

Subject: Full

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I've been thinking about frequency.
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Clearly, you didn't need the repetition in order to get the point of that first sentence. In fact, the repetition probably made it less likely you read it.

So why does frequency work so well in marketing? Why did candidates spend more than two billion dollars on the last election... that's about \$10 a voter. Clearly, the information could have been transmitted a lot more cheaply than that.



It starts with the fact that ten percent (!) of voters polled acknowledged that they decided who to vote for on the day they voted. Wow. Why wait that long? Surely the voter had some sort of inkling long before that.

I think people are full. They have too much to do, too much on their plates, no room for new ideas, new tasks and new challenges (or at least they think they're full). So when all those ads are hurled at them, they ignore them. They ignore them because they can, and because they don't perceive that they have a problem that the ad will help them

solve.

And then suddenly, election day arrives (or you run out of flour or need to hire a consultant or fly on a plane to Singapore or whatever). And now you have a problem. You don't know how to choose. So you let some ideas in. You're momentarily unfull, and then, when you're full again, you go back to ignoring the world.

But who do you let in? Which ideas get a shot?

You've probably guessed already. It's the ideas that were in line, patiently waiting. The ideas that earned their place in line because of those ads you say you ignored. You don't consciously remember them, of course, but they were there all along, laying the groundwork, just waiting until you were unfull.

So, all marketing analyses that ignore time are wrong. There's a big difference between a message that arrives when I'm full and when I'm unfull. And there is a big difference between a first impression and tenth one. Even if I can't remember the first nine.