

# EPIISODE 037

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## 6OURBON 7IME

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Kyle Poff, Rafael Beretta, and Raphael Franzini, Leo Burnett

AND

Jon Marks, Beam Suntory

### **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to The Follow-up, a weekly podcast that goes in depth into projects recently reviewed on Brand New featuring conversations with the designers, and sometimes their clients, uncovering the context, background and design decisions behind the work.

### **ARMIN VIT**

This week we are following up on 6ourbon 7ime, a new brand platform for a handful of Beam Suntory brands — including Jim Beam, Maker's Mark, Knob Creek, Legent, and Basil Hayden's — that is encouraging people to reclaim the hour between 6:00 and 7:00pm for themselves.

The project, designed by Leo Burnett Chicago, was posted on Brand New on May 10, 2021. You can pull it up on your browser at [bit.ly/bnpodcast036](https://bit.ly/bnpodcast036) that is B I T dot L Y slash bnpodcast036, all in lowercase.

This week we are joined by Kyle Poff, Design Director at Leo Burnett; Rafael Beretta, Creative Director at Leo Burnett; Raphael Franzini, Creative Director at Leo Burnett; and Jon Marks Senior Brand Director, Global Small Batch, at Beam Suntory.

In this conversation we learn about how open-ended the original task was, with Beam Suntory approaching Leo Burnett with a few simple yet difficult to solve questions: How do we reach our audience? How can we serve them at this point in the pandemic? While the resulting campaign — under the banner of 6ourbon 7ime — seems so effortlessly on point and almost obvious because of how good it

is, it was the result of a complex process. From analyzing consumer insights to creating a name that encompasses not just all of the Beam Suntory brands but also a special moment of the day to figuring out where and how to deploy the message. It was great to hear how small decisions during the process, whether it was replacing letters with numbers or shifting from a black and white color palette to a sunset-inspired one or taking a hand-crafted approach to typography resulted in a beautifully designed and thoughtfully considered campaign.

Now let's listen in as Bryony follows up with Kyle, Rafael, Raphael, and Jon.

**BRYONY GOMEZ-PALACIO** The last year and a half had many of us realizing just how much we could do from home. And just how blurry the line between being on and available, and off and unavailable, could be. Today, we are as far from Bourbon Time as a workweek can be, but we won't let that stop us from getting all the details of how this project came to be. Jon, Raphael, Rafael, and Kyle, welcome to The Follow-Up.

**RAFAEL BERETTA** Thank you.

**RAPHAEL FRANZINI** Thanks for having us.

**JON MARKS** Thanks for having us.

**KYLE POFF** Yeah, really great.

**JON** Really excited to be here.

**BRYONY** So it's going to take our listeners a little bit to figure out what voice matches what name, in what source, but if you can take a minute just to state your name, where you're joining us from, and what your role is.

**RAPHAEL** I'm Rafa Franzini, I'm a Creative Director at Leo Burnett in Chicago.

**RAFAEL** So to make it easy and the other Rafa, Rafa Beretta, Creative Director at Leo.

**KYLE** My name's Kyle Poff, I'm a Design Director at Leo Burnett in Chicago.

**JON** My name's Jon Marks. I'm the Senior Director of Global Small Batch for Beam Suntory.

**BRYONY** Fantastic, thank you everybody. Jon, we're going to go ahead and start with you in order to get a baseline of what this project was all about. Given that Bourbon Time is not selling a specific product or service, but an idea, or an experience., can you share with our audience what exactly was the design challenge that you were hoping to outsource to a design firm?

**JON** There was something that all of us can relate to in the last year, year and a half. Which is, you know, we all went into the pandemic and the period of time that we've been living through with a very set set of habits, and rituals, and sort of things like that. And then all of a sudden we came out of it, or we came into it, and we didn't have access to some of those same rituals. We were spending a lot more time at home, and spending a lot more time with family, with friends, and spending a lot more time at work. And we saw a lot of changes therefore in the way that people drink and consume spirits as we went to. And the question on the table then was, what's a way that we can connect with them in this new reality? What's a way where we can talk to our consumers, our drinkers, that maybe we're used to spending time at bars, or spending time having other people make cocktails for them, or spending time in any other way, and now they're spending time at home. How can we connect with them in a new way? And more importantly, what is it that we need to know about them? That we need to know about that new reality, that changes how we would talk to them and how we would interact with them. And so that was really the foundational starting point for when we engaged with the Leo Burnett team. A simple brief to a certain extent of just help us figure out, like what has changed? What is new? What is different in this new world? And how can we connect with them in a different way, in a way that's not just us talking to them, but us becoming a part of their new life, their new daily rituals, and their new daily experiences.

**BRYONY** It sounds like you rose the question for yourselves, and then came to Leo Burnett with a very open-ended: this is our challenge. this is what we want to solve—help us figure it.

**JON** Exactly. I mean, we had some hypotheses, we had some sort of ideas of where it was. One of the biggest ones being really this idea around all of us has spent the last 18 months engrossed in a blurred line between work, and home, and play, if you will. We really didn't come in with that answer to the question. We really wanted to work with a team and that was the big reason why we engaged the Leo Burnett team, was to try to figure out. Help us understand how do you answer this question. What are the ways to approach it? We've been busy, but pretty open-ended, at the start, to really let these guys shine in their way of coming on and helping us answer it.

**BRYONY** If you don't mind my asking why Leo Burnett?

**JON** Yeah. I mean, a couple of reasons. One, obviously the name on the door speaks for itself in terms of just the history and the heritage of the firm, but to be candid it's more than that. It was bigger than that. It was that this team really has a reputation, and we had spent some time with them over the years, especially our leadership had spent some time and gotten to know some people from the firm that just has a reputation of helping to solve the thorny questions. The name on the door might speak for itself in terms of some of the beautiful creative, the most memorable pieces of advertising copy that you can remember, but they also have a similar reputation in helping to figure out how do you answer a question like this? We felt like going to a firm like Leo Burnett, trying with this team to really unpack this really thorny issue, would set us up for success in giving us that chance to really figure out and get to the bottom of what it would take to really connect with our consumers during this time.

**BRYONY** So for the Leo Burnett team, how did you all get involved with this project internally?

**RAPHAEL** It was a special one for me, it was my first project at Leo. That's when I met Kyle and the rest of the team. I guess Jon's right, when the ask came in, all those hypothesis were already in place, and I guess started building from there. Bourbon Time wasn't the only solution for it, we had another one that we liked, but Bourbon Time felt right. Wasn't just like, how can we connect to those consumers in a new way? For us, it felt more, how can we create a new role for the project? That isn't just what we had before and could only be bourbon, you know. Like when you think of it, one of the things that made people lose that control, and that separation from work to home was the loss of the commute. We didn't have to commute anymore. And that's something that people hated, but it was working well in that sense. And it's usually the time that you can also stop work, go for a drink with your colleagues, right? You had that kind of role, but now you're at home and you need to separate things. So creating that hour for us meant that we could give the product something that the product didn't have before. And another thing that was important to note is that we weren't working for one specific brand, it was for the whole bourbon portfolio. But I think that's how we started. It started with that problem. We built from there. We wanted to create a new world for the product. And then we start throwing around. And that's how this team, which is much larger than the people in this call got together.

**KYLE** Prior to working on Bourbon Time... actually, a few years prior, I had worked on a Jim Beam master brand kind of update with the full design team at the Leo Burnett Chicago office. And it was one of those occasions that everyone that was working on it was just so excited. And that was about a year's worth of work—brand campaign, style guides, you know, updating many of the different actual tool kits that they have, and pushing those out. And this came along, Andrew Swinand announced that there was another partnership opportunity, and who wanted to work on it. And a lot of the people on the design team wanted to. I was luckily one of the people that was able to do that at that point.

**BRYONY** So you brought a little bit of historical expertise to the project.

**KYLE** Yes. Yeah. We used many of the knowledge that we had about how big Jim Beam at the time was, but also like how they could be pushed a little. Then this was completely different, it was for Beam Suntory, and there hadn't been a really large campaign for Beam Suntory that we'd all been aware of, and pushing this out was a really fun opportunity.

**BRYONY** So talk to me a little bit of how you developed the concept, and the brainstorming sessions. When did this happen in relationship to where everybody's working from home and the office? How does that brainstorm translate, versus the traditional way you had always brainstormed at Leo Burnett?

**RAPHAEL** I think the brainstorm was also part of how the idea came to be because we were facing the same. Sometimes, in advertising, we need to be... when you're creating, or working on a project that you are not the consumer of that product, you need to have a lot of empathy and understand how that consumer is looking at the product, and the project, and the campaign. But in this case, we're all facing this. You don't need to drink bourbon to be facing this, and we're all facing this. We're working in that kind of environment. So in a way, it helped us get to the idea—I mean, all meetings were on Zoom, right? So every time we were on Zoom and then 6:00 PM, 7:00 PM, and you're like, oh my God....

**BRYONY** You're still there.

**KYLE** Yeah, it doesn't stop. [Laughter.]

**RAPHAEL** We're still here.

**RAFAEL** Since the beginning, the movement, the idea was never just about like finding time. Despite like the name is Bourbon Time, Bourbon Time is bigger than just time for you. Like every Happy Hour, or to have time to drink with our friends. We launched the movement, the campaign, with a print ad in New York Times that said like, "Hey, you can make

our Bourbon Time whatever you want.” You know? It’s just like that time that you can drink. Of course you can have a drink with our friends, but if they want to like walk with their dog, or if you want like to call your parents, or you’re feeling like Bourbon Time is bigger than just... Not than just, but like, it’s not just about like a Happy Hour you know. It was really like something that, like we said was something that everyone was feeling and everyone was needing that time, you know?

**RAPHAEL** And that’s actually the name of when the idea was first born. It was called The Happiest Hour because we thought it isn’t just Happy Hour, it’s more than that. It’s having control of your time. And that’s how Happiest Hour was born even before it was, we called it Bourbon Time.

**BRYONY** I have to say, I think I like Bourbon Time more than The Happiest Hour. It has less of a visual emotion attached to it. Now, Jon, how involved were you during the brainstorming process?

**JON** We weren’t terribly involved in the brainstorm itself. I know there were a number of check-ins with the team as it went forward, but I know the first time that I saw the idea, it was a little bit more flushed out beyond just sort of a rough idea. I think that there was some power in that, in the spec that it came to us, not just as an insight, but also as a here’s how it could come to life. But it also came to us at a stage where it wasn’t fully final, and where we could really collaborate together and build out the details. I do recall the first meeting we saw it, and it was very much around the insights around the what if, what it could be, what’s possible with it. It wasn’t, here’s how we’re going to do it on these following—it wasn’t fully baked out. And that was great. Right? You could tell the team had put a lot of thought, a lot of energy into developing what is possible and what it could be, and then brought us in as a client at the time when we could really form it together into a fully baked plan as it went forward.

**BRYONY** So it was more of the strategic presentation versus the design presentation and saying, this is what your eight and a half by 11” ad is going to look like.

**JON** To an extent. What I would say is that was a little bit... it was almost like strategic with proof of concept, right? So it wasn't a fully written out. Here's what your New York Times ad is going to look like, or here's what your creative is going to be, period. But it did have a lot of proof of concept so you can start to envision how this concept could come to life. What the creative could look like, what the ways it would work. And I think that this idea, the insight is so strong, but the creative is as well. And so having that proof of concept to look at helped us to wrap our heads around, what will this look like? How will this work in market? How will consumers, and our customers, our distributors, et cetera, engage with it? So it was a little bit halfway, right? It wasn't fully final. It wasn't all of the final creative by any means. There was a lot of room for us to discuss, and debate, and align, on what that plan is. But there wasn't a lot of really beautiful creative, even in that first meeting that I sat in, where we could at least understand what it could be. And again, it was all about possibilities. It was all about how this plan could come to life. And they did a great job of showing us what that could look like.

**BRYONY** So let's talk about this first presentation for a second. Earlier, you mentioned that there was a second concept that didn't make it through, obviously. Was that part of this first presentation? Or was that eliminated as part of a check-in somewhere along the way?

**RAPHAEL** It was part of the very first presentation, I think Kyle, you would remember we had another go at it, which was a concept around you're at home, so nobody's looking at you—you can drink however you want it, you don't need to dress up, you don't need to impress anyone, you're not going to a bar to show off, you don't need to drink the brand that you think people would like to see you drinking. That kind of concept. I think it was around, you know, drink what helps you reclaim the freedom of being at home and drinking for yourself, not for anybody else. Not for the image that you create when you drink in a bar.

**RAPHAEL** Yeah, and I also remember there were several times where we were looking at different concepts about you being the bartender at



your own home, which felt like a little treaded, or we kind of had the prognosis that, you know, looking into the future, that could be something that would seem like other brands would do that. It was just kind of like that simple thing. And we were like, what's more dynamic? What else can we go to, and Bourbon Time, just that in and of itself is so simple, and so magical, that kind of like was born.

**BRYONY** And Jon, as you were experiencing these two ideas in that first presentation, I always like to know, did you just know the moment you saw it? This is the one that you can stop talking about the other one? Or was there a debate and further conversation about the merits of each?

**JON** I still remember there was this really simple sentence that led off this idea. I think I've seen this and it's not the only time anyone has ever said this, but the way it was used was so powerful in the presentation, which was quite simply, "are we living at home, or are we living at work, or working from home?" It just rang so true and to Rapha's point earlier, especially of... this needed to be simple. This needed to be a simple insight. It wasn't about creative in that first moment, it was about finding that way to connect with our consumers, our drinkers lives, and that is such a real feeling. Every one of us has felt that in the last year and a half throughout this point, whether it's the lack of commute, whether it's the fact that sometimes we will take a 30 minute break for bedtime, and then get right back on the phone afterward, or whatever that is. That is a very real and rich insight. And so there was something about that sentence and then the way it translated into some of that proof of concept creative right afterwards that you just knew that it wasn't just going to be great work. But it's going to be a really rich insight that it was gonna really connect in new ways, and in different ways. And to me, that really stung from the beginning.

**BRYONY** For the Leo Burnett team, what were the steps taken after this meeting on the strategy, the overall concept and design direction? I would love to hear more about what the timeframe was, the deadlines,

challenges, surprises... as you're still working through the pandemic, still experiencing the concept that you're designing.

**KYLE** Yeah, so, really our intent at the very, very beginning of the design process was to lean heavily into a bolder than bold visual world, right? Like anything you'd ever seen that was in your face, this is going to be 10x that. It was, let's make a statement, let's do the revolution thing. But then we decided to maybe go the completely opposite direction. Rafael Beretta came in, we threw lots of different new ideas and kind of like grid forms at the table, and expressions of different balance. And then also looking at label design, for instance, in the world of like scotch and even wines, you slowly start to realize for a brand as big as Beam Suntory that specializes in so many different elevated brands, maybe quiet is better, right? You have to be much more of a quiet visual standard, but in the existing bourbon world, everything's gold, or black, and has a Southern carnival kind of aesthetic, you know? So those dark moody distillery and bar undertones felt very like incorrect. And with what was happening in the world at the beginning of the pandemic, people's worlds were looking so different, maybe even a little depressing. So to balance those vibes out there, very zen-like proclamation of a brand as big as Beam Suntory, it felt like a new undiscovered territory, which is kind of where we landed. That's just kind of like talking about the bold versus quiet aspect.

**RAPHAEL** And then we also threw the six in it. I remember we had one meeting that we were like, is there a way to make it visual what we're trying to say, like when you should have that stop. Is there a way to maybe remake what Happy Hour did for you? Or that's why we started with Happiest Hour and then landed here. But then it's not Happy Hour, it's something else. For now, we're just calling it Bourbon Time. Cause you're thinking that's Bourbon Time for us. If you're not specific on what you need to communicate in that sense, you're asking too much. Because then you're asking people to be creative about it. You're asking people to get their own bourbons. And then it wouldn't happen. So we need to be specific. So what if you recreate the time

that it's usually that time after work in our imaginary, it's 6:00 PM. And then I remember in one meeting we drew, what if six, what if could write... use six to write Beam. It was Beam first, and then evolved to 6ourbon. And then we had, Kyle will remember this, we had one round of visuals having the six and then Kyle wrote 6ourbon Time with the six, and at some point good, maybe we just use a "T" with a 7 instead of a "T". And that was it. It was as casual as this.

**BRYONY** As casual, but you all felt it in the moment, I'm sure.

**RAPHAEL** And what's great is that those two numbers literally look just like the letter forms. I mean, one being lowercase, the six and the seven looks like an uppercase "T", but they just... it's so readable. Something from the very beginning, we knew the logotype needed to be very super readable and feel like it's a classic logo that's almost been around forever.

**RAFAEL** And to the point of Kyle, like he was saying, sometimes when you think about the bourbon category, like advertising, like something that is like heavy, and dark, and crowde., We are all the time trying to make that feeling completely the opposite because even to make that work, even to make that cocktail becoming like a sundial, you need to put that cocktail in the middle of any space, any artwork, any crop, having space to breathe. So it can become the sundial, and all the pieces we really wanted to almost like be the time to breathe, you know? When you are looking to all the medias, all the websites, you will want all the banners to be almost a time for you to, okay, that's breathe. So this is why we were always pushing, oh, it has to be minimal. It has to have a lot of negative space. It has this sundial that the cocktail has to be right in the center of the page because then it starts to be almost like a clock, and it becomes a clock. And the cocktail, you start to see that shadow pointing to six, to seven. The thing about being minimal was so important for us because then everything starts to connect. Even the thesis becoming "a time for you to breathe". Meanwhile, you were at your computer.

**KYLE** The photography aspect really was a much different—and we knew pretty much right out of the box we were dealing with the time of day, closer to sunset. We needed really elegant shadow work in everything we were going to produce. There's a pretty devoted following to cocktail photography out there, but using those super long shadows as a reference for the sundial, like Beretta was just bringing up, I mean, it really lands on the point. It hits you over the head without it just being too, like obtrusive. It's just an awakening wild-type of moment for us. When we found out let's really use that shadow to our advantage here, and our photographer stylist team, Chelsea Craig and Beth Parker-Dury, they were amazing to work with also. So that was really great. It really helped bring it to life.

**RAPHAEL** Kyle has a picture that he took in his backyard when we were putting a comp together [laughter]. That was the original cocktail photography. Maybe we can share this at some point [laughter].

**RAPHAEL** My mother-in-law has this one gold glass and she really wanted all these glasses to stay together. But I was like, I have to use this one for this cocktail shoot. You know, I have just like my iPhone, and so I went outside and shot it. And then we twisted the shadow around in different ways to figure out what works best to convey the message. But she was like, where's my glass? Where is that? I was like, it's coming back to you.

**BRYONY** We all have our priorities. Let's just keep that clear, right? That's great. So I'm curious if you can talk a little bit about the typography and the texture within the typography, because in a way that's not quite as minimal as the photography, but it's a beautiful compliment to it.

**RAPHAEL** With our typography we wanted something that felt, like I said before, like it had been around forever, you know? Almost like that feeling that it comes from the Golden Era of advertising meant for the time of day obviously, which many referred to as the Golden Hour Day. And those two things really needed to come hand-in-hand together to help outfit the entire campaign with our colors, our balanced of negative

space of photography, but especially with the logotype, right? And with the variety of letter forms out in the world a type family which has a numbers that feel that natural together. Something that you would want as a replacement for the six and the seven was very subjective. In the beginning, like hundreds of different scripts that we wanted to do, but this Cheltenham really came to be the obvious winner. And then how it balanced with a very pedestrian Interstate family, it just felt like magic to us. We had to go with those two—and you know, the six and the seven were obviously stretched a little, and we did a minimum amount of work on it, but it was just so beautiful. And obviously the stamping process took a really long time. Beretta, you want to talk some about that. But I think one of the biggest challenges of that, was because we did so many different stamps. We wanted it to be so real, we didn't want it to seem like it was a Photoshop effect. And then once you stamp everything, everything looks amazing. So how do you choose? Then, kind of like swapping things in and out. I think that was one of the biggest challenges— to choose the best.

**RAFAEL** Yeah. We had like 10 options for each letter. You know? Me and Kyle were all the time like, oh, this one is good, this one, or maybe like send back to Giannini and crop it, take out of the paper in a different way and do like the select in a different way so we can bring more texture, or less texture. So we were like crazy about it. In the end, when we were looking through all the artwork and everything, we didn't want anything to sound digital. So that was just the final touch. And when you look to all the labels of Beam Suntory and everything, all of them have those hand made, handcrafted, aspect. So we would like to bring something like that, you know? So this is why we are like, okay, all the typography that is on the work, like just like bring some dirty to it.

**RAPHAEL** I have a friend in Miami that when I shared a word, he was like, how'd you guys do that on Photoshop? Like, how? No Dude, Rafa and Kyle they're doing actual stamps. He's like, nobody does that anymore. How'd you do it? [Laughter] Like no, stamps.

**BRYONY** Oh, but it makes all the difference, I am a firm believer on that. Jon as all of this is happening, I assume you're having check-ins throughout the process. Talk to me about what those months were like, and how the excitement was building within Beam.

**JON** First and foremost the work kept getting better and better, just gorgeous work, as we started to see it come to life. That alone built excitement within the company. But I think what was great is that, it wasn't just the work that was building, but every time we'd have a check-in, every time we'd have a conversation, the idea was so much tighter, and clearer, and it's simpler. And the creative just supported the idea, the design supported the idea so, so well, whether it was the sundial, whether it was the typography, whether it was the premium end craft nature of everything... Everything just kept getting stronger and stronger to the point where, you know, the biggest question that started to come was okay, now, how do we go do it? What's next in terms of, you know, how do we actually go put this into market? And that's the best case scenario when you have work that, especially coming from the standpoint of, you know, the Global Marketing team, where when we can start to walk around and showcase some of this work with our stakeholders internally, with our distributors, with everyone that we have to use to sort of get work into the world, if you will, when you start to get a, oh my gosh, I want it now response and perspective, that's a win for all of us, whether it's our team, whether it's the two teams. It just continued to build as we saw more and more investments of the work itself. And then eventually we were able to actually get it out.

**BRYONY** Now this whole project is unusual in its premise, in how it came about and in the circumstances in which it came about. Was there a pivotal moment for each of you? Kind of like, there's a before and after of the process of this project.

**JON** I have some people on my team that really took the reins and worked closely with these guys on really developing the nitty-gritty of the plan. And I still remember the moment when I first saw what the fully

baked up plan could look like. So, not just what the creative is, but how we're going to bring it to life, what are the touch points are going to use, what are the different channels... That to me was the moment when this turned from a really beautiful creative concept, and a really, really strong strategic insight, into like, oh, wow, this could work! That moment was still a couple months before we actually got it into market because obviously then you had to go make all of that stuff. But that to me was the real pivotal moment when this turned from idea into a tangible reality. I see how all of these pieces are now going to interact to ladder up to something really big, and really special in every way.

**KYLE** I would love to comment on the color palette. A lot of times with a brand you start to look at what color means, and there's not really much of a definition behind it. And if there is it, doesn't give you that feeling. Whereas this, you know, in the beginning, we were doing tons of black and white stuff. Or black and like, off-white. It's something we thought that was the powerful vibe that we wanted to go with because Jim Beam, the Beam brand in and of itself has black and white, like on the label. We were using those label components from the beginning, but then Berretta came in, and had this amazing insight... when I first saw it, and heard it, and he showed us what he was doing, it was just like, oh my God, this totally wraps everything with a perfect design bow. You start to look at the pure black and white in the beginning stages, and you think about looking at a black and white ad in your living room. And then Beretta came up with this idea, if sun was hitting that ad in that newspaper or magazine, what would the colors be? The blacks would turn to like a dark red that would be like whiskey. The whites would turn to a warm cream color. So then if you take a photo of that ad in your living room, that would be the ad when you'd be looking at it anywhere. Yeah, like I said, insight that really turned it around and was incredible. And then, you know, you can really tie in the whiskey idea because the whiskey is in the deep shadows. It's almost like the whiskey is influencing everything you're looking at, as well as the sun.

**RAFAEL** We live the minimalistic aspect of the black and white. Me and Kyle, we were always like trying to keep it, it's so beautiful—just black and white—the idea is there, it's so minimal. It's all about like being beautiful. But then we were like pushing to make it that more ownable for Beam Suntory. So how we make that more ownable? Because there's other brands in the category that are black and white as well. So how we make it more ownable? And even more ownable for the project. We were happy when we figured that out, then we're like, oh, if it's just about bourbon and time, it shouldn't be black and white, it shouldn't be green, it should be all about like that golden hour, you know?

**RAPHAEL** For me, was when I saw that picture, Kyle, of the drink and the shadow. Because that's not new, right? A drink and a shadow is not new, but the meaning it had that it was the shadow from 6:00 to 7:00 PM. For me, it was like, okay, now we have it because we're moving into just a name that says 6ourbon 7ime that, you know, take your time, reclaim your time, to a feeling. And then it goes back to all those cues. That's I think when the cues started. How can we give as many cues as possible, for you, during your work time to know it's time. And then when you think of that sun hitting sideways, when you think of that color palette, when you think of the distressed type, the black that isn't black, the white that isn't white. That's all the cues you need to stop working. That's when, to me everything connected.

**BRYONY** That's great. So you're excited, you're figuring out all the details. What were some of the main considerations that you needed to take into account, in order to bring it all to life? And were there any huge challenges through that?

**RAPHAEL** For us, it was... at least was my first time doing a work that is for a category, almost, not just one brand. And making one campaign that represents it all, and has little things from each brand. It needs to have the right tone of voice for each brand. That was for me, the most challenging. How would Jim Beam talk about 6ourbon 7ime? How would Knob Creek talk about 6ourbon 7ime? How would Maker's Mark



talk about 6ourbon 7ime? You know, Maker's MARk should talk about it, saying it's remarkable, make your hour remarkable, or Jim Beam can talk about making it more refreshing. Like you need to find the right thing to say. What's the tone of voice for each brand, but they're all talking about that same thing.

**BRYONY** It's all the group of friends brought together for 6ourbon 7ime.

**JON** The two challenges that I saw was, one exactly Rapha just laid out. We were developing a category for a program, but we within Beam Suntory, within our bourbon portfolio, we have very distinct and strong brands that we've actually opted to build as individual brands. We've opted not to build them as a portfolio traditionally. It was a big challenge to say exactly to Rapha's point, how does Basil Hayden play with this? And not just from a design perspective, and from a tone of voice perspective, but also from an activation perspective and all of that. And how do you kind of balance that. I think the second big challenge that I recall sort of going through was just the tangibility of this, especially as you got closer to the consumer, closer to the point of purchase. That was always a real challenge for us. It was to say, okay, as a concept, as an insight, as a piece of creative, as a piece of design, there was tremendous strength in all of this work. And how do you translate that, and do it when all you've got is a case card in a store? In our industry, that's where many consumers first, and sometimes only, hear about brand communication. Is when they're standing in a Benny's store and standing and looking at a display of work. And so thinking about that, and thinking about how do you take this beautiful concept that can be designed in so many ways for this really beautiful holistic, rich experience, but also thinking about how do you translate it down into, you know, where you don't have that much time, or that much of a canvas to paint on, in many ways was a challenge. It wasn't a challenge we didn't overcome by any means, but it was tricky. And it was one of the hardest parts I'd say of the tangibility of bringing this project to life, was thinking about that whole spectrum of where things could be done.

**BRYONY** And so now that it's done and it's out there in the world, what kind of feedback have you been receiving Jon, be it from customers, employees, or even just through hardcore numbers, in terms of how it's being received.

**JON** We've received generally positive feedback. I will say that Beam Suntory has had over the years, a number of different portfolio programs, and they tended to focus so much on us as brands and less on our consumers from the standpoint of like, what's an insight that could actually explain to consumers why they should care about a portfolio program in the first place. And that's okay. All companies kind of waver between these two different balances in different spaces within there. And we've had a lot of success in the past with some of those portfolio programs where we just talked about, here's our portfolio of brands, here's what you should know about our portfolio of bourbons. That's something that I think our teams internally are very used to, in the sense of what we've brought and with 6ourbon 7ime, we brought something very different. We brought something from the standpoint of, here's something that's rich, the rich insight into our consumers' lives, here's a reason for why we have a portfolio. There's a reason they can believe in why they have all of these different brands that they can go to. And here's why you should display them all together. And the feedback we got was generally very positive, but that's a very different way to approach portfolio programming. It's a really, again, rich insight that people could believe in. And so generally, I mean, from the standpoint of our distributors who had a lot of good things to say about seeing it, to some of our internal teams who were very, very positive, very, very excited. And then, especially from the standpoint of when you saw some of these displays get into store, when you saw some of the feedback that we got from consumers, all that kind of stuff, it just was generally a really, really positive note that we received across seeing all the work together.

**BRYONY** There's nothing like wrapping it all up at the end. I have a question for each of you as we go about wrapping up. Kyle, for you personally, what was the most satisfying aspect of working on this project?

**KYLE** It's definitely the people. I'm a very head down, maker-type person, and you know, especially at the beginning of this project, knowing... this was the biggest project I had started during the pandemic. And there was like a few others that were really big, but this one was just, we knew it had the potential to be massive, win lots of awards... And so I think in the beginning, like that head down moment was great. Like you do on everything, you're always at your computer, but working with this team, Raphael and Saatchi, and the producers, and the photographers. I actually didn't go on the photoshoot unfortunately, for different reasons, but that process was still so streamlined and amazing. And I would just say like, the people in this process were like the thing that I truly appreciate, and we have so many projects at Leo Burnett, and I just hope that we can all work together again on something else amazing.

**BRYONY** Fantastic. It's always good when you can have fun working with other people when don't dread that [laughter]—.

**KYLE** Totally.

**BRYONY** Raphael Franzini, what part of the process was the most rewarding for you?

**RAPHAEL** As I think back on all of the different versions of that campaign that we had, usually you get creatives, not very happy of making more and more versions of the same work. But I do think that we landed on the best version we could, with this work. Design-wise, the message, the manifesto ad that we put out in the New York Times... everything that went out was the best version that we had for it. So I guess trusting the process was a big learning for me as a creative.

**BRYONY** Trusting the process and pushing everybody through all of the iterations is what you ended up with the most rewarding.

**RAPHAEL** And not giving up. [Laughter] Because every project has its challenges. And this one I think it was maybe, four or five months from start to delivery.

**BRYONY** That's not very long.

**RAPHAEL** I know, we had one thing that we didn't, couldn't control, which was the pandemic. When you're creating a campaign that is 100% dependent on something you can't control it gives you that sense of like, it needs to go, it needs to go out now. I don't know if two weeks from now it's going to make sense. We were on the verge of getting a vaccine, and all those things so we were like, it needs to go.

**BRYONY** And it needs to go, otherwise who knows if we will actually need it.

**RAPHAEL** Exactly.

**BRYONY** Although that wouldn't have been terrible either.

**RAPHAEL** I was going to mention that. I prefer we would never have had to create this.

**BRYONY** Rafael, I wanted to ask you, what part of the outcome, and that which lies ahead is what's the most exciting for you?

**RAFAEL** The campaign, the visual campaign. It's so powerful, and I'm very jealous of some parts of that campaign that, when I saw it for the first time, the cocktail becoming like a sundial, and et cetera, so awesome. And I always say that like for Kyle, hey guy, this is great. And from a visual standpoint, I think the message that we could put out of the world, for me, it's like the most powerful element of this campaign. In spite of this campaign have such a strong visual aspect on it. I feel that when we could talk about that issue, and having such a powerful brand, beside of us, willing to talk about that. For me, for sure, what the most rewarding aspect of it. As we continue to move in on these like hybrid world, I think like there is a space to continue to talk about that, and having a 6ourbon 7ime 2.0, or something like that.

**BRYONY** Jon, I'll go ahead and ask you, how do you envision this experience brand basically will evolve once we, hopefully as a collective, return to a new normal post-pandemic in hopefully the near future?

**JON** I think in many ways, the jury's out on that question, and that's okay. Right? 'Cause we have to see how the world evolves, and how it gets back to. But again, what I think the strength of the concept here was, was that it tapped into something very real, very pure, about where our consumers, our drinkers were. And realistically speaking, it's going to remain. As we look to the future, you know, the vast majority of companies are opting for either a hundred percent virtual, or as an option, or hybrid workshop/workplace, or anything like that. And so, so many jobs, what we've now proven is the fact that you can do at least portions of those positions, of those roles, not at work, not in an office. And so, no matter what this rich insight, this idea around again, the fact that again, "are you working from home or living at work", where are the blurred lines? I'm in the office today, I'm actually going over to the Leo Burnett office in a few hours. So, I came downtown today., so I had a commute, I had a set moment of separation, but on other days when we wake up, we have a few minutes to get ready and then we're right on Zoom, all the way through. You know, there's always going to be a role for a moment of reclamation, a moment of taking a pause, of saying, hey, let's just shut all of the time out. And what we're seeing in today's world is that so many people, they're only moments of reclamation can be when they go on a vacation. And then let's all admit, sometimes that's not even a moment of reclamation as much as we hope it would be. So, no matter what happens, no matter how the pandemic, the post-pandemic world evolves, this insight will evolve, but it'll still be there.

And the role that bourbon can play, the role that our products, our portfolio can play in helping to establish that moment, no matter what it is and how it works, will still be there. So I don't have a great answer for exactly how it will evolve yet, because I think the jury is out for all of us to see how it will go. But I'm very confident that we will

see a world where we can continue to play that role that this team in particular is set up so nicely, and so lovely for our consumers of: take a step back, take a break, turn everything off, and just take a moment for yourself, or to do something with someone else that does kind of reinvigorate you and repose everything. Like that's not going to change. Whether we have a pandemic going on around the world, or not.

**BRYONY** Yeah. I can definitely see this evolving into kind of a phase two or 6ourbon 7ime 2.0 sort of thing. So overall I think this project gave everybody a reason to walk over to their desks on the daily basis, and eventually a reason why to walk away from that desk as well, realizing that you need to fulfill your own manifesto, your own concept, and give yourself some time to be. I want to thank you all for being on The Follow-Up today. This has been very enlightening and it is wonderful to hear that something so broad, and so open ended, and based on so much turmoil, can turn into something that excites a whole group of people, that brings them all together, and produces beautiful work. Congratulations on turning that coin around. That is amazing.

**JON** Thank you. It was great to be with you and credit to the these teams for pulling it off too. Really excited to be able to work with these guys.

**KYLE** Thank you so much. Thanks Jonathan. Thanks Bryony.

**RAFAEL** Thank you guys.

**JON** Well, thank you for the time. Really appreciate it. And thanks to the Leo team for setting.

**ARMIN** Our podcasts are usually published on Tuesday at 10:00 am so it's a long week ahead before Friday at 6:00pm when we reward ourselves with a few sips of an adult beverage but as we learned today we don't have to wait that long as 6ourbon 7ime can easily be the early-afternoon dog walk, the late-afternoon fruit snack, or, especially in our case, the 5:00 am hot cup of coffee. Whatever 6ourbon 7ime means to you, it's your responsibility and right to reclaim it any time of day.

Today, thanks for listening. Until next time, we'll be here, we hope you'll be there.