

Top Performing Online Campaigns Achieve Branding Objectives

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Dynamic Logic recently announced the most effective online advertising campaigns of 2006, based on research that evaluated how well each campaign achieved its branding objectives. Reviewing the campaigns measured in the U.S. and the U.K., we determined the top overall campaigns, which successfully generated the greatest branding impact.

The research was conducted using AdIndex® while each campaign was running live across the Internet. The results were uploaded into MarketNorms®, our online advertising effectiveness database, thus allowing us to determine which campaigns performed best across key criteria. These campaigns were the most noticed, with the highest Online Ad Awareness scores resulting after exposure to online advertising; they generated increases in Brand Awareness and were also highly persuasive.

Top U.S. campaigns

Among those ads measured in the U.S., the top campaigns were led by consumer packaged goods products, including four Kraft campaigns: Oreo, Honey Bunches of Oats, Kraft Singles and Crystal Light On-the-Go. Other brands that also achieved high scores were BMW, Dove, McDonald's®, and Ray-Ban. Online Ad Awareness scores for these campaigns ranged from 18-43 percentage-point increases after exposure to online advertising. The ads were also highly persuasive, generating the highest scores in Brand Favorability and Purchase Intent.

The value of video

Interestingly, most of the U.S. campaigns utilized some form of video ads, which previous Dynamic Logic research has shown can effectively cut through the clutter, yielding higher awareness for brands on average compared to online advertising in general. Video ads can also provide a successful format to communicate to consumers. Many of the video ads appearing among the top campaigns happened to be repurposed TV spots that were adapted for online, and also implemented a variety of video formats, including pre-roll, in-banner and interstitial ads. Companion units were placed near the video, allowing viewers to interact with the ads and maintaining constant brand presence while the videos were playing.

Top U.K. campaigns

The top U.K. campaigns represented a wide variety of brands and categories, including travel, consumer packaged goods, automotive and entertainment. Brands included two cinema campaigns for Adrift and The Sentinel, which utilized video as part of the campaign assets. Also among the top performers were travel site Opodo, Colgate's Palmolive for Men, Philips Streamium Wireless Music Center, Sheila's Wheels, Kraft's Tassimo, Volkswagen Jetta and Yahoo! Search.

Many of the online campaigns were well-integrated with the offline campaigns, including Sheila's Wheels, which allowed people to more easily recognize and connect with the brands.

The adverts also included rich media elements and some lively home-page placements which captured visitors' attention, but did not disrupt their experience enough to have a negative impact on the brands. The top performing campaigns tended to find the right balance between grabbing and holding people's attention and having a positive effect without harming their user experience.

These campaigns illustrate smart media strategy and clever creativity, providing some great examples of what online adverts are working well. They also illustrate some guidelines in creating successful online brand advertising that other marketers may be able to learn from and apply. Following are some best practices that can be gleaned from the top performing campaigns:

- Keep the message simple. Don't try to convey too many messages with your online advertising
- Be sure the brand is intrinsically linked to the creative assets
- The online campaign should be synergistic with the offline campaign
- For products, make the product shot the "hero" of the ad. Showing the prepared product or people using the product helps demonstrate its benefits and also grabs viewers' attention
- Leverage the unique capabilities of the Internet, such as interaction, layered roll-over units, and precise targeting

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