

CAM Foundation, Cutting Edge,

16 December 2008

Welcome to our round-up of the year's useful marketing news.

Advertising

The future of neuroscience

Neuroscience comes under the microscope in this article, which suggests that although it is likely to make a contribution to advertising in the future, those days are still a long way off. The author looks at the "myths and nonsense" surrounding neuroscience, science's influence on advertising and "some of the useful things that neuroscience tells us now".

Admap, January 2008, pp24-6

Do celebrities have effect?

Celebrity endorsements come under scrutiny in this paper, which examines their effectiveness, given that one-quarter of advertising in the US features a celebrity. Celebrity expertise, attractiveness and trustworthiness are all important to consumers, while negative information about celebs is bad news for the brand concerned.

International Journal of Advertising, Vol 27(2) 2008, pp209-234

Agencies

The right relationship

Chopping and changing from one agency to another is an expensive business, but plenty of agency/client relationships go sour. How can you ensure you choose the right agency and that it carries out the work you want? The process begins at the pitch stage, so ensure you are all 'in tune' with each other, and look to the long-term – what does the agency see for the future of your brand? If things do go pear-shaped, don't forget that the TUPE regulations might just see the same people working on your account even though you thought they were gone for good!

the marketer, April 2008, pp32-6

Brands and Branding

What are your customers really saying?

Brand extensions are one way in which a brand can grow, and marketers obviously hope that their existing customers will like the extension as much as the parent brand. However, this isn't necessarily the case, and research has shown that customers often criticise brand extensions, engaging in negative word of mouth communications. This article examines the emotion of anger in particular, and how it relates to brand extensions, resulting in negative word of mouth.

Journal of Brand Management, Vol 15(4) 2008, pp258-271

Greener brands?

Consumers are becoming more aware of climate change and the need to act, but do they trust brands that promote themselves as green? Retailers top the list of green brands, but British consumers' attempts to name climate change brand leaders are poor. Furthermore, many consumers are sceptical of brands' claims that they are doing something to address the problem – whereas 30% would buy something from a retailer that claimed to be environmentally friendly, just 16% would buy products if they read that the retailer had been involved in greenwashing.

Marketing Week, 30 October 2008, p26-7

Children and Youth

Fickle youth

A survey by Q Research has found that 46% of young people aged 11-25 would swap to a mobile phone provider that gave free texts and talk time in return for receiving mobile ads. They would also be willing to receive mobile adverts if they received top-up credit (67%), discounts (60%) and free music (51%).

New Media Age, 22 May 2008, p13

Conferences and Events

Always measure

Live events are a popular way to promote a company or brand, but how often do visitor numbers get measured – and what happens afterwards? Technology is available to measure numbers, but subsequent analysis and use often fail to materialise. Measuring return on investment is important, but many exhibitors just don't bother to find out how their stand impacts on their bottom line.

Marketing Week, 12 June 2008, pp31-2

Customer Relations

Create value for satisfaction

Measuring customer satisfaction is a good idea, and should identify those areas where there is room for improvement. However, what organisations don't realise is that the process of measuring satisfaction is more complicated than it seems, and that customers go elsewhere not because they are dissatisfied with a company, but because another has offered them better value. This article likens customer satisfaction measurement to a journey, the various stages of which can be examined in order to discover where improvement is needed.

Customer Strategy, February 2008, pp16-9

Time to get emotional

Today's world is a competitive one, so standing out from the crowd is important, and that means connecting with customers. A great customer experience occurs when three factors come together – engaged employees, customer service and adopting an attitude that boasts just how good you are. Customers want employees who are efficient, trustworthy and good at problem solving. In other words, customers are concerned with the "emotional and people-oriented aspects of a company's service".

Brand Strategy, March 2008, pp34-5

Happy to pay more

British consumers would rather spend more on goods and services that are handled in the UK than via offshore call centres that make the services cheaper. Only 6% of those surveyed by ICM say they are happy with overseas call centres, and just 1% of Scots were happy. The research also found that women were more likely to be put off by offshore centres than men.

Customer Strategy, June 2008, p6

Direct Marketing

Successful subjects

Long subject lines are more effective than shorter ones when it comes to email marketing messages. Alchemy Worx found that subject lines with 50 characters or fewer were likely to be opened by recipients, but click through rates were low. Subject lines with 70-100 characters were opened and click through rates were higher. Subject lines that contained 60-70 characters were the least effective on both opening rates and click throughs.

New Media Age, 3 July 2008, p13

Times are changing

New information from **CCB fast.MAP's Marketing-Gap Research** shows that fewer customers are opening direct mail, with 20% citing lack of time as the most important reason for this. However, consumers responding to the survey said the biggest motivation to open direct mail was communication from a known brand, followed by personalisation. Interest in the product came in third place.

Database Marketing, September 2008, pp20-1

Law

Be careful with buzz

The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations, which came into force on 26 May, and tightened the rules on 'buzz marketing' ("commercial communication via the internet, social networking and word of mouth"). The Institute of Practitioners in Advertising's Legal Director, Marina Palomba, says companies could face fines if they originate viral emails that look as though they are from 'ordinary' people, or if they use

