

BRAND FOUNDATION · €1,500 · PART TWO OF TWO

STRATEGY & RATIONALE

Who WOBBLE is for, what it is actually selling, why every decision in part one was made, and what was rejected on the way.

1

customer, described
precisely

3

directions rejected,
with reasons

5

messages to repeat

1

number the brand is
judged on

Portfolio sample. WOBBLE is invented. This is part two of a €1,500 brand foundation. It exists because an identity handed over without its reasoning gets unpicked by the first person who does not like pink.

THE MARKET

A shelf where everything is either serious or sugary.

The functional drinks chiller has two ends. At one, clinical white cans with ingredient lists and words like *adaptogen*, priced at €3.20 and bought by people who read labels. At the other, energy drinks — aggressive, black-and-neon, aimed at eighteen-year-old men and largely avoided by everybody else.

Between them is nothing. There is no drink on that shelf that a thirty-year-old buys because it looks like fun, and there is no functional brand at all that is comfortable being ridiculous.

What we looked at

Twenty-two functional and soft drinks in three Dublin chillers, photographed and priced. Their language, their colour, and what a shopper can identify at two metres. Four rounds of standing beside a chiller watching what people picked up and put back.

The gap, in one line

Nineteen of twenty-two used blue or white as the dominant colour. Not one of the twenty-two was funny. Being visibly unserious is a position nobody on that shelf has taken, and it is available because it is commercially frightening.

TWENTY-TWO CANS. NINETEEN BLUE OR WHITE. NONE OF THEM FUNNY.

THE SHELF, COUNTED

WHAT	OF TWENTY-TWO	WHAT IT MEANS FOR WOBBLE
Blue or white dominant	19	Any warm bright is visible from further away than every rival
Ingredient list on the front	14	Front-of-can copy is available space nobody is using for personality
Fruit photography or water droplets	16	Illustration and flat colour will not be mistaken for anything else
Uses the word wellness or similar	11	The word is taken, worn out, and slightly embarrassing to the buyer
Priced €3.00 or above	15	€2.80 sits below the pack without looking cheap
Funny, in any way at all	0	The position is empty because it is frightening, not because it is bad

Counted across three Dublin chillers in August. Illustrative here; in a real foundation each is photographed and dated.

WHO IT IS FOR

The person buying a drink instead of a snack, at half three.

Late twenties to early forties. Not an athlete, not on a wellness journey, and mildly irritated by both categories. They are in a shop at half three because the afternoon has gone flat, and the honest choice in front of them is a chocolate bar, a coffee they do not want, or something from the chiller.

They will pay €2.80 for something that feels like a treat. They will not pay it twice for something that felt like medicine. And they are slightly embarrassed by the wellness aisle, which is the emotional detail the whole brand turns on.

What they are actually buying

A small, cheap, guilt-free lift in the middle of a boring afternoon. The botanicals are a permission structure, not the product — they are the reason it is allowed to be a treat.

Who it is not for

Anybody optimising anything. If a customer wants to know the milligram dose of the botanicals, they are a different brand's customer and chasing them turns the can white.

WHAT THAT MEANS FOR EVERY DECISION IN PART ONE

Why it is loud

Because the purchase is impulsive and made at two metres in four seconds. Subtlety is a strategy for products people plan to buy.

Why calories are on the front

Thirty calories is the permission. It is the one functional claim that does work at half three, and it is the only number allowed to be large.

Why it never says wellness

Because the customer is mildly embarrassed by that word, and a brand that uses it becomes a thing they buy quietly rather than a thing they enjoy.

WHAT WAS WATCHED AT THE CHILLER

They scan, they do not read

Roughly four seconds from opening the door to reaching. Nobody read a back label. Two people read a front label and put the can back.

They reach for a colour

Regulars reached without looking at the name at all — which is the entire argument for the flavour colour-lock in part one.

They put things back

The most common rejection was picking up a white functional can, turning it, and putting it back. The turn is the moment the sale is lost.

WHAT WAS REJECTED

Three directions that did not survive, and why.

Clean Function

White can, one accent, ingredient-led. Credible, premium-looking, and easy to sell into a health store.

Rejected because — it puts WOBBLE beside eleven better-funded brands doing the same thing, and it competes on efficacy claims, which is a race decided by marketing budget.

Irish Botanical

Provenance, foraged ingredients, muted greens, a story about a hillside.

Rejected because — it is beautiful and it is a €4.50 drink. The customer at half three is not buying a story, and the price it demands puts it beside the coffee they already declined.

Sports Adjacent

Performance framing, black and neon, gym partnerships.

Rejected because — that shelf is owned, the incumbents outspend everybody, and the position specifically excludes the person we described on page three.

WHY THE LOUD ONE, STATED PLAINLY

Because it is the only one of the four that cannot be bought. A rival can outspend WOBBLE on ingredients, on provenance photography and on gym sponsorship. What they cannot do is be ridiculous, because being ridiculous requires giving up the customer who reads labels — and no established brand will do that.

HOW THE FOUR WERE COMPARED

DIRECTION	CAN A RIVAL BUY IT?	PRICE IT DEMANDS	VERDICT
Clean Function	Yes — eleven already have	€3.20+	Fails on competition
Irish Botanical	Yes, with a supplier and a photographer	€4.50	Fails on price
Sports Adjacent	Yes, and they outspend you	€2.50	Fails on the customer
WOBBLE	Only by giving up the label-reading customer	€2.80	Holds

The risk, stated as plainly

Loud brands age faster than quiet ones, and a colour palette this saturated will look like a specific year at some point. The mitigation is that the shape and the colour-lock carry the recognition rather than any single trend — but if you are not prepared to redraw the surface treatments in four years while keeping the system, take Clean Function instead.

VOICE

The confident friend who is already mid-story.

Loud, quick, and in on the joke. Never the brand *trying* to be fun, which is the failure state and the difference between charming and exhausting.

Loud & juicy

Big, sensory, physical. How the drink moves and feels, not its benefits profile. One idea per line, dialled up.

"Berry Bounce hits like a trampoline for your tongue."

Quick & springy

Short lines. Present tense. No wind-up. If a line needs a second breath, cut it.

"Crack it. Feel it. Wobble on."

In on the joke

Self-aware and warm. WOBBLE knows it is a silly name and a ridiculous colour, and that is the point. We wink; we never smug.

"Functional? Technically. Mostly it just tastes unreasonably good."

THE LINE BETWEEN FUNNY AND ANNOYING

Funny is at our own expense. The name, the colour, the fact that four botanicals is not a medical intervention. A brand willing to undercut its own claims is a brand people trust with the claims it keeps.

Annoying is at the customer's. Jokes about needing a lift, about Mondays, about being tired. The customer is mildly fed up at half three and does not want it pointed out — they want the drink to be the good part of the afternoon, not a comment on the bad part.

SAY THIS, NOT THAT

NOT THIS

"Beat the 3pm slump!"

"Fuel your day with four powerful botanicals"

"The healthy alternative you deserve"

"New flavour alert!!"

THIS

"Half three. Here you go."

"Four good things, one loud can."

"Thirty calories. Do what you like with that."

"There is a third one now. It is the green one."

THE FIVE MESSAGES

Repeat until you cannot bear them.

#	MESSAGE	WHERE IT LIVES
01	Feel-good fizz that refuses to sit up straight. The whole proposition in eight words. If only one survives, this one.	Everywhere
02	Thirty calories. The permission. Said plainly, never dressed up, never with an exclamation mark.	Front of can
03	Four good things, one loud can. The functional claim, deliberately underplayed so it stays believable.	Back of can, site
04	Functional? Technically. The self-undercut. It is the line that makes the other four credible.	Social, packaging riff
05	If it sits still, it is wrong. Internal first, external second. It governs every design decision and it is quotable enough to leak, which is fine.	Internal, and occasionally out loud

ONE PER SURFACE

A can carries message one and two. A poster carries one. Never stack them — five messages on one surface is a brand explaining itself.

DO NOT ROTATE THEM

The urge to freshen up arrives around month four, which is roughly when the first customer has heard one twice. Recognition is entirely repetition.

NEVER ADD A SIXTH

If something new genuinely matters, one of these five has to go. Six messages is no messages, and the one that gets dropped in practice is always the best one.

WHAT IS DELIBERATELY NEVER SAID

No health claim beyond the calorie count. Not because the botanicals do nothing, but because the moment a functional claim is made it has to be defended, regulated and out-spent — and it moves the brand onto the shelf it was designed to avoid.

No comparison to anything. No *unlike other energy drinks*. Naming the category you are avoiding puts you back in it, and the customer at half three has not thought about the category at all.

THE ECONOMICS, HONESTLY

What this brand needs to be true to work.

ASSUMPTION	FIGURE	IF IT IS WRONG
Retail price	€2.80	Above €3.20 the half-three impulse buyer is gone and this is a different brand
Cost per can, at 20k units	€0.94	Spot colours are part of this. Dropping them to save 6c costs the shelf recognition
Trade margin required	~35%	Non-negotiable in the multiples. It sets the floor on everything above
Minimum viable run	20,000 cans	Below that the per-unit spot-colour cost makes the maths fail
Repeat purchase	[X]	Unknown, and it is the number the whole business rests on

Illustrative except the last row, which is a **marked gap**. Until there is a real repeat-purchase figure, nobody — including me — knows whether this is a brand or an experiment, and no amount of design decides it.

What the identity cannot fix

Distribution. A can that is not in a chiller is not being chosen at two metres by anybody, and the loud palette is worth precisely nothing in a warehouse. If listings are the bottleneck, that is a sales problem and this document does not address it.

What it can fix

Being picked up once it is there, and being found again on the second visit. That is the entire remit of a brand identity in this category, and it is worth being clear about the size of it.

THE FIRST NINETY DAYS

In the order that costs least.

WHEN	WHAT	WHY HERE
Week one	Run the four-second chiller test with the flat artwork, printed at actual size and taped to cans	Costs €0 and it can still change the design
Week two	Single test print of all three cans on aluminium, spot colours	Colour on metal is not colour on paper. Find out before 20,000 units
Week four	Write thirty captions in the voice. Read ten aloud to somebody who is not involved	The voice is the highest-risk part of this brand and it is free to test
Month two	Production run. Nothing about the identity changes after this point for a year	Recognition needs repetition and the temptation to tweak starts around month three
Month three	Start counting repeat purchase, however crudely	It is the marked gap on page seven and everything depends on it

WHAT MUST NOT CHANGE FOR A YEAR

The colour-lock

Berry is plum and pink. Mango is orange and lime. Citrus is cyan and lime. Swap one and every regular has to relearn the shelf.

The can shape and layout

Flavour name largest, brand a third of it, calorie count on the front. This is the recognition system, not a design preference.

The five messages

Not one word, for twelve months. You will be bored of them by March. That is the point at which they start working.

WHAT I WOULD SAY ON A CALL

If the person who has to write these captions for two years does not find the brand funny, take Clean Function instead. A voice this specific dies the moment somebody who does not believe in it is running the account, and that is a staffing decision rather than a design one. It is also the most common way a brand like this quietly reverts to a white can with a blue accent inside eighteen months.

WHAT THIS IS JUDGED ON

Second purchase, not first.

Anything loud enough will get picked up once. The identity has done its job when somebody who liked it can find it again in a different shop, in a different chiller, without reading a word.

The test

Four seconds, two metres, five of six people finding the right flavour. Plus a repeat-purchase count from month three, however rough.

The honest caveat

If people buy it once and not twice, the problem is the drink, not the can — and I would tell you that rather than propose a refresh.

FUNCTIONAL? TECHNICALLY.

WOBBLE is invented. Parts one and two together are a €1,500 brand foundation — identity and strategy settled in the same three weeks, with the rationale written down so that the decisions survive the first person who does not like pink.