

A man and a woman are shown in a movie theater, both wearing 3D glasses and smiling. The woman is holding a large black bucket of popcorn. The background is a blurred crowd of people. There are green geometric shapes in the top right and bottom left corners of the image.

# Brand Partnerships

How to prove their worth

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# What makes a good partnership

We all know that a good brand partnership can increase your customer base, drive depth of engagement, improve customer perceptions and increase loyalty...for both brands in a partnership. But how do you prove that it has done this, and show the ROI?

Brand partnerships are everywhere, consumers are savvy to them and marketers extol their benefits.

From researching the value of all types of brand partnerships, including brands partnering with TV shows such as Sony and the World Cup on ITV, through to strategic partnerships, we know what makes a good partnership work, and what needs to be measured to assess success.



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Whilst there are obvious differences in approach needed for partnering with a TV show to a more strategic alliance, one thing holds true - consumers need to feel comfortable with the partnership for it to work, and it works better if consumers understand the benefits the partnerships bring to them.

This could be additional content via online activations, or a competition with a prize related to one of the partners, or another point of access to a brand.

Then there are specific guidelines for different types of partnership...

# Guidelines for different partnerships



## Strategic Partnerships

### Choose carefully

Multiple partnerships can be effective if they are reaching the right audiences. Take for example Spotify who partnered with The Times – for Spotify helping to attract an older more upmarket audience whilst for the Times helping open them up to a younger audience. Both brands are able to benefit from positive brand re-enforcement amongst different audiences. Spotify has multiple partnerships such as Virgin Media, Vodafone, Sonos, BBC Playlister and The Times – all enabling them to reach distinct target audiences across different sectors.

The danger can come when partnering with multiple brands in the same sector (such as all the phone companies, or TV platforms) as the uniqueness of the partnership can be lost and therefore limit impact. Pick the partners that will give you the best mix to reach key target audiences for brand growth; e.g. different partners to appeal to different age groups. Big brands are important but more niche partnerships can drive relevance amongst hard to reach groups.



### Don't over-indulge

Partnering with too many brands in the same sector may start driving confusion and impact on premium brand perceptions.

### Don't confuse the consumer

Limit the number of partnerships and offers directly messaging at the same time, as when saturation is reached the impact on consideration may no longer be positive. Be careful on what offers are given – setting timeframes is important to as not to have multiple offers all at the same time. Too many offers at the same time can lead to confusion, erosion of the value of the current proposition, and can also change the dynamics of the market as after a while consumers will come to expect brand offers.

### Be consistent

Whilst you can't always control creative executions of partner ads, there needs to be clear guidelines to ensure brand consistency in terms of message or tone.

### Don't rely on partners to do all the work

A key part of making a brand partnership work is to maintain the brand distinction of your own brand – use partnerships as part of the wider marketing plan and media mix, as your own brand campaigns can be more effective in brand building.

# Guidelines for different partnerships



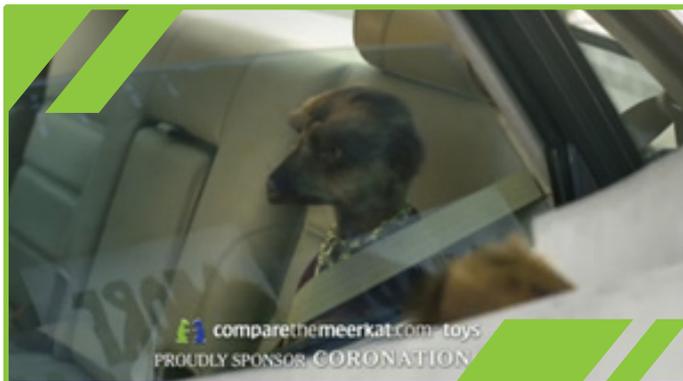
## TV Show Partnerships

### Choose carefully

Consumers expect the TV show and brand partners to be of a similar ilk – aside from the cost applications, a new brand would feel odd alongside an established soap opera or huge sporting event.

### Make sure there is a link

Consumers need to understand why a sponsor and a programme go together. The link doesn't need to be obvious though; shared tonality or mood state can work. E.g. A wine brand sponsoring a Saturday night entertainment show.



### Be a true partner

Be involved on all relevant platforms; online, mobile, competition etc. This increases both consumer engagement and impact on the brand, but make sure each activation offers something for the consumer; access to new or additional information, or somewhere for them to become more involved for instance.

### Understand the brand partnership pathway

A short term partnership can drive awareness, but over the longer term it can do much more for brand image and call to action measures.

### Don't confuse the consumer

Keep the messaging clear and simple.

### Be consistent

Have some tonal, visual or messaging link to other advertising which may be around at the same time.

# Measuring brand partnerships



Both types of partnerships can be mutually beneficial, and can grow in scope and impact over the longer term. Short term partnerships may help drive immediate sales, but long term partnerships will have more emotional impact on the brands involved.

At SPA Future Thinking we have a suite of tools for measuring brand partnerships. Campaign Optimiser 2.0 allows you to see which platforms used in a multi-media partnership had most impact on the brand. Timed Emotional Response allows you to see the implicit effects that a partnership may have had on a brand.

## Campaign Optimiser 2.0:

Re-launched in an interactive format, Campaign Optimiser 2.0 helps identify which platforms used have impacted most on campaign awareness, appeal and call to action. It enables you to:

Evaluate the impact each media channel used in a multiplatform campaign has made on overall campaign awareness and on uplifts for key metrics

Input spend per platform to see which platforms over or under index comparative to spend

Alter spend or % spend per platform to see how things would have turned out differently with a different media outlay

With surveys tailored to your objectives we make sure we cover what we know is important to an advertising and sponsorship campaign: message tone and appeal, social media impact and fit with expectations for your brand.

## Timed Emotional Response:

The power of emotion derives from an increasing focus aimed at getting closer to understanding real behaviour and the truth. Human behaviour naturally responds and acts on how we feel as much as on the facts in front of us at any time.

Timed Emotional Response (TER) allows you to see the implicit effects a brand partnership has on your brand. By measuring speed of response to brand attributes and comparing those aware versus unaware of a partnership we can show where the partnership is working at a deeper, emotional level.

TER provides more than just the cognitive drivers of consumers; it is about understanding the emotional actions of human behaviour.

# About us



## Suzy Aronstam, Head of MMT

Suzy has been with Future Thinking for 15 years and heads up all of our broadcast sponsorship evaluation research, working closely with the sales research teams in major broadcasters.

She developed our extensive norms database for sponsorship, and has been instrumental in the development of Campaign Optimiser, our research tool for measuring the relative impact of different platforms within a multimedia campaign.

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Future Thinking is distinctive rather than different. Our toolkit may bear the hallmarks of other research agencies but we are dedicated to delivering a singularly characteristic blend of intellect and commercial awareness that ensures clients think, feel and do differently.

With combined industry experience of over 40 years and offices in the UK and Europe, Future Thinking provide genuine research expertise and understanding across a wide range of industry sectors. Dedicated teams across the business, with a mix of agency and client side experience, ensure we remain at the forefront of innovative thinking, advanced technology and analytical expertise.

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