

stormbrands



DBA DESIGN EFFECTIVENESS AWARDS 2018

THE TOFOO COMPANY:

**A BRAND THAT UNDENIABLY OWNS TOFU**

FOOD PRODUCERS, JUNE 2017

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Our mission was to create the number one tofu brand in Britain.**



R & R Tofu made the best tofu. Ever. The problem was that without a brand of their own, nobody knew about their delicious product previously only sold through health food retailers. So we set about creating a brand that undeniably 'owned tofu'.

And that's how The Tofoo Company was born. Next we needed to get people excited about the brand and spread the word. But we didn't target vegetarians, oh no. Instead we aimed our tactics at people who are trying to cut down on the amount of meat they eat. Our mission was to create the number one tofu brand in Britain, after all.

### Consumer Engagement

Easy to customise, featuring recipe cards or boldly proposing flavour combinations straight from the pack, there's no wonder The Tofoo Co.'s range tofu is being featured in various social media food pictures. Shared by customers, the brand enjoys the connection created with their target market and this awareness has been a key factor in the 500% production increase.

**'We had a very credible market opportunity story for retailers but they see lots of those everyday – the combination of that with strong branding helped deliver exceptional distribution and the branding has clearly been a massive help in driving trial at fixture'**

David Knibbs, Director, The Tofoo Company

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

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### Outline of project brief

**Our challenge was to create a brand identity for R&R Tofu, an experienced player in the tofu market.**

The design and packaging needed to transmit that The Tofoo Co. were not new at this game and, in fact, they played it so well that you could very well say that they owned tofu. It also needed a playful tone of voice that would approach the target markets, made of young singles and affluent young families, with confidence.

Therefore, the proposition was as simple and clear as possible: this is Tofoo, a tasty tofu on a fearless mission to cause a flavour **revolOotion** (see what we did there).





## PROJECT OVERVIEW (CONTINUED)

### Description

**The Tofoo Co. offers  
100% organic, non-GM  
and gluten, dairy, wheat  
& yeast-free tofu.**

The Yorkshire-based company makes Soil Association-certified tofu by hand, using Nigari, an all-natural ingredient created from seawater, to turn the soymilk into curds, therefore innovating a market where other competitors use calcium sulphate. The Tofoo Co. is offering 4 product variations across the UK: Naked, Smoked, Indian Spiced and Oriental Spiced.

The brand's mission from the get-go was to reinvent the way customers look at tofu and to change the perceptions of blandness that associate this ingredient.

They do that by including a recipe card in every tofu pack, sharing tips and recipes on their website and social channels.



**The story has been a tremendous success in less than a year. Launched October 2016, The Tofoo Co. quickly gained listings in 2,000 Tesco stores, Ocado, London Co-ops, Waitrose and Sainsbury.**

### Business objectives:

- Break down the customer market's negative image of tofu
- Get consumers to see The Tofoo Co. as a mainstream ingredient
- Gain listings in one major UK retailer
- Drive demand towards reaching 4000 distribution points
- Secure listings in 5 national retailers

### Design objectives

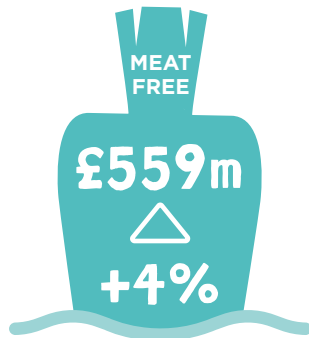
- Create a bold but simple design to attract the primary target markets: young singles, living in the south who shop in urban stores and affluent young families
- Develop a playful brand identity and tone of voice to target flexitarians and non-meat eaters
- Showcase organic credentials, in a category saturated by artificial thickening agents

### Challenges

- Position a new brand in a market already dominated by two powerful and established brands: Cauldron and Quorn
- Change customer perceptions of bland, tasteless features associated with tofu (50% of adults think meat substitutes lack exciting flavours)
- Deliver a brand and packaging design able to withstand retailer scrutiny and win listings

## PROJECT OVERVIEW (CONTINUED)

### Overview of the market



2016 saw the wider food market in deflation, but one particular segment was ascending: the meat-free foods segment was seeing average price value sales up 4% to £559m. (Mintel)

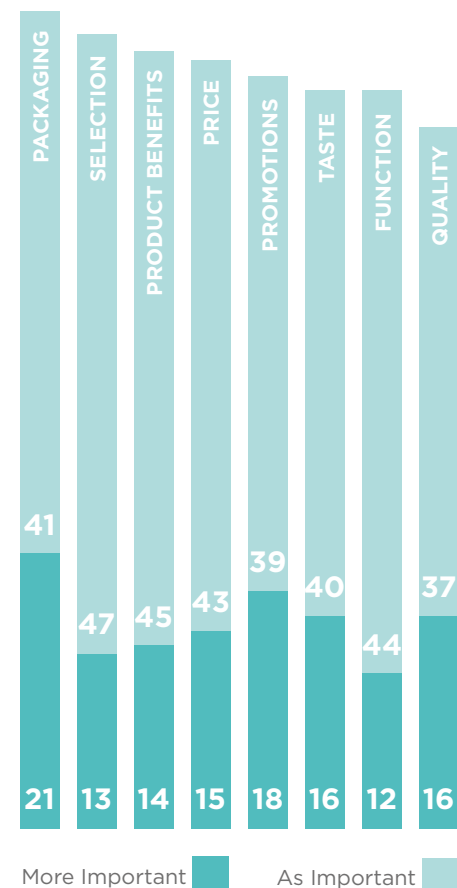


Consumer eating habits have heavily shifted over the past decade, with 28% of adults limiting or reducing meat, 14% who are interested in doing so. (Mintel)

- Market data estimates a healthy over 3% year on year growth, with the meat-free foods market predicted to be worth as much as £620m in 5 years. (Mintel)
- In October 2015, the World Health Organisation reported that processed meat was identified as carcinogenic and that red meat is a possible carcinogen. This further sparked public debate on the consumption of meat, allowing meat-alternative brands to thrive.
- 50% of customers think there is a lack of exciting flavours in meat-free alternatives and tofu, 14% think tofu is a good source of protein.
- The number of vegans has risen 360% to 542,000 over the past 10 years and the number of vegetarians is now at 5% (1.14m). 88% live in urban areas, with 22% living in London. (The Telegraph)
- 6 in 10 UK consumers say that country of origin is one of the most important factors in brand choice. See fig 1. (Nielsen, 2016)
- The Tofoo Co. entered a market already dominated by a strong Tofu producer, Cauldron, and flanked by meat-free foods mammoth Quorn. In less than a year, its authentic brand identity and playful, yet simple packaging design propelled it into 5,000 national distribution centers, launched it in over 1,000 stores, created awareness that increased production by 500% and generated a brand worth £3m at RSP.

fig 1.

### Brand origin is more/ as important than...



#### MAIN COMPETITORS

Cauldron, Dragonfly, Taifun

#### LAUNCH DATE: 24TH

October 2016

#### DESIGN BUDGET AND PRODUCTION COSTS

£60k for strategy and design + £250K production investment

## OUTLINE OF DESIGN SOLUTION

### From the start of the design process, StormBrands kept one thing front and centre: authenticity.

It became clear through market research, that in order to challenge a sector dominated by brands with larger retail experience and great marketing & advertising budgets behind them, the target market must resonate with the brand identity, design and packaging.

And an identity was born: playful, energetic and witty. The Tofoo Co. needed to speak the language of the young, predominantly female market living in the South and the young affluent families, so much so, that it would tap into the 80% of the customers who make in-store purchasing decisions. It needed to be charismatic, stand out and capable to take on the Goliaths of the meat-free chilled aisle.

It needed to break barriers of perceived blandness, educate on its qualities and flavour profiles and be able to speak out for itself. The pack designs achieved just that: it cut through the usual category tones, which tended to be a touch 'alternative' and bland.

Using bright colours achieved just that, brave and bold typography, an injection of fun and a real 'on pack celebration' of all things natural and tasty.

The OO of Tofoo soon became a powerful graphic shape on pack. It aimed to tell the story of versatility and how good quality tofu can be enjoyed in many different ways - this inspired the background of fresh vegetable shapes, a simple silhouette wallpaper which became another very ownable and consistent asset on shelf.

And finally, the design wanted to tell the brand's story in a very friendly and natural way. The copy tones are fresh, laid-back and confident. This is an invitation to join The Tofoo Company on their quest to enjoy delicious, top quality Tofu.

### THE MAGICIAN

Tofoo with something up it's sleeve

How do we get this Tofoo so deliciously tasty?

It's all smoke and mirrors. But without the mirrors.

We take our ORGANIC, all-natural tofu and SMOKE it with BEECHWOOD for a distinctive taste.

MAGIC!





THE TOFOO COMPANY

## OUTLINE OF DESIGN SOLUTIONS (CONTINUED)

**This is Tofoo, with taste. This is a mission. This is a revolOotion. We wanted a product that excited, educated and regularly put good quality tofu on dinner plates and in recipes. The Tofoo Company was born. Unshakeably ownable with a quirky re-spell of the product. Unequivocally organic and unapologetically straightforward.**



## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

### Brand launch 24/10/2016

- Delivering to 5,000 distribution points in less than 1 year
- Sales into target market ahead of expectation, based on internal figures
- Consumer demand drove NPD and the range extended to include two flavoured variations: The Oriental and The Indian
- Smashed through design objectives to create a brand that engages both flexitarians and non-meat eaters: thousands of social media mentions and boost in sales
- Continuing to change customer attitude on tofu through Recipe Cards included in all packs and social media sharing of photos of customer-made dishes
- Shortlisted for the Best New Product award at the Soil Association
- First promotion in Tesco Express resulted in outstanding results: 75% sales growth, growing overall sales at 25% ever since

**45%**

of shoppers are new to the tofu category



**£3m**

Achieved £3m RSP brand run rate by first year of being on the market, slashing through its category and main competitor's RSP value of £5m achieved in 30 years

Increased awareness led to  
**500%**  
increase in production

**2000**

listings across Tesco stores, Ocado, London Co-ops and Waitrose + another 375 Sainsbury stores from 28/06/2017

Features across print & online publications: Celebs Now, About Time Magazine, Great British Chefs, Now Magazine, and Natural Health Magazine



## SUMMARY OF RESULTS (CONTINUED)

**‘Tofu has always been an oddity and for many consumers it’s seen as bland, spongy and unpleasant. The Tofoo Co brand has taken the concept of Tofu and given it a shake up. Our product tastes great, is firm and easy to use straight from the pack!’**

David Knibbs, Director, The Tofoo Co.



## OTHER INFLUENCING FACTORS

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### MEAT NO MORE

The meat-alternative food market has been enjoying rapid growth since 2016, when this sector turned a corner from a past of continuous decline, to YOY 2% value sales growth and average prices jumped 4%.

There have been lots of factors to attribute this to: World Health Organisation's 2015 report associating cancerous attributes to red meat and high meat consumption, consumers' shifted focus and buying power towards organic foods, high levels of consumers consciously limiting or excluding animal products from their diet as part of their lifestyle, a 360% in UK vegans and a surge in vegetarians and flexitarians, documentaries on the real farm-to-fork road, as well as social media coverage from celebrities and influencers advocating for the reduction or exclusion of meat intake.

### TESCO EXPRESS PRICE PROMOTION

Early in 2017, The Tofoo Company decided to make the most of their listings in Tesco Express. Realising that the price point might discourage some of the target market to turn away from a newcomer on the tofu market, the company decided to run a price promotion, taking a proactive approach in encouraging customers to give Tofoo a chance.

The 75% increase in sales during the promotion, followed by the 25% increase in sales ever since are a testament to the fact that customers keep choosing The Tofoo Company time and time again.





## OTHER INFLUENCING FACTORS (CONTINUED)

### SOCIAL MEDIA COVERAGE

With all investments made in branding and designing the identity of the product, as well as a small marketing budget set aside and further investments made into the factory facilities needed to produce premium-quality tofu, The Tofoo Company needed to bypass the high costs associated with traditional forms of advertising.

Thus, social media ticked multiple boxes. They promoted the website, full of recipes, facts about the brand and videos showing how they make their tofu & engaged with flexitarians and non-meat eaters alike daily.

But perhaps most importantly, they gave Tofoo a voice in perfect symmetry to its brand identity. Impressive target market engagement resulted from that, with many young adults generating content and spreading the word about the brand. The quality tofu revolution had begun.

The great design stemmed from a thorough understanding of the product, the market and target customers. It spoke of the product's UK, hand-made & organic attributes, giving The Tofoo Company power to breeze through corporate and design objectives, flying off the shelves.

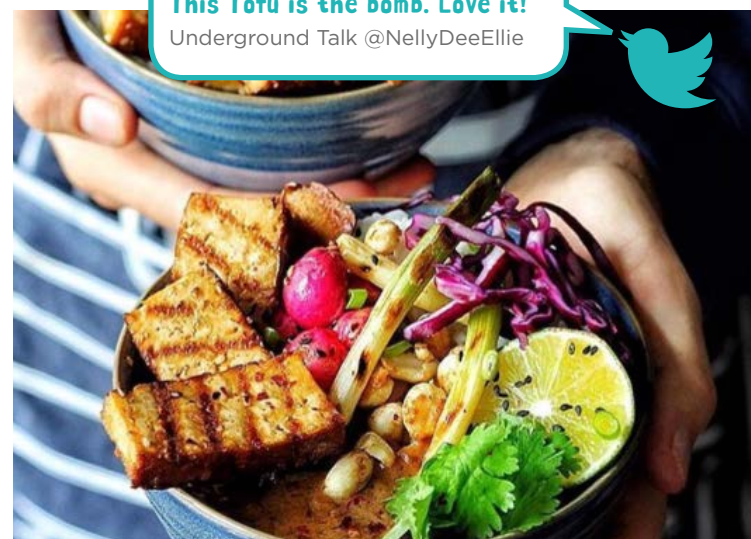
**Now if that's not the nation recognising a brand that owns tofu, then we don't know what it is.**



Tonights dinner, Hoisin tofu sti-fry.  
#tofoo is officially my favourite tofu now!  
Omg so good! Michelle Marks @ChelleFlorem



Omg just had #Tofoo for dinner.  
This Tofu is the bomb. Love it!  
Underground Talk @NellyDeeEllie





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## References:

The Tofoo Co. Internal Figures  
Nielsen  
Mintel  
The Tofoo Co.  
Social Media Channels