

Forbes

CMO NETWORK

How One Brand Is Hitting The Emotional Quotient

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Everything about reaching out to today's target audience is about developing some level of engagement where the potential or existing customer becomes emotionally vested in the information that a brand shares with them. The objective is that the emotional quotient becomes a large enough part of the equation to convince them to buy and, even better, let other people in their circle know it.

In developing products and services, companies are even assessing the emotional quotient that might be calculated with certain ideas prior to launching them as a viable business, such as what MySizeID has done with its idea for online clothes shopping. Or what Mercedes-Benz did this past holiday season.

Beyond retailers, though, the most interesting use of the emotional quotient definitely has to be how one financial planning company, Ameriprise Financial, has leveraged it to engage its audience.

What Is EQ?

Before relating their story, you might want to know more about what defines the emotional quotient (EQ) or what is also referred to as the emotional intelligence quotient. EQ measures how well a person can monitor, manage, and control their emotions, which also include what they think and how they act in relation to

those emotions. How well a person can assess external factors, such as situations and relationships, can also determine a measurement of EQ.

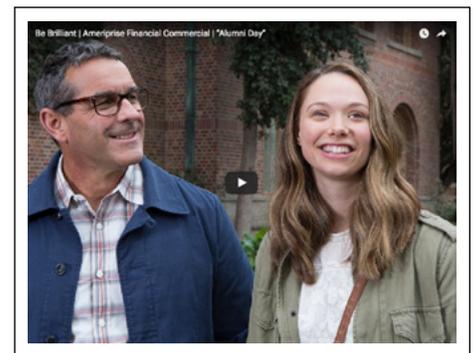
The concept of EQ has been around for a couple centuries, but it only started to become part of the language of social behavior and business in the 1980s. It was then that various assessments were developed that an organization could use to assess their staff's EQ as part of a way to determine how employees felt or responded to certain situations. Only recently has it started to gain momentum in relation to marketing and customer engagement processes that have come to the forefront due to social media platforms and a more empowered audience.

EQ In Action: The Story Of Ameriprise Financial

The Ameriprise Financial TV spots serve as a good case study of what's possible when a company finds ways to hone in on EQ and then create a marketing campaign that directly engages with particular emotions that their audience typically exhibits. The company developed and launched their national Be Brilliant.[®] brand platform in 2015 as a way to tell stories based on real goals and aspirations that people have achieved as a result of working with an advisor on financial planning. The Be Brilliant.[®] brand platform is multichannel and includes

digital ads, native advertising, social media creative, and new customizable content for advisors.

Marie O'Neill, Senior Vice President, Marketing at Ameriprise Financial, explains how the campaign story began: "The first chapter featured individuals who achieved the financial freedom to pursue their passions and underscored the value of working with an advisor. Like our current ads, the first spots ended with the message, 'With the right advisor, life can be brilliant,' reinforcing the value our advisors bring to clients through the personal relationships and financial advice they provide."



Differing from previous ads that that company used, which did not employ an EQ perspective, these new ad campaigns dive deeper into emotional and authentic stories. As O'Neill explains, "It celebrates the financial confidence and empowerment clients experience when they are able to author their own

success stories with the help of a lasting advisor relationship.”

A Considerable Effort

While the idea has come off exceptionally well in terms of the response, appearing to be so simple, yet so effective, behind the scenes, there was a considerable effort that went into something designed to touch their audience in a more meaningful way. In order to truly understand the emotional quotient within their audience, the company had to conduct extensive research. This approach also played a critical role in identifying the right stories to feature.

O’Neill states, “We asked consumers about their top goals and aspirations, such as giving back to the community, owning a business, and funding a college education, to understand how Ameriprise contributes to making life brilliant pre- and post-retirement.”

This research then provided the contextual flavor that helps make any story great and engaging whether it is in a book, on the Internet, on the big screen, or on the small screen. Viewers want a reason to get involved in what they are watching or it’s just simply not worth watching. In this case, Ameriprise was able to get its audience to not only

watch their television spots, but they also utilized their understanding of EQ to connect on a deeper level with their audience and motivate them to use their financial planning services. 

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