

Going viral is not enough to boost the bottom line, warns TNS

Contributed by TNS
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Super Bowl 2015 advert analysis reveals Budweiser's "Lost Dog" lacked relevance, casting doubt over its long-term value.

As television networks place ever more emphasis on "event" programming, brands are forking out millions of dollars to exploit the advertising opportunities presented by live TV. However, according to global market research consultancy, TNS, many brands who invest heavily in high profile advertising spots are failing to realise their potential.

The conclusion follows TNS's in-depth analysis of the Super Bowl 2015 advertising campaigns. It analysed 2.6 million

Super Bowl tweets and over half a million that mentioned adverts specifically over several days before and after Super Bowl Sunday as well as interviewing viewers to consider the memorability and long-term impact of the campaigns.

TNS corroborated the views of media commentators who agreed that Budweiser's "Lost Dog" advertisement was the winner on the night, capturing both hearts and conversations online. The beer brand enjoyed a 26% share of ad mentions online, compared to just 9.8% of its nearest rival, GoDaddy. It also won the battle for retweets, with 69% of all mentions of the advert falling into this category, easily positioning Budweiser's ad as a viral phenomenon online.

A further 17% of the ad's mentions were within conversations between users and 13% came from unprompted, isolated tweets about the ad, underscoring the increasing interplay between television and digital devices whereby viewers "screen-stack" to watch and comment on TV at the same time.

However, while on the surface Budweiser's advertisement was a resounding success; a deeper analysis casts doubt on its long-term value to the brand. TNS's ConversionModel communications tracking tool uncovered that while the emotive advertisement captured consumer attention and elicited a strong emotional reaction from them, it achieved a poor score on personal relevance, thus failing to translate into memory - and ultimately value - for the brand.

Shedding light on the findings, Bob Burgoyne, Global Product Development Director, Social, at TNS, commented: "There can be no argument that Budweiser soared beyond its rivals on the Super Bowl social media battlefield. Many brands can only long for the level of online penetration they enjoyed. Nevertheless, their Lost Puppy advertisement is testimony to the point that going viral is not enough to secure long-term brand impact.

"Whilst Budweiser successfully created considerable noise about the advert before it aired and produced a concept that went viral, the product itself only featured towards the end of the prime Super Bowl spot, making the beer barely noticeable among the puppies.

"Despite enjoying significantly less social success, McDonald's "Pay with lovin'" advertisement starred family ones, filmed in-branch. Likewise, Microsoft's "Estella's Brilliant Bus" campaign was a feel-good advertisement, making community with technology. These advertisements are just two examples of campaigns more closely aligned with viewers' personal values and goals, better leveraging the opportunity to resonate with consumers and maximising return on investment.

As television networks increasingly excite and engage audiences through live TV in a bid to defend against the threat of on-demand, the pressure for brands to successfully leverage these prime time advertising spots through social media is high. With the Oscars just around the corner, many brands will be looking to swiftly learn the lessons of the Super Bowl winners and losers, before they let their \$1.9m advertising spots go to waste.