

TRA | think top ten

July 2019: Top Ten TV ads named in new viewer-led research by Think TV and TRA

The viewers have spoken! New Zealanders have named their favourite ads on TV. The most-loved TVCs cover off weddings, birthdays, bank heists and everything in between!

[ThinkTV](#), in partnership with [TRA](#) conducted the research in June this year. The key question ‘what is your favourite ad on TV at the moment?’ encouraged candid feedback from viewers on what ads had stuck in their hearts and minds.

The cinematic tension displayed in Speights’ ‘Dance’ and Lotto Powerball’s ‘Armoured Truck’ was roundly praised. Viewers also commended the emotional connection showcased in Cadbury’s ‘Mums Birthday’, Spark’s ‘Wedding’ and BNZ’s ‘What Ella Wants’.

Tapping into our unique sense of humour proved a winning formula with Meridian’s ‘Wind. Water. Sun’, VTNZ’s ‘Road Commander’, Health Promotion Agency’s ‘The Tooth Fairy’ and Holden’s ‘Get a Doggone Fieldays Deal’ all making it into the top ten. Audience were also partial to some clever wordplay with Nova’s ‘Broadband’ rounding out the list.

The TRA survey looked at a nationally representative sample of 1000 New Zealanders aged 18 to 60 years old (sourced from the [Dynata](#) research panel). Open-ended responses were manually coded to look at frequency of mentions, resulting in a top ten. Survey participants were also asked why they liked their favourite ad, and how it made them feel about what was being advertised.

Think TV Chairman, Paul Maher says “Advertisers have really upped their game to create emotional, amusing and entertaining ads for viewers to enjoy. All the top ten ads showcase brilliant storytelling. We know that engaging and connecting with viewers makes brands memorable and drives sales outcomes. What we’re even more pleased to see is that those surveyed recalled over 100 commercials – that really demonstrates the unrivalled power of TV advertising”.

New Zealand’s current favorite TVCs:

1. Cadbury ‘Mums Birthday’ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l0eEgeizNCA>

“The little girl is very sweet and trusting and the shop keeper is kind and understanding, all emotions we need more of these days”

“It is refreshing and sweet. Gives me the warm fuzzies”

“It has a simple message which is easy to understand.”

“Its’ wholesome and sweet. The little girl looks so sad trying to buy the chocolate. And she really didn't want to pay with her unicorn toy but did so for her mum. It was so sweet when the dairy owner not only gave her the chocolate but also the unicorn back as change”

"It makes me smile and is cute I can imagine a child doing this"

"The little girl is very sweet and trusting and the shop keeper is kind and understanding, all emotions we need more off these days"

This little story about generosity - created by UK agency VCCP as part of Cadbury's new global platform 'there's a glass and a half in everyone' - has tugged the heart strings and stuck in the minds of more New Zealanders than any other ad right now. Of those who mentioned this ad as their favourite, there is a significant female skew and a skew toward those aged 45-60. When asked why they liked it, almost a quarter mentioned the quality of the acting. The spot has given the product a relevant role in the story, with 61% mentioning 'Cadbury' in their description of this ad. It will be interesting to see how Cadbury leverages these likeable characters across other media and point of sale to strengthen brand attribution ...and you don't get love without a little hate; a number of keyboard warriors have taken to Cadbury's Facebook page with cynical remarks about the 'glass and a half' line evolving because the chocolate bars are no longer big enough for all that milk!

2. Speights 'Dance' https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ss_WKXpJ5l8

"It tells a good story that I can relate to with some humour and a good climactic ending"

"It's funny, it's emotional, it's great for a modern take on the classic good on ya mate old Speights ads we know and love"

"Speights Ale is all about friendship and these tough guys are good at doing something feminine like dancing"

"The comradery is great. There's is ethnic diversity in the Ad and the characters model just how to be a good Kiwi or friend. It uses atypical characters to play the roles. E.g. The mates who are the great ballroom dance instructors are Maori. The storyline is great! (it's even a pleasant surprise at the end that he can dance so well!)"

Amusing audiences with a humorous story about the gentler side of kiwi masculinity and mateship, there was a male skew among those who named this as their favourite, although plenty of females chose it too. 78% mentioned 'Speights' in their description, so the beer had a memorable role to play in the story.

3. Meridian 'Wind. Water. Sun.' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VOTt28gzdZU>

"It makes me wonder why he's running, keeps me entertained and it is funny"

"It's just funny and reminds me of a classic NZ day at the beach"

"It is intriguing and keeps you guessing what they are advertising"

"It's really funny and at first you don't know what he's after, but you know that it must be really important. When you see it's trash it makes you realise just how important it is to not litter and keep our surroundings clean"

Kiwi humour wins again in reasons why people chose this as their favourite ad. However, playing the intrigue game means brand attribution may have suffered as only 46% mention 'Meridian' in their description. Like Cadbury, it will be interesting to see how Meridian leverage their likable character across other media touchpoints to strengthen the relationship between this favourite ad and their revamped brand.

4. VTNZ 'Road Commander' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGiQZDKOvow>

"It's funny. It's very different to other ads that companies have on TV. I don't think I've ever seen an ad like it before. It's a different kind of humour that isn't so straight line and boring"

"I love how kiwi it is and the humour, it also gets its message across well - also that VTNZ are your friends"

"I like this add because it is creative, fun to watch, to the point, out of the box thinking for advertising, great stuff"

"Love the main actor, the idea of the flame thrower, the blades and his excitement about that and then the guy in the back being glad they have got it. It's just so different, it's great"

There are countless ads showing friendly staff helping customers, but few do it in quite such a distinctive way as the Road Commander series for VTNZ. Most of those who mentioned it as their favourite were aged 45-60. And of course, the humour was the main reason people liked it. 82% mentioned VTNZ in their description.

5. Spark 'Wedding' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oPOglQLyeek>

"Deeply emotional, realistic and inspiring"

"It's touching. Its relatable. It shows technology is not all bad and can be used to solve problems"

"It feels human and it makes you care about the family"

"It's beautifully shot and really gets me emotional"

"It relates to so many people. Gives the warm fuzzies"

"It's sad but it's so loving and has good music"

"It's emotional and made me cry the first time I saw it"

"It shows the progress in technology and is a happy and emotional way of putting that across"

Predominantly mentioned by females, there is also a slight skew to 18-29 year olds. The audience enjoyed the relatable heart-warming nature of this ad. Considering the Spark brand only features in the end-frame it's impressive that 94% mentioned 'Spark' in their description.

6. BNZ 'What Ella Wants' https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QhxLeQsx_qM

"I like the song, I like that he is trying to do his best for his little girl even though he might not have a lot of money and she is happy accepting what he can afford and not what she wants"

"The puppy is very cute and the advertisement has a very catchy tune"

"Really wholesome, not pushing too much of an agenda, happy music"

"Because it's relevant in my life, the dad tries to do whatever he can for the daughter and she's grateful for it and understanding. Then he surprises her with a little puppy"

Those who mentioned BNZ's ad were also predominantly female, with a skew to those aged 45-60. As well as the endearing story, the music in this ad was one of the top reasons people liked it. 79% mentioned 'BNZ' in their description.

7. Health Promotion Agency 'The Tooth Fairy' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R4ds9H6ZeSc>

"It's different (most toothpaste/health ads are horribly boring). The Tooth Fairy is funny, larger than life and to the point. The Dad is in a constant state of shock/disbelief."

"Makes me laugh every time I have watched it"

"It funny, charming, will appeal to the target audience and is an important message"

"Comedic tone but good message, not too preachy"

The classic story of the tooth fairy, reimagined in Aotearoa, and this time with a lesson for parents ...and a good spoonful of humour to help the lesson go down. A quarter of the people who mentioned this ad also described it as a relevant message for their needs. HPA's ad is the most frequently mentioned favourite from a Government brand. Our results show a skew to those in the Upper North Island (Northland, Waikato, BOP), with BOP standing out as significantly more likely to mention this ad. There is also a skew toward those aged 45-60.

8. Lotto Powerball 'Armoured Truck' https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wsZwxOqOu_4

"I think both actors are funny especially the driver when he springs the truth on his mate - they both deserve an Oscar"

"It tells a story that I can relate to....it is something that could happen in real life; not exaggerated or half-truths"

"It's nice to see people being kind to each other for a change"

"It's so funny and has a twist"

"Its heart warming, makes you dare to dream"

The production quality and great talent have elevated this story-with-a-twist to a top ten favourite. Helped along by the presence of the distinctive yellow ticket, everybody who mentioned this ad mentioned 'Lotto' in their description. Lotto's new 'Lost ticket in her cast' ad comes in at number 14 in the ranking.

9. Holden 'Get a Doggone Fieldays Deal' https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E_fnKTTtM5g

"It's makes me laugh, I find it cute"

"It's a funny ad where dogs like riding comfortable too"

"Love the reaction of the dogs and the look on the farmers face when he realises where they are"

The classic combo of a farmer, dogs, and kiwi humour has made for a likeable ad that's got noticed, but wasn't there another ute that used this combo a while ago? Brand attribution was not so strong for this spot unfortunately.

10. Nova 'Broadband' https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H1_49kf1Ft8

"Very funny wordplay, very clever with light hearted approach to a generally pretty dull subject"

"It has a good blend of humour and messaging, and is part of a series of ads with a consistent theme and characters - so they kind of take you along the journey as each new ad comes out"

"Humour, clever, ordinary people, memorable, well-acted"

"It's hilarious...because who knew so many words could rhyme with Nova. It is clever and funny"

"Because it sells the product in an honest, entertaining way"

Back in 2014 NZ was introduced to Greg Grover from Nova in a 30sec spot that mentioned the brand name 10 times. Continuing the clever rhyming with the same likeable character has paid off for Nova in this latest instalment. Only one person who said this was their favourite ad didn't mention 'Nova' in their description. A memorable way of standing out in a hard-to-differentiate category.

About Think TV

A collective voice for the industry to promote the scale and effectiveness of television advertising in New Zealand. Members include TVNZ, Mediaworks and Sky.

About TRA

TRA is an insight agency. We combine our understanding of human behaviour with intelligent data capability to help organisations navigate uncertainty and answer the big questions they are facing. To do so, we put people at the heart of the organisations we work with through extensive use of research, analytics, strategy, culture and design.

For further information about the survey and results, contact carl.sarney@tra.co.nz

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