

# MAKING BELONGING JOYFUL

Inclusive representation in  
advertising to grow brands

February 2023

Image source: Virgin Atlantic, See The World Differently  
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There was a lot of debate in 2022 about how to make effective ESG (Environment, Social, Governance) advertising. Brands were looking to find the right balance between delivering a great creative experience to the audience, having a differentiated ESG angle, and connecting their brand in a way that delivered business outcomes.

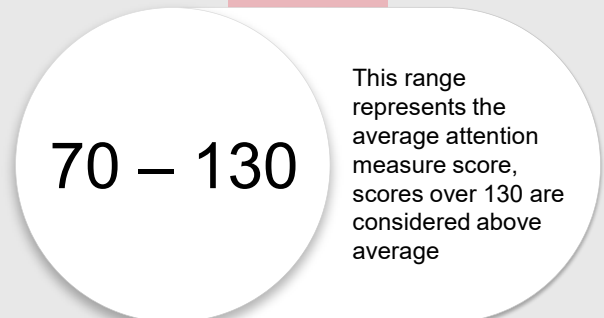
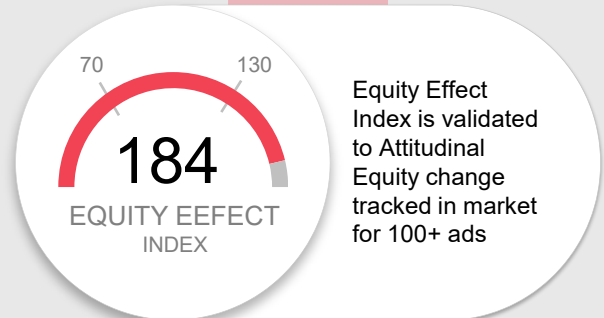
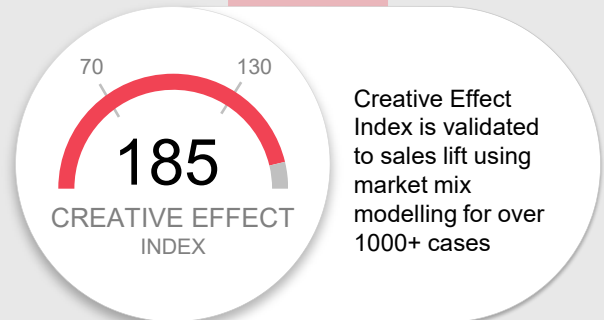
In this context, it gives us great pleasure to share that Virgin Atlantic's "[See the World Differently](#)", made by [Lucky Generals](#), is our ad of the year 2022 and a good example of how to do the 'S' in ESG with flair. It is a brilliant effectiveness case study on the power of positive representation done well, with the use of entertainment, joy, and brand consistency.

Why this ad? "See the World Differently" was tested using our signature creative assessment offer [CreativeSpark](#) and landed in the top 10% of the ads in 2022 in Ipsos' creative database in the UK. The ad excelled on all three effectiveness KPIs; brand attention index (measure of memory encoding), creative effect index (short term sales lift potential), and equity effect index (long term market share growth potential). Its effectiveness is tied to the ad being a Misfit ad, delivering a creative experience that entertains people, while anchored in an idea that makes Virgin Atlantic different to other airlines.

Working with [SeeHer](#), Ipsos has evidenced how the positive portrayal of women and girls in ads is predictive of [short term sales increases and longer term brand relationships](#).

Ipsos has identified three key principles for making great ESG advertising: be true to the facts, true to the people, and true to the brand. "See the World Differently" does all three. It modernises the iconic Virgin tone of voice, reflects a variety of authentic people you want to watch, and provides a great creative experience for the audience.

## SEE THE WORLD DIFFERENTLY



## TRUE TO THE FACTS: People, not potpourri

The world is a complex place filled with a vast array of diverse, unique, and interesting human beings. Virgin Atlantic portrays unique people that you want to engage with, in all their quirky glory. Lucky Generals consulted with Virgin Atlantic's internal networks and the Diversity Standards Collective. This helped them successfully represent diversity without the casting seeming tokenistic or coming across like a potpourri of two-dimensional characters

Virgin Atlantic is 'walking the walk' by giving their colleagues the [freedom to choose the uniform](#) that they feel most comfortable in and which best represents who they are.

## TRUE TO THE PEOPLE: Taking people on a journey

The ad provides a joyful lens on inclusion and belonging vs. falling into a trap of being serious or worthy. Focusing on the crew and passengers was clever. The brand writes a love letter to their people rather than standing on a soapbox and setting the world to rights in a 60 second ad.

## TRUE TO THE BRAND: Our crew = our kind of people

Showing freedom to belong in a joyful way is an effective tool to normalise differences and celebrate the individuals. In a [discussion of Black Joy](#), we reflect on the principles of changing the narrative on race and the importance of talking about and portraying joy as a counterweight to being defined by trauma.

Changing the narrative on diversity requires light and shade and this advert demonstrates that it can be highly effective to lean into the light and showcase joy.



### ALICE MCGINN

Strategy Director  
Lucky Generals



The campaign is the first work born of Virgin Atlantic's new platform, "See the World Differently", which captures the brand's iconoclastic spirit and nods to the post-lockdown zeitgeist, where we are all looking at our lives with fresh eyes.

We needed to launch the platform with tangible evidence of how Virgin Atlantic 'See the world differently'. As part of the creative development process we discovered that the best and most powerful evidence are their people. Unlike other airlines, they aren't required to follow a script, but are instead encouraged to be themselves, offering customers a more personal touch.

It's this personal touch customers find particularly appealing. Our audience wants to feel special, but without the formality and treated as an individual no matter where they're sitting on the plane. It is this quality of individuality that Virgin Atlantic's people and customers share, that we set out to capture.



Image source: Virgin Atlantic, See The World Differently



In many ways this campaign is part of a watershed for radical inclusivity in marketing. The sheer creative joy of authentic portrayal comes alive on screen in this campaign. Through working with the Diversity Standards Collective, Virgin Atlantic and Lucky Generals successfully translated the lived experiences of their employees on screen. A depth of understanding which has not just informed this work, but has been a driver for positive change within the business.

There is no question that when it comes to positive representation the advertising industry still has a long way to go. Yet the good news is that the effectiveness of “See the World Differently” affords progressive brands the opportunity to approach their own advertising differently too. As Ipsos’ ad of the year 2022 this campaign and the ethos and energy of the creative minds dedicated to every single detail of positive portrayal are both compelling and joyful. This is the kind of work that not only successfully underlines that diversity drives creativity; but whose strategy and approach can serve to drive the industry forward towards a truly inclusive future.

## NICOLA KEMP

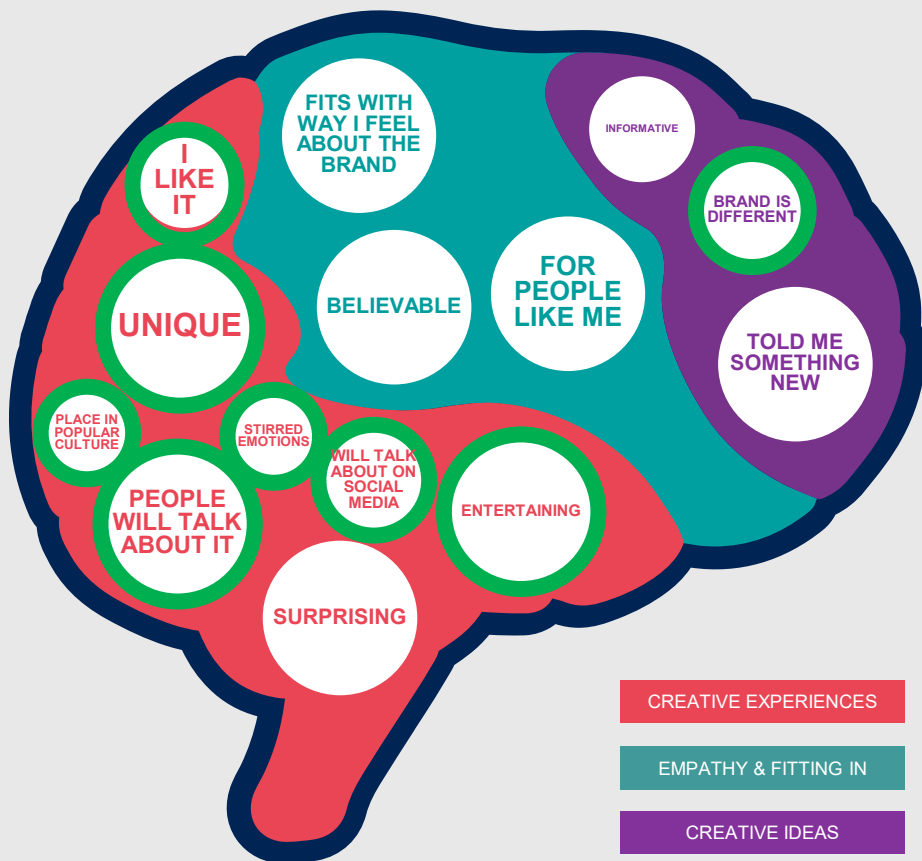
Editorial Director  
Creativebrief





Image source: Virgin Atlantic, See The World Differently

## Virgin Atlantic makes its point by taking you on a highly creative journey



**This ad is a Misfit because it delivers a creative experience that differentiates the brand.**

What makes a Misfit? Creativity is celebrated as the fuel of effective advertising, but it has a problem. It is an enigma of artistic work and its pursuit invites uncertainty, with corporate boardrooms demanding certain returns. Misfits aims to move beyond this impasse by proposing a shared language for what creativity means in advertising and outlines robust evidence supporting its effects. Because if advertisers don't embrace uncertainty and adopt a Misfit mindset to achieve extraordinary effects, they will be confined to safe work and ordinary effects.

[Discover Misfits here](#)

Diagnostics that performed above the Ipsos norms highlighted in Green  
 Source: Misfits: How Creativity in Advertising Sparks Brand Growth



Image source: Virgin Atlantic, See The World Differently



People have always been at the heart of Virgin Atlantic and important to the success of the brand. Our people are our differentiator, so it made sense to start by championing them and their individuality, and then applying this spirit to everything we do.

Virgin Atlantic encourages everyone to be themselves. We have always promoted and championed individuality – that’s how we see the world differently.

When it came to execution, we told the story of a group of Virgin Atlantic people and customers traveling through the airport and onto the plane. Our story collided the clinical airport environment and metal of our aircraft, with the small details that make each character an individual, creating a spot filled with humanity and warmth.

## ANNABELLE CORDELLI

Senior Vice President of  
Brand & Marketing  
Virgin Atlantic



## MAKING A GOOD VIGNETTE AD

Virgin Atlantic were primarily focused on a unifying idea which was brought to life through powerful story telling. While they didn’t set out to make a vignette ad, the end execution uses that style. A vignette ad is one that shows multiple mini stories or scenarios vs. a linear storyline.

An analysis of the Ipsos creative database shows that vignette ads struggle to cut through more than linear stories. The most common pitfall of vignette ads is that they often try to include something for everyone and end up appealing to no one.

There are four scenarios in which vignette ads perform well and “See the World Differently” had all of them covered. Vignette ads work well when they:

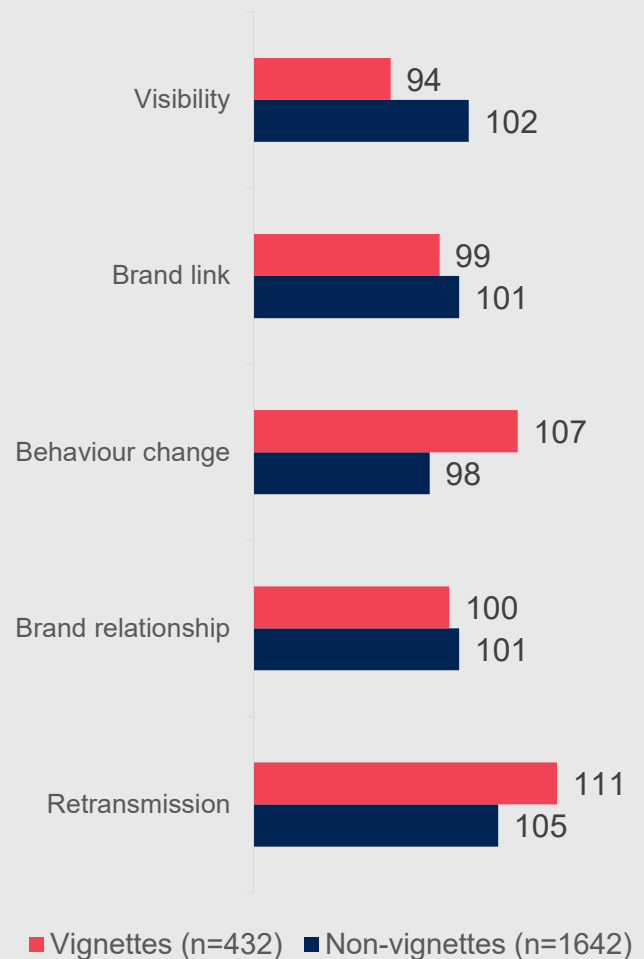
1. Appeal to an audience with a core idea vs. packing in a variety of scenes
  - The core idea is ‘people with panache’ and all the scenes work hard to bring out their character. It doesn’t feel like a box ticking exercise, even though the ad does get through a lot of under-represented groups.
2. Have a creative device or consistent character that links scenarios together
  - The music and location are a connecting device through the ad.
3. Sequence scenes well in terms of timeline and logic, e.g. young to old, dark to light
  - The ad moves through the airport, security, boarding, being seated and taking to the sky. It feels smooth and seamless to watch, and now you know why!
4. Establish the premise early and people can grasp the theme quickly
  - The opening scene where the Virgin Atlantic crew in uniform decides against her red lipstick immediately sets out the idea and the brand.

If you are planning an ad that highlights a diversity or ESG message, early research is key. The Ipsos triple truth principles: true to the facts, true to the people, true to the brand, combined with robust early research like [Ipsos Instant|Labs](#) will help button down language, nuance and fundamentals to land an effective campaign.

**Kudos to Virgin Atlantic and Lucky Generals for “See the World Differently”, our Ipsos UK ad of the year 2022. A masterclass in how to be joyfully representative, nail the vignette ad format, and put the brand front and centre.**

## Vignette ads lag on visibility, but can perform well on other dimensions

Advertising KPIs by vignette vs. non-vignette ads



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## FURTHER READING

[SeeHer: Strive for more](#)

[Misfits: How Creativity in Advertising Sparks Brand Growth](#)

[Creative Development: Explore the communication strategy, uncover the best idea and creative route](#)

**[Creative|Spark](#)** Assess and maximise creative potential to achieve short and long-term effects for your brand in as little as 24 hours. Creative|Spark captures realistic attention metrics in a true to life distracted environment and observes the reality of how people make view content and make choices. It draws from multiple scientific disciplines to measure a range of thoughts, feelings, and emotions, alongside sales and equity share validated outcome measures.

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