

## GEICO

### 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)
GEICO	Gecko Ventriloquist	:19

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
GEICO	98%	99%	98%	96%	96%	96%

GEICO had nearly universal recognition for both the audio-only and the TV clip. Men and women were able to correctly attribute this clip to GEICO after being exposed to the de-branded clip of the actual television commercial.

**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?

56% of the respondents who correctly attributed the ad to GEICO said they knew it when they heard the voice of the gecko:

As soon as I heard the voice and saw the gecko
I know because of the voice and the picture of the gecko
Immediately when I heard his Aussie accent, it was later verified by seeing the gecko.
Immediately the australian voice of the geico
When I heard the geckos voice.
as soon as I heard the lizard
the voice of the gecko
Immediately when I heard the Gecko's Voice
I IMMEDIATELY knew it was Geico because of the Gecko's voice in the first nano second. The image of the computer animated Gecko only confirmed what I all ready knew.
when i heard the animal speak

53% of the respondents who correctly attributed the ad to GEICO said they knew it when they saw the gecko:

When I saw the lizard
When I saw the gecko
Saw the little green lizard
The lizard
When I saw the GEICO Gekko
As soon as the lizard appeared
The little Getco
As soon as you see the reptile
The gecko
when I saw the geico (animal)

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

43% of the respondents who correctly attributed the ad to GEICO said they were amused:

entertained
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<b>I always smile</b> when I see the Geico commercials. I like the gecko's voice and think he is funny. Plus my daughter always laughs when she sees him so it makes me think of her.
It makes <b>me smile</b> . I think the gecko is cute.
<b>I smiled</b>
<b>Happy</b> . I have Geico as car insurance.
<b>I laughed</b>
It <b>made me feel good</b> . I find the lizard's voice calming and soothing.
<b>feel good</b> , I always liked those commercials.
<b>Good</b> . I enjoy the gecko commercials.
i like the voice of the gecko, <b>makes me smile</b>

**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?

95% of the respondents who correctly attributed the ad to GEICO said it was when they heard the voice of the gecko:

The <b>gecko's voice</b> is instantly recognizable.
the <b>lizard accent</b>
The <b>gecko's accent</b> gave him away!
I heard the <b>Gecko</b>
As soon as I <b>heard the gecko's familiar voice...immediately</b> .
The <b>voice of the gecko</b> .
The <b>accent</b> as soon as the ad began
<b>gecko's voice, immediately</b>
the <b>gecko's voice is immediately recognizable</b> .
The <b>lizard's accent</b> .

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

32% of the respondents who correctly attributed the ad to GEICO said they were amused:

<b>Amused</b>
He is <b>funny</b> , so---GOOD
The gecko is <b>amusing</b> . I enjoy the commercials

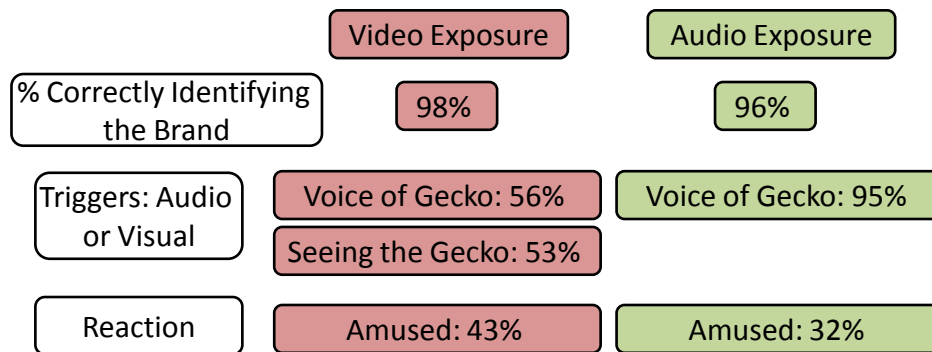
<b>Amused.</b>
<b>funny</b>
<b>Made me laugh.</b> Relaxed me
It made me <b>smile</b> , I laughed
Made me feel happy, <b>I love that lizard it's very cute.</b>
<b>funny</b>
I think of the cute geiko and they <b>make me smile/ laugh</b>

There were also 47 references to being able to visualize the television commercial after exposure to only the audio clip:

<b>I visualized the GEICO reptile holding a puppet</b>
<b>I immediately thought of the gecko</b> appearing on screen
<b>I pictured the little green gecko</b>
I started <b> picturing the most recent commercial</b> with the him walking the Brooklyn Bridge
<b>I imagined the Gecko walking on his hind legs having a conversation</b>
I could see the <b> little green guy walking</b>
I could picture the <b>geigo character</b> and the cartoon character of Bobby
<b>I pictured the commercial</b>
Made me think of <b>the commercial and images of it such as the dummy</b>
It made me <b>picture the Gecko</b>

**Summary:**

# GEICO



51% of cues were auditory

In the absence of any visual cues, auditory cues alone can generate brand identification metrics that rival visual cues, as other senses compensate for the lack of any visual stimulation. An example of this is illustrated when in the absence of any visual stimuli, 95% of the respondents to the audio clip referenced the Gecko’s voice as the “aha” branding moment versus 56% referencing the voice in the TV clip. The Gecko’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.

Of note, 51% of the respondents to the TV clip mentioned an auditory trigger as the “aha” brand identification moment, versus 49% who mentioned a visual trigger, so there was actually more audio branding triggers in the TV commercial than visual triggers.

Importantly, the ability of audio to trigger visual is also clearly seen in the comments above where 47 respondents after exposure to only the audio clip mentioned being able to “see”, “picture” or “think of” the television commercial and the Gecko.

The Gecko’s voice has proven to be an extremely valuable “audio signature”. Not surprisingly, for those respondents exposed to the audio-only version, nearly all (95%) cited the voice of the Gecko as the trigger for identifying the ad as GEICO’s. However, more than half of the respondents exposed to the video also cited the voice of the Gecko as the trigger. In the GEICO TV clip, the Gecko’s voice is heard for a second or two prior to his actual physical appearance, leading to 56% of television clip respondents to recognize his voice and associate it with GEICO.

Physiological impact: 1-in-3 respondents exposed to the audio-only version reported being amused by the clip, proving that the humor of the TV ad was able to come across through the audio alone. When exposed to audio only stimulation, it is not possible to experience humor or amusement without mental visualization, that in this case is either the result of recalling the actual television commercial (imagery transfer) or mentally visualizing the described scenario in the world's most powerful screen- the human brain. In both cases, audio stimulation resulted in "visual" stimulation.

Similarly the voice itself is enough to transfer the image of the Gecko, prompting comments on the lizard's cuteness. Similar to above, to describe something or someone as cute a mental picture is required providing additional confirmation that audio stimulation can trigger visual stimulation. This confirms that sound (whether the voice of a character, background music, etc) can inspire and motivate consumers as effectively 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 Gecko'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". The fact that over half of all the branding moments in the TV clip were audio in nature confirms that 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 an even more important role in communicating GEICO's commercial messaging.