

# Is there a rat in your underwear drawer?

 By John Laurence

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Poor brand integration is one of the most common problems we find when testing TV ads with our EEG neuromarketing technology...

No matter how powerful the ad is, if your brand is not properly incorporated into the narrative, you are making very expensive art.

That's not to say you should ensure that the brand jumps out at you as if you had discovered a rat in your underwear drawer.



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Ads with high attention on branding have a correlation with ad liking scores, but a negative one. In other words, an audience paying high attention to branding is a danger sign.

What on earth is happening here? Surely we are told that the purpose of advertising is to bring your brand to the attention of the audience?

## The negative hits home stronger than the positive

The truth is that we tend to pay more attention to negative things in life and less to the positive - something called the [negativity bias](#).

I have found that high attention is more commonly associated with negative (or withdrawal) emotion than positive (or approach). When consumers are zoning in on a brand, it often means that there is an issue with the branding in the ad.

We have discovered four possible causes for this:

1. The brand (or its positioning) is unfamiliar
2. The brand is well understood but is acting out of character/context
3. The brand is intrusive or forced into the concept (feels contrived)
4. The brand is secondary to the concept or late appearing.

I have seen award-winning ads that suffer from this problem. What you really want to achieve is an ad that people love, but more importantly, one where the brand plays a role that is natural, believable and consistent with how people have come to value it.

## ABOUT JOHN LAURENCE

John is MD of HeadSpace Neuromarketing and is an experienced marketer with over 15 years in the marketing and advertising industry. As well as having worked in marketing research, he has headed the marketing divisions of two blue-chip global brands in South Africa and has developed strategy for several well-known brands. Contact him on tel +27(0)83 230 8764 or email [john@head-space.biz](mailto:john@head-space.biz).

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