

impossible

INTEGRATNESS

EXAMPLES, INGREDIENTS AND A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

You've heard it said,

“In the future, the 30-second spot will be dead.”

Welcome to the future! Well, almost.

Standing in stark contrast to the traditional :30 spot, one buzzword echoing through the halls of savvy network ad sales and marketing departments is “integrated.”

What is “integrated?” While not quite the death knell of the 30-second spot, integrated media is indeed an increasingly effective way of reaching audiences. **One part commercial, one part promo, this hybrid format “integrates” an advertiser message with a network brand.** The resulting win-win can reach audiences in new and powerful ways while generating additional revenues for these savvy networks.

But what are the ingredients of successful integrations? How does one avoid viewer turn-off from obvious product placement? How does one achieve effective and tangible results?

To answer these questions, we will examine some recent and noteworthy integrations, draw some conclusions, and examine a case study.

Let's not just integrate. Let's create “integreatness.”

RECENT & NOTEWORTHY INTEGRATIONS

DISCOVERY / COORS LIGHT "HARD WORK"



DISCOVERY / WALL-E *



SPIKE / KAY "DIAMONDS"



TNT NBA / ANGELS & DEMONS



USA MONK / HOOVER



DISCOVERY / LEXUS "INNOVATION"



TLC / ALLSTATE "BIKERS"



SUNDANCE / INFINITI "THE INSPIRATION SESSIONS" *



NICK / FLIP "NEW AND NOW"



* PRODUCED BY IMPOSSIBLE

View these spots at
www.impossible.tv/public/integreatness/

KEY INGREDIENTS

SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATIONS' COMMON INGREDIENTS

- V** VIEWER AFFINITY
- A** ACCENTUATE ADVERTISER
- M** eMOTIONALLY ENGAGING
- P** PROXIMITY

VIEWER AFFINITY

One good brand deserves another. Successful integrations typically leverage the [Halo Effect](#), where viewer affinity for brand #1 creates a positive association with brand #2.

When developing creative for an integration, ask yourself, “Is the viewer passionate about brand A? How can that brand essence be leveraged to integrate and connect with brand B?”

Your goal is to employ the viewer’s affinity for one brand and invite the other brand into it. Ideally, the viewer has affinity for both brands, enabling you to produce a truly targeted, customized experience.

For further details about influencing consumer behavior by way of brand familiarity, see [Familiarity Heuristic](#).

ACCENTUATES ADVERTISER

This is an obvious attribute of successful integrations, but merits emphasis. Clients are paying for their brands’ visibility and expect your channel’s solution to provide both a higher quality and quantity of viewer impressions than competing outlets.

We suggest developing creative to exploit that which you possess but your competition does not: your unique brand essence. After all, integrations that do not leverage your uniqueness are arguably a commodity the advertiser can get from other sources. An added bonus: uniqueness is not unlike a monopoly; it commands a premium price.

EMOTIONALLY ENGAGING

All other factors being equal, an emotional message has greater impact than a purely rational/functional message (see [Marketers Long for More Stress on 'Emotional Benefits'](#), Adweek, May 21, 2010). Successful integrations tend to exploit this advantage by delivering messages that resonate with an audience on an emotional level.

For clarity, the term “emotional” here may refer to feelings of humor, drama, excitement, loss, pride, power, as well as concepts such as “values of this brand are similar to my own” or “using this brand makes me feel good.”

Bear in mind, many advertisers are unfamiliar with engaging with their customers via emotional benefits. They may assume if their brand proposition is rational/functional (e.g. lowest price, best value, superior performance, etc.) the delivery of that message should likewise be purely rational/functional. Be prepared for possible resistance.

When developing creative, challenge the assumptions. For example, if an advertiser seeks rational/functional creative because their brand promise is “value,” ask:

- ▶ Why might viewers have strong feelings about *value*?
- ▶ *How does it feel* to get a really good value?
- ▶ How does value *add meaning to the viewer’s life*?

Asking questions from a broader perspective can also be helpful, for example:

- ▶ What is this advertiser’s story? What does it have in common with our story?
- ▶ What does this advertiser stand for, as opposed to simply what they sell? Do we stand for the same things?

PROXIMITY

Successful integrations often rely on proximity to relevant programming, whether in time or space. Here **proximity in time** refers to **when** a spot airs. Considerations:

- ▶ If an integration ties an advertiser’s brand with your show, does the integration air during that show? Or within a related show?
- ▶ Will the advertiser’s commercial air immediately before or after the integrated spot?
- ▶ How can the integration grab the attention of time shifting viewers?
- ▶ When resuming programming after the integration, can a host or announcer provide a follow-up commentary or a call-to-action?
- ▶ What formats will engage viewers best? Rather than a :30 spot, what about a :15/:15? What about vignettes, IDs, [podbusters](#), IPMs, billboards, etc?

Similarly, **proximity in space** refers to **where** a spot or related media is placed. Considerations include on-air, off-air, print, web, swag, etc.

CASE STUDY

DEADLIEST CATCH / DESPICABLE ME TIE-IN

DISCOVERY CHANNEL



DECISIONS, DECISIONS

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

From the vendor vetting process to creative development to execution, several key decisions enabled success. So now it's your turn – at each of these key decision points, what would you have done? (The actual decision that was made in this case is highlighted in pink with a corresponding rationale.)

DECISION #1: AD SALES IS IN TALKS WITH A MOVIE STUDIO ABOUT A BIG TIE-IN PROJECT DUE IN TWO MONTHS. DO YOU...

A. What's a tie-in? Start researching

B. Mention project to potential agency

> Agency responds favorably, making emotional investment which you can leverage later if needed

C. Wait: project needs to to firm up more before you commit time to it

DELIVERABLES

:10 Franchise A Billboard
:10 Franchise B Billboard
:10 Franchise C Billboard
:10 Network ID GENERIC
:10 Franchise A Friday Billboard
:10 Franchise A Friday GENERIC
:10 Movie OPEN
:10 Movie ID - Gag #1
:10 Movie ID - Gag #2
:10 Movie ID - Gag #3
:10 Movie Sneak Peek Tease

:60 Movie Sneak Peek - Topic #1
:05 Movie Sneak Peek - Topic #2
:10 Movie In-Marathon ID #2
:10 Movie In-Marathon ID #3
:30 Movie Elements - Vignette #1
:30 Movie Elements - Vignette #2
:30 Movie Elements - Vignette #3
:15 Movie Elements - Character Moment #1
:15 Movie Elements - Character Moment #2
:20 Movie Elements - Character Moment #1
:20 Movie Elements - Character Moment #2

DECISION #2: THE PROJECT IS DUE IN JUST 3 WEEKS! DO YOU...

A. Write creative brief

B. Ask the potential agency for ideas

> 20+ more creative brains are engaged, scripts are already underway

C. Build list of all potential agencies and invite them to pitch

> The time involved in pulling together a pitch results in lost window of opportunity to shoot Captain Keith.

DECISION #3: ONLY 2 WEEKS LEFT. DO YOU MOVE AHEAD WITH...

A. Ambitious: shoot talent on location

B. Risky: beg studio to send trailers, toolkits, etc.

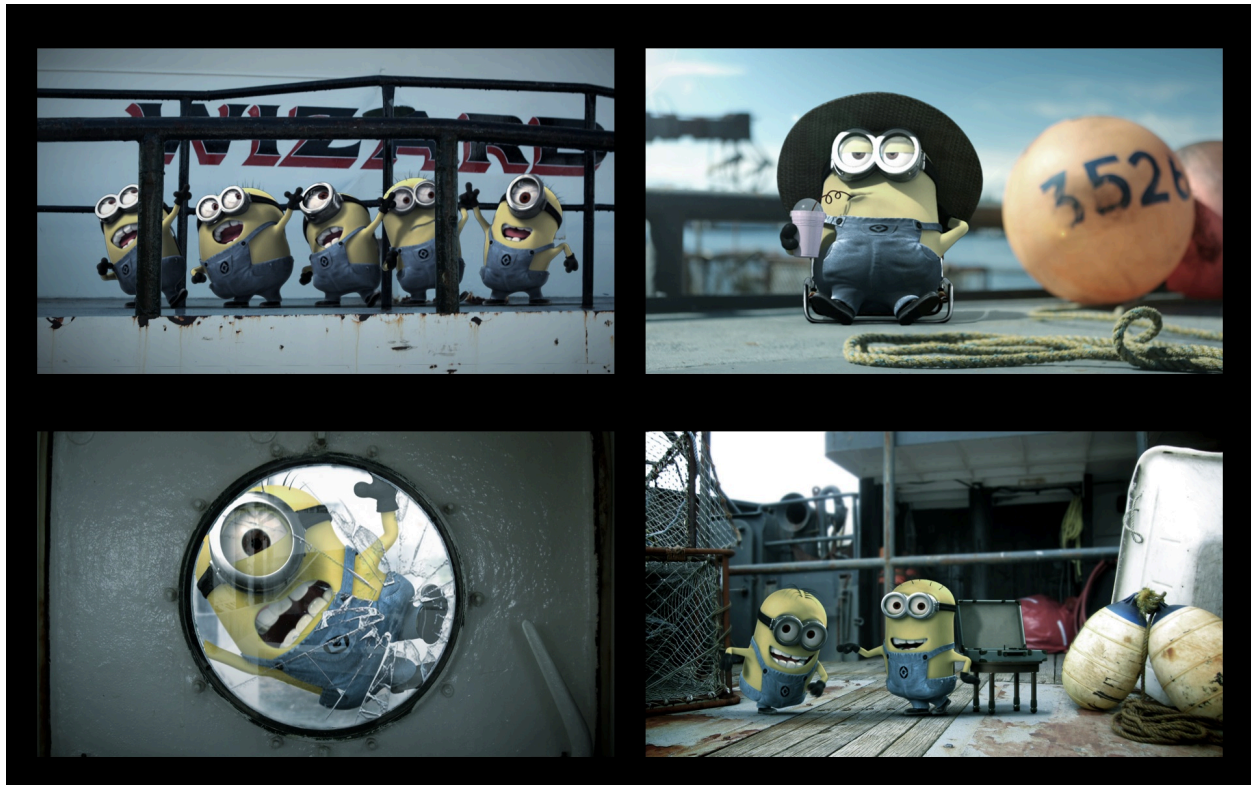
C. Safe: a clip edit

D. All of the above

> Cover your bases, eliminate options only when absolutely necessary

CONCEPT

CAPTAIN KEITH IS PROUD OF HIS NEW CREW, BUT IF HE ONLY KNEW...



DECISION #4: THE STUDIO WANTS TO SEE THE CAPTAIN INTERACTING WITH THE MINIONS. THE DIRECTOR SAYS IT'S A BAD IDEA. DO YOU...

A. Trust the director

> Captain Keith may be on TV, but he's not an actor. Disaster averted.

B. Cover your bases, shoot the Captain both ways.

> Shooting both ways will expand the shoot to two days. Budget cannot afford and the Captain is available for just a single day.

C. "The customer is always right." Override the director.

> Forcing the talent to act with CGI characters that do not exist in reality is doomed to look and/or feel corny.

View the final spots from this campaign at Impossible's website.

MEASURING THE RESULTS

PROJECT POST-MORTEM

ON-TIME: ✓

ON-BUDGET: ✓

ON-BRIEF: N/A

Project was a rousing success despite not employing a creative brief.

VIEWER AFFINITY: ✓

Fans of Brand A were enthralled with Brand B.

ACCENTUATE ADVERTISER: ✓

See feedback below.

EMOTIONALLY ENGAGING: ✓

Humor element was enthusiastically received by the target audience.

PROXIMITY: ✓

Multi-faceted campaign drove tune-in to an all-day marathon. During the marathon, sneak peeks, vignettes and IDs kept viewers engaged and connected with both brands.

FEEDBACK: ✓

DISCOVERY

“Everyone (Discovery and Universal) was blown out of the water with the Despicable Me stuff. Definitely raised the bar and exceeded expectations.

I'm so happy that we were able to work together on this one. You guys are truly amazing to work with... let's do it again soon!”

UNIVERSAL

“Despicable Me not only took over Captain Keith's boat, but it really took over the box office!!!!

Thank you all for your support, creativity, and most of all your tireless dedication to make this movie a HUGE success. It is really because of all of our amazing partners that this movie greatly exceeded expectations.

We heard so many positive comments on the amazing material that they saw on Discovery and Deadliest Catch! We couldn't have done it without you all! Once again... you all outdid yourselves.”

TAKEAWAYS

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

SMART GAMBLES

- **Cover your bases, have backups**
- **Eliminate options as you go, only when you have to**
- **Leverage your experts to watch out for gotchas**

INTEGRATE INTUITIVELY

- **When time is of the essence, trust your intuition**
- **Resist temptation to overanalyze**
- **Study concept of “Thin Slicing” = Spontaneous decisions are often as good as – or even better than – carefully planned and considered ones.**
[Malcolm Gladwell, *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*]

SHOOT WHENEVER POSSIBLE

- **Due to recent innovations, live action is now an option for budgets of all shapes and sizes**
- **Including human dimension is well-proven approach to create emotional connection**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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PRESIDENT / FOUNDER

IMPOSSIBLE

IMPOSSIBLE

- ▶ **ENGAGING TV VIEWERS WITH THE BRANDS THEY LOVE**
- ▶ What: Creative Agency
- ▶ Specialties: Promotions, Branding and Integrations
- ▶ In Business: 15 years
- ▶ Where: Denver, Colorado
- ▶ Size: 22 fabulous people who love what they do
- ▶ Clients: Networks, Entertainment Companies and Advertising Agencies
- ▶ For more info: www.impossible.tv