

APG Posters

Ali Kebap – a rags-to-riches story



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## Ali Kebap – a cult figure appears

April 2009. It has not been an easy year for the media industry. Falling sales, short time work – crisis. The whole country is affected. And so is APG. But we cannot simply bury our heads in the sand. That is not the answer. A much more useful idea would be to create our own campaign to publicize the benefits of posters as an advertising medium. A medium that is particularly well suited to boosting sales when times are hard. An affordable, flexible and powerful communication tool.

APG staff draw up a brief and then hold a series of meetings with creative agency Publicis in Zurich. The agency will be responsible for the campaign. Why? This is the same Zurich-based agency which – exactly ten years ago, in 1999 – created a poster campaign with Angie Becker that was a hot topic all over Switzerland for weeks.

The first creative proposals arrive a few days later. They show a man who immediately captures the imagination of everyone who sees him. He satisfies every requirement of the brief. Ali Kebap is born.

## The teaser campaign



3 August 2009. A chubby kebab seller with a gap in his teeth grins out from APG's billboards. Ali Kebab is "NEW in Town". Just in the towns? Not at all – the friendly Turk suddenly starts appearing in hamlets and villages all over Switzerland.

And all over Switzerland the people ask: Is there a new kebab shop opening in the village? Or is this a campaign for a fast-food chain? Or maybe even for a political party? Journalists research the phenomenon and speculate about Ali's origin. Even the television picks up on the story. And that's not all. A large number of blogs and web forums begin discussing Ali Kebab and wondering who he might be. "When will we find out what the teaser campaign is all about?" they ask.

## The reactions

### Un kebab tempesta gli spazi pubblicitari

La vasta e misteriosa campagna pubblicitaria è senz'altro riuscita nell'intento di suscitare curiosità. In alcuni casi in tutti gli angoli del mondo?

### Un mystérieux Kebab à l'affiche

BERNE. «New in Town - Ali Kebab», c'est le message d'une mystérieuse affiche placardée en Suisse. Elle montre, coiffé d'un chapeau turc, un homme un peu dodu, qui tient un long couteau effilé devant un pain de viande. La société d'affichage SGA garde secret le nom de son mandataire. Selon le quotidien Tages-Anzeiger, la SGA elle-même ferait ainsi sa propre pub durant les mois creux de l'été.

I vertici della Società generale di affissioni, de noi interpellati, confermano che dal 17 agosto si saprà di più. E infatti annunciate una nuova ondata di cartelloni che andrà a tappezzare gli spazi pubblicitari della Svizzera. Anche di altri paesi europei? Possibile essendo il committente un'importante catena di... kebab? (o si può chiamarlo fast food?). Ad ogni modo i vertici della Sga rispondono evasivamente che «non si può escludere che si tratti una campagna internazionale». Il cartellone, in effetti, si adatta ad ogni dove.

### ALI, L'ARME SECRETE CONTRE LA CRISE?

Qui n'a pas vu cette affiche promettant l'arrivée d'un vendeur de kebab en ville? Pour les professionnels, c'est sûrement un coup de la SGA pour combler les emplacements vides.

### Die Kebab-Ali-Aktion hat Trittbrettfahrer gefunden

Mitarbeiter des Unternehmens, Leiter Marketing und Altkommunikation von APG in Zürich, thematisieren die Plakataktion mit dem runderhobenen...



### Wo ist denn eigentlich dieser Ali?



### Wer steckt hinter Ali?

Er sei «New in town», wirbt «Ali Kebab» nicht nur in Bern auf zahlreichen Plakaten, sondern in der ganzen Schweiz. Dass der rundliche Herr, der freundlich lächelnd sein Messer hochhält, nicht wirklich für eine Kebab-Kette werben dürfte, ist offenbar...

### Wer ist Ali?



### Rätselhafte Kampagne sorgt für Aufsehen

L'À-PROPOS Ali surfe sur la campagne de pub «Ali», c'est lui! C'est en tout cas le surnom d'Ekrem Güncü, 49 ans. Patron des kebabs Ephese, à Genève, il a profité de la campagne

### "Il misterioso volto di Ali Kebab non è un manifesto anti-stranieri"

"No, non credo proprio che siano manifesti contro gli stranieri" dice il presidente dell'Udc Pierre Rasconi. Di primo acchito a guardare il volto pacifonico di Ali Kebab che da giorni scintilla misterioso in tutta la Svizzera da grandi, quanto anonimi, cartelli pubblicitari, c'è da pensare ad una nuova campagna democristiana, come quella sulle pecore nere, in vista della votazione popolare di novembre contro i razzisti. Per quanto anonimo, se fosse stata un'iniziativa propagandistica su scala nazionale del nostro partito l'avremmo comunque supportato" assicura Rasconi. Dietro c'è invece, almeno in parte, un'operazione di marketing del "Mantello on line", il settimanale in rete della Lega del ticinese, gestita dalla società di comunicazione Tipoposizion che la capo al deputato Norman Gobbi e Stefano Bernocchi. Se dai manifesti di Ali Kebab, che annuncia l'arrivo della specialità araba, si passa al sito alikebab.com, con lo stesso slogan in italiano: "Benvenuti a tutti...".

### MAIS QUI DONC EST ALI KEBAB?

Il est en train de faire le buzz. Depuis quelques jours, la Suisse est envahie par un grand format à l'échelle de Bern, Zurich, Lugano ou Lausanne, sourit à tout le pays. Il s'agit d'un grand format à format et chapeau rouge sur la tête, et vertes les mains d'un mystérieux vendeur de kebabs. Depuis plusieurs jours, de grandes affiches au look Hollywoodien ornent les affiches aux rails. Mais qui est ce mystérieux Ali? Et qui veut donc dire cette campagne? Pour Thoma, nul ne le sait. L'Office ne donne qu'une indication: affiche de laus, Ali Kebab (Chapman et al).

### Ali le kébabier est juste un gros coup de pub pour la pub

ÉPILOGUE La campagne qui a envahi toute la Suisse était une anticipation de la SGA (Société d'Affichage SGA).



Ali neckt das Publikum: Wofür das Plakat wirbt, ist unklar. sichtlich. Doch wer steckt wirklich hinter der sogenannten «Teaser-Kampagne» (to tease = necken, reizen)? Die Plakatgeber wollten die Aufmerksamkeit des Newsnetz/tauchs verraten. kann tippt auf ei-



17 August 2009. "Ali Kebab mystery solved". This and similar headlines appear in most of the Swiss daily newspapers. It is no surprise to us, of course, but it causes great astonishment everywhere else. APG is behind Ali Kebab? Yes, in the middle of an economic downturn, APG is promoting its own medium. With great success in fact. Fan groups appear on Facebook, APG receives a substantial number of orders for posters as well as a non-stop stream of calls from journalists wanting to interview the real Ali. Ali Kebab becomes a cult figure within a very short time – throughout Switzerland.

«Ali-Kebab»:  
Es war die APG

In der vergangenen Woche sorgten im ganzen Land gestreute «Ali Kebab»-Plakate für grosses Rätselraten (Ausgabe vom 11.8.). Jetzt ist klar, wer hinter der grellgelben Werbung steckt: Die Allgemeine Plakatgesellschaft (APG) hat die Plakate selber aufgehängt. Die Botschaft: Wenn Unternehmen – ob klein oder gross – auf Plakatwerbung setzen, sind sie nachhaltig erfolgreich. Genau wie der (fiktive) Geschäftsmann Ali: Die neusten Plakate zeigen ihn mit Krawatte um den Hals und zwei Mitarbeitern im Hintergrund. Ali hat also innert kürzester Zeit expandiert und ist Chef geworden. Die APG zeigte sich gestern zufrieden darüber, wie viel Aufmerksamkeit er der ganzen Welt gebracht hat. 14. September: Ali-Geschichten werden.

Rätsel um Ali gelöst

Eigenwerbung mit Ali Kebab

Die APG AG – eine Tochtergesellschaft der Affichage Holding SA – hat das Geheimnis um die Teaser-Kampagne «Ali Kebab» gelüftet. Die Botschaft: Dank der APG zum Geschäftserfolg. Das aktuelle Sujet ist noch bis 14. September in allen Landesstellen ausgehängt. Und: Die Geschichte geht weiter. Beat Holenstein, Leiter Marketing und Akquisition dazu: «Die Geschichte des – fiktiven – Geschäftsmanns 'Ali' steht als Sinnbild für die Unternehmen, die mit Einsatz des Mediums Plakat nachhaltig erfolgreich sind.» Für die Idee und Umsetzung der Kampagne zeichnet laut Mitteilung die Zürcher Werbeagentur Publicis verantwortlich. (bt)

APG





4 September 2009.

After the teaser campaign, Ali's story takes a surprising twist: more staff, more branches, more success. On the heels of the Ali Hotel comes Ali Kebap Airways.

**This was not the first time that the Publicis agency had created a teaser campaign that had got the whole nation talking. Ten years ago, they scored a big success with "Angie Becker". Is there a formula for a successful teaser campaign? Yes, and Publicis knows what it is.**

The requirement of the APG brief is clearly stated: the campaign must prove the effectiveness of poster advertising beyond all question. It must show that posters are not just a medium for international brands. On the contrary; they can help small and medium-sized companies generate a lot of interest in their products for not a lot of money. And it should also be proved that posters are the most important selling medium. Why? Because they can be placed very precisely in the required target market – in the place where the decision to buy is made: out of home.

After developing the Ali concept, Publicis begins to draw up the campaign. Right from the very beginning, they exclude any possibility of Ali being a "good-looking photographic model". He has to be a true-to-life kebab seller. Working with the photographer, the agency quickly assembles a number of kebab stands, and casts a variety of characters. They then narrow down the field. And Ali – or rather Hasan – stands out from all the candidates immediately.

The campaign needs to look real, and to feel authentic – as if the owner of a "real" kebab stand had produced it himself. A difficult job for the graphic artists, who are used to producing polished artwork to a very high standard.

But also a challenge. The ad agency works on different layouts, selects a bright amber background as the colour theme and deliberately designs the typography to appear awkward. Finally, they take studio shots of Ali in a variety of poses.

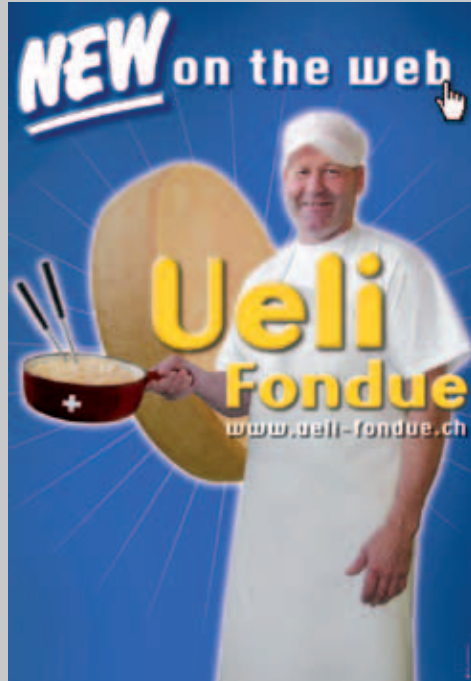
#### **A greater focus on posters**

Once the interest in Ali takes hold, people begin to wonder about Ali the person. Who is Ali and who is behind him? Both journalists and private individuals begin to investigate the mystery. The press receives an inquiry nearly every hour. There is increasing speculation that APG is behind the campaign.

And what exactly is the most important ingredient in a teaser campaign? That's an easy one. Secrecy. It sounds simple enough in theory, but it is often difficult to achieve in the real world. Everyone involved – from the creative team to the logistics staff – must comply with this condition absolutely.

Was the poster campaign a success? Yes, Publicis certainly thinks so. Talking to other advertisers and media agencies will confirm that this is the case. Since Ali Kebap, advertisers have been much keener to include posters in their advertising campaign.

Ali Kebap gains a following



“Ali Kebap was a stroke of luck for APG”

Interview with Beat Holenstein, Head of Marketing & Acquisition for APG

**APG posters are a success for advertisers. After Ali Kebap, nobody in Switzerland could fail to know this. Beat Holenstein knows why poster campaigns are so successful.**

**Sascha Hardegger:** Mr Holenstein, the Ali Kebap campaign caused huge ripples throughout Switzerland. Newspapers and television reported on it and customers reacted to it in a wide variety of ways. What is your verdict?

**Beat Holenstein:** We achieved, even exceeded, our goals. I am very happy with the campaign. Thanks to that poster, Ali Kebap, who was previously completely unknown, became a topic of conversation all over Switzerland, and even abroad. All within a very short time. I ask you: what other medium can do that? None!

Why, in your opinion, did Ali have such a powerful effect on the population?

**There were a number of reasons. The teaser campaign made people think: “Who is Ali? Who or what is behind it?” The eye-catching, yellow poster prompted a real mixed bag of emotions. And Ali seemed to be everywhere.**

What were your objectives for the campaign?  
**First, to show that posters can help any company to be successful, whether they are from a village or a big city. This is because the medium allows them to focus very precisely on a specific geographical area. No other medium is more effective in doing this. That is why posters are such a superb “selling medium”. The Ali Kebap campaign showed this quite clearly.**

On 29 December 2009, the “Tages Anzeiger” newspaper chose Ali Kebap – along with Zurich Mayor Corine Mauch – as its “Person of the Year”. Did that surprise you?

**No. You have seen for yourself how posters can help you achieve ambitious goals within a short space of time.**

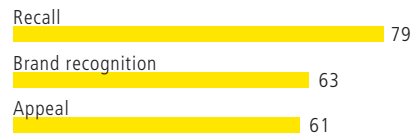
Mr Holenstein, thank you for your time.



# Facts and figures at a glance

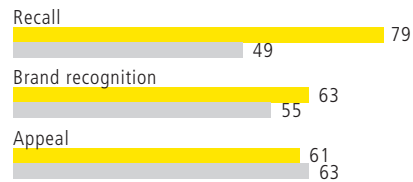
## Overview of totals

In % of persons surveyed (recall) or of persons with recall (brand recognition, appeal)



## Comparison of PPI® averages

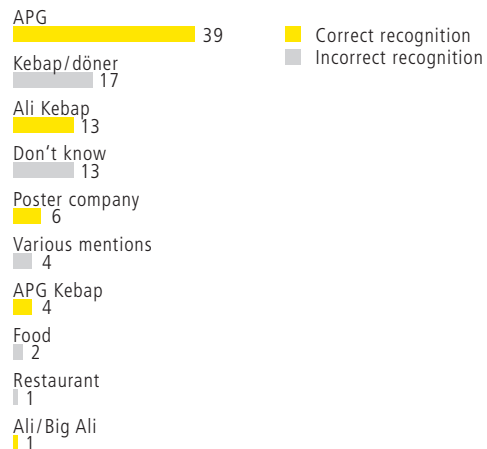
In % of persons surveyed (recall) or of persons with recall (brand recognition, appeal)



■ Ø PPI®

## Recognized brands

In % of persons with recall



## Number of posters per wave and week

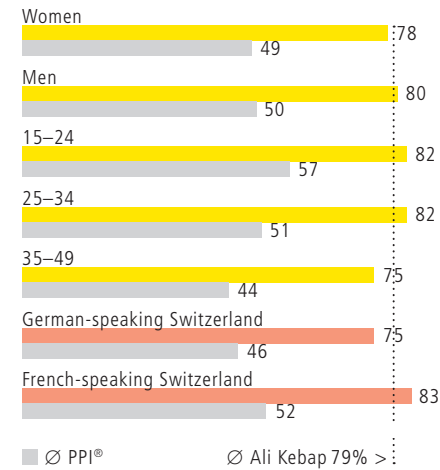
1,250 in formats F12, F200, F200L, F24 and 500 in F4 format

## Performance

Target group 3.4 million  
Reach 77%  
Contacts 41  
TCP CHF 9  
GRP 3,385  
Contact class 5

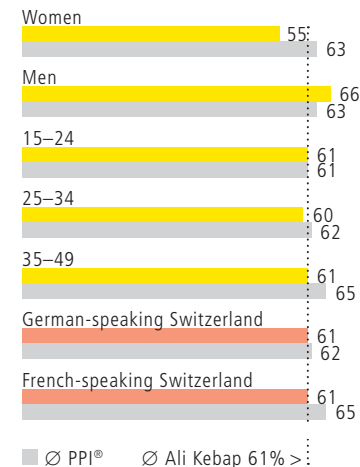
## Feature-based recall

In % of persons surveyed



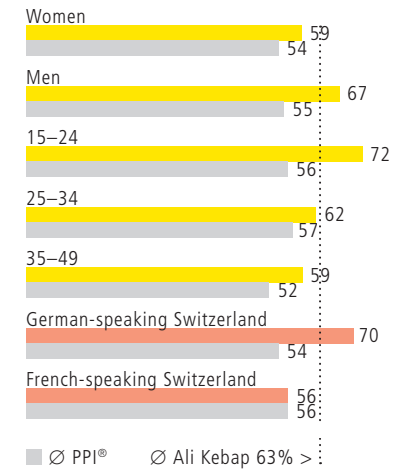
## Feature-based appeal

In % of persons with recall



## Feature-based brand recognition

In % of persons with recall



## Facts and figures at a glance

### Formats – advertising exposure

The teaser campaign was posted all over Switzerland in F12L, F200L and F24 (F4) formats. According to SPR+, the title “NEW in Town” achieved an average advertising exposure of 3,385 GRP\*. This was in the contact class 5.

### PPI® recall: 79 percent\*\*

The campaign achieved stable values in all sociodemographic subgroups. These are above the PPI® average. The 42 GRP per % recall means that this was a very effective campaign.

### Brand recognition: 63 percent

Mainly men and younger age groups correctly recognized the brand. The German-speaking regions achieved better results here than the French-speaking regions. The overall values are above the PPI® average.

### Appeal: 61 percent

The campaign achieved stable values in all sociodemographic subgroups. These lie near the PPI® average.

### Conclusion

For a new brand, “Ali Kebap” achieved very good values above the PPI® average.

#### \* GRP (Gross Rating Point)

This is a media planning term. It is used to measure advertising exposure and is the gross reach in percent within the potential target group.

#### \*\* PPI® Poster Performance Index

The APG study examines the advertising effectiveness of national poster campaigns. It evaluates recall, brand recognition and appeal in a post-test carried out in Switzerland and produces benchmarks using the data on average values available within the sector.

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# Ali chosen as Person of the Year 2009

Tagess-Anzeiger - Dienstag, 29. Dezember 2009

## Zürich

Aufsteiger 2009

### Sie haben ein gutes Jahr hinter sich



Flinker als angedacht: Bauarbeiter am Stadleroberplatz und im Seefeld.

#### 1. Baustellen

Am 21. September erklärte Stadträtin Ruth Gemmer den Umbau des Stadleroberplatzes für beendet - einen Monat früher als geplant. Was hatten die Gewerbetreibenden und die Bürgerlichen gerollt wegen dieser Baustelle und den Weltuntergang, wenn nicht Schlammregen prophezeit. Und dann ging's so schnell und «glücklich». Aus dem dümmsten Baustelle wurde ein kleines Obel. (9)

#### 2. Susi Gut

Wehe dem, der ins Visier von Susi Gut gerät: Erst brachte sie den Club of Rome um städtische Gelder, dann kippte sie den umstrittenen Hafenkran, und nun macht sie Stadtpräsidentin Corine Mauch das Amt streuzig. Aber selbst wenn sie dieses Mal scheitert, könnte sie nächstes Jahr wieder zu den Aufsteigern gehören - dann, wenn sich ihre Mikropartei im Parlament halten kann. (9)



Da strahlte sie noch: Corine Mauch nach der Wahl als erste Stadtpräsidentin.

#### 3. Corine Mauch

Am Sonntag, 29. März, hatte sie es geschafft: Die ausserhalb des Rathauses weitgehend unbekanntes SP-Gemeinderätin wurde zur ersten Stadtpräsidentin von Zürich gewählt. Nachdem im ersten Wahlgang FDP-Stadträtin Kathrin Martelli genügt, aber das absolute Mehr verpasst hatte, gewann Mauch im zweiten Durchgang 57 Prozent der Stimmen und alle Wahlkreise. Ein Triumph. (9)

#### 4. Deutsche in Zürich

Jeden Monat vermehren sie sich um etwa 1000 Köpfe - die Deutschen. Nicht weil sie so fruchtbar wären, sondern weil sie so zuwandern. Über 70000 wohnen mittlerweile im Kanton, über 28000 in der Stadt Zürich. Klug, wie sie sind, besuchen viele der Einwanderer Bernimmatur, um die Eingeborenen nicht allzu fest mit farschem Auftritt und zögerlicher Aussprache zu erschrecken. (9)



Um ein Haar: Der Sender stand vor dem Aus. Bis Ringler das Checkback machte.

#### 5. Radio Energy

Geld regiert die Welt: Zu dieser Erkenntnis gelangte Bundesrat Moritz Leuenberger nach dem Kontrakt zwischen Giuseppe Scaglione und Radio Energy. Für fünf Millionen Franken hatte der Medienkonzern Ringler dem Radiomacher eine Konzession abgekauft, die der Staat zuvor gratis abgeherbt hatte. Ringler kann das egal sein: Energy darf weiter senden. (10)

#### 6. Ulrich Schlöer

Für die Linke ist er ein rotes Tuch, ein «SVP-Taliban», der in die Wüste geschickt gehört. Ulrich Schlöer. Der Politiker aus Flaach verpasste im Herbst 2007 die Wiederwahl in den Nationalrat, sein politisches Schicksal schien besiegelt. Doch dann tauchte ihm das Glück: Schlöer rückte in den Nationalrat nach. Und an seiner Minoren-Initiative wird die Linke lange kauern. (10)



Ein Bild des Erfolgs: Kaffiger Ali Kebab und Hasan, sein Darsteller.

#### 7. Ali Kebab

Hasan, der palästinensische Maschinenbau-Ingenieur, wurde über Nacht im ganzen Land bekannt. Der 46-Jährige schlüpfte für die Allgemeine Flakater-Schiffahrt (AFG) in die Rolle des Ali, der mit Kebab-Karriere machte und bald schon eine Honnekte und eine Flaggenschiffahrt gründete. Im richtigen Leben verkauft Hasan Falabel in Zürich. Er heisst, es seien die besten der Stadt. (10)

#### 8. Erich Vock

Zwanzig Jahre lang war «Die Kleine Niederdoferer» in Zürich nicht mehr auf der Bühne zu sehen - wohl, weil es niemand wagt, das Bäuerlein Heiri zu spielen. Wer kommt schon gegen die Legende Rudolf Walder an? Erich Vock. Er scharte ein Ensemble mit Prominenten um sich und schlüpfte selber in die Rolle des Heiri. Zur Freude des Publikums: Jede Vorstellung ist ausverkauft. (10)