



New Zealand's Top 10 Favourite Ads

September 2022

Every three months, in partnership with [TRA](#), we survey New Zealanders to find out which TV ads are resonating and which creative is going the distance.

The survey asks a nationally representative sample of over 1,000 people a simple, unprompted question; "What is your favourite ad on TV at the moment?" We also ask them why they like it and how it makes them feel.

The most frequently mentioned favourites make up our top ten list. Here are the latest results.

New Zealand's 10 favourite ads in September 2022

Note: '+/-' indicators note how the ranking of each ad has changed since last evaluation in July 2022.

1. Trustpower – [Meant to be Together](#)/Four Legs Good +1
2. Westpac – [Together Greater](#) +1
3. ASB – [Ben and Amy](#) -2
4. ANZ – [Sameer's Why](#) +2
5. PAK'nSAVE – [Stickman](#) +2
6. Genesis – [Introducing George and her family](#) -2
7. McDonald's – [Then. Now. Always.](#) -2
8. Meridian Energy – [Be good to nature](#) Same place
9. AA Insurance – [Live a little freer](#) Returns to list
10. KFC – [General promotions](#) -1

Learnings from the marketers behind the work

We reached out to the marketers who helped create these favourites to share their learnings, and insight into what it takes to create popular and effective work.

So read on for valuable learnings and inspiration for creating a favourite.

1. Trustpower – Meant to be Together/Four Legs Good

This is the perfect case study for why emotional storytelling is the ultimate tool in creating rewarding and memorable advertising. It's already featured three times on New Zealand's Favourite Ads list and doesn't seem to be going anywhere soon.

Meant to be Together has viewers feeling 'full of emotion,' 'warm fuzzies,' and 'hopeful'. A few respondents even mention that it brought them to tears. No surprise then that it performs strongly on being an ad that people want to talk about.

Carolyn Schofield, Head of Brand at Trustpower, says they've had massive amounts of positive feedback on social media as well as organic PR with journalists and radio hosts talking positively about the ad.

Schofield notes that the plan is to stick with the platform long-term with 'Meant to be together' staying consistent across multiple stories. Think Specsavers or Snickers. She says they have seen a

significant improvement in brand perceptions among those who have seen the ad vs those who haven't.

Schofield says that educating non-marketing stakeholders on best practice thinking, such as Field and Sharp, that's grounded in data, was key to getting a long-term emotional storytelling strategy over the line.

2. Westpac – Together Greater

This epic story is enjoyed because its imaginative, heartfelt, and shares an uplifting message of kindness and connection.

Suraiya Phillimore-Smith, Chief Marketing Officer at Westpac, says that 'Together Greater' has earned an "overwhelmingly positive response from customers", with fans sharing videos of them enjoying the spot alongside babies and pets and even requesting soft toys of their favourite monster.

Phillimore-Smith notes that arriving at the platform required a lot of research and customer testing which uncovered the core insight – people didn't want banks telling them what to do, but to stand alongside them, empowering them to achieve their goals.

The emotional storytelling used to bring 'Together Greater' to life is clearly resonating. Westpac are seeing positive gains in consideration for both customers and non-customers.

We've also seen improvement in performance on 'Remembered' over time. This is most likely due to continued exposure to the campaign and use of the characters in follow-up executions and touchpoints. Westpac have been wise to give the hero execution the time and space it needed to wear in.

3. ASB – Ben and Amy

Through strong creative commitment to their platform and characters, ASB have got to a place where new executions remind viewers of past ones they've enjoyed. Kiwis have become invested in Ben and Amy's story; looking forward to seeing what comes next.

'Ben and Amy's Little Window Shopper' got the most mentions in our September survey. The ad, first released in October last year, is feel-good fun with memorable lines like, "Hey mince and cheese, get a wiggle on!" Further, the story of a young girl getting a job to save up for the watch of her dreams taps into the [Kiwi Code](#) of earned success.

The characters have become lovable and instantly recognisable brand assets. ASB achieves the strongest creative edge score across the board.

Bianca Osborne, HO Business Marketing at ASB, says that the campaign has been very successful in building ASB's strongest ever brand metrics. "Importantly, branded recall and likeability is really strong. Delivered by our consistent use of characters, our warm tone, and the cultural truths we tap into."

4. ANZ – Sameer's Why

With 'Sameer's Why', ANZ cleverly wrap their Good Energy Home Loan announcement in a sweet and rewarding love story. It's the inclusion of smile moments that make the ad enjoyable and memorable. Kiwis particularly enjoy the moment where Sameer tries to impress his crush by directing the solar panel installation. And they get a good laugh out of him shutting the hot water off on his poor Dad too.

Michael Reynolds, Head of Brand Marketing at ANZ, says that Sameer's WHY is about putting purpose ahead of profit, connecting both customer financial wellbeing and energy efficient home upgrades for a more sustainable future. "It shows customers how being good to the planet can not only be good for your pocket – but also your heart."

The campaign has led to strong interest with ~1400 customers taking out loans to fulfil their energy efficiency goals. In the last three months, just over \$60 million in lending has been drawn down under this offer, with the most popular uses being to purchase electric vehicles, or install double glazing and heat pumps. This momentum is expected to continue.

Further, ANZ continue to see a positive impact on brand and advertising metrics – helping drive strong consideration while making memorable and enjoyable ads Kiwis love to watch.

5. PAK'nSAVE – Stickman

Stickman has been the face of PAK'nSAVE for 14 years and is still making Kiwis laugh. This campaign is a masterclass in long-term brand building.

Stickman perfectly captures Kiwis' sense of humour – disarming and down to earth. Or put another way – lovable Dad jokes.

Lauren Ness, Senior Marketing Manager at PAK'nSAVE says a lot of work goes into keeping campaigns fresh and interesting.

[Instickman](#) is a good example of taking the character to new places. It's Stickman's personal Instagram page where he does his best to 'influence' like-minded savey New Zealanders. He doesn't always get it right, but you can be guaranteed a laugh. The page has over 24K followers.

Another example is the latest [Fresh](#) TVC where for the first time, Stickman interacts with a staff member in the real world to put misconceptions about the quality of PAK'nSAVE's fruit, vege, meat and seafood to bed. As Ness puts it, it's difficult for a drawing of a stick-apple to signify freshness. So, a special exception was made to show Kiwis the real thing and prove it.

The campaign is a good reminder that cracking a winning platform is just the start. You've got to keep it fresh and take it to new places.

6. Genesis – Introducing George and her family

Genesis' new creative platform introduces a lovable family who are already a big hit with Kiwis. People love the humour and can see themselves in the characters – “They're just a real-life family with no airs and graces.”

'Someone' in the house being careless with saving energy is relatable – “It's something we used to say to our kids!” And building the story around this relatable insight means that it has category relevance at its core.

Talking with Stephanie Fahey, Head of Brand at Genesis, it's clear that this was the strategy from the start. Fahey says, “The story had to be relevant and show how Genesis add value.”

It heroes market-leading innovation and the emotion and warmth of the story captures the experience of dealing with Genesis' customer service.

This is just the beginning for George and her family. Genesis have built an enduring platform to talk to multiple proof points. Kiwis will get to know more about the family with future executions.

Since campaign launch, brand love and consideration metrics have been moving in right direction.

7. McDonald's – Then. Now. Always.

'Then. Now. Always' is a wholesome story that reminds Kiwis of special times they have with their own family. A trip to McDonalds' with the grandparents is a treat that many remember fondly.

As one fan put it, "Being a grandparent with small grandkids who love going to McDonald's, I can relate to the bond between the characters."

Luke Rive, Director of Marketing at McDonald's, says "The campaign was created to highlight the importance of family and the special memories that are made over a McDonald's meal. Macca's is always there to help families connect."

As well as being very Rewarding, the work performs strongly on Remembered. The 'last chip' moment which repeats at the end in a McDonald's store does heavy lifting here, along with use of McDonald's 'red' brand colour weaved in throughout.

McDonald's have also used the grandma and grandson characters to promote the Chicken Big Mac and introduce MyMacca's Rewards – a good example of connecting brand to activation to make it work even harder.

8. Meridian – Be good to nature

Meridian's new brand character, Nature herself, makes one heck of an entrance with this spot. Appearing out of nowhere from a lightning bolt in the sky – the ad immediately grabs attention.

Kiwis love it for its balance of epicenes with down-to-earth Kiwiness. The delivery of the 'Nope' line is right on the money.

Jordan Fahey, Advertising and Media Manager at Meridian, says it's an enduring platform designed to be expanded and built on over time. The initial focus has been introducing the character in a way that resonates with Kiwi culture and demonstrating that together we have the power to make a difference.

Importantly, the brand is walking the talk. Over the past few years, Meridian have been planting thousands of trees to offset our carbon footprint and have created Certified Renewable Energy that not only reduces reported emissions for customers but is now on track to deliver over \$2.5m of support for community and business decarbonisation.

Fahey says that she is really pleased to see the work capturing audience's attention and that this has translated into strong attribution scores and uplifting brand metrics.

9. AA Insurance – Live a little freer

AA Insurance's 'Live a Little Freer' campaign has had a steady presence in our favourite ads tracking. A memorable soundtrack over entertaining and relatable household accident moments has kept audiences smiling and kept AA top of mind.

The campaign was launched in October 2018 and is still going strong. Melodie Vickars, Head of Brand, Marketing and Communications, says the advertising platform that was designed to differ from others in the category. "Rather than focus on things that could go wrong, creating fear and anxiety, AA Insurance choose to focus on the things that matter most to New Zealanders – showing how insurance can allow us to live life a little freer, without the worry and fear of what if's."

The work has been a great success, with the individual executions showing strong levels of recognition and driving positive associations that can easily be linked back to AA Insurance. The campaign has been instrumental in allowing AA Insurance to achieve some long-held goals, including becoming New Zealand's most preferred general insurer. The 4 years since the campaign launched have been a significant period of growth for AA Insurance, with a large increase in sales that are less reliant on incentives, and a strong lift in active policies.

10. KFC

KFC continue to deliver some of the most entertaining product and price promos in New Zealand. The 15" spots follow a consistent structure that packs a punch with likeable jokes that keep love for KFC front and centre.

And with the use of red and white striped buckets, music, and the colonel, there's no mistaking who it's for. As Ella Fairley, Senior Marketing Manager at KFC puts it, "We tell the stories in a distinctly KFC way; injecting our brand codes, humour, and championing Kiwis to let down their guard and just enjoy being in the moment."

Further, a lot of work goes into building relevance through using the Kiwi Codes and monitoring social media trends to understand what's resonating with Kiwis; tapping into cultural moments that are part of everyday life.

Consistency, humour, distinctiveness, and relevance – the secret ingredients to KFC's success.

What have we learned?

Through looking at the ads that make the favourite list, we can arrive at key principles for creating popular and effective work.

Build to last

Aim to create work that wears in, where you can add depth and meaning to it over time. And give your hero execution the time and space it needs to become familiar and loved.

Use emotional storytelling to create remarkable and rewarding work

The trick is to create stories that don't just grab attention but hold it. And it works for promotion work just as well. Including little smile moments can make all the difference.

Tap into Kiwi Codes and cultural tensions

Careful work has gone into creating ads that resonates with Kiwis at a cultural level. This makes them even more relatable and enjoyable.

Deliver on your brand promise

It's critical that you're backing your brand promise up with real-world action. Meridian is a great example of a brand that is walking the talk.

Don't just rely on your logo at the end

There are great examples on this list of how weaving brand codes throughout the execution doesn't get in the way of creating highly rewarding work. And with over half featuring ongoing brand characters, it's clear this is a powerful way to achieve strong brand attribution.

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