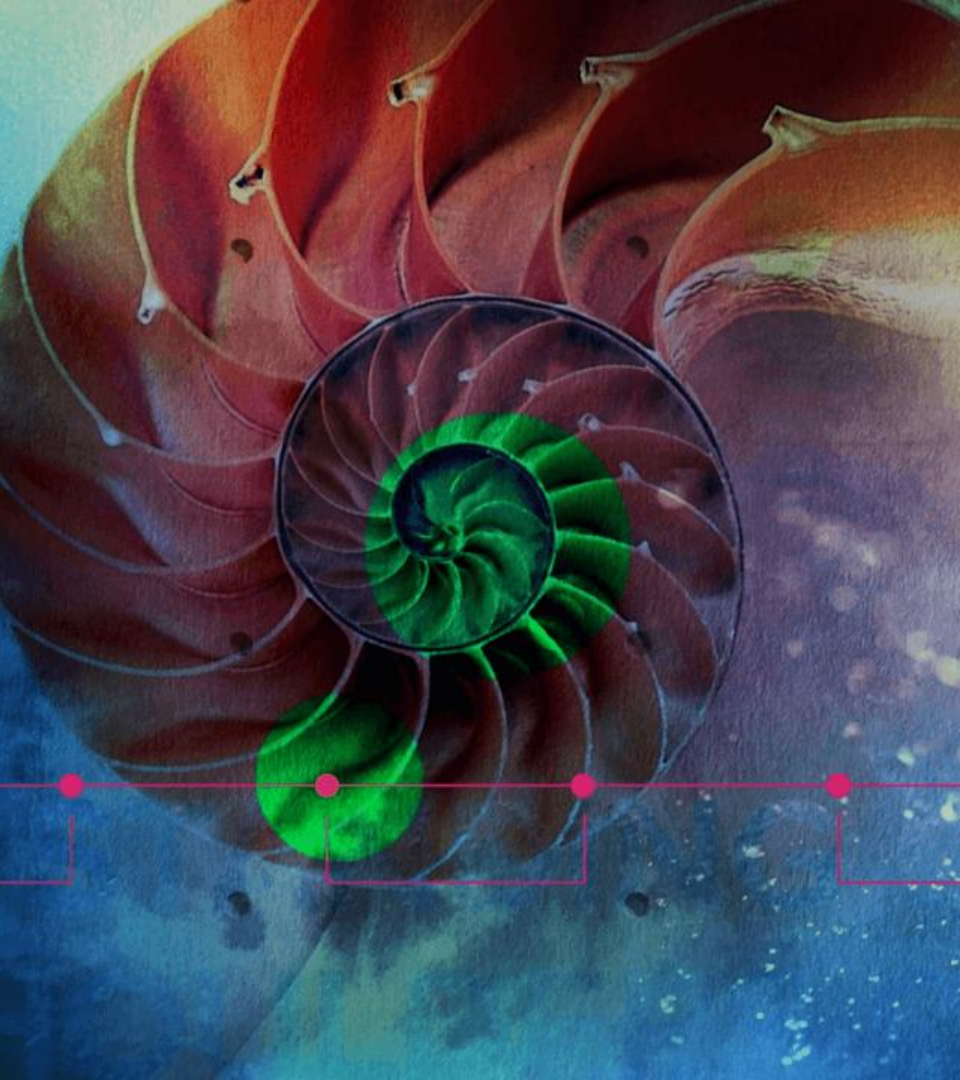# CAMPAIGN CREATIVITY
IN TIMES OF COVID-19

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OVERVIEW

Purpose:

Understand how brands expressed creativity during the pandemic

Analysis Scope:

- Using the Data Creativity Score, measure, compare and score creative impact of COVID-19 campaigns
- Scope of the analysis covers EU5 countries: Italy, Germany, France, Spain & the UK

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 crisis created a **dramatic shift in priorities** for citizens across the world

Brands have been **uncertain about how to advertise** in a sensitive way in order to not alienate consumers struggling to come to grips with the pandemic, whilst maintaining a healthy business

Without being able to continue with "business as usual", many brands looked to create unique **COVID-19-specific campaigns**

This report looks at which **campaigns resonated well creatively** with consumers & highlights lessons for other brands looking to restart their advertising during this uncertain time

MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS REFLECTS THE MOTIVATIONS OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR & DECISION MAKING

Self actualization
Desire to become the most one can be

Esteem
Respect, self-esteem, status, recognition, strength, freedom

Belonging
Friendship, intimacy, family, sense of connection

Safety needs
Personal security, employment, resources, health, property

Physiological needs
Air, water, food, shelter, sleep, clothing

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APPEALING TO ONE OF THESE DRIVERS IS A KEY DETERMINANT OF POTENTIAL BRAND SUCCESS, WITH ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS OFTEN APPEALING TO ONE OR MORE LEVELS

EXAMPLE ADVERTS

Self actualization
Desire to become the most one can be

Esteem
Respect, self-esteem, status, recognition, strength, freedom

Belonging
Friendship, intimacy, family, sense of connection

Safety needs
Personal security, employment, resources, health, property

Physiological needs
Air, water, food, shelter, sleep, clothing

Link

Link

Link

Link

Link

THE PANDEMIC RADICALLY CHANGED CONSUMER'S FOCUS IN THE HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

Moving focus from the top of the pyramid (self-actualization & esteem) to the bottom (safety & physiological needs)

Safety needs
Personal security, employment, resources, health, property

Physiological needs
Air, water, food, shelter, sleep, clothing

WHICH BRAND CAMPAIGNS, BY NEED STATE, RESONATED WITH CONSUMERS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?

DATA CREATIVITY
SCORE

A DATA-DRIVEN APPROACH TO MEASURE, COMPARE AND SCORE CREATIVE IMPACT – ANALYZING WHICH COVID-19 ADVERTS PERFORMED BEST PER NEED STATE

DCS measures **creative impact** of a campaign by quantifying the criteria of the most important industry awards (such as Effie, Cannes Lions, The ADDYs, The D&AD etc.)

CONCEPT

Measures the **emotionality, originality & understanding** of the campaign through consumers' attitude towards it

ACTIVATION

Measures the **conversion** of media to consumers´ interest with Google Searches for the Brand, Product and Campaign

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CRITERIA CONSIDERED IN THE DATA CREATIVITY SCORE

Subscore	Operationalization	Methodology	Meaning
CONCEPT	Involvement	The more emotional (+ or -) opinions about Originality, Emotionality and Understanding within the User Generated Content buzz, the more involving the creative idea	**The power of creative**
	Endorsement	The bigger the share of positive opinions about Originality, Emotionality and Understanding, the higher the score	
ACTIVATION	Campaign Activation	A campaign scores high at Activation when the share of campaign/brand/product search during the target campaign phase is higher than its general average when isolating trend effect (growing or declining) and seasonal effects	**The excellence of execution**
	Brand Activation		
	Product Activation		

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CAMPAIGNS ACROSS INDUSTRIES WERE ANALYZED FOR 5 EUROPEAN MARKETS

| Safety needs	Belonging	Esteem	Self actualization
13 campaigns	**28 campaigns**	**15 campaigns**	**5 campaigns**
Auto: 2 campaigns	Auto: 3 campaigns	Auto: 4 campaigns	Auto: 2 campaigns
Entertainment: 1 campaign	Communication: 8 campaigns	Communication: 1 campaign	Communication: 2 campaign
Finance: 1 campaign	Cosmetics: 2 campaigns	Entertainment: 1 campaign	Entertainment: 1 campaign
FMCG: 4 campaigns	Fashion: 1 campaign	Fashion: 2 campaigns	
Public Sector: 3 campaigns	Finance: 2 campaigns	Finance: 2 campaigns	
Retail: 2 campaigns	FMCG: 8 campaigns	FMCG: 4 campaigns	
	Public Sector: 3 campaigns	Public Sector: 2 campaigns	
	Retail: 8 campaigns	Retail: 1 campaign	

Please note: No campaigns analyzed focusing on physiological needs

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CAMPAIGNS IN MARCH & APRIL TARGETED BELONGING. THIS MOVED TO ESTEEM & SELF ACTUALIZATION IN MAY

NEED STATE SPLIT ACROSS MONTHS

■ Safety ■ Belonging ■ Esteem ■ Self Actualisation
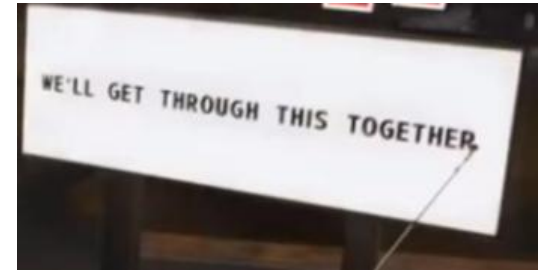

March
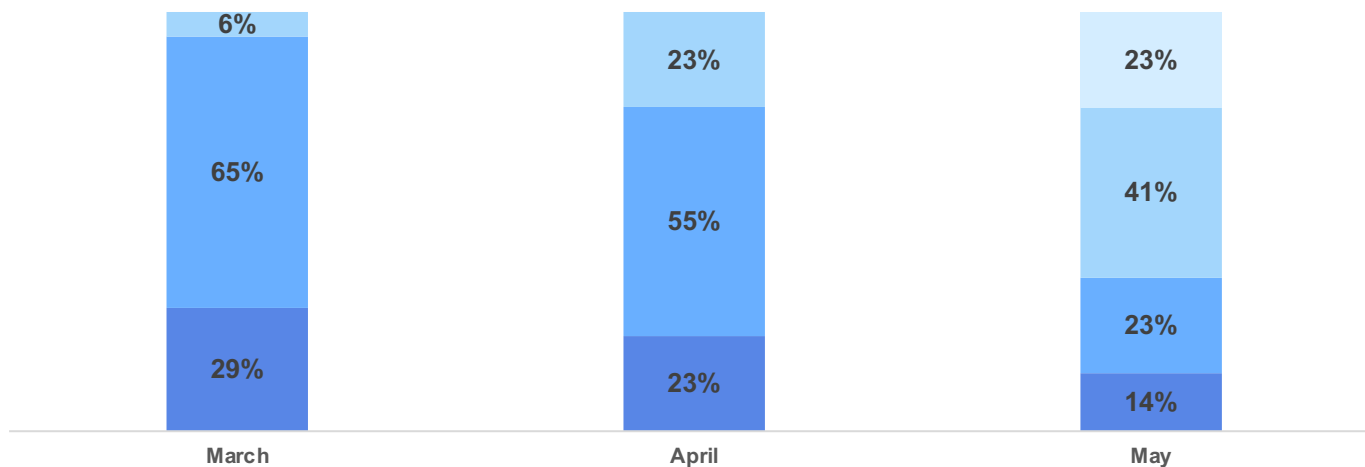
3.2
Concept   1.3
Activation   5.1

April

3.2
Concept   1.6
Activation   4.9

May

3.3
Concept   1.7
Activation   5.0

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THE FIRST COVID-19 SPECIFIC CAMPAIGNS FOCUSED ON MESSAGING RELATING TO SAFETY & BELONGING

Messaging focused on **staying safe** in the home, **connecting with loved ones** and creating a sense of **togetherness** with those around you
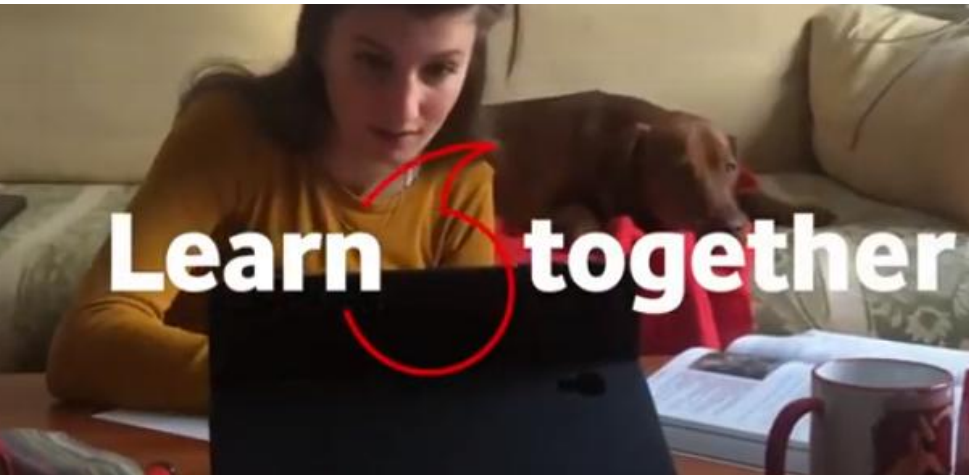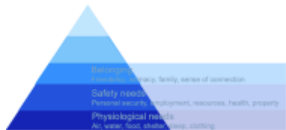
VODAFONE
TOGETHER

Vodafone's "together" campaign was one of the first adverts that targeted the belonging need through a message of togetherness during COVID-19

This ad was created entirely in people's homes across Italy, showing citizens coming together to learn, exercise, play music & communicate with loved ones via their internet connection. The ad conveys a message of community & belonging

https://www.thedrum.com/news/2020/03/25/ads-we-vodafone-italy-creates-ad-home-demonstrate-the-power-connectivity

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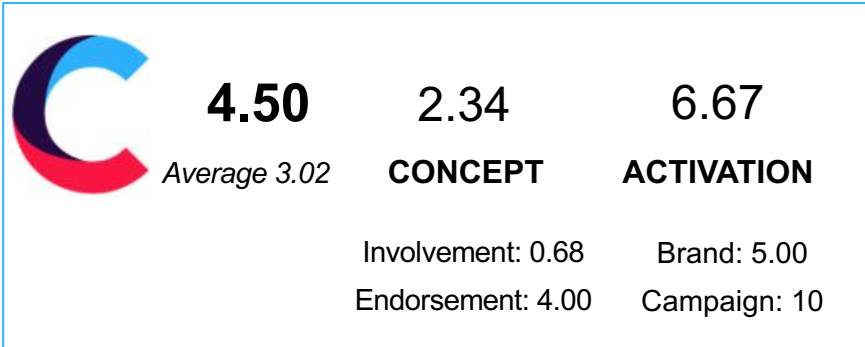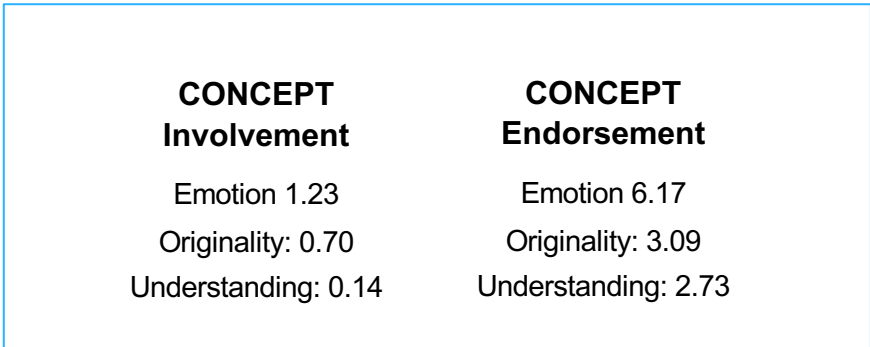# VODAFONE TOGETHER

At a concept level, the adverts sincere emotion drove endorsement for viewers. The campaign performed very well in activation, particularly at campaign level. The advert messaging works well in relation to Vodafone's brand purpose: connecting & bringing people closer together

DATA CREATIVITY SCORE

4.50
Average 3.02

2.34
CONCEPT

6.67
ACTIVATION

Involvement: 0.68
Endorsement: 4.00

Brand: 5.00
Campaign: 10

DEEP DIVE METRICS

**CONCEPT
Involvement**

Emotion 1.23

Originality: 0.70

Understanding: 0.14

**CONCEPT
Endorsement**

Emotion 6.17

Originality: 3.09

Understanding: 2.73

So what? This campaign helped Vodafone convert media into actual consumer interest (google search volume)

REPLY
TD
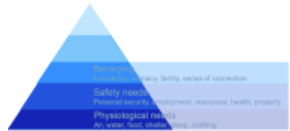
NIVEA
SMALL ACTS OF KINDNESS MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE

Over the past decade, Nivea has cultivated a brand purpose of community & sense of belonging which was further communicated in their "small acts of kindness" campaign

Thank you to everyone who has shown they care.

NIVEA Creme

#ShareTheCare

This ad begins with empty streets & classrooms but moves to acts of kindness happening within the home; people connecting together & caring about each other despite the physical distance
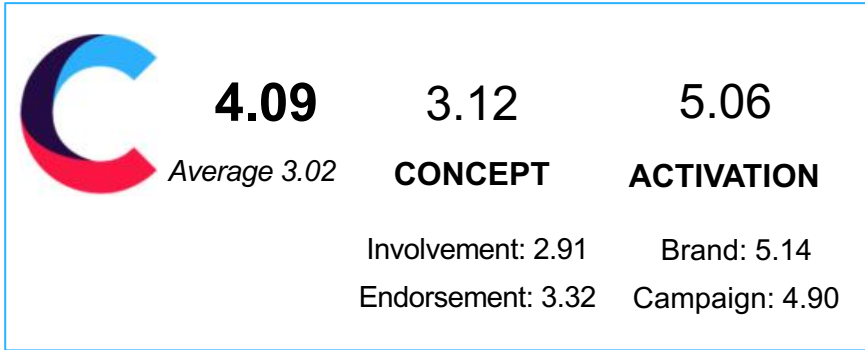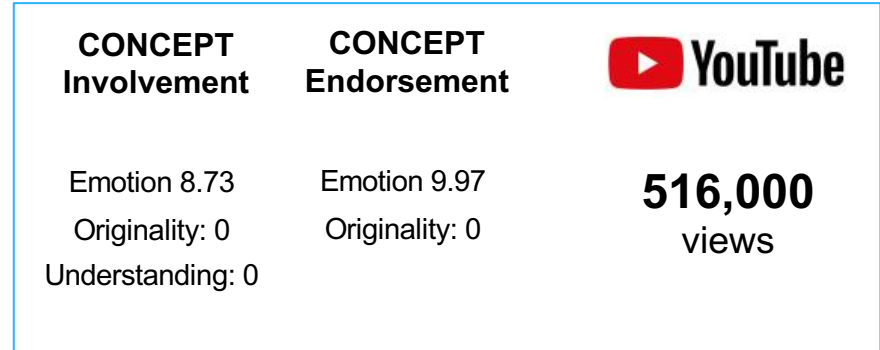
REPLY
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NIVEA
SMALL ACTS OF KINDNESS MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE

The campaign connected with consumers at an emotional level, as it works in harmony with Nivea's brand values, giving them a legitimacy to communicate this message to consumers. This in turn drove activation both for the brand & campaign
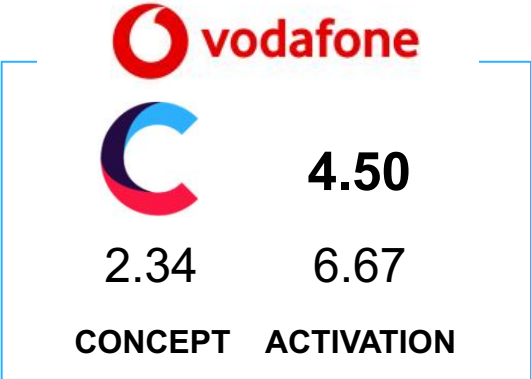
DATA CREATIVITY SCORE

4.09
Average 3.02

3.12
CONCEPT

Involvement: 2.91
Endorsement: 3.32

5.06
ACTIVATION

Brand: 5.14
Campaign: 4.90

DEEP DIVE METRICS

CONCEPT Involvement

Emotion 8.73
Originality: 0
Understanding: 0

CONCEPT Endorsement

Emotion 9.97
Originality: 0

▶ YouTube

516,000
views

So what? The emotional spot resonated as well from user generated content; triggering originality is also important
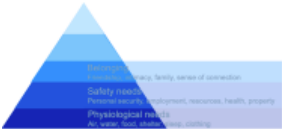
REPLY
TD

VODAFONE & NIVEA WERE ABLE TO EXECUTE THEIR BELONGING CAMPAIGNS ON AN EMOTIONAL LEVEL

These campaigns built on their **pre-existing brand purpose** of **community & togetherness** to execute a strong COVID-19 message

Vodafone took the opportunity **to strike early** before there was a wealth of campaigns with similar messaging, thus seeing some of the highest scores in the Data Creativity Score for **campaign activation**
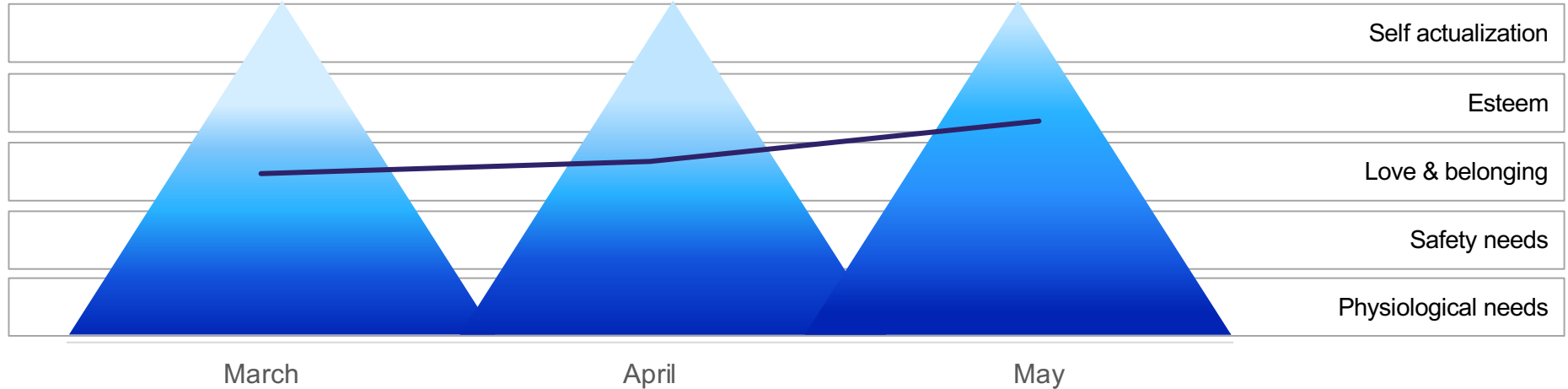
vodafone

4.50

2.34	6.67
CONCEPT	**ACTIVATION**

NIVEA

4.09

3.12	5.06
CONCEPT	**ACTIVATION**

Other campaigns targeting "belonging"

3.23

1.45	5.00
CONCEPT	**ACTIVATION**

26 campaigns in total: includes auto, communication, FMCG & retail campaigns

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AS LOCKDOWNS EASED AND CURVES FLATTENED, ADVERTISING BEGAN TO MOVE UP THE HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

Self actualization

Esteem

Love & belonging

Safety needs

Physiological needs

March   April   May

REPLY
TD

COVID-19 SPECIFIC CAMPAIGNS THAT CAME LATER IN THE PANDEMIC FOCUSED ON MESSAGING OF ESTEEM & SELF ACTUALIZATION

Messaging was much more light-hearted, **thanking people for staying at home**, showcasing **creativity** expressed during lockdown and **looking to the future** when people can leave their homes

OTB
BRAVE

The Brave campaign communicates a more upbeat and playful vibe, targeting respect & self-actualization needs

Upbeat music accompanies a range of people having fun & continuing their lives during lockdown – from socially distance tennis to dance challenges – with statements overlapping the video of how they are brave

OTB
BRAVE

The OTB campaign worked at both concept & activation level. Consumers saw the concept as original **which** drove emotion; this triggered activation which particularly benefited the brand

DATA CREATIVITY SCORE

4.94
Average 3.02

4.61
CONCEPT

Involvement: 3.36
Endorsement: 5.85

5.29
ACTIVATION

Brand: 5.44
Campaign: 5.00

DEEP DIVE METRICS

**CONCEPT
Involvement**

Emotion 9.50
Originality: 0.45
Understanding: 0.13

**CONCEPT
Endorsement**

Emotion 9.85
Originality: 7.70
Understanding: 0.00

So what? The creative idea working off the esteem need triggered positive reactions for originality

Self actualization
Desire to become the most one can be

Esteem
Respect, self-esteem, status, recognition, strength, freedom

REPLY
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ROSSMANN
CLUB FEELING

Club Feeling appeals to the esteem need of status, recognition & freedom. Consumers are looking for some escapism from lockdown, which is reflected in the

Customers line up outside Rossmann like a club with a bouncer deciding who can enter the store. The woman let into the store dances to techno in a smoke-filled room. The scene then cuts to her standing in a Rossmann store dancing while everyone is shopping around her
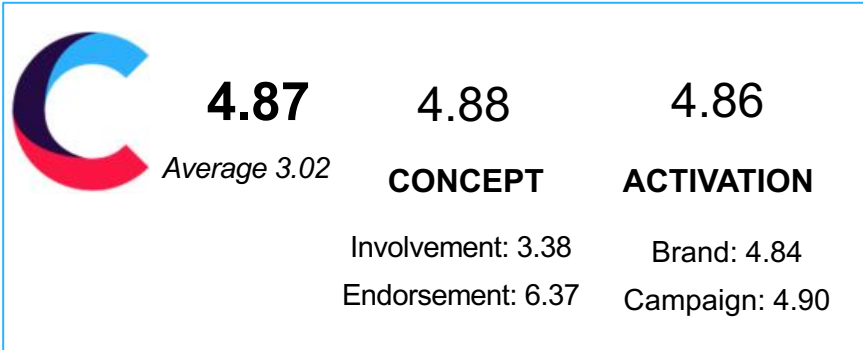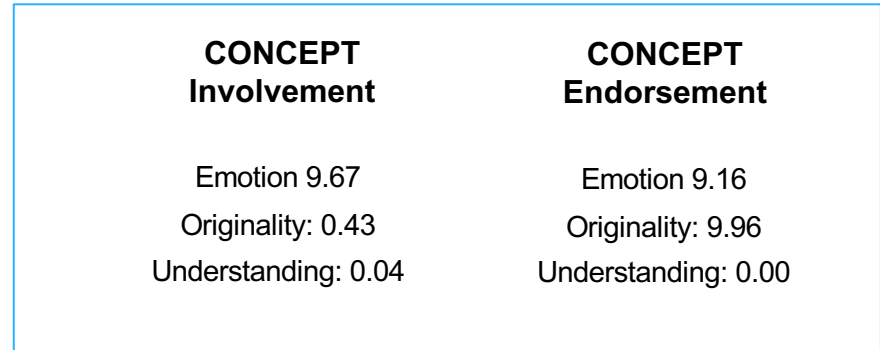
ROSSMANN
CLUB FEELING

Rossman's advert was one of the first to begin to use humor in their COVID-19 messaging. Consumers responded well to this, seeing the advert as original & driving strong emotion scores for involvement & endorsement

DATA CREATIVITY SCORE

4.87
Average 3.02

4.88
CONCEPT
Involvement: 3.38
Endorsement: 6.37

4.86
ACTIVATION
Brand: 4.84
Campaign: 4.90

DEEP DIVE METRICS

CONCEPT Involvement

Emotion 9.67
Originality: 0.43
Understanding: 0.04

CONCEPT Endorsement

Emotion 9.16
Originality: 9.96
Understanding: 0.00

So what? Humor & esteem helped to communicate this creative spot triggering positive reactions for originality

Self actualization
Desire to become the most one can be

Esteem
Respect, self-esteem, status, recognition, strength, freedom

REPLY
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TIKTOK
A LITTLE BRIGHTER INSIDE

This is TikTok's first TV advert and targeted self actualization by communicating how to express creativity and uniqueness through the app

where all your
daydreams
come true

TikTok

A little brighter inside

This advert is a montage of various celebrities having fun and expressing themselves in their home via a TikTok video – the advert is colorful and is accompanied by an upbeat remix of "Mr Sandman"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5FieyssOA6w

TIKTOK
A LITTLE BRIGHTER INSIDE

While TikTok triggered emotion in consumers, the campaign was not seen as original and impacted concept scores overall. The campaign did however, work well in activating consumers in terms of brand, campaign & app downloads

DATA CREATIVITY SCORE

4.11
Average 3.02

3.12
CONCEPT

Involvement: 2.91
Endorsement: 3.33

5.10
ACTIVATION

Brand: 5.11
Campaign: 5.09

DEEP DIVE METRICS

**CONCEPT
Involvement**

Emotion 8.73
Originality: 0
Understanding: 0

**CONCEPT
Endorsement**

Emotion 10
Originality: 0
Understanding: 0
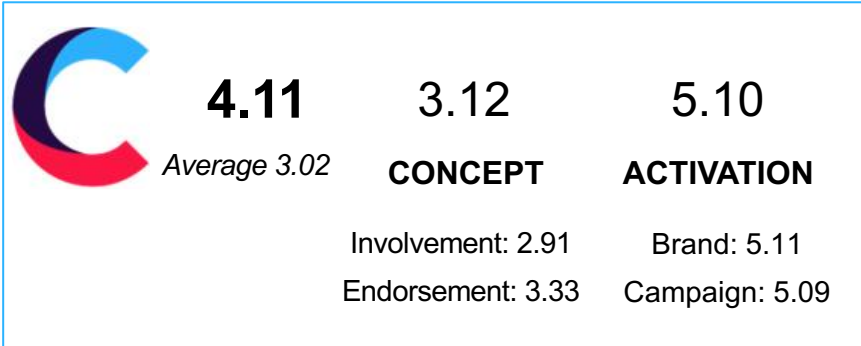
#1 downloaded UK app in apple store (+2 places)
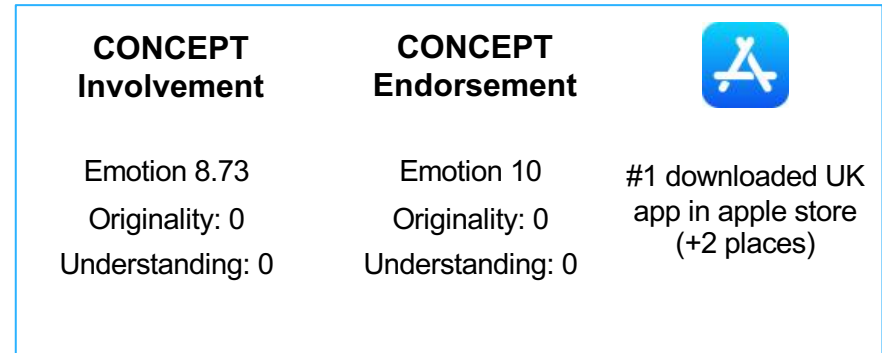
So what? Moving to the top of the need pyramid triggered positive emotion in consumers

Self actualization
Desire to become the most one can be

Esteem
Respect, self-esteem, status, recognition, strength, freedom

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WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THESE EXEMPLARY CAMPAIGNS?

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KEY TAKE OUTS FROM COVID-19 CAMPAIGNS SO FAR

Campaigns that resonated with consumers were typically **the first** to appeal to that messaging– using **emotion** in a way that reflected their **brand purpose and consumers' needs**

Early COVID-19 campaigns **spoke to the nation** and picked a message **of togetherness** to reflect the serious situation citizens were facing; this was particularly true in Italy which first faced the COVID-19 crisis in Europe

As the situation in Europe began to ease, brands were able to use **humor in a sensitive way** in order to **disarm a stressful situation**, as consumers needs & motivation moved into esteem & self actualization

HOW DO CAMPAIGNS DIFFER BETWEEN COUNTRIES?

THE UK SAW THE HIGHEST CONCEPT SCORES ACROSS COVID-19 CAMPAIGNS; ALL COUNTRIES HOWEVER SAW STRONG ACTIVATION SCORES

	🇪🇸 Spain	🇮🇹 Italy	🇫🇷 France	🇩🇪 Germany	🇬🇧 UK
Average DCS Score	**2.94**	**3.11**	**3.08**	**3.35**	**3.56**
Concept	1.09	1.13	0.93	1.69	2.29
Activation	4.79	5.10	5.22	5.02	4.82

💡 COUNTRIES WITH A STRICTER SHUTDOWN REACTED LESS TO THE CAMPAIGNS, BUT EXHIBITED HIGHER ACTIVATION

STRICTER LOCKDOWN MEASURES

Average DCS Score	3.05
Concept	1.07
Activation	5.03

LESS RESTRICTIVE MEASURES

Average DCS Score	3.46
Concept	2.01
Activation	4.91

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DCS SCORES BY MARKET REFLECT EACH COUNTRY'S ADVERTISING SPEND & ACCEPTANCE OF ADVERTISING OVERALL

	🇪🇸 Spain	🇮🇹 Italy	🇫🇷 France	🇩🇪 Germany	🇬🇧 UK
Average DCS Score	**2.94**	**3.11**	**3.08**	**3.35**	**3.56**
Concept	1.09	1.13	0.93	1.69	2.29
Activation	4.79	5.10	5.22	5.02	4.82
% buy brands advertised[2]	**29.7%**	**21.6%**	**18.2%**	**24.5%**	**26.4%**
Market advertising Spend per capita (2019)[3]	**140.60** USD per capita	**149.11** USD per capita	**207.49** USD per capita	**298.72** USD per capita	**426.11** USD per capita

Spain had low COVID-19 DCS scores despite being more receptive to advertising overall

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WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR BRAND CAMPAIGNS IN THE FUTURE?

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE FUTURE OF ADVERTISING?

As the world transitions to a future new normal, smart brands should tie their creativity tightly with **helping solve consumer problems and needs** – there will be a shift in focusing on consumers needs within advertising since COVID-19

These should be firmly woven into & **linked to the brand's purpose**

As more brands target the higher need states, consumers will begin to **show fatigue in this messaging** as they did for belonging-specific adverts

Brands should identify **new messaging & target different needs** in the future to ensure messaging stays original & drives high engagement

Brands in the "new normal" will need to be faster to **create a path to purchase no matter the circumstance** particularly if we see further COVID-19 waves hitting Europe

Brands cannot always focus on creating emotional concepts, this **needs to be balanced with originality & activation** to stimulate purchases

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