



Category
Leisure Goods
Client
Pop Village
Design Consultancy
Elmwood Design
Date
June 2015



elmwood



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Andy and Mario popped on to the footwear scene in summer 2014 with the aim of creating a cool, comfortable shoe suitable for festivals, beaches and general fun times. Armed with an order of 1,500 pairs, they asked Elmwood to create branding and packaging that would capture the playful nature of the product and which would encourage purchase without the need for further marketing investment.

The brand's name 'POP' immediately led to a playful and iconic packaging format that really stands out and grabs the shoppers' attention, delivering a totally unique brand experience.

On the back of the branding and packaging alone, POP Village managed to:

- Secure a pop-up retail space in Sheffield's Meadowhall shopping centre
- Sell all of its stock in half the anticipated time
- Sell double the amount of shoes forecasted in the first 6 months

And launch equally successful sub-brands for children – POP Kids and Poppets – a year ahead of schedule.

(154 Words)



Some POP Village highlights:

**SECURED A POP-UP
RETAIL SPACE**
IN SHEFFIELD'S MEADOWHALL
SHOPPING CENTRE



SOLD OUT 
IN 1/2 ANTICIPATED TIME

 **DOUBLE**
PROJECTED SALES
IN 1ST SIX MONTHS

**LAUNCHED SUB-BRANDS
POP KIDS & POPPETS**
A YEAR AHEAD OF SCHEDULE



PROJECT OVERVIEW

OUTLINE OF BRIEF

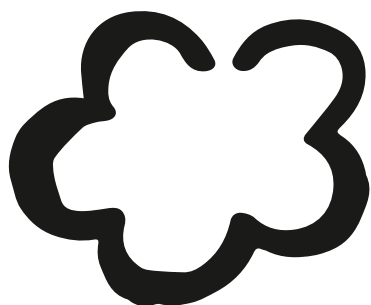
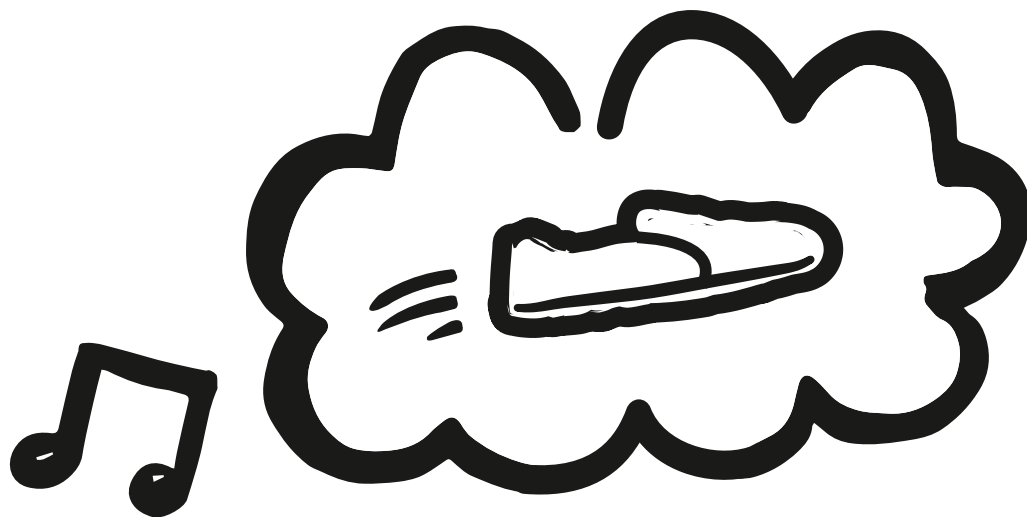
Friends and fellow music-lovers Andy and Mario had an idea to create a new footwear brand aimed at young festival-goers. Their plan was launch it at festivals and music hotspots including Global Gathering, Leeds Festival and Camden Market throughout the summer of 2014.

They asked Elmwood to create branding and packaging that would communicate POP Village's story, and capture the playful feel of their collection of ethically-produced plimsolls.

Specific objectives included:

1. Break even by year two
2. To sell 1500 pairs of shoes in 6 months (their complete stock)
3. To create a cool brand that people will love (and make a name for themselves)
4. To produce a complementary kids' brand within 12-18 months





PROJECT OVERVIEW

DESCRIPTION

POP Village is a footwear brand launched at music festivals in 2014. It was started by friends Andrew Turner and Mario Campagna with the aim of making cool, comfortable shoes for long days, long nights, festivals, beaches and general fun times.

The shoes themselves appear as a range of simple, lightweight plimsolls in cool colour and print combinations. Adding a playful twist, each one is scented of bubblegum.

The POP team works with a family business in Rioja, Spain to produce their hand-stitched shoes using natural rubber and ethical cotton. The business had made its name making shoes for villagers and vineyard workers in the region, and their history and ethos attracted POP Village to them as exclusive manufacturing partners.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

OVERVIEW OF MARKET

POP Village's main competitor is Flossy plimsolls, an 'Ibiza-born, European-bred footwear brand immersed in over 30 years of cultural history'. First appearing in the UK in 2010, the shoes are sold nationwide in Schuh and Office, and have a much wider distribution network than the newcomers. The company also invested heavily in SEO and online consultancy at this time to grow their brand digitally and position themselves as serious players in the UK.

Pop Village is also in competition with more established brands such as TOMS, which takes a strongly ethical stance.

Although POP's aim is to appeal to young festival-goers, the brand also had to feel mass-market but cool, unisex and not-dated, trend-led but not trying too hard.

Project launch date
July 2014

Size of design budget & production costs
£18,830 – Studio time
£465 – illustration

(379 Words)





OUTLINE OF DESIGN SOLUTION

While the idea for the brand was born out of a spirit of fun, there was also a serious side. For Andrew and Mario it was important that the shoes should have strong environmental credentials. With that in mind, they chose to use only ethically sourced cotton and natural rubber. It was also important to communicate the craft and care that goes into the product, so every pair of shoes is presented with a card in the shape of a cotton reel bearing the maker's name.

With the products taken care of, Andrew and Mario needed a brand identity for POP Village that would reflect the fun-loving, offbeat attitude of the products. Because the brand was a start-up we wanted to create maximum impact and tell the story of POP Village. At the same time, the design had to embrace a conflict – between the shifting sands of trend-led fashion and the need to stay consistent and relevant as the brand grew.

OUTLINE OF DESIGN SOLUTION

(continued)

Capturing the spirit of youthful optimism, we created a bold and distinctive logo that features the brand name emerging from a horizon line inside a circle. This appears on the heel of each plimsoll, and also led to the production of circular business cards. The strong simplicity of the logo acted as a solid foundation and allowed us to be a little more experimental with colour and type.

The brand name immediately suggested a playful packaging format that would really attract attention in a retail environment.

Each pair of plimsolls is sold inside a cardboard tube, inviting customers to 'pop' the top. The tubes feature hand-written text and illustration, highlighting aspects of the brand's story and ethos – 'Ethically sourced', 'Cool and comfortable' and 'Feel good and do good'. A bright colour palette brings it all together in a highly ownable brand concept.

(303 words)



SUMMARY OF RESULTS

At the start of the project, we sat down with the client to identify objectives that would be key to the success of this start-up brand

Objective 1: To break even by year two

As with most start ups, Andy and Mario have put their life savings into this business. The buzz the brand created has put them firmly on track to achieve not only break even but profit by year two. They have recently attracted 2 major new investors who really want to drive the brand forward, and expect to gain a significant profit by summer 2016.

Objective 2: To sell their complete stock of 1,500 pairs in 6 months

Not only did POP sell its complete stock of 1,500 pairs, but they did so in just 3 months – half the time expected, and they went on to sell just over the same again in the next 3 months. So, 3,235 pairs sold in 6 months – more than double their target.

A successful launch at summer festivals in 2014 led to securing a retail space in Sheffield's Meadowhall and wholesale distribution to over 20 independent retailers in the UK, Ireland and South Korea in the spring of 2015, including Stomp in Knaresborough (an award-winning children's footwear retailer).

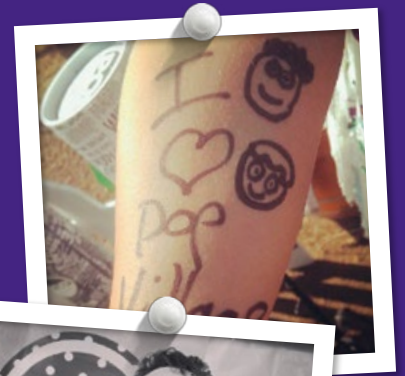


SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Objective 3: To create a 'cool' brand that people will love (and make a name for themselves)

Feedback from customers has been phenomenal – people love the branding and the tubes, which also doubled up well to create interesting point-of-sale and displays for the product.

The strong branding and packaging concept was also instrumental in securing a pop-up retail space in Sheffield's Meadowhall shopping centre, where people enjoyed the giant tube seating area too.



As a start-up, trying to establish and communicate an identity is not easy, and something that comes with time. Having people who understand and show enthusiasm in what you are trying to do is what gets you through the hard times. The quality of the creative work has been an incredible asset in presenting our brand to potential customers and other businesses. I can't speak highly enough of what it has done for our company."

Andrew Turner
Co-founder, POP Village



SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Objective 4: To produce a baby sub-brand within 12-18 months

Initial success of the adult brand led to the launch of both POP Kids and Poppets (baby shoes) in December 2014 – only a year after the company was formed and just 5 months after the first product release, way ahead of target.

Customers loved the children's shoes which were launched at the pop-up store in Meadowhall – and POP Village sold 437 pairs in the first 9 days. In the first 6 months this total rose to 1,000 pairs purely through their 20 independent retailers.

OTHER INFLUENCING FACTORS

As a start up, POP has relied on strong branding and packaging concepts to do the talking for them. The packaging conveys the brand's story, and alongside the website as means of providing customers with information on their brand, their only other means of promotion is through social media.

EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

If selling double the expected amount of shoes than anticipated, and launching a sub brand way ahead of schedule isn't enough, POP Village has plans for further range extensions – 'Flip Pops'. Yes, you've guessed it, a range of flip flops to be released in Summer 2015.

The design has also been recognised in creative circles, having been shortlisted for a New York Festivals award.

There's also a plan to boost social media activity, directing people to the website which will include a weekly blog. POP Village will also use it as a means to introduce new products to customers, allowing them to gauge demand before release and support market research.

Finally, Andrew & Mario were not the only ones to benefit from POP's success. As a result of POP's sales and future projections (as well as that of their other clients), the factory in Rioja, Spain has been able to invest in a new 8,000 square metre eco production facility introducing green tech and the use of energy more efficiently – heat pumps and reusing waste materials have been particularly successful.



Research resources
All information provided by the client

