

100% PURE

# BUCKWUD

CANADIAN  
MAPLE SYRUP

CATEGORY: 4.1 PACKAGING: BRANDED FOOD

CLIENT: WELLNESS FOODS

DESIGN CONSULTANCY: BRANDOPUS

DATE: JUNE 2012

brandopus



“BrandOpus developed a strong brand story and a clear, recognisable identity that allows the authentic Canadian origins of the syrup, so key to the brief, to shine through in the packaging.

Buckwud's striking design and simplified pack communication helps the consumer to find the product at the fixture.

All the sales results and buyer feedback we have received indicates that the brand acts as a beacon for the category, and draws consumers in on the strength of the design.”

**Sarah Turpin, Brand Manager, Wellness Foods**



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ctd.

### **Sweet growth**

Since launch Buckwud has reinvigorated the maple syrup market. The brand accounts for 68% of volume sales growth<sup>iv</sup> enjoyed by the market in six-month data, despite Buckwud only being launched for four of those months!

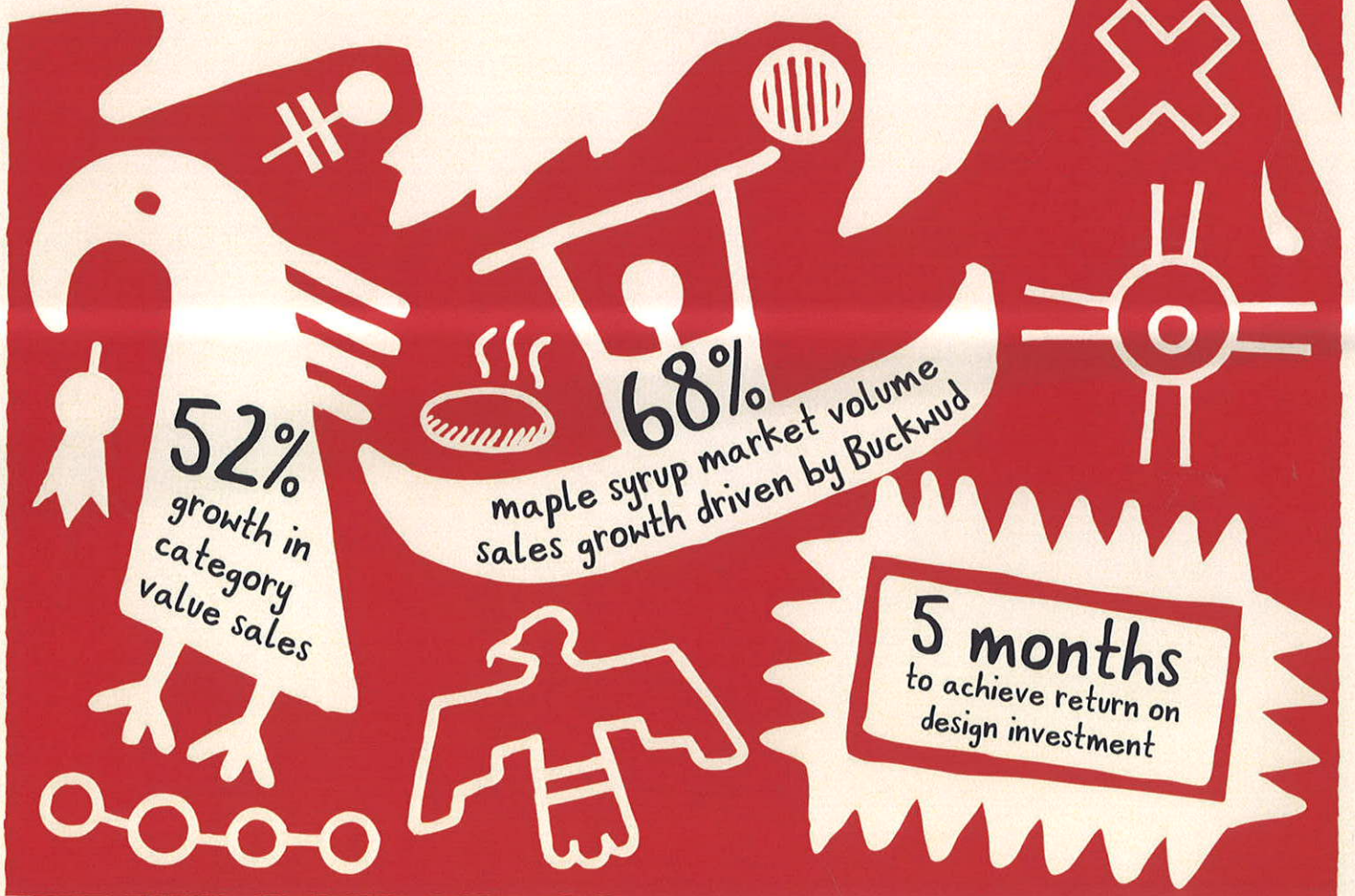
### **Sharing the taste of success**

The success doesn't stop there: Maple syrup market value sales are also on the increase, driven by Buckwud which accounts for 52% of the category value growth<sup>v</sup> over the past six months, again despite Buckwud only being launched for four.

### **Not so sticky situation**

What's more, the uptake of Buckwud by major multiple buyers and consumers alike has forced Wellness Foods to ramp up production by 20%, and has enabled the design to achieve a return on investment in only 5 months since launch<sup>vi</sup>.

Word count: 307



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Buckwud bottles the very best, 100% pure maple syrup, sourced and produced in Canada especially for the UK market. Unlike its competitors, this maple syrup is not blended with any other sugar based liquids.

The company turned to BrandOpus to reposition the maple syrup under a separate brand, increasing consumer awareness to the premium nature of the product and maximising sales. Wellness Foods had previously retailed four maple syrup variants under the Rowse brand. But it was felt there would be further opportunity to grow sales under a separate brand and in a single variant of 100% pure maple syrup, which resulted in a fantastic reception from the UK consumer.

Available in  
**522**  
Tesco stores  
since launch

**33%**  
increase in  
price point

value sales  
**£231,000**  
in 4 months

After Wellness Foods relaunched their maple syrup as Buckwud, the brand achieved **£231,000** in value sales<sup>i</sup> within four months of launch. That's a huge leap of **14.9%** in sales versus the same period the year before, when the product was marketed as Rowse. The redesign allowed **a 33% increase in price point**<sup>ii</sup>, solely accountable to the design. And for the first time ever, Wellness secured sales of maple syrup into Tesco stores, with buyers eager to list Buckwud across a huge **522 stores!**<sup>iii</sup>



## PROJECT OVERVIEW

### OUTLINE OF PROJECT BRIEF

Previously Wellness Foods produced and marketed a range of four maple syrups under the Rowse brand. The syrup is 100% pure and natural, which means that it is not simply maple flavoured or blended with any other sugar based liquids, unlike the majority of the competition.

However the packaging did little to justify the premium positioning of the syrups. Consumers were unfamiliar with the different usage occasions and varying strengths of the four distinct Rowse maple syrup variants, leading to a loss of market share to private label and cheaper brands.

Following the BrandOpus redesign, Rowse had recently undergone a shift in messaging to focus on their position as 'the nation's favourite honey brand'. Since selling maple syrup as well as honey contradicts the new identity as honey experts, an alternative strategy was needed.

To remedy this, it was decided to simplify the range to a single variant, and that to justify the high price point, Rowse maple syrup should be sold under a new brand. Given that maple syrup comes from the Sugar Maple tree, native to Canada, and all of Rowse's maple syrup is sourced and packed in Canada, this was the focus of the brief to BrandOpus:

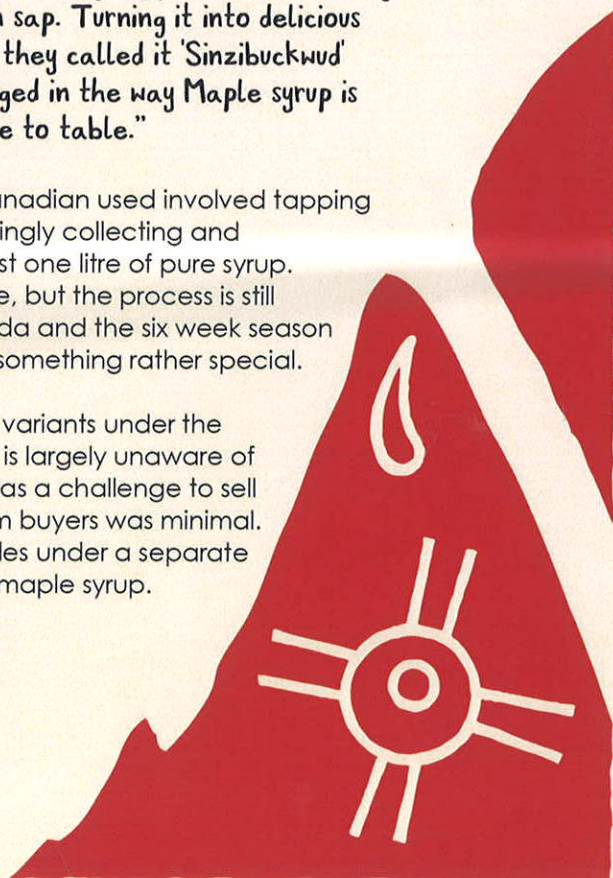
- To create a new authentic maple syrup brand, exploring how to visually cue Canadian heritage
- ☞ To consider unique naming options that evoke the Canadian provenance of the syrup
- ✕ To convey the fact that Rowse Maple Syrup is 100% natural

### DESCRIPTION:

*"Long, long ago the first people of the land that is now Canada discovered that when they pierced the bark of the Maple tree a magnificent sticky, sweet liquid trickled out. They tasted it. 'It's Gud' they thought. They tapped the trees using Reed Funnels and collected the flowing golden sap. Turning it into delicious syrup. All they needed was a name. Naturally they called it 'Sinzibuckwud' meaning 'drawn from wood'. Not much has changed in the way Maple syrup is produced today. Pure from tree to table."*

The ancient and laborious technique that the native Canadian used involved tapping and drawing 40 litres of sap from the tree, then painstakingly collecting and concentrating the liquid through evaporation to form just one litre of pure syrup. Nowadays producing maple syrup is less labour intensive, but the process is still restricted by the limited number of Maple trees in Canada and the six week season when sap can be harvested which makes maple syrup something rather special.

Wellness Foods had previously retailed four maple syrup variants under the Rowse brand. But given that the average UK consumer is largely unaware of the differences between variants, Rowse maple syrup was a challenge to sell into major multiples, and the feedback and support from buyers was minimal. With this in mind, Rowse took the opportunity to grow sales under a separate brand and in a single variant of 100% pure maple syrup.



## PROJECT OVERVIEW


### OVERVIEW OF MARKET

The total maple syrup market is worth just under £11m and is growing at 9.6% year on year. However in recent years the market suffered when poor harvests sent volumes nose-diving and prices skyrocketing. To compound matters, currency fluctuations between the Canadian dollar and the pound have added about 30% to raw material prices since 2007. The maple syrup market splits into two areas – Pure maple syrup, like Buckwud, which is worth £8.7m, and blended maple syrup, which makes up the remaining amount at just over £2m.<sup>vii</sup>

Prior to Buckwud, Wellness Foods produced maple syrup for themselves under the Rowse brand, and also for the majority of private label in the UK. However at the time of brief, private label was selling 53% more volume than Rowse, and was effectively cannibalising sales. There was also strong competition from brands: In data released just two days prior to the launch of Buckwud, Clarks UK dominated the branded UK retail market with a 42% volume share.<sup>viii</sup>



Project launch date

 **December 26th 2011**

Maple syrup prices average at between £1.24 and £2.18 per 100g.<sup>ix</sup> Prior to relaunch as Buckwud, Rowse maple syrup retailed in the middle of this spectrum, at RRP of £1.79 per 100g. However due to the increasing cost of raw materials, Rowse were unable to reduce price point to remain competitive, the challenge was down to design to allow the product to command a higher price.

Beyond currency fluctuations and poor weather, which are largely out of the market's control, there is also a cultural barrier to market growth. Although the profile of maple syrup is on the increase in the UK, the average consumer doesn't necessarily have a bottle in their kitchen cupboard. Brand design certainly had a role to play in educating the consumer about maples syrup, enticing them into purchase, and ensuring the growth of the category overall.

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

### OUTLINE OF DESIGN SOLUTION

BrandOpus delved into the history of this valuable liquid so prized by the native Canadians, taking inspiration from and celebrating the time-old tradition of producing maple syrup, creating a brand story and identity, then applying it across all touch points.

BrandOpus evolved the name Buckwud from the original native Canadian name for maple syrup, Sinzibuckwud meaning literally 'drawn from wood'.

Respectful of the Canadian culture, BrandOpus created a wider language of hand drawn pictogram symbols to communicate the artisan origins of syrup. The pictogram symbols feature on the front of pack, communicating the spirit behind Buckwud maple syrup, whilst on the back of pack there is a string of pictograms run around the edge of the label, depicting the order of the ancient production method.

The block printed style used on pack also reflects the handcrafted and down-to-earth values behind the origins of maple syrup, whilst the Canadian origins of Buckwud are further emphasised with a key colour palette of red and cream, and use of the maple leaf.

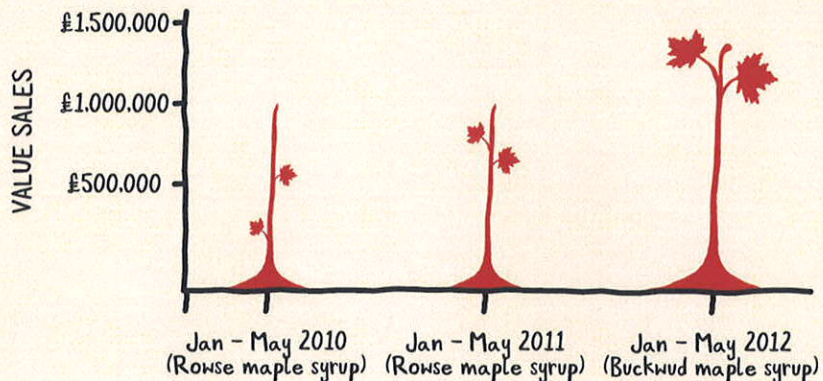
A traditional maple syrup glass jug was chosen for the bottle structure, featuring the ornamental finger-loop much-seen on North American syrups, further playing up cues of Buckwud's Canadian origins.



## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

### INCREASE IN SALES

After Wellness Foods relaunched their maple syrup as Buckwud, the brand achieved **£231,000 in value sales<sup>x</sup>** within four months of launch. That's a **huge leap of 14.9%** in sales versus the same period the year before, when the product was marketed as Rowse.<sup>xi</sup>



### INCREASED PRICE POINT

Design alone has **allowed a 33% increase in price point**, from £4.49 to £5.99 in Waitrose stores. The price point increase that the new design has allowed is set to become even greater in selected other retailers in forthcoming months.

### RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Buckwud has delivered a **return on design investment in only five months since launch.**

### SIMPLIFICATION OF THE PRODUCTION PROCESS

Detailing such as the choice of a more expensive bottle, labels at the front and back of the pack, and a tag on bottle neck increased the initial cost of manufacturing Buckwud packaging in comparison to Rowse Maple syrup. However, the redesign has enabled the rationalisation of the range of four products, down to a single Buckwud syrup, simplifying the production process, and **allowing the company to focus on developing new products.**

### INCREASE IN PRODUCTION IN RESPONSE TO DEMAND

Wellness Foods have had to **increase maple syrup production by 20%** in response to consumer demand following the launch of Buckwud.<sup>xiv</sup>

### INCREASE IN VISIBILITY

Buckwud was chosen to feature prominently in Tesco's Pancake Day promotions, which subsequently delivered **massive volume sales of 49,500 extra units** and £198,505 value sales in return.<sup>xv</sup> The less desirable, previous design would have been less likely to get such great standout as part of a celebratory promotion.

**56,776**  
increased unit  
sales<sup>xii</sup>

**14,194kg**  
in new orders<sup>xiii</sup>

**68%** of this market  
volume growth.<sup>xi</sup>



#### DRIVING CATEGORY GROWTH

Buckwud has contributed £231,000 incremental value to the category in the four months since it was listed exclusively in just one of the major multiple, namely Tesco.<sup>xv</sup>

#### INCREASED MARKET SHARE

Since Buckwud launched, Rowse value market share now sits at 39.2% of the pure maple syrup market, **a growth of 7.6%** versus the same period the year before. Within total maple syrup, Rowse value market share is now 30.5%, equating to **a growth of 3.1%**.<sup>xvi</sup>

#### EDUCATING THE UK CONSUMER

Whilst honey is a national favourite at the breakfast table, the UK consumer is less familiar with maple syrup. By rationalising the maple syrup range down to a single product, and using design to play up the cultural cues and association with Canada, Buckwud has made the market easier to understand, and increased the rate of purchase. This spells long-term growth for the category, as the consumer finds a place for maple syrup in their day-to-day diet and sales continue to rise.

#### INCREASED DISTRIBUTION

The Buckwud brand enabled Wellness Foods to achieve a new listing into 522 Tesco stores. This is equivalent to an **increase in distribution of over 50%** in one retailer alone!<sup>xviii</sup>

~~MAY 2011: AVAILABLE IN 1000 STORES~~  
MAY 2012: AVAILABLE IN 1522 STORES

£231k  
contributed  
incremental value to  
the category from buckwud<sup>xvii</sup>

50%  
increase in distribution<sup>xviii</sup>

#### OTHER INFLUENCING FACTORS

At launch, Buckwud secured an exclusivity deal with Tesco. As such the majority of data relates to sales of Buckwud in 522 Tesco stores alone.

Following the end of this exclusivity period in March, Buckwud is now available in other retailers.

Buckwud featured as part of a three week Pancake Day promotion in Tesco, but there has been no other promotional pricing affecting sales figures quoted in the 4 months since Buckwud launched.

No other marketing activity took place over the period of the redesign.

## SALES TEAM, BUYER AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

"Love the design! I need to taste this ASAP! Pancakes tonight..."

Kate Walton, Buckwud fan,  
via Facebook

"The Buckwud design made it easy to sell the product into major multiples, achieving instant listings with Tesco, Sainsbury's, Waitrose and Morrisons. This was because buyers really accepted and bought into the name, concept and authenticity behind the Buckwud brand. Buyers were very complimentary about the packaging, going out of their way to praise the bottle, label design and story behind the brand."

Jeff Hammond, Sales  
Director, Rowse Honey

"Love the Buckwud packaging - who is your design agency?"

Tesco buyer