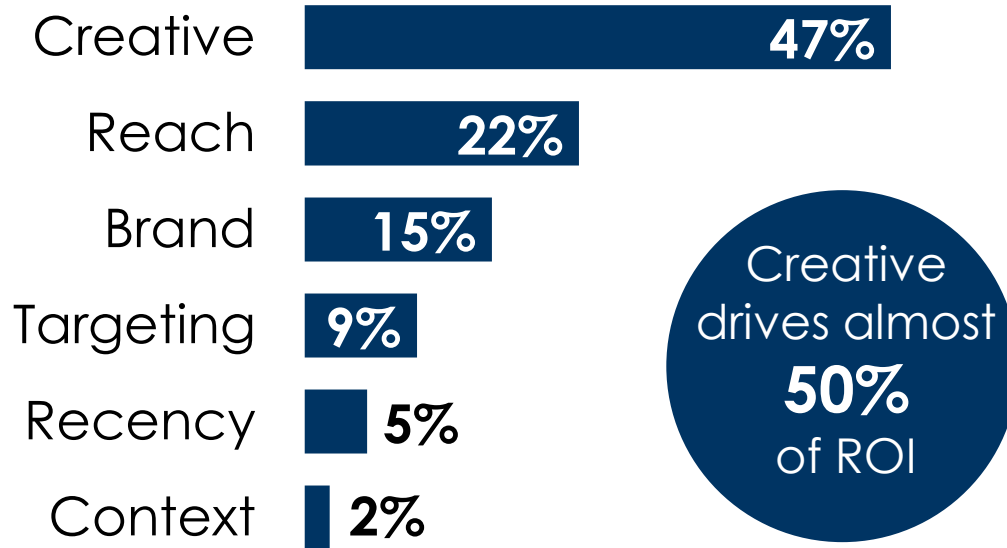




Audio creative best practices

Creative is critical to driving sales and ROI

Nielsen study of 500 advertising campaigns and elements that contribute to sales lift on all major media platforms



“Creative is a key driver of advertising performance/campaign effectiveness, second only to investment levels.”
- Analytic Partners

Creative best practices from the foremost experts on audio creative and sonic identity



Finding the connection point between the message, the media and the tools

EFFECTIVE CREATIVE

Message

Media

Tools

The Message: Have a conversation: Don't shout

AM/FM radio listening is a personal experience, in the car or through headphones. 89% of car commuters drive alone. Attention doesn't have to be fought for.

Best practice

Use this intimate experience as a way to have a conversation with consumers. Don't yell, shout, or sound too scripted.

"Radio listening is a one-on-one and emotions-driven experience ... where they turn to get gratification of personal wants and needs."

- Radio Ad Effectiveness Lab

"A great story on radio draws you in, grabs and holds your attention and then sticks with you long after it's over. The best radio starts with a great story."

- The 9 Golden Rules For Creating Great Radio Ads presented by the Radio Advertising Bureau

The first five seconds matter: Say the brand early and often

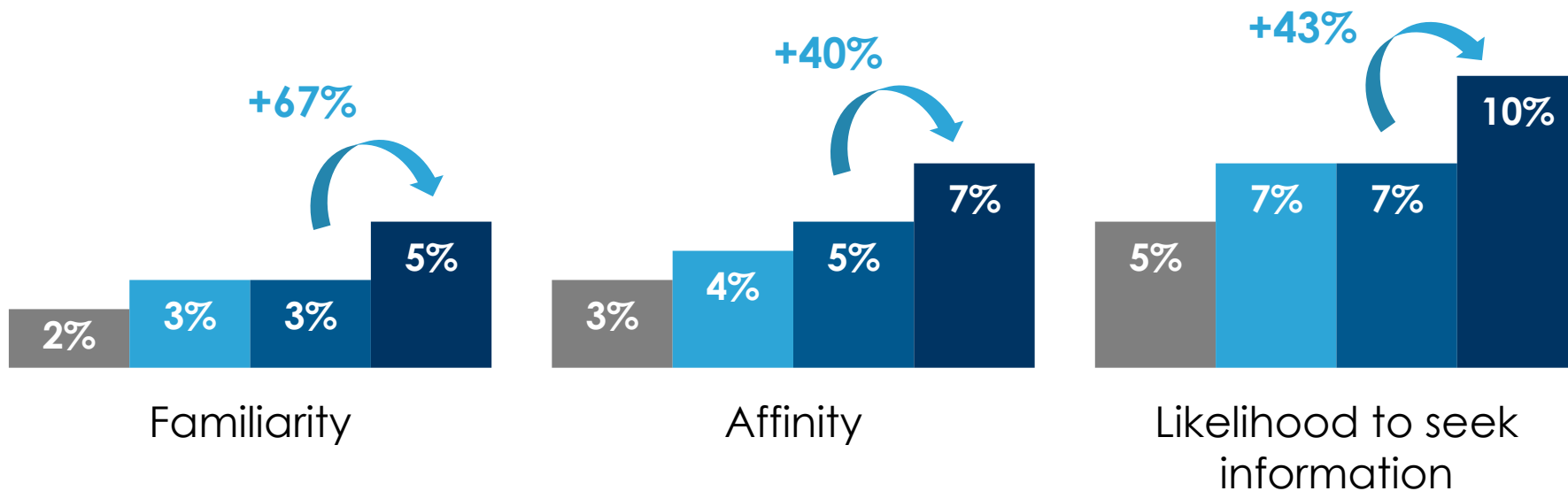
Best practice

Clearly communicate a brand's name and key message upfront. According to Veritonic, the leader in audio creative research and analytics, say the name of the brand at least four to six times.

“...consumer engagement drops off after the first 5 seconds, and this best practice ensures a consumer connection early on and reinforces the remembrance at the end of the ad.”
- Nielsen

More brand mentions drive lift

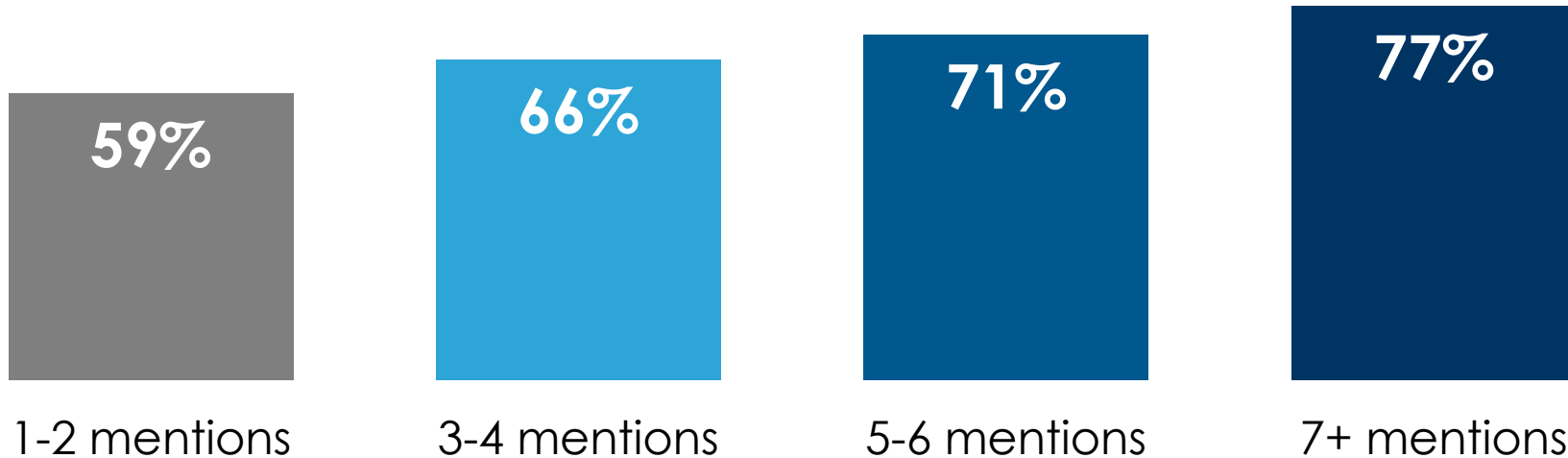
■ 1-2 mentions ■ 3-4 mentions ■ 5-6 mentions ■ 7-14 mentions



Source: Nielsen Podcast Brand Effect Study 2020; Chart figures reflect average Top 2 Box Exposed percentage. [FAMILIARITY] How familiar are you with the following retailers? [AFFINITY] How do you feel about the following retailers? [INFO SEEK INTENT] How likely are you to look up information on each of the following retailers in the near future?

More brand mentions drive higher ad recall

Brand recall




Source: Nielsen Podcast Brand Effect Study 2020; Chart figures reflect average Top 2 Box Exposed percentage. [RECALL] Which brands do you recall from your experience with the audio content?

Invest in brand

“How much should an advertiser spend on brand messaging versus performance messaging is a critical question marketers face when planning and allocating budgets. Our ROI Genome shows the strong value of investing in brand messaging. We have found that **messaging that focuses on the values of a brand outperform product, promotion or functionality messaging 80% of the time.** While there is great benefit to invest in brand, to achieve multiple product and business growth objectives, **it is important to have a combination of branding and product or performance messaging.**”

The Analytic Partners ROI Genome shows that **brand messaging** outperforms performance messaging

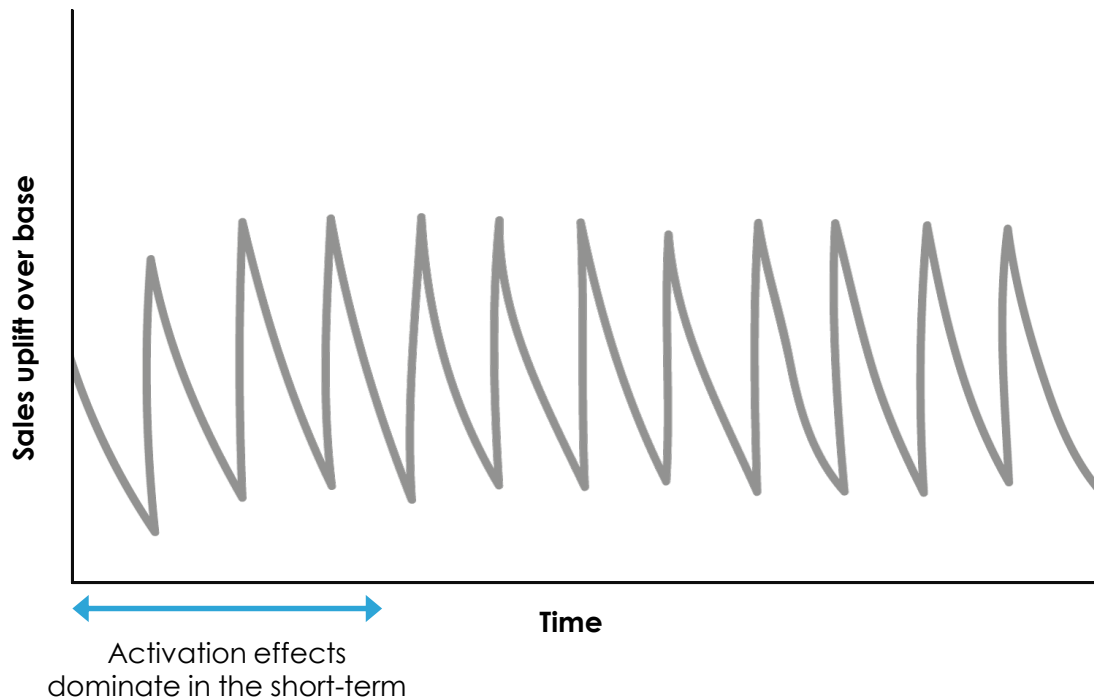
80% 

of the time

Sales activation is short-term while brand building has lasting effects

Sales activation	Brand building
Exploits mental brand equity	Creates mental brand equity
Generates sales now	Influences future sales
Tightly targeted	Broad reach
Short-term	Long-term
Persuasive messages	Emotional priming

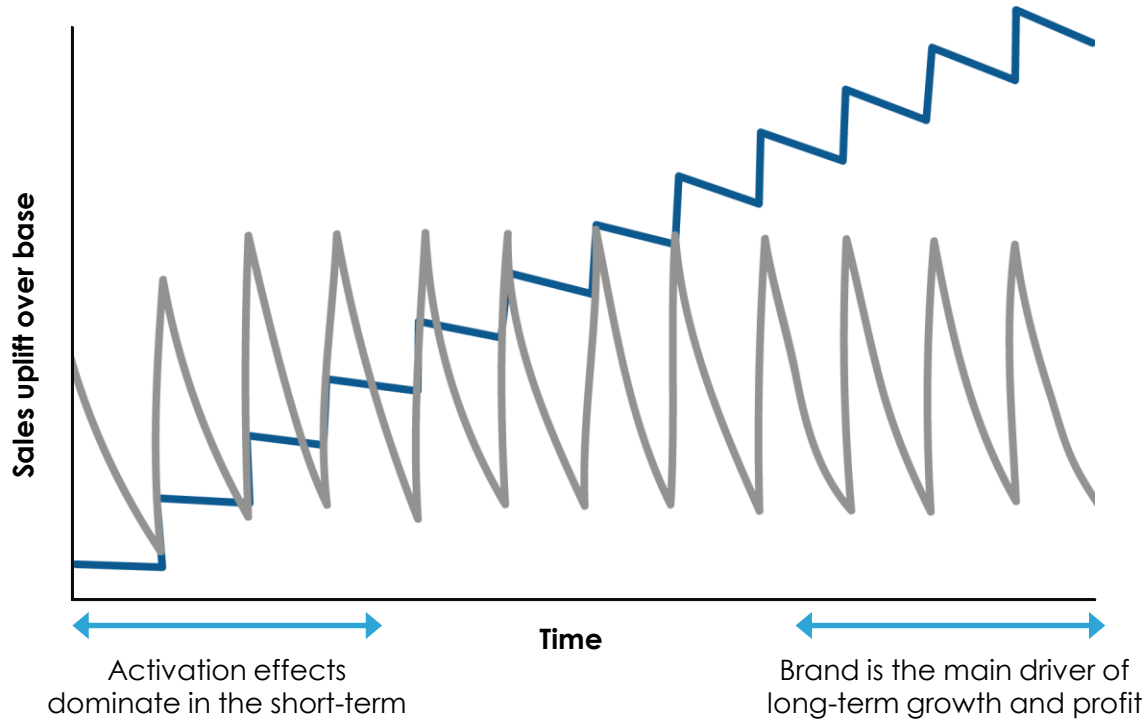
Sales activation ads generate short-term sales uplift



Sales activation/short-term sales lift

Short-term sales uplifts, but brand perceptions unchanged. No long-term increase in sales or reduction in price sensitivity. High efficiency and ROI. Sales activation is the “carbohydrate” of advertising.

Brand building ads steadily build sales over time



Brand building/long-term sales growth

Brand grows stronger, leading to long-term volume increase and reduced price sensitivity. Brand building is the “protein” of advertising.

Sales activation/short-term sales lift

Short-term sales uplifts, but brand perceptions unchanged. No long-term increase in sales or reduction in price sensitivity. High efficiency and ROI. Sales activation is the “carbohydrate” of advertising.

Don't get caught up on spot length

While longer ads do perform marginally better, in the grand scheme of audio creative, the length of an ad is a minor factor in effectiveness.

Longer ads see modest improvements in effectiveness but aren't always as efficient. Instead focus on other creative aspects of the ad for more impact.

Focus instead on the number of messages included, your mix of brand building and sales activation, and utilizing emotional copy over rational messaging to influence the effectiveness of creative.

Longer ads generate slightly higher likeability

Average % of respondents who answered 'like it a lot' or 'like it somewhat' when asked how much they like or dislike an AM/FM radio ad



A bar chart comparing the average percentage of respondents who 'like it a lot' or 'like it somewhat' for two different ad durations. The first bar, representing ':10s + :15s', is a medium blue and shows 61%. The second bar, representing ':30s', is a darker blue and shows 68%.

Ad Duration	Average % of respondents who answered 'like it a lot' or 'like it somewhat'
:10s + :15s	61%
:30s	68%

61%

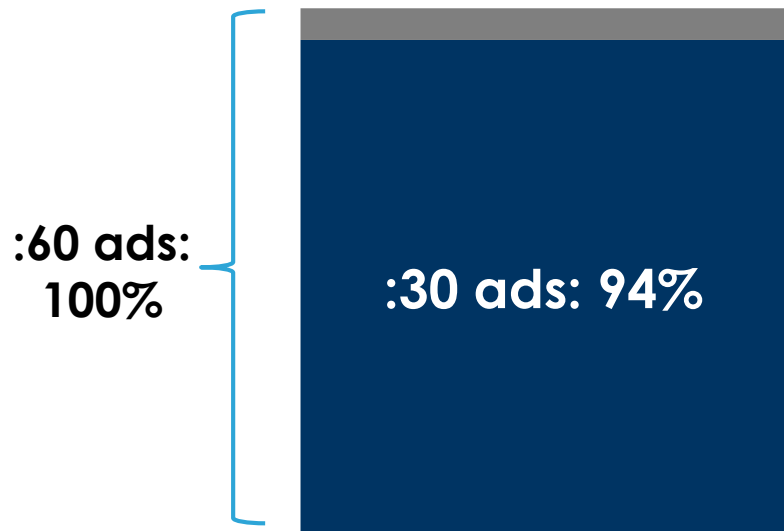
:10s + :15s

68%

:30s

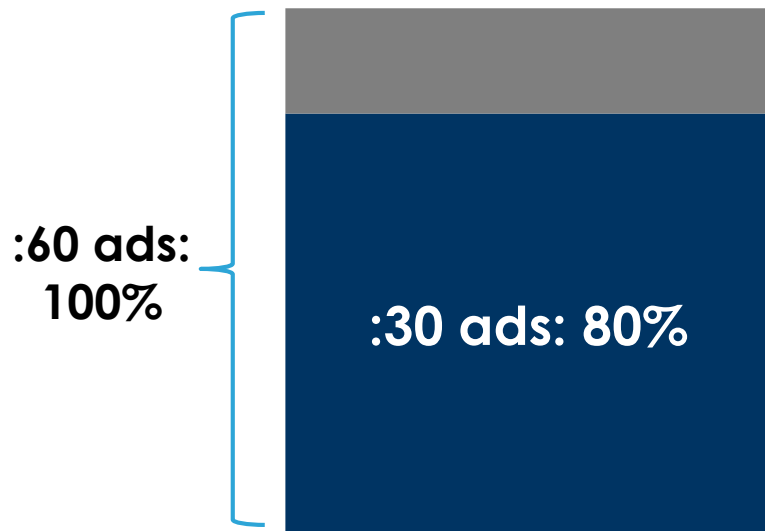
Ad length plays a minor role in ad recall and purchase intent

:30 second ads have 94% of the recall of :60 second ads



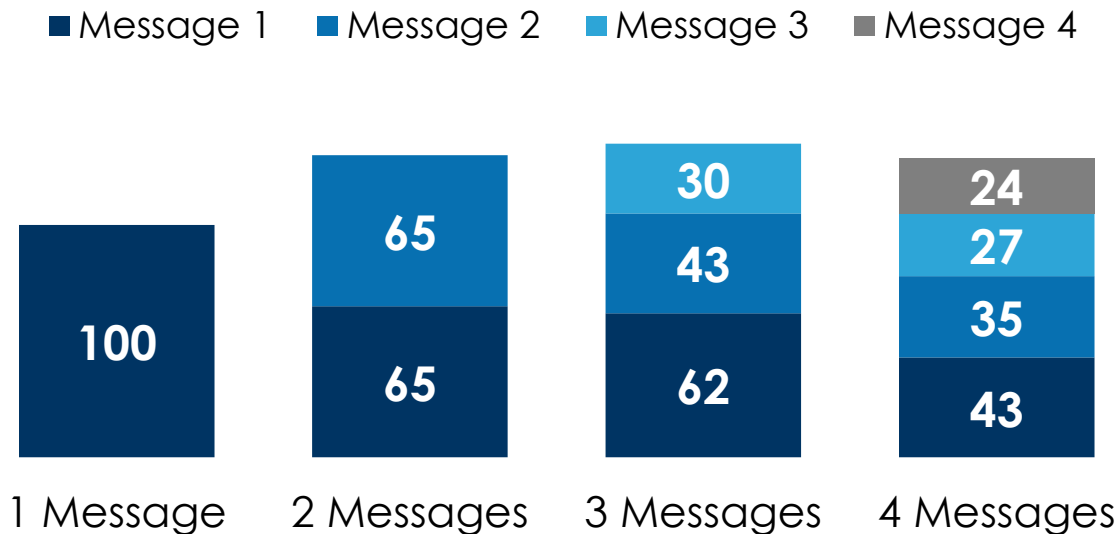
Ad recall

:30 second ads have 80% of the purchase intent of :60 second ads



Purchase intent

The Message: The fewer the messages, the greater the recall

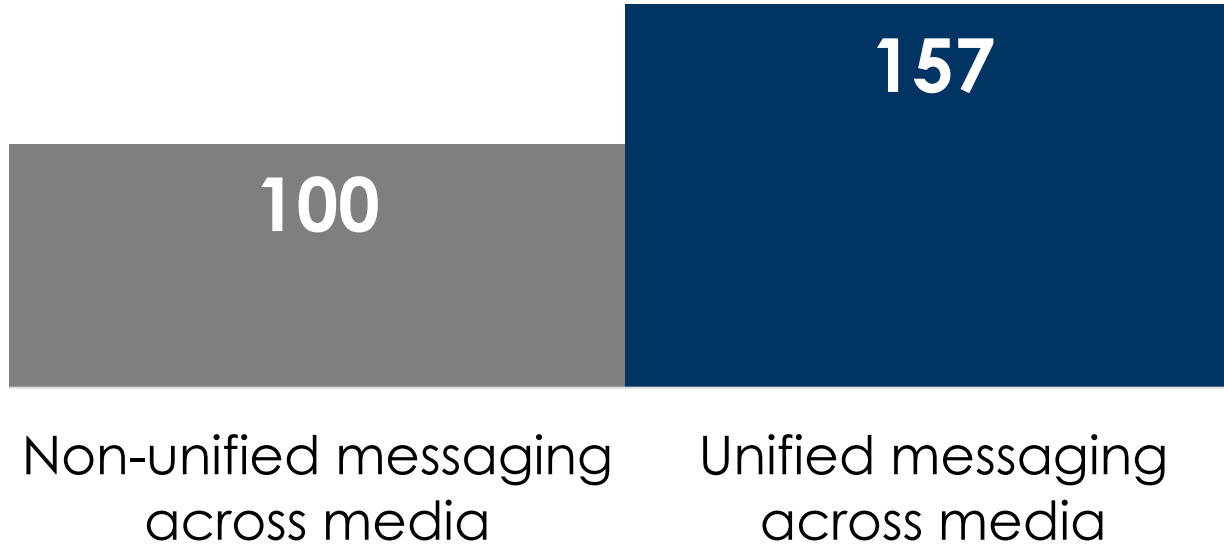


Millward Brown:
The more messages an ad attempts to communicate, the **lower** the likelihood of a single message being communicated

How to read: The first message of an ad with four messages has 43% of the recall of an ad with one message.

Use consistent, unified creative across different media to deliver impact

Indexed impact of different types of cross-platform creative strategy on equity metrics



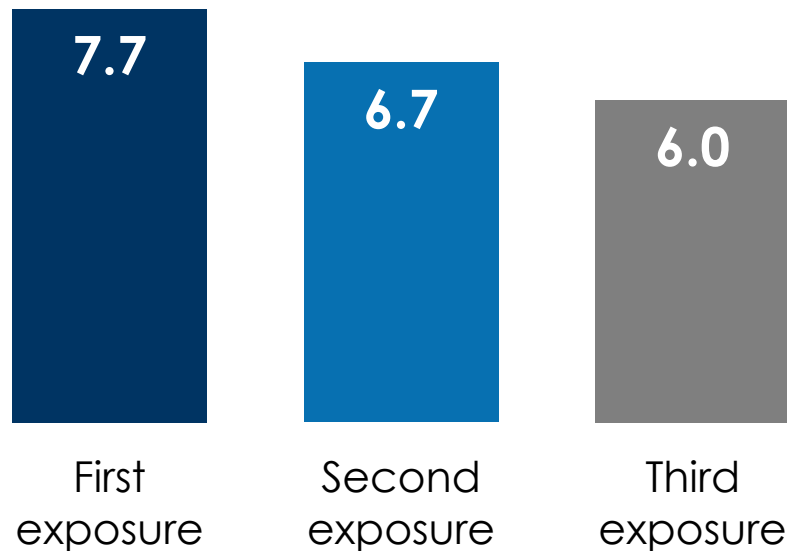
Source: Millward Brown, 2016, Analysis of 50 campaigns from 2011-2015; Impact shown is aggregated effect on Association, Motivation and Salience metrics, established through online surveys of 1,400 consumers per campaign. 100 is index for non-unified.

Nielsen Neuroscience Study: Humor can engage but the joke wears out fast

EEG Engagement is a summary measure of three core measures:

- **Attention processing:** measures sustained focus and shifts in focus over time
- **Emotional motivation:** intensity and extent of being drawn to the experience emotionally
- **Memory activation:** formation of connections with new and past experiences

EEG engagement over 3 exposures quickly erodes



The Message: Tell a story with emotion

Be relatable. People relate to real people and real stories. The emotional relevancy of AM/FM radio makes it a personal, human experience.

Best practice

Insure your ads make people feel something. Avoid copy with bewildering lists of facts. Put listeners first. Demonstrate how the brand has a positive impact on their lives.

“Audiences engage with tangible human outcome” that are simply and clearly communicated.

- Nielsen Neuroscience Study for
Westwood One

“Relevant emotionally-based messages are twice as efficient as rational messaging and twice as profitable. The impacts are hard to measure in the short term. But, over the long term, they develop incredible power in terms of salience and memorability. Emotional messaging is, it seems, the compound interest of marketing.”

- Binet & Field, *The Long and the Short of it: Balancing Short and Long-Term Marketing Strategies*

Why emotion-driven ads are important

“I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

- Maya Angelou

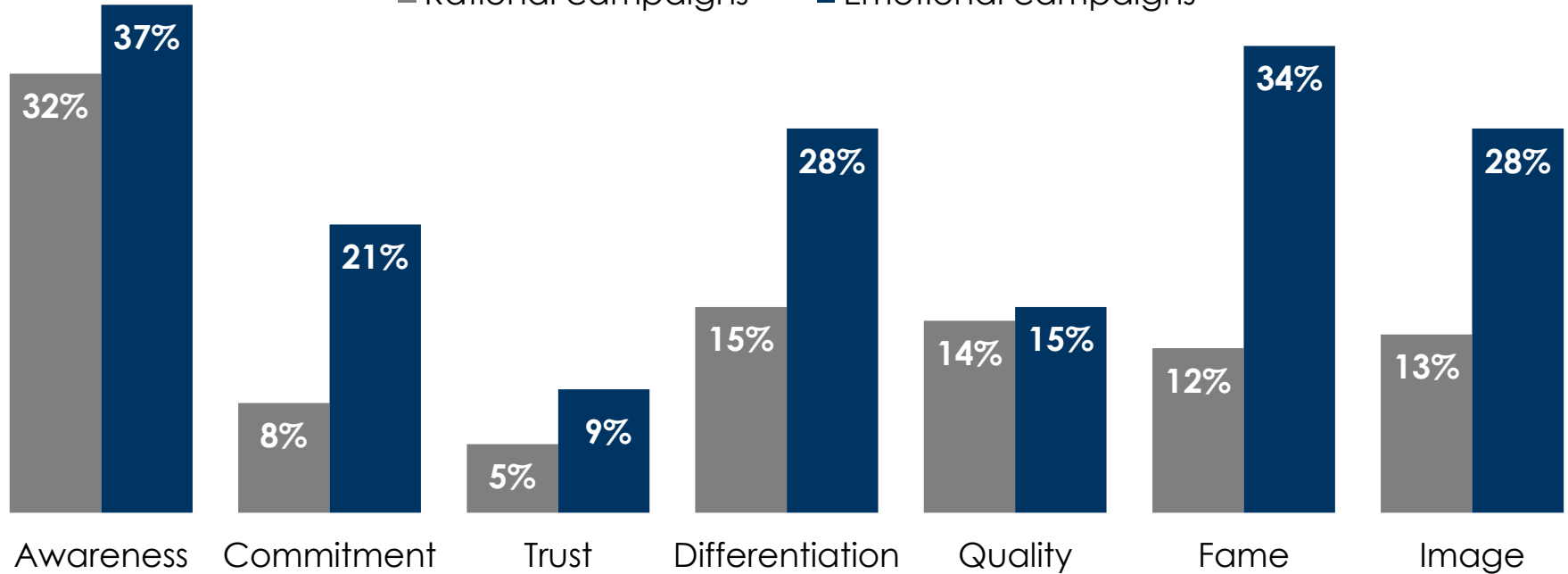


Courtesy, William J. Clinton Presidential Library

Emotional campaigns build brands more strongly

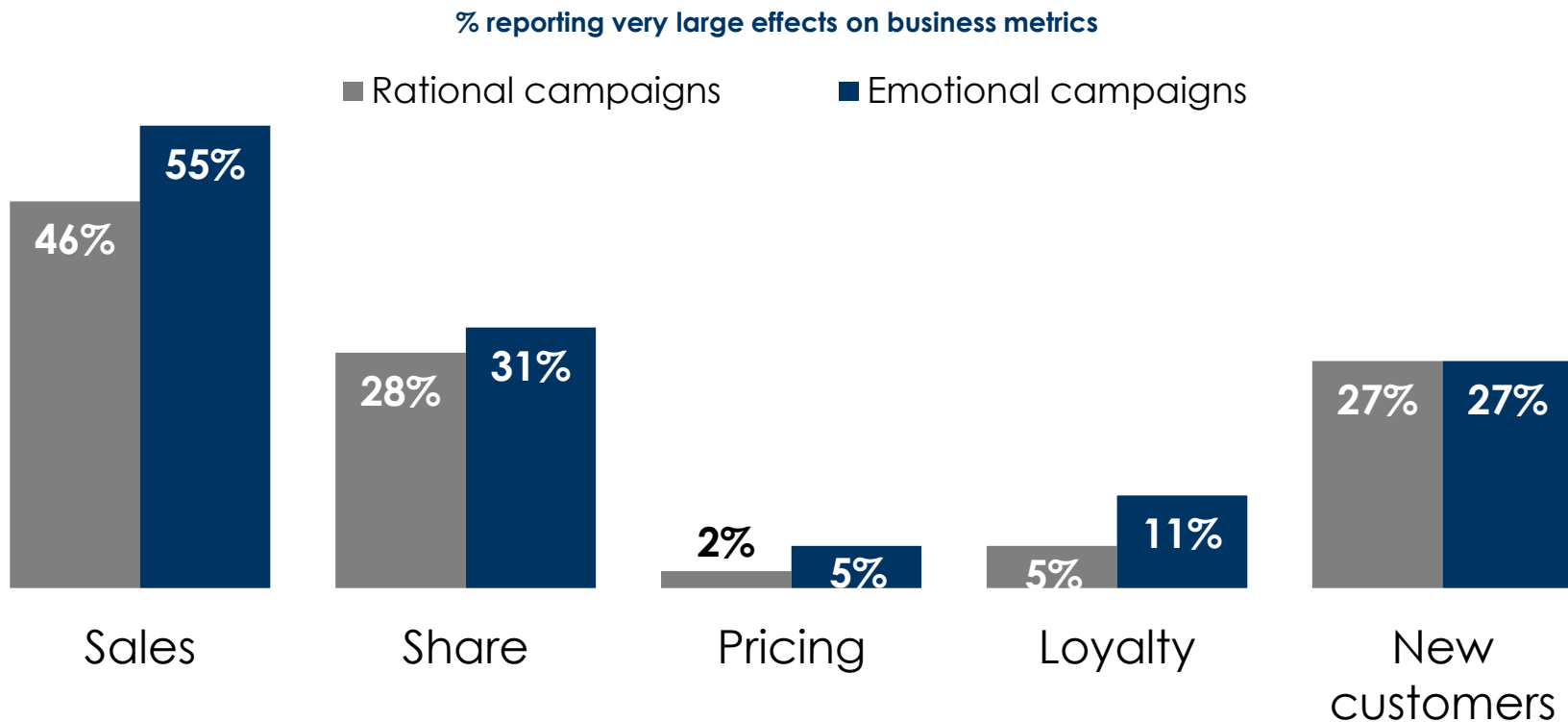
% reporting very large effects on intermediate brand metrics

■ Rational campaigns ■ Emotional campaigns



Source: The Long and the Short of It: Balancing Short and Long-Term Marketing Strategies; Les Binet, Head of Effectiveness, adam&eve DDB & Peter Field, Marketing Consultant

Emotional campaigns yield stronger long-term business effects



The Message:

Use a fluent device, ie. a recurring character or scenario

Fluent device:

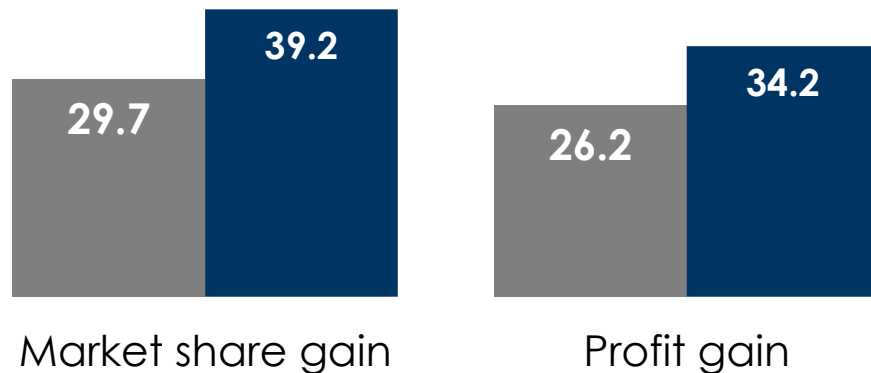
- A fictitious character or characters (human or creatures) created by the brand and used as the primary vehicle for the drama in more than one ad across a campaign (ie. GEICO's gecko)
- A scenario, expressed as a slogan, used more than once in a campaign as the primary vehicle for the drama without which the ad would make little sense (ie. "You're not you when you're hungry!" from Snickers)

Orlando Wood, Chief Innovation Officer,
System1 Group and author of *Lemon: How
the Advertising Brain Turned Sour*

Campaigns with a fluent device are much more likely to achieve market share and profit gain than campaigns without

% achieving very large effects on each

■ No fluent device campaigns (256) ■ Any fluent device (79)



Design marketing for System 1 thinking

Princeton University psychologist Daniel Kahneman, PhD, was awarded the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences for his groundbreaking work in applying psychological insights to economic theory, particularly in the areas of judgment and decision-making. His bestselling book, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, highlights two different ways of thinking.

“**System 1:** the vast majority of our decisions are quick and instinctive, and driven by emotion and experience. System 1 simplifies decisions and allows judgments to be made more quickly and easily. System 1 underpins every decision we ever make - you can't switch it off.

System 2: decisions are difficult and considered, occurs when we have to process complex or ambiguous information. If we can avoid this difficult decision making we will.”

Build familiarity, create positive emotion, and make things easy to process

System 1: Achieving Profitable Growth

John Kearon,
Orlando Wood,
and Tom Ewing

“**Achieve Fame, Feeling and Fluency.** The 3 Fs drive profitable brand growth. Brands should come readily to mind (Fame), feel-good (Feeling), and be recognizable (Fluency).

Fame is what gets a brand into a person's mental shortlist. The more readily a brand comes to mind in a decision context, the better the choice our System 1 assumes it to be. To build fame, target wide, touch deeply, and be distinctive.

Fluency is the speed and ease of processing information. Fluency is the strength of a brand's distinctiveness. If a brand is easily recognized and processed, it must be a good choice. This hands a huge advantage to brands with distinctive logos, slogans, jingles, color schemes, music or other unique assets.

Feeling. Positive emotion is the driving force behind profitable advertising. Advertising helps us feel good about a brand - and if a brand feels good to our System 1 minds, it's a good choice.”

The Message: Entertain for emotional gain

"Embrace the idea that advertising is at least as much showmanship as it is salesmanship. It is time to rediscover the fact that **advertising builds brands best when it is entertaining, popular and memorable**, when it is not just a pitch, but a performance."

Paul Feldwick

Why Does The Pedlar Sing? What Creativity Really Means In Advertising

"The buying of time or space is not the taking out of a hunting license on someone's private preserve, **but it is the renting of a stage on which we may perform.**"

Howard Luck Gossage, advertising visionary frequently referred to as "The Socrates of San Francisco"

Case Study:

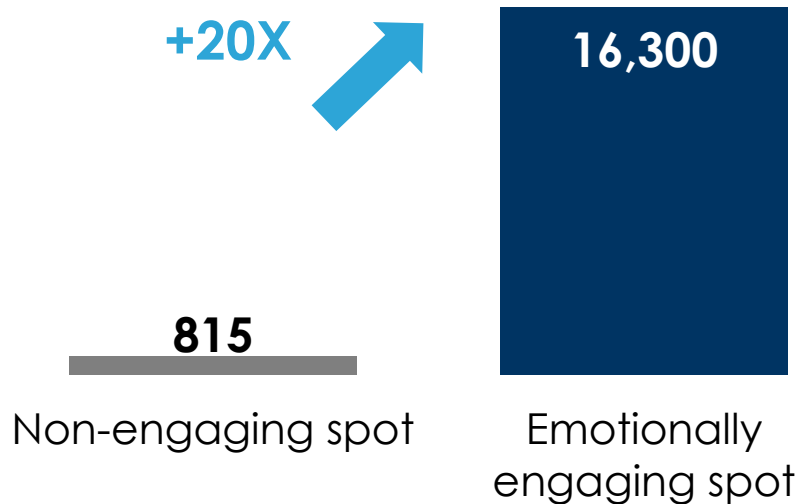
Maggio Cheese uses emotional creative to drive engagement

Maggio Cheese ran an on-air contest awarding a trip to Italy to a winning family. Two types of spots ran:

- **Non-engaging spot:** Commercial lacked emotion, read like a laundry list, and failed to paint a mental picture.
- **Emotionally engaging spot:** Commercial had personality, was memorable, and focused on one key takeaway.

Results: The emotionally engaging spot drove **20X** more engagement, receiving 16,300 contest entries versus the non-engaging spot's 815 entries.

Contest entries received



Finding the connection point between the message, the media and the tools

EFFECTIVE CREATIVE

Message

Media

Tools

Fit the AM/FM radio station programming format

Listeners tune in expecting to hear content and ads native to the environment they selected.

Best practice

Tailor creative to the format or station where it airs. For example, put country music behind your ad on country stations. Put rock music behind your ad on rock stations. Create different versions of your ad based on programming format.

“Radio listeners see ads as being more appropriate and meaningful to them ... and expect advertisers to target their content and creative to specific listeners of that program.”

- Radio Ad Effectiveness Lab

Align to consumer purchase mindset

AM/FM radio gives brands the ability to influence purchase decisions when they are on their way to the store and during key buying windows.

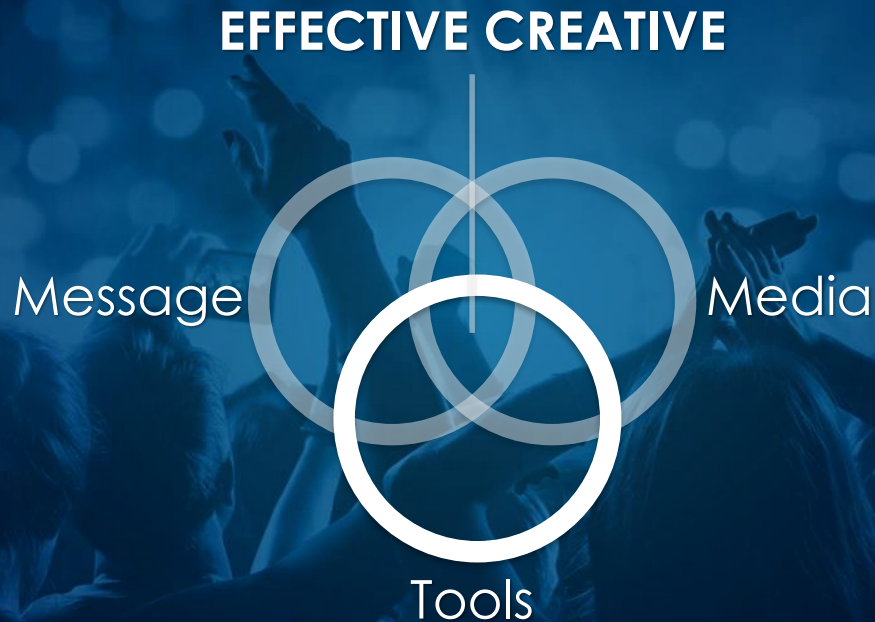
Best practice

Think of the consumer mindset. Apply appropriate call to actions to reach consumers when relevant, for example lunchtime offers during the day and school supplies during back-to-school season.

“Radio leads in all media time spent from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. when stores are open. Two-thirds of all AM/FM time spent occurs away from home in vehicles and at work, when consumers are shopping and thinking about errands and to do lists.”

- The Nielsen Total Audience Report

Finding the connection point between the message, the media and the tools



The Tools: Make the ad audible and easy to understand

A recent ABX creative study of a quick service restaurant's 3 AM/FM radio ads found all of the ads scored below average for message delivery, being clear, and understood.

The lower scores were attributed to the fast pace nature and lack of understanding of the dialogue in the ads.

Best practice: For effective creative, pace the script so that it can be easily understood, make sure it is audibly clear, and keep the content simple and intuitive. Insure that speaking voices are foreground and not overwhelmed by music and background effects.

	Ad 1	Ad 2	Ad 3	ABX AM/FM radio averages	ABX QSR AM/FM radio averages
	:30	:30	:30		
Message:					
Delivery	71	76	87	95	104
Clear	75	79	89	98	105
Understood	71	73	84	92	101

The Tools: Use music for branding

“...ads using music prominently are significantly more effective than ads that don't, enhancing effectiveness by 20–30%.”

- Les Binet and Sarah Carter

How Not to Plan: 66 Ways to Screw it Up

Music and sound are powerful, triggering an emotional response through audible familiarity.

Best practice

Utilize a consistent music theme to become your brand anthem.

“If music creates emotion, what we see is brand favorability increases, brand consideration increases, metrics that really apply directly to ROI. When it comes to all experiences, brands are realizing that emotional connection is more important than ever.”

- Lauren McGuire, President
Made Music Studio

“A consistent use of music, such as a pneumonic or familiar jingle, will increase familiarity, likability while triggering instant brand recognition.”

- Radiocentre/Strike A Chord

Create a sonic logo with melody that says the name of the brand

Veritonic, the leader in audio creative research and analytics, says sonic logos that have melody and words are very compelling and test better.

Best practice

Use jingles or sonic logos as distinctive brand assets that are memorable and provide sensory cues.

Byron Sharp, author of *How Brands Grow*, says the key to success is creating consistent and constantly-used easy-to-remember brand assets which will over time create distinctive memory structures which bring the brand front-of-mind when a consumer is shopping that category.

Veritonic: Audio logos that say the name of the brand and have a melody have the strongest brand association

U.S. audio logos that mention the brand's name and have a melody	% of Americans who could correctly associate the audio logo with the brand
State Farm	88%
Arby's	75%
Ace Hardware	74%
AutoZone	74%
Popeye's	71%
Red Robin	71%
Farmers	70%
Liberty Mutual	67%
Pandora	67%
Wayfair	66%
USAA	63%
TUMS	60%
Jergens	54%

Veritonic: Audio logos that don't say the name of the brand and lack a melody have very weak brand association

U.S. audio logos that don't mention the brand's name and don't have a melody	% of Americans who could correctly associate the audio logo with the brand	U.S. audio logos that don't mention the brand's name and don't have a melody	% of Americans who could correctly associate the audio logo with the brand
Little Caesars	52%	GSK	0%
Netflix US	26%	Honda	0%
HBO US	18%	Microsoft Teams	0%
Xbox One	10%	Nissan	0%
Taco Bell	9%	Slack	0%
Southwest	2%	Sprint	0%
Audi	0%	Traeger	0%

Veritonic: Audio logos that don't say the name of the brand have very weak brand association

U.S. audio logo has a melody but does not mention brand's name	% of Americans who could correctly associate the audio logo with the brand
Nationwide	48%
McDonald's	35%
NBC	35%
Old Spice	23%
Toyota	23%
Duracell	16%
Intel	13%
ABC	10%
T-Mobile	9%
Cricket Wireless	7%
Gillette	2%
Abbott	0%
Amazon Prime Video	0%

U.S. audio logo has a melody but does not mention brand's name	% of Americans who could correctly associate the audio logo with the brand
Bounty	0%
Campbell's	0%
CBS	0%
Charles Schwab	0%
HSBC	0%
Hulu Originals	0%
Mastercard	0%
Metro (by T-Mobile)	0%
Michael's	0%
Mrs. Meyer's Clean Day	0%
Oreo	0%
PNC	0%
Shell	0%
Sonos	0%
TD Ameritrade	0%

Leverage the appeal and trust of AM/FM radio personalities and podcast hosts

AM/FM radio provides access to local and national personalities who can be leveraged from live reads to endorsements to recorded spots.

Best practice

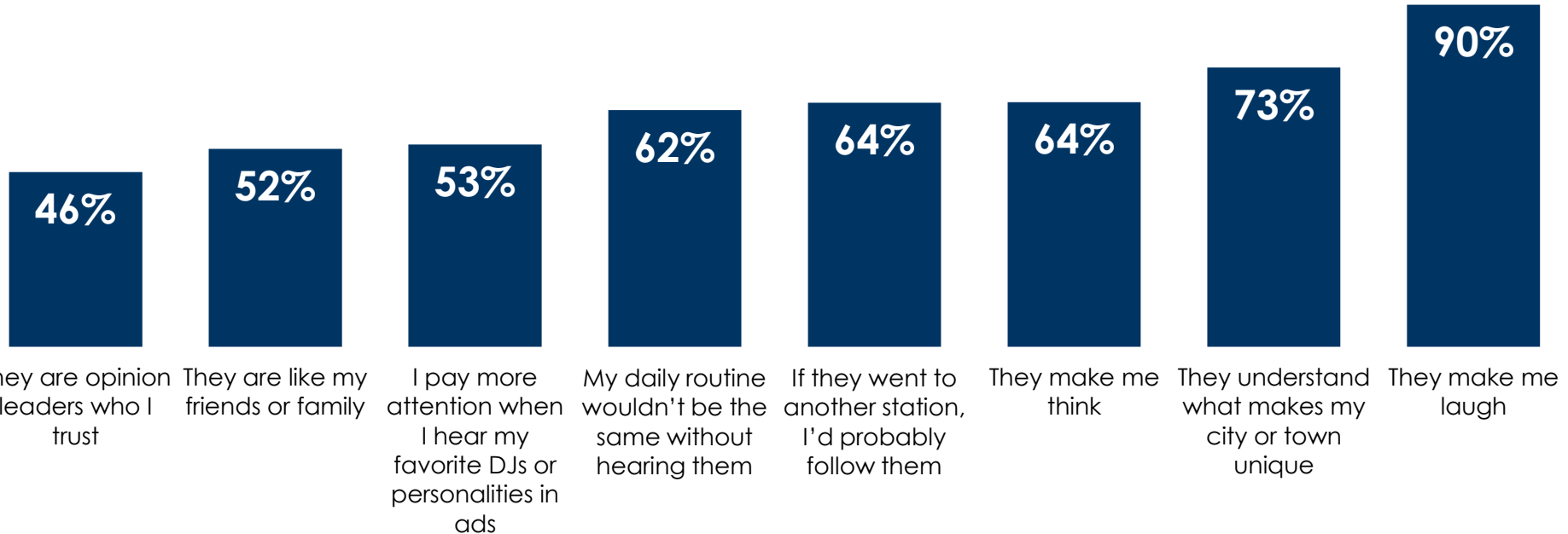
Use trusted personalities to voice creative, providing immediate creditability, endorsement, and relevance to listeners.

“Celebrity [personality] power has a halo effect on credibility and emotional motivation.”

- Nielsen Neuroscience Study with
Westwood One

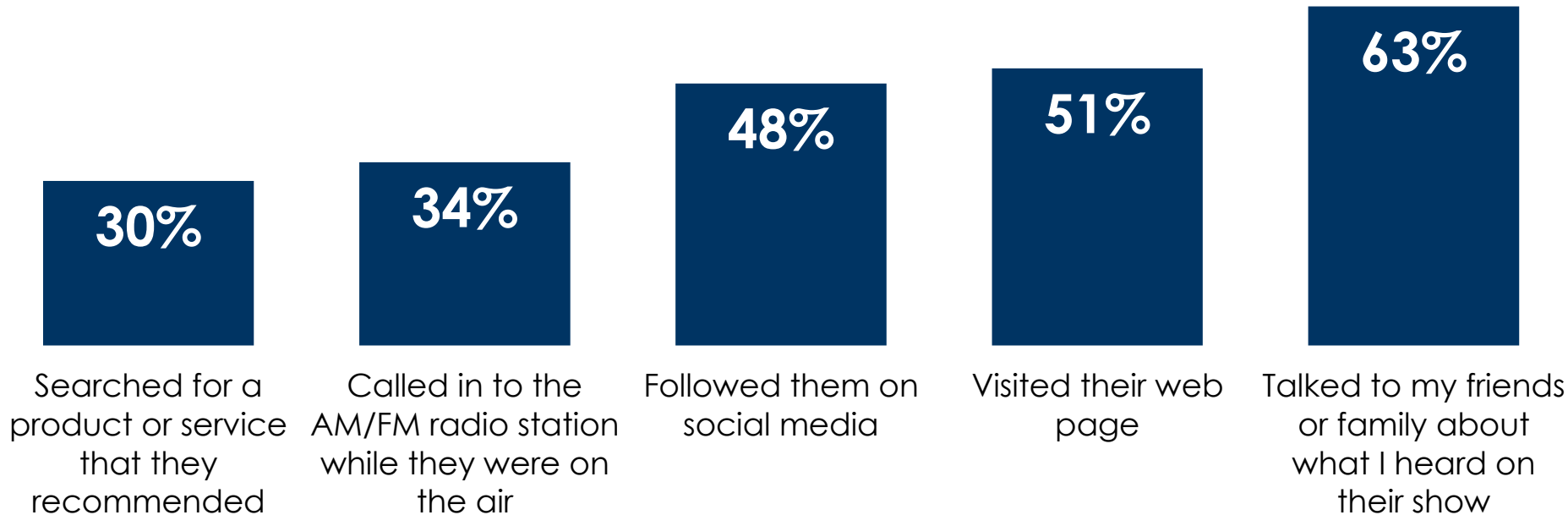
Listeners form meaningful connections with AM/FM radio personalities

% who strongly or somewhat agree with the statement when thinking about their favorite AM/FM radio DJ, personality, or show

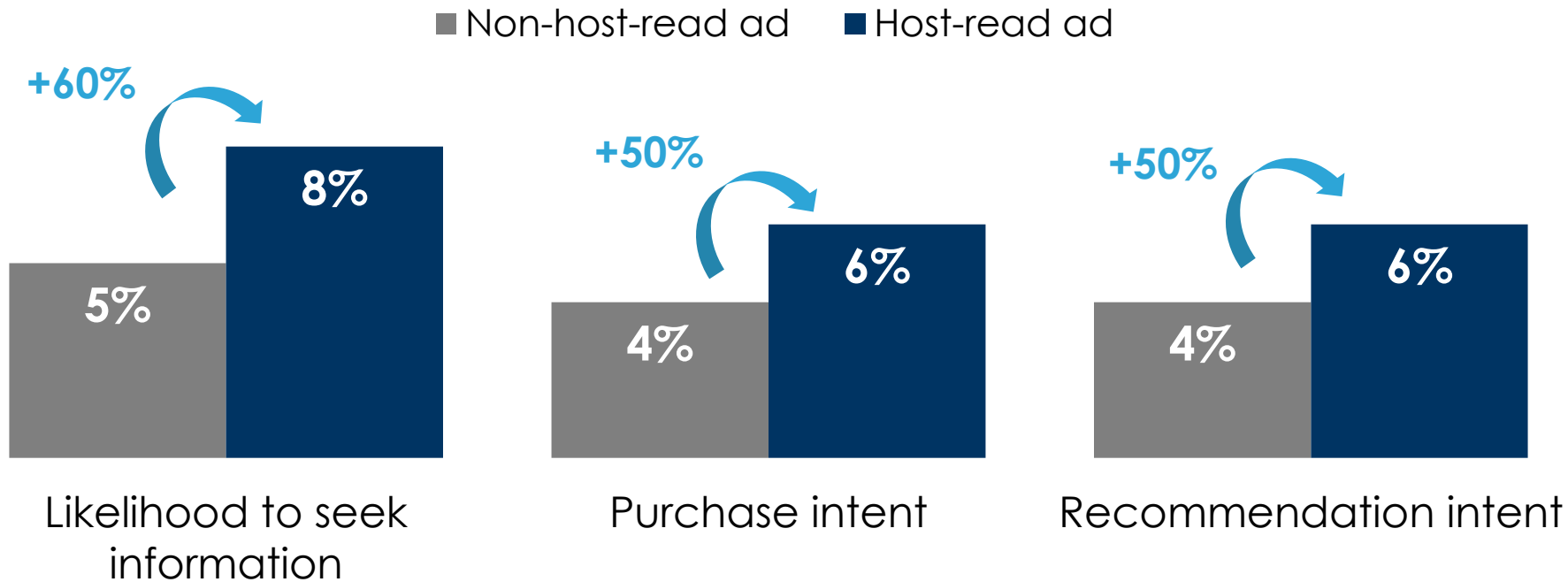


AM/FM radio personalities drive listener action

Thinking about your favorite DJ, personality, or show, which of the following have you done in the past year?



Host-read ads perform best and drive likelihood to seek information, purchase, and recommendation intent



Source: Nielsen Podcast Brand Effect Study 2020; Host Rating/Attribute Norm; Among respondents exposed to branding [HOST RATING] How would you rate the host, as a part of the podcast? [HOST ATTRIBUTES] What words or phrases would you use to describe the HOST (T2B)

Target your core audience: Women prefer a female voice

Familiar voices resonate. For example, Nielsen found women prefer female voiceovers in AM/FM radio ads.

Best practice

Leverage the target audience to inform voice talent and copy.

“Female voiceovers perform up to 14% better than male voiceovers among women.”

- Alice Sylvester,
Sequent Partners analysis of Nielsen
study of 98 AM/FM radio ads

The Tools: Don't worry about wear-out

Wear-out is the point where creative performance declines by 50% from its peak from listener fatigue of message frequency in a continuous time period.

The better the creative, the longer you can run the ad.

This chart illustrates the number of GRPs that a piece of creative can be run before wear-out occurs. For example, an ad with average creative score of 100-109 can be run with 1100-1500 GRPs before wear-out.

The weight levels that would cause wear-out are much higher than the majority of national AM/FM radio campaigns.

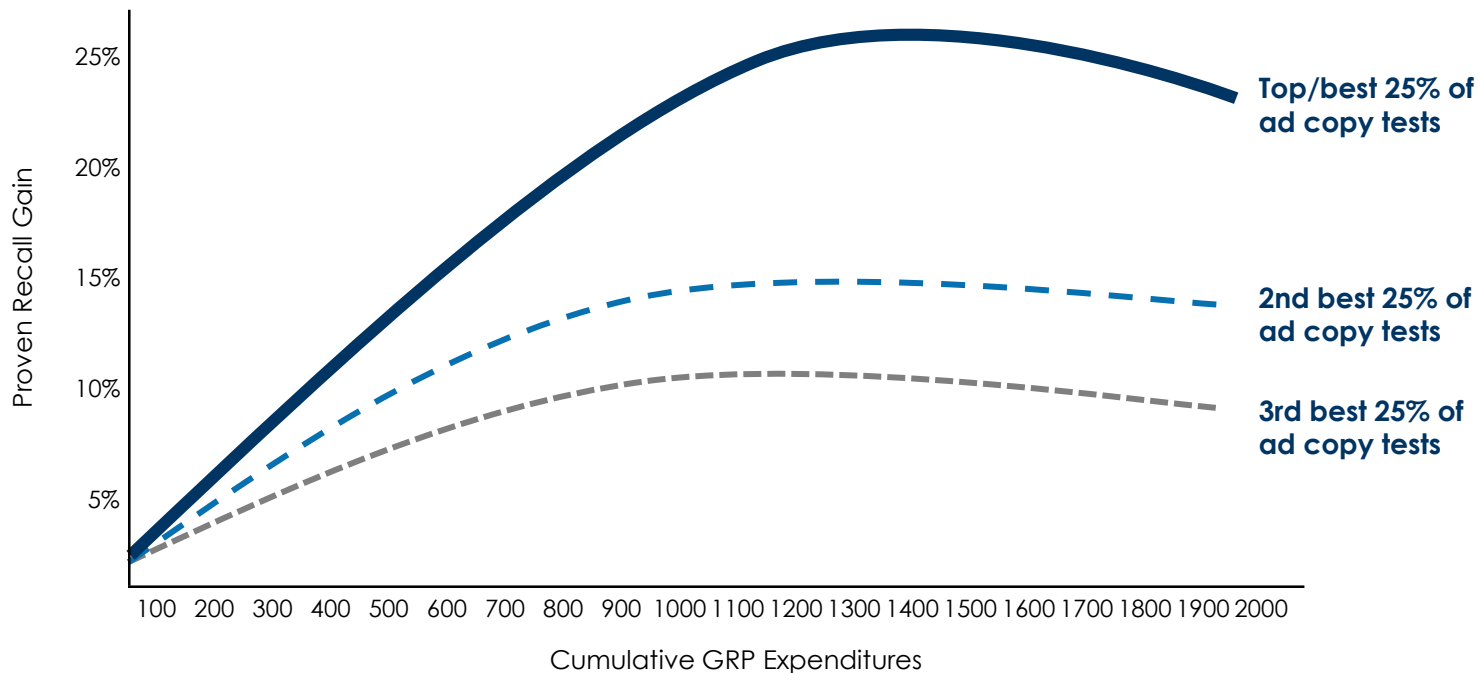
“Don't be overly concerned about wear-out. Millward Brown concludes that genuine wear-out is rare, and limited to 'new news' ads. Campaigns are more likely to wear in than out.”

- Les Binet and Sarah Carter
How Not To Plan

Creative test score index (higher = better)	GRPs allowed before encountering wear-out
<80	400-800
80-89	700-1100
90-99	900-1300
100-109	1100-1500
110-119	1300-1700
120-129	1500-1900
130-139	1700-2100
140-149	1800-2200
150-159	2000-2400
160-169	2100-2500
170-179	2200-2600
180+	2400-2800

Superior creative delivers 3-4X more ROI

Creative quality is the primary driver of "break through," accounting for 75% of variance in brand/message recall levels



Creativity and effectiveness go together

“Peter Field has analyzed the relationship between creativity and effectiveness. Using the IPA’s Databank, he took a huge number of campaigns, comparing performance in creative awards around the world with business results.

Ads that win creative awards are much more effective than ads that don’t. And the more creative awards they win, the more effective they tend to be. But the striking finding is how efficient creative campaigns are. Ads that win creative awards are 11 times more efficient at selling stuff than other ads.”

- Les Binet and Sarah Carter

How Not to Plan: 66 Ways to Screw it Up

EFFECTIVE CREATIVE



Media

Message

Tools

Audio creative best practices

The Message

- Have a conversation: Don't shout
- The first five seconds matter: Say the brand early and often
- Don't get caught up on spot length
- The fewer the messages, the greater the recall
- Use consistent, unified creative across different media to deliver impact
- Tell a story with emotion
- Use a fluent device, ie. a recurring character or scenario
- Entertain for emotional gain

The Media

- Fit the AM/FM radio station programming format
- Align to consumer purchase mindset

The Tools

- Make the ad audible and easy to understand
- Use music for branding
- Create a sonic logo with melody that says the name of the brand
- Leverage the appeal and trust of AM/FM radio personalities and podcast hosts
- Target your core audience: Women prefer a female voice
- Don't worry about wear-out



Thank You

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Audio creative resources

- [Radio Ad Effectiveness Lab](#)
- [Nielsen Radio Ad Effectiveness](#)
- [Nielsen's Total Audience Report](#)
- [Radiocentre/Strike a Chord](#)
- [Veritonic 2021 Audio Logo Index](#)
- [Made Music Studio: Addressing Today's Top Brand Challenges with Sonic Identity](#)
- [Audio Creative Best practices from The Richards Group's Chris Smith: Developing Effective and Memorable Radio Ads](#)