

IPG MEDIA LAB

Forbes

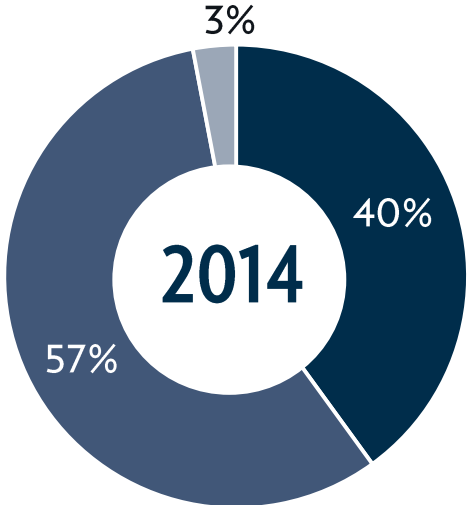
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Newhouse
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

Forbes

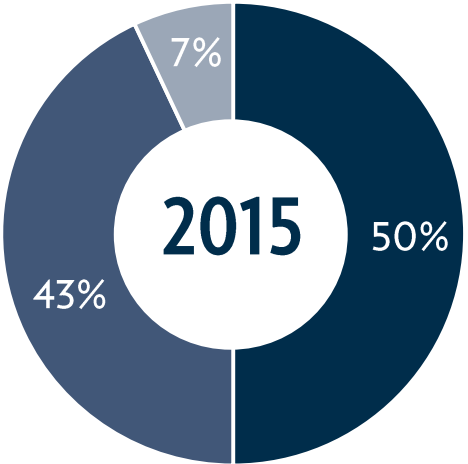
Storytelling: The Current State of Branded Content

Spend on Branded Content is Increasing



Change in Their Company's Content Marketing Budget According to US Marketers

- ▲ Increase
- Stay the same
- ▼ Decrease



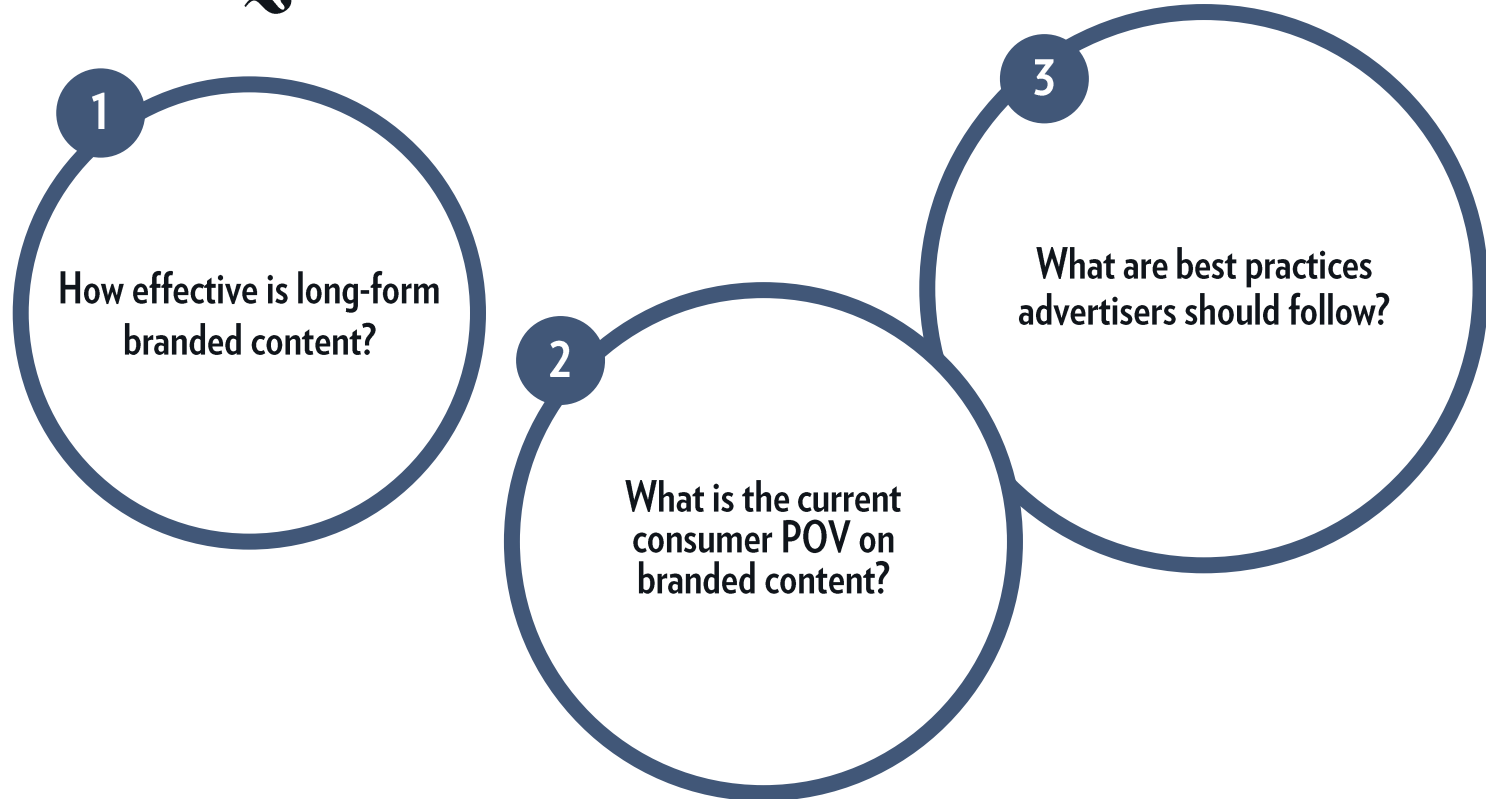
Source: eMarketer, SkilledUp, "Content Marketing: Marketers New #1 Engagement Tool," 2015

Despite Continued Investment, the Industry Still Struggles on How to Measure Impact

Biggest Challenges of Native Advertising According to US Agency and Brand Professionals



Research Questions



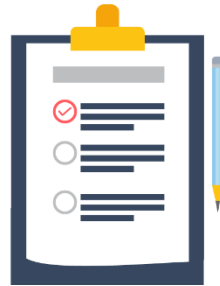
40 Distinct Test Conditions

AD TYPE	BRANDED CONTENT FORMAT	LOCATION	DEVICE	INDUSTRY VERTICAL	STORY-TELLING TYPE	ARTICLE LENGTH	LEVEL OF BRANDING
BANNER AD ONLY	ARTICLE	FORBES.COM	PC	CONSUMER ELECTRONICS	BREADTH	SHORT	LIGHT
BRANDED CONTENT (WITHOUT DISPLAY)	VIDEO	BRAND WEBSITE	SMARTPHONE	AUTO	DEPTH	LONG	HEAVY
BRANDED CONTENT (WITH DISPLAY)				AVIATION			

Experimental Design



Recruited participants across PC and smartphone from relevant sections of Forbes.com and representative online panel (n=4,168)



Initial survey with demographic and media consumption questions

ForbesBrandVoice®



Randomized participants into test cells. Participants were driven to content that matches their real life consumption habits



Post exposure survey to measure traditional brand metrics (ad recall, perceptions, etc.), and qualitative feedback

Broad Range of Brands

SONY



MASERATI



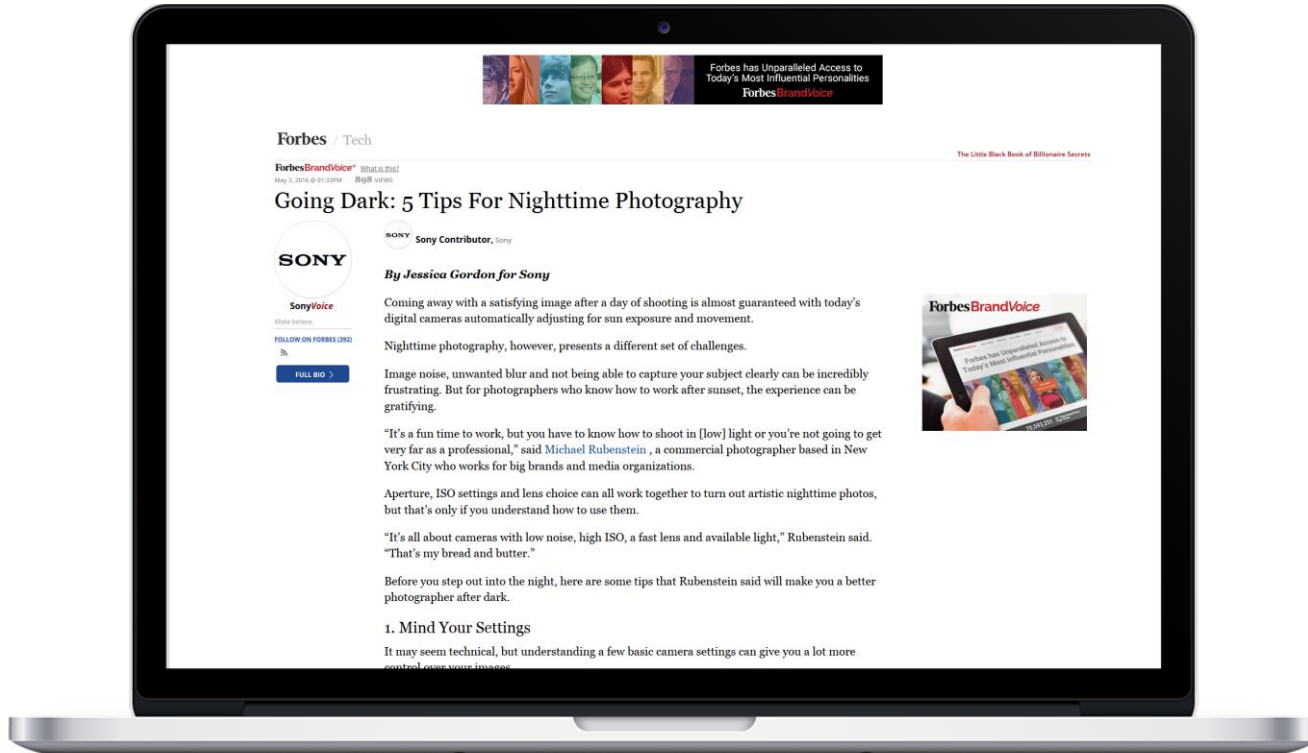
BOEING



Branded Content Without Display

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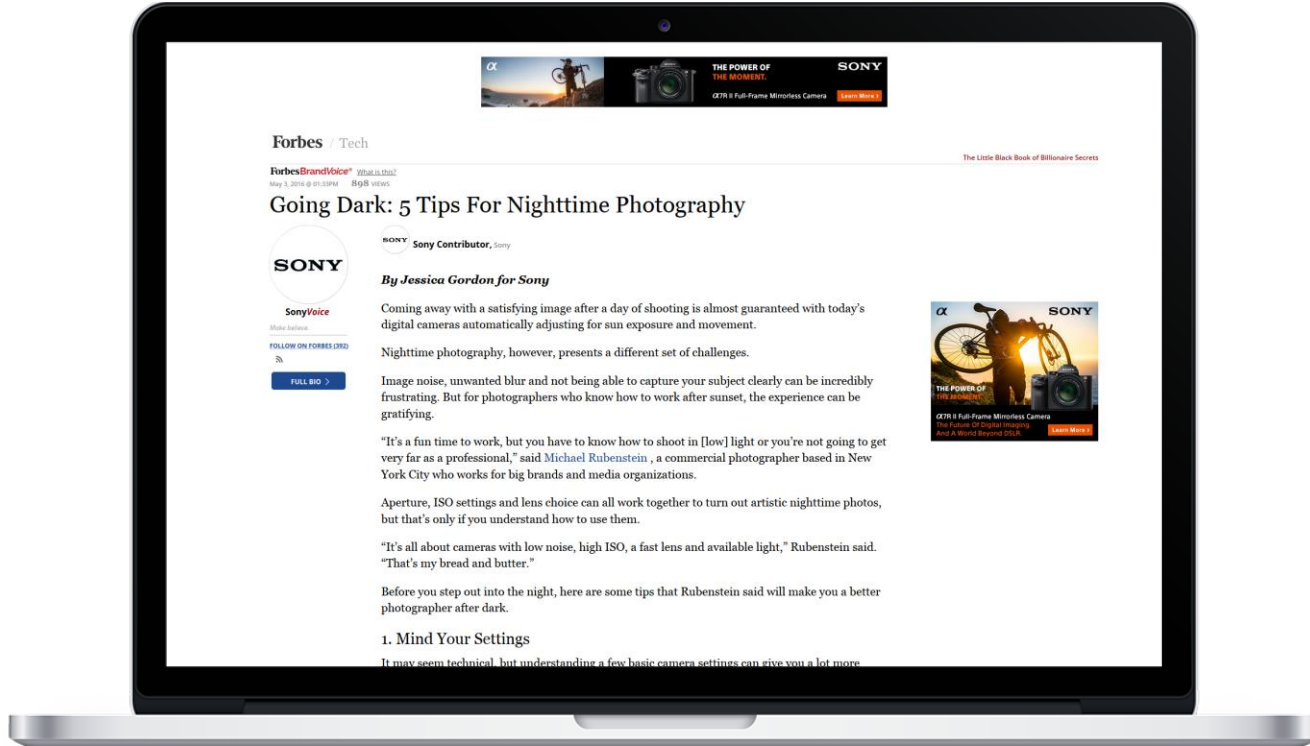
Forbes



Branded Content With Display

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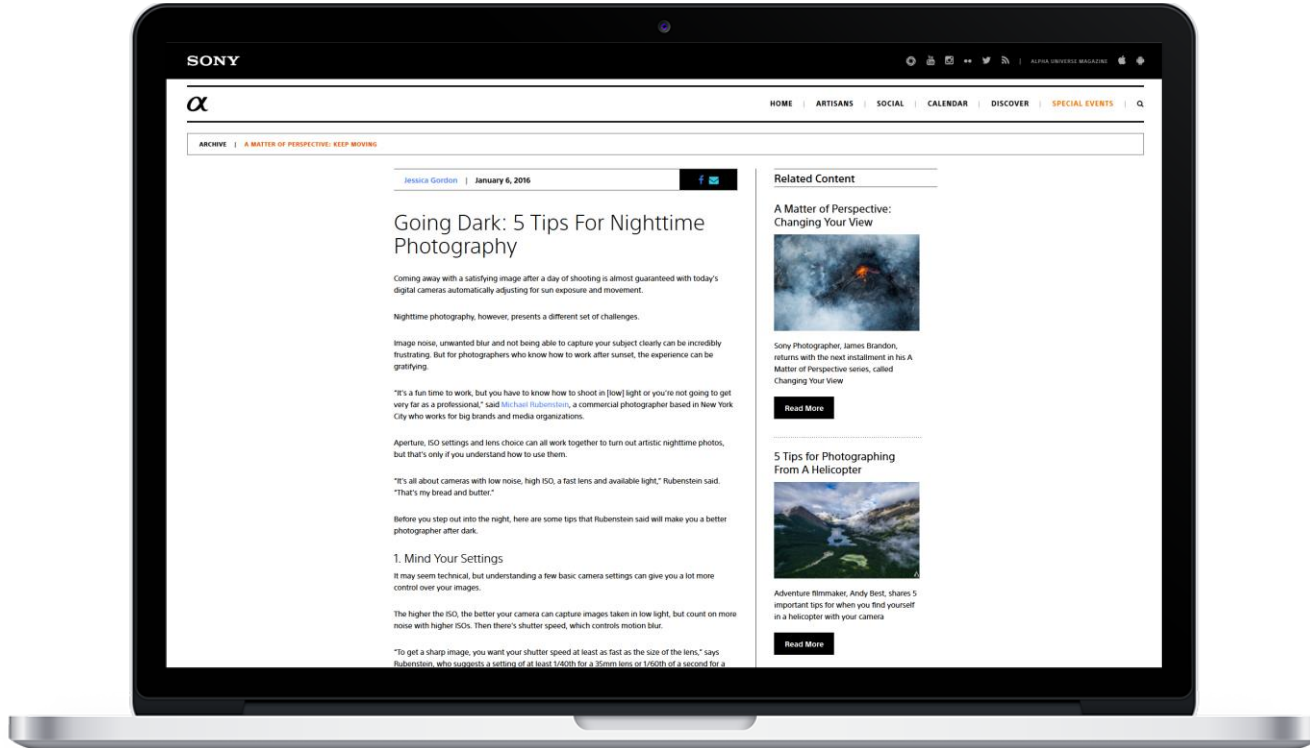
Forbes



Branded Content on Brand Website

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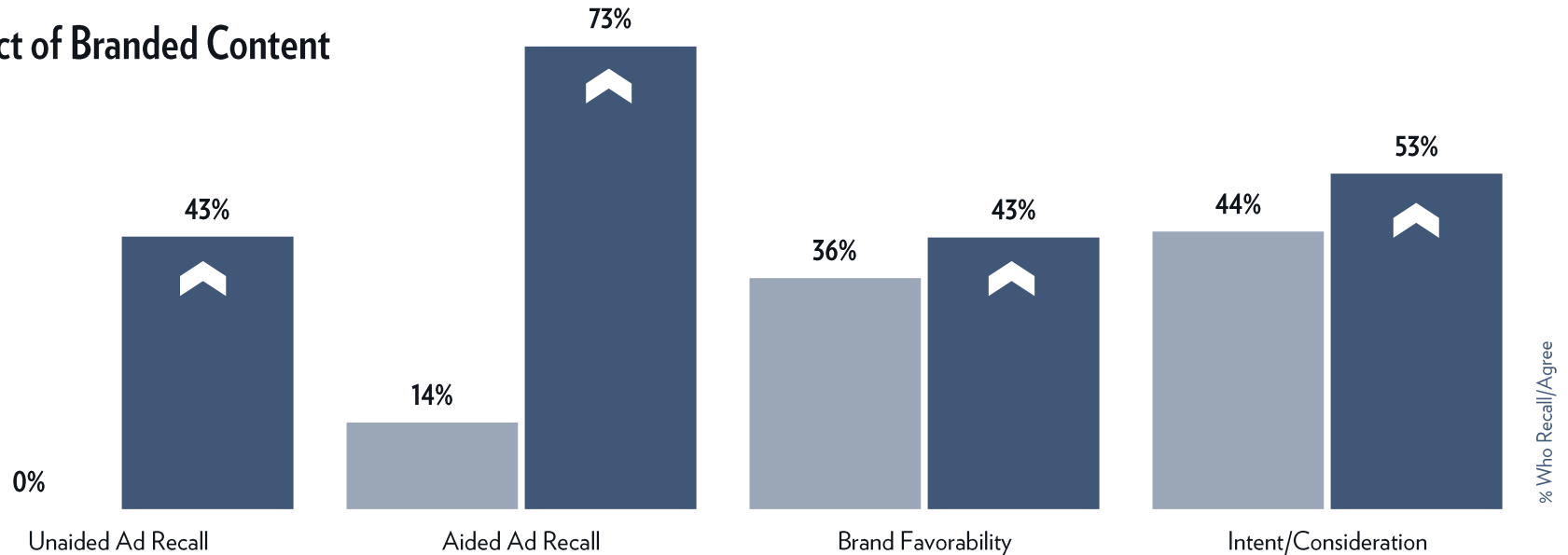
Forbes



How Effective is Branded Content?

Branded Content Works! It Impacts Awareness & Persuasion Metrics

Impact of Branded Content

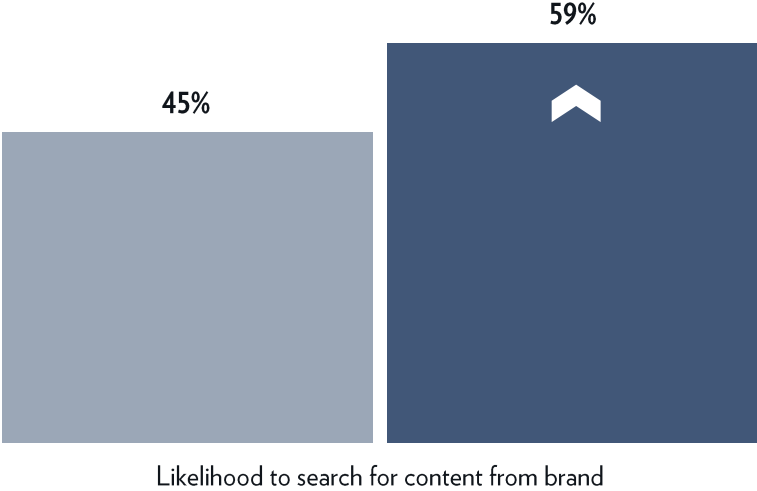


▲ Statistically significant difference between Branded Content vs. control at >= 90% confidence
Control n=544, Branded Content n=579; Branded Content without display

Control Branded Content

After Viewing Branded Content, People are More Likely to Seek Out Content From Brand in the Future

Impact of Branded Content



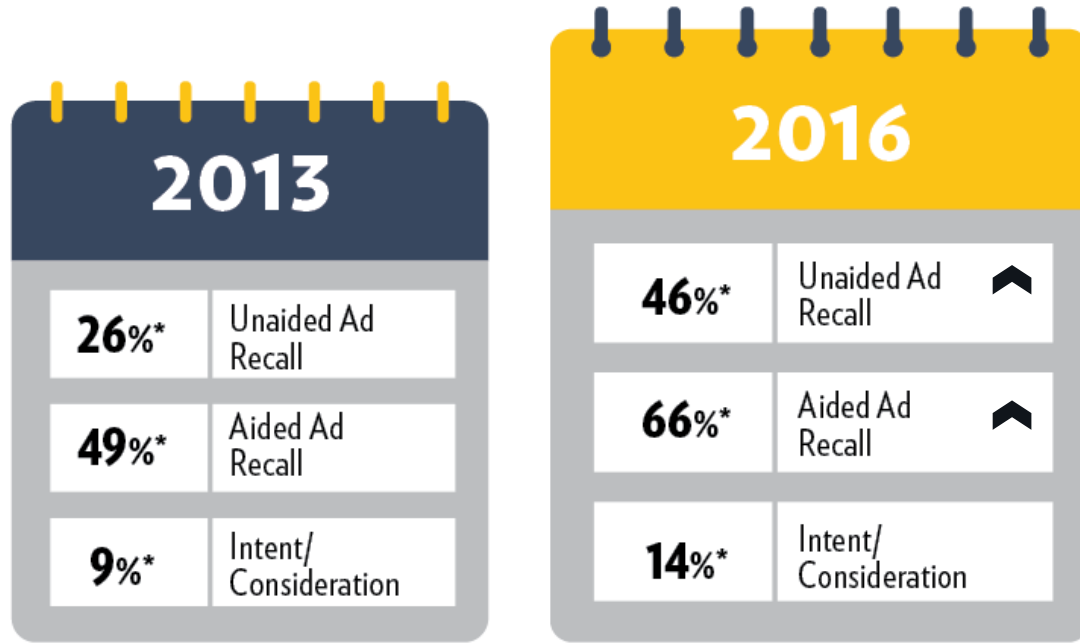
% Who Agree

▲ Statistically significant difference between Branded Content vs. control at >= 90% confidence
Control n=229, Branded Content n=253; Branded Content without display

Control Branded Content

Branded Content Just as Effective, 3 Years Later

Branded Content Trended Over Time



Often see decline in new ad products after consumers grow accustom to them. But, interestingly we see no downward trend in effectiveness here.


* Statistically significant difference between test vs. control at $\geq 90\%$ confidence

▲ Statistically significant difference of difference between 2013 and 2016 at $\geq 90\%$ confidence
 2013: Control n=310, Branded Content n=345; 2016: Control n=414, Branded Content n=440;
 Branded Content without display, Web intercept only

Content is More Memorable on Brand's Website, Likely Due to High Level of Branding

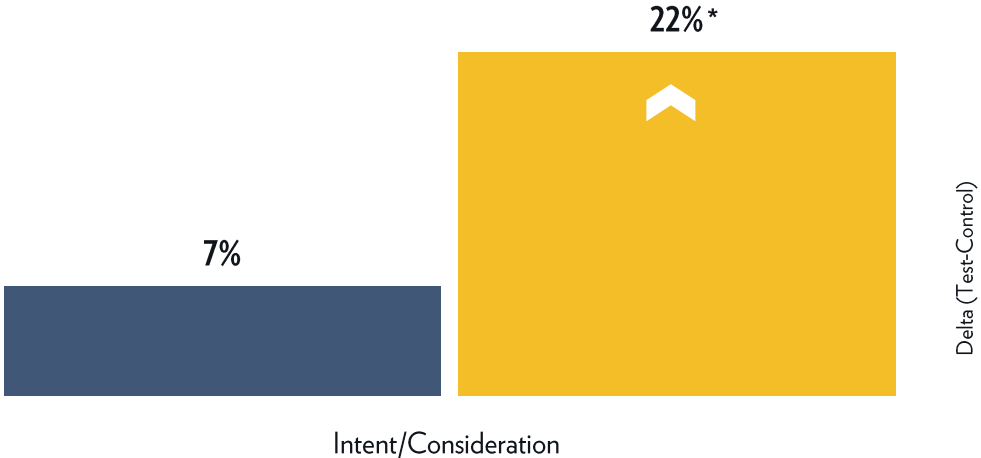
Role of Location: Total Audience



 Statistically significant difference between test vs. control at $\geq 90\%$ confidence
 Statistically significant difference between BC on Forbes.com & BC on brand website at $\geq 90\%$ confidence
 Overall Results: Control n=424, BC - Forbes n=455, BC - Brand Website n=329;

However, Engaged Consumers Show Greater Purchase Consideration on Forbes

Role of Location: Engaged Consumers



* Statistically significant difference between test vs. control at >= 90% confidence

^ Statistically significant difference between BC on Forbes.com & BC on brand website at >= 90% confidence

Engaged Consumers: Control n=91, BC – Forbes n=98, BC – Brand Website n=95; Spend 100+ seconds with content

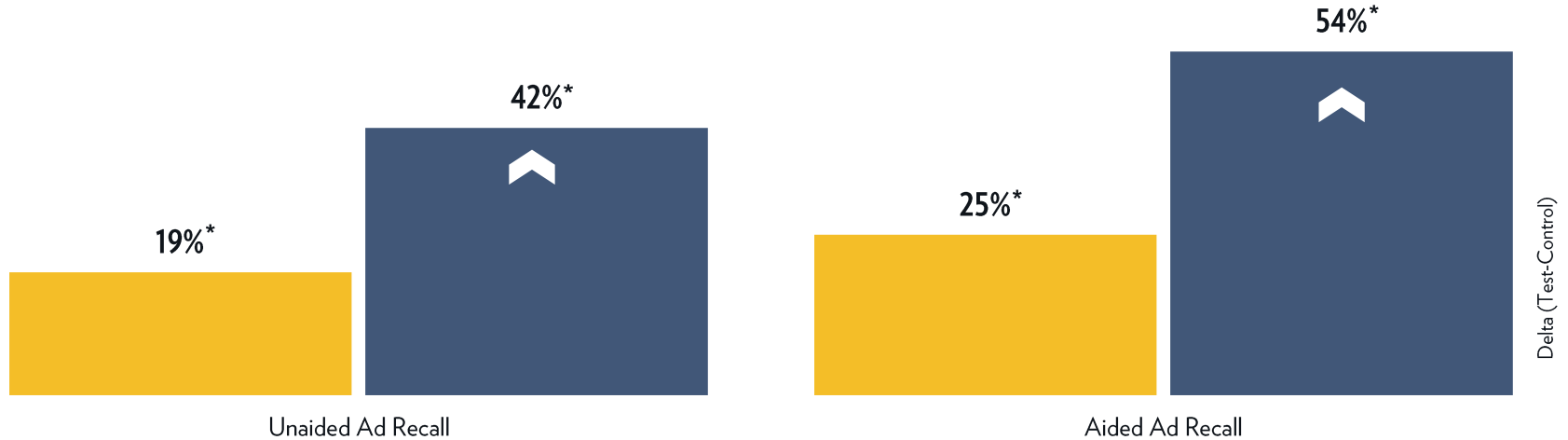
Branded Content on Brand Website

Branded Content on Forbes.com

How Does Branded Content Perform Compared to Display?

Branded Content is 2x More Memorable Than Display Ads

Impact of Format Type on Recall Metrics

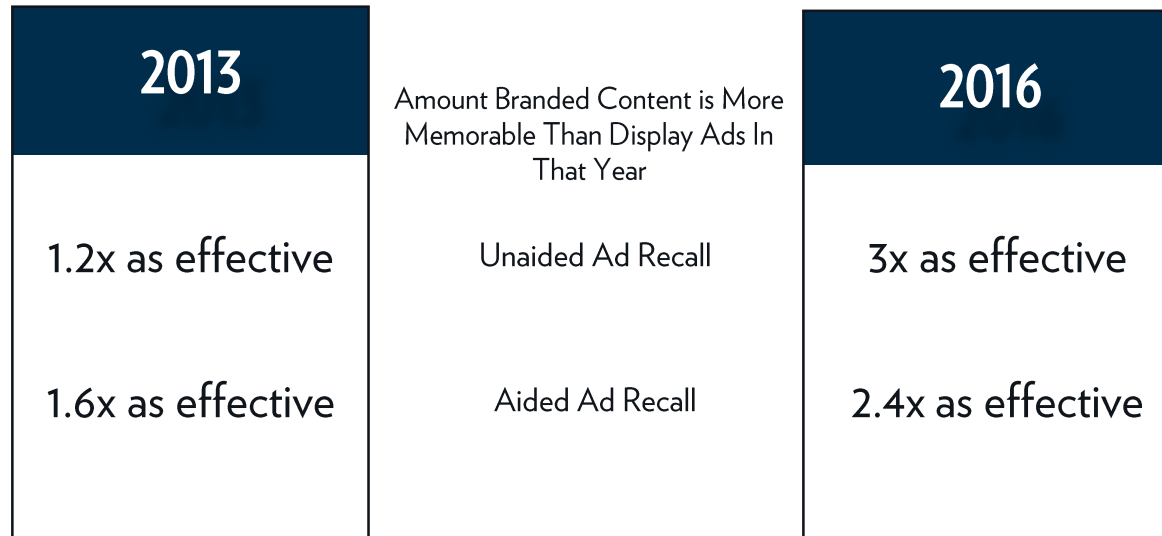


* Statistically significant difference between test vs. control at >= 90% confidence
^ Statistically significant difference between display & branded content at >= 90% confidence
Control n=315, Display Ad n=336, Branded Content n=326; Branded Content without display

Display Ad Branded Content

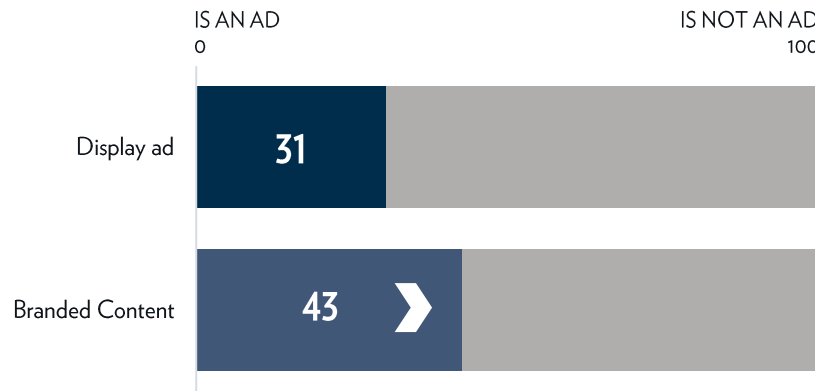
In 2016, Recall of Branded Content Appears to be Growing

Effectiveness of Branded Content Compared to Display Ads Trended Over Time



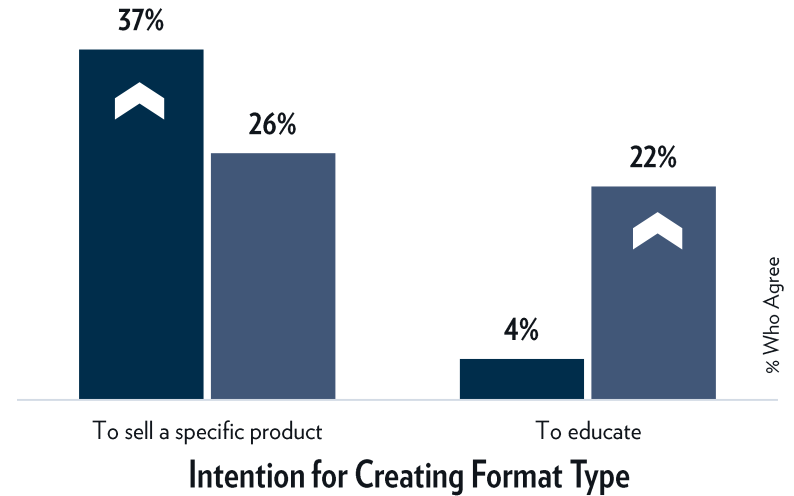
2013: Control n=310, Display n=320 Branded Content n=345; 2016: Control n=221, Display n=236, Branded Content n=229, Web Intercept Only

Branded Content Less About Selling & More About Education



Content Market Scale By Format Type

On the scale above, where does the [display ad/article] you just saw belong?
The [display ad/article]...



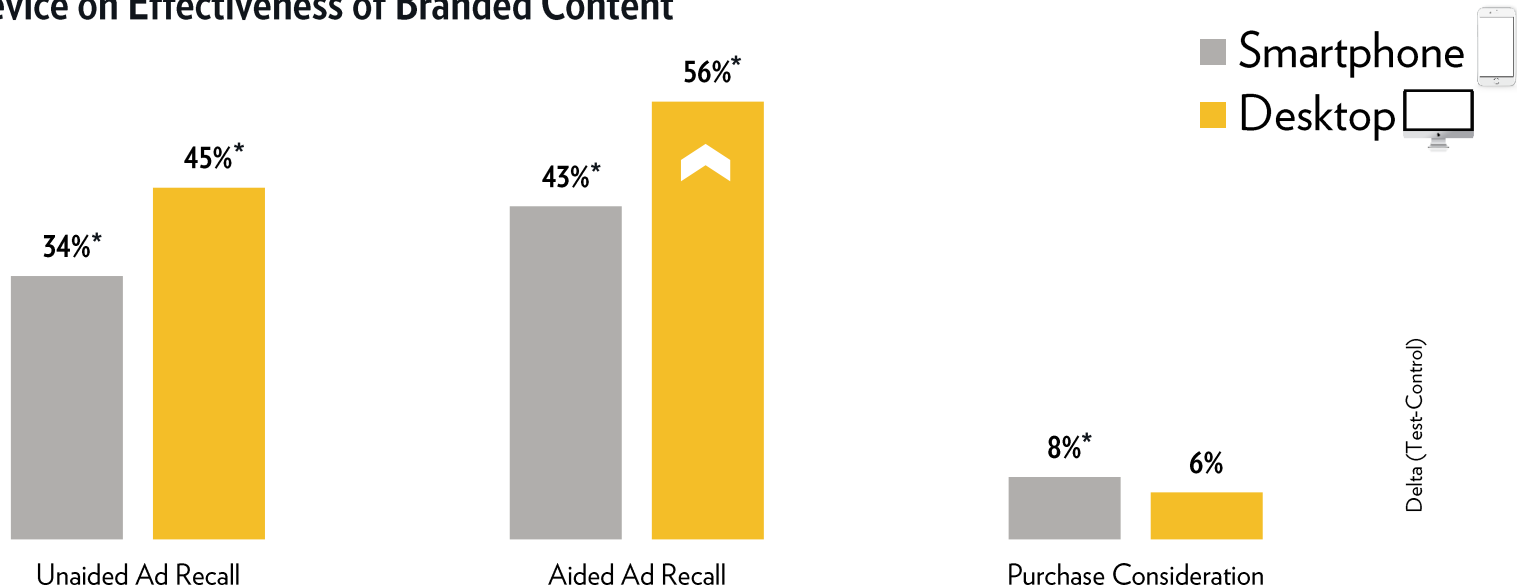
Intention for Creating Format Type

■ Display Ad ■ Branded Content

^ Statistically significant difference between display & branded content at >= 90% confidence
Display Ad n=283, Branded Content n=288; Branded Content without display

Branded Content More Memorable When on a Larger Screen, but Device Doesn't Impact Ability to Persuade

Impact of Device on Effectiveness of Branded Content



* Statistically significant difference between test vs. control at >= 90% confidence

^ Statistically significant difference of difference between smartphone & PC at >= 90% confidence

Smartphone: Control n=75; Test n=74; PC: Control n=240; Test n=252; Branded Content without display

So, What Happens When Display is Added?

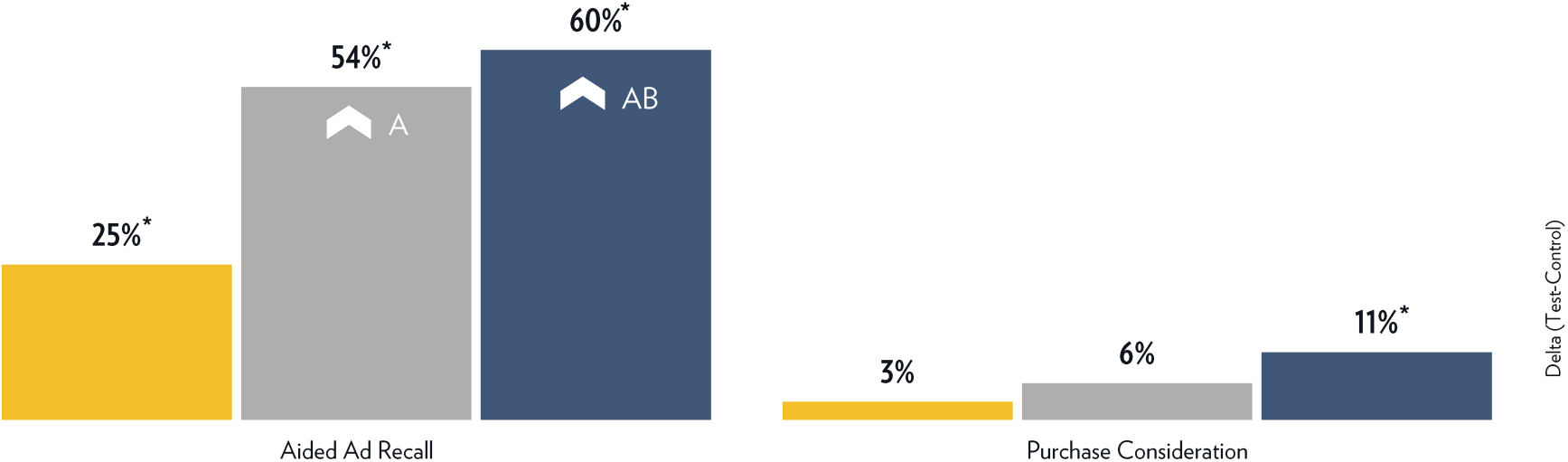
ADDITIONAL BRANDING:

Exact same branded content article
except for display ad

- **Low branding:**
Page with house display ad
- **High branding:**
Page with brand's display ad

Additional Branding Improves Recall

Impact of Format Type on Brand Metrics

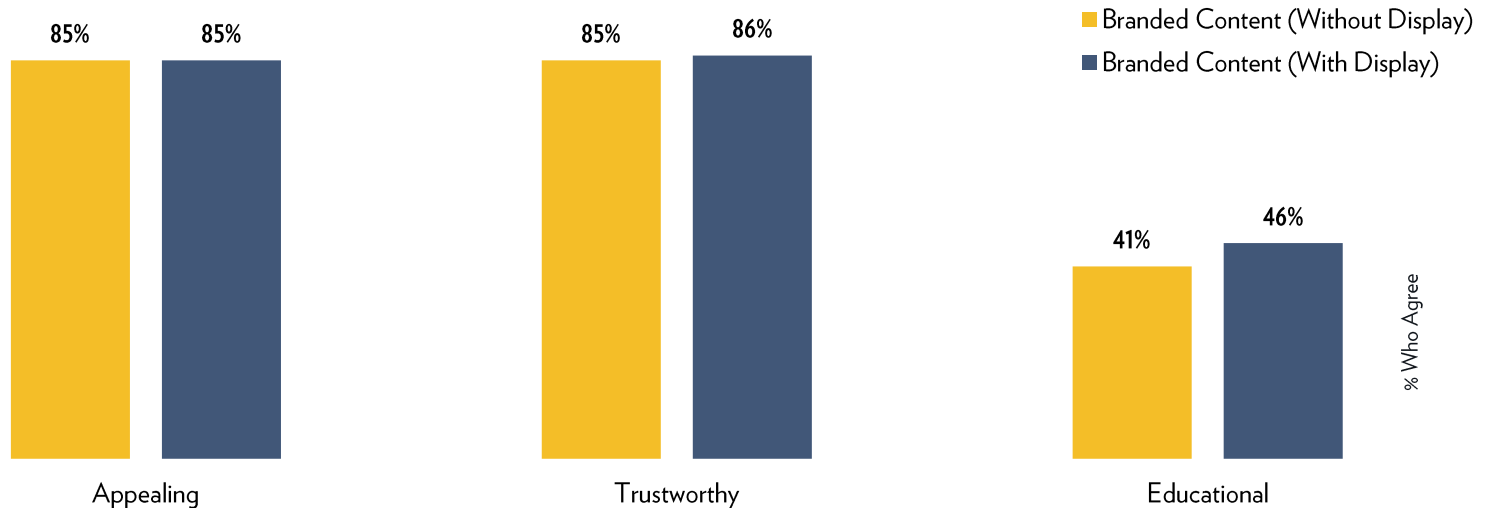


* Statistically significant difference between test vs. control at >= 90% confidence
▲ Statistically significant difference between groups at >= 90% confidence
Control n=315, Display Ad n=336, Branded Content (Without Display) n=326, Branded Content (With Display) n=327

■ Display Ad (A) ■ Branded Content (Without Display) (B) ■ Branded Content (With Display) (C)

Adding Display Doesn't Negatively Impact Perceptions

Impact of Format Type on Perceptions of Brand



Statistically significant difference between branded content (without display) & branded content (with display) at $\geq 90\%$ confidence
Branded Content (Without Display) n=227, Branded Content (With Display) n=227

Does the Level of Branding Impact Performance?

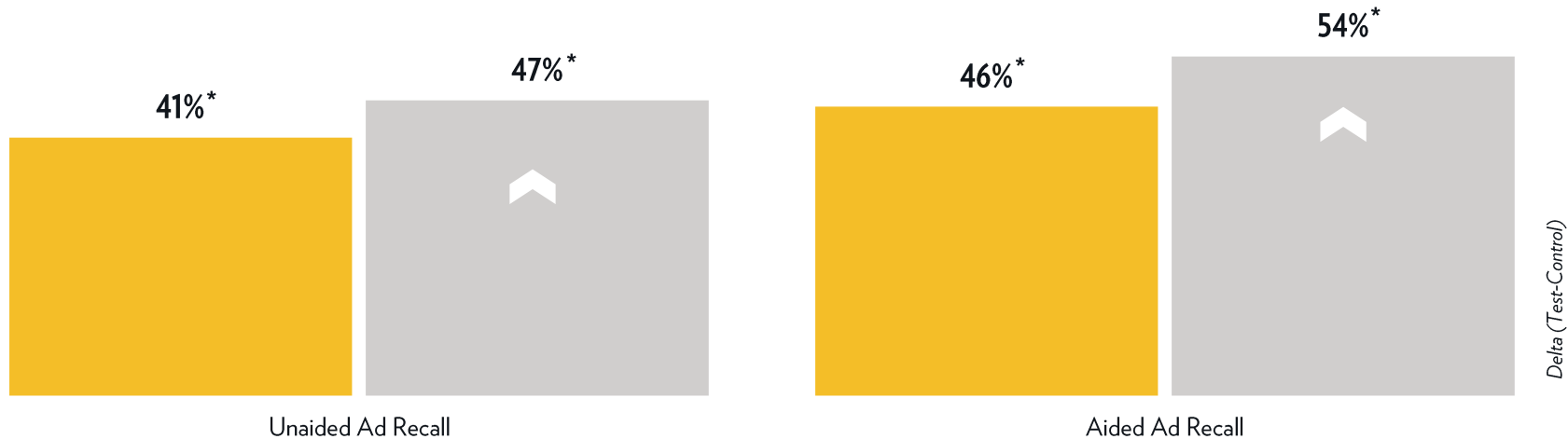
LEVEL OF BRANDING:

Same article, but with more branding

- **Low branding:**
Original level of branding
- **High branding:**
2x number of brand mentions, 2
additional references to specific details
about the brand's product

The More Branding the Better for Recall

Impact of Level of Branding on Recall Metrics



* Statistically significant difference between test vs. control at $\geq 90\%$ confidence

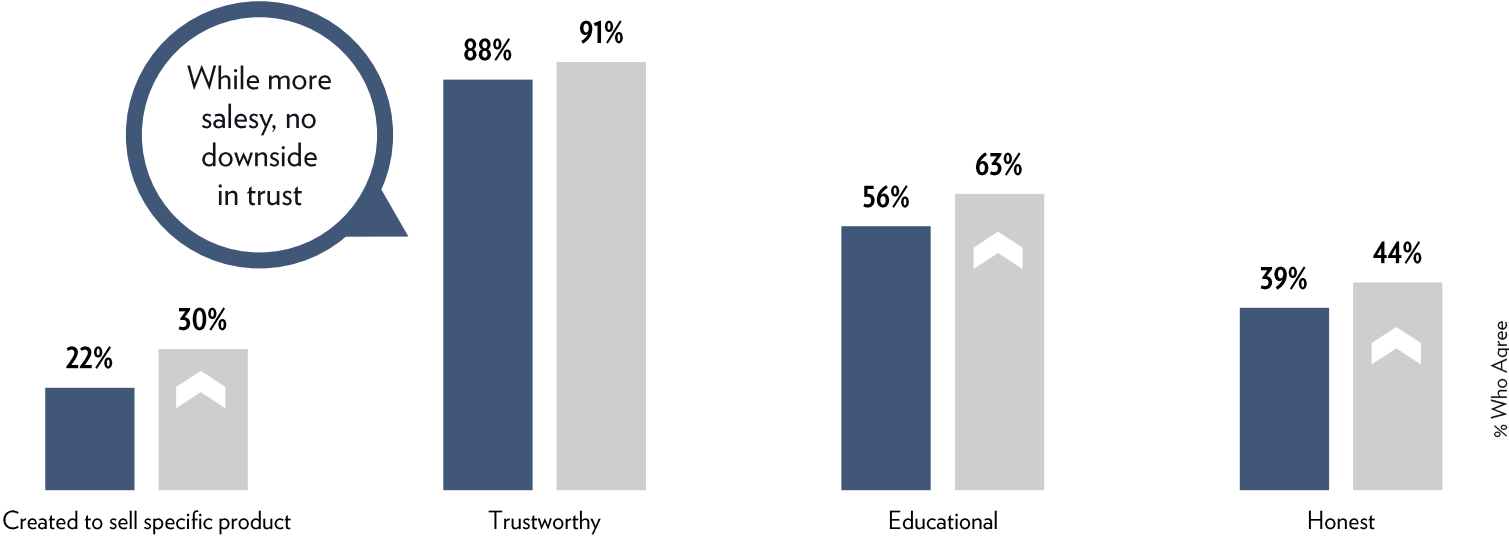
▲ Statistically significant difference between low & high branding at $\geq 90\%$ confidence
Control n=195, Low Branding n=409, High Branding n=402

Low Branding

High Branding

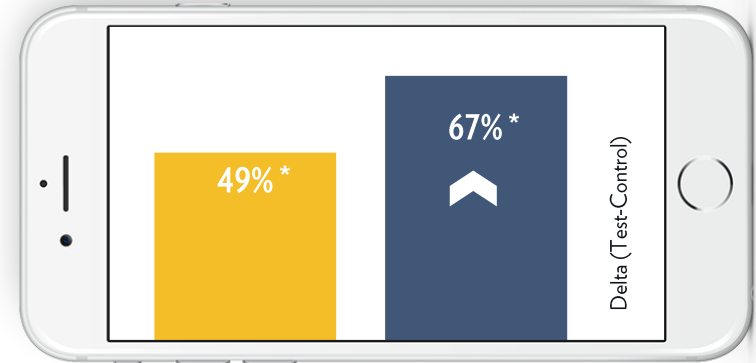
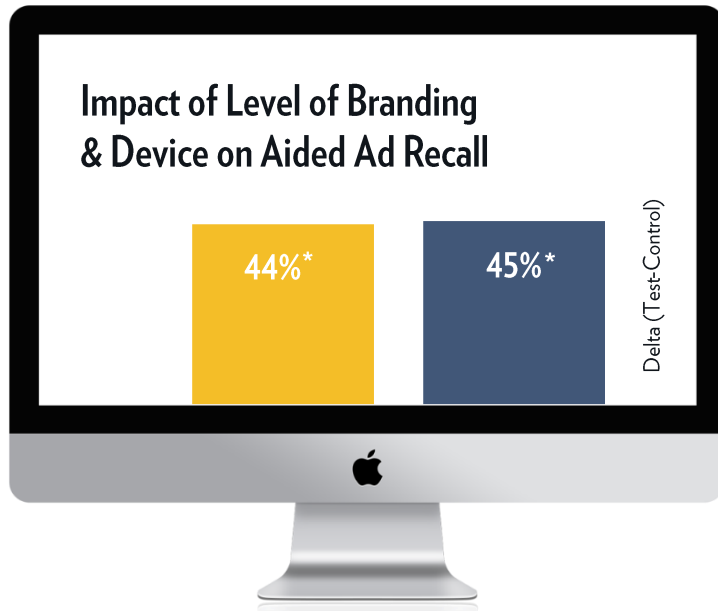
Article With Stronger Branding Seen as More Educational & Honest

Impact of Level of Branding on Brand Perceptions



Statistically significant difference between low & high branding at $\geq 85\%$ confidence
Sell Product/Honest: Low n=355, High n=350; Trustworthy/Educational: Low n=234, High n=209

High Branding Especially Important When People are Reading an Article with Small Text



Low Branding High Branding

* Statistically significant difference between test vs. control at >= 90% confidence

^ Statistically significant difference between low & high branding within that device at >= 90% confidence

PC: Control n=120, Low Branding n=258, High Branding n=245; Smartphone: Control n=75, Low Branding n=151, High Branding n=157

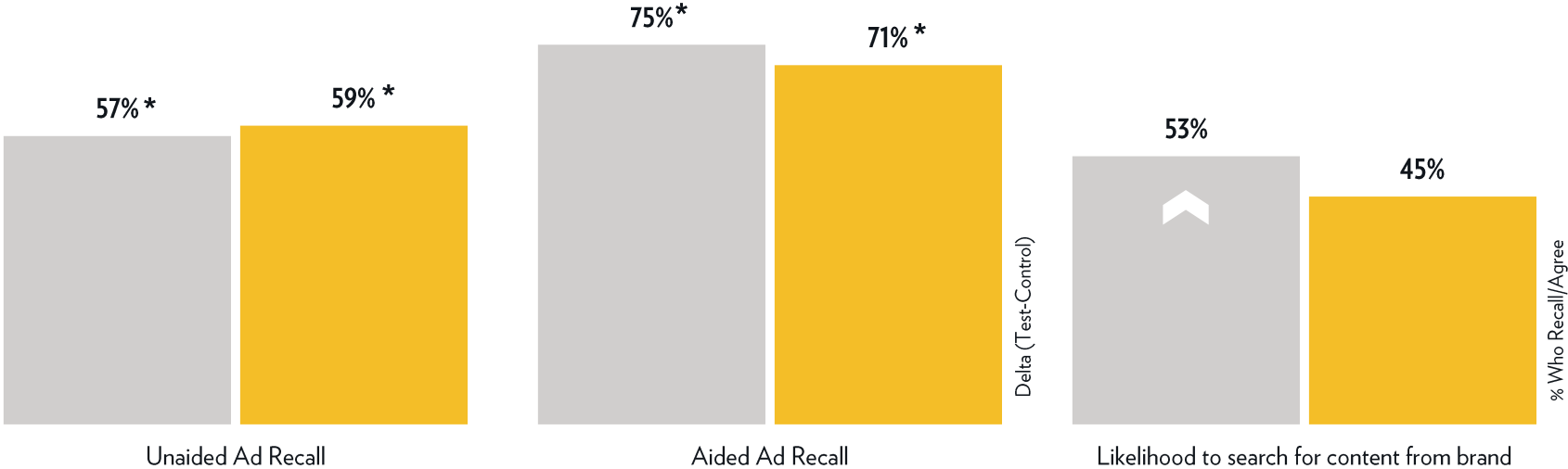
Is There an Impact Based on the Type of Storytelling?

FOCUS OF CONTENT: Does the content focus on familiar aspects of the brand or introduce broader elements?

- Breadth: Content focuses on lesser known parts of the brand
- Depth: Content focuses on the distinctive parts of the brand

Introducing Diverse Parts of Brand Drives Interest in Seeking Out Content

Impact of Storytelling Type on Ad Recall and Intention Metrics



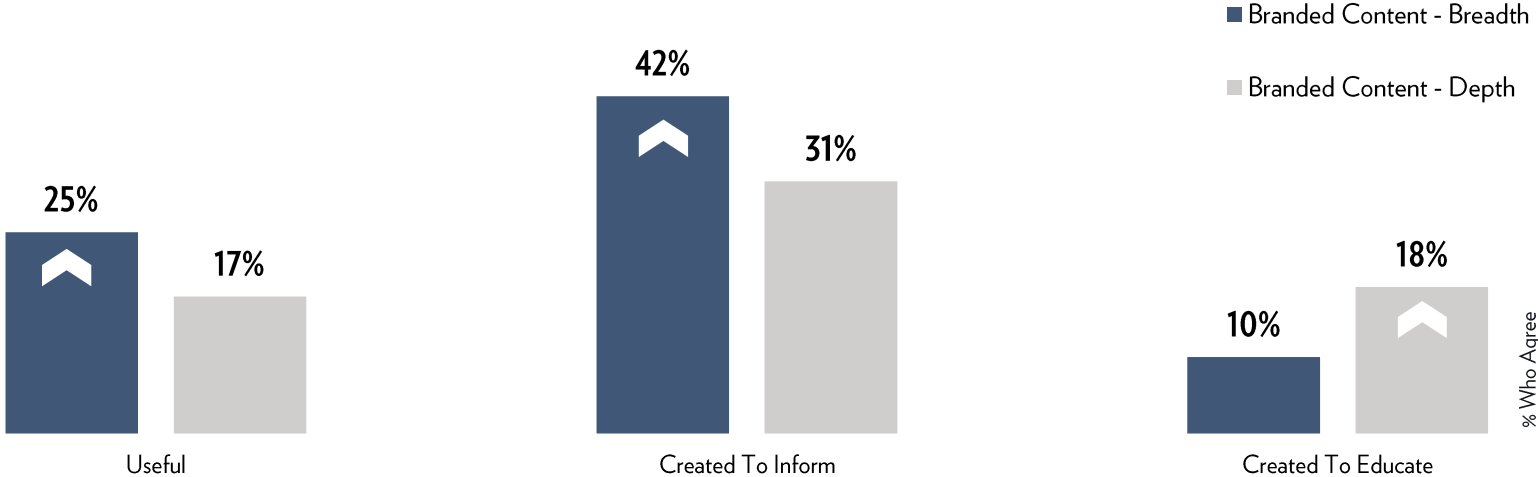
* Statistically significant difference between test vs. control at >= 90% confidence
^ Statistically significant difference between breadth vs. depth at >= 80% confidence
Control n=120, Breadth n=131, Depth n=132

Grey square Breadth Yellow square Depth

Breadth = Informing Broadly About Brand

Depth = Educational Deep Dive into Brand

Impact of Storytelling Type on Perceptions of Brand & Intentions for Creating Content



⬆ Statistically significant difference between Breadth vs. Depth at >= 80% confidence
Breadth n = 105, Depth n = 99

Does Content Length Matter?

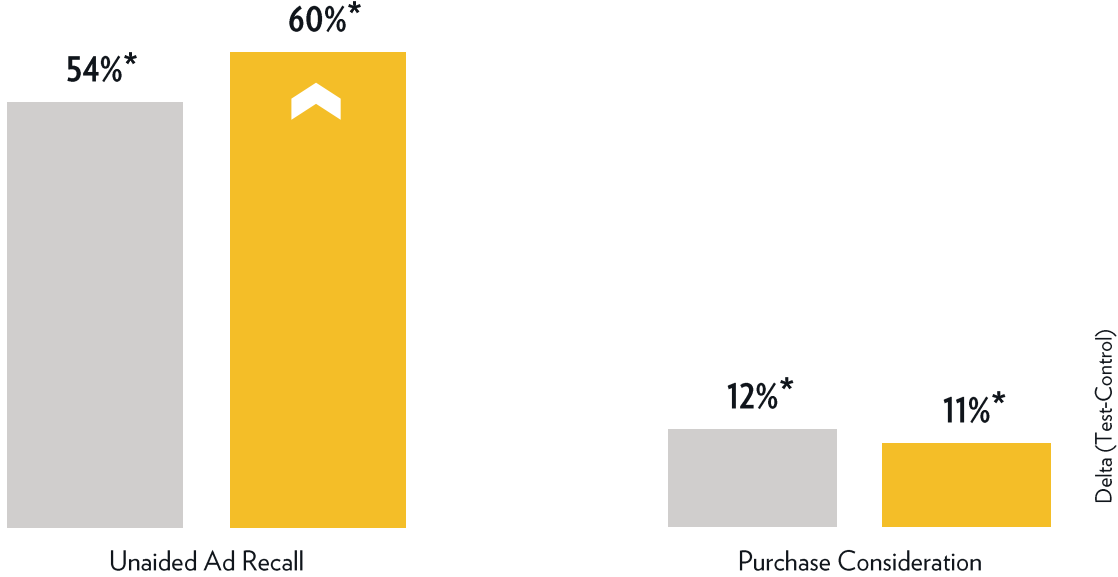
ARTICLE LENGTH

Same content but varying article length

- Short article: On average, 535 words
- Long article: On average, 743 words

Article is Able to Persuade Regardless of Length

Impact of Article Length on Brand Metrics



* Statistically significant difference between test vs. control at >= 90% confidence
▲ Statistically significant difference between short & long article at >= 90% confidence
Control n=412, Short Article n=411, Long Article n=416

Article Length Performance Doesn't Vary by Device

Short Article

Long Article

Aided Ad Recall

59%*

Desktop

62%*

73%*

Smartphone

73%*

Purchase Consideration

9%*

Desktop

8%*

17%*

Smartphone

14%*

Delta (Test-Control)

* Statistically significant difference between test vs. control at >= 90% confidence
^ Statistically significant difference between short & long article within device at >= 90% confidence
PC: Control n=240, Short Article n=240, Long Article n=250; Smartphone: Control n=172, Short Article n=171, Long Article n=166

Implications

Branded content is here to stay! It's still highly effective in 2016

Branded content provides a good platform to **truly connect** in a way that feels consumer centric

Running content on trusted news sites such as Forbes can help establish **reach & boost performance** among particularly engaged consumers

Stay true to your narrative – Content should be as long (or short) as makes sense for the story

While we believe there is a tipping point, **don't be afraid to mention your brand** as long as it makes sense for the narrative. For articles, more branding is especially important on smartphone