
media
dpg

The **Creative Dividend**

2026



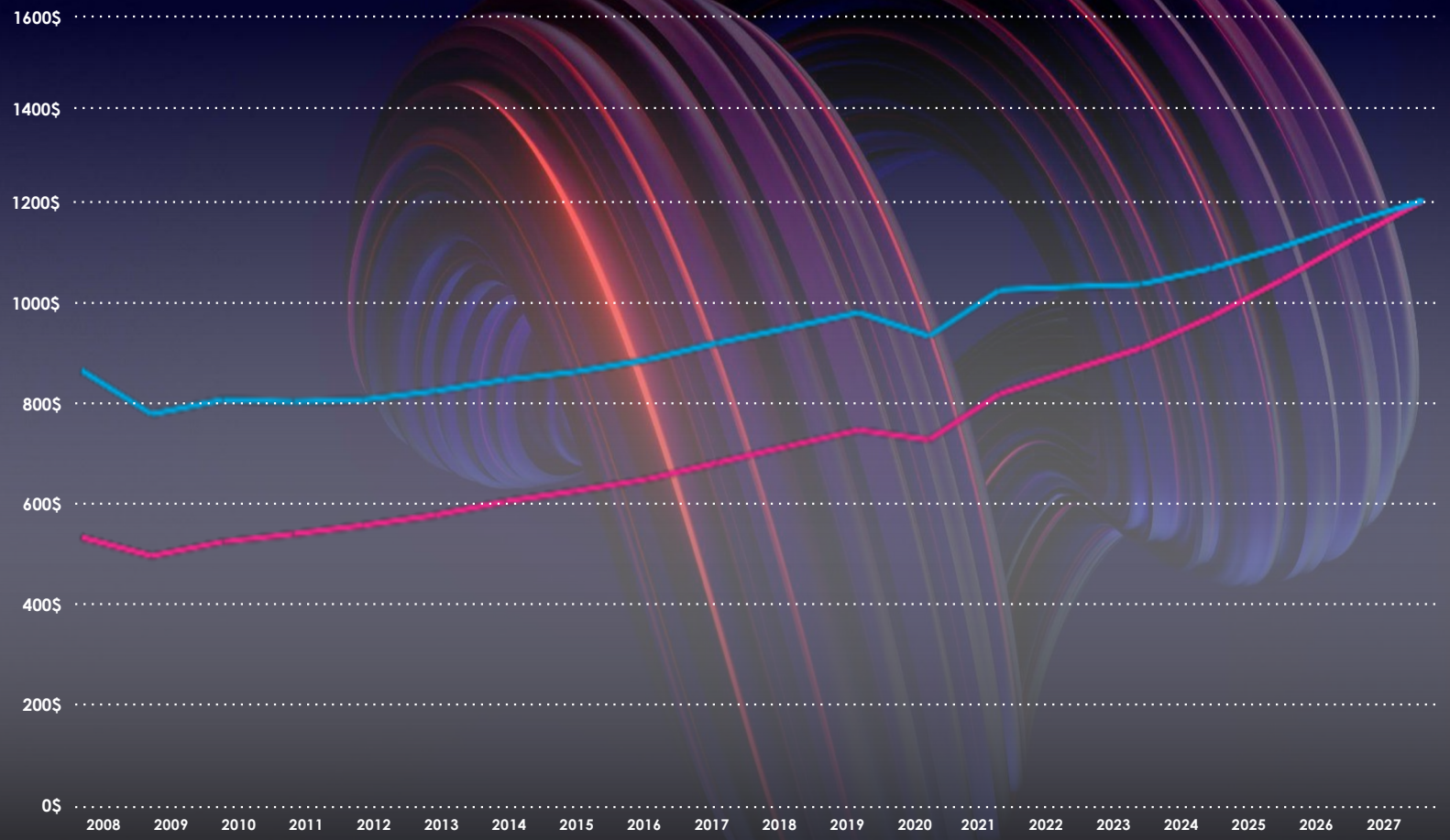
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Belgium

1

The **context**

What's going on in media & branding?

We've **never spent more** on advertising



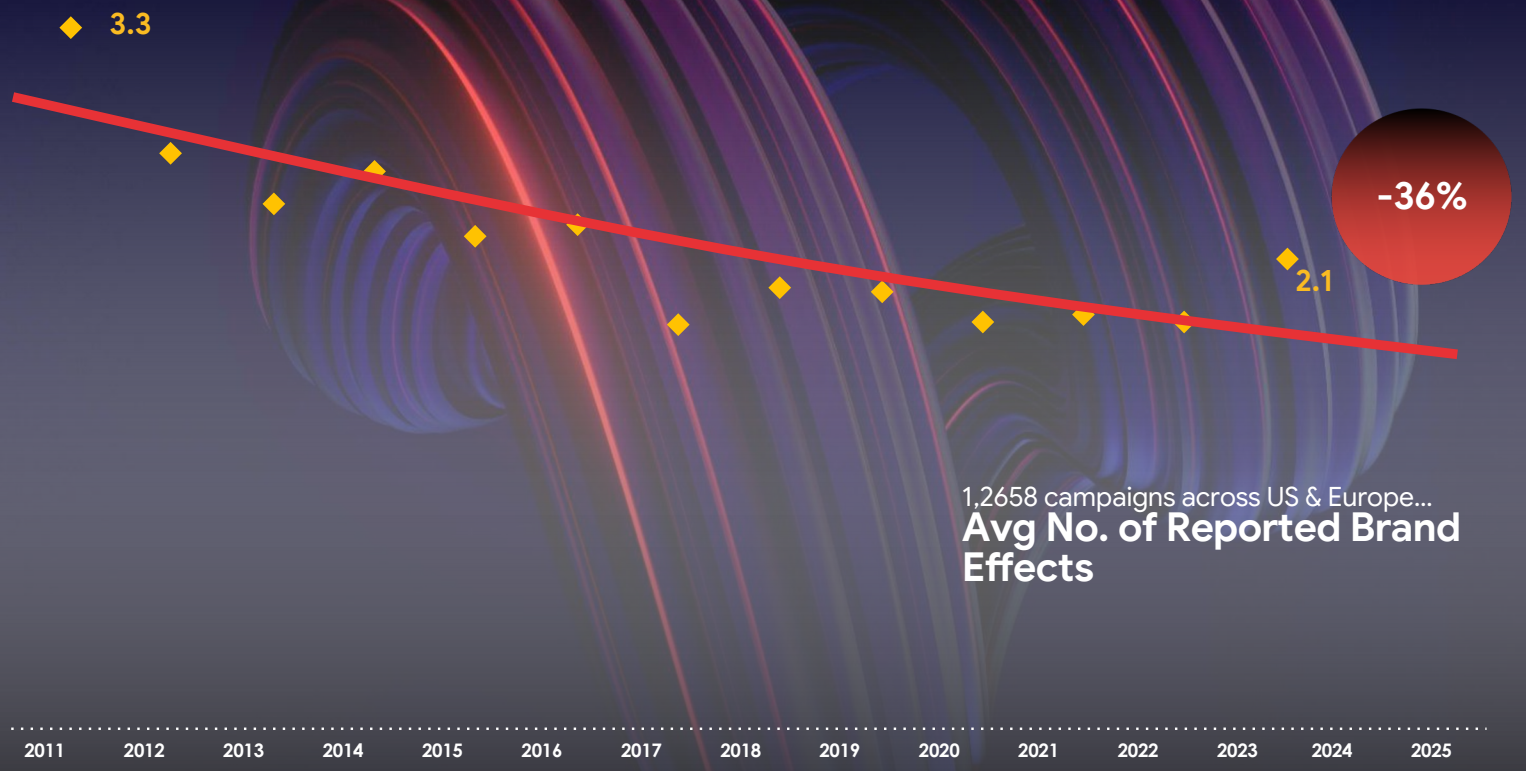
+47%

Real Ad Spend (2027 $mil)

Global Ad Spend ($BN)

WARC Media, Global Ad Trends: Media's New Normal / Global Ad Forecast Q4 2025 Update, 11 Dec 2025. 2024 inferred from WARC's 2025 spend and growth rate. Real Ad Spend calculated by System1 using IMF World Economic Outlook Database, Apr 2026, "Inflation rate, average consumer prices — World", rebased to constant 2027 US$.

Advertising has never grown brand less



1,2658 campaigns across US & Europe...

Avg No. of Reported Brand Effects

Average Brand Effects: *1265 US, Europe, UK & Ireland campaigns between 2007-2023 from the Effie Case Library (2018-2023 awards).* ***Emotion****: Campaigns matched with System1 Test Your Ad Data from 200,000+ respondents, average Star Rating.*

Advertising has never grown brand less



2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025

Average Brand Effects: *1265 US, Europe, UK & Ireland campaigns between 2007-2023 from the Effie Case Library (2018-2023 awards).* ***Emotion****: Campaigns matched with System1 Test Your Ad Data from 200,000+ respondents, average Star Rating.*

2

Core question on (Effie) **effectiveness**

What separates an average campaign from a growth engine that build the brand and rings the cash register?


Modern
ADVERTISING EFFECTIVENESS
PRINCIPLES
THE CREATIVE DIVIDEND

One approach: Effie & **The creative dividend**

312 Effie cases

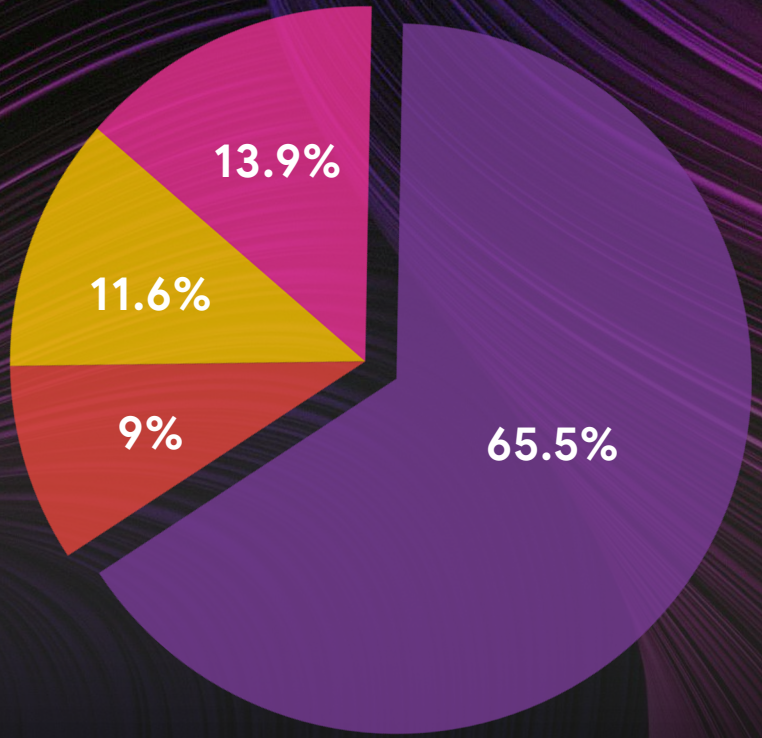
2014-2025

Is there an effect on brand and/or business KPIs?

What drives this effect? Which variables make a difference?

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Symbiosis: Brand & Business are inseparable

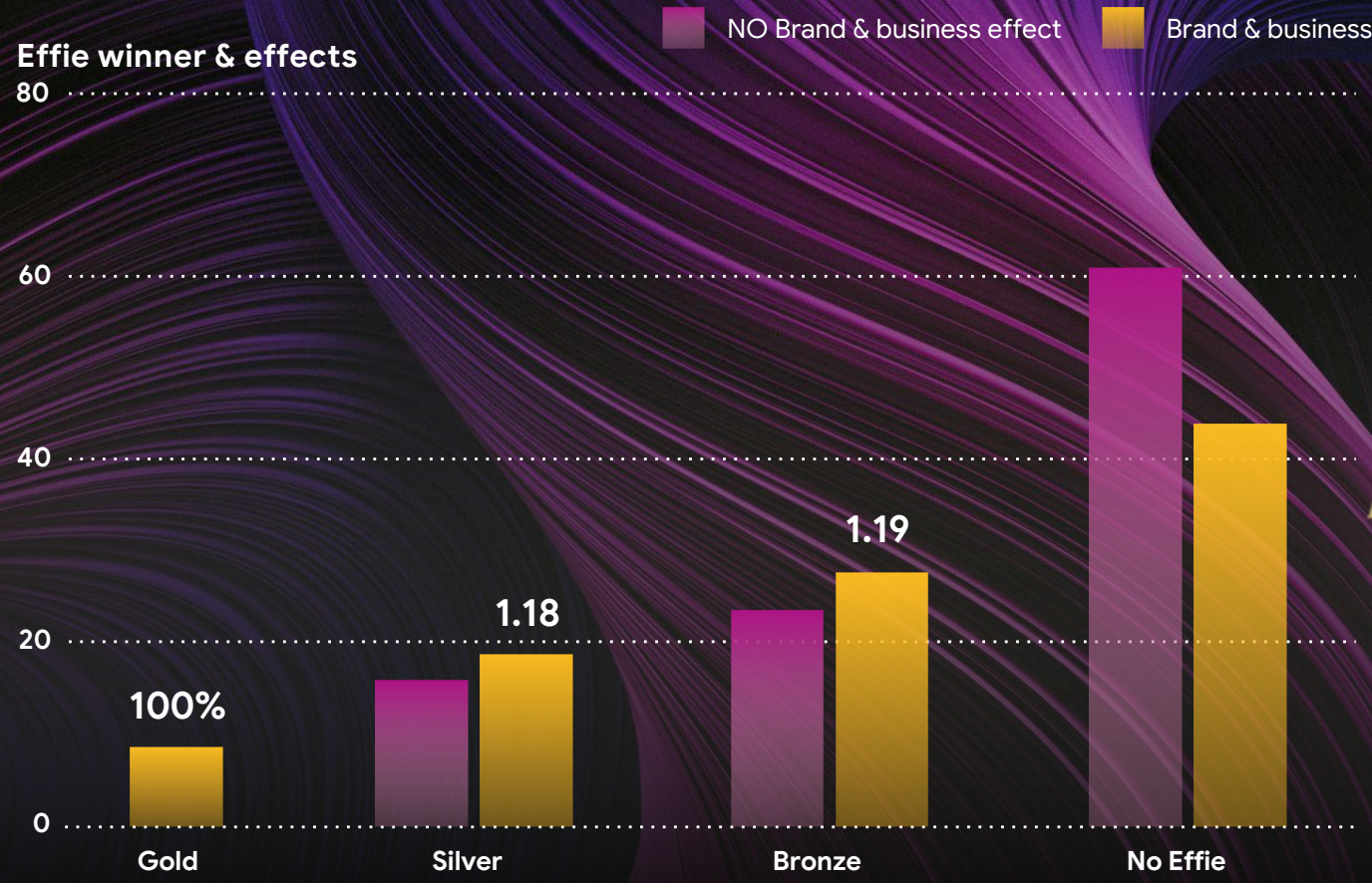


- Goal brand & business achieved
- Goal brand achieved
- Goal business achieved
- Other goal achieved

66% of cases achieve Brand & Business growth simultaneously

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Winning Gold = **Delivering Dual Impact** (100%)





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3

What about the **context variables**?

Ok, brand and business go together but do market conditions and contextual factors play the dominant role?

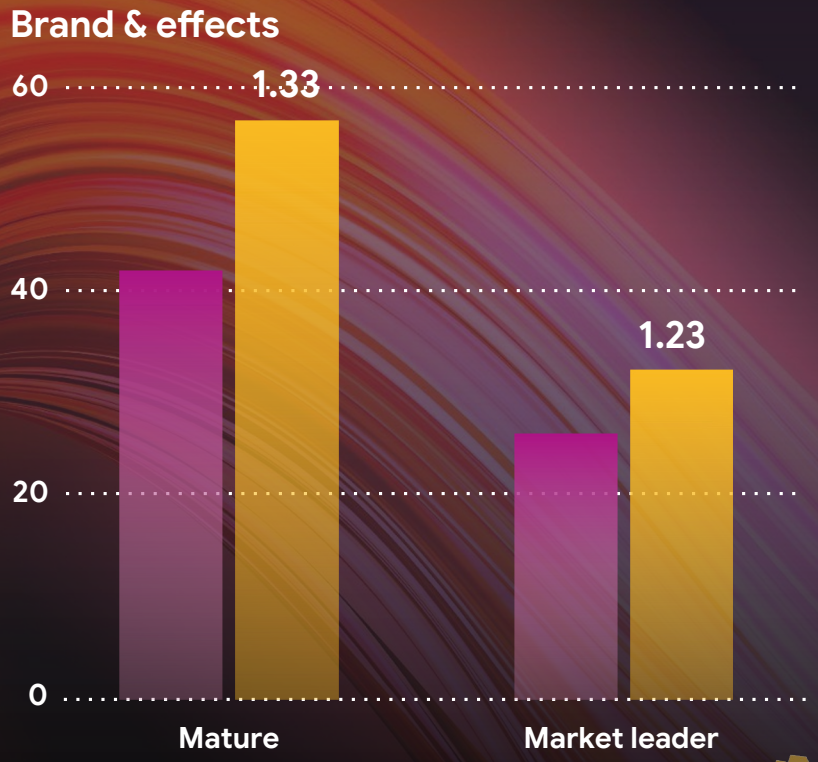
Success sits in the execution not in the context

Context has little impact

- Market evolution
- Premiumness
- B2B vs B2C
- Product innovation
- Market leaders have some edge

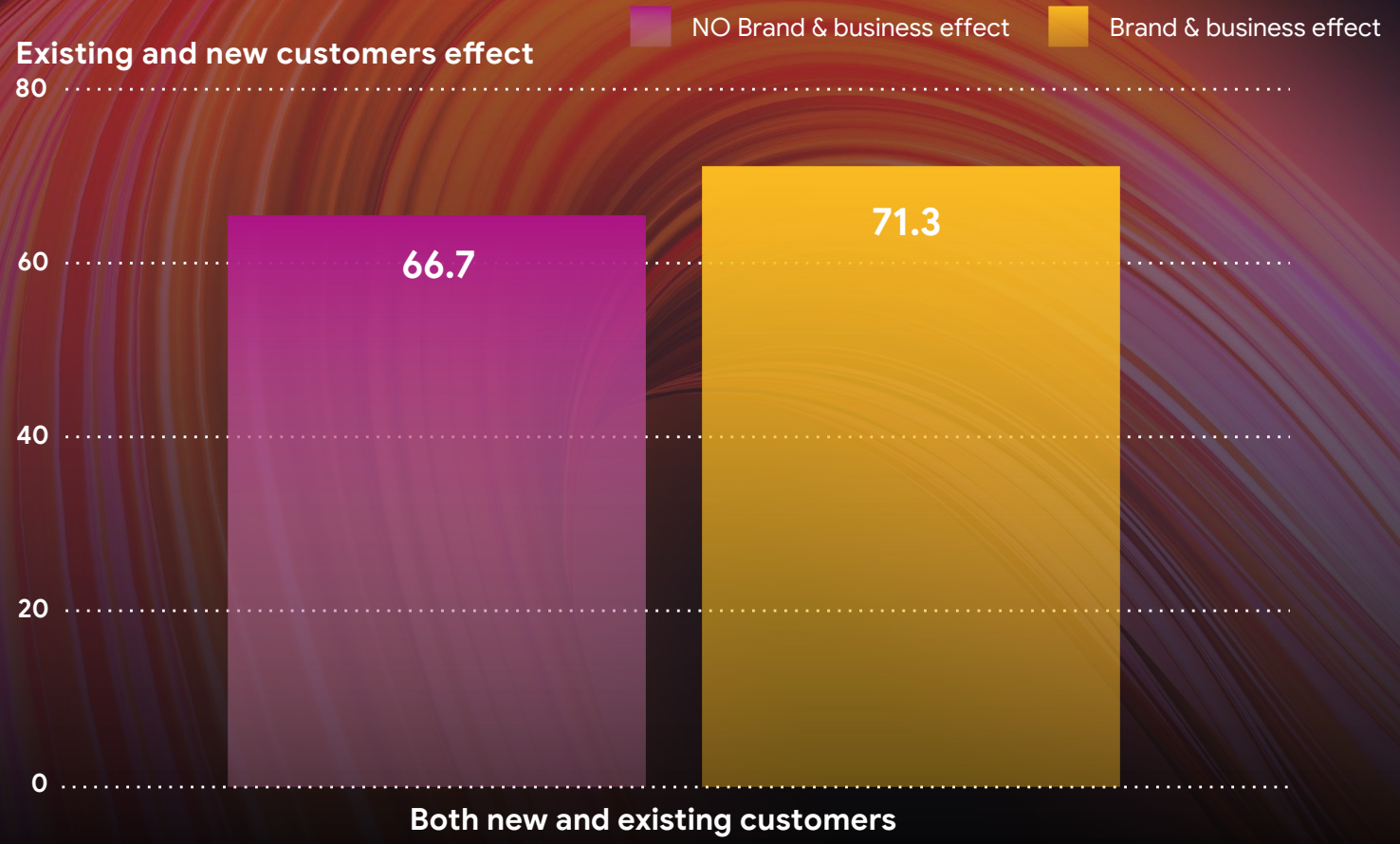
But brand maturity is important





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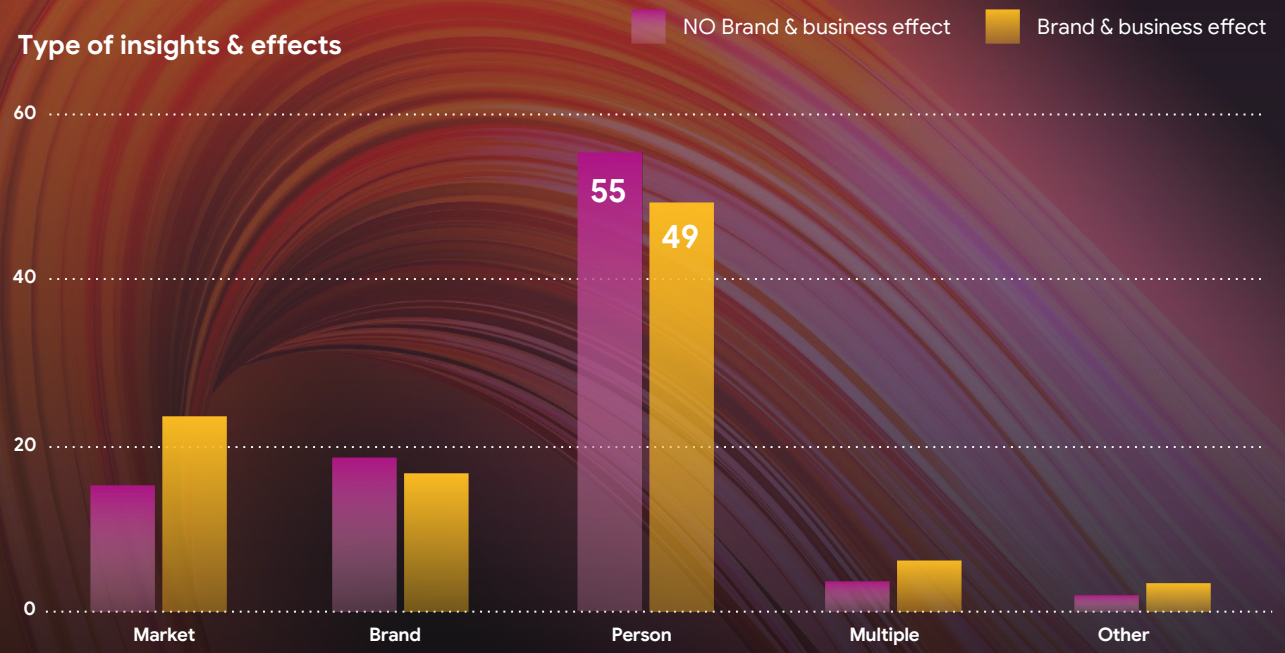
Always **existing and new customers**



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Consumer behaviour is the firestarter





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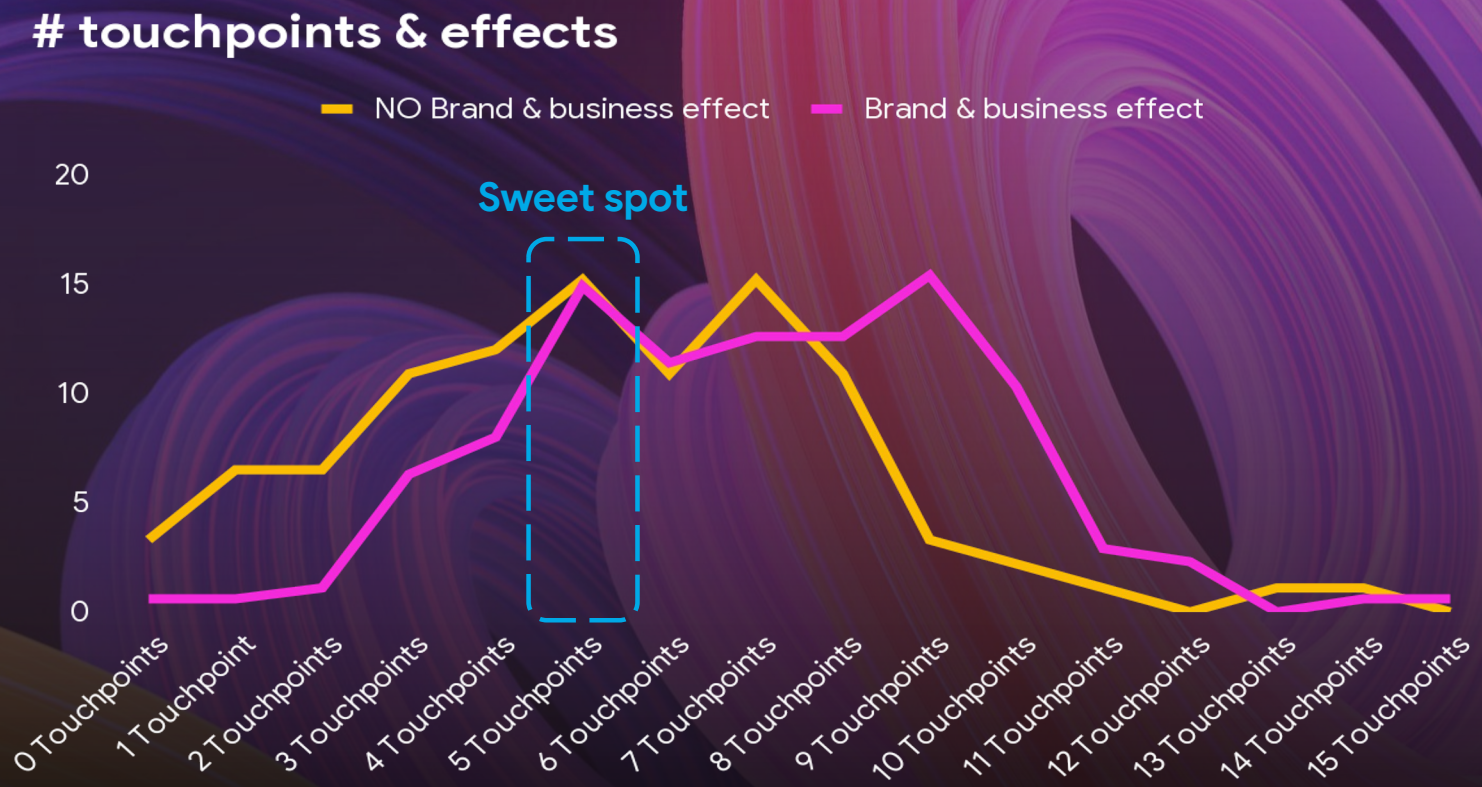
4

Context is **not** so important

But what about media?

Crossmedia (<=5) is the price of entry

Winners scale to 9+



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There is **not one crossmedia combo,** but **many high reach combos**

5 **Touchpoints combo**

Most used

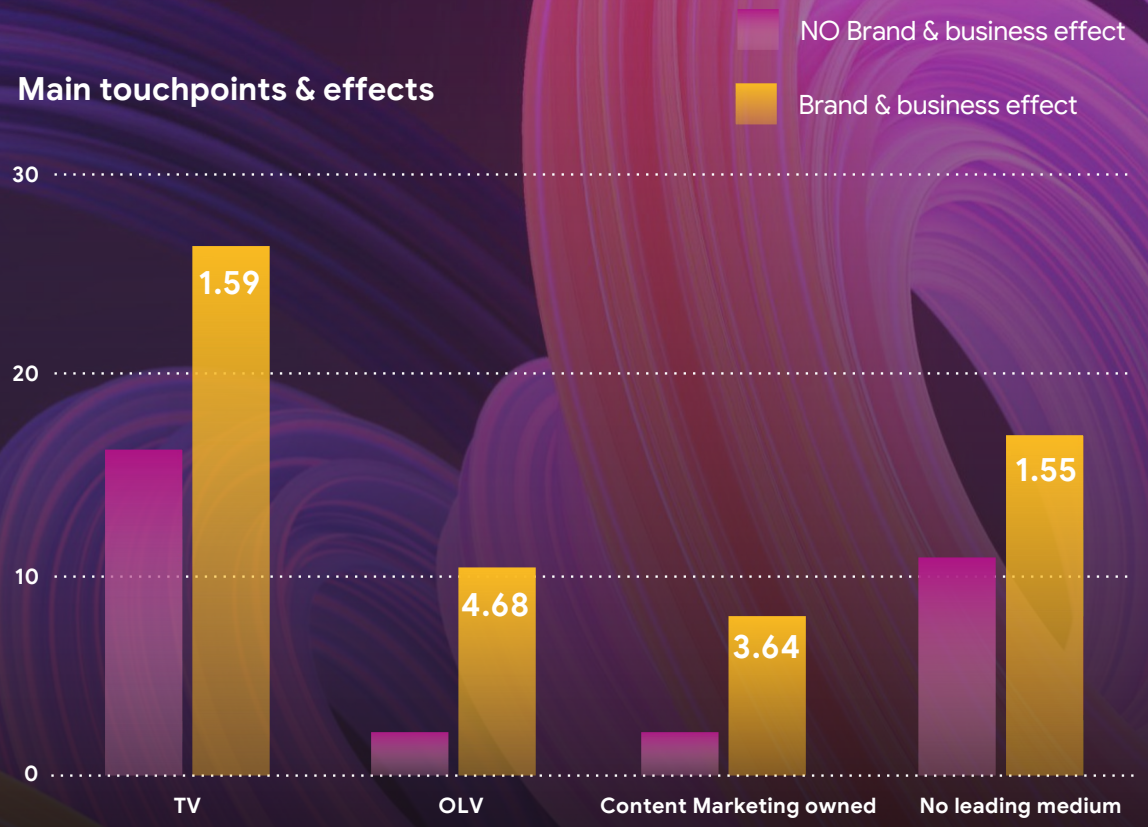
- TV
- Social display
- Radio
- OOH
- email/social organic /online display

Most used combo

4 TP	OOH + TV + Radio + Social Display
3 TP	OOH + TV + Radio
	OOH + TV + Social Display
	TV + Radio + Social Display

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Video & content marketing are the backbone



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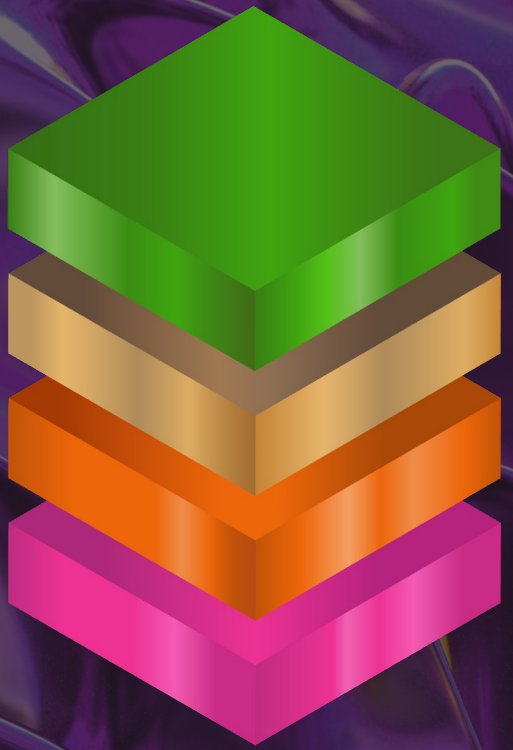
5

The **game changer**

If the context is not so important and media is not the differentiation, what does make a difference?

The **Creativity Stack**

Four ways creativity stacks to increase the likelihood that advertising drives growth.



Profit Multipliers

Consistency **X2.9**

Showmanship **X1.6**

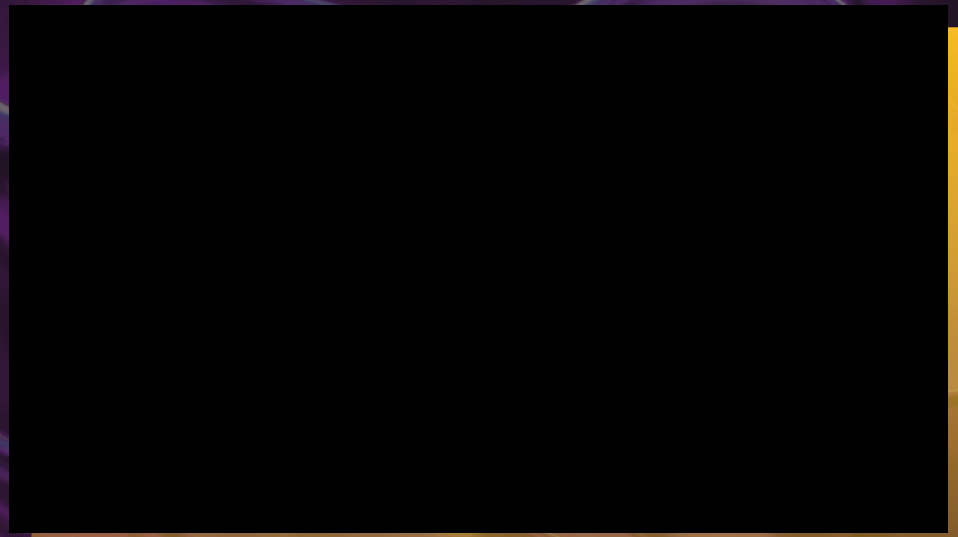
Distinctiveness **X1.4**

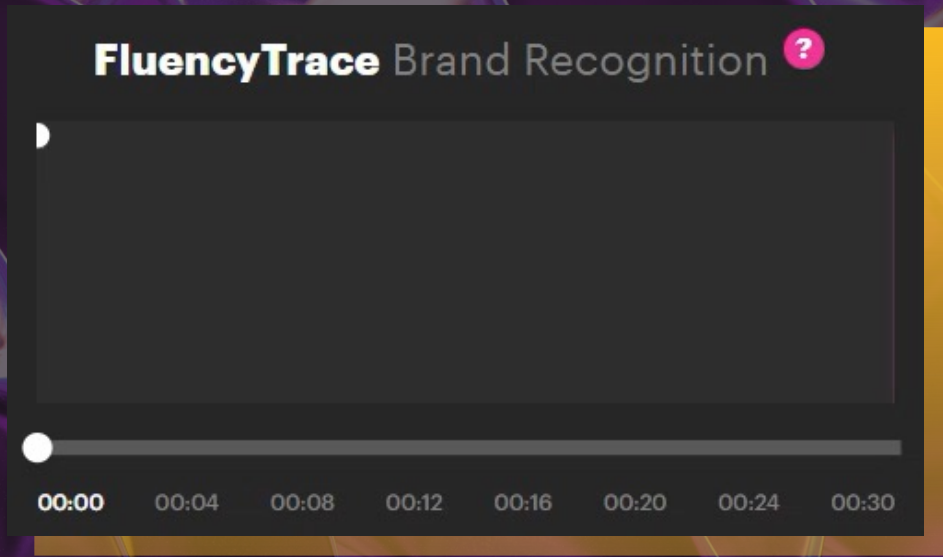
Emotion **X2.4**

Likelihood campaign reports incremental profit, top vs bottom quartile for each creativity type. ***Benchmarked within category.***

Les Binet and Peter Field, The Long and the Short of It: Balancing Short and Long-Term Marketing Strategies (IPA/Thinkbox, 2013), Fig. 31, using IPA Databank data. Base: 127 cases.

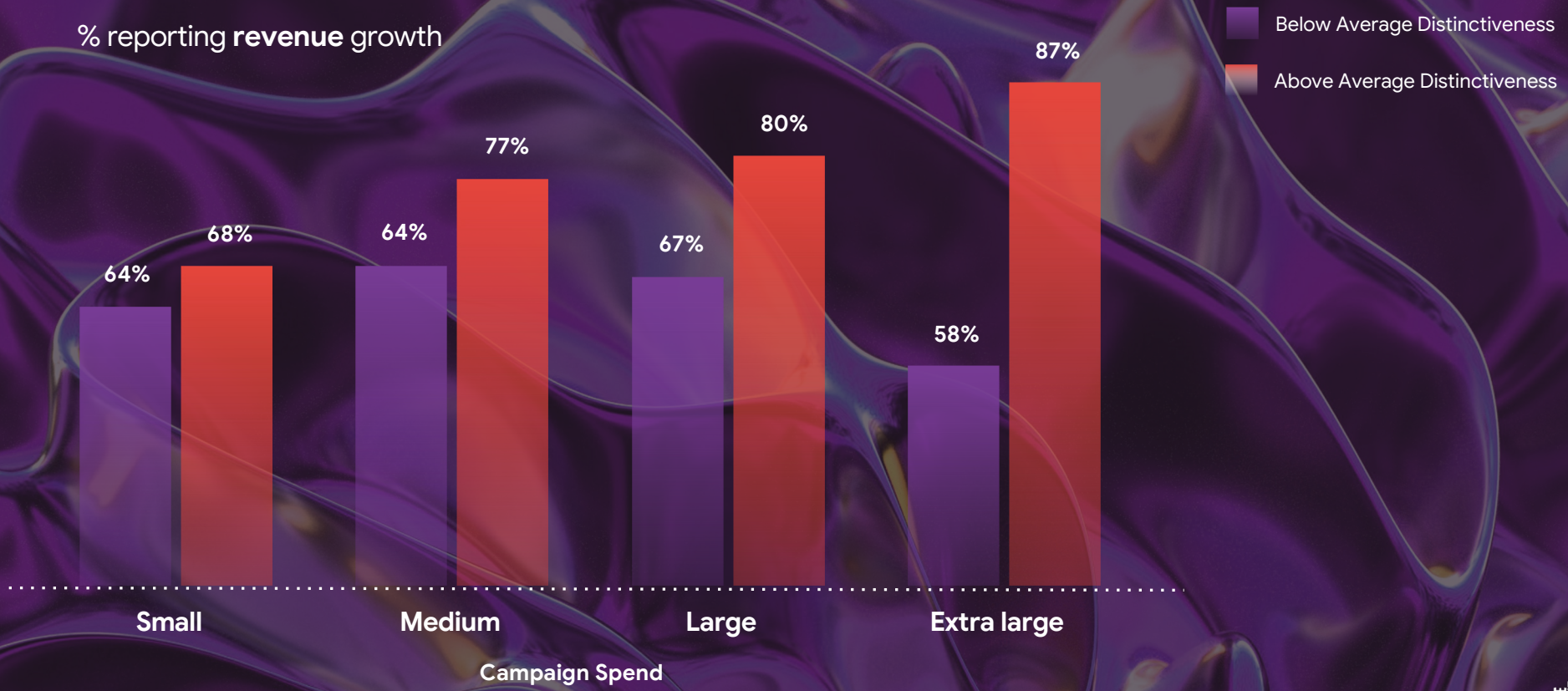
The **World's most distinctive Ad**
Second-by-second response





System1

Distinctiveness turns media spend into revenue



1,251 US, Europe, UK & Ireland campaigns between 2007-2023 from Effie Insights' database (2017-2023 program years). Measured with System1's Test Your Ad with 200,000 respondents in each market, Star Rating & Fluency Rating. With reported media spend. US: S: $0-$5M, M: $5M - 20M, L: $20-60M, XL: $60M. Europe: S: €0-1M M: €1-5M, L: €5M+.

Distinctiveness and...





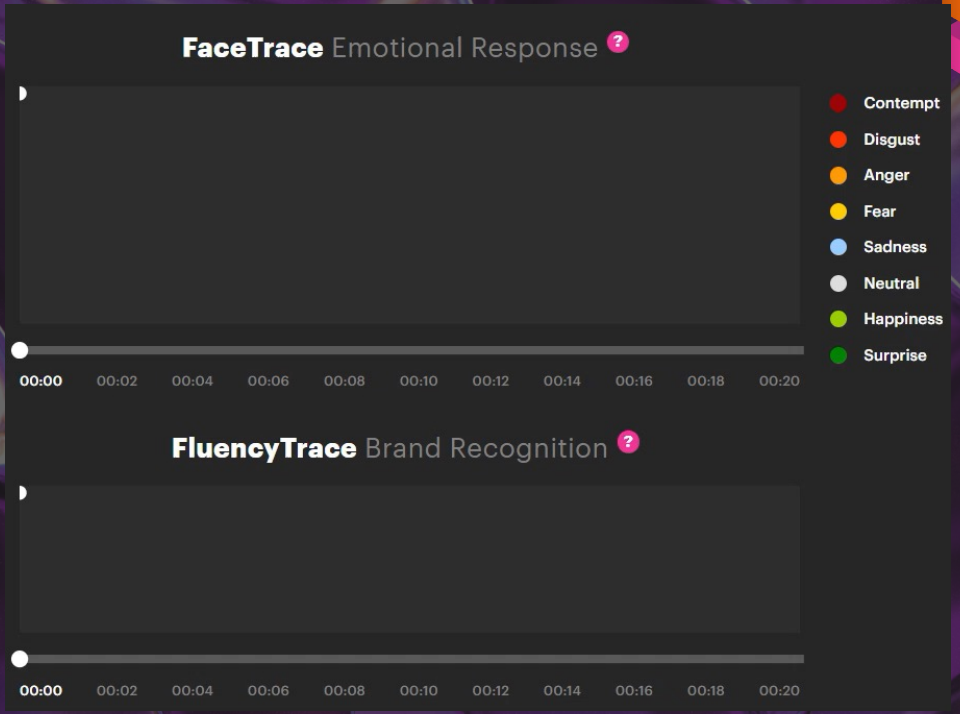
Distinctiveness 100

Emotion **1.5** / 5.9

System1

Second-by-Second Response





System1

Second-by-Second Response

Twix. Left or right, a good decision either way.

20 sec. 27th Mar 2023



Star Rating:
Strong

Predicts **long-term** market share growth



Spike Rating:
Exceptional

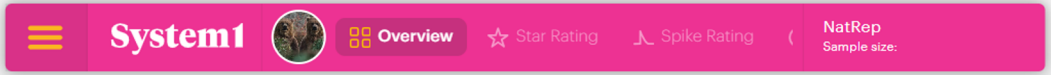
Indicates **short-term** sales potential



Fluency Rating:
Exceptional

Indicates **strength** of brand recognition

We ask people how they feel about each ad using our **FaceTrace®** emotional measurement tool, used on over 10m people worldwide




“
How do we earn
EMOTION, ATTENTION,
TRUST & FAME?
”
THE CREATIVE DIVIDEND

We must entertain **for commercial gain**

Salesmanship	Showmanship
Flatness	A clear sense of place
Abstracted product, feature, ingredient	One scene unfolding with progression
Abstracted body part (e.g. hands, mouth)	Characters with agency (voice, movement, expression)
Words obtrude during the ad	Implicit, unspoken communication (knowing glances)
Voiceover	Dialogue
Monologue (e.g. testimonial)	Distinctive accents
Adjectives used as nouns	Play on words or subversion of language
Freeze-frame effect	Set in the past (costumes & sets)
Audio repetition (metered prose, sound effects)	Reference to other cultural works (pastiche/parody)
Highly rhythmic soundtrack	Music with melody
Facial frontality (the stare, looking into the camera)	Spontaneous change in facial expression
Self-consciousness (e.g. looking into mirror)	Something out of the ordinary (emerging from scene)
Empty smile (socially willed/out of context)	Animals (the living)
Product-centricity (focus on things)	Animated characters (suggesting the living)
Split-screen effect (abstraction)	People touching (intimacy)

We must entertain **for commercial gain**

Salesmanship

5%

Flatness
Abstracted product, feature, ingredient
Abstracted bod… hands, mouth)
Words obtrude during the ad
Voiceover
Monologue (e.g. testimonial)
Adj… used as nouns
F… frame effect
Audio repetition (metered prose, sound effects)
Highly rhythmic soundtrack
Facial frontality (the stare, looking into the camera)
Self-consciousness (e.g. looking into mirror)
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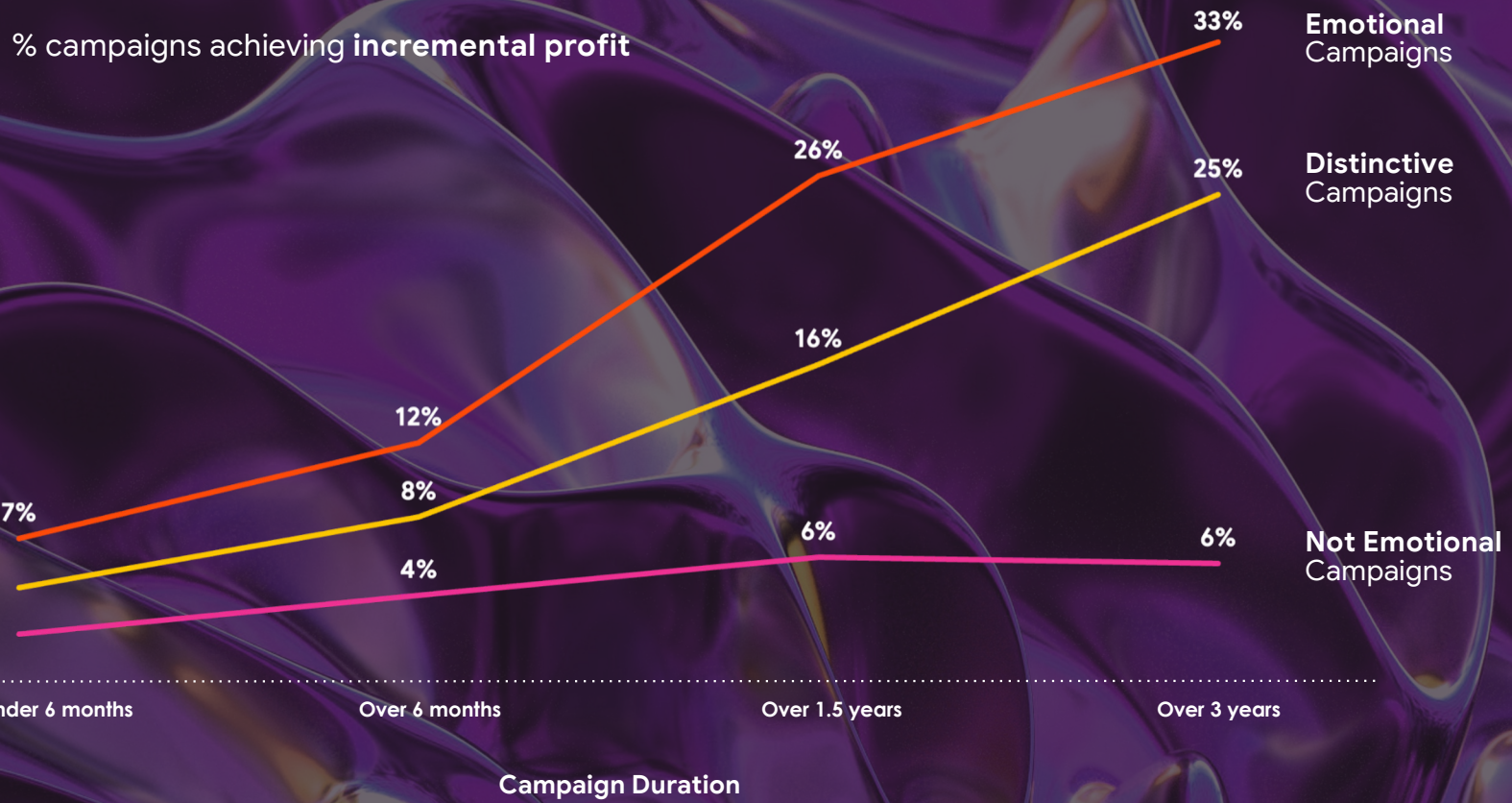
Showmanship

95%

A clear sense of place
One scene unfolding with progression
Characters with agency (voice, movement, expression)
Implicit, unspoken communication (knowing glances)
Dialogue
Distinct… ac…
Play on wo… or sub…sion… …guage
Set in the p…st (co…nes… set…
Refere…ce to other cultural works (p…astiche/parody)
Music wi… melody
Spontaneou… change in facial …xpression
Something out of the ordinary (emerging from scene)
Animals (the living)
Animated characters (suggesting the living)
People touching (intimacy)


SPA

Consistency is the **hardest part**



Within vertical quartiles: Top vs Bottom Star Rating & Fluency Rating. 1265 US, Europe, UK & Ireland campaigns between 2007-2023 from the Effie Case Library (2017-2023 program years). Ads tested with System1's Test Your Ad with 200,000+ Global Respondents.

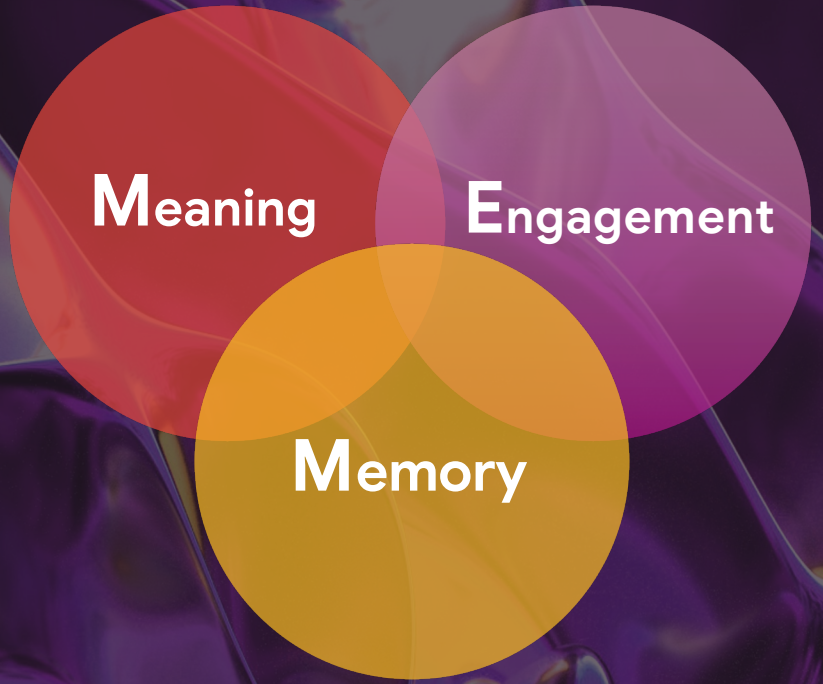
The **Game Changer**

What separates average campaigns from growth engines?

+300%
CREATIVE DIVIDEND

Campaigns scored with High Creativity have a **3x higher likelihood of achieving dual brand & business growth** compared to ordinary campaigns.

The Belgian Creative Triad MEM

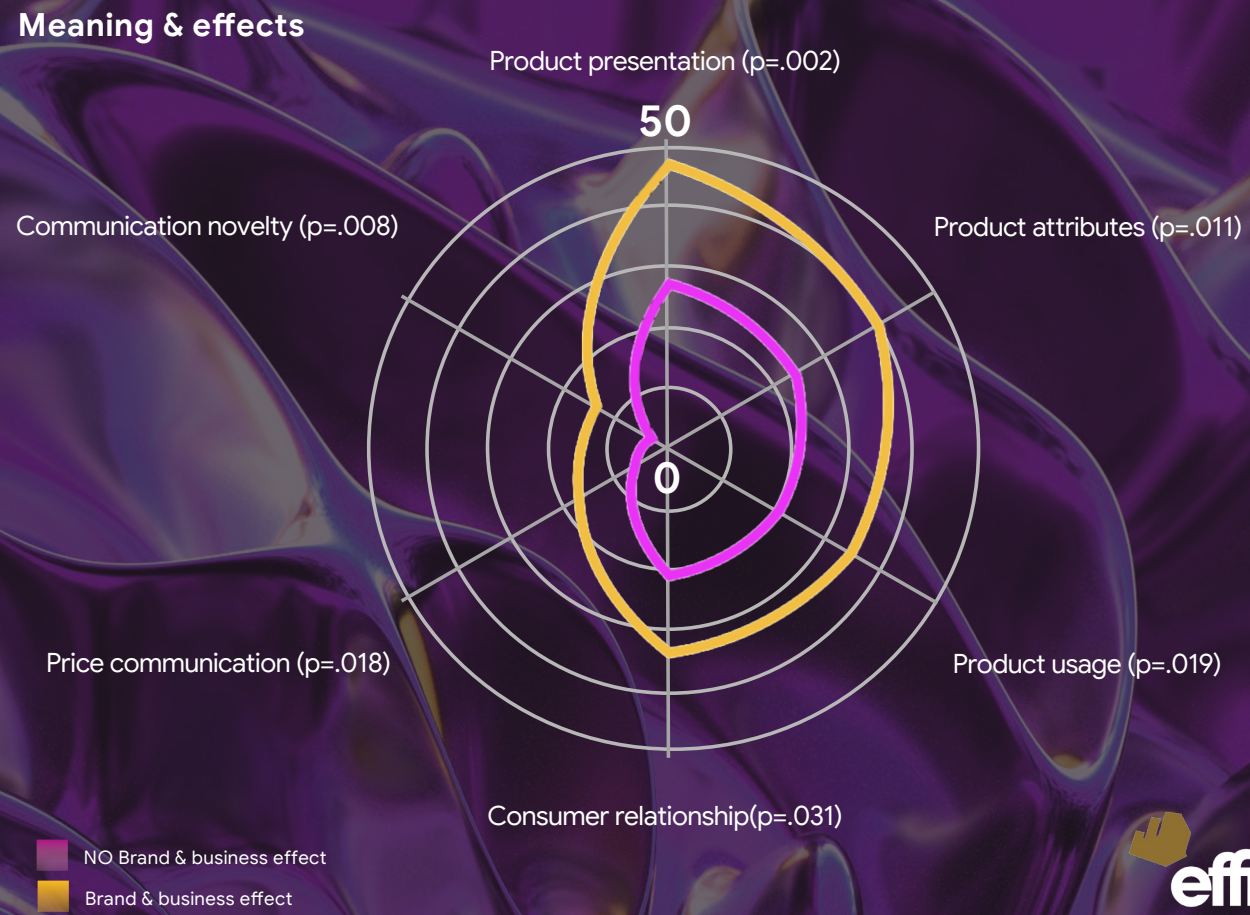


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1 - **MEANING**: Why is this relevant for me?

MEANING

The substantive message a campaign communicates: what the brand wants to convey and the position it aims to occupy in the consumer's mind.



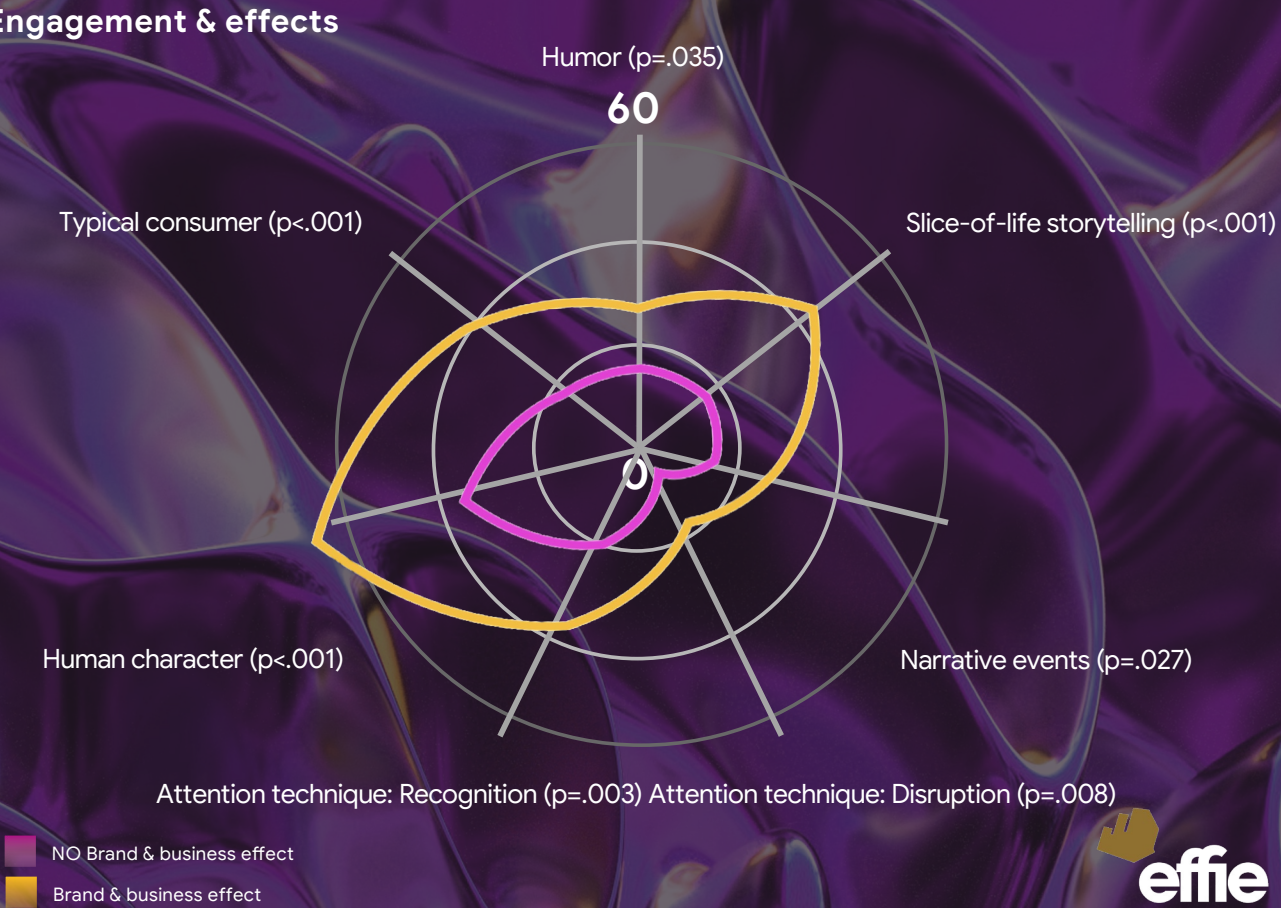
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ENGIE

2 - **ENGAGEMENT**: should I give this any attention?

ENGAGEMENT

The second dimension encompasses all the creative choices that determine whether people pay attention to the message.

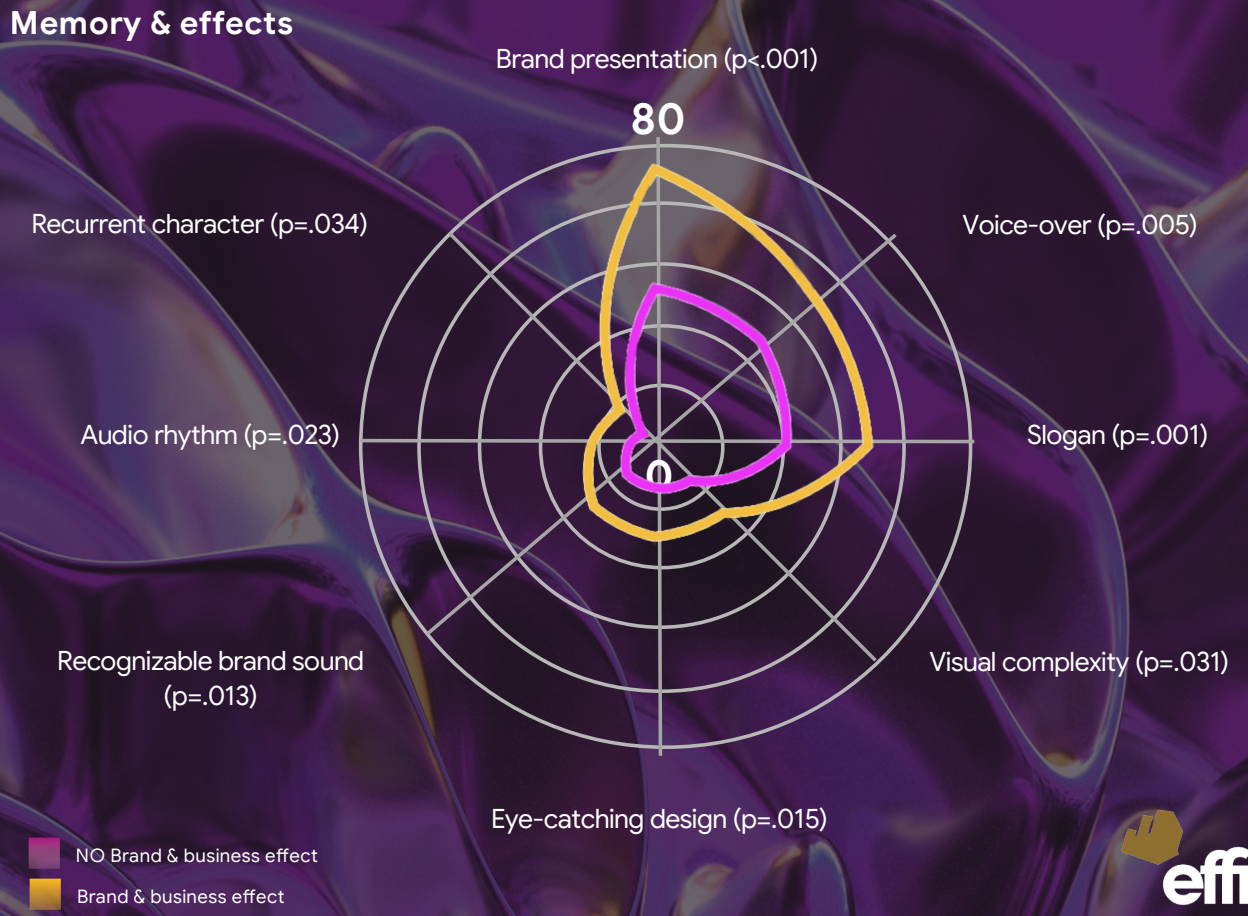


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3 - **MEMORY**: Can I recall which brand it was?

MEMORY

This encompasses all elements that ensure the message is unequivocally linked to the brand. Brand, presentation, voice over & slogan are key elements.



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europabank

The **Creative-Belgian** Dividend

1 FOUNDATION

Strategic trigger

Take the time to think what happens around you, where **consumers** are moving and where it creates **friction with brands**.



2 DISTRIBUTION

Media ecosystem

Understand your local **media environment** and the effects of every touchpoint (combo).

You're not the consumer.
Don't assume based on your own behavior

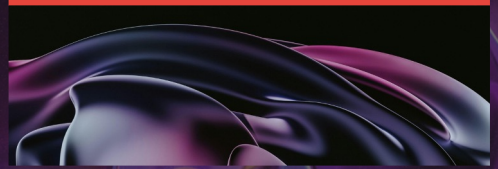


3 CREATIVE MULTIPLIER

Creative dividend

Get down to the nitty gritty of creativity to build:

Meaning: why should I care?
Engagement: why should I watch?
Showmanship & emotion
Memory: why should I remember?
= distinctiveness + consistency



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