



Brief set by
Kraft Mac & Cheese

In collaboration with
Jones Knowles Ritchie (JKR)

Connect KMC to Gen Z in culture to show them that KMC is more than a kids food brand

Deadline
20 March 2024, 5pm GMT

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The backstory

Kraft Mac and Cheese (KMC) is America's most iconic comfort food. It has been filling bellies and feeding souls since 1937.

The brand has been on a renovation journey over the last few years. While KMC has always allowed parents to win their kids over at mealtimes, the truth is – everyone loves mac & cheese – helping yourself to bowl-full is like catching up with an old friend who fills up your belly & soul. This is true for students, graduates, first time-home owners, new parents, and everyone in between.

In 2021, KMC launched its 'Help Yourself' campaign, unveiling its new brand positioning to speak to people beyond families with kids. But the brand now needs to do more, beyond a traditional brand campaign, to connect directly with older Gen Zs and younger Millennials.

What's the challenge?

Create a brand activation that speaks to older Gen Zs and younger Millennials by connecting to what they care about in culture, and showing them that KMC is there for them whenever they need some reassuring comfort.

Your brand activation idea should be rooted in a strong truth about this audience, connected to what's important to them in culture today, but also lead to something that is credible for the KMC brand and connected to what it stands for. It should also look and feel like KMC does in the world today.

The activation could be executed at any point in the year, but please include when your suggested launch moment is, and why. Lastly, the activation idea should be newsworthy, getting media outlets and consumers talking.

Who are we talking to?

American, older Gen Zs and younger Millennials (ages 18-32) who do not have kids and are at a stage in their lives where they are navigating all sorts of changes and challenges – big & small. Graduating, making new friends, moving out, getting jobs, and navigating the workforce. While they find change exciting, there are moments that make them unsure of themselves. Our audience spans all US geographies, identities, ethnicities, income levels, genders, and abilities.

Things to think about

Create connection and relevance

Over the last couple years, people have been buying less KMC; they're buying private label mac & cheese because it costs less, buying new mac & cheese brands they haven't seen before, or are stopping buying it all together, in favour of different categories, like ramen.

To continue growing, KMC must connect with a younger and more diverse audience. These consumers have a deep emotional connection to KMC that started in childhood, but that more than anything, today, they see it as a kids' food brand. Show this audience that KMC is as relevant and exciting for them today as it was when they were kids.

Tap into culture

The best way to build relevance? Tap into cultural moments your audience is interested in, topics they're passionate about, or a life moment that's a big deal for them. KMC has a chance to show consumers how it also supports those same cultural moments and topics, and how it can be there for them when they need support and comfort the most; for example – when they move into a dorm with roommates for the first time, or are navigating making new friendships.

Think about the where

As you think about the activation, consider where it could show up. If it's an in-person experience, what does the online, scalable experience also look like? If it's online, is there a way to boost via an in-store or in-person experience? Anything is fair game as long as it connects in the moment and lands the message.

The important stuff

A successful brand activation will hit these 6 points:

1. Culturally powered and relevant insight
2. Has voltage, has never been done before
3. Is sticky & memorable
4. Is simple and can be explained in one line
5. Is ownable & authentic to the Kraft Mac & Cheese brand
6. Gets Gen Z talking (they say 'I can't believe KMC did that' and then tell their friends).

Present:

Your solution – clearly explain your idea and how it would work.

Your creative process – how you arrived at your solution, and key insights from your research – especially audience and cultural insights.

What and how to submit

Read **Preparing your entries** before you get started for full format guidelines.

Main (essential):

Either a **presentation video** (max. 2 min) OR **JPEG slides** (max. 8), showing your solution.

Optional (judges may view this if they wish):

Interactive work (websites, apps, etc); if your main piece is **JPEGS**, you can also submit **video** (max. 1 min total); if your main piece is **video**, you can also submit **JPEGS** (max. 4).



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Further information

The KMC Brand Foundations

KMC recently updated their brand foundations with a new brand purpose: “to feed the full you.” Kraft Mac has been there for its consumers every step of the way, throughout their life, leaving them feeling grounded, uplifted, and reassured. It’s like a lifelong friend that you might not talk to every day, but when you do, it’s like no time has passed, and you walk away feeling like your cup has been filled. That’s why we say that KMC’s cheesy comfort nourishes your belly and soul.

KMC haven’t yet created a campaign to reflect these new brand foundations, but have started to launch some brand acts in 2023 with it in mind (ex: KMC College Care Pack).

KMC are inspired by brands like Dunkin, Oreo, McDonalds, Crocs and Doritos, and the activations they do with younger consumers in culture.

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