Ep115 - Awarded Campaigns: How Specsavers used humor and consistency to become one of the UK’s most effective brands

MichaelAaron Flicker: [00:00:00] Welcome back to Behavioral Science for Brands, a podcast where we bridge the gap between academics and practical marketing. Every week we sit down and go deep behind the science that powers great marketing today. I'm MichaelAaron Flicker.

Richard Shotton: And I'm Richard Shotton.

MichaelAaron Flicker: And today in our episode, we are discussing the behavioral science secrets behind the awarded campaign Spec Savers.

Let's get into it. So Richard, this is a brand in Great Britain that many almost everyone would know, but our American listeners may have not heard of Spec Saver, but growing up in London, this is a brand you knew. For a long time.

Richard Shotton: Oh, yeah. Phenomenally successful. I should add though, I grew up in Essex, not London.

I don't wanna have my Essex family and school friends having a, but having a go [00:01:00] at me as if I'm pretending to be a Londoner now. So I did grow up slightly outside of London. I should mention that.

MichaelAaron Flicker: Yes. Thank you for disclaiming that.

Richard Shotton: More, more importantly, Specsavers. Massive brand, very well known.

MichaelAaron Flicker: And they're an optometry brand, so they do eye exams, and then they sell glasses, as we're gonna talk a lot about today. But they're just an optometry.

Richard Shotton: Yeah. They do hearing aids as well, but that is,

MichaelAaron Flicker: yeah.

Richard Shotton: A, I think a lot smaller part of the business.

MichaelAaron Flicker: Yeah. I think I when we get into some of the humor, they've, they've built on that. But like we'd like to do, let me set up the brand and a little bit of the backstory because I think it's informative to the campaign that we're gonna talk about today. And when you and I look to highlight awarded campaigns. We are really looking for campaigns that have driven business outcomes for the brand, and it's a fairly high bar.

We're looking at the IPA [00:02:00] Effectiveness awards. We're looking at the A NA Reggie, which is the American Equivalent of Effectiveness Awards, but we're looking for not just, was it a creative campaign? That won Creativity awards, but did they really prove that it drove back to business impact? And this was a 2024 gold winner of the IPA Effectiveness Awards.

We'll get into all of that, but pretty high bar here. Excited to take everybody through the case study. So Spec Savers for our American listeners was founded in 1984 by optometrists Mary and Doug Perkins. Today they have over a thousand stores globally with annual revenues exceeding $5.5 billion a year.

And since 2002, they've stayed consistent with one campaign. Their [00:03:00] longest running platform should have gone to Spec Savers, and it's become recognizable across the UK for being a humorous. A humorous campaign tied to everyday mistakes that come from not wearing your prescription glasses. So every kind of commercial centers around that.

And for those of us who hadn't seen it, a quick YouTube search of, should have gone to Spec Savers. There's compilations of ads where you can. 3, 6, 12 of them in a row. And you really get the sense of how connected all of the campaign has been. So that's the backstory. That's the backdrop here.

But what they brought to the 2024 IP effect IPA Effectiveness awards that won them the gold, was actually turning their iconic tagline on its head, and the commercials all focused. In this [00:04:00] new campaign on people who said they don't go to Spec Savers, and instead the punchline is that Spec Savers comes to them and the campaign was called, I Don't Go.

It ran on TV commercials, video on demand. Outta home ads and cinema. And really it's, we'll put it in the show notes. You can watch one 32nd spot and you'll get the whole feeling for how they've taken a 20 year campaign and they really made it even more inclusive. The campaign convinced more than a half million rejectors of the brand to come and visit Spec Savers for an eye test.

And it delivered a 32% increase to their home visits program. In all, it drove almost 20 million pounds of incremental profit to spec savers. So really a very effective campaign. One that really [00:05:00] leveraged a lot of brand history, but did it in the same style. It used humor to to continue to evolve the brand.

And. It was very effective in market, so lots of fertile material. Richard, as we start to dive into today and you and I found really two biases that we thought were at work here, that we thought that we could bring to light for everyone.

Richard Shotton: Yeah, absolutely. And a slightly different angle on something we've discussed before, which is this power of humor.

I think the one bias that relates to why it's such an important tactic is the longstanding idea of what's known as the present bias, so sometimes known as present preference bias, some point sometimes known as hyperbolic discounting. It's essentially the argument that humans are very concerned about what happens to them now and in the immediate future.

They are much less concerned. [00:06:00] Extremely less concerned about what's gonna happen in the medium or the long-term future. Now, that might sound flippant statement, but there's an awful lot of evidence that supports it. So one of the classic studies was by Liam Delaney, who's at the University of Sterling, and in 2015 we cover this study in, in hacking the human Mind in the Klan chapter.

He recruits a group of people, 144 people, and he essentially gives them loads of, would you rather do A or B? So loads of choices. So for example, he might say to me, would you prefer to pay me 13 pounds now or 16 pounds in a month's time?

Now, if people were sensible economic machines, everyone should say I'd definitely rather pay you 13 pounds now.

'cause that is an astronomic interest rate. I think it equates to 23% monthly interest rate or 1090 9% interest rate [00:07:00] over a year. So anyone who has any concern for their finances should pick the immediate smaller payment, but that's not what happened. Just as present bias suggests slight majority, about 60% of people, they would rather pay the 16 pounds in a month's time.

13 pounds in a immediately. So strong evidence of this idea. We are really concerned about what happens to us now. Future issues, we just don't care. Now,

people might think all very interesting, but what that, what this got to do with humor, but think about what humor does. It gives you an immediate reward.

It makes you laugh in the moment, and that makes people want to turn towards the advertising if you just give people useful information about the product. As we've discussed before, 95% of people are not in market any one [00:08:00] time. 95% of people, you are telling them a bit of information that will be used in the future and if it's useful in the future, but not now.

Most people won't listen. So information relevant to purchasing will often be ignored. Something that rewards people immediately, that has real power.

MichaelAaron Flicker: And the campaign does this in such a. Insightful way. It makes these humorous insights around what it feels like to not have your prescription glasses on right now.

So there's there's a hundred examples. I watched probably 12 or 15 of these commercials. But it's, what does it feel like to not have your glasses on when you've parked too close to the garage door, closing over and over again on your car? Or what does it feel like to not have your glasses on?

As a mailman and you're picking the wrong stuff up and delivering the wrong things to people. These are all [00:09:00] lighthearted, humorous moments.

Richard Shotton: Yeah.

MichaelAaron Flicker: Of what could otherwise be a very painful experience of not being able to read a restaurant menu, not being able to see the words on a page. They've decided to use humor.

It, but make it feel very real in the moment that the humor's being delivered. Yeah, absolutely. My, my favorite example is at Sydney Airport they ran giant posters that said, welcome to Melbourne Airport. And then smaller fonts should have gone to Specsavers and I would've just loved to be a fly on the wall as people were coming down the escalators.

Richard Shotton: And just that moment of. Oh my God, I've booked the wrong plane then to realize it was just a specsavers joke. So they're brilliant and I think that's worth emphasizing the sheer craft that's gone into this campaign. Absolutely. Most brands should be thinking about what is the immediate reward.

That I'm gonna give a viewer of my ad. But then of course, [00:10:00] translating that into something that's actually enjoyable, actually funny, is a phenomenal craft. And I think hats off to the copywriters at spectators.

MichaelAaron Flicker: Yeah. And so we're narrowing in not just on humor as the delivery device, but of helping people be transported to that moment where that present bias is really at play.

Where if they can imagine themselves. At that moment that they have the experience right away rather than, yes, sure, it would be good to go to the eye doctor in the future. Of course it would be better to have an updated prescription, but because they focus on that real moment of where not having your specs, not having your glasses.

On can be caused trouble or mishap or misfortune. I think that's part of, yes, they do it in a humorous way, but it's that they're focused on the moment of the tragedy as it were, of the moment you wish you had your right prescription.

Richard Shotton: Yes.

MichaelAaron Flicker: I think that's really,

Richard Shotton: it's a very [00:11:00] consistent joke.

That's absolutely true. I think to me the analogy is like wanting. People to take medicine. You sugar the pill. It's like a Trojan horse. I think. Humor, yeah. You have something that you want to deliver in the trace of the Trojan horse. As some Greek soldiers.

You don't just get the Greek soldiers to walk up to the gate. You have to wrap them in something that's pleasant and enjoyable in the moment. And it's exactly the same with a message. Now you've got to wrap up whatever piece of information you wanna convey in something that gives people an immediate benefit.

That's, I think, the crucial part from the present bias.

MichaelAaron Flicker: And maybe give them a little credit too, for using humor when they do have a little bit more of a serious mission eye health. And the things that could go wrong if you can't see well. Could be a little bit more serious, but they've decided [00:12:00] to wrap their message in humor.

Which may have not been the most obvious first place to go for an eye health brand or for an optometry brand.

Richard Shotton: A a, absolutely. So I'm sure some people are thinking that okay, humor might be fine for a soft drink or a beer, but surely this is inappropriate for something as serious and maybe even life changing as your eye health.

Actually there are a number of experiments often those, the ostrich effect, which suggest that the obvious thing to do in a health category, the obvious thing of scaring people into getting that more regular eye test that often backfires. So we've talked previously, I think it was on the Snickers episode about the ostrich effect, and we talked about a George Lowenstein study.

But there's actually, I think, even more relevant studies when it comes to health. So there's a psychologist at [00:13:00] Claremont Graduate University Josh Soff. I'm not sure if I pronounced that a hundred percent right. So apologies Josh. And in 2013, he does post a slightly evil experi. So recruits a group of people and then he gives them information about genital herpes, and he then gives people an option.

So everyone is gonna have some blood taken, there's gonna be a small amount of blood taken, and then they have a choice. So they want to be paid $11 and given the genital herpes results. Or do they want to be paid $1 and they don't have to get the results? Now to a sensible, logical economic actor, the answer should be obvious.

A hundred percent of people should say, I'll take the money and I've got this amazing information about my health. But actually a significant portion, 15% of people essentially pay [00:14:00] $10 not to get the information. Remember, they've still, they give $10. Yeah. They're only getting $1 fee.

They could have had 11. They've gone through the pain, the blood has been taken. Someone knows their status, but they would rather stay in this blissful state of ignorance. So I think this shows you that there is a real danger of trying to scare people. The ostrich effect is the idea that if you make people feel.

Nervous or guilty or afraid. They behave like the metaphorical strips. They stick their head in the sand. They ignore your ads, or they go through mental gymnastics to say why your powerful message just doesn't apply to them. So absolutely, even in the most serious of areas, humor has a role.

MichaelAaron Flicker: So this ostrich effect is really.

It is really clear to me that that people that want that get scared away. They just really don't wanna deal with it. And that seems to connect really strongly with what we're talking about at Specsavers. [00:15:00] If they don't want get their prescription updated, they haven't wanted to deal with their eye health issues, they're just naturally gonna push away from it.

Is humor enough? Meaning they've, the spec saver ads are relatable, they're funny, they grab your attention, but is that enough if, when they are time to get a pair of Specsavers when it is time to get a pair of glasses, is it enough to convert them? I guess that's a question I.

Richard Shotton: Yeah. And that is I think a fair challenge.

And I think lots of listeners will be worried about that. That, okay, all very well and good. You've got people's attention. You haven't scared them off. But when they do enter the market, surely they're then gonna weigh up all the different opti opticians and go to the one that sounds like they're professional.

Sounds like they're they, great value for money. But actually there's this paradox that by being funny, by being likable, by being witty, we know there's this idea called the halo effect, which is the [00:16:00] argument that when people make a judgment about a brand, they don't weigh up each of the unique elements of the brand independently.

What they tend to do is take one standout characteristic. Like being likable or funny, and they apply that positivity to all the other metrics. So the great thing for spec safes is if they come across as humorous and warm and affectionate, people assume they're probably good value for money.

They're probably know what they're doing. They're probably trustworthy, they're probably high quality. You focus on one aspect of your performance, really land that, and people will begin to think you're better in all sorts of unrelated areas.

MichaelAaron Flicker: Yeah, we call that the halo effect, and we could talk about the study in a minute, but one of the things that it does for me, it also makes the brand more endearing when they make light of these very serious issues like.

Not being [00:17:00] able to drive the car as well as they should. I was watching this one animated series they did, where the postman is coming up with he's driving off the road and he's running through people's yards and collecting underwear from clothes hang blinds, but actually it's sharing a very serious message that you could drive in a car and have some pretty, pretty bad outcomes if you can't see.

But they do it in a lighthearted way. And to me I felt endeared to the brand for making me think about something that would otherwise be a pretty horrible thing to think as I'm aging, as my eyesight's getting worse. But delivering it in a way that that does make me feel better about it. So we are getting this benefit of the halo effect that you generally feel better about everything.

But I think I was feeling like Specsavers was giving me permission to think about some negative consequences of [00:18:00] not wearing my glasses. Or not having my updated prescription, but in a way that allowed me to think about it without thinking about all the really nasty things that could happen. So that humor gave me permission to engage in the.

In the need to get my prescription updated without feeling guilty about not having done it. I don't that, that's like in between these ideas.

Richard Shotton: So I agree with you on that. And there's often a lot to be said for looking at the kind of etymology of words what they literally mean, and the etymology of advert is turned towards.

Frankly, a pretty good rule of thumb is we turn towards things that are endearing or funny. We turn away from things that make us feel unpleasant. So absolutely the clues in the name we work in advertising, you want to encourage people to turn towards your message. And the way to do that is to be endearing, is to be funny, not to make people feel nervous.

And [00:19:00] hey, sometimes that still feels like a statement, the obvious. Actually, if you look at most healthcare advertising, most advertising that tries to get people to save more money in their pensions, other things that might scare them most, that's the exact opposite. Most people think if I just scare people enough, they will realize the folly of their ways, and then they will start visiting the doctor or the optician, or putting money in their pension.

But the evidence is, it's the complete opposite. Any critique that this is a statement of the blinding obvious cannot be correct. 'cause most people don't do it.

MichaelAaron Flicker: Yeah. And it comes, it brings to mind for me, when you and I were working on hacking the human mind we did a insight that we all have talked about before, that pratfall effect that we talked about how an admission of a small flaw gains a gains a greater likability gains, a greater adherence.

But we talked about in the book that the real double whammy is when you [00:20:00] have a mirrored strength in your admission of guilt in your little flub that you share. When you have a mirrored strength, that's when the pratfall effect is really, its strongest, and it applies here in some ways when you use humor.

To make a connection with people, you're already winning. But when you use humor with a mirrored strength that it, every time you use it, it shows something really. Even more important about your brand Snickers. You're not you when you're hungry, and, but Snickers is the resolve of that. It's the positive Specsavers so many of the ads are around if only you had your prescription glasses.

And every time they turn the humor on how they solve that to me it's a doubling. It's a double strength. It's not just that they're using humor in their ads, but that, that they're tapping in on real human insights of why [00:21:00] prescription glasses make the world a better place.

Richard Shotton: There's certainly an argument.

I think. This might have come back in the Millwood brown days, I think. I think the mild brown Kantar. I think that's right. But they used to have this phrase that of a vampire effect of humorous ads. So they did have this one watch out where they said, if the joke doesn't relate to the brand, be careful.

People will turn towards your ads, but they'll remember the joke and not the message you want. I think you are right to keep on coming back to this point of. Every single ad is about the humor of a ridiculous situation where someone doesn't have the glasses they tell you about the, these problems, but in a acceptable manner.

But it keeps on reminding you that of spectators the danger of not having glasses. That it is a very relevant use of humor. And I think that is something to double down on. Yes, humor's valuable, but [00:22:00] really beware the vampire effect. You as a brand need to be central to the joke, otherwise people might remember the wrong aspect of your advertising.

Absolutely,

MichaelAaron Flicker: and in a lot of ways, that to me is why after 20 years of consistency, this is an IPA effectiveness award winner because when they turn it on its head. And they say, I don't go to Specsavers. Specsavers comes to me. The buy the community, the buyer base is in on the joke. They've like they know that the humor has been always, I should have gone to Spec Savers.

So to me, they're playing with the cultural currency. They have. By turn, by bringing people in on the joke and turning it on its head. I don't if you see it that way, but to me that's part of the brilliance of what they did here.

Richard Shotton: Yeah. And it's something that's only open to you if you have run a campaign for a very long time, because then people do know what you are referencing.

If you've just run a campaign for a year or six months, [00:23:00] don't expect people to know it in the intricacies that that the marketing department are aware of. Yeah that,

MichaelAaron Flicker: yeah.

Richard Shotton: Consistency brings real benefits.

MichaelAaron Flicker: So we've talked about how they've used humor in a really authentic way. Anything more to say on the halo effect before we go to our third insight into why this campaign was so effective.

Richard Shotton: I think that's it on the halo effect. I think it is a fascinating one and should stop people being too literal minded in their communications, knowing about the halo effect. Essentially give people license to think about what is it I can powerfully communicate. And I often think this is about what you can demonstrate in an ad.

You can be funny rather than just. A claim. A claim of something. A good or a bad act can say that. So the Halo Effect gives you this license to focus on what you can communicate effectively rather than [00:24:00] what you feel you should communicate, because frankly, you move one metric in a positive direction and most of other metrics will follow suit.

MichaelAaron Flicker: Lovely. So let's go to a third insight.

Richard Shotton: Yeah.

MichaelAaron Flicker: About how we've used, about why Spec Savers went this way and why it was so effective for them.

Richard Shotton: So the final thing that we can talk about is the longevity of the campaigns, as you mentioned. Brands been around since the eighties, but it was in 2002 that they came up with.

This line should have gone to Spec Save, so they have been running that for 24 years. Phenomenally long campaign and often. When we've talked about in other episodes the value of consistency, and we often refer to the mere exposure effect. So this experiment that Robert Zion did back in 1968 when he was at Stanford, and what he showed is the more often people [00:25:00] see a stimulus, like a strap line, the more they see it.

Even if you give them no more information, they start to like it more. Now, that's very well known. What's not so well known is there is a very related set of experiments called the Illusory Truth Effect. And rather than measuring repeated exposure and liking, they measure repeated exposure and credibility or belief.

So it's more about truthfulness, trustworthiness than liking. So the classic study was by Marian Schwartz. 1982 study when she was at the University of Wisconsin. And she recruits this group of people and she shows them a long list of statements. So one of them might have been Lud, big Van Beethoven was a lifelong bachelor.

So it's a true statement that people don't get [00:26:00] told if it's true or false that's gonna come later. Other people are told things like Julie Garland's, real name was Louise Havoc. That's a false bit of information. Now, when people are given these lists of statements, sometimes they saw the statements beforehand, so they were seeing them repeated times.

Sometimes they just saw them once. All the participants then had to judge whether the statements were true or false. On a scale of one to seven. So the higher the number, the more they believe them. And then the interesting thing was Schwartz could then cut believability of statement by frequency of exposure.

So same statements, all that's varying is frequency. People who saw the statements for the first time, their average rating was 3.92. If people saw those statements twice, average rating was 4.2. [00:27:00] So 7% improvement if people saw the statements three times, average rating 4.3, so there's 9% improvement.

So the more you saw the statement, the more you believed it, even if the information within the statement hadn't become hadn't been changed or rotted in any way. So you go back to spec savers and you think this whole argument, you should have gone to Specsavers. Each year you run it, it becomes seen as more credible and more truthful.

Not because necessarily more information's being packed in not 'cause there's a better rational argument. Simple repetition makes that statement more believable.

MichaelAaron Flicker: It gets back to a comment maybe even a theme that we covered in our interview with Mark Ritson, that marketers might get tired of the same campaign, but that doesn't mean that consumers do.

And as an industry, [00:28:00] we have a lot of pressure to replace these old campaigns, consistency. It just continues to be proven to pay off. The longer you stay in market with the same message, the better it will do. And Specsavers is a lovely example of showing that you can be consistent with a campaign. You could be consistent with a tagline, but that doesn't mean you have to rerun the same exact ad forever.

In fact, you can keep refreshing the ads. Keep refreshing the campaign. While without changing course, while keeping the same strategy and the same tagline. So it really gives us a lot to think about when we're thinking about how to do great creative within a system, within a, within the model that takes advantage of the mirror exposure effect like this.

Richard Shotton: Yeah I would double down on saying the Mark Rickson episode you mentioned, but I think he's one of our [00:29:00] best interviews. Certainly one of the most popular, most viewed ones. So I strongly recommend people went back and had a listen to that because I think he's got loads of really good points about consistency and beyond.

MichaelAaron Flicker: Episode 1 0 4, what I scroll back? Yeah. Yes. But yeah it's a and our prep for that episode. It's not just a conversation he had with us. It's a platform that he brings to the world. He writes about this regularly. His mini MBA program focuses on this concept that we should be much more interested in repeating what's working rather than constantly changing out ads.

Richard Shotton: Yeah I think you know that there's a lot to be said for that. It's one of those examples of a simple point that can have huge impact on business success. And just because something simple, it doesn't mean it happens a lot. Too often ideas get dismissed because they're simple. And I think that's a real fault [00:30:00] of the industry.

MichaelAaron Flicker: We, so we've talked about the mere exposure effect over a long period of time in multiple different ways, and we hit it quick, but I think it's helpful to just take a moment and explain or remind all of the listeners that this tendency to develop a preference for something, because we're familiar with it.

That has we have a number of different studies on what gets better. So the Marian Schwartz example is teaching us that people become, what more trust is it trustworthiness that we're showing.

Richard Shotton: It's. If you see an argument multiple times, even if the argument itself doesn't change, it becomes believed more with repetition.

So I think it's about believability of a statement and that's thing every advertiser wants. They've gotta be believed, haven't they? People have gotta believe their message about quality or price or trust. [00:31:00] You get some of that believability by the cogency of your argument, but you get some of that believability by the sheer repetition, the sheer amount of times that you tell people.

MichaelAaron Flicker: And when we've hit them. That's great. And when we've hit the mere exposure effect in the past, we've been focused on likability. Is that the is that correct?

Richard Shotton: Yeah that's the difference. So Zion, he did the original study back in 1968 and the metric he looked at was likability got all general positive actually.

So he did things like show people photos. Get people to rate how good looking they thought the face was. And the twist in the experiment was some people were shown the photo once. Some people shown the photo lots of times. And what he showed, I think, with almost a hundred percent consistency is the group that saw the image repeatedly, they rated it as more handsome, more beautiful than the group who just saw the image once.

So he is about, I think that more [00:32:00] qualitative positivity or liking. Schwartz is all about truthfulness.

MichaelAaron Flicker: That's, I think that's the I think that's, to me, the power of the mirror exposure effect is that through multiple differentiated studies we have really what we're trying to drive at here, whether that's po generally positive emotions, likability specifically, or truthfulness specifically.

It gives us a lot to work in to really believe that repeatability is a critical element.

Richard Shotton: Yeah. Yeah. I think you're right, and it's always worth having that slight skepticism towards a single study. Single studies don't definitively prove anything. They could easily be retracted later on. They could easily be disproved by later studies.

But once you either see exactly the same finding being shown repeated times, or you start seeing this consolation of similar studies repetition brings liking, repetition [00:33:00] brings truthfulness. Once you start seeing this. Repeated set of findings, then I think you're on something powerful and that's where we should be putting our our bets.

Much greater trust in studies that have been replicated than studies that are just one-offs.

MichaelAaron Flicker: And I think that if I were to summarize in America's zeitgeist at the moment, this. The set of findings is more easily been dis boiled down to you should stick with one ad execution for longer.

And I think even Mark Ritson, when I've read some of his materials, he oversimplifies it by saying. If I had a choice, I would stick with any one ad execution even longer. And I think that's where it gets a little bit of flack, at least in in this, in the circles that I've been in that we don't want to just have one ad execution forever, and that's not really what [00:34:00] we're showing here.

We, that may be true, that one ad execution. Ought to do ought to have more longevity. We're really focused on the idea that the creative platform, that the brand platform, yeah. That the space we're occupying in a buyer's mind ought to be repeated for much longer, and we should stick with it much longer than most campaigns do.

Richard Shotton: Yeah. Yeah. I completely agree with that. I split into two truth. This is one is exactly the same. Piece of creative can probably be on average run for longer.

MichaelAaron Flicker: Yep.

Richard Shotton: But then secondly, the bigger, more important finding, I think is almost this variable. Consistency now should have gone to Spec Savers.

The strap line has stayed the same for 24 years, but they haven't run a single ad for. 24, 25 years. But every single ad is always about the comic consequences of not having your glasses. So there's a consistency of [00:35:00] theme, and then they vary within those nice, tight parameters.

MichaelAaron Flicker: Love it. Love it. So let's lean back and let's recap the episode.

Yeah. The most important points that we hit.

Richard Shotton: So it feels like a long time ago since you started. What was the first one? So the first one was present bias. That was the study by Delaney. Essentially, people really care about what's gonna happen now or in the near future. They are much less concerned about what's gonna happen in the medium or the far future.

That is a really powerful rationale about why humor is so important. Because humor gives the audience a reward in the immediate moment, whereas just telling them about why your product is amazing, that only benefits them when they enter the market. And 95% of people, as John do, has showed, are not in the market any one moment.

So you've gotta think as a business, how can I reward people Now? That will encourage engagement and attention [00:36:00] for your ads. The second thing we talked about was the ostrich effect. That is essentially the idea that people will behave like the metaphorical ostrich. They will stick their head in the sand if you make them feel scared or sad or guilty.

So what you wanna do instead is think, how can I focus in, even if I have a very serious subject on elements of positivity? Yes, eye health is as important a subject as you can get. If you delay getting eye tests, it can increase the chances of going blind. But be very careful about emphasizing those apocalyptic outcomes because what people often do is turn away from the advertising better, to focus on the positive, better to focus on the lighthearted.

And then the final bit we talked about, which is a new angle on an old idea. We talked about the illusory truth effect. So that was the Schwartz study. She gave people statements and they [00:37:00] were more likely to believe them if they'd seen them for a repeated number of times. So the more people hear a statement, the more likely they are to believe it.

Yet another piece of evidence about the power of consistency. Now as an industry, we chop and change far too much. You wanna keep on varying within very tight parameters how you communicate with your audience.

MichaelAaron Flicker: And I will add one more. You add the etymology of. The word advertising, which means to turn towards.

And that really to me, helped remind us all what we're trying to do. That was specifically in our second, in, in, in the second part of the episode. But to me that really helps remind us what the organizing principle of advertising is.

Richard Shotton: Yeah.

MichaelAaron Flicker: Have people towards you, turn towards your message and turn towards your brand so that you can sell more of it.

Richard Shotton: Yeah. Yeah. Don't take attention for granted. It is [00:38:00] a hard thing to get, an easy thing to lose. You've gotta, you've got to reward people for for giving you their very limited time.

MichaelAaron Flicker: Lovely. And so with that, we say thank you for tuning into this week's episode of Behavioral Science for Brands.

If you found the content we covered interesting and engaging, we'd ask that you please share it with others, and we also ask for you to like, share or comment as it helps the algorithm find more listeners just like you. And until next time, I'm MichaelAaron Flicker.

Richard Shotton: And I'm Richard Shotton.

MichaelAaron Flicker: Thanks for listening.