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creative power with  
advertising research



Ameritest

WHITE PAPER

## Testing Television Commercials

BY CHARLES YOUNG

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No business wants to put average advertising on air. Competitive advantage is gained in the marketplace only when you spend your money behind advertising that is superior to your competitor's.

Yet statistically, more than forty percent of all the ads you will test with any report card measurement system will generate an average score. That's because the quantitative measures produced by all copytesting systems follow a classic bell curve.

And all too often you are under the deadline pressure of air dates, dealing with an advertising research system that is just a blunt instrument for filtering ads rather than a system designed to help make ads better. The result? You find yourself confronted with the reality of putting millions of dollars behind what is no more than an average television commercial.

Ameritest, like other pre-testing systems, has the report card measures that help you separate strong ads from the weaker ones—measures of commercial performance that have been validated against sales and tracking data. But unlike other advertising testing systems, Ameritest can also provide you with quantitative diagnostics that help you spot the diamonds in the rough. These are above-average ideas that produce an average score only because of minor executional flaws that require additional creative polishing. These are creative ideas that need to be optimized, rather than thrown away.

Chances are that if an idea has made it as far along in the creative development process as the quantitative testing stage, it has the potential to be a winner—but only if research is used to help the creative process, rather than kill it.

At Ameritest we understand that advertising works in complex ways involving both rational and emotional processes of perception. We understand the yin and yang of strategy and execution. We also understand that high performing advertising ideas cannot be boring, formulaic or “cookie cutter.”

Published research on research has shown that traditional verbal measures, like recall testing for example, fail to account for the emotional or experiential component of many effective commercials. In contrast, Ameritest is a fair test of experiential advertising. The Ameritest system rewards ads that are fresh and different, entertaining or dramatic, ads that communicate important ideas and motivate the consumer.

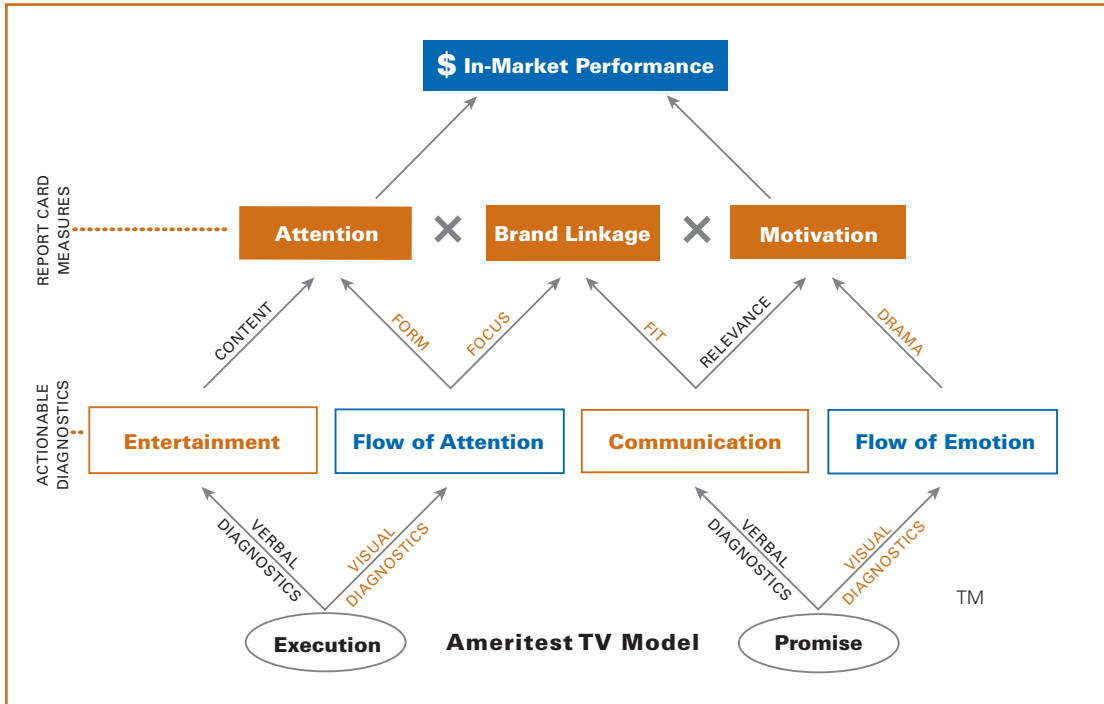
To measure the television commercial experience, standard copytesting is not enough because experience is larger than language. To help you focus the experience your audience has of your piece of film, you need to know what your audience is looking at when they watch your commercial. And you need to know what the audience feels about what they see.

We understand television as primarily a visual experience. A TV commercial is a selling idea expressed in film.

In combination with standard measures of performance—such as attention-getting power, branding and motivation to purchase—and the traditional verbal diagnostics that everyone provides, we offer you proprietary non-verbal techniques refined over twenty years of testing and development such as our patented Flow of Attention® and the Flow of Emotion® tools which provide you with actionable insights into the filmmaker's arts.



*The Flow of Attention graph makes visible the rhythms of visual storytelling. On this graph the height of the picture tells you the percentage of the audience that is paying attention to each particular image. Peak moments, like the three shown above, turn out to be the keys to understanding how the structure and drama of film drive attention, branding and motivation.*



Putting all the pieces together, we provide you with the most complete advertising research model for pre-testing TV commercials:

Working within the framework of this model, Ameritest has developed a large database of norms for a wide range of categories, such as high tech, business to business, consumer package goods, food and beverage, Quick Service Restaurants, financial services, telecom and retail.

With these tools our team of analysts bring experience and insight to the interpretation of your data. They have won the prestigious David Ogilvy Advertising Research Award seven times—including Grand Prize for our work with IBM, and most recently for work with Wal-Mart. The reason for these awards is quite clear. For Ameritest clients, average is just not good enough!

**How you can use the Ameritest system:**

- Use key measures to filter out big ideas from little ideas

- Do "rough" testing and make change decisions that carry lower costs
- Re-edit rough or finished ads with confidence, to improve ad performance
- Use picture sorts to more effectively edit :60's to :30's or :30's to :15's
- Mine Picture Sorts for the right TV images to rollout in print
- Measure visuals across countries, reaching beyond linguistic boundaries
- Use visual measurements to more effectively evaluate ads targeted to children
- Identify useful images for online ad tracking
- Predict what will be in memory years after ads air, not just the next day, with "branding moments." These moments contribute significantly to brand equity.

Please contact us today at [info@ameritest.net](mailto:info@ameritest.net) for more information.



Ameritest® is a seven-time winner of the ARF David Ogilvy Research Award including the Grand Ogilvy.