



PERSONAL CARE GOLD WINNER

CoverGirl Lashblast: "Next Big Thing"

Business Situation and Campaign Objectives

CoverGirl is the leading Cosmetics brand in the U.S. mass market with over \$700 million in annual sales. The brand is known for offering accessible and high quality products to women that want to experiment with their look and play up their natural beauty. Historically, the brand's leadership has been in Face, with some products that have been around for more than 50 years.

In late 2005 and for the first time ever, CoverGirl enjoyed success in Eyes with the introduction of breakthrough mascara innovation. Procter & Gamble was the first manufacturer to launch "moldtrusion" brush technology. While the new mascara brush technology promised to provide separation, the #1 unmet need among mascara users, the launch was risky as consumers had been using the same twisted wire brushes for 4 decades.

The gamble paid off and CoverGirl grew share in the Eyes segment. However, competition quickly followed and the first two CoverGirl launches (LASH and VOLUMEExact) featuring the new technology were not sufficient to catapult the brand to a leadership spot in Eyes.

Historically, another leading brand has been the #1 player in Eyes. CoverGirl's competition wins in the marketplace by launching accessible, cutting edge cosmetics with a hip appeal. They employ heavy promotion and high levels of media spending to drive trial on new product launches. They also create iconic products with memorable designs, such as the long-standing #1 mascara: a green and pink tube, which cannot be missed in-store.

With overall Cosmetics' sales declining and the Eyes segment growing, CoverGirl had a unique opportunity to capitalize on its new success and compete for the #1 spot in Eyes.

Our objectives were:

1. Create an emotional connection with consumers- Utilize consumer insights to create irresistible products and drive trial via holistic advertising campaigns.
2. Capitalize on innovative moldtrusion technology- Besides maintaining sales leadership, delight consumers and be recognized as the innovation leader.
3. Change the game on how to meet consumer needs- Offer a range of mascaras featuring moldtrusion technology to uniquely meet all consumer mascara needs.

Below is the story of **CoverGirl Lashblast Mascara**. The biggest U.S. cosmetics launch ever.

Research Story

A multi-functional team was tasked with creating a successful mascara proposition that met a consumer need in a new and distinct way. In order to achieve this, we created an iterative learning continuum that brought the consumer to the forefront of the decision making process. The following 4 steps summarize our research approach.

1. Understanding what she wants. Leveraged consumer segmentation model to identify volume seekers and develop a product to delight them.
2. An unexpectedly simple idea. Created an idea that meets consumer needs and designed the technology to support it via an iterative learning process.
3. Volume Seekers as Boss. Shaped our strategy with simple, but critical consumer insights. The consumer was the boss.
4. An Icon in the Making. Addressed consumer purchase barriers by creating a holistic proposition that is easy to find in store.

Understanding what she wants

Before the conception of Lashblast, only 2 out of our 7 mascaras offered volume as a benefit, a competitive disadvantage in a category with more than 60% of sales in 'volume'. We had an opportunity to optimize our portfolio and play in the volume segment.

We knew consumers wanted their mascara to give them volume, as most of them perceived their lashes to be too thin and sparse. Volumizing mascaras transform lashes and make them appear, in consumer words: *"more awake."* However, despite multiple mascara options in the marketplace, it was hard to find one that achieved this look without clumping/sticking lashes together.

We developed a consumer segmentation model rooted in females' attitudes and behaviors as it relates to eye make-up. The model enabled us to identify a group of high volume seekers. While this group represented less than 15% of U.S. make-up users, they significantly over index on mascara usage.

Volume Seekers never leave the house without make-up and want to be noticed when they enter into a room. They believe that their eyes are their best feature and that eye make-up will drive attention to their eyes. They often look for mascaras that offer volume as a benefit because they think it makes their eyes appear bigger and consequently more attractive. We internally called them the *Eye Divas*.

These consumers represented an incremental target for the brand and as a result, inspired the design of our new volumizing mascara: Lashblast.

An unexpectedly, simple idea

Using insights from our segmentation model and qualitative research, we developed the first round of Lashblast concepts for quantitative testing. This is when we uncovered our first key insight: *Excellence in execution starts with a single minded, intuitive idea. BIG brush = BIG lashes, was our simple, irresistible idea, and she needed to see the brush to believe it!* This early concept did not show the brush and it did not test well.



We refined the idea and re-tested it showing the brush side by side with a typical mascara brush. During this round of testing, we realized that the size and shape of the brush gave us credibility. There was a direct link

between how big and different the new brush looked and her belief in the benefit. *BIG brush = BIG lashes* became the team's motto as we entered the next phase of product development.

Volume Seekers as Boss

The team wanted to marry the BIG moldtrusion brush design with the volume benefit consumers desired. In order to achieve this, we established an "Expert Panel" of Eye Divas. The Panel met on a regular basis over a few months and used a mix of research techniques (e.g. 1-1 interviews, focus groups, triads) and innovative stimulus to bring consumers into the decision making process. This non-traditional approach gave us the opportunity to:

1. Establish a deep connection with our consumer target, Eye Divas
2. Understand where and when Eye Divas would be most receptive to our message
3. Recognize not only Eye Divas' product needs, but how they shop in-store

It was during this phase that we uncovered the following additional insights:

- Among the volume seekers, there was a sub-group of extreme volume seekers. This small and demanding consumer group helped us design a superior product that maximized the brush's technology for separating lashes with a new volume formula.
- The brush had the potential to become an icon. Consumers know that a lot of mascaras offer the same benefit. In the case of Lashblast, the brush's size and look gave her a reason to believe this one was different.
- She cares about the package. She may like "pretty" packages, but in-store what she needs is to find it! She also notices the pack shape and will often imagine how easy it is to use. If it does not look easy, she will not buy it.

An Icon in the Making

To be successful, we needed to think about what she would experience in-store. The package needed to be distinct and combine the idea's simplicity with the boldness of the extreme volume benefit.



The team picked a bright orange color for the mascara tube and a simple white back card to focus attention on the product itself. Bold graphic brush strokes brought the "blast" to life on the package.

Qualitative consumer research confirmed that the bold brush strokes communicated an extreme volume benefit. Most importantly, the boldness and intuitiveness of the design made it easy for consumers to quickly understand what was important to them: the product benefit. These insights were so powerful that we consequently updated the back cards of our entire mascara line-up to help shoppers select the right mascara for them.

Bringing Lashblast to Life

It was time to exploit the product's bold, disruptive design via a holistic marketing strategy that would create an emotional connection with consumers.

The team used online ad diagnostic research to explore 3 communication directions inspired by the core idea, BIG brush = BIG lashes. We transformed the core idea to a

meaningful message consumers could understand and identify with: “*big, bold look at me lashes.*”

The research also taught us that it was not enough to ‘say’ the brush was BIG. Consumers needed to ‘see’ the brush side by side to a traditional brush. In fact, this visual was more effective at driving persuasion and believability in TV copy than showing the brush by itself. While we saw the importance of the brush during concept development, this research illustrated the importance of getting the translation from concept to copy right. As a result, visualization of the BIG, orange brush became a key element of all our creative including promotional displays for retailers.

Now that we had a strong proposition, we needed a superstar to drive awareness and elevate CoverGirl’s equity. We wanted someone consumers identified with and that exemplified the boldness and simplicity of the product. We used ad research to screen multiple spokesperson options and confirm our talent choice. CoverGirl partnered with megastar Drew Barrymore to both star and co-create the advertising. The research indicated that Drew’s unique sensibilities and down to earth personality would help us push the boundaries of the campaign to connect with the more make-up involved *Eye Divas*.



Example Print Execution

The winning copy, “*Next Big Thing*,” featured Drew Barrymore and utilized a black and white effect while keeping the BIG, orange brush true to color. This effect allowed us to keep the brush as the hero of the ad, while creating the high drama that bespoke the product benefit of big, bold lashes. The ad also cited Lashblast as the “must have” product of the season.

The results of this iterative copy development process spoke for themselves. The 30 and 15 second spots, tested via IPSOS ASI, achieved strong, above average copy scores and almost double recall and persuasion norms.

The ad won consumer hearts by being unexpected, entertaining, and memorable. Memorable was critical for us. In Cosmetics you need to be memorable to break through the clutter as there are too many products consumers can choose from (approx. 5,000 SKUs for top 4 mass Cosmetics brands).

This was the only test execution where consumers remembered the brush and our crisp message of “*big, bold, look at me lashes.*” Consumer comments confirmed our choice of Drew Barrymore. Drew’s fun loving personality brought a refreshing and authentic point of view to the advertising that elevated the brand’s emotional relevancy.

This iterative copy development process highlighted two consumer driven insights that further shaped our campaign strategy.

- Volume Seekers were not the only ones being delighted! Copy testing suggested that Hispanics were attracted to Lashblast due to its relevant and intuitive benefit.
 - *Impact on campaign strategy:* The team included activities targeted to this key demographic group including ads that featured Hispanic CoverGirl, Ana de la Reguera, who we knew was more relevant among Hispanics.
- Orange is an unexpected color. Research suggested that the color of the brush helped consumers remember the ad and drove bold and upbeat perceptions.

- *Impact on campaign strategy:* The team created a holistic campaign by featuring the BIG, orange brush throughout all consumer touchpoints.

Campaign Description

Next Big Thing was the catalyst for our holistic campaign. While we had designed a strong proposition, the launch could only be successful with a showstopping, holistic advertising campaign that rallied behind a single, clear message.

The Lashblast marketing plan was created to drive awareness and trial among females, ages 15-54, via trade and PR activities as well traditional media vehicles such as TV, Print and Online. We allocated 60% more in media than the original “moldtrusion brush” launch, LASHExact, based on marketing mix modeling essentials to drive higher returns.

Inspired by “*Next Big Thing*,” the campaign focused on the brush and leveraged the size and orange color of the pack. In order to add credibility to the positioning of Lashblast as the “must have” product of the season, we partnered with Vogue Magazine and other well-known beauty editors to discuss the hottest finds of the season and play up the on-trend appeal of the product. We also incorporated Lashblast into our branded entertainment platform, America’s Next Top Model, to reinforce the product benefit in a fashionable, on trend way.

The team complemented advertising in traditional media vehicles with a grassroots approach that focused on the “Eye Divas” in places where she was expected to be most receptive to our message. For example, we invested in CoverGirl’s first “Google paid search.” We knew that “Eye Divas” expect to find information about the latest, hottest Cosmetics online and not having a presence there would have resulted in missed sales.

Below is a summary of our key marketing activities for the year long campaign.

Timing	Winter 2007-08	Spring 2008	Summer 2008	Fall 2008
Advertising	(1) TV— <i>Next Big Thing</i> :15s and :30s to drive awareness and reach; (2) Print Pages/Spreads			
Trade	Early Launch /What’s New Promotion	Spring Promotion	Summer Promotion	Back to School Promotion
PR	Ongoing Activities—National editorial coverage of Lashblast via product briefs and samples to beauty editors, bloggers, and other credible sources to drive word of mouth, early trial			
Online	E-mail blasts to communicate new Lashblast, update CG.com, paid searches, etc.			

Business Results

Lashblast Mascara is on track to be the largest U.S. launch in the history of the Cosmetics industry. It first appeared in stores, on promotion, in November 2007. By January 2008, its official launch date, product displays at key retailers were running low. Two months later, and for the first time in over 20 years, the historical leader could not claim its title of America’s #1 mascara...

As the third consecutive CoverGirl mascara launch using moldtrusion technology, it surpassed our objectives, as outlined on Table 1. The achievements of this consumer driven launch include the following firsts for CoverGirl:

- Covered on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* in May 2008 as one of Oprah’s “favorite things for summer,” which drove an unprecedented 0.5 Billion impressions
- Awarded Beauty Biz Award for Most Innovative Advertising Campaign in 2008

- 2008 *CEW* Award Winner for *Best New Mass Cosmetic Product*
- Unparalleled levels of retailer support
- Featured twice on NBC's Today Show

Table 1

Objective	Result
Lashblast Sales	70% higher than expected
Brand Linkage	23% higher than previous launches
Eyes Share	12% share- #1 spot

But, Lashblast's story does not end here. Due to its success, we launched complementary eye shadow shades in July 2008 and gained additional retailer support.

We will start 2009 with new ads that qualified with a Copy Effect Index 150% higher than the original ones. The new advertising will fuel the launch of a line extension that should help Lashblast take over the title: **America's #1 mas**