COMMUNICATION & SOCIETY

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Effective communication models in advertising campaigns. A strategic analysis in the search for effectiveness

Abstract

In striving for effectiveness these days, sales alone cannot be the single foremost objective. Other factors can contribute to the creation of a virtuous cycle and have an impact on sales. These too should be measured when determining the overall effectiveness of a campaign. In this article we present an analysis of the winning cases in the Effectiveness Awards for commercial communications in Spain from 2010-2018. We will use it to identify the most widely employed communication models and evaluation metrics currently in use when considering the effectiveness of an advertising campaign. To compare and provide professional assessment we have sought out and compiled the opinions of professionals from the advertising sector who have previously sat on the Effectiveness Awards jury. The main objective is to identify and categorise the most effective models of communication currently in use. To this end 280 cases have been analysed from the Effectiveness Awards between 2010 and 2018 and a total of 48 in-depth interviews have been carried out. Among the main results we highlight the superiority of emotional models over rational ones. We found cultural emotion provides the best results though when it comes to gains in efficiency, a correlation of both yields improved averages in business.

Keywords
Models, effectiveness, advertising, communication, strategy, Effectiveness Awards.

1. Introduction

The advertising industry is currently undergoing profound change. The panorama of the moment is one in which the advertiser faces numerous complex challenges. The lack of differentiation between products and brands has become a symptom apparent across developed markets (Benavides–Delgado *et al*., 2010). There is a saturation of communication that surpasses the attention threshold as well as the fragmentation of media which presents an obstacle to reaching objectives. It is ever more the case that communication campaigns are less memorable to consumers (Palmatier *et al*., 2006) and are defined under an assortment of nomenclature (integrated campaigns, 360º campaigns etc.). Each one seeks to coordinate the multiple components of communication and thereby amplify and maximise contact with the consumer. This however, due to its complexity, makes measuring difficult. The consumer too

is ever more expert in the techniques employed in communication. No longer a passive receiver but, thanks to the Internet, a potent means of diffusion through both the sharing of messages and the adding to of content. This represents a departure from a traditional model of communication to the current possibility of responding to and influencing other consumers (Bermejo, 2008). The *crossumer* is a much more demanding consumer; reluctant to accept the traditional premise of communication whilst knowledgeable on the strategies and tools employed in marketing (Gil & Romero, 2008).

The industries making up the ecosystem of the advertising world (advertisers, agencies, media, consultancies and research institutes) need to feel secure in their decision making processes (Álvarez. 2012). In spite of all these challenges, practices within the field have evolved very little over time. The advertiser wants to go on informing in their highly saturated environment whereas the power to do so and the effective control over the information such as its effectiveness in results, has been brought into question (Pallete, 2012). These kinds of presumptions continue to constitute the norms upon which everyday work is carried out. There is the need for a message or sales pitch which must be understood by the consumer to succeed (Cuesta, 2012) coupled together with creativity as a subsidiary element to empower and reinforce the message (Roca & Mensa, 2009). However, brands continue over-informing to persuade and achieve a change in consumer behaviour (Bassat, 2011). All of this raises various questions about the basis upon which many briefing models pivot: What is there to say? What is the promise? What is the *selling idea*? (Ollé & Riu, 2009). Effectiveness becomes the yardstick for change, the gold standard with which not only advertising actions are measured, but so too is the entire industry starting with the advertising agencies themselves (Vázquez, 2012).

Today, there is a demand for greater emphasis on how to generate effective communication actions when faced with a landscape so radically altered by digital media (Campos, 2010). It is a pressing challenge for the industry and advertisers who need to imbue their brands, products and campaigns with attractiveness (Brujo, 2008). The demand for effectiveness from all sides is greater than ever with a sector wide paradigm change evolving at breakneck speed not to mention a world economic crisis that has altered consumer behaviour (Oliver & Alloza, 2009). It is necessary to define with the greatest possible accuracy exactly which routes and situations are most relevant in achieving optimum results (Massoni, 2007).

In Spain there is much subject matter of interest: The Awards for Effectiveness in commercial communication (from here on Effectiveness Awards) provides a basis for the study of the most effective cases in the advertising industry. They make up a very qualified sample for research into the most suitable practises for achieving optimum results. At a time as demanding as is currently the case, advertisers and agencies ought to review the models they apply in communication (Fanjul, González & Arranz, 2018). Whilst there are rules that may still be valid and functional for specific products, categories or life cycles of brands, there are models that can (and should) improve on the results obtained (Maciá, 2018).

1.1. *Definition of effectiveness and the principal measuring techniques*

One of the main challenges that arises in the planning of any given communication campaign is in clearly determining the precise objectives sought and the metrics used to analyse its level of effectiveness (Patti *et al.*, 2017). Bill Bernbach affirmed that the aim was to sell (Levenson, 1987). What really matters are commercial aims over attitudinal ones. Intermediate metrics (attitudinal or behavioural) are important, as are the results of communication, although they continue to be measured as a means to an end: sell more, to more consumers, at a higher price (Palmatier *et al.*, 2006).

In line with the Spanish Association of Advertisers (AEA), effectiveness can be defined as the capacity of an advertisement to fulfil the task set. The Spanish Association of Advertisers

definition may appear restrictive in its reference to the subject as that which should generate effectiveness (advertisement), but it isn't clear whether it refers to a specific piece or to the campaign as a whole. Neither is there a definition of what might be the foreseeable results and whether the emphasis is on the sale of products/services or other metrics related to brand values. It fails to determine what can feasibly be expected of an advertising action, leaving it to rest on a term as broad and ambiguous as *a task*. This touches on the complexity of the concept, defining a process that passes through cognitive, affective and conative functions and which will be the object of study in the different models of persuasion analysed later in the article.

Generally speaking, sales is the foremost option for advertisers in the establishment of advertising objectives (García-Uceda, 2011), and that is clearly reflected in the cases presented at the Effectiveness Awards. Despite this, it is the more difficult option to establish for two reasons: the first is due to the difficulty inherent in isolating the results obtained for sales given the impact of many other variables that might influence the final results. The second is determined by the fact that advertising can have a delayed effect on sales (Martín-Santana, 1998). The elasticity of results that advertising can demonstrate shows that effectiveness should aspire to exceed previously established objectives (Binet & Field, 2009). We have to be more demanding about effectiveness when we talk about advertising because persuasion doesn't come from a mechanistic or economic approach but from a psychological one in which the response generated should be greater than the objectives initially set out (Cuesta, 2006).

The concept of advertising effectiveness is inextricably linked to the prior setting of objectives, the measuring of the results and fulfilling (or improving on) them (Cooper, 2006). Not determining the objectives clearly beforehand will impact on the effectiveness of a campaign. Therefore, brands ought to be aware of the pitfalls inherent in not being relevant to consumers and how they should bolster the personal element, the connection with the consumer, and offer innovative content focused on entertainment and inspiration (Martí & Muñoz, 2008).

From a theoretical perspective, we can determine the principal techniques used for measuring effectiveness are found in three main stages behind the process of advertising response. It is they that make up the different levels of response from the purchaser: the cognitive stage, the affective stage and the conative stage (Beerli & Martin, 1999).

Cognitive techniques measure the capacity of an advert to capture attention as well as its memorability and capacity to transmit the message it is aiming to communicate. These techniques should be employed in the measuring of advertising effectiveness for all types of campaign regardless of objective. If the individual has not perceived, understood and remembered the message, it is unlikely that it will produce the desired effect in attitude (Checa, 2000). However, the fact that a message has been read by an audience does not necessarily imply that it has been either accepted or validated (Griffiths, 2002). Within these cognitive techniques, measurements of a physiological nature are applied to analyse the emotional response of those who are exposed to the advertising through the use of technological devices. *Neuromarketing* seeks to link the emotions to sensory, physiological and cognitive indicators, by measuring (Quiñones, 2014). These techniques permit the evaluation of each image and the resulting intention to purchase. These tools however have a quantitative character which doesn't reveal exactly why the results are produced. Other ways of measuring that have been employed have a semi-physiological character in which the individual, in contrast to those in the aforementioned case, maintains full control over their response (Cuesta, 2006).

Measurements of brand notoriety that evaluate the level of cognitive response (that is, raising awareness of the existence of a product, brand or company) are usually employed at product launch and used to comprehend the brand position in the mind of consumers

(Barden, 2013). The most frequently used technique is *top of mind* and can analyse notoriety as either spontaneous or suggested (prompted), the same as a so-called memory test (Aaker, 2002). Brand notoriety is made up of two parts: memory and brand recognition. The *memory* of a brand implies the capacity on the part of consumers to recognise a brand within a category of products (Keller, 2013). *Recognition* of a brand however implies that the consumer knows of it beforehand and faced with a range of brands, should be able to identify it (Capriotti, 2009). Lastly, there are measurements based on memory that measure the impact of the message through the capacity of an audience to remember and recognise it. They mainly measure two different aspects: message capture on first viewing of the advert and the degree to which the advert remains in peoples' memories (Holt, 2004).

Affective techniques act on consumer behaviour via the creation or reinforcing of attitudes that allow for peoples' feelings to be expressed (Anderson, 1999). Once again it is worth remarking that these measures do not determine that a purchase will be made, they simply show a favourable disposition. As such a survey is carried out to determine if the consumer has enjoyed the advertising piece being studied (Sivera–Bello, 2008).

The measuring of attitude tests the strength of feelings of individuals towards the object being advertised and also judges their intensity. At the same time they analyse the attitude of an individual to the advertisement as a dichotomous variable made up of two perfectly differentiated components. There is on one hand the affective, emotional side reflecting the feelings individuals experience during their exposure to the advert. On the other hand however there is the cognitive or evaluative component that shows their opinion on the quality of the advertisement, the information provided and its utility (Regueira, 2012). The measurement of brand preference makes reference to the liking/preference an individual has in relation to other competing brands on the market (López, 2007). There are also the means of persuasion the advert has which correlate with its ability to change an individual's attitude when faced with the brand in question (Sardegna & Donayre, 2016).

Finally there are the conative techniques that measure behavioural responses manifest by individuals in not just purchasing terms, but also in their predisposition to act in a desired way. This is commonly used in campaigns seeking to provoke action in the consumer (Fresno, 2012). With that in mind, measurements of purchasing intention are applied. These quantify the likelihood of an individual trying out or buying a brand. They also measure responses to direct marketing actions which refer to campaigns that incentivise product trials and motivate an individual to go to a sales outlet, etc. There is also the measuring of variations in sales which is used to establish a direct relation between sales and advertising and thereby identify the different factors clearly influencing sales (Sánchez-Blanco, 2011).

We can see that the evaluating of advertising effectiveness is difficult given that the mechanics of measurement are complex and completely dependent on the response of a person to communication. This is where all manner of problems and challenges arise in its evaluation. Tellis (2004) details the most important of them:

1. Consumers may purchase a product for a wide variety of reasons. Analysing the effect an advert has had on the purchase requires control and analysis of these factors.

2. Advertising habitually uses different media which can have different results on the consumer. As such it is necessary to determine the contribution each has had on the final outcome.

3. Advertising may have effects in both the short and/or long term. A campaign can continue having an effect beyond the timescale initially estimated as well as taking time for its effect to unfold.

4. The effectiveness of a campaign can vary depending on its duration and can differ over the life cycle of the campaign.

5. A campaign can present different levels of effectiveness depending on the different segments of consumers.

6. The results of a campaign can overlap with those of a previous one in such a way that any increase or fall can be influenced by a preceding campaign.

Therefore the study of a campaign's effectiveness entails reflecting and theorising on how communication affects and influences the consumer (Ayestarán, Rangel & Sebastián, 2012). There are many theoretical models that have been pursued to delimit the ways in which consumers react to advertising (Eguizábal, 1998). There are those from the perspective of the communicator which view the consumer as passive (King, 1973), to those in which the consumer is seen as a transformer of the communication (Farrán, 2016). It is really important to thoroughly understand the life cycle of the product as well as that of its category. In considering whether or not the same effectiveness can be demanded from either model, the dependence on the sector in which a product operates must be taken into account. This depends on a product's life cycle, the brand and the environment (cultural and social context) and makes a different connection with the consumer necessary. Notoriety and persuasion are also required to generate a concrete conversation (Fontana 2010).

1.2. *Classification of the models of advertising communication*

A classification of the principal models of communication is set out, reviewing and updating those put forward by Binet and Field (2009), and will be applied in the analysis of the field of work:

Rational (communication focused on the product)

- Rational *(Information)* in line with Binet & Field (2009): Provides information about the brand, or the product, category and consumer. These campaigns eschew the emotional component. It is a model in which the benefit and the *reason why* constitute the axis of communication.
- Rational Empathetic (*Persuasion)* in line with Binet & Field (2009): Seeks to capture attention by drawing the interest of the audience by means of novelties and by adding an emotional element to make the message more memorable. The information may be presented in the form of a challenge to initial perceptions of the category or even to strengthen the perception of the brand itself.

Emotional (consumer focused communication)

- Classic Emotion (*Emotional involvement*): Campaigns that seek to exalt the feelings and emotions of the audience and so create an engagement with the campaign and the product/brand being advertised. The intention is to transfer these emotions onto the brand and generate empathy with the consumer. On occasion product information may be included although this is done anecdotally.
- *Fame*: As an objective it seeks to generate notoriety in the form of *talk-value* and *word of mouth.* It focuses on the generation of entertainment. They are campaigns in which the main purpose is to be spoken about to gain earned media principally on social networks. The connection they aim to achieve with the consumer is attitudinal and the information is minimal.
- Social Creativity (new model): Campaigns that require the involvement of the consumer with the content. They explore any tensions there may be in the category and specific context and use them to benefit the message. They make participation the axis of the campaign by inviting consumers to share space with the brand and fellow consumers. They are collaborative campaigns which can easily become high profile through the *buzz* they generate.
- Cultural Emotion (new model): Campaigns which break with the conventions of the categories to which they belong in order to take a position on tensions and conflicts that affect their clients. They seek not only awareness but also recognition, a connection and an emotional link between the brand and the consumer (Vázquez, 2012).

2. Objectives and methodology

The principal objective of this piece is to focus on the study and analysis of the winning campaigns of the Effectiveness Awards in commercial communication (Effectiveness Awards) with the aim of identifying and categorising the most effective current models of communication. This analysis is also complemented by the compilation of professional opinions from the advertising communication sector in order to obtain a more practical view and contrast the information acquired in the case studies of the Effectiveness Awards. To this end 280 cases have been analysed from the Effectiveness Awards between 2010 and 2018 and a total of 48 in-depth interviews were carried out.

The Effectiveness Awards are organised by the Spanish Association of Advertisers (AEA) and have been recognising the best practices of the Spanish advertising industry since 1997. Twenty editions have been held to date and they have become ever more prestigious: they are the awards of this kind to receive most worldwide inscriptions, surpassing the UK, USA, Argentina, and China. So far they have clocked up 2,368 cases presented by 400 agencies and over 800 advertisers.

The Effectiveness Awards comprehend that differentiation, innovation and thus, creativity, all correlate with effectiveness. They take into account the need to correctly isolate the results obtained in respect to other variables which may influence the final decision of the consumer. The effects are evaluated in terms of return on investment in a broad sense without being exclusively tied to sales and they open the way to intermediate measurements which we will go on to look at in the analysis.

The advertising industry demands a higher dose of efficacy in its campaigns (Álvarez, 2012) and this calls for creativity and strategy to be totally aligned in the advertising messages if what is really sought are results that go beyond sales alone (Checa, 2000). Advertising saturation (Benavides *et al.*, 2010), ecosystem changes as a result of the digital boom (Campos, 2010), changes in the form of content consumption (Cuesta, 2012) and the new consumer profile (Gil & Romero, 2008), call for strategies of an emotional character to connect with audiences and generate memorable campaigns (Ollé & Riu, 2009).

As such, the starting hypothesis is predicated on the superiority of emotional models over rational ones in the campaigns that have been recognised as highly effective by the Effectiveness Awards. Emotional models achieve better results in business compared to rational ones.

The superiority of emotional models over rational ones prompts a series of questions that arise in the literature used for the theoretical framework and calls for research into three principal areas:

- Regarding effectiveness: Are there a larger number of awarded cases which focus on the emotional rather than the rational? What are the models in which this superiority dominates? What elements of efficacy do campaigns considered for the Effectiveness Awards have in common?
- Regarding metrics: Is there a greater performance of metrics of effect on the idea and brand results in campaigns that have obtained an Effectiveness Award? Is the performance better in metrics of business and sales?
- Regarding the sector: How do professionals set out an advertising campaign and what elements should they include to ensure its efficacy? What is the opinion of the aforementioned professionals in relation to the current media landscape, the most effective formats and the current relation that brands should have with consumers?

The main technique used for the study was the analysis of content constructed from the classification of data obtained in the case studies of the winners of the Effectiveness Awards held between 2010 and 2018. Content analysis is an investigative tool which allows for the analysis of the subject in a non-intrusive way. It identifies tendencies and provides an

objective, systematic and quantitative method (Bardin, 1989). A case study is a unit of analysis used to research a contemporary phenomenon empirically in a real life setting using multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2009). Case studies help to discover how and why things happen, allowing research of contextual reality and the differences between what is planned and how things actually unfold. (Anderson, 1999). Research by means of case studies can pivot on a single case (when this turns out to be highly particular or unique and always when a lot of information about it is available) or on multiple cases (Losada & López, 2003). In this article, given the nature of the object being studied, a multiple investigation of cases will be undertaken and will combine both quantitative and qualitative techniques (Berganza & Ruiz, 2005).

The winning cases between 2010 and 2018 in the following defined categories of the Effectiveness Awards are taken as a sample of the field work:

- Effectiveness in Commercial Communication.
- Effectiveness in Commercial Communication – Budgets under 300.000€ (as of edition XV 250.000€).
- Special Regional Category/Local.
- Special Recognition of the Most Innovative Strategy.

The category of Media Effectiveness, the special category of Social Responsibility and other special recognitions remained outside the purview of this analysis. The criteria for having discounted these categories was the need to analyse cases which provide a commercial result rather than media effectiveness as well as the amplification of message with earned media as a final metric. The categories analysed were: food, alcoholic beverages, non-alcoholic beverages, banking, large retail, catering & hostelry, automotive, travel & leisure, telecommunication companies, lotteries & betting, mass media, large scale consumption & services, insurance and consumer durables.

In regard to the analysis, a template was used in all cases in which the aim was the study and identification of the most effective model of advertising communication as well as the most widely used metrics of measurement. As such, the criteria determined by the contest itself were followed rigorously when evaluating the cases presented and the metrics that contributed in each of them.

Finally, the following items were analysed:

- Communication strategy developed: level of difficulty that the communication action had to resolve (market competition, product maturity, lack of differentiation, etc.) against the objectives set by the client.
- Metrics of business results: sales, market share, reduction in price sensitivity, frequency of purchase, increase in turnover and ratio of sales to investment.
- Metrics of effects on the brand: notoriety, repercussion, memory of advertising, improvement of attributes and of the perception of the product/service, purchasing intention, differentiation and engagement.
- Metrics of the effects of the idea and execution: pieces carried out, website visits, visualisations and web interactions (primarily YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram), user registration, earned media, and improved positioning, Google searches, generation of positive conversation and raised profile repercussion.

Previously we set out a classification of the models of communication with a review of the work by Binet & Field (2009). Carrying out this research allowed for the identification of two additional models, rational *branded content* and emotional *branded content* which reveal an evolution in the market with a focus based on *storytelling*. To clarify the analysis of these cases, the following models were taken as a starting point:

Rational
- Rational informative
- Rational empathetic

- Rational *branded content*
  Emotional
- Emotional
- Emotional Fame
- Social Creativity
- Cultural Emotion
- Emotional *branded content*

The empirical framework of content analysis is complemented by 48 individual interviews of relevant personalities from the advertising sector representing the ambits of advertiser, creative agency and media with each following an open questionnaire. The main reason for choosing an open interview as a qualitative methodology in carrying out empirical research lies in the definition itself. It is seen as a process of questioning and the registering of knowledge and opinions on a given subject so as to carry out a specific task with that information (Losada & López, 2003). In this way the interviewer could receive answers relevant to the hypothesis of the research (Merino & Yagüez, 2012).

Those interviewed had been jury members of the Effectiveness Awards between 2010 and 2018. The juries are selected by the Spanish Association of Advertisers (AEA) from among presidents, marketing, brand and communication directors from the foremost Spanish companies, managing directors and presidents of communication agencies (creative or media), creatives, directors, executives and planning strategy directors. All are professionals with outstanding careers and broad professional recognition. As a criteria for selection, representation was sought from advertisers responsible for communication of brands that had been recognised as much in the awards as in the advertising sector itself. The presence of strategic planners was taken into particular account given their involvement in the awards, setting out and writing the cases and for their contribution to the design of the awards themselves. The interview was made up of a questionnaire–script with a total of 15 semi-structured questions organised into the following topics:

- Elements common to effective campaigns
- Evaluation metrics for effectiveness
- Models for more effective communication
- Most effective advertising formats

In this modality the interviewer follows a specific question guide which is useful in clearly defining the points being researched and which allows for further exploration of topics that arise during the course of the survey. They are carried out in person and transcribed afterwards with the aim of analysing the information on the basis of the objectives set out for the research.

3. The main results

In continuation, the main results obtained from the analysis of the cases are explained as are the in-depth interviews of professionals from the advertising communication sector.

3.1. *Results of the analysis of the Effectiveness Awards cases*

This analysis has enabled us to conclude that on a consistent basis, emotional focus mostly outperforms rational focus year on year with an average of 82% emotional cases and 18% rational. There are four principal models which dominate all the years analysed: classic emotional (32%), emotional *branded content* (30%), emotional social creativity (8%) and cultural emotion (7%). Rational models are scarcer, with rational informative (9%) and rational empathy (6%) being the most significant. The distribution of the communication models analysed also turns out to be quite consistent over time showing the average values in Graph 1:

Graph 1: Distribution of communication models in the Effectiveness Awards.
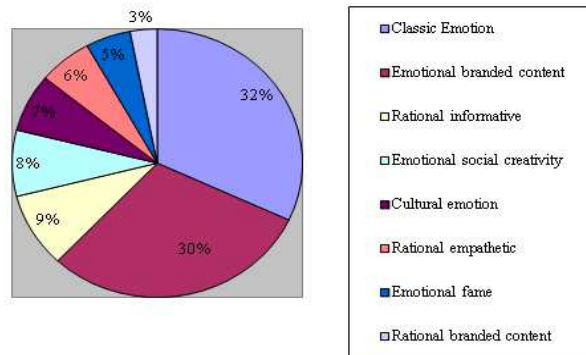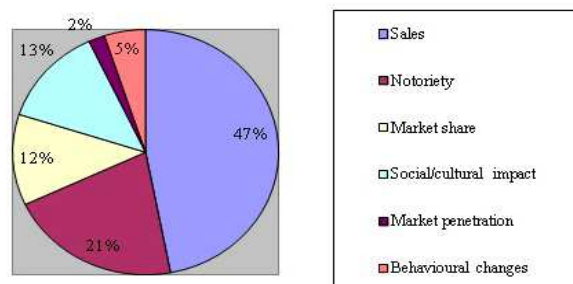

Source: Own elaboration based on case analysis.

In what is referred to as the behaviour of models in generating evaluation metrics, emotional ones average more business metrics and have more effect on creative campaign ideas year on year. Metrics related to sales, new clients and market share are the most cited business objectives while earned media, online repercussion and website visits are those cited as having most effect on business. Regarding effects on the brand, notoriety and brand attribute improvement are the most utilised metrics. The clarity disappears when emotional models are imposed on rational ones making them much more balanced.

The majority of the metrics most used by the Effectiveness Awards are quantitative and refer to sales. The sales metric, by some margin, is the most cited as defining of an effective campaign. Those that are qualitative in nature pay attention to brand value such as equity which refers to the differentiation, relevance and changes in the consumer. From among all the cases analysed, we see a general consensus in which to achieve positive data across the metrics, the brand must generate proximity and closeness to the consumer and stand out from the competition. The product ought not to be spoken of but be left to relevant topics to lift the campaign from the screen and bring it into society. Advertisers should invest in their own media, brand and human capital and generate connections using them. If a brand works on all levels, the results and the return will be equally proportional, affecting all levels. What are referred to as metrics linked to feelings and brand affinity, have grown in importance every year since their introduction to the consumer at the centre of brand strategy.

From among all the cases analysed, we can agree that the metrics providing reliable data in determining the level of effectiveness of an advertising campaign are those which appear in Graph 2:

Graph 2: Metrics to identify an effective campaign.
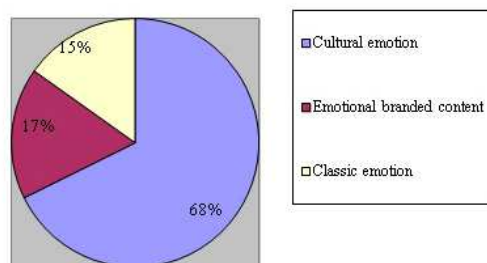

Source: Own elaboration based on case analysis.

The analysis of low budget campaigns confirms the greater use of emotional models (89%) and demonstrates the greater application of emotional *branded content,* as the most used option: 53% of cases employ this model. If those cases in which business results are of great importance are taken into account, (substantial increase in sales and market share), emotional cases are again better represented (84%).

The cultural emotional model is the model that excels more for being the only one which markedly increases its presence from among the representation sample: with a 7% share in 2010-2018, rising to 15% when considered among the most successful case results. When looking at earned media, the superiority of emotional models is practically absolute. The models that most report this media are cultural emotion and emotional social creativity. Moreover, when considering the models applied in the Big Awards, we see that 100% correspond to having an emotion focus and within this 100% the cultural emotion model is the one with greater presence. An analysis by category has been looked at and once more the emotional focus surpasses the rational even in supposedly rational categories such as the banking sector. Of the ten most important categories (food, alcoholic beverages, non-alcoholic beverages, banking, large retail, automotive, catering & hostelry, travel & leisure, telecommunication companies, and insurance), in only two (catering & hostelry and insurance) is there a greater presence of rational models.

In regard to the advertisers who have won more awards during this period, the following findings can be confirmed: Campofrío (nine awards), Banco Sabadell (seven awards), Coca-Cola (five awards), Grupo Mahou (four awards), Ikea (three awards), Amstel (three awards) and Atrápalo (three awards)... all of which have for the most part used emotional models (91%), making ever more clear the pre-eminence of emotional focus. Once again the cultural emotion model is reinforced, given its 68% presence as we can see in Graph 3:

Graph 3: Models of the Big Effectiveness Awards.

Source: Own elaboration based on case analysis.

Lastly, and to contextualise the use of the cultural emotion model as the one that really stands out clearly above other models, we see that it is present in the most important categories in the study (food, large retail and non-alcoholic beverages) and doesn't require large budgets to carry out. It uses online video content for the idea to gain traction, traffic and reach. Advertisers such as Campofrío and Gadis have gained wide recognition from the use of this model. Today it is Campofrío together with Ikea who are the most admired brands by professionals in the Spanish advertising sector.

3.2. *Results of the in-depth interviews*

Regarding the opinions of the interviewees about the elements common to effective campaigns, the majority (81%) confirm the importance of creativity aligned with strategy to

achieve campaign notoriety and effectiveness. This alongside the building of values and the purpose of the brand, are ever more important to connect with the audience and generate effectiveness. Creativity therefore stands as one of the most effective tools in capturing attention as it achieves a differentiation and makes a connection with the public that generates a short term response and a long term link to the brand. Innovation and strategy are also stand out elements needed for an effective campaign.

According to the interviews, advertising effectiveness can be understood on three different levels:

- The achievement of commercial objectives set out prior to the launch of the campaign through communication actions by a brand, product or service.
- The generation of a change in behaviour, perception or attitude of the consumer towards the brand.
- The developing of a planned impact to achieve greater profitability and amplification of the effect of the message.

To be able to fulfil these three objectives, the campaign must be based on a combination of planned strategy and good creativity. Aspects which appear in Graph 4.

**Graph 4**: Correlation between creativity and planned strategy in an effective campaign.
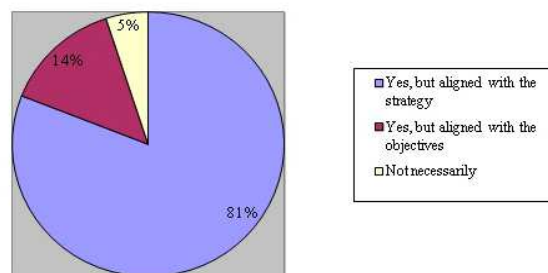
Source: Own elaboration based on case analysis.

The professionals interviewed made it clear that one should be very cautious when establishing any direct relationship between sales and advertising even though the most commonly used metrics are sales and market share. Sales are cited as the variable that most defines effectiveness (85%), although it is emphasised that there are actions that can pursue other ends (15%). Other cited metrics are: notoriety (36%), impact (25%), reach (12%), relevance (10%), news creation (9%) and the generation of unpaid impact (8%).

In regard to measurement, there is a critical view of the current methodology. The unanimous response from the four types of public surveyed (advertisers, creatives, planners and media) is that the measurements currently in use are unsatisfactory. While it is believed that business metrics do measure the results correctly, in what is referred to as the ambit of communication, the tools are not thought to have evolved as fast as media and advertising have with digital change. It is in this sense that those interviewed were most critical of the lack of a correct measurement.

Those interviewed highlighted the need to consider campaigns over the long term in order to come up with a suitable trajectory for the brand. As such, an effective campaign is defined by its fulfilment of established objectives, underlining the importance of well-defined objectives as a first step in producing an effective campaign: the solution begins by identifying the problem and defining the objective to resolve it. Creativity, in-depth knowledge of the target audience and notoriety, make up the three fundamental elements to ensure a campaign is effective and these are reflected in Graph 5:

Graph 5: Elements common to effective campaigns.
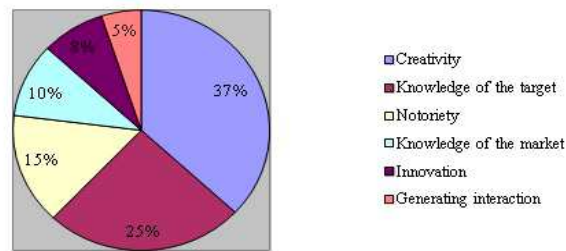
Source: Own elaboration based on analysis of the interviews carried out.

There is a consensus in regard to the most effective models of communication with 86% in favour of emotional models, 9% preferring hybrid models and 5% showing no particular preference. The cultural emotion model appears as the most effective at 45% followed by classic emotion at 32%.

Finally, in regard to the most effective formats, those interviewed still considered television as the "star" media whenever it is combined with online media. In the view of the professionals, the main problem with internet is that it has exported a very televisual-centric view as an audiovisual format that depends more on the needs of the brand than the requirements of the consumer or audience and this brings into play the mass use of so-called *adblocker*s.

Once again *branded content* appears referenced as an effective technique for certain types of public. The main reasons for this is that it can fulfil different functions from pedagogical to entertainment, and because this format responds to a consumer demand for brands to tell stories that encourage active participation. *YouTubers* (alongside *instagramers* and *influencers* in general) are cited as generators of *branded content* who can collaborate with brands in facilitating the creation of content of interest that brings in significant audiences. Finally, video and outdoor advertising are considered the other most effective formats of the moment.

It should also be noted that the majority of those interviewed pointed out that effectiveness isn't in the format but in the creative part and is also related to the objectives set by the campaign. At the same time they recognise that there are more possibilities these days to articulate big ideas with different and innovative formats.

4. Discussion and conclusions

After analysing the cases and carrying out the interviews, the hypothesis set out at the start can be reaffirmed: there is a latent superiority in emotional models over rational ones and a correlation of both in respect to the effectiveness obtained. The brands that have won awards in the period analysed used an emotional focus in 91% of cases. This corroborates the opinions of those interviewed.

In regard to metrics, emotional models generate a greater average in business results, with cultural emotion and emotional fame as those that stand out achieving the most notable results. The emotional cases achieved greater effects in business (increases in sales and market share) compared to the rational. 89% of the cases with significant results in business responded to emotional schemes. In regard to the greatest versatility when applied across different product categories, emotional models showed a great capacity to adapt to all category types and even those which are more associated with rational parameters. The emotional model that achieves the best results and from which a consensus emerges from

both the results from the Effectiveness Awards and from professionals interviewed, is the cultural emotion model. Campaigns that correspond to the cultural emotional model usually seek credibility and closeness to build a connection and thus be more credible and effective. This is principally done by identifying social tensions and friction on which the brand can rely (Bermejo, 2008). It is all about campaigns that are characterised by the inclusion of a strong anthropological substrate and which instead of working on insights into the consumer; work on insights of a social character, breaking free of its category theme. The brand eschews talk about the theme preferring instead to address initiatives or topics of general interest.

In relation to the professional sector, we can verify that prior research of the consumer with any significant contextual changes that have been exposed in a review of the specific literature together with analysis of the competition are highly important in finding areas that can be maximised in the interest of the product/brand and the relevance of the proposal. They also help to find points of differentiation in regard to the competition and in formulating new paths. At the point of setting out a campaign, culture becomes increasingly important since more work is done for the brand and not for a benefit anchored in a single proposal. The sector has to detect tensions and social trends from which the communication can gain resonance and thus more effectiveness (Srinivasan & Moorman, 2005). The brand's territory has to be credible as well as known and recognised as much by the target audience of the campaign as by society at large.

The use of emotional communication is a consequence of the maturity of the markets in which product differences are not relevant but brand affinity and the values represented are (Yale & Gilly, 2013). As such, it is best used in mature contexts, without differentiation and above all, when seen from the viewpoint of the consumer. It is currently one of the models most in use and has the prime goal of generating brands that become *lovebrands* to gain greater empathy with the consumer (Fernández–Gómez, 2014). The benefits of the product are being put to one side and the consequence of this explains the establishment of an innovative difference which is conceptualised as a new and engaging way to connect with the consumer. Emotional advertising is becoming more akin to sophisticated and personalised communication and the consumer is increasingly complex in their understanding of advertising practices and resources (Zaltman, 2013).

Media saturation makes effectiveness increasingly complex and it is necessary to generate greater interest by means of *pull* strategies to attract an audience (Griffiths, 2002). Given this scenario, communication is moving towards an emotional model more focused on digital media (Serrano-Cobos, 2016). In fact, advertisers are asking for integration with digital media: they comprehend that *online* and *offline* cannot be separated. In this framework, the *branded content* format stands out as it amplifies the stories provided by the brand and in so doing generates an experience closer to entertainment for the audience (Fresno, 2012).

The incursion of new metrics and the apparent ease of measuring absolutely everything in the digital world demand a clearly defined dashboard with relevant metrics showing how the interactions, earned media, and conversation correlate with final sales and changes to the image of the brand. Over the long term, measures of relevance and interaction with the brand are being put aside and the erroneous use of return on investment (ROI) is being used to measure these variables (Lenskold, 2004). There are still gaps in our knowledge when it comes to measuring brand preference and the use of big data which is considered to be an element that will have a drastic impact on the analysis of communication.

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