

22 - The Science of Sound/Audio

Leveraging Sound Branding

Posted on [August 22, 2013](#) by [admin](#)

“I should have known, sound branding!

Sound Branding is common sense. Quite simply, we are wired to go. It is said that the human ear reacts to certain sounds more than others. This is sound branding.

Sound, most notably music, triggers emotions, auditory pleasures, memories and associations. Sound branding is a multi-sensory form of communication and a holistic corporate model, which drives perception. It also creates attention with familiar associations. It also differentiates from the dross of typical advertising media.

The benefit of this auditory effect is that it enhances brand identity, loyalty, and thus increases sales. Take the memorable Intel or Coca-Cola jingles as key examples.

Harley Davidson's distinctive and trademarked motorcycle exhaust sound, and Kellogg's investment in the power of auditory stimulus with its cereal crunching demonstrates strategic marketing through sound branding. Firms of this sort understand sound branding delivers personality.

The advent of digital media and devices increases the communication of the sound branding experience. Sampling of sound branding through audio identity should be appreciated by listening to the following examples: can be viewed and heard here.

- *Bentley Motor Cars* developed “The new sound of Bentley” — a stirring and thunderous soundtrack and the prelude to a potent new Bentley driving experience.
- Hip boutique hotels such as *Puro Hotel* in Mallorca, whose beach bar has been voted one of the world's 50 best by CNN Travel, surrounds you everywhere with lounge/chill-out genre of music compiled by its in-house DJ – whether you open their website, choose to listen to their on-line steaming player, purchase a CD, relax by the pool sipping a passion fruit mojito or come nightfall, gather around to dance to their house tunes.
- Fashion retailer, *American Apparel* geared for a ‘twentysomething’ audience, constantly plays a

fast paced “feel-good” tempo type of music in the background streamed from its own Viva radio station – its official in-store music and audio network. As part of its overall store ambiance, it plays it live in over 160 of its retail locations worldwide. This feat has demonstrated its influence on shopper purchases resulting in increased sales.

Martin Lindstrom, branding expert and author of several books on the subject of ‘neuromarketing’, wrote in his book “Brand Sense” (on “Branding the Sound of Falling Aluminium”), that the Danish luxury audio/video brand, Bang & Olufsen, has raised the bar in the manufacture of corded phones with the Beocom 2 model phone ring tone. He is quoted stating:

“By refining this existing sensory touch point, additional brand equity is established, and a new aspect of the *Bang & Olufsen* brand is raised in the universe of the brand.” Birgitte Rode, CEO of *Audio Management* adds, “The difference between the BeoCom2 sound and other ringing tones is, that the Bang & Olufsen sound is human, it makes you feel at home, and it’s instantly recognizable.”

Iconic fashion designer, Karl Lagerfeld once said that “Fashion and music are similar because music expresses a time frame as well.” Music effects volume and the good vibrations. Upbeat music appropriate for the evening will not appeal to morning customers enjoying their coffee.

If you have an Italian-themed bar, you may want to interject some Italian vibes from artists such as Zuccero and Eros Ramazotti. If your theme is geared to a very hip, young audience, it will likely suit your customers to include songs with a driving beat from cutting-edge alternative and electronic artists.

Emotional Anchoring

Designing and implementing custom music and visual strategies emotionally anchor a brand to its clients. The purpose of branded digital music compilations is to turn your listeners into disciples of your brand. Every aspect of your custom CD speaks volumes about your brand.

That said, custom produced white label CDs place equal importance on print, media, and visual elements in addition to the music. Specialty music compilation companies such as Sonodea and Custom CD Corporation oversee all logistics related to custom branded CD music compilation and development. They work closely with clients on everything from the music themes to the packaging to the visual content. This ensures that the music, look and feel of the CD resonate with their customers’ clientele and target demographic which forms part of the customer

experience. *Sonodea* also creates sound environments for retailers, boutique hotels and restaurants to enhance the auditory role of the entire ambiance.

Sound Branding

A brand's identity is comprised of visual, auditory and other sensory components that create recognition in the mind of the consumer. The power of music has the ability to seduce the soul, raise the spirit, build social connections, wiggle our bodies to the rhythm, increase purchases, as well as develop, strengthen and recognize brands. Sound branding supports refining brand communication and in designing a better sounding environment.

In some fashion, all business is show business and storytelling. Brand image is all about the experience, perception and differentiation you create in the customers' mind. Sound branding forms part of the equation and bringing all this into meaningful consideration by applying its multi-sensory approach to attracting and retaining clientele to your brand and business establishment. It is, therefore, essential to consider audio brand management and strategic use of sound in the total branding equation.

Article Title: **Sound Branding**

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Evolution Or Revolution? When And How To Change Your Logo

by [Brendan Murphy](#), [Richard Wilke](#), 5 hours ago

A company's logo is its visual shorthand, and good logos send a direct message -- they are clear, unique, and memorable. Most importantly, they represent the authentic story of what a company stands for. A strong logo can support a company for decades, but as companies change with increasing speed, the lifespan of a logo has decreased with a greater need to be nurtured to keep up. So how do you know when it is time to update your logo? And how do you determine whether the change requires a nip tuck or a complete facelift?

Sometimes the need for a logo change is obvious and follows a major business decision like a merger, acquisition, spinoff, reorganization or a complete industry transformation, as in the case of categories like health care. Other times, there may be a disconnect between what a brand stands for and what is resonating with customers. Or it might be a matter of modernizing a traditional logo that was designed well before the days of Twitter and Facebook and simply doesn't translate well across these channels.

Risk and reward

Whatever the case, it's important that making a logo change is rooted in strategic purpose rather than the pursuit of the next shiny object. Success will be driven both from the top down through company leadership and from the bottom up through the employees and everyday customers. Social media has given the customer an amplified voice, and if the company does not have a thoroughly reasoned rollout plan, there can be serious brand repercussions. Gap is the prime example of hell hath no fury like a customer scorned.

The truth is, you may think you own the logo, but your customers may believe otherwise. They have emotional attachments and are the ones making a daily choice to badge themselves with it. At a minimum, this means a very deep understanding of your customer -- or in some cases, as Yahoo's current "30 days of change" campaign, it can go as far as offering direct involvement in the process.

When and why to change

Changing a logo comes with a big price tag emotionally and financially. Companies only make this investment once a decade or so -- and they owe it to themselves to consider all the possibilities. And while it's important to address the "why?" you should also ask "what if?" Below are three degrees of change to consider.

1. Change without change: Brands often will opt to keep their logo but change the message and design system that surrounds it. IBM and GE are prime examples. With the launch of Smart Planet and EcoImagination, both brands have refined their brand story, while leaving their logos intact. It's important to note that both these brands are operating from a position of strength and one where they can proactively nurture their brand elements to be relevant on the road ahead.

2. Evolution: Many companies continuously tweak and refine their logos without fundamentally altering its character. Changes can range from functional to cosmetic, subtle to significant, but the overall message is one of continuity. Apple and Nike have continuously refined their logo over the years, to keep it vital yet still immediately recognizable. "Evolution" can be a good option when companies are trying to reach new audiences or signal a change in their business strategy.

3. Revolution: Revolution is most typically associated with a major strategic shift or cataclysmic event including both internal and external factors. This can include a merger, spin-off, name change, legislation or worst-case scenario, a catastrophic event like bankruptcy or a customer crisis. We have seen a lot of change in this arena in the airline and health care space, and we anticipate more to come. "Revolution" may also be necessitated as a company matures. While many hold Apple up as a symbol of modernity and simplicity, its first symbol was quite intricate and downright folksy. Similarly, Microsoft's first effort would be at home on a disco album from the late 70s.

Where do you stand?

As you consider when and how to make a change to your identity, ask yourself these questions:

1. Does the logo reflect your future business strategy?
2. Does it translate well in new media?
3. Does it resonate with your current and future customer base?
4. Does it convey vitality?
5. Is it on par with your industry standards? Does it positively differentiate from your competition?

If you answered “no” to one or more of these questions, it's probably time for a change. Ultimate success will be achieved by tying the logo to your brand story, your employees, your customers -- and ultimately, your business success.

Apple’s iconic ‘Tri-tone’ alert sound that plays when you receive a text message on the iPhone was born back in 1999, nearly a decade before the company shook up the phone industry when it released its first iPhone. That’s according to [a blog post from its creator](#), Apple software designer Kelly Jacklin, which was [spotted by TUAW](#).

Jacklin retells the story of the sound’s creation in some detail, noting that it began as a favor for his friend Jeff Robbin who, alongside partner Bill Kincaid, created SoundJam, a music player for the Mac which later became iTunes when Apple bought the company.

Jacklin says he was “looking for something simple that would grab the user’s attention:”

I was really into the sound of marimbas and kalimbas at the time, so I thought I’d try both of those. I also went through bank (after bank) of sounds built into the SW1000XG, auditioning instrument sounds, and found three other instrument sounds that I liked: a harp, a koto (Japanese zither), and a pizzicato string sound (that’s the sound a violinist makes when plucking the string, rather than bowing it).

He says he developed the sound by first setting up a program that ran various combinations of notes that he selected. After fixing the timing and format, he whittled the sounds down to a final shortlist of 28 and chose '158-marimba.aiff' as his favorite.

Interestingly, Jacklin sent all 28 samples to Robbin, who agreed with his pick.

As he describes in this excerpt below, the rest is history.

SoundJam MP was released, sold reasonably well, but not anything spectacular. Some months later, and I hear from Jeff saying that Apple bought it (to later become iTunes), and Jeff, Bill and Dave Heller (also working on it) were hired along with it. Good for him! When Apple finally released it (in 2001), it still had the disc burning sound, which, again, I thought was pretty cool!

A couple years later, the installer team decided that they would use this same “completion” sound in the installer, for the sound that happens when an install completes.

Fast forward quite a few years, and the iPhone comes out. I was not involved in development of the iPhone, nor iOS, although I was unsuccessfully courted by the iPod software guy (Tony Fadell) right when I was considering the move to work on audio software (I went to the Pro Apps group at Apple instead). So imagine my surprise when the iPhone ships, and the default text message tone is... “158-marimba”, now going by the clever (and not actually accurate, from a music theory perspective) name “Tri-Tone”. Time goes by, and this sound becomes iconic, showing up in TV shows and movies, and becoming international short-hand for “you have a text message”...

- [*Skype's UI Sounds*](#)

I'll continue the theme of my [previous post](#) by looking at another product using sound design in a very creative and differentiating way. [Skype](#), which shouldn't

need much of an introduction if you're reading this blog, is the most popular voice over IP service out there and has amassed over 663 million registered users in its decade of existence. Redefining and disrupting the telephone industry is no small task, and Skype has used UI sounds in an integral way to claim its place as both the heir and future of the telephone.

Skype's sounds are bubbly, textural, and playful, and many use a delay effect which adds a unique and fantastical element. According to Skype's official [brandbook](#), "The Skype tone of voice is unique... Humour is an important part of the Skype voice. We don't tell one liners, but employ a gentle wit to engage our users." While the brandbook doesn't directly mention sound design, Skype has clearly done a good job in translating the intended voice of their brand into the realm of abstract interface sounds.

Their brandbook also mentions "As a company that enables people to talk for free, the speech bubble is a potent and unique symbol to Skype. We will own the speech bubble. Skype is a frenetic, energetic brand that is constantly moving." The bubblyness of the sounds isn't just to add energy and fun to the product experience, but to also literally reference to speech bubbles, Skype's big brand metaphor for open communication.

Sounds Like a Telephone

Of Skype's 27 user interface sounds, only 2 directly reference the very familiar tones of the telephone.

When a user initiates a call, they hear what sounds like an 8 digit number being dialed on a touch tone phone. This sound is played every time you make a call and the tones do not correspond to the number you're dialing

Sound familiar? Why Audio Branding works

by Yael Leveson | Apr 23, 2013

I was recently reminded of the fact that in advertising you can't win 'em all when someone commented that they weren't sure about the latest Comparethemarket radio ad.

Personally I really like it. As a listener it makes me smile and I love the fact that Alexander has become a character in his own right (even publishing his own autobiography). Then as a media researcher I also know that the Comparethemarket radio ad will do really well on branding: only this week someone else commented *"They [Compare the market ads] are really clever - you just have to hear **"simples"** and you know who it is!"*.

Maybe I'm imagining it but there seem to be more examples of brands which are investing in consistent audio branding across both TV and radio these days. There's the voice of the Birds Eye polar bear; the McDonalds sonic sting; the operatic sound of Gio Compario (Go Compare); the distinctive drawl of Iggy Pop (Swiftcover). Oh and then of course there's the Lloyds music (go on, admit it, you've tried to sing it too!). These are just the first few that spring to mind - there are many more.

Research, including the RAB's RadioGauge study, demonstrates that strong audio branding can produce effective results. For a start it ensures that the brand is instantly recognisable, even if the listener is in the middle of doing something else such as driving to the shops or doing the housework (or in my case procrastinating about doing the housework by writing a list of exactly what housework I should be doing).

Audio branding also links a radio ad to the wider campaign to make it more efficient. When I hear the voice of Alexander I don't just think "that's the Comparethemarket" ad, I also have a picture of a meerkat in my head. So I'm remembering the TV campaign at the same time. Mind you, I must admit that it was slightly disturbing hearing the voice of the polar bear in my head when I went to get Birds Eye peas out of the freezer. Thank goodness they were Birds Eye peas, otherwise that polar

bear might have climbed out of the bottom drawer of the freezer to berate me (so their advertising **is** working!)

Let's not forget too that sound influences how we feel about a brand. We know from research that music and voice can have a powerful effect on our emotions. And yet this can often be ignored by marketers who will invest far more time and effort thinking about the visual aspects of an advertising campaign than the audio aspects, despite the fact that, as Martin Lindstrom of the Brand Sense agency states, "*there's a 65% chance of a mood change when we hear a positive sound*".

In [RadioGauge](#) the Engagement Meter monitors levels of listener response while they are actually listening to the ad. It's interesting to see how, when a distinctive brand sonic kicks in, the engagement trace immediately goes up, suggesting that listeners don't just recognise brand sonics, they connect with them at a deeper emotional level. So I say keep up the good work Alexander - simples! Image courtesy of Wikipedia

Honda Odyssey Campaign Boasts New Tag, Cross-Media Tie-Ins

by [Karl Greenberg](#), Yesterday, 6:14 PM

The voices of Neil Patrick Harris and Rainn Wilson will be featured in the new campaign for the 2014 Honda Odyssey advertising campaign. The new effort also presents a new Honda tagline, "Start Something Special." In addition to three initial TV spots, there's a tie-in with "The X Factor" talent show, an integration with Rovio's "Angry Birds" and Zynga's "Words with Friends."

I'm Thinking. Please. Be Quiet.

Tommi Musturi

By GEORGE PROCHNIK

Published: August 24, 2013 162 Comments

SLAMMING doors, banging walls, bellowing strangers and whistling neighbors were the bane of the philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer's existence. But it was only in later

middle age, after he had moved with his beloved poodle to the commercial hub of Frankfurt, that his sense of being tortured by loud, often superfluous blasts of sound ripened into a philosophical diatribe. Then, around 1850, Schopenhauer pronounced noise to be the supreme archenemy of any serious thinker.

Readers' Comments

Readers shared their thoughts on this article.

• [Read All Comments \(162\) »](#)

His argument against noise was simple: A great mind can have great thoughts only if all its powers of concentration are brought to bear on one subject, in the same way that a concave mirror focuses light on one point. Just as a mighty army becomes useless if its soldiers are scattered helter-skelter, a great mind becomes ordinary the moment its energies are dispersed.

And nothing disrupts thought the way noise does, Schopenhauer declared, adding that even people who are not philosophers lose whatever ideas their brains can carry in consequence of brutish jolts of sound.

From the vantage point of our own auditory world, with its jets, jackhammers, HVAC systems, truck traffic, cellphones, horns, decibel-bloated restaurants and gyms on acoustical steroids, Schopenhauer's mid-19th century complaints sound almost quaint. His biggest gripe of all was the "infernal cracking" of coachmen's whips. (If you think a snapping line of rawhide's a problem, buddy, try the [Rumbler Siren](#).) But if noise did shatter thought in the past, has more noise in more places further diffused our cognitive activity?

Schopenhauer made a kind of plea for mono-tasking. Environmental noise calls attention to itself — splits our own attention, regardless of willpower. We jerk to the tug of noise like sonic marionettes. There's good reason for this. Among mammals, hearing developed as an early warning system; the human ear derived from the listening apparatus of very small creatures. Their predators were very big, and there were many of them.

Mammalian hearing developed primarily as an animal-detector system — and it was crucial to hear every rustle from afar. The evolved ear is an extraordinary amplifier. By the time the brain registers a sound, our auditory mechanism has jacked the volume several hundredfold from the level at which the sound wave first started washing around the loopy whirls of our ears. This is why, in a reasonably quiet room,

we actually can hear a pin drop. Think what a tiny quantity of sound energy is released by a needle striking a floor! Our ancestors needed such hypersensitivity, because every standout noise signified a potential threat.

There has been a transformation in our relationship to the environment over the millions of years since the prototype for human hearing evolved, but part of our brain hasn't registered the makeover.

Every time a siren shrieks on the street, our conscious minds might ignore it, but other brain regions behave as if that siren were a predator barreling straight for us. Given how many sirens city dwellers are subject to over the course of an average day, and the **attention-fracturing** tension induced by loud sounds of every sort, it's easy to see how sensitivity to noise, once an early warning system for approaching threats, has become a threat in itself.

Indeed, our capacity to tune out noises — a relatively recent adaptation — may itself pose a danger, since it allows us to neglect the physical damage that noise invariably wreaks. A [Hyena](#) (Hypertension and Exposure to Noise Near Airports) study published in 2009 examined the effects of aircraft noise on sleeping subjects. The idea was to see what effect noise had, not only on those awakened by virtual fingernails raking the blackboard of the night sky, but on the hardy souls who actually slept through the thunder of overhead jets.

The findings were clear: even when people stayed asleep, the noise of planes taking off and landing caused blood pressure spikes, increased pulse rates and set off vasoconstriction and the release of stress hormones. Worse, these harmful cardiovascular responses continued to affect individuals for many hours after they had awakened and gone on with their days.

As Dr. Wolfgang Babisch, a lead researcher in the field, observed, there is no physiological habituation to noise. The stress of audible assault affects us psychologically even when we don't consciously register noise.

In American culture, we tend to regard sensitivity to noise as a sign of weakness or killjoy prudery. To those who complain about sound levels on the streets, inside their homes and across a swath of public spaces like stadiums, beaches and parks, we say: "Suck it up. Relax and have a good time." But the scientific evidence shows that loud sound is physically debilitating. A recent [World Health Organization report on the](#)

[burden of disease](#) from environmental noise conservatively estimates that Western Europeans lose more than one million healthy life years annually as a consequence of noise-related disability and disease. Among environmental hazards, only air pollution causes more damage.

The deafening silence

All silences are not equal, some seem quieter than others. Why? It's all to do with the way our brains adapt to the world around us, as Tom Stafford explains

A “deafening silence” is a striking absence of noise, so profound that it seems to have its own quality. Objectively it is impossible for one silence to be any different from another. But the way we use the phrase hints at a psychological truth.

The secret to a deafening silence is the period of intense noise that comes immediately before it. When this ends, the lack of sound appears quieter than silence. This sensation, as your mind tries to figure out what your ears are reporting, is what leads us to call a silence deafening.

What is happening here is a result of a process called [adaptation](#). It describes the moving baseline against which new stimuli are judged. The way the brain works is that any constant stimulation is tuned out, allowing perception to focus on changes against this background, rather than absolute levels of stimulation. Turn your stereo up from four to five and it sounds louder, but as your memory of making the change rapidly fades, your mind adjusts and volume five becomes the new normal.

Adaptation doesn't just happen for hearing. The brain networks that process all other forms of sensory information also pull the same trick. Why can't you see the stars during the daytime? They are still there, right? You can't see them because your visual system has adapted to the light levels from the sun, making the tiny variation in light that a star makes against the background of deep space invisible. Only after dark does your visual system adapt to a baseline at which the light difference created by a star is meaningful.

Just as adaption applies across different senses, so too does the after-effect, the phenomenon that follows it. Once the constant stimulation your brain has adapted to

stops, there is a short period when new stimuli appear distorted in the opposite way from the stimulus you've just been experiencing. A favourite example is the waterfall illusion. If you stare at a waterfall ([here's one](#)) for half a minute and then look away, stationary objects will appear to flow upwards. You can even pause a video and experience the illusion of the waterfall going into reverse.

It's a phenomenon called the [motion after effect](#). You can get them for [colour perception](#) or for just lightness-darkness (which is why you sometimes see dark spots after you've looked at the sun or a camera flash).

After-effects also apply to hearing, which explains why a truly deafening silence comes immediately after the brain has become adapted to a high baseline of noise. We perceive this lack of sound as quieter than other silences for the same reason that the waterfall appears to suck itself upwards.

So while it is true that all silences are physically the same, perhaps Spinal Tap lead guitarist Nigel Tufnel was onto something with his [amplifier dials that go up to 11](#). When it comes to the way we perceive volume, it is sometimes possible to drop below zero.

This was my [BBC Future](#) from last weekend. The original is [here](#).

Is This from interning for Howard Stern. Read the *Inside Radio* Q&A with Chris Oliviero on page

Folgers taps voice recognition for brand building

By [Lauren Johnson](#)

May 14, 2013



Folgers is leveraging a mobile application to mix up its classic marketing jingle for consumers.

The Folgers Insta-Jingle app lets consumers customize the brand's famous "Best Part of Wakin' Up" jingle. The app is available for free download from Apple's App Store.

"In downloading the app and recording a customization, there doesn't appear to be anything that happens following the recording other than in the instructions a small amount of text that suggests consumers share their customized jingle socially," said Marci Troutman, CEO of SiteMinis, Atlanta.

"It would be much more successful if a jingle was chosen to be a part of a campaign, rather than just random recording that is lost in a void," she said. "I think consumers may be intrigued, download the App once and then it won't be used again."

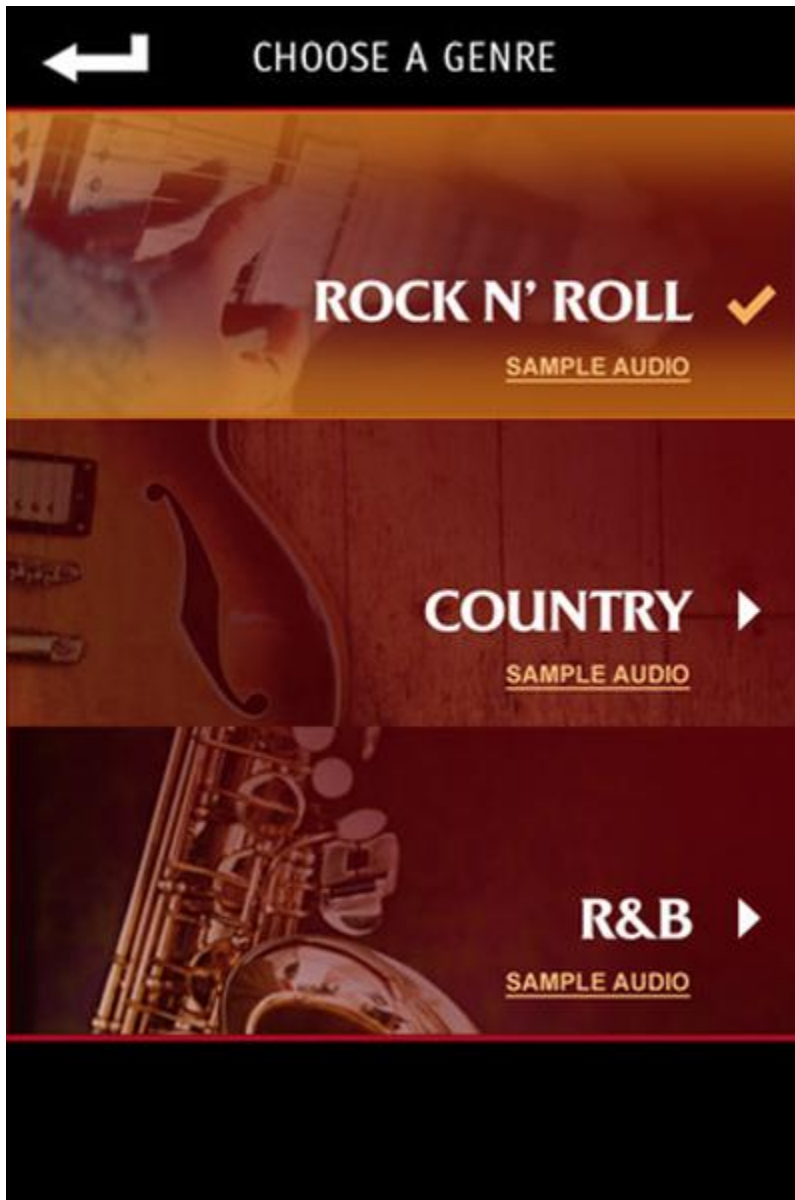
Ms. Troutman is not associated with Folgers. She commented based on her expertise on the subject.

How it works

When consumers open the app, a large circle in the middle of the homepage encourages consumers to begin recording their song.

Additionally, the company's logo is splashed across the top left-hand corner of the page.

Consumers can pick from three different genres to personalize their jingle – country, rock and roll and R&B.



Folgers is banking on consumers sharing their remixed songs once they are created.

Options to share content via Facebook, Twitter and email are heavily promoted at the bottom of the page.

Alternatively, consumers can also name and save the voice recordings in the app to listen to later.

Although the app is simple, it is straight-forward in helping Folgers reimagine the brand's classic marketing jingle with digital components.

To help promote the new app, Folgers sent out an email blast to its Folger's Wakin' Up Club list last week.



The Folgers email

Voice personalization

Voice recognition is gaining traction with mobile marketers.

As mobile continues to become more sophisticated, voice recognition is being used to spur engagement and bring consumers back to an app multiple times.

For example, Hearst Magazines' Esquire magazine rolled out an app earlier this year to feature its style, drink and fashion content. By speaking into their devices, consumers could find content that matched their interests ([see story](#)).

In this case, voice recognition helps Folgers create custom, tailored content for its users to create buzz around its brand.

Folgers has used campaign-specific apps in the past, too.

For the holidays last year, the company rolled out a themed app that let consumers create customized messages. The app was also meant to help the company build up its email database ([see story](#)).

"Brands should consider apps that encompass more than one action," Ms. Troutman said.

"Consumers are less likely to download multiple apps for a single brand, and ultimately get frustrated if the option of engagement they are looking for includes yet another download," she said.

Content May Be King, But Audio Is Qween In Former Mediacom Chief's New Venture

by [Joe Mandese](#), Yesterday, 6:54 PM

Doug Checkeris has always had his quirks. Now he has his Qwyrk. The quirky part comes from the fact that he's a Canadian media buyer who rose to be head of North America for one of WPP's leading media agency networks, Mediacom. The Qwyrky part comes from the fact that that's the name of the new venture he's been incubating since leaving WPP.

"When I left MediaCom a couple of years ago I spent, time meeting with all kinds of people and companies in the investment and marketing services business," he explains, adding, "I continue to be amazed by the ability of the agency business to fend off the application of disruptive technologies."

That said, he believes some momentous change is coming, so he spent most of his hiatus angling around "ventures that are disruptive in nature, which suits my personality, and feature content and technology."

The result is Qwyrk, a new app that officially launched Thursday that enables people to personalize email and social media messages with music, movie quotes and sound effects. Specifically, it's an audio app that allows social media users to add up to 24-seconds of sounds, including songs, mobile soundtracks or audio effects to an email, Facebook post or Twitter tweet.

At launch, Qwyrk had already licensed "millions" of audio tracks from record labels, film studios and sound effect libraries. . In other words, Checkeris and his partners want to make Qwyrk the Instagram of sound.

As for the "monetization" model, well, given Checkeris' background you might not be surprised to learn that it's a 100% ad-supported one. And it's a pretty ingenious one at that. While the app must be downloaded and installed for the person sending a Qwyrk, anyone can receive it - and the advertising embedded along with it.

There's even a commerce model, because Qwyrk effectively is a sampling opportunity for music labels, with a feature that enables full-length tracks to be purchased via online retailers.

"People have a basic need to be understood and Qwyrk offers a way to satisfy that need beyond emoticons and 'LOL's," says Checkeris.

Five Reasons Why Only the Multisensory Will Survive

BRANDING

By [Colleen Fahey](#), Published August 16, 2013

[1 Join the discussion!](#)

hare:

hare:

Full disclosure here: I'm making a case for a more precise and mindful use of sound in conveying your brand identity. I'm convinced that, today, your audio identity must be crafted and managed with the same care and discipline as your graphic identity. Here's why:

1. Shorter, shallower attention spans.

Attention spans have declined from 12 seconds to 8 seconds in the last dozen years and people are in a state of "continuous partial attention" (Linda Stone). You need every tool in your kit to reach through the distractions.

Sound is fast and memorable. It's processed bio-mechanically, straight from eardrums to the auditory cortex sitting right next to them in the brain. It works to convey meaning, enhance emotions and create memory.

When pairing a visual logo with a sound logo, it doesn't just make the logo twice as recognizable or memorable – they multiply each other.

If your brand has a recognizable audio identity, people will pick it up even if their eyes are closed, averted or darting all over a screen.

2. All new media in the past two decades is audio-enabled.

Today people are conditioned to take in sight and sound together. The media experience they're accustomed to is accompanied by audio.

But brands are far behind this trend. They spend fortunes on their visual identities and leave their audio identities to the various agencies and suppliers who create their videos, telephone hold music, commercials and events.

Usually this results in a hodgepodge. Just as you have a visual identity you should have a distinctive, created-for-you audio identity. And it needs to reflect your values, personality and aspirations.

I'm sure your brand has a visual style guide. Does it have an audio one?

3. Proliferation of devices leads to brand confusion

In order to be open to a relationship, your customer needs to know who you are and how you'll react. Today there are more ways to state what you're about, more ways you customers can recognize you.

One way to be recognizable is to make sure your sound territory is consistent (but not mindlessly repetitive) across all your places of customer interaction. Does your on-hold music define your brand? Does your sampling booth? Does your app?

What if you gave rights-free brand-tailored music loops for your customer-created videos?

4. Brands must deliver an experience

The most intensely memorable experiences stimulate sight, sound, smell, kinesthesia, touch. Especially brands that have to fight to get people out of their increasingly entertaining homes. Retailers, hospitality and travel providers need to use every tool to give people a reason to leave their homes.

When someone crosses your threshold do they experience a transition from the outside world to your special world? Are they greeted with a distinctive carpet of sound that subtly conveys where they are (and who you are)? I've walked into ATM foyers and the only transition in the harsh "beep, beep beep" of ATM machines. Why not a meaningful and memorable sound?

5. Overwhelming visual environments

We are living in a world that is overwhelmingly visual. Today's consumers experience visual bombardment at every turn, consequently, much of it gets tuned out.

Scent and music provide new and intensely memorable ways to connect. And you can tap into those senses even when the customer is staring at something else. Because you can close your eyes but you can't close your ears.

Conclusion

As attention spans continue to shrink and consumers tune out the excess visual stimulation delivered through a multitude of media channels, the competitive advantage will go to those who use audio branding not only capture a consumer's attention, but also underscore, position and emphasize the role of the brand in the customer's life

Is How You Really Talk?

Your Voice Affects Others' Perceptions; Silencing the Screech in the Next Cubicle

• By SUE SHELLNBARGER

• [smallerLarger](#) It is hard to hear the sound of your own voice. But that sound may affect other people's impressions of you even more than what you say.

A strong, smooth voice can enhance your chances of rising to CEO. And a nasal whine, a raspy tone or strident volume can drive colleagues to distraction. "People may be tempted to say, 'Would you shut up?' But they dance around the issue because they don't want to hurt

New research shows the sound of a person's voice strongly influences how he or she is seen. The sound of a speaker's voice matters twice as much as the content of the message, according to a study last year of 120 executives' speeches by Quantified Impressions, an Austin, Texas, communications analytics company. Researchers used computer software to analyze speakers' voices, then collected feedback from a panel of 10 experts and 1,000 listeners. The speakers' voice quality accounted for 23% of listeners' evaluations; the content of the message accounted for 11%. Other factors were the speakers' passion, knowledge and presence.

People who hear recordings of rough, weak, strained or breathy voices tend to label the speakers as negative, weak, passive or tense. People with normal voices are seen as successful, sexy, sociable and smart, according to a study of 74 adults published recently in the Journal of Voice. "We are hard-wired to judge people. You hear somebody speak, and the first thing you do is to form an opinion about them," says Lynda Stucky, president of ClearlySpeaking, a Pittsburgh coaching company.

Other common vocal irritants include "uptalk"—pronouncing statements as if they were questions—and "vocal fry"—ending words in a raspy growl. Such quirks "make the listener think the person who is speaking is either uncomfortable or in pain," says Brian Petty, a speech pathologist at the Emory Voice Center in Atlanta.

Annoyed listeners often assume nothing can be done to change an irritating voice, and the speakers are often unaware of the problem. But in most cases, people's voices can be strengthened or improved through therapy, coaching or feedback.

Some voice problems have a medical cause, such as nodules on the vocal folds, or cords. A hearing impairment can cause people to talk too loudly, says Edie Hapner, director of speech-language pathology at the Emory Voice Center at Emory University. Also, advanced age can cause a person's voice to lose volume, she says.

Analyzing Vocal Styles

Nearly everyone has worked with or for someone whose voice drives them crazy. Listen to sentences read in the style of some of the chief irritants.

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• More photos and interactive graphics

But many voice problems can be eased through therapy, including exercises to support the voice through improved breathing, or to strengthen laryngeal muscles or change the way they work.

Speech pathologist Jayne Latz says she often receives requests for voice coaching after performance reviews in which a boss raises the issue as a problem for co-workers or customers. She uses sound-level equipment and audio recordings to make clients more aware of how they sound. She also teaches vocal exercises and helps clients replace filler words such as "you know" with a pause for emphasis, says Ms. Latz, president of Corporate Speech Solutions, New York City.

New York financial executive Gerard Vignuli consulted Ms. Latz because he knew he spoke too fast, clipped the ends of words and often used filler words such as "like" to give himself time to think, he says. "When I was speaking, people didn't know what the hell I was saying," he says. With coaching, "I learned to step back and pause rather than saying, 'Uh, uh.' "

His friends noticed the difference: "People didn't tell me until I started taking lessons, then they said they saw a difference. They said, 'Oh, we used to hate it when you said 'X,' " he says. "I said, 'Great! Why did you wait until now to tell me?'" Now, he asks friends to help him practice, telling them, "Call me out" when they hear him lapse into old speech patterns.

People don't hear their own voices as others hear them. The voice must travel through the bones of the head before reaching the speaker's ears, changing the way it sounds, says Dr. Hapner.

Raising the issue can be touchy, Ms. Hartman says. Some people become defensive about their voices, saying, "That's just the way I talk, and people shouldn't judge me," she says. Also, sensitive factors such as gender, ethnicity, age and cultural background play a role in how people talk, and so managers should take care not to discriminate against an employee based on those characteristics, she says.

It helps to raise the topic on a positive note, such as, "I admire the way you talk to clients. I've learned a lot by listening to you," Ms. Hartman says. She suggests using an "I-when you-because" formula when raising the problem, saying, "I'm unable to think when you talk loudly because it's distracting to me."

Everett Collection

The Whisperer: Marilyn Monroe was known for a breathy voice, but it is risky at the office.

Ways to Improve Your Voice

Good habits and vocal awareness can make a difference.

Record your voice on your phone and listen to how you actually sound.

Ask a friend or co-worker to signal to you discreetly if you lapse into bad habits such as using 'um' or 'you know.'

Increase your fluid intake and avoid frequent throat-clearing to keep the vocal cords healthy.

Ask a voice coach for breathing and vocal exercises to make your voice more resonant and relaxed.

See a speech pathologist or physician for persistent problems such as vocal fatigue or hoarseness.

Learn to warm up and rest your voice before and after intense use, such as teaching or coaching.

Have your hearing checked if your voice is too loud.

Work teams can sometimes help raise an employee's awareness, says Gillian Florentine, a human-resource consultant with Howland Peterson Consulting in Pittsburgh. A publishing-company sales team she worked with two years ago was disrupted by a rep whose voice boomed so loudly that co-workers couldn't hear clients on the phone, Ms. Florentine says. Co-workers in team meetings shared recordings of their calls, so the rep could hear himself in the background. He toned it down a bit, and agreed to a plan to rearrange their desks and place soundproof panels near his desk, she says. The problem was solved and the team has since been able to work smoothly together.

Ms. Florentine advises employers to screen job seekers based partly on their voices. Hiring managers typically focus on other factors, such as skills and experience, only to realize later than a new hire's speech patterns are annoying to co-workers or customers, she says.

When Jim Roddy interviewed Jon Dudenhoeffer five years ago for a recruiting job, he liked everything about him but his voice, says Mr. Roddy, president of Jameson Publishing, an Erie, Pa., publisher of trade magazines and websites.

"After the first half-hour, I had to put down my pen and say to him, 'We have a lot of high-energy, engaging people here, and I don't think they're going to like working with you because I can hardly hear you,'" says Mr. Roddy, author of "Hire Like You Just Beat Cancer." He added, "How about loosening up? People are going to think you have no pulse."

Mr. Dudenhoeffer says he learned to speak in a low-key, deliberate tone during his 20-year stint as an investigator and trainer in the Air Force. He is also naturally reserved and has a calm, controlled manner. He was surprised that Mr. Roddy made an issue of his voice, but promised, "Sure, I'll give it a try."

He had to make an effort at first to put more energy into his voice, but "after I got more comfortable, my personality just came out," he says. He has since been promoted to senior director of sale

In one of the recent [Reptilian](#) Interviews "[Questioning the Third Eye](#)" – an interesting relationship is questioned with regards to, for example having a look at when we're '[daydreaming](#)' / 'thinking about things'.

So, when you're daydreaming – wondering about relationships/sex/[money](#)/the future/holidays and/or when you're thinking – looking at the day, what to do/how to do it/when to do it/the people involved and all those things: [have you noticed that you in that moment can SEE two worlds at the same time](#)? Like, while you're daydreaming / thinking about things – lol, it's not like the external world shuts down so that we only see the internal world and also vice versa where the internal world shuts down so that we can only see the external world... [while we're daydreaming/thinking: we can see both worlds at the same time.](#)

This is the point the interview focuses on, questioning the following points: HOW exactly can we see inside our Minds? We don't have 'eyes' in the Mind or organs in the brain that can be dissected and investigated to understand how exactly we see inside our Minds. We have physical eyes – E-Y-E and we have a mind I's, because the question asked as well is "WHO/what is the one/thing in the Mind that SEES?" We know with physical-seeing, it is in fact the physical body that makes it possible to see – [but, how does the mechanics/processes of seeing in fact operate/function in our Minds?](#)

If you note, I also earlier mentioned that we have mind I's...plural. If you have a look at all the different things you daydream about or think about, you will notice that you 'become a different person' inside yourself in terms of how you [change](#) how you 'feel' – you can one moment daydream about a future [relationship](#) and be all positive, then the next moment think about your current relationship and be all negative, like two different I's / 'sides' of yourself being exposed. So, who/what are all the different I's that occupy the Mind that can 'see' in two worlds at once?

I would suggest investing in this interview and interviews to follow to understand HOW we see in the Mind, to understand WHAT/WHO is it that in fact sees and WHY we can create [emotional-relationships](#) to what we see/how we see things in the Mind; and within this all, most importantly: how we have come to be able to exist in two-worlds where we spend very little time in the REAL PHYSICAL WORLD and more time in the mental/consciousness world

How Music at the Office Affects Your Work Life

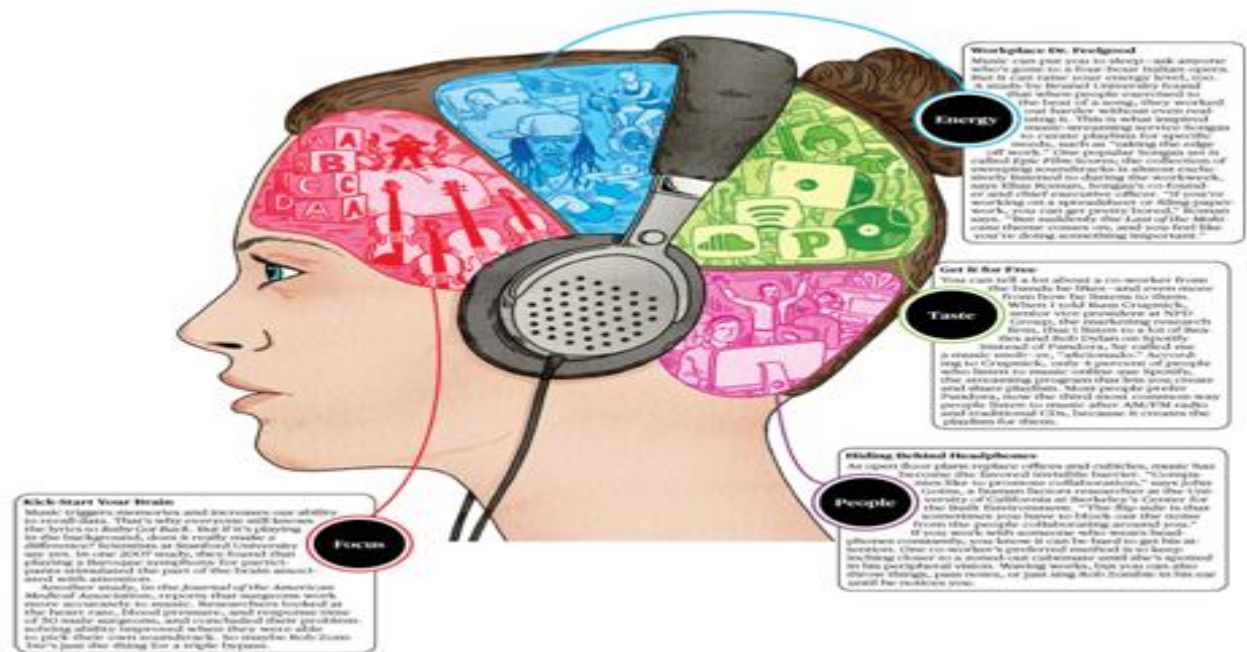
The wistful, synth-laden pop tune *Wildest Moments* is coming through tiny, dime-size earbuds—well, technically just one bud because the right side's wires have frayed—as I return e-mails, set up interviews, and file my expense reports. One desk over, a co-worker is listening to Rob Zombie.

Music is a ubiquitous accessory in nearly every office and across all careers, from a documentarian friend who's been writing scripts to the same Counting Crows album for over 15 years to a gallery curator who told me she likes to appraise artwork while listening to Gregorian chants. It wasn't always like this.

Our professional lives stayed tuneless until the early 20th century, when soothing jazz started playing in elevators, and department stores began piping in quiet melodies to make shopping more enjoyable. In the 1940s, the wireless radio company Muzak created sets of songs for offices, [which it called Stimulus Progression](#), that slowly increased in intensity so that employees would feel energized as they worked. "Stimulus Progression went out in the 1970s and is long gone," says Kenny Kahn, executive vice president and global brand officer of Mood Media, which bought Muzak in 2011 and also owns its

former rival DMX, “and we don’t do the instrumental easy-listening stuff anymore, either.”

These days, Mood focuses on branding; its 46 music designers tailor playlists for more than 60,000 business locations throughout the world. If you’re in an office that plays music in the lobby, break room, or warehouse, those songs could be coming to you courtesy of Mood. But even if you choose to listen to [personal music at your desk](#), you should know that it’s affecting the way you think and work in ways you may not realize.



Electrolux Shows Off Quiet Vacuum With a Super-Quiet Concert

An Orchestra Plays 'Carmen' Without Exceeding 43 Decibels

Published: [July 29, 2013](#)

28share this page



Electrolux's new vacuum is so quiet you can barely hear it. The brand's "ergothree" line doesn't rise above 43 decibels -- but what does that mean? To demonstrate, [TBWA Hakuhodo](#) held a concert called "[43dB Symphony](#)," featuring an orchestra led by a sensitive conductor who had a sound-level meter in front of him. If the sound levels

increased -- either because of an overzealous member of the orchestra or the audience -- they got rewarded with a stern look by the conductor.

The orchestra played "Carmen" without going over 43dB -- it's a track that usually exceeds 90dB when performed.

We've seen a concert as the setting for brand creativity in the past -- [notably by BNP Paribas](#), which introduced a mobile-only bank with a mobile orchestra, as well as [Unilever's Cream Silk](#), which [tested the strength of hair washed with the product](#) by making violins out of it.

For more exciting ideas in brand creativity, tune in to [Creativity-Online.com](#), follow [@creativitymag](#) on Twitter or [sign up for the Creativity newsletter](#).

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uHgRqMt9bh8&safety_mode=true&persist_safety_mode=1&safe=active

Farmers Insurance Revamps Logo

by [Tanya Irwin](#), 8 hours ago

Farmers has unveiled a new corporate logo that aims to connect the Los Angeles-based company's past with its future.

"Our new logo is meant to be evolutionary rather than revolutionary," says Mike Linton, chief marketing officer for Farmers, in a release.

New York City based-Lippincott is the creative partner behind the new Farmers logo.

The company was "really proud" of its previous logo, "but it is time to hit the refresh button," says Linton.

"To distinguish yourself in today's saturated insurance marketplace, it's critical that our logo stands out on television, the Web, mobile devices and other media -- considerations no one could have imagined in the 1950s when the Farmers logo was last updated," he said.

In developing its new logo, Farmers relied upon its first logo designed in 1928, when the company was founded. In that inaugural logo, the warmth of a sunrise represented the optimism of a new day. Some 30 years later, a shield image was added to the sunrise to symbolize protection.

Taken together, Linton said, the sunrise and shield represented an organization that confidently safeguarded its customers.

"The new logo captures our belief that by helping customers make more informed insurance decisions, we can provide them with greater knowledge, confidence and security," he says "And by doing so, we can help them make the smartest insurance choices for their families."

The new logo is part of the Farmers transformation to an organization that not only serves our customers better, but also helps empower them, he adds.

The current Farmers "We Believe in Smart" advertising campaign, which is at the core of the company's sales and marketing efforts, reflects and reinforces its focus and commitment to help make customers smarter about their insurance decisions.

A combination of judgment, consumer input and research and digital compatibility were instrumental in the decision by Farmers to select a new logo, Linton says.

Back in the '40s and '50s, the [Muzak Company](#) would program workplace music specifically to increase productivity, a technique called "Stimulus Progression."

Tone poems: New Nokia sounds have arrived

There are few sounds as well-known as the Nokia Tune. It's no surprise really, since it's been our default ringtone for almost 20 years. We first heard [the Grande Valse](#) in a commercial back in 1993 and a year later, it was made into a ringtone. The rest is history – it's heard nearly two billion times a day across the world!

Since then, the Nokia Tune has been updated eight times, and other Nokia sounds have been renewed as well. In fact, it was only very recently that Nokia's sound and visual design team completed their latest renewal introducing the latest version of the Nokia Tune and bringing new beats to the alarm clock, email, calendar, messages and start-up sounds.

We spoke to sound design experts Tapio Hakanen and Henry Daw to find out how the updated sounds came to be.

"The latest renewal is not a radical revolution, but more of a subtle evolution", Tapio explains.

The team started the task literally by listening. They listened to the old sounds dozens of times and thought about the proper way to bring new elements in. Both consumers and sound experts were consulted. Finally, they created four different versions of the Nokia Tune and one was selected as the official version.

There are a lot of details related to sound you probably don't come to think of. For example, what is the proper pitch? How many times should the sound "go around"? Is a modern, traditional or a synthetic sound better suited for the purpose?

The team naturally follows international music trends, but Nokia itself has a strong idea of how the ringtone should sound. Tapio mentions *functionality* and *discretion* a number of times.

"Nokia has gone in a more minimalist direction in recent years. We talk a lot about purity in design and the same applies to sound design."

During the years, the Nokia Tune has been played with different instruments like a guitar and a piano.

Earlier, the Nokia sound was perhaps a tad more relaxed and now we are heading towards a bolder direction. The change, however, is subtle.

"Renewing and changing everything at once is not a value in itself. When you are renewing sound, the end result needs to be meaningfully better," Henry says.

We can hear percussions, bells as well as synthetic elements in the new ring tone.

Regional and cultural differences need to be considered too. In Asia, for example, people generally enjoy louder sounds. In Western countries, those same sounds might be considered irritating. A large number of people never change their ringtone, so in a way, the Nokia Tune has been designed for these people. People who really want to emphasize their personality will change their ringtone anyway.

But let's not forget the good old alarm clock! It is, after all, the first sound many people hear when starting their day.

"The alarm clock is also the one sound we receive most spontaneous feedback for", Tapio says. The new alarm clock is slower and almost zenish. It starts off slow and lasts for 30 seconds. In many competing devices, the alarm clock sounds like a buzzer!

We think the new sounds are modern and fresh. But don't take our word for it, listen in yourself

The brand sounds are automatically installed to new Nokia devices, but old Nokia users can upload the new sounds from the [Nokia Store](#) and the [Nokia Design Sound Cloud pages](#). If you're using a Lumia, you can download the alarm

Understanding, Identifying and Building Distinctive Brand Assets

4 Votes

This post is part of a continuing [series of quest posts](#). Jenni Romaniuk is an Associate Research Professor of Brand Equity, Ehrenberg-Bass Institute, University of South Australia.

This post is a summary of an Ehrenberg-Bass Institute corporate member report written in conjunction with Nicole Hartnett, Research Associate at the Ehrenberg-Bass Institute.

Distinctive assets are non brand-name elements that are able to evoke the brand in the memory of consumers. Some of the most famous examples include the Nike 'swoosh', the Aflac duck and Mastercard's priceless advertising. All of these elements are able to represent their brand name without needing any other prompting.



Aflac Duck - Distinctive Brand Asset

Many creative elements have the potential to become distinctive assets including: *logos, slogans, colors, shapes, typefaces or fonts, characters, celebrities, jingles and/or music, sounds, advertising style, tastes, textures and scents.*

However merely using one of the elements described above as part of your [brand identity](#) does not necessarily mean it is an 'asset' for your brand. For an element to be an asset, it needs to meet two criteria:

Uniqueness – **To what degree is your brand *only* linked to the element?** When consumers link multiple brands to an element, brand confusion ensues. Ideally, marketers want to develop brand assets that are unique in their category.

Prevalence – **How many consumers link your brand to the distinctive element?** The more consumers that are able to identify your brand based on the asset, the stronger and more valuable the distinctive asset becomes.



The Nike Swoosh Is Prevalent and Unique

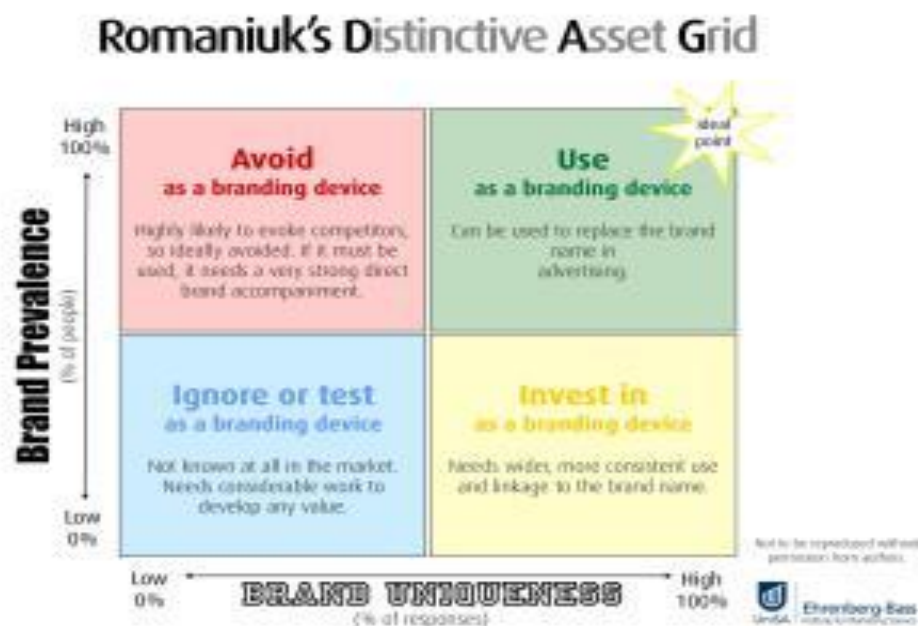
Simply put, distinctive assets are more creative alternatives to directly showing a brand name, and they help create a larger brand footprint when elements are used in conjunction with the brand. Marketers can use non-word elements such as color, visual images, and sound to provide a [multi-layered process for entry into consumer memory](#). On the consumer end, brand assets simplify brand identification outside of the advertising context, for example on-shelf or as a retail outlet.

How does an element become a distinctive asset?

To develop a distinctive asset, marketers need to make a commitment to consistent co-presentation of the element and the brand name across all consumer touch-points. Then, consumers must learn to associate the element with the brand.

Whether a brand has already developed distinctive assets or is embarking on creating elements, the main question marketers need to answer is: "Do consumers recognize my brand?" Throughout this process, keep in mind that for an element to be a distinctive asset it must evoke the brand, without prompting, for close to 100% of consumers. Only then can the distinctive asset be considered strong enough as a unique brand identifier. Ultimately, distinctive assets can replace the brand name in marketing initiatives.

I have created the Distinctive Asset Grid to enable marketers to classify their brand's distinctive elements. The grid is divided into four broad quadrants, which each represent the current state and future potential of a distinctive element.



If an element falls in the quadrant labeled ...

Use: It is a strong distinctive element that evokes the brand from memory for the vast majority of consumers. Distinctive assets that fall in the "Use" quadrant are highly differentiated from those of competitive brands. Therefore, assets in this quadrant can be used to replace the brand name in advertising.

Invest: The element has unharnessed potential: it meets the most important criteria and it is highly unique to the brand. However, not many people are aware of the asset (low

prevalence) which restricts its ability to be used in place of the brand name. To further cement the element, it should be co-presented with the brand name.

Avoid: If the asset falls in the “Avoid” quadrant, marketers should be wary of using the element as an alternative to the brand name. Otherwise, the element may bring competitors to mind for consumers.

Ignore: An element in this quadrant is best unused in its present state. The exceptions are elements that are at the beginning of their development, as the majority of new elements have low prevalence and uniqueness. However, if an element’s uniqueness and prevalence have not developed after receiving proper marketing support, then the asset should be reconsidered.

Finally, some FAQ:

1. Are there any drawbacks in using distinctive assets for brand identification?

While distinctive assets represent some opportunities, they also present some risks. If you use the brand name to identify the brand in advertising, all who notice the brand name will know that it is that brand that is advertising. However, if you only use a distinctive asset to identify the brand, and it is not 100% unique and prevalent, there will be some people who see the distinctive asset but don’t think of the brand name. These are wasted exposures.

2. Do distinctive assets have to have a meaning for consumers beyond the brand name? (or is it better if they do?)

There is good reason to be cautious about [selecting elements with strong meaning](#) to develop as distinctive assets. Firstly, the strong meaning will hamper the brand’s ability to attach the brand name to the distinctive asset. This meaning will be evoked in consumer memory when the element is presented, which will then dominate and interfere with the development of links to the brand name. Secondly, you can’t control the consistency of this past meaning. Finally, what if the core meaning of the brand changes over time in response to consumer or market trends? The distinctive asset will also need to change, negating the value of past investments.

For more information on this research, contact Jenni: Jenni@MarketingScience.info

Jenni Romaniuk’s research interests are Brand Equity Metrics, Brand Salience, Distinctive Brand Assets, Brand Name Execution, Advertising Effectiveness and the influence of Word of

Mouth on consumer behaviour, particularly in Television program viewing. Her work has been published in European Journal of Marketing, Journal of Advertising Research, Journal of Business Research and Journal of Marketing Management. Jenni is also past editor of *Journal of Empirical Generalisations in Marketing Science* (JEMS): www.empgens.com

And in the world of advertising and marketing, radio continues to be incredibly innovative.

There is a music school in Frankfurt, Germany called the University of Hannover Academy of Music.

It is an elite school for musicians.

Hannover wanted to recruit specific people: Those with "perfect pitch."

If you are born with perfect pitch, it means you can identify a specific musical note without any other external assistance or context.

If you think that's easy, try it now: Sing an "A" off the top of your head.

Only one in 10,000 of us can do that.

In Europe and North America, some studies suggest that less than 3% of the population can do it. Yet, 98% have absolute colour recognition.

That's how rare Perfect Pitch is.

So the University of Hannover's Music Department wanted to recruit people with perfect pitch.

So how could they do that on radio?

By doing this: (YouTube insert)

Because people with Perfect Pitch can identify every note on the musical scale, the Hannover School of music communicated to them in a way only they would understand.

The music notes spell out the school's email address.

It was an ingenious use of radio because it did two things:

One: It gave the school heightened awareness and spoke to the creativity of the school. And two: This commercial became the first entrance exam.

Only those with perfect pitch would pass the test by emailing the school.

It was a huge success for the university. Allowing them first crack at the most talented crop of new students.

All done with the innovative use of radio.

Sometimes a great television advertising idea has trouble jumping to another medium.

Take the popular television campaign for Snickers, with the theme line, "You're Not You When You're Hungry." (YouTube insert of Betty White Snickers spot)

This has been a big selling idea for Snickers, and has propelled the candy bar from the #3 position in confectionary brands to #1, surpassing M&Ms and chewing gum Trident.

The campaign idea has worked extremely well on television, using celebrities like Joe Pesci, Richard Lewis, Liza Minnelli and Roseanne Barr.

But transferring this idea to radio could be tricky. Yet, in Puerto Rico, they found an ingenious way to do just that.

In an idea called "The Day Hunger Took Over Radio," 37 different stations across the island all did something they had never done before.

They started playing music they would normally never play.

So the Rock station, for example, suddenly started playing Salsa, the Salsa station started playing Heavy Metal, the Hip Hop station started playing opera, the Latin

station started playing Japanese music and the Techno station started playing country:

Each station created chaos, and 3.2 million radio listeners were totally confused - until that is, Snickers cleared up the confusion by airing a personal message that said:

"We apologize for the inconvenience, the DJ is not himself when he's hungry. When he finishes eating his Snickers, we will be back with our regular programming."

It was an outrageous way to get the Snickers brand, and its "You're Not You When You're Hungry" message out to over 3.2 million listeners.

But they did it, and got worldwide press while utilizing nothing but the creative power of radio.

Breast Cancer Awareness Month occurs in October around the world.

In Israel, radio stations got together with the Israel Cancer Association and did something highly creative.

8am is the highest peak of listenership on morning radio. More people tune in at that hour than at any other hour of the day. And as a result, advertisers pay the highest rates in that time period.

On October 30th, at 8:05am, radio stations in Israel did something they had never done before.

All morning shows broadcasted out of the right speaker only.

They did that to convey the idea of what it is like to lose one breast, to lose one part of a whole.

And to achieve maximum reach of that message, every radio station in the entire country silenced their left speaker simultaneously at 8:05am:

(YouTube insert)

Every station assured their listeners they weren't hearing a malfunction, that the one-channel broadcast was intentional to bring awareness to breast cancer, and every station urged women to get tested.

The project was called "The Day Radio Went Mono." It generated tremendous awareness, and press in all other mediums wrote hundreds of stories about it.

But here's the important part: The amount of help-line calls increased by 98%. And mammography testing increased by 24%.

Extraordinary results - generated by the creative use of radio.

Meanwhile, over in Malaysia, a radio station was tackling the topic of breast cancer in a different way.

BFM 89.9 is a radio station in the city of Petaling Jaya that focuses on business news - hence its slogan, "The Business Station."

Working with the Breast Cancer Society of Malaysia, BFM 89.9 wanted to reach their listeners in a unique way during Breast Cancer Awareness month in October.

The radio station has a highly educated, successful business audience, but research showed that same audience ignores basic cancer awareness messages.

So BFM 89.9 chose to break the rules of radio.

They interrupted their regular business news with breast cancer awareness messages - but did it by incorporating those messages seamlessly into their news reports, delivered by the newscasters themselves.

Read in exactly the same style: (YouTube insert)

To BFM's listeners, it must have come as a shock to be listening intently to business news then suddenly hear that rolling nipples between the thumb and index finger is a way to check for lumps and indications of pain.

It was that last line you just heard that makes this campaign so effective. Not only does it give men and women direction on how to check for breast cancer, it highlighted one of the most important aspects of breast cancer:

That it can come when you least expect it.

It was a brave and incredibly creative way to communicate to an audience that ignores the usual breast cancer messages. And the degree of difficulty was high, because the format of an all-business station makes it difficult to do something fresh and compelling.

It was simply a radio idea that was impossible to ignore.

The number of kidnappings in the country of Colombia have always been high. By 2000, it was estimated that 3,752 people had been kidnapped in the in South American country. While numbers have dropped dramatically over the last 10 years, the rate of kidnappings in Colombia is still one of the highest in the world. And that number includes hundreds of missing policemen and military personnel. The government of Colombia wanted to try to communicate to its kidnapped soldiers. They wanted to boost their morale, and let them know they are not forgotten. The government also wanted these kidnapped soldiers to know the government is coming for them.

But how they chose to do this was remarkable.

Because radios are commonly played in the jungle camps of the kidnappers, the government, along with advertising agency DDB, devised a way to talk to the kidnapped soldiers via radio - without the kidnappers knowing. Essentially, they used a code.

First, a song was written. The song was titled "Better Days" and the message of the lyrics said that - even though you feel forgotten and alone - better days are coming and we will see each other again soon.

While the lyrics were meant to be uplifting, they alone wouldn't have got the attention of the kidnapped soldiers.

Something else would do that.

Morse code. Something all kidnapped military personnel were trained to understand.

A message in Morse code was created, that said:

"19 people rescued, you're next, don't lose hope."

The Morse Code was then re-composed as music inside the song. While the lyric sent out one message, the Morse Code sent out the real one: (YouTube insert)

It was an extraordinary solution, because for the first time in a decade, the voices of the Military Forces of Colombia broke through enemy lines and reached their men with a message of strength and hope.

And they did it by taking radio's biggest strength - its extraordinary ability to reach into the jungle - and sampled it with 21st century thinking.

In Germany, 342 people died last year as the result of drinking and driving.

A voluntary humanitarian organization wanted to do something about this growing problem. They wanted to raise awareness of the issue in a way that couldn't be ignored.

So they did it by creating a "radio ghost."

The city of Hamburg, known for its "red light" district, has one of the highest rates of drinking and driving. The urgent need was to talk to young drivers who often went nightclubbing then drove home drunk.

The organization came up with a bold idea: To let the people who died speak to the drivers at the place of their death.

Special "death crosses" were built, not unlike what we all see on streets and highways where someone has been killed in a driving accident.

Then they took an FM transmitter and an MP3 player, and used the cross as an antennae to bypass radio frequencies.

The crosses were then placed in locations where people had been killed.

So, when a car stopped at a traffic light where a death cross was positioned, for example, the following message was transmitted to the car and ACTUALLY OVERRODE any radio station the driver was listening to. Instead, they heard a message from the dead person - a "radio ghost."

Source: London International Advertising Awards

"Radio Ghosts" were messages aimed directly at young drivers, delivered in an innovative technical way, and the drinking & driving message was packaged in a completely new and compelling way.

Myself and the other four radio judges had never heard anything like that before.

And we awarded it the Grand Trophy.

Because it elevated the medium of radio.

So much innovative work being done in the world's oldest broadcast medium.

When we judged that award show, we were blown away by the degree of innovation in this category.

There was an enormous freedom apparent in the thinking. None of these radio ideas were held back by typical radio conventions, and the creators didn't respect any boundaries.

And while recent technology may have made the "Radio Ghosts" campaign possible, almost all of the other ideas had nothing to do with digital technology - they were just big ideas.

But that is the glory of radio.

A remarkable medium of possibilities.

Sonic Branding Tue, Jun 15, 2010 Neuromarketing, Branding

What does your brand sound like? If you have no clue, you are missing an important part of an overall sensory branding effort. One firm that knows what its signature sounds are is Audi, which has gone to considerable effort to establish a sound style guide intended to function much like a visual style guide in maintaining consistent branding across media, campaigns, and locations. First, let's watch an Audi commercial that embodies several of their signature sounds. See if you can pick them out: Some of the Audi signature sounds included in that clip are a steady heartbeat, a breath, and a piano. I particularly liked the way that the sound tied into the visual elements. Rather than simply hearing disembodied breathing on the sound track, you can see the actor's breath condense in the chilly air. The SoundLounge blog, written by CEO Ruth Simmons, covered the Audi effort in Do you have a Sound Style Guide? Audi does and led me to this video explanation of Audi's sonic branding efforts: Simmons notes, By narrowing their set of musical building blocks, they're hoping to create a consistent brand sound for their otherwise consistent brand image. The end goal, of course, is for the audience to hear that heartbeat and think Audi. Not every firm has Audi's resources, of course. Nevertheless, establishing a consistent sonic identity isn't out of reach. I've seen even small, local advertisers who included the same jingle or non-musical sound in each and every commercial; even though this may have been done without extensive research or development of a sound style guide, that music or sound did indeed become part of the brand's identity.

While much of the Audi effort focuses on created sounds like heartbeats and breath, the opportunity for a distinctive product sound shouldn't be overlooked. As I noted in Audio Branding: 'Tis the Season, mobile phone maker Nextel used that approach effectively: While most cell features let the user choose from a range of sounds or ringtones, Nextel did something smart: every Nextel phone emits a distinctive chirp when in walkie-talkie mode. This chirp is unique and instantly recognizable by any other Nextel user. They have incorporated the chirp into their TV commercials, and one hears it often in public. This powerful auditory branding message cost Nextel nothing other than the courage to keep the sound consistent across phone styles and generations, and to not let users easily change it. Here's a commercial showcasing the Nextel chirp in a totally incongruous setting: Sadly, between its smallish market share and acquisition by Sprint, the Nextel brand itself was unable to prosper in segments beyond its devoted base of team users in construction, field service, and similar areas. - See more at: <http://www.neurosciencemarketing.com/blog/articles/sonic-branding.htm#sthash.PQomgtJV.dpuf>

Is Music Really A Brand Asset?

Each time a brand uses sound it is (in some way) influencing the perception of the consumer. But it's doing even more than that. Whatever the context, genre, artist or channel, that sound is generating either an *asset* or *liability* for its overall brand equity. Investment in music should never be seen as just an additional cost. It's about creating lasting brand assets – increasing long-term profit from a customer by engaging with them on a completely different level.

Going beyond market research

Brands invest heavily in market research for visual assets such as packaging and logos but when it comes to music, the focus becomes vague, often based on what the consumer 'likes' or 'remembers'. But using my favourite track an advert doesn't necessitate my being attracted to your brand. In fact quite the opposite! To establish true understanding of a consumer's response to sound we need break this research down into more specific, relevant elements. Only then can music help brands drive purchasing behaviour and increase their value both emotively and financially.

Measuring the intangibles

Calculating the impact of the invisible has become an intrinsic part of evaluating a brand's success. Interbrand's inclusion of 'intangibles' as a key part of its overall assessment for its annual 100 Best Global Brands report demonstrates not only that it can be done, but that it's a crucial tool for measuring brand value. On the surface, the idea of generating metrics to measure a consumer's response to music can seem an unlikely concept. But it's something we at soundlounge do every day of the week. Once achieved, it's hard to question the value of investing more in establishing music assets – whether to encouraging consumers to spend longer at a shop, engage with an ad or inspire brand loyalty online.

the power of sound: audio drives award winning work at the 2013 cannes lions

When it comes to advertising awards, nothing matches the prestige (or the intensity) of the



[Cannes Lions.](#)

This year a record 35,765 entries from 92 countries were submitted to the Cannes Lions 60th International Festival of Creativity, making it the largest and most prestigious global awards event for creative advertising and communications.

You can certainly debate [the relevance of award shows](#), but researchers [Les Binet and Peter Field](#) found that creatively-awarded campaigns are, on average, [ten times more effective](#).

Knowing the power of sound to shape brand identity, enhance consumer engagement and increase brand awareness, it comes as no surprise that audio driven work (both strategically and creatively) [takes home its share of "Lions."](#) As technology continues to create new ways of closing the sonic gap between brands and their audience, we're convinced that the strategic use of sound will play an increasingly important role in brand marketing.

We're writing this post from Cannes, where we're only three days into the Festival. Already, we're seeing the importance of sound as a key component of effective advertising. Here's a sampling of four winners that we think stood out from the crowd:

BUND: "Tree Concert" was an initiative conceived and produced by [BBDO Germany](#) / [Ketchum Pleon](#) to increase awareness about Berlin's shrinking chestnut tree population. After selecting a large chestnut tree in Monbijoupark, a number of polymer structures were installed at its base. Each of the structures was designed to respond to the impact of falling chestnuts with sound and light effects, so that through the course of the installation, the tree actually [produced a musical performance](#). People were able to interact with the installation and ultimately encouraged to donate to the cause via an SMS text. The results? With up to 500 visitors a day, donations to the [BUND](#) fund jumped 800%. In addition, a remix compilation of the performance was produced and released on iTunes, with the proceeds continuing to help the effort. Not only was the campaign a successful fund raiser, but it captured Gold (for Charity and Nonprofit) and Bronze (for Best Use of Live Events and Stunts) Lions in the PR category.

Kontor Records: [Kontor](#) partnered with [OgilvyAction Düsseldorf](#) to solve the problem of how to promote new DJ tracks to the advertising industry. How do you break through the clutter of everything that comes across the desk of a creative director? Simple. [Send them your music on vinyl](#). But how many creative directors have turntables in their offices? No problem. A smartphone and a QR code (you can actually demo it [here](#)) allows you to "play" the record on the mailer in which it was sent. The result? 71% of the 900 Turntable QR codes were activated and 42% followed a link to the Kontor Online Store. To top it off, the promotion took home a Gold Lion in the Media Division for Best Use of Audio.

Absolut Vodka: [Absolut](#) and [SANCHO BBDO](#), along with media agency [PHD Columbia](#), asked the question, "What does Absolut sound like?" The brand activated consumers through [a creative combination](#) of music, radio, artists, neuroscience and technology. Absolut created a radio show in Columbia focused on electronic music where none existed before. Using social media channels and a custom designed Facebook app, fans were asked by DJs to create their own remixed versions of the branded ["Absolut Greyhound" theme](#) created by Swedish House Mafia. The remixes were evaluated by the DJs, [with the winning remix \(as determined by the DJs neurological response to each of the entries\)](#) landing its producer a trip to Stockholm to assist SHM in concert. In an extension of the campaign, a fashion designer created a collection inspired by the sounds of Absolut and presented the collection at the nation's biggest fashion

event ([ColumbiaModa](#)2012). The result? A sales jump of 26% for the brand, Facebook fans tripled, Twitter followers doubled, over 2,000 minutes of video interaction was recorded, and the remix app reached a peak of 14% engagement. Add to that a Silver Lion in the Best Use of Integrated Media Category.

Metro Trains: [McCann Melbourne](#) worked with Melbourne's [Metro Trains](#) to create a unique public service announcement that would reduce train related accidents. The campaign was fueled by a catchy little ditty called "Dumb Ways to Die." The song, created by the agency, was attributed to a fictitious artist dubbed "Tangerine Kitty." An [animated video was created for the music](#) and then posted on YouTube. The result? Within a week, the video had been viewed 20 million times (it's currently approaching 50 million hits). Within a month, it had captured so much attention it landed in [Google's 2012 Zeitgeist](#). It became the most shared public service campaign in history, with the song charting on iTunes in 28 countries and played on radio stations worldwide. Even more importantly, there was a 21% reduction in accidents and deaths – with 39% of the core audience (13-25 year olds) reporting that they would act safer around trains. As of this writing, "Dumb Ways to Die" has taken two Grand Prix awards in the PR and Direct categories and a Gold Lion in the Promo and Activation category. No doubt there's more to come!

discovery could have huge implications for the study of other neurological diseases, such as [Alzheimer's disease](#).

Creating the Windows 95 Startup Sound

When Windows 95 was being developed, executives commissioned music legend Brian Eno to develop a "piece of music" to play when the operating system started up. This music would become known as "The Windows Sound." Eno is probably most renowned* for his ambient music -- long tracks with deep sound beds and drifting melodies. But this track had to be a little shorter. Eno related the story:

The thing from the agency said, "We want a piece of music that is inspiring, universal, blah-blah, da-da-da, optimistic, futuristic, sentimental, emotional," this whole list of adjectives, and then at the bottom it said "and it must be 3.25 seconds long."

And, of course, Eno solved the problem, creating a supremely iconic sound. But when you take his micro-music and stretch it out to two and a half minutes, it becomes suspiciously like the music we hear on his [ambient albums](#) -- slow, ethereal, moody, beautiful in a very different way. So listen to it (this is a Windows 95 ad that an enterprising YouTuber slowed way down):

(You can also [listen to the normal-speed version](#) for context.)

The shortened Eno quote above isn't the full story, though. Here's the [full context](#) from an interview -- and also keep in mind that Eno composed the sound on a Mac, saying "I've never used a PC in my life; I don't like them."

The idea came up at the time when I was completely bereft of ideas. I'd been working on my own music for a while and was quite lost, actually. And I really appreciated someone coming along and saying, "Here's a specific problem — solve it."

The thing from the agency said, "We want a piece of music that is inspiring, universal, blah-blah, da-da-da, optimistic, futuristic, sentimental, emotional," this whole list of adjectives, and then at the bottom it said "and it must be 3.25 seconds long."

I thought this was so funny and an amazing thought to actually try to make a little piece of music. It's like making a tiny little jewel.

In fact, I made 84 pieces. I got completely into this world of tiny, tiny little pieces of music. I was so sensitive to microseconds at the end of this that it really broke a logjam in my own work. Then when I'd finished that and I went back to working with pieces that were like three minutes long, it seemed like oceans of time.

* = Yes, Eno is also very well known for his work as a producer with Talking Heads, U2, David Bowie, Coldplay, you name it, as well as a brief stint with Roxy Music. But in my world, his [Ambient 1: Music for Airports](#) record is the touchstone of his music career.

Why Music Makes Our Brain Sing



Baptiste Alchourroun

-
-

By ROBERT J. ZATORRE and VALORIE N. SALIMPOOR

June 7, 2013

MUSIC is not tangible. You can't eat it, drink it or mate with it. It doesn't protect against the rain, wind or cold. It doesn't vanquish predators or mend broken bones. And yet humans have always prized music — or well beyond prized, loved it.

In the modern age we spend great sums of money to attend concerts, download music files, play instruments and listen to our favorite artists whether we're in a subway or salon. But even in Paleolithic times, people invested significant time and effort to create music, as the [discovery of flutes](#) carved from animal bones would suggest.

So why does this thingless “thing” — at its core, a mere sequence of sounds — hold such potentially enormous intrinsic value?

The quick and easy explanation is that music brings a unique pleasure to humans. Of course, that still leaves the question of why. But for that, neuroscience is starting to provide some answers.

More than a decade ago, our research team used brain imaging to [show](#) that music that people described as highly emotional engaged the reward system deep in their brains — activating subcortical nuclei known to be important in reward, motivation and emotion. [Subsequently](#) we found that listening to what might be called “peak emotional moments” in music — that moment when you feel a “chill” of pleasure to a musical passage — causes the release of the neurotransmitter [dopamine](#), an essential signaling molecule in the brain.

When pleasurable music is heard, dopamine is released in the striatum — an ancient part of the brain found in other vertebrates as well — which is known to respond to naturally rewarding stimuli like food and sex and which is artificially targeted by drugs like cocaine and amphetamine.

But what may be most interesting here is *when* this neurotransmitter is released: not only when the music rises to a peak emotional moment, but also several seconds before, [during what we might call the anticipation phase](#).

The idea that reward is partly related to anticipation (or the prediction of a desired outcome) has a long history in neuroscience. Making good predictions about the outcome of one's actions would seem to be essential in the context of survival, after all. And dopamine neurons, both in humans and other animals, play a role in recording which of our predictions turn out to be correct.

To dig deeper into how music engages the brain's reward system, we designed a [study](#) to mimic online music purchasing. Our goal was to determine what goes on in the brain when someone hears a new piece of music and decides he likes it enough to buy it.

We used music-recommendation programs to customize the selections to our listeners' preferences, which turned out to be indie and electronic music, matching Montreal's hip music scene. And we found that neural activity within the striatum — the reward-related structure — was directly proportional to the amount of money people were willing to spend.

But more interesting still was the cross talk between this structure and the auditory cortex, which also increased for songs that were ultimately purchased compared with those that were not.

Why the auditory cortex? Some 50 years ago, Wilder Penfield, the famed neurosurgeon and the [founder](#) of the Montreal Neurological Institute, reported that when neurosurgical patients received electrical stimulation to the auditory cortex while they were awake, they would sometimes report hearing music. Dr. Penfield's observations, along with those of many others, suggest that musical information is likely to be represented in these brain regions.

The auditory cortex is also active when we imagine a tune: think of the first four notes of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony — your cortex is abuzz! This ability allows us not only to experience music even when it's physically absent, but also to invent new compositions and to reimagine how a piece might sound with a different tempo or instrumentation.

We also know that these areas of the brain encode the abstract relationships between sounds — for instance, the particular sound pattern that makes a major chord major, regardless of the key or instrument. Other studies show distinctive neural responses from similar regions when there is an unexpected break in a repetitive pattern of sounds, or in a chord progression. This is akin to what happens if you hear someone play a wrong note — easily noticeable even in an unfamiliar piece of music.

These cortical circuits allow us to make predictions about coming events on the basis of past events. They are thought to accumulate musical information over our lifetime, creating templates of the statistical regularities that are present in the music of our culture and enabling us to understand the music we hear in relation to our stored mental representations of the music we've heard.

So each act of listening to music may be thought of as both recapitulating the past and predicting the future. When we listen to music, these brain networks actively create expectations based on our stored knowledge.

Composers and performers intuitively understand this: they manipulate these prediction mechanisms to give us what we want — or to surprise us, perhaps even with something better.

In the cross talk between our cortical systems, which analyze patterns and yield expectations, and our ancient reward and motivational systems, may lie the answer to the question: does a particular piece of music move us?

When that answer is yes, there is little — in those moments of listening, at least — that we value more.

Robert J. Zatorre is a professor of neuroscience at the Montreal Neurological Institute and Hospital at McGill University. Valorie N. Salimpoor is a postdoctoral neuroscientist at the Baycrest Health Sciences' Rotman Research Institute in Toronto.

Study shows TV ads minus the pictures can be effective Mom-focused radio spots. From selling sausage to green beans, and deodorant to fabric softener, this week's Advertising Research Foundation conference focusing on media measurement delivered a raft of studies showcasing radio advertising's ability to connect with consumers. In a follow-up to an earlier "Eye vs. Ear" study done late last year, Katz Marketing Solutions reaffirmed that TV spots minus the pictures can make for powerful radio ads. Katz tested 10 packaged goods products that appeal to 25-54 year old moms — brands such as Johnson's Baby Lotion, Green Giant, Kellogg's Frosted Flakes and Snuggle. Most spent little or nothing in radio. The goal was to demonstrate that even without pictures, moms recognize the brands just by audio cues. Nearly all moms picked up on Olive Garden, Progressive and Frosted Flakes — "they're great!" as Tony the Tiger would say — but other brands did well too. Without any pictures, 68% identified a Johnson's Baby spot — not just from the baby noises, but keywords like "moisture" and "lotion" and the happy, warm and nostalgic feeling of the ad. For Snuggle, 79% pegged the brand — mostly on the bear mascot's voice. And Green Giant's "ho ho ho" was a slam dunk for many moms — 80% identified the brand without any mention of the iconic green-tinted man on the box. Overall, for the 10 products tested, the group of moms was able to name the brand just by the TV ad's audio track 77% of the time. "There is a tremendous amount of audio brand equity that is recognized," Katz Marketing Solutions president Bob McCurdy says. The message from Katz to advertisers is they can build the frequency of TV ads by moving dollars to radio, and save some money in the process. McCurdy says Katz has been sharing the data with the various brand managers, who seem receptive to the research. But changing buying habits doesn't happen overnight. "If they're not using radio already, it takes a while," McCurdy says.

The Beck's Edison Bottle

from Shine Limited PRO3 days ago NOT YET RATED

The first playable beer.

19th Century technology meets 21st Century music over a bottle of beer in the latest extension to the Beck's Record Label project.

This time, the art label has evolved, and been replaced by the grooves of Auckland band Ghost Wave. Their new single was inscribed into the surface of a Beck's beer bottle which could then be played on a specially-built device based on Thomas Edison's original cylindrical phonograph.

Making the world's first playable beer bottle was a formidable technical challenge. The clever people at Auckland firm Gyro Constructivists first had to design and build a record-cutting lathe, driven by a hard drive recording head. Then they reinvented Edison's original cylinder player, using modern materials and electronics and built to very fine tolerances.

The Edison Bottle made its public debut at SemiPermanent in Auckland in May to a standing ovation from the assembled media and design community.

Semi Permanent Launch video: <http://on.fb.me/1a5J3ct>

Beck's has had a long association with music and art. In fact, at about the same time Heinrich Beck was brewing his first beer in the 1870s, Tom Edison was tinkering away on designs for the first phonograph.

Considering how beer has influenced recorded music since then, this physical collaboration was very appropriate and long overdue.

June 21, 2013 | 03:00PM PT

How the Brain Really Works

New techniques are letting researchers look at the activity of the whole brain at once

- By ALISON GOPNIK

- **smallerLarger** For the last 20 years neuroscientists have shown us compelling pictures of brain areas "lighting up" when we see or hear, love or hate, plan or act. These studies were an important first step. But they also suggested a misleadingly simple view of how the brain works. They associated specific mental abilities with specific brain areas, in much the same way that phrenology, in the 19th century, claimed to associate psychological characteristics with skull shapes.

Most people really want to understand the mind, not the brain. Why do we experience and act on the world as we do? Associating a piece of the mind with a piece of the brain does very little to answer that question. After all, for more than a century we have known that our minds are the result of the stuff between our necks and the tops of our heads. Just adding that vision is the result of stuff

at the back and that planning is the result of stuff in the front, it doesn't help us understand how vision or planning work.



John S. Dykes

But new techniques are letting researchers look at the activity of the whole brain at once. What emerges is very different from the phrenological view. In fact, most brain areas multitask; they are involved in many different kinds of experiences and actions. And the brain is dynamic. It can respond differently to the same events in different times and circumstances.

A new study in *Nature Neuroscience* by Jack L. Gallant, Tolga Çukur and colleagues at the University of California, Berkeley, dramatically illustrates this new view. People in an fMRI scanner watched a half-hour-long sequence combining very short video clips of everyday scenes. The scientists organized the video content into hundreds of categories, describing whether each segment included a plant or a building, a cat or a clock.

Then they divided the whole brain into small sections with a three-dimensional grid and recorded the activity in each section of the grid for each second. They used sophisticated statistical analyses to find the relationship between the patterns of brain activity and the content of the videos.

The twist was that the participants either looked for human beings in the videos or looked for vehicles. When they looked for humans, great swaths of the brain became a "human detector"—more sensitive to humans and less sensitive to vehicles. Looking for vehicles turned more of the brain into a "vehicle detector." And when people looked for humans their brains also became more sensitive to related objects, like cats and plants. When they looked for vehicles, their brains became more sensitive to clocks and buildings as well.

In fact, the response patterns of most brain areas changed when people changed the focus of their attention. Something as ineffable as where you focus your attention can make your whole brain work differently.

People often assume that knowing about the brain is all that you need to explain how the mind works, so that neuroscience will replace psychology. That may account for the curious popular enthusiasm for the phrenological "lighting up" studies. It is as if the very thought that something psychological is "in the brain" gives us a little explanatory frisson, even though we have known for at least a century that everything psychological is "in the brain" in some sense. But it would be just as accurate to say that knowing about the mind explains how the brain works.

The new, more dynamic picture of the brain makes psychology even more crucial. The researchers could only explain the very complex pattern of brain activity by relating it to what they knew about categorization and attention. In the same way, knowing the activity of every wire on every chip in my computer wouldn't tell me much if I didn't also know the program my machine was running.

Neuroscience may be sexier than psychology right now, and it certainly has a lot more money and celebrity. But they really cannot get along without each other.

A version of this article appeared May 4, 2013, on page C4 in the U.S. edition of The Wall Street Journal, with the headline: The Brain as a Quick-Change Artist.

For the first time in history neuro science has been used for researching the impact of radio ads in the brain. 538, Mindshare and neuromarketing agency scanned the brain activity of 25 male subjects in the age of 20 to 49 years and listeners of 538 for this research. While lying in the fMRI scanner they listened to radio ads. They thought they were participating in a language study and were asked to do tasks with letters. One task kept their attention away from the ads only slightly, a more difficult task simulated the situation of radio listening as a background activity. This way a conscious and an unconscious listening situation were created. 32 different commercials were tested with different characteristics. This way we also obtained insights about the effectiveness of humor, sound logos, visual transfer and about the differences between tactical ads and brand ads. This research gives us insights which advertisers, media agencies and sales houses can use.

The results

1. Radio Works, both consciously and unconsciously

The way an ad enters the brain (consciously or unconsciously) determines strongly the way it is processed. During conscious listening the listener weighs the value of the facts in the commercial. During unconscious listening the brain is busy with something else and has less capacity to evaluate the arguments given by the commercial and trusts the ad based on prior knowledge of the brand. In other words: it is easier to activate the promise of the product in the brain. Also, the listener is 'off guard' as he is not aware that a commercial message is being received. It's not all positive, as expected there is more irritation when auditive stimuli are distracting from a difficult task.

① Brand ads have to create a positive brand awareness. So it could be better to advertise at moments that the listener is busy and 'off guard'. Sales driven ads could benefit more from a conscious contact as more rational arguments must be transferred. Conscious contact means more capacity to process the offer.

2. Visual Transfer is really Emotional Transfer

When there is Visual Transfer the radio ad fits a corresponding tv ad. Listening to the radio ad will bring back the image of the tv ad in the brain, according to established assumptions. This research shows that this is not how transfer works. The transfer doesn't take place in the visual part of the brain (visual cortex), nor in memory areas (hippocampus). Instead, emotions connected to the tv ad, are recalled in the brain when exposed to the radio ad. Positive or negative. This means that tv ads which were not strong on the relevant emotions are better not used for visual/emotional transfer.

① These findings suggest that radio is much more than expected a relevant medium for building brands, extending or intensifying the effect initially built by tv.

3. Sound logo increases effect

A sound logo increases the potential effect of the commercial. There is a better reaction on attention, emotional response and effect. This goes for all brands but especially big strong brands.

① So all advertisers should use a sound logo, for any media channel with an auditive component. This includes tv and prerolls.

Visual transfer does not exist, emotional transfer does

fMRI scanning shows what consumers **subconsciously** hear

For the first time in marketing history the impact of radio advertising on the consumer brain has been explored using fMRI technology, through a collaboration between neuromarketing bureau Neurensics, **Dutch radio station 538 and media giant Mindshare.** The spectacular results of the research provide unique insight into the processing and effectiveness of radio advertising, information relevant to all businesses making use of auditory marketing.

The brains of 25 male subjects were scanned while they listened to radio commercials. Participants were unaware of the true nature of the study; they were lead to believe they were participating in a study about language proficiency. **The most interesting finding of the study is that radio ads have a different impact on the brain when processed consciously or unconsciously. During unconscious processing, the consumer uses simple, automated rules and heuristics that fall prey to persuasive advertising. Unconscious processing of radio ads results in greater trust in the communicated message and, consequently, greater anticipated reward or expectation associated with the advertised object. During conscious processing the consumer listens more critically to the commercial arguments: resulting in less trust, but more overall emotional activation. Still, listening to advertising while heavily distracted (unconscious processing) results in greater agitation, or anger.**

Small advertising elements have a large effect

In addition to the difference between conscious and unconscious processing, the study also found that radio commercials with a sound logo are more effective in activating brain areas that are relevant in determining purchasing behavior, than commercials

without sound logo. This holds true for all tested brands, but it works especially for strong, well-established brands. Humor in radio advertisements results in greater attention and more overall brain activity compared to ads without humor. Humorous radio ads score more extremely (negative/positive), which does not make them necessarily more effective than non-humorous commercials. If the aim is to stand out and create attention, humor is an effective tool. However, the polarizing effects of humor may be detrimental to effective brand building.

Visual transfer does not exist

The last interesting finding concerns visual transfer. Visual transfer is the mental activation of imagery associated with a television commercial upon hearing the corresponding radio advertisement. Or so theory assumed. The current research provides evidence for an emotional, rather than visual transfer of information. The emotional pattern (negative/positive) that a TV-commercial elicits in the consumer's brain is reactivated upon hearing the radio edit. Contrary to theory, the visual cortex (responsible for processing visual information) and memory structures (e.g. hippocampus) are not more active for radio ads with a television commercial, than for radio ads without a television version. The radio ads that have a television version activate the same emotional pattern (negative/positive) as their television counterpart.

Jikke Romijn (Head of research at Mindshare): “These findings are a first in marketing history and highly relevant in the planning and creation of effective radio advertising. Not only do we know how the consumer's brain processes radio commercials, we also know how we can improve the effectiveness of the ads.”

4. Humor increases the attention but also polarizes.

Commercials with humor show more attention, more activity in the brain than commercials without humor. Commercials with humor show extreme results, positive and negative. In terms of effectiveness, humor may not always be helpful.

① If primary awareness and attention are the objectives, humor is a great instrument. For brand building campaigns it may be better to stay away from humor.

5. Action gets more reaction than brand advertising

A commercial with a concrete call to action gets more attention and triggers the expected reward and other positive dimensions more easily than ads for brand building purposes. This is probably because of the 'what's in it for me' effect: listeners can easily judge the relevance of the message in their personal situation. This results in lower 'advertising suspicion' too.

① Promotional campaigns can benefit from conscious contacts more, as rational arguments need to be transferred and judged. Brand building ads benefit most when the brain is 'off guard' and implicit brand images can easily be transferred. Emotional transfer with a TV ad and the use of a sound logo greatly enhance this effect.

Can you hear me now? The importance of sound in content marketing [video]

Published on May 24, 2013

by Brafton Editorial

Stefanie D'aulizio presents this week's Content & Coffee with Brafton. She explores some key takeaways from Heartbeat's book [Sounds Like Branding](#). Marketers often think about how their brands come across on computer screens, publishing dynamic media that educates, convinces and converts prospects. However, brands may be appealing to the wrong senses in advertising, as sound may be the most persuasive way to grab customers' attention.

We hear a lot about how written content is king, [blog marketing](#) is the next big thing and people just can't get enough media on their phones. But [the new book](#) *Sounds Like Branding*, by international

branding agency Heartbeat, suggests that what consumers hear during a brand experience is key to forming a positive opinion about the company.

Brands spend countless hours developing strategies to elicit the right emotion from their prospects. But have they focused too closely on the wrong aspects of their campaigns? Sound Advice found that sixty percent of companies have not identified how they sound to their customers, while studies show that of all the senses, hearing is the one linked most strongly with emotion.

If content marketing is about storytelling, and words strike up powerful emotions, it's clear companies can't operate on a single plane any longer. Brands need dynamic marketing strategies that include high-quality writing and compelling sound.

Marketers have already heard a lot about [video marketing](#). Industry experts say it's the Next Big Thing. But video content creation requires more than informational scripts – it demands brands think about how they sound and make sure the impression they're making matches how they want to be perceived by prospects. So marketers can't solely focus on the words scrolling down the teleprompter – they must consider their inflection, pitch and tone, too.

How does your brand sound? Think about it – are you coming off the way you want to online? Maybe it's time you voice your opinion and not just blog about it on your website.

Catch you next week and happy content marketing

Principal #4: Audio is Critical

Two screens may be present, but
there is still only one audio track.

Those who engage in second
screen behaviors while the TV is on
still listen to the TV....as audio
“snaps them back” to the TV.



14

innerscope Ipsos MediaCT

Audio logos

ARF

Audio is now
key in video
ads!

**"I think the ad should
use more *audio* because
I'm not always focusing
on the video and if I can
hear it and it's clever or
something sticks in my
head that could be more
beneficial."**
 – Jared B

- Nearly all consumers talked about doing something else when any video ad comes on (be it on TV, or online)
- However, if the audio is engaging, they will turn their attention back to the ad
- Advertisers should consider re-focusing their creative efforts from more visually-focused creative, to adding more emphasis to audio

Tour Operator Logos: The Value of Creating a Good Logo

BRANDING

By [Simon Lenoir](#), Published May 14, 2013

A logo is an essential part of your business branding plan. You might be a small activity operator in a coastal beach town, but that doesn't mean you don't need a logo that allows people to instantly recognize who you are and what you do.

There's even more competition out there online, so you need to create a logo that grabs attention wherever it's placed.

There are many benefits to having a logo designed specifically for your company:

1. Logos Create Business Identity

When you're creating your business logo, remember that this is the image your clients will remember you by.

Think about it — you probably recognize other large corporations in your world because of their logos.

When you look for a caffeine pick-me-up, you probably glance around to find the nearest green circle filled with a mystical mermaid, the universal symbol for Starbucks Coffee.

This is the type of corporate identity you want among your customer base. **A good logo will allow them to recognize you in seconds.**

Put your logo everywhere!

Once you've settled on the design, use it consistently throughout all of your marketing materials. Include your logo on your merchandise, and wherever your company is mentioned online.

The more places you put your logo, the quicker your customers will recognize it and the faster your brand identity will develop.

If they see your brand on your Facebook page, [they will remember to "like" your page](#) in order to receive more updates. Or if your logo is on a local sponsorship banner, they'll know you're investing resources in your community.

2. Logos Provide Visual Enhancement of Your Brand

Your logo should represent your company and what it does.

When you create your logo, you should:

- Choose a color that will **stand out**, and make it a clean, crisp logo that is easy to read and understand.
- Include the name of your company in some form, in order to intertwine your business name with your visual identity.
- Try to give **some sort of idea of what your business does**, either with imagery or text.

Here's a good example from one of our customers, [Go Car Barcelona](#):

Brand strategies are an important part of [developing your business and helping it grow](#) each year, but they are essentially incomplete if you don't have a logo.

3. Logos Make You Look Professional

People are more apt to work with a company with a well-developed logo. Even though in reality it doesn't mean that one tour is better than the other, people might think that way because first impressions count.

For example, which logo looks better?

A good logo gives the impression that you have invested significant time and resources into [developing your brand identity](#). The underlying message is you're a successful and legitimate company with enough money behind it because you can pay for such activities.

Your logo is a worthwhile investment.

This is your chance to get creative and develop an image that represents your tour or activity so be excited! Invest the time and resources necessary in order to create a logo that instantly conveys your mission and tells customers what they can expect.

If you're thinking about changing your logo, remember that consistency is key – even when you radically change it. Notice in the example above, Best Buy kept the yellow price tag incorporated into it.

Don't rush. Develop a logo that you love, one that you feel truly represents your business. If you can't decide between a few images, test it out with 10-15 of your customers at the end of a tour to ask them which they prefer.

In an online world where people make judgment calls in a nano-second, your logo could be the factor that gives you the upper hand against your competition (provided [your website looks professional](#), too).

Wired for sound

Wed, 22 May 2013 | By [Lou Cooper](#)

Sonic identity: What we hear when experiencing a brand is key to forming a positive opinion of it, according to research, and many brands are now using sound to their advantage.

Selfridges worked with Condiment Junkie to bring in a sonic element to its Christmas window displays

Seven out of 10 marketing managers spend 5 per cent or less of their marketing budget on music and six out of 10 marketing managers have not identified how their brand sounds, according to *Sounds Like Branding*, a book published by the chief executive of Heartbeat, an international global music branding agency. Are marketers missing a trick?

Studies show that of all the senses, our hearing is the one linked most strongly with our emotions, and emotion is the key factor in forming clear, long-lasting memories, according to *Sound Advice*, a white paper on the importance and benefits of a sonic identity, produced by sonic branding and experiential sound design company Condiment Junkie.

Although a sound agency may well say that, there is no doubt that what consumers hear when they are experiencing a brand is important.

One brand that recognises the value of sound is Selfridges (pictured). “Sound is incredibly important to Selfridges as a business and the playlists used in each department are very considered,” explains Selfridges’ creative concept manager Sarah McCullough. “Sound is a real area for development with retailers: it’s something that can enhance the experience.”

Selfridges worked with Condiment Junkie to introduce a sonic element to its Christmas windows for the first time. “In terms of footfall, the Christmas windows are incredibly important, they’re probably seen by more people than any other window scheme,” says McCullough.

Re-imagining traditional Christmas songs using the sound of a music box, it placed a discreet device on the inside of the window that when attached to a surface, turns the entire surface into a speaker. This allowed people to approach the window and use their finger to spin a disc, like a modern version of winding up a music box.

“There was that lovely pay off for customers if they were to interact with the window, of hearing the music start,” she says. “We’re always looking for innovative ways to bring new experiences to our customers and this certainly did that.”

As it becomes difficult and more expensive for brands to differentiate themselves visually, brands such as Selfridges and Diageo (see Q+A) are increasingly turning to sound, as well as other senses, to better engage with their consumers.

One sector that takes the power of sound extremely seriously is automotive. “For decades, the big car companies have been spending lots of money thinking about exactly how their car doors should sound when you close them - suitably strong and secure - how exactly the dashboard should sound when a potential purchaser comes into the car showroom and taps on it, and what the engine should sound like for the driver,” explains Charles Spence, professor of experimental psychology at Oxford University.

Spence has conducted extensive research into ‘cross-model correspondences and synaesthetic marketing’ - or the effect that stimulation of one sense has on another. “Often when you ask consumers why they chose this or that product, the answers they give verbally don’t seem to bear much relation to what’s actually driving their behaviour when you do the analysis. We try to develop more robust, objective measures - how the sound of a product, its package, the place in which it was bought, the place in which consumers are using or eating it has on their behaviour, their liking and their response,” he explains.

One area of exploration for Spence is virtual clothing and augmented reality in retail. “You’re in front of a store window or in-store and the item or colour you want isn’t there. You can click on a screen and it’s as if you’re looking in the mirror wearing the clothing. Those augmented clothing applications are just visual at the moment.”

So he investigated whether adding sounds to these applications increases a person’s engagement and crucially, the willingness of people to buy such an item of clothing with augmented sounds, as well as visuals.

The decision of which music to play is too important to be left to the manager’s preferred iPod selection

The experiment found that people interacted with the system for 30 per cent longer with sound and were also willing to pay more for the item that they experienced in the presence of realistic sounds than in silence.

Another area Spence highlights is restaurants. His crossmodel research lab in Oxford ran an experiment with The Fat Duck in Bray which revealed that people’s perception of the intensity of the bitterness and sweetness present in a toffee was modified significantly by varying the pitch of a soundtrack that was playing over headphones.

“A growing number of bars and restaurants will start to realise that the decision of which music they play is too important to be left to the manager’s preferred iPod selection,” says Spence.

“In the future, we will increasingly see technology being used to allow for the personalised delivery of music and/or soundscapes to individual tables, or even to an individual diner or drinker.”

Spence explains that in recent years an increasing number of brands have started to explore the possibilities associated with matching sounds to their brands. In 2011, Starbucks, for example, commissioned a piece of music with the launch of its packaged coffee brand Starbucks Via.

“The most important thing is understanding the values of your brand and those you want to portray and most importantly the audience that you’re aiming at. These should determine the sounds that you create to represent your brand,” says Arnon Woolfson, head of content, rights and IP at marketing communications agency Anomaly.

However, as more brands take to the airwaves, Condiment Junkie’s paper urges that careful thought must be given to what a brand sounds like, warning against ‘audio backfire’.

A more obvious way that brands use sound is via radio advertising. Last month, the Radio Advertising Bureau released its latest research, revealing the most effective creative features in ads. The research, which measures consumer feedback on over 600 radio advertising campaigns from the RAB’s radioGAUGE, as well as data collected using a brain scanner, finds that, on average, people exposed to radio advertising are 40 per cent more likely to consider purchasing an advertised brand compared to non-listeners.

Integrating music from a brand’s TV ad into their radio ads significantly increases levels of focus and engagement within the brain, according to the study, and the frequency of using consistent sonic branding is 44 per cent higher in the most effective ads compared to the least effective ads.

And it seems brands are taking radio more seriously. For example, biggest spender BSkyB splashed out £18.2m on it in the year to March 2013, up from £9.9m for the previous 12 months.

Studies in the digital sphere also point to the positive effects of audio on engagement. NPR is a media organisation that serves as a national syndicator to a network of almost 1,000 radio stations in the US.

Research done by NPR into its iPhone, iPad and Android apps found that users who requested audio - a station stream, a national newscast, or NPR Music content - viewed twice as many pages as those who only read the apps’ content.

On average, audio streamers racked up 4.2 page views per visit versus 2.4 for text-only users. The ratio held up for iPad users, too. Listeners viewed 8.1 pages per visit, versus 3.9 among readers. Radio has been shown to provide a ROI of £1.48 for every pound spent on the medium, which is second only to TV, according to a study by Ebiquity on behalf of Thinkbox, which explored average ROI by medium across the last three years.

So when it comes to how your brand sounds, it pays to listen

Sonic Branding: The New Strategic Identity Gamechanger

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As music becomes a deeper sensory adventure, so does branding. Companies are plugging into the perks of “sensory branding” by building tribes of brand enthusiasts through the emotional, experiential power of music and curated playlists that reflect the brand’s personality. Learn more about [Songza](#), the company behind the new sonic branding movement, and our first “On Branding” guest, Co-Founder and Chief Content Officer, Eric Davich, on [Episode 001](#) of our show. For upcoming episodes, [subscribe to our podcast](#) on iTunes.

As your last few moments of peaceful slumber meet the morning dawn, the dynamite boom of James Brown’s “Get Up Offa That Thing” zaps you awake.

Goooooooooooooood morning!

It’s go time.

As you move from shower to subway, you summon a playlist that encapsulates your second-by-second mood. A playlist for Monday mornings? *Check.* A playlist that gets you pumped for that 9:45 a.m. boardroom pitch? *Check.* A playlist handpicked by Diane von Furstenberg? *Hey, this dress is by DVF! Check.* Your earbuds buzz a bit as you press play, and the energy courses through you from the first note.

This playlist is sonic fuel, and it’s just as important as your morning cup of joe.

When brands spend hour after hour thinking through captive audience scenarios and experiential marketing techniques, the concept of sonic branding makes complete sense.

What is sonic branding? Simply put, sonic branding is the way a company leverages acoustics to make an emotional connection. [Much like](#) the NBC tri-chime, or the

“Intel inside” jingle that saw their rise during the golden television age, companies have an opportunity to strike a chord with target consumer markets — especially when brand identity sees a crossover with personal identity.

Once a consumable, passive activity for high society Englanders and 19th century aristocrats, music has darted and dashed into many a new democratic territory. Considering how the Walkman set the iPod up for success, it’s undeniable that both devices have changed the way music was consumed in the 90’s and early 00’s. Now that devices live at our sides at all hours of the day, sonic branding is beginning to reach an apex of relevance.

More than that though, brands are becoming acutely aware of the way consumers — *we, the people* — are interacting with devices and branded content. How do we toggle between a mobile phone and a tablet as we transition from the backseat of a taxi to the marble lobby of our offices? What experiences call for a “mood match”, in which audio mirrors the mood the listener is in, and what experiences call for a “mood makeover”, transforming a glum Wednesday with TurboTax into an epic aural journey?

Digital music services like [Songza](#) are quickly becoming the middleman for brands looking to break into experientially driven events. At the intersection of user experience, curation, and music delivery, Songza provides big brands with that elusive opportunity to get in front of an audience without the trappings of disruptive marketing. Instead, brands are able to make an emotional connection by creating or curating playlists that match the identity of the brand itself.

Sonic branding meets several brand goals:

(1) The “right time, right place” factor.

Brands worldwide are becoming deeply aware that simply “pushing product” is no longer a viable or attractive option to users. Brands have to deeply listen to the rhythm of the day-to-day in order to pinpoint the exact moment of opportune reach. This includes deep reconnaissance into the blogosphere, social networks, and user data that’s pulled from a variety of regularly used services.

ESPN has been overhauling its content delivery over the past several years by investing in cross-platform development that allows game time streaming across every phylum of digital device: mobile phones, tablets, desktop computers, laptops,

televisions, devices on WiFi and those without, small screens and big screens...the list goes on. According to ESPN's Moira Davis, Vice President of Marketing, it's about behavioral observation and developing content that is able to be consumed across any need state, at [any given time](#).

[Multi-screen research](#) by Google is providing tremendous insight into how customers are interacting with devices on a day-to-day basis, spurning interest in the way brands interact with fans — and vice versa. As a result, companies are leaping at the opportunity to provide content in a way that's natural with the flow of the user's day.

Content that's within reach has a higher possibility of being reached for when a brand clearly invests thought into the way the content interacts with users.

(2) The task completion factor.

Great UX designers know it's the completion of the task that matters. If a subject can't find what they're looking for in a reasonable amount of time, if they become anxious as they delve deeper into a webpage or become so frustrated that they abandon the site and go in search of a better one, the designer's work has failed.

In [this case study](#) outlined by Nokia's development team, the company delves into some of the core considerations that brands are putting into music "tagging" applications like Shazam. Working one-on-one with Shazam's business development team, the UX designers and developers found that consistent brand recognition across platforms, intuitive user interfaces (UI), and ease of usability all helped to boost the likability of Shazam's end product. Today, the service connects 300 million people in more than 200 countries and 33 languages [worldwide](#).

In [an interview with PCMag](#), Songza co-creator Elias Roman acknowledged Songza as a "lifestyle enhancement company", noting that for instance, its team of 25 curators have found that the soundtrack to the Last of the Mohicans made filling out that gnarly Excel spreadsheet an actual pleasure.

In the coming years, as science and technology continue to reach higher heights, it will be especially interesting to watch the neurological studies that can get even more specific in addressing user behavior.

(3) The discovery engine factor.

Everyone's got a friend they call a "tastemaker". Great leather shoes. Great tortoiseshell glasses. Great vintage record collection.

You'll have whatever they're having.

When it comes to services like Songza, curation is key. Back in 2009 and 2010, while Pandora, Last.fm, and Turntable.fm were pursuing the crowd sourced content route, Songza stepped back to analyze its competitive advantage.

What wasn't being done? Curated content.

Now, the time is ripe for it. Thanks to a small army of 25 chosen music curators, Songza is able to work with the well-versed and music fluent to compose playlists that are perfectly in tune with the brand's overall essence, and align with the listener's own identity.

These brands are also finding that they can provide tactile value to listener's lifestyles, by offering up a discovery engine that lets music aficionados engage with music they've never heard before. Sure, they're capturing the core of the company through sound, but brand-created playlists are also offering new opportunities for exploration — perhaps one of the most valuable points to all of this.

Brand expression that gives way to personal expression — now that's on the money.

For more on "sonic branding" and the power of sound, check out this interactive sound experiment from Coca-Cola, called the "Remix Bottle", a social music project by DJ and inventor, Jun Fujiwara that puts the focus on, "sounds in, happiness out". Be sure to catch all the high notes [on YouTube here](#).

Couldn't agree more to the importance of silence in catching attention. One example I like is sleeping in the wood surrounded by the sounds of thousands of crickets. It's marvelous and the cricket song help us fall asleep due to its flow and continuity. Now try to sleep with a single cricket in your room...:-) It's the silence between "cricks" that prevents our brain to sleep.

To help us understand the benefits of using sound in the marketing mix, we hear from Emiliano Ramos of [The Sound Agency](#).

Q: Tell us about The Sound Agency – what do you do; who are your clients?

A: The Sound Agency is the world's first full-service business sound consultancy, based on a unique, proprietary model of the ways in which sound affects human beings. We help our clients make sound that is congruent and consistent, whether it is at point of sale, in marketing communications, soundscapes in shops, showrooms and other branded spaces.

Our chairman, Julian Treasure, is the world's leading authority on the use of sound in business, having had four global [TED talks](#), all about sound. Amongst our clients are Harrods, BAA, Honda, Nokia, BBC, Coca-Cola, Waldorf Astoria, Intercontinental Hotels, Lancaster City (California), Bank Muscat, BP, Sonae Sierra, Intu Properties and mfi.

The main benefits we achieve for our clients are improved customer experience, enhanced brand awareness and increased profits. We have now been unleashing the power of sound for global brands, hotels, retailers and other commercial spaces for almost a decade.

Q: Most place marketing to attract companies to a location is visual in nature – comprising a mix of text, data, pictures. With the increasing use of on-line media such as videos, sound is now a potential feature for this mix. Can you tell us what sound branding is and how it can be useful for marketing?

A: Sound branding, as defined by the Audio Branding Academy, aims at building solidly a brand sound that represents the identity and values of a brand in a distinctive manner. With all the means of communication available nowadays, there is a wealth of possibilities for brands to connect with their customers using sound.

Increasingly more brands are becoming aware of the importance of the auditory component of their marketing communications. No matter what your activities are, your brand is making sound and if you are not giving it the attention it deserves, you are probably shooting yourself in the foot.

Research undertaken by Professor Charles Spence from the University of Oxford shows that congruent sound can enhance the power of visual communication by over 1,100%.

Accordingly, if sound is accidental and incongruent, it can reduce the impact by up to 86%.

Q: Can you give us some examples of good sound branding, and tell us why they are good?

A: In terms of brand awareness, Intel Inside is one of the most successful stories in sound branding. Computer processors are something few of us have seen and Intel had little to show in advertising. The creation of a sonic logo was the answer and gave the brand worldwide recognition.

Interestingly enough, whereas it cost Intel hundreds of millions of pounds through the years to reach sound awareness, Nokia did the same with little investment – the Nokia tune is played by the brand's phones billions of times a day around the world.

Abercrombie and Fitch is another great example of a brand consciously using sound to achieve their goals. Their branches blast loud, carefully chosen music aimed at a young audience, creating an atmosphere that attracts their target audience and purposely keeps older people away.

The world's leading car manufacturers invest millions in producing and tailoring each and every sound their cars make – both electronic and mechanical. And it pays off. Martin Lindstrom, owner of the BrandSense agency, a partner of ours, attests in his *BrandSense* book that 44% of Bentley consumers point to sound as the primary factor in their choice of brand.

This will not be news for anyone, but many brands seem to forget it on the way – a satisfied customer spends more. BAA Glasgow Airport requested our services to reduce passengers' stress levels. Our research showed that, as in many commercial spaces, music wasn't the best option to reach their objectives, so we created beautiful soothing soundscapes based on water, wind and bird sounds that act in a non-conscious level.

Feedback was universally positive as passengers reported feeling safe, happy and protected. We not only reached our client's goals but also increased their profits – as customers felt more relaxed, they spent more time in the airport's retail spaces and sales in the free shop area increased by 10%.

Harrods, one of our main clients, lacked a sound strategy and customer experience was being damaged by incongruent sound. Our BrandSound Guidelines defined 140 zones within the store, each with a specific designed sound – either a carefully tailored music playlist or generative soundscapes. Our suite of generative soundscapes and sound effects in their Toy Kingdom won the gold medal at the Audio Branding Awards last December and shows how to deliver an extraordinary multi-sensory experience.

Q: In terms of promoting a place to attract companies to invest, how can sound branding be of use?

A: Being an essential part of marketing communications, sound can definitely enhance the brand and raise the profile of places. Our BrandSound model has identified eight expressions of sound, and provides detailed guidelines on how to maximise the benefits of sound using each of them.

Sound (including voice) in advertising has to be completely in line with the values and characteristics of the place, with branding benefits even higher with the use of a carefully designed sonic logo.

Your location might be smart, high tech, sophisticated or, perhaps, an industrial powerhouse. Regardless of the attributes you want to showcase, it is fundamental to use sounds that embody those features. When consistent, branded audio (especially podcasts), can be a powerful and cost-effective way to transmit information about a region, while promoting it and enhancing its brand.

In 2011, the Mayor of the City of Lancaster in California contacted The Sound Agency after seeing the potential soundscapes have to improve wellbeing and lower crime rates. We created and installed a relaxing soundscape for walkers along the city's half-mile pedestrian district, renamed [BLVD](#).

The soundscape produces a feeling of security using birdsong and evokes purity and serenity using gentle water sounds. Reactions from citizens and visitors have been extremely positive – some want to buy the soundscapes for their homes and retail spaces! Media coverage in press, radio and even prime time TV in the USA has been intense, providing the city with great PR.

Regions, cities and districts are already making sound and some of its elements can be incorporated in to designed sound, making the cognitive association much stronger.

A case study that illustrates this is that of the City of Vienna. Its Tourist Board carried out marketing research to define the sound of the city, which resulted in the [Vienna Sound Identity](#). A downtempo opera, which evokes the feelings of sensuality, timelessness and sophistication, is the base for its sonic logo and soundscape, which are used in different marketing initiatives such as television spots on CNN and in tourism events abroad.

The key word for great marketing is consistency. If you already have it visually, sound can help you reach new heights in effectiveness.

For decades Ace Hardware has used radio to reach its customers — it spent \$3 million in radio last year according to Kantar Media — and a new ad campaign will continue that tradition. But in a move that reiterates the growing body of evidence supporting the power of audio signatures, Ace will use its complete iconic jingle for the first time in more than 15 years. It was originally made famous in commercials in the '70s and '80s. Then in 1989 the jingle evolved from "Ace is the place with the helpful hardware man" to "Ace is the place with the helpful hardware folks" to better reflect its workforce. But for the past 16 years, only the melody of the jingle has

been featured, not the words. The new marketing effort, designed to focus on the locally-owned hardware store's more personalized service, will restore the jingle to its original form. Inside Radio caught up with Ace director of consumer marketing Jeff Gooding about the power of sound.

Inside Radio: As a longtime user of radio, how does Ace see audio branding?

Jeff Gooding: Audio branding and audio cues directly tied to your brand can and should be a powerful mechanism to definitively link the messaging to your brand with the consumer audience. With mnemonic music and tones, brands can hit an emotional chord with their target audience and, in many cases, leverage the equity in that to establish a deeper connection that can increase consideration and drive consideration and loyalty. That is one of the many reasons why, at Ace, we are bringing our classic and unmistakable Ace jingle back with our new campaigns. We want to leverage the tremendous equity we have with the Ace jingle with our core customers, and establish it further with our emerging customer demographic to reinforce why they should and do shop Ace.

IR: Do consumers still remember a jingle that's been gone for more than a decade?

Gooding: After more than 15 years of not using the jingle with lyrics in our advertising, you can't imagine the high level of recall we still get from consumers regarding the jingle. It's amazing. Everyone knows it and loves to sing it to you once they know you work for Ace. Why wouldn't we use the power of that jingle and audio branding to cement Ace in the hearts and minds of consumers? It's part of the American fabric and amplifies what is in the DNA of all of our retailers and stores, and that is to deliver service helpful day in and day out to their customers.

IR: Doesn't sound like an easy to accomplish.

Gooding: It's not an easy thing to do. It's hard to have the insight and consistency to build an audio signature for your brand, have it stick and become part of the consumer vernacular and pop culture. But when it does, it's powerful and can help amplify your brand beyond the resources you are investing in. Brands returning to audio branding are doing what we are doing, remaining relevant to our core customers while building and deepening relationships with new customers.

IR: Retro-branding seems to be hot right now.

Gooding: Many brands appear to be returning to this type of classic branding and communication. It's classic advertising, steeped in tradition, that can drive a deep emotional brand connection and most of all leverage equity the brand has built to drive consumers to action.

IR: As a marketer, do you see audio branding on par with visual branding?

Gooding: I see audio branding differently than visual branding and how they can not only work together, but also on their own individually. That's part of the power of integrated marketing. Visual and audio branding are integral to bringing the messaging to life, reaching consumers in the multiple ways they want to be reached. They strike different emotional chords that establish and deepen the connection with the brand. Each have their own role and can be powerful in different ways

Research Shows Online Viewing Brings Substantial Cannibalization

by David Goetzl, Monday, April 15, 2013 3:53 PM

Networks used to argue with considerable passion that making full episodes available online had little impact on ratings. The digital viewership was “additive,” they’d say.

Online viewers weren’t going to watch the linear broadcast anyway. Further, online availability could be a boon as people would become attracted enough to eagerly check out the on-air broadcast.

Cannibalization? No way.

But that position is receding. And, new research from GfK backs up the evolving views. The conclusion is simple: cannibalization is here.

Survey results show 33% say they watch less traditional TV with streaming options, while 24% say they watch more. GfK says networks used to gain a “net benefit” from streaming on, say, an NBC.com or CBS.com. Now, the research firm calculates it brings a “net disadvantage.”

“Online viewing has now strongly entered cannibalization levels,” GfK writes.

GfK executive David Tice points out that doesn’t mean overall TV viewing is declining. Nielsen recently released data showing women ages 18-plus watched on average of 3% more linear TV in late 2011 than the year before.

But, particular shows are finding audiences erode with other viewing opportunities and Tice said that brings into focus how to derive as much revenue from streaming as traditional viewing. GfK found 32% are visiting network sites via a mobile device.

GfK’s conclusions were derived from an annual survey conducted last year from December 5 through 14, where participants were asked questions about their media behavior since Sept. 1, 2012. The firm conducted 1,500 full interviews among Internet users in a 13-to-54 demographic.

The seventh-annual survey only covered usage of “official” network digital platforms for broadcast and cable outlets -- be they affiliated with the network itself, specific shows, etc.

The impact of cannibalization is one reason programmers are pushing for improved cross-platform measurement to get credit for smartphone, tablet and other consumption.

Even as GfK did not tiptoe around the “The Big C” (not the Showtime series) in its research, it did offer concerned networks some potentially heartening news. The firm

found 16% of online video viewers say they've forwarded a link to an online commercial, while 20% have visited an advertiser's site.

Also, 26% said they "typically watch" the pre-roll/mid-roll/post-roll ads. (Among a subset of avid online viewers, that number would seem low since ads generally aren't skippable with full episodes.)

Here's a double-edged sword: GfK research indicates well over 50% do something else online as a commercial plays in a streamed episode, but they don't turn the volume off. So, while they miss the full video experience, they do hear the pitch.

Among other findings, GfK found that even with sites like TVGuide.com and Zap2It.com, network hubs continue to be a go-to place online for schedule information. There's potentially another double-edged sword there, though. The sites might generate a certain trust among consumers. However, GfK indicates many are visiting because they feel confused about shows being "moved, cancelled or put on hiatus."

While chasing listings information is surprising, the survey's suggestion the other principal reason viewers visit an ABC.com or ComedyCentral.com is to watch a full episode is a no-brainer.

"Making that type of video available is sort of the expectation of the consumer now," GfK's Tice said. "You really do have to offer that. Otherwise, they're going to have a negative impression of your network."

Networks might have to take an image hit for a while. More and more content is behind a gate with the authentication or TV Everywhere movement. Fox, for example, doesn't make full episodes available to those without a pay-TV subscription until eight days after broadcast.

Looking further into the GfK report, the firm explored second-screening. Some networks such as TBS with "Conan" have been launching apps that synch content appearing on a digital device with what's on TV in real time. GfK found no more than around 15% of respondents are using the opportunities.

The GfK survey also indicated networks are becoming weaker at keeping social media users within controlled turf. In 2011, 36% of respondents said they used a social-media button on a network Web site. In 2012, the figure dropped to 27%. Certainly, it wouldn't be surprising if people are increasingly seeking out their own Facebook and Twitter experiences, rather than responding to offers of guided tours.

Still, networks might gain from that if conversations are deemed more authentic. Of course, genuine dialogue blasting a show can be trouble. That can stop viewing on any device before it starts. Forget cannibalization there.

The Gift of Listening

By Richard Brooke | Published:

Ever been chatting with someone and, before you can even finish your sentence, they interrupt to share their own thought or finish yours for you? Or perhaps you are in the middle of making an important point and their attention is pulled away as they check their ringing cell phone, send an email or reply to a text message. We've all watched someone we are talking to nod and even mutter "uh huh" – knowing all the while they didn't really hear a word we just said.

These are conversations that leave people feeling unheard and unimportant, and they happen to all of us every day. In fact, most of us are guilty on a regular basis of listening to others in this same way.

You have all heard the cliché about why humans have two ears and only one mouth. The level at which I intend to encourage you to listen here, would require that cliché to be updated to a ratio of four or five ears to one mouth. If you think about how easy it is to offend someone with your mouth and how impossible it is to offend someone with your ears ... well, you get the point.

Listening at the level described here is a discipline and an art that will pay big dividends in your personal relationships and in your business endeavors.



When you practice this level of listening, you will provide people around you with a gift that they have rarely been given in their lifetime.

The **Gift of Listening** is simply listening with a commitment to hear exactly what another person is saying. Hearing what they are *intending* to say but are not; even hearing what they are purposely *not* saying. More importantly, it is hearing what the other person is *feeling* ... their words merely an attempt at expressing those feelings. You may be feeling scared or mad or sad or happy. The artful listener will feel what it is you feel, and let you know the communication has landed.

Listening at this level requires, first and foremost, a commitment to "source" the other person. This is an emotional and spiritual gift. You must be willing to give the other person the validation, acknowledgment and esteem they are seeking.

Think about what really happens when two people come together in a conversation. They could be talking about the weather, sports, politics, business or simply what they did last weekend. Each person comes to the conversation with an unconscious addiction to "being heard." They want the other person to hear their point, their story, their opinion, their accomplishments, and their feelings on the subject. They are usually politely persistent, and they want the last word.

Imagine what it looks like, sounds like and feels like to have these two agendas collide. Neither person is heard; neither is validated. Feelings are hurt or, at best, not nurtured. The result is an emotional train wreck. Empowerment, self-esteem, friendship, relationship and love are overlooked—or even damaged.

Giving the gift of listening starts with you setting aside, for the moment, your agenda to be sourced in a conversation.

Just make the commitment at the beginning of the conversation to have it be "all about the other person." You do not have to do this in every conversation, just the ones in which your goal is for the other person to walk away feeling better about themselves than before they spoke to you. Funny, but in every case they will also feel better about you ... much better than if you tried to create the same feelings by making the dialogue "all about you."

The second thing you must do to listen at this level, is to start listening with your body, your heart and your intuition—instead of your mind.

The superficial way you and I were taught in school to listen, is with our conscious mind. That is the part of our mind that discerns between right and wrong, hot and cold, good and bad. It is the part of us that has formed opinions on everything we have ever heard, read, experienced or just thought about. Most of us go through life managing our affairs with all the information and opinions we have amassed in our conscious mind.

When using your conscious mind to listen, the result looks like an argument or a competition, or that you just plain aren't interested. I tell you about my weather and you respond by telling me about yours. The thing is, I don't care about your weather and you don't care about mine. I tell you what I did this weekend and you think doing that is a waste of time. I tell you I think so-and-so should have done things this way and you disagree, if not verbally at least that is what you are thinking ... and how you are listening.



There are other parts of you designed for far superior listening. Your body actually listens. It feels impressions of whether things said are true or false, authentic or contrived. It uses your emotions, your intuition, your unconscious mind all wrapped up in a spiritual self that, given the opportunity, can really hear the entire message. Again, it is hearing what is *said*, what is *intended to be said*, what is *not said*, and what is *felt*.

To give yourself the opportunity to listen with these tools, you must have a clear intention to use them and not use your conscious mind. You accomplish this by agreeing to source the other person. To do this you will want to quiet your mind. Listen from a clean slate. Wipe clean your opinions about this person. Wipe clean from your thoughts what you want out of this conversation, other than to completely and fully be there for this person.

Wipe clean the mindless chatter that keeps you from being fully present in this moment for this person and for what they want you to hear. This means if you hear your mind commenting on what the other person is saying, you stop yourself and recommit or “represence” yourself. Do this throughout the conversation as often as you need to, in order to stay present.

The third step to the Gift of Listening is to take a look at what is referred to as your habitual listening or your “already, always listening.”

Each of us has at least one habitual listening we use to filter conversations.

Habitual Listeners

- I already know this; therefore, I do not really need to listen.
- Get to the point. I do not have time for all the preamble.
- I know where you are going with this and will help you get to the end.
- Whatever you have, I have better. Hurry up and finish so I can show you mine.
- I disagree with your position; therefore I will not listen further.
- I am preoccupied with my own life story; I cannot pay attention to yours.
- I am so overwhelmed with who you are, I cannot hear what you are saying.

Identify your habitual listeners and practice recognizing when they are in play. Knowing about them, and being willing to shut them off, is half the battle.

Here are some new **Empowering Habitual Listeners** you may replace them with:

- I am here to hear all you have to say.
- I am here to feel all you are feeling.
- I am here to hear what you are *not* saying, as well.
- I am here to source you, to empower you, to get what it is you want me to get about you.

- It is all about you today.
- Your story is the only story.
- Your opinions carry opportunities for me to learn.
- Your concerns are valid for you and today are my concerns, as well.
- Today I see things through *your* eyes, hear through *your* ears and feel with *your* heart.
- In this conversation, you speak and I listen ... really listen.

The fourth step is to ask Hunch-Led Questions.

During these kinds of conversations you will *feel* questions that might be asked, either for clarification or to further the conversation down a path. Hunch-led questions need to be asked. Asking them will enrich the discussion. They are questions almost begging to be asked. They are, however, different from questions that you think up with your conscious mind.

The difference with **Mind Questions** is that they have an agenda to them. Mind questions think they already know the answer, and want to show they are right. Mind questions have opinions behind them. Mind questions have been thought out. If you find yourself entertaining any question that smells like this, do not ask it. If you find yourself with a hunch-led question ask it, even if you think it is too intrusive, too bold, or none of your business. If it is a hunch-led question, it is begging to be asked.



Listening at this level may seem like it takes a lot of energy and time. It may and it may not, depending on the person and topic. You can apply this level of listening to a 30-second conversation or a three-hour one. Either way you will provide the other person with an extraordinary experience.

The single most impactful word that describes what is accomplished here is “honoring” another person.

This is truly a spiritual experience for people, along the lines of unconditional love. Honoring people at this level is probably not something anyone has done for them since they were in the formative years with Mom and Dad, or the romance months of a new love. Applying this level of listening to any relationship—whether business or pleasure—will expand your horizons tenfold. You will have people wanting to be in your presence ... for no other reason than they find you interesting and feel better about themselves when they are with you.

Although a lot of what is offered here may not have been used in the following story, it is a great testimony to the power of listening:

Be the Most Interesting Person They Have Ever Met

Decades ago the editors of *Psychology Today* magazine staged an experiment to establish the effects of listening and asking easy, probing questions. Staff members flew to LAX from New York. The editor flew in later, with the intention of meeting his seatmate and getting to know him on the five-hour flight. For the duration of the flight, the *Psychology Today* editor asked questions and listened. He asked more questions based on what he felt his seatmate wanted to talk more about, and avoided areas he felt he didn't. His total “purpose for being” during the five hours, was to have the conversation be all about his seatmate.

As suspected, throughout the flight the seatmate never asked anything about the editor, not even his name.

As the seatmate disembarked the plane, the staff for *Psychology Today* was there to interview him. They simply asked him what he thought about the man seated next to him on the flight (the *Psychology Today* editor, whose name he did not even know). He responded: “He was the most interesting man I have ever met.”



Moral of the story: Being interesting may have nothing to do with your deeds, your opinions or your stories, but rather **your interest in others**.

In my brief 30-plus years of being in the supercharged people business, I have seen clearly that we spend most of our waking moments in an addictive unconscious quest to be known, honored and loved. We need to be trusted, admired and respected, as well. We go to great lengths to feed this addiction from the money we seek to earn, to the good deeds we make sure we get done, to the stories we tell of it all. Knowing how important it is to all of us, imagine how unique a gift you can be to your ever-widening circle of influence by just giving it to them in every conversation.

The gift of listening is the gift of healing

BMW Introduces New ‘Sound Logo’

By Anthea Quay, 20 Mar 2013

Who would’ve known that [BMW](#) had a ‘sound’ logo?

The German automobile company has rolled out a new version to its sound logo, which will be used in the brand’s new product films, and radio and TV advertising commercials.

The old sound logo had a ‘double gong’ ending and was used the last 14 years, according to Joachim H Blickhäuser, the head of Corporate and Brand Identity at BMW Group.

“As part of the evolution of our acoustic branding, we are replacing [it] with a new sound logo, which gives the brand a distinctive modern, aesthetic and dynamic recognition factor and can be used in many different ways worldwide,” Blickhäuser said in a statement.

Sound designer Thomas Kisser, who developed the new logo, also added: “It was a very intensive process and a wonderfully exciting challenge right from the start. The questions I asked myself at the outset were: What does the BMW brand sound like to me? Which sound themes represent the values I associate with BMW, such as Sheer Driving Pleasure, aesthetic appeal and power? And how can I create a sound logo that clearly differentiates the brand from other brands—especially other automotive brands?”

The new sound logo will be first introduced in French and UK markets in March, and will soon rollout globally later this year.

Have a listen to the difference between the old and new sound logos below, and let us know what you think:

Losing Game: Super Bowl Ads and the Mute Button

28% of spot's impact lost without sound, per researcher By [Christopher Heine](#)

- January 31, 2013, 2:14 PM EST

At first blush, it seems almost painfully unsurprising that a television ad is less effective without sound. And the heavens know that the majority of [Super Bowl](#) watchers are not going to miss out on the audio of the big game's hyped commercials.

But some old-school sports diehards will still hit the mute button here and there during commercial breaks from the football action in order to be heard in the kitchen that he or she could really use another [Schlitz](#). And in other scenarios, Super Bowl parties tend to be noisy—therefore copy for the ads often gets lost in the translation.

So it's interesting—for Super Bowl ads or just any old TV commercial—to get an idea of what that means to the brand that ponied up for the slot. According to [EyeTrackShop](#) data being released today, 28 percent of an ad's impact is lost in terms of brand recall and general perception of the spot if the sound is off.

The New York-based software firm conducted an A/B test (sound versus no sound) on 165 consumers who viewed "[Goat 4 Sale](#)," an ad submission (video below) that's a finalist for the Doritos "[Crash the Super Bowl 2013](#)" contest. The consumers' visual attention was broken down into fractions of a second, utilizing EyeTrackShop's eye-tracking platform, to measure what was seen, in what order and for how long.

While the data won't likely deter brands from plopping down millions of dollars to be in the game anytime soon, EyeTrackShop president [Jeff Bander](#) contends his research should show Super Bowl advertisers how important it is that the visual creative sells the product even without the benefit of the copy being heard.

"Advertisers need to understand that if you can't communicate your message without sound, you're losing money," he said. "And with a \$4 million price tag, a lot is at stake."

Silent reading isn't so silent, at least, not to your brain

Jan 23 2013 Published by [scicurious](#) under [Behavioral Neuro](#), [Uncategorized](#)

If you're reading this sentence, chances are you're reading it silently (if you're reading it out loud, hey, that's cool too). Your lips aren't moving, you're not making any sound that other people can hear. But are you

making "sound" in your head? Many people who read silently do so by imagining a voice speaking the words they are reading (and often, it's your own voice, so there's even a specific "tone". I wonder if this is what makes people react so strongly to some blog posts). This could be because when we learn to read, we associate symbols with verbal sounds until the association is effortless (as for reading learning in the deaf, it may occur another way).*

This is particularly interesting because it means that reading silently is producing "cross-talk" between different sensory systems, with written words producing an auditory experience for the reader. But is it really an auditory experience?

([Source](#))

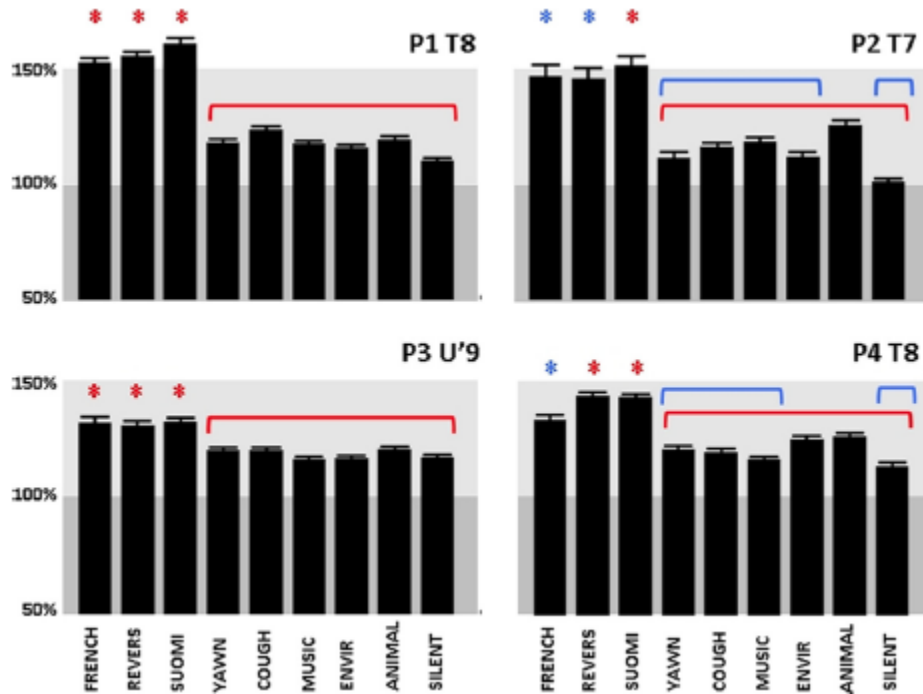
Perrone-Bertolotti et al. "How Silent Is Silent Reading? Intracerebral Evidence for Top-Down Activation of Temporal Voice Areas during Reading" Journal of Neuroscience, 2012.

It's a relatively easy hypothesis to assume that if we are "reading aloud" when we read silently, we should see increases in activity in the auditory-related areas of our brains, particularly things like the temporal voice area (which is particularly sensitive to voices as opposed to sounds in general). There are some fMRI studies that have indeed shown activity in this area during silent reading. But when does this occur? Is it part of the processing of silent reading? Do we have to read "aloud" to ourselves to read silently? Or is it something that happens later on, where we insert the voice reading "aloud" in our heads to aid us in comprehension?

This isn't something that fMRI can answer. But it is something you can answer if you have electrodes implanted in the right places. While most people don't walk around with electrodes in their heads and are unlikely to volunteer to do it for science, there is a small population of people who DO. Some of these people have severe intractable [temporal lobe epilepsy](#). One of the last-ditch treatments for this is often the resection (taking out) of the temporal lobes. But before this is done, you have to determine if the seizures really are the result of temporal lobe activity, and where the seizures start (you really don't want to have to take out more than you absolutely need to). So patients get implanted with electroencephalographic electrodes that are underneath the skull and over the temporal lobes to monitor their activity.

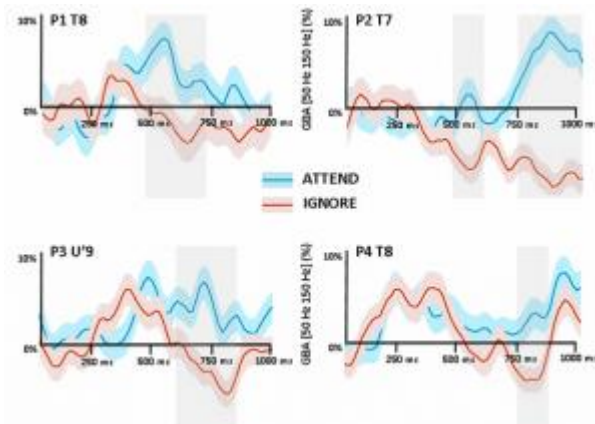
And of course, if you've got the electrodes anyway, you might as well participate in a reading study.

So the authors of this study had four people previously implanted with EEG electrodes near the temporal lobes read a story silently and listen to a voice giving them instructions. While they read and listened the authors were taking recordings.



You can see above recordings from the four auditory areas, one from each patient (sadly, there were only four patients, it's a rare condition, and those who need surgical treatment for it are even more rare). You can see that these areas in the temporal lobes respond significantly to speech (French, Suomi, and reversed French) as compared to other random sounds like coughs, music, or animal noises.

And this area also responds to the written word.



You can see the blue lines (when the patients were asked to pay attention) showed increases in electrical activity in this area when the patients were presented with written words. This is an auditory cortex that usually responds to speech, and apparently, to our brains, the written word counts as speech.

What's particularly new about this study is that it not only shows that silent reading causes high-frequency electrical activity in auditory areas, but it shows that these areas as specific to voices *speaking a language*. This activity was only present when the person was paying attention to the task. The authors believe that

these results back up the hypothesis that we all produce an "inner voice" when reading silently. And it is enhanced by attention, suggesting that it's probably not an automatic process, but something that occurs when we attentively process what we are reading. And the next time you read silently, remember that it's not quite so silent to your brain.

Perrone-Bertolotti M, Kujala J, Vidal JR, Hamame CM, Ossandon T, Bertrand O, Minotti L, Kahane P, Jerbi K, & Lachaux JP (2012). How Silent Is Silent Reading? Intracerebral Evidence for Top-Down Activation of Temporal Voice Areas during Reading. *The Journal of neuroscience : the official journal of the Society for Neuroscience*, 32 (49), 17554-17562 PMID: [23223279](#)

*Side note: the authors also comment that "few would contest that most of our waking time is spent talking to ourselves covertly". This amuses me greatly. Do we? I mean, no citation for that, but do we all spend a lot of time talking to ourselves in our heads? Is this one of those things that everyone is slightly too embarrassed to talk about?

Social TV Keeps Viewers Engaged When Minds Might Wander, Study Says

Second Screen Helps Hold Viewers' Attention

By:

[Mallory Russell](#)

Published: [July 03, 2012](#)

Media companies and marketers are watching the development of social TV closely. But when viewers constantly use their computers or mobile devices during their favorite shows, won't they wind up seeing less of the show itself?

An app that viewers can use as they watch "Conan" on TBS

Advertisers and TV networks shouldn't worry, a new study suggests.

Interacting with social media on a second screen makes viewers more engaged in programming than if they were watching alone without social media, according to the study **by Time Warner Research Council**. Instead of distracting viewers, it merely augments the way that they view TV.

It's true that connected devices are increasingly crowding the viewing experience. "Normally I watch TV with my roommates," said one study participant. "We all have our laptops, our cell phones out, and we'll just talk about what's going on the TV, and then we're tweeting."

"We're always on our electronics," he added.

But all that may actually be helping viewers maintain their focus. "The most important overall finding is to understand that people use media to optimize their levels of interest and excitement," said Jack Wakshlag, chief research officer at Turner Broadcasting, a [Time Warner](#) unit that collaborated with the research council, sibling Warner Bros. and the research companies Innerscope and Ipsos. "When they find something engaging on the TV, they pay attention. When their interest wanes, in the absence of a second screen they could change the channel, get up, read a magazine, etc. With a second screen that allows live social engagement, they have more reason to stay on-channel with their friend."

The researchers used biometric monitoring and eye tracking to gauge 126 Millennial viewers' engagement with episodes of "Conan" and "TMZ" as they participated in varying levels of social behavior. They found that viewer engagement levels while watching with a friend or connecting with a friend over social media were 1.3 times higher than for people watching alone and not using social media. Engagement among those using co-viewing apps, designed to deliver content and allow conversation in sync with the program, proved 1.2 times more engaged than those viewing alone without a social app.

"I would be less into a show if someone took away all my social media," said one female participant, "because you wouldn't have somebody else to share that with and get them involved into it."

Even when viewers turn to social media during commercials, the study suggested that they still pay attention to the TV -- sometimes more than they think. Eye-tracking results revealed that viewers responded to audio cues, for example, both on the shows and during commercial breaks.

Viewers also seemed to appreciate brands that associated themselves with the second-screen experience, such as [AT&T](#), which sponsored a [Team Coco app](#) to use while watching "Conan." A post-study survey showed that AT&T's brand favorability among those that used the app was 33% higher than those who didn't use it.

Univision Communications Selects Man Made Music (NYC) for Sonic Rebrand

December 29, 2012 by [Janice Brown](#)



The NYC-based music and media company [Man Made Music](#) has won a major client, announcing that it has been named as the sonic branding agency of record for creation of [Univision's](#) sonic rebrand.



The new Univision logo is the springboard for the media giant's fresh sonic brand, debuting January 1st.

Univision stands as the leading media company serving Hispanic America, with wide-ranging multimedia assets. Man Made Music will create an overall sonic anthem for the brand, including a sonic logo and full identity packages for Univision's news, sports, telenovelas and movie offerings, plus the Univision Radio group, segmented by radio playlist.

The sonic identity will be utilized across Univision Communications' multimedia platforms, including Univision Network, UniMás Network and Univision Radio. The new sonic identity for Univision Network will be unveiled on January 1, 2013 followed by UniMás on January 7.

Man Made Music's Founder and Lead Composer, Joel Beckerman, oversaw a sonic branding process designed to give voice to the Univision mission, and bring to life the evolution of the Univision brand over its 50-year history.

The fresh sonic branding follows an October, 2012, unveiling of Univision Communications' new brand identity. The company's new logo was introduced at that time, evocative of a human heart and three-dimensional in appearance, representing Univision as the "Hispanic Heartbeat of America."

The Univision rebrand signified growth and transformation, and celebrates the culture of innovation built over the company's 50-year history.

In early December, Univision Communications unveiled the UniMás Network, the newly transformed TeleFutura. UniMás provides alternative and bold programming to the new generation of Hispanic Millennial trendsetters – the Más Generation.

Man Made Music created built on Univision's overall message and strategy with a new sonic identity that captures the essence of the dynamic multimedia company and its audience. With its new sound, Univision emphasizes the company's heritage and culture, while at the same time connecting with its Hispanic American audience.

Man Made Music's team of arrangers, composers and musicians created a dance track, using Latin rhythms with a vibrant, heartfelt tone – the result is an emotional journey intended to capture the entirety of the Univision experience. The new sonic identity instantly connects audiences with Univision, creates continuity across Univision's multiple platforms and differentiates the uniqueness of the media company.

On pins and needles to hear this new sonic brand? Tune in to Univision on New Year's Day!

FOOD SOUNDS BETTER

When patrons of The Fat Duck in the UK, one of the most innovative restaurants in the world, ordered seafood, they were brought ipods playing 'sounds of the sea' to accompany the dish. They reported that the food tasted fresher. The mixing up of sensory information, such as seeing colours or patterns when you hear music, or tasting words, are examples of a condition called synaesthesia. It affects as many as one in 2000 people. Studies have shown that we all have a potential for synaesthesia as newborns. The sensory pathways usually become normal as we grow, but there remains a trace of this capacity.

BITTERSWEET PROJECT EXPLAINED

A recent project, led by Anne-Sylvie Crisinel, as part of the Cross Modal Research Laboratory, directed by Professor Charles Spence, at the University of Oxford found certain musical tones changed how we perceived certain tastes. Their Bittersweet Study showed that the taste of food could be adjusted by changing the sonic properties of a background soundtrack. For example, low brass sounds make things taste more bitter. High-pitched tunes played on a piano or bells make things taste sweeter.

Spence describes how subjects were given several pieces of bittersweet toffee. They were asked to rate each piece saying how sweet or bitter it was. Sometimes when they are eating a piece of toffee they heard a 'bitter' soundscape. Other times they heard the 'sweet' soundscape. He says, 'people rated toffee as tasting significantly sweeter when listening to higher pitched soundscape, and as significantly more bitter when listening to the lower pitch soundscape.'

SYNAESTHETIC FUTURE

They are currently working on making a musical recipe for each of the basic tastes: sweet, sour, salty and bitter and not just the pitch and type of instrument, but other sonic qualities such as rhythm. The Lab's other projects include prototyping sonic plates and glasses, which make a synaesthetic sound to match the taste and smell of what is consumed. He continues, 'we are also taking complex flavours and aromas like cognac or wine and trying to match instruments and sounds to them, to recombine those musical elements into a symphony.'



Spence believes that Bittersweet's synaesthetic mapping is part of valuable approach to understanding multisensory inputs and part of a growing trend towards what he sees as synaesthetic marketing strategies to target consumers.

Just like brand visuals, audio can help recognize, identify, position and enhance a brand.

Imagine a swoosh. What do you think of? Nike, of course. When you see the NBC peacock, does a sound come to mind? It's the three distinctive chimes that have been associated with NBC since the 1920s. It's almost impossible for anyone who has a television to hear those three notes without conjuring up the brand. **Which proves audio branding can be just as strong as a great visual.**

Just like a strong established visual, sounds can also reach beyond the rational mind and tap into memories and emotions. **Audio branding uses sounds to create memories or positive memory triggers** that help recall a specific brand in the mind of consumers. As LeeBeth Cranmer, writing for [SecondWind](#) states, **"It's not merely background music but a sound that represent the identity and values of a brand in a distinctive manner.**

McDonalds is another brand that effectively uses audio branding. As soon as you hear that "I'm Lovin It" audio you probably think about the golden arches. United Airlines has used an adaptation of George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" for generations. And who can hear the four Intel tones and not think of "Intel Inside?"

The power of audio branding has been evident since the early days of radio when jingles were so prevalent. As Cranmer continues, **"in our modern age of advertising and marketing, audio branding is more important than ever due to the increased number of touch points available to promote your brand through sound."**

Because we live in an age of sound, there is a great opportunity to tap into a medium that can create strong memories and emotional connections with your brand. Healthcare marketers should consider audio branding as a component of their marketing strategy.

And audio branding is not limited to music or musical tones. It could be a distinctive voice, a sound effect or a particular way of saying a tagline. **We spend great amount of effort and money working on the visual identity of our healthcare brand. Strong consideration should be given to creating that audio identity as well. To make sure your brand is not just seen but also heard.**

Nokia Hired An Entire Orchestra Just To Put Out a Couple of Measly Ringtones

 Eric Limer



Nokia was looking at some of its numbers when somebody noticed that the popularity of classical music ringtones was pretty high, second most popular. So did they shrug this inane news off with amused sighs and feeble "that's neat"s? Not at all. They went out and [hired a whole 55-piece orchestra to whip up 25 more](#). Overkill maybe?

The orchestra was commissioned to perform and record 25 original 'miniatures' composed by Nokia's in-house 'sound designers'. Hopefully for all of us those aren't the same sound designers that were behind Nokia's [god-awful dubstep ringtone remix](#). Some of the recordings are already rolling out to Lumia 820s and 920s, with some being saved for upcoming phones. All things considered, if this is what the people want, you can't fault Nokia for trying to give it to them, but it kind of makes you wonder, right? I mean, what have they got in store for the number *one*, most popular ringtone type?

How sound and smell can create perfect harmony

Sound and vision are not the only senses that work together – new studies show that even sound and smell can form an unlikely pairing

- Cassie Barton
- [The Guardian](#), Monday 22 October 2012 15.00 EDT
- [Jump to comments \(19\)](#)



What does that scent sound like? New research is helping to redefine our understanding of the senses. Photomontage: The Guardian/Getty Images

A few years ago, on work experience at Oxford University's [psychology](#) department, I found myself roped in to participate in an experiment by a research team led by [Professor Charles Spence](#). Sitting in a tiny room in the warren of labs and offices, I was shown a rack of bottles of scent and a simple computer program that let me play the sound of musical instruments at different pitches. My task was to sniff each of the scents, and pick the sound that fitted best with each smell.

Puzzled, I inhaled my first sample – sweet and slightly sickly, like bubble gum. Deep blaring brass seemed instinctively wrong, so I tried out higher and purer sounds and eventually settled on a high piano note. An hour later, I left not much the wiser about what was going on. Only later did I find out that the team was covering new ground in a field known as crossmodal perception.

When we think about how our senses work, we imagine them operating individually: you sniff a flower, and the smell is delivered uninterrupted from nose to brain. However, it is more complicated than that. Our senses mingle more often than we realise, collaborating to help us make sense of the world more easily. For example, we call dull thuds "heavy" and associate them with large objects, even though the sound itself has no size or weight. This would have helped our ancestors decide whether to run away from predators based on how big they sounded, without stopping to look them over. Most evidence for crossmodal perception comes from studies into sound and vision, which isn't surprising considering how often we use them together. But research that shows other senses crossing over is emerging all the time, and it seems that even sound and smell sometimes form an unlikely pairing.

Two New York researchers, Daniel Wesson and Donald Wilson, were confronted with this fact when they began investigating an "enigmatic" area of the brain known as the olfactory tubercle. Originally, they only intended to measure how olfactory tubercle cells

in mice responded to smell. But during testing, Wesson noticed that every time he clunked his coffee mug down next to the experiment, the mouse cells jumped in activity. In fact, the olfactory tubercle is physiologically well-placed to receive both smell and sound information from the outside world; and so Wesson and Wilson broadened their investigation.

They found that among individual cells, most responded to odour but a significant number were also active when a tone was played. Some cells even behaved differently when smell and sound were presented together, by either increasing or suppressing their activity. As Wesson and Wilson point out, there may be some evolutionary sense behind the phenomenon – the sound of movement accompanied by an unfamiliar smell could alert you to the presence of a predator.

Of course, mice are not people, and a handful of firing cells don't always add up to a conscious experience. But Charles Spence and Anne-Sylvie Crisinel have been carrying out experiments such as the one in which I participated at Oxford University, which seem to show that sounds and smells cross over in human perception, too. Recently, they delved into the world of wine-tasting, using a kit designed to help novices learn about the basic smells found in wine. Participants in their experiment were asked to sniff different samples, and then match them to an appropriate musical instrument and pitch. There were interesting consistencies in the smells people picked. Piano was often paired with fruity scents and with smells that participants said were less complex. Musky and unpleasant smells, meanwhile, sounded like brass.

Further research found that listening to different sounds can alter your perceptions. Studying taste this time, the team ordered some cinder toffee made by [Heston Blumenthal's Fat Duck restaurant](#) and put together "soundscapes" corresponding to bitterness and sweetness. Participants tasted identical pieces of toffee while listening to each soundscape, and found the toffee more bitter or sweeter, depending on which soundtrack they were listening to.

Studies like this are helping psychologists redefine our understanding of the senses, and how the brain integrates them to its advantage. And just imagine the possible creative collaborations between musicians and [chefs](#): sound-enhanced wining and dining could be imminent. You might one day be routinely ordering a coffee with a soundtrack to bring out your favourite aromas. Best not to mention all this to Starbucks.

Branding: How AT&T Created Its New Sonic Identity

Sonic branding expert Joel Beckerman was tasked with designing sounds to signify "safe," "connected," and "possibility" on AT&T phones. Here's how he went about it.

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Samsung phones make Samsung noises. LG phones make LG noises. But now AT&T wants all of the phones on its plan--no matter their manufacturer--to sound the same.

Starting in April, the brand began rolling out a sonic makeover. There's a new AT&T ringtone, a new AT&T startup sound, and a new AT&T ringback tone. Works in progress include a "sound of safe" lets customers know security protection is engaged, a "sound of success" that signifies completion of a task, and a "sound of connect" that tells users their phones have signal. The idea is to remind customers that they're having an AT&T experience even though they're using devices from various manufacturers. With the exception of Apple devices, all AT&T phones manufactured after April will include these type of new tones.

A firm called [Man Made Music](#) designed the sounds to match a sonic logo and anthem they also made for AT&T.

Man Made Music founder Joel Beckerman says sound has earned a more important role in branding as it becomes more central to customers' experiences with devices. "Probably the one example that everybody knows is when you send email from an iPhone, there's a little sound," he says. "It's the same on desktops, same on a laptop, same on iPad."

The process of designing the same sonic unity for AT&T was more like visual branding design than you'd expect. It started with market comparison analysis, brainstormed possibilities, and a focus group. "We don't ask people, 'What do you think of the sounds?'" Beckerman explains. "What we do is put the sounds in the devices, and then ask people, 'How are the devices to use? Is it fun, is it easy, is it hard? What part of the experience is difficult for you?' And then we'll map that against research where people have the devices and there is no sound." The key is to make sure sounds fit in with what people expect from a brand while also emoting the brand's personality.

Once the sounds are right, the silence--what Beckerman calls the "white space" of sonic branding--needs to be correctly tuned, too. "[Sound] is the cayenne pepper in the sauce," he says. "If you put just enough in, then it's a fantastic experience. If you put in a little too much, then all the sudden the sauce is just awful."

Joel Beckerman will speak at *Fast Company's* [Innovation Uncensored](#) conference in San Francisco this week.

A roaring success: how acoustics make us spend more money on cars

By [Rose Eveleth](#) | November 2, 2012, 5:04 AM PDT

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As automotive engineering has improved, our rides have gotten quieter. Even non-hybrid cars cocoon their drivers in comfortable silence. But some companies are trying to give motorists a little more motor. The new [Ford Focus will have engine noise pumped in when the driver steps on the gas](#). Other cars, like the BMW M5 and Volkswagen's GTI, have done similar things [with mixed results](#). These engine sounds — some real, some recorded — are meant to put the roar back into driving, even when you might not be driving a muscle car. But do they really make a difference to drivers?

“Focus ST drivers want to hear the engine sing when they put their foot on the gas,” said Bjoern Boettcher, Ford of Europe’s vehicle sound quality expert, in the press release announcing the technology’s application to that model. “Our cars are engineered to be quiet inside the cockpit, so we have to pull out a few tricks to give enthusiastic drivers the sound they crave — and that’s where our Sound Symposer comes in.” The Sound Symposer will provide Focus drivers with a little bit of engine noise when they hit the gas.

Marketers call this kind of auditory salesmanship “sonic branding.” It’s at work when you hear jingles or classic voices — think McDonald’s “ba da ba ba ba,” and Geico’s trademark Gecko voice (which is really a Cockney accent coming from a lizard). But it’s also at work when you hear a Harley Davidson drive by, or a bowl of Rice Krispies snap, crackle and pop. When it comes to cars, sound plays a huge part in the choices people make. The way a car door sounds when it closes, and the engine sounds when you’re driving, can make or break a sale, according to sound marketing expert and president of Katz Marketing Solutions, Bob McCurdy. “A second or two of sound can communicate a grand message and can bring to the surface a tremendous amount of emotion,” he says.

You might think that you’re immune to such marketing tricks. “Don’t kid yourself,” McCurdy says. While you might not be aware of how sound influences you, everyone takes the sound of a car into account when they decide to buy. “You don’t want it to sound like it’s wimpy, you want it to sound like it has getup and go,” he says, “so when I step on the gas I can get out of a dangerous situation or I can merge a little bit safer. Even if it’s psychological, that’s enough to make a difference.”

Now, it’s nearly impossible to quantify just how much this new feature will increase the value of the Ford Focus. The effect is likely to be indirect, says James Kellaris, a professor in the department of marketing at the University of Cincinnati. “Consumers may not rush out to buy specifically to acquire this feature,” he says. “The sound feature, however, may increase liking, which precedes and determines purchasing.”

While Ford is trying to make its Focus sound like it has a little more oomf, other car companies are tackling sound for a different reason. In hybrid cars, for example, buyers often don’t know when the car is turned on or off. Frankie James, the Managing Director at the Advanced Technology Department of General Motors helped design the sounds for their hybrid cars, such as the Volt. They designed sound cues for when the car was on or off.

Integrating sound into vehicles is tricky business. Some companies have been [blasted on the Internet for creating](#) “fake sounding” engine roars. McCurdy doesn’t think the authenticity of the sound really matters. “I don’t think you or I are going to be an expert enough in engines that we’ll be able to know the difference,” he says. Neither does Kellaris. “People will not process the sound consciously, critically. It will just be there, telling them: all is well.” But James says that sound can be tricky, and doing it badly is worse than not doing it at all. “It’s always the case that you don’t notice when it’s right and you do notice when it’s wrong,” she says.

And while the engine might sound mightier than it actually is, it's not about portraying what the car can actually do — it's about playing to people's psychology. "Perception is reality in consumer marketing. People do not perceive the world as it is; rather, they perceive it how they perceive it," says Kellaris. If they perceive a powerful engine, they think they've got one, even if it's just a Sound Symposer playing them what they want to hear.

Image: Ford's 2013 Focus. (Ford)

The Search for Sweet Sounds That Sell

Household Products' Clicks and Hums Are No Accident; Light Piano Music When the Dishwasher Is Done?

By ELLEN BYRON

The small sounds consumer products make—whether a snap, click, rustle or pop—can be memorable and deeply satisfying, often suggesting luxury, freshness, effectiveness or security.

Companies, in their endless drive to motivate customers to buy, are paying more attention to these product noises and going to great lengths to manipulate them. Sound is emerging as a new branding frontier.

More companies are discovering that the sound a product makes can convey subtle information about its quality and influence purchasing decisions. WSJ's Ellen Byron reports.

Subtle auditory cues can make a big difference to shoppers choosing from several brands, companies say. Occasionally a product pitches its unusual sound directly: Remember "Snap, Crackle, Pop" for Kellogg's Rice Krispies, and Alka-Seltzer's "Plop Plop Fizz Fizz"? Sound, for the most part, isn't the first thing consumers notice about a product. But when it's good, they quickly come to appreciate it, marketers say.

"These little touches can really separate you from the other guys," says Ted Owen, vice president of global package design at Clinique, an Estée Lauder Cos. line. "We call them the intangibles."

Last month, Clinique introduced High Impact Extreme Volume mascara, which produces a soft, crisp click when the top is twisted shut. The click reassures users that the package is closed and the liquid mascara won't dry out. But more subtly, Mr. Owen says, the click conveys the elegance of the \$19.50 formula.

Mr. Owen and his team fiddled with some 40 prototypes of inner parts of the mascara tube, paying particular attention to the tiny, curved plastic tab, called a "nib," that emits the click when the top twists over it. By adjusting the slope of the curve and a corresponding tab located inside the top, designers could alter the click's tone. A steep curve made a high-pitched click, which the team thought sounded cheap. A flatter curve made a dull sound. "We sweated that detail," Mr. Owen says. "You have to pay attention to it and manage it through all the materials you consider and all the manufacturing steps to be sure you get it right."

Getting it wrong can bring major consequences. Hoping to tout its SunChips brand as environmentally friendly, Frito-Lay, part of PepsiCo Inc., PEP - 1.55% introduced a compostable chip bag in 2010. Consumers found it noisy and complained. Sales fell, and Frito-Lay eventually went back to the old bags. "The packaging of the product is a multisensory experience for our consumers," says a Frito-Lay spokesman.

Illustrations by Serge Bloch; Photos by F. Martin Ramin for The Wall Street Journal

Illustrations by Serge Bloch; Photos by F. Martin Ramin for The Wall Street Journal

Dyson wants its vacuums to have a pleasing, low tone, which it says sounds more upscale.

Illustrations by Serge Bloch; Photos by F. Martin Ramin for The Wall Street Journal

Snapple says the pop a consumer hears when unscrewing the top from a new bottle is a cue that it is fresh.

Even product sounds that happen just once may be treated with reverence. Snapple, owned by Dr Pepper Snapple Group Inc., says the pop a consumer hears when unscrewing the top from a new bottle of Snapple is a cue that it is fresh. The company calls it the "Snapple Pop" and says it builds anticipation and offers a sense of security, because the consumer knows the drink hasn't been opened before or tampered with.

Snapple was so confident about the pop's safety message that in 2009 it eliminated the plastic wrapping that encircled the lid. It saved on packaging costs

and eliminated an estimated 180 million linear feet of plastic waste, the company says. "We were a lot more comfortable making that decision because we knew there was this iconic pop," says Andrew Springate, senior vice president of marketing.

Discussions of sound in corporate meetings brings linguistic challenges. "We're not quite as bad as when you go to the mechanic to try to describe a car problem," says Lisa King, vice president of Insights & Innovation at [Newell Rubbermaid Inc.](#), [NWL 0.00%](#)maker of Sharpie markers.

Company executives call the sound a Sharpie marker makes as it moves across the paper the "scritch-scratch." When they consider making a product innovation, they check for the "scritch-scratch." "It's part of the experience of using that marker," Ms. King says. "The sound of your product can be as distinctive as the look."

Despite the growing attention, it's still rare for ads to boast about product sounds. In May, [Volkswagen VOW3.XE +4.57%](#) introduced a commercial praising the "thunk" of the door on the Jetta. (A guy shuts his car door, and the thunk makes things—a football, a kite, a doll, a cat—fall out of a tree.) "We were looking for a metaphor to convey quality and well-built," says Tim Mahoney, Volkswagen of America's chief marketing officer.

Some annoying product sounds are overdue for an update. [General Electric Co.'s GE -1.97%](#)appliance division is overhauling the abrasive buzzers, dings and beeps that clothes dryers, ovens and microwaves have been making for decades.

GE worked with a sound designer who composed a "soundtrack" for each of its four major brands. Instead of beeps, rings and buzzes, the appliances play snippets of their song. Turn on a machine and hear the music crescendo; turn it off, and the same snippet decrescendos. For time-sensitive alerts, like a timer, the music becomes increasingly urgent.

Each brand's music is meant to appeal to the target customer. Hotpoint, a budget-friendly line, will have a grunge-rock tune. The Monogram line, GE's priciest, will feature light piano music. "This is more Aaron Copland," says David Bingham, GE Appliances' senior interaction designer. "Very forward-looking and elegant-feeling."

As home-appliance design becomes more minimal, GE says, elements like sound are more important. The new sounds are set to hit the market in two or three years.

Some products strive for silence. Tampax Radiant, the tampon line Procter & Gamble Co. PG -1.55% launched in April, has a textured plastic wrapper that won't make loud crinkling sounds.

The wrapper is targeted at women, especially teens, who say they want more privacy in public restrooms. "They are trying to keep the secret and the wrapper wasn't able to do that," says Alex Albacarys, associate director for global Tampax research and development. "On this wrapper we took it to the next level in terms of sound avoidance."

P&G researchers measured the noise of the new wrapper in the company's sound laboratory and found there was a 25% decibel reduction with the Radiant compared with Tampax Pearl, which was previously P&G's quietest tampon wrapper.

Household brand Method Products puts its bottles to a "trigger tester" to be sure they can withstand some 10,000 sprays without emitting what Don Frey, Method's vice president of product development, calls "chatter."

In recent months, Method has been evaluating new packaging suppliers and bottle nozzles to keep up with growing sales. A squeaking or chattering nozzle usually indicates a mechanism that isn't put together well. "It creates images in consumers' minds of how well it's going to work, and how well it's made," Mr. Frey says.

Dyson, the appliance maker, has been paying more attention to machine noise in recent years. Globally, the company wants its vacuums to have a pleasing, low tone, which it says sounds more upscale.

In the U.S., Dyson says consumers have been fairly tolerant of loud vacuum cleaner noise, but there are signs they are becoming more sensitive. In March, Dyson introduced the DC-39, its quietest full-size vacuum available in the U.S. The motor is attached to sound-dampening mounts, and polyurethane helps absorb sound energy.

"There has started to be more demand from the U.S. for quieter, better sounding products," says Rachael Pink, an acoustic engineer at Dyson. "People now expect products to sound good—not just sound quiet, but have a nice quality."

Write to Ellen Byron at ellen.byron@wsj.com

Control the music and you control the mood of the room

Despite the time, effort and money invested in what people see, most companies have no strategy for what their customers hear.

An amazingly creative use of sound and smell-Dunkin Donuts:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kmrc8ZJld8A&safety_mode=rue&persist_safety_mode=1&safe=active

CANNES, France—Ad agency Talent in São Paulo, Brazil, won the Grand Prix in the Radio Lions contest here tonight for something more deliciously devious than a straightforward radio ad campaign.

On behalf of Go Outside magazine, the agency dreamed up the unlikely idea of turning an ordinary FM radio broadcast into defactor mosquito repellent. It worked like this: From 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. every night for three weeks, the agency had a local radio station add a 15 kHz frequency sound to its normal music programming. That tone is all but inaudible to humans—but to mosquitos it sounds uncomfortably like a dragonfly, one of its natural enemies. Thus, the pests stayed well away from the radios, allowing Go Outside's readers to, well, go outside

7/12 New research shows radio commercials are having an impact between the ears. Theater of the mind has long been one of radio's most powerful weapons, but a new study conducted by Critical Mass Media for Katz Marketing Solutions takes that notion several steps further. It finds that "sonic branding" has an emotional and visual response on listeners, who often are able to link a radio spot to a brand by sound before the first word is even uttered. "It's just amazing what a second or two of audio can do to generate in terms of emotions and feelings," Katz Marketing Solutions president Bob McCurdy says. The 1.7-second gong of the Taco Bell ad brought images of chalupas and the restaurant's roadside sign to participant's minds at the same time it made them hungry. Similar results were seen for McDonald's and Little Caesar's commercials. McCurdy says

that 40% of the people who heard a food ad actually reported being hungry. “Sound can impact you physiologically,” he says.

“If you are an advertiser and there are key periods of consumption throughout the day, it is a perfect justification to go out and heavy up in those key periods of consumption and use radio.” The study tested sonic brands from a wide range of marketers, from Mazda to Old Spice and from Pillsbury to Duracell. It’s not all sound effects, however. The three-second “More Saving, More Doing” audio branding of Home Depot had people seeing orange aprons and thinking of weekend chores — exactly what the retailer wanted. In another case it was just the sound of Geico’s spokes-gecko’s voice that resonated. McCurdy sees the research as a tool to help radio sell itself to marketers. “Once an advertiser has an audio signature that is established, it is easy to shift money into radio,” he explains. “It is more efficient and they still get the visual part of it — in a few seconds the message registers.” Katz is looking at expanding the research, which is part of a larger effort at the rep firm to give advertisers ways to quantify the power of sound and connect it to the listening habits of consumers. McCurdy believes the results are applicable to advertisers on a local market level as well, noting the firm often suggests that clients have a consistent audio environment from TV to radio. The online study of 250 respondents tested 24 brands in all. See how people reacted to each of the commercials [HERE](#).

Check this out: very interesting. Discusses 4 ways sound impacts us:

<http://exp.lore.com/post/21208635527/soundcloud-explores-the-four-effects-sound-has-on>

Social TV Keeps Viewers Engaged When Minds Might Wander, Study Says

Second Screen Helps Hold Viewers' Attention

By: [Mallory Russell](#) Published: [July 03, 2012](#)

Even when viewers turn to social media during commercials, the study suggested that they still pay attention to the TV -- sometimes more than they think. Eye-tracking results revealed that viewers responded to audio cues, for example, both on the shows and during commercial breaks. (COMMENT- KIND OF AUDIO SOUND BITES. ILLUSTRATES THE POWER OF SOUND TO COMMAND AND FOCUS ATTENTION)

Cannes Lions, Sonic Branding and the Importance of Sound

The whir of a fan at night ... The rev of a starting engine ... Your sister's laugh ... The sound of your father's steps on the stairs

These make up the soundtrack to our lives, as much, if not more so, than our favorite songs. They orient us to the things we remember, the people we love and the experiences that have defined us. They are part of a language that we never forget.

Like it or not, brands are as much a part of our life's landscape as anything else. Our memories of our grandmothers are linked to the Oreos they fed us on holidays. There are certain airlines that will always make us think of coming home. A particular Gap shirt reminds us of that guy/girl we fell in love with one hot summer in July.

When we think about these brands, we usually think of the product or the service -- the color of the Coke can, the taste of a Peep, the feel of the airplane seat against the back of your legs. What we don't think of as readily, but what is also always present, is the sound of the brand. **The song from that iconic Pepsi commercial, the pinging sound your Mac makes as it fires up, the clicking of the blinker on**

your old Ford as you signal right. These are equally, if not more important, than the visual cues that usually come to mind first.

There are a small number agencies in the marketing world that work or even dabble in the business of sound. One of few that does, and arguably one of the best, is [MassiveMusic](#). More than 10 years ago, this agency had its genesis at Cannes, after the repeated success of its opening night party. It is now one of the most coveted events of the week. The agency also usually take home a few awards. This year MassiveMusic is entered in Film Craft for Best Use of Music for Fiat "Get Ready," as well as Sound Design and Editing. It also worked on a [beautiful film](#) with Fitzgerald & Co for Bulwark titled 451°, which is entered in several categories.

What's interesting about the agency is that it has found incredible success in something we often overlook. Yes, it matters what something looks like and feels like, but just as importantly, it matters what it sounds like. As Elijah Torn, their creative director describes it,

"Sound is such an important aspect of all of our lives. This becomes even more apparent as everything in our lives is becoming digital. Shutter sounds on digital cameras let us know that our memories are being captured even though there isn't a mechanical connection. Certain frequencies -- such as that of the human voice can resonate more deeply and convey their message more clearly. With music we can have an enhanced memory recall -- music puts us in a specific place. Tying the proper music and sound design to a brand can then extend this into our daily lives. Instead of only being thirty seconds of someone's daily life from a web or television commercial, you create a sense of familiarity, comfort and of course a direct memory." This "sonic branding" reminds us of the importance of sound. A sense that we can sometimes forget about when we are so caught up in the acts of seeing and feeling. Hearing is hard-wired to our emotions and sound can allow us to experience things with a depth that wouldn't otherwise be present. Just imagine a day at the sea without the music of the waves hitting the shore. What would it be like to be more conscious and connected to the things we hear? Maybe we should all try it out. At some point today stop what we are doing, the same way we would pause to take in a view, and just...listen.

Follow Sarah Hall on Twitter: www.twitter.com/sarahh314

Check out these links to learn more about Sound:

This video is amazing. A blind young man sees with sound:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qLziFMF4DHA>

Click on below to see how sound can impact your perception of something innocent and funny:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2T5_0AGdFic&NR=1&safety_mode=true&persist_safety_mode=1 SCARY MARY

Julian Treasure: The 4 ways sound affects us:

http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/en/julian_treasure_the_4_ways_sound_affects_us.html

Check this out- how a musical staircase alters behaviour:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2lXh2n0aPyw>

Check this out- How sound alters behaviour in a park:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cbEKAwCoCKw>

In This Clip Martin Lindstrom illustrates how effectively kids can identify an advertiser via and audio signature or the sound of the product:

<http://www.martinlindstrom.com/nbc-today-show-kids-inc-part-2/>

This clip from MassiveMusic nails the importance of an audio signature/sonic branding

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VuMorarsTZw>

What images come to mind after hearing the following.....reading is really hearing...it is one part of your brain talking to another part of your brain:

TV/Movies - "Here's Johnny"; Houston, we have a problem; "I see dead people"; "I'll Be Back"; "You Can't Handle the Truth"; "Yeah, I can fly (Ironman)"; "Your Fired"; "Doah"; 60 minutes stopwatch; "The tribe has spoken"; "Book Em, Danno";

Music - Theme from ET; Jaws; the "chime sound" from Law and Order (when it switches each scene - this is a good one); Theme song from The Office; Theme from Friends; theme from American Idol; Jeopardy music; Glee - Ending credits/theme song.

What you hear can be more unsettling than what you see. Award winning director M. Night Shyamalan got the rating of his movie "The Village" changed from R to PG simply by eliminating **one sound**. Not one of his movies have been rated R

Open up a Coke or Beer with no sound....Would it taste right?"If you have the specific sound you "know" when you open this bottle you will already be happy before tasting the product itself," said Brigitte Schulte-Fortkamp, who teaches **psychoacoustics** at Berlin's Technical University. "It's not really a conscious process. You are influenced without knowing it." When a soft-drink aficionado opens his beverage of choice, **he is conditioned to expect the crisp sound of unleashed carbonation; he associates that sound with freshness and satisfaction-**

Vera Brandes- music pharmacologist-Like apothecaries of old, who distilled extracts from nature's store of herbs and plants, Ms. Brandes and her associates analyze music of all kinds to tease out its "active ingredients," which are then blended and balanced into medicinal compounds. Though they steer clear of gross pathologies or infectious diseases, they claim their methods have broad application in psychosomatic disorders, pain management and what Ms. Brandes calls "diseases of civilization": anxiety, depression, insomnia and certain types of arrhythmia.

The pharmacopeia stands at about 55 tracks of medicinal music, with more in the pipeline.

Neuromarketing's raison d'être derives from the fact that the brain expends only 2 percent of its energy on conscious activity, with the rest devoted largely to unconscious processing. Thus, neuromarketers believe, traditional market research methods — like consumer surveys and focus groups — are inherently inaccurate because the participants can never articulate the unconscious impressions that whet their appetites for certain products

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation released a study report in June 2004 showing that improving building design and reducing noise in hospitals can help boost healing. The study also showed that loud paging systems and beeping medical devices interfere with workers' satisfaction levels, reduce productivity and increase accidents.

Royal Air Maroc's sound identity had to convey the five core values of the airlines, which are Moroccan, majestic, magical, maternal and modern, while respecting the oriental roots of the company and being strongly oriented to the future. The goal of this new identity was triple-fold: to better differentiate the airline, express its values, and reinforce the impact of its communication

In addition to influencing our mood by making us feel energized or sleepy, happy or sad, **sound has an amazing ability to inspire us and remind us of the past. Psychological studies have shown that humans strongly associate sounds with a particular memory. Thus, sound has this unique power to recall certain experiences, which is a crucial advantage when it comes to building a strong brand in the minds of consumers.**

EVP Chief Creative Officer R/GA Nick Law: I think sound as branding is incredibly important when it comes to these behaviors that I was talking about. Content now so often has an interface in front of it. So our relationship with content is through interface, and interfaces work better when they're visceral. That's why Apple has taken the time to brand all of these sounds, these functional sounds. I don't think many

companies are using sound in as sophisticated of a way as they could be.

Both McDonalds and Coke have made extremely good use of their embedded brand mnemonics, and **Dunkin' Donuts recently combined smell (the aroma of coffee shot from an atomizer) with sound (the atomizer was actually triggered by a sonic signal sent from the brand's jingle) on public buses.** Sales shot up as a result. The Hamburg Philharmonic created an audio logo patterned after the image of a "waveform" that resulted in looking at the combination of the city skyline and its resulting reflection in Alster Lake, while Audi is working on a branded sound for their e-tron.

With its customized music set from The Playlist Generation, The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf® is engaging with its loyal customers on a whole new level. "We are fully focused on enhancing every aspect of our customer experience," said Mel Elias, President and CEO, The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf®. "The Playlist Generation has truly translated our brand into a distinct sound for our stores which has resulted in a phenomenal response from our customers and our Team Members."

Michael Smith, CEO, The Playlist Generation, stated, "With their unique Sonic Identity, The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf® is differentiated from the generic coffeehouse sound and has created a platform

- It seems it's not only humans who can benefit from music therapy: a Tuscan wine grower has found his vines responding to the sounds of Mozart, Beethoven, Vivaldi and Mahler.
- When Carlo Cignozzi began restoring a Montalcino farmhouse and planting a new vineyard called Al Paradisio di Frassina, he intuitively felt that playing music to the vines would benefit their growth. His early efforts attracted the attention of Amir Bose, who personally supplied the large network of **weather resistant loudspeakers required to cover the whole vineyard.** Researchers from the university of Florence have since been applying academic rigour to test the theory with both on field and laboratory studies. These have focused on the positive effects sound waves have on the vine's root system, leaves and flowers and the negative effect they have on parasites and predators of wine grapes. Cignozzi is adamant that the grapes

closest to the loudspeakers ripen fastest.

- Around 56 loudspeakers play classical music day and night and Carlo has named a Brunello wine Flauto Magico (The Magic Flute) in recognition of it being the first wine ever to be grown “completely in tune with Mozart’s musical harmonies”.
- Carlo believes his experiments have given a new “dynamic impulse” to organic farming methods. “Although experiments are still in their early stages the results so far are very encouraging,” he says.

Companies are starting to engineer foods that taste better by appealing to the eyes and ears, for instance. The work may even have implications for medicine — helping to explain, say, how the brain can compensate for a missing sense — and for education.

Scott King, part of a UK company called Condiment Junkie that creates sounds to enhance products and events, says that recruiting multiple senses works best when “one sense is choreographed with another in a way that has an effect greater than the sum of its parts.” The company has worked with Fat Duck restaurant in Bray, England, run by celebrity chef Heston Blumenthal, to develop soundtracks to bring out specific flavors in the food, based on their finding that hearing certain sounds (high tones, tinkling pianos) make people perceive a bittersweet toffee as more sweet, while hearing low-pitched tones and trombones make the toffee taste more bitter.

ULABY: Director Michel Hazanavicius thinks every director secretly yearns to make a silent film. It's cinematic storytelling at its purest. And **"The Artist" is immersive in the same way great radio can be. There's a sense missing. Your brain fills it in.**

HAZANAVICIUS: **So you do it with your own imagination, with your own ghosts, your own life, your own sounds, your own reference. So it makes the movie much more yours in a way.**

ULABY: **I saw "The Artist" with someone who swore later he could remember what the actors sounded like.** The film is critically

adored. It's a smash in France and the lead won the best actor award at the Cannes Film Festival. Still...

With the marketing world's emphasis on creating strong brand experiences, combined with a rapidly fragmenting media world, it is not surprising that smart marketers are looking at new ways to improve messaging, enhance recall and make better connections with consumers.

Music can do all that, and when used in more creative, insightful and strategic ways, it can be an incredible branding tool.

Let's try an exercise involving movie soundtracks. Close your eyes and recall the Harry Potter theme song. Now recall the James Bond theme. Do the same for Star Wars, 2001, Chariots of Fire, The Exorcist and Jaws. If you are at all sentient, you're probably getting an image with each bit of music, not to mention twinges of magic and mystery, intrigue and danger, awe, hopefulness, fear and maybe even mild panic with the Jaws theme that kept people out of the water for a decade.

See what is happening here? You are triggering visual memories and raw emotions by merely thinking about a piece of music. If you were actually hearing the music as well, you'd be experiencing that even more intensely.

Elizabeth Loftus of the University of Washington:

In many ways the ear is superior to the eye. What I mean by that is that there is evidence from controlled laboratory studies that show when you present a list of words to people and you present either auditorily, say on a tape recorder, or you present it visually, say on slides, people remember more words if they hear the words than if they see them.

In order to understand why, you have to realize there are essentially two kinds of memory. There is the iconic memory which stores visual images and the echoic memory which stores auditory images. When the eye sees some picture or takes in some visual information, a fairly complete image registers itself in iconic memory., but it fades away

fairly quickly, on the order of say a second or so. However when the ear takes in information, it too, registers a fairly complete image but it fades away more slowly, say on the order of 4 or 5 seconds.

The power of the spoken word never really stops. **There is an important study that shows that even when people were anesthetized during surgery, if they are hypnotized later, can remember some of the things that were spoken, some of the sounds they heard during surgery.**

A study from Northwestern University shows that if you try to convince people about a product- it happened to be a shampoo- and you do it with just a verbal message, people are much more persuaded about your product. They like it better, they want to buy it more than if you accompany those verbal images with pictures. The verbal message alone seems to create in people's minds more of a positive feeling for this product.

Listening to a message is much more effective than reading it. Two things are different. First the mind holds spoken words in mental storage much longer enabling you to follow the train of thought with greater clarity. And second, the tone of the human voice gives the words emotional impact that no picture can achieve.

But there are other things that happen in your mind when you listen to the spoken word

Sticht: we conducted research for the U.S. Army in which we presented a speech without any tone to it and found that comprehension and learning were very poor. When we added natural inflection and intonation, then comprehension and learning were greatly improved.

The relationship between the two kinds of words may be of interest to you. We found that written language is recorded by the mind back into an internal form of oral language. Your mind apparently translates printed words into their spoken equivalents before the mind can understand them.

That format is verbally driven and rarely contains any visual distractions. People don't rave about their commercials. They just remember them.

“Never go to sleep without a request to your subconscious.” – Thomas Edison

Your subconscious loves to do work while your body performs other tasks that are easy. I can prove this very easily by asking you how many good ideas you have had while driving or in the shower. When you are relaxed yet slightly distracted, your mind is often at its best.

Charles Spence, from Oxford University, UK, walked away with the Nutrition Prize for showing how the way foods taste is affected by how they sound.

"When you play the sound of crisps when people bite into Pringles - if we change the sound as they eat, we can actually change how fresh, or how crisp, the Pringle tastes to people," he told BBC News.

"We've used [a bacon sizzling] sound to flip the flavour of bacon and egg ice cream. If we play that sound over the loudspeakers in the room, the ice cream will taste more 'bacony' than if you play the sound of, say, farmyard chickens."

Why Recall Studies are limited in their usefulness:

Neurologist Richard Cytowic says, "Not everything we are capable of knowing and doing is accessible to, or expressible in, language. This means that some of our personal knowledge is off limits even to our own inner thoughts! Perhaps this is why humans are so often at odds with themselves, because there is more going on in our minds than we can ever consciously know."

Psychologist Carl Jung compared this “unconscious” to swimming in the silent and weightless world underwater: above the waterline exists the sunlit world of the conscious mind filled with air, birds, trees and people. But below the waterline, in the unconscious mind, is a timeless world of twilight and shadows, symbols and beauty, metaphors and music.

Visit this website for some terrific information re how sound impacts what we see, feel and purchase:

WWW.CSGAUDIO.COM/POWEROFSOUND

Check out these two links: the first one confirms the power of an audio logo to penetrate society. The other one is just plain funny.

<http://youtu.be/P-rGG5jJyd4>

<http://www.guitarpee.com/>

Tweets On Steroids!?

Short. Quick-hitting. Impactful. Not the 140-character kind but that of sound. Several seconds of an “audio tweet” can carry quite a punch as well.

“If you have consumers who are snacking on short amounts of time with different types of media channels, we have to think about how to communicate in short, ‘snack-like’ bits of messaging,” Unilever’s Patti Wakeling, Global Director of Media Insights recently stated in an industry trade magazine. The effective use of audio might just be the right recipe.

Audio, even just a few seconds of it, can powerfully and quickly bring to mind detailed brand messaging and emotions. Everyone’s aware of the usual audio branding examples of the “Intel Inside” campaign, the NBC chime or McDonald’s “I’m Lovin It.”

We at Katz Marketing Solutions wanted to learn more and dig deeper, going beyond just ‘awareness’, to quantify the impact of sonic brands of the top U.S. advertisers. So we commissioned a study to determine the impact of various advertisers’ “audio” snippets, whether it’s an audio logo, music used in the commercial or the voice of a “spokesperson”. The methodology was quite simple: play a short audio snippet, ask a few questions and have the participants jot down verbatim answers.

The goal was to quantify both the ability of these audio sound bites to communicate a brand message and generate emotion. Many of the previous studies on the subject focused on brand identification. We wanted to take it a step further and quantify the emotions that surfaced after exposure.

The following summarizes the findings from two of the 24 sounds tested. Both were from the fast food category but similar results were uncovered for all product categories tested. Two hundred-fifty respondents were asked to answer three key questions. The results confirmed the incredible power of audio.

Question #1: *Do you know the company or brand that uses this sound in its advertising?*

QSR #1: 75% correctly identified the advertiser unaided

QSR #2: 86% correctly identified the advertiser unaided

What was particularly surprising was the lack of misattribution.

Question #2: *What message comes to mind when you hear this sound?*

QSR #1: 65% provided some advertiser specific commercial messaging

QSR #2: 83% provided some advertiser specific commercial messaging

Question #2 Verbatims:

“That there are other fast food choices besides hamburger places.”

“To get tacos instead of hamburgers.”

“I think of hot and ready pizza. The company is trying to tell me i can always get my pizza hot and ready from them.”

“Pizza is yummy, their pizza is the best.”

“Reliable fast food restaurant where you get the foods you love to eat.”

**Question #3 What pops in your head when you hear this sound?
How does it make you feel?**

"Hunger" was the most evident response when consumers were exposed to these fast food audio clips. It incited a craving desire to eat:

"I can go for a taco and it made me hungry."

"Burritos and tacos. Makes me wanna eat."

"Makes me feel like trying something new."

"Makes me hungry for pizza."

"Hungry! I love their delicious food and cheap prices!"

"It makes me want to eat their pizza... I used to eat it all the time in college and now i want one now."

"Makes me want their breadsticks which are amazing."

"Happy and hungry."

"Want pizza."

"Crave pizza."

"Hungry."

"Fast food, hungry."

"Tacos. I get hungry."

"I can go for a taco and it made me hungry."

"Hungry, yummy food."

It is important to note that there was absolutely no prompting of any kind.

Also impressive was the fact that many of the respondents referenced in detailed fashion either the advertiser's spokesperson's attire/appearance, their feelings toward them or jotted down the advertiser's exact slogan, which was not present in the tested audio snippet.

It's all too often forgotten or overlooked that audio can very effectively trigger brand messaging, elicit an emotional response to the point of impacting us physiologically while positively impacting several key branding metrics: awareness, intent and affinity. This study is a powerful reminder of how even one or two seconds of audio can trigger brand messaging and explicit visual images, providing an advertiser with the benefit of the visual at audio prices. Radio anyone?

Check out the results of the entire study at www.sonicbrandstudy.com

-- *Bob McCurdy is the President of Katz Marketing Solutions, the national marketing unit of the Katz Media Group, a division of Clear Channel Communications. Bob can be reached at bob.mccurdy@katz-media.com.*

NASA heads to a lab in Minnesota to put astronauts through acoustic torture tests

By Mike Wehner, [Tecca](#)

If you've been to a crowded airport, sporting event, or even a kid's birthday party lately, a little peace and quiet might sound like the perfect thing to help you kick back and relax. Just don't let things get too quiet, or you might drive yourself a wee bit insane: the [anechoic chamber](#) at [Orfield Laboratories](#) in Minnesota can mute 99.99% of all sound, but visiting the silent oasis isn't as calming as you might expect.

The room holds the current Guinness World Record as the quietest place on the planet, and companies from all over the world seek out its unique acoustic properties. The walls of the chamber are lined with sound-absorbing baffles that can capture noise and mute it in an instant. This allows companies — both Whirlpool and Harley-Davidson have visited — to test just how noisy their products are without the risk of outside interference.

But while the super-silent oasis is a great testbed for various products, it holds a darker side: **silence, it turns out, can put a great strain on the human brain**. Researchers at [NASA](#) test the room's unique acoustic capabilities on humans rather than hardware. The noiselessness is used to simulate the silence of space — an environment astronauts would be well served to grow accustomed to.

What they've found is that when all outside noise is removed from an enclosure, human hearing will do its best to find something to listen to. In a room where almost 100% of sound is muted, people begin to hear things like their own heartbeat at a greatly amplified volume. As the minutes tick by in absolute quiet, the human mind begins to lose its grip, causing test subjects to hallucinate.

NASA then monitors how the would-be [space](#) explorers react, and whether they can get past the very obvious awkwardness of seeing or hearing things that aren't actually there. **According to lab officials, the longest anyone has lasted is 45 minutes before being allowed to hear the sweet sounds of planet Earth once again.**

In the end, the chamber has proven a valuable scientific tool, just don't plan on renting it for some peace and quiet — it may do more harm than good.

Sound is a terrific memory anchor and memories are comprised of not only words, but pictures. When someone asks us to “remember when...” we don't remember in words, we recall entire scenes first, then fill in with dialogue. Sound triggers visual images very effectively.

The study of how radio messaging influences listeners is important for marketers. While only a certain percentage of listeners are fully

engaged at any given time, messaging does register with those who even listen passively.

Dr. Robert Heath from the UK, has spent years studying how the human mind absorbs commercial messaging. Several of his articles have been published in the Journal of Advertising Research. His research describes and explains how advertising is processed at different levels within the human brain even by people who are only partially engaged or even completely disengaged from the commercial message.

He's identified several ways in which people learn, retain and absorb commercial content while paying little or even no attention to the messaging:

1. **Passive learning**- Low attention cognitive process that requires partial attention and deployment of cognitive resources.
2. **Implicit learning** – An automatic non-cognitive process that requires no attention or any deployment of cognitive resources

Heath defines the third type of learning as “explicit,” which occurs when all cognitive resources are focused on the printed page, the radio or television. But unlike print, which requires total attentiveness, radio messages can also be absorbed passively as well as implicitly. Explicit learning has been linked to the rational processing of commercial messages, while passive and implicit learning tend to appeal to the more enduring and influential emotional processing of commercial messages. This is another benefit of radio's audio messaging as in the fast pace of everyday life, “considered” or rational decisions tend to be subservient to “intuitive” or emotional decisions. This combination gives Radio the most complete attentiveness package of any medium.

Radio is a “soak in” medium rather than “seek out” medium. We typically consume radio in a more relaxed state that enables relevant messages to register more effectively than when we are in a “seek out”, task oriented mode as is often the case with internet messaging.

Due to most sound being processed subconsciously, we're often oblivious to the impact sound has on our product perception and choices. But whether we realize it or not, sound has the ability to inspire, create desire and persuade. Neurologist Richard Cytowic says, "Not everything we are capable of knowing and doing is accessible to, or expressible in, language. This means that some of our personal knowledge is off limits even to our own inner thoughts! Perhaps this is why humans are so often at odds with themselves, because there is more going on in our minds than we can ever consciously know."

The automotive industry has long recognized the power of sound to generate sales. Studies show that almost a third of consumers can distinguish one car from another by the sound of their doors closing. Chrysler, Mercedes and Acura all have acoustic engineers working on refining the sound of their car doors. Bentley's acoustic engineers have actually influenced the design of the car to achieve a unique and instantly identifiable sound in a market where almost half (44%) of consumers say the sound of a car is an important factor in their purchasing decision.

It's been proven time and again that sound can alter people's behavior. Numerous experiments have illustrated that the pace of music can influence the size of the check at restaurants—the slower the music the greater the check.

A grocery store study confirmed that the type of music played greatly influences the choice of wine. And when classical music is piped over loudspeakers in the London Underground, crime dropped 33%. In the 1920s, the use of sound actually assisted in making people more comfortable with the elevator. When first introduced, people had a high level of anxiety about riding in elevators. Recognizing the calming effect music had on people, soothing music was pumped in to make passengers more at ease—and the term "elevator music" was born.

While sound contributes heavily to the perception of quality in the automotive industry, it is making major inroads in other categories. Kellogg's employed a company to design a particular crunching sound for its cereal. Nokia succeeded in trade-marking its ringtone,

with 41% of global consumers able to recognize the Nokia tone. Bahlsten, a German food company, created a division of researchers to engineer an optimal crunch for its biscuits and potato chips, going as far as developing special microphones placed inside testers' ears to record crunching. Other companies clearly understand the power of sound to convey freshness by focusing on the sound of opening a jar of freeze-dried coffee, a can of soda or a can of Pringles, which are largely engineered.

Sound also plays a critical role in gaming. How engaging would Space Invaders be if the music intensity didn't pick up as the aliens got closer? Ogilvy used sound on behalf of Fanta to more effectively position the product with teens by creating a mobile application that used high-pitched frequencies audible only to people under 25. These sounds included wolf-whistles, warnings and "pssts," along with tags representing traditional words and phrases.

Author Julian Treasure said, "Sound affects human beings in four ways: physiologically, psychologically, cognitively and behaviorally. These effects are profound, changing how we feel and what we do - including our commercial decision-making and actions."

Without the effective use of sound, the ability to evoke emotion is severely limited. Sound has an immediate, direct link to both the rational and emotional parts of our brain. Sound shapes our thoughts, our feelings, our behaviors, our lives. With all of the scientific and physiological evidence available, there is a real opportunity to begin using sound and our sense of hearing more effectively in the marketing of products particularly in radio. After all, there are only two senses that can be "broadcast" to reach customers en masse- sight and our sense of hearing. Sound enables the messenger to reach a place within the human mind that visual branding cannot — and does not — approach. We can hear around corners, we can see in the dark and our sense of hearing enables us to envision a product in a personalized fashion based upon our own individual experiences.

Jack Trout has said, "After analyzing hundreds of effective positioning programs, we ran into a surprising conclusion: the programs were all verbal. There wasn't a single positioning concept that was exclusively

visual. We have come to the conclusion that the mind works by ear, not by eye.”

Helen Keller wrote, “The problems of deafness are deeper and more complex, if not more important than those of blindness. Deafness is a much worse misfortune than blindness for it means the loss of the most vital stimulus...the sound of the voice that brings language, sets thoughts astir and keeps us in the intellectual company of man.”

The following excerpt is taken from the book, “What Sticks”.

Dr. Daniel Schacter professor of psychology at Harvard: you may think that because you pay little attention to commercials....your judgment about products are unaffected...but a recent experiment showed that people tend to prefer products featured in ads they barely glanced at several minutes earlier...even when they have no explicit memory of having seen the ad.

Dr. Elizabeth Loftus, ranked 58th on a list of the 100 most influential researchers in psychology in the 20th century wrote when she was at the University of Washington:

In many ways the ear is superior to the eye. What I mean by that is that there is evidence from controlled laboratory studies that show when you present a list of words to people and you present either auditorily, say on a tape recorder, or you present it visually, say on slides, people remember more words if they hear the words than if they see them.

In order to understand why, you have to realize there are essentially two kinds of memory. There is the iconic memory which stores visual images and the echoic memory which stores auditory images. When the eye see some picture or takes in some visual information, a fairly complete image registers itself in iconic memory., but it fades away fairly quickly, on the order of say a second or so. However when the ear takes in information, it too, registers a fairly complete image but it fades away more slowly, say on the order of 4 or 5 seconds.

The power of the spoken word never really stops. There is an important study that shows that even when people were anesthetized

during surgery, if they are hypnotized later, can remember some of the things that were spoken, some of the sounds they heard during surgery.

In a 2011 issue of [Media](#) magazine, and the subsequent editorial, were devoted to "The Brain." I began reading with the hope that the issue's guest editor, Dr. Carl Marci, would cover the ability of sound to impact the brain. But aside from one article, which touched on the impact of music in advertising, there was very little discussion on the topic.

If, indeed, the brain is the **ultimate screen** "where everything ultimately plays out," as A.K. Pradeep from Neurofocus states in the magazine, then what are the various ways for marketers to impact it?

"Screens" are synonymous with viewing and sight. But are visual stimuli required to generate images? The answer is obviously no. Humans are quite capable of creating pictures in our minds by visualizing. This is defined as "recalling mental images or pictures," which requires no direct visual stimulation. And what happens while we sleep? Every night, our eyes are completely closed, yet we are creating vivid imagery while dreaming. So the human brain is quite capable of "seeing" without direct visual stimulation.

A fact overlooked by many is that the sound waves that enter our ears do greatly impact what we ultimately see. We hear a voice, a commercial, a song, a movie trailer, a tire screech, a church bell and immediately we begin to visualize, **activating our own internal _ video screen that's fueled by sound.**

A powerful argument could be made that this type of intensely personal visualization can actually be more impactful than the actual picture. Renowned author and marketing expert Jack Trout came to understand the impact of sound after analyzing hundreds of positioning programs. He said: **"We have come to the conclusion that the mind works by ear, not by eye."**

Need further proof of our ability to see without direct visual stimuli? Imagery Transfer anyone? In a recent study we conducted for a major national advertiser, without prompting, consumers continually

referenced the company's television campaign after exposure to its radio commercials.

The Hindus have a saying, "Nada Brahma," which translates to "The world is sound." While this might be overstating things a bit, the ability of sound to trigger visual images, motivate consumers and impact our brains is immense. Certainly, this warrants the ultimate sound vehicle -- radio -- to be elevated from its current "lost continent" status in some marketing departments.

A word has the power to change your life. Think about that for a moment because it is literally an Earth-moving statement – to change your life.

Words, my friends, change everything! Words have a dramatic effect on what we know, how we interact with people and the decisions we ultimately make. Words can influence us, inspire us or just as easily bring us to tears.

Words change our relationships, our demeanor, our entire system of beliefs, and even our businesses. Being a planet or not being a planet makes a major difference, just as the words "I love you" or "I hate you" have majorly different meanings behind them. Words have a powerful and undeniably overwhelming influence on us – for good and, at times, for bad. Think for a moment how words have changed your life:

Marry me! It's a girl! You're hired! You're fired. We won! We lost. Guilty. Not guilty. Google is a company with a focus on classifying and organizing words. It is a very simple focus, really: to be better than any other entity at organizing words. Words have become the key to everyday life. In our vehicles, many of us use words to get assistance, either via a service such as OnStar (I need help, my car won't start) or via GPS (and don't turn left when told to turn right, or the next word to leave your mouth may well be S%*T).

The new science of our cross-wired senses

Yes, your ears can change what you taste. What discoveries about cross-sensory perception are revealing about the brain.

By Courtney Humphries

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December 11, 2011

Martin Gee/Globe Staff

The senses have always been our portals into the outer world. We have the classic five that Aristotle talked about — sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch — plus more recently recognized senses of balance, temperature, pain, and body position and movement. Each evolved to collect some distinct type of information about our environment, and to tell us our status within it.

That's largely how we tend to think about the senses, anyway: separately, each one its own distinct way to understand the world around us.

But in recent years, various findings have emerged to challenge that assumption — strange illusions in which one sense seemed to change the perceptions of another. One study published in 2000 particularly grabbed people's attention: When researchers at Caltech showed test subjects a brief flash of light accompanied by two quick tones, many people saw two flashes instead of one. The same effect occurred when the researchers tapped their subjects' skin twice as the light flashed. Vision — considered our most reliable and dominant sense — could be altered by sound or touch.

And that wasn't all. Other studies showed that what people saw affected what they heard; ***that certain types of music or background noise affected how food tasted***; and that smells could influence how a texture felt to the touch.

What the researchers were uncovering, in other words, is that our senses are not so separate after all. Scientists have realized that interaction between the senses “is the rule rather than the exception,” says Ladan Shams, one of the researchers who conducted the light-flashing study and now a sensory scientist at the University of California at Los Angeles. From the earliest stages of perception, it appears, the senses are enhancing, competing with, and even altering one another in surprising ways.

Since then, a new field has emerged to study cross-sensory perception, with laboratories throughout the world devoted to understanding how the senses merge. Scientists are developing a new way of thinking about how our brains are organized and how we perceive the world. And what began as basic scientific research to understand the brain’s organization is spreading into other fields, such as marketing: ***Companies are starting to engineer foods that taste better by appealing to the eyes and ears***, for instance. The work may even have implications for medicine — helping to explain, say, how the brain can compensate for a missing sense — and for education.

It might seem unsettling that the perceptual tools we rely on to navigate the world are so fluid — not just capable of being fooled, but capable of fooling one another. But the constant interaction and interference between our senses, in fact, is central to one of the brain’s most astonishing feats: its ability to take a sea of complex, conflicting sensory input and assemble it into a fairly reliable picture of the world.

Philosophers have long debated the primacy of the senses in knowing truth, but they have rarely questioned their separateness. The Epicurean poet and philosopher Lucretius, for example, argued that the senses couldn’t influence one another, “for each has powers discrete and apart, its separate force.” Because of these separate powers, he reasoned, “it must be, then, that one sense cannot prove another wrong.”

Yet we’ve always understood intuitively that senses do affect one another in certain ways. As anyone who’s ever eaten dinner while nursing a bad cold knows, nearly all of food’s flavor comes from our

sense of smell, not taste. Since the dawn of the talkies, moviegoers have experienced this kind of sensory interaction, too. Their ears might hear sounds from a speaker behind them, but their eyes persuade them that the voices are coming from actors projected on the screen.

Now, science is showing that such connections among the senses are more widespread and deeply rooted than we ever imagined. What happens in the movie theater isn't just an isolated illusion — the blending of sensory information is critical for the brain to create a seamless interpretation of its outside world.

Research into perception is following suit. Over the past decade, previously disparate studies of the senses have begun to merge. There is now a yearly conference devoted to multisensory research, and the topic is finding its way into neuroscience meetings. Some scientists focus specifically on the integration of senses, while others have expanded their previously single-sense research to include others. Shams, at UCLA, says that while some people initially doubted whether isolated illusions had bearing on the everyday function of the senses, most now accept there are countless ways they are intertwined.

One researcher who has spearheaded this change is psychologist Charles Spence, head of the Crossmodal Research Laboratory at Oxford University. While neuroscientists have been piecing together how senses connect in the brain, his work has revealed how the crossing of sensory information affects perception and behavior. His recent work on the psychology of flavor perception, for instance, has shown that the flavor of your food is influenced by touch, vision, and even sound. A study from his lab a few years ago showed that people rate potato chips as crisper and better-tasting when a louder crunch is played back over headphones as they eat. ***A study published this year showed that people thought a strawberry mousse tasted sweeter, more intense, and better when they ate it off a white plate rather than a black plate.*** Other researchers have conducted similar studies showing that our impressions of experiences, and our emotional responses to them, derive from a

blending of different kinds of sensory input — a process that is usually completely unconscious.

These findings are leading to a fuller picture of how we really perceive the world around us. **Barry Stein, a multisensory scientist at Wake Forest University**, says that what's been surprising is how early in the process of perception the senses begin to overlap. Even before the brain makes higher-level judgments about the sensory information it is receiving, Stein says, special “multisensory neurons” that respond to more than one sense begin to synthesize it.

This process allows the brain to quickly blend different channels of information into one impression. In some cases, senses enhance one another: A distant image paired with a weak sound can appear more noticeable than each alone. In some cases they compete with each other and one wins out (as your eyes win over your ears in the movies). In others, the information merges into something new; when people watch a video of a person saying “ga” while the audio is dubbed with a voice saying “ba,” they hear an intermediate “da.” Though the senses can fool us in certain cases, being able to integrate them helps us make a quick judgment and move on, rather than puzzling over conflicting information.

The ability to coordinate among the different senses seems to be something the brain learns; we're not born being able to do it. “You'd think that the brain comes with all this hardware built into it,” says Stein. “But that's not the case.” Instead, research shows that after we're born, the brain quickly learns to put information from the senses together. This early wiring of the brain to coordinate sensory input helps explain why people born without a sense who then regain it — such as deaf people who receive cochlear implants later in life — have a difficult time learning to integrate the new sensory information.

This research sheds light on other fascinating phenomena that neuroscientists have observed in those with impaired sensory functions, too — and it may ultimately suggest possible therapies. **In blind people, for example, research has shown that the sense of touch activates the visual cortex; in other words, areas of the brain normally designated for processing one sense can adjust to**

make use of information from another. Then there are people, like those with autism or other conditions, who have impaired abilities of sensory integration. Therapists influenced by the science of multisensory integration have worked with people with autism to create “sensory diets,” interventions that focus on using senses together.

And the new work may ultimately affect how the rest of us learn, as well. Shams’s group at UCLA has found that people learn a visual task better when it’s accompanied by sound, for instance — even when they are later tested using only vision.

In broader commercial applications, meanwhile, the science is already providing a new basis for what marketers have long surmised: They are selling customers more than just the core sensory experience. Restaurant owners, for instance, know that choosing decor, lighting, music, and table settings that complement their food can boost their bottom line, and companies have long market-tested food products for texture and packaging as well as taste. But we are now beginning to understand that these elements don’t just create atmosphere and associations — they can actually make food taste different. For example, several studies have found that adding red coloring can make drinks taste sweeter, allowing a company to reduce sugar content while turning color up a notch.

After all, no sight or sound exists in a vacuum; at the deepest neurological level, when we sit down to that meal, all our senses will be working together.

Sound Science

Many scholars have conceptualized radio as a low involvement medium (Speck & Elliott, 1997), with much of the overall time spent listening being actually spent doing other things while the radio plays in the background. The implication here is that information from radio commercials mostly fails to penetrate the cognitive system. However, a recent series of studies using persuasive radio messages as stimuli (Potter, in press, 2000; Potter, Chen, Cho, & Zhou, 2000; Potter, Lang, & Bolls, 1998) suggests that while listener involvement may

vary greatly from person to person, there are other structural attributes of an audio message that cause the human cognitive system to automatically pay attention to the message. The biological mechanism for this automatic allocation of cognitive resources is known as the **orienting response** (“the OR,” Pavlov, 1927; Sakolov, 1963; Watson & Gatchel, 1979). This is hard-wired into the cognitive system such that a person will predictably have an OR in response to **novelty** in the environment or to learned signals, such as hearing one’s name called out. An occurrence of an OR in a human subject can be identified by physiological changes such as a momentary deceleration in heart rate and increase in skin conductance over 6 to 10 seconds following the onset of the novelty into the environment (Graham, 1979; Watson & Gatchel, 1979;

The implications of this series of studies is that, regardless of the fact that radio tends to be a medium of lesser involvement, there are certain identifiable structural features that the human brain cannot help but cognitively process—at least initially. This is even the case if the listener has the radio on in the background while involved primarily in completing other tasks. One of these features that listeners automatically process is the beginning of a commercial message (Potter, Lang, & Bolls, 1998).