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IN DEPTH

# Can Cadbury's search for a new advertising agency help recapture its former glory?

By [Natalie Mortimer](#)  
April 1, 2017

Cadbury is in the midst of a **creative review** that will see the chocolate brand consolidate its account under one single agency as it seeks to return to its advertising to the heights of its 'Gorilla' fame.

2007 was arguably the most successful year for advertising at Cadbury. It was the year when a TV spot starring a Gorilla drumming along to Phil Collins' 'In the Air Tonight' captured the attention of the public, and propelled the brand to a level of notoriety it had never seen before. At the time YouGov figures showed that public perception of the brand had noticeably improved in the period following the launch, reversing a decline experienced in the first half of the year. It was a bold departure from Cadbury's previous marketing strategy and one that focused on entertaining consumers over communicating its product portfolio.

But since then, Cadbury has failed to deliver such a successful mix of ingredients. In 2012 the brand introduced a **new positioning and strap line named 'Joyville'** billing it as a 10-year communications platform to reconnect its brand marketing to its chocolate portfolio. The push, which included a 60-second TV ad, featured Joyville - the fictional place where Cadbury Dairy Milk is made - and workers, however the strategy was dropped just two years later after the brand admitted the characters in the advert were too complicated and the push failed to communicate key elements of the flagship Cadbury product.

It was replaced in 2014 with a **£7.5m 'Free the Joy' campaign**, which saw the brand launch new Dairy Milk Ritz and Lu products to help position the brand in the afternoon snacking market as industry-wide chocolate sales began to stagnate.

Yet again, the push failed to resonate. Speaking at the time Phil Rumbol, former marketing director at Cadbury's, **called upon the confectionary maker** to move away from innovation intended simply to sell products toward "building brand value in a sustainable way".

He wrote in a blog piece in 2014: "Since the Kraft/Mondelez takeover, there's been a succession of new Cadbury products - Cadbury with Philadelphia, Oreo, Daim, and now Ritz and Lu (no, me neither.) Can you spot the pattern? Aside from the merits of each of these products, what does this say about the Cadbury brand? I'll tell you what it says: 'We're owned by an American Cheese and Biscuit company.'"

And so it seemed the iconic chocolate brand had lost its way, and not just among consumers. Last summer its top marketer **Matthew Williams bowed out of the business after 15 years**, a departure that came after Cadbury lost more than £6m in Crème Egg sales in 2015 after it controversially swapped the Dairy Milk in them chocolate for a cheaper recipe. The business was also hit earlier this month when **Cadbury owner Mondelez lost its global VP-media and customer relationship management, Bob Rupczynski to McDonald's**.

"Over the last couple of years, Cadbury and the Crème Egg have been impacted by news of changing recipes according to YouGov

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Impression score (whether a respondent has a positive impression of a brand) declined by 15 points, while Cadbury Crème Egg's dropped by 24 points.

"Both scores began to improve until early 2016 when scores once again dropped. As we approach Easter 2017, scores have still not returned to the pre-recipe change level. What's more, Cadbury's Quality score (whether a brand represents quality) is 10 points lower today than it was in early 2015."

And now, Cadbury is facing an additional issue: Brexit. As inflation grows, the pound loses its value and import costs rise, a new challenge presents itself to the confectionary industry - product size. YouGov's Portion Size report indicates that 13% of consumers

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"While a new ad strategy may help, convincing consumers of its renewed quality under difficult market conditions will be a tough challenge. The good news is that despite the difficulties it has faced, Cadbury remains a popular and strong brand - especially compared to competitors," added Stacey.

It's not just Cadbury that has been hit by socio-economic issues. According to a 2016 Mintel report, volume sales of chocolate have stagnated since 2014. Growth has been stifled by some consumers limiting their consumption of chocolate and smaller pack sizes being introduced for some products.

Such issues aside, signs of marketing change at Cadbury were evident earlier this year when it **decided to sponsor the Premier League**, its first major sports sponsorship since it backed the London 2012 Games. Speaking to The Drum about the move, **Cadbury said the decision stemmed from the need to "stay relevant"**.

"We believe our role is to encourage balanced snacking by providing clear nutrition information to consumers on front of pack, promoting healthy lifestyles, improving the nutritional profile of our products."

Cadbury's current creative account has been split between Saatchi & Saatchi and Fallon, the agency behind the drum-playing Gorilla advert.

Paul Houlding, managing director at Isobel told The Drum that the brand's move to consolidate its advertising account is "a big but great call".

"All the great work I know comes from absolute clarity of thinking and a motivated agency," he said. "So, putting all the business into one agency is a big but great call. Overnight there is one agency champion of the brand, one overall vision, one agency motivated by the size of the prize but also by the commitment and confidence shown to that agency by the client. It's a good recipe for success."

**This article is about:** [World](#), [Cadbury](#), [Mondelez](#), [Fallon](#), [Saatchi & Saatchi](#), [Ogilvy & Mather](#), [In-depth](#), [Advertising](#), [Modern Marketing](#), [Food & Drink](#), [Brand](#)

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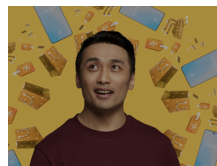
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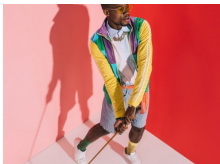
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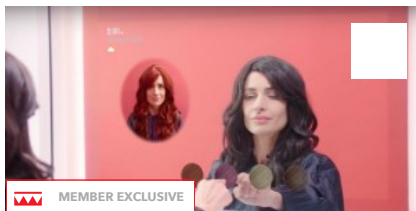
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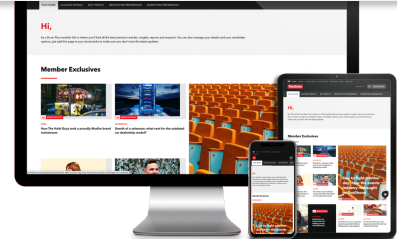
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