

Old Spice

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)
Old Spice	Hello Ladies	:17

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
Old Spice	82%	92%	71%	68%	79%	56%

Nearly 7-in-10 consumers were able to identify the advertiser as Old Spice after exposure to the audio track from the TV clip, and that ratio was higher among men (nearly 8-in-10). These numbers are just slightly lower than the scores for the actual de-branded television commercial.

Video 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 Old Spice said they knew it when they saw the actor:

The character , if I had not seen it before it would have been the whistle at the end
The old spice guy
Almost immediately because I recognized the spokesperson .
As soon as I saw the Old Spice Guy
When I saw the half-naked man .
Once I saw the guy in the bathroom
Isaiah Mustafa let me know it was an old spice commercial. Also the whistle at the end.
the actor and the whistle
when i saw the guy and heard the whistle
Right off as soon as I saw the guy

20% of the respondents who correctly attributed the ad to Old Spice said it was due to the sound of the whistle:

For sure when I heard the whistle
The tune whisled at the end.
The whistling at the end of the commerical.
The jingle music at the end.
At the end with the ' whistling music '.
At the very end when the whistling started.
The whistle of the jingle at the end sealed it
Tune at the very end
Signature whistling at the end
the end when they whistle

12% of the respondents who correctly attributed the ad to Old Spice said it was due to the actor’s voice:

when I saw the actor and heard his voice
When the guy was speaking in his mono tone
Immediately at the words hello ladies . This is a very memorable commercial. I

will never forget it. My friends and I quoted it constantly.
As soon as the actor started speaking I knew it was for Old Spice. I remember this commercial well because I thought it was extremely funny.
Immediately , the actor and his voice
As soon as I saw and heard the guy
The actor and his voice
Seeing the actor and his voice
His voice and inflection
THE ACTOR SPEAKING

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

47% of the respondents who correctly attributed the ad to Old Spice said they were amused:

funny ad and I liked it
Happy . They are always funny. I paid close attention.
Happy . He is a very funny actor.
happy/funny emotions. its a funny commercial
I giggled
I wish he was my man, LOL!
It made me feel happy because it is so funny and made me feel like a very distinguished man was talking to me.
It made me laugh .
It made me smile and feel happy.

Audio-only exposure: Brand Triggers

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

40% of the respondents who correctly attributed the ad to Old Spice when they heard the actor’s voice:

As soon as I heard the voice . I know this ad very well and would recognize it anywhere
as soon as i hear the actor's voice , since he did several of these commercials
I recognized the voice , and then when he said he was on a horse, I remembered seeing this commercial.
From the very beginning of the clip. Actor has a very distinct voice and the commercial is really funny.
The man's voice and his comments sounded familiar.

Immediately when spokesman began speaking . Commercial structure is unique.
I recognized the speakers voice
When the guy in the commercial starts talking
The voice and then the dialogue in the first sentence
Actors voice and terminology in the commercial

32% of the respondents who correctly attributed the ad to Old Spice said it was due to the sound of the whistle:

I recognize the narrator's voice, and I also recognize the commercial. Also, the 'jingle' at the end was unmistakably Old Spice
The actor's voice and the whistle at the end.
Right away but couldn't come up with the name until the whistling at the end .
The jingle at the end
The whistling at the end
I had a clue, but I only got it when I heard the whistle
The old spice whistle at the end.
the whistling jingle at the end
When I heard the whistle at the end of the commercial.
the whistle

21% of the respondents who correctly attributed the ad to Old Spice said it was due to the dialogue:

i'm on a horse
when he said ladies, look at your man, now look at me.....
The guy from idiocracy saying look at this, now at me, etc.
The whimsical nature of the commercial, along with the actor saying he was on a horse .
'Look at your man, now back to me' was used in the Old Spice commercials.
soon as he said look at your man
'look at me, now back to your man...'
beginning of the clip that said look at your man now look at me
When he began to speak and the dialogue
The back and forth dialogue

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

38% of the respondents who correctly attributed the ad to Old Spice said they were amused:

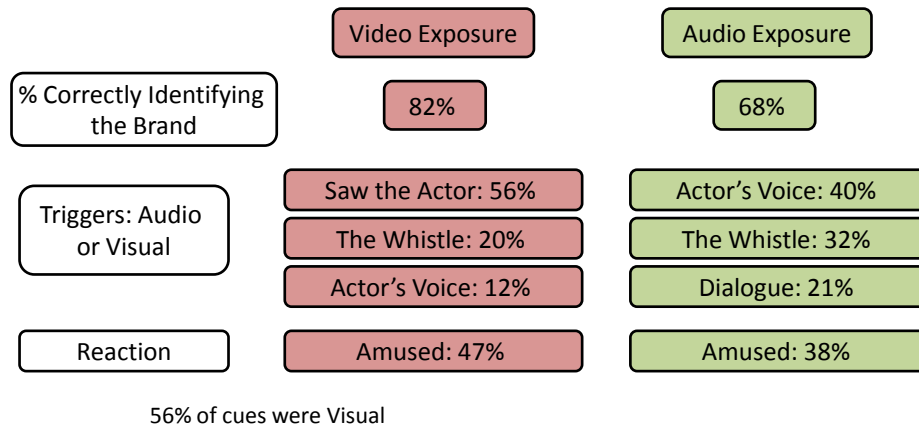
amused.
felt funny, humorous
Great! These commercials are hilarious!
Happy- loved those commercials and how viral they went
happy. i use the product myself
Happy. Old Spice commercials make me laugh
I find the commercial funny , and so I felt positive feelings hearing it because i do like the commercial.
I laughed. It was funny
I love these Old Spice commercials. I used to think of it as an older brand and these commercials singlehandedly changed my perception of the brand.
I love this ad!

22% of the respondents who correctly attributed the ad to Old Spice said it conjured an image in their head:

It's funny. I laugh. And I see the TV commercial - dude in a towel, dude holding the oyster and tickets come out, etc.
a shirtless dude on a horse
I pictured that guy on a horse.
I pictured the man in the shower in the Old Spice commercials.
It made me think of a strong man
It made me think of the Old Spice man in the shower
made think of the old spice dude on the white horse
I could see the spokesman
The Black guy on a horse
Mental image of a guy on a horse backward

Summary:

Old Spice



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, 72% of the respondents to the audio clip referenced the actor's voice or the whistle as the "aha" branding moment versus only 32% referencing one of them in the TV clip. The actor's voice and whistle served to effectively fill any void that might have been presumed to have occurred due to the lack of any visual stimuli.

Over 1/3 of the branding "aha" moments in the TV clip were auditory in nature. Although this particular commercial is no longer on the air, consumers are generally familiar with the Old Spice campaign (Smell Like a Man, Man) and are able to recognize it almost as well by audio cues as visual cues.

The character of the "Old Spice Guy," was the overwhelming brand trigger, both for the video and audio-only exposed respondents. 56% of the respondents exposed to the TV clip knew the brand by the sight of the actor, while 12% attribute it to his voice while 40% of audio-only respondents give credit to the actor's voice, and 21% to his dialogue.

Also, Old Spice is the owner of a recognizable audio signature: the whistle tune. 20% of respondents exposed to the TV clip referred to it as a brand trigger. However on the audio clip, this percentage is much higher at 32%.

Physiological impact: Amusement from exposure to this campaign was evident by respondents whether exposed to the video or audio-only clips. 38% of those exposed to the audio clip found humor in the spot even without any visual aids vs. 47% for the TV clip. In fact, 22% referenced mental images of the actor and setting based on the audio clip alone. This suggests 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 actor's voice, the whistle and dialogue that the audio components of the television commercial are as effective in generating brand awareness as the actual television commercial. Also 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 1/3 of all the branding moments in the TV clip were audio in nature confirms that the audio aspects of the commercial has been effectively ingrained in the minds/psyche of the consumer to consider having audio based mediums to play a more important role in communicating Old Spice's commercial messaging.