

The Pripps Blå Case
The Fall of the Favourite

MANAGEMENT DECISION

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Market Situation

The rebranding project started in 2010 when the Pripps Blå management team recognized that something needed to be done to increase the sales and improve the brand reputation. To improve the reputation, the management decided to take a bold step and change the branding strategy into something completely new. After a comprehensive market analysis and trend evaluation, new insights on what the brand ought to become was revealed. Consumers of the 21st century showed a great interest in the “hipster lifestyle”, including microbreweries, which many referred to as “hipster beer”. The consumers attracted to this way of life were “hip”, urban youths showing appreciation for leisure activities at trendy and relaxed places like Andra Långgatan in Gothenburg and Södermalm in Stockholm. Music, dance and festivals, all with undertones of authenticity and credibility, were key factors for this group of people. However, the biggest competitor Norrlands Guld already targeted this consumer segment, but the decision was made to take the battle and challenge the other beer giant.

Partnerships

To execute the rebranding of Pripps Blå, partnerships with knowledgeable people was needed. The first partner recruited was WDW Creative, a Stockholm based creative agency working with strategy, brand development, design and communication, specialized in working with fashion, culture, music, drinks and hotels. The goal with the recruited partnership was to rejuvenate the brand and reach new potential consumers. The strategy developed to do so was three folded. Firstly, collaborations with influential and urban people, regarded as credible within the consumer segment was needed. The concept “Låt oss presentera” (“Let us present”) was born and the original idea was to present people with roots in the fashion, art and music scene. Secondly, a collaboration with vintage retailer “Beyond Retro” was initiated. As the third and final step, United Screens, a multi-platform network with focus on online videos on YouTube became involved in the “Let us present”-concept, which then was introduced in collaboration with Swedish artists such as Far & Son, Joy, Rebecca & Fiona & Little Jinder.

The New Look

With this rebranding, Pripps Blå wanted to mediate a younger appearance to the brand in order to match its new chosen consumer segment, but still be humble to the strong heritage of the brand. Pripps Blå wanted to keep its iconic look without getting stuck in something outdated; they wanted to make use of the brands history as a force forward. Thus, Pripps Blå presented new visuals to illustrate this new

brand identity. The new logotype and communication conveyed adventure and freedom and a strong belief in the future. All linked to the glorification of youth, including new impressions and opportunities (**See Exhibit 1**). As they stated themselves; Pripps Blå has belief in the future, not nostalgia. Pripps Blå is pop, not rock. Pripps Blå is a sailor, not a harbour worker.

Activations and Results (From 2011 to 2017)

To execute the new rebranding strategy for Pripps Blå, a four-point plan was put into action for the coming seasons:

Firstly, to revitalise and give the brand new energy and to reach the urban consumer segment, Pripps Blå needed to make them relevant throughout the year, not only the summer. Creating a narrow targeted, but yet including, communication plan covering the whole year accomplished this.

Secondly, the brand needed a new appearance. The strong heritage including Gothenburg and the Swedish summers was not to be forgotten and hence, it needed to be included in the rebranding but on new terms. The brand history would still have close ties to the brand identity, but some freshness needed to be added.

Thirdly, the concept “Let us present” was activated in various formats, including “Let us present - the Swedish summer” (**See Exhibit 2**) with the hashtag #DenSvenskaSommaren (#TheSwedishSummer). When using this hashtag on social media sites, people were competing for an opportunity to celebrate the Swedish summer together with well-known Swedish artist on Knarrholmen, an island in the archipelagos of Gothenburg. In total, 80 people were selected to be a part of this event where they were given access to exclusive performances by the collaborating artists and moreover, party with them. The creative agency United Screens produced seven commercials and five short documentaries during this party, which later on were promoted on the most popular social media sites. All and all, the brand activations during the first summer of Pripps Blå’s new brand strategy put focus on summer, celebration of life and music.

The fourth and final step was to make further brand activations, both in-house and through collaborations. One activation included promoted parties on a boat in collaboration with one of Stockholm's most hip nightclubs at the time. To be on a boat was the perfect way of connection the new branding with the marine heritage. Additional, an eco-friendly beer was launched, exclusively sold in selected restaurants and on the music festival Way Out West. Moreover, collaborations with restaurants grew and to give the partners gift kit with products suitable for the Swedish summer was a great way to create awareness for the new and fresh Pripps Blå.

As a result of these activations, the attitude towards Pripps Blå changed and the sales of the beer once again increased (**See Exhibit 3**). Unfortunately, the Swedish

summer season quickly ended in 2011, but this was solved by extending it by travelling abroad to a warmer destination, more specifically, Los Angeles in the USA. Here, Pripps Blå sponsored the fully Swedish festival Stockholm, CA and continued their collaborations with Swedish “hip” artists. By so, the brand managed to go from the Swedish Västkust to the warmer American West Coast and elongate the summer and their branding strategy.

Exhibit 1 The new Pripps Blå logotype and bottles/cans



Exhibit 2 Example of ads used for the concept "Let us present"



Exhibit 3 Sales of Pripps Blå versus Norrlands Guld 2009-2017

