

BIC Cristal Design Brief

Prepared for: FA/YSDN 3010 Package Design

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SECTION 1: MARKET INSIGHTS

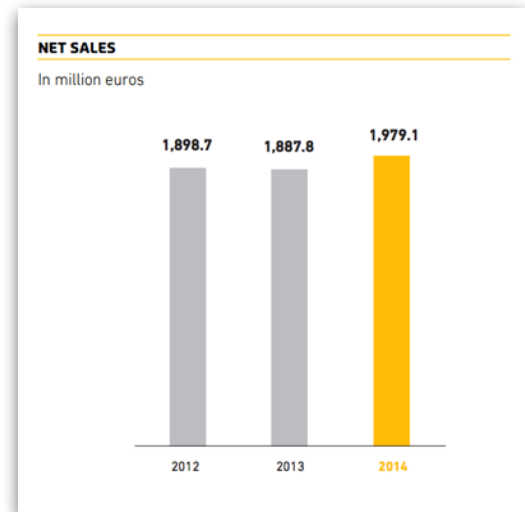
Market Overview and Challenges

In BIC's 2015 annual report, Bruno Bich (Chairman of the Board), said that in stationery section of the company, BIC has gained market share in nearly every region of the world where BIC operates. The report also says they are still in a leadership position over their competitors and their net sales are progressing annually by 5% on average.

Based on BIC's net sales from 2012-2014, in 2013 there was a small dip in sales most likely in response to the release of the "BIC for her" pen (a pen designed specially for a woman's "tiny hand" and came in purple or pink) in 2012 which caused a huge controversy. BIC's numbers were back up for 2014 which was the largest year for net sales out of the three. BIC

has also had some issues the past few years with their advertising being sexist. They released the campaign "Look like a girl. Act like a lady. Think like a man. Work like a boss." This campaign was seen as highly offensive as it gave off the message: "Market your company like a 1970s misogynist."

BIC's dedication to innovation has continually kept an edge over its competitors. A large challenge for a manufacturer of pens is that when a product that has been around for as long as the pen has, and is as simple as a pen, how much room is there really for improvement? This also raises the question of how does a pen company keep up it's sales during the age of technology when people mostly use computers to write? Recently BIC released the BIC Cristal stylus, which maintains the same simple and disposable design as the regular BIC Cristal but with an added feature. Most stylus are pricy but BIC has created an affordable and simple solution by turning the pen into a tool that is comparable with technology.



Category Insights

BIC is known for its disposable pens, however the brand name was strong enough to be applied to other categories. They have achieved success with disposable lighters, razors and many other products with their unifying factor of “disposability”. BIC stands out from its competitors by pairing high-quality products with affordability, and has a reduced effect on the environment by using recycled materials, while offering the equivalent performance.

Competitive Landscape

BIC’s competitors are Sharpie and paper-mate (both under Newell Brands). BIC has a slight disadvantage against these companies because these competitors have a much more concentrated product line while BIC is involved in many different markets.

Target Market

BIC’s target markets are professionals, small businesses and households, specifically low income families, as they aim to make affordable products. The Target age would be between 20 - 40 years old for their main set of products. BIC does have certain speciality products targeted at children and women respectively since BIC aims to create a balanced product portfolio.

SECTION 2: BRAND INSIGHTS

Brand Legacy

- Full name: Société BIC S.A
- Founded in 1945 (71 years ago) by Baron Marcel Bich
- BIC is a shortened version of the founders name
- BIC is a corporation based out of Clichy, France
- Best known for making ballpoint pens
- Known for making disposable consumer products such as lighters, razors, mechanical pencils and printed paper products.



BIC CRISTAL PACKAGE REDESIGN

History

In 1945 Marcel Bich was working with Edouardo Buffard manufacturing parts for fountain pens in Clichy, France. Marcel realized the potential for the ballpoint pen so he adapted and improved a process for making ballpoints that were originally invented by a Hungarian named Laszlo Biro. In 1950 Bich launched his own ballpoint pen under the company name BIC, a shortened and more memorable version of his name. The high quality and affordability of the BIC Cristal ballpoint pen caused it to rise in popularity quickly. BIC began to win over foreign markets by creating subsidiaries and taking over foreign companies. In 2005 the BIC Cristal pen entered into the collection of the Department of Architecture and Design at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York.

Logo

The first BIC logo consisted of the word BIC in a red rounded parallelogram. In 1952 Marcel Bich enlisted the help of french poster designer Raymond Savignac to promote the “Elle court, elle court, la pointe BIC (it runs, it runs, the BIC point) advertising campaign. This campaign was illustrated by a little boy running after a BIC Cristal pen. In 1960 for the Nouvelle Bille (new ballpoint) campaign the little boy who was dressed as a schoolboy with a pen on his back, stopped and faced the public with a ballpoint head. The character posed next to the letters B-I-C and the “BIC Boy” was born.

Pack Evolution

1950's



1950's
Advertisement



1950's
Packaging

1960's



1960's
Packaging

1970's



1970
Packaging



1970's
Packaging



1976
Packaging



1979
Packaging

1980's



1980's
Packaging



Late 1980's
Packaging

1990's



1990's
Packaging



Late 1990's
Packaging

2000's



2000's
Packaging



2009
USA Packaging

2010's



2010's
Packaging



2012
"BIC for her" Packaging



Current Packaging



Brand Equities

- BIC's colours are orange and black
 - In colour psychology orange means adventure, optimism, self-confidence and sociability. Orange vitalized and creates enthusiasm.
 - In business, orange gives the impression of affordability, but too much can suggest cheapness.
- BIC's iconic logo has always been in a rounded parallelogram
- The Bic Boy has been apart of the company and advertising strategy since 1952 and has been the face of the company since 1960.
- The slanted slab serif BIC logo typeface is also very iconic and hasn't changed since the logo's inception.



The orange and black colour definitely needs to remain because it works with what the brand stands for. A slight update and variation to the logo typeface is needed. The BIC Boy is iconic and doesn't need to change very much.

Brand Character

When you think of BIC you think “convenient”, “economical” and “original”. The BIC Boy and the orange colour scheme adds warmth and personality to the product while still suggesting an element of quality and professionalism. BIC is very concerned with their impact on the environment so I would also characterize BIC as innovative and responsible.

Unique Point of Difference

At first I thought BIC’s history was what made it stand out from its competitors but then I decided to do some research on Paper-Mate and Sharpie. I found out that the Sanford Ink Company that originally made Sharpie dates back to 1857 and the Sharpie was invented in 1964 (the marker not the pen) while Paper-Mate dates back to the 1940 when it just sold ink and glue and then the pen was introduced in 1949. So since it doesn't really have a unique history why does it stand out against its competitors?

- **Reputation** - Although other competing brands also have a long history, BIC has a longstanding reputation for quality.
 - **Price** - Sharpie pens are much more expensive than BIC and Sharpie pens are felt tip rather than ballpoint. Sharpie pens are also overshadowed by its markers.
 - **Brand Awareness** - Although BIC and Paper-Mate are very similar in price people gravitate to BIC because of the BIC lighter. People are familiar with the company because they see it all the time. There are always BIC lighters at the checkout of supermarkets and convince stores so people are constantly exposed to this brand. Unlike BIC pens, BIC lighters don't really have much competition in the disposable category so people buy it, use it and realize that it's a quality brand. So when they are faced with an option between BIC pens and Paper-Mate pens they will gravitate to the brand they know better.
 - **Identifiable/Memorable** - Bic has a short name that is easy to pronounce, recognize and remember. The bright orange labels and packaging really stand out on the shelf and grabs attention, while leaving a memorable impression compared to the competitors who have plain white packaging.
 - **Commitment to Innovation** - The company is always working on its smooth ink flow and ergonomic design. They have also developed products like its fraud defence ink that is water, light and eraser-resistant to prevent illegal activity such as “check washing”.
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- **Social responsibility** - BIC uses recycled materials and also supports causes like The Haiti relief effort and Fight for your Write.

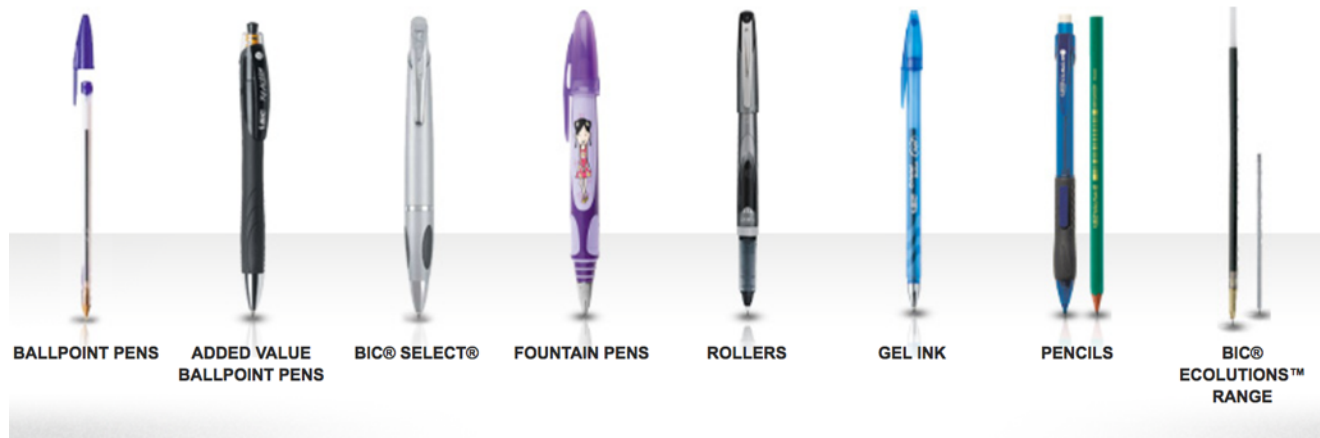
The orange and black colours on BIC packaging also stand out from Sharpie's white and black and Paper-Mate blue and white. BIC stands out because its a high quality brand for a low price.

Current Product Offering

BIC offers a variety of different products in 3 distinct categories: Stationery, Lighters, and Shavers. In the lighters category BIC offers the sub categories of Classics, Electronics, Decorated, Lighter Cases and Multi Purpose Lighters. BIC's shavers are broken down into a Mens and Women's category which are then each further broken down into ranges such as Value Range, Premium range and System.



The stationary section is broken down into Writing, Correction, Marking, Colouring and Drawing, and Other Stationary. Writing is then broken down even further into BIC's many different types of pens such as ballpoint pens, Added Value Ballpoint Pens, BIC Select, Fountain Pens, Rollers, Gel Ink, Pencils, and BIC Ecolutions Range.



The Ballpoint category has many different types of pens but since this design brief is dedicated to the BIC Cristal Pen I will just be focusing on that style.



- BIC Cristal Classic**
- quick dry ink
 - tungsten carbide ball
 - clear hexagonal "no roll" barrel for visible ink supply
 - ventilated cap

- Cristal Fashion/Shimmers**
- quick dry ink
 - tungsten carbide ball
 - translucent hexagonal barrel for visible ink supply
 - ventilated cap
 - comes in fun colours

- Cristal Pocket**
- quick dry ink
 - tungsten carbide ball
 - mini format: 11cm
 - clear hexagonal "no roll" barrel for visible ink supply
 - ventilated cap



Cristal Clic

- quick dry ink
- tungsten carbide ball
- click retractable mechanism
- clear hexagonal "no roll" barrel for visible ink supply
- ventilated cap



Cristal Fine

- quick dry ink
- tungsten carbide ball
- high precision
- click retractable mechanism
- clear orange hexagonal "no roll" barrel for visible ink supply
- ventilated cap



Cristal Classic Variations

- extra smooth
- extra bold
- extra life
- extra comfort

Design Strategy

BIC's logo hasn't changed since 1952 and could use an update. The BIC typography is very iconic so it needs to have the same feel as it does now, just with a new fresh face. On BIC's old packaging the orange colour was a little bit darker and much more vibrant than today's packaging. The current packaging is more yellow and needs to revert back to its old hue. The BIC Boy is the face of company and is very lovable so it still should be incorporated into the new packaging design. Although BIC's innovation team has made a huge effort to use recycled materials for the packaging, once you bring it home, you throw it out right away. Once you open the package the thin plastic rips and the pens fall loose all over the place in the drawer. It would be beneficial to create a packaging that last longer and becomes part of the products appeal. Since the pens are sold in bulk and not just as singles, the packaging should be a place to neatly store these pens until their time of use.

Shoppers Drug Mart Aisle



I went to Shoppers Drug Mart to see how BIC compares with its competition on the shelf but I was surprised to find that there were no competitors available for purchase. BIC was the only brand offered for pens in the stationary aisle.

Next was a trip to Walmart where there was a much larger selection.

Walmart Aisle



Walmart gave a much better picture on how BIC stands out on the shelf. BIC stands out way more compared to Paper-Mate which gets completely lost hanging beside the orange BIC packaging. BIC

has 4 units of pens right beside each other while paper-mate only has one unit. Standing further back the orange really stands out, but when you pick up the two packages side by side paper-mate ends up looking more professional, due to its physical pen design. I think the fact that the Cristal is completely clear is what makes it look less professional. A simple translucent barrel would fix this problem. Paper-mate is also 10 cents cheaper so the packaging for BIC needs an upgrade to sway people to spend the extra 10 cents. Finding the balance between the black and orange colour scheme will be key to minimizing the view that BIC is cheap and unprofessional. One of BIC's largest strengths over the competition is that the other companies don't have brand character whereas BIC does, therefore the packaging needs to embrace this.

APPENDIX

Marketing and Advertising Reference



BIC Cristal Design Features

