

Cutty Sark

Rebranding the classic London whisky.

Cutty Sark is a very smooth and distinctive blended Scotch whisky independently owned by the illustrious Berry Bros and Rudd, purveyors of fine wines and spirits since the Seventeenth Century.

Created by Mr Berry and Mr Rudd in the 1920's to provide a distinctive alternative to the heavy, peaty whiskies of the time, the brand grew to enjoy huge success. In the 1970s, it was the best selling blended whisky brand in the largest spirits market in the world: the USA.

But since then the brand has fallen on harder times and so we were invited to join with the marketing team at BB&R to revitalise this sleeping giant and return it to profitable growth.

We began with workshops to refine the brand proposition. Cutty has a very particular heritage that can be traced back to the Berry Bros shop at 63 St James St, London. And it was these very particular, independent London roots that seemed to encapsulate much of what the brand could stand for. We soon came to think of Cutty Sark as 'the independent London whisky that loves to challenge conventional thinking'.

This willingness to take on the status quo and be a challenger brand is there throughout the history of Cutty - in its creation as an alternative kind of Scotch; in its packaging with the bright yellow label; in the story of how it was the most sought after whisky during prohibition and the origin of the term 'the real McCoy'; and in its present day ambition to appeal to a younger, more adventurous consumer than the classic whisky drinker.

Our creative work began with a redesign of both bottle and packaging to strip away the extraneous details accrued over time and to allow the brand to speak with confidence and exuberance. We made much of Cutty yellow (a printing accident on the very first 1923 bottles) and employed a classic 1920's sanserif typeface: gill sans.

Online and Engagement

We designed a new website for the whisky to expand upon the theme of creative blending at the heart of Cutty Sark's distinctive tastes - and populate it with unique, inspiring content.

The resulting site is a creative blend in itself, revolving around an ever-shifting grid of content thumbnails.

With a flick of a switch the grid transforms depending on your interests.

To tell the many and varied stories behind the brand, we worked with independent artists and filmmakers via online communities The Smalls (wholly owned and controlled by Devilfish), & Don't Panic.

The result is a pleasingly creative and rewarding online experience.

We've chosen some of London's leading urban artists to create murals that describe the London provenance of the brand and provide us with a rich library of visual assets for off air marketing (as well as some compelling online content).

Building on the projects success, we've also created the identity and marketing for a sub brand - The Shanghai London Sessions - a live, multimedia music event that will travel around the world promoting Cutty and all that it stands for.

And, best of all, we've had a 100% cast iron excuse to drink lots and lots of whisky.



