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Changes like these have the potential to shift the balance between audio and visual media, weakening the dominance of what we see over what we hear; and yet many brands continue to heavily prioritise visual communication and are failing to leverage the world of audio.

In this report, Neuro-Insight draw on decades of neuroscience expertise, combined with brand new research, to demonstrate the power of audio communication. We describe a new approach to planning and creative, which uses neuroscience principles to understand and harness the impact of sound, in order to boost campaign effectiveness in a changing media landscape.

@neuro_insight



Tuning in to sound:

The under-used creative resource



NEURO-INSIGHT

About Neuro-Insight

Neuro-Insight uses a proprietary brain imaging methodology to measure the subconscious impact of communication in order to optimise its effectiveness.

For more information on the findings detailed in this report, and to discuss how they might apply to your business challenges, we'd love to hear from you:

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Introduction

Introduction



When MTV hit the airwaves on August 1 1981, the very first video that it broadcast made a bold statement; ‘Video killed the radio star’ by Buggles.

At that time, the channel’s confidence in video seemed well-founded. MTV’s stratospheric rise through the ‘80s and ‘90s, coupled with the rise of broadcasters like CNN and ESPN, opened the gates to round-the-clock entertainment, out to keep our attention firmly fixed on the screen.

But despite the soaring success of visual media, video is a long way from killing radio which, along with other voice and music based platforms, continues to thrive today because of the enduring power of sound.

Yet, all too often, planning and creative strategies overlook sound’s capacity for impact and long-term brand building, and sound is often used as a finishing touch rather than a fundamental asset. Marketers overlook this at their peril, particularly

as it seems that another media shift is in progress. Audiences today often report feeling overly distracted by their devices and, increasingly, are looking for relief from the tyranny of the screen.

Now, more than ever, is the time to investigate how sound can realise its true potential in the world of branding and communication.

In the following pages, we draw on neuroscience principles, and the outcomes of specific studies, to illustrate the many ways in which audio media can be at the forefront of brand communication, as a powerful driver of memory encoding and future action. Our findings suggest that marketers and agencies who overlook sound as a creative tool are often missing out on a crucial dimension of branding.

It’s time to tune in.

Audio and the brain

The role of neuroscience

At a conscious level, it's hard for us to identify and separate out the impact of sound from other aspects of communication. But looking at brain response is a great place to start if we want to track and quantify how people are responding to sound in ways they might never consciously perceive.

Neuroscience offers marketers a means of measuring second-by-second processes in different parts of the brain, which are linked to a range of cognitive functions. By understanding and analysing these, we can build a picture of some of the key factors that shape our perceptions of the world and ultimately drive our actions.

For marketers, the most crucial of the metrics that we track is a function that we call long-term memory encoding (LTME). "Long-term" means anything that is stored for more than a few minutes, and the metric doesn't relate to what is already in memory, but measures what is being stored, or encoded, on a second by second basis as we experience a stimulus.

By measuring LTME, we understand how our brains record our experience of the world. This is crucial in two ways. At the simplest level, if something doesn't get encoded into memory it simply isn't there, and can't possibly affect our future actions. But, beyond that, our brains are very selective about what goes into memory and so what's encoded is information that the brain has already, at a subconscious level, identified a use for.

Memory encoding is both an enabler and a predictor of likely future action, and studies have clearly shown the link between strength of memory encoding and subsequent real world outcomes.

But what encourages memory-making? There are numerous things that contribute to memory encoding, and decisions made by markets and creatives are key to many of these. Creative choices that are made; like script, casting, colour palette and role of the product, can all change the way we process a message, and audio cues like music, tone, accent, timing and sound production are just as important.

In the course of this report we will be drawing on neuroscience as a primary resource for exploring many of these factors. We'll begin by delving into the way subconscious information is tracked and analysed, with a brief overview of Neuro-Insight's approach to research and insight development.

The Neuro-Insight methodology

The technology used by Neuro-Insight - Steady-State Topography (SST) - is unique in the world of neuromarketing. Originally developed in the academic world, all the key metrics used by SST have been validated through peer-reviewed research, and it's been used for commercial research projects for almost twenty years.

SST is particularly well-suited to market research, as it tracks subconscious responses in an environment that reflects the way in which content is normally consumed; studies are carried out in a normal room - not a hospital or lab environment. Because there is an unusually low level of "noise" in our data, we can confidently report on results based on respondents viewing input material only once; not multiple times. And it is a quantitative methodology with a cell size of at least 50 respondents, to ensure that results are robust and the sample is large enough to be representative of the target audience.

How it works

Study respondents are pre-recruited and convened in groups of eight at the research location. They are given an introduction to the methodology and are then fitted with visors and headsets that pick up electrical responses in the brain, taking second by second readings from 20 felt sensors.

We generally take readings for around 30 minutes whilst people engage with study content. Participants are not told specifically what the research is about - they are simply told that we are interested in their response to viewing content, and that they should just engage with this as they would do normally.

What it measures

Whilst traditional market research relies on conscious responses, the brain functions we measure are subconscious, representing reactions that people may not even be aware of but which can nevertheless impact decisions and behaviour. By identifying activity from areas in the brain associated with specific cognitive processes, we are able to report on five key metrics:



Long-term memory encoding:

This refers not to existing memories, but what is being encoded, or stored, into long-term memory at the point when it is being laid down. "Long-term" means effectively anything that is stored in the brain for more than a few minutes.



Engagement

Engagement is an indicator of how involved people are with the presented stimulus and is generally triggered by material that is of personal relevance.



Approach/ Withdrawal

This refers to the "direction" of the emotion being experienced – the terms broadly equate to like and dislike. If you show strong approach, it suggests you want to move towards it because you like it, whereas the opposite is true for withdrawal.



Emotional intensity

Emotional Intensity relates to the strength of emotion being experienced.



Attention

As it sounds - a measure of how closely participants are paying attention to what they are watching, providing an indication of the level of interest.



The brand room and how sound contributes to it

The first way in which neuroscience can help to shed light on the importance of sound is in providing an underlying model about how branding works in the brain.

The Brand Room and how sound contributes to it

Customers don't think about brands nearly as much as marketers do. Brand communication is most effective when there's a tacit acknowledgement of this which means shaping comms with an understanding of the difference between brand activity that helps build equity (vital but difficult and longer-term) and activity that is about leveraging that equity at appropriate touchpoints.

Building the "Brand Room"

We use a simple analogy of a "Brand Room" to visualise how our brains process and store information about brands.

For everything we encounter over our lifetime, including people, places, ideas and brands, our brain builds a corresponding neural network of associations that grow over time as we learn more about or interact more with the subject in question. We can think of these networks as being like rooms in the brain, each representing a particular thing.

The 'room' of a brand we've only just heard about starts out bare, with no existing associations, but subsequent encounters help to furnish and so distinguish the room from others. Whilst some brands will never be important to us, and always reside in sparsely decorated rooms, those that we engage with will become more richly populated with associations. These can be positive or negative depending on the nature of our brand experiences, so if we have a lot of great experiences with a brand, we'll accumulate a lot of positively-cast associations in our minds.

Brand communication can play one of two roles in relation to the brand room. The first is to help furnish or decorate the

room, by adding or changing associations. This is a long-term job and tends to be most effectively achieved by media like television, cinema (and of course by personal experience); things that deliver narrative, colour, movement and sound in relatively long-form content.

But no matter how well decorated they are, brand rooms tend to sit in darkness most of the time. It's only when something flicks a metaphorical light switch that the associations and sentiments within the room can have any impact, providing a shortcut to the emotions and perceptions already stored from previous encounters with the brand in a way that can start to affect peoples' actions.

These "light switches" usually comprise elements of brand iconography; logos, shapes, sounds and colours which are strongly associated with a brand. These can be delivered by most media, but those that are particularly well-placed to act as triggers are media that deliver short, frequent impacts close to point of purchase - in-store promotion, online advertising and social media typically work well in this way.

Sound has a role to play both in decorating the brand room and in acting as a light switch to trigger associations. Music and dialogue certainly have the ability to build brand equity, and can multiply the impact of visuals when the two are aligned, but sound can also be an excellent trigger.

Where a brand has appropriated a sound or piece of music, this can evoke the brand quickly and effectively.



If a rival retailer “does a John Lewis” at Christmas, there is a danger of actually benefiting the John Lewis brand

Using sound to build equity

As a brand that arguably has the most festive brand room around, John Lewis has crafted a carefully-maintained set of associations throughout its long-running Christmas marketing campaigns. Highly evocative and emotional stories are delivered consistently year on year, amplified by distinctive, synchronised soundtracks.

New covers of famous tracks are developed to reinforce and colour the story that the advertising tells, and make it easy to amplify the effect of the TV campaign through the use of radio. The emotional associations built between the narrative and the soundtrack are deepened on repeat viewing and then switched on time and again by the airplay received by the soundtrack single alone.

And indeed, the way in which John Lewis has come to own music covers at Christmas could have an additional, presumably unforeseen benefit. Because John Lewis is so strongly associated with this sort of advertising, if a rival retailer “does a John Lewis” at Christmas, there is a danger of actually benefiting the John Lewis brand. If the rival’s own branding isn’t strongly communicated, the brain will default to the brand in category that best fits with the type of advertising on show - usually John Lewis of course - and any new emotional associations will be attributed to that dominant brand - effectively helping to further decorate the John Lewis brand room.

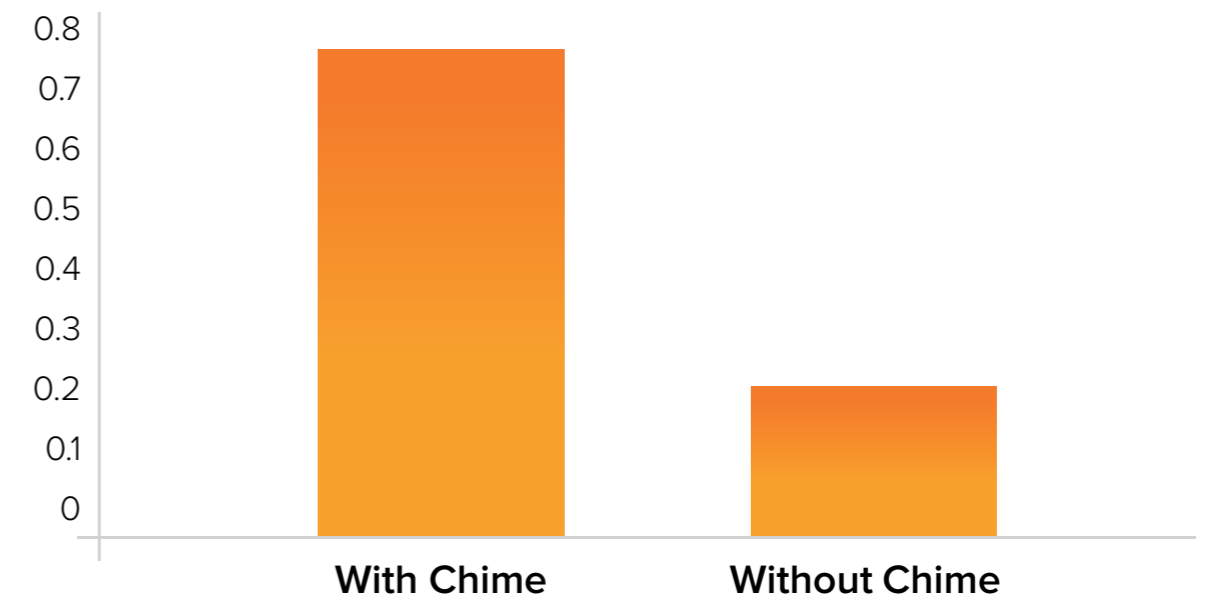
Using sound as a light switch

Intel used sound in a very different way to John Lewis - not to build brand equity, but rather to trigger it. Most of us will recall the Intel Inside sound ident, and neuroscience research that we carried out a few years ago demonstrated just how effective it was.

We took an ad that featured the Intel chime, and re-edited it to remove that part of the sound track. Half the respondents in a study were shown the original ad and the other half saw the ad with the chime removed. We found that when the chime was present, right brain memory encoding (where response to music is usually reflected) was higher but, even more crucially, left brain encoding (for words and detail) was also much stronger (Figure 1). This means that people weren’t just encoding the sound, but also strongly encoding the branding that went alongside it in the form of the written brand name. Intel, by committing to their sonic branding over time, had forged a remarkably strong piece of brand iconography.

Intel’s chime was so prolific because of a contractual obligation stating all companies which used Intel’s chips in their devices had to play its tone in their advertising. Thankfully, there are many ways for advertisers to achieve a similar effect, without getting the lawyers involved.

Figure 1: Memory response to Intel’s audio branding



How audio becomes a brand multiplier

Mark Barber MBE,
Planning Director, Radiocentre



We embarked on a project to challenge the perception that audio media is only useful for tactical messaging, as we believed there was a viable role for audio as a complementary tool to grow a brand strategically, in tandem with a wider media campaign. We employed a series of research methodologies to provide the proof.

In testing the effects of radio advertising alongside audio-visual media, we discovered that far from being just a tactical medium, audio channels can enhance a brand's network of associations in the brain - building brand equity - and in so doing can improve the cost-effectiveness of marketing campaigns by 20%.¹

How does it achieve this? While a medium like radio will maximise reach in conjunction with TV, it will also reinforce associations if a strong audio brand asset is used consistently. Radiocentre found that of all the brands we tested, those which had the strongest 'sonic property' - whether that was music, a sonic ident or another kind of audio asset in their advertising - did the best at growing their network of associations across media.

So beyond just delivering additional reach, including radio advertising in the mix using consistent audio assets can boost brand associations and improve the overall efficiency of brand building campaigns.

1- Radio: The Brand Multiplier, Radiocentre (research: Differentology), 2016



Leveraging sound unifying content & context

Sound can both furnish the brand room and act as a light switch. But our experience of sound is rarely isolated.

The impact of audio will be greatest when content is complementary to other elements of the experience: sensorially, tonally and in terms of the surrounding environment.

Leveraging sound: unifying content & context

In sync with our senses

TV advertising is traditionally the most prevalent multi-sensory format, delivering effective brand-building through an immersive combination of audio and visual creative.

Working with Thinkbox in 2016, we set out to understand the creative factors that contribute to TV advertising effectiveness, measured in terms of branding impact. We used a database of over 200 ads, researched over a period of around five years, to identify factors consistently associated with effective ads, and discovered how soundtracks could both add or detract from an ad's performance.

Our analysis showed that music in TV advertising was associated with the strongest levels of long-term memory encoding when the soundtrack was closely choreographed with the action - either by having lyrics that matched what was happening on-screen, or by the cadence of the music corresponding to the pace of the action.

Ads that closely linked their sound and visuals delivered, on average, 14% higher memory encoding at end branding than more passive soundtracks.

But that's not to say any music is good music - we also found through the same analysis that, in terms of driving strong memory encoding, it was better to have no music at all than to have recessive music that wasn't significant to the advertising.

The results demonstrate the benefits of synchronising sound with other senses - specifically vision.

Our brains hate it when what we see and what we hear are badly aligned (think bad lip sync). In that situation, what we see will tend to dominate.

When sound and visuals are closely synchronised, messaging is likely to be reinforced, whilst recessive, ill-aligned sound will just interfere with what we are watching and make the overall impact less effective.

The implications for marketers and agencies are clear. If the addition of a soundtrack sits at the end of the creative process, once the visuals are finalised, there's a danger that the two won't work well together, and the sound could even be counter-productive. There's a strong case for planning audio elements much earlier, in conjunction with the visual elements of a piece of creative.

In sync with the tone

So aligning the creative elements of a piece of advertising will boost its impact, but a soundtrack also needs to be in keeping with the tone or feeling of a piece of creative.

This may seem intuitive - we could guess that playing a jolly track over a serious message, for instance, would fall flat - but the implications go further than this.

In our studies we have found that even minor tweaks to an audio track can result in very different outcomes.

Similar tracks - different emotions

In a recent study, we took two ads from the 2018 Superbowl and looked at the impact of using different soundtracks.

The first ad was Kia's 'Feel something again', which used Aerosmith's classic track 'Dream On'. The version of the ad that aired had used heavy audio editing to align the song and the car's sound effects with the visuals, and the moments where these were closely aligned were associated with strong peaks of memory encoding (Figure 2). We created a second version of the ad, using the original song but without the added effects, and the impact on memory was dramatically lowered (Figure 3).

The car sounds in the original version of the ad were strongly reinforcing the visuals and ultimately driving up memory response to the all-important product shots.

Figure 2: Kia memory encoding (music and sound effects)

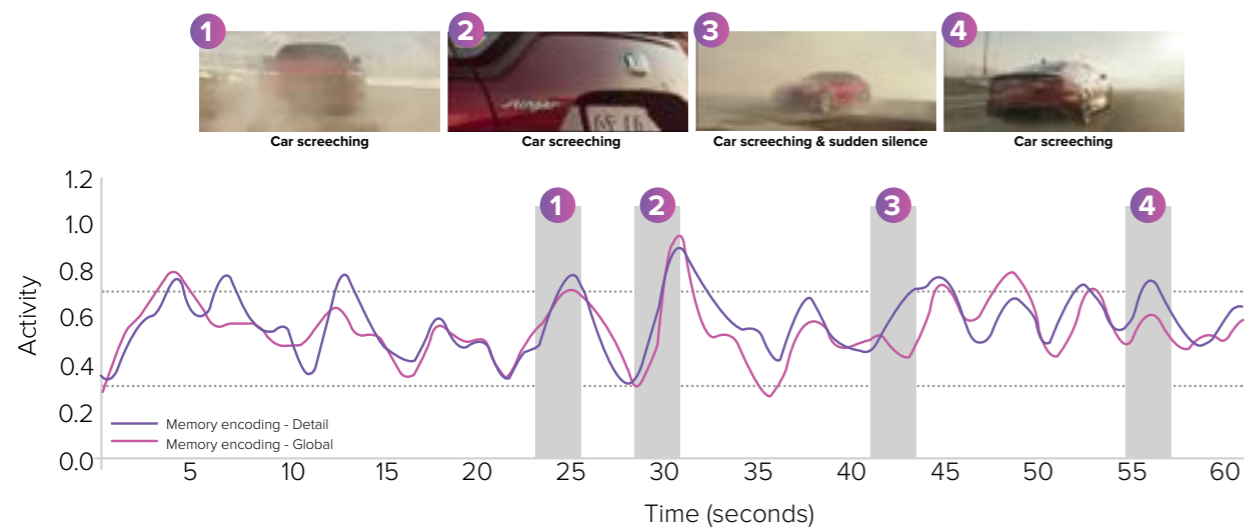
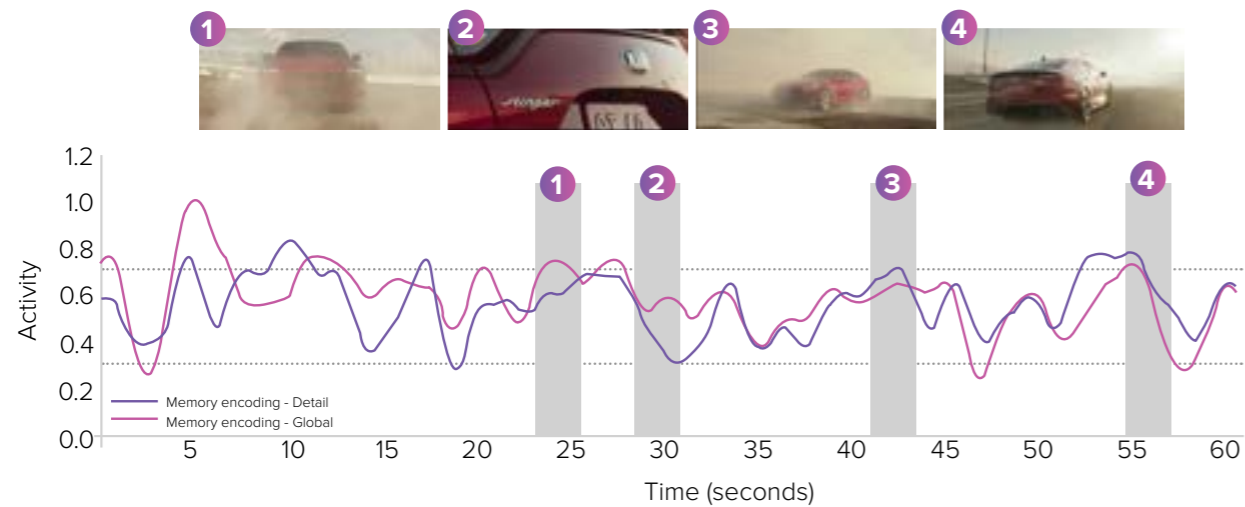


Figure 3: Kia memory encoding (music alone)



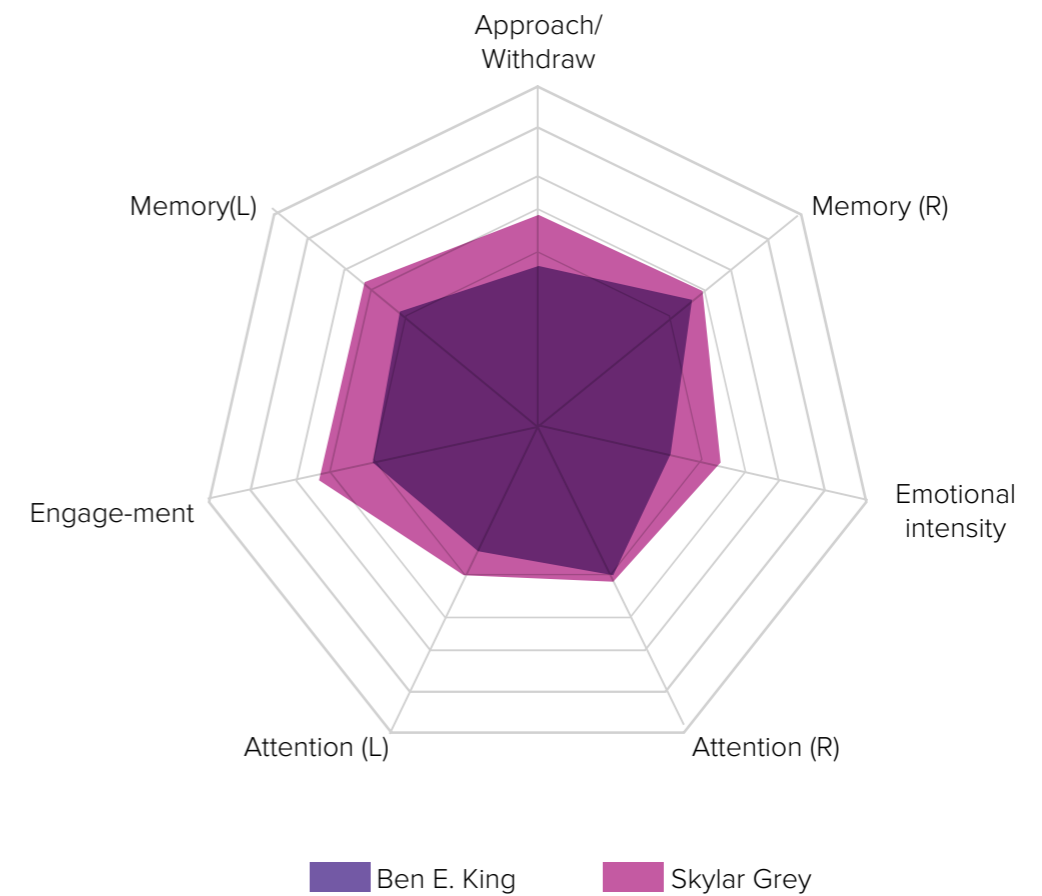
The second Superbowl ad that we looked at was for Budweiser. The ad announced the brand's support of the Texas storm relief effort and took as its backing a cover version of "Stand by Me" by Skylar Grey, a softer and slower version than the original by Ben E. King. To understand the impact of this, we created a new version of the ad using the original Ben E. King track and researched it alongside Grey's cover version.

As shown in Figure 4, we found Skylar Grey's version strongly out-performed Ben E. King's.

Despite the familiarity and popularity of an original track, when it comes to advertising, fit is more important than fame.

Both the Kia and Budweiser ads show how detailed editing work can create a more effective result than just laying a good track over the action; and above all they show how sound needs to be in sync with the tone of an ad if it is going to boost its impact.

Figure 4: Average responses to Budweiser Superbowl advertisement (comparing Ben E. King and Skylar Grey sound tracks)



Similar tracks - very different results

In a live market example, we worked with a pharmaceutical company to assess the impact of two soundtracks on responses to a TV ad designed to drive people to the company's website.

The two tracks were ostensibly similar, and traditional research had revealed little difference in conscious responses to them.

However, our research showed that one of the tracks elicited a much stronger memory encoding response than the other (Figure 5), particularly at the call to action ("visit the website"). By looking at the pattern of response we found that, at key moments

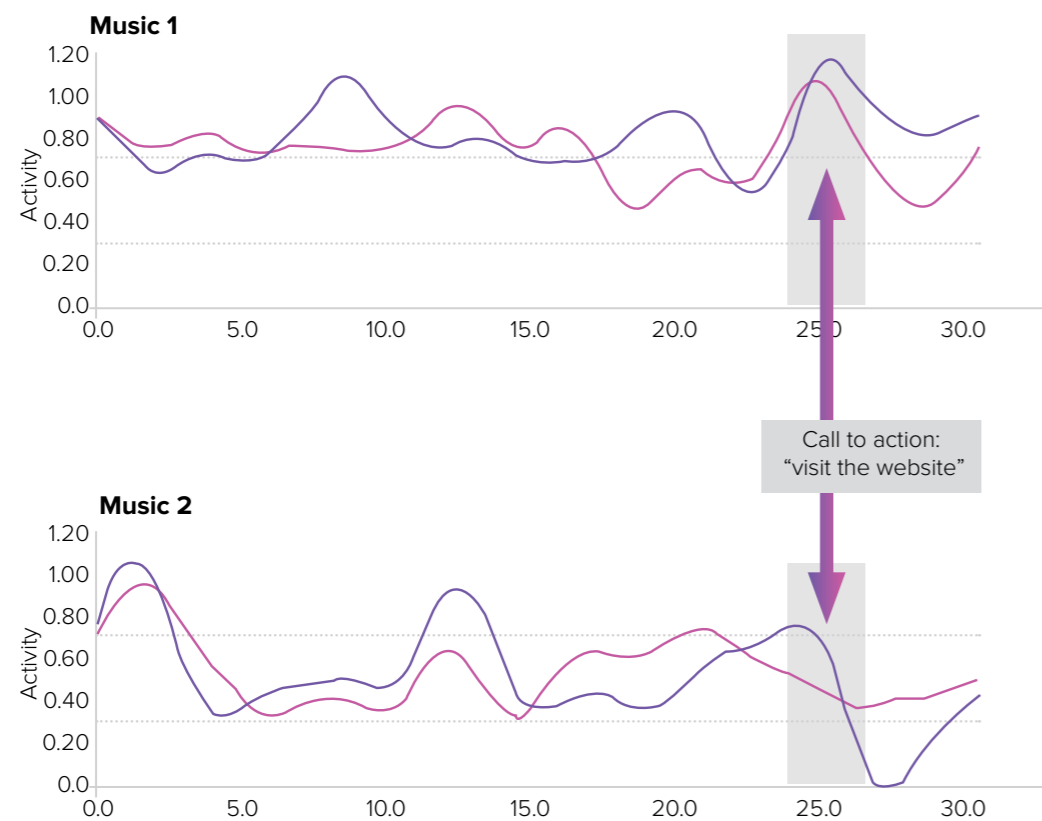
in the ad, the tempo of the best-performing track was much more in keeping with the emotional tone of the message being delivered.

To check real world impact of the new ad, we compared the level of memory encoding response that it elicited with that of an ad aired the previous year and found it to be around 60% higher.

The client adopted the recommended soundtrack, and in-market results subsequently showed that, when the new commercial was launched, traffic to the website more than doubled year on year.

So it's important for sound to complement the tone of an ad, but it can go further than this and actually draw attention to key parts of the message. A pause in the sound track can create tension, which makes the brain more receptive to what follows; or music rising to a crescendo can build emotional responses and again create a feeling of anticipation in the brain. These sorts of changes to pace and intensity can direct the brain to be receptive at points in an ad where key messages and calls to action are delivered, and so help to reinforce their impact.

Figure 5: Comparing memory encoding response between similar music tracks



Complementing the environment

The final point to make about synchronising sound and context is that it's not just the context within the ad that matters, but its surrounding context too. Brain response is fundamentally affected by the environment in which our experiences take place. Effective messaging is a product of great content shaped for the right context.

The bi-lateral nature of brain response is a key factor underlying the impact of context. The left and right hemispheres of the brain fulfil different roles and process stimuli quite differently.

Every piece of communication that we see, whether it be an ad or its surrounding content, will have a polarity in terms of brain response - it might be more left brain, or more right brain or somewhere in the middle. We talk about this as being the neurostate™ of a piece of communication.

The crucial thing about neurostates is that, once the brain is following something with a particular polarity, it won't change instantly when new content is presented. So, our brains tend to be more receptive to content that has a similar neurostate to the content that preceded it.

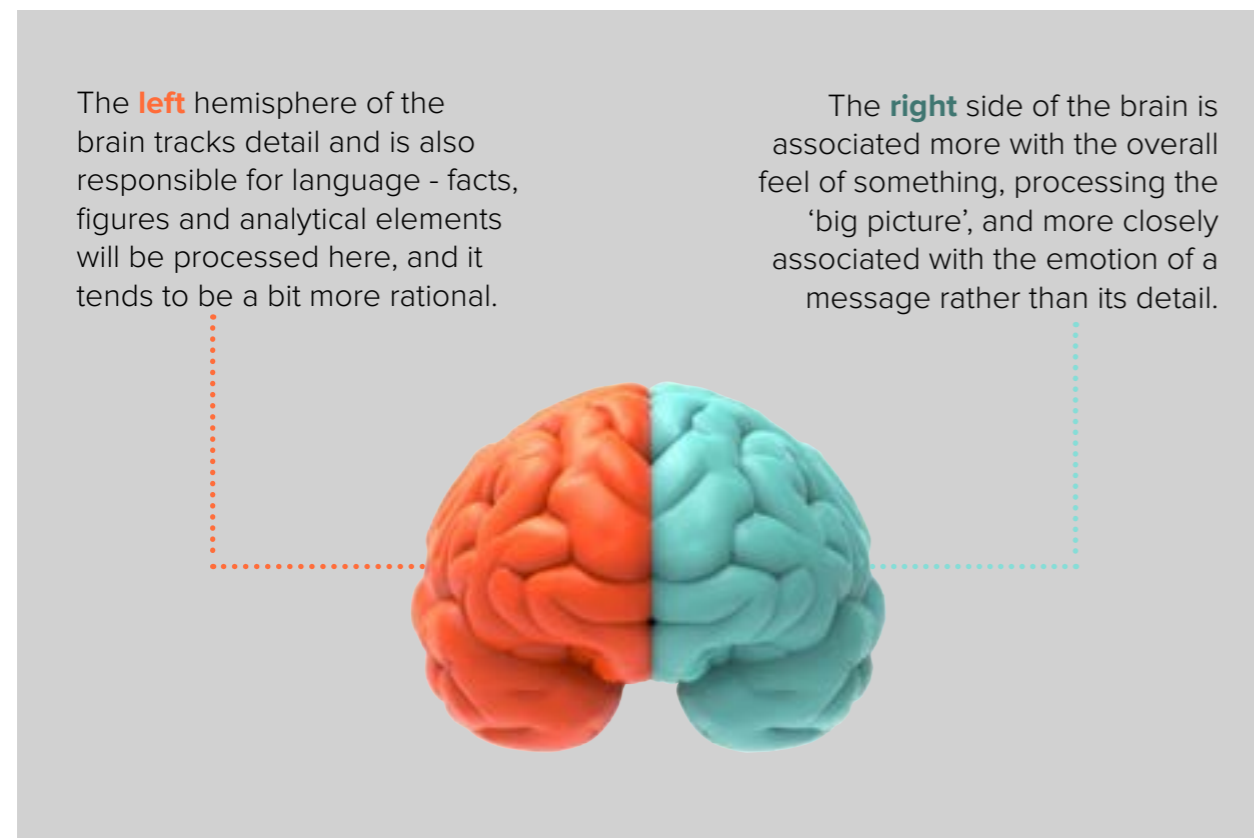


Figure 6: Correlation between programme and advertising neurostate™

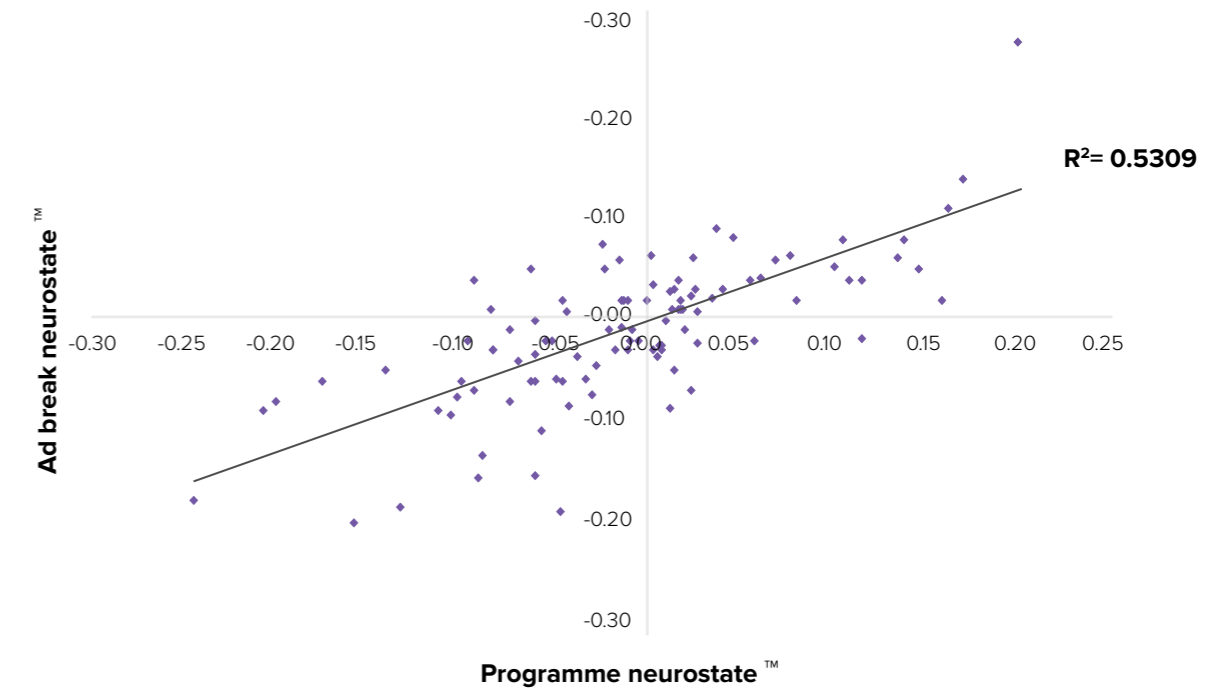


Figure 6 shows how the neurostate of a TV programme carries through into the advertising that follows it.

Setting out to deliberately match the neurostate of a message to the signature of the surrounding media environment can add huge value to the impact of that message. Reviewing our database to understand this relationship, we found that advertisements which intrinsically matched the neurostate of the programme context in which they appeared drove levels of memory encoding that were on average 25% higher than those which appeared in an unmatched context.

Advertisements which match the neurostate of their programme context drive 25% higher memory encoding than in an unmatched context.

Maximising impact through delivery

The use of sound can have a powerful impact on audiences - but what are the implications for the wider ecosystem of media and advertising?

In fact, there are three key aspects to making the most of sound at the point of delivery.

Maximising impact through delivery

Branding out loud

The first point to make is that the mere presence of a positive sound can drive communication effectiveness. Many brands don't have any existing audio branding to leverage, but can benefit right away from the addition of a sound signature.

We put this to the test by working with an audio branding expert to develop a sonic device for a brand that didn't have one - Unilever. The resulting sound was a subtle combination of rising, harmonic notes which we edited on to the visual Unilever branding at the end of a Colman's Gravy advert.

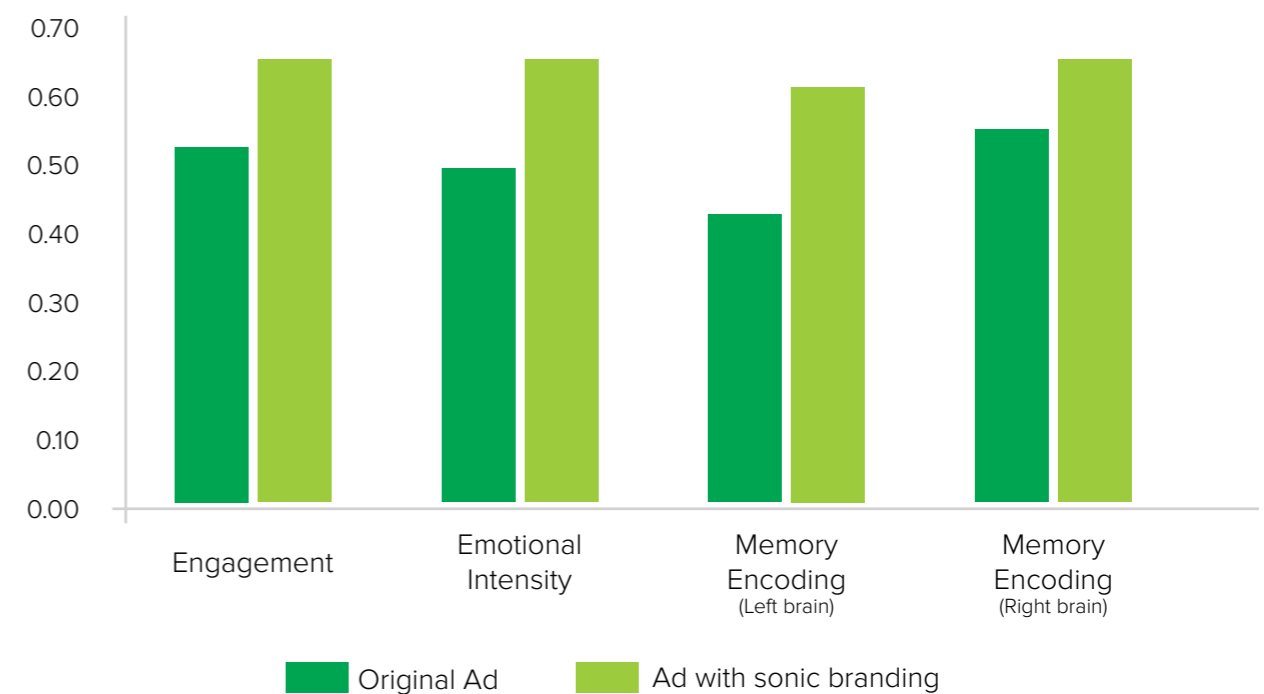
We then researched the original and edited versions of the ad side by side, and found that brain response at end branding was

higher across all key metrics for the version of the ad with the sound ident. Although the ident was entirely new, and so could not have any existing equity in the brain, its mere presence meant that the branding impact of the ad was strengthened (Figure 7).

Immersion and impact

So branding impact can be strengthened by the mere addition of an audio element. But the way in which the sound is delivered can have a huge impact too, as we have found in research projects looking at the impact of sound quality.

Figure 7: Brain responses to sonic branding



Maximising impact with 3D Sound
Hayley Fox, Head of Insight Innovation
Global



In an age of constant connectivity and exposure to new content, the quality of an experience is more important than ever before. When watching visuals we don't want to put up with a grainy or pixelated image, and will opt for higher resolution when we can. And when it comes to sound, our preferences are even more pronounced.

At Global, we have consistently championed new opportunities to improve the audio experience and offer 3D audio delivery to advertisers. It's evident that 3D opens up new possibilities that can boost the impact of radio content and advertising and so, in March 2018, we commissioned a research study to investigate the impact of 3D sound and draw out the implications for advertisers. The key findings, summarised below, highlight the way in which a great sound experience can change the way we respond to content, and the ways in which advertisers can use this to make more effective content.

1. The impact of responses to 3D changes over time

There's an opportunity for advertisers to make a strong impression with 3D in the early part of a narrative. However, this early impression is delivered in terms of attention and approach (positive emotional responses) rather than memory, so delivering sounds and emotions early on is likely to work better than delivering more detailed information or branding. This early opportunity is more about setting the scene than landing a message.

There are also implications for media planning. The initial impact of 3D is immediate but transient, and long-term memory encoding becomes stronger with further exposure to 3D. Advertisers would therefore benefit, where possible, from placing 3D audio executions in an environment where there is other 3D content and/or buy adjacent ad breaks. This way, the brain would have the opportunity to adjust to the 3D experience, and its impact would not be dependent on a single exposure.

2. The right brain impact of 3D audio is particularly strong

We also found that right brain response to 3D audio was particularly strong, so it is likely to work best for brands, ads and categories that are aiming to deliver an overall emotional feel rather than a high degree of detail. Specifically, ads that use music and other sounds will tend to benefit from 3D more than those which use a detailed spoken audio track.

More specifically, in terms of branding, relying on spoken branding is not likely to leverage the potential benefits of 3D audio. Brands that use some sort of sonic identifier are likely to derive a stronger benefit from 3D because they are delivering branding, via the sound, in the right hemisphere of the brain.

3. 3D audio heightens emotion, for better or for worse

Brands can benefit from a more pronounced emotional response to 3D audio, and shouldn't be afraid to drive this further with their creative. Whether positive or negative, these responses will enhance an ad's impact.

However, advertisers should be mindful about exactly where and how more confronting sounds are used, and avoid introducing them near or at point of branding. Memory has an emotional "colour" and works by association, so branding delivered alongside a negative emotion will, to some extent, be coloured by that emotion.

Maximising impact through delivery

Enhanced response to sound is crucial for memory encoding of a commercial message, but it's also relevant for music production for pure enjoyment too.







Working with Headphone:X, an immersive audio system designed to optimise sound resolution, we carried out a study to research the relative impact on enjoyment of improvements to video and audio quality.

The results showed that our brains are highly sensitive to changes in audio quality and this has a dramatic impact on enjoyment. The higher quality audio in the study elicited a 66% increase in likeability over the standard audio, whilst enhanced video quality resulted in an uplift of only 2%.

This was all the more significant for broadcasters when bandwidth implications are taken into account - the improvements in audio quality required only a 15% bandwidth increase over standard stereo audio, whilst the enhanced video content demanded an increase of 77% (Figure 8).

Enhanced brain response to quality immersive audio makes sense, as 3D audio and high fidelity audio are both more faithful to our experience of sound in the real world, and the resulting higher sense of relevance can help to drive up memory encoding.

Figure 8: Comparing improvements in audio and visual quality

	Quality	Bandwidth change	Likeability
Video 	480p vs 1080p	 +77%	 +2%
Audio 	Stereo vs DTS Headphone:X	 +15%	 +66%

Is it all talk?

The changing way in which we are choosing to interface online also has profound implications for the way marketers can use sound.

This year, 21.9% of internet users will turn to voice assistants at least once a month, and this figure is growing fast as accuracy of voice recognition improves. For marketers, there are some key implications in terms of how voice assistants impact our experiences, and the ways in which brands can leverage them.

This is something we worked on with JWT and Mindshare, as part of their Speak Easy project.

Why voice assistants allow us to speak easy

*Jeremy Pounder, Futures Director
Mindshare*



When we set out to research voice technology for our study Speak Easy, we wanted to understand whether voice interactions are fundamentally different to other ways of interacting with technology.

We drew on neuroscience research as a means of uncovering the underlying attraction or purpose of voice for users, and applied this to broader research including qualitative and quantitative research, and in-depth expert interviews.

In the process, we built a case for brands to play a more valuable role in their audiences' lives by embracing voice technology in the right way.

The findings point to three key characteristics of voice technology as an audio channel which plays to our natural preferences:

Easing the cognitive load

We found that voice interactions showed consistently lower levels of brain activity than their touch equivalent (a typing interface), indicating the brain was not having to work so hard to process information. This was particularly pronounced when respondents were receiving information, suggesting that a voice response is less taxing than screen-based interactions.

Craving intimacy

If voice tech is helping us access information more naturally, it's also building closer relationships between us and the tech itself. 60% of smartphone users agree that "if voice assistants could

understand me properly and speak back to me as well as a human can, I'd use them all the time." The emotional response to Alexa grew during the course of our experiment as people became more comfortable using it, and overall was 53% stronger than during the same tasks carried out through text. This stronger emotional response may be a function of our tendency to project personality onto things around us – in this case the inanimate voice of a digital assistant.

Find your Voice

Voice presents huge opportunities for brands to reinforce their perception with users, as our neuroscience work showed that saying a brand name elicits double the emotional response than typing the brand name or clicking on it. Speaking to a brand directly appears to trigger our deeply held brand associations more strongly than text or touch interaction.


Response to Alexa grew during the course of our experiment as people became more comfortable using it, pointing to the latent potential for a closer relationship over time.

Find out more about Mindshare and JWT's Speak Easy research and report⁴.

4- <https://www.mindshareworld.com/uk/about/speak-easy>

Building an audio-powered brand: questions for marketers

All brands can benefit from sound. Opposite are a few questions marketers and advertisers can ask about their brands to probe how sound might help when building identity, developing executions and delivering impact.




Identity
Building and using a brand room

Does your brand have a sonic signature?

Are your key audio assets used consistently in creative?

Does your audio branding serve primarily to build new associations, or to trigger existing ones?

If the latter, how can your media plan dial up triggers at opportune moments?



Delivery
Maximising the sound experience

Does your brand have an audio personality?
Could it engage with audiences as a voice assistant?


How does sound fit with the surrounding environment?

Could it cut through more strongly?

What will be your audience's Neurostate?
How can sound adapt to that?

Could sound experts help engineer a more impactful delivery of sound?

Is there an opportunity to use sound enhancements like 3D technology in your media plan?



Execution
Synching sound, vision and tone

How aligned is your brand's visual and audio experience?

Does music drive the action of your creative, or does it take a back seat to visuals?

Do musical patterns direct the brain to key information?

Are key messages landed with audio and visuals working together?

Is the tonality of music in keeping with the feel of your message?

Does your creative process develop audio and visual assets in parallel?