

CASE STUDY

BRANDING AND PACKAGING

Fishing for the right fit

Vancouver's Straydog Marketing + Design puts fresh into frozen fish

ZACHARY Semeniuk had to do a bit of fishing around before finding the right marketing and design team for his new line of products.

The Brief:

A marine biologist turned entrepreneur, Semeniuk's Vancouver-based line of frozen fish needed the right branding and package design to convey his personal passion for fish freshness, ocean sustainability and fair trade.

rolled up in a newspaper, so we kind of played off that a little bit," says creative director Rachelle Hynes.

Set in 10 pt Times New Roman Regular, the text background for each unit of W!ld Ocean Fish resembles the newsprint used to wrap fish at a typical west coast fish market. The W!ld logo uses a hand-drawn and scanned ink-brush font, recalling how fishermen use black markers to scrawl a fish's type and price across the makeshift wrapping paper. A dot in the *d* in W!ld



West coast fishmonger, Zachary Semeniuk, wanted the packaging of his fair-trade frozen produce to be reminiscent of fish bought at the market wrapped in newspaper and hand labelled with a black marker

The Challenge:

"We had gone through a few different design agencies and hadn't been pleased with the results. We went to Straydog in the end," Semeniuk says. "Other designers were having a difficult time grasping the concept. We wanted the feeling that this fish is very special. It's wild-caught fish. It's a premium product. We wanted the consumer to have a feeling of quality and affordable luxury while maintaining an organic feel."

The Process:

Vancouver's Straydog Marketing + Design helped name Semeniuk's W!ld Ocean Fish company and handled everything from its branding to web design. The design team looked at the values and qualities Semeniuk wanted to communicate with W!ld's packaging and chose imagery invoking a typical marketplace fish vendor. "People tend to think about buying fresh fish

completes the logo with the subtle image of a fish.

The background text is Semeniuk's own words; some from original essays and some culled from opinion pieces he's written for local papers. "If you take the time to read it, it's all about advocacy and sustainability," Hynes says.

The company logo and package information stand out in the foreground with coloured boxes that match the colour of the package's rear. Each fish type sports a different bright colour. "Each colour is something that would be complementary to the fish itself," Hynes says. "For example, for the Coho salmon we used a nice, rich blue which complements the orange of the salmon."

A transparent strip on the back of each package lets the consumer see a part of the fish contained within. A QR code allows concerned consumers to learn more about the fishermen who caught their fish.

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The logo uses a hand-drawn and scanned ink-brush font; a subtle dot in the *d* makes the letter into a stylized fish

The name of the fish type on the front is set in Din Regular, 27 pt, while facts in the nutritional information table are Helvetica Neue, 8-13 pt. The rest of the package's text content is Din Regular, Medium or Bold, 10-14 pt.

The design's many layers proved to be an obstacle at the printing stage, Hynes says. Initial efforts printing on the package's matte finish dulled out Straydog's bright colour choices and made it difficult to achieve the desired effect of Semeniuk's background text showing slightly through the coloured boxes.

"With the additional layers...it was printing in a different colour, which would have meant another layer of printing and another colour, which is more costly," Hynes says. Instead of adding yet more layers, Straydog searched for a printer that could do a matte finish while getting the opacity of the coloured bars just right. After a few failed attempts with other printers, Straydog teamed up with B.C.-based packaging material supplier Taipak Enterprises.

The Result:

Early response to W!ld Ocean Fish's package design and branding has been so strong that Semeniuk is expanding his scope. "The brand is just launching and he's blown his forecast out of the water, so to speak," Hynes says.

Semeniuk originally planned to launch locally in Vancouver but, after Canada-wide natural food distributor UNFI (United Natural Foods) saw mock-ups and learned more about the brand, his product was picked up for wider distribution. After delaying the West Coast launch to synchronize with demand in the East, W!ld Ocean Fish became available in various outlets across the country this past December.

Although finding the right team was a challenging process, Semeniuk says he is more than pleased with the results. "[The design] has a feel like you've actually gone to the market and procured a great piece of fish. And that's a really wonderful feeling for a lot people," he says. — **Jef Catapang**

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