

THREE KEYS TO UNLOCK BRAND SUCCESS

Shaping Expectations, Integrating Context, Acting with Empathy

By Emmanuel Probst January 2023



Brands are no longer in control. In a dynamic world, people are. Brands can make powerful connections and bring more to people's lives by actively shaping their expectations.

BRANDS ARE NO LONGER IN CONTROL

Marketers, beware: you are no longer in control of your brand. In a dynamic world, people are in control. Think of Cadbury, for example, which triggered an uproar from consumers and the media when launching its "Unity Bar" to celebrate India's diversity. On a more positive note, Vaseline recently gained 1.5% in household penetration in the U.S., thanks to "slugging," a beauty routine prompted by TikTok creators.

But brands can make powerful connections with people and bring more to their lives.

Ipsos' vision to building great brands is underpinned by 3 keys to unlock brand success: Shaping Expectations / Integrating Context / Acting with Empathy. This new approach empowers marketers to drive brand success by shaping people's expectations, empathizing with people, and understanding the role brands play in their lives.

EXPECTATIONS

Expectations are what people think and know about the brand and the category. This includes all the expectations people have about brands, such as:

- Sensorial expectations
- Functional/emotional expectations
- Social expectations
- Buying expectations

WHY COCA COLA STANDS OUT AT SHELF

Expectations are important because they are the foundation of all our subjective experiences. For a long time, researchers assumed that experiences happened to us. However, modern neuroscience reveals that we are the authors of our experiences.

Carefully shaped expectations are why we can find that can of Coke instantly and easily on a busy shelf. It's only because we have pre-set visual expectations of the colours and shapes we expect to see that we can find them easily.



CONTEXT

Successful brands start with understanding the context people live in: Context is what is happening in people's lives, and the world around them.

What is important to people and the brands they choose will change depending on the context. At Ipsos, we differentiate the macro from the micro context:

- The macro context embraces societal and cultural values, norms, and prevalent issues, topics, and themes.
- The micro context refers to the occasions in which people are choosing brands. That is, what needs they expect the brand to satisfy and what problems it must solve for them. The micro context also includes when, where and with whom people choose a brand.

Ipsos' Expectations / Context /

Empathy approach gives marketers a deep understanding of the everyday, personal context of their consumers: their immediate needs, goals, and missions.

WHY UNDERSTANDING CULTURAL CONTEXT DROVE SUCCESS FOR BABELL

Babbel is a paid language learning online service that faces fierce competition from free-of-charge alternatives. Babbel needed to develop a new communication platform to create an emotional bond with people and give them a reason to pay for Babbel's service.

Ipsos' study revealed that people in different countries see different opportunities language learning brings. In Germany, for example, people learn languages for personal enrichment, while in Brazil, people learn languages to advance their career.

Ipsos enables marketers to measure Contextual Equity and Brand Desire:

- **Contextual Equity** helps ensure that expectations align with people's unique needs in a given context
- **Brand Desire** measures attitudinal brand preference, which changes across personal contexts.

HOW CULTURAL CONTEXT SHIFTS EXPECTATIONS

UNDERSTANDING CHANGES EVERYTHING

INSIGHT

While language can be a barrier to aspirations, it can also be a springboard to seize **new opportunities.**

IDEA

With Babbel language learning app, Understanding changes everything

Diversity
Personal enrichment
Self assurance
Professional boost

EMPATHY

Empathy is to understand what's important to people, and how brands can add to their lives. Brand managers who demonstrate empathy endeavor to continuously capture and feel what is important to societies, cultures and individuals across contexts and consumption occasions. Empathetic brand management and brand marketing has been proven to be more effective. For example, empathetic communication is the #1 driver of long-term advertising effectiveness.

Indeed, Ipsos research based on 1,734 ads shows that empathy is key point of differentiation for brands. Further, this research points out the importance of gaining a total understanding of people. That is, bringing to light what truly matters to them, their challenges, their needs, their dreams in the context of the world around them.

HOW VOLVO CONNECTED THEIR SAFETY LEGACY WITH WHAT MATTERS TO PEOPLE IN THEIR LIVES

One of the obvious places for brands to demonstrate empathy is through their advertising. This campaign for Volvo showcases how important empathy is when it comes to a brand's creative expression.

In this meta-analysis, our Creative Excellence team identified that creative advertising must demonstrate that the brand understands people, and must act empathically.¹

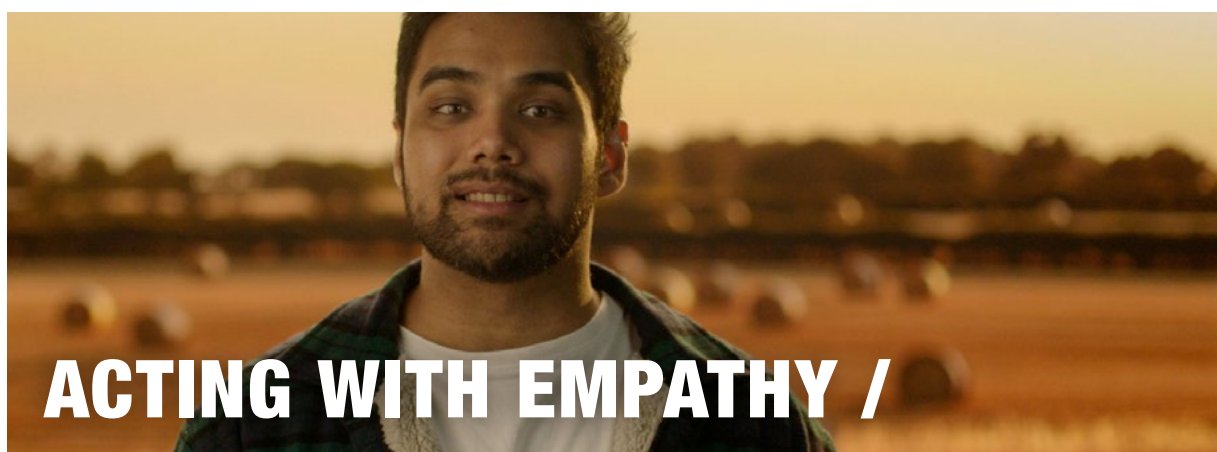


1. MISFITS: How creativity in advertising sparks brand growth. <https://www.ipsos.com/en/misfits>

WE GET PEOPLE, WE GET BRANDS

At Ipsos, we help you understand the role your brand could play in people's lives. We uncover their unique contexts and what is important

in their lives. We turn data into insights and strategies so only your brand can meet people's expectations.



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