



Microsites: Big Brand Impact, Smaller Reach

Microsites are commonly used in the marketing mix, but are they having an impact? Do visitors leave these sites with more positive perceptions of the brand and, as a result, a greater likelihood to purchase or take an action?

Since the early days of the Internet, websites have been one of the most important communication touch points for advertisers. While websites have clearly demonstrated their power to influence behavior and enable customer transactions, they are sometimes overlooked as one of the most visible means to create and enhance brand perceptions. In addition to corporate Websites, marketers often leverage branded microsites to supplement their marketing campaigns and provide people with a platform to further engage with the brand through videos, games, sweepstakes, and other content.

Dynamic Logic helps clients across many industry sectors evaluate the effectiveness of branded microsites. Normative data, from 182 Dynamic Logic SiteImpact™ studies conducted globally, reveal that microsites have a substantial impact on consumers' awareness and perceptions of a brand. In fact, microsite visitation leads to significant increases in all standard brand metrics.

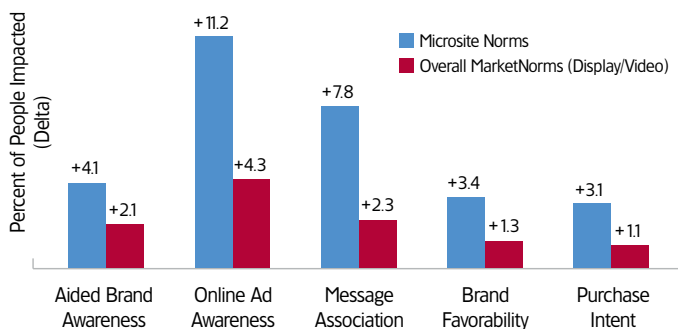
Measuring Microsite Effectiveness

To evaluate the effect microsites have on brand perceptions, Dynamic Logic randomly surveys visitors to the site. Some take the survey just before visiting the site and are used as a control group. Another, statistically-similar group completes surveys after exiting the site. Survey responses from the two groups are compared and their differences represent a measure of microsite impact. As shown in the chart, we see that on average, microsites impact 7.8% of site visitors with respect to conveying key brand messages. In other words, after visiting a microsite, 7.8% of people become aware of a campaign's message who otherwise would not have been.

Comparing Microsites to Other Digital Campaign Elements

Microsites are typically included as part of a broader marketing campaign that also leverages display and video components to drive traffic to the site. Looking further at percent impacted scores, microsites appear to generate increases nearly double of those typically seen for online display and video ads combined. This may be a result of the microsites' audience, which tends to be comprised of people with a greater affinity toward the brand who may respond more strongly to the brand's messaging. However, it is likely more related to the experience people have on the microsite, which is much more immersive, interactive, and engaging than simply being shown a display or video ad while browsing online.

Online Ad Effectiveness Performance



Source: Dynamic Logic MarketNorms, last 3 years; N=2,461 campaigns, n=3,713,053 respondents; Microsite Norms, N=182 campaigns, n=199,508 respondents; Delta (Δ) = Exposed-Control



When comparing microsites and display ads with regard to pre-existing brand perceptions, we find baseline awareness and perception levels tend to be higher among microsite visitors. This is because microsites attract people who have a greater pre-existing familiarity and affinity towards the hosting brand. Attracting such an audience is generally desirable, since microsites – though also used to attract new consumers – are often built to deepen relationships and loyalty with current brand users. The larger attitudinal impact that microsites generate compared to display and video ads, despite starting at higher baselines, is a further testament to microsites’ strength in a media plan.

Characteristics of a Successful Microsite

Within SiteImpact studies, site visitors who take our survey are asked to provide feedback on their site experience. Not surprisingly, there is a direct relationship between a visitor’s site experience and shift in brand metrics – i.e., when respondents report a positive experience, brand metrics tend to be elevated. Interestingly, the site attribute that determines the largest branding impact varies by the campaign goal.

| Metric/Goal | Microsite attribute(s) most commonly related | Insight |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| Aided Brand Awareness | “Understand the benefits of the brand” | When the brand benefits are clear and relevant, visitors are more likely to remember the brand name after leaving the microsite. |
| Message Association | “Useful information” “Easy to use” | Many taglines tend to communicate a key brand benefit. If the site is easy to navigate and has relevant information, the site visitor is more likely to link the brand and its campaign message. |
| Purchase Intent | “Useful information” “Fun and engaging” | Although these are quite dissimilar attributes, they both represent some form of value being delivered to the consumer. Sites with “useful information” provide knowledge, while “fun and engaging” sites provide entertainment. Both may translate into intended purchase, perhaps as a result of reciprocation. |

Investing in Microsites for a More Engaged Audience

It’s important to note that this analysis does not account for audience reach or costs. While microsites tend to have a larger brand impact than display or video ads, the reach of these sites is notably smaller. On the other hand, microsites attract a particularly relevant audience, and quality may outweigh quantity of consumers when building relationships is a key part of a brand’s marketing strategy. In terms of costs, an effective microsite requires a decent investment towards production of the site as well as media for traffic drivers. Therefore, while microsites appear to generate a more impactful brand experience than display or video ads, efficiency should be examined when talking about their return on investment.

NOTE: These findings are aggregate in nature, reflect past results and are not a guarantee of future results for individual campaigns.

About SiteImpact™

Dynamic Logic’s SiteImpact evaluates the effectiveness of a website or microsite by using brand health metrics and consumer feedback to identify key factors of a site’s impact and potential optimizations. SiteImpact can tease out the effect of a site in isolation or can be used as part of an AdIndex® or CrossMedia Research™ study designed to evaluate the broader marketing campaign.

About MarketNorms®

Advertisers, publishers and agencies use MarketNorms to understand which aspects of online advertising have the greatest impact on brand lift. Dynamic Logic’s MarketNorms database of over 6,000 campaigns across more than a dozen industries has branding lift metrics, ad and brand attributes, environmental/site data, audience data and other campaign information collected in over 8.2 million surveys.

www.marketnorms.com

Dynamic Logic, A Millward Brown Company

+1 800 245 2455

www.dynamiclogic.com