

"Why I joined a political party for work"

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The Mad Men guide to pensions

16 September 2015 | By Sara Benwell

What would Don Draper do: Three pensions communications lessons from the world of advertising

Pensions Awareness Day is all about better communications. What better way to improve them than looking at three lessons from the world of advertising?



- **Stop educating – start engaging**

The pensions industry spends too long trying to educate people about pensions and not enough time trying to get them engaged in the first place.

Nick Throp the co-founder and director of communications specialist Like Minds, (who is also an ex-advertising executive) explains: "If you look at the most successful advertising campaigns, they don't start with the premise of this is why this is good for you, they start with some kind of emotional connection with the audience.

"If you're writing about pensions and savings, the most important pre-requisite is not the ability to be fantastically articulate. The most important thing is empathy.

"You have to be able to put yourself in the shoes the person who are receiving this communication and understand their mindset and how they feel about this."

- **Develop an elevator pitch**

Any good advertising executive knows that if you haven't got someone's attention in the first ten seconds, they may as well be lost to you forever. Without a good elevator pitch you'll never get

people engaged enough to care about pensions.

Throp says: "The second thing that was drummed into me when I first started in the world of advertising was: 'Explain in one sentence why the person you are targeting with this communication should be interested in this product or service.'

"If you wrote a sentence that was 30 words long, that was too long."

10 top elevator pitches - crowdsourced from Twitter

For Pensions Awareness Day we asked the industry to tweet us an answer the question 'Pensions: why should people bother?' in 10 words or less. Here are the best replies:

1. Former shadow pensions minister Gregg McClymont: **"coz you're going to live longer than you think."**
2. Simon Kew, assistant director, Deloitte: **"#Pensions- Saving for the longest holiday of your life."**
3. Andrew Pennie, marketing director, Intelligent Pensions: **"No pension is like longest/best holiday with no spends! #PensionAwarenessDay"**
4. Former pensions minister Steve Webb: **"coz you'll need a wage when you don't have one!"**
5. Jennie Kreser, partner, Silverman Sherliker: **"because starving in old age is a bad idea"**
6. Helen Swire, assistant editor of *PI's* sister magazine, Reward Guide: **"Because long-term financial stability is key to mental wellness."**
7. Alan Higham, founder, PensionsChamp: **"Save a day's pay & work a week less"**
8. Mark Locke, PR and external communications lead, the LangCat: **"Because your kids will eventually resent having to support you. #PensionsAwarenessDay"**
9. Darren Philp, director of policy and market engagement, the People's Pension: **"Because you've worked hard and want to enjoy retirement"**
10. Will Aitkin, director, Deloitte: **"Pensions: because you'll want to stop working before you die"**

- **Get creative**

The most effective adverts of our generation have one thing in common. They are creative with more than just words. Just look at the John Lewis Christmas adverts.

Throp explains: "We spend a lot of time talking about strategies around how to engage people. We don't spend as much time as we should thinking creatively about the ideas in the campaigns we use or the way we use words and pictures to influence behaviours. And importantly, and this is a bit left-field, the importance of music.

"The difference between a successful and a not-successful video is often not about the direct content, it's actually around the emotional response to it and music is a really brilliant way of short-circuiting that."