

**Simply, Better  
Communication in  
the connected age**

# Communication in the connected age

**The connected age is complicated. Technology has led to abundance of choice and near constant exposure to communications and information. Just as we embrace the benefits these changes bring, three-quarters of us feel that the world is changing too fast and over 60% wish life was more simple<sup>1</sup>.**



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It's easy to see why when we consider that, by 2015, the amount of media asked for and delivered to consumers on mobile devices and to their homes will take more than 15 hours a day to see or hear<sup>2</sup>. In the meantime, each of us is exposed to a volume of information equivalent to almost 200 newspapers daily – a more than fivefold increase since before the internet<sup>3</sup>.

Abundance is not limited to media. The average supermarket carries around 48,000 products<sup>4</sup> (five times as many as it did 40 years ago<sup>5</sup>) and helps explain why half of us often feel overwhelmed by the choices we have as consumers<sup>6</sup>.

Given this abundance of choice and information, it's no surprise that brands are now understood to be heuristics for choice - a short cut for easy decision making – and that emotion and the subconscious mind play leading roles in determining our behaviours. System 1 (automatic, emotional, fast) brain processes often dominate over System 2 (effortful, cognitive thought). We simply haven't the time to consider every decision in detail and our minds are wired to avoid this.

In this paper we give our point of view on why we believe simplicity is essential to brand success in the connected world and why brands that have simplicity of purpose, communications and service will be the ones that succeed above others.

**“Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated.”**

Confucius

## The role of advertising and communications in the connected age

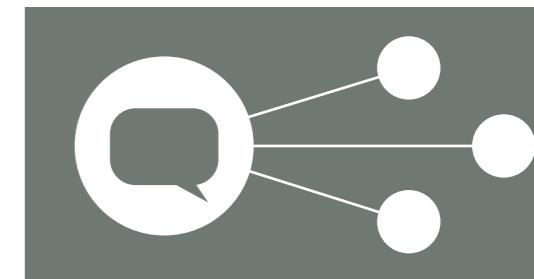
**The role of advertising and communications hasn't changed. Its purpose remains a simple one: to build and grow the associations and prominence of brands in the minds of consumers. The best way to achieve this is to ensure all media work together in complimentary ways.**

Digital media have given rise to exceptional growth in the ways that advertising and communications can reach and engage people and continue to be a catalyst for amazing creative expression. However, much of our day-to-day experience of the web often involves a high degree

of interruptive push marketing (and often re-targeting of ads for products already bought, bought for someone else or no longer interested in). In many respects, digital advertising is guilty of the same charges levelled at “traditional media”, while initial expectations of social engagement have also proven to be unrealistic.

Many of our clients are seeing benefits from intelligent strategies based around a clear purpose and compelling ideas that people want to engage with, while experimenting with new approaches around content and real-time marketing.

Advances in technology won't stop and new ways to connect with people will continue to grow, so while no one will ever have all the answers, we can build better approaches by continually testing and learning.



## It's not as easy as "just be emotional"

We now know that brands are powerful and can change the nature of the product experience and that people have different experiences if brands are connected to areas of the brain involving long-term memories, higher order goals and personal values.

So if your communication pulls the brand into contexts that are relevant to someone, then this

will increase the chances of the stories, images and associations it conveys becoming embedded in their perception of the brand.

This is why we believe emotions can play such a powerful and effective role in advertising and why measurement of emotions is a fundamental part of how we evaluate ads.

That doesn't mean there is no role for product in advertising. There

are many product attributes that people care about...photos and music on smartphones, style and passion in cars, caring for your family with healthy food, drinking cola or beer with friends....the key is to find things that people care about or enjoy and communicate them in an emotionally compelling way.

So it's not just a case of saying "be emotional" and waiting for the ROI to roll in.

## Don't neglect activation

While emotional ads can be hugely impactful, brands mustn't forget the role of activation.

The benefits of an emotionally compelling campaign that builds equity won't be realised if brands neglect to combine this with more tactical sales activation. Binet & Field's recent analysis of the IPA Database<sup>7</sup> ('The Long & Short of It') concludes that for maximum effectiveness "brands should spend around 60% of their budget on brand-building activity and 40% on activation."

## Why reach and fame are important

Most brands have a small number of heavy buyers/users and a much larger number of light buyers/users. Logically, it's easier to get light (or non) buyers to buy a little more often than to expect those who already buy the brand a lot to buy it even more (there are only so many cans of Coke a person can drink in a day!).

This means that if brands wish to grow beyond their current heavy users, they need to ensure their campaigns have strong reach, beyond the core base.

This aligns with Ipsos' database which shows that excessive frequency is not a strong driver of ad performance. Consumer

response to advertising tends to build and peak early, in correlation with the build in reach for new creative (by 1000 TRPs). So the key to maximising impact is to maximise reach, while reducing the frequency. Additional frequency will not compensate for weak creative.

This is also why "fame" campaigns have been found to be a more effective subset of emotional ones. Campaigns that get talked about (on and offline) and are shared widely generate "free" reach and amplification, as well as gaining social approval and advocacy. Hence, campaigns that become cultural reference points are very often highly impactful.

## Case Study: Always #likeagirl

P&G aims to put its campaigns at the heart of social conversation and did so again with this year's campaign for Always, which challenged what it means to act #likeagirl. It contrasted how adults have become conditioned to limit their expectations of what girls can achieve with the reality of what young girls actually can do. A simple big idea was brilliantly executed to deliver:

- Emotionally compelling content people want to engage with and share
- 50m YouTube views within 2 months of launch
- News coverage and debate online and across tabloid and broadsheet press



source: www.leoburnett.com

# Why half of your ad spend is wasted

**Ipsos' database shows that 50% of the reason why ads fail to achieve normative impact is due to weak brand attribution.**

That is, outside of media issues (e.g. lack of support), ads fail if people are unable to recall which brand they were for. It seems incredibly simple but it's also incredible how often this happens.

There is no "standard formula" for achieving good brand attribution but Ipsos' database shows that ads that are more successful at

## How we measure the impact of your brand building communications

**Just as advertising has evolved since the heyday of the Mad Men, so has research.**

We've learned more about the science of how people make decisions... the role of the subconscious mind and System 1 thinking... and developed technology that can measure emotional response... we understand the need to measure

communicating the brand name include those which feature:

- **Brand Integration: an integrated role for the brand within the scenario**
- **Brand Cues: elements and iconography that help identify the brand and tie it back to what the brand stands for**
- **Brand Presence: recognisable brand shots or mentions**

behavioural response... the importance of test and control designs...

Done well, research should lead to the "liberation of magic", to borrow a phrase from Martin Weigel, Head of Planning at Wieden+Kennedy, Amsterdam.

In our view research should be fertiliser, not weedkiller.

## Case Study: Apple

Apple has employed consistent brand iconography over many years. The use of colour, silhouettes and the iconic logo are common to their campaigns, packaging and products. These associations are continually strengthened with repetition and mean that Apple's communication is instantly recognisable and identifiable.



source: www.apple.com/uk/iphone/compare

## Research that combines simplicity and science

**At Ipsos ASI, we use iterative, flexible, qual and quant approaches to help clients find a big idea that is universal, founded on human motivations and is fertile ground for creativity.**

We use measures of brand relationships that link to real world behaviour - that are simple and intuitive and reflect the fact that brands are heuristics for decision making.

We use neuroscientific techniques such as implicit reaction tests (IRT) and facial coding to measure emotional response to advertising.

We derive the impact of advertising on the brand rather than asking people how it affects them.

We measure the potential of campaigns to achieve retransmission and fame through measures that reflect online and offline sharing behaviours.

We use ad replacement technology to test online campaigns in the real world.

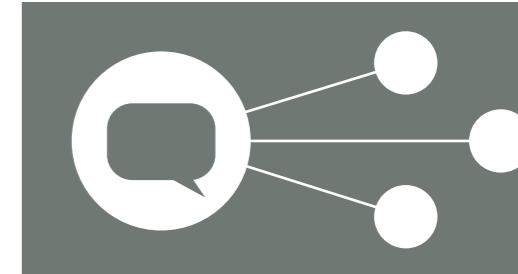
Ultimately, we believe that simplicity and clarity of purpose is as important in research as it is in building successful brands.

We're not saying it's easy. As Steve Jobs said: "Simple can be harder than complex. You have to work hard to get your thinking clean to make it simple. But it's worth it in the end because once you get there, you can move mountains."

We couldn't agree more. At Ipsos ASI, we're dedicated to this task and to delivering *Simply, Better* research that helps creativity thrive and builds brands that succeed in the connected age.

## Sources:

1. Ipsos Global Trends (2014)
2. 'How Much Media?', Institute for Communications Technology Management (CTM) at the University of Southern California (2013)
3. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/science/science-news/8316534/Welcome-to-the-information-age-174-newspapers-a-day.html>
4. Food Marketing Institute <http://www.economist.com/node/17723028>
5. Food Marketing Institute <http://www.economist.com/node/17723028>
6. Ipsos Global Trends (2014)
7. 'The Long & Short of It', Les Binet & Peter Field (2013)



# Simply, Better Communication in the connected age

## **About Ipsos ASI**

At Ipsos ASI UK, we help clients to define, shape and tell Simply, Better brand stories in a fast-changing media landscape.

Founded in 1962, our approaches are state-of-the-art, but draw on 50 years of experience. We explore, probe and challenge conventional wisdom, integrating the latest advances in neuroscience, but basing our approaches on a simple and validated philosophy.

Ipsos ASI is part of Ipsos, one of the largest and best known research companies, with offices in more than 80 countries.

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