



The campaign engaged football viewers by hijacking the VAR to offer discounts on TVs | Photo source Nord DDB

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AD CAMPAIGN CO-OPTS FOOTBALL REFEREE VIDEO ASSISTANT



An ad campaign for a Nordic electronics retailer offers discounts every time the video assistant is called in for a football game

Spotted: Nordic electronics retailer Elgiganten, which operates in Denmark, Sweden and Norway, recently launched an ad campaign that co-opted the video assistant referee (VAR) used in football games. During football matches, the referee calls for the VAR by forming the outline of a television with his or her hands. The brand used this to tie the use of the VAR in with a discount.

Every time the referee made the VAR signal, Elgiganten would activate an online discount for one of its televisions. The discount would last for only one hour. Crucially, the amount of the discount was tied into the time of the call. So, if a referee called for the VAR 35 minutes into the game, the discount would be for 35 per cent off.

The discounts did not show up on television but were pushed online, using social media. The social media campaign encouraged viewers to watch for the VAR call. Of course, if one came up early in the game, they also had to decide whether to hold out for a later call and a greater discount. The discounts were capped at 45 per cent.

According to the ad agency who came up with the idea, Nord DDB, the “VAR Discount,” “made its debut in the match between Liverpool and Man City. Which resulted in a big win for the brand — without having to pay anything in sponsorship costs. Instead, Elgiganten will stay in the middle of the action all season. Just by making VAR something to look forward to.” The ad debuted in a match between Liverpool and Manchester City and in just one hour Elgiganten sold 313 TVs, for 2.4 million DKK (€320751) – more than paying back the cost of the spot.

Consumers are becoming more used to being bombarded with ads. This means that it takes a clever approach to rise above the constant hubbub of everyday ads. Other ads we have seen recently that stand out include a campaign by a [Cincinnati bank](#) that replaces retail ads with encouragements to save and a campaign by a brand that supports children's [lemonade stands](#).

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Takeaway:

In addition to the sales, the in-game campaign attracted 10,500 unique visitors to Elgiganten's site and 250 live customers during the game. The campaign had managed to turn the entire audience into a pool of potential customers, without buying expensive ad-time. Moreover, by making the offer time-limited, Elgiganten is forcing people to make a spur of the moment decision. Since people are often already excited when watching a football game, the added excitement of a chance to grab a discounted TV may make people even more likely to make a purchase. Elgiganten plans to run the campaign during the next Premier League, the Danish Super League and the European Championship.