

What do the Jamie Oliver advertisements say about the Sainsbury's brand?

Using celebrities in advertisements can be very effective, for example, Walkers Crisps' use of former England football star Gary Lineker over seven years has helped the company become one of Britain's most recognised retail brands.

Sainsbury's are typical in having chosen Jamie Oliver to front their advertisements: the Naked Chef, famous for his 'lurveverly - jubberly' chats with neighbourhood butchers and greengrocers, gives the cosy illusion that the big superstore is really a friendly corner shop.

My favourite two Sainsbury's advertisements featuring Jamie Oliver are called 'Ruby murray' and 'tiger'. 'Ruby murray' has a very humorous and strong narrative, almost like a mini story. Jamie and his friends come in from a late night out and one of them suggests having a 'ruby murray' for dinner. It then cuts to Jamie shopping at Sainsbury's casually chucking ingredients into his basket in a very relaxed manner. He makes shopping look fun, quick and simple. It shows he is able to buy all of the unusual and exotic ingredients he wants at Sainsbury's, and it is easy to access at any time of day, or night in this case. In no time he is back at his friends house cooking the meal. There is a very fun atmosphere and uplifting music, and he looks like he is really enjoying cooking for his friends. He serves the meal up and proudly shows his friends who reply with 'nah, I don't fancy that much mate', Jamie looks disappointed but this is quickly reversed when they all laugh and get on with eating the meal. This advertisement is almost selling a lifestyle of having fun, laughing and generally having a good time.

The advertisement 'tiger' also has a very humorous narrative. It starts off with Jamie's wife Jules 'quickly popping out'. When she has left the house, Jamie immediately picks up the phone and calls a 'mystery woman' who he nicknames 'tiger'. He tells her he is going to go and see her. The audience are misled and intrigued because they are given the impression that Jamie is having an affair. It quickly cuts to Jamie in his kitchen cooking a tart for the woman, again, looking like he is having a lot of fun - drumming pans and spinning plates. The background music 'Girl I want to be with you' leads the audience on and keeps them intrigued and wondering who the woman could be. It then cuts to Jamie on his scooter, travelling to see 'tiger' and singing along to the background music making the audience even more lured in. He arrives at the house and checks his hair in his mirror, which is stereotypically what males do before meeting a lover. He then jumps over the hedge, eager to see the woman and knocks on the door. The woman answers and all we see are her tiger slippers to add to the mysterious humour and keep the audience in suspense. Jamie greets her with a friendly 'alright mate' and passes his grandma the tart he made for her. This advertisement will appeal to the elderly especially, because they will like the fact that Jamie has a good relationship with his grandma and cooks food for her.

Throughout both advertisements there are close ups of Jamie's facial expressions, which give the impression to the audience that he is very friendly, warm, charming, funny and genuine. Jamie is an east end boy who uses a lot of slang words. He is not a typical posh, rich celebrity, which makes people feel he is like everyone else, and not beyond anyone's reach. Recently Oliver's mother, father and grandmother have joined him and his wife Jules in the advertisements. This gives the idea that Jamie has good relationships with all his family and friends and is very much a boy-next-door type of character. He is represented as a 'cool' 'young' and 'modern' chef, who makes cooking look fun and easy. For this reason, he appeals to families, young people, the elderly and almost everyone.

Sainsbury's success with Jamie Oliver contrasts with their advertising disaster featuring John Cleese abusing the staff through a megaphone, trumpeting the slogan "Value to shout about". Not only was John Cleese annoying and irritating, he is rude, sarcastic and patronising. The ad encouraged value shoppers who tend to switch between all the chains searching for special offers and excluded the existing better off, higher spending shoppers. Also, the advertisement doesn't compliment Sainsbury's in any way - the shelves do not look appealing and the shop looks empty. The overall impression of this advertisement was incorrect and unappealing, causing a huge drop in sales.