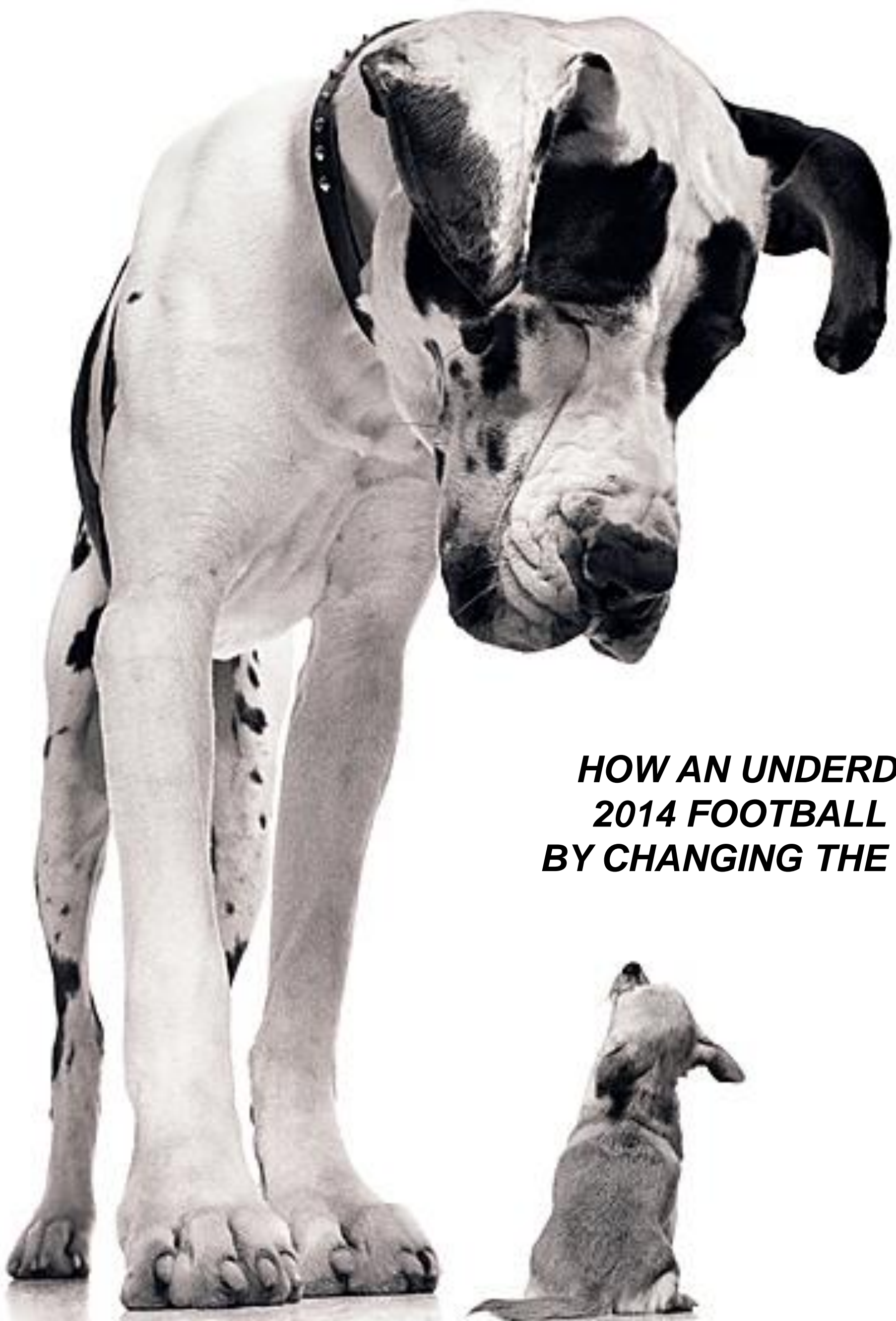


MARKETING SOCIETY AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

CATEGORY: CONSUMER INSIGHT
BRAND: CURRYS PC WORLD
BRAND OWNER: DIXONS CARPHONE



***HOW AN UNDERDOG WON THE
2014 FOOTBALL WORLD CUP
BY CHANGING THE PLAYING FIELD***

A game we couldn't afford to lose

Following the demise of Comet in 2012, and the departure of Best Buy from the UK - Currys PC World is the last remaining specialist electronics retailer left on Britain's high street.

On the face of it that may seem like an enviable position to be in – a practical sector monopoly. But, in reality, over the last five years our competition has grown, not diminished.

Competition has increasingly come from non-specialist retailers - including department stores (e.g. John Lewis), supermarkets (e.g. Tesco), catalogue businesses (e.g. Argos), pure play online retailers (e.g. Amazon), and from OEM's selling direct (e.g. Apple).

As well as challenging us for share of the consumer electronics market, their brand strength challenges us for preference. We were up against the world's most valuable and successful retail company, Amazon, who were squarely parking their tanks on our lawn; we faced a resurgent Argos, investing millions in price and store experience; and of course the marketing might and creativity of Britain's most admired and awarded Marketing Department, Craig Inglis' John Lewis. The competition's marketing strength was borne out in preference data- consumer electronics buyers tended to be more favourable towards John Lewis, Argos and, in particular, Amazon.

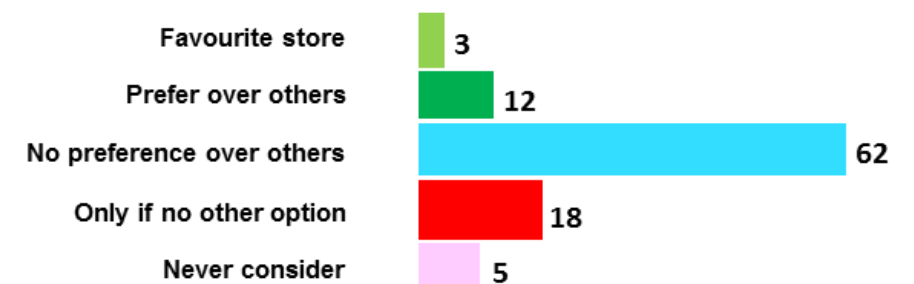
With the Football World Cup on the horizon, our share of the television category was our primary concern. Televisions sales are crucial to our business. Whilst accounting for a relatively modest 3.5% of sales by volume, the category accounts for a very significant 17% by value (not for publication).

There tends to be two 'events' that stimulate the market for television sales, above the natural replacement cycle: transformational technology innovation and sporting events.

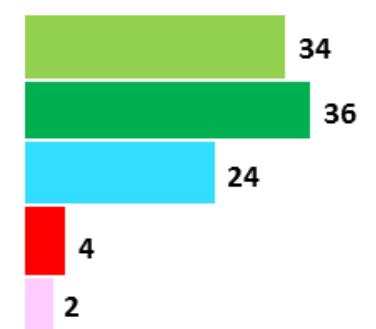
The last big innovation in television technology was the emergence of HD plasma and LCD TVs. An innovation that coincided with the 2006 Football World Cup.

However, there was no expected coincidental market innovation expected in 2014. In addition, the average age of TVs replaced was on average six years old (*Source: NPD DisplaySearch Global TV Replacement Study*), meaning that the muted demand spike stimulated by the 2010 World Cup wouldn't materialize for another two years.

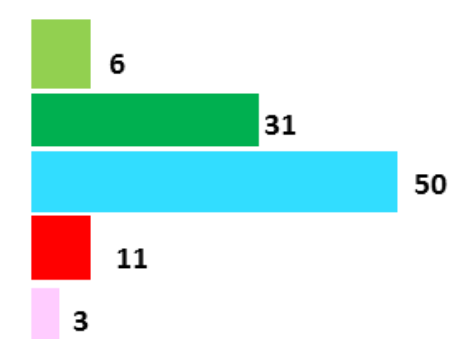
Currys PC World



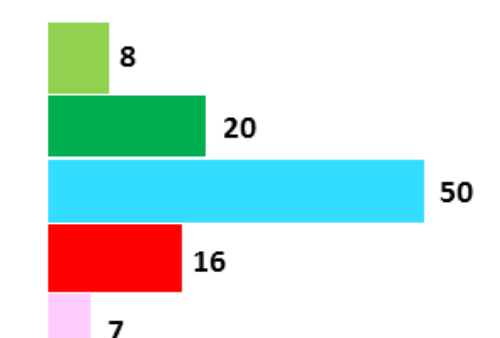
Amazon



Argos



John Lewis



The challenge



Despite these pressures, our objectives remained bullish.

They were to:

1. Increase saliency of Currys PC World during the build up to the Football World Cup
2. Drive store footfall, ecommerce site traffic and sales conversion rates during the build up to the Football World Cup
3. Outperform an aggressive 10% year on year television sales value growth target for the World Cup period

In the summer of 2014, we expected sales volume for large screen televisions to be hard-fought, in marketing terms. There were three main reasons why:

Playing with one foot tied behind our back

1. Currys PC World wasn't an official sponsor of the World Cup:

That, in itself, presented us with a set of stringently enforced FIFA guidelines.

The rules are designed to protect sponsors from ambush marketing campaigns by those who have not paid to be a sponsor.

So, no overtly piggybacking the tournament for us.

2. We had no credibility in football:

Unlike Nike, Coca Cola and McDonalds, we had no directly relevant products and no history of supporting grass roots football upon which to build a marketing idea.



Nike Write the future television commercial, World Cup 2010

3. Our competition would be bigger and stronger than ever:

We wouldn't just be competing with retailers for a share of the television market. We'd be competing with any advertiser trying to be heard during in the build up to the tournament.

We were significantly outgunned in terms of media spend- the sports, FMCG and alcohol big-hitters were collectively spending almost 55 times our media budget, leaving us with a share of voice of just 3%.

There was also a natural sense of anticipation for the marketing communications created by certain high profile brands that had a history of blockbuster Football World Cup ads.

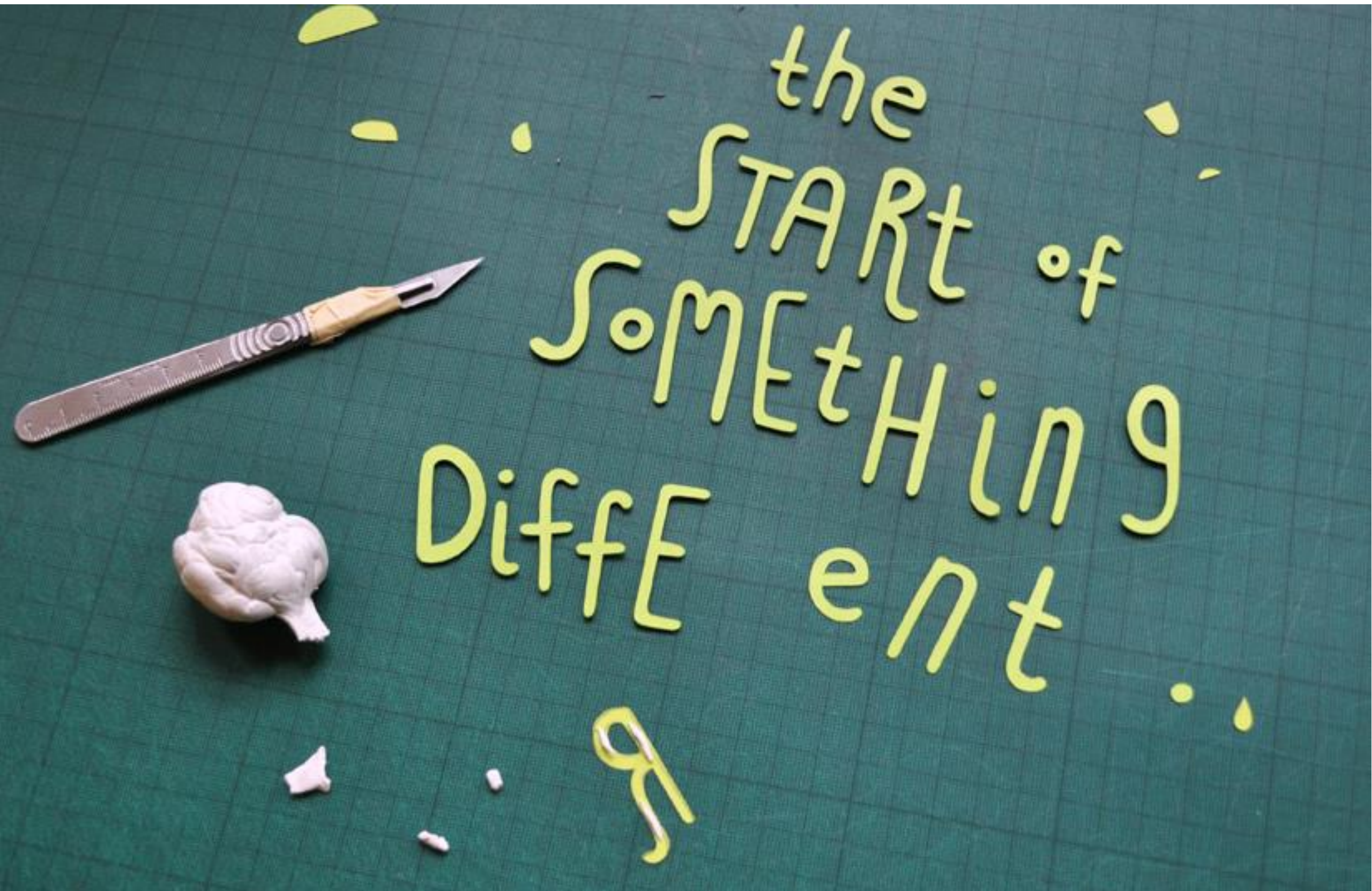
We, on the other hand, were starting from scratch.

	May – July 2010	SOV
Nike	£18,160,050	29%
Puma	£10,672,877	17%
Adidas	£10,090,179	16%
McDonalds	£ 6,759,577	11%
Sony	£ 5,687,040	9%
Carlsberg	£ 4,032,736	7%
Dixons	£ 1,760,010	3%

Relative share of voice, Football World Cup 2010

In the context of consumer electronics marketing we had historically achieved good share of voice and stand out. But, in the build up to the World Cup, it was clear we'd struggle if we couldn't find a distinctive approach to our marketing strategy.

If you can't join them,
beat them



The combined effect of the marketing challenges made us feel like we were playing with a significant competitive handicap.

We were looking for a marketing approach that would drive our brand favourability amongst direct electronics retail competitors and drive distinctiveness in the broader context of football – specifically the World Cup.

After reviewing the marketing activities of Nike, Coca Cola and McDonalds during past World Cup tournaments it became clear to us that their scale, bombastic style and credibility might actually work to our advantage.

We were sure from the outset that the airwaves, stores and the web would be full of big production content featuring football and/or Brazil, so we made a conscious decision to change the playing field.

To find an angle to exploit we interrogated our internal data sources, cultural and market trends and the latest academic thinking.

We unlocked three key insights that would prove to be pivotal to our marketing communications and subsequent business effectiveness.

1. World Cup Football has a broad audience appeal

According to FIFA data, the world cup has huge national reach in the UK- in 2010, almost 80% of the population watched some of the coverage. FIFA also report that, when world cup games have high levels of national reach, the gender split of the audience is “more reflective of the general population (i.e. less aligned to men)” (source: FIFA/KantarSport, 2010).

The reported gender split on average for UK viewers during the 2010 world Cup was 61% male and 39% female.



2. Football World Cup marketing is fundamentally macho, despite the sport's widening appeal

When we dug a little deeper, we discovered through football attendance data that the face of the sport was changing globally, even if the portrayal of football in the media wasn't.

Figures released by The Official England Supporters Association in the mid-00's showed a major rise in female membership. At some of the bigger Championship clubs, more than 25% of season ticket holders are women. Premiership research at the same time showed that female football fans attending top-flight games was rising above 18% of the total. That meant that total female attendance for Premiership games alone was in the region of 2.3 million.



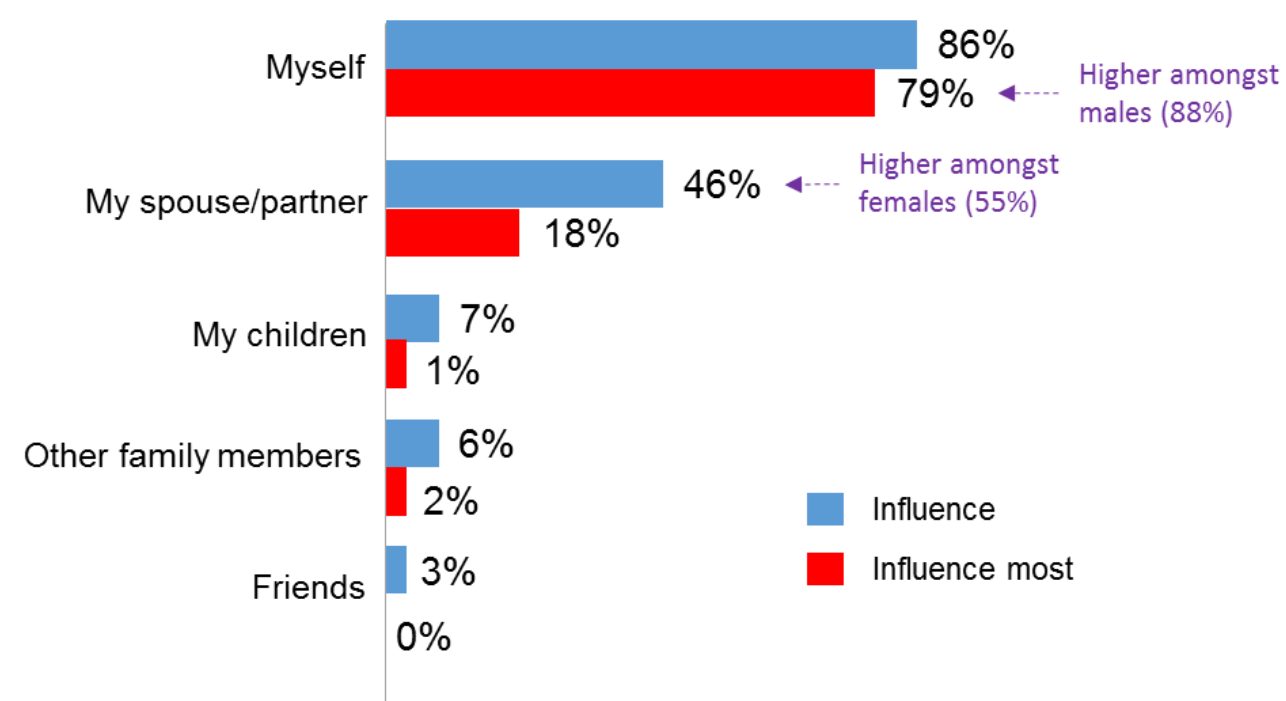
3. Who holds the purse strings when it comes to buying a telly?



Our own insights team had uncovered research that indicated that, when it comes to the purchase decisions for TVs, men and women have rather different understandings of who has the most influence. As shown, right, men are more likely than women to state that *they* have the most influence, whilst women are more likely than men to state that a television purchase is a joint decision.

Discovering this natural unspoken truth – about the differing opinions of men and women- proved pivotal in our thinking. It unlocked the opportunity to speak to our mixed gender audience about televisions and the World Cup in a way that elevated our point of view into a more human realm- the nature of relationships- thereby having universal resonance for our audience.

Influence and main influencer on decision making for TV purchases



Quiet persuasion

We had identified a unique creative angle to exploit, but how could we bring it to life in a way that stood out from, and made our little voice sing out louder than, our robust competition?

Rather than try to rationally persuade a narrower male audience with a traditionally macho football approach, this was our opportunity to more subtly seduce a broader, mixed gender audience with a quiet and nuanced piece of communication.

We wanted marketing communications that didn't shout like all the others, but rather, whispered, and hooked our audience with a universal truth that would resonate emotionally.

In a sea of epic, macho, global advertising, we wanted our offering to feel, like the brand, uniquely British.

This would not only be a new playing field versus the competition, whose approach would be international, glamorous and epic, but it was a new playing field for Currys PC World : we have a history of rational marketing communications .

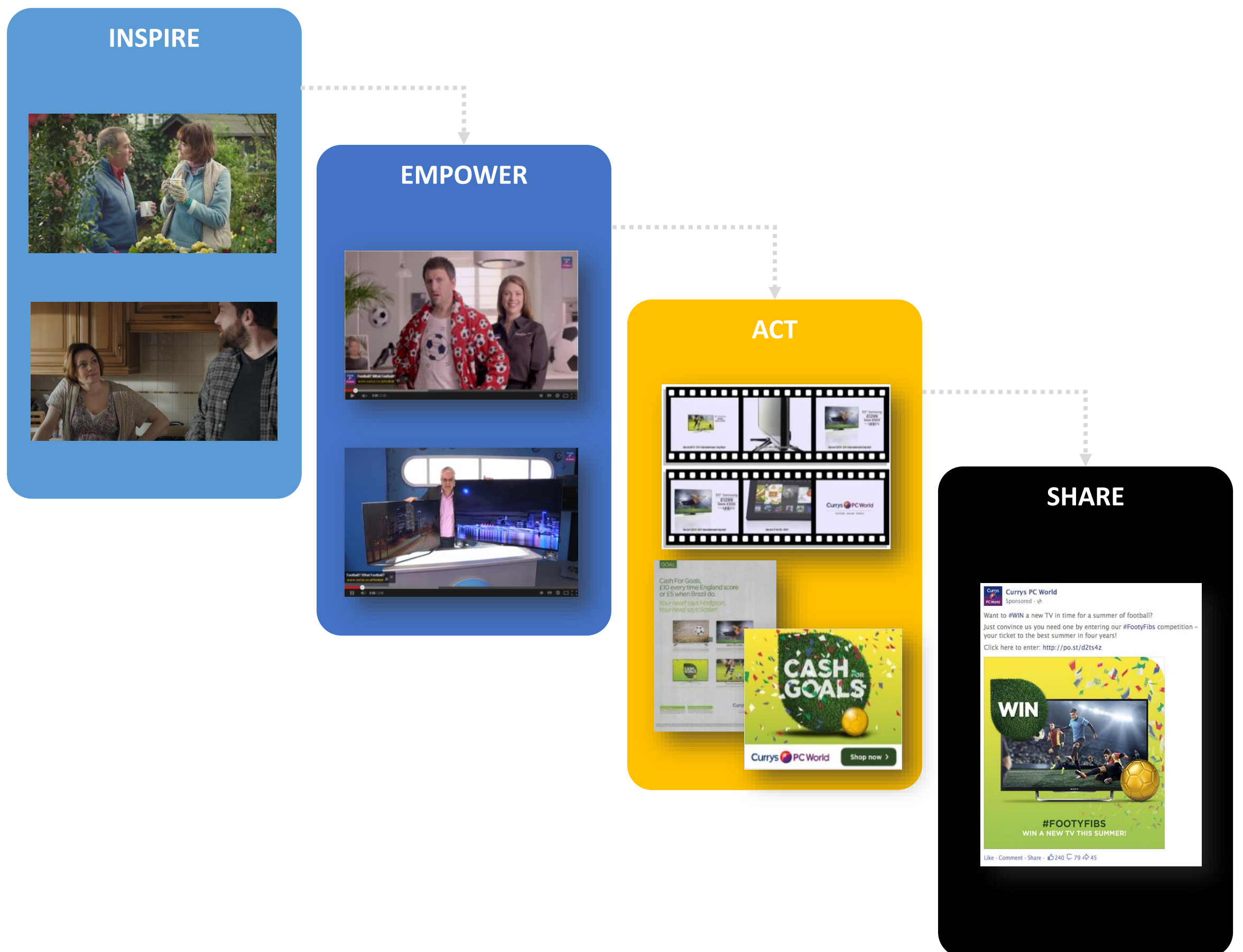
The glitz and razzle dazzle of conventional sports advertising were banished, and replaced with an intimate, warm, domestic portrait that was intended to appeal to women as well as men.



Multi-layered implementation

To ensure every component of our marketing communications had a distinct role and played a part within a complete consumer journey, we structured our ideas within the following campaign architecture*.

Marketing ideas were pushed through every phase of the model – from broadcast media to in store POS.

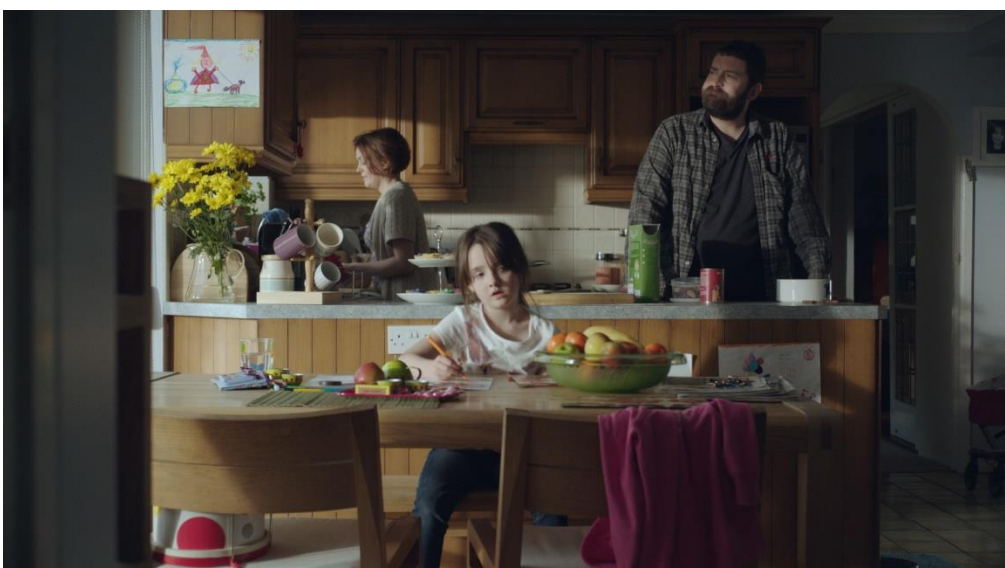


* Walker Media IDEAS model

Multi-layered implementation

INSPIRE:

The campaign, named 'Football? What Football', kicked-off with television executions built on a universal insight about relationships and the humorous, subtle (or not so subtle) attempts at manipulation that go on between couples - particularly when it comes to purchasing big-ticket items for the home.



Multi-layered implementation

EMPOWER:

Syndicated content and social network marketing helped television buyers by providing them with the information they need to navigate the complex world of smart televisions.

Online and ecommerce site content built on the 'Football? What Football?' theme by depicting the humorous interaction between a female expert and football pundit 'Fenners'. '*Fenners' guide to buying a new TV*' provided details about the television technology that is best for football viewing and gave details of our aftersales delivery and installation services.

Video content included collaboration with presenters from The Gadget Show.



Multi-layered implementation

ACT:

CASH FOR GOALS

Get £10 every time England score or £5 when Brazil do.
On TVs £699 and over:

*It's a win - win.
Whoever wins.*



- 1. Samsung 40" Smart 3D LED TV
£499 Save £350
With Smart TV technology, access online content direct from your sofa.
Model: UN40H6000. Product support £5.00 per month. Energy rating 'A'. Was £849 from 01.04.14 to 26.04.14
- 2. Exclusive Panasonic 40" Smart 3D LED TV with FreeTime
£549 Save £200
Free Blu-ray player. Instantly watch TV from the last 7 days, plus all the major catch-up TV services.
Model: AG45G45. Product support from £5.00 per month. Energy rating 'A+'. Was £749 from 26.03.14 to 16.04.14
- 3. Exclusive Samsung 48" Smart 3D LED TV
£799 Save £350
With FinView HD & FinCast HD built-in, get sharper picture quality on this designer TV.
Model: UN48H6570. Product support £7.00 per month. Energy rating 'A+'. Was £1149 from 01.04.14 to 21.04.14
- 4. Exclusive Samsung 50" Smart 4K Ultra HD TV
£1299 Save £300
Get sharper picture quality with 4K Ultra HD, up to 4x resolution plus online content through the Smart Hub.
Model: UN50H6200. Product support from £9.00 per month. Energy rating 'A+'. Was £1599 from 23.04.14 to 26.04.14
- 5. Samsung 55" Smart 3D LED TV
£899 Save £400
A slim, Smart TV giving you the best range of catch-up services with built-in WiFi.
Model: UN55H6000. Product support from £7 per month. Energy rating 'A+'. Was £1299 from 06.04.14 to 01.05.14
- 6. Exclusive LG 55" Smart 3D 4K Ultra HD LED TV
£1499 Save £500
With 4K Ultra HD, experience superior picture quality with up to 4 times the resolution of Full HD.
Model: UE55LA96L. Energy rating 'B'. Was £1999 from 01.04.14 to 21.04.14
- 7. Samsung 55" Smart 3D 4K Ultra HD LED TV
£2699
With a stunning curved screen and 4K Ultra HD, experience superior design and picture quality.
Model: UN55H6200. Energy rating 'A'. Was £2999 from 01.04.14 to 21.04.14
- 8. Samsung 60" Smart LED TV
£999 Save £150
Smart TV with an impressive range of catch-up services and built-in WiFi.
Model: UN60E3000. Product support from £7 per month. Energy rating 'A+'. Was £1149 from 26.03.14 to 16.04.14

Worried to begin in price?
If you find Argos, Asda, John Lewis, Next or M&S has the same product at a cheaper price we'll match it - even up to 7 days after purchase!

Currys PC World
IN STORE ONLINE MOBILE

Hard working product and price advertising in press, online and on television displayed the latest television products alongside sale prices to drive consideration close to the moment of purchase.



CASH FOR GOALS

£10 FOR EVERY ENGLAND GOAL OR **£5** FOR EVERY BRAZIL GOAL

WHEN YOU BUY ANY TV £699 AND OVER

A 'cash for goals' promotional idea featured specific television deals on television, in press, online and in store.

Customers were able to choose cash back for England or Brazil goals - with a premium on England goals!

Multi-layered implementation

SHARE:

The marketing communications ideas was pulled through to social media and in store with an idea called #FootyFibs.

The public could enter a competition on Twitter. By sharing their best fibs to persuade their partner they need a new television they had the chance to win a new large screen television.

The advertisement is set against a bright green background. At the top left is the Currys PC World logo. To its right are navigation links: HOME, WHAT'S THE SCORE?, and OI, REF!. On the far right are social media icons for Twitter and Facebook. The main headline reads "#FOOTYFIBS NEED A NEW TV THIS SUMMER?". Below this is a paragraph of text: "We know getting hold of a new TV for the summer isn't always a simple affair. You might need to convince someone else in your life it's a good idea. You might need to give them their own reason to embrace multiple inches of glorious new tech. That's why we created #FootyFibs - your ticket to the best summer in four years." To the right of the text is a large green leaf-shaped graphic with the word "WIN" in white. Below the leaf is a television screen showing a football match. The bottom half of the ad features a virtual football pitch with a goal and a white arrow pointing towards the TV. The pitch is bordered by a white fence with the Currys PC World logo repeated along it. Confetti is scattered around the TV screen.

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In conclusion

Marketers tend to be obsessed with share of voice as a key metric of success.

This paper demonstrates that it's not always those who shout the loudest who are heard and remembered.

Subtlety and nuance can be more powerful marketing weapons than brute force, especially when they are deliberately used to extend a brand's emotional resonance to a broader prospect base.

The underdog can prevail by changing the playing field.

