

Here comes Christmas!

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Unfortunately, having picked up a particularly unpleasant virus, I've spent the past two weeks of my life confined to my bed. After almost 7 seasons of 'Modern Family' the boredom began to set in, and it wasn't long before I found myself consumed by YouTube's Christmas content.

Although thinking about Christmas seemed a tad premature, with so much time on my hands I'd soon done two-thirds of my Christmas shopping and thanks to a particularly good tree decorating video, I had what could only be described as an extensive bauble wishlist.

So, it was only on my return to work that I discovered my consumption of Vlogmas was not as

prematurely festive as I had imagined; this year's Christmas adverts had arrived with a bang.

First out of the gates – Asda, Argos, Iceland and Walkers, who have fallen into two rather distinctive camps. Iceland and Walkers have opted to bolster their Christmas campaigns with festive heavyweights, Frozen II and Mariah Carey respectively, whereas Asda and Argos have gone for some heartfelt storytelling.

Iceland's spot shows Anna, Elsa, Olaf and Kristoff playing charades, during which time Elsa reveals that Christmas dinner is her favourite thing about the festive season. We are then shown a glorious feast and the voiceover declares "Discover the magic of Frozen at Iceland this Christmas." The tie in between Frozen II and Iceland works very well: frozen food plus the sequel to one of the greatest commercial successes Disney has had in recent times, which also happens to be called Frozen? I love it, it's genius.

When I read that Walkers had the undisputed Queen of Festivity, Mariah Carey, to support their new Christmas flavours campaign, I was overjoyed. I supposed that this would be a delight to behold, much like the newborn baby Jesus was on Christmas day all those years ago. However, I was underwhelmed. Don't get me wrong, I enjoyed the rendition of All I Want for Christmas is You at the beginning, which MC sang whilst wearing an extremely festive sequined red gown. However, the remainder of the storyline, in which Mariah and an elf battle over the last packet of Walkers, just fell a little flat for me. I can only hope the new flavours (Brussel Sprouts and Pigs in Blankets) are more impressive than the spot.

In Asda's advert a young girl wins over her grumpy brother by capturing some of Santa's leftover magic from the Aurora Borealis and transforming her hometown into a festive wonderland complete with a white cat pulled by a sleigh of toy mice (my favourite moment in the whole 2 minute spot!) and people at a bus stop transformed into jolly gingerbread people. This is a perfectly pleasant effort from Asda but for me, it doesn't particularly push the boundaries of festive campaigning.

My favourite is from Argos. This could be because it features a father and daughter drumming along to Simple Minds' iconic track Don't You (Forget About Me) and Simple Minds is my own father's favourite band. It left me quite misty-eyed. However, I also like that they have chosen

to tell a simple story; Christmas gifts from Argos will bring your family closer together! The spot is also titled The Book of Dreams, which is particularly powerful. For many this will conjure up memories of pouring over the Argos catalogue whilst lying on the living room floor, eyeing up potential Christmas list items for parents to buy and then ship off to Santa. That's the story my mam told me when we would go shopping. I never questioned the logic of sending it off to the North Pole only for a large bearded man to bring it back.

I eagerly await the remainder of this year's Christmas Advert Bonanza. This year is tipped to have more brand-building stories than last year, where the focus was on tactically highlighting products. With Marks and Spencer, John Lewis and Partners and many more still to come we are all in for a treat. I am off to put more baubles and some organza onto my tree wish list and maybe nab a packet of festive flavoured Walkers crisps.

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