

## Helping a Brand Find Itself

### Objective

Using a comprehensive research program, we helped our client identify opportunities to focus, strengthen and extend a well-known brand.

### Background

Our client, a large manufacturer of underwear and casual clothing for men and women, distributes primarily through major mass merchandisers. In recent years, the company had attempted ventures into fashion categories, but with limited success, because retailers were not fully supportive of the brand outside of its core categories. Having shifted focus away from its traditional strengths, the brand found its image diluted, and its dominance was eroding.

### Analysis

We conducted a BrandDynamics™ study to understand the state of the brand's equity among consumers. The BrandDynamics Pyramid, which describes a brand's relationship with consumers, was solid at all five levels: Presence, Relevance, Performance, Advantage, and Bonding. The only area of relative weakness was on the Performance level, where the brand was downgraded on the attributes "stylish" and "better quality." Even so, 81% of respondents believed that the brand satisfied basic functional product performance requirements.

Comfort was the strength named most consistently across the brand's categories, with value coming through as a secondary strength.

### Recommendations

We recommended that the brand emphasize its core strengths of comfort and value. We suggested that the best opportunities for extending the brand would lie in categories where the brand's core equities — soft, unstructured, comfortable — would be valued.

### Action

The brand introduced a major "comfort" innovation in one of its original categories, the first significant advance in the category in a decade. The new creative execution which would announce the product launch was copy-tested using Link™, and our results showed the ad had a high probability both of breaking through and generating a short-term increase in sales.

### Results

We followed the product launch in tracking, and observed that the promise of the new creative was realized. The new campaign achieved the strongest breakthrough (measured by Millward Brown's Awareness Index) in seven years, moving ad and brand awareness to record levels. The product innovation was enthusiastically received by consumers, with average retail sales up 30% to 70% in the year following the launch.