

# SUSTAINABILITY AND ADVERTISING

Friends or foes?

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## 無論願意與否， 迎向永續發展的挑戰 正在我們的生活和媒體中 佔據越來越多的空間

從聯合國政府間氣候變遷專門委員會 (IPCC) 1 揭露報告以警示人們氣候變遷問題的嚴重性、每年定期舉辦的聯合國氣候變遷大會 (COP) 及其帶動在世界各地的抗議活動，到激進團體和運動如「反抗滅絕」採取的公民不服從與其他非暴力抗議行動等等，我們可以看到「永續性」已然成為媒體上的熱門議題。諷刺人們漠視氣候問題的電影《千萬別抬頭》一推出便竄升至 Netflix 熱門

### 當我們談到永續性時 品牌 OCCUPY A SINGULAR SPACE

品牌提供人們所需要的產品與服務，而在我們的日常生活中占有一席之地。其中有些品牌是積極推動永續轉型的領導者，然而大多數品牌仍然在助長過度消費及污染問題。不過，無論屬於哪一種類型的品牌，都具有一個共通點：他們都透過廣告與消費者溝通，因此我們能看到有越來越多的廣告傳遞永續相關訊息。

起初在連結廣告與永續性時，很可能會出現認知失調問題。這兩者的目標難道不是互相違背的嗎？”

排行榜第二名<sup>2</sup>。除了氣候變遷和其他環境問題的挑戰，社會面向的永續發展也同樣成為焦點，出現一波又一波的社會運動：推動性別平權的 #MeToo 運動、關注人權並為多元與包容發聲的 #BlackLivesMatter 運動不過是其中最為人所知的幾個案例。無論我們身在何處，都難以避開那些圍繞著如何建立永續未來的問題。

起初在連結廣告與永續性時，很可能會出現認知失調問題。這兩者的目標難道不是互相違背的嗎？廣告目的在於銷售，然而永續則提倡「能滿足現今需求，同時卻不損害後代滿足自身需求的能力。」<sup>3</sup>

## 廣告與永續性該如何同時運作？ 他們能否相互加乘，打造出一個 更具永續性的未來並成就負責任的品牌？

在益普索，我們每年對數千則廣告進行前測，透過重新檢視這些研究資料，我們得以回答此問題。我們確實看見有某些品牌被點名為漂綠，但絕大多數情況下並非如此。全球有68%的人認為，若企業沒有採取行動對抗氣候變遷，將使自己的員工及消費者對其感到失望<sup>4</sup>：人們期望廣告主對永續發展有所作為。品牌的挑戰在於如何在進行永續溝通的同時，也幫助產品銷售與市場份額成長。

在本文中，我們將分享對含有永續訊息的廣告進行評估所發現的洞察。哪些廣告表現優異？哪些廣告的效果則不如預期？我們從中發現了什麼關鍵趨勢及tips，來幫助品牌推出更有效的永續廣告？

We identified 200 ads in our global database that included some sustainability messaging, across a wide distribution of countries, categories, type and importance of sustainability claims. The two main areas of sustainability that are addressed in advertising are environmental and social claims. These ads were evaluated using our CreativeSpark assessment tool, which measures a combination of thoughts, feelings and emotions with sales and market share validated metrics to measure effects and identify areas to optimise, if needed.

In our analysis, we identified five key learnings that we believe can help brands successfully change people's behaviour and create a more sustainable future, while also helping to grow their sales and market share.

# 1. TALKING ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY DOES NOT IMPROVE THE CHANCES OF MAKING ADVERTISING GROW YOUR BRAND

Simply adding a sustainability claim to your ads does not make them work better for your brand. From an overall effectiveness standpoint, ads with sustainability claims perform on par with ads without such claims. This suggests that brands cannot rely on the fact that they are talking about sustainability to be more effective. The ad needs to be executed in the right way.

This is even more apparent when we look at the components of overall effectiveness, where we see that **brand attention is 5% lower for ads with a sustainability claim.**

This is due to several factors, the main ones being:

- Sustainability messages tend to be generic, and difficult for a brand to own
- The right balance needs to be struck between sustainability messages and brand focus
- Multiplication of sustainability messages means it's harder to catch attention.

It's something we've seen before when a type of advertising becomes common: the sea of sameness – everyone talks about the same thing, making it harder to stand out.

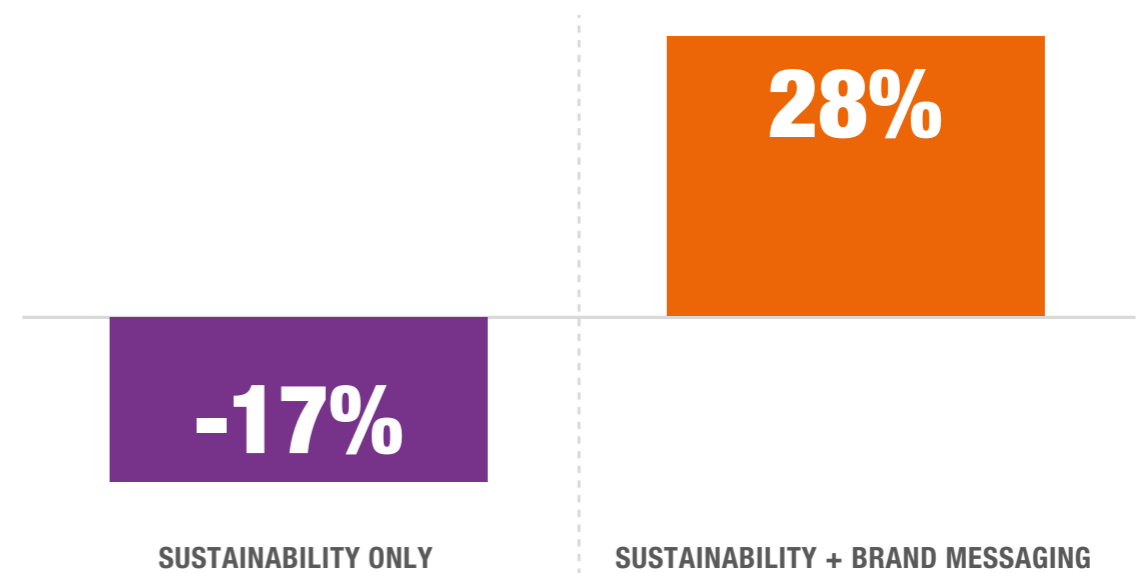
# 2. STRIKE THE RIGHT BALANCE BETWEEN SUSTAINABILITY AND BRAND MESSAGING

In reviewing the ads, we see that the sustainability angle varies. Some ads focus solely on the sustainability claim, while others blend brand messages with sustainability. Ads that blend brand and sustainability messages perform much better, with an average increase of 54% on our overall performance index (Fig. 1). **This shows the importance of not forgetting to include brand benefit messages in your ads.**

We see this difference when looking at drivers of effectiveness as well. Ads that focus only on sustainability are less likely to convey a new message and lag on the entertainment factor (Fig 2).

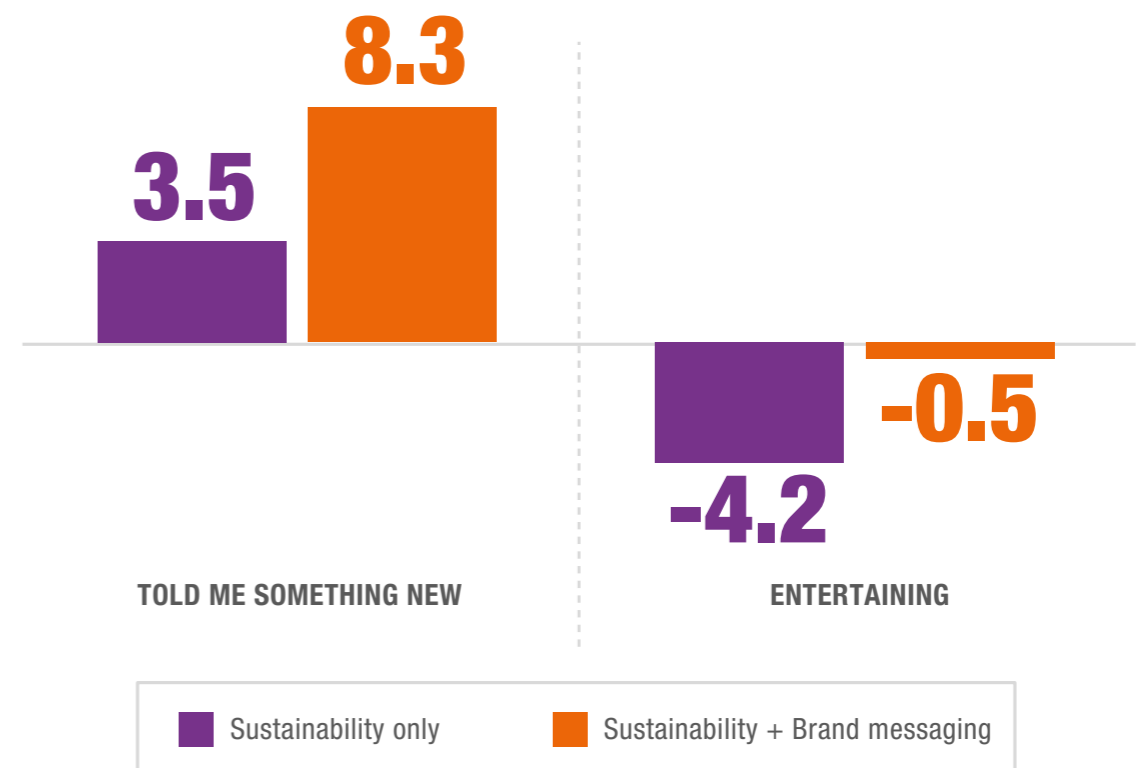
An excellent example of striking the right balance between brand and sustainability messaging is the Volvo ads on 'the ultimate safety test' which was reviewed in a previous Ipsos article.<sup>5</sup> This ad stayed true to Volvo's key self-proclaimed brand mission of keeping people safe, by showing the different types of safety tests they put their cars through. In the last scene, it takes an unexpected turn by showing a glacier's ice breaking down into the sea while the voiceover adds "climate change is the ultimate safety test, that's why we're changing to all-electric". By introducing the protection of the planet to increase people's safety in a surprising way, it does a great job at integrating Volvo's traditional brand messaging of safety with sustainability.

Figure 1 Creative effectiveness vs. norm



Source: Ipsos

Figure 2 Ad rating vs. norm



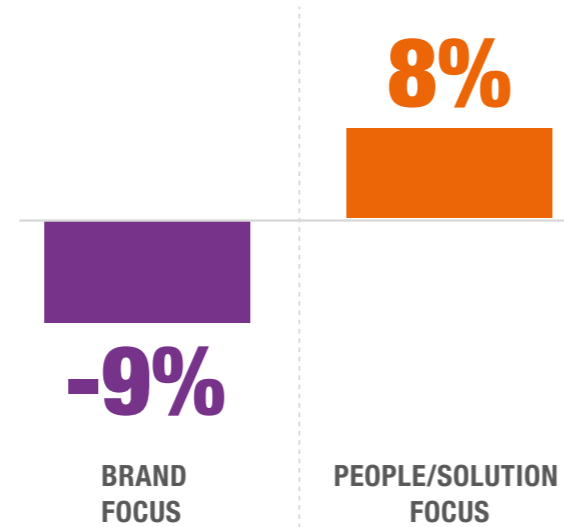
Source: Ipsos

### 3. PULL PEOPLE INTO A SUSTAINABLE BEHAVIOUR, DON'T PUSH THEM INTO IT

Another trend we observe regarding sustainability-related ads relates to the way the message is crafted. We see that ads that focus on people, talk about their problems, and offer them a solution are more effective than ads that just talk about the brand.

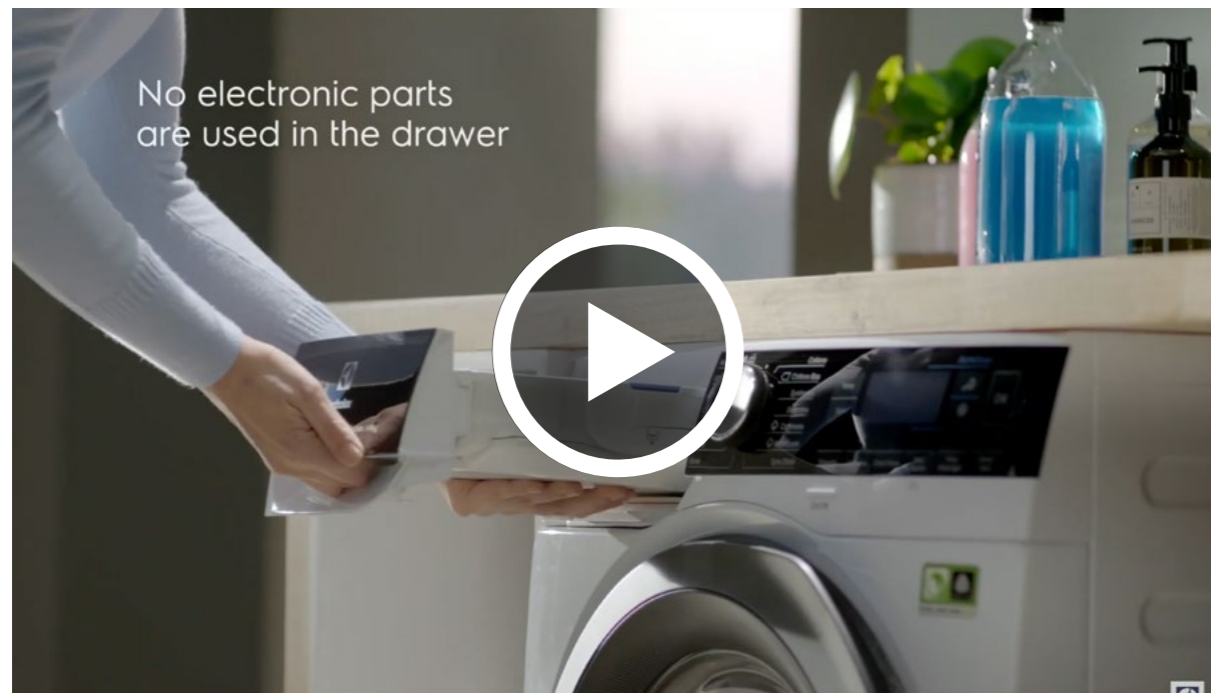
The solution could be simple and pragmatic too – such as the auto-dosing function of washing machines in an Electrolux ad, which automatically calculates and uses the correct dose of detergent needed for the laundry you've loaded into it, avoiding waste.

Figure 3 Creative effectiveness vs. norm



Source: Ipsos

Illustration 1 Electrolux 'AutoDose' advert



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X7NPV4guP8c>

Illustration 2 Rimmel 'Kind and Free' advert



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TmVAZ5rvBZ8>

The Rimmel 'Kind & Free' ad is another good example, presenting a make up range that is free from fragrance and animal testing, and so therefore kind to humans, animals and the planet.

As we learned in the recently published Ipsos book *'Misfits: How Creativity in Advertising Sparks Brand Growth'*,<sup>6</sup> **empathy** is one of the three pillars of creativity, alongside creative experiences and ideas. Empathy is also a key driver of advertising effectiveness; this holds true with sustainability advertising too. People like to be heard and like to be offered easy solutions: ads that convey this are demonstrating empathy. Putting people

at the core of your strategy and showing that you are taking the right steps to be part of the solution increases your relevance and creative performance.

What doesn't work as well are ads that focus on the brand or that ask people to do something like 'start recycling'. This could be compared to 'pull' vs. 'push' tactics. The first case offers you a solution, pulling you into a sustainable behaviour by making it easy for you. The latter case tries to push you to do something you may not have planned or wanted to. **Ads that use 'pull' tactics have an overall effectiveness of +19% on average**, driven by an increase of choice intent (Fig.3).

Another great example is the SodaStream ad that shows a forklift breaking through the wall of an apartment, carrying a pallet of bottled water. The voiceover narration asks “Tired of running out of sparkling water? Then get this counterbalance forklift. Or maybe there is a more ecological solution. In fact, with SodaStream you turn tap water into delicious sparkling water. And you say goodbye to plastic! SodaStream, better for you, better for the planet.”

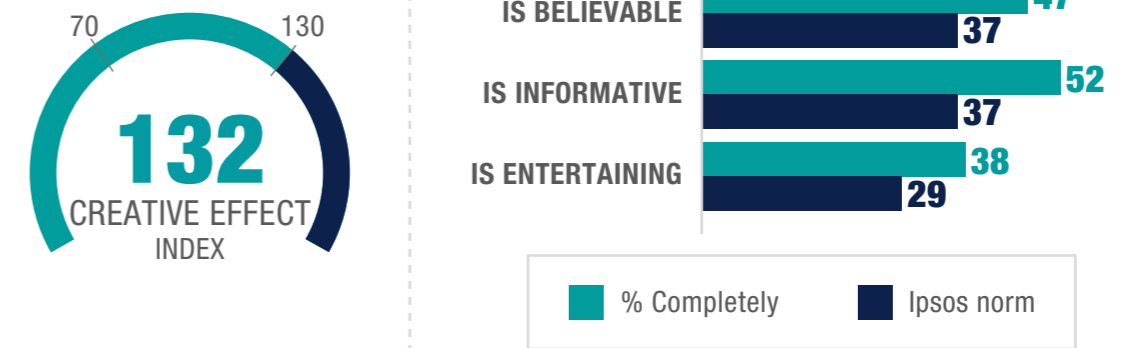
The ad balances sustainability and brand messaging well, with the first part showing the overconsumption of plastic bottles and the second part using distinctive brand assets like the sound of the SodaStream machine and the bottle filling up with gas. It also offers people a simple solution to get carbonated water. This ad performed very well in our evaluation, with an entertaining theme and an informative and believable message driving a top tercile Creative Effect Index, our overall ad effectiveness metric (Fig. 4).

Illustration 3 SodaStream advert



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZVAugPPN2Qs>

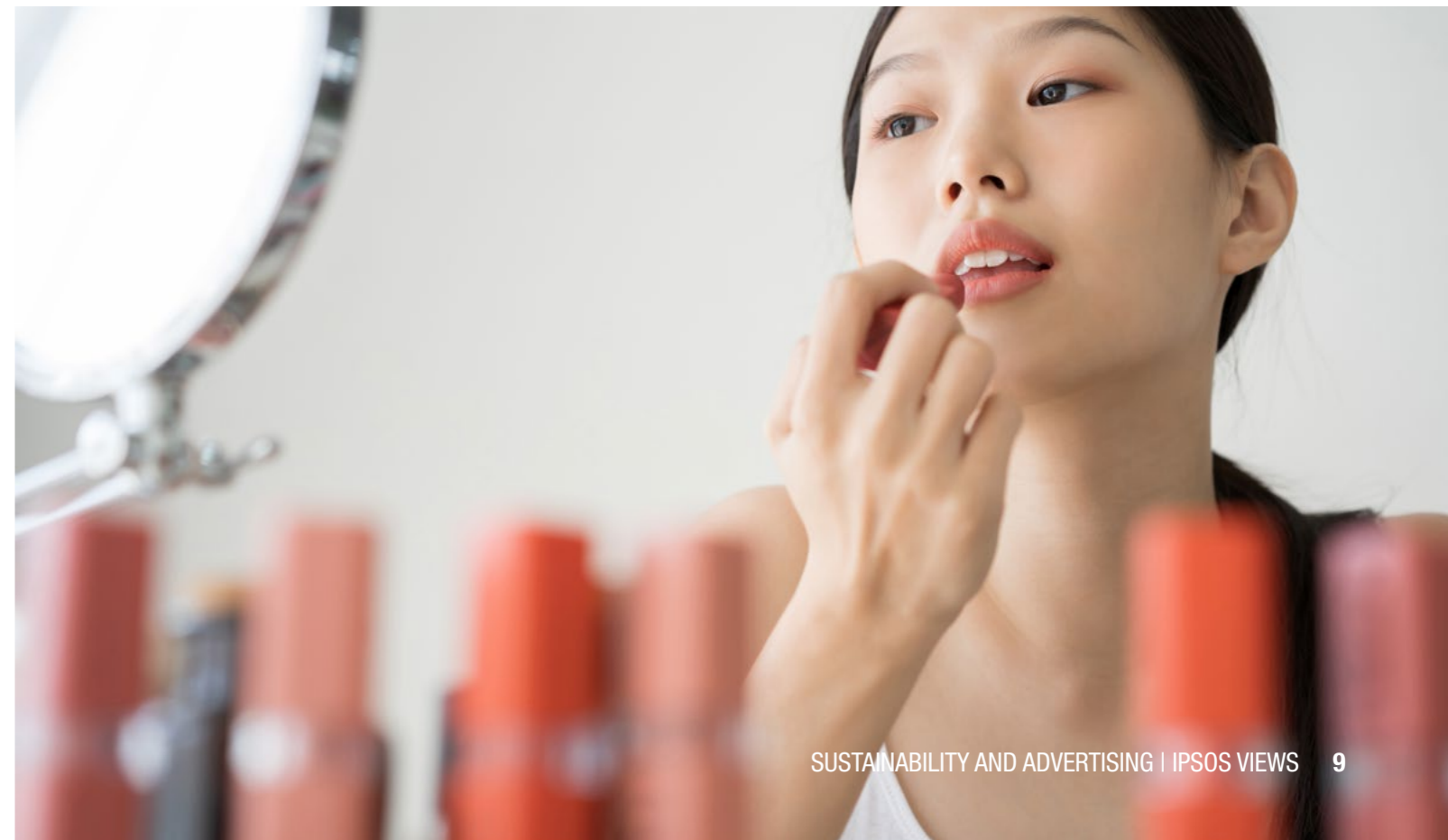
Figure 4 SodaStream Creative Effect Index



Source: Ipsos

Sustainability works in advertising only if consumers believe the brand is truly sustainable. Otherwise it can backlash against the brand. This means brands must first act sustainably across their value chain before using it in advertising.”

Einat Ben Horin, Head of Global Consumer Insights & Analytics, SodaStream

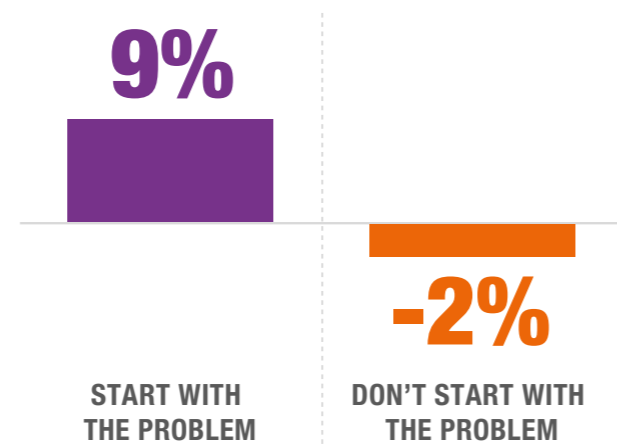


## 4. FACE THE ISSUES

We see a smaller number of ads that choose to start with the problem head on, usually as an introduction to the sustainability topic they are going to cover. This varies from showing images of the impact of climate change, to showing local businesses struggling or minorities facing discrimination. While the problem-solution set-up is quite traditional in advertising, the problems here are serious and may be perceived as generic. Does this kind of set-up work well when talking about sustainability and serious issues? The answer is yes, as we can see in the following data.

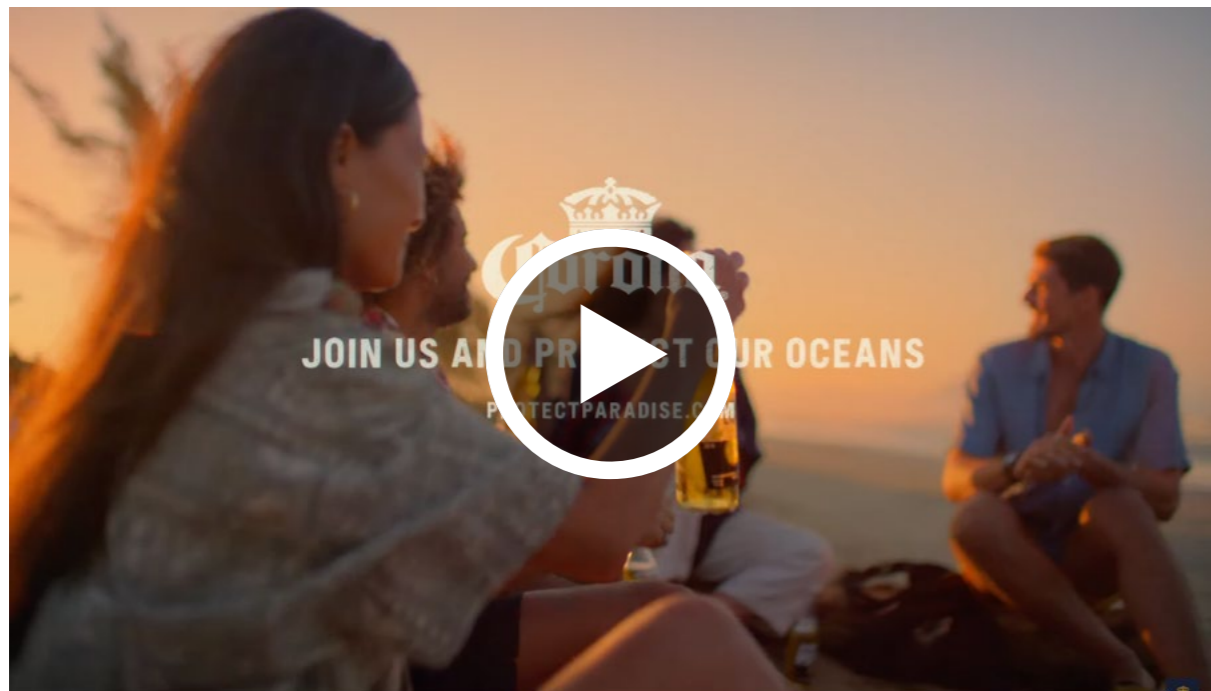
Overall, **ads that start with the problem outperform the other ads in terms of effectiveness (+11%)** (Fig. 5). Acknowledging the problem is probably a good start if you want to be part of the solution.

Figure 5 Creative effectiveness vs. norm



Source: Ipsos

Illustration 4 Corona '77 Earths' advert



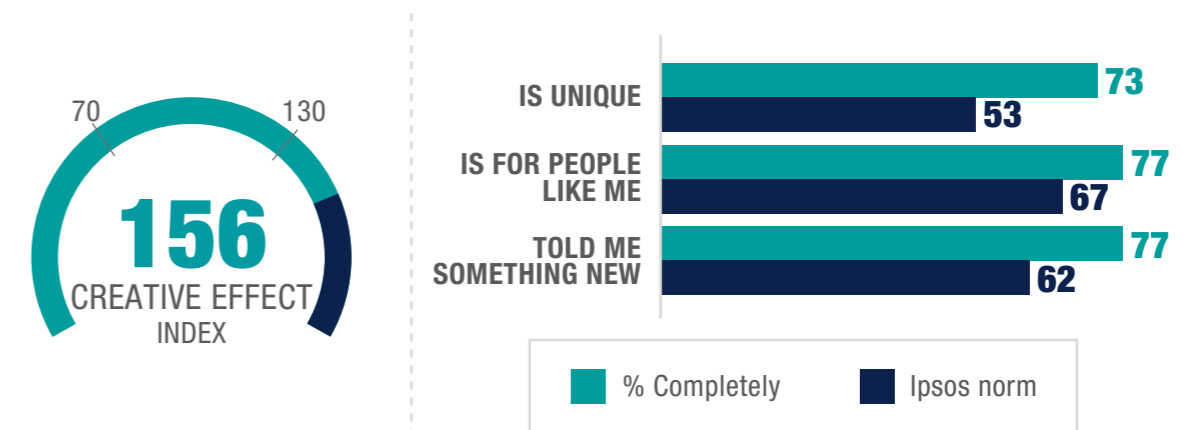
Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Z3zZcGHk-Y>

A great example of an ad that faces this issue is the Corona '77 Earths' ad. The ad is set on a beach, a traditional setting for Corona ads, but with other planet Earths in the sky. The voiceover narration says "if there were 77 Earths, nature would be endless (...) we could let plastic suffocate whole oceans (...) and go on living exactly as we do now, but there aren't 77 Earths. That's why we have a net zero plastic footprint. Join us and protect our oceans."

This ad craftily blends a visually beautiful experience, that hasn't been seen before, with a stark problem - plastic in the oceans – as well as showing that Corona is part of the solution by having a net zero plastic footprint.

It performed well in our CreativeSpark evaluation, with a strong overall creative effect, driven by perceptions of uniqueness, relevance and supported by a strong new idea (Fig. 6).

Figure 6 Corona Creative Effect Index



Source: Ipsos

As a brand born at the beach and deeply connected with nature, Corona wants to do all it can to be an ally to our environment and our oceans. Becoming the first global brand with a net zero plastic footprint is one more step in Corona's broader ambition to help protect the world's oceans and beaches from plastic pollution. But we can't do it alone, we need everyone to join this mission. ”

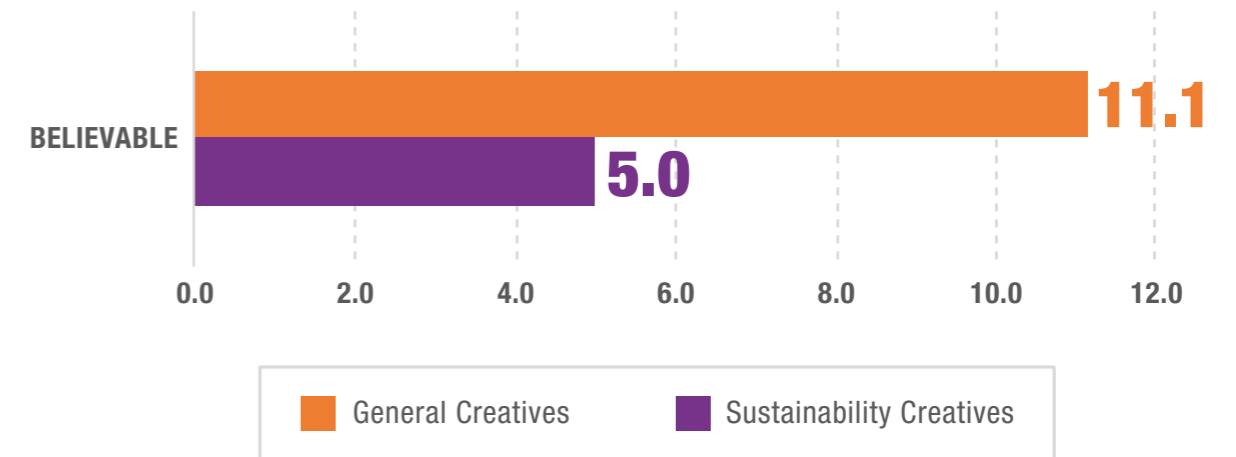
Felipe Ambra, Global Vice President of Marketing, Corona

## 5. TALK THE TALK... AND WALK THE WALK

If we look a bit deeper at the overall effectiveness, we can see what the more tactical drivers of success for advertising are. By comparing the relative strength of drivers of overall effectiveness between ads with a sustainability claim and those without, we can pinpoint which of these are overperforming and underperforming.

**Believability** is one of the key drivers that is lagging behind for sustainability ads today. This suggests that it is underutilised and could have more importance in driving good results, and that sustainability is harder to believe (Fig. 7). Make sure that the claims in your ads are credible and that you are following through on them. Not doing so exposes you to the risk of being accused of greenwashing and facing a media backlash.

Figure 7 Driver of Creative Effectiveness Strength\*



\*Strength of driver is calculated by looking at the average difference of the ad rating 'is believable' between high and low performing ads.

Source: Ipsos

Believability is one of the key drivers that is lagging behind for sustainability ads today.”

## CONCLUSION

To conclude, advertising and sustainability can and should be friends. People want brands to act for a better world and to communicate about it. But just adding a sustainability claim to an ad will not be enough. Ads need to cut through the sea of sameness, and offer a new, entertaining and relevant experience in order to be effective. A good way to do this is to strike the right balance between your own brand benefits and additional sustainability benefits and to put people at the centre of your strategy. By offering them sustainable answers to their problem, you can show that you are part of the solution. On

this journey, watch out for pitfalls that could make you look like the foe; make sure you face the issues if there are some along the way, and most importantly be credible, believable and follow through on what you say; don't oversell your claims.

In the end, the truth is probably that we're starting a challenging transition towards a sustainable future, where much remains to be done. And that transition will not happen without brands taking action, and without great advertising to support those actions.

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