

UNLOCK NEW GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES FOR DIY

WITH REFINERY



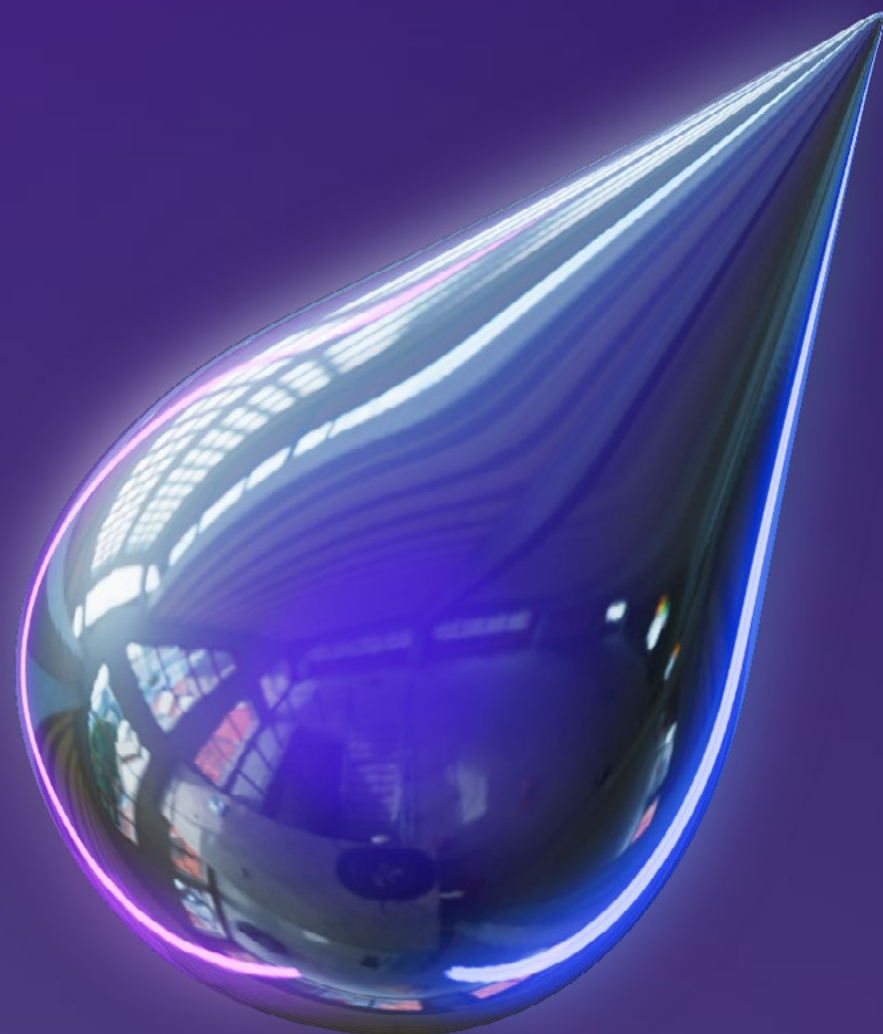
Just one droplet can cause a ripple across an entire ocean.

One droplet doesn't sound like much but it's all it takes. It has the power to change so much. Combine that with the skill of 50+ creative experts, working together towards a common goal, it forms something much bigger.

Growth.

We're Refiners by nature, not just by name; we're advertising alchemists. Through our proven Refinement process, we deliver growth. We distil and refine, and refine again until we're left with the purest, most powerful solution: a drop of marketing magic.

With this drop of magic we can make sure that brands aren't just another drop in a sea of sameness.



A drop of marketing *magic*

DELIVERING GROWTH IN HARDWARE AND DIY

In today's fast-paced world, staying ahead means more than keeping up with trends—it's about shaping them.

Here are our top-3 observations for the industry over the next 12 months with actionable insights that will help you to capitalise on them.

WOMEN & DIY INDUSTRY TREND #1

Expert opinion from *Creative / SEO / Social / Strategy*

SPECIALIST VS GENERALIST INDUSTRY TREND #2

Expert opinion from *Creative / SEO / Social / Strategy*

BRAVERY IN ADVERTISING MARKETING TREND

Expert opinion from *Creative / SEO / Social / Strategy*



Our proven approach: **refinement**

We don't just offer theories—we provide results. From delivering successful campaigns to improving brand perception, our case studies demonstrate the tangible impact we've had on businesses just like yours.

We'd love to partner with you to explore how we can bring these insights to life and help you achieve the next stage of your growth. Get in touch to discuss how we can help you stay ahead of the pack.

Ready to *grow*?

HARDWARE AND DIY

WOMEN & DIY

INDUSTRY TREND *#1*



#1

WOMEN AND DIY

More women are reaching for the DIY tool kit -
what does it mean for brands in this space?

Women doing DIY. It's not a new thing, and in the context of the 21st century, it's not a revolutionary thing either - so why is it only just being brought into the conversation? Despite more women engaging in domestic DIY, the trade industry remains heavily male dominated. Why? And what does it mean for brands in this space?

This piece aims to provide the latest industry data and insights surrounding the increasing number of women in DIY and why #GirlsWhoBuild is trending on Social Media. We'll explore how this change could potentially impact the trade world and how it's created opportunities for brands operating in this sector.

Is advertising just slow to catch up with social change?

With the number of women taking on DIY projects rising by nearly **20%**⁽¹⁾, why is it not reflected in the way we advertise to DIY enthusiasts? Ideally, advertising should be at the forefront of change, moving ahead of the curve, positively influencing social culture. But unfortunately, it's often playing catch up rather than setting the standards.

Traditionally, advertising has taught women that their place is in the home but excludes themes of home improvement and DIY - these are "men's jobs" or "blue jobs". Even in recent years, the majority of trade ads still lean towards a hyper-masculine stance or attempt inclusivity with inauthentic, tokenistic and often subsequently misogynistic, representations of women frequently failing to engage a female audience.

What's going on in the trade sector?

Disappointingly but unsurprisingly, only **4%**⁽²⁾ of the trade industry is female. Is this due to the fact that women simply aren't encouraged to join these sectors? On the Tools reports that "only **35%** of young women said they had considered a career in the trades, compared to **60%** of young men".⁽³⁾ Forbes suggests that this could be due to a lack of authentic representation within relevant advertising stating "representation shapes how people see themselves and their abilities."⁽⁴⁾

With the UK set to lose out on "**£98bn** of growth by 2030 due to shortage of tradespeople"⁽⁵⁾, this is no longer a 'women's issue' but a nationwide issue. By leveraging the hundreds of thousands of women interested in DIY, how can we encourage them to take their know-how and passion to a professional level?



What’s encouraging women's interest in DIY?

Put simply - other women who are already making a 9-5 out of their DIY interest and skill.

During the UK’s first lockdown in 2021, with the nation ground to an almost-halt, many women turned their attention to their homes, heading to YouTube and TikTok to learn the basics of DIY and home improvement. With a **20%**⁽⁶⁾ increase in interest surrounding home inspiration, more female creators took to Social Platforms to educate and share tips and tricks with fellow enthusiasts. #GirlsWhoBuild blew up on Social Media and inspired a cultural shift in opinion surrounding what women are capable of.

Creators who saw success include self-proclaimed ‘trans handy ma’am’ **@mercurystardusttopz** AKA Mercury Stardust; who shares DIY and home improvement hacks as well as her own home renovation journey to her audience of **1+ million** followers. As well as her bubbly, down-to-earth personality, her popularity is due to the simple and inclusive way she breaks down tasks, making them less intimidating and more accessible to DIYers of all levels.

Another prevalent creator is **@frills_and_drills** AKA DIY enthusiast Lindsay Dean. Dean has attracted **1.4+ million** followers by transforming spaces from basic to luxurious with a focus on bigger builds and projects. Like Stardust, Dean shares her own ‘forever home’ journey and successfully inspires women to achieve their interior dreams with a rags-to-riches approach to upcycling materials.

Why have these women had more of an impact on their female audiences than commercial communications? Here’s what we know:

- Their authentic personality makes followers feel they can trust them
- Their captive audience of women aged **21-55** can relate to them on at least one aspect of their life
- Their followers trust their recommendations - especially if they’ve seen them use the products/follow the processes they recommend
- The content they produce often includes a ‘before and after’ aspect which engages the audience and motivates them to watch it through to the end
- Their audience members can see themselves in the creator which in turn gives them more confidence to try their recommended techniques/tips and tricks

As well as creators on Social Media, the amount of in-app purchases of tools and other relevant materials has increased with **14%**⁽⁷⁾ of female Social Media users having directly purchased items from in-app features in the past three months. Mintel reports that “**20%** of female shoppers agree that home improvement retailers are overwhelming”⁽⁸⁾ which could provide an explanation as to why more women are shopping online instead of visiting physical stores.

WHAT OPPORTUNITY DOES THIS CREATE FOR BRANDS IN THIS SECTOR?

Social Media

- Partnering with popular influencers with a large female reach (like those discussed earlier in this piece) is a great way to put your brand in front of a captive audience. Again, it feels more authentic than content that comes directly from your brand.
- Leverage in-app and online shopping. These are a great way to promote products and offer sampling to your audience.
- Build a supportive community online. Include a range of women at different skill levels to build authentic connections.

Insights and strategy

- Using up-to-date, relevant insights and data gleaned directly from your target audience to act as a springboard for creative work will ensure that the end result is relatable and resonates with female audiences.
- Building a strategy informed by these relevant insights will help to make sure the output remains relatable throughout.

Creative

- Authentic casting is key. Casting real people rather than models creates a more authentic output. Collaborating with the people you cast can also help to make your creative stronger and more representative of the wider female audience.
- Practise what you preach. It sounds simple, but having a female presence across each touchpoint of your creative development process will ensure it's sense-checked by people closer to the target audience. Inclusivity is important at every stage to avoid seeming tokenistic.
- Again, it sounds simple, but messaging plays a big part in resonating with women. Avoid stereotypes and outdated narratives to tap into your audience's

Ad Placement

- Identifying Social Media platforms your audience engages with is key to get maximum exposure for your ads. Define your audience then find out where they spend online time.
- Young women typically use TikTok and Instagram more than men. This is an untapped territory that brands could potentially leverage to increase the number of young women engaging with the trade sector.

Content and SEO

- Having female professionals, enthusiasts and writers collaborating on written content will help to ensure it's relevant, up-to-date and resonates with a female audience.
- Similarly to Social Media, partnering with popular online bloggers in the relevant sectors is a great way to produce authentic online content.
- Owning a content pillar relevant to your audience is another effective way to reach your audience through search. Try to define unique phrases your brand can own and implement these across titles and captions of frequently searched things i.e. YouTube videos/TikTok posts.

HOW WE AUTHENTICALLY PUT WOMEN FRONT AND CENTRE

DULUX TRADE VINYL MATT

Really (really) high-coverage paint.

24%
ON CLICKS
OVERPERFORMED

24M
COLLECTIVE VIDEO
VIEWS YT/META

95%
REDEMPTION RATE
ON VOUCHERS

THE CHALLENGE

Dulux Trade Paints tasked us with creating an integrated campaign to stand out against the competitive, price-driven matt emulsion market. In a landscape saturated with similar messaging and creative execution, Dulux Trade's rigorous real-world testing by professionals set it apart. Our goal was to launch the new Dulux Trade Vinyl Matt formulation, reclaim customers drawn to cheaper alternatives and appeal to an increasing female audience.

THE STRATEGY

As Vinyl Matt is a widely used product, the target audience spanned UK professional decorators and paint experts. However, Dulux's latest research revealed that while the industry remained predominantly male, the past five years had seen a significant increase in female participation, signalling a shift toward greater diversity in the trade.

THE IDEA

Our campaign highlighted Dulux Trade Vinyl Matt's exceptional coverage and authentic endorsements under the conversational, playful tagline, "Really (really) high coverage paint. Really (really) approved by professional decorators." By featuring real decorators from Dulux's network, we were able to authentically represent industry professionals - including women.



SPECIALIST VS GENERALIST

#2

SPECIALIST VS GENERALIST

How can brands add value to their consumers
amidst the battle of the bottom line?

With so much market saturation, it's hard for brands to stand out. And when you factor in the knock-on effects of a pandemic and a national cost-of-living crisis, it seems almost impossible. With more people feeling the pinch, shoppers are switching to cheaper generalist suppliers who out-price their specialist counterparts. Professional tradespeople are doing the same causing a 1.6% decrease in total DIY product spend in 2023 alone.*⁽¹⁾

DIY brand messaging has become a battle of the bottom line with many specialist stores struggling to keep up with generalists' low pricing. With total DIY spend predicted to increase by over 16% in 2024-29*⁽²⁾, what can brands do to attract and retain customers without using price as a hook?

Busting non-specialist myths

"I'll find it cheaper online" - a thought most of us have probably had. In truth, it's actually very hard to do. Online DIY spending has increased by an estimated **1.8%***⁽³⁾ which Mintel suggests is due to the ease of purchase on familiar sites like Amazon contributing to its 'cheaper' perception.*⁽⁴⁾ While shopping online does allow for the use of price-comparison and offer-hunting tools, prices of actual products remain interchangeable between specialist and generalist retailers. So why have so many consumers turned to online retail giants?

Value VS price

In short: value.

Everyone is shouting about low prices, so consumers have switched to generalist brands they feel offer them more value. Like Warren Buffett famously said: "price

is what you pay. Value is what you get." So what do consumers feel like they're 'getting' from generalist retailers?

Aside from the preconceived notion of lower prices, Mintel states **34%** of consumers look for a brand they can trust and **20%** consider the ranges of products the brand has on offer.*⁽³⁾ This provides an explanation as to why generalist stores are succeeding - they're more familiar to newer 'lockdown' DIYers and have a carefully curated product range that's easily accessible.

Despite the features exclusive to specialists like B&Q and Homebase, such as memberships and loyalty schemes, have customers become distanced by these brands' shift towards a more price-driven narrative? **84.51's** Customer Value White Paper says consistency is key to building brand loyalty*⁽⁵⁾ and changes in brand messaging can disrupt this. It seems DIY specialists have achieved the opposite of their intentions by trying to match generalist retailers' price-focused comms.

HOW CAN YOUR BRAND BUILD TRUST AND, ULTIMATELY, LOYALTY?



Competing with other brands for the lowest possible price isn't going to win you brand loyalty or stand-out. Looking at your own unique offering and communicating how your brand adds value is always a better strategy. What do you offer that others don't? And are you leveraging it as effectively as you could be? We can help you answer these important questions.

If you've enjoyed the tester and want the full product, get in touch to find out how we can help you to grow your brand and loyal customer base, in the right direction.

Strategy

- Identifying the key features your current customers value can help with attracting new shoppers. Implementing this research into a long-term strategy is key to making sure your approach is consistent and relevant.
- Being true to your brand core and values is essential. Try to avoid hopping on the bandwagon unless it's relevant to your offering.

Ad Placement

- Providing top-notch customer service makes shoppers feel valued. Using AI can help keep up with communication demand - this could be as simple as using a chat bot to reply to online queries or automatic emails asking for feedback post-purchase.
- Time is the ultimate currency. Simplifying the whole purchase process not only respects your customers' time but builds trust and loyalty, demonstrating that you understand and prioritise their needs.
- If customers have a negative experience shopping with you, they won't buy from you. And, they'll tell their friends too. Clear product displays, engaging content, and knowledgeable staff are all things that make it easier for customers to confidently make a purchase whether that's instore or online.

SEO

- One thing that generalist stores can't shout about is expertise. Highlighting your expertise and knowledge is a great way to build trust with customers. Don't just respond, recommend. Your specialist knowledge is invaluable to customers so help where you can.
- Using unique key words can help your brand to reinforce its expertise and index above generalist stores in search.

HOW WE INCREASED DDC'S VALUE PROPOSITION FOR THEIR MEMBERS

DULUX DECORATOR CENTRE MOVING FORWARDS WITH YOU

Letting Dulux Decorator Centre's audience know that we're 'Centred on You'.

THE CHALLENGE

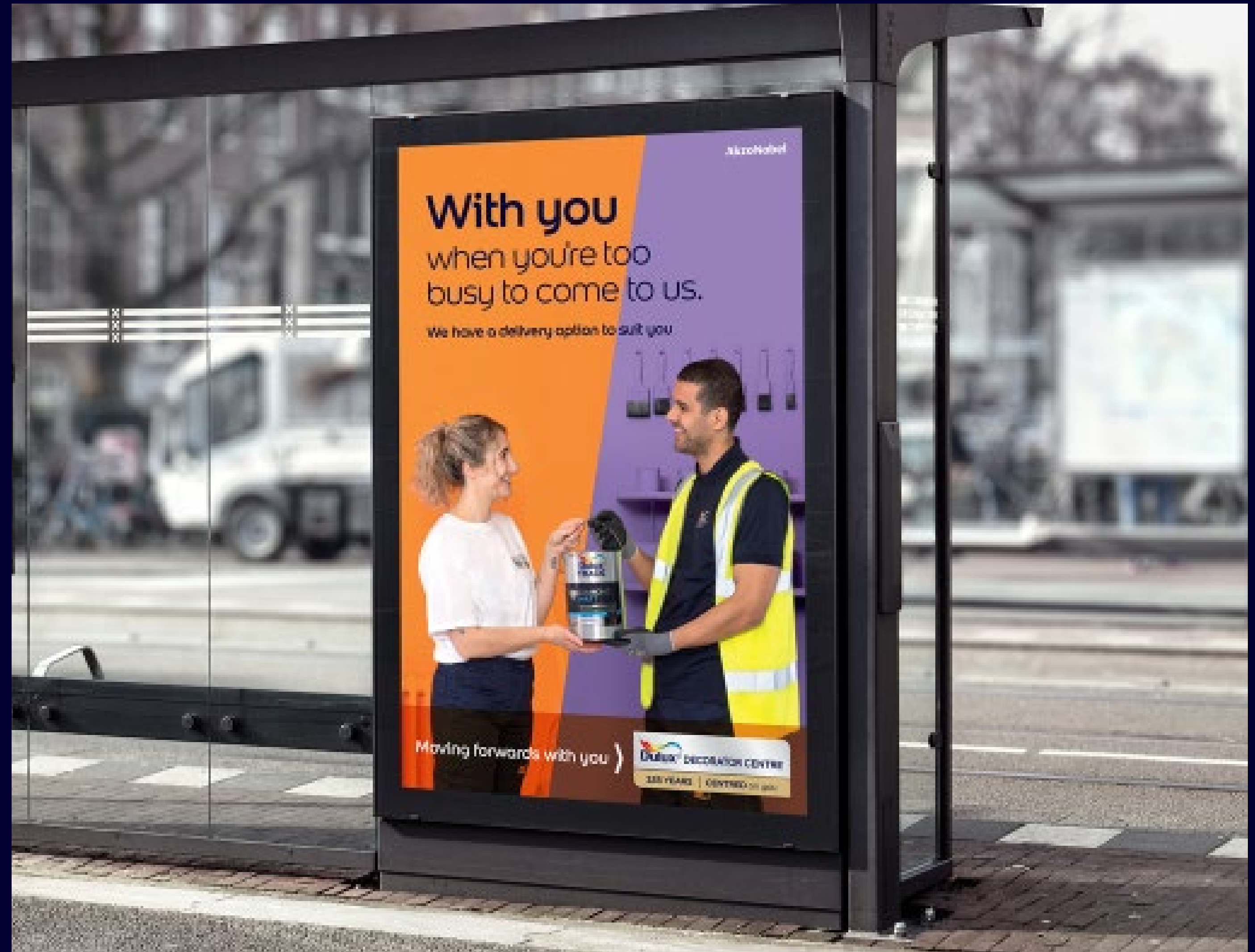
With the challenge of increasing Dulux Decorator Centre's value proposition and perception, Refinery needed to create a customer-facing articulation of their internal proposition 'Centred on You'.

THE INSIGHT

As a merchant that has been championing and supporting decorators all over the country, DDC leveraged the unique "we're the best partner for you" space and used it to their advantage. 'Value' goes above and beyond cost and product and so does Dulux Decorator Centre.

WHAT WE DID

Moving Forwards With You is Dulux's promise to not only service current industry professionals but future generations too. Refinery created fast-paced scenarios showing DDC colleagues anticipating their audiences' needs in various scenarios. Covering paid-social content and owned channels, these scenarios were carefully chosen to resonate with the audience's particular pain points and show how DDC effortlessly alleviates them.



BRAVERY IN ADVERTISING

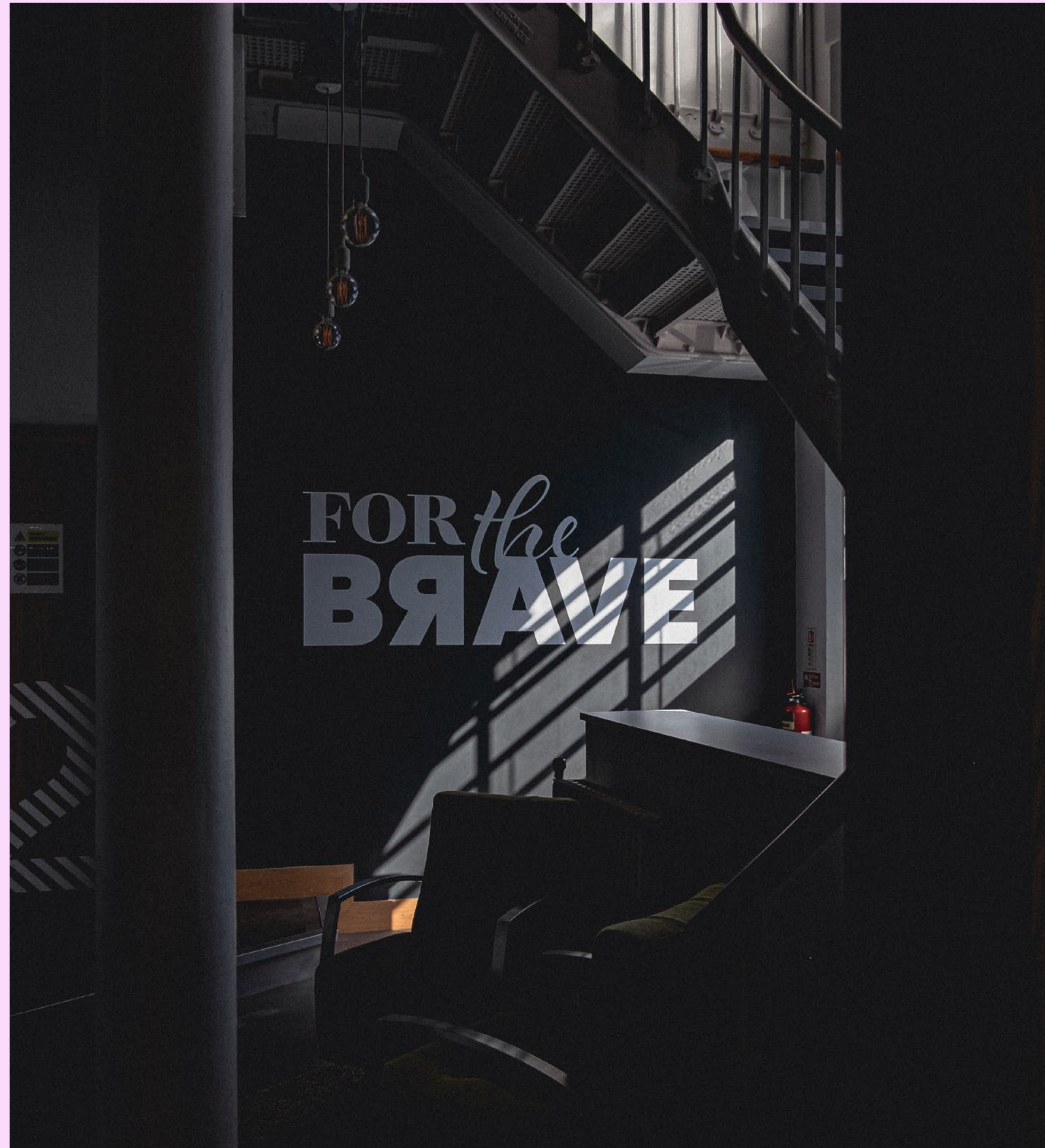
BRAVERY IN ADVERTISING

How to make 'bravery' work for your brand

Home improvement should be inspiring. Empowering, even. Advertising tells DIY customers to 'be brave' and to 'try something new'. But how can we expect our audiences to feel empowered and inspired by these messages if they're delivered with absolutely no 'bravery' whatsoever?

The term 'bravery' has become a buzzword in advertising. It implies risk and controversy - two things in particular that make us feel out of our comfort zone. But bravery doesn't have to be either of these things. Good ideas aren't dangerous or risky, they are disproportionately effective.⁽¹⁾ So if we look at bravery as a means to being effective, what does it actually mean?





BRAVERY

In our fast-paced, culture-first world, being 'brave' is essential to being seen. Jackson summarises that "boring, risk-averse marketing won't get attention. And it won't persuade anyone to change what they do."⁽²⁾ But is risk-taking what bravery is all about?

By Refinery's standards, being brave simply means having the courage to do something different. Something slightly unconventional. And this doesn't have to be anything outlandish, wacky or 'creative for creativity's sake'. It could be as simple as taking inspiration from another sector and implementing it into your own. Malcom defines bravery as "understanding your audience and what they're looking for and then delivering on that in a way that is unexpected and fresh".⁽³⁾

'Bravery' on its own isn't enough. Creativity still needs to resonate for it to be effective. The New York Times suggests that being brave is only an effective strategy when coupled with empathy and authenticity⁽⁴⁾ - a real understanding into your audience. So, why is authenticity important?

AUTHENTICITY

86% of consumers say authenticity is an influencing factor for purchasing decisions⁽⁵⁾. But why?

Our world moves quickly, we know this. And to keep up, brands jump on trends, veering away from their core values, in an attempt to stay relevant.

While this isn't the worst strategy to keep up with the times, it can often make brands feel insincere and inconsistent. New York Times suggests the current influencer-driven landscape has left consumers "craving genuine connection."⁽⁶⁾

So how can brands achieve a genuine connection?

The answer lies in finding who you are as a brand. Forbes advises brands to start with "why" they exist and then "align everything in their business with that purpose"⁽⁷⁾. This is key to connecting with customers through identity and core values rather than products and offering.



How can brands be *brave* and *authentic*?

As oxymoronic as it sounds, being authentically brave can be as easy as participating in a social trend that's unexpected but still relevant to your brand. Or tweaking your tone of voice to add an edge to your messaging. Whatever you do, make sure it aligns with your “why” - your purpose.

Strategy

Without sounding like your mum in high school, being yourself is the hardest and easiest way to be bravely authentic. Defining who you are as a company and stretching this to every corner of your brand is key for consistency. With so much misinformation and over promising associated with advertising, don't pretend to be something you're not. Be a brand consumers can trust.

Be direct. And we don't just mean tone of voice - although if this is relevant to your brand, go for it! We mean be direct to your audience. Get under their skin, find out everything there is to know about them. And be brave about being specific. Targeting everyone will reach no one. Hone in on your direct audience and speak to them how they want to be spoken to about things they care about.

Social

Trends aren't a one-size-fits all - less is often more. Make sure everything you post, publish, say and do is carefully tailored to fit your brand purpose, your “why”. Quality content is better than high-volume content. Being relevant to your brand will make your content relevant to your audience.

Bravery isn't just about doing something wild and wacky. Being strategic and authentic with how you're provocative is more effective. What makes you different? What do your audience care about? And how can you tell them in a disruptive way? Need a hand unleashing your bravery? We're here to help.

Creative

Another print ad? Another web post? Make it the print ad. The web post! Small changes can make a huge difference. Could you be creative with ad placement? Or be surprising with a strategic zero search-volume keyword? How can you execute your message in an impactful and memorable way?

HOW WE USED STRATEGIC DISRUPTION TO RE-ESTABLISH SKIL AS A BRAVE CHALLENGER BRAND

SKIL
KNOWLEDGE IS POWER



THE CHALLENGE

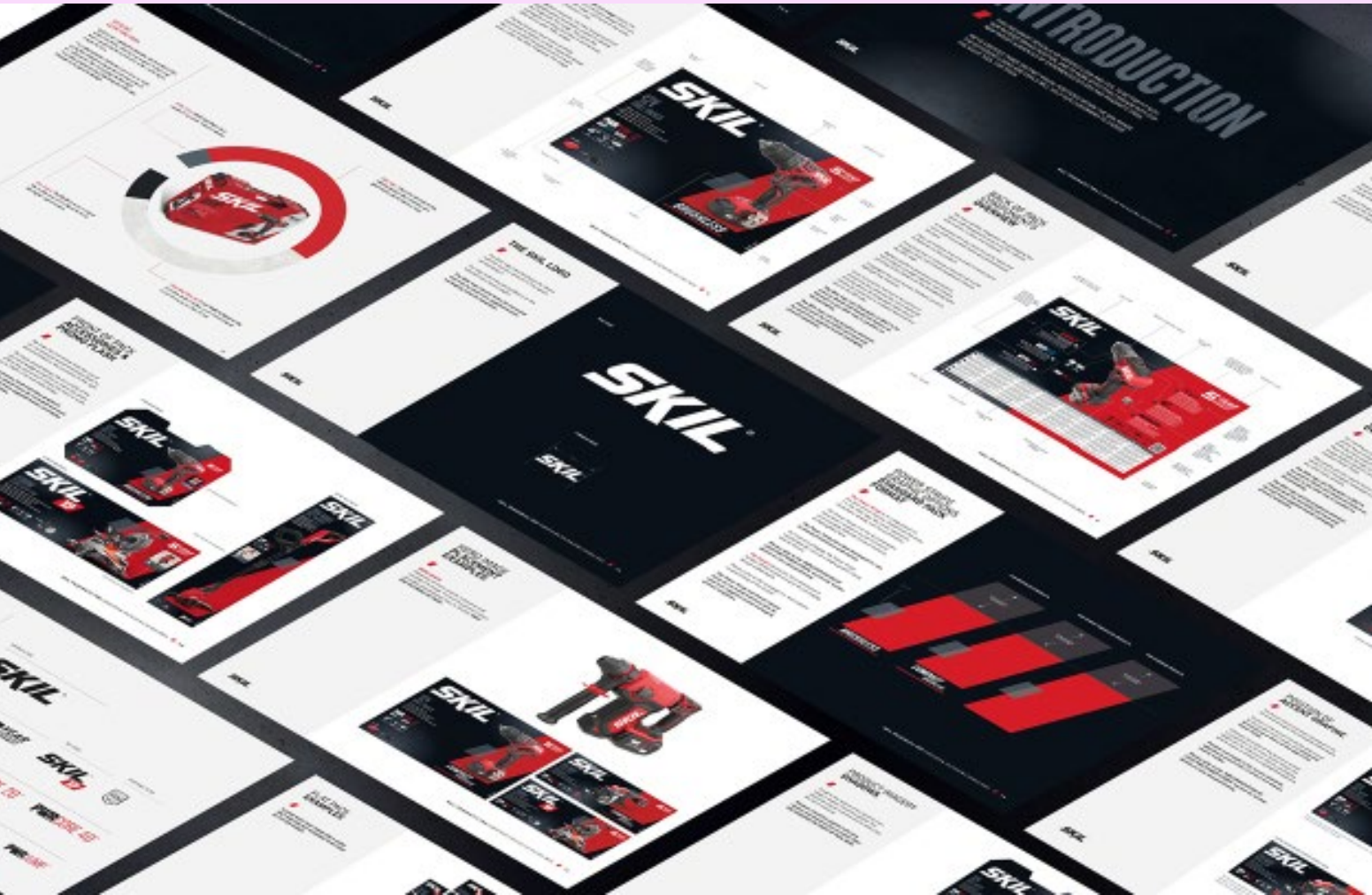
Despite being well-established in the US, SKIL had low brand awareness in Europe. Refinery's task was to reposition and effectively relaunch SKIL as an innovative challenger brand.

THE IDEA

Refinery crafted a 'Knowledge is Power' positioning for SKIL's relaunch. This line celebrated SKIL's intelligent power and intuitive performance while acknowledging SKIL's 100 years' of experience.

THE EXECUTION

To ensure SKIL stood out, we carved out an attention-grabbing new look and feel using bold colours and textures and crafted a tone of voice that spoke directly to our audience.



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How can Manchester's *#1 private integrated marketing agency* help you?

We've already refined and delivered growth for many brands in the DIY and home improvement sectors with our full-service offering and robust Refinement™ process.

OUR SERVICES

Strategy

Brand Planning | Brand Strategy | Research |
Marketing Strategy

Communications

Comms Planning | Content Production | PR |
Organic Social | Influencer

Creative

Brand Design | Creative Concepting | Video |
Animation / 3D | Audio | Artwork

Performance

Paid Social | SEO | PPC | Programmatic / Display |
Web Design & Dev | Ecom Design & Dev | Data & Analytics

We've *refined and delivered growth* for
many home improvement organisations

SKIL



AkzoNobel

WD-40



Thank *you*

Get in touch today to find out what we can do for your business.

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