

# AYE, NO BAD TO THAT.

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

CATEGORY: 4 SECTOR, 4.3 FOOD & DRINK

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# Summary

This paper demonstrates how, by capturing the mood of a nation and putting the fans at the heart of the action, IRN-BRU became 3.5 times more memorable than any other sponsor of the Glasgow 2014 Games.





# Getting ready for the games

On 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2012 AG Barr signed a sponsorship agreement with the Glasgow Commonwealth Games, this led to the decision that all AG Barr marketing activity in 2014 should be centred around the games.

This was an exciting and ambitious challenge and represented a step change for the IRN-BRU brand for the following reasons:

- **Uncharted territory** – The IRN-BRU flagship campaign had never before had to fit within sponsorship guidelines
- **Tone of Voice** - IRN-BRU's creative work is famed for irreverent and cheeky personality, which would have to be carefully managed with a global sports sponsorship in mind
- **Steep Competition** – we were competing against global sponsors with lots of experience and huge activation budgets

# '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 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, Ford and SSE.

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

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

Strategic thinking and effective planning

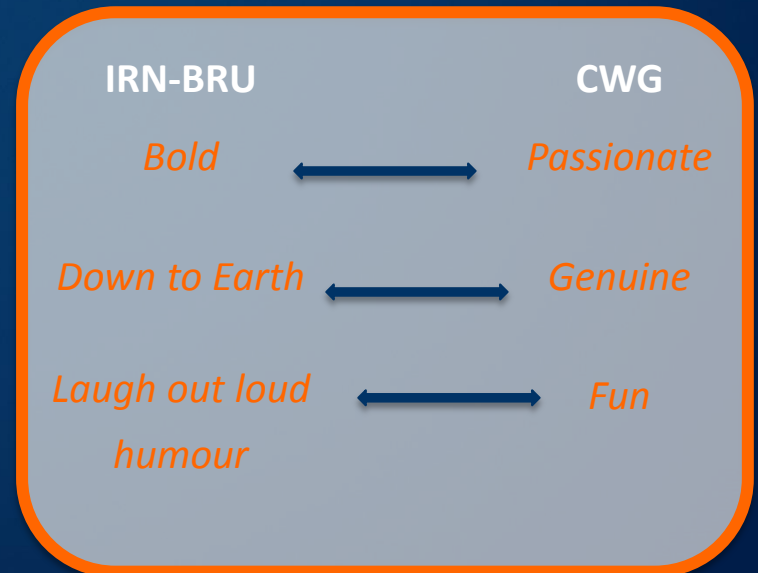


If any brand could get straight to the heart of the nation, IRN-BRU could. No other brand evokes this amount of loyalty and outpourings of love from such stoic people.



But, this was May 2013 and there was little or no buzz around The Commonwealth Games at this time so the real challenge was how to ROUSE PRIDE in 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.

It emerged that they considered IRN-BRU's involvement with the games as an overwhelmingly positive move:

***They said** - IRN-BRU sponsoring the games sparks a sense of national pride that drives greater interest in the games*

***They expected** – IRN-BRU to bring “the fun” to the games and inject some real personality*

***They thought**- IRN-BRU will make the games more accessible to a wider audience*

Face Consumer Research, 2013



The synergies were there and the audience were positive about the association but how were we to ROUSE PRIDE whilst staying true to our 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 personality twist:

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

Our creative teams took this thought and turned it into a powerful and rousing campaign line:



Mindful of our steep ambitions, once we had our core creative thought we worked in a cross agency group\* to develop a robust phasing plan for the activation:

## Activation Plan



\* PR agency STRIPE, digital experts BLONDE, the media agency PHD and lead creative agency Leith

# **‘WE HAVE IRN IN OUR BLOOD’**

**Originality, creativity, execution  
and implementation**





Our creative teams were inspired by how the truth in the consumer insight resonated with the down to earth, honest and, sometimes, self effacing character of the IRN BRU brand.

With this in mind they wrote a powerfully moving script that made the hairs stand up on the necks of all who heard it and left us all with a smile on our faces and our hearts filled with pride.

#### 'IRN IN OUR BLOOD'

Oh proud land.  
We may take more wee steps than giant leaps.  
But that is what makes our mettle.  
We may reach for the stars and come up with clouds.  
But it is in the reaching that we find joy.  
Yes, we are scared to dream, for losing is a very real option.  
But dream we do.  
Disappointment may be our meat and two veg.  
But that is what makes us hungry.  
We'll smile.  
We'll sing.  
We will dress like numpties.  
For though we walk in the molehills of achievement.  
Our best have scaled mountains.  
And when the sporting gods do shine on our pasty faces?  
Martians need earplugs.  
Why?  
Because we're the underdog with the heart of a lion.  
Why?  
Because we're Scottish and we have IRN in our blood!  
And we say, 'Aye, no bad,' to that.

IRN-BRU. Proud sponsors of Glasgow 2014.



## PHASE 1 – 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.



# Pre Launch

The team from PR agency Stripe visited all key media titles dressed in the numptie outfits from the commercial and hand delivered the advert on IRN-BRU USB sticks giving journalists and presenters a sneaky peak of the new campaign.



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



# Day One

To build intrigue and tease the launch of the TV advert, Stripe and digital agency Blonde succeeded in getting team Scotland to tweet lines from the script ahead of the ad launch – #borntosupport trended in Glasgow.



In preparation for the launch we supplied branded wrappers bearing the full script to Glasgow chippies so customers fish suppers were wrapped in the words of the advert urging them to look out for it on telly that evening.

OH PROUD LAND! WE MAY TAKE MORE WEE STEPS THAN  
GIANT LEAPS BUT THAT IS WHAT MAKES OUR METTLE  
WE MAY REACH FOR THE STARS AND COME UP WITH  
CLOUDS BUT IT IS IN THE REACHING THAT WE FIND JOY  
WE MAY BE SCARED TO DREAM, FOR LOSING IS A VERY REAL  
OPTION BUT DREAM WE DO YES, DISAPPOINTMENT MAY  
BE OUR MEAT AND IS WHAT MAKES  
SMILE WE'LL SING  
LIKE NUMPTIES FOR  
IN THE MOLEHILLS OF ACHIEVEMENT OUR BEST HAVE  
SCALED MOUNTAINS AND WHEN THE SPORTING GODS DO  
SHINE ON OUR PASTY FACES? MARTIANS NEED EARPLUGS  
WHY? BECAUSE WE'RE THE UNDERDOG WITH THE HEART OF  
A LION WHY? BECAUSE WE'RE BORN TO SUPPORT AND WE  
HAVE IRN IN OUR BLOOD! AND WE SAY, 'AYE, NO BAD,' TO THAT





# Day One

Following the PR and digital seeding campaign the commercial 'IRN In Our Blood' launched simultaneously on Facebook & TV at 19:45 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July.



# Day Two

Thanks to some judicious media planning by PHD, we dominated the morning commute the day after the launch with striking outdoor, a full Metro wrap and radio.



A man in a blue and white jacket is shown in profile, looking out over a cityscape at sunset. Dramatic light rays break through the clouds, illuminating the scene. In the foreground, a large stadium is visible, surrounded by city buildings and greenery.

## **PHASE 2 - BORN SUPPORTERS, A CALL TO ARMS**

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

# Born Supporters

We launched the search for our stars in partnership with the Scottish Sun, asking for characters to come forward and let us know why they were 'Born to Support'.

Our lucky winners featured on 6 sheet posters in their home towns. We arranged photocalls with each of the winners in their communities to support the national campaign with some strong regional coverage.



Blonde also developed an app which allowed supporters to upload a photo of themselves and create their own Born To Support sticker to feature in the IRN BRU sticker book. Everyone could be part of the campaign.





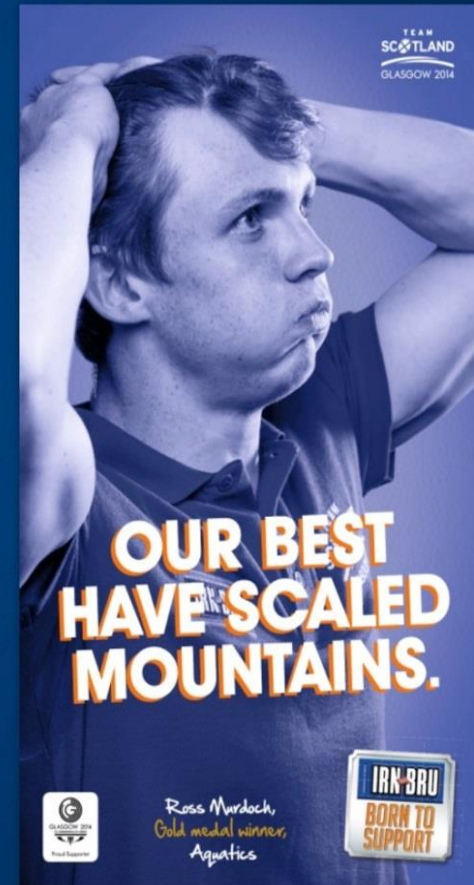
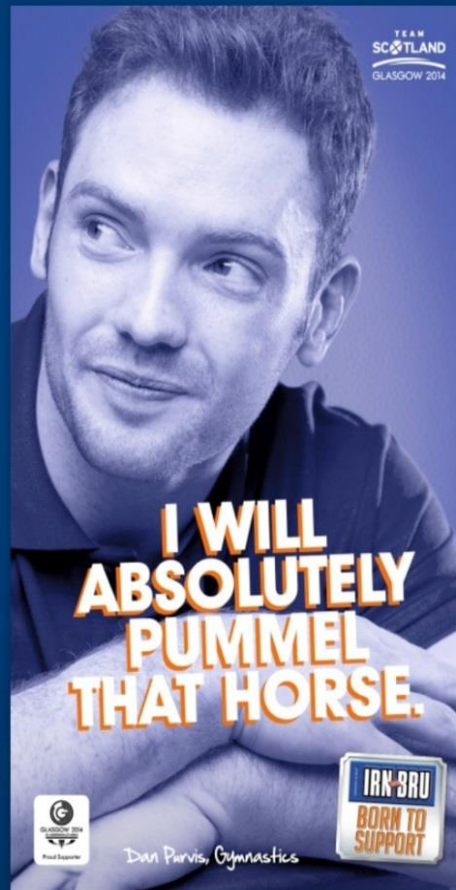
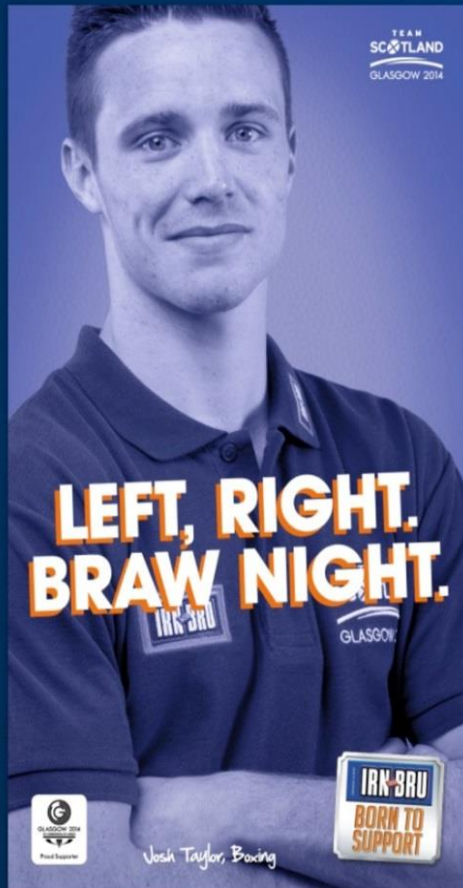


**PHASE 3 – BORN TO SUPPORT YOU**  
WITH THE GAMES IN FULL SWING THE FOCUS OF THE CAMPAIGN NOW  
SHIFTED TO SUPPORTING THE FANS AND THE ATHLETES.



# Supporting Team Scotland

We showed our support for team Scotland through iconic outdoor posters with messages of encouragement that were typically IRN-BRU in tone and personality.



# BRU STORE

Meanwhile we showed our support for our fans by building a giant orange shop filled with IRN-BRU goodies in Glasgow's Merchant City .

The BRU Store was part retail, part brand-experience and was built from shipping containers to reflect the brand's shipbuilding heritage, (made in Scotland from girders).

It proved to be the heartbeat of the games. Swamped by fans of the brand eager to get their hands on exclusive merchandise and also keen to see Team Scotland celebrating their medals. Next door everyone could film and share their own celebrations in our bespoke slow-mo booth.





# Creating our own news

With the Games now underway, we had to remain relevant to fans and to continue to show our support for Scotland's athletes.

We welcomed Team Scotland athletes to the BRU Store for appearances on each day of the Games. This could have become stale in the eyes of the media, but instead, we owned the headlines on virtually every day of the Games.



From inviting Opening Ceremony star, Jock the Scottie Dog, to pick up his very own BRU tartan coat, or presenting Ross Murdoch a pair of BRU budgie smugglers (trunks),– Stripe ensured IRN-BRU remained at the heart of the story each day and continued to be the sponsor everyone was talking about.



# Ongoing digital activity

Keeping momentum during Games time was strengthened by Blonde focusing on supporting the athletes. We set about creating characteristically IRN-BRU content, tailored for athletes that we had identified as being popular on Twitter.

We capitalised on second screening opportunities when these athletes were competing in their events. Therefore releasing highly relevant content into people's Twitter feeds as they watched athletes performances.

We also had a 'war room' set up to handle reactive social opportunities in real time to ensure we stayed fresh and current in social spaces. Hitting these peak times on Twitter's news feed with the right content meant that we achieved some fantastic interaction levels throughout the campaign, smashing Twitter benchmarks.







**PHASE 4- THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT**

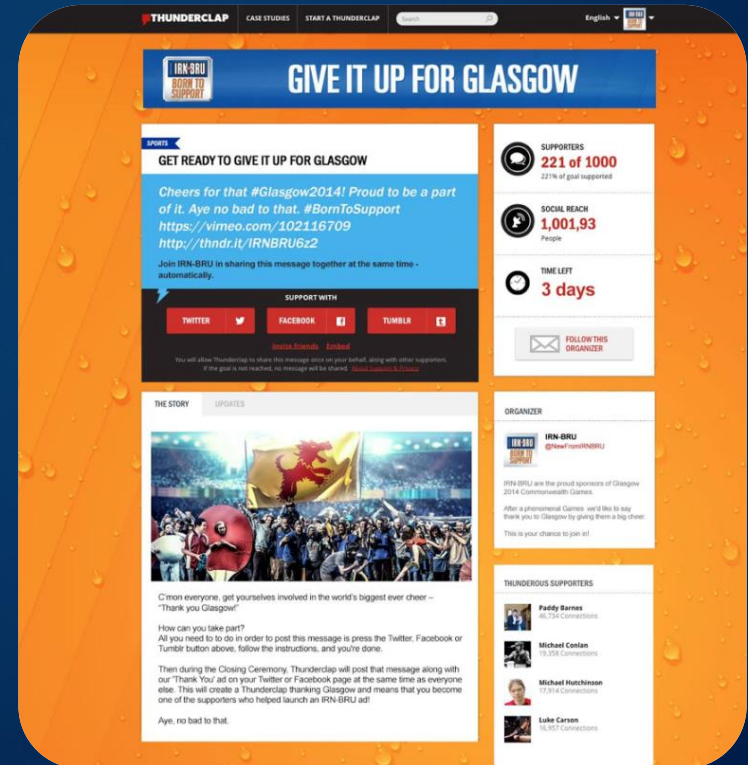
# IRN In Your Blood

After 'the best Games ever' we needed to thank Scottish fans for their incredible support. We did this by creating a new version of the advert, 'IRN in YOUR blood.' This was shot in 3 days out and about in Glasgow and edited and approved in 1 day.

Click [here](#) to watch it.



We Launched 'IRN In Your Blood' via Thunderclap with a reach of over 700k people during the closing ceremony.



# '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**

# This is how it was done:

- TV advert had a **reached 4,157,000** viewers
- The launch ad had a social reach of almost **1m with 350,000 views**.
- The advert was the **3<sup>rd</sup> most viewed** TV advert in July 2014 on YouTube.co.uk
- It achieved **4,681 FB likes, 6,387 shares with a reach of 969,216**.
- Our Born Supporters app had a **reach of over 2.1m**.
- 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**.
- Social activity had an engagement rate **4 times higher** than Twitter benchmarks and **a 22% increase** in Twitter followers **in just 10 days**.
- Our Thank You ad delivered **121,000 views in just one day** – the **highest number of views** ever in that period of time for any IRN-BRU film online.
- The campaign as a whole 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**.
- Finally, IRN-BRU was voted **the UK's no. 1 FMCG social brand** by Social Brands 100

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 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’.