



HeyHuman

WHITE PAPER

BRAINKIND CONTENT A COMPETITIVE EDGE FOR COMMUNICATIONS

Many believe that the attention people pay to communications hasn't significantly changed, and most brands still stick to a marketing strategy that assumes long attention spans.

Brands need to make their communications easy to process so they can cut through the complex messaging created online, through social media and on mobile devices.

- The amount of information we process each day is now five times more than we processed in 1986.

- An article produced by Dr Martin Hilbert ([How Much Information is There in the 'Information Society'?](#)) stated that the amount of information produced has increased from 2.5 newspaper pages of information to six newspapers worth per day.
- There has been a significant reduction in average attention spans.

Daniel Kahneman's bestselling book '[Thinking, Fast and Slow](#)' suggests that 95% of what we process is non-conscious and dominated by emotional 'fast thinking'. Byron Sharp's '[How Brands Grow: What Marketers Don't Know](#)' says that the key to brand growth is the consistent use of distinctive 'key brand assets' – logos, icons and colours.

We commissioned neuroscience research to look into the effect multi-screening (switching between several devices) has on attention span, engagement and recalling information.

THE RESEARCH

We tested what happens to our brains when we multi-screen.

Phase 1 of the research involved people watching TV.

Phase 2 was researching on a laptop while watching TV,

and phase 3 added mobile messaging

to researching on a laptop and watching TV.

Many people claimed that using several devices made them feel 'productive and efficient' because they could 'multi-task'.

Our studies focused on measuring 'cognitive load' – the 'mental energy' we have to devote to different tasks – and the real effect of multi-screening.

As more of us multi-screen and multi-task, we increase the cognitive load and so drain our mental resources.



OUR RESEARCH FOUND THE FOLLOWING.

- Attention, engagement and recall decreased across the three phases.
- Recall in phase 1 was around 90%, dropping to 30% in phase 3.
- An increase in cognitive load eventually lead to 'cognitive collapse' – where people were completely overloaded – in phase 3.
- People were actually 'task-switching' rather than 'multi-tasking' – flitting attention between devices, with a loss of attention and recall every time they switched.

When people realised that their recall was reduced by multi-screening, they were surprised:

“I FEEL LIKE I’VE SLEEPWALKED INTO IT. IT’S NOT BEEN A CONSCIOUS EXERCISE BECAUSE ALL THESE DEVICES HAVE... BECOME MUCH FASTER AND SOPHISTICATED, SO YOU HAVE THE MULTIPLE THINGS RUNNING AT ONCE. BUT THERE’S A DOWNSIDE THAT YOU’RE NOT REALLY CONNECTING.”

Brands must be clever about how they engage people through different channels.

- Make communications easy to process and easily recognised by using key brand assets.
- Make communications more ‘resonant’ by stimulating different areas of the brain at once to improve recall.
- Make messages more relevant.



BRAINKIND CREATIVE

TO BE 'BRAINKIND', WE NEED TO THINK ABOUT
THE THREE R'S:

RECOGNISED

This is about understanding which of your key brand assets are most distinctive and when to use them.

RESONANT

This is about how we stimulate different senses at once to engage more working memory. You can achieve this by using evocative language like KFC's 'Finger lickin' good' - this reflects a physical sensation and so is more likely to be more memorable.

Other techniques include the use of people's faces. We mirror people's emotions - following where they are looking and feeling the emotion they are expressing.



WE MUST THINK CAREFULLY ABOUT WHERE WE FOCUS
PEOPLE'S ATTENTION IN COMMUNICATIONS AND THE
EMOTION WE ARE CONVEYING.

RELEVANT

This is about tailoring the communication to be relevant, based on more fleeting, shallow connections and meeting the mind-set of people on a specific platform. On Facebook this could mean placing brand assets at the front of a video to prime people towards the brand, even if they don't click on it. For YouTube it means thinking about a creative piece that works in the first five seconds.



WANT TO LEARN
MORE ABOUT OUR
BRAINKIND CONTENT
WORKSHOP?

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