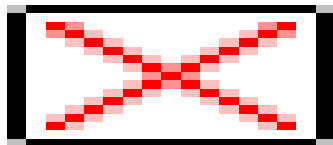


WARC this way

Fri, Jul 4, 2008 | Posted by [Antony Mayfield](#)



I presented at the [WARC Advertising & Consumers conference](#) yesterday on 'Social Media: Innovation and Earning Attention'.

My theme was around the need for brands' marketing teams and agency partners to invest resources in innovation to find new ways to engage with people in social media

One of the bonuses of speaking was that I got to hear from other speakers like [Faris Jakob](#), Naked's Digital Ninja ('what happens when geeks get to make up their own job titles?'), DDB's Andreas Moellmann and Mark Earls - a celebrity in adland, appears, though I just know him through his book Herd and [blog of the same name](#).

My overall impression of the day was positive: across the board marketers are challenging themselves to better understand how they can adapt to the opportunities and challenges of more complex, networked relationships with the people who are important to them.

What was also encouraging is that there is no easy consensus to fall into. People are not all coming from the same point of view and there some interesting debate around.

Mark Earls and Alex Bentley, an anthropologist from Durham University, stood out in this respect, by bringing data and academic to bear in debunking some of the widely accepted ideas and models brought to popular attention by Malcom Gladwell's Tipping Point.

They take a point of view that trends and shifts in mass behaviour are much more random and more to do with copying one another than with the influence of mavens and hubs within networks. It was a strong argument and I'm looking forward to digging into Herd while I'm on holiday next week.

Another committed counterpoint to some perceived herding in how marketers think about advertising came from [Thinkbox's David Brennan](#).

David was making a plea for 'the end of end-ism' (as proclaiming 'the end of TV advertising' and 'the death of TV'). He had some excellent research and insights about how TV spots are great for awareness and emotionally engaging consumers.

As interesting as his arguments and data was the tone in which he delivered his speech: it was an impassioned defence of TV, based in part on assumptions that the previous digitalistas' presentations - which he'd not seen - had been declaring the demise of TV.

For the record: I do talk about the shift from channels to networks as the dominant model of media, and

what that means for marketing, but I didn't talk about the death of anything. Nor did anyone else for that matter.

At the end it was announced that a 'blogger has been beavering away' taking down summaries of the presentations. Hopefully they will be up soon on the WARC site along with the presentations ' definitely worth a read I'd say?

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