PROCEEDINGS OF THE

2017 GLOBAL CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ADVERTISING

In conjunction with
Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan

Advertising at the Intersection of Technology and Culture

Conference Co-Chairs

Jisu Huh, University of Minnesota
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AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ADVERTISING

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Edited by

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PREFACE

This volume of Proceedings contains the competitive research and special topics sessions presented at the 2017 American Academy of Advertising (AAA) Global Conference held July 6-8 in Tokyo, Japan. The papers in this volume are organized in the order they appeared in the conference program.

The conference kicked off with two special topic panel sessions that set the tone for the whole conference. The first session discussed the recent transformation of the advertising market and practice in Japan impacted by cutting-edge technological innovations but still deeply rooted in the unique Japanese culture. The other session looked toward the future – 2020 when Tokyo will be the global center of innovation and culture, as the hosting city of the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Day 2 was filled with 11 research paper sessions and a panel session on advertising law and regulations in Asia Pacific, a keynote speech, and a Meet-the-Editor session. Our keynote speaker, Yoshito Maruoka (Head of Dentsu Innovation Institute) gave an overview of the Japanese marketing/advertising market, presented critical challenges facing today's advertising industry, and shared some suggested strategies. Attendees also had a chance to meet with editors and associate editors of AAA journals and other prominent advertising journals, and learn about each journal and its review process.

The third day opened with a AAA ThinkubAAAtor panel session headed by Gayle Kerr, a series initiated in 2015 by Sheila Sasser, who unexpectedly passed away earlier this year. An additional special topic panel session on digital analytics and three research paper sessions followed. The conference closed with an off-site event visiting various Tokyo landmarks and the Edo-Tokyo Museum followed by a superb buffet dinner.

By any measures, the conference was a great success. It broke the record for the number of submissions and number of countries from which submissions came. A total of 103 papers and 5 special topics session proposals were submitted from 17 countries, and approximately 140 advertising scholars and practitioners from 12 different countries attended the conference. Forty-four research papers were presented and 5 special topics panel sessions were offered. I hope these Proceedings will serve as a valuable resource for advertising researchers, educators, and practitioners, and that the innovative new research ideas shared here will stimulate future research.

In closing, I'd like to thank all of our session presenters, panelists, moderators, and participants for their outstanding contributions. My heartfelt thanks also go to our members who volunteered to review papers. I would also like to express my deep appreciation to AAA Executive Director Pat Rose, Conference Manager Betty Djerf, and AAA President Michelle Nelson for their invaluable input and help. Most importantly, I must thank our Japanese co-chairs, Kazue Shimamura, Morikazu Hirose, and Mariko Morimoto. I owe them my deepest gratitude for the great teamwork, their devotion and tireless work providing warm hospitality and making this conference a successful event.

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SPECIAL TOPICS SESSION: TRANSFORMATION OF ADVERTISING IN JAPAN—CHANGES IN THE INDUSTRY, CORPORATE STRATEGIES AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Chair: Christopher Pokarier, Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan

This Special Topics Session examined the recent changes of advertising practice in Japan with experts from different fields of research. Distinctive features of Japanese advertising range from the presence of mega companies in the advertising industry still being full-service agencies, the relatively lagged development of branding within corporate strategies to the low penetration rate of globally developed services of digital content distribution such as Netflix. However, all of these are rapidly changing in the last decade or so. The Session was well-attended and the panel received a number of interesting questions and comments from the floor, resulting in a lively discussion with attendants from different parts of the world. In the following we provide summaries of the four papers included in the Session.

Advertising Industry in Japan—Changes in the Digital Age?

Nobuko Kawashima, Doshisha University, Kyoto, Japan

The first paper in the special topics session attempted to sketch out some of the features of the Japanese advertising industry, including the full-service agency model still in place, large client base held by mega agencies and their domestic orientation. The paper argued that these (together with the preferences of clients) make television commercials less interesting than what 'creative agencies' in the world would produce in the spirit of brand guardianship. The practice is however changing a little these days, because of the changes in media consumption behavior and global and digital strategies employed by the mega agencies. The paper provided a basis for the following papers to discuss other areas of corporate communications such as branding and IMC. It was also supplemented by the last paper that described the recent trend in creative production in the Japanese advertising industry.

Advertising and IMC in Japan: Advertisers' Perspectives

Shizue Kishi, Tokyo Keizai University, Tokyo, Japan

The second presentation consisted of three sections: 1. IMC research and practice in Japan, 2. Japanese advertisers' perceptions on important communication strategy issues, and 3. Case study.

Although Japanese large advertising agencies have traditionally handled both above and below the line media, the concept of IMC received heavy attention among the academia and the practitioners when it was introduced in the 1990s. It appears that the recent industry interest is in the "media," as is indicated by such new concepts as communication design, content marketing, and customer journey, and so on.

The latest results of the annual survey conducted by the Japan Advertisers Association clearly show that advertisers are shifting to "digitalization." In terms of organization structure, not a few advertisers have set up new sections, other than advertising department, to deal with digital communication.

Finally, a case study on Shiseido, one of the largest cosmetics companies in Japan with over 140 years' history, was introduced to describe their pursuit for further globalization and their IMC capability. The drastic shift from its corporate brand to individual brands that Shiseido owns, and missions of the newly developed strategic communication department in optimizing customer media experiences were briefly described.

Contemporary Brand Transformation in Japan: Extensions and Expansions.

Hiroshi Tanaka, Chuo University, Tokyo, Japan

The objective of this paper is to explore how brands have evolved in contemporary Japan. The author categorized history of brand into five stages: (1)prehistoric, (2)proto, (3)pre-modern, (4)modern, and (5)contemporary brand. According to this scheme, contemporary brand after the 1980s can be characterized as an expansion of modern brand in its format and style. The question is the way in which the practice of branding in Japan has developed. First, contemporary branding in Japan has expanded into the non-physical product arena, such as Eyesight. Second, the architecture of Japanese branding has expanded, e.g. Seven & I HD's omni-channel branding. Third, brand ownership has evolved to be more flexible, e.g. Toyota's coalition with Mazda. Fourth, the meaning included in a brand has become more abstract, such as Muji's minimalistic branding. Fifth, some Japanese brands have extended their mother brands' territory and increased their size, e.g. Shiseido. In conclusion, Japanese brands are struggling to expand their territories, meanings, and relationships under harsh global competition.

The Revival of Japan's Creativity—A New Direction in Online Films

Tatsuro Sato, Tama Art University, Tokyo, Japan

The last paper in this session tried to describe a recent trend in Japan's creativity. As the first paper mentioned, Japan has not been well-received in the global advertising creative world for a long time. In recent years, however, Japan has been awarded gold prizes in the Cannes Lions for four consecutive years since 2014 in the category of online film. The paper argued that this is a result of the revival of Japan's creativity. The reasons for this achievement in online films are that 1) when online, films are liberated from the limitation of 15 seconds—the most typical format for TV commercials in Japan, 2) online films tend not to be 'promotional' but to be 'for branding', 3) the creatives are more attentive towards the global market with online films. The paper also pointed out the non-creative background of the professionals in the mega agencies of the awarded works as a contributing factor to the three abovementioned reasons. It can be suggested that they are not 'tainted' by the traditional ways of thinking and practice that might have been appropriate for TV commercials in Japan and for domestic audiences in the past.

SPECIAL TOPICS SESSION:
LEVERAGING THE OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES: BUILDING BRAND EQUITY FOR ALL

Moderators: P. Monica Chien, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia
Sarah J. Kelly, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia
Panelists: Shuichiro Ikematsu, The Tokyo Organising Committee of The Olympic and Paralympic Games, Tokyo, Japan
Shiro Yamaguchi, University of Marketing and Distribution Sciences, Kobe, Japan
Naoki Motohashi, Mitsubishi UFJ Research & Consulting, Tokyo, Japan
T. Bettina Cornwell, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR

Overview

Tokyo will be under the spotlight as it hosts the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2020, dubbed the largest global marketing and branding platform. Indeed, the Olympic and Paralympic Games provide stakeholders a once-in-a-life-time opportunity to create linkages with one of the world's most watched sporting events. The Games and its host cities have argued that the event generates economic and social benefits to all stakeholders, including sports legacy and improved infrastructure for the host cities, sense of pride within the community, and goodwill and enhanced image for its sponsors. Accompanying the fame, however, are also challenges such negative media publicity surrounding the Game's preparation and its athletes, stakeholder welfare and relationship management, environmental issues, and intergroup conflicts among fans. Does hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games provide brand equity enhancing opportunities for all, or is it merely a money pit?

The purpose of this special session is to bring together multi-disciplinary scholars and practitioners who are engaged in research on topics pertinent to sports branding, marketing and communication. Following the conference theme, the session is framed in the context of Tokyo, Japan. Tokyo's status as global center of innovation and culture will culminate in its staging of the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, but a multitude of issues involving concerned stakeholders will create challenging blocks along the way, many of these remain to be explored and discussed. Consequently, the session provides attendees with a forum, where they engage with researchers who are currently investigating issues that represent some of the most relevant and recent thinking in areas such as sports marketing and event management, consumer behavior, sponsorship linked marketing, and tourism. Specifically, Olympic leveraging will be discussed from the perspectives of host cities, non-host cities, and sponsors. Not only do these topics have relevance for marketing and advertising scholars, they are also important for industry, governments and communities, as all stakeholders are concerned about how to leverage the Olympics to enhance the brand equity of their cities, products or services.

This special session aims to provide scholars and practitioners with the opportunity to reflect, discuss and offer commentary on various aspects of Olympic linked marketing. Marketing of, and marketing through, mega sporting events requires the consideration of multifaceted perspectives such as consumer behavior, media influence, cross-cultural communication, internal marketing, and business-to-business communications. A number of external and internal stakeholders are also involved, whose images and welfare may hinge on the successful planning and implementation of the events. Consequently, this special session based on the forthcoming Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo provides an overarching theme and logical platform to discuss these interwoven issues that have connections with scholarly literature of branding, consumer psychology and integrated marketing communications.

We believe that the session offers timely insight into the current event and sports communication landscape, and provide a better understanding of the problems and opportunities that characterize modern Olympics marketing efforts. The following topics are discussed in this special session: (1) the current state of planning and branding for the Olympic and Paralympic Games; (2) social, cultural and regulatory issues that are relevant to mega events and sports; (3) Olympic-linked marketing and communication strategies and stakeholder implications, and (4) existing literature which will enlighten practitioners and researchers.

The Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 Brand Strategy

Shuichiro Ikematsu, The Tokyo Organising Committee of The Olympic and Paralympic Games, Tokyo, Japan

The Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 Brand Strategy planning was presented, inspired by culture, scenery, and aspiration of Tokyo and Japan. The process of developing the strategy had to fit with constraints of aligning with the Vision of Olympic Movement. A survey was undertaken to identify the Essence for Tokyo and Japan. Non-Japanese people who lived in Japan or worked in Japan were interviewed and it was found that non-Japanese people had very distinct and different images toward "Tokyo" and "Japan". Contrasting perceptions and co-existence were identified as important essences for Tokyo and Japan. For example, the delightful juxtaposition of modern buildings and ancient temples co-exist in Tokyo and Japan. The harmonious co-existence is possible because of the spirit of *wa (harmony)* which has historically and culturally been an important value of Japan. With this spirit of harmony, the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 can create innovation to motivate people's minds and to trigger socially proactive attitudes. Hence, the brand strategy represents the total fusion of the Olympic and Paralympic Movement, Tokyo 2020 Games Vision, and the Essence of Tokyo and Japan. The ultimate brand promise is defined as "Innovation from Harmony". This Brand Promise is composed of four different brand essences, including celebration, diversity, resilience and inclusive society. Innovation of the Games will be created by the harmonization of contrasting perceptions of Tokyo and Japan. Under the core belief that sport has the power to change the world and our future, three basic concepts were chosen which are: "Achieving Personal Best", "Unity in Diversity", and "Connecting to Tomorrow".

Sporting Events and Place Marketing

Shiro Yamaguchi, University of Marketing and Distribution Sciences, Kobe, Japan

The purpose of this study was twofold: (1) to investigate the effects of personality fit between sporting events and destination on event satisfaction and destination loyalty and (2) examine the influences of event satisfaction on destination awareness, destination image, and destination loyalty based on the consumer-based brand equity of a destination (CBBED). In the second study, destination image was divided into four factors: (1) infrastructure, (2) attraction, (3) value, and (4) enjoyment.

To address these purposes, the data collection was conducted two times (2015 and 2016) at the Ako city marathon in Japan. Of the 251 participants approached for the first study, a total of 231 (response rate of 99.2%) completed the questionnaire. Of the 400 participants also approached for the second study, a total of 353 (response rate of 88.2%) completed the questionnaire. In order to examine the hypothesized model for first and second studies, this study applied a structural equation modeling. In the summary of study 1, three personality fit dimensions were present including: (1) Sincerity/Competence, (2) Conviviality, and (3) Excitement. Next, Sincerity / Competence in personality fit had a positive impact on event satisfaction. Finally, event satisfaction had significant direct effects on the destination loyalty.

In the summary of study 2, findings from the study offered three main theoretical contributions. Firstly, event satisfaction directly influenced on the destination awareness. Secondly, destination awareness had positive effects on infrastructure, attraction, value, and enjoyment of destination image. Finally, infrastructure, attraction, and enjoyment in destination image were important determinants of destination loyalty. As a practical implication, these findings suggest that event organizers need to consider fit between sporting events and destination in terms of image and personality. Additionally, in order to create CBBED, event organizers should build a mechanism to have everyone involved such as audiences, participants, and volunteer.

Challenge and Issues for Regional Cities of Mega Sports Events

Naoki Motohashi, Mitsubishi UFJ Research & Consulting, Tokyo, Japan

This presentation aims to discuss opportunities and challenges facing host cities locating outside of Tokyo as well as non-host cities ("Regional Cities") of mega sports events. Mega-events not only provide entertainment, but they are also said to act as catalysts for economic and social development for the host city. In Japan, such impact of hosting mega sports events including the Olympic and Paralympic Games is expected also in many Regional Cities, especially those that are experiencing a rapid decline in population. Officials in central and local governments are sensitive to risk that taxpayers in non-host cities will be left to shoulder the post-Olympic debt, and they may not be invested with anticipation or enthusiasm towards the event. Consequently, there is a growing sense that stakeholders must now approach the planning and management of events more strategically to justify the massive public investments required and to maximize event benefits.

To this end, initiatives have been developed by the Cabinet Office to encourage cities, towns, and villages across Japan to serve as Olympic "host towns", referring to local governments that are not hosting the event per se but will welcome international athletes and delegations for cultural, sport and educational exchanges prior to the Games. While many local governments have filed elaborative plans to serve as an Olympic host town, there is little understanding as to what strategies need to be developed in order to capitalize on opportunities offered by the mega-event. Several issues remain to be considered: (1) How could Regional Cities attract and integrate international teams/organizations into their leveraging programmes? (2) How could Regional Cities convince residents and local stakeholders to get involved in the Games, despites the uncertainty in economic and non-economic benefits? and (3) What mechanisms are available to help residents overcome the fear of communicating in English? Effective solutions for these issues need to be identified before the vital goals of community revitalization and international tourism development can be achieved.

Rethinking Sponsorship Recognition

T. Bettina Cornwell, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR
Steffen Jahn, University of Goettingen, Germany

A few weeks after almost any large scale sporting event concludes, reports are posted showing that many, if not most of the event viewers have little idea about who the sponsors were. Given that the TOP sponsors typically pay $200 million for the opportunity to partner with the summer Olympics, that their sponsorship is not remembered is a managerial concern. Given the importance of these communication investments, it is curious that we know so little about the measurement instruments that produce these results. This research considers the way in which our study of sponsor recognition influences the results we find. We show that the presence of competitor foils can influence recognition of a true sponsor. Because recognition draws on vast arrays of information about the event and brands, the characteristics of the recognition task, such as the number of direct or indirect (but event related) foils may influence recognition. This work draws into question research findings that dismiss sponsorship as ineffective when recognition rates are the main outcome variable and when details of the data collection are not provided.

THE ROLE OF SOCIALIZATION AGENTS IN ADOLESCENTS' RESPONSES TO APP-BASED MOBILE MARKETING

Wonsun Shin, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia
May O. Lwin, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Abstract

This study examines the role of socialization agents (parents, peers, and media) in adolescents' attitudinal and behavioral responses to app-based mobile marketing practices. A survey conducted with smartphone users aged 12-19 in Singapore indicates that both communication- and control-based parental mediation can help younger adolescents develop a critical orientation toward app-based mobile marketing. However, parental intervention backfires when it is imposed on older adolescents. Findings also show that adolescents' susceptibility to normative peer influence makes them less critical about app-based mobile marketing, regardless of their age. When it comes to the role of media, adolescents' responses to app-based mobile marketing are more a function of perceived smartphone competency rather than the amount of time they spend on smartphones.

THE ROLE OF GAMIFICATION IN ENHANCING INTRINSIC MOTIVATION TO USE A LOYALTY PROGRAM

Kyongseok Kim, Towson University, Towson, MD
Sun Joo (Grace) Ahn, University of Georgia, Athens, GA

Abstract

Based on Self-Determination Theory (SDT), this study examined how rewards could weaken intrinsic motivation to use a retail loyalty program. Two experiments were conducted. Study 1 revealed that individuals who received a salient reward (an explicit requirement and deadline for reward achievement and no reward options) presented lower intrinsic motivation to engage in the loyalty program than those who received its non-salient counterpart (a less explicit requirement, no deadline, and reward options). Study 2 found that the salient reward presented in the gamified form using graphical feedback enhanced the lowered intrinsic motivation. Implications for designing effective loyalty programs are discussed.

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN MOTIVATION FOR CONSUMERS' ONLINE BRAND-RELATED ACTIVITIES ON FACEBOOK

Gauze Pitipon Kitirattarkarn, Theo Araujo, Peter Neijens
Amsterdam School of Communication Research, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Introduction

The emergence of social networking sites (SNSs) has put consumers in the driver's seat. They choose when, where, and how brands can communicate with them (Hutchison, 2016). Considering that SNSs enable consumers to create and interact with content, including *brand-related content* (content related to product, service, organization, or place brands, Br-C), consumers have also recognized their power to influence Br-C (Arnhold, 2010). Given the increased relevance of SNSs for consumers, brand managers face the challenge of understanding why consumers across the globe create and interact with Br-C on SNSs.

Several scholars have studied consumers' motivations for engaging in online brand-related activities. Consumers' online brand-related activities (COBRAs) can be categorized into three levels of engagement: consuming, contributing to, and creating Br-C (Muntinga, Moorman, & Smit, 2011). Earlier research has explored why consumers view user-generated online advertising (Cheong & Morrison, 2008; Knoll & Proksch, 2015), 'like' or follow brand pages (Jung, Shim, Jin, & Khang, 2016; Lin & Lu, 2011; Tsai & Men, 2013), pass along brand messages (Araujo, Neijens, & Vliegenthart, 2015; Yuki, 2015) or video advertisement (Hayes & King, 2014), discuss brand information (Tsai, 2013), and create Br-C (Berthon, Pitt, & Campbell, 2008; Poch & Martin, 2015).

This stream of research, however, has largely focused on single-country samples, and primarily on Western populations. This creates a critical gap in the literature because assumptions articulated about brand-related use of SNSs in one culture do not necessarily carry over to other cultures, considering that motivations for SNS use generally reflect prevalent cultural values of the culture (Barker & Ota, 2011; Chu, Windels, & Kamal, 2016; Kim, Sohn, & Choi, 2011). To the best of our knowledge, there is only one cross-cultural study that exploring this subject, confirming that culture does have an influence on brand-related SNSs use (Tsai & Men, 2014). While extremely important, the findings of this study call for further research considering that (1) the SNSs involved in the study were different in each country (Facebook brand pages from the United States, Renren and Sina Weibo from China), and therefore different SNS features may confound the influence of culture, (2) the study focused only on consumers' motivations for using brand pages, thus it needs further in-depth investigation into how culture affects motivations for other brand-related activities (e.g. 'liking', commenting on, sharing, or posting Br-C on consumer's newsfeed and timeline).

The cultural dimension of individualism and collectivism was selected for this study considering its wide use and acceptance for investigating cultural differences among cultures (Triandis, 2001), particularly in advertising and communication research (Okazaki & Mueller, 2007). Given the limited knowledge on how motivations associated with COBRAs vary across different cultures, we adopt a qualitative research design and conduct in-depth interviews with consumers in the Netherlands and the United States, considered individualistic cultures, and South Korea and Thailand, considered collectivistic cultures (G.H. Hofstede & Hofstede, 2001; Lewis, 2010). These four countries were chosen because they have a high level of SNSs usage (We Are Social, 2016a), which reinforces the relevance of this study. We specifically focus on Facebook, the most popular SNS among people across the four countries (We Are Social, 2016b). Pertinently, Facebook has proven to be an ideal platform for promoting sponsored content – one of the most important strategies for today's fast-changing online advertising business (Herrman, 2016).

This study makes several contributions to academic research by extending insights and theories derived from previous studies on brand-related SNS use (e.g. Kim et al., 2011; Muntinga et al., 2011). Firstly, we investigate the extent to which motivations previously found for COBRAs in individualistic country samples are also valid in collectivistic societies. Secondly, we explore how the motivations for consuming, contributing to or creating Br-C differ across individualistic and collectivistic cultures and, more specifically, how consumers in these cultures position these activities in relation to their individual values and social orientation. Thirdly, from a practical point of view, the role of cultural differences in consumers' engagement with Br-C poses serious challenges for global and multinational companies (Okazaki & Taylor, 2013). The present study addresses this challenge by providing detailed insights regarding the motivations that consumers have when engaging with Br-C across cultures. The findings should provide an understanding of how to interact with consumers across cultures and assist practitioners in making cultural adjustments when promoting Br-C on SNSs.

Theoretical Background

Cultural Individualism and Collectivism

The cultural individualism/collectivism distinction holds important knowledge about consumer behavior including how they function and communicate in a society (Roland, 1991; Triandis, 1988). While individualistic persons, such as those from North and Western Europe, and North America, focus on the self as a unique entity, collectivistic individuals, such as those from Asia, focus on the self as a member of a group (Triandis, 2001). Individualistic individuals are motivated by their own preferences, needs, and rights and give priority to their personal goals. In contrast, the identity of collectivistic individuals is based on a collective social norm with family and friends being important factors. Along these lines, the independent and interdependent individuals' conceptualization (self-construal) and values have been found to mediate the influence of individualism/collectivism on communication styles (Gudykunst et al., 1997). These communication styles are related to Hall's notion (1977) that cultures can be distinguished with regard to the degree of context (high vs low) in their communication systems. While low-context direct communication is used predominantly in individualistic cultures, high-context indirect and visual oriented communication is used predominantly in collectivistic cultures (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988; G.H. Hofstede & Hofstede, 2001). As a result of intimate relationships among high-context collectivistic people, they are deeply involved with each other and their inner feelings are kept under strong self-control (Hall, 1977). In contrast, low-context individualistic people are highly individualized and disintegrated, thus involvement with others is relatively little, and the communication between people is more explicit and non-personal (Hall, 1977; Kim, Pan, & Park, 1998).

The Use of SNSs across Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures

Several cross-cultural researchers have pointed out that people use SNSs with different motivations that reflect their prevailing cultural values. Kim et al. (2011) indicated that Americans tend to use SNSs for entertaining themselves primarily by finding new friends with similar interests, and making fewer efforts to maintain the relationships. South Koreans, however, seem to use SNSs for obtaining information and social support from existing social relationships (close friends, family), requiring deeper involvement. Given that collectivistic people tend to use social media to create closely linked networks more effectively, Fong and Burton (2008) have explored in their study how Chinese consumers encourage information sharing and exhibit higher reliance on personal sources of information while requesting product recommendations and information. Goodrich and De Mooij (2014) have also indicated that people in collectivistic cultures tend to use social media more often than individualistic cultures for sharing ideas, forming opinions, and guiding purchase decisions. In contrast, Americans tend to use SNSs to develop and present online identity highlighting their uniqueness (Chu et al., 2016). Furthermore, cultural individualism and collectivism have also been found to influence the relationship between people's self-consciousness and self-presentation on SNSs. Individualistic low-context SNS users tend to engage more in self-enhancement activities than collectivistic high-context SNS users (Lee-Won, Shim, Joo, & Park, 2014). Likewise, American Facebook users were found to engage in proactive self-presentation activities such as managing unwanted photo tagging to a greater extent than Asian Facebook users (Rui & Stefanone, 2013).

When it comes to cross-cultural research focusing specifically on brand-related SNSs use, Tsai and Men (2014) found that culture influenced consumers' motivations for using brand SNS pages. As a result of intimate social ties stressed in collectivistic cultures, the connection between Chinese SNS users and their preferred brands and online brand communities were closely bonded, thus these consumers were more likely to actively take part in a conversation about the brands on brand SNS pages. In contrast, the same study showed that the act of 'liking' brand pages by American consumers was mostly motivated by individualistic gains and self-expressive gestures to demonstrate their personal interests, thus in the American individualistic culture relationships with brand communities were more likely to be weak. It is, however, unclear whether the results deriving from a two-country sample are valid for other individualistic or collectivistic countries. More importantly, further investigation is needed to confirm if these differences are also valid for the wide range of COBRAs.

Consumers' Online Brand-Related Activities (COBRAs)

In this study, we adopt the COBRAs typology developed by Muntinga et al. (2011) to explore how consumers in different cultures engage with Br-C on Facebook. This typology classifies brand-related activities according to levels of engagement, and proposes three dimensions. Firstly, *consuming* Br-C constitutes a relatively passive type of online participation and represents the lowest level of online brand-related engagement. People who consume Br-C, for example, read brand-related articles, or watch brand-related videos posted by others or by brands themselves. Secondly, *contributing* to Br-C involves a moderate level of engagement with online brand-related activities. People who contribute to Br-C 'like', share, or post comments on Br-C, which includes user-to-content and user-to-user brand-related interactions. Lastly, *creating* Br-C represents the highest level of engagement for online brand-related activities. People who create Br-C, for example, post their experiences about products or services in a brand-related message, picture, or video.

Motivations Underlying Consumers' Engagement with Brand-Related Content on SNSs

According to previous research on COBRAs (e.g. Berthon et al. 2008; Knoll and Proksch 2015; Lin and Lu 2011; Poch and Martin 2015), motivations for brand-related SNSs use can be summarized in six main categories: (1) *Information* refers to observing and staying updated about things, searching for advice, opinions, or inspiration, finding useful information, and collecting information before making a purchase decision; (2) *Entertainment* relates to relaxation, enjoyment, emotional release and relief; (3) *Empowerment* is associated with the intention to have an influence on others, and to change people's perception regarding a specific brand; (4) *Remuneration* is defined as a desire to obtain benefits or rewards such as economic incentives (e.g. special offer, discount promotion), or work-related benefits; (5) *Personal identity* is concerned with finding reinforcement for personal values, and involves self-expression, identity management, and self-fulfillment, and (6) *Social integration* relates to interacting and communicating with others to maintain and expand interpersonal connections. It involves motivations related to gaining a sense of belonging, seeking support, affiliating with like-minded people, and showing in-group identifications.

It is already known that the relevance of these six motivations varies according to the level of social media engagement. For example, people *consume* (e.g. view, watch) Br-C because of information, entertainment (Cheong and Morrison 2008; Knoll and Proksch 2015), and remuneration (Muntinga et al. 2011) motivations. And when it comes to higher levels of engagement with online Br-C, personal identity and social interaction motivations emerge for *contributing* to (discussing, sharing) Br-C (e.g. Hayes and King 2014; Tsai and Men 2013; Yuki 2015). Regarding the research on why consumers *create* brand-related videos and content on SNSs (Berthon et al. 2008; Poch and Martin 2015), entertainment, empowerment, personal identity, and remuneration are the motivations that influence such behavior.

While we have learned that motivations vary according to the level of engagement in the COBRAs, research exploring the influence of culture on these activities and their motivations is scarce. Earlier findings for online brand-related activities in individualistic country samples still need to be validated for collectivistic cultures, and the motivations underlying COBRAs should be explicitly compared across cultures. The following research questions, therefore, are proposed:

RQ1: How do motivations for consuming Br-C on Facebook differ between consumers from individualistic and collectivistic cultures?

RQ2: How do motivations for contributing to (liking, commenting on, sharing) Br-C on Facebook differ between consumers from individualistic and collectivistic cultures?

RQ3: How do motivations for creating Br-C on Facebook differ between consumers from individualistic and collectivistic cultures?

Methodology

Participants and Recruitment Process

In this study, we interviewed consumers from individualistic (the Netherlands, the United States) and collectivistic (South Korea, Thailand) countries. A total of 10 interviews were completed per country, as this is considered sufficient to enable the development of a theme and for useful interpretation (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006), leading to a total of 40 participants.

A multiple snowball technique was employed by the interviewers to select participants. Firstly, each interviewer browsed her list for Facebook friends, and contacted one friend who met the criteria to participate in the study, namely whether: (s)he either contributed to ('liked', commented on, or shared) Br-C on their newsfeed, or created (posted) Br-C on their timeline in the two weeks before the interview was conducted. The intent of these criteria was to ensure that a participant would be able to remember why (s)he engaged with such Br-C. After completing the interview, each participant was asked to refer to another Facebook user who also met the criteria for this study. The process followed this procedure until reaching 10 participants in each country. There were a few times that the participant could not refer to another respondent. In these situations, each interviewer needed to look up at her friend list again and restarted the process. All participants were given remuneration of 22.5 euros for their participation.

In order to get a wide variety of opinions, the selection criteria for participation also ensured a wide range in age (21-60 years). The participants were in average 33.03 years old (SD = 12.46), 50% were female, and most (82.5%) held a bachelor degree or above. Participants from the four countries were comparable in terms of age, gender, and education, and were born, were nationals of, and resided in the countries in the scope of this study.

Interviewer Training

The interviewers were female bilinguals (Dutch-English, Korean-English, Thai-English) and one American female who completed a master's degree in Communication. The first author was the Thai-English bilingual. Their ages ranged between 25 and 28. The first author conducted in-depth interviews with the American, Dutch, and South Korean interviewers in order to familiarize them with the questions and the interviewing process, as well as to assess their comprehension of the questions in each language and culture. After discussing and finalizing the interview materials, pilot interviews with Facebook users from the four countries were conducted. After the pilot interviews, the first author had a meeting with the three interviewers to discuss if any issues occurred, and to make sure participants clearly understood all the questions.

In-depth Interviews

All face-to-face interviews were conducted in the native language of the participants, in the country where the participants lived, between 1 June and 20 July 2016. Each of the in-depth interviews took approximately an hour. The interviewers were provided with a semi-structured interview guide that included an explanation of all interview steps and examples of consumers' brand-related activities (liking, commenting, sharing, posting). The interview was divided into three sub-sections including general questions regarding Facebook usage (e.g. have you ever 'liked' Br-C on Facebook?), individual's motivations for engaging in brand-related activities (e.g. why did you decide to 'like' this Br-C?), and perceived friends' motivations for engaging with brand-related activities (e.g. in your opinion, why did your friend 'like' this Br-C?). The first introductory section of the interview was designed to make participants familiar with the interview topic. The latter two sections allowed us to record and see various types of Br-C contributed and created by both participants as well as their friends.

Before the start of the interviews, participants were informed about the aim of the study and their rights as a participant, and signed an informed consent form. During the interviews, participants were asked to access their Facebook account and go through their activity log, timeline, newsfeed, and also some of their friends' timelines. We used ScreenFlow software to record the whole conversation as it helped us capture both a screen as well as participant's face and voice. We conducted initial interviews with Thai participants, and found that saturation occurred within 8-9 interviews. As these findings were sufficient to answer our research questions, we adopted this approach and applied to the other three countries.

Data Analysis

All 40 interviews were transcribed verbatim in the original language by the interviewers. The thirty interview transcriptions in Dutch, Korean, and Thai were translated into English by the interviewers and bilingual research assistants. The average length of the interview transcriptions was about 5,500 – 6,000 words.

The coding process was as follows. Firstly, open coding was conducted (Saldaña, 2013) with a software program designed for computer-assisted qualitative research (MAXQDA 2011). Before going through the interview scripts, the first author read summaries written by the interviewers in order to understand the main insights of each interview. Subsequently, the first author thoroughly read the transcripts line by line and identified labels (codes) that describe what motivations the respondents mentioned. For example, a phrase or sentence describing the influence of friends or family was attributed the specific code for the "personal relationship (sub)motivation" and was placed under the general code "social integration motivation". Motivational statements that represented more than one motivation were coded twice or more. All the motivational statements were also coded corresponding to each COBRA type. When we were uncertain of motivations underlying motivational statements participants provided (e.g. unfamiliar brands, slang words), we used the screen capture recorded by ScreenFlow or consulted the interviewers to clarify and understand the context of conversations during the coding process.

After the first cycle of coding was completed, the first author did the second and third cycles following the steps mentioned in the previous paragraphs, as some of the first cycle codes might be later subsumed by other codes, relabeled, or dropped altogether (Saldaña, 2013).

Accordingly, we compared the coded statements to its correspondence with motivations demonstrated in the previous literature: empowerment, entertainment, information, integration, personal identity, and remuneration. When participants mentioned motivations that did not correspond with any of these motivations they were labeled as new motivations.

Internal Reliability and Validity

In line with recommendations for qualitative research (e.g. Guba, 1981; Van der Goot, Beentjes, & Van Selm, 2015), we used three procedures to ensure internal reliability and validity. Firstly, after the interviews, the interviewers provided interview summaries including key insights and screenshots of Br-C mentioned during the interviews so that the first author was able to interpret conversations correctly. Secondly, the first author had peer debriefing sessions with the three interviewers by randomly choosing some interview transcripts to discuss and reach agreement on each code and category applied. Finally, the first author did ‘member checks’ with four Thai participants in which they were asked to indicate whether the coding was misinterpreted. The first author’s interpretations were correct and confirmed. In this regard, and considering checks with the interviewers for the other countries, the accuracy of coding across the other three countries was also considered to be consistent.

Results

Based on the interviews, we found seven motivations that influenced consumers’ engagement with Br-C on Facebook. Information seeking, intention to try or purchase, entertainment, personal identity and presentation, remuneration, social integration, and empowerment motivations were also found in the previous literature (e.g. Knoll and Proksch 2015; Lin and Lu 2011; Muntinga et al. 2011). The intention to try or purchase was an additional motivation that emerged from the interviews. The definition of motivations and some examples of quotes for each motivation are presented in Table 1.

Below, we discuss differences in motivations that influenced participants from the four countries to consume, contribute to, and create Br-C, respectively.

Motivations for Consuming Brand-Related Content

Participants across the four countries provided reasons associated with both *information seeking* and *entertainment* for consuming Br-C on Facebook. However, some important differences emerged from the interviews when they explained the reasons that would motivate them to only consume a given Br-C, but take no further contribution to Br-C.

The first key difference was concerned with perceptions of privacy, and one’s own public image, which related to *personal identity and presentation* motivation. Several Dutch and American participants indicated that they chose not to post anything about themselves on their timeline as they didn’t want to be known on the Internet with all their private things included. For example, one Dutch participant (male, 28) said, “I don’t need to be associated with a brand by posting a comment and I just don’t want everyone to see that I’m reacting to it”. When it comes to public image, the Dutch and American participants tended to think consciously how they wanted to be known on the Internet and they did not want to become a spammer for brands that they happened to be involved with. For example, one American interviewee (male, 40) stated, “I actually care about more than just myself. That’s why I don’t post a lot of branded stuff. I don’t like to wear a lot of clothes that have a brand name across them.”

Unlike the Dutch and American participants, participants from South Korea and Thailand tended to focus on avoiding arguments with their social groups. They indicated feeling sometimes uncomfortable to contribute to or create Br-C on Facebook, as it would show their perspectives on a certain direction, which might not be the same as others’. For example, one Thai participant (male, 26) indicated that, “[If] I don’t click ‘like’, the content is a controversial topic and I don’t want to show my opinion and have an argument with friends who might have a different point of view”.

Motivations for Contributing to Brand-Related Content

Participants across the four countries provided reasons associated to all the seven motivations when discussing the reasons why they contributed to Br-C on Facebook. While motivations were similar at a high level, however, interesting differences across cultures emerged for the different types of contribution (‘liking’, commenting, and sharing).

Information Seeking and Entertainment: Sharing for Saving Content

Several South Korean and Thai participants indicated that they shared *informative* or *entertaining* Br-C on their timeline as a way to save the content for themselves, so that they could read or watch the content again later.

One Thai participant (male, 22) indicated that, “I like to share things on my wall so I can come back to read them later because I don’t have time to read them now.” Interestingly, some South Korean participants went a step further and shared the content only with themselves, by selecting the ‘Only Me’ option when posting to their timeline. For example, a South Korean participant (male, 23) indicated that, “People would say that my timeline is messy if I share everything. Therefore, I sometimes share content with ‘Only Me’ for saving purpose.” However, Dutch and American participants did not provide similar reasons.

Purchase Intention as a Social Activity

South Korean and Thai Participants commonly indicated the motivation of signaling their *purchase intention* (to their friends) when they ‘liked’, commented on, and shared Br-C. For instance, a South Korean interviewee (female, 24) stated that she made a comment referring to her friend after she saw a post by OST (a South Korean fashion brand) advertising friendship rings because, “I wish to have one with my friends.” Some of these South Korean and Thai participants identified the Br-C they shared as their wish lists or shopping lists. For instance, one South Korean interviewee (male, 35) said that, “I actually thought I would like to buy them if I make some money in the future.”

Although Dutch and American consumers did not indicate their intention to purchase (with or without a focus on friends) when deciding to ‘like’ and share Br-C, they did suggest they would contribute a comment to explicitly indicate their desire to purchase a product or to visit a location.

Personal Identity and Presentation: Emotional Expression and Impression Management

South Korean and Thai participants indicated that they intended to express their feelings about the Br-C that touched them emotionally by ‘liking’, commenting, and sharing. For instance, a South Korean interviewee (male, 35) stated that he ‘liked’ a post by Apple (an American technology company) because, “It’s more related to emotion. There’s something that moves my heart. I think that there is more to it than just promoting products.” However, Dutch and American participants did not give the same reasons for ‘liking’ Br-C, and only suggested that emotional expression (positive or negative) was a reason to comment or share. For instance, an American interviewee (female, 20) said that, “I commented on this post because it really pissed me off, so it’s an extreme reaction to something.”

Social Integration: Having a Discussion and Socializing with Friends (versus Others)

While participants across the four countries indicated that they contributed to Br-C as a way to engage in conversations, their intended audience differed especially when it came to commenting. Dutch and American participants tended to focus on the brand, or on the content without clearly indicating a focus on friends. For instance, one Dutch interviewee (male, 22) stated that, “I prefer to comment on others’ posts to discover their perspectives, otherwise the conversation would remain within my social circle, and then the interaction would be much lower.” However, South Korean and Thai participants indicated that they wanted to participate in conversations with friends, particularly when contributing a comment. For example, one Thai participant (male, 22) commented on his friend’s post because, “I saw that my friends were at Bar-B-Q Plaza (a Thai restaurant), but I couldn’t go on that day. I asked them why you guys didn’t tell me.”

Moreover, since Facebook has provided ‘check-in’ and ‘location tag’ functions that allow people to use the global positioning system (GPS) on their electronic devices to let friends or others know exactly where they are, only Thai participants liked to comment on these friends’ checking-in posts as if they could meet friends or join a gathering of friends. For example, “When I see my friend check-in at a location nearby me, I will comment on her post or drop personal messages via Facebook Messenger to check if we could meet up or have a quick chat” (Thai female, 34).

Interestingly, South Korean participants were the only ones who mentioned celebrities as a reason to contribute to Br-C as a *social integration* activity. They tended to ‘like’ or share brand-related post when they saw their favorite celebrities in it. One South Korean participants (female, 30) indicated that, “Especially, young people, they always ‘like’ these Facebook celebrities’ postings.”

Empowering Friends by Tagging Their Name

Participants, except for Americans, indicated that they posted comments by tagging friends as a way to suggest a product, a restaurant, or something associated with the *empowerment* motivation. For instance, a Thai interviewee (female, 25) stated that, “I tagged my friend on a post about Dior (a French luxury fashion brand) as I wanted to recommend that to her.” Similarly, one South Korean interviewee (female, 22) asserted that, “The photos of their foods look great and delicious, so I tagged a friend of mine.” When it comes to sharing Br-C, participants across the four countries indicated reasons related to the empowerment motivation.

TABLE 1
Definition and Examples of Motivations Demonstrated in COBRAs.

Motivations	Definition	COBRA type	Examples of quotes
• Entertainment	The entertainment motivation covers gratifications that are related to passing time; being entertained by humorous content; or having good experiences and memories.	Consumption Contribution Creation	"I really enjoyed Schlitterbahn (a water park in Austin, Texas) and I had lots of fun. I just wanted to tell people where I was, this was where I had so much fun" (American female, 20). "Posting allows me to save my memories online. It almost feels like it is a photo book. I have access to it anytime I want" (South Korean male, 27).
• Empowerment	The empowerment motivation refers to people's desire to exert their influence or power on other people or brands by listing good/bad products/services; giving opinions regarding product/services; spreading the word towards brands.	Contribution Creation	"I took a picture to say that I ate it and it is costly. The price equals the cost of four meals. My intention was to blame but not to show-off" (Thai female, 28). "When I tag someone on Facebook, more specifically when I leave the comment to my friend about – this place is good to go, or this video clip is funny to watch" (South Korean female, 24).
• Information seeking	The information motivation covers gratifications that are related to staying updated on relevant events; seeking advice and opinions; collecting useful/interesting information.	Consumption Contribution Creation	"If it has something to do with like getting something out of it, or like if it's one of my favorite coffee places that I obviously like. They said like we'd got this new seasonal. Come try it" (American female, 23). "It's more about information, promotion, trending and new stuff, for example, what's new on Central (a Thai department store). I would share" (Thai female, 34).
• Intention to try or purchase	The intention to try or purchase refers to gratification that is related to people's desire to try or purchase a product, or to visit a place. Subsequently, they want to express their desire to their friends or the public by creating or contributing to such Br-C.	Contribution Creation	"This post was about a coffee place. It is near my house. I think I would love to see and go there" (Thai male, 35). "So I actually thought I would like to buy them if I make some money in the future and that's why this post attracted me" (South Korean male, 35).
• Personal identity and presentation	The personal identity and presentation motivation covers gratifications that are related to the self that people try to present to the public. It covers motivations that are related to people's personal interests and experiences; emotions and feelings; intention to present their (positive) image.	Contribution Creation	"Thai people like to show what they want to be such as a person buying high-quality brands, spending leisure time in high-end department stores, or having good and fancy foods by uploading pictures on Facebook" (Thai male, 26). "I want to show-off. To show my friends that I went there, I ate the foods there, the place that everyone talked about" (Thai female, 25).

Motivations	Definition	COBRA type	Examples of quotes
• Remuneration	The remuneration motivation covers gratifications that are related to people's expectation to gain some kind of future rewards such as economic incentives, work-related benefits, and reciprocity.	Contribution Creation	"You can win this if you 'like' this. I won an 80 USD gift card from this restaurant that just opened up in the Arboretum (Austin, Texas), and all I did was commenting on their post" (American female, 23). "Those 'likes' are because I wanted free WiFi at terraces in Barcelona" (Dutch male, 23).
• Social integration	The social integration motivation covers gratifications that are related to other people. It covers gratifications that are related to gaining a sense of belonging; connecting with friends, family, and society; seeking opinion/ support; having a conversation with others; giving support to others; being helpful to others; socializing with friends.	Contribution Creation	"I 'liked' this post because it is the post of the guy who I know. Yeah, it's a brand but this was more on a personal level" (Dutch male, 28). "I've started working as a volunteer two months ago and I did share this for a second because I really very much support what they do and I think it is beautiful" (Dutch female, 23).

Note. The definition of each motivation is adapted based on the previous literature (Araujo et al. 2015; Berthon et al. 2008; Cheong and Morrison 2008; De Vries, Gensler, and Leeflang 2012; Hayes and King 2014; Jung et al. 2016; Kim et al. 2015; Knoll and Proksch 2015; Lin and Lu 2011; Muntinga et al. 2011; Poch and Martin 2015; Tsai 2013; Tsai and Men 2013; Yuki 2015).

Remuneration: Obtaining Promotional and Work-Related Benefits

Finally, both cultures indicated reasons related to *remuneration* as their motivation to contribute to Br-C as consumers. Dutch and South Korean participants, but not American and Thai participants, indicated that they 'liked' and shared Br-C in as a company's employee or a business owner. They contributed to the Br-C as a way to promote their own brand, or their own work. Some of them indicated that Facebook had become a marketing platform and they did not merely use it to keep in touch with their inner circle or for meeting new friends. For instance, a Dutch participant (male, 34) 'liked' a post because, "I am an ambassador for it so then I like seeing it. It's actually indirectly a commercial thing."

Motivations for Creating Brand-Related Content

Participants across the four countries all provided reasons related to the six motivations, except information seeking, for their creation of Br-C. Regarding the *entertainment* motivation, passing time was the reason only Thai participants indicated when creating Br-C. Two Thai interviewees stated that they felt lonely because their working environment isolated them from others. To release those feelings, they liked to upload funny pictures or content, which sometimes accidentally related to brands. Additionally, South Korean and Thai interviewees perceived that Facebook was their own diary or photo book that they could record their daily life and could access anytime. They posted Br-C as a way to record what they had done or where they had been each day as a part of their memories. For instance, a South Korean interviewee (female, 63) said that, "I uploaded pictures of the gifts my professor gave me to save it on Facebook. This will last possibly forever so I use Facebook as my diary." However, Dutch participants did not provide similar reasons.

We further found differences when participants provided reasons related to the *social integration* motivation. South Korean and Thai participants created something related to brands because they expected to have a conversation with someone who had the same opinion. For example, a Thai interviewee (female, 52) created a post about Starbucks (an American coffee company) that said, "I want to know if there is anyone who would think the same." Moreover, only Thai participants often mentioned Facebook as a channel that enabled them to meet someone offline at a specific place and time. They usually liked to check-in at brand-related location (e.g. café, restaurant) because they expected to meet friends who were nearby. However, American and Dutch participants did not give the same reasons for creating Br-C.

Discussion

The present study explores motivations underlying consumers' engagement with Br-C across individualistic (the Netherlands, the United States) and collectivistic (South Korea, Thailand) cultures. The results of the in-depth interviews provide several key findings that validate and extend earlier research.

The first key finding of this study is that the six motivations for COBRAs found in countries with individualistic cultures (e.g. Knoll & Proksch, 2015; Muntinga et al., 2011) are also applicable in countries with collectivistic cultures. More specifically, consumers across individualistic and collectivistic cultures generally engage in COBRAs for obtaining useful information, entertaining themselves, gaining economic incentives, connecting with people, presenting their personal interests, and influencing others' opinions. Moreover, we do not find any important differences in motivations for *consuming* online Br-C across cultures. People normally read, watch, or listen to Br-C for the sake of seeking information and entertaining themselves. This fills a critical gap in the cross-cultural literature regarding Br-C engagement, demonstrating that consumers across cultures have similar motivations for Br-C consumption, and provides companies that operate globally with a broad understanding of why and how consumers across various markets engage with Br-C on Facebook.

The second key finding of this study is the new motivation that emerged among collectivistic cultures. More specifically, the results show that primarily people from collectivistic cultures want to express their desire to purchase or try products to their friends, and thus engage in creation or contribution behaviors on SNSs. This motivation is particularly important for collectivistic countries, as consumers from South Korea and Thailand frequently indicate their purchase intention as a social activity – often associating or tagging friends – when commenting on or sharing Br-C. This new finding extends our theoretical understanding as to why consumers engage with COBRAs. This finding is in line with earlier cross-cultural research on online consumer decision making (Goodrich & De Mooij, 2014) asserting that friends' opinions are found to be important for collectivistic consumers, especially when they need confirmation for their purchase decision process.

A third key finding of this study is that collectivistic participants' motivations for engaging with Br-C were driven by the wish to express a sense of belonging to their social group, and to express this in-group identification via Br-C activities on SNSs. Consumers in collectivistic cultures contribute and create Br-C as a way to socialize and have conversations with friends, to gain social and emotional support from friends, and to indicate their intention to try a product with friends. This finding validates the study of Jung et al. (2016) who proposed that peer influence is the strongest determination of a favorable behavioral intention to engage with brand pages among collectivistic countries. Additionally, it extends the literature by demonstrating that peer influence prominently affects collectivistic consumers' motivations when engaging in all types of COBRAs. In contrast, individualistic consumers often mention obtaining advantages for themselves and give priority to their personal goals when creating Br-C. When having discussions, they mention friends less often than collectivistic consumers, and indicate more of a desire to have open discussions, and to freely express their opinions with others outside of their (close) social group. These findings are aligned with the previous cross-cultural social media motivations studies (Chu & Choi, 2011; Chu et al., (2016) that propose that while collectivistic SNS users show greater involvement with their existing contacts, individualistic SNS users focus more on information sharing and the extension of their networks with a large number of loose contacts.

A fourth key finding of this study is how participants perceive privacy and even the motivations for using SNSs differently across collectivistic and individualistic cultures. On the one hand, the results show that several collectivistic participants used their Facebook as their own private diary by storing Br-C visible for themselves only, because they are sensitive to contextual and relational factors. This finding supports the study of Park and Kang (2013) who argued that collectivistic consumers, especially Koreans, are under a lot of social pressure, and pay a lot of attention to how others perceive them. This seems to be in line with the more general observation that people in collectivistic high-context cultures are more likely to suppress their feelings and interests in interpersonal communication (Hall, 1977). On the other hand, individualistic participants only consuming Br-C suggested that they avoid presenting their personal interests on SNSs. This finding extends the results of cross-cultural research regarding online privacy concerns (Cho, Rivera-Sánchez, & Lim, 2009) by demonstrating that, when engaging in COBRAs, people in individualistic cultures indicated higher levels of desire for private life and independence from the collective by actively avoiding presenting their associations with brands on SNSs.

Practical Implications

The present study provides valuable managerial implications for global and multinational companies in three aspects. Firstly, we recommend that brand managers consider the consumers' sharing and posting Br-C activities as powerful engagement strategies because the Br-C that are shared and posted by one consumer are easily eye-catching and have a wide reach to other consumers. Based on these findings, the prominent factors that influence consumers across cultures to share and post Br-C are personal identity and presentation and social integration. Therefore, global marketers may need to prompt consumers to see (1) how their brands can bolster consumers' positive image and ideal identity construction, for example, by positioning themselves as a brand associated with innovation, sophistication, friendliness, or altruism, or (2) how brands can strengthen consumers' relationships with friends, or social groups, for example, by introducing online campaigns related to friendship (e.g. Share a Coke campaign) or social support (e.g. #LikeAGirl campaign by Always).

Secondly, we have learned that a sense of belonging and in-group identification seem to be very influential motivations in online Br-C engagement for collectivistic consumers, while obtaining advantages and achieving personal goals appear to influence individualistic consumers' engagement with Br-C. Based on these findings, SNS marketers could leverage these motivational patterns and employ a targeting Br-C strategy. For example, the Br-C advertised across individualistic consumers could stress rewarding outcomes (e.g. economic incentives, information usefulness), and the Br-C promoted across collectivistic consumers may need to emphasize benefits of social relations (e.g. values of friendship, social support).

Finally, we suggest that global and multinational managers consider brand-related location sharing as a tool for bridging the gap between online (COBRAs) and offline (consumers' purchasing behavior). According to the results, consumers across cultures have intentions to check-in at brand-related locations related to their desire to promote themselves and for self-presentation, and to provide detailed information regarding the specific locations. All of these consumer motivations are found to induce other consumers' intention to purchase a product or to visit a place, as well as to collect and discuss brand information. Therefore, global brand managers should ensure that their company's important information is listed with location-based networking services (e.g. Google Places).

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

While this study makes important contributions, some limitations must be considered, and addressed in future research. Firstly, participants of the study were active Facebook users who had either contributed to or created Br-C at least once. While this allowed for a rich exploration of COBRA motivations, less active Facebook users, who only consumed Br-C were not interviewed. Future research should extend the findings of this study by also including these less active consumers who only consume Br-C because they might provide additional reasons for (not) engaging with Br-C on SNSs.

Secondly, the operationalization of culture was based on the country in which the participants were born and resided. While this is common practice in cross-cultural research, people in the same culture may define their own identity differently (Bernritter, Loermans, Verlegh, & Smit, 2017). Therefore, to extend and validate our findings, future research should adopt a quantitative approach and investigate the relationship of individuals' cultural values and personality characteristics with country-level cultural values, and understand how it influences COBRA activities.

Finally, we focus primarily on motivations underlying COBRAs, especially on Facebook, across cultures. To extend the cross-cultural research on COBRAs, future research should consider other relationship-oriented antecedents, such as message characteristics (Araujo et al., 2015) and social factors (Tsai & Men, 2013). Moreover, as it is already known that culture also influences how motivations for SNS usage in general vary by platform (Chu et al., 2016), future research should extend the findings of the present study by exploring whether and, if so, how Br-C engagement varies across cultures on other SNS platforms beyond Facebook.

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THE EFFECT OF CULTURE ON PRODUCT EVALUATIONS

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Abstract

Culture affects the commercial success of new products. Most studies note effects on demand; this article investigates how national culture influences consumers' post-consumption satisfaction with entertainment products by examining how national culture (long-term orientation, power distance belief, and individualism) moderates the effects of marketing elements (product launch timing, advertising, and the product's cultural content) on consumers' evaluations. This study reveals that a long-term orientation mitigates the negative effect of delayed launch; power distance beliefs accentuate positive advertising effects; and individualism weakens the positive effect of congruence between a product's cultural content and consumers' national culture

GLOBALIZATION AND "JAHMERICAN" FOOD ADVERTISING IN JAMAICA

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Abstract

Globalization enables the free flows of mass media and global brands, which can influence individuals' identity and consumption. Research has shown that youth and parents in Jamaica are internalizing American culture in their identity, values, and behaviors (i.e., becoming "Jahmerican") through a process of remote acculturation. As a result, some adolescents and mothers, especially those who consume U.S. media, feel and act more "American" and tend to eat more unhealthy food. However, there is no existing research on advertising, or food advertising, in Jamaica to link commercial media to remote acculturation. Therefore, we explore aspects of the local food marketing environment in Jamaica to gauge the prevalence of American brand food advertising and explore the degree to which ads are using global or local consumer culture positioning. Further, since studies have linked food advertising exposure to obesity, we assess the types of foods that are featured, and the information, including nutrition, that is offered. To do so, we contrast advertisements in local mass media that are rarely studied but often vary in information content: newspaper and outdoor. Results of our content analyses revealed that U.S. fast food and beverage brands were predominately featured in Jamaican advertising, using global, glocal, and local approaches. The most frequently advertised foods, across local and global brands, were energy dense processed foods and fast-food restaurants. A greater variety of beverages were advertised, including alcohol and soda as well as fruit juice, water, coffee, and milk. Implications for cultural changes, advertising, and health are offered.

EVENT SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:
POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR MARKETERS AND CONSUMERS

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Abstract

This study examines event social responsibility (ESR) as an emerging construct of interest at the nexus of two increasingly prevalent business trends—event sponsorship and corporate social responsibility. Sponsored events serve as marketing channels for sponsors to promote brands, connect with consumers via their passions, and demonstrate their commitment to the community. Drawing from the theory bases of affect transfer and social identity, the study's theoretical framework expands existing sponsorship research because by demonstrating how ESR benefits the event, its sponsors, and consumers, including positive word of mouth for the event and patronage toward sponsors' products. The authors tested the theoretical framework via a field study of attendees (*n*=879) at a sponsored, large-scale community sporting event that provided health and wellness education. Analytic results offer evidence that ESR translates into positive outcomes for marketers (i.e., events and sponsors) and consumers.

THE EFFECTS OF INCONGRUENCE ON CSR ADVERTISING

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Abstract

The current research examines the effects of ad-brand personality incongruence (congruent vs. moderately incongruent vs. extremely incongruent) on consumers' evaluations and behavioral intention toward a CSR ad and CSR activity. The results of two studies show that moderate incongruence leads to more favorable attitudes toward a firm's CSR activity. Further, the current study investigates the mediating role of cognitive thoughts and perceived fit by testing the relationships among the congruence level, cognitive thoughts/ perceived fit, attitude toward an ad, and perceptions of the firm's CSR activity. The findings indicate that positive cognitive thoughts regarding a CSR ad mediate the relationship between ad-brand personality incongruence and attitude toward the ad and perceptions of CSR activity whereas perceived fit negatively mediate this relationship. More interestingly, the current study explores an interaction effect between ad-brand personality incongruence and aroused (study 1) and ad-induced (study 2) emotion (i.e., guilt) on consumers' evaluations and behavioral intention. The findings indicate that when the feeling of guilt is aroused among consumers, extreme incongruence leads to higher behavioral intentions. Theoretical and managerial implications are discussed.

DOING RIGHT MATTERS IN DOING GOOD: THE ROLE OF CSR FIT ON BUILDING COMPANY CREDIBILITY AND REPUTATION THROUGH CONSUMER ATTRIBUTIONS

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the effects of CSR fit and source on corporate perceived credibility and investigate how consumers' attributions of CSR activities impact corporate credibility and reputations, and ultimately influence consumers purchase intention and willingness to speak positively about the company. Study 1 compared the group differences on perceived corporate credibility by conducting a 2 (fit: high vs. low) x 2 (source: internal vs. external) between-subjects experiment. The results indicated a good fit between the social cause and company business positively influenced corporate credibility. Based on the findings from Study 1, Study 2 applied the attribution theory and conducted an experiment to compare how different fit levels influence consumers attributions on CSR activities, and ultimately affect corporate credibility and reputation, as well as consumer purchase intention and the word-of-mouth.

GENDER REPRESENTATION IN CAMBODIAN TELEVISION ADVERTISEMENTS

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Abstract

This study analyzed 157 unduplicated Cambodian television advertisements from 2016 for differences in gender representation. The findings indicate gender differences for several variables, including the degree of dress (more men than women were fully dressed and more women than men were suggestively dressed), the setting (more women than men were at home and more men than women in the workplace), the voiceover (male voiceovers clearly outnumbered female ones), and the product category (women advertised for the body care/toiletries/cosmetics/beauty products product category and men for alcoholic drinks and for the automotive/vehicles/transportation/accessories product categories). Most of these gender differences were expected in the patriarchal society of Cambodia where traditionally strict codes of conduct for men and women exist. In contrast, the equal numerical representation of women and men counter those expectations. Also the results for the age of the primary character ran counter to most previous research in that there were not more younger women than men, but only more older men than older women. The potential effects of such representations on audiences are discussed based on social cognitive theory and cultivation theory.

THE CONTENT ANALYSIS OF OLDER ADULTS IN MALAYSIAN TELEVISION AND PRINT ADVERTISING

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Introduction

The numbers of very old are increasing, and by 2050 there will be 379 million people aged 80 and above (United Nations, 2015). Globally, senior consumers (those aged 50+) in the year of 2015 rose by 55 million and the proportion of older adults reached 8.5 percent of total population. It is expected that older population is projected to almost double to 1.6 billion globally (He, Goodkind & Kowal, 2016). In Asia-Pacific, older consumers comprise not only the fastest growing but also the wealthiest of all segments (Walker, 2011). While Malaysia's current population does not reflect the astonishing proportions of old people that can be found in some countries, it is nevertheless experiencing a phenomenal demographic transition. Censuses between the years 1970-2000 reveal an increase in those aged 60 and over from 3.5% to 6.3% (Rabieyah and Hajar, 2003). Increasingly, international researchers are using age 50 as the cut-off age for studying older consumers (Sudbury-Riley, Kohlbacher and Toth, 2012). However, the Malaysian government has adopted age 60 as the threshold for formulating plans for older adults (Ong and Phillips, 2007). Consequently, no precise figures for those Malaysians who are over 50 exist, but analysis of the UN statistics suggests that currently approximately 15% of the population is aged 50+.

Given the projected growth and spending power of this cohort, it is essential for organisations to understand the market comprising older people in Malaysia, in order to better cater for these senior adults and to further develop their own business strategies to increase market share (Hasbullah, 2007). Gerontologists have long recognised that people age socially and psychologically as well as physically (Riley, 1985) and also that people age at different rates (Jarvik, 1975). Consequently, research clearly demonstrates that as people age they become more dissimilar (Moschis, 2000), which means that they simply will not be able to identify with the advertising messages that are traditionally aimed at younger cohorts.

Research Problem

The majority of research pertaining to ageing consumers has been conducted in Western countries and cannot always be applied to the East because of cultural differences. As Malaysia is experiencing a demographic transition where the number of older people is increasing, it is essential for advertisers and marketers to understand older adults' specific preferences in the marketplace.

Malaysian-based empirical research into marketing and advertising to older consumers is sparse, and there is evidence to suggest that many businesses are not yet properly prepared to serve this growing and increasingly important market (Walker, 2011) despite the fact that many international researchers have shown that this group respond to and depend on advertisements for information (Simcock and Sudbury, 2006). As this segment is increasing in size, it is essential for companies and advertisers to give more interest to this market (Ong and Chang, 2009). The only previous research into older advertising models in Malaysia (Ong and Chang, 2009) revealed that while older models in television advertising were not cast in a negative stereotypical way, they were underrepresented and when they did appear they were in background roles.

The research presented here is part of a larger study into older adults in Malaysian advertising. The central aim of this research is to advance knowledge by analyzing the usage and portrayal of older models in both television and print advertisements in Malaysia and investigating the attitude of older consumers towards such advertisements. This study evaluates the portrayal in terms of function and roles of older adults in both television and print advertisements.

Literature Review

Advertising Roles

The number of older adults included in advertising does not necessarily indicate their importance (Prieler, 2012). Rather the roles they portray may provide a better understanding of their perceived significance. A number of studies have highlighted the role given to older adults in advertising. These studies show that in the West older adults are often given either background or minor roles (Lien, 2005; Roy and Harwood, 1997; Simcock and Sudbury, 2006). Nevertheless, there is a mixture in the results for Asian studies. A study by Lee, Kim and Han (2006) reveals that in Korea, older adults hold the highest percentage for major roles while in the United States, minor roles tend to be occupied by older adults. Lee et al. (2006) and Prieler et al. (2011) also show that in South Korea and Japan, older adults were mostly positioned in major roles than minor or background roles. Prieler (2012) conducted a study between older foreign residents and local older adults in South Korea and found that mostly older foreigner were given major roles while local older adults were given minor roles in TV ads.

Ong and Chang (2009) disclose that in Malaysia, older adults are usually given minor or background roles while in Korea, older adults are regularly given major roles in advertising. Ong and Chang (2009) revealed that 57% of the older models in Korea were cast in major roles. Obviously, what is clear is that there appears to be cultural differences in terms of role of older adults in advertising.

Many of the ads targeted at older adults tend to use celebrities. Most of older celebrities were cast in major roles especially if the products are targeted to older consumers. Prieler et al. (2010) found that older celebrities in Japan often play a major role in Japanese TV ads. They also found that older male celebrities are more prevalence in ads compared to older female celebrities. In Australia, Higgs and Milner (2006) also found a high percentage of older celebrities in ads and mostly hold major roles.

Usage Level of Older Adults in Advertising

Most advertising studies have shown that older adults tend to be underrepresented especially in television commercials (Lee et al., 2007). The underrepresentation of older adults in advertising is considered serious because the older market is growing but not many older adults are used in advertisements (Lee, Kim & Han, 2006; Peterson, 1995). Past studies show that older adults are underrepresented in advertising in relation to their proportion within a country (Ong & Chang, 2009; Bradley & Longino, 2001). Roy and Harwood (1997) found in their American study that only 7% of characters contained older characters from 3,547 characters studied from 778 commercials. This finding clearly shows the level of underrepresentation as at that time older adults comprised 17% of the US population. Similar results were found for magazine advertisements where only 9% of ads contained an older person, despite older adults comprising 16% of the population (Usric, Usric & Usric, 1986) while another found that older adults were significantly underrepresented in print advertisements in US (only 0.06%) while the actual population was 12% (Peterson, 1995). Carrigan and Szmigin (1999) revealed that older adults were underrepresented in British magazines compared to their proportion of the entire population in United Kingdom.

Prieler et al. (2009) revealed the underrepresentation of older adults in Japan, especially those older than 65 years. Their study found only a 6.1% inclusion of older adults in television commercials but comprised 20.2% of the actual population. Conversely, however, the study found for those aged 50-64, such underrepresentation was less prevalent. Recently, Prieler et al. (2015) still found that the representation of older adults in Japan TV advertising are still underrepresented.

This underrepresentation was also found in the only previous Malaysian study. Ong and Chang (2009) found that only 2.4% of the characters in the ads were older adults whereas the total percentage of older adults in Malaysia was 6.6%. They also found that in South Korea, only 8.6% of older adults were cast in the advertisements whereas at that time, older adults represented 13.3% of the population. The same goes for Korean ads where Lee, Kim and Han (2006) found that only 8.0% of ads include people over 60 whereas in the population this age group accounted for 12% of Korean population.

The Importance of Representation

The increasing number of older adults in many countries has motivated many researchers to study media portrayals of them (Zhang et al., 2006). Studies have shown that as people get older, they rely more and more on media (Festervand and Lumpkin, 1985; Steven, 1981). Media does play an important role in older adults' lives (Goot, Beentjes and Van Selm, 2012). Research has consistently shown that older adults spend more time consuming media compared to younger people, and this is especially true of television (Harwood, 2007). Media provides a leisure activity for those who are ageing (Havinghurst and Albrecht, 1953).

Studies also shown that older adults are heavy users of mass media for entertainment particularly for news and information searching (Steven, 1981, Grancy and Graney, 1974). It is believed that older adults watch news and search for information because they miss the information that they used to get during working time or from other social context (Chory-Assad and Yanen, 2005; Bliese, 1986). Empirical findings found that older adults rely more on media with respect to meaningfulness and emotional balance (Bartsch, 2012; Mares and Sun, 2010). Mares, Oliver and Cantor (2008) claim that as a person grow old, they tend to perceive the future to be more limited and restricted and they will focus more on achieving emotional satisfaction, stability, and meaningfulness in the present. Therefore, they will avoid unnecessary negative or pointless experiences. In contrast to younger people, older adults prefer media with heart-warming content because it may offer the emotional satisfaction and steadiness that they reportedly seek. The orientation on meaningfulness and emotional balance explains why older adults are more interested in media compared to younger people (Mares and Sun, 2010).

Asia and the Special Case for Malaysia

The majority of research pertaining to ageing consumers has been conducted in Western countries, and cannot always be applied to the East because of cultural differences. Respect for older adults is profoundly rooted in the norms of Asian collectivist culture (Sung, 2001). In contrast, social behaviour in Western individualist cultures is guided by personal attitudes (Kashima et al., 1992) and the accomplishment of individual goals is stressed. Cuddy, Norton and Fiske (2005) in their study found that Westerners stand alone in their perception of older adults as warm and caring though feeble. Liu et al. (2003) found that older adults in Chinese society are respected and revered for their wisdom and experience, with older adults being perceived as optimistic, generous and health conscious. Ironically, as Ng et al. (2002) note, some aspects of Asian culture, particularly filial piety, may have perpetuated older adults as being invisible from the marketplace, due to them being treated with "venerable respect rather than as active participants" (Ong and Phillips, 2007, p. 88). However, a study by Gerlock (2006) claims that there are mixed feelings towards older adults in Asian countries, suggesting this traditional pattern may be shifting. Some older adults in Asia lack self-confidence about their capabilities and due to deteriorating health they are beginning to feel like a burden to their families. Gerlock (2006) further adds that in several Asian countries, particularly Bangladesh, Hong Kong, Korea and China, those older adults who are poor are concerned about growing old, feeling that survival is difficult and surrounded by uncertainty and even suffering.

Most Eastern studies pertaining to age and culture focus on the Chinese population, and there are vast differences between China and Malaysia. Malaysia is unique in that its population is multi-ethnic (Malaysia Demographic Profile, 2015), comprising Malays and other Bumiputera groups (61%), as well as large proportions of Chinese (24%), Indians (7%) , and other ethnic groups (8%). Differences between the ways in which these ethnic groups age have been found (Tengku Aizan and Masud, 2010) and each group displays different cultural characteristics (Rabieyah and Hajar, 2003) which affects their consume behaviour (Ong, Kitchen and Jama, 2008; Moschis and Ong, 2011). The ways in which older adults in general, and perhaps the different ethnic groups in particular, are portrayed in advertising is therefore worthy of investigation, especially in light of the fact that different languages are widely used across Malaysian television, print and radio advertisements.

Limited facts are available with regards to financial behaviour and wealth of Malaysians, particularly the very old (Tengku Aizan and Masud, 2010; Sabri et al, 2010). Nevertheless, Ong and Phillips (2007) found older Malaysians to be rather discerning, price conscious consumers with good ability to discriminate, a finding that suggests they are not very different from their senior counterparts in many other countries (Sudbury and Simcock, 2009). Yet, in line with so many other countries, older consumers in Malaysia "tend to be either ignored or thought of as small and insignificant" (Ong and Philips, 2007: p. 88). As Asian markets are growing (Shao, Raymond and Taylor, 1999), advertising plans and tactics in Asia are considered to be particularly important (Tai, 1997). It has been claimed that consumers favour advertisements that serve core cultural values (Zhang and Gelb, 1996) and consider local cultural values to be particularly persuasive (Gregory and Munch, 1997; Taylor and Stern, 1997).

Only one previous study has ever investigated older adults in Malaysian advertising. Based on a sample of 494 television advertisements that featured people, Ong and Chang (2009) found 9.5% of these contained older adults. However, analysis of the actual numbers of people in these advertisements paints a different picture. Senior consumers were frequently depicted as part of an inter-generational group, rather than the focus of the ad itself. Indeed, in total 2566 people featured in these advertisements, but only 2.4% were seniors. In total, only 4 older men and 3 older women were featured in major roles, and no single advertisement contained solely older adults. When older models were used, they were mainly depicted in a positive way; however it is noteworthy that all of the older females that were utilised were portrayed in the home. Finally, older models where overwhelmingly used in advertising for financial services products, followed by medicines and other health products. Not a single older person appeared in any advertisement for food, beverages, ICT, cosmetics, beauty products, electricity, cars or transport.

Ong and Chang's study, published in 2009, comprised television advertising from 2008. There are signs that some businesses have begun to address the needs of older adults, although these do tend to limit their efforts to the needs of the very old (Walker, 2011). Nevertheless, an increase in the numbers of older models would be expected, given the 4 years that have elapsed since Ong and Chang completed their study. Moreover, the current study also includes print advertising, which has never before been considered.

Method

Sample

Advertisements appearing on the three major broadcast networks in Malaysia - TV3, TV8 and TV9 - were recorded between 8pm and midnight for 2 weeks. The 10 most popular magazines in Malaysia (Media Guide, 2011) were selected as the population for print advertising. There are no magazines specifically for older adults readers in Malaysia. It should be noted that not all of the top 10 magazines published in Malaysia are country specific; rather, several are international publications. The top 10 magazines that comprised the population for this study are: Times magazine, Asian Week, Reader's Digests, Fortune, Forbes, The Edge, FHM, The Economist, Dewan Ekonomi, and Flavour. From this population, a simple random sampling technique was used in order to select one 2011 edition from each magazine, thus the final sample comprised one edition of each publication (10 magazines in total) all of which were in print between January and December 2011. All full page and half page advertisements that contained human characters were analysed. Advertisements that contained no people (product only), or non-human characters (cartoons, etc.) were excluded, as were ads without faces (such as hands or legs only).

Judges

One of the authors and two independent judges coded and categorised both the TV and print advertisements. All judges have marketing related training; one is aged 32 and was chosen on the basis of his extensive knowledge of advertising and PR. The other is aged 55, and was chosen because an older judge can improve reliability (Carrigan and Szmigin, 1998). In line with previous content analyses (Zhou and Chen, 1997) any differences or disagreements were discussed and consensus reached through discussion.

Ambiguity among researchers surrounds the ages at which the senior consumer market begins. For example, the starting age has been placed as 45 (KeyNotes, 1994), 50 (Alexander, 1990; Oliver, 1995), 55 (Calver, Vierich and Phillips, 1993; Moschis, 1992; Van Auken, Barry and Anderson, 1993), 60 (Wilkes, 1992) and 65 (Day et al., 1988). Previous content analyses pertaining to older adults in advertising also lack consistency in terms when later life begins, which makes direct comparisons between studies difficult. Age 45 (Peterson and Ross, 1997), 50 (Atkin, Jenkins and Perkins, 1991; Kohlbacker, Prieler *and* Hagiwara, 2011; Simcock and Sudbury, 2006), and 60 (Roy and Harwood, 1997; Ylänne,William and Wedleigh, 2010) have all been used in previous content analyses. Malaysia uses age 60 as the starting point for deliberating aging trends and formulating plans for older adults, which follows guidance given by the United Nations World Assembly on Ageing in 1982. However, the retirement age in Malaysia is 56, suggesting that the threshold for when a person enters 'older age' is actually earlier than age 60 (Ong and Phillips, 2007). Nevertheless, at least among market practitioners and service providers, there does appear to be some agreement that age 50 is the starting point for this market. Such firms include tour operators offering specialist holidays, insurance firms offering age-related discounts and services such as those offered by Saga, AARP and Age-UK. Moreover, age 50 has become the key age at which many researchers begin to study older consumers (Sudbury-Riley et al., 2012), and this is the starting point for many age-related periodicals (for example, AARP's The Magazine, Fifty-Plus News) offered to seniors. On this basis, age 50 was chosen as the lower parameter for the older consumer market.

Coding

Content analysis has been used for over two centuries (Harwood and Garry, 2003). With regards to consumer research, the seminal paper by Kassarjian (1977) developed a structure for the use of content analysis, which, with some refinements (Kolbe and Burnett, 1991), remains one of the best templates for using the technique and forms the basis of this study. The first stage, in order to ensure a technique that is a "scientific, objective, systematic, quantitative, and generalisable description of communications content" (Kassarjian, 1977, p.10), is to ensure objectivity, which is the process by which nominal categories are developed (Kolbe and Burnett, 1991). A model was judged to be aged 50 or above using the following criteria:

1. Age was directly mentioned, or the ad included any reference to retirement or being older.
2. Physiological indicators were apparent, such as extensive grey/ white hair or balding; wrinkles of the skin on hands and face; the use of a walking-stick, wheelchair or other mobility aid.

Product/service categories were developed based on previous content analyses, and comprised 14 different product/service sectors. When an older person was included in an ad, their race (Malay, Chinese, Indian, Others, Mixed) was noted. This was straightforward, based on language, skin colour, and clothing. Additionally, their physical appearance (strong, weak), setting (residential, business, outdoor), and activity (sedentary, active) were categorised. Finally, judgement was made in terms of how older adults were depicted from an emotional perspective, and categorised as positive (depicted as happy, having fun, light-hearted), negative (sad, depressed, weak, unhappy, miserable), or a mixture.

Results

A total of 2230 television advertisements were analysed, 1729 of which contained people. Of these, 277 (16%) contained older adults, which is approximately representative of the numbers of older adults in the Malaysian population. For the magazine sample, however, this was not the case. Of 2687 print advertisements analysed, 1238 included people, and 304 of these (24.5%) contained older adults. A total of 581, or 19.5% of the sample depicted at least one older adult, either alone or as part of a group. Clearly, older people in advertising in Malaysia are not underrepresented.

Table 1 presents a breakdown of older adults by ethnicity and media, and compares this breakdown to the population composition. As can be seen from table 1, the Chinese are slightly overrepresented in TV advertising and underrepresented in print ads, resulting in an overall proportion of older Chinese models that almost mirrors the population breakdown. Older Indians are slightly overrepresented in TV advertising (10.5% compared to an expected 7%) while double the expected proportion appear in print advertising. Almost one third (29.9%) of print advertising featuring older models does not contain the major races in Malaysia, which was expected given that many of the publications are international, thus more Western models were found. Noteworthy is the healthy percentages of adverts (10% of TV and 16% of print) which depict older adults of different races together. However, it can clearly be seen that older Malays are severely underrepresented in both television (46% compared to an expected 61%) and print advertising (32% compared to the expected 61%).

TABLE 1
Older Models by Ethnicity and Media (%)

Race	*Population Breakdown*	*TV*	*Print*	*Total*
Malay	61	46.2	19.4	32.2
Chinese	24	29.6	20.4	24.8
Indian	7	10.5	14.1	12.4
Other	8	3.2	29.9	17.2
Mixture		10.5	16.1	13.4

Table 2 clearly shows that when older models are used, they are actually given major roles. Indeed, of the ads containing older models, over half of TV and over two-thirds of print ads portrayed these older adults as central to the advertisement. Token (background) older models were not utilised at all in television advertising, and in less than 3% of print ads. Moreover, it seems that older adults are utilised in food and retail advertisements (Table 3) as well as health ads, though less than 10% are used in all other product categories.

TABLE 2
Older Models by Role and Media (%)

Role Classification	*TV*	*Print*	*Total*
Major	54.9	69.4	62.5
Minor	31.4	7.6	18.9
Background	0.0	2.6	1.0
Product Expert	0.0	6.9	3.6
Celebrity	13.7	13.5	13.6

TABLE 3
Older Models by Product Category and Media (%)

Product Category	*TV*	*Print*	*Total*
Food	25.6	15.5	20.3
Retail	20.6	11.2	15.7
Health	7.9	17.8	13.1
Drinks	15.5	0.0	7.4
Insurance	3.2	10.5	7.1
Banking	3.2	8.9	6.2
Moral	11.9	0.0	5.7
Communication	2.9	7.9	5.5
Auto supplies	2.9	4.9	4.0
Vacation	0.4	7.2	4.0
Electronics	0.0	7.2	3.8
Restaurant	0.4	5.6	3.1
Education	5.4	0.0	2.6
Airlines	0.0	3.3	1.7

Table 4 shows the way older adults are portrayed in terms of emotions, activities and physical abilities. Overwhelmingly, seniors are depicted as positive, in that they are depicted as happy, light-hearted and having fun. It is perhaps noteworthy, however, that more than one-third of print advertisements featured seniors who were sad, depressed, or unhappy. Likewise, more than two-thirds of television advertising, compared to just over half of print ads, portrayed seniors as physically active. In contrast, three quarters of print ads depicted seniors as strong, while almost one third of television ads showed them as weak. Nevertheless, in the majority of Malaysian advertising, seniors are depicted as happy, active and physically strong.

TABLE 4
Portrayals by Media (%)

	TV	*Print*	*Total*
Emotion			
Positive	80.9	65.8	73.0
Negative	11.6	34.2	23.4
Changed	7.6	0.0	3.6
Activity			
Sedentary	31.8	47.0	39.8
Active	67.5	53.0	59.9
Mixed	0.7	0.0	0.3
Depiction of Physical Ability			
Strong	64.3	75.3	70.1
Weak	31.4	24.3	27.7
Mixed	4.3	0.3	2.2

Discussion and Implications

The study found that the number of older people in Malaysian advertising is proportionate to the number of people in Malaysian society. Thus, as a group older consumers are not underrepresented in advertising in Malaysia. However, in terms of the ethnic make-up, the proportion of older models that are actually Malaysian is not representative of the Malaysian population. Rather, it was found that the Chinese are proportionately represented while Indians are slightly overrepresented. It was also found that many Western models appear in Malaysian ads, thus it seems that older Malays are underrepresented due to slightly greater numbers of Indians, and far greater numbers of Westerners, than are found in the population.

Results confirmed that older adults are given major roles, and are not relegated to minor or background roles. At the same time, it was found that very few ads portray older adults as a product expert, though the exception to this is when older celebrity endorsers a product. The types of products that tend to use older models are predominantly food, retail and health products and very few other product categories contain older models in advertising.

The ways in which older adults are portrayed was then analysed. It was found that older models are mainly depicted in a positive way, in that they are usually depicted as happy, light-hearted and having fun. Likewise, they are mainly depicted as active and physically strong.

Clearly, Malaysian advertising has made enormous progress in terms of both the numbers of advertisements that utilize older adults and the way these older adults are depicted. Contrary to previous content analyses conducted in the West (Carrigan and Szmigin 1998; Davis and Carson 1998; Kessler, Schneider, and Bowen 2010; Zhou and Chen 1992), other Eastern countries (Higgs and Milner 2005; Lee et al. 2006; Morton and Chen 2009; Prieler et al. 2009), and even Malaysia itself (Ong and Chang 2009), senior adults are not underrepresented, and are not depicted in a stereotypical manner. Indeed, seniors are portrayed as active, happy and light-hearted, physically strong, in an assortment of settings including outdoors and business scenarios, and are deemed suitable to feature in ads for a wide range of products and services. In 2014, the youngest baby boomers entered the senior market. The results of the study presented here show that, finally, seniors are being included in advertising and that major strides have been made in terms of the inclusion of older women.

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IMAGES OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES IN TELEVISION COMMERCIALS IN ASIA: A COMPARISON OF JAPAN, CHINA, KOREA, THAILAND AND SINGAPORE

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Abstract

This research objective is to examine the similarities and differences of images of foreign countries in Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Thai, and Singaporean television commercials. The research methodology focuses on content analysis. 1,940 advertisements within a selected time-period in 2015 were collected, coded, and analyzed. The results show that there are differences of foreign images in Asian television commercials, because of the different economic, social and cultural backgrounds of the originating countries. Furthermore, analysis reveals three groups of advertising characteristics: 1) Domestic market orientation (Japan, China, and Korea); 2) Interrelation market orientation (Thailand); and 3) Diversity market orientation (Singapore).

WE'RE FRIENDS, RIGHT? HOW USING DIALOGUE ON FACEBOOK EFFECTS THE PERCEPTIONS OF TRUST AND AUTHENTICITY BY CONSUMERS

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Abstract

A study was conducted examining the effects of dialogical communication strategies on consumer's perceptions of trust and authenticity on organizations. The experiment tested organizational Facebook posts broadcasting a corporate social responsibility message. While "Human Voice" represented as a casual tone had no effect on perceived trustworthiness or authenticity, Dialogical Loop as replies to user comments was found to significantly effect stakeholder perceptions of authenticity negatively, but did not effect trustworthiness. Ruminations about possible implications for organizational communications theory and practice on social media, as well as recommendations for further study of the Facebook platform are discussed.

THE POWER OF LIKE: PREDICTING CORPORATE REVENUE BY USING FACEBOOK ACTIVITIES

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Abstract

With the availability of data mining in social media, it has become possible to directly measure a company's social media activity. The present study attempts to relate the Facebook activity of companies to that of consumers, and examines the effect of such Facebook activities on companies' corresponding business success. The authors estimate a feasible Generalized Least Squares model (FGLS) by using nearly 10 years of panel data (from 2007 to 2016) containing the S&P 500 companies' Facebook activity in conjunction with financial performance information. The results suggest that, in the case of the companies' Facebook activity, the number of posts by a company on Facebook leads to a decrease in revenue. However, in the case of consumers' Facebook activity, the two predictors – the number of likes and comments – are positively associated with revenue. The number of shares does not improve revenue. The authors argue that these big Facebook data are informative in quantifying how and what companies' social currency derived virtually from social media can turn into actual currency. Theoretical and managerial implications of the findings are discussed.

A CROSS-CULTURAL STUDY OF APPLYING TAM TO EXAMINE CONSUMERS' INNOVATIVENESS IN ACCEPTING BRAND PAGES

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Christina Chung, Ramapo College of New Jersey, Mahwah, NJ
Jonghoon Kim, Incheon National University, Incheon, Korea

Abstract

This study examines the relationships between cultural value orientations and the TAM variables in the SNS context among U.S. and Chinese consumers. The theoretical model for this study is formulated based on seven fundamental constructs: independent self-concept, interdependent self-concept, perceived ease of use (PEU), perceived usefulness (PU), social influence (SI), and Consumer innovativeness (CI) to measure intentions to join. The results show that both self-construals significantly influence consumers' perceptions of using a new technology-related advertising medium and the intra-cultural effects do influence young consumers' intentions to join brand pages in both countries. This research shows that both antecedents and outcomes of the relationships between the constructs are moderated by consumers' cultural orientations. Different factors influence American and Chinese respondents' intentions to join brand pages. This study has provided some preliminary evidence concerning what factors drive young American and Chinese consumers to join brand pages. The general findings contribute to the ongoing development of the TAM perspective by studying the effects of consumers' desire for social interaction when participating in social media marketing activities. The results also affirm that PEU, PU and SI are important antecedents of studying behavioral intentions to adopt brand pages in the SNS context. This study evidently shows that both individualistic and collectivist cultures are quite consistent across countries and the findings also reinforce the self-concept theoretical perspective that the activation of either type of the self-concept is related to situational or contextual factors.

"THIS REVIEWER RECEIVES FREE PRODUCT IN EXCHANGE FOR HIS/HER HONEST OPINIONS." HOW SPONSORED REVIEWS DIFFER FROM ORGANIC REVIEWS

Su Jung Kim, Iowa State University, Ames, IA
Ewa Maslowska, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Abstract

Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) has become a critical element of two-way communication between consumers and companies. Online consumer reviews (OCRs), a particular form of eWOM discussing post-consumption experiences, may be influential when they are believed to be unbiased. However, marketers are increasingly incentivizing consumers to write reviews, which can mislead consumers because it is difficult to discern the difference between the two when they are displayed together. This study is one of the early studies that examines the differences between sponsored and organic online product reviews. Based on the principles of reciprocity and public commitment, this study predicted the differences between these two types of reviews. By using a secondary analysis of online reviews data, this study found that sponsored reviews are longer, less extreme, and favorable to the product being reviewed, but are perceived as less helpful than organic reviews. This paper concludes with theoretical implications on motivation, reciprocity, persuasion knowledge literature as well as practical implications for OCR platform management.

DRIVING POSITIVE SPOKEN AND ONLINE WORD OF MOUTH

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Helen Oakes, Keele University, Newcastle, UK

Abstract

This study identifies drivers of positive word of mouth. It involves mixed methods research, firstly collecting and analyzing interview data gathered from arts organization managers, followed by analysis of questionnaire data gathered from 134 arts consumers, and concluding with analysis of online postings by arts consumers on TripAdvisor. Managerial interviews reveal the potential for online co-creation of narratives between arts organizations and consumers, highlighting emotional, cognitive, behavioral, social, and perceptual drivers of word of mouth recommendations. Findings arising from questionnaires administered to arts consumers (supported by data drawn from TripAdvisor postings) support a range of hypotheses. They reveal how positive emotional and cognitive responses, repeat patronage, increased social interaction, art that is stylistically matched to target segment preferences, and perceived well-being and quality of life improvement significantly enhance positive spoken and online word of mouth.

PREDICTORS OF ELECTRONIC WORD-OF-MOUTH BEHAVIOR ON SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES IN THE UNITED STATES AND KOREA: CULTURAL AND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIP VARIABLES

Kyung Yul Lee, Hanyang University, Ansan, Republic of Korea
Hojoon Choi, University of Houston, Houston, TX

Abstract

Given that consumers' electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) communication on social networking sites (SNSs) is influenced by cultural and social background, this study examined (a) to what extent eWOM behavior is influenced by various cultural value orientations and social relationship variables and (b) how those influences differ between U.S. and Korean SNS users. The results suggest that the predictive power of cultural and social relationship variables is different between the two countries and that the difference has more to do with individual-level cultural orientation than national culture. Based on the results, several practical and theoretical implications are discussed.

SPECIAL TOPICS SESSION:
ADVERTISING LAW AND REGULATIONS IN ASIA PACIFIC: CHINA, JAPAN, AND SOUTH KOREA COMPARED

Moderators: Kyu Ho Youm, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR
Yik Chan Chin, Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, China
Mariko Morimoto, Waseda University, Japan
Minjeong Kim, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, South Korea

Overview

For one reason or another, advertising law and regulations are rarely discussed as a comparative topic at the major conferences of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), International Communication Association (ICA), National Communication Association (NCA), and International Association for Mass Communication Research (IAMCR). Few AAA conferences have featured global advertising law panels.

Our special topics session, the first of its kind, was valuable to AAA members with an interest in advertising law from a foreign and comparative perspective. Our approach is derived from the so-called "reverse perspective" premise that communication and non-communication scholars and practitioners learn about themselves more critically when they learn about others.

As the editors of *The Global Advertising Regulation Handbook* observed in 2014, "Regulation of advertising is influenced by a country's culture, economy, and various political and societal factors." Three experts from China, Japan, and South Korea each examined advertising law and regulations in his or her country using "functional equivalence," i.e., identifying how advertising issues are handled as a matter of law in a similar (or dissimilar) way. One US media law expert who teaches advertising law and comparative media law contextualized advertising law and regulation as a research topic for advertising scholars from an international and comparative perspective.

ADVERTISING LAW AND REGULATION: AN INTERNATIONAL AND COMPARATIVE RESEARCH TOPIC

Kyu Ho Youm, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR

Youm started the session by noting that advertising markets are global. Not surprisingly, advertising law and regulations are global, too. Citing a 1995 study of comparative-advertising law in the U.S., Europe, Asia, and Latin America, he stated: "Many foreign governments have placed restrictions on their advertising markets, which create barriers to entry for American companies. Consequently, companies need to know the legal and cultural barriers in various foreign countries before implementing an advertising campaign overseas." According to Youm, this explains in part why advertising law and regulations, whether international or foreign, have attracted more attention from law/advertising practitioners and academics.

Youm cited *International Advertising Law: A Practical Global Guide* (2014). The book of 500-plus pages focuses on the advertising laws and regulations of 30 jurisdictions. It is primarily for lawyers, in-house counsel, and advertising executives. He also called attention to *The Global Advertising Regulation Handbook* (2014). The 260-page edited volume was "to contribute to an understanding of what led to the differing types of regulation (governmental and self-regulation) and to view the regulation from the perspective of the country that enacted it." The 20-country book was for advertising practitioners and students.

Youm agreed with the editors of *The Global Advertising Regulation Handbook*: "Regulation of advertising is influenced by a country's culture, economy, and various political and societal factors."

Most significantly, Youm took special note of *Media, Advertising, and Entertainment Law Throughout the World* (2016), a leading international law treatise on 45 jurisdictions, including the European

Union. This 2-volume annually updated book devotes three sections to advertising law: sources, false advertising, and third-party trademarks and copyrights in advertising. To advertising scholars with a sustained interest in global advertising law, Youm said, it is a must read.

Online Commercial Advertising in the People's Republic of China: Consumer Rights and Market Monopoly

Yik Chan Chin, Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, China

Chin began her presentation with a real-life story in China: In the early 2016, a university student in China died of cancer after receiving an ineffective medical treatment that caused him to miss opportunities to use proven treatments. The student was misled by a medical advertisement on Baidu, the Chinese equivalent of Google. The advertisers paid Baidu to privilege their treatment in the search engine's results.

Chin said that this incident of 2016 had ripple effects beyond Baidu. President Xi Jinping stated that search results should not be based only on who gives money to search engines. China's state Internet regulator, i.e., the State Internet Information Office, set up a team to investigate the incident.

The Chinese government issued new rules governing email advertising, paid search results and embedded links, and images and videos that advertise goods or services. Thee rules target false and misleading claims in online advertising for prescription medicine and tobacco.

In her presentation, Chin examined the history of China's online medicine advertising, the relations between web search engines and advertisers, and the relevant Chinese law and regulations. She argued the above mentioned tragic incident showed a combination of systematic failures in protecting consumer rights and an anti-market-monopoly by a few Internet companies in China.

Advertising Regulations in Japan: From A Consumer Rights Perspective

Mariko Morimoto, Waseda University, Japan

The concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR), along with corporate compliance, has been widely recognized and discussed by Japanese professionals because it is believed that practices in these areas are helpful to build trust with stakeholders. Since trust is valued highly among Japanese consumers and crucial in developing brand loyalty, comprehensive knowledge of advertising-related regulations from a consumer rights' perspective is essential for academics and practitioners.

The presentation begun with a brief history of consumer rights in Japan and development of the Consumer Basic Act. Then, six laws were presented as the fundamentals of Japanese advertising regulations: 1) Consumer Basic Act; 2) Civil Law; 3) Unfair Competition Prevention Act; 4) Act against Unjustifiable Premiums and Misleading Representations; 5) Copyright Law; and 6) Trademark Law. In addition, Internet-related laws such as the Act on the Protection of Personal Information were discussed in relation to consumer privacy protection.

Relevant parties ranging from government, industry, and consumer-initiated organizations that enforce corporate compliance and fostering CSR were also addressed. Those agencies included government offices such as Consumer Affairs Agency and Japan Fair Trade Commission, industry associations such as Japan Advertisers Association, Japan Advertising Agency Association, and Japan Advertising Review Organization, and consumer groups like National Liaison Committee of Consumers' Organization. Their roles and significance in developing advertising-related laws were emphasized in the presentation. The presentation shed the light on the shortcomings of these laws and proposing new approaches to consumer protection in Japan in the digital era.

Not Free as Air: Regulating Ads on Air in South Korea

Minjeong Kim, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, South Korea

Kim examined the emerging issues and the current regulation framework of commercial speech in South Korea with a focus on broadcast advertising.

First, she gave some background on the constitutional status of advertising in Korea by discussing the three landmark cases of the Constitutional Court of Korea (CCK) in the 1990s-2010s. In 1998, the CCK ruled that commercial speech was protected under Article 21 of the Constitution of Korea on freedom of speech and the press. In 2005, the CCK articulated the judicial scrutiny applicable to the constitutionality of advertising regulations. In 2015, the CCK held that a prior review system on medicine advertising was unconstitutional.

Second, she analyzed Korean advertising statutes. The Act on Fair Labeling and Advertising is the main source of advertising regulation that prohibits false or deceptive advertising. The Broadcast Law is another statute that covers broadcast advertising. It requires that the Korea Communications Standards Commission review the fairness and the public interest of broadcast advertising. Since 2010, product placement advertising (known as "indirect advertising" in Korea) has been allowed in Korean broadcasts.

Finally, her presentation addressed new challenges for advertising regulators in Korea. One hotly debated issue is whether commercials should be allowed in the middle of a broadcast program. Also noted were the privacy concerns over online behavioral advertising in light of a recently proposed 2016 guideline for the de-identification process of personally identifiable information (PII) in the age of big data.

Special Topics Session Conclusion

In many ways, advertising law and regulation reflects how society balances freedom of expression with the government interest in preventing deceptive advertisements. Although advertising is still recognized as second-class in the free speech jurisprudence throughout the world, it is now given more protection than ever.

In China, Japan, and South Korea advertising law and regulation, like other areas of mass communication law, are found in a wide range of sources: constitutional, statutory, and self-regulatory. The regulatory schemes of the Asian countries, as presented at the panel session, showcase the so-called commercial speech doctrine as less than a reality. But there are more similarities than differences among the Asian countries when it comes to increasing attention to the consumers' right to truthful advertising. It is clear from the panel discussion that advertising law and regulation is still evolving in China, Japan, South Korea. Hence, advertising scholars are in a unique position to offer directional advice to their lawmakers on what to learn from other countries' advertising law experience.

ADVERTISING FEASIBILITY OR DESIRABILITY ATTRIBUTES? THE ROLE OF COUNTERFACUTAL THINKING IN PERSUASION AFTER NEGATIVE CONSUMPTION EPISODES

Kai-Yu Wang, Brock University, Ontario, Canada
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Abstract

Consumers engage in counterfactual thinking (CFT), the process of looking back at events and thinking how things could have turned out differently, in their daily life. This research proposes that CFT, activated by a prior consumption episode, influences construal level and then affects consumer preference for product feasibility (vs. desirability) attributes in a subsequent consumption context. The results show that CFT is associated with a low construal level, reflected by participants' preference for concrete (v.s. abstract) action identifications (Study 1a) and classifying related objects into more categories (Study 1b). Study 2 further examines the effect of CFT on consumers' choice preferences. The results show that CFT enhances the importance of feasibility considerations and results in more favorable evaluations for a product choice with high-feasibility attributes (vs. high-desirability attributes). The effect of CFT was replicated and observed in a subsequent ad persuasion context (Study 3). The findings make contributions to the construal level theory and CFT literatures and provide implications for advertisers.

WHEN TWO WORLDS COLLIDE: THE DARK TRIAD PERSONALITY AND THE HUMOR IN COMEDIC VIOLENCE ADS

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Abstract

There has been much interest in the advertising discipline regarding comedic violence effects but much has yet to be explored. The relatively new construct of the dark triad (DT) personality (Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy) provides an interesting perspective in studying comedic violence advertising as the DT is often associated with anti-social behavior. Through an online survey, the findings showed that the fit of the humor to the message and perceived justification of the violence were significant predictors to perceived humor of comedic violence ads. Narcissism positively correlated, while Machiavellianism negatively correlated with perceived humor. Ad attitude and brand attitude mediated the relationship between perceived humor and purchase intention of the ads. Theoretical and practical implications are provided.

COMPARING TYPICAL OR ATYPICAL ATTRIBUTES? THE ROLE OF COMPARISON VALENCE AND RELATIVE MARKET SHARE IN COMPARATIVE AD PERSUASION

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Kai-Yu Wang, Brock University, Ontario, Canada
Wei-Ting Jhang, National Dong Hwa University, Taiwan

Abstract

In most of the comparative ads, the advertised brand compare with a comparison brand on typical attributes, which are often associated with well-known brands. However, some brands take a different approach by comparing atypical attributes, which are not correlated or negatively with typical attributes. Little research has studied the contingent factors that influence the effect of attribute typicality on ad persuasion. This research examines the moderating role of comparison valence and relative market share on the effect of attribute typicality on comparative ad effectiveness. The results show that in a high-high market share condition, atypical attributes were more persuasive than typical attributes in negative comparative ad conditions. The effect of attribute typicality was not significant in positive comparative ad conditions. An opposite pattern of effects were observed in a low-high market share condition. Atypical attributes were more persuasive than typical attributes in positive comparative ad conditions. Such an effect was not observed in negative comparative ad conditions.

THE DYNAMIC INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BRAND ACTIONS, CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT BEHAVIORS AND CONSUMPTION

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Abstract

This study investigates customer engagement in the context of TV shows. Engagement is here theorized as a dynamic, iterative process that develops over time, and involves constructs of brand actions (paid advertising and tweets), customer engagement behaviors (tweets), and consumption (TV show viewing). Set-top-box data from a US Cable TV provider, Kantar Media advertising data, and Twitter data are used to build an empirical model. The results show that different brand actions have different effects on TV consumption. Time-shifted TV viewing is positively affected by paid advertising, but negatively affected by tweets from the TV show. Live viewing can be stimulated with tweets from the TV show, but will be hindered by paid advertising. Surprisingly, negative sentiment expressed in other viewers' tweets seems to increase live viewing, but it also reduces time-shifted viewing. The results contribute to customer the engagement literature and have interesting implications for advertisers.

CONSUMER'S WILLINGNESS TO ENGAGE IN A SOCIAL MEDIA CONTEXT: A BRAND PREFERENCE ANALYSIS IN CHINA

Terri H. Chan, Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong

Abstract

In today's digitizing era, social media advertising efforts continue to expand with strong abilities to concisely target, behaviorally profile, and interactively engage consumers. While brand information in a social media context is plentiful, it is argued that while consumers can attend to numerous brands, it really relies on the consumer's motivation to interact with a particular one such that brand-consumer relationship can be further fostered. Collating data from three independent sources, this study examined 195 leading consumer brands across 23 product categories in China to verify the role of consumer's willingness to engage on shaping brand preference.

WHAT FEATURES OF BRANDS' POSTINGS INDUCE VIRALITY AND CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT ON FACEBOOK?: A STUDY USING REGRESSION AND COMPUTATIONAL ANALYSIS APPROACHES

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Yunhwan Kim, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Seoul, Korea

Abstract

This study investigates the effects of various features of brands' posts on electronic word of mouth and consumer engagement on Facebook by using regression and decision tree analysis. The findings from the regression analysis illustrate that the use of multi-media contents (photo and video), hashtags ("#"), and subjective and positively emotional words are more likely to make the brands' posts of Facebook viral and engaged with users. Additionally, the decision tree analysis shows that the use of multi-media is found to be the strongest predictor of the higher level of consumer engagement on Facebook.

THE IMPACT OF BRAND PERSONALITY SELF-CONGRUITY ON BRAND ENGAGEMENT AND PURCHASE INTENTION: THE MODERATING ROLE OF SELF-ESTEEM IN FACEBOOK

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Shu-Yueh Lee, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, Oshkosh, WI

Abstract

This research examines the impact of brand personality self-congruity (BPC) on brand engagement and purchase intention while investigating how self-esteem moderates the relationship between BPC and these dependent variables in Facebook. Data from 301 Facebook users who clicked "like" for a brand were analyzed using factor analysis, structural equation modeling, and multi-group analysis. BPC showed a significant, positive influence on purchase intention and brand engagement, which subsequently affected purchase intention in a positive direction. Brand engagement also mediated the relationship between BPC and purchase intention. BPC showed conditional indirect effect on purchase intention via brand engagement depending on the level of self-esteem. Specifically, a participant with lower self-esteem was more likely to seek brands that may help realize her or his ideal self-concept. Theoretical and practical implications for advertisers are discussed, as well as suggestions for future research in this area.

HANDLE WITH CARE: PERSONALISATION TECHNOLOGIES IN THE CREATIVE PROCESS

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Abstract

This paper applies the sociocultural perspective of the systems model of creativity to explore the influence of digital media on the creative process of advertising art directors and copywriters. Analysis of interviews with 18 Australian art directors and copywriters reveals the role of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the creative process as a source of knowledge and inspiration. Importantly, this analysis identifies a series of practitioner concerns about exposure to ubiquitous digital media platforms, such as Google and Facebook. The nature of this apprehension is discussed with reference to the "algorithmic gatekeeping" that is employed by widely applied ICTs to personalise digital media content based on a user's past experiences and other collected data. There can be little doubt that algorithmic gatekeeping and personalisation provide art directors and copywriters with the ability to easily access the research materials they require, yet a series of less obvious losses emerge as these ICTs seek to prioritise familiar rather than entropic media content and in doing so have the potential to intensify existing concerns about practices that inhibit successful ideation.

Introduction

While advertising is currently in the process of reinventing itself in a bid to rise to the challenges presented by networked digital media, much less attention has been placed on the impact of technological change on the creative process of those who produce branded communication. Advertising art directors and copywriters have always been influenced by mediated sources of information, however the digital era presents a largely unrecognised transformation in the way practitioners are exposed to media content. We are entering a period of digital media personalisation in which algorithmic gatekeeping determines access to information made available by technology companies including Google, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter (Bozdag 2013). With regard to the creative process of art directors and copywriters, this personalisation presents a series of obvious gains in addition to a number of less apparent losses. Search engines and the social web provide advertising art directors and copywriters with a means of managing a vast amount of content that is capable of building knowledge and triggering inspiration, yet the programs that filter this information present subtle forms of bias that are capable of limiting the qualitative diversity of the online content a practitioner is exposed to. If diverse and serendipitous reference points are required to achieve novel outcomes, the use of online platforms with personalisation capabilities presents itself as a barrier to successful ideation in the context of advertising creativity. As a means of introducing this line of inquiry, this paper examines the role of digital media in the creative process and introduces a series of tensions that emerge at a particular intersection of advertising practice and technology.

Despite the existence of numerous studies that view the creative process of practitioners as a predominantly individual or team actions, advertising creativity does not occur in a sociocultural vacuum. The influence of the sociocultural contexts in which advertising is produced has been established in previous research, most specifically Vanden Bergh and Stuhlfaut (2006), yet the means in which art directors and copywriters seek out information and inspiration when responding to a creative brief has yet to be examined. This paper addresses this research gap with a qualitative study of 18 art directors and copywriters working in Australian advertising agencies. Themes drawn from this data are then analysed using systems model of creative process (Csikszentmihalyi 1999), which was also applied by Vanden Bergh and Stuhlfaut's (2006) empirical study of advertising creativity. The conclusions drawn from this analysis provide a foundation for a discussion of the influence of algorithmic gatekeeping and personalisation on the creative process of contemporary advertising art directors and copywriters.

Background

The Value of Creative Advertising

Creativity is commonly described as the mission of the entire advertising industry (Ewing, Napoli and West 2001; Koslow, Sasser and Riordan 2003; Nyilasy & Reid 2009) and the main reason clients select the services of an advertising agency (Henke 1995; Hogg and Scoggins 2001; Johar, Holbrook and Stern 2001; Goldenberg and Mazursky 2007). The clients of advertising agencies are advised that the novel or surprising elements inherent in a creative advertisement capture the attention of a target audience by rising above the noise of the contemporary media landscape. Given its high level of importance in this industry context, numerous attempts have been made to define the concept of advertising creativity. Ewing, Napoli and West (2001) state: "Perhaps it may be best described as the forming of a new association of words, images, meanings, or events to produce an original communication intended to modify buyer behavior in some way" (p.161). Drewniany and Jewler (2008) focus on the affect of creative advertising by positing: "Creative ads make a relevant connection between the brand and its target audience and present a selling idea in an unexpected way" (p.6). Other authors, such as West, Kover and Caruana (2008), suggest that creative advertising occurs when a commercial "grabs" an audience, whether through pathos, an unexpected laugh, or a sudden "snap" to attention. While each of these definitions offers a different focus, collectively they highlight the value of novelty as a fundamental condition of advertising creativity.

The desire of advertising agencies to achieve creative outcomes is well established. As Belch and Belch (2013) point out, a significant body of research has substantiated the efficacy of creative advertising. Studies have revealed the capacity of creative advertising to achieve short and long term brand recall (Sheinin, Varki and Ashley 2011), generate positive brand perceptions amongst audiences (Dahlen, Rosengren and Torn 2008) and achieve higher sales of products or services when compared to conventional approaches (Reinartz and Saffert 2013). Conversely, when there is an absence of creativity – arising, for example, from a client aversion to risky ideas or adherence to rigid formulas – advertising is deemed to be largely ineffectual (Nyilasy, Canniford and Kreshel 2013, pp.1701–1704). The relationship between creativity and effectiveness is regularly discussed in industry contexts. For instance, a study by Donald Gunn (author of the influential *The Gunn Report*) and the UK's Institute of Practitioners in Advertising states that from 1996 to 2012 advertisements that won creativity awards were seven times more effective in terms of achieving increased market share and return on investment than non award-winning advertisements (cited in *Campaign Brief* 2013).

Sociocultural analysis of advertising creativity

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's systems model of creativity (1988) identifies the communicative interactions of the social systems that "determine the occurrence of an idea, object or action" (p.329). Rather than seeking to categorise the tasks taken by the individual in the creative process, the systems model is concerned with the relationships of the various systems involved in the formation of a creative outcome (Figure 1). The model draws attention to the interactions between three systems: the creators of an idea, the field that judges the idea, and the domain that provides a cultural context and decides whether to retain an idea for use in future variations of creative products. The field consists of a body of experts who determine what is accepted as being creative and will thus be disseminated; levels of expertise, status and power vary within this group (Sawyer 2012, p.216). In the context of creative advertising, the field encompasses the industry, the client, the agency and the target audience, all of whom have a say, in both implicit and explicit ways, in determining whether an advertisement is considered to be both a creative and appropriate response to a predetermined goal. The domain consists of the creative products that have been accepted by the field and broader cultural conventions – languages, symbols and notations – shared by members of the field (Sawyer 2012, p.216). In the case of advertising creativity, art directors and copywriters draw upon a series of symbolic meanings from the domain and seek to produce a novel variation that the field recognises as creative and the domain accepts as a cultural object worth remembering.

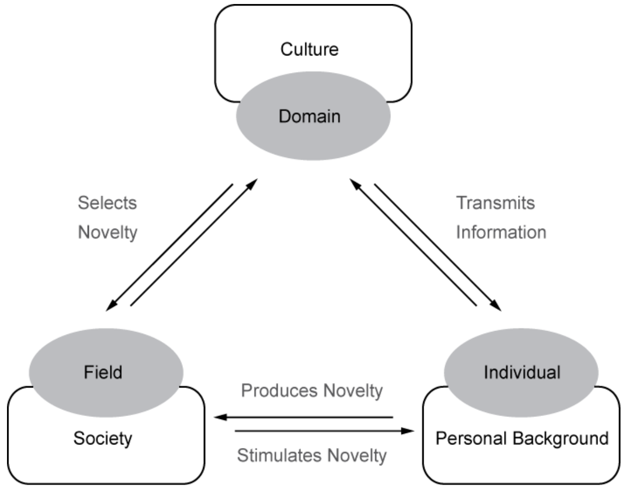

FIG. 1. Csikszentmihalyi’s systems model of creativity (1999)

Rather than presenting a linear process that starts with the creator, the systems model asserts that the creative process exhibits a circular causality that does not necessarily commence with a fixed and predictable event. In the case of advertising, a new idea may start with the client or be sparked by information drawn from the domain. Aside from reinforcing the view that the creative process does not occur in a social and cultural vacuum, the strength of this model is its accommodation of unpredictability, looseness of structure and identification of complex interactions that influence the creative process. It does not view creativity as a formalised series of repeatable steps but instead as interlinked communicative relationships that change in response to different contexts.

Closely following the analytical framework established by Csikszentmihalyi, Vanden Bergh and Stuhlfaut (2006) have empirically traced the relationships between different systems by analysing case studies on the production of high-profile advertisements. Their classification of data gathered from “Moment of Creation” case studies written for *AGENCY* magazine from 1991 to 2001 indicates that 42.5% of practitioners referred to the influence of creators when discussing the development of a high-profile advertisement, 23% referred to the field’s influence and 34.5% referred to the domain (p.387). These findings support the argument that advertising is a collaborative process that extends beyond relationships inside an agency or between an agency and its clients. Importantly, the study underscores the considerable influence the domain has on the ideation process and by implication reveals the significance of communication channels used by creatives to collect cultural representations. While Vanden Bergh and Stuhlfaut did not seek to identify the communication channels that connect the three systems, their conclusions assist this paper’s exploratory study into the influence of ICTs that apply personalisation algorithms, such as Google, YouTube and Facebook, on advertising creativity.

The rise of algorithmic gatekeeping

This paper extends Vanden Bergh and Stuhlfaut’s study by exploring the nascent impacts of digital media on the everyday actions of art directors and copywriters, practitioners commonly referred to as “creatives” who are charged with the task of developing advertising executions. According to Bozdag (2013), digital media technology developers have responded to “the growing amount of information on the social web and the burden it brings on the average users” by developing algorithms that filter information in response to a profile of information that has been collected about the user (p.213). Approaches to personalisation can be understood as being either explicit or implicit in nature – a distinction that refers to how information about the user is predominantly collected. Explicit personalisation requires the user to customise the information source by identifying topics of interest or rating media content with regard to its relevance. As such, the user is aware of the existence of personalisation. A smartphone news app that presents stories based on the user’s previous identification of content they either like or dislike is an example of this approach. Implicit personalisation is the result of the software determining a user’s interests by collecting a dossier of information, such as previously visited web sites or physical location, and using this data to determine access to digital media content at some point in the future. For example, Facebook can be understood to enact a form of implicit personalisation in its news feed function. According to Bozdag (2013), the social networking site’s Edgerank algorithm determines which information is presented to the user based on levels of interaction and the type of content shared. For instance, the massive amount of information that could potentially appear in a user's Facebook newsfeed is filtered by Edgerank to prioritise content that is similar to previously consumed information or has been of interest to those the algorithm believes the user has a strong relationship with. As a widely deployed social media, this new form of filtering has tremendous influence. Facebook is not alone in the quest to personalise online content with search engines also seeking to customise the online content its users are exposed to – a disruption with specific implications of those who use the web as part of their everyday work practices.

In 2007 Google introduced an algorithm that analysed 57 personalisation factors to help it predict the search intent of each user (Pariser 2011, pp.1–2). As a result of this algorithm it is possible for users of Google search to receive different search results for the same term. The search term "jaguar", for example, may deliver results on the Central and South American cat for a Google user who has been profiled as a travel enthusiast, while someone who has been profiled as a car lover may receive results that revolve around the English automobile. The algorithm considers factors such as the device used to access the web, the Internet Protocol (IP) address of the user, and the user's search history (Google n.d.). The IP address provides Google with an indication of the user's location, an important tailoring instrument for search engine results. Less obvious to the Google user is the influence of their previous online behaviours on future search results. The collection of search history data is achieved through storage files or 'cookies' that are deposited on a user's computer to record information such as previous search terms and links the user has clicked. Users who have signed into a Google account, such as Gmail or YouTube, provide the algorithm with further data on personal and online behaviours that contribute into an even richer profile (Google 2012). While the concrete ways in which a user's profile shapes his or her search results have not been made public by Google, it is clear that this form of algorithmic gatekeeping represents a significant technological transformation, one with the potential to reshape mediated aspects and relationships between creatives, their field and the domain in which they operate.

Digital media's influence on the process of making novel associations

In order to develop new ideas, advertising creatives are required to construct novel associations between existing concepts. This process, according to Sawyer (2012), is the result of a combination of conscious and unconscious cognition (p.104). While the development of new associations may not necessarily be a task practitioners want to delegate, it is an action that is capable of being automated by programs that seek to filter online content, such as Google search. One of the aims of the search engine is to pre-empt the user's needs and this involves making connections before a search query is complete. For instance, a 2010 Google blog post describes the benefits of the Google Instant as follows: "Typing [c] will give you predictions for [chicken] or [cake] versus [craigslist] or [cnn], and typing [co] will predict [cookies] or [coconut] – and maybe inspire you to make coconut cookies" (Google 2011, para.3). This example suggests a desire to develop associations on behalf of the user insofar as Google search acts as a technological subconscious that completes a thought, i.e. a search term, based on knowledge of the searcher drawn from an extensive database. This example also demonstrates that the search engine presents suggestions to the user in a way that is analogous to how ideas are associated with a word or concept in the ideation process. An outcome that occurs because the completed form of the query might not directly match what the user is consciously thinking, or it may complete an idea that is on the tip of the tongue, or in this case, on the tip of the fingers.

The term technological subconscious can be used to suggest a parallel with human cognition, the process of developing associations based on a vast repository of stored memory that occurs below the individual's awareness. As occurs with human cognition, only the formed association presented by Google is perceptible. For example, typing the word "orange" into the search engine when working on a new advertisement for an orange-handled power tool may result in the immediate presentation or auto-completion of a particular idea that was not sought, for example the television series *Orange is the New Black* being brought into the conscious thought processes of the art director or copywriter. This could set off further associations that result in a creative concept, such as female inmates using power tools to break out of prison. It is setting up a connection that is unlikely to have occurred without the use of a personalised search engine. The concept of a technological subconscious extends beyond the automated completion of search terms and into the search results themselves when incomplete thoughts or vague search terms are entered into the query box. Of course, the example presented here might be one of thousands of associations that would run through the mind of a creative as they attempt to develop a new idea, but what is distinctive about the involvement of Google's technological subconscious is the adaptive mirroring of human and machine cognition. As a result, the question of whether the searcher or Google developed a new association becomes difficult to determine. The important point here is that the search engine both mimics the associative process of the creative and complements their ideation in a way that other mediums do not.

The limitation of "radical encounters" in the online world

Siva Vaidhyanathan (2011) argues that the delivery of results based on a profile erodes the influence of serendipity – chance encounters and helpful mistakes – that often evokes knowledge and creativity. Similar concerns have been raised by Eli Pariser (2011) who suggests personalisation places web users in a "filter bubble" in which search engines provide information that reinforces the status quo: "Personalization is about building an environment that consists entirely of the adjacent unknown – the sports trivia or political punctuation marks that don't really shake our schemata but feel like new information. The personalised environment is very good at answering the questions we have but not at suggesting questions or problems that are out of our sight altogether" (p.91). For Pariser, personalised search engines trap the user in a relationship with technology that results in exposure to online content that feels new but is not. This approach to computing could be thought of as a best friend who knows you so well they are capable of finishing your sentences as you speak. But in face-to-face communication, having someone finish your sentences, on the basis of previous exchanges and static expectations, can subtly direct and thereby narrow the parameters of a conversation. These conditions have led Vaidhyanathan (2011) to express concern about the ability of Google's algorithmic structures to shield the user from "radical encounters" by limiting their access to information they are already aware of. Before an exploration of how digital media with personalisation capabilities is conditioning the creative process, particularly with regard to biases that shield users from diverse sources of information, it is important to examine how ICTs are deployed by practitioners in the creative process.

Method

Sampling

Qualitative research was identified as the most suitable approach for this exploratory study, with one-on-one interviews conducted with Australian practitioners to collect discursive "insider accounts" of their creative practice. The themes that emerged from analysis of collected data are not presented as generalisable results but instead provide an understanding of the perceptions held by a group of participants on the use of digital media technology in creative practice. A purposive and non-probability sample of interview participants who work as advertising agency art directors and copywriters was recruited. A total of 18 participants who were employed in the Australian states New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland took part in the study. These locations were selected as the majority of Australia's advertising revenue (89%) is generated by advertising agencies located in these regions (Shulman 2011, p.17). The majority of participants were located in Melbourne (seven); five were from Brisbane; four were based in Sydney; and two worked in both Sydney and Melbourne on a regular basis. Study participants ranged in age from 18 to 54 with the majority aged between 35 and 44. On average, study participants had 15.3 years of experience in the advertising industry. As such, the sample predominantly consisted of participants who were well established in their careers. Practitioners from small, medium and large advertising agencies were interviewed.

Data collection and analysis

Semi-structured, in-depth, one-on-one interviews were selected as the research instrument, as this study seeks to understand an emerging phenomenon. The use of semi-structured interviews enabled questions to be asked in an "open, empathic way" that was capable of "motivating the interviewee to tell their story by probing" and thereby allowed for the reporting of descriptive insider accounts of the topic being investigated (Hennink, Hutter and Bailey 2011, p.109). The semi-structured interview format permitted questions to be varied to suit different participants and their circumstances while still covering the same conceptual ground. The names of all participants and their employers were de-identified following the transcription of their audio interviews.

Transcribed versions of audio-recorded interviews were analysed using the three-stage process developed by Miles and Huberman (1994). The first stage involved data reduction in which general categories of information were developed. During the data display stage, data was coded within analytical categories and subcategories to create thematic clusters. The third stage verified the study's findings by returning to the data to review coding analysis and case selection. While the research model used by this paper presents limitations that are inherent in interrogating semi-conscious patterns and habits of technological use, it was deemed to be the most appropriate given the goal of studying a research object that has only recently been introduced into practice.

TABLE 1
Participant characteristics

Name	Age	Gender	Agency size (staff no)	Experience (years)	Position	Location
AD1	35–44	M	50–99	13	Digital art director	MEL
AD2	35–44	M	1–19	17	Digital art director	MEL
AD3	18–24	F	N/A	4	Mid-weight art director	MEL
AD4	35–44	M	1–19	17	Senior art director	BNE
AD5	35–44	M	1–19	15	Creative & art director	MEL
AD6	35–44	M	50–99	13	Senior art director	SYD
AD7	45–54	F	100+	26	Senior art director	MEL
AD8	35–44	M	1–19	27	Senior art director	MEL
AD9	35–44	M	50–99	9	Senior art director	SYD
AD10	35–44	F	N/A	15	Senior art director	MEL/SYD
AD11	35–44	M	50–99	15	Digital art director	BNE
AD12	35–44	M	50–99	21	Senior art director	BNE
CW1	25–34	M	N/A	9	Senior copywriter	MEL/SYD
CW2	25–34	M	50–99	5	Mid-weight copywriter	SYD
CW3	45–54	M	1–19	30	Creative & copywriter	BNE
CW4	35–44	F	20–49	12	Senior copywriter	MEL
CW5	35–44	M	N/A	24	Creative & copywriter	BNE
CW6	25–34	M	50–99	4	Mid–weight copywriter	SYD

Findings

The study's findings were analysed using the systems model of creativity, which considers the ways in which three main participant groups – creators, the field and domain – influence the formation of a creative product. Importantly, the systems model allows both the relationships between those involved in the creative process and their communicative actions to be considered.

Creators

In a similar finding to the Vanden Bergh and Stuhlfaut (2006) study, participants highlighted the collaborative nature of ideation with the majority stating they regularly worked as part of a "creative team" consisting of an art director and copywriter. However, that is not to say that all tasks are completed as a team, as the creative process was predominantly described as an ad hoc and loosely structured movement between individual and team actions rather than a rigidly habitual or standardised process.

> My partner and I go into a room and we just talk, we don't necessarily talk about the brief, we just talk to each other. And then maybe we look at the brief … I'm a really big believer in working really intensely and then I go away and look at something on the Internet. [CW4]
>
> When I do follow a routine, I'll get the brief and I'll just try and read it over and over again until I understand it … typically I'll write a lot of ideas down on paper, sometimes if I'm trying something different I might not do that. I'll just speak (the ideas out loud) or try to think visually about them or talk to the art director (and) bounce ideas off him. [CW6]
>
> That first stage is really brain dumping I suppose … it's discussing it out (sic) and kind of teasing it out and discussing some of the options to start with … You have a break, go and get a cup of coffee or something and then you usually change gears, think of your own ideas for a while and come back to (team work). [CW2]

These statements are indicative of a theme that suggests the creative process is both a shared and individual series of actions. During their discussion of the creative process participants rarely described influences outside of the creative team, however there were some exceptions with a small number discussing the influence of digital media technologies. For instance, CW4 mentioned the use of the internet as means of relaxing or pausing during the creative process, which was described as taking place as short spurts of activity.

Field

The majority of participants discussed the influence of the audience on their work by articulating a desire to "understand" or "connect" this field participant. For example:

> In advertising I feel creativity is being able to sit in the shoes of your market and come up with a concept and appeal to them and ultimately sell somebody's product. [AD8]

The following statement offers an example of the outcome of understanding a particular audience:

> My quest is for truth and that's what I'm constantly looking for, I think if you find a truth that hasn't been told before you don't have to worry about the originality, it's (already) original, people are going to connect with it. [AD6]

For this participant, audiences connect to "truths" that have not been presented to them before. Other participants described similar means of developing a connection with an audience as the identification and communication of "human truths" or "consumer insights". This focus on the engaging the audience (rather than taking the more conventional approach of immediately emphasising product or service benefits) echoes empirical studies by Nyilasy & Reid (2009) and Kover (1995) on practitioner perceptions of advertising efficacy. Kover's research also posited that copywriters commonly engage in a dialogue with an "internalized other" or "ideal viewer" when crafting messages (1995, 596). While participants in this study did not discuss imagined interactions, many articulated a strong desire to understand how an audience thinks and feels. Before the widespread use of digital media this knowledge would emerge from personal experience or market research reports. In an important transformation, the consumer insights capable of informing the creative process of contemporary practitioners are available via a plethora of social media platforms across an array of devices.

Consideration of the field's role in the creative process also provides insight into the largely institutional gatekeeping influences that determine whether an object developed by art directors and copywriters is allowed to progress. In the context of creative advertising, the client, planners and account managers determine the brief, thus shaping the constraints that the creator works within; other members of the field, advertising agency management, determine the allocation of resources and overall creative philosophy or direction. In addition, broader industry perceptions of what constitutes novel advertising are communicated through industry commentary and awards for creativity. While there was some discussion of the involvement of clients and colleagues in the creative process by the participants in this study, a theme emerged to suggest that the influence of what the broader industry considers to be "creative" presented a significant generative role. Specifically, study participants commonly felt that adhering too closely to the field's expectations of what is considered to be creative was problematic and capable of trapping them in an industry based "echo chamber" that resulted in overly derivative work.

> I just try and stay outside the field of advertising because it gets incestuous ... If I work in it, I don't need to digest it all night, yeah. I'd rather read a science manual. [CW1]

> Advertising creativity can be a little bit of an echo chamber where some people just get inspired by ads and it's a circular thing. Whereas I think if you look for influences and stuff outside of other advertising you're probably going to (get) a mix of other things (and) you're probably not going to be repeating other ad concepts so much. [CW2]

For these practitioners, the field itself can act as an impediment to the achievement of novelty, with exposure to other advertisements resulting the production of familiar rather than novel outputs. This is a salient finding with regard to this study's first research question, as commentary about advertising is increasingly flowing through personalised digital media. Interestingly, this desire to avoid industry commentary and thus templates of what is considered to be creative emerges as a "double edge sword" for practitioners. While many practitioners sought to avoid exposure to exemplars of advertising creativity, research indicates the value of responding to templates or codes with the insertion of a novel variation in order to produce a creative object that will be in turn accepted by the field (Goldenberg, Mazursky and Solomon 2007).

Domain

The influence of the domain is of particular interest to this study as it seeks to map the relationships that are most influenced by the personalisation capacities of ICTs. A series of themes emerged to reveal participants' communicative relationship to the domain and thus provide greater understanding of the influence of digital media, a key conduit to cultural symbols.

When discussing barriers to the creative process, participants commonly mentioned the issue of media saturation as a phenomenon they felt had the capacity to limit creativity. For instance, one participant considered the saturated media environment in which the communication industries operate to be a barrier to the production novel advertising. Other participants stated that it was common for a creative team to discover that another advertiser had already produced their "new" idea. For one of the copywriters in the study, existing advertisements and media content were a problematic influence when new ideas were not forthcoming.

> I think it's hard to come up with original ideas (even though) it's every creative's ambition to do it … you get a brief, you're working on stuff, trying to think of ideas, you can't think of any good ideas, and whether it's consciously or subconsciously you are influenced by things that you've seen whether it's another ad or whether it's something else. [CW2]

For this practitioner, the ability of existing advertisements and other media content to fill the void when novel ideas could not be developed presents the most significant barrier to originality. He notes that this can be the outcome of not only exposure to media content but also unconscious plagiarism or cryptomnesia, a concept with a burgeoning relationship to personalised digital media technologies. Another participant said the production of what is at first considered to be a new creative concept but turns out to be an idea that already exists is a result of coincidence:

> If you do come up with a campaign that's similar then it's coincidental and I have done that in the past where I've presented an idea that I don't ever remember seeing before and someone says "it's been done before", and yeah they were able to show me it. [CW6]

The belief that new ideas were more difficult to achieve because most new ideas had "already been done" emerged as a key reason why creative advertising is so highly valued. This condition was compounded by the large amount of advertising material that was produced by the industry, with some participants stating that continued exposure to advertising material increased the likelihood of unconscious imitation. These observations, and in particular concerns over the influence of unconscious plagiarism, raise the question of whether constant exposure to a large amount of advertisements and other media content makes it difficult for art directors or copywriters to remember the source of an idea.

The majority of participants stated that online technologies were used for their individual research (as opposed to market research that may be included in the creative brief), an action that was described as capable of occurring at any stage of the creative process. Participants who worked within a particular specialism were found to have similar perceptions of how online technologies are used for research purposes. Rather than using online technologies to complete task-specific research actions, many practitioners said they tried to avoid exposure to online content before a novel idea had been formed.

> I think for a creative you just sort of delve into your own experiences … I think researching can be useful at different stages, I find that I like to do all of my thinking to begin with and then come to a dead end and then research only later on. [CW2]

> I like to draw on the things I've personally observed or been inspired by in the past. Obviously I'm inspired by the information in the brief. After I've exhausted all of that, and sometimes that is all the deadline allows, I'll research the topic, usually on Google. [AD12]

These statements underscore the high value placed on deferral to existing knowledge and experience, however many in this group said they would access online content to help them form new associations when "come to a dead end". This point is interesting because it demonstrates a faith in digital media, that it will get the job done but not necessarily with a sufficient degree of creativity.

Various reasons were provided on why research should be avoided until an idea has been formed. The most common explanation was the belief that task-specific research using online technologies led to overly derivative outcomes.

> If you specifically go looking for it you never quite find it or you get too derivative. [CW1]

> You get the same inspirations and the same visual feeds and the same facts as everybody else is getting. So if you visit this blog or the other blog, it essentially doesn't matter because the content is going to be the same. [AD9]

> All these ads (recently) came out at once, it was like a giant person walking through the street, then it was a huge clock walking through the street, and then it was rabbits coming out of the ground in the street … Everyone was probably watching these popular YouTubes going 'why don't we put that in Melbourne or Sydney?' [AD3]

The following participant saw the collection and reinterpretation of online content as being a "lazy" approach to ideation:

> A lot of creatives go straight to YouTube now and it's becoming extremely derivative and what I find is I can almost look at a film and see a moment … and I'll go "I set my clock (on) who's going to rip (it) off first" because it's there for the picking. [AD6]

Digital media was described as being employed to illustrate ideas. One participant described refinement as occurring when "the ideas (are) there, it's just sort of colouring in". In the words of another participant:

> Refinement is so important. I can say to you grey, but there's millions of shades of grey and that's open to misinterpretation so (when) you get an idea you have to make it tangible, you have to make it sellable. To do that (I use) film and tangible references, things the client might not or things they might have seen before but we help paint that picture. [AD6]

This practitioner's perception indicates that online technologies are used predominantly to illustrate ideas and remove ambiguity to "sell" a creative advertisement concept to a client. His discussion of references – both imagery and video were used as examples – emphasises that YouTube clips are employed to support ideas rather than as objects for replication. However, the possibility exists that while an idea might have been formed independently of a YouTube video, the use of this content as an illustrative reference has the potential to fold back on the idea and reshape its final execution.

Despite many participants stating that they aimed to avoid media content until an idea had been formed, several also said research was valuable if undertaken as an on-going process. For instance:

> I find it better to use that stuff, whether they are blogs or humour websites, not in relation to a task. I think it's better to have a healthy appetite for that stuff and it just bounces around and then you realise that you just end up picking and choosing it as you need it. [CW1]

> (I read) stuff that may not seem relevant but it really is, because someday somewhere you'll remember what you've read and you'll say to your partner "I read this thing that it's really interesting that people do this, and then there's an idea in that". So, you have to have a constant whirl and add to that. [CW4].

> I'm not a voracious reader but I'm curious about things, I store them away and know that they will be handy later. [AD12]

Other participants described the process of on-going research as allowing them to be "well rounded" or "plugged in" to contemporary culture. Importantly, the value placed on on-going research suggests a preference for research material that is recalled by the practitioner rather than task-specific research that is fed into the creative process without subjective inflection. In terms of the type of information used by these participants, blog content emerged as the research source most commonly sought out via online technologies either on an on-going basis or when existing knowledge or personal experiences were exhausted as means of evoking new associations. The types of blogs mentioned included advertising industry, design and photography sites. Other online platforms, including Google Images, newspaper websites, newsletters, YouTube, online forums, Twitter and product review sites, reflect the desire of participants to access a large number of sources of inspiration that expose them to cultural representations and examples of consumer behaviour.

Discussion and Conclusion

The identification of the ways in which networked digital media are used in the creative process provides a foundation for an exploration into the influence of software with personalisation capabilities on the creative process.

It is important to trace the role of digital media in the creative process due to the emergence of algorithmic filtering, a shift that presents a largely unrecognised influence on contemporary advertising practice. In a clear alignment with the Vanden Bergh and Stuhlfaut (2006) study, this paper argues that the creative process is socially conditioned rather than exclusively the result of an individual's or individual creative team's creative thinking. In addition, it highlights the role of networked digital media in the creative process using the systems model of creativity to map relationships and information flows within the creative process.

This paper's analysis of participants' insider accounts of their creative practice collectively reveals an ambivalent relationship with digital media technologies. These media were described as providing access to the cultural symbols that are translated into creative advertisements and connecting creatives to the "human insights" that inform advertising narratives. The personalisation capacities of search engines such as Google and social web platforms including Facebook and YouTube assist participants to identify this information within the sprawling online environment. In addition to recognising the utility and convenience of digital media within the creative process, a series of concerns were raised about its potentially negative impacts. Participants commonly stated that accessing digital media could lead to overly derivative work with many seeking to avoid exposure to online content prior to the formation of a creative concept. Yet digital media technologies were accessed when a creative's knowledge and experience was exhausted or to "mock up" a creative concept for presentation purposes. Participants commonly expressed concern about media saturation – in terms of both advertising and other forms of popular culture media content – which was viewed as being capable of overwhelming their ideation. This apprehension suggests a key tension with regard to the use of personalised media technologies. These technologies have been developed to help reduce information overload, yet in doing so simultaneously present a series of barriers to the production of novel advertisements.

There has been a considerable shift in the structuring of information that is drawn into the creative process with mass media approaches to information filtering based on the editorial policies of legacy or mass media publications largely being subsumed by algorithmic gatekeeping. While this emergent approach to filtering is still based on human decisions – as software engineers determine how an algorithm works – algorithmic gatekeeping presents distinctive forms of media bias. Key amongst these is a bias towards the known that has been referred to as the "filter bubble" with information in search engine results, for example, being filtered based on an ICT's dossier of a user's previous online behaviours (Bozdag 2013; Pariser 2011). A concern here is that individual searchers with similar profiles, such as those working as art directors and copywriters, will be provided with exposure to the same media content, for example news about industry conditions or new campaigns – information that provides an understanding of what the field considers to be creative. Practitioners are required to be cognisant of industry trends but they also need to forget these reference points to develop novel associations. By prioritising particular forms of content – and as a result delimiting entropic or unexpected content – amongst a group of users with similar profiles, programs like Facebook and Google make the act of forgetting more difficult to achieve. Some participants expressed concern about the advertising industry being an "echo chamber" in which ideas for advertisements were commonly replicated. This apprehension is not new; however it is a condition that emerging digital media technologies have the potential to intensify in the era of algorithmic gatekeeping.

This study's identification of the role of digital media to transfer information from the domain system to the creators of an advertisement provides further insight into the emerging influence of personalisation technologies. Participants in this study said they use digital media as part of their creative process for a number of reasons. These include as a form of distraction during the creative process, to refine an idea that has been developed, and for long-term knowledge building about the world around them. As discussed by Vaidhyanathan (2011), personalisation has the capacity to reduce the chance encounters with information that can stimulate creativity and knowledge building. Rather than reading minds, Google search estimates the searcher's intention by analysing the relative importance of a web page – based on the nature of its incoming links from other web pages – and information collected about the individual's online behaviours. Hillis, Petit and Jarrett (2013) describe this characteristic as "generic individualisation": "While search results may be ranked or selected on personalization algorithms, they nevertheless reflect only a prediction of the actions a user may take as they are generated solely on the basis of aggregating pre-stated preferences. In effect, Google offers searchers ideas of what to search for based on individual preferences that reference only a generic 'vision' of themselves" (p. 67). The generic nature of these personalised results is likely to present the familiar rather than unknown to the searcher, a condition that could emerge as a point of frustration for creative practitioners looking for diverse sources of information. Following Pariser's (2011) argument, this information may not be recognised by the user as being familiar; it may exist as the "adjacent unknown" and thus delimit access to legitimately surprising or entropic media content being fed into the creative process.

The question of whether personalised media technologies become actors rather than mere conduits of information within the creative process also emerges. The development of a series of new associations that eventually inform a novel idea is the result of both conscious and unconscious actions (Sawyer 2012). When Google search is employed in the creative process as a means of building knowledge, a number of associations are made based on what the program knows about the user. In effect, the search engine emerges as the user's technological subconscious. For example, the search term "photocopier fail" may result in access to a video of a man photocopying his backside, captured by a security camera, being presented to the user and thus an association is developed based on decisions made by the search engine and initially below the surface of the user's awareness. This has the potential to limit the novelty inherent in the resulting advertisement if creatives working on similar briefs at different agencies stumble upon the same "idea" at the same time and subsequently produce similar advertisements. When this occurs a fundamental trait of creative advertising, the presentation of a novel or surprising effect, is diluted. That is not to say that creatives are in the process of entirely outsourcing the task of developing novel associations to search engines and the social web. It is likely that associations developed through a technological subconscious would be part of a large number drawn into the creative process. Yet given the importance placed on novel rather than conventional executions by the advertising industry as it seeks to attract increasingly difficult to reach audiences, the extent of this emergent condition is worthy of further examination by both scholars and practitioners.

Widely deployed digital media technologies that seek to filter the online environment based on an awareness of user's previous online behaviours are simultaneously opening and narrowing the window onto the world provided by search engines and the social web. This algorithmic gatekeeping presents both benefits and losses to the creative process of art directors and copywriters. The participants in this study acknowledged the utility and convenience of digital media technologies but also highlighted a series of concerns that can be linked existing conditions that are being intensified by the application of algorithmic gatekeeping. The extent of these limitations requires further analysis into what is a nascent and complex social relationship between advertising creatives and digital media, one that unlike other media transformations has not announced itself to the user due to the implicit rather than obvious personalisation of information that is presented on an everyday and ubiquitous basis.

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THE USE OF EXPERIMENTAL TECHNOLOGIES IN AWARD-WINNING WORK: A COMPARISON OF ASIAN VERSUS WESTERN CREATIVE STRATEGIES

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Introduction

"Asia is an instinctively vibrant, creative and entrepreneurial region that is quick to adapt and change. It learns fast and acts faster." – Chris Jaques, CEO of M&C Saatchi Asia Pacific.

Technology is changing almost every aspect of our lives, perhaps no more dramatically than in the consumer sphere. As digital media continues to grow as a channel, so has its share of total ad revenues, with internet advertising experiencing a 21% increase in the first quarter of 2016 and mobile advertising accounting for 35% of 2015 ad revenues (IAB, 2015 & 2016). The power of technology as a channel for advertising is now an influential force in the *creation* of advertising as well. Leading U.S. and international award shows that annually select the best creative work in advertising have adapted their entry categories in recognition of this trend. The Clio Awards, an international award program, now recognizes excellence in digital and social user experience within its categories (Clio Awards, 2014). The One Show, another international award program, incorporates "innovation" categories to honor work that uses technology in unprecedented fashion (The One Show, 2014). In 2013, the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity added a sixteenth category to its list of award categories: the "Innovation Lions" (Pathak, 2014). This new category was intended to "honor the technology and innovation which lead to the creative idea being possible" (Pathak, 2014).

According to the Social Construction of Technology (SCOT) theory, technologies are often adapted to perform in ways other than initially intended as "other social groups, with different interests or needs, adapt, modify or subvert the uses to which any particular technology is put" (Lister, Dovery, Giddings, Grant, & Kelly, 2003, p. 81). Given the premium placed on originality in this highly competitive and creative industry, it is not surprising that an increasing number of winning entries in the top advertising award shows reflect some experimentation with technology in both the craft and delivery of advertising messages. For purposes of this study, we will use the term "experimental technology" to describe technologies that were not originally developed to help create or deliver advertising messages but are employed to do so. The present study is designed to examine how technology plays a role in award-winning strategies from both theoretical and practical perspectives.

Theoretical Framework

Koslow, Sasser and Riordan (2003) propose a conceptual model of creativity which includes three dimensions: originality, strategy and artistry. Originality emphasizes novelty or newness while both strategy and artistry can influence how appropriate an advertisement is perceived to be, depending on who is asked. For example, an account executive may consider a more strategic approach to be more appropriate, while an art director or copywriter may favor a more artistic (aesthetically pleasing) approach. Compared to appropriateness, originality is considered to be the less subjective perception, meaning that even though different people have different perceptions of what is creative, their core evaluations of originality are similar. In other words, people tend to agree more on what is original than what is appropriate. Consider *Billboard* magazine's Guitar Pee strategy as an example (see Figure 1). This strategy converts a bathroom urinal into an electronic guitar, converting urination into music. Although the "wow" factor is there, not everyone may consider this strategy to be appropriate. It is important to note that the conceptual model describes how advertising professionals evaluate and respond to creative ideas rather than consumers (Koslow, Sasser & Riordan, 2003).

FIGURE 1
Billboard's guitar pee campaign.
Experimental technology type: sound transmission
Original technology application field: sound technology

The conceptual model of creativity is similar to the "ROI of creativity" concept developed by the global agency DDB, which describes how consumers evaluate and respond to advertising. DDB's philosophy suggests that effective advertising includes three elements: relevance, originality and impact (Moriarty, Mitchell, & Wells, 2011). DDB frames originality as the unique qualities of an ad (which may incorporate an ad's artistry), while relevance and impact – both related to an ad's strategic merits – contribute to how appropriate an ad is considered to be. Relevance refers to how relatable the idea is to the target audience and impact describes the impression it leaves with them.

These scholarly and professional frameworks converge in one important way: they both address how people evaluate and respond to creative content. The conceptual model of creativity focuses on the practitioner perspective while DDB's concept focuses on consumers (Koslow, Sasser & Riordan, 2003; Moriarty, Mitchell & Wells, 2011). In this study, we use two terms that incorporate elements of both perspectives to describe distinct responses that experimental technologies, when incorporated as part of a creative strategy, seem intended to elicit. A *reactive response* is a rational reaction to the advertisement that influences purchase intention or compliance with a call to action while an *affective response* is an emotional reaction to the advertisement that may or may not trigger a brand evaluation. Reactive responses, the result of rational thinking, reveal a target audience's perceived appropriateness of a creative strategy. The target audience makes a judgment and may take action after evaluating the strategy and artistry of a campaign. Affective responses, on the other hand, are an emotional reaction by the audience, primarily reflecting their perception of a creative work's originality.

Cultural Differences in How Advertising Is Viewed

It is important to recognize that both the people who create advertising and the people to whom advertising is directed may see it differently depending upon the culture in which they live. A number of researchers have suggested that culture exerts a powerful influence on how people from different countries think about advertising – whether they are the professionals who craft the messages or the consumers who see/hear them (MacKinnon, 1962; Han & Shavitt, 1994; Miracle, Chang & Taylor, 1992; Taylor, Miracle & Wilson, 1997; Smith & Yang, 2004; Kim, Han & Yoon, 2010). This phenomenon is perhaps best documented in Asian cultures, where advertising is commonly "assessed in part by whether the ad message is socially appropriate" and "shows the advertiser's conscious awareness of and care for other people in the society" (Kim, Han & Yoon, 2010, p. 93). This perspective is often characterized as *collectivism*, a point of view that strongly values communal relationships, belonging and harmony (among other constructs) and favors advertising messages that respect these principles (Kim, Han & Yoon, 2010). In fact, Nisbett (2003) contends that Asian consumers tend to see advertising as part of a broad cultural context and engage in more holistic processing than their Western counterparts, who view ads more narrowly and generally respond more rationally to them. On the other hand, research on Asian advertising and Asian consumers suggests that emotional appeals are more common because they are more effective with audiences (Miracle 1987; Kim, Han & Yoon, 2010).

Asian Creativity as a Growing Force in Advertising

The Western world, currently the leading global advertising market, would be wise to pay attention to the Asian market as its population booms and its economic power expands. Industry watchers note "a tremendous shift in the quality of advertising and creativity" in Asia over the past 25 years (O'Neill, 2011, p. 35). Tim Broadbent, regional planning and effectiveness director at Ogilvy & Mather Asia-Pacific, asserts that Asian advertising agencies "show a greater willingness to experiment and change" in contrast to their Western counterparts (Broadbent, 2009, p. 17). The sense that the Asian advertising industry is coming into its own is palpable. Chris Jaques, CEO of M&C Saatchi, argues that Asian agencies "no longer benchmark themselves against the West" (Jaques, 2011, p. 44).

Consequently, this paper offers a comparison of two samples of award winning strategies (one drawn from Asia and the other from Western sources) to examine the extent to which experimental technologies are employed in their respective sets of work and what similarities and differences may be observed. Given that the use of experimental technologies as a creative tool in advertising may be a harbinger of the future, we are interested in seeing how Asian and Western cultures are responding. Finally, we will discuss how and why the incorporation of experimental technology benefits ad practitioners and appeals to consumers around the world.

Brand Advertising and the "Wow" Factor

Agencies are incorporating more technology into their work to help cut through advertising clutter, to increase the "wow" factor among consumers and to promote discussion about/sharing of their work (Annfera, 2014).

The "wow" factor that technology can bring to an advertisement represents an effort to elicit an *affective response* from consumers. An affective response is an emotional reaction to the ad that may or may not trigger a brand evaluation (Yi, 1990). Affective responses may be positive or negative, constituting a "valence" or range of emotion (Bakalash & Riemer, 2013). The development of an emotional bond between brand and consumer is central to the practice of branding and is also a long-term investment, rooted in the hope that consumers will favor one brand over another when making a purchase decision. This "soft sell" approach is less likely to prompt what we will refer to as a *reactive response* to the ad: a rational reaction that more immediately influences purchase intention or urges compliance with a specific call to action (Yang & Smith, 2009).

Award-Winning Creative Strategies

In what some describe as a "post-digital age," the challenge for those who create advertising is to further extend the boundaries of brand experiences, the interactions between product and consumer (Frampton, 2014). In true creative fashion, those who craft advertising messages see great potential in borrowing (think: leveraging) technologies that have already proven to transform other disciplines. In 2013, the London advertising agency OgilvyOne developed an outdoor video display for British Airways depicting a child pointing to the sky each time a plane flew overhead (OgilvyOne London, 2013). The outdoor ad, equipped with an ADS-B surveillance system that uses GPS to track in-time flight data, displayed the flight number and destination of each plane flying overhead as the child "watched" from the display (Annfera, 2014). This work was recognized by numerous award shows in 2014, including the Clio Awards, The One Show, D&AD Awards and The Cannes Lions (Coloribus, 2014).

Research Questions

This study builds upon a previous study examining the use of experimental technologies (technologies that were not originally developed to help create or deliver advertising messages) in award-winning creative strategies. While the previous study focused on creative work developed in the Western world, this study compares the previous findings to creative work developed in Asia. The following research questions are posed as we compare award-winning strategies from these distinct areas of the world:

RQ1. Are award-winning creative strategies developed in Asia used in different ways than those developed in Western markets?

RQ2. Are award-winning creative strategies developed in Asia intended to elicit different consumer responses than those developed in Western markets?

RQ3. Among the award-winning creative strategies analyzed, what specific product categories are most often represented from the Asian and the Western markets, respectively?

RQ4. Among the award-winning creative strategies analyzed, what specific experimental technologies are most often employed by Asian versus Western agencies?

Method

Sampling Frame

To answer our research questions, we conducted a content analysis of 182 award-winning strategies from the Asian market. Our purposive sample included four major Asian award programs: 1) Ad Star, 2) Spikes Asia, 3) the Asia Pacific Advertising Festival and 4) The One Show China. The sample was drawn from three years of winning entries, from 2013 to 2015. All the Asian strategies have English captions, enabling the coders to understand, analyze and interpret the content.

The aforementioned sample was compared against a previous content analysis of 858 award-winning creative strategies from the Western world. That purposive sample was drawn from eight major award programs in 2013, 2014 and 2015: 1) the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity awards, 2) the ADC Festival of Art + Craft in Advertising and Design, 3) the American Advertising Awards (ADDY Awards), 4) the International ANDY Awards, 5) the CLIO Awards, 6) the D&AD Awards, 7) the London International Awards (LIA), and 8) The One Show.

All entries were accessed via the Coloribus Creative Advertising Archive. We examined grand prix, gold, silver and bronze entries of the above awards shows in all categories that included work incorporating experimental technologies. Each award winning entry constituted one unit of analysis. The examined categories in each award show are listed in Table 1. Winning entries that overlapped across the award shows were coded only once.

TABLE 1

Examined Award Categories

Award Shows (Western Market)	Examined Award Categories
Cannes Lions Awards	Branded content Entertainment Cyber Innovation
ADC Awards	Interactive
ADDY Awards	Digital advertising Integrated campaigns Non-traditional
ANDY Awards	Branded content Creative technology Integrated and mobile
Clio Awards	Branded entertainment & content Digital social Engagement Innovative media
D&AD Awards	Integrated & earned media Mobile marketing
LIA Awards	Branded entertainment Digital Integration Non-traditional
One Show	Branded entertainment Interactive
Award Shows (Asian Market)	Examined Award Categories
Ad Star	Branded Content Innovation Integrated Interactive Interactive Craft Mobile
Spikes Asia	Branded Content Digital

	Integrated Mobile
Asia Pacific Advertising Festival	Interactive Mobile
One Show China	Branded entertainment Social Media Mobile

Measured Variables & Intercoder Reliability

The same three variables as the previous research conducted by Qiao and Griffin (2016) were examined in the current study. These three variables included product category, presence of experimental technology and intended response. The same codebook used by Qiao and Griffin (2016) was applied.

Overall Intercoder Reliability. For the western strategies, a total of 13% of the strategies in the sample were coded by three trained researchers. The Krippendorff's alpha was used to calculate the intercoder reliability. The range of the intercoder reliability was from .74 to 1.0, which exceeds the minimum reliability coefficient .70 for content analysis (Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken, 2002). Based on the same coding scheme and training process, the sample from the Asian market was analyzed by the researchers.

Product Categories. The product category for each award-wining strategy was recorded directly from the Coloribus database. For example, the entry titled "Samsung Power to Sleep" in the database was categorized as "cell phones" and the entry titled "Mom's First Birthday" was categorized as "baby hygiene." Technology-related products (such as a cell phone) were coded as "1" while non-technology-related products (such as fast food) were coded as "0."

Presence of Experimental Technology. Examples of experimental technology found in ads within our sample include QR code gyroscopes, motion detection, virtual reality, optical character recognition (OCR), etc. Ads that incorporated experimental technologies were coded as "1" and those that did not were coded as "0." We also identified the original application for each technology. For example, the 3-D printing technology used as part of the design of a Japanese Whiskey glass is more commonly used in optical fabrication industry.

FIGURE 2
Hibiki Glass
Experimental technology type: 3-D printing
Original technology application field: optical fabrication technology

Intended Response. An *affective response* is an emotional reaction to the advertisement that may or may not trigger a brand evaluation, while a *reactive response* is a rational reaction to the advertisement that influences purchase intention or compliance with a call to action. An example of a strategy intended to elicit an affective response is Shiseido's "Life Color Clock." By using mathematical modeling to extract colors from users' Facebook photos, the users' own customized clock could be created (see Figure 3).

FIGURE 3
Shiseido's Life Color Clock (an example of affective response)
Experimental technology type: Math modeling
Original technology application field: mathematics

An example of a strategy intended to elicit a reactive response is a campaign for a mobile communication service in the Philippines. The old analog mobile phones can be turned into a textbook through using an advanced telecommunication technology. This strategy intends to prompt audiences to donate their phones and help people who lived in the rural areas of the Philippines (see Figure 4).

FIGURE 4
Smart Communications Campaign (an example of reactive response)
Experimental technology type: smart SIM card reader
Original technology application field: telecommunication

If we judged that an ad's intent was to elicit an affective response, it was coded as "1," or if not, it was coded as "0." If we believed an ad's intent was to elicit a reactive response, it was coded as "1," or if not, it was coded as "0." In cases where an ad was intended to elicit both types of responses, it was coded "1" for both types.

Results

In order to answer the first two research questions, a quantitative analysis was employed.

From among the 182 strategies produced by Asian agencies, a total of 69 entries were identified to employ experimental technology, accounting for 37.9% of the original sample. From among the 858 strategies constituting the Western sample, 99 entries incorporated experimental technology, accounting for 11.5% of the original sample size. In other words, strategies incorporating experimental technologies were more frequently recognized by judges in the Asian market than the Western market.

A series of chi-square tests were employed to analyze the 69 strategies from the Asian market and 99 strategies from the Western market (see Table 2).

TABLE 2
Chi-Square Test Results

Variables		N	Proportion	χ^2	Sig
Asian Strategies	Non-technology-related products	49	71.0	.059	.48
Western Strategies		72	72.7		
Asian Strategies	Affective Response	69	100	1.41	.346
Western Strategies		97	98		
Asian Strategies	Reactive Response	11	15.9	8.42	.003
Western Strategies		36	36.4		

The first research question (RQ1) sought to determine whether award-winning creative strategies developed in Asia were used in different ways than those developed in Western markets. Among the 69 strategies from the Asian market, 49 were used to promote non-technology products while 20 were employed to promote technology-related products. Among the 99 strategies from the Western market, 72 were employed to promote non-technology related products and 27 were used to promote technology-related products.

According to the chi-square test of independence, no significant difference was found (χ^2 (1) = .059, p > .05) in terms of using experimental technology to promote non-technology products. In other words, creative strategies from the Asian market (71.0%) and the Western market (72.7%) both utilized experimental technologies to promote non-technology products more often than to promote technology products.

The second research question (RQ2) examined whether award-winning creative strategies developed in Asia intended to elicit different consumer responses than those developed in Western markets. In terms of affective responses, 100% of the Asian creative strategies were coded as eliciting consumers' affective response compared to 98% of Western creative strategies also coded to elicit the same. Based on the chi-square test of independence, no significant difference was found (χ^2 (1) = 1.41, p > .05). In other words, strategies from both markets were more often intended to evoke consumers' affective responses. In terms of reactive responses, 15.9% of the Asian creative strategies were coded as eliciting consumers' reactive response while 36.4% of Western creative strategies were also coded to elicit the same. According to the chi-square test of independence, a significant difference was found (χ^2 (1) = 8.42, p < .05). Western creative strategies (36.4%) were more likely to prompt consumers' reactive responses than Asian strategies (15.9%).

To answer RQ3 and RQ4, we conducted a qualitative analysis of the 69 Asian creative strategies and 99 Western award-winning creative strategies that incorporated experimental technologies. Quantitative analysis could not be conducted due to the large number of categories (N=18) represented by experimental technology types we identified.

The third research question (RQ3) sought to determine what specific product categories were most often represented from the Asian and the Western markets, respectively. Among the 69 Asian creative strategies that use experimental technologies, consumer services (87%, N=60) was the most common product category. A fairly even distribution was found between durable goods (7.2%, N=5) and packaged goods (5.8%, N=4). Among the 99 Western strategies, a similar pattern was found. Consumer services was the most common category (45.5%, N=45), followed by packaged goods (30.3%, N=30) and durable goods (24.2%, N=24).

TABLE 3

Frequencies for Product Type

	Product Type	Frequency	Percent
Asian Strategies	Packaged Goods	4	5.8
	Durable Goods	5	7.2
	Consumer Services	60	87.0
Western Strategies	Packaged Goods	30	30.3
	Durable Goods	24	24.2
	Consumer Services	45	45.5

The fourth research question (RQ4) was intended to identify what specific kinds of experimental technologies were most often employed by Asian versus Western agencies. Within the subset of 69 Asian strategies that used experimental technologies, we found that the most commonly used technologies were mapping/navigation (18.8%, N=13), telecommunication/radio broadcasting/sound (15.9%, N=11), optical fabrication (14.5%, N=10), motion detection (14.5%, N=10) and image scanning/OCR character recognition (13%, N=9). Among the 99 Western strategies, image scanning/OCR character recognition (18.2%, N =18) was most common, followed by web technology/virtual reality (15.2%, N=15), mapping/navigation (11.1%, N =11) and motion detection (9.1%, N=9). This finding reveals that both Asian and Western strategies incorporated motion detection, image scanning/OCR character recognition and mapping/navigation, all of which (notably) are commonly part of mobile device capabilities.

TABLE 4

a. Frequencies for Asian Strategies

Technology Type	Frequency	Percent
Motion Detection: i.e. gyroscope	10	5.1
Manufacturing Technology: i.e. ultra sonic sensors	0	0
Gaming	2	1.0
Mapping/Navigation Technology: i.e. navigation tools	13	6.6
Telecommunication/Radio Broadcasting/Sound Technology: i.e. pirate radio	11	5.6
Image Scanning/OCR character recognition technology	9	4.5
Math: i.e. math modeling	1	0.5
Engineering: i.e. RFID sensors	1	0.5
Filming/Animation	3	1.5
Web Technology/Virtual Reality Technology/Interactive Technology	3	1.5
Meteorology: i.e. weather sensors	0	0
Optical Fabrication Technology: i.e. 3-D printing	10	5.1
Computer Software Technology: i.e. computer aided 3D sculpture	2	1.0
Sports: i.e. space jump	1	0.5
Lie Detection: i.e. polygraph	0	0
Wearable Technology: i.e. live data converting shirt	0	0
Purification Technology: i.e. air purification technology	0	0
Medical Technology: i.e. brain wave technology	1	.5
Chemical Technology: i.e. fade ink	2	1.0

b. Frequencies for Western Strategies

Technology Type	Frequency	Percent
Motion Detection: i.e. gyroscope	9	9.1
Manufacturing Technology: i.e. ultra sonic sensors	3	3.0
Gaming	3	3.0
Mapping/Navigation Technology: i.e. navigation tools	11	11.1
Telecommunication/Radio Broadcasting/Sound Technology: i.e. pirate radio	6	6.1
Image Scanning/OCR character recognition technology	18	18.2
Math: i.e. math modeling	4	4.0
Engineering: i.e. RFID sensors	8	8.1
Filming/Animation	3	3.0
Web Technology/Virtual Reality Technology/Interactive Technology	15	15.2
Meteorology: i.e. weather sensors	2	2.0
Optical Fabrication Technology: i.e. 3-D printing	4	4.0
Computer Software Technology: i.e. computer aided 3D sculpture	6	6.1
Sports: i.e. space jump	1	1.0
Lie Detection: i.e. polygraph	1	1.0
Wearable Technology: i.e. live data converting shirt	1	1.0
Purification Technology: i.e. air purification technology	1	1.0
Medical Technology: i.e. brain wave technology	3	3.0
Chemical Technology: i.e. fade ink	0	0

Discussion

This study was conducted in an effort to answer four research questions about the use of experimental technology in award-winning creative strategies from two different markets, Asian and Western. The first question asked whether award-winning strategies developed in Asia were used in different ways than those created by Western agencies. Our second research question investigated whether or not award-winning strategies from Asia were intended to elicit a different response from consumers than Western strategies. Our third and fourth research questions sought to identify the types of products that most often incorporated experimental technologies in their creative strategies and what specific technologies were most often employed in the Asian and Western samples, respectively. Here, we discuss our findings and offer some implications to consider.

Theoretical Implications

Based on this study, we find that both award-winning strategies from both Asian and Western markets are most commonly devoted to a similar goal: to sell non-technology products. While it may seem counterintuitive, this finding may reflect the very nature of creative strategies: the less "expected" juxtaposition of sophisticated technology against product categories that are not is probably deemed more original/novel in the eyes of award show jurors (and, perhaps, consumers as well). In addition to their perceived originality, the winning ideas also seem to indicate judges' recognition of the appropriateness (read: creativity) of using experimental technology to showcase non-technology related products, reflecting Koslow et al. (2003)'s conceptual model of creativity. Notably, strategies incorporating experimental technologies were more often awarded by Asian award shows than Western award shows from 2013 to 2015.

According to this model, strategy and artistry can exert positive effects on creativity under the influence of different levels of originality. Strategy has a positive effect on creativity when originality is high and artistry has a positive effect on creativity when originality is moderate or low. Applying this model to the current finding, the strategy and artistry of these award-winning creative strategies are manifested through novel means of presentation: the unexpected incorporation of experimental technology, greatly increasing their creativity levels, which likely helps to differentiate them and make them more memorable. For example, the use of digital algorithms based on Mandelbrot's fractal geometry as part of a social media strategy for IBM may seem predictable, as technology is being employed to sell technology (Ogilvy New York, 2013). On the other hand, the use of optical character recognition technology (OCR) to create Molson's "beer fridge," a refrigerator that only Canadian passport holders can open, brings more of the "wow" factor (Rethink Canada, 2013). Although both strategies are award winners, among these entries, the latter is more representative of how experimental technologies were used. When highly disparate concepts are somehow connected, this “remote association” can be pivotal in creatively solving a problem (Mednick, 1962).

Another key observation of this study is that experimental technologies in award-winning creative strategies more often are intended to elicit an affective (more emotional) rather than reactive (more rational) consumer response. Given that most award-winning strategies in our sample are best categorized as brand advertising (which focuses on the development of an emotional bond between brand and consumer as a long-term investment), this is not surprising (Hackley, 2005). The nature of most ads we analyzed in this sample was classic “soft sell” in that they did not include an explicit call to action. Instead, the intent was to build or strengthen the relationship/affinity between the brand and the consumer.

Managerial Implications

What can advertising practitioners learn from the findings of this study? We can offer four recommendations. First, it’s beneficial for practitioners to consider incorporating experimental technologies into creative work for brands/products outside the tech category. This approach seems less expected and may be perceived as more creative than using technology to sell technology. Furthermore, it’s helpful to keep abreast of technological advances and capabilities far afield from your own industry. The more exotic a technology is, the greater the potential for a groundbreaking creative strategy may be. In addition, advertising practitioners are encouraged to leverage the consumer engagement factor that technological features of a creative strategy can afford your brand/product. As the examples included in this paper illustrate, technology can engage human beings and deepen relationships in ways we can only yet imagine. Finally, continue pushing the limits for how experimental technologies might be used to enhance the way consumers experience branded content. Our findings offer evidence that “go to” technologies such as motion detection and mapping are more commonplace and that others may lead to even more creative (and perhaps award-winning) solutions.

Limitations and Future Directions

Future research can compare these findings to work from other areas of the world and focus on other dimensions of creativity, such as strategy or artistry, leading to a richer understanding for how the most powerful ideas can be developed. Moreover, we understand that some may consider the evaluation of award-winning creative strategies as somewhat myopic in focus, but we believe that the best examples of innovation in creative strategy are most likely found within work at this level of achievement.

Conclusion

The advertising industry continues to evolve at a remarkable pace. For those charged with developing the most creative strategies possible for promoting products and brands, key parts of the job are keeping a close eye on industry trends and trying to anticipate what the next big thing will be. Art directors and writers enable brands to “speak within the culture” and give them their voice (Griffin & Morrison, 2010, p. 168). The level of creative achievement represented by those who win Lions, Clios and One Show Pencils is worthy of far more than due respect. We can study these examples and try to understand what sets them apart. Clearly, some of the most visionary creative professionals are appropriating exciting new technologies to enliven the conversation between brands and consumers. In this paper, we find evidence of a counterintuitive (read: creative) trend that technology’s “wow” factor is being used to sell products that exist outside the tech category. In our findings, we also observe that this strategy is more often employed in the context of an emotional rather than rational appeal. As PJ Pereira, chief creative officer and co-founder of Pereira & O’Dell explains, advertising is “an industry that is supposed to be about continually changing the formats it uses and the way it operates” (Contagious, 2014). It follows, then, that our scholarly research into the development of optimal creative strategies should keep pace as well.

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ADVERTISING CREATIVES' KNOWLEDGE AND USE OF THEORIES AND CONSTRUCTS

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Introduction

Despite the ongoing conversations over the past two decades about bridging the academic-practitioner gap in advertising (Gabriel, Kottasz, and Bennett 2006; Nyilasy and Reid 2007; O'Donohoe and Tynan 1998), there is still very little research into the advertising academic-practitioner gap and how to best address bridging the gap. The gap between academics and advertising practitioners refers to the lack of overlapping communication and interaction between the two groups with the result being the lack of academic theories being best utilized in the creation of advertising. One way to address the academic-practitioner gap is to identify the implicit theories advertising professionals currently use to create ads. While they may not have the same terminology as academics, there is research that suggests practitioners do use some type of implicit theory, or systematic framework, when creating ads (Gabriel et al., 2006; Kover 1995; Nyilasy and Reid 2009) and going forward, we will call these "practitioner philosophies," which are informal theoretical frameworks (Kover 1995) or systematic knowledge structures (Ross, 1989) that describe a process of creating ads or connecting with consumers. For example Kover (1995) found that copywriters are concerned with breaking through and getting the consumers attention.

Both Gabriel et al. (2006) and Kover (1995) attempted to connect practitioners' philosophies to academic theories, while Nyilasy and Reid (2009) failed to explicitly connect the philosophy practitioners use to academic theory. This is important to the academic-practitioner gap because advertising professionals may already use tested academic theories in the creation of ads, they may use philosophies that have been shown to be unsuccessful in academic research, and they may possibly have philosophies that academics have not yet thought to test. The most interesting implication of this research is to find out what, if any, practitioner philosophies line up with explicit academic theories or constructs. Finding a definition to theory is difficult because "Lack of consensus on exactly what theory is may explain why it is so difficult to develop strong theory in the behavioral sciences" (Sutton & Staw, 1995, p. 372). The author will use a general definition for theory proposed from Corley and Gioia (2011), "theory is a statement of concepts and their interrelationships that shows how and/or why a phenomenon occurs" (p. 12). Formal theories are ruled by logical inferences and are born out of formal reasoning (Berger, Roloff, and Roskos-Ewoldsen 2010).

This research seeks to bridge the knowledge gap by discovering what frameworks copywriters (i.e., those who write the words for ads) and art directors (i.e., those who put the visuals together for ads) in advertising agencies employ and how those frameworks (i.e., philosophies) connect to academic theory or constructs. Copywriters and art directors are known as advertising creatives or simply called "creatives" in the advertising industry. Creatives execute the words and visuals in advertisements. By finding out what theories they are already using, it will give researchers a base for understanding what practitioners already know. It is also beneficial to determine if advertising practitioners know they use those theories or if it is just part of the practice of ad creation. If they are creating ads without fully understanding "why it works," creatives are at a disadvantage. Without being able to explain to the client why an ad will work, good advertising may go unused. Also, a lack of understanding of the current body of academic research can lead to unnecessary trial and error for those working in agencies. Both academics and advertising professionals can assist in learning more about the gap and how to bridge it.

This research will expand on the research that attempts to bridge the academic-practitioner gap and could be used to enhance the education of those seeking advertising degrees by generating knowledge that could better link academic theory and constructs (i.e., topics that have been studied by advertising academics and published in peer review journals) to applied practice. The remainder of this article provides an overview of relevant literature on the academic-practitioner gap and how practitioners view topics being studied in academics. This is followed by the research questions that guided this project, study methods, results, and a discussion of the implications of these findings for academics and practitioners.

Research Questions

The body of knowledge around the topic of philosophies used by practitioners when creating ads is still at the beginning phases and more qualitative data to identify these philosophies will continue to build on the foundation that exists to understand this area of research better before a survey could demonstrate the more widespread validity of these earlier, more exploratory investigations. This study builds on the work of Drumwright and Murphy (2004), Ewing and Jones (2000), Gabriel et al. (2006) Kim et al., and Kover (1995) to explore more of the implicit theories used by practitioners, connecting those philosophies to formal academic work, and to address the question of where do these philosophies come from by asking the following research questions: RQ: Do advertising creatives explicitly talk about academic theories or constructs?

Methods

Sample

In-depth interviews based on the interview guide adapted from Kover (1995) were preformed with advertising creatives (N=20): copywriters (65%) and art directors (35%). Recruitment was through snowball sampling. The researcher started with current connections in advertising firms and received additional potential participants through those connections. In addition to snowball sampling from existing industry connections, recruitment for interviews was also done through posting on the LinkedIn boards for copywriters and art directors. Finally, agencies in the Midwest were picked for cold calling through email to recruit for the interviews. The region of the Midwest was targeted to get perspectives outside of the traditional advertising industry hotspots of New York City, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. The final sample included creatives from firms in New York (20%), California (15%), Texas (55%), Arizona (5%), and Nebraska (5%) who work in business to consumer advertising agencies. The size of the agency was not taken into account, but in-house advertising professionals, those who work solely for a particular company or brand on that organization's staff, were not interviewed.

The advertising professionals interviewed ranged in age from 22 to 57 with a mean age of 34 (SD=9.8), 40% were female and 60% were male, all participants had degrees from a four-year university with 60% of the participants having additional schooling, 70% of participants had gone through portfolio school, and ranged in work experience from 1 to 33 years in advertising with the mean years of experience at 9 (SD=10). The practitioners have been given pseudonyms for quotes within the results and the pseudonyms with descriptors can be found in Appendix.

Analysis

Using the thematic analysis framework described by Braun and Clarke (2006), a number of decisions about the data were made prior to beginning analysis. First, the constructionist view, which as defined by Braun and Clarke (2006), "examines the ways in which events, realities, meanings, experiences and so on are the effects of a range of discourses operating within society" (p. 9), was taken while analyzing data. There are books, blogs, and popular magazine articles that discuses advertising research from both academics and marketing firms that have found its way into the classrooms and popular culture to the point where the themes emerging from the data will reflect discourses about effective ways to advertise. Second, the decision of what to count as a theme was made; any response or meaning that reflects the research questions or was a systematic knowledge structure about academic theories or constructs was counted as a theme. Third, a rich thematic description of the data set was chosen over a detailed account of one particular aspect. This study was not designed to understand in depth what explicit academic theories advertising creatives use or to describe them in detail if they use any at all. This study was designed to tease out the knowledge creative have on academic theory and if they use it to create ads. Fourth, themes and patterns were identified through deductive thematic analysis; the data was coded to fit into a pre-coding framework about their use of theory. Fifth, due to the research question being about practitioner's knowledge of "theories" a semantic or explicit level was chosen; therefore, the focus was on explicit themes over latent or underlying conceptualizations that emerge.

The interviews were recorded and transcribed, and thematic analysis was performed. The first step in the process was conducting the interviews over the phone using the interview guide adopted from Kover (1995). While the interviews were being conducted, hand written notes were taken. As soon as an interview was completed the notes were used to create memos of the interview highlighting practitioner use of "theory". The interviews were transcribed and an online program called Dedoose was used to broadly code the transcripts. Anytime participants talked about academic theory it was coded. Those experts where printed off and notes where again taken during the re-reading process to understand practitioner use of "theory". After the paper was written, an advertising practitioner not connected to the project and who has knowledge of academic theories was used to check the validity of the results. The practitioner read this study and did not suggest any changes.

Results

Practitioners' Discussion of "Theories"

In regards to the RQ: Do advertising creatives explicitly talk about academic theories or constructs?—yes, a few practitioners in the study did explicitly talk about academic theory, although the majority of them did not.

The interview guide was designed to get practitioners to talk about the concepts, philosophies, and theories that they use to create and design ads without directly asking about known theories or philosophies that practitioners might be using, but the last question asked in the section "strategy," which at the very end of the interview just prior to being asked one question on defining research and three general closing questions about any thing else the participants would like to add, was a question that directly asked, "What are some theories about consumers you use to connect with your target audience?" While this question did directly say "theories," of the 40% of participants who mentioned having a theories course in college only one participant directly connected the term "theory" in this question to the types of theories or constructs in academic research.

At some point during the interviews prior to the more direct question mentioned above, 30% of participants did explicitly state that they knew of the existence of academic theory; although, only one participant did mention theory later when asked directly about it toward the end of the interview. Another 10% mentioned that understanding psychology and sociology is important to creating advertising and connecting to the consumer; although, none of them mentioned this in relation to the final question "What are some theories about consumers you use to connect with your target audience?" that was asked at the end of the interview. With much of the advertising research building on theories, concepts, and measurements from psychology and sociology, for practitioners to make the connection is considered a small step in the right direction in bridging the academic-practitioner gap. The majority of participants did not mention academic research or theories at all.

Those with knowledge of academic theory. There were some practitioners (30%) in the study who explicitly knew of academic theories and understood that academic theories existed. Of that 30 percent, they all stated that they had a theories class in college when asked questions about their educational background, and most of the participants that mentioned getting theories courses in college tried to talk about theory and how it was useful. Most were unable to explicitly talk about the theories they learned or used. Often they would mention theory at some other point in the interview and when directly asked about theories they use to connect to the consumer at the end of the interview, they would not come back to academic theories. One participant brought up theory when asked about emotions:

> So, if I'm remembering my theory correctly, they're most effective when not used for something quantifiable or not combined with that sort of an approach. I think emotions are, gosh, this is a tough one. They're kind of our way in, in some ways. If we can get an initial emotional reaction, then there's a chance that the audience will stick around or listen to the rest. If we can make someone laugh right off the bat or someone be intrigued, then maybe they won't change the channel just yet. (Carol)

And later when directly asked a question about what theories she uses, Carol said, "People are busy. People just don't have time for anything not worth their time." Carol had talked about having a theories class in college at the master's level, and had even tired to use them while answering other questions, but when asked about theory she gave a response that did not include any theories. This was true for the majority of participants who talked about theory. One participant tried to name a theory they use, "social media theory," which is not an academic theory and one participant was very excited about theory. When Beth answered questions from the section about education, she mentioned the Theory of Planned Behavior, talked about how she had wanted more theories classes, and how useful theory can be:

> Aren't you going to teach me either more of the theory behind these things? We did have one theories class which was amazing. But I just really didn't feel like they were trying to help me learn more above and beyond what I would have learned in an undergrad course besides theories. Theories, I think, really helped us. I wish there were more classes like that. (Beth)

Beth did not mention theory again when questions about connecting to the consumer were asked or when directly asked about theory. There was another small fraction of participants (10%) who mentioned theory and believed trying to use it has a negative impact on creativity. As one participant said:

> I wouldn't say certain theories. I'd say the only theory I'd go back to is understating relevance, but that's always changing, so I would say no, there's no backbone theory that I go to. Because I think that would stifle

> the creative process for me. Part of the creative process, is opening yourself up to the audiences, and what a meaningful solution it would look like for them. And so if I think I would carry too many concrete, I carry too many concrete presuppositions. I think that will hold us back from finding the right solution. That would make too many assumptions for me. (Rick)

Or when asked about theories to connect to consumers, they did not give it much importance:

> I don't. I don't have any of that [theories]. We have strategists, they come up with that stuff, but usually they'll put it out to us. But yeah, I don't think too much about that. Expect for what they give us—it's something to think about. (Daryl)

Of the practitioners (40%) in the study who were coded as having knowledge of academic theories, the lowest threshold was for those who mentioned psychology and sociology (10%) when directly asked about theories they use to connect to consumers. With much of the academic research in advertising borrowing from those two fields, the author considered it as better than having no knowledge of academic theories and research in regard to the academic-practitioner gap. Another common factor for those participants was they had been out of school for a longer period of time (15+ years) and mentioned that taking multiple courses in school, including psychology and sociology courses, helped them be more well-rounded at their job. Psychology and sociology in particular try to explain how humans behave in different situations or under different conditions, and that is important for advertising. As one participant put it:

> I think just having a basic understanding of human psychology or sociology and what drives people is a good background to have. Again, the whole idea that fear and greed are the two most powerful drivers and if you can somehow tap into those it can really work for you... so I think that's again part of that idea of a well-rounded ad education, so I went to a university and I took sociology, and I took psychology and other classes to learn these things about human behavior and so I think the more you can know about human behavior outside of the advertising world, the more you can adapt it to work for you within advertising. (Ryan)

This shows that some advertising practitioners know it is important to understand human behavior that knowledge can assist in the creation of ads, but as Carol so eloquently put it, "I think a lot of people don't realize that advertising is an academic discipline."

Overall, even the participants who knew about academic theory and thought it was important were mostly unable to clearly explain it, talk about it explicitly when asked, or in some cases explained it incorrectly. There were 20% of participants who stated that knowing theory was important in being able to explain to the client why choices where made; again, none of the participants in this study mentioned this in relation to the final question "What are some theories about consumers you use to connect with your target audience?" that was asked at the end of the interview. The majority of these participants were also not actively using theory in their work despite knowing about it. This is why bridging the academic-practitioner gap is important—some creatives know that theory exists and it is useful to justify choices to a client, but they often do not know what theory to use, do not know how to integrate academic concepts into creative work, or they are not using those theories and concepts correctly.

Those without knowledge of academic theory. The majority of participants did not attempt to directly talk about academic theories or concepts, did not mention any theories class in college, and did not allude to advertising as an academic discipline. When directly asked about theory or when they mentioned the word "theory," it was philosophies they used, not theory. When this group of practitioners was directly asked about theory, they had very different answers. One of those philosophies was about how people feel about advertising. At the top of one company's creative brief, it says that people hate ads and people do not remember advertising. Another philosophy was that consumers are ignorant about information, products, or brands. An example of this is when asked about theories, Kevin said, "I guess maybe that consumer doesn't really know anything and be as informative as possible. The quickest and fastest way possible." There was also the philosophy of "completing the circle" in which consumers want to think, but not too much. Abraham described it as, "I've always thought A to B to D, they can figure out C… Consumers like to solve simple problems, even if it's just an 'Oh, oh ah-ha'." There was a small section of practitioners who avoided answering the question about theories (15%) and another small set of practitioners (15%) that stated their theory was to respect the customer—respect their time and intelligence, treat them with respect, and not try to trick them. One of the practitioners who answered the question about theory in regard to respecting the consumer said:

> I guess if there's a theory, it's really a theory about consumers, it's really respect. It's probably my number one universal theory is respect the consumer, trust them to be thoughtful and ingenious and capable and then give them creative messages that will leverage those considerations. (Rick)

The philosophies stated above—how much thought consumers will put into ads, how consumers feel about advertising, and completing the circle—came up with other practitioners in the study in relation to other questions and will be elaborated on later in the results.

Discussion

This research was an exploration into what philosophies advertising practitioners, specifically the creatives (i.e., copywriters and art directors), are using that align with academic theories or constructs. What was found is that there are many areas of overlap in regard to practitioner philosophies and concepts studied in academics, although the terminology was very different in most regards. Those with knowledge of theory were mostly unable to articulate it, and only a few thought it was important. The number of participants who had some type of theories course yet were unable to discuss it or thought it was not useful points to the need for a better way to connect during the educational experience of future advertising practitioners. There are also lines of future research that could help clarify the differences found.

Educational Implications

One way the academic-practitioner gap can be bridged is during the education process. With a clearer understanding of how advertising practitioners are using theories and constructs, it will be easier to incorporate those theories and constructs into more explicit uses in practice. This study also showed that even those who had knowledge of academic theories and thought they were useful were unable to articulate those theories or talk about theory when explicitly asked.

The way to work these topics into the classroom is to make the students see how it can be effectively used in their work of creating ads. When a theory or construct can be connected to the creative process in a way that makes theory or constructs part of creating the ad with the consumer in mind it would be more salient in the minds of students. One way of making this connection would be to have a creative with experience in an agency co-teach with a professor who is experienced in academic. Working together they could bridge the abstract usability of academic theory with the functionality of creating campaigns that will resonate with the viewers. One suggestion for this would be having students pick a theory or construct from academia and create an advertising campaign that incorporates that knowledge and is for that theory or construct. Another way of making the connections more explicitly connected would be to have creative professors teach about advertising history and in the same class period have theory professors teach the theories and constructs that connect to the time periods the ads were made, how the ad motivates consumers, or how advertising in that time period influenced academic research.

Another way to bridge these two very different thought processes is by having more professors with knowledge of academic theory (i.e., doctorates of philosophy) who also have a strong knowledge of the advertising creative process and agency experience. Making the connections explicit and connecting those topics to how it can benefit the work of creatives is a step in the right direction for bridging the academic-practitioner gap. There are some topics that will be discussed below that need further research by academics to fully understand the knowledge gap and how best to address it.

Future Research

This study showed that even those practitioners who had theories classes in their advertising programs were not using those tools to the best of their abilities. Another future line of research in regard to the academic-practitioner gap would be interviewing advertising professors to find out how they incorporate theory into the classroom and how they connect those theories to the creative process, the creation of ads, and functional tools that advertising students can use in their future careers. A better understanding of how theories are being taught and why they are not connecting with the students in a memorable way will assist in bridging the academic-practitioner gap.

Limitations

While this study has found the continued need to bridge the academic-practitioner gap, there are some limitations. One limitation was on sampling and the timing: the interview coincided with the busy season in advertising agencies, making recruitment difficult. Another limitation on the sample was it started through snowball sampling and through cold contacting advertising agencies across the country. While there was a good mix of participant backgrounds in education, work experience, location, and age, there was a small cluster of students from the same graduate program and another cluster of participants from the same state. Another limitation was that due to the choice to cover a broad range of topics to get practitioners to invoke practitioners to talk about their use of theory instead of doing a detailed account of practitioners' explicit use of theory.

Conclusion

The academic-practitioner gap has been a topic of conversation in the literature for more than 30 years, and while it has received little research, it is a topic of conversations in many departments in academia. This study adds to the body of research on the academic-practitioner gap by examining if advertising creatives are aware of academic "theories", how they might be using them to create ads, and if they believe those theories can help them create ads.

The new insights found are: most of the participants with knowledge of academic theories and constructs think it is useful to have that knowledge, those who tried to talk about theories and constructs were not particularly accurate, and almost none of the participants who had talked about academic theories or constructs throughout the interview came back to those theories or constructs when explicitly asked about "theories used to connect to consumers." It has shown that the academic-practitioner gap is prominent and needs more research to understand and more work to bridge. There were practitioners in this study that touched on theory and understood how important it is, but they did not necessarily understand how to incorporate those concepts into their creative work.

The best way to start bridging the academic-practitioner gap may be to start in college, and it is important that the connections between creativity and academic theories and constructs are taught simultaneously. It is also important that those connections are made explicit in the educational process and incorporated into the same classroom. Getting the future advertising practitioners involved in bridging the academic-practitioner gap is also important. If practitioners understand how to use the theories and connect it to the creative process before they leave school, they will have the tools to be more successful in their future careers.

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APPENDIX

Participants

PSEUDONYM	GENDER	AGE	CREATIVE FUNCTION	YEARS IN ADVERTISING	LOCATION
Carol	Female	26	Copywriter	2	New York
Chad	Male	30	Art Director	2	California
John	Male	25	Copywriter	2	Texas
Tara	Female	22	Copywriter	1	New York
Kevin	Male	25	Art Director	3	California
Eugene	Male	25	Copywriter	3	Texas
Ryan	Male	39	Copywriter	17	Texas
Derrick	Male	50	Art Director	30	Texas
Shawn	Male	48	Copywriter	26	Texas
Daryl	Male	39	Art Director	10	Texas
Emma	Female	30	Copywriter	6	Texas
Maggie	Female	57	Art Director	33	Texas
Marc	Male	45	Copywriter	19	California
Abraham	Male	29	Copywriter	5	Texas
Beth	Female	30	Copywriter	3	Texas
Nancy	Female	37	Copywriter	3	New York
Anna	Female	25	Copywriter	4	New York
Lori	Female	28	Copywriter	3	Arizona
Carl	Male	28	Art Director	6	Texas
Rick	Male	35	Art Director	5	Nebraska

IS AUGMENTED REALITY ADVERTISING A CURE-ALL? AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE IMPACT OF INNOVATION RESISTANCE ON AUGMENTED REALITY ADVERTISING EFFECTIVENESS

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Abstract

The use of augmented reality (AR) technologies in advertising is often perceived as a good thing that improves advertising effectiveness. Although there are obvious benefits to AR technologies, they may pose disadvantages for advertising under some conditions. This study employs an experimental design to investigate the conditions under which the use of AR may be particularly effective or rather ineffective in advertising contexts. We first discuss the inconsistent results regarding the effectiveness of AR on advertising message comprehension and argue that these inconsistencies can be at least partly explained by the moderating effect of an individual's resistance to innovation (i.e., AR technologies). We then provide statistically significant interaction effects between ad types (AR-based, traditional 2D) and innovation resistance. Finally, we suggest that the effect of AR on certain variables such as comprehension of advertising messages and interest in ads is constrained or unconstrained by an individual's level of receptivity or resistance to a new technology-based advertising platform, and that flow experience is equivalent regardless of these levels.

THE STATE OF AUGMENTED REALITY ADVERTISING AROUND THE GLOBE: A MULTI-CULTURAL CONTENT ANALYSIS

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Introduction

A recent *Marketing Charts* survey asked top marketers to select future trends that would affect marketing by 2020. Augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) were selected by 26 percent of CMO's and senior marketers surveyed as among their top future trends (Szymczyk, 2015). It is said that while VR transports the users to another world, AR enhances the world we already inhabit. With super-imposed digitally rendered images, AR allows the users to have a heightened experience within their actual reality (Meriwether, 2015). While the technology is still quite new, it appears to be catching on in a big way.

The benefits of AR technology are many. From the user perspective, AR is entertaining. Consider McDonald's use of AR during the 2014 World Cup. Using their newly designed fry boxes, McDonald's allowed customers to download an app and play an AR soccer goal game that incorporated their real world surroundings as obstacles. And, AR is useful. Timberland enhanced their customers' retail experience by allowing them to try on clothes without going into a dressing room. Both Target and Wal-Mart are testing AR apps that will provide users with in-store navigation, allowing for faster shopping time and less frustration. In terms of usability, much of AR utilizes simple gestures, such as the wave of a hand, downloading an app on a mobile or using its built-in camera. From the marketer's perspective, the novelty of AR alone has the potential to increase brand awareness. AR delivers an engaged audience to marketers. According to one of the most popular augmented reality apps, Blippar, AR campaigns have an average dwell time of 75 highly engaged seconds – as compared to the 2.5 passively engaged seconds radio and television ads tend to garner (Mangiaforte, 2014).

While embracing the potential role of AR technology in advertising, marketers may find it risky to view AR advertising as a one-size-fits-all marketing tool to be applied in the same manner across global markets. Prior research noted that the process of accepting information systems varies in different cultures (Harris, Rette, & Cheung, 2005) and AR advertising is influenced by culture-level phenomena because it features interaction (Lee, Chung, & Jung 2015). We contend that brands should consider culture-specific factors when crafting AR ad campaigns. The purpose of this research is to reveal general characteristics of AR ad campaigns, and to compare the design of AR ad campaigns from different countries to help understand how AR ad campaigns are constructed across cultures.

Literature Review

Aesthetics of Augmented Reality Advertising

AR technology refers to the overlay of virtual three-dimensional objects onto one's physical environment (Yaoyuneyong, Foster, Johnson & John, 2016). Marketers can layer text, pictures or videos over product packaging, print advertisements, outdoor billboards, buildings, and street scenes, and consumers can then experience these hybrid realities via digital screens, smart phones, video installations, or projections (Scholz & Smith, 2016). AR has been defined as the co-existence of the virtual and the real in the same space, and the interactive alignment of computer-rendered information with physical reality (Azuma, Behringer, Julier, & Macintyre, 2001). AR can take numerous forms. Scholz & Smith (2016) outlined four typical AR marketing paradigms. The first is *Active Print/Packaging*, in which the consumer uses a smartphone, tablet or computer camera to scan AR-equipped printed material (such as a print ad, product packaging, or a catalogue) in order to access digital content triggered on their mobile device or computer screen.

The second type is *Bogus Window*. Here, devices such as digital screens (disguised as normal glass windows) augment the space users' view. As part of Pepsi Max's "Unbelievable" campaign, the company utilized bus shelters in London, turning one of the shelter's walls into a fake window that appeared to show a number of unlikely scenarios happening on the street behind. A camera was placed on the external face of the window, capturing what was really happening on the street and live streaming it on the internal side. It should be noted that "since the augmentation occurs behind a bogus window, the user cannot see himself as part of the augmentation" (Scholz & Smith, 2016, p. 151).

The third type of AR marketing paradigm is *Geo-Layer*, in which the marketer augments the space around the user with digital objects that may or may not be linked to specific geolocations. With AR, marketers can utilize GPS data (from smartphones) to immerse users in a brand experience no matter where they are. Noting visitors' difficulties in locating the Sunshine Aquarium in Tokyo, the facility built an AR app to help them find the aquarium by giving directions to the facility. Unlike other GPS apps, however, this one worked by having a team of digital penguins lead visitors to the facility on users' cell phone screens.

The fourth type is *Magic Mirror*, in which an AR mobile application or an AR-equipped screen enables consumers to interact with virtual objects and to see themselves as part of the augmentation either through the AR mobile app or AR-equipped screen. For example, Lynx (known as Axe in the U.S.) used AR to allow visitors to London's Victoria Station to pose with digital angels featured in their ad campaign. The brand placed signs in the railway station telling travelers to look up to a giant video screen, where they saw an image of themselves interacting with the angels.

We have added *projection mapping* to the four existing marketing paradigms, and defined it as those practices that project images or videos onto surfaces of any kind (for example, buildings, automobiles, etc.) and turn them into interactive displays (Rodriguez, Quint, Gorecky, Romero and Siller, 2015). For example, to promote its new Accent sedan, automaker Hyundai projected a giant 3D image on the side of a building. Closely related to the type of marketing paradigm is the type of device on which AR virtual content is displayed. For instance, magic mirror campaigns tend to adopt an AR-software-equipped digital screen installed in a public place (for example, a bus shelter or shopping mall), whereas active print/packaging campaigns typically rely on users' mobile devices with an AR application. Projection mapping campaigns generally depend on a surface in a specific shape to present the virtual content (such as the exterior of a building).

Augmented Reality Advertising Research

Because the technology is so new, the number of academic investigations related to AR is still rather limited. Several studies, have, however, examined consumers' attitudes toward AR campaigns (Yaoyuneyong et al., 2016). Findings suggest that participants perceive AR campaigns to be high on playfulness, convenience and time saving, in particular, in the realm of shopping. In comparison to traditional print ads and quick response (QR) code print ads, consumers preferred AR print ads, noting its informativeness, novelty, and effectiveness

Other researchers focused on how AR applications or AR-web-cam-equipped mirrors can assist consumer in trying on virtual products (such as make-up or clothing) prior to purchase. Javornik, Rogers, Moutinho and Freeman (2016) reported on an in-situ study observing how shoppers approach and respond to magic mirrors in a retail setting. They found virtual try-ons resulted in significant exploration – shoppers spent time looking at themselves on a display integrated in a make-up counter. Behavior tracking data from interactions with the mirror supported this. Moreover, the augmented experience was perceived to be playful and credible while also acting as a strong driver for future behavior.

In terms of AR research in global markets, Wafa and Hashim (2016) investigated the adoption of mobile AR ads by brands in Malaysia via an analysis of ads that appeared in a leading local newspaper. The authors also interviewed personnel from agencies to gauge brands' receptiveness to using mobile AR technology. They found that there are a very limited number of brands, to date, which have adopted AR technology in their ads and that practitioners have found it difficult to convince clients to try the new technology. Eyueboglu (2011) explored Turkish consumers' first impressions and feelings in response to an AR campaign for an online U.K. fashion boutique. Focus group participants noted the app was easy to use, practical and saved time. Lee, Chung, and Jung (2015) examined the cultural differences in acceptance of mobile augmented reality in South Korea and Ireland. The authors found that in both eastern and western cultures, the aesthetics of AR is a crucial component for formulating positive perceptions regarding AR, which in turn, induced behavioral intention to use AR.

Theoretical Framework: Individualism versus Collectivism and Advertising

The above cited investigation by Lee, Chung, and Jung (2015) highlights the role that culture – and in particular individualism vs. collectivism – can play in advertising. Geert Hofstede's typology of cultural dimensions has been applied to various areas of global branding and advertising, as well as the underlying theories of consumer behavior (de Mooij & Hofstede, 2010). Hofstede's individualism vs. collectivism dimension pertains to the importance of the group rather than the individual. A high individualism ranking suggests that individuality and individual rights are paramount within a society, and ties between individuals are loose. A low individualism ranking indicates that a country tends to be collectivistic. Here social ties are much tighter and one owes one's lifelong loyalty to one's in-group (Mueller, 2011). An important benefit of Hofstede's model of cultural dimensions is that it provides country scores. In general, most Western countries rank as individualistic cultures, whereas Asian and Latin American countries score as collectivistic cultures (de Mooij, 2004). Individualistic societies are generally low-context communication cultures with explicit verbal communication. Collectivistic cultures tend to be high-context communication cultures, with an indirect style of communication (de Mooij and Hofstede, 2010). A number of researchers have investigated differences in style, such as the direct versus indirect styles used in individualistic and collectivistic cultures (see Cho, Kwon, Gentry, Jun, and Kropp, 1999; Han and Shavitt, 1994). Han and Shavitt (1994) found that magazine advertisements in the U.S. (an individualistic culture) tended to employ appeals focusing on individual benefits and preferences, and personal success, whereas ads in Korea (a collectivistic culture) tended to utilize appeals emphasizing in-group benefits, harmony, and family integrity. Cho, Kwon, Gentry, Jun & Kropp (1999) compared TV commercials in the U.S. and Korea and found that a greater percentage of individualistic themes (e.g. featuring a person enjoying being unique, addressing individual benefits, and featuring a person doing something alone) were present in American commercials. However, the Korean commercials did not contain a greater percentage of collectivistic elements (e.g. a conversation among people in harmony with each other, and featuring people working as a group). Several investigations have found that culturally-congruent ad appeals are more effective than non-congruent ones (Han & Shavitt, 1994: Zhang & Gelb, 1996). Attitudes toward the ad and brand were more positive in the U.S. when the advertising message emphasized individualistic values, whereas in China attitudes toward the ad and the brand were higher when collectivist values were employed (Zhang & Gelb, 1996). Han and Shavitt (1994) found that advertisements featuring individualistic values were more persuasive in the U.S., while ads emphasizing collectivistic values such as family or in-group benefits resonated with Korean subjects.

Culture, Technology, and Advertising

Another stream of research explores the role of culture and technology in relation to advertising and marketing. Muralidharan, La Farle and Sung (2015) compared a national online panel of smartphone users from India and the U.S. Results showed that entertainment impacts Indians' attitudes toward smartphone advertising, while informativeness plays a more important role for the American sample. This suggests that, in addition to providing a fun experience, AR ad campaigns in individualistic cultures may be more likely to include useful product information than those from collectivistic cultures. In exploring how the individualism/collectivism cultural dimension influences consumers' attitudes toward retail innovations, Trappey, Trappey and Mulaomerovic (2016) compared Taiwanese and Swedish university students. Results showed that Taiwanese prefer innovations with a lower level of self-service, while Swedish subjects preferred the opposite types of retail innovations. Researchers are interested in the type of interaction consumers have with AR virtual content. Some marketers allow users to manipulate what and how AR content is displayed. In these campaigns, users are required to download and use mobile applications or to control the content displayed on AR-equipped screens through motions. Such campaigns may involve a higher level of "self-service" and thus may be more popular in individualistic cultures.

Prior studies (Cole & Packer, 2011; Nisbett, 2003) noted that people across cultures adopt different cognitive styles. While people from individualistic cultures tend to perceive objects as single and independent entities, those from collectivistic cultures tend to regard objects as being related to the context in which they appear (Nisbett, 2003; Triandis, 1999). When designing AR experiences, Scholz and Smith (2016) suggested marketers consider how the AR content will integrate with specific social and physical contexts. Some AR campaigns can include AR content integrated with surrounding social and physical contexts. Some AR campaigns include AR content integrated with an individual and provide a customized experience for that person. Some AR campaigns do not integrate the digital content with the surrounding physical context and the digital content can be viewed almost anywhere by anyone with no change in the meanings conveyed. Because culturally-congruent ad appeals are more effective than non-congruent ones (Han & Shavitt, 1994: Zhang & Gelb, 1996), it is possible that individual-integrated AR content and context-segregated AR content are more prevalent in AR ad campaigns in individualistic cultures, whereas environment-integrated AR content is more popular in AR ad campaigns in collectivistic cultures.

Based on the aforementioned literature review of augmented reality advertising and cultural effects, the following research question and hypotheses were formulated for this study:

RQ1: What are the general characteristics of augmented reality advertising?

H1: Augmented reality advertising in individualistic cultures tends to be more likely to include product information than in collectivistic cultures.

H2: Augmented reality advertising in individualistic cultures tends to be more likely to allow users to manipulate what and how AR content is displayed than in collectivistic cultures.

H3a: Augmented reality advertising in individualistic cultures tends to be more likely to include individual-integrated AR content than in collectivistic cultures.

H3b: Augmented reality advertising in individualistic cultures tends to be more likely to include context-segregated AR content than in collectivistic cultures.

H3c: Augmented reality advertising in collectivistic cultures tends to be more likely to include environment-integrated AR content than in collectivistic cultures.

Methods

Sample

It is noted that social media, such as YouTube, extend the influence of AR advertising campaigns, and some YouTube videos featuring AR ad campaign have generated a large number of views and likes. According to Paek, Kim, and Hove (2010), YouTube has developed into an ideal platform for promoting products due to its popularity. It is within this context that we decided to select sample AR ad campaigns from YouTube. In September 2016, we searched YouTube to locate videos related to AR ad campaigns through the following search terms: "augmented reality marketing", "augmented reality advertising", "augmented reality campaign", "augmented reality outdoor advertising", "augmented reality live event", "3D image projection", and "projection mapping". Because the search outcomes were sorted by relevance (by default), we watched every single video listed in the first 20 pages for each search term. If a search term generated less than 20 pages of results, we watched all the listed videos. As a result, we identified and collected a total of 156 videos, with a final total of 129 videos after duplications and videos without country of origin information were removed. In the sample videos, augmented reality was clearly employed and a brand could be identified as the video sponsor. For each video, its URL address was recorded and its content was analyzed.

According to Wimmer and Dominick (2007), content analysis can aid in describing communication content and in testing hypotheses of message characteristics. However, content analysis, as a tool for examining cross-cultural differences in advertising, has been criticized (Samiee & Jeong, 1994). Nevertheless, de Mooij and Hofstede (2010) have come to its defense:

> "Comparative content analysis does provide insight in cross-cultural advertising practice that also points at what works best in a country. If in a country certain appeals and communication styles are more common than in others, these style elements are used because they are effective (McQuarrie & Phillips, 2008). When the values of consumers are congruent with the values reflected in advertising, the link to liking the ad, the brand, or the company increases, and advertising will be more effective (Polegaro & Bjerke, 2006)" (de Mooij & Hofstede, 2010, p. 99).

In this investigation, content analysis allows us to explore the general characteristics of AR ad campaigns uploaded on YouTube, and to examine the prevalent appeals used in AR advertising from different cultures.

Coding Scheme

Based on a pilot study, we developed a coding scheme. The content analysis primarily captured five dimensions of an AR ad campaign video: (1) locality, (2) product, (3) target audience, (4) AR execution, and (5) user-brand interaction.

Locality. We investigated the country of origin, region, and location of each AR ad campaign video. For each video, we recorded the country of origin. In total, we identified 39 countries for 127 videos, with 2 videos featuring multiple countries. We then noted the individualism score for each country on the basis of Hofstede's (2016) website (there was no country score provided for Armenia), and divided countries into individualistic countries (countries with individualism scores of 50 and above) (e.g., the U.S., Australia, the U.K.) and collectivistic countries (countries with individualism score below 50) (e.g., Columbia, Indonesia, South Korea). Further, we classified the 39 countries into four regions: (1) Europe, (2) Asia, (3) North America, and (4) Other. In addition, we analyzed the location of each video and divided it into fourteen categories: (1) shopping mall, (2) retail store, (3) office building, (4) railway station, (5) bus station/stop, (6) airport, (7) gas station, (8) hotel, (9) restaurant, (10) museum/art gallery/exhibition/stadium, (11) fitness center, (12) billboard, (13) multiple, and (14) other.

Product. We classified products into eighteen categories on the basis of Mueller, Okazaki and Diehl (2014)'s coding scheme : (1) service: tourism/leisure, (2) service: financial (banks/credit cards), (3) service: other (ad agency, technology company, telecommunication), (4) foods and beverages, (5) medicine, (6) clothes & accessories, (7) sporting goods, (8) cosmetics/toiletries, (9) electronics (phone, computer, TV), (10) home appliances, (11) automobiles, (12) books and magazines, (13) entertainment/theaters/films/TV programs, (14) software, (15) DVD/Video/Music, (16) furniture, (17) real estate, and (18) other. In analyzing product category, we divided products into: (1) high-involvement products (e.g., vehicle), (2) medium-involvement products (e.g., fashion clothing), and (3) low-involvement products (e.g., beverage, magazine). Additionally, we examined whether each video conveyed product information verbally and/or visually, and this item was coded as 1 (yes) or 2 (no). Moreover, we examined whether incentive information was included in each video and classified it into three categories: (1) with one incentive, (2) with multiple incentives, and (3) without incentive.

Target audience. For each video, we analyzed the level of technical savvy required of the target audience and divided this item into: (1) tech savvy audience (e.g., a user has to download and use a mobile application to participate in an AR campaign), (2) less tech savvy audience (e.g., a user can be involved with an AR campaign without using a mobile device), and (3) mixed (e.g., a user must employ a mobile application to partake in an AR program, but meanwhile can engage in another AR program without using a mobile device).

AR execution. First, we examined the type of AR device used in the campaigns. We divided the type of AR device into six categories: (1) mobile device, (2) public screen, (3) surface of any kind of shape (e.g., the exterior of a building), (4) mixed device, and (5) other. Then, on the basis of Scholz and Smith (2016)'s research and definitions of projection mapping as a special form of AR technology (Fujimoto et al., 2014; Rodriguez, Quint, Gorecky, Romero, & Siller, 2015), we explored the type of marketing paradigm adopted in AR ad campaigns and divided this item into six categories: (1) active print/packaging (e.g., a user scans an AR-equipped print ad with a mobile device to see virtual content), (2) bogus window (e.g., a user can see virtual content displayed over live street view through an AR-equipped public screen), (3) geo-layer (e.g., the space around the user is augmented with digital objects that may or may not be linked to specific geolocations), (4) magic mirror (e.g., a user can interact with virtual objects and see himself/herself as part of the augmentation through an AR mobile application or an AR-equipped screen), (5) projection mapping (e.g., a user can see virtual content projected on the exterior of a building and the projection turns the building surface into an interactive display), and (6) multiple (e.g., an AR ad campaign can adopt more than one of the marketing paradigms).

Next, we investigated how the AR layer in each video integrated with specific physical contexts, and classified the degree of context integration into three categories: (1) *individual-integrated AR content*, which refers to AR content that is integrated with an individual and can augment the individual by adding virtual content to the person (e.g., a person tries on virtual clothes); (2) *environment-integrated AR content*, which denotes AR content that is integrated with surrounding physical context to provide an immersive customer experience, and can augment multiple people and/or the environment (e.g., users are able to interact with virtual animals through an AR-equipped public screen); and (3) *context-segregated AR content*, which refers to AR content that is separated from surrounding physical context and the campaign can be viewed anywhere with little change in the meanings it conveys (e.g., a user scans an AR-equipped print ad through a mobile device, and a virtual three-dimensional object emerges on the device).

User-brand interaction. We examined each video to see how a user acts toward virtual AR content presented by a brand, and we classified the type of user-brand interaction into four categories: (1) *perception* refers to an experience in which a user can passively perceive the virtual content (e.g., a user scans an AR-equipped print ad with a mobile device to see a virtual product pop up); (2) *manipulation* denotes an experience in which a user can change what and how AR content is displayed but the user is not part of the AR content (e.g., a user can flip through different recipe options that are digitally layered over a product package); (3) *integration* refers to an experience in which a user becomes part of the AR content but has no control of the virtual content (e.g., a user pretends to pet digital animals displayed in an AR-equipped public screen); and (4) *interaction* represents an experience in which a user becomes part of the AR content and interacts with it (e.g., a user standing in front of an AR-equipped public screen can change the color of the virtual clothes by waving his/her hand). Then, for each video, we investigated whether a user could do any of the following things: (1) access offers, samples, sweepstakes, (2) obtain prices, (3) access web/media, (4) download an app, and (5) purchase product. Each of these five items was coded as 1 (yes) or 2 (no).

Coding Procedures

The unit of analysis was an AR ad campaign video uploaded on YouTube. Before starting the main coding, two coders analyzed five AR campaigns that were not included in the study. During the training sessions, when disagreements arose, the two coders shared their interpretations and a final decision was made by consensus. The process continued until both coders were comfortable with the operational definitions of each item in the coding scheme. Definitions and examples of the coding items were accessible at all times. After the training session, the two coders analyzed 20 videos from the sample pool independently in order to determine inter-coder reliability.

Coding results of 20 videos were compared, which exceeds the 10% rule-of-thumb sample size (Wimmer & Dominick, 2007). Inter-coder reliability was calculated using Cohen's kappa, which is suitable for categorical variables (Wimmer & Dominick, 2007). Reliabilities for all the coding variables were satisfactory: country of origin (1.00), region (1.00), location (.94), product (1.00), product category (.73), convey product information (1.00), incentive (.88), tech savvy of target audience (1.00), type of trigger device (1.00), type of marketing paradigm (.73), degree of context integration (1.00), type of user-brand interaction (.90), access offers, samples, and sweepstakes (1.00), obtain prices (1.00), access web/media (1.00), download app (1.00), and purchase product (1.00). The disagreements between the two coders were resolved by further discussions between them. Next, each coder analyzed half of the remaining of sample videos.

Results

General Characteristics of AR Ad Campaign Videos on YouTube

Locality. We collected 129 AR ad campaign videos uploaded on YouTube, of which 127 videos originated from a single country and two videos featured multiple countries. When analyzing the individualism level of countries, we excluded one video from Armenia, as Hofstede provided no score for this country, and we also excluded the two videos that appeared in multiple countries. Thus, our final sample for locality included 126 videos. In total, 47 videos originated from collectivistic countries (36.43%) and 79 videos from individualistic countries (61.24%). The top four countries with the greatest number of AR ad campaigns were the U.S. (16.28%), the U.K. (15.50%), India (6.98%), and Australia (6.20%). Of the 129 videos, 40.31% came from Europe, 30.23% originated from Asia, 17.05% came from North America, and 12.40% originated from other regions. Results indicated the most frequently portrayed location was a shopping mall (20.93%), followed by other locations (14.73%) (an indoor setting without a specific location), museum/gallery/exhibition/stadium (10.85%), billboard (10.85%), a retail store (9.30%), multiple locations (9.30%), and a bus stop (8.53%). These videos accounted for 84.49% of all the sample videos.

Product. Results revealed that foods and beverages were most frequently promoted in AR ad campaigns (27.91%), followed by automobiles (13.95%), entertainment/theaters/films/TV programs (13.95%), electronics products (8.53%), services (ad agency, technology company, telecommunication) (8.53%), and clothes and accessories (7.75%). These five types of products accounted for 80.62 % of all products. Regarding product category, 34.11% of the videos featured a high-involvement product, 12.40% promoted a medium-involvement product, and 53.49% promoted a low-involvement product. Among the 129 videos, 50.39% conveyed product information whereas 49.61 did not convey any information. The majority of the videos did not include any incentive (75.19%), 17.05% included one incentive, and 7.75% contained multiple incentives.

Target audience. With regards to the level of technical savvy of the target audience, results showed that the majority of the 129 videos targeted a less tech savvy audience (66.67%), 27.91% targeted a tech savvy audience, and 5.43% targeted a mixed audience.

AR execution. Regarding the type of AR device adopted in AR ad campaigns, results revealed that a public screen was most often utilized (57.36%), followed by a mobile device (27.13%), a projection mapping surface (8.53%), a device other than a public screen or a mobile device (e.g., a computer) (3.88%), and use of multiple devices (3.10%). In terms of the type of marketing paradigm, results showed magic mirror was most frequently used (51.16%), followed by active print/packaging (26.36%), projection mapping (10.85%), bogus window (6.20%), and geo-layer (2.33%). Additionally, 3.10% of the video ads adopted more than one type of marketing paradigm. In terms of the degree of context integration, results indicated that 50.39% of the sample videos included AR virtual content integrated with surrounding physical context, 25.58% contained AR virtual content segregated from surrounding physical context, and 24.03% featured AR virtual content integrated with an individual.

User-brand interaction. In terms of the type of user-brand interaction, 41.09% of the 129 videos featured integration in which a user becomes part of the AR content but has no control of the virtual content, 26.36% featured perception only (in which a user passively perceives the virtual content), 17.05% featured interaction in which a user becomes part of the AR content and interacts with it, and 15.50% featured manipulation in which a user can change what and how AR content is displayed but the user is not part of the AR content. Among all 129 sample videos, 20.16% showed a user accessing offers/samples/sweepstakes, 3.10% showed a user obtaining product prices, 17.82% them showed a user accessing web/media, 15.50% showed a user downloading an AR app, and 3.10% showed a user purchasing a product.

The Relationship between Culture and the Design of AR Ad Campaigns

First, we examined whether there was any relationship between culture and communication of product information in AR ad campaigns. Results indicated the communication of product information differed between videos from individualistic and collectivistic countries ($\chi^2 = 7.64$, $df = 1$, $p < .01$). In particular, while the majority of videos from collectivistic countries did not convey product information (65.96%), the majority of videos from individualistic countries conveyed product information (59.49%). Therefore, H1 was supported.

Second, we explored the relationship between culture and the type of user-brand interaction in AR ad campaigns. Results showed the type of user-brand interaction portrayed in AR ad campaigns differed significantly between videos from individualistic and collectivistic countries ($\chi^2 = 12.43$, $df = 3$, $p < .01$). In particular, for videos from collectivistic countries, the majority featured integration in which a user becomes part of the AR content but has no control of the virtual content (54.45%). In contrast, there seemed to be an equal adoption of all the four types of user-brand interaction among videos from individualistic countries ($\chi^2 = 2.77$, $df = 3$, $p = .43$). In addition, results from two-sample t-test indicated that videos from individualistic countries (22.78%) tend to be more likely than those from collectivistic countries (4.26%) to feature manipulation in which a user can change what and how AR content is displayed but the user is not part of the AR content (is not affected by the AR content) (t ($df = 124$) = 2.75, $p < .01$), whereas videos from collectivistic countries (54.45%) tend be more likely than those from individualistic countries (31.65%) to feature integration in which a user becomes part of the AR content but has no control of the virtual content (t ($df = 124$) = 2.53, $p < .05$). Therefore, H2 was supported.

Third, we examined the relationship between culture and degree of context integration in AR ad campaigns. Results revealed the degree of context integration portrayed in AR ad campaigns did not differ significantly between videos from individualistic and collectivistic countries, and environment-integrated AR content was used most frequently in videos from both types of countries, with 61.70% appearing in videos from collectivist countries and 44.30% in those from individualistic countries ($\chi^2 = 3.66$, $df = 2$, $p = .16$). However, results from two-sample t-test indicated videos from collectivistic countries may be more likely than those from individualistic countries to include environment-integrated AR content (t ($df = 124$) = 1.89, $p = .06$), especially given the small sample size ($N = 126$). Therefore, H3c received partial support. Results from two-sample t-test indicated neither difference in the use of individual-integrated AR content between videos from collectivistic countries (19.15%) and those from individualistic countries (25.32%) (t ($df = 124$) = .80, $p = .43$), nor difference in the adoption of context-segregated AR content between videos from collectivistic countries (19.15%) and those from individualistic countries (30.38%) (t ($df = 124$) = 1.39, $p = .17$). Therefore, neither H3a nor H3b were supported.

Discussion

The purpose of this research was to delineate the prevalent characteristics of AR ad campaigns and to determine whether culture plays a role in how AR ad campaigns are constructed.

Prevalent Characteristics of AR Ad Campaigns on YouTube

Locality. AR advertising has already become a global practice, with marketers from 39 countries embracing AR technology in their ad campaigns. This suggests a great opportunity for global brands to inform and entertain global audiences via AR technology. Moreover, AR advertising is omnipresent, be it in an outdoor or indoor setting.

Product. AR technology has been employed to promote a wide range of products, and categories that top the list are foods and beverages, automobiles, entertainment/theaters/films/TV programs, electronics products, services, and clothes and accessories. Also, there was an almost equal split between campaigns that conveyed product information and those without product information. Noticeably, AR ad campaigns do not tend to emphasize a sales orientation, as indicated by the finding that the majority did not include an incentive.

Target audience. Results indicated that AR ad campaigns target a diverse audience, ranging from less tech savvy to very tech savvy consumers. Given that perceived ease of use is one important factor that determines audience's attitudes toward technology-facilitated advertising (Faquih and Jaradar, 2015; Lee et al., 2015), it makes sense that the majority of the AR ad campaigns targeted a less tech savvy audience.

AR execution. The majority of AR ad campaigns utilized an AR-equipped public screen to present AR virtual content, which speaks to the easy-to-use principle, as an AR ad campaign using a public screen does not require a user to download a mobile app. Also, results from this study shed light on the most frequently used AR marketing paradigms (magic mirror, active print/packaging, projection mapping, and bogus window). The limited use of geo-layer AR marketing paradigm might be related to the technical difficulty in augmenting the geographic space around the user with virtual content. In terms of degree of context integration, the prevalent use of environment-integrated AR content in ad campaigns may reflect the features of AR technology – integrating virtual content with one's physical context and providing consumers with an immersive brand experience (Azuma et al., 2001; Scholz & Smith, 2016).

***User-brand interaction*.** The majority of AR ad campaigns did not enable a user to manipulate what and how AR content is displayed. Scholz and Smith (2016) noted that "true interaction, which requires users and AR content to mutually affect each other, may be technologically challenging to implement" (p.156). However, the authors mentioned, "marketers can increase user-brand engagement by allowing consumers the mere perception that they are interacting with AR content" (p.156). For example, although users cannot truly control the motion of virtual animals, they can observe themselves "pet" digital animals on an AR-equipped screen. In this way, consumers can become immersed in the illusion of interacting with digital content. In addition to providing users with an interactive experience, AR technology serves multiple functional purposes, such as enabling a user to access offers/samples/sweepstakes, to obtain product price, to access web/media, and to purchase products.

Culture and Aesthetics of AR Ad Campaigns

We found some similarities as well as differences between AR ad campaigns from collectivistic and individualistic countries. The tendency to include product information in AR ad campaigns in individualistic countries indicates that these campaigns convey information to consumers in order to appeal to their individual benefits and preferences. This is consistent with content analysis findings from prior research that noted that ads in individualistic cultures tended to employ appeals emphasizing individual benefits (Cho et al., 1999; Han & Shavitt, 1994). This also corresponds to Lee, Chung, and Jung's (2015) finding that perceived usefulness of AR should be focused on in individualistic cultures. Compared with traditional ads, AR advertising opens new possibilities for brands to communicate product information to consumers in an engaging way, such as allowing consumers to scan a product package to access real-time product information or to virtually try-on products before making purchase decisions (Yaoyuneyong et al., 2016).

The finding that AR ad campaigns from different countries featured different types of user-brand interaction, corresponds with previous research on AR advertising (Lee et al., 2015; Trappey et al., 2016) that argued that perceived ease of use should be considered crucial component of AR in collectivist cultures, and that consumers from such cultures prefer innovations with a lower level of self-service than those from individualistic cultures. We found that AR ad campaigns from individualistic countries tend to be more likely than those from collectivistic countries to feature an interaction in which a user can change what and how AR content is displayed but the user is not part of the AR content, whereas AR ad campaigns from collectivistic countries tend to be more likely than those from individualistic countries to feature an interaction in which a user becomes part of the AR content but has no control of the content. When a user is not part of the AR content but can control it, the user is not affected by the AR content and may develop a sense of independence of manipulating the AR content in the interaction process. On the other hand, when a user is part of the AR content but cannot control it, the user is affected by the AR content and becomes the target, being integrated into the context, instead of being the "controller" who can transform the digital content (Scholz & Smith, 2016).

The prevalent use of environment-integrated AR content in ad campaigns from both collectivistic and individualistic cultures may shed light on the characteristics of AR technology – mixing virtual content with one's physical context (Azuma et al., 2001; Scholz & Smith, 2016). This may also explain why AR ad campaigns in individualistic cultures were not more likely to include individual-integrated AR content and context-segregated AR content than those in collectivistic cultures. Compared with AR campaigns from individualistic cultures, those from collectivistic cultures tend to favor the use of environment-integrated AR content. This result is in line with prior studies (Nisbett, 2003; Triandis, 1999) that noted that people from collectivistic cultures tend to regard objects as being related to the context in which they appear. Thus, advertisers and marketers may unleash the maximum potential of the overlay function of AR in order to construct an immersive brand experience for collectivistic consumers.

As with any research, there are limitations associated with this investigation. First, we acknowledge the limitation associated with using YouTube as a source of AR ad campaigns. Clearly, there are many more examples of AR campaigns worldwide than those that surface on YouTube. However, accessing AR campaigns from countries around the globe via other means remains a challenge for future investigators. Some may criticize our use of content analysis because of the weaknesses associated with this method. This analysis represents our first step in exploring AR campaigns and allowed us to capture the nature of such campaigns in a variety of markets. Future researchers may wish to employ surveys or experiments to measure user attitudes toward AR ad campaigns. Finally, in terms of cultural dimensions, this study focused only on individualism/collectivism. Clearly other cultural variables may play an influential role in how AR ad campaigns are constructed.

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THE FUTURE IS HERE: HOW THE INTERNET OF THINGS IS CHANGING CONSUMER JOURNEY

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Introduction

It is hard to believe that only about 10 years ago the Apple iPhone had yet to be marketed. Now, the world of smart interconnected objects (phones, cameras, thermostats, lights, alarm systems, refrigerators, etc.) is proliferating at an astounding rate. In the very near future, we are likely to have an increasing number of objects that anticipate our needs, know our preferences, and act accordingly, perhaps even without our instructions. For example, when a consumer enters a supermarket, her smartphone might automatically recognize the location, and compile a shopping list from several sources. The smart refrigerator communicates to the list that it is low on milk, her spouse's post on Facebook is examined and suggests that he has a cold so cold medicine and cough drops might be needed, and her calendar reminder of a friend's birthday triggers the inclusion of a birthday card to the list. A smart t-shirt with sensors woven in its fabric indicates that consumer's blood pressure is too high, so the smart phone modifies the shopping list to exclude high-sodium foods, while simultaneously sending a health update to the shopper's physician. When the consumer is ready to check out, the cash register equipped with a face-recognition technology automatically pulls up a credit card associated with this customer, so the payment is fast and easy. The self-driving car has been already summoned from the parking lot, and is now waiting at the store entrance. On the way home, the smart car automatically sends a request to the smart home system to turn on the heater and open the garage door. This scenario may sound like an episode from a sci-fi movie, but all of these things are already technologically feasible, and the scenario reflects a common vision of where the technology is headed – the era of the Internet of Things (IoT; Atzori, Iera, and Morabito 2014; Sundmaeker et al. 2010).

The IoT envisions a world where objects are "smart" and are all connected through the Internet into a global network, enabling the "anytime, anywhere, any media, anything" communication facilitated by machine learning algorithms (Atzori, Iera, and Morabito 2010). Rapid advancements in sensing technology, connectivity, hardware, software, material science, and other related fields indicate that the evolution of IoT has already started. Researchers estimate that by 2020, the number of smart devices linked through the Internet can reach 50 to 100 billions, and will include a wide range of objects - from smartphones, small wearables, and home appliances, to smart cars, ATMs and warehouse shipment facilities (Sundmaeker et al. 2010, p. 41).

The shift from the Web 2.0 to the IoT (also referred to as Web 3.0) is gradually reshaping even the most fundamental elements of consumers' everyday lives, and will generate a lot of serious challenges and opportunities for both theorists and practitioners of advertising and marketing. Despite numerous early indicators of the upcoming changes – proliferation of the connected smart devices and emergence of artificial intelligence agents to facilitate their use – the IoT has received very little attention from the scholarly advertising community. This paper attempts to begin a discussion on what the emergence of the IoT might mean for the theory and research in advertising and consumer behavior. It starts by presenting some key technological trends underlying the IoT and their possible effects on consumer behaviors. We then discuss how these changes in consumer behavior may influence existing advertising theory and research. We conclude by suggesting new areas for theory building and research methods. We hope this paper will inspire many advertising scholars to join the large interdisciplinary research community working on – and preparing for – the development of the IoT.

The Internet of Things: New Era in Computing

To put it simply (although nothing about this phenomenon is simple), the Internet of Things is what our current Internet of Computers will be when it "grows up": a global network of smart objects and services that are interconnected, wirelessly communicating and powered by the machine-learning algorithms. The building blocks of the IoT are "smart" devices. Currently, in the Web 2.0, these include mostly machines that were originally designed to compute and communicate: computers, tablets, and smartphones. However, every year more and more objects are re-engineered to become "smart". Consumers can already purchase "smart" watches, TVs, cars, washing machines, and even entire "smart home" systems. The terms "smart" indicates that the object is equipped with sensors and can modify its performance based on the context-, task- and/or user-related variables: physical parameters of the environment (location, light, temperature, motion, etc.), users' vitals and affective states, natural speech, and many others (Schmidt and Van Laerhoven 2001). For example, Microsoft's *Septimu* smart earbud headphones can sense a wearer's heart rate, posture and mood, and then recommend a song best suited for the situation. Ralph Lauren offers a Polo Tech Shirt that has sensors woven directly into the fabric. The shirt collects information about the key biometrics, covered distance, burned calories, movement intensity, and streams it directly to the wearer's mobile device. Trade shows and industry conferences boast many various smart product prototypes that are not yet available on the market, but offer a great preview of what the future holds in store: mood-sensing fabrics, contact lenses that monitor blood sugar, jewelry that serves as a mobile payments mechanism, décor elements that monitor and display the level of home energy consumption, and many others (Darwish and Hassanien 2011; Lopez et al. 2009).

The building blocks of smart objects are held together by the cement of connectivity. In addition to sensing and machine-learning technology, smart machines are also equipped with networking capabilities, so that they can interact not only with their users and the physical world, but also with each other. In other words, many everyday objects and services that were not originally designed for communication can now join a global Internet-based network similar to what PCs, laptops, tablets and smartphones can do. For example, several years ago LG rolled out a series of smart home appliances that communicate with the owner's smart phone. Using natural speech, a consumer can use his phone to send the machine a command to start a washing cycle, and when the laundry is done, the machine will call or text back to notify the owner (Fishler 2013). While we are used to the ability of our tablets, phones and computers to "talk" to each other, the possibility of other devices joining the conversation is extraordinary and exciting. As more and more smart objects join the network, the "Internet of PCs" is gradually evolving into the "Internet of Things". Researchers also expect that as smart objects are becoming more sophisticated, they will also become increasingly more proactive and autonomous: they will be able to not only exchange information, but also *independently* "start new acquaintances, connect to external services, exploit other objects' capabilities, and collaborate toward a common goal" (Atzori, Iera, and Morabito 2014, p. 97).

To help users navigate through the increasingly complex ecosystem of the IoT, developers are also working on a conceptually new user interface for consumer-device interaction: a personal digital assistant (PDA; also referred to as "virtual", "conversational", or "intelligent" agent). PDA is a software package equipped with artificial intelligence and designed to personify the interface of a computing device. PDAs are usually anthropomorphic and can interact with their owners using natural language. Apple's Siri, Microsoft's Cortana and Amazon's Alexa are some of the most visible examples of such PDAs. The main power of digital agents lies in their ability to access and consolidate tremendous amounts of data from multiple sources in both digital and physical world for an integrated user experience. This includes both personal, private information (data from the consumer's smart devices, personal schedules and plans, contacts, all digital financial and health records, purchase history, general profile of preferences and interests, etc.), and public data (social media, various sources of company and product information, product reviews, news, crime alerts, traffic and maps, etc.). Connected to the wealth of IoT data and powered by machine-learning algorithms, PDAs can perform a variety of tasks for or on behalf of the consumer: from simple things like managing a calendar, solving a mathematical equation, or hailing an Uber, to tasks that go beyond one-step commands and require synthesis and analysis of complex heterogenous information in real time. For example, an agent may be able to independently purchase a gift based on the shopper's budget, recipients' tastes, promotions in local and online stores, online product reviews, and current fashion trends. The remarkable characteristic of the agents is that they can also do all of these proactively. Due to their superior information processing capabilities, PDAs can easily gain insights and identify patterns and information that are not easily accessible or obvious to the consumer: e.g., vitals, daily habits and their triggers, distant events on the calendar, emerging economic or cultural trends, information on new merchandise and promotions from various vendors, and so on. Over time, an agent can learn to not only respond to requests, but to anticipate consumer's needs and be proactive in delivering the solutions at just the right moment. Visionaries and leaders of the technology sector believe that these powers of the digital agents will make them more than just a new type of user interface – they are expected to become *the primary* interface and a gatekeeper through which consumers will interact with the world around them (Nadella 2015).

Advertising Theories in The Age of The IoT: Out with The Old?

The world full of smart interconnected devices and curated by personal intelligent agents can bring dramatic changes to consumer behaviors, thereby challenging even our most fundamental assumptions about advertising and brand management. Will advertising theories hold when the third wave of computing enters mainstream? Like in most other areas of study, theory is the foundation of the advertising discipline. Its role is to describe and explain various aspects of consumer behaviors in the context of strategic communication. However, in contrast to many other disciplines, the environment in which advertising exists is highly changeable, and as media usage patterns and consumer behaviors evolve in response to these environmental changes, advertising theories can lose their explanatory utility or pragmatic significance. It is important to recognize that most of the existing body of knowledge in advertising is based on research conducted during or prior to the “second wave of computing” (the time from introduction of the first personal computer until present) and, thus, describes and explains phenomena that only exist in a specific technological context. As this context changes, there is a clear need to revisit the body of knowledge which advertising community accumulated in the past decades.

At this point, the IoT is still in its formative stage, and we can only speculate about what exactly the world will look like once these technologies achieve a certain level of maturity and how exactly consumers will integrate them in their lives. However, it appears certain that the IoT will challenge at least two cornerstone assumptions of advertising theory: 1) that the consumer is the only source of agency in the consumer journey, and 2) that consumers’ choices and actions are based on rather limited perceptual and cognitive abilities, as well as a flawed behavioral control. Violation of these fundamental assumptions may have some deep ramifications for the validity and utility of some advertising knowledge. To guide us through the further discussion of this proposition on a theory-specific level, we will consider effects of the IoT at each stage of the hierarchy of effects model.

It is commonly accepted that strategic communication is a longitudinal multi-step process, with the consumer progressing through certain states toward the desired communication outcome while (Thorson and Rodgers 2012). This process is best described by the models of the hierarchy of effects (Barry 1987), which posit that persuasion process starts with the consumer’s attention and interest in the message, then progresses through some form of cognitive and/or affective reaction to the message and its content, which can then lead to the formation, alteration or reinforcement of attitudes and, ultimately, on to desired behavior (purchase of a brand, voting for a candidate, adopting a health behavior, etc.). Although some aspects of this model have been debated (e.g., linearity and unidirectionality of the effects, see Kobayashi 2008) the basic structure of the model remains unchallenged and provides a useful framework for our discussion.

Attention and Information Search

For any message to have an effect, it should be first perceived and processed by the consumer. However, humans have limited perceptual capacities (Lang 2000), are skeptical about advertising (Friestad and Wright 1994), and tend to avoid ads cognitively and physically (Duff and Faber 2011). This is our current baseline picture of the first stage of the communication process, and technology behind PDAs can change all of its major elements.

People are information processors, who constantly perceive, store and make sense of the stimuli around them. But human ability to perceive and process information is greatly restricted by both external factors (e.g., limited time), and internal physiological constraints (Eysenk 1993; Lang 2000). There is only so much (and it is actually not much at all) information we can see, hear, process, encode and store. A number of other moderating variables – e.g., our information search goals (Johnston and Dark 1986; Graham 1997), concurrent activities and multitasking (Duff and Sar 2015), information format and message characteristics (Allan 2006) – further determine what does and does not get attended to and encoded. Unlike humans, virtual agents connected to the IoT are not subject to any of these limitations and are excellent at searching, detecting, processing and encoding huge amounts of data. Virtual helpers can serve as consumer’s “extra eyes, extra ears”, and greatly expand the amount of information considered in any particular scenario, including non-salient and previously unknown options (brands, retailers, substitute product categories), comprehensive brand and product information (e.g., content of all promotional messages), product reviews, and a wealth of other data that is usually left under the radar of consumer’s attention. PDA can monitor global marketplace around the clock, and whether the person is actively shopping or not, the PDA is always ready to relay any useful information – either in response to the user’s request, or proactively, in anticipation of an apparent future need (Forest, Hoanca, and Tsakis 2015). Such PDA-enabled attention augmentation is inconsistent with our view of consumers’ limited perceptual and attentive capacities, and can reduce the predictive utility of previous findings built on the assumption of such limitations.

Another aspect of attention and information search behavior that is likely to be affected by PDAs is consumer ad avoidance in its various manifestations. Skeptical and knowledgeable about persuasive communication, people are motivated to gain control over their media consumption and ad exposure, and increasingly rely on digital tools and solutions to physically avoid all promotional content altogether – install ad-blocking software, pay for subscription to the ad-free versions of the content, etc. PDAs are gradually creating an environment where ads on the most media platforms cannot, and do not have to, compete for the user’s attention: as machine-learning algorithms are getting better at selecting content to be displayed on the personal devices, promotional materials that do get through may no longer be perceived of as “ads”, but as useful, timely and relevant information. There are two mechanisms that are possibly responsible for this effect: uber-personalization, and reduced consumer’s skepticism toward information suggested by PDAs. Personalization by itself is not new – advertisers have been capitalizing on the benefits of user-tracking and big data analytics for many years now, and with a great success. Empirical research confirms that when online ads are tailored for the individual consumers, they are more likely to click on the message, have more positive attitude toward the ad and the website, and are more likely to respond to the promotional offer (see Sundar, Kim, and Gambino 2017 for review). Having PDAs on their side, consumers will now gain an ability to also benefit from tracking and personalizing technologies, previously employed by the marketers to their advantage. Working on consumer's behalf, rather than in the interest of third-parties, PDAs will serve as an effective communication intermediary which will offer only those ads and brands that are highly relevant to the consumer, and in the most appropriate time, place and format. PDA-curated messages have some major advantages over the marketer-driven personalization, which will make them well-accepted and desirable by consumers. First, personal agents can obtain a much deeper insight about what, when, where and in what format would be a welcome information. While marketers primarily rely on the information harvested from the website "cookies" – either collected directly from the company's website, or from the third-party data aggregators, – PDAs have access to much richer data, including those from personal calendars and records, smart devices and appliances, information about family members, user's daily commute, real-time health and affect data, and other records not available to the marketers. For example, in a typical location-based advertising, a vendor can detect when you are near the pizza parlor, and can send to your phone an ad and a coupon. A PDA can do a much better job, because it can know that its owner's blood pressure is too high, he recently visited a doctor, and then ordered a cookbook with healthy recipes. Thus, an ad from a place serving fresh juice or yogurt might be better received. Second, because the digital assistant acts in the interest of the consumer, its suggestions are not limited to a single brand or to the options available from a single vendor. Rather than simply receiving messages pushed by the marketers (usually those with bigger advertising budget or more advanced targeting software), the consumer can now "pull" information from a much wider list of sources. Finally, because the technology is "personal", PDA-curated content may be accepted with less skepticism. While consumers do respond well to the narrow-targeted messages crafted by the marketers, they also report major concerns about their privacy, which leads to a very mixed overall experience (Aguirre et al. 2015; Kelly and Kerr 2010). But if the message is not pushed by the marketer, but is, instead, determined based on one's personally chosen criteria and selected by the software on one's own phone, the consumer may be more willing to attend to such a message. If messages are uber-personalized to the degree they are perceived as highly relevant, non-intrusive and timely, and if a digital helper rather than a marketer determines them, the phenomenon of consumer ad avoidance may eventually become less pervasive.

In the discussion of consumer's attention and ad avoidance, we must also consider another game-changing functionality of the virtual assistants – their ability to communicate using natural speech. Conversational format in human-machine interaction has always been the golden standard for the technology developers as the most convenient, efficient and natural way of communication for humans (Picard 1997). Rather than typing in a question on a phone or a laptop, and then going through results site-by-site and click-by-click, a person can simply ask a question like they would a friend or a shopping assistant ("Cortana, who has the best electronics deals on Black Friday?"). Speech-recognition also enables users to directly interact with devices for which traditional interface (keyboard, touchpad, etc.) is not usable or convenient, e.g., smartwatches, home appliances, cars. Efficient and practical, conversational interfaces also create a better, richer interaction and a sense of connection with a human being (Gratch and Marsella 2005). All these factors give a reason to expect that natural speech will become increasingly popular, or even preferred mode of human-machine interaction.

The possibility to verbally delegate information search to the digital assistant provides consumers with yet another way to physically avoid ads. For example, Amazon's Alexa can add items to the shopping list, or even re-buy items from your shopping history if you simply ask her to do so in your normal voice. Now compare this to the traditional way many people shop on Amazon. Even if the consumer has an ad-blocking software, she will still see some on-site ads that are usually invisible to the ad-blocking software. She may also notice a section showing what "consumers who bought this item also bought", and may even get curious about the "Sponsored products" displayed on the page. In the end, the consumer gets exposed to much more information and product options than she initially wanted. All these can be avoided if the consumer chooses to speak with Alexa to do her search.

At the time of writing of this paper, most PDAs installed on personal and household computing devices understand only one- or two-step commands. However, digital agents capable of long goal-oriented dialogues already exist and are tested in other domains. For example, Microsoft has developed a digital anthropomorphic agent that, speaking in a conversational language, can interact with and triage medical patients (Viswav 2014). It is only a matter of a few years, if not months, until virtual assistants will be also upgraded with more advanced conversational capabilities, and will be able to perform more complex information search on consumer's behalf. For example, a consumer will be able to ask a PDA to help him choose a local summer camp for his kids. The consumer will hear a list of suggestions, ask the agent a series of clarifying questions, then make a choice, and maybe even ask the agent to make a reservation. This creates an unprecedented situation when, in order to obtain some information, the consumer does not need to browse the local newspaper or personally search the Internet, and is not exposed to the actual promotional content crafted by the marketers. Whether the ads are in color or monochromatic, large or small in size, include a picture of smiling children or only factual information, occupy half of the front page or just a small section at the end, – all of these factors that can potentially have an effect on user's attention and interest in the ads are no longer relevant. In terms of the hierarchy of effects, this is an extraordinary situation when the consumer can outsource the "attention" stage to the machine, and skip straight to the "interest", or even "purchase".

Of course, even when technology helps consumers to achieve the highest level of control over media consumption and ad exposure on their personal devices (i.e., filter out all ads that do not meet consumer's needs and interest), it will still be impossible to avoid all promotional materials altogether. We will probably see a rapid growth of advertising forms that can stay under the radar of PDAs: product placements, outdoor advertising, native advertising, ambient displays, etc. In these new environment, it will be more important than ever to understand how consumers respond to information they do not purposefully seek *and* which appears on the platforms other than personal devices. Researchers have begun to reveal some important insights into what happens when consumers do not actively attend to the ads online (Duff and Faber 2011). Adjusting to the new Web 3.0 reality, we need to further our insight into this area of research, and to extend it beyond traditional and online media environments.

Advertising Evaluation and Brand Attitudes

The first-order outcome of exposure and attention to advertising is some form of cognitive and/or affective reaction to the message. Just like perceptual deficiencies influence consumers' information search and attention, so do cognitive biases and limitations influence individuals' response to the messages (Haselton, Nettle, and Murray 2005). Researchers have reported a large number of context-, message-, and consumer-related variables that can significantly influence individuals' choices: imagery (Keller and Block 1997; Myers and Sar 2015), music (Allan 2006), celebrity endorsement (Hung 2014), construal level (Lieberman, Trope, and Stephen 2007), the size of consideration set (Iyengar and Lepper 2000), habits (Wood, Quinn, and Kashy 2002), regulatory focus (Lee and Aaker 2004), priming effects (Yi 1990), framing of alternatives (Levin, Schneider, and Gaeth 1998), anchoring effects (Wegener, Petty, Blankenship, and Detweiler-Bedell 2010), arousal and emotional appeals (Holbrook and Batra 1987), affect (Loewenstein and Lerner 2003), involvement (Johnson and Eagly 1989), brand familiarity (Kent and Allen 1994), to name just a few. In other words, consumers' preferences are often constructed on the fly and are highly contingent on their internal resources, external stimuli crafted by the marketers, and a number of contextual factors. Given the limited computational capabilities of humans, it is natural that their preferences and behaviors are usually less than optimal. For example, every time consumers shop at a local grocery store, they face a choice between several brands, including a cheaper generic one. Often the products are identical, yet many consumers are willing to pay a premium for one of the brands out of habit, brand loyalty, specific brand-evoked emotions, a fuzzy memory of a warm feeling evoked by the brand ad, or other subjective and irrational reasons. Software algorithms are not subject to such influences, and can augment consumers' cognition by doing all the analysis and problem-solving in such a comprehensive, rational and accurate manner as only a machine could. Both the process and the outcome of such evaluation can be quite different from what the current advertising theories predict.

One of the most influential works that describe how an individual processes a persuasive message is Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM; Petty and Cacioppo 1986). According to ELM, there are two distinct routes for information processing: a central route characterized by extensive cognitive elaboration on the message, and a peripheral route characterized by minimal, if any, cognitive processing. Two main moderators that determine the depth of message elaboration and the route to persuasion are motivation and ability to process information. When individuals are both motivated and able to think about it, the likelihood of elaboration is high, and the message arguments (their strength and quality) determine the persuasion outcome. This is central route to persuasion. When individuals are not motivated and/or not able to carefully evaluate the message, the likelihood of elaboration is toward the low end of the continuum, in which case peripheral cues (e.g., execution elements of the ad) are primarily responsible for the outcome. This is the peripheral route to persuasion.

Motivation to deliberate is mainly determined by the consumer's involvement with the product, along with the person's dispositional need for cognition, mood, and a few other less influential factors (Cacioppo and Petty 1982; Petty, Cacioppo, and Schumann 1983). Ability variables are more numerous, and can be situation-, person-, or message-related: e.g., limited time for processing, noise and other distractors, person's insufficient background knowledge of the topic, message language and complexity, lettering font size and color of the print ad, and so on. Research suggests that situations with both high motivation and high ability to process the message are rather rare, and even if/when "people are motivated to hold subjectively accurate attitudes, being cognitive misers, people by default have a low likelihood of elaboration" (Schumann et al. 2012, p. 59). In other words, the default route for consumer's persuasion is through the peripheral cues (heuristics). The default for the personal digital agents is the exact opposite: with an immense computational capacity, AI-driven machines are excellent at remembering, aggregating and analyzing data, finding patterns, cross-checking facts, estimating probabilities, and solving even the most complex multi-variable problems (Backaitis 2014). In fact, PDA greatly resembles the "rational consumer" assumed in the traditional economic theory and in the early works on consumer decision-making (e.g., Herstein and Milnor 1953). For example, researchers expect that the rational consumer should engage in price search to reduce price uncertainty (Mehta, Rajiv, and Srinivastan 2003), strive to increase consideration set and search for options (Zwick et al. 2003), check supporting evidence for the manufacturer's product claims (Kalra, Rajiv, and Srinivastan 1998), and do other things to maximize utility in a consistent and a coherent manner. This is not a very realistic picture of a human behavior, but is a pretty accurate description of how a PDA would proceed.

As the consumers increasingly rely on their PDAs for information search and processing, the effect and importance of the elements designed to appeal to consumers through the default peripheral route of persuasion may decrease. Having a celebrity photo, a nostalgia-evoking imagery, a catchy tune, and even a brand logo will have smaller, if any, effect on which product gets selected by the computer algorithm. Similarly, PDAs are immune to the creative solutions that – intentionally or not – exploit deficiencies of human mental accounting. For example, framing options in terms of gains vs. losses (Kahneman and Tversky 1979), prevention or promotion (Higgins 1998), or presenting options in more or less abstract terms (Lieberman, Trope, and Stephan 2007) are all well-known ways to influence consumers' choices in a predictable manner, but would have no effect on a computer.

This creates a unique situation where marketers will need to design messages for a qualitatively different, non-human, "audience" (i.e., machine algorithms), and where consumers may begin to receive commercial information that is drastically different from what they are used to, both in form and in content (e.g., unusual brand recommendations, previously ignored important product attributes, alternatives re-framed for an easy comparison). On the most basic level, this raises a question about the relevance and validity of conceptual and operational definitions of key advertising variables: attitude toward the ad and the brand, along with a number of related concepts: involvement, memory, processing fluency (Lee and Aaker 2004), attitude strength (Priester et al. 2004), attitude certainty (Tormala and Petty 2002), and some others. For example, is it still important that the ad evokes positive attitude? In a situation where we cannot be certain about the agency of the decision-maker (i.e., a human or a PDA), can we still use memory as a measure of advertising effectiveness, or brand purchase as a measure of brand attitude? Our current vision of how these variables fit together in a bigger picture may also need a revision. For example, in their meta-analysis of research on antecedents and consequences of ad attitudes, Brown and Stayman (1992) found that attitude toward the ad affects brand attitudes in two ways: directly (ad attitude → brand attitude), and through the brand cognition (ad attitude → brand cognition → brand attitude). As consumers gain an opportunity to remove themselves from the strategic communication process, how will this model change? What will now feed into brand attitudes, and how can advertisers stay in touch with consumers if communication is partially mediated by intelligent machines? Mostly important, what are the boundary conditions for the new effects? Consider emotions, an essential part of human experience. Will consumer's experience really improve if PDAs strip all the communication of nostalgia appeals, funny visuals or invigorating tunes? Can machine algorithms learn to take into account all the seemingly irrelevant, suboptimal, unquantifiable, and undetectable factors that are, nevertheless, critical to the consumer experience (e.g., visions of the "ideal" self, dreams and fantasies)? What determines whether a consumer is willing to delegate her decision-making to PDA? And how will consumers perceive the options selected by the machine, especially if they are unusual, unfamiliar, or even objectionable? For example, a virtual agent can estimate that it is not advisable to donate money to a charity, or buy new toys for a terminally ill pet. Rational, economically optimal choices such as these may not always be the most desirable for the consumer. How exactly individuals react to PDAs and integrate their advice in their behaviors will greatly depend on how PDA technology evolves (i.e., quality of the actual machine-learning algorithm), as well as consumers' relationship with PDA as a medium and a message endorser. We will discuss these questions in the next sections.

Consumer Behaviors

The disruptive effect of the IoT on marketing communication process can extend beyond the initial attention-interest-evaluation steps, and will also manifest at the more advanced stages, such as overt behaviors and repeat purchases. As consumers increasingly trust machines to collect information and make decisions on their behalf, it is reasonable to expect that they will allow, or even prefer, their digital helpers to perform actual transactions as well. Delegating purchase decisions to the machine is not such a far-fetched idea. It is already realized in some online trading tools, where a consumer can set up a bot to buy and sell financial instruments on consumer's behalf. Some companies also experiment with the possibilities to automate purchases of consumers' goods, like reordering supplies and groceries. For example, Amazon offers its customers a Dash Button – a small Wi-Fi enabled device that connects directly to the consumer's Amazon account via a phone app. Each button is paired with one specific product (e.g., Tide laundry detergent). To re-order this product, a consumer just needs to press the button, making it fast and easy to restock essentials. In the recent years, we have also seen an increase in product subscription services, where a consumer commits to regular shipments of products, where the final selection of the goods and brands is chosen by the seller. One can subscribe to buy food (*BlueApron*), toys (*LittlePassports*), makeup (*Birchbox*), and even clothes (*Stitchfix*) this way. These examples, together with some empirical evidence, illustrate that consumers may, in fact, be quite willing to entrust machines with making purchasing decisions, either because of convenience, desire for novelty or excitement, or for some other reasons (Forsythe, Butler, and Schaefer 1990; Hollander and Rassuli 1999; Wood, Salomon, and Englis 2002). As devices gets smarter and software algorithms more sophisticated, machines will learn to increasingly accurately assess consumers' tastes and needs, and automatically (re)order items without any intervention from the consumer.

Such outsourcing of buying behaviors might be further facilitated by the fact that people already display very high consistency in their purchase patterns. In contrast to the traditional categorization of consumers into either brand loyal, switchers, or variety seekers (Guadagni and Little 1983), new empirical evidence from multiple product categories indicates that the absolute majority of consumers have a split-loyalty for a limited set of brands, even in the durable goods categories (Deighton, Henderson, and Neslin 1994). When the timeframe of purchase analysis is sufficiently extended to avoid measurement artifacts (i.e., a year, instead of a week or a month), only a negligible number of buyers appears 100% brand loyal, or always switching from brand to brand (Deighton, Henderson, and Neslin 1994). Considering this evidence, it is often argued that the main purpose of advertising is not to educate consumers about the brand or to persuade them to commit, but to nudge existing customers, encourage them to buy the brand more often, and, perhaps, to persuade current non-users to include the brand in the consideration set for future trials (Barnard and Ehrenberg 1997). This is done primarily by maintaining high brand salience in consumers' memories, and by reinforcing their positive experience with the brand.

With growing adoption of PDAs, the "nudging" role of advertising will remain important. On one hand, technology can easily automate many repeated purchases, and even mimic a consumer's pattern of rotating between several preferred brands. When consumer's purchases are outsourced to the software and do not depend on salience of any particular brand at the moment of purchase, there seems to be little pragmatic reason for the marketers to remind consumers about the brand. Further automating already habitual or repetitive purchases can be accepted as a useful option by the consumers, and a highly desirable possibility for many well-established and popular brands that already enjoy a large base of support (consider the earlier example of Amazon's Dash button for Tide).

One the other hand, new technology also has the power to disrupt buying routines and modify consumers' consideration sets much more effectively than any traditional marketing methods. PDAs can augment brand memories better than any ad, so that once a person displays even a small sign of interest or preference for a brand (for example, displays physiological signs of the unusually positive attitude toward a new perfume tested in the department store), a PDA can help to translate this brand interest into the actual purchase by later putting this perfume into online shopping cart, or bringing it into consumer's consideration set in some other way. PDAs connected to the smart appliances can also alert the user if the product or brand seem no longer needed. For example, if yogurt always expires without a consumer ever eating a spoon of it, or if a consumer continues to subscribe to a sailing magazine after selling her boat, the agent can alert the user to these facts and suggest to modify future purchases accordingly. Equally important in this context is the feature of PDAs we discussed earlier: their ability to give a fighting chance to the brands that would otherwise be left ignored or even unknown. Being extraordinary information search and analysis machines, virtual agents connected to the IoT can continuously survey market for the alternative options, and suggest them to the user in addition to her usual brand repertoire. Altogether, these functionalities of the IoT will empower the consumer, but will be a "mixed news" for the marketers, who can both benefit from automation, and become more vulnerable to consumer switching behaviors. More research is needed to understand all the circumstances and ramifications of purchase automation: consumers' decisions that lead to purchase "outsourcing", their perception of the process, further relationships with the automatically purchased brands, and the role of promotional messages in such relationships.

Another way in which the IoT can significantly disrupt consumer behaviors is by helping individuals to manage habits. Habits are behaviors that are automatically triggered by various recurring cues, such as a place, time, mood, physical elements of the environment, or a social situation (Wood, Quinn, and Kashy 2002). Associations between contextual cues and consumer choices can develop rather quickly (Lutchyn and Faber 2016), and are usually highly stable. It is currently estimated that almost half of everyday consumers' actions and choices are habitual (Wood, Quinn, and Kashy 2002). In most cases, habits serve as a perfectly adaptive mental shortcut. However, some habits – such as smoking or emotional eating – are harmful and subject for intervention. Unfortunately, habits are hard to break because consumers are usually unable to identify triggers (i.e., specific contextual cues) of their habits, and/or may struggle with breaking the cue-habit association. Personal digital agents equipped with real-time data from biosensors, GPS, calendar and a number of other smart devices will make the task of introspection much easier. At a minimum, users will be able to see a clear picture of their consumer behavior patterns and uncover the real triggers of their choices and actions (Li, Dey, and Forlizzi 2010). For example, eating sweets may be triggered by being in a bad mood, binge drinking may be linked to presence of a certain friend, and purchase of processed food may be associated with both the time of day and specific location (e.g., gas station). Digital assistants can help to not only identify such links, but also support lifestyle changes by providing just-in-time warnings, physically re-routing a person away from the contextual cue, suggesting alternatives to a habitual response, or doing some other interventions (e.g., facilitate a stress-reducing activity for emotional eaters). A meta-analysis by Hermsten and colleagues (Hermsen et al. 2016) suggests some initial evidence that feedback through the digital technology can be, indeed, effective in disrupting bad habits. However, due the novelty of the technology, we still lack understanding of what makes such habit-management interventions effective, and how we can improve them further. Effects of the medium (e.g., a smartwatch vs. a smartphone), specific message characteristics (e.g., timeliness), endorser type (e.g., anthropomorphic PDA or no endorser), and other unique variables in technology-assisted interventions present great subjects for future research.

New Areas of Advertising Research: In with The New

The IoT will also present a set of unique research issues, most of which will concern various aspects of users' adoption of the personal digital assistants. First, there is a clear need to explore different characteristics of PDAs as the new medium. Siris, Cortanas, and Alexas differ from the usual interface of any personal digital device, and are even more distinct from any traditional media class: unlike any existing medium, PDAs have natural language capabilities, can be activated by voice, "reside" in the cloud, and are not device-specific (i.e., an individual's personal helper can appear on or speak from across multiple platforms – a person's smartphone, laptop, tablet, smartwatch, and, potentially, car dashboard, smart home system speakers, etc.). Characteristics of the medium shape the communication environment, and can significantly influence consumer's experience and reaction to the message. In fact, the psychological effects of the medium can be even more powerful than effects of the medium content (McLuhan 1964/1995). Multiple studies in advertising have shown that memory for the ad, attitudes toward the ad and the brand, and even purchase intentions can be all significantly changed by the channel through which the message is delivered (e.g., Dahlen 2005). If "medium is the message" (McLuhan 1964/1995), then what is the message in the case of a personal digital agent? How do consumers perceive and interact with this medium? How do its characteristics – specifically, voice-based interaction, omnipresence of the assistant, sense of social co-presence, immersion, and newness of the technology – influence process and outcomes of interacting with this medium? These are some of the new questions that will need to be answered.

PDAs also represent a new type of information source and a message endorser. Developers strive to imbue virtual agents with "personality" by pre-programming carefully thought-out jokes and responses to some "personal" questions ("Siri, are you married?"). PDAs are also customizable: currently, users can choose their agents' gender, language, voice accent (a proxy for nationality), and the list will likely extend to include other important personality variables (e.g., appearance, age, clothes, mannerisms). This, together with PDAs' ability to hear, understand, and respond, makes digital agents very human-like in ways that span well beyond rudimentary anthropomorphism. Furthermore, PDAs are designed to learn about every aspect of their users' life, their likes, preferences, everyday habits, and many other highly personal things, which over time can lead to an illusion of a close personal relationship (Schiaffino and Amandi 2004). However, PDAs are clearly *not* human. Amalgamation of real and artificial, physical and digital, "smart" and naïve about basic human practices, agents are a unique phenomenon of which people are still trying to make sense. But what happens when this entity becomes "a window to the world", as predicted by the technologists? There is a pressing need to understand the psychological issues of interacting with intelligence that is not human: how do consumers perceive their digital helpers? Some early studies suggest that people respond to technology – specifically, computers – in a social way, as they would to real people: attribute machines with personality characteristics, address them politely, and so on (Reeves and Nass 1996). Researchers explained that humans have not evolved yet to differentiate an artificial human from a real one, so even "subtle and implicit representation of socialness [in a computer] are sufficient to evoke social responses" through built-in mechanisms in the human mind (Nass et al. 1994, p.556). Contrary to this proposition, robotics scientists found that the effect is not so straightforward, and that as a machine increases in human-likeness, human reaction to it improves only to a certain point of realism, after which it dips into the "uncanny valley" – probably due to the fact that highly realistic robots are implicitly categorized as real humans and are judged against standards they cannot meet (Mori, MacDorman, and Kageki 2012). Digital, very human-like, "smart" and personal, PDAs do not easily fit within any existing schema, so it is crucial to understand how exactly consumers perceive this technology: as "social" agents, in which case the rules of human-human relations will apply, or as just another computer interface. To paraphrase this in more pragmatic terms: when a consumer receives a recommendation relayed by Siri, will this consumer categorize it as a digital ad, as another person's endorsement, or as a close friend's recommendation? Perception of the agent will affect what types of tasks a consumer is willing to delegate to the PDA, how well she would accept its messages, how much trust she would have in the quality of information, and many other outcomes. For example, in the previous chapters we hypothesized that consumers may display less skepticism and better acceptance of messages delivered by PDAs, but this proposition needs to be tested empirically.

It should be noted that, although they are new to the consumer arena, various forms of embodied digital assistants have been studied by computer scientists for decades, so advertising field can greatly benefit from interdisciplinary collaboration on this topic. For example, works on technology acceptance (Davis 1986), robotics (Mori, MacDorman, and Kageki 2012), and various aspects of human-computer interaction (Norman 2008) can be extremely informative for both theory building and method development. Consumer-agent interaction is a fascinating topic, and will soon take the central stage in advertising research.

Conclusion

Internet and its supporting technologies are constantly evolving, and we are now witnessing beginning of the new, possibly the most disruptive phase of this evolution. Transition from the Internet of PCs to the Internet of Things has already started. The vision of the IoT predicts a world full of smart interconnected devices, where a myriad of objects and services can "think", learn what we like, anticipate our needs, and communicate with consumers and each other, supported by the machine learning algorithms and artificial intelligence. The key question now is not whether or when the vision of the IoT will be fully realized, but how consumers' everyday lives will change by incorporating the IoT into their environments, what brands need to do to fit into this communication revolution, and how researchers can help in the process.

The advertising discipline should acknowledge this transformation by revisiting its theories and research agenda rooted in the pre-IoT era. Specifically, arrival of the Web 3.0 will undermine two of the basic axioms in advertising body of research: that the consumer is the only source of agency in the consumer journey, and that this consumer's choices and actions are based on rather imperfect perceptual and cognitive abilities. The IoT-connected digital assistants will endow consumers with super powers of augmented attention, cognition, memory and even behavior, which should enable the consumer to finally "gain the upper hand in the marketing game…" (Forrest and Hoanca 2015, p. 58). This will bring major disruptions to every stage of the communication process, and, thus, affect the descriptive utility and practical significance of many current advertising models and theories. In this paper, we described the current state of technology, tried to predict how exactly consumers' behaviors will change, and discussed some of the questions, variables and previous findings that may need to be considered (or, rather, re-considered) to ensure that the advertising theory is up-to-date with technological and societal changes.

We also outlined several qualitatively new issues brought by the new technological phenomena. For the first time in history, we have a situation where technology truly departs from the metaphor of a desktop/face-to-face human-machine interaction, and when digital agents are equipped with a relatively advanced level of artificial intelligence. This creates situations unimaginable even just a few years ago, e.g., a consumer receiving a message from his washing machine, or asking his PDA in a normal conversational voice to hail taxi or buy laundry detergent. This new reality generates a large number of questions for advertising researchers, who will now need to understand how consumers perceive the new entity of non-human intelligence (i.e., PDAs), and what role this entity will play in consumers' lives. None of these issues is well understood, and there is a pressing need for a new research agenda that would begin to explore these and many other related issues. Our hope is that this review will inspire a further discussion and research in this area.

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OUR FEARLESS LEADERS: HOW AGENCY LEADERS IN AMERICA PERCEIVE THE 21ST CENTURY

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Abstract

This research examined leadership in U.S. based ad agencies during a period of transition and turmoil as they adapt to the knowledge era. No longer is the legacy agency model viable as agencies seek to reinvent themselves through new paradigms. Leadership is a big part of the change process. For advertising scholars, this offers a timely opportunity to examine the role of leadership in managing change at the advertising agency. How do leaders handle new ways of thinking and doing as part of 21st century agency management? What are some of their major internal and external challenges? What constitutes effective leadership for the transforming agency of today? Is there a broadly accepted understanding of "ideal" leadership and do agencies successfully strive for it? How are agency personnel being trained to lead? These are some pertinent questions that drive this qualitative investigation. Using in-depth interviews with 16 leaders at small, medium, and large agencies across the U.S., the study offered insights on effective leadership and its attributes, challenges, and training in a post digital world.

Leaders revealed genuine concern about survival and competitiveness in the post digital world and expressed general concern about declining value. Agencies today face an identity crisis and need a new value proposition, are suffering a flight of talent from the industry, and are dealing with internal cultural and structural upheaval. Digital agencies appear best prepared to meet challenges as products of the times.

So what does it mean to lead in these times? Interviews reveal that effective leadership in advertising is not seen as very different from other industries in transition. Ideal leaders for today's agencies are individuals with exceptional change management skills who can steer through turbulent times by reimagining the nature of the agency business. Leadership is viewed as a more distributed phenomenon with top down and bottom up processes. Effective leaders are seen as both transformative and pragmatic, collaborative and empathetic. In addition to knowledge and expertise, key leadership qualities include soft skills like listening, emotional intelligence, humility and integrity.

However, leadership training across industry is seen as uneven relying as much on informal mentoring as on structured programs. While agencies are committed to building a skilled workforce, investing in training leaders for the future is not an industry priority.

Insights from this study can be used to conduct industry wide research on viewpoints of leaders and followers, examine training issues in leadership, extend leadership study to global advertising contexts and help formulate leadership theory in advertising.

HOW MARKETERS VIEW CONTEMPORARY MARKETING COMMUNICATION: THE MAC MODEL

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Introduction

Traditional media such as TV, the press, and radio remain important components of integrated marketing communication. Nevertheless, technological developments have been continuously changing the face of marketing communication, particularly in recent years. In making their purchase decisions, consumers are now merging online and offline product information sources (Ratchford, Talukdar, and Lee 2007). Indeed, consumers have been found to place more trust in peers and online social networks than in traditional marketing messages (Buhalis and Law 2008), and the internet has in some cases replaced advertising in other media, especially newspapers (Ratchford 2015). As a result, few business-to-business campaigns would be developed today without thinking of search engine optimization and social media (Swani, Brown and Milne 2014). Brands still 'push' communications to consumers, but buyers now have both the ability and a willingness to pull communications that interest them and even to push their own messages back to marketers.

Against this backdrop, many companies recognize that consumers are playing an increasingly important role not just as receivers of marketing communication, but as senders too. There is a constant, rapid and relentless dialogue between marketers and consumers (Berthon et al. 2008; see also Daugherty 2008), with social media in particular empowering consumers (to a far greater extent than business-to-business buyers) to become more active in the communication process. With Web 2.0, consumers have the ability not only to absorb information, but also to produce and distribute it, resulting in marketing communication that is co-created. Recognizing that the traditional marketer-controlled model may no longer be sufficient, many companies and organizations are increasingly encouraging consumers to communicate with them and other consumers, as well as trying to involve them in the process of developing advertising and other elements of the marketing mix (Thompson and Malaviya 2013).

Marketing communication is thus changing in response to technological change. The marketing implications are still somewhat unclear, and it has been recognized that further research on marketing in the presence of these new media, particularly social media, is needed (Ratchford 2015). Furthermore, apart from the emergence of the internet and of digital and wireless devices, there has been an evolution from mass to micro-marketing; a fragmentation of consumer markets and media audiences; increased use of sales promotions and public relations; and a rapid growth and development of database marketing (Belch and Belch 2014). As a result of such changes, marketing practices and ways of defining marketing and marketing communication have been in flux (Gould 2004; Reitman 1994; Kitchen, Brignell, and Sprickett Jones 2004; Nyilasy and Reid 2009; Schultz and Kitchen 2000; Schultz 2003;), to the extent that there seems to be increasing confusion rather than rational discussion and development (Schultz, 2016). In particular, academics have noted for a number of years that marketing communication lacks a central definition and formal theories useful amidst such rapid change (see for example Cornelissen and Lock 2000; Kitchen and Schultz 1999). This is demonstrated by the widespread disagreement amongst scholars about the general concept and scope of marketing communications (Kliatchko 2008). Differing definitions and explanations of the principles and applications of marketing communication have become common. Whatever the cause, the field is today marked by extreme conceptual and semantic ambiguity (Torp 2009), and the lack of a single, solid theoretical base (Schultz, 2016). This has led the Marketing Science Institute to call for new conceptual frameworks which might facilitate understanding how marketing actions (including marketing communication) influence consumers (Anonymous 2012).

The core reality is that new technologies have empowered consumers to talk among themselves and talk back to marketers, making it uncertain how well existing marketing communication models now apply. The myriad theories relating to how advertising works remain useful in both academic studies and business practice, but marketers plan their marketing activities using concepts that they consider to be suited to marketplace realities. After all, the basis of management action is not the world as objectively given, but instead managers' perceptions of the world (generally known as 'sensemaking': see Weick 1995; Ellis and Hopkinson 2010). To date, however, practicing marketers have had but little to say about how the various theories and models related to marketing communication work in practice. If they consider that marketing communication works in one way while academics consider that it works in another, parallel and disconnected marketing ‘universes’ are at play. The purpose of this research, therefore, was to develop a practitioner-based model of how marketing communication works without regard to academic theories.

Marketing Communication Models

Communication models have been around in marketing in one form or another for more than 100 years (Weilbacher 2001). A number have been developed which depict the stages a consumer may pass through in moving from a state of not being aware of a company, its products, or its brand to actually making a purchase. Such models have typically focused on advertising and the traditional cognition-affect-behavior sequence. The three best-known response hierarchy models (that is, the most cited in leading textbooks) are AIDA, Information Processing and Hierarchy of Effects. Attention, interest, desire and action (AIDA) (Strong 1925) was an early attempt to explain how an advertisement’s target audience might pass through a number of stages in responding. That well-known model had its origins in personal selling and was framed in terms of gaining a customer’s attention and then arousing interest in the product. The information processing model of advertising assumes that the receiver of a persuasive message is an ‘information processor’ or a ‘problem solver’. Finally, the hierarchy of effects model (Lavidge and Steiner 1961) is similar to AIDA and perhaps the most widely applied of the traditional response models, proposing that a consumer passes through a series of steps in sequential order from initial awareness of a product to purchasing it.

Such models are often used to explain and predict how consumers respond to marketing communication applying the traditional cognition, affect and conation sequence. These general approaches have received widespread attention from both marketers and academics as a useful description of the way advertising works, and have been used as a basis for measuring advertising effectiveness (Barry and Howard 1990). Researchers have suggested that advertising is an investment in a long-term process that moves consumers over time through several stages, beginning with product unawareness and moving ultimately to purchase. Consumers do not ‘jump’ from disinterest to the status of a convinced purchaser. Rather, they go through a series of steps to the threshold of purchase (Lavidge and Steiner 1961). Behind these kinds of models is the belief that advertising influences over time, so advertising may not lead to an immediate behavioral response. A consumer must reach each step before he or she can move on to the next.

There is little disagreement about the importance of the three stages of consumer response (cognition, affect, and conation), but there has been significant disagreement among scholars regarding their order. Understanding how consumers respond to marketing stimuli is of particular importance because establishing a satisfactory response model facilitates measuring marketing productivity. Proper strategies and tactics generate productivity improvements. Marketing productivity analysis is an inherently partial productivity measure in that it is based on a subset of the universe of possible organizational inputs, outputs, and transformation processes (Misterek, Dooley, and Anderson 1992). By managing on the basis of a 360-degree view of the customers (Rust et al. 2004), it can help integrate marketing communication and facilitate measuring marketing productivity. According to Rust, marketing’s intermediate outcomes are usually measured in terms of non-financial measures such as attitudes and behavioral intentions, but properly measuring marketing productivity requires understanding the entire customer response process. Furthermore, it has been recognized for some years that agency models of how advertising works are important criteria in the choice of agencies (Harvey and Rupert 1988).

With the business environment changing rapidly, the traditional communication models are now widely acknowledged to be insufficient. In short, they were developed prior to the advent of interactive marketing. The internet creates a fundamentally different environment for marketing communication, and with the internet and co-creation there is now a lack of agreement on the inputs to marketing communication, its outputs, and how consumers respond to it. As previously mentioned, the field of marketing communication is notable for its extreme conceptual and semantic ambiguity (Torp 2009). Even when academia does reflect on the existing marketing communication models and perhaps proposes revised ones, the voice of practicing marketers is seldom heard.

This research was designed to go part way toward resolving this conceptual ambiguity and the lack of practitioner insight by exploring how practicing marketers view contemporary marketing communication. The central research questions were:

1) How should marketing communication be defined?
2) How do practicing marketers perceive today’s consumers’ responses to marketing communication?

Answers to these questions should help both scholars and practicing marketers plan, implement, and better evaluate marketing communication which involves both push and pull functionality.

Generally, the level of statistical expertise demanded plus the time required have effectively removed practitioners from the debate in the top marketing journals. Yet one cannot assume that the practitioners’ idea will be the same as those of the academics who have come to dominate the academic literature. Recently Ots and Nyilasy

(2015) gave some voice back to practitioners by exploring managers' mental models when implementing marketing communication programs. The focus of their work was on failures when trying to apply the implementation of an integrated marketing communication paradigm. Aside from the two specific research questions stated above, this study sought to extend the work of Ots and Nyilasy by again working with practitioners, and by capturing all elements of marketing communication in a model comprising its inputs, outputs and process.

Methodology

Because this research sought an in-depth understanding of modern marketing communication and the processes involved, grounded theory methods were deemed the most suitable. Grounded theory attempts to build a provisional theory or model of a process grounded in the viewpoints of the participants and developed inductively. The sample is normally small, but the participants are carefully selected on the basis of being well qualified to elaborate on the process that is being modeled. But Glaser and Strauss (1967) draw attention to the way in which grounded theory is always provisional: "When generation of theory is the aim, however, one is constantly alert to emergent perspectives, what will change and help develop the theory. These perspectives can easily occur on the final day of study or when the manuscript is reviewed in page proof: so the published word is not the final one, but only a pause in the never-ending process of generating theory" (Dey 1999: 117). With this understanding, the theory offered here is provisional and the various components of the proposed model could be further tested quantitatively by researchers seeking to examine its robustness as well as its generalizability beyond the context of this study.

Sample

The research was conducted in Hong Kong, usually considered to be Asia's advertising capital. Hong Kong has one of the highest per capita rates of advertising spending in the world (Anonymous 2013). In applying grounded theory sampling methods, each participant should be included based on their ability to contribute to the development of the emerging model (Creswell 2013), i.e. theoretical sampling. In this case, given that marketing practitioners' views of the marketing communication process vary greatly, to qualify for the research a candidate needed to be a senior manager involved with marketing communication. Various advertising databases and directories were used to identify potential participants. Those candidates were first contacted by email, followed up with phone calls where required. The email described the study and requested a personal appointment for an interview. When a candidate agreed to take part in the research, the objectives and scope of the study were described in more detail. Theoretical saturation was deemed to have been reached by around the 20th interview. The final sample comprised 13 men and 7 women, each of whom had been working in the field of marketing communication for 12 years or more. They constituted a mix of agency employees and clients. Their positions included CEO, Vice-president, Account Director, Marketing Director and Marketing Manager, among others, and they were currently involved in industries such as telecommunications, public relations, advertising, fast-moving consumer goods, the media, education, jewelry, entertainment, footwear and shopping malls.

Procedure

The interviews were conducted in the participants' offices and typically lasted more than an hour on each occasion. Each interviewee signed a consent letter, and confidentiality was emphasized. The interviews were recorded, also with the participants' consent. The interviews were based on an interview protocol, and towards the end of the interview each participant was asked to provide some demographic information. The aim in the interviews was to generate a holistic portrayal of the entire complex process of marketing communication from multiple perspectives, identifying cause-and-effect relationships among factors as well as interactions. The protocol initially probed the core questions related to the research purpose:

- What is marketing communication?
- What are the inputs?
- What are the outputs?
- How do consumers respond to marketing communication?
- What is their thinking process?
- What needs to occur in their mind before they actually take action and buy the product?

Despite the protocol, the course of each interview depended upon the participant's comments. Follow-up questions were asked in pursuit of saturation. As is typical of grounded theory methodology, the list of questions grew and became more specific as each interview was completed. New categories and properties emerged over the course of the interviews and were incorporated into a revised model.

Data Analysis

The coding process followed the open-axial-selective codes of grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin 1998). Initially, open coding was used to separate hundreds of interview excerpts into raw codes. This line-by-line analysis was followed by axial coding. Axial coding involved reducing and structuring the raw codes into categories (and their properties), i.e. "putting the data…back together in new ways by making connections between a category and its subcategories" (Strauss and Corbin 1998 p91). Finally, selective coding was used. Selective coding was the integrative process of selecting the core category, systematically relating it to other categories, and filling in categories that needed further refinement and development (Strauss and Corbin 1998). The selective coding, therefore, naturally evolved from the axial coding. In this study the core category was "marketing communication", and the remaining elements of the emerging model tended to revolve around its inputs and outputs. The core category thus pulled together the other categories into an explanatory whole.

This process involved multiple trips to the field in a bid to confirm (or reject) categories and probe for new ones. The categories developed were compared and recombined until the analysis produced no new codes, categories, or properties, and all of the data could be accommodated in the resulting set of categories. Once a category was deemed saturated, that category was probed less intensively in subsequent interviews, which focused instead on the newer categories which were not yet deemed saturated. The analysis therefore involved constant comparison, and several versions of the model evolved during this process, until the final comprehensive marketing communication model was accepted.

The method also engaged in extensive memoing as the marketing communication model evolved. Those written records served as analytical building blocks that helped with the final formulation of the model (particularly at the axial coding stage), and ensured that the analysis was grounded in the data. In fact the researchers had both practical and academic experience with marketing communication, so there were several occasions during the data analysis when ungrounded ideas emerged from their personal biases and experience. This is a common problem with such inductive methods, and the memoing served to sensitize the researchers to it and return the analysis to the data.

Validation

Two auditors checked the data collection and coding at several stages of the fieldwork. The auditors maintained an audit trail that outlined the research process and the evolution of the codes, categories, and theory. This enhanced adherence to the required theoretical sampling, constant comparison, the open-axial-selective coding process, saturation, and evolving interview questions essential to the grounded theory methodology. In addition, although checking by the respondents is not commonly used in grounded theory research, some participants were sent highlights of the final model to validate the interpretations. It should be recognized, however, that constant comparison is a form of member checking that occurs throughout the model-building process (Elliott and Lazenbatt 2005).

Results

Only selected quotations will be reported here to elaborate on the components of the model, but all of the model's components were supported by numerous coded statements.

Modern Marketing Communication

The participants were invited to provide a definition of marketing communication. They pointed to inadequacies in the current definitions, including omissions and a failure to describe the contemporary situation properly. The participants agreed that marketing communication starts with a message the company wants to convey to a target audience, and that it has to be consistent with the other elements of the marketing mix, but they felt that modern concepts of marketing communication need to consider new media and word of mouth much more seriously. So aside from advertising, public relations, direct marketing, sales promotion, and personal selling, they agreed that online social media promote word of mouth which allows consumers to communicate with each other and also with companies much more than in the past. Communication is therefore multi-directional: marketer to consumer, but also consumer to consumer, and consumer to marketer. Consider the following illustrative comments:

- *"Word of mouth is now part of marketing communication, and might become the major part of marketing communication."* (Participant H)
- *"Traditionally, it is one-way; today it is not only two-way but multi-ways."* (Participant H)

- "*With the internet platform, marketing communication is not one-way or two-way, but multi-ways and helps facilitating consumer-generated content to induce demand."* (Participant O)

Discussion of personal selling evoked opinions about whether or not it should be considered a form of marketing communication. The opinions varied, usually by industry, with some arguing it should be left out of the concept of marketing communication altogether.

Listening to consumer feedback was often emphasized as important. The participants felt that since consumers today have more channels through which to express their views quickly, they demand a quicker response. Organizations therefore need to react quickly if they are to maintain an image of listening to consumer feedback and being willing to make any necessary changes. Participants thought that social media require a different approach to managing marketing communication:

- *"Listening has always been important. However the situation is different nowadays because there are far more people, so listening is more important than before."* (Participant P)
- *"Social media force the company to listen but make sure to do it properly to make it more effective. It allows the company to have a direct relationship and direct dialogue. To respect and talk to the customers in their language. It changes the trend and how to communicate more effectively."* (Participant L)

The participants were also aware of increasing consumer power, and how the internet and "information democracy" influence consumer power, combined with the concept of co-creation. Consider the following comments, for example:

- *"The company must respect customers, as they are more influential now. The company needs to take into account customer opinion, and be ready to adjust at any time and act fast."* (Participant R)
- *"Customers are very active. Nowadays most trendy products are actually developed in separate stages to satisfy or test the customers' needs and wants to further develop new products. For example, Apple's iPhone and some new sports shoes development by Nike were developed in different stages to add in some more value by collecting opinions from the customers in the middle."* (Participant S)

Consumer Response

The participants believed that the steps in the consumer response process have become faster and more fluid in recent years due to the internet. Similar to the arguments of Armstrong (2010) and Nyilasy and Reid (2009), the participants suggested that the steps in consumer response (beyond getting initial attention) can occur in any order and can occur simultaneously. Response can even oscillate backward and forward. The participants clearly viewed consumer response as being somewhat more fluid and unpredictable than the "learn-feel-do" sequence that traditional consumer response models rely on. For example, consider the following comments related to consumers' speed of response:

- *"*[The response process] *is very fast, much faster than we think. For example, online shopping or E-banking, a purchase can be concluded in 2 to 3 seconds on the web."* (Participant S)
- *"E-shopping/ E-banking enable the whole response process to happen at the same time."* (Participant B)
- *"Awareness, knowledge and liking can happen very fast nowadays."* (Participant A)
- *"By social networking, results can be achieved overnight, very fast, but likeability has to happen first." (Participant L)*

Consider the following comments related to the process oscillating or even skipping previously- accepted steps in consumer response:

- *"Nowadays the consumer thinking process is fragmented. They get information from somewhere, get information all the time."* (Participant M)
- *"It's hard to measure the steps in the sequence and they cannot be separated clearly."* (Participant N)
- *"When customers are aware of the product or the brand, they also have some knowledge of it, no matter if it is about the brand image or the function."* (Participant B)

The respondents often mentioned that product involvement influences the process. They associated involvement more with brand risk than any other type of risk. For low involvement/low risk decisions, consumers might act before they think or feel, following the logic of Vaughn (1980). All in all, the response process appears to be more circular than one-way and sequential. Consumers commonly skip steps and even go through multiple steps simultaneously. In addition, the participants pointed out that consumers may restart the process at any time. Consumers can learn, feel and do multiple times creating the possibility of a 'whirlpool' effect.

The majority of participants also outlined two distinct types of output from marketing communication: the tangible and the intangible. They described sales and profit as tangible and as resulting not only from new customers, but often even more importantly from repeat customers. Their less tangible outputs related to brand awareness, brand image and overall brand health. The participants agreed it is necessary to measure the effectiveness of marketing communication so as to determine whether the results achieved the pre-set objectives, and that measures of the effectiveness of marketing communication tend to revolve around customer equity (i.e. the lifetime value of a customer) and brand equity (i.e. the value of the brand, over and above the product's objective value).

A New Framework

Piecing together these views, it is clear that these experienced marketers' views of marketing communication and how consumers respond to it do not concur with traditional academic models. Schultz (2016) has asserted that while academics tend to favour stable models, practitioners seem to see marketing communication as a "moving set of interlocking pieces and parts involving multiple players/promoters who are constantly and continuously evolving, emerging, and adapting" (Schultz 2016, p. 2). In the context of this study, consistent with Schultz's (2016) assertion, practitioners view marketing communication as a dynamic and evolving field, where consumers are active communicators making rapid and fluid responses. The data suggest the following practitioner-based summary of the marketing communication process in contemporary markets.

> *Marketers act as conversations starters. Their communication channels include advertising (online and offline), direct marketing, personal selling, public relations, sales promotion and social media. Through generating word-of-mouth, consumers are participants in, and spreaders of, these conversations. Marketers may monitor that word-of-mouth through social media postings and field research. Consumer responses in terms of the classic learn / feel / do sequence may be unpredictable; consumers may enter at any stage, go through the stages in an unpredictable order, and may not necessary pass through all three stages before making a decision. Marketer and consumer-generated communication together co-create brand equity and customer equity.*

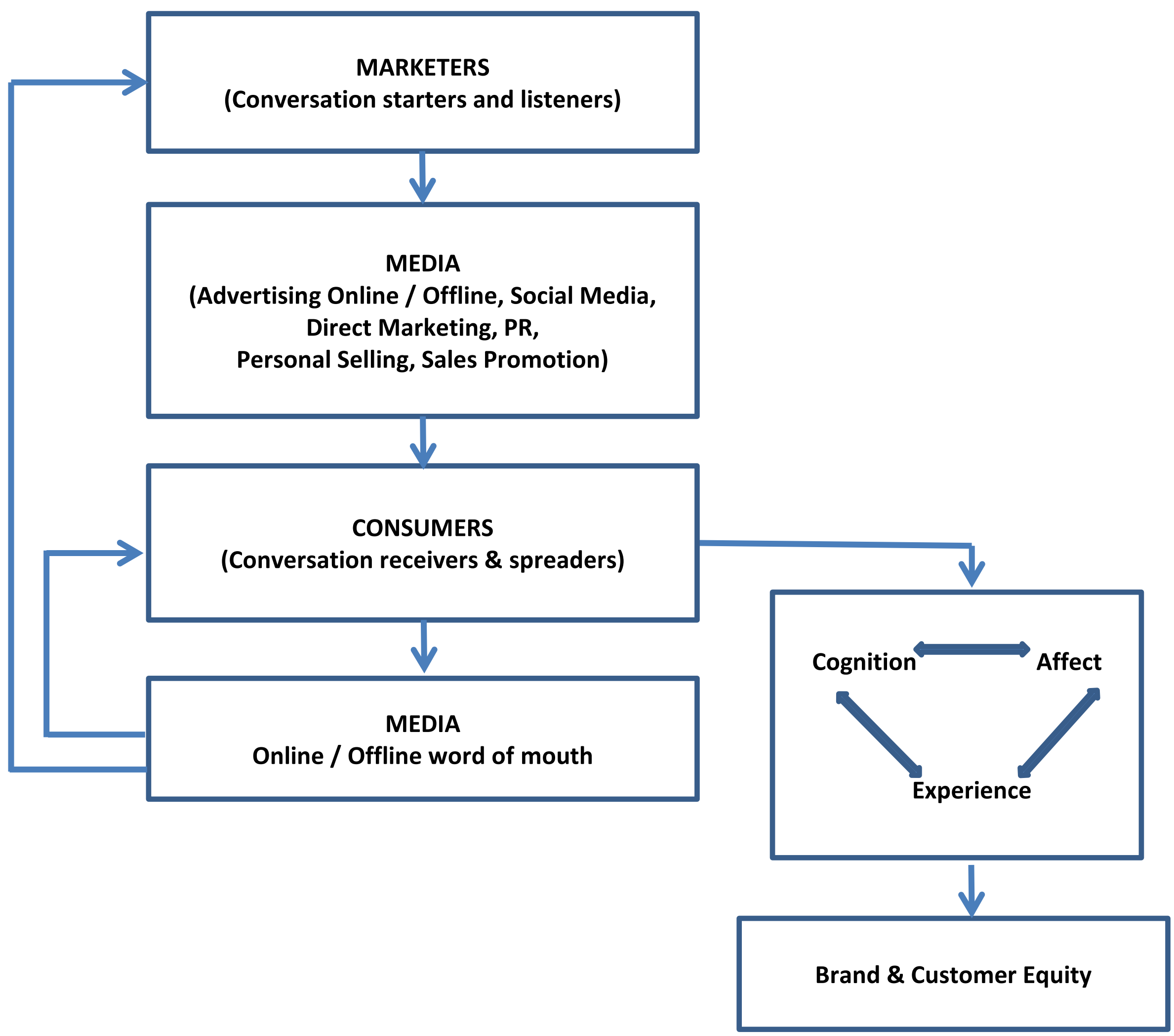
This statement reflects the idea that both marketers and consumers are often both talking and listening in today's communication process. The key elements in this process are:

- **Marketers:** Marketers may start the conversation with consumers. Traditional communication channels remain important, but the weighting has changed. Advertising (online and offline) remains a most important communication tool, but the role of personal selling may have decreased in the internet age. Ratchford, Talukdar, and Lee (2007) found, for example, that when it comes to the purchase of automobiles, using the internet is associated with a significant reduction in time with the car dealer and time spent in negotiation. That said, it may be that the exact role of personal selling in the overall marketing communication process is context-specific. Different product categories may generate different roles for the various communication channels. In any case, the communication methods marketers rely on today exploit both traditional and online channels.
- **Consumers**: Consumers receive messages from marketers and spread them to others (as well as spreading other messages on their own initiative). Consumers may also give feedback to marketers. Marketing communication therefore is no longer one-way to the same extent as formerly. It can be marketer to consumer, consumer to marketer, and consumer to consumer. Social media give consumers a voice and increase the reach and speed of the process, such that consumers are just as likely to influence each other as marketers are to influence them. Furthermore, unlike the offline version, online word of mouth is observable. Armed with such data, marketers find themselves able to listen more intently to their consumers, but at the same time they are expected to respond much more promptly than in the past.
- **The whirlpool*:*** The consumer response process can be viewed as a learn-feel-do whirlpool. The traditional understanding is that the consumer decision journey is a linear one (sometimes described as a funnel) (King, Racherla, and Bush 2014), but consumers today no longer respond in one direction only. There are far more deviations and they can restart the process at any time. Similar to the argument Court developed in his 2009 research, experience still feeds back into cognition and affect, but now consumers can learn, feel and do multiple times (Court et al. 2009). Belch and Belch (2014), citing research by the Advertising Research Foundation, refer to the social consumer journey where consumers are constantly considering potential purchases and evaluating products. Consumers can be active shoppers, reaching out for information, but they can simultaneously be passive shoppers, receiving comments continually through social media or other channels.

- **Brand equity and customer equity:** The two major outputs of the marketing communication process are purchase (initial purchase and repeat purchase) and brand health. These important assets are determined by consumers as they always have been. Rust, Zeithaml, and Lemon (2000) have done considerable work on customer equity, while brand equity has been extensively discussed by Keller (2003) and others. But the behavioral response, the purchase, has traditionally been treated as the final step in the consumer response sequence. In the midst of a whirlpool, this view may no longer be as useful as it once was.

Figure 1 summarizes the framework arising from these interviews. It is termed the 'MaC' model in recognition of the joint role of both marketers *and* consumers in the communication process. The MaC model appears to reflect Shannon's (1948) original communications model as seen through the prism of practitioners' perceptions of the processes involved today.

FIGURE 1
The MaC Model



Implications

The MaC model of Figure 1 has the potential to reinform academic thinking on the modeling of marketing communication while also offering insights to practitioners about how their marketing communication might best be planned. Given the fluidity of today's marketing environment and its multidirectional influences, however, the MaC formulation is not structured in a way which can offer step-by-step guidance when planning a marketing campaign. Nevertheless, the MaC model implies that the following are important considerations for marketers when devising their campaigns:

- In social media, reach is a result of the action of other users in the network, and the price to pay for that reach is often an altered and augmented marketing message from a 'classic' advertiser's point of view (Peters et al 2013). Rigid, highly-structured marketing communication plans, therefore, may no longer work too well. Marketing communication plans need to be flexible and ready to evolve with the story that is co-created with consumers, responding to evolving online brand conversations.
- Marketers involved in online conversations with consumers need to be good listeners, fast responders, and honest.
- When marketers are monitoring online conversations they need to consider the possibility that a negative online comment about a company's brand may be from a competitor's employee rather than an authentic dissatisfied customer. After all, the anonymity of online comments raises the possibility of deception (King, Racherla, and Bush 2014). Some online forums have developed reputation mechanisms enabling readers to judge the credibility of a post, and these would be of use to listening marketers.

Despite the apparent utility of the MaC model, the basis of this study is to present the practitioner viewpoint rather than support it. Practitioner views should be given some credence, but not accepted as absolute truth. For example, Participant O made a statement about consumers skipping the awareness step. It is clearly not possible to 'skip' awareness other than from a neuroscience perspective. Awareness is a well-established requirement to precede brand evaluation and choice. As such, the MaC model is offered as a representation of practicing marketers' views rather than as a new model. It is clear that there are a number of limitations to the practitioner view of how marketing communication works in the interactive age of marketing. These include (but are not limited to) the observations that

- Marketers appear to miss the psychological nuances of consumer behavior.
- Marketers are oriented towards solving practical problems and continuing working relationships and not towards challenging the current paradigm or developing generalizable and testable theory.
- Marketers are skilled at observing outcomes, but they may lack an understanding of the mechanisms that led to those outcomes.

Academia should not import directly practitioners' cognitive mental maps. Nevertheless, the MaC model can provide insight into practitioners' thinking about marketing communication in today's interactive age of marketing. The MaC perspective offers a window into the mental models of practicing marketers.

There are two primary limitations to consider. Despite the globalization of the advertising industry, there may well be a cultural bias in the MaC model presented here, given that is inevitably rooted in Chinese culture. Hong Kong has long been a melting pot for Western and Eastern ideas, but the participating marketers are from a narrow cultural classification nevertheless. Secondly, the MaC model is reflective. It does not set out to replace existing theories or criticize them. Rather it constitutes a 'window' to marketers' mindsets and how they see interactive marketing communications working today. It is clear from the study, however, that managers operate from within a limited framework that is not entirely logical nor one that corresponds well with the conventional wisdom.

The above limitations open up a number of opportunities for academic enquiry. First, the MaC model is a relatively simple illustration of the entire marketing communication effort, but, as Weilbacher (2001) has mentioned, managers need research elucidating how consumers synthesize individual marketing communication inputs into an overall conception of a brand. Future research could, therefore, profile consumers who are receivers and spreaders of word-of-mouth communication and disentangle the contribution they make to brand and customer equity relative to the contribution made by paid media placements. Second, different cultures may put different weight on the importance of social media in making purchase decisions. Collectivist cultures, for example, might be expected to attribute greater importance to social media. It would be useful to examine Western practitioners' perceptions of the role of social media in the overall marketing communication effort. Finally, it is important to keep in mind that this emergent theory is provisional, and the variables depicted in the MaC model could be tested in future quantitative research in order to examine the robustness of the model as well as its generalizability beyond the sample and context of this study.

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EXPLORING THAI ACADEMICS' OPINIONS ON FOUR KEY AREAS OF INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

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Abstract

Since its inception in the 1980s, integrated marketing communications, known as IMC, has been prevalently implemented both in academic and practitioner communities across the world. Academics have endeavored to develop the concept of IMC as well as its measurement. Meanwhile, practitioners in different types of business have practiced IMC and appreciated its benefits. IMC has played a vital role in marketing communications especially in this period of time when communications are boundless and consumers' behavior has changed dramatically.

The past decade has seen the rapid development of IMC in many areas. However, few studies have investigated academics' perspectives on IMC. It has previously been observed that definition of IMC, principles of IMC, benefits and barriers to IMC implementation, and the future of IMC are the basic understanding towards IMC. The issue of definition has been a controversial and much disputed subject within the field of IMC. Principles of IMC are conceptual basis of IMC, whereas the issues of benefits and barriers to IMC implementation are significant to the IMC practice. In the meantime, questions have been raised about the future of IMC on whether IMC would continue especially in this digital age. Therefore, the specific objective of this study was to examine academics' viewpoints on these aforementioned four main areas of IMC.

This study uses a qualitative approach to investigate academics' viewpoints on IMC. It was conducted in the form of in-depth interviews. The data were gathered from six key informants who were professors teaching IMC or marketing communication-related courses from leading public and private universities in Thailand. A semi-structured question guideline was designed to include every necessary concern pertaining to the studied issues of IMC. This study systematically selected universities within the defined criteria. Six interviews were performed between April and May 2016.

The most interesting finding was that the respondents understood IMC only at the strategic or operational level, not at corporate or organizational level. That is, IMC was considered as either one form of marketing communications or a marketing communications strategy. However, the respondents had a good understanding towards key principles of IMC. The findings also revealed that IMC was perceived as beneficial for organizations, while inflexible organizational structure, silo mentality, and a lack of support from top management were claimed to be barriers to the implementation of IMC. In terms of the future of IMC, it was believed that IMC would remain amidst growing importance of digital and media conglomeration.

Based on the findings, it could therefore be assumed that Thai academics have limited understanding towards IMC. This anticipating finding preliminary suggested that Thai academics should embrace a broader view of IMC since its concept has evolved from a concept first proposed in 1980. One of the issues that emerges from these findings is that those organizations that have been practicing IMC should investigate on whether one of the revealed barriers are also their obstacles to IMC implementation. If so, these barriers should be removed to allow a better work flow and higher effectiveness of IMC. Finally, regardless of what IMC is called or would be called in the future, its core principles would remain, but more interactive in order to flow parallel with the digital era.

AAA THINKUBAAATOR SERIES: THE CITIZEN SCHOLAR

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Louise Kelly, Queensland University of Technology, Queensland, Australia
Sheila Sasser, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, MI
Jami Fullerton, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK
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In 2017, the ThinkubAAAtor series explored the concept of the Citizen Scholar. The university of the future will be shaped by many different, complex and often competing purposes (Allahar and Cote 2014), with expectations to improve service quality, as well as increasing student numbers and expanding research capacity. This escalates a number of competing priorities for today's universities, which Armstrong and Summerlee (2016) identify as (1) the need to educate increasingly larger student cohorts (2) fiscal challenges caused by ever-tightening financial resources (3) need to address the false dichotomy between teaching and research and (4) need to introduce more effective and authentic learning experiences designed to promote employability.

In addition to this, universities face competition from other universities and even other knowledge producers, fuelled by internationalization and online offerings. Universities are also challenged about their place in the world, especially their greater accountability in society (Han and Zhang 2015).

The 2017 ThinkubAAAtor session challenged participants to rethink the way in which universities engage in teaching, as well as the skills and attributes of their graduates and the link between education and citizenship. In particular, this Citizen Scholar ThinkubAAAtor session looked at the role of universities to promote scholarship as well as producing active and engaged citizens.

The Citizen Scholar is a means of integrating aspirations of social change into higher education pedagogical development. The special session demonstrated both the need and some examples of the practice of educating students beyond their disciplinary knowledge to embrace a broader, more societal focus. In particular, the presenters use best practice to explore Arvanitakis and Hornsby (2016) four proficiencies and attributes essential for preparing Citizen Scholars. These are:

1. Creativity and innovation – generating new and unique ideas.
2. Resilience – be nimble and flexible to change, adopt and anticipate innovations and capacity to learn from mistakes and to preserve.
3. Working in teams and across experiences – teamwork is important for innovation and advancement of ideas. Important to recognize and accommodate the growing interconnectedness of our societies.
4. Design thinking - placing people at the centre of our decision making, including ethical leadership, the relationship between lecturers and students no longer being limited and unidirectional but being a dynamic exchange where each brings their own experiences.

Outcomes from the ThinkubAAAtor

ThinkubAAAtor served as a Think Tank to help AAA attendees to explore new ways to interface with students to engage and facilitate new, empowering experiences. Gayle Kerr, Louise Kelly, Jami Fullerton, Alice Kendrick and Jef Richards lead the discussions in each of the attributes of the Citizen Scholar and provided examples of how the concept of the Citizen Scholar has been implemented into their units and course structure. Participants in the session also shared experiences and ideas were generated using post it notes which were shared, discussed and collated for future reference. The session concluded with participants agreeing to the value of incorporating the Citizen Scholar attributes into course curriculum and also the possibility of collaboration for future research. The group also paid tribute to the late Sheila Sasser who was part of the original ThinkubAAAtor panel and acknowledged her substantial contribution to the AAA and to advertising education.

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THE ROLE OF MATCHING MINDSET AND SOCIAL DISTANCE IN ANTI-TEXTING WHILE DRIVING ADVERTISING

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Abstract

This study examines message strategies of PSAs that can effectively discourage young adults from texting while driving. The study reveals significant persuasive effect of matching the mention of one's close/distant social relationship and the concrete/abstract visual presentation of the outcome of distracted driving. We test the effect of PSAs on perceived threat and intentions to engage in preventive behavior. In addition, young drivers read a scenario to rate the responsibility of the texting driver, and to assign fines and jail time, in order to explore attitude toward the distracted driving. Theoretical and managerial implications are discussed.

EXPLORING THE ROLE OF REGULATORY FOCUS AND PROCESSING FLUENCY IN THE EFFECTIVENESS OF NARRATIVE VERSUS NON-NARRATIVE ADVERTISING: A STUDY ABOUT SUGAR INTAKE IN THE USA

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Abstract

Given that many health problems in the United States are closely related to high sugar consumption, this research examined the effectiveness of ad forms (narrative vs. non-narrative) on persuading people to limit sugar intake through an online experiments completed by 1,104 participants. It was found that individual difference of regulatory focus moderated the effect of narrative vs. non-narrative advertising. Moreover, this study revealed an underlying mechanism of how audiences processed narrative vs. non-narrative advertising differently via the mediator of processing fluency, and further resulted in different advertising effectiveness. Contributions and implications were discussed.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GUILT AND SHAME APPEALS ON HEALTH COMMUNICATIONS: THE ROLE OF COPING RESPONSE, SELF-CONSTRUAL AND PERSONAL CULTURAL ORIENTATION

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Introduction

Given a growing literature has endeavoured to characterise the psychological processes involved in guilt and shame, often focusing on the distinct antecedents and their consequences for social behaviours (e.g., Basil, Ridgway and Basil 2008; Cotte, Coulter and Moore 2005; Coulter and Pinto, 1995), there is little understanding of how (e.g., mediators) and when (e.g., moderators) guilt and shame appeals in health communications can encourage the desired pro-social or pro-health behaviour. This is partly due to the lack of research into the distinction between guilt and shame effectiveness, the differing of emotional and psychological responses to the two types of emotions, and the key moderators that are influential in the response to them that motivate positive behaviours. Specifically, the current research focuses on examining the mediator of the coping response to emotional arousals (Agrawal and Duhachek 2010; Duhachek, Agrawal and Han 2012), and the moderators of individual differences of self-construal interacting with self-referencing (Burnkrant and Unnava 1995; Symons and Johnson 1997) or the sources of evaluation (Goss and Allan 2009; Grabhorn et al. 2006; Lee, Scragg and Turner 2001; Proeve and Howells 2002), and culture, especially at individual level (e.g., personal cultural orientation, Yoo and Donthu 2005) influencing the relative effectiveness of guilt and shame appeals in health communications.

The current research contributes to literature in the domain of health communications and emotions by answering the following research questions:

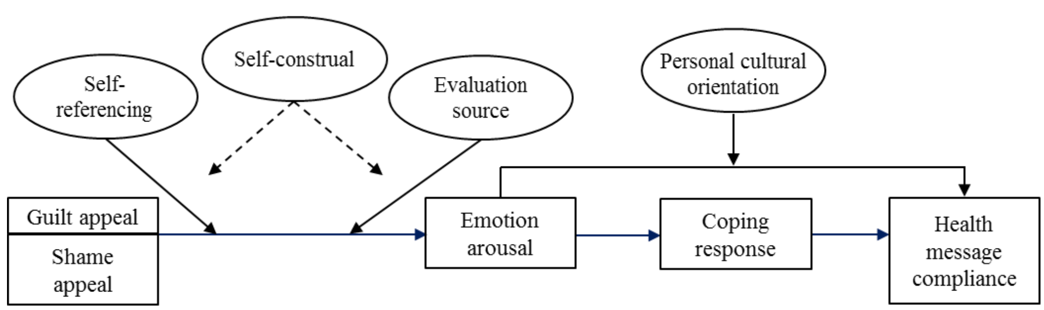
RQ1: Do self-construal and personal cultural orientation influence the relative effectiveness of guilt and shame appeals towards health message compliance?

RQ2: Does the coping response to guilt and shame arousals influence health message compliance?

Conceptual Model

In this research, the current knowledge on pro-social and charitable donation behaviour is synthesised into an extant model of guilt appeals (e.g., Basil et al. 2001, 2008; Cotte et al. 2005; Coulter, Cotte and Moore 1999; Coulter and Pinto 1995; Giner-Sorolla 2001; Hibbert et al. 2007; LaBarge and Godek 2006; Lwin and Phau 2014; Renner et al. 2013), which serves as the foundation of the proposed model in health communications. It is accordingly noted that the factors focused on, and examined in, the extant model are not examined in this study. The current research attempts to build and test a theoretical model for understanding the processes by which guilt and shame appeals may lead to better compliance with health messages (see *Figure 1*). The study, therefore, examines the effects of the mediating factor of the coping response to emotion (identified as being under-studied), the interactive effects of the dual moderating factors of self-referencing or the sources of evaluation with self-construal, and the additional individual difference factor of personal cultural orientation.

FIGURE 1
Proposed Model of the Effectiveness of Guilt and Shame Appeals on Health Communications



Taken together, this better predicts the effectiveness of guilt and shame appeals. Accordingly, the proposed model: (*i*) incorporates coping response as the cognitive outcome of emotional arousal underlying health message compliance; (*ii*) explains the role of self-referencing or the evaluation sources of guilt and shame appeals interacting with self-construals; (*iii*) explores under which personal cultural orientation guilt or shame appeals are most effective; and (*iv*) differentiates between guilt and shame appeals' effects in the context of health communications.

Method

Binge drinking among young adults (ages 16 to 30) is the research context used for this study. A series of 2 emotion (guilt versus shame) x 2 self-referencing (self-reference versus other-reference) x 2 source of evaluation (internal versus external) between-subject experiments was conducted to test the research model. Eight stimulus materials using print advertisements was developed and pretested effectively. Data was collected through an online questionnaire survey among university undergraduates in New Zealand (*n* = 266).

Based on the survey data, this study applied structural equation modelling and regression analyses to test the hypotheses and address the research questions. Specifically, structural equation models were estimated using AMOS to test hypotheses regarding the main structural relationships. In addition, multiple sample analyses were conducted to test the moderation effects of self-construal and personal cultural orientation. The structural equation model of latent interactions was estimated to moderating effect of tie strength. A two-way ANCOVA using SPSS was conducted to test the hypotheses associated with the interaction effects of self-construal with self-referencing or the sources of evaluation.

Discussion and Contributions

The results broadly support the proposed model for health communications using guilt and shame appeals. That is, the coping response has a partial mediating effect on the relationship between guilt/shame arousals and message compliance. This suggests that emotional arousals influence both the coping response indirectly and message compliance directly (Hair et al. 2010). Self-construal was found to moderate guilt and shame arousals from respective emotional appeals. However, there were no interactive effects of self-construal with self-referencing or the sources of evaluation on guilt and shame arousals. Personal cultural orientation moderated the impact of shame arousals, but not those of guilt arousals, on message compliance. Interestingly, this study found that there was no significant differential effect of guilt versus shame arousals in message compliance.

The study contributes to the literature of health communications and emotions as the first step of an empirical effort to probe the differential effect of guilt versus shame appeals under both impacts – mediating and moderating. First, this research developed and tested the fully extended model of the effectiveness of guilt versus shame appeals in health communications where the coping response is an instrumental mediator. Second, the study identified under-studied moderators (i.e., self-construal, personal cultural orientation of individuals) and extended the current research by examination of their effects on the relationships of emotional appeals-emotional arousals-message compliance. Third, the present study isolated the effects of unintentional emotions by examining guilt and shame separately through respective emotional arousals rather than emotional appeals. Finally, the study differentiated the effect of guilt versus shame appeals in the context of health communications, in particular binge drinking.

The findings also have important practical implications. The insights provided by this research could help social marketers as well as public policy makers to effectively develop health communication campaigns more appealing message content and appropriate media selection. Armed with the understanding of how distinct emotion (i.e., guilt versus shame) works, coping responses (i.e., adaptive versus maladaptive) to these emotions trigger alongside varying evaluations of certain message receiver attributes (i.e., independent versus interdependent, individualist versus collectivist), practitioners can better structure emotional messaging and select media that facilitate healthy and pro-social behaviour.

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A STUDY OF GREEN ADVERTISING IN "NIKKEI ECOLOGY" MAGAZINE: A QUANTITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS AND QUALITATIVE SEMIOTIC APPROACH

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Introduction

In recent years, interest and awareness towards to the importance of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has grown. In particular, the idea of development for a sustainable society has gotten worldwide attention due to the introduction of the ISO26000 standard. This standard was devised in 2010 by the International Standardization Organization (Japan Standards Association, 2011). In this standard, protecting the environment is included within the concept of CSR along with developing the economy and improving society. Due to the adoption of this standard, showing evidence of taking environmental action has become increasingly important for corporations. In public relations and advertising activities, a wide array of information about the company including its concrete environmental actions and company ideas is demanded. Through the concept of CSR, the core idea of specific corporate activities for improving society has paradigmatically shifted in Japan. For example, the focus has gradually changed to activities intended to have a long-term relationships with a company's core business rather than just a brief social contribution that is normally unconnected with its core business. Also, the style of reporting social achievements has changed. Previously, many Japanese companies were unwilling to widely publicize their social goodwill and their activities to their external stakeholders. In contrast, recently there is a tendency to share both positive and negative information with their stakeholders as a form of corporate accountability. Furthermore, the idea that CSR communication should aim to build good relationships with corporate stakeholders has become increasingly important (Liu, 2015).

Based on the recognition of the importance of environmental issues in CSR communication, this research focused on green advertising. As a result of international conferences and symposiums about environmental concern through the 1980s and 90s, environmental activities have gradually begun to take off in Japanese companies. Today, corporate environmental activities are widespread in range, such as making environmentally-friendly products, improving technology to reduce the environmental burden of the production process and planting trees for reforestation to increase biological diversity. Following such corporate environmental activities in Japan, green advertising first appeared in the 1990s (Ohashi, 2002; Sekiya, 2009). For example, Toyota Motor Corporation was the first Japanese company to begin using green advertising, which following Volvo who was the first to do so in Japan. Since then, many other Japanese companies have used green advertising. Due to various environmental activities conducted by Japanese companies, green advertising has also featured various types of advertising. For instance, there are product advertisements presenting eco-products or eco-techniques, and corporate advertisements promoting corporate ideas and images (Wakita, 1997; Sekiya, 2009).

According to Sekiya (2009) who studied environmental advertising in terms of the advertising strategies used by companies and the social psychological views of the target audience, green advertising is the most important communication channel for Japanese corporations. Especially, Sekiya found that when the communication target is setting on consumer at public relations or advertising activities in companies, green advertising is one of the most valuable communication channels (Sekiya, 2009). The results of my own research on media usage of CSR communication in Japanese companies, also suggest that advertising is regarded as an important communication channels for Japanese companies when the communication target is the external stakeholders (Liu, 2015).

The definition of green advertising used in this study is informed by the work of Banerjee, Gules and Ayer (1995), Wakita (1997) and Sekiya (2009). Banerjee, Gules and Ayer (1995) defined green advertising as any advertisements that meet one or more of the following criteria: 1. Explicitly or implicitly addressing the relationship between a product/service and the biophysical environment, 2. Promoting a green lifestyle with or without highlighting a product/service, 3. Presenting a corporate image of environmental responsibility. On the other hand, Wakita (1997) defined green advertising as a genre that traditionally commercialized product advertisements, industrial advertisements and corporate advertisements that are combined with the theme of environmental conservation. According to the research of Sekiya (2009), green advertising is defined as advertising that reflect the social and psychological concern of people about environmental issues and their increasing environmental consciousness.

One problem with these definitions is that they were defined before the concepts of CSR were developed in 2010. In this study, green advertising is defined as any advertisement that contains a reference to corporate environmental measures or corporate environmental ideas in the content information. The aim of this study is to clarify how Japanese companies attempt to communicate about the environment with their target audience through green advertising.

Literature review

Overview of green adverting research

Throughout the world many studies of green advertising have been conducted. Much of this research has been conducted from the viewpoint of sociology and communication studies and focused on such issues as the international comparison of advertising expressions and, content analysis of visual elements and verbal claims (Banerjee, Gules and Ayer, 1995; Leonidas et al., 2011; Xue and Zhou, 2012). Research on green advertising has been conducted in Japan as well. Through research focusing on the communication process of green advertising in TV commercials, Sekiya identified the following characteristics: the strategies used by the advertisers, the content of the advertisements, and the recipients' impressions of green advertising (Sekiya, 2009). Other research has examined the level of greenness in green newspaper advertising in Japan (Matsumura and Worawan, 2002).

From the viewpoint of social psychology regarding the environment and the media, Sekiya (2009) conducted research on green advertising of TV commercials from three different perspectives: 1) what Japanese companies think about producing environmental advertisements, 2) what filming techniques are used, and 3) what audiences think about green advertisements. From this research he identifies the following characteristics: 1) Japanese companies are conscious of the need to be natural and humble in their green adverting because they believe that green advertising is regarded suspiciously by recipients, 2) the frequent appearance of children and ordinary people in green advertising, is seen in terms of their function as metaphors for future potential and common environment problems, and 3) consumers have both positive and negative impressions of green advertising. Research focusing on the claims of green advertising in Japanese newspapers and magazines, has identified the problem of ambiguity in the use of expressions about environmental problems (Kanbara 1998; Ohashi 2002). Meanwhile, according to Matsumura and Worawan (2002), green advertising in Japanese newspapers tends to project a green corporate image and uses a lot of emotional appeals. They explained these tendencies as a reflection of Japan as having a high-context culture. The communication in such cultures is more frequently implicit and reliant on the communicative context rather than in low-context cultures such as China and America.

However, all of the above-mentioned research mainly focused on the analysis of the verbal elements of green advertising, which is just one of the semiotic channels. Although, there are a few studies (Sekiya, 2009) that have considered visual aspects of communication about environmental issues such as through the use of photographs and illustrations, the samples of green advertisements were taken from TV commercials and the analysis framework focused only on filming techniques such as the number and kinds of shots. In contrast, there is little research that has focused on visual elements in green advertising in print media. In addition, there is little research which attempts to clarify what images tend to be used to represent the environment in printed advertisement and none which does so by combining content analysis and semiotics. Furthermore, no research has been conducted to study Japanese green advertising since the ISO 26000 standard was introduced in 2010. As a result, there has not yet been any research on green advertising by Japanese companies in relations to CSR. There is also a lack of research a cultural studies perspective on green advertising in Japan.

Cultural studies perspective on advertising

A cultural studies perspective on advertising has been used in advertising analysis in the field of sociology. It has been suggested, for example, that advertisements have been mirroring society and telling stories of the mood of the times of that society (Kitada 2002; Senoo 2015).

A pioneering study of advertising representations with this cultural studies perspective is that of by Du Gay et al. (2000) who analyzed advertising representations of the Sony Walkman. In Du Gay et al.'s analysis of the Sony Walkman advertisements, they not only considered the representations in the advertisements themselves but also what kind of reflections were provided to the society through such advertising. For example, Sony helped to create a consumer culture based around images of youth through the representation of street fashion, sports and popular music in their advertisement for the Walkman. They also created new forms of behavior associated with enjoying music privately in public spaces. Moreover, Du Gay et al. analysis provided insights into the development of the corporate identity of Sony after having created such consumer culture, through an analysis of the background stories of the key actors and facts and their connections with the structures of production and consumption. Du Gay et al.'s research reveals how advertising is closely related to the culture and ideology of a society. One additional motivation for conducting the present study is that there have been few studies which have investigated Japanese culture and society in relation to green advertising.

Therefore, this study is designed from the perspective of cultural studies as proposed by Du Gay et al. It combines semiotic and cultural studies analysis to attempt to reveal how Japanese companies or advertising companies attempt to represent the environment and what exactly such representations mean in the case of green advertising. The purpose of this study is to identify green advertising in the period of growing interest and awareness towards to the concept of CSR since 2010.

Methods

Sampling green advertising

The author conducted content analysis to measure the visual elements and the representation level of greenness on green advertising in Japan. Green advertisements were selected from the Japanese environmental business monthly magazine "Nikkei Ecology". The reason for choosing "Nikkei Ecology" was that it is a place where companies and other advertisers post many green advertisements in each issue. Nikkei Business Publications, Inc. has published this magazine since 1999. The articles of the magazine are mainly about the analysis of the latest comprehensive trends of companies' new eco-products and environmental activities. The main target readers of the magazine are business people working in companies and student doing job hunting.

The sampling period was from January, 2013, to December, 2015. Only the advertisements that fit in the definition of green advertising and were one full page or larger in size were coded. A total of 124 advertisements were identified as green advertising in this study.

Analytical framework

There is a genealogy of research that analyses advertisements from the viewpoints of sociology and communication. Particularly, Stewart Hall developed his well-known encoding and decoding model of communication in terms of the relation between the sender and the receiver in the social context. Hall's theory expanded the semiotic approach of Barthes who studied the denotations and connotations of advertisements.

This study attempts to comprehensively analyze green advertising based on the encoding and decoding model proposed by Hall. To elucidate the features of the green advertising representations and the meanings, the analysis focuses on visual elements such as photos and illustrations of green advertising. These visual elements are considered to let the target audience inspire interpretation. Therefore, targeting these visual elements, the analysis also involved a quantitative content analysis and qualitative semiotics analysis of the advertisements.

Coding framework and procedures

The coding framework consists of six categories: *the target audience*, *the business type of advertiser*, *the characters*, *the representations of nature*, *colors* and *the level of greenness*. This framework is inspired by the previously developed coding categories and terms used by other scholars to conduct content analysis (e.g., Banerjee, Gules and Ayer 1995; Shimomura 2000; Matsumura and Worawan 2002, and Leonidas et al 2011). Details of the categories and terms are as follows:

The first category is the advertisers' characteristics in green advertising, which are defined as having two variables: 1) *the target audience* (B to B; business to business, B to C; business to customers, and Both; business to business and customers) and 2) t*he business type of advertiser* (Manufacturer, Retailer and Service).

The second category is *the content information of advertisement*. The content information of advertisement involves advertising objective from advertisers such as promotion of a product or service, promotion of a corporate image and both. In this study, three different kinds of content information are identified and categorized based on definition of Simomura (2000). 1) Product advertising includes promoting products and technologies. Both of these kind of information are connected with a corporation core business. 2) Product advertising and Corporate advertising (related to the business), includes products and technologies as well as corporate philosophy related to corporation's business. 3) Corporate advertising includes actions that contribute to society or corporate philosophy that is not related to a corporation's business.

Third category is *the characters*. Based on the codes developed from Banerjee, Gules and Ayer (1995) and Leonidas et al (2011), four terms (Celebrity, Employee of the company, Ordinary person, and Children) were adopted. As well, the number of Characters was defined as four items (1, 2, 3, and 4 or more).

Fourth category is *the representation of nature*. The eight items are set as: The Earth, Forest, Mountain, Water/Ice, Ocean, Blue sky/Starry sky, Morning glow/Sunset and Trees/Leaves.

The fifth category is *colors*. Through the analysis process, six different colors were categorized: Green, Blue, White, Black, Orange and Brown. In the category of colors, there are two terms: 1) the Colors which occupy most of the advertisement, 2) the Colors which are used on a part of the advertisement such as for photographs, illustrations and text.

The sixth category is *the level of greenness*. The representation of level of greenness is regarded as an index to examine the extent of the environmental focus in the advertising (Banerjee, Gules and Ayer 1995). Coding criteria for the representation of level of greenness were developed by Banerjee, Gules and Ayer (1995), and these were adapted and revised by Matsumura and Wollawan (2002) for analyzing the content of green advertising in Japanese newspapers. Based on these two studies, a definition of the category in this study is set as follows: 1) Shallow level: the representation level of greenness is vague in its environmental expressions. 2) Moderate level: the representation level of greenness does not address environmental issue related to the product or technology in great detail, but mentioned specific environmental measures. 3) Deep level: on this level, the representation includes both environmental issues and environmental measures clearly in the advertising.

Two coders were recruited by the author to conduct all of the coding. Both were graduate school Japanese students majoring in media and communication in their research department. To ensure reliability of the coding scheme in this study, firstly the two coders tested the coding categories of green advertisements at random separately, then they met to discuss and attempt to resolve any differences. Finally, the average reliability of the coding categories was measured by percentage agreement between the two coders and was confirmed as being over 0.91 for each category. Additionally, based on the results of content analysis, the author inferred the meaning of the representations as communication between senders and receivers from the viewpoint of the semiotic approach.

Results and discussions

Advertiser characteristics

The advertiser characteristics of 124 advertisements in this study are reported in Table 1. The results show that the majority of the target audience was Business to Business with 60.5%. The second largest group of target audience was Business to both Business and Customer (21.8%). The smallest category the target audience was Business to Customer (18.5%). On the other hand, in the business type of advertiser, manufacturer accounted for the largest proportion at 70.2%. Following manufacturers, came service at 18.5% and retailers at 11.3%.

TABLE 1
Audience characteristics

Advertiser characteristics	Target audience (n = 124)			Business type of advertiser (n = 124)		
	B to B	B to C	Both	Manufacturer	Retailer	Service
Number	74	23	27	87	14	23
Ratio (%)	60.5	18.5	21.8	71	11.3	17.7

Advertisement content

The most frequent type of content information found in the green advertising was the category of "both advertising" products/technology and corporate philanthropy (43%). This was followed by corporate advertising related to nonbusiness (31%) and the least frequent type was product advertising (26%). Combining the percentages of "both" advertising and product advertising, the total percentage of green advertisings related with business was close to 70% (See Figure 1). Based on this fact, it appears that including information related to corporation's core business has become a mainstream pattern in Japanese green advertisings.

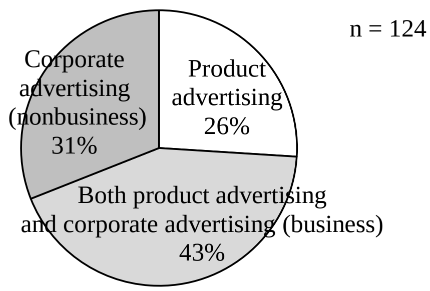

FIGURE 1. Categories of advertisement content

The characters and the number of person

Regarding the characters used in advertisements, children appeared most frequently at 31%, followed by ordinary people (24%), employees of the company (24%) and celebrities (21%). Figures 2 shows four examples of such uses of these categories of characters in green advertising.

FIGURE 2. Examples of the characters

The relationship between the types of the characters and the number of person is shown in Figure 3. The study found that 29% of characters appeared by one person as celebrities in the advertising. In contrast, ordinary people (20%) or children (20%) often appeared together with employees of the company (11%) as a two person pair. Although various kinds of environmental measures such as afforestation to recycling projects were presented in the content information of advertisements, this result suggests that Japanese companies attempt to tackle the environmental issues together with these characters. Children (20%) and ordinary people (20%) appeared frequently in group of 4 or more. This result suggests that one reason why the companies' environmental measures is for the sake of future generations. It also suggests that environmental problems, which are the subject of environmental measures, are seen as a common problem between Japanese companies and the characters who are metonymies of people in general.

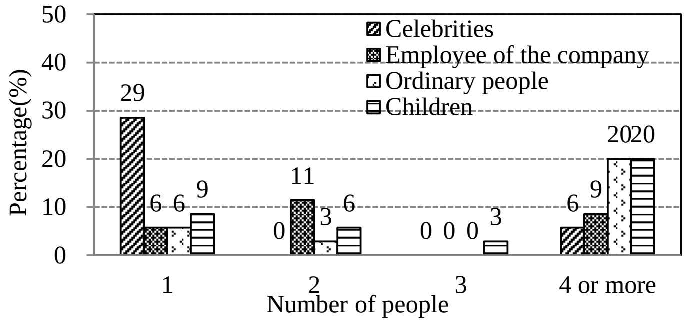

FIGURE 3. Relation between character and the number of people

The representations of nature

Over 70% of the green advertisings included representations of nature (73%). The details of each frequency of the eight terms are shown in Figure 4.

The Earth was represented relatively frequently (16%) among all of the representations of nature. The image of the Earth are used to indicate an ideal of a healthy planet with a beautiful blue color. On the other hand, the Earth serves as a metaphor for the existence of certain global environmental problems (See Figure 5).

One surprising result was that representations of dynamic nature such as forests and mountains were quite infrequent, just 9% and 8% respectively (See Figure 6). Another surprising finding was that approximately four-fifths of the representations of nature were of tree/leaves located near to houses or city streets (See Figure 7). These representations have a connotation about the symbiosis of humans with nature. Nature is seen as surrounding us in our daily life rather than as the dynamic nature that far away.

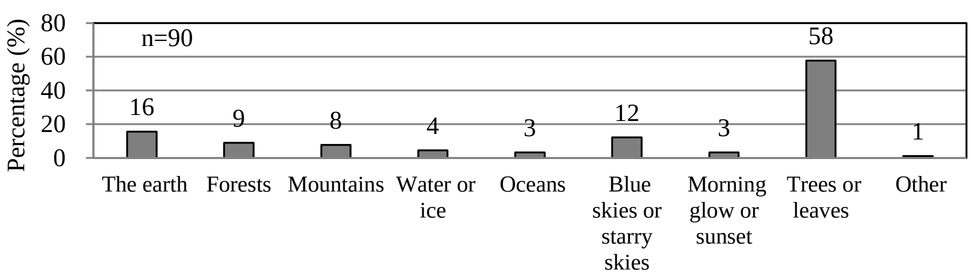

FIGURE 4. Details of the representations of nature

FIGURE 5. Examples of representations of the Earth

FIGURE 6. Examples of representations of dynamic nature

FIGURE 7. Examples of representations of nature surrounding our daily life

Colors

The colors used on green advertising were analyzed as two different categories: 1) colors occupying most of the advertisement, and 2) colors used as part of advertisement for photographs, illustrations and copy. As for the first category, it was initially expected that green or blue would be most commonly used colors in the advertisements. However, the results showed that nearly half of color used was white (43%). Following this, blue (26%), orange (11%), black (10%), green (8%) and brown (2%) (See Figure 9). The widespread use of white appears to be due to its function in emphasizing advertisements' text and illustrations. This may reflect the attitude of Japanese companies, who are seeking to explain about the content information of the advertising.

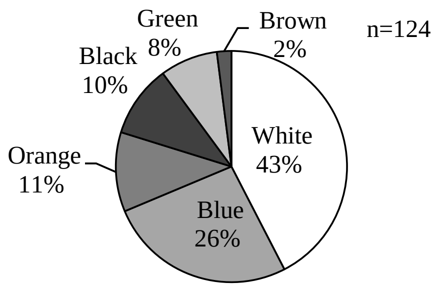

FIGURE 8. Use of colors occupying most of the advertisement

As for the use of colors used in part of advertisement, it was found that the order of frequencies of the most widely used colors were as follows: white (97%), blue (88%) and green (80%). In contrast, black (50%), brown (27%) and orange (27%) were used in less than half of the advertisements (See Figure 10). Even though blue and green were not used as the dominant color in the advertisements, they nevertheless seem to have been considered as colors related to nature or the environment.

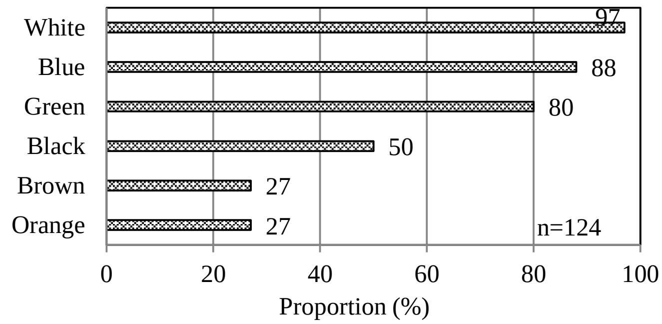

FIGURE 9. Colors used in a part of advertisement

Representation level of greenness

Concerning the level of greenness displayed by the advertisements, 49% were rated as moderate. 42% as shallow and 9% as deep (See Figure 11). Combining the advertisements rated deep, including those representing environmental issues and environmental measures, and those rated moderate, including those representing solely environmental measures, more than half of sampled advertisements in this study were been found to contain specific environmental measures. Meanwhile, combining the moderate level and the shallow level, it appears that over ninety percent of the green advertisings were quiet bland or vague about the representations of specific environmental issues.

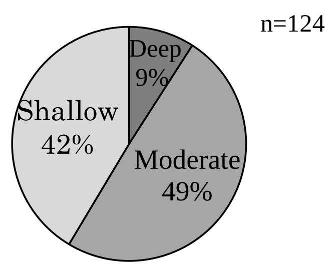

FIGURE 10. Level of greenness

To elucidate the relation between the level of greenness and the content information of the advertisements a cross comparison of both categories was conducted. The findings show that the moderate level was found most frequently in the "both" category advertisements that include both product advertising and corporate advertising related with business (23%), and product advertisements (19%) as well. The shallow level was most frequently found in corporate advertisings without business (23%). Overall all, on content information of the advertisements, the results show that the deep level was the least found type in each category of content information (See Figure 12). This result suggests that the bland or vague representation of environmental issues was more frequently used than the representation of more specific environmental issues in the green advertisements.

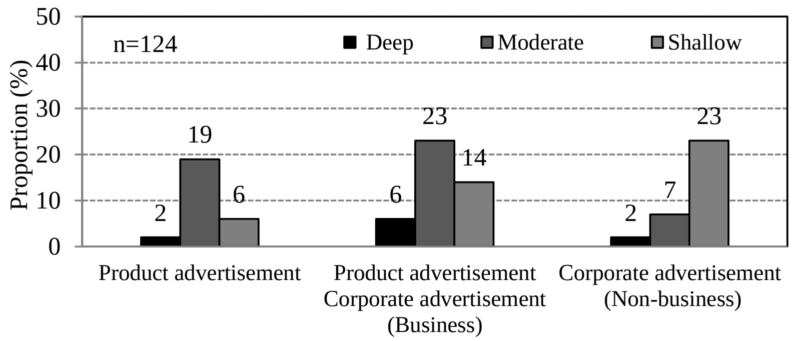

FIGURE 11. Relation between greenness level and the advertising content

Conclusion

This study has identified the following six tendencies about the representations used in the green advertising of Japanese companies:

1. The adverting reflects the companies' tendency to carry out environmental efforts through their core business.
2. The advertising represents the attitude of the corporations toward their advertising recipients as being that they are willing to work together with them on environmental measures to against common environmental issues.
3. The advertising tends to have a connotation of symbiosis with nature but this is mainly concerned with the aspects of nature surrounding our daily life rather than more dynamic nature such as mountains or forests.
4. The visual elements of nature (such as the image of the blue Earth) are used as metaphors for explaining the existence of environmental issues.
5. The colors used in the green advertisements reflect the communicative attitudes of the Japanese companies while also show conveying images of the environment and nature.
6. Although environmental measures are mentioned in the most of the advertisements, there are few cases in which they are represented together with environmental issues. In general, the representation of environmental issues is quite bland or vague.

The first three tendencies indicate that the green advertising produced by Japanese companies reflects the concepts of CSR and the sustainable society. The last three tendencies suggests that there is a problem with the green advertising because of the way it tends to represent environmental issues in an unclear way, even though the visual elements of nature are used as metaphors for the existence of environmental issues.

Limitation and Future directions

This study analyzed the visual elements such as photographs, illustrations and colors used in the green advertising of Japanese corporations. However, in terms of advertising representations, not only visual elements, but also verbal elements are significant. Therefore, as an extension of the present study, I intend to research the verbal elements of these advertisements in order to enhance the relevance of the findings presented here. I hope that an examination of the verbal features used in Japanese corporate green advertising might offer more evidence upon which generalizations may be made concerning the representations practices of green advertising.

This study dealt with the visual features of representations in green advertisings, which is one of the currently popular channels for CSR communications in Japan and elsewhere. Through the feature of the representations, this study discussed what meaning were encoded in advertisements and how Japanese companies attempt to communicate with their advertising recipients through their green advertisings. In future research, it will be necessary to clarify how the meanings encoded in the advertisements are actually received by the recipients. Such an audience-focused perspective is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of green advertisings.

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WHEN AND WHERE SHOULD I PLACE MY AD? THE EFFECYS OF COGNITIVE LOAD AND AD-CONTEXT CONGRUENCE ON MEMORY AND PERSUASION FOR ADVERTISEMENTS IN BLOGS

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Introduction

Since the emergence of the first online ad, we are constantly surrounded by advertising messages from the moment we wake up and check the notifications on our phone beside the pillow to the last post we read from others' blog before we go to bed. Forms of online ads are also evolving with the maturing online advertising business from the early and more obtrusive pop-up ads, banner ads and paid search ads to more targeted, personalized native ads (Cho and Cheon 2004). However, as consumers are continuously bombarded by ads, and as most of the ads are either ignored or avoided from our attention (Duff and Faber 2011), when and where an advertiser places his ad to achieve effectiveness becomes a question urges for an answer.

Numbers of researchers have argued that an ad will gain more favorable outcomes by being placed in the context where the thematic feature is similar to the ad. Those researchers suggested that the congruence between the ad and the context will make the ad be attended more fluently, and thus more favorable attitudes toward the ad will be elicited (De Pelsmacker, Geuens, and Anckaert 2002; Janssens, De Pelsmacker, and Geuens 2012; Moore, Stammerjohan, and Coulter 2005; Segev, Wang, and Fernandes 2014). Theoretical mechanisms referred by researchers to explain the ad-context congruence effect consist of contextual priming effect and conceptual fluency effect. For example, Yi (1990, 1993) studied contextual priming effect on consumers' subsequent brand evaluation. He concluded that consumers' evaluations of a brand will be primed by the context adjacent to the brand. Similarly, Mandler (1982) indicated that the activated concepts in consumers' mind due to the priming effect of the context make the congruent ad more predictive in consumers' information processing system than the incongruent ad. On the other hand, research on conceptual fluency effect suggested that the predictive environment will facilitate individuals' information processing fluency, and lead to positive evaluation of the processed target (Tversky and Kahneman 1973).

However, different studies analyzing ad-context congruence effect on consumers' memory for the ad suggested that the congruence between the ad and the context will merge them together, and then processed as a whole by consumers (Kumar 2000). This phenomenon was called cognitive interference, which was related to individual's limited cognitive resource. The results of studies conducted by Caplan and Waters (1999) implied that cognitive resources are necessary for individuals to process information. Some researchers also proved that people whose cognitive resources are occupied, in other words, with high cognitive load (Lavie *et al.* 2004), will have problem processing information effectively. However, the accumulated research on ad-context congruence effect has put little focus on the role of cognitive load in influencing ad-context congruence effect.

Present study is aimed to fill the gap by examining cognitive load as a moderating variable and to investigate its influence on ad-context congruence effect in online blog context. Ad-context (in)congruence and levels of cognitive load were the independent variables manipulated in the study where the dependent variables were attitudes, recall and recognition of the ads. The paper starts from a literature review considering the theoretical mechanisms underpinning the ad-context congruence effect and the role of cognitive load in processing information. Then, the methodology and the results of the study are presented. Finally, implications of the findings from the experiment are discussed followed by the limitations of current study and the recommendations for future research.

Literature Review

Ad-context Congruence in Advertising

Ad-context congruence was defined as the degree to which the theme of advertising material is featured similarly to the editorial content in a particular media vehicle (Zanjani, Diamond, and Chan 2011). Researchers have investigated the effect of ad-context congruence on how individuals allocate attention to the ad while processing the information that results in different attitudes and levels of recall and recognition of the ad. Although some studies have analyzed the ad-context congruence effect in the auditory context (i.e. the background music of the advertisement) and examining the recall and recognition of the ad (Kellaris, Cox, and Cox 1993) or have used mixed methods to approach the ad-context congruence effect (Hung 2000), most studies of the ad-context congruence effect had focused on the congruence between the ads and the visual or textual media context (De Pelsmacker, Geuens, and Anckaert 2002; Furnham, Gunter, and Richardson 2002; Furnham, Gunter, and Walsh 1998; Janssens, De Pelsmacker, and Geuens 2012; Moore, Stammerjohan, and Coulter 2005; Segev, Wang, and Fernandes 2014; Zanjani, Diamond, and Chan 2011). In this present study, the ad-context congruence effect is studied in the online blog, and the features of the native advertisements are designed as congruent or incongruent with the blog content.

Empirical studies examining ad-context congruence effect on subsequent attitudes toward the ads suggested that a higher level of ad-context congruence will lead to more positive attitudes toward the ads compared to the advertisements being placed in an incongruent environment (De Pelsmacker, Geuens, and Anckaert 2002; Janssens, De Pelsmacker, and Geuens 2012; Moore, Stammerjohan, and Coulter 2005; Segev, Wang, and Fernandes 2014). Explanations for these findings were attributed to contextual priming effect (Janssens, De Pelsmacker, and Geuens 2012; Moore, Stammerjohan, and Coulter 2005; Segev, Wang, and Fernandes 2014) and conceptual fluency effect (Lee and Labroo 2004).

Although studies of ad-context congruence effect primarily focused on its positive influence on consumers' attitudes toward the ads, other research studied the effect of ad-context congruence on consumers' memory. As a whole, this body of work has shown that consumers are less likely to recall and recognize ads in the ad-context congruent condition than consumers exposed to ads that are incongruent with the context (Kumar 2000; Furnham, Gunter, and Richardson 2002; Furnham, Gunter, and Walsh 1998; Furnham and Price 2006; Moore, Stammerjohan, and Coulter 2005). The underlying mechanism for explaining these empirical findings is called cognitive interference, which will result in a melt-down effect, a phenomenon hindering consumers' memory for the ads (Furnham, Gunter, and Richardson 2002; Furnham and Price 2006) and thus leading to lower recall and recognition of the ads in the ad-context congruent condition.

In addition, studies of the ad-context congruence effect often considered consumers' motivation of processing the advertising information (Moore, Stammerjohan, and Coulter 2005), brand familiarity (Dahlén *et al.* 2008), and levels of involvement as the moderators of the attitudes (De Pelsmacker, Geuens, and Anckaert 2002; Janssens, De Pelsmacker, and Geuens 2012; Segev, Wang, and Fernandes 2014) or the recall and recognition of the ads (Zanjani, Diamond, and Chan 2011). For example, Segev, Wang, and Fernandes (2014) manipulated participants' levels of issue involvement with the blog, and they found that participants with lower levels of involvement had more positive attitudes toward the incongruent ads. On the other hand, Zanjani and her colleagues (2011) suggested that levels of task involvement played the moderating role of participants' memory for the ads. Their findings also indicated that participants with higher task involvement levels were less likely to recall and recognize the ads.

However, besides the levels of involvement, from the cognitive psychology perspective, consumers also need cognitive resources to process information when they are exposed to the ads or the media content. Since cognitive capacity is a limited resource (Caplan and Waters 1999), consumers' levels of cognitive load while processing the editorial content and the advertising information will also influence their overall comprehension of the conceptual meanings of the ads and the content. Therefore, this study proposed cognitive load as new moderator for the ad-context congruence effect. The different levels of cognitive load are expected to moderate the ad-context congruence effect, and then influence the subsequent attitudes and memory for the ads.

Contextual Priming Effect

Studies of traditional and online media have found that an advertisement will be evaluated more favorably when it is congruent with the media context than otherwise (Yi 1990, 1993). Most research on the ad-context congruence effect attributed the positive evaluation following the exposure to a congruent ad to the priming effect of the context surrounding the advertisement (Janssens, De Pelsmacker, and Geuens 2012; Moore, Stammerjohan, and Coulter 2005; Segev, Wang, and Fernandes 2014; Zanjani, Diamond, and Chan 2011). The priming effect refers to the activation of a series of related concepts in consumers' semantic networks. If the target is relevant to the activated concepts, the activated schema can easily be assimilated into consumers' knowledge structure, which allows the target to be semantically processed more easily (Fazio 2001; Yi 1990, 1993). Therefore, as these accessible concepts will affect consumers' subsequent evaluation and judgement of the target (Higgins, Bargh, and Lombardi 1985; Murphy and Zajonc 1993), targets that are relevant to the activated concepts will be evaluated more positively because consumers are fond of information that conforms to their expectations (Mandler 1982).

In this case, the contextual priming effect is the priming effect regarding contexts where the advertisements are placed as the cognitive primes that can activate the related concepts or information in consumers' knowledge model (Yi 1990, 1993). If the ads are congruent with the contexts, the congruent ads will be more readily associated with the activated concepts than the incongruent ads, and thus the congruent ads will be evaluated more favorably than the incongruent ads given that the congruent ads have higher predictability (Janssens, De Pelsmacker, and Geuens 2012;

Mandler 1982; Moore, Stammerjohan, and Coulter 2005; Segev, Wang, and Fernandes 2014). For example, Yi (1990, 1993) examined the contextual priming effect by associating either the positive or negative attributes with the target. The findings suggested that although participants were unconsciously primed and were unaware of the activated concepts in their mindsets, their subsequent evaluation of the target was still influenced by those primed concepts. Therefore, the accessibility of the concepts and the information will determine how much they can influence the evaluation of the target.

Conversely, Dahlén and his colleagues (2008) suggested that placing ads in incongruent contexts will not lead to the devaluation of the ads, instead, the incongruence between the ads and the contexts will result in more favorable attitudes and better recall and recognition of the ads, especially when the consumers are familiar with the advertised brands. Although their findings indicated that the ad-context incongruent condition enhanced advertising effectiveness, the conclusion was highly subject to the mediating effect of brand familiarity because the brand with higher familiarity was more likely to grab the attention of consumers, and lead to better memory for the brand and its advertisement. Moreover, no matter if the ad is congruent or incongruent with the context, the formed attitudes toward the familiar brand are not likely to change accordingly. Therefore, the measured attitudes in the study were likely to be the consequence of brand familiarity (Janssens, De Pelsmacker, and Geuens 2012). In fact, the incongruence between the ads and the contexts might lead to cognitive dissonance that requires greater cognitive effort to process the ads. Consumers will be more frustrated in the incongruent condition and devaluate the ads subsequently (Garbarino and Edell 1997).

In this study, participants were exposed to an online blog context with ads that were either congruent or incongruent with the feature of the blog. It was assumed that more favorable attitudes will be observed in the ad-context congruent condition because the contextual priming effect in the ad-context congruent condition enables consumers to conceptually process the ads more easily with their activated schema. The favorable attitudes result from the fluency of processing the advertising information are the outcome of conceptual fluency effect (Hamann 1990; Mandler 1982; Nedungadi 1990; Tversky and Kahneman 1973).

Conceptual Fluency Effect

According to the processing fluency model, if consumers have prior exposure to a target, they tend to process it more fluently, and that fluency will lead to favorable attitudes toward the target (Seamon *et al.* 1995). Although most research on the processing fluency model focused on the result of this perceptual fluency effect (i.e. the fluency of processing the target's shape, size or color due to previous exposure) the conceptual fluency effect, another construct in understanding processing fluency, also has the positive influence on the attitude toward the target. This kind of top-down association regarding how easy an individual relates to and processes the target with previously exposed concepts is considered as conceptual fluency (Tversky and Kahneman 1973).

Early research found that the level of conceptual fluency is affected by elaboration or attention to the target (Hamann 1990). Some empirical studies analyzed the effect of conceptual fluency on memory-based purchase choices by directly or indirectly priming the participants with the target brand or the competing brand to increase the accessibility of the brand in participants' mind (Nedungadi 1990). Other research asked participants to do affective ratings on words or products that appeared either in a predictive context or a neutral context to examine the conceptual fluency effect created by the predictive context on the subsequent attitudes toward the target words (Lee and Labroo 2004; Whittlesea 1993). The findings of studies of the conceptual fluency effect suggested that although conceptual fluency could be achieved by the elaboration on the target (Hamann 1990), the positive attitude toward the target as the outcome of the conceptual fluency effect could also be observed when the target words were primed and inferred more fluently in a meaningful and predictive context than in a neutral or unpredictable context (Lee and Labroo 2004; Whittlesea 1993).

Thus, the present research hypothesized that consumers will evaluate advertisement that is congruent with the editorial content more favorably than advertisement that is incongruent with the content because the editorial content has higher predictive power toward the ad in the ad-context congruent condition than in the ad-context incongruent condition. In other words, audiences may expect to see an advertisement for trip planning website while reading a blog about traveling and so this 'expectation' would lead to more fluent processing. Since the advertisement can be conceptually processed more fluently in an ad-context congruent condition, more favorable attitudes result from conceptual fluency effect will be observed.

Cognitive Interference & Meltdown Effect

Although considerable evidence has suggested that the congruence between the ad and the context will lead to positive attitudes toward the ad, studies of the ad-context congruence effect in traditional and online advertising environment have found that the congruence between the ad and the context will, however, result in cognitive interference impeding consumers' cognitive processing of the advertising information and hinder their memory for the ad (Furnham, Gunter, and Richardson 2002; Furnham and Price 2006; Kumar 2000; Moore, Stammerjohan, and Coulter 2005; Zanjani, Diamond, and Chan 2011).

Cognitive interference theory suggests that different concepts primed by the target will compete against each other in consumers' memory system during the recall and recognition tests, and the activated concepts that have the strongest associations with the target will be recalled more readily (Kumar 2000). Nelson and his colleagues (1976) found that the degree of conceptual and semantic similarity between pictures will also influence consumers' subsequent recall. If the conceptual similarity between the targets is high, the concepts being primed by the targets will compete against each other because they belong to the same cognitive structure in consumers' schema. However, if the targets are distinct from one another, each of them will activate distinct concepts or associations in consumers' schema, and those concepts will not compete against each other because each of them is from different cognitive structures. Therefore, as the ad and the context belong to the same cognitive structure in the ad-context congruent condition, cognitive interference becomes greater than in the ad-context incongruent condition, and the subsequent memory for the incongruent ad will be better than for the congruent ad.

The conceptual similarity that causes the merge between the ad and the context leading to cognitive interference is called the meltdown effect (Furnham, Gunter, and Richardson 2002). In the ad-context congruent condition, the ad and the context merge into one prime, and thus the total concepts that they can activate in consumers' schema are fewer than in the ad-context incongruent condition where there is no merge of the ad and the context. Therefore, the concepts that can aid the subsequent recall of the ad are more sufficient in the ad-context incongruent condition than in the congruent condition. For example, advertisements for cars were recalled better when they were placed in the TV program about food (Furnham and Price 2006). As the concepts primed by the ad are distinct from the concepts primed by the context, the activated concepts (i.e. those associated with the ad, and those associated with the context) will not compete and interfere with each other so that the subsequent recall of the incongruent ad will be better. Past research has found that placing an ad in a conceptually incongruent environment will result in better memory for the ad (Kumar 2000; Furnham, Gunter, and Richardson 2002; Furnham and Price 2006; Moore, Stammerjohan, and Coulter 2005; Zanjani, Diamond, and Chan 2011).

In this study, it was assumed that participants will have better recall and recognition of the ad if they are exposed to the ad that is incongruent with the context than participants who are exposed to the ad that is congruent with the context. However, memory for the ad might also be influenced by other factors such as participants' working memory load or cognitive load.

Cognitive Load

Cognitive load or working memory load is conceptualized as the degree to which an individual's cognitive capacity or working memory that has been exploited to accomplish certain tasks (Paas and Van Merriënboer 1994). According to the load theory of selective attention proposed by Lavie and her colleagues (2004), the active attentional control requires cognitive resources such as working memory capacity to ensure accurate attention allocation and effective processing of the target. In contrast to long-term memory, working memory, also named as short-term memory, is a memory system with short-duration and limited cognitive capacity that manages the storage and usage of the processed information (Baddeley 1992; Caplan and Waters 1999). In addition, Baddeley and Hitch (1974) suggested that working memory is composed of the central executive system controlling attention allocation, the articulatory loop commanding verbal and "interpretive" processing (Caplan and Waters 1999), and the visual-spatial sketch pad managing the processing of visual information, and they believed that working memory capacity determines an individual's cognitive performance.

Under the control of verbal working memory system, the "interpretive processing" is the process of recognizing words and appreciating the meanings and the syntactic structure to comprehend the sentences (Caplan and Waters 1999). In other words, sentence comprehension will demand verbal working memory resources to activate the interpretive processing mechanism that allows the reasoning and remembering of the sentences. Identifying the relationship such as the congruity between the ad and the context is also a process of sentence comprehension that requires the activation of interpretive processing mechanism supported by working memory capacity. Therefore, if the load of working memory is high, fewer resources are available for processing and interpreting the sentences that lead to failure of comprehension.

Research examining the effect of working memory load often manipulates the number of digits for participants to memorize in the experiment. Although some studies found that a digit-memorizing task will not increase working memory load nor interfere with the comprehension of the sentences (Caplan and Waters 1999), most researchers held the opinion that the digit-memorizing task will increase participants' difficulty in processing and comprehending the sentences (Baddeley and Hitch 1974; Lavie *et al.* 2004). The findings of the effect of working memory load on sentence comprehension suggested that participants with higher working memory load were more insensitive to the sentence structure than participants with lower working memory load. Therefore, participants with higher working memory load are less likely to be affected by the ad-context congruence effect because they have little cognitive capacity to process the sentences effectively and to recognize whether the conceptual meanings between the ad and the editorial content are congruent or not. On the other hand, participants with lower working memory load will have sufficient cognitive resources to process and interpret the sentences. That is, the effect of ad-context congruence on individuals' attitudes, recall, and recognitions of the ads will be moderated by the level of working memory load. In other words, only in the low cognitive load condition where participants can comprehend the meanings of the ad and the editorial content effectively can the ad-context congruence effect play its role, and vice versa.

Since sentence comprehension demands cognitive resources, the ad-context congruence effect will be subject to consumers' concurrent cognitive load because the premise of the ad-context congruence effect requires consumers to have the capability to interpret the sentences first. However, scarce research has examined the effect of cognitive load on the ad-context congruence effect, and thus, the present study aimed to shed light on the role of cognitive load in influencing the ad-context congruence effect.

Given that the objective of this paper is to study the effect of ad-context congruence on the advertisements in blogosphere, the study first investigates which of the theoretical mechanisms underlying the ad-context congruence effect is more prominent.

RQ: What is the effect of ad-context congruence on consumers' attitudes, recall and recognition of the ad?

This study also proposed cognitive load as the moderator of the ad-context congruence effect on consumers' responses to the ad. When participants are in the low cognitive load condition, it is anticipated that the contextual priming effect, conceptual fluency effect, and cognitive interference will occur together. If participants encounter the ad-context congruent scenario, they will have more favorable attitudes but lower memory for the ad; whereas, if participants encounter an ad-context incongruent scenario, they will have less favorable attitudes but better memory for the ad. In contrast, the ad-context congruence effect will not be as salient in the low cognitive load as in the high cognitive load condition. With high cognitive load, no matter if the participants encounter an ad-context congruent or incongruent condition, they will only have limited memory for the ads, and their attitudes toward the congruent and incongruent ads might not be as discrepant as the participants with low cognitive load because the few cognitive resources will interfere with their comprehension of the ad and the blog content, and hinder the formation of attitudes toward the ads. The hypotheses of the study are as follows:

H1a: The ad that is incongruent with the blog context will result in better recall of the ad than the ad that is congruent with the context.

H1b: The ad that is incongruent with the blog context will result in better recognition of the ad than the ad that is congruent with the context.

H1c: The ad that is congruent with the blog context will produce more positive attitudes towards the ad than the ad that is incongruent with the blog context.

H2a: Individuals in the low cognitive load condition will be more likely to recall elements of the ad than those in the high cognitive load condition.

H2b: Individuals in the low cognitive load condition will be more likely to recognize elements of the ad than those in the high cognitive load condition.

H2c: Low cognitive load will produce a more favorable attitude of the ad than high cognitive load condition.

H3a: Cognitive load will moderate ad-context congruence effect on the recall of the ad.

H3b: Cognitive load will moderate the effect of ad-context congruence on the recognition of the ad.

H3c: Cognitive load will moderate the effect of ad-context congruence on the attitudes toward the ad.

Methodology

Design and Sample

The study was conducted on Qualtrics using a 2 (cognitive load: high vs. low) × 2 (ad-context congruence: congruent vs. incongruent) between-subjects design. Participants were 80 (26 males, 54 females) undergraduate students recruited from a large Midwestern university. An extra course credit was granted to the participants in exchange for their participation.

Stimuli

Blog Topic. Research on the ad-context congruence effect has suggested that involvement will influence participants' attentiveness while processing the information (Segev, Wang, and Fernandes 2014). As people usually read blogs that they find interesting, the selected blog topic should have higher than the average levels of involvement to simulate a real-world situation. A blog article about a blogger's traveling experiences in some European and Asian countries was selected (see Appendix 1 and 2) because "travel" was believed to be a topic without gender differences in attraction and one that can arouse participants' involvement with the content (Krugman 1966). The levels of involvement with the blog topic were also measured at the end of the study.

Congruent and Incongruent Ads. Based on the selected blog content featuring traveling, two advertisements for different brands in different product categories were selected for the ad-context congruence or incongruence situations. The two advertisements were on behalf of two novel brands that were not currently in use in the country to prevent the influence of brand familiarity on participants' later responses. An ad for a trip planning website was chosen for the ad-context congruence condition, while in the ad-context incongruence condition, an ad for an ink pen brand was selected. The perceived fit between the ad and the blog context were evaluated by the participants in the main study.

Variables

There were two independent variables (*ad-context congruence*: congruent versus incongruent; *cognitive load*: high cognitive load versus low cognitive load) in the study. *Ad-context congruence* was conceptualized as the degree to which the ad was conceptually similar to the surrounding blog content (Zanjani, Diamond, and Chan 2011). In this study, it was operationalized as matching the concepts of the advertised products that were either similar or dissimilar to the surrounding blog content.

Cognitive load, on the other hand, was conceptualized as the degree to which an individuals' cognitive capacity that was occupied to accomplish a certain task (Paas and Van Merriënboer 1994). In this study, the operationalization of different cognitive load conditions required participants to memorize different lengths of digit sets at the beginning of the study (Baddeley and Hitch 1974; Lavie *et al.* 2004).

Procedure

Participants were seated individually in front of a computer in the lab, and generally only one to two participants were arranged into the same timeslot. They were shown the informed consent on the computer on the first web page on Qualtrics before the experiment started, and they were told that the objective of the study was to investigate individuals' daily blog-browsing behavior. This instruction was aimed to make the study as naturalistic, and the participants feel as relaxed throughout the experiment as possible. Then, they were randomly assigned to one of the four experimental conditions.

At the beginning of the study, participants in different cognitive load conditions were asked to memorize different lengths of digit(s) sets appearing on the computer screen. In the low cognitive load condition, participants were shown "6" for 500 milliseconds, while participants in the high cognitive load condition were shown "517326" for 2 seconds (Lavie *et al.* 2004). After that, participants were presented a blog about traveling. For participants in the ad-context congruence scenario, the blog would come with an ad for a trip planning website at about the end of the blog, while the ad was replaced by an ink pen ad in the ad-context incongruence scenario.

As soon as the participants finished reading the blog and the ad, they were instructed to free recall the digit(s) that had appeared in the previous digit-memorizing task. Then, their memory for the ad was assessed in the free recall session followed by the recognition test before they were asked to evaluate their attitudes toward the ad. Finally, participants' levels of involvement with the blog topic and the perceived fit between the ad and the blog were measured. Before they finished the study, they were asked to provide their demographic information. Upon completion, participants were thanked for their participation regardless of their performance in the study, and debriefed about the main purpose of the study.

Measurement

Recall of the Ad. In the free recall session, participants were asked to provide whatever they could remember about the ad in the blog. Their responses were coded as "2" for recalling the advertised brand, "1" for recalling the advertised product category, and "0" if they did not remember anything.

Recognition of the Ad. Six brand names (see Appendix 4), including KKday, Franz, ezTravel, Pilot, Uni, Pentel, were provided in the recognition test for participants to select. They were asked to select the brand name that the ad in the blog was advertised for. Their responses were coded dichotomously as "1" for recognizing the brand name, and "0" if not.

Attitudes toward the Ad. Participants' attitudes toward the ad were measured by a five-item bipolar semantic differential scale (MacKenzie, Lutz, and Belch 1986) with items including bad/good, unpleasant/pleasant, unfavorable/favorable, irritating/not irritating and uninteresting/interesting.

Levels of Involvement. A seven-item bipolar semantic differential scale (Park and McClung 1986) with items including irrelevant/relevant, means a lot to me/means nothing to me, matters to me/doesn't matter to me, uninterested/interested, significant/insignificant, vital/superfluous, essential/nonessential was applied for assessing participants' levels of involvement with the blog in manipulation check.

Ad-context Fit. The perceived fit between the ad and the context was assessed by a six-item five-point Likert scale (Segev, Wang, and Fernandes 2014) where "1" being "strongly disagree" and "5" being "strongly agree" with statements including "The ad and the blog on which it is posted are a good fit.", "The ad and the blog on which it is posted are consistent.", "The ad and the blog on which it is posted belong together.", "The ad and the blog on which it is posted have a lot in common.", "The ad makes the blog less credible", and "It is beneficial for X to appear with the blog."

Results

Manipulation Check

The manipulation check for the blog topic was measured by asking the participants to evaluate their *levels of involvement* with the blog on a seven-item bipolar semantic differential scale (Park and McClung 1986) (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.879$). A mean score was created based on the seven items ($M = 4.609$, SD = 1.084). In line with the intended manipulation, the overall mean score of participants' levels of involvement with the blog topic was higher than the average. In addition, the histogram indicated that participants' levels of involvement with the blog were normally distributed. The manipulation of participants' levels of involvement with the blog was achieved.

Then, in order to verify the manipulation of *ad-context congruence*, participants were asked to evaluate the perceived fit between the ad and the blog context on a six-item five-point Likert scale (Segev, Wang, and Fernandes 2014) (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.862$). A mean score was created based on the six items ($M = 4.375$, SD = 1.243). To analyze participants' responses to the perceived ad-context fit, an independent sample T-test was performed.

In line with the intended manipulation, the results of the t-test showed that participants in the ad-context congruent condition ($M = 5.02$, SD = 0.97) and participants in the ad-context incongruent condition ($M = 3.73$, SD = 1.16) evaluated the 'fit' significantly differently, $t\ (78) = 5.37$, $p < .01$. Specifically, participants in the ad-context congruent condition evaluated the perceived fit between the ad and the blog context higher than participants in the ad-context incongruent condition. Therefore, the manipulation of ad-context congruence was achieved.

Finally, the manipulation check for *cognitive load* was measured by asking the participants to recall the digit(s) in the digit-memorizing task. In the low cognitive load condition, the free recall responses were coded as "1" for correctly recall the digit, and "0" if not. Similarly, in the high cognitive load condition, the free recall responses were coded as "1" for correctly recall five to six digits in the digit set, and "0" if not. Participants would be excluded from the analysis if they were coded as "0." None of the participant were excluded in this section of manipulation.

Hypotheses Testing

Effects of Ad-context Congruence.

Memory for the ad

The first set of hypotheses predicted superior memory (recall: hypothesis 1a; recognition: hypothesis 1b) for the ad that was incongruent with the blog context as compared with the ad that was congruent with the blog context. A one-way ANOVA with *ad-context congruence* (i.e. congruent or incongruent) as the independent variable and participants' *recall of the ad* as the dependent variable was conducted. The result of the analysis showed a significant effect of ad-context congruence on participants' recall of the ad $F\ (1, 78) = 12.836$, $p < .01$ with the incongruent ad more likely to be recalled ($M = 1.10$, SD = .928) than the congruent ad ($M = .425$, SD = .747). Therefore, hypothesis 1a was supported.

Next, a one-way ANOVA was performed but with participants' *recognition of the ad* as the dependent variable. The result showed no significant effect of ad-context congruence on participants' recognition of the ad $F\ (1, 78) = 1.278$, $p > .05$ with recognition for the congruent ad ($M = .525$, SD = .506) and the incongruent ad ($M = .650$, SD = .483) almost equally likely to be recognized. Therefore, hypothesis 1b was not supported.

Attitudes toward the ad

H1c predicted more favorable attitudes toward the ad that was congruent with the blog context than the ad that was incongruent with the blog context. Participants' attitudes toward the ad were assessed by a five-item bipolar sematic differential scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.852$) (MacKenzie, Lutz, and Belch 1986). A mean score was created based on these five items. A one-way ANOVA with *ad-context congruence* as the independent variable and participants' *attitudes toward the ad* as the dependent variable was conducted. The effect of ad-context congruence on participants' attitudes toward the ad was significant, F (1, 78) = 10.897, $p < .01$. Specifically, the ad that was congruent with the blog garnered higher attitudes toward the ad (M = 3.8, SD = .83) than did the ad that was incongruent with the blog context (M = 3.24, SD = .68). Therefore, hypothesis 1c was supported.

Ad-context Congruence and Cognitive Load.

Before analyzing the effect of different levels of cognitive load as a moderator for predicting ad-context congruence effects, the main effect of cognitive load on participants' memory for the ad was measured by analyzing participants' *recall and recognition* of the ad. The second set of hypotheses predicted that participants in the low cognitive load condition would have superior memory (recall: hypothesis 2a; recognition: hypothesis 2b) for the ad as compared with participants in the high load condition.

First, a one-way ANOVA with *cognitive load* (i.e. high, low) as the independent variable and participants' *recall of the ad* as the dependent variable was conducted. The results showed a significant effect of cognitive load on participants' recall of the ad F (1, 78) = 13.099, $p < .01$. Specifically, as expected, those in the low cognitive load condition had better recall of the ads (M = 1.139, SD = .867) than those in the high cognitive load condition (M = .455, SD = .820). In addition, Participants' recognition of the ad was also analyzed with a one-way ANOVA. The results also showed a significant effect of cognitive load on the recognition of the ad F (1, 78) = 14.916, $p < .01$ with participants in the low cognitive load condition significantly more likely to recognize the ads (M = .806, SD = .067) than participants in the high cognitive load condition did (M = .409, SD = .497). Therefore, hypotheses 2a and 2b were supported.

Next, in hypothesis 2c, we assumed that participants in the low cognitive load condition would have more positive attitudes toward the ads than participants in the high cognitive load condition. A one-way ANOVA was run with *cognitive load* as the independent variable and participants' *attitudes toward the ad* as the dependent variable. The results showed that the effect of cognitive load on participants' attitudes toward the ad was significant F (1, 78) = 10.319, $p < .01$. Specifically, those in the low cognitive load condition indicated more favorable attitudes toward the ads (M = 3.82, SD = .46) as compared with those in the high cognitive load condition (M = 3.27, SD = .94). Therefore, hypothesis 2c was supported.

Overall, the results suggested that participants' *attitudes toward the ad* and participants' *recall and recognition of the ad* were affected significantly by cognitive load in line with predictions. That is, the low cognitive load condition did result in more positive attitudes and better recall and recognition of the ads. In this case, hypotheses 2a, 2b and 2c were supported.

In order to analyze the moderating effect of cognitive load on participants' memory for the ad under different ad-context conditions, a two-way ANOVA with *ad-context congruence* (i.e. congruent, incongruent) and *cognitive load* (i.e. high, low) as independent variables and participants' *recall of the ad* as the dependent variable was run. There were no significant interactions between cognitive load and ad-context congruence on participants' recall of the ad F (1, 76) = .682, $p > .05$. Another two-way ANOVA with *ad-context congruence* and *cognitive load* as independent variables and participants' *recognition of the ad* as the dependent variable was run. The results found no significant interaction between cognitive load and ad-context congruence on participants' recognition of the ad F (1, 76) = .378, $p > .05$.

To see the potential moderating effect of cognitive load on participants' attitudes toward the ad influenced by ad-context congruence, a two-way ANOVA was performed with *ad-context congruence* (i.e. congruent, incongruent) and *cognitive load* (i.e. high, low) as independent variables and participants' *attitudes toward the ad* as the dependent variable. The result found no significant interaction between cognitive load and ad-context congruence on participants' attitudes toward the ad F (1, 76) = 1.36, $p > .05$. Thus, hypotheses 3a, 3b and 3c were not supported.

Although the results did not achieve statistical significance and hypotheses 3a, 3b and 3c were rejected, the change of participants' attitudes and recognition of the ad in different ad-context scenarios were directionally consistent with the hypotheses when considering if cognitive load played a moderating role in the relationship.

In addition, although there was no significant interaction between cognitive load and ad-context congruence on participants' attitudes and memory for the ad, in Table 1, the attitudes (see differences of mean scores between two ad-context groups in the ad attitude) and recognition (see differences of mean scores between two ad-context groups in the ad recognition) of the ad between congruent and incongruent group in the low cognitive load condition were more similar than in the high cognitive load condition. This result indicated that in the low cognitive load condition, as participants were able to allocate more attention on the ad, their subsequent attitudes and memory for the ad between congruent and incongruent group were more consistent. However, as participants' cognitive resources were exploited by the digit-memorizing task in the high cognitive load condition, they were less likely to attend to the ad in the blog. Thus, it appears that the larger differences of attitudes and recognition of the ad between congruent and incongruent group in high cognitive load condition were due to insufficient attention.

TABLE 1
Descriptive Statistics for Cognitive Load and Ad-context Congruence

Ad Attitude				
		Mean	**Differences of mean score**	**Std. Deviation**
Low Cognitive Load	Ad-context Congruence	4.000	.356	.428
	Ad-context Incongruence	3.644		.431
High Cognitive Load	Ad-context Congruence	3.636	.727	1.036
	Ad-context Incongruence	2.909		.670
Ad Recognition				
		Mean	**Differences of mean score**	**Std. Deviation**
Low Cognitive Load	Ad-context Congruence	.778	.055	.428
	Ad-context Incongruence	.833		.431
High Cognitive Load	Ad-context Congruence	.318	.182	.477
	Ad-context Incongruence	.500		.512

Discussion

In light of the proliferation of online media, advertisers must think deep before implementing any media strategy among various online media alternatives that have distinct characteristics. For example, the online blog that was studied in this research is one of the most popular media for online advertising due to its capability of producing issue-focused and targeted content that attracts specific groups of viewers with similar interests and tastes (Segev, Wang, and Fernandes 2014). Moreover, as online blogs can create a more naturalistic environment for ads than other media, advertising messages for the blog context are often emphasized on the congruence between the ad and the surrounding blog content in order to make the ad as “native” as part of the blog.

Native advertising has gaining its popularity among advertisers with increasing marketing budget being devoted into this industry (BI Intelligence 2015). For example, Google has offered native programmatic buying services for travel brands to more precisely target their advertisements to their potential customers (Johnson 2016). The strengths underpinning native advertising are the capability of realizing greater engagement and attracting more consumers’ attention than a traditional advertisement can achieve as it often disguises itself in the media context that shares similar concepts with the advertising messages. Therefore, in order to validate the function of native advertising, it is essential to examine the congruence effect between the ad and the context.

Results of the present study contributed to the understanding of the relationship between the advertisement and the context where the ad was placed in many ways. First, this study investigated the effect of ad-context congruence on advertising effectiveness by measuring participants’ attitudes and memory for the ads. The results suggested that the ad that is congruent with the context will receive more favorable attitudes than an incongruent ad. When the priming effect of the context (Yi 1990, 1993), in this study, it is likely that the blog, activated the related concepts in participants’ mind and formed a predictive environment for processing the information, the exposure to the congruent ad was processed more fluently than the incongruent ad. Then, that feeling of expectedness and fluency ultimately led to positive attitudes toward the congruent ad (Mandler 1982). Second, superior memory was discovered for participants exposed to the incongruent ad, an outcome indicating the function of cognitive interference effect (Kumar 2000; Furnham, Gunter, and Richardson 2002; Furnham and Price 2006). This effect predicts that the congruity between the ad and the context will reduce the number of concepts being activated in consumers’ minds and hinder the memory for the congruent ad. These findings related to ad-context congruence effect have important implications for optimizing ad placement strategy. Specifically, if the goal is to create positive attitude, a media context that is congruent with the ad is preferred. Whereas, an incongruent context is ideal for the brand that wants to stay in consumers’ mind.

More importantly, this research shed light on the moderating role of cognitive load in influencing the ad-context congruence effect. Cognitive capacity is an important but limited resource for processing and comprehending information. However, most advertising messages are delivered to consumers during the daytime when their cognitive resources are probably occupied for other tasks that will interfere with their processing of the ad. Results of this research supported the assumption that although participants could recall the incongruent ad significantly better than the congruent ad in the low cognitive load condition, the high cognitive load, however, drastically impeded the memory for both the congruent and incongruent ads. Although there was no significant interaction between ad-context congruence and cognitive load, the descriptive results suggested that participants in the low cognitive load condition were responded similarly with more positive attitudes toward the congruent and incongruent ads compared with high cognitive load participants who seemed to have more discrepant and negative attitudes toward both ads. Likewise, low cognitive load predicted similar responses across ad-context congruent and incongruent conditions with better recognition of the ads, while participants with high cognitive load had more discrepant and inferior recognition for congruent and incongruent ads. The discrepant results of attitudes and recognition of the ads in the high cognitive load condition suggested that participants may have had difficulty offering additional cognitive resource to process the blog and the ads so that the deviations between ad-context congruence and incongruence groups with high cognitive load were greater than those with low cognitive load. The implication here highlights the decisive role of consumers' cognitive resource in influencing the subsequent responses to the ad wherever it is placed, and indicates that the advertising messages will be processed more effectively when consumers are free from tasks. However, if the ad must be delivered when consumers are busy with tasks, ad-context congruence effect should be taken into consideration.

Limitations and Future Research

Despite the fruitful findings, this research has some important limitations. First, studies of the effect of cognitive load on individuals' comprehension of the sentences (Caplan and Waters 1999) have suggested that individuals with high cognitive load are more sensitive to sentence complexity. Therefore, the present study which showed no significant interaction between ad-context congruence and cognitive load in memory for the ad might be the result of the design of the blog being too complicated, which caused the floor effect in participants' recall and recognition of the ads in the high cognitive load condition. Future research should consider implementing a pretest for manipulating the level of complexity of the stimulus used in the main study. Second, the experimental design was aimed to simulate participants' daily blog reading experiences. However, the manipulation of cognitive load asking participants to memorize digits at the beginning of the study was relatively different from participants' past experiences and lowered the external validity of the experiment. Therefore, future research could modify the manipulation of cognitive load to be more naturalistic to increase the results' generalizability.

Finally, future research on this topic should extend the investigation to different media contexts with different ad formats such as pre-roll ads or banner ads. Tasks that consumers usually engage in while processing advertising, such as walking or listening to music, should also be covered in the future study to reflect real-world situations because motion is another factor that can influence individuals' cognitive load. In addition, future work should measure more variables such as purchase intention and brand attitude to see how they may be influenced by the interaction of cognitive load and ad-context congruence effect to gain more insight into this topic.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Stimuli Sample 1: Ad-context Congruence

Appendix 2

Stimuli Sample 2: Ad-context Incongruence

A META-ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF MEDIA CONTEXT ON AD ATTITUDES

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Abstract

The role of media context in advertising engagement has been the subject of interest for advertisers and media practitioners over the past 50 years. However, there remains a lack of understanding and clarity on the relationship between media context and ad effectiveness. To unify previous literature and provide a bigger picture of the relationship, this study meta analytically examined the relationships between media context and consumers' attitudes toward the ad/brand/product (ad attitudes hereafter) as one of the ad effectiveness outcome measures. A total of 31 years of research findings (i.e., 75 studies) were synthesized. Overall, media context and ad attitudes were moderately and positively correlated, but the effect differed by study characteristics and specific media context as well as types of ad attitudes. The findings suggest that different media contexts leverage consumers' ad attitudes differently. This implies the need for academic researchers to continue to research this area and for practitioners to pay close attention to media contexts in media decisions.

NATIVE AMBIGUITY:
DISCOVERY, PROCESSING AND IDENTIFICATION OF NATIVE ADVERTISING IN SOCIAL MEDIA ENVIRONMENTS

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Abstract

Native advertising is designed to closely resemble the editorial and user-generated content that is featured in today's social media platforms. In this study, we used an eye tracking experiment to investigate how well audiences can identify native advertising. We found newer forms of native advertising are hard even for sophisticated and knowledgeable social media users to identify as such. This presents an ethical dilemma for advertisers, who must decide between creating display advertising, which is susceptible to "banner blindness," and native advertising, which may be mistaken for user-generated content. Certainly native units may be more effective. However, should advertisers be in the business of misleading consumers?

A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF PLACEMENT STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY DIFFERENT PRODUCT CLASS

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Abstract

Building on the economics of information theory (Stigler, 1961) and the message matching model (Liebermann and Flint-Goor, 1996), a large-scale content analysis of products appearing in Hong Kong prime-time television programs was conducted to map the placement strategies employed by different product class. Overall, 225 hours of 62 prime-time television programs were recorded and analyzed and a total of 1,225 brand appearances were identified. In line with traditional advertising, search goods were found to be placed with more details disclosed and with higher prominence than experience goods. Experience goods placed in television programs were more likely well-known brands. A higher proportion of search goods were found to be associated and interacted with characters in programs. Contrary to what was anticipated, search goods were more likely to be placed in emotional rather than rational context. The pattern in general matched with the predictions derived from traditional advertising but somehow manifested in different ways. The study facilitates greater understanding among marketers and academics about the applicability of the theories to the non-traditional advertising context which may help simplifying marketers' decisions in formulating placement strategies.

SPECIAL TOPICS SESSION:
DIGITAL ANALYTICS: PERSPECTIVES OF PRACTITIONERS AND ACADEMICS

Moderators: Hairong Li, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI
Jingtao Ji, Google, Hong Kong
Morikazu Hirose, Tokyo Fuji University, Tokyo, Japan
Francisco Tacoa, Future Architect, Tokyo, Japan

Overview

Following the release of the Google Analytics 360 Suite, the enterprise analytics platform, in March 2015, Google made the Analytics Demo Account available in August 2016 for the faculty who teach digital analytics to bring live data along with powerful tools in the classroom. Some faculty members had the opportunity to use the Demo Account, the precursor of Google's AEK (Analytics Education Kit) to be released soon. Google's AEK is expected to include video tutorials, cases, assignments, analytics tools and live data. Like Google Online Marketing Challenge (https://www.google.com/onlinechallenge/) that was launched in 2008, Google's AEK will be another big thing in advertising and marketing education. In preparation for the smooth adoption of Google's AEK in the classroom in the US and other countries, this special topics session invited industry experts and faculty members who already have firsthand experience in using or teaching Google Analytics to share their perspectives on a number of important issues, such as how clients and agencies use digital analytics, what insights Google Analytics can generate, what are best practices in doing digital analytics, what analytical skills advertising majors should acquire and possess, and what topics should be covered in a typical course on digital analytics. During the session, the panelists from China, Japan and the US shared their experiences and perspectives, which in combination shed light on some pedagogical issues of digital analytics.

Actionable Customer Insights

Jingtao Ji, Google, Hong Kong

The Google Analytics 360 Suite includes six components: Analytics, Optimize, Attribution, Audience Center, Tag Manager, and Survey. The newly added Survey is a powerful tool that may be used to collect the opinion of a user in real time when they interact with a website or brows a product. The Survey functions make the 360 Suite more complete for all kinds of data collection.

A widely used tool in the 306 Suite is Analytics. It allows the business to generate customer insights on four important issues. First is about Audience: Who are you reaching? Second is Acquisition: Where are they coming from? Third is Behavior: How are they interacting? And Four is Conversion: Are they taking action? A business may use real-time results from Analytics to identify issues and make remedies. For example, the bounce rate may be analyzed to improve a landing page in search advertising, an important part of the user experience and revenue generation.

The most important outcome of Analytics is customer insights, whose ramifications can be easily understandable to decision makers. If an insight couldn't be acted upon, its value gets lost. For example, audience data enable a better understanding of who are the audience and what they like in a given interaction situation. If a business can customize promotion offers that can really appeal to the interest of individual customers, the marketing response can be highly positive. In one recent case, we observed a 13% increase of the average order value (AOV) and 34% lower cost per action (CPA) than non-brand search campaigns, resulting in a 1,300% return of investment (ROI). In a sense, actionable customer insights should be the ultimate product of digital analytics.

My Experience in Teaching Google Analytics

Hairong Li, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI

I was invited to test Google's Analytics Education Kit in its pilot stage. I integrated Google Analytics into media planning and interactive advertising courses in the spring of 2016. Based on students' positive feedback, I developed a new online digital analytics course and offered in the summer of 2016 and 2017. This course has become part of the new curriculum for our advertising analytics minors.

A digital analytics course should enable students not only to understand the concepts and processes of digital analytics but also to master analytical skills through hands-on exercises to solve business problems. For this purpose, my online course consisted of seven weekly modules, and each module included several components: Overview (learning objectives, lecture synopsis and assignments); Lecture (video lessons, demos and exercises); Articles (about best practices and recent trends); Essay or Report (thoughts on digital analytics issues or analysis results on required and selective questions and approaches to business problems); and Quiz (questions based on the lecture and articles). Students gained the knowledge, skills and most importantly confidence in dealing with real-time data for consumer insights upon completing the course.

New challenges I planned to overcome in future teaching included more background information for students to understand data fluctuations in certain situations; better understanding of users as people by numerical information; generating more actionable consumer insights; increased coverage of mobile and social analytics; and better assistance for students to earn professional certificates.

Education and Digital Analytics

Morikazu Hirose, Tokyo Fuji University, Tokyo, Japan

Many Japanese universities have introduced online educational systems like those in other countries. These systems provide useful tools such as clickers, message boards, question forms, and so on. Access data in such kind of systems, however, were not analyzed because it was difficult and time consuming. Thanks to latest technology and powerful applications such as Google Analytics, it is easy for us to examine access data from online systems.

To collect the online behavioral data and evaluate an online course system, the data is collected from our university websites, with the aid of the Google Classroom. The results from Google analytics show how students react to the push function of the Google Classroom. They check the message on the mobile device first, then download and read their assignments on their tablets. We have developed several online systems to improve student's experiences, namely simplifying the access flow. The results imply that improving the access flow leads to lower session time and higher bounce rate. Unlike for e-commerce sites, high bounce rate indicates good sign for educational sites. These results suggest that online educational systems should be evaluate differently from commercial sites.

In our real classrooms, we need to combine other data such as reactions in the classroom or grade of the students to evaluate online educational systems in future. Considering the fact that the more educational contents are provided online, it is very important to apply the research frameworks in advertising to improve online educational systems.

Natural Language Processing for Text Analytics

Francisco Tacoa, Future Architect, Tokyo, Japan

This presentation introduced some methods from the field of Natural Language Processing (NLP), which can be used to convert raw textual data into a resource that provides more value during information search or decision processes. It shared how we carry out NLP tasks such as Text Classification to reduce the human labor when determining the label of an email based on its contents, with a degree of accuracy that is comparable to humans and much higher than by using manually-crafted rules. It also showed how to employ Information Retrieval techniques into search systems in order to increase the number of relevant documents being retrieved, in comparison to systems that are based on the matching of keywords and logical (i.e., using "and", "or" and "not" conditions) search patterns.

Finally, for the research of advertising the presentation discussed how tasks such as product recommendations and sentiment analysis can contribute to the understanding of customer behaviors by analyzing, for instance, the textual information (profile, comments, etc.) about customers in order to know more about their preferences or opinions about specific products and, consequently, provide them with more precise information about other products that they would be likely to acquire.

Conclusion

The attendees were engaged in active discussion following the presentations. Discussion topics included the ethical issues of using audience data in the analytics age; the availability of professional certificates for advertising students to earn; and resources that can used to facilitate teaching of digital analytics. Several attendees indicated an interest in developing and offering a digital analytics course in the near future.

THE IMPACTS OF MORAL CHARACTER AND PERCEIVER CHARACTERISTICS ON ENDORSER PERCEPTION

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Abstract

In social psychology, moral character and warmth were verified as the two most dominating personality traits in person perception (e.g., Goodwin, Piazza, and Rozin 2014). As with person perception, the influences of moral character and warmth on endorser perception should also be impactful. However, while extant research in endorsements had verified a variety of effective endorser characteristics (e.g., attractiveness, expertise, likability, trustworthiness), the impacts of moral character and warmth on endorser perception have not been investigated yet.

Additionally, extant research in social cognition has recently documented that the dispositional tendency (Hepler and Albarracín 2013), innate moral intuitions (Graham, Haidt, and Nosek 2009), and self-location (Fetterman and Robinson 2013) of perceivers moderate perceivers' social judgments. The discussion about the impact of tarnished endorsers on brand evaluations shall be more thorough if the personality characteristics of perceivers (i.e., consumers) are also considered.

Therefore, this research advances endorsement research by examining the moderations of the characteristics of endorsers (i.e., moral character and warmth) and perceivers (i.e., dispositional tendency, innate moral intuitions, and self-location). With two experimental studies, we demonstrate that moral character is more influential than warmth on endorser evaluations. Tarnished endorsers with immoral character (vs. coldness) exert more negative influence on brand evaluations. Except for dispositional tendency, innate moral intuitions and self-location moderate brand evaluations.

The generalizability of findings between westerners (i.e., Americans) and easterners (i.e., Indians) was further verified with the third experiment. Endorser and perceiver characteristics yielded asymmetric patterns of influence on Americans' and Indians' perceptions of endorsers and brands. Dispositional tendency partially moderated Indians' advertising and brand evaluations. However, the effect did not eventually instigate salient weakening effects (i.e. brand quality changes) on the endorsed brands. In contrast, innate moral intuitions and self-location moderated Americans' brand evaluations. Tarnished athlete endorsers exerted more negative impact on Americans with heart-location or higher moral intuitions.

The cultural difference of analytic and holistic thinking styles was a potential explanation for this special tendency (e.g., Ng 2010). A post-test was conducted in order to verify the thinking styles of Americans and Indians. The results indicated that the thinking style of Indians was more holistic than the thinking style of Americans. Holistic-thinking Indians tended to reconcile the contradictory information about the tarnished athlete endorsers and brands before and after the experimental treatments in a dialectic way of thinking. As a result, tarnished athlete endorser information exerted less influence on Indians' brand evaluations, regardless of the perceivers' personality characteristics. In contrast, the effects of innate moral intuitions and self-location observed on analytic-thinking Americans were not observed on holistic-thinking Indians.

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EFFECTS OF NARROWED DISTANCES ON CELEBRITY-ENDORSED ADVERTISEMENT ATTITUDES

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Abstract

This paper examines the effects of narrowing distance dimensions – primarily from social distance of celebrity endorsers, their nationality, and as augmented by consumers' situational ethnocentricity, on attitudes toward the advertisements featuring celebrities. A pilot test on actual advertisements and three laboratory studies show that the endorsement is more effective when the advertisement features celebrities as socially close others than when they are more distant; and the effects are greater when the celebrity is local than foreign. Finally, when ethnocentricity is high, advertising attitudes increase with social closeness when the celebrity is local but decrease with social closeness when the celebrity is foreign. On the other hand, the effects on low ethnocentricity are diametrically opposite: advertising attitudes increase with social closeness when the celebrity is foreign, and decrease with social distance when the celebrity is local. We propose that these effects are mediated by consumer self-referencing. Anchored on construal level and social identity theories, implications on relational paradigm in celebrity endorsements and on international marketing communications are discussed.

"MY CELEBRITIES" ARE NOT LIKE "OTHERS' CELEBRITIES": COLLEGE STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF IN-GROUP CELEBRITIES AND OUT-GROUP CELEBRITIES

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Hua Chang, Towson University, Towson, MD

Abstract

Drawing from social identity theory and self-categorization theory, this study investigates college students' perception of their in-group celebrities ("my favorite celebrities") and out-group celebrities ("celebrities popular among other college students"). Findings from an experiment (N=153) confirm that college students perceive that their in-group celebrities are much more similar to the self-concept than are their out-group celebrities. In addition, exploratory analyses suggest that the in-group celebrities collectively represent a more heterogeneous group than do the out-group celebrities; some of the best-known celebrities are more frequently considered as out-group celebrities than as in-group celebrities even when they belong to both groups; and actors are more frequently considered as in-group celebrities than are any other categories of celebrities. Findings have implications on the strategic choice of celebrity endorsers through micro-targeting as well as the type of message framing to enhance the in-group appeal.

Introduction

Celebrity endorsement is a popular advertising tactic around the world. It is estimated that 10%-25% of all advertising in the U.S. feature celebrity endorsers (Amos, Homes, and Strutton 2008; Belch and Belch 2013). The prevalence of celebrity endorsement is even higher in several Asian countries. In China, 40% of youth products are reported to use celebrity endorsement (Chan and Prendergast 2008). In Korea, close to 60% of television commercials show celebrity endorsers (Choi, Lee, and Kim 2005). In Japan, advertising practitioners estimate that over 75% of advertising feature celebrities (Kilburn 1998).

Celebrity endorsement is reported to be effective for increasing brand recognition and brand interest (Atkin and Block 1983), generating positive attitude towards the ad and the brand, and raising purchase intentions and sales (Belch and Belch 2013; Bergkvist, Hjalmarson, and Magi 2016; Lee and Thorson 2008; Pringle 2004). Effects of celebrity endorsement are reported to be especially strong among young adults (Bush, Martin, and Bush 2004; Hung, Chan, and Tse 2011).

Research has shown that college students use celebrities as their reference group and inspirational figures in their self-concept development (Adams-Price and Greene 1990; Boon and Lomore 2001; Park and Lessig 1977), and they look for a congruence between their ideal self-concept and the media image of the celebrity endorser when evaluating celebrity endorsement (Choi and Rifon 2012). Findings from these studies echo the argument that consumers choose products or brands that match or enhance their social identify (Grubb and Grathwohl 1967).

Drawing from social identity theory and self-categorization theory (Duck, Hogg, and Terry 1995; Turner 1985), we propose that college students will perceive their favorite celebrities closer to their self-identity (in-group celebrities) and celebrities popular among other college students to be more distant from their self-identity (out-group celebrities). From this premise, the present study first examines the effects of such categorization on college students' perceptions of similarities between self and celebrities in each group. Second, the study explores similarities and differences between the members of the in-group celebrities and out-group celebrities at a collective level.

Based on the findings, the current study intends to extend the relevant theories of self-categorization and social identity to understanding the effects of consumer-celebrity congruence in celebrity endorsement. The study also attempts to provide the advertisers with managerial implications on the strategic choice of the celebrity endorsers to enhance their in-group appeal.

Conceptual Framework

Self-Categorization, Social Identity, and Celebrities

Recently, investigation of the mediated relationships between consumers and celebrities has gained much interest, including self-identification, fandom, and parasocial relationships (See Cohen 2014 for a summary). Just as consumers choose brands that express their self-identity to facilitate their social interactions (Belk 1988; Sirgy 1982), young consumers use celebrities as their reference group to develop, maintain, and enhance their self-concepts and social identity (Adams-Price and Greene 1990; Boon and Lomore 2001; Park and Lessig 1977). Choi and Rifon (2012) have shown that the congruence between consumers' ideal self-concept and the perceived image of celebrities influences college students' attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand, and purchase intention even after the effect of the product-celebrity congruence has been accounted for.

The effect of consumer-celebrity congruence in celebrity endorsement may be explained by the theoretical framework of self-categorization and social identity (Duck, Hogg, and Terry 1995; Tajfel 1982; Turner 1985). These theories are based on the notions that "an important part of the self-concept is derived from membership in social groups," and that people often view themselves and others as "group members with a common or shared social identity" with relevant in-group members (Duck et al. 1995, p. 198). Tajfel and his colleagues (1971) argue that people's tendency to categorize self and others either as in-group members or out-group members is inherent in certain societies due to "norms, values, and expectations present in their socialization and education," and that such categorization occurs even when there is little utilitarian value to the act (p. 151). Furthermore, people "accentuate prototypical similarities between self and in-group members and prototypical differences between in-group and out-group members" (Duck et al. 1995, p. 198).

McCracken (1989) proposed a meaning transfer model of celebrity endorsement based on the research done in the area of symbolic meanings of consumption (e.g., Hirschman and Holbrook 1981; Solomon, 1983). According to his meaning transfer model (McCracken, 1989), a celebrity endorser is a prototype of certain cultural symbols and social norms due to his or her stage persona. If young adults use celebrities as a reference group to develop their self-identity and consumer products that are endorsed by celebrities to express their self-identity in their society, it is plausible to think that they will perceive some celebrities closer to their self-identity (in-group) and others more distant from their self-identity (out-group). Therefore, we propose that college students are likely to perceive that their in-group celebrities (e.g., "my favorite celebrities") are more similar to self-identity than are their out-group celebrities (e.g., "celebrities popular among other college students").

> ***H1***: College students will perceive that their in-group celebrities are more similar to self than are their out-group celebrities.

Similarities and Differences between In-Group and Out-Group Celebrities

Out-Group Homogeneity

The present study also explores whether there are any distinctive similarities and differences between in-group celebrities of college students and out-group celebrities of college students at a collective level. First, we compare the variability of names between the two groups. People often categorize others either as members of in-groups or out-groups (Tajfel and Turner 1979). These categorizations affect how people perceive others. Studies have shown that individuals perceive members of other group as less variable and more homogeneous than members of their own group—a tendency known as the out-group homogeneity effect (e.g. Judd, Ryan, and Park 1991; Park and Rothbart 1982). Park and Rothbart (1982) conducted four experiments to explore the out-group homogeneity principle. The studies found that social categorization could "lead to differences in perceived variability for in-group and out-group members" (Park and Rothbart 1982, p.1066). In particular, the specific attributes of an in-group member are salient, whereas the characteristics of an out-group member are more general.

Boldry, Gaertner, and Quinn (2007) did a meta-analysis of 173 studies and found a "small but reliable outgroup homogeneity effects" (p.164). To date, most of research on outgroup homogeneity focuses on person perception and stereotyping (e.g. Jones, Wood, and Quattrone 1981; Judd, Ryan, and Park 1991). Some scholars argue that outgroup homogeneity occurs because people are less familiar with members of the out-group (e.g. Linville and Jones 1980). The lack of familiarity with members of the out-groups leads to less variability in the perceived traits associated with out-group members compared to in-group members (Quattrone and Jones 1980).

If the out-group homogeneity effects occur at an individual level, would similar effects be observed when out-group members are compared with in-group members at a collective level? In our study, college students are likely to know more about their own favorite celebrities compared to celebrities popular among other college students. With higher level of familiarity, would college students' choice of in-group celebrities show more variability than their choice of out-group celebrities? That is, will the extent to which duplicate names and unique names are found, as indication of variability, be significantly different between in-group celebrities and out-group celebrities? Therefore, we ask,

RQ1: Are the frequencies with which duplicate celebrity names are found among the in-group celebrities significantly different from those among the out-group celebrities?

In-Group/Out-Group Boundaries

Second, we examine the flexibility of the boundary between in-group celebrities and out-group celebrities at a collective level of college students. Celebrities are symbols of culture and desired norms in a society (McCracken 1989; Rubin and Windahl 1986). In this study, the distinction between in-group ("my favorite celebrities") and out-group ("celebrities popular among other college students") is made within a common subculture of college students. At a collective level, the distinction between the two groups may begin to blur as in-group celebrities to some students may also be out-group celebrities to other students, and vice versa, creating a group of dual-group celebrities.

To the extent college students perceive themselves as members of the same subculture (Peter and Olson 1996), we can expect that there will be a substantial overlap between the in-group and out-group celebrities and that the dual-group celebrities may account for a large portion of the celebrities mentioned in either group. On the other hand, if individual students primarily see themselves different from other college students, and part of the difference is their tendency to see their in-group celebrities being more heterogeneous than are out-group celebrities, we can expect that dual-group celebrities will be less frequently found among the in-group celebrities than among out-group celebrities. Therefore, we ask,

RQ2: Are the frequencies with which dual-group celebrities appear among the in-group celebrities significantly different from those among the out-group celebrities?

In-Group/Out-Group Celebrity Type

Finally, we compare the occupational categories of in-group celebrities and out-group celebrities to see if there is any relationship between celebrity types and the in-group/out-group membership. As discussed earlier, young adults' attachment to celebrities is based on their identification with celebrities (Adams-Price and Greene 1990), a desire to be like celebrities in distinction and achievement (e.g., sports celebrities or action heroes in movies) or in glamorous lifestyle as portrayed in the media (Hung, 2014). Green, Brock, and Kaufman (2004) state that identification with a character in a narrative (i.e., a celebrity) requires absorption and "the adoption of a character's thoughts, goals, emotions, and behaviors, and such vicarious experience requires the reader or viewer to leave his or her physical, social, and psychological reality behind in favor of the world of the narrative and its inhabitants" (pp.317-318). Cohen (2001) defines identification as "a process that consists of increasing loss of self-awareness and its temporary replacement with heightened emotional and cognitive connections with a character" (p. 251). If self-identification with celebrities requires a deep sense of connectedness, are college students likely to consider certain types of celebrities (e.g., actors) more than other types of celebrities (e.g., TV personalities) as their in-group? That is, college students may connect easily (in-group) with good actors whose stage performance is valued to the extent they connect with the audience at a personal and emotional level through the narrative. On the other hand, college students may not find such personal connection with other types of celebrities (out-group) whose performance does not necessarily involve a narrative or require emotional connection with the audience at a personal level. Therefore, we ask,

RQ3: Are the frequencies with which occupational categories of celebrities are distributed among the in-group celebrities significantly different from those among the out-group celebrities?

In summary, the present study explores college students' perception of in-group celebrities and out-group celebrities and the implication of such categorization on potential celebrity endorsement. We first examine the perceived similarity between self and in-group/out-group celebrities. We, then, explore other similarities and differences between the in-group celebrities and out-group celebrities at a collective level. The findings will have practical implications on the strategic planning in the choice of celebrity endorsers and framing of the messages when targeting young adults.

Method

Design, Participants and Procedure

A web-based experiment was used to test the proposed hypothesis and research questions, with a 2 (celebrity type: my favorite celebrities, celebrities popular among other college students) x 2 (referent group: self, other college students) mixed design. Celebrity type was a between-subject factor and referent group was a within-subject factor. The referent group was included in the design to test a third-person effect on the perceived influence of celebrity endorsement, which is not included in the scope of analysis in this study. One hundred fifty-three undergraduate students were recruited from marketing and communication classes at a Mid-Atlantic university. Participants were slightly more female (54%) and largely white (67%) with an average age of 21.

Participants were told that the survey was designed to understand college students' thoughts about the use of celebrity endorsement in advertising. They were then randomly assigned to one of the two celebrity group conditions ("my favorite celebrities" or "celebrities popular among other college students"). Participants in each condition were asked to name three celebrities according to their respective experimental condition. Afterwards, using the piping function in Qualtrics, participants in both groups answered a series of questions about the first celebrity they named in their respective condition, including perceived similarity with the named celebrity. The questionnaire ended with demographic questions and a demand probe question about the purpose of the study. Only one of the 153 participants made a comment that the study was to see the difference between self and other college students regarding celebrity endorsement.

Measures

Perceived similarity between self and celebrity: A single-item question, "In terms of attitudes, values, and outlook on life, how similar are you to (the named celebrity)?" was borrowed from a previous study on self-categorization (Zhang 2010, p. 198) to measure the perceived similarity. The responses were measured with a 7-point Likert scale (1=not similar at all, 7=very similar).

Occupational categories of the celebrity endorser: Two student coders who are highly familiar with the celebrities popular among college students, but were not familiar with this research, were recruited to code the occupational categories of celebrities after the data were collected from the participants. First, one of the authors and the two coders together coded a third of celebrities among "my favorite celebrities" group (N=79) during the training and came up with 10 occupational categories including actors, singers, politician, business men & women, sports players, models, bloggers, TV personalities, comedians, and others.

The two coders were instructed to assign each celebrity into one primary category only if the celebrity is known in multiple categories (e.g., actor and TV personality). When in question, the primary category was determined based on the order of the occupations listed in the celebrity's own Website. After the training session was completed, each coder independently coded the remaining celebrities in the data set. In the end, the two coders' agreed on the occupations of 177 out of the 189 different celebrities included in this study, resulting in an inter-coder reliability of .94 (Holsti 1969). The disagreement on the remaining 12 celebrities were resolved after discussion.

Results

In-Group Celebrities and Out-Group Celebrities

Collectively, seventy-nine students in the in-group celebrity condition named 237 (79 x 3) celebrities as their three of their favorite celebrities. Seventy-four students in the out-group celebrity condition named 222 (74 x 3) celebrities as three of the celebrities they consider popular among other college students. Therefore, a total of 459 celebrities were included in the analysis including duplicate names within groups and between groups.

Hypothesis Testing

H1 predicted that college students would perceive that their in-group celebrities are more similar to self than are their out-group celebrities. An independent sample T-tests was run the test the hypothesis. Therefore, H 1 was supported, $t (151) = 6.87$, $p < .01$. College students believed that their in-group celebrities ("my favorite celebrities") were more similar to self in terms of attitudes, values, and outlook on life ($M = 4.33$, $SD = 1.73$) than were their out-group celebrities ("celebrities popular among other college student") ($M = 2.39$, $SD = 1.76$).

Research Questions

RQ1 explores whether the frequencies with which duplicate celebrity names appear among the in-group celebrities would be significantly different from those among the out-group celebrities. Table 1 shows the result. A Chi-square statistics from a crosstab analysis indicates that the frequencies with which the unique names and duplicate names are mentioned differ significantly between the two groups of celebrities (Chi=41.17, d.f. = 1, p<.001). Among the in-group celebrities, 87 out of the 237 names (36.7%) were duplicates and the remaining 150 names were unique. Only six celebrities were named more than five times each (Kevin Hart, J. Cole, Rhianna, Leonardo DiCaprio, Blake Lively) with the highest duplication at eight. Among the out-group celebrities, 148 out of the 222 names (66.7%) were duplicates and 74 names were unique. Kim Kardashian alone was mentioned 33 times. Other frequently mentioned celebrities include Drake (21 times), Beyonce (18 times) and Kayne West (16 times). These four celebrities accounted for 40% of the total mentions among the out-group celebrities. The results suggest that out-group homogeneity effects are seen at a collective level of analysis.

TABLE 1

Distribution of Duplicate Names

Frequencies	**In-group celebrities**	**%**	**Out-group celebrities**	**%**	**All**	**%**
Duplicate names	87	36.7%	148	66.7%	235	51.2%
Unique names	150	63.3%	74	33.3%	224	48.8%
Total	237	100.0%	222	100.0%	459	100.0%

Overall difference of frequencies between the two groups: $\chi 2(1, 1) = 41.17, p<.001$

RQ2 explores whether the frequencies with which dual-group celebrities appear among the in-group celebrities would be significantly different from those among the out-group celebrities. Table 2 shows the result. A Chi-square statistics from a crosstab analysis indicates that the extent to which the dual-group celebrities appear among the in-group celebrities is significantly different from its counterpart among the out-group celebrities (Chi=71.72, d.f. = 1, p<.001). A total of 35 different celebrities were named as both in-group celebrities and out-group celebrities. When duplicate mentions were included, the dual-group celebrities were mentioned 85 out of the 237 times (35.9%) as in-group celebrities. The same group of 35 celebrities was mentioned 167 out of 222 times (75.2%) as out-group celebrities.

In addition, these dual-group celebrities were often found primarily as in-group celebrities or primarily as out-group celebrities, suggesting that their perceived images among college students are rather fixed along the inter-group boundary. For example, such dual-group celebrities as Kim Kardashian, Drake, Beyonce, and Justin Bieber were considered mostly as out-group celebrities. On the other hand, other dual-group celebrities including Jennifer Lawrence, Jennifer Aniston, Leonardo DiCaprio, Chance the Rapper, Brad Pitt were mostly considered as in-group celebrities. Only a few of the dual-group celebrities (e.g., Rihanna, Kevin Hart, Kylie Jenna) were mentioned in similar frequencies between the two groups, suggesting that they were considered as in-group by some students and out-group by others. Overall, the results suggest that the categorization of in-group/out-group celebrities is rather clear even at a collective level of analysis.

TABLE 2

Distribution of Dual-Group Celebrities (with Duplicate Names)

Frequencies	**In-group celebrities**	**%**	**Out-group celebrities**	**%**	**All**	**%**
Dual-group celeb.	85	35.9%	167	75.2%	252	54.9%
Single-group celeb.	152	64.1%	55	24.8%	207	45.1%
Total	237	100.0%	222	100.0%	459	100.0%

Overall difference of frequencies between the two groups: $\chi 2(1, 1) = 71.72, p<.001$

RQ3 explores whether the frequencies with which occupational categories of celebrities are distributed among the in-group celebrities significantly different from those among the out-group celebrities. The number of celebrities in five of the ten occupational categories (politician, business people, model, blogger, and other) were fewer than five each, and therefore, were removed from the final analysis (Wimmer and Dominick 1997). Table 3 shows the result from the remaining five occupational categories among the 433 celebrities, separated between in-group celebrities and out-group celebrities (duplicates are included). A Chi-square statistics from a crosstab analysis indicates that the distribution of occupational categories of celebrities differs significantly between in-group celebrities and out-group celebrities (Chi=80.86, d.f. = 4, p<.001). Actors (45.0%) are most frequently found among the in-group celebrities while singers (49.3%) are most frequently found among the out-group celebrities. Sports celebrities are moderately represented among both in-group and out-group celebrities, 16.4% and 17.8%, respectively.

TABLE 3
Distribution of Celebrities by Occupational Categories

Occupational categories	**In-group celebrities**	**%**	**Out-group celebrities**	**%**	**All**	**%**
Actor	99	45.0%	18	8.5%	117	27.0%
Singer	63	28.6%	105	49.3%	168	38.8%
Sports	36	16.4%	38	17.8%	74	17.1%
TV figure	15	6.8%	44	20.7%	59	13.6%
Comedian	7	3.2%	8	3.8%	15	3.5%
Total	220	100.0%	213	100.0%	433	100.0%

Overall difference of frequencies between the two groups: $\chi 2(4, 1) = 80.86, p<.001$

Discussion and Implications

Research on celebrity endorsement continues to generate active interest among marketing and communication scholars (see Amos, Holmes, & Strutton, 2008 for a meta-analysis). While earlier research focused on source effects (Hovland, Janis, and Kelley 1953; McGuire, 1985) and congruence between the endorsers and endorsed products ("match-up hypothesis") (e.g., Kamins 1990; McCracken 1989), recent studies include investigation of the relationships between consumers and celebrities (e.g., celebrity worship, identification, parasocial relationship) (e.g., McCutcheon, Lange, & Houran 2002; Thompson, 2006; Hung, 2014). In particular, the effects of congruence between consumer and celebrity has been gaining attention (Choi and Rifon 2012; Pradhan, Duraipandian, and Sethi 2016).

This study fills the gap in the research of consumer-celebrity congruence by highlighting the importance of self-identification with celebrity. Self-categorization theory and social identity theory provide the conceptual framework. Specifically, our findings suggest that college students tend to perceive in-group celebrities (vs. out-group celebrities) more similar to their self-concept.

When the in-group celebrities and out-group celebrities are compared at a collective level, three interesting findings emerge. First, in-group celebrities represent a more varied and heterogeneous group than do out-group celebrities. Second, the clear boundary between in-group/out-group celebrities mostly stay even at a collective level, suggesting that part of the inter-group differences is due to socialized norms and values within the subculture of college students. Last, actors are more likely to be considered as in-group celebrities than are any other celebrity types of celebrities.

The study makes contributions on multiple fronts. First, the clear findings about the perceived similarities between college students' self-concept and their in-group celebrities reinforce previous research that college students use celebrities as their reference group in their self-concept development (Adams-Price and Greene 1990). College students inherently categorize a celebrity either as their in-group member or out-group member and accentuate similarities between self and in-group celebrities and lack of similarities between self and out-group celebrities, even when their relationships with celebrities are mediated through media, not built on real-life interactions. These findings extend previous research on social identity and self-categorization (Duck, Hogg, and Terry 1995; Tajfel 1982; Turner 1985) into the context of social groups built on mediated relationships.

Second, the findings contribute to the existing literature on outgroup homogeneity effect through the investigation of variability among in-group and out-group celebrities. Consistent with prior study (e.g., Park and Rothbart 1982), the study adds additional evidence in the context of celebrity endorsement that out-group celebrities are more general, whereas those of in-group celebrities are specific and varied.

The fact that college students perceive in-group celebrities more similar to self and more heterogeneous than out-group celebrities could have important strategic implications on how to use celebrity endorsement more effectively as an advertising tactic. When selecting celebrities to endorse products or services, firms should not only consider the fit between endorsers and products as most previous research suggests, but also focus on the level of identification between endorsers and specific target customers.

Specifically, our research suggests that some of the best recognized and most talked-about celebrities in the media may also be seen less unique, and therefore, more distant from consumers' self-concept and social identity (out-group celebrities). These celebrities, despite their fame and visibility in the media, may not be the most appealing endorsers to the target segment. Other celebrities who have managed to create a rather unique persona, independent from their fame, may have stronger personal appeal to college students and be a better endorser for the brand. Tools of behavioral targeting may allow marketers to customize their celebrity choice and/or placement of advertising message more effectively at a high cost efficiency. Using a personal appeal rather than a mass appeal in the message framing is also likely to increase the sense of connectedness and identification between the college students and the celebrity endorsers. Moreover, the findings from the current study also suggest that college students most easily identify with actor celebrities than other types of celebrities. This might due to that consumers are more likely to cognitively or affectively identify with characters when processing narratives (Cohen 2001).

Limitations and Future Research

The current study is exploratory in nature and its findings are presented within several limitations. The participants in this study were college students from one public university in the Mid-Atlantic area. Though previous research suggests that younger audience is more susceptible to celebrity endorsement effects (Atkin & Block, 1983), future research could replicate the study with older participants. Also, the findings might have low external validity because the participants in our study were not randomly selected from a larger definable population but from a convenience sample instead. Although cost-effective, a web-based experiment limits our control in the data collection process compared to a laboratory study.

We used "my favorite celebrities" and "celebrities popular among other college students" to represent differences in consumer-celebrities relationship. Future research should explicate more vigorously the underlying mechanism in the two types of celebrity. In addition, the current study only asked the participants to list the names of their favorite celebrities and celebrities popular among other students. To get a better idea of outgroup homogeneity effects and deeper understanding of college students' perception of in-group celebrities and out-group celebrities, future research could include thought-listing questions about the traits college students associate to each group.

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