

How Advertising Works 2018

Request for Proposals

Length, Creative, Clutter and Cohort: The Impact of Short Ads

Background

The ARF is continuing its How Advertising Works Today (HAW) series of projects in 2018 with the goal of gaining additional insights that help marketers make advertising more effective under today's conditions. During the last two years, HAW has addressed cross-platform strategies, optimizing mobile ad formats, context effects, and mobile survey quality. A new initiative for 2018 is "Length, Creative, Clutter and Cohort: The Impact of Short Ads".

This research series is part of a comprehensive ARF program to advance the science of marketing. Findings from this research are: published as part of the ARF publication series and presented along with our selected partner(s) at ARF conferences, events and special advertiser workshops.

Problem Statement

As the number of 6 second ads on television is increasing, many members have asked the ARF to explore if and how such ads can be effective through high quality, objective research. Also, there is significant interest in whether short ads (10 seconds and 6 seconds) are more or less effective on digital media: desktop, tablet and smartphone.

Short ad forms have been studied in a digital/mobile environment and at a high level on television. The ARF will share its and its members research with selected firms so that the final research design builds upon and does not repeat existing research on short formats.

There are several specific questions that we would like this research to answer:

- For Television and Mobile:
 - Can the creative be similar to 30's or 15's or should it be different? Are 10's different from 6's?
 - Which creative elements have a positive impact on effectiveness measures?
 - Note – our mobile research suggests there needs to be a unified theme with television 15's but content must be selected for the mobile screen and anticipated shorter exposure.
 - Are 6's viable as a standalone campaign on television and how does this contrast with a standalone 6 second campaign on mobile? How do 6 second ads on TV work together with digital/mobile ads in a cross-platform campaign?
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- How effective are short ads within a typical TV ad pod? Should they be used as stand-alone or clustered in short ad pods? Is there an optimal pod configuration that uses 6's. What is optimal placement on mobile?
- Are short ads more effective for younger TV viewers or is the viewer's age not a factor?
- Do 6's work differently in a sponsored environment (on air talent pre-mentions or Logo cues prior to ad)
- For Audio
 - Do short format ads work differently in a streaming environment from terrestrial? With or without video in stream?
 - Is there image transfer from video or longer radio to short format audio?
 - Does on air sponsorship impact short format effectiveness?

The ARF is reaching out to members to sponsor this new initiative that will help buyers and sellers make better, research-based decisions. As we stated above, we have already started to analyze the large body of research on ad length, primarily research on 15s vs. 30's, and found it provides insights that help formulate hypotheses regarding the issues surrounding 6 second ads.

Further, we have been talking to ARF members and industry leaders to make sure we know of existing or planned research projects on these issues, so we can design original research that address key issues that are not thoroughly addressed by those studies.

To be clear, the purpose of this study is to determine best practice for the use of short formats across different platforms.

The ARF's "Short Ads" Project

The Project has three elements

- Analysis and synthesis of existing and new research on the role of ad length.
 - Much of this work will be conducted by the relevant ARF councils and staff (Cognition, Creative and Multicultural councils).
- Original experiments that complement and build on the research done to date.
 - Most research to day has been conducted in laboratory but at a higher level of detail. We are interested in a variety of methods which may require multiple partners to interpret both in lab and in a home/real world experience.
- Interpretation, reporting and presentation through a suite of ARF venues.

Original Research

Methods, Measures, and Design

We are looking for proposals that address these research questions. We believe a variety of methods may be appropriate, including biometric/neuroscience-based measures, surveys, and measures to explore ROI and sales impact of different campaign approaches. We are interested in laboratory experiments, as well as in-home and out of home effects. Additionally, we are interested in unstructured data as a possible source of effectiveness, such as social mentions and sharing. Advertisers have expressed strong interest in sales response.

If “effectiveness” cannot be measured in terms of sales or ROI, we recommend a variety of measures to assess attention, ad and brand recall, ad liking, and purchase intent.

Experimental designs should be the focus of this research in order to provide clear causal insights. For lab experiments, we recommend test situations that resemble actual viewing behavior (i.e. use of a second screen, co-viewing). Further, the HAW project, as well as many other studies, have shown the importance of creative. Therefore, we welcome proposals that address the role of creative factors.

Proposal Requirements

We ask for proposals containing details of the following:

- Methodology / rationale
- Deliverables (incl. any interim)
- Relevant corporate experience
- Team members and project leads
- Timing for each stage of the research (e.g., design / execution / analysis)
- Cost (including price points for different configurations (e.g., more / less product categories, additional brands))
- Areas where you feel your efforts might be supplemented / complemented by another methodology
 - Partners can join with other companies for more wholistic execution of this landmark project or may bid on only one portion such as: Lab only, in home only, radio only, ...
- Single page in Word format summarizing the above details
 - A more detailed Word or Power Point document may accompany the one-page summary

Expectations are for bids to reflect pricing consideration that accounts for the ARF’s not-for-profit industry role and the associated recognition of being selected.

Please submit responses by March 30, 2018 to horst@thearf.org. The anticipated award date is April 13, 2018.

Fieldwork and/or analysis should commence within one week of award date, with topline results available by May 30, 2018.

Supplier Selection Process

The ARF’s mission is to bring solutions to our members and the advertising and research industries that are based on high quality, objective research that provides new insights. As such, potential partners will be evaluated on these criteria:

- The proposal is judged to achieve the above stated goals of the research, reflects methodological and intellectual rigor, and is supported by validation that ensures the reliability and validity of results

- The research reflects leading-edge thought leadership in advertising research and innovative thinking in analytics, research solutions, and/or insight generation

The ARF reserves the right to select one or multiple solution providers to execute this work and will have the final determination in which solution providers are selected.

Additional Terms

- Following the date on which the ARF receives the Supplier's proposal and pricing, that proposal and price shall be binding on the Supplier in all respects for 90 days.
- In submitting a proposal, the Supplier understands that the ARF will determine at its sole discretion which proposal, if any, is selected. The Supplier waives any right to claim damages of any nature whatever.
- This RFP defines specific requirements only. It is not intended to be, nor should it be construed as, an offer to contract. The ARF will consider each proposal but is under no obligation to act on any proposal. All submitted proposals shall become the property of the ARF.
- Each supplier agrees that it shall absorb all costs incurred in the preparation, revision, and presentation of any proposal.
- When applicable and approved, any travel and lodging will be billed at cost.
- The ARF intends to share a public report of findings.
- The ARF will make available the original data to ARF Members for validation and further analysis, with approval from Sponsors and subject to any results being shared with the full ARF community.