

My top 10 takeaways from the IPA EffWeek 2019

10 insights from a week of panel discussions and presentations with key marketing effectiveness leaders

By Kate Barnham, Hearts & Science



This week I had the pleasure of fully immersing myself into EffWeek, an event run by the IPA alongside clients, agencies and industry bodies. The aim is to help marketers and brands make their marketing more effective in the digital era, and to create lasting culture change and position marketing as a key agent of business transformation in the wider business community.

Here are my top 10 takeaways from the week. Some of them are derived from new research, some of them are adapted ways of thinking about an established idea, and some of them are reiterations from industry leaders of the key areas of focus for driving effectiveness forward in the future.



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1. Digital disrupters are fundamentally changing consumers' viewing habits, but TV retains important cultural sovereignty

In Claire Enders' (Enders Analysis) presentation of the UK Media Landscape, she spoke at length about how the UK is at the forefront of adoption of content across the board; we are both exporters and consumers of high-quality culture and innovative advertising. In recent years though, digital disrupters have begun to change the way consumers consume that content; Google and Facebook are dominant advertisers and a massive 40% of mobile bandwidth is being used to stream YouTube and Netflix. In addition, there are even more platform in the pipeline with both Apple and Disney launching their own streaming services.

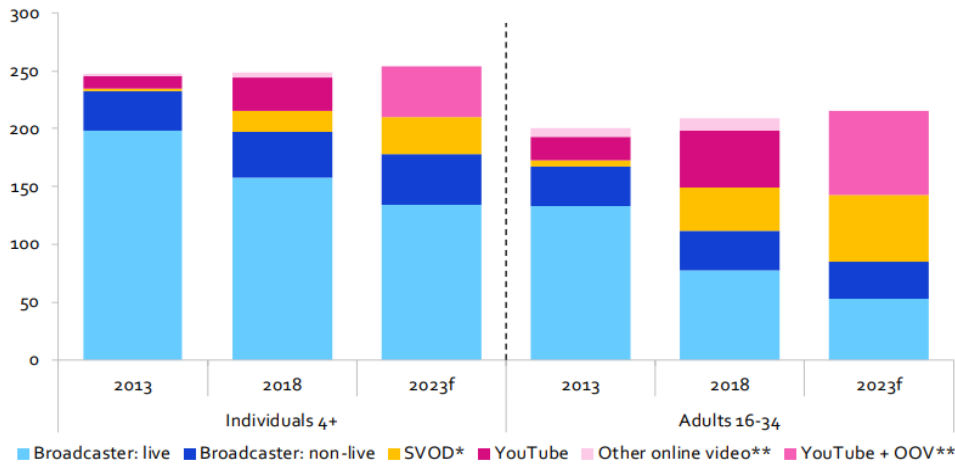
This is the environment that traditional media channels are having to compete in, often against structurally loss-making businesses and businesses with much larger budgets. But there are considerable brand safety concerns around some of these providers and platforms. Claire sounded the alarm over how unregulated much of this content is and expressed concern around children having access to inappropriate content. And this is something that a traditional medium like TV still has going in its favour; it is unique in reflecting the UK's cultural sovereignty in terms of rules and regulations, resulting in it being a brand safe, controlled and trusted environment. That is something that It is of the utmost importance that we protect this, and something that advertisers should not forget, even with the increasing number of alternative options. TV is "a unique way of getting across values that are progressive, kind, generous and democratic".

Please see graphs over the page.



An insatiable appetite for video, only set to grow

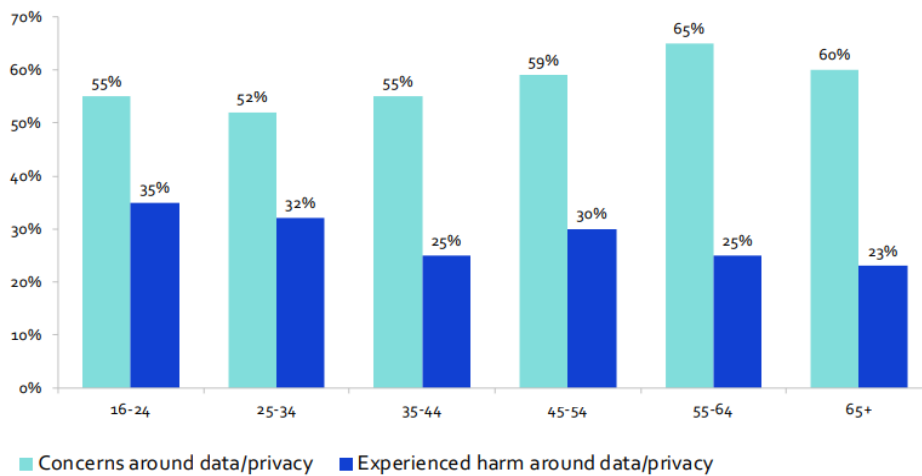
Average video viewing by age group (mins/day)



*Broadcaster SVOD services (e.g. NOW TV) fall under 'Broadcaster'.
 **Excludes adult content.
 [Source: Enders Analysis, BARB/AdvantEdge, ONS, Comscore, and industry research]

Data privacy harms are triggering a backlash

Data/privacy online by age, June 2018 (% of UK internet users)



[Source: Ofcom]

2. It's not brand OR performance but and... and... and...

Sue Unerman (Mediacom) presented her thoughts on 'What makes a 21st century brand?' using award winning IPA effectiveness case studies to prove out some of her specific points. Her key point was that the industry has somewhat of an issue with binary thinking; brand OR performance activity, traditional channels OR digital channels. However, we shouldn't be thinking about either/or in this way, but and... and and... and and... And to do that brands need to be addressing several specific areas, all at the same time. 3 of these key areas are:

Purpose: Barclays purpose-led initiatives included staff equipping different groups of customers with digital and life skills, such as how to avoid fraud or use technology. Compared to its previous product campaigns, purpose-led initiatives contributed to 2.6 times the level of brand trust seen previously.

Frictionless: Ella's Kitchen seamlessly combined ATL and BTL comms. The core of their plan was an always-on model featuring an advice hub and a CRM-driven initiative of emails and other communications to encourage users to recommend the brand. The programme drew in 40% of all new UK parents of weaning babies, generating £12.6m of incremental sales, and a 10% increase in penetration.

Use of Data: 32Red had an ambitious plan to double UK revenues to £100m in four years. Via modelling and smart use of data, a new strategy identified high value customers and delivered significant growth in new players through an effective mix of search, TV advertising, sports sponsorship, and content partnerships. The £100m target was reached one year early and 32Red was eventually sold for £176m, four times its valuation at the start of the growth plan.

[Full presentation available here](#)



3. Creativity must not be restricted solely to marketing

This concept was mentioned in several of the talks throughout the week. In Neil Barrie's (21st Century Brand) discussion about building a 21st century brand he spoke about how your creative canvas is your whole company, not just your content, and that to this end the brands that are succeeding now are driving creativity across four key pillars: Purpose-Led, Community-Driven, Tech-Enabled and Narrative-Based. Some examples of creativity outside of marketing include:

- **Bumble** (Purpose-Led) believe in driving forward gender equality and you can see this squarely in their product but also in their leadership, which is 80% women. The company's founder also personally campaigned to criminalise the sending of unsolicited obscene images in her home state of Texas when she found out that it wasn't illegal.
- **Apple** (Community-Driven) have their very successful 'shot on iPhone' campaign, which not only champions amateur photographers but also has a positive impact on local communities who benefit from beautiful free art.
- **N26** (Tech-Enabled) is an online banking product which that has invested heavily in a beautiful UI which is also fun to use, s strategy which has led to huge growth for the fledgling brand.
- **Airbnb** (Narrative-Based) needed to grow into the mainstream to drive overall business growth and achieved this through a clear consumer insight around the negative experiences consumers have with accommodation while on holiday. The narrative became one of being anti-holiday - 'why vacation somewhere when you can live there?'

In addition to this, Viveca Chan (WE Marketing Group) presented on The China Brandscape and also talked about weaving creativity throughout the entire business. She said that there's a reason that there are now two Chinese companies in the top 10 most valuable global brands in 2019; they do everything. They are the complete ecosystem, not just ecommerce. And they're not afraid to be creative, using smart data and innovating fast.

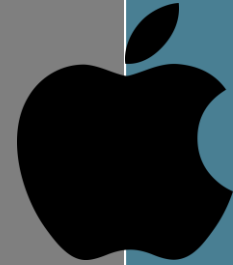


Purpose-Led



Ensuring their scale is ultimately to the benefit of the communities they serve

Community-Driven



With aligned incentives across customers, investors and employees

Tech-Enabled



By a world-class data-driven product that scales globally and connects emotionally

Narrative-Based



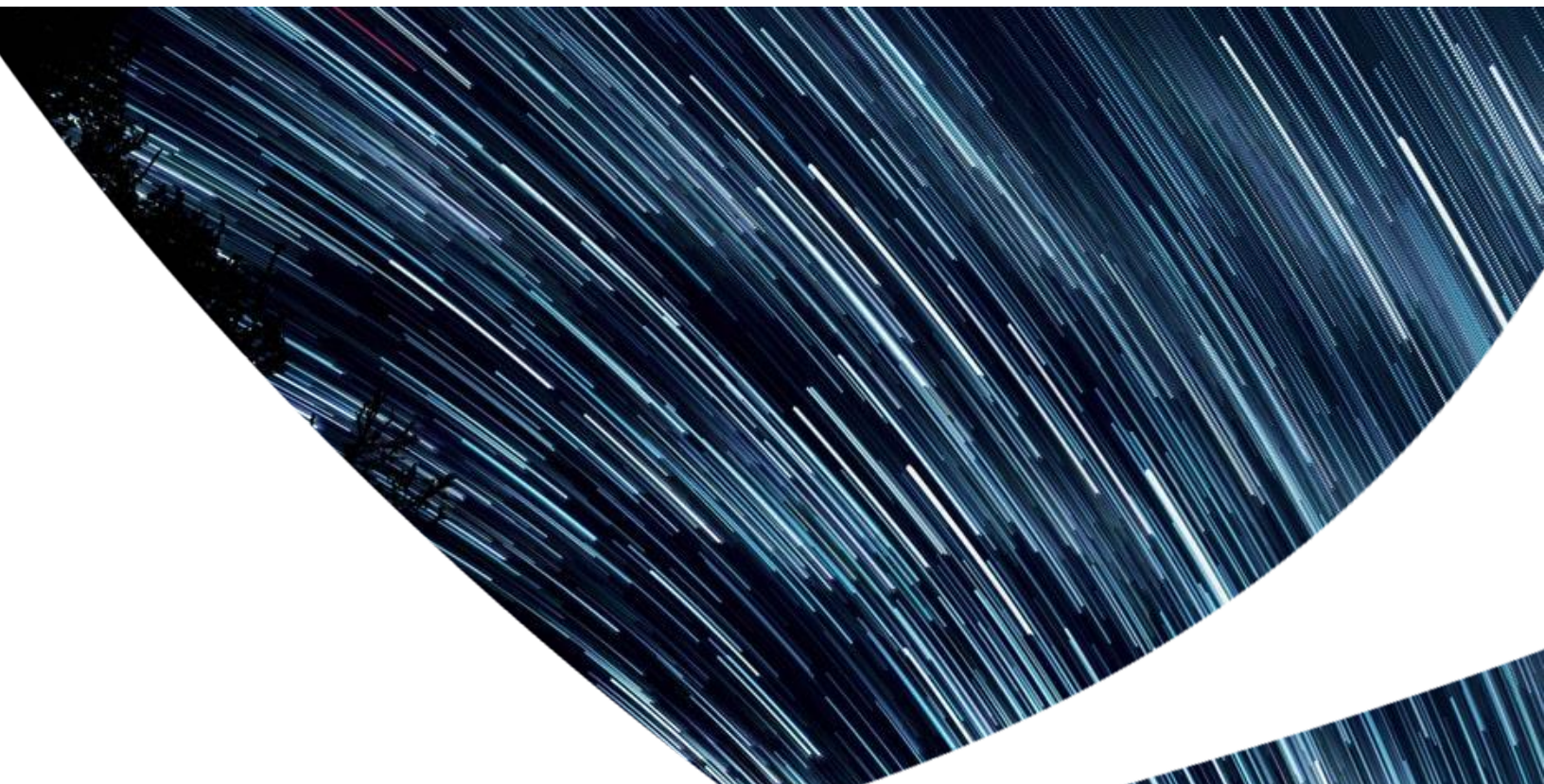
To unify all stakeholders with one shared story across all touchpoints

4. It's what you do with data that matters

Marketing effectiveness doesn't come from access to the data itself, it's about what you do with it that counts. In the words of one of the fathers of marketing effectiveness, Les Binet, "Data is pretty dumb. What you do with the data is what matters". This was discussed at length throughout the week. Lucas Brown (Total Media) revealed in his State of the Nation on Data that by 2025 30% of the data we have access to will be real-time. Digital data is already readily available, and this is driving a 'spin & bin' mentality that's causing people to act quickly on the most easily available metrics and which is fuelling the growth of short-termism. This is evident from the work the IPA have done. We have access to more data than ever before but what we're seeing is a decline in effectiveness.

What we need to get better at is triangulation of all these different data sources and different measurement methodologies, ensuring everything ultimately ladders back up to clear objectives and KPIs. There is ongoing research into ways to unify different approaches – attribution vs. econometrics vs. empirical tests – as they can often point in entirely different directions. No one is yet sold on the best way to do this and work is ongoing. However, what is clear is that many of the best measurement methods we have access to aren't new, we just need the courage to use them, for example long term fallow cells. And if we want to measure the long term, we need access to more long-term data, something that is increasingly difficult to get hold of for agencies.

[Full presentation available here](#)



5. Company culture is key to marketing effectiveness

Diageo presented back some of the internal work they have been investing in over the last few years, focused on instilling a culture of marketing effectiveness across their business. Their five key recommendations were:

- **Have a clear vision** – cost cutting pressure from investors led to a promise to overhaul productivity to the tune of £500m over three years, with marketing contributing £100m of that number
- **Set yourself a financial target** – this generates an outcome that can be shared and understood across the business, outside of just marketing
- **Instil a test, learn and iterate mindset** – you will have failures, you need to have courage and give people the power to be bold
- **It's not about fancy software** – solid business objectives and KPIs are much more important. They did talk about their web-based marketing effectiveness tool, Catalyst, but stressed that this was about providing globally consistent data and objectives, and common KPIs
- **Foster creativity** – alongside their data work they developed a separate program called Creative Sparks that ensured that the focus was still on creativity

And the results? A 16-fold gross profit return on investment and greater confidence from the business in marketing. The same actions and patterns can be seen reflected in the Direct Line effectiveness case study from 2018, really highlighting how important culture is to effectiveness.



6. Emotion is imperative to effectiveness

Mark Kermode was invited to present his thoughts on what it is that makes a great film, and he kicked off by speaking about the trend amongst film critics of favouring 'intelligent' cinema, rather than cinema that evokes a physical response e.g. a laugh or a shriek. There is a suspicion of the physical response, the feeling that the film isn't highbrow or intellectual if the response generated is a rational one rather than an emotional one. However, emotion is a primal engagement that you can't control, and so in Mark's opinion 'telling a story, or selling a story, won't work unless it hits you emotionally - otherwise you're just selling it to yourself' - and that this is true of advertising as well.

As an example, Mark discussed the science fiction films *Silent Running* and *2001 A Space Odyssey*. The two films were made around the same time and *Silent Running* was created by someone who had worked on *2001*, so they have many similar narrative and visual elements. Mark explained that he knows rationally that *2001* is a better film but *Silent Running* evoked such an emotional response in him the first time he saw it that it is by far his preferred film, and the one that he recalls vividly.



7. Humans + Machines = Marketing Effectiveness

Don't worry, we won't be losing our jobs to machines any time soon!

Tracy De Groose from Newsworks made a great point that "85% of the decisions that humans make are irrational but we're trying to use rational science to measure them". We must balance the use of data with gut feel, magic, creativity and human understanding. We mustn't underestimate human intelligence.

Gareth Jones from eBay revealed their internal motto, 'programmatically personalised at scale'. To achieve the personalisation that they do, at speed, they require machines, but they also need to retain human creativity.

And finally, a representative of Google's experimental testing team talked about their approach to creating and analysing live platform tests and was very clear that for them the machine learning can only do so much, with some pieces of the puzzle such as narrative structure still requiring human analysis and intervention.

Machine Learning led analysis



- Average size of the logo
- Number of shots
- % of frames with people

Human led analysis



- Narrative structure
- Emotions
- Value proposition

8. Using behavioural science to supercharge your digital advertising can have a disproportionate effect on consumer choice

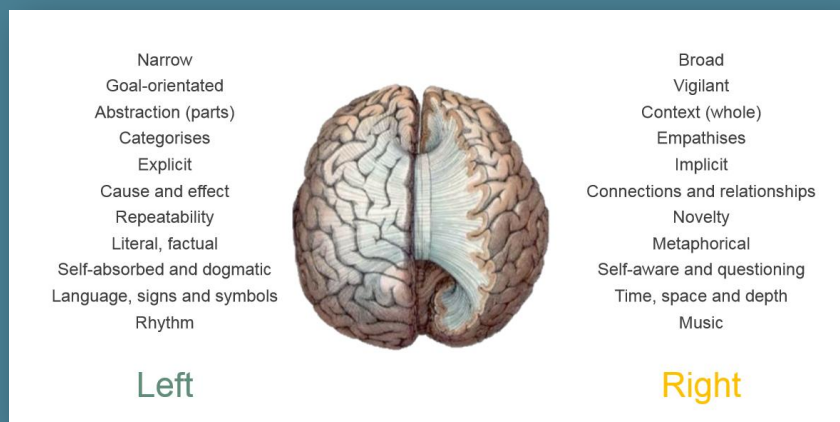
This is an insight from the Google event where they presented some initial findings from their Decoding Decisions research, investigating what they've coined as 'the messy middle' – that part of the consumer journey between awareness and consideration, and a purchase.

Google used behavioural science principles and screen tracking to create some online tests, to better establish what drives consumer choice. Aggregating 300 behavioural science principles into 7 (Mere Exposure, Category Heuristics, Social Norms, Authority Bias, The Power of Now, Scarcity Bias, The Power of Free), they discovered that they could drive choice away from a consumer's category first choice into other, less desirable, brands. An example of how they used these principles; offering a free satnav update for the second choice in the category with all else kept consistent drove that brand up in terms of choice. And the result? In some cases, even an entirely fabricated brand could overtake the category favourite if supercharged enough with these principles.

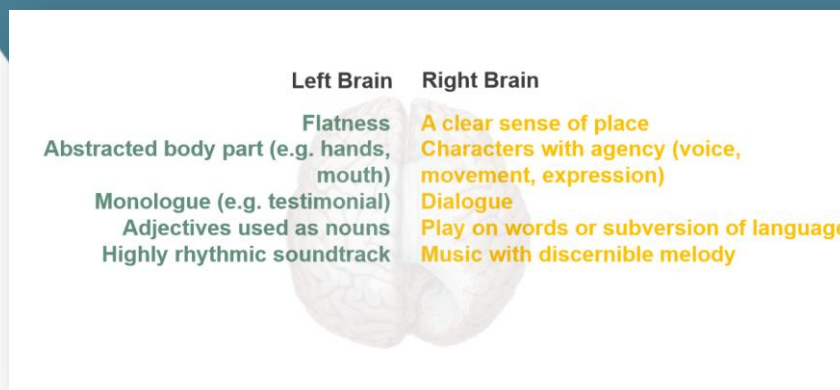


9. We're currently slap bang in the middle of a left-brained period in advertising

Orlando Wood from System1 launched their new research into the crisis in creative effectiveness, which focuses on the difference between left and right brained thinking with regards to creativity. The structural differences of the two sides, and the differences in the way that they attend to the world around them, translate into the type of content that each side of the brain would prefer and create.



The research suggests that through history we can see where the left brain – which has a greater suppressive effect on the right brain – has become dominant, and that we're in one of those periods now. This means that advertising has taken a turn to reflect some of those left-brain attributes: literal, factual, flat, abstract, narrow, goal-oriented, with a preference for signs and symbols. And that this could be one of the causes of the short-termist, activation focused advertising we've seen contribute to a decline in effectiveness.



10. B2B follows much the same rules of marketing as B2C

And finally, to a presentation at LinkedIn by Les Binet and Peter Field. I won't labour this one too much as I'm sure many of you are already familiar with their work on the elements that contribute to an effective B2C campaign, but now they have repeated the analysis for B2B campaigns... and found much the same thing.

- **Build a strong brand** - it is still brand advertising rather than activation which drives long-term large business effects.
- **Expand your customer base** - penetration trumps loyalty.
- **Maximise mental availability** - fame as an objective beats awareness and salience.
- **Harness the power of emotion** - emotional over rational even for B2B advertising.
- **Budget for growth** - the ESOV rule holds, although the brand activation split is more like 50:50 than 60:40.

[Full presentation available here](#)





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