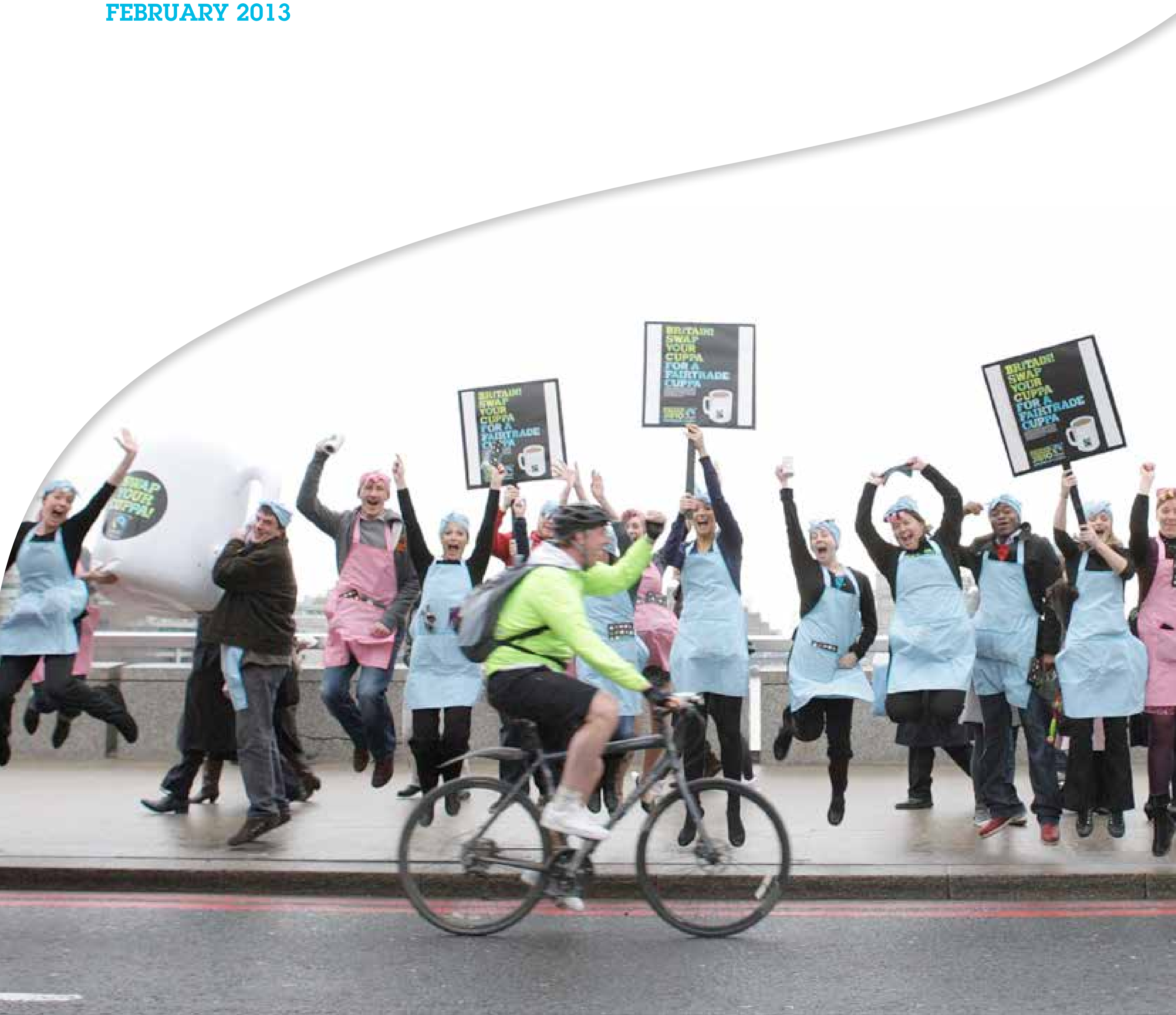
Winner

Creating brands with purpose – the mainstreaming of Fairtrade

FAIRTRADE FOUNDATION

FEBRUARY 2013



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Fair Trade in the UK goes back more than 19 years. The movement sprang from concerned citizens looking for ways to create fairer trading links resulting in a better deal for those at the end of international supply chains. These pioneering consumers and businesses created a social movement which raised awareness of unfair trade and helped create a market for ethical products. In the first decade, the emergence of a single FAIRTRADE Mark and the energy of the social movement combined to create a force of huge potential. But by 2007, after fifteen years of campaigning, less than £500m of Fairtrade goods were sold in the UK. Five years later that figure stands at over £1.5bn, as Fairtrade has successfully mainstreamed, transforming opportunities for hundreds of thousands of farmers around the world.

In 2009 the Fairtrade Foundation recognised that the slow organic build of a movement was not enough to seriously address deeply ingrained poverty amongst developing world farmers. A Marketing function was created to reposition Fairtrade for the masses and create a compelling proposition for businesses to join and to scale up rapidly.

This application will present how excellence in marketing – in positioning, in promotion, in word of mouth and in commercial marketing – has helped achieve a step change in awareness, familiarity and the value of Fairtrade, whilst maintaining its position as the most trusted mark in an increasingly crowded environment of labels and issues. With excellence in marketing Fairtrade has built itself as a lighthouse brand with purpose, enabling many others to build purpose into their brands.

BACKGROUND

The Fairtrade Foundation was founded eighteen years ago. It was a response to the growing grass roots movement in civil society that demanded we should source products from developing countries on terms that would empower impoverished farmers to work their own way out of poverty. With a mark to show ethically-minded consumers that the products guaranteed a fairer deal for farmers, the Fairtrade movement created a mental shortcut, or brand, which became the gold standard in a burgeoning ethical sector. It also united the separate country movements under one mark so Fairtrade could go global as a labelling option for multinational companies.

Figure 1 – Emergence of an international brand

Awareness, familiarity and sales grew steadily, thanks to campaigners. As supply chains became more established, availability of products and traded volumes began to hit critical mass. The support of key retailers such as the Co-operative and Sainsbury's made core Fairtrade products like coffee and bananas available.

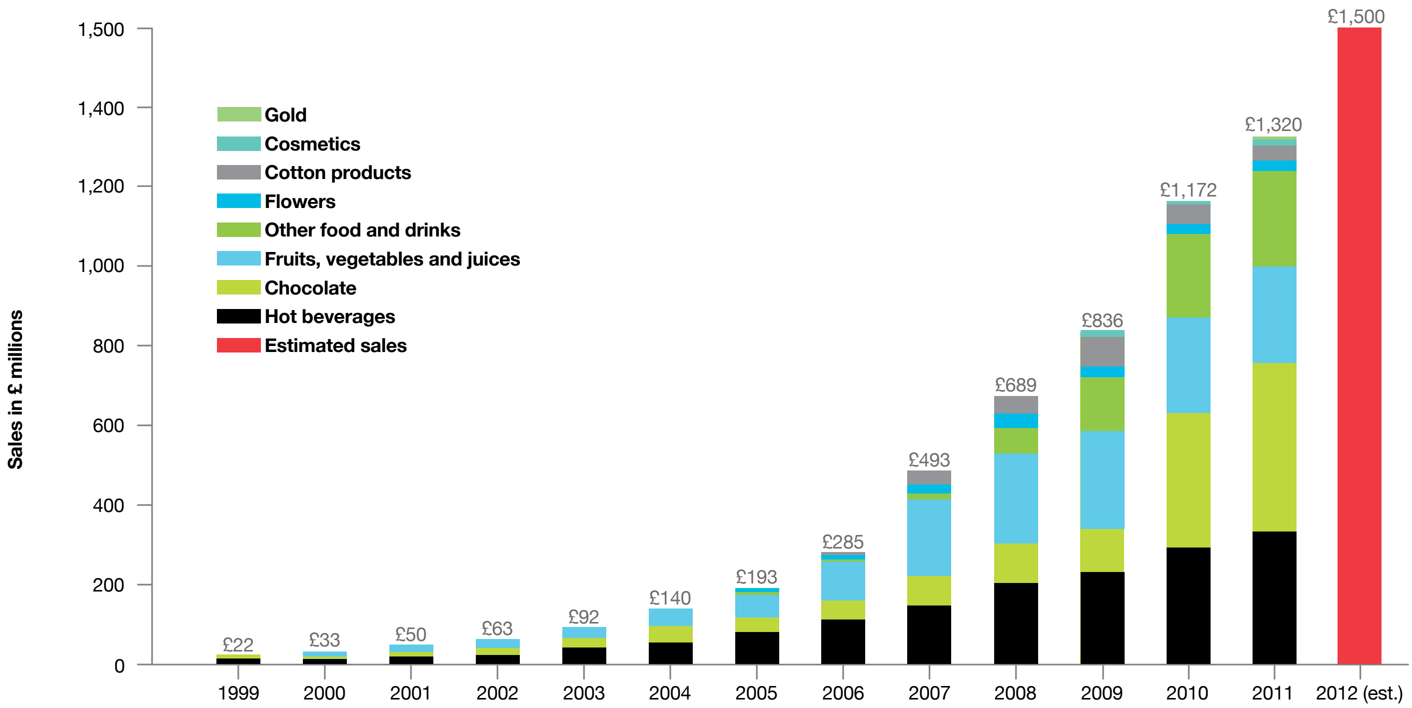


Figure 2 – Sales of UK Fairtrade products

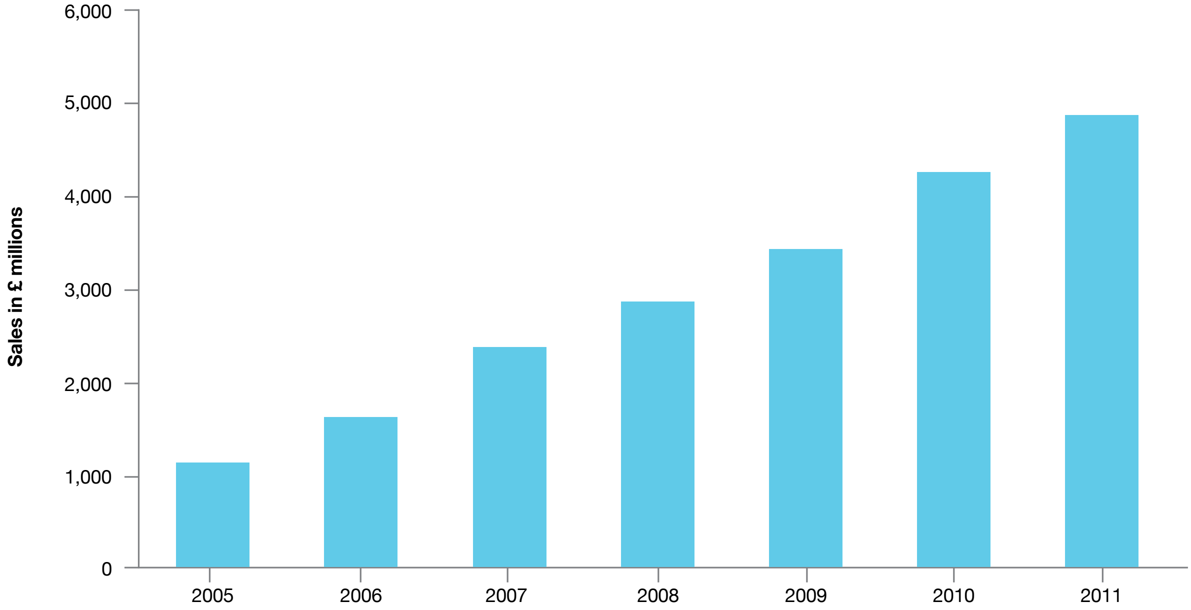


Figure 3 – Global Fairtrade sales

By 2008/9 the sales outlook was positive, but signs were that future growth was not going to be easy. The UK was in recession, businesses were cutting costs and consumer concerns were increasingly close to home. Fairtrade was no longer alone in the market. Low hanging fruit had been picked and the campaigning agenda had drifted towards climate change as an international issue of concern spawning alternative grass roots movements like Transition Towns. We needed a new strategy if we were to scale up volume and go mainstream.

ACHIEVING MARKETING EXCELLENCE

STEP 1: GLOBALISING THE BRAND

Globalising the Fairtrade brand was an appropriate starting point for expanding the brand and approaching mainstream markets because:

1. Global brands looking to build purpose into their brands want a globally consistent certifier, so marketing campaigns can be replicated across borders
2. Cash limitations in each Fairtrade market meant investing in quality brand development was only feasible with combined budgets
3. Financial constraints meant that ‘stealing with pride’ was imperative for smaller markets to access good marketing assets from larger markets – so messaging, design, imagery need to be consistent

As illustrated in Figures 4-8 below, we successfully moved from an inconsistent base into a global brand within 12 months, despite barriers not typically found in the private sector, ie:

- **The lack of a ‘head office’ to direct content and implementation. Fairtrade International in Bonn has a central co-ordinating role, but the international network operates as a federation rather than a hierarchy. With separate founding members, Boards and budgets in each market, participation in a project like this and compliance is entirely voluntary**
- **The politics of Fairtrade are different in different countries, with variances culturally specific, often emotive. Messaging in Austria for example had focused on child labour, in South Africa on black empowerment. In France, Fairtrade is positioned as a real alternative to conventional trade, not as a partner of multinationals. The Swiss on the other hand position Fairtrade as a corporate solution**
- **Awareness of Fairtrade in different markets varies greatly, from single digit awareness in markets such as Poland and South Korea to 90 per cent in the UK,[1] necessitating a more basic communication of what Fairtrade is in some markets, with a greater need for emotional connection in others**

The success of this project is shown by the full adoption of the guidelines in all markets – from the most established like the UK to the least like South Korea. The guidelines managed to walk the line between global consistency and appropriate flexibility in implementation.

> Fairtrade's vision is for a world in which all producers can enjoy secure and sustainable livelihoods, fulfil their potential and decide on their future.
>
> **Our Aspiration**
> To transform global trade by promoting fairer trading conditions. To achieve this we will position Fairtrade as the guiding light for sustainable development, touching more lives more deeply than any other ethical certification scheme.

Figure 4 – A shared vision

1 Globescan Fairtrade International Consumer Perceptions Survey, Q. Which, if any, of the following labels have you ever seen?, 2011

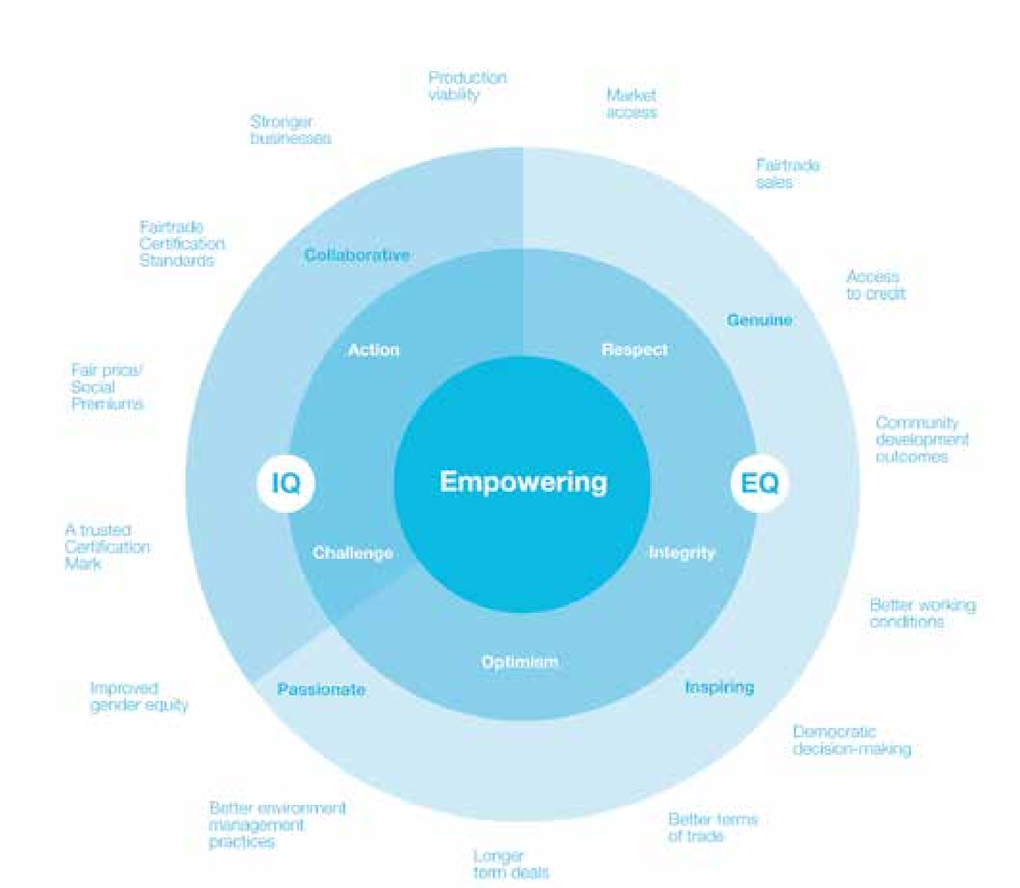


Figure 5 – A shared brand positioning

Fairtrade provides: – a framework for fairer trade – floor prices and Social Premiums – a trusted Certification Mark – support, leadership and tools – meaningful connections – strong Standards	**Helping to achieve:** – fairer deals – better working conditions – collective strength through democratic decision-making – better environment management practices – stronger businesses – longer-term relationships – longer-term production viability	**Resulting in:** – empowerment for a better life for producer communities – public participation in poverty reduction – increased market opportunities – ongoing community development – a cleaner environment – better terms of trade
Overall: – Fairtrade – people empowered for a better world – Fairtrade – making lives better	**For Producers:** – Fairtrade delivers fairer prices for products – Fairtrade supports producers to achieve more control over their lives – Fairtrade provides better Standards to support stronger businesses – Fairtrade creates more opportunities for producers and their communities	**For Consumers:** – buying Fairtrade makes you a contributor to a better world – Fairtrade offers consumers a powerful way to reduce poverty through their everyday shopping – Fairtrade is a choice for a better world

Figure 6 – Verbal expression message hierarchy

Figure 7 – New international brand identity

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STEP 2: A NEW, ACCESSIBLE CAMPAIGN STYLE AND TONE OF VOICE FOR THE UK

A stronger, consistent look and feel globally helped establish a strong visual identity for Fairtrade in the UK and met the need of global licensees to roll out partner marketing activity internationally. Nonetheless, we needed a marketing campaign which would address the particular needs of the UK market to:

1. Deepen engagement

2. Encourage people to move from positivity to active purchasing, more often

3. Develop a campaigning voice and style stretchy enough to galvanise supporters whilst convincing mainstream brands that Fairtrade could fit with their brand DNA

We contracted wieden + kennedy London to develop a creative strategy to make us stand out from increasingly generic development communication and appeal to less committed, positively pre-disposed shoppers.

The new campaign style is illustrated through the first campaign, The Big Swap for Fairtrade Fortnight 2010.

Figure 8 – The Big Swap Fairtrade Fortnight 2010

In this campaign we created a strong promotional template which delivered a significant level of partner activity. We pulled together enough advertisers under the Big Swap banner to sponsor a 'Fairtrade Big Swap' ad break on Channel 4. Over 1m 'Swaps' to Fairtrade were registered online by supporters and shoppers. Mainstream brands had just begun switching and Starbucks turned their stores over to a blanket Fairtrade message with a Big Swap sales promotion. Cadbury TV advertised a brand promotion swapping wrappers for music. Awareness of Fairtrade Fortnight grew from 30 per cent in 2009 to 49 per cent in 2010. 25 per cent of people claimed to have bought a product as a result of seeing or hearing about Fairtrade during the Fairtrade Fortnight period.[2]

2 Taylor Nelson Sofres (TNS), Fairtrade Study, Q. Have you seen or heard anything Fairtrade or Fairtrade Fortnight?, 2010

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STEP 3: UNDERSTANDING OUR TARGET SHOPPERS AND SUPPORTERS

To go mainstream and help partners, we needed to understand our target audience better. We had to move from a gut feel understanding to a more sophisticated segmentation and get a large number of people from positivity to active demand and choice.

We studied 2,000 consumers to identify their characteristics in relation to attitudes and behaviours. Figure 9 summarises what we found.

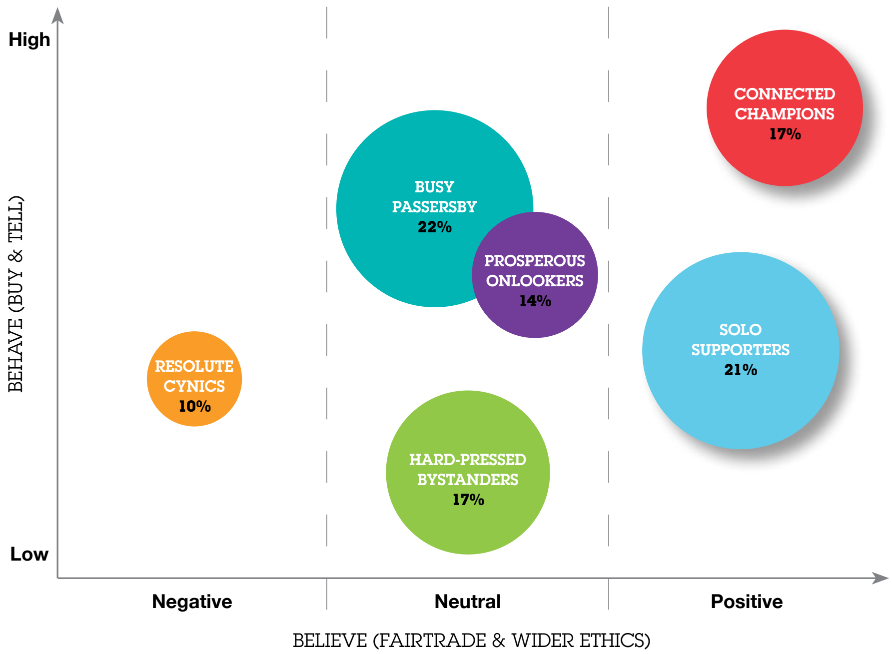

Figure 9 – Fairtrade Study – the Ethical Consumption Landscape

This showed us that our best opportunity for creating greater commitment to Fairtrade lay in two key audiences representing some 40 per cent of the population.

Solo Supporters are an older group of ethical shoppers, they hold strong convictions with set ideas, which favour Fairtrade. They are well off and tend to over-index in Fairtrade spend. They are less likely to act for Fairtrade or spread the word generally.

Connected Champions are a younger group of people; socially networked on and off line they are environmentally and socially aware and connect with other people expansively on their views and perspectives.

So we rebalanced our marketing and press activity to ensure our efforts were reaching across the spectrum, but with a greater emphasis on Connected Champions as an opportunity to expand our campaigning nature to a broader constituency than the traditional Fairtrade campaigner. Given budgets, it was also pragmatic to target and ignite an active online audience. These consumers are responsive to simple but meaningful communication on the need for Fairtrade and the impact of their purchase.

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STEP 4: FROM COMMUNITIES OFF LINE TO ONLINE

In 2009 Fairtrade's social media presence was just starting to grow. With the launch of Fairtrade cosmetics that year, we decided to increase the digital base. We invested time and some budget in campaigns around new and lesser known product categories which would make positively predisposed consumers re-evaluate Fairtrade, engage and share. When communicating at a brand level we created a range of digital mechanics which made it easier for consumers to engage with us. Figures 10-13 show a spread of campaigns that achieved this. While suceeding in growing Fairtrade's digital engagement, these campaigns all also integrated with licensee communications, helping them drive purpose in their brands.

Figure 10 – Make Beauty Fair

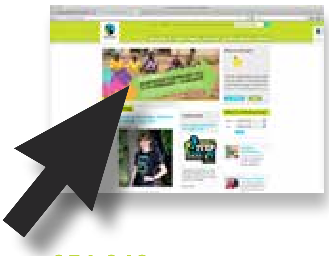
Figure 11 – Sip for South Africa

Figure 12 – Show off your Label

Figure 13 – Swap your Choc

The result was a transformation in digital interaction between the Foundation and our supporters. Between 2009 and 2012 our digital metrics grew as shown below. Amongst other results, during 2009 some 70,000 people viewed a piece of digital content from us, in 2012 that figure was almost 1,000,000. With overall annual budget growth no greater than 10 per cent per annum, this is a tremendous indication of the mainstreaming of our direct engagement.

A significant secondary benefit is that our commercial licensees now consider our supporter engagement channels as a valuable route to market for their brand and CSR communications, and a mechanism that delivers value for money for their license fee.



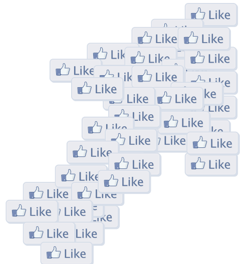
856,340 unique visitors in 2009
1,081,617 unique visitors in 2012

71,362 average unique visitors a month in 2009
90,135 average unique visitors a month in 2012

www.fairtrade.org.uk

Go Bananas 2009 microsite had
30,701 unique visitors in 2009

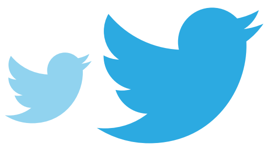
Take a step in 2012 microsite had
137,488 unique visitors in 2012



28,282 Facebook followers by end of 2009

87,583 Facebook followers by end of 2012

www.facebook.com/FairtradeFoundation



4,006 Twitter followers by end of 2009

41,050 Twitter followers by end of 2012

www.twitter.com/fairtradeuk

72,795 video views in year of 2009 alone

997,819 video views in year of 2012 alone

www.youtube.com/fairtradefoundation

Figure 14 – Fairtrade digital interactions

We plan more innovation like this to drive deeper engagement with Fairtrade. Figure 15 shows screengrabs from the Ask Malawi project, launching in February 2013, allowing consumers to connect directly with a community in Malawi to better understand them, their challenges and the impact of Fairtrade.

Figure 15 – Ask Malawi.tv

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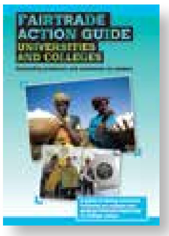
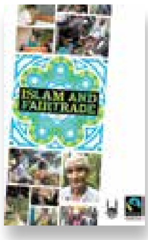
STEP 5: REINVIGORATING OUR CAMPAIGNS NETWORKS





Our campaigns network is the backbone of the Fairtrade movement. 32 per cent of people learn about Fairtrade through family, friends and colleagues, whilst 16 per cent hear about us through education, community and faith groups.[3] Word of mouth is a key asset. Brand partners highly value the networks and our privileged access to them.

The risk in mainstreaming is that it leaves many campaigners feeling the job is done and they no longer campaign
with the passion they had when Fairtrade was young. To address this, from 2009 the strategy was updated to:

1. Improve the tools campaigners had to reach mainstream consumers, bringing them closer to delivering the strategy, engaging them and involving them in the process of mainstreaming

2. Invest in those campaigns groups where the energy lay – schools, where there is most interest in new groups reaching Fairtrade status

3. Link Fairtrade to related issues; highlighting its impact as an environmental standard, developing mining standards, linking the plight of developing world farmers to domestic farmers and showing how poor countries are bearing the brunt of global economic deterioration

3 Globescan, Q. How have you learned about Fairtrade?, 2011

ACHIEVING MARKETING EXCELLENCE

STEP 6: BUILDING BRANDS WITH PURPOSE

Fairtrade lives or dies by our ability to convert all the above into a compelling business case for brands. They need to be convinced that Fairtrade is the best way that they can build purpose into their brands.

The success of the marketing of Fairtrade has a strong B2B dimension. Key aspects of the marketing strategy include:

- **A value and research-based business case, outlining the financial and brand equity potential of a switch to Fairtrade**
- **Sector-specific e-comms delivering messaging on the impact of Fairtrade on supply chains and farmers, and product availability**
- **An annual conference with thought leaders in the sector, producers and new brands to engage current and prospective licensees in the Fairtrade story**
- **Mapping the Foundation's understanding of Connected Champions and Solo Supporters on to prospective partner brands to suggest marketing strategies**

What we have achieved

The success of these efforts is evidenced in:

1. The delivery of new brands to Fairtrade certification

2. Fairtrade sales growth

3. Growth in awareness, familiarity, trust and active choice

4. Continued growth in the grass roots movements as we have mainstreamed

5. Delivery of value to famers

These illustrations tell the story best.

Figure 16 – Brand switches to Fairtrade

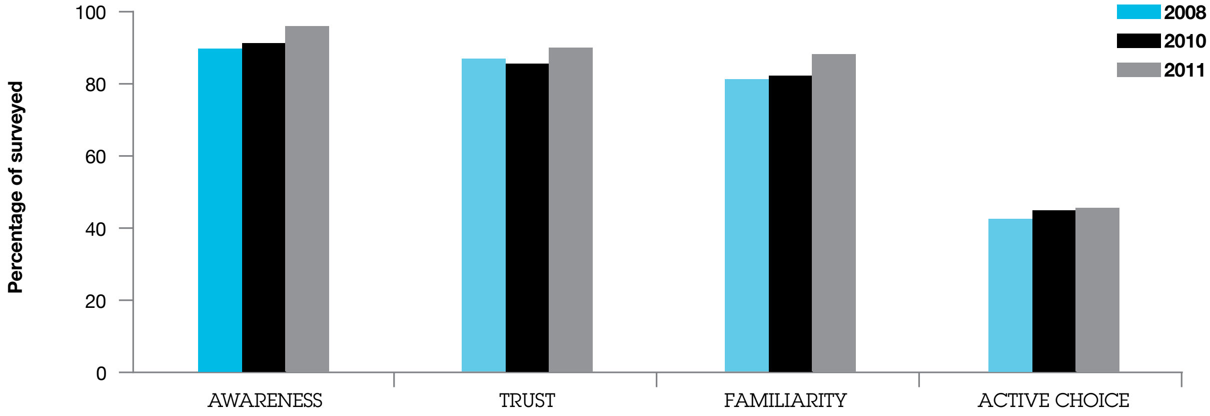


Figure 17 – Growth in awareness, familiarity, trust and active choice (Globescan)

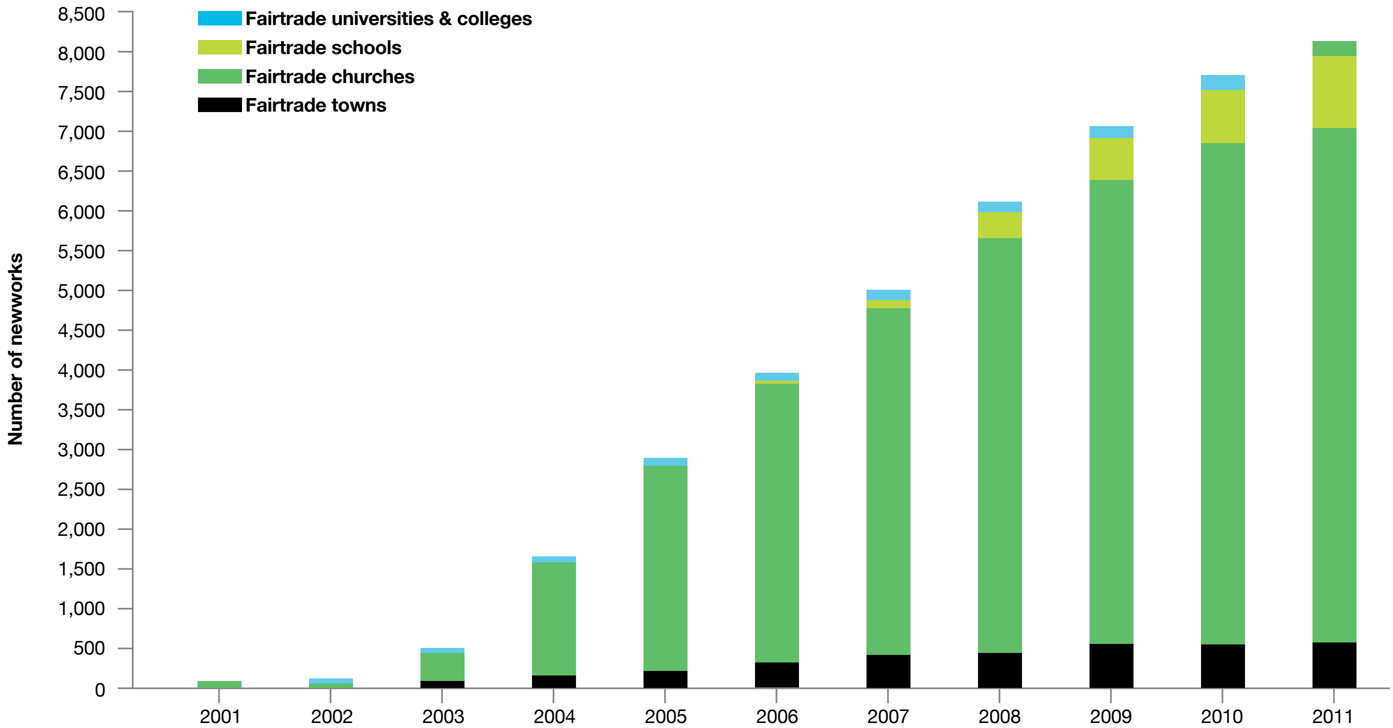


Figure 18 – Growth in grass roots networks (Fairtrade internal data)

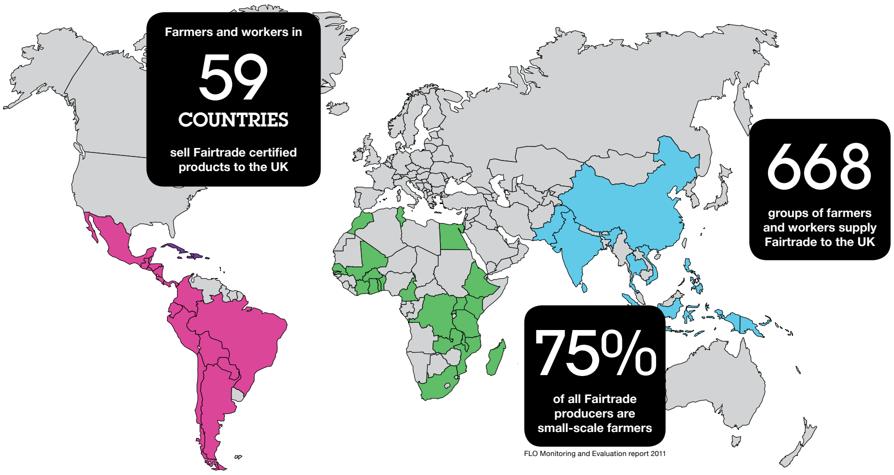
CONCLUSION

What this application shows is that there was no silver bullet in creating the sucess of Fairtrade in recent years. Despite a challenging economic climate, we have managed to step change sales and commercial engagement through excellence in marketing. On limited budgets we globalised the brand, found an accessible tone of voice, made our understanding of the ethical consumer more sophisticated, took our communities online, refocused our campaigner, focused efforts and translated all of this into a commercial proposition with sucess. As at 2013 we are proud to reflect on how Fairtrade has driven the ethical consumption sector and contributed to building purpose in brands.

Figure 19 – Delivery of value to farmers

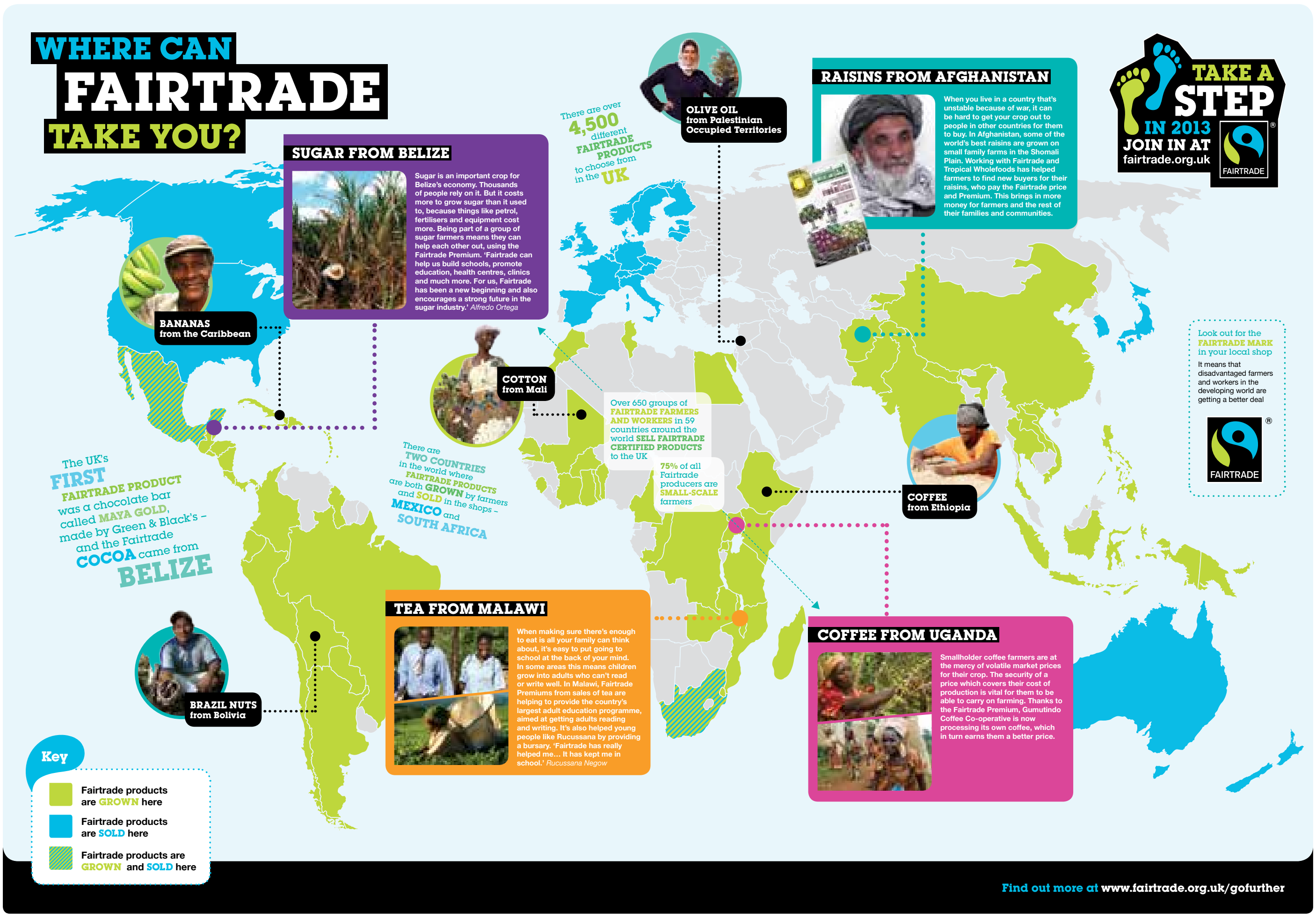
APPENDIX 1

THE FAIRTRADE WORLD



Producer partners in these countries sell to the UK Fairtrade market:

LATIN AMERICA	CARIBBEAN	AFRICA	ASIA
Argentina	Cuba	Burkina Faso	Afghanistan
Belize	Dominican Republic	Cameroon	China
Bolivia	Haiti	Central African Republic	East Timor
Brazil	Windward Islands	Comoros Islands	India
Chile		Côte d'Ivoire	Indonesia
Colombia		Dem. Rep. of Congo	Laos
Costa Rica		Egypt	Pakistan
Ecuador		Ethiopia	Palestine
El Salvador		Ghana	Papua New Guinea
Guatemala		Kenya	Philippines
Honduras		Madagascar	Sri Lanka
Mexico		Malawi	Thailand
Nicaragua		Mali	Vietnam
Panama		Mauritius	
Paraguay		Morocco	
Peru		Mozambique	
		Rwanda	
		São Tomé and Príncipe	
		Senegal	
		South Africa	
		Swaziland	
		Tanzania	
		Togo	
		Tunisia	
		Uganda	
		Zambia	



APPENDIX 2

STRATEGIC SEGMENTS: PEN PORTRAITS

Supporters/Campaigners: at a minimum a supporter will consciously purchase Fairtrade regularly, will be on our database or social media channels and will have actively joined in on a campaign in the last year. They will receive and read Faircomment (our bi-annual newsletter). They understand the issues around trade justice and will dedicate time to write or petition for a Fairtrade cause or campaign. Campaigners will be a member of a Fairtrade town, faith or education group. They will actively recommend Fairtrade or Fairtrade products to friends or acquaintances either through work, socially or online. They like to get out in the community. They will organise Fairtrade events and will be on a steering group for a Fairtrade Town/ Faith group/ University. Key channels for communicating with them are our website, social media networks, mailings (e-news and postal), and our NGO partners.

Connected Champions: positively inclined to Fairtrade and related ethical issues, they are active choosers of Fairtrade products (when they think of it and when they can find them). Younger (44% <35 yrs) and more socially connected, they are happy to recommend causes and brands to others. They show propensity to both purchase and to advocate on Fairtrade – tend to say that they could explain Fairtrade to someone else. This group are open and receptive to all advertising so Fairtrade communication needs to disrupt/ cut through. Online is a key channel- internet & social media usage is high, online news readership is high. Word of mouth is critical to this group, so campaigner organised community events will be important. Business partner activity is also be important (in-store retail and out of home, digital and ATL).

Solo Supporters: positively inclined to Fairtrade and ethical issues. Happy to buy Fairtrade (contribute the greatest in terms of sales). Older (51% >55yrs) and tend to have formed their opinions in life. Much less likely to influence others. Will say they believe in Fairtrade but less confident that they could explain it to someone else. This group are much less likely to listen/respond to advertising in general. In-store and via our campaigner events are the best ways to get attention and influence them.

Busy Passersby: more neutral to ethical issues and Fairtrade (not top of mind). Likely to recognise the Fairtrade mark and know it represents a good thing, but tend not to be sure they understand exactly what it means. May be receptive to Fairtrade messaging through their favourite brands. This group is the average shopper in their media consumption. Children will influence their media choices as well as their love of celebrities. Supermarket magazines are an important source of information (as with all the segments).