



# Ireland’s top 100 brands embrace TV advertising

TV advertising plays a major role in sustaining a brand’s relationship with the consumer, as it drives memorability, sales, and long-term brand equity.

On the following pages, we will list Checkout’s Top 100 Brands for 2021 and those that have used TV advertising between May 2020 and April 2021 will have a TV icon beside their name



To say it has been an unusual 12 months in the world of FMCG brands is an understatement. FMCG businesses have experienced a wide range of disruptive pressures from Covid-19 and Brexit, and the resulting issues have been wide and varied, leading to changing patterns of demand (and supply) in the marketplace. Priorities shifted, consumers began to behave – and feel – differently and marketing strategies had to change dramatically to accommodate the state of flux brought about by various lockdowns.

The TV advertising industry has also undergone some dramatic changes in the last 12 months, with innovation moving to the heart of broadcasters’ and advertisers’ agendas. New programme formats, new booking processes, extra flexibility, and an expanded back catalogue, meant that TV stayed relevant for both audiences and advertisers as everyone adjusted to the pandemic way of life.

International and Irish case studies show us that brands that were in the enviable position to be able to continue to invest in communications, advertising and marketing during recessionary times have tended to emerge in stronger positions than those brands that had to decrease, or even stop, their marketing spends. Looking specifically at TV advertising (spot advertising and sponsorship), we can see that 58 of the 100 brands on the Checkout Top 100 Brands list for 2021 used TV advertising during the same period (12 months up to 25 April 2021). While year-on-year comparisons are difficult after such an unusual 12 months, there are some trends that can be observed.

### Maintaining mental availability

If we look at the top ten categories that are driving sales (confectionary, carbonated soft drinks, milk and milk alternatives, bakery, crisps and snacks, sport/energy drinks, biscuits, and ice cream), we can see that eight of the brands who are ranked at number one in those top 10 categories used TV advertising during the same period. These category

leaders, from Dairy Milk to Lucozade to Magnum, are all well-known for their brand-building TV advertising and TV sponsorships, which they continued to invest in over the past 12 months.

This brand advertising is key, as it means retaining mental availability with consumers by ensuring your brand is always among those that any consumer is considering. Mental availability means reaching a lot of people! In his book, How Brands Grow, Professor Byron Sharp of the Ehrenberg-Bass Institute for Marketing Science (part of the University of South Australia) wrote about this approach and how the real challenge of marketing is all about availability — availability in the mind and in the store.

The more physical and mental availability a brand can achieve, the more likely it is to succeed. When establishing marketing plans against these principles, television advertising emerges as one of the best and most effective tools for driving growth.

### Trying new things

Delving deeper into the Checkout Top 100 Brands list, we can see that, again, eight of the top ten brands on the list used TV. One of the most notable outcomes for brands from the dramas of 2020 was stories of consumers trying new brands for the first time – partly due to shortages of their preferred brands and different shopping habits, but also because of the increased time they had to research and sample alternatives. These changes are reflected on the Top 100 Brands list, where we can see that 61 brands maintained or increased their position (including new entrants to the list). While there is no telling how long this period of positive growth will continue, what is certain is that there are significant opportunities for brands to continue this growth into late 2021 and into 2022.

52% of those 61 brands are on the right track – having used TV advertising in the same period, many are using it again after being off air the previous year. A number of brands, including Dr Oetker, Felix, Hellmann’s and Magnum, substantially increased their TV investment, and also experienced improvements in their position on the Checkout Top 100 Brands list. While it is impossible to attribute the changes fully to their use of TV advertising, their brand building TV advertising



campaigns mean that these brands should be well-positioned in the mind of the consumer to both maintain and grow existing market share and defend sales volumes from competitors.

**Brand building**

According to UK data scientists, Les Binet and Peter Field, 50% to 70% of brand sales come from long-term strategy, rather than short-term activation. This means that those brands need to continue investing in channels that are reaching their target audiences, and nothing beats the mass reach of television. Forbes published a story last Autumn about how recessions have been pivotal moments for brands to win market share. They gave numerous examples, such as how, in 1920, Kellogg’s became the number one cereal brand in the US because they maintained their advertising investment through the Great Depression.

Half a century later, Toyota became the leading car manufacturer in the States by staying on air during the oil crisis. In the US in 2020, Procter & Gamble saw their net income rise by 5%. One thing that hasn’t changed over the last 100 years, let alone the past 12 months, is the power of TV advertising and the advantages for brands that use it.

Have a look at the list of the Top 100 brands on the following pages - any brand with a TV icon beside their name has used TV advertising between May 2020 and April 2021. ■

*\*\*Analysis uses the same Nielsen 12 months to 26 April 2021*  
*\*\*TV Advertising Source: TAM Ireland, Nielsen Media Ireland*  
*Includes TV spot advertising and TV sponsorship*  
*(Broadcaster Video on Demand e.g. RTE Player is not included)*

