



A Woman's Worth

How better portrayal is good for business

Key takeaways:

Ipsos data reveals a third of Britons, and 38% of 16-24s, increasingly believe a woman's primary role is to be a good wife and mother.

Remembering advertising's role in gender role reinforcement, 58% of ads tested in the Ipsos database feature women in traditional roles.

There is an opportunity for marketers to use non-traditional gender portrayal to drive up ad effectiveness.

- Ads that feature women in non-traditional roles such as athletes (4%), STEM professionals (3%), Business owners (3%) and artists (2%) are significantly more likely to score high vs. low on the Gender Equality Measure (GEM®).
- Ads with a strong Gender Equality Measure (GEM®) score are 24% more likely to drive short term sales and 28% more likely to drive brand equity.

Effie case studies back this up with inspiring marketing activity by brands who have realised in-market success with well-rounded portrayals of women in non-traditional roles.

- Secret in the US grew their brand by 8.8% collaborating with female Olympic athletes.
- Ancestry UK increased revenue from new customer signups 20.4% and increased ROI by 10% by celebrating women's full lives in history.
- Nissan experienced record-breaking sales amongst women in Saudi Arabia by focusing on female accomplishment vs. permission to drive.
- Dove US grew sales 10% by challenging the status quo on toxic beauty content that girls see in their social feeds.

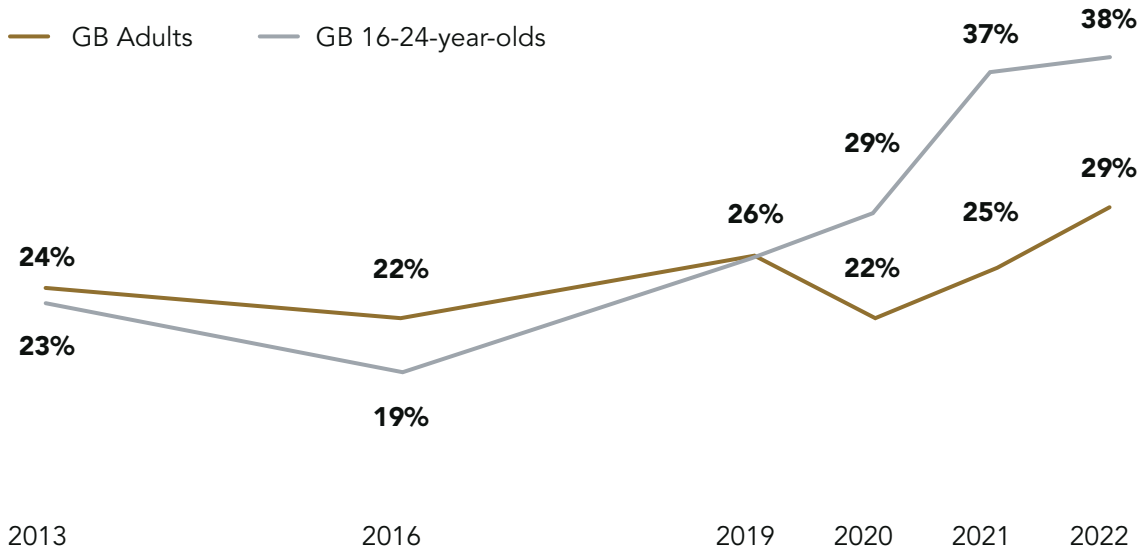


It would seem the women's movement has been running to stand still.

In 2022, almost a third of people (27%) in Great Britain agreed that the main role in society for women is to be good wives and mothers, gradually increasing over the last 10 years from 24% (Figure 1).

Figure 1.

% Agree "The main role of women in society is to be good mothers and wives"



Source: Ipsos Global Trends 2023

If you imagine that this is due to long held beliefs amongst older generations, think again. Of 16-24s, 38% agreed with this statement, which is nearly three times more than 55-74-year-olds and reveals a worrying trend for this demographic (Figure 1).

Whilst there are, of course, social factors influencing the formation of gender stereotypes, such as Andrew Tate's rise to prominence, marketing has done its fair share to reinforce gender bias more subtly. Brands compound this view of women in three ways:

1. Perpetuating power dynamics

Brunel University in collaboration with Starling Bank analysed over 600 photographs used for articles about money and finance. They found that men and women were

depicted very differently. Whilst men were shown to be in control and making financial decisions, women were shown clutching piggy banks and counting pennies.



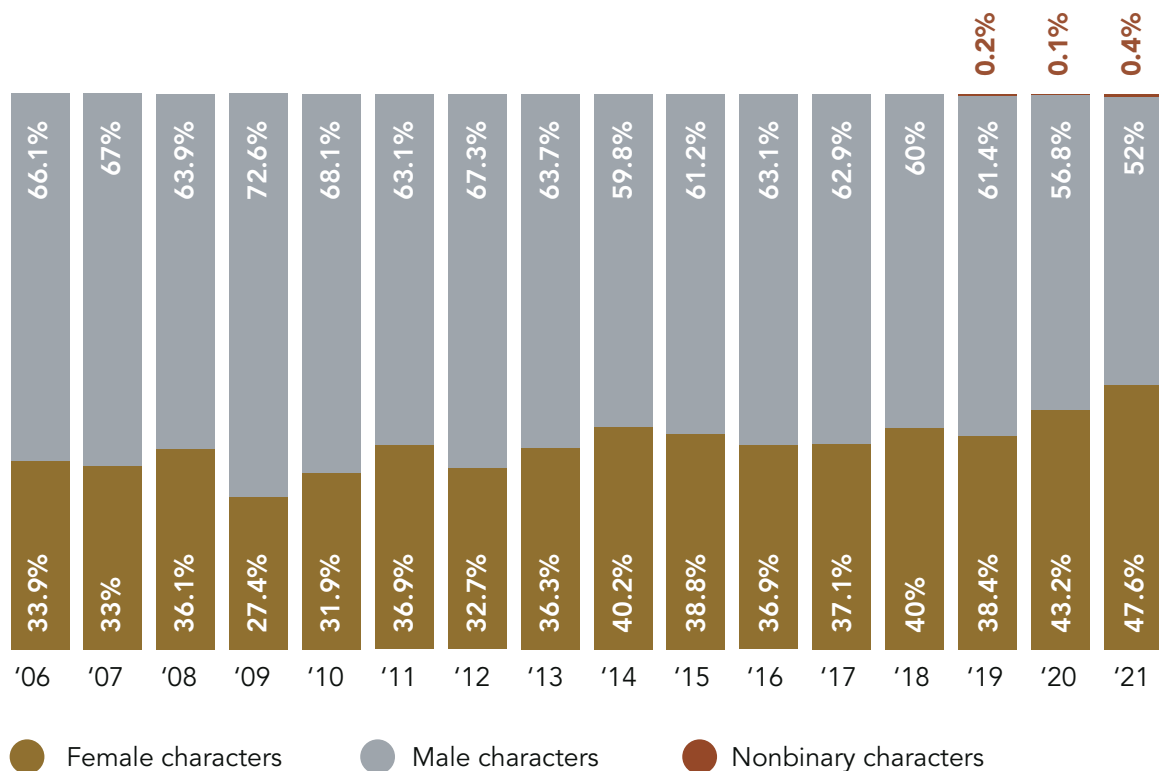
2. The deletion of women

An analysis by the Geena Davis institute of Cannes Lions films from 2006-2021 revealed that it wasn't until 2021 that the creative work submitted reached a near parity in the share of female characters (Figure 2).

Though female characters still displayed less autonomy than their male counterparts, there were some signs of the gender gap narrowing in depictions of authority and leadership between 2019 and 2020.

Figure 2.

Gender representation in Cannes Lions Film and Film Craft Creative Work from 2006 to 2021



Source: Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media

3. Harmful stereotypes

Ads showing domestic chores continue to feature women in these roles. Not only are they depicted as the ones doing the chores, but the Ipsos US Gender Equality Measure

(GEM®) database shows that women in ads mostly feature in family roles and in the home (Figures 3 and 4).

Figure 3.

Share of ads with women by role

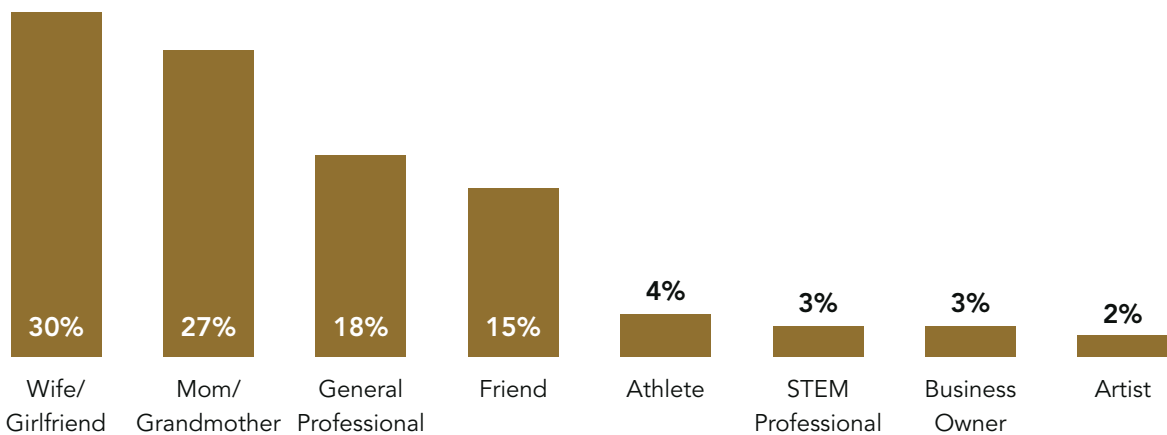
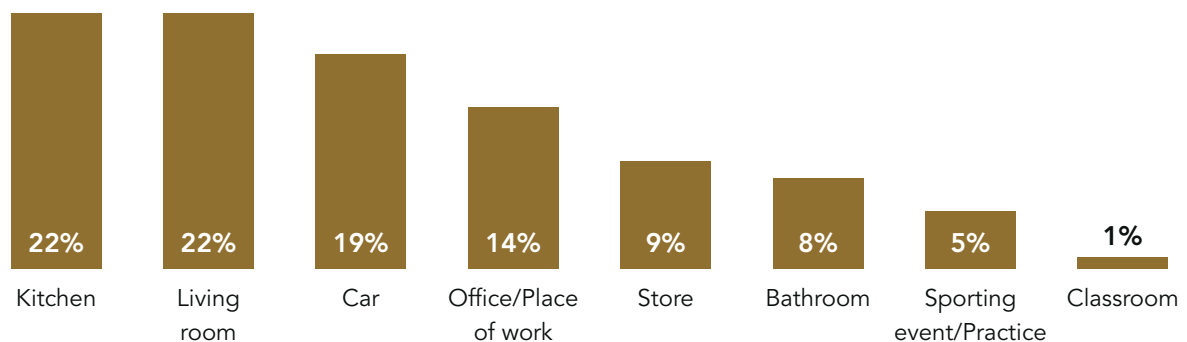


Figure 4.

Share of ads with women by location



Source: Ipsos GEM® Database, 2019-2021. **Base:** 926 ads

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Picture a world where women and girls finally witness their true selves portrayed accurately in the media, embracing their full potential. It's high time we utilise the force of marketing not just to mirror culture but to shape it. Embracing this mission is a moral imperative and a strategic advantage for businesses. The evidence is compelling: ads that earn the highest GEM scores also experience the greatest surge in sales. Modern consumers, particularly women, demand more from brands and advertisers. They are casting their purchasing power in alignment with those who do better. So, let's seize this opportunity to drive change and growth together.

— Shelley Zalis, CEO and Founder of The Female Quotient

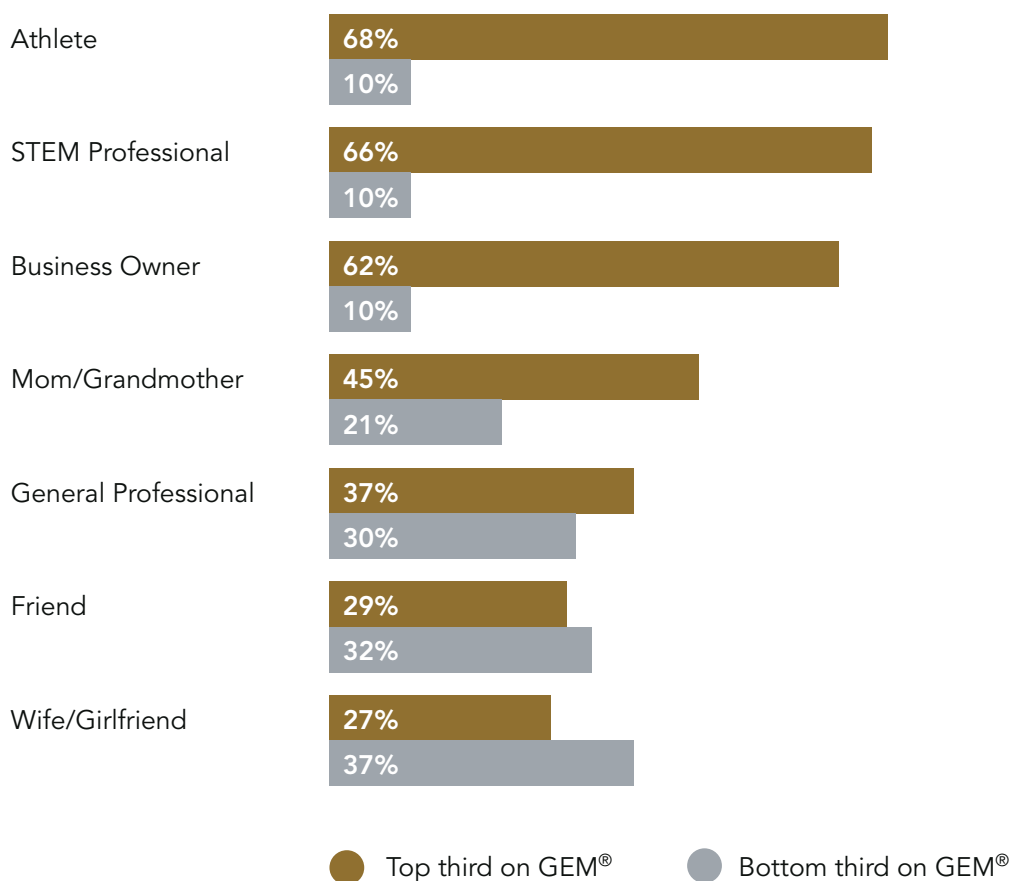


But, despite these tendencies in the depiction of women, there is a commercial as well as social imperative in better representation. In collaboration with #SeeHer, Ipsos showed that ads with a strong GEM® score were 24% more likely to drive short term sales and 28% more likely to drive brand equity.

Brands can benefit from those stronger effectiveness levers by representing women in more varied roles.

Figure 5.

Percentage of ads with GEM® scores by tercile and role



Source: Ipsos GEM® Database, 2019-2021 **Base:** 926 ads

Based on the research findings, advertisers can score highly on GEM® by presenting stories of women in non-traditional roles like

STEM Professionals, Athletes, or Business Owners (Figure 5).

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Advertising at its best reflects the society it talks to. In a society in which diversity and equity are more openly championed than ever, that should mean not relying on lazy stereotypes of race, sexuality, gender, ethnicity and class. But all too often, advertising has an identity crisis when it comes to women. Still.

I mean, where are the older women, the funny women, the working class women in ads? And, the women scientists, women engineers, business owners, (unless you're selling flowers and cupcakes that is).

With Sport England's 'This Girl Can' campaign, I thought change is coming. They put cellulite on screen and showed sweaty bodies instead of toned physiques. It was a turning point in the way women are portrayed in advertising and opened clients' eyes to diversity around shape, class, colour, and age. It didn't try to celebrate or empower women because it didn't have to – it achieved both simply by showing women how they really are, and that was brilliant. But 'This Girl Can' was back in 2015, and as the Ipsos findings now suggest, since then, things have slipped back.

Our industry is behind the curve, still. And companies that don't stop their lazy stereotyping will lose out as the two third of Brits who don't think a woman's main role is to be a good wife and mother, vote with their feet.

— Vicki Maguire, Chief Creative Officer, Havas London





**HE WON HIM—
YOU MUST KEEP HIM...**

**SMETIC SKIN
ood looks!**
oman's charm
eping her skin
smooth. Yet
hout realizing
ing her own
up is not prop-
c allowed to
after day, it
smetic skin.
ny blemishes
blackheads,
gnals of this
trouble.
less if
way
vely screen
illion-dollar
Toilet Soap
made to re-
ughly. Its



**ELISSA LANDI
PARAMOUNT STAR**



rich, ACTIVE lather sinks deep down into the pores, carries swiftly away every vestige of dust, dirt, embedded powder and rouge.
Before you put on fresh make-up during the day—ALWAYS before you go to bed at night—give your skin this protecting, beautifying care. Exquisite smooth skin is a priceless treasure. Don't take chances!
ANY GIRL CAN HAVE SMOOTH, REALLY LOVELY SKIN. YOU CAN USE COSMETICS AS MUCH AS YOU WISH IF YOU GUAR YOUR SKIN AS I DO—WITH GENTLE LUX TOILET SOAP.



It's nice to have a girl around the house.

Though she was a tiger lady, our hero didn't have to fire a shot to floor her. After one look at his Mr. Leggs slacks, she was ready to have him walk all over her. That noble styling sure soothes the savage heart! If you'd like your own doll to doll carpeting, hunt up a pair of these he-man Mr. Leggs slacks. Such as our new automatic wash-and-wear blend of 65% "Dacron"™ and 35% rayon—incomparably wrinkle resistant. About \$12.95 at push-targeted stores.
Dacron™
Get yourself a new pair of Leggs
Dacron Company, 6700 Avenue of the Americas, New York 19, N. Y.



Where there's a Man...

there's a Marlboro

—with a filter that delivers a smoke of surprising mildness

YOU GET A LOT TO LIKE... FILTER, FLAVOR, FLIP-TOP BOX



**our husband ever finds out
you're not "store-testing" for fresher coffee...**



...if he discovers you're still taking chances on getting flat, stale coffee... see he wants you!
For today there's a sure and certain way to test for freshness before you buy



"Look, I'm a Mother!"



**Want him to be more of a man?
Try being more of a woman.**



**Emerald
by Coty**



**Old Gold
CIGARETTES
KING SIZE**



Made by Old Gold, a famous name in tobacco for nearly 100 years.

**Getting
representation right**

There are several learnings we can draw from Effie award winners on where brands can begin to do better.

Secret:

Supporting a cause

The success of the #WATCHME campaign from Secret (a deodorant brand in the US and Effie Sport category finalist) highlights the benefits a brand can receive when focusing

on non-traditional roles for women, both in terms of short-term sales growth and positive brand perceptions.

The graphic is a promotional advertisement for Secret deodorant. It features a central image of Kara Goucher, a Youth Sports Advocate, Olympian, Marathoner, & Author, in athletic wear. To her right are two smaller photos of Alex Morgan, a Youth Sports Advocate & World Cup Soccer Champion, in athletic roles. The background is blue and pink. The Secret logo is in the top left, and the Women's Sports Foundation logo is in the top right. The slogan '#WatchMe BECOME FASTER, TOUGHER, & STRONGER THROUGH SPORTS' is prominently displayed. A '1 = \$1' offer is shown with a Secret deodorant stick. The text 'STICK TO WSF' is also visible. At the bottom, there is a small disclaimer: '*Secret pledged \$150,000 to the Women's Sports Foundation* based on 150,000 limited-edition Secret Outlast units available during the campaign. Donation is not dependent on actual sales.'

Ipsos research demonstrated that women depicted in athletic roles had the strongest likelihood to have a positive GEM® score, particularly as support for women's sport is gaining momentum, and viewership is

increasing (with 62% of British football fans intending to watch the Women's World Cup 2023 compared to 48% for the 2019 tournament in France – Figure 6).

Figure 6.

How closely, if at all, did you follow each of the following football tournaments?

2023 Women's World Cup (to be held in Australia and New Zealand) *intended



2022 Women's Euro tournament (held in England)



2019 Women's World Cup (held in France)



● Very/fairly closely ● Not that closely/at all

Source: Ipsos UK. **Base:** 1,067 online British football fans aged 16-75, 23-26 June 2023.

The #WATCHME campaign aimed to address the lack of visibility of women in sports, which leads to higher dropout rates in sports amongst girls than boys. Secret collaborated with female Olympic athletes and created limited-edition products with \$1 from every purchase donated to the Women's Sports Foundation.

The results of the campaign were impressive. Sales of the limited-edition SKUs were strong,

and the overall Secret brand grew significantly (+8.8%). The omnichannel #WATCHME campaign generated strong awareness and exceeded expectations, delivering 89 million impressions, and reaching 26.5 million unique individuals. By supporting women's sports and championing the cause, Secret not only connected with its target audience, but also strengthened customer loyalty and confidence in the brand.

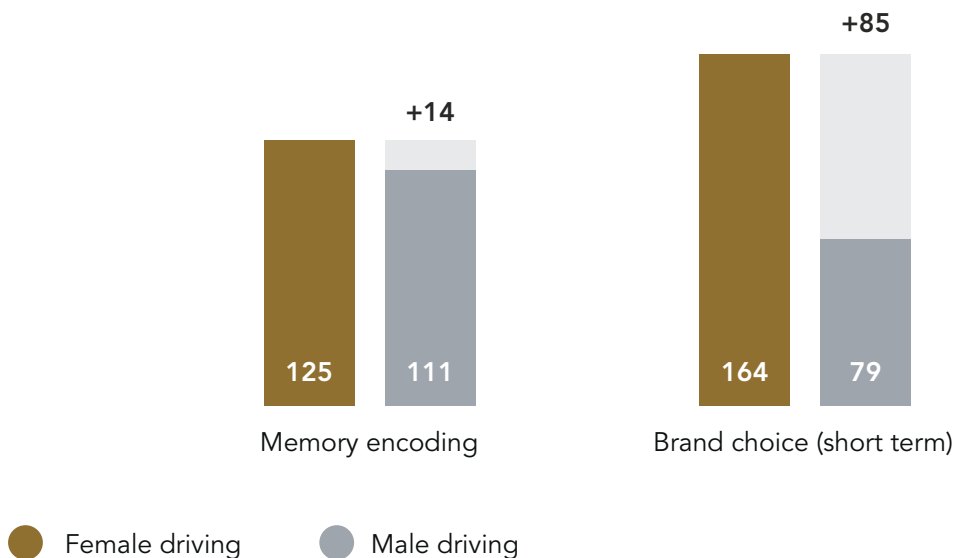
Nissan: Celebrating women’s achievements

Automotive is a category which has been guilty of showing women in passive roles, passengers rather than drivers. However, in terms of memorability, an analysis

of automotive ads in the Ipsos creative database shows that ads featuring female drivers are more likely to stand out and drive short term sales (Figure 7).

Figure 7.

Driving advancement – breaking stereotypes by putting women in the driver’s seat



Source: Ipsos Creative testing database, US. **Base:** 112 automotive ads

Effie 2022 finalists Nissan and their partners at TBWA did an outstanding job with their Nissan Kicks campaign in Saudi Arabia. Instead of focusing on the story of women legally gaining the right to drive in 2017, the campaign highlighted the achievements of three highly accomplished Saudi women. The campaign showcased a free diver, an Olympic Equestrian Medallist, and a fashion

designer who were forging their own paths. It moved away from the narrative of seeking permission or comparing women to men. As a result, Nissan experienced record-breaking sales among women, proving that their approach resonated with the audience, propelling the brand forward as a challenger in the market.

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It's vital to recognise how wrong we are to assume that progress on gender equality is inevitable and that Gen Z will save us. These young guys are more likely than men my age to say that 'a man who stays home to look after his children is less of a man'.*

But when the benefits of gender equality are so irrefutably clear, to business as well as society, in the short and long term, for men as well as women... why are the barriers and backlash still here, and growing?

It's so easy to understand women's progress as men's loss – of power, of voice, of space, of freedom. It can just feel a bit illogical that feminism benefits those whose gender is systemically privileged as well as those who are marginalised.

We urgently need to bring men into the picture too, and position more expansive gender roles as a genuine positive for them. How do we depict men being led, parenting, listening, expressing vulnerability, and nurturing in a way that doesn't trigger 'beta' accusations and derision?

We'll never truly solve this problem or seize this opportunity without looking at the other half of the story too.

— **Lori Meakin, WACL Exec member, author of 'No More Menemies' and founder and CEO of The Others & Me**



*Ipsos International Women's Day 2023 with The Global Institute for Women's Leadership and Kings College London, 2023

Ancestry UK: Celebrating women's full lives

Effie Silver winner Ancestry UK grew their business with the help of their agency partners at Anomaly with a campaign called 'Bring your backstory to life'. The creative featured the rich histories of individuals, challenging people's two-dimensional views of those in their past. A female ancestor became a more significant link in a chain of events leading up

to your existence. One such story is of a great grandmother, Mary, who was discovered to be a talented mural artist, the head girl at her school, and who unexpectedly gained new sisters when her father remarried. Ancestry saw a 20.4% increase in incremental revenue from new customer signups, whilst not only maintaining ROI, but increasing it by 10%.

Bring your
BACKSTORY TO LIFE

I didn't know my great-grandma, Mary. Until Ancestry helped me discover the school where she was Head Girl, the sisters she gained when her dad remarried, and how she made a living painting murals.

Now, Mary is more than a name. She's a member of my family.

Discover your backstory with a 14-day free trial*

ancestry

Dove:

Effectively challenging the status quo

When it comes to dismantling toxic beauty standards, no brand quite has the same cachet and commitment as Dove. With 'real beauty' as their north star, they have won several Effie awards by marrying social change and marketing effectiveness.

The 2022 Gold Effie winning campaign 'Toxic Influence' was designed to raise awareness of the toxic beauty advice on social media.

Their research showed that teenage girls in the US underestimate the insidious impact of toxic beauty advice from influencers, while parents are unaware of its ubiquity online. Girls were being told to file their teeth down to straighten them, use baby Botox to reduce wrinkles, and waist corsets to get a flat tummy. Dove wanted to challenge this, but how do you engage both parents and daughters to have the desired impact?



Dove used Deepfake technology and put the advice of toxic influencers from their daughter's social feed into the mouths of mothers. The impact of the mother seeing herself giving advice she would never give her daughter was immediate and powerful. This provocative video content was followed by action, with Dove engaging with positive

influencers and providing parents with a toolkit for detoxing feeds and talking to their daughters about this issue.

This was one of Dove's most successful campaigns, increasing sales by 10%, achieving 3bn US impressions, and significantly increasing brand metrics.

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Brands have a powerful role to play to dismantle harmful stereotypes in ads and to promote progressive portrayals of all people. Dove has been breaking stereotypes, championing inclusion and empowering women for decades and this is very much part of their core values and brand DNA. Brands like Dove know that championing inclusion is not just the right thing to do, our research shows that progressive ads deliver 92% better brand power, 94% better brand difference and 76% better enjoyment of ads. As an industry, we must continue creating advertising that drives humanity forward and is a force for positive change.

— **Aline Santos, Chief Brand Officer & Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer Unilever & Effie UK Council Member**



SO THE HARDER A WIFE WORKS, THE CUTER SHE LOOKS!

GOSH, HONEY, YOU SEEM TO THRIVE ON COOKING, CLEANING AND DUSTING AND I'M ALL TUCKERED OUT BY CLOSING TIME. WHAT'S THE ANSWER?

VITAMINS, DARLING! I ALWAYS GET MY VITAMINS

Kellogg's PEP

Vitamins for pep! PEP for vitamins!*

Wanted—HUSBANDS FOR THESE GIRLS

Dorothy, 25, lives at home. She has a job, but she can't get ahead. She dreams will, talk well, dances well—but she is seldom asked out—and never a second time. She thinks she is mismatched. She blames others when really her own conduct is to blame...

Both is only 22. Her natural charm and interest in other people win instant response from those she meets. Yet acquaintance rarely ripens into friendship. Only a few childhood friends are forever one complaint each. Perhaps some day one of them will help her...

Hubert, 27, is lonely. So highly beautiful, she is lowering self-estimation about meeting people, even especially. They lose interest in her. She wonders who, not realizing, that like Dorothy and Beth, she is careless about preparation when in underthings...

Cigarettes are like women
The best ones are thin and rich

Silva Thins
are thin and rich

Silva Thins are thin and rich. This taste lighter than most because—well, rich is better.

The game is

ROOMSTICKS

Round Rosie, Or Carol, Or Eleanor, etc. Fun. But you can only play if you use ROOMSTICKS. Hopsticks, twigs, twills, flannels in blends of Acrilan® and permanent pressed good looks. Play styles. Game colors. To help make your game more fun, ROOMSTICKS has a special feature. But if you don't want to play our way—take off our pants and go home.

Wanted—HUSBANDS FOR THESE GIRLS

ISN'T it natural for every girl to want popularity, romance, a devoted husband? What a pity, then, to see lovely girls like those above looking out because they are careless about perspiration odor in underthings. They themselves criticize it in others, without ever suspecting they are guilty!

Avoid Offending—Perspiration clings to underthings—prevents daintiness this way! Make it a rule to Lux underthings after each wearing. Then there's not the slightest danger of offending from perspiration odor.

Lux is kind to colors and fabrics, doesn't fade and weaken them as cake-soup rubbings, soaps with harmful alkali often do. Lux has no harmful alkali. Anything safe in water alone is safe in Lux!

LUX for underthings removes perspiration odor—Saves Colors

Where there's a Man...

there's a Marlboro
—with a filter that delivers a smoke of surprising mildness

YOU GET A LOT TO LIKE... FILTER, FLAVOR, FLIP-TOP BOX

Successful Marriages start in the kitchen!

In summary

Fiction like Margaret Atwood's 'The Handmaid's Tale' gives us goosebumps because it has roots in a reality women already experience. It reminds us of the fragility of liberal freedoms which are hard won, but easily forfeited. As the Ipsos trends on gender equality show, there is much work to be done to erode systemic bias.

Beyond societal benefit, our data shows that there is a clear commercial benefit for brands willing to actively feature powerful portrayals of women. Here is how marketers can tap into the current opportunity to give their brand marketing an advantage:

1. Act now

The landscape with women in non-traditional roles is still not as normalised as it could be. There is still plenty of headroom to do things differently & stand apart.

2. Focus

Take heed of signals vs. taking on a whole movement. Secret saw an opportunity to drive interest in sports and found a natural fit with their category.

3. Advance the conversation

Rather than playing to a current event, treat it like the 'ground floor' and ride the elevator to the top. See how you can elevate the narrative, like Nissan did by moving on from celebrating women's right to drive to celebrating women in Saudi Arabia.

4. Make the portrayal as rich as you can

Research and due diligence before execution is important to making portrayals and reflecting on issues authentic like Dove and Ancestry.

Get in touch



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Samira is an Ipsos expert on brand and communication work, with 20 years of experience spanning creative and research roles. She leads Ipsos' early-stage campaign development offer, is a thought leader on ad effectiveness, and works with clients to adopt a misfit mindset and make bolder, highly creative campaigns that audiences value.



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Juliet has over 25 years' experience of working across marketing, brand and communications. Her career has spanned the Charity and Public Sector as well as the Commercial sector. She has been a Marketing Director and worked in Brand and Creative Agencies at every level. Her role at Effie allows her to bring her diverse experiences together to champion the progressive practice and practitioners of marketing effectiveness across the industry.

Dynamic Effectiveness: Ipsos & Effie UK

While the bedrock of brand building and human motivations stand firm, we turn our spyglasses onto the shifting sands to uncover current opportunities for marketers. The series combines evidence on society, trends, and advertising effectiveness from Ipsos research with Effie's marketing effectiveness database.

