

NIELSEN CONSUMER NEUROSCIENCE

MEASURING “TRUST” IN THE FINANCIAL SECTOR

Does the Music in an Ad Impact Perceptions of Brand “Trustworthiness?”

THE CHALLENGE

Measuring an ad’s ability to communicate “trust” is a tricky business. Perceptions of trust can be non-conscious, formed almost immediately, and biased by subtle factors.

A German financial institution had learned this the hard way, and turned to neuroscience methods to better understand if their latest television ad creative was being associated with the idea of trust – a critical value when consumers are deciding who to invest their life savings with.

THE SOLUTION

The client collaborated with Nielsen Consumer Neuroscience using EEG based neuroscience measurement to assess the performance of two different version of their new television ad: an upbeat version versus a classical version. Using EEG, Nielsen was able to measure every second of the ad to determine whether they were emotionally engaging or memorable and whether watching the ad would drive future behavior in consumers.

In addition to watching the ads, participants performed a task which was designed to assess how well the ad communicated key messages on a non-conscious level.

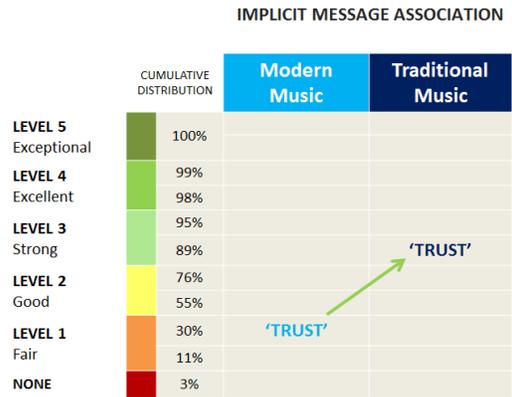
For both ads, the word of critical interest was “Vertrauen” (German for “Trust”). The goal was to measure the impact of a change in music, from “upbeat” to “serious” and its impact on the ability of the ad to communicate trust in the brand.

THE RESULTS

The results showed the traditional music significantly outperformed the modern track: in particular, the traditional music was better at helping viewers connect emotionally with the ad. Additionally, the traditional music was better able to support key moments throughout the ad by building dramatic tension that peaked at particularly salient moments. The music choice also made a big difference in the ad’s ability to communicate “trust.” Findings supported that classical instruments may be more associated with ideas of longevity and stability, compared to the synthesized sounds in modern music, which may be more associated with excitement and risk.

However, this does not mean traditional music is more “trustworthy.” Instead, we’ve learned the importance of carefully matching an ad’s soundtrack to the creative: not all music interacts with ad creative in the same way and good research is necessary to understand the impact of music on the ability of an ad to create an emotional connection, communicate intended messages, and impact future behavior.

ADVERTISING CASE STUDY



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