

How brands (and their ads) can survive election season

Political advertising changes the tone every election cycle, but an Ipsos study shows that in some cases it makes brand ads shine even brighter.

13 May 2024

Brands / Advertising / Election



In election years, the media landscape experiences a significant influx of funding, as political campaigns vie for attention and influence. According to Ad Impact's 2023/2024 Political Ad Spending Projections Report, 2024 political ad spend is expected to grow 13% compared to 2020, to a staggering \$10.2 billion. This intense competition and the potentially divisive nature of political advertising present unique challenges for brands striving to get their messages across in between.

One of these challenges is the change in tone that accompanies political advertising. Compared to the typically upbeat and positive tone of brand advertising, political ads often adopt a more serious, and sometimes negative, tone. This stark contrast can create a jarring backdrop against which brands have to try and make their messages

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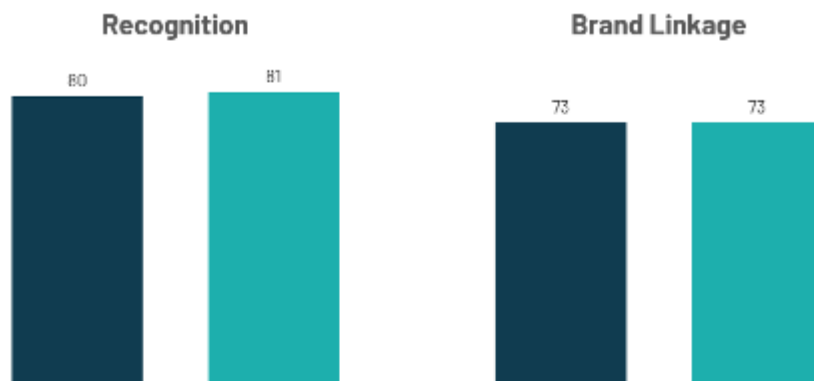
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Despite these challenges, there is good news. **Three in four consumers (78%), claim that political advertisements do not influence their perception of other ads**, according to Ipsos data. Some say that they find brand advertising to be a refreshing break from the often-negative political ads.

We decided to objectively assess the accuracy of this consumer perception using Ipsos' Creative Spark solution. **Ipsos selected 10 brand ads across a variety of categories and tested them in two environments:** one featuring standard non-political ads (control) and another composed of political ads. Subsequent questions were asked to understand ads' breakthrough ability and how political ads impact consumers' perception of these ads.

The data suggests that the barrage of political advertising does not significantly detract from the ability of brand ads to get noticed, be remembered and to be accurately attributed to the brand.



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Furthermore, some consumers are increasingly aligning their purchasing decisions with their values. This trend offers an opportunity for brands to resonate with consumers on a deeper level. However, brands need to tread carefully when taking a stance on issues. Any missteps can lead to potential unwanted associations and may even prompt consumer boycotts.

In the face of these challenges, brands need to be steadfast. If they decide to take a stance on an issue, they should remain consistent in their position, even if it provokes some backlash. Brands that stay the course, while ensuring their campaigns are rooted in solid, strategic foundations, can weather the storm.

Ads with strong messaging rooted in the brand's values or heritage reinforce positive perceptions of the brand



Effect on Brand Relationship Index

Source: Ipsos Meta-Analysis of 5,153 ads from 2015-2020

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challenges with strategic foresight, a clear understanding of their audience, and an unwavering commitment to their values can succeed in this dynamic environment.

Navigating the nuances of advertising during election years can be challenging, but with tools like Creative Spark, brands can leverage data to make more informed decisions. [Reach out to Ipsos to learn more about Creative Spark.](#)

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How can we help you ?*

Media & Brand Communication

ANA Alliance for Inclusive Multicultural Marketing Forum

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1 October 2023

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