

A VIEW FROM JOSH KRICHEFSKI

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# Getting vocal – will Channel 4 revolutionise digital advertising?

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JOSH KRICHEFSKI, CEO, UK 26 APR 2017

The advertising world is no stranger to change. In 2016, UK businesses [spent more than £10bn](#) on online advertising, a channel which [barely existed](#) 20 years ago. That is some change! Over those two decades, advertising has become highly sophisticated, embracing digital technology to better target, communicate with and ultimately sell to consumers. The latest development is the news that [Channel 4 will](#) this month launch ads that will speak out the name of the viewer as part of the creative.

The new format will allow advertisers to incorporate the individual names of registered All 4 viewers – a huge audience of 15 million people – into the audio of their adverts. The first brands to take part include 20th Century Fox and MediaCom client Ronseal.

This is a genuinely exciting development and one I'm sure will draw the attention of brands around the globe, as well as other broadcasters.

Personalisation may not be new, direct mail has always been personalised, but the ability to speak directly to a consumer is hugely powerful and is incredible an opportunity. Imagine – a personalised ad speaking to you as an individual about doing some DIY. It would certainly cut through the ad noise while you make a cup of tea!

There's no doubt this will be a hugely engaging format and, if used well, it will grab – and hold – the attention of viewers and draw them to the brand. But herein lies the challenge – “if used well”.

Our job in advertising is to make sure ads are relevant and engage people. No matter how innovative the format is, unless it's used imaginatively, it will be a novelty that fades away.

Personalised video ads have the potential to be much more than that – this could change the way digital ads are delivered. But advertisers shouldn't get carried away with the format and forget the ingredients that make a truly great ad. The concept of the ad needs to be creative, the execution needs to be seamless and, of course, we need to remember that not all brands will be right for this.

Reaching the right audience remains absolutely key so brands need to decide if personalised video ads, in this case on Channel 4 with its specific audience, is right for them. And if so, how are they going to make that ad stand out? Like anything in advertising, it's only worth doing when it enhances the experience for the consumer.

To hear more of our thoughts on personalised video ads, listen [here](#)

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