

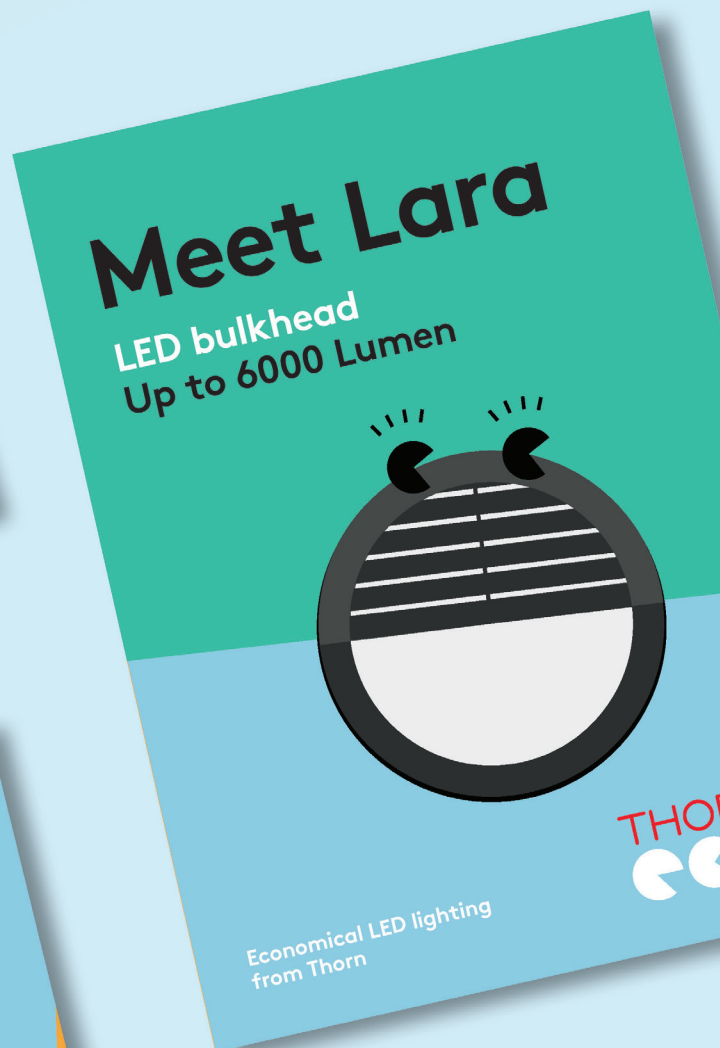
THORNeco: Meet the family

Client: Zumtobel Group

Electronic and Electrical Equipment

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For publication



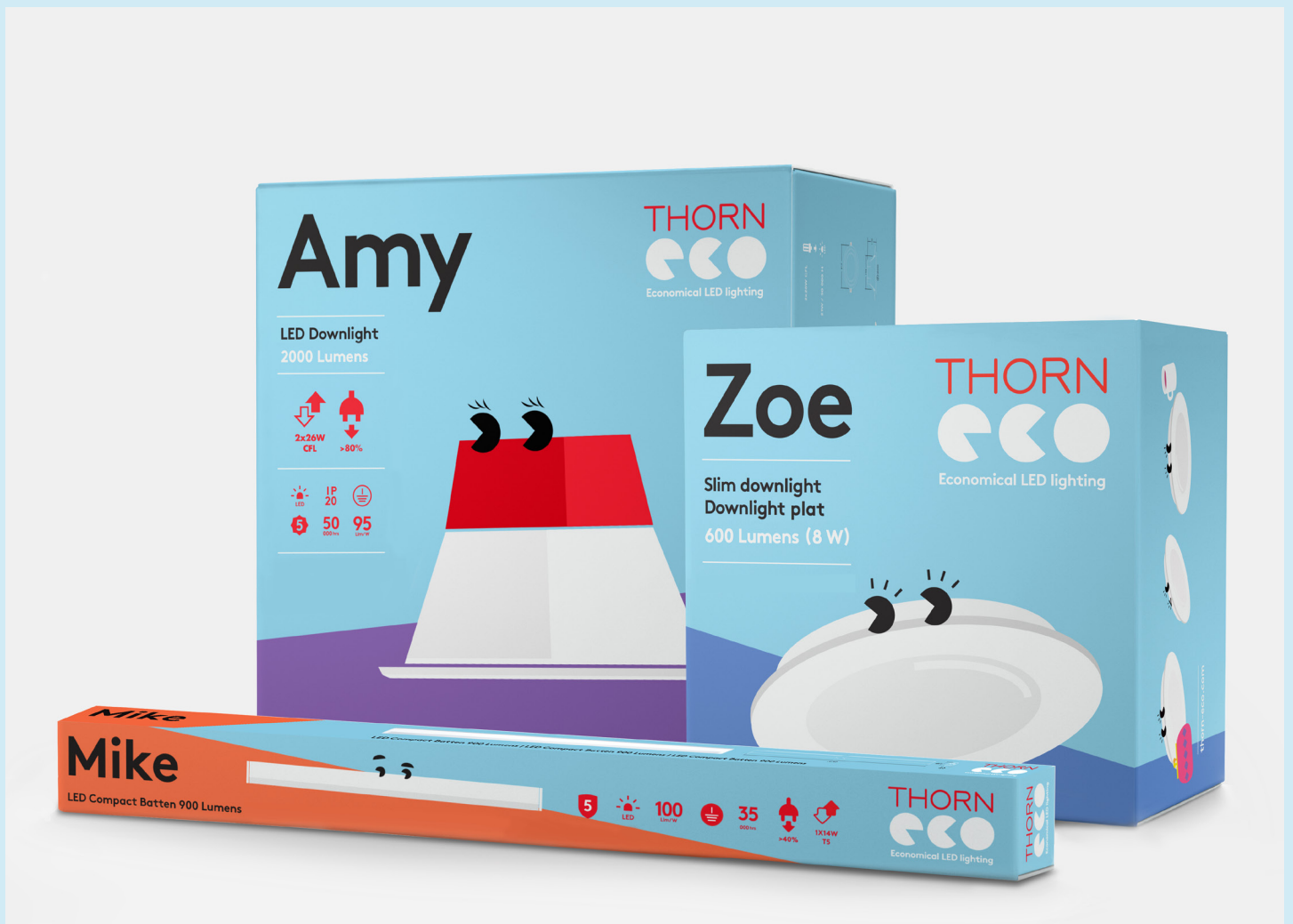
"The level of awareness and sales we've achieved with wholesalers in a very short timeframe is incredible. This is down to a provocative brand concept that, frankly, rattles a very conservative sector. It has demonstrated to our group that a bold and courageous design strategy can achieve real business results."

Jens Milnikel

Executive Vice President

Business Division Special Purpose Products

Zumtobel Group



Executive Summary

301%

Increase in average monthly sales

38:1

ROI – after only 3 months

Based on sales post re-launch

21%

of website visitors signed
up to the database

Against a B2B benchmark of 9%

350%

Increase in UK wholesale stockists

"This is the best selling tool we have had"

Sales representative, UK

There's a revolution going on in lighting. It's the on-going drive for LEDs which are becoming ubiquitous and creating a huge replacement market with massive environmental benefits. But it can look dull, especially at the low-cost end. Products are functionally named and mostly interchangeable. This market is potentially huge, but highly commoditised.

GW+Co worked with the Zumtobel Group, parent company of the THORN brand, to brand THORNeco, its new economical range of LED lighting, targeted at electricians and sold via wholesalers over the counter ('OTC'). This was a strategic push by the group into a new B2B market segment with a clear goal for growth.

Early efforts by THORN to enter the sector had fallen somewhat flat. GW+Co knew they had to shake it up and create stand out. Applying a retail approach to the trade market, products were given real names, creating a product 'family'. Instead of using product photographs, the lights were illustrated, literally adding character based on how and where the lights were used. To introduce each product, GW+Co created short videos for each character, keeping them snappy for easy sharing. These really came to life on social media.

Brand workshops with the THORNeco's marketing team, incorporated hands-on exercises designed to help them develop promotional activities and get them thinking in the THORNeco tone of voice. Crucially, it has hugely motivated THORN's sales reps who have fully embraced the concept. Sales figures after only 3 months prove the market likes it, too.

245 words



Morale boosting

100%

of respondents to our UK sales rep survey said that the new branding had brought more fun to their day!

Project overview

Project objectives

Establish a new sales channel and create incremental business growth for the Zumtobel Group

–

Establish a new value brand for the replacement market in lighting in a highly competitive, commoditised environment

–

Engage with a new audience, namely younger electricians

–

Raise awareness and achieve buy-in of the new range with wholesalers who are the gatekeepers between the electrician and the product.

–

Leverage the well-known THORN brand without cannibalising its wholesale offering

–

Resolve the visual conflict between the THORN brand and the THORNeco product range which is up to 30% cheaper

–

Build a concept that can be rolled out worldwide

–

Prove the validity of the brand concept in the two key markets of France and the UK

–

Engage sales teams who have a lot of autonomy (including financial) in the Zumtobel Group. Winning them over could not be imposed but had to be embraced

Background

THORN is an established brand, particularly in the UK and France where it has a long heritage (it was founded in 1926). Since 2000 it has been part of the Zumtobel Group, one of the leading international players in the professional lighting market.

THORNeco is a value range of products which was launched to take advantage of the latest developments in lighting, namely the advent of LEDs which are extremely durable with energy savings and therefore creating a significant replacement market which THORN wanted to be a part of. It was launched for a specific market segment, the over-the-counter (OTC) wholesale market where THORN had no presence.

Initial launch proves problematic

Initially, THORNeco was launched in the same design as THORN products, which led to justified concerns of a devaluing of the THORN product palette (THORNeco is a budget range, its products are basic and 30% cheaper).

It needed careful handling and a solid strategic approach that would be embraced by stakeholders. Which is when the team turned to GW+Co.



THORN packaging



Previous THORNeco packaging



“Against some internal scepticism and natural resistance, it was always going to be difficult to pull off, but GW+Co’s strategic thinking turned an ‘ugly duckling’ into an exciting and engaging brand.

The branding has not only helped us grow faster and further than expected, it has given the whole team a huge boost. Moreover, rather than cannibalising it, it has invigorated the THORN parent brand.”

Anna Sutter

Head of Branding & Brand Communications
Zumtobel Group

Project overview

The market

The OTC (over-the-counter) wholesale trade market is estimated to be between €1.5–2bn Europe. Within this, the LED replacement market is big but because the segment is rarely split out in reports and there are overlaps, it is difficult to put an exact size to it. In the UK, THORN estimate the trade market is around £420m of which THORN has a share of 7.7%. There are around 400 relevant outlets of wholesalers in the UK.

All data: Zumtobel Group

The challenges

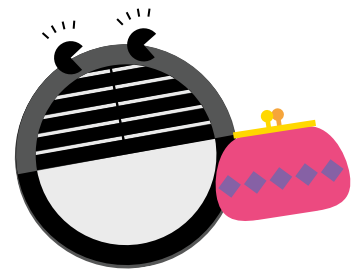
THORN has traditionally been a strong brand in the wholesale/ trade lighting market. But had no tailored offering for the OTC market where the rise of LEDs – low cost, simple and highly efficient light sources – has enabled a number of new competitors to enter into the market.

Against these younger competitors, THORN was seen as a quality, but increasingly outdated brand, respected by older electricians, but much less known with younger ones.

In wholesale, space is tight and products are rarely on display. Instead, it falls to the person behind the counter to suggest a product that meets the electrician's needs. The wholesaler, therefore, is crucial to a brand's success.

The budget

The re-designed THORNeco family launched in March 2017 with a design budget of €153k which included everything – brand creation, guidelines, website, animations, ads.



Wholesale market product displays: much of a muchness. No personality, focus is on product pictures and technical features



Project overview

Strategic approach

Collectively, GW+Co and the THORNeco team researched the different types of wholesale outlets representative of the UK and France which were to be the test markets. We conducted a thorough competitor audit and, through representatives of Zumtobel Group's network of 1500 sales people, as well as field research, tested our concept to ensure it would work internationally and across cultures.

This strategic approach informed both brief and solution. In essence, The THORNeco product range is made of basic 'me too' products. With no product differentiation, the only way it can differentiate is through branding.

The project scope widened to include a naming strategy, packaging, tone of voice, brand identity, a brand toolkit and a digital strategy that would not only establish the brand, but help build up a database of potential customers.

744 words

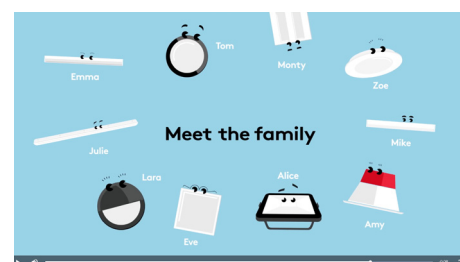
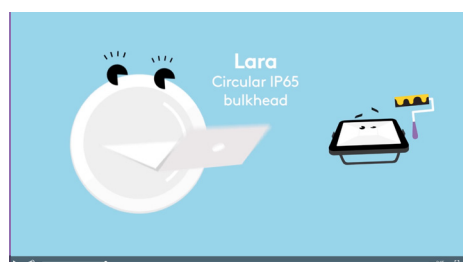


"The fact that the brand polarises – some sceptics found it childish, others called it a revolution – is, in my view, a strong contributor to its success. It has galvanised the whole team like nothing before."

Jens Milnikel

Executive Vice President,
Business Division
Special Purpose Products,
Zumtobel Group

Stills from the brand video. See more at thorn-eco.com



Design solution

GW+Co took a retail branding approach to the wholesale market.

By giving the products real names and an individual personality, the brand became relatable and memorable. Messages became stories, product features became personality traits.

Most products in the trade market have made up or technical names, for example Cavan, Hybrid9, FGLED, Skytile and Parathom. These are not memorable.

In contrast, we called our products Amy, Eve, Victor, Monty and so on. When we tested this with wholesalers, they loved it because these names are easy to memorise.

To understand the impact, compare these conversations:

"I need a downlight, please."
"OK, I'll get you the FGLED"

or

"I need a downlight, please."
"Ok, you'll need Amy then."

GW+Co's naming strategy allows for an almost endless stream of possible new names. This is important because product cycles in wholesale OTC are extremely short. It also allows for international roll-out: THORNeco produce different products for different markets, so it would be possible to choose a Chinese name for the Chinese market.

Against sector norms, the THORNeco branding introduces humour, playfulness and personality into a field that is dominated by pricing and technical information.

The look and feel is kept very simple to emphasize the 'value' proposition in contrast to the higher end, more serious THORN products. The goal was to create the smaller, slightly cheeky sibling to the THORN brand.

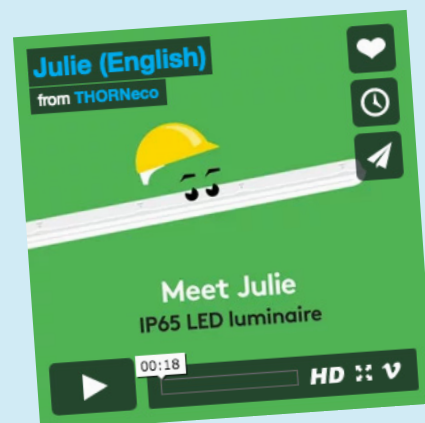
Colours were taken from the THORN palette and adjusted to create a lighter and more basic feel.

428 words



Design solution

When we did field research to test the concept in store, we had all sorts of reactions. Some said we're mad, others insisted they didn't care for packaging, but everyone smiled. We then knew we were on to something.



To introduce each product, GW+Co created short videos for each character, keeping them snappy for easy sharing. These really came to life on social media.



Brand workshops with THORNeco's marketing team incorporated hands-on exercises designed to help them develop promotional activities, help them communicate in the THORNeco tone of voice and engage the sales team.

We've arrived!

Pick us at your local wholesaler



One output was the creation of a THORNeco bus featuring the characters and various props and accessories that went on tour in the UK, with 37 sales reps taking part over 20 days. It proved to be a great tool to engage electricians and train wholesaler staff.

Moreover, it turned out a hit with the sales team who wrote a daily blog back to headquarters, tweeting and creating a buzz around the whole Group. In a survey amongst the sales reps, 100% of respondents said the brand had brought more fun into their day.

Design solution

Before


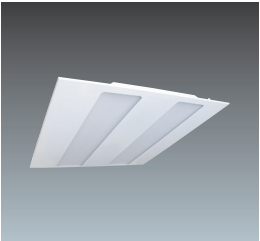


After



THORNeco

Moduline LED II



A cost effective recessed LED luminaire for offices and commercial lighting

- High bright LED module and high performance optics delivers optimal luminaire efficiency
- Easy in / pull up installation complies with most ceiling types
- 40% energy savings compared with T5 fluorescent

Application

- Open plan office
- Commercial building
- Circulation areas

Light source information

- Life time 35,000 Hours (B70B50, Ta25 °C)
- 3200lm (22W), 100lm/W @ 4000K
- Colour Temperature 3000K, 4000K
- CRI 80
- McAdams 3

Meet Amy

IP65 LED Luminaire
900 Lumens



Amy's warm and inviting nature makes everyone feel at home

- Consistent light output with no shadowing
- Replacement for traditional 1x18W, 2x18W or 2x26W compact fluorescent downlights
- Choice of 3000K warm white or 4000K cool white to suit application use
- CRI 80
- McAdams 3

 800-2000 lumens up to 95lm/W	 Save up to 80% energy	 50,000 hours = 13 year lifespan
 105, 150 & 200mm cut-outs	 3hr emergency version available	 Install in 10 minutes

Ideal for...

- Residential
- Hotels
- Offices & meeting rooms
- Schools & universities

 Five year warranty
thornlighting.co.uk/warranty

THORNeco

Summary of results

Sales

Increase in average monthly sales of

301%

since re-launch

Return on Investment

38:1

In only 3 months

Based on sales since re-launch

Increases in market distribution

THORNeco is currently sold in France and the UK.

Pre-sales orders have been taken for Norway, Sweden, Germany, Austria, Italy, Spain, Benelux, Hungary, Poland, Croatia, Slovenia, Czechoslovakia, Romani and Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro.

By this time next year the brand will have increased its presence to

17

new export markets.



Summary of results

Increase in market share

+1%

Rise in THORN's share of estimated total trade lighting market in the UK – after only 3 months!!

New jobs created

5



3 in Marketing
& Product
Management



2 in Product Development/
Sourcing

THORNeco website

An incredible

21%

of visitors to the website signed up for the newsletter and have been captured as potential customers.



Against a benchmark of 9% for B2B companies

Source: HubSpot State of Inbound Marketing Report



3082

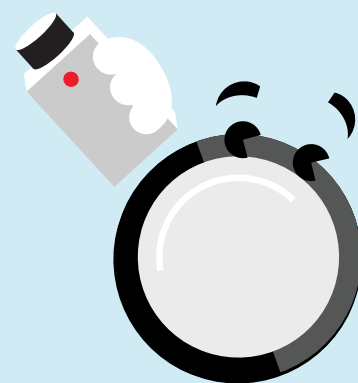
catalogues have been downloaded since brand launch

Brand videos

In the first 3 months:

4503

views on Vimeo/YouTube



Summary of results

Reaction from target market

Wholesaler uptake

The success of the brand depends on uptake by wholesalers and by training wholesale staff to sell the products to their end customers.

90%

of wholesale reps who responded to our survey said that the new characters and product descriptions make it easier to describe and explain the products.

90%

agreed that the new character and product descriptions make it easier to train wholesale staff.

Brand perception

95%

of respondents to our global sales reps survey said they felt the new branding helped to gain attention and made the product more memorable.

66%

said that new branding shifted perceptions of the brand from one that was 'good quality but expensive' to one that was 'good value' – crucial to the trade market.



Point of Sale uptake

€100,000

Original budget for THORNeco POS material

€200,000

POS material produced due to demand from global wholesalers

Prior to re-launch, 70 of the 400 wholesale stockists in the UK had displayed THORN material. 250 now have beautiful THORNeco displays.

357%

increase in UK wholesalers displaying THORNeco POS

On the road

On a recent 20-day UK bus tour, we encouraged sales reps to engage with the 'social media friendly' brand tool box which we created.

46

wholesalers (out of a potential 400 in the UK market) spotted the fun, colourful posts and requested that the bus tour visit them!



“[Our customers] loved the product names and the whole fun vibe of THORNeco. We even managed to convince them to have a group shot, in front of the Bus – holding props!”

Sales representative, UK

Other influencing factors

LED replacement market growth

There is an ongoing global trend towards replacing old fashioned light bulbs with LED lighting which lasts much longer and is more environmentally friendly. However, THORN's position within this market had stagnated and the new brand has catapulted THORNeco as a strong global challenger – and has reinvigorated perceptions of the THORN brand as a whole.

The UK promotional bus tour

33 UK Sales reps took part in a 20 day promotional bus tour in April. Feedback from the tour indicates that its success was largely to do with the new branding and toolkit.

Increased product range

The original launch featured five products, at re-launch there were ten.

Research resources

Field research by GW+Co and Zumtobel Group

All THORNeco sales statistics have been provided by Zumtobel Group

Survey Monkey: THORNeco 20 day bus tour for reps, sent to 37 recipients (Trade Team UK & Ireland)

Survey Monkey: THORNeco global sales reps (sent out to 77 people (Trade Team Nordics, UK, Ireland, Baltics, Management)

HubSpot

Client

zumtobel group

