

# The Miracle Food

Television Bureau of Canada (TVB)



**Business Results Period (Consecutive Months): January 2010 – March 2010**  
**Start of Advertising/Communication Effort: January 4, 2010**  
**Base Period as a Benchmark: January 2009 - March 2010**

**Geographic Area Covered: Ontario and BC only**

“Television, a scientific dream ever since the telephone was perfected, has at last been realized,” enthused an Indianapolis Star news report of the event, which made history on April 7, 1927, as the first public demonstration of a long distance TV broadcast.

Traditional TV won’t be here in seven to 10 years,” says Kim Moses, co-producer of CBS’ popular Ghost Whisperer, who has just launched a short-form version of her own show online. “It’s changing so fast that I don’t know if it’s even going to be that long.”

## **No support channels, no PR. Just 3 TV spots and a metrics plan to measure its success.**

So what is it? Is TV a scientific dream or a dinosaur? If you listen to many media pundits, you’d think that television is going the way of the hula hoop. Are emerging technologies and the changing media landscape spelling D.E.A.T.H. for TV?

The Television Bureau of Canada (TVB), along with John St., sought to dig deeper into this very issue by developing a campaign that would be communicated with TV alone. No support channels, no PR. Just 3 TV spots and a metrics plan to measure its success.

How did we do it? We took a commodity product, broccoli, which has had no direct communication promoting it or its nutritional value during the past year, and turned it into a true vegetable success story using nothing but the power of TV.

## SITUATION ANALYSIS

In 2008 it was reported that only nine percent of households had a PVR, but a recent industry study suggests the number of PVRs has risen to 29 percent, with usage projected to grow to 42 percent by the end of 2010. That same report stated that “79 percent of consumers with PVRs are fast-forwarding through the commercials.”

In March 2009, an Ipsos Reid poll said Canadians spend more than 18 hours a week online, compared with 16.9 hours watching television.

Conversely, Ad Age referenced a PricewaterhouseCoopers report that projects ad spending on U.S. television will grow to \$80.3 billion in 2014 from \$62.1 billion in 2009, surpassing its previous high in 2006 of nearly \$70 billion.

What is an advertiser to believe? To find out, TVB created three 30 second broccoli spots that were all in rotation, until the Haiti earthquake, when 1 spot titled “Chimney”, which depicted an older gentleman surviving a violent storm, was pulled out of respect for the situation.

### **Understanding the effectiveness of television advertising was put in the hands of an unlikely hero: broccoli.**

If the perceptions about the waning effectiveness of TV were true, we’d expect to see low awareness/recall of the spots and little to no change in the broccoli market. If the TV ads were being seen, remembered and acted upon, we’d see the opposite.

Understanding the effectiveness of television advertising was put in the hands of an unlikely hero: broccoli. The point being made is simple: television is one of the most influential and compelling communication tools of our time. It builds brands, tells stories and at times guides and defines popular culture.

In an effort to remind us how interesting and provocative commercials can be, TVB created three spots promoting the health benefits of broccoli.

The product . . . not sexy. The results . . . dramatic.

## OBJECTIVES:

Prove TV advertising is effective by:

1. Making broccoli relevant to consumers by raising top of mind awareness by 20% and intent to purchase by 10% using nothing but TV advertising
2. Increasing broccoli sales by more than 5% using nothing but TV
3. Showing TV can still play a key role in brand building (no other channels used)



## STRATEGIC THINKING

As this is a unique case we had two targets. The first was the advertising/marketing community. When determining media and communication strategies, the decision-makers' list is long and includes the likes of ad, media, and communication agencies, and all levels of client side marketing communications. All of these stakeholders are analyzing industry data, using brand architecture and target insights to determine their media choices and recommendations. This is also a very cynical group of people who have been bombarded with studies and media reports arguing either side of TV relevance discussion.

These people are the primary target for The Miracle Food campaign. Our goal was to show them how TV alone can impact the success of a brand. When looking at the possible directions we could have gone, and the media channel we were trying to promote, it was an easy decision to create a case study about TV effectiveness rather than advertise the merits of TV itself.

Our secondary target was the primary grocery shopper (women 34-49), but since the media was donated we needed to ensure our communication had broad appeal that could influence influencers as much as purchasers. If we didn't reach or influence the primary grocery shopper, we wouldn't hit our metrics.

Broccoli was selected because it is widely un-liked, un-owned and, well, darn good for you. If we were going to try to sell something, why not make Canadians a little healthier along the way?

## COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The communication strategy was simple: Using only TV, generate sufficient interest in a product that has not been advertised in recent memory by demonstrating that on its own, TV can increase sales, awareness and positive perceptions of broccoli.

## KEY EXECUTIONAL ELEMENTS

### CREATIVE DISCUSSION

With all the talk in recent years about the death of television advertising, the Television Bureau of Canada wanted to remind people of television's ability to deliver a message to the most people, in the most emotionally engaging way. But we realized we couldn't just tell the industry about it. We had to prove it. With a product that was already an extremely tough sell to begin with. Broccoli.

Three TV spots aired between January 4 and February 7, 2010, pitting the miraculous benefits of broccoli against other miracles in life, with a simple HTML website in place to track results without any additional PR or support.

**Media used:  
TELEVISION ONLY.**

### MEDIA DISCUSSION

Our media plan was a GRP goal. We had little control over the media outside of TV only and focused our efforts on reaching the GRP goal.

- The media was donated by TVB member stations and was ROS (run of schedule)
- Consistent with a brand launch constrained to a 5-week window, our goal for each market was a total of 1,500 campaign GRP's ( ±10%)
- Airtime was provided in all extended markets in Ontario & British Columbia
- The target audience was W25-54, previously stated as 34-49
- The Prime/Fringe ratio for all stations was 60/40
- Prime was defined as 7pm-11pm for conventional stations and 5pm-12am for specialty stations
- The Conventional/Specialty ratio was 60/40



TV SPOTS



PARACHUTE



OCTUPLETS



CHIMNEY

TV SPOTS



YOUTUBE SPOOFS



WEBSITE





## BUSINESS RESULTS

Two key sets of metrics were used to measure success: advertising impact and sales results.

On both scores, the results were overwhelmingly successful. The client undertook a pre-post tracking study conducted by Ipsos in October 2009 and February 2010 to measure the impact of communications on consumer perceptions and awareness. The study included 1,636 adults, 18-64, and was conducted prior to the beginning of the campaign with a post-wave at the end of the 5 weeks.

Despite the brevity of the campaign, top-of-mind awareness for broccoli went from receiving no mentions to being the second most recalled produce in the study. 13% of consumers responded they had purchased at least one more bunch of broccoli in their latest shopping trip as compared to the pre-campaign period, while the intent to purchase at least 1 more bunch of broccoli also increased by 13%.

Driving this claimed behaviour was strong ad impact: unaided ad awareness reached 65% (nearly 20 points ahead of research supplier norms for similar tactical campaigns) and aided awareness was nearly ubiquitous at 90% of respondents. And beyond awareness and purchase interest, the campaign successfully shifted perceptions of broccoli – something even your mom was unable to do very well:

### Attribute ratings post-campaign versus pre wave

**Versatile +11%**

**Tasty +15%**

**Health +18%**

**Full of Vitamins +20%**

**More Nutritious than other Vegetables +65%**

Using the traditional medium of television, TVB was able to cause a social stir. Using social media metrics (Radian 6 and Google metrics), we saw average mentions of “broccoli” or “miracle food” increase by 444% during the campaign and the weeks that followed. Search volume was up 100% vs. the same period in 2008 and 2009. Broccoli’s fan page on Facebook attracted +17,000 followers and over 30,000 were sufficiently intrigued by the television spot to watch them again on YouTube. An additional 20,000 people tuned in to watch the +15 spoofs users created and posted online.

And the most rewarding of all metrics; Broccoli sales rose 8% versus same period in 2009 according to AC Nielsen.



## CAUSE & EFFECT BETWEEN ADVERTISING AND RESULTS

This is the perfect scientific case. No variables were introduced except the introduction of the 5 week TV campaign. The perception data and AC Nielsen sales data combined with the web and social network monitoring metrics all showed direct spikes during the period The Miracle Food campaign was in market.

We also noticed a sharp decline in the web and social network metrics after the campaign was stopped. To ensure real correlations, we used generic key words such as 'broccoli', as well as specific terms such as "the miracle food" to understand if the campaign was driving the reported metrics. We saw a 444% increase in mentions of 'broccoli' and/or "miracle food" over the same period in 2009, which was a direct result of the TV ads breaking through.

To summarize, the impact of the TV spots was linked directly to consumer activity via the U&A study and the increase in sales. The U&A clearly identified consumer perceptions of broccoli had changed for the positive, their intent to purchase and purchase volume would increase, hence the 8% increase in sales.

Is TV still effective advertising vehicle? Ask your local broccoli farmer.

