



From Good to Great Communications: How Emotions Can Help

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Ipsos ASI
The Advertising Research Specialists

“I’m always **collecting emotions**
for **future reference.**”

– Harlan Howard

As I am sure you could imagine, there is no shortage of opinions in our line of work – the advertising industry is filled with many intelligent, witty and creative people. So when I was asked by an industry peer what **really** made for great communications I couldn't help but reflect on the ads that mattered to me, and that influenced my decision making.

The ads that I remember first really paying attention to when I was much younger were the classic long distance commercials. Do you remember them? The tear jerkers?



And yes, they did make me cry. They probably still would. They originally aired when I had no need for a long distance provider and played no role in household decision making. I was clearly not the target. But they stayed with me. To this day, even when faced with much cheaper alternatives and family spread around the globe, I continue to patronize the brand that resonated with me back then, even though back then I had no ability to act on it.

Now, if someone questioned my seemingly irrational choice of landline and long distance provider (they are one in the same), especially when I could be getting such cheaper rates or using just my mobile, my answer would be steeped with emotion. They are the brand I **trust** to be able to connect me with my family and friends. Full stop. Nothing more. I could back that up with more rational arguments about brand heritage, best networks, leading innovation, but that is not really why. Along the way, this brand connected to my aspirations and values in a way that has stayed with me. And it started with their advertising campaign from 20+ years ago.

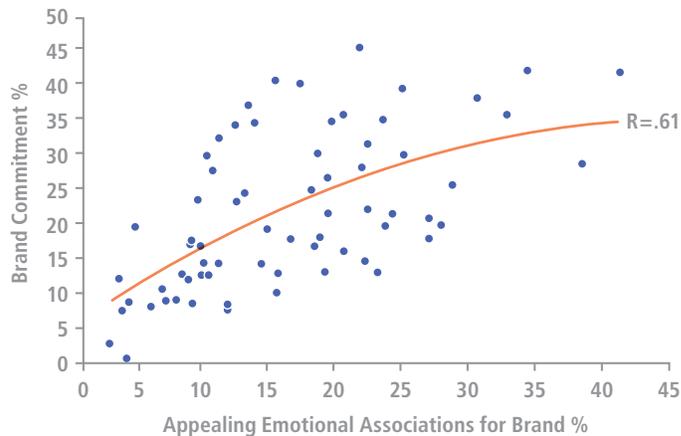
That is what makes me, and all of us at Ipsos ASI, so passionate about advertising – the ability for a great piece of communications to build brand resonance that is so lasting it can influence a brand decision more than 20 years later.

What fuels our passion even more is that there is no one recipe for advertising success. Brand building communications come in so many forms and types that we actually prefer not to typecast them (more on this later).

What great communications do have in common is that they create an emotional response in consumers that benefits the brand in a lasting way.

Brands that can successfully leverage emotional rewards and pay-offs, that can sell emotional desires, do not need to compete on product features or price (which is a good thing when it is increasingly more difficult to differentiate on product features and performance). Ultimately these brands sell what the consumer wants to experience when they use the brand, and it is those emotional elements that drive consumer commitment.

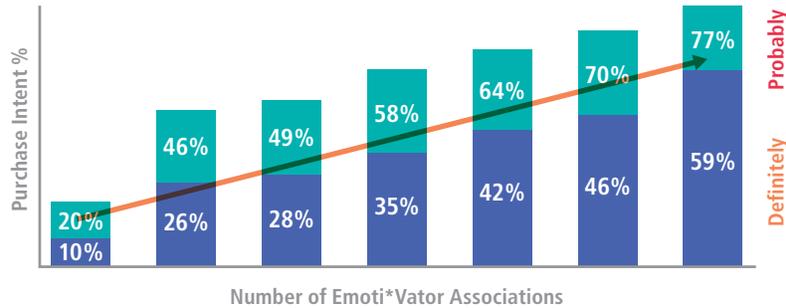
Brand Commitment by Appealing to Emotional Associations



Source: Ipsos ASI R&D Data

Our research bears this out over a wide range of studies for different brands. For example, consumers' ratings for the strength of their emotional associations with the brand are correlated with expressed commitment or preference for the brand.

And, positive response to the brand.



Source: Ipsos ASI R&D Dec 2007, N.A.: 75+ brands across 15+ categories

We frequently ask consumers to indicate which emotional needs or motivations – “Emoti*Vators” – they associate with a given brand. Consistently, we find consumers express higher levels of intent to buy the brands with which have more emotional associations.

So how can you ensure you leverage emotions to build your brand?

We believe the role of communications is to connect consumers to a brand in such a way that it creates lasting brand resonance - or an emotional connection. And this occurs when communications connect to consumers’ personal journeys and experiences, whereby they demonstrate how the brand can fulfill needs, motivations and aspirations while reflecting a core set of values. In my opinion, pretty emotional stuff.

But the discovery of this emotional connection cannot start and end with a piece of creative, regardless of whether it will be placed on traditional or emerging media. It should start with the Big Idea - the maxim or principle that inspires consumers and propels brands. Put another way, the Big Idea activates the emotional territory that will elevate a brand in execution. To be big it should tap into genetic human emotions and motivations that are credibly linked to the category: then it must weave that emotional hook together with the brand promise. **Essentially, with a Big Idea, emotion and brand coexist.**

Thinking back to the long distance campaign example, the power of ‘Reach out and touch someone’ was that long distance calls clearly and intrinsically achieved the connection with loved ones when one is miles away, sating the desire to be with them.

Know your Emotional Roadmap, and check that you are on track

When you have the RIGHT Big Idea for your brand, you understand the emotional connections that should underpin every execution, regardless of the amount of information you are sharing. Hold your creative to those fundamentals and your consumers should inherently feel a positive emotional response to the brand. If you're not sure, then measure consumers' emotional reactions to the brand and to the ad to confirm it.

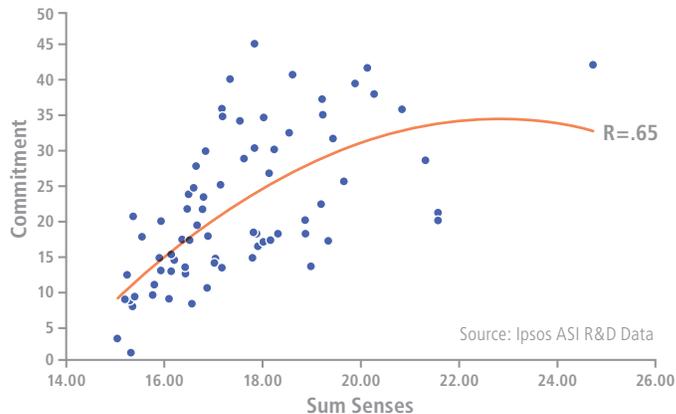
Thanks to advances in (bio) technology, there are many tools available to discover the emotional answers that you are looking for. Over the past 10+ years, Ipsos ASI's toolkit has expanded to provide insights along a broad range of emotional response dynamics. Survey measures have become highly visual and interactive, with tools like our Emoti*Scape or CEP®Test, that help consumers express their conscious feelings and emotional associations with ads and brands. Through selected partnerships, we carry this exploration into advanced non-conscious methods like Biometrics, while still ensuring we can offer clients the opportunity to dive deep into consumers' emotional response in qualitative settings. **But rather than arguing which emotional measurement is "The Best" – because of course there are trade-offs for each – our key point is that we always need to assess or check the emotional response to an ad, and to a brand.**

Leverage what we have learned about emotions in advertising

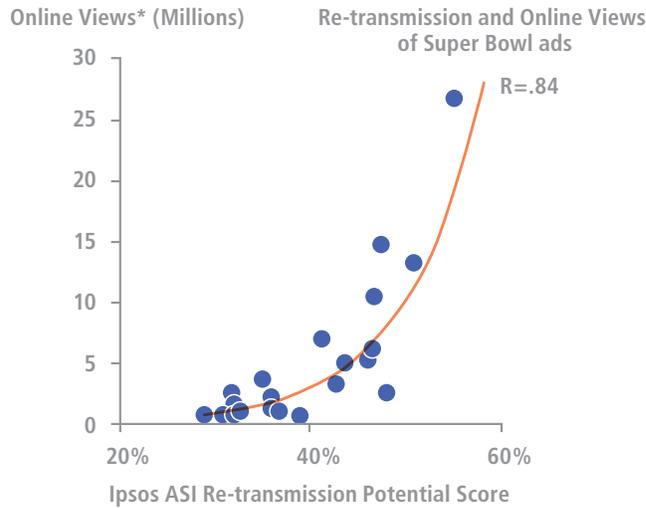
- Marketing properties like icons and mnemonics, developed over time through conscientious investment in consistent messaging, can instantly trigger consumers' emotional associations to reinforce brand commitment. For example, the Michelin Man instantly reminds me of "...so much is riding on your tires".



- Focusing on sensory experience is another way to evoke strong emotional associations. In surveys, we find brands that are associated with more sensory elements also enjoy higher commitment ratings:

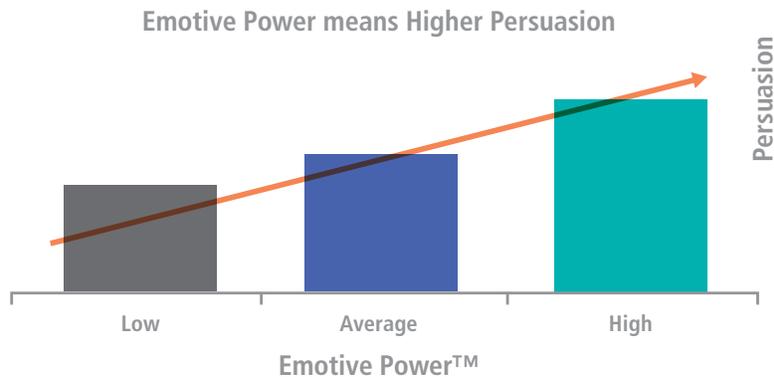


- Emotional response can promote the re-transmission of ads – the passing along of communications to friends and family, amplifying the ad’s impact. Even more, it can increase the potential for viral exposure because consumers watch and talk about what resonates with them.

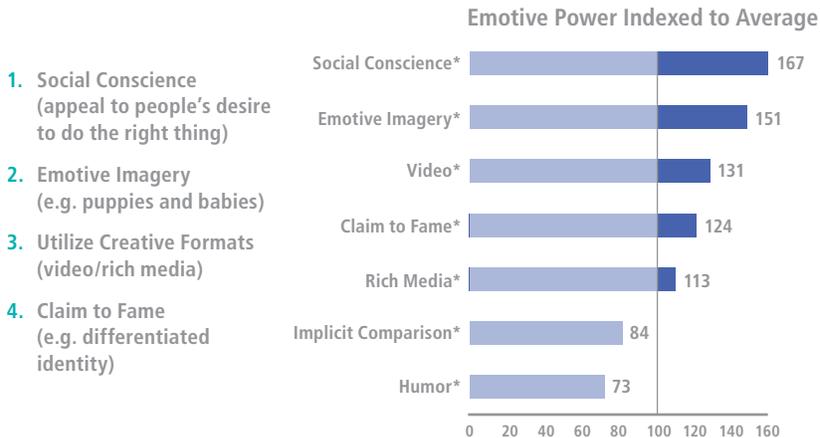


*Visible Measures True Reach™ online views for the week following the Super Bowl broadcast.

- Emotional Engagement matters for all brands – in all media. Emotive Power can make a difference for digital ads too.



- And we've identified multiple tactics to do it:



Base sizes: Video n=14; Rich Media n=39; Humor n=8; Social Conscience n=7; Claim to Fame n=7; Implicit Comparison n=8; Puppies/Babies/Kids n=9

*Very Low Base

But back to my favorite long distance commercial.

Perhaps the inspiration behind the campaign was a simple eureka moment whereby one creative genius connected an engaging idea to the brand in a meaningful way. And eureka moments still happen. But while the fundamentals of great advertising have not changed much in 30 years, the context within which they exist has.

Consumers are savvier and more connected. Markets and media are more complex and more fragmented. Competition for consumer attention and loyalty is more intense. Marketers can't afford to leave anything to chance, or even to hope for a stroke of creative genius, especially when accountability is a not just a talking point, but an action standard. Emotional measurement is a necessity.

To sum up, there is no one recipe for the creation of great communications but there is one secret ingredient: a Big Idea that resonates with the consumer, founded in creative insight, and fostering a lasting, emotional connection.

Interview With An Expert

What's makes an expert are years of hands-on experience. Sharing their passion for the art and science of advertising, senior experts from Ipsos ASI offer unique insights into what makes great advertising, great. In this series, seasoned experts will discuss the power of re-transmission, leveraging emotions in advertising, virality and wear out, leveraging social media, and better measurement for better outcomes.

About Ipsos ASI

Ipsos ASI is the advertising and communications market research company you can consistently count on for the best quantitative and qualitative results that point the way to the most profitable actions. Ipsos ASI is part of the Ipsos organization. Founded in Paris, France, in 1975, Ipsos is the only independent, publicly-listed research company that is controlled and managed by research professionals. Ipsos is a leading global research company focusing on six core specializations: Advertising, Marketing, Media, Opinion and Customer Relationship Management research, and Data Collection and Delivery. With offices in 66 countries, Ipsos conducts research in more than 100 countries.

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