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Face Time

The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising

By
Dan Hill
President
Sensory Logic

Kogan Page
October 2010

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Pitch Letter

Selected Reviews

Bylined columns Based on Chapters

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It's all ABOUT FACE

Being on-message was the hallmark 20th-century advertising.

Being both on-message and on-emotion is the hallmark of 21st-century advertising.

Scientists and psychologists now argue that people are, above all, emotional, not rational, decision-makers.

Dan Hill explains how being on emotion creates advertising that works in his latest book.

ABOUT FACE

The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising



Dan Hill

Publisher: Kogan Page

Publication date: October, 2010

ISBN: 978-0-7494-5757-0

Review copies are available online.

If you prefer to receive a hard copy galley, please let me know.

Visit Netgalley to download the book for e-readers or as a PDF

<http://tinyurl.com/24f7x3j>

Excerpts are available. Please review the chapter headings and their summaries below to find content of interest to your audience.

I look forward to assisting you.

Sincerely,

Len Stein

Visibility Public Relations

Grounded in psychology and neurobiology, as well as a study of advertising tactics, "About Face," this new book from Dan Hill (author of *Emotionomic*, *Body of Truth* and *Face Time*) provides 10 rules to enable companies and advertising agencies, large and small, to create more effective communications.

About Face benefits from Hill's decade of research into facial coding, the tool described in Malcolm Gladwell's *Blink* and showcased in the hit TV series *Lie to Me*.

"Improving advertising results requires leveraging emotions, creating a lively brand personality, addressing people's values, and recognizing their search for shared meaning via social media. Loyalty, after all, is a feeling," said Dan Hill, president of market research firm Sensory Logic (www.SensoryLogic.com).

About

Dan Hill is an authority on the role of emotions in consumer and employee behavior and an expert in facial coding as an aid in measuring people's decision-making process.

He is the founder and president of Sensory Logic, a scientific, research-based consulting firm that specializes in gauging and helping to enhance companies' sensory-emotional connection with consumers.

He has appeared on the Today Show, CNN, MSNBC, and Fox Business. He is the author of *Emotionomics*, *Body of Truth: Leveraging What Consumers Can't or Won't Say*, and *Face Time: How the 2008 Presidential Race Reveals the Importance of Being On-Emotion in Politics, Business and in Life*.

Chapter Details

01 Get physical

Orientation

Billy Mays and the gift of the gab

The variables of voice

Seeing what you can't see

What has the most visual stopping power?

Going beyond sight and sound into additional media

Leveraging sensory contrasts

Creative templates that work well

02 Keep it simple

Orientation

How not to waste half your advertising

Engagement: what the financial stakes are

Advertising's secret emotional cancer: frustration

Overcoming frustration through simplicity

Rules for word play

03 Keep it close to home

Orientation

Easy does it: the advantages of leveraging what's familiar

Putting a new, improved twist on what's familiar

The comfort zone: where the familiar is credible and easy to accept

Home is where the heartbreak is

Leveraging people's preference for comfort

Taking into account people's bias against what's foreign

04 Focus on faces

Orientation

Why faces are special: proof and four well-known reasons

Why faces are special: subtle factors highly relevant to advertising

From theory to practice: emotional responses to faces

True smiles versus social smiles: how heartfelt smiles differ from willed ones

The quest for authenticity

Criteria for casting appropriately and evaluating

performance
Cold-hearted criminals also have cold minds

05 Make it memorable

Did you see it? Recall measures as a house of mirrors
Explaining the answers: the gap between recall and how ad retention works
Explaining the answers: why 'Truth' won and what it means for you
Three additional criteria for enhancing ad retention based on how memory works
How to avoid the risk of creating unbranded ads

06 Relevancy drives connection

Orientation
The categorical truth: never forget the WIIFM
Types of motivations: a serious case of wanting fun food
Being on-motivation is essential to effectiveness
Redefining industry categories as emotional markets
Relevancy created by identifying with the emotions involved
Relevancy created by identifying with a brand's personality type

Always sell hope

Orientation
Happiness, Inc.: leveraging the hope that springs eternal
The interrelated dynamics of happiness and hope: an advertiser's checklist
A critique of three examples of selling both hope and happiness
Behavioural economics and the tension between hope and fear in advertising
The missing factor in selling hope: be true to your word(s)

08 Don't lead with price

Orientation
Cheapo-nomics: an example of 'value' advertising in practice
How leading with price can destroy a company's marketing strategy
Problem 1: Lack of sustainability (surprise fades)
Problem 2: Become numb to price (devaluing hope)
Problem 3: Invites analysis (undercutting emotional engagement)
Problem 4: Low-value perceptions (inviting contempt)

Problem 5: A price focus distorts purchase choices
(dissatisfaction results)

Problem 6: Brand loyalty at risk; pride takes a hit

Problem 7: Brand integrity at risk; desperation detected

In contrast, three real solutions to economic hard times
and price/value wars

09 Mirror the target market's values

Orientation

Why empathy has become marketing's new touchstone

The struggle to create authentic dialogues: welcome to
executive blogging

The battle of sexism: offensive gender portrayals

The rise of a creative class outside the advertising
agency structure

Cause marketing: a way to neutralize critics and make
new friends

Believability sticks

Orientation

The battle between belief and pervasive scepticism

Defining the types of advertising

What type of advertising is most emotionally persuasive?

Time for analysis: what are the implications of these
various results?

The two ends of the spectrum for creating persuasion

Familiarity: what we know and like, we trust

Fairness versus desire: fulfilling on practical needs or
wants and dreams

Fairness: why humility and specificity work wonders

Desire: it's all about the three Ps of passion, pleasure
and purpose

Consistency: nobody's won over by fickle companies
and mono-emotion actors

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SELF-EVIDENT REVELATIONS MAR DAN HILL'S 'ABOUT FACE'

Left Hand's Nat Gutwirth Says Book's Insights Are Sound, but Familiar to Anyone in Marketing

Published: March 17, 2011

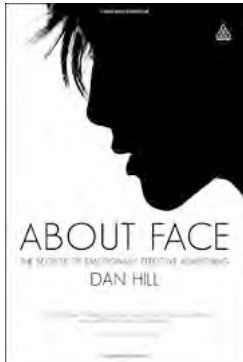


Nat Gutwirth

Imagine that in a gesture of interplanetary good citizenship, you have agreed to host a friendly Martian house guest for the next 10 days. Your new friend is polite, witty and well spoken; clearly a learned person by the standards of his world. He speaks flawless English with a barely detectable accent. All this you find charming and exotic. The hard part is listening to his laborious scientific explanations of things you already know.

This, as best I can describe, is how an advertising professional -- especially a creative one -- will feel when reading "About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising." Dan Hill is a wise man, well known as a researcher specializing in the Brave

New World of facial coding. He crafts a nice sentence (his Ph.D. is in creative writing). He cites a wide variety of credible sources on branding and advertising, leaning heavily on such venerable texts as "Positioning" by Trout and Ries, and Luke Sullivan's "Hey, Whipple, Squeeze This." He references dozens of authoritative studies to support his arguments. And he garnishes his assertions with nifty charts and tables. But like our well-meaning Martian, Hill seems largely unaware -- or unconcerned -- that many of his purported "findings" have already been found.



'About Face'

The trouble isn't that Hill doesn't have insight into his subject. He does. His central thesis, that brand relationships -- like all relationships -- have an emotional basis, is above reproach. And it's a truth that social scientists and researchers have long resisted in their efforts to "quantify" the "science" of persuasion. But for those of us in the business of crafting brand communications, many of Hill's revelations are fairly self-evident. Or should be.

Negative emotions, he tells us, generate negative responses. Happy people make people happy. Too much information is confusing. Price is not a positioning. People are more likely to remember things they care about. And it's never a good idea to make promises you can't keep. To call these statements of the obvious is, well, kind of a statement of the obvious, isn't it?

Of course the fault isn't with Hill's methods or intentions. It's with the basic irony of the exercise. He's trying to make a persuasive rational argument to prove that rational argument isn't the most persuasive form of

communications. But analyzing the component parts of a successful ad is kind of like dissecting a frog. You'll learn a lot about the parts and pieces that make up a living organism, but no matter how skillfully you put them back together, you're not going to end up with a live frog.

A further complication is that not all of Hill's arguments are as clear as they could be. Some of his charts were incomprehensible to this Earthling (quick -- where would you place "conformity" on an axis that measures "Hope & Confidence" against "Fear & Desire?") And there is also a troubling lack of ambiguity in his approach. In his quest to establish the importance of emotion he minimizes -- even ridicules -- the value of rational arguments. But of course every decision is a conversation between our rational and emotional selves. Good advertising, as I'm sure Hill understands, should build a bridge between the two.

On the upside, Hill does have considerable insight into the fundamental shifts that interactive media have brought about and their impact on the future of commercial communications. He makes some sharp observations about the ways we learn and store information and the roles of hope and fear in our purchase decisions. He also cites eye-tracking research to illustrate his arguments about logo placement and scene changes that I can imagine causing heated arguments in editing suites.

But ultimately, reading "About Face" is like hailing a cab in Rome. You will end up in the right place. You may even enjoy the ride. But the route will confuse you. You will probably feel disoriented along the way. And you may end up wondering if you really got your money's worth.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nat Gutwirth is partner-creative director at Left Hand in Philadelphia. Talk to him: nat@lefthandcreative.com.

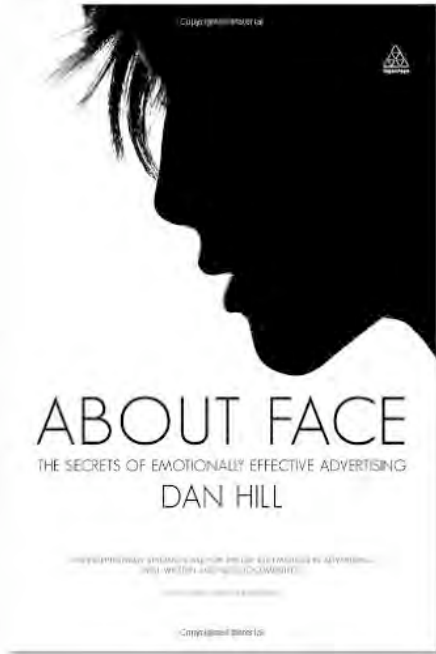
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About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising



About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising

by Dan Hill

Reviewed by [Robert A. Moskowitz](#) | Released: October 28, 2010

Publisher: Kogan Page (212 pages)



This book is exactly what you hope it is, which is plenty.

Based on years of watching what actual people do when confronted with various examples of advertising, Dan Hill has developed a lot of ideas about what works, and why. And he lays out a good many of them in this fast-paced, fact-based treatise on how to do advertising more effectively.

His message is clear, and clearly presented: "This book is about how 21st century marketing can realize success by being on-emotion, first and foremost. Being on-message remains a vital but secondary strategy, a way to plug in just enough 'facts' that the rational mind, searching to justify a choice, can find them . . . and therefore, feel confident about the purchase."

According to Hill, the central secrets of effective advertising now require that we . . . give people a way to be interested (leveraging the sensory brain), a reason to care (leveraging the emotional brain), and then and only then a confirming reason to believe (leveraging the rational brain)."

Because each of the five senses is handled in a separate part of the brain, Hill also believes that engaging more senses is automatically beneficial to the advertiser, because more brain activity comes into play.

Rather than offer one-size-fits-all prescriptions, however, Hill focuses on providing research results, insights, and guidelines. For Hill, "This is a book dedicated to exploration."

It's a slim volume, but there is a great deal in these pages to explore.

Hill covers the importance of passion, purpose, and personality in effective advertising. He reminds us that successful "advertising is a seduction, not a debate." In fact, Chapter Seven is titled "Always Sell Hope."

He offers us proven models of what controls human behavior, including the four basic drives, to defend, acquire, learn, and bond, as well as some other motivations to which successful advertising must appeal, including empowerment, attachment, self-esteem, and enjoyment.

He also breaks down the demographics of those on the receiving end of advertising into such "emotional target markets" as people who are seeking self-expression, affirmation, nurturing, exploration, interpersonal connection, and causes to support.

While emotion is central to Hill's theme, he understands that text plays a role in most advertising, but cautions that it should address emotional benefits, remain

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Other Reviews by Robert A. Moskowitz include

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simple, and aim to add just one more adjective to a product's identity.

Hill's chapters cover what he considers the most important elements to include in advertising:

- Stopping power
- Engagement
- Likability, familiarity, assurance, and comfort
- Faces—if only because we have specialized brain apparatus dedicated to decoding what faces convey
- Memorability
- Relevance—if only to address such consumer concerns as “why should I care?” and “how will buying your offer make my life better?”
- Happiness and hope—within the limits of honesty
- Mirrors of the target market's values—selling them on themselves, and
- Believability—building enough trust and reassurance to overcome today's skepticism

There's a whole chapter advising advertisers not to make price most important. Hill argues that people react to price-based advertising with surprise (positive at first, but it fades), and then with a loss of hope, a reduction in engagement, and a proclivity toward contempt. He offers evidence to show that leading with price produces customer dissatisfaction, and can prompt prospects to detect desperation in the advertiser—never an incentive to buy.

Hill can legitimately make all these statements because he is founder and president of Sensory Logic, a scientific, research-based consulting firm that specializes in gauging and helping to enhance companies' sensory-emotional connection with consumers.

According to his data, people make their purchase decisions on such emotional principles as aversion to loss, resistance to change, desire for conformity, blinders to actual probability, overconfidence, impulse, and a strong sense of justice (they don't want to be cheated).

Rather than buying goods and services, Hill asserts that consumers actually trade their money for satisfaction. They want to feel good about purchasing to fulfill their needs (or “must haves”), their wants (or what they expect to have), and their desires (or what they dream of having).

Furthermore, he claims the human brain is wired to process the “big picture” first, and only afterward to get involved in analyzing and understanding the details of an advertising offer.

Although About Face is largely strategic, Hill does wander into the weeds, particularly when revealing the results of his company's eye-tracking research. His research shows where the eye travels over an advertisement, how long it lingers, and which locations are most likely to deliver the strongest impression on the consumer.

In a subtle pitch for new business, Hill points out that 42% of graphic designers, presumably ignorant of the evidence, place important visual elements where consumers are least likely to perceive them favorably. He also provides the fruits of some esoteric research, including a list of six “creativity templates” which purportedly describe most of the most successful ads ever created.

Essentially, Hill boils down his ideas to make some simple points:

- There are primarily only two effective paths to persuasion.
- Argument is one path, including efforts to create belief and avoid triggering skepticism or counter-argument, while
- Emotion is the other path, including efforts to create engagement and affinity by providing authentic experiences and emotions.
- Testimonials can combine successful elements of both argument and emotion.

It sounds like a simple recipe, but if it were, every advertisement would be fantastically successful. Obviously, that's not the case. Hill's subtext reflects

advertising as a creative endeavor that can be guided by research and track records, but will never be reducible to a formula because it is always aimed at growing and changing consumers.

Writing primarily for those who enjoy and/or earn their living in advertising, Hill pretty much ignores any concerns about negative consequences, which of course exist.

For example, discussing on page 148 the dangers in today's dialogue-oriented advertising environment, Hill refers to "the Dove 'Onslaught(er)'"parody, which points out the psychological damage done to women by the ubiquitous distortion of models in print advertising, to make them unattainably thin, pretty, and perfect. If you follow this line of advertising criticism, you'll eventually encounter The Photoshop Effect Part 2 Controversy, in which a critic of the process poignantly echoes Dan Hill's own prescription for the advertising industry: "You're not really selling a product. . . . You're selling hope!"

Clearly, selling hope is not the same as selling soap, and the hope advertisers sell can be good or bad for people and society. Sadly, Hill fails to address the simple fact that some of what passes for hope in advertising is actually rooted in fear.

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Marketing & Strategy Innovation

[About Face by Dan Hill](#)

by [Roger Dooley](#) on 21 October, 2010 - 20:30



Book Review: [About Face – The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising](#) by Dan Hill

At a time when neuromarketing discussions are dominated by brain scans – EEG on the commercial side, and fMRI for academic research – Dan Hill and his firm, [Sensory Logic](#), are the main proponents of using [facial coding](#) as a way to determine what consumers are really thinking.



Or, more precisely, what consumers really **feel**. Hill and others believe that careful analysis of facial expressions, including fleeting “microexpressions,” lets marketers see the true emotions experienced by their customers.

About Face isn't a manual for would-be facial coding analysts. Indeed, there is very little discussion of the actual techniques used. In just one chapter, “Focus on Faces,” Hill acquaints readers with the basic concept. (Hill's earlier book, [Emotionomics](#), goes into more detail on that topic.) Rather, this book is a how-to guide for advertisers who want their ads to be emotionally impactful. Hill draws upon his firm's many studies to offer a set of best practices for advertisers.

What makes *About Face* an appealing and useful book is that it is chock-full of practical, specific advice often illustrated by real-world examples. In addition, third-party research is carefully cited so that the interested reader can dig deeper if desired.

As with A. K. Pradeep's [The Buying Brain](#), one has to take Hill's references to the Sensory Logic's own findings largely on faith. While it would be nice to have a better idea of what the original data and research

processes looked like for both Hill’s and Pradeep’s books, they are certainly no worse in that respect than the typical “marketing guru” book that is based on anecdotes and personal experience.

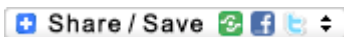
A good chapter in *About Face* is “Make it Memorable.” Hill discusses in great depth what makes ads memorable (or easy to forget). One interesting finding from Hill’s research is that emotional engagement with TV ads is maximized when there are either **three or four scene changes**. Going higher or lower drops the emotional peaks reached. Hill amplifies this analysis by suggesting that the best place to put important information in an ad is immediately after a scene change (to get a novelty boost) but when the scene is related in content to the previous scene (to keep it simple in the viewer’s mind). Fast-paced TV spots do attract attention to sensory elements in the ad, and are good for brand and imagery advertising. They work less well when the objective is to create recall of factual information or persuasive message involving spoken words or text.

Other chapter topics include leveraging the sensory characteristics of ads, why simplicity is important in ads and how to achieve it, keeping ads “familiar” to maximize impact, how to “sell hope,” pricing pitfalls to avoid, and more.

In some coming posts, I’ll focus on more of Hill’s nuggets of marketing wisdom. For now, I’ll simply say that *About Face* is exactly what a marketing book should be. It’s full of specific techniques and recommendations, supported by a combination of cited third party studies and the author’s own findings from years of client research.

Amazon Link: [About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising](#)

Original Post: <http://www.neurosciencemarketing.com/blog/articles/about-face-dan-hill.htm>



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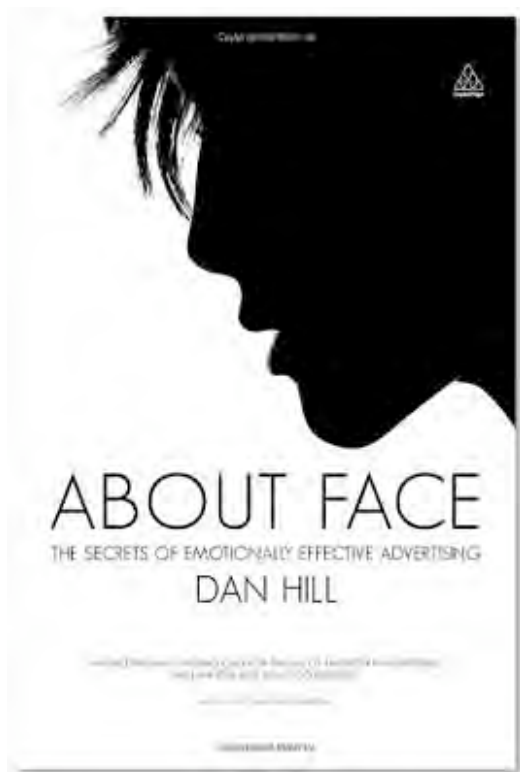
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By Blog Business World, Wayne Hurlbert.



[About Face](#)

[The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising](#)

By: [Dan Hill](#)

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"With ever-gathering force during the past two decades, breakthroughs in brain science have confirmed what we all instinctively know in our gut but don't admit to in business: people are primarily emotional decision makers", writes leading authority on the role of emotions on consumer and employee behavior, Dan Hill, in his insightful and eye opening book [About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising](#). The author describes the overwhelming case for utilizing emotional triggers in every aspect of marketing and advertising campaigns, and shares the concepts necessary to utilize emotional responses effectively.

Dan Hill explodes the myth of the rational decision maker through the use of cutting edge science and

research. Despite evidence to the contrary, however, the much of the advertising and marketing industries have continued to insist that customers don't make their buying decisions based on emotional responses. Dan Hill demonstrates that emotions rule people's buying decisions every day. The rational reasons are only applied after the fact to justify that choice. Leading edge advertising agencies are already discovering the power of the emotional response, however. Through the research conducted by Dan Hill, advertisers can see readily which components of their advertising message is working. Perhaps more importantly, they can gauge precisely why the message, or parts of the message work on a deeper emotional, unconscious level.



Dan Hill (photo left) Understands that when a person makes an emotional response to a message, that person is also motivated to take action. With this fundamental concept in mind, the author provides a formula that assists marketers and advertisers in crafting the ideal communication format. The effective, emotionally charged message can be formulated as follows:

- * Keep it simple
- * Make it relevant
- * Be memorable
- * Focus on faces
- * Always sell hope

* Don't lead with price

For me, the power of the book is how Dan Hill shows clearly the critical importance of understanding the role emotions play in the buying process. For advertisers who relied on traditional communications channels and staying on message, the book serves as a true wake up call. Instead of staying on message, as previously practiced, Dan Hill urges advertisers to remain on emotion instead. This fundamental change in perspective changes the entire advertising and marketing landscape, from a rational model, to one based on the overwhelming force of emotions on human thought and decision making. The book is especially useful for creating an emotionally charged brand image, that will not only be memorable, but effective in a deeper and more personal manner.

Marketing to women has long been understood to be emotionally charged, and Dan Hill points to the effectiveness of that approach. He also recommends extending and enhancing the emotional marketing and advertising message to everyone, including both men and women. The good news, according to Dan Hill, is that creating an emotionally charged message should come naturally to advertisers. People can feel the emotional power of the advertisement naturally, and and on an intimate and very personal level. By trusting in the emotional impact of the message, marketers can achieve a more intimate relationship with their customers and clients. For the twenty-first century, Dan Hill provides the road map to a more successful and personally connected advertising industry.

I highly recommend the important and paradigm altering book [*About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising*](#) by Dan Hill, to anyone serious about understanding the crucial role made by the emotions in the buying process. This book provides the scientific background to support the premise, and the practical steps necessary to put the theory into practice. Dan Hill will change forever the way that you think about and approach marketing and advertising messages and communications channels.

Read the valuable and essential book [*About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising*](#) by Dan Hill, and enter the twenty-first century realm of emotion based advertising. You will move far ahead of the competition, and they will never even understand what happened to them.

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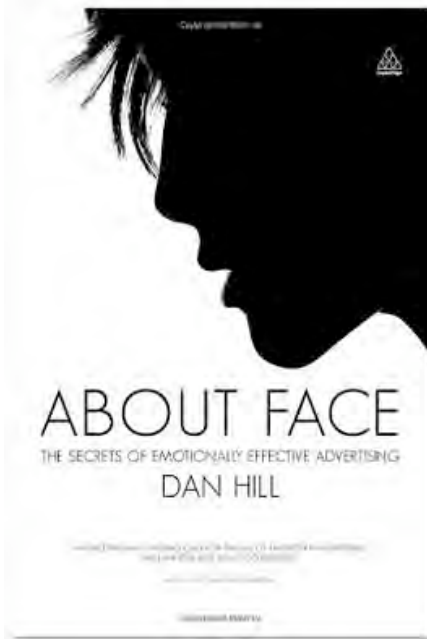
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Book Review: About Face



Posted by [Wayne Hurlbert](#)

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About the Author: [Wayne Hurlbert](#) provides insightful information about search engine optimization and public relations for websites and business blogs on the popular [Blog Business World](#).

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SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 07, 2010

About Face: Emotionally Effective Advertising

About Me

FRANZ DILL

Retired from Procter & Gamble after 27 years. Now consulting extensively. Background in mathematics, working on a wide variety of modeling, supply chain, analysis, expertise, business intelligence and social media applications.

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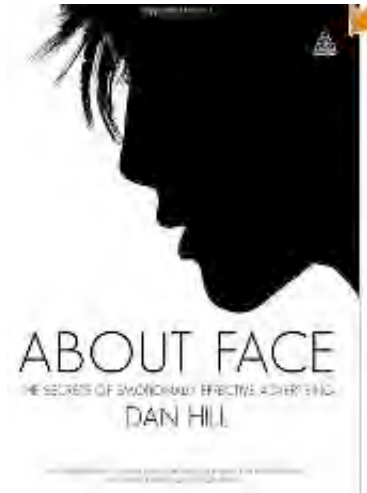
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Now Reading: [About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising](#) by **Dan Hill**. Notably in chapter 4 he talks about focusing on faces. This is a particularly useful overview of how important faces are in advertising, whether on line or in other signs or media. This is topic we studied extensively and had long time historic, but hardly scientific use in consumer package goods. The topic is well known, but rarely covered in detail. See the section on 'true smiles' vs 'social smiles': How heartfelt smiles differ from willed ones. I would further like to see how these can be detected using neural scans in more detail. Overall a very good overview book, the topic is rarely covered in one place. Continuing to read.



I see the author, Dan Hill, is from the consulting firm [Sensory Logic](#), which is also worth a look.

Posted by Franz Dill at [7:28 PM](#)

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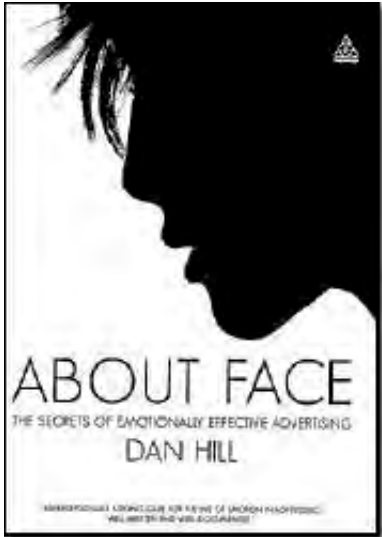
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Book Review: About Face By Dan Hill

Submitted by [Krista Peck](#) on 11/27/2010 – 6:00 am [Comments](#)



With the gratifying high that ensues upon finishing a good book, I am eager to share a bit about [About Face](#) by Dan Hill with you. Similar to *Buyology* by Martin Lindstrom, *About Face* explains some of the secrets of creating emotionally effective [advertising](#).

With degrees in both Sociology and Psychology, neuromarketing and the science behind what makes consumers buy is a particular favorite area of study. For those of you who don't know, neuromarketing is the science of bridging the gap between the mind and consumer connection with brand advertisements. Don't worry, a background in Soc or Psych is not necessary use techniques outlined in this book for your brand.

The Premise: Businesses are made of people, and the people within those businesses deal with intrapersonal and interpersonal issues on a daily basis.

Going a step further, into the marketing world, advertisements are made to appeal to people at some level. So, one of the most important [marketing](#) goals for a brand is to evoke an emotion (e.g. "Wow, I love Louboutin heels. *This brand is the only one for me.*") or an action (e.g. "*I really need to buy these shoes. They are comfortable and on sale!*").

About Face is split into 10 chapters:

1. Get physical
2. Keep it simple
3. Keep it close to home
4. Focus on faces

5. Make it memorable
6. Relevancy drives connection
7. Always sell hope
8. Don't lead with price
9. Mirror the target market's values
10. Believability sticks

While some of these concepts seem like common sense, Hill uses examples of advertisements, snippets of studies and neuro-science research facts to explain why these 10 things are imperative in advertising.

Here are my favorite pieces from *About Face*:

1. There is a known path that the eye typically takes when looking at a webpage. The bottom right corner is the worst area to place an advertisement and is referred to as the "Corner of Death."
2. Yale University identified the following 12 words as the most persuasive in the English language: "you," "money," "save," "new," "results," "easy," "health," "safety," "love," "discovery," "proven," and "guarantee."
3. Based on a study by Ipsos, the more a brand matches its target audience, the greater the rise in purchase intent. Hill illustrates this point with The Dove Campaign for Real Beauty, where women with average body types are displayed in ads.
4. There is a scientific basis for Hill's advice to sell hope. Neurobiologists and psychologists have learned that happiness can deliver physical, social and intellectual benefits.
5. Women are estimated to be responsible for 83 percent of all consumer purchases. However, 91 percent of women believe that advertisers don't understand them and 58 percent are annoyed by portrayals of their gender.

I recommend this well-written book to anyone interested in business. *About Face* is an easy read, full of illustrations and interesting facts that help the reader connect with Hill's message. This book is valuable for advertisers, but also provides interesting information on how the human mind operates. And, the latter is both interesting and helpful no matter what business you are in.

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About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising

Genre: [Business & Economics](#)

Author: Dan Hill

Publisher: Synergy Books (October 1, 2010)

ISBN: 9780749457570



While nearly every company and self-employed individual has something to promote, authorities on marketing rarely agree on the methods used to sell anything. Consequently, how-to manuals on this popular subject can be found everywhere from the public library to local bookstore to college campus.

The supply of marketing books is not an issue, but distinguishing the best from the worst can be a problem. *About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising* may be classified among the finest. This text explores the process of marketing from a commonsense perspective, while recognizing that emotions really *do* guide decisions, even when we believe a so-called rational, analytical stance is appropriate. His fascinating approach incorporates the creative, the intuitive, and the emotional into the coldhearted realm of levelheaded business. In addition, Hill is not afraid to contradict what other recognized instructors have proposed in their wide-ranging theories on how to reach a distant consumer.

Organized and enjoyable to read, his work discusses topics such as keeping advertising simple and close to home, making the approach memorable and relevant, and selling hope rather than leading with price. Hill advises mirroring the target market's values and emphasizes the importance of believability. His tactics can be applied to all professions, giving those in-the-know a favorable edge. Backed by broad research, Hill has provided extensive notes along with an index, making *About Face* suitable for classroom use. Filled with photos, graphs, diagrams, and charts, he illustrates his key points to aid in quick comprehension.

Dan Hill is the founder and president of Sensory Logic, a research consultancy that helps clients enhance their "sensory-emotional connection" with customers. A regular speaker at business conventions throughout the world, he's an expert on facial coding as well as the role of emotions in consumer and employee behavior. Hill is also the author of *Emotionomics*, a bestselling title published by Kogan Page.

Whether marketing a product, service, or entertainer, the hardest part may be in determining what specific sensor will trigger the intended response and result in a sale. *About Face* addresses probable mistakes and guides the reader away from stereotypical pitfalls placed in the way by the advertising industry itself. Hill has supplemented the works of his more "logical" competition in acknowledging the importance of basic human instincts and motivations, many of which are innate—biological urges and physical desires—rather than reactions learned from experience.

Julia Ann Charpentier

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Book Review: About Face

Companies are desperate for attention. They spray paint their logos on streets, pay people to drive cars wrapped with their ads, and even [hire a guy to wear their T-shirts](#). In our ad-saturated, commoditized society, what else is there to try?

Lots of things, according to ad consultant and Sensory Logic president Dan Hill. In his book, [About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising](#), Hill breaks down exactly what makes an ad work in today's hyper-stimulated marketing era.

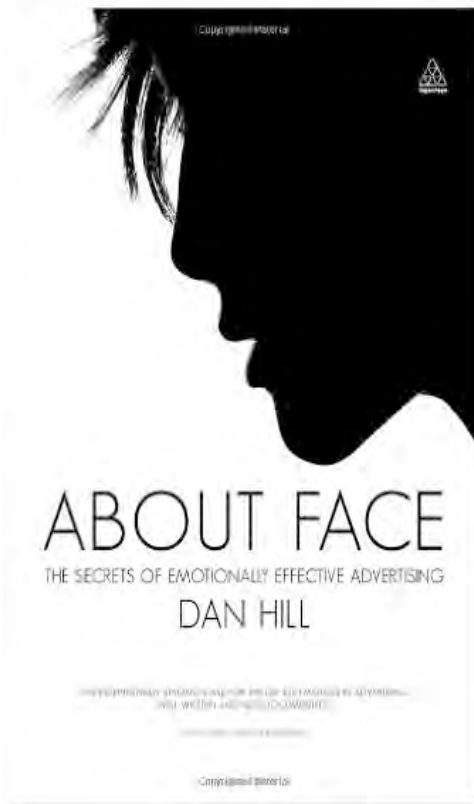
Hill's message is that ads aren't about message anymore. They're about emotion and experience. Passion, purpose and personality have replaced the old three P's of product, place and promotion.

Using brain science, Hill decodes how ads work on an emotional level. He shows advertisers how and how not to design ads that appeal to 21st century consumers. Because emotions rule decisionmaking, advertisers ignore these new rules at their own peril.

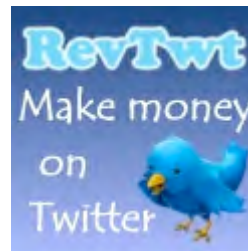
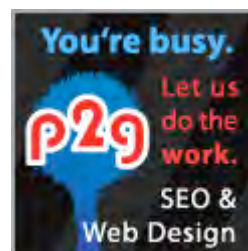
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Hill shares how advertisers can cultivate positive emotions and experiences in consumers, using science, qualitative research, his own extensive experience, diagrams, charts, and MRI images.

Each chapter focuses on several ways that humans work, and then how to



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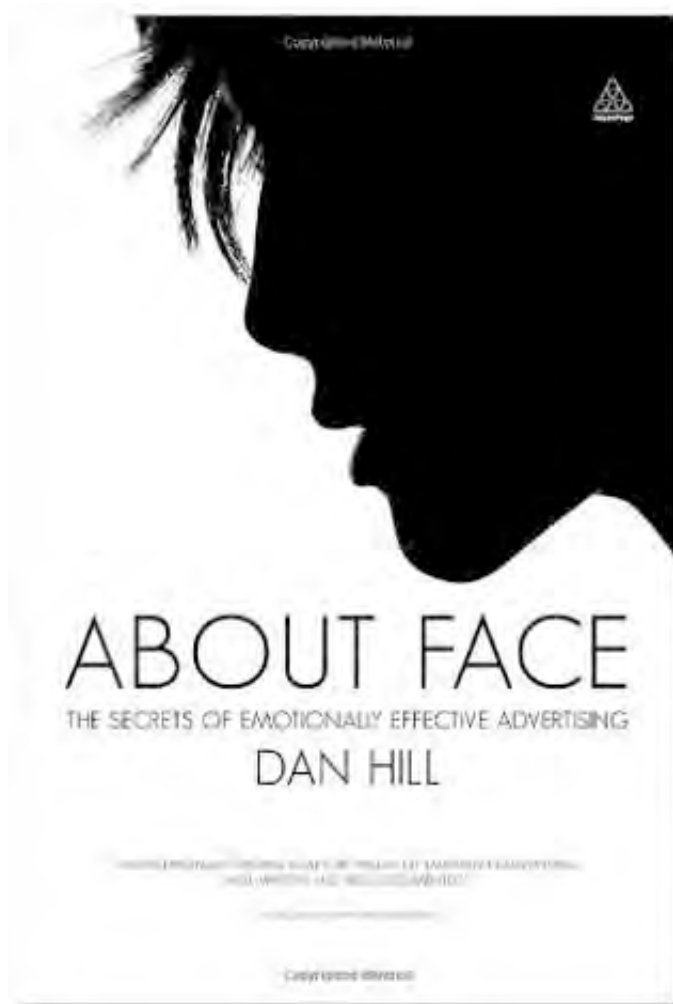
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Marketing to Women Online

November 09, 2010

About Face Book Review



If you're looking for a business/marketing book that is a true winner, you've just found one. It takes a lot to really blow me away, but [About Face - The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising](#) did just that.

I'm a fan of author Dan Hill, so I went in with high expectations. Dan did not disappoint.

About Face combines theory with specific actionable advice

There were two things I really liked about [About Face](#).

1. **Focus on the *why*, not just the *what*.** The introduction title is "Science Meets Creativity." We often see ads that are successful, but don't know exactly why the ad was successful. My problem with "creativity" is that it's often difficult to replicate. Dan Hill uses science like facial coding to actually measure true emotional reactions in test subjects. He shares research on how the brain reacts to different types of messages.
2. **Specific actionable recommendations.** The second, and more important reason I like this book is that it gives you specific recommendations from wording of your ads to types and placement of images. I kept jotting down notes for clients I'm working with and specific ideas for improving their marketing materials. Now THAT'S the sign of a book

worth reading.

Dan points to this quote, "Advertising does not first get attention then create an emotion. Advertising creates an emotion which results in attention." I think this is the key to the whole book.

What you'll learn in About Face

- Why the Billy Mays commercials worked so well.
- Why pausing in a commercial can give it more emotional impact.
- Why implied motion in images holds our attention. And why motion of any kind is often a winner. (This also helps to explain why this [Men's Warehouse commercial](#) works so well).
- Why brain research suggests putting the still image on the left and copy on the right for more effective ads.
- The greater number of people in a photo spread, generally speaking, the less positive consumers emotional response to it. (Aka, having 5 people may be more effective than having 12). You may have too many people to emotionally care about.
- Why the lower right hand side of a marketing piece is the corner of death. (Yet it's one of the most popular places to put your company logo.)
- What the 12 most persuasive words in the English language can tell us about which is a better motivator - pain or gain. (Hint, most are defensively oriented.)
- What's the number one negative emotion felt by us in response to advertising? *Frustration*. This is why simplicity and being crystal clear in your messaging are so important. Just in case you're wondering, websites are plagued by frustration - 38%, the second highest in the survey. Another reason to make sure your marketing is crystal clear? Dan Hill points out that, "There's no money in making people feel stupid."

The power of familiarity

One of the best takeaways for me was the advantages of leveraging what's familiar. Here's what Dan Hill has to say:

The focus here is on generating likeability and preference through familiarity. The operative emotion is assurance; the operative term is comfort. In marketing, what's unfamiliar tends to get screened out by us. Go too far afield and you lose people. A far better approach is to use an existing zone of comfort to ease our natural fear of change.

For instance, in TV spots that Sensory Logic has tested we've often seen a surge in both emotional engagement and positive feelings when something very familiar comes on the screen, even if the treatment itself isn't that special. Familiarity increases acceptance.

The importance of faces and mirror neurons, especially when marketing to women

Finally, there's lots of research on faces and emotion - Dan Hill's specialty. The role of mirror neurons is especially important when marketing to women. ([Michele Miller wrote about this recently.](#))

The importance of using faces in advertising, and how to use those faces to most advantage, is something every advertiser should learn.

In advertising the human face represents a treasure trove of opportunity to engage us and compel consideration and persuasion.

So, get out there and get your copy of [About Face - The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising](#) by Dan Hill. Get ready to take lots of notes.

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[About Face by Dan Hill](#)

Wed, Oct 20, 2010

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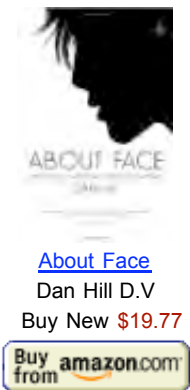


Book Review: About Face – The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising by Dan Hill

At a time when neuromarketing discussions are dominated by brain scans – EEG on the commercial side, and fMRI for academic research – Dan Hill and his firm, [Sensory Logic](#), are the main proponents of using [facial coding](#) as a way to determine what consumers are really thinking. Or, more precisely, what consumers really

feel. Hill and others believe that careful analysis of facial expressions, including fleeting “microexpressions,” lets marketers see the true emotions experienced by their customers.

About Face isn't a manual for would-be facial coding analysts. Indeed, there is very little discussion of the actual techniques used. In just one chapter, “Focus on Faces,” Hill acquaints readers with the basic concept. (Hill's earlier book, [Emotionomics](#), goes into more detail on that topic.) Rather, this book is a how-to guide for advertisers who want their ads to be emotionally impactful. Hill draws upon his firm's many studies to offer a set of best practices for advertisers.



What makes *About Face* an appealing and useful book is that it is chock-full of practical, specific advice often illustrated by real-world examples. In addition, third-party research is carefully cited so that the interested reader can dig deeper if desired.

As with A. K. Pradeep's [The Buying Brain](#), one has to take Hill's references to the Sensory Logic's own findings largely on faith. While it would be nice to have a better idea of what the original data and research processes looked like for both Hill's and Pradeep's books, they are certainly no worse in that respect than the typical “marketing guru” book that is based on anecdotes and personal experience.

A good chapter in *About Face* is “Make it Memorable.” Hill discusses in great depth what makes ads memorable (or easy to forget). One interesting finding from Hill's research is that emotional engagement with TV ads is maximized when there are either **three or four scene changes**. Going higher or lower drops the emotional peaks reached. Hill amplifies this analysis by suggesting that the best place to put important information in an ad is immediately after a scene change (to get a novelty boost) but when the scene is related in content to the previous scene (to keep it simple in the viewer's mind). Fast-paced TV spots do attract attention to sensory elements in the ad, and are good for brand and imagery advertising. They work less well when the objective is to create recall of factual information or persuasive message involving spoken words or text.

Other chapter topics include leveraging the sensory characteristics of ads, why simplicity is important in ads and how to achieve it, keeping ads “familiar” to maximize impact, how to “sell hope,” pricing pitfalls to avoid, and more.

In some coming posts, I'll focus on more of Hill's nuggets of marketing wisdom. For now, I'll simply say that *About Face* is exactly what a marketing book should be. It's full of specific techniques and recommendations, supported by a combination of cited third party studies and the author's own findings from years of client research.

Amazon Link: [About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising](#)

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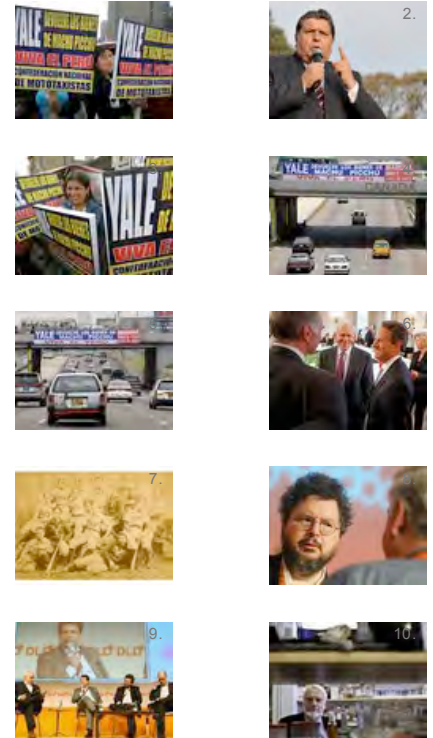
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What's the difference between genuine and "social" smiles? Fake smiles last longer; they "don't know when to end;" their timing is "odd;" and they are often "asymmetrical, or lopsided."



What is the importance of this information? According to Dan Hill in his new book *About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising*, understanding these factors and moving away from "on-message" to "on-emotion" communications can substantially increase the effectiveness of advertising.

It's not revolutionary to declare "emotion sells," since the standard for decades, "sex sells," is based on emotional (that sometimes result in physical) responses. Hill explores brain functions and explains how different stimuli (words, visuals) affect the brain which thereby produces the emotional response.



Most people are aware that there is a world of difference

between seeing the word “bread” and seeing a warm loaf of bread taken from the oven, sliced, and buttered (mmmmm, melting butter). Hill explains why there is a difference. For advertising to be successful it must evoke perceptions, which is not always the same as reality, except that what a person *perceives* to be reality is his reality.

About Face is divided into ten chapters, each of which is a principle of effective “on-emotion” advertising: Get Physical; Keep It Simple; Keep It Close to Home; Focus on Faces; Make It Memorable; Relevancy Drives Connection; Always Sell Hope; Don’t Lead with Price; Mirror the Target Market’s Values; and Believability Sticks.

Hill illustrates many of his points with a variety of advertisements, and quotes from a number of sources about advertising and its effect on them are peppered throughout the book. He bases his research and suggestions on “recent breakthroughs in neuro-science.”



Advertising is designed to elicit a response, but the response is not to purchase an item or use a service. The response should be *emotional*, and well-crafted advertising will elicit emotional responses that do the work of convincing the consumer he or she needs a particular product or service. If this all sounds like advertisers should try to *manipulate* consumers...well, duh!

The information that Hill provides is of special interest to those selling something, but aren’t we all? Isn’t making an attempt to “put your best foot forward” a technique of selling an image of ourselves? When we appeal to someone’s sense of responsibility in order to get something done (take out the trash, tithe, vote, stop littering) aren’t we trying to manipulate behavior?

Hill’s suggestions, while applying to product advertising, could well be incorporated into designing one’s own web site or blog, interviewing for a position, or designing a winning term paper. They emphasize appealing to emotions rather than logic or rational thinking to effectively reach one’s target.



About Face is an informative guide to better advertising as well as a fascinating look into human emotion, motivation, and thought processes.

Bottom Line: Would I buy *About Face*? Yes, my interest in psychology and brain studies makes this a must have in my personal library. Release date: October 28.

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Book Review: About Face by Dan Hill

By MISS BOB ETIER
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Hill illustrates many of his points with a variety of advertisements, and quotes from a number of sources about advertising and its effect on them are peppered throughout the book. He bases his research and suggestions on "recent breakthroughs in neuro-science."



Advertising is designed to elicit a response, but the response is not to purchase an item or use a service. The response should be emotional, and well-crafted advertising will elicit emotional responses that do the work of convincing the consumer he or she needs a particular product or service. If this all sounds like advertisers should try to manipulate consumers...well, duh!

The information that Hill provides is of special interest to those selling something, but aren't we all? Isn't making an attempt to "put your best foot forward" a technique of selling an image of ourselves? When we appeal to someone's sense of responsibility in order to get something done (take out the trash, tithe, vote, stop littering) aren't we trying to manipulate behavior?

Hill's suggestions, while applying to product advertising, could well be incorporated into designing one's own web site or blog, interviewing for a position, or designing a winning term paper. They emphasize appealing to emotions rather than logic or rational thinking to effectively reach one's target.

About Face is an informative guide to better advertising as well as a fascinating look into human emotion, motivation, and thought processes.

Bottom Line: Would I buy About Face? Yes, my interest in psychology and brain studies makes this a must have in my personal library. Release date: October 28.

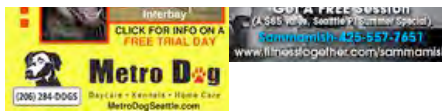
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 - Book Review: Secret Service Saint by Janet Ann Collins
 - An Interview with Cindy Vine, Author of Not Telling
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OUR AFFILIATES



NOVEMBER 1, 2010

Good Practices Never Go Out of Style

Book Review: [About Face—The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising](#) by Dan Hill



Conducting primary neuromarketing research is expensive. But I see neuromarketing becoming accessible to small and mid-size companies in two ways. The first is that the tools of neuro research are becoming cheaper, making it easier for smaller research providers to get involved or for companies to go it alone. The second is that plenty of neuro and psych research has been translated,

simply, into good practices that anyone can follow.

Concerning the latter: Dan Hill's *About Face—The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising*. This book is a great, concise overview of what all marketers should know. It covers a lot of what we've been talking about in this blog: hierarchy of information, fear of the foreign, being memorable, linking to emotions. There's a lot of old advice—like keeping it simple—with new scientific support. There are some surprises, such as avoiding logo placement in the “corner of death” (the lower right, advertising's old standby).

Don't dismiss this book as obvious. God, if that were true! Our experience is that corporations really are like people. at least in the sense that they are very capable

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of ignoring good, solid, proven practices.

In the same vein, don't believe that having all this information out in the open will only level the playing field, so you should focus on other practices. Again, not a problem. I guarantee that your competition is more likely to follow its leader's fickle ego than what works.

Lastly, you might think that all these practices will now lose their power to persuade. Don't I wish! We all complain about dirty political ads, but they will not go away as long as we allow ourselves to be pulled in by the lies. And what about our built-in fear of the foreign? Studies shows that [immigration is healthy](#) for our economy and country. Other studies show that people who expose themselves to the foreign, by living abroad for example, are [more creative](#) (which I'll assume you think is good). Yet most of us prefer to surrender to our deep-seated emotions, opposing immigration and staying at home.

All of this is to say buy the book and follow the advice. That alone will put you ahead of your competition.

Posted in *Marketing, Review* | Tagged *About Face The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising, advertising, book review, Dan Hill, design, logo, Marketing, Neurobranding, neuromarketing* | **Leave a comment**

OCTOBER 25, 2010

Authenticity? Just do it.

Hiding behind hollow messaging is just another attempt at control



In my [last post](#), I wondered whether Gap's [terrible new logo](#) was not a misstep but rather a brilliantly fabricated authenticity moment: it allowed the company to appear responsive to its customers by quickly reverting to its iconic blue box (btw, neuroscience may help [explain](#) why the new one bombed).

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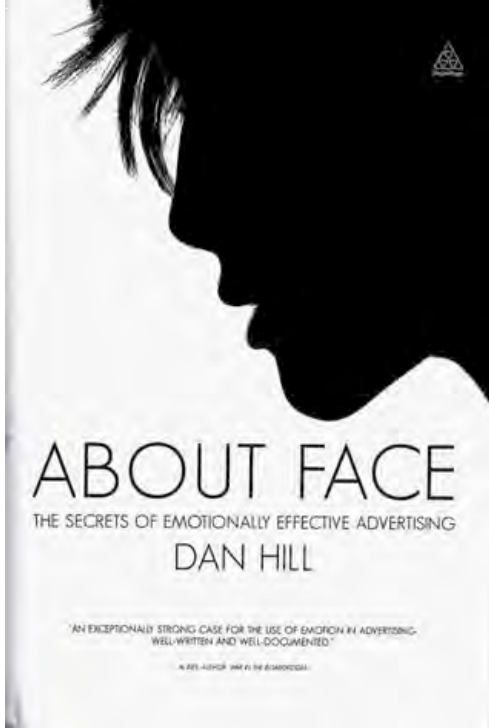
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Published: September 14, 2010 15:17 IST | Updated: September 14, 2010 15:17 IST

From the old 4 Ps to people-centric 3 Ps

D. Murali



Move from the old product-centric 4 Ps – viz. product, price, place, and promotion – to passion, purpose and personality, the people-centric 3 Ps, says Dan Hill in ‘About Face’ (www.vivagroupindia.com). Why? Because emotions rule decision making, he adds.

Whereas the twentieth-century marketing was largely about being ‘on-message’ (that is, about getting talking points consistently right), marketing in this century can be successful by being ‘on-emotion,’ assures Hill. And it is about ‘creating the right emotions for a particular person, at the right time, and in the right way to fit the positioning of a given offer (whether it be a product, service or experience).’

Sensory bandwidth

The first of the ten rules laid down by the book reads, ‘Get physical.’ Great advertising, the author describes as something that you see and hear, and perhaps also smell, taste, and feel, because the urgency of creating stopping power requires going beyond the common senses of sight and sound to invoking the other three senses when possible.

Another reason to engage people across the sensory bandwidth is that the new generation of consumers will reject being mere consumers, he cautions. “They want to be advertising’s co-producers, people who condone or dismiss the messaging of companies based on how it is shaped and experienced by them, in their own bodies, through their own senses.”

Among the pertinent research findings cited in the book are that there can be a 40 per cent improvement in people’s mood when exposed to pleasant fragrances; that people are willing to pay over \$10 more for shoes displayed in a scented as opposed to unscented showroom; and that only 3 per cent of the companies that belong to the Fortune 1,000 have a distinct scent for their different brands.

Avoid ‘message-itis’

Keep it simple, instructs the second rule, since consumers who don’t get emotionally engaged by your advertising out of boredom, or frustration, represent a lost opportunity. One of the tips to keep things simple is to provide global information or the big picture (the forest) before giving local information (the trees).

Another tip is on editing video for TV spots, considering that the eye typically needs six frames, or one-fifth of a second, to move from one part of the visual field to another. “Edit the video more tightly than that and two bad things happen. First, the gaze of consumers won’t travel fast enough to shift from an image in one part of their visual field to another, causing the new image not to be noticed much if at all before the video moves on. Second, overly abrupt, tight editing – involving scene shifts that the viewer can’t follow easily – raises the frustration level.”

An important takeaway for those aspiring for simplicity is to avoid ‘message-itis,’ the undue emphasis on the offer. “Remember that the more we get told, the less we know, as the subconscious focuses on what’s most important and excludes the rest.”

Face value

Selecting the right faces and personalities for ads is crucial, advises Hill in one of the chapters. Based on eye-tracking results of tested TV spots, he reports that faces are on screen 70 per cent of the time, and that 76 per cent of all the gaze activity while they are on screen is focused on faces.

We focus on faces because they are so expressive, providing valuable information for anyone trying to read another person's mood and intent, the author explains. "Second, impressions drawn from people's facial expressions are often used to justify our opinions or new acquaintances. From 'shifty' looks, to 'kind' eyes or a 'crooked' smile, we don't hesitate to make character judgments based on what we see in somebody's face."

An insightful discussion in the chapter is on how you can detect a true versus a social smile. True smiles emerge spontaneously from our intuitive limbic system and activate both the mouth and eye regions, notes Hill. The corners of the mouth rise, the cheeks rise, and there's a host of subtle muscle activity around the orbit of the eye socket, he elaborates. "In contrast, 'Have-a-nice-day' smiles involve a pathway from the motor cortex, appear only around the mouth and can be consciously summoned at will. The lack of eye-muscle activity is why we say, 'The eyes are the window to the soul,' a place where faking it doesn't come easily."

Recommended addition to the professional marketers' reading list.

**

BookPeek.blogspot.com

Keywords: [Business](#), [Marketing](#), [Advertisement](#), [Guidelines](#), [Values](#)

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Be Simply Awesome Neuromarketing Tweetchat

Written on December 2, 2010 by [Verilliance](#) in [Neuromarketing Tweetchat](#)



I started reading Dan Hill's [About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising](#) a few nights ago. At first I was ready to throw it on the nightstand and categorize it as a snoozer. But as I got further in, I realized the book is a gold-mine of data. Hard core data.

So while it's not an easy read, it's a highly valuable one if you're looking for reasons why your marketing is flailing and clear steps to make it better, all based on research. In most cases, facial coding which is Hill's [specialty](#).

Keep it Simple

Chock Full of
Awesome

That's chapter two of the book, AND the focus for tonight's Neuromarketing tweetchat (otherwise known by the hashtag #NMchat).

We all know KISS (keep it simple stupid), and I've talked here before about things like [cognitive fluency](#). Keeping it simple is a well-known and simple concept, and yet I see ads, teaching tools, and websites every day that fall flat on keeping their message or creatives simple.

But How Can Simple Be So Hard?

Companies, organizations, and agencies "suffer from tunnel vision", Hill says. They can't see when there's too much information, not the right kind of information, buried information, and so on because they are too close to the projects. They already "get it" so they see their message with biased eyes. Not to mention that the drive to sell or persuade can override common sense on simplicity.

That's bad news because no matter how good your product, your service, or your cause, if your audience experiences frustration or confusion they will develop a negative view and abandon ship. Dan Hill found over a decade of market research that **"frustration is the number one negative emotion felt by us in response to exposure to advertising."**

Your Homework

So...here's where things get fun. For #NMChat tonight we're going to look at three sites and talk about what wasn't clear, what was frustrating, every little element that made things more difficult for us and what happens to our perception of the brand or organization in that process.

And if you're brave you can offer up **your site** in the comments and we'll take a look at it too! Free and awesome feedback on how you can improve your site's simplicity score? Sweet! But I have to limit it to THREE otherwise #NMchat will go on all night!

Let's Get a Look at Those Sites!

To come up with three sites I went to Google and searched for the first three things that came to mind: "protecting the environment", "writing", and "meditation supplies". I chose the sites that hold the #1

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Reviews: "An exceptionally strong case for the use of emotion in advertising. Well-written and well-documented."

- **Al Ries, author, *War in the Boardroom***

"Whether you are trying to influence others, or trying to figure out how others are trying to influence you, About Face is a useful guide to the way advertising really works."

Dan Ariely, author *Predictably Irrational* and Senior Fellow, The Kenan Institute for Ethics, Duke University

"There's a preparedness to embrace neuroscience and behavioural economics, and thus Dan Hill's latest work is timely. Let's hope the new generation of creative people will take advantage of his many insights and practical recommendations."

Hamish Pringle, Director General, Institute of Practitioners in Advertising and co-author of *Brand Immortality*

"Dan Hill hits a bull's-eye with About Face. It provides the foundation for how to engage audiences in the era of social marketing. I love this book."

Denise Shiffman, author of *The Age of Engage: Reinventing Marketing for Today's Connected, Collaborative, and Hyperinteractive Culture*

"At last, a research maven whose right brain is as advanced as his left. Good stuff here for creating and defending creative work."

Luke Sullivan, author of *Hey Whipple, Squeeze This: A Guide to Creating Ads*

"This lively book should be required reading not just for creatives young and old but anyone who sees the industry as a window into our societies and ourselves."

Professor Dr David Slocum, Faculty Director of EMBA Program, Berlin School of Creative Leadership, Berlin, Germany

"This book is full of insights and actionable content that you can literally take 'at face value'. Read it and smile."

Jonathan Salem Baskin, global brand strategist, speaker, and author of *Branding only Works in Cattle*

"Every brand and marketing manager who wants to know how to build a strong brand should read this book."

Dr Paul Temporal, Group Managing Director, Temporal Brand Consulting; author of *Branding in Asia: The Creation, Development and Management of Asian Brands for the Global Market*

"Dan Hill shows how to inject the virtue of emotion back into business."

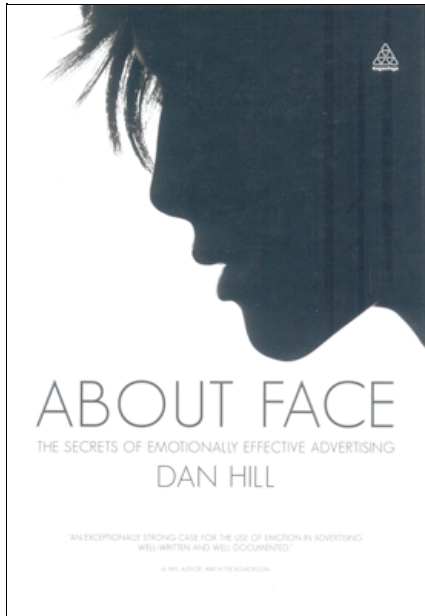
Charlene Li, author of *Open Leadership*, co-author of *Groundswell*

Description: Once advertising was all about being "on-message" and getting talking points right. But breakthroughs in brain science have confirmed what we all know but don't often admit to in business: people are primarily emotional decision makers. From podcasting, blogs and forums to interactive ads in stations, the heart of the matter is now the consumer's experience, not the company's marketing message.

About Face shows how 21st-century advertising can realize success by being "on-emotion". Using data from eyetracking and facial coding to analyse consumer responses, it demonstrates exactly which advertising strategies are successful and why.

Moving beyond the old 'Ps' of product, place and promotion, Dan Hill outlines the ten rules for emotionally effective advertising, including:

- keep it simple
- make it relevant
- be memorable
- focus on faces



Title	About Face
	The Secrets of
Subtitle	Emotionally Effective
	Advertising
Author	Dan Hill
ISBN	9780749457570
List price	Rs. 695.00
Price outside India	Available on Request
Original price	GBP 19.95
Binding	Hardbound
No of pages	208
Book size	153 x 229 mm
Publishing year	2010
Original publisher	Kogan Page Limited
Published in India by	Kogan Page Special Priced Titles
Exclusive distributors	Viva Books Private Limited
Sales territory	India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, .
Status	New Arrival

- always sell hope
- don't lead with price

Emotions rule decision making. **About Face** shows you that by focusing on the three new 'Ps' of passion, purpose and personality, your campaigns can become more effective and emotionally engaging, taking you closer to the customer.

Contents : *Introduction* • Get physical • Keep it simple • Keep it close to home • Focus on faces • Make it memorable • Relevancy drives connection • Always sell hope • Don't lead with price • Mirror the target market's values • Always sell hope • Don't lead with price • Mirror the target market's values • Believability sticks • Summary • *Alter word* • *Notes* • *Picture credits* • *Index*

About the Author : **Dan Hill** is a recognized authority on the role of emotions in consumer and employee behaviour, and an expert in facial coding. He is the founder and president of Sensory Logic - a scientific, research-based consultancy that specializes in gauging and helping to enhance companies' sensory-emotional connection with consumers. Dan is a frequent speaker at business conventions across the globe and the author of the best-selling *Emotionomics*, also published by Kogan Page.

Target Audience: Advertising professionals, brand & marketing professionals.

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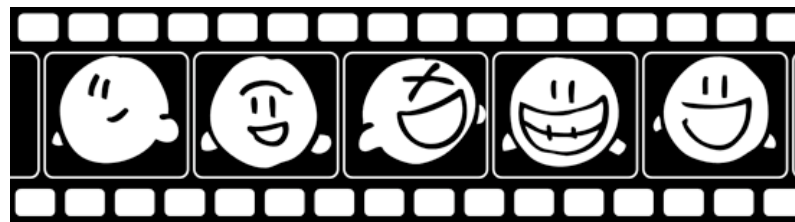


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Winkle measures Emotional Responses by Dan Hill

Last Updated (Friday, 20 August 2010 11:45) Tuesday, 17 August 2010 10:00

As part of the Customer Intelligence Program of Winkle, we are very pleased to announce the cooperation with Dan Hill's [Sensory Logic](#). Over twelve years, Dan Hill developed a valid measure for capturing emotions from people's faces by using a simple webcam. He is not just a nice guy (and that he is) who's able to distinguish between a true and a fake smile, but more importantly developed ground breaking thinking about how to translate findings from his method into successful marketing strategies and product development.

**What is the method developed by Dan Hill about?**

Your face reveals your true emotions. Over 40 muscles, hidden right behind your facial skin, are responsible for expressing joy, fear, anger, sadness or any other emotion that you feel. According to Dan Hill "(...) Facial expressions are the most reliable scientific indicator of how someone is feeling (...)".

You think you can fully control your expressions? Yes, you may be able to suppress your facial muscles pretty fast by the "thinking part" of your brain: if you feel sad, but don't want to share this to the outer world, you can willingly change your facial expression to anything you like. Yes, you may be able to fool ordinary people, but no, not professionals like Dan Hill. They capture your face image by image in a 30 second clip and are able to see those subtle reflections of your "emotional brain" mirrored on your face. That's what they have been trained to do for over ten years. And that's what they use to interpret, in a very valid and reliable way, consumers' responses to advertisements, product concepts or propositions.

Winkle integrates the measures developed by Sensory Logic in state-of-the-art research tools. We are - conjointly - focused on understanding your customers' true needs and true opinions on your products, services and communication means.

About Dan Hill

Dan Hill is the President of Sensory Logic, Inc., founded in 1998 as a scientific consumer insights firm that specializes in gauging both verbal and nonverbal, subconscious reactions to advertising, store environments, and product design, packaging and presentation. His award-winning creative writings have been published in The New York Times and noted with distinction in the 1994, 1991 and 1989 editions of The Best American Essays. He is author of four books: Body of Truth (2003), bestseller Emotionomics (2007), Face Time (2008) and - will be released in Europe in late September - About Face: Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising (2010).

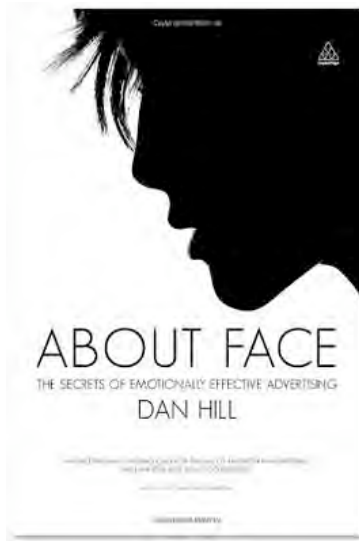
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Business News Online

About Face by Dan Hill – Book review

December 21st, 2010 by Wayne Hurlbert

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[\[http://1.bp.blogspot.com/_qGSiMLu6NXM/TQ-apaj6N0I/AAAAAAAAAC-s/I43ud4nChrc/s1600/About%2BFace.jpg\]](http://1.bp.blogspot.com/_qGSiMLu6NXM/TQ-apaj6N0I/AAAAAAAAAC-s/I43ud4nChrc/s1600/About%2BFace.jpg)

About Face

The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising [http://800ceoread.com/book/show/9780749457570-About_Face]

By: [Dan Hill](http://www.sensorylogic.com/home/) [<http://www.sensorylogic.com/home/>]

Published: October 28, 2010

Format: Hardcover, 212 pages

ISBN-10: 0749457570

ISBN-13: 978-0749457570

Publisher: [Kogan Page](http://www.koganpage.com/) [<http://www.koganpage.com/>]

"With ever-gathering force during the past two decades, breakthroughs in brain science have confirmed what we all instinctively know in our gut but don't admit to in business: people are primarily emotional decision makers", writes leading authority on the role of emotions on consumer and employee behavior, Dan Hill, in his insightful and eye opening book *About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising* [http://800ceoread.com/book/show/9780749457570-About_Face]. The author describes the overwhelming case for utilizing emotional triggers in every aspect of marketing and advertising campaigns, and shares the concepts necessary to utilize emotional responses effectively.

Dan Hill explodes the myth of the rational decision maker through the use of cutting edge science and research. Despite evidence to the contrary, however, the much of the advertising and marketing industries have continued to insist that customers don't make their buying decisions based on emotional responses. Dan Hill demonstrates that emotions rule people's buying decisions every day. The rational reasons are only applied after the fact to justify that choice. Leading edge advertising agencies are already discovering the power of the emotional response, however. Through the research conducted by Dan Hill, advertisers can see readily which components of their advertising message is working. Perhaps more importantly, they can gauge precisely why the message, or parts of the message work on a deeper emotional, unconscious level.



[\[http://3.bp.blogspot.com/_qGSiMLu6NXM/TQ-bLyQSPTI/AAAAAAAAAC-0/lo2J-vyG3Ak/s1600\]](http://3.bp.blogspot.com/_qGSiMLu6NXM/TQ-bLyQSPTI/AAAAAAAAAC-0/lo2J-vyG3Ak/s1600)



[/Dan%2BHill.jpg\]](#)

Dan Hill (photo left) Understands that when a person makes an emotional response to a message, that person is also motivated to take action. With this fundamental concept in mind, the author provides a formula that assists marketers and advertisers in crafting the ideal communication format. The effective, emotionally charged message can be formulated as follows:

- * Keep it simple
- * Make it relevant
- * Be memorable
- * Focus on faces
- * Always sell hope
- * Don't lead with price

For me, the power of the book is how Dan Hill shows clearly the critical importance of understanding the role emotions play in the buying process. For advertisers who relied on traditional communications channels and staying on message, the book serves as a true wake up call. Instead of staying on message, as previously practiced, Dan Hill urges advertisers to remain on emotion instead. This fundamental change in perspective changes the entire advertising and marketing landscape, from a rational model, to one based on the overwhelming force of emotions on human thought and decision making. The book is especially useful for creating an emotionally charged brand image, that will not only be memorable, but effective in a deeper and more personal manner.

Marketing to women has long been understood to be emotionally charged, and Dan Hill points to the effectiveness of that approach. He also recommends extending and enhancing the emotional marketing and advertising message to everyone, including both men and women. The good news, according to Dan Hill, is that creating an emotionally charged message should come naturally to advertisers. People can feel the emotional power of the advertisement naturally, and on an intimate and very personal level. By trusting in the emotional impact of the message, marketers can achieve a more intimate relationship with their customers and clients. For the twenty-first century, Dan Hill provides the road map to a more successful and personally connected advertising industry.

I highly recommend the important and paradigm altering book *About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising* [http://800ceoread.com/book/show/9780749457570-About_Face] by Dan Hill, to anyone serious about understanding the crucial role made by the emotions in the buying process. This book provides the scientific background to support the premise, and the practical steps necessary to put the theory into practice. Dan Hill will change forever the way that you think about and approach marketing and advertising messages and communications channels.

Read the valuable and essential book *About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising* [http://800ceoread.com/book/show/9780749457570-About_Face] by Dan Hill, and enter the twenty-first century realm of emotion based advertising. You will move far ahead of the competition, and they will never even understand what happened to them.

Tags: *About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising* [[http://technorati.com/tag/About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising](http://technorati.com/tag/About_Face:_The_Secrets_of_Emotionally_Effective_Advertising)] , Dan Hill [[http://technorati.com/tag/Dan Hill](http://technorati.com/tag/Dan_Hill)] , advertising and marketing concepts [[http://technorati.com/tag/advertising and marketing concepts](http://technorati.com/tag/advertising_and_marketing_concepts)] , business book reviews [[http://technorati.com/tag/business book reviews](http://technorati.com/tag/business_book_reviews)] .



About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising: Dan Hill

By: [Renee C. Fountain](#) | 04.04.2011 | Filed: [Non Fiction](#) | [Link](#)

Rating: 3 stars



With the changing times, as well as the changing economy, Dan Hill's *About Face* brings forth the topic of how consumers are now buying more on emotion than ever before.

Packed with research, statistics and astute observations, Dan Hill, (an authority on the role of emotions in consumers and an expert in facial coding) uses eye-tracking and facial coding research, along with examples of current advertising to demonstrate the how and why consumers respond (or don't respond) to certain types of advertising.

Focusing on 10 main themes, chapters such as "Keep It Simple", lists the 12 most persuasive words in the English language (based on findings from Yale University research). "Focus on Faces" notes that selecting the right faces for the ad is crucial for consumers to respond with similar emotions. In "Make It Memorable" Hill deconstructs humorous ads down to the minutiae regarding the best placement for the "surprise peak points" and notes that enhancing retention boils down to motion/action, animation/special effects, singing/sound effects, punch line and enthusiasm/excitement in that order.

Along with the search for new avenues in which to capture the consumer's attention, Hill notes that the down economy is also changing the way advertisers push their products. One such major change is the practice of leading with price; which in the end can do more harm than good.

While companies are trying to show the public that they have discounted their prices, the public perceives the value as being in decline as well. Additionally, the consistent message of low prices removes the emotional element of "surprise" and desensitizes the consumer to the "wow factor" of a sale price; resulting in consumers' expectation of lower prices.

Daniel Hill has packed a lot of information into a rather slim volume. Although quite informative, the large amounts of research data and statics being disseminated, often causes the writing to take on the rigid and dry tone of a college text-book.

Whereas some information seems like common sense: true smiles are better than false. There are also many interesting and very useful facts: faces in advertising have major impact on the viewer, more so than ads without faces; as well as other tips and ideas.

About Face demonstrates how the "Three Ps" of the past, have been modernized by Dan Hill's 10 tips for the future.

Hardcover: 212 pages

Publisher: Kogan Page (October 28, 2010)

ISBN-13: 978-0749457570

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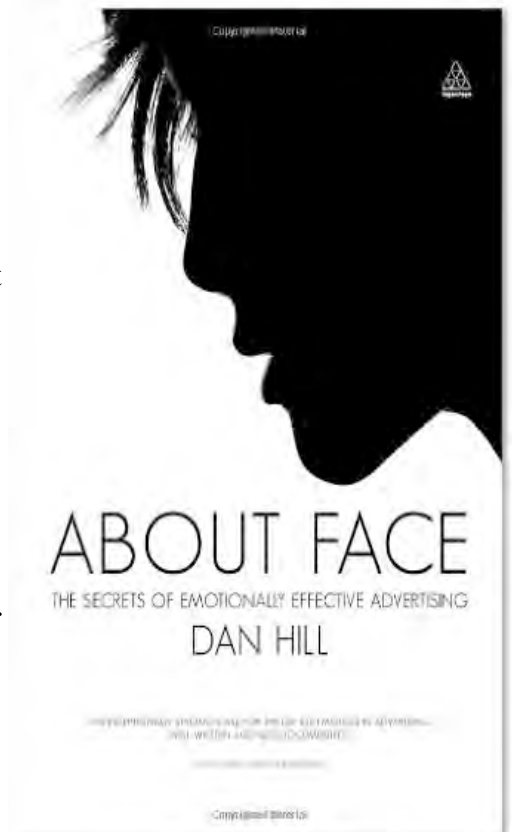
[Companies](#) are desperate for attention. They spray paint their logos on streets, pay people to drive cars wrapped with their ads, and even [hire a guy to wear their T-shirts](#). In our ad-saturated, commoditized society, what else is there to try?

Lots of things, according to ad [consultant](#) and Sensory Logic president Dan Hill. In his book, [About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising](#), Hill breaks down exactly what makes an ad work in today's hyper-stimulated [marketing](#) era.

Hill's message is that ads aren't about message anymore. They're about emotion and experience. Passion, purpose and personality have replaced the old three P's of product, place and promotion.

Using brain science, Hill decodes how ads [work](#) on an emotional level. He shows advertisers how and how not to design ads that appeal to 21st century consumers. Because emotions rule decisionmaking, advertisers ignore these new rules at their own peril.

Content



Hill shares how advertisers can cultivate positive emotions and experiences in consumers, using science, qualitative research, his own extensive experience, diagrams, charts, and MRI images.

Each chapter [focuses](#) on several ways that humans work, and then how to create ads around those emotional and experiential realities. Chapters begin with an orientation, then parcel out wisdom in engaging, cleverly written sections. Although chapters are relatively short, they're rich in information; Hill facilitates your understanding by ending each with a summary. Here's an abbreviated breakdown of each chapter:

Chapter 1 explores the commercial value of stopping power—making someone stop what they're doing—as opposed to just getting attention with your ads. Hill stresses the importance of engaging all five senses in advertising, uses eye tracking [data](#) to unveil seven features successful ads need, and covers the six creativity templates that 85% of award-winning ads adhere to.

Chapter 2 tells you how simplicity can create significant emotional interest in an ad and create engagement, one of advertising's Holy Grails. Hill discusses the benefits of including movement, famous faces, and one or more story climaxes in your ad. Using eye tracking, he gives five tips for optimal [web](#) design. He also shares tips for making copywriting work.

Chapter 3 covers how to harness people's natural tendency to like, prefer and trust the familiar. Ads can create familiarity through repetition, music that helps viewers make certain associations, a cast and voices that the [target market](#) recognizes.

Chapter 4 helps you cultivate your characters' public appearances. Hill rates how on-screen CEOs and spokespeople in real ads are; for example, [Drew Barrymore](#), representing Cover Girl, failed at being authentic and engaging, while Healthy Choice's Julia Dreyfus was a winner. The more emotion your ad or appearance's main character is, the more people will pay attention. Hill shows data that 75% of on-screen "gaze activity" is focused on faces to underline his points.

Chapter 5 dives into memory, specifically how we only recall a tiny portion of the sensory information we absorb. We save it because it is relevant, novel, intense, familiar and/or involves change. You learn what the optimal number of TV spot scenes and emotional peaks are for maximizing recall, and how to increase notoriously low levels of brand recall.

Chapter 6 covers how ads can help consumers address their fears, wants and needs. Ads draw consumers in by making problems vivid. This, in turn, readies consumers to buy. Hill explores ten kinds of consumer motivations, how to create a resonant brand personality using archetypes, and how to live in a commoditized era by redefining markets into six emotional niches, including causes, nurturing, and affirmation.

Chapter 7 explores how to promote [the key](#) positive feelings of happiness and hope. He shares seven principles of behavioral economics as a way for advertisers to "play to people's emotional manipulation of reality." In an insight that now happens to pertain to national politics, Hill writes that "if you advertise using hope, be sure to deliver, because [customers](#) expect emotional reciprocity."

Chapter 8 tells you how competing on price kicks you in the face and makes you look desperate. Instead, use sensory stimulation, brand associations, and innovation to enhance your offerings.

Chapter 9 shares how ads need to reflect their [target](#) market's beliefs and values. They can do this through dialogue, stories, authenticity, and products geared at 21st-century "prosumers." Hill explains how to do this. He also stresses how being insensitive to gender—which most advertisers still are—is a big mistake.

Chapter 10 how to craft ads that persuade and foster trust. Hill describes three kinds of ads that do this,

whom to use them for, and what kind is best. He then wraps up the book with a summary of his many useful ideas.

Thoughts

When I was reading *About Face*, it felt like Hill, a witty and engaging conversationalist, was talking to me the whole time. He makes it easy to grasp each concept, no matter how complex.

After finishing the book, I felt like I had the formula for effective 21st century advertising. Not only did Hill break down how and why ads need to appeal to certain facets of [human nature](#), he also gave actionable keys to making those principles work in your own campaign.

The book contains almost encyclopedic knowledge, but without being dry. Hill brings concepts down to earth by pinpointing where and how advertisers get it wrong; he's not shy about naming names. After finishing all the chapters—there wasn't a boring one in the bunch—I started seeing TV and print ads, and especially faces, in a whole new way. I liked it, I learned from it, and it changed the way I saw things. That's what I call a successful book.

That said, *About Face* geared mainly towards [marketers](#) and advertisers, especially those who produce visual campaigns. This book, as its title suggests, mostly covers the visual aspects of advertising.

Bottom line: If you know how humans work, you know how to work ads on them. I highly recommend this book to anyone involved in creating visual ads on any level.

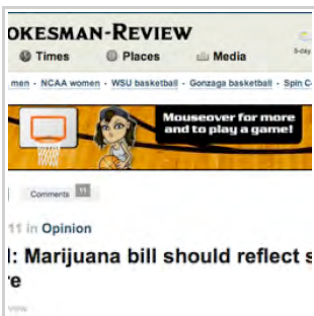
Disclosure: We received a free [copy](#) of this book.



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VISIBILITY

Bylined Columns

**Based on Content
From**

About Face

By

Dan Hill

Leading with price is the path to ruin

The recession has increased the prevalence of price discounting. It's a perilous strategy that will kill your advertising, branded offers and, ultimately, your company

By Dan Hill, *Sensory Logic*

Nowhere in marketing do emotions run hotter during today's slowly fading Great Recession than when it comes to the role of (low) prices being highlighted in advertising.

In boardroom after boardroom, one can easily imagine what's being said: "We've got our fixed costs, for salaries, equipment, etcetera, and we need to make some money fast. So let's lower our prices, and let everybody know as loudly and clearly as can be." As a result, CEOs and CFOs carry the day, and chief marketing officers beat a quick retreat to their offices to let the ad agencies know what they need to do.

Only it's a bad – even terrible – idea to lead with price in advertising, and here are seven reasons why.

"To cut us off from the wisdom of our emotions and the gut-level instincts we use to evaluate an offer's value has led many consumers to make a purchase decision they soon regret. And that's no way to build a business"

1 Discounting – especially repeated discounting – isn't sustainable. One of the key advantages of a sale is that it has the element of surprise, thereby gaining attention. After all, how does surprise register on people's faces? Their eyes go wide, and their mouth falls open as if it's nature's way of saying "shut up, and notice the world around you". Surprise aids stopping-power – a vital ingredient in successful advertising. But surprise fades when you use the same reduced-price trick over and over.

2 Surprise. This is really, in effect, a pre-emotion. It's brief (less than a second) and followed either by the verdict of the surprise being positive (a 'wow') – or a negative (a 'yikes'). Low pricing that is constantly repeated leads to expectations of future low prices, to desensitisation, and the virtual impossibility of creating a 'wow' emotional response. But don't take just my word on

this. Shopper research involving bargain price tags has shown that seeing any price tag causes disgust. The explanation is that people instinctively don't like giving up their money. So creating more delight regarding the offer, thereby generating allure that exceeds feelings of disgust about surrendering cash, is what a positive purchase decision relies on. The problem is that a low-price strategy isn't about the offer's intrinsic value; it's merely a desperate attempt to lower people's disgust levels about opening their wallets and, ultimately, given desensitisation, it's a losing game.

3 A focus on prices is a focus on numbers, on statistics, and carries people from right-brain emotional involvement in advertising to left-brain analytics. That's a bad trade-off, given that everyone feels before they think, that the emotional brain sends ten times as much data to the rational brain as vice-versa, and that only the sensory and emotional parts of the brain connect to muscle activity – that is, they make something happen. An analytical response to advertising is fine in academia but, in business, results from the IPA's database of 880 marketing campaigns has found that emotionally-oriented campaigns generate twice as much profitability as 'hard-sell', rationally-oriented ones.

4 Price-leading advertising also creates an offer to be promoted. For starters, let's consider the $value = quality/price$ equation. There, price at least gives the illusion of being a precise, tangible entity, a benchmark for inferring the quality of the offer. So what will a lower price do? It might help to shape perceptions that the as-yet floating, undetermined quality of the new offer is actually quite low, or that an existing offer was never worth as much as people have been accustomed to paying for it, thereby harming the offer's equity. Put another way, cheap doesn't feel good.

5 Encouraging consumers to take a price-oriented, statistical, rational approach to their purchase decisions can have disastrous, unintended consequences because often, and contrary to popular opinion, our emotions are providing us with valuable insight. They steer us, which is inevitable, given the conservative estimate that 95% of people's thought activity isn't fully conscious – it is intuitive, operating in the realm where emotions hold sway. To cut us off from the wisdom of our emotions and the gut-level instincts we use to evaluate an offer's value has, as research shows, led many consumers to make a purchase decision they soon regret. And that's no way to build a business.



Discount retailers have performed well during the recession, but in the long-term, discounting damages brands

6 Brand loyalty is at risk because pride takes a hit. Loyalty is a feeling, and how is a loyal user of the offer supposed to feel when they see the price is lower for everyone, and not just them? Won't they feel duped for what they bought before the price cut, losing the pride that comes from having bought wisely? Moreover, the company loses twice over. Its existing customers pay less for goods they were already buying anyway and may not buy again at full price, when or if it gets restored, because their latest belief is that the original full price suddenly looks too high. As for the new customers who bought a deal, their loyalty is less real than the profit margin sacrificed to bring them into the picture.

7 A brand with offers often on sale is a brand with an integrity problem. After all, a key way we judge the trustworthiness of others, as well as companies, is to look at the degree to which they behave consistently. With price-leading advertising, the truth is that a company's identity becomes fuzzy. Suddenly, you're either a discount brand or else you are signalling a lack of confidence – even desperation – and that, in commerce, just as in dating, is never very attractive. To further that point, leading with price suggests you have nothing else to say, or show, in your advertising. Price as your main attribute doesn't mean anything – except that, instead of emphasising customer connectivity, aided by advertising, the

battle ends up getting fought in terms of price and distribution. Loyalty ceases to be a barrier to entry, as surprise, hope and every other positive emotional dynamic required comes crashing down.

ALTERNATIVES TO DISCOUNTING

In contrast, what should a company do rather than rely on price-leading advertising in tough times? Here are three suggestions.

1 Leverage the sensory dimension. For most of this article, I've been talking about the emotional brain versus the rational brain, but in reality, we have three brains that came during different stages of evolution, starting with the sensory brain (500 million years old), followed by the emotional brain (200 million years old) and, finally, the rational brain (100,000 years old). Two principles emerge: first, the rational brain is, in scientific terms, an afterthought. It doesn't enjoy first-mover advantage. Second, the sensory and emotional brains enjoy the advantage of older – even ancient – hard-wiring in the brain that links them together. So leverage that connection, adding sensory elements to your offer to distinguish it from rivals in subtle, intuitive ways.

2 Enhance brand associations. The human mind isn't really a very rational, linear, sequential machine. Or, to the extent

that it is, it's more like a pinball machine, and the companies that win that game do so by using advertising that keeps the ball moving, the lights on, and the score rising, by creating subconscious, positive, emotionally-charged connections. Brand associations cost nothing, and, unlike a bargain price, we don't become desensitised to them, meaning they have more value by virtue of being inherently meaningful if created wisely.

3 Invite the consumer into the picture. What's the easiest way to sell to people? Sell them on what they've already bought in on, which is themselves. Validate their worth by inviting innovation through co-creation. Let them have a say in what the product could look like next. Surely we're past the point of believing that a factory-centric approach is sustainable in business?

The consumer is king and queen, so promote openness, sharing and collaboration on behalf of making your company's $value = quality/price$ an equation they can buy into. When people have enjoyed having a hand in creating the offer, then the advertising that advocates for its value becomes a far easier sell.

more on price discounting at www.warc.com

ADWEEK

The Emotional Life of Women

An implicit equation has hamstrung Western civilization for 300 years and harmed the effectiveness of advertising equally as long

Oct 5, 2010

-By Dan Hill

An implicit equation has hamstrung Western civilization for at least 300 years and harmed the effectiveness of advertising equally as long.

I'm referring to the equation that judges rationality as superior to emotions, with the former traditionally being the cherished fiefdom of male executives at major companies and the latter the squishy, touchy-feely and not altogether important province of female consumers. But breakthroughs in brain science over the past quarter century have laid that false duality to rest: we're all primarily emotional decision makers, and since everybody feels before they think, objectivity is a myth and so is pure, disciplined rationality.

For ad agencies struggling to promote often undifferentiated offers, what a relief. The days of being on-message can now give way to a greater, truer reality. What's most important in 21st-century marketing will be on-emotion, meaning to create the right emotion at the right time, for the right audience, on behalf of the right positioning of a branded offer.

But even with this new freedom to follow their correct instincts (visuals and emotions win), the ad agencies -- with most of its top slots filled by men -- have plenty of work of their own cut out for them. Here's some help for them in overcoming blind spots:

To be on-emotion is also to be on-motivation. That figures, since the two words have the same root in Latin: to move, to make something happen. There are five core motivations: physical satisfaction, empowerment, enjoyment, attachment and self-esteem. Male creative directors and the approximately 80 percent of CMOs who are men may be equally to blame for the fact that in the ads my company has tested over the past decade, 39 percent of them focused on enjoyment and 30 percent on empowerment--both of which you could argue tilt masculine, especially empowerment.

But what are the motivations that create the most emotional engagement and the greatest volume of positive feelings? The motivations women understand and cherish: the intimacy of attachment (to others), and the need to protect one's self-esteem.

As fMRI brain scans have shown, mass murderers are cold people. Their minds show less emotional activity than those of ordinary people. (Come to think of it, so do the minds of many people in advertising.) When marketing a product, the emotions shown need to seem authentic and plausible. Do we really need to see a parade of housewives gaga over holding a conversation with the Ty-D-Bol Man? Condescension hurts.

And speaking of authenticity, make sure the smiles on display don't look fake: with the two halves of their brain literally connected a bit better than those of guys, when we say a woman is in "touch" with her feelings, there's scientific proof.

Finally, values matter. As Carol King famously sang, "[It this] a moment's pleasure? ... Will you still love me tomorrow?" Feelings can be fleeting. But the feelings that matter long term are those that reveal our personality and our value system, which is distinctly ours and something we are deeply invested in emotionally.

Branding is, in the final analysis, entirely emotional, a matter of building a relationship between a company and targeted consumers. So don't expect cause marketing to fade. Women in particular are looking for extra, emotional reasons why they should care about a brand based on it caring about them, and the causes that matter to them.

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[Avoid the Corner of Death!](#)

Thu, Oct 28, 2010

[Neuromarketing](#), [Branding](#), [Neuro Web Design](#)

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What's the worst place to put your logo, and where do advertisers most often put their logo in print ads, TV spots, and direct mail pieces? The answer is the same: the lower right corner, an area dubbed the "Corner of Death" by facial coding expert Dan Hill.

Hill's comments stem from an interesting eyetracking study by Steve Outing and Laura Rule, reported in [The Best of Eyetrack III](#). This illustration shows a composite average of how people scan a typical web page:

Branding Strategy Insider

September 29, 2010

Marketing Brands To Women



It's an implicit equation that has hamstrung Western civilization for at least 300 years, and harmed the effectiveness of advertising equally. I'm referring to the equation that judges rationality as superior to emotions, with the former being the cherished fiefdom of male executives at major companies and the latter the touchy-feely and not altogether important province of female consumers. But the breakthroughs in brain science over the past quarter century have laid that false duality to rest: we're all primarily emotional decision-makers, and since everybody feels before they think, objectivity is a myth and so is pure, disciplined rationality.

For ad agencies struggling to promote often undifferentiated offers, what a relief. The days of being on-message can now give way to a greater, truer reality. What's most important in 21st century marketing will be on-emotion, meaning to create the right emotion at the right time, for the right audience, on behalf of the right positioning of a branded offer.

But even with this new freedom to follow their correct instincts (visuals and emotions win), the ad agencies have plenty of work of their own cut out for them. After all, as a law suit from the NAACP alleges, ad agencies have problems with

diversity. For instance, as reported by Advertising Age of the 58 Super Bowl spots where the identity of the creative team could be affirmed, 92% of the creative directors were white males.

Here's some help for them in overcoming blind spots:

1. To be on-emotion is also to be on-motivation. That figures, since the two words have the same root in Latin: to move, to make something happen. Among the five core motivations of physical satisfaction, empowerment, enjoyment, attachment and self-esteem, male creative directors and the approximately 80% of CMOs who are men may be equally to blame for the fact that in the ads my company has tested over the past decade, 39% of them focused on enjoyment and 30% on empowerment. Those are motivations that you could argue tilt masculine, especially empowerment. But what are the motivations that create the most emotional engagement and the greatest volume of positive feelings? They're the motivations women understand and cherish: the greater intimacy of both attachment (to others), and protecting one's self-esteem.

2. As fMRI brain scans have shown, mass murderers are literally cold people. Their minds show less emotional activity than ordinary people. So in advertising, so long as the emotions shown are authentic and not ultimately detrimental to the branded offer, show some feelings. But make them plausible.

Do we really need to see a parade of housewives gaga over holding a conversation with Tidy Bowl Man? Condescension hurts. And speaking of authenticity, make sure the smiles on display aren't faked: with the two halves of their brain literally connected a bit better than those of guys, when we say a woman is in "touch" with her feelings, there's scientific proof.

3. Finally, values matter. As Carol King famously sang, "Is this just a moment's pleasure? Will you still love me tomorrow?"

Feelings can be fleeting. But the feelings that matter long term are those that reveal our personality (a hot head is somebody who is frequently angry, for instance) and our value system, which is distinctly ours and something we are deeply invested in emotionally. Branding is in the final analysis entirely emotional, a matter of building a relationship between a company and targeted consumers. So don't expect cause marketing to fade.

Women in particular are looking for extra, emotional reasons why they should care about a brand based on it caring about them, and the causes that matter to them. What should go away, but probably won't on the other hand, are gender portrayals that inadvertently or otherwise demean women, thereby undermining self-esteem and inviting contempt for the brands trying so hard to create a positive emotional bond to the predominantly female shoppers of the world who pay their salaries by making their purchases.

Contributed to BSI by [Dan Hill](#), Author of "About Face, Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising"

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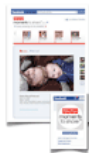
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Mom's the Word: Social Media and Mothers



Advertising's Trust Deficit and How to Address It

by Dan Hill

December 17, 2010

It's not hard to pull together statistics on the degree to which Americans distrust advertising. While it varies by medium from the highest level of trust in print at 59%, to a mere 18% for mobile advertising, the advertising average falls under 40%. Another even more disturbing study found that a "true" ad attracted more skepticism the more it got air time.

If trust is, indeed, the emotion of business (as the cliché goes), then surely this trust deficit is a serious matter that advertising must address, but how best to do so?

At the simplest level, research has likewise found that even the mere assertion of trustworthiness (despite a lack of proof) in itself already provides a boost. Apparently, consumers believe that a company that dares to proclaim its trustworthiness must be at once both more confident and have less to hide. But after that step, what else can a company do?

One key answer, I believe, lies in establishing a genuine, projected corporate personality. Apple and a few others frequently lauded examples aside, how many medium or even large-scale advertisers have a consistent and, therefore, reliable personality? The answer is precious few. The advantage of a tangible personality are many, ranging from the fact that people relate to personalities in the way that having characteristics, behaviors and values make a company an entity one dares to put faith in.

My favorite model for creating a commercially viable personality comes from the collaborative work of Margaret Mark and Carol Pearson, as they've identified 12 archetypal characters, familiar to us from anything from mythology to folk tales, to modern literature and movies. According to their schema, American Express is a ruler, Wendy's is a regular guy/gal, Miller Lite is a jester, Hallmark is a lover and Nike is a hero.

Those types of roles have understandable, fixed meanings. In the transitory world of advertising, where campaign slogans, celebrity spokespeople, and everything else is constantly changing, by drawing on the verities of knowing, for example, that a ruler exerts control and a hero acts courageously, gives a company's advertising an essential orientation point. If the ad is "out of character," then it almost surely should not get enacted.

But if that's too theoretical for you, here's another model you can use. Whether your advertising uses celebrity spokespeople, your CEO, "experts", or ordinary Jane/Joe consumer prototypes to populate your ads, remember that each of those four options has certain dimensions and qualities it must address to enhance trustworthiness.

For celebrities, dynamism is vital, for instance. They must exhibit energy and project status. Likeability is a bonus. In comparison, CEOs and Experts must come across as informed, honest and a holder of status due to their knowledge. Finally, Janes/Joes work their way into our confidence by having experience with the product, being likeable and having enough energy that it translates into the kind of stage presence that makes your advertising cut through the clutter.

Last but not least, here's another tip from the emotional research my company, Sensory Logic, Inc., specializes in. Canned music and stiff, professional monologues are only about one-third to one-half as effective as recognized, individualized music and intimate dialogues. Whatever the personality type of mode of spokesperson you use, make sure they come across as a real person, not just a generic, empty suit.

In addition to the tips recounted so far, it's important to not overpromise on your advertising claims.

Value is a gut-level decision based on the overall experience and the take-away feelings. So how are the issues of not trusting the brand overcome? How can I really **know** who I'm buying from? One main strategy is to fully flesh-out the brand personality. We all have certain images, feelings, perceptions and thoughts that come to mind when we think of Walt Disney, Hallmark, Pepsi, Ford, McDonald's, etc. How does the positivity quotient get increased when promoting the brand personality?

One way to improve the trust quotient is to have an opportunity to really KNOW the personality of the brand. There is a natural tendency to really like people that we know very well. Most companies, in my opinion, haven't done a good job at revealing themselves to potential consumers. One exception, however, that immediately comes to mind is Steve Jobs, CEO of Apple. You know what to expect from him and his company's offerings. His value system, the manner in which he's run his company and the strategies and mindset he incorporates are widely known. Millions of people have bought his tools and ever-evolving technologies over the years and he acquires new subscribers daily.

As referenced earlier in this article, Margaret Mark's and Carol Pearson's book "The Hero and the Outlaw: Building Extraordinary Brands through the Power of Archetypes" showcase advertising that leverages a brand's innate personality type. They identify 12 archetypal characters, the motivational subset they belong to, and for each archetype its essential meaning and brands that exemplify the archetype.



4 Motivation Subsets	Archetype	Helps People	Brand Example
Stability & control	Creator	Craft something new	Williams-Sonoma
	Caregiver	Care for others	AT&T (Ma Bell)
	Ruler	Exert control	American Express
Belonging & enjoyment	Jester	Have a good time	Miller Lite
	Regular Guy/Gal	Be OK just as they are	Wendy's
	Lover	Find and give love	Hallmark
Risk & mastery	Hero	Act courageously	Nike
	Outlaw	Break the rules	Harley-Davidson
	Magician	Affect transformation	Calgon
Independence & fulfillment	Innocent	Retain or renew faith	Ivory
	Explorer	Maintain independence	Levi's
	Sage	Understand their world	Oprah's Book Club

Source: Mark, M. & Pearson, C. The Hero and the Outlaw: Building Extraordinary Brands Through the Power of Archetypes

As Mark and Pearson's model is in figures drawn from mythology and fables, the model is something most everyone can easily relate to. And therein lays the advantage to advertising of using personality types as an alternative means of generating motivational relevancy. After all, who among us hasn't at various stages of our lives felt like we could relate to any one of the above roles? Through the use of the various archetypes, corporations can channel their offerings into personalities that are easily recognizable by consumers. For example, who among us hasn't wiped away a tear at the end of heart-wrenching Hallmark card commercial? The desire to find love and give love is one of the foremost human desires. Hallmark has successfully capitalized on those emotions, thus achieving corporate success for decades. "When you care enough to send the very best" is more than a slogan for Hallmark; it is a business commitment and one that people who buy Hallmark cards intimately and emotionally identify with.

Dan Hill is a recognized authority on the role of emotions in consumer and employee behavior, and an expert in facial coding. He is the founder and president of Sensory Logic – a scientific, research based consultancy that specializes in gauging and helping to enhance companies' sensory-emotional connection with consumers. Dan is a frequent speaker at business conventions across the globe and the author of the best-selling **Emotionomics**, published by Kogan Page. His newest book **About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising** is also published by Kogan Page. Hill's work appears in USA Today, China Forbes, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, the Discovery Channel, Fox News, The Today Show, MSNBC.

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Advertising's Trust Deficit and How to Address It

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Branding Strategy Insider

August 11, 2010

Encoding Advertising In The Mind



While the first job of advertising is to get itself noticed, the second job is to be remembered. Otherwise, the third job, being persuasive, won't typically have a chance for success until the advertising is being experienced directly at the point of sale. So, from both my study of how memorable advertising works as well as my decade-plus experience in using facial coding to scientifically quantify emotionally effective, impressionable advertising, what actually works in generating high recall?

Here's a short primer, involving nine possible variables:

The scientific estimation is that a visual impression enters the brain's sensory storehouse for no more than half a second. In that brief time interval, consumers intuitively make a decision as to whether the image is worthy of retaining. Everything else gets discarded, given that the brain is like a paper-shredder constantly trying to avoid overload. Radical simplicity is therefore the first secret. Just like the joke that has to be explained to you is never as funny as the joke you just get, visual complexity kills recall potential. Since half the brain is devoted to processing visuals, failure to leverage imagery is fatal.

Invoking emotional engagement through relevance continues to be another key attribute of memorable advertising. But relevancy isn't only whether the offer fits our needs, or wants of what we don't want (our fears). It could be that we relate to the talent shown on screen or in print, to a problem that's being depicted, or to a story line or theme. Because visuals serve as metaphors to help us understand the world around them, leverage them to establish a need or want. A case in point: the famous Maxell audio tape advertising that shows a guy in a chair inside his house or apartment, the lamp shade and the guy's scarf both blown back from the force of the music coming out of the guy's loudspeaker. There, the visual metaphors being exploited consist of conflating loud (versus soft) and fast (versus slow), given that the guy is also dressed to resemble a motorcycle rider (think, Easy Rider). Excitement and rebellion is the evoked want, reminding me of the funniest request I ever heard on a radio station. A mousy, timid sounding girl calls in to ask the DJ to play Steppenwolf's hit song, "Born to Be Wild."

Associations aided by familiarity provide another point of leverage.

The storage of memories is often based on the degree to which the information is associated with or linked to what else we've already retained. That's because people are inherently lazy, like house cats, are what they already know and have retained works because it's easier and ties in to what they have already deemed to be important, interesting, et cetera. The greater the number of these links (evoking stories already in our hearts and minds), the better the chance of recall. The Maxwell ad takes advantage of a number of associations we have regarding the outlaw status/myth of bikers. Link a key product attribute to a meaningful memory and use the latter to hook us on the former.

Speaking of associations, since neurons that fire together, wire together, yes, repetition does work. But since that approach can cost you lots of money (you may not have) and runs the risk of alienating people, let's go on three more ways to generate recall.

The opposite of repetition is novelty. What's new and surprising and of interest can literally make our eyes go wide with curiosity. Just make sure the mind's eye has time to absorb it and let it register emotionally, which is at least 1/6th of a second (or 5 frames). That sounds easy to allow for, but believe me in testing advertising I've seen many instances of "bald spots" where consumers aren't engaged because everything is happening too fast.

Change works, because real or implied motion gets our attention. The explanation is from an evolutionary point of view, survival. Any change in the status quo may provide an opportunity or pose a threat. When the change involve intensity, even better. What's red-hot invites or even demands scrutiny.

Finally, make sure your advertising involves an explicit or at least an implicit story, and that the story has a peak or climax to it. Nothing bores people more than a story, or joke, without a pay-off or punch line. Way too many commercials are like a drive through Kansas, instead of Colorado. Everything's flat, with the problem/solution scenario not really working because the problems depicted are as dull as the outcome. A great ad should have at least one peak, maybe even two. Our research furthermore shows that a peak that comes later is better, leading the emotional momentum build. For the TV spots we've tested, peaks that come later enjoy a true-smile, top-box emotionally pay-off that's 12.8% greater than a peak that occurs at or before the mid-point of a 30-second spot.

Contributed to BSI by: Dan Hill, President, [Sensory Logic](#) and Author of *About Face*

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Moving on to people-centric 3 Ps

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- BL Club
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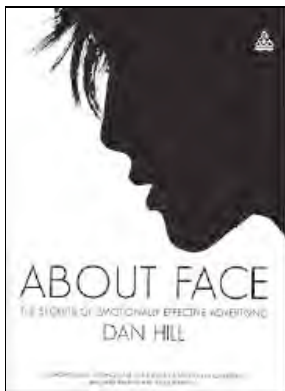
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Move from the old product-centric 4 Ps - product, price, place, and promotion - to passion, purpose and personality, the people-centric 3 Ps, says Dan Hill in About Face (www.vivagroupindia.com). Why? Because emotions rule decision making, he adds.

Whereas 20th century marketing was largely about being 'onmessage' (that is, about getting talking points consistently right), marketing in this century can be successful by being 'on-emotion,' assures Hill. And it is about 'creating the right emotions for a particular person, at the right time, and in the right way to fit the positioning of a given offer (whether it be a product, service or experience).'

SENSORY BANDWIDTH

The first of the 10 rules laid down by the book reads, 'Get physical.' Great advertising, the author describes as something that you see and hear, and perhaps also smell, taste, and feel, because the urgency of creating stopping power requires going beyond the common senses of sight and sound to invoking the other three senses when possible.

Among the pertinent research findings cited in the book are that there can be a 40 per cent improvement in people's mood when exposed to pleasant fragrances; that people are willing to pay over \$10 more for shoes displayed in a scented as opposed to an unscented showroom; and that only 3 per cent of the companies that belong to the Fortune 1,000 have a distinct scent for their different brands.

AVOID 'MESSAGE-ITIS'

Keep it simple, instructs the second rule, as consumers who don't get emotionally engaged by your advertising out of boredom, or frustration, represent a lost opportunity. One of the tips to keep things simple is to provide global information or the big picture (the forest) before giving local information (the trees).

An important takeaway for those aspiring for simplicity is to avoid 'messageitis,' the undue emphasis on the offer. "Remember that the more we get told, the less we know, as the subconscious focuses on what's most important and excludes the rest."

FACE VALUE

Selecting the right faces and personalities for ads is crucial, advises Hill in one of the chapters. Based on eye-tracking results of tested TV spots, he reports that faces are on screen 70 per cent of the time, and that 76 per cent of all the gaze activity while they are on screen is focused on faces.

We focus on faces because they are so expressive, providing valuable information for anyone trying to read another person's mood and intent, the author explains.

"Second, impressions drawn from people's facial expressions are often used to justify our opinions or new acquaintances.

From 'shifty' looks, to 'kind' eyes or a 'crooked' smile, we don't hesitate to make character judgments based on what we see in somebody's face."

An insightful discussion in the chapter is on how you can detect a true versus a social smile. True smiles emerge spontaneously from our intuitive limbic system and activate both the mouth and eye regions, notes Hill. The corners of the mouth rise, the cheeks rise, and there's a host of subtle muscle activity around the orbit of the eye socket, he elaborates.



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Leading With Price Will Kill Your Advertising, Branded Offers, and Ultimately Your Company

by Dan Hill, President, Sensory Logic

Nowhere in marketing today do emotions run hotter than when it comes to the role of (low) prices highlighted in advertising.

In boardrooms everywhere, one can imagine what's being said, we need to make some money fast so let's lower our prices, and let everybody know. So CEOs and CFOs carry the day while CMOs beats a quick retreat to let the ad agencies know what to do.

Only it's a bad idea to lead with price in advertising. First, discounting, especially repeatedly, isn't sustainable. One of the key advantages of a sale is the element of surprise. How does surprise register on people's faces? Their eyes go wide, the mouth falls open; it's nature's way of saying: shut up, and notice the world around you. Surprise aids stopping power in advertising, but surprise fades when you use the reduced-price trick over and over.

Second, surprise is really a pre-emotion. It's brief (less than a second) and followed either by the verdict of the surprise being positive "wow" or a negative yikes! Repeating low pricing leads to expectations of future low prices, desensitization, and the impossibility of creating a wow response.

Shopper research has shown that seeing any price tag causes disgust. Instinctively, people don't like giving up their money. So creating more delight regarding the offer, generating allure that exceeds feelings of disgust about surrendering cash, makes a positive purchase experience. The problem is that a low-price strategy isn't about the offer's intrinsic value; it's merely a desperate attempt to lower people's disgust levels and, ultimately, given desensitization, is a losing game.

Third, a focus on prices is about numbers, statistics, and carries people from right-brain emotional involvement in advertising to left-brain analytics. That's a bad trade-off, given that everyone feels before they think. Results from the IPA's database of 880 marketing campaigns has found that emotionally-oriented campaigns generate twice as much profitability as traditional, hard-sell rationally-oriented campaigns.

Fourth, price-leading advertising creates quality problems for the offer. Let's consider the value = quality/price equation. There, price at least gives the illusion of being a benchmark for inferring the quality of the offer. So what will a lower price do? It might help to shape perceptions that the floating, undetermined quality of the new offer is actually quite low, or that an existing offer was never worth what people have been accustomed to paying. Put another way, cheap doesn't feel good.

Fifth, encouraging consumers to take a price-oriented, statistical, rational approach to purchase decisions can have disastrous, unintended consequences. That's because, contrary to popular opinion, our emotions provide valuable insight. They steer us, given the conservative estimate that 95% of people's thought activity isn't fully conscious, hence intuitive and operating in the realm of emotion. To cut us off from the wisdom of our emotions has led many a consumer to make a purchase decision they soon regret.

Sixth, brand loyalty is at risk because pride takes a hit. Loyalty is a feeling, and how is a loyal user supposed to feel when they see the price is lower for everyone, not just them?



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Moreover, the company loses twice over. Existing customers pay less for goods they were already buying (and may not buy again at full price). As for new customers who bought a deal, their loyalty is less real than the profit margin sacrificed.

Finally, seventh, a brand on sale is a brand with an integrity problem. A key way we judge the trustworthiness of others and companies, is the degree to which they behave consistently. With price-leading advertising, a company's identity becomes fuzzy. Suddenly, you're either a discount brand or are signaling a lack of confidence that, in dating as in commerce, is never very attractive.

Furthermore, leading with price suggests you have nothing else to say, or show, in advertising. Price as your main attribute doesn't mean anything. The marketing battle is fought in terms of price and distribution. Loyalty ceases to be a barrier to entry, as surprise, hope, and every other positive emotional dynamic required, comes crashing down.

This material was drawn from Dan Hill's book *About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising*, Kogan Page, October 2010, ISBN: 978-0-7494-5757-0

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The Author



Dan Hill (dhill@sensorylogic.com) is a recognized thought leader and practitioner in helping companies build stronger sensory-emotional connections with consumers. His previous book *Emotionomics* was chosen by Advertising Age as one of the top 10 must-read books of 2009. His newest book, *About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising* draws on a database built up over a decade of experience using facial coding as a non-invasive, scientific research tool on behalf of major companies.

Visit www.sensorylogic.com.

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The Emotional Path to Success

Moving beyond "on-message marketing."

By Dan Hill - Posted Sep 25, 2010

The breakthroughs in brain science have confirmed what we all already know in our gut, but sometimes forget about in the day-to-day rush of getting the next ad campaign launched: Namely, that everybody *feels* before they *think* — and, without generating an appropriate emotional response, no campaign has a chance of success.

Here are some guidelines to help avoid that fate.

1. **Get Physical** — Sight and sound are fine, but overused. Leverage the sensory dimensions of feel, touch, and taste to create more intimacy and differentiation. Remember: The brain originated with our sense of smell. So Descartes got it wrong — it's more like, *I have the ability to smell, therefore I feel/think and buy your product*.
2. **Keep It Simple** — You've got three seconds to connect. The joke that has to be explained to you is never as funny as the joke that you just *get*. The frustration of "huh" (message-itis) is marketing's hidden emotional cancer. Consumers feel lost more often than anybody wants to admit.
3. **Keep It Close to Home** — Generate likeability and preference through familiarity. Most advertising only has time to echo the story already in your head and heart. Anything out-of-the-box risks being out of emotional range. What's intellectually complicated merely becomes emotionally obscure.
4. **Focus on Faces** — It's the center of our being, the barometer of health and beauty. It's also how we tell if we like somebody, or where to check if we distrust what she's saying. Fake smiles don't really fool us; everybody's a natural facial coder. For instance, "surprise" that lasts for more than a second isn't genuinely feeling surprise: It's canned, spin, rejected.
5. **Make It Memorable** — Ad agencies too often set a pace that feels like a blur to consumers. Their clients — companies — can meanwhile be foolishly blind to the need for an ad to have an emotional peak. People notice change; a solution where the "pain" of the status quo isn't conveyed adequately means the solution isn't as valuable and the story drones on.
6. **Relevancy Drives Connection** — *Us* and *me* are everything; attachment and self-esteem are the motivations that work best. Differentiation from rivals doesn't by itself deliver anything on behalf of your target market. In Latin, "motivation" and "emotion" have the same root, which is *to move, to make something happen*. Without emotional engagement, you're dead.
7. **Always Sell Hope** — Meaningfulness is the key to sustained happiness. Create a powerful context, a way to enhance confidence and security, or merely sell a product or service instead. When we're happy we embrace a branded offer, and are inspired to solve problems at a clip that's as much as 20 percent faster (with superior results). In other words, happiness is more than a "soft" benefit.
8. **Don't Lead with Price** — *Price* only has to be heard to be pigeonholed, short-circuiting the emotional connection. In contrast, *value* gets assessed over time based on the build-up of brand associations and experience. Make money by building a relationship. Loyalty is a feeling, after all, and in this case depends on overcoming our natural aversion (disgust) toward giving up cash for a company's goods or services.
9. **Mirror the Target Market's Values** — Most companies are merely talking to themselves, thinking the offer is hero. Yes, there are the ephemeral emotions created by responding to an ad as stimulation. But richer pay dirt is evoking emotions that nourish brand equity through projecting a compelling brand personality and enshrining values that echo what the target market accepts and can embrace.
10. **Believability Sticks** — Arguing through statistics is the least persuasive type of advertising. Analogies and cause/effect ads work because we intuitively believe the story and visuals. That enables us to believe the tale, not the teller, which is essential to ad effectiveness because corporate credibility is on life support.

About the Author

Dan Hill (dhill@sensorylogic.com) is a recognized thought leader and practitioner in helping companies build stronger sensory-emotional connections with consumers. His previous book, *Emotionomics*, was chosen by Advertising Age as one of the top-10 must-read books of 2009. His newest book, *About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising* draws on a database of results built up over a decade of experience using facial coding as a noninvasive, scientific research tool on behalf of major companies around the world. To learn more, visit www.sensorylogic.com.



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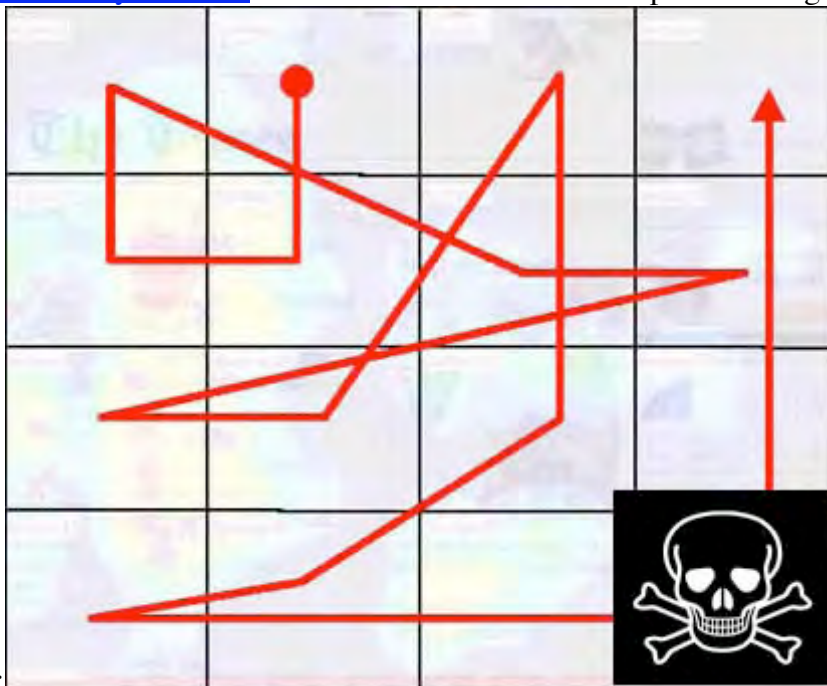
[Avoid the Corner of Death!](#)

by [Roger Dooley](#) on 30 October, 2010 - 21:29



What’s the worst place to put your logo, and where do advertisers most often put their logo in print ads, TV spots, and direct mail pieces? The answer is the same: the lower right corner, an area dubbed the “Corner of Death” by facial coding expert Dan Hill.

Hill’s comments stem from an interesting eyetracking study by Steve Outing and Laura Rule, reported in [The Best of Eyetrack III](#). This illustration shows a composite average of how people scan a typical web




page:

Outing and Rule caution against taking this exact path too seriously, as variations in layout will cause differences in how people scan the page. The skull graphic wasn’t part of Outing and Rule’s report, but rather inspired by a similar image in Hill’s new book, [About Face](#).

In an recent article, Hill says:

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MT Expert's Top Ten Tips: Secrets of emotionally effective advertising

Date: 20-Aug-10

Here's how to get more bang for your buck from advertising spend. The Government may want to take note...

Since becoming Prime Minister, David Cameron has slashed the UK government's advertising budget by 50% as part of its austerity efforts. In large part, the savings have come from cutting jobs, dumping the Change4Life healthful-living campaign, and shifting from TV and print advertising toward more online marketing to reduce costs. But given that a variety of studies over the years indicate that only about 15% of advertising works well, the Central Office of Information (COI) might get more bang-for-its-pound not only by reining in spending, but it might also want to consider adhering to these rules from advertising expert Dan Hill.

1. Get physical

Sight and sound are fine, but over-used. Leverage the sensory dimensions of feel, touch and taste to create more intimacy and differentiation. Remember: the brain originated with the sense of smell. So Descartes got it wrong: instead of 'I think, therefore I am,' it's more like, 'I have the capacity to smell, therefore I feel/think and will buy your product'.

2. Keep it simple

You've got three seconds to connect. The joke that has to be explained is never as funny as the joke you just get. Consumers feeling confused (because of verbose claims, i.e., message-itis) is a much more common occurrence than anybody in marketing wants to admit, making frustration marketing's hidden emotional cancer. Use the visual to connect, with crisply focused text providing the intellectual alibi or reason to believe.

3. Keep it close to home

Generate likeability and preference through familiarity. Most advertising only has time to echo the story already in your head and heart. Out-of-the-box ad agency ideas risk not connecting with the target market's emotional sweet spot, so be bold but wise. What's intellectually complicated merely becomes emotionally obscure in a 30-second TV spot.

4. Focus on faces

The face is the center of our being, the barometer of a person's health and beauty. It's also how we evaluate whether we like somebody, and the place to check if we distrust what we're being told. Fake smiles don't fool us; everybody's a natural facial coder. For instance, 'surprise' that lasts for more than a second isn't genuinely felt surprise; it's canned, another case of 'spin' and is intuitively rejected. Our results show that the casting alone can account for a 30% swing in consumers' emotional response to an execution that is otherwise identical in format and messaging.

5. Make It memorable

Ad agencies too often set a pace that feels like a blur to consumers. Their clients can meanwhile be foolishly blind to the need for an ad that achieves an emotional peak. People notice change; a solution where the 'pain' of the status quo isn't conveyed adequately means the solution isn't perceived as valuable and the storyline just drones on.

6. Relevancy drives connection

'Us' and 'me' is everything; attachment and self-esteem are the motivations that work best. Differentiation from rivals doesn't by itself deliver anything on behalf of your target market. In Latin, the words 'motivation' and 'emotion' have the same root, i.e., to move, to make something happen. Without emotional engagement, you're dead.

7. Always sell hope

Meaningfulness is the key to sustained happiness. Create a powerful context, a way to enhance confidence and security, or else you're merely selling a product or service instead. When we're happy we embrace a branded offer, and are inspired to solve problems at a clip that's as much as 20% faster (with superior results). In other words, happiness isn't 'soft'.

8. Don't lead with price

Price has only to be heard to be pigeon-holed, short-circuiting the emotional connection. In contrast, value gets assessed over time, based on the build-up of brand associations and experience of the offer. Make money by building a relationship. Loyalty is a feeling, after all, and when it comes to price it depends on overcoming people's natural aversion (disgust) about surrendering cash to purchase a company's goods.

9. Mirror the target market's values

Yes, there are the brief, immediate emotional reactions that happen in response to experiencing an advertising execution. But richer results come from evoking emotions that nourish brand equity through projecting a compelling brand personality and enshrining values that echo what the target market accepts and can embrace. Most companies merely talk to themselves, thinking the offer is the hero, when the consumer's heart is where the real action is.

10. Believability sticks

The Marketing Communicator

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How to Save Advertising from Its Three Worst Faults

Posted on [September 14, 2010](#) by [Kimmo Linkama](#)

Guest post by Dan Hill

This material is drawn from Dan's new book About Face, the Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising, to be published in October 2010.

The joke that nobody much laughs at in marketing circles is the one liner ascribed to John Wannamaker. “Half my advertising dollars are wasted, but I don’t know which half.”

If only the reality of marketing was that good! Rigorous reviews of sales performance data by those willing to take an incisive look at the state of marketing leads to a less generous total—maybe 15% of advertising pays back its costs.

So what are the three most essential keys to doing better?

Casting is crucial

A dozen years of research has led me to realize that the talent cast, especially in TV spots, but in print ads, direct mail and web sites too, can create a swing of as much as 30% in preference, even when all other variables tested are identical, i.e., tagline, product shot, layout, design, etc.

Fundamentally, we have more positive emotional responses to, and prefer to buy from, those who have “stage presence,” and project likeability and authenticity. Fake, or social smiles, are the bane of advertising.

Unfortunately, most talent is chosen through a casting process that by its very nature leads to the selection of actors given to putting on fake smiles, rather than true ones (in which the muscles around the eyes relax), which are signaled by a twinkle in the eye. Often actors’ fake smile lingers too long, comes across the face too quickly, or departs too fast, in what I call the “guillotine smile.” Meanwhile, portrayals of negative emotions—sadness, fear or surprise (which should last a second or less)—are often more problematic.

Worse, executives who appear in their brand ads are more prone to inauthentic acting than professional talent. Since trust is the key emotion of business, good casting and authentic performances are crucial to creating engaging, persuasive advertising.

Our normative database indicates that both drama-based ads, and ads that rely on testimonials, struggle to drive purchase intent. The biggest culprit in execution being off-emotion acting that undermines the delivery

of on-message claims.

Simplicity is sweet

Nevertheless, most clients suffer from message-itis, in the desperate hope that adding one more claim, benefit, or fact will somehow carry the day and lift market share. It won't.

Meanwhile, most agencies love special effects and add more camera angles and edits than the average viewer can follow. Cut! I've found that frustration is the hidden emotional cancer of advertising: typically, 20% to 40% of emotional responses consumers during initial exposure to an ad qualify as frustration. Why? People don't feel they "get" what's going on.

That's no way to grow market share. Neurobiology has shown that forcing people to over-think causes them to under-feel, to drop out, just when creating an emotional connection is essential, given that the emotional part of the brain processes 10 times as much data as the rational brain. Lose people emotionally and you lose the sale.

Provide a sense of change or other form of tension

Half the brain is devoted to processing visuals. To leverage that brainpower, motion is vital. That could be anything from a change in people's expressions, to the movement of people or objects, a change of settings, or animated imagery. Stimuli in motion works because the mind is geared to notice changes in the status quo, which represent threats (survive) or opportunities (thrive). Either way, people will be motivated to heighten their awareness.

Moreover, in getting people to focus on change make sure the motion is placed in the middle of the screen, or layout, so that it commands both eyes. We instinctively focus on the middle field of vision, or on things moving into the middle field. What's visually peripheral is also mentally peripheral.

Finally, in regard to change there's the often-necessary option of depicting change not only by literal motion, but also from a change in plot line. Many an ad involves a problem/solution scenario, or other form of contrast. The problem is that often the cautious client won't agree to depict the problem in a heartfelt manner. Unfortunately, when a problem isn't deeply felt, its solution won't be seen as valuable. In other words, Milquetoast depictions of human discomfort or disappointment aren't compelling and don't drive purchase intent.

At the end of the day, or spot, if you want your ads to pull, make them sincerely address a heartfelt problem in a realistic manner via an authentic depiction. And, ask the CEO to stay in his office.

Dan Hill is the founding president of the research firm [Sensory Logic, Inc.](#), and the author of Emotionomics, chosen by Advertising Age as one of the top 10 must-read books of 2009. His latest book, About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising, is likewise available from U.K. publisher Kogan-Page.

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Commentary

The Face Doesn't Lie

Bob McCurdy, Jul 26, 2010 05:00 AM

Facial coding, the study of the physical expression of emotions, is considered such a reliable tool the CIA and FBI regularly use it to identify bad guys. And if the technology is effective enough for them, it's certainly good enough for advertisers to gauge emotional engagement with a commercial message.

Marketers have long been interested in how to further connect with consumers. The Facial Action Coding System (FACS), developed by sociologist Paul Ekman in the 1960s, is the core methodology for evaluating facial expressions and also a valuable tool to measure consumer engagement. FACS breaks facial expressions down into 23 specific action units and is based on a widely accepted and simple premise -- emotions impact facial behavior.

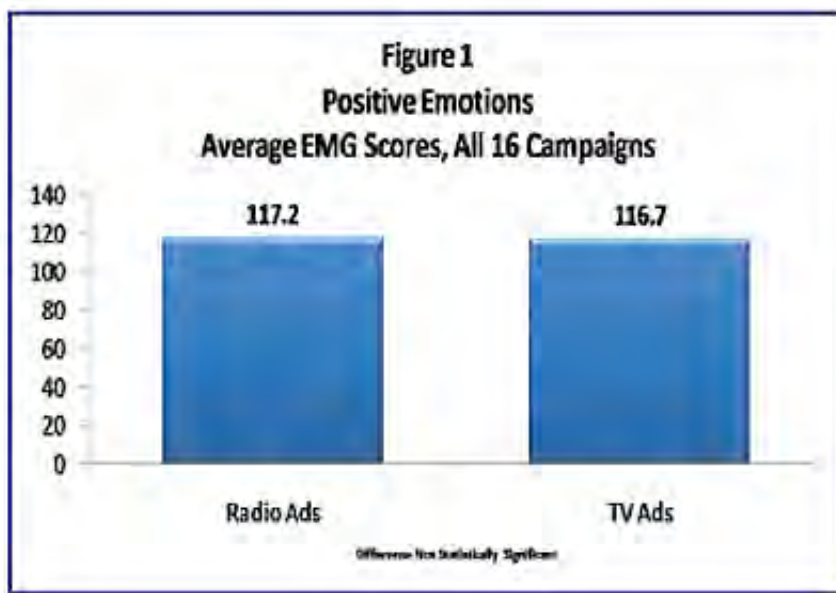
Facial response to stimuli is not voluntary but rather automatic and unconscious. If you see or hear something that pleases or annoys you, your facial muscles automatically respond without the exertion of any conscious cognitive resources. The face's 43 facial muscles work in conjunction to produce the seven core emotions universally recognized: happiness, surprise, sadness, fear, anger, disgust and contempt.

Studying the facial expressions of thousands of subjects, two well-respected research companies both concluded that radio ads are just as engaging, if not more so, than TV ads.

Sensory Logic is a market leader in helping global companies, such as Sprint/Nextel, Kellogg's, Johnson & Johnson, 7-11, Staples, Target, GlaxoSmithKline and others, measure and manage consumer emotions strategically and tactically. Sensory Logic used FACS to test commercial engagement by analyzing more than 2,500 radio subjects and over 3,750 TV subjects-a statistically valid sample by even the most stringent in-lab standards. To qualify as "engaged," at least one of the 23 facial action units had to be observed while viewing or listening to the commercial. Nonintrusive webcams recorded the reactions. The results are below:

	No. of Commercials Tested	Average Sample Size	Engagement
Television	75+	50	40%
Radio	50+	50	46%

The Sensory Logic results above are consistent with the findings of a Gallup & Robinson study published in July 2007. Gallup's study focused on the biometric technique facial electromyography, which was developed at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. Facial electromyography focuses on two facial muscles: the zygomatic muscle, the smile muscle and the corrugator muscle, the frowning muscle. Gallup evaluated 16 pairs of radio and TV commercials by embedding them in actual programming in a lab designed to simulate a living room. As with the Sensory Logic results above, the radio commercials generated emotional impact equal to their TV counterparts:



Both Sensory Logic and Gallup relied on techniques that interpret unconscious reactions to stimuli, which are far more accurate than any rational responses or "intellectual alibis" a subject may provide. That's because FACS and facial electromyography accurately identify an individual's raw emotional reaction while verbal responses often reflect intellectual filtering.

The Sensory Logic data is a summary of results from its TV testing, which were compared to the results of their independent radio testing. Both the radio and TV studies were conducted separately using FACS without the intent of comparison, thus resulting in a completely unbiased assessment.

The power of radio to engage listeners is proven once again. And when pricing is taken into consideration, radio becomes an even more attractive complement or substitute to television. As media plans are finalized for rest of 2010 and created for 2011, it would be wise for any marketer intent on outperforming the competition to give radio the consideration the medium deserves.

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Insight

Being 'On-Emotion' Leads To Success

by [Dan Hill](#), 4 hours ago

Recent breakthroughs in neuroscience confirm what we marketers know in our guts, but sometimes forget in the day-to-day rush of preparing the next ad campaign launch. Namely, everybody feels (emotions) before they think (rational decision), and without generating the appropriate emotional response, no ad campaign can succeed.

Here are some guidelines to help avoid that fate.

Get Physical

Sight and sound are fine, but over-used. Leverage the sensory dimensions of feel, touch and taste to create more intimacy and differentiation. Remember: the brain originated with the sense of smell. So Descartes got it wrong. It's more like, "I smell, therefore, I feel/think" and will buy your product.

Keep It Simple

You've got three seconds to connect. The joke that has to be explained is never as funny as the joke you just get. The frustration of "huh" (message-itis) is marketing's hidden emotional cancer. Consumers feel lost more often than anybody wants to admit.

Keep It Close to Home

Generate likeability and preference through familiarity. Most advertising has time only to echo the story already in your head and heart. Out-of-the-box ideas risk being out of one's emotional range. What's intellectually complicated merely becomes emotionally obscure in a 30-second spot.

Focus on Faces

The face is the center of our being, the barometer of one's health and beauty. It's also how we tell if we like somebody, or the place to check if we distrust what they're saying. Fake smiles don't fool us; everybody's a natural facial coder. For instance, "surprise" that lasts for more than a second isn't genuinely feeling surprise; it's canned, spin, rejected.

Make It Memorable

Ad agencies too often set a pace that feels like a blur to consumers. Their clients can meanwhile be foolishly blind to the need for an ad that has an emotional peak. People notice change; a solution where the "pain" of the status quo isn't conveyed adequately means the solution isn't perceived as valuable and the storyline just drones on.

Relevancy Drives Connection

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DAN HILL

Dan Hill is president of Sensory Logic, based in Minneapolis. His new book, "About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising," is due out in October via Kogan Page.

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Us and me is everything; attachment and self-esteem are the motivations that work best. Differentiation from rivals doesn't by itself deliver anything on behalf of your target market. In Latin, "motivation" and "emotion" have the same root -- to move, to make something happen. Without emotional engagement, you're dead.

Always Sell Hope

Meaningfulness is the key to sustained happiness. Create a powerful context, a way to enhance confidence and security, or merely sell a product or service instead. When we're happy we embrace a branded offer, and are inspired to solve problems at a clip that's as much as 20% faster (with superior results). In other words, happiness isn't "soft."

Don't Lead with Price

Price has only to be heard to be pigeon-holed, short-circuiting the emotional connection. In contrast, value gets assessed over time, based on the build-up of brand associations and experience of the offer. Make money by building a relationship. Loyalty is a feeling, after all, and in this case depends on overcoming our natural aversion of giving up cash for a company's goods.

Mirror the Target Market's Values

There are the ephemeral emotions created by responding to an ad as stimulation. But richer pay dirt results from evoking emotions that nourish brand equity through projecting a compelling brand personality and enshrining values that echo what the target market accepts and can embrace. Most companies merely talk to themselves, thinking the offer is the hero, when the consumer is.

Believability Sticks

Arguing through statistics is the least persuasive type of advertising. Analogies and cause/effect ads work because we intuitively believe the story and visuals. That enables us to believe the tale, not the teller, which is essential to ad effectiveness because corporate credibility is on life support.

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2 comments on "Being 'On-Emotion' Leads To Success "

 [pam alvord](#) from [Kilgannon](#)
commented on: August 10, 2010 at 9:43 AM

This aligns with one of my favorite quotes -- "emotion captivates, reason justifies." In fact, one of our Senior AE's just blogged about the same topic. Read more at <http://bit.ly/bq75GO>.

--pam

<http://kilgannonsays.wordpress.com> www.kilgannon.com @kilgannonsays.com

 [Lynn Schweikart](#) from [Gen-Sights](#)
commented on: August 10, 2010 at 8:36 AM

Great article. More and more, science is confirming what we know instinctively. Don't give me the facts, tell me the story.

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Commentary

How To Create Truly Memorable Commercials

Dan Hill, Sep 17, 2010 05:00 AM

While the first job of advertising is to get itself noticed, the second job is to be remembered. If not successful, the third job, being persuasive, won't have a chance to succeed until the advertising is experienced directly at point of sale.

So, from my study of how memorable advertising works, as well as a decade using facial coding to scientifically quantify emotionally effective advertising, what actually works in generating high recall?

Here's a primer, involving several variables:

1. A visual impression enters the brain's sensory storehouse for no more than half a second. In that brief time, consumers intuitively make a decision as to whether the image is worthy of retaining. Everything else gets discarded, given that the brain is like a paper-shredder constantly avoiding overload.

Radical simplicity is the first secret. As the joke that has to be explained is never as funny as the joke you just get, visual complexity kills recall potential. Since half the brain is devoted to processing visuals, failure to leverage imagery is fatal.

2. Invoking emotional engagement through *relevance* continues to be another key attribute of memorable advertising. But relevancy isn't only whether the offer fits our needs, or wants, or what we don't want (fears). It could be that we relate to the talent on screen or in print, to a problem that's depicted, or to a storyline or theme.

Visuals serve as metaphors to help us understand the world so leverage them to establish a need or want. Case in point: the famous Maxell audiotape advertising that shows a guy in a chair inside his room, the lamp shade and the guy's scarf both blown back from the force of the music coming from the loudspeakers. There, the visual metaphor being exploited consists of conflating loud (versus soft) and fast (versus slow), given that the guy is dressed to resemble a motorcycle rider (i.e. "Easy Rider"), excitement and rebellion are the evoked want.

3. *Associations* aided by *familiarity* provide another point of leverage. The storage of memories is often based on the degree to which information is associated with what else we've already retained. That's because people are inherently lazy, and retained works ties in to what they have already deemed important, interesting, etc.

The greater the number of these links (evoking stories already in our hearts and minds), the better the chance of recall. The Maxwell ad takes advantage of a number of associations we have regarding the outlaw status/myth of bikers. Link a key product attribute to a meaningful memory and use the latter to hook us on the former.

4. Speaking of associations, since neurons that fire together wire together, *repetition* does work. But since that approach can cost you lots of money, and runs the risk of alienating people, let's check three more ways to generate recall.

5. The opposite of repetition is *novelty*. What's new, surprising and of interest can literally make our eyes open wide with curiosity. Just make sure the mind's eye has time to absorb it and register emotionally, which takes at least 1/6th of a second (5 frames). That sounds easy but, believe me, in testing advertising I've seen many instances of "bald spots" where consumers aren't engaged because everything is happening too fast.

6. *Change* works, because real or implied motion gets our attention. The explanation is from an evolutionary point of view -- survival. Any change in the status quo may provide an opportunity or pose a threat. When the change involves *intensity*, even better. What's red-hot invites or even demands scrutiny.

7. Finally, make sure your advertising involves an explicit, or at least, an implicit story, and that the story has a climax. Nothing bores people more than a story, or joke, without a punch line. Far too many commercials are like a drive through Kansas, instead of Colorado. Everything's flat, with the problem/solution scenario not really working because the problems depicted are as dull as the outcome.

A great ad should have at least one peak, maybe two. Our research shows that a peak that comes later is better, letting the emotional momentum build. For TV spots we've tested, peaks that come later enjoy a true-smile, top-box emotional pay-off that's 12.8% greater than a peak that occurs at or before the mid-point of a 30-second spot.

This material is excerpted from Dan Hill's new book, About Face, the secrets of emotionally effective advertising, to be published in October.



Seven Reasons Why Leading With Price Will Kill Your Advertising, Your Branded Offers—and Your Company

by Dan Hill

Published on November 9, 2010



The following article is drawn from Dan Hill's new book, *About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising* (October 2010, Kogan Page).

Nowhere in marketing today do emotions run hotter than in [advertising](#) that highlights the role of (low) [prices](#).

In boardrooms everywhere, one can imagine what's being said: We need to make some money fast, so let's lower our prices and let everybody know. So CEOs and CFOs carry the day while CMOs beat a quick retreat to inform their ad agencies.

But the thing is... it's a bad idea to lead with price in advertising.

First, discounting, especially repeatedly, isn't sustainable. One of the key advantages of a sale is the element of surprise. How does surprise register on people's faces? Their eyes go wide, and their mouths fall open; it's nature's way of saying shut up and notice the world around you.

Surprise aids stopping power in advertising, but surprise fades when you use the reduced-price trick repeatedly.

Second, surprise is really a pre-emotion. It's brief (less than a second long) and it's followed by a verdict: either a positive "Wow!" or a negative "Yikes!" Repetitive low pricing leads to expectations of future low prices, desensitization, and the impossibility of creating a "Wow" response.

Shopper research has shown that seeing any price tag causes disgust. Instinctively, people don't like giving up their money. So creating more delight regarding the offer and generating allure that exceeds feelings of disgust about surrendering cash are what make a positive purchasing experience.

The problem is that a low-price strategy isn't about the offer's intrinsic value: It's merely a desperate attempt to lower people's disgust levels; but ultimately, because of desensitization, it's a losing game.

Third, a focus on prices is about numbers and statistics, and it ushers people from right-brain emotional involvement in advertising to left-brain analysis. That's a bad tradeoff, given that everyone feels before they think.

Results from management consulting company IPA's database of 880 marketing campaigns has found that emotion-oriented campaigns generate twice as much profitability as traditional, hard-sell, reasoning-oriented campaigns.

Fourth, price-leading advertising creates quality problems for the offer. Let's consider the value = quality/price equation. There, price at least gives the illusion of being a benchmark for inferring the quality of the offer.

So what will a lower price do? It might shape perceptions that the floating, undetermined quality of the new offer is quite low or that a previous offer was never worth what people had been paying. Put another way, cheap doesn't feel good.

Fifth, encouraging consumers to take a price-oriented, statistical, rational approach to purchasing decisions can have disastrous unintended consequences.

That's because contrary to popular opinion our emotions provide valuable insight. They steer us: A conservative estimate is that 95% of people's thought activity isn't fully conscious, and hence is intuitive and operating in the realm of emotion.

Sixth, brand loyalty is at risk because pride takes a hit. Loyalty is a feeling, and how are loyal users supposed to feel when they see the price is lower for everyone, not just for them?

Moreover, the company loses twice over. Current customers pay less for goods they were already buying (and may not buy again at full price). As for new customers who bought because of a deal, their loyalty is less real than the profit margin sacrificed.

And **seventh**, a brand on sale is a brand with an integrity problem. A key way we judge the trustworthiness of others and companies is the degree to which they behave consistently. With price-leading advertising, a company's identity becomes fuzzy. Suddenly, you are either a discount brand or you're signaling a lack of confidence that, in dating as in commerce, is not attractive.

* * *

Leading with price suggests you have nothing else to say or show in advertising. Price as your main attribute doesn't mean anything. And so the marketing battle is fought in terms of price and distribution; loyalty ceases to be a barrier to entry; and surprise, hope, and every other positive emotional dynamic required come crashing down.



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Understanding Eye Flow and Avoiding The Corner of Death

10/28/2010

Greg Colunga [Advertising](#), [Landing Pages](#), [Offline Marketing](#), [Online Marketing](#), [Television Advertising](#), [Website](#), [advertising](#), [approach](#), [brand](#), [landing page](#), [landing pages](#), [marketing](#), [offline](#), [online](#), [online marketing](#), [strategy](#), [subliminal](#) [Leave a comment](#)

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I just recently started following the [Neuromarketing blog](#) and wanted to share a really interesting article they just posted in today's issue.

It's called "[Avoid the Corner of Death!](#)," and it is greatness. Below, I've copy/pasted their article, including the most interesting part: **The eye flow chart.**

Understanding this is critical, especially for landing page optimization purposes, and tells me that if you're placing your most important information (a video, an ask, etc.) on the upper-right hand corner of a two-column landing page layout, that you're putting your most important information at the last place in which this eyeflow chart ends.

More over, anything in the bottom-right corner is squarely in the

new book, About Face.

In an recent article, Hill says:

If we take print ads as an example, you've got 1.7 seconds of average viewing time, per reader. And the lower right-hand corner is typically the second to last place people look on a page. (What's even worse in terms of timing, along the upper right edge, i.e., the alley of death.) What you don't see, you don't get. [From Mediapost - The 6 Secrets of Eye-tracking by Dan Hill.]

Despite these findings, the lower right corner is by far the most common single location for the primary logo/brand identity use in all types of advertising, according to Hill.

So based on eye-tracking research, where should the logo or brand identity be placed so that consumers actually see it? Hill says that the best place is the lower middle part of the page or layout, At that point, the viewer will have engaged emotionally with the leading part of the ad, and will then have the opportunity to associate the brand with solving a problem or satisfying consumers' wants.

I hope you enjoyed.

– GC

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The ultimate value proposition: The 'Me' and 'We' motivation

Posted by Dan Hill in [Customer experience](#), [Marketing](#) on Thu, 21/10/2010 - 00:57

3
tweets



Remember the *New Yorker* cartoon where two women are talking and one says to the other, "But not enough about me. What do you think about me?" [3 tweets](#) [tweeted](#)

Such solipsistic myopia is endemic to human behaviour, so it's no surprise that such a condition afflicts companies, too. As a client at a big pharmaceutical firm once said, "We're really good at figuring out what's in it for us, but not so good at figuring out what's in it for our customers."

Obviously, her company isn't alone. Everybody knows the mantra about how the product isn't the hero, the customer is, but practicing that mantra is harder done than said. I'd like to suggest how what's in it for me (WIIFM) relevance can be best established using evidence from a decade of my company's research.

Don't lie to me

First a note on methodology.

The words 'motivation' and 'emotion' share the Latin root, *movere*, to move, to make something happen (as in generating preference, persuasion and, ideally, purchase intent), so it should come as no surprise that my company specialises in using the research tool made famous initially through Malcolm Gladwell's bestseller **Blink**, and recently through the Fox primetime hit series 'Lie to Me'.

The tool is facial coding, which instead of relying on self-reported verbal input extracts the amount and (positive) degree of emotional engagement expressed through people's facial muscle activity. Because actions do speak louder than words, the reactions your face intuitively reveals are the most accurate barometer of whether solipsistic myopia or genuine WIIFM is achieved in a company's advertising.

Here's what we've found from a decade of studies. The majority of TV/radio spots and print ads in our database emphasise two of five motivational groupings. Those are enjoyment (39%) and empowerment (30%). In other words over two-thirds of all the advertising we've tested involves depicting the benefit of purchasing the offer as a matter of ephemeral pleasure or gaining status, resources and capability. Throw in another motivation grouping, physical well-being and you get 75% of how all advertising is slanted.

The two missing motivations rule

But what of the two other motivational groupings, and what generates the emotional engagement and preference that drives purchase intent?

Suddenly, self-esteem ('me') and attachment ('we') rule the day.

Together, these two groupings account for only 26% of the ads in our database. But when you look at the amount of emotional engagement (defined in facial coding terms as what percentage of tested consumers reveal at least one codeable emotional response during exposure to an ad), self-esteem and attachment rank first and second. More specifically, the level for self-esteem is 50%, 45% for attachment.

The other three motivational groupings that record an average engagement level of 38%. Clearly, whether the benefit of the offer is about making me, the consumer, feel better about myself or bolsters my sense of belonging, are the most vibrant ways of ensuring the offer has deep emotional value for the potential end-user.

Next, how about the degree of (positive) emotional engagement?

Facial coding works by noting what percentage of tested consumers reveal codeable emotional responses that are predominantly positive. Now let me tell you that's no slam-dunk. Even a person born blind reveals the same emotions that you and I because, as Charles Darwin realised, our emotional displays aren't learned, they've been hard-wired

into the brain over the course of evolution.

And of the seven core emotions people reveal happiness, surprise, sadness, fear, anger, disgust and contempt, only one (happiness) is purely positive. One is neutral (surprise), the other five negative because people hear bad news more loudly than good news as a matter of increasing one's survival odds.

Emotional displays, the barometer

Emotional displays, aren't a matter of 'lip service'. They serve as a barometer of what connects for people and makes them feel better about wanting to purchase a given offer. And, while the ways in which self-esteem are depicted in the advertising we've tested rises no higher than 49%, roughly in the range for enjoyment and empowerment, the degree to which depictions of attachment as the ultimate benefit of purchasing are positive in nature, reaches an astonishing 83%.

So when it comes to which motivation to invoke 'me' (self-esteem) and 'we' (attachment) are the most robust. Then when it comes to positive emotional pay-off, attachment becomes a company's best avenue for fostering preferential relevance. However, three-quarters of the advertising that we've tested is off-base, focused primarily on enjoyment and empowerment.

Three degrees of meaningfulness

Should it come as a surprise that the nurturing 'we' of attachment, which incorporates the 'me' and fosters connectedness, should win?

Hardly. Researchers have concluded that happiness resides in finding meaning in our lives and that when it comes to meaningfulness, there are three ever more important degrees of how value gets determined in life.

At the outer ring are the fleeting pleasures of the flesh. Those are the weakest ring of the motivational bulls-eye. Only 6% of the ads in our database that draw on the physical realm reside there. Meanwhile, the next inner ring is a matter of seeking variety and novelty. The motivational grouping of enjoyment fits best there.

As to the innermost ring, the enduring, inner circle of happiness consists of meaningfulness caused by two factors. The first is the warmth and depth of our ties to other people. The second is feeling hopeful about our circumstances, because we control them and/or feel that some reasonable degree of fairness will prevail. Yes, as a motivation empowerment qualifies as having some degree of potential pertinence but self-esteem and attachment carry the day.

How quickly will companies realise that, they have been tilting at windmills for the

decade we've been building advertising norms? The answer may be a very long time given that the 'me' and 'we' of self-esteem and attachment, may seem to business leaders too soft when compared to the aggressive, nature of invoking the empowerment motivation.

But not to make the adjustment is in marketing terms, having invoked motivations that don't resonate as deeply as the ultimate value proposition of looking out for me and mine, is foolish. Here's hoping that for their brand's sake, and the sake of their shareholders, that companies soon endeavour to make an adjustment.

This material is excerpted from Dan Hill's book "About Face, the secrets of emotionally effective advertising," to be published in October 2010.

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Advertising's Three Worst Faults

Posted on | September 16, 2010 |

By Dan Hill



The joke that nobody much laughs at in marketing circles is the one liner ascribed to John Wannamaker. “Half my advertising dollars are wasted, but I don’t know which half.”

If only the reality of marketing was that good! Rigorous reviews of sales performance data by those willing to take an incisive look at the state of marketing leads to a less generous total - maybe 15% of advertising pays back its costs.

So what are the three most essential keys to doing better?

One: Casting is crucial.

A dozen years of research has led me to realize that the talent cast, especially in TV spots, but in print ads, direct mail and web sites too, can create a swing of as much as 30% in preference, even when all other variables tested are identical, i.e., tagline, product shot, layout, design, etc.

Fundamentally, we have more positive emotional responses to, and prefer to buy from, those who have “stage presence,” and project like-ability and authenticity. Fake, or social smiles, are the bane of advertising.

Unfortunately, most talent is chosen through a casting process that by its very nature leads to the selection of actors given to putting on fake smiles, rather than true ones (in which the muscles around the eyes relax), which are signaled by a twinkle in the eye. Often actors “fake smile lingers too long, comes across the face too quickly, or departs too fast, in what I call the guillotine smile.” Meanwhile, portrayals of negative

emotions - sadness, fear or surprise (which should last a second or less) - are often more problematic.

Worse, executives who appear in their brand ads are more prone to inauthentic acting than professional talent. Since trust is the key emotion of business, good casting and authentic performances are crucial to creating engaging, persuasive advertising.

Our normative database indicates that both drama-based ads, and ads that rely on testimonials, struggle to drive purchase intent. The biggest culprit in execution being off-emotion acting that undermines the delivery of on-message claims.

Two: Simplicity is sweet.

Nevertheless, most clients suffer from message-itis, in the desperate hope that adding one more claim, benefit, or fact will somehow carry the day and lift market share. It won't.

Meanwhile, most agencies love special effects and add more camera angles and edits than the average viewer can follow. Cut! I've found that frustration is the hidden emotional cancer of advertising: typically, 20% to 40% of emotional responses consumers during initial exposure to an ad qualify as frustration. Why? People don't feel they "get" what's going on.

That's no way to grow market share. Neurobiology has shown that forcing people to over-think causes them to under-feel, to drop out, just when creating an emotional connection is essential, given that the emotional part of the brain processes 10 times as much data as the rational brain. Lose people emotionally and you lose the sale.

Three: Provide a sense of change or other form of tension.

Half the brain is devoted to processing visuals. To leverage that brainpower, motion is vital. That could be anything from a change in people's expressions, to the movement of people or objects, a change of settings, or animated imagery. Stimuli in motion works because the mind is geared to notice changes in the status quo, which represent threats (survive) or opportunities (thrive). Either way, people will be motivated to heighten their awareness.

Moreover, in getting people to focus on change make sure the motion is placed in the middle of the screen, or layout, so that it commands both eyes. We instinctively focus on the middle field of vision, or on things moving into the middle field. What's visually peripheral is also mentally peripheral.

Finally, in regard to change there's the often-necessary option of depicting change not only by literal motion, but also from a change in plot line. Many an ad involves a problem/solution scenario, or other form of contrast. The problem is that often the cautious client won't agree to depict the problem in a heartfelt manner. Unfortunately, when a problem isn't deeply felt, its' solution won't be seen as valuable. In other words, Milquetoast depictions of human discomfort or disappointment aren't compelling and don't drive purchase intent.

At the end of the day, or spot, if you want your ads to pull, make them sincerely address a heartfelt problem in a realistic manner via an authentic depiction. And, ask the CEO to stay in his office.

This material is drawn from Dan's new book "[About Face, the Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising](#)," to be published in October 2010.

- Dan Hill is President of [Sensory Logic](#)

Leading With Price Will Kill Your Advertising, Branded Offers, and Ultimately Your Company

by Dan Hill, President, Sensory Logic

Nowhere in marketing today do emotions run hotter than when it comes to the role of (low) prices highlighted in advertising.

In boardrooms everywhere, one can imagine what's being said, we need to make some money fast so let's lower our prices, and let everybody know. So CEOs and CFOs carry the day while CMOs beats a quick retreat to let the ad agencies know what to do.

Only it's a bad idea to lead with price in advertising. First, discounting, especially repeatedly, isn't sustainable. One of the key advantages of a sale is the element of surprise. How does surprise register on people's faces? Their eyes go wide, the mouth falls open; it's nature's way of saying: shut up, and notice the world around you. Surprise aids stopping power in advertising, but surprise fades when you use the reduced-price trick over and over.

Second, surprise is really a pre-emotion. It's brief (less than a second) and followed either by the verdict of the surprise being positive "wow" or a negative yikes! Repeating low pricing leads to expectations of future low prices, desensitization, and the impossibility of creating a wow response.

Shopper research has shown that seeing any price tag causes disgust. Instinctively, people don't like giving up their money. So creating more delight regarding the offer, generating allure that exceeds feelings of disgust about surrendering cash, makes a positive purchase experience. The problem is that a low-price strategy isn't about the offer's intrinsic value; it's merely a desperate attempt to lower people's disgust levels and, ultimately, given desensitization, is a losing game.

Third, a focus on prices is about numbers, statistics, and carries people from right-brain emotional involvement in advertising to left-brain analytics. That's a bad trade-off, given that everyone feels before they think. Results from the IPA's database of 880 marketing campaigns has found that emotionally-oriented campaigns generate twice as much profitability as traditional, hard-sell rationally-oriented campaigns.

Fourth, price-leading advertising creates quality problems for the offer. Let's consider the value = quality/price equation. There, price at least gives the illusion of being a benchmark for inferring the quality of the offer. So what will a lower price do? It might help to shape perceptions that the floating, undetermined quality of the new offer is actually quite low, or that an existing offer was never worth what people have been accustomed to paying. Put another way, cheap doesn't feel good.

Fifth, encouraging consumers to take a price-oriented, statistical, rational approach to purchase decisions can have disastrous, unintended consequences. That's because, contrary to popular opinion, our emotions provide valuable insight. They steer us, given the conservative estimate that 95% of people's thought activity isn't fully conscious, hence intuitive and operating in the realm of emotion. To cut us off from the wisdom of our emotions has led many a consumer to make a purchase decision they soon regret.

Sixth, brand loyalty is at risk because pride takes a hit. Loyalty is a feeling, and how is a loyal user supposed to feel when they see the price is lower for everyone, not just them?



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Moreover, the company loses twice over. Existing customers pay less for goods they were already buying (and may not buy again at full price). As for new customers who bought a deal, their loyalty is less real than the profit margin sacrificed.

Finally, seventh, a brand on sale is a brand with an integrity problem. A key way we judge the trustworthiness of others and companies, is the degree to which they behave consistently. With price-leading advertising, a company's identity becomes fuzzy. Suddenly, you're either a discount brand or are signaling a lack of confidence that, in dating as in commerce, is never very attractive.

Furthermore, leading with price suggests you have nothing else to say, or show, in advertising. Price as your main attribute doesn't mean anything. The marketing battle is fought in terms of price and distribution. Loyalty ceases to be a barrier to entry, as surprise, hope, and every other positive emotional dynamic required, comes crashing down.

This material was drawn from Dan Hill's book *About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising*, Kogan Page, October 2010, ISBN: 978-0-7494-5757-0

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Dan Hill (dhill@sensorylogic.com) is a recognized thought leader and practitioner in helping companies build stronger sensory-emotional connections with consumers. His previous book *Emotionomics* was chosen by Advertising Age as one of the top 10 must-read books of 2009. His newest book, *About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising* draws on a database built up over a decade of experience using facial coding as a non-invasive, scientific research tool on behalf of major companies.

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"Me" and "We" the Ultimate Value Propositions

Here are more insights into creating engagement in advertising from market researcher Dan Hill.

This material is excerpted from Dan's book "About Face, the secrets of emotionally effective advertising," to be published in October 2010.

Remember the New Yorker cartoon where two women are talking and one says to the other, "But enough about me. What do you think about me?"

Such solipsistic myopia is endemic to human behavior, so it's no surprise that such a condition afflicts companies, too. As a client at a big pharmaceutical firm once said, "We're really good at figuring out what's in it for us, but not so good at figuring out what's in it for our customers."

Obviously, her company isn't alone. Everybody knows the mantra about how the product isn't the hero, the customer is, but practicing that mantra is harder done than said. I'd like to suggest how what's in it for me (WIIFM) relevance can be best established, using evidence from a decade of my company's research.

Don't "Lie to Me"

First a note on methodology.

The words "motivation" and "emotion" share the Latin root, movere, to move, to make something happen (as in generating preference, persuasion and, ideally, purchase intent), so it should come as no surprise that my company specializes in using the research tool made famous initially through Malcolm Gladwell's bestseller Blink, and recently through the Fox primetime hit series "Lie to Me."

The tool is facial coding, which instead of relying on self-reported verbal input extracts the amount and (positive) degree of emotional engagement expressed through people's facial muscle activity. Because actions do speak louder than words, the reactions your face intuitively reveals are the most accurate barometer of whether solipsistic myopia or genuine WIIFM is achieved in a company's advertising.

Here is what we've found from a decade of studies. The majority of TV / radio spots and print ads in our database emphasize two of five motivational groupings. Those are enjoyment (39%) and empowerment (30%).

In other words over two-thirds of all the advertising we've tested involves depicting the benefit of purchasing the offer as a matter of ephemeral pleasure or gaining status, resources and capability. Throw in another motivation grouping, physical well-being and you get 75% of how all advertising is slanted.

The Two Missing Motivations Rule

But what of the two other motivational groupings, and what generates the emotional engagement and preference that drives purchase intent?

Suddenly, self-esteem ("me") and attachment ("we") rule the day.





Together, these two groupings account for only 26% of the ads in our database. But when you look at the amount of emotional engagement (defined in facial coding terms as what percentage of tested consumers reveal at least one codeable emotional response during exposure to an ad), self-esteem and attachment rank first and second. More specifically, the level for self-esteem is 50%, 45% for attachment.



The other three motivational groupings that record an average engagement level of 38%. Clearly, whether the benefit of the offer is about making me, the consumer, feel better about myself or bolsters my sense of belonging, are the most vibrant ways of ensuring the offer has deep emotional value for the potential end-user.



Next, how about the degree of (positive) emotional engagement?

Facial coding works by noting what percentage of tested consumers reveal codeable emotional responses that are predominantly positive. Now let me tell you that's no slam-dunk. Even a person born blind reveals the same emotions that you and I because, as Charles Darwin realized, our emotional displays aren't learned, they've been hard-wired into the brain over the course of evolution.



And of the seven core emotions people reveal happiness, surprise, sadness, fear, anger, disgust and contempt, only one (happiness) is purely positive. One is neutral (surprise), the other five negative because people hear bad news more loudly than good news as a matter of increasing one's survival odds.



Emotional Displays, the Barometer

Emotional displays aren't a matter of "lip service." They serve as a barometer of what connects for people and makes them feel better about wanting to purchase a given offer.

And, while the ways in which self-esteem are depicted in the advertising we've tested rises no higher than 49%, roughly in the range for enjoyment and empowerment, the degree to which depictions of attachment as the ultimate benefit of purchasing are positive in nature, reaches an astonishing 83%.

So when it comes to which motivation to invoke "me" (self-esteem) and "we" (attachment) are the most robust. Then when it comes to positive emotional pay-off, attachment becomes a company's best avenue for fostering preferential relevance.

However, three-quarters of the advertising that we've tested is off-base, focused primarily on enjoyment and empowerment.

Three Degrees of Meaningfulness

Should it come as a surprise that the nurturing "we" of attachment, which incorporates the "me" and fosters connectedness, should win?

Hardly. Researchers have concluded that happiness resides in finding meaning in our lives and that when it comes to meaningfulness, there are three ever more important degrees of how value gets determined in life.

At the outer ring are the fleeting pleasures of the flesh. Those are the weakest rings of the motivational bulls-eye. Only 6% of the ads in our database that draw on the physical realm reside there. Meanwhile, the next inner ring is a matter of seeking variety and novelty. The motivational grouping of enjoyment fits best there.

As to the innermost ring, the enduring, inner circle of happiness consists of meaningfulness caused by two factors. The first is the warmth and depth of our ties to other people. The second is feeling hopeful about our circumstances, because we control them and/or feel that some reasonable degree of fairness will prevail.

Yes, as a motivation empowerment qualifies as having some degree of potential pertinence but self-esteem and attachment carry the day.

How quickly will companies realize that, they have been tilting at windmills for the decade we've been building advertising norms? The answer may be a very long time given that the "me" and

"we" of self- esteem and attachment may seem to business leaders too soft when compared to the aggressive, nature of invoking the empowerment motivation.

But not to make the adjustment is in marketing terms, having invoked motivations that don't resonate as deeply as the ultimate value proposition of looking out for me and mine, is foolish.

Here's hoping that for their brand sake, and the sake of their shareholders, that companies soon endeavor to make an adjustment.

By Dan Hill: President - Sensory Logic

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The power of women consumers...and how to reach them

Oct 4, 2010

By Dan Hill, president of Sensory Logic and author of 'About Face, Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising' (Kogan Page, October 2010).

It's an implicit equation that has hamstrung Western civilization for at least 300 years, and harmed the effectiveness of advertising equally.

I'm referring to the equation that judges rationality as superior to emotions, with the former being the cherished fiefdom of male executives at major companies and the latter the touchy-feely and not altogether important province of female consumers.



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But the breakthroughs in brain science over the past quarter century have laid that false duality to rest: we're all primarily emotional decision-makers, and since everybody feels before they think, objectivity is a myth and so is pure, disciplined rationality.

For ad agencies struggling to promote often undifferentiated offers, what a relief. The days of being on-message can now give way to a greater, truer reality.

What's most important in 21st century marketing will be on-emotion, meaning to create the right emotion at the right time, for the right audience, on behalf of the right positioning of a branded offer.

But even with this new freedom to follow their correct instincts (visuals and emotions win), the ad agencies have plenty of work of their own cut out for them.

After all, as a law suit from the NAACP alleges, ad agencies have problems with diversity. For instance, as reported by Advertising Age of the 58 Super Bowl spots where the identity of the creative team could be affirmed, 92% of the creative directors were white males.

Here's some help for them in overcoming blind spots:

1. To be on-emotion is also to be on-motivation.

That figures, since the two words have the same root in Latin: to move, to make something happen. Among the five core motivations of physical satisfaction, empowerment, enjoyment, attachment and self-esteem, male creative directors and the approximately 80% of CMOs who are men may be equally to blame for the fact that in the ads my company has tested over the past decade, 39% of them focused on enjoyment and 30% on empowerment.

Those are motivations that you could argue tilt masculine, especially empowerment. But what are the motivations that create the most emotional engagement and the greatest volume of positive feelings? They're the motivations women understand and cherish: the greater intimacy of both attachment (to others), and protecting one's self-esteem.

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2. As fMRI brain scans have shown, mass murderers are literally cold people. Their minds show less emotional activity than ordinary people.

So in advertising, so long as the emotions shown are authentic and not ultimately detrimental to the branded offer, show some feelings. But make them plausible.

Do we really need to see a parade of housewives gaga over holding a conversation with Tidy Bowl Man? Condescension hurts.

And speaking of authenticity, make sure the smiles on display aren't faked: with the two halves of their brain literally connected a bit better than those of guys, when we say a woman is in "touch" with her feelings, there's scientific proof.







3. Finally, values matter. As Carol King famously sang, "Is this just a moment's pleasure? Will you still love me tomorrow?"

Feelings can be fleeting. But the feelings that matter long term are those that reveal our personality (a hot head is somebody who is frequently angry, for instance) and our value system, which is distinctly ours and something we are deeply invested in emotionally.

Branding is in the final analysis entirely emotional, a matter of building a relationship between a company and targeted consumers. So don't expect cause marketing to fade.

Women in particular are looking for extra, emotional reasons why they should care about a brand based on it caring about them, and the causes that matter to them.

What should go away, but probably won't on the other hand, are gender portrayals that inadvertently or otherwise demean women, thereby undermining self-esteem and inviting contempt for the brands trying so hard to create a positive emotional bond to the predominantly female shoppers of the world who pay their salaries by making their purchases.

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Leading with Price Will Kill Your Advertising, Branded Offers, and Ultimately Your Company

Special Guest Dan Hill
November 2010

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Nowhere in marketing today do emotions run hotter than when it comes to the role of (low) prices highlighted in advertising.

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In boardrooms everywhere, one can imagine what's being said, we need to make some money fast so let's lower our prices, and let everybody know. So CEOs and CFOs carry the day while CMOs beats a quick retreat to let the ad agencies know what to do.

Only it's a bad idea to lead with price in advertising. First, discounting, especially repeatedly, isn't sustainable. One of the key advantages of a sale is the element of surprise. How does surprise register on people's faces? Their eyes go wide, the mouth falls open; it's nature's way of saying: shut up, and notice the world around you.

Surprise aids stopping power in advertising, but surprise fades when you use the reduced-price trick over and over.

Second, surprise is really a pre-emotion. It's brief (less than a second) and followed either by the verdict of the surprise being positive "wow" or a negative yikes! Repeating low pricing leads to expectations of future low prices, desensitization, and the impossibility of creating a wow response.

Shopper research has shown that seeing any price tag causes disgust. Instinctively, people don't like giving up their money. So creating more delight regarding the offer, generating allure that exceeds feelings of disgust about surrendering cash, makes a positive purchase experience.

The problem is that a low-price strategy isn't about the offer's intrinsic value; it's merely a desperate attempt to lower people's disgust levels and, ultimately, given desensitization, is a losing game.

Third, a focus on prices is about numbers, statistics, and carries people from right-brain emotional

involvement in advertising to left- brain analytics. That's a bad trade-off, given that everyone feels before they think. Results from the IPA's database of 880 marketing campaigns has found that emotionally-oriented campaigns generate twice as much profitability as traditional, hard-sell rationally-oriented campaigns.

Fourth, price-leading advertising creates quality problems for the offer. Let's consider the value = quality/price equation. There, price at least gives the illusion of being a benchmark for inferring the quality of the offer. So what will a lower price do? It might help to shape perceptions that the floating, undetermined quality of the new offer is actually quite low, or that an existing offer was never worth what people have been accustomed to paying. Put another way, cheap doesn't feel good.

Fifth, encouraging consumers to take a price-oriented, statistical, rational approach to purchase decisions can have disastrous, unintended consequences. That's because, contrary to popular opinion, our emotions provide valuable insight. They steer us, given the conservative estimate that 95% of people's thought activity isn't fully conscious, hence intuitive and operating in the realm of emotion. To cut us off from the wisdom of our emotions has led many a consumer to make a purchase decision they soon regret.

Sixth, brand loyalty is at risk because pride takes a hit. Loyalty is a feeling, and how is a loyal user supposed to feel when they see the price is lower for everyone, not just them? Moreover, the company loses twice over. Existing customers pay less for goods they were already buying (and may not buy again at full price). As for new customers who bought a deal, their loyalty is less real than the profit margin sacrificed.

Finally, seventh, a brand on sale is a brand with an integrity problem.

A key way we judge the trustworthiness of others and companies, is the degree to which they behave consistently. With price-leading advertising, a company's identity becomes fuzzy. Suddenly, you're either a discount brand or are signaling a lack of confidence that, in dating as in commerce, is never very attractive.

Furthermore, leading with price suggests you have nothing else to say, or show, in advertising. Price as your main attribute doesn't mean anything. The marketing battle is fought in terms of price and distribution. Loyalty ceases to be a barrier to entry, as surprise, hope, and every other positive emotional dynamic required, comes crashing down.

Author

Dan Hill is the founding president of the research firm Sensory Logic, Inc., (www.SensoryLogic.com) and the author of "Emotionomics," chosen by Advertising Age as one of the top 10 must-read books of 2009. His latest book, "About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising," is likewise available from U.K. publisher Kogan-Page.

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Why price-led ads have become 'brand killers'

Wednesday November 10, 2010

Nowhere in the field of marketing do emotions run hotter or higher than when it comes to the role of low prices highlighted in advertising, according to a new book by Dan Hill, president of research firm Sensory Logic.

The book, entitled '*About Face: The Secrets of Emotionally Effective Advertising*' (published by Kogan Page), asserts that boardrooms everywhere are full of executives saying that the company needs to make some money quickly and that the obvious answer is to lower their prices and let the whole world know. _____

The problem, Hill warns, is that it's a bad idea to lead with price in advertising. Discounting - especially repeatedly - isn't sustainable. One of the key advantages of a sale is the element of surprise. Surprise provides real 'stopping power' in advertising, but it fades rapidly when you use the 'reduced price' trick over and over again.

And surprise is not really an emotion: it's actually what Hill calls a 'pre-emotion'. It's brief (usually less than one second in duration) and is followed either by a verdict, which is either a positive "wow!" or a negative "yikes!"

Either way, repeating low pricing leads to expectations of future low prices, consumer desensitization, and the impossibility of creating a "wow!" response again (if ever).

Disgusting pricing?

Interestingly, consumer research has also shown that seeing any kind of price tag causes a sense of disgust. Instinctively, people don't like giving up their money.

Consequently, creating more feelings of delight regarding an offer, and generating an allure that exceeds feelings of disgust about surrendering cash, makes for a more positive purchasing experience.

The problem is that a low-price strategy isn't about the offer's intrinsic value; it's merely a desperate attempt to lower people's disgust levels and, ultimately, given desensitization, it is a losing game.

It's not a numbers game

A focus on prices is always about numbers, statistics, and carries people from a right-brain emotional involvement in advertising to left-brain analytics. That's a bad trade-off, given that everyone feels before they think. Studies of the IPA's database of 880 marketing campaigns have found that emotionally-oriented campaigns generate twice as much profitability as traditional, hard-sell, rationally-oriented campaigns.

And price-leading advertising creates quality problems for the offer, too. Let's consider the well known "value = quality / price" equation. There, price at least gives the illusion of being a benchmark for inferring the quality of the offer.

So what will a lower price do? It might help to shape perceptions that the floating, undetermined quality of the new offer is actually quite low, or that an existing offer was never worth what people have been accustomed to paying. Put another way, cheap doesn't feel good.

Encouraging consumers to take a price-oriented, statistical, rational approach to purchase decisions can have disastrous, unintended consequences. That's because, contrary to popular belief, consumers' emotions provide valuable insight. They steer people, given the conservative estimate that 95% of people's thought activity isn't fully conscious, and so these insights are both intuitive and operating in the realm of emotion. To cut us off from the wisdom of our emotions has led many a consumer to make a purchase decision they soon regret.

The brand loyalty risk

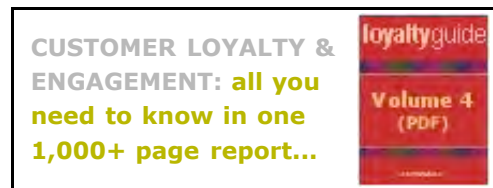
With a price-led strategy, brand loyalty is at real risk because loyalty is often based on feelings. How is a loyal user supposed to feel when they see the price is lower for everyone, and not just them? And the brand loses twice over because existing customers pay less for goods they were already buying (and may not even buy again at full price). And, for new customers who bought a deal, their loyalty is usually less real than the profit margin sacrificed.

Finally, a brand "on sale" is a brand with an integrity problem. A key way in which consumers judge the trustworthiness of both people and companies is the degree to which they behave consistently. With price-led advertising, a company's identity becomes fuzzy. Suddenly, you're either a discount brand or you're signaling a lack of confidence that is not very attractive.

At the same time, leading with price suggests you have nothing else to say, or show, in your advertising. Putting forward the price as your main selling point doesn't mean anything to the consumer, and the marketing battle ends up being fought in terms of price and distribution. Worse still, customer loyalty ceases to be a barrier to competitors.

More Info: <http://www.sensorylogic.com>

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Branding Strategy Insider

March 25, 2011

A Marketer's Guide To Scientific Research Techniques



“A lie can travel halfway around the world while the truth is still putting on its shoes.” Mark Twain

Confusion reigns supreme. In the years since Malcolm Gladwell's international bestseller, “Blink: The Power of Thinking Without thinking,” awakened marketers to the importance of tapping into the intuitive, emotional responses of consumers to enjoy more effective marketing campaigns, a wild west of scientific research techniques have emerged. Claims and counter claims are enough to make one's head spin, especially marketers, who have better things to do than trying to sort out which research tools to rely on.

As someone who began to study emotional responses for clients a half decade before most of these neurometric firms were born, please allow me to provide some unvarnished perspective.

Two Key Dimensions - Engagement and Arousal

The first key is that there are two essential dimensions: engagement and arousal (whether emotional responses occur, when, and the intensity of those responses), and valence (the degree to which positive or negative emotions occur). Yes, engagement and arousal help to tell you if your marketing message is breaking through the clutter, driving attention, and creating opportunities for recall. Tools that measure engagement and arousal and, in fact, specialize in it, include heart rate, sweat gland activity and respiration.

Ultimately, however, engagement and arousal are in and of themselves insufficient. Mention Adolf Hitler to me and I'll have an intense reaction, but I wouldn't actually want to buy anything from the guy. And thus the dimension of emotional response that feeds the bottom line is valence because you have to build preference and loyalty.

In tackling valence, there are only four techniques: EMG (bio feedback), EEG (electrical activity on or just below the scalp), fMRI (brain scans), and facial coding. EMG provides an incomplete reading of brand building preference because it reads only two facial muscles and requires sensors. In contrast, facial coding involves reading all 43 facial muscles, and doesn't require sensors. Moreover, facial coding is universal (even a person born

blind emotes just like you and I) and provides real-time data because the face is the only body part where the muscles attach directly to the skin.

Two additional advantages of facial coding – it can be used during exposure and in Q&A follow-up, It can read All seven (7) specific emotions, which is valuable because each emotion has its own meaning that allows a marketer to create campaigns that are on-message and on-emotion.

As for the two remaining tools that are in use to measure valence, the reality is that these techniques promise more than they can really deliver. EMG is merely a complex arousal measurement tool that can't access the deeper parts of the brain where emotional reactions are centered. Second, in trying to read valence based on a left brain/right brain split assumes a fundamentally flawed approach/withdrawal model. That 's because anger, which is an approach but a negatively valenced emotion, cannot be identified using EEG or separated from happiness responses. Thus no accurate positive/negative reading can be taken.

Finally as to fMRI, not only is it expensive, and requires a fairly claustrophobic testing experience, it's still undergoing development. Therefore, fMRI is for at present more like a moon walk than a walk in the park. The human brain is our personal 3.5-pound universe, and anybody who tells you that they know precisely what each part of the brain signals when it lights up through reading blood oxygen levels is either a liar or a fool.

I chose to specialize in facial coding because it isn't a "black box." Everyone is a lifelong facial coder, reading others' expressions to know whether they're with or against us. That's the essence of being a good marketer: not just turning people on, but winning them over. And that's how great brands get built.

Contributed to BSI by: Dan Hill, President, [Sensory Logic](#) and Author of About Face

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The article misses one important means of scientific research, and that is asking people. It seems strange that all of the techniques mentioned are in fact indirect, requiring interpretation of some machine reading or facial expression. It is true that the way in which you ask people how they feel is critical, just as much as it is true that you have to connect EEG pads in the right way to get a correct reading. But direct questioning allows you to uncover about 100 different emotions - valence attached. And if you do it right - as we do - it is more accurate, reliable, replicable and cost-effective than any of the other techniques mentioned. And it is very effective in developing brand strategy.



Posted by: [Christie](#) | [March 26, 2011 at 09:09 AM](#)

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