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## Re-thinking the efficiency of classical ad breaks

### The Background

In 2011 Mediaset put in place a strategy to position themselves on the Spanish market as the broadcaster with the most effective and least disruptive advertising breaks. To achieve this, its sales house (Publiespaña) applied a new strategy limiting its prime time advertising blocks to a maximum of 6 minutes. This decision was backed up by thorough research proving that the duration of an advertising break is the factor that most influences advertising effectiveness, together with the position of the ad within the block.\* Publiespaña communicated the results widely and even commissioned a follow up study in 2013, which confirmed the previous findings and also showed that the recall of short advertising blocks was 42% higher than the ones above 6 minutes.

### The strategy – two examples

#### » Communication

To maintain this image, every month Publiespaña publishes a table listing the percentage of short breaks in prime time aired on their channels compared to their main competitors'.

The communication is aimed both at viewers, encouraging them to choose Mediaset's channels over their competitors' during peak hours and at advertisers, using the argument of a higher efficiency to position the sales house as market leader.

#### » The Homeland Case



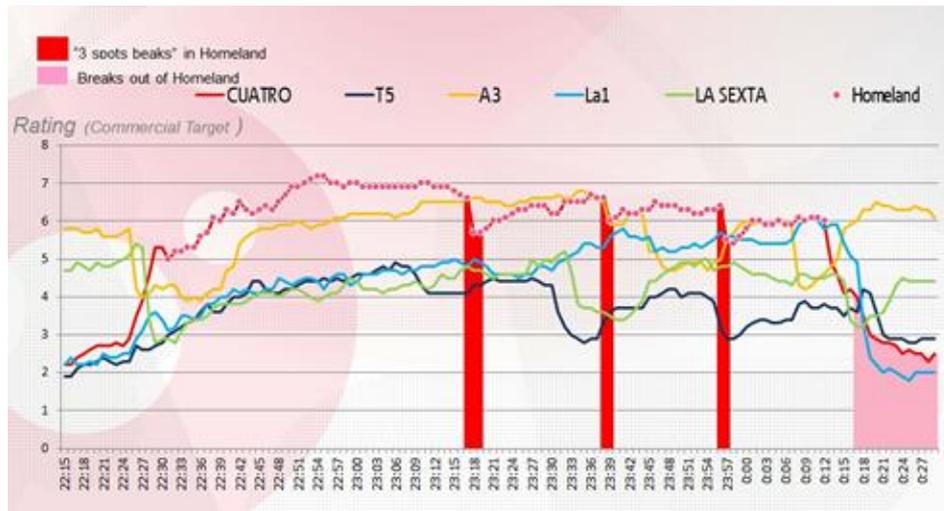
To build up on the success of the 6-minute break, and take it a step further, Publiespaña adopted a new strategy for the launch of the third season of the hit US series "Homeland" with a new sales strategy: instead of selling two breaks of six minutes per hour, they offered a series of shorter 1 minute breaks featuring a maximum of three spots. Bumpers informed the audience about this new format and encouraged the viewers to give their feedback on Twitter with the hashtag #3spots. Almost 90% of the Twitter comments about the new breaks policy were positive, and the most original and creative tweets appeared on screen. The results were unprecedented: 97% of viewers remained with the channel during the break. Additionally, the recall rate of the spots within Homeland was four times higher than for spots aired during similar programmes and target groups.

% of blocks below 6 minutes in Prime time

2013	MEDIASET España	ATRESMEDIA
Ene.	96	74
Feb.	94	68
Mar.	95	69
Abr.	94	75
May.	95	73
Jun.	92	65
Jul.	92	45
Ago.	97	59
Sep.	93	64
Oct.	93	71
Nov.	93	77
Dic.	93	62

\* Publiespaña Comunicación

2014	MEDIASET España	ATRESMEDIA
Ene.	97	68



From a sales and pricing point of view, advertisers were aware of the exclusivity of the format and were willing to pay triple for a spot located in those “3- spot break”. For instance, Apple used this short format to launch the Iphone 5 in Spain and was very satisfied with the results of the campaign.

The success of this format encouraged Publiespaña to implement it around other premium content such as US series or before major live sports events, and pushed the concept further with the airing of single spots.

### Why does this matter to egta members?

Publiespaña’s initiative proves that advertising innovation and creativity can also take place on the “first screen” and that the classical ad breaks can be made more efficient. The effectiveness reflected also through the positive feedback and interaction with the audience.

Such creative formats are beneficial for all parties involved: advertisers combine better visibility with a higher efficiency and are in turn willing to pay higher prices, viewers are pleased with the shorter breaks, and the sales house improves its image and reaches a great level of “stickability” as well as viewers’ engagement.

*\*The study was commissioned by Publiespaña and carried out by the Institute CIMEC, with the title “Primetime advertising effectiveness.” One of its aims was to discover the most effective factors that influence recall, notoriety and word of mouth around advertising campaigns. The results heavily favoured the duration of the advertising block (72.6%), followed by the ad position (23%) and finally the duration of the spot (4.4%). Additionally, the study proved that a spot in a weaker position in a short block has better results than the best placed spot in a long block. The final conclusion of the study was that the position of a given spot within an advertising block matters less in a short one than in a long one.*



### Background information

Please click on the links below to access the relevant links:

- » **Press release** – Publiespaña (please click [here](#))
- » **CIMEC study** - presentation (please click [here](#)) in Spanish
- » **Homeland case** - presentation (please click [here](#)) in Spanish