

4 brand and commercial advantages *Promise to the Customer* delivers

Key findings of the whitepaper, *Making a Promise to the Customer: How to give campaigns a competitive edge* (PTTC) to help brands create more effective marketing by placing a clear *Promise to the Customer* at the heart of their strategy was presented at Cannes Lions by Jann Martin Schwarz of LinkedIn's B2B Institute, and strategy expert Roger Martin, in partnership with Warc.



Image supplied. Key findings of the whitepaper, *Making a Promise to the Customer: How to give campaigns a competitive edge* was presented at Cannes Lions

A follow up session will take place on Wednesday 21 June in the Palais des Festivals, Cannes.

A proxy mental model

PTTC, is a proxy mental model that allows marketers to deploy familiar marketing frameworks in a way that is much more easily understood by the C-suite, other functions within their organisation, and customers.

It works both as an upstream organising principle, helping the business interpret what the marketing department is trying to achieve as well as a downstream impetus to creative communications.

Data suggests that *PTTC* appears to have an edge when it comes to delivering positive impact on brand metrics and

sustained commercial impact.

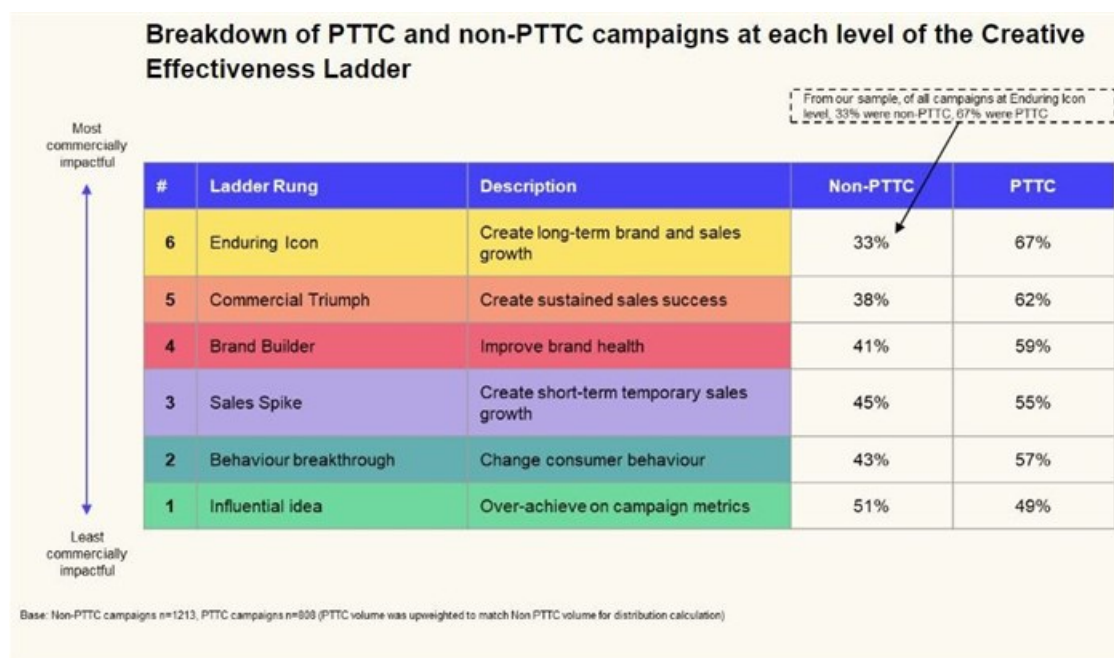
It puts accountability to the customer at its core and delivers against the basic pillars of marketing: Product, Price, Place and Promotion.

Drawing on Warc's extensive database of B2B and B2C effectiveness case studies, over 2,000 award entrants and winning advertising campaigns from the last five years (2018-2022) were analysed, of which 40% (808) were identified as having made a credible *Promise to the Customer*.

Significant brand and commercial advantage

The study found that PTTC campaigns deliver a significant brand and commercial advantage compared to those that don't:

1. When campaigns are grounded in an explicit *Promise to the Customer* - a memorable, valuable and deliverable promise - they are as much as 48% more likely to report brand health improvements than those that don't.
2. The impact was consistent regardless of budget, duration, or number of channels used (the three drivers for measuring a campaign's Creative Commitment). *PTTC* can therefore offer a competitive advantage to smaller or scale-up brands, or be a useful approach for marketing departments under budget pressure.
3. *PTTC* campaigns deliver a commercial advantage - they are 60% more likely to report increased market share, and 17% more likely to report increased market penetration than non-*PTTC* campaigns.
4. To assess the depth of commercial impact, *PTTC* campaigns were analysed against the Creative Effectiveness Ladder. At all but the lowest rung, *PTTC* campaigns over-indexed against their non-*PTTC* counterparts. Additionally, *PTTC* campaigns are more prevalent at the higher levels of the Ladder, with 67% of *PTTC* campaigns reaching Enduring Icon level, versus 33% of non-*PTTC* campaigns.



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B2B and B2C branding are more similar

Roger Martin, CEO advisor, strategist, former Dean of the Rotman School of Management and author of *Playing to Win*, *The Design of Business* and *A New Way To Think*, says that in the four decades he has been working on strategy and branding, this *PTTC* finding is the single most exciting discovery with which I have been involved

It reinforces my long-held belief that B2B and B2C branding are more similar than different. “

“In both domains, the power of a brand is strong, but only takes shape when the entire organisation coordinates its efforts to design, make, project, and fulfil a *PTTC*.

PTTC establishes both a compelling imperative and a helpful roadmap for overcoming the often siloed worlds of product, marketing, go-to-market, and customer loyalty. It is now crystal clear that if a company isn't making a clear *PTTC*, it is wasting its advertising spending for no reason other than engrained bad habits.”

The promise of a product to the customer

Jann Martin Schwarz, founder and head of The B2B Institute at LinkedIn, says it is exciting to see the *PTTC* mental model validated against such a significant body of research.

“It is exciting to see that ad creative which focuses on understanding “what is the promise this product makes to the customer?” translates into much better campaigns, as well as being easier to understand and operationalise by many parts of a business.”

“The problem with ‘brand’ is that it has become a complicated concept that means many things to many people.

The idea of a *Promise to the Customer* is a big simplification, and means that ‘brand’ can be understood by everyone.

The concept of understanding and projecting the right promise captures many of The B2B Institute's foundational findings that we worked on with the Ehrenberg Bass Institute, such as our work on Category Entry Points and the importance of building mental availability in buying situations,” he says.

Health, market share and long-term sales

Mimi Turner, Head of EMEA at the B2B Institute at LinkedIn adds: “For me, the most interesting finding in this research was what happens with lower-budget campaigns. In marketing, big is usually better. Big brands with big budgets usually have the advantage. But only a few marketers have the luxury of that kind of scale.

“When we applied a *Promise to the Customer* lens to campaigns with lower budgets, lower duration and fewer distribution channels, we found that making a *Promise to the Customer* made campaigns much more successful across brand health, market share and long-term sales outcomes than campaigns of the same scale that did not have a *Promise to the Customer*. That's something that marketers who are struggling to compete for budget can really use to drive better results.”

Corporate level and creative communications

David Tiltman, SVP Content, Warc says: “Over time we've realised how important language is to securing buy-in for marketing investment. Terms like ‘brand’ and ‘purpose’ are not always viewed favourably outside the marketing team. That's why we're interested in new frameworks that can circumvent these preconceptions.

“*PTTC* is an exciting idea because it can work both at a corporate level and as a starting point for creative communications. And as we are starting to see in the analysis, this approach can deliver real benefits in terms of brand health and long-term sales impact.”

The full report is available to read [here](#).

A four-part series of Warc podcasts, in partnership with The B2B Institute at LinkedIn, will follow taking a deep-dive into the findings of this new research.

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