

# SA youth survey: TV ads entertaining, but not truthful

Young South Africans find television ads entertaining, but don't see them as necessarily showcasing products and brands honestly. This is the finding of a recent survey by consumer insights company Pondering Panda, which polled the opinion of 1924 respondents between 15 and 34, on the topic of advertising on television.



The survey found that while 71% said they enjoyed watching TV ads, almost two thirds (64%) believed most ads were not truthful about what was being advertised. Only 32% believed adverts were honest in what they portrayed.

On the question of enjoyment, black respondents were more likely than other race groups to say they enjoyed watching TV ads. 80% of blacks felt this way, compared to 71% of coloureds, 50% of whites, and 47% of Indians. There were no significant differences according to age or gender.

## 'We don't believe much of what you say, but we don't want you banned'

In terms of persuasiveness of advertising, 32% of respondents claimed to buy things quite often as a result of seeing ads. 55% said that they seldom bought anything as a result of advertising, while 13% of respondents claimed that advertising had no affect whatsoever on their buying habits.

The survey also found that, given a choice, SA youth would rather watch TV with ads than having advertising banned. 56% said they liked ads, and would keep them as part of their television experience, given a choice. In contrast, 35% said they would eliminate ads entirely from television, if they were able to. Young blacks were significantly more likely than other race groups to want to keep ads on TV. 69% of blacks said they would prefer to retain ads on television, compared to 50% of coloureds, 31% of Indians, and only 28% of whites.

## 'Too many campaigns that are poorly branded'

Butch Rice, co-founder of Pondering Panda, said: "Most young South Africans are clearly receptive to television advertising. However, their lack of trust in the honesty of advertising is a challenge to marketers - but it's not the only one. Our ad testing studies have shown that major brands face significant challenges when it comes to correct brand linkage among young people, when recalling specific ads on television. There are too many campaigns out there that are poorly branded, leading to a serious wastage of advertising budgets, in terms of their effectiveness. Viewers often recall the ad, but can't say whom it was for. Worse, they also often think it was for a competitor."

Interviews were carried out on cell phones between the 11th and 12th of December, 2012, across South Africa. Results were weighted to be nationally representative.

Pondering Panda is market research and consumer insights company that specialises in mobile research. It has completed over 2 million interviews in its first year of operation. Its commercial success is attributed to the fact that interviews are conducted via cell phones. People have their phones with them at all times, ensuring a high response rate. Because respondents feel relatively anonymous, their answers are more candid than they would be in traditional interviews conducted by a fieldworker. As all information is input digitally, a rapid assembly and analysis of the data can be completed, allowing for a fast turnaround.

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