
SLIPSTREAM

Bicycle London

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Augmented out of this world creativity.

Maybelline went viral earlier this year with what looked to be an amazing out of home build in and around the London Transport network. In the video footage large mascaras were applied to London tube cars and buses which adorned giant eyelashes. The footage was created as augmented reality, by filming footage then overlaying computer generated imagery.

The aim to create something visually striking worked and certainly got people talking. The video has racked up over 3 million likes on Instagram since July, gaining praise for their innovative approach to marketing from the industry and consumers alike. Even if some people questioned whether it was real or fake, it didn't matter. It was all a bit of fun.

The success of this campaign hasn't gone unnoticed, with many other brands now following suit. Which raises an interesting paradox; in a time when we are all so cautious of misinformation, why would we be so accepting of advertising that is 'fake'?

Firstly the point of misleading the viewer; where we must give them more credit. Augmented reality is now so prevalent that it even appeared in the latest series of Strictly Come Dancing. Even the most realistic treatments will be seen for what they are by at least one viewer and then the game is up. There is no point going to great lengths to deceive, just to create something that gains attention.

Secondly, these forms of advertising allow for creations not possible in the real world. Take for example the North Face Nuptse Jacket adorning the Elizabeth Tower (Big Ben) for JD Sports. This would never wash and the 64 million views it has gained the brand (on TikTok) would be non-existent. Advertising has strict guidelines. Even if money were able to open doors to some additional opportunities, the outlay will overshadow the pay



back. The ability to do something creative and 'out-of-this-world' is much more achievable with augmented reality.

Thirdly, cost signalling. It is proven that there is a positive effect when a consumer sees a big piece of advertising out in the world. It shows that the brand believes in what it is selling and they have made the investment to announce this to the consumer. You may argue that some of this is lost when staying within the digital world. Quite the contrary, the increase in creativity will be likely more appreciated by the consumer. The brand has gone out of their way to create something more interesting than the standard approach. Creativity works.

So why aren't we all doing it? As with many trends in marketing, there is a tendency to jump on the bandwagon aiming to replicate the success of Maybelline. Any stunt, real or fake, must be strong enough to live outside of the marketing community alone - keeping in mind how it will be received by the consumer.

We would argue that this form of creativity is more suited to 'fun' brands with playful marketing. There isn't room for serious, scary or harmful pieces of content here. Only those that will entertain and gather attention. These activations aren't for every brand. Yet if you are a fun brand and a CGI model of a cat jumping over a giant handbag will connect with your consumers, then we say - go for it.

Will Ridley, Senior Account Manager

Laziness undermines digital advertising.

There was a grim picture painted in Campaign during December, of \$73million wasted spend from advertisers during the festive season. Digital advertising was the culprit, but in the current landscape this is wholly unnecessary, all it needs is a human touch.

Today, programmatic buying reigns supreme in the digital advertising world, fueled by machine learning. Enabling us to identify and target prospects like never before. But can we set up,



sit back and let algorithms do the heavy lifting? Not quite.

Transparency is on the rise, which is why Campaign has unveiled the shocking statistic of festive ad waste. Improved practices allow us to identify unviewable impressions, invalid website traffic and misaligned contexts, empowering humans to step in and take action on poor performing activity. It allows us to dump the poor performers and double down on winning channels. We can create more effective placement, marrying ad formats with relevant contexts for maximum engagement. It also allows greater integration between medium and message.

At Bicycle, we believe in curating media experiences. It's not just about avoiding waste; it's about crafting brand extensions that resonate with audiences. We go beyond traditional brand safety concerns and delve into the heart of message optimisation. It's a

dance between human insights and data-driven decisions, a tango fuelled by careful crafting.

The responsibility doesn't lie solely with agencies. Advertisers must demand transparency and proactive waste reduction from their partners. Ask questions, challenge assumptions, and embrace the human-machine symbiosis that unlocks true advertising effectiveness.

Remember, it's not just about saving money; it's about crafting experiences that resonate with your audience and deliver impactful results. So, let's ditch the "lazy buying" mentality and embrace the power of carefully crafted campaigns. Together, we can get digital advertising off the naughty list.

[Brands 'wasting \\$73bn of ad spend on unsuitable digital ads' during festive period](#) a commentary

Nick Cargill, Programmatic Account Director

X; Bargain reach, but at what cost?

A year on since Musk's acquisition of Twitter, there are still some uncertainties about the company's growth plans. Their biggest revenue driver, advertising has slumped. Many advertisers have pulled from the platform on concerns of brand safety, which has resulted in a recent court case on the placement of advertising against unsavoury content.

We can't ignore the need they have for immediate income, despite executives claiming multiple income streams on their route to being the 'everything platform'. CPM's

are at a record low level as they have increased inventory, to entice advertisers back to spending.

The question is, is it safe for our brands to appear there? The answer is yes (and no) because activity requires ever more careful set up and management. Our recommendation to run on X will depend on your goals and the category you operate in.

The targeting capabilities are still very different and in some cases more advanced, with contextual, celebrity follower lookalikes and hot topics are all options that can be attractive to some industries, such as entertainment. Right or wrong, Bicycle will be keen to advise on the best use of the new 'X' and how to build it into your Media Experience.

Abi Bateman, Social Manager





Is there more to sell than emotion at Christmastime?

It has been written many times by the fathers of effectiveness - Binet & Field - and recalled many times thereafter, that emotion is a strong driver of advertising success. It's not surprising then, that emotion is the aim of many agencies and advertisers as they craft their messaging; no time is this more apparent than Christmas.

Led by the bastion of UK Christmas advertising John Lewis, the emotional advert is something that is replicated (to varying degrees) multiple times every festive period. In the year just passed however, there was a seed of doubt thrown into the ring.

This has taken the form of a furious debate taking place on LinkedIn by copy-testing providers, to whether emotion is a misleading factor in an already emotionally charged time of year. The catalyst being that 40% of ads tested by System 1 received a maximum (emotional) 5 star rating vs the 1% of ads all year round.

As Bicycle we ask; with all the emotion flying around at that time of year, should it be relied upon to drive the bottom line, or is there a better way to do it?

Reach, branding and availability (as noted by Jenni Romaniuk of Ehrenberg Bass Institute) are some of the key elements that denote (more) success of advertising. Essentially we need to put the message in front of people, make it clear who it's from and then ensure they can easily buy from us. Yes emotion is a key factor to whether we are memorable when we are needed to be recalled, but not the only factor and emotion is also multi-faceted.

'If I make you laugh, cry or experience some form of emotional response...that doesn't necessarily

make you want to go out and buy anything in its own right. The key is about aligning emotions around perceptions of the brand and a relevant message they are giving' - Aidan Mark, Media Science & Strategy Director. These emotions need to make the brand memorable when they are thinking about say; buying a present for aunty Linda.

We marketers are obsessed with metrics and emotion is currently in vogue. Aiming for any one individual metric (emotion, sales, awareness etc) usually has unintended consequences. John Lewis showed the importance of emotions in comms, now there are plenty of brands trying to replicate their success. The trouble is that relying on emotion alone negates the other factors at play. A more suitable approach would perhaps be to create emotion *and* relevancy.

Then there is the element of distinction, another memory builder. 'A lot of the Christmas ads forget that they need to sell some products, so they might be examples of emotionally charged advertising that is not especially effective. Especially so if they're competing against a bunch of similarly emotion led but ultimately homogenous communications'.

So our recommendation to you is that yes, emotion is a strong tool to use during the festive period - but perhaps an easy solution that would lack cut through against the swathe of emotion already knocking about. Perhaps you'd be best finding ways to layer in emotion as more, let's say un-emotional times of year? After all, opportunity is found where others are lacking.

Bryan Hogg, Strategy Director

Bicycle

TV stays on top.

It has been proven as one of the most effective channels, but in the context of changing consumption habits, how can this stay on top?

In his recent talk at The Future Of TV Advertising event, Peter Field explains that TV is still a dominant driving force for the power of a brand which should not be forgotten. He highlights 3 effectiveness points to TV's continued success, Attention, Emotion and Trust.

The greater the attention, the higher the memory retention and opportunity for brand building. Higher attention channels enable creative to work more effectively - in fact 65% more effective in uplift in business effects. However, not all channels hold the same attention. A 15 second TV ad reaches 7.5 active attention

seconds compared to YouTube with an average of 5.2 attention seconds and an Instagram story with only 1.7 attention seconds on average. Attention is not lost on the younger generations; if you weight consumption to attention, 70% of time per day goes towards broadcast TV for the 16-34's.

Emotion is a key tool in driving advertising effects. TV is more heavily used by emotional campaigns through its ability to connect with the audience. It allows the sole focus of the audience, unlike other channels such as social media. The double benefit of high attention media is that when you layer in emotion you receive more attentive seconds. Increasing the chances of building retention in the mind of the consumer.

The correlation between trust and profit is also strong. Data analysed by Field showed that trusted campaigns had a higher skew of investment to TV (48% of investment vs 44% investment in non-trusted campaigns). Effects of TV spend peak at 80% where TV starts to decline. If the objective is profit, 50% should be treated as the baseline amount of spend to allocate into TV. Pricing power & market share = profit growth.

So what will help to keep TV on top? We should continue to pay attention to it - use it not as an extension of performance marketing. We should continue to make it enjoyable - with entertaining content and entertaining ads. We should continue to trust it - allowing no fake news, no unfiltered ads. Doing this will defend TV's unique ability to drive sales, margin and profit.

[Why TV is still at the heart of effectiveness](#) - Peter Field. Commentary by Alex Eyles, AV Senior Manager

