



**the mcf**  
**McDONALD'S CREATIVE FRAMEWORK**  
IRRESISTIBLE ADVERTISING FOR AN ICONIC BRAND

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**DDB**

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# The McDonald's Brand



All you need  
to know,  
and how it affects  
the work.



**The content of this  
Creative Framework  
is 100% pure beef.  
It is endorsed  
and supported by both  
McDonald's and DDB.**

We both believe:

That a brand as big as McDonald's should only have the best advertising.

That Creativity is our most powerful weapon.

That a big idea can change everything.

That if an ad isn't Creative, it isn't selling.

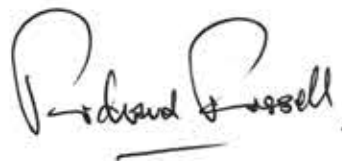
That great advertising is infectious and uplifting to those who make it, as well as to those who see it or interact with it.

We both want the same thing:

For us all to do the best work of our lives.



Pierre Woreczek  
Chief Brand & Strategy Officer, McDonald's Europe.



Richard Russell  
McDonald's European Creative Director, DDB Europe.

**The  
Creative  
Framework  
exists:**

To unleash iconic work.

To be a practical, useful, clear and simple communications model for client and agency.

To be referred to regularly, and gladly.

To focus thinking and effort while at the same time liberate and inspire.

To help develop sharper, more powerful strategies.

To ensure a common understanding of what the McDonald's brand is.

To ensure a common understanding of what a McDonald's ad is.

To share the best examples of McDonald's advertising and show how it should be done.

To make us learn from these ads and judge our future ideas against them.

To manage expectations of the final Creative work.

To save time and money.

To make the ads – and life – simpler, easier and more enjoyable.

To unleash iconic work.

**RULES ARE GOOD.**

**Boring but important small print.** This Creative Framework is designed to apply to all countries, no matter what their unique culture or requirements may be. McDonald's is a universal brand and its advertising should be universal too. This Framework allows us to create work that can travel; work that can be gleefully borrowed or adapted by any other market around the world. There is no reason at all why this can't happen. We just need to stick to this simple Framework based on people, food and universal truths, and then apply the highest standards of thinking and execution.



## Together we are good food, good people, good neighbour.

Good food with unique, iconic tastes; real, proper ingredients, and the choices you want.

Good people whom we champion and treat right, and are part of the reason you go to McDonald's.

A good neighbour who does what he can for both the community and the planet.

A company that is fundamentally good.

### This is our broader purpose. Our brand ambition.

It is how we want our customers and people to know us. It will govern how we behave and drive our decisions as a company.

It is a statement of principle to live by, and live up to, rather than a marketing line – meaning it does not play a direct role in our advertising. But all our work should feel like it could come from a company that has such a purpose.

Increasingly, our advertising messages should reflect this brand ambition. We must build trust in McDonald's by giving people the evidence that proves these six words are true.

Together we are good food, good people, good neighbour is not the empty claim of a huge corporation. It is not there just to make it look like we care. It is what we believe.

A belief that we have run with, and built on, and taken to places that Ray Kroc could never have imagined. It is a philosophy that drives our thinking and actions in a hundred ways; the results of which would make many a McDonald's sceptic think again.

## Together.

It's a slushy word, but this idea of 'togetherness' is truer and more powerful than you might realise. **Being together** is not just an internal rallying cry; it affects more of our behaviour and communications – and our customers' behaviour – than you might be aware of.

**Together** happens every single day in our restaurants, when millions of people spend time together chatting, laughing, connecting... and loving our food. It is why we are visited by people of all ages, types and backgrounds, who sense McDonald's is a place where they are free to be themselves. It is why our restaurants have become a kind of 'hub' where people can meet and gather; a familiar, trusted place that will be open when others are closed. It is why we champion families and are glad to be known as a family restaurant. And it is proved every two years at major football tournaments, when fans from one country sit side by side with rival fans.

**Together** is perhaps best known through the Ronald McDonald Houses, which help concerned parents stay closer to their sick children by providing over 7,200 rooms worldwide every night. It is being part of, and giving back to, the community – from local partnerships to team sponsorships; from school support to disaster relief. It is using your size and influence to encourage your suppliers to work in a more sustainable way. Or not work with us at all. On a smaller scale, it's being responsible for the area outside our restaurants by patrolling daily for litter, whether it's our litter or not. And it is why we helped train the thousands of volunteers at the 2012 London Olympics. The same volunteers who most people agree were the unsung heroes of the Games, and the glue that held everything together.

**Together** is why we advertise in the social space and seed compelling ideas that can connect us all. It is why we write so many great people stories in our TV ads. And, of course, it is all of our Creative agencies producing a collective body of irresistible work that sells our food, builds our brand and spreads the McDonald's message.



Firstly, an  
important question:  
**How might we  
make ourselves a  
stronger brand in the  
consumer's mind?**

How can we make sure our brand is not too 'soft' and that our communications aren't too 'nice'? How might we give our brand more power and presence, rather than one that just informs and entertains? Our ads will always have the human touch, but do we need more?

We are storytellers, and the best storytellers make people think. While we stand for simple, easy enjoyment, we still need to provoke thought, change minds and stimulate action, even as we entertain. Our advertising task is much more than just presenting our menu items and nutritional stories. As a brand, we must get across our beliefs too.

*We need to talk to people better.*

*We need to find the power of our own voice.*

**What is our voice?  
What do we believe?**

Well, it starts from the truth of the company. McDonald's was born out of a wish for democracy, and a fair deal for all. Ray Kroc, the founder of McDonald's, felt it was wrong that restaurants only came in two forms:

Fancy food that was expensive.

Poor quality food that was cheap.

He wanted to provide people with something new, and something good, that everyone could appreciate:

*Quality food at affordable prices.*

Right from the word go, Ray Kroc wanted to do the right thing, in the right way. He wanted all who worked for McDonald's to understand that they were doing something good by offering a new kind of food and experience. Sixty years later, this is still what we believe in.

Our journey together. For good.

Whether it's what we serve, who we are, or how we behave as a company...

...together we are good food, good people, good neighbour.

**i'm lovin' it**

This is the brand line that our customers see – our longest-running campaign line and the sign-off to every single ad. It's the thought that captures how people feel about McDonald's.

It's also the test by which every idea must be judged.

**i'm lovin' it** doesn't just refer to the burger in the ad, or the promotion, or the value promise, or the quality commitment... it refers to the idea in the ad too.

If people's response to the ad itself isn't **i'm lovin' it** then we have failed. It means our ad wasn't fresh enough; human enough; witty enough; engaging enough.

**i'm lovin' it** is both simple and powerful but, after being seen a thousand times over many years, it can only keep its truth and power by genuinely delivering on the emotion it describes.

If the ad isn't great, we are letting the line, and the brand, down.

A polite but firm reminder:  
**Every single ad must say...**





# The McDonald's promise: **Simple, easy enjoyment.**

Three words that the consumer never sees, but a summary of what McDonald's gives them that our customers would surely agree with.

McDonald's offers a simple, reliable moment of pleasure in a world that can sometimes be a grind. Let's face it: life is less about the big milestones, and more about the small moments, the small pleasures.

## **Three words that lead to a simple, logical and inarguable parallel with the work.**

McDonald's the brand offers  
simple, easy enjoyment.

So...

McDonald's advertising must offer  
simple, easy enjoyment.

The advertising must reflect the  
positioning of the brand.

Which means it must be enjoyable  
(as well as hard-working).

**Which means it must contain ideas /  
thoughts / stories / humour / images /  
headlines that are engaging and entertaining.**

Which means that a McDonald's print ad  
cannot ever be just a picture of the food  
and its name and a background picture.

And a TV ad has to be as enjoyable and  
as smart as the show it interrupts.

And a digital activation must be effortlessly  
rewarding to participate in.

Outward expression

**Emotion**

**i'm lovin' it**

End benefit

**Promise**

**Simple, easy, enjoyment**

Broader purpose

**Ambition**

**Together we are**

**good food**

**good people**

**good neighbour**

Combined with the five notes it's our global expression of enjoyment and appreciation.

The guide to how we act from communication to POP. The end result of what every interaction with McDonald's should feel like.

Our philosophy; our reason for being; our original and timeless truth; our enduring strength. Used to inform business planning, this is the company we would wish to be. A higher purpose to live up to.

**The  
company  
vision:**

To be our customers'  
favourite place and way  
to eat and drink.

**The  
communications  
vision:**

To create  
our customers'  
favourite ads.



## The McDonald's tone and feel.

Simple. Easy. Enjoyable.

Strong and confident.

An insightful observer of life and people.

A natural enthusiasm for things.

An underlying decency and warmth.

A local sensibility.

A celebration of good food.

Makes you smile.

Occasionally makes you think.

## McDonald's is a natural part of the fabric of our lives.

This is the great truth of the brand. McDonald's already plays a real, meaningful part in the lives of millions of people. It already fits right into the rhythm of our customers' lives. (Every day, our 34,000 restaurants serve 69 million customers in 119 countries throughout the world.)

*This great truth allows us to create natural, effortless people stories, centred around McDonald's, without it feeling forced or fake.*



## Yes, but is it a McDonald's ad?

## So what is a McDonald's ad?

Our aim is not to write great ads.

**It is to write great McDonald's ads.**

Every time we have an idea we must stand back from it and ask:

**Yes, but is it a McDonald's ad?**

The following quote is a few years old but, as a description of our Creative intent, it's hard to beat:

*"Wherever our advertising appears, it must be graphically, literally, musically and cinematically recognisable as a quality effort. It must reflect a rare and perceptible sensitivity to the times in which we live, the people to whom we are talking and the impression we leave on them. And it must have character that immediately identifies it as McDonald's advertising – a tone of voice, a look and an underlying decency and warmth that others cannot copy because they do not feel it as we do."*

*Paul D. Schrage, McDonald's International Marketing Conference, Chicago 1995.*

***"An underlying decency and warmth that others cannot copy because they do not feel it as we do."***

A McDonald's ad should make you feel good. It should have a spirit, a warmth and a positivity that is engaging and infectious. You should be glad you saw it, both for what it said and how it said it.

Leave the cool and flashy ads to others. McDonald's advertising should have a heart. Because when we do it supremely well – with invention and wit and charm – it makes for the most powerful, memorable ads of all.

**STRUCTURE**  
WITHOUT AN ORGANISING  
STRUCTURE AT THE HEART  
OF ALL OUR PROJECTS  
**WE ARE NOTHING**  
IT IS THE **STRUCTURE** THAT **ALLOWS THE**  
**MAGIC** TO HAPPEN

# Structure





## McDonald's are storytellers.

This has always been the case, and it is more important than ever.

People stories.  
Food stories.  
Company stories.  
Authentic stories.

Stories that make you smile.  
Stories that make you nod in recognition.  
Stories that make you think again.  
Stories that make you hungry.

We have stories to tell, and these stories will be the deciding factor in what people think of us. If people don't know how much we care about the quality of our food...if they don't know how tasty our new McWrap is...if they have forgotten just how special a Big Mac is...if they don't know what we stand for beyond our burgers... then it is because we haven't told our stories well enough.

**“We are not a  
hamburger  
business;  
we are a people  
business selling  
hamburgers.”**

*Ray Kroc, Founder of McDonald's.*

### We like people.

And we relish the chance to observe them, and celebrate them, in our ads.

The best McDonald's Creative people are the ones who have empathy with the McDonald's consumer. Who can put themselves in their place, and know how they think. Creative people who are fascinated by the human condition in all its absurdity, complexity and glory... and can't wait to try and bring some of this to life in a McDonald's ad.

As the man said, we are a people business.

We are here to make people happy, and deliver on their needs. Our food is not just fuel. It appeals to people on a deep, emotional level. So should our advertising. Our casting should reflect who our customers really are and create a connection that is genuine. Our ads should touch you, tickle you and delight you.

They should win people's hearts.



## The Four Pillars.

Each pillar focuses on one marketing challenge, leading to single-minded communications strands dedicated to a specific issue or opportunity.

## The Four Pillars.

Each pillar has a focused role for communications, which guides our approach to each task.



## Marketing plans relating to **Brand**.

Naturally, there are many stories we could tell throughout the year, but we can't media support all of them.

Matching our calendar stories with the brand perceptions we need to improve will allow us to decide which topics we should focus on. This way we can more easily decide what's most important and how we should weight them.

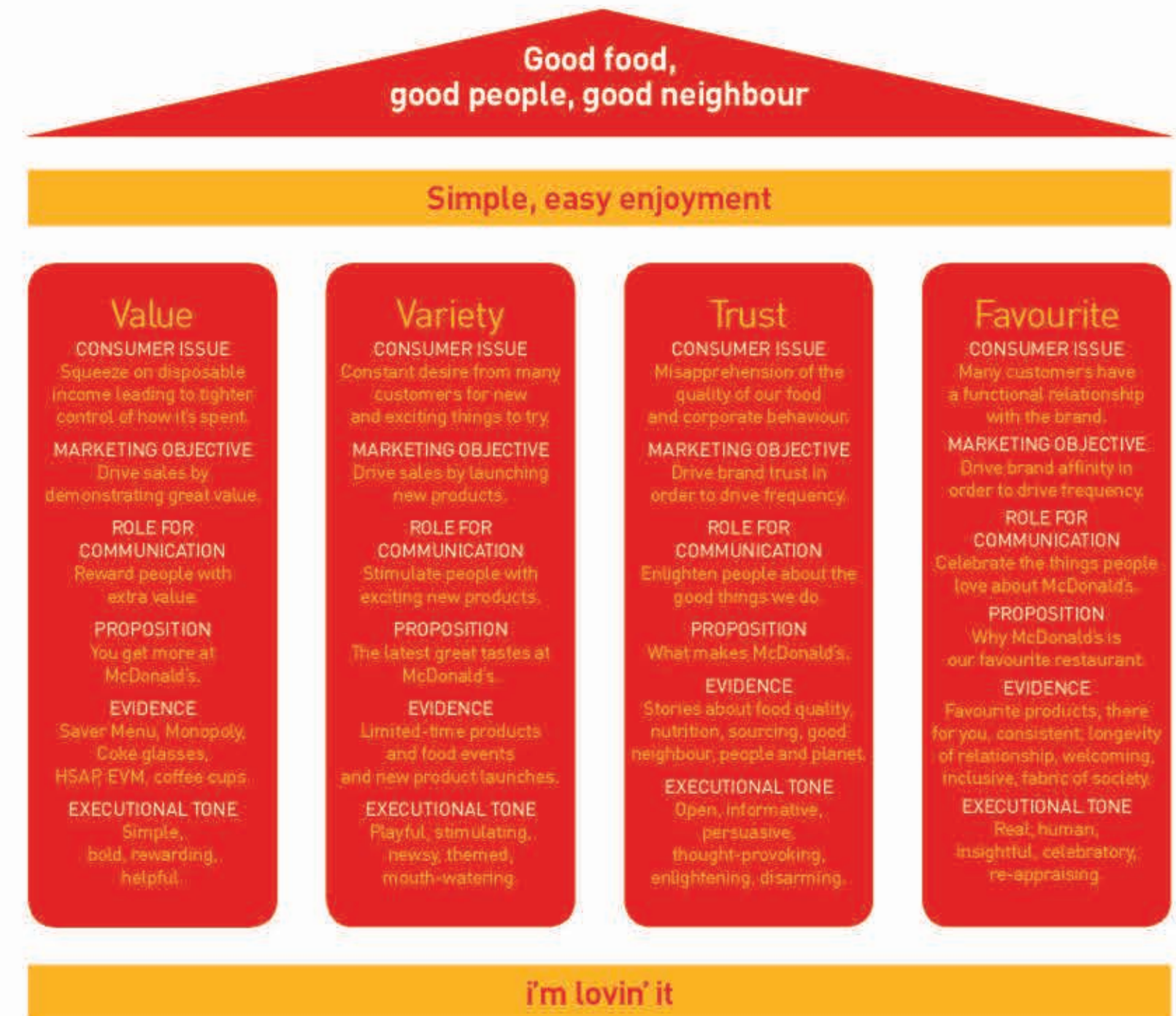
While we still want to sell as much food as we can, the biggest issue we face is brand health.

**In other words, Brand beats Promotion.**

## The Four Pillars.

The Pillars are an organising framework designed to help give order and balance to our communications plans. They help us manage brand perceptions over the long term whilst driving sales in the short term, and provide guidance for all our daily communications questions.

All McDonald's communications tasks can be grouped under four core Pillars. These Pillars make sure we focus on the aspects of our brand that are the most important and relevant to our customers and on the key brand issues we face: the brand affinity issue as well as perceptions of our Food and Integrity.



The Four Pillars created by Leo Burnett UK.



## Using the Four Pillars to generate the right briefs.

The Four Pillars can help us to define the direction for a brief.

In general it is quite easy.

EVMs ask for a Value brief. A Big Mac will be informed by the Favourite Pillar.

But what about the Happy Meal? Does it come under Value, or Favourite, or even Trust?

In this case, we need to decide by our communication objective.

Do we need to reinforce the affordability of the Happy Meal in order to reward families?

Then it's Value.

Do we need to reassure mums about our commitment to constantly improve the Happy Meal?

Then it's Trust.

Do we need to strengthen the emotional bond between families and the McDonald's experience?

Then it's Favourite.

## Has the time come to re-think our approach to the different pillars?

The secret of success is NOT to keep doing things the way we always have, even when we do it well. In order to stay ahead of the pack we need to look at ways to make our messaging more powerful and explicit. New ways of tackling traditional tasks.

At the very least, we must ask the right questions and consider the answers carefully.

**However we do it, isn't it time we got smarter?**



## Trust.

### Is a smarter, more thought-provoking approach to Trust needed?

Over recent years, consumer scepticism about the quality of our food and our corporate behaviour has become ingrained in mainstream culture. There is a greater awareness and distrust of big business, and the digital age has meant that personal comment, company stories, etc., can spread easily and colour opinion.

So when it comes to building deserved trust in the McDonald's brand, our ideas have to work harder than before. They have to be unignorable and thought-provoking, yet be delivered with a soft power. We have to strike the right tone or risk being dismissed.

Many of these stories have been told before – yet they have not landed in any meaningful way in the mind of the consumer – so we must find new ways of telling them.

### How do you make someone believe something they don't wish to be true?

You have to do more than just present a fact. You have to win people over and prove that you are telling the truth.

## Favourite.

### Is a smarter, more product-focused approach to Favourite needed?

The emotional bond with our customers, while still strong, is not developing at the pace we expect.

Is it time to make the ads for our Core products and services more emotive and effective? To re-energise, as well as remind?

Take the Big Mac. Should we treat it like a brand in its own right? Do we develop a bespoke creative approach that is consistent across all markets? At the very least, surely we should be creating more insightful and impactful strategies to leverage our most famous menu asset?

Sometimes, our Favourite ads don't feel like they 'sell' the Favourite. It is not enough to just tell a great human story that features the Core item. It needs to 'star' the Core item. It needs to make you re-appraise and reconsider the real value of that item. Just because a commercial shows someone using a drive-thru doesn't mean we're 'selling' the reasons why drive-thru is such a convenient and satisfying way of enjoying a McDonald's.

## Value.

### Is a smarter, more explanatory approach to Value needed?

Due to the economic crisis, inflation, increasing life expectancy, etc., people have less money to spend.

If, in three years' time, we were to ask them, 'which brands supported you best during the difficult economic times?', what should we be doing now to ensure that McDonald's is one of their answers?

Do we need more explicit messaging about the beliefs and principles behind our prices?

How can we better communicate our wish to help our loyal customers through difficult times? Shouldn't we be expanding the 'money' conversation with our customers?

Just doing ad after ad about menu items with a low price tag does not communicate the thinking and reasoning behind those prices.

We must give the 'why,' and not just the 'what.'

## Variety.

### Is a smarter, more brand-conscious approach to Variety and Food Events needed?

We don't always think of our Variety activity as having a role to play in building our brand. Sometimes it feels like the monthly menu item and its ads just have to make a quick splash in a short period, and they have done their job. But the stature of the Food Event and the stature of its ads are essential to presenting our brand in the right way.

The Food Events we support should feel significant and long-lasting in both flavour concept and ads. It is only when both are focused and iconic that we are helping to build equity.

We do this well with a Food Event like Great Tastes of America – the ads seem to have a greater stature and presence that matches the iconic status of the American flavours concept. But we should aim to do this more often.

Variety is an important piece of the bigger puzzle to build the brand.



## The importance of the creative brief.

The creative brief is vital. It cannot be paid too little attention, nor so much that it runs to ten pages. Even if time is short, it can never be left out of the process. (And creative work should never be used to 'test' a brief. Either the objective and message is clear and wanted, or it isn't. To wait and see what you get wastes time and money, and disrespects the creative brains who have worked on it.)

The brief is the starting point for everything and without a clear strategic objective, understood by all and approved at the highest levels of both client and agency, the creative work doesn't stand a chance. When judging an idea there are only two questions to ask, and in this order:

Is it on-brief?

Is it good? (Original; relevant; clear; motivating; on-brand; etc.)

If there is confusion over the first question, then there's no point even asking the second.

**We say again: the creative brief is vital.**

## The importance of insights.

As a brand, we are talking to people all the time, about a lot of things. They will only listen if we can make our messages resonate.

Insight strategies display perceptive, relevant, volume-driving thinking – with a compelling human insight at the heart.

Uncovering simple human truths and digging deeper for honest insights is the key to making our products and stories more meaningful. Deep down, we know this to be true, but we do not commit to discovering these insights regularly enough. It's time to stop just talking about them and start building their creation into our processes properly.

Please note:

A great insight can occur at any point in the creative process. Frequently, the insight that unlocks the big idea is not in the brief, but is unearthed by the Creatives as they think around the problem. We should all take responsibility for insight creation.

**Whatever pillar your message sits in, an idea with an insight at the heart of it will unlock a better emotional connection. It just will.**

VALUE. Only insights can bring our Value to life and give an emotional hook to a rational price. If we want to be seen as a real ally of our customers we must explore the human benefit of low price and show people that we know what's on their mind. Just writing the price big does not do this.

TRUST. Endlessly repeating the same old facts about our quality has not built the trust in our brand that our actions deserve. Only a smarter, more insightful approach to our truths and stories will create re-appraisal.

FAVOURITE. People are too familiar with our classic food. We need to remind people why they love them. A powerful insight can provide an angle on our core products that can put them front of mind again and trigger even greater appreciation.

VARIETY. Our rich advertising history has shown that we can write great ads for our promotions and food events without necessarily attaching an insight. But we still need them. Our food will always taste better if we can add a juicy insight to the crisp lettuce, succulent beef and tangy teriyaki sauce.

**Have we mentioned how important insights are?**

# Strategy



I'm lovin' it™



## So how do you go about uncovering real insights?

insight – the ability to perceive clearly or deeply; a penetrating and often sudden understanding, as of a complex situation or problem.

insight – (the quality of having) an understanding of something, the capacity to understand hidden truths, especially of character or situations.

insight – grasping the inner nature of things intuitively; instinctive knowing (without the use of rational processes).

It is a hidden truth, expressed in a startlingly original way, about why people think, feel or behave in a certain way, which then creates an 'a-ha!' (a surprising moment of clarity and recognition).

## What really counts as an insight?

### NO:

Observation.  
Conventional wisdom.  
What consumers say.  
What consumers do.

### YES:

Insight.  
Answers the question *why?*  
Why consumers say that.  
Why consumers behave that way.

## Observation is not Insight.

### Observation is fact.

I'm not satisfied with my job.  
Cleaning the house is hard work.

### Insight is feeling.

I never thought I'd end up like this.  
Cleaning the house keeps me from the things I really love: my family.

## From **TASK** to **IDEA**.

**TASK.** Always start with a clearly defined task that can be solved by the means of communication.

**TRUTH.** Dig to find (through data, research, discovery, etc.) a brand, product or human truth (i.e. fact) that is relevant to your task.

**INSIGHT.** Take the truth and keep on asking *why* until you arrive at a different view on it. A real insight will instantly make you think differently about a product, service, brand and what it can do for you.

**IDEA.** Bring the insight to life in a creative and impactful way.

## Little girl. Canada.

**TASK:**  
Remind families why McDonald's is their favourite place to eat and drink.

**TRUTH:**  
Kids love to go to McDonald's with their parents.

**INSIGHT:**  
McDonald's isn't just a place for food and drink – it's also where life happens.

**IDEA.**  
For the first time, a father finds the words to tell his daughter what she means to him.



## Lunch break. USA.

**TASK:**  
Motivate people to take their lunch at McDonald's.

**TRUTH:**  
Lunch breaks for office workers have turned into working lunches.

**INSIGHT:**  
Deep down, most office workers would love to reclaim their lost lunch break.

**IDEA.**  
Say it loud; say it proud. It's my lunch and I'm going to take it.



## Breakfast. Russia.

**TASK:**  
Introduce Russians to McDonald's breakfast as a modern way to start the day.

**TRUTH:**  
Breakfast is the most important meal of the day.

**INSIGHT:**  
We're no good at anything until we've eaten a proper breakfast.

**IDEA:**  
As people buy their breakfast at McDonald's, they reveal how much they need it.





## **Creativity in advertising. What is it?**

An idea that brings to life a message in such a way that it makes both the idea and the message irresistible.

**“Creativity is mistrusted.  
But we need it in our  
advertising more than ever.  
Today, an idea for McDonald’s  
needs to be smarter,  
bigger, brighter and more  
on-brand than ever before;  
whether we are making a poster  
outside a restaurant, telling  
stories in film, or unleashing  
a huge social activation  
that could circle the globe.  
Believing in the power of  
original ideas and vowing to  
consistently create them is the  
single most effective business  
move our company can make.  
The success of McDonald’s  
and how we are perceived as a  
brand is in the hands of our  
Creative agency partners more  
than even they might know.”**

*Pierre Woreczek.*

**Before we go on, let us all agree.**

A creative idea is not an extra idea that isn’t needed.

It is not something that will make the ad more complicated for consumers.

It will not ‘get in the way’ of the product.

It is the only thing that will sell our food and drink.

It is the only thing that will build brand affinity.

*“All around the world, we have seen that our most outstanding creative advertising gets significant business results. Creativity is not a ‘nice to have’; it is a must. The exciting pursuit of ideas is officially expected of all of us.”*

*Pierre Woreczek.*

# Creative





“Word of mouth  
is the best  
medium of all.”

*Bill Bernbach.*

From now on our ideas need to work however our audience wants them to. Gone are the days of one-way communication. Today, the rules are different. Our social ideas can't just be 'creative,' they need to 'create a wider desire.' Desire to participate; desire to share; yet still, of course, desire to buy.

Yes, we still make a ton of TV and a lot of OOH, but all of our messages are in the public domain and the digital space now, not just the social activations. Once they are out there, anything can happen. Whether posted online with praise (or ridicule), or shared amongst friends, or picked up by the media, or humiliatingly ignored, or played with in a way we didn't see coming, the world of advertising is more volatile, unpredictable and thrilling than it has been for years.

Our ideas are in the hands of our customers now, and more than ever they will have to prove their worth by provoking action beyond just purchase. And whether we are good or bad, people are going to have their say.

**So let's be good.**

## Our ultimate Creative aim:

To be one of the small handful of international brands that are so well-known for their belief in creative excellence that there is a tangible weight of expectation around every ad.

There aren't many, and we know who they are. Why can't we join them?

**McDonald's must be famous for its advertising.**

**Can McDonald's  
make people like  
advertising again?  
We will reap the  
rewards if we can.**

An ad without a creative idea in it is a piece of wallpaper that no one will pay any attention to. This is because no one cares about advertising. So it doesn't matter how delicious the new burger looks...or how interesting the promotional concept or idea is... or what great value the new Meal Deal is... or how reassuring the 100% beef fact is... **NOBODY IS PAYING ANY ATTENTION!** Nobody is listening because our ad is just one of the hundreds and hundreds of ads consumers are exposed to – and ignore – every single day.

**“...they won't  
listen to you if  
you're not  
interesting... and  
you won't be  
interesting until  
you say things  
imaginatively,  
originally, freshly.”**

*Bill Bernbach.*

So if we want consumers to care about our ads, and notice our messages, and visit our restaurants more... **we had better make our ads interesting.** We had better be one of the brands known by consumers for giving them interesting, rewarding ideas that are worth looking out for. Otherwise, we are in trouble.



**“It is important that people know what you stand for. It’s equally important that they know what you won’t stand for.”**

Mary Waldrop.

*We don’t know who you are, Mary, but we’d have liked to work with you.*

**What’s the single most important factor behind our creative success?**

**Set the bar high.**

There’s no getting around it. None of this works unless we apply only the highest standards of thinking, craft and execution.

It is officially required.

It is officially expected.

The greatest work comes from people who refuse to settle for anything less. Who will not tolerate being average and invisible. Agency folk, and client folk, who all think the same thing:

*“It’s an ad for McDonald’s – it cannot go out the door unless it’s good enough.”*

**How do we feel about awards?**

**We like them. But we do not obsess about them or pursue them to the exclusion of all else.**

We will not expect them or covet them.

We will not write our ads for juries, but for the consumer. We will not follow ad trends, but trust that ideas with timeless, universal values, executed well, will always resonate.

Our ideas will be judged best by the man in the street. We will create ads that become famous in the real world and win people’s hearts. And if they win an award too, then great. For one night only, we shall drink champagne out of high-heeled shoes.

And if they don’t, then that’s fine too. The most important thing is that the ad met our own high standards. And if it did, then we shall just have to celebrate with a McDonald’s shake. (We hear there’s a great new flavour this month.)

## What are the ingredients for a great McDonald's ad?

1. Compelling human insight.
2. Authentic storytelling.
3. Big, single-minded idea.
4. Uncomplicated message.
5. Highly engaging.
6. Real, not surreal.
7. Surprising.

## 1. Compelling human insight.

2. Authentic storytelling.
3. Big, single-minded idea.
4. Uncomplicated message.
5. Highly engaging.
6. Real, not surreal.
7. Surprising.

A human understanding based on a simple truth. An idea about personal behaviour, not product facts, features or benefits. A life thought that will strike a chord of recognition, but still be fresh enough to be worth saying. Obvious, but not easy to uncover – it should have the 'duh' factor [cue slapping of forehead]. A motivating truth that can trigger appraisal of the message and increase the chances of action. An idea that seems to speak directly to the individual.



There are two kinds of compelling human insight.

### a. Life behaviour insight.

DDB South Africa. Happy Meal. 'Make a deal' Print campaign.

Kids put parents under pressure to get them things, most of which you don't want to get. Next time it happens, use the promise of a McDonald's Happy Meal instead as a way to make it go away.









## People stories with actors.

Leo Burnett UK. Brand: 'Zoo' TV.

A very real, believable scenario featuring character types you don't normally see in ads. A small boy has divorced parents. Mum hands him over to Dad for the morning.

The boy knows he'll be going to McDonald's later, but he hatches a plan to make the day get even better.



There are two kinds of authentic storytelling.

## b. Company stories about how we do things.

Compelling; thought-provoking; reassuring; surprising; disarming; winning.

DDB Sweden. 'Winter' TV.

Original, insightful and thoughtful spot that makes you consider in a new way the care and effort that goes into the preparation of your food at McDonald's. It reminds us that winter is hard: hard for farmers, and hard for Mother Nature. And hard, in particular, for that tasty little bag of carrots you get for your kids.



VO TRANSLATION

*The cold has no conscience. The more the temperature is falling, the more everything stops. But there are a few who still get the work done. A few who are working on the fields and taking care of the land. A job that never ends. And all this because of the well-being of these.*

[We see a small bag of McDonald's carrots placed on a tray.]

There are two kinds of compelling human insight.

**b. McDonald's behaviour insight.**

DDB Australia. Brand. 'Bonus Fries' TV.

Don't you love it when you find some bonus fries at the bottom of the big brown bag?



1. Compelling human insight.

## 2. Authentic storytelling.

Believable stories that can draw you in and command your attention, whether their task is to amuse, charm, inform or enlighten.

3. Big, single-minded idea.

4. Uncomplicated message.

5. Highly engaging.

6. Real, not surreal.

7. Surprising.

There are two kinds of authentic storytelling.

**a. People stories with actors.**

Authentic characters who can win your heart and make you smile.

No clichés or stereotypes.

Believable situations with moments of human fallibility and imperfection.

People with character and personality who you'd like to know in real life, or eat next to in McDonald's.

Sharp dialogue that fizzles and crackles. Inventive scenarios that build and crescendo to a satisfying conclusion.

Stories that haven't been told before, spun with a lightness of touch.

Stories with humanity that stay with you.



1. Compelling human insight.
2. Authentic storytelling.

### 3. Big, single-minded idea.

A fresh, original solution that feels somehow special and important. An idea that stays focused throughout the execution.

A thought that is capable of extending across different executions and touch points without being diluted or confused.

4. Uncomplicated message.
5. Highly engaging.
6. Real, not surreal.
7. Surprising.



Leo Burnett UK. Happy Meal. 'Happy Box' TV.

A magical infectious spot that reflects the genuine joy that all kids feel towards that iconic red box. Take six giant, playful 'happy' boxes... and hundreds of wide-eyed kids... and let the cameras roll.

1. Compelling human insight.
2. Authentic storytelling.
3. Big, single-minded idea.

### 4. Uncomplicated message.

A thought about McDonald's that is easy to grasp and appreciate. A message that isn't hidden within the Creative idea or complicated by other unnecessary information.

An ad that makes it effortless for people to understand what we are talking about.

5. Highly engaging.
6. Real, not surreal.
7. Surprising.



TBWA Spain. EVM. 'Crush' TV.

Sweet, simple and to the point. A boy grows up with a huge undeclared crush on a girl at his school. Finally, his great moment arrives; she comes up to him as he eats his McDonald's take-away and asks if she can have one of his fries. But he doesn't have any! He just bought a burger. If only he'd bought an EVM – burger, fries and drink for not much.



1. Compelling human insight.
2. Authentic storytelling.
3. Big, single-minded idea.
4. Uncomplicated message.
5. Highly engaging.

## 6. Real, not surreal.

Nothing can happen in a McDonald's Core Product ad that couldn't happen in real life. For these kinds of messages anything weird or unreal is not on-brand.

We do not do them, no matter how much fun they might seem.

Within the Favourite Pillar, whenever we write people stories for TV, this is the golden rule that makes a McDonald's ad a McDonald's ad. This is what separates us from our competitors and elevates our advertising. Let them do the silly stuff. Let them be quirky and fleeting and superficial.

We shall be the authentic ones speaking to people's hearts and funny-bones in a more meaningful, memorable, powerful way.

7. Surprising.

## Why?

We want people to do more than just buy McDonald's. Or like McDonald's.

We want people to believe in McDonald's.

To believe in our food; our quality; our decency; our people. To believe that while we are big, we also try to offer the best experience and do the right thing.

So we need people to believe in our ads too.

And the more real and authentic they are, the more chance we stand.

*[Variety Pillar ads are different. These ads can be any kind of execution. In Variety we need the creative freedom to do whatever is needed to bring the Promotion or Food Event to life.]*

The following four ads are the kind of executions that are **NOT** right for McDonald's Favourite messages. We must **NOT** write ads like these anymore.

You'll also notice how it's much harder to like the people in these kinds of ideas. You either feel nothing about them at all or, as in two of the four ads, you actively dislike them. This is not good for the brand.



1. Compelling human insight.
2. Authentic storytelling.
3. Big, single-minded idea.
4. Uncomplicated message.

## 5. Highly engaging.

Executions that get noticed and then hold the attention. Considered creative solutions that break through by entertaining and evoking real emotions. No one seeks out advertising, so we have to win people over with the engaging excellence of our ideas. The more engaging our ideas, the more we create affinity for the brand, and the more we drive preference for McDonald's.

6. Real, not surreal.
7. Surprising.



### DDB USA. Brand. 'Joe and Frank' TV.

Beautifully written story of two old guys in McDonald's and the stylish older lady they take a shine to. Funny, sassy dialogue between the two of them, mixed with real humanity in their tale. You can't help but love it.



### DDB USA. Frozen Strawberry Lemonade. 'Lemon-Aid' TV.

A talking lemon tells us how lemons always get a bad rap and how no one appreciates them properly. But now, thanks to McDonald's Frozen Strawberry Lemonade, everyone loves them. Great writing. Funny and insightful. An engaging and unlikely character. A powerful property for the brand.



### TBWA France. Happy Meal. 'Happy Song' TV.

Happy and friends do a song and dance. This ad is not about having a great idea – it is all about the execution. It can only be great if craft and care are given to every single second – which is exactly what they've done. The song is infectious and feel-good with real character and appeal. The dance scenes are rich and inventive. The way the boxes move makes you smile. The whole ad is filled with visual and musical ideas. And only a 90" could do it justice. Everyone who worked on this ad – client and agency – went for it. And it shows.



1. Compelling human insight.
2. Authentic storytelling.
3. Big, single-minded idea.
4. Uncomplicated message.
5. Highly engaging.
6. Real, not surreal.

## 7. Surprising.

This is, perhaps, the key to everything. If we want people to notice us and re-appraise the brand, we are going to have to find fresher, more surprising creative solutions. The reassuring familiarity of McDonald's is a big plus in the high street, but it counts against us in our ads.

How can we tell authentic and human stories, but still surprise? How can we tell flavour and ingredient stories in unexpected ways? How can we tell quality and trust stories that provoke thought? How can we engage in a new fashion?

We have to do things that aren't normally done.

Tell stories that aren't normally told.

Use media that isn't normally used. Of all the questions we should ask of our ideas,

**IS IT SURPRISING?** is the biggest.



**BETC Euro RSCG France. Brand.**  
**'Come as you are' TV.**

If you are a restaurant that encourages people to 'Come as you are' then you have to put your money where your mouth is. If you'd asked people which brand would be the one to write a commercial about a young guy's struggle to tell his parents he is gay, ten to one they wouldn't have said McDonald's. This is the kind of surprising communication that makes people re-think the brand and feel it has a relevance to their lives today.

## Does every part of this list apply to every brief we are likely to tackle?

**No We should use our judgement as to what works best where.**

Clearly, some elements apply everywhere:

Big, single-minded idea.

Uncomplicated message.

Highly engaging.

Surprising.

But the others need freedom and flexibility.

Compelling human insight and Authentic storytelling don't generally apply to seasonal menu items and promotions. (Though there could be exceptions to that.)

Authentic storytelling will lend itself mainly to TV spots.

Real, not surreal may well not apply to Value and Variety tasks.



The following four ads are the kind of executions that are **NOT** right for McDonald's Favourite messages. We must **NOT** write ads like these anymore.



A young guy wrestles a bear while his friend asks everyone what percentage of beef is in a one-hundred-percent-beef McDonald's patty.



A fisherman has his McDonald's take-away eaten by a shark. Next time, he lures his nagging wife onto the jetty, gives her his McDonald's, and waits for it to happen again.



As a young guy opens his Big Mac, buildings and objects around him come to life and sing the Big Mac 'Two all-beef patties...' song.



Two rather creepy young kids in a car make various objects come to life and ask 'Are we there yet?'. The radio, the toys, a passing bird; they all put pressure on their parents to stop the car at McDonald's.

**i'm lovin' it**

**In the early 1990s, a well-known professional golfer found himself waiting on one of the tees during a tournament, while there was a delay in the group ahead. As it happened, there was a mobile McDonald's restaurant in the tented commercial area nearby, which caught his eye. Unable to resist, he nipped over and bought a Big Mac. Just as he returned to the tee, the hold-up cleared and he had to drive off straight away. His caddie offered to hold the Big Mac while he took his shot.**

**"No way," said the golfer. "You'll eat it."**

**So he used the Big Mac as a tee, to stop anyone taking it.**

**(This is in the middle of an actual tournament, remember.)**

**He put the burger down, and placed his ball on top. He then played a perfect shot, driving the ball miles down the middle of the fairway... without disturbing the Big Mac at all.**

**Calmly, he picked up his precious burger, and began eating.**





## A new idea: True stories.

A completely new creative approach that can be adopted across all markets to increase affinity for the brand in a believable, lovable and powerful way.

**True stories** of real people and the things they do that entertainingly prove how much they are loving McDonald's.

Other brands cannot do this. Because other brands are not loved in the way that McDonald's is. Millions of people genuinely love our food and our experience. So let's find their stories and turn them into ads.

## True stories: Giving new power to i'm lovin' it.

**i'm lovin' it** has been running for ten years. This is the perfect way to reignite it.

Here's what we said earlier:

**i'm lovin' it** is both simple and powerful but, after being seen a thousand times over many years, it can only keep its truth and power by genuinely delivering on the emotion it describes.

Telling **true stories** can do this.

The stories on the following pages are exactly the kind of thing we mean, and would make great TV or Print. Let's get out there and find more.



i'm lovin' it

In 2006, a 23-year-old staff member in a McDonald's restaurant in Cardiff, Wales, won £1.3 million on the National Lottery. He gave up his job... but 18 months later, he went back to it.

"They all think I'm a bit mad but I tell them there's more to life than money," he said. "I loved working at McDonald's before I became a millionaire and I'm really enjoying being back there again."





“

**I will never forget the day I passed my driving test. Only minutes after passing, I went straight to my local McDonald's drive-thru. Could there be a more perfect place to go for your first official journey as a driver? I've had hundreds of McDonald's over the years, but this one was special. I deliberately went round twice, to get another drink.**

Elaine

”







In 1997, Jemimah Thompsett from England got married in the city of Hong Kong. It was a wonderful day, everything a young bride would want. Except, at the end of the reception, Jemimah was starving. (She wasn't much good with chopsticks and had only eaten about three prawns all day.)

As everyone left the reception, she announced that she had to have a McDonald's. In full wedding dress she walked in and ordered a Quarter Pounder with Cheese.

"Do you want fries with that?"

"I do."

i'm lovin' it



# TV

The best place to tell our compelling stories.

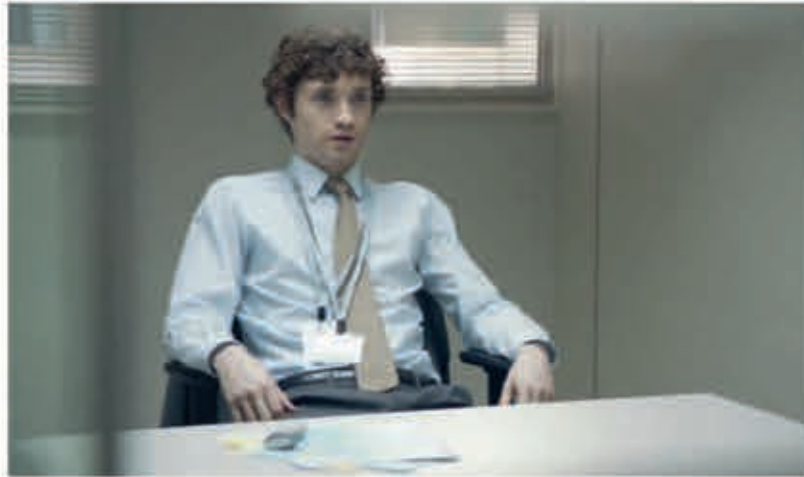
## Favourite TV.

Memorable, engaging human stories  
(with nothing unreal).



TBWA USA. 24-hr drive-thru.  
'Sleeping Baby' TV.

One of the all-time great McDonald's ads. A wonderfully human and inventive idea, made with love and skill and attention to detail. In the small hours, a father takes his baby out in the car to get him to fall asleep. He visits a 24-hour drive-thru for a much-needed coffee and Egg McMuffin, but can't stop for fear of waking the baby. Not just a brilliant story, beautifully told, but it makes the crew members human and likeable too. Some of their observed moments are a true pleasure. An ad you can watch again and again.



**Leo Burnett UK. Brand. 'First Day' TV.**

A young guy's first day at his new office job. Come lunchtime, after a bewildering morning full of a hundred new things to remember, he needs the familiarity of something he knows and loves – a Big Mac Meal. Great writing. Lovely observations. Terrific storytelling.



**Leo Burnett UK. Happy Meal. 'Being Six' TV.**

There are many things that make the life of a six-year-old hard. Luckily, there is also McDonald's and the thrill of a Happy Meal, which almost makes up for it. Lovely casting. Perfect music. And the inspired decision to shoot in black and white.

**Needham, Harper and Steers USA. Big Mac. 'Two all-beef patties, special sauce, lettuce, cheese, pickles, onions, on a sesame seed bun' TV.**

You wouldn't think that an advertising jingle whose only words were the listed ingredients of a hamburger could capture the imagination of a nation. But that's what happened in America in 1974. The genius was in turning the slogan into a tongue-twister and challenging people to get it right. And if they could say it in under four seconds as they ordered in a restaurant, they got a drink free. All of which turns a food idea into a human idea, and shows how ingredients and food appeal are no barrier to amazing, effective creativity.





## Favourite TV can also be Brand TV.

Favourite TV doesn't always have to mean Core Products. Sometimes anything goes, as long as it feels McDonald's and makes you feel good about the brand. It doesn't have to feature any food; it just has to be uniquely McDonald's and uniquely engaging.



### Cossette Canada. Brand. 'My Little Girl' TV.

People's lives play out inside McDonald's restaurants. When you're visited as often as we are, it can't help but happen. That's why it's okay to write great people stories that don't sell a particular product. This one features a father and daughter and tugs at the heartstrings. It works beautifully, thanks to a killer last line of dialogue.



### TBWA Netherlands. Brand. 'Zorro' TV.

The truth is that McDonald's brings people together. McDonald's is something that millions have in common. So when a young boy wants to make friends with the girl opposite but she doesn't want to do any of the things he does, there's really only one last suggestion he can make.  
Cute, funny and true.



### Cossette Canada. Brand. 'McDonald's?' TV.

A simple and undeniable demo that proves how McDonald's really is something we all share. Real people show how McDonald's can create a spark of connection amongst complete strangers, even in foreign countries.



## Variety TV.

Playful, fun messages that reinforce the theme. Any kind of idea or style, including animation – but always with a feel-good McDonald's tone.



TBWA Belgium. Free Coke Glasses.  
'Car Roof' TV.

Another super-simple idea: glasses on the roof of a car, vibrating/dancing to the music. The glasses are the hero. The idea makes you want them. Hypnotic, appealing and persuasive. Job done.



Leo Burnett UK. Fruitizz. 'Fizzy Kids' TV.

Kids jumping around trying to make the fruit they're holding fizzy. Simple and fun. Human, yet product-focused.



DDB Sweden. Happy Meal Books.  
'Fairy Tale' TV.

One night, Mum tells her little girl a fairy tale. But she's an awful storyteller and it's an awful story. She really needs the fairy tale books, free with McDonald's Happy Meals. Another great example of how to give a promotion a human angle.



Leo Burnett UK.

### Great Tastes of America. 'Road Trip' TV.

A deceptively clever mini-campaign that ties together a trip round American cities and their different tastes, with two guys driving round Britain and stopping at different restaurants for the different burgers.

Funny little dialogue vignettes, playing off each city. A great example of how to turn Food Events into relevant, hard-working people stories with engaging characters.



## Variety TV.

They can be people stories if we want, but we should allow ourselves to write different kinds of ideas too.

For instance, a **World Cup** promotion will have so many human emotions attached to it that it would probably make sense to use people to illustrate it, as long as we still have explanatory cutaways that show the promotion's mechanics.

Whereas a **Monopoly** promotion may well require a more graphic visual approach, using the famous characters from the game, or the iconic-looking board. For instance, an animated ad featuring the Dog and the Car going into a McDonald's that has been added (built) in the corner of the board sounds like an interesting start to an idea.

A **McXican Burger** (hey, good name!) might have a real human story featuring a man in a McDonald's with a Mexican-type moustache, being bought the burger by his friend.

While a **Hawaiian Burger** might have a script featuring a 6" toy hula girl wiggling her hips next to the burger and getting progressively more excited as the voice-over goes through the ingredients of the burger... in turn, making her pull off ever more fancy dance moves and shapes. (Clearly not real life, but fun and relevant.)



## Value TV.

Simple, clear and memorable price messages, giving an emotional hook to the rational price wherever possible. Any kind of idea or style, including animation – but always with a feel-good McDonald's tone.



DDB Singapore. McValue Lunch. '12.01pm' TV.

Simple and insightful. Two guys wait for a second outside McDonald's until 12.01pm and the McValue promotion starts. Quietly powerful.



Leo Burnett UK. £1.39 Bacon McDouble With Cheese. 'Money-saving Tips' TV.

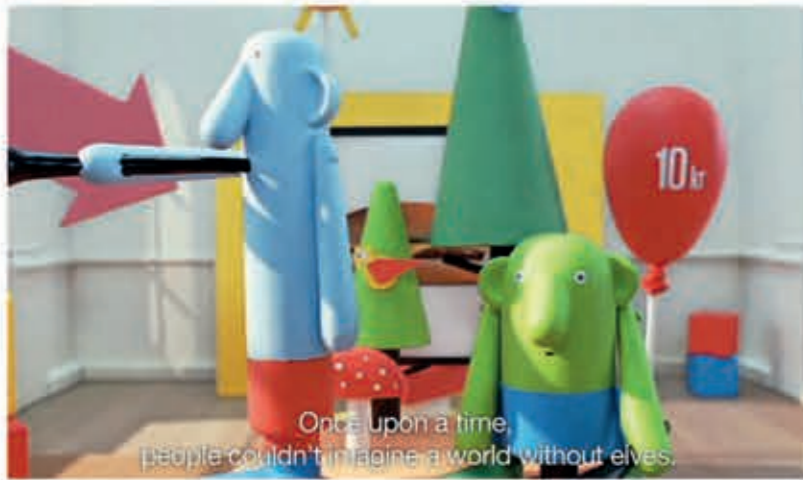
Two money-saving tips from McDonald's – one quirky and humorous; one a great value burger. There are many ways to tell a Value message and within the Value Pillar our people stories don't have to be authentic and real. This is surreal and silly, but within Value that is still on-brand.



DDB USA. Dollar Menu. 'What can I get for a dollar?' TV.

We see how little you get for a dollar in life. A smart and amusing way of highlighting just what good value a dollar sandwich is from McDonald's. You can't help but come away agreeing that McDonald's is wallet-friendly.





**DDB Sweden. Value Big Deals. 'Can't Believe' TV.**

Another ad where it's all about the execution. As a voice tells us about the things that people once found unbelievable, it draws a parallel with the prices at McDonald's, which are still hard to believe. The shooting style is very home-made and the whole ad feels very approachable, friendly and un-corporate.



**DDB Denmark. Value Coin Offers. 'Coinhunters' Launch TV.**

An interactive idea that got thousands of people hunting and scanning the one million virtual coins spread across Denmark, to claim their free menu item. It proved irresistible and reinforced McDonald's as a value brand.

**Trust TV.**

Honest, believable and impressive stories of the good ways in which McDonald's behaves. From food quality... to restaurant cleanliness... to sustainability... to pride in our people... to enriching communities... to bettering the planet.



**DDB Norway. Beef Farmers. 'Journey' TV.**

A friendly crew member shows us where McDonald's beef comes from. Literally. He walks all the way from his restaurant to the farmer, across rivers and mountains, in order to introduce us to him. This ad does a lot more than just give us a fact. When we tell our Trust stories with humanity and charm, they become more believable and more effective. And it's always good to give our crew members character, and show that they are people too.





Leo Burnett UK. Brand Trust.  
'The A-Z of M' TV.

Kids and adults on a farm give us a charming tour through a dozen quality and sustainability stories. By the end, thanks to the weight of evidence and the engaging, lo-fi way we've been told them, we are rethinking our attitude to McDonald's. (The UK client has said that they didn't need anyone to remember particular stories, just take in the breadth of the company's actions and our clear commitment to doing the right thing.) What could have been an overdose of information is instead compelling and persuasive.



TBWA France. Happy Meal Nutrition.  
'Happy Box' TV.

A surprising story of how your Happy Meal has changed for the better. A perfect tone of voice through lovely stop-frame animation as the box opens, and we see simple drawings of the differences. The subjects of quality, sustainability (of both food and toys) and wholesome options are all covered. Again, this kind of idea takes bare facts and brings them to life with real style. It even includes a neat Value sign-off at the end.

## The food.

If we really want to sell our food, rather than just show it, we need to think further than just the visuals.

As well as looking natural and mouth-watering, McDonald's food should capture the imagination with insightful, chord-striking human writing too.

How we bring a menu item to life is as important as how we light it. If we can talk about our food in smart, human ways, with relevance and imagination, then we are not presenting any old food, but McDonald's food.

The following commercials are totally food-focused. But they are clever, witty and watchable. And they really, really, really make you want to lick the screen.





DDB USA. Angus Bacon.  
'Angus Axiom No.11' TV.

With a burger as full of good stuff as the Angus Third Pounder, it pays to take your time when looking for the right point of entry. Ah, the bacon bit... good choice.



DDB USA. Angus Deluxe.  
'Angus Axiom No.16' TV.

A warning to carefully observe the differences between the Deluxe Angus Burger and your hand as, in the heat of the moment, the lines can become blurred and the consequences painful.



DDB USA. Angus Mushroom.  
'Angus Axiom No. 57' TV.

While eating a Mushroom and Swiss Angus Burger one may lose the ability to tell the difference between a simple napkin and your shirt sleeve. Sadly, the sleeve is not as effective at removing cheese from about your face and mouth.



DDB USA. Quarter Pounder With Cheese.  
'Mouth' TV.

If the Quarter Pounder With Cheese makes your mouth water then you might want to talk to your mouth – with your mouth – and tell it to ease up. Just make sure no one's watching as your lips move.

DDB Australia. Grand Angus.  
'A Little Bit Fancy' TV.

A fancy voice tells us how fancy the  
Grand Angus is and shows us the proof.  
The onion is the purple one...



## Print

How can we make our Press/00H more consistently creative  
and engaging, while still hard-working and effective?



**Print.** To start with, we all have to acknowledge one thing:

That the ad on the other page, with a nice picture of the food and a great creative idea, is selling the menu item better than the ad below, which has a nice picture of the food, but no idea.



Yet, every year, we make hundreds of ads like this...



... and hardly any like this.

Print is the ideal place to hero our great food – be it seasonal menu items or much-loved favourites. But a shot of the food isn't enough. We must have an engaging idea in there too, to bring the menu concept to life and sell it properly.

We must never again make a Print ad with no idea in it.



There are basically two ways to create great McDonald's food Print.

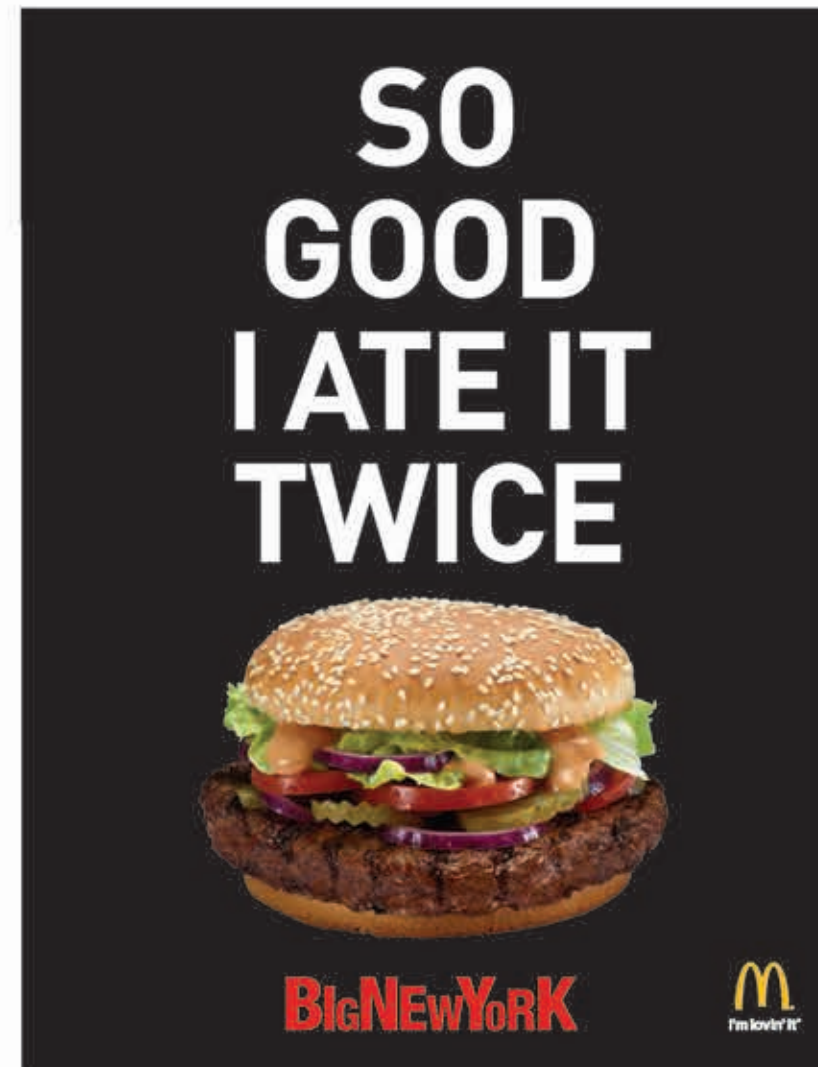
## 1. Write engaging headlines.

Here's a headline for a New York Burger, playing off the famous line 'New York, New York. So good they named it twice.'

(New York City is in New York State, so it's known as New York, New York.)

The line is doing two things: reinforcing the New York theme and driving taste and desire. Not bad for a line that's also funny and playful.

Every new burger will have a theme around it – we just have to write a headline that plays off that.



## 2. Have visual ideas.

Here is a striking visual idea from Finland – beautifully simple, clever and rewarding, with the menu item as the star of the show. (It even has a subtle coffee-in-the-morning message, as it is an early morning sky they've used.)



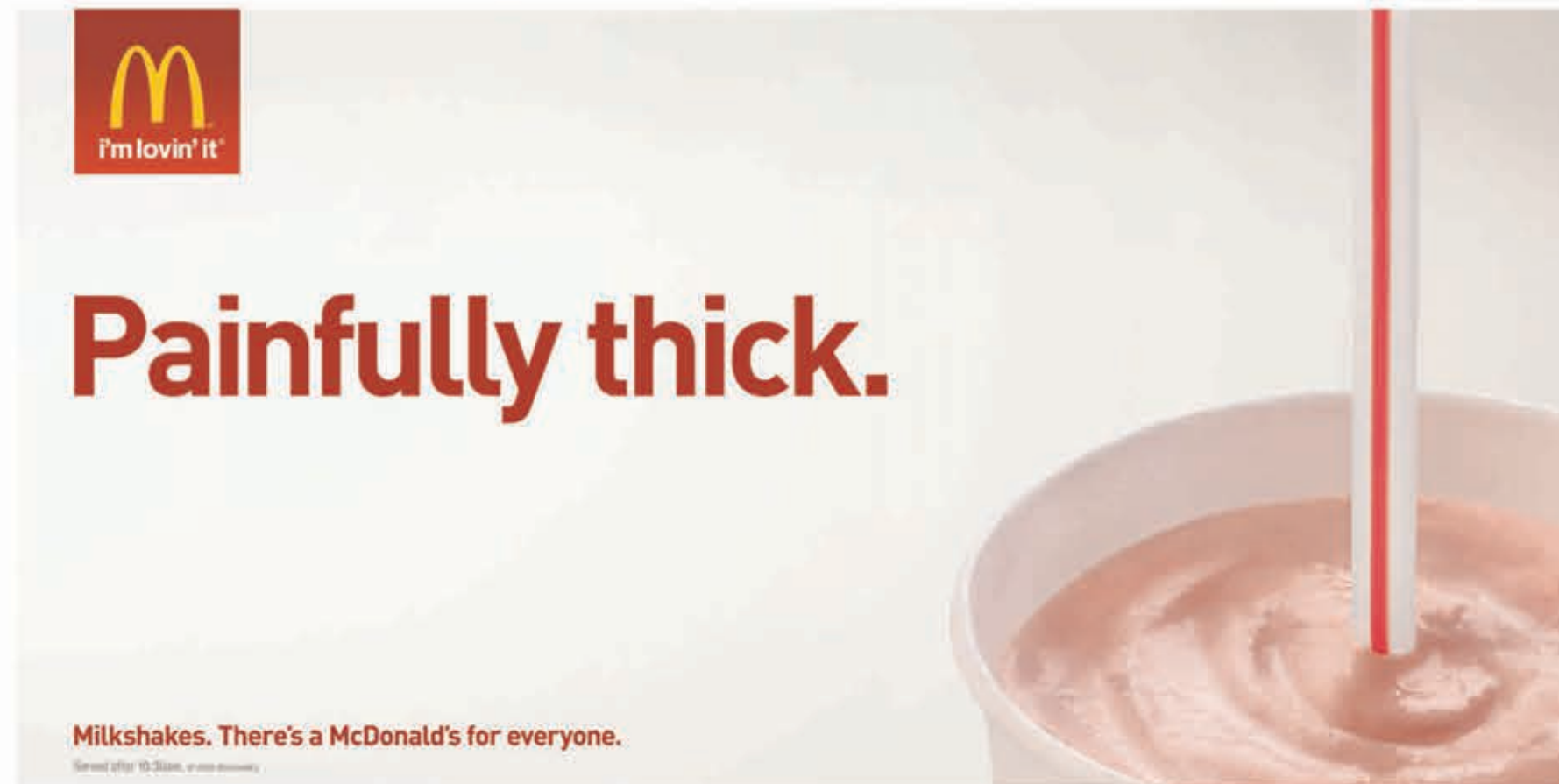


# How might we approach Print for each of our pillars?

## Favourite Print.

A picture of the food (or service) and an engaging headline (or visual idea) based around an insightful truth that reminds people why they love it.





Idea: An office worker gets that mid-afternoon, low-blood-sugar sleepy moment, and yawns – his arms making a 3 o'clock shape. Message: Let McDonald's help you get through the afternoon with a McWrap. Note: What a pity the creative team made the copy line and food shot so ridiculously small! It stops a great idea from being properly effective as persuasive communication. Almost certainly, they thought the ad stood more chance of winning an award if it was 'cleaner.' Another reason why we shouldn't care so much about awards.



An extremely smart ad from Sweden, and one of the few to really make you think about what McDonald's offers, and how their food means something to you.

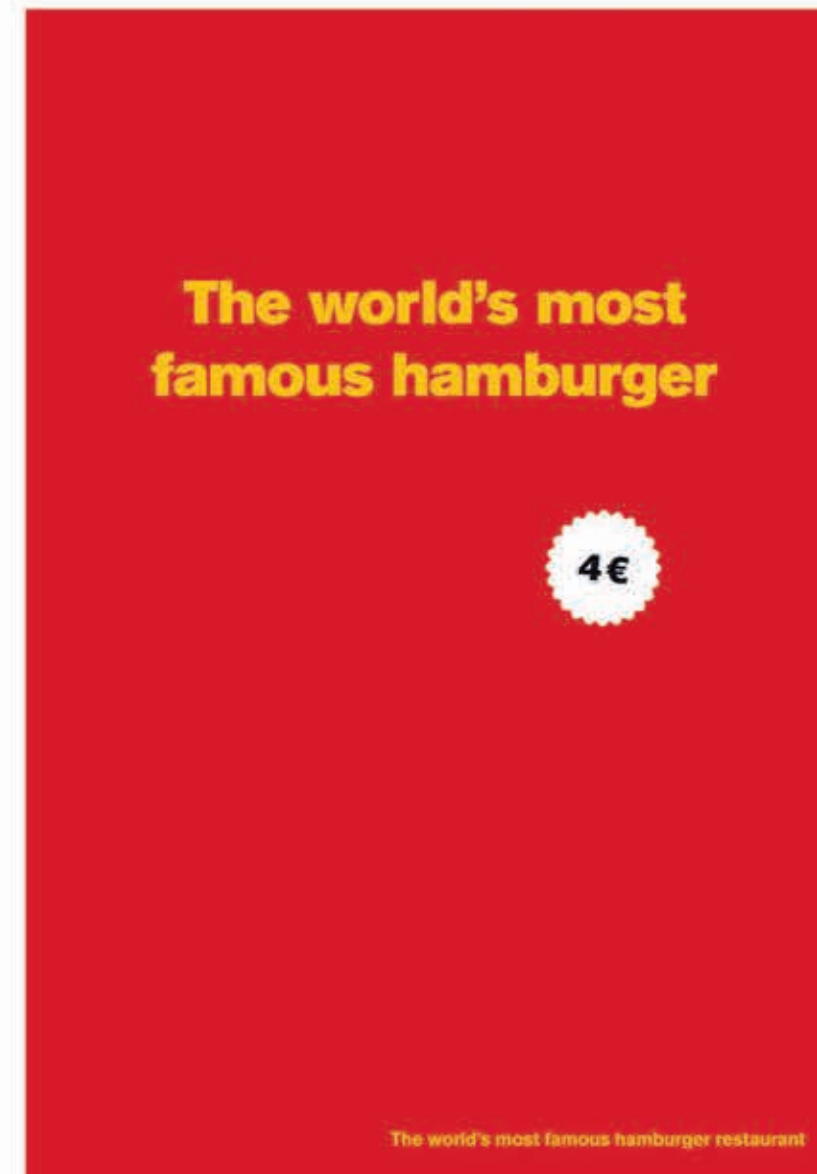
When you read 'The world's most famous hamburger,' you work out for yourself it must mean the Big Mac. There is no other contender. But you have decided this yourself, not been told it by the ad. Your opinion is confirmed by the red and yellow McDonald's colours, and reinforced by the end line 'The world's most famous hamburger restaurant.' After all, who else could that be referring to?

Leading you gently by the hand, the ad has reminded you how special this iconic burger is.

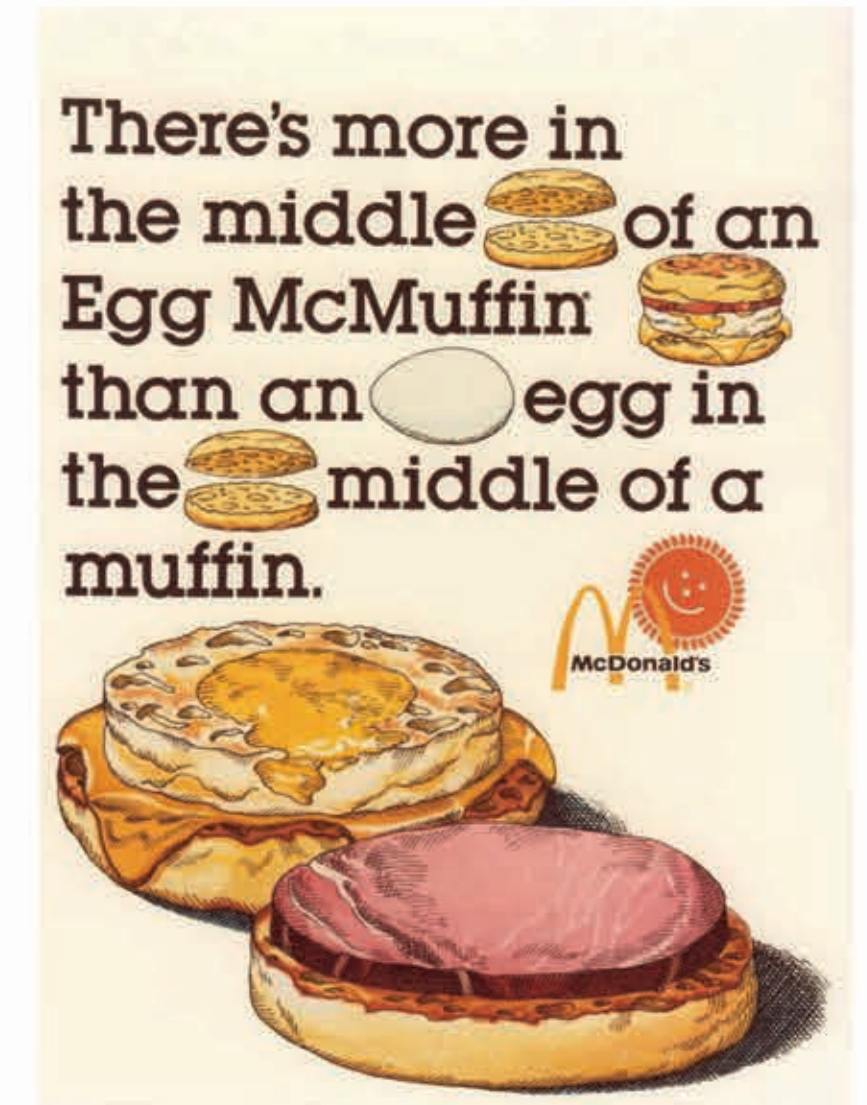
In fact, it has made you remind yourself. And then it has one more trick. It gives you the price of the Big Mac, and makes another thought occur to you. "You know, that's really not much to pay for the world's most famous hamburger, and a sandwich I love."

Even though there is no brand name or Golden Arches, it is actually the most branded ad McDonald's have ever made... because it actually makes you think about the branding, and the brand, and how special the food is, and what good value it is.

Now *that* is a hard-working ad.



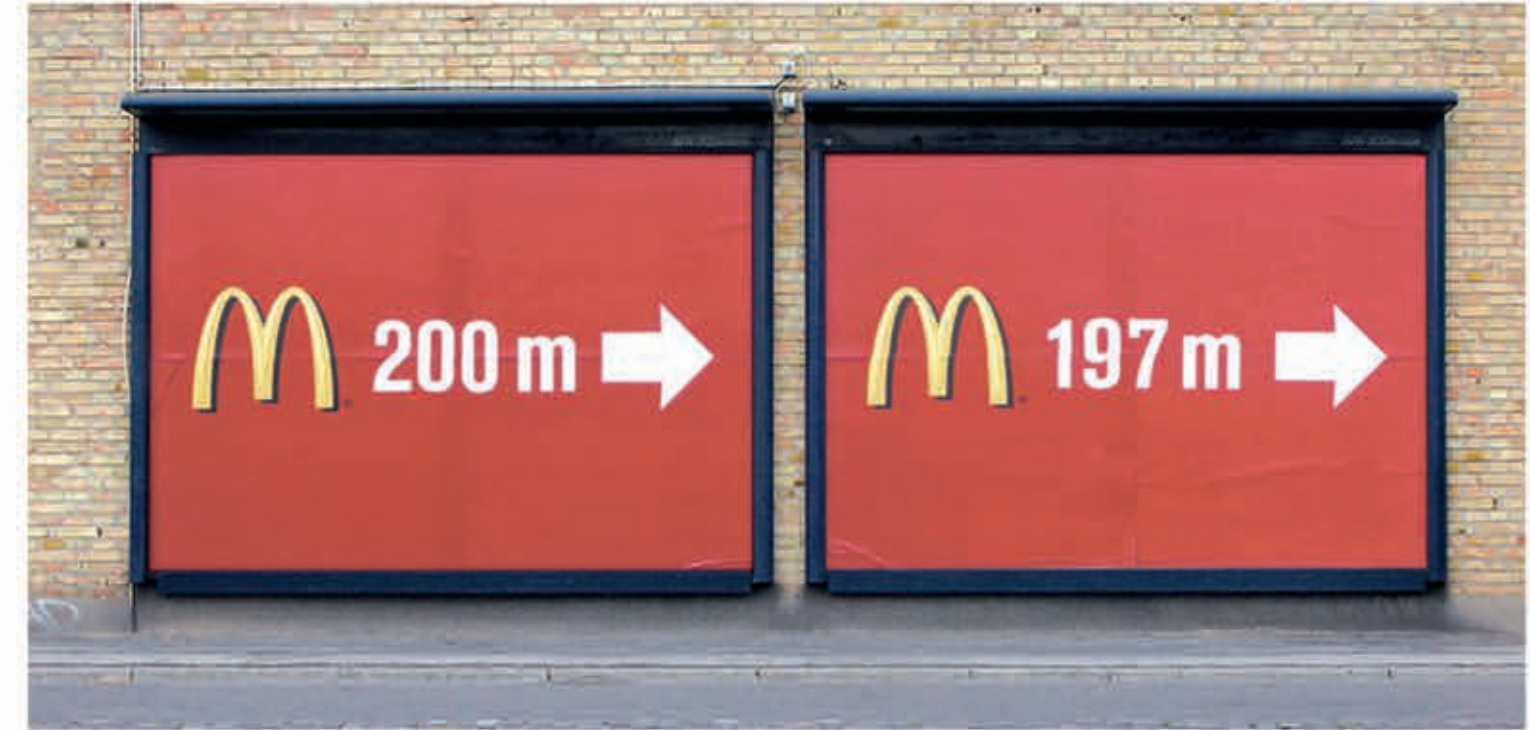
This is an American ad from 1978, when they introduced the Egg McMuffin. What's great is the way it talks to people. There was obviously some confusion about what was actually in an Egg McMuffin – was it only egg? – so they told people about it with a really distinctive and conversational headline. This kind of line is very different to the sort we write today. And the look of the ad is certainly different too. This ad should encourage us to find creative solutions that are a little less obvious and expected.





## Favourite Print can also be Brand Print.

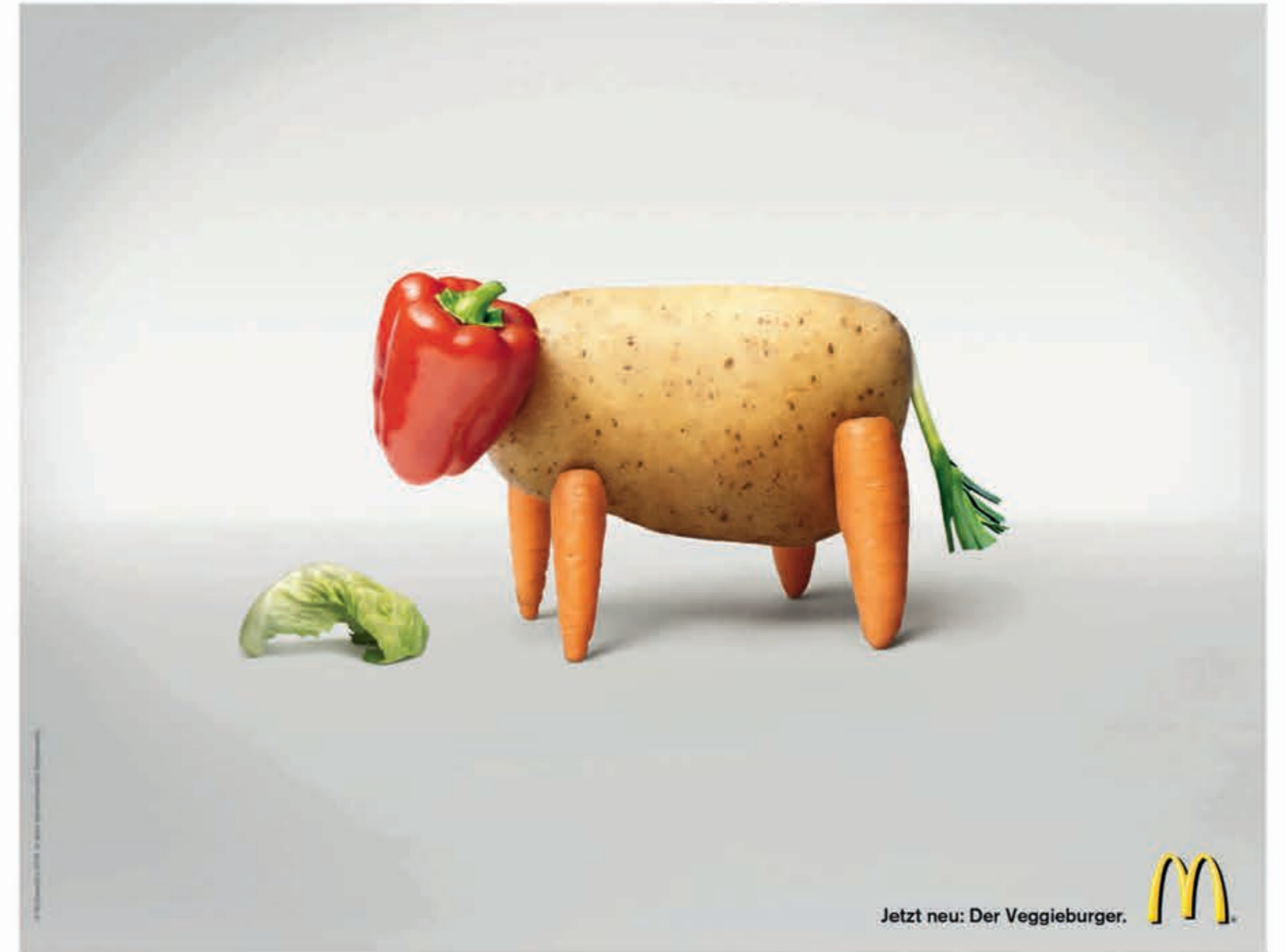
Favourite Print doesn't always have to mean Core Products. Sometimes anything goes, as long as it feels McDonald's and makes you feel good about the brand. It doesn't have to feature any food; it just has to be uniquely McDonald's and uniquely engaging.





## Variety Print.

A picture of the seasonal menu item and an engaging headline (or visual idea) that reinforces the unique theme or ingredient.



## Value Print.

From the UK, an old ad but a great one. The ice cream and the 20p price create a 'face' visual that also communicates taste and enjoyment. Simple, clever, hard-working, rewarding and effective. This ad is why McDonald's employs the best agencies.



## Always ask: What is our Value story?

Where possible, we should consider whether our Value Print ideas should explain the thinking behind our prices and give our point of view. Sometimes there is a bigger story than just the price itself.

## The Student Loan Menu.

An insightful campaign (overleaf) that introduces a helpful value menu for students. The menu targets students through a flexible pricing scheme, which changes throughout the month depending on the state of the student's finances.

On the 25th, when students receive their loan, prices are at their highest.

They are gradually reduced each week until the 24th.

The offer is brought to life in a series of illustrated, article-like ads that describe students' changing finances – ranging from 'a smorgasbord of opportunities' in week one, to 'filing for bankruptcy' in week four.

**It is a campaign that makes students feel that McDonald's really understands them.**





The Edmonton Sun is turned into a McDonald's Breakfast Burrito — wrapper and all.



## Value Print.

A picture of the featured menu item and an engaging headline (or visual idea) that emphasises the price, which is strongly featured in the ad. (Just writing the price next to the food is not enough.)





# THE STUDENT LOAN MENU

The menu that adapts to fit the state of your wallet

You have just received your student loan, and once again you find yourself conducting the orchestra of life. No money clip in the world can muster the huge sums of money you have at your disposal. Abraham Lincoln, Andrew Jackson, Benjamin Franklin – they are all your friends and never shall you part.

WEEK ONE OF FOUR

YOUR BANK ACCOUNT: A MORGANSTERN OF OPPORTUNITIES.

In the bar you carelessly abandon the last flat sips of beer in the bottle to reward yourself with a new one. With a pitying smile you watch the other poor saps fondling their lukewarm bottles and nervously picking away at the labels. Where is their dignity? On your way home you generously tip the cab driver even though he knowingly chose the long way.

You spend your weekday lunches chucking away at various restaurants, Lunch-boxes? Noodles? It all seems like hazy memories of another time, another you. The new you watch as the bills dance out of your wallet while humming along to the waltzing tune of your own success.

You relieve your pockets of change by giving them to the pan flute-playing street musicians and opt to "Donate" when recycling cans. You lend money to friends without paying attention to who borrowed what. You buy a piece of clothing labeled "dry clean only".

When your movie urge beckons you refrain from downloading. Indeed, you pay just as you're supposed to. You are a stern as well as sudden supporter of copyright.

Those contributing to culture needlessly need to be rewarded for their work, and should people such as yourself, in the top tier of society, stop defending that belief – then who will?

One morning you even consider paying the TV-license, although you quickly dismiss the absurd notion. Even you have to draw the line somewhere.

On a regular Tuesday you find yourself shopping at the deli counter

in the grocery store. Garlic marinated olives, sundried tomatoes and artichokes all snuggle comfortably in your shopping basket, waiting for – well, what exactly? You're not that good at cooking to be honest, you merely want to feel like one of those boisterous TV-chefs with greasy bushy hair and buttoned-up shirts who yell at people, smoke their home butchered veal over wet cedar wood and massage organically grown herbs into it a meaty and passionate fashion.

Speaking of buttoned-up shirts, you decide it's about time you sort out a gym membership. You've thought about it for a long time, just never got round to it. You want a body that oozes as much success as the rest of you, and now the time has come. You choose the most expensive gym, with the largest number of trendy fitness classes, even though sweating in sync with other people is the most humiliating thing you know. Considering how frequently you open your wallet, however, it's important what cards show when you do.

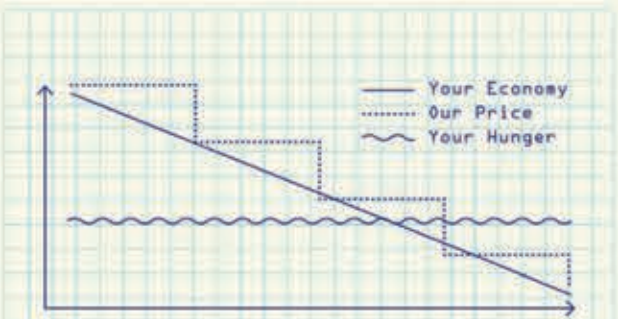
While queuing at the ATM you notice an extremely good-looking person behind you, so you "forget" to take your bank statement, hoping to impress. Wealth is, as everybody knows, a powerful aphrodisiac. To further emphasize your opulence to visiting friends, you place

“  
On your way home you generously tip the cab driver even though he knowingly chose the long way.”

an issue of Connoisseur Magazine in your bathroom – a bargain from an antiquarian bookstore. It's important that the impression you make on your friends is on par with how you view yourself.

When your parents call to see if you are getting by you swiftly brush away their concerns. You're on your own now, fending for yourself. You are the architect of your own happiness. Besides, you have a couple of great business ideas tucked away that you'll probably unleash any day now. You're basically just a necktie knot away from your first million and the very thought of it makes you grin.

Considering all of this you consequently find it rather immaterial, like a grain of sand in your monetary desert, like a scanty twig on the sturdy tree of your wealth, that the Student Loan Menu is currently at its priciest:



### What is the Student Loan Menu?

As a student, the current state of your economy greatly controls your way of life – you're simply filthy rich one week to find yourself flat broke the next. That's why we've devised a menu adapted to the fluctuation of your wallet: when you are in the green it costs a little more, and when you're in dire straits it's cheaper. This way you can always come to us for a great meal.



See you at McDonald's

# THE STUDENT LOAN MENU

The menu that adapts to fit the state of your wallet

Suddenly you find your funds don't seem as endless as they did last week, and slowly your sense of money's worth is starting to return. Your loud rants about scrapping all social welfare in favour of lowered tax on champagne now appear a little rash in the cold light of reality.

WEEK TWO OF FOUR

THE REDUNDANCY OF OVER-ABUNDANCE.

Now, when you go out, you pay with your credit card so you don't feel compelled to leave the change on the counter. On your way home you make sure you share a cab with others, even though it means you have to walk for a bit. You naturally ensure you don't end up riding shotgun.

You still treat yourself to the cinema, but when your friend forgets her wallet you lend her money for the ticket instead of treating her. Those days are over, and your subtle attempt to tell her is perhaps not so subtle. In fact, you're now trying to remember everyone who borrowed money from you last week, and you write down their debts on a small piece of paper that you carry with you at all times. You bitterly regret last week's careless

and generous statement "oh, it'll even out". How could you say that? Everybody knows that friends who borrow money are exactly the ones with whom it never evens out.

You start eyeing the Tupperware boxes in the kitchen cabinet, but don't do anything about it. You want to stay in the illusion of wealth a little longer, even though it's starting to crumble. You know you should save a little. To cure your bad conscience you Google articles about SMS loans and indulge in horror stories about people far more desperate than you.

You and your friends decide to spend a Saturday evening in –

to cook, drink wine and just hang out. Somehow you manage to make yourself head of the snacks department. Vegetable sticks and dip, that's nice and fresh right? And not too expensive. The voice in your head knows it's actually more cheap than tasty, but you try to convince yourself that it's the other way around.

You call your parents. Not because you need anything – on the contrary, you're still a successful single sailor on the vast ocean of your own private economy. You simply have a feeling it might be good to stay in touch. You know, just in case.



Frustratingly, one of your buddies reminds you that a mutual friend's birthday is coming up. And to make matters worse, it's an even number. Do you have to buy a gift? And if so, how much does it have to cost? You frantically try to remember if he got you anything for your birthday, and disappointingly realise that he did. And it was a good one. Disappointing indeed.

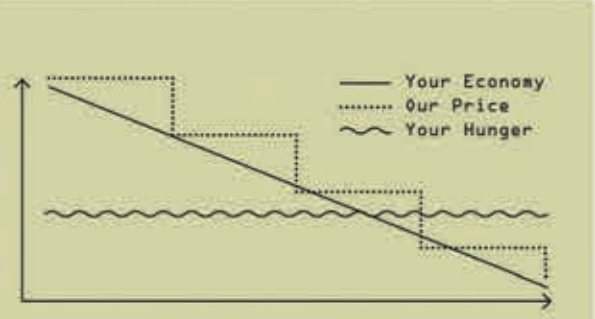
You contemplate making him a gift certificate – to buy him dinner or brunch some day. That way you can push the problem ahead of you, and hopefully your friend will forget all about it. It's a fifty-

“  
You want to stay in the illusion of wealth a little longer, even though it's starting to crumble.”

fifty shot and you will get extra props for spending lots of valuable time crafting a beautiful card. Personalised gifts are so rare these days. Yes, that's a great idea.

You no longer decide to press "Donate" when you recycle. Not because you're cheap, definitely not, it's just that you're not sure the money actually reaches the people who need it. There's nothing wrong with a little critical thinking.

Although you try to put it out of your mind, it's now dawning upon you that the end of the month is pretty far off in relation to your economy. Luckily, the Student Loan Menu is a little cheaper this week at only:



### What is the Student Loan Menu?

As a student, the current state of your economy greatly controls your way of life – you're simply filthy rich one week to find yourself flat broke the next. That's why we've devised a menu adapted to the fluctuation of your wallet: when you are in the green it costs a little more, and when you're in dire straits it's cheaper. This way you can always come to us for a great meal.



See you at McDonald's



## Trust Print.

Informative, enlightening and persuasive words on the particular subject or topic, with an evocative and relevant picture. Headline ideas, or visual ideas, or both.

At the risk of repeating ourselves:

*Our messages are not getting through and we must think differently. We can't just present our truths and stories – we must sell our truths and stories.*

The ad on the opposite page is the calm and measured response that the UK took to the bad publicity generated by the film 'Super Size Me.' The tone of voice is exactly right; not outraged and defensive, but confident, honest and utterly reasonable.

It walks you through the flaws in the film's premise and tells you surprising and relevant facts about the McDonald's menu and its wholesome options. It makes the film seem biased and manipulative and makes the reader feel more respect for the brand than they might have felt before.

**It is a classy, persuasive piece of advertising in the truest sense, and a reminder that when we talk to people in the right way, there is no end to the things we can make happen.**

## IF YOU HAVEN'T SEEN THE FILM 'SUPERSIZE ME,' HERE'S WHAT YOU'RE MISSING.

From the familiar logo at the bottom of the page, you won't be surprised to read that this is not exactly a rave review of 'Super Size Me,' though what may surprise you is how much of the film we agree with.

Taking the theory that 'if you eat too many carrots you'll turn orange' a step further, the film charts one man's mission to eat every meal at McDonald's for thirty days – our average customer would take over six years to eat the same amount. For maximum effect, he reduces his physical activity right down to the bare minimum. The effect is indeed quite dramatic. (Apologies for spoiling the ending, but it's hardly a cliff-hanger.) He puts on weight. Lots of weight.

The film is slick, well-made and yes, somewhat annoyingly, doesn't portray McDonald's in the most favourable light.

And yet, what we do agree with is its core argument – that if you eat too much and do too little, it's bad for you.

What we don't agree with is the idea that eating at McDonald's is bad for you.

We've always been famous for our Hamburgers and our Fries, but we wouldn't suggest that they should be anything other than part of a balanced diet. A balanced diet that, you may be surprised to hear, you can increasingly find at McDonald's.

Over the last few years, we've added a lot more variety to our menu. The Premium Salads in our new Salads Plus™ range count towards two of the recommended five daily portions of fruit and vegetables. Our Grilled Chicken Salad typically has just 295 calories and only 3.6% fat.

And contrary to what you might think from watching the film, rather than just soft drinks and shakes, we offer a wide range that includes Evian® natural mineral water and pure orange juice.

It may also surprise you that we are one of the biggest retailers of prepared fruit packs in the country. Your children can swap their Fries (now served with typically 23% less salt) for our Fruit Bags, or they can opt for a Fruit Shoot from Robinsons,® organic milk or a fizzy drink. And you'll be pleased to know our breast meat Chicken McNuggets™ now have less salt.

Of course these are only a few of the changes we've made, and there are plenty more in the pipeline. What can't change overnight is people's perceptions, but we would like to think that in five to ten years time we may be as famous for our salads, our fruit or our organic food as we are for our Hamburgers.

For more information on the points discussed above visit [www.supersizeme-thedebate.co.uk](http://www.supersizeme-thedebate.co.uk) or call 08705 244 622.





# THE STUDENT LOAN MENU

The menu that adapts to fit the state of your wallet

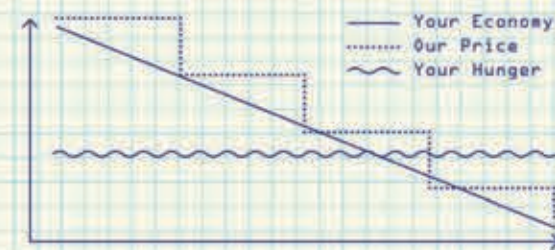
Your economic situation is starting to feel precarious. You're by definition not entirely penniless just yet, but it's high time to start preparing for the grim last week of the month. You obviously need to cut down on expenses, but it's equally important to create new sources of income.

WEEK THREE OF FOUR

DISH FALLS ON YOUR FINANCES.

You begin by booking up all vacant laundry-room slots in the student dorm. These can later be negotiated with desperate neighbours for a reasonable compensation, a bottle of wine or two. The wine can also be sold or traded for other commodities with needy friends. You scour the communal fridge in the kitchen. With a veteran touch you let groceries with short expiry dates change places with newer ones from the others' shelves.

While you're at it, you exchange the light bulbs in your own room for the new ones that someone forgot on the kitchen counter. Perhaps not the nicest thing to do, but an act simple enough to excuse as a practical joke, should someone notice.



What is the Student Loan Menu?

As a student, the current state of your economy greatly controls your way of life – you're simply filthy rich one week to find yourself flat broke the next. That's why we've devised a menu adapted to the fluctuation of your wallet: when you are in the green it costs a little more, and when you're in dire straits it's cheaper. This way you can always come to us for a great meal.

Isn't there an unwritten rule dictating the transference of ownership when you've borrowed something for a certain length of time? The same way you lose tenancy after subletting an apartment for a long time? You decide to sell the jacket the next time you see your classmate.

You meet one of your neighbours in the elevator. During the descent you consider "accidentally" squeezing



You wonder if it would be possible to reclaim all the tips you so generously splurged out earlier in the month. Finding all the bartenders shouldn't be so hard, and the cab drivers' phone numbers are right there on the receipts. The gratitude and appreciation you showed through the act of tipping surely still counts even though you want your money back, right?

You get dressed to go out. The jacket you're wearing was borrowed from a friend, and you suddenly recall a classmate who only last week wondered if it was possible to buy it

yourself in the door when you both exit, so you can sue him for damage. Not bad enough to be scared for life, but still enough to treat yourself to that trip to Brazil you've been dreaming of. You decide against it when remembering that article about the guy who lost

both arms and legs and only got one grand in compensation.

You ride the bus to town during rush hour. You do this because it's the hardest time of the day to find a vacant seat. You actually take the bus going the wrong direction, just to make sure you get the best seat for the long ride back.

When an elderly man finally gets on, you offer him your seat. However, you do it in a somewhat submissive and subdued way, hoping to remind him of a helpful Cub Scout. It obviously works: he gives you some loose change.

You're doing well at your evening job and your boss compliments your efforts. To point out the all-important link between performance and pay, you tell him to "say it in bills, not in words".

After work you meet an old childhood friend. Your goal is to get some free coffee and cake out of it, and you pull it off by making your old mate feel guilty over the fact that you never hang out anymore.

Before falling asleep you toy with the idea of getting back together with your ex. This would mean splitting the rent and having a joint food account. You could always break it up again on the 25th, when the next student loan arrives. You finally rejoice at the news that the Student Loan Menu is now even cheaper:



See you at McDonald's

# THE STUDENT LOAN MENU

The menu that adapts to fit the state of your wallet

Broke, destitute, skint, penniless, dirt-poor – there are many names for the things we hate. It takes but a quick glance at your bank statement to verify that the student loan is long gone.

WEEK FOUR OF FOUR

FILING FOR BANKRUPTCY.

You comb your couch for lost coins. It's only gone a week since your last treasure hunt, but you had a bunch of people over this weekend, so there's a good chance some change might have escaped the pockets of one of your iPhone-fiddling buddies. You recall, with a minuscule amount of shame, the time you found a twenty note between the cushions at a friend's friend and "forgot" to tell anyone about it. You quickly push this memory aside, concluding that in harsh times like these there is no room for legal hair-splitting regarding who owns what. Instead, you consider the option of selling your bus pass. You hope that the much talked about cut-downs in the public sector have had a welcome effect on the number of ticket inspectors.

You move on to trawling your circle of friends for someone to borrow money from. Preferably someone with parents rich enough to allow their children to live life unaware of the monthly aggravation of student loan living. You obviously make a separate

list of the friends you already owe money, so you can avoid them until the 25th.

You remember reading articles about people in poor countries who survive on less than a dollar per day. You search the web for information on how they achieve it, hoping to get some pointers on dealing with your current economic situation.

Whilst surfing, you suddenly realise your Internet connection always slows down when your above neighbour is at home. You quickly deduce that he's mooching off your connection. Wouldn't it be perfectly reasonable to argue that he should

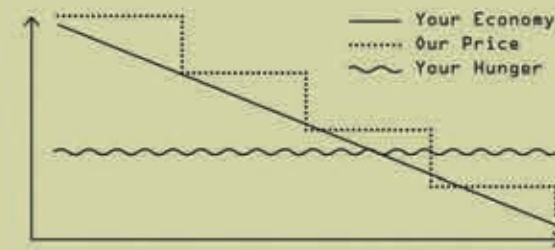
pay half the bill? You make a mental note to raise the discussion the next time you bump in to your neighbour.

You decide to throw a party. It might sound like a bad idea for a penniless pauper such as yourself, but you cunningly plan to apply the principle "bring your own food and beverage

fridge's echoing empty shelves. The party also generates a lucrative trip to the recycling station. You flinch in horror when realising you almost pressed the "Donate" button and retract your hand at the speed of light, as if burnt by a red hot poker. A weekend trip to your parents sounds like another good idea – you're out of both detergent and toilet paper. The only question is how you're going to get your parents to come and get you, so you don't have to waste money on the trip there.

*"In harsh times like these there is no room for legal hair-splitting regarding who owns what."*

You know it's going to be a struggle to get through the last grim couple of days before the next student loan arrives. That's why it feels like a gift from above that the Student Loan Menu now costs a negligible:



What is the Student Loan Menu?

As a student, the current state of your economy greatly controls your way of life – you're simply filthy rich one week to find yourself flat broke the next. That's why we've devised a menu adapted to the fluctuation of your wallet: when you are in the green it costs a little more, and when you're in dire straits it's cheaper. This way you can always come to us for a great meal.

– I'll supply the rest". This results in loads of left over food and alcohol that you graciously welcome to your



See you at McDonald's



## Print: we must be more original.

This Print ad won a Cannes Gold Lion for McDonald's in 1991. Today, all round Europe, we are still creating dozens and dozens of the same kind of 'visual coincidence' ads every year. (As are nearly all other advertisers, in all categories.)

Even when they are neat and clever and work well, it is still the kind of ad that the consumer has seen a million times before, making it harder for our message to cut through and be noticed.



We are also writing lots and lots of logo ads featuring the Golden Arches. (Here is just a small selection.) Time and again, we revert to the age-old idea of making something else look like our logo. (Or making our logo look like something else.)

The thinking is understandable (it immediately brands the ad as McDonald's) but it's lazy. Sorry, but it is.

**We must find new, fresh ways for our brand to engage in Print.**





**There is one more reason why we must stop playing with the logo.**



**It is more than a logo; it is the McDonald's trademark.**

Which all sounds very boring, but consider this: Every time the logo is messed about with or made to look like something else, or vice versa, it chips away at McDonald's right to protect it from infringement by others.

These parties could try to say that it is not an important element of the McDonald's Corporation that deserves protection because McDonald's themselves don't protect it.

Next thing you know there are Golden Arches everywhere, none of which have anything to do with McDonald's.

*When you come right down to it, the Golden Arches are possibly McDonald's greatest asset...and we are putting them in danger with our tired, lazy ads.*

**Finally, is Print an untapped opportunity to drive affinity further?**

As we know, McDonald's is a storytelling brand, and we have great stories to tell – so perhaps we should use Print more often, as an opportunity to talk to people and engage them?

Print can be a chance for people to get to know us better, and like us more. A chance to spend some time in our company; assuming, of course, that we are an interesting enough companion. It would be up to us to speak with a lively mind and a keen wit (and not for too long) on the things that matter to us: from McWraps...to drive-thru...to sustainability...to our fantastic crew members.

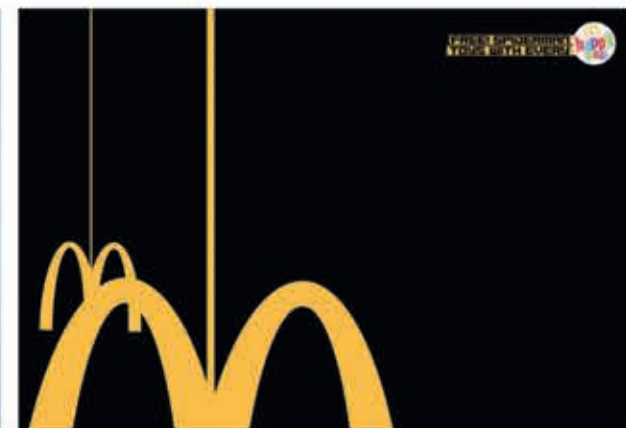
It's always good to talk.





And while awards are not our main objective, these are no longer the kind of ads that win the big gongs at Cannes either.

To repeat: we must find new, fresh ways for our brand to engage in Print.





# Radio

Here's a thought: why don't we make McDonald's the only brand on radio whose ads are actually liked?

**No one cares  
about advertising.  
And on the  
radio, it's even  
worse.**

People hate ads on the radio. Badly written; crass and clichéd; shouty, shouty; sell, sell; blah, blah.

There are huge rewards and goodwill lying in wait for the advertiser who takes the trouble to charm, amuse and entertain on a regular basis, over the long haul. You can own the airwaves if you get it right. You can even make people actually look forward to your next spot.

So let's treat every ad as a brand ad, whatever message we choose. Whether we're revealing a new McWrap, or seeding the idea of breakfast at McDonald's, or explaining how our beef is locally sourced, there is no reason why we can't do it with craft and care and a twinkle in our eye.

Over time, if we keep our standards high, we cannot fail to increase affinity for the brand, and McDonald's will have won a permanent place in the heart of every grateful listener.

*"Thank goodness. It's one of those McDonald's ads."*



## It's always good to talk.

The ad opposite is a wonderful example of McDonald's having an opinion, and a voice, and how it can lead to irresistible advertising.

A Cheeseburger talks to us. It helps us to understand why we shouldn't listen to those people who seem to have turned against cheese. It explains why a burger with cheese on is about the greatest thing we could ever eat. By the end, we can only agree.

As one comment online put it:  
*"If this doesn't make you want to go straight to your local McDonald's, then nothing will."*

# Cheese.

A defence.

My name is Cheese. I'm tasty. I have no enemies. Despite this you choose not to eat cheese? Not to love cheese? Call me crazy, but what can be better than cheese? What can be more satisfying than to let your mouth embrace a fresh cheeseburger? Not much, my friends. Not much.

I contain pickles, onion and ketchup. Nestling inside me is a perfectly cooked hamburger made from 100% beef. So what's the problem? What are you going to eat instead? What can be better? Baked beans? No, that's what I thought. A quiche? Hardly. Hot dogs? Don't make me laugh. What has cheese ever done to you? Did you eat bad cheese as a kid? Did you get bitten by a cheese? The cheese just wants to be eaten. So, let it be eaten. Enjoy it. The tasty cheese. The fine cheese. The perfect cheese.

The cheese that makes you go that extra mile. The cheese that makes you discover life again. The cheese that makes you call your cousins, the ones you haven't called for years. The cheese that makes you give a cheerful greeting to that annoying neighbour with the angry dog. The cheese that makes you write to the beautiful lost love that you never dared to talk to, way back at that discotheque in 1998.

How can that cheese not be for you? It melts in your mouth, for God's sake, it melts in your mouth. What more can a human being ask for?

Get a cheeseburger. It's no big deal.



Cheeseburger 1 EURO





# Digital & Online

## How should a McDonald's digital idea differ from everyone else's digital idea?

As we stand knee-deep in new technology, itching to explore and create, this is the question we should ask before all others.

We must find the right way to merge the tone and feel of our timeless brand and its traditional values with the changing ways that people are engaging with content, messages and ads. Looking at two or three screens at once is quite normal. Sharing is an instinctive reaction to something good, and the litmus test for what we create. Big ideas are bigger and more media neutral than ever.

We take great pains to ensure our ideas in TV, Print, etc., are 'on-brand.' We must take the same care with new media. Yes, we can do funky things with a digital poster nowadays... but so can everyone. What funky things should McDonald's do? And not do?







Some questions we should  
be asking ourselves.  
And some answers we've  
already created.

**How might 'simple,  
easy enjoyment'  
be delivered in the  
social arena,  
but still be ownable  
by McDonald's?**

It's easy to have fun and enjoyable online ideas.  
But there must always be something that  
makes the enjoyment uniquely McDonald's.

**DDB Finland:  
'Draw French Fries' social activation.**

Challenge McDonald's and three friends to a  
'how-long-is-your-French-fry?' competition.  
The one who pulls the shortest has to buy  
a Big Mac Meal for the one who pulls the  
longest. A well-observed and ownable piece  
of fry behaviour is neatly transferred into  
the social space.





**Always ask:  
what is McDonald's  
point of view?**

We should always be prepared to express our opinion, whether it's about a burger, a new menu item or something bigger like a way of thinking or a way of behaving. McDonald's holds a big place in society and it's our responsibility to speak up occasionally and say what's on our mind.

**Leo Burnett United Arab Emirates:  
Restaurant event 'A Day Offline' social activation.**

A provocative, but welcome, reminder that our obsession with our phones, and with being online, is affecting our family relationships. For one day only, McDonald's restaurants become a mobile-free zone; a haven from online distractions; a place for families to reconnect through joint activities and quality time.





**How does a  
storytelling brand  
tell its stories  
beyond a TV spot  
or a press ad?**

Great writing will never go out of fashion.  
Talking to people can be even more  
satisfying online, as long as we do so with  
charm and care.

**DDB USA: Frozen Strawberry Lemonade.  
'Lemonaid' online extension.**

Our talking lemon gets to tell us a little more  
about his family tree and how he came to meet  
up with a strawberry to create McDonald's  
delicious Frozen Strawberry Lemonade.





## How might digital allow us to have a welcome presence out in the real world, beyond just our restaurants?

McDonald's is a part of the landscape and we are glad it is there. We expect, and like, to see it around us. Which means we have more permission than most to bring our messages into people's real physical world, beyond the confines of traditional media.

### DDB Poland: Brand. 'Train Timetable' digital poster.

A platform timetable tells you when the next trains are leaving and how long you have to wait. But it tells you in hamburgers, Cokes and fries.

The longer you have to wait, the more menu items are shown on screen beside your train, and the more you think you might just pop in to McDonald's before it arrives.



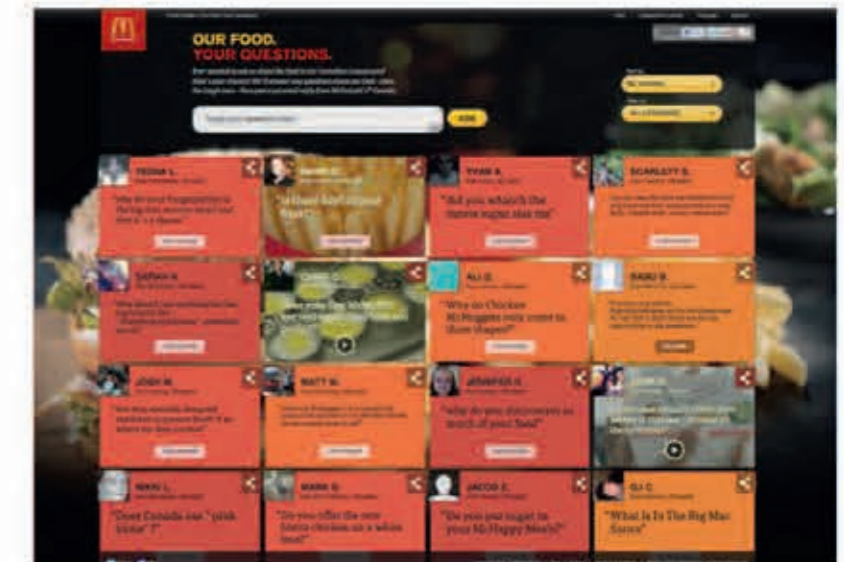


How does a brand  
that stands for  
**Good food.**  
**Good people.**  
**Good neighbour.**  
behave in  
the digital space?

Such a brand should be open and proud  
and inviting. And more than happy to engage  
in conversation about the way it does things.

DDB Canada: 'Our Food. Your Questions.'  
Website and interactive campaign.  
<http://yourquestions.mcdonalds.ca/>

People are encouraged to ask McDonald's  
any question they want about their food.  
Literally, any question at all. And then they  
get an honest answer.





## How are we best using **mobile** to bring our brand to life?

Mobile is making our biggest ideas more practical and achievable, and at the same time simpler and more irresistible for our customers.

### DDB Sweden: McWraps Launch. 'Go and get' mobile app.

Using a map you can find virtual wraps placed within a 330m radius of a restaurant. If you can 'grab' a wrap with your phone and keep holding it till you get to the nearest store, you get it free.

Let it go and it goes back on the map.

A neat digital extension of the creative idea:  
McWraps are too tasty to put down.





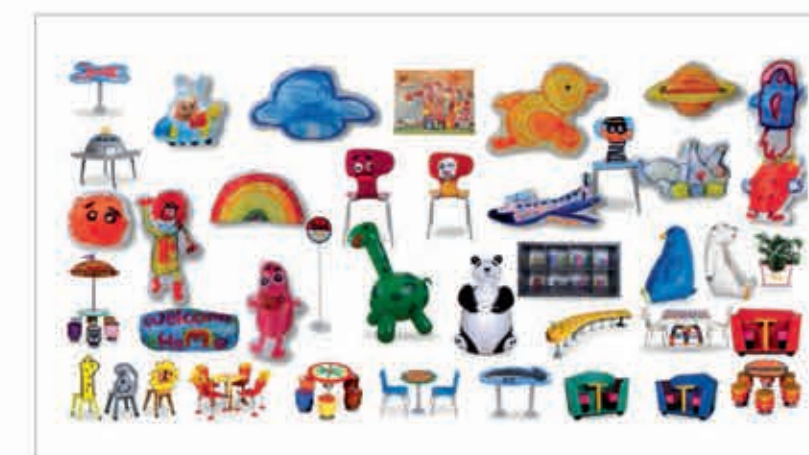
**Digital can make  
us a more  
surprising brand.**

Digital allows us to do more unexpected things, in unexpected places, in unexpected ways. McDonald's must surprise. We are a cosy, familiar and loved part of millions of people's lives, but we need to keep them on their toes a bit too.

Predictable is only good when eating a Big Mac. In our ads, it spells invisibility.

**DDB Hong Kong: Restaurant re-fit.  
'I'm amazing' social activation.**

An incredibly ambitious and anthemic idea that challenges the culturally accepted notion of how children should grow up. Young kids in Hong Kong are given a canvas to express the kind of imagination and creativity that is normally suppressed in the quest for the best grades. The canvas? A McDonald's restaurant. An actual store, theirs to completely redesign however they see fit. As we said to them, *"If you could build the McDonald's restaurant of your dreams, what would it be? If you can dream it, we will build it."* And we did.



**“Playing it safe can be the most dangerous thing in the world, because you’re presenting people with an idea they’ve seen before, and you won’t have impact.”**

*Bill Bernbach.*

**“If you are not a risk-taker you should get the hell out of business.”**

*Ray Kroc, Founder of McDonald's.*



## The final word. Consistency.

Keeping it up. Again and again and again and again and again and again and again and again and again...

Every agency does the odd great ad. Most brands do the occasional brilliant piece of work. But rare is the campaign that consistently scales the heights.

Our mission isn't just to keep our finger firmly pressed on the quality control button... but to put a heavy brick on it.

## Why is consistency so important?

It is only when we are consistently creating work of the required standard that our creativity will have its greatest effect.

[Why are Pixar so extraordinary and loved as storytellers? Not because they tell the occasional great story, but because they *only* tell great stories.]

The only thing stopping us? It's hard. Or everyone would do it.

We all have to make the commitment to excellence, from the top down. But with every execution it gets easier. And then one fine day, it dawns on you that all this excellence has become a habit.

That it is automatic.

That there is no stopping you now.

That everyone gets it, and everyone wants it – McDonald's and DDB – with equal enthusiasm.

And that, good people, is the day we celebrate by ordering a McFlurry with our Apple Pie.

## A Virtuous Circle for all of us.

If we all share the same  
creative ambition, then one good  
thing leads to another.

