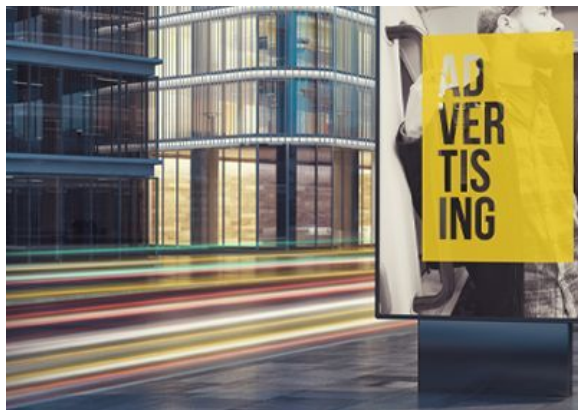


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“COVID-19 has rapidly changed when, where and how consumers are exposed to advertising. Financial services have been less impacted by COVID-19 than other sectors, allowing advertisers to take a larger share of voice and use their adverts to reassure and guide customers through challenging times.”

– **Thomas Slide, Senior Financial Services Analyst**

This report looks at the following areas:

- **The impact of COVID-19 on consumer attitudes towards financial services advertising.**
- **Analysis of advertising spend and the channels used for above-the-line advertising campaigns, as well as how this differs by financial product.**
- **Consumers' exposure to and recollection of financial services advertising.**
- **Consumers' understanding of financial terms often used in advertising and how this differs by demographics.**
- **How consumers feel about different advertising channels in terms of trust and engagement.**

48% have been reassured by their bank's adverts since the COVID-19 outbreak, highlighting how the pandemic has given financial brands an opportunity to rebuild an emotional connection with customers.

Financial services have generally been less impacted by COVID-19 than sectors such as leisure or travel, and this has presented an opportunity to capitalise on reduced demand for media space. As a result, financial brands have enjoyed a greater share of voice and leveraged this to reach out to customers to reassure them and provide practical advice and support during a difficult time. The shift in focus from reaching new customers to reassuring existing ones should help lay the foundations of improved customer engagement in the post-pandemic world.

Financial services brands have an opportunity to build on consumers' improved perceptions of the industry coming out of the pandemic. The increased use of digital channels to communicate with friends, family and businesses also presents an opportunity for financial services advertising to engage with consumers on a more emotional level.

A lack of financial literacy risks undermining the ability of consumers to make the right choices. Young people are particularly likely to lack confidence in the terminology commonly used in advertising financial services, making them more susceptible to being persuaded by unregulated products or risky choices. Advertising is already increasingly being used to educate and guide customers to better choices, and this should have greater resonance if the sector emerges from the pandemic with an enhanced reputation for supporting customers through difficult times.

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