

Your Eyes Don't Lie!

A few years ago eye tracking could only record where people looked BUT today we can also measure their reactions. Take a look at the 2 Advertisements for TDC Telecommunications Company: Ad Design A and Ad Design B. Which one do you think has the greatest impact? Our eye tracking research study provided the answer!

Original Danish text by: Sune Alstrup, Eye Tracking Specialist, EYEFACT

It is said that our eyes are the mirror of our soul and that there is a close correlation between our eye movements and psychological processes. We knowingly can communicate with other people through our eyes, for example we all know: a flirtatious "twinkle in his eyes" or a "killer look". But our eye movement can also unknowingly reveal our intentions and interests. Cognitive researchers have since the 1950s created and studied measurements of the eyes, but the technology used for eye tracking has not until recent years reached a stage where the marketing research field could take advantage of it. A major part of the analysis performed at EYEFACT has for many years been Usability and User Experience studies, however, the past year there has been major growth in the analysis of traditional advertising and design. Nowadays we cannot only measure peoples' Visual Attention with high precision, which means what people immediately see or not see in advertising or TV spots, but as something new we can now see into peoples' minds and emotional reactions. In other words we can obtain objective data on something as subjective as emotions.

The Value of Eye Tracking

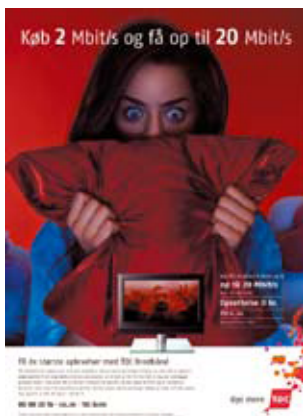
As a result eye tracking is going to play a key role in the creative decision making process because it supports the choices between different creative designs and formats. The eye tracking analysis will be able to identify the most effective design among several options and the analysis will also provide several objective data outputs, which show the difference between the designs' effectiveness levels. Hence you can deselect the less effective design, or consider the individual design pitches differently in relation to the different media distribution channels. For example: it could be the case that one ad proves to be more effective towards a female audience, while another ad works better for a male audience. As a result the eye tracking analysis provides you with objective data which ensures you as an advertiser to get the most out of your media spending.

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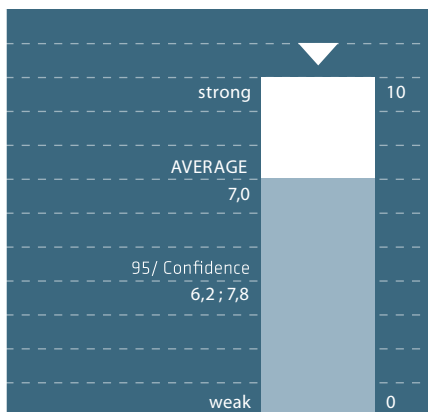
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This is one of the main reasons that eye tracking is becoming an integral part in the creative design process and pre-testing phases among media and ad agencies.

Tested images:



Results:



Objectivity

The difference between eye tracking and the traditional methods lies in the data collection which is based upon actual measurements of eye movements therefore, as a decision-maker one is not dependent on peoples' own subjective assessments, or even certified expert interpretations of

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peoples' behavior. That is a major advantage because as you know people do not always tell "the truth" when questioned, and there is often a difference between what people think they have seen compared to what they actually have seen. Furthermore, the eye tracking analysis is also much better in giving explanations of why a logo or a message has not been seen. For instance: one ad did not engage the reader, or even that the reader was so distracted with a picture in the ad that the primary message was being ignored. The message that you want to communicate to the reader could perhaps be drowned in other elements, or the message is just positioned wrongly in relation to the other elements. Therefore, the analysis of the so-called Visual Attention is a crucial source of information for any marketing and analysis department.

Emotional Impact

The newest tool in eye tracking now makes it possible to measure an ad's emotional involvement solemnly based on measurements of people's eye movements. It sounds like science fiction, but the method simply takes into account that our eyes react unconsciously when we are affected emotionally. iMotions, a Danish software company, stands behind the development of the software that in combination with modern eye tracking equipment can detect the emotional reactions based on eye movements. Such measurements are especially valuable when you want to compare the effectiveness of two ad designs. Without an eye tracking analysis it can be difficult to choose between two different designs, and in most cases such a decision will be based on a gut feeling or a subjective interpretation based on a sample size of the target group. An eye tracking analysis can provide an ad's emotional involvement based on an objective figure, so you can base your decision making on facts rather than on your gut feeling.

TDC Telecommunication Company Tests Emotions

One of our studies performed this past spring was an eye tracking analysis for print ads for TDC Telecommunications Company (TDC). The main goal for all the ads was to create emotional engagement with the audience, Danish customers may recall a few of the tag lines from the media: Listen More, Dream More, Create More etc. The two ads "Fear More" were very similar in design (see below). Ad Design A had a close-up of a woman's face, while Ad Design B had a slightly wider angle of the woman. Try to take a look at the two ads. Which ad would you have chosen? Which ad do you think has the highest emotional involvement for men and for women? It is not obvious but that is where the eye tracking results helped TDC in its decision making. The emotional

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involvement for men was almost identical for both designs, but there was a surprisingly big difference in the emotional response for women. The emotional involvement is measured on a scale of 0-10 where 10 is the strongest. For women Ad Design B had an emotional involvement of 7.0 compared to 4.2 for Ad Design A. Simply put Ad Design B creates a strong emotional involvement for both men and women, where Ad Design A fails to engage the female audience. It seems that men are primarily influenced by the woman in bed, while women spent more time focusing on the dolls. Therefore, the combination of a woman in the bed with dolls appears to be the explanation of Ad Design B's higher emotional involvement for women.

Contacts / References

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EYEFAC T is the leading eye tracking consultancy in the Nordic region. We help our market research clients to predict and optimize advertising effectiveness. We are specialists in capturing and interpreting visual attention and emotional response, as well as studying user experience.