

# Cruzcampo®

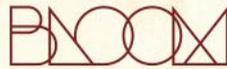
SEVILLA

## CRUZCAMPO TRANSFORMS THE UK'S BEER MARKET

**JULY 2025**

DBA Design  
Effectiveness  
Awards Entry

**AGENCY**



**CLIENT**

Cruzcampo,  
HEINEKEN UK

**FOR PUBLICATION**



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With its April 2023 launch of Spanish lager Cruzcampo, HEINEKEN UK aimed to disrupt the UK lager market.

Already a major brand in Spain with a 118-year heritage, Cruzcampo was new to the UK market and it was entering a crowded space. Mainstream premium world lagers had been a growth opportunity for many years but now it was densely populated with Peroni, Stella Artois, Kronenbourg 1664 and of course the established Spanish beers San Miguel and Estrella Damm, that Cruzcampo would need to find space alongside.

What is more, Cruzcampo would need to prove itself in year one with zero advertising support.

The HEINEKEN UK team set Bloom the task of designing an identity and key assets that would capture the feeling of Spain whilst also differentiating Cruzcampo from established Spanish lagers, and so help it achieve ambitious targets for years one and three.

The key target audience was Millennials at a time of life where 'me' or 'us' time is ever less frequent, and who are looking for an aspirational drink they can enjoy and relax with, in those fleeting moments.

Cruzcampo is the number one lager in Andalusia and its capital Seville. The key strategic insight on this project was that while holidaymakers spend an average of 1.9 nights in Madrid or Barcelona, the homes of Madri and Estrella, the average visit to Andalusia is 10 days. The Cruzcampo brand would be clearly Spanish, but also differentiated from rivals by focusing on its microprovenance, and the slower pace of life in Andalusia.

So from terracotta tiling to typography taken from Seville street signs, even to the clever use of shadows, every element of the design was built around the core idea 'The Streets of Seville'. The brand is redolent of carefree afternoons, a shaded corner of the square, a cold lager, all worries left far behind - speaking directly to that key target audience.

Cruzcampo was the biggest brand launch in beer, wine and spirits since 2007. It far exceeded the ambitious targets set at the outset of the project, going from 0 to 20% of the market in just two years and transforming the UK lager market.



## CONTEXT AND OVERVIEW

The growth in the UK of beers from overseas has been impossible to ignore. Indeed, world lager now holds the largest share of the beer market in the UK, making up 27% of the volume sold, and 33% of the value sold, according to CGA On Premise Measurement Service, 30/12/2023. Mediterranean, and particularly Spanish beers have done particularly well in this space. Established brands like San Miguel have been joined by new entrants like Madri, which was created specifically for the UK. This chart clearly shows the double-digit growth achieved by these brands:

TOTAL TRADE VOLUME PER THOUSAND HECTOLITRES (KHL)	FULL YEAR 2019	FULL YEAR 2020	FULL YEAR 2021	YOY % CHG
Total Top Spanish Lagers	1,505.2	1,576.1	1,913.6	21%
San Miguel	1,143.5	1,264.4	1,408.5	11.4%
Estrella Damm	324.1	281.8	371.1	30.6%
Estrella Galicia	16.9	14.6	20.8	42.5%
Mahou	17.5	12.5	11.5	8%
Madri	-	-	92.0	-

The team at HEINEKEN UK had identified a market opportunity to launch a mainstream Spanish lager to compete with mainstream lager brands like Kronenbourg and Stella Artois, as well as Spanish brands like San Miguel, Estrella & Madri.

It would be aimed at beer drinkers aged over 25, and particularly the 'Me Time' consumer: 30–45-year-old Millennial middle-class consumers with no or older children who want to celebrate their 'me', or 'us', time with a more sophisticated drink that would help them disconnect and look good. HEINEKEN UK viewed this as a key demand space for the category with a potential value of £3bn.

**Cruzcampo was the brand chosen to achieve this.**



Already within the Heineken Global portfolio, Cruzcampo has a 118-year history and is one of the most popular beers in Spain, particularly Andalusia. It had in the past been exported to the UK, but with no marketing investment and only through limited wholesale routes. It had never been widely available – HEINEKEN UK set out to change that.

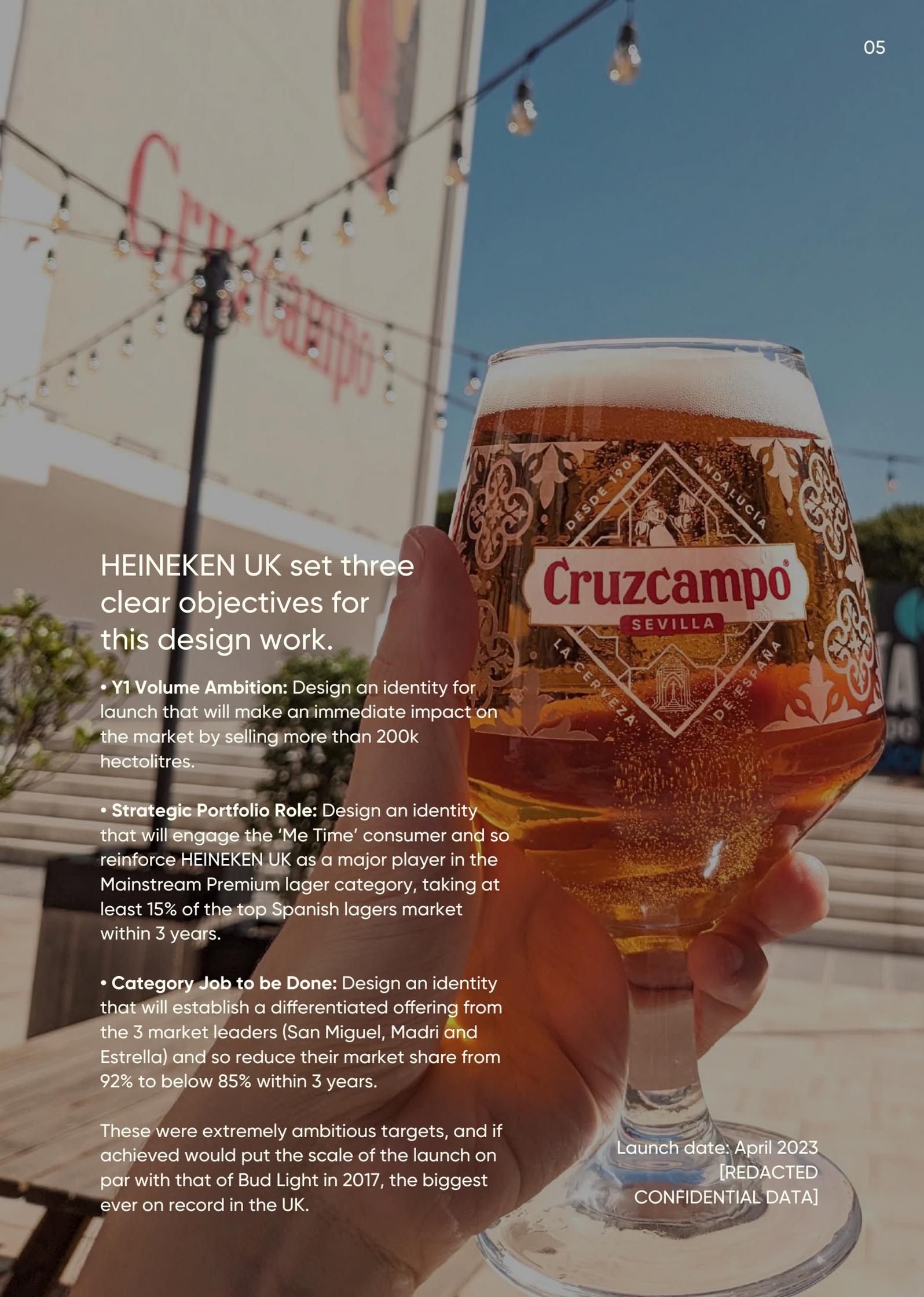
The vision was clear. Cruzcampo would disrupt the UK mainstream beer market, making San Miguel look like dusty old news in the process. With a breakthrough design and brand world, it would transport UK drinkers to Andalusia, the real heartland of Spain.

HEINEKEN UK briefed Bloom to deliver key visuals, a brand playbook, and

designs for on and off-trade formats. While there was undeniable opportunity, there were also significant brand design challenges to address: how to find an ownable space within this flooded category and make it relevant to the UK market, whilst staying true to the original brand's identity and key brand assets.

For the creation of the brand's UK identity through packaging and a key visual, it was a collaboration between the HEINEKEN UK team's knowledge and experience of the Spanish brand and Bloom's expertise in developing iconic design that could resonate in the UK market.





HEINEKEN UK set three clear objectives for this design work.

- **Y1 Volume Ambition:** Design an identity for launch that will make an immediate impact on the market by selling more than 200k hectolitres.
- **Strategic Portfolio Role:** Design an identity that will engage the 'Me Time' consumer and so reinforce HEINEKEN UK as a major player in the Mainstream Premium lager category, taking at least 15% of the top Spanish lagers market within 3 years.
- **Category Job to be Done:** Design an identity that will establish a differentiated offering from the 3 market leaders (San Miguel, Madri and Estrella) and so reduce their market share from 92% to below 85% within 3 years.

These were extremely ambitious targets, and if achieved would put the scale of the launch on par with that of Bud Light in 2017, the biggest ever on record in the UK.

Launch date: April 2023  
[REDACTED  
CONFIDENTIAL DATA]

## DESIGN SOLUTION

As borders dissolve and tastes widen, brands must work harder to tell provenance stories in compelling and memorable ways. It's no longer enough to be a Spanish, German or Italian beer – consumers are looking for something more distinctive. They're looking for microprovenance.



Representation of Spanish food and drink culture in the UK has developed beyond one dimensional, brash and reductive cues, to tap into authentic nuances of heritage, culture and regional gastronomy. And in reviewing the competitor landscape, it was clear that the ownable characteristic of Cruzcampo in the UK is the untold story of Andalucia.

This differentiation set us up for success as a clear point of difference against competitors. But how to capture the essence of Andalucia, and its capital Seville?

The key insight was that the average time spent on holiday in cities like Madrid and Barcelona is 1.9 nights – non-stop city breaks, every minute packed full of something to do and eat – whereas the average time spent on holiday in Andalucia is 10 days – a far more relaxed experience, with freedom to explore, change plans, and take the time to really enjoy and appreciate the things that you discover. This wasn't to be an urban, gritty brand; it was to represent the more relaxed spontaneity of the Southern Spanish lifestyle.

Through in-depth exploration of Andalusian heritage, lifestyle and culture, including a visit to Seville, the team gathered a sense of cobbled streets, courtyards, warmth and buzz. Where time slows down, so you can savour the little things in life. That sip of cold beer, the laughs with friends, the spontaneous evenings at the local bar. And this led to the core design idea:

## LAIDBACK CHARM INSPIRED BY THE STREETS OF SEVILLE

Every touchpoint relates back to this core idea.

So, the visual identity captured real life in the streets of Seville: Moorish tiles, rustic street signs, the beating sun, a slower pace of life. Very different to all the red Spanish beers on the market. It did this through:

- A colour palette combining warm earthy tones and vibrancy with our iconic Cruzcampo Red, inspired by the facades of the city's buildings. Core and supporting palettes evoke a sense of energy, joy and the rich cultural tapestry that defines the city. Named the Cruzcampo colours: Cruzcampo Red, Tile Cream, Sevillian Gold, Light Orange, Terracotta Orange, and Turquoise.
- Imagery evokes terracotta walls, with shadows not only enabling depth to the key visuals, imagery, and environments, but also giving that sense of escapism from the afternoon heat to a place where time slows down so you can savour the little things.
- Typography is influenced by the characterful letterforms of Seville's street signs and consciously weathered. Two font families that have a subtle nod back to the origin of Cruzcampo.
- Use of light to capture the bright world of Seville, so sunshine, dappled shadows and heroing the crisp coolness of condensation on the beer.

This was a design solution created to answer the objectives set by HEINEKEN UK. Every element is unmistakably Spanish, but also clearly pulls away from competitor Spanish beers. With its sense of Sevillian relaxed spontaneity, it speaks directly to those vital Millennials looking for carefree time for 'me'.



## RESULTS AND OTHER INFLUENCING FACTORS

Cruzcampo was the biggest brand launch in beer, wine and spirits since 2007, based on £ value in its first year of launch, according to data from both CGA OPM Data on 24/02/2024 and Nielsen Discover Data from 23/03/2024.

It has far exceeded the ambitious objectives set at the outset.

- **Y1 Volume Ambition:** Design an identity for launch that will make an immediate impact on the market by selling more than 200k hectolitres.

In its first year it sold 213k hectolitres. In its second year it sold 847k hectolitres.

The impact on the UK market was rapid. In June 2024, The Grocer looked back on the launch: "Having hit the on-trade in April 2023, Cruzcampo rolled into

Tesco, Booker and One Stop in August. It has since shifted 10.9 million litres – the biggest absolute volume gain of any booze brand this year".

According to NIQ 52 w/e 20 April 2024, just 8 months after making its off-trade debut it stormed into the top 100 brands with a £29.6m gain.

- **Strategic Portfolio Role:** Design an identity that will engage the 'Me Time' consumer and so reinforce HEINEKEN UK as a major player in the Mainstream Premium lager category, taking at least 15% of the top Spanish lagers market within 3 years.

Cruzcampo had taken 20% of the market within 2 years – far exceeding its target.

TOTAL TRADE VOLUME (KHL)	JAN-DEC 2021	JAN-DEC 2022	JAN-DEC 2023	JAN-DEC 2024	YOY % CHG
San Miguel	1,483	1,756	1,747	1,545	-12%
Madri Excepcional	92	615	1,144	1,249	9%
Cruzcampo	-	-	93	817	324%
Estrella Damm	367	472	390	347	-11%
Mahou	14	26	37	60	64%
Estrella Galicia	19	30	32	42	32%
Total Top Spanish Lagers	1,975	2,899	3,542	4,061	-

- **Category Job to be Done:** Design an identity that will establish a differentiated offering from the three market leaders (San Miguel, Madri and Estrella) and so reduce their market share from 92% to below 85% within 3 years.

In the two years following the 2023 Cruzcampo launch, San Miguel's market share fell from 49% to 38%, Madri's fell from 32% to 30%, and Estrella Damm's fell from 11% to 9%.

**CRUZCAMPO  
WENT FROM 0%  
TO 20% IN JUST  
TWO YEARS.**



# INFLUENCING FACTORS

## 1.

### Was the success of this launch due to marketing spend?

At launch, Cruzcampo had zero above the line, or advertising support.

This is unusual for a mainstream lager, which typically receives a seven-figure above the line investment.

In April 2024, the brand kicked off a £10m UK campaign, and this will certainly have contributed to year two's success.

However, year one was remarkably successful without this ad support, and that success would have given the HEINEKEN UK team confidence to invest further into the brand.

Furthermore, the ad campaign is a build on the design work described in this entry. It provided clear brand guardrails and a comprehensive creative direction for how the brand should be brought to life, consistently everywhere. All Cruzcampo marketing is rooted in a clear creative design idea 'the laid-back charm inspired by the streets of Seville', and so we can claim that the year two success of the brand's ad campaign was driven to a significant extent by the design work shown here.

## 2.

### What about below the line, promotional activity?

There was below the line marketing support, and while we cannot reveal details of the scale of that investment, it was in line with that of competitors and as with the advertising above, its success was very much grounded in the design work described in this entry.

## 3.

### What about the impact of collaborators?

When the ad (ATL/Comms) agency (Lucky Generals) was selected, Bloom presented the work shown here to them whilst they were doing their immersion in Seville. So, from the outset they were using the design strategy insights and thinking.

Bloom worked in the same way with the below the line partners, MESH, helping them to bring the brand to life. Central to this was a key visual, which aimed to evoke 'a sense of Seville'. This has now become an important asset for all off-pack and out-of-home marketing materials.

## 4.

### Was this launch only successful because of the post-COVID return to socialising?

Cruzcampo launched at a time when consumers were returning to pubs after the pandemic, eager for new experiences and premium options.

All brands potentially benefitted from this, but it was Cruzcampo that successfully capitalised on it. It capitalised on both the enthusiasm for trying new, premium world lagers and the 'Me-Time' moment.

## 5.

### How much of its success came from the fact people remembered the beer from holidays in Spain?

There would certainly have been a recognition of the beer from happy, relaxed times on holiday, but the identity was designed specifically to evoke that. The fact that it reminded so many people of those long, carefree afternoons in the sun is testament to the success of this design work, and a key reason why it was so commercially effective.

## CREDITS (Bloom)

**Kylie Arthur** – Business Director  
**Neil Vestrini** – Creative Director  
**Toby Atkins** – Associate Creative Director (Illustration)  
**Ishbel Lohman** – Planning Director  
**Lottie Petersen** – Design Director  
**Sophie Sapara** – Account Director  
**Tim Reynolds** – Chief Technology Officer  
**Dion Fowler** – Production Director  
**Rob Davis** – Technical Director  
**Rich Paterson** – Senior Designer  
**Brae Savva** – Senior Designer  
**Toby Hunt** – Senior Visualiser  
**Reece Shannon** – Midweight Designer

---

## CREDITS (HEINEKEN UK)

**Rajeev Sathyesh** – Marketing Director (CMO)  
**Veronica Sica** – Marketing Director (Beer)  
**Alice Batsford** – Senior Brand Manager  
**Laura Smith** – Brand Manager  
**David Newell** – Packaging Design Manager

---