

BAND-AID

**BAND-AID
BY ALEXANDRE HERCHCOVITCH**

Category: Idea for New Product or New Content



Summary

Reinventing one of the world's greatest product inventions

A Band-Aid case readily calls for a story about healing wounds.

But when it comes to a brand synonymous with its category, for years the undisputed leader, our story tells of how to face a much tougher challenge than healing wounds: to help a “stagnated leader” increase profits in a stagnated market.

This story shows a planning team applying an underused planning skill in Brazil: going beyond the communication and acting as client's business partner in the development of a new product to broaden the brand's horizons.

It's the story of a planning team bravely questioning the repetition of the client's initiatives targeted at children's audience and, after assessing several possibilities, suggesting a new product for a brand new audience, introducing Band-Aid into the world of fashion and borrowing from it innovation and attitude attributes for an outdated brand.

A story that ends with the planning team also putting its classic planning skills to good use (and having luck on its side), defining the communication strategy for the product in order to make it genuinely fashionable, desired and successful. In Brazil and around the world.

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A healthy brand share, but a worrying outlook

With almost 70% value share in a mature market, Band-Aid's business strategy is to pursue "high profitability" (rather than volume).

Accordingly, the brand had for three years focused its marketing spend on its most profitable product line – childrens' decorated bandages. They featured a series of characters, like Batman, Spider Man and Hello Kitty, printed on the bandages. These represented 15% of the brand's value share, but were twice as lucrative as the basic line.

Though the competitors had recently also introduced their own decorated releases, Band-Aid's decorated line remained a sales leader.



The problem was that, the client forecasted a market with the 3rd consecutive year of slowing sales. This put pressure on Band Aid being able to command a significant premium to continue to deliver margin to the business.

That was when the client asked us to help them make their decorated children's line sell more.

Looking beyond the children's line

What we learned during the meeting with the client intrigued us: how to remedy a situation where for years the brand leader had been creating new children's bandages, with highly desired characters as well as large shelf space, and yet the market was declining?

The Planning team concluded that penetration of the children's decorated bandage market had plateaued. It would take a significant marketing drive to increase penetration further or justify even higher pricing.

The planning team stayed true to the strategy of profitability but **suggested that this effort shouldn't be just another communication campaign for the children decorated line, but rather a project to invest that budget in targeting a new segment.**

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Looking for a new approach

It did not take us long to realize that we could not sell children's decorated bandages to people other than children. However, it was clear whoever we targeted, it would need to be with a decorated bandage of some kind. Decorating bandages was a relatively low-cost addition to the production of product, whilst justifying a relatively high price in the minds of consumers. That meant that functionally superior or performance enhanced product were not an option.

NEW CHARACTERS

Both Band-Aid and its competitors were already using some of the most popular characters, and other high-appeal characters, like Harry Potter, were unavailable for licensing. **The planning team therefore decided that Band-Aid needed to move away from this character-based format for the purposes of targeting a new audience.**

BAND-AID OLYMPICS

We learned that J&J would be one of the official sponsors of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games. The client suggested a new line decorated with Olympic sports themes.



The planning team ruled out this idea since, **like the Olympic Games, it would last a short time**, not enough to generate more profitability.

But not everything was *“out”*.

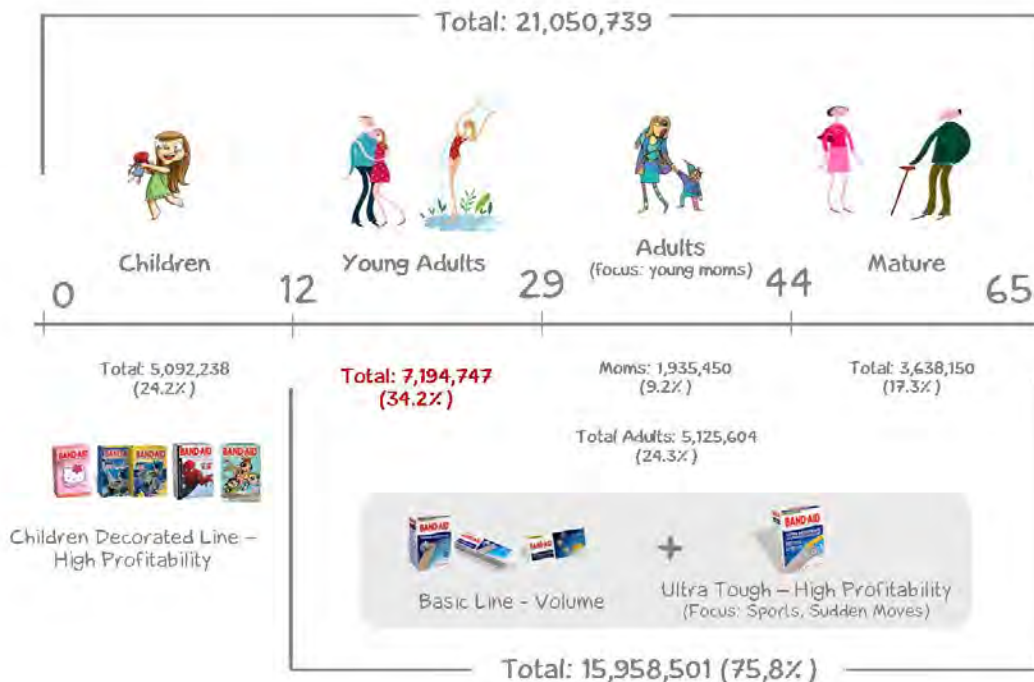
Analyzing the band's portfolio according to age groups allowed us to see that there were a few target gaps the brand hadn't created a specific product for. Out of those, **young adults** made up the largest number of consumers, or 34.2% of the potential market.

Band Aid had a decorated product for children and a basic line for young Mums and the elderly. However, the young adults had only a relatively niche, high performance product (Ultra Tough) targeted at them.

For such a large section of the market it seemed likely that there was a gap for another kind of product that could compliment the Ultra Tough product in the Band Aid portfolio.

Brand Portfolio by Age Audience

URBAN POPULATION, BRAZIL'S 9 MAIN MARKETS, ABC SEL Classes
(Source: Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics – IBGE.QOV.BR)



But that gap was no guarantee of success to a decorated line. Planning then decided to explore if and why this audience would mobilize for a decorated line sold at a premium price.

Young Adults, childlike insight: fashion as grownups' play.

The planning team searched for an answer to this question first by analyzing what prompted the use of a decorated bandage. As our budget didn't allow us to properly research the potential target, we then dove deep into the information we already had on children's relationships with Band-Aid and on the behavior of young adults.

Learnings

Use of adhesive bandages:

- Adhesives have functions that are considered specific:
 - Protect the wound from "blows" or attrition with clothes / shoes (something "quilted")
 - Protect the wound from expose to dirt/dust, and therefore to infectious agents
 - Aesthetic function → Minimize the possibility of the wounded area being seen by other people
 - For the children:
 - Fun / entertaining aspect → Also facilitating procedures (for the mother)

"...My daughter thinks that a band-aid is a game. A tattoo. She is always saying that she hurt herself only so that I put one on her..."

What they use and how they go about it

Adhesive bandages with children's motifs / characters:

"facilitator" of the process

Fun/Ludic → It helps minimize the pain of the moment

However, **not always it is effectively bought/used**

- High cost (in comparison with the traditional model)
- Children really like "to play" with the adhesives

- Used for play / on dolls
- Used as tattoos
- Faking or maximizing the effect of some hurt to have an "excuse" for the use of this type of bandage

"... My mother stopped buying these for me, because once I used a bunch on my doll..." (DG girls)

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The big lesson was that, what prompted children to WISH to wear a decorated bandage went beyond fun healing: the bandage worked as a tattoo, an accessory and even a “play”.

What made decorated bandages attractive was what we called **“ATTITUDINAL USE”**, something the brand had never formally used to its advantage.

Though seeming to be exclusively associated with children, this behavior had potential to encourage young adults to “play” and to pay to stick Band-Aid not only on their wounds.

Young adults were looking for more ways to express their style and fit into a certain group, while standing out within it. **And because fashion offers countless possibilities for design, texture and personalities, it presented itself as the main self-expression element for this target, while working as a “play” this audience was investing their time and money in.**

A TGI study backed up our findings. “Following fashion” was a value with high affinity and penetration with the target.

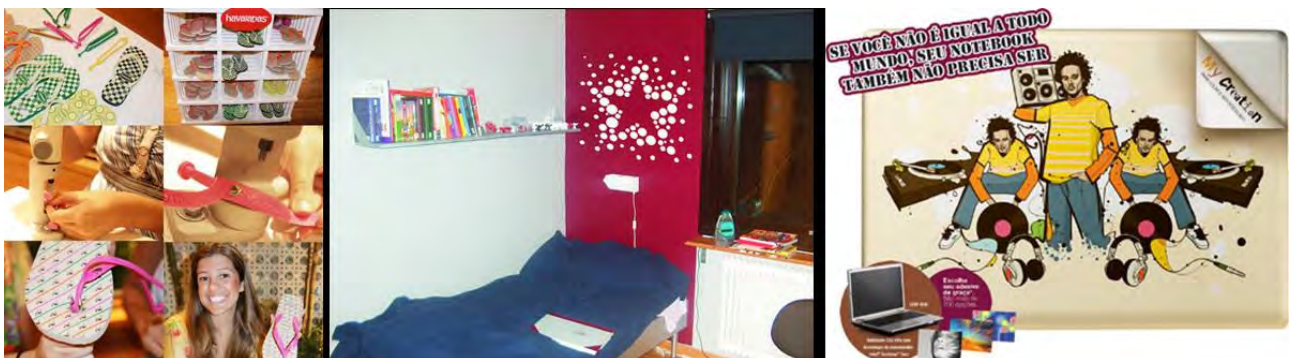
TGI 2008 - ABC Classes, Urban Population, 9 major markets

Opinion: <i>"I always try to be up-to-date regarding fashion and style"</i>		12 - 19 y.o.	20 - 24 y.o.	25 - 34 y.o.	35 - 44 y.o.	45 - 54 y.o.	55 - 64 y.o.
TOTALLY AGREE	Penetration	21%	16%	12%	9,40%	8,90%	7,92%
	Affinity Index	★ 168	★ 125	★ 101	74	70	62
TOTALLY / PARTIALLY AGREE	Penetration	48%	45%	37%	30%	28%	25%
	Affinity Index	★ 132	★ 126	★ 104	84	79	70
TOTALLY DISAGREE	Penetration	12%	15%	18%	19%	24%	25%
	Affinity Index	↓ 64	↓ 80	↓ 96	104	133	136

Fashion Oriented

Fashion Indifferent

But following fashion was not enough. Planning learned that young people needed to lend their personality to the codes determined by fashion. This explained why they had more and more been using **customization** tools on clothes, mobiles, laptops and even in their bedrooms.



Planning had the insight that combining that two “plays” (fashion + customization) was a promising step, especially because many of these tools were **self-adhesive**.

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The runway is our new way

After this investigation process, **planning framed the idea**: a new product line for young adults, that worked as a **fashion accessory not only for the wounded skin, but for clothes and other objects**. Or as we put it in the concept board:

“A Band-Aid that makes you fashionable even when you get hurt.”

“Luck” making the novelty genuinely fashion

But creating supposedly stylish strips and simply claiming that they were stylish wouldn't work. If fashion was about aspiration, **planning decided that a genuinely fashionable product needed to be created and suggested turning to a fashion celebrity to help us co-create it**.

Number one on the list was Alexandre Herchcovitch, Brazil's most important and innovative designer.



Besides lending authenticity to the Idea, he could make it big enough to generate buzz and optimize our limited budget of US\$140,000. We then decided to go talk with him.

Astonishingly, we found out during our meeting with Mr. Herchcovitch that **he is so smitten with Band-Aid that he has a tattoo of one on an arm!** He got so excited about the product idea that he accepted our partnership proposal at a very reasonable rate.

In the briefing, planning's suggestion was to faithfully bring Mr. Herchcovitch's creations onto the strips. And he himself suggested the product's design: **a line of decorated strips with the most remarkable prints that had been used in his collections.**

This is how **"BAND-AID BY ALEXANDRE HERCHCOVITCH"**, a.k.a. **"BAAH"**, came to being.

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Communications: walking the catwalk

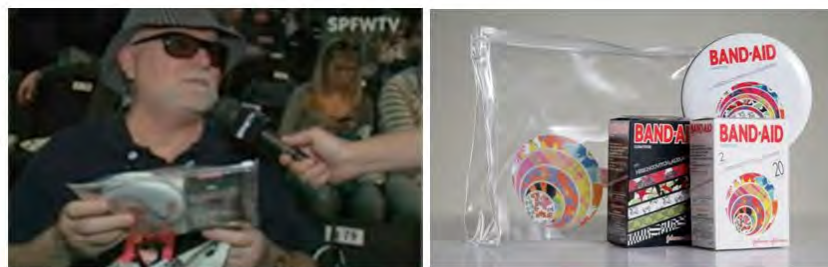
To keep BAAH's fashion DNA, planning decided that its communication, unlike other bandage products, should be exactly like that of any fashion item (clothing, perfumes). Our product had to walk the catwalk.

The creative team then suggested creating packaging with a daring attitude, Herchcovitch-style. For the first time ever in J&J's history, packaging for Band-Aid would be black.



With the collection ready for the catwalk, the planning team suggested intense and fashion-like PR work.

The product was launched at São Paulo Fashion Week. During Mr. Herchcovitch's show, "BAAH" kits with customization tips were distributed to members of the press and celebrities.



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To help generate further buzz, Mr. Herchcovitch also designed and sold at his stores an exclusive BAAH T-shirt.



On the Internet, visitors could read about each of the prints and get customization tips.



The creative team took the channel recommendation by the planning to the letter: drugstores behaved like fashion venues, with store windows decorated with mannequins clad in Herchcovitch outfits and adorned with BAAH:





Results: Band-Aid is definitely “in”

Profitability (Nielsen)

- Top selling decorated bandage at pharmacy chains, surpassing by 5% the Hello Kitty line (the best-selling decorated line), without cannibalizing the children’s line.
- The brand grew 2p.p, reaching an all-time record of 70% of market share in value terms.

Coverage

- On a budget of US\$140,000, the project generated US\$4 million in spontaneous media.
- For the first time ever a product created in Brazil made the New York Times.



Business

- J&J will export BAAH to other markets, including NYC, one of the world’s fashion capitals.

Acting as a real business partner (and as a personal stylist) and relying on all of its skills, the planning team discovered and developed a fertile “attitudinal use” for Band-Aid and helped one of the world’s most important inventions to reinvent its category and to keep itself innovative, profitable and fashionable as ever.