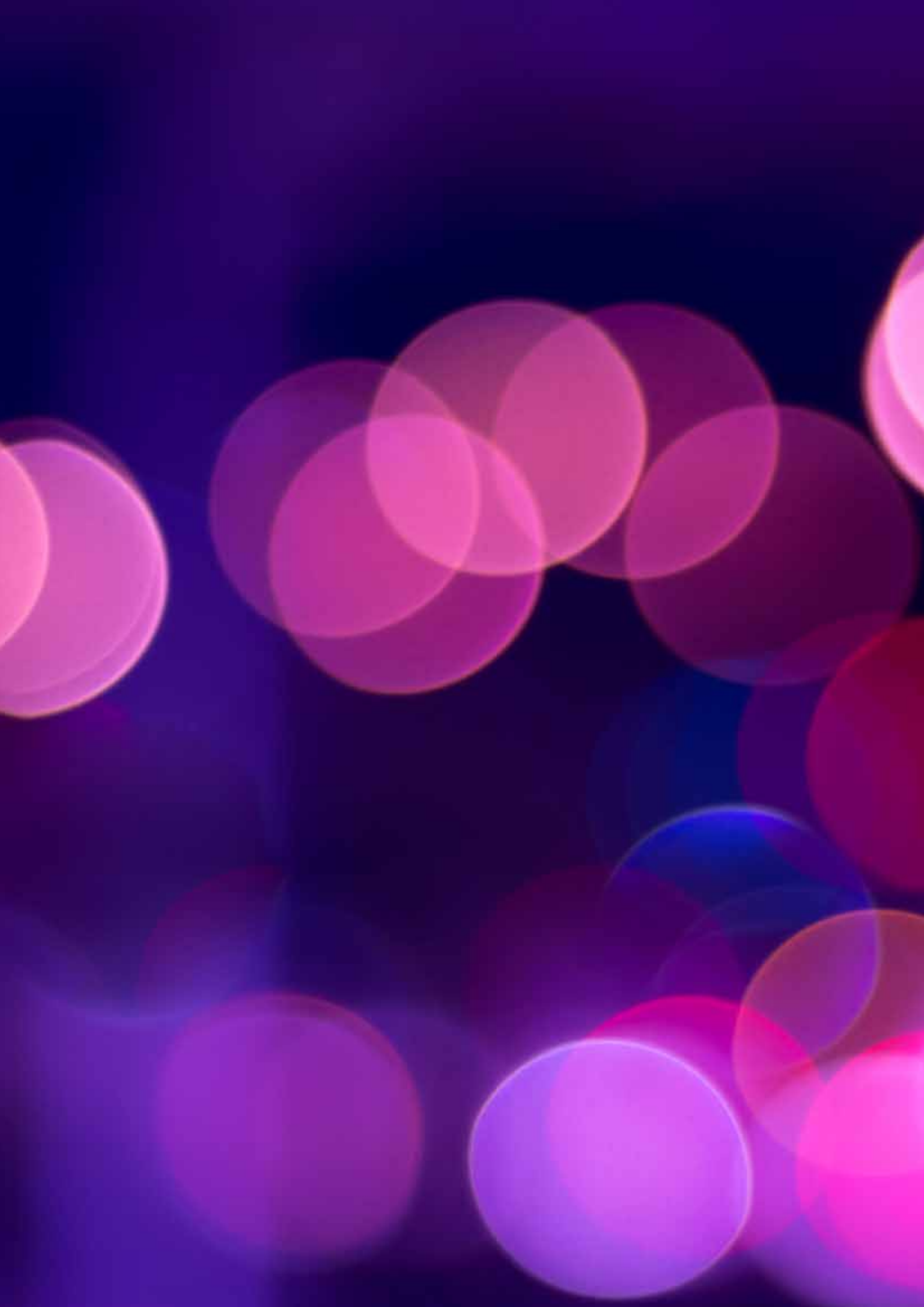


I must be talking to my friends

John Fanning

 **TAM Ireland**
Television Audience Measurement Ireland

iapi
Institute of Advertising
Practitioners in Ireland



I MUST BE TALKING TO MY FRIENDS

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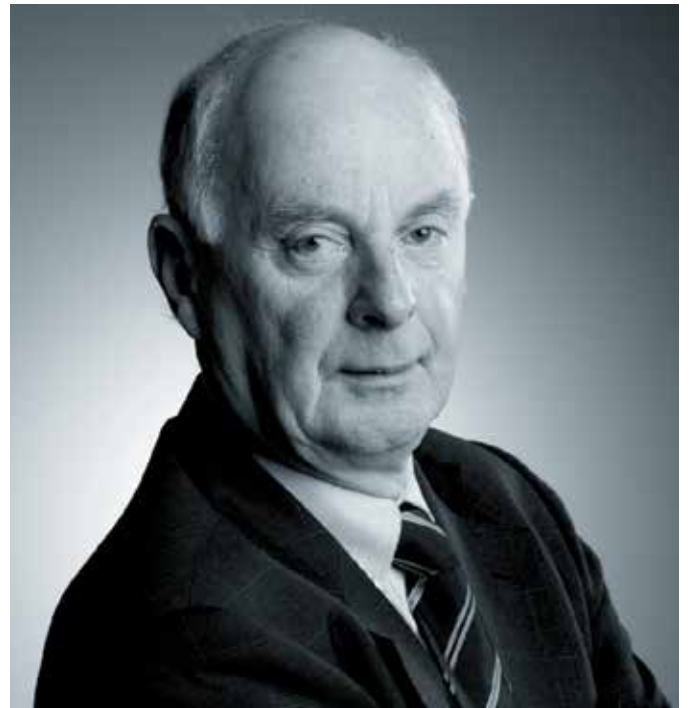
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John Fanning

John Fanning: Worked in London in market research after graduation from UCD. He returned to Dublin in in the 1970's and joined McConnells Advertising. He became Managing Director in 1980 and Chairman in 2000 until 2006. His book *The Importance of Being Branded: An Irish Perspective* (Liffey Press) was published in 2006.

John currently lectures on Branding and Marketing Communications at the Smurfit Business School, is Chairman of Bord Bia's Brand Forum, is a regular contributor to *Marketing Magazine* and is a member of the Arts Council. John was Chairman of the judging panel for 2014 IAPI AdFx Awards.

Foreword

TAM Ireland recognise the need for hard evidence to prove the work and worth of advertising in Ireland. We are keen to demonstrate the power of what we do in a way that is understood by even the most cynical at the boardroom table, so that when it comes to allocating budgets, advertising can take its rightful place on the agenda. Although we are an organisation whose focus is Television, in this instance, it is the argument for advertising in general that is built and told.

Looking at it from 2 different angles we worked with well-known and highly respected independent strategic planner Karen Hand and Marketing and Branding Lecturer John Fanning.

John Fanning has taken a qualitative approach to study the practical side of advertising in action. He demonstrates throughout this report how it has been used to overcome the many and varied business

challenges that brands face. With John's great experience and endless passion for our business he has worked through the "best in class" from the IAPI AdFx awarded campaigns to demonstrate the true capability of advertising and the general principals employed by the most successful campaigns.

The aim of this report is to be a tool for advertisers to use as a reference for clear examples of how advertising has helped to grow business in Ireland and to show the effect of advertising across a diverse range of brands.

Jill McGrath
CEO
TAM Ireland



How Effective Marketing Communications Ensures Business Profitability and Societal Progress.

Preface

The Advertising Effectiveness Awards were introduced in Ireland in 1996 to acknowledge the contribution to business profitability that results from successful marketing communications campaigns. It was also designed to encourage agencies and advertisers to take measurement and accountability more seriously by defining the objectives of any marketing communications investment more precisely and putting the measuring tools in place to provide a more detailed assessment of the end results. Award-winning case histories are collected every two years and following the announcement of the 2014 awards there are now 133 case studies demonstrating the capacity of marketing communications to transform businesses, large and small, by increasing profitability. The purpose of this document is to analyse the case studies, offer some general conclusions and provide guidance for future effective profit enhancing campaigns.

The primary purpose of marketing communications is to maintain a regular conversation with customers. Sometimes we neglect this basic necessity. Lack of regular conversation is serious because of the competition for our customer's attention from competitors. I've deliberately used the word 'conversation' here rather than 'dialogue' which too often comes across as 'marketing-speak'. The legendary US copywriter, Howard Gossage, once defined a great advertisement as 'the start of a riveting conversation'.

Riveting conversations, like great advertising, involve entertaining stories, anecdotes, epigrams, wit and gossip in addition to relevant interesting information. The purpose of this document is to help you, the marketing communications community, to persuade your financial colleagues and your boards of directors how riveting advertising can transform businesses by increasing sales, profits and shareholder value and why riveting conversations need a strong creative boost to get started.

We are a business that is obsessed with change which sometimes leads to a neglect of the accumulated experience and wisdom that has been built up over the years. We need to correct this. Although we are not a profession in the accepted sense of the word we have built up an impressive corpus of knowledge about how marketing communications works. The AdFx case studies are an important contribution to that knowledge and the more we can quote them in support of presentations for investing in marketing communications, the more likely we are to be successful.





How Effective
Marketing
Communications
Ensures Business
Profitability and
Societal Progress.

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PART 1

Effective Marketing Communications Campaigns: General Principles. Introduction


Today investment in marketing communication is more accountable to the boardroom as senior management seek to measure marketing effectiveness in terms of its contribution to the profitability of the enterprise. The demand for more accountability was the primary reason behind the introduction of the IAPI's Advertising Effectiveness Awards, (AdFx), in 1996. The competition for the awards is held every two years. Marketing communications agencies are required to write a detailed paper outlining

1. the objectives behind a given investment in advertising, or any other form of marketing communications
2. the strategy behind the campaign
3. the creative content of the campaign itself
4. the thinking behind the mix of media used and finally, and most important of all
5. the results, ideally measured by an increase in profitability, sales increases and/or market share gains.

The winning papers are published in a book of case histories demonstrating the power of marketing communications to transform the fortunes of businesses and competition for inclusion is fierce. An award-winning case history is the best calling card an agency can have to convince existing or potential clients to give them work. The total number of award winning case histories since 1996 is 133, an invaluable resource not just for all marketing communications agencies but for businesses of all shapes and sizes who will be able to see how much their own companies could benefit from an investment in advertising.

The following are some of the highlights from the award-winning papers over the years showing the power and capacity of carefully planned, creatively executed marketing communications to transform the fortunes of a business;

- Brilliantly crafted advertising guided by the enduring copy line "Nothing Added But Time" transformed a non-performing, poorly regarded Bulmer's brand from 1% of the long alcoholic drinks market to over 10% between 1990 and 2005.
- In 2009, within ten months Bord Gais recruited over 300,000 household electricity accounts with their high impact 'Big Switch' campaign.
- More recently Liberty Insurance achieved the difficult and delicate task of reversing the seemingly inexorable decline of the Quinn household and motor insurance business and establishing a solid position in the Irish market using a subtle strategy which combined Bostonian charm and financial probity within only ten months.
- In 2010 as the recession took its toll Husqvarna's sales were falling and with an investment of €35,000 a promotional campaign achieved a sales increase of €1.5m; a return on investment of over 4,000%.
- In 2013 the Jack & Jill Foundation raised €450,000 within three months for a marketing communications investment of €45,000; a return on investment of 800.



These examples from the 133 case studies available from the AdFx data base give some idea of the impact that an investment in marketing communications can have, often in a very short time-frame. It is also useful to consider the sheer range of business and institutional objectives that can be achieved by a combination of solid research, insightful planning and inspired creativity;

- ensuring the long term strength and profitability of brands
- revitalising brands in danger of falling out of favour with a younger generation
- protecting brands from competitive pressure and retailer own brands
- protecting indigenous brands against global competition
- saving tax-payers money by reducing smoking and binge drinking and increasing seat-belt wearing and contraceptive usage
- winning the war for talent by making businesses more attractive to potential employees
- re-positioning charities to make them more attractive to potential donors.
- overcoming our lack of a military tradition and making the Defence Forces a more attractive career option
- re-positioning Alzheimer's from a stigma to a medical condition and helping families to cope better.

But perhaps the most unusual and positive effect of marketing communications was the Cadbury's Dairy Milk campaign in 2011. The company was now part of the giant global confectionery corporation, Mondelez, and as with most consumer goods companies of this size the future of the business's Irish manufacturing plant was under threat, but the sales success of this campaign reinforced the case for its retention in North Dublin.

Planning and Implementing Effective Marketing Communications Campaigns.

Although the purpose and objectives of marketing communications campaigns are infinitely varied the process by which they are conceived and implemented can usually be broken down into five separate stages;

- **Objective:** defining the purpose of the campaign based on detailed understanding of the market
 - **Communications Strategy:** defining the most compelling argument to achieve that objective.
 - **Creative Proposals:** creating marketing communications to deliver the argument.
 - **Media Strategy:** defining the budget and choosing the optimal media mix from the increasing proliferation of channels.
 - **Measurement:** measuring the effects of the campaign.
- 

Stage 1:

Objective: Defining the Purpose of the Campaign and the Target Market

Three exercises are involved here; data collection, setting objectives and defining the target market.

Understanding the market

The widely used Brand Planning Cycle provides a useful discipline for collecting and collating this information;

The answers to the first two questions; where are we now? and why are we here? will emerge from the data collection exercise.

The third question; 'where could we be?', will mean having to make a decision about what a proposed marketing communications campaign is expected to achieve.

The fourth question will involve a decision on the most compelling argument we can devise, the most appropriate budget and the most cost effective and efficient media strategy.

The final question deals with continuous measurement of progress in achieving campaign goals.

Answering the first two questions; where are we now? and how did we get there? will involve a thorough description of the market under review;

- size of market by volume and value
- trend in recent past e. g. five years—is it increasing, decreasing or static
- brand shares in last five years
- demographic, behavioural and attitudinal profile of the leading brands.

All the above data will be quantitative but it should be augmented by qualitative research to provide a more in depth understanding of the market dynamics.

The Advertising Planning Cycle




Devised by Stephen King: Marketing Director of JWT London in the 1970's and 80's and one of the founders of Account Planning in 1969.



How could we get there?

The most compelling argument we can devise.
The most appropriate budget.
The most cost effective and efficient media strategy.



Where could we be? - Defining the Objectives

Once we have a thorough understanding of the market we can set realistic objectives for our brand.

Campaign objectives can be divided broadly into three types;

1. Business objectives; e.g. recruiting new users, recruiting users from a different demographic sector, decreasing price sensitivity/churn.
2. Behavioural objectives; e.g. increased penetration and loyalty.
3. Intermediate objectives: e.g. brand awareness, brand attribute/image ratings, also referred to as 'brand health'.

Analysis of the IPA database in the UK suggests that objectives based on concrete business goals as opposed to intermediary objectives are more likely to result in better returns on marketing investment.

Other findings from best practice in setting objectives include:
-the more detailed and precisely defined the objectives the better the end results, the more specific the objectives and the more accountable the campaign - focussing on a single campaign objective does not make the results more significant; objectives should be detailed and prioritized.

Defining the Target Market:

This is based on the information compiled under data collection and on the objectives the campaign is meant to achieve. There are a variety of ways that customers might be defined: 'potential or new, existing or lapsed, light, medium or heavy, infrequent, occasional or frequent, promiscuous, loyal or non-user'. In addition a whole range of demographic breakdowns need to be applied.

There is also the question of intermediaries. Retailers have always been an important intermediary audience for FMCG campaigns but as the business environment becomes more complex many different kinds of opinion leaders can effect campaign outcomes and therefore need to be considered. Barnardo's (2008) is an interesting example.... in addition to the commercial requirements of increasing awareness, improving attribute ratings and attracting donations, the organisation also wanted to provoke a public debate around the whole issue of childcare, so political, media and administrative opinion leaders were a key element in the target group.



Stage 2: Communications Strategy: Devising Relevant and Unexpected Insights which Facilitate Great Creative Material.

Insights can come from (1) a deeper understanding of the emotions and aspirations of the target market; (2) the market dynamics at play between the product and the consumer And (3) The deep truth of the product itself.

Stage 1 involves amassing as much information as possible about the market and ideally the wider society in which the market operates. But information on its own is not enough. Coming up with a powerful and compelling communications strategy is in itself a creative act in the sense that it is the invention of a new way of looking at a brand. This accounts for the near mythic status the 'insight' has attained in recent years. A good insight reflects something of real importance to the consumer and leverages an aspect of the product or service.

There are many examples in the AdFx case studies of how insights gleaned from the planning process naturally lead to creative solutions.

Sometimes they come from a more acute understanding of the hopes and fears, anxieties and aspirations of the target audience. There is no doubt that the more sensitively you understand the changing mores and nuances of a society the more likely you are to come up with marketing communication strategies that have the power and authority to change that society. The following are examples of good insights which led to successful campaigns;

Kellogg's Rice Krispies Squares (2010)

The insight for this case history wasn't too difficult to uncover—research quickly unleashed the nostalgic feelings for the famous Rice Krispie bun which was synonymous with Irish childhood memories.

These memories were captured in a TV campaign which resulted in a MROI of 44.25% and a three-fold increase in sales value between 2006-2010.

Critical insights can also emerge from a better understanding of the market dynamics between product/service and the consumer;

Irish Life (2008)

A detailed examination of the Irish pensions market revealed that 50% of Irish workers had no pension but when the figures were analysed in more detail it emerged that 75% of women had no pension. This led to a dramatic TV commercial featuring a woman diver appearing to dive into an empty pool accompanied by a voice-over explaining the extent of the problem. The campaign resulted in an increase in pensions take-up by women of 83%.

The third main source of insights is the interrogation of the product or service itself in the hope that a product/service 'truth' that could provide the basis of a creative campaign will emerge. A growing interest in brand genealogy has resulted in some of the more successful global marketing communications including Jack Daniels and Johnny Walker. Irish examples from the AdFx case studies include;

Electric Ireland (2014)

Because of the required deregulation the ESB, an 83 year old brand with a strong emotional resonance in Ireland, was forced in 2009 to lose 40% of its residential customers and not compete in the market for two years. It was also forced to change its name but its first campaign as Electric Ireland drew heavily on the brand's genealogy with an emotionally charged TV-led campaign under the heading; 'Electric Ireland understands your energy better than anyone else'. An important part of Electric Ireland's genealogy is the legacy of two outstanding TV commercials produced for the ESB in the 1980's; 'Going Home' and 'Night Feed', both of which subtly reflected changes in Irish society at the time.

The above three approaches are useful starting points in the quest for successful marketing communications campaigns but there is no single blue-print that guarantees automatic success. Creativity is central to devising the most effective positioning and the most compelling communications material but creativity does not follow a mechanical linear process.

Stage 3: Creative Development

As a rule the more imaginatively you research the market, the deeper you dig, the more likely you are to uncover the elusive nugget of insight that will lead to great creative work.

However in any of the award-winning case studies it was the creative idea itself that proved to be the decisive factor in increasing sales, market share or shareholder value with the successful marketing communications material emerging directly from creative intuition.

The successful 2008 National Lottery case study was based purely on the fact that two millionaires would be 'born' on a given date and this natal analogy resulted in a series of humorous TV commercials developing the maternity ward theme. In this campaign an investment of €600,000 yielded sales of €6m.

Great creative ideas are the ultimate goal, the world-proven discriminator in developing campaigns that can transform businesses but their birth is messy and their parentage often obscure. The best ideas can come at any stage and it is therefore important to have the different disciplines involved present at every stage..

For this reason I believe it is also worthwhile to have creative people present during the initial planning discussions. We can never be sure where creative ideas come from but once exposed to details of a communications brief creative people will be unconsciously mulling ideas around and who knows how the connecting spark that results in a breakthrough will emerge.

In recommending that all disciplines come together to create great marketing communications I am aware that this goes against the current trend for excessive atomisation of the whole process... parcelling out different stages among different agencies.



Stage 4: Budget and Media Strategy: Understanding the New Media Ecosystem and the Consumer's Exposure to and Interaction with Paid, Owned and Earned Media.

Many different methods have been proposed and used over the years without ever coming to a universally agreed way to determine the most effective and efficient marketing communications budget.

This mixed bag of approaches reflects the uncertainty surrounding the whole area but more detailed analysis using the IPA database in the UK is beginning to result in a consensus that **'the relationship between Share of Voice (SOV) and Share of Market (SOM) is the most important determinant of the budget level required'**. (Pringle and Marshall 2012).

In Marketing in the Era of Accountability, Binet and Field 2007, the concept of 'equilibrium SOV' was introduced; 'it is accepted that there are general relationships between market share and share of voice and that for any given market share there is an equilibrium SOV at which that market share will be stable, so that if SOV falls below the equilibrium level the market share will generally fall'. They also concluded that share of voice above market share will deliver growth, 'the critical metric that determines the level of a brand's value market share growth is its extra share of voice defined as SOV minus SOM'. Although there are differences across markets for an 'average FMCG' brand it was calculated that for each ten points **of extra share of voice would deliver value market share growth of 0.5% per annum**. The link between creativity and effectiveness was also noted; the correlation between a campaign's performance across the creative awards as assessed by the Gunn Report and its business performance measured by the IPA Effectiveness Awards showed that **creatively awarded campaigns were on average eleven times more efficient**.

Once the campaign budget has been decided the next stage is to determine the optimum media strategy, a task which has been made much more complex by the fact that digital now offers an almost limitless number of channels on which to distribute content. In the 1996 collection of award-winning case studies the average number of media channels used was three, **in the 2014 collection that average had increased to over ten** as the full panoply of digital channels started to be used to their ultimate effect. The ambition to have one's campaign continually present in the lives of the target market, 'always on', is captured in the following quote from the "3" case study (2014), no matter where viewers consumed their content they were viewing a "3" ad at any particular time.

Innovative media strategies have always been a feature of award winning campaigns and are not just a product of the digital era;

- long before outdoor morphed into OOH Dunkin Donuts employed an imaginative city centre strategy to attract teenagers (1996).
- Magners' dramatic 'take-over' of Victoria Station and the long walk through Heathrow were the most 'creative' element in their English launch strategy (2006)
- the disruptive TV buying approach adopted by Rabo Direct accentuated their core brand positioning (2006).

However the new opportunities afforded by the plethora of new channels and the opportunities for interaction have transformed media strategy. Intimations of a brave new world were visible by 2008 but the full extent of the revolution became evident in 2014 when every single case study contained some digital element. Among the most comprehensive and ground-breaking were;

- Liberty Insurance (2014) A wide range of traditional and digital platforms were used to create maximum impact in the shortest possible time.
- Murphy's (2014) Interesting combination of traditional media, digital media, PR/ WOM and a specially created app on a limited overall budget.
- Cadbury's Dairy Milk (2014) Detailed three part media strategy using a wide range of channels to communicate different brand messages.

**'the relationship between
Share of Voice (SOV) and
Share of Market (SOM)
is the most important
determinant of the budget
level required'**

(Pringle and Marshall 2012)

Stage 5: Measurement

All of the case studies in the AdFx database demonstrate a serious commitment to careful campaign evaluation. The detail and sophistication of how marketing communications campaigns are evaluated in Ireland has advanced significantly since the 1990's especially in terms of calculating the marketing return on investment. In the 1996 awards there was only one attempt to measure MROI whereas in 2014 the majority of award-winning cases include this calculation.

Accurate measurement depends on precise campaign objectives so the more effort put into Stage 1 the easier Stage 5 becomes; **agreeing clear objectives makes marketing more effective** by focussing resources on the task in hand and makes marketing more accountable by providing definite criteria for judging success or failure.

Examples of campaigns where measurement was most rigorous include;

- The Gathering (2014) Comprehensive attempt to measure multi-layered commercial and societal benefits of this campaign.
- Cadbury's Dairy Milk (2014) Detailed measurement of a campaign with a number of different communications objectives.

The five stage approach outlined above should be regarded as a potential guideline when developing a marketing communications campaign. It is not intended as a blueprint; there are no blueprints in this business. For many years admen and academics attempted to put forward hierarchy of effects models to explain how the whole thing worked beginning with AIDA (attention, interest, desire, action) in 1900 (Verdi's eponymous opera had just been performed for the first time!). Other models introduced during the twentieth century include; AIDCA (attention, interest, desire, conviction, action) 1921 and DAGMAR in 1961. Over the years these models have been criticised for gross over-simplification and leading practitioners have always been suspicious on the grounds that we are never likely to come to any simple but useful comprehensive statement that explains everything.

Although there will always be people hankering after a systematic advertising formula that 'Explains Everything' they are now very much a minority but Pringle and Marshall (2012) have suggested a looser set of guidelines proposing five key consumer considerations that can be translated into 'communication streams' and seem to be particularly apposite for media planning in a digital age.

FAIPA

This latest acronym, FAIPA, translates as follows;

Fame

- product or service awareness and particularly salience, a sense of 'excitement' that can be influential about brand perception in a celebrity-obsessed age. Sample media; TV, Outdoor, Sponsorship.

Advocacy

- stimulating testimonials, reviews and other third party word of mouth. Sample media; social media, ad-funded programming, PR.

Information

- how the brand performs in functional terms, ideally meeting a customer's personal requirements. Sample media; print, internet, brochures.

Price

- includes special offers or tailored payment terms and what value these represent to the customer. Sample media; sales promotions, direct mail, point-of-purchase.

Availability

- not just buying offline but buying availability online through the media itself. Sample media; internet, newspaper inserts, in-store TV, radio.

Conclusion

In spite of the proliferation of media channels and fragmentation of audiences the fundamentals of marketing communications remain the same;

- deep understanding of the market, the product/service, and the consumer
- understanding of and data relating to, the new media ecosystem and the
- interaction between owned, earned and paid for channels
- Devising compelling insights based on leveraging consumer needs possibly based on societal trends with a product/service truth
- Realising relevant and unexpected creative material designed to communicate the resulting insight

Because creativity is involved at every stage particularly when defining insights and realising creative communication material the path to transformative campaigns is not linear; sometimes a great creative breakthrough will emerge from the original data often from an unexpected observation, sometimes it will only emerge after a slow painful delivery at the very end and sometimes it will follow a linear path. The important thing is to be ready to acknowledge the most compelling solution at any stage and this is why interaction between all disciplines involved are desirable at every stage.

And finally - there are a number of award-winning effective case studies where there was no great insight and no outstanding creative work; the mere fact of advertising, usually on air, was enough to produce a dramatic result. Examples of campaigns which arguably worked simply by the fact that they advertised include, Cow & Gate (1996), RTE (2002), Dyson (2006), Husgvarna (2012) and BT (2012).

Agreeing clear objectives makes marketing more effective

PART 2

Different Ways Marketing Communications can Improve Business Performance.

1) Long Running Branding Campaigns: Protecting Brands from Competition and Retailer Pressure.

This is the most familiar territory for advertising and marketing communications. There is a long history of brands investing in continuous advertising over the last hundred years that are still alive and profitable today while less far-seeing competitors have vanished and are forgotten. One of the most famous examples comes from the US in the late 1920's when two companies, Kellogg's and Post dominated the market for ready-to-eat cereals. It was still a relatively new market so when the depression came no one was clear about what would happen to consumer demand in that market. Post took the predictable route by reducing expenses including cutting back on advertising. Kellogg's took the road less travelled, doubling its ad budget and dominating the radio airways with commercials for its new cereal, Rice Krispies. By 1933, with the economy still mired in recession, Kellogg's profits had risen almost 30% and it became the dominant brand in the market, a position it retains to this day - especially in the Irish market where it has been the market leader for over fifty years. Kellogg's are probably the outstanding example of how to retain market leadership and resist the encroachment from retailer own brands through continuous investment in advertising and continuous new product development. In this context it is worth mentioning that Kellogg's won a gold award in the 2010 AdFx awards for Rice Krispies Squares, a new product developed from the original Rice Krispies.

A more recent example of a long-running, carefully-planned, well-executed brand-building campaign also from the drinks market is Coors Light, a recipient of awards in 2010. The brand was launched in draft form in the Irish market in 2004 and was immediately faced with the problem of the traditional 'girly' stigma surrounding this sector of the beer market. The fact that the target market for beer is mainly young males, who are highly advertising-literate and use beer brands as badges to define themselves, meant that the 'girly beer' tag would have to be overcome. This was achieved by the classic strategy of product interrogation - question the product relentlessly until a suitable product truth emerges. The creative idea came directly from the brand's history. In 1873 Adolph Coors chose the seemingly inhospitable Rocky Mountains for his brewery because of the purity of the mountain spring water he found there. The beer was then famously packed on ice and delivered to market by rail. This story provided not only the provenance, quality and masculine cues required for the target group but also led to dramatic and exciting

visual ideas for TV commercials. A series of advertisements expanding on the story were made between 2005 and 2009 and achieved a 25% volume sales growth while increasing brand salience, involvement and acceptance among the target group.


Consistent long-term advertising works across all product categories and not just drinks or other fast moving consumer goods. The 2008 awards case studies included an account of the seat-belt advertising from 2001 to 2007 - a cross-border campaign jointly run by the National Safety Council in the Republic of Ireland and the Department of the Environment in Northern Ireland. A detailed analysis of road traffic statistics revealed that 15-34 year olds were the most over-represented, in terms of their population share, as killed or seriously injured victims who were not wearing seat-belts in both jurisdictions. Market research revealed that many young drivers believed that wearing seatbelts was a matter of personal choice and they claimed to a feeling of discomfort wearing seatbelts and a feeling of physical and social exclusion wearing a rear seatbelt.

A strategy was devised based on the dramatising of the dreadful consequences of not wearing seat-belts - a horrific accident in which young people not wearing seatbelts were directly responsible for causing death and serious injury. The objective was to position non-seatbelt wearing as morally irresponsible and to change the perception that it was a matter of personal choice. Three hard-hitting TV commercials were made using shocking imagery to show how brain damage and death could result from not wearing a seatbelt.

Television was chosen as the core media channel for the launch of each of the seatbelt campaigns. Previous case studies and research findings, which proved the unmatched potency of television in changing attitudes quickly, meant that TV was selected as the main awareness-driver for each seatbelt campaign.

As a result of the campaign backseat seatbelt-wearing increased from 20% in 1999 to 84% in 2007 in the Republic of Ireland. In Northern Ireland where backseat belt wearing before the campaign was the lowest in the UK became the highest by 2007. Driver wearing rates increased in the Republic from 55% in 1999 to 88% in 2007. More importantly post campaign deaths and serious injuries fell by 29% in Northern Ireland and by 46% in the Republic.

Consistent long-term investment in advertising is the most effective way to build profitable brands and maintain brand leadership.



In recent years however the Great Recession combined with the advent of digitalisation has resulted in businesses being forced to concentrate on short term survival. We have seen a surfeit of campaigns designed to produce an immediate sales increase but the survival imperative has the potential to weaken brands over the long term.

Too many short term promotions send the wrong signal to the public who become addicted to price promotions and lose sight of long term brand values.

No matter how successful a campaign the Brand Planning Cycle must be kept in mind at all times always asking 'where are we now' and 'where could we be'. Society changes, markets change and campaigns wear out and new opportunities emerge

2) Creating Maximum Impact in Minimum Time.

Advertising is also well known for its capacity to create massive nation-wide impact very quickly and in today's hyper-competitive climate this can be an important requirement. The latest book of award-winning case studies includes an example where a completely new brand to the Irish market was taking over a long-established brand, with the added complication that the established brand had become embroiled in a series of financial scandals. That brand was Quinn Insurance which was a victim of the collapse of the Sean Quinn business empire, and to compound the problem the spectre of the notorious Anglo-Irish Bank was also involved. As a result of the stream of negative publicity surrounding the group the Quinn share of the total insurance market fell from 12.2% in 2007 to 6.2% in 2011. In December 2011 an American insurance brand, Liberty Mutual Insurance, became involved in this maelstrom when it purchased the Quinn Insurance motor and home insurance customer base. Although unknown in the Irish market Liberty Insurance was a brand with integrity built for over one hundred years around a long established ethos 'to preserve and protect the things people care about, believe and own and cherish' and 'to help people live safer and more secure lives'. The brand was launched in the Irish market in January 2012 under the proposition, 'We do the right things by you' and a copy line, Insurance: The Way it Should Be. The main creative message was told in a 60sec TV commercial featuring a straight-talking, fresh-faced optimistic young American, Bobby, who 'said hello' to Ireland speaking from the US, introduced us to the brand's Boston roots, explained its ethos and values and finished on location in Ireland. Within ten months the brand had achieved a spontaneous awareness level of 76% and had reversed a new business decline of 26% in 2010 and 8% in 2011 with an increase of 10% in 2012. In less than a year a business

surrounded by controversy, its brand share and reputation in free fall and with poor staff morale had been transformed by a carefully thought-out and executed advertising campaign.

In the intervening years between the 1996 case studies and today's 2014 cases there have been numerous examples of professional advertising campaigns creating immediate impact to either establish new brands in the shortest possible time, provide an immediate boost to sales or both.

In the 2000 book the Walker's case study showed how a creative Irish twist on a long running UK campaign involving a 'confrontation' between Roy Keane and Gary Lineker achieved a brand share of 13% within three months of the launch.

In 2008 the National Lottery introduced a new product very different from its existing portfolio of games: a Millionaire Raffle. The tickets cost €20 each, an unprecedented price for a single ticket in the Irish market, and a €600,000 advertising budget had to sell all 300,000 of them. The creative approach was developed around the idea that two new millionaires would be born on the day of the draw. All the tickets were sold with twenty days to spare.

In 2010 the Campbell's Soupfuls case showed how a launch budget of €340,000 achieved a market share of 20% and sales of €3m within eleven months.

The power of advertising to create instant awareness and a good impression is even more important today because of increased competition.

Consumers in most markets will choose from a repertoire of only four or five brands. The main qualification for inclusion in this repertoire is being well-known and well-regarded.

It is worth noting the critical importance of really good planning. In the Liberty case the merits of a credible alternative positioning had to be carefully weighed before deciding on the most compelling solution.

The increasing concentration of retailer power means that new FMCG brands are given very little time to make an impression before they are removed from the shelf. Walker's and Campbell's showed how an initial investment in marketing communications solved the problem and the National Lottery showed how an investment of €6m achieved sales of €6m in two months



If an Irish brand is prepared to invest in world class marketing communications and can add a specifically Irish dimension consumers will be more than prepared to give it a helping hand

3) Protecting Indigenous Brands from International Competition.

The creation, development and maintenance of strong indigenous brands is important not just economically but socially and even psychologically. Commenting at a symposium on the Irish economy in 2008, before the full extent of the Great Recession was known, Prof. Frances Ruane, Research Professor at ERSI, remarked; The growth engine in the Irish economy is in foreign direct enterprises and despite recent efforts we are still a considerable distance from having large numbers of strong internationally tradable indigenous businesses –we ignore our dependence on foreign owned enterprises at our peril.

Six years later this is even more necessary and successful indigenous enterprises will be the main foundation of a new strategy. But successful indigenous businesses will increasingly require imaginative branding which in turn will require well planned creatively executed marketing communications. At the heart of business success is the ability to differentiate and marketing communications excels at creating difference. There are many examples from these case studies of how advertising and marketing communications have been essential in the creation and development of Irish brands by creating a distinctive point of difference.

Donegal Catch, a gold award winner in 2008, is a classic example of how strategic planning combined with creative excellence with an Irish “blas” can achieve dramatic sales and profit success. Donegal Catch is the brand leader in the frozen fish market and maintained this position in the period covered by the case study - 2003 to 2008. During that time it was outspent by its main international competitor, Bird’s Eye; it was under continuous pressure from aggressive retailer own-brand alternatives and had to pass on 6% price increases due to the increasing cost of sourcing fish. The only counter to these formidable challenges was to create a strong marketing communications campaign. Between 2003 and 2008 the brand’s profits rose by 600% and the value of the brand to its owner, Northern Foods, rose by an amount fifteen times greater than the total advertising spend over the period.

The contribution of advertising to the continuing survival of a longer established Irish brand icon, Club Orange, was even more impressive given the huge competitive pressure from the international soft drinks businesses - some of the most legendary marketing machines in the world. Dramatic ‘orange based’ ads were created for TV and outdoor and the brand enjoyed a steady increase in brand share during the period of the campaign, culminating in a 10.7% share of the overall soft drinks market in 1998 - a market share growth of 27% over three years.

An equally well-loved and even longer established iconic Irish brand is Mi-Wadi, a fruit squash. By the 1990’s the brand faced the familiar problems of indigenous brands in a small domestic market: increased competition from international brands and lack of resources to match their marketing communications investment. The resulting strategy was built on the proposition of Trust. “You can trust this brand” - with a back-up argument that the brand has been made in Ireland for over seventy years. Within two years the brand recorded its highest ever share of the market, 21.8%, and had replaced Kia Ora as the second brand in the market.

In 2004 Mi-Wadi received the gold award for the best long-running campaign. The new campaign was backed by the inspired copy-line ‘It’s not your Wadi, it’s Mi-Wadi’. An interesting point made in this case study was the acceptance of the need for high quality advertising material to match the overseas competition. The sales results vindicated the strategy as Mi-Wadi became brand leader in 2003 with a 37.4% market share.

Irish people are often ambivalent about buying Irish. The result is we don’t automatically buy Irish because it’s Irish but if an Irish brand is prepared to invest in world class marketing communications and can add a specifically Irish dimension we will be more than prepared to give it a helping hand.

4) Putting New Life in Old Brands.

Throughout the twentieth century most consumer goods businesses considered advertising a necessary investment but since the measurement of the financial return on advertising investment became more widespread and professional since the 1980’s it is now possible to calculate the effect of that investment with greater precision.

Low-Low, one of the gold awards in 2014 illustrated this point. Launched in 1989 in the “healthier spreads” market the brand enjoyed double- digit growth for fifteen years.

But sales of the brand and the category began to decline as they failed to evolve with changing consumer lifestyles. A new campaign was planned which was designed to halt the decline and provide it with a more distinctive positioning.

The target market was women who were fed up with the patronising tone of much of the marketing communications in the sector; they aspired to a healthy lifestyle but wanted enjoyable rather than punitive solutions to eat healthier. A two part strategy was devised. The first part was to create a cultural tension around the whole

issue of dieting, health and food enjoyment. A video 'Adland Gal' was produced parodying the stereotypical advertising world of the category which attracted 2.4m views within three weeks. The second part of the strategy involved more conventional TV ads communicating positive healthy and enjoyable eating experiences with Low-Low under the copy line 'Food to Feel good About'.

During the period of the campaign weekly purchasing of the brand increased from 8% to 15% and in a sector declining by 9% Low-Low marginally increased its brand share, overtaking the brand leader in the category.

In the 2006 awards a long-standing Irish brand leader was given a make-over resulting in increased sales and profits. Batchelor's is the long established leader in the baked beans market out-selling the better known Heinz brand by a comfortable margin. But by 2004 it was faced with a dilemma common to brands that have enjoyed long-term success: it inevitably appeared a little old-fashioned, out-of-touch and dull compared to younger, more cosmopolitan rivals. There is only one course of action for brands faced with this problem - invest in a new marketing communications campaign aimed at a younger audience, based on a new understanding of their particular anxieties and aspirations. A series of TV commercials were introduced based on the consumer insight:

'life would be empty without Batchelor's'. The campaign succeeded in re-vitalising the brand producing significant increases in brand image attributes among the younger target audience, reversing the slight fall in brand share with a new increase of over 2% and a new high of 60% overall brand share.

As the Great Recession tightened its hold on the nation and retailers exploited a new opportunity for increasing sales of their own in-store brands the pressure on established Irish brand leaders grew more intense. In 2010 the brand leader, Denny's, share of the sliced meat market declined as a result of increased competition from private label, particularly the rapidly expanding German discounters. Denny's strategy for coping with this familiar problem was to communicate a distinct point of difference in the brand. At a time when consumers see little functional difference between the leading brands in most markets this was an ambitious approach but Denny's believed that their claim to be the only 'pre-packed sliced ham with 100% natural ingredients' was valid. The real task was to effectively communicate this to the target audience and this was achieved with a TV commercial showing a little girl in a classroom with a magnifying glass 'taking a closer look' at the pack thus encouraging her mother to do the same. Sales in 2012 increased by 6% over the previous year. This case history should be studied by food brands who believe they have a genuine taste advantage or difference. It demonstrates that consumers will accept the proposition if it is communicated convincingly and creatively.

Reviving an ailing brand almost inevitably requires some new insight developed at the planning stage which steers us in the right direction.

Low-Low's came from an understanding of the target group, Batchelor's from a better understanding of the market involving a different perspective on how consumers viewed the product, whereas Denny's came from an essential product truth.



5) Winning the War for Talent

One of the most unusual uses of marketing communications designed to make a business more attractive to potential employees was for Jameson and is described in the 2014 awards. A critical element of the brand's marketing communications strategy is the use of brand ambassadors to engage in high level personal selling in fashionable bars and clubs in major cities around the world. The Jameson Graduate Programme recruits over thirty graduates a year and wanted to increase brand awareness and position the programme as innovative, creative and unique. Qualification standards were high; successful applicants needed to be fluent in a number of languages and display attractive, outgoing personalities in addition to high levels of academic qualifications.

Candidates were required to include in their application a two minute video to prove their credentials and showcase their creativity and language skills. However in 2011 Jameson was ranked only 151st in terms of businesses that would be attractive to graduates.

They obviously wanted to attract the highest calibre talent for their Graduate Programme so they created a digital hub for the whole recruitment process. Potential candidates, who are always online, always connected and are highly sophisticated media users, can experience the Jameson way of life and the opportunities available through interaction with current graduates already employed on the programme who supply streams of content and respond directly to queries.

The campaign has resulted in transforming Jameson's image in the graduate recruitment market moving the business from 151st most attractive in 2011 to a position in the top 10 in 2014.

The 'war for talent' is particularly fierce in a booming market but regardless of the state of the economy businesses that have the edge in attracting the best and the brightest will out-perform their competitors. These case studies demonstrate how marketing communications can improve a business's ability to attract the best and the brightest by presenting a more distinctive, attractive and dynamic image.

An enhanced image for a business will also have a beneficial effect on existing staff morale which in turn will have a beneficial effect on the business. A recent survey in the UK showed that businesses with engaged employees increased operating income by 19% compared with businesses with lower levels of engaged employees which saw operating income fall by 33%.

Reviving an ailing brand almost inevitably requires some new insight developed at the planning stage which steers us in the right direction.

PART 3

Marketing Communications can Improve the Performance of all Organisations.

In this section three types of organisations, not typically regarded as advertisers, are considered; Government Departments, Charities and Retailers. Retailers, of course, have been among the earliest advertisers but I am including them here because it is only recently that they have started to regard themselves as 'brand' and are therefore now engaging in more sophisticated marketing communications.

Doing the State Some Service: How Advertising Saves Taxpayers Millions of Euros.

The Advertising Awards case studies include a wealth of evidence of how government advertising adds to rather than diminishes the public purse. They should be required reading for all government ministers.

The primary objective of most private sector advertising is usually to persuade people to buy more of a company's products or services. Public sector advertising is mainly trying to change people's behaviour and in the past twenty years it has successfully managed to make sweeping changes for the better in Irish society by encouraging us to:

- wear seat-belts
- never ever drink and drive
- recycle household waste
- give blood regularly
- prevent farm accidents
- use less energy
- not to smoke.

One of the most successful campaigns which won gold awards in 2012 and 2014 was the anti-smoking campaign. Apart from the fact that smoking kills so many people every year it is also a huge burden on the health service. Although regular campaigns designed to help people quit have been run over the years and have had an effect with the percentage of the population who are regular smokers declining slowly, almost one third of the population are still smokers. In 2011 a new campaign was planned designed to encourage smokers to make a quit attempt. The argument most likely to evoke a response and make the smoker consider quitting was the research that showed that one in every two smokers will die from a tobacco related illness. A cast of smokers and ex-smokers were selected, alerted through ads in clinics, public offices and Facebook. The selected respondents were invited to participate in the research along with a sibling, mate or loved one. Each of the pairs of respondents communicated three messages: a statement of the unavoidable 1 in 2 fact, a direct question asking if they could live with the consequences and a new 'Quit' logo. The campaign resulted in over a quarter of a million people, 277,700, quitting during the campaign. Smoking costs the Irish Health Service

just under €750m per annum. International research showed that 5% of smokers who make a quit attempt will be smoke free a year later. That means that the campaign resulted in just under 14,000 people quitting smoking and will be no longer a burden on the public purse, an €11m saving for the Health Service and a return on marketing investment of €1: 40.

The most charismatic of the 'real' people in the campaign was Dubliner Gerry Collins who was an ex-smoker whose personal story was featured in the campaign. According to the HSE the 2011-2013 campaign was 'one of the most comprehensive and effective behavioural change public education campaigns ever'. However it was beginning to tire by the end of 2013. Gerry Collins's offer to extend the campaign into 2014 provided the means of a re-vitalised campaign for 2014 under the dramatic and hearth-breaking line: "I thought I got away with it. I thought I was the 2 but now I discover I was the 1". During the sixty days before he died over 60,000 smokers quit smoking, of which 3000 should be smoke free in twelve months - of which, in turn, half would have died. Thus Gerry Collins saved 1500 lives. This represents savings to the HSE of €14m.

Another example of how marketing communications changed behaviour and saved lives was the long-running anti drink-driving campaign. The main objective of a long running series of TV advertisements was to change the widespread belief, especially among younger drivers, that one or two drinks did not affect their ability to drive safely. In 1995 just over one third of male drivers under fifty (35%) believed it was unacceptable to drive after one drink. By 2006 this percentage had doubled (70%). This resulted in a 35% reduction in deaths due to alcohol-related deaths on the road in 2005 compared to 1995.

The campaign to persuade more people to wear seat-belts was equally successful in changing behaviour. A critical element in this campaign was to persuade back seat passengers to wear a seat-belt. Research had shown that younger passengers claimed a sense of 'physical and social exclusion' when wearing seatbelts in the rear of a car. In 1995 just over half of back seat passengers (52%), were wearing seat-belts. By 2006 this percentage had reached 90% and more dramatically deaths and serious injuries without seatbelts fell by 29% in Northern Ireland and by 46% in the Republic of Ireland.

Politicians and senior civil servants tend to have a poor understanding of how marketing communications work and are often suspicious of the concept in the first place.

We need to do more to educate them about the enormous potential savings professional marketing communications campaigns can achieve for the exchequer.

Charity Begins With Advertising.

The first appearance of a charity in the advertising awards case histories was in 2004 for Barnardo's, followed by the Alzheimer's Society in 2006 and then by an increasing number of entries and award-winners in 2012 and 2014. The increase in recent years has been due to the effects of the recession which had resulted in a decline in giving from an increasingly hard-pressed Irish population.

Barnardo's followed their case history in 2004 with a second in 2012 and they probably represent the most successful example of how charities can benefit from professional marketing communications. In 2010 Barnardo's received a silver award for another case history, designed to increase awareness and put children's rights in the forefront of political debate, but as the recession took its effect on people's ability and willingness to donate to charity this campaign was also required to increase revenue. Market research was employed to uncover the barriers to supporting Barnardo's and the most likely arguments for overcoming these barriers. The research showed that people were more likely to give if they could see a tangible return for their contribution. As a result a campaign was created arguing that children's welfare was the responsibility of the community not of big government. This resulted in a 50% increase in donations.

The 2012 awards case studies include details of a campaign for the ISPC which succeeded in reversing a 22% decline in donations in 2010 to a 6% increase in 2011.

In 2014 the Jack and Jill Foundation received a gold award for a harrowing TV advertisement which raised awareness of a charity founded to provide intensive care for severely ill children to be cared for in their own homes. An initial media investment of €45,000 yielded €450,000 of donations, a return of €10 for every euro spent. The ROMI was calculated as follows: marginal contribution, €405,000, net profit, €360,000, ROMI, 800 (360,000/45,000 X 100).

These case studies show that charities can be regarded as brands and can benefit from a better known, more distinctive and more attractive brand image.

This is particularly apposite in Ireland today given recent public concerns about the way these organisations are governed.

Retailers Finally Embrace Marketing Communications.

Traditionally retailers eschewed the marketing subtlety and artistic creativity of high level marketing communications in favour of what might be described as the 'wham bang thank you ma'am' school of

advertising. McDonald's have led the way for retailers with seven awards since 2006. Not only have they led the way for retailers they also can claim more award-winning case studies than any other advertiser.

They made a third consecutive appearance in the 2010 awards for their 2009 EuroSaver campaign which followed the successful formula of previous years by starting with a detailed research programme designed to capture the zeitgeist of by now recession torn Ireland. The critical insight emerging from this research was that although the transition from teenager to young adult had always been stressful the stress levels were now acute due to the economic collapse and the increasing likelihood of unemployment or emigration. This led to a campaign positioning EuroSaver as 'the solution in troubled times'. Four TV commercials were produced based on a theme which directly reflected the mood of the nation: 'Things can change quickly so it's good some things don't change at all'. As a result EuroSaver sales increased by 34% between 2009 and 2010 with an ROMI of 193%. An interesting footnote to this campaign was that it was adopted by McDonald's in the Czech Republic, the first time an Irish McDonald's campaign had been exported.

McDonald's also featured strongly in the 2012 and 2014 awards. In 2012 they had two winning case studies, both direct responses to the continuing recession which was hurting the Informal Eating Out (IEO) market sector where McDonald's was the dominant brand leader. The first was for a campaign which changed existing perceptions of the brand to make it a more acceptable choice for breakfast - thus extending sales during the day - and the second was for the successful introduction of Wraps, a completely new food platform for McDonald's. The new product was positioned as being highly portable, suitable for eating 'on the go', and the creative campaign featured a clever headline: 'It's new but you'll easily pick it up'. The launch was so successful that McDonald's market share increased by 24%.

Although McDonald's was the retailer with the most awards it wasn't the only one and 2012 marked the first appearance of a major multiple when Super-Valu walked off with the Grand Prix for the imaginative transformation of their retailer brand range. Super-Valu featured twice in the 2014 awards, winning a silver for a campaign to re-position the brand as the true champion of Irish farmers and food suppliers to combat attempts by the German discounters to occupy that territory. Super-Valu also won a bronze award for a separate campaign for their Supreme food range.

Retailers are leaving behind their functional repetitive advertising approach and embracing more sophisticated emotionally based advertising often using in-depth market research to uncover societal concerns and consumer insights.

PART 4

How Marketing Communications Reflects Societal Change.

Marshall McLuhan, he of 'the medium is the message' fame, also noted that anthropologists of the future would be well advised to study the advertising of any period they were investigating where they would find invaluable clues to how people lived at the time. Anthropologists of the future would be well advised to study the combined AdFx case studies. This section concentrates on three areas worth noting: (1) the way marketing communications can be studied as a direct reflection of a society that experienced turbulent economic fortunes in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, (2) how Irish society responded to the Great Recession and (3) how it responded to the digital revolution.

Advertising as a Reflection of a Changing Ireland.

A study of the AdFx award winners since 1996 already offers insights into the changing Irish business landscape. During the first decade the winning case studies were almost exclusively in the fast moving consumer goods category but the FMCG share of winning entries starts to decline in the second decade. This was because a much wider range of business sectors began to invest in marketing communications and the power of traditional brands leaders in the grocery sector weakened under the onslaught of retail giants armed with more accurate consumer data from loyalty card schemes and more professional use of market research. Over half of the case studies in 1996 were for fast moving consumer goods brands but in 2014 this category represented less than one third of all award winners. This year a wide variety of businesses: retail, finance, automotive, tourism, utilities and entertainment made an appearance in addition to charities and public sector advertisers.

The case studies from 2010 onwards are awash with introductions outlining the scale of the damage in individual markets caused by the Great Recession and under the 'objectives' heading there are repeated references to 'increasing sales in a declining market'. There are plenty of examples of how this difficult goal was achieved through outstanding advertising but there was also a potentially worrying trend in the number of case studies based on short term promotional campaigns with no mention of long term brand-building. There is a natural tendency for managing directors to reduce advertising spend and new product innovation during a recession but evidence from previous recessions suggests that businesses who take the opposite course are more likely to thrive.

Exclusive reliance on price promotions stimulates price sensitivity in a market, decreases brand distinctiveness in the long run and enhances the popularity of private label.

If the anthropologists of the future will find in these case studies a treasure trove of insights into life in Ireland in the boom and the bust, marketing communication professionals of the present will find an equally rewarding treasure trove of best practice in strategic planning, insight generation and availing of the enhanced cost-effective opportunities for reaching audiences in the new media landscape.

Surviving and Thriving in the Great Recession.

The mistake of cutting investment in marketing communications when the economic climate darkens has already been noted in the ready-to-eat cereal example from the US in the 1920's. The case studies from the 2010, 2012 and 2014 awards show that many businesses opted to spend their way out of the recession and were rewarded for holding their nerve.

The car market was one of the main early casualties; after fifteen years of continuous sales increases in July 2009 car sales were down a massive 65% on the previous year. Renault was particularly hard hit because its market share had been falling for some time and by 2008 had dipped under 4%. In addition brand attribute studies showed that the Renault brand had developed poor value and quality perceptions. The solution was a promotional campaign built around a 'scrappage scheme' whereby the company provided motorists with discounts of up to €4,500 when they replaced their old car with a new Renault. However the creative element in the campaign that captured the public imagination was that it was portrayed as a media 'story' and featured an Irish News reporter talking excitedly about the scheme from a location that frequently appeared on Irish television screens like Government Buildings. In some commercials the reporter was seen to stalk Government Ministers lobbying them to take action while portraying Renault as the organisation that was taking action to help Irish motorists. The campaign attracted huge media coverage and helped Renault to fourth brand in the market with sales increasing by over 500% during the campaign.

One of Ireland's leading electrical retail brands, Curry's, was also severely impacted by the recession, not only because of the sharp decline in consumer confidence and spending but because a weakening in the Sterling exchange rate during 2008/9 resulted in an average 12% increase in buying power for shoppers in the Republic of Ireland who could easily use that increased power by crossing the border. Over €435m was spent on cross-border shopping trips in the year ending July 2009. Curry's responded with a price reduction of 6.5% but conscious that this on its own would not compensate for at least a 10% reduction available to cross-border shoppers it was advertised in a dramatic way using a powerful visual device -



Agreeing clear
objectives makes
marketing more
effective





the substitution of the colours of the Irish tri-colour onto the British Union Jack giving the impression that Ireland was taking over the best of what the British had to offer. Other quintessentially British icons and phrases were also used, for example, 'God save a fortune'. The ruse worked and Curry's sales increased by 13% following the campaign.

The beleaguered financial services sector was an obvious casualty of the recession not only in terms of a shrinking market but because of the reputational damage and public opprobrium suffered as a result of their part in the crisis. Nevertheless business has to be done and a Bank of Ireland case study in the 2012 award winners demonstrated the power of creatively distinctive engaging advertising to overcome all obstacles. The Bank needed to respond to a Troika-led demand to achieve €600m new deposits in 2011 by opening 10,000 new lump sum deposit accounts. A TV led campaign based on the imaginative use of a well-known savings icon, the squirrel, bettered the target achieving over 17,000 new accounts and raising over €1m in deposits.

Every time a recession comes along marketing communications professionals are able to summon up impressive evidence showing that businesses who maintained marketing communications spend in previous recessions emerged more successful than businesses that battened down the hatches. We'll have to keep spreading this message.





The Media Revolution.

The marketing communications literature of the last decade regularly refers to the 'digital revolution' but it is really the entire media side of the business that has been revolutionised.

In 2014 digital achieved mainstream status with some digital element in most case studies and including a number of campaigns which would not have been possible in a pre-digital age. One of the most comprehensive examples - and an ideal case study from which to gain a clear understanding of the complexity and opportunities of the new media landscape - is for Cadbury's Dairy Milk. Like many other impulse purchase brands sales were in decline due to the continuing austerity-led recession but in addition to recovering lost sales the business also wanted to introduce new packs, always a potential for trouble when you are dealing with a long-established national favourite. This case study describes an ambitious three-pronged strategy beginning with a digital-only stage designed to generate engagement, likeability and word-of-mouth. A real-life Joyville was created in St Anne's Park, Raheny, in Dublin, involving a chocolate-giving tree to surprise and delight passers-by with hidden cameras in the surrounding trees and bushes to record their reactions (it is interesting to note how many digital initiatives rely on a 1960's cult TV programme!). An edited video was then transmitted through social media encouraging users to become part of the experience and share it with friends. It quickly became the most watched video in the country generating over 800,000 views. In stage two the new pack changes were introduced using outdoor and digital channels designed to communicate the changes clearly but with the minimum of fuss. The initial activity was then augmented by a 60sec TV commercial edited from the Joyville video.

The third and final stage was designed to create a national debate around the relative merits of the eight variants in the CDM range. For this stage the media mix comprised a new video on digital display formats, a microsite and outdoor. This complex campaign resulted in a 5% increase in gross profit for the brand and sales and market share gains.

A new app also played a key role in the 2014 Murphy's case study which used the classic jujitsu strategy of leveraging the superior strength of an opponent to your own advantage. In 2011 Budweiser had run a national promotion featuring a fictitious American presenter offering free pints if the temperature during the summer reached over 21 degrees. Murphy's neatly inverted the idea parodying the American's lack of knowledge of the normal Irish summer by offering free pints of Murphy's if rainfall went above 2 mm accompanied by a witty headline; 'When it Rains, it Pours'. The target audience could participate in the promotion by downloading an app which in turn could be displayed to participating bars thus eliminating costly and annoying administration mechanisms. Not surprisingly sales increased at the expense of brand leader Guinness, affinity ratings significantly improved and a data base of over 30,000 was amassed and sales of Murphy's increased for the first time in seven years.

Although we need to be careful about what one commentator has described as 'throwing the baby it has taken one hundred years to nurture out with the analogue bathwater, is a crazy response to the opportunities digital presents' we must also acknowledge the extraordinary opportunities presented by the new channels. The 2014 case studies in particular prove that digital is here to stay, just like television, radio, press and outdoor.

They also confirm evidence from the UK market that fully integrated campaigns are likely to be more successful than campaigns that concentrate on a single channel. But in our business, which has creativity at its heart, we should never be afraid of exceptions, of taking the road less travelled.



HOME ABOUT US CONTACT

Section of a website layout containing several images and columns of text. The images include a group of people, a man in a suit holding a clock, a man working at a desk, and a hand pointing at a screen.







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