



LEVERAGING THE POTENTIAL FOR 'WORD OF MOUTH' AND 'WORD OF MOUSE'

MAKING RE-TRANSMISSION WORK FOR YOUR BRAND

December 2012

“ Be interesting, or be invisible ”

Andy Sernovitz



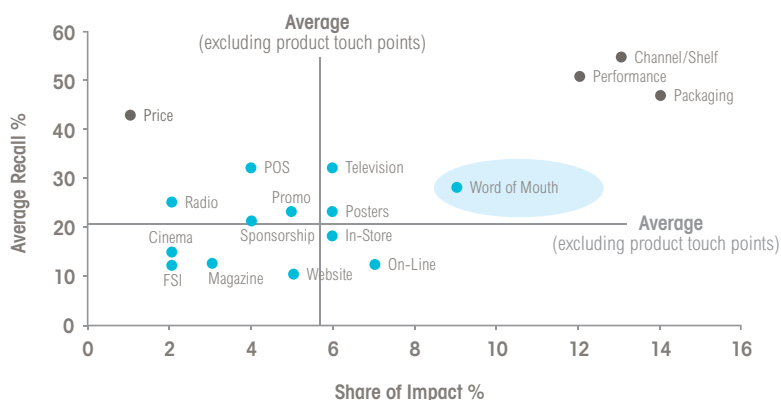
I find all conversations about advertising fascinating:
 how and when people talk about the different ads that
 they saw, what they interpreted the message to be, how
 it made them feel. So it is not surprising that I find the
 impact of 'word of mouth' to be fascinating.

I have found it fascinating for many years because, no matter how we cut the data, we see that (when present) word of mouth has one of the strongest in-market effects when compared to all of the other touchpoints. When word of mouth is positive, there is implied or explicit endorsement of an ad (or a brand) by consumers. This is something from which any and every brand manager would want to benefit. But more interestingly, conversations about 'word of mouth', or increasingly in today's reality, 'word of mouse', can often become

conversations about virality. The great thing is that word of mouth is so much broader than just virality. Great advertising demonstrates huge sharing potential. This is because of its social or storytelling value, or what Ipsos ASI terms 're-transmission'. Re-transmission is a powerful influencer: receiving content from a trusted source can become an endorsement of that product or message. The result? A multiplier effect on both reception (how many people notice the branded communication) and response.

Brand*Graph 360 Summary Audit

Source: Average Results from 20+ observations (when present), across multiple industries + studies

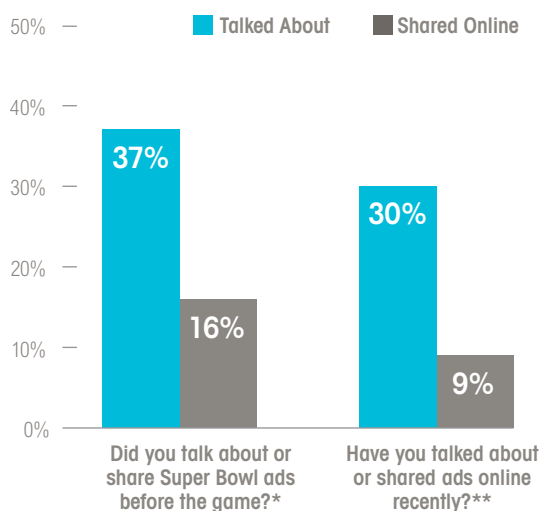


Ipsos ASI
brandgraph*360

Source: Ipsos ASI BrandGraph*360 Database

Now while I would love to see all of my favourite bits of content go viral, and to be the source of that thread, I know that it is often beyond my control. The factors that can influence virality are not necessarily direct properties of the creative. U.S. Super Bowl ads receive some of the highest viral views in a year because of the associated buzz. Many watch the game just for the ads. In addition, the context in which the content is seeded – like what is happening in the news, sports, entertainment, etc. – can play a big role in whether the content gains traction.

Going back to my love of conversations about ads, the interesting fact is that many of them still occur offline...



*Source: Ipsos ASI 2012 Super Bowl study

**Source: Ipsos Omnibus 2011

Re-transmission drives earned media – the social value that comes along with ‘shares’, suggestions to friends, ‘likes’, comments and photo/video uploads by others. This can translate into increased advocacy for the content and for a brand because:

1. People value social proof – response increases when consumers think others have been motivated already.
2. Also, sharing feeds itself – the more people talk about something, the more likely that ‘talk’ will grow exponentially.

When thinking of earned media, we need to remember that the balance of control has shifted toward the consumer. The key is to generate the right conditions to nudge the conversation toward positive brand advocacy. To do this, it is important that brands generate the conditions necessary for consumers to be receptive to the brand, and to the content.

An entire article could be spent outlining how to ensure consumers are receptive to your brand. But why do people talk about ads or other content in the first place?

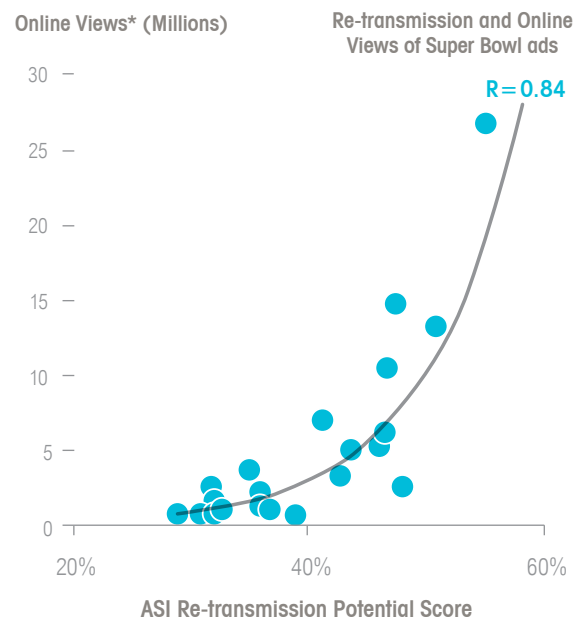
1. It has **perceived personal relevance** for the consumer, or someone close to them – it connects to something meaningful
2. And that **connection** is **emotional** – whether positive or negative
3. There is an element of **surprise** or **humour** – something worth talking about

All of which you could **personally** experience yourself or you could expect others to experience.



So, there are broader benefits from re-transmission beyond viral views. Furthermore, all types of content can be successful and can be re-transmitted. This reflects the engagement an impression can deliver for consumers. How consumers express that engagement can occur in many different ways, across many different behaviours. Multiple conversations can amplify the impact of the initial view as consumers recall and react to the content as a group rather than individually.

There are indicators that can be measured to determine the likelihood of re-transmission. We see with Ipsos ASI's new Re-Transmission Potential Score, that the stronger the result, the greater the potential is for an ad to be viewed online.



*Visible Measures™ online views for the week after Super Bowl.

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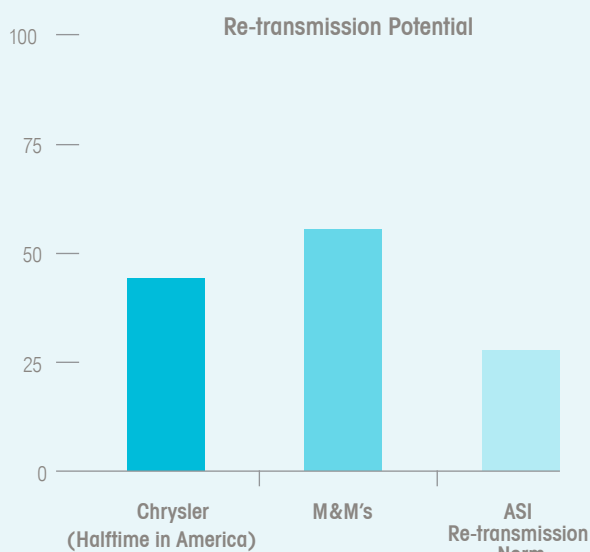
When in market, understanding re-transmission is a matter of understanding all of the behaviours that contribute to your brands' earned media; it is simply an additional touchpoint to measure in your holistic measurement.

A Tale of Two Ads

As you can imagine, I love to watch the Super Bowl for the advertising. Two of my favourites from the 2012 Super Bowl were M&Ms' "Just my Shell", and Chrysler's "Halftime in America". Both illustrate how different types of ads can achieve re-transmission.



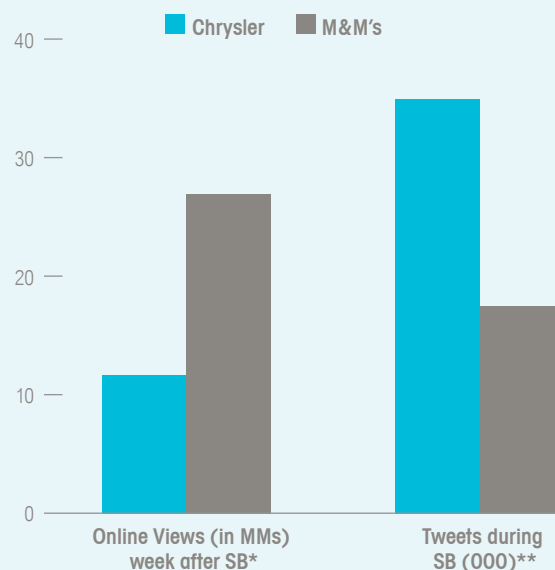
Each ad demonstrates similar re-transmission potential:



M&M's was a viral sensation, generating more viral views than any other Super Bowl ad that Ipsos ASI tested. It leveraged a highly popular song and is funny, entertaining, and perhaps a bit risqué.

Chrysler's "Half Time in America" also generated many online views (after all it did air during half time). More than anything, it got the country talking. It stirred up political controversy and parody. More importantly for the brand, it stirred admiration and interest in Chrysler's line-up. Stories appeared across the spectrum of news media, including CBS News, Fox News, the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg and the Huffington Post, just to name a few.

And those differences are clearly demonstrated below.



*Source: Visible Measures, 2012 Super Bowl ads

**Source: radian® Brand Bowl 2012

The Chrysler ad was strong in the areas of emotional connection and relevance, resulting in conversation social value, while the humorous unique and buzz-worthy M&M's ad resulted in viral social value.

So, while creating viral content may be an aspirational goal for many brand managers, creating content with re-transmission potential is achievable and measurable. Given that positive re-transmission only works to enhance the reception and response, it should be an objective for all brand managers as they create great advertising and great content.



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About Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI is one of the largest and best known research companies in the UK and a key part of the Ipsos group, a leading global research company. With a direct presence in 84 countries, our clients benefit from specialist knowledge drawn from our five global practices: public affairs research, advertising testing and tracking, media evaluation, marketing research and consultancy, customer satisfaction and loyalty.

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