

Why so many ads fail

Have you ever been watching TV and seen a commercial that falls flat or that outright offends you? I bet you have. I have: the Go Daddy commercials from last year's Super Bowl, for example, were way offensive and sexist. So, how did they make it to such a massive audience? Why did they get made at all?

I think the answer lies in some nuggets from this Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation survey of black women in America. If you read through the poll (especially the last few questions about sexism and racism compared to black men, white women and white men), you see that each group views the world differently. For instance, a number that is really indicative, is that 55% of white men think the world is fair to everyone, versus 34% of black women and 47% of white women. (In my opinion, the world is fairest to white men, so therefore they think the world is fair for everyone.)

Another telling statistic is that more black women (36%) think sexism is a big problem in society than white men (12%). Again, white men do not experience much sexism, so it does not affect them as a group, and they conclude it is not a big problem in society.

Different people experience the world differently. Marketers need to be aware of this since we are often swayed by our own experience of the world. This is why certain white male politicians have no problems indicting a whole class of people for being lazy or for not believing in the American dream.

So the next time you see an ad that seems to be tone-deaf you will know that it was created by someone who doesn't understand that his/her experience is not reflective of the world as a whole.

Your thoughts?

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