



The chimp living in your brain

Why marketers need to befriend the chimp

How do you feel when someone else criticises you? Or what negative thoughts enter your head when you are about to make a speech? Many of the decisions you make, the wrong ones especially, come from the emotional part of your brain.

It is powerful enough to make you spontaneously perform a rude hand gesture to a driver who cuts you up on the motorway, only to regret it afterwards.

According to Professor, elite sports psychiatrist and author of *The Chimp Paradox*, Steve Peters, there is a 'Chimp' in your brain and it is running wild with your thoughts and actions.

The counter-balance is the 'human' part of the brain - the one that steps in afterwards and suggests you ought not to have done that. By which time, it's too late. The other driver is twice your size and is banging aggressively on your window (chimp talks to chimp).

All is not lost though. With the right training, the chimp can be managed if not controlled. It can even help you win an Olympic Gold medal. Just ask Sir Chris Hoy.

So why is this relevant to the professional marketer?



- **FRONTAL**
- **TEMPORAL**
- **PERIETAL**
- **OCCIPITAL**
- **CEREBELLUM**
- **LIMBIC (CHIMP)**

The chimp likes a good story

Branding and advertising agencies recognise that many of the storytelling techniques used by authors, scriptwriters and film directors can be adopted to help sell products. Nothing new here. In fact, stories are the emotional 'glue' that have connected societies for generations. But why do they work?

The stories that work the best are those that have high emotional content. This brings us back to the chimp.

Brand storytelling works because the emotional part of the brain is the one that immediately connects with the story. And for the story to make an impact, it needs something negative to happen. Because the Chimp does like a catastrophe.

Something negative from a marketer? Well yes. When you think about it, every invention ever created was designed to solve a problem, so what problem does your product or service solve? By making a drama out of the problem, you stand a much better chance of driving action from a prospect.

The adult brain

So once you have targeted a prospect (through advertising, PR, social media), does their adult brain step in and argue against buying from you?

Only if you don't live up to the promise.

Storytelling only drives up revenues when the product it portrays lives up to the message. Be authentic, be genuine and of course be creative.

Then both the Chimp and Adult will like you.