

Testing Creative Work 2: Reverse Design

Given our growing knowledge of the role and influence of unconscious processes in reactions to advertising and the poverty of our technique for exploring the unconscious, it makes utter sense to employ a reverse design when exploring creative work, whether as roughs or finished executions.

At the very least reversing the design will help control for order effects (in tests of variants, people tend to choose the first or the last and those in the middle get ignored - partly because of the limits of working memory). And using this model of reversal in the diagram, sometimes you will explore what is already present in people' s minds before showing them anything new, while at others you show the new material before exploring brand recognition or associations.

By doing this you will get a very good account for your analysis of what is already there, how the new material fits or aligns with that and finally an appreciation of the likely consequences on the internal brand (that brand as held inside customers' minds) of the new material. That is often an area where your client will be seeking reassurance and explanation.