

# REAL WORLD IMPACT

A guide to measuring brand experiences in the real world.

This book outlines the principles of EMR  
(Experiential Measurement and Research),  
the proprietary service developed by Sense.

Sense is an award-winning marketing agency that  
specialises in creating experiences which make  
brands useful, interesting, relevant and desired.

To learn more about the topics covered in this  
book, or about Sense's wider range of services,  
please do get in touch.

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# WHY MEASURING BRAND EXPERIENCE MATTERS

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*Understanding the how and  
why of experiential today*

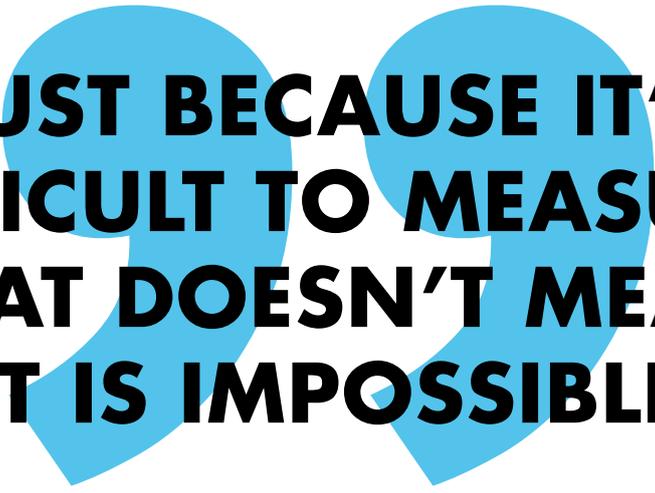
In a world of bits and bytes, where consumer relationships are increasingly carved into streams of data and people are reduced to zeros and ones, face-to-face contact has never been more important. If you're reading this book you understand this already.

### ***Why?***

Because you're thinking about commissioning a brand experience.

Indeed maybe you've already done so. Either way, you want to engineer the kind of direct and human interaction between your brand and its buyers that can only be achieved in the real world.

The trouble with the real world, however, is that what happens in it can't easily be quantified. It's easy to measure what happens in an online interaction, because everything occurs within a managed environment that we - humans - create. But when you break out of this system and get people meeting people, this certainty and order evaporates. This is why experiential activity has remained so immune to measurement throughout its growth. But just because it's difficult to measure, that doesn't mean it is impossible.



**JUST BECAUSE IT'S  
DIFFICULT TO MEASURE,  
THAT DOESN'T MEAN  
IT IS IMPOSSIBLE**

---

By understanding the true nature of brand experience and by being flexible, we can in fact get a handle on the impact of our campaigns. That's what this book is about - understanding the discipline, and using that understanding to measure its effects.

***You've already taken the first step -  
so keep on reading and join us on the full journey.***

# THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FRONT LINE

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Before diving into how we measure and what we measure, we should spare a moment to consider *why* we measure. What is it about real world interactions with your brand that are so important?

***It all comes down to building a powerful front line.***

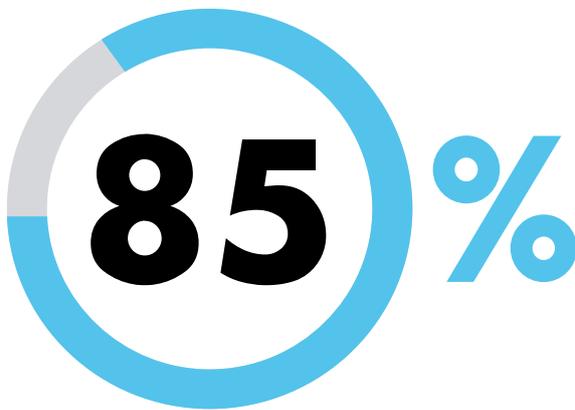
The front line, in the context of your brand, is made up of those parts of the business that interact directly with consumers.

If you're a bank for instance, your high street branch is your front line. The activities happening at your head office however, aren't. Call centres are the front line. Shop floors are the front line. Your product is the front line.

***Anything that the consumer interacts with directly; that's the front line.***

Now because it's all the consumer ever sees, it is the front line that shapes their opinion of you. You also have your marketing activities of course, your ads and promotions - however the power of these assets pales in comparison to the front line. PwC estimates that 85% of brand opinion is driven by everyday interactions, with only 15% being influenced by communications, so it's clear that the front line warrants significant attention.

Unfortunately, when it comes to the front line, not all brands are created equal. Some sectors, such as airlines, fashion retailers and car manufacturers have incredibly rich front lines. There are many consumer touchpoints for them to play with, and thus they generally find it easier to create compelling brands that command greater loyalty.



**85% OF BRAND OPINION IS DRIVEN BY EVERYDAY INTERACTIONS, WITH ONLY 15% BEING INFLUENCED BY COMMUNICATIONS**

*PwC - Global Consumer Insights Survey*





# NOT ALL BRANDS ARE CREATED EQUAL

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On the flip side there are other brands with very little front line at all. This includes pretty much the whole of the consumable goods sector.

The relationship between say a bleach or breakfast cereal brand with an end user will be much less rich, complex and direct than it would be with a gym brand, and therefore trickier to build a meaningful relationship.

Consider for instance, that on the list of the world's top 20 most valuable brands, only one brand without a significant front line ever gets a look in - Coca-Cola. Not many of us can call on the heritage that it enjoys of course, so for the rest of us the rule is simple:

*The richer your front line, the stronger your brand.*

***So what do you do if you aren't lucky  
enough to have a front line?***

***You create one.***



***The most famous example of this kind of thinking came from Steve Job's decision - mocked at the time - to start opening Apple stores.***

Contrary to popular belief, his goal with the stores was not to simply sell more computers. Apple could have sold just as many at a greater margin through established retailers and online. It was instead a brand building exercise.

While market leader Dell operated a business model that was purely mail order, Apple rightly realised that other premium brands controlled their brand experience in order to raise their perceived value. Nobody would perceive Louis Vuitton as being high luxury if they only sold through department stores and online, so the same applied to computing.

Apple opened their stores and became the most profitable company in history; charging what they wanted and never discounting.



A similar story can be seen with Red Bull. The reason the energy drink brand is always the “*go to*” example of a powerful, consumable goods brand is because it went to incredible efforts to build a front line away from the point of purchase. Its commitment to sports, events, sponsorship, music and sampling means that it is, by a long distance, the consumable goods brand with the biggest front line. *This* is where people learn about the company, not through the retailers where its product is stocked.

***Naturally, you don't have to do anything as extreme as these two companies in order to enjoy the benefits of the front line.***

***You simply have to create some brand experiences.***



Every brand experience - even something as straightforward as basic product sampling - is a piece of the front line. Consumers won't see this as being a separate piece of communications like your TV ad, they'll instead see it as you. A brand ambassador working for you is as representative of the brand as a waiter is of a restaurant, or a cabin attendant is of an airline. They are the people who carry the weight of the brand on their shoulders. Sure, it comes with some pressure - but it also comes with opportunity.

Every time you activate a brand experience, you will be building on the opportunity demonstrated by the PwC research - creating more everyday interactions where the most powerful connections are fostered. In fact, if you're undertaking a *pure* brand experience that isn't embedded in your business model (in the way that a waiter or cabin attendant is), you actually have an additional advantage. You have the ability to create a great experience for its own sake - an experience far more entertaining and rich than you might be able to achieve if the experience were part of the core product.

So as you read through the recommendations in this book, keep in mind the importance of this activity. It isn't just something you're doing on behalf of your brand; in the eyes of the consumer *it is* your brand.

***Therefore when you measure these activities, you don't just measure their marketing performance; you measure yourself. You get to discover how your brand sits outside of the online surveys, the Nielsen reports, the focus groups. You get to see how it exists in the real world.***

We hope you find this book useful.

# THE GROUND RULES

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*Things you need to know  
before getting started*

# 1

# THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EVALUATION AND REVIEW

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If you've commissioned a brand experience before, then you've probably already seen something claiming to offer "measurement" or "evaluation" of the activity.

## THIS MIGHT HAVE INCLUDED THINGS LIKE:

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- Whether or not the activity hit a target (like sample distribution, or attendees)
- How long the activity ran for
- Number of competition entries

... and other direct metrics like these.



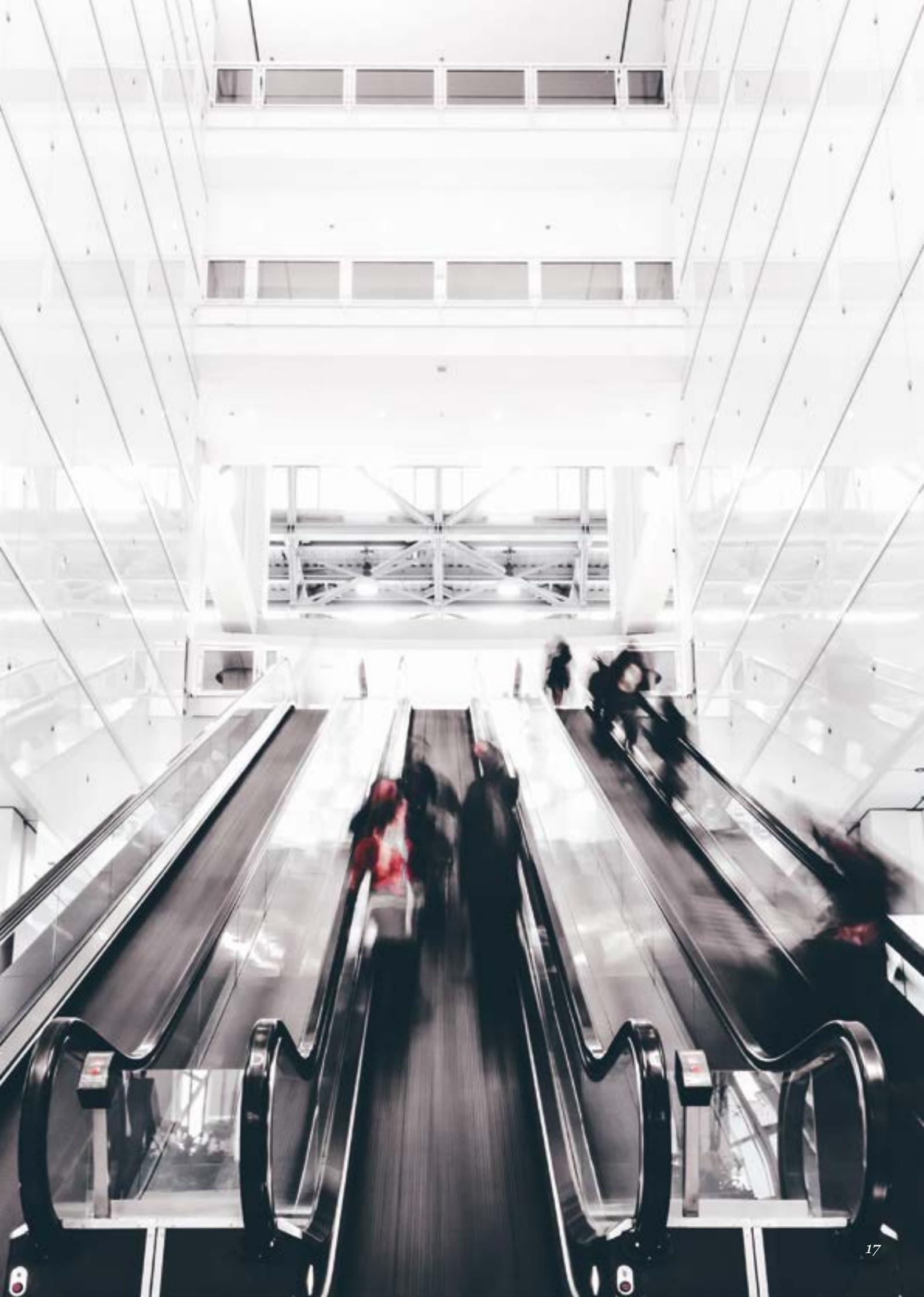
# AN EVALUATION OF A CAMPAIGN DOESN'T TELL YOU WHAT HAPPENED, IT TELLS YOU WHETHER WHAT HAPPENED *WORKED*

---

Whilst such things are important, they only constitute a *review* of the activity, not a true *evaluation*.

An evaluation of a campaign doesn't tell you what happened, it tells you whether what happened *worked*. Whether or not it achieved the desired business goals that saw the experience commissioned in the first place.

The focus of this book is on these types of results. That said, reviews are important too. So it's worth having a quick look here at the different ways you can review an activity.



The metrics by which you review an experience will depend entirely on its structure. Naturally, if you aren't distributing product samples, then you won't have a sampling target for instance.

What you are looking to find out is simply whether the experience functioned correctly; whether all the moving parts were in working order.

**A SOPHISTICATED REVIEW MAY INCLUDE:**

---



**VISITORS AND PARTICIPANTS**

Not only to find out how many people came, but how many got involved at a deeper level.



**SOCIAL LISTENING**

To determine whether the experience managed to gain any indirect reach away from the point of interaction.



**MOVEMENT TRACKING**

To establish how people travel around and engage with the experience.

# THE ONE THING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MEASURING BRAND EXPERIENCES...

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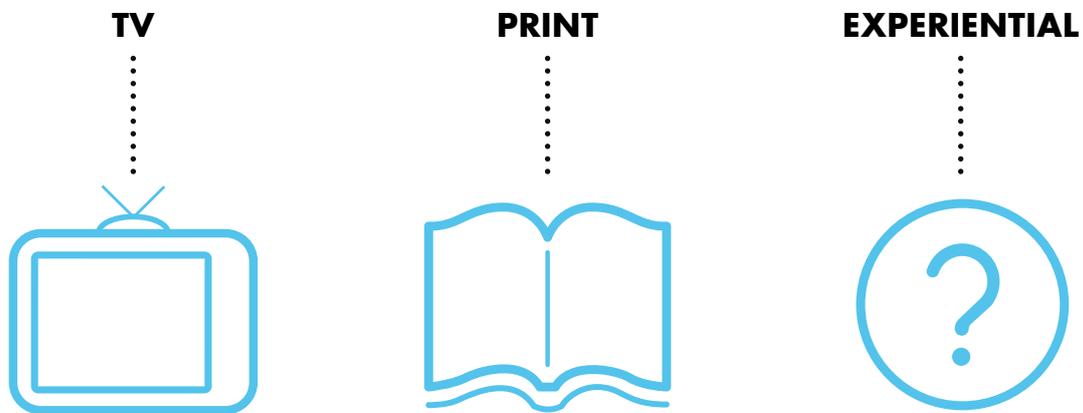
In the following pages we're going to look at measurement techniques and tips in a fair amount of detail. How deep you want to go is up to you, but regardless of whether you're merely flicking through out of curiosity, or you're deep in the midst of planning your own research, there is one thing you must take away.

*This is the golden rule for brand experience measurement:*

***There is no formula for experiential research.***

If someone ever tells you they have a formula or “*automated model*” figured out for measuring experiential, scrutinise it closely, for whilst you can apply such things to other forms of marketing, brand experiences are harder to pin down.

The reason for this is simple. Other marketing disciplines tend to always have a consistent format. TV ads for instance, are always shown on screen. Print ads are always images in publications. This means that if you develop a method for measuring that format, then it doesn't matter what the creative within it happens to be - the way you measure it will always be the same.



When it comes to brand experiences however, there is no consistent format. The shape of a product sampling campaign, an ambient installation or an event, are all completely different. You could say that brand experiences have an “*absence of format*” - they are ideas that have broken free of the page or the screen.

This is obviously great for impact but not so great for ease of measurement. Rather than applying the same formula every time, you have to build your methodology from scratch, customising it to the particular shape of your particular activity.

That’s the bad news. But the good news is that whilst the practicalities might change, the core principles remain consistent.

***So long as you understand the basic structure and some simple rules, it is indeed possible to measure brand experiences in consistent ways.***

Read on to find out what they are.



## SIX STEPS FOR HEALTHY SKIN

**OBJECTIVE**

---

Bring warmth to what is seen as a cold and clinical brand.

**RESULT**

---

+87% strengthening of statement: "Sanex is a brand I feel close to."

*EMR 2014 - Sanex*

# THE FOUR STEPS OF EMR

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*A step by step guide to  
Experiential Measurement and Research*

# 2

# STEP ONE

## UNDERSTANDING YOUR CAMPAIGN

Campaign measurement begins long before the campaign itself is activated. It's a process that begins before an agency is even briefed. It begins with your business goals.

Although all brand experiences help build a front line for a business, they can also be used for a variety of more specific marketing challenges. Because of this, identifying the type of experience you're creating in terms of its marketing goal is an essential first step on the road to both effectiveness and clarity.

This section invites you to consider the big picture up front, so the latter details fall into place more easily.

*There are two main categories of brand experience,  
just as with every marketing activity...*

---

# STRATEGIC

(LONGER TERM)

These are campaigns designed to build the brand over time, instilling sustainable beliefs in target consumers. These are unlikely to provide immediate financial ROI, but are essential for creating meaningful and powerful brands that will deliver long-term payback.

## EXAMPLE: TIMBERLAND EARTHKEEPER POWERCAMP

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Festival recuperation environment powered entirely by the movement of visitors.

## MEASUREMENT:

---

78% point swing away from The North Face for being a credible eco-brand.

*EMR 2011 - Timberland*



# TACTICAL

**(SHORTER TERM)**

These are campaigns designed to provoke a direct response in target consumers, such as immediate purchase. These have the potential to have immediate financial return, but are more limited for brand communication because of their more transactional goals.

## **EXAMPLE: JORDANS FUELLING THE NATION**

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A simple supermarket sampling vehicle for their Super Granola product.

## **MEASUREMENT:**

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40% of exposed non-buyers converted to ongoing purchase.

*EMR 2013 - Jordans*

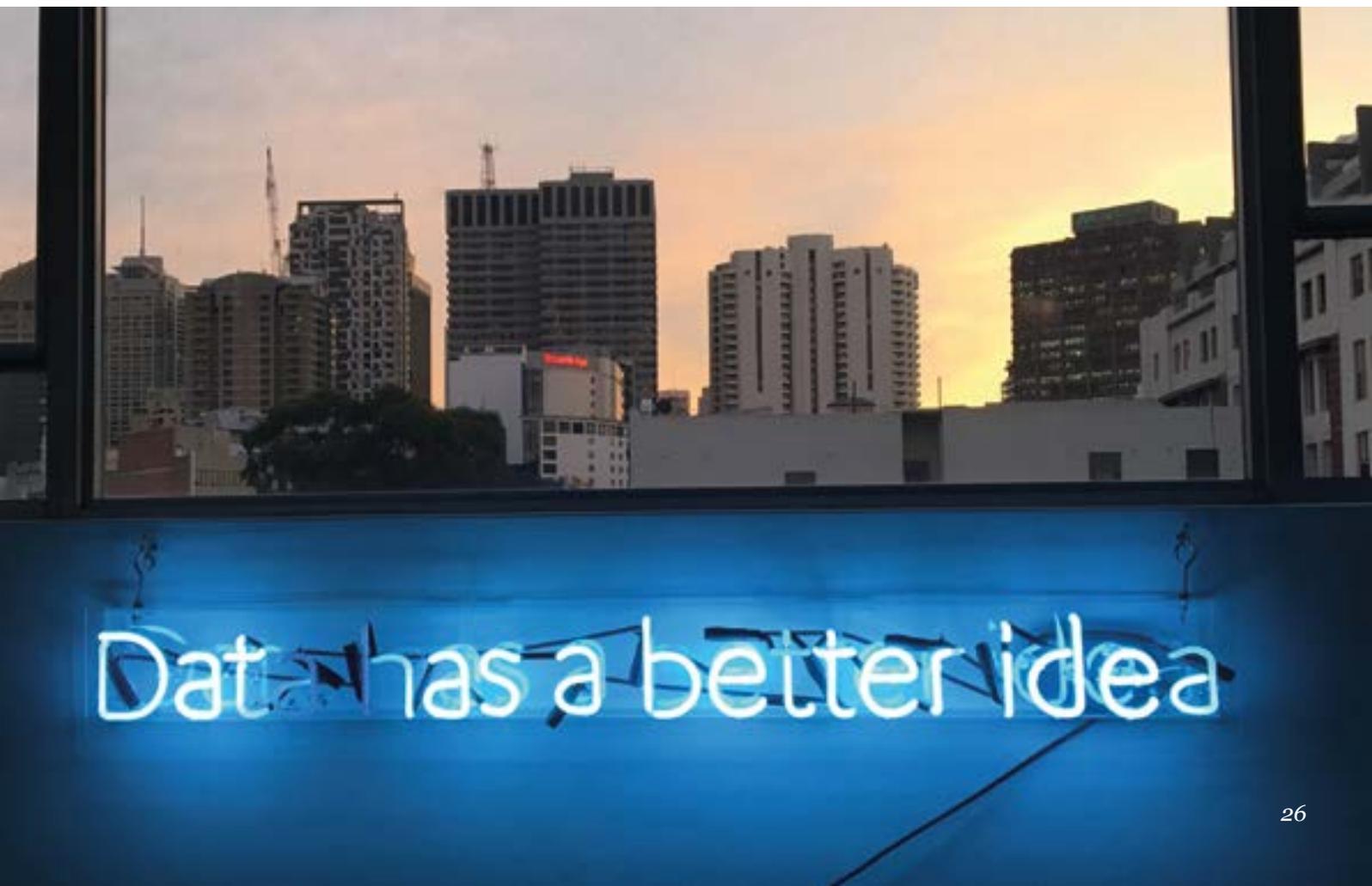


***It's essential to get a handle on which category your campaign falls into.***

Not only for figuring out what questions to ask, but also for designing the experience effectively in the first place.

It is quite typical to get confused and to start judging strategic experiences by tactical standards (or vice versa), which will then disrupt the planning process and give a distorted picture of what the campaign achieved when you come to evaluate.

So ensure you're clear on this before diving in.





# Sky Rainforest Rescue

## DISCOVERY TRAILS

### **OBJECTIVE**

---

Raise interest in the plight of the rainforest.

### **RESULT**

---

77% of walkers felt inspired to make changes in their daily life to help the rainforest.

*EMR 2012 - Sky Rainforest Rescue*

## STEP TWO

# ESTABLISHING PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The next step is to figure out exactly what it is that you want to measure. The points you list here will form the crux of the questionnaire you use to gather opinions.

*The process is simple...*

---

# THE PROCESS

---



These are your  
performance measures



Their variety is limitless, but  
(depending on goals and idea)  
could include:

**PURCHASE  
RATES AND  
ROI**

**USAGE  
BEHAVIOUR**

**COMPETITOR  
COMPARISONS**

**DEMOGRAPHIC  
SHIFTS**

**EDUCATION**

**BRAND  
EQUITY  
MEASURES**

**WORD OF  
MOUTH**

**OPINION  
CHANGE**

etc.



## STEP THREE

# GATHERING YOUR DATA

Now that you know what you want to measure, you need to figure out how you're going to do it.

As we mentioned earlier in the book, no two brand experiences are the same. Consider just how different a mass sampling campaign is from a glitzy event. One travels all over the country, whilst the other occurs in one place. One might last for weeks, whilst the other takes place at a single moment in time. One only reaches the people it directly touches, whilst the other might be supported by additional media.

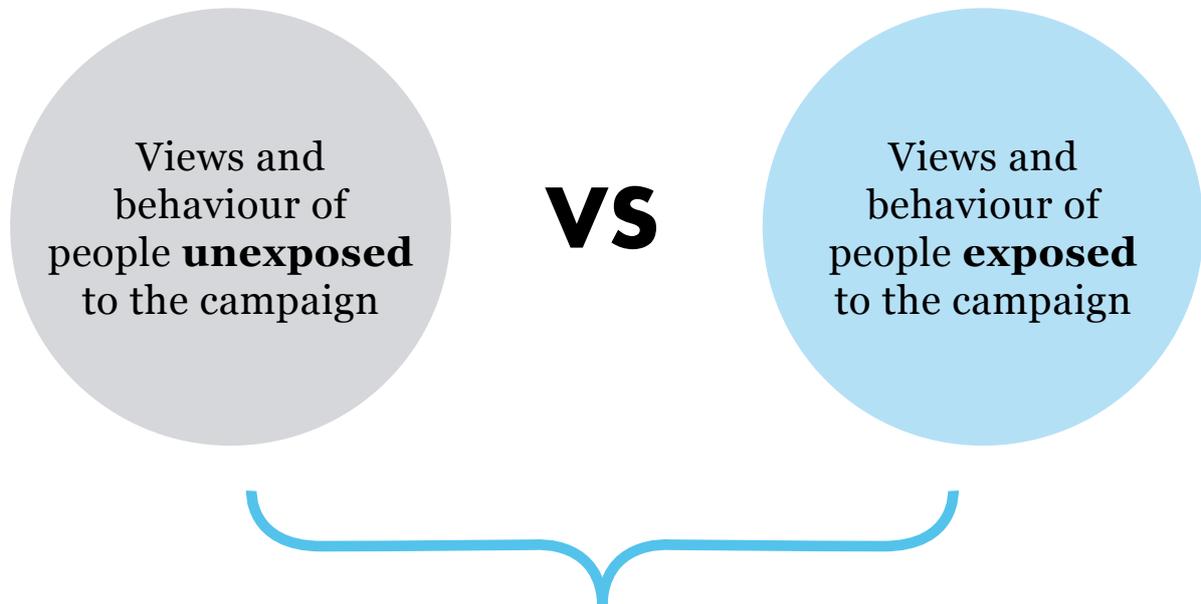
You see, although we can call them both brand experiences and they both take place in the real world, you cannot use the same research methodology to collect their results.

*Therefore you have to begin with a consistent core model and then design a bespoke way to apply it to every execution...*

---

# THE LOGIC

---



**Demographically matched**

As you can see it's quite simple. The only catch is this:

***You need to gather the views of those exposed to your campaign, away from the point of interaction.***

### **THE REASONS FOR THIS ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

---



- People tend to be overenthusiastic when quizzed about an experience in the immediate aftermath
- You will often want to gauge behaviour changes (for instance, purchase) in the weeks following the activity

This means that although you might collect contact details at the point of experience, the real research should be conducted weeks later over the phone, when the dust has settled and you can measure their “*new normal*.”

This doesn't apply to your unexposed audience of course. They can be interviewed at any time, providing you are confident they are going to be representative of your exposed audience prior to their experience.



## STEP FOUR

# ANALYSING YOUR DATA

Now that you have your data for these two groups, your analysis becomes a simple job of comparison.

However, there are some ways to increase the complexity of the analysis and therefore the depth of your findings.

*Here are a couple of key techniques  
to enable you to delve deeper...*

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# DATA CUTS

---

A data cut divides your audience into subcategories so you can compare results at a deeper level. For instance, instead of simply comparing all of your exposed audience to all of your unexposed audience, you can pull out just the people within those groups who had bought the product before, or who are over 50, or who are female.

Cutting your data like this can be essential to creating a sophisticated analysis, although you must be careful not to let the sample size of your cuts become too small.



# ADDITIONAL FOLLOW UP DIPS

---

When you interview your exposed audience a few weeks after their interaction, this is called a “*follow up*”. Often you will only need to do this once, for example, four weeks later. However, there is always the option to do this again, to see how the effects of the experience might be continuing further into the future - say an additional eight weeks later.

You could even take this further and begin an ongoing dialogue with these consumers (or non-consumers as the case may be), occasionally returning to them to see how their relationship with your brand or category has developed.





## SIP, DIP, SHARE OFFICE SAMPLING

### OBJECTIVE

---

Reposition Ryvita Thins as a sociable snack to be shared amongst friends and family.

### RESULT

---

228% increase in buyers eating the product sociably with friends four weeks later.

*EMR 2014 - Ryvita*

# THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE DATA

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*Don't forget who it's all about*

# 3

***Ultimately, behind any piece of research are people - people who are more complex than anything you can reduce to data.***

Keeping this in mind allows you to bring an extra dimension of subtlety to your analysis and helps make sure you never misinterpret the results you gather.

Every piece of EMR research takes a moment to showcase some of the individuals we've spoken to - and so just to give a bit of texture to the technique, we've profiled some of them here.



## KRISTINA

**Administrator**  
Crewe

*I always thought green tea was just another mint one, but now I've tried it, I really like it!*



## KEY

**Operations analyst**  
Leeds

*Pravha is now my go-to pint when I finish work.*



## HENRY & ROB

**Baby & carpenter**  
Bournemouth

*We generally just buy what's on offer (apart from baby stuff, where we spend a little extra).*

## FLORA & MILLY

Management consultants  
London

---

*We're alike in so many ways, but we have to agree to disagree on our favourite tea!*

”



## JOANNA

Beautician  
Edinburgh

---

*I used to drink whatever was in the cupboard, but I'm a bit fussier now I've got a new favourite.*

”



## LAURA

Speech therapist  
Reading

---

*I know it's supposed to be for kids, but I always make sure that there's enough for me too!*

”





## DAHER

Operations manager  
Bristol



*I didn't think Lurpak would be worth paying more for, but I couldn't go back to a different spread now.*



## CHRIS

Construction manager  
Leicester



*I thought my local takeaway was unbeatable but I reckon I can give it a run for its money now!*



## TOBY

Dog  
Berkshire



*Woof.*

# ADVANCED TECHNIQUES

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*Hidden knowledge to take  
your work to the next level*

# 4

# FINANCIAL ROI ANALYSIS

---

Sadly, not every marketing scenario represents a formula for printing money, rewarding you with £2 out for every £1 you put in.

However, certain tactical campaigns do have this characteristic and in these situations the most important measure for you to research will be direct financial return.

In this section you'll find a brief description of our approach to calculating this type of ROI. Whether it's the core purpose of your campaign, or a secondary curiosity within a more strategic brand project, it can be applied to any idea.

**Those exposed to the activity  
who go on to buy**

The split of these pools will be established through the research process



**X**



**X**

Purchase volumes calculated through comparative, claimed purchase pre and post research



**=A**



**=B**

**ROI =**

$$(A + B) \times (1 + ft - f) \times (m)$$

units in first month

f = attrition factor\*

t = desired time period (in months)

m = margin per unit

\* See overleaf

## WHAT IS AN ATTRITION FACTOR?

When you gather claimed purchase data, it will obviously only cover the period between the activity and when you interview the exposed consumers *e.g. one month*. We do not assume that the volume of purchase in this first period will necessarily continue indefinitely (some may buy less, some may drop out altogether), so to project future months we apply an attrition factor to lower the anticipated future purchase. The attrition factor can be estimated or based on further follow up dips.

### FOR EXAMPLE:

---

Say on average exposed consumers bought two units in the month following the activity. To project anticipated sales into the future we don't assume they will buy two units per month every month forever, so we lower it.

A standard measure for consumable goods (if you have no specific information) is 0.22.

**MONTH 1 AVERAGE PURCHASE  
= 2**

**MONTH 2 AND ONWARDS AVERAGE PER MONTH PURCHASE  
= 2 X 0.22 = 0.44**

Here is an example of the model applied to a yogurt sampling activity, so you can see how it works in practice.

**200,000 exposed to the activity  
of which 100,000 go on to buy**

The split of these pools will be established through the research process



**X**

**X**

Purchase volumes calculated through comparative, claimed purchase pre and post research



**=25,000 UNITS (MONTH 1)**

**=150,000 UNITS (MONTH 1)**

**ROI =**

$$(175,000) \times (1 + (0.22 \times 12) - 0.22) \times (0.5)$$

units in first month

f = attrition factor

t = desired time period (in months)

m = margin per unit

**ROI =**

$$\mathbf{\pounds 299,250}$$

# LEARNING TO LISTEN

---

Unlike almost all other types of research your brand will undertake, research into brand experiences allows you to speak to people as individuals. This gives you a great opportunity you don't normally have.

Rather than having your research be a one-way piece of data capture, you can start a dialogue with the participants, giving some additional depth to the surface results.

The way you do this is up to you, but here are a few ideas which we regularly action with EMR...



## INDIVIDUAL DIALOGUES

---

Sometimes you find people who have an interesting relationship with your brand. Perhaps they're a very heavy user, or someone who uses it in an unusual way. In these cases, why not arrange a separate, deeper conversation with them to understand these behaviours more? You could even get them to film their usage or record a diary, whatever method you think will deliver fresh insights.

## FURTHER QUESTIONS

---

No matter how good one's questionnaire writing skills, it's not unusual to find new questions cropping up as you start to gather the data. Perhaps you want to get more insight into an element of the results that haven't gone quite as you expected. Or perhaps you simply neglected something first time around. In these cases there's no need to worry, as you can return to your audience and gather the information you need second time around.

## BESPOKE PANEL

---

As well as speaking to respondents individually, you can also get them together to give you a different dynamic as a focus group. This is particularly useful if you have a separate requirement to reviewing the brand experience, such as planning how you might do things better next time.

***You will be amazed at how willing people are to help, as many are keen to get their voices heard.***



**Warburtons**

**LIGHTER WAY TO LUNCH**

**OBJECTIVE**

---

Introduce Britain to Warburtons Thins.

**RESULT**

---

19.93 packs purchased for every one sampled, over the subsequent 12 months.

*EMR 2015 - Warburtons Thins*

# TOP TIPS FOR SUCCESS

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*Lessons from a decade of  
Experiential Measurement and Research*

# 5

We've been doing this for a while now. You name the logistical challenge or the data difficulty, we've seen it all.

After a while you start to see the same challenges cropping up again and again, showing that there are some pitfalls that are consistently present no matter the context.

***Here we list the most common so that you can avoid them when planning your research.***



## ONE

### **DON'T JUDGE AN EXECUTION ON RESULTS IT WASN'T DESIGNED TO DELIVER**

This may seem obvious, but that doesn't mean it isn't frequently forgotten. For instance, if you create an activity for a cereal that is all about accentuating its "heritage", don't research its effect on "health perceptions" of the product. Many successful campaigns have been made to look underwhelming by researching the wrong thing, so ensure your questions match up to the campaign objectives.

## TWO

### **DO ONE THING WELL**

Just in case you are tempted to handle the first mistake by trying to create an experience that ticks every box you can think of, tread carefully. The best campaigns have a very focussed, single-minded job to do. This is because people can generally only take one lesson away from an activity - any more complicated and you risk them leaving with nothing.

## THREE

### **DON'T MEASURE THE EXPERIENCE, MEASURE ITS EFFECTS**

It can be tempting to make your research all about how people reacted to the experience itself. How did they engage with it? Did they enjoy it? These results can be interesting and useful, however, they are very much secondary to whether that engagement and enjoyment produced a positive business impact for the brand in question. Always try and orient your questions towards the product and its usage, rather than the activity.

## FOUR

### **PAY ATTENTION TO THE EXTREMES**

It's easy to view all your results as averages. An average of 7 out of 10 agreement to a question is always better than 6 out of 10, right? Not necessarily. This is because generally speaking it is only the extremes (the 9s and 10s) that will provoke action such as purchase. The difference between 4 and 6 out of 10 probably won't be much in reality as neither will deliver for you. So consider counting the results that you think will really drive action amongst consumers. A lower average, but more extreme results, will often mean higher performance.

## FIVE

# DESIGN YOUR QUESTIONS WITH AN EYE ON THE FUTURE

It can be easy to view research as a backward-looking exercise *e.g. how did we do in the past?* However, the best research isn't about the past, it's about the future. It's about planning what you're going to do better next time.

Making your research fulfil this function is all about how you design your questions. With each question ask: *“Would the answer to this question make a difference to us going forward?”*

# WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

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We're confident that the information in this book will not only help you to develop a deeper understanding of how to measure brand experiences, but will also help you to build better experiences in the first place.

The techniques are flexible enough to be applied to any brand experience you commission, whatever the shape, goal or context.

So we encourage you to embrace these techniques yourselves and create something ground-breaking for your brand - either under your own steam, or perhaps with our help.

If you'd like to chat further, please get in touch - and in the meantime we look forward to bumping into you out there in the real world.

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# THE PROBLEM WITH EXPERIENTIAL IS THAT IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO MEASURE... RIGHT?

As a global brand experience agency,  
this is something we've heard many times.  
And to be honest, for many years, *it's been right.*

That's why we created EMR  
(Experiential Measurement and Research),  
the definitive measurement and research service for  
brand experiences. Honed for a decade, it allows you  
to measure the business impact of any campaign,  
no matter how radical or non-traditional.

sense