



# bottle green

Bottlegreen Drinks  
Packaging: Branded Drink  
The Bottlegreen Drinks Co.

**ZIGGURATBRANDS**

July 7, 2011

## Executive Summary



Overall annual sales grew from £7.9m in year ending December 2007 to £14.2m by December 2010, an uplift of **79.7%**.

In 2007, Piper Private Equity backed the Bottlegreen Management team in an MBO and set out to build a brand capable of ongoing profitable growth. They planned to exit in five years.

Research indicated that brand awareness and penetration was low, while repeat purchase was high so the product was good. The brand sold well in Waitrose. Just Waitrose. Therein lay the problem; Bottlegreen had mutated into a Waitrose own label look-alike and unsurprisingly, outside that environment it fared less well.

The MBO team's investment was based on their belief that the brand was an under-achiever. Their research indicated that the brand could grow outside its Waitrose homeland if the visual branding encapsulated the brand story in a compelling enough way to provide a strongly differentiated and ownable platform for organic growth and innovation.

The rebrand has been a commercial success for all involved. The Private Equity investor managed an exit after less than four years and made 500% on their original investment. The MBO team have achieved the personal financial independence they sought and the invigorated business now has a well-funded owner, energised to build on the achievements of the management, who are staying.

Overall annual sales grew from £7.9m in year ending December 2007 to £14.2m by December 2010, an uplift of 79.7%. Digging deeper into that dramatic sales growth, cordials saw an uplift in sales of 74% which has to be set against category growth over the same period of just 15%. Similarly, The Ready to Drink range achieved growth of 110% over the same period in which the category managed just 13%.

**“...we have now identified design and flavour as being completely central to what Bottlegreen is and they have to be at the heart of everything we do from now...”**

Simon Speers, CEO Bottlegreen

Word count 299

# Project Overview



**bottlegreen**  
Drinks Co



OLD DESIGN  
PRESSÉ

## Outline of the Project Brief

The key objective of the redesign was to create a brand capable of supporting the new Private Equity owner's ambitious intentions to grow, extend and then sell.

## Description

Founded in the Cotswolds in 1989 the original intention of Kit and Shireen Morris was to establish a wine business to exploit Kit's winemaking skills.

To make ends meet while waiting for the vines to mature, the Morris's decided to exploit the abundance of elderflower growing locally to create an elderflower cordial. Kit's winemaking skills ensured the product packed a real punch and such was the interest in the product that the wine project never saw the light of day.

The business grew organically through the 90s, exploiting Kit's skills to create truly distinctive flavours; steadily the range of cordials grew and distribution was expanded. The product range continued to grow through the early noughties with the addition of a range of ready to drink Pressés and a sorbet.

In 2007 the Morris's sold the business to Piper Private Equity, a finance business focused on realising the growth potential in consumer brands. Piper's own research identified low awareness of the brand in general, coupled with great enthusiasm for the brand where it was known. It looked more like a Waitrose own label than a brand in its own right and that was never going to support Piper's ambitious plans.

The task was to create an identity that gave the brand **visibility, cohesion and a clear positioning in a busy marketplace**, providing the foundations for the future profitable extension and distribution that could facilitate a profitable exit for the investor in five years.

## Overview of the market

Bottlegreen operates in two categories; 'Cordial and Squash' plus 'Ready to Drink'. Both categories are in steady if unspectacular growth.

## Project launch date

The brand was relaunched in March 2008

## Size of design budget

£110,000



OLD DESIGN  
CORDIAL

NEW DESIGN

## Outline of Design Solution

Our analysis suggested that if Piper's ambitions were to be realised we needed to bring the Bottlegreen story to life in a more distinctive, ownable and engaging way.

The old design was felt to resemble a Waitrose own label; perfectly at home in that environment but unsuitable for supporting the MBO team's brand ambitions. The two key design issues we identified were the limitations of a small label and a long brand name and the inconsistency of having different physical formats for cordials and presses when no such difference was required; they were marketed apart from each other.

**Difficult decisions had therefore to be taken regarding the need to break up the logo to aid impact and to move the entire brand to a more consistent physical format which necessitated significant and unplanned for investment in tooling.**

A key facet of the Bottlegreen brand story is the products' distinct and challenging taste profile irrespective of the format. This brand truth is rooted in the legacy of Kit's winemaking ethos which continues to this day to underpin all the company's product thinking.



### Leaving an Impression

After a collaborative strategic process aimed at uncovering a distinctive and memorable brand story 'Leaving an Impression' emerged as the brand essence that would inform all future brand communication. It became the benchmark for the design team in its challenge to present the brand as an elegant alternative to traditional squashes and emerging adult focused Ready To Drink brands aimed at a sophisticated ABC1 female audience.

Our design theme was based on the idea of leaving an impression through the pressing of the flowers. The successful Trade press ad used to launch the new packs brought this essence to life in a sophisticated way that emphasised to the Trade the brands' ambitions of becoming a style icon.





The role of elderflower is not just historically serendipitous, in 2007 80% of the products were elderflower or elderflower mixes. The importance and associations with elderflower were real, but also potentially limiting.

Our solution associates an elderflower with the company identity and the elderflower products while allowing a stylish variant story to unfold on non-elderflower packs. The logo was successfully split in two and the illustration used to create a visual link between the elements.

The conical bottle used for cordials was, we felt, unlike anything else on the market and we recommended that Bottlegreen invest in a new conical bottle for pressé to create a clear brand association to this elegant form; a form we have subsequently exploited with a series of dramatic Limited Edition bottles with the designs wrapped completely around the conical form thus increasing association with the brand.



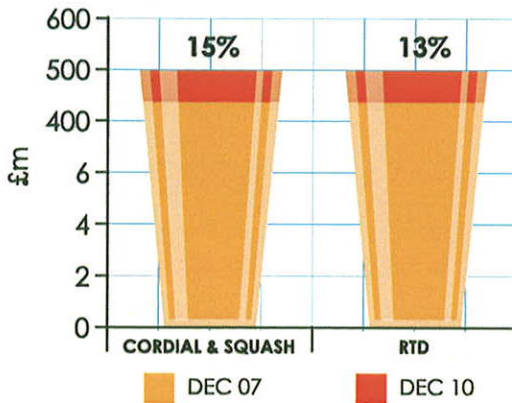
Piper Private Equity, the investor and backer of the management team managed an exit after only four years and made **500%** on their original investment.

Word count 440

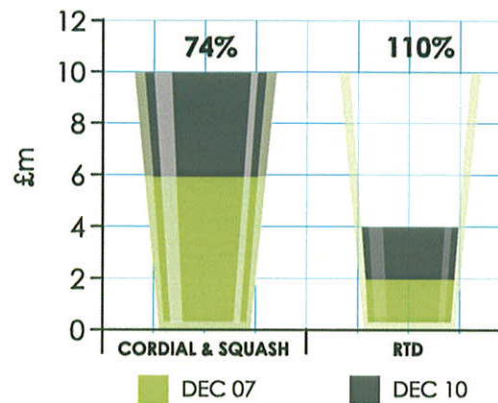


# Summary of Results

## MARKET GROWTH



## BOTTLEGREEN'S GROWTH



In Cordials, the brand is now **No.1** in premium and has grown to 4th overall

The rebrand has been a commercial success for all the parties involved.

Piper Private Equity, the investor and backer of the management team managed an exit after only four years and made 500% on their original investment.

The management team delivered consistent growth between 2008 and 2011 and have all achieved the personal financial security they sought when embarking on the project. They have secured a new owner (SHS, parent company of Schloer and WKD) for the business who is keen to invest further and build on the success of the past 4 years and their own roles in that exciting future.

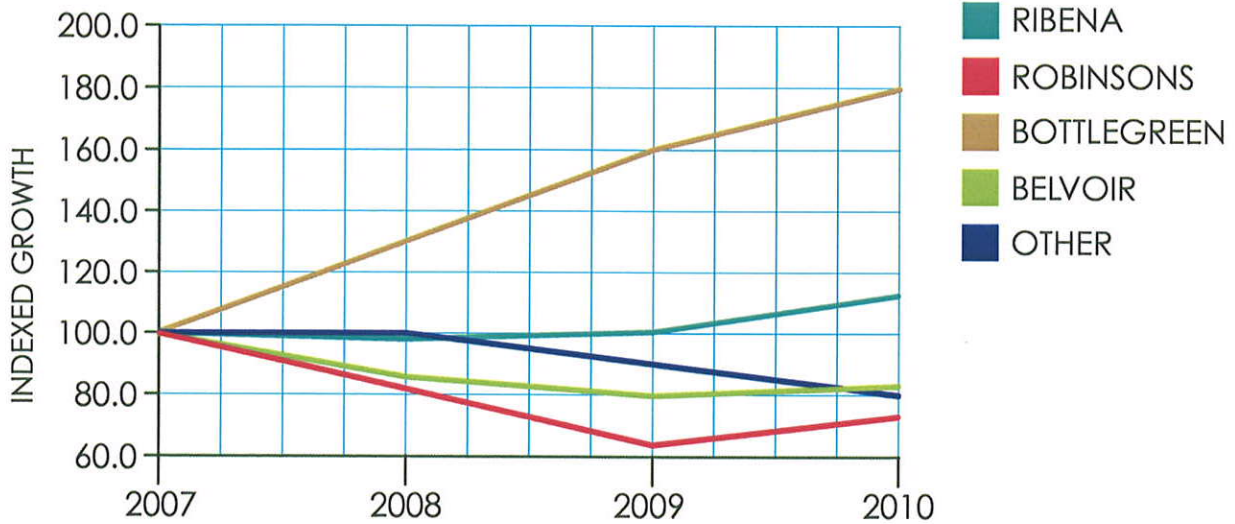
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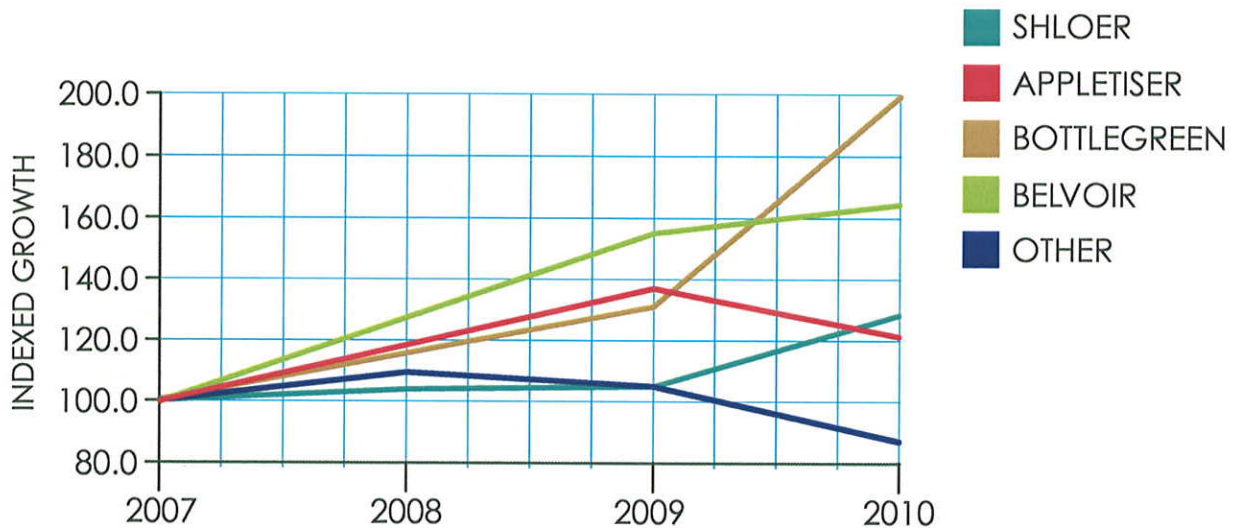
This growth is all the more impressive when one considers the strategic intent of the investor to sell when the time was right. Profits were rigorously controlled and this share growth was matched by a significant growth in profitability which enabled such a profitable exit.

Bottlegreen's impact on its competition is implicit in the numbers above, but come to life more dramatically when viewed on the following charts from Nielsen, tracking the brand growth indexed against competition.

## CORDIALS



## READY TO DRINK



Bottlegreen is dramatically outperforming the competitor set in both Cordial and RTD

Design has been fundamental to the success enjoyed by the brand and by the investors in the brand.

### Other influencing factors

The brand, other than a Trade press ad at launch receives no above the line support.

