

**Feel Better Energy**





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# Feel better energy

EDF Energy overcame the restrictions and hostility towards the energy category, to create transformative communications in 2012. Using the emotional appeal of a character based campaign, the brand was embraced by customers and employees alike. EDF Energy were winning [redacted] of all market switchers and achieved the largest net gains in product accounts of all major suppliers since launch; the only top 6 energy supplier to grow share. The activity delivered ROI of [redacted]

Word count: 74



# From the fringes to centre stage

Imagine being responsible for the fifth biggest brand in a category that consumers sometimes hate, and often ignore. Your lovingly crafted marketing is swept from their brains by tabloid headlines and Today programme interviews. You try to create differentiation, and consumers can't even remember your name.

Your main lever for differentiation is no longer seen to be as convincing as it once was. Your discussed in parliament and stringently monitored by a government regulator. Oh, and your main competitor spends three times as much money as you.

**Sounds like fun doesn't it?**

**This story is about the revitalisation of the EDF Energy brand in the UK. The story of how marketing moved a brand from the fringes to centre stage, navigating a successful path through a thicket of restrictions and winning customers at a faster rate than any of their competitors.**

# A bit of history

EDF Energy became the brand we know today in the UK market in 2003, as part of a wave of acquisitions and re-brandings that saw the arrival of e.on from Germany, the re-branding of Npower, and the creation of Scottish and Southern. British Gas (the historic monopoly provider) was the only brand largely untouched by these shenanigans, and this created a brand advantage for them that remains today, having traded under variations of the same name since 1973. In a low interest market, familiarity counts for a lot.

Despite EDF Energy's success, they had failed to make their mark in the minds of the British public, often referenced as part of the industry's notorious 'big six' they were only the 5th most spontaneously recalled brand with small market share.



## A negative sea of sameness



**Gas and electricity are seen as commodity products. Paradoxically, although we couldn't live without the products, the supply brands elicit apathy and confusion amongst many.**

As if it's not challenging enough for a marketer in this sector to engage consumers, in recent years, indifference has turned into hatred and disdain.

Customers saw a category that's always increasing prices 'to cover costs' but still reporting extortionate profits. A world filled with multiple tariffs, incomprehensible energy jargon and complex billing. And if they wanted a good deal, the responsibility was firmly theirs.

All of this resulted in an impression amongst customers that all energy suppliers are the same; there is no real (positive) choice.

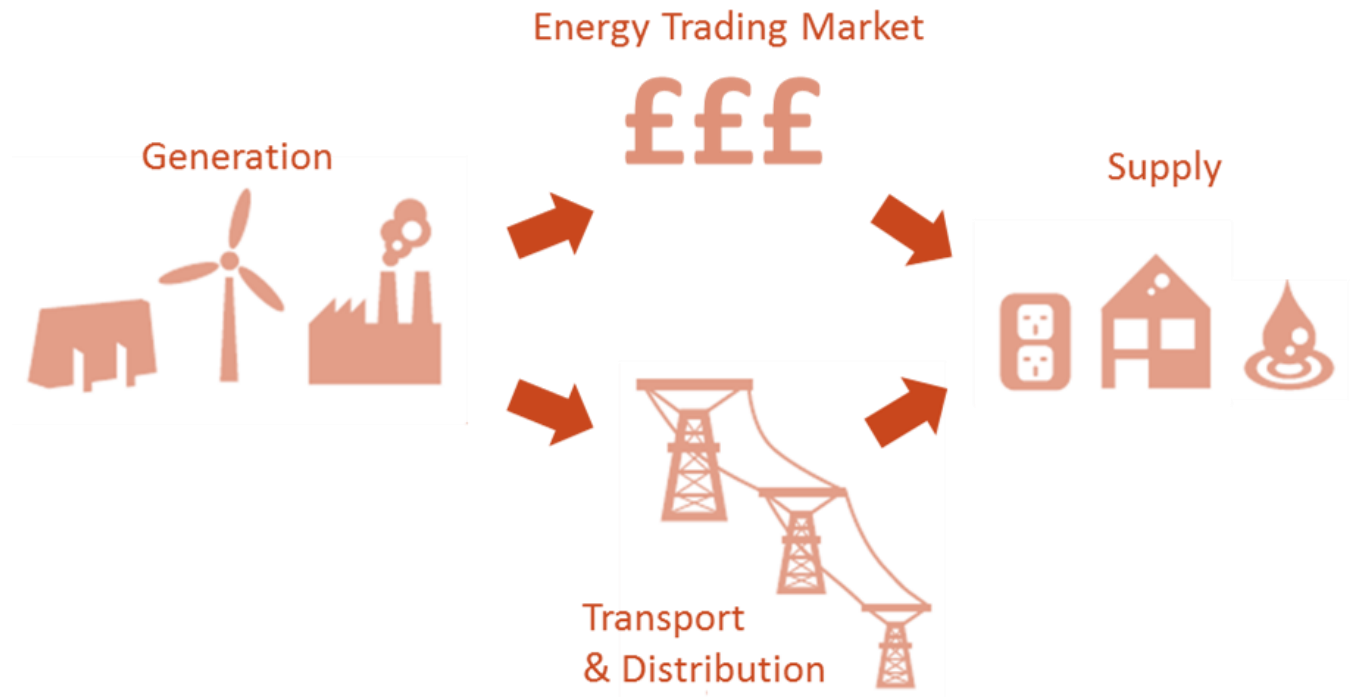
How could EDF Energy differentiate itself - become the brand that customers actively want to choose in this negative sea of sameness?

# Limitations of a complex market

Unlike an FMCG brand, which can manipulate the cost of their product either at the retail end, through promotions, or the supply chain side, by squeezing manufacturing costs, the energy sector's complexity doesn't allow providers this luxury.

Becoming the 'cheap' provider to drive brand differentiation was not an option.

Many energy companies are effectively split into two businesses – one generating and supplying electricity to the national grid; the other buying blended energy from the grid and supplying it to homes and businesses. You don't directly supply the energy you generate.





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# Generation – Differentiating but not motivating

Energy (electricity specifically) can be generated in a number of ways\*, EDF Energy had previously positioned their marketing around their generation differentiator – Low Carbon. (As EDF Energy runs many of Britain's Nuclear power plants, the energy generated and supplied to the grid is very low carbon)

'Save Today, Save Tomorrow' was the brand's summation of their low carbon credentials and the dual benefit to the customer and environment, this was brought to life by 'Team Green Britain' campaigns.

This was an effective strategy for a little while. In 2006 climate change was topping the list of household concerns. Then came the global crash, and money was overwhelmingly everyone's main concern.

EDF Energy's business differentiator was no longer as motivating, (although still core to the business). The brand would have to find another means of standing out.

\*Electricity can be generated by, fossil fuels, nuclear power, renewable technologies



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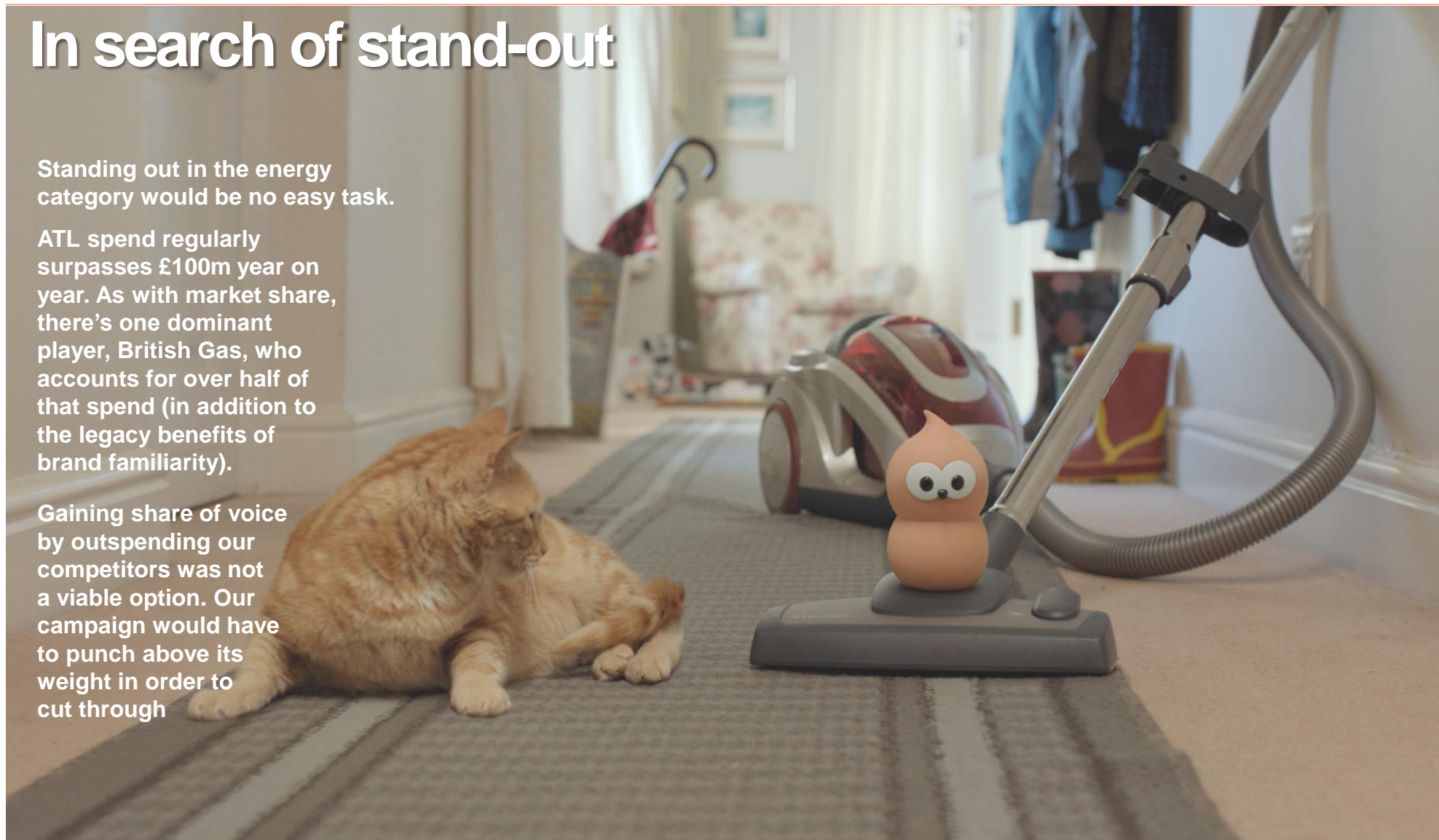
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# In search of stand-out

Standing out in the energy category would be no easy task.

ATL spend regularly surpasses £100m year on year. As with market share, there's one dominant player, British Gas, who accounts for over half of that spend (in addition to the legacy benefits of brand familiarity).

Gaining share of voice by outspending our competitors was not a viable option. Our campaign would have to punch above its weight in order to cut through



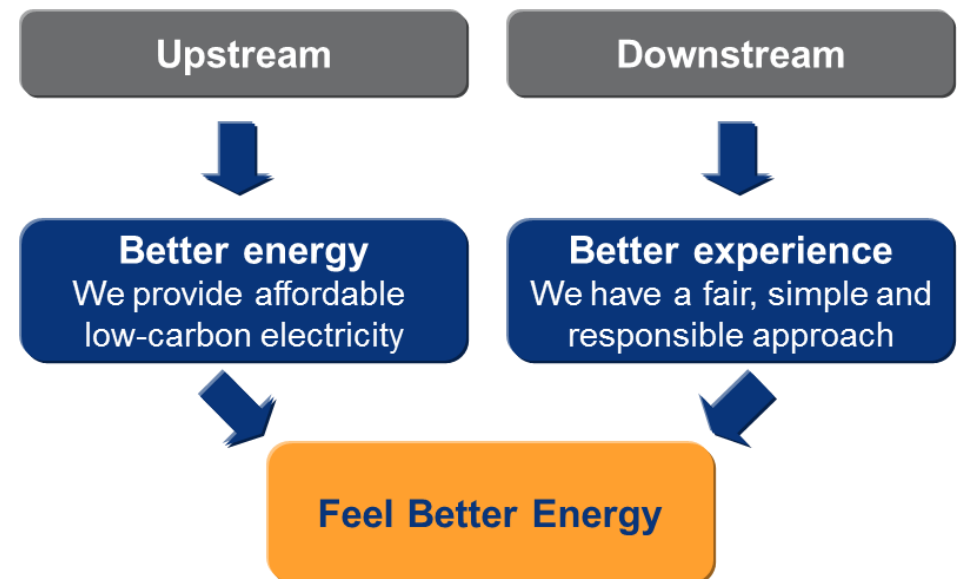


# Repositioning EDF Energy

The first expression of our brand's benefit (low carbon supply) and ambition (becoming the positive choice) as 'the better energy company' failed to engage customers in research.

We discovered that rational argument would struggle against cynicism in the energy category (our IPSOS brand tracker showed that only █ of consumers felt 'my energy company acts with my interests in mind'). So if we were to neutralise this negativity, we would need to engage emotionally, not rationally.

We were lacking emotion, being too absolute and directive. So we evolved our claim to providing 'feel better energy'. Combined with a different advertising approach consumers connected with our messages – we were able to accommodate our core business differentiator whilst injecting the emotion we needed.



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# The role of a character

**We decided that having a character would give customers a property to connect with, much easier for people to do than connecting directly with a brand.**

**It also gave us an asset, a visual shortcut for people to remember the brand by (helpful for our relatively small spend)**

**The vital thing was to find a character that would effectively bring to life our new brand promise, 'feel better energy'.**

**Meet Zingy.**



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# Inspired by 'feel better' technology

Zingy, was originally inspired by a robot called Keepon\*.

Keepon is a robot that was developed and used in the classroom to help autistic children interact with the world.

Like its inspiration we found it was essential to maintain a neutral appearance. By doing so it allowed viewers to project their own personality and feelings.

This 'blank canvas' of the character is what gave it its cute distinctive charm. Its appearance and simple movements connected with consumers positively, raising smiles thus generating warmth towards the brand itself.

We worked with the creators of Keepon to develop our own character. And called him Zingy.

\*<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3g-yrjh58ms>





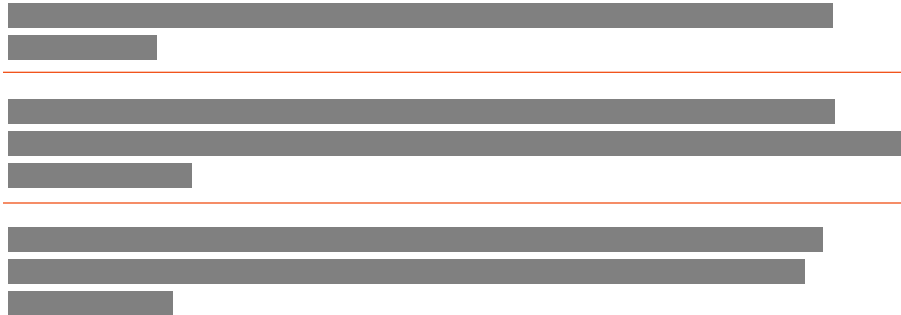
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# How the emotion comes through

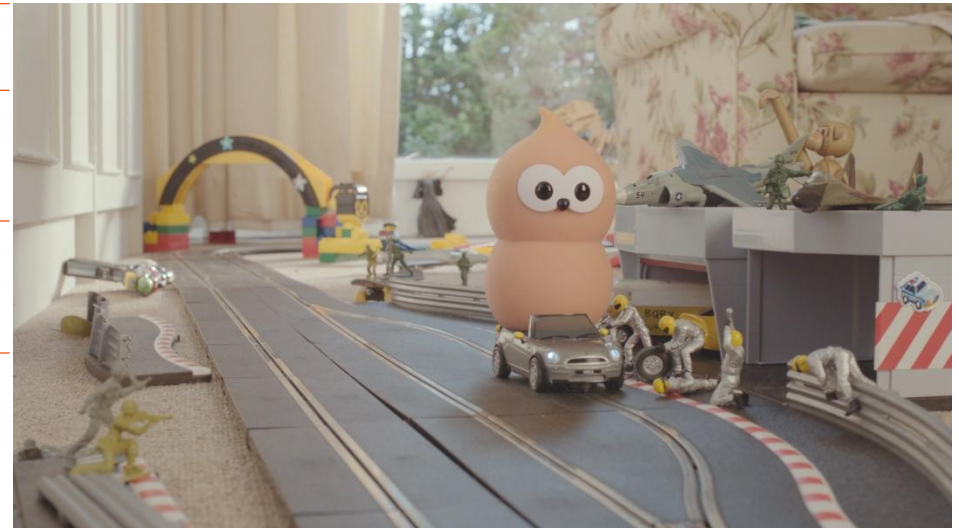
**Qualitative research found that the ads drove an emotional response by disarming the audience and sidestepping any rational resistance. At the same time this small robot helped overcome the negative industry sentiment.**

The positive impact on brand perceptions was quantified using Hall & Partners' Brand Engager Model, with encouraging results:



It was also important to make sure a dancing robot did not undermine the brand's expertise or integrity, being a nuclear operator.

Research validated that although Zingy was unexpected from an energy supplier, it did not call into question the brand's generation credentials.



# It only works if it works everywhere

We were able to use Zingy on every branded surface a customer was likely to encounter for EDF Energy, ensuring complete consistency through the line, capturing the 'feel better' idea throughout. Our integration was another way for us to create a bigger impact on our relatively small budget.



**Does your energy company give you...**

- 1 Electricity from **low-carbon** generation?
- 2 A **great price** with no rise guaranteed until at least September 2013?
- 3 A **promise** to tell you if another supplier is more than £1 a week cheaper at typical use?
- 4 **No termination fee** if you want to leave?
- 5 A **reward** every month with Thank you?

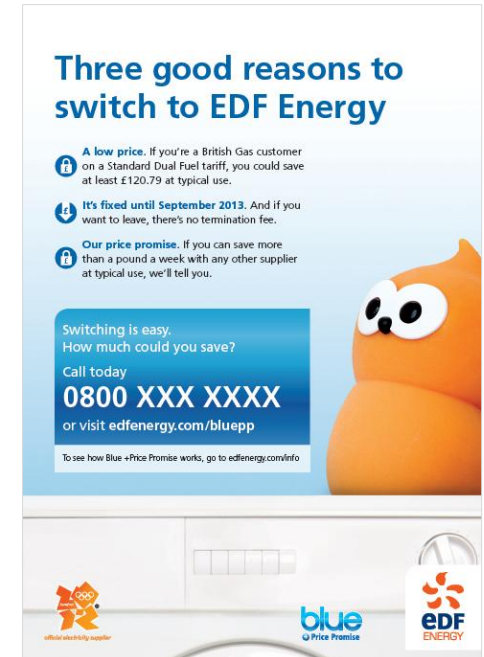
Right now only EDF Energy gives you all this, with **Blue+Price Promise**.

For a quick, no obligation quote call today XXXX XXX XXXX or visit [edfenergy.com/blueppromise](http://edfenergy.com/blueppromise)

To see how Blue+Price Promise works, go to [edfenergy.com/info](http://edfenergy.com/info)

**blue**  
Price Promise

**EDF**  
ENERGY



**Three good reasons to switch to EDF Energy**

- 1 A **low price**. If you're a British Gas customer on a Standard Dual Fuel tariff, you could save at least £120.79 at typical use.
- 2 It's **fixed** until September 2013. And if you want to leave, there's no termination fee.
- 3 Our **price promise**. If you can save more than a pound a week with any other supplier at typical use, we'll tell you.

Switching is easy.  
How much could you save?  
Call today  
**0800 XXX XXXX**  
or visit [edfenergy.com/bluepp](http://edfenergy.com/bluepp)

To see how Blue+Price Promise works, go to [edfenergy.com/info](http://edfenergy.com/info)

**blue**  
Price Promise

**EDF**  
ENERGY

# Another reason to feel better

Whilst the approach was about emotional connection, we knew there was an opportunity and an obligation to change what we were offering, not just how we were advertising. So, we innovated against 'feel better energy' in product, service and loyalty.

The flagship was a new product called 'Blue', the first variant of which we launched was Blue+Price Promise. This product offered households a category defying promise - if you could get your energy cheaper with another provider, we would tell you AND allow you to leave for free, unlike most other tariffs at the time which charged termination fees. And furthermore, the product was backed with low carbon nuclear supply, so now people could get low carbon at no extra cost.

The word 'blue' in a large, blue, 3D-style font with a gradient and shadow effect.



# The work

## Launch TVC



## Product TVC



## Press & OOH



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# Results

2012 was a big year for EDF Energy. In addition to the strategies described, EDF Group was a sustainability partner of London 2012. But Zingy could not be used during the period of the games - no sponsor could feature any unofficial 'mascot' in their advertising, therefore the measurement of success is restricted to the first half of the year.

The brand experienced significant increases in, spontaneous awareness and key equity statements, gaining ground on category leader, British Gas.

Blue secured endorsements from market influencers, Martin Lewis (Money Saving Expert) who promoted the product across a number of channels including TV and Radio (BBC Radio 5) and on his Twitter feed.

Measure	March 2012	July 2012	Uplift	British Gas (July 2012)
Spontaneous Awareness				
Offers great deals				
Stands out in a positive way in the energy industry				

Source: EDF Energy IPSOS Brand Tracker July 2012

**"I give it an 8.5 out of 10. This is a rock 'n roll tariff ... plaudits to EDF".**

**Martin Lewis (Money Saving Expert)**



# Ad performance

Across all tracking measures, EDFE increased by a cumulative █ percentage points, whilst the category, on average, increased by only █ percentage points.

Advertising recognition peaked at █, attribution to EDF Energy peaking at █ (for comparison, when British Gas first launched their current campaign, attribution was only █)

The work proved positive for the brand with █ of respondents say the advertising makes them feel more positive about EDF Energy.

And it delivered on the 'feel good' factor with █ of people saying it made them smile, and █ saying they enjoyed watching the ad.

## Recognition over time

█ Cumulative TVRs

█ Weekly TVRs

█ Any ad



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# Employee engagement

Feel Better Energy inspired employees and gave them confidence that the organisation was moving in the right direction.

Measure	2012 Post 'Feel Better Energy' Campaign (% total favourable)	Uplift from 2011
EDF Energy's new advertising inspires me as an employee		
I believe EDF Energy's executive team (CEO included) have a clear vision for the future		

Source: B2C Employee Engagement Interim Survey (June 2012)



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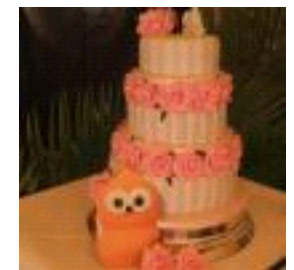
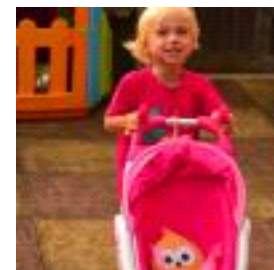
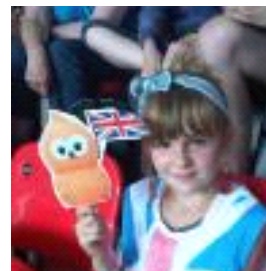
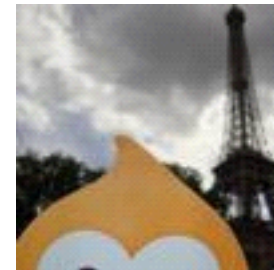
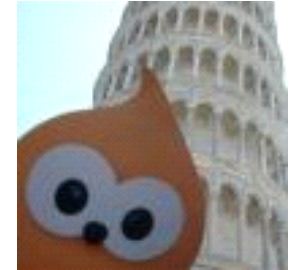
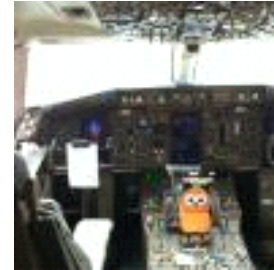
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# Employees took zingy to their hearts

Zingy travelled the globe with our employees, during holidays usually designed with the express purpose of forgetting about work.

None of this was specifically designed, or encouraged by the marketing team, and in fact the levels of engagement were beyond our wildest imaginings.

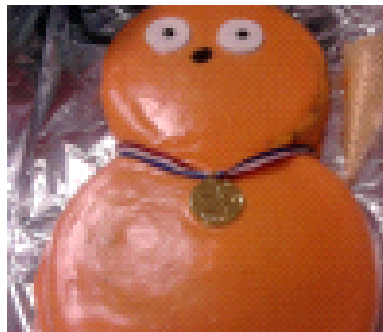
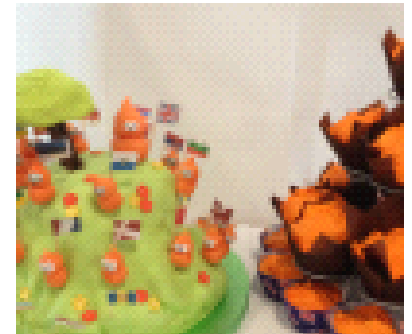
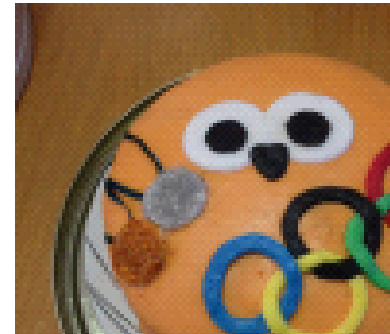
Clearly this was becoming a special relationship.



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# Particularly popular on cakes, for some reason



Please note: not all the cake creative work is LOCOG or IOC compliant, and is used here purely to illustrate depth of employee engagement, none of the above cakes were created by the brand or comms team, or shown to customers.



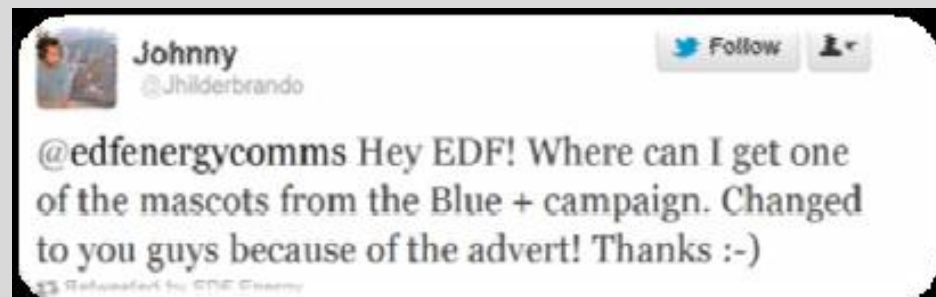
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# Social acclaim from customers

Sentiment in social media was transformed - As a 'feel bad' category an average of only █ of mentions are positive. After the campaign, █ of EDF Energy mentions were positive. Zingy was a hit.

█ recognised the character and █ liked him online. 34 fan pages started on Facebook with an accumulative █ followers (the most popular page is called "I love Zingy the EDF Energy orange blob"). Not to mention the unsanctioned Zingy merchandise that can be found living on eBay.



Recognised Zingy

Liked him online

Fan pages

followers

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# Business performance

Blue accounts by year end

of all market switchers won

We exceeded all our sales targets.

new Blue accounts ( ahead of target), and existing accounts transferred to Blue ( ahead of target). By year end, there were over 1m Blue accounts, and existing customer churn had dropped from to .

Industry data has confirmed EDF Energy were winning of all market switchers and has achieved the largest net gains in product accounts of all major suppliers since launch. During April-July 2012 EDF Energy's net gains were greater than second place competitor Scottish Power.

# Return on Investment

As referenced earlier in the paper, the energy market has 4 parts with energy being bought and sold before it gets to customers. The large profits reported by energy companies are in fact driven by the generation side, not the supply (B2C) side. A report by the industry regulator showed that energy companies have on average made only 1.6% profit on supplying customers since 2005.

Using EDF Energy's brand valuation tool, independently audited by brand valuation experts at Brand Finance, we isolated the financial contribution this advertising will have on our business leading to a positive post-tax ROI of [REDACTED]. This is based on incremental retention and acquisition of B2C customers directly linked to ATL. (For comparison, British Gas' Gold winning IPA effectiveness paper was [REDACTED]).

EDF Energy was also the only brand in the energy sector to grow market share.



# Conclusion

Marketing has taken the brand from one of a number of relatively anonymous brands in the energy market, to one of the best known in the category, with a distinctly different brand claim, based on emotional connection, not rational connection. It's paid back to the business immediately and has started strongly in becoming a feel good choice, in a feel bad category.

Word Count: 1,996