

AIBO becomes Sony mascot

AIBO, or Artificial Intelligent Robot, has been a media darling since its introduction in the autumn of 1999. Throughout Sony Europe's 2002 advertising campaign, consumers have seen the AIBO ERS-210 model engaging with Sony products from WEGA televisions, VAIO PCs and DVD players to digital still cameras, Handycams and Walkmans. Sony Europe is encouraged by the simplicity of the advertising - it is all about Sony products. AIBO allows for a synergy across the different product businesses as well as adding charm and character through its engagement and interaction with products.



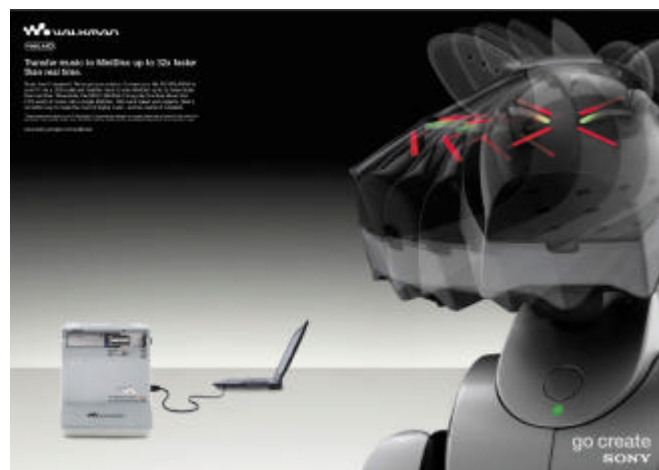
The main aim behind introducing AIBO as the star of Sony Europe's advertising is to provide an integrated advertising approach. This approach provides a good balance between brand awareness and product advertising. Research has shown that AIBO performs well at representing what the consumers expect from Sony – cutting-edge technology, innovation, entertainment and fun.



One simple idea was needed to represent the entire range of products. Using AIBO as a 'marque' throughout the advertising campaigns strengthens the Sony brand in consumers' minds. Simultaneously, AIBO showcases Sony key products.

The television campaign was launched with two commercials in May 2002; one for the WEGA Theatre, Sony's home entertainment systems, and the other for Net MD Walkman.

Sony is also using AIBO as a mascot in print, outdoor, cinema and online advertising. This new campaign has given the Sony brand a unique look and feel – providing the 'standout' the Sony products truly deserve. This campaign is an integral part of the existing 'Go Create' strategy that emphasizes connectivity and creativity in using Sony products to help make people's lives more enjoyable.



This first wave of AIBO commercials has enjoyed significant success. Surveys carried out in the aftermath of the commercials have confirmed the expectations that were based on pre-campaign research. The surveys were designed to assess the impact AIBO was having on the advertising campaigns as well as to measure AIBO awareness and perceptions. The majority of respondents, 88%, knew AIBO. A large proportion of those respondents got to know the friendly entertainment robot from his presence on television, followed by a smaller proportion that met AIBO on the Internet. AIBO is associated with expressions including 'full of high-tech functions', 'suitable to Sony', 'exclusive' and 'fascinating'.

Overall, AIBO had a welcomed impact on the advertising campaign. The best results were recorded by the WEGA Theatre campaign, where survey respondents were very

enthusiastic about the television commercial and the print adverts. The Sony Net MD Walkman and the other products of the campaign closely matched these promising results.



The next advertising campaign will span the run up to Christmas, with a debut set for October 2002. A similar concept will be used to advertise the range of Sony products, once again using AIBO to showcase their advantages.