



AYE, NO BAD TO THAT.

**HOW IRN-BRU OWNED THE
COMMONWEALTH GAMES IN 2014.**

CATEGORY: 3 COMMUNICATION, 3.7 PR

AUTHOR: STUART MARTIN



SUMMARY

This paper demonstrates how a multi-layered PR campaign from Stripe Communications helped IRN-BRU capture the mood of a nation and become 3.5 times more memorable than any other sponsor of the Glasgow 2014 Games.



GETTING READY FOR THE GAMES

In October 2012, A.G. Barr signed a sponsorship agreement with the Glasgow Commonwealth Games, with IRN-BRU as the lead sponsor drinks brand.

IRN-BRU had previous experience activating sponsorships on a local and regional level in Scotland, but this signalled their biggest ever commercial sponsorship investment and the largest sponsorship programme ever undertaken by the company.

We were not only tasked with announcing and managing the sponsorship, but to keep it at the forefront of a busy media agenda before, during and after the Games. Our ultimate goal was to be the most memorable and the most loved sponsor of the Games.

'BUT DREAM WE DO'

Ambition and clarity of objectives



Ambition and clarity of objectives

Our objective was very simple but very ambitious:

To be the most memorable and the most loved sponsor of the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth games

We were determined to punch well above our weight both in terms of visibility and impact. We had to work smartly to make our Tier Two sponsorship activity outshine the Tier One sponsors such as Virgin Media, Emirates, SSE and BP.

To do this we needed a strategy which went straight to heart of the Scottish people and **roused pride** in the nation.

AMBITION AND CLARITY OF OBJECTIVES

Our success was to be measured by:

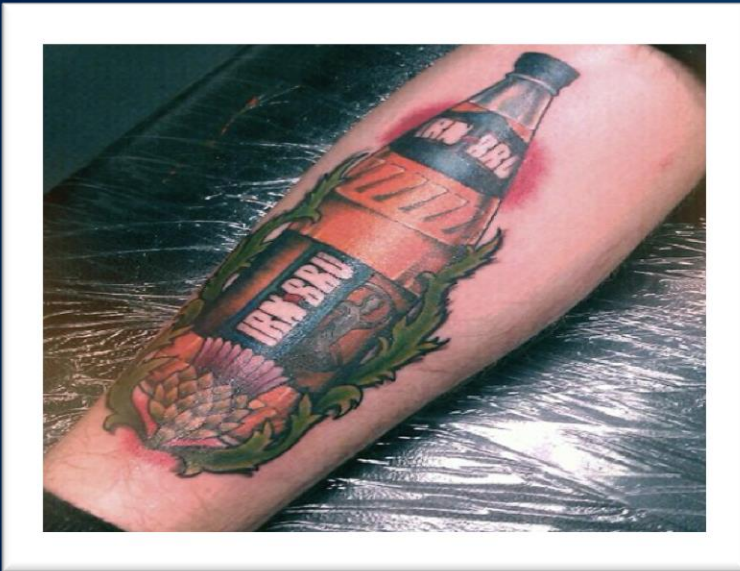
- Recall of sponsorship
- At least 70% of coverage to be of excellent quality of messaging (image + three key messages)
- Coverage in all tier 1 media titles
- At least 3:1 return on investment
- To positively associate IRN-BRU with both Team Scotland and Glasgow 2014

**‘IT IS IN THE REACHING
THAT WE FIND JOY’**

Strategic thinking and effective planning

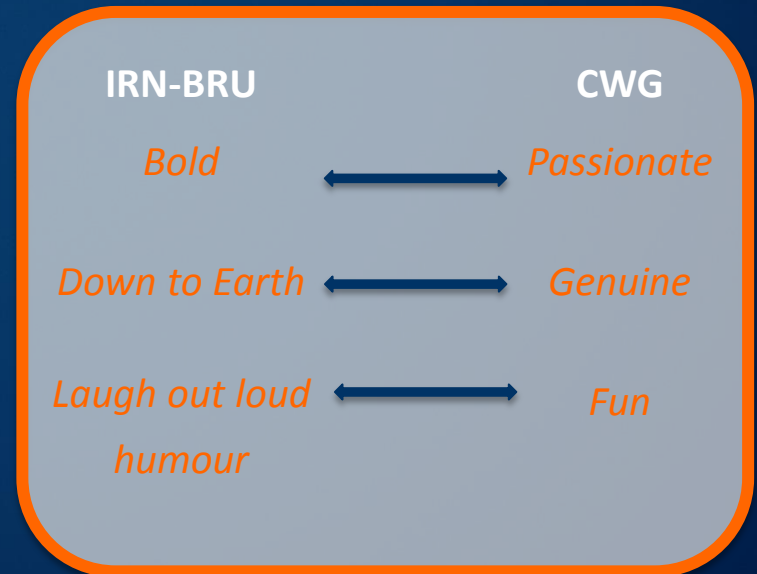


If any brand could get straight to the heart of the nation, it was IRN-BRU. No other brand evokes this amount of loyalty and outpouring of love from such stoic people.



The real challenge was how to ROUSE PRIDE in our partnership with the Games.

We first looked at the synergies between the brands to ensure that we could be true to the IRN-BRU brand whilst complimenting the Commonwealth Games values and personality. We found that the core personality traits worked in harmony with each other:



We then turned to our audience to gauge opinion of the partnership.

- **Firstly, we consulted our large, loyal online community panel, whom we trust to give us honest, no-holds-barred feedback and opinion on the brand.**
- **Secondly, we knew we had to appeal to a much broader, family market so we did some workshops and co-creation groups with a much wider target market.**

The synergies were there and the audience was positive about the association.

But how were we to ROUSE PRIDE whilst staying true to IRN-BRU's down to earth, irreverent and cheeky sense of humour?

The answer was grounded in our consumers. We decided to:

**PUT OUR AUDIENCE AT THE
HEART OF THE STRATEGY.**

SCOTTISH FANS INSIGHT

Our passion and unyielding support for our teams (regardless of their performance), our talent for friendly banter & japes, our knack of getting stuck in, having a huge amount of fun and never taking ourselves too seriously makes us the most positive, determined, unforgettable, friendliest and **best supporters in the world**



This led to a single minded sports related proposition, albeit with a trademark IRN-BRU twist:

Scots may not always be world beaters at sport but, when it comes to support, we're world champions.

Our campaign was therefore defined by:



Mindful of our steep ambitions, once we had our core creative thought we developed a robust phasing plan for the activation:

Activation Plan



‘WE HAVE IRN IN OUR BLOOD’

**Originality, creativity, execution
and implementation**





PHASE 1 - PRE-GAMES / HEROIC LAUNCH

WE WERE GOING TO BE THE MOST MEMORABLE SPONSOR OF THE GAMES SO WE HAD TO LAUNCH THE CAMPAIGN IN A WAY THAT WOULD BUILD INTRIGUE AND BEGIN TO CAPTURE THE HEARTS OF THE NATION. START AS WE MEANT TO GO ON.

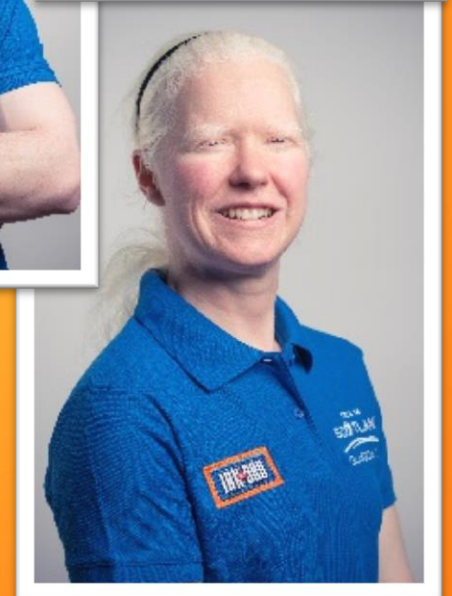
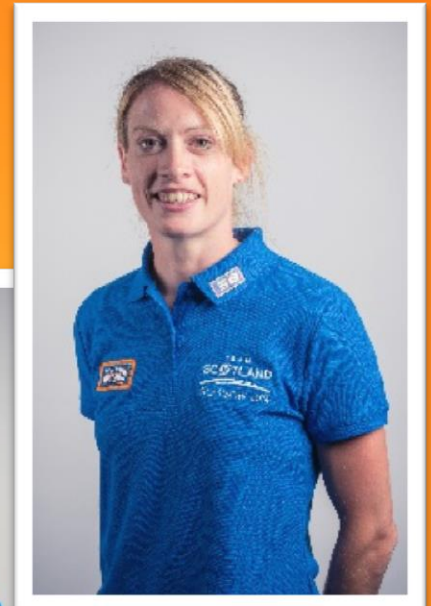
CAMP SCOTLAND

We visited Team Scotland's pre-Games camp to engage them with the brand and to achieve their buy-in to the campaign and our planned activity.

Ahead of camp, we prepared IRN-BRU goody bags and secured space in the official athlete kit bags.

We secured social media interaction from the athletes and mentions both pre and during Games - especially around the IRN-BRU lucky socks we delivered to each Team Scotland athlete.

We also interviewed and photographed each athlete to build personal stories for print and online media.



ROUSING PRIDE

IRN-BRU is known for its clever and quirky advertising and we wanted to pay homage and launch the ad in a fun way. We created themed USB sticks and branded shuttlecock tubes in which the new ad was delivered to media.

The ad was hand delivered to our target media outlets with team dressed in specially commissioned 'numpty' costumes referenced in the ad.

The campaign launch dominated the media, resulting in 31 articles with a reach of over 2.5 million.

We also worked closely with Team Scotland and carefully organised a coordinated piece of Twitter activity. 15 of our top athletes each tweeted a line from the IRN IN OUR BLOOD poem that made up the narrative to the television ad.

Fans got involved, proudly engaging and retweeting, using #borntosupport, and marking the start of what was to be a very special 11 days...



Colin Rhys Gregor
@colingregor

Follow

We may take more wee steps than giant leaps. But that is what makes our mettle.

#borntosupport

RETWEETS 19 FAVOURITES 19



Jen McIntosh
@JenMac800

Follow

We will dress like numpties. #borntosupport

Reply Retweet Favourite More



Danny Purvis
@PurvisDanny

Follow

We're the underdog with the heart of a lion.

#borntosupport

RETWEETS 31 FAVOURITES 27



Michael Jamieson
@mj88live

Follow

We're Born to Support and we have IRN in our blood #borntosupport

Reply Retweet Favourite More

RETWEETS 42 FAVOURITES 44



A man in a blue and white jacket is seen in profile on the right side of the frame, looking out over a city. In the background, a large stadium is visible, and several bright beams of light from stadium floodlights illuminate the sky. The scene is set during sunset or sunrise, with a hazy, golden light over the city.

PHASE 2 - BORN TO SUPPORT

PHASE TWO OF OUR ACTIVATION PLAN WAS TO PHYSICALLY HERO OUR BORN SUPPORTERS AND FEATURE THEM IN OUR ADS.

BORN SUPPORTERS

We launched a search for Scotland's Born Supporters via an unpaid national media partnership with The Scottish Sun and local media outreach.

We found Scotland's 10 best 'Born Supporters' and worked alongside partner agencies to create localised six sheet advertising in and around the winners' home towns.

We conducted case study interviews with each winner and sold in features to local media across Scotland.

Finally, we managed photocalls across Scotland - selling in pics to national and local media.



ON YOUR MARKS

With the world's media watching the Glasgow 2014 Opening Ceremony, it was vital for IRN-BRU to play a key part in the action.

We wanted something visual and iconic that fans across the globe would immediately recognise and what's more recognisable than a Forth Road Bridge made out of IRN-BRU and dancers resplendent in bright orange jumpsuits and blue hardhats?

As soon as the Opening Ceremony took place, we received the iconic shots from Getty and proudly issued to media desks across the country, officially marking IRN-BRU's 2014 Commonwealth Games campaign underway.





PHASE 3 – BORN TO SUPPORT YOU
WITH THE GAMES IN FULL SWING THE FOCUS OF THE CAMPAIGN NOW
SHIFTED TO SUPPORTING THE FANS AND THE ATHLETES.

BRU STORE

The heartbeat of IRN-BRU's Games-time activity was a large retail unit situated in the Merchant City.

IRN-BRU's first ever retail store, the unit was built from recycled shipping containers to reflect the brand's shipbuilding heritage. And all post-operations profits were donated to the brand's official charity; Prince and Princess of Wales Hospice.

With consumer demand high, we created suspense and hype amongst fans by creating a fun launch picture (shown right) and seeding out merchandise to key media and influencers to generate even more buzz.

Working closely with the team, we also supported national and international media visits to the store. We reached out to key influencers and local celebs to invite them along and raise awareness of a great cause. Media opportunities included broadcast interviews with Heart FM, BBC Radio Scotland and STV as well as visits from Canadian and Australian media.

During its residency, 151k people visited the IRN-BRU Store and we generated 116 pieces of coverage. The IRN-BRU Store also played host to 12 live broadcasts.



CREATING OUR OWN NEWS

As with our fans, our Games-time focus shifted to the personal and success stories which emanated from Team Scotland.

We managed athlete appearances every day during Games. Athletes were welcomed to the stage on top of the IRN-BRU Store. From here, they were introduced to the thousands of gathered fans for a Q&A and an opportunity to meet them with their Commonwealth Games medals.

Media were also invited to the IRN-BRU Store every day, where we managed print, TV and radio interviews as well as photography.

Our photography was issued to media every afternoon – each with a new and creative moment to remain relevant throughout the period of the Games and avoid any fatigue from picture desks.



MAVERICK MOMENTS

IRN-BRU is famous for its maverick personality and we regularly work to deliver 'Maverick Moments'; quirky, uniquely IRN-BRU stories that capture the imagination and specific moments in time.

Glasgow 2014 was no different and we secured the following Maverick Moments throughout Games-time.



Jock the Scottie Dog - Just hours after he appeared at the Opening Ceremony, We invited Jock the Scottie Dog, to the IRN-BRU Store the morning after his big showcase and presented him with his very own IRN-BRU tartan coat.

Heart of an Underdog - We presented Swimmer Ross Murdoch with his very own BRU trunks. Just the previous day, Ross had come from nowhere to surprise the world by beating Olympic silver medallist Michael Jamieson to the Commonwealth Gold.

Get Yer Pins Oot - We invited Clydesiders and volunteers to the IRN-BRU Store where we gifted them with a limited edition pin badge as a gesture of appreciation for their terrific work during the Games

BRU Should be so Lucky - Glasgow's favourite Aussie closed the Games, and what better way to send her off than with a pair of IRN-

'OH PROUD LAND'

The results



RESULTS

Our objective was:

'To be the most memorable sponsor of the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth games'

And it is fair to say that we achieved that goal with IRN-BRU being 3.5 times more memorable than the 4 top tier sponsors.

**3.5 x MORE
MEMORABLE
THAN ANY OTHER SPONSOR**



This translated into some healthy commercial results:

**Sales rose by 24.4%
throughout the period
of the games.**

Source: Nielson Aug 2014

MarketingWeek

**AG Barr raises glass to Irn-Bru
Commonwealth Games success**

**London
Evening
Standard**

**AG Barr wins at
Commonwealth Games**

PR RESULTS:

- In just 8 weeks, the campaign dominated the media with over **401 pieces of media coverage**, all 100% in tone.
- This coverage achieved a **PR value of £10m** and delivered **345 million opportunities to see or hear**.
- We gained **coverage in all tier one media** titles including full front page Daily Record as well as a number of national outlets
- **85% of coverage** contained key messaging and images.
- We achieved an ROI of **1:185**.
- IRN-BRU Store was **visited by 151k people** and **sold over 37k items**. It **hosted 22 medal winner** appearances that delivered **116 pieces of coverage** and **12 live broadcasts**.



A close-up, slightly blurred photograph of a diverse crowd of people at what appears to be a sports event or concert. In the foreground, a man with a beard and a woman are cheering with their mouths open and arms raised. The background shows other people in a similar state of excitement, with warm, ambient lighting suggesting an indoor venue.

AYE, NO BAD TO THAT.

This campaign taught us that by working smarter than the competition, and recognising the synergies between the two brands and putting the people of Scotland at the heart of the strategy, IRN-BRU succeeded in becoming an integral part of ‘the best games ever’.