



Category 3.8 – Sponsorship

## Highland Spring and The 2014 Ryder Cup: The perfect match

A joint submission by the Highland Spring Group Agencies

OFFICIAL SUPPLIER  
2014 RYDER CUP





# Précis

In August 2013, Highland Spring signed an Official Supplier deal to become the Official Bottled Water of The 2014 Ryder Cup. With a carefully planned and phased activation strategy, combined with creative excellence, Highland Spring maximised longer-term brand exposure and scored a victory in terms of outstanding sales performance.



# On the practice ground

When it was announced that the Ryder Cup (RC) would return to the spiritual home of golf, we saw a real opportunity. With Gleneagles being a short 'drive' away from Highland Spring's (HS') source in The Ochils, not only did we want to celebrate the world's biggest golfing event being in our own backyard, we wanted to recognise the shared Scottish provenance that made both brands so special. In addition, the RC aligned with HS looking to build on its UK's No.1 bottled water status through:

- Reach – maximum brand exposure through RC's extremely high profile as an event with global appeal way beyond just golfers
- Stature – RC's world class status reflected the brand's British pre-eminence
- Sales – leverage the RC association in September when post-summer sales erode

With HS, they recognised true strategic alignment. Like Gleneagles, the brand is a product not just of the same locale and terrain, but also of the highest levels of custodianship; HS' Soil Association accreditation aligns perfectly with the RC's sustainability agenda.

What's more, the brands shared a mutual interest in nurturing grassroots golfing talent:

*"Supporting sports like golf has been a long-term part of our strategy to promote the benefits of a healthy active lifestyle and the tournament is a perfect platform to inspire Brits to get more involved in the sport."*

Les Montgomery,  
HSG Chief Executive



In partnership with the Scottish Golf Union (SGU), HS were the official sponsor of the Junior Masters, the biggest national junior golf competition.

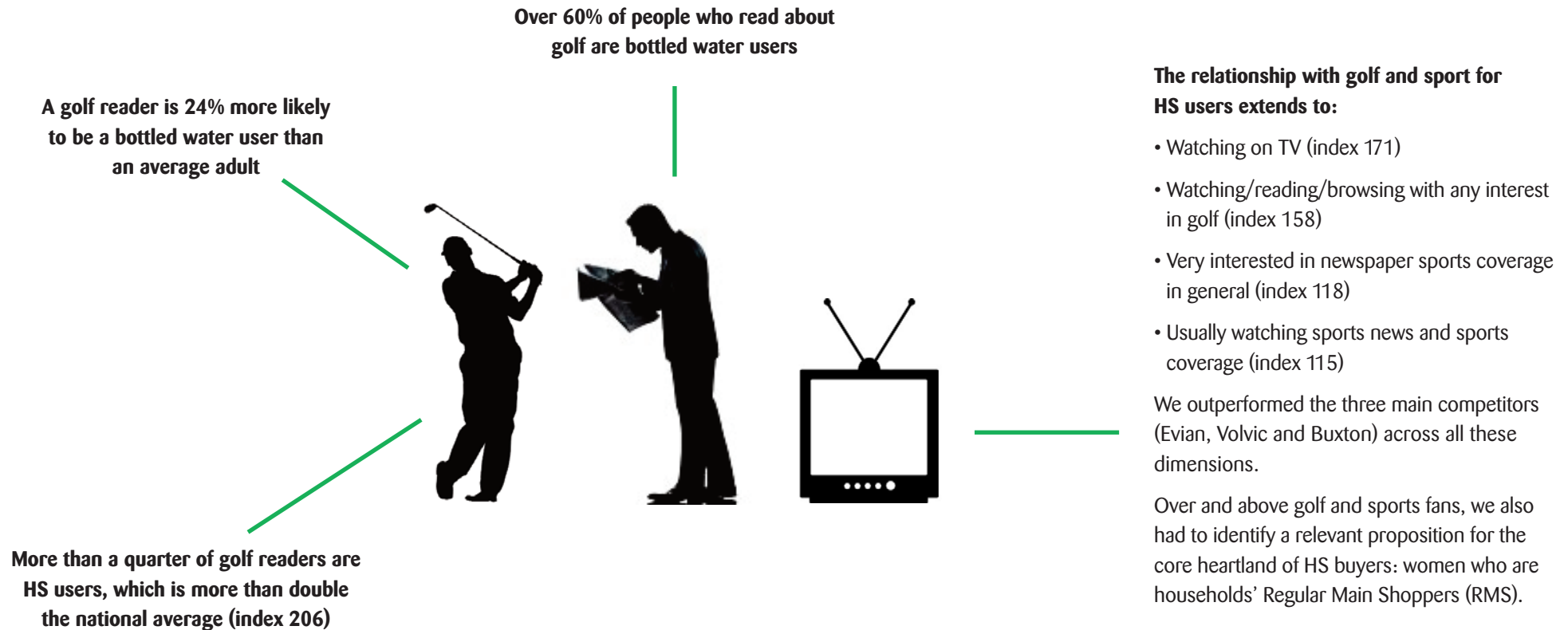
Finally, we could offer the RC huge, joint branded exposure courtesy of 33.5 million packs on shelf in the UK's biggest retailers. This was very attractive to the RC – HS' broad shopper profile would take the event to new audiences.

In August 2013, we signed an exclusive agreement to be the Official Water Supplier to The 2014 Ryder Cup (RC2014) at Gleneagles from 23rd to 28th September. Now the hard work started as we had to develop our full RC marketing and communications strategy. It was time to get on the course.



# Teeing off

In becoming an Official Supplier we identified a number of strategic opportunities. To optimise these we had to quantify our understanding of potential target audiences. Extensive TGI analysis demonstrated a very strong and positive correlation between golf enthusiasts and the Bottled Water category. Moreover, when we analysed this relationship at a brand level, HS performed better than its biggest competitors:



# Teeing off (continued)

In developing our Ryder Cup Activation Programme (RCAP) we knew that the on-pack promotion would have an integral part to play. Under the Official Supplier agreement the on-pack would be developed fully by HS marketing so it meant that we could leverage the RC agreement to maximum effect for brand marketing.

For example, we were able to develop a promotional mechanic that not only offered unique, money-can't-buy RC experiences, but also delivered broader appeal through, for example, offering luxury breaks. This meant that it would engage our wider female audiences beyond golfers and sports fans.

The on-pack also provided other significant opportunities if we rolled it out in September 2013:

- Creating a full year of high profile involvement with the RC, ensuring we benefitted from the full scale and excitement of the event. This also provided us with fantastic coverage ahead of other sponsors!
- Giving sales a boost when they historically tail off after the summer months
- Providing early engagement opportunities with both staff and the trade
- Maximising interest with the trade by coinciding the trade launch of the on-pack with the RC tour featuring the trophy





# Teeing off (continued)

With the role and timing of the on-pack defined, we had a fully-fledged RCAP:

THE FRONT 9	THE BACK 9
Looking to establish longer term opportunities over and above the Official Supplier package – focused on hard and intermediate measures e.g. sales and brand health respectively	Activation around the event, through the Official Supplier package
<p>Led by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• On-pack promotion</li></ul> <p>Supported by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paid for advertising</li><li>• Experiential marketing</li><li>• Social media amplification</li><li>• PR</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Official Gala Dinner</li><li>• Official Captain's Guide</li><li>• Official Programme ad</li><li>• Product placement</li><li>• On-course big screens</li><li>• Hospitality</li><li>• Junior Ryder Cup</li></ul>



# The front 9

## On-pack promotion

A UK-wide on-pack offered a five star, VIP weekend at the tournament, including hospitality and a private helicopter to the event! In line with our audience insights:

- This grand prize was designed to have significant mainstream appeal, attracting women (typically the main household shopper) and non-golfers
- This was supported with a prize of 30 tickets to RC2014 to target golf enthusiasts. This also provided a reason for repeat purchase to keep entering the promotion
- 75 non-golf related luxury breaks were also available to boost the prize fund, deliver universal appeal and encourage repeat purchase



*"We have had so many wonderful experiences packed into one weekend – I want to thank every single person at Highland Spring."*

Steven Webster,  
On-pack Grand Prize Winner



## Trade activation





# The front 9 (continued)

## Paid for advertising

We opted for quality press in the week up to and during the event (20 – 28 September 2014), which provided a good target audience fit with around a quarter of RMS being 'interested in golf', with 'read about golf in the papers' reaching 27.6% of RMS (index of 134 versus Adults).

To reflect RC2014's newsworthiness, the press was weighted with 69% in Sport and 31% in Main News in total reaching 14% of UK Adults at 1.82 OTS.

The creative aligned HS' No.1 bottled water brand status with the stature of the event.



All of our ads in Sports appeared next to Ryder Cup editorial.

## Experiential marketing:

- Five branded 'golf buggies' whizzed around Edinburgh's RC Zone on the Saturday, picking up and dropping off shoppers



- The activity was promoted on HS' social channels and included a compelling consumer competition to amplify noise around the activity: Tweet to Win an Overnight Stay for two at Gleneagles using #BuggyAboutTown
- There were in total 720 passengers with 1,440 bottles of HS sampled



Laura Henderson @LauraHenderson · Sep 28  
#buggyabouttown loving Highland spring water guys I thanks for the water!  
Reply Retweet Favorite



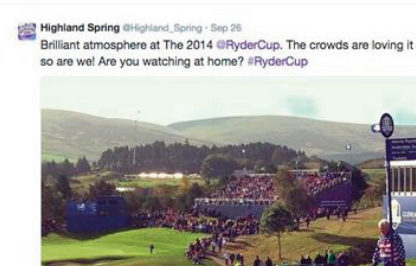
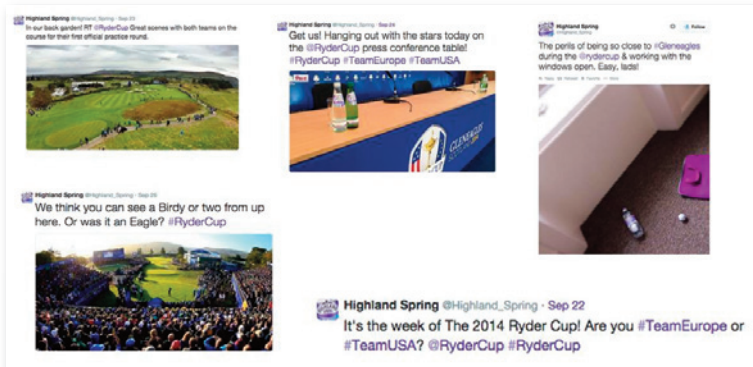
emma @EmmaEmmav · Sep 27  
About to get on our buggy! #buggyabouttown  
Reply Retweet Favorite



# The front 9 (continued)

## Social amplification:

A variety of other social content, incl. competitions, was posted on both Facebook and Twitter in the lead up to and during the event.





# The front 9 (continued)

## Staff engagement



Ryder Cup Volunteer Programme –  
12 staff given a lifetime chance to  
work at the event



Ticket giveaways



Staff competitions



Branded merchandise





# The back 9

The Official Programme ad referenced the proximity of the HS source to the event and how this shared provenance makes HS so special:



On-course big screens – TV ad shown on 503 TV screens and 21 big screens throughout the week giving the spectators exposure to brand communications



Junior Ryder Cup



The Official Gala Dinner

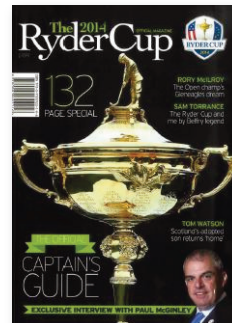


Hospitality – 205 Highland Spring guests, incl. key customers

"Just wanted to thank you for a great day yesterday, very well organised and executed. Great company and atmosphere. Very well done and many thanks."

Operations Manager, Tesco

The Official Captain's Guide



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2014 RYDER CUP

The Official Programme





# The back 9 (continued)

## Product placement

Well over 250,000 bottles of Highland Spring were distributed in total, including product placement at press conferences and hospitality areas, ensuring visibility of the brand at the event and to a UK broadcast audience of nearly 33m households.\*



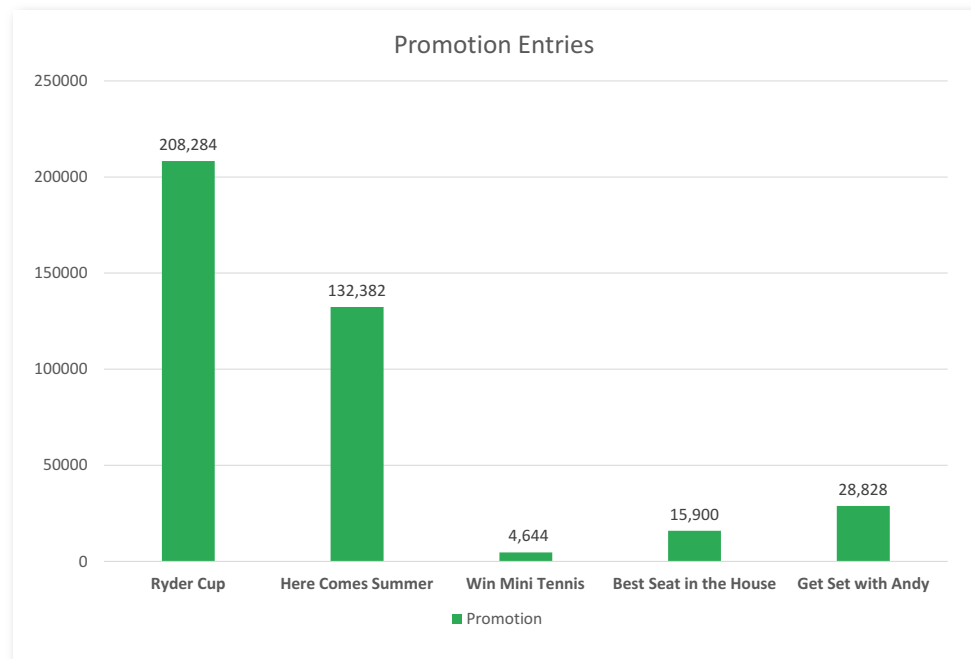
\*The household reach figure is the number of households that could have watched any part of the RC broadcast, incl. highlights (Source: Repucom)



# Highland Spring's scorecard

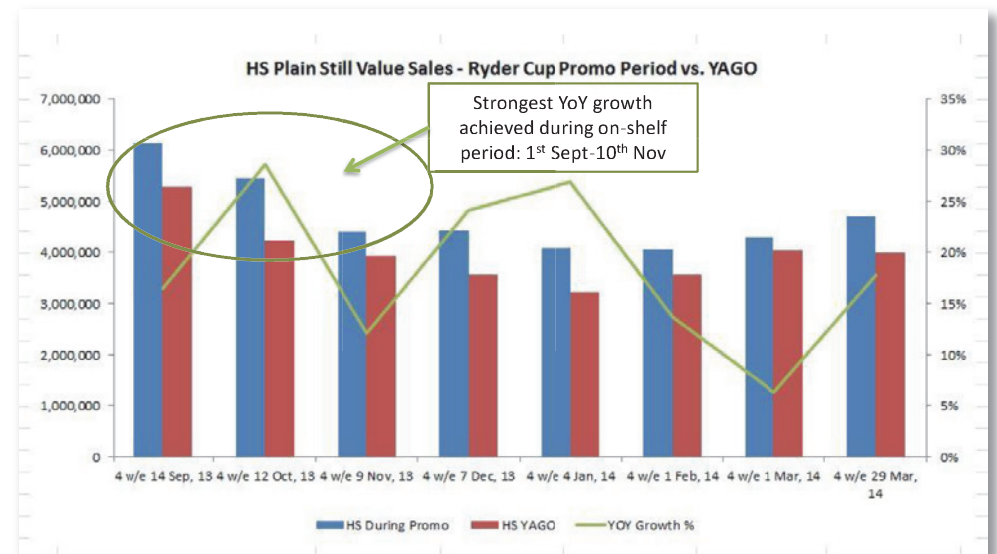
Too many sponsorship evaluations end up relying on a mixture of softer and anecdotal measures. The advantage of embedding an on-pack promotion into RCAP was that we can report quantifiable success:

- There were in total over 208k entries to the promotion, which made it the most successful on-pack promotion that HS had ever run:



## Sales

- The on-pack drove sales during the post summer period when traditionally bottled water sales tend to dip:
  - During the promo period (32 weeks – 1st September to 29th March 2014), there was a 15.4% increase in sales YOY = £37.6M vs. £31.8M in the same period a year ago
  - Sales growth = 18%
  - This is 5.2ppts ahead of Plain Still Water category growth
  - This performance came despite a 6% shortfall in our distribution points YOY



**= A big endorsement of RCAP – to go big and go early to maximise the benefits to the business!**

Source: All data via IRI, 32 w/e 29th March 2014

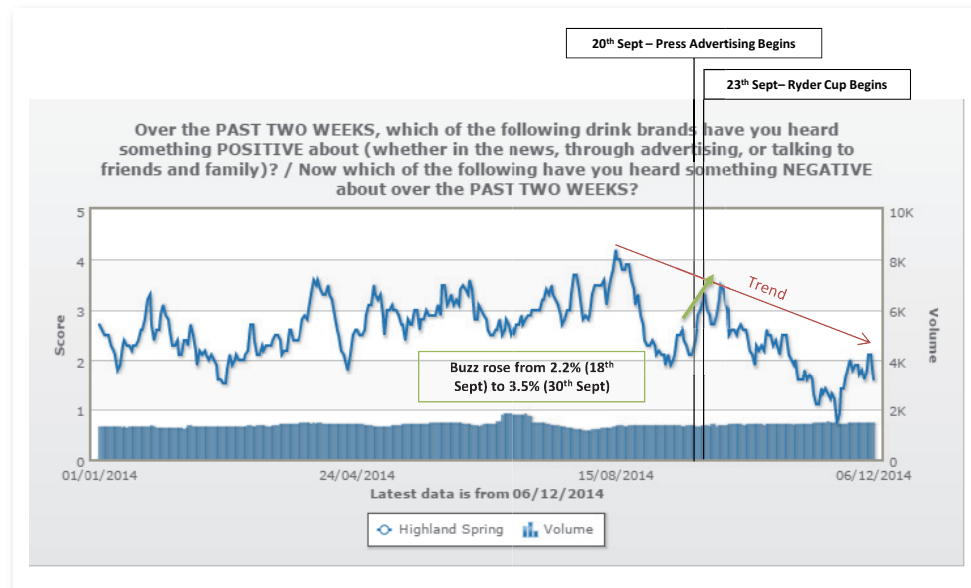
# Highland Spring's scorecard (continued)

## Strong results on brand metrics

In a category in which summer seasonality has a big impact on brand metrics – typically declining after the summer months – the activity shifted key metrics upwards.

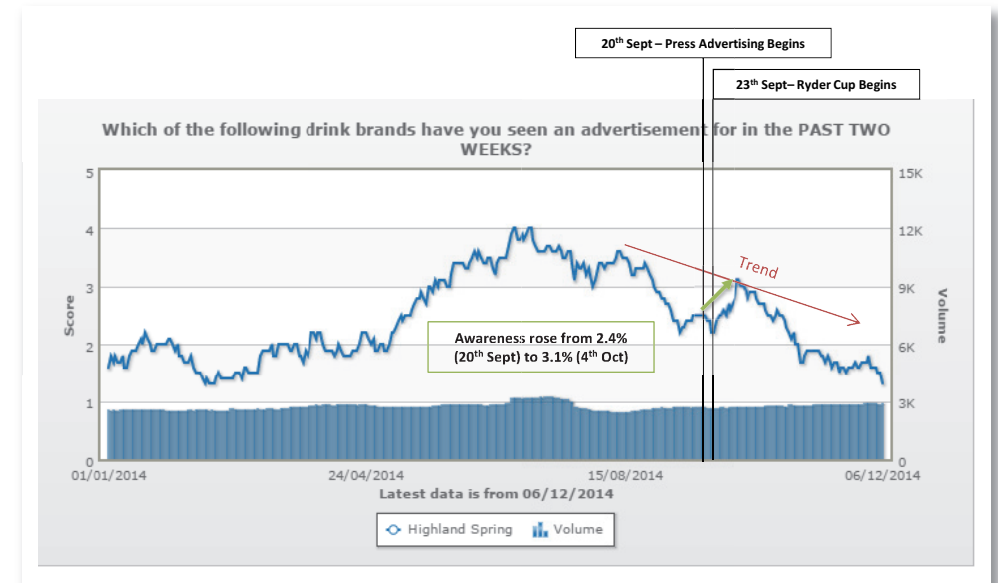
## Brand buzz:

Buzz tracking demonstrated the immediate impact of the integrated campaign.



## Ad awareness:

Great media planning and creative delivered on awareness.

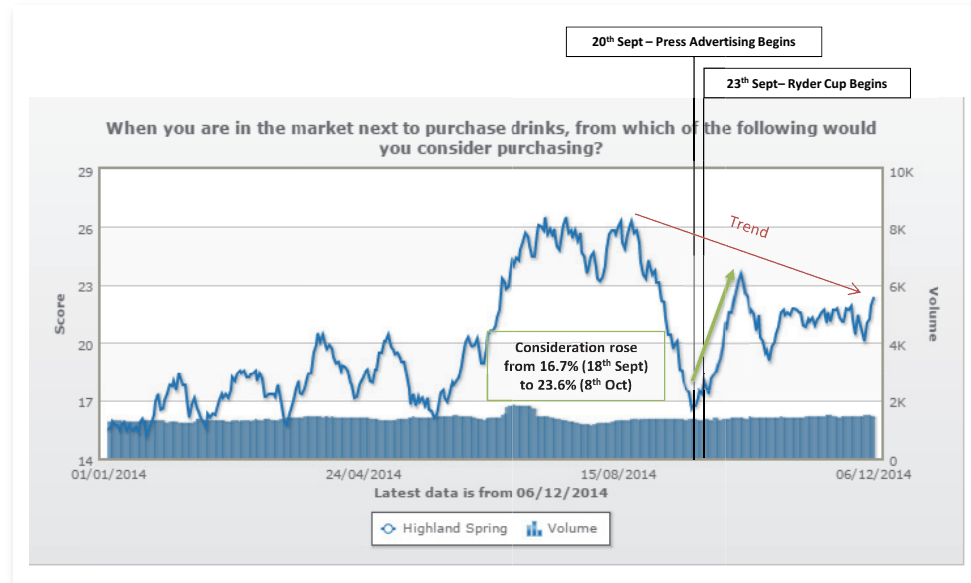




# Highland Spring's scorecard (continued)

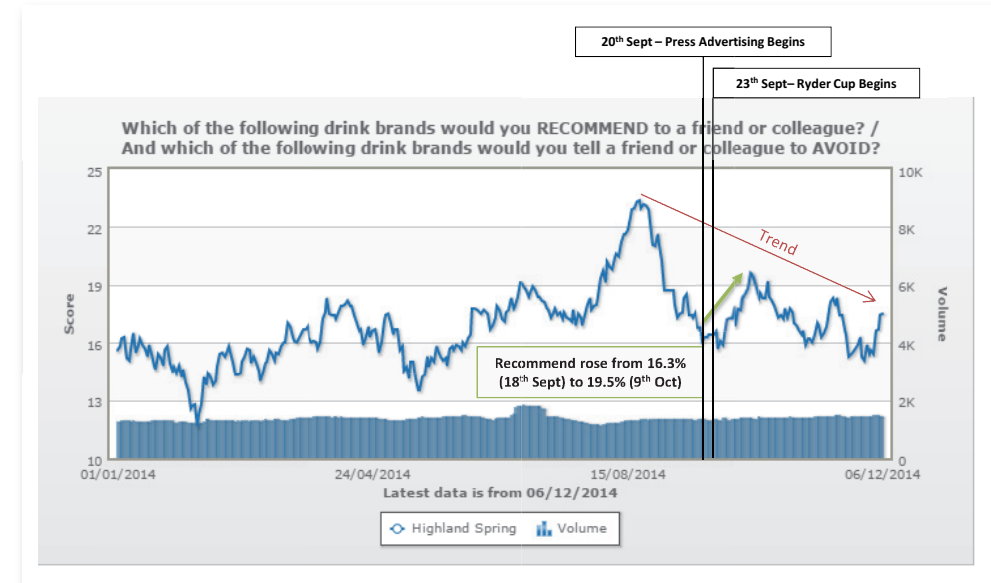
## Consideration:

More people were ready to buy the brand.



## Recommendation:

And more people were willing to recommend the brand.



Source: YouGov BrandIndex

# Highland Spring's scorecard (continued)

Reach:

Paid for press advertising:  
13,184,000 impacts

Official Captain's Guide:  
10,000 circulation

Official Programme:  
4,050 copies sold

Social Media:  
278,376 impacts

Ryder Cup Events:  
247,111 attendees

Press and online coverage showing  
product in situ: 58 articles = £25,000  
media value equivalent. Including TV  
coverage of press conferences this  
increases to £106,000

*"On behalf of Ryder Cup Europe,  
I would like to thank Highland Spring  
for their efforts and contribution to the  
success of The 2014 Ryder Cup."*

James Finnigan, Commercial Director,  
The European Tour

**In conclusion, Highland Spring's sponsorship of RC2014 was both a sales success and a demonstration of how to drive brand metrics in a highly seasonal category. Without a question HS scored a victory at RC2014.**





# The Ryder Cup 2014 – Agency Team

*“Successful activation of the Highland Spring sponsorship of the Ryder Cup relied entirely on the collaboration and commitment of our agency partners and the teams worked together brilliantly. Their professionalism not only helped protect and enhance HSG’s reputation as a strategic partner to this world-class event, it also drove the commercial return. We’re grateful to everyone for their support.”*

Andrea McQuaid, Head of Brand Marketing,  
Highland Spring Group

Advertising:



Media:



On-pack promotion  
and experiential:



Digital:



PR:

