

## FOR PUBLICATION

DBA DESIGN EFFECTIVENESS AWARDS 2023

## SMIRNOFF'S MOST SUCCESSFUL FLAVOUR LAUNCH EVER,

SURPASSING ANNUAL SALES TARGETS  
IN LESS THAN 10 WEEKS & DELIVERING  
ROI ON DESIGN IN LESS THAN A WEEK.

BRANDING AGENCY  
**BULLETPROOF**

CLIENT COMPANY  
**DIAGEO**

DATE  
**NOVEMBER 2022**





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“THE AGENCY TOOK A BOLD AND DIFFERENTIATED APPROACH WITH THE DESIGN OF RASPBERRY CRUSH WHICH HAS TRANSFORMED OUR FLAVOURS PERFORMANCE. CHANGING THE COLOUR OF THE LIQUID, CREATING A VIBRANT & DELICIOUS DESIGN SCHEME AND TRANSLATING THIS TO AN IMPACTFUL POINT OF SALE HAS TRANSFORMED SALES & MADE THIS OUR MOST SUCCESSFUL FLAVOUR LAUNCH EVER.”

Hania Midura  
Design and Visual Identity Director, Diageo North America

#1 NPD IN BOTH SPIRITS & FLAVOURED VODKA

97% OF CATEGORY GROWTH  
CAME FROM RASPBERRY CRUSH

[REDACTED CONFIDENTIAL INFO]

#1 VODKA BRAND SMIRNOFF, SINCE  
THE LAUNCH OF RASPBERRY CRUSH

6.6 DAYS TO ROI ON DESIGN

[REDACTED CONFIDENTIAL INFO]



## DESCRIPTION

Smirnoff is the world's most infamous spirit. From Russian Serf to the toast of Hollywood, no other vodka has lived through so much. Since its birth in 1864, Smirnoff has become the world's number 1 vodka. The brand has offered various iterations of flavoured vodkas, a range of 12 made available through multiple markets globally at the time of brief. But the incoherent design strategy meant that the brand was not visible to customers and consumer's enthrall to the flavoured spirits trend. Conscious that they were losing out on a £208 million opportunity over the following three years, Smirnoff aimed to make their flavoured vodka offering more relevant, starting with a raspberry variant.

Smirnoff Raspberry Crush Flavoured Vodka is a delicious raspberry-flavoured vodka with the natural flavours of pink raspberries. Made with unmistakably smooth Smirnoff No. 21 vodka, triple distilled from a blend of the finest grains and filtered 10 times in a unique process through 7 columns of charcoal. The resulting liquid is a luscious combination of exceptionally smooth taste and sweet juicy raspberry flavours. Smirnoff Raspberry Crush is positioned to be the perfect accompaniment for get-togethers with friends.

## OVERVIEW OF THE MARKET

At the time of the brief, the flavour theme was driving phenomenal growth across all FMCG, but especially in spirits: the flavoured vodka market in GB was on fire, growing at +15% YOY and outperforming both total spirits and non-flavoured vodka.

[REDACTED]

By contrast, Smirnoff's competition was excelling in the category: JJ Whitley was showing strong growth; in fact, it was already the same size as Smirnoff Flavours despite only launching in September 2019. Incredibly, the range already accounts for 56% of the JJ Whitley parent brand. Ciroc Flavours accounts for 69% of the parent brand, whilst Absolut Flavours is 33% of the parent brand. Smirnoff had identified an opportunity to grow its share in the flavoured vodka market but needed the right creative partner to do this in a fresh, flavourful, bold and vibrant way.





## OUTLINE OF PROJECT BRIEF

With the opportunity in sight, the brief to us was to grow Smirnoff's share in flavoured vodka by recruiting consumers into the brand through a bold, updated platform for flavoured vodkas that are bright, fun and full of juicy flavour.

Specifically, we needed to:

- Drive re-appraisal of vodka and inspire consumers with vibrant, bold, juicy flavours and beautiful bottles full of mischief and fun.
- Communicate the liquid experience of being a flavoured vodka that is bright & full of juicy flavour, driving appetite appeal.
- Develop a vibrant design with Smirnoff's mischievous personality shining through.
- Consider that this needs to be a system and will be expanded to include other flavours.

## PROJECT LAUNCH DATE

July 2021

## SIZE OF DESIGN BUDGET

[REDACTED]

## SCOPE OF WORK

- Visual Identity
- Packaging Design
- Illustration (commissioned)

## COLLABORATIONS INVOLVED

Irene Laschi - Illustrator





## OUTLINE OF DESIGN SOLUTION

With a sea of demure, prim, proper and restrained flavoured vodka and gins flooding the market, no one is better positioned to unleash a bold new fruit-forward expression than Smirnoff, The World's No.1 Vodka. Flavours is a range of enticingly juicy fruit flavours made to unite the brand's mischievous character with the unexpectedly vibrant refreshment that unlocks more moments of enjoyment.

We needed to create a new look for the previously disparate Smirnoff Flavours proposition, to demonstrate that this is a range for all-in flavour experimentation with a glamorous edge. So we developed a vibrant and delicious design scheme that reflects this attitude. Packed with punchy colours, glamorous foils, fun stripe backgrounds, juicy fruit illustrations, and the reassuring authority of the iconic Smirnoff Crown and Signature. The design scheme is based on three core traits:

**TIMELESS** - The balance of mixing the past with the present is built into the Smirnoff brand DNA, and Flavours is no exception. We respected the long-standing brand assets and built delicious dimensions of sophisticated full on flavour to unlock new potential.

**DESIRABLE** - Smirnoff Flavours make the moment extra: more glamour, more mischief, more flavour, more fun and more fingers up to whatever stands in the way of our pleasure.

**MISCHIEVOUS** - Smirnoff Flavours is a daringly bold expression that is always on a mission for taste. The perfect co-conspirator and foil to our main protagonist.

The big fruity flavour of Raspberry Crush is the reward for those who desire it, so we made the bold taste shine through in a way that's irresistibly intriguing and impossible to miss at the fixture. Popping with bright blue and teal shades and accentuated with pink and gold foils, we elevated the full on taste experience in a way only Smirnoff can get away with, capturing an intensely juicy flavour that's not afraid to be big, vibrant and full of depth. Meanwhile, we added to the front label temptingly bold fruit illustrations that scream juicy refreshment, reborn.

With Raspberry Crush out in the world, we developed the design idea across the wider Smirnoff Flavours range: Mango & Passionfruit pops with bright pink and orange, accompanied by sumptuous purple and gold foil, while Berry Burst boasts a blue and green scheme, offset with blue and gold foils. Tumbling, juicy fruit illustrations point to the wild and flavourful characters of both variants, unleashed for unrestrained pleasure.

The result is a visually powerful representation of the proposition: deliciously infamous Smirnoff meets bold fruits to create wild & distinctive fusions in both taste and attitude.



## RESULTS

### INCREASE IN SALES

**Within a week...** Raspberry Crush became Morrison's #1 SKU, selling over 31,000 units. [REDACTED]

Raspberry Crush had the highest weekly sale rate of any flavoured vodka in the last two years, at 69.4 bottles per store per week. As a point of comparison, Echo Falls Summer Berries was the previous record holder with just 34.4 bottles per store per week, less than half of our hero.

**Within a quarter...** [REDACTED]

Raspberry Crush became the number 1 flavoured vodka SKU in volume and value sales in less than a month after launch.

**Within six months...** And that was just the start: the product achieved £18.8M of value sales MAT within less than eight months of launch, [REDACTED]

**Within a year...** Raspberry Crush became the #1 NPD in both spirits and flavoured vodka, accounting for 14.4% of all Spirits NPD sales and 38.1% of flavoured vodka NPD sales. As a point of reference, the 2nd highest spirit NPD, Highland Park Viking Scars Whiskey, was just 30% of Smirnoff Raspberry Crush sales.

Raspberry Crush was a whopping £6.2M ahead of the No.2 flavoured vodka SKU, J.J Whitley Raspberry and last but not least, it had driven a colossal £446k retail sales value for Morrisons.

**And in the latest data...** Raspberry Crush was worth £23.2m on 8th September 2022, the latest data available at the time of writing, demonstrating that the relaunch's success isn't a short-term fad.

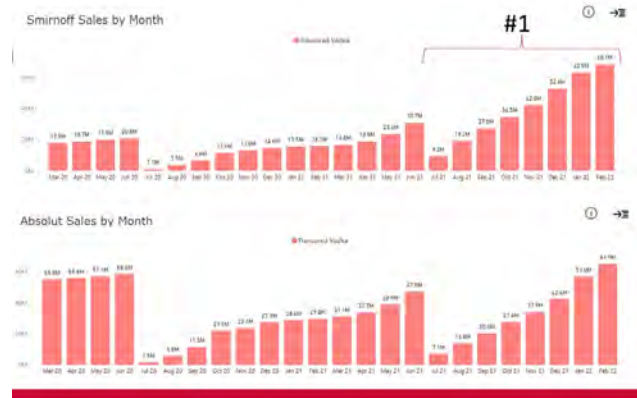
and Mango & Passionfruit collectively drove a phenomenal 51% of category growth.

And 12 months after launch, Raspberry Crush was responsible for 97% of category growth, delivering £19.5m of the £20.2m YOY growth in flavoured vodkas. In the words of Nielsen "Raspberry Crush undoubtedly drove category growth: without it, the category would have much more modest growth and would have entered a decline in some periods."



### COMPANY GROWTH

Within the vodka category, since the launch of Raspberry Crush in July 2021, Smirnoff has overtaken Absolut sales and has retained the #1 brand position since. Smirnoff attributes this success to the relaunched Flavours range.



### INCREASED MARKET SHARE & DRIVING CATEGORY GROWTH

While it's clear that flavoured vodka is growing, before Raspberry Crush, Smirnoff wasn't benefitting from this trend.

With YOY growth of +32.5%, flavoured vodkas are the fastest-growing flavoured spirits category. In comparison, total spirits are down -3.5% over the same period. But before the relaunch of the Flavours range, Smirnoff had been losing market share for the previous two years, even as the flavoured vodka trend was on the rise.

Since the launch of Raspberry Crush, Smirnoff has turned that situation around and is now the brand pushing the growth of the flavoured vodka category. Within six months of launch, Smirnoff Raspberry Crush

Beyond vodka and into the wider spirits category the success of Raspberry Crush is making waves: In the year to August 2022, Smirnoff was the fastest-growing spirit brand in absolute value, with an additional £22m (3.9%) added versus the year prior. [REDACTED]

And even at the highest category level, spanning all alcohol brands, the success of Raspberry Crush is reflected in results: Smirnoff is the only brand in the top 7 of The Grocer's list of Britain's Biggest Alcohol Brands 2022 to grow in value and volume sales over the last year.

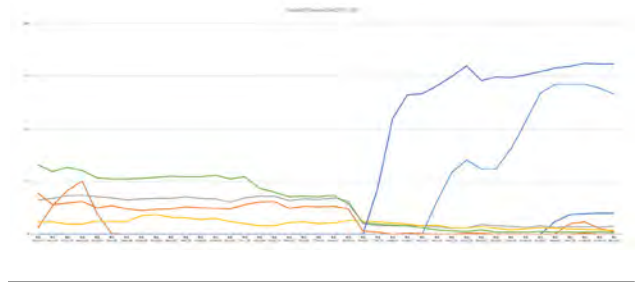
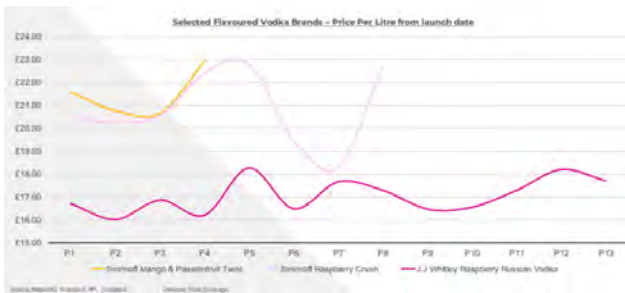
**RESULTS CONTINUED**

BRITAIN'S BIGGEST ALCOHOL BRANDS 2022								
	CHANGE VS 2021	BRAND	SALES (£M)	CHANGE (£M)	CHANGE (%)	LITRES SOLD (MILLIONS)	VOLUME CHANGE (MILLIONS OF LITRES)	VOLUME CHANGE (%)
1	0	Stella Artois	£646.7	£86.7	-11.8%	275	-35	-11.2%
2	0	Smirnoff	£589.6	£22.0	3.9%	36	2	5.3%
3	0	Gordons	£459.8	£81.0	-15%	31	-4	-10.0%
4	0	Budweiser	£448.8	£79.9	-15.1%	196	-32	-14.1%
5	0	Fosters	£335.0	£97.6	-22.6%	177	-49	-21.6%
6	0	Carling	£329.1	£77.9	-19.1%	187	-45	-19.4%
7	0	Jack Daniels	£311.1	£19.5	-5.9%	17	-1	-2.9%

**HIGHER PRICE POINT ACHIEVED**

[REDACTED]

In fact, it has delivered these impressive results detailed above despite a higher price per litre than its closest competitor, JJ Whitley Raspberry. That is partly because, unlike JJ Whitley, the design and proposition have allowed Smirnoff to rely on fewer promotions than the competition.



**INCREASE RECRUITMENT OF TARGET AUDIENCE**

One of the most exciting aspects of the success of Raspberry Crush has been the incremental growth to both Smirnoff and the category that the variant had triggered: 74% of Raspberry Crush drinkers were new to the Smirnoff brand, 50% were new to vodka and 8% new to spirits, whilst a vast 40% switched from beer, wine and cider when they chose Raspberry Crush.

**CHANGES IN SPENDING PATTERNS**

Raspberry Crush has allowed Smirnoff to penetrate new occasions: the variant flexes across all demand spaces and compared to the core '21' product, is especially suited to lively, upbeat occasions with friends and family, where the design and proposition of Raspberry Crush have allowed the product to index 10% higher than the core Smirnoff '21'.

Lively, upbeat moments	Smirnoff Raspberry Crush 24%	Index to Smirnoff no.21 110%
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**ROI**

With Raspberry Crush smashing all sales projections, the retail sales value surpassed the design fee in just 6.6 days. Of course, as a design agency, we're proud of our commercial effectiveness on behalf of our clients, but even by our high standards, delivering ROI for the client in under a week was quite shocking, in a good way.

**INCREASE IN DISTRIBUTION**

The new look for Flavours allowed Smirnoff to boost its distribution of the range to levels that were unprecedented in the previous two years. The highest level of distribution for Smirnoff Flavours prior to the redesign was Raspberry at 33% 4W PCW. But Raspberry Crush exceeded this distribution rate within one month of launch, and is currently at 80.75% 4W PCW, which is an uplift of 144% on the previous high of Smirnoff Flavours distribution.

**EXPORT GROWTH**

[REDACTED]





## RESULTS CONTINUED

### NEW REVENUE STREAMS CREATED

Meanwhile, in the UK market, Raspberry Crush has been joined by another two variants: Mango & Passionfruit and Berry Burst are now available nationwide. In due course, Smirnoff will have four flavours under the “bold, vibrant” platform, with plenty more exciting variants in store for 2023 and beyond.

Smirnoff has also reformatted Raspberry Crush into increasingly popular ready-to-drink (RTD) cans. Raspberry Crush with Lemonade rolled out UK-wide on 6 April 2022, beating competitors Absolut and JJ Whitley to RTD launch. Commenting on the launch, Smirnoff said it was “perfectly placed” to capitalise on growth of flavoured vodka and RTD sales and would recruit more drinkers to the vodka category.

### CHANGES IN CONSUMER ATTITUDES & BEHAVIOUR

Smirnoff has attributed the high sales of Raspberry Crush to the great point of sale standout and unique bottle design: 86% thought the bottle was extremely new and different. Whilst 85% of Vodka consumers intend to buy Smirnoff Raspberry Crush.

Here is a sample selection of how people view the product:

“FRUITY AND SUMMERY, FULL OF FLAVOUR.”

“FASHIONABLE, REFRESHING.”

“IT LOOKS LIKE IT WOULD BE A NICE SUMMER DRINK.”

Based on the look and proposition, 89% of people polled view the product as a great drink to have with friends, 89% think it’s fun and vibrant, 84% are drawn in by its fruitiness, 79% view it as a good alternative to gin, and 71% view it as premium.

#### A GREAT DRINK TO HAVE WITH FRIENDS



#### FUN & VIBRANT



#### A GREAT NEW FRUITY FLAVOUR



#### A GOOD ALTERNATIVE TO GIN



#### IS PREMIUM



And the evidence shows the Raspberry Crush is on a roll: awareness grew from 32% to 35% between January and May 2022, whilst the repeat custom of those who trialled Raspberry Crush over the same period climbed by an impressive 80.4% to 12.8.

### SALES TEAM TESTIMONIALS

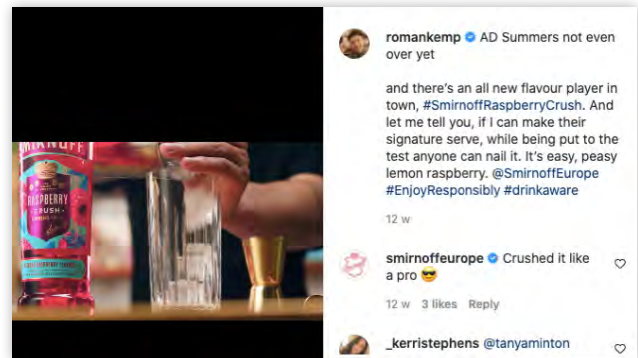
“To truly excite customers and consumers, new flavour innovations need to bring something distinctive to the table

that resonates with the target audience. That’s what buyers look for, and that’s the comment we got time and time again when working with retailers to list Raspberry Crush: that the look and feel of the SKU excites and delights from the fixture to the serving occasion. Frankly, they and we are bowled over by the results.”

Mark Jarman, Head of Smirnoff GB

### MEDIA REACH

Smirnoff Raspberry Crush achieved over 83 media articles following the launch, reaching an incredible 5 million people and allowing visibility to exceed Diageo’s KPIs by 317%.





## RESULTS CONTINUED

### OTHER INFLUENCING FACTORS

54% of all flavoured vodka is sold on promotion (at the latest MAT), and Smirnoff Raspberry Crush is in line with this value. In fact, in data shared by Nielsen, they were at pains to point out that price promotion was used judiciously and only around Christmas, unlike competitors such as JJ Whitley.

Given these results, you'd think that the distribution of Raspberry Crush was significantly higher than the competition. But in fact, the SKU was only available in 10% of on-trade venues, and is within a similar range of distribution as competitors within the off-trade.

### DISTRIBUTION



Smirnoff Raspberry Crush  
4,774



Flavoured Vodka  
46,360 (+11.1%)

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### SOURCES

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- Nielsen scan track mat to 26.12.20 off-trade value
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- MMR consumer testing Jan 2021 – all comparisons made vs current Smirnoff raspberry packaging
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