

The untold Old Spice story



What's manlier than fighting a bear? Winning a fight with a bear. And what's even manlier than winning? When your only weapon is a spork*.

Being a manly man means more than winning bear battles. It means flying across the ocean at moment's notice to negotiate a peace treaty. Then, once victorious, high-fiving the clouds as you fly home. How are you high-fiving the clouds? You're not flying a plane, you're strapped to a jet pack—one that you made yourself using only a penguin, a paper clip, and a roll of duct tape.

Maybe it's because Old Spice has the word "old" in its name, and maybe because it's been around since the 1930s. But before we lent it a rough and calloused helping hand, many younger men apparently thought of the brand as a musky-smelling something for granddad—and not as a fleet of products they'd choose to groom with.

Fixing this misperception seemed like a job for Mandor. I mean, Landor. But the manliest men know that the only thing more awesome than going it solo is being part of a team. So even though we can summit Mt. Everest alone (while blindfolded and crawling on our knees), we joined forces—as if part of a championship football, rugby, or cross-Sahara relay race team—with ad agency Wieden + Kennedy to reposition Old Spice's branding program.

After a little more than a year of intense thinking and hard work, men of the world met the Fresh Collection of grooming products. Its manly scent is barely contained within the badass bone-colored packaging—designed with our illustrations of badass sharks and bears. "Fresh" is the opposite of "old." And "mentally retreating to an exotic tropical beach via something you rubbed on your armpits" is the opposite of "musky." Success.



*Spork = spoon + fork

“Fresh” is the opposite of “old.” And “mentally retreating to an exotic tropical beach via something you rubbed on your armpits” is the opposite of “musky.” Success.



Around the same time, Wieden + Kennedy introduced Isaiah Mustafa, aka the towel-wearing dude from the Old Spice commercials that you’ve definitely seen and obviously greatly enjoyed. The original spot, “The man your man could smell like” for Red Zone body wash, rocketed to the highest heights of social media fame with over 30 million views (as of March 2011) on Old Spice’s official YouTube channel alone. And, resulted in Procter & Gamble’s first Cannes Grand Prix award in 50 years. The campaign also struck gold five times: It won four Gold Effies and took home the grand prize for effective marketing communications at the 2011 Effie Awards, an honor Wieden + Kennedy shared with its teammates Paine PR and Landor. Go team, go.



So, while we clearly invented time travel, saved already-extinct birds from extinction, and built ice castles in the Sahara desert using only rubber knives, we suppose you’d still like some sproof** that our amazing work also sold a heck of a lot of products for P&G.



Well, the sproof is in the pudding. Or in this case, the sproof is in the Fresh Collection. Sproof as of January 2011: For the 1.2 million Fresh Collection units shipped to stores in North America, sales almost doubled the projected forecast. And the Fresh Collection’s successful launch has propelled the overall North American Old Spice deodorant business by 19 percent, and the global deodorant business by 17 percent.



We might not be as fluent in marketingese as we are in bear, shark, or manspeak, but we’re 99.9999 percent sure these numbers mean that we’ve sold twice as many Fresh Collection products as predicted, a year after the line launched.

And what could be manlier than that?

**Sproof = sales + proof of purchase