Rochester Institute of Technology

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the College of Imaging Arts and Sciences
in candidacy for the degree of Masters of Fine Arts Computer Graphics Design

Cookie Dough 2.0: Digital Sketchbook
The story of cookie dough's rise to a legitimate snack
through computer graphics design

By Sue Leo
November 9, 2010

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_____   _____

Signature of Author   Date

Abstract

Cookie Dough 2.0 is a thesis documenting the graphic design branding journey of transforming cookie dough from simply a mixture of raw ingredients used in making chocolate chip cookies into a legitimate snack food.

Graphic design was the critical factor in forming the brand character, packaging and marketing support materials. All concepts and final mechanicals were created digitally. Additionally, this thesis illustrates how the brand identity emerged through the many phases of product development.

Table of Contents

Introduction

This thesis documents the visual journey of making cookie dough, raw ingredients used in the creation of chocolate chip cookies into a legitimate snack food that is safe to eat.

The story begins with the Cole & Parks Restaurant in Victor, New York of which I am an investor. The product that inspired the cookie dough snack concept was an earlier invention called DoughEggs® that is pre-portioned gourmet dough, ready take home and bake into cookies. The edible cookie dough concept began as an extension of this product. The cookie dough is not baked, and it is safe to eat.

The graphics and packaging for the first generation of the cookie dough product was designed to reflect the Cole & Parks brand. The second generation packaging was created by a third party, which is outside of the scope of this thesis. However, the third and current generation as of the publication of this thesis is within the scope.

My thesis show consisted of a presentation and an extensive display of concepts, prototypes and actual production samples. The display showed the evolution of the graphic design developed for several branding names for the invention from the logotypes, packaging concepts and marketing materials.

In addition to displaying physical artifacts, I presented an electronic sketchbook created in the software program InDesign, detailing the evolution of the logo and other imagery from initial product concept DoughNuggs® to the present day identity as Mrs. Fields® Cookie Dough Snacks. The presentation also touched upon the inside story behind the product, the goals, challenges, outcomes and obstacles.

All work created for the cookie dough project was created electronically on MacIntosh computers using Illustrator, Photoshop, Flash, InDesign, and Acrobat software.

Review of Literature

1) ***Guidelines for Online Success. The Do's and Don'ts of the Internet from the best interactive agencies around the world.*** Ed. Rob Ford, Julius Wiedermann (2008). Printed in China. *This book is a visual inspiration book with links to actual websites that you can visit. Topics covered in this book include Interface & Design, Marketing & Communications, Technology & Programming, Technical Advice, Content Management and E-Commerce.*

2) ***The Universal Traveler. A Soft-Systems Guide to Creativity, Problem Solving and the Process of Reaching Goals.*** Don Koberg and Jim Banall (1991). Crisp Publications, Inc. 1200 Hamilton Ct., Menlo Park, CA 94025. *I use many of the creative problem solving techniques in this book. The seven stages of creative problem solving has become second nature to my design approach and process.*

3) ***The 22 Immutable Laws of Marketing Violate them at Your Own Risk!*** Al Ries and Jack Trout (1993). Harper Business, a division of Harper Collins Publishers, Inc. 10 East 53rd St., New York, NY 10022. *This is a great little book with short but important topics to consider when developing a product and bringing it to market. Understanding some of these concepts helps designers understand how marketing to consumers works and can help make design assist in the success of the product.*

4) ***Branding the power of market identity.*** David E. Carter with an introduction by Jeffrey F. Rayport (1999). Hearst Books International, 1350 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019. *This is a visual stimulus book where you can view a variety of classic logos and explore how they are applied to various packaging, architectural and promotional materials.*

5) ***Achieve Brand Integrity Ten Truths You Must Know to Enhance Employee Performance and Increase Company Profits.*** Gregg Lederman (2007). B@W Press, 60 Park Avenue, Rochester, NY 14607. *Although this book deals mostly with educating your employees about what a brand is, it also speaks to the breadth of brand identity and the relationship between "saying the brand" with communications branding and "doing the brand" within the culture.*

6) ***Marks of Excellence. The history and taxonomy of trademarks.*** Per Mollerup (2000). Phaidon Press Limited, Regent's Wharf, All Saints St, London, N1 9PA. *This is another reference book to use for inspiration when developing logos.*

7) ***1000 Retail Graphics from Signage + Logos and Everything In-Store*** JGA (2007). Rockport Publishers, a member of Quayside Publishing Group, 33 Commercial St., Gloucester, MA 01930. *This is a visual reference book that does a nice job showing products in the retail setting along with non-traditional and creative labeling applications.*

Review of Literature

8) ***Packaging Graphics + Design Renee Phillips*** (2001). Rockport Publishers, a member of Quayside Publishing Group, 33 Commercial St., Gloucester, MA 01930. *This is a visual reference book that focuses on packaging design. I have used it many times for inspiration.*

9) ***Designing Brand Identity. A Complete Guide to Creating, Building, and Maintaining Strong Brands*** – Second Edition. Alina Wheeler (2006). John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken, NJ. *This book not only has an excellent layout, it is a comprehensive book that delves into brand strategy, Nomenclature, Brand Essence, Communications, Information and Touch Points. The book touches on a myriad of applications from motion graphics to static graphics and web design.*

10) ***Don't Make Me Think A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability.*** Steve Krug (2006). New Riders, 1249 Eighth St., Berkeley, CA 94710. *This is an excellent common sense guide to what works in website design from a usability standpoint.*

11) ***Marketing to the New Super Consumer Mom & Kid.*** Tim Coffey, David Siegel and Greg Livingston (2006). Paramount Market Publishing, Inc., 301 S. Geneva St. Ste 109, Ithaca, NY 14850. *This book is a great resource to get into the mind set of moms and kids. It is helpful to read books about your target market as understanding what motivates them is instrumental in the design process.*

12) ***Brand Simple. How the Best Brands Keep it Simple and Succeed.*** Allen P. Adamson (2006). Palgrave Macmillan, 175 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10010. *This book touches all elements related to branding and emphasizes the need to keep the message simple by capturing the essence of the brand in communication messages.*

13) ***How Brands Become Icons. The Principles of Cultural Branding.*** Douglas B. Holt (2004). Harvard Business School Press, Boston MA. *This book delves into tailoring brands identity and messaging to specific market segments through social networks and myth making principles.*

14) ***Joomla 1.5. A User's Guide Building a Successful Joomla! Powered Website.*** Barrie M. North (2009). Pearson Education, Inc. 75 Arlington St, Ste. 300, Boston, MA 02116. *This is a guide that covers the basics of the content management open source system called Joomla. This was a helpful resource for me when implementing the Mrs. Fields Cookie Dough Snacks website.*

The First Generation: DoughNuggs®

In the fall of 2005, the idea for a food concept hatched. Launched at Cole & Parks, a restaurant based in Victor, NY, DoughEggs® (FIG. 1) was a revolutionary product giving consumers a convenient way to make home baked cookies without the hassle of mixing ingredients.

With DoughEggs® you can customize your own variety of ready-to-bake gourmet cookie dough, bring it home and bake it! Each dough egg is pre-portioned and placed in a specially designed 12-piece container that includes a pocket tag supplying baking instructions.

Customers love the quick convenience of having fresh baked cookies at home without all the mess.

DoughEggs®
Ready-to-Bake Pre-portioned Dough

FIG. 1

Process

When the Cole & Parks DoughEggs® product hit the market, a fascinating thing happened. Customers would approach the restaurant counter and ask for one dough egg on a plate along with a fork to eat on site. Soon, this began to happen quite frequently — suddenly it clicked!

Why not develop a safe-to-eat cookie dough product?

Since the dawn of making chocolate chip cookie, people have been sneaking and eating dough morsels before they could reach the oven. This clandestine activity can lead to food borne illnesses such as salmonella or ecoli. However, that generally hasn't deterred people from doing it.

Nothing existed in the market that consumers could safely eat without the risk of salmonella poisoning. Since the product is not baked, there is no need to use egg for leavening so, the recipe was formulated without eggs and a new snack food was born!

The first challenge was the fact that eating cookie dough as a snack was a novel concept. Cookie dough was not considered a legitimate snack food. Second, we lacked an advertising budget. Third, from a product positioning standpoint we needed to find the right messaging and address all of the preconceived food safety issues. And finally, from the design perspective, it was important to reflect the Cole & Parks brand and convey all the product features on the container. A picture of the cookie dough snacks on the outside of the container was important to have since consumers had no idea what the treat looked like.

Printing for containers was costly and required very large minimums, so our packaging options were limited by the budget and how well we could negotiate pricing with the packaging suppliers and persuade them to waive minimum print run requirements.

Process

The snacks made their first debut under the brand name Cole & Parks DoughNuggs.® This was a terrific pairing with the sister product Dough-Eggs.® The initial plan was to launch both products in grocery stores and in food service operations such as restaurants, cafés and fast food chains.

The target audience drove the development of the logo design and later the packaging. The primary decision maker for the first generation product was moms. Of course kids were the target, but the graphics were targeted to moms.

Knowing the target demographic helps to guide the designer in developing imagery, selecting fonts, and creating graphic styling. Quite often in entrepreneurial situations designers also write critical copy points.

FIG. 2

The logotype for DoughNuggs® (FIG. 2) was designed to reflect the Cole & Parks brand. Cole & Parks is known for high quality, classic, and innovative products. The typeface ITC Giovanni was chosen for the logo for its distinctive and stylized lowercase g. Plus, the font provided a direct tie in with the Cole & Parks logo that appears in the red oval above the product name.

Process

The use of initial caps for the product name DoughNuggs® enabled the nesting of the two words on top of each other to create a visual play between the word dough — the ingredients, and the word nuggs — the shape of the snack. The logo type was used in the stacked form and in an inline version that appeared on the final container. (FIG. 3).

FIG. 3

The two fonts selected for the logotype, labeling and other typography were ITC Giovanni Book and Eurostile Bold which are the corporate fonts for Cole & Parks. This created a strong visual tie with the established Cole & Parks brand. (FIG 4.)

ITC Giovanni Book
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890

EUROSTILE BOLD
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890

FIG. 4

Process

The first packaging selected for DoughNuggs® was a cardboard freezer container. This particular container solution often confused consumers. Many assumed that it was chocolate chip ice cream. The original proto-type designs (FIG. 5) featured a picture of a perfect nugg nested within the logotype. The strategy for future product extensions calls for changing the background color to communicate different flavors, while the integrity of logo position and other product information is maintained.

FIG. 5

Below are the final production containers. (FIG. 6) After the 9 ounce freezer container was introduced, the novel 2.25 ounce cup was developed for use in food service organizations such as restaurants.

FIG. 6

Process

The production mechanical had to be modified for printing on a curve so that the text flowed parallel to the top and bottom radius of the container. (FIG. 7)

FIG. 7

Besides the Cole & Parks restaurant, one of the first distribution points for the product was in a locally-owned restaurant chain and a small independent grocer. Sales flyers were developed for purchasing agents and store owners. Table tents created product awareness to restaurant patrons at point of sale and proved a successful strategy. (FIG. 8)

FIG. 8

Process

In addition, smaller logos and tag line treatments were developed to support advertising objectives. The "Curb the Crave!" logo (FIG. 9) sprang from customer feedback. The Cole & Parks corporate fonts were combined with a handscript typeface into a secondary logo that was used on marketing materials. The tag line "The cookie dough Mom lets you eat!™" was created in ITC Giovanni text. The tag line was a great success and caught the attention of kids.

The cookie dough Mom lets you eat!™

FIG. 9

By January 2007, production was growing to the pace that a larger manufacturing space was needed, so dough making was moved into an incubator at The Technology Farm in Geneva, New York. Soon after, a search began for an outside manufacturing partner with an established distribution network.

In December 2007, Cole & Parks completed a joint venture agreement with Rich Products, Inc. located in Buffalo, New York to manufacture, market, and distribute the cookie dough snack product on a national scale. This brought new players into the process to influence the direction of the product.

The newly assembled decision-makers decided to change the product name from Cole & Parks DoughNuggs® to Cookie Dough Nuggets. New identity graphics were contracted to an outside agency. From December 2007 through March 2008, Rich Products managed rebranding.

Process

In 2008, plans to automate manufacturing triggered new container options for the product. The all-natural recipe required modification to work in the high volume dough extrusion machines and product specifications for the production size and shape of the nuggets were redesigned. (FIG. 10)
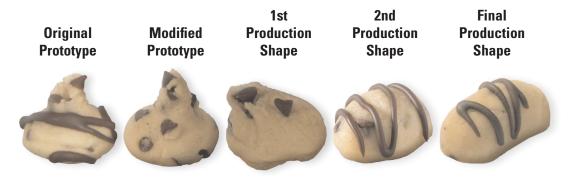
Original Prototype	Modified Prototype	1st Production Shape	2nd Production Shape	Final Production Shape

FIG. 10

This new manufacturing process opened up the possibilities to use flexible packaging. Two types of flexible containers were selected 1) resealable zipper pouches and 2) heat-sealed pillows. The new manufacturing process lead to a new product name and identity. This came about from direct feedback by QVC, the cable shopping network. They had been approached as a potential sales channel. They loved the product, but advised us that the name Cookie Dough Nuggets would be stronger and garner more attention if it was associated with a brand name. So, a search began for an anchor brand. The top-of-mind name was Mrs. Fields® known for chocolate chip cookies and a recognized, established high quality brand.

By December 2008, a licensing agreement had been negotiated with The Mrs. Fields® Brand, Inc. to market the cookie dough under the new name Mrs. Fields® Cookie Dough Snacks. I became the design steward once again for the rebranding of the product.

Process

The target shifted directly to the youth market ranging from 11 to 22-year olds. The aesthetics of the new packaging needed to be dynamic, fun, eye-catching, contemporary and colorful to attract their attention. The graphic styling would set the tone and character. It would be the key to grabbing the consumer's attention. The ultimate test to determine if a design solution is a success is whether the graphics compel the consumer to engage with the product and buy it.

If the target is kids and the design is more appealing to thirty-year olds, then you have missed the mark, no matter how many design awards it may garner. The true measure is connecting with the target audience and the ultimate objective for a design professional is to meet or exceed the mark. And the greatest success in consumer work is sales.

FIG. 11

FIG. 12

The persona for the new mark had to be friendly and approachable. To achieve this elements of cookie dough were integrated into the design. The words "cookie dough" were rendered to look like soft mounds of dough and the word "snacks" like the chocolate drizzle that adorns each piece. The logotype on the first-run production bags (FIG. 11) when printed differed from the prototype bags, so the logo required enhancement (FIG. 12) on later printing runs. A red colored halo was placed around the words "cookie dough" and a banner shape behind "snacks". These graphic embellishments helped provide better contrast for the logo that appears on top of the starburst pattern in the background.

Process

The proposed branding concept featured a colorful gradient linear burst motif in the background radiating from behind the center of two cookie dough nuggs. I wanted to create energy and motion so that the mouth watering snack would grab your attention. (FIG. 13) The design strategy for future flavors changes the background color and product shot to indicate the flavor.

FIG. 13

It became imperative for us to conduct a test with the target audience to prove the concept and validate the proposed design. In December 2008, students were presented several packaging designs (FIG. 14) created from the feedback all of the decision makers. The students were given no preemptive information about what was in the package. The proposed burst design was the favorite by a landslide. Additionally, we gained valuable feedback for key copy points to use on the packaging.
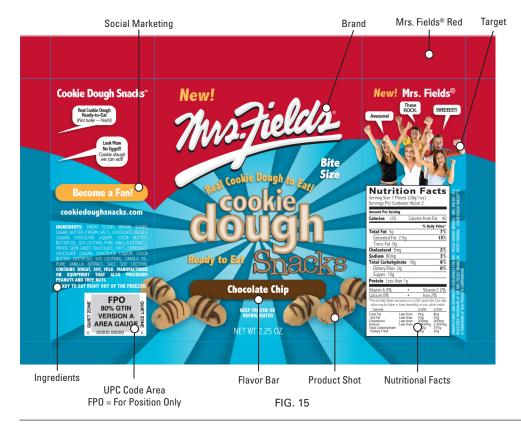

FIG. 14

Process

The flexible packaging was executed in two sizes a 10 ounce resealable zipper pouch and a 2.25 ounce heat-sealed bag (FIG. 15). A printed box was created for bulk sales and the small 2.25 ounce food service cup was rebranded (FIG 16).

FIG. 15

FIG. 16

Process

Blending the corporate graphic standards of several entities was a challenge. First and foremost, the graphics had to follow Mrs. Fields® corporate standards and guidelines. The Mrs. Fields® red is a strong, intense color and dominates the composition, so the color pairing was important along with the selection of typeface for the copy points. Because Mrs. Fields® has high name recognition, the logo was featured prominently on the top of the package to grab consumer attention to the product. An additional flavor, brownie chocolate chip, was added to the Mrs. Fields® launch. (FIG. 17)
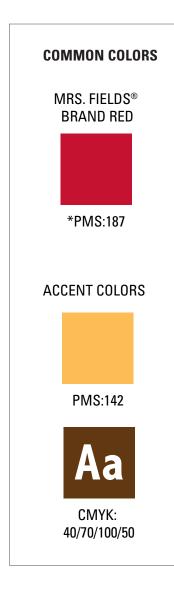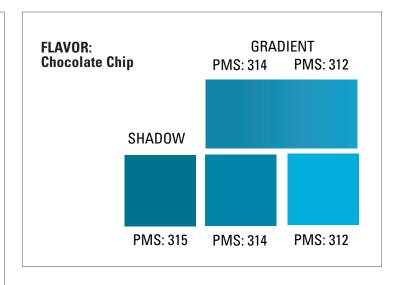

FIG. 17

A lifestyle shot of young adults was featured on the back of the bag and on the box containers and a connection to social media was created by promoting the website and using terminology "Become a Fan!" on the package. A bold color scheme was paired with the intense red of Mrs. Fields® brand identity.
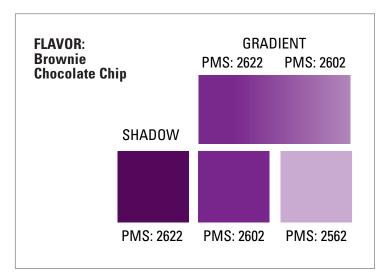
Process

The typeface selected for the packaging was chosen for its versatility with font weights ranging from extra bold to condensed forms. Abadi was also used as the font form for the rendered cookie dough logo.

Abadi Condensed Extra Bold
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890

Abadi Condensed Light
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890

COMMON COLORS

MRS. FIELDS®
BRAND RED

*PMS:187

ACCENT COLORS

PMS:142

Aa

CMYK:
40/70/100/50

FLAVOR:
Chocolate Chip

GRADIENT
PMS: 314   PMS: 312

SHADOW

PMS: 315   PMS: 314   PMS: 312

FLAVOR:
Brownie
Chocolate Chip

GRADIENT
PMS: 2622   PMS: 2602

SHADOW

PMS: 2622   PMS: 2602   PMS: 2562

Process

The following figures show how the brand application to various forms of packaging and marketing materials. These items were on display as part of the thesis presentation.
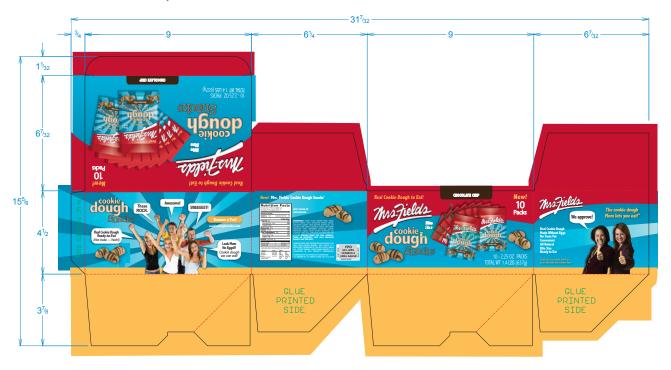

FIG. 18   10 Pack 2.25 oz. Chocolate Chip Container

FIG. 19   6 Pack 1.5 oz Brownie Chocolate Chip Container

Process

Static Cling
Fridge Decal Sign

Shelf Wobbler

Branded Merchandise
Display Trays

Clip
Hanger

FIG. 20   Convenience Store Support

FSI (Free Standing Insert) Coupon

Manufacturer's Promotional Coupon

FIG. 21
FSI and Manufacturer's Coupon

Process

FIG. 22   Sales Flyer

FIG. 23   Website Header Design (Joomla CMS Platform) www.cookiedoughsnacks.com

Process

FIG. 24
Backlit Restaurant Duratrans

Process

FIG. 26

In May 2010, sampling events were conducted at colleges across the U.S. The promotion was called Mrs. Fields® University. A shield design with the tag line E Pluribus Eat 'Em! (FIG. 25) was created to create a collegiate feel to the program. A grunge font was use for the tag "Eat Dough!" to give it an edgier look and feel.

FIG. 25

A direct mail campaign was executed to purchasing agents in colleges and universities featuring a school wall calendar (FIG. 26) and a Z-fold, 6-panel brochure (FIG. 27). Posters were created to display on campus to advertise where to buy them (FIG. 28).

Process

FIG. 27 Direct Mailer to Colleges & Universities

FIG. 28 Campus Location Display Poster Series

Summary

The result of this work has received positive responses from consumers. The product is in commercial production and currently being rolled out nationwide. I have been fortunate to have had the opportunity to shepherd the design direction for this product and be invested in its future success.

The feedback received from my thesis presentation and display elicited great questions from the audience. I was happy to see students interested in the interaction between clients and vendors. My thesis presentation also stimulated genuine interest and questions about starting your a design business, how to get clients, and what it is like to work for yourself.

Conclusion

This project has encompassed a significant body of work inspired not only from my design career, but by my work in the graduate program. I have experienced diverse learning opportunities throughout the development of the cookie dough product. I was exposed to new materials and applications, as I developed a deeper understanding for the effort involved to bring a product to market. I was able to contribute and influence many aspects not in the "traditional" job description of a designer.

In the course of product development, milestones were faced where various decision makers needed assurance that the design strategy was sound and would work. It was important to meet requirements and deadlines while maintaining the integrity of the concept. It was also important to stay a flexible, engaging and enthusiastic designer.

The brand identity is a winner. The ultimate success of this product now rests upon other factors including the commitment of the distribution channels; the support of the manufacturer; the strength of the marketing; the economy; ability to increase market awareness and access, plus most importantly continued customer satisfaction.

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Appendix

Appendix

Subject: FW: Thesis Proposal to get okay'd by the folks at Richs
From: "Reeves–Collins, Donna" <dreeves@rich.com>
Date: Mon, 27 Sep 2010 10:19:16 –0400
To: "Sue Leo" <sdl@sdleo.com>

From: Grieshober, William
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2010 10:18 AM
To: Reeves-Collins, Donna
Subject: RE: Thesis Proposal to get okay'd by the folks at Richs

Conceptually, I have no issue with this. I believe the information that would be shared is in the public domain. Let me know if you think otherwise. My best, Bill

William E. Grieshober, Jr.
Vice President and Deputy General Counsel
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From: Reeves-Collins, Donna
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2010 8:57 AM
To: Grieshober, William
Subject: FW: Thesis Proposal to get okay'd by the folks at Richs

Bill – When you have a minute, I have a favor to ask. Sue Leo (the graphic designer – you met her once) went back a couple years ago, to get her Masters Degree in Fine Arts, from RIT. As a final step to receiving her Degree, as she has already graduated, but must complete her thesis, is to develop and present her thesis. She would like to do her thesis on Cookie Dough Snacks and the design road leading up to today. She wasn't sure RIT would approve a real product experience, but they are very excited about it – since most of the Thesis presentations are theoretical. I am comfortable with this, as it is representing only her design work, and it is for a College Thesis. She has asked for me to make sure you are okay with this too. Attached is her Proposal that has been approved by RIT. – Thanks Bill - Donna

(PS: Of course I am asking Sue to leverage RIT's excitement about this thesis/product, to get them to bring the product into RIT and to participate in the Sweep-Stakes program)!

From: Sue Leo [mailto:sdl@sdleo.com]
Sent: Sunday, September 26, 2010 11:12 AM
To: Reeves-Collins, Donna
Subject: Thesis Proposal to get okay'd by the folks at Richs

Donna:

This is my final thesis proposal. All I will need is something in writing from Rich Products that they are okay with me using the cookie dough product for my thesis. All of the work is stuff that I have done. I am not including any creative done by Landor.

I have approval from all of my RIT advisers and I am planning to present Friday, Oct 15, 2010 during the RIT Brick City Festival.

My thesis defense will be the first week in November and has yet to be scheduled.

Thanks for your support with this project!

Sue :-)

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Logo Deconstruction

The cookie dough snack logo was created in illustrator. The figure to the left reveals the structure of the cookie dough portion (above) compared to the final render (below). The type was converted to outlines and the concentric shape was adjusted to form equal margins from the edge of the letter form. The top layer is 85% transparent white with a 4 pixel radius gaussian blur and the bottom layer fill is C25M40Y65K0 with a 2 point outline in C40M65Y90K35.

The mark for the word snacks took form by using the font American Typewriter as the base shape. To create tighter kerning with the letters, they were positioned in a stepped pattern so that the serifs could nudge in closer and create a tight relationship between the letter forms. The letters "a" and "c" were connected and the "k's" shape was slightly modified.

The render was created out of three layers. The interior was a 3 point stroke (C30M50Y75K10) with a 5 pixel radius gaussian blur, the next layer was a fill only (PMS4625) with a a 4 pixel radius gaussian blur, the third layer was a fill only (C50M70Y80K70) with a drop shadow blurred 2 pixels, offset X=-2 px, Y=x 2px.

Thesis Proposal

Thesis Proposal for Master of Fine Arts Degree

Rochester Institution of Technology
College of Imaging Arts and Sciences
School of Design
Computer Graphics Design

Title: **Cookie Dough 2.0: Digital Sketchbook**
The story of cookie dough's rise to a legitimate snack
through computer graphics design.

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Abstract

This thesis documents the graphic design journey of bringing cookie dough from a raw material to a legitimate new snack food that is safe to eat. The computer graphics design were a critical component to change the context in which cookie dough is consumed. The presentation will show how the brand identity evolved while developing this new snack from a local product into a national brand.

Background

In the fall of 2005, the concept for a commercial food product was hatched. I had been a partner in developing packaging for a product called DoughEggs® — a revolutionary concept that enables consumers to bring home a variety of ready-to-bake gourmet cookie dough in a specially designed container. Each DoughEgg is delicious pre-portioned dough ready-to-bake in your oven without the mess of having to mix any ingredients — and with home-baked freshness!

All of my life, I had secretly been a cookie dough eater, and I was not alone in this clandestine activity. When the DoughEggs® product hit the market, a fascinating thing happened. In the Cole & Parks restaurant where the DoughEggs® product was invented and launched, customers would approach the counter and ask for one DoughEgg with a fork to eat on site! This soon started to happen with some regularity.

Cole & Parks founder, Donna Reeves-Collins was constantly on the lookout for innovative new food products to create and offer — suddenly the idea clicked! Why not develop a safe-to-eat cookie dough product? There was nothing on the market that consumers could safely eat without the risk of salmonella poisoning. A new food product was born! Cookie dough that is safe to eat!

As a designer to have the opportunity to be on the ground floor in developing graphics and even on a deeper level — a brand identity— is what it's all about. It is a test of all of your talents, experiences and creativity to be able to fully participate in your craft. Designers can have a critical role in guiding a product from development to production through distribution and sales. And, often times contribute and/or influence areas not always considered traditional realms for designers.

By January 2006, product prototypes were being developed and taste tested in the restaurant and with friends. My role has always been collaborative and much broader than simply an assigned graphic to execute, and so as part of the development team started to think about product names. The initial name for this new cookie dough product was coined DoughNuggs®. This was a terrific pairing with the sister product DoughEggs® and so, I started to develop some logotypes that would reflect the Cole & Parks brand personality— which I had also spearheaded.

The vision for this product was to eventually take it nationwide. Potential markets included grocery stores, restaurants, convenience stores, movie theaters, and more. Although initial

market research revealed that 65% of the population eats cookie dough. We looked at narrowing the field down to focus on tweens, teens, and the young adult market.

In 2006, Cole & Parks began to manufacture the DoughNuggs® product in-house with future plans to partner with a manufacturer. At that point in time, manufacturing was strictly a handmade process and was extremely labor intensive. We had signed up a local restaurant to sell the cookie dough as a snack and sales were successful enough for the retailer to add them to their standard fare.

By January 2007, production was growing to the pace that a larger manufacturing space was needed, so the dough making was moved to an incubator facility at Cornell Technology Farm in Geneva, New York until a commercial manufacturer could be found to partner with.

In December 2007, Cole & Parks completed a joint venture agreement with Rich Products, Inc. located in Buffalo, New York to manufacture market and distribute the cookie dough snack product and help take it nationwide. I am an investor/owner of Cole & Parks, LLC. The Mrs. Fields® brand is one of the licensed name selected for this product by the joint venture and is not exclusive to the cookie dough product.

Problem Statement

Cookie dough has long been taboo because of the potential for salmonella poisoning, but for years people have been sneaking this decadent treat as they portion dough onto those ungreased baking sheets before baking — although they may not admit it. Enter cookie dough snacks — made to eat, not bake — real cookie dough made without the eggs — a simple solution to an age-old issue. A typical reaction by many became "Why didn't I think of that?" We knew there was a market for this product. In fact, cookie dough inclusions had made cookie dough ice cream the most popular flavor in the ice cream food category. We decided to take cookie dough to its start to becoming a legitimate snack food. This was a challenging paradigm shift.

The product borne out of an "ah-ha" moment was fashioned into a graphic identity affiliated with the Cole & Parks brand, then evolved into specific targeted consumer markets through the natural course of business dynamics and market forces. My goal as designer was to tell the story about what's inside the package through compelling graphics about a new food category with virtually no media support. The initial distribution points were grocers where no advertising is allowed. And, the initial targets were moms and kids.

As the product got into distribution channels, the target market evolved while the players expanded, the challenge was to maintain design integrity and brand identity across all components while satisfying new restrictions with corporate design standards, labeling requirements and aesthetic preferences. The prime design challenge was to create a design that would literally sell itself. The product needed it's own personality to break through the clutter in the freezer case and it had to be appeal to the age group of our target market. The major hurdle was the fact that eating cookie dough is a revolutionary idea to consumers. It is a new food category. The graphics challenge was to tell a long story on a small bit of real estate, the physical challenge — product placement.

Scope

My thesis presentation will consist of prototypes and actual production examples of the journey of the cookie dough product. I will plot the milestones and share what challenges have been met along the way as we brought this new product concept to market and illustrate the critical role graphics, colors, packaging and messaging is to the target market.

All prototypes, production examples and promotional support materials were digitally created using Illustrator, Photoshop, In-Design and Flash. In addition, Cinema 4D was used to model some prototypes. Other software used includes Dreamweaver, Microsoft Word and PowerPoint, KML, Google Maps and Joomla 1.5.

Literature Survey

BOOKS

1)   ***Guidelines for Online Success**.*
     The Do's and Don'ts of the Internet from the best interactive agencies around the world.
     Ed. Rob Ford, Julius Wiedermann (2008). Printed in China. This book is a visual inspiration book with links to actual websites that you can visit. Topics covered in this book include Interface & Design, Marketing & Communications, Technology & Programming, Technical Advice, Content Management and E-Commerce.

2)   ***The Universal Traveler***
     a Soft-Systems Guide to Creativity, Problem Solving, & the Process of Reaching Goals
     Don Koberg and Jim Banall (1991). Crisp Publications, Inc. 1200 Hamilton Ct., Menlo Park, CA 94025.
     I use many of the creative problem solving techniques in this book. The seven stages of creative problem solving has become second nature to my design approach and process.

3)   ***The 22 Immutable Laws of Marketing*** *Violate them at Your Own Risk!*
     Al Ries and Jack Trout (1993). Harper Business, a division of Harper Collins Publishers, Inc. 10 East 53rd St., New York, NY 10022.
     This is a great little book with short but important topics to consider when developing a product and brining it to market. Understanding some of these concepts helps designers understand how marketing to consumers works and can help make design assist in the success of the product.

4)   ***Branding*** *the power of market identity*
     David E. Carter with an introduction by Jeffrey F. Rayport (1999). Hearst Books International, 1350 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019.
     This is a visual stimulus book where you can view a variety of classic logos and explore how they are applied to various packaging, architectural and promotional materials.

5) **Achieve Brand Integrity** *Ten Truths You Must Know to Enhance Employee* Performance and Increase Company Profits
Gregg Lederman (2007). B@W Press, 60 Park Avenue, Rochester, NY 14607.
Although this book deals mostly with educating your employees about what a brand is, it also speaks to the breadth of brand identity and the relationship between "saying the brand" with communications branding and "doing the brand" within the culture.

6) **Marks of Excellence** *The history and taxonomy of trademarks*
Per Mollerup (2000). Phaidon Press Limited, Regent's Wharf, All Saints St, London, N1 9PA. This is another reference book to use for inspiration when developing logos.

7) **1000 Retail Graphics** *from Signage t Logos and Everything In-Store*
JGA (2007). Rockport Publishers, a member of Quayside Publishing Group, 33 Commercial St., Gloucester, MA 01930
This is a visual reference book that does a nice job showing products in the retail setting along with non-traditional and creative labeling applications.

8) **Packaging** *Graphics + Design*
Renee Phillips (2001). Rockport Publishers, a member of Quayside Publishing Group, 33 Commercial St., Gloucester, MA 01930. This is a visual reference book that focuses on packaging design.

9) **Designing Brand Identity**
A Complete Guide to Creating, Building, and Maintaining Strong Brands – Second Edition
Alina Wheeler (2006). John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken, NJ
This book not only has an excellent layout, it is a comprehensive book that delves into brand strategy, Nomenclature, Brand Essence, Communications, Information and Touch Points. The book touches on a myriad of applications from motion graphics to static graphics and web design.

10) **Don't Make Me Think** *A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability*
Steve Krug (2006). New Riders, 1249 Eighth St., Berkeley, CA 94710
This is an excellent guide to what works in website design from a usability standpoint.

11) **Marketing to the New Super Consumer Mom & Kid**
Tim Coffey, David Siegel and Greg Livingston (2006). Paramount Market Publishing, Inc., 301 S. Geneva St. Ste 109, Ithaca, NY 14850
This book is a great resource to get into the mindset of mom's and kids. It is helpful to read books about your target market as understanding what motivates them is instrumental in the design process where you can leverage elements that are compatible with consumer values and triggers.

12) **Brand Simple** *How the Best Brands keep it Simple and Succeed*
Allen P. Adamson (2006). Palgrave Macmillan, 175 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10010
This book touches all elements related to branding and emphasizes the need to keep the message simple by capturing the essence of the brand in communication messages.

13) ***How Brands Become Icons*** *The Principles of Cultural Branding*
    Douglas B. Holt (2004). Harvard Business School Press, Boston MA
    This book delves into tailoring brands identity and messaging to specific market
    segments through social networks and mythmaking principles.

14) ***Joomla 1.5*** *A User's Guide Building a Successful Joomla! Powered Website*
    Barrie M. North (2009). Pearson Education, Inc. 75 Arlington St, Ste. 300, Boston, MA
    02116. This is a guide that covers the basics of the content management open source
    system called Joomla.

Project Description / Methodology

What I would like to present in my thesis is the story of the brand created for this cookie
dough product and show how it evolved as it went from an idea to an actual nationally
distributed product.

My thesis project will consist of a display of concepts, prototypes and actual production
samples for a new consumer food product — cookie dough that is made to eat, not bake.
The display will cover the evolution of the graphics developed for several branding names
for the invention from the logotypes, packaging concepts and marketing collateral.

In addition to displaying physical artifacts, there will be an electronic presentation that will
show the evolution of the logo and other imagery from the initial product concept,
DoughNuggs® to the present day identity as Mrs. Fields® Cookie Dough Snacks.

I would like to add into this display some of the obstacles faced along the way that
challenged design decisions such as budgets, corporate graphic standards, target market,
and timeframes.

The presentation includes logo development; packaging design; integration of licensing and
legal requirements into the packaging while maintaining the brand identity; product
extension to other cookie dough flavors; design of traditional marketing collaterals such as
sales flyers, signage, coupons, tradeshow booths, posters and t-shirts. Other items that I
would like to showcase include promotional projects websites, social marketing such as
Facebook and Twitter, and developing the brand into special programs to target markets
such as the college and university segment.

Limitations

There are no limitations.

Marketing Plan

I plan to present this work on Friday October 15, 2010 during the Brick City Festival. In addition to this, I am working to add RIT as a participant school in our fall Sweet-Stakes promotion with the Mrs. Field® Cookie Dough Snacks product that would coincide with the date of this presentation. If the school is not able to participate, I will hand out Sweet-Stakes tickets at my presentation. Each ticket is a chance to win an Apple iPad, a Kinect for Xbox, a T-shirt or a case of Chocolate Chip Mrs. Fields® Cookie Dough Snacks. I will also create posters and postcards to promote the event as well as advertise on social media. Product samples will also be available to eat! I will also create an online survey to capture feedback.

Budget
The cost for this presentation should be less than $200 for poster and display materials; I would like to mount flat items on foam core and will display packaging samples etc. All of the artifacts currently exist so there is no incremental cost.