How You Can Reduce Creative Wear:
The most important things we’ve learned about capturing audiences’ attention

NBCUniversal
Let’s face it, it’s tough to get a human’s attention
Comparing the average short-term attention by animal

Using one way to measure attention, humans place a distant fourth behind dogs, dolphins and sea lions.

(And goldfish have a much longer attention span than people think)
And it’s getting worse. In the digital age, the average attention span has declined 33% in 15 years.

Source: Microsoft Consumer Insights Attention Span Study: https://dl.motamem.org/microsoft-attention-spans-research-report.pdf
Which has impacted advertisers, challenging recall as air waves have become cluttered

Total spots aired have increased significantly in the past couple of years

Increased ad clutter and declining attention spans have made it harder to remember creative, resulting in declining brand recall

Source: Spots from iSpot.tv (2018 vs. 2019);
Brand Recall – Phoenix TVBE, Syfy, Bravo, USA, NBC, Primetime (2014 to 2019)
**Poor attention means everyone suffers:**
Audiences, Agencies, Clients, and Publishers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wear Out</th>
<th>Impressions</th>
<th>Site Traffic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>60 days</strong></td>
<td><strong>5.1M</strong></td>
<td><strong>-9%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The average time an ad will wear out more quickly</td>
<td>The average loss of impressions due to tune out over the duration of the ad</td>
<td>As an Insurance case study, the average advertiser saw in converted site traffic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Resulting in audiences recalling less and tuning out more
So How Do We Win Back Attention?
Understanding there are many definitions of attention, this presentation defines attention as ad views to 100% completion with no interruptions on linear TV and select OTT.

Creative wear looks at how long it takes to improve recall (wear-in) compared with attention declines over the flight time (wear-out).
Methodology

Crunching the numbers
Attention and creative are complex. And while we don’t have all the answers, we conducted a robust analysis to see what types and elements of an ad drive attention over time.

We conducted an analysis over several years of data using:

- **538** creative variables
- **38,817** creative spots
- **131,098** statistical tests
Methodology
Break Through Elements
Across all industries, these three elements emerged as the dominate factors affecting attention

Brand Power
Ex. The size, love, and awareness of the brand

Creative
Ex. Storytelling, visuals, talent

Planning
Ex. Flight length, context, timing and placement
Drivers Analysis

Example: Creative
Emotional tones reduce creative wear and improves attention

Be Emotional:
• Performed best across all ad tonality, wearing out 10% slower than any other ad type
• 52% of creative awards are given to emotional ads
• More likely to generate viral moments

Best Features of an Emotional Ad
• Storytelling on deep held emotional bonds like parents/children or animals
• Avoid negative visual cues like frowning or smirks
• Two to three emotional beats are best with the last beat coming at the end of the commercial
• Associate the brand with the emotional beat, either visually or verbally

Sources: Internal Analysis, iSpot, Whitney Xi, et al.; Timberland: Unspeakable Truths – Neuro-science and AI enable better identification of the emotions conveyed by advertising, ESOMAR 2019; Marte Atune; Over Half of All Award-Winning Ideas use emotion as creative strategy; WARC 2020
Drivers Analysis

Example: Brand Power

Creative meant to drive brand awareness should be rotated more often the more well known the brand.

When wear out begins to set-in based on creative and brand size.

Sources: Internal Analysis, iSpot,
Understanding Audience and Meals Moments to Best Engage with Restaurant Customers

Average Days Before Wear-Out Sets In
By Restaurant Sub-Category

Days until wear out

Casual Dining  Delivery Services  Entertainment & Games  Pizza  Quick Serve
Brand: 171  53  42  31  58  34
Product: 53  42  48  35  75  41
Smaller brands wear-out slower over time, with Whataburger and Firehouse subs being the slowest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Restaurant</th>
<th>Average Days before Wear-Out Starts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QSR Total</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chick-fil-A</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chipotle Mexican Grill</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KFC</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McDonald's</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subway</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taco Bell</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burger King</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendy’s</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average Days before Wear-Out Starts
Drivers Analysis

Example: Product Ads
When drilling into product-oriented ads, longer ads tend to last longer and achieve higher attention over the average flight.

For QSR, 30 second spots tend to begin wearing out around two months into their flight. Strategic implications could be to utilize 30s when educating on new products or promotions.

Sources: Internal Analysis, iSpot.
Less effective over time

Over the course of a year, the average 15s second ad will lose

38%

More impressions compared with a 30s
due to tuning out or turning off
Drivers Analysis

Example: Planning

Time on-air is the number one predictor of creative wear

The avg. QSR begins wearing out in **14 days**

For creative in market more than two months, wear out starts setting in around **49 days**

Consider rotating in new ads somewhere between **120 and 160 days** as wear-in stops and wear-out continues to accelerate

Days in market

*Sources: Internal Analysis, iSpot,*
Drivers Analysis

Example: Day Part Site Conversion
Sports has the highest site conversion across all day-parts, followed up by Sitcoms

133%

Overnight dayparts are drive 133% more conversion to site compared with early morning dayparts across restaurant

Sources: Internal Analysis, iSpot; attribution is 12 day window from time of view
Drivers Analysis

Example: Boosting Ad Completion Rates

Analyzing just breakfast creative, we tried to understand what impact each element has on an audience’s ability to lean in.

Contribution of each creative element to ad completions of breakfast ads

- Feat. Athlete
  - **Contributes positively to Ad Completion**
- Tied to Event
  - **Contributes positively to Ad Completion**
- Feat. Actor
  - Somewhat Contributes positively to Ad Completion
- Ad Duration
  - **Does not contribute to ad completions in any significant way**
- Equali. 30s
- Spend
- Total Impression
- Daypart
- Promo
- Number of Talent on Screen
- Creative Mood
- Feat. Characters
  - **Contributes negatively to Ad Completion**
Drivers Analysis

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Lessons Learned:

Creative takeaways
Top elements that impact attention

Brand Power
The more well known your brand, the more important creative rotation is

Creative
Focus on emotional cues and spokespeople like animals or authors

Planning
Limiting flight times is the number one way to reduce creative wear

Sources: Internal Analysis, iSpot,
Next Up:

Want to know more?

Please contact us for custom insights and how we can partner on improving attention through analytics and innovative creative content

For more information, please contact:

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