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NEWS

Brand sponsorship viewed as more trustworthy than other forms of TV advertising

ADVERTISING CONSUMER INSIGHT

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A study by Channel 4 has found that 89% of consumers saw brands that sponsor TV as more trustworthy than other forms of advertising.

Plugged by Channel 4 as “the most comprehensive study into the effectiveness of TV sponsorship ever conducted”, the research by Consumer Insight aggregated 107 Channel 4 sponsorship studies. This included 257 waves of research that involved speaking to over 80,000 viewers over the past five years. This analysis was combined with research by Differentology.

The study also found that brand sponsorship appeals to young audiences and, for 79% of the UK audience, it is an accepted part of a TV experience.

Programme sponsorship also confers a premium on the sponsoring brands with 76% of viewers thought that TV sponsorship is a more expensive form of advertising and therefore, 91% perceived sponsoring brands to be more premium.

Consumers even want more of it, finds the study. Nearly seven in 10 wanted to see more of sponsorship as a form of advertising. This rose to 80% if the viewer was exposed to a product category they were actively in the market for.

This ties in with the finding that of those who recalled sponsorships, 54% said they were more likely to buy a sponsor's product.

“Although we've always known what sponsorship delivers for brands we lacked the proof,” Jonathan Lewis, head of digital and partnership innovation at Channel 4, said. “Some of the findings have left us pleasantly surprised, especially the positive perceptions around audience acceptance and relevancy among young audiences.

“At a time when brand safety and the need for accountability are paramount to advertisers we are delighted to see that TV sponsorship provides a reliable, transparent and effective platform for a host of brand and marketing communications challenges.”

Sponsorship case studies: Domino's Pizza, Lexus and Wickes

The study also spoke to brand partnerships including Domino's sponsorship of Hollyoaks, Lexus' sponsorship of the Drama on 4 strand and Wickes' sponsorship of Channel 4 's biggest programming strand Homes on 4.

For Domino's, the sponsorship of Hollyoaks saw an ROI increase of 35% leading the brand to increase its partnership from one year to three.

“Hollyoaks has offered us a route to our audience at a key time of day and has delivered significant increases in purchase intent and brand perceptions,” Rebecca Rose, head of marketing at Domino's, said. “Our partnership remains fresh as new viewers find the show

and by next year we'll have reached close to 90% of all 16-34s.”

Lexus, too, has renewed its sponsorship of Drama on 4 for a further two years, building on a three-year relationship thanks to “significant improvements in the awareness and consideration for Lexus within the Channel 4 audience.”

Wickes is another brand that has seen a rise in brand awareness among Channel 4 viewers, just three months into its three-year sponsorship of Homes on 4.

“This immediate impact (+14% vs 5% average) was boosted by the brand’s strong alignment with the programming content,” Matthew Gaunt, customer and communications director at Wickes, said. “Consideration of products featured in the idents grew by over 10% among viewers and greater amongst those looking to undertake relevant DIY jobs by an impressive 11%. Wickes also reported a near 40% increase in measured ROI from the activity versus the same spend in spot TV.”

New executional guidelines:

The research has helped Channel 4 to establish a new set of executional guidelines for clients to ensure the absolute efficacy of TV sponsorship:

- advertisers can become concerned that a campaign will ‘wear out’ if it is seen too much. This isn’t the case with sponsorship. ‘Wear out’ drives higher awareness and viewers are more likely to purchase the brand/product showcased;
- the stronger the brand’s alignment with the content it sponsors the bigger the boost to its metrics, especially purchase intent;
- strong, clear audio and visual branding makes a sponsorship 2.5 times more memorable to the viewer;
- viewers prefer the wording “Proudly sponsored by...” to any other alternative as it complements their expectation that the sponsor is a

partner in their viewing experience;

- four successful ways to align a brand with the content it sponsors include aligning creative execution with content or product with content; aligning with the audience or with the broadcast time.

This article was first published by Campaign. You can view the original [here](#).

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