Case study

Unilever – Dove Nutrium bar - product launch

Key takeouts: Adding online can boost results but not budget

Online media builds brands, but in a mixed media schedule can deliver a greater impact if existing channels have high frequency. Boosting the frequency of the web can cheaply raise impact.

Run date: **2001** Territories: **US** Research agency: **Marketing Evolution / Dynamic Logic** Digital disciplines: **Online media, monitoring and evaluation, marketing models and integration**

Background

This was the pioneering landmark study into optimising the media mix and the level of weight internet banners should be given. The award-winning research formed a roadmap for media-neutral planning and quantified how each marketing channel influences the consumer. It revealed how some channels are used to saturation point; while others are barely explored. Minor reductions in frequency or reach of campaigns in one media free up budgets that work harder online: same budget, better results.

Objectives

The objectives of the research were to:

- Quantify the brand effectiveness of online graphical advertising
- Quantify the brand effectiveness of advertising in TV and print
- Discover optimal mix of exposures in terms of reach and frequency
- Uncover a roadmap to help media planners find the right channel mix

Academy Tutor comments...

"The research gave the first roadmap to marketers wanting to rebalance their mix of media. It showed how to move budgets between channels to get better results without increasing the cost of a campaign. Across the 10 studies that followed, a general rule emerged: 10-15% of brand advertising budgets should be on the web – even for low consideration brands. However it only answers some questions, and remember that online campaigns can fail without strong creative, planning, or a comparable CPT of media."

What they did

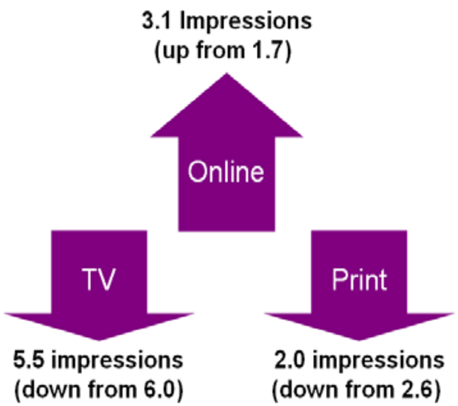
Unilever worked with MSN and research agencies to explore how their media was working. They tracked consumer exposure to advertising across several media channels and isolated the brand effect of each exposure in each media. This gave deep insights into the effectiveness of TV, online and print advertising.

How they did it

For a sample of 15,000 people, the researchers tracked media exposure and brand attitudes throughout the campaign live period to explore the relationship between advertising impacts in each channel and changes in brand attitudes.

Evaluation technique

This approach to evaluation of online media became the first of more than a dozen similar studies which each explored different aspects of the media mix and the specific roles of online. This was a brand building campaign, aimed to achieve an uplift on key brand metrics just based on exposure to the graphical advertising.



The aim was not to drive click through, but purely to measure uplift based on exposure to the graphical advertising.

Results

The campaign worked well to build brand equity, even when just in magazines and TV (without online media):

- Unaided brand awareness first mention Dove up 3pts
- Brand Image (on average) up 13pts
- Purchase intent up 3pts

Adding web banners and skyscrapers significantly boosted results, giving disproportionately better returns. The combination of online and offline worked better because the online campaign created stronger impact and reinforcement on its first, second or third view than the over exposed TV and print campaigns did.

The campaign pinpointed when other media wore out and yielded key findings that guide planners in re-planning FMCG brand campaigns. For this particular campaign:

- Optimal frequency for web advertising was 3.1 (up from 1.7 impressions per person in the initial campaign)
- Optimal frequency for TV was 5.5 (down from 6 impressions per person in the initial campaign
- Optimal frequency for print was 2.0 (down from 2.6 impressions per person in the initial campaign)

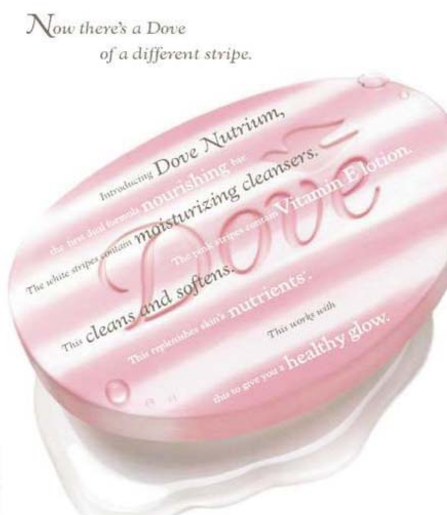
- Dove initially planned their campaign for 10% online reach of target audience and discovered that the optimal reach was 60%

Research revealed that throttling back on the frequency of their television and print campaigns freed up budgets that would work harder online.

Comment

Online advertising reduced the cost per customer to create the same change in branding at a lower price. This showed how budgets could be reallocated to work harder; reaching more people and moving the brand attitudes further. It gave a roadmap for media planners because if exposures (frequency) are very high in one media channel and very low in another, chances are the media mix hasn't been optimised.

These levels will vary by campaign, market, target consumer and levels of internet use, but what was proven in the US in 2001 is a safe bet for a level most markets in Europe, Asia and the Americas should have crossed by today.



DIGITAL TRAINING ACADEMY