

A person is lying in bed, holding a smartphone up to take a picture or video. The scene is dimly lit, with a lamp visible in the background. The entire image has a purple overlay.

# How You Can Reduce Creative Wear:

The most important things we've learned about  
capturing audiences' attention

**NBCUniversal**

# Let's face it, it's tough to get a human's attention

Comparing the average short-term attention by animal



Using one way to measure attention, humans place a distant fourth behind dogs, dolphins and sea lions.

(And goldfish have a much longer attention span than people think)

**And it's getting worse. In the digital age, the average attention span has declined 33% in 15 years.**

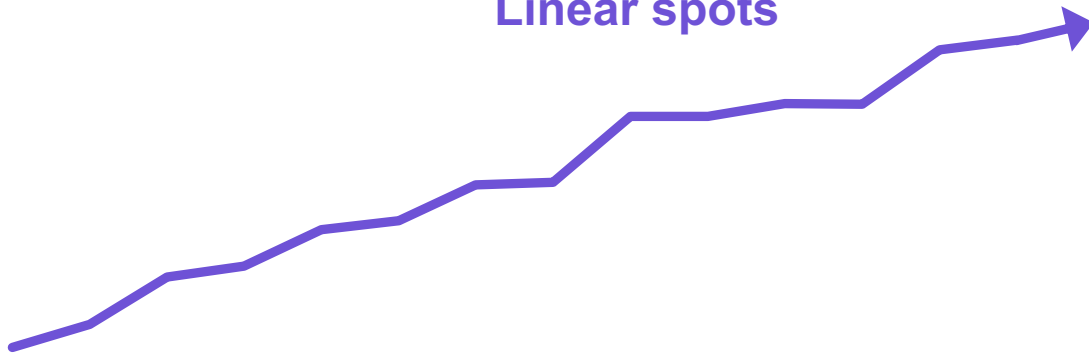
Source: Microsoft Consumer Insights Attention Span Study:  
<https://dl.motamem.org/microsoft-attention-spans-research-report.pdf>



# Which has impacted advertisers, challenging recall as air waves have become cluttered

**+15%**

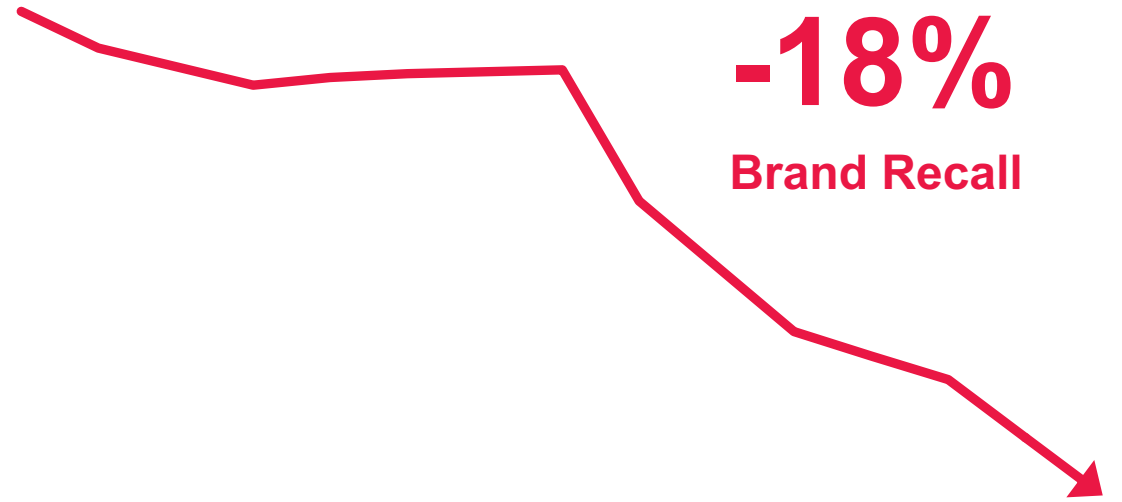
Linear spots



**Total spots aired** have increased significantly in the past couple of years

**-18%**

Brand Recall



Increased ad clutter and declining attention spans have made it harder to remember creative, resulting in declining **brand recall**



# Poor attention means everyone suffers:

Audiences, Agencies, Clients, and Publishers

On average, every one point drop in the attention score, impacts:

Wear Out

**60 days**

The average time an ad will wear out more quickly

Impressions

**5.1M**

The average loss of impressions due to tune out over the duration of the ad

Site Traffic

**-9%**

As an Insurance case study, the average advertiser saw in converted site traffic

Resulting in audiences recalling less and tuning out more

**So How Do We Win  
Back Attention?**



Understanding there are many definitions of attention, this presentation defines attention as ad views to 100% completion with no interruptions on linear TV and select OTT

**Creative wear looks at how that long it takes to improve recall (wear-in) compared with attention declines over the flight time (wear-out)**



Methodology

# Crunching the numbers

Attention and creative are complex. And while we don't have all the answers, we conducted a robust analysis to see what types and elements of an ad drive attention over time

We conducted an analysis over several years of data using:



**538**  
creative variables

**38,817**  
creative spots

**131,098**  
statistical tests



## Methodology

# Break Through Elements

Across all industries, these three elements emerged as the dominate factors affecting attention



### Brand Power

Ex. The size, love,  
and awareness of  
the brand



### Creative

Ex. Storytelling,  
visuals, talent



### Planning

Ex. Flight length,  
context, timing and  
placement

## Drivers Analysis

# Example: Creative

Emotional tones reduce creative wear and improves attention

## Be Emotional:

- Performed best across all ad tonality, wearing out 10% slower than any other ad type
- 52% of creative awards are given to emotional ads
- More likely to generate viral moments



## Best Features of an Emotional Ad

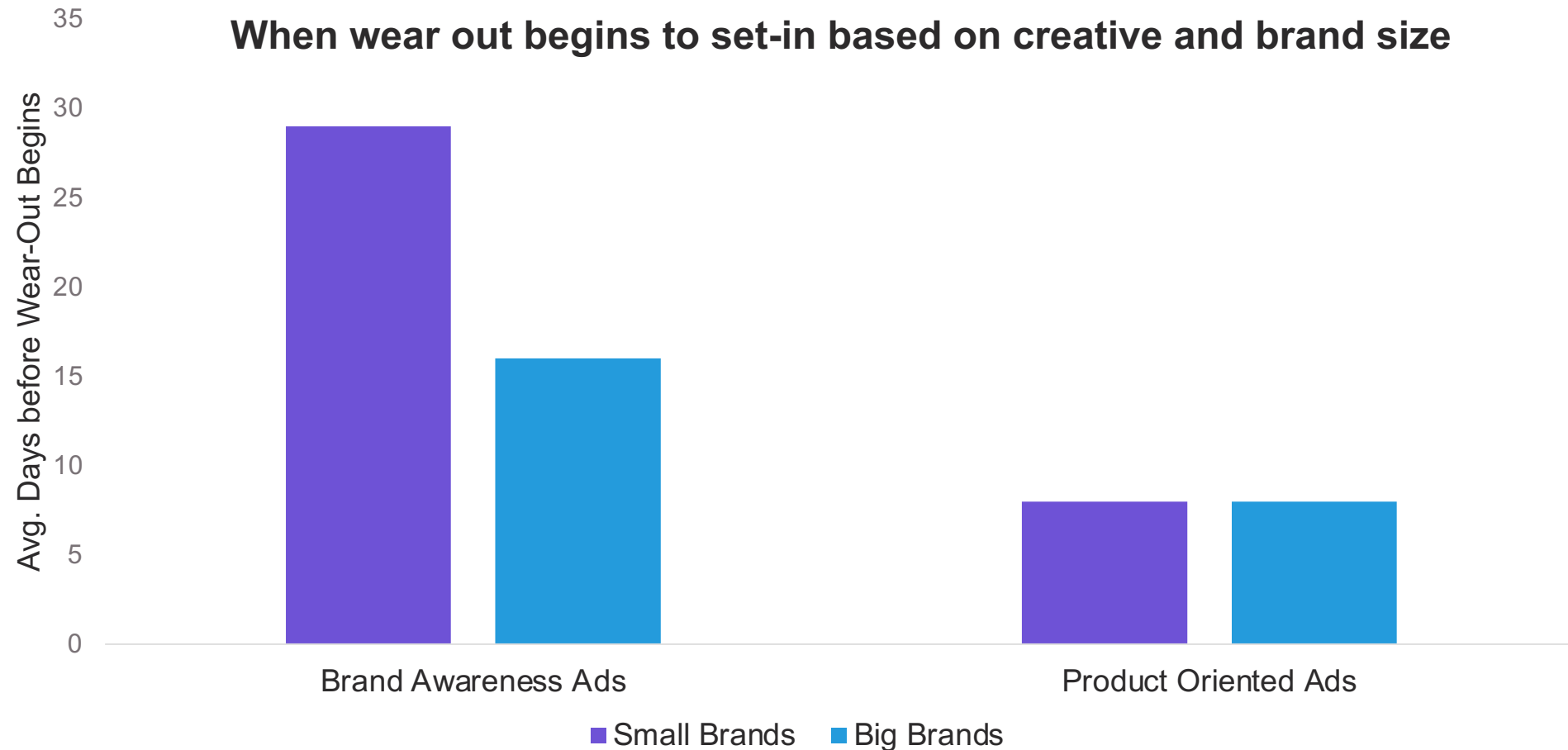
- Storytelling on deep held emotional bonds like parents/children or animals
- Avoid negative visual cues like frowning or smirks
- Two to three emotional beats are best with the last beat coming at the end of the commercial
- Associate the brand with the emotional beat, either visually or verbally

Sources: Internal Analysis, iSpot, Whitney Xi, et al.; Timberland: Unspeakable Truths – Neuro-science and AI enable better identification of the emotions conveyed by advertising, ESOMAR 2019; Marte Atune; Over Half of All Award-Winning Ideas use emotion as creative strategy; WARC 2020

## Drivers Analysis

# Example: Brand Power

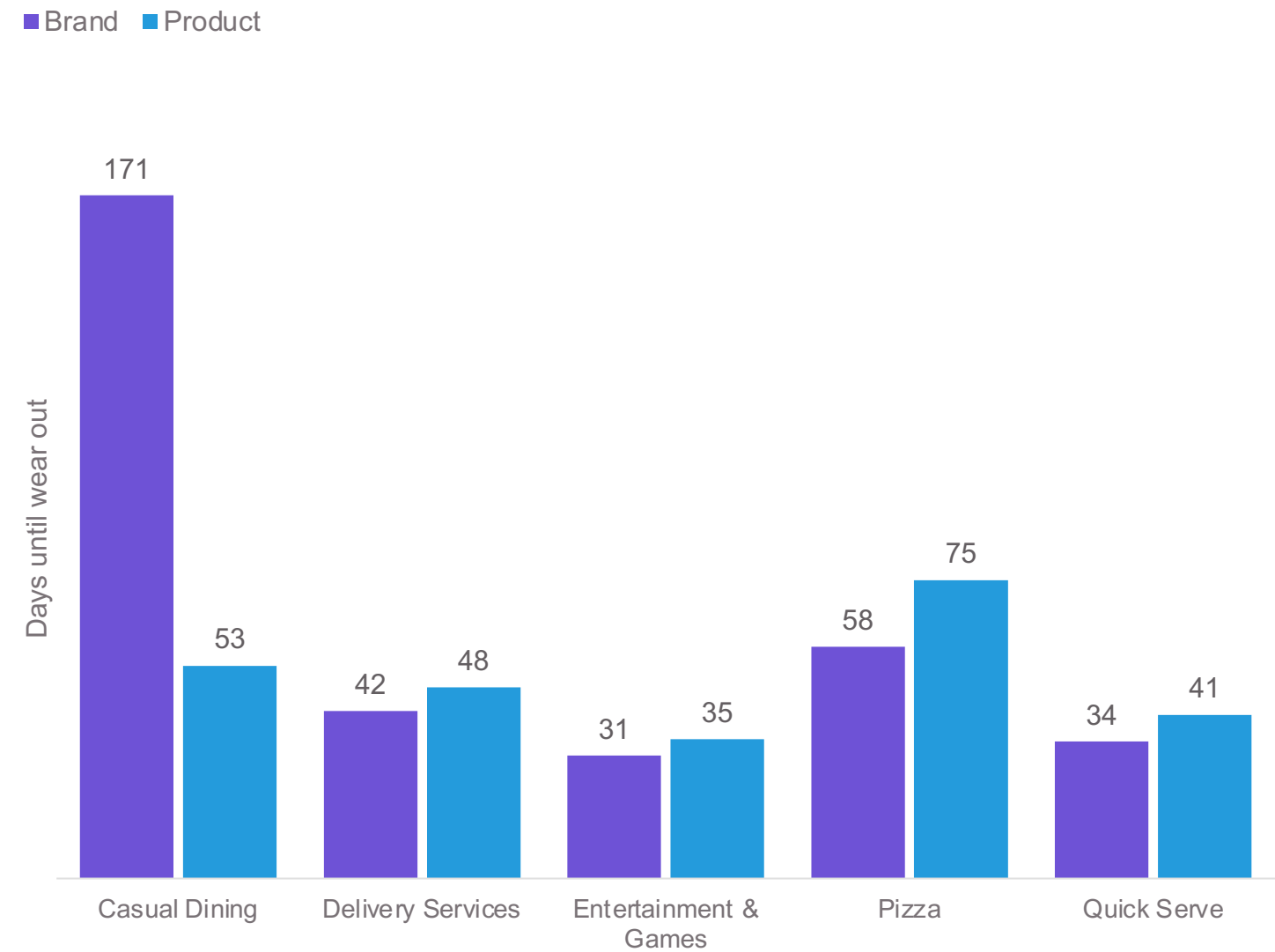
Creative meant to drive brand awareness should be rotated more often the more well known the brand



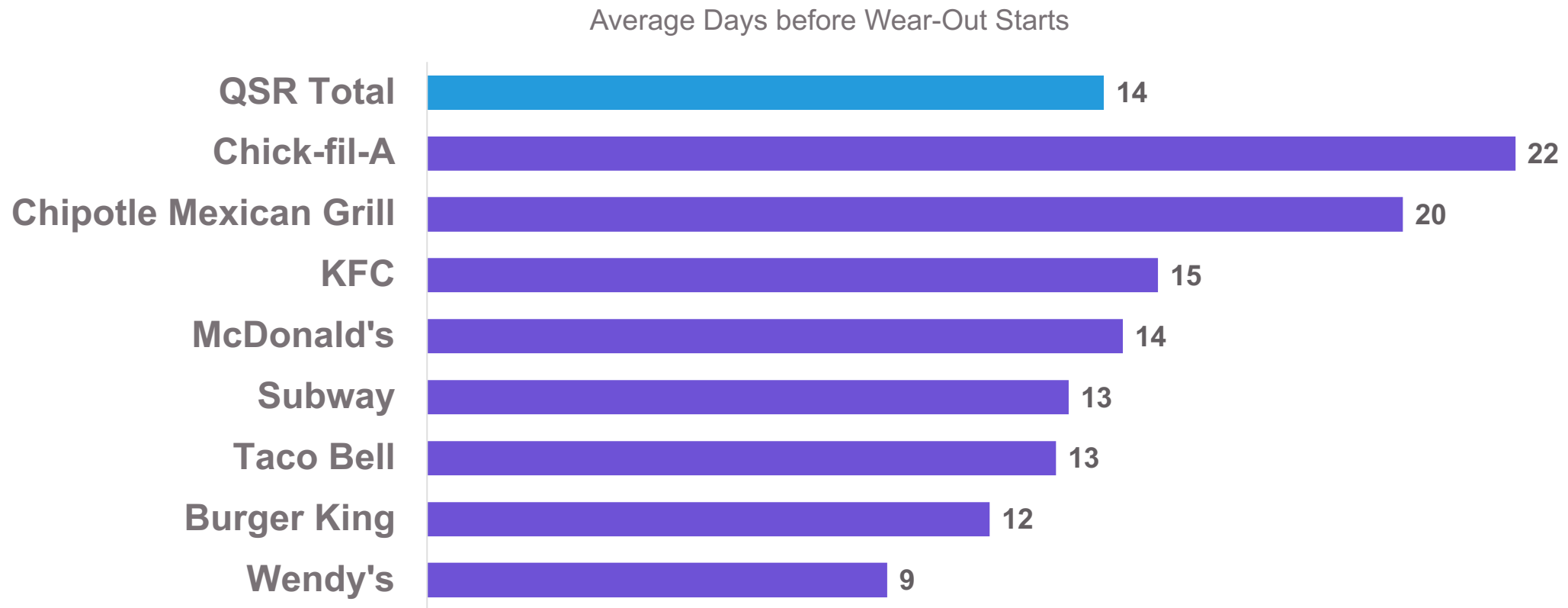
# Understanding Restaurant Creative:

Brand vs. Product

Average Days Before Wear-Out Sets In  
By Restaurant Sub-Category



# Smaller brands wear-out slower over time, with Whataburger and Firehouse subs being the slowest

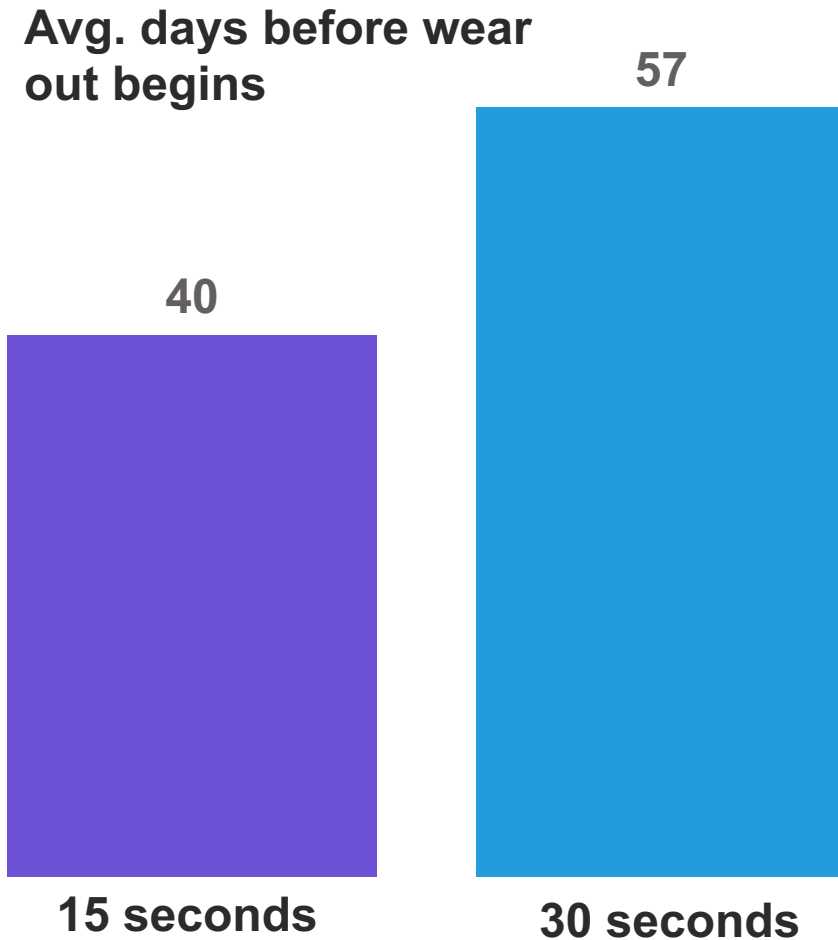


## Drivers Analysis

# Example: Product Ads

When drilling into product-oriented ads, longer ads tend to last longer and achieve higher attention over the average flight

For QSR, 30 second spots tend to begin wearing out around two months into their flight. Strategic implications could be to utilize 30s when educating on new products or promotions



# Less effective over time

Over the course of a year, the average 15s second ad will lose

**38%**

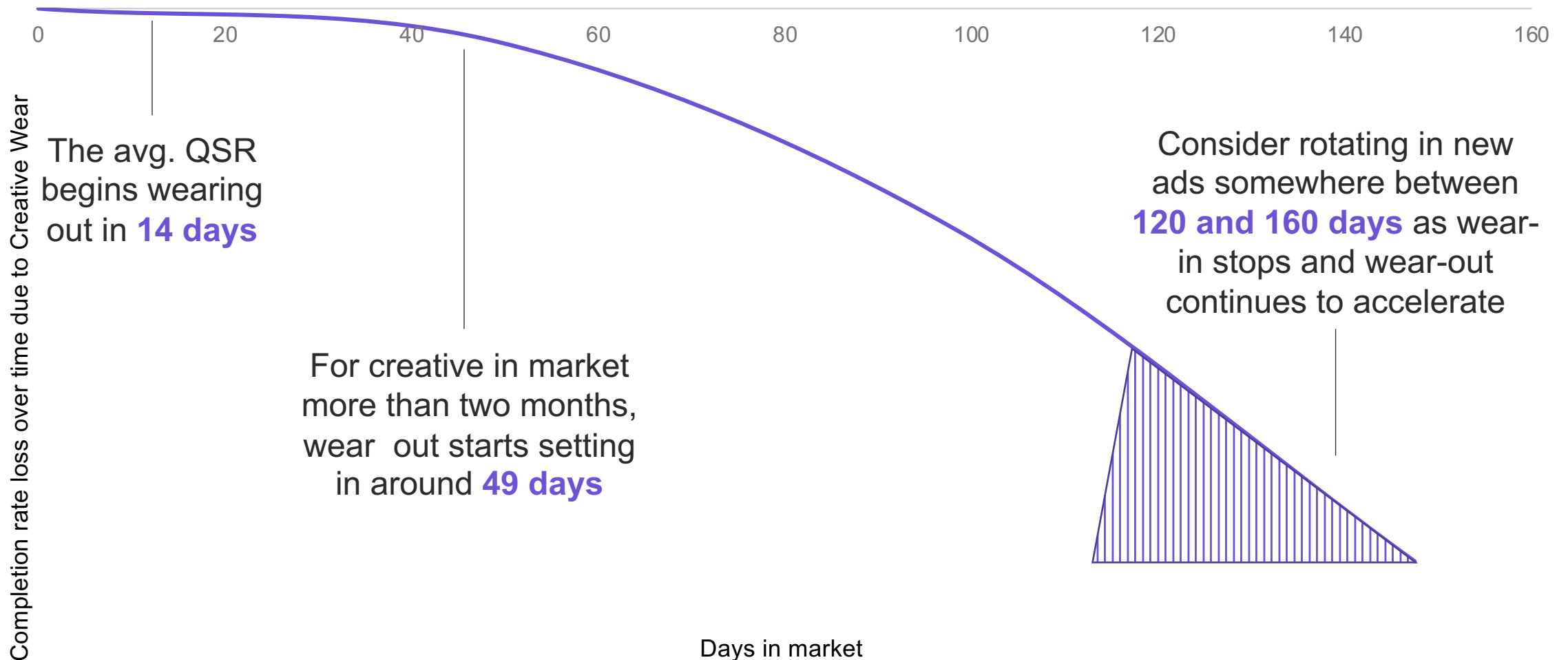
More impressions compared with a 30s  
due to tuning out or turning off



## Drivers Analysis

# Example: Planning

Time on-air is the number one predictor of creative wear

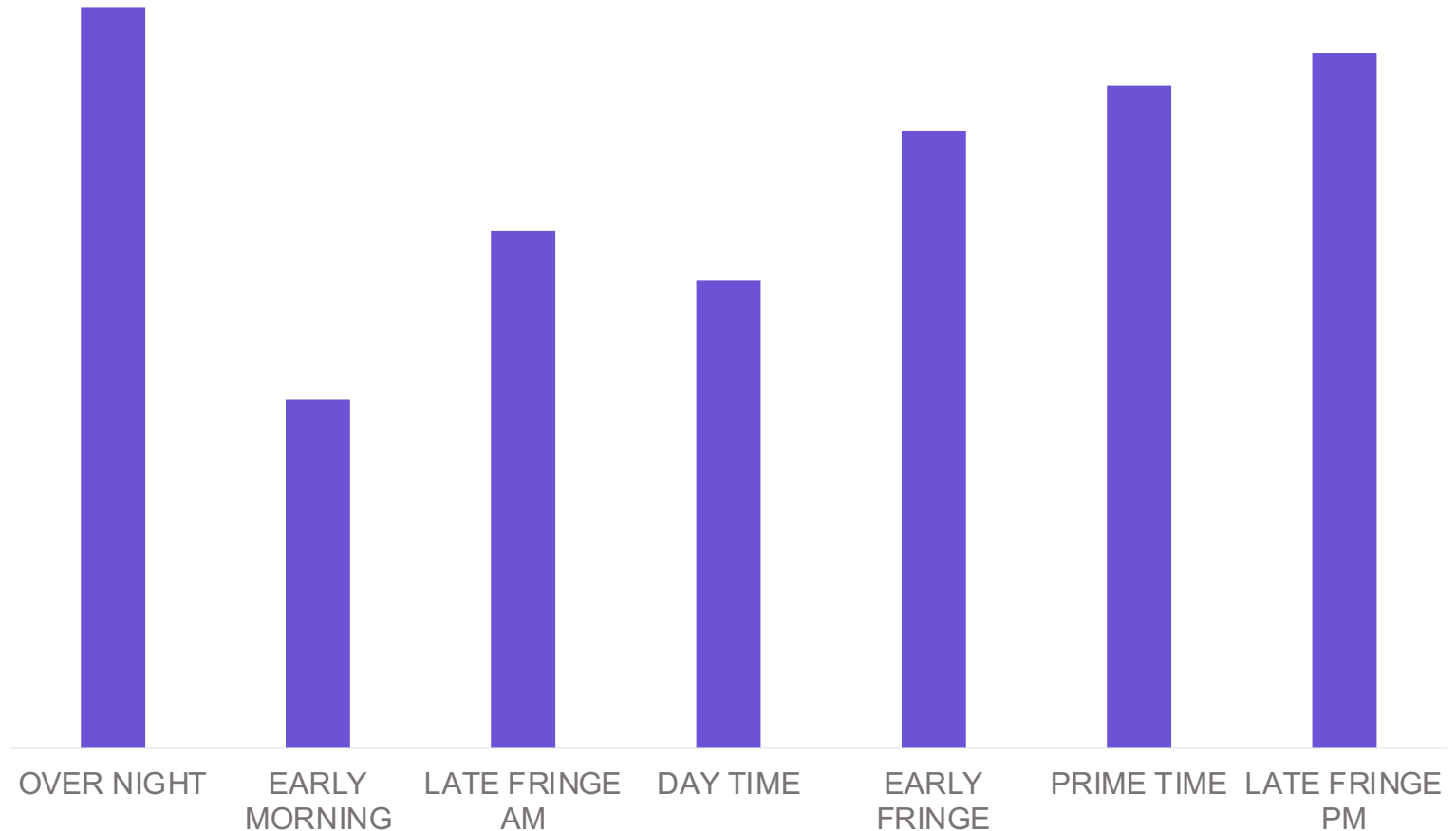


## Example: Day Part Site Conversion

Sports has the highest site conversion across all day-parts, followed up by Sitcoms

133%

Overnight dayparts are drive 133% more conversion to site compared with early morning dayparts across restaurant

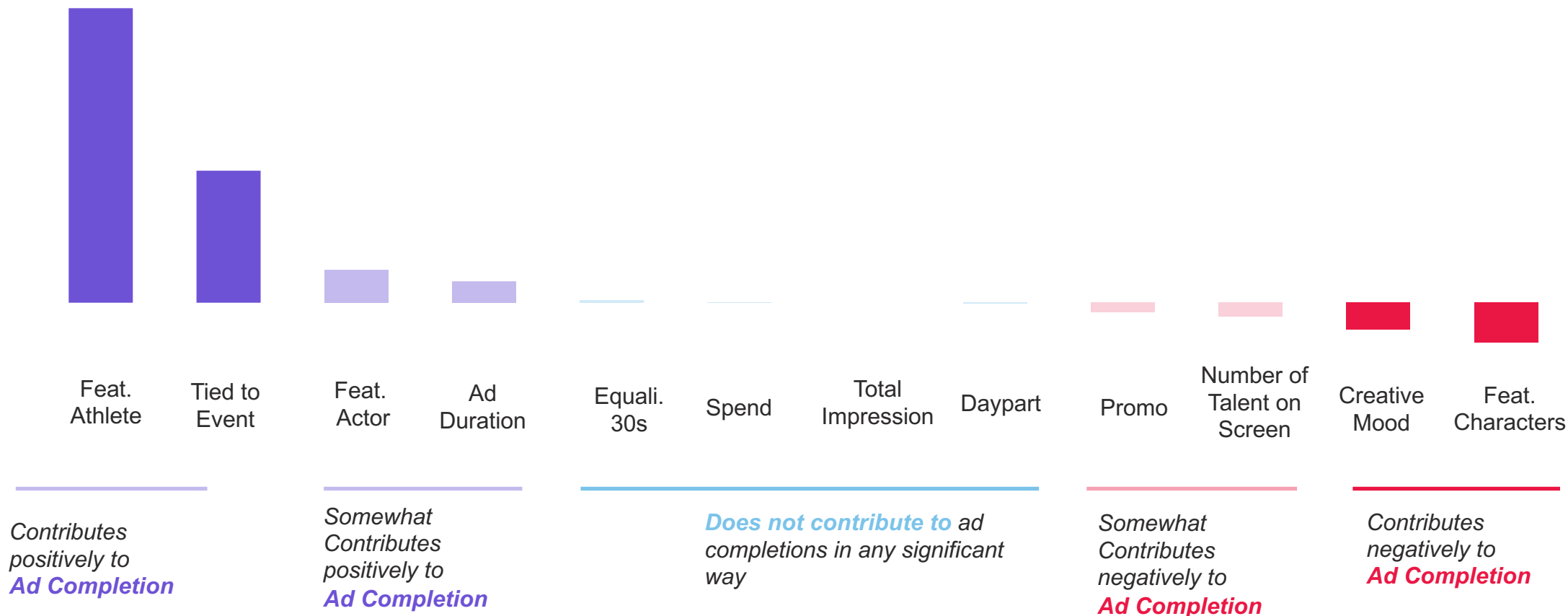


Drivers Analysis

# Example: Boosting Ad Completion Rates

Analyzing just breakfast creative, we tried to understand what impact each element has on an audience’s ability to lean in

Contribution of each creative element to ad completions of breakfast ads

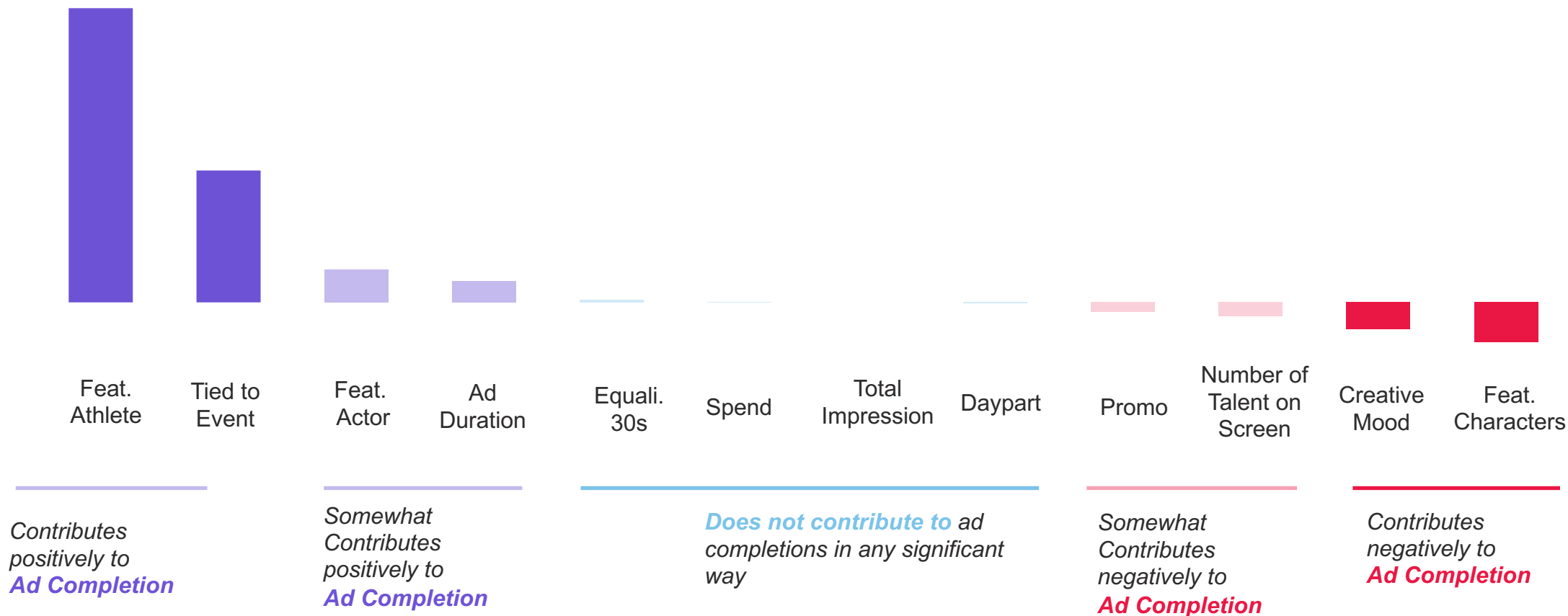


Drivers Analysis

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## Lessons Learned:

# Creative takeaways

Top elements that impact attention



### Brand Power

The more well known your brand, the more important creative rotation is

### Creative

Focus on emotional cues and spokespeople like animals or authors

### Planning

Limiting flight times is the number one way to reduce creative wear





Next Up:

## Want to know more?

Please contact us for custom insights and how we can partner on improving attention through analytics and innovative creative content

**For more information, please contact:**



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