

NIELSEN CONSUMER NEUROSCIENCE

FINDING THE EDGE OF THE CREATIVE CLIFF

Pushing the Audience to, But Not Over, Their Emotional Edge to Create Powerful Ad Copy

THE CHALLENGE

DKMS, a blood cancer charity, wanted to encourage the general public to register and become potential donors.

As part of its pro bono effort, Nielsen Consumer Neuroscience collaborated with DKMS in Germany to test the performance of one of their new campaigns. The challenge: how could DKMS convey the severity of blood cancer in a way that engaged the viewer and drives action?

THE SOLUTION

DKMS created a 30 second ad, “Ice World,” in which a man is ripped from his bed into a bleak, unforgiving ice world. He is scared and alone. He collapses in the ice only to awake back in bed, relieved it was all a dream. The ad ends with a call to action – “Open Mouth. Swab in. Be a Donor.” The ad was analyzed using EEG based neuroscience measurement.

THE RESULTS

“Ice World” was found to perform very poorly compared with other ads.

EEG is advantageous because the data is collected on a second-by-second basis, allowing for granular analysis across scenes, characters, and other aspects.

Multiple scenes were found to be disengaging to the audience, including the scenes that showed close-up, low-level shots of the characters. Neuroscience has shown that partial body shots and obscure angles are more difficult for the brain to process.

Additionally, during the peak scene, the main character is shown dying. The large dip in engagement shows this is a step too far for the audience. While viewers have the capacity to empathize, overly-negative imagery will cause disengagement.

Nielsen recommended that a 20-second version of the ad which incorporated uncovered optimizations could still result in a strong execution, with less media spend. DKMS made the recommended edits to the ad, and Nielsen re-tested. The ad, which had previously scored at the bottom for emotion, was now at the top! Other key measures also dramatically improved.

Using Nielsen's recommendations, DKMS succeeded in creating an emotionally engaging ad about an extremely negative issue while saving money by compressing the ad to 20 seconds.

ADVERTISING CASE STUDY



Quintile Distribution*	Overall Effectiveness	Emotion	Action Intent
91 – 100 Well Above Average		20' Recut	
61 – 80 Above Average	20' Recut	↑	20' Recut
41 – 60 Average	↑	↑	↑
21 – 40 Below Average	30' Original	↑	30' Original
9 – 20 Well Below Average		30' Original	

For more information contact your Nielsen representative or visit www.nielsen.com/consumerneuroscience