

# Why brands should take a stand in their ads: 3 perspectives, 1 campaign

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## Topics

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What happens when brands take a stand on social and cultural issues? Often, customers sit up and pay attention. On YouTube, for example, cause-related ads have more views and higher engagement rates.<sup>1</sup> But wading into controversial topics is tough. When it goes wrong, companies risk coming off as opportunistic and out of touch.

So what can companies do to get POV advertising right? Ask Yoplait. In its recent “Mom On” campaign, the yogurt brand tackled a hugely contentious subject: mom shaming.

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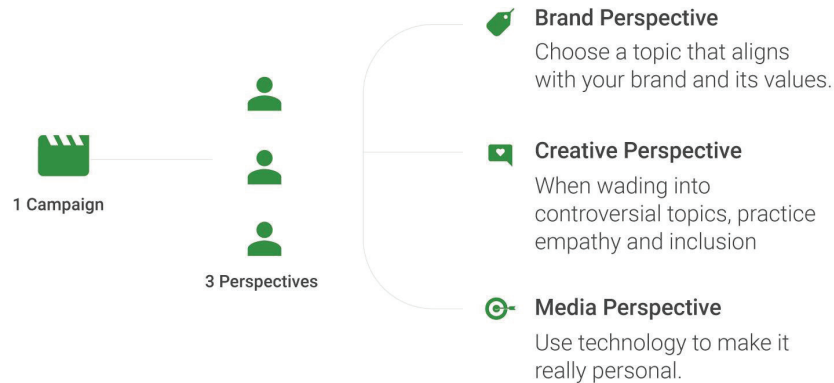
You've Got This,  
Mom On!



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The campaign delivered best-in-class results across all five Brand Lift metrics, including a whopping 1,461% lift in Brand Interest.

We spoke to the team behind the campaign to find out how they got cultural relevance right.



## Choose a topic that aligns with your brand and its values

*Doug Martin, Business Unit Director, Yoplait*

"The main objective of our 'Mom On' campaign was to drive brand reconsideration. Yoplait has been around for a long time and people think they know us. But sometimes the familiar gets overlooked for new stuff. Framing the campaign around a hot cultural topic was a great way of marketing to moms who may have forgotten about us.

Of course, the risk with this approach is that it ends up seeming disingenuous and inauthentic. How did we avoid that?

Well, as Susan Pitt, one of our senior marketing managers, put it: 'It helps that almost all the decision-makers in the team are moms. That meant we intuitively knew how to speak to our target audience in a way that didn't sound forced or artificial.'

It also helped that, as a brand, we've faced those same pressures. In the past, it was enough for yogurts to taste great and be affordable. Now, expectations are a lot higher, sometimes unrealistically so. As we say in our anthem video, if it's not made from cage-free Norwegian hemp milk, some people aren't interested.

That common ground meant we could authentically embed Yoplait into a wider debate our target audience was already having, which was really our main goal. And it worked. The social media conversation around our campaign has been incredibly positive and poignant."

## When wading into controversial topics, practice empathy and inclusion

*Justine Armour, Group Creative Director, 72andSunny New York*

"There's a lot of information out there telling moms how to do parenting 'right' and painting an unrealistic, idealized picture of motherhood. Our audience told us about the range of judgments they come up against as moms, and how they don't recognize themselves in most ads they see.

After hearing this, we knew we wanted this campaign to be full of understanding and support for moms, to show them that Yoplait has their back.

## You can be controversial, as long as you do it with empathy.

Using a 60-second anthem video gave us the space to showcase the range of judgments our audience had told us they face. We aired it on YouTube because we knew from our research that [moms use the platform](#) not only for entertainment, but also as a resource for parenting tips and tricks, to help build up their confidence.

Our biggest takeaway on the creative side was this: you can be controversial, as long as you do it with empathy. The average watch

time of the anthem video—56 seconds—shows that an inclusive, compassionate message can be effective at capturing attention.”

## Use technology to make it really personal

*Michael Soroosh, Managing Director of Communications Planning,  
Mindshare*

“The aim of our anthem video was to appeal to all moms—those who breast-feed, those who bottle-feed; those who stay at home, those who go to work; those who live in yoga pants, and those who dress up.

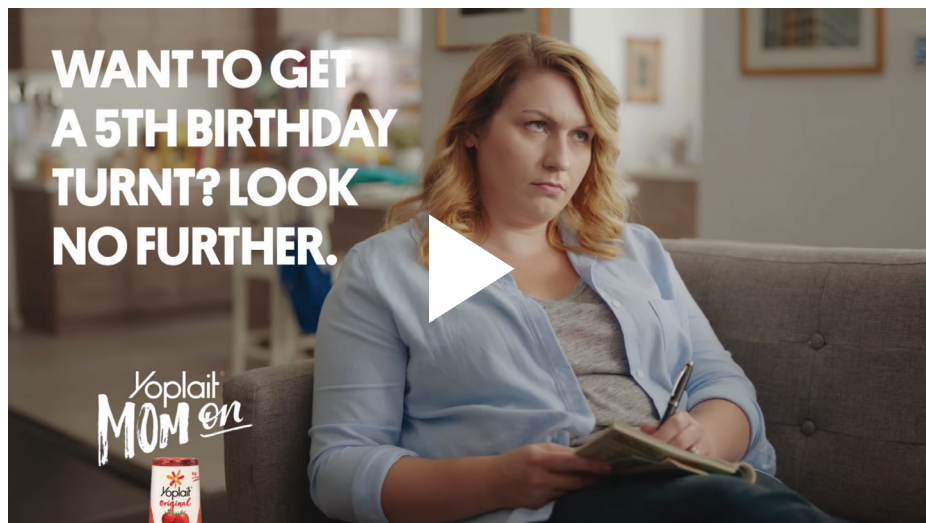
But every marketer knows that the most effective ads are those that connect with people as individuals. That’s why we turned to technology to help make it personal.

As well as producing an anthem video, we used YouTube’s Director Mix to quickly create [32 different six-second ads](#), which we used to retarget those who had seen the longer video.

The copy for these ads was customized based on the videos each mom was about to watch. Moms looking up kids birthday party ideas might be served something like this, for example:

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Want to get a 5th birthday  
turnt? Look no further.



"And moms about to watch a movie might see something like this:

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A movie? Sounds like  
90-minutes of blissful  
silence.



"It meant we were able to build on the wider message of the campaign with touches of personalization."

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## Sources

- 1 Pixability, "Purpose Driven Marketing" Research. Top 100 brands defined by Interbrand's 2016 list of top 100 global brands. June 2017. \*Engagement = Sum of likes, dislikes, comments and Facebook shares