



HONORING IDEAS THAT WORK 2013 EFFIE AWARDS

ENTRY ID # 6860

Basic Information

1. Brand Name	Mizuno			
2. Product / Service Type or Description <i>(Do not include brand name)</i>	Sporting Goods Retailer			
3. Title	Mezamashii Run Project			
4a. Category for this Entry	David vs. Goliath			
4b. Classification	Check all classifications that apply.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Local	<input type="checkbox"/> Regional	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National	<input type="checkbox"/> Multinational	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-English
4c. List the time period your case was running: Provide date Mo/Day/Year or note Ongoing.	Start Date: 5/19/12	End Date:	X Ongoing	

Instructions

Your written case may not exceed 6 pages. Judges appreciate clear, concise, honest, compelling cases. Questions and instructions may not be deleted from the completed case; they serve as a guide for both entrants and judges. Answers must be in black 10-point font or higher (charts/graphs can be in color) and all data, claims and facts in all sections of the entry form must include a specific, verifiable **source**. Refer to the Effie Entry Kit for guidelines on properly citing your data. Do not include any Agency names (Ad, Media, Other) anywhere in the entry. Answer every question or indicate "not applicable". Unanswered questions or unsourced data will result in disqualification. Ensure the answers you submit in the Online Entry Area match your answers here.

5a. What was the state of the brand's business and the marketplace or category in which it competes before your effort began?

Provide information on the category, marketplace, company, competitive environment, and/or the product/service that created your challenge. Provide competitive context (main competitor spend, position in market, etc.) and category benchmarks.

The running shoe category, led by giants Nike and Reebok, spent \$144 million in advertising from June 2011 to June 2012 (source: Kantar Media Strategy, 8/28/12).

Our brand, Mizuno, was virtually unknown in the U.S. with just 7% brand favorability (source: client brand tracker, 1Q12). We had no star athlete endorsers. We had no legions of pro, college and high school teams bearing our logo on their uniforms. All we had was a \$1.5 million marketing budget, just 1% of category spend.

Mizuno running shoes are stiff (for a reason) so they don't feel as cushy and comfortable as the other brands. As a result, people trying on Mizunos in the store tend to prefer other brands (source: agency research).

5b. What was the strategic communications challenge? Provide context on the degree of difficulty of this challenge and detail the business need the effort was meant to address.

What was the business problem the effort was meant to address? What were the specific challenges and opportunities that the client and/or brand/product faced? Include a definition of the audience you were trying to reach.

We had no money.

Mizuno's best prospects, Running Junkies, stick to what they know works: 80% know the brand *and* model of the running shoe they intend to buy before they shop and 90% actually do buy that brand and model (source: Mizuno Segmentation Study, 11/11). We had to be extremely compelling to disrupt that behavior.

The Mizuno store experience was far from compelling. The shoes the Running Junkies came to buy were familiar, soft and cushy. And Mizuno's stiff shoes are priced on average 35% above the category (source: client, agency research).

Finally, Mizuno had recently redesigned their \$115 flagship shoe, the Mizuno Wave Rider, in a way that alienated many within the small group of Mizuno loyalists (source: client, agency research).

No awareness. No money. A deeply ingrained buying habit we had to break with a product that didn't feel good and costs a lot more. Brand ambassadors who had lost faith in the brand. Piece of cake.

5c. What were your objectives? What were the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) against your objectives?

Your entry may have one or all of the following objectives: A. Business, B. Behavioral, C. Perceptual/Attitudinal. State specific objectives for all of these that apply to your case and the tools you planned to use to measure each objective. Provide a prior year benchmark for each KPI or context regarding why they are significant if no prior benchmark is available. Provide a % or # and time frame for all objectives. Ensure that it is clear why the objectives are important to moving the business forward and defend/rationalize the basis for the objectives selected, if you feel it is necessary.

- ◆ **Goal #1:** Grow favorability among Running Junkies.
- ◆ **Goal #2:** Sell a lot more shoes.
- ◆ **Goal #3:** Build a sustainable community of fans to serve as an ongoing trial generator for Mizuno running.

6a. What was the insight that led to the big idea? How did you get to that insight?

Describe what led to your idea – e.g. a consumer or business insight, a channel insight, marketplace/brand opportunity, etc.? Explain how it originated and how the big idea addressed the challenge.

Our first insight: The odds were stacked too high against us to win in-store.

The store clerk's job is to sell shoes, not Mizunos. He's not going to try to talk a Running Junkie out of the shoe she came to the store ready to buy. And any Running Junkie open to trying different brands will lace them up, take a few steps and jump up and down a few times to test them. With that process, what feels like "fit" is just cushioning, and Mizuno's competitors win that battle.

Our second insight: The odds shift in Mizuno's favor on the road.

Mizuno loyalists love the brand because it's made for hardcore running. Mizuno's stiffer, less-cushioned Wave Technology really does provide a better running experience for those who run on it 20 miles a week or more. Mizunos are made to be tried on the run. If we could get Running Junkies to actually wear the shoes on a run, we'd have a shot at converting them. In fact, the worst thing we could do is use advertising to drive in-store trial.

Our third insight: Running Junkies, true runners, know a great run from an ordinary run.

They are a different breed of athlete. They live for the run. They run for the moments of "flow" when the endorphins kick in and they feel like they are flying. But they spend more time chasing that high than actually enjoying it (source: agency qualitative research, Mizuno Segmentation Study). They try on shoes like everyone else. But they might pay a premium for a no-name shoe if they experienced a great run in Mizunos.

6b. What was your big idea?

*What was the core idea that drove your effort and led to the breakthrough results? What is at the very heart of the success in this case? We are not talking about your execution or tagline. **State in one sentence.***

Do an end run around the big guys.

7a. How did you bring the idea to life?

*Describe and provide rationale for your communications **strategy** that brings the idea to life, as borne from the insights and strategic challenge described above. How did your **creative and media strategies** work together to reach your specific audience? How did you link the insight to the channel choices and how does that play out in your strategy to bring the idea to life? Explain your media strategy and why the channel choices were right for your audience & idea. Did your communications strategy change over time? If so, how?*

We took the trial occasion out of the store (where the big brands dominate) and onto the road (where Mizuno shines).

We started with a \$1.5 million media budget for 2012. The first thing we did was cut it in half. The first half would be spent putting free Mizunos on Running Junkies' feet in a program we called the Mezamashii Run Project. The second \$750,000 would be spent doing what we could to make people aware of the project.

Mezamashii is Japanese for "eye opening" or "brilliant." It symbolizes the feeling runners get when they get into the groove and have great run. It's the experience for which Mizuno designs its shoes. The Mezamashii Run Project was conceived as more than a one-and-done campaign. We hoped to ignite something organic and social that will evolve and grow as more runners experience a Mezamashii run.

We built three phases into the Mezamashii Run Project:

1. **Initiate:** Key Running Junkie influencers, from bloggers to running club leaders and celebrities, received one of 600 handmade direct mail invitations. Upon receiving the invitation, each runner was told to call Mizuno USA and fulfill their shoe order using a unique code on the inside of the invitation. Then, depending on the size of their circle of influence (which we determined by measuring their status within the larger running community), they were offered the chance to send out one, three or 10 invitations to fellow runners they thought would also appreciate a Mezamashii run. All recruitment was handled through word of mouth and social media.
2. **Expand:** Six weeks after the Initiate phase started, we launched the Expand phase. This relied on paid, owned and earned media to spread the word. Display and rich-media online banners were strategically placed on major running websites, including Runner's World, Women's Running, Active.com, Running Times and Facebook, while small-space print ran in Runner's World. The unique Mezamashii brand identity that leverages Mizuno's Japanese heritage is also found at running events and in stores that carry Mizuno. In this second phase of the campaign, the overall running public could apply to join the project via Mizuno's home page and be one of 100 people chosen to receive a free pair of Mizuno running shoes.
3. **Nourish:** The third phase, which was just beginning at the end of this Effie period, is geared at maintaining the community. Paid media will continue to run and people will still have the opportunity to sign up to join the project. With the community largely built, the focus will be on making sure community members get new, relevant and exciting information and offers from Mizuno, like the opportunity to wear test future products, influence shoe design, access future models before they become available to the public, and have live chat sessions with Mizuno shoe designers.

7b. What channels did you use? (communications touch points) Check all that apply.

*Indicate below **all** communications touch points used in this case. You must provide detail in your written case and show on the 4-minute video at least one example of each communication touch point you mark below which was integral to the effort's success. For example, if you mark 30 boxes below and 10 were what drove the results and what you discuss in your entry form as integral to the effort, those 10 must be featured on the 4-minute video.*

<p><input type="checkbox"/> TV</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Spots <input type="checkbox"/> Branded Content <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsorship <input type="checkbox"/> Product placement <input type="checkbox"/> Interactive TV/Video On Demand <p><input type="checkbox"/> Radio</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Spots <input type="checkbox"/> Merchandising <input type="checkbox"/> Program/content <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Print</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Trade/Professional <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper - print <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper - digital <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Magazine - print <input type="checkbox"/> Magazine - digital <input type="checkbox"/> Custom Publication <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Direct</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mail <input type="checkbox"/> Email <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PR</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Guerrilla</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Street Teams <input type="checkbox"/> Tagging <input type="checkbox"/> Wraps <input type="checkbox"/> Buzz Marketing <input type="checkbox"/> Ambient Media <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sampling/Trial <p><input type="checkbox"/> Events</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cinema</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interactive/Online</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Display Ads <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brand website/microsite <input type="checkbox"/> Developed Branded content for another website <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile/Tablet Optimized Website <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital video <input type="checkbox"/> Video skins/bugs <input type="checkbox"/> Podcasts <input type="checkbox"/> Gaming <input type="checkbox"/> Contests <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Search Engine Mktg. (SEM/SEO) <input type="checkbox"/> Geo-based ads <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social Networking Sites/Applications</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mobile/Tablet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> App <input type="checkbox"/> In-App or In-Game Ad <input type="checkbox"/> Messaging/Editorial/Content <input type="checkbox"/> Display Ad <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consumer Involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WOM <input type="checkbox"/> Consumer Generated <input type="checkbox"/> Viral <p><input type="checkbox"/> OOH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Airport <input type="checkbox"/> Transit <input type="checkbox"/> Billboard <input type="checkbox"/> Place Based <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Packaging</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Product Design</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Trade Shows</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sponsorship</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retail Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POP <input type="checkbox"/> In-Store Video <input type="checkbox"/> In-Store Merchandizing <input type="checkbox"/> Retailtainment <input type="checkbox"/> Store within a Store <input type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sales Promotion</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Professional Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> In-Office <input type="checkbox"/> Congresses <input type="checkbox"/> Detail/E-Detail/Interactive Visual Aids (IVAs) <input type="checkbox"/> Closed Loop Marketing (CLM) <input type="checkbox"/> Continuing Engagement <input type="checkbox"/> Informational/Documentary Video <p><input type="checkbox"/> Point of Care (POC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Wallboards <input type="checkbox"/> Video (HAN, Accent Health) <input type="checkbox"/> Brochures <input type="checkbox"/> Coverwraps <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Check-In <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p>
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7c. Paid Media Expenditures

Paid media expenditures (purchased and donated), not including agency fees or production costs, for the effort described in this entry. Given the 'spirit' of this question use your judgment on what constitutes fees, production and the broad span that covers media – from donated space to activation costs. Check one per time frame.

**For entries in the Health Effies or Olympics Marketing categories, please refer to the entry kit for eligibility date changes.*

Sept 2011 – Aug 2012*		YEAR PRIOR: Sept 2010 – Aug 2011*	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Under \$500 thousand	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10 - 20 million	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10 - 20 million
<input type="checkbox"/> \$500 - 999 thousand	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20 - 40 million	<input type="checkbox"/> Under \$500 thousand	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20 - 40 million
<input type="checkbox"/> \$1 - 2 million	<input type="checkbox"/> \$40 - 60 million	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> \$500 - 999 thousand	<input type="checkbox"/> \$40 - 60 million
<input type="checkbox"/> \$2 - 5 million	<input type="checkbox"/> \$60 - 80 million	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1 - 2 million	<input type="checkbox"/> \$60 - 80 million
		<input type="checkbox"/> \$2 - 5 million	

\$5 - 10 million

\$80 million and over

\$5 - 10 million

\$80 million and over

By your estimates, compared to other competitors in this category, this budget is: Less About the same More

Compared to prior year spend on the brand overall, is the budget this year: Less About the same More

7d. Owned Media and Sponsorship

Elaborate on owned media (company owned real-estate, either physical or digital, that acted as communication channels for case content – e.g. corporate website/social media platforms, packaging, branded store, fleet of buses, etc.). Also detail sponsorships you may have had or write “not applicable”.

The Mezamashii Run Project is housed on a microsite linked to mizuno.com.

7e. List and explain all other marketing components that were active during this time.

Select the components that were active during this time. Explain the effect of the selected components below.

- Couponing
- Leveraging Distribution
- CRM/Loyalty Programs
- Giveaways/Sampling
- Other marketing for the brand running at the same time as the entered effort/campaign
- Other _____

It's not really “other,” it's the core idea: The Mezamashii Run Project is a social media campaign centered around a breakthrough way to get people to try the brand.

8. How do you know it worked? (Include KPIs.) Why are these results significant for the brand?

- (i) *Detail why you consider your effort a success. **Refer to your specific audience and directly to your objectives and KPIs described in section 5b.** Demonstrate how you met or exceeded those objectives using quantitative and behavioral metrics or other measurement tools you described. Use charts and graphs to display your results where possible, refer directly to the KPIs outlined in 5b and provide a clear time period for the data shown.*
- (ii) *Explain, with context, why your results are significant in your category and competitive situation. Did your effort drive business? How? For confidential information proof of performance may be indexed if desired. Numerical results lacking context regarding why they are significant will be disregarded. Provide pre and post measures and an understanding of the industry and category norm. You must show how the individual KPIs achieved tie together and collectively impact the overall success of the case.*
Note: Do not include results after 8/31/2012*. This will result in disqualification.
***Olympics Marketing: Do not include results after 9/30/2012.**

◆ We achieved Goal #1: Grow favorability among Running Junkies.

Brand favorability grew 54%, from 7% to 10.8%, in the first five weeks of media support (source: client brand tracker, 8/12).

This increase is reflected in comments made by Mezamashii Run Project members who rated the shoes they received. Through the end of August, 183 members posted reviews; 94% of the reviews gave top 2 box reviews to the shoes and 93% told us they intend to buy Mizuno shoes in the future.

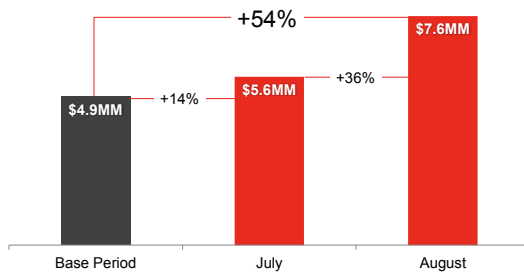
- “These (Mizuno) shoes blew my mind and made me actually despise my other running shoes that I once swore by...Keep doing what you're doing, I won't be going back to anything else anytime soon!” - Angela Norvich (Saucony), Member shoe review from MRP site

- “The (Mizuno) Wave Rider fits my foot like a glove and I'm kicking myself for never trying Mizuno before. This is a brilliant marketing campaign, because even though you gave me a pair of shoes, you have gained a lifelong customer. Well done.” - Adam Mull (Brooks), Member shoe review from MRP site

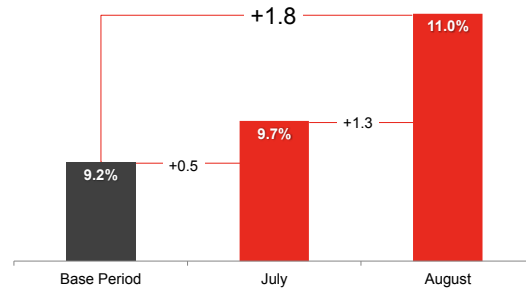
◆ **We achieved Goal #2: Sell a lot more shoes.**

Mizuno achieved strong specialty store sales and share growth in each of the first two advertised periods. August was Mizuno's best share period in three years, on sales (source: Sports Marketing Surveys USA, 9/6/12).

Mizuno Dollar Sales in Specialty Running Stores
(Base = Avg. Month Jan-Jun 2012: Source: Specialty Marketing Surveys)



Mizuno Dollar Share in Specialty Running Stores
(Base = Avg. Month Jan-Jun 2012: Source: Specialty Marketing Surveys)



◆ **We achieved Goal #3: Build a sustainable community of fans to serve as an ongoing trial generator for Mizuno running.**

In just 60 days, the Mezamashii Run Project accomplished the following:

- Engaged 19,504 Mizuno runners and Mezamashii Run Project members (source: client)
- Welcomed 100,000 new unique visitors to mizunorunning.com, an increase of 52% (source: client)
- Brought 155,859 visits to the Mezamashii Run Project home page through paid media (source: client)
- Gained 25% more Twitter followers

The running community is rallying around the Mezamashii Run Project, showing we have rebuilt and expanded the brand's ambassador base:

- “What the Mezamashii Run Project has taught me.....don't knock something until you try it. Mizuno believes in their product so much that they gave out shoes knowing once you try them you will love them.” (Fatrunnergirl.blogspot.com, 7/12/12)
- “I've never bought a pair of shoes based on advertising, but I have been influenced by other runners experiences with them. Mizuno obviously believes in their product enough to put it on the feet of runners, rather than relying on fancy marketing to sell the product.” (Runtotheborder.com, 6/21/12)

9. Anything else going on (whether or not you were involved) that might have helped drive results?

Describe all other factors in the marketplace that could have contributed to results shown in this entry. Judges are industry executives – entries that omit pertinent information will be disqualified. You must answer this question or write “no other factors”. Do not leave blank.

No other factors.