

CoverGirl

Study goals:

- 1) To better understand the role audio plays in successful television commercials that have had sufficient time and budget to generate high levels of awareness
- 2) To quantify audio and visual's role in triggering brand identification in these commercials

Methodology: Television commercials from top U.S. advertisers were de-branded with all audio and visual "brand" mentions stripped out. Online interviews were conducted with 300 consumers (A21-54). Two groups of 150 respondents were served 14 clips comprised of a mix of the de-branded television commercials and audio-only versions of the commercials.

One of the tested ads was for:

Brand	Television Ad	Length (secs)
CoverGirl	Ellen DeGeneres	:20

Fieldwork for this commercial was conducted December 10-13, 2012.

First question: After exposure to the de-branded TV commercial clip or audio of that clip, respondents were asked "Name the company or brand you think the clip was for?"

	Video Exposure			Audio Exposure		
	Adults	Men	Women	Adults	Men	Women
CoverGirl	50%	26%	75%	41%	15%	67%

Nearly the same percentage of women (67%) were able to identify the advertiser as CoverGirl after exposure to the audio-only version of the TV clip as were able to identify it after exposure to the de-branded television commercial. (75%)

De-branded television exposure: Brand Triggers

Question #2: At what point did you realize what the brand was? What visual or audio clue led you to recognize the brand? Was there an “aha” moment?

81% of female respondents who correctly attributed the ad to CoverGirl said they knew it when they saw Ellen:

When I saw Ellen in the commercial
seeing Ellen DeGeneres
I knew as soon as I saw Ellen . love her
When Ellen came on the screen
I knew as soon as I saw Ellen DeGeneres because I know she is a Cover Girl and I have seen this commercial when I watch her show.
Ellen DeGeneres. I know she is a cover girl.
When I saw Ellen , she is a spokesperson
Ellen is what made me know the brand
immediately, Ellen is very recognizable a their spokes person
the moment I saw the spokesperson , I knew it was a commercial for Cover Girl. She's been with cover girl for a long time

Question #3: Respondents to the TV clip were: How did the video make you feel? Did it trigger any emotion?

41% of the respondents who correctly attributed the ad to CoverGirl said they were happy:

It made me feel happy! When Ellen is in something it makes you remember what it is.
happy. I love Ellen
made me smile . I think Ellen is very personable.
It made me smile , I love Ellen.
I immediately thought of how funny Ellen is and that she was an unusual pick for a Cover Girl.
I love Ellen, very funny!
Always happy to see a spokesperson for makeup that is not what society considers classically beautiful.
I smiled , I like Ellen
Made me laugh , Ellen is funny.
Happy- got to love Ellen!

Audio-only exposure: Brand Triggers

Question #2: At what point did you realize what the brand was? What visual or audio clue led you to recognize the brand? Was there an “aha” moment?

81% of female respondents who correctly attributed the ad to CoverGirl said they knew it when they heard Ellen’s voice:

When I heard Ellen talking about make up. I've seen her in ads for Cover Girl.
Ellen's voice, from the beginning. Though really once she mentioned something about a face or something, that's how I could tell it was specifically Cover Girl and not something else she advertised.
As soon as I heard 'Hey wrinkle face.' I recognized Ellen's voice and figured it was a Cover Girl commercial.
When I heard Ellen DeGeneres' voice. I've seen the commercials she does for CoverGirl
A few seconds in, when I recognized Ellen DeGeneres' voice , I figured it had to be Cover Girl.
I immediately recognized Ellen DeGeneres' voice and remember print ads she does for the cosmetics company.
As soon as I heard Ellen's voice and the script about makeup.
As soon as I heard Ellen's voice
Immediately after hearing her voice
When I recognized Ellen's voice and I know she represents this brand. It is for the makeup that contains Olay. I can't think of the particular line but I know it is Cover Girl.

Question #3: Respondents to the audio clip were asked: How did the clip make you feel? Did it trigger any emotion?

47% of the respondents who correctly attributed the ad to CoverGirl said they were happy versus 41% indicating happiness after exposure to the TV clip:

Happy, I love Ellen!
Ellen makes me feel lighthearted.
It was comical and cheerful
Light hearted humor...very like able =)
I love Ellen :)
It made me feel happy. Ellen is so upbeat!
I really like Ellen, she's got a bubbly personality and a great, sarcastic wit.
It made me remember the print ads. It made

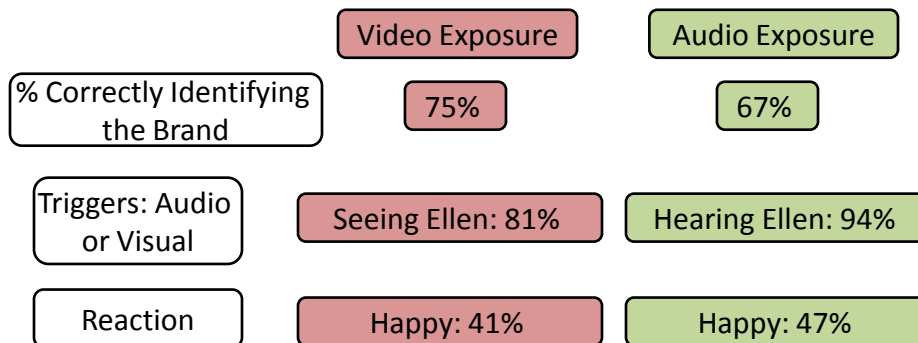
me smile because she is very funny.
Happy. I like Ellen so it reminds me of happy times .
Happy, I like Ellen

There were also numerous references to being able to visualize the television commercial after exposure to only the audio clip:

It made me remember the print ads . It made me smile because she is very funny
I was picturing Ellen and the wrinkle-faced people she was describing
Pictured Ellen talking about the make up
The audio made me picture the commercial
Pictured Ellen DeGeneres and the funny commercials
I was picturing silly Ellen jumping all over on TV
Saw the commercial in my head
Can see the commercial . funny
I pictured Ellen talking
It made me think of Ellen and her dancing

Summary:

CoverGirl



Note: responses are for female respondents only

With the absence of visual cues, auditory cues alone can generate brand identification that rivals visual cues, as other senses compensate for the lack of visual stimulation. An example of this is apparent when in the absence of any visual stimuli, 94% of the respondents to the audio clip referenced Ellen's voice as the "aha" branding moment, versus 81% seeing Ellen in the TV clip. In the absence of any "visual" in the audio clip, Ellen's voice alone served to effectively fill any void that might have been presumed to have occurred due to the lack of any visual stimuli.

CoverGirl is the beneficiary of a spokesperson who is so well-known, that her voice is as recognizable as her face. Also, there is high awareness among women that Ellen is associated with the CoverGirl brand.

Importantly, the ability of audio to trigger visual is also clearly seen in the comments above where numerous respondents after exposure to only the audio clip mentioned being able to "see", "picture" or "think off" Ellen in the television commercial.

Physiological impact: Nearly 1-in-2 female respondents exposed to the audio-only version reported feeling happy after hearing the clip, proving that Ellen's humor and personality was able to successfully come through the audio alone. Actually, a higher percentage of women felt happy as a result of audio-only exposure than video exposure (47% vs. 41%) This confirms that sound (whether the voice of a character, background music, etc) can inspire and motivate consumers as well as the visual.

Conclusion:

These findings are particularly impressive in light of the fact that the audio clip used in this study was lifted verbatim from the TV commercial. If enhancements/modifications were made to reflect an audio-only form of delivery, it would likely lead to an even more impressive audio result.

The data strongly suggests primarily due to the Ellen's voice, that the audio components of the television commercial are as effective in generating brand awareness as the actual television commercial. Many of those exposed to the audio clip were also able to visualize the actual television commercial experiencing what is known as "imagery transfer". Overall it appears as if the audio aspects of the commercial has been sufficiently ingrained in the minds/psyche of the consumer to consider having audio based mediums to play a more important role in communicating CoverGirl's commercial messaging.