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Case Study



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Client
Origin

Title
All Kinds of Useful: How Origin Switched On a Category of One

Category
B18a. Return On Investment - Commercial Over $5million

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Q1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & WHY DOES THIS CASE DESERVE AN AWARD?

"Who has ever hung up the phone and thought "gee, how helpful was my energy company today"? Nobody.

Why? Because as an industry, we mistake where our brand lives: thinking it's in our advertising and our future promises, not our service and interactions in the present.

So while major players prophesied to Australians about the energy transition, Origin made a different choice and pivot: stop being another energy company and become Australia's first truly useful one.

Not useful as a message. Useful as a daily commitment: every touchpoint, every product, every service interaction becoming an opportunity for an act of useful.

The context and timing of our launch could not have been more hostile. Consumers trusted energy companies less than banks [Energy Consumers Australia, 2025]. A federal election being fought on cost of living had made energy bills a political weapon. Housing costs had surged and household budgets were breaking. In this environment, energy brands were part of the problem.

Origin chose to launch anyway. Not despite the conditions, because of them.

The new brand idea, 'All Kinds of Useful', escaped the category entirely, occupying a position no competitor was claiming. More than a campaign platform, it helped transform the retail business holistically, reshaping product thinking, redefining how people understood their roles, and bringing real empathy and tangibility to how Origin showed up for customers and community.

It created a genuine desire for Origin to be as useful as the utilities it provided. And because it was genuinely distinctive, it functioned as a media asset, making every dollar work harder.

The results followed. The campaign drove a 42% relative increase in likelihood to consider, making Origin the most considered energy brand in its category. Media contribution grew by 106% and became the fastest growing revenue source, up 162% YoY. It delivered an incremental marketing efficiency ROI of 4.1, achieving hyperscale, and an overall ROI of 2.32, as verified by Mutinex.

This case deserves recognition because it is a remarkable example of a deliberate act of self-disruption. As the market's largest energy provider, Origin had every reason to stay the course and rely on its size to weather the storms. Instead, it chose real empathy over corporate distance, and drove results that significantly outpaced share of spend.

The lesson isn't about energy. It's proof that proximity to the customer is proximity to returns.

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Q2. WHAT WAS THE STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGE?

An industry with an almost impossible brief. Energy brands are tasked with managing the world's most complicated industrial transformation, while being expected to navigate impacts to climate, jobs and bills. They're trying to keep the lights on through a once in a lifetime geopolitical crisis, without interrupting anyone's Netflix. And doing all this while stuck in the crossfire of a political debate that never stops, and where nuance is the first casualty.

It is, by any measure, an unenviable position to occupy. But at the time we chose to launch this brand, all these factors were turned up to eleven.

The worst time in a decade to launch a rebrand. Origin launched in March 2025, weeks before a federal election fought on cost of living. 74% of Australians cited rising living costs as a major concern, with 55% feeling financially insecure [PWC Voice of the Consumer Survey, 2025], and more than 80% were "concerned" or "very concerned" about power prices [Nielsen Consumer and Media View]. Rents had risen 38% since the start of the pandemic [CoreLogic Quarterly Rental Review, 2025], and total scheduled mortgage payments had reached their highest share of household disposable income since records began, surpassing even the 2008 peak [RBA Bulletin]. Energy bills were part of a household budget that was already reaching breaking point.

The most distrusted industry in Australia. Australians trusted energy companies less than banks [Energy Consumers Australia, 2025], a record no one wanted to break, with only 43% of Australians believing electricity retailers would do the right thing by their customers [Energy Consumers Australia].

[redacted] In the period leading into the campaign, energy retailers spent more than [redacted] on advertising, up 14% year-on-year [Nielsen Ad Intel]. The return: a category that sounded, looked and felt completely identical. [redacted]

[redacted] The category had confused communication with value, and differentiation was almost non-existent.

An idea that had blended in. Origin wasn't exempt. 'Where All Good Change Starts' had served its purpose during COVID, hope and optimism when the world needed it most. But now it was running Origin in the energy peloton [redacted]

Meanwhile, media ROI sat at 1.11 functional, but insufficient for the growth ambitions of the brand. Despite top line growth of 2% in revenue against the previous year, key drivers of short and long term marketing effectiveness had fallen, the baseline eroded by 7% and media contribution was off by 39% from comparable investment. The comms needed to change.

Origin couldn't spend its way out. [redacted] In a category drowning in noise, buying more wasn't an option. Origin had to find a better idea instead.

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Q3. WHAT WERE YOUR OBJECTIVES? State specific goals.

Simple, perception drives intent, media can multiply it into sales, so we became focussed on the below:

OBJECTIVE 1: IMPACT ON PERCEPTION

Escape the category entirely to spark a genuine rethink. In a category where every brand was cast as untrustworthy and out of touch, Origin needed to leap out of the energy peloton, with a positioning compelling enough to give Australians a reason to put Origin on their consideration list for the first time.

KPI 1: Drive consideration uplift.

Benchmark: 31% likelihood to consider [Previous Campaign Platform Benchmark].

OBJECTIVE 2: IMPACT ON COMMERCIALS

Turn the brand idea into a true commercial asset. A brand people genuinely think differently about is a more efficient media asset. The second objective was to prove that escaping the category to define our own preferred battlefield, would make media work harder, converting changed perception into lower acquisition costs and increased market share.

KPI 1: Turn marketing into a growth driver for the retail business and deliver top line growth.

Benchmark: Exceed last year's marketing contribution of 3.8%, and drive top level growth

KPI 2: Be more effective and efficient in media this year and drive growth

Benchmark: The incremental spend must have an incremental ROI > $1.11, to beat last year's total marketing ROI performance.

Q4. WHAT WAS YOUR STRATEGY AND HOW DID YOU GET THERE?

The Target Audience

In the face of widespread distrust, most competitors made the same call: chase green credentials and transition stories, believing that positioning themselves as architects of the clean energy future would build brand love.

Nobody was meeting the bulk of Australians where they were actually at.

The disengaged majority who experienced energy not as a transition story but as a bill, a call centre, a confusing plan. People who felt they had every reason to treat every energy company with hostility, and weren't being given reason to think otherwise from brands.

Here's where Origin made the opposite bet. We believed that chasing future credentials had disconnected the entire category from the daily reality of what utilities actually are, and how people actually experience them.

So we chose to be a brand that met people where they were, instead of pulling them towards a vague future they weren't sure they had a place in. Our theory was simple: people who expect nothing are the easiest to surprise. Low expectations, disrupted by empathy, self-awareness and genuine usefulness, create more

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powerful brand reappraisal than any amount of money spent preaching to the converted.

The Key Insight
There's a paradox at the heart of this category that nobody had named.

The utilities energy companies supply, are among the most useful things in daily life. And yet the companies supplying them had managed to feel like the opposite: complicated, distant, and profoundly confusing to deal with.

Because competitors chased the future, promising transformation, transition, a cleaner tomorrow, and in doing so they ignored their value in the present: their product was useful, but their company was found wanting. They had been building their brands in the wrong place.



An energy brand isn't built in its advertising. It's built in the providing. This was our unlock: close the gap between the usefulness of what Origin supplied, and the usefulness of the company supplying it. Not to create just a new campaign, but to create a whole new category.

The Strategic Idea
Origin would stop being an energy company and become a company that won on its empathy. The proposition: Origin is the useful utility company.

‘Useful’ to Origin meant empathy over top-down change, real service over promises, and presence today, over future promises. It meant striving to be as useful in its experience, as the products it supplied.

It was a position no energy competitor could easily steal, because no energy competitor was even playing in our category.

The Commercial Logic
Brands grow by being mentally available to the most people at the moments that matter. The more category entry points a brand owns, the larger it grows

Every competitor had built their memory structures around future entry points that only resonated with a minority: the transition-curious, the sustainability-engaged, the wealthy early adopters.



This was our categories critical gap. By positioning against it, Origin opened up more people across more entry points, far closer to the lived reality of energy in Australia. Not a cleaner future, just a clearer bill. Not a transition journey, just an answer when I call. Not a brand that lectures me, one that actually helps.

By owning "useful", a way of being no other competitor wanted to hold itself accountable to, Origin built a distinctive asset that could be recalled across the broadest possible audience at precisely the moments that mattered. Not by out-spending the category, but by bringing the purpose and promise of an energy brand back down to earth. "All Kinds of Useful" wasn't just a tagline. It was a memory structure built for the mainstream.

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Q5. HOW WAS YOUR STRATEGY BROUGHT TO LIFE?

Disrupting Inside, Before We Went To Market. "All Kinds of Useful" didn't start in advertising. It started internally. An innovation practice built around 'Useful Ideas' opened a direct line from frontline teams to leadership, giving the people closest to customers a structured way to surface what was broken, frustrating or worth fixing.

The ideas that came back were genuinely useful.

High Usage Alerts turned data into a heads-up, notifying customers of abnormal consumption before it became a bill shock, or before a quietly dying fridge quietly tripled their usage. Your Energy Wrapped will give customers a personalised snapshot of their energy year, borrowing the logic of a cultural moment to make something dry feel worth sharing. Tech ran ‘Useful Hackathons’, finding ways to build better from the inside. Even rewards got useful: slurpees, coffees, small gestures that respected customers' time and loyalty.

One notable internal submission became Energy Happy Hours: a loyalty product that rewards customers with free energy at key milestones, turning a transactional relationship into one that actually recognises tenure, overcoming the 'loyalty tax' most energy customers believed they were paying.

This wasn't a repositioning handed down from the boardroom. It was an organising principle that had already proven itself inside the retail business before it ever ran on a screen.

That sequencing mattered. Because when the campaign launched, it wasn't promising something new, it was announcing something true.

The Creative Idea: Switching On Useful

To announce the new ethos to the world, the campaign centred on a single, simple device: the "Useful Switch": a satisfying toggle that flipped everyday moments from usual to useful.

A visual and conceptual mechanism that put the customer in control, demonstrating Origin’s new behaviour in action. Where the category hid in the future, the switch showed that Origin promised usefulness in the present tense.

The work rolled out across film, OOH, social and BVOD through four complementary TVCs, each switching on a different dimension of usefulness. The Brand TVC established the overall positioning. We showed Origin flipping everyday friction into ease. We demonstrated technology actively managing energy on your behalf. We communicated the breadth of Origin’s ecosystem, solar, internet, EV charging, proving this was more than an energy bill provider.

The Media Approach

The challenge
Australians see energy brands as transactional, confusing and largely interchangeable. Saying we were “useful” wasn’t enough - the media itself had to prove it.

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The strategic response
Instead of following category norms of fragmented retail messaging and constant tactical noise, Origin launched “All Kinds of Useful” as a high-impact brand platform. The role of media shifted from distribution to demonstration - making “useful” tangible through channels, formats and experiences that people could genuinely engage with.

From the outset, the strategy rejected the comfort of spreading budgets thin. Investment was deliberately concentrated into fewer, higher-attention channels to maximise cut-through, salience and consistency.

A decisive shift in markets
Through a cross-functional strategy workshop, the team challenged a long-held assumption: that national presence automatically equals effectiveness. With finite budgets, this approach was diluting impact.

The outcome was a clear, conviction-led decision to prioritise NSW and Victoria, the markets with the greatest ability to deliver and sustain growth at scale. As a result, FY26 marked a deliberate departure from historical norms. QLD and SA metro were switched off for brand and retail ATL, despite being included in the AKOU launch prior to June.

This wasn’t retrenchment. It was focused, trading geographic breadth for the depth required to reach meaningful media thresholds and unlock performance.

Rebalancing the funnel
The strategy deliberately strengthened the upper funnel to force lower-funnel channels to work harder and more efficiently with in-market audiences. This was reflected in a clear shift from a 65:35 to a 70:30 upper- to lower-funnel investment mix.

TV as the growth engine
Broadcast TV became the backbone of the strategy, providing rapid reach, consistent frequency and premium environments to establish AKOU at scale. From FY26, TV investment was concentrated in Metro Sydney and Melbourne, supported by regional NSW, VIC and QLD, ensuring spend worked hard enough to deliver return rather than being diluted across too many markets.

This was a bold call in a category increasingly biased toward short-term performance channels. But modelling showed that TV had been historically under-invested, sitting below the spend threshold required to unlock meaningful returns.

Once that threshold was reached, performance lifted significantly, aligning the clients known saturation curves and validating the decision to invest with greater conviction. Importantly, data showed continued headroom rather than diminishing returns, alongside hints of a multiplier effect between TV and Search, where upper-funnel strength amplified lower-funnel efficiency.

To maximise the impact of a finite TV budget, activity was pulsed two weeks on, two weeks off in the latter stages of the campaign - repeatedly hitting effective spend levels while extending presence and momentum over time.

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Timing for impact

Launch (April – June): Delivering in the growth window
The All Kinds of Useful brand launch entered market during Origin's primary acquisition period. It was designed to do what brand is supposed to do in a peak window, build mental availability, drive consideration, and convert interest into sales. It delivered. Marketing-driven revenue grew [redacted] year on year during the launch period. The strategy worked where it was expected to work.

But a [redacted] uplift in a historically strong acquisition window, while exceptional, could still be explained by category dynamics, a good campaign catching a natural wave. The more important test was what happened next.

H1 (July – December): [redacted]

[redacted] Marketing-attributed revenue in H1 has traditionally been the year's low watermark, a period to manage efficiently, not to grow.

In FY26, H1 marketing-driven revenue grew [redacted] year on year.

This is the brand halo in its clearest measurable form. The adstock and brand equity built during the launch period did not evaporate when the peak window closed. It extended forward, sustaining commercial momentum through a period that had never previously delivered growth at this level. Origin did not just ride the seasonal wave. It kept moving when the wave was gone.

Extending "useful" beyond screens

Whilst TV was the backbone of the screens strategy we further amplified it through highly engaged environments including BVOD, YouTube and Netflix pause ads, reinforcing reach and attention in premium digital contexts.

Cinema further elevated the platform, synchronising bespoke creative with theatre lighting to create a distinctive and memorable brand moment.

Outdoor played a central role in turning the AKOU idea into lived experience. Investment was tightly focused in Sydney and Melbourne, where large-scale special builds, sequential takeovers and mobile charging bus shelters transformed "useful" from a brand claim into something people could actually access.

The principle
This strategy was grounded in disciplined restraint as much as bold ambition. It resisted "always-on everywhere" thinking in favour of smarter, harder investment where data proved the upside existed.

The guiding belief was simple and unapologetic:
Stop playing it safe, stop spreading budgets thin, and invest with conviction - because scale is what turns brand belief into business effect.

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Q6. HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT YOUR CAMPAIGN WAS SUCCESSFUL?

Did people think differently about us, and was it good for the retail business?

Yes, on both counts.

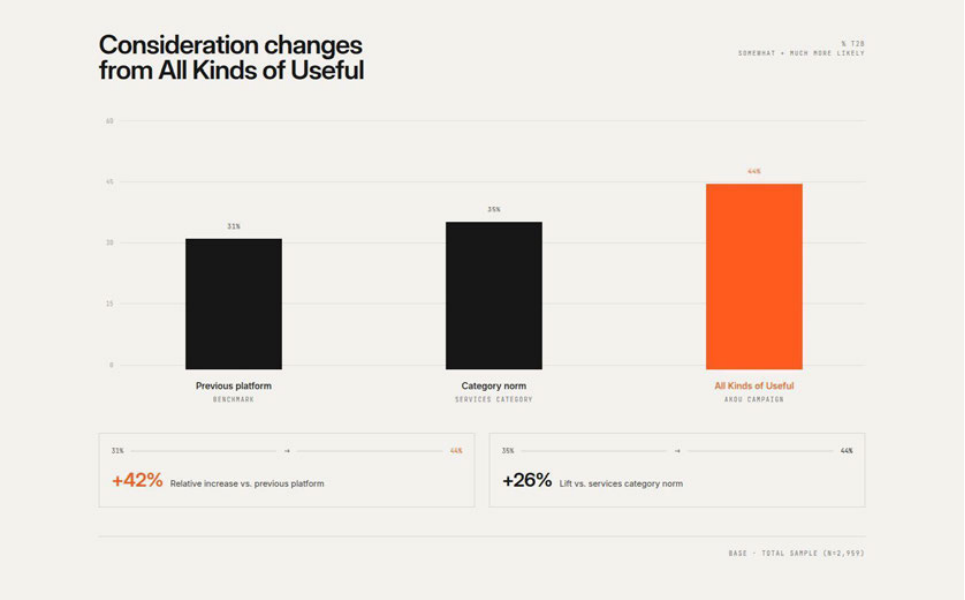
OBJECTIVE 1: Did Origin spark a genuine rethink?

KPI 1: Drive consideration uplift

Benchmark: 31% [Previous Campaign Platform]

Result: 44% likelihood to consider. a 42% relative increase, nearly doubling the impact of the previous platform [Nature campaign research, May–June 2025], and making Origin the most considered energy brand in its category.

Nature Research - Consideration Changes - SEE IMAGE 1



OBJECTIVE 2: Did the brand idea become a commercial asset?

KPI 1: Turn marketing into a growth driver for the retail business, and deliver top line growth.

Benchmark: Exceed last year's marketing contribution of 3.8%, and drive top level growth

Result: The retail business saw total revenue grow [redacted] [redacted] indicating marketing is a clear growth driver for the brand. Absolute revenue uplift via marketing grew [redacted] YoY which was one of the fastest drivers for growth.

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Total Sales vs Media Sales 25/26 - SEE IMAGE 4



KPI 2: Be more effective and efficient in media this year and drive growth

Benchmark: The incremental spend must have an incremental ROI > $1.11, to beat last year's total marketing ROI performance.

Result: Marketing delivered an total ROI of $2.32 (double of last year) with the incremental ROI of $4.1. This denotes the strategy and the effectiveness of the media selection caused the uplift not just more spend. Specifically, the upper funnel activity drove [redacted] of the growth which is where the channel selection was skewed too.

Media is twice as efficient YOY - SEE IMAGE 2



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Q7. WAS THE CAMPAIGN A GOOD INVESTMENT?

Most brand investment asks you to take it on faith. This one didn't. Our case rests on three things.

It replaced a long-term brand idea without a drop in market share. Most brands expect a short-term loss when they reposition. New cues, new narratives, new memory structures are being built from scratch rather than refreshed, and so there's a gap between launch of a new idea and its benefits. But not in this case. "Where All Good Change Starts" had spoken to a minority already listening. "All Kinds of Useful" spoke to everyone else, and in doing so, refreshed memory structures across a far broader audience without losing the ones already built.

It built a foothold in the audience that mattered most. The campaign launched an idea that compounds. The 2.3 ROI returns reflects one period of activity. The equity Origin now holds in the minds of the mainstream majority ignored by the category, are returns that will grow long after this entry is judged.

The money worked harder as it scaled. The Mutinex MMM proved that every additional dollar returned more than the one before it, ROI improving as spend grew, CPA falling as investment increased. That's not normal. The heavy lifting is done when a breakthrough idea and strategic media selection work in tandem.

It positioned the retail business as having a reason to exist beyond selling utilities. "All Kinds of Useful" wasn't a tagline handed to a media agency, it became the organising principle for how Origin showed up across every touchpoint and collaboration between agencies and the retail business. When a brand idea is strong enough to direct product, service and communication simultaneously, it stops being marketing spend and starts being business strategy.

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Q8. DEMONSTRATE THAT THE RESULT WAS NOT DUE TO OTHER FACTORS

[redacted] If market conditions were uniformly lifting the category, media efficiency would track external trends, not double in ROI while spending more.

Sales Composition - Mutinex - SEE IMAGE 3



Third-party verification removes self-attribution risk. All commercial results come from Mutinex, an independent MMM provider isolating media contribution from pricing, distribution, and market dynamics.

Pricing and product were stable. No major pricing promotions or product launches in the period provide an alternative explanation for the efficiency improvement.



YoY Media Contributed Revenue Comparison - SEE IMAGE 5



[END]

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