



Birth of a Brand

M&S Advertising and Branding Timeline

- 1884 Michael Marks opened his first stall at Leeds Kirkgate Market. His first advertising slogan was 'Don't ask the price, it's a penny'.
- 1894 Thomas Spencer went into business with Michael Marks, and the brand name 'Marks & Spencer' was born.
- 1890s to 1920s Goods were branded with 'Marks and Spencer' and 'Marks and Spencer Ltd' from 1903 onwards. The brand names Monster, Welbeck, Marspen and Daymar were also used. Paper bags featured a list of all M&S stores on one side, and an image of Head Office on the other.
- 1900s M&S regularly advertised in newspapers from the early 1900s onwards.
- 1909 The Advertisement and Publication Department was set up.
- 1910s M&S started to spread to the South of England, and came into competition with other chain stores. To reinforce the brand, stores started using similar signage and used the same colour scheme. 'Originators of the Penny Bazaar' and 'Admission Free' were used as slogans in gold lettering on store fronts.
- 1913 M&S started producing Grand Annuals – magazines full of interesting stories which also had lots of advertisements for M&S goods.
- 1928 The St Michael brand was introduced. Originally used only for a small range of products, St Michael goods were made specifically for M&S, to M&S specifications and St Michael was regarded as a mark of quality. No item could be sold as a St Michael item unless Simon Marks had approved it.
- 1930s M&S paper bags start featuring art deco designs. M&S also opened a large number of new 'Super Stores' and accompanied this with a nationwide newspaper advertising campaign. Many of these advertisements featured the slogan 'Marks & Spencer, The Family Store'. Instore décor included posters promoting the M&S values of trust, quality and value.
- 1931-2 Two editions of the Marks & Spencer Magazine were produced. This was filled with interesting articles and advertising for items available at M&S.
- 1941-52 During the war very little advertising could be carried out. All clothing had to carry the utility label, and the St Michael logo was green and was displayed in a shield shape.
- 1950s M&S advertised on TV and in cinemas for the first time. Cinema adverts focussed on innovative fabrics and easy care properties, and featured dance



troupes and expensive sets. Many used the slogan 'Available from your M&S'. M&S started holding charity fashion shows – these continued until the 1980s and drew large crowds. In addition to raising lots of money for charity this promoted the brand and encouraged people to buy items from new collections. M&S started advertising in womens magazines, particularly Woman Magazine and She.

- 1951 The St Michael logo was changed from a simple font to a handwritten style to help make the brand more appealing to women.
- 1953 In house advertising started with St Michael News, a newspaper-style staff magazine. Employees were encouraged to take the magazine home and show new ranges to friends and family.
- 1958 The first M&S colour print advertisement was published in Woman magazine, and featured brightly coloured New Look dresses, and skirt and blouse outfits.
- 1959 The St Michael brand started to feature prominently on carrier bags. M&S also made a point of advertising that you could only get St Michael goods from Marks & Spencer.
- 1974 M&S screened its first ever food advert on television.
- 1980s During the 1980s M&S started to use high profile models and to collaborate with catwalk designers. M&S also started advertising in high end fashion magazines such as Vogue.
- 1995 M&S launched its first ever poster campaign.
- 2000s The St Michael brand was phased out in 2000, though St Michael continued to be used in The St Michael Promise – M&S' guarantee of high quality merchandise.
New sub brands were created, including Autograph, Limited Collection and Blue Harbour.
M&S returned to TV advertising for the first time since the 1970s. Starting with Christmas TV ads, landmarks included the first 'This is not just food, this is M&S food' advertisement in 2004, and the first advertisements featuring Twiggy, Erin O'Conner and other models in 2004.
- 2004 The 'Your M&S' logo and slogan was introduced.