



Dimensions in the evaluation of creativity in integrated communication campaigns. A contribution for assessment in the educational environment

Dimensiones en la evaluación de la creatividad en campañas de comunicación integrada. Una aportación para la evaluación en el entorno docente



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How to cite this article:

González Leonardo, E.; Pacheco Rueda, M. and De Frutos Torres, B. (2020). Dimensions in the evaluation of creativity in integrated communication campaigns. A contribution for assessment in the educational environment. *Doxa Comunicación*, 30, pp. 283-307.

<https://doi.org/10.31921/doxacom.n30a15>

Received: 16/01/2020 - Accepted: 16/04/2020

Abstract:

Evaluating creativity in integrated communication campaigns is not an easy task. Despite creativity being one of the most important aspects in the sector, subjectivity plays a decisive role when evaluating the creative potential of a campaign. In the professional environment, creative people make subjective evaluations based on their experience in order to screen the different alternatives produced by the agency. In the Advertising and PR degrees, students do not have previous experience, and as such, it is necessary to convert the qualitative evaluation mentioned into a numerical mark. The objective of this research is to identify the dimensions inherent in the evaluation of creativity in order to develop a resource in line with the requirements of the industry that might contribute to reducing the academic-professional gap. The method includes interviews with professionals and an extensive review of the literature cited. The data coding was carried out simultaneously with the bibliographic review and the result was the identification of four core evaluation dimensions and fourteen secondary that comprise the model presented, which if applied to the teaching field can contribute to evaluating and guiding students' creative work. Students can also reinforce their mastery of the subject by integrating through practice the principles proposed in this model.

Keywords:

Creativity; evaluation; university teaching; public relations; advertising.

Recibido: 16/01/2020 - Aceptado: 16/04/2020

Resumen:

Evaluar la creatividad de las campañas de comunicación integrada no es tarea fácil. A pesar de que la creatividad es un aspecto de especial relevancia en el sector, la subjetividad juega un papel determinante a la hora de valorar el potencial creativo de una campaña. En el entorno profesional, los creativos establecen valoraciones subjetivas basadas en su experiencia para filtrar las distintas alternativas generadas en la agencia. En los grados en Publicidad y RR.PP los estudiantes no poseen experiencia previa y, además, es necesario traducir dicha evaluación cualitativa a una calificación numérica que la represente. El objetivo de esta investigación es identificar las dimensiones implícitas en la evaluación de la creatividad para desarrollar un recurso que, alineado con los requerimientos de la industria, contribuya a reducir la brecha académico-profesional. El método comprende entrevistas a profesionales y una extensa revisión de la literatura. La codificación de los datos se realizó simultáneamente a la revisión bibliográfica y dio lugar a la identificación de cuatro dimensiones centrales de evaluación y 14 subdimensiones, que constituyen el modelo que se presenta que, en su aplicación en el ámbito docente, puede contribuir a evaluar y guiar el trabajo creativo de los estudiantes, así como a reforzar su dominio de la materia mediante la integración, a través de la práctica, de las dimensiones propuestas en dicho modelo.

Palabras clave:

Creatividad; evaluación; docencia; relaciones públicas; publicidad.

1. Introduction

We find ourselves immersed in the paradigm of Integrated Persuasive Communication (IPC), which is defined by the importance of the audience and a context that influences the sender, message and receiver by allowing two-way communication on several channels. The combination of audiences and channels and the desire to attract attention has blurred the boundaries between communication, product and entertainment, making a transition from communicating about a product to developing products and content that communicate and engage the consumer in creating brand value. In the search for trust, conversation and virality, IPC uses the channels that best suits each case, maximising the synergies between them, and enabling an emerging connection between advertising and Public Relations (Castelló and Del Pino, 2019). The search for earned media and the absence of media utilization patterns characterize integrated communication campaigns, developed on the basis of profound knowledge of the consumer, his or her possible reactions, society and the media (Carretero and Rangel, 2017). This brings us back to the term “liquid creativity”, a phrase coined a decade ago by advertising artist Daniel Solana in his work entitled, *Postpublicidad* (Post-advertising) (2010). The term alludes to the

scenario that was just beginning at that time in which the choice of media decisively affected the message, and creativity in using the media was part of the creative solution.

In this context, evaluating the creativity of an integrated communication campaign is not an easy task. Although creativity is considered to be fundamental in the advertising industry (Baños and Ramírez, 2004; Fallon and Senn, 2007; Navarro 2007), what is considered creative and not creative will always be decided subjectively (Stuhlfaut and Yun, 2011). In the professional environment, ratings include expressions such as, “it works”, “the art is well-rounded”, or in a corrective tone, “it’s missing a little something”, or “it needs to be stretched a bit more”, and even comments such as, “I’d put a little more effort at the end of the copy, but without cutting into the claim” (Gil, 2012:155). When it comes to assessing the creative quality of a piece of advertising, the complexity inherent in evaluation is increased by the uncertainty and subjectivity that distinguishes assessments in the professional sector.

The number of times that one hears the expression, “it doesn’t quite grab the concept”, in which the person who made the affirmation and the person who accepted it both agreed whole-heartedly that the concept had failed, yet neither of them was capable of being more specific, either because it was not necessary or there simply was not enough time. The assessment was considered valid, and a search for solutions to the unspecified problem began immediately. After a few days, when they met again, it was discovered that the agreement was only illusive, and that each person had understood what needed to be done in a different way (Gil, 2012:155)

In the advertising sector, creative people (imaginative directors, art directors and writers) make their evaluations based on their experience, which acts as an informal theoretical framework (Kover, 1995), or systematic knowledge structure (Ross, 1989), which varies depending on the person and the philosophy of the agency. This implicit knowledge is self-taught through professional activity and is difficult to transfer from one individual to another, so it should be expected that the dimensions implicit in assessment will vary depending on who is performing the assessment and the context in which it is being carried out. During the creative process, different proposals that appear in an agency follow a series of filters that determine, on the one hand, which alternative will be launched to the public, and on the other hand, which path will be followed in developing the idea.

In advertising, the first filter used to judge creative alternatives is carried out by the creative *duplas*, or art and copy teams, during the ideation process (Stuhlfaut, 2011). The proposals generated are then evaluated by the creative direction and other agency professionals in order to select which proposal will be submitted for approval by the advertiser, and ultimately, by the public. It is not until the analysis of the latter’s response has been carried out, after the campaign has been launched, that the agency and advertiser check to see whether the campaign has met their forecasted expectations. In the teaching environment, and specifically in subjects related to creativity in advertising and public relations (PR) within the framework of Spanish degrees in Advertising and PR, the aim is generally to reproduce the activity of advertising agencies in the classroom. In the educational context, it is common for the first evaluation to take place in student work teams, in which the professor assumes the role of director who offers feedback to the students on the proposals made. Generally, assessment of the students’ skills is performed through their creative production (integrated communication campaigns or creative works of a different nature), which in most cases are not launched to the public, and consequently the evaluation of creative quality ends up being an appraisal of creative potential beneath a fictitious forecast of results.

Occasionally, teaching methodologies or projects are carried out that involve the professional sector in the academic development of creative campaigns, as in the case of the inter-disciplinary initiative known as, “Entrepreneurs and Creative People”, developed at CEU San Pablo University, which gives a perspective to the integration of disciplinary knowledge and the involvement of the industry in student training through contact with clients and professionals in the process, as well as the evaluation of communication campaigns developed by students (Bartolomé, Viñarás, and Llorente, 2012; Bartolomé, Llorente, and Marugán, 2018).

In both contexts, subjectivity is present in the assessment, but the implications of the absence of systemisation are very different. In the professional sector, subjectivity and intuition are reinforced by experience. However, in the teaching context, students lack experience, so it is necessary to translate a qualitative evaluation into a numerical mark that represents the assessment and is understood by the students. The absence of references regarding the dimensions that define the creative quality of an integrated communication campaign increases the difficulty of making professorial evaluations comprehensible and educational. It may be the case that the person in charge of the teaching somehow recognises his or her own professional routines and is able to transmit these routines and explain them in the classroom (Gil, 2012), thus applying their own intuitive systemisation. However, this would not guarantee consistent criteria among faculties, or even among subjects, precisely because of this subjectivity. For their part, students need resources for the purpose of training their critical judgement and refining their own filter regarding their creations to a certain extent, as well as detecting and understanding the weaknesses or strengths of their proposals in order to correct errors or enhance opportunities. The characteristics of the groups –generally numerous and heterogeneous due to the students having diverse expectations and skills regarding creativity (Gil, 2012)– increase the need for the teams to be able to guide their work in order to make progress, carry out first-level filtering, and exchange feedback with a certain amount of autonomy. For this to be possible, students need to acquire a minimum set of skills in the subject matter that could be transformed into a minimum mastery of the dimensions that determine creative quality.

Most studies on the needs of the academic sector point to a gap between the training of students and the actual needs of the profession. As stated by Corredor and Farfán (2010:111), “formal education in Advertising and PR does not meet the standards of the professional sector”. In line with what is proposed by most research on the needs of the sector, these authors consider that a change is necessary in the education of students in order to bolster their adaptation to industry requirements (Cook, 2002; Altarriba and Rom, 2008; Corredor and Farfán, 2010). However, the current state of the communications industry makes it even more difficult to classify the dimensions by which we must evaluate and train students.

Despite the fact that creativity is the core of advertising, the scarcity of scientific research on creativity evaluation is striking, perhaps because of the difficulty involved in defining the term creativity, or the very nature of the creative process itself, the diversity of creative products, or even the complexity of the environment surrounding creativity in advertising (Klebba and Tierney, 2012). Even smaller in size and scope is research involving PR creativity, which only focuses on the growing influence this area is acquiring in the sector, and on a related note, the changes needed regarding the creative process and the need for transformation of some professional profiles (The Holmes Report, 2013; Estanyol and Roca, 2014). The analysis provided by Estanyol and Roca (2014) demonstrates that despite creativity in PR becoming increasingly valued

in the sector and more demanded by customers, it is still far from attaining the recognition and prestige enjoyed by the advertising industry. For this reason, and given the absence of academic research on the evaluation of creativity in PR, this empirical investigation has been approached from an advertising perspective.

2. Objectives

The objective of this research is to identify the aspects that underlie the evaluation of the creativity of integrated communication campaigns for the purpose of developing a resource that will allow students in Advertising and Public Relations degrees to assimilate criteria that contribute to assessing the creativity of their communication proposals.

This study focuses on answering the following research question: What aspects define the creative quality of an integrated communication campaign? In order to respond to this question, in-depth interviews have been conducted with a sample of communication professionals who work in the field of creativity. The implied dimensions identified in the professional evaluation are put into perspective with regard to the features of creativity evaluation proposed by academic research. As a result of this unification, a creativity evaluation model for integrated communication campaigns is proposed in this study.

3. Methodology

3.1. Method

In order to identify the dimensions of evaluation, this study is based on the Grounded Theory method in which the researcher “collects, codes and analyses data simultaneously” (Soneira 2006:155). This research does not start from assumptions that are *a priori*, nor from existing theoretical frameworks; hypotheses emerge from the data, and inputs from the bibliographic review are incorporated during the analysis process to complement the information extracted. The concepts and their relationships have been continuously and systematically examined to the point of data saturation. The literature review has been conducted in parallel with the categorisation of the assessment domains and the design of the model.

The data has been extracted from interviews with creative directors from various advertising agencies and from an extensive documentary review categorized into three types of resources: (1) research on the dimensions of creativity assessment, (2) research on creativity assessment in advertising, and (3) previous models in advertising creativity assessment designed for application to the professional environment.

3.2. Sample

The selection of interviewees was carried out according to the following criteria: (1) the person has worked in the creative department of a multinational advertising agency, (2) he or she has a total of more than 7 years' experience in advertising, and (3) the person has participated in advertising festivals, either as a judge or as an award winner.

The procedure for defining the final sample size was guided by emerging theory (Glaser, 1978) which consists of identifying the evaluation dimensions during the interviews until they are saturated through constant comparative analysis (Glaser, 1992). During the first interviews, the information that needed to be extended was identified, as well as the aspects that needed to be emphasised (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). This information was relevant for the formal adaptation of the remaining interviews. The decision regarding sample size was made according to guidelines offered by San Martín (2014:113) as follows: “at the moment when constant comparisons among data do not reveal new relations or properties of the data, theoretical saturation has been reached, at which point it is no longer useful to carry out more interviews and observations”; after 5 interviews, the data started to become repetitive, and after 9, new data no longer appeared, so we stopped the interview and information collection phase. Table 1 shows the characteristics of each interviewee.

Table 1. Characteristics of the interviewees

<i>Interviewee number</i>	<i>Professional profile</i>	<i>Multinational company where the person developed most of their career. / Last agency where the person worked.</i>	<i>Professional experience (in years)</i>	<i>Experience on a panel of judges at advertising festivals</i>	<i>Gender</i>
I1	Executive Creative Director	JWT / Neolabels	About 20 years	yes	F
I2	Executive Creative Director	GREY / Pingüino Torreblanca	About 20 years	yes	M
I3	Executive Creative Director	Proximity	About 20 years	yes	F
I4	Creative Director / Copy	Proximity	About 20 years	yes	M
I5	Creative Director / Art	BBDO / Proximity	More than 10 years	yes	F
I6	Art Director	Shakleton	Nearly 10 years	no	M
I7	Creative Director / Copy	BBDO / Ele&Uve	More than 10 years	no	F
I8	Creative Director / Art	BBDO / Ele&Uve	More than 10 years	no	F
I9	Creative Director / Art	SCPF / PS21	More than 10 years	yes	F

Source: created by the authors

Regarding variability in agency and international holdings, professionals I1, I2 and I9 have worked in agencies belonging to WPP (Grey, SCPE, JWT); professionals I3, I4, I5, I7 and I8 have worked in agencies belonging to the Omnicom group (BBDO, Proximity), and professional I6 has worked in agencies belonging to Publicis Worldwide (Leo Burnett). Moreover, professionals I1, I2, I6, I7 and I8 have directed or worked for independent agencies, which we believe complements their perspective and has enriched the study.

3.3. Procedure

Firstly, interviews were conducted using an adaptation of the interview guide proposed by Kover (1995). The interviews were of a semi-structured type in order to offer participants greater freedom of expression. To avoid constraining or leading the responses, the specific purpose of the research was not revealed to the interviewees. Conversations began

with a battery of questions about the training and professional experience of the participants, which provided relevant information for the interpretation of the data and generated a preliminary atmosphere of trust. The interviews were divided into two parts: the first part included general questions to introduce the interviewee to the subject, and the second part consisted of questions related to the most relevant information needed for the study. As a closing, open questions were included to give the interviewees the opportunity to make spontaneous contributions.

The interviews were conducted by telephone, at which time they were recorded, and then subsequently transcribed. Notes were taken during the course of the conversations, and those aspects of the evaluation that each interviewee emphasised as being important were recorded. The coding, which is open-ended and axial, was carried out simultaneously with the data collection. During open coding, the concepts identified in the transcribed text were identified, named and categorised. These concepts (or sub-dimensions) were then classified and grouped into homogeneous sets that helped to identify several main dimensions, and in turn provided explanatory value to those dimensions. Responses or meanings that were repeated are considered dimensions, equivalent to a descriptive knowledge structure of the creative quality of a communication campaign. During axial coding, a relation was carried out between the codes (dimensions and sub-dimensions) by using a combination of inductive and deductive reasoning that contributed to the construction of the model. The categorisation is conceptual, or in other words, it is related to ideas rather than data in order to prevent regression to purely descriptive reports. According to the method, the data are not coded to fit into pre-existing theories or constructs, but instead focus on the underlying conceptualisations. The limit for classification as a dimension or sub-dimension is for it to have been mentioned by 80% or more of the respondents.

In line with the proposal of Glaser (1978), the academic literature was reviewed during the analysis process, which contributed to the discovery of new properties of dimensions and sub-dimensions, as well as their relationships. Relevant academic research was classified to complement the categories and concepts extracted, giving rise to the contents of the emerging model.

4. Results

4.1. Dimensions for assessing creativity from a professional point of view

Following the procedure described, the concepts that emerged from the professional narrative resulted in the creation of several general categories that were broken down into sub-dimensions, and then were revised until reduced to four dimensions that were once again contrasted with the review of the academic literature. These dimensions are as follows: originality, effectiveness, engagement and execution. In addition, in line with the findings of Stuhlfaut and Yun (2011), 55.5% of the people interviewed also highlighted the strength of social insight, or suitability to the moment, or even to the very context itself, as a strong point in the search for impact and visibility for a campaign. Table 2 shows the evaluation dimensions of creativity collected from the interviews.

Table 2. Dimensions and sub-dimensions of creativity evaluation obtained from the interviews

<i>Interviewee</i>	<i>DIMENSION 1: Originality</i>	<i>DIMENSION 2: Effectiveness</i>	<i>DIMENSION 3: Engagement</i>	<i>DIMENSION 4: Execution</i>	<i>*Suitability to time and place.</i>	SUB-DIMENSIONS
I1	Original, surprising	Suitable for the brand	Connects with the public, It excites them	Suitable for all channels	Suitable for the context	
I2	Original, widely-known	Effective	Empathy, attention			
I3	Surprise	Achieves the objective	Excitement, impact	Well executed, it has fine artistry.	Suitable to the moment	
I4	Originality, Surprise	Achieves the objective, suitable for the brand	Excitement	Well executed, it has fine artistry.		
I5	Original, surprising, ground-breaking	Follows a strategy, it accomplishes its goal.	Excitement	Suitable for all channels	Suitable for the context	
I6	Originality, Surprise	Effective	Excitement, impact, it is comprehensible	Suitable for all channels		
I7	Surprise	Achieves the objective	Excitement, customisation	Suitable for all channels		
I8	Surprise	Achieves the objective	Excitement	Suitable for all channels	Suitable to the moment	
I9	Originality		Excitement, connects with the audience	Differential execution	Suitable to the moment	

Source: created by the authors

4.2. Dimensions of creativity evaluation from the perspective of academic research

While identifying the dimensions involved in professional evaluation, we reviewed the academic literature to complement the emerging theory. We found that attempts to define creativity evaluation have varied according to characteristics, as well as regarding the number and definition of its dimensions. From a psychological point of view, numerous authors have defined creativity as novelty that results in usefulness (Treffinger, 1980; Amabile, 1983; Besemer and O'Quinn, 1989; Runco and Charles, 1993; Plucker and Beghetto, 2004; Jackson, 2005). However, originality and usefulness are not enough to evaluate applied creativity. Thus, most of the research on the evaluation of creative products in advertising establish multiple criteria, arguing that such assessments imply a multidimensional phenomenon. We examined the evaluation dimensions proposed by several authors who have approached creativity evaluation from the perspective of psychology and advertising in relation to the four dimensions of our grounded theory. Table 3 summarises the evaluation items provided in each case.

Table 3. Dimensions and sub-dimensions of creativity evaluation from academic research

Author	Year	Field	DIMENSIONS			
			Items related to ORIGINALITY	Items related to USEFULNESS	Items related to ENGAGEMENT	Items related to EXECUTION
Taylor and Sandler	1973	Advertising	– Originality – Generation – Redefinition	– Relevance	– Hedonistic (impact) – Complexity	– Condensing (synthesis)
Besemer and Treffinger	1981	Advertising	– Novelty (originality, surprise)	– Resolution (logic, usefulness, value, understanding)		– Development, (organic qualities, precision, elegance)
Amabile	1983	Psychology	– *Trust in the subjective judgement of expert judges without the need for evaluation dimensions.			
Besemer and O'Quin	1989	Psychology	– Novelty	– Resolution		– Development, Synthesis
Runco and Charles	1993	Psychology	– Originality	– Suitability		
Ang y Low	2000	Advertising	– Novelty	– Meaning (relevance)	– Excitement (feelings)	
White and Smith	2001	Advertising	– Originality	– Intelligibility (comprehension)		– Development, Synthesis
Koslow, Sasser and Riordan	2003	Advertising	– Originality	– Strategy	– - Attraction / Artistic level	
	2006	Advertising	– Originality	– Strategy (Suitability, usefulness)		– Art (design, expressive qualities of the advert)
Horn and Salvendy	2006; 2009	Advertising	– Product attributes (novelty, evolution)	– Judges' preferences (centrality, applicability)	– Excitement (attraction, preference)	– Product attributes (resolution, synthesis)
Smith et al.	2007	Advertising	– Originality – Synthesis (unusual connections) – Flexibility (vitality)			– Development (details) – Artistic value (distinction in production)
Smith, Chen, and Yang.	2008	Advertising	– Divergence	– Relevance (Effectiveness)		
Caroff and Besançon	2008	Advertising	– Originality	– Pertinence		
Stuhlfaut and Yun	2011	Advertising	– Novelty (original, imaginative, innovative, unique, new, surprising)	– Usefulness (important, persuasive, relevant, strategic, memorable)	– Affectivity (emotionally attractive, captivating) – Humour	
Vejling, Tomba and Mateo	2014	Advertising	– Originality – Affinity	– Logic (decoding/ understanding)	– Impact – Fantasy	– Break (suitable for the channel).

SUB-DIMENSIONS

ISSN: 1696-019X / e-ISSN: 2386-3978

Source: created by the authors

Regarding different concepts or sub-parameters (novelty, affinity/connection, innovation, surprise, divergence or flexibility), we have observed that all authors consider originality to be an evaluation dimension. Another common dimension is effectiveness, also viewed from different perspectives (relevance, usefulness, pertinence, strategy, suitability, understanding or memorability). Although the model proposed by Smith et al. in 2007 does not include effectiveness, the study carried out by Smith, Chen and Yang in 2008 was an evolution of the previous investigation and poses just two dimensions, divergence and relevance. Thus, one could say that all of the authors studied consider effectiveness to be a dimension.

In terms of engagement, the most recent models (Sthufault and Jun, 2011; Vejling, Tomba and Mateo, 2014) propose affectivity, humour, impact, or fantasy (imagination), as resources to connect with the consumer. However, previous models barely contemplate this dimension, and if they do, they express it under a single sub-parameter (impact, excitement, or attraction). One would expect that the latest models, which belong to the era of integrated persuasive communication, would in fact include dimensions to measure the connection with the consumer. In the same way, from the point of view of execution, the most recent model (Vejling, Tomba and Mateo, 2014) proposes suitability to the channel (break) as a dimension, diverging from previous models that included execution only from a formal approach (artistic value, resolution or synthesis).

Another factor detected from the interviews and literature review, which has an influence on confirming the dimensions, is the difference in judgment within the different contexts of the professional sector where evaluations are carried out: festivals, agencies and clients. Given that festivals give awards for “the best” advertising of the year, we would expect that the selection process would undergo a rigorous criterion that could act as a reference for this study. However, this expectation has not been fulfilled in reality, because far from following a rating system that acknowledges weighted dimensions, the prizes are awarded based on an overall evaluation resulting from the subjectivity of a panel of judges. Among the guidelines of the festival, the dual combination of originality and effectiveness takes precedence, but the relevance of each dimension varies according to the festival¹ (Aguilera, 2017). West, Caruana and Leelapanyalert (2013) have determined a third dimension, execution, which has been integrated into several festivals and/or categories using different weightings. However, all of the interviewees have agreed that the guidelines that define the evaluation are not the “official” ones listed on the website of each festival, but are the criteria set by the presiding chairpersons of the different panels of judges.

In festivals, generally the presiding chairperson is the one who sets the guidelines of what the festival is looking for. When it comes to judging the works... that is more or less how the guidelines are set. For example, in Cannes, the works are usually super-revolutionary ideas that change the world for the better, and you know that the ideas have to meet that criterion, more or less... or if it's a festival like the one called Inspirational, which looks for innovative and inspiring ideas, you have to focus on that aspect to some extent... It also has to be accompanied by [the idea] of execution (I2)

1 Festivals such as Cannes Lions, El Sol, Clío Award, C de C, etc., are more focused on originality while the Effie Awards, IPA Effectiveness Awards or prizes awarded by the APG are the events that place the highest value on effectiveness (Aguilera, 2017).

Several interviewees were critical of the creativity evaluation at festivals, as they consider them to be similar to promotional platforms for agencies and the sector itself, and to have a moneymaking zeal that influences their operations. Moreover, they criticize the fact that many campaigns never reach the public, that they are created “by the publicists, for the publicists” (I6). The dimensions and sub-dimensions of creative evaluation offered by the interviewees (Table 1) refer to the parameters that govern creative work on a daily basis, or in other words, the factors that determine a good campaign from the point of view of the agency and the client. For that reason, if we put aside festivals in order to assess what would be a good campaign for an agency or a client, the concept of usefulness or effectiveness gains strength once again.

4.3. Model for evaluating the creativity of integrated communication campaigns

As the dimensions and sub-dimensions of evaluation in the academic and professional spheres are identified, the need arises to assess the different interpretations associated with the emerging concepts, of which the definitions provided by professionals and researchers are analysed in depth. The variety of approaches helps to consider different possibilities in the proposal and organisation of the relationships and hierarchies of the dimensions and sub-dimensions involved. The results obtained are organised into four dimensions of creativity evaluation (originality, effectiveness, engagement and execution), as well as 14 sub-dimensions linked to creativity:

4.3.1. Originality

Most authors agree that a creative idea must be original (Hernández, 2004; Bur-tenshaw, Mahon and Barfoot, 2007). However, this concept has been defined and understood in various ways. Thus, Ricarte (1999) and Arroyo (2006) refer to originality as a novelty. Sarkar and Chakrabarti (2011) state that one way to establish the novelty of a product is to compare the characteristics of that product to features of other similar products available at the time of the release of the former, both of which are targeted to meet the same need. For their part, Vejling, Tomba and Mateo (2014) define originality as “the relative uniqueness of something that makes it different from what is expected by the public”, and in their model they also include a dimension called “connection”, considered to be the merging of thoughts that apparently have no connection, yet are responsible for causing surprise. Torrance (1977) and Guilford (1950) also highlighted the establishment of connections as a type of novelty. In line with this, some interviewees have defined originality as “agility in connecting ideas” (I5) and most of them (6 of the 9) link the establishment of connections to originality, and mention constant observation as a source of inspiration for such creativity.

As for the relationship between originality and surprise, Ricarte (1999) states that the mission of creativity is “to make the obvious surprising”. Surprise motivates individuals to solve the unexpected, thereby increasing their effort and attention. Taylor, Wilson, and Miracle (1994) found that when campaigns contained a message that was different from the one expected there were more favourable attitudes toward the campaign and the brand, and more buying interest compared to adverts with non-differentiating messages. Twose and Polly (2011) went deeper into the issue by contrasting the relationship between psychological responses and sales through the analysis of campaigns that had won effectiveness awards (IPA) or creativity awards (Cannes). The list of emotions was very long, but only one of the emotions, the feeling of surprise, correlated with selling or creative effectiveness. The measurement of persuasive value showed a correlation

with a slight jump in sales, although it did not generally contribute to brand value, which is the guarantor of long-term performance. Also related to the concept of originality is innovation, considered a contribution that leads to novelty. Several festivals have introduced innovation into their criteria (Barahona, 2019), believing that with innovation the campaign will be a contribution to the sector.

Linked to this idea is the criterion of inspiration, which values the fact that a campaign or advertising piece might be converted into a social trend, thereby becoming a leader within the sector. Obradors (2007) assigns a new epithet to an advertisement with a high level of innovation, describing it as “shielded”, since it becomes unique and reaches the maximum degree of originality.

According to this approach, it can be inferred that the ability to connect ideas in a manner that is innovative or unexpected is a way of achieving originality. Therefore, the first dimension implied in the evaluation of integrated communication campaigns is originality, defined as the use of resources in an innovative and unpredictable way, and is related to the following sub-parameters: (1) connection/affinity; (2) surprise factor; and (3) innovation.

4.3.2. *Effectiveness*

David Ogilvy and Bill Bernbach transformed the world of marketing and communication by demonstrating that what the client asked for could also be achieved by using creativity (Fallon and Senn, 2007: 18). Authors such as Bassat (1993), Ricarte (1999) and Hernández (2004) support the idea that advertising creativity must always meet objectives, whether in terms of sales or image. Burtenshaw, Mahon and Barfoot (2007) warn of the danger of being led by a creative idea to the point of forgetting the main objective of the briefing, the needs of the target audience, or even neglecting the overall view of the problem. The interviewees stress effectiveness as an essential component of a good campaign.

For me, a good advertising campaign is one that solves a client's business problem. Full stop. After many years of experience, I believe we are in a business where there are objectives, and if our client's goal is to sell or reach some level of notoriety, a good campaign has to achieve that. (I3).

Your client asks you for a campaign to reach an objective; however original it might be, if you have not reached the objective of the briefing, it's not going to work. (I7)

A good campaign is one that sells. We are communicators, but we are also sellers. Our aim is to sell products and sometimes to sell ideas, brands, etc. A good campaign is one that works, and what is now becoming very important are the effectiveness awards. I think it's quite fair, because there are many festivals where the idea, or the creativity, is rewarded, but the overall purpose is for it to work. For me, the campaign that sells is the best, but what happens is, I expect a campaign to sell but also to be creative, different and renowned. A campaign must have ingredients that draw attention and inspire empathy. (I2)

Bassat (1993) talks about advertising creativity as the transfer of all research and strategy into one advert. Research is crucial in integrated communication campaigns, because it is only thorough knowledge of the consumer, brand and context that sales and communication objectives can be achieved (Halper, 2013). Nevertheless, research is a source of inspiration for creative strategy, but in no case should the work of creative people be subordinated to merely communicating their conclusions in the most creative way possible. Otherwise, spontaneity would be constrained and research would be a liability rather than a strategic asset.

Effectiveness represents the second dimension inherent in evaluation, expressed in terms of strategy, and broken down into four sub-parameters that indicate its gradation or achievement: (1) compliance with objectives, (2) suitability to the brand, (3) suitability to the context, and (4) suitability to the target audience.

4.3.3. *Engagement*

In the current context, the capability of generating engagement takes on special relevance. Solana (2010:11) reaffirms the theory of Goldhaber (1997) by stating, “we live in an economy where the most characteristic, scarce commodity is attention from the public”. He goes on to say, “in this context, the globalized, holistic scenario of scrambled content in which attention is so scarce, those of us who work in the advertising industry become beggars of attention” (2010: 35). This is where advertising merges with content to achieve the effect of entertainment or usefulness that moves away from intrusiveness.

We have to take into account that the audience is not waiting for us, is not looking at us, and even when they are paying attention to what we want them to hear, we have to find a way to develop the skill of empathising with people instead of “bothering” them so much. That was always one of the first things they told us about advertising: we often interrupt people’s daily lives with our messages and we only have two alternatives; either we tell people something that makes them say, “hey, this is really worth listening to because it’s a very good offer”, or maybe it was something they didn’t know, it was entertaining, etc. A campaign has to have those ingredients to draw attention and generate empathy. (I2). What consumers want is entertainment. They want to have a good time, to be shocked, or to be surprised. They are not looking for rational, practical information about the product. They’re looking for something more emotional. (I3)

Vejling, Tomba and Mateo (2014) talk about a dimension called “emotiveness”, proposed as a “sensory hook” that allows one to identify the degree of emotion provoked in the target audience. In reference to emotion, the interviewees indicated that when an idea is good, you “notice it” immediately (E5), and you get a “gut feeling” when watching it (I4, I6, I8). Neuromarketing and sociological theories of the hierarchy of effects reveal the influence of affectivity and emotion on the perception of impact, and on the subsequent decision-making process (López de Ayala, 2004).

In order to “hook” the consumer, the value offered to the consumer must be well defined, and access to the experience must be immediate, easy, comfortable and fun. A large portion of the resources for connecting with the audience come from the particular medium involved, but also from customisation and the incorporation of context data that allow the user to feel involved. The challenge and risk lie in using information that is not so personal that it leads to a sense of loss of privacy (Tucker, 2014). The communication model has been customised, and the study of the target audience has evolved toward the study of buyers as people with regard to different segments of the public in order to create communication that is more in line with their lifestyles.

... For me, there is also customisation now. For a campaign to be a good one, I think it has to be very targeted. I think campaigns that try to focus on men and women from all social strata are no longer valid. Those that target the social stratum they need to focus on are the ones that are successful (I7)

Before [the industry became so segmented] it was impossible, but now with big data, it can be done. We can target women with a primary school education who live in a rural environment and who are under 25 years of age. It can be done. (I8)

Starting from the disorder generated by overexposure and the emergence of channels and media, which Hubbard (2018) refers to as “clutter”, this author highlights the importance of the “hook”, interpreted as the way the message is elaborated, and as an attraction that is triggered through decoding. Vejling, Tomba and Mateo (2014) refer to “logic” as the way that content is displayed to the receiver so they can decode it. Bassat (1993) and Hernández (2004) deal with this concept in terms of simplicity, which they view as clarity and straightforwardness in the transmission of the message to facilitate the connection with the recipient. Consumers enjoy creativity that appeals to their intelligence, yet they do not like feeling forced to study adverts in order to understand them (Navarro, 2007).

Related to the statements above, the umbrella concept chosen to bring together the items that comprise the connection with the consumer is the term *engagement*, which is viewed as the ability to “engage” the consumer, or the degree to which a consumer interacts with a brand. It could be stated that engagement confirms the commitment between brand and user, which represents the “link between a series of customer behaviours toward the company that go beyond the purchase, and that occur as a result of individual motivation” (Van Doorn et al., 2010). The sub-parameters linked to engagement are the following: (1) impact, (2) empathy, and (3) excitement.

4.3.4. Execution

Carretero and Rangel (2017) state that the adaptation of the channels to the message is a typical feature of integrated communication campaigns. Everything fits nicely within these campaigns: a documentary, a song (not understood as a campaign jingle but as a campaign itself), a product to be sold, software, a simple tweet, or a sociological experiment. The message is not intrusive, but becomes a part of people’s lives, entertains them, and even provides reasons to take a stand. The impact is not as important as the experience, because if the experience is rewarding for the consumer it will become the company’s loudspeaker in its victorious medium. The interviewees agree that the success of a campaign comes from the combination of both old and new ideas, and the way of thinking about advertising does not change, as the concept always has to prevail and be adaptable to all platforms.

There are ideas that “draw” from basic insights, but the way things have been done so far is no longer valid. These ideas have to be transformed with what we are able to do now. However, conceptually straightforward ideas are just as valid now as they were before, although now it is true that an idea is already more closely tied to a certain medium. It is not the same to produce a TV campaign, and now a version for Stories, since it is not going to work the same way. You have to know how Stories works, how the channel works, and create the campaign from there. Nevertheless, they can no longer be adaptations of the original idea. Each one has to “come down a bit”, so to speak, depending on the channel you are using. (I7)

It is essential to adjust the idea to all channels. Simply repeating a banner advert is not the way to go. (I1)

A good idea must be feasible in many formats, because if it only serves for part of what you can encompass, then you have to go to the source and segment it very well. There are a lot of ideas where you just say, damn! I have created something that works really well on Spotify, but only on Spotify. Some ideas are like that, but if we talk about a big idea, which for me would be a 360 degree marketing campaign, it has to be feasible for many formats, and little by little, you shape it until you get it closed. (I6)

When you are working for an agency, or you have a briefing, unless you are specifically told that it has to be for PR, a movie, or a specific spot, you provide options for many things. You carry out campaigns that used to be called 360°, but now are called “platforms”, where all of those ideas fit. The Cannes prize we won at Bungalow was a PR project. (I9)

If a good idea is very well adapted to your format, which is exactly what was needed, there is no need to bore the entire world by using all of the channels: choose well the channel where you have to tell the idea. Also, a great strategy helps a lot in narrating the idea. In fact, there are ideas that are also strategies, in many cases. Also, occasionally a PR idea has very different characteristics from those of an ATL spot, but most of all, it is a good idea adapted to that category. (I5)

Each media requires a different type of tone, and the coherence of the brand is in the core values, concepts, and its own particular style.

Focusing on the formal possibilities of innovation, Burtenshaw, Mahon and Barfoot (2007) apply the concept of simplicity to the transmission of the message through the layout as part of the art director’s work. Fallon and Senn (2007) put concept and formal aspect on the same level, considering that brilliant execution without a brilliant strategy is useless, but a brilliant strategy without brilliant execution ends up being invisible (2007:11). Hernández considers that execution is a resource that can be used to attract the public (2004: 240), and indicates that the message must be aesthetic, attractive and seductive. For Fanjul and Gonzalez (2012), the aspects capable of differentiating the product or service from competitors and generating personality and brand awareness are created during the development of the advertising pieces. Authors such as Arroyo (2006) and Segarra (2013) warn that the evolution of technology may result in some campaigns becoming “all about technical production”, prioritising the operational aspects and leaving aside creativity during the concept and strategy phases. In professional jargon, this way of working is called “fireworks”, referring to mediocre creativity that places more importance on showing off than on content.

According to the above, the sub-dimensions linked to the dimension of execution are as follows: (1) innovation in the channel involved and/or the format, which is believed to be part of the creative proposal that deals with the way of executing and/or integrating the idea into the format; (2) the adaptation of the idea to the format; and (3) the formal execution, typical of art direction.

4.3.5. Suitability to time and place

Suitability to time and place is proposed as a transversal dimension, as it is related to the four main dimensions. In terms of originality and effectiveness, context acts as a stage for dissemination, but also for ideation, turning the “when” and “where” into determining variables in the search for innovation, social trends and virality (Sivera, 2014). With regard to engagement, Hubbard (2018) states that a fundamental value for achieving the ‘hook’ is to make an impact at the right time and in the right place. Some authors (Rayport, 2013; Nesamoney, 2015; Selva and Caro, 2016) highlight the use of resources for enhancing connection related to using real-time contextual information, such as adapting the advert to the temperature of the city where the user is located while he or she is connected, incorporating music to which the user has recently listened, or providing content that interests them. Other strategies involve proposals with a social value, such as the case of certain brands that offer answers to cultural and social concerns through their campaigns, thereby fostering

encounters between sender and receiver that result in shared meta-histories with consumers that provide brand value, generate content, and create communities (De Miguel and Toledano, 2018: 215).

...Of the current trends, I like the potential of creating products and projects that aim at products and services themselves. I also like the fact that companies now want to incorporate a win-win situation into their brands, like the intention to have a better planet, to improve the environment, to create something for the common good, and to know that the purpose of companies is not just to produce products, but also to improve people's lives. (I1)

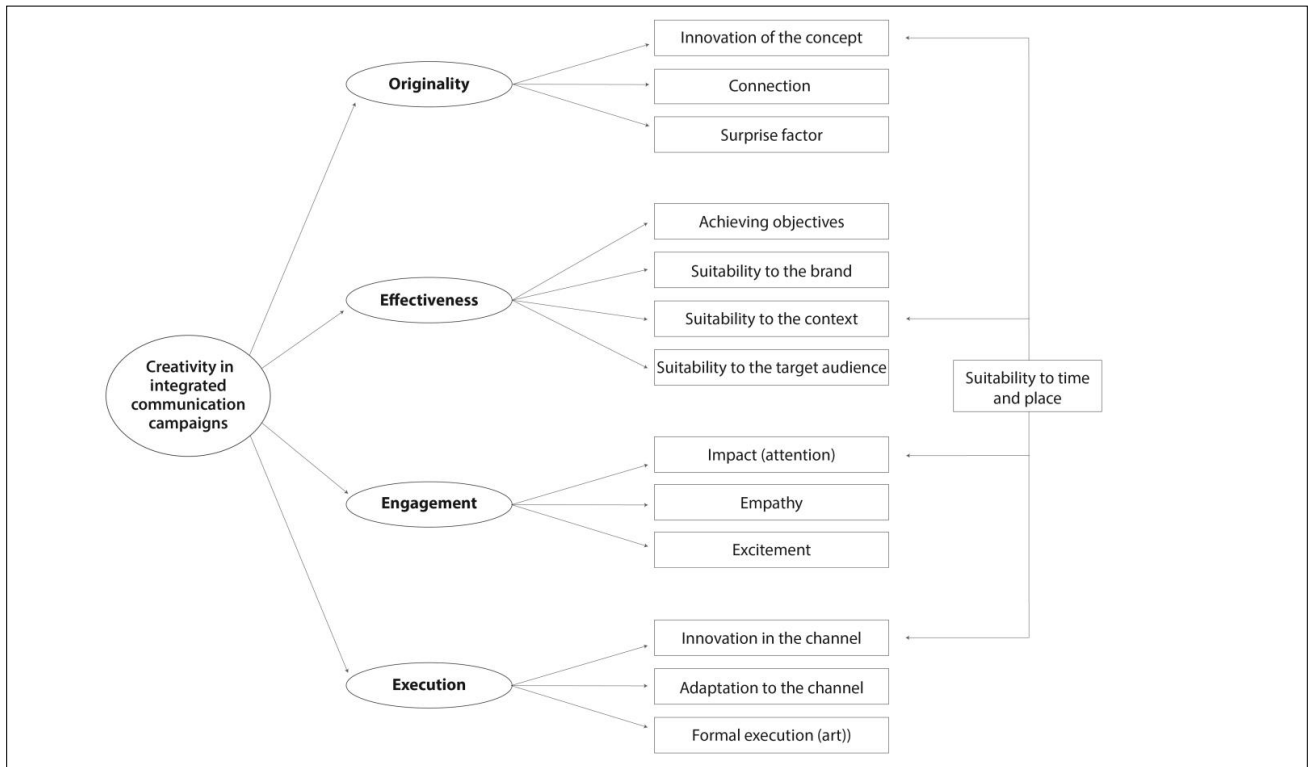
In terms of execution, innovation in the channel must go beyond the standard routine and be executed in the right format, time and place, with this being a determining factor in the effectiveness of the campaign (Ansari and Riasi, 2016). This approach was expressed by 55.5% of the professionals interviewed, and by 65% of the participants in a study conducted by Stuhlfaut and Yun (2011), who emphasised that advertising messages must be delivered at the right time and in the right place in order to have an impact and connect with the consumer. On occasion, the location depends on where consumers are looking for information or what type of media they are using. The issue is not the number of times a consumer is impacted by what they see, but about the connection, or affinity, that might occur after an exhibition, which is part of the creative concept.

Suitability to time and place is therefore considered to represent a transversal characteristic involved in the following: (1) innovation of the concept (originality); (2) suitability to the context (effectiveness); (3) impact, understood as the 'hook', or capturing attention (engagement); and (4) innovation in the channel (execution).

4.3.6. *The model*

Based on what has been analysed, a model is proposed herein that envisions 4 dimensions and 14 sub-dimensions. The dimensions indicate what creative professionals value as indicators of creative quality, and the sub-dimensions express the characteristics that contribute to the development of each dimension. Figure 1 reflects the model proposed for the evaluation of the creative quality of an integrated communication campaign.

Fig. 1. Proposed model for evaluating the creativity of integrated communication campaigns



Source: created by the authors

5. Discussion and conclusions

In the professional environment, assessment of creativity is guided by implicit knowledge or informal theoretical frameworks (Kover, 1995) acquired through experience, which are difficult to transfer among individuals and lead to assessments characterised by a lack of definition and by subjectivity.

When an attempt is made to emulate professional practice in the classroom (Gil, 2012), this situation is replicated in academic subjects related to advertising creativity and public relations within Advertising and PR degrees. In the teaching environment, the absence of systemisation in assessment presents two major obstacles with regard to the professional sector: On the one hand, it is necessary to translate the qualitative evaluation into a numerical mark that is comprehensible to students; On the other hand, students need resources to develop critical thinking skills and be able to

filter and optimise their creative projects with a certain amount of autonomy, yet this would result in minimal mastery of the subject. Research on the academic-professional gap reveals that the education of students is not adapted to the current requirements of the industry (Corredor and Farfán, 2010), the characteristics of which increase the complexity of creative evaluation. In the era of Integrated Persuasive Communication (Castelló y del Pino, 2019), the search for social relevance and the integration of audiences and channels have broken the barriers that have separated communication, product and entertainment, resulting in a convergence of Advertising and PR into integrated communication campaigns characterised by the search for earned media and liquid creativity that considers the use of media to be part of the creative solution. The all-encompassing scenario and the absence of patterns in media use increase the difficulty of identifying and verbalising the dimensions to be used in educating and evaluating students.

The objective of this research is to identify the dimensions implicit in the professional assessment of creativity in order to develop a resource that will allow students in Advertising and Public Relations degrees to assimilate criteria that will enable them to evaluate the creativity of integrated communication campaigns. This study is a precedent in Spain in identifying the dimensions of creative quality assessment in integrated communication campaigns based on an extensive review of the literature and statements made by creative professionals. The results show that the tacitly assumed theories used by professionals are in line with the theories or models used by academics. However, the academic world uses terms that are not verbalised, or are simply ambiguous in the reality of the workplace (Hubbard, 2018).

The model suggested herein could be useful in eliminating ambiguities in the interpretation of concepts during the different phases of the creative process. It could also help to verbalise uniformly the strengths and weaknesses of the creative alternatives during the reasoning process both in an agency as well as with a client. However, the most important contribution of this study alludes to the teaching environment, where the presence of indicators or dimensions of reference would help to evaluate and guide the creative work of students, as well as to develop a minimum body of knowledge on the subject in the medium-term by integrating the dimensions proposed in the model through practical application.

The absence in the professional sector of the identification of the dimensions implied in creativity evaluation has resulted in studies being carried out, which in the academic world (and in line with our study as well) have attempted to identify, categorise and translate this process into operational terms. The study by Tur (2018) should be highlighted due to the fact that based on a review of the literature, this author proposes a series of questions to assess the creative product in the educational context and evaluate students in creative subjects based on analysis and experimentation. Although several dimensions have appeared in other formats in previous studies, the model we have presented herein includes new aspects in both content and purpose. Regarding content, the following features should be noted: a) no other model introduces engagement as a dimension that brings together attention, empathy and excitement; b) none of the models considers the execution dimension from the dual perspective of innovation in channels and the formal aspect; c) this is the first model that presents suitability to time and place as a transversal characteristic.

As for the purpose, the distinct contribution of this model is its ad hoc design for implementation in the evaluation of integrated communication campaigns. Some earlier models present an approach that is either too general (Smith, Chen and Yang, 2008; Caroff and Besançon, 2008) or too specific (Koslow, Sasser and Riordan, 2003, 2006; Horn and Salvendy;

2006, 2009). Dimensions such as “synthesis” could be suitable for the evaluation of advertising graphics just as the “integration of corporate values” could become a relevant dimension if we consider the evaluation of events. In spite of this, given the heterogeneous characteristics of integrated communication campaigns in which creativity goes beyond the concept of innovation in the channel, it is necessary to apply a comprehensive view that covers the evaluation in various channels and formats without losing the overall vision of the campaign's objective. For this reason, this model has been built taking into account this scenario and the possibility of evaluating different types of campaigns, ranging from those focused on community building through experience to those that seek to change an audience's attitude, or break a social barrier, with the support of temporary insight reinforced by graphic and audio-visual production. Thus, the common pattern in the evaluation of integrated communication campaigns is to acknowledge the dimensions of effectiveness, originality, engagement and execution.

Of course, this does not mean that these dimensions are the only ones that exist, or that they should be the guide for all communication. Instead, it means that this model provides a reference by which to evaluate or filter integrated communication campaigns during the creative process. Moreover, integrated persuasive communication, which is highly creative, is the one that would reach the maximum gradation in each of the dimensions.

Based on the proposed model, future lines of research should include the design of a tool adapted to students in Advertising and Public Relations degrees that could be a training instrument to help guide them through the conceptual stages of the creative process in the classroom and systemise the assessment, thereby reducing subjectivity and making teacher assessment comprehensible.

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7. Annexes

7.1. Interview guidelines

Previous data from the INTERVIEW

1. Name
2. Year of birth
3. What is your academic background? How did you acquire your training in Advertising Creativity?
4. What is your opinion regarding what you learned about Advertising Creativity in the Bachelor's or Master's degree programme?
 - Are you satisfied with the training you received?
5. How many years have you worked in advertising?
6. How many agencies have you worked for, and what has been your position or professional profile?
7. What is your current position? / How long have you been in your current position?
8. What other professional positions have you held in advertising?
9. Have you worked as a creative specialist in PR? Have you worked in PR creativity as part of one or more advertising campaigns?
10. Have you ever worked freelance?
11. Have you ever worked as a lecturer? (Where?) How was the experience?
12. Have you ever been a judge in an advertising competition? (Where?) How was the experience?

Interview guidelines.

Opinions regarding the SECTOR

I would like to start by asking your opinion about the advertising industry.

1. Generally speaking, how would you describe the characteristics of advertising today?
2. How has the advertising industry changed since you started?
3. In your opinion, how do digital media influence the way advertising projects are carried out in the digital age?
4. What do you see as the role of creativity in advertising?

Acknowledging the idea

We are going to move on now to some questions related to identifying a creative idea.

1. What does a good advertising campaign need to have? / If you had to say what factors indicate the creative quality of a campaign, which factors would you choose?
2. What role do creativity and effectiveness play in determining a good campaign?

3. When validating an in-house idea or creative campaign, what criteria do you use to evaluate it? / What are the characteristics of these good ideas or campaigns?
4. What would you say is the relationship between creativity and planning that revolve around the creation of the idea and its approval?
5. How do you think your clients value creativity?
6. I would like to know your opinion about the differences between what makes a good campaign for an agency and one for a festival.
7. When you were a member of a panel of judges for creativity awards, did you follow any criteria?
8. We have found out that the Cannes Film Festival website does not specify a standard criterion for evaluation... [the website] indicates that on the one hand, originality is highly regarded, and on the other hand, creativity. How do you interpret the difference between originality and creativity?

Developing the idea

We will move on now to some questions that have to do with originating a creative idea...

We have talked about the industry and how to recognize a creative idea, and now I would like to talk about the strategy you use to originate the idea...

1. How are ideas conceived?
2. Have you ever used idea-generating techniques?
3. What role does the team play in the creative process?
4. What is the organisational structure of your creative department?
5. What has most influenced the way you carry out your work?

Closing questions

1. What do you think is the most important thing that students of advertising creativity should be learning?
 - a. Why?
2. Is there something I have forgot to ask that you think might be useful?
3. Do you have any final thoughts on your experiences in advertising?

Thank you very much for your cooperation!