

Make your brand rock

5 tips to rock your communications using multi-touchpoint campaigns

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It has never been tougher for brands to touch and move people. We all experience it. Globalisation has resulted in multiplying brands. With digitisation, more content is developed for more channels. New channels open every day – outdoors, in our pockets, even on our fridges - through smartphones, connected screens and the Internet of Things.

People are bombarded with thousands of branded messages every day, and pay less and less attention. They skip, fast forward, and multitask more and more.

To succeed, brand communications must reinvent itself to even get a chance to earn people's attention. They need to rock. Literally.

How can you make your brand rock? Here are five lessons Ipsos has learned from investigating successful – and not so successful – brand communications.

Give your brand a rock band

From Genesis to Twenty One Pilots or Muse, the best and most legendary rock bands result from great musicians playing together, amplifying their individual talents. Likewise, in order to increase the chances of engaging people with the campaign, winning brand communications rely on inspiring content, played across several touchpoints.

Indeed, when we compare the results of pre-testing a single touchpoint with testing an entire multitouchpoint campaign, on average we see an uplift of 14% for Attention, 31% for Consideration, and 38% in Brand Desire. These results are echoed in the 2016 ARF Rethink conference, which reported double digit incremental ROI when brands move from one to several touchpoints.

Year after year, the Cannes Creativity festival winners illustrate the benefits of multi touchpoint campaigns as a means to rock consumers and bring them closer to the brand.



Here's a great example: Burger King's McWhopper proposal. It step-changed its brand desire versus McDonald's by leveraging carefully selected touchpoints and pieces of content, precisely associated and phased to trap McDonald's into the villain's role and turn Burger King into a white knight:

Phase 1

make a generous, almost innocent peace proposal to McDonald's, in newspapers and viral outdoor ads, to get both journalists' and the public's attention

Phase 2

Await for McDonald's answer (bet on "No")

Phase 3

Funnel angry public reactions to make the Burger King Peace Day event viral, leveraging digital video and amplification from journalists and people's social posts

Even a masterfully crafted, soloist commercial could not have achieved so many PR impressions and earned media for the Peace Day event, and generate such retransmission and ownership from the general audience. This is the power of a campaign that truly rocks.

Create a hit for your brand!

The Police had Every Breath You Take, Coldplay has Viva la Vida. Likewise, great communication campaigns need a strong score to move their audiences. In the communications world, this is the 'Big Idea'. A strong big idea will help your brand find an insight, that is a tension that strikes the right chord with people. Identifying how the brand uniquely alleviates that tension becomes the melody which is the answer the brand proposes to people's aspirations.

Big Ideas are not new to marketers. What matters now to make campaigns successful is that the Big Idea must be infused in each piece of communication across each touchpoint in such a way that it builds on its overall objectives. In other words, make sure that every touchpoint sings along and plays the right score. Why? Because the multiple coordinated cues together deliver, like the components of a hit record, an amplified whole that has a greater chance of capturing and keeping people's attention and build, rather than wear out, over time.

Last year's DB Export Brewtoleum campaign, which managed to grow the brand in a declining New Zealand beer market, succeeded thanks to a disruptive big idea. DB Export reminded their beer drinkers they too could save the entire world consistently across TVC, digital, outdoor and earned media.

And this is exactly what the campaign achieved – people acted upon that message, drinking beer and saving the world, with their pub drinking mates. The result? A 10% increase in sales.

Great rock bands jam

What truly builds rock bands' fame are their live concerts, when all musicians are on stage and jamming. You can witness the alchemy between the voice of Bono, Edge on the guitar, with Adam Clayton playing bass and Larry Mullen on the drums: this is what U2 is best known for.

Like bands, campaigns work best when they jam. They need to foster synergies, through the themes, executional assets, key visuals, logos, cues they use, so people can instantly make connections as they navigate and encounter campaign assets. Campaigns jam when the story from the first piece of content is amplified with the experience of a second piece of content, thereby gaining meaning and multiplying engagement. Resonant, repeated, harmonious messages are easier to pay attention to, to encode and retrieve from memory, rather scattered, disparate pieces.

Harvey Nichols' 2013 Christmas campaign was a campaign that jammed. On its own, on shelf, the limited edition product line, with its puzzling cheap gifts like elastic bands and paper clips, would certainly gain attention. Coupled with the "Sorry I spent it on myself" TV commercials and online viral videos, Harvey Nichols became the Christmas shopping destination, for the selfish and selfless Christmas shopper, matching that season other heavyweight Christmas retail advertisers such as John Lewis. I am certain there were a few friends and family members that received elastic bands as shoppers reenacted the film.

Idols are contagious

Rock music has its stars and geniuses – Jimi Hendrix, David Bowie, Prince – who reinvented music and how to play it thereby taking it to a new level. As much as an idol can take music a leap forward, so too can nurturing great creative. Ipsos has identified that 75% of a campaign’s impact comes from the creative, not the media choices. It is therefore essential to put special care and talent in the execution.

What makes both rock stars and breakthrough creative so important is that they offer a memorable experience – a sold out concert, a truly moving moment – so that people are willing their friends to experience for themselves, and they share and retransmit. People thus become your touchpoints, amplifiers multiplying further the power of your campaign.

The Spanish Lottery Justino online short video is a great example of excellence in craft and retransmission: it is an emotionally stirring piece of creative that moved its audience, created awareness with a strong call to action. The magic of this unique creative is seamlessly carried across several digital activation touchpoints, and quickly became viral. It was seen more than 16 million times, and the character got 100,000 followers on Instagram in just a month. People went on to share it more than 150,000 times, and it became the first discussion topic on the web in Spain (the fifth in the world).

The brand is the voice

Let’s not forget one last ingredient. Most rock bands forge their identity around an emblematic lead singer (who usually steals the spotlight). You cannot dissociate Guns & Roses from Axl Rose, or Hayley Williams from Paramore.

With great campaigns, the brand is the lead singer. It is essential that the brand is pivotal to the story and seamlessly integrated to serve two purposes:



as a key point of connection between different pieces of content to become strongly associated with important (and ideally distinctive) cues and assets...



... but also as the focal point of the story, so that people can act upon and towards the brand.

Great campaigns are not only remembered for the idea or story they tell, but also by the brand they serve. Can one dissociate Think Different from Apple? Taste the Rainbow from Skittles? Or someone acting and looking displaced when hungry from Snickers?

So don’t forget to find out if your campaign truly rocks: check that you have a rock band, with a guaranteed hit, ensure the touchpoints jam together, you nurture a creative idol that will make your content contagious and shared by people, and don’t forget to give the brand the lead vocals role.

