

Remember to remember me - making advertising stick

 By Louise Hefer

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Something horrible recently happened in our household *cue first world problem here*. Our TV remote broke, and I mean proper broke...broke in terms of not being able to forward, exit or move between channels. So now we're rocking it old school style and having to actually get up and change channels, I know, I know, I'm hearing your horrified screams all the way from wherever you are.



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What this means is that I'm spending way more time watching TV than I usually do (and in general that's not a lot) because now a show is a full hour instead of the 40min when you forward through the ads. This, in turn, is forcing me to actually watch the ads. At first I stared at the screen with a 'the lights are on but no one's home' expression, not really listening or seeing what's happening on the screen until my husband made a comment along the lines of "Sheesh (or maybe it was another adjective starting with an S), BLEEP is literally in every single ad break with the same ad, if I have to watch another ad again my brain is going to explode!"

Five rules for creating memorable ads

That made me sit up and take note of the number of ads I was actually seeing. Now I know that clutter and breakthrough isn't new but I thought it's worth revisiting it again, because let's face it, we forget things. In June, 398,841 ads ran across all stations for the whole month which equates to 13,294 a day! Yes yes, I know, not everyone watches all the stations but even just looking at SABC 1, there are roughly 255 ads flighted on average per day. Even competing against 254 ads instead of 13,293 is a big task for any brand.

So with this conundrum in mind, I set off searching for a short and concise 'How-to Guide' that addresses this, more specifically from someone that's really intelligent and works at a reputable company (and even though I qualify I thought that that might be slightly hubris).

Daren Poole from Kantar Millward Brown wrote an article on five rules for creating memorable ads, which I've summarised. In general, the article digs deeper into new research that explores what builds lasting impressions in advertising. And as much as we don't like hearing this, consumers engagement with ads are really superficial and they will only take out a broad idea or feeling when navigating through the hundreds of ads they see a day. So let's look at the rules and how they can benefit us in the long run.



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Kantar 16 May 2017



Ads that travel well begin with an insight

Daren Poole, Kantar 19 Oct 2016



Rule #1 – Make a meaningful impression

The long-term competitive advantage comes from building a brand's emotional meaningful difference. Emotional meaningfulness is creating an affinity for the brand and the emotional difference is about a brand acting in a way that perceives them to be more progressive than other brands. Research shows that brands who are successful in doing this, have the greatest chance of financial success.

Rule #2 – Work with the brain, not against it

As I've stated, consumers are bombarded with different messages on a daily basis and very few actually stick. They simply just don't care about the ads which have become wallpaper, so the brain filters it out. Taking this into account, it's important to remember that firstly, ads need to have instant meaning, and secondly, they need to make people feel something. Ads that evoke emotional responses are more likely to generate sales effects.

Rule #3 – Good storytelling leaves an impression

Their research has shown that ads that use a storytelling angle are more engaging and help make the ads more noticeable and memorable (think John Lewis's Christmas ads here). Ads that feature stories create a higher level of expressiveness, which is directly linked to a lift in sales.



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Rule #4 – Get the channel right

It's important to place the right creative with the right target market, in the right channel, on the right platform and at the right time. That's a lot of pressure, but if you don't get that right, all your efforts will be wasted. Come chat to us if you need some help on that.

Rule #5 – No brand means no impression

Creating an engaging ad without branding will not add any value to the brand. Taking the second rule into account (the one about the brain), we know, and research shows, that consumers only partially engage with an ad and rarely watch it until the end. This highlights the importance of branding before disengagement. Research has found that the single best forecaster of an increase in sales effects for ads is branding.

There you go, five easy rules to keep in mind. Ads that are emotionally engaging and build a lasting and memorable impression are more effective than those that don't. Somewhere deep down most of us know this - we just need to be reminded every now and then.

And now for a challenge! I challenge you to try and watch at least one of your favourite shows tonight with all the ad breaks, and while you're watching the ad breaks, try and see whether the ads have ticked the boxes on any of the five rules. You can even create a game out of it! Come on, do it...

ABOUT LOUISE HEFER

Louise Hefer has over a decade of media industry experience - currently Media Strategist and CCM (Chief Coffee Maker) at The MediaShop. She is a custodian of knowledge management, laughing, having fun and seeing the glass half full. Trying to change the world one step at the time.

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