Modern marketing in disguise: creating value connections between companies and consumers
Mossinkoff, M.R.H.

Citation for published version (APA):
Mossinkoff, M. R. H. (2012). Modern marketing in disguise: creating value connections between companies and consumers
Chapter 5 Innocence Lost

5-1 Introduction
An Innocent smoothie is a drink composed of fresh crushed fruit, slightly pasteurised, but with no added ingredients or treatments whatsoever. A simple product with straightforward benefits for virtually everyone. Yet the Innocent brand often became a beacon in extant economic, political and social discourse in the United Kingdom. In fact, since its inception in 1999 the brand grew very quickly and managed to keep a dominant market share through the years. It also managed to create a strong value connection with a small number of engaged consumers.

In section 5-2 I will start with one of the most controversial events in the story of Innocent, when Coca-Cola bought a stake in the company. Reactions showed, somehow surprisingly, that many consumers were quite engaged with the brand, i.e. the Glue Value of the brand was quite strong. In section 5-3 I will show that a great part of Innocent’s success is very much due to the ‘spirit of the times’, which indicates that, in terms of values, the levers on which the brand thrived are not that original, but what then were the determinants of its success? Was this postmodern marketing? The brand certainly managed to market its products in a different way than the many other companies operating in the same market(s). I found that their way consisted of: Anthropomorphic packaging (section 5-4), systematically influencing the selection environment or the perception of key decision makers (section 5-5) and getting personal with consumers (section 5-6). Finally I will corroborate the conclusion that Innocent has indeed been able to manipulate the brand’s perception to a large extent, but may not have been very aware of that. In fact, consumers were quite active in the marketing process, but never fundamentally changed the value proposition of the company (section 5-7). Finally I will conclude that the fact that Innocent finally decided to accept the stake from Coca-Cola, shows how Innocent executives became aware of the serendipitous nature of their marketing, i.e. the impossibility to re-create it in continental Europe and thus the need for a strong partner to make sure the product is presented on the main shelves of European retail outlets.

5-2 A marriage of convenience
‘Innocence lost’ was one of the most predictable headlines in the newspapers after the UK based company Innocent ltd sold a stake of 20% to the Coca-Cola company in 2009. Given the anti-corporate image of the brand some journalists would speak of a David and Goliath
affair, others predicted the end of the company. The brand lost some of its luster, but the question is if that would not have been the case anyway. From 2009 the main product, a drink of crushed fresh fruit, or Smoothie, needed to be pushed harder through the distribution channel, especially outside the UK, which is probably the very reason why Innocent came to an agreement with Coca-Cola.

Picture 5-14: Some consumers are eager to prove and spread their disappointment

In 1999 the three founders of the company Innocent Drinks ltd started crushing fresh fruit, pouring it into small bottles and distributing it to a few restaurants in the city of London. Ten years later, in 2009, the company was generating about 130mln pounds of total sales by delivering about 2 million bottles of Smoothies around Europe and has been rated one of the most successful entrepreneurial stories of the United Kingdom. Testimony to its success were not only the many prizes obtained (see table below), but also the amount of works published about the company (a quick search on the Internet using the keywords innocent drinks and case study generated about 784.000 hits). The founders were even appointed official consultants to the UK prime minister (Gordon Brown at the time) in matters of food, economics and innovation. The fast growth of the company in these ten years is deemed by scholars to be mainly due to the innovative marketing, but also to the quality of its products. More specifically: the ‘quirky’ and funny communication, walking-the-talk by delivering on promises, and the outstanding quality of the products in terms of healthiness and taste.
Table 5-6: The rapid growth of Innocent in terms of recognition, sales and size.

Innocent revenue

Table 5-7: Revenues of Innocent in mln pounds. Based on press reports.
Since its inception in 1999, the brand only saw some misfortune during the financial crisis of 2008-2009 when it clearly lost some of its market share and revenues, mostly in favour of private label alternatives (see appendix 5-1 to this chapter for more detailed information on market share and brand recognition figures). The sudden drop in sales between 2008 and 2009 shows how price-sensitive (or elastic, economists would say) these markets are. It suggests that the market played a big part in justifying a steady growth and the willingness to pay an average of 1.5 pounds premium (i.e. above a ‘normal’ price) for a bottle of 250ml. It is, after all, a market for a product, plain crushed fruit, that one can easily make at home, and one could argue that it is almost a commodity, with small or no differentiation possibilities, except for continuously adding new fruits to the mix (what I would call fashion see box 5-1) and, indeed, branding. Making the market even more difficult to conquer was the presence of a few very big players with established financial and marketing armies. But, at the same time there were not many new players, and we found that the tale of the – innocent – young entrepreneur taking it up against the big, bad boys certainly contributed to creating the image of the brand.

**Box 5-1: The smoothie as an exclusive and fashionable item**

Continuous innovation in the core product, as well as in packaging and product range are key to the growth of the company in terms of volumes but also of image: The core product, the Smoothie, is treated as a fashion item. The fashion-ability of the product is especially evident from the limited edition phenomenon and that a new ‘collection’ is developed for every season. As with every respectable fashion company the new collection implies a careful mix between exploration and exploitation of trends. Exploration lies primarily in the use of remarkable (in the sense that it is generating surprise and is therefore remarked by the public) ingredients, which had not been used in a soft-drink so far, like beetroot, pomegranate, kiwis, lychees and the like. Even more explicative of the fashion phenomenon is the issue of colours. Green and brown are ‘difficult’ colours, but they are nevertheless introduced and generate quite some upheaval. And the seasonable smoothies always come in bright and fresh colours in summer, and warm and darker ones in winter. Exploitation of existing trends is also happening as is shown by the introduction of functional smoothies, on the edge of the functional drinks trend (although always without synthetic additives). In the picture you can see the smoothie of the
month April 2007, with “juicy pomegranates from southern Turkey (where the conditions are perfect for the pomegranate tree) mixed with sweet Williamette raspberries”. On the right side a “Special Guest Smoothie”.

The Coca-Cola affair not only demonstrated the obvious resentment of customers, but more interestingly it showed how some customers (not many) defend the brand quite emotionally claiming, for instance, that coming to terms with the enemy would only help spreading the ‘good’. Allegedly Coca-Cola was very interested in this small but strong commitment from a core group of users. Something must have generated this ‘strong connection’, but was it indeed very innovative, new, fresh, or witty marketing? Or was it good old marketing in a new jacket?

5-3 Rebels with a cause
The brand became a beacon in discussions on health and healthy food prevalent in England, but also elsewhere in the 90’s and after. Actually some health experts were busy telling Guardian readers what they should do to keep healthy, advising several natural products and one brand…next to being naïve Innocent drinks became healthy per definition as well (the comments are reported in the appendix 5-1). The healthy effects of the drink where not so much due to what was in it, but mostly to what was left out, i.e. all kinds of additives, but especially sugar. The drink is only slightly pasteurized to ensure a longer shelf-life. Adding to the health effects for consumers are the healthy consequences of purchasing the product for everything natural, as well as concern for the less fortunate. Concerning the natural environment Innocent drinks claims to be the first company doing research and eventually developing a bottle that is fully recyclable. Another example of how Innocent ‘cares’ for the environment is the buy-one-get-one tree action (see picture aside). Consumers can still register on the website, insert a code e.g. recall the ‘wholesome’ effects of Jamey Oliver’s Kitchen with whom Innocent drinks has occasionally collaborated for marketing purposes. In fact Innocent is the only brand featured in Oliver’s Feed me better campaign and also sponsors it's follow-up Jamie’s school dinner.

Picture 5-15: Buy One Get One Tree
found on the smoothie bottle and actually follow the growth of their tree, a kind of Foster Parents but with a tree instead of a child. Users can attach messages to the trees for other people to see, and some 100,000 trees have been planted in India and Africa as the result of the action. The most important charity initiative may be the Innocent foundation, aimed at supporting farmers and their environment, an obvious choice given the primary input of smoothies. Other ‘social responsibility’ initiatives are the support of the elderly, through collaborations with the charity Age Concern, or the homeless. Quite rhetoric laden is the answer of the company to consumers asking for free drinks to sponsor their events (in the f.a.q. page in the website): it gives spare drinks only to the homeless.

One important element of the company’s communication in this respect is that it was not a ‘sustainable’ brand, but rather a natural one. One of the founders and main spokesman of the company, Richard Reed, states several times in a rather obvious way, that for them it was important to be natural. The term is interpreted in its strict sense when talking about the ingredients and the material of packaging, and in its broader acception when talking about marketing. According to Reed being natural in the last context also means doing ‘great business’.

Pictures 5-15: Your shortcut to health (15a)! And nature (15b).
Now nature is not all good by definition is it? Rather the opposite. Nature is also about looking for short-term short-cuts\textsuperscript{110}, which can turn out costly in the long run\textsuperscript{111}, but an Innocent smoothie helps you out there as you can see from the picture 5-6.

At the time, and probably more so today, Innocent was not the only company being (or trying to understand what it means to be -) socially and environmentally responsible, and in this respect an ‘Innocent face’ might as well be a Body Shop or Ben and Jerry’s. These companies have similar stories with respect to the health effects, the David & Goliath paradigm, and also, mostly for Ben & Jerry’s, the aesthetics and ‘tone of voice’.

The Body Shop is quite univocal in its acception of human connotations, and may be a bit too much in-your-face. On the right side of the picture the cow is somehow human, but not the face of the company, rather the one of the main supplier.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{bodyshop_benjerrys.png}
\caption{The Body Shop and Ben\& Jerry’s advertisements}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{110} Evolution is not only about reproduction, more fundamentally it is about survival.

\textsuperscript{111} This is a.o. why one reads differing opinions about the effects of social advertisements aimed at enhancing the risk perception of e.g. smoking or driving fast. In some cases these advertisement campaigns actually reinforce the motivations for ‘bad’ behavior. They tell you what to do in case you want to be bad; also, as the Italian saying goes: “meglio l’ovo oggi che la gallina domani”, i.e. Better an egg today than a hen tomorrow.
The concept of Ben & Jerry’s is more interesting to us because it resembles those of Innocent in several respects:

- The graphics throughout the external communications resemble that of Innocent which seem drawn by a child or ‘do-it-yourself’ not anything like what a professional design agency would do.
- The alleged outstanding (natural) quality of the product is necessary to justify a premium price.
- The cow is the testimonial of the campaigns. Having animals, like cows and rabbits, talk to consumers is a strategy Innocent used several times.
- They claim to use only natural ingredients but not in a serious way which would make consumers feel like ‘health junkies’, but in a more ‘quirky’ way using some intertextuality (Peace, Love and Ice Cream).

This strategy worked, because of a shared discontent at the time with big corporations, associated with everything rational, persuasive and unfair. These companies came of age in a time when big corporations where having great credibility problems, several publications overtly criticised their bad practices. *The corporation* by Joel Bakan, and before that *No Logo* by Naomi Klein are examples of a few authors generously supported by financial scandals of Enron, Parmalat, and the likes. *The* bad practice that helped these companies grow and that consumers were finally able to pinpoint had a name: marketing (see picture 5-6).

![Scott Adams 'Dilbert' view on marketing](image)

**Picture 5-16: Scott Adams ‘Dilbert’ view on marketing**

It is also in this context that we must understand the difficulties larger companies, like Pepsi, GlaxoSmithKlein and Nestlé, had to enter the Smoothies market. Being a newcomer was indeed a big advantage. Venture capitalism and related concepts of entrepreneurialism were hot, start-ups en-vogue. Innocent largely capitalised on this trend. The naïve tale of how the founders started the company (see box 5-2) is often reported as exemplary (the prizes won for
being the best start-up in the UK are testimony to this). However, in the owner’s account of the story of the company it appeared that it took several years, business plans and more unexpected efforts before the start succeeded.

Box 5-2 The bins story

“In the summer of 1998 when we had developed our first smoothie recipes but were still nervous about giving up our proper jobs, we bought a £500 worth of fruit, turned it into smoothies and sold them from a stall at a little music festival in London. We put up a big sign saying ‘Do you think we should give up our jobs to make these smoothies?’ and put out a bin saying ‘YES’ and a bin saying ‘NO’ and asked people to put the empty bottle in the right bin. At the end of the weekend the ‘YES’ bin was full so we went in the next day and resigned”.

http://www.innocentdrinks.co.uk/us/our_story/ (July 2011)

This ‘no-corporate’ approach worked, as the company is often described in press reports in terms like ‘Peter Pan’ or ‘David and Goliath’ and ‘Childish’, and competitors try to imitate it with doubtful effects given the overt messaging (see picture 5-7).

Picture 5-17: Competitors in Germany try to emulate Innocent. Many are trying to imitate Innocent’s tone-of-voice and graphic style. Original pictures.
Not only was being a small start-up an advantage, but it was also the ‘happy-clappy’ (as some journalists defined it) style of the company’s communications. One of the characteristics of this approach is never to be too explicit about one’s intentions. Some call that naivety, but not many. This may become clearer by looking at what the extant trends in the sector were at the time, and how Innocent’s activities totally fitted these.

As you can see from table 5-3, in the UK the consumption of drinks associated with health, water and fruit juices, grew considerably at the end of the millennium, more than the others categories\textsuperscript{112}.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carbonates</td>
<td>4,700,000</td>
<td>+ 17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit juices and fruit drinks</td>
<td>1,750,000</td>
<td>+ 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottled water</td>
<td>700,000</td>
<td>+ 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentrates and ready-to-drink squash</td>
<td>700,000</td>
<td>- 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5-8: Market Value of UK Soft Drinks Sector, 2002**

Still according to the same report this growth is due to (p.39):

1. Increased snacking and eating on-the-go
2. Alcoholic drinking and driving restrictions
3. Growth in leisure pursuits, which often incorporate a drinking occasion
4. Decreasing popularity of hot drinks
5. Wider range and availability of drinks to appeal to a larger market
6. Health benefits messages about fruit juices and water
7. Advertising

And this seems like a reflection of Innocent’s alleged determinants of success. Concerning the first point Innocent introduced the product in ‘to-go’ outlets in the center of London. In several consumer comments we found the smoothie was considered a substitute for coffee:

some users refer to it as the ‘new caffelatte’ a ‘cool’ drink to enjoy ‘to go’, on the run, on the road, for breakfast or as a snack.

The second point may speak for itself, but it is interesting to note that terms like indulgence, cocktail, champagne, bohemian are used often by consumers praising the benefits and looks of the product.

The third point has been exploited gratefully by Innocent with the Fruitstock events. These gatherings around music, literature (Penguin was also a sponsor, and a writer like Alain de Botton a reported guest), and tasting (local farm’s produce) were so successful that in 2003 the company decided eventually to organise them in a smaller scale outside greater London, and rebrand them ‘Village Fete’. As you can see from the table in appendix 10-1 this move went together with the strategic intention of expanding outside the city and to regain a ‘small’ image (hence also the new name).

The fourth point is voiced by comments we found several times about how the Smoothie is the ‘new latte’.

The fifth point is to be understood in relation to a later comment in the report where apparently there was a lot of room for experimentation in this category. In fact Innocent was not the only one entering the crushed fruit category, another new brand like Pete & Johnny was growing fast, and bigger companies also started introducing new brands in a category that had already been booming in the USA, as the founders also admit.

In relation to point six, I repeat that what Innocent achieved is to be mentioned in nutritionists’ lists of ‘must-have’ healthy products (e.g. what to have for breakfast) amongst primary products like an apple or a cracker. This way becoming a message of health, like Nike became the totem of the jogging culture in the 80’s. I will discuss the seventh point in more detail in section 5-7, but it suffices here to say that Innocent hired some of the most innovative advertisement agencies for its campaigns.

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113 Allegedly Nike not only took advantage of the jogging culture in the early 80’s, but also influenced it. *(Upgrade-strategy, the globalization reader* Door Frank J. Lechner,John Boli Blakwell: p 170).
5-4 An Innocent Smoothie face

In 2003 several newspaper articles report about David Cameron (presently England’s prime minister) being “unashamedly dependent” on Innocent. The smoothie bottle seems cleverly marketed and attractively packaged just like him. Some journalists report having spotted the politician in his Notting Hill residence in a t-shirt slugging an Innocent smoothie and consequently that the conservative party does not need an Innocent smoothie in charge (before the politician became prime minister…). Why not an Innocent smoothie in charge? Comments of some journalists might help us in this respect. Some report on how the packaging is actually irritating and totally superfluous, prospecting a Peter Pan like dream world or implying a ‘fullscale co-option of the wide-eyed political naivety of the 60’s’, or (my favourite) they consider an Innocent smoothie as being ‘the beverage equivalent of a morning person’. This last point may be clearer if linked with other comments like Innocent ‘makes it compulsory to laugh’. However another consumer aptly says that ‘Innocent is so wholesome that resistance is futile’.

Rendering the brand and thus the founders in a way more human or nearer to ‘the people’ in the perception of consumers, is admitting faults. Traditional marketing is about having the best product, about near-perfection. The new zeitgeist is about recognising and accepting each other’s limitations and more humane instincts. That leads us to the other side of the Innocence coin.

A naughty image is carefully managed: the Innocent-face urges consumers to make kids on the small bottles for children. Employees are advised not to walk around in the nude at the company event Fruitstock, there are references to chastity and orchids in the booklets in France. The word naughty is even mentioned by one consumer who reports that the ‘fruity concoctions feel incredibly naughty’. Another journalist reports that in 2009 celebrity Mischa Burton is reported as having an ‘Innocent Smoothie’ face, since she was mysteriously hospitalised, allegedly because of drugs abuse.

Where does that leave us with the David Cameron’s Innocent smoothie face? Well, David Cameron had some issues in 2005 regarding the use of drugs, and he famously commented, I
would say now in a very Innocent style: "I did lots of things before I came into politics which I shouldn't have done. We all did." (Wikipedia UK David Cameron page March 2010).

**Box 5-3 No Coke**

It would seem that David Cameron, possible future leader of the Conservatives, Great Britain, Northern Ireland, the Falkland Islands and the Republic of Bluewater, is not such a bad man after all. After enduring intense speculation about his substance intake, he has finally come clean and revealed his filthy drug secret. And shockingly, it would seem that it's our little drinks that give him a natural high (man). Cameron revealed in Saturday's Daily Telegraph that he is dependent on our smoothies. "It's true, I'm afraid," said the man who would be king. "I'll have at least one a day, usually with lunch. There's no particular flavour I go for - I like them all."

Innocent Weblog, ‘Family newsletter’ 26th Oktober 2005

The founders of the company comment on this issue by saying that typically bigger corporations talk to consumers the way they think corporations should talk to consumers whereas at Innocent: “we speak the way we talk” because “your granma should get it” and a brand should speak to consumers just “like to your friends”\(^\text{114}\). Innocent’s tone-of-voice is pivotal for its success, just like it was for Ben & Jerry’s. But for Innocent this is even stronger than for Ben & Jerry’s; having a Ben & Jerry’s ice-cream face may not be as effective. As one of the founders, Richard Reed, likes to mention several times: 95% of the branding is in the bottle, and as a result, in the words of a business journalist: “…in their brand the products speak directly to you rather than Innocent speaking for them”\(^\text{115}\)

‘Don’t look at my bottom, you know what it’s like…’

More precisely it is the bottle speaking here. Packaging it is. Just have a look at the specifications of the label in the figure underneath:

\(^\text{114}\) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kta2upHMtk&feature=player_embedded July 2011
\(^\text{115}\) http://www.claremackenzie.com/tag/pr July 2011
Note that some whimsical phrases are added that give a defined personality to the bottle, like ‘…and we promise to brush our teeth twice a day’ or the repetition of words, like ‘ever, ever…’ or ‘please keep me cold’. The personality is childish, but from the perspective of adults. Other examples of the kind of language such a child should use are: ‘I've got to behave and not say anything too rude or controversial. So, mum, they really are good for you. They are made with 100% pure fresh fruit. They contain loads of vitamin C (a day and a half’s worth)’ and ‘they are as fat free as an apple or banana and that's because they are just fruit. Is that good enough for you, mum? Right, I'm off to smash some windows and have a fag’ or ‘thou shall not commit adultery’, ‘My mum's started buying our smoothies (and that's after a whole year, the skinflint)’. However some text is also plainly whimsical, like ‘and [contains] plumb nuns’ or ‘enjoy by …’ instead of the usual ‘to be consumed until…’. When turning the bottle upside down, phrases like ‘do not look at my bottom’ or ‘try the other side, its easier’ are surprisingly found. The surprise maybe lies also in the recognition of traits that make the smoothie not just akin to a person but really human, more precisely a small friend who not only admits his own faults, but understands yours as well; ‘You know what it’s like…’.

The Big Knit campaign

In the interviews the marketing executives of the company never really talk explicitly about their quest to give the bottle anthropomorphic connotations. However, intentionally or not several marketing activities were supporting this persona construction. Maybe the most successful one in this respect is the Big Knit campaign.

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116 The other side of the Innocent coin I commented on before.
After a trial in the Benelux under the name of Supergran in 2003, the Big Knit is introduced in the UK in 2004. To promote the limited edition smoothie of December, when sales in the whole category shrink, the UK creative department came up with the idea to dress the bottle to stimulate sales. However, they did not just order a bunch of caps and put them on the bottles, but thought of having consumers making them instead. Although it did not get that much public recognition in the beginning, this action eventually contributed consistently to create the company’s image outside the big cities amongst all age groups, but mostly the elderly. Volunteer consumers use up their scraps of leftover yarn to knit hats that fit on the top of a small Innocent smoothie bottle. In 2011 the ‘hat of the week’ competition even attracts design agencies\textsuperscript{117}. For every bottle with a hat sold, 50p goes to Age Concern, half of which comes from the retailer. In 2007, over 200,000 Pounds were raised for the charity Age Concern\textsuperscript{118}. An example of a concrete activity generated by the action is the organisation of a Christmas dinner for older, lonely people. This action is repeated every year. From 2005 onwards more consumer enthusiasm is shown by the large amount of knitted hats sent in, also from Germany and Denmark. In 2008, 400,720 wooly hats were knitted which raised 200,360 pounds. Amongst the explicit aims of this action was also increased collaboration from retailers to increase their commitment. The Dutch marketing managers were surprised indeed by the positive attitude of a Dutch department store (The Bijenkorf) in this respect. The action was and still is very successful also in terms of retailer’s commitment (retailers sell 80% more smoothies than normally [3]) and exposure (press releases). Every year several hundred sent-in caps are left over, and particularly the elderly are eager to keep on knitting: “That was brilliant, it works great” (see picture 10-7)[5].

\textsuperscript{117}http://www.designhive.com/blog/we-knit-hard-for-the-innocent-big-knit (July 2011)
\textsuperscript{118}http://www.wikihow.com/Knit-Hats-for-the-Innocent-Drinks-Big-Knit (June 2010)
Picture  5-20: Eldery people knit too many caps for bottles with a smile

This marketing action is exemplary for our discussion because it shows how engaging consumers, allowing people to ‘do-something’ for the brand, can both contribute to create an image (charity) and introduce the product to a new consumer group: elderly people. But the question is why this (again, according to company executives totally serendipitous…) idea had, and still has, so much success. If it was just originality and therefore surprising, success would not have lasted that long\textsuperscript{119}. Again we think that the answer is anthropomorphism. Obviously the little smoothie needs a woolen hat in winter, granma’s need to take care of a child (elderly people setting up hat-knitting meetings) and younger people need to take care of the elderly (and thus knit as well, learning from the granma’s, and contributing to AgeConcern). So the company allowed for spontaneous consumer engagement, but the levers on which it thrived are indeed very natural. Next to efficiency (conservation) and reproduction, insights from evolutionary psychology tell us that we have a propensity to take care of each other because by doing so we enhance the probability of survival of our offspring or fittest.

5-5  Co-opting ideas

If it is true that 95% of the branding is in the bottle, it is also true that, as results from our accounts, 95% of the founders’ (working) time was spent with issues not directly related to the bottle. These were more related with trying to create or influence the context in which decision makers and (hopefully) committed customers form their preferences.

\textsuperscript{119}Three months to be exact, according to Miceal Dahlen, see www.nextopia.info, or else http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aMgOUtXUShA (July 2011)
Innocent defines the market in functional terms like ‘people wanting to do something good for themselves and for the environment’. Now even if this definition seems very general, in 2004 some journalists report the typical Innocent consumers as consisting of ‘the affluent rich’ or ‘fashion conscious thirtysomethings’ or people who are ‘body-aware, affluent, and far, far too busy to consume fruit the traditional way, with their teeth’ (more comments are reported in the appendix to this chapter). So apparently still quite an elite. And a feminine one at that, which, given the associations of the brand with health-body, childlikeness, indulgence, knitting, is not so strange. As a result one TV celebrity for instance reports that she always drinks a Smoothie before going to bed, and the women’s magazine supplemented to The Times mentions the pleasure of enjoying an Innocent Smoothie. Through the years consumers are described by journalists and company executives as “slightly more female, slightly more affluent, slightly younger”. But still willing to make children, I would add, as becomes evident from the website audience demographics reproduced underneath:

![Figure 5-2: Audience demographics by June 2010, Alexa.com](image)

If this defines the core users, a search on the internet for pictures related to Innocent drinks and the Big Knit, or the Fruitstock and Village Fete events, or even the pictures of visitors to the company headquarters posted in the company’s weblog reveal quite a heterogeneous consumer group. It becomes evident though, that addressing new consumers groups always fitted into a broader marketing and distribution strategy. The initial target market was defined as ‘hippies with a calculator’, and this had consequences for distribution and advertisement activities, as for instance the first ads were purposely placed along the stairways of London’s tube. The development of the other two markets (family and children) also went together with
new packaging (e.g. one liter tetrapacks), campaigns (e.g. TV-advertising) and distribution (e.g. supermarkets).

Elaborating on the functional properties of the drink allowed Innocent to easily adapt to new consumer groups\textsuperscript{120}. However, even if in the founders’ voice this all came about rather by chance, we think the founders envisaged expansion to other demographic (age and affiliation) and geographic (outskirts of London and continental Europe) areas quite soon, also encouraged by the unexpected financial results.

\textit{Press:} As one line in Innocent’s recipe for marketing success reads: “get yourself in the press” and so they did. Notwithstanding that our view might be a little skewed by that fact the we reviewed many newspapers, we found that the company was very often reported, not only indirectly because of the creation of stories that journalists like to tell, but also directly, for instance by appointing the founder Richard Reed as columnist of the Guardian, or by the publication of pictures of the three founders on the back sleeve of the same newspaper.

The press adds trust to the reliability of the brand with words and witiness.

\textit{Celebrities} were not directly endorsing to our knowledge, however, some more or less locally known celebrities (not necessarily people) are mentioned in the press in relation to the company. Besides the various prime ministers, one of them is Alain de Botton, a philosopher who became quite popular for having made great philosophers and writers accessible to the general public. The well-known British book editor Penguin is not only present at the company’s festivals but publishes one of their books as well. More local, in the UK mainly TV celebrities, report on having smoothies at night or in the morning, and Jamie Oliver (a celebrity TV-cook) is a logical companion when addressing issues of healthy food for children at school. Peanuts’ Snoopy is also reported as drinking a smoothie. Another smoothie face?

The consumer groups that are engaged with celebrities are kids, young and wealthy females, conservative ex-college Cambridge and Oxford thirty-something students, and finally the allegiance with literature supports the witty image of the company again, adding credibility.

\textsuperscript{120} On the bandwagon of functional drinks, an imported fashion from the USA, in 2003 even \textit{supersmoothies} were introduced, in particular a Detox (de-toxinating) Super Smoothie and one with an extra amount of vitamins C that does not come from additives but from adding fruit that is particularly vitamin-rich.
Very often *nutritionists*, with academic titles and food safety associations, but also less formal experts in the fields of beauty and health advise the smoothie for improved looks. The younger female wealthy group is addressed, but not explicitly. The owners *admit* that the clientele is ‘slightly female’.

Innocent not only claims to support the natural environment, obviously a choice near to the core product’s characteristics, but also people through allegiance with charities for homeless (who get the left over produce) and for elderly people (getting a share of the Big Knit extra revenues). Due to its colonial past (noblesse oblige...) Charity institutions (4) in the UK have a long history, maybe even more than in other European countries, but this association goes deeper and crosses over to all UK minded consumers and fits in the zeitgeist of the 90’s of continental Europe as well.

*Schools/Business schools.* The educational trait of the smoothie is supported by the many visits to schools and business colleges alike. In this way not only the kids are won, but also marketing and business savvy contexts.

*Definitions.* The founders, and even the Benelux managers, often mention that the smoothie category is formally non-existent, as the company pushes for a definition. This may also explain why some health specialists mention the benefits, along with cereals and the like, of an Innocent smoothie, and not of just fruit. The issue is that of quality, and Innocent actually tries to get institutionalised trust. Existing categories like Juices, Water and Frozen Desserts, may have been more problematic as well because it was more difficult for Innocent to control and shape them.

*Politics.* If the association with David Cameron was maybe serendipitous, the continuous attempts to get an abolition of the VAT on smoothies, or a permission to put vending machines in schools were definitely intentional. Just like the reports of Gordon Brown visiting the headquarters or of how Innocent’s founders are nominated advisors to the government for health, innovation and food issues. Allegiance with the government gives Innocent a seal of institutionalised trust.

*Distribution channels.* By allowing a consistent share of the margins, placing funny booklets in outlets and contributing to the image of restaurants and shops alike with the Big Knit campaign, Innocent managed to get the support of retailers who have become eager to convey the benefits of the drink to consumers.
So it seems that company executives have been quite busy defining the terms in the contexts in which the brand had to get accepted, or which could have an influence on generating primary demand for the product as well.

5-6 **Borderline disorders?**

The fact that the term borderline disorder has negative connotations is due (among others) to the idea that we need *order*. However, usually the nearer we get to defining borders, the more blurry they become. What we see in the marketing of Innocent drinks is that the border between functional and emotional values and the border between front- (what consumers see) and back-office (what consumer do not see) are fading as well. This is akin to showing the ‘Kitchen’ in public according to a Dutch saying, or cleaning up dirty clothes in the public river according to an Italian saying. What the company is also doing here is to create an open house for the ‘Innocent Family’. These are probably what the owner of the company referred to as the *channels often seen as of secondary importance*. They consist of Story-telling and Opening up the Offices to the public.

*Story telling*: One of the founders has been writing columns for The Guardian regularly, and is a much wanted speaker at business, school, and university venues. Some tales, like that of the inception of the company, had a great impact on the image of the brand (see Table 5-2). Innocent also published four books: the first book with recipes, the ‘Little Book of Drinks’ was written and published in 2002 (Fourth Estate, 12,99 GBP, later also translated into other languages) and features also not-so-innocent cocktails. The public notices that healthy drinks might even include alcohol. A second book was written and published by the founders in 2004 with the explicative title ‘Stay Healthy Be Lazy’. Another recipes book is published in 2006 and in 2009 the founders comment on their success factors and publish their story in: ‘Innocent, our story and some things we have learned’ (Penguin).

*Opening up the offices*: Consumers are invited to visit the ‘fruit-towers’ (a wink to the impervious headquarters of the big corporations). Funny comments on the website and weblogs about the furniture of the offices stimulate people to send in gadgets and even carpets. AGM’s, or ‘adult grown-up meetings’ are organised in the offices annually to answer
consumers’ questions everyone can apply\textsuperscript{121}. Consumers are repeatedly invited to call the ‘bananaphone’, not for complaints but whenever they feel bored. In the company’s weblog many stories refer to what is happening inside the offices, and children are even invited to spend their birthday there.

So there is a constant in the marketing of Innocent that might have contributed to generating consumer commitment and the fast growth of the brand, and this is, next the other factors we have already discussed, the ability to give consumers the perception of having a peak behind the scenes but removing the coulisse between the front- and back-office.

The construction of this image is supported by the advertisement campaigns (see table 5-3). In one of the TV ads in particular the brand manager personally shows consumers how to make smoothies. Commenting on the constituencies of the first advertisements Mr. Reed observes: “we liked to talk to people like we’d just popped in for a cup of tea and a biscuit”. As a matter of fact several campaigns are developed in-house, but at the same time the amounts of money budgeted for the campaigns indicate a belief in the function of mass-advertisement, as becomes clear from the table underneath where you can also note that in 2007 the aim was to become small again\textsuperscript{122}. As we said before the fast growing event Fruitstock was given up in favour of the smaller Village Fete in the same year.

\textsuperscript{121} I have tried to take part at one of these, but did not manage, due to an overwhelming demand. Also mentioning our research purpose did not help to get around the lottery.

\textsuperscript{122} The words ‘small’ and ‘little’ also permeate all external communications. The books that Innocent publishes are ‘little’, the bottles always address Mums, when Coca-Cola invests in Innocent the founders report that they are still small in that they want to do many little things, the company aims at being Europe’s favourite little juice company.
Picture 5-23: Fruitstock became too big

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instore/Online</td>
<td>&quot;Create smoothies, form the makers of smoothie and staff&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;our daily fix&quot; in a park in London</td>
<td>&quot;intro to only fortable humans&quot;</td>
<td>the creative director, Ben&lt;br&gt;German, explains&lt;br&gt;the difference&lt;br&gt;between a Smoothie and a&lt;br&gt;Baileys</td>
<td>30 second TV&lt;br&gt;spectacular, How do&lt;br&gt;you make a smoothie&lt;br&gt;in 30 seconds?&lt;br&gt;Instead of &quot;nothing but&lt;br&gt;a smoothie&quot;&lt;br&gt;now it reads&lt;br&gt;&quot;Smoothie by&lt;br&gt;Baileys&quot;</td>
<td>TV ads</td>
<td>&quot;This is what&lt;br&gt;the Baileys&lt;br&gt;loves&quot; TV&lt;br&gt;spectacular on&lt;br&gt;a couch in a&lt;br&gt;park with a&lt;br&gt;smoothie</td>
<td>&quot;Viagra&quot;&lt;br&gt;introduced&lt;br&gt;shift&quot; in a&lt;br&gt;park with the&lt;br&gt;smoothie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>Small stock in&lt;br&gt;supermarkets</td>
<td>Small stock in&lt;br&gt;supermarkets</td>
<td>Small stock in&lt;br&gt;supermarkets</td>
<td>Small stock in&lt;br&gt;supermarkets</td>
<td>Small stock in&lt;br&gt;supermarkets</td>
<td>Small stock in&lt;br&gt;supermarkets</td>
<td>Small stock in&lt;br&gt;supermarkets</td>
<td>Small stock in&lt;br&gt;supermarkets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales/Online</td>
<td>1 min</td>
<td>2,500m</td>
<td>3,500m</td>
<td>4,500m</td>
<td>4,500m</td>
<td>4,500m</td>
<td>4,500m</td>
<td>4,500m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales/Online</td>
<td>1 min</td>
<td>2,500m</td>
<td>3,500m</td>
<td>4,500m</td>
<td>4,500m</td>
<td>4,500m</td>
<td>4,500m</td>
<td>4,500m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
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<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agencies</td>
<td>In-house</td>
<td>OMD, Fallon,&lt;br&gt;Alison</td>
<td>Fallon, Alison</td>
<td>Fallon, Alison, PR&lt;br&gt;Compass</td>
<td>Fallon, Alison, PR&lt;br&gt;Compass</td>
<td>Fallon, Alison, PR&lt;br&gt;Compass</td>
<td>Fallon, Alison, PR&lt;br&gt;Compass</td>
<td>Fallon, Alison, PR&lt;br&gt;Compass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Actions</td>
<td>Sampling, &lt;br&gt;the distribution of&lt;br&gt;calendars&lt;br&gt;TV ads and&lt;br&gt;promoters in&lt;br&gt;supermarkets</td>
<td>Sampling, &lt;br&gt;the distribution of&lt;br&gt;calendars&lt;br&gt;TV ads and&lt;br&gt;promoters in&lt;br&gt;supermarkets</td>
<td>Sampling, &lt;br&gt;the distribution of&lt;br&gt;calendars&lt;br&gt;TV ads and&lt;br&gt;promoters in&lt;br&gt;supermarkets</td>
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<td>Sampling, &lt;br&gt;the distribution of&lt;br&gt;calendars&lt;br&gt;TV ads and&lt;br&gt;promoters in&lt;br&gt;supermarkets</td>
<td>Sampling, &lt;br&gt;the distribution of&lt;br&gt;calendars&lt;br&gt;TV ads and&lt;br&gt;promoters in&lt;br&gt;supermarkets</td>
<td>Sampling, &lt;br&gt;the distribution of&lt;br&gt;calendars&lt;br&gt;TV ads and&lt;br&gt;promoters in&lt;br&gt;supermarkets</td>
<td>Sampling, &lt;br&gt;the distribution of&lt;br&gt;calendars&lt;br&gt;TV ads and&lt;br&gt;promoters in&lt;br&gt;supermarkets</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 5-3: Innocent campaigns overview. Original elaboration on the basis of newspaper articles.
What one can also notice from the themes row is that the aim is never to inform explicitly about the healthy properties of the drink but rather on its natural...nature. Even if the core of the brand is (wants to be) functional, catering to the need for a healthier life and a cleaner environment, this intention is never explicitly expressed in the external communications. The allegiance with indulgence helps to bring the product to consumers who won't feel treated as health-junkies or fetishists. As one journalist reports about the “Utter tosh…” drink, she suggests to take a break from stuff like wine and chili, but not to get into mystical thinking (referring to the above mentioned health junkies), and instead spend a fortune on Innocent smoothies.

5-7 All too human…

In the 90’s, as Vladimir Zizeck puts it: ‘The new spirit of capitalism triumphantly recuperated the egalitarian and anti-rhetoric of 1968, presenting itself as a successful libertarian revolt against the oppressive social organizations characteristics of both corporate capitalism and Really Existing Socialism – a new libertarian spirit epitomised by dress-down “cool” capitalists such as Bill Gates and the founders of Ben & Jerry’s ice cream’ and I would add the Innocent drinks founders to the list. The value proposition of Innocent fitted the zeitgeist very well: sound business as a successful combination of ethical concern and playful entrepreneurialism.

Also contributing to the success of the value proposition is the fact that the smoothie was not so much a new product as a new product category, i.e. not the discovery of a new way to satisfy a generally felt emergent need. That was the need for a healthy, responsible, albeit quick, refreshment. The smoothies category would probably have also grown without Innocent, as other starting or small enterprises were experimenting with crushed fruit drinks at the same time, also encouraged by the growing smoothies sales in the USA.

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123 Zizek, V. 2009 First Tragedy than Farce Ed. Verso, p. 56

124 Some journalists report that the Smoothie ‘brings a bit of sunny California in rainy UK’. The founders admit having extensively looked on the internet for ‘inspiration’.
From several accounts of Innocent’s activities and consumer reactions we have seen that there has always been a group of people who have a strong value connection with the brand.

**Table 5-9: The Glue Value qualifier**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HyPo I: (Survival) Symbolic value is ‘value for money’</th>
<th>HyPo II: (Distinction) Symbolic value conveys individual status/attractiveness</th>
<th>HyPo III: (Reciprocation and Belonging) Symbolic value is understood in a broader social context</th>
<th>HyPo IV: (Differentiation through belonging) Symbolic value in a smaller, ‘tribal’ social context</th>
<th>HyPo V: (Differentiation through contribution) Symbolic value is ‘Hijacked’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The benefits of the value proposition are to solve individual basic, physiological problems of subsistence (efficiency, conservation of energy)</td>
<td>The benefits of the value proposition are related to enhancing attractiveness and progeny survival</td>
<td>Allegiance with ideological, rhetoric values strongly reflecting the ‘zeitgeist’</td>
<td>The values addressed are relevant, and meaningful, only within a specific (local) micro-cultural context</td>
<td>Consumers add values to the firm’s proposition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In other words the Glue Value of the brand was high. As I have shown in several cases the brand became the icon of a broader social discourse, and as such an identifier of allegiance to what Zizeck calls dressed-down, ‘cool’ capitalism. Looking at our GV categories in table 5-4, that would mean HyPo III. So the glue value was high, but shared. However it is interesting to see how the company managed to create this value by acting upon levers that are relevant in specific contexts. Maybe it helps in this respect to try to draw the value connection pyramid for Innocent.
Honesty was the first and only explicit value of the company. Later on the founders developed a number of values (tier 2) which would mainly define their ethical stance to be more akin to corporate than to brand values. The themes chosen in the campaigns (tier 3) are never very different. The aim was always to inform about the values as from tier 1, or else to explain those to users. More symbolic values were developed by the many local initiatives (tier 4). The brand would go to small villages, organise smaller events and promote local produce. In other words, the ‘small things’ the founder Richard Reeds refers to where pivotal in supporting the ‘small’ side of the brand’s image and necessary to gain credibility.

In terms of Glue Value, with respect to the kinds of values represented in the value proposition, I would thus place Innocent mainly in the HyPo III category in table 5-4. In some aspects the values tend to the left side of the dimension: the core function of the product is survival (HyPo I), and the product’s packaging asks for ‘parental’ protection (HyPo II), i.e. it is not referring to specific microcultural systems but to more general – basic – values. Hypo IV is not really applicable because the brand did not acquire distinct symbolic value in very specific micro-cultures. The many local actions were not aimed at searching for consumer activity and interest, but consisted more of some kind of systemic persuasion.
So I think the value proposition is characterised by two elements. First it is very ‘British’. The use of charity next to environmental sustainability, the writer’s club associations through the witty texts and the allegiance with Penguin books, or the Oxford-college image of the founders, and some typically British tongue-in-cheek humor are all traits that most British feel as their own, as do the founders, who therefore were probably not so aware of how this characterisation contributed to the success of the brand. Secondly a very large part of the company’s success was due to saying and doing the right things at the right time in the right locations (timing is of the essence…). Does this mean that the marketing of Innocent was not so special after all? Before we conclude on this let us have a deeper look at the degrees of input from the company and from consumers in the marketing process.

If the Value Proposition in terms of product and positioning are straightforward and easy to reproduce, the marketing of the company apparently is not, witness the many not very successful attempts to reproduce it (see picture 5-7). In other words, marketing was very important to influence or manipulate the perception consumers have of the brand, but what was the role of consumer’s and of the company’s activity in creating this image? (table 5-5; an overview of the ratings of the marketing activities of Innocent is presented as commented in the appendix to this chapter).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Activation (AC)</th>
<th>Values (VA)</th>
<th>Glue value (GV)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ComInp</td>
<td>ConsInp</td>
<td>ComInp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packaging</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public relations</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotions</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence marketing</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive media</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medians</strong></td>
<td>II</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5-5: Rating of Innocent’s marketing activities**

*Activation*

The medians of respectively company and consumer input are II and III. This is coherent with what I expected from the outset, which is that the company allowed for consumer input, but always in a quite univocal fashion, i.e. trying to retain control. The higher rating for consumer input is embodied in at least two instances where company executives were surprised by consumer reactions, one when consumers started sending in furniture (carpets, given the
existing ones were considered shabby) and one when the collaboration was announced with McDonald’s first (to distribute the drinks) and with Coca-Cola after.

**Adding Values**

Here we find the same valuation as for the previous indicator, II and III, this means that the values that Innocent addressed were functional, but presented in a stylistically consistent, I would say puerile, way that helped the company gain credibility when, in the spirit of the time, consumers were critical towards the persuasiveness of big corporations. As a result though consumers adopted the brand and made it an icon of extant political (right-wing) and societal (healthy foods) discourse.

**Peer Activity**

The valuation of IV for company input and II for consumer input might come as somewhat of a surprise here. This means that the company has been looking for communal activity but did not generate as much as expected. In fact I have posed some weight to the Big Knit campaign which clearly had spontaneous gatherings as a result.

However, it is also true this was quite exceptional. Other instances of higher interaction with consumers were more on a one-to-one basis; advertising, public relations and advertisement generate emotional reactions, but these are not the result of sharing information. The group of loyal customers the company generated is not very active sharing resources in relation with the brand. A search on the internet, for instance, reveals no fan websites that are not created by the company itself.

To conclude on the role of the company and of consumers in the signification process of the brand we are therefore somewhere in the middle-right side of the HyPo dimension, i.e. ‘Interactive marketing research and co-evolution’, however, the classification here is more difficult than with the evaluation of Diesel since there is more variation in the kinds of marketing approaches and consumer reactions. Innocent drinks has sometimes elicited consumer reactions in an iterative fashion, but has also always done that in such a way that the brand’s image would stay consistent.

Innocent focuses on the functional properties of the product (‘Nothing but nothing but fruit’) but some degree of ‘cultural filtering’ was crucial to the positioning of the brand. But a more local value connection probably also limited the expansion possibilities of the company in
space and in time (the strategy at the outset implied a global vision which became European afterwards, and finally called for the help of Coca Cola). Moreover, the barriers to entry in this sector are not high, consumers have now discovered that the cheaper private label alternatives are just as good a shortcut to, also financial, health.

5-8 Conclusions

Despite the fact that company’s vision changed from being ‘Europe’s favourite little smoothie’ to becoming ‘the earth’s sustainable FMCG\(^\text{125}\) industry’ ([1,5 p60]) it seems that by 2010 it did not manage that on its own yet, as the collaboration with Coca-Cola was mainly sought after to push the product through EU distribution channels. So my main conclusion about the brand is, that the success of what several authors have quickly depicted as a new kind of marketing, is not a recipe for success; it is only to be understood in combination with 1) The ‘cool entreprenuer’ trend and 2) All things British. Let me clarify this a bit further.

The fact that in continental Europe the company started working more through distributors (i.e. relying more on trade than on consumer marketing) in concomitance with the selling of an important stake to Coca-Cola is, I think, no mere coincidence. Company executives understood that it was too difficult and costly, also in terms of time needed, to reproduce the UK marketing and image abroad. Coca-Cola bought a stake in the company because it was interested in the small but loyal group of consumers. That may help introducing new products in the future, but Coca-Cola also helps pushing the product through its own distribution channels in continental Europe.\(^\text{126}\) I think this is additional proof of the fact that Innocent’s success has for a large part been due to the zeitgeist and to a maybe unintentional but clearly British component of the brand’s image; not so much the New Britain kind of values (which I will mention in the Mini chapter) but sheer, classic, Oxford, Penguin, Charity institutions, farmer’s produce, London City, parks and green meadows, …kinds of associations. In other words the brand is very much a result of its time and place. It is also true though, that despite the many attempts to enter the smoothies market by competitors the brand has managed to keep a steady market share and even to create a small but very committed community of consumers.

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\(^{125}\) Industry acronym for Fast Moving Consumer Goods, in other words: all you can find in supermarkets.

\(^{126}\) Bickery Foods for the Netherlands.
Having said that, the marketing of the company did present some distinguishing features which allowed to lever on very basic human tendencies: 1) The tendency to give human connotations to products and 2) a recognition of the power of aesthetics in relation with meaning and 3) the need of people to find out about others (some kind of female curiosity).

1. Giving life and a distinct personality to the bottle may have been the most important way for Innocent to relate to the market; indirect proof is the difficulty the company had to introduce new products in existing categories like frozen yoghurt ice-cream, orange juices and water. Innocent became the smoothie, and therefore it may have been difficult for consumers to associate it with other products without changing the perception of the brand (you do not go to a baker to buy a steak…). The product becomes an agent and not an object of communications.

2. Aesthetics and design play a fundamental role in giving the bottle human attributes and conveying the brand’s identity. The company chose a logo that resembles a face to start with, and one with a small aura it is. Secondly all the communications written on the bottle are in prima persona, and the drawings kind of childish, as if the bottle itself made them. The content of the communications also bring to mind the talking of a child, as for instance from the frequent use of the word ‘mum’ or ‘granma’. The big-knit campaign obviously treats the bottle as a person. Even stronger in giving the bottle human connotations are intertextual messages referring to the inevitability of making faults. Of course variety in colours and a puerile style reinforce this image.

3. Characteristical to the founders’ marketing is also the ability to give a perception of familiarity (‘look, we are just like you’). This is achieved by telling consumers about the personal daily vicissitudes of the founders and employees e.g. through the weblog, or opening up the offices, or through publications. The image of fatalism and some serendipity in the most important happenings that favoured the brand is contrasted by the constant efforts of the founders to influence the contexts of the most important decisionmakers and selectors of the market(s).

Adding to this is the constant attempt to make a fashionable item of the bottle, paying attention as well to the colours of the fruits in relation to the season and introducing limited editions, or ‘special guests’. But having a product that is more difficult to imitate and being less reliant on extant trends may be a better recipe for a durable strong image. Fashion is a caducous phenomenon by definition and in the words of Abraham Lincoln ‘you can fool some people sometimes, but you can’t fool all the people all the time’.