

# THE POWER OF THE **BRAND IDEA**



# INTRODUCTION

The Brand Idea is the creative expression of the Brand Positioning and it gives direction to all creative work of the Brand. The Brand Idea has the potential to spark great creative work while ensuring the consistency of all Brand's Through the Line activities.

Not all Brand Ideas have the same potential, though. Brands with a poor Brand Idea, either too loose (unclear) or too tight (small) will suffer from the same risk as not having a Brand Idea at all. The Brand Stories will be lost in the crowded and loud Storytelling landscape due to its limited ability to generate World Class Creativity and consistent work over time. It is essential, therefore, to devote your best Agency and Senior Brand Team's resources to the development of the Brand Idea.

In this booklet, we will give you tips and advice on how to develop a Brand Idea or optimise an existing one, and how to judge if it is strong enough to create Brand Stories that win the minds and hearts of our consumers.

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## 1

## WHAT IS THE BRAND IDEA?

The Brand Idea at HEINEKEN is the creative expression of the Brand Positioning and it is developed to guide the creative work consistently over time.

## THE BRAND IDEA SHOULD:

- ✓ Define the ownable creative territory of the Brand
- ✓ Work in the long term
- ✓ Be expressed in words that resonate with consumers language
- ✓ Be the springboard of World Class Creativity in all Brand building activities

The Brand Idea will bring to life the Brand Positioning for consumers.

## CURRENT

Consumer Belief  
about the Brand

## DESIRED

Consumer Belief  
about the Brand



The Brand Essence sits at the centre of the Brand in a Bottle (BiaB). While the Brand Essence clearly shows what the Brand stands for, the Brand Idea guides how the creative work should bring it to life. As such, the Brand Essence and the Brand Idea have two different roles.



Brand Essence

VS

Brand Idea



Is the distillation of what the  
Brand stands for

Creative expression of the  
Brand Essence

Is at the heart of your BiaB

Provides clarity and defines directions to  
the Brand internally and externally

Inspires and unlocks creativity for all  
Brand communications

Is developed by the Brand Team

Developed by the Creative Agency in  
collaboration with the Brand Team

Let's look at the Pedigree example:

"Make the world a better  
place for dogs"

"Demonstrate everything we do is  
for the love of dogs"

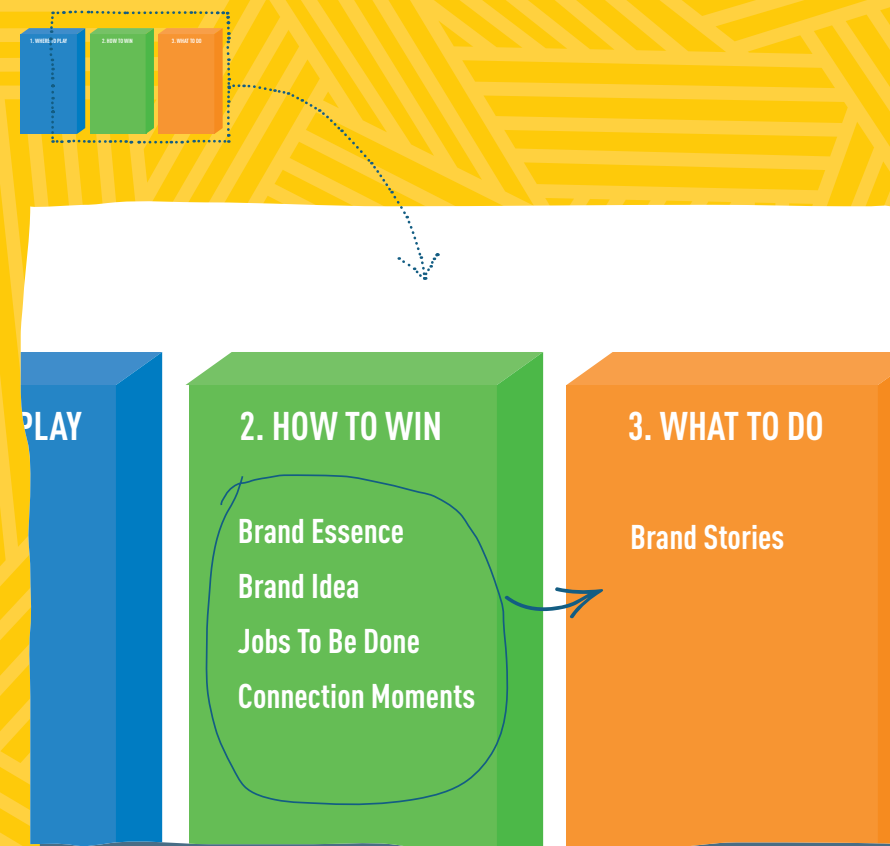


## Take a look at some other good examples:

Brand	Brand Essence	Brand Idea
	Be a Man of the World	MOTW knows that when you cross your borders, you open your world.
	Unleash the Wild Side of Fun	Life needs more Desperados. Desperados celebrates those who inspire us to break out of normal town by living by their own rules.
	Espiritu Libre	Assert your Freedom. Where others bend to the pressures of conformity, Sol champions those who live with purpose.
	Everyday Optimism	Show how Coca-Cola sparks everyday moments of Optimism and Happiness.
	The Power to Achieve Whatever you Want	Showcase how you can always challenge your limits.
	Inescapable Attraction	Gives you the edge in the mating game.
	Masculine Pioneering	Demonstrate the rewards from journeys of progress.
	The Essence of Youth	Brings you youth as a state of mind.

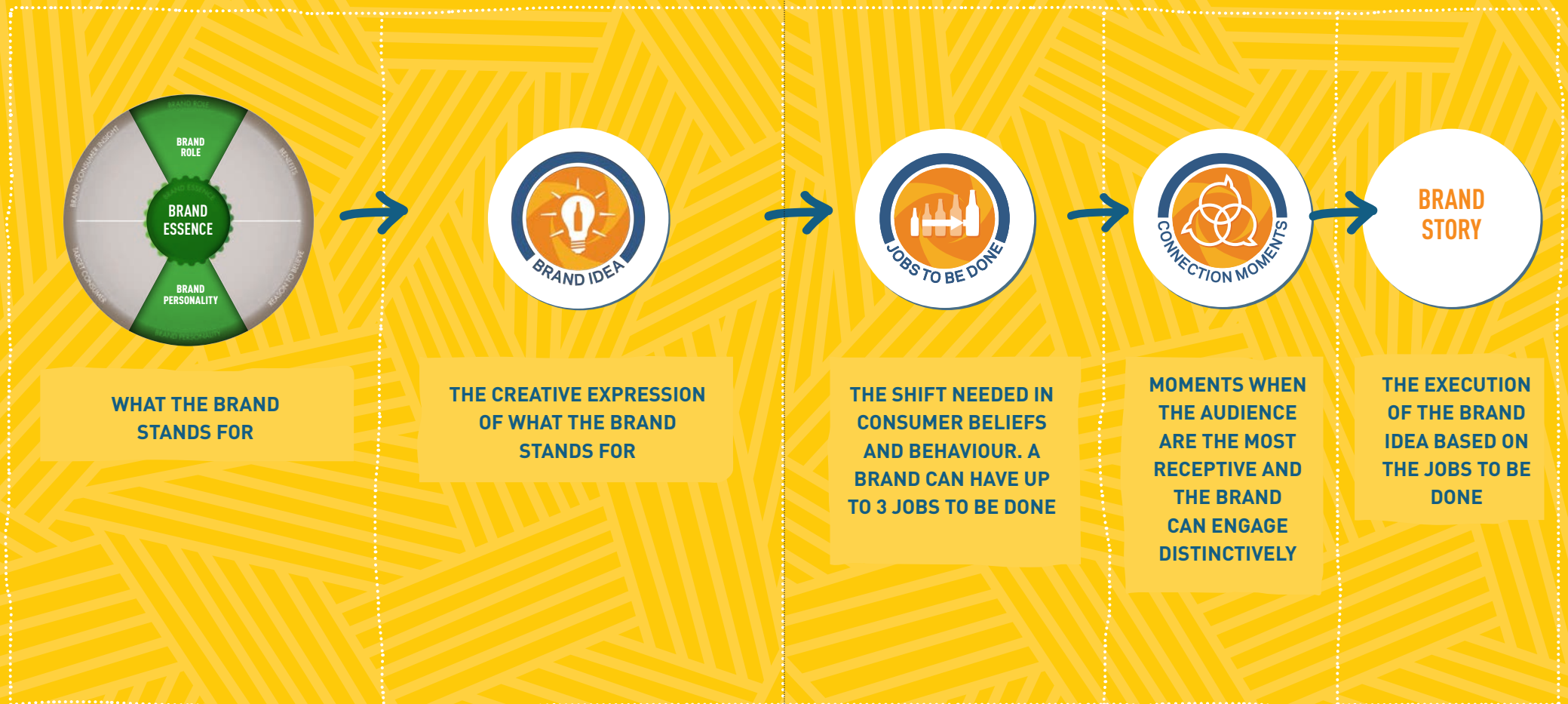
Like the BiaB, the Brand Idea is a strategic decision. This means that it is a fundamental decision that will guide all executions over time: as such it requires the attention of the most senior marketer in the team.

### BRAND BUILDING FRAMEWORK





The Brand Idea is the creative springboard to Brand Stories. Let's have a look at how the Brand Essence, Brand Idea and Brand Stories build on each other.



Let's look at an example from Heineken®



Be a Man of the World



MOTW knows that when you cross your borders, you open your world



Recruit 5% of competitive drinkers who are aspiring MOTW UCL fans and who do not regularly choose Heineken® to buy a 6-pack during the UCL season, by changing their belief that Heineken® is just another sponsor and lacks relevance



UCL Match Night



MOTW knows that instead of watching the game at home alone, he puts a little thought and effort to make it special for him and his friends



## 2 HOW TO DEVELOP THE BRAND IDEA

It's time to look at your Brand Idea when...

- ▶ **There has been a significant change in your BiaB**  
E.g. Change the insight
- ▶ **There is a new Jobs To Be Done (JTBD) that cannot be delivered with the current Brand Idea**  
E.g. Recruit a new group of consumers
- ▶ **Brand communications are consistently underperforming**  
E.g. Tracking studies show that communications are not impacting the 'premium' equity statement
- ▶ **Further executions feel as if you've seen them before**
- ▶ **The Brand Idea only works for traditional advertising and cannot survive within the StoryTelling framework**
- ▶ **There is a significant change of external context**



DEPENDING ON THE OUTCOME YOU WILL NEED TO DECIDE  
TOGETHER WITH YOUR CREATIVE AGENCY IF IT IS TIME TO:

**2.1 DEVELOP**  
THE NEW BRAND IDEA

OR

**2.2 IMPROVE**   
YOUR CURRENT BRAND IDEA

## 2.1 DEVELOP THE NEW BRAND IDEA

**BRIEFING**



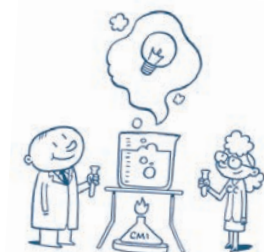
**CRAFTING**



**RESPONSE**



**VALIDATION**





## BRIEFING your Creative Agency

Briefing for your Brand Idea is one of the most important tasks as a marketer, but getting to an excellent Brand Idea isn't easy! It will require a strong Agency Team who really understands the concept of the Brand Idea and who is prepared to challenge all the preconceived ideas of the Brand and think differently. Make sure the brief is single-minded and totally focussed on the Brand Idea. Really challenge yourself to keep to the goal of creating a strong, compelling and differentiating Brand Idea. You can use the StoryTelling Brief, as a format and the tips below.



### PRE-BRIEF

#### Assemble and share the Brand Assets

- Brand Ambition – where the Brand wants to be in the next 5 years
- BiaB
- All JTBDs
- Communication Legacy (historic Brand communications)
- Brand Equity Tracking
- This booklet

### BRIEF

#### Share and discuss the Brand Assets and the desired outcome using the Brand Idea Checklist \*

- Congruent
- Creative
- Emotional
- Insightful
- Durable

\* More on the Brand Idea Checklist on p. 23-24.

## Invest in careful and iterative CRAFTING



Developing the Brand Idea is a full creative process. It requires Brand Team and Creative Agency to work hand in hand. Each Agency will have a different way to get to the Brand Idea, so expect a great variety of ways of working across Agencies. Some Agencies will ask

you to be part of the process earlier and others later. Focusing on the outcome and agreeing on expectations from both sides earlier in the process will help you achieve the best results.

### TIPS

- Demand the best creative and planning resources within the Agency
- Plan generously: the time needed to craft a great Brand Idea is difficult to predict
- Get out of the comfort zone: great Brand Ideas often sit outside of the category norms
- Create a spirit of shared ownership and success with the Agency





## The Creative Agency **RESPONSE**

When the Agency presents the Brand Idea, ask the following questions:

**WHAT IS THE BRAND IDEA?** The Agency should be able to describe the Brand Idea in a succinct way. If it takes too long, watch out: it could be too complex or implicit.

**HOW DOES THE BRAND IDEA COME TO LIFE?** Ask for an explanation of how the Brand Idea works. How does the Agency envision bringing the Brand Idea to life?

**WHY IS IT RIGHT?** Why should it resonate with consumers? Why is the Brand entitled to own the proposed Brand Idea?

Remember, the Brand Idea is a strategic decision. A thorough understanding of the Brand Idea and a full commitment afterwards to activate it is key to succeed.

## **VALIDATION**

There is no formal way to test the Brand Idea. Each Brand Idea will require a different validation depending on its being a new Brand Idea or an evolution of the existing one.



### **TIPS**

- Bringing the Brand Idea to life is the best stimulus for validation
- Be flexible in the research methodology approach
- Involve research partners early in the process

## 2.2 **IMPROVE** YOUR CURRENT BRAND IDEA



**GET WHAT YOU NEED**

**SEE WHAT IS GOING ON**



**EVALUATE OPTIONS & DECIDE**

## GET WHAT YOU NEED

If you have taken the decision to improve your current Brand Idea, it is important to understand the creative past of your Brand and the reason why you believe that current Brand Idea has lost traction.



For this you need as many examples as possible of your current and historic Brand communications. These should include any online and offline communications, experiential and shopper activity. Also bring your BiaB and JTBD for reference.

- Only collate those materials which you feel are 'on Brand' and from the most recent Brand campaigns
- If your Brand has undergone a recent change in strategic direction, only use those examples which fit its current Positioning
- Leave out wrong executions

## SEE WHAT IS GOING ON

The decision to improve your current Brand Idea must lead to a stronger Brand Idea. Therefore it is important to recognise the core elements of the Brand's creative heritage, so together with the Agency you can take it from there.



Follow the next steps below and see how it works with the McCain example on the next page.

- 1 Review all the ATL/BTL materials you have selected
- 2 Describe what is going on in each of these without using any Brand elements or copy lines. In all BTL examples, explain what the 'story' of the activity is, rather than the mechanics
- 3 In any video execution, break the story into scenes to understand sequence as well as action
- 4 Identify what are the recurring elements and how these link together

## EVALUATE OPTIONS & DECIDE

- 5 Write possible versions of the Brand Idea and decide





## 1 Look at the following 2 executions using QR codes

FRIES

PIZZA



## 2 Write a description of what is going on in each of those executions

A mother asks her son, dressed up as a monster, what monsters eat while serving the children's dinner. The boy gives a long list of horrifying and imaginative things, but is prompted by his mum to add chips to the list-as this is what is being served tonight. The boy adds chips to the list and sits down to enjoy them. There is a joke between mother and son when he confirms that chips go with everything including 'Brains' which he had included in his monster list.

A girl sits in a living room and calls her boyfriend who is preparing dinner. She is pretending to place an order for a take away food. The boyfriend plays along in the imaginary game, pretending to be the waiter who describes the pizza he is serving as if it was from a restaurant menu. The imaginary role play finishes with a joke as of them eat pizza.

## 3 Break the story into scenes and understand the sequence

- Fantasy world in everyday setting
- Child imaginary point of view on the everyday situation
- The food is being requested
- The food is being offered
- Mealtime setting
- The other person joins in the imaginary situation and brings them closer together
- The food plays a role in the creation of the imaginary world
- The food on offer is enjoyed as it tastes as good as restaurant food

## 4 Identify the recurring elements and what the executions have in common

- The food lives in the both real and imaginary worlds
- The serving and eating of the food together bring you back to everyday reality
- Everyday family and friends situations

## 5 Evaluate possible options and decide

### BRAND IDEA 1

Dramatise how universally loved food makes everyday situations more fun

### BRAND IDEA 2

Show how irresistible food transforms reality by making everyday relationships stronger

### BRAND IDEA 3:

Show how food that everybody loves allows better everyday connections

## WHICH BRAND IDEAS WOULD YOU CHOOSE?

## OVER TO YOU!



# 3 HOW TO ASSESS THE BRAND IDEA

The most effective way to evaluate the strength of the Brand Idea is through the work it inspires. Your Agency will need to demonstrate the breadth and depth of the Idea, illustrating how it can be used to create stories that deliver all JTBDs. Since the Brand Idea is the springboard for creativity, attempting to assess a Brand Idea without creative work is impossible.



## TIPS

- Brand Idea cannot be assessed as concept alone
- Invest resources to see how the Brand Idea will be fully realised
- Samples of creative executions can give you the full experience of the Brand Idea by including:
  - Sample of how the Brand Idea would be brought to life
  - Multiple stories based on the JTBDs
  - Multiple channels across Paid/Owned/Earned

## USE THE BRAND IDEA CHECKLIST TO ASSESS THE BRAND IDEA



### CONGRUENT

Is the Brand Idea congruent with the key elements in your BiaB (Brand Role, Brand Personality, Brand Essence)?



### CREATIVE

Is the Brand Idea creative and does it inspire creativity within Team and Agencies?

The Creative Ladder may be used to assess how creative the Brand Idea is, as it gives us the language to evaluate and describe Brand Ideas and executions simultaneously. Therefore, when using the Creative Ladder to evaluate Brand Ideas, it is essential to see examples of that Brand Idea brought to life in specific executions.



### EMOTIONAL

Does the Brand Idea have the power to elevate your Brand to a higher human, social and emotional order?



### INSIGHTFUL

Is the Brand Idea based on insights and communicated in language that will connect and resonate with the audience?

CONTINUE WITH  
THE CHECKLIST ON  
THE NEXT PAGE!



## DURABLE

Does the Brand Idea have the durability to inspire many stories over time?

Special attention should be given to the potential of the Brand Idea to be fertile over time and to be able to trigger multiple expressions of its creative power in different stories and touch points.

You may have heard this question before... Do Brand Ideas dry up? Some of the best Brands have been activating the same Brand Idea for years with great success.

		
Show how Coca-Cola sparks everyday moments of Happiness and Optimism	Just do it	Gives the edge in the mating game
> 60 YEARS	> 50 YEARS	> 30 YEARS

SO THE REAL QUESTION YOU SHOULD ASK YOURSELF:  
IS MY BRAND IDEA GOOD ENOUGH?

**Invest quality time in crafting a powerful Brand Idea: it will secure integrity of the creative identity of your Brand in the complex digital world, and it will be the single most powerful asset to develop World Class Creativity**

CINZIA MORELLI-VERHOOG





## NOTES

## NOTES





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