

From concept to Tesco shelves in eight months

Development of Blue Skies' fresh fruit ice lollies built on Vypr data at every stage

For twenty years [Blue Skies](#) have been bringing fresh cut fruit to retailers in the UK and Europe. Founded with an ethical mission to deliver quality produce in partnership with producers, offering a fair price and helping to build infrastructure in the communities they source from, the company has, until recently, been solely a private labelling operation. But with squeezed retail margins and the economic uncertainty around Brexit they made a decision to venture into branded fruit products, with dairy-free ice cream and freshly pressed juice the first two ranges brought to market.

Blue Skies took their award-winning ice cream to Tesco, but the retailer felt they already had the vegan ice cream niche covered. Instead they suggested Blue Skies take a look at adult ice lollies; an entirely new market for them. At this point Blue Skies turned to Vypr to help them through the development of this new range. During the process they met frequently with Tesco, using Vypr data to provide the empirical basis of their development decisions and persuade Tesco that they were on the right track. At each stage the ability to get 500 relevant consumer responses in an hour was crucial to supporting Blue Skies' case.

The first priority for Blue Skies was to understand the market and how their proposition (ethical, fresh cut fruit) aligned with consumers. First they needed to establish that "ice lollies for grown-ups" was a niche in need of their product. Once Vypr data convinced Blue Skies and Tesco that there was a market there, they asked a series of word association questions of our consumer community, arriving at five words which they needed to ally their proposition with: new, refreshing, premium, fun, indulgent. These words acted as a guide throughout when considering flavours, positioning, claims, packaging design and more.



In your opinion, would you describe premium adult Ice Cream on a stick as:

223 Responses

Refreshing



Total Panel (207 / 223)



Yes: 92.83%
No: 7.17%

Indulgent



Total Panel (178 / 223)



Yes: 79.82%
No: 20.18%

Stylish



Total Panel (149 / 223)



Yes: 66.82%
No: 33.18%

Aspirational



Total Panel (88 / 223)



Yes: 39.46%
No: 60.54%

Feminine



Total Panel (81 / 223)

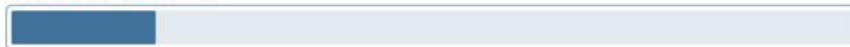


Yes: 36.32%
No: 63.68%

Boring



Total Panel (38 / 223)



Yes: 17.04%
No: 82.96%

The next stage for Blue Skies was to look at flavours. They tested a range of concepts to determine which had most traction – Tesco decided they wanted a variety of themed flavours in each box, so Blue Skies homed in on two flavour profiles; one based on mango, and the second on other tropical fruits. The flavours were tested individually and in combination to provide an idea of which options worked together. The results informed the selections made, with Tesco and Blue Skies choosing to throw in one unusual choice which didn't test as well individually but attracted some shoppers to the variety pack (pineapple and ginger).

Mango & Strawberry premium adult ice lolly



Total Panel (441 / 518)

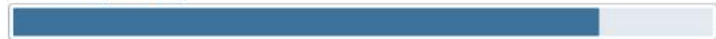


Yes: 85.14%
No: 14.86%

Mango & Raspberry premium adult ice lolly



Total Panel (434 / 518)



Yes: 83.78%
No: 16.22%

Initial packaging concepts for the product featured Ghanaian-inspired prints to represent the origin of much of their fruit and their ethical involvement with their suppliers, but consumer testing showed that the “fresh cut fruit” aspect of the product carried more appeal. Blue Skies pivoted to focus on images of fruit, shooting a variety of fresh fruit which made it through to the final design. They also tested different names for the variety packs, concluding that Mango Medley and Tropical Trio resonated best with consumers.

Throughout the process Blue Skies and Tesco worked closely together to move the product from an idea on a whiteboard to the finished article. By testing and refining the concept at each stage with Vypr data, both retailer and manufacturer were able to move forward with confidence, resulting in a listing in over 550 stores nationwide and predicted revenue of £1 million in the first year.

“Vypr proved an absolutely essential tool to secure our listing. It provided us with objective data that allowed us to evolve our proposition to create something truly compelling. Most critically, the speed with which we could test elements of our proposition meant that we could achieve the seemingly impossible: from concept to in-store in less than 8 months – and that’s saying something for an ice lolly made in Ghana!”

—Hugh Pile, Chief Sales and Marketing Officer at Blue Skies