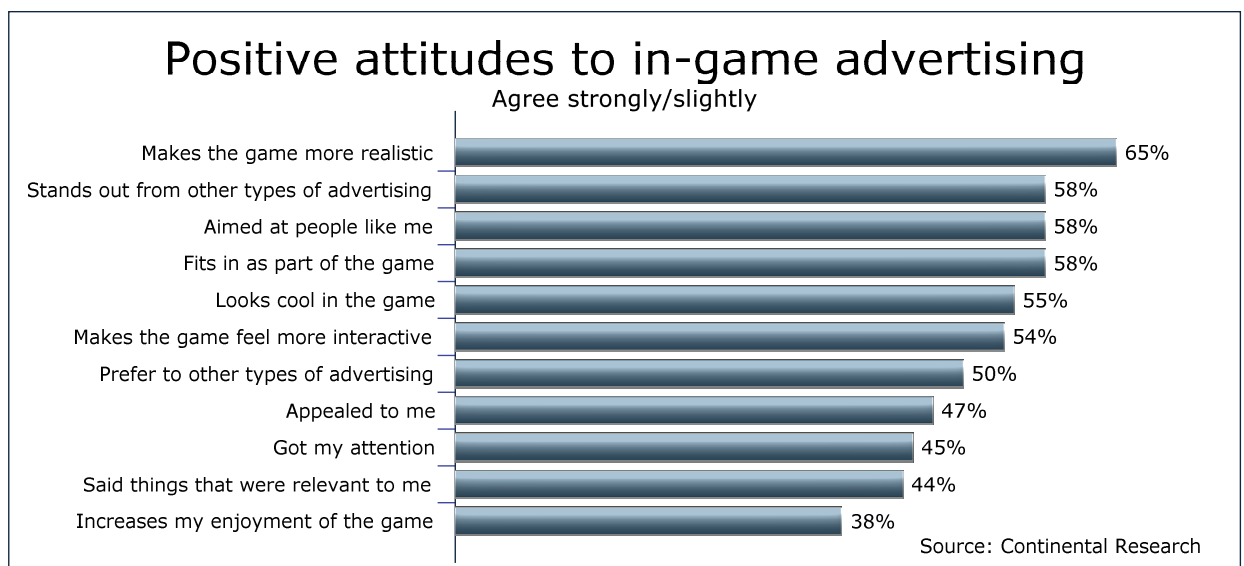




In-game advertising: not mass market - but massive in its market

London 12th May 2009: The received wisdom is that it is nerdy young men, playing computer games on their own in darkened rooms, who are exposed to in-game advertising. Continental Research has conducted 12 in-game advertising effectiveness studies with Massive Inc, part of Microsoft Advertising, and is determined to put the record straight.

It is no secret that video games are hugely popular. Last year in the UK consumers spent £1.9bn on packaged games*. Many of these games can be played online, either alone or socially with others, and the ability to connect to the internet allows companies like Massive Inc to serve ads dynamically as they progress through the game.

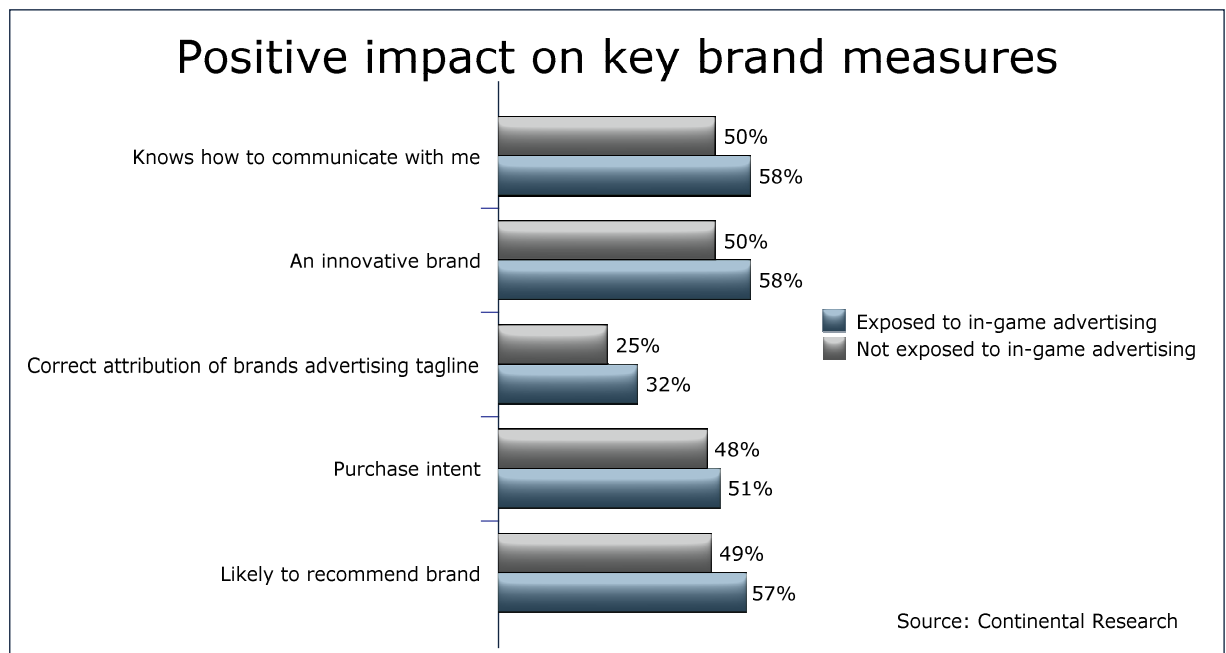


It's cool, but does in-game advertising work?

Gamers spend a significant amount of time playing and so have a high and sustained exposure to ads which helps account for in-game's positive impact on brand awareness and brand equity. Massive's network of gamers average 12 hours a week playing online,

putting their gaming consumption on a par with more traditional media such as television, radio or press.

Across the 12 ad effectiveness studies, Continental Research found the average ad recall to be a very healthy 54%. Unlike advertising messages in other media, advertising is seen by its audience as helping to make gaming feel more authentic; two thirds (65%) of gamers agreed that in-game ads made the experience more realistic and 55% said the ads 'look cool' (see Chart 1). Brands that advertise in games are regarded as innovative by gamers, having a further positive impact on their brand equity.



Gamers are influencers

In interviews with 500 male gamers aged 15-34, it became apparent that they shared key characteristics; a love of competing with other people and a strong desire to win. By comparing the 500 gamers with the TGI 'typical' male in the same age group, the research revealed other traits unique to gamers:

- They are more likely to be employed and therefore were more affluent, earning £22,000 pa compared to the TGI average of £14,000
- They believe success can be measured by money
- They crave premium brands as part of their quest for status
- Contrary to their stereotype, gamers are interested in the latest fashions, enjoy shopping for clothes and looking good
- They also spend more on toiletries and grooming products.

Gamers are a confident group and tend to influence the behaviour and attitudes of their peer group. Eight out of 10 claim to talk to their friends about mobile phones and electronic gadgets, and 71% said they believed they could influence other people's choice of mobile phone handset. Almost half had posted comments or reviews on products on websites in the past 12 months.

James Myring, Director of Media at Continental Research says "Our research has shown that brands that are advertising to gamers are reaching affluent, brand-literate young men, who readily accept advertising as part of the gaming experience. They are also influential consumers, recommending products and brands to their friends and to others through online reviews.

Whilst in-game advertising doesn't have the broad reach of TV or radio, it does have the advantage of enjoying very high levels of engagement and the ability to target young men through the many different titles available."

Ends

*Source Screen Digest. The global figure for spend on packaged games was \$30.3bn in 2008.

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About Continental Research

Continental Research is a full service market research agency based in London, specialising in media, advertising and Internet & telecoms research. Continental has produced reports on the Internet, mobile phones and digital TV for over a decade. The reports are based on consumer data and ultimately it is the consumer who decides whether new technologies and services wither away or flourish and even change the world we live in.

The company was acquired by BDRC, a leading full service market research agency specialising in hotels, finance, travel and tourism and mobile telephony at the beginning of 2008.

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