

Tangible

THAWING BRITAIN: WAKING UP FROM THE BIG FREEZE

23rd April 2020

People's normal lives are paralysed in lockdown. The economy is frozen in time (sometime in March, or possibly February). People are talking about fictional filmic qualities to a reality that is barely recognisable, never mind believable – we are scene shifting from the apocalyptic scenarios of Contagion (2011), and 28 Days Later (2002) to the re-emergence and readjustment stories of cryonics in Forever Young (1992) or Realive (2016) .

We can paint a series of views of the future that is ahead of us – to some it will be very similar to a cool and frosty February 2020, to others a previously unimagined tundra landscape where behaviours are forever influenced by the recent memory, or perhaps continuing reality, of physical distancing, social dislocation and economic restructuring.

But before we get to the new post freeze world, we need to consider **going through the thaw**. How can we do this without damaging the very tissue that has been protected? How hot should the transition be, how quickly should we set the pace of change, how can we coax or encourage, support and reassure people to get moving; and in our commercial world, get buying, using and consuming?

As part of our post crisis planning thinking earlier this month <http://tangiblebranding.com/covid-19-post-crisis-planning> , the Tangible reset agenda talked about the need for ambition and optimism, of testing new approaches and proving the value of **creativity** to make a new positive future for businesses and brands.

THE TANGIBLE RESET AGENDA FOR HERE AND NOW

BE OPTIMISTIC: when have you ever had the opportunity to make a fresh start, to compete equally with other brands and businesses as they come out of the hiatus?

GET BUSY: now is the time for action. Anything is possible but only if stuff gets done.

TEST AND PROVE EFFECTIVENESS: Aim high, invest for growth and embrace the challenge of proving the benefits of how much? and how fast?

GET CREATIVE: Don't expect the old ways to keep working- renewal happens through innovation.

GET NOISY: if you don't you will not be heard. If you are not heard, you are also invisible.

Be true to real values and, if you have it in you, be endearingly **HUMAN**

The key in all of this seems to be the importance of facing **realities**. This is not about fiction, we are not in a movie, but we can create stories based on **truths that resonate**. We know that emotion and imagination work closely together and that as people we recognise and connect with the humanity of others.

So here are some resources that might help kick off or reinforce some creative thinking:

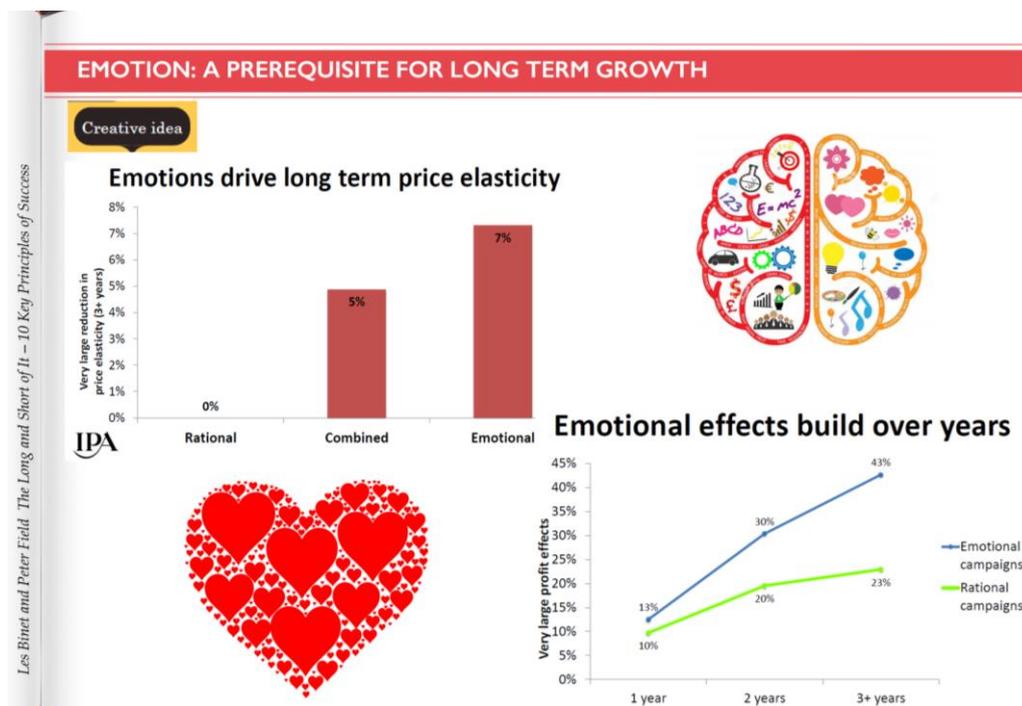
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There's an old blog post on the Tangible website here on a related topic <http://tangiblebranding.com/brands-that-speak-without-talking/>

The slides below are from our Tangible training manuals on effective communications and refer to some favourite effectiveness research by Les Binet and Peter Field with the IPA, and by Thinkbox.



5 WAYS HOW TV ADVERTISING CAN MAKE A BRAND FAMOUS

Creative idea

It seems logical that putting personality into ads can make them more engaging and effective. This seems to work best not by focusing on the *brand's personality*, but reflecting a *consumer personality* that is distinctive and attractive.

Neuro Insight conducted a study coding 200 UK ads on 50 creative measures and tested each on a minimum of 50 respondents. Using Steady State Topography participants wore an electrode cap with sensors to capture brain activity during exposure to each ad.

The analysis of results confirmed the creative techniques that ensure engagement converts into long term memory.

1. *It's not about shouting the loudest – hard facts often fail to deliver*
2. *It's all about the classic story-telling techniques – make the brand intrinsic to an ad*
3. *People are paramount – focus on human interaction*
4. *Music can make an ad...or break it – it works best when it drives the action*
5. *Branding's in the timing – don't tell the brain it's over too soon or they switch off*



Our creative media agency friends at Love Sugar Science www.lovesugarscience.com are always thinking about this and shared ITV's latest brand new and excellent research with System 1 on the topic, hot off the press:

5 features connecting even better in the crisis

- Character Fluent Devices
- Scenario Fluent Devices
- Ads celebrating 'betweenness'
- Ads set in or referencing the past
- Ads with connection to local place and community

System1

5 features connecting less well in the crisis

- The direct hard sell
- Ads focused on *things*
- Ads pandering to self-image
- Ads reliant on words or rhythm
- Ads that are aggressive, competitive or performance focused

System1

So, we can add an old idea to our new planning: to come out of the big freeze

plan to GET WARM