



Breaking through the clutter

November ad review

Part 1 of 3

‘Tis the season to be ... sensitive

“I’m very excited to spend time with family this Christmas - especially as no COVID rules - but obviously cost is a bit more of a concern this year!” – Female, 21-25

As we roll towards what is expected to be a very busy advertising period with the World Cup landing on top of the festive season, there is some very notable hesitancy from consumers towards brands that may be too quick to associate themselves with this year’s tournament, or with an overly joyous Christmas representation in their ads.

Of the consumers we spoke to this week, concerns around the host nation – Qatar came through organically, with 1 in 4 even saying that seeing a World Cup themed ad would negatively affect their opinion of the brand.

As we were expecting, there are a lot of polarizing thoughts around the World Cup this year but there is still a lot of excitement around the event itself. There was a clear warning to advertisers that there needs to be very clear relevance between the brand and the tournament for advertising to be received positively this year. Brands perceived to be ‘jumping on the band wagon’ may well be judged harshly in light of the controversy around the host nation.

And despite a majority being excited for Christmas, worries and nerves around the cost of living are still playing in the back of our minds. However, as this is the first ‘proper Christmas’ after Covid there is a lot of anticipation – but we found people would much rather a realistic representation of the day, which although generally merry usually has a few hiccups and comes with very real cost pressure this year.



Never knowingly underplayed

“Very thoughtful and powerful and sent a strong message. Really made me think how lucky I am” – Male, 26-34 on the John Lewis Christmas ad



We’ve yet to see any World Cup ads breakthrough and the most memorable ad so far is the **John Lewis** ad, with the only other contender being the **Aldi** carrot ad – although it is trailing John Lewis in mentions (20% vs 52% for John Lewis).

John Lewis this year again stands out due to its high emotional resonance which few other ads so far have tapped in to, and the fact that the ad stood for a clear message was mentioned repeatedly.



The main barrier is the length of the ad. Most people are only likely to watch and enjoy it once or twice, with consumers mentioning how ‘stale’ longer ads of this type can get within a relatively short time.

Other ads consumers can recall at this time included; **Lidl**, **Asda**, **Adidas**, **Go compare**, **Compare the Meerkat**, **Very**, **Tesco’s**, **Marks and Spencer’s** and **McDonald’s**



Stand out or inspire?

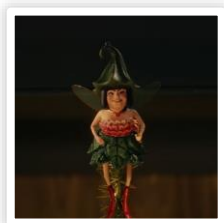
“It’s got to stand out. A strong storyline with some sort of twist. And clearly work in the brand so that the ad could not have been made by anyone else.” – Male, 50+

Of the ads we discussed specifically in the forum, 80% consumers like the **Disney** Christmas ad as it portrays a heart-warming family scene. The representation of a young family of colour was appreciated, and the representation was clearly important to consumers.

Although well-liked, the storyline was considered a little ‘soft’ and confusion around which Disney product the ad was for may explain why we see it struggling to breakthrough or be remembered organically.

The **M&S** ad was more memorable, but doesn’t land particularly well as the characters create confusion and have little relevance to the products shown later in the ad.

What consumers were wanting were ads with a real representation of people and their Christmas season, complemented by music and ‘British’ humour. This could be part of the perfect recipe to a stand-out Christmas ad. Celeb cameos and keeping the storyline close to the brand and product can also help to land a successful Christmas ad campaign.



The detail

MetrixLab UK is running a weekly online qualitative discussion to garner audiences’ views of the advertising they are seeing during the busy advertising season in November 2022. Each forum runs with 50-80 participants drawn from the general population. All must share decision-making or be the sole decision-maker on general household purchases.

Our AI-powered digital qualitative platform – Immerse – allows us to conduct an hour long text, image and video based discussion with up to 120 people per session; giving us qualitative feedback at quantitative scale.

Analysis can be conducted live by MetrixLab researchers, with results available instantly via the analysis page in the platform, and a written analysis available within 48 hours. The above topline analysis relates to the discussion we conducted on the 15th November 2022 at 6pm GMT.