



Following the flower



The
Travelling
Bee Co.

WILD FLOWER HONEY

From the wilds of Scotland
& the North East of England
natural & unprocessed

THE TRAVELLING BEE COMPANY
INDUSTRY SECTOR FOOD PRODUCERS
CLIENT COMPANY THE TRAVELLING BEE COMPANY
DESIGN CONSULTANCY DECIDE.
SUBMISSION DATE 30TH JUNE 2017
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DECIDE.

To bee or not to bee?

Bees are in trouble. Populations have declined by 45% in the UK since 2010 due to farming methods, climate change, and disease. And one third of our food depends on pollination.

In 2012, Mark Chambers turned his passion for bees into a business producing honey. His approach involves transporting colonies of bees to locations around the North East of England and Scotland with the seasons to access flowers and trees. Depending on the flowers, the honey delivers taste and health benefits for consumers.

Originally known as Honeyliscious, the brand was failing to secure listings at premium retailers. It just didn't look special or different. Two years in, the enterprise was not sustainable. A complete overhaul of the branding was needed to exude quality and clearly present the USP: mobile bees.

24
NEW RETAIL
CUSTOMERS

DESIGN PAID FOR ITSELF
IN THE FIRST
4 months

565%
GROWTH IN SALES

The Travelling Bee Company launched in 2015. The upgraded look is nostalgic with a dash of wit. A new tagline 'Following the flower' helps tell the story. Colour highlights the source. The brand was turned into something that could also work in the gift market. The redesign transformed the business, opening the doors to target retailers **Fenwick Food Hall** and **NotOnTheHighStreet.com**. Both had previously rejected the brand. It was featured in design-led magazines **Vogue** and **House and Garden**. Online sales grew by 500%. Total turnover grew by 565% from the 12-month period prior to the redesign to the last 12 months. **The project paid for itself in the first four months.**

But there was a greater impact. As the business grew so did its number of bee colonies, from 10 in 2014 up to 90 colonies. That's an increase of 4.8 million bees. And an increase in educational outreach around their plight.

4.8m
MORE BEES

doubled
NUMBER OF
COMMUNITY
WORKSHOPS



“The project was a turning point. Now it’s a sustainable business and the better we do, the more we can protect and promote bees.” Mark Chambers, Founder

“We’ll stock it tomorrow” Fenwicks Buyer in response to the new branding

PROJECT OVERVIEW [827 words]

Outline of project brief

Honeyluscious had been trading for two years driven by Mark's motivation to promote bees and educate people around their plight. Despite its fine product and interesting back-story, the business was failing to secure the listings it hoped for from target retailers. It just didn't look special or different.

The success of the business was in the balance. The branding project needed to provide a platform for growth. A complete overhaul was needed to exude quality and clearly present the USP: mobile bees.



Before



After



TO ACHIEVE ITS AIMS, THE PROJECT OBJECTIVES WERE:

-  To establish a compelling brand narrative
-  To upgrade the branding in line with the high quality of the product

THE PROJECT INVOLVED:

- A brand diagnostic workshop
- Creative planning leading to identification of key messages and USPs
- Development of a new name
- Design of new brand identity assets
- Design of packaging
- Delivery of a wider toolkit for use across online and point of sale

THE COMMERCIAL AIMS WERE:

OBJECTIVE 1

To increase sales

The target was to simply to stay in business.

OBJECTIVE 2

To gain listings at Fenwick Food Hall and NotOnTheHighStreet.com

It was essential to gain a presence with trusted premium retailers to validate the brand and provide a springboard for growth.

OBJECTIVE 3

To increase distribution

Over and above the flagship retailers, it needed to expand distribution to increase sales volumes.

THE SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL AIMS WERE:

OBJECTIVE 4

To increase the bee population and pollination services

The aim was to develop new colonies to be able to replace other bee-keepers' lost colonies, and increase the pollination service for farmers and the wider ecology.

OBJECTIVE 5

To increase education and awareness around bees

Core to the business was its mission to increase awareness of the importance of bees and the threats to them.





Description

Mark Chambers grew up with an interest in wildlife and studied insects at university. He kept bees in Tyne and Wear and Northumberland and in 2012 decided to turn his passion for bee-keeping into a business.

It produces natural, unprocessed honey retailing at £5 and £6 per pot as well as beeswax, pollen and propolis. Bees are homed in quality hives in natural locations. Products come from a single colony (non-blended) and the harvesting method ensures optimum flavour and quality, avoiding heating the honey which destroys the enzymes.

Mark realised that by moving the bees each season, he could provide them with specific flowers and trees, particularly wild heather in Argyll and Bute in Scotland, accessible for only a very short period. In doing this he could produce honey with different flavours and health benefits. Research done by Glasgow University found that heather honey has been found to be superior to Manuka honey in all but one test. New Zealand Manuka honey is prized for its unique antimicrobial and nutritional qualities. Sold locally, Mark's honey has a considerably lower carbon footprint.

The business is committed to its ecological mission to nurture and promote bees, and educate people on their importance. Mark runs interactive sessions with community groups including young offenders, schoolchildren, and children with learning difficulties. He visits with a real hive, honey spinners and a slide show and explains the relationship between beekeeper and honeybees and the production process. In some deprived areas, some children had never heard of honey. Mark is still the main beekeeper in the business.



“Bees are very intelligent and social creatures; we’ll never know all that they know.” Mark Chambers, Founder

Overview of market

Ecological context

One third of food production depends on pollination. Bee populations have declined by 45% in the UK since 2010 due to farming methods, insecticides, climate change, disease and parasites.

Honey market

Honey is the largest sector within the Jams & Spreads category. Total Honey consumption by UK consumers stood at 41,000 tonnes in 2014, 95% of which was imported (Budge & Learner, 2014 Honey Imports, The Sweet Truth). In 2015 it grew by 8.9% to £119.5 million (source: Kantar Worldpanel).

Competitors

The Bee Farmers' Association is the commercial trade association for beekeeping in the United Kingdom. It represents around 450 bee farming businesses of which the Travelling Bee Company is now one.

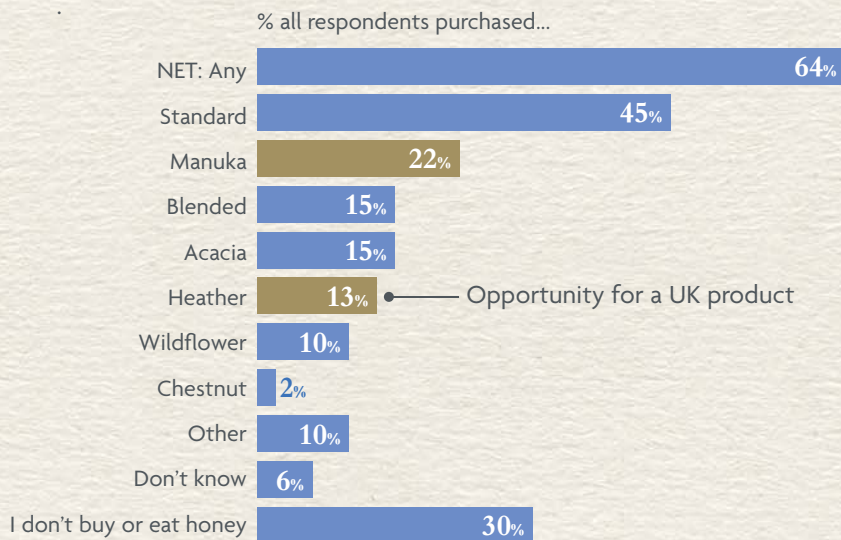
Market dynamics: sugar

The UK Government has introduced industry targets to cut sugar by 20% by 2020 (Attitudes to Sugar & Sweeteners, Mintel, Jan 2017). Honey sales have benefited as it is seen as a better-for-you alternative sweetener. More widely there is a consumer demand for healthy eating, natural products, local products, and ethical products. In combination, these demands presented an opportunity for the brand.



Market dynamics: honey as a remedy

Manuka honey, purchased by one third of honey consumers, is a significant trend that has helped to position honey as beneficial to health. Heather and Wild Flower honeys are niche segments of the market. There is growing interest in using honey as a natural remedy for hayfever sufferers. It is believed that eating honey from bees which have visited flowers in your locality lessens allergic reactions to the flower pollen.



(Source: Food Standards Agency 2016)

Opportunity for a UK product



Project launch date: The new brand launched in November 2015.

Size of design budget and production costs: The design fee was £10,000.



Fenwick Food Hall delicatessen, Newcastle





OUTLINE OF DESIGN SOLUTION [379 words]

The aim of the design was to **develop a compelling brand narrative focused on the brand's USP: mobile bees**, and **upgrade the branding in line with the high quality of the product**. The agency and client worked in close collaboration to develop the brand strategy and name. The approach was to use nostalgia with a dash of wit. Packaging was intended to look reassuringly premium while delivering surprises in the details.

A name with a story

An engaging new name was introduced: The Travelling Bee Company. This amplifies the fascinating story of mobile bee-keeping: how the hives are moved around to follow the flowers in bloom to extract honey bespoke to that flower, which is what makes the product so unique.

An engaging emblem

The main emblem in the identity is a traditional but playful illustration of a beehive on wheels. Personality and humour is conjured by the addition of the wheels to the hive while the swarm of bees evoke movement. The illustration was inspired by the idea of a travelling flea circus and iconic Winnie the Pooh illustrations. The hive image creates a recognisable profile on the label when viewed from a distance in store.

Witty wording

Building the brand personality is important for scalability, enabling it to become more than just a provincial brand. A new tagline, 'Following the flower', was developed to further support the proposition and engage customers. The artisanal tone of voice is further used on the lid label with 'Lovely honey made by happy bees'. Wording at the base of the label, 'Natural and unprocessed', reassures the consumer on quality.

Lovely lettering

The styling of the hand rendered type was designed to communicate artisanal values in a stylish modern way.



Jar lid





Clear colours

The largely black and white scheme and unbleached paper label complement the variety of warm hues of the honey. Flashes of bright colour highlight the different tastes relating to specific flowers the bees visit across the North East of England, Northumberland and by the shores of the Kyles of Bute, Argyll, Scotland. Colour coding enables shoppers to navigate the products more easily and explore more of the range.

EARLY SPRING

SUMMER

AUTUMN

WINTER

RAPESEED & HEDGEROW

RASPBERRY & BLACKBERRY

WILLOW HERB & HEATHER

IVY



Masterful merchandising

The reduced size of the label allows more of the product to be visible to customers in store.

The beehive illustration and calligraphic type are effective at large-scale for point of sale graphics.

Gorgeous gifts

The branding was designed to increase the appeal of the product as a gift. Boxes were introduced to facilitate gift bundling and hampers. The lid of the jar was changed to black to amplify the premium cues of the brand.



SUMMARY OF RESULTS

COMMERCIAL AIMS

The commercial aims were focused on creating a sustainable business. The task was to upgrade the packaging so that it could compete in a premium retail environment and express the brand's USP: mobile bees.

The impact of the new design was seen immediately, with orders from new retailers, increased sales from existing retailers, and increased sales online too.

OBJECTIVE 1 To increase sales

The target was to achieve enough sales to stay in business. In the first 12 months after the relaunch this was achieved more than twice over. **Turnover grew by 565% from the 12-month period prior to the redesign to the last 12 months.** The project paid for itself in the first four months.

Seasonal gifting

December sales increased almost eightfold from 2014 to 2017, providing evidence that the appealing new look was now seen as a suitable gift item.

Online

Online sales via third party stores Amazon, Etsy, Ebay, Folksy increased by 500%. Online sales via the company's own ecommerce website increased by 500%.

New job creation

The company not only managed to stay in business but now employs three more people. It has one additional Beekeeper to support the management of additional hives, an extra member of staff to handle interactions with consumers via social media channels, and extra resource has been recruited to support monthly attendance at food markets and exhibition events. Further roles are envisaged in the coming 6 months to help develop a market presence in Scotland.



565%
GROWTH

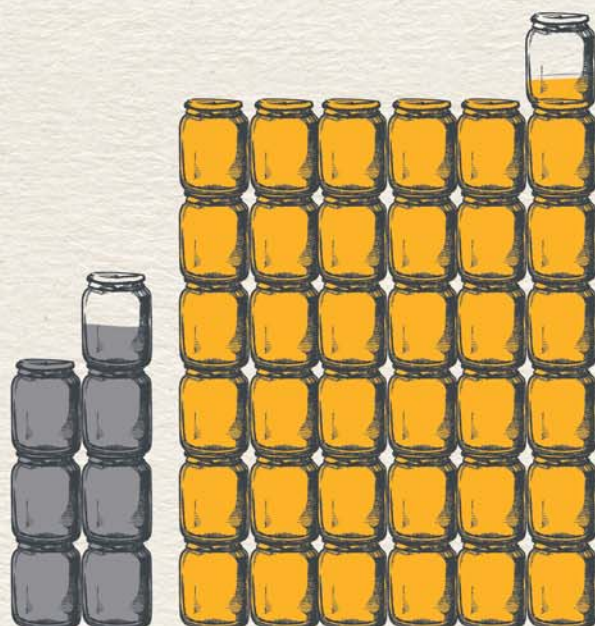
500%
INCREASE IN
ONLINE SALES

ACHIEVED TARGET
twice over
IN FIRST YEAR

DESIGN PAID FOR ITSELF
IN THE FIRST
4 months

CREATED
3
NEW JOBS

TURNOVER
IN PERIOD 12 MONTHS
PRIOR TO REDESIGN



TURNOVER
IN LAST 12 MONTHS





OBJECTIVE 2 To gain listings at Fenwick Food Hall and NotOnTheHighStreet.com

It was important to gain listings with respected quality retailers to validate the brand and provide a springboard for growth. **Fenwick Food Hall** had consistently declined to list Honeyluscious products, citing the design as the issue. Following the redesign, the buyer instantly agreed to list the range. Online retailer **NotOnTheHighStreet.com (NOTHS)** is highly selective in identifying and inviting distinctive, quality up-and-coming brands to list as 'partners' on its platform. Following redesign, NOTHS listed The Travelling Bee Company's core product range and luxury hamper.

"This brand has a very polished and professional design and brand behind it. Its positioning of premium, natural and local is just right for our Food Hall." Fenwick Buyer following the new listing

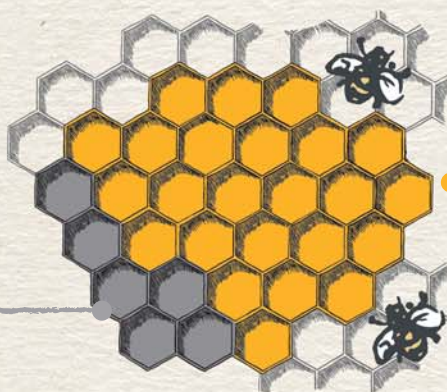
"Looks like a quality product" – Farmers market customer

OBJECTIVE 3 To increase distribution by other retailers, online stores and food businesses

The company needed to increase the number of retail customers to sell greater volumes. Prior to the relaunch, the business supplied just six retailers. As a direct result of the new look, press coverage was achieved in design-led publications Vogue and House & Garden. The brand was invited to exhibit in a premium position at Living North in 2016, a high profile, selective seasonal food and lifestyle event. And it was invited to attend a pop-up event in London's Piccadilly Circus. The brand acquired 24 new retail customers. It now supplies over 30 retailers including Miss Mary's Hamper, a new gift-focussed retailer as well as Inver restaurant – a multi-award winning restaurant on the banks of Loch Fyne.



SUPPLIED
6 retailers
PRIOR TO REDESIGN



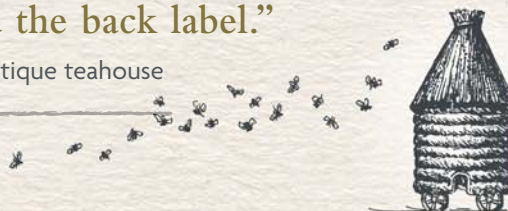
ACQUIRED

24 new retail
customers
SINCE REDESIGN



"The jars look great. The logo has a nostalgic vibe. It's great to see packaging getting straight to the point. Our customers know what is in the jars on the shelves without having to pick them up to read the back label."

New customer, Quilliam Brothers boutique teahouse



Creating a Buzz around Honey...



SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL IMPACT

As the enterprise grew, so did its ability to make positive ecological and social impact. It could deliver its mission to better promote the bee population and awareness of their importance.

OBJECTIVE 4 To increase the bee population and pollination services

Nurturing its own bees

As the demand for honey increased, the business increased the number of bee colonies it was nurturing from just 10 in 2014 to 90 colonies. One colony comprises around 60,000 bees which can pollinate 4,000m² of fruit trees (Source: The British Beekeepers Association). That's an increase in 4.8 million active working bees – 32 football pitches of pollination. The business is also nurturing a further 70 young colonies to sustain the demand for honey, pollination and colony sales in the future. The upscaling of production means the business owner Mark Chambers is no longer simply a bee keeper but is now formally recognised as a 'Bee Farmer' by the Bee Farmers Association which acts as the voice for professional beekeeping.

Supporting other beekeepers

The Travelling Bee Company offers support to the non-commercial and hobbyist beekeeper by supplying healthy young colonies of disease-free honey bees. It is actively replacing lost colonies as some 10-15% are usually lost over winter. Mark has replaced 30 colonies in the last year.

Pollination services

The company's bees are hard working. The business provides a pollination service that is becoming increasingly needed as populations of natural pollinators suffer due to global warming and farming practices. Wild pollinator populations (eg, bumblebees, solitary bees, hoverflies) are at an all-time low and most feral honey bee colonies have been lost to varroa. Managed honey bees are the most efficient means to ensure successful pollination of a wide range of crops. This increases yield and provides better quality fruit. The Travelling Bee Company provide pollination services to ten farms.

Scotland stewards 80% of the world's heather moors. The Travelling Bee Company's pollination programme plays an important role for the tourist industry of Scotland ensuring that the Heather moors are thriving.



4.8m
MORE BEES

320,000m²
EXTRA POLLINATED PLANTS

NOW AN OFFICIAL
'Bee Farmer'

30 COLONIES
REPLACED
FOR OTHER BEEKEEPERS

POLLINATION AT
10 farms





OBJECTIVE 5 To increase education and awareness around bees

The new visuals and wording helped the business to tell its story. It now uses the labels on the back of the jars to explain how the honey is produced and educate customers. That's a message that has gone out on some 45,000 jars since the rebrand. The website is also used to spread the word and users dwell time has increased by 149% up to 1 minute 27 seconds.

The commercial success of the business enabled Mark to continue his voluntary activities in the community delivering free hands-on educational sessions. Demand has increased as the profile of the business has grown. He now delivers 10 sessions per year with schools, youth groups, women's guilds, and museums compared to just 5 in the year before. Mark ran workshops at the Great North Museum, presenting to over 600 people. Additionally, he has been invited to speak on BBC radio.

Service to the community

Mark runs a 'Bespoke Honey Service'. He receives emails and calls from customers asking for remedy honeys for Hayfever sufferers particularly and uses his knowledge and expertise to make

recommendations. This service includes helping with dogs and horses suffering with hayfever.

Mark supports The Beekeepers Association, Local Authorities and pest control by ethically removing swarms which the general public have raised as a concern in their gardens and homes. Mark also offers counselling to members of the public on bees. In the last year he has rescued 25 swarms and rehoused them into colonies.



SHARING THE STORY ON OVER
45,000 jars

WEB DWELL TIME
INCREASED BY
149%
TO 1 MIN 27 SECS

EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS
doubled
TO 10 PER YEAR



25 SWARMS
REMOVED
FROM THE COMMUNITY
AND ETHICALLY REHOUSED
INTO COLONIES

"In some deprived areas, some children had never heard of honey."

Mark Chambers

"Thank you loads. It's been fab we have all learnt so much
and the children loved it." Roman Road Primary School, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear





OTHER INFLUENCING FACTORS

The success of the business was driven in part by the increased demand for honey as a substitute for sugar, for local and ethical products, and interest in honey's medicinal properties. We believe that the carefully crafted and clever branding provided the brand with competitive advantage over and above similar competitor products.

- The project pulled into focus its unique proposition around mobile bees, and ensured that it looked the part for the target market. In fact, the largest growth has come not from the healthy-eating sector but from entering the gift market, driven largely by the look.

In terms of growth, the brand outperformed the category.

- There was no advertising. PR was minimal, led by the product appearance and quirky story framed by the new branding.
- Growth has been sustained over an 18-month period since the rebrand showing more than simply a peak at launch.
- There is lots more potential still in terms of supply across the UK and in the near future, overseas export too.
- Strong continuing growth is expected.

*When it comes to quality and taste,
you'll find our honey travels well*



RESEARCH RESOURCES

The Travelling Bee Company financial reports
 Mintel
 Food Standards Agency
 Bee Keepers Association
 Budge & Learner 2014, The Sweet Truth
 Kantar Worldpanel
 Bee Farmers Association
 Google Analytics