



CAC's Digital Advertising Tactics Hit the Mark

In recent years, the California Avocado Commission (CAC) has increasingly shifted marketing funds from traditional, broad-reaching media vehicles such as radio, to very targeted digital media vehicles such as online and audio (Pandora, Spotify) advertising. Measuring the effectiveness of these newer advertising media requires a different approach than traditional consumer research projects that study advertising awareness and consumer perceptions against a broad market base.

Therefore, in 2018 CAC engaged independent researcher The Nielsen Company (US), LLC, to evaluate the effectiveness of the current advertising campaign using a methodology that isolates the impact of digital ad exposure. The overall conclusions from the study are that attitudes about California avocados among avocado buyers during California avocado season remain high, and the shift from traditional mass media to more targeted digital media is working.

The advertising research was fielded between April 4 and September 4. Unlike traditional tracking studies that are usually fielded at the end or mid-point of an advertising campaign, this type of study is directly correlated to the ads being served and was fielded throughout the time of advertising. This is done by placing digital “tags” on the ads that

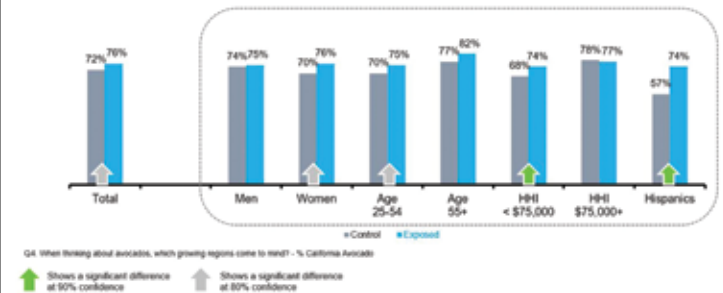
identify if consumers are exposed to a California avocado ad; participants are offered an opportunity to take the survey within 24 hours of ad exposure. The research was conducted among adults 18 and over who purchased avocados in the past month and reside in western states (Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington). It should be noted that more than half (52 percent) of the sample was California residents, and 82 percent of the sample said they eat one to two avocados per week. This means that most of the participants in the study were from the valuable “super user” segment of the avocado category. The research had a large sample size of 988 consumers. Half of the participants were exposed to CAC’s 2018 digital advertising (the exposed group) and half had not (the control group). For comparability, the control group was selected with a demographic composition that matched the exposed group.

Key Study Results

As part of the study, participants were asked, “When thinking about avocados, which growing regions come to mind?” More than 70 percent of them answered “California”. This is known as “unaided awareness”. “Unaided awareness” of the California growing region, already very high among avocado

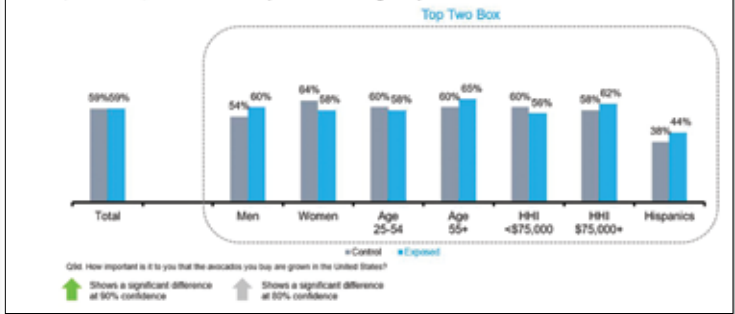
UNAIDED AWARENESS

Unaided Awareness increased amongst several groups with the campaign generating results comparable to those at higher baselines



IMPORTANCE OF BEING GROWN IN US

Roughly six in ten said it is important that the avocados they buy are grown in the United States, however, it wasn't as important among Hispanics



purchasers in the Western region of the U.S., increased after exposure to California avocado advertising –most significantly among households with incomes under \$75,000 and Hispanics. It also increased among women and CAC’s principal age target of 25 to 54.

Among all study participants, both the control group, who was not exposed to the digital ads, and the exposed groups, who did see them, California avocado aided awareness, favorability, purchase intent and willingness to recommend levels are all very high. This is a reflection of the 40 years of California Avocado Commission marketing in this region. When a brand scores in the 80 to 90 percent range on these types of measures, it is difficult to realize improvements on these already high ratings; in some cases, a goal may be set simply to maintain these highly favorable opinions. Nonetheless, when compared to the already high scores of the control group, women, adults ages 55 plus and Super Users (not shown on chart) who saw California avocado advertising were significantly more likely to say they would be “somewhat” or “very likely” to recommend avocados from California com-

pared to those who did not see the ads.

About 60 percent of respondents think it is somewhat or very important that the avocados they buy are grown in the United States. Though exposure to California avocado advertising did not increase this perception, nearly half of respondents (46 percent) said they check where their avocados originate.

After answering the perception questions above, all of the study respondents were shown one of several California avocado online ads used in 2018 and were asked to evaluate the ads on a series of attributes. In general, consumers liked all of the California avocado advertising they saw, with “appealing” the highest rating received on all of the various CAC ads evaluated. A video of a coastal California avocado grove that was filmed by a drone was the ad most well liked.

In addition to researching the effectiveness of CAC’s 2018 overall media plan, consumer responsiveness to California avocado advertising was evaluated for each of the digital media channels CAC used in 2018. The very detailed results from this study will inform the media plan for 2019. 🥑

RECOMMENDATION

Following campaign exposure, women and adults ages 55+ were significantly more likely to say they would recommend avocados from California



FAVORABILITY

In terms of avocado origin, California had the highest favorability amongst all the regions

