

# A lesson in advers<sup>1.2.11</sup>

How an underdog toppled a Portuguese icon



**Category**

1. Brand Identity

**Sub-category**

1.2 Design and Implementation over £100,000

**Client company**

Sovena

**Design consultancy**

Pearlfisher

**Current date**

July 2012

**Pearlfisher.**

## Executive summary

For thousands of years olive oil has written a rich story: forging trade routes and shaping Mediterranean culture and cuisine. Today, olive oil is a symbol of health, pleasure and contemporary living.

One country where olive oil is an integral way of life is Portugal, where the leading brand, Gallo, had portrayed it as a symbol of nostalgic national pride and passion.

Underdog brand, Oliveira da Serra needed to engage and inspire consumers through a fresh new perspective that was relevant to contemporary Portugal.

**Overtook the market leader in 1 year!**

Despite aggressive sales tactics from Gallo, the rebranded **Oliveira da Serra rapidly overtook** the market leader for the first time ever, toppling the Portuguese icon. It had been hoped that this may take place three years after the rebrand, but incredibly this feat was accomplished **by the end of only the first year!**

**Now no.1 brand**

Oliveira da Serra became **number one olive oil** in Portugal growing its relative **market share** by 103% vs Gallo the previous market leader.

In a year when the olive oil market grew by only 1%, Oliveira da Serra increased its volume by an **incredible 14%**. Had the new design not given such a positive commercial contribution, the market would have decreased -2%.

**Increased volume by an incredible 14%**

Following the rebrand, Oliveira da Serra **gained new presence in 106 exclusive gourmet stores** increasing distribution by **over 300%**.

Gained new presence in **106** gourmet exclusive stores.

**The main market competitor was forced to change their design**

The impact of the new design was so disruptive that **Gallo** the main market competitor **was forced to change their design** less than one year after the launch of Oliveira da Serra's new design.

**ROI in only 18 months!**

**Just 18 months** after relaunch, (after all costs and overheads were taken care of) the cost of the design investment was recouped.

## Project overview

### Outline of project brief

To redesign the Oliveira da Serra brand and represent the progressive face and future of Portuguese olive oil.

- Totally refresh the brand, transforming it from “me-too” copycat to a distinct motivated character with a clear purpose all of its own.
- Challenge the market leader and its established representation of olive oil as traditional and overly nostalgic.
- Bring Oliveira da Serra forward as a brand with increased sales, distribution and market share. With a focus on increasing distribution in more premium stores.
- Respond to consumer desire: “I want to enjoy new tastes and experiences, combining the best and the latest with a healthy, natural lifestyle.”
- Unite the complex historical and cultural tapestry of Portugal with its modern identity: create a complete story that connects origin with aspirational future.



## Description



Before the re-design, Oliveira da Serra had lacked purpose and a clear brand truth of its own. The brand was without a strong identity and had found itself indistinguishable from its main rival and the market leader, Gallo.

Though the current brand did have some positive values (an emphasis on olive oil as part of family life, a symbol of tradition and togetherness), these were not being clearly articulated enough to be distinguishable from the Gallo brand, which was communicating them in much stronger ways.

Gallo had the monopoly on traditional heritage and rather than continuing to copy that, Oliveira needed something entirely new.



Rather than rooting themselves in the nostalgic dreams of the past, they woke up and looked to develop a new forward thinking identity. By bringing out and celebrating the positive qualities of the product, the brand ignites consumers' emotions and reflects a picture of modern Portugal.

With a mixture of original and contemporary reference points and a combination of the emotional and the functional, Oliveira da Serra offers innovative opportunities for new taste experiences.

**Whilst still nodding to authentic roots, the brand no longer rests on old clichés – but offers bold, honest and individual simple goodness. Referencing both rural and urban life and making itself accessible to all generations, the new Oliveira da Serra brand has repositioned itself as the essential olive oil brand. It embodies the progressive energy of Portugal, its collective aspirations and its positive energy for the future.**

## Overview of the market

The worldwide olive oil market landscape was declining and the Portuguese market was already dominated for years by a strong brand (Gallo) when Oliveira da Serra decided to disrupt the category.

When the new Oliveira da Serra brand was launched, its main competitor, Gallo immediately responded by introducing extremely aggressive promotions of its product lines. The market leader intended to minimise the success of the Oliveira da Serra launch not only by offering price promotions to customers, but by filling retailers' warehouses with their own stock and leaving little space for the new designs to be introduced to market.

In addition to Gallo adopting these aggressive sale tactics, the olive oil market was becoming staid, having grown in value by only 1% between 2010 and 2011 with even the value of Gallo its market leader eroding by -8% ([www.datamark.com.br](http://www.datamark.com.br)).

Oliveira da Serra had to find its place in a slowing market where the leader was playing hardball.

### Project launch date

# March 2010

### Size of design budget

# £153,000





### Outline of design solution

Whilst the Gallo brand remained proudly nostalgic – sentimentalising tradition and playing on the emotions of pastoral life – the new Oliveira da Serra looked forward to the dawning of the new day.

By anticipating what the future of a new Portugal will look like, the design finds new relevance and moves the consumer on from Gallo's emotional territory towards a modern way of connecting with national pride.

Oliveira da Serra's values of quality enjoyment are communicated through codes and cues that celebrate flavour and taste. Graphic images closely link the brand to natural elements of leaves and fertile trees whilst rich colour palettes retain olives at the heartland of the brand. Though these touch points are rural in nature and celebrate the fertility of Portugal's land, they are strikingly simple in look and feel and ensure that the brand remains fresh, energetic and full of character.

Oliveira da Serra balances pleasure, taste and origin alongside positive associations of health benefits and natural ingredients. The consumer is brought closer to the goodness of olive oil and its position within a healthy lifestyle.

Eating, cooking, flavour, practicality, community and enjoyment are all key credentials and messages in the rebrand. Highly accessible for the modern consumer, Oliveira da Serra balances its Portuguese values with contemporary living.



Outline of design solution





## Summary of results

When it was relaunched, Oliveira da Serra set out to achieve 85% relative market share within three years. Given the aggressive sales techniques of their main competitor, Gallo, this was a very ambitious target.

By the end of just the first year, the new design proved so successful that this target was surpassed and Oliveira da Serra had an increase in relative market share from 79% to 103%.

**103%**  
relative market share

For the first time ever, Oliveira da Serra had surpassed its main competitor Gallo and was **the market leader** in Portuguese olive oil.

In a year when the olive oil market grew by only 1%, Oliveira da Serra had an incredible **14% volume increase**.

This performance in volume was accompanied by a **15% increase in sales value**.



**Whilst the value of the entire olive oil market grew by 1% from 2010 to 2011, had the new design of Oliveira da Serra not given such a positive commercial contribution, the market would have actually fallen by -2%.**

The value of competitor brands was decreasing – with Gallo suffering an 8% reduction – and it was Oliveira da Serra alone that was instrumental in restoring balance and growth in the market.



#### **Increased distribution**

The new design was also critical in conquering the gourmet market. Previously, exclusive stores had perceived the brand as purely for the mass market. Following the rebrand, Oliveira da Serra gained a new presence in this gourmet arena and **distribution increased by more than 300% from 28 to 106 stores!**

Changing the perception of retailers and consumers.

The impact of the new design was so disruptive and had such improvement in brand visibility, that **it forced the main competitor to also change its design and communication strategy less than one year after the launch of Oliveira da Serra's new design.**

## **ROI in 18 MONTHS!**

With such commercial success, **it only took 18 months** for the design investment to be recouped (once all business figures were dealt with).

## Positive impact on staff morale

The new brand image also impacted the business internally. Its bold, striking, and confident personality revived the work environment.

“I feel the new bold, striking, confident image and personality has given us licence to be a lot more like that in terms of how we, as a team, behave and act. Not only is it more fun, but enables us to really embody what we believe the brand stands for.” Luis Pereira Santos, Global Marketing and Portugal Sales Director, Sovena





## Other influencing factors

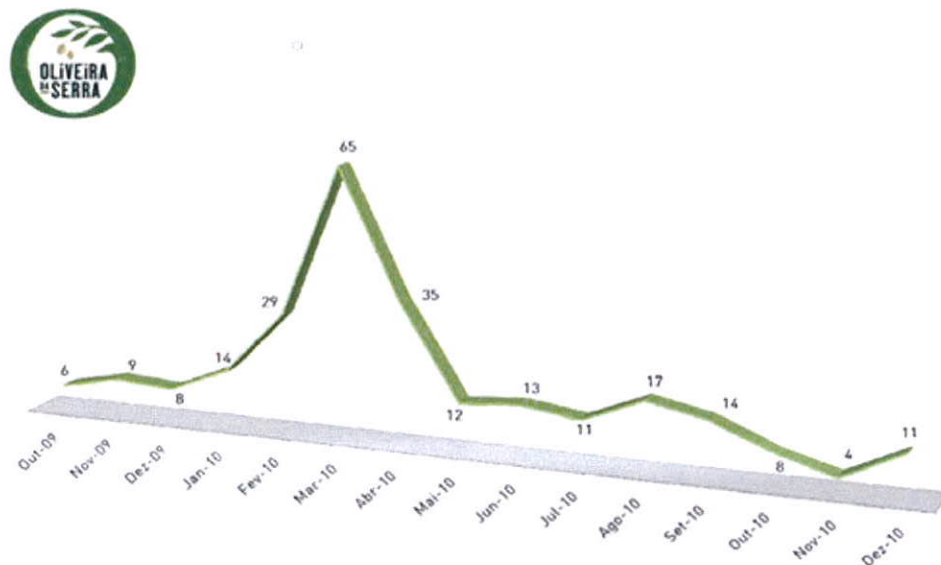
The only other influencing factor was non-solicited attention from the media who recognised **the value of the new design**.

**The rebrand was commented on in the most relevant Portuguese mass market media channels**, namely newspapers and radio stations such as i,Focus, Diário Económico, Diário de Notícias, Correio da Manhã and Jornal de Notícias.

So whilst the profile of the brand was raised by these media outlets, this was **instigated purely on the value of the new design**.

**“The new design has the merit of improving the brand’s relationship with the press who, from that moment started to give more importance to Oliveira da Serra”**

Isabel Roseiro, Strategy Marketing Manager, Sovena



Graph shows increased press interest following the new design launch

## Research resources

Client sales data and [www.datamark.com.br](http://www.datamark.com.br)