

# From Awareness to Action

Does High-Impact Advertising Provoke User Engagement?



# Executive Summary

The almost infinite forms of content and advertising in the digital space make it increasingly difficult for brands to attract the attention of users for their advertising messages and products. In addition, it is principal to increase the length of time a potential customer spends with an advertising medium and thus also with a brand or product, and to make this interaction as appealing as possible for the customer. High-impact advertising formats offer various possibilities to achieve these objectives.

This study analyses how high-impact advertising formats and standard banners affect user engagement in a genuine real live environment using the forced-exposure methodology. For this purpose, respondents were divided into a test and a control group, each of which was shown one of three different advertising campaigns in as high-impact advertising format or standard banner. Afterwards, the respondents gave their opinion in a questionnaire.

The results of the study show that high-impact advertising formats significantly increase user engagement. Furthermore, it is confirmed that the respondents rate the interaction with the advertisement positively. This significant added value compared to standard banners has direct positive effects on brand metrics such as brand perception or brand recall. Strong effects can also be observed in the area of the lower funnel. If a test person has interacted with a high-impact advertising format, the willingness to recommend a brand or product to others, as well as to buy it, increases significantly compared to test persons who had advertising contacts with standard banners.

In summary, this study proves that high-impact advertising formats encourage users to interact with the advertised brands and products stronger than standard banners and are thus able to effectively increase branding metrics along the entire marketing funnel.

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# Introduction

# Derivation

## Relevance and influence of user engagement in the field of digital advertising

Digital marketing faces the significant challenge of grabbing users' attention, inspiring them with your brand, and establishing a lasting relationship with potential customers. To achieve these goals, several factors need to be considered, such as defining the right target group, reach, and frequency of contact.

User engagement is an important metric that is increasingly becoming the focus of digital marketing. It is crucial to choose the right advertising format and appealing design to create a positive user experience, as this increases user engagement, recommendation, and purchase intent.

The relevance of user engagement in the field of digital marketing is also reflected in the increasing demand for dedicated billing models, such as cost per engagement (CPE), e.g. the billing of a campaign based on the costs of the defined interaction.

For this reason, Nielsen and YOC have designed a study that looks at the extent to which high-impact advertising formats can specifically promote user engagement.

In detail, the analysis focuses on answering three questions:

- How strongly do users interact with high-impact advertising formats compared to standard banners?
- How does user engagement affect the perception of advertising formats and the brands and products advertised?
- Does user engagement in the context of high-impact advertising formats lead to an increase in the key figures in the lower funnel?

# Background

## High-impact Advertising

High-impact advertising formats are innovative advertising media that contain a variety of features to interact with the user to attract their attention, build an emotional connection and strengthen brand awareness. They offer advertisers a variety of creative ways to communicate the message of the advertised products and the brands behind them.

## Demarcation from standard formats

When compared to interactive high-impact advertising formats, standard banners are typically simple banners that come in jpg, png, or gif formats, either static or animated. Advertisers usually design themselves with graphics, text, and a logo. Standard banners have limited opportunities for interaction and usually offer users no interaction besides clicking on the standard banner itself.

## Reasons for the high-impact product selection

The study focuses on the YOC Mystery Ad® as the core element and evaluates one campaign each for Milka, Sky, and Nespresso. The same product line was used in each campaign to prevent distortion of the results by the high-impact advertising formats. The selected campaigns represent different industries and price points, providing a comprehensive analysis.

## History of studies

In 2020, the first collaborative study by Nielsen and YOC entitled "The Effectiveness of High-Impact Ad Formats" was published, demonstrating the effectiveness of high-impact products. In 2021, the second study followed with the title "Planning for Impact", which is dedicated to the question of whether the choice of advertising format as well as the number of advertising contacts optimises brand awareness. The third and most recent study, "From Awareness to Action: Does High-Impact Advertising Provoke User Engagement?" delves into user engagement in the context of high-impact advertising offering valuable insights into the effectiveness of these advertising formats.

# High-impact formats

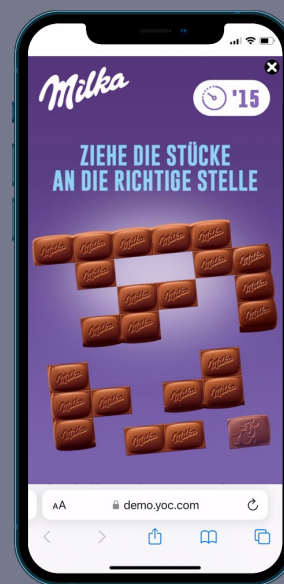
## Product definition and campaigns

### YOC Mystery Ad®

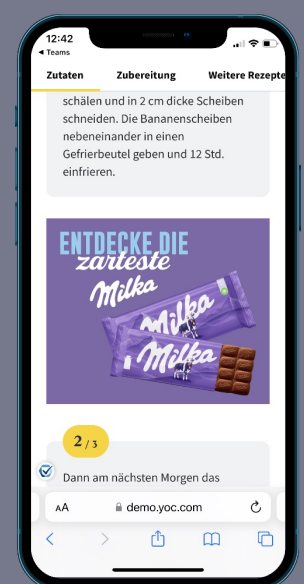
The YOC Mystery Ad® is an innovative advertising product that features various technical integrations. In the mobile arena, it covers the entire screen, which makes it highly attention-grabbing for the user. The product allows for direct playful interaction, creating a unique brand experience for the user that promotes engagement. The YOC Mystery Ad® uses various forms of interaction, including familiar mechanics such as "swiping," "voting," "puzzling," and more, making it easy for users to understand and access.

### Milka

The YOC Mystery Ad® for the Milka campaign features an incomplete chocolate bar and individual chocolate pieces. The user is asked to move the individual chocolate pieces to complete the chocolate bar, similar to a puzzle. A countdown at the top right of the display indicates that the user has 15 seconds to complete the interaction.



YOC  
MYSTERY AD®



STANDARD FORMAT



# High-impact formats

## Sky

The YOC Mystery Ad® for Sky offers an option for direct voting through the "Slider Bar Feature". Users vote for their favourite football team by moving the football on the screen from left to right. Once users have successfully voted, they are given access to a discount code. The advertisement is displayed as a full-screen ad and thus achieves strong visibility and attention.

## Nespresso

The YOC Mystery Ad® of the Nespresso campaign is equipped with a "Mini-Game Feature". The words "Pinball Game" and a call-to-action encourage the user to start playing. The pinball game is designed to resemble a Nespresso capsule, and the user is prompted to shoot it against obstacles using a pinball machine and collect points. The obstacles are themed around coffee and the Nespresso brand, providing a fun and immersive user experience that promotes brand awareness.



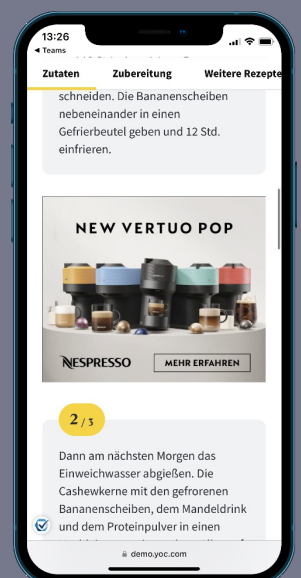
YOC  
MYSTERY AD®



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MYSTERY AD®



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# Methodology

# Methodology of this study

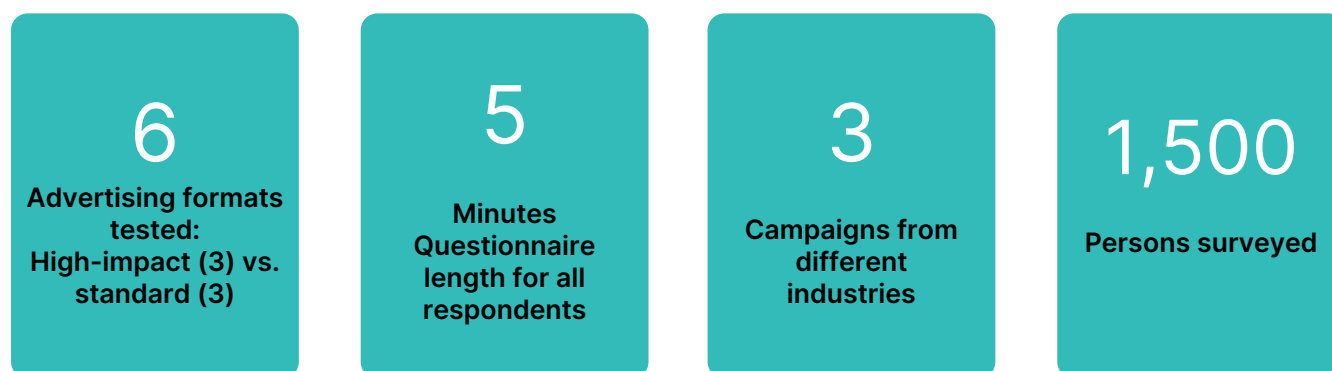
For this study, a complex methodology based on the robust forced exposure approach was used. Here, the different advertisements are tested in an online environment that is perceived as real. In addition, a test and control group comparison is used to measure the impact of advertising campaigns. In this setup, respondents were divided into six groups, three test groups and three control groups each.

Three ad campaigns were selected from the FMCG and entertainment categories, which were tested as both high-impact advertising formats and standard medium rectangles (300x250 px) in a mobile environment.

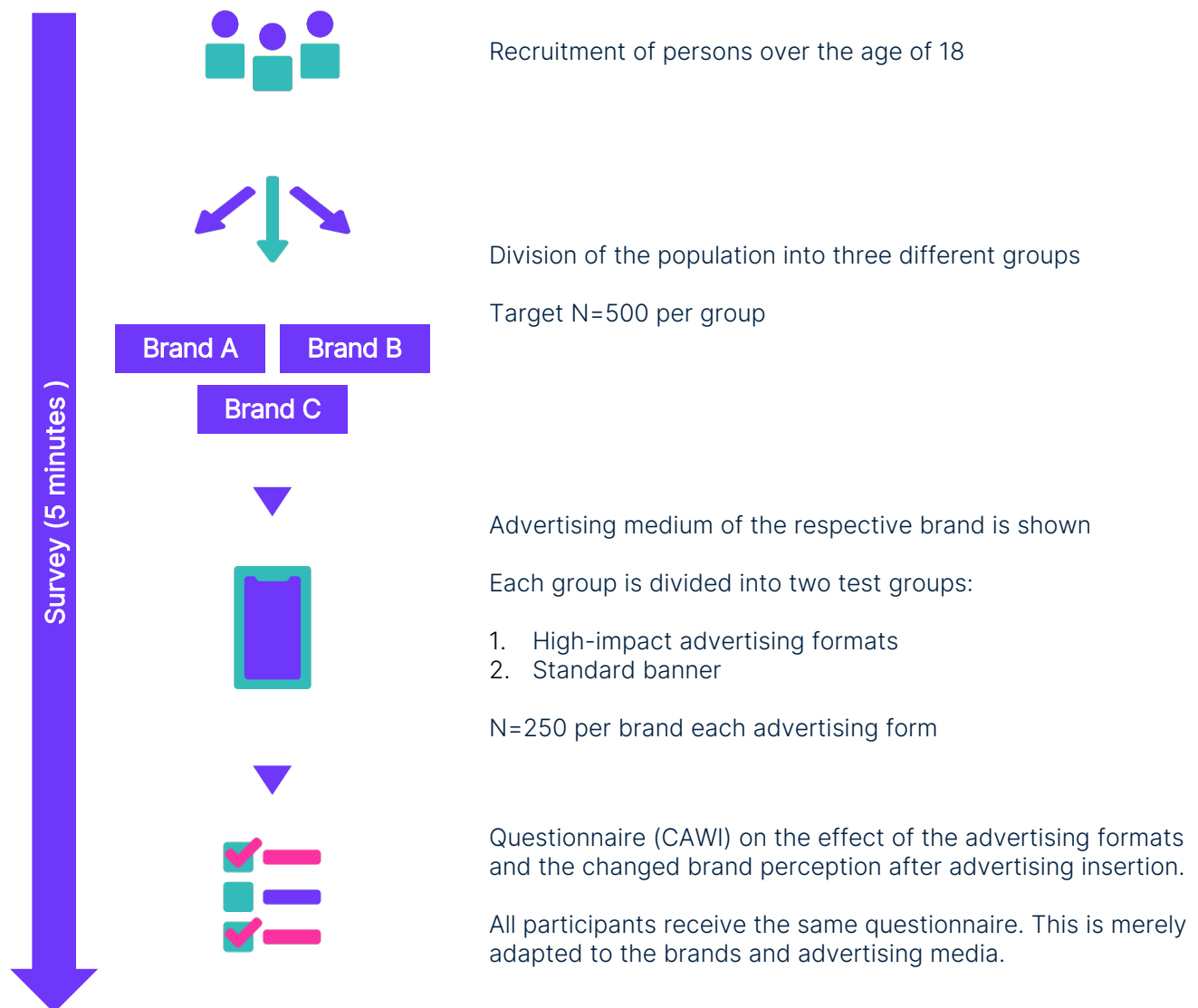
A robust population of N=1,500 total respondents was used to obtain valid research results.

After engaging with the content of the online environment, all respondents were given an approximately 5-minute questionnaire. The respondent was asked various questions and topics about the brands/products shown, the interactions that took place as a result of the advertising, and a series of questions about brand perception and awareness.

## Overview



# Visualisation of the methodology



At the beginning of the study, panellists from an online access panel were invited to participate in an online survey without revealing any information about the content of the survey. The respondents were then asked to visit a mobile website and read through the article presented, as well as engage with the advertising material. A control question was used to check whether the respondents had engaged with the content. In the further course of the fieldwork, the respondents were given a questionnaire to survey the advertising impact. Each respondent answered the questionnaire only once.

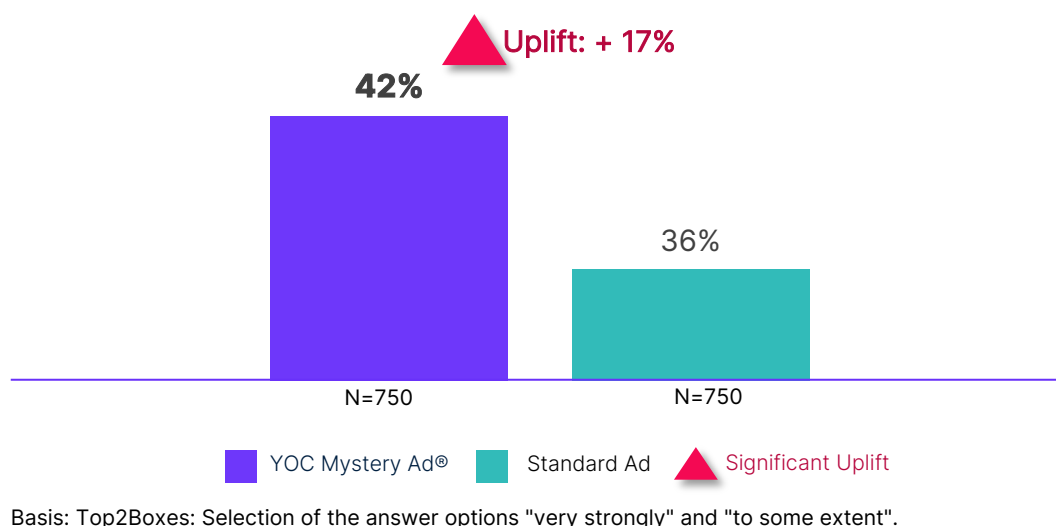
# Study results

## High-impact formats increase user engagement

Within the joint study by YOC and Nielsen, respondents were asked a variety of different questions on the topic of user engagement. Overall, the study shows that high-impact advertising formats are convincing in terms of user engagement.

High-impact advertising formats encourage more interaction with the ad. On average, 42% of all respondents were encouraged to interact with the high-impact ad.

### User Engagement



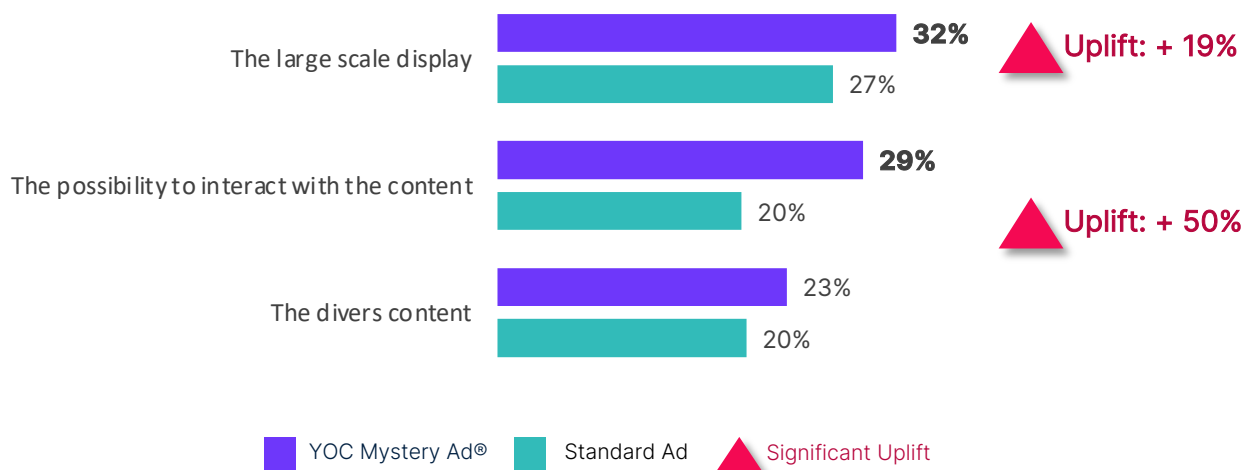
The analysis of individual characteristics of the advertising media also clearly shows that interaction is an important and positive component of high-impact advertising formats. With an uplift of 32%, a higher basic willingness to interact with high-impact formats compared to standard banners can also be identified.

High-impact advertising formats, especially the YOC Mystery Ad®, thus increase user engagement and encourage users to interact with the ad and thus perform significantly better than standard banners in many performance indicators of digital advertising campaigns.

# Users appreciate the interaction possibilities with large-scale high-impact advertising formats

The following figure describes which characteristics of digital advertising the respondents rate positively. With a significant uplift of 50%, high-impact advertising formats are rated significantly more positively than standard banners in terms of interaction. The large-area display and the diverse content are also characteristics in which the high-impact advertising formats score significantly better in comparison. In addition, one-fifth of the respondents state that they find the advertising medium "non-disturbing" despite the large-area display.

## Positive features of the advertising media in comparison

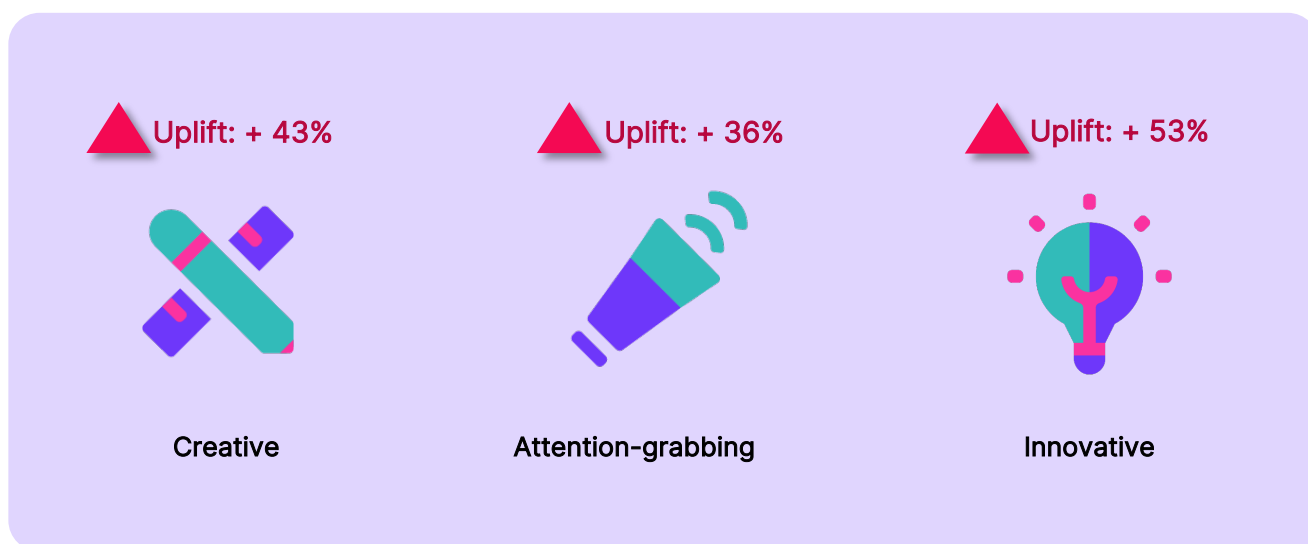


Basis: All Campaigns: N(YOC Mystery Ad®)=750 / N(Standard Ad)=750



## Creativity, innovation and an increase in attention distinguish high-impact advertising formats from standard banners

In the further course, the respondents were presented with different attributes to choose from. High-impact advertising formats are particularly often described with the attributes "interesting" (38%) and "informative" (30%). Compared to the standard banners, high-impact advertising formats are significantly more often rated as **"creative"** (43%), **"attention-grabbing"** (36%), **"innovative"** (53%) and **"extraordinary"** (18%).



Basis: All campaigns N(YOC Mystery Ad®)=750

The association with the attributes mentioned stress that high-impact advertising formats **stand out significantly more from other advertising formats.**

34% of all respondents also stated that high-impact advertising formats are clearly different from other advertising media they usually receive in the digital space. Only 22% could confirm this for standard banners. This corresponds to a significant difference of 53% in favour of high-impact advertising formats. Only less than a quarter of the respondents (24%) said they did not perceive any difference between high-impact advertising formats and other forms of advertising.

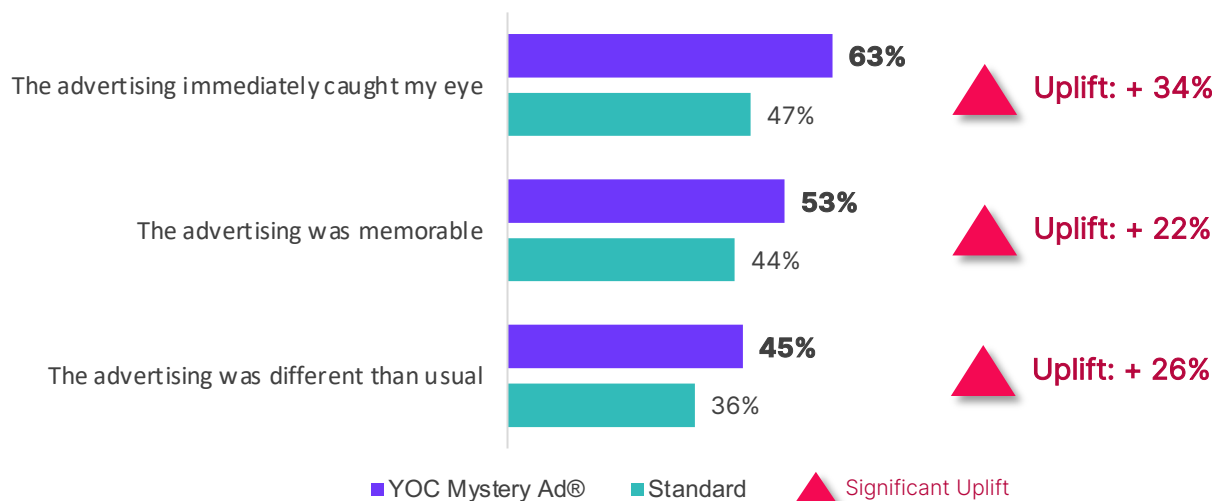




Furthermore, compared to standard banners, high-impact advertising formats score particularly well in that they are **"immediately noticeable"** (63%) and **"memorable"** (53%). In addition, the respondents sense significantly more often that the high-impact advertising formats are **"different than usual"** (45%).

In a direct comparison to standard banners, the YOC Mystery Ad® consistently shows significant uplifts in terms of perception.

### Perception of the YOC Mystery Ad®



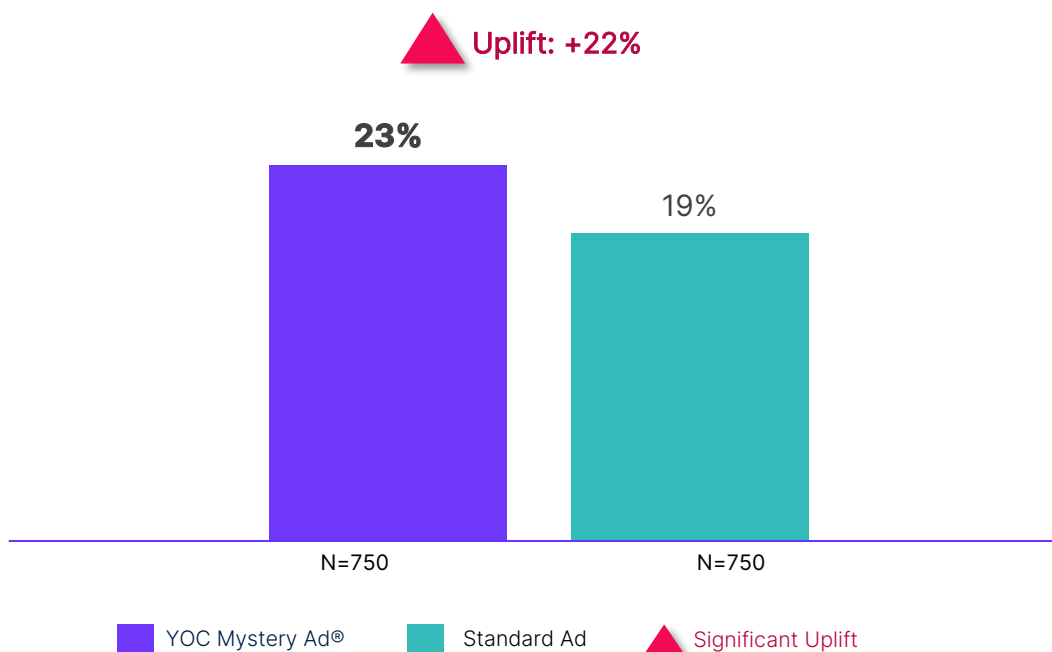
Basis: All campaigns: N(YOC Mystery Ad®)=750 / N(Standard)=750  
Top2Boxes: Selection of the answer options "agree completely" and "tend to agree".

## High-impact advertising formats have a positive influence on brand perception

Overall, high-impact advertising formats are rated as more appealing, more memorable and more creative by the respondents. The YOC Mystery Ad® in particular stands out. **23% of all study participants who have seen a YOC Mystery Ad® find it very appealing.**

High-impact advertising formats generate a significantly higher ad likeability, i.e. the user's pleasant perception of the ad. It was found that the YOC Mystery Ad® achieved an average positive uplift of 22% compared to standard banners, which illustrates the positive perception of this high-impact advertising format across different industries.

### Ad Likeability



Basis: All campaigns | Top1Box Selection of the response option "Very appealing"

## High-impact advertising formats have a positive effect on brand perception

The positive opinion about high-impact advertising formats also has a positive effect on the respective brand perception and brand recall of the respondents at the same time. Interaction with the advertising medium enables 55% of respondents to better remember the advertised brand in all three campaigns.



**55%**

of people surveyed are better able to remember the advertised brand as a result of interactive advertising content.

Basis: All campaigns: N(YOC Mystery Ad®)=750 | Top2Box: Selection of response options "strongly agree" and "tend to agree".

This result is additionally confirmed by the aesthetic perception of advertising. 59% of all survey participants agree that they find high-impact advertising formats to be attractively designed.



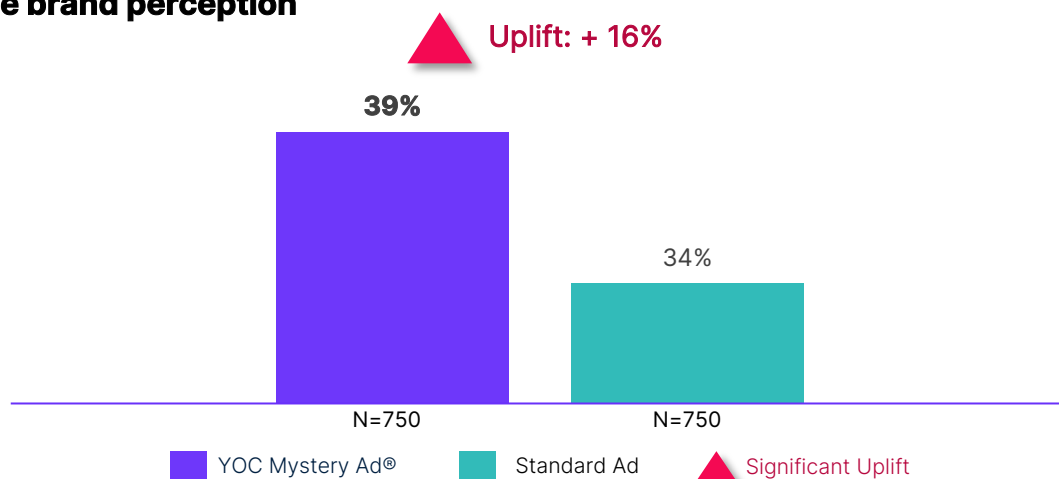
**59%**

of all respondents state that attention-grabbing advertising formats are appealing.

Basis: All campaigns: N(YOC Mystery Ad®)=750 | Top2Box: Selection of response options "strongly agree" and "tend to agree".

Overall, the YOC Mystery Ad® has a significantly stronger positive impact on the perception of the advertised brand, with an uplift of 16%.

### Positive brand perception



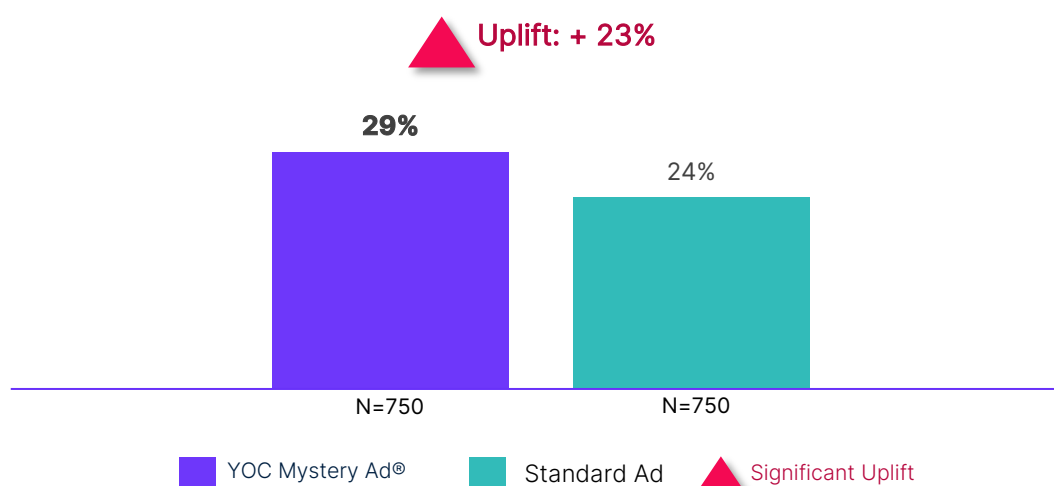
Basis: Top 2 boxes: selection of response options "very positive" and "rather positive"

## High-impact advertising formats encourage a recommendation of the advertised brand or product

Just under one-third of respondents (29%) said they actively searched for further information after coming into contact with a high-impact ad.

Compared to standard banners, this results in a significant uplift of 23%. Further study results confirm that 40% of the surveyed study participants would "very likely" or "rather likely" recommend the brand shown in the advertising material to other people.

### Interest in further information after advertising contact



Basis: Top 2 boxes: selection of the answer options "very likely" and "rather likely"



## High-impact advertising strengthens performance in the lower funnel

With an uplift of 16% compared to standard advertising, high-impact advertising formats encourage referrals of advertised brands/products.



**31%**

of those who have seen a YOC Mystery Ad® would recommend the brand they saw to others.

Basis: All campaigns: N(YOC Mystery Ad®)=750 | Top2Box: Selection of "very likely" and "rather likely"

In addition to recommending the brand/product to others, high-impact advertising formats arouse the respondents' interest in more information and thus strengthen brand activation. More than a quarter of respondents would probably search for further information about the advertised brand/product after seeing high-impact advertising formats.



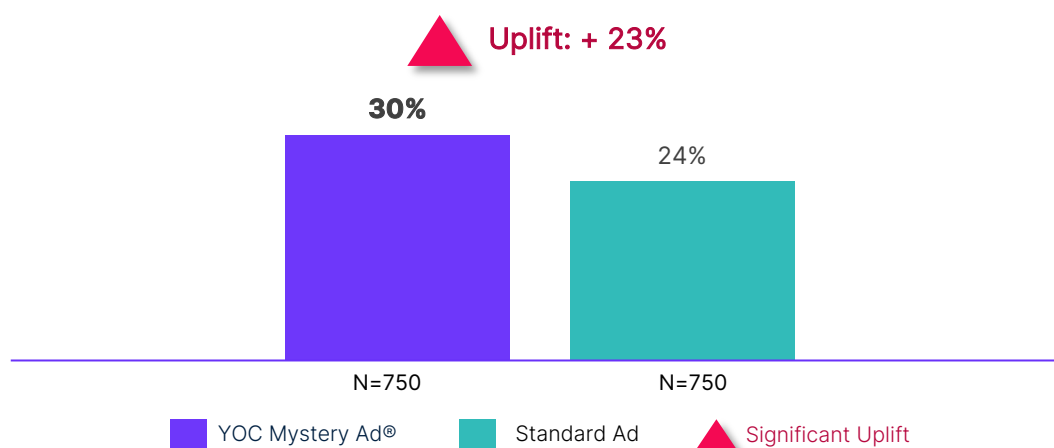
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of those who have seen a YOC Mystery Ad® would search for more information of the advertised brand.

Basis: All campaigns: N(YOC Mystery Ad®)=750 | Top2Box: Selection of "very likely" and "rather likely"

The increased brand activation is also reflected in the purchase intention. Compared to standard banners, significantly more people (30%) would consider the brand/product shown for purchase after contact with high-impact advertising formats.

### Purchase intention after advertising contact



Basis: Top2Box: Selection of the response options "very likely" and "rather likely"



# Interpretation

# Interpretation and derivation

The results of this study show that the research question "Does High-Impact Advertising provoke User Engagement?" can be answered with an unambiguous yes. The study confirms the assumption that users interact significantly more actively with high-impact advertising formats than with comparable standard banners. The interaction in turn promotes the positive perception of the advertised product or brand. This positive perception by the user refers not only to the advertised products but also to the brand as a whole. Aspects of the so-called "lower funnel", such as further information searches, recommendations, and purchase intentions, are also promoted by high-impact advertising formats compared to standard banners.

To ensure comparable results, this study focuses exclusively on the YOC Mystery Ad®. VIS.X® Artificial Intelligence (AI) is an essential component of the proprietary technology platform VIS.X®, through which high-impact advertising formats are delivered. By using VIS.X® AI, the feature functionalities investigated in this study, such as "puzzle", "vote" and "pinball", as well as a variety of other features, can be implemented in other YOC high-impact advertising formats, e.g. the YOC Sitebar. VIS.X® AI identifies the appropriate advertising format that best matches the advertiser's campaign objectives. Mobile and desktop formats are considered to ensure a holistic multiscreen strategy. The optimization is independent of cookies and enables the achievement of customized KPI targets without relying on external data.

This study as well as the two previous studies, thus confirm that high-impact advertising formats are successfully used to achieve differentiated campaign goals, from increasing brand awareness to increasing product purchase intent. In light of these findings, high-impact advertising formats are a meaningful tool for advertisers and media planners to achieve significantly better campaign results with available budgets.



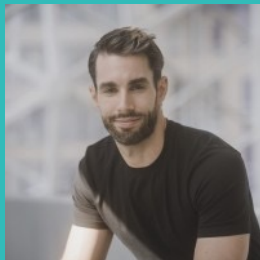
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YOC is a publicly listed technology company and develops software for the digital advertising market. By combining its programmatic trading platform VIS.X® and YOC's high-impact advertising formats, the company enables an optimal advertising experience for advertisers, publishers and users of the internet and mobile apps. By using VIS.X® and YOC's high-impact advertising formats, advertisers are able to increase their brand awareness in combination with high-value advertising inventory. Renowned premium publishers offer global media reach and benefit from the high monetization of VIS.X®. As a pioneer of mobile advertising, YOC has been on the market since 2001 and has been listed in the Prime Standard of the German Stock Exchange since 2009.

