♪⌁ SONIC PULSE®

SOUND ADVICE
Familiarity

The journey of sonic logo attribution over time offers brands strategic insights into building enduring connections with consumers.
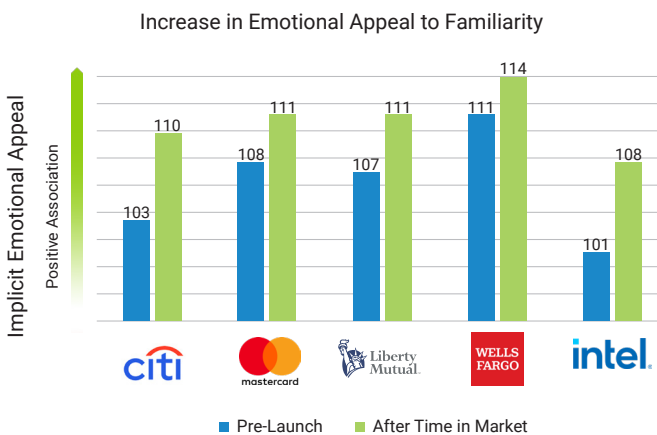
Ever hear a sound and before you consciously recognize what it is, you already have a feeling or a mental image in your head? When you hear the McDonald's tune "Ba-da-ba-ba-baaa... I'm lovin' it" or Netflix's "TaDummmm" coming from the screen, you probably already have an expectation of the experience you're about to have. How did these sounds come to implicitly relay this information and what can be done to get your sonic logo recognized?

Take the following brands for example:

Increase in Emotional Appeal to Familiarity

Implicit Emotional Appeal / Positive Association

Brand	Pre-Launch	After Time in Market
citi	103	110
mastercard	108	111
Liberty Mutual	107	111
WELLS FARGO	111	114
intel	101	108

■ Pre-Launch ■ After Time in Market

According to the Sentient Decision Science Sonic Database, it takes an average of two years for a sonic logo to truly become attributed to a brand. Like any paired stimulus, it takes time to build sounds or visual logos that are synonymous with values, experiences, or services (just ask Pavlov!). The exposure effect enhances familiarity: as individuals gain more experience with a logo, their preference for familiarity tends to increase, fostering a greater liking for the logo and what it represents.

However, it should be kept in mind that when pairing items such as services or experiences with, say, a sound, that the two must match. In other words, your sonic logo has to actually reflect your brand's values and attributes for familiarity to increase attribution.

The reality is that attribution tends to build over time with exposure and explicit coupling of the visual and sonic identities. This makes it difficult to test a completely new sonic logo for recognition. The right way to do this is a longitudinal test where the brand actually exposes the logo "lockup" to the real world. You have to measure the increase in correct recognition over time as exposure increases. However, this is strategically unpalatable to most brands because the risk of arriving at the answer "your sonic logo isn't increasing
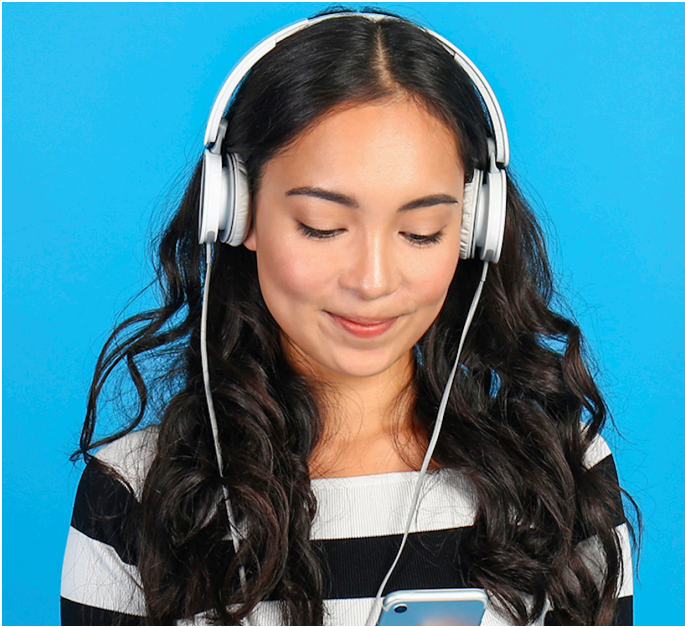
attribution" is substantial. But the risk is costly! If your brand and sonic logo do not align, there is a risk of burnout.

Familiarity preference favors the early adopter. The sooner you build a Sonic Identity, the longer it will be associated with your brand, thereby building familiarity and comfort (if the sound is the right fit!). Having not just a sonic logo but an entire Sonic Identity allows for flexibility. A sonic logo may become tired (burn-out with audiences), or the atmosphere and consumer mood has changed (i.e. the 2020 pandemic), or there is a need to grow with the times (i.e. demise of the jingle). Investing in a sound palette helps to avoid a complete revamp of a sonic logo and instead provides brand-specific and brand-familiar sounds for a refresh that stays true to the company's core.

Schedule a Demo

Meet with one of our experts to dive into the power of our Emotion AI platform!

- Learn about our pilot programs to help your team get a feel for the platform
- Get details on volume discount pricing on platform subscriptions
- Review additional product case studies
- Get info on our syndicated ad results & competitive norms options

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