

# Advertising out of CV-19

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As Australians start to emerge from lock down, their businesses will be taking tentative steps towards business-as-usual. These are unprecedented times, and marketers could be wondering whether pre-CV strategies should be turned inside-out or scrapped completely. The good news is that a 'back to basics' approach will help brands advertise out of CV-19 and lay the foundations for future growth.

For marketers wondering how to best deploy a heavily pruned advertising budget after CV-19, Byron Sharpe says you shouldn't panic. "If your budget is halved you can fix it by doubling effectiveness. That sounds impossible but (the good news is that) there is evidence that it is possible."<sup>2</sup>

Consumers have wanted to hear from brands during this crisis.<sup>1</sup> But herein lies the challenge. As well as doing more with less, marketers will need to pay close attention to both the tone of their creative and the media vehicles they associate with as the market moves toward recovery.

The media channel or media placement impacts the way an advertisement is received and perceived. Choosing the wrong media placement can result in brands falling foul of consumers who, under stress, are cynical of opportunists and of false empathy as life starts to return to normal.

The isolation of CV-19 may be coming to an end, but the challenge isn't over for marketers. With this immense challenge comes the opportunity to focus on what works and lay the foundations for more effective marketing well into the future.

## This document answers the following questions:

- What are the benefits, short and long term, of remaining on air during and out of CV-19?
- What considerations or adjustments that need to be made to brand advertising out of CV-19?
- What media channels to cut and what media channels to keep out of CV-19?

1. Kantar Covid-19 Barometer, 26 Mar, 2020.

2. Byron Sharpe, "A Marketing Guide: What to do in a Recession", Ehrenberg Bass, 2008.

# Power up your share of voice

Many marketers are now working with advertising budgets that have been heavily pruned. The best approach is both defensive and offensive requiring marketers to monitor and maintain their share of voice.

In "The Long and the Short of it" Les Binet and Peter Field found that when it comes to revenue growth, a brand's share of voice (the proportion of ad spend within a category) is directly correlated with the brand's share of market.<sup>3</sup> Conversely, the finding also applies to revenue decline.

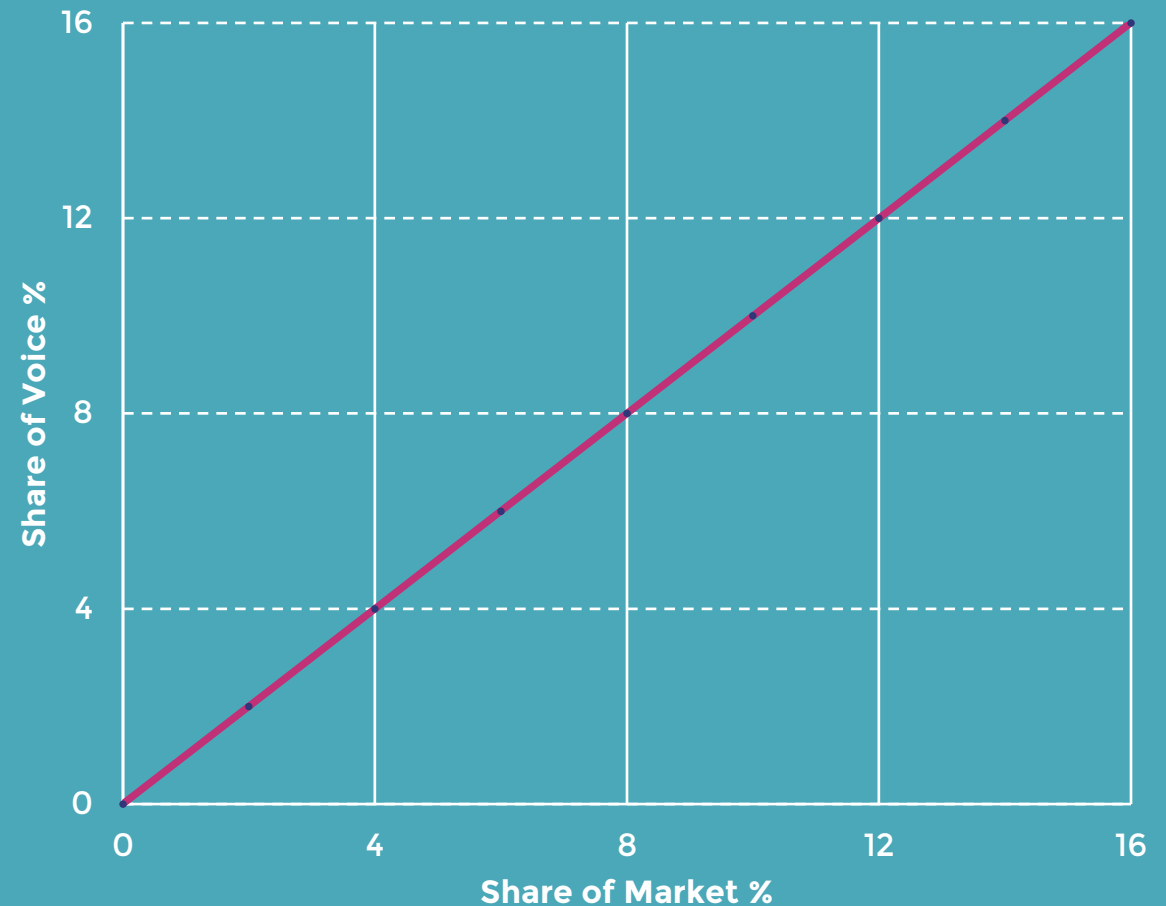
Marketers whose brands suffered budget cuts during CV-19, particularly when cuts reduced share of voice relative to competitors, are facing a higher risk of losing market share.

But it is not too late. There is opportunity now for brands that are able to regain or even grow share of voice. These brands will secure a larger share of the pie – and take a larger share of the spoils – as the recovery unfolds.

3. The Long and the Short of It. Binet & Field, 2013

## Advertising investment reduces risk

354 brands grouped on the basis of relative ad spend



# Trust is everything

The good news is that consumers want to hear from brands during this crisis.<sup>4</sup> These same consumers have been, and will continue to consume more hours of media for the foreseeable future. So that makes a marketer's job pretty easy, right? Well, no. The not-so-good news is that stressed-out consumers emerging from the crisis will be feeling cautious and wary.

Media placement impacts the way a brand advertisement is received and perceived. Choosing the wrong media placement can result in a brand falling foul of consumers who, under stress, will be cynical of opportunists.

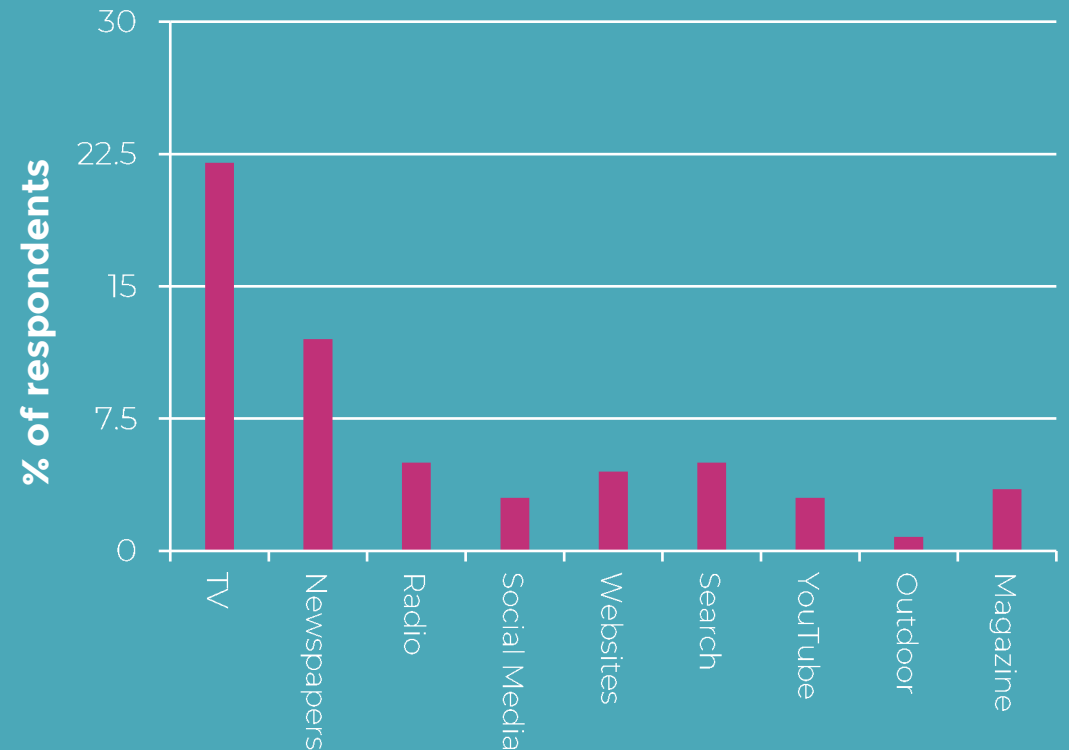
Brand safety and credible journalism have proven to be critically important during this crisis because consumers are frightened and wary – and this will continue as the world starts to emerge from CV-19. “Without trust, advertising has no future. A brand without trust is a product. Advertising without trust is noise,” says Keith Weed, former CMO of Unilever.<sup>5</sup>

Surrounding an otherwise fantastic advertisement with fake news can immediately render an ad ineffective, or worse, may even damage brand perceptions. Since the early days of the CV-19 crisis, Australians have flocked to TV news broadcasts and news media in droves. By associating with credible, trusted media channels, your brand will get the benefit of that trust halo.

4. Kantar Covid-19 Barometer, 26 Mar, 2020.

5. Chris Pash “Keith Weed: We need to talk about trust in advertising” AdNews, 30 September 2019

In which of the following places are you most likely to find advertising that you TRUST?



Source: Actuals Roy Morgan AdNation Study Australians 14+, May 2017, n=503 (Last 7 days) In which, if any, of the following places are you most likely to find advertising that you TRUST

# Play the long game

Marketers are no strangers to balancing the long and the short game. Stretching campaign evaluation periods into the future is always a sensible course of action, especially during a recession and afterwards, as consumer confidence begins to improve.

In the Australian Advertising Effectiveness Rules, Robert Brittain and Peter Field interrogated the Australian Effie's Database, comprising Effie's submissions for the past three years, to validate the conclusions of Field's renowned research work with fellow effectiveness guru Les Binet.<sup>6</sup>

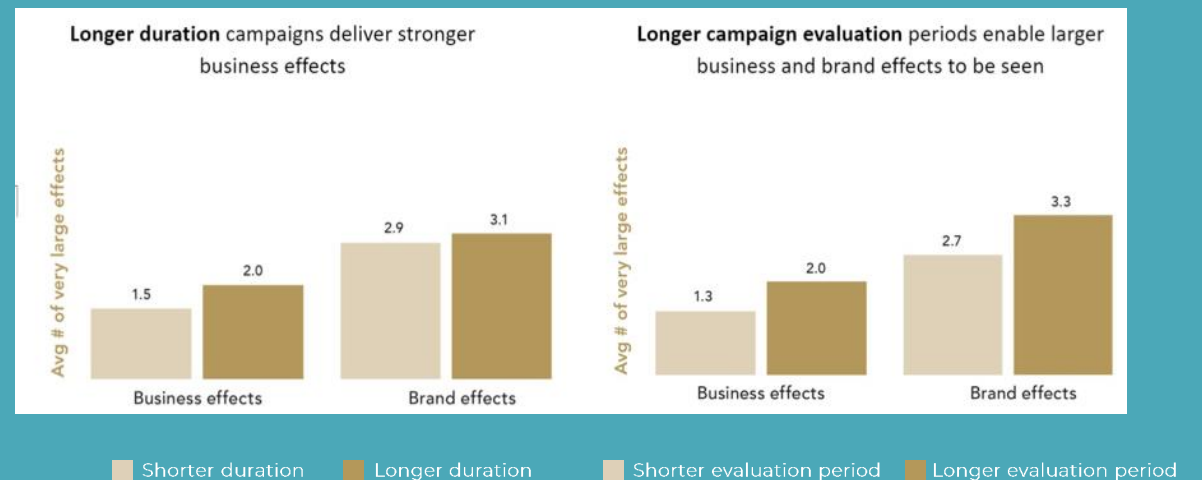
The data indicates that longer evaluation periods reveal stronger impacts when it comes to acquiring new customers, market share growth and increasing pricing strength.

Field says that, "The only sensible course for any advertiser who wants to maintain a presence through this recession is to be putting money into long-term brand building because the role of that investment is for the recovery, not for now."<sup>7</sup> As the economic recovery begins, now is the time for marketers to review investment in both the short and long term.

6. Robert Brittain and Peter Field, Australian Advertising Effectiveness Rules, The Communications Council 2019.

7. Peter Field. The recession on steroids. Marketing Week, 26 Mar, 2020.

## Longer is better when it comes to campaign duration and campaign evaluation



Robert Brittain and Peter Field, Australian Advertising Effectiveness Rules, The Communications Council 2019.

# PLAYING THE LONG GAME: BCF

## The objective

BCF was all set for a bumper Easter with a campaign centered around getting Aussies to visit holiday towns that were devastated earlier in the year by bushfires. But in the wake of CV-19 travel restrictions, the brand needed to pivot – and fast.

BCF General Manager – Marketing Ben McConnell and his team wanted to find a way to rally Aussies together to be a part of something bigger and have a bit of fun during what is a tough time for many people. He said: "We are really passionate about families spending quality time together and for many, Easter is the only opportunity they have throughout the year to do that. A family getaway wasn't going to be possible this year, so we felt camping in your backyard was a solid compromise."

## The execution

A campaign to encourage Aussies to embrace backyard camping came to life with the idea locked in at lunchtime on Friday 3 April. By Monday, the TVC was ready to roll and was dispatched to networks that Wednesday.

## The media mix

McConnell said: "We did consider pulling TV as an option, but we were really passionate about the backyard campaign idea and the role we can play in helping people have a bit of fun. So we decided to go for it."

The logo for "Australia's Biggest Backyard Campout" features the text "AUSTRALIA'S" in a blue sans-serif font at the top. Below it, the word "BIGGEST" is written in large, bold, blue letters on a yellow rectangular background that has a slight 3D effect. At the bottom, the words "BACKYARD" and "CAMPOUT" are stacked in the same blue sans-serif font as the top line.

## The results

BCF was less focussed on short-term sales impact from the strategy with McConnell noting: "We believe that investing in what is right will benefit the brand for the long term."

While there's no way of knowing exactly how many Aussies BCF inspired to camp out in their backyards over the Easter break, more than 5,000 families registered via social media with just as many entries in the #BCFBACKYARD competition. McConnell said: "We would assume, based on anecdotal evidence, that actual participation would be at least 10 times this figure."

And while doing good during this time of crisis is likely to have an ongoing impact to brand metrics, BCF has also seen measurable sales impact off the back of the campaign with backyard related camping products sold such as marshmallow forks, fire pits and kids camping gear.

# Target everyone

Marketers know that campaign success depends on choosing media channels that will reach their target audience. But there is always much debate over who precisely to target.

Analysing the IPA databank in the UK, Les Binet and Peter Field have shown that driving penetration is critical for brand growth.<sup>8</sup>

Byron Sharpe and the Ehrenberg Bass Institute have similarly maintained that brands are constantly losing customers/users and need to focus on recruiting large numbers of new customers (or increase penetration) to grow.<sup>9</sup>

The Australian Effie's databank indicates that the IPA findings are correct, and campaigns with a broad target are more effective at driving both business and brand effects.<sup>10</sup>

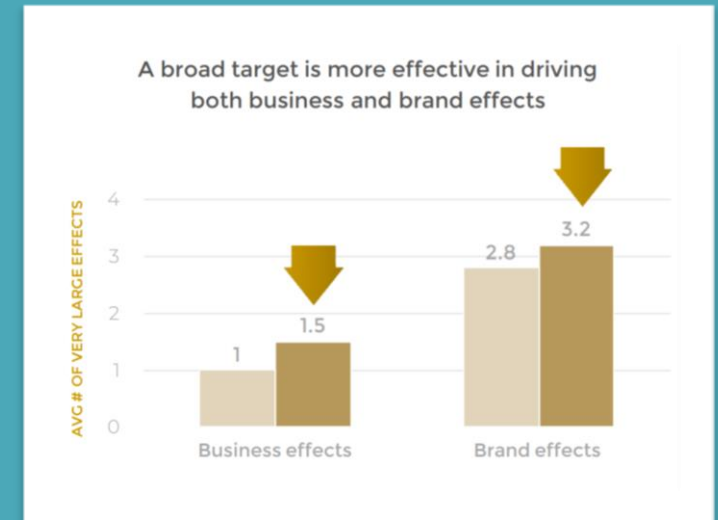
Growth is achieved by targeting as broadly as possible. And this has never been truer than now, as old habits have been set aside and purchase decisions reconsidered through the CV-19 crisis.

8 The Long and the Short of It. Binet & Field, 2013

9. How Brands Grow. What Marketers Don't Know. Byron Sharp, Oxford University Press Australia, 2010.

10. Robert Brittain and Peter Field, Australian Advertising Effectiveness Rules, The Communications Council 2019.

## TARGETING BROAD IS BEST



Robert Brittain and Peter Field, Australian Advertising Effectiveness Rules, The Communications Council 2019.

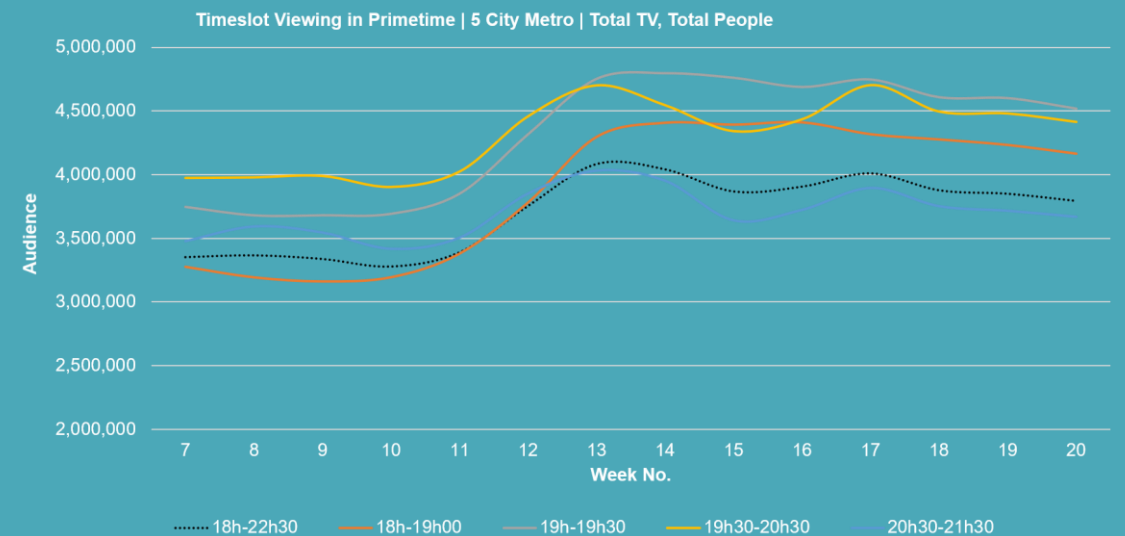
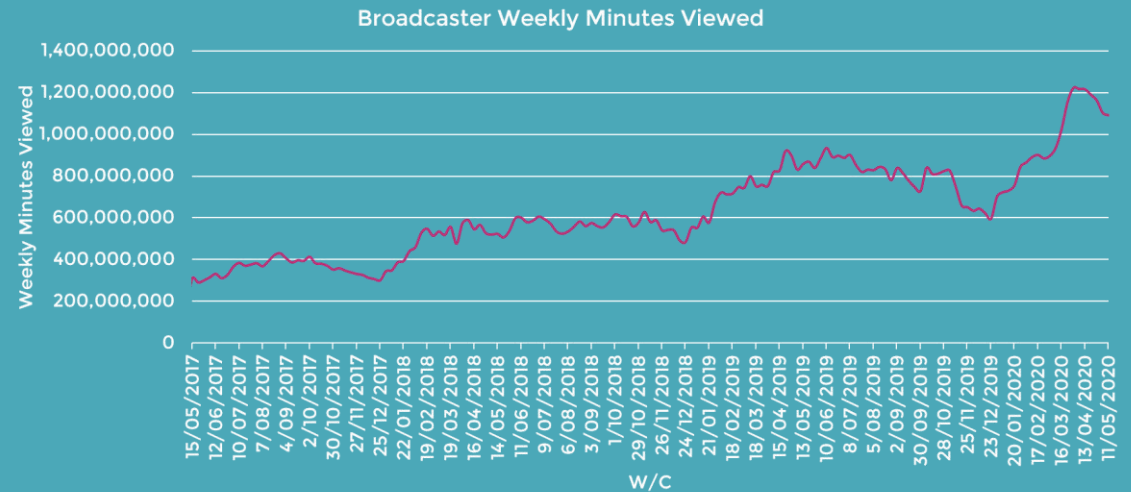
# Reach them where they are

Self-isolation caused a sudden and dramatic change in media consumption. And while the economy starts to re-boot there are still a lot of Australians at home. This will solidify audience numbers for both linear TV and BVOD.

In the initial weeks of the crisis, the audience for TV news programming surged as Australians sought trusted, factual updates on how the world was changing.

Not only did overall audience numbers increase during CV-19, the proportion of co-viewing also grew, with “family hour” evident between 7pm and 8pm, indicating that families did, and likely will continue to, watch TV together for both news and entertainment.

Unlike social video such as YouTube and Facebook, TV brings people together for a shared experience. Co-viewing allows brands to speak to multiple generations at once, sparking conversations that influence purchase decisions and commitment to behaviour change.



Source top: OzTam VPM May 2017-May 2020 Live & VOD FTA+Foxtel Minutes  
Source bottom: OzTAM Metro Overnights 5CM, Total TV, Week 20 2020 (10/05/2020 to 18/05/2020)



# Focus on effectiveness

With reduced budgets, marketers need to ensure every last dollar is working as hard as the first.

Marketers responding to budget cuts bought on by CV-19 continue to be challenged to cut fat without damaging muscle. While multi-media campaigns with more touch-points drive greater ROI, in times like this marketers face tough decisions about which channels to keep and which channels to cut.




It's important to remember that when it comes to media channel selection, not all reach is created equal. The Benchmark Series found that media channels that deliver attention and visibility deliver superior sales impact.<sup>11</sup>

The research found that advertising on TV and BVOD generates more than twice the sales impact of brands that combine TV with social video platforms such as YouTube and Facebook.

Reach is important but reach alone is not enough. Successful marketers will think of media decisions in terms of "effective reach" where brands reach as many people as possible and the impact of the reach is multiplied by the effectiveness of the channel in ensuring the ad is seen.

<sup>11</sup> Benchmark Series, ThinkTV, 2018

## Cross platform effects accentuate the importance of visibility

1st VIEW	2nd VIEW	CROSS PLATFORM STAS	SALES IMPACT
	BVOD on mobile	172	-
	Facebook on mobile	135	TV+BVOD is 2X higher than TV+ Facebook
	YouTube on mobile	130	TV+BVOD is 2X higher than TV+ YouTube

Benchmark Series, ThinkTV, 2018

# Be helpful and hopeful

CV-19 turned daily life upside down. As a result of this overwhelming change, it's human nature to gravitate toward familiar things. There is a sense of reassurance and certainty with the familiar – and it turns out that includes brand advertising.

Kantar's Covid-19 Barometer shows 82% of Australians thought it important that brands keep advertising during the crisis.<sup>12</sup>

The study found people wanted brands to offer practical help in their everyday lives. This was the number one expectation of brands across the globe.

The study identified the top three expectations Australians had from brands during CV-19, and it turns out they wanted brands that:

- inform and guide the change that is occurring
- are reassuring and ease anxieties
- are helpful and hopeful.

Advertising campaigns that give consumers hope for a better future are needed right now. Brands that can be reassuring will build brand connection, which in turn will increase market share and strengthen a brand's ability to command a price premium.

<sup>12</sup>. Kantar Covid-19 Barometer, 27-31 March 2020.

# 82%

of Australians think it's important that brands keep advertising.



Kantar Covid-19 Barometer, 27-31 March 2020.

# Toyota calls on TV to celebrate the Aussie Spirit

## The objective

During the CV-19 crisis, Australians – including those in essential services – would need Toyota for vehicle repair or general product support. The brand needed to reassure customers it remained available to assist. Toyota Chief Marketing Officer Wayne Gabriel said: “As a leading Australian business, we believe we have a role to play to help Australians as we navigate this situation. We wanted to remind people that in times like these, it’s important we come together as one. This is inherent in our very nature as Australians.”

## The execution

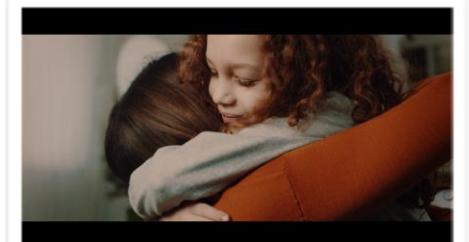
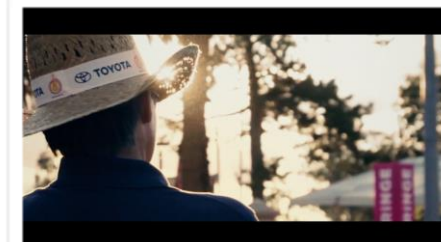
Toyota launched ‘The Spirit’ campaign. In the spot, a rousing poetic voiceover champions the great Aussie spirit and the importance of lending a hand. Gabriel said: “It doesn’t feature a product or service, in fact very little Toyota product appears in the spot. Instead, it puts people front and centre and celebrates Australia’s amazing spirit and unwavering resilience.” Due to social distancing restrictions, Toyota was unable to shoot new material, so the brand used existing creative or content made in conjunction with media partners.

## The media mix

Prior to the pandemic, Toyota had brand activity scheduled and the decision was made to use this allocated spend. The media mix was recalibrated to maximise use of channels that, “best create that bond between Australians and remind us that we are not alone”. Gabriel said: “TV in all its forms is where Australians are seeking information and entertainment. And that’s backed by the numbers.” For ‘The Spirit’, linear and over-the-top (OTT) TV, which includes BVOD and live streamed broadcaster content on PCs and mobile devices, sit at the heart of a multimedia campaign designed to connect with us all, one by one.

## The results

While it’s still early days to gauge the impact on Toyota’s brand metrics, by continuing to invest in brand building activity, Toyota will be well positioned for the bounce back. Gabriel said: “We need to remember the lockdowns will end at some point and retail activity will resume.”



# Be memorable

Marketers who had budgets slashed during CV-19 will need to make every available dollar go further as the recovery begins. One way to do this is to space media bursts a bit further apart than normal. If this is the case, or even if it is not, it always makes good sense to choose media channels that imprint advertising messages in consumer's memory banks for longer.

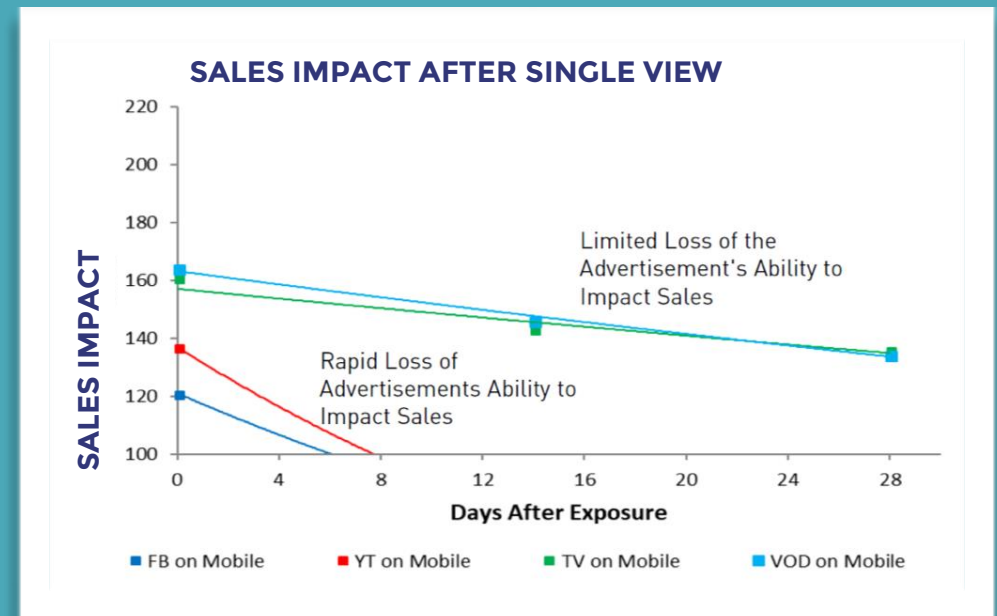
Using eye tracking software on people's own devices – be that a TV, PC or mobile phone – the Benchmark Series was able to determine which ads people were looking at. After seeing the ads, survey participants were funnelled through a discrete choice modelling exercise that replicated the experience of being in a store. The research used the well-established metric of short-term advertising strength or STAS.<sup>13</sup>

After more than 5,000 Australians were observed viewing in excess of 25,000 advertisements for 60,000 different brands, the study found that TV advertising continued to impact consumer choice 28 days after they had seen the ad.

The decay rate for TV was so low that after 28 days, the impact of TV advertising was still greater than the impact of Facebook advertising on day zero.

<sup>13</sup>. Benchmark Series, ThinkTV, 2018

## Memorability allows an ad to work for longer



<sup>1</sup>Benchmark Series, ThinkTV, 2018

# Build emotional connections

Marketers know emotional campaigns are more effective at impacting long-term market share growth and longer-term brand metrics related to memory structures.<sup>15</sup>

Yet, many marketers are concerned they need to deviate from their usual approach during the CV-19 recovery period, fearing a backlash against a 'business as usual' approach.

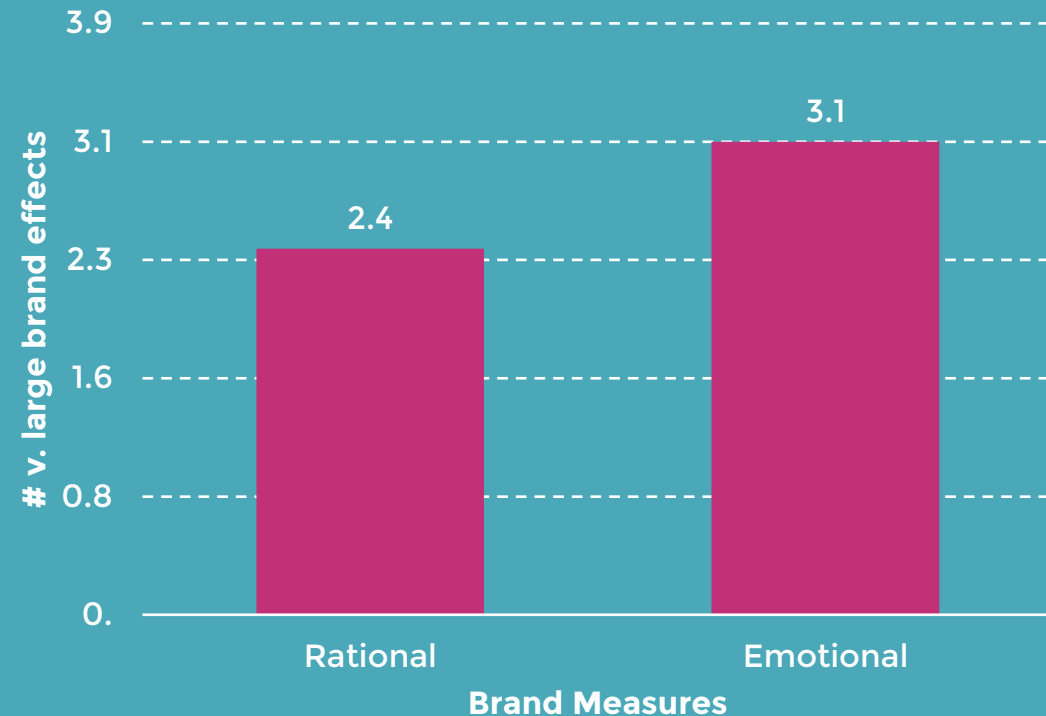
The good news is that people want brands to be generous, modest, self-aware, have a sense of humour and demonstrate spontaneity. Now is not the time to offer automated, mechanistic responses.<sup>14</sup>

Following CV-19, it is imperative for advertising to be humanistic, so marketers should feel confident that emotionally-driven storytelling can consolidate brand share now and into a post-pandemic world.

14. Orlando Wood. System1. The recession on steroids. Marketing Week, 26 Mar, 2020.

15. Does Campaign Complexity Help or Hinder Advertising Effectiveness. Robert Brittain, 2019.

## Emotional campaigns drive larger brand effects



# Advertising out of CV-19



CV-19 has brought cuts to advertising budgets and so the imperative is to at least maintain, or, if possible, grow share of voice. Brands that can grow share of voice will have a larger share of the market as recovery comes.

Consumers have wanted to hear from brands through this crisis, but they are wary, and so association with trusted brands has never been more important. Marketers will need to pay close attention the media vehicles they associate with.

The most sensible course of action for marketers, especially during a recession or when emerging from crisis, is to play the long game, stretching campaign evaluation periods into the future.

Brand growth is achieved by targeting as broadly as possible, and this has never been truer than now. Consumers have been forced to set their consumption habits aside and reconsider all purchase decisions.

Broad reach is key, and marketers must stay abreast of rapidly changing media consumption and perceptions. Self-isolation has caused a sudden and dramatic change in media consumption and the changes will linger as the recovery comes.

Reach alone is not enough. Media decisions need to be made in terms of “effective reach” where brands reach as many people as possible and the impact of the reach is multiplied by the channel’s ability to ensure the ad is seen.

Advertising campaigns that give consumers help for right now, and hope for a better future are needed. Brands that stay on equity will be reassuring and will build brand connection.

Reduced budgets often mean large gaps between advertising bursts. The best campaigns will utilise media channels that imprint advertising messages in consumer’s memory banks for longer.

During CV-19 it is imperative for advertising to be humanistic. Marketers should feel confident that emotionally-driven storytelling can consolidate brand share now and into a post-pandemic world.

## Acknowledgements

This deck would not be possible without data and insights from the Communications Council and Kantar.  
If you'd like to know more, visit [communicationscouncil.org.au](https://communicationscouncil.org.au) and the Kantar COVID-19 Barometer