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Innovate or Stagnate: Why You Should Embrace Creative Testing to Combat TV Ad Fatigue

Here's why you should always have an ad creative testing strategy, even when your campaigns are performing.

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A critical component of any successful performance TV campaign is effective creative. It's often recommended to launch a campaign with multiple creatives, and A/B test them to determine a statistically significant winner. From the foundation of a target-achieving ad copy, you can build a successful campaign.

Ok, I committed to a creative test. What now?

If all goes well, at the end of this testing period your ad campaign will have a creative exceeding KPI goals. You'll be running a spot that outperformed alternative concepts, and you'll prepare for life beyond the testing phase of the campaign.

Instincts may now tell you to test and scale into new media opportunities (which you should) and put creative brainstorming on hold while you blindly stoke the fire with increased ad spend (which you shouldn't).

A successful creative test has rewards beyond just providing the campaign with a strong margin and scalability. It gives you the freedom to continue testing additional spots and diversify the portfolio of ad copy that you're driving response with.

Why shouldn't I just scale since I have a creative that exceeds response goals?

If you take the approach of pausing creative brainstorming while reaping the gains of a seemingly invincible control creative, you might be at a loss when response begins dwindling. With minimized insights on what messaging is most effective across various formats, genres, dayparts, and affiliates, you'll have a delayed start in reigniting your target audience's interest.

Learnings not gained eventually transform into margin not captured.

Learning while your campaign is healthy and scalable allows you to aggressively pit new spots against each other to bolster your arsenal of attention-grabbing concepts. Simultaneously testing new creative concepts while scaling media spend unlocks longevity in an ad campaign via ad copy diversity.

What are the benefits of ad copy diversity?

Having several comparably successful spots allows you to spread your message across various creative concepts, quelling the onset and severity of ad fatigue. And as important as this is for national players, it's even more important for localized efforts where your media continually runs in the same target DMAs for the life of your campaign.

In a localized campaign we recently ran targeting 18 states, a 14-week stretch that saw over \$1.5MM in ad spend highlighted the importance of creative diversity. There was one control creative running throughout the first seven weeks. During this time, the campaign's response rate fell 39%.

In the 8th week, another creative was introduced and ran just 20% of the total weekly media spend in the trailing seven weeks. In that time, the control creative experienced only a 2% reduction in overall response rate—essentially plateauing from the descent it experienced running solo.

Creative diversity yields you more than only one winning ad copy. It mitigates ad fatigue and offers alternative spots that can claim center stage over your control and keep your campaign thriving if response rates shift.

Embrace creative testing as an ever-present strategy for nursing campaign health, even if you have a high-performing ad—it will keep your message fresher for longer and maintain response rates more effectively over the long term.

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