



New Zealand's Top 10 Favourite Ads

July 2022

Every three months, [TRA](#), in partnership with [ThinkTV](#), surveys regular New Zealanders to find out which 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 July 2022

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

July sees three new ads make the list from Genesis, McDonald's, and Meridian.

1. ASB – [Ben and Amy](#) +2
2. Trustpower – [Meant to be Together](#)/Four Legs Good -1
3. Westpac – [Together Greater](#) -1
4. Genesis – [Introducing George and her family](#) New to list
5. McDonald's – [Then. Now. Always.](#) New to list
6. ANZ – [We Do How](#) -1
7. PAK'nSAVE – [Stickman](#) Returns to list
8. Meridian Energy – [Be good to nature](#) New to list
9. KFC – [General promotions](#) -5
10. Cadbury – [Mum's Birthday](#) - 2

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.

Applying TRA's Creative Edge Framework

For each of the public's favourites, we also used our proprietary Creative Edge framework to consider the strength of the ad's execution.

The ['Three R's'](#) of Creative Edge measure how likely an ad is to:

- Grab people's attention (Remarkable);
- Entertain them (Rewarding); and
- How strongly the brand was linked to the creative idea (Remembered).

The most effective campaigns achieve healthy scores across all Three R's.

Analysing the top 10

1. ASB – Ben and Amy

ASB returns to the #1 spot with their new TVC - 'Small steps add up to big things'. New Zealanders love the ad for being warm and relatable with a touch of Kiwi humour. And with distinctive brand characters and a healthy use of ASB's yellow, there's no mistaking who it's for.

One of the benefits of long term brand characters is optimising what you already have achieved and increasing the effectiveness of any future work. And this is the case with Ben and Amy - which is far from set and forget.

Sumi King, Head of Brand at ASB, says that a lot of work goes into applying learnings from previous Ben and Amy ads, and doing more with the parts that Kiwis connect with most.

For example, the latest spot sees the return of the younger version of Ben and Amy who were featured in a previous ad. ASB found Kiwi's connected with Ben and Amy's childhood 'back story' and this has continued through in the latest spot as a flashback. You'll also see Ben choose the dinosaur head as a prize for Amy over the expected teddy bear - which nods to a previous spot where young Amy received dinosaur slippers from Ben.

This suite of interconnected creative spots keep the work fresh but consistent, the audiences connect to this story and this has helped ASB achieve its strongest ever brand metrics.

2. 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 twice 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

It's early days but there's already an indication that brand love and consideration metrics are moving in right direction.

5. 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 McDonald's 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.

6. ANZ – We Do How

'We Do How' demonstrates ANZ's commitment to giving New Zealanders the practical help they need to start their financial wellbeing journey. The launch spot is still first in terms of Kiwi's favourite, but there were some mentions of the humorous Kiwisaver spot with Dad working on his motorbike in the garage.

Viewers feel a rush of joy in seeing the hard work of Sameer and his family pay off when he finally achieves his dream of becoming a Black Cap. And the work achieves a strong Remembered score through weaving in ANZ's brand colour and leveraging the banks' history as a Major Sponsor of New Zealand Cricket.

As a result, ANZ have seen significant lifts in advertising recall and this has carried down to growth in consideration.

But it's more than an outward-facing advertising campaign. Astrud Burgess, General Manager Data and Marketing at ANZ, says, "It's always been important for our staff to feel actively involved in everything we do."

Internal initiatives included the 'Book of How' which brings to life the power of 'how', and the 'Deck of How' which includes 52 ideas to help improve financial wellbeing. It's a great example of living a brand promise inside and out.

7. 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.

Stickman 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 savvy 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.

Like ASB, it's another good reminder that cracking a winning platform is just the start. You've got to keep it fresh and take it to new places.

8. Meridian – Be good to nature

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

Kiwis love it for its balance of epicness 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. 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.

10. Cadbury – Mum's Birthday

There are other executions of 'There's a glass & a half in everyone,' but this is the favourite. It was in the top ten consistently the year that it launched back in 2019 and is back again.

Produced out of the UK but with a universally appealing story about a girl trading her most beloved toys for a bar to give to her Mum on her birthday. Kiwis love it because it's a cute and heart-warming display of generosity. Further, it feels very down-to-earth in its use of a family that are not particularly 'well-to-do' and a setting that is imperfect and warts and all.

'Mum's Birthday' is a good reminder of the efficiency that can be achieved from creating an iconic and effective ad – you can keep using it year after year.

What have we learned?

Through looking at the ads that make the favourite list, we can arrive at five 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

With the special exception of Cadbury, careful work has gone into creating ads that resonate 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. And as we've seen from ANZ, it can be useful to think of your people as your first audience. Involve them and take them on the journey. Empower and inspire them to deliver to the brand promise in new ways.

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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