

Gaymers

» The cider brand is upping its event marketing budget to strengthen ties with the **music community**

Everyone knows alcohol and live music go together as seamlessly as Jagger and Richards in full swing. Always trying to stay one step ahead of its rivals, Gaymers had a successful year in 2008, with event marketing activity at major festivals such as Glastonbury, and by introducing its own intimate Gaymers Grassroots Gigs.

"We invested £4m in an integrated marketing campaign last year and reached 650,000 consumers. The overall Gaymers brand experience grew by 200 per cent," says Gaymer Cider Company managing director Peter Spencer.

The brand's target audience is 18 to 24 year-olds. Spencer says: "According to Target Group Index data, 68 per cent of 18 to 24 year-olds think music is massively important to their lives. The idea for Gaymers is that consumers will associate our brand with having a good time at a music event."

He adds: "We have also found that our target audience is more recession-proof than most. Not many of them have mortgages and they tend not to have credit cards or loans; they are just experiencing the good in life."

This year, Gaymers' music activity is set to grow, with the brand injecting £5m into event marketing. Spencer says it hopes to reach 800,000 consumers.

Live gigs

» The Grassroots Gigs last year featured four bands: The Futureheads, The Young Knives, The Wombats and Mystery Jets. The gigs gave the bands a chance to revisit their home towns and perform in intimate venues, usually associated with their debut performances.

They took place in May and guests could win tickets via the Gaymers music website or the band's individual websites.

Consumers could also access exclusive content from the gigs, including interviews with the bands, through the Gaymers site. Channel 4 filmed the

performances and will work with the cider company again this year on the Grassroots events, which are set to feature six bands.

Spencer says: "The biggest gig was for 250 guests, so from a brand perspective it's a deep, intimate experience, compared with festivals, which are more broad. It's also a prize you can't buy, because all attendees have to win tickets to attend."

Festivals

» Festivals are a major part of Gaymers' event marketing strategy, with the brand chosen as official cider



Gaymers' extensive activity at events is reaping rewards, as its target audience comes to associate the cider brand with having fun

for Glastonbury last year, a role it will repeat in 2009. It also provided the apple-based tippie for the Leeds and Reading festivals in August.

Another innovation was the Gaymers Cider Garden at the

Lovebox Weekender in July and Rock Ness in June. The garden provided guests with a chill-out area, a 'vinyl section' where they could request DJs to play records, and Rockaoke, which offered people a chance to sing

karaoke with a live band. This year, Gaymers will be re-creating its Cider Garden at Leeds in August, Latitude in July, Rock Ness in June and Festival in September.

"Our event marketing budget hasn't been affected by the credit crunch; we are turning up the volume on event activity and investing £5m," says Spencer. "From our point of view, events are a strong through-the-line investment to build awareness of a brand, and despite the economic climate

people are still looking to enjoy themselves. The fact that Glastonbury was sold out this year shows that people are still really engaged with festivals, which are seen as a good-value experience."

Spencer also says that over a 12-week period of festival activity, Gaymers managed to sell 4.3 million pints of cider, and consumer awareness of the brand at events grew to more than 73 per cent.

Additional festival activity will see another appearance at

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the Lovebox Weekender in July, where guests will be able to enjoy the Gaymers Great Escape Stage, which features a treehouse.

Urban music festivals

» These festivals take place over two or three days and involve live acts performing in venues such as pubs and clubs. Gaymers will be headline sponsor of Camden Crawl later this month, and will be active at the Great Escape in Brighton and Liverpool's Sound City, both in May.

Guests can buy tickets for any part of the festival they wish to attend. "The urban festivals increase our distribution reach in the music venues, and, because they are popular, the events are great for engaging our target market," says Spencer.

Music venues

» The cider brand is aligned to a number of music venues within the Live Nation and Mama groups, and it

recently signed a contract with the Mint Group, whose roster includes Koko in Camden; Clapham's Bison and Bird and Inferno nightclubs; Elk Bar in Fulham; and Mary Janes in Tower Hill.

Spencer says that the brand's increased relationship with music venues helps it to gain support in the on-trade, and Gaymers is currently in discussions with a number of other venues and operators to see how it can link in the Gaymers brand.

The future

» Increasing its event marketing strategy budget to £5m for 2009 is clearly a show of intent on Gaymers' part.

"The music gigs and festivals are a huge investment for us," concludes Spencer. "We get an emotional investment and connection with our target audience, who are clearly passionate about music. It's the perfect way to engage them because if they associate Gaymers with good times, they are more likely to buy the product again."

Gaymers reached **650,000** consumers during its summer of experiential activity in 2008