

IKEA

'Enduring everyday thinking'

Mother

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Summary

This paper is about finding new meaning and purpose in a brand we thought we knew inside out. And in so doing, discovering new significance in something we all take for granted: The Everyday.

Playing the wacky Swede in the UK for years, the IKEA had never been given its full worth. It remained fun or frustrating, depending on your point of view, but little else.

Years of successful, even award-winning work wasn't enough. The brand was in a long, slow decline.

Through investigation and interrogation, Strategy challenged our own understanding of the brand, its role in everyday life at home and the power of furniture itself.

We created a strategic platform that allowed us to imbue the brand's behaviour and communication with the meaning and purpose of its founding principles. We used rich insights into consumers relationships with their homes along with deep understanding of the brand's roots to challenge the accepted wisdoms of everyday life at home.

The Wonderful Everyday has already had a significant impact not just on IKEA communication and brand performance, but upon the UK business as a whole.

Yet, what makes this story so wonderful is that it is not yet finished. This is the tale of a platform created to endure.



“Oh that? It’s just IKEA”

28 years ago, IKEA was the Swedish revolutionary who weaned us off chintz and transformed British home furnishing taste forever. More than 13m mattresses - and 1 in 5 British conceptions - later, we weren’t looking quite so stylish or avant-garde.

The optimist saw flat or declining metrics post-recession, but the Strategists on IKEA saw a more concerning picture emerging. Across the key purchase-drivers of *Trust, Price and Likeability*, the brand was 10-20% behind competitors¹ and while awareness was growing, albeit slowly, consideration absolutely wasn’t.² All of these metrics were, unsurprisingly, significantly more pronounced amongst lapsed customers – exactly the cohort we were trying to bring back to the brand.

Despite delivering business impact and brand fame (ROI of £12, Cannes Gold & Silver Lions, BIG, British Arrow and Campaign BIG awards), the brand’s most effective work to-date wasn’t working hard enough.

Something fundamental had to change to meet not insignificant targets of +10% sales and +6% store visitation.

Beyond the bright shiny colours

We knew too much about the brand to be objective. Strategists and Creatives alike knew the best value products, the shortcuts in the store and the quality pieces nobody expected to come from IKEA. So we commissioned an in-depth study with IKEA fans and rejectors to get a little perspective.

Accompanied shops, conflict groups and online forums gave us clear indication of the issues we faced:

1. We had an image problem with lapsed customers (of course, but now we knew why)
2. We had a quality and value for money challenge (driven by our affordable flat-pack range)
3. We meant too little to consumers; beyond quirky or minimalist products
4. Even our biggest fans shopped only part of the range, and relished regaling lapsed shoppers with epic urban legends of IKEA nightmares

¹ Millward Brown Brand Tracker 2012

² MediaCom Business Science 2012



While each posed a serious risk to future brand health and growth, it was the fourth that worried us most; even our fans could go little beyond durability and storage to justify their shop.

We lacked substance and meaning at a time where home furnishing trends pointed to storytelling and shabby chic – and at a time when the cultural tide had well and truly shifted towards authenticity and experience.

Quantitative data and qualitative insight pointed to one thing: We had a weak brand.

The role for strategy was to find a way to fix this. Not just to deliver on our immediate business and marketing goals, but to set IKEA up for a bright and prosperous future.

Returning to our Roots

For all the wacky Swedish comms in the brand's UK history, IKEA had never truly been introduced to UK consumers. Having always been the 'other' to the British cultural norm of the day (chintz or beige or showy design) we had never really told anyone anything about who we were.

So who is IKEA?

A global behemoth led by an enigmatic founder, the brand's culture emanates out from one place – Älmhult – the icy Swedish town where it was founded 72 years ago. An isolated, challenged place with principles of frugality, social democracy and farmers' common sense.

We had to go there.

It was snowy and wonderful in Älmhult – but through days of museum visits, conversations with designers, and time spent in Ingvar Kamprad's house with the brand storyteller, the tireless curiosity of the Strategist revealed an IKEA we'd never seen before.

It had been staring us – and every agency before us – in the face.

In every brand manual, catalogue, piece of internal comms and IKEA office we'd ever visited.

It had been there since Ingvar founded the business back in 1943. An enduring brand purpose that informed everything IKEA had ever done:



'To create a better everyday life for the many people'.

It seems crazy to think we had only ever read this statement at face value. From the outside looking in, it just explained low-cost flat pack, cinnamon buns and hot dogs. But from inside, at the heart of the brand, it suddenly said so much more.

Hook, line and sinker

A corridor conversation with an IKEA Designer gave us an insight into how we'd make the brand purpose relevant to UK consumers to transform the brand.

The hook story isn't an epic story. It's an everyday one.

Its impact is wonderful for the family in question, but negligible to anyone else.

And its positive effect only grows over time.

The hook story taught us humility.

It taught us to think like an IKEA Designer and recognise the impact tiny changes to your home can have on your everyday life and ultimately, on your happiness.

Suddenly, we were challenging everything we thought we knew about furniture and its impact on life at home.

The hook story illuminated the brand purpose in action, and in doing so, gave us a brand truth to leverage:

IKEA exists for one thing, and one thing only – to improve the Everyday.

THE HOOK STORY

Wrestling kids into their outdoor clothes every morning takes time and causes arguments. But in Sweden the challenge is compounded by the fact that harsh winters mean layer upon layer of snowsuits, hats, gloves, scarves and thick boots. Every snowy day brings tears and tantrums as it's time to get dressed to go out.

In Ålmhult, an IKEA designer explained that the solution to these daily arguments was a simple coat hook. Not a special coat hook, just a standard, run-of-the-mill coat hook that costs about one Euro.

The secret? Simply putting the coat hook at your child's height. This way they can be like Daddy or Mummy: they can take their clothes from their own hook and get dressed for themselves. With the kids now keen to get dressed for themselves, the process of leaving the house in winter becomes quicker and much less fraught.

Which not only stops arguments and tantrums but also gives you ten more minutes in the morning to enjoy together.

Suddenly, this wasn't just a coat hook after all.

From purpose to platform

We went forth with one objective; to create an enduring brand platform that would inspire the consistently great creative work needed to drive reappraisal of the brand now and in the long term —this was change we know wouldn't happen overnight.

We had to transform an internal brand truth into an external brand platform; a simple expression of the everyday benefit IKEA helps deliver.

Strategy named this '*The Wonderful Everyday.*'

Feeding the platform

We had an enduring platform that made the internal brand language consumer facing, but we still had a long way to go to imbue it with meaning and relevance. To drive growth, strategy would have to find a way to make the platform both as flexible and as cohesive as possible to sustain every campaign across the retail calendar.

Rather than a brief, we wrote a manifesto.

Our communication needed to show we understood life at home better than anyone else, but clearly mirroring everyday life would never be enough; we had to treat it with the sense of magic that showed how much we valued it and believed it really could be wonderful.

This influenced our strategic framework; beginning with an insight into everyday life at home then reconciling this with a point of view from IKEA to challenge accepted wisdoms – providing a role for the brand to improve it in the process.

Now the work began; we set about breathing life into The Wonderful Everyday across four key business areas.

THE WONDERFUL EVERYDAY: A MANIFESTO

Practical is wonderful.

Sure, there are people splitting atoms and flying to Mars.

But aren't there still giant leaps to made in stopping a saucepan boiling over?

The greatest design challenge in the universe is getting a child out the house in the morning on time.

It's living with a dog.

It's brushing teeth.

It's getting a baby off to sleep.

Solving the everyday takes imagination.

Practical isn't easy but it's a joyous design challenge.

And that's exactly what IKEA love.

And it's why every single thing we sell is an imaginative, beautiful celebration of the everyday.

IKEA. The wonderful everyday.



Sustainability

How could we leverage the brand's commitment to sustainability?

We knew trust was one of our biggest barriers, but the only way to address this was brand behaviour; the business commitment to LED was the perfect opportunity to demonstrate tangible, committed altruism.

Consumers perceived sustainability to be a trade-off; something that was expensive or time consuming and not a priority in the context of fragile consumer confidence, however well-meaning they were at heart.

Strategic platform: The power of the everyday.

We can all make a difference by changing the everyday; something as simple as replacing ordinary light bulbs with energy efficient LED alternatives has a significant impact.

Creative platform: Small things make a big difference.

When sustainability needn't affect your routine or your wallet, why wouldn't you switch?

The Work:

Containers

Our distinctive and wise voice of IKEA delivers the following voiceover.

VO: Here's a tip from IKEA - Keep an eye on your leftovers.
Everyone loves leftovers, so try storing them in see-through containers. Because if they are easier to see, they are easier to remember. And if they are easier to remember, they are less likely to be wasted.

It's a small thing, that could make a big difference.

That's The Wonderful Everyday...from IKEA.

For more tips, visit us online

Pressure

Our distinctive and wise voice of IKEA delivers the following voiceover.

VO: Here's a tip from IKEA - Put some pressure on your food.
A pressure cooker reduces cooking times by 50%. So it also uses less energy, you see. And it's better at keeping all the delicious vitamins and minerals in the food.

It's a small thing, that could make a big difference.

That's The Wonderful Everyday...from IKEA.

For more tips, visit us online



—Radio script

—TV Spot: youtu.be/qvZUEDEZQBI

Beds

Sales data and seasonality indices pointed to a surprising trend; bed sales spike on return from summer holiday, how could we take advantage of this?

We often live in the future and muddle through the everyday, paying little attention to the things around us that could actually affect our daily lives—like our bedrooms. Lots of Brits suffer from sleep problems; four out of five people complain of disturbed or inadequate sleep.

Strategic platform: Good days start here.

We set out to emotionalise Brits' relationship with their bedrooms in the summer period - while also challenging the accepted wisdom that the best bed in life is a hotel bed. We knew changing your bed at home would have a greater impact on your everyday life.

Creative platform: There's no bed like home.

A celebration of the feeling that when it's perfect for you, nothing else comes close.

The Work:

Light

Our distinctive and wise voice of IKEA delivers the following voiceover.
VO: The A to Zzz from IKEA. L is for light.

As soon as you get out of bed in the morning, open the curtains. Sun light stops your body releasing the sleep hormone, making you naturally more awake and alert. Just make sure you've got pyjamas on first. For the neighbours' sake.

For more tips to help you start and end your day better visit IKEA.co.uk/slash/wonderful/everyday.

IKEA. The Wonderful Everyday.

Snooze

Our distinctive and wise voice of IKEA delivers the following voiceover.
VO: The A to Zzz from IKEA. S is for Snoozing.

There is a con man in your bedroom called the snooze button. It replaces good rem sleep with bad dozing sleep, making you feel tired all day. So don't snooze. Instead set your alarm for as late as you can get away with, then just get up.

For more tips to help you start and end each day better visit IKEA.co.uk/slash/wonderful/everyday.

IKEA. The Wonderful Everyday

—Radio scripts



—TV Spot: youtu.be/iZW04_BdyG8

The A to Zzz

Find 26 tips to help you start and end your day better at IKEA.co.uk/wonderfuleveryday

is for Reading

Not all reading is recommended before bedtime. Avoid work-related materials and self-help books as they can stress you out and stop you getting to sleep. Fiction is ideal though. It soothes the more imaginative areas of the brain and prepares the body to dream as you can drift off into a relaxing, restorative slumber.

—Press Executions

Entertaining

IKEA traditionally struggles in the festive season; how could the 'everyday' compete with Christmas?

No matter which festival you choose to celebrate, the festive season is fraught with the pressure of special occasions and important dates - all against a background of increasingly scarce and interrupted family time.

Strategic platform: Let's celebrate the special occasion of everyday entertaining.

Every day should be special. A reason to cook and eat together. To sit at the table, congregate on the sofa or just pull up an extra chair and be together.

Creative platform: Every meal is a special occasion.

A celebration of the little everyday moments that bring us together - and a reminder to value them as much as the moments we call special occasions.

The Work:

Sizzle

SFX: A rich, mouthwatering sizzle of food on a hot pan.

Our distinctive and wise voice of IKEA delivers the following voiceover.

VO: This could be a piece of 28 day aged filet steak, prepared by the hand of a Michelin-starred chef.
Or, it could be a couple of bangers. Prepared by you.

But you see, when you come together with the people you love, every meal is a special occasion.

For ideas to help you celebrate every day visit IKEA.co.uk/slash/wonderful/everyday.

IKEA. The Wonderful Everyday

Rush Hour

SFX: We hear the familiar rush hour noises: the rumble of a train, a muffled announcement.

Our distinctive and wise voice of IKEA delivers the following voiceover.

VO: The evening rush hour. It sounds just like the morning one. But it's a happier sound. It means you're about to be reunited with the leftover lasagne and your favourite people — and that's a worthy cause to celebrate.

Because when you come together with the people you love, every meal is a special occasion.

For ideas to help you celebrate every day visit IKEA.co.uk/slash/wonderful/everyday.

IKEA. The Wonderful Everyday



—Radio scripts

—TV Spot: youtu.be/GzCLshtTnxg

Storage

Despite storage being the brand's heartland, the IKEA range was still perceived as low quality and only for secondary areas of the home.

Brits have the most possessions but the smallest homes in Europe - yet we still see storage as a rational solution to 'mess' with no emotional benefit and little impact on everyday life at home.

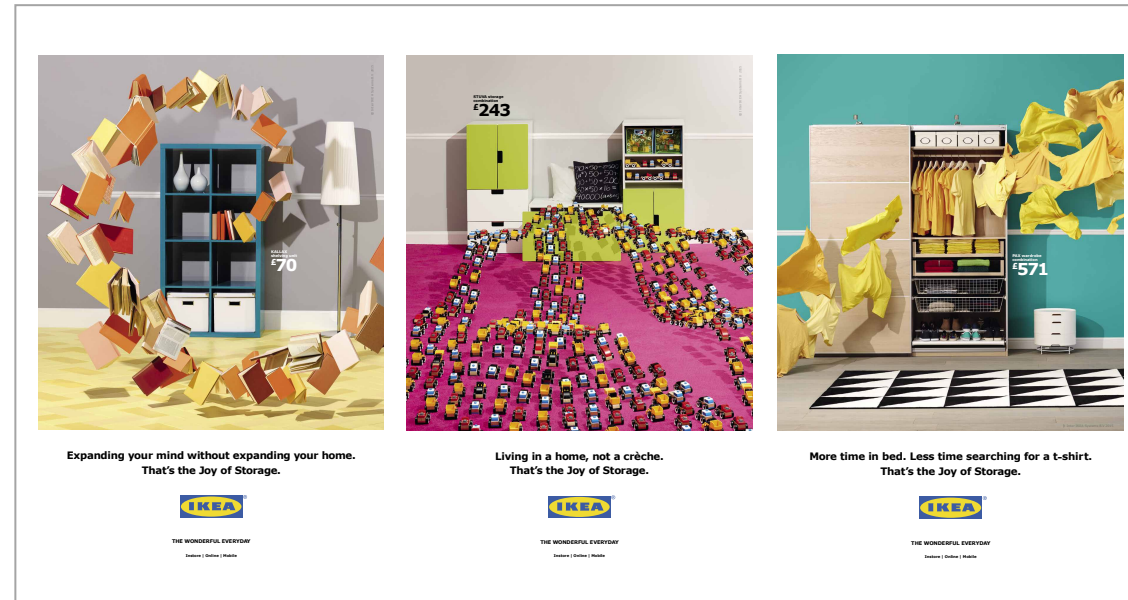
Strategic platform: Great storage is the secret to success.

Great storage is your invisible best friend, career coach and style advisor. It makes for good days and good nights (in or out), it creates space and a sense of wellbeing.

Creative platform: The Joy of Storage.

A celebration of the feeling that comes from having storage that meets your needs – storage that makes your mornings brighter, your evenings more relaxing and that helps you truly appreciate the everyday.

The Work:



The image displays three separate print advertisements for IKEA storage products. Each ad features a different storage unit and a creative visual metaphor for the benefits of storage.

- Advertisement 1 (Left):** Features a blue shelving unit with a price tag of £70. The unit is surrounded by a large, circular arrangement of colorful paper bags and folders, suggesting organization and expansion of space. The text below reads: "Expanding your mind without expanding your home. That's the Joy of Storage." and includes the IKEA logo and "THE WONDERFUL EVERYDAY".
- Advertisement 2 (Middle):** Features a green and white storage unit with a price tag of £243. The floor is covered with a dense carpet of small toy cars, with a path leading to the unit, symbolizing a cluttered home. The text below reads: "Living in a home, not a crèche. That's the Joy of Storage." and includes the IKEA logo and "THE WONDERFUL EVERYDAY".
- Advertisement 3 (Right):** Features a white wardrobe with a price tag of £571. The wardrobe is overflowing with yellow clothes, with some items flying out, representing the frustration of searching for items. The text below reads: "More time in bed. Less time searching for a t-shirt. That's the Joy of Storage." and includes the IKEA logo and "THE WONDERFUL EVERYDAY".

—Press Executions



—TV Spot: youtu.be/DassdizThkk



—Special Build Outdoor



Ultimately, this paper isn't finished...

"Most of the job remains to be done. Let us continue to be a group of positive fanatics who stubbornly and persistently refuse to accept the impossible, the negative. What we want to do, we can do and will do together. A glorious future!"

—INGVAR KAMPRAD.

The Wonderful Everyday has captivated the IKEA business in the UK; from HR and recruitment and to the interior designers in the store and everyone in-between. It is part of their vernacular as much as it is the brand platform for all communications – not just in paid, but in all channels, even gracing the front of the publication distributed twice as widely as the Bible, the IKEA catalogue.

The Wonderful Everyday has also united the integrated agency team to deliver tighter, more effective and more transformative campaigns together. Indeed, together we have created the most effective work IKEA has done to date in the UK.

At the end of the brand's financial year in August, year-on-year were sales were up 11.3 per cent to £1.41 billion in the UK; this has since been maintained during the period 1 September to 31 December with sales still up 12 per cent. Although store visitation missed its target by 1%, our increased focus on digital activation drove an increase in web visits of 26%.

Yet despite this, we stick by Ingvar's words and believe there is still a lot to be done.

And that's where the true role of Strategy in this whole piece comes in.

In the humility and rigour with which an enduring platform was created – not for the benefit of short-term campaign goals, but ultimately for the benefit of the brand long into the future.

The Wonderful Everyday is a platform designed to endure. And ultimately, to outlive any Strategist, Creative or Client working on the brand. And that's what makes it so wonderful.

