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Proceedings of the 2018

CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ADVERTISING

60th Anniversary

Harsha Gangadharbatla, Editor
University of Colorado

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ADVERTISING

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE 2018 CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ADVERTISING

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AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ADVERTISING

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PREFACE

It is a privilege and an honor to serve as the editor of the 2018 Proceedings of the pre-conference, competitive research, and special topics sessions presented at the 2018 annual Conference of the American Academy of Advertising held March 22-25 in New York, New York. This is the 60th anniversary of the conference and, as a whole, the conference was a great success.

Overall, 188 competitive research papers and 14 special topics proposals were submitted for double-blind review. A total of 100 competitive papers (53%) and six special topics sessions (42%) were accepted. The special topics sessions were well coordinated by AAA President Tom Reichert of the University of South Carolina. Summaries of the special topics sessions presented at the conference are included in these proceedings. The 2018 proceedings also contain summaries and abstracts of the pre-conference and full papers and abstracts of competitive research sessions. The papers in this volume are organized in the order they appeared in the 2018 Conference Program.

The conference would not be possible without the efforts of the 199 reviewers and those who served as session chairs, and moderators. I sincerely thank all those who volunteered their precious time and expertise and contributed to making this years AAA conference another outstanding event. I also want to acknowledge the sponsors who provided financial support, our wonderful Conference Manager Betty Djerf, and members of the AAA Executive Committee who were constant sources of support throughout the entire process of organizing the conference. My special thanks go to the AAA Past-President Michelle Nelson and President Tom Reichert for their valuable input, patience, and guidance, and especially to Executive Director Pat Rose who is always invaluable but especially so during the entire conference submission process. Finally, thank you to Tara Walker, PhD student at University of Colorado Boulder, for her help proofreading and formatting the proceedings.

I hope the 2018 proceedings serve as a valuable resource for advertising scholars and educators, and that the ideas here will stimulate future research.

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DIGITAL ADVERTISING & ETHICS: RESEARCH, TEACHING, AND PRACTICE

Saleem Alhabash, Michigan State University, East Lansing MI
Kjerstin Thorson, Michigan State University, East Lansing MI
Minette (Meme) Drumwright, University of Texas at Austin, Austin TX
and Kathryn Pounders, University of Texas at Austin, Austin TX

Abstract[1]

Advertisers and marketers have access to an extraordinary array of data about consumers. These data open up limitless opportunities for the design of digital campaigns, while also sparking new challenges and ethical concerns. Advertisers collect and use behavioral data to more effectively target consumers, raising issues about data privacy—and creating risks for advertisers as consumer awareness of data privacy grows. Besides ethical questions related to the architecture and capacity of digital and social media, advertisers today are faced with daily ethical and moral questions related to (a) means of data collection (including passive data collection); (b) ownership of the data; (c) ability to access social network data; (d) means of handling and using data in targeted and behavioral advertising (e.g., programmatic buying); and (e) the overarching concerns about consumer privacy protection (Nuna and Di Domenica, 2013; Richards & King, 2014; Zwitter, 2014). In their discussion of the marketing ethical concerns related to "big data," Nunan and Di Domenico (2013) raised three main areas where ethical treatment of Internet users is necessary: "the right to be forgotten," "the right to data expiry," and an individual's ownership of his/her social graph, referring to the availability of data through one's online social network (pp. 9-10). Such challenges, Zook et al. (2017) argue, "often lie outside [researchers' and practitioners'] training and comfort zone." The current pre-conference gathers scholars, educators, and practitioners to discuss digital advertising practices across a variety of domains, in order to explore how the advertising community is confronting issues ethics and data privacy. Instead of providing answers, standards, and ethical templates, the main objective of this pre-conference is to bring digital advertising researchers, educators, and practitioners together to discuss emerging issues and identify resources to support continuing conversations.

The pre-conference started with a philosophical and theoretical overview of the emerging ethical concerns related to digital advertising. Given digital advertising's increasing reliance on big data and analytics, the pre-conference highlighted ethical concerns in that domain as they pertain to protecting consumers' privacy as they pertain to varying contexts, from political advertising to commercial product advertising. Aside from growing adoption of big data and analytics, the pre-conference also focused the discussion on different digital advertising strategies, including native advertising, artificial intelligence, and virtual reality. Finally, the pre-conference panelists and participants shared their experiences of teaching digital advertising ethics.

References

[1] *Note:* Due to inclement weather conditions, several of the scheduled panelists were not able to attend the pre-conference. This abstract mainly highlights the talks given by panelists present at the time of the scheduled pre-conference.

Nunan, Daniel and Maria Di Domenico (2013), “Market research & the ethics of big data,” *International Journal of Market Research*, 55 (4), 505-520.

Richards, Neil M., and Jonathan H. King (2014), "Big data ethics," *Wake Forest Law Review*, 49, 393-432

Zook, Matthew, Solon Barocas, danah boyd, Kate Crawford, Emily Keller, Seeta Peña Gangadharan, et al. (2017). Ten simple rules for responsible big data research. *PLoS Computational Biology*, 13 (3), e1005399, http://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pcbi.1005399

Zwitter, Andrej (2014), "Big data ethics," *Big Data & Society*, July-December, 1-6. DOI: 10.1177/2053951714559253

PRE-CONFERENCE SESSION
IMC IN TRANSMEDIA ERA: VOICES FROM INDUSTRY

Moderators: Jooyoung Kim, University of Georgia, Athens, GA
Lori DePace, Publicis Health, NYC, NY
Panelists: David Paragamian, Managing Director, Razorfish Health
Isabel Nie, VP/Global Search Director, Blue449
Jon Hackett, SVP, Director, Emerging Technology of Publicis North America

Location: Publicis Media, 375 Hudson St., New York, NY 10014

The media revolution over the past decade has greatly changed how people communicate and consume media. As consumers quickly adapt and flock to new media channels, the need among advertisers and scholars to understand the media and relevant consumer insights continues. For the practice of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC), the ongoing influx of new media sources makes effective integration of message and media experience highly challenging. Moreover, conventional advertising knowledge and practice from the era of analogue media have become obsolete and invalid in light of new media platforms and motivations for media consumption.

As the advertising profession progresses toward an era of digital media, empowered by technological advances such as artificial intelligence, advertising scholars need to understand how the digital revolution might impact consumers and advertising processes, especially in transmedia environments. Such timely insights can be used to test, modify, and advance traditional theories or build new theories to advance the field of advertising.

However, understanding new media forms and using them strategically to observe, track, and target consumers have always been difficult tasks for advertisers because of limited guidance and experience. One of the best ways that advertising professionals and scholars can learn about the new opportunities opened by new media is to learn about the best pioneering practices and thoughts in the field. Formulating course materials to reflect current industry trends would also greatly help advertising educators better prepare future advertising professionals.

In 2018, the annual AAA conference was in New York City, the heart of American advertising. This location had a great deal of potential to create several unique opportunities for members of the Academy to meet and interact with advertising practitioners on Madison Avenue to gain a detailed familiarity with the current advertising landscape. Thus, the purpose of this pre-conference was to open a discussion forum among AAA members and advertising professionals in NYC about current IMC practices in the transmedia environment powered by the ongoing digital media revolution. Many questions related to research and teaching were explored: What is the current status of new media usage in advertising? What are the emerging media-related issues that advertising researchers should consider for scholarly investigation? What are the essential skills and knowledge that the advertising profession requires from new hires in the transmedia advertising era? These questions were explored through panels of industry specialists who spoke about their best cases and practices and field questions from session attendees. Answers had important implications for what advertising educators and researchers can do to stay relevant in this ever-changing industry.

Program

Opening Welcome by **Danny Dellacona (Senior Vice President, People Development and Organization Effectiveness with Publicis**

Panelist Presentations

- **David Paragamian, Managing Director, Razorfish Health**
  "Current Views on IMC and Its Future Direction in Digital Age"
  Advertising changes as the advances in technology bring in new media and communication opportunities. Amidst constantly changing media and technology evolutions, advertising needs to evolve to adapt to such changes with a good sense of understanding about the past, present and future of technology. David talked about his thoughts on how the practice of IMC would evolve as the media environment with technological advances would bring us new opportunities.

- **Isabel Nie, VP/Global Search Director, Blue449**
  "Right Mix of Touch Points in Digital Age: Traditional and New Media"
  The ongoing digital media revolution offers many new brand touch points to consider when planning for advertising. Considering the practical concerns related to agency business such as media billing and consumers' cross-engagement with new and traditional media, advertising professionals need to know what would be the optimal mix of media to maximize the outcomes. Isabel discussed about her extensive experience in media planning and shared her thoughts.

- **Jon Hackett, SVP, Director, Emerging Technology of Publicis North America**
  "Creative in Digital Era: What Matters"
  The digital media revolution boosted by N-screen possibilities for advertising exposure has made many challenges for advertising due to the motivational nature for using different media and physically different sizes of screens. In this session, Jon shared some cases of N-screen advertising and what really matters for creatives to be successful in today's multi- and cross- media environment.

CONSUMER RESPONSES TO TIME-RESTRICTION: ROLE OF CONSTRUAL LEVEL AND ADVERTISING APPEAL

Hyuksoo Kim, Ball State University
Yunjae Cheong, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies
Kihan Kim, Seoul National University

Abstract

Using Construal Level Theory as a theoretical framework, this study investigates the mechanism on how time-restriction works and conditions under which time-restriction is effective in influencing consumer evaluations. A factorial design of 2x2 (time-restriction: Yes vs. No x advertising appeal: collectivistic vs. individualistic) between subjects was employed. Online experimental data from 161 college students revealed that construal level mediates the effect of time-restriction on purchase intention. Simply, low construal level led to stronger purchase intention. Notably, this finding appeared to be more pronounced for subjects with low construal levels who were exposed to collectivistic appeal without time-restriction. Theoretical and managerial implications were discussed for researchers and practitioners.

UNDERSTANDING THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN CONTROL AND REGULATORY FOCUS ON ADVERTISING EFFECTIVENESS

Naa Amponsah Dodoo, Emerson College
Linwan Wu, University of South Carolina

Abstract

This research investigates the possible influence of control and regulatory focus in persuasion and tests three competing underlying mechanisms. Grounded in the theoretical framework of Regulatory Focus Theory, which suggests distinct motivational principles, this research proposes that a promotion focus or prevention focus coupled with the boundary condition of control determines variations in consumer evaluations and behavioral intentions. The results show that regulatory focus interacts with perceived control such that a promotion focus advertisement is more effective under the condition of sufficient control. Emotion regulation was found to be the underlying mechanism that accounted for the results. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

EFFECTS OF CONSTRUAL LEVEL AND NEED FOR COGNITION ON CONSUMERS' RESPONSES TO TEMPORALLY FRAMED BENEFITS

Seounmi Youn, Emerson College
Hyuksoo Kim, Ball State University

Abstract

Applying construal level theory as a theoretical framework, this study examined the conditions under which temporally framed messages are effective. A 2 (temporal framing: near-future vs. distant-future rewards) x 2 (construal level: high vs. low) x 2 (need for cognition: high vs. low) between-subjects design was employed. Data from an online experiment showed that consumers generated more favorable responses to the ad when the temporal distance matched consumer construal level. Low-construal consumers were found to prefer product information framed with near-future rewards. This CL temporal fit effect appeared for consumers high in need for cognition only. Further, the matched message enhanced consumers' perception of message quality and this perceived message quality mediated the effect of the CL temporal fit on consumer responses to the ad. Theoretical and managerial implications were discussed.

EXPLORING THE INFLUENCE OF FUTURE TIME PERSPECTIVE ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROCESS- AND OUTCOME-FOCUS MENTAL SIMULATION IN ADVERTISEMENTS

Linwan Wu, University of South Carolina
Sun-Young Park, University of Massachusetts Boston
Ilyoung Ju, Bowling Green State University

Abstract

Future time perspective is an important construct in cognitive psychology. It could prominently influence individuals' perceptions and behaviors. So far, limited research has focused on this construct in the advertising field. An experiment was conducted in the present study to analyze the influence of consumers' future time perspective on the effectiveness of process- and outcome-focus mental simulation in advertisements. The results indicated that participants with extensive time perspective evaluated an outcome-focused ad more favorably than those with limited time perspective and participants' growth-seeking orientation accounted for such effects. These findings are believed to contribute to the advertising literature by examining the impact of a relatively underplayed concept in the advertising field and provide useful suggestions to practitioners with regard to delivering process- and outcome-focused advertisements strategically.

A NETWORK APPROACH TO VIRAL ADVERTISING: THE ROLE OF TRADITIONAL INFLUENCERS, NEW INFLUENCERS AND LOW-INFLUENCERS

Itai Himelboim, University of Georgia
Guy Golan, University of South Florida

Abstract

The diffusion of social networks platforms opened the door to a new age of peer to peer distributed advertising content widely referred to as viral advertising. The current study proposes a social networks approach to the study of viral advertising. Expanding beyond the conventional retweets metrics to include Twitter mentions as connection in the network, this study identifies three groups of key users: Hubs – highly retweeted users, Bridges - highly mentioned users connecting otherwise primarily disconnected users, and Isolates - low influence users. The role that each of these users in viral advertising is discussed and illustrated by a case study of Heineken's Worlds Apart campaign. We discuss the contribution of the network approach in the context of the growing body of literature on this relatively new advertising strategy examining, key variables that may lead to the success of social media advertising campaign.

BRAND FEEDBACK'S EFFECTS ON PURCHASE INTENTIONS AND WORD-OF-MOUTH RECOMMENDATIONS: MEDIATING ROLES OF JUSTICE PERCEPTION AND SATISFACTION

Manu Bhandari, Arkansas State University, Jonesboro, AR
Shelly Rodgers, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO
Viet Nguyen, Arkansas State University, Jonesboro, AR

Abstract

Scholars in multiple disciplines including advertising are researching the role and impacts of brand feedback, or brand response, to online reviews or electronic word of mouth. However, the research is still at a rudimentary stage. Not much is known about the underlying mechanisms through which brand feedback affects consumers who read eWOM messages to make purchase-related decisions. The current study seeks to contribute in this area by examining whether two concepts, justice perception and satisfaction, mediate brand feedback's effects on purchase intentions and word-of-mouth (WOM) intentions. Results seemed to generally support "brand feedback —> justice perception —> satisfaction —> purchase intentions —> WOM intentions" path of effects. However, we also noticed some negative direct effects of brand feedback on brand feedback-induced satisfaction and WOM intentions.

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF ONLINE PRODUCT REVIEWS IN ONLINE SHOPPING WEBSITES IN THE ASPECT OF DIGITAL CONSUMERISM AND CULTURE

Haseon Park, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND
Joonghwa Lee, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND

Abstract

This study explored representation of digital consumerism and cultural differences in online product reviews. Discourse analysis was conducted to investigate how digital consumerism is constructed in online product reviews and how representation of digital consumerism differs in message strategies by culture. Results demonstrated that digital consumerism was expressed by constructing online product reviews with online consumer powers. Digital consumerism was also found to be constructed by using different message strategies. Cultural difference was found only in focus on online consumer power. The findings of this study contribute to understanding digital consumerism in online product reviews in intercultural aspect and helping advertisers who target international consumers.

OFFLINE ADVERTISING AS A DRIVER OF CONSUMERS' ONLINE BRAND ENGAGEMENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Hilde A. M. Voorveld, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands
Theo Araujo, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands
Stefan F. Bernritter, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands
Edwin Rietberg, DAN DNA, Dentsu Aegis, the Netherlands
Rens Vliegenthart, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Abstract

Research investigating the drivers of consumers' engagement with brands on social media is proliferating. However, little is known about how advertising outside social media drives engagement with brands on social media. This study aims to explore the relation between advertising spend in different offline media (TV, radio, newspapers, magazines, out of home), and reach of and engagement with brand pages on Facebook. The study uses a unique real-life dataset containing information about the Facebook pages of 46 brands for approximately three years combined with Nielsen Advertising Spend data. Results showed that while advertising in offline media could influence organic and viral reach, the number of page likes were directly influenced by advertising on Facebook only. It can be concluded that offline advertising is relevant in driving consumers' online brand engagement, however, there is a unique set of drivers for organic reach, viral reach and likes. Thus, whether advertising in offline media should be used a driver for consumers' brand engagement on Facebook heavily depends on the specific campaign objectives.

“I OWE MY LIFE TO THE KIND INDIVIDUAL WHO CALLED THE HELPLINE, ELSE, I WOULDN’T BE HERE TELLING MY STORY”: EXPLORING THE INTERPLAY OF SELF-VIEWS AND SOCIAL DISTANCE IN NARRATIVE ADVERTISING ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION IN INDIA AND THE UNITED STATES

Sidharth Muralidharan, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX
Eunjin (Anna) Kim, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX

Abstract

The persuasiveness and popularity of narratives in commercial advertising has gained much attention but its application in inculcating responsible behavior is severely limited. Domestic violence against women is a global issue and there is a dire need for effective bystander intervention campaigns. This two-part study delved into how narratives could be employed to elicit favorable ad attitudes and encourage bystanders to report instances of domestic abuse in their neighborhood. Study 1 focused on testing the effectiveness of narratives in two culturally diverse countries – India and the USA. In general, findings showed that narratives (vs. non-narratives) were more persuasive in both countries. As the next step, using culture (interdependence vs. independence) and social distance (parents vs. neighbors), Study 2 found narratives with a socially proximal entity (parents) to be more persuasive in India while no differences between countries were observed for the socially distant entity (neighbors). Theoretical and managerial implications are discussed.

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN AROUSAL PRIME EFFECTS ON HUMOR ADVERTISING

Hye Jin Yoon, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX
Yoon-Joo Lee, Washington State University, Pullman, WA

Abstract

There have been numerous studies observing arousal and valence mood effects on advertising processing but no study to date has examined context effects in regards to humor advertising. The surrounding environment could boost or hinder humor ad processing and thus this is an important and underserved research area. The current study set out to test arousal prime effects on humor ad responses with gender as the moderating factor. Two experimental studies tested the interaction between arousal prime effects and gender on responses to humor ads and found that males and females responded differently to humor ads presented after different arousal level primes. Mediation analysis found felt arousal of the humor ad to be an underlying mechanism. Theoretical and practical implications are provided.

FEMALE POWER PORTRAYALS IN ADS, UNDERLYING DIMENSIONS

Melika Kordrostami, California State University San Bernardino, San Bernardino, CA
Russell N. Laczniak, Iowa State University, Ames, IA

Abstract

Stereotypical female portrayals are still common in advertisements, though the role of women in society has progressed. In recent years, it appears there has been a move toward portraying women in power positions in ads. This research focuses on this new trend of female portrayals in ads. Power is defined as the capability to change others'/self behavior or thoughts. Building on theories of social power and feminine power, a new typology for different types of female power in ads is proposed. This typology includes five types of female power in ads including sexual power, athletic power, expert power, family power, and empowerment. To determine the viability of this classification system, participants are asked to complete a sorting task. A set of current pre-rated print ads are given to participants for them to sort into ads that demonstrate a similar type of female power in the same category. Multidimensional scaling (MDS) and hierarchical clustering of the results from sorting is used to extract the underlying dimensions of female power in ads and provide empirical evidence for the proposed typology. Future research might study interrelations between female power dimensions in ads and also study the consequences of exposure to female power portrayals.

THE ROLE OF LGBTQ IMAGES ON BRAND RESONANCE: COMPARING LGBTQ+ AND NON-LGBTQ+ VIDEO GAME CONSUMERS

Sindy Chapa, Florida State University
Samantha Sumler, Florida State University

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between the LGBTQ+ culture in video games and brand resonance. Specifically, this study aims to explore to what extent the use of a LGBTQ+ cultural asset on video games can affect brand awareness, quality and loyalty between LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ video game consumers. An online survey was used to collect the data, and a proposed model was tested using SEM multigroup analysis. A total sample of 488 was used to test the model and the series of hypotheses suggested by the literature. The findings showed that the impact of the LGBTQ+ cultural assets on brand quality and brand loyalty differs between LGBTQ- and non-LGBTQ consumers. Specifically, the results of this study suggest the LGBTQ culture on a video game is the key predictor of brand loyalty among LGBTQ+ video games consumers.

SPECIAL TOPICS SESSION: PREPARING UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS FOR INDUSTRY BY ENHANCING RESEARCH AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Moderators: Patricia Huddleston, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI
Anna R. McAlister, Endicott College, Beverly, MA
Elizabeth Taylor Quilliam, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI
Juan Mundel, DePaul University, Chicago, IL
Dawn Pysarchik, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI
Kenneth Walker, Campbell-Ewald, Detroit, MI
Shannon Harris, Endicott College, Beverly, MA
Brittany Thomas, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI

Overview

A recent Wall Street Journal article articulated the difficulty that companies face in finding employees with "soft skills" such as clear communication, problem solving, critical thinking and teamwork skills (Davidson, 2016). More specific to the advertising industry, writing and presentation skills are viewed as "foundational" for students entering the new media landscape (Neill & Schauster, 2015). One strategy to build both soft and hard skills is to provide undergraduate students with opportunities to engage in "hands on" research (and forums to communicate research findings), beyond those that are offered in a typical undergraduate curriculum.

At research-productive (R1) schools, such opportunities might be offered to undergraduates who are invited onto research teams to work alongside grant-funded professors and graduate students. In smaller schools or those that are teaching-focused, graduate students may not be part of the landscape and professors may be so busy with teaching that they struggle to find time for research. Hence, at a teaching-focused school, offering independent study or project-based class opportunities can serve the dual purpose of developing the undergraduate students' research and communication skills, while also providing the professor with valuable research assistance.

Including undergraduates in research teams is becoming more prevalent, and in some fields, like STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) programs, the majority of undergraduates are included (as research assistants, lab staff, or team members) in faculty research projects (Gardner et al., 2015). While this practice appears to be less prevalent in business focused disciplines, like advertising, eight of the top 10 advertising programs have a formal infrastructure for facilitating undergraduate research.

The benefits of including undergraduate students on research teams accrue to both faculty and students. Benefits to students include the opportunity for an "inside look" at how studies are conceptualized and carried out, confidence in their ability to work as research team members, practice in conceptualizing research problems, specific skill development (e.g., participant recruitment, using equipment, coding, data analysis) and development of writing, presentation and critical thinking skills. These benefits are arguably greater than the clearly important benefits gained through the more "arm's-length" approach of having students participate as research subjects but not actually be included on research teams (a common practice in Psychology and an increasingly common practice in Advertising programs). Faculty members also benefit from working with undergraduates on their research projects. As the saying goes, "many hands make light work" and including undergraduates as part of a research team can increase the speed of recruitment, data collection, coding and analysis. If the undergraduate research assistant has good writing skills, s/he can also assist with manuscript preparation. Undergraduates who work on research teams are not only well-poised for recruitment into graduate programs, but are arguably more competitive in the job market, compared to students who have no prior experience of "hands on" research.

While mentoring undergraduate researchers is becoming more common at large, research-intensive universities, this may not be the case for all colleges and universities. Therefore, the purposes of this special topics session are to: 1) provide an overview of factors that contribute to the success of including undergraduates on research teams; 2) address the benefits and challenges of working with novice researchers; 3) offer a "roadmap" of practical advice and best practices to begin working with undergraduate student researchers; 4) showcase examples of undergraduate students' research projects from research-intensive and teaching-focused schools; 5) share student experiences as undergraduate researchers and their subsequent competitive advantage at job interviews and internships, by having student researchers present as part of this special topics panel; and 6) understand, from the employer/agency perspective, how undergraduate research experience is perceived.

This session will involve discussion of: 1) strategies for selecting and recruiting undergraduate student to join research teams (including funding opportunities to attract students; 2) examples of research projects with students as co-investigators; 3) client-based collaborative research in the classroom; 4) study spin-offs (allowing undergraduate students to come up with their own questions in a larger project); 5) book writing with students; 6) “the good, the bad, and the ugly” of working with undergraduate researchers; 7) the student perspective, and 8) the employer’s perspective.

Other sessions at the conference will be dedicated to presentation of research findings and much less focused on the practicalities of how each research team was assembled. This session focuses specifically on the inclusion of undergraduate students as research collaborators. The session has been designed to appeal to faculty from teaching-intensive schools as well as research schools, and contains content that will be useful for our industry colleagues also.

Beyond the actual session, conversation will be continued with interested parties who will be invited to talk directly with any of the professors, undergraduate students, or the industry representative delivering various parts of this session. All presenters are willing to share specific details on recruitment, compensation, instruction, and challenges associated with including undergraduate students as research team members. These specifics may be very useful to any person who has not previously collaborated with a junior researcher.

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CREATIVE THINKING: INSIGHTS FROM ADVERTISING EDUCATORS AND PRACTITIONERS

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Abstract

The goal of this study is to address the lack of extant research on how creative thinking is conceptualized and taught by educators and professionals in advertising in the context of constant change and innovation in the industry. Using in-depth interviews of practitioners and professors of advertising, this study found three main themes: the Journey, the Motivated Learner, and Safety (safe environment). The findings suggest to educators and practitioners that acquiring, practicing, and mastering creative thinking skills requires an integrated pedagogical strategy that focuses on each individual, culture, social interactions, and creative collaboration.

FIVE YEARS AND LITTLE CHANGE: TRACKING ADVERTISING CREATIVE WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES

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Abstract

This five-year study explores the number of women in advertising creative departments across the United States. The dataset was drawn from Red Books, between 2012 to 2016, and gathers 8,953 individual's names from within 2,181 U.S.-based advertising agencies. On average women accounted for only 26.1% of all creatives within creative departments and only 17.5% of those in creative leadership. Further, there is a clear relationship between gender and being a creative director. In all but one year (2012), there are statistically significant, positive linkages between being a man and being a CD. Yet, another finding points to an upward trend in the percentage of women in advertising creative departments from 2012 through 2016. Finally, our regression model forecasts a significant growth of women CDs in the coming years.

THE ROLE OF CONSUMER INSIGHT IN CREATIVE ADVERTISING DEVELOPMENT: ESSENTIAL AID OR COGNITIVE BIAS?

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Abstract

Advertising professionals like account planners and creatives highly praise the role on consumer insights to solve advertising problems creatively. Although seen as an invaluable aid, another perspective is that it can create mental set fixation, a cognitive bias that reinforces only limited perspectives on a problem, thus inhibiting creativity. We test whether strong, weak or no-insight conditions help or hinder professional creatives to develop highly creative advertising ideas. We also test across two media, print and television. Although we find support for the benefits of insight for the print conditions, the television conditions show the classic signs of mental set fixation. Although we show consumer insight can improve the quality of creative work, it needs to be much more carefully managed to produce consistently high quality creative work.

IMPLICIT THEORIES OF CREATIVES

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Introduction

Despite the ongoing conversations over the past three decades about bridging the academic-practitioner gap in advertising (Gabriel, Kottasz, & Bennett, 2006; Nyilasy & Reid, 2007; O'Donohoe & Tynan, 1998; Preston, 1985), 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 & 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.

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 theories and constructs studied by academics (i.e., topics that have been studied by advertising academics and published in peer review journals). 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 and constructs studied by academics they are already using, it will give researchers a base for better understanding the academic-practitioner gap. Both academics and advertising professionals can assist in learning more about the gap and how to bridge it.

This research will expand on Kover (1995) by including art directors and copywriters, and could be used to enhance the education of those seeking advertising degrees by generating knowledge that could better link theories and constructs studied by academics to applied practice. The remainder of this article provides an overview of relevant literature on the academic-practitioner gap. This is followed by the research question that guided this project, study methods, results, and a discussion of the implications of these findings for academics and practitioners.

The Academic-Practitioner Gap in Advertising

The Gap

Bridging the knowledge gap between academics and advertising practitioners is a frequent conversation in academic conversations. It has been discussed in advertising literature for over 30 years (McQuarrie, 1998; Nyilasy & Reid, 2007; Preston, 1985), and has been a topic of conversation in marketing literature even longer. While Preston (1985) and McQuarrie (1998) draw attention to the gap, Nyilasy and Reid (2007) elaborated on why the gap exists. They analyzed key writing on the gap and identified five reasons why there is a disconnect between advertising professionals and academics: (1) knowledge dissemination and outlets for distribution of academic knowledge; (2) the form and content of the knowledge being incomprehensible; (3) the structure of academic rewards and the organizational culture that hinder a practical focus; (4) the philosophy of the role of academic research; (5) practitioners' unwillingness or inability to seek out academic research. Part of the academic-practitioner divide happens due to the nature and structure of academia, while part of the divide is due to advertising professionals not fully understanding why or how academic research could help them (Nyilasy & Reid, 2007). While these categories are useful, Nyilasy and Reid (2007) state that the academic verses professional debate, which peaked in the 1980s, has ended with the professional (applied) side winning out. This makes the philosophy of the role of academic research a less likely cause in the current continuation of the gap. It is also a mistake to distinguish outlets for knowledge dissemination and the context of the knowledge being incomprehensible as distinctive from the organizational culture of academia and the structure of academic rewards. It is the organizational culture and reward systems in academia that lead to the gap in outlets for knowledge dissemination, which in turn also proliferates the form and content of the knowledge being incomprehensible.

The gap turns out to be a two-sided problem. (1) Academics acknowledge the gap exists and that it needs to bridged, but there is little incentive for them to do so (AMA Task Force, 1988). At the same time, (2) advertising professionals do not fully understand academic research and the benefits it could provide them, and they have little access to comprehendible and applied knowledge, which gives practitioners little reason to seek out the knowledge themselves (AMA Task Force, 1988; McKenzie, Wright, Ball, & Baron, 2002; Ottesen & Grønhaug, 2004).

Academics

One of the major problems that proliferates this knowledge gap is the lack of incentives for academics to make the connection with advertising professionals. Tenure-track positions expect publications in peer-reviewed journals and conference attendances at academically orientated conferences (AMA Task Force, 1988; Defleur, 2007). Academics need publications in peer-reviewed journals, which is one of the main ways academics' performance is measured; publications also play a major role in receiving tenure (AMA Task Force, 1988; Brennan & Ankers, 2004; Defleur, 2007; November, 2004). November (2004) noted, "At most universities, the critical factor is the number of publications and the type of journal in which they are published—not relevance" (p. 41). The term often used for this environment when talking about the academic reward system is "publish or perish" (AMA Task Force, 1988; November, 2004; Brennan & Ankers, 2004). This framework is stressful and leaves little room for academics to build the relationships needed to bridge the current gap, despite the fact that many academics would like to make the connection with practitioners (Brennan & Ankers, 2004). There is no incentive for academics to publish in the trade journals (e.g. Ad Week, Advertising Age, Communication Arts Magazine, Brand Republic) where advertising practitioners seek information (AMA Task Force, 1988; Defleur, 2007) or build a following of professionals through a blog. It takes time and hard work to build the relationships with trade magazines or build an online blog following, so one's work could be disseminated outside of academics—time that is not available for outlets that will give little back to the career of the academic.

There is also no incentive for academics to attend advertising practitioner conferences, while the overlap of current advertising professionals at academically orientated conferences is marginal to completely nonexistent. At the same time, conferences for advertising professionals leave little room for the research of academics because they are structured differently: there is no submission of research papers and no peer review; they have calls for awards, not calls for papers; they may submit work (i.e., ad campaigns or one-off ads) for competition, but attendance by people not winning a competitive award is common; presenters are scheduled out in advance, are the top in their field, and have nothing to do with those who sign up to attend; and the emphasis is on workshops and learning from single presenters, as opposed to a panel of people with the same research interest. There is little to no incentive for academics to attend commercial conferences and build relationships or network at those events.

Practitioners

While academics have little incentive to make the information easily accessible to practitioners, it then becomes a question of why practitioners do not seek out the knowledge being created in academics. Practitioners may not understand the value of the information created by academics (Brennan & Ankers, 2004; Chong, 2006), academic research papers can be hard for those outside of academia to understand (Ottesen & Grønhaug, 2004), finding the practical relevance within academic publications may be difficult to those working in advertising (AMA Task Force, 1988; Chong, 2006), some practitioners do not know of the research that exists (Brennan & Ankers, 2004; McKenzi et al., 2002), and the scientific method of research is also viewed as being at odds with the creative nature of advertising (Chong, 2006). The "academic speak" of journal papers could be a major obstacle to dissemination of information, along with literature reviews and methods sections that hold little value to practitioners of advertising. Being able to clearly understand how the research was conducted to convey validity and reliability of the results are key factors to better dissemination of knowledge and research created by academics.

A major factor behind why advertising practitioners do not seek out academic research is advertising professionals may not understand how research could benefit them (Brennan & Ankers, 2004), and practitioners are often focused on the shortcomings of research (Chong, 2006). Having a solid understanding of the research being done by academics could benefit practitioners in two ways. First, it could help focus the energies put toward advertising campaigns. When practitioners have a better understanding of what works in advertising and why it works, it could lead to better advertising (i.e., more persuasive, increased ad trust, higher likeability that leads to more positive affect for the brand) and could lead to less trial and error. Understanding theories and constructs studied by academics would give practitioners the ability to craft messages and campaigns that are more likely to be effective and would give advertising practitioners more tools in their wheelhouse to create the most effective advertising possible.

One of the benefits of academic research for practitioners is how it can give practitioners the ability to explicitly explain and justify the work they create. A solid foundation of theories and constructs studied by academics could give practitioners the ability to explain why they made the choices they did for a campaign, which could reduce the "perceived risk" of a campaign. Advertising practitioners want to take risks with ads and marketing strategies they believe will pay off, but their clients may be less willing to take a risk on an untested creative strategy. Clients may see an advertising campaign as being too risky (i.e., too creative, too over the top, unlikely to connect with consumers), but if advertising professionals started with theories and constructs studied by academics to create a campaign, they could then explain to the client why the campaign would work, thus reducing perceived risk by the client. This could also reduce the need for copy testing and cut costs associated with creating an advertising campaign. By starting with theories and constructs studied by academics, advertising companies may also reduce internal costs, which is of little interest to researchers but would be a benefit for advertising agencies.

Another obstacle to the dissemination of knowledge is the lack of understanding of what academic research is. The term research holds different meanings for academics and practitioners (Brinberg & Hirschman, 1986; Chong, 2006; Shrivastava & Mitroff, 1984; Stewart, 1989). In academic research, there is more freedom to the questions one can ask, while practitioners want answers to specific outcomes of specific ads or campaigns on which they are currently working (Chong, 2006). In advertising agencies, the answer is the point of the study, while in academics the methods and generalizability are major points of the study. Advertisers need something that works well enough to solve a problem and academic research is trying to build knowledge and build on existing theories. While both are concerned with the sample, advertising research is sampling from their target market and academics typically try to have a broad sample of individuals from different demographics. Academic research is typically grounded in theory, while agency research is not. These sometimes subtle and sometimes drastic differences in what research means to academics and advertising practitioners makes it difficult for professionals to understand the validity of the work academics do.

The information gap between advertising practitioners and academics exists because of both the structure of the two communities and the lack of communication between academics and practitioners. Academics have little time and no incentives to bridge the gap despite the fact that many believe the information and knowledge should be disseminated. Practitioners do not fully understand the benefits they would receive from learning more about theories and constructs studied by academics, and they have difficulty accessing the information.

Research Question

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 Nyilasy and Reid (2007), Gabriel et al. (2006), 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 question: RQ: Are there practitioner philosophies that line up with theories or constructs studied by academics?

Methods

Sample

In-depth interviews based on the interview guide adapted from Kover (1995) were performed with advertising creatives (N=20): copywriters (65%) and art directors (35%). Recruitment was through cold calling, message boards, and 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.

Analysis

Using thematic analysis as described by Braun and Clarke (2006), a number of decisions about the data was made before analysis begins. 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 because research about advertising from both academics and marketing firms has found its way into the classroom and popular culture to the point where the themes emerging from the data will reflect discourses operating within society about effective ways to advertise. These society discourses may or may not reflect current academic research on advertising. Second, the decision of what to count as a theme was made; any patterned response or meaning that reflects the research questions or was a systematic knowledge structure that describe a process of creating ads or connecting with consumers 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 implicit theories are used by advertising creatives or to describe them in detail; this has already been covered by other research (Gabriel, et al., 2006; Kover, 1995; Nyilasy & Reid, 2009). This study was designed to connect the implicit theories used by creatives in advertising agencies to explicit theories studied by academics, and to identify themes that may be of interest to academics for future research. Fourth, themes and patterns were identified through inductive thematic analysis; the data was not coded to fit into pre-existing theories or constructs because practitioners did not speak about their work with explicit connections to theories or constructs studied in academics. Fifth, due to the research questions being about practitioner's philosophies (i.e., frameworks used to create ads and connect with consumers), it was unlikely advertising professionals would talk about academic theories at a semiotic or explicit level; therefore, the focus was on latent themes or underlying conceptualizations that emerge.

The interviews were recorded and transcribed, and thematic analysis was performed continuously until saturation occurred. 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 philosophies that were important to the practitioners in this study, which helped during the coding process to have the broader themes in mind. For example, different elements of ads (i.e., the music, the visual style, the typeface, or by creating an emotional reaction) that help to break through and connect with consumers, or hook someone's attention, were mentioned throughout the interviews in response to a variety of different questions; this helped to identify the theme of "breaking through." When coding for "breaking through" anything broadly related to and how practitioners in this study describe the different aspects of breaking through, which where later titled as sub-themes "clutter," "hooks," and "right time, right place." The threshold for themes was 50 percent or more. Within the section on "breaking though," practitioners talked about different sub-themes that are involved in the process of breaking through. In this case, the threshold was 50 percent for the sub-themes and "clutter," "hooks," and "right time, right place" were the sub-themes that at least 50 percent of participants mentioned.

The interviews were transcribed and an online program called Dedoose was used to broadly code the transcripts into larger themes. Next the excerpts from the broad themes were printed out, re-read several times, and coded into the more defined sub-themes (i.e., Clutter, Hooks, and Right Time, Right Place). Notes were also taken during the re-reading process to understand the overarching ideas of each sub-theme. After the themes were coded and the author created a codebook, which could be used was used to check face validity of the themes and sub-themes by an advertising practitioner not connected to the project. The practitioner read this research paper and the code book; they did not suggest any changes to the themes or sub-themes, and the practitioner agreed with the themes and sub-themes the author produced.

Lastly, the connection to academic advertising research was made. Since advertising is a debtor field and uses theory from other, more established fields with the stimuli of advertising (Nan & Faber, 2004), any theories or constructs the author could find that was used with the lens of advertising as a stimuli, rather than all communication research, and has been published in peer reviewed journals was considered when the author when connecting practitioner philosophies to academic theories or constraints. The author used the knowledge they already had in some areas (e.g., dual processing theories or constraints like need for cognition, attitude toward the ad equals attitude toward the brand) to start the process of finding academic research to connect to the philosophies that practitioners talked about and was continued in online databases of peer-reviewed journals (i.e., Google Scholar, EBSCO, Sage, Taylor & Francis Group, and ScienceDirect) to be as thorough as possible. Other topics (e.g., clutter) the author used key terms like "clutter" from the practitioners in the study to start the search processes in online databases of peer-reviewed journals (e.g., EBSCO, Sage, Taylor & Francis Group, ScienceDirect, etc.) for concepts and constructs that have been researched in academics (e.g., Johnson's (2014) research on clutter). The author started by reading well-cited and relevant articles and used those articles to find more peer review journal articles to connect to the philosophies that practitioners in this study talked about.

Results

Due to the use of inductive thematic analysis, the results start with the larger philosophies used by advertising practitioners, within the larger theme the difference aspects of those themes used by practitioners are discussed, finally each theme ends with explicitly linking those philosophies used by advertising practitioners to academic research, or identifying philosophies that open up a new line of research.

In regards to the RQ: Are there practitioner philosophies that line up with theories or constructs studied by academics?—the answer is yes, but the degree to which those philosophies overlap with academic theories or constructs varies. The following sections will first discuss in detail practitioner philosophies that stood out in the interviews and then the extent to which those philosophies overlap or align with theories or constructs studied by academics.

Practitioner Philosophies

Breaking Through

A major practical concern for practitioners in advertising is breaking through the clutter and hooking the audience into paying attention long enough to make an impact. To break though, practitioners in the study said ads needed a good "hook" to move from awareness to engagement. Participants also talked about the ad being in the right place at the right time; meaning, if a person does not see it or is not interested in it at the moment, it will not have an impact.

Clutter

One of the concerns for 65 percent of the creatives who were interviewed is breaking through the clutter and trying to draw attention of consumers who are constantly being bombarded with logos, sponsorship, or some form of advertising that is finding its way into any available space that can be found: annoying pop-up ads online, stadiums named after the sponsors, ads embedded into video games, metal plates on benches that pressed ads onto people's bare legs when they sat down, and even urinals have been turned into advertising space. Clutter came up as a topic when asked, "How do you try to connect with the consumer when you create ads?"

A common theme among the practitioners in the study was an awareness of how advertising has become increasingly invasive in our daily lives and how this creates a challenge because consumers are good at blocking out advertisements. Carol stated it this way while she was talking about connecting to consumers, "Advertising does seem to keep popping up everywhere as soon as there's space for it." Practitioners were also aware of the overwhelming number of ads that are seen daily, how people have become good at blocking out the extra noise, and that breaking through the clutter is a major challenge for practitioners as Tara said, "We see, I think the number is like 5,000 ads a day. We are already pretty good at tuning things out on our own." While Daryl addressed the challenges that clutter causes, "There's so much clutter out there that cutting through that can be a challenge." In both instances, awareness of clutter leads to a recognition that the clutter changes the way people engage with media in general. Not only are practitioners aware of how much advertising clutter there is in the world, they recognize that it is not the most ideal environment for them to be working in:

> I was watching some soccer this morning, and there's ads all around the stadium, there's ads on the jerseys, and it's just like information overload… There's just so much noise going around that you need to try and get as blindly in front of people as you can. I wish it were a little different. (Carl)

Many practitioners who were interviewed were aware of and concerned by the amount of advertising clutter there is out in the world and that breaking through advertising clutter can be difficult. They also elaborated on how to break through the clutter and get the attention of the consumers they are trying to connect with through hooks.

Hooks.

All the practitioners in this study talked about break through to consumers by making the message resonate with the consumer through what they called "hooks" designed to create interest when asked, "How do you try to connect with the consumer when you create ads?" Practitioners in the study defined hooks as the one piece of the advertisement that draws customers into the message and makes them interested in listening to that particular message. As Derrick said, "Something has to hook you into paying attention." According to these practitioners, one way to create a hook is through the way the message is crafted: the music, the visual style, the typeface, or the way a message is worded. All of the practitioners mentioned one or more of those elements through out the interview process. Another hook talked about by practitioners that will draw consumers in is making them solve a simple mental puzzle within the messaging of the ad. In response to being asked about connecting to consumers Abraham said:

> You need a straight headline but then visuals going to make them do all the work. So, if they have a bent headline, they need a pretty straight visual. If you have a bent visual and a bent headline, people are going to be confused. (Abraham)

Several of the participants described it as completing a circle. An advertisement cannot complete, or close, the circle for the consumer; they need to be challenged to make the leap and close the circle themselves. On the other hand, advertisements cannot make the consumer work too hard to close the circle; Abraham described it as an ad can go from A to B to D and let people figure out C, but an ad can not go A to D; if ads do not give enough information to complete the circle, consumers will also not be drawn into the message:

> It [the message] should just challenge the viewer to solve a little bit of the puzzle on their own to get them involved rather than just be a message that's like hitting you in the head with a two by four, you felt it but it wasn't very pleasant. They don't want to be beaten with messaging. They want to be lulled into being charmed to actually draw the message in on their own. (Derrick)

Carl described it like this, "By giving them [consumers] the opportunity to solve or figure it [the ad] out themselves, it's more of a connection." Making a connection through a good hook can even create interest where there was not interest before. According to all the practitioners in the study, creating buzz and making advertising interesting to watch helps hook them into paying attention. Shawn said it quite simply, "Make it interesting and people will watch." Not only can a good hook create interest, but participants believed that people do not always know what they want until they see it. According to Daryl, "There's a certain amount of people who don't know what they want until they see it." Kevin held this same view but thought it was more prevalent, "I don't think most people even know what they want, or want to hear." These are both examples of how practitioners in the study know they need to hook consumers who might not know how a product or service could assist them.

Breaking through the clutter involves finding a good hook and "a lot of the challenge is finding the hook," according to Daryl. Practitioners are trying to get the consumer to stop and pay attention when they are not interested in being interrupted from what they were doing: driving a car, scrolling through Facebook, reading a blog, watching a television show, or talking with a friend before the movie starts. According to practitioners, finding the hook that gets consumers interested without disrupting their day and in a way that makes them want to get involved with the message is key. Sometime finding that hook is by catching people off guard:

> There is this cognitive dissonance that's happening. A perfect example of this is the original Old Spice commercial where he is like, 'I'm on a horse' and you go, "Right. What? Hang on, okay. Catch me up." That's what makes Dos Equis attractive, because every line is a joke and so that catches you off guard and you go, "Wait a minute. What are they saying?" (Eugene)

Having a good hook can get people engaged where there wasn't interest before. This can be done through making consumers think or by catching them off guard. Not only does the ad need to hook people into paying attention, but the ad also needs to connect with consumers in the right place at the right time.

Right Time, Right Place

According to 65 percent of practitioners in the study, advertising messages also need to be presented at the right time and place to resonate and connect with the consumer. Practitioners do not think ads need to be everywhere; they just need to be where the consumer's eyes are looking at a time they are thinking about the product or service being advertised. The placement depends on where the consumer seeks information and what types of media they are using. Several participants talked about the sidebar ads on Facebook and how they show ads for products a person has recently searched for online. Search for eyeglasses and Warby Parker ads will be displayed in the sidebar, or spend time looking for beds and Helix Sleep and Casper sponsored posts will show up in a person's newsfeed. For practitioners it was not about how many ads a consumer sees, but about the connection that ad can make:

> Maybe it's a shift from quantity to quality engagement in some ways, because the world is so noisy. So how can we help our brand authentically connect with an audience that's already kind of looking for them as opposed to just blasting it out there; try to get a million impressions to how can we actually help you find the audience that truly wants to connect with you already based on their lifestyle or choices, their interests and help them connect with you in a meaningful way to where they're gonna be part of your tribe. (Rick)

Presenting ads at the right time and in the right place is an objective that can become easier to miss than to hit as one participant point out. Creating ads that break through the clutter by using a good hook and placing ads in the right places at the right time is at the forefront of the minds of advertising creatives.

Connecting Breaking Through to Academic Theory

There has been significant research done in the area of advertising clutter and its various effects across media platforms (Brown & Rothschild, 1993; Elliott & Speck, 1998; Ha, 1996; Ha & Litman, 1997; Jake Rotfeld, 2006; Riebe, & Dawes, 2006). While some media platforms have greater negative impacts of advertising clutter, the effects are not nearly as prominent as advertising practitioners believe. Elliott & Speck (1998) found that perceived ad clutter leads to lower attitude toward the ad and more ad avoidance. Television advertising was viewed by consumers as having the most communication problems, the highest perceived ad clutter, and was avoided the most (Elliott & Speck, 1998). They also found that radio advertising was viewed a slightly better than television advertising in those same factors, and magazines were the rated the same as television advertising for communication problems, but lower on perceived ad clutter.

The amount of clutter was also overestimated; in popular news medias, which was repeated by a few practitioners in this study, claim that people see up to 5,000 ads a day. Johnson (2014) found that 5,000 is all brand exposures, which would include the brands within your home, and only about 362 advertising exposures per day. Being exposed to more than 350 ads per day is what would be considered clutter, while the 12 ads that made an impression are the ones that break through and connect with the consumer.

Breaking through was also a theme found by Kover (1995), when interviewing only copywriters using the same interview guide and there has also been some research on how to "break through": Pieters, Warlop, and Wedel (2002) looked at advertising originality and familiarity on attention and memory; Pieters and Wedel (2004) looked at how images, text size, and brands gain attention; Stout, Leckenby, and Hecker (1990) looked at the effect of music in television commercials; and Till and Baack (2005) studied creative advertising and its effects on brand attitude, recall, and purchase intent. These studies get at some of the elements that practitioners are concerned with—font, visuals, originality, and creativity; these are similar to the elements the practitioners listed—the music, the visual style, the typeface, by creating an emotional reaction, or by tapping into the universal truths that connect individuals. The concept of advertising at the right time and place has also been studied in academics with a heavy focus on digital and online advertising (Danaher & Mullarkey, 2003; Gross, 2010; Shamdasani, Stanaland, & Tan, 2001; Van Reijmersdal, 2009). In the case of the "right time, right place" advertising, creatives know it is an important issue, but rely on media and account planners to know where to reach consumers, which removes control of the "right time, right place" away from creatives within an advertising agency.

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 theories or constructs studied by academics. 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. There are also lines of future research that could help clarify the differences found.

Advertising practitioners had a good understanding the topics looked at in this study that are well-studied concepts within academics, but the terminology did not always match. In the area of clutter and breaking through, there was some overlap between academic research and practitioners' philosophies. Practitioners overestimate how much advertising clutter exists, but existence of the clutter and its effects on consumer attitudes is confirmed by academic research (Brown & Rothschild, 1993; Elliott & Speck, 1998; Ha, 1996; Ha & Litman, 1997; Jake Rotfeld, 2006; Riebe, & Dawes, 2006). There was also overlap on how to break through that clutter by using elements that hook the consumer into paying attention—visual style, font choices, music, originality, and creativity (Pieters & Wedel, 2004; Pieters et al., 2002; Stout et al., 1990; Till & Baack, 2005). This is an area where although practitioners in the study mentioned the elements and used them to create ads, they were unable to explicitly state how those elements worked. The practitioners' use of these design elements in advertising was driven by "gut feelings" about how they work and not necessarily explicit executions of the elements.

While this study showed there is some overlap between advertising practitioners' philosophies and the theories or constraints used by academics, it also confirmed there is still an academic-practitioner gap in advertising that needs to be bridged. This is a conversation that has been going on in the literature for over 30 years, although it has received little attention in academic research, and it is a conversation that could be changed. Having a better knowledge of the topics that need to be bridged and how big the knowledge gap between academics and practitioners is will help shed light on a solution to how to bridge that gap.

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.

Future Research

An area for future research that would be useful to help bridge the academic-practitioner gap would be in the area of elements used by practitioners to break through the clutter (e.g., visual style, font choices, music, originality, and creativity). While the effects of these elements on consumer attitudes and behaviors have been studied (Pieters & Wedel, 2004; Pieters et al., 2002; Stout et al., 1990; Till & Baack, 2005), there is room for future research on how advertising practitioners use those same elements and to what degree of precision are they using those elements. The next step in this research could be in-depth interviews with advertising creatives to dig deeper into the elements they use to break through the clutter and how they believe those elements break through the clutter to connect with consumers. A better understanding of this area of the academic-practitioner gap is needed to find an appropriate way to bridge it.

Limitations

While this study has found some areas that could help 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 instead of doing a detailed account of one particular aspect, the philosophies discussed about breaking through by the practitioners in the study did not get as in depth as they could be. Another example of this was in regard to emotions in advertising. This is a complex topic and there are researchers dedicated studying emotions in advertising, because the topic of emotions in advertising was too big for the scope of this project some questions were dropped from the interviews as the interview process progressed.

Another limitation was due to the author being unfamiliar with some topics (e.g., clutter), which means the terms used to search for published research might not have been the most effective. The author found multiple terms in the published research that connected to the same idea; this means that while the author tried to be as thorough as possible, there might have been other terms that were missed during the process of searching for academic research that connects to the philosophies the practitioners in this study.

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SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING RESEARCH DURING 2006 – 2016: LITERATURE REVIEW THROUGH THE LENS OF COMMUNICATION PROCESS MODEL

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Abstract

The current study reviewed the core stages of social media advertising literature development during 2006 – 2016through the four major components in classic communication model, namely, the message sender (source), the message, the medium, and the message receiver (individual), to analyze the approaches that prior scholars have taken in understanding social media advertising and what major themes were revealed. The findings showed that majority of the studies focused on the message receiver related variables, followed by message factors and source factors. But little attention was given to the medium factors. The current study concludes by proposing future directions in extending the current literature of social media advertising.

AN EYE-TRACKING STUDY TO EXAMINE THE VISUAL ATTENTION OF ADS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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Abstract

This study examined the impacts of three visual factors of advertising—size, order and type—on the four phases of attentional measures (discovery, interest, processing and engagement) on three social media platforms using a series of eye-tracking experiments with general populations. After controlling for the influences of various personal characteristics and the types of social media platform, this study found that the three visual factors show different patterns of influences on the four attentional measures. The findings indicate that, while the ad size has significant impact on the entire attentional process, the ad order has considerable impact on interest. In terms of ad type, this study observed the attentional advantages of display ads over native ads in discovery, processing and engagement.

CONSUMERS' ENGAGEMENT WITH TV EVENTS: THE ITERATIVE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VIEWING RATINGS AND ENGAGEMENT BEHAVIORS ON TWITTER

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Abstract

The ways audiences consume television (TV) are changing and shifting from a passive consumption of the content to interactive *engagement* with the content that involves different actors and takes place across multiple screens. Today, audiences often consume TV programming and simultaneously engage with the program and other consumers using social media such as Twitter. Previous research has only rarely looked into the interactions between engagement behaviors on Twitter and other engagement behaviors such as media consumption. This is surprising, considering that on Twitter, these new TV engagement behaviors can not only be observed and measured, but also stimulated by the TV program and advertisers sponsoring it. This paper presents work in progress that examines the iterative relationship between TV consumption (i.e., viewing ratings) and the content and actors of TV engagement behaviors on Twitter. The preliminary results reveal several interesting findings. We observe a negative relation between TV viewing ratings and consumers' tweeting behavior, and a positive relation between tweets from celebrities and viewers' tweeting and viewing behavior. We also find that the content of tweets has an effect on consumers' engagement. Our findings bring interesting practical and theoretical implications.

STARRING IN YOUR OWN SNAPCHAT ADVERTISEMENT: INFLUENCE OF SELF-BRAND CONGRUITY, SELF-REFERENCING AND PERCEIVED HUMOR ON BRAND ATTITUDE AND PURCHASE INTENTION OF ADVERTISED BRANDS

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Abstract

Snapchat geofilter advertisements use augmented reality (AR) technology to place consumers in photographs embellished with branded content. This study examined the joint influence of self-brand congruity, self-referencing and perceived humor in these self-endorsed geofilter brand advertisements on consumers' brand-related preferences. Results revealed that self-brand congruity, self-referencing and perceived humor exerted significant main effects on consumers' post-use brand attitude and purchase intention. Self-brand congruity also significantly interacted with self-referencing and perceived humor to affect brand attitude and purchase intention, while self-referencing significantly interacted with perceived humor to affect purchase intention, but not brand attitude. Implications for advertisers and researchers are discussed.

I'M STIGMATIZED AND I KNOW IT: STIGMATIZING APPEALS EFFECTIVENESS IN SOCIAL MARKETING

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Abstract

This research aims to understand the effect of an under-investigated advertising technique – the stigmatizing appeal, which we define as a persuasive communication strategy which intentionally stigmatizes individuals for their non-desirable behaviors. One qualitative and two quantitative studies were conducted using an advertisement stigmatizing consumers for overusing electric energy. A three-dimensional scale (accusation, exclusion, and disclosure) is proposed for measuring the perceived stigmatization in advertisements. Accusation and disclosure have a positive effect on the intention of behavioral change via the attitude toward the advertisement, while exclusion has a negative effect. Overall, stigmatization has a positive effect on the intention of adopting the positive social behavior. These findings show that stigmatizing appeals can be used as a tool in social marketing to convince consumers to modify their non-desirable behaviors into positive behaviors.

THE POSITIVE SIDE OF GUILT APPEALS: WHEN EFFORT ENHANCES COMPLIANCE TOWARD NEGATIVE INDUCED EMOTIONS IN ADVERTISING

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Abstract

An experiment was conducted to assess how guilt appeals work in influencing prosocial behavior. It was hypothesized that when combined with level of effort (high vs. low) that is associated with performing the behavior, guilt appeals would be more effective when high effort is required. With the absence of guilt, compliance with the recommended behavior would be achieved when low effort was emphasized. The results supported the hypotheses showing guilt appeals activated a sense of urgency and importance, resulting in intention to comply. Guilt did not act as a strong motivator for low effort scenarios as individuals did not need more encouragement for an easy-to-perform behavior.

CAN WE FIND THE RIGHT BALANCE IN CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING? ANALYZING THE BOUNDARIES OF BALANCE THEORY IN EVALUATING BRAND-CAUSE PARTNERSHIPS

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Abstract

The phenomenon of brands partnering with causes is referred to as cause-related marketing (CRM). Some CRM partnerships may seem less compatible than others, but the level of perceived compatibility differs from consumer to consumer. We know a great deal about how perceptions of compatibility affect attitude and behavior, but we know less about how to predict a consumer's perception of compatibility. Therefore, our purpose was to investigate the boundaries in which balance theory could be used to analyze CRM partnerships. As far as we know, this is the first study to consider attitude strength as a separate measure of analysis (versus attitude alone) when considering balance theory, as well as the first study to attempt to understand if using continuous attitude and attitude strength measures can predict balance. We found that consumer's current attitudes towards a brand and a cause predicts their perceptions of CRM compatibility, and their continuous attitude and attitude strength evaluations can be used to predict balance in CRM triads. This is important for advertising practitioners, as we explain how they can use these insights to determine which organizations to partner with in the future.

THE EFFECT OF CAUSE PROXIMITY AND MESSAGE CONCRETENESS ON ATTITUDE TOWARD CAUSE-RELATED ADVERTISING: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF ADVERTISING BELIEVABILITY

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Abstract

Previous studies in cause-related marketing (CRM) have found that cause proximity is an important factor to determine the effectiveness of CRM advertising messages. Specifically, the literature suggests that a geographically near cause (local issue-related cause) is generally more persuasive than a distant cause (global issue-related cause) is. However, building on the tenets of the Construal Level Theory, the current study proposed that attitude toward a CRM ad would be more favorable when cause proximity is congruent (vs. incongruent) with the level of message concreteness. This study employed a 2 (cause proximity: global vs. local CRM ad) X 2 (message concreteness: abstract vs. concrete) experimental design. The results showed that the effectiveness of a global CRM ad is enhanced when an abstract message is used, while the effectiveness of a local CRM ad is evident when a concrete message is used. The results further suggested that advertising believability fully mediated the effect of cause proximity on attitude toward the ad only when an abstract message is presented in the global CRM ad. Theoretical and managerial implications and directions for future research are discussed.

TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION AND ADVERTISING: IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

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Abstract

The purpose of this Special Topics Session is to open a discussion forum among AAA members and advertising professionals in NYC about current advertising practices closely related to technology innovation. Many questions related to research and teaching could be explored: How can technology open up new avenues to leverage the medium as much as the message? How can technology transform ideas into art? How can experiential creative strategies be designed to optimize individual media channels? How do we leverage mobile as the medium within a planned brand-experience strategy? These questions can be explored through panels of industry specialists who can speak about their best cases and practices and field questions from session attendees. Answers will undoubtedly have important implications for what advertising educators and researchers can do to stay relevant in this ever-changing, technology-driven industry.

EXPLAINING TURNOVER INTENTION IN ADVERTISING AGENCY: THE ROLES OF JOB SATISFACTION AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

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Abstract

High turnover is an infamous problem in the advertising industry. While much anecdotal evidence and remedies have been presented in practice, less academic attention has been paid to this costly problem. This study tries to fill the gap in the advertising literature by 1) exploring factors affecting job satisfaction of advertising practitioners and 2) examining the roles of job satisfaction and organizational commitment in forming a turnover intention. The results revealed that satisfaction with the relationship with superiors, pay, and workload was related to the overall job satisfaction. The findings, also, suggested that job satisfaction affects turnover intention only indirectly through organizational commitment, highlighting the importance of organizational commitment. Theoretical and managerial implications are discussed.

ACHIEVING STRATEGIC DIGITAL INTEGRATION: VIEWS FROM EXPERIENCED NEW YORK CITY ADVERTISING AGENCY PROFESSIONALS

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Eric Haley, University of Tennessee
Sally J. McMillan, University of Tennessee

Abstract

The advertising agency environment is changing and requires agencies to deal with many communications opportunities in emerging platforms. Many concepts from IMC (e.g., the importance of data-driven targeting and integrated communication across disciplinary boundaries) have carried forward to the digital era. While academic literature has begun to examine the impact of digital technology on communication practice, the function of traditional full-service advertising agencies within the digital, social, and experiential communication environment remains under-examined. This study employs a qualitative paradigmatic perspective to address the following research question: What are experiences with and perceptions of strategic digital integration among veteran advertising professionals who work in New York City full-service agencies? Eighteen advertising agency professionals who held supervisory positions in account, strategy or creative were interviewed to gain a longer-term perspective on experiences with strategic digital integration. All participants were employees of major, full-service NYC advertising agencies as they would likely work with sophisticated national and multi-national marketers. Three key insights emerged from data collection: (1) the promise of digital integration, (2) leveraging the digital promise, and (3) the growing sophistication of using digital. Overall, participants from the NYC agencies do not think that advertising is dead, rather they portray it as evolving to leverage the new promises of digital platforms through better strategic integration.

ADVERTISING PRIMED:
HOW PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY AFFECTS MORAL REASONING

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Abstract

Moral reasoning, measured by the Defining Issues Test (DIT), increases over time as we age and engage in education. Advertising professionals consistently score lower on the DIT than their media colleagues in journalism and public relations, which suggests that professional experience also impacts advertising practitioners' moral reasoning. To understand how professional identity influences moral reasoning, and guided by theories of moral psychology and social identity, 145 advertising practitioners working in the United States participated in an online experiment. According to the results, moral reasoning scores have increased since 2005, which is good news for the industry. Furthermore, an interaction effect between gender and priming suggests we revaluate moral psychology theory's explanatory power for media practitioners and reconsider how the complexity of professional identities in concert with gender, age, education, and professional training, to name a few variables, interact to affect moral reasoning.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSUASION KNOWLEDGE AND ADVERTISING INVESTMENT: WHAT DRIVES WHAT?

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ABSTRACT

While we know a lot about how consumers develop persuasion knowledge and how they react to persuasive attempts by marketers, we do not know whether and how marketers and advertisers react to consumers' persuasion knowledge. Does consumers' persuasion knowledge affect marketers' actions, particularly their efforts and investments in advertising? Do possible changes in advertisers' investments in turn influence persuasion knowledge? We suggest four alternative explanations for the relationship between persuasion knowledge and advertising investment and test them by means of a meta-analysis of 128 manuscripts providing 150 distinctive data sets that provide data on persuasion knowledge measures. We find that the relationship between persuasion knowledge and advertising investment is negative and persuasion knowledge affects advertising investment rather than the other way around. The findings indicate that marketers surrender to high persuasion knowledge that decreases advertising effectiveness and re- duce their investment in advertising. These findings provide several new insights to the discussion about the crisis of advertising, for future research on persuasion knowledge, and for advertising practice.

REACTANCE TO PERSONALIZATION: UNDERSTANDING THE DRIVERS BEHIND THE GROWTH OF AD BLOCKING

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Abstract

Fueled by advancing technologies that continually expand Web data tracking and aggregating capabilities, online advertising has become increasingly personalized and pervasive. This trend is largely responsible for a growing number of consumers (over 615 million worldwide as of December 2017) choosing to install ad-blocking software on their computers and mobile devices. As a result, U.S. publishers and advertisers estimate that consumer ad blocking cost them more than $28 billion in revenue in the first half of 2017, and this figure is forecast to exceed $35 billion by 2020. Rooted in a theoretical foundation of Psychological Reactance Theory (PRT), the present study examines the key cognitive and affective factors driving consumers to reject personalized advertising messages and install ad-blocking software. A structural equation analysis reveals that a balance of privacy-related threats, along with benefits rooted in relevance and rewards, moderated by the type of data (first party or third party) being used to personalize advertising messages is contributing to this shift in consumer attitudes and behaviors. Based on these findings, the authors propose important theoretical extensions to PRT along with useful practical implications for advertisers and publishers.

TWO DECADES OF SCHOLARLY RESEARCH IN ADVERTISING: BEYOND THE LEADING JOURNALS

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Abstract

Using a keyword search of 73 academic databases, this study identifies 30,382 advertising research articles published in 6,140 unique journals over a 20-year period (1997-2016). Analysis of the database metadata associated with these articles indicates significant growth in both the number of articles and number of journals over time, growth and decline patterns for top journals, changes in the types of journals publishing advertising research, and changes in the subject matter of advertising research. The results demonstrate the need for studies of trends in advertising research to move beyond the traditional three to five "leading" journals.

YOU REAP WHERE YOU SOW AND TRUST IS THE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL SEEDING: COMPUTATIONAL RESEARCH APPLYING THE TRUST SCORES IN SOCIAL MEDIA (TSM) ALGORITHM

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Abstract

Applying a computational research approach, this study empirically tested the impact of consumer-to-consumer trust on the extent and speed of viral ad diffusion, using real-life viral ad examples representing different product types, brands, and content characteristics. Specifically, this study adopted Roy et al.'s (2017) TSM algorithm, and tested hypotheses predicting significant impact of individual users' trustworthiness scores on the number of retweets and the speed of retweets about a viral ad disseminated in the Twitter network. The study results revealed that only a small proportion of social media users who are exposed to a viral ad tend to contribute to viral ad diffusion. Social media users with higher trustworthiness scores were found to make significantly stronger contribution to spreading viral ads faster and more broadly. Additionally, users' trustworthiness scores had stronger impact on the extent and speed of viral ad diffusion especially in the situation where the viral ads contained socially controversial messages, relative to ads containing non-controversial content. Theoretical contributions and practical implications are discussed.

MINING INFLUENCER MARKETING MESSAGES: INVESTIGATING CONSUMER RESPONSES TO BRAND- VS. INFLUENCER-GENERATED ADS

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Sang-Sang Tan, Nanyang Technological University
Xiaoyu Chen, Nanyang Technological University

Abstract

Brands investments in influencer marketing have been escalating over the past few years. While the advertising industry and market analytics are touting the unique value of influencer marketing, there is a paucity of research explicating its effectiveness. The present study adopted a text mining approach and analyzed consumer's responses to influencer- vs. brand-generated ads on Instagram. During the selected time frame, a total of 145 influencer-brand campaign dyads between Instagram influencers and the top apparel brands were identified. Our results show that influencer-generated branded posts enjoyed significantly higher engagement in terms of followers liking and commenting than that of brand-generated posts. This study applies text mining with sentiment analysis and latent Dirichlet allocation (LDA) on 13,542 unique comments for both influencer- and brand-generated ads. Text analysis results demonstrate that Instagram followers expressed significantly higher percentage of positive sentiment in their comments for influencer-generated ads than that of brand-generated ads. Our findings' theoretical, managerial, and policy implications are discussed.

DOES DEVICE MATTER IN VR ADVERTISING? PERCEPTION AND MEMORY OF VIRTUAL REALITY BRANDED CONTENT

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Rachel Yang, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Chen Chen, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
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Abstract

In a laboratory experiment, participants viewed a branded virtual campus tour using one of three commercially available 360-degree video and virtual reality (VR) viewing devices (Oculus Rift, Google Cardboard, 360-dgree video using iPhone 6 plus). Participants' perceived telepresence, free recall of the content, and their reflections of the experience were analyzed. Results show that while viewers in all three conditions reported high levels of telepresence, perceived telepresence negatively impacted free recall of targeted locations in the virtual tour. A qualitative analysis of participants' post-viewing comments revealed nine emerging themes about their experience: Generally, they can be classified into two categories: (1) the evaluation of the VR experience and (2) the evaluation of the VR content. For the evaluation of the VR experience, participants' expression of feelings and thoughts were dominant. The five themes that emerged include: telepresence, video quality, discomfort, control, and thoughts about the applications of VR in other areas. As for the evaluation of the VR content, there were four themes: involvement of the self, involvement of third persons, emotion, and content quality.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN VIRTUAL REALITY: A WALK IN THEIR SHOES

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Lee Jaejin, Florida State University
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Abstract

This research aimed to examine how Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) advertisements made into Virtual Reality (VR) experiences affect consumers' perceptions of CSR, attitudes toward a company, and behavior intentions that result in loyalty toward a company. To this end, the study assessed the moderating effect of consumers' levels of perceived altruism-based CSR motives on the CSR outcomes. The findings of this study indicated that VR is a great tool for maximizing the CSR outcomes and the level of perceived altruism-based CSR, both of which are directly connected to the success of CSR behaviors.

USING AUGMENTED REALITY TO OVERLAY BRANDED CONTENT ON THE FACE: TO WHAT EXTENT DO TYPE OF AUGMENTATION (SELF/OTHER) AND USE EXPERIENCE (ACTIVE/PASSIVE) AFFECT BRAND RESPONSES?

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Abstract

Augmented Reality (AR) technology shows great potential for marketers to revolutionize consumer experiences and engage consumers in novel ways, by overlaying virtual, branded content on the consumers' face. This study aimed to examine the persuasiveness of AR social media apps providing a social, entertaining brand experience with AR, and the underlying processes that could explain its effects. This was the first study to focus on the unique use characteristics of AR in a social context, by examining whether augmentation (self/other) and AR use experience (active/passive) influenced brand responses using Snapchat's sponsored AR lenses. Against expectations, the different use characteristics did not affect the underlying processes (brand connections), neither did they affect brand responses. Directions for future research are discussed.

ENHANCING DESTINATION IMAGE THROUGH VIRTUAL TOURS: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF SPATIAL PRESENCE

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Abstract

Virtual reality has played a crucial role in the promotion of tourist destinations. Although new media technology can improve destination marketing effectiveness, empirical support for the benefit of virtual tours is still lacking. A between-subjects experiment (N = 118) was designed to examine whether a 3D virtual tour led to more favorable destination image. The results not only confirmed the hypothesis but also revealed the mediating role of spatial presence. Details about the effects of immersive advertising on consumer responses are presented, and theoretical and managerial implications are discussed.

SPECIAL TOPICS SESSION: CREATIVITY, DATA, AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: THE NEW TEAM

Moderators: Jorge Villegas, University of Illinois at Springfield, Springfield, IL
Thomas Vogel, Emerson College, Boston, MA
Sabrina Habib, Winthrop University, Rock Hill, SC
Jeff Williams, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC

Panelists: Bia Castro, Uber, New York City, NY
Marianna Dutra, Publicis NY, New York City, NY
Sonya Matejko, Situation Interactive, New York City, NY
Darren McColl, SapientNitro, Miami, FL
Roman Tuskerman, Publicis NY, New York City, NY

Overview

The advertising industry is currently experimenting on how to use data obtained from impressions, engagement, and other interactions that are collected and analyzed in real time. These dynamic and enormous datasets create many opportunities for real-time targeted communication. Increasingly, data has been also used to feed artificial intelligence [AI] systems that are designed to learn from data patterns to predict behavior, design messages, and make decisions (Agrawal, Gans, and Goldfarb 2017). IBM's Watson customizes websites for each visitor based on their personal data, creating micro-targeted ads and using artificial intelligence to develop creative executions. Examples like Watson show the pervasive introduction of machine learning –the ability of a computer to learn from data patterns rather than from human programming- to our field (IBM Watson 2016). The use of data in creative work goes beyond the development of content, by human or machine. Recently, an award-winning app was developed by Adidas to help runners avoid Do Not Walk signs as they jogged in the streets of Tokyo, enabling them to build a relationship with the brand and helping them navigate the city (Natalia 2017). These cases show how technology is being used to develop creative work, to shape the way stories and brand platforms are created and experienced.

As technology impacts advertising in all fronts, creative teams have gradually incorporated technologists (i.e., data, information systems, or computer scientists) in the development of creative strategies and executions along with the traditional art director/copywriter duo. The technologist must be a creative thinker with the ability to code, develop prototypes using technology, and bridge the differences between scientists and creatives. The technologist is a creative who understands the possible ways in which data can be leveraged in creative concepts and executions. These scientists can also provide real-time campaign metrics, which changes the workflow of creative teams (Creative Skillset 2017).

Most of the recent studies in marketing and advertising related to big data/AI and similar technologies have focused on media decisions, measurements of online sentiment, recommendation personalization, and other applications focused on consumer behavior (Sheng, Amankwah-Amoah, and Wang 2017). However, few studies have explored the effect of these technologies at the organizational level in ad agencies or other marketing-related companies. Interestingly, researchers have found that most companies do not have the organizational structure to use systematically big data opportunities (Braganza et al. 2017). A similar criticism has been raised about universities since future employees of companies of the industry will require to understand data science and its interdisciplinary nature in order to work efficiently in multidisciplinary big data/AI teams. The current environment in companies and professionals schools is too siloed for the use of data in strategic and long-term manner (Carillo 2017). Technology is triggering the restructuring and change of behaviors of creative teams and organizations at a fast pace. A study sponsored by the Association of National Advertisers in conjunction with the Advertising Educational Foundation stated that students are graduating with large gaps in their knowledge when entering the industry since skill requirements are changing faster than academic curricula (Lum 2017). This panel aimed at addressing this topic in the creative realm, bringing the following themes to the attention of educators and practitioners.

The Use of Technology is just Cosmetic until it is Systemic

Creatives need to work closely with creative technologists in areas such as machine learning and big data. A one-time interaction where creatives learn possible insights from technologists is not enough. They should be part of the creative team in a systemic way that allows for multidisciplinary voices, knowledge, and ideas. The creative team should have members who have a deep understanding of data and technology applications, and have unrestricted access to them to leverage their potential. However, it is always important to remember that data is just a tool, not an outcome or strategy.

AI can Recommend Marketing Plans that Affect Creative Work, but it has Limits

As much as data can be analyzed to develop new marketing ideas that can impact marketing practices, it is important to think strategically. This is an ability that is currently not possessed by AI or other technologies. A great example presented in the panel was Uber Eats' analysis of its growing database of food delivery data. Out of this analysis, Uber Eats developed zone-based recommendations for their partner restaurants of items to include in their menus based on what is popular at particular times of the day. The problem of this approach is the quick saturation of markets with similar products. In this case, as in many others, data-based recommendations should be always evaluated from branding and strategic perspectives by professionals.

AI can Develop Creative Work, but a Human should be the Final Judge

As demonstrated in different occasions, computers are able to design advertisements that are perceived positively by consumers and experts. These robot creatives analyze large number of advertisements and develop creative ideas connecting diverse elements previously seen in advertisements that received high effectiveness scores. Many questions arise: is this creativity or just a rehashing of ideas to maximize short-term results? Or more importantly, how can an AI system evaluate if an execution is congruent with the brand's values and personality? At least at this moment in time, creatives will not be replaced by robots since there is still the need for a creative's judgment that goes beyond the understanding of correlations between elements of an execution and strategy.

Students need to be Willing to be Leaders of Change

As technology permeates all activities in ad agencies, students in advertising programs need to understand the importance of learning on the job and have a positive attitude to change. Advertising agencies will change as fast as technology transforms media, markets, and consumers and the only way for them to thrive is to count with creatives willing to develop new abilities, learn completely new ways to communicate with consumers, and learn how to work in new organizational structures. For example, creatives who rose through the ranks in ad agencies one or two decades ago, were mostly interested in creating print and television messages to be broadcasted in national media. This type of creative executions at ad agencies has become less common while less "glamorous" executions on the Internet are becoming much more usual tasks. Current students in advertising programs should be prepared to change their medium of expression of their creative ideas. Another trait that is required in this dynamic industry is to be ethical in every activity. Concerns on how we collect and use data with little time to reflect on their implications increase the need to develop in our students a strong understanding of ethics and how to apply them in a very dynamic industry. Another important trait for creatives of the future is to learn how to be a leader. Clients and account managers might get obsessed with the allure of technology, getting away from the factors that make us human. It is the job of the creative as a leader to remind everybody in the organization that computers have unparalleled abilities of logic and can work 24 hours a day, but they cannot surpass humans' abilities to express themselves with feelings, humor, and art.

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A CONSUMER SOCIALIZATION APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING ADVERTISING AVOIDANCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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Abstract

In the past five years, there has been a rapid growth of advertising on social media. The current study adopts the consumer socialization framework to investigate advertising attitude and avoidance on social media platforms (Facebook/Twitter/Instagram) via an online survey of U.S. adults. Results show that peer communication, susceptibility to peer influence, media usage, and susceptibility to media influence all negatively affect ad avoidance and that the relationships are mediated by attitude toward social media advertising. The data also show no differences by demographics for avoidance or attitudes, with the exception of age, which is related with the former only.

A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE: ANTECEDENTS AND OUTCOMES OF AD-EVOKED NOSTALGIA ON FACEBOOK

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Abstract

Integrating the theories of nostalgia and consumer-brand relationships, this study developed and tested a theoretical model for understanding ad-evoked nostalgia within the context of Facebook. Online survey data (n = 244) were collected with Amazon MTurk to disentangle the relationships between antecedents, ad-evoked nostalgia, and outcomes. Path analysis revealed that nostalgia proneness and Facebook intensity had a positive, direct effect on ad-evoked nostalgia, which subsequently affected self-brand connections and brand engagement through social sharing. The need to belong was found to have an indirect effect on ad-evoked nostalgia through nostalgia proneness. Theoretical and managerial implications were discussed.

THE EFFECTS OF PERSONALITY TRAITS AND TAILORED MESSAGES ON ADVERTISING AVOIDANCE ON SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

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Abstract

Social network advertising's growth and prominence as an alternative avenue for advertisers to deliver their messages to consumers is now a mainstay. Similarly, consumers' adoption of varied strategies, such as ad avoidance, to mitigate their exposure to advertising messages appears to be on the rise. Within literature is the established connection between personality traits and SNS use. Bearing in mind that online behavior can be determined by personality traits, such traits may be significant in predicting how consumers engage in SNS ad avoidance. Research also suggests that messages that are tailored to fit personality traits are regarded as more persuasive. This study examines how SNS ad messages tailored to fit personality traits function to determine individuals' engagement in SNS ad avoidance. As predicted, messages that are tailored to match personality traits are influential in determining SNS ad avoidance. Specifically, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and neuroticism did influence SNS ad avoidance with the exception of conscientiousness. Perceived relevance mediated the relationships between the personality traits and perceived intrusiveness and SNS ad avoidance. Perceived intrusiveness also was positively related to SNS ad avoidance. Theoretical contributions and implications are discussed.

AUTHENTICITY IN ADS: EXPLORING EFFECTS OF PERCEIVED AUTHENTICITY OF INSTAGRAM MODELS ON AD, BUYING INTENTIONS

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Erika Johnson

Abstract

Authenticity has been considered the word of the decade. This study investigated whether perceptions of authenticity would mediate the relationship between model body type (plus size or thin) and appearance (photoshopped or not) and ad and purchase intentions. Results indicate that perception of authenticity does mediate the relationship especially when a model used in an advertisement is plus size and not photoshopped. Our results indicate that advertisers could contribute to improving the satisfaction of aspects of the self, and body image states of women while still meeting their bottom line by using increasing the use of real bodies in their creative content.

EXAMINING THE INFLUENCE OF MEDIA USAGE ON PRODUCT PLACEMENT EFFECTIVENESS

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Introduction

Past studies have focused on product placement in works of fiction, such as movies, television dramas, and comedies (Karr 1998; Gupta, Balasubramanian, and Klassen 2000; Russell and Stern 2006). However, product placement has been conducted in various genres (Gould and Gupta 2006; Kowalczyk and Royne 2012). Gould and Gupta (2006) researched real placement in game shows and indicated different roles for the various products placed, resulting in various meanings and effects. Congruence with the program genre and the context in which the placement was made played an important role in successful placement (Bhatnagar, Aksoy, and Malkoc 2003; Gould and Gupta 2006). Moreover, product placement is practiced not only in traditional media but also in the Internet media. For example, SNSs open altogether new arenas wherein celebrities endorse brands on their pages and accounts. In social games, consumers are accustomed to being exposed to product placement, have high awareness, and have more developed attitudes toward the placed brands (Chen and Harley 2014).

To further understand the effects of product placement on traditional and Internet media, this article examines the effects of product placement by drawing upon media usage and motivation perspectives. Media usage influences the perception with which programs and product placement within such programs are to be interpreted. DeLorme and Reid (1999) asserted the importance of understanding product placement in terms of user experience. The effects of product placement are expected to differ depending on the motivation for consuming the media.

Moreover, this article tests media use and motivation in relation to attitudes toward product placement (APP) and placement-related behavior (PRB), respectively, and the mediated relationship between these constructs. Advertising studies show that attitude toward advertising precedes brand cognition and attitude, which, in turn, are followed by the purchase intention (e.g., MacKenzie and Lutz 1989). Likewise, product placement studies postulate the generation of a conative response via the response to the advertising itself (e.g., Gregorio and Sung 2010; Morton and Friedman 2002). However, the product placement format, which blends advertising and non-advertising, collapses the premise of the hierarchical process. Several studies show discontinuity between brand cognition and attitude (Cowley and Barron 2008; Friestad and Wright 1994; Russell 2002; van Reijmersdal 2009; Yoon, Choi, and Song 2012). Excessive exposure to placement leads to higher cognition, whereas skepticism toward persuasive attempts, resulting from higher cognition, leads to a more intense unfavorable attitude. A perceived persuasive attempt exerts a different effect on product placement outcomes. Moreover, a user's interpretation of the promotional intent from product placement is also influenced by media use and motivation and thereby the way in which a media is used influences APP and PRB.

This study contributes to the product placement literature in several ways. First, the study measures the effect of product placement on both TV and Internet media. Little is known about the effect of product placement on Internet media when compared with that on traditional media. Most studies have researched TV dramas, movies, and comedies on traditional media; however, little is known about the effectiveness of product placement on Internet media.

Second, this study incorporates the perspectives of media usage and motivation into the issue of media effect on product placement. Gangadharbatla and Daugherty (2013) examine the influence of informativeness and entertainment perceived to be obtained from a placement on APP. However, given that subtle placement that is difficult to remember is effective in suppressing skeptics, the influence of media usage on motivation toward program and content in which the placement appears on placement effectiveness is significant because before viewing placement, the motivation of a viewer has already determined the effectiveness dominantly.

Moreover, as product placement has penetrated various genres in a variety of media, media usage appears to play an important role in the effectiveness of product placement. The perspective of media usage and motivation enables researchers to analyze how the equivalent media usages in different media work. This study tests the relationship between media usage and placement effectiveness for both types of media (TV and Internet) rather than the differences in the relationship between the two types of media. This perspective helps in advancing knowledge of the context in which the consumer uses the media.

Finally, this article finds a peculiar effect of product placement that differentiates it from advertising. Several studies noted discontinuity of the hierarchical process for the product placement effect. Drawing on that perspective, the introduction of the new media motivation construct clarifies complex, discontinuous aspects of product placement effectiveness. A close examination of the impacts of media usage on APP and PRB indicates different routes toward enhancing the placement effect.

Literature Review

Most of the studies of product placement have adopted psychological constructs, such as recall, awareness, and attitude, as dependent variables (Morton and Friedman 2002). Conversely, a few studies have adopted variables concerning behavioral outcomes such as purchase and placement related to usage and behavior (e.g.,Gregorio and Sung 2010; Kowalczyk and Royne 2012; Morton and Friedman 2002; Nelson, Keum and Yaros 2004). These studies focused on the relationship between APP in general and the behavior guided by such placement. They reported that APP influences PRB (Gould, Gupta, and Krauter 2000; Gregorio and Sung 2010; Morton and Friedman 2002).

The persuasive knowledge theory argues against the sequential effect. Advertising causes the activation of persuasive knowledge that enables the consumer to interpret persuasive attempts as a form of advertising, whereas product placement prevents such activation (Bhatnagar, Aksoy, and Malkoc 2003; Cowley and Barron 2008). However, when obvious placement appears in a program, persuasive knowledge is activated. Consequently, higher cognition of a placed brand conversely leads to a less favorable attitude toward the brand. Successful product placement is crucial in the matching of the program and content with the brand placed therein (Russell 1998). Furthermore, the question as to whether persuasive knowledge is activated depends on a user's media usage. Product placement blurs with the program itself, thereby becoming identified with it in the mind of the consumer. Hence, users with motivation may be unlikely to understand placement as a form of "text" for evaluating the placement itself as APP. Because they do not realize that an attempt is being made at persuasion (Friestad and Wright 1994), viewing product placement results in PRB without favorable APP.

More importantly, media usage may also influence APP and PRB independently. The practice of product placement has been developed beyond particular genres such as movies and dramas. Placements have been executed—in the form of real placement—in talk shows and news programs in traditional media and in blogs and SNSs on the Internet. Unlike in the case of works of fiction such as movies and dramas, increasing exposure through placement in news programs, talk shows, and blogs enhances the perceived trustworthiness of the product placement, which in turn leads to purchase. Conversely, product placement involving celebrity endorsement, whether in fictional roles or otherwise, has been executed from the beginning and has been extended to and now penetrates social media. The process of endorsement by a celebrity is a prerequisite for a parasocial relationship with the celebrity, which is derived from the underlying motivation of entertainment (Hung 2014; Hung, Chan, and Tse 2011). Such placement appears to contribute toward forming a favorable APP. As placement is embedded in various genres, a user's media usage and motivation each appears to influence the outcomes of product placement. Even without a psychological response to placement, an instance of media usage stimulates behavioral response. Conversely, depending on media usage, a consumer might shape their attitude toward the placement itself, which results in influencing PRB.

Developing Hypotheses

Many studies have researched viewing behavior on the basis of the usage of traditional media such as TV shows (Lee and Lee 1995). Media usage and gratification studies have found typical motivations such as information, entertainment, and social interaction (Lee and Lee 1995; Rubin and Perse 1987). Prior studies have explored information seeking, social interaction, and entertainment as motivations for Internet usage (LaRose, Mastro, and Eastin 2001; Papacharissi and Rubin 2000). With both types of media, people are motivated to consume the media to obtain useful and valuable information. Second, people consume the media to satisfy their need for entertainment. When people use the media, they feel excited and relaxed (Lee and Lee 1995). Moreover, people consume the media to escape their daily lives and as a pastime. Finally, people use the media to satisfy their need for social activity. Media consumption provides a basis for conversation with friends (Lee and Lee 1995). The greater the number of users connected to a program the greater the social interaction within the program (Russell, Norman, and Heckler 2004).

As for the information motive, those who have the information motive are likely to seek out useful and valuable information by consuming the media. They not only learn tips on product usage and obtain benefits from product placement (Gangadharbatla and Daugherty 2013) but also acquire much more information from programs and contents. They tend to identify a product placement with the program in which it is contained and therefore are unaware of anything untoward, i.e., the promotional intent. Furthermore, those with the information motive do not require favorable APP that is affected by the presence of an entertaining experience (Cowley and Barron 2008). Simultaneously, because those with the information motive do not perceive persuasive intent, they behave reactively after viewing a placement to the extent that they do not even have a favorable attitude toward the placement.

H1: The information motive on TV and the Internet has a positive impact on PRB.

As for the entertainment motive, those who consume media for entertainment purposes are likely to generate positive APP. As advertising and entertainment are inextricably intertwined, a favorable attitude toward placement requires an aspect of entertainment (Kretcher 2004). Entertainment enhances the experience of advertising thereby preventing consumers from generating skepticism toward product placement (Cowley and Barron 2008; Ducoffe 1996). Thus, those with an entertainment motive seek entertainment from placement, which is likely to affect APP; however, this does not result in PRB because such users do not seek information that is conducive toward making a purchase.

H2: The entertainment motive on TV and the Internet has a positive impact on APP.

Those with a social motive for media usage tend to accept the practice of product placement overall. Social influence has an impact on a consumer's response to product placement because some brands have more communicative value than others (Gregorio and Sung 2010; Noguti and Russell 2015). In such a consumption activity, consumers share group norms through social interaction, modeling, and reinforcement (Churchill and Moschis 1979; Gregorio and Sung 2010). Peer communication facilitates social learning through these mechanisms (Gregorio and Sung 2010). Greater communication with regard to consumption enhances positive attitudes toward brand-related communication. The social motive is not an internal factor that drives consumers to gain benefit and enjoyment from programs and content directly, thereby distracting them from programs and content. Cowley and Barron (2008) found a positive increase in placed brand attitude when those with low program liking were exposed to prominent placement. Therefore, without generating skepticism, consumers with a social motive are likely to be attentive to product placement itself, engage in social interaction as a result, or even utilize such placement in their social interaction. Moreover, social norms through peer communication greatly influence consumption activity, shaping not only attitudes but also behavior (Gregorio and Sung 2010).

H3: The social motive on TV and the Internet has a positive impact on APP.
H4: The social motive on TV and the Internet has a positive impact on PRB.

Several studies have revealed that the greater the positive attitude toward placement, the greater the PRB (Gregorio and Sung 2010; Morton and Friedman 2002). Thus, the relationships of the entertainment and social motives with APP and PRB are expected to be mediated relationships.

H5: APP has a positive impact on PRB.
H6: The positive impact of the entertainment motive on PRB is mediated by APP.
H7: The positive impact of the social motive on PRB is mediated by APP.

Method

The measurements used in this study are adopted from the past studies. Most of the measurements of media use are adopted from Perse and Rubin (1987) except for two items that have been newly added. PRB is adopted from Gregorio and Sung (2010). These measurements are assessed on a five-point Likert scale. APP is measured according to four items on a seven-point semantic differential scale from MacKenzie and Lutz (1989), Gregorio and Sung (2010), and Cho and Miracle (2004). Some statements have been modified to relate to Internet usage.

The online survey was conducted in Japan. At first, potential respondents were given a modified definition of the product placement definition used by Gupta and Gould (1997) as follows: product placement is the practice of a seller inserting a brand, product, or logo in recognizable form into a scene on TV, on the Internet, in a movie etc., in a way that is different from advertising. They were asked whether they had been exposed to product placement either on TV or the Internet. The selected participants answered about the programs and the content in which they were exposed to product placements in their media usage and about their APP and their PRB regarding the product placements to which they were exposed. In open-ended comments, the respondents were asked to describe the details of the product placements that they had experienced, such as the product categories of the product placement and the genres and content in which product placement appeared. Responses containing invalid answers were deleted. The total sample was 795. Males constituted 48.7% of the respondents. By age group, 19.6% were in their 20s; 20.9%

were in their 30s; 21.3% were in their 40s; 20.5% were in their 50s; and 17.7% were in their 60s. The numbers of subjects for each type of media were as follows: TV (N = 463) and the Internet (N = 332).

The product categories of the placed brands that they saw were food and beverages (17.2%), automobiles (13.4%), mobile phones (11.8%), media (10.6%), electronics (10.3%), and retail and service (10.2%), among others that included apparel, finance, and transportation.

Results

Measurement Model

This study evaluated our measurement model following the two-step approach recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). The author conducted a confirmatory factor analysis using the maximum likelihood method to evaluate the fitness of the measurement model. Goodness of fit was assessed with a chi-square test, a comparative fit index (CFI), incremental fit index (IFI), the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), and a root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). Confirmatory factor analysis using the full data set yielded satisfactory results (Chi-square = 554.555, df = 263, p < .001, CFI = .97, IFI = .97, TLI = .96, RMSEA = .03). The convergent validity was assessed by examining the standardized factor loadings on the constructs. All the loaded items in the respective media were found to be greater than .50. This study also assessed convergent validity using composite scale reliabilities and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for the respective media (Fornell and Larcker 1981). The composite scale reliabilities ranged from .83 to .96, exceeding the cutoff value of .70. The AVE of each construct is required to be greater than .50 (Bagozzi and Yi 1988; Fornell and Larcker 1981). The AVE satisfied this criterion. To examine the discriminant validity, we compared the square root of the AVE with the correlation between two latent constructs (Fornell and Larcker 1981). The square root of the AVE should exceed this correlation. This criterion was satisfied. Table 1 shows the correlation, the composite reliabilities, the AVE, and the √AVE.

TABLE 1
Reliability and Validity Test

TV	M	S.D.	a	b	c	d	e	AVE	CR
Entertainment motive(a)	3.30	0.90	**0.83**					0.70	0.87
Social motive (b)	2.90	0.86	0.44	**0.80**				0.64	0.83
Information motive(c)	2.90	0.74	0.41	0.52	**0.76**			0.58	0.84
APP(d)	4.90	1.23	0.37	0.23	0.20	**0.90**		0.82	0.94
PBR(e)	2.70	1.03	0.14	0.40	0.32	0.38	**0.88**	0.72	0.93

Internet	M	S.D.	a	b	c	d	e	AVE	CR
Entertainment motive(a)	3.00	0.88	**0.84**					0.71	0.87
Social motive(b)	2.80	0.84	0.47	**0.82**				0.67	0.86
Information motive(c)	2.90	0.74	0.42	0.69	**0.75**			0.56	0.83
APP(d)	4.50	1.34	0.49	0.41	0.31	**0.92**		0.85	0.96
PBR(e)	2.80	1.03	0.39	0.50	0.38	0.58	**0.86**	0.75	0.92

Note; On-diagonal elements are the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct.

Hypotheses Testing

The proposed model in SEM yields a satisfactory fit ($\chi 2(269) = 994.552$, p < .05, IFI = .93, TLI = .92, CFI = .93 RMSA = .05). With regard to H1, the information motive has a significantly positive impact on PRB for TV but not for the Internet. Therefore, H1 is partially supported. With regard to the entertainment motive, it has a significantly positive impact on APP for both media. Therefore, H2 is supported. The social motive has a significantly positive impact on PRB for both media, but has a significantly positive impact on APP only for the Internet; Thus, H4 is supported, whereas H3 is partially supported. APP has a positive impact on PRB for both media. Thus, H5 is supported.

With regard to the mediation relationship, this study conducted mediation analysis (bootstrap resampling = 1,000). Regarding the entertainment motive, indirect effects are significant for the Internet (β = .19; 95% confidence interval; upper = .29; lower = .11) and TV (β = .11; 95% confidence interval; upper = .18; lower = .06) because the bias-corrected 95% confidence interval excludes the value of 0; thus, H6 is supported. However, there are differences in mediation (Zhao, Lynch, and Chen 2010). The direct path from the entertainment motive to PRB is significantly negative for TV and not significant for the Internet (no hypothesis). In other words, mediation for the Internet is full, whereas mediation for TV is competitive.

As for the social motive, the indirect effect of the social motive on PRB is significant only for the Internet (β = .10; 95% confidence interval; upper = .18; lower = .04). Given the result of a significantly positive path from the social motive to PRB, the mediation on the Internet is found to be complementary; thus, H7 is partially supported.

TABLE 2
Result of Hypotheses Test

TV	β	t-value
Information motive → APP (No hypothesis)	N.S.	1.041
Information motive → PRB	0.19^{*}	4.177
Entertainment motive → APP	0.33^{*}	6.983
Entertainment motive → PRB (No hypothesis)	-0.17^{*}	-3.744
Social motive → APP	N.S.	1.525
Social motive → PRB	0.3^{*}	6.412
APP → PRB	0.35^{*}	7.524

Internet	β	t-value
Information motive → APP (No hypothesis)	N.S.	0.374
Information motive → PRB	N.S.	1.498
Entertainment motive → APP	0.41^{*}	7.802
Entertainment motive → PRB (No hypothesis)	N.S.	0.749
Social motive → APP	0.22^{*}	4.152
Social motive → PRB	0.26^{*}	5.072
APP → PRB	0.46^{*}	8.151

Note; * P<.01

Discussion

The main finding of this study is that APP and PRB, as measures of product placement effectiveness, depend on media usage. Most of the related studies assume that APP precedes PRB as a chronological step; however, introducing the media use and motivation constructs to placement indicates a different route to the effect. In particular, the results contribute to the study of product placement as follows.

First, as expected, for both types of media, the entertainment motive was found to have a positive impact on APP but not on PRB. This result implies that the entertainment motive might improve the psychological outcome but not the behavioral outcome regardless of the media. More interestingly, given the finding that mediation is competitive for TV, those with an entertainment motive on TV are likely to avoid placement-induced behavior without an enhancement in their attitude toward placement. Consumers with an entertainment motive might have a skeptical attitude toward placement before they are exposed to it. Although several studies emphasize entertainment in product placement effectiveness to suppress the skeptics (e.g., Cowley and Barron 2008; Kretcher 2004), the results show that entertainment itself is not a prerequisite for the behavioral aspect. When consumers do not have interest in a placement, their skepticism impedes their placement-induced behavior.

Second, the information motive is found to have a positive impact on PRB only for TV. With regard to no hypotheses between information motive and APP, those with information motive do not experience attachment to the placement itself. Regarding the unexpected result of the information motive having no significant influence on PRB for Internet media, the sheer number of placements on the Internet seems to influence the unexpected result. In a cluttered environment with numerous placements, it is more likely that consumers with the information motive will encounter placements because their greater extent of searching highlights their motive more than that of consumers with other motives. However, while they make an effort to search for placements, they do not confirm whether information from the placements is trustworthy due to the numerous numbers and skeptics about their sources. Excessive amounts of placement and skeptics may not result in PRB.

Finally, the social motive has a positive impact on APP only for the Internet and on PRB for both media, as expected. Those with a social motive are likely to buy or seek out the brand placed and the related information because they like to share their opinions and influence others to own the placed brand, regardless of the media characteristics. As for the result of the influence of the social motive on APP only for the Internet, the Internet might be regarded as being more conducive for sending links and photos to others, which results in a higher APP.

Overall, the social motive is superior to other motives in terms of the effectiveness of product placement. Consistent with the suggestion of Gregorio and Sung (2010), product placement is a crucial factor in the consumer socialization process. Especially, peer communication prompts social conformity among peers, thereby influencing brand selection. Concerning the media characteristics, there are slightly more common characteristics than different characteristics in terms of the influence of media usage on product placement effectiveness. This leads to the conclusion that the structure of media usage and motivation outweigh the media characteristics in relation to the product placement outcome.

This study suggests insights for advertisers based on these findings. Social motive plays an important role in product placement effectiveness; therefore, inserting placements into SNSs is congruent with a higher placement effect. SNSs prompt not only social interaction, such as peer communication, but easy access to the point of purchase through the links, thereby exploiting the effect of the placements. However, information itself regarding placement brought by SNS is not effective for lurkers or active seekers of information without social motive.

Limitations and Future research

This study has some limitations. The research focused on the relationships between media usage and the psychological and behavioral outcomes of product placement. However, the variable of the program genre within which the placements are executed was not controlled in the analysis. In addition, individual variables, such as skepticism that could influence the outcome of the product placement, were not included in the analysis as control variables. Furthermore, although this study was tested empirically, its theoretical foundation is inadequate for a deeper understanding of the causal relationship in the placement phenomenon. For example, the study does not explain sufficiently how the social motive is related to the outcome of product placement. Furthermore, since knowledge of product placement on the Internet has not been accumulated in sufficient quantity, the effects of product placement on different types of media are not explained theoretically. Though this study found a mediating relationship between usage and the outcome of placement, the explanation should be estimated based on a theoretical framework. In spite of such limitations, these results might advance the knowledge of product placement studies. To develop the findings of this work, the following studies should be conducted in the future.

Product placement on SNSs and consumers' reactions thereto should be researched further. Many studies have investigated the brand effect on SNSs, whereas little research has been conducted on product placement on SNSs. In particular, the aspects of endorsement by celebrities and social interaction between followers that follow celebrities should be the focus. Through Instagram, celebrities have great influence over followers when they recommend products. Variables such as parasocial interaction by celebrities in placement studies might be used to further explore and develop research on SNSs. At the same time, future studies should adopt the variable of social interaction between followers regarding the placement effect on SNSs, which would be consistent with the finding of the social motive influence in this study. Because SNSs facilitate the greatest social interaction of any media genre, consumers can give, seek, and pass on product information (Chu and Kim 2011). Therefore, not only the main effect of the social interaction variable but also an interaction effect through parasocial interaction by celebrity would be expected.

Finally, the effect of product placement on the likelihood of purchase should be researched further. Product placement on SNS accompanied with social interaction is expected to have a greater effect on purchase due to the ease of accessing the point of purchase through a link. However, most studies have focused on the effect of placement on brand recall and brand attitude (e.g., Chen and Harley 2014; Gillespie, Joireman and Muehling 2012; Gupta and Lord 1998; Kamleitner and Jyote 2013; Russell 2002; Russell, Norman and Heckler 2004; Russell and Stern 2006), whereas only a few have considered the relationship between purchase and product placement (e.g., Gould, Gupta and Krauter 2000; Gregorio and Sung 2010; Morton and Friedman 2002; Noguti and Russell 2015). Noguti and Russell (2015) revealed that social norm not influence directly but moderate the relationship between attitude toward brand and purchase intention. Presumably future research should explore how a construct affects purchase intention. Thus, a theoretical framework of the effect of product placement on the purchase decision process should be developed as an advertising effect.

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Appendix 1

Concept and Measurement

Information Motive
So I can learn about what might happen to me.
So Ican learn how to do things I haven’t done before.
Because it helps me learn things about myself and others.
Because I can learn different things.

Entertainment Motive
Because It's enjoyable.
Because It entertain me.
Because It's exciting.

Social Motive
So Ican talk with other people about this.
So I can share the ideas online about this.
Because I can know other's ideas about this.

Attitude toward Product Placement
bad----------------------------Good
unfavorable----------------------favorable
negative-----------------------positive
dislike--------------------------Like

Product Placement-Related Behavior
I have searched for information about brands after seeing them.
I looked for brands in the online and the retail store after seeing them.
I learned new information about brands after seeing them.
I wanted to try brands after seeing them.

BRAND PLACEMENT IN FICTION: THE ROLE OF STYLISTIC DEVICES IN PLACEMENT EFFECTS ON ATTITUDE TOWARDS FAMILIAR AND UNFAMILIAR BRANDS

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Abstract

This research investigates brand placement effectiveness in the context of a fictional text. Drawing on past work in communication, cognitive science, and linguistics, the present study specifically explores how embedding a brand name within the direct vs. indirect speech of a short-story affects readers' brand attitudes. Furthermore, it tests the moderating role of brand familiarity. Participants were randomly assigned to the conditions of a 2 (speech type) x 2 (brand familiarity) between-subjects experiment, whereby they read a short-story featuring a familiar or an unfamiliar brand placed in either direct or indirect speech. As expected, brand attitudes were more negative after exposure to placements within direct, as compared to indirect, speech, yet contrary to predictions, brand familiarity did not moderate this effect.

THE IMPACT OF PROSOCIAL ADVERGAMES ON CONSUMER RESPONSE

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Abstract

This research investigated the impact of game content and brand placement on consumer response. A 2 (Game content: with a prosocial initiative vs. without a prosocial initiative) × 2 (Brand placement: prominent vs. subtle) × 2 (Fit between a company and a cause: high vs. low) between-subject factorial design was employed. A mobile web-based game was developed for stimuli. Findings showed that those who played the advergame with prosocial content responded more favorably toward both the game and the company than those who played the advergame without prosocial content. The research also found an interaction of game content and brand placement on consumer response. Specifically, in terms of an advergame with prosocial content, participants exposed to a prominently placed company evaluated the company more favorably than participants exposed to a company placed subtly. In contrast, for an advergame without prosocial content, the company evaluation was more positive in a subtly placed condition than in a prominently placed condition. In addition, a moderating role of fit between the company and the cause was found. Implications and future research are discussed.

SUBTLE GREEN ADVERTISING: HOW DOWNPLAYING PRODUCT GREENNESS IMPACTS ON PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

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Abstract

Despite frequent reports that consumers favor products with environmental benefits, they often purchase traditional alternatives. One reason for this is the performance liability, whereby consumers perceive green products to be less effective. Regardless of such perceptions, firms are continuously employing an explicit communication strategy, whereby the environmental attributes are made prominent in the appeal. Thus, we propose and test the concept of green understatement (i.e., subtly communicating green attributes) to improve green product performance evaluations. The results of three experimental studies show that green understatement leads to higher performance evaluations (Study 1) and that this effect becomes stronger in situations of higher performance criticality (Study 2) but is non-significant when the environmental attribute becomes optional (Study 3). Drawing on self-determination theory (SDT), we show that this effect is due to autonomous motivation, whereby consumers feel that their autonomy is threatened when they perceive that an unwanted tradeoff is being asked of them. The findings aid in the understanding of how a green product communication strategy may influence performance evaluations and provide managerial implications for green product promotion.

SO CUTE IT HURTS!: THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN ANIMAL CUTENESS AND MESSAGE FRAMING IN ENVIRONMENTAL ADVERTISING

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Abstract

Amidst growing concerns over algorithmic/programmatic ad placement, the current study investigates the effects of emotional content that precedes ads. This study uses a 2 (valence: positive vs. negative) x 2 (arousal: low vs. high) x 3 (ad repetition) x 3 (order) mixed factorial design to investigate the effects of prior exposure of emotional stimuli on psychophysiological responses, memory outcomes, and attitudinal and behavioral evaluations. Participants (N = 44) were exposed to neutral ads that were preceded by positive or negative images that also varied in the level of arousal. Results indicated that valence and arousal interacted to affect psychophysiological responses and memory outcomes, yet worked independently via two main effects on advertising effectiveness variables. Theoretically, the study extends the limited capacity model of mediated motivated message processing (LC4MP) to sequential message processing through the lens of the excitation transfer theory. On a practical level, the study provides evidence for contextual content effects on ad processing and effectiveness.

SIGNALLING SUSTAINABILITY: APPROACHES TO ON- PACK ADVERTISING AND CONSUMER RESPONSES

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Extended Abstract

For over three decades environmental and social issues have been key concerns for consumers, with companies making efforts to address these through different marketing strategies (Belz and Peattie 2010). Companies either believe social and environmental issues are not their concern and keep '*their head in the sand'* (Peattie 1992, p. 151) or consider them as vital for their corporate ethos, thereby integrating them into their business strategies through CSR activities, environmental management systems, eco labelling, and green advertising (Ottman 2011; Belz and Peattie 2012). More research is essential in order to understand consumers' perceptions of the various types of on-pack sustainability claims practices as it is believed that environmental and/or social messages can signal social responsibility (ISEAL 2015) and influence consumer behavior. In this paper we present our findings from a retail market study of major fast-moving consumer goods retailers in four countries. In addition, focus groups are used to explore consumers' perceptions and behavior as *receivers* of these signals in order to investigate which current approaches seem to be clearer, credible and preferred. The main research questions are:

- *What type of on –pack sustainability advertising approaches are found on FMCGs in different countries?*
- *What are consumers' perceptions of the various on-pack sustainability advertising approaches?*

Signaling theory emerged from the study of information economics where buyers and sellers share asymmetric information during a market situation (Spence 1974). The main constructs of the theory according to Connelly et al. (2011) are: Firstly, the *signaler* who usually has more information about the product and its qualities than the general public. Reliability and veracity seem to be important for *signaler* practices (Arthurs, Busenitz, Hoskisson and Johnson 2009) and as such many companies apply for sustainability labels. However, some companies decide to exaggerate with their *signals* and engage in *greenwashing* and false claims (Ottman 2011) which seem to confuse consumers (Alevizou et al. 2015). To curtail potentially misleading practices at an international level, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 14000 series distinguishes three types of labels: Type I (certifications and eco labels), Type II (company generated claims), and Type III (life-cycle based labels). Although this classification provides an important first step, it has been criticized for not being inclusive enough and omitting instruments such as obligatory labels, test reports, trademarks, and other issues such as social affairs (Rubik and Frankl 2005). Secondly, the *signal*, which represents an information cue, an action or a strategy employed by the seller and are effective only to the degree that consumers deem them useful and credible (Boulding and Kirmani 1993; Atkinson and Rosenthal 2014). As such, sustainability labels are *signals* that provide consumers with useful information about social and environmental practices enabling them to make more ethical consumption decisions. However, not all of these *signals* seem to be clear, substantiated and verified which adds more challenges to the consumer decision making process. The third important signaling theory construct is the *receiver* of the signal who is the consumer, gaining from purchasing goods associated with signals of good quality or credible sustainability claims (Atkinson and Rosenthal 2014). Extant research reports low consumer awareness or recognition of, and attention to, eco labels in the market (Alevizou et al. 2015) and yet the success of sustainability labelling depends greatly on the level of consumer awareness (DEFRA 2010) and on the trust and credibility of the message content and source (Atkinson and Rosenthal 2014). Finally, in signaling theory the *feedback environment* and *noise* are important constructs as they set the context of the interaction between signalers and receivers.

Due to eco labels representing social and environmental claims in a visual format, utilizing semiotics is an appropriate research approach, as it centers on not only how images look, but also how they are looked at by the audience and within the wider societal context (Rose 2012). Semiotics is a discipline *that provides a structure for studying and analyzing how signs function within a particular environment* (Zakia and Nadin 1987, p.5). The four countries (France, Greece, Sweden, UK) present examples of diametrically different levels of policy climate and political and market commitment to sustainability. A retail study was conducted in each country for a period of six months. We purchased products containing a sustainability related message (e.g. eco labels, green brand names, NGO labels), which we photographed and coded using NVivo software for qualitative data. To address the second research question, six focus groups were conducted in the UK (Manchester), six in Greece (Athens), six in Sweden (Stockholm) and ten in France (Paris and Bordeaux). Each group had eight participants (totaling 224) and lasted approximately two hours. Eleven broad sustainability advertising approaches emerged from our research, which are the following:

Country of Origin and Mandatory Labelling.

The 'Made in' logos are popular amongst companies and consumers. In this type of labelling companies use creative designs and logos usually featuring the national flag with taglines prompting consumers to support their regions/countries. Consumers, especially those in Greece, expressed strong preference for this type of labelling *"I only buy made in Greece products, especially when it comes to food"* (Gr). This coincides with previous research (Chan 2000) highlighting that claim type and the source of the country's green image are important in consumer decision making. Consumers commented on other mandatory labels such as the '*danger for the aquatic environment'* symbols displayed alongside other green claims and considered this a positive labelling practice by the manufacturer as *"I agree, I think it is positive as they want to give us all the information…"* (Gr, UK). However, only a minority of consumers were able to distinguish mandatory labelling from voluntary labelling practices.

Branding Sustainability- Product or/and Corporate Level Practice.

This approach implies environmental/social credentials as the majority of the green brands or product lines have a name associated with, and inspired by, nature (Planet-Gr, L'Arbre Vert- Fr, Eco-care-UK, Änglamark- Sw). The brands adopt a *bundle* approach where they display their eco labels and certifications alongside a web address for more information. They also display their awards or environmental management systems (e.g. UNEP award on Ecover). In Sweden buying eco labelled products seems important and the word ekologiskt was frequently mentioned during the discussions *"I always buy ekologiskt food…sometimes I pay twice as much…yes it is very expensive"* (S). In summary, this *bundle approach* with a variety of labels seems to appeal the most to consumers as it is *boldly stated* on the product packaging and consumers believe "*it is not possible to lie*" (Gr, S). Colors and language or *"the product uniform"* (Gr) seem to signal product *greenness* and the addition of organic and/or fair trade logos signal brand credibility.

The Classic Approach: Eco Labels and Certifications.

Sweden and France have their own national eco labels: the NF Environment (France) and the Svanen (Nordic Swan – Sweden). Consumers in the UK and in Greece did not recognize any eco labels and when they were shown the EU eco label consumers mentioned that it reminded them of the *"flower–power movement"* (UK). Overall when consumers noticed the EU abbreviation they assumed that *"this product has received an EU award"* (Gr, UK). Similarly, Type I–like labels have gained popularity in all countries (e.g. FSC, MSC, Fair Trade, Organic certifications). There is a growing interest in animal welfare and farming practices, especially in the UK. These initiatives are seen as positive by consumers, however there were a few consumers who mentioned that *"label or no label… no one really knows what actually happens in farms/factories,"* (Gr, UK) indicating a suspicion in terms of animal welfare and *closed farm doors*. The main vocabulary used in this approach refers to ethics and traceability/sourcing (e.g. ethically, responsibly, sustainably sourced/made, traceable). The proliferation of claims (Prag et al. 2016; ISEAL, 2015) was apparent in all four countries with consumers in Sweden and France being able to recognize and remember logos and certifications.

Scientific Jargon.

With this approach companies may either *display/list all their ingredients* (such as Fair Trade, organic) on one section of the package, or state *the absence of ingredients* (e.g. VOCs, CFCs, GMO, BPA, palm oil, phosphates, or silicones). Consumers are not knowledgeable about many of the terms, which makes them feel uncomfortable for not having the required knowledge "*…We don't know their scientific English vocabulary! We don't even know the scientific Greek vocabulary…"* (Gr).

Interactive Labelling

Interactive labelling implies that companies create or adopt existing logos and prompt consumers to behave/feel a certain way. These vary from 'save the planet', to 'recycle', 'save the X animal', or 'care for the X' or can take the form of competitions where consumers have a chance to win green products or other rewards. Overall consumers mentioned that they can understand this approach more than they can understand eco labels. However, after viewing a number of these labels they became skeptical and this negative reaction snowballed to other labels.

These types of signals require consumer action and in most cases blend in with the rest of the packaging and they can easily be ignored.

Supply Chain Focused Approach

There are a number of 'partnership' initiatives/labels that focus on supply chain stages. Others take a holistic approach and offer a *'farm to shop shelf'* guarantee to consumers. These types of labels are descriptive with nature and animal inspired icons, taglines and colors. Companies in this case used vocabulary indicating that their suppliers were *certified to a standard* or are *meeting X standards* which reflects positively on their own standing. Consumers viewed this approach as a positive approach with limited financial cost for the company.

Industry Initiatives and CO_2 Programs

Companies either initiate ethical and/or environmental programs or partner up with industry (e.g. cleanright). Consumers were not confident with the process of CO_2 calculation or compensation but they were aware of the media attention these topics receive.

Pressure Groups, Foundations, Cause Related Marketing and Charities.

Charity, foundations and pressure group logos are increasingly displayed on products. Consumers were all aware of the charities and preferred this type of approach over others *"you contribute to a good cause!"(Gr, UK).* In terms of the pressure group logos the WWF and the PETA logo were found on toiletries and consumers saw this as a powerful approach on the part of the company. However, they believe that the companies are "*certified"* against strict standards, which is not necessarily the case.

Shopping Guides, Listings and Checklists

An emerging category especially with the widespread use of social media is ethical listings of companies. In this case the company displays a logo stating that the product has been checked by the X listing organisation. Consumers in the UK were especially receptive towards this approach, which can be justified by the popularity of the Which? consumer magazine *"yeah, I always look at Which? magazine to find the best product…".* This was not a popular approach in other countries.

Lost in Translation and Transition

In Greece an alarming number of misspelled claims such as CFS, CFG, ozon safe, ozon safed, environmentally friently, C.F.C.s, OZON free, OZONE friedly were found on product packaging. In all countries the wide variety, bundle approach and high number of these claims annoyed consumers as *"… This product has 5-6 logos but they mean nothing. This product hasn't got any sort of environmental identity!"*(Gr, UK).

Visualizing Sustainability.

Many brands portray themselves as *green* with a bundle of green images, taglines and statements. Consumers found this approach easier to relate to and the logos more *'talkative and descriptive'* than eco labels *"yes! Now this statement/ logo I can understand! Bravo to them!"*(Gr). In this case the issue of substantiation and proof becomes crucial for the brand as consumers believed that these products are part of green brands. In other words, consumers viewed the categories of *Branding Sustainability* and *Visualizing Sustainability* as the same one.

This research supports recent reports (e.g. Prag et al. 2016) stating that the labelling scene is now increasing with mandatory, private voluntary, hybrid voluntary, non- profit voluntary, public voluntary and public mandatory labelling taking the lead and leaving all previous labelling classifications out of date and limiting. Companies may use a mixture of on-pack sustainability signals, making their classification as green/ethical a challenge especially for consumers who lack the relevant knowledge. Thus, sustainability advertising needs to be examined at a product packaging level. Classifications such as those by Carlson et al (1993) or Voss (1991) stressing the *product, process, image/cause* and *associations* approach is nowadays limited and on-pack advertising has considerably evolved. On top of this, other key stakeholders enter the labelling scene with awards, listings, guides and even using their own logos to certify compliance and support of their cause. This external effect from the *signaling environment* creates *noise* which may distort the signals send by organizations.

Our study has important practical implications as it maps existing practices and investigates consumers' perceptions of each category of practice. Consumers are confused but also see company activity as a positive development and seem keen for more information. However, they found distinguishing the different approaches quite a challenge which ended up frustrating them or alienating them as *"all this is for those environmentalists"* (Gr, UK). They also seemed confused with the wide variety of labels, of pressure group labels, initiatives and charities. It seems that Swedish consumers are less confused but contend with fewer labels and types of labelling approaches. Is this the ideal approach? If so, can this be the future of on-pack sustainability labelling? At the current time the packaging landscape is changing with labelling becoming a brand in itself. We wonder where labelling will go from here, and suggest that future research is warranted on this complex and important marketing practice.

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I AM A GREEN CONSUMER – "I DO A GOOD" VS. "I AM GOOD": THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN PRIDE APPEALS AND REGULATORY-FOCUSED MESSAGES IN GREEN ADVERTISING

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Abstract

This study examined what features of a message induce the two facets of pride emotion – hubristic and authentic – and how these two types of pride appeals interact with regulatory-focused messages in green advertising. Results indicated there were significant interaction effects on participants' attitudes toward the ad and brand, purchase intentions, and intention to engage in positive word-of-mouth. Directions of the interactions showed that persuasiveness increased when hubristic pride appeals were combined with promotion frames detailing the "desired, positive benefits" of engaging in a green behavior and when authentic pride appeals were matched with prevention frames focusing on the "undesired, negative consequences" of failing to comply with a green behavior. A series of planned contrasts revealed that the interaction effects were driven by the hubristic pride condition across all dependent variables. Additionally, this study found that consumers' skepticism toward green advertising moderated the relationship between pride appeals and regulatory-focused messages, such that highly skeptical participants showed more favorable responses toward the matched messages (i.e., interaction) compared to those with low levels of skepticism. This suggests that pride emotions induced by green advertising can serve as heuristics for less skeptical consumers, as well as prompt careful information processing, which is likely to have interaction effects with accompanied message frames for more skeptical consumers.

FORCED EXPOSURE TO ONLINE VIDEO ADS: THE ROLE OF PERCEIVED CONTROL AND DESIRE FOR CONTROL

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Abstract

This study examined the impact of user control features on viewer experiences with online video advertising. In particular, the study explored the impacts of an ad skip option and a remaining ad time display on ad intrusiveness, ad irritation, attitude toward the ad (A_{ad}) and attitude toward the brand (A_b). In addition, the study investigated perceived control as a mediator and desire for control (DFC) as a moderator. When the ad skip option was available (vs. not available), viewers perceived higher control over the ad and lower ad intrusiveness and lower ad irritation. However, the availability of the skip option did not lead to more favorable A_{ad} or A_b. Similarly, the presence (vs. absence) of the ad time display led to higher perceived control over the ad and lower ad intrusiveness and lower ad irritation but did not lead to more favorable A_{ad} or A_b. Moreover, the results confirmed that perceived control mediates the effects of two control features on viewers' response to the online video ads. However, DFC did not significantly moderate the impact of perceived control on psychological reactance.

FIVE SECONDS TO THE AD: HOW PROGRAM-INDUCED MOOD AFFECTS AD COUNTDOWN EFFECTS

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Abstract

The study examines how program-induced mood and a five-second countdown warning affect reception of mid-roll video commercials. Building on mood regulation theory, findings from three studies suggest that program-induced mood and five-second countdown systematically influence advertising effectiveness. When the main program is tragic (comedic) and when a countdown precedes (does not precede) the mid-roll ad, viewers have more positive attitudes toward the ad and purchase intentions. The findings are replicated in realistic (Study 1) and controlled (Studies 2 and 3) settings.

UNDERSTANDING THE INFLUENCE OF CUSTOMIZATION ON BRAND EVALUATION AMONG CONSUMERS WITH DIFFERENT LEVELS OF UNCERTAINTY AND UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE

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Abstract

The online environment is filled with uncertain situations. Limited research has explored whether communication technology aids consumers to deal with the psychological state of uncertainty during online information processing. The present study focused on the technological affordance of customization. A lab experiment was conducted to analyze the interplay between uncertainty, customization, and uncertainty avoidance on consumers' brand evaluation. The results indicated that participants with high levels of uncertainty avoidance highly evaluated a brand on a customizable website and underrated the brand on a non-customizable website when they felt strong uncertainty. Such effects were not observed among participants with low levels of uncertainty avoidance. These findings are believed to contribute to the literature of human-computer interaction and provide useful suggestions to practitioners of digital advertising.

ADVERTISING IN A MOBILE APP?
THE MODERATING ROLE OF BRAND ATTITUDE AND LOCATION

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Abstract

Many retailers are investing more resources on mobile technologies such as mobile applications to engage customers and increase in-store sales. A unique mobile application developed by a large shopping mall operator in East Asia allows customers to save relevant advertising information, share their liking for a brand and check-in at the mall. In contrast to much extant research that has studied mere passive exposure to advertising, this study investigates whether customers' behavior of saving mobile advertisements influences sales, and how their attitude towards the store brand and their location moderates the main effect. The study uses a rich dataset (a total of 985,042 customer-store purchase transactions made by 31,683 customers) obtained in collaboration with one of the largest shopping mall operators based in East Asia. In order to test the theoretical framework, it uses an instrumental variable technique to develop a causal research design. The results show that while customers who save advertisement from a brand on a mobile app purchase more, a positive attitude towards the store brand further enhances this effect. In addition, the effect is stronger for customers who interact with the mobile app when they are in proximity of the store in the mall. The study, therefore, provides novel findings pertaining to the inter-relationships of various customer engagement behaviors on mobile devices and has important implications for academics and marketers interested in mobile advertising.

THE LEGAL STATUS OF COMMODITY PROMOTION PROGRAMS

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Abstract

The constitutionality of compelled commodity promotion programs was challenged by a wide range of producers between 2001 and 2005, ranging from alligator trappers in Louisiana and mushroom farmers in Tennessee to grape growers in California. This analysis examines the arguments and decisions rendered in 14 federal cases--the two most controlling cases involved mushroom producers and cattle farmers--and assesses the present legal status of commodity promotion programs.

GREEN CONSUMERS ARE MORE VULNERABLE TO GREENWASHING: THE ROLE OF CONSUMERS' GREEN KNOWLEDGE AND ENVIROMENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS

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Abstract

Considering the prevalence of greenwashing ads, the study posits that green consumers' environmental consciousness itself would not help in detection of greenwashing, rather it leads them to be more prone to believe in it. This study involves a 2 (knowledge intervention) × 3 (types of greenwashing ad: vague claim vs. false label vs. True green ad) experiment and reveals that a knowledge intervention, explaining about greenwashing, significantly aids consumers to identify the misleading nature of vague claims, while still perceived false eco-labels as a genuine claim. The findings support that green consumers are likely to accept deceptive environmental ads because of their sincere desire to protect the environment.

BLOCKING ADS AND DELETING COOKIES: A LONGITUDINAL STUDY EXAMINING ONLINE PRIVACY PROTECTION BEHAVIOR

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Extended Abstract

As companies collect, use, and share personal information that is available online, privacy concerns are rising. Personally protecting privacy has become an essential part of everyday life (Büchi, Just, and Latzer 2017). Self-management of privacy seems particularly important as the law only provides limited privacy protection (Zuiderveen Borgesius 2015; Baruh and Popescu 2017). But are people actually empowered and able to protect their privacy online? This study aims to gain insights into (1) whether people protect their privacy online, (2) which methods they use most often, and (3) what factors of the Protection Motivation Theory (PMT) may explain protective behavior.

Prior research reveals that people generally try to protect their privacy online (e.g., Büchi, Just, and Latzer 2017; McDonald and Cranor 2010; Smit, Van Noort, and Voorveld 2014). However, these studies measure different behaviors, often focus on social media, and some do not provide descriptive statistics of protective behaviors. To better understand people's protective behavior in general, we study the extent to which people protect their privacy online, and which methods they use most often.

To gain insights into *why* people protect their privacy online, we draw upon the PMT (Rogers, 1975; Witte, 1992). The PMT was originally developed to understand why people are motivated to protect themselves against health threats. It posits that people's motivation to protect themselves from a specific threat depends on two things: a threat appraisal and a coping appraisal. The threat appraisal assesses the *perceived severity* of the threat and the *perceived susceptibility* to the threat. The coping appraisal assesses *self-efficacy* and *response efficacy*. When threat and coping efficacy are both perceived as high, people are motivated to protect themselves from the threat. Based on the theory, we expect that *high levels of perceived severity (H1), susceptibility (H2), self-efficacy (H3), and perceived efficacy of protective behavior (i.e., response efficacy) (H4) will lead to more protective behavior*.

Additionally, to replicate earlier findings with a longitudinal approach, we propose: *People's (a) education, (b) gender, and (c) age influence privacy protective behavior (H5).*

The data used for this study were based upon two waves (wave 1 April 2016, wave 2 May 2017) of a larger longitudinal survey distributed among a representative sample. 928 respondents completed the relevant questions in both waves (49% female, wide variety of educational levels, *M* age in wave 1 = 56).

All independent variables (perceived severity, perceived susceptibility, self-efficacy, response-efficacy, gender, age, and education) were measured in wave 1. The dependent variable (protective behavior), was measured in both waves. Scale items and descriptive statistics are available upon request.

Results show that (1) people rarely to occasionally protect their online privacy, and (2) most often delete cookies and browser history or decline cookies to protect their online privacy. Additionally, (3) the perceived threat is high: people perceive the collection, usage, and sharing of personal information as a severe problem to which they are susceptible. The coping appraisal is mixed: although people do have confidence in some protective measures, they have little confidence in their own efficacy to protect their online privacy.

Moreover, to examine the change in behavior over time, we ran a regression analysis with the lagged variable of initial protective behavior (wave 1) as predictor variable. The results revealed that perceived severity ($B = 0.05$, $SE = .02$, $\beta = 0.09$, $p = .004$) and response efficacy ($B = 0.05$, $SE = .02$, $\beta = 0.09$, $p = .002$) both have a significant positive effect on people's protective behavior. Perceived susceptibility ($p = .509$), self-efficacy ($p = .123$) education ($p = .144$), gender ($p = .828$), and age ($p = .822$) do not have significant effects. This means that H1 and H4 are supported, but H2, H3 and H5 are not. Additional tests show that mostly people with lower education levels say that they do not know whether they perform the different protective behaviors. Lower educated citizens are thus less likely to be familiar with the measures they can take to protect their online privacy, and this results in less protective behavior.

This study has some important theoretical and practical implications. Until now, many of the studies into online privacy protection behavior lacked a theoretical foundation. In this study, we aimed to change this by drawing upon the PMT to examine which factors may explain privacy protective behavior. The theory proved to be a valuable way to understand why people protect their online privacy and provides practical insights into what should be communicated to encourage protective behavior. When policymakers and consumer organizations wish to motivate people to protect their online privacy, these nudges and messages should address the *perceived severity* and *response efficacy* as they positively affect protective behavior.

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DO I HAVE A REASON TO WORRY?: KNOWLEDGE-BASED AFFECTIVE ELEMENTS OF ATTITUDE TOWARDS PERSONALIZED MARKETING COMMUNICATION

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Abstract

This study investigates antecedents of attitude towards personalized marketing communication, namely knowledge about this phenomenon, privacy concerns, the feeling of resignation and experience with PMC. Moreover, it also provides insights into the state of various types of consumer knowledge related to PMC (knowledge about practices, regulations, institutional surveillance and technology). Based on the multicomponent model of attitudes, knowledge as cognitive element, privacy concerns and resignation as affective elements and experience as conative element were proposed as antecedents of attitude towards PMC. Moreover, the model was extended to analyze the cognitive base of privacy concerns and resignation. This study advances past research in showing that knowledge is not directly, but only indirectly related to the attitude towards PMC. Moreover, it shows that privacy concerns and resignation are both meaning-based phenomena, namely they are formed based on available knowledge. Thus, knowledge indirectly influences the attitude as it leads to change in privacy concerns and the feeling of resignation, which both lower the attitude towards PMC. The findings inform marketing practitioners in suggesting that increased transparency about the protection offered to consumers and adhering to regulations leads to a decrease of concerns and in turn, more positive attitude. Moreover, organizations are encouraged to take on the social role of educators about technology to reduce negative affect among consumers. Furthermore, lawmakers are informed about the current level of legal knowledge and its importance to the consumer.

FOSTERING RESISTANCE TO COMPETING MESSAGES: IMPACT OF NARRATIVES AND TRAIT REACTANCE IN HEALTH PUBLIC SERVICE ADVERTISING

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Abstract

An effective health public service advertising (PSA) must not only produce an immediate persuasive impact but also compete with counter messages from different interest groups. This experimental study investigated the effectiveness of narrative PSAs in the face of counter persuasion and the moderating role of trait reactance (TRA). Findings support narrative benefits in producing immediate persuasion outcomes. Exposure to narrative PSAs also leads to a stronger PSA-consistent behavioral intention after counter persuasion. Moreover, TRA is found to be a significant moderator of narrative persuasion. Narrative impact in inhibiting counter-arguing is more pronounced among consumers with lower TRA and is undermined among consumers with higher TRA. Moreover, for higher TRAs, exposure to the narrative PSA is related to a greater decrease in behavioral intention when counter persuasion is present; for lower TRAs, the change in behavioral intention is not significantly different depending on the format of PSA. The paper provides implications for narrative persuasion research and health advertising practices.

ADVERTISING THAT COMFORTS: EFFECTS OF PERSON-CENTEREDNESS AND MOTIVATION TO PROCESS IN HEALTH PROMOTION ADVERTISING

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Abstract

This study investigated the effects of person-centeredness and motivation to process in health promotion advertising on individuals experiencing a health problem. Person-centeredness describes "the extent to which messages explicitly acknowledge, elaborate, legitimize, and contextualize the distressed other's feelings and perspective" (Burleson, 2003, p. 11). Participants (*N* = 243) took part in a 2 (health problem: mild, moderate) x 3 (person- centeredness: low, moderate, high) between-subjects experiment with emotional improvement, attitude toward the message, and behavioral intention as the outcome variables. Results showed that higher levels of problem severity led to significantly greater motivation to process, and participants with high motivation to process reported greater change of emotional improvement, attitude toward the ad and behavioral intention than participants with low motivation to process. There was also a main effect of person-centeredness on emotional improvement and attitude toward the ad, but not on behavioral intention. However, none of the motivation to process x person-centeredness interactions was significant. Understanding the effect of person- centeredness in health promotion advertising provides practical implications for designing ads directed to individuals facing health problems and effectively improve their emotions and attitude.

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EFFECTS OF ENDORSER TYPE AND TESTIMONIALS IN DIRECT-TO-CONSUMER PRESCRIPTION DRUG ADVERTISING (DTCA)

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Abstract

To fill the gap in the DTCA research regarding the effects of different endorsers used in testimonial vs. non-testimonial ads, this study tested the effects of different types of endorsers (expert vs. consumer vs. celebrity) in testimonial vs. non-testimonial message contexts on consumers' perceptual, attitudinal, and behavioral responses toward DTCA. It also examined the role of source credibility and source similarity as the psychological mechanism of the endorser type effects. Results from an experiment demonstrate expert endorsers tend to generate significantly higher source credibility, while consumer endorsers generate the highest source similarity. Neither the endorser type nor the message type factor had significant main effect on the dependent variables, but the interaction of endorser type and message type significantly impacted ad believability and ad skepticism. Specifically, the endorser type factor had significant impact on the dependent variables only in the testimonial ad condition, but not in the non-testimonial ad condition. The effects were mediated by source credibility.

DISCLOSING PAID INFLUENCERS:
SELF-REGULATORY AND INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVES

Moderators: Mariea Grubbs Hoy and Courtney Carpenter Childers, University of Tennessee
Laura Brett, Director, National Advertising Division, Advertising Self-Regulatory Council
Dylan Collins, CEO, SuperAwesome
Amanda Gillentine, Director of Digital Marketing, Harper's Bazaar USA
Lynne Jansons, Founder & CEO, Digital Lens

Overview

Advertisers see significant benefits in using influencer marketing including creating authentic content and driving brand engagement (Linqia 2016). However, one of the key drivers to this tactic is that it circumvents consumers' ad blocking behavior (emarketer 2017b). When influencer marketing is embedded organically within social media platforms in the form of influencers' posts, this form of native advertising may blur the lines of content and advertising and minimize consumers' ability to identify it as paid sponsorship. In response, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC 2015, 2017b) has been proactive in its issuance and application of guidance regarding endorser usage and native advertising to influencer marketing. Further, the FTC has sent out letters to both advertisers and their Instagram influencers regarding postings that did not clearly and conspicuously disclose the incentivized relationship (FTC 2017a). The National Advertising Division (NAD) of the Advertising Self-Regulatory Council has had several recent decisions related to the use of influencer marketing. Both advertisers and influencers experience mixed awareness of the need to disclose and how to do so (Childers, Lemon and Hoy 2017; Izea 2016).

We note that influencer marketing was not a key word choice when submitting papers to the conference despite its increasing importance to the industry. This panel brought together individuals from the leading advertising self-regulatory body and practitioners who are involved in influencer marketing. They are able to speak to this growing tactic as it targets both adults and children. Further they specifically discussed the state of disclosing paid sponsorship for influencer social media posts. This panel offered the potential to inspire connections and conversation among academics, practitioners and self-regulatory representatives.

Opening Comments

Mariea Grubbs Hoy, University of Tennessee

Hoy began the session by providing examples of celebrity influencers on Instagram and then moved to Forbes' 2017 Top 10 Influencers in a variety of categories. Advertisers need to keep in mind several key considerations as they engage in influencer marketing including: 1) growth in "micro" and "middle" influencers; 2) Instagram has become influencers' preferred channel; 3) video brings "passion" and authenticity to the brand; 4) brands have to trust their influencers and 5) in 2017 the FTC took action regarding clearly and conspicuously disclosing sponsored posts (emarketer 2017a; FTC, September 7, 2017).

In 2016, 45 percent of advertisers said that they were not aware of the FTC's most recent disclosure guidelines regarding sponsored social media influencer posts (Linqia 2016). That number dropped to 29 percent in 2017 (Linqia 2017). However, an analysis of 800 Instagram accounts found that only 25% of the accounts disclosed in a way that fully complied with the FTC guidelines (Inkifi 2018).

Panelists

Laura Brett, Director, National Advertising Division

Brett's focus was on the legal guidance and application for influencer marketing. She began by presenting an overview of advertising self-regulation (the Advertising Self-Regulatory Counsel) as a part of the Better Business Bureau. The National Advertising Division's (NAD) standards for reviewing influencer marketing focused on two concepts: 1) the consumer should understand when they are viewing an advertising message and 2) advertising messages must be truthful. Brett presented overviews of several influencer related cases. In its FitTea and Kardashian decisions (*NAD Case Reports* #6042 and #6046) in December 2016 and January 2017 respectively, the NAD noted that disclosures are required for paid endorsements. In the Shell Oil Company (*NAD Case Reports*#6065 March 2017), the NAD noted that the disclosure must be included in the content. In its June 2014 case involving General Mills, Inc. (*NAD Case Report* #5715) the NAD stated that a disclosure was required even when the compensation was small. In two cases, Goop Inc., (*NAD Case Report #5977)* and Moon Juice (*NAD Case Report #5976)* both June 2016, the NAD underscored that advertising messages must be true regardless who is advertising or where the claim is made. The BA Sports Nutrition (*NAD Case Report #6026* November 2016) also addressed that advertising messages in influencer marketing must be true.

Amanda Gillentine, Director of Digital Marketing, Harper's Bazaar USA

Gillentine discussed the policies and procedures Harper's Bazaar used to select and monitor influencers. She provided several examples and told how Harper's Bazaar does its own photo shoot as it controls the magazine's branding seen through the sponsored influencer brand posts. Gillentine noted that not influencers are created or priced equally and presented a range of influencers including bloggers, vloggers, experts, special talents, entrepreneurs, high-end models, celebrities, athletes and life casters. Many factors determine pricing such as the brand, the number of followers, the number of influencer posts on their own channel, the product, the timing, the exclusivity, the usage, the "ask," and the travel. She noted that more follower, more posts on the influencer's channel, certain events such as awards of New York Fashion Week, the more the influencer is used and the more contribution the influencer is asked to make increases the cost. The process involved submitting a talent roster to select the "best of the best" influencers who match the requirements, having the client rank the influencers, making a "soft offer" to the influencer, submitting a final contract followed by finalizing rights and usage and the talent's signature. Harper's Bazaar is aggressive in assuring that promoted content is identified as such. Gillentine showed examples across several social media platforms.

Lynne Jansons, Founder & CEO, Digital Lens

Jansons walked through the influencer marketing process beginning with doing the research to understand who the brand is trying to research and ensuring alignment between the brand and audience. With this insight, the next step is to identify top influencer prospects and begin asking a number of questions included "Do they disclose existing branding relationships? Are they adhering to FTC guidelines?" The next step involved reaching out to a few prospective target influencers to be build relationships and report and then to make decisions. This step involves educating and providing influencer partners with guidelines, best practices, key talking points, examples and tools. Finally, the brand is ready to "go live." In this phase, brands gain insights from fan engagement and repurpose content across brand-owned channels. They should also be available to answer any influencer questions. Jansons then showed several examples of how to appropriately develop and disclose influencer content and examples of problem posts.

Dylan Collins, CEO, SuperAwesome

Collins provided an overview of his company which specializes in providing technology that uses "zero-data tools for all levels of safe, compliant kids' digital engagement." He provided insight into children's online viewing preferences and possible changes coming to YouTube as a result of data gathering methods with younger audiences. Collins noted that as traditional media such as television transitions to predominantly serving today's child audience via digital outlets, that the transition involves unique considerations. For example, Disney or Nickelodeon air programming and know the general audience size and composition but have no personal data on individual child viewers. As these content creators move to a platform where children can engage with the brands and devices collect data, these networks can collect – and sell – more personal child information. SuperAwesome has a specific product, Kidfluencer that provides "kid-safe, brand-safe, influencer marketing and content creation on YouTube." Its program is designed to make sure that the influencer talent has been certified on how to do things properly with children's safety in mind.

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HOW CONSUMERS PROCESS INFORMATION IN MENU BOOKS: FOOD MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS IN FOOD RETAIL CONTEXTS

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Abstract

This research aims to identify the optimized way to display food products to facilitate consumers' consumption visions, which results in positive consumer evaluations. Study 1 illustrates that presenting the product information including self-referencing cues enhances consumption visions. However, this finding is moderated by consumers' product knowledge. Study 2 affirms this finding by comparing consumer responses to a food image with a purple hand vs. with a natural skin color of hand. It is found that the purple hand condition hinders consumers' mental process, resulting in negative consumer evaluations.

IMPACT OF PRECEDING ANTI-OBESITY PSAS ON PROCESSING OF FOOD COMMERCIALS AND DESIRE FOR HIGH-CALORIE FOODS

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Abstract

The present study examined how the stress or negative feeling induced by the PSAs influence viewers' emotional and cognitive processing of subsequent food commercials, which may result in increased desire for high-calorie foods. Using implicit association test (IAT) and continuous response measurement (CRM), the results showed that after exposure to the anti-obesity PSAs and high-calorie food commercials, viewers self-reported higher negative explicit attitudes toward high-calorie foods. However, IAT indicated their increased desire for high calorie foods. The results are discussed in detail regarding the effectiveness of the current anti-obesity PSAs using the tactic of shaming overweight individuals.

CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT IN OTC DRUG ADVERTISING IN JAPAN: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONGRUENCY AND PERCEIVED ENDORSER CREDIBILITY

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Abstract

This study examined the effects of celebrity endorsement on perceived endorser credibility in Japanese over-the-counter (OTC) drug advertising featuring multiple celebrity categories based on congruency theory. In particular, this research explored brand-endorser congruence and endorser-consumer congruence and their roles in advertising-related attitudes development. A 3 (endorser categories: actor/actress, athlete, talent/TV personality) x 2 (endorser's gender) factorial experimental design with 480 Japanese consumers was used in the study. The results indicated that in Japanese OTC drug advertising, actors/actresses and athletes were seen as more credible than talents (TV personalities). Endorser categories also had a significant association with identification with the endorser through ideal self-congruency. Additionally, perceived endorser credibility mediated the relationship between identification and advertising evaluations.

THE INTERMINGLING OF NARRATIVE AND EXPOSITORY STYLES WITHIN DIRECT-TO-CONSUMER PRESCRIPTION DRUG COMMERCIALS

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Abstract

Direct-to-consumer advertising for prescription drugs (DTCA) is one of the most prominent categories of advertising in the United States. It is distinctive from many other advertising categories due to the mandate that the ads provide an elaborate disclaimer about the product. In particular, the fair balance doctrine articulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration requires drug risk information such as side effects and contraindications to be communicated with equivalent prominence as drug benefit information. Several content analyses have identified disparities in the nature by which drug benefits and risk information are presented. Such disparities include differences in font size or speed of oral delivery (Huh and Cude 2004; Kaphingst et al. 2004), complexity of language used (Abel et al. 2008), and visual-verbal consistency (Russell et al. 2016; Sumpradit, Ascione, and Bagozzi 2004). These differences invariably pose an implicit advantage to the conveyance of drug benefits over risks.

One aspect that has received little attention in DTCA literature is the use of narratives. Narrative here refers to an array of execution techniques that exhibit a story-like format and are typically processed in a story-like manner. The limited scholarly discussion and empirical research on this topic within DTCA provides some indication that narratives can be a common element of the genre, and concerns have been raised that narratives communicating drug benefits are misleading (Frosch et al. 2010, 2011; Kaphingst et al. 2004). However, the scope of this research has been too narrow to clearly identify how narratives are being used in DTCA and whether the nature of that use actually contributes to further differences in the communication of drug risks and benefits. A first step for investigating this issue is to document the presence of narrative techniques in consumer prescription drug ads during benefits and risk information segments. The study presented in this paper was a content analysis of television commercials designed to take that first step.

Indeed, the results show a noticeable difference in the ad styles used to deliver medication benefits versus medication risks. Narrative styles were used almost exclusively to communicate benefits and information about the health condition. In contrast, narratives were rarely used to deliver risk information. Instead, lecture was used in all ads to deliver risk information. Of particular interest is that when lecture is used to list these side effects or contraindications, the visual scene being portrayed is most often one presenting a story directly opposite of the negative possibilities which are being verbally communicated. Furthermore, it is important to note that medication benefits were also reiterated via lecture in most ads. This could be seen as using expository content to reinforce the narrative communication of benefits – a reinforcement that does not occur for drug risks.

Future research should focus on consumer responses to narrative and expository styles used in DTCA to determine (1) which ad styles they most identify with, and (2) which ad styles they pay most attention to when viewing these ads.

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THE EFFECT OF PROGRAM-INDUCED ENGAGEMENT ON MEDIA MULTITASKING AND THE MODERATING ROLE OF BRAND FAMILIARITY

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was a) to investigate the effect of program-induced engagement on the amount of media multitasking while watching TV, b) to examine the effect of media multitasking on cognitive and affective evaluation of ads, and c) to explore the moderating role of brand familiarity. A lab-based experiment was conducted and the findings of the experiment were four fold. First, the findings indicate that when the programs were affectively engaging, programs with a high level of cognitive engagement led to a lower level of overall media multitasking than programs with a low level of cognitive engagement, not only during the programs but also during the commercial breaks. Second, media multitasking led to reduced ad memory, a finding that is consistent with previous studies. Third, the findings indicate that even in the same media multitasking situation, people who watched a program with high cognitive engagement reported a higher level of ad memory than people who watched a program with low cognitive engagement due to the attentional spillover effect. Fourth, the findings revealed a possible moderating role of brand familiarity, indicating that brands with a high level of familiarity might reduce the memory deficit effect of media multitasking.

DOUBLE JEOPARDY IN THE LONG TAIL: AUDIENCE BEHAVIOR IN THE AGE OF MEDIA FRAGMENTATION

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Abstract

Traditionally higher attention has translated into higher advertising revenues for media. However, with a multitude of options to choose from on the Internet, advertisers are often tempted to turn their attention away from outlets with mass appeal towards those that would be considered niche. In this niche, subcultural age where all consumers are consuming their personal preferences and attitudes, on what basis do audiences fragment? This study examines associations between users and usage of the 2000 most popular sites on the US Internet. Results indicate that popularity predicts usage and audience niches are less prevalent than commonly assumed. The findings are a cautionary tale for advertisers who may look to completely dissociate with traditional big media and turn most of their towards smaller niche outlets to target a more engaged audience.

WEATHER AND EMOTIONAL CONTENT OF TELEVISION ADVERTISING

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Abstract

In this study, the authors assess the relationship between weather and advertising effectiveness. Specifically, they develop a quasi-experimental design to estimate the combined effect of different weather conditions and the emotional content of television spots on changes in online visits of a streaming portal. Findings indicate a significant interaction effect: if the weather is sunny, television commercials in which the actors show predominantly negative emotions are more effective than television spots in which predominantly positive emotions are expressed by the actors. The opposite is true if the weather is rainy.

For advertisers, these findings imply new opportunities for weather-based targeting: Based on the analyzed dataset, the advertising effectiveness could have been increased by 5.75 per cent, if the different spots were aligned according to their optimal weather conditions.

THE POSITIVE EFFECT OF RELATED TWEETING DURING A LIVE TELVISION SHOW ON ADVERTISING EFFECTIVENESS

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Abstract

The aim of the study was to deepen the understanding about how related multiscreening affects advertising effectiveness. The study differentiates multiscreening activities (social media use, chatting, and information search) and relatedness levels. A survey was directly administered after a live television show. The survey measured respondents' multiscreening behavior, attention to the television content and commercial break, program involvement, aided recall, and brand attitudes. No differences were observed between the different multiscreening activities, but the level of relatedness did affect the advertising outcomes. The results showed that the more related the multiscreening activity was, the better respondents recalled the ads and the more positive brand attitudes they had. This effect was mediated by subsequent attention to television content, program involvement, and attention to the commercial break. Furthermore, it was found that related multiscreening increased the likelihood that respondents stay tuned after the television show had finished.

SPECIAL TOPICS SESSION: THE UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES OF THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION

Moderator: Cynthia R. Morton, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL
Caryl Cooper, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
Tom Kelleher, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL
Jef I. Richards, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI
Marla Stafford, Memphis State University, Memphis, TN

Overview

In 2006 Time magazine honored "You" — the new-media public —as its person of the year. The acknowledgment was an optimistic lens on the potential of the everyday man and woman, who, when armed with the power of the World Wide Web (i.e., Web 2.0), were empowered to mobilize social networks, advance new ideas, and challenge traditional exchanges between media sponsors and the audience. Quoting Time magazine's explanation, "It's about many wresting power from the few and helping one another for nothing and how that will not only change the world, but also change the way the world changes," (Grossman, 2006). Advances in social networks, mobile media, and other digital interactive platforms effectively tilted the balance of media control to media audiences, who could decide for themselves if the narratives and frames presented were compelling enough attract their attention. The article was a call for marketers and advertisers to adjust the way they related to consumer audiences if they wanted to remain competitive. Indeed, the age on one-to-one marketing had arrived.

Studies dedicated to social media markets, branded digital communications, mobile technology, and interactive tools are well represented in the literature. However, room still exists for research dedicated to online behavior, advertising content creativity for digital and mobile media, content engagement, and interactivity, be it positive or negative. In his book Irresistible: The Rise of Addictive Technology and the Business of Keeping Us Hooked author Adam Alter (2017) asserts, "Tech isn't morally good or bad until it's wielded by the corporations that fashion it for mass consumption. Apps and platforms can be designed to promote rich social connections; or, like cigarettes, thy can be designed to addict" (p. 8). In Hooked: How to Build Habit-Forming Products author Nir Eyal takes on the questions of what makes digital consumers engage with certain products out of sheer habit and if a pattern underlies how technologies 'hook' users. A substantial body of research has established the advantages of the digital media landscape, digital content, and its digital markets/audiences.

While the pace of scholarly research has increased to bring greater transparency to unique angles of the digital revolution, what can scholars need to consider in expanding pedagogical understanding of the potential effects of digital media and content? Has the digital revolution lived up to the expectations paved over 10 years ago? What are the unintended consequences of the digital revolution?

The panel interrogated the systemic, psychological, and behavioral outcomes corresponding to the digital revolution, and shed light on opportunities for continued research in the area. Each expert brought a unique perspective to the forum and provided recommendations for marketing communications practitioners as it relates to the unintended consequences of digital target marketing, content delivery, and audience engagement.

Caryl Cooper focused on YouTube in particular and the disparity in the way the channel of communication (under)serves segments of its audience. She examined the case of brand-sponsored ads that seemed to address socially-charged issues with sensitivity and thoughtfulness. While the such powerful messages may go viral in the digital space, it is notable that no a brand's long-term investment in such issues, if absent, risks delegitimizing the importance of the steps needed to activate change in an audience's attitudes and beliefs.

Tom Kelleher discussed the implications of the burgeoning amount of information marketers and advertising agencies hold about brand consumers in databases used to optimize targeting outcomes. The data acquired from contemporary data devices, such as personal digital assistants, wearable technology, website cookies, and the carbon footprint of credit card use, have tipped the balance in advertisers' access to consumers. The breach in database security that have resulted among prominent digital marketers in recent years is not only notable, but pose a real risk to individual consumer privacy. Scrutiny also must be given to the ethical implications in a marketer's desire to target a prospective consumer and the consumer's preference to control, if not decline, the persuasion attempt.

Jef Richards explored the unintended consequences topic from the perspectives of consumer privacy, deceptive advertising practices, and copyright violations. His views on issues such as the ways digital advertisers collect information on consumers, the rampant stealing of digital intellectual property, and advertising and marketing claims made online that challenge the confines of the law lend food for thought to researchers. Realms of privacy (e.g., home, school, work) once thought to be legally protected have come up for grabs in light of dated Internet security measures and institutional hacking.

Marla Stafford discussed the psychological and sociological impact of digital revolution on users of social media and digital interactivity tools (i.e., texting and gaming), and digital content. In an age where consumers have an unprecedented opportunity to use digital platforms as a bridge to community and outreach, the overall physical and mental well-being of some users is worse than ever. The unintended consequence of "digital engagement" have been linked to higher levels of personal dissatisfaction, including greater loneliness, anxiety, and depression. Teens and young adults are particularly vulnerable to behavioral addictions associated with high exposure to digital content.

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EXPLORING READERS' EVALUATIONS OF NATIVE ADVERTISEMENTS IN A MOBILE NEWS APP.

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Introduction

As digital news outlets often cannot survive through subscription revenues alone, advertisements play an important role in their business model (Newman et al. 2016). However, online news readers have become better at both ignoring and sometimes even completely blocking traditional display advertisements, for example by installing ad blocking software (Adobe 2015, Fransen et al. 2015, Hervet et al. 2011). In order to combat this ad avoidance and to generate new revenue streams, many news outlets are incorporating so-called 'native advertisements' into their online news platforms (WARC 2016). In-feed native advertisements on news websites, also called sponsored content, can be defined as advertisements that mimic the look and feel of editorial news articles (Ponikvar 2015, Wojdynski and Evans 2015). Native ads attempt to provide readers the experience of reading news instead of viewing advertising, by presenting content without an explicit selling intent (Ferrer Conill 2016). Their editorial format aims to minimize both ad avoidance and irritation (Becker-Olsen 2003, Van Reijmersdal, Neijens and Smit 2005). However, this editorial appearance of the native ads can also mislead readers into thinking that they are looking at an editorial news article, and this might lead to feelings of deception (Levi 2015). Both practitioners and researchers from the advertising and media fields have warned about the possible negative effects of the covertness of the native advertising format, especially in a news context in which trust among readers is essential (Einstein 2016). Therefore, consumer protection organizations such as the Federal Trade Commission have issued guidelines on native advertising, recommending advertisers and media to make native advertisements clearly identifiable as advertising to consumers, by utilizing disclosures (FTC 2015).

To date, most studies on native advertising have been focused on readers' recognition of disclosures and native advertisements, and how this recognition may impact readers' evaluations of the ad and advertiser (Van Reijmersdal et al. 2016, Wojdynski 2016, Wojdynski and Evans 2015). These experimental studies, that have been conducted on personal computers using regular news websites, have shown that readers often do not notice these disclosures. Yet, when readers do recognize them, this can lead to more negative evaluations of the ad and advertiser. Contrary to these findings, there are also studies that did not show a negative effect of disclosure- and ad recognition on readers' evaluations (Becker-Olsen 2003, Carr and Hayes 2014). These studies suggest that native advertisings' effectiveness cannot only be explained by readers lack of ad recognition, and they showed that several other factors, such as readers' involvement with the topic (Krouwer and Poels 2017) and perceived utility of the content (Sweetser et al. 2016) might also play a role. More research is needed to further explore if there are other factors that may also influence readers' evaluations of native advertisements. Until now, experimental studies on native advertising have only investigated the direct effect of changing one or two characteristics of native advertisements on readers' evaluations (e.g. Wojdynski and Evans 2015, Wu et al. 2016). However, no studies have been focused on readers' thoughts on native advertising on news websites in general, by taking a qualitative approach. This is important to do, as this might show new factors that may influence readers' evaluations of native advertisements, and new perspectives of readers on native advertising in online news media in general. Also, readers' underlying thoughts about news outlets that contain native advertisements should be more deeply explored, as little attention has been given to the consequences of native advertising for the news outlets (Amazeen and Muddiman 2017, Ferrer Conill 2016). It is important to further investigate this, as the reputational damage for news outlets might outweigh the financial benefits that native advertising can bring (Amazeen and Muddiman 2017).

A second gap in current knowledge is that to date, all past studies on native advertising on news websites have been conducted on personal desktop or laptop computers. However, mobile news consumption is rising quickly (Newman, Fletcher, Levy and Nielsen 2016). In 2016, 72% of the USA news consumers accessed their news via mobile devices (Mitchell et al. 2016), and in several countries in Europe, Asia and America news consumption has become mobile-first (Newman, Fletcher, Levy and Nielsen 2016). This mobile environment might also have an impact on readers' ad recognition and perceptions of native advertisements (Grewal et al. 2016). Additionally, during the previous experimental studies readers were exposed to a static web page on a computer, that displayed one native advertisement. This differs from practice, as most readers first need to click on the headline of a native ad before being exposed to it. They might already recognize the ad at this stage, as consumer protection organizations and legislators require media and advertisers to properly disclose native advertisements (FTC 2015). Readers' interactions with native advertisements at these different stages of exposure to the ads need to be further investigated, by observing readers when utilizing a mobile news app.

This study aims to address these two knowledge gaps by investigating readers' general perceptions of native advertisements in a mobile news environment, by conducting usability tests and taking in-depth interviews with mobile news readers. We aim to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: To what extent and how do readers recognize native advertisements in a mobile news environment?

RQ2: How do readers evaluate native ads in a mobile news app and which factors influence these evaluations?

RQ3: What are the consequences of native advertising for readers' evaluations of the news outlet?

The paper is structured as follows. First, we outline the theoretical context and key concepts that are related to native advertising and mobile news contexts, based on current theories and findings from both the advertising and journalism fields. We then outline our methodology and procedures for analysing the data. Next, we present our key findings and discuss them in relation to our theoretical framework. Finally, we provide several directions for future research.

Theoretical Framework

Key characteristics of in-feed native ads in online news media are their editorial look and feel, and integration within the editorial context (IAB 2013). However, both the characteristics of the native advertisements, such as the disclosures and content, as well as contextual factors, such as the device, type of news website and advertiser, can vary (Einstein 2016). We will discuss these different factors and how they might affect readers' processing and evaluations of native ads in our theoretical framework.

Ad recognition versus deception.

Past research on native advertising has been mainly focused on readers' (lack of) Persuasion Knowledge. Persuasion Knowledge (PK) is related to the knowledge and tactics that consumers use to identify advertisements and to cope with them (Friestad and Wright 1994). Due to the editorial look and feel of native advertisements, readers' PK may not be activated when they are exposed to them. Several experimental studies have shown that when readers do not identify native advertisements as such, their evaluations of the ad are more positive (Boerman and Van Reijmersdal 2016, Wojdynski 2016). This follows intentional exposure theory, which states that readers are more open and positive towards editorial content that can fulfill their needs for information and / or entertainment (Lord and Putrevu 1993). In contrast, consumers do not like to be unwillingly influenced by persuasive messages, and recognizing a native advertisement as such, i.e. through PK activation, therefore often triggers ad resistance (Fransen, Verlegh, Kirmani and Smit 2015, Van Reijmersdal et al. 2015, Van Reijmersdal, Fransen, van Noort, Opree, Vandeberg, Reusch, van Lieshout and Boerman 2016).

As the editorial format of native advertising can also be deceptive to readers, customer protection organizations such as the FTC require news outlets to add a disclosure to their native advertisements (Federal Trade Commission 2015). The vast majority of studies on native advertising have been focused on the effects of disclosure recognition and Persuasion Knowledge activation (Van Reijmersdal et al. 2016, Wojdynski and Evans 2015) . Although it has been shown that disclosure recognition increases readers' PK and that this can lead to more negative ad evaluations (Boerman and Van Reijmersdal 2016, Van Reijmersdal, Fransen, van Noort, Opree, Vandeberg, Reusch, van Lieshout and Boerman 2016), research also showed that readers often do not notice these disclosures (Wojdynski 2016, Wojdynski and Evans 2015). Additionally, in some studies readers recognized the commercial intent behind online sponsored content or offline advertorials, but nevertheless still evaluated these ads more positively compared to other advertisements (Becker-Olsen 2003, Boerman and Van Reijmersdal 2016, Kim, Pasadeos and Barban 2001).

In contrast, when readers are exposed to a native advertisement while thinking they are looking at news, yet find out later that they were actually looking at an advertisement, this might backfire on their trust (Levi 2015). Being open and thus transparent about the commercial intent in advance, may decrease these feelings of deception (Becker-Olsen 2003, Carr and Hayes 2014). Thus, although some studies showed negative effects of disclosure- and ad recognition on readers' ad evaluations (Van Reijmersdal, Boerman, Van Noort, Vandeberg, Reusch, Van Lieshout and Fransen 2015, Wojdynski 2016), there are contrariwise also studies that indicate positive effects of being open about the commercial intent, especially in terms of readers' trust in the online media context (Becker-Olsen 2003, Carr and Hayes 2014). Considering these conflicting effects of being transparent about the commercial intent behind native advertising, more research is needed to further explore the influence of both ad recognition and feelings of trust versus deception on readers' evaluations of advertisements, advertisers and news websites.

Content and context.

Several studies suggest that readers' perceptions of the content and context can also have a large impact on readers' evaluations, and that (a lack of) ad recognition is just one factor that determines readers' evaluations of native advertisements (Kim, Pasadeos and Barban 2001, Krouwer, Poels and Paulussen 2017). The editorial format of native advertisements imply that they can also provide some kind of informational and / or transformational value to readers (Sweetser, Ahn, Golan and Hochman 2016, Van Reijmersdal, Neijens and Smit 2005). When readers consider the information as highly useful to them, this might lead to more positive evaluations of the advertisement (Sweetser, Ahn, Golan and Hochman 2016). Another factor that may play a role is brand presence in the text. When the brand is more prominently featured in a native advertisement, consumers feel less manipulated, and this could lead to more negative evaluations (Krouwer, Poels and Paulussen 2017). These preliminary findings on the effect of content characteristics suggest that it is important to further explore different types of content characteristics that may influence readers' evaluations. There may be other content characteristics that play a role here as well, but have not yet been identified. A third factor that needs to be further investigated is the relationship between readers' perceptions of the sponsor and the news outlet, and their evaluations of native advertisements. A recent case study suggested that readers can completely despise an advertisement, mainly because of the sponsor (Carlson 2014). In this particular case, the native advertisement was provided by a controversial religious organization, which elicited many negative responses from readers. Conversely, studies in other online contexts have showed that high credibility of a source can positively influence evaluations of information and advertisements (Flanagin and Metzger 2007, Pornpitakpan 2004). However, little research has been conducted on the influence of context factors in a native advertising context, and more research is thus needed to investigate to what extent and how readers' perceptions of both the advertiser and news outlet are related to their evaluations of the native advertisement.

Native ads in a mobile news environment

To date, no studies on native advertising have been conducted in a mobile news environment (Harms, Bijmolt and Hoekstra 2017). However, as pointed out earlier, online news consumption is becoming mobile-first (Newman, Fletcher, Levy and Nielsen 2016). Research that takes into account the effect of mobile contexts is therefore highly needed, as the mobile characteristics might impact readers' ad recognition, processing and evaluations (Ghose, Goldfarb and Han 2012, Grewal, Bart, Spann and Zubcsek 2016). For example, regarding disclosure and ad recognition, eye-tracking research showed that readers often do not notice disclosures when looking at news websites on a computer, especially when the disclosures are positioned at the top of a web-page (Wojdynski 2016, Wojdynski and Evans 2015). However, due to the smaller screen sizes of the mobile devices, mobile content and advertisements are often not surrounded by other content or advertisements (Chae and Kim 2004, Grewal, Bart, Spann and Zubcsek 2016, Harms, Bijmolt and Hoekstra 2017). As there is less distraction of other elements, readers might be more likely to notice disclosures on their mobile phones, and subsequently recognize the native advertisements as advertising.

Furthermore, readers generally first need to click on the headline of a native advertisement, before being exposed to the full advertisement. As consumer protection organizations require that native advertisements are directly recognizable as such, the headlines of the native ads on the front page are often already accompanied by a disclosure, such as "sponsored" or "paid post" (FTC 2015, Levi 2015). It might be the case that readers already recognize the ads before they click on the headline, yet until now studies have only been focused on the disclosures on the ad pages themselves. Research that takes into account readers' behavior on news websites and the different stages of exposure to the ad might therefore show different results.

Additionally, mobile contextual factors may not only affect readers' ad recognition, but also their evaluations of the advertisements and the news outlet. Previous research on other mobile advertising formats, such as banners and location-based advertising, have identified several factors that could affect readers' attitudes towards advertising on mobile devices (Grewal, Bart, Spann and Zubcsek 2016). These studies have shown that perceived usefulness of the ad, ad relevance, credibility of the ad and user control can positively influence consumers' evaluations of these mobile advertising formats (Liu et al. 2012, Merisavo et al. 2007). These factors might also play a role in readers' perceptions of mobile native advertisements. This study will further explore this.

Last, readers' evaluations of a free news app that includes native advertising may differ from legacy news websites and offline news media. Readers might be more critical when native advertisements are published on websites of legacy news organizations, or news websites with paywalls (Einstein 2016). In general, readers' willingness to pay for mobile news applications is low (Gundlach and Hofmann 2017, Van Damme et al. 2015). Consequently, advertisements are vital to the business model of news apps (Westlund 2013), and readers might therefore be more open to native advertisements in news apps. On the other hand, readers expect news media to provide them objective and credible information (Deuze 2005). When advertising is more intermingled with editorial content, their trust in the news medium might be harmed (Einstein 2016). One experimental study showed that the reputation of both online and legacy news publishers could indeed be damaged when readers recognize native advertising as such (Amazeen and Muddiman 2017), yet another study did not find a clear effect of native ad recognition on the publisher's credibility (Krouwer, Poels and Paulussen 2017). More research is needed to more deeply understand if, when and why native advertising could jeopardize news media's reputation, particularly in mobile news contexts.

Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative approach, which allows researchers to explore new factors that may influence readers' evaluations, create a deeper understanding of readers' underlying thoughts, and to take contextual factors into account (Morrison 2011). The study utilized usability testing in combination with semi-structured in-depth interviews. The usability test of the news app provided more insight into if, when, and how readers recognize mobile native advertisements, and readers' underlying thoughts when they are looking at a native advertisement. It also helped readers to become familiar with the concept 'native advertising', as readers otherwise might would not have been aware of it, or understand it. The subsequent interview enabled the researchers to explore readers' perceptions of native advertising in mobile news environments at a deeper level.

Participants

Participants were selected using purposive sampling. Twenty-four users of a free national news app were invited to "help the media company to gain more insight into how its users evaluate the news app". The study took place at the office of a national news organization. All participants received a small monetary incentive for their participation (40 euro) and travel costs. The 24 participants (13 males, 11 females) were between 21 and 60 years of age (*M*age = 40 years), with varying levels of education. Seventy percent of the participants indicated that they used the news app of the study a least once a day.

Usability test

We conducted the usability test using a special testing smartphone on which an offline version of the news app had been installed. A small camera above the testing smartphone and installed screen capturing software allowed the researcher to monitor and record participants' mobile scrolling behaviour on a computer screen. The researcher and participants were in the same room. All participants received the instruction to scroll through a test version of the news app and were encouraged to 'think aloud' when doing this. During the usability test, participants scrolled through the home page of the news app. All participants were directed to the same two news articles, banner advertisement, pre-roll video advertisement and news video, and native advertisement. The news articles that were utilized in the test were about non-sensitive news topics. The topic of the native advertisement was: "how to save on your energy bills", and the ad was sponsored by a national organization for home owners. The native ad headline was positioned between the news articles, yet distinguished from the other news headlines via a grey-colored background (as opposed to the white background), the wordings: "*Sponsored by Vereniging Eigen Huis*", and the company's logo. The page of the native ad itself also contained a disclosure, again using the wordings 'sponsored by brand x', a logo, and a grey background. The disclosure was positioned below the headline of the native advertisement. We measured whether participants actively mentioned that they were looking at an advertisement, and we asked about their thoughts when they were looking at the text. As we constantly asked readers about their thoughts, this did not lead to more suspicion. After participants completed the usability test, which took about fifteen minutes, in-depth interviews were conducted.

Interviews

On average, the interviews took 45 minutes. During the interview several topics were covered, using a semi-structured questionnaire. By not only talking about native advertising, but all kind of in-app elements, we reduced social desirability bias. Before talking about the topic of native advertising, all participants received the same topic introduction: *"One of the things we that we showed you during the usability test was a native advertisement. Native* *advertisements are advertisements that are designed in the look and feel of a news article"*. We then showed the participants also two other native advertisements from two different news categories (one about cars, the other one about dairy and vitamin D), in order to decrease bias in readers' evaluations. Next, we addressed the topic of native advertising. Questions were derived from the research framework, and asked participants about their thoughts on native advertising, their evaluations of native advertising, advertisers and the news app, the factors that influence these evaluations, and their evaluations of other advertising formats.

Data analysis

All the conversations during the usability test and the interviews were transcribed, coded and analysed. We used both the pre-defined themes (based on the research questions) and open-coding techniques to identify the themes. Next, we used focused coding to group the themes and discover patterns. Finally, the findings were reflected according to the concepts of the theoretical framework, and based on this process we developed new empirical and theoretical insights that together answer the three research questions.

Findings

Mobile native ad recognition

During the usability test, the majority of the readers did not have difficulties recognizing the native advertisement. In most cases, they recognized and mentioned the labelling on the front page, before clicking on the native advertisement. The visual characteristics of the disclosure seemed to make the difference. Readers mainly referred to the grey background colour as the most important characteristic to distinguish native advertising headlines from news headlines.

A second factor that participants often mentioned was the company's logo next to the headline. The few participants that did not recognize the native advertisement as advertising, were mainly confused due to the amount of information that the advertisement provided. The editorial style of the text made them evaluate the native advertisement as a news article. They perceived the text consequently as editorial. In two cases, the participants noticed the disclosure, but were nonetheless still confused. In these cases, the wordings of the disclosures were not clear enough:

> *"I consider this more as news, as information. The article is 'sponsored by brand x', but that doesn't tell anything about the author of the article, right?".* (R24, male, age 47)

Another factor that was confusing for some readers was the positioning of the native advertisement between the editorial news on the front page.

> *"I don't think this is advertising because it is just part of the economic news on the front page".* (R14, female, age 49)

This confirms that not all readers are able to recognize native advertisements, especially when there is no disclosure, or when the disclosure is not clear to them. Although a few readers were confused, ad recognition was still fairly high in this study, mainly due to the high disclosure recognition on the front page of the news app. The visual characteristics of the disclosure (i.e. the colour and the company's logo) played a major role in this recognition.

Factors that influence ad evaluations

Readers' ad recognition was only to a certain extent related to their evaluations. Although several readers indicated during the interview that they generally skip advertisements, the vast majority of the readers in this study stated that they sometimes intentionally pay attention to native advertisements and could evaluate them positively, depending on how much value the ad provides them:

> *"Sometimes I see an interesting headline, and then I see that it's sponsored content. But oh well, if it's interesting… It just depends on whether it's interesting".* (R2, female, age 24)

Thus in terms of Persuasion Knowledge, the activation of conceptual Persuasion Knowledge (i.e. ad recognition) does not always lead to more scepticism and resistance. Readers' evaluations of native advertisements depend not just on whether they recognize it as advertising or not, but also on other factors. The analysis of the interview data provided insight into several other factors that may influence readers' evaluations.

First off, our analysis of the interviews revealed that the majority of the readers seem to take more of a 'value exchange' approach towards native advertisements. If a native ad can fulfil their needs for certain information, readers are willing to pay attention to it and their evaluations of the ad will be more positive. Based on the headline, they evaluate whether it is worth paying attention to the ad. Next, if the ad fulfils their expectations, they may evaluate it positively.

> *"I quickly recognize advertisements. However, sometimes you are looking for certain information and if the advertisement provides me that information, I am interested in reading it anyway".* (R13, male, age 34)

Due to the editorial format, readers seem to set expectations for native advertisements that are similar to what they expect of editorial news articles. When evaluating the three different native advertisements that were shown to them in the study (one during the usability test, two during the interview), readers mainly based their opinions on whether an ad fulfils their informational needs. When asked about their opinion about all three advertisements, readers were most negative in their evaluations of the native advertisement about a new car. This text was perceived as 'too commercial' and 'mainly about the product'. They were on the other hand more positive about the vitamin D native ad and the native ad about saving on energy bills. The vitamin D ad referred in the beginning to the results of an academic study on vitamin D. Readers appreciated the 'trustworthy' information in the beginning and considered this ad in general as valuable. The advertisement on saving on energy bills was also perceived as 'helpful' and therefore in general positively evaluated. The information utility theory and uses and gratifications theory seem to play a role here. Readers often mentioned that they evaluate whether a native advertisement can possibly fulfil their needs for information. If the information is considered as valuable to them, they can have a positive attitude towards the advertisement, even though the information is provided by a commercial source.

However, next to information utility, source credibility (in the context of the advertiser) also seems to play an important role. For instance, several readers mentioned that they have had a negative experience with one of the advertisers of the sample native advertisements. These readers had a negative predisposition towards the advertisement and advertiser, and reading the native advertisement did not change this, simply because they did not trust the advertiser. Conversely, when readers trust the advertiser, they are more open towards the message:

> *"This advertisement is provided by a consumer organization, which is interesting to me. But as soon as it is a very commercial organization that only wants to sell me a product, I will not read it".* (R13, male, age 34)

Thus, both source credibility and credibility of the information may influence evaluations. It might be that in some cases information utility can outweigh source credibility, unless readers have a very negative predisposition towards the advertiser. Furthermore, a few readers mentioned that some kind of advertisers, such as political parties and companies that promote products that have a negative impact on society, should not be allowed to publish native advertisements on news platforms.

> *"I would not publish a native ad on why political party X has the best plans. I would stay neutral on those kind of topics".* (R21, male, age 32)

Although readers acknowledged that native advertising can offer informational value, they also stated that they will evaluate the advertisements negatively if the text would be too promotional and / or invaluable to them. Thus, readers' personal investments and benefits should be balanced with the advertisers' investments and benefits. Readers do not want to put effort into reading information that is not valuable to them. Furthermore, there were also several readers that mentioned the amount of native advertisements; this should be balanced with the amount of editorial news, and native advertisements should not overshadow the editorial content of journalists.

Readers' perceived control is another factor that seems to be important. Several readers indicated that they that do not mind any native advertisement, as long as they are in control, and can decide themselves whether they will read it or not:

> *"I mean, everyone can publish native advertisements and it is up to yourself whether you decide to pay attention to it or not."* (R18, female, age 52)

In order to stay in control and make a conscious decision on whether they expose themselves to a native ad, readers consider it as important that native advertisements are easily recognizable. This contradicts with their other statements on the content of the native advertisement, which they prefer to be editorial. Thus on the one hand, readers do not want the content of native advertising to be overly promotional, but on the other hand, they do want to be able to quickly recognize the advertisements as advertising. In this regard, they can decide themselves whether they are willing to pay attention to it, or not. Some readers recalled during the interview situations in which they were not aware that they were clicking on a native ad (not just in this particular news app, but also in other online contexts) and the frustration that this lack of control caused:

> "*The first time I saw a…*(native advertisement) *I did recognize it, but I also thought: it is annoying that you expect an article and end up with something else."* (R20, male, age 30)

However, in the case of this particular news app, most readers felt in control, as they quickly recognized the native advertisements. This 'control' was, together with the utility aspect of native advertisements, the reason why most readers preferred native advertisements over the two other advertising formats that were discussed: banners and pre-roll video advertisements. Readers considered native ads as less intrusive than banners and video ads, and they liked the fact that they could decide themselves whether they would click on the title and read the native advertisement. This is in contrast to pre-roll video ads, which force readers to watch the advertisement before they can consume a news video. Banner advertisements were also often mentioned as annoying, due to their size and intrusiveness, and the fact that they often redirect readers to another website:

> *"Because those large advertisements, like this one… Sometimes you're scrolling and then you accidentally click on a banner ad. And then you have to close the ad again, and go back to the app. It is a matter of seconds, but it is annoying anyway."* (R13, male, age 34)

Readers stated that native advertisements are more easily to scroll across, as their headlines had the same size as the headlines of the news articles. They then can decide themselves whether they think it is worth clicking on the headline and view the native ad, or not. Next, if the native advertisement matches readers' expectations, they may evaluate it positively.

> *"I can choose whether I click on a native advertisement or not, whereas banner advertisements are annoyingly present in the app. I am also always scared that I will click on a banner, sometimes the app can get blocked then. With these native advertisement you also know: it may be sponsored, but you also know that at least it contains information."* (R16, female, age 56)

Effects for the news outlet

When readers were asked about their thoughts on the fact that the news app contained native advertisements, they were either neutral or positive. Only two readers felt deceived by the fact that the news app contains native advertisements, and also only two readers indicated that this damages their trust in the news app. It was striking that the readers seemed to be well aware of the revenue model of digital media outlets. Several readers started to explain that they do not necessarily like advertisements, but also realize that it is necessary in order to keep the news app 'free'.

> *"I simply realize that advertisements are necessary… I understand that they generate revenue that is needed to maintain the news app. In the end it is as easy as that."* (R19, male, age 29)

They indicated that it is important to them that they do not have to pay for the news app, and that they rather 'pay' with reading advertisements, instead of actually paying money. Thus, it seems that there is an implicit social contract between advertisers, news media and readers (Gordon and De Lima-Turner 1997). Readers are viewing native advertisements in exchange for free access to news. However, they also stated that the advertisements should at least not disturb the user experience.

Due to their unobtrusiveness, readers were positive about the integration of native ads in the news app, as long as they contain a disclosure. For most readers in this study it was clear that the content of the native advertisement was created by the advertiser or the advertising department, which may explain the fact that the implementation of native advertising did not harm their trust in the news app. Still, there were four readers who believed that the native ad had been written by a journalist. This can be problematic, as the majority of the news readers indicated that the 'independence' of journalists is key to maintain their trust. This independency is one of the key values of journalism (Deuze 2005), together with objectivity and public service, and these values may be questioned when there is no clear line between the editorial and advertising functions of news organizations.

> "*If journalists write native advertisements, readers' interests will be mixed with the interests of the advertiser. However, when I'm reading a news article, I always expect a critical view. When there's a sponsor involved, I expect that the article will be rather positive.*" (R15, male, age 38)

Two of the four readers that were more critical towards the news app due to the implementation of native advertisements, also thought that journalists were involved in producing the content. Thus, it seems that native advertising does not harm readers' evaluations of the digital news outlet, as long as the ads are valuable and not deceiving, and it has been clear that journalists are not involved in the production of the native ads.

Conclusion and Discussion

By means of usability testing and in-depth interviews with news readers, this research aimed to provide more insight into how readers recognize and evaluate native advertisements in a mobile news app.

The first research question aimed to investigate readers' native ad recognition in a mobile news context. In our usability test, the majority of the news readers recognized native advertising as such, mostly on the home page, before clicking on the advertisement. This is in contrast to other studies that have been conducted on desktop or laptop computers, in which the minority of participants was able to recognize native advertising as such (Wojdynski 2016, Wojdynski and Evans 2015). One explanation for this may be the characteristics of a mobile web page

(Grewal, Bart, Spann and Zubcsek 2016). As a mobile screen is smaller, it is not possible to display many website elements at the same time (Ghose, Goldfarb and Han 2012), which may increase the likelihood that readers notice the disclosure. A second explanation may be the look and feel of the disclosure at the front page. When they recognized the advertisement, readers referred mainly to visual elements of the disclosure on the front page of the app, such as the grey background colour and sponsor's logo. This is in line with recent experimental research that showed that visual proximity and a logo can indeed help readers to recognize native advertisements (Wojdynski 2016). Conversely, the position of native advertisements between the news and the editorial style of the content were factors that caused confusion among readers. Readers that did not recognize the disclosure often also not recognized the native ad as advertising when reading the text. Thus, disclosure recognition is necessary to help readers recognize a native advertisement, which is in line with previous research (Boerman, Van Reijmersdal and Neijens 2015, Wojdynski and Evans 2015).

Via our second research question we aimed to gain more insight into readers' evaluations of native advertising and news apps that contain native advertisements, and the factors that explain these evaluations. Results of the in-depth interviews showed that, in general, readers have either a neutral or positive attitude towards native advertising. The findings suggest that these evaluations are mainly influenced by four key factors: (1) perceived utility, (2) perceived control, (3) recognisability, and (4) pre-existing attitudes towards the advertiser.

First, the analysis showed that readers were mostly concerned about the editorial value and the relevance that native advertisements offer. The subject and content should match their informational needs. If this is the case, they can intentionally pay attention to native advertisements, also when they know that they are looking at an advertisement. Conversely, readers evaluate native advertising more negatively when an advertisement is too commercial and does not bring any benefits to them. This is in line with theories that describe the interaction between advertisers and consumers as a value exchange, such as the information utility theory and inferences of manipulative intent theory (Becker-Olsen 2003, Campbell 1995, Sweetser, Ahn, Golan and Hochman 2016). These theories can be summarized in the idea that in the end, readers are making up a balance: if they gain enough value out of the persuasive attempt, they respond positively to it. However, when it is mainly the advertiser that takes benefit of it, they are likely to feel disadvantaged and have subsequently a more negative opinion about the advertisement.

A second important factor is the amount of control that readers feel they have. Readers consider it as important that they can decide themselves whether they pay attention to a native advertisement or not. Due to higher perceived control, readers prefer native advertisements over banner and pre-roll video advertisements. Readers are forced to scroll across the in general larger banner advertisements and to watch pre-roll video advertisements before consuming news content (Cho and Cheon 2004, Hegner, Kusse and Pruyn 2016). These advertisements interrupt them when using the app, and this intrusiveness leads to more resistance and more negative perceptions. This is in line with research of Cho and Cheon (2004), who found that perceived goal impediment is the most important ad characteristic that leads to negative ad evaluations and advertising avoidance. Native advertising on the other hand was perceived as less intrusive, as most readers recognized the advertisements before clicking on them. Thus, on the one hand, readers want native advertisements to not be overly promotional and to bring them some editorial value, but on the other hand, they also want to be able to directly recognize the native ads, which contradicts each other. A clear disclosure seems to be the appropriate solution for native advertising in order to maintain the editorial style of the ads, but also provide readers the feeling of being in control.

Last, readers' pre-existing attitudes towards an advertiser also influence their evaluations. It seems that pre-existing negative perceptions of an advertiser cannot be solved with native advertising, as readers were not open towards messages of advertisers they did not like in the first place. Thus, building trust in a brand might be an important prerequisite to make native advertising effective (Pornpitakpan 2004). Furthermore, it should be noted that several readers do not accept native advertisements that are provided by political parties and advertisers that provide controversial products (such as cigarettes or political parties).

Research question three aimed to explore the consequences of native advertising for the mobile news app. Following traditional functions of journalism, such as 'objectivity' and 'independency', one could expect that integrating native ads into a news context would harm readers' perceptions of the news app (Deuze 2005). However, users of this news app generally indicated that their perceptions of the news app were not more negative due to the integration of native advertisements. Several explanations can be derived from readers' answers. First of all, most readers seemed to be well-aware of the presence of native advertising, not only on news websites, but also in other contexts. Thus the possible deceptiveness of the native advertising format (Einstein 2016, Wojdynski 2016) did not play a major role in in this particular context. Most readers were convinced that the native ads in the news app had not been written by a journalist. However, they also indicated that when this would have been the case, this would have harmed their trust in the news outlet. Thus, to maintain readers' trust it is important that journalists will not be involved in the production of native advertisements. A second explanation for readers' high acceptance of native advertising might be that their advertising literacy is increasing, due to the more frequent appearance of hybrid advertisements such as sponsored news articles, sponsored blogs, brand placement etc. (Wojdynski & Golan, 2016). Readers explained that they are open towards native advertising, because they understand that this is helping them to access the news content for free. Thus, there seems to be an implicit social contract between the news outlet, advertisers and readers (Gordon & Lima-Turner, 1997). Readers are willing to 'pay' for the news content by viewing native ads. The fact that the news app in this study was a free news app may have had an influence on their high acceptance of native advertising. Readers furthermore preferred native advertisements in general over banners and pre-roll video advertisements, as they considered the native advertising format as less intrusive, and sometimes more valuable, depending on the content of the ads.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Several points should be kept in mind when interpreting and generalizing the present results. First, the readers we had invited for the study turned out to be all rather experienced with, and quite positive about the news app. This might have affected their recognition and evaluations of native advertisements. Also in this case, the news app was provided by a digital-only publisher that provides free access to its news articles. Readers' acceptance may differ in the context of paid news apps or websites of legacy news publishers. Furthermore, we exposed readers to three different native advertisements in order to provide them a clear view on the concept of native advertising. However, biases resulting from exposing readers to three specific native advertisements could have affected their evaluations. Last and most importantly, the goal of this study was to provide more insight into readers' underlying thoughts on native advertising and to explore the different factors that may affect readers' evaluations. We used one news app as a case study for this explorative research, and therefore generalizations should be made with caution.

Still, the study does show several interesting factors that may explain readers' attitudes towards native advertising in a news context, which can be further studied in future research. First, as readers mainly referred to visual characteristics of the disclosures, it would be interesting to further investigate these visual elements. Although some research already took some visual characteristics of disclosures into account (Wojdynski 2016), more research is needed to further improve the effectiveness of disclosures. Also, as this explorative study showed that the mobile context may influence readers' ad recognition and evaluations, future experimental studies should take into account the influence of (mobile) news contexts as well, especially since mobile news consumption is becoming the standard (Newman, Fletcher, Levy and Nielsen 2016). Second, the study showed that readers are less worried about the presence of native advertisements in a news context in general, but are more concerned about the execution of the native advertisement. One important characteristic that needs more research, is the influence of the editorial value or 'information utility' of the content. It seems that due to the native advertisements' format, readers expect that the advertisers offer interesting information that fulfils their media gratifications and match editorial standard (Sweetser, Ahn, Golan and Hochman 2016). As readers mentioned the importance of relevancy, it would be interesting to investigate the effect of personalization of native advertisements, based on readers' preferences or data gathered from their behaviour. Furthermore, it seemed that readers have a negative perception of native advertisements that are provided by advertisers they don't trust, regardless of the quality of the native ad. Future research should therefore provide more guidance on the effectiveness of native advertising for different types of advertisers. Last, in our study one of the reasons that readers provided for their high acceptance of native advertising, was that thanks to advertising they can consume the content for free. It would therefore be interesting to compare in future research readers' acceptance of native advertising for different types of media outlets.

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INFORMATION OR DECEPTION? EFFECTS OF DISCLOSURE LANGUAGE AND PROMINENCE ON CONSUMERS' VIGILANCE ABOUT NATIVE ADVERTISING

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Abstract

With native advertising attracting consumers to form brand relationships, there has been a concern that consumers are not clearly aware of this new form of advertising. Though public policies specify that native advertisements include prominent advertising disclosures and use consumer-friendly disclosure language, research has found that consumers fail to recognize the incentivized nature of native advertising due to less prominent and vague labels for disclosure. The current study conducts two experiments using a U.S. adult sample to examine how disclosure prominence and language choice could affect consumers' vigilance of the incentivized nature of native advertising and shape their evaluations of the ad. As a cognitive process mechanism, we find cognitive fluency plays a mediating role. Importantly, we find the prominence level moderates the effect of disclosure language on consumer response. Theoretical and consumer implications are discussed.

NATIVE ADVERTISING: HOW ATTITUDE TOWARD ONLINE NEWS MEDIA AND CONTENT RELEVANCE ARE LINKED TO THE BRAND EVALUATION AND BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS

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Doyle Yoon, University of Oklahoma
Nazmul Rony, University of Oklahoma
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Abstract

This study examined the effects of two critical predictors of native ad effectiveness, attitude toward online news media (A_n) and content relevance, on the formation of brand cognition, brand attitude and behavioral intention to click on the ad. A 2 (attitude toward online news media: favorable/unfavorable) × 2 (content relevance of native ads: high/low) between-subjects experimental study on 181 samples was conducted on two different brand categories, e.g., utilitarian (smartphone) and hedonic (food). The results of the study found that favorable A_n significantly led to favorable cognitive and attitudinal reactions in the case of all brand categories, and behavioral reactions only in food brand category. Next, higher content relevance achieved positive cognitive, attitudinal and behavioral reactions in all brand categories, expect for higher intention to click in the case of the smartphone brand. An empirical evidence of interaction between A_n and content relevance on brand cognition level was also found in the food brand category.

CAN ADVERTISING STUDENTS RECOGNIZE AN AD IN EDITORIAL'S CLOTHING? SCORES FROM THE STANFORD "EVALUATING INFORMATION" TEST

Alice Kendrick, Southern Methodist University
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Abstract

A national sample of US advertising students participated in a study that included a test of their ability to differentiate between editorial and advertising content on a website. Almost all of the students identified a standard banner promotion as an advertisement. More than one in five misidentified a bylined article as an advertisement, and about one in four did not classify a story prominently labeled as "Sponsored Content" as an advertisement. Open-ended explanations indicated source confusion around the terms sponsored content, native advertising and advertising. Results are viewed within theories of effects of disclosure on persuasive knowledge activation. Practical insights for publishers, advertising educators and advertising researchers are discussed.

Healthy, Sweet, Brightly Colored, And Full Of Vitamins: Affective And Cognitive Persuasive Strategies Of Food Placements And Children's Healthy Eating Behavior

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Extended Abstract

The presentation of healthy food on audiovisual media may have important consequences for children. In fact, the persuasive effects of food placements on children's eating behavior have been investigated in several studies and results to date continually show that food placements can prompt children's eating behavior (e.g., Auty and Lewis 2004). The existing body of literature, however, falls short on three factors: First, the type of food is not sufficiently researched, as most studies have dealt with unhealthy products. Thus, there is little research investigating the potential positive effects of healthy food placements on children's knowledge about healthy food, their attitude, and their consumption behavior. Second, we lack research on the persuasive mechanisms for food placements targeted at children. That is, the specific cognitive and affective persuasion strategies— which have received great attention in health communication research (e.g., Lawton, Conner, and McEachan 2009) — have not been investigated with regard to food placements. Third, there is a significant lack of research investigating children's individual susceptibility factors. Two factors are included in the present study. Firstly, children's stage of cognitive development is crucial, when investigating the persuasive impact of healthy media messages (Buijzen, van Reijmersdal, and Owen 2010). In our study we thus include children from two developmental stages (middle childhood 6-9 years old; and late childhood 10-12 years old). Secondly, a factor which is deemed as essential in connection to eating behavior is children's BMI (Herman and Polivy 2008). So far, however, the BMI has not been considered as a moderator for food placement effects.

With this study we investigated whether healthy food placements (i.e., fruit) connected to different persuasive strategies (cognitive, affective, and combined; see Edwards 1990) can enhance children's healthy food choice. We conducted two experimental studies, measuring children's awareness for positive cognitive and affective arguments regarding fruit; fruit evaluation; and fruit choice in response to an audiovisual cartoon. We conducted a first preliminary study with N = 154 children between the ages of 6 to 11 years to test our stimulus material in its effectiveness and reliability. Based on these results, a second study with N = 193 children between the ages of 6 to 11 looked at the effectiveness of healthy product placements on children's knowledge of healthy food, their evaluation of healthy products, and their food choice of healthy over unhealthy snacks.

The first, preliminary, study confirmed that children were aware of the positive cognitive and affective arguments presented in a narrative audiovisual stimulus. The second study revealed that the use of affective appeals (i.e., in the sole affective and the combined conditions) increased children's awareness for the positive affective attributes

of fruit, which then led to a more positive evaluation and increased choice of fruit. While BMI did not moderate the effects on children's argument awareness, fruit evaluation, and fruit choice, children's age moderated the awareness for cognitive arguments and also the impact of the cognitive arguments condition on children's fruit choices.

Our results indicate that while using affective arguments in content targeted at children could potentially prompt a healthier eating behavior for children of all ages, the effectiveness of cognitive arguments seem to depend on children's developmental stage. Yet, the effect of affective arguments is not self-evident and is dependent on a chain of mechanisms. Most importantly, the key path to persuasion can be found in the awareness for the positive affective attributes of healthy food.

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THIS VIDEO IS SPONSORED! AN EYE TRACKING STUDY ON THE EFFECTS OF DISCLOSURE TIMING ON CHILDREN'S PERSUASION KNOWLEDGE

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Abstract

An experiment (N = 272, ages 10 to 13) was conducted, using eye tracking, to examine the effects of disclosure timing on children's responses to sponsored content in online videos. Results show that a disclosure that is shown before a sponsored video, leads to more visual attention than a disclosure that is shown during the start of the video. Consequently, the disclosure before the video leads to higher disclosure memory, which leads to a better recognition of the sponsored content as being advertising, evoking more skepticism toward the sponsored content, and finally resulting in less positive attitudes toward the brands, the video, and the influencer.

UNBOXING PARENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF SPONSORED CHILD INFLUENCER VIDEOS

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Courtney Carpenter Childers, University of Tennessee
Nathaniel J. Evans, University of Georgia

Abstract

In August 2016, the Children's Advertising Review Unit issued a case involving child influencer unboxing videos noting that they did not appropriately disclose sponsorship and blurred the lines between content and advertising. Prior research suggests that even parents have difficulty identifying covert forms of child-targeted advertising. We conducted 14 in-depth interviews with parents of children ages 4 to 11 and found limited awareness of the tactic. However, when prompted, parents could discern its persuasive intent yet they were confused as to the video's sponsorship. All said their child would not identify these videos as advertising.

CHINESE PARENTS' MEDIATION OF CHILDREN'S RESPONSES TO ADVERTISING

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Jijin Lu, Warwick University, United Kingdom

Abstract

This study explores Chinese parents' perceptions of advertising and its impact on children, how they manage children's responses to advertising, and how they perceive the roles of various socialization agents in creating a safe advertising environment for children, from a cultural perspective. In-depth interviews with parents of children aged 7-12 have revealed that Chinese parents are not very concerned about advertising's negative influences on children and they are very confident in their ability to manage their children's responses to advertising. Influenced by cultural values, the parents prefer restrictive mediation to active mediation, they seek for soft approaches to mediation, and they count less on other socialization agents in creating a better advertising environment. Nonetheless, the parents acknowledge that they should adapt their mediation strategies and engage in more active communication with their children when the children are getting older. Implications of the finding are discussed and suggestions for future research are provided.

SPECIAL TOPICS SESSION: CONSUMER ANTI-BRAND ACTIVISM AND ADVERTISING IMPLICATIONS

Moderator: Jisu Huh, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN

Overview

In the age of social media, practitioners and industry observers in advertising and public relations have expressed growing concerns over consumer activism against brands or companies using social media regarding a wide range of issues. Some of these issues involve apparent egregious corporate behavior (Guckian et al. 2017), while in other cases companies have been caught in controversy when their advertising campaigns provoked anger of vocal consumers, such as the cases of Motrin Mom ad (Learmonth and Parekh 2008) and the Starbucks Holiday Red Cup controversy (Tadena 2015). In some cases, brands are criticized for culturally insensitive or irresponsible ads (Victor 2017), digital ads appearing next to offensive or controversial contents (Vranica 2017), and sponsoring a television show featuring controversial television personalities, such as Don Imus, Glenn Beck, and Bill O'Reilly (Grynbaum and Maheshwari 2017).

Social media's growing reach and instantaneity has enabled vociferous minority groups to vent their anger instantly and mobilize other people to get involved in their anti-brand actions such as boycotts. The increasingly influential online anti-brand activism phenomenon, especially in response to certain advertising campaigns or messages, has posed particularly difficult challenges to advertisers (Grynbaum and Maheshwari 2017). As such cases pile up, marketing professionals and consumer researchers have been paying attention to the phenomenon and potential implications for brands from multiple perspectives, such as brand safety (Noller and Magalon 2016), anti-brand communities (Hollenbeck and Zinkhan 2006, 2010), consumer boycott behavior (Makarem and Jae 2016), consumer brand sabotage (Kähr et al. 2016), consumer brand engagement (Guckian et al. 2017; Hollebeek, Glynn and Brodie 2014), and brand crisis management (Gruber et al. 2015; Lim 2017). However, systematic research on the anti-brand activism powered by social media remains scarce in the advertising field. In addition, this topic has not yet been addressed in AAA conference, both research paper sessions and journal outlets, despite the potentially wide-ranging and important implications for practice and theory building.

To address this significant gap and to stimulate interest and future research on the topic, this panel session offers an in-depth discussion about consumer-brand relationship and engagement, consumers' anti-brand activism using social media, and implications for advertising practice and research.

Consumer Activism & Implications for Advertising

Shreya Mukherjee, Deutsch New York, New York, NY

The first panelist presented several industry cases related to the current consumer culture and consumers' anti-brand activism, including consumer backlash against Starbucks "Race Together," Dove's latest gender-empowering ad, and Ram Super Bowl ad using MLK quote. Then, the panelist shared her insights and questions about today's consumer relation. The presentation concluded with Important implications for advertising and marketing.

Brand Meaning as a Negotiated Social Process

Candice R. Hollenbeck, University of Georgia, Athens, GA

In an age of ubiquitous digital connectivity, brand meaning has become a negotiated social process. Whether a brand is loved or hated, brand meaning is collectively negotiated as a shared symbol of a cultural ideology. However, brand meaning can spiral downward when cultural tensions arise in society and the brand becomes a target for creating social change. In the same way loved brands symbolize positive cultural myths (e.g., Patagonia, environmental concerns), hated brands can symbolize areas for change and improvement (e.g., McDonald's, obesity epidemic). Here, the focus is on anti-brand communities and how empowered consumers can mobilize negative advertising toward a brand.

Forms of resistance to culturally constituted brand meanings resemble a continuum of responses, ranging from passive to active behaviors. The list of targeted brands continues to increase and includes well-known brands such as Wal-Mart, McDonald's Starbucks, ExxonMobil, Google, Apple, Facebook, Sea World, just to name a few. The impact of such consumer-led movements can be long-term and damaging for companies. As groups of consumers continue to negotiate brand meaning, companies will need to embrace more innovative forms of advertising. Citi Bank provides one example of success. After being tied to the financial crisis, Citi Bank listened to consumers' concerns and then used advertising funds to promote goodwill. Rather than relying on traditional forms of advertising, Citi Bank offered the first bike system in New York City, called Citi Bike, and the company's efforts have been praised by popular media sources as an advertising revolution (https://www.fastcompany.com/40428988/how-citi-bike-started-a-transportation-and-advertising-revolution).

Digital connectivity provides a way to study anti-branding efforts and the associated social, cultural, and ideological transformations. Virtual platforms created by consumers are changing the nature of communications. By listening to consumers, companies can push beyond traditional forms of advertising to embrace new ways of connecting with consumers. Consumers want authenticity and perceptions of authenticity lie in the eye of the beholder, the consumer. If viewed as a source for research and improvement, the anti-brand movement can help advertisers find ways to creatively add value to their brands, products, and services.

Love, Hate, & Brand Relationships in the Social Media Age

Jameson Hayes, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL

Brand activism has gained considerable traction due to heightened consumer ethical awareness and buying based on brand values. Extant research has focused largely on reasons for and consequences of brand love and hate (Batra, Ahuvia, and Bagozzi 2012; Zarantonello et al. 2016). Sometimes brands make mistakes and bring negative brand activism on themselves; other times consumers simply attract big brands simply because they are big brands. So, to some extent, brand haters are going to hate even if marketers do their jobs well. As such, it is important to understand how brands might protect themselves from anti-brand activism.

I would like to first offer a couple of observations. First, while it is provocative to use extreme language like brand love and hate, love and hate are simply two extremes of the spectrum of consumer-brand relationship strength. A small percentage of a brand's consumer base loves or hates the brand while the lion's share is in between those extremes. Second, anti-brand activism is largely exacerbated by social media wherein consumers can instantly share negative commentary about brands with huge networks of people with little effort. So, it seems reasonable, then, that understanding how brand relationships interact and exist in the digital space will produce insights into how anti-brand activism can be counteracted.

Digital engagement is behavioral manifestations of consumer-brand relationships (CBRs; e.g., van Doorn et al. 2010). CBRs manifest themselves online by driving positive eWOM from consumers while leading consumers to resist negativity regarding brands with which strong relationships exist (Hayes, King, and Ramirez 2016; Wallace, Buil, and de Chernatony 2014). The implication is that the best way to combat anti-brand activism online is to utilize digital engagement to build strong enough relationships with our consumers that the brand, with the help of its consumers, can fend off negative attacks.

As such, there is a lot left to understand about the how to build and leverage CBRs in the digital space. What exactly is the nature of CBR building through digital engagement? Can digital engagement activities be used to ascribe lasting brand associations and personalities to brands? What are the relational consequences of digital engagement behaviors both for brand relationships and interpersonal relationships intertwined in the interactions? How do platform effects influence CBRs? These are just a few big questions to research moving forward should consider when examining the brand relationship's ability to combat anti-brand activism.

#ConsumerActivism in the Age of Social Media: Implications for Managing Crisis and Brand Reputation

Joon Soo Lim, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY

In this presentation, Lim discussed the theoretical underpinnings for the new wave of consumer activism powered by social media. He argued that the most widely cited research (e.g., Klein, Smith, and John 2004; Sen, Gurhan-Canli, and Morwitz 2001) has explained consumer activism by psychological and economic factors, such as involvement, counterarguments, perceived efficacy, estimated participation, susceptibility, and self-enhancement, that affect consumers' boycotting behaviors. Arguing that this line of research identifying the moderating factors is based on the rational behavior paradigm, which may not explain the online consumer activism in the 21st century. Lim noted that utilizing social media has been a game changer in consumer activism by empowering the active consumers in organizing online protests, drawing media attention and making a difference by pressuring the brands to take a responsible action. In this changing social/mobile environment, consumer activism has become more frequent and easier to organize.

From a theoretical point of view, Lim asserted the role of emotions in propelling the consumer boycotts. He noted that consumers these days call for boycotts over egregious corporate behaviors, as well as various types of irresponsible behaviors such as culturally/racially insensitive ads, sponsorship of controversial figures/organizations, and brand safety issues. He suggested that online consumer activism can be well explained by appraisal theories of emotions, regardless of the issues or its targets. He further proposed the appraisal-emotion-behavior (AEB) model that thinks of the boycotts as a coping behavior in response to negative emotions elicited by the appraisals of the egregious or irresponsible corporate behaviors. In the appraisal of egregious and irresponsible corporate behaviors, he suggested that appraisals on moral values play a significant role in evoking emotions of contempt, anger, and disgust, or CAD (Rozin et al. 1999). In conclusion, Lim discussed the managerial implications of online consumer activism from the issues, reputation, and (para)crisis management perspectives (Lim 2017).

Global Brands in China: Changing Consumer-Brand Relationships

Kineta Hung, Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong

Chinese consumers, as consumers elsewhere, use brands to help define their social identity. To the rising middle class, international brands are not only an indication of quality products but they are also status symbols and an indication of the users' sophistication. This special brand-consumer relationship has an unexpected negative impact on the general public. Regardless of the quality and appeal of the brand, members of the public who do not like the current brand users would allow their emotions and prejudices to affect their brand perceptions, thus resulting in anti-brand sentiments. This concept of disidentification, or brand-hate by an out-group (non-customers), has been documented with empirical evidence (Karlsson and Rodrigues 2015).

In China, the disidentification consumer-brand relationship is most evident in global luxury brands. Although the *nouveau-riche* or *tuhao* accounts for just about 30% of luxury users, their outrageous attitudes and showing-off behaviors have spread to affect the perceptions of specific luxury brands (e.g., Louis Vuitton) and the general public's attitude towards these brands. Further, some of these brands are ridiculed by netizens, who create "ads" for these brands that are widely viralled and joked at. Although the people who dislike these specific luxury brands are non-consumers of the brands, their perceptions and impacts cannot be ignored to ensure the brands' long-term viability in this market.

For many fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), the niche strategy that was originally adopted to enter China many years earlier is no longer effective. Instead, a localization strategy is adopted to appeal to the growing middle class. This strategy when adopted consistently can be so successful that for selected brands such as Olay, even Chinese consumers who prefer to buy local would continue to buy these brands as they thought they were local brands. Thus, global brands are faced with a double-edged sword in China. They could appeal even more strongly to the niche market and strengthen their bond with this segment or they could localize and broaden their appeal to include the growing middle class. Implications on global brands' communication strategy were discussed.

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WALK THE TALK! INSIGHTS INTO EMPLOYEES´ EVALUATION OF THE AUTHENTICITY OF THEIR COMPANY´S CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSBILITY (CSR) ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

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Abstract

We analyze drivers of employees´ evaluation of the authenticity of their company's corporate social responsibility (CSR) engagement and communication. Three key drivers of employees´ authenticity evaluations are included: Attitude towards the CSR advertisements, perceived corporate culture fit and evaluation of the perceived underlying CSR motives (selfish versus unselfish, economically versus non-economically induced). Additionally, the impact of employees´ involvement in CSR and the CSR dimension (customer-oriented, employee-oriented, environmental, and philanthropic) are investigated. Findings from a study with the employees (n=432) of an European energy provider suggest that the attitude towards the CSR advertisements and the perceived corporate culture fit have a higher impact on employees´ authenticity evaluations than the perceived CSR motives. Moreover, findings reveal that employees´ involvement in CSR diminishes the influence of attitude towards the CSR advertising, but strengthens the influence of perceived corporate culture fit on employees' evaluation that the company's CSR efforts are authentic. Interestingly, with increasing involvement in CSR, the perceived underlying CSR motives become less important. Some differences were found in the relationships depending on the four CSR dimensions. Implications for advertising, CSR practice, and internal communication are derived and limitations are addressed.

HOW DO ULTRA-ORTHODOX SHOP ONLINE? ADVERTISING AND PURCHASE BEHAVIOR AMONG RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

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Osnat Roth-Cohen, Ariel University

Abstract

The current study uses an innovation resistance perspective and domestication theory as frameworks for analyzing trends of Internet adoption and online purchasing behavior in Israel's Ultra-Orthodox community over the past decade. This research wishes to reveal and emphasis Ultra-Orthodox's role as a major potential target audience to various on-line advertisers and discuss the growing importance of micro audience. During the last decade, rates of Internet access and online advertising and purchasing have continued to increase in the Ultra-Orthodox community. However, users in this group (similar to other religious groups in Israel) have yet to fully utilize the potential of online shopping. The odds ratio in Internet adoption and online shopping over time among the Ultra-Orthodox were higher, compared to other religiosity groups. Our findings show that socio-demographic characteristics are effective for tracking Ultra-Orthodox Internet adoption. However, the power of these characteristics to differentiate Internet usage behaviors is much lower. Due to the linked processes of Internet domestication, increasing connectivity, and utilitarian Internet use the Ultra-Orthodox community may be considered an attractive target audience for online advertisers.

WHEN AND WHY CONSUMERS FORGIVE BRAND TRANSGRESSIONS

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Abstract

Inspired by moral licensing theory, the current research attempted to identify when and why a brand's prior moral behaviors increase consumers' willingness to excuse — license — subsequent brand transgressions. Self-brand connection (SBC) and ambiguity of transgressions were proposed as important factors influencing consumers' forgiveness on brand transgressions. We found that when participants were given (vs. not given) information about a brand's prior moral behaviors, they forgave the brand's subsequent ambiguous moral transgressions more regardless of levels of SBC. However, when brand transgressions were perceived to be blatant, only high SBC participants forgave the transgressions, while low SBC participants were reluctant to forgive the transgressions in the presence (vs. absence) of the brand's prior moral behaviors. The findings shed light on different paths to moral licensing in the eyes of observers at the brand level.

VIRTUAL NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCES: THE IMPACT OF MORTALITY SALIENCE ON BRAND PREFERENCES

Sun Joo (Grace) Ahn and Jung Min Hahm, University of Georgia

Abstract

This study examined the impacts of near-death experiences in virtual worlds on brand evaluations in the context of advertising. Guided by the terror management theory and excitation transfer theory, a 2 (threat: virtual threat vs. no threat) x 2 (involvement: high vs. low) experiment (*N* = 106) was conducted. Results indicated that virtual threat promoted self-brand closeness for high involvement brands. Mediation analysis revealed that (a) virtual threat led to high anxiety, (b) anxiety then let to greater arousal, and (c) high arousal was linearly associated with self-brand closeness. Implications and future research of the virtual near-death or fatal experiences on consumer decision making are discussed.

DO CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS BENEFIT LUXURY BRANDING?

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Abstract

This study empirically investigates the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement for luxury brands, compared to that of non-celebrity endorsements. Two separate 2 (celebrity vs. non-celebrity) x 2 (luxury vs. non-luxury brand) between-subjects design of experiments are conducted based on female college students and average female consumers, respectively. The results consistently show that celebrity endorsements are more effective than non-celebrity endorsements only with respect to attitudes toward ad, but not with respect to brand luxuriousness, brand attitudes, purchase intention, and estimated product price in the ad. A structural equation model identifies the significance of congruence in generating brand luxuriousness. It is also revealed that consumers who have greater previous experiences tend to perceive reduced value from a product in the luxury ad.

WHEN SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS ENDORSE BRANDS: THE EFFECTS OF SELF-INFLUENCER CONGRUENCE, PARASOCIAL IDENTIFICATION, AND PERCEIVED ENDORSER MOTIVES

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Introduction

A recent trip to China reminded me the ubiquitous presence of social media in people's lives. In addition to having the world's biggest netizens– 751 million internet users, China has the world's most active environment for social media (CNNIC, 2017). According to eMarketer's latest forecast, more than 600 million people will access to social networking sites (SNSs) regularly in 2017, from traditional video sites like Youku and PandaTV, to micro-messaging and communication platforms like WeChat and Sina Weibo. A McKinsey survey of 5,700 internet users in China found that 95 percent of users were registered on one SNS site and 91 percent of respondents visited a SNS site in the previous six months, compared with 67 percent in the United States (Chiu, Lin and Silverman, 2017). The recent expansion of SNSs into the areas of payment, shopping, healthcare and financial service, have complicated, yet enriched the social media landscape in China. In recent years, *wang hong* (网红) – a growing group of social media influencers who focus on turning their online fame into an actual business, have increasingly become key opinion leaders in China's SNSs.

Social media influencers are referred to as people who have built a sizeable social network of people following them (De Veirman, Cauberghe and Hudders, 2017). Recent literature suggested that social media influencers are distinguished from traditional celebrities as influencers on social media are perceived significantly more trustworthy and similar to SNS users (Gräve, 2017). China's social media influencers are similar to their western counterparts in many aspects. First, they are content producers with a large number of followers. Like the famous YouTuber PewDiePie who has more than 57 million subscribers, one of China's most popular social media influencer-Papi Jiang has gathered 44 million followers cross multiple platforms, who is best known for her satirical videos mocking everyday life, relationships and social issues. Second, these social media influencers are persuasive opinion leaders who have strong effects on consumer decision-making process (Escalas and Bettman, 2017). A product recommendation is perceived as more authentic and credible when it is communicated by a social media influencer compared to when it is generated by an advertiser. Marketers have recognized the power of social media influencers and focused on these influencers to endorse brands and products targeting their followers. Fashion bloggers and twin sisters MiuMiu & Viviandan, who have 6.3 million followers on Sina Weibo, were the spokesperson for Maybelline New York targeting Chinese consumers in 2014. However, social media influencers (or *Wang Hong*) in China came with their unique characteristics compared to western counterparts due to a much fragmented social landscape in China. Restriction on foreign websites and social media such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube has resulted in a flourishing home-grown social landscape on which Chinese-owned properties thrive and expand. An Ogilvy's report (2015) indicated thirty-six major SNSs in China that own a significant amount of users. Consumers can no longer be reached by one or two dominant social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, but require a handful overlapping platforms that are in constant flux. A more fragmented and dynamic social media ecosystem requires influencers and opinion leaders to be able to manage and produce content catering various audience segments cross different SNS platforms.

Yet there is a scarcity of research investigating the rich phenomena of social media influencers in China and their potential impact on SNS users. Recent literature has primarily focused on the uses and gratification of SNSs among Chinese netizens (Hu, Yan and Hu, 2015; Chen and Haley, 2010), providing limited practical implications for brands and companies who want to connect with their consumers on SNSs. Given the prevalence of social media usage among consumers in China and the rise of social media endorsements, it is important to understand the effects of social media influencers and their product endorsements on consumers.

This study aims to examine SNSs usage among Chinese consumers, to what extent they identify with social media influencers, and the characteristics that make a social media influencer an effective endorser. We started by investigating the effects of a match between a consumer's perception of the social media influencer and his/her own ideal self-concept on the advertising effectiveness of influencers' posts. In particular, the effectiveness in terms of engagement with brands on SNSs, attitude towards the branded content generated by a social media influencer, and consumer purchase intention. Finally, the moderating and mediating functions of identification and perceived sponsor motives on the effectiveness of social media influencers were also investigated in this study.

Theoretical Background

Effectiveness of Brand Endorsement

The effectiveness of brand endorsement is well documented in the literature (Amos, Holmes and Strutton 2008; Bergkvist and Zhou 2016; Ohanian 1990; Petty, Cacioppo and Schumann 1983), providing insights into the source effects, the underlying endorsement processes, and the conditions under which the effects may be strengthened. Focusing on the qualities of an endorser, the *source-credibility model* and the *source-attractiveness model* suggest that the credibility of an endorser has a beneficial effect on consumers' acceptance of a message. Source credibility is commonly evaluated based on three dimensions: *expertise* refers to the extent to which a communicator is perceived by consumers as a source of valid assertions (Hovland, Janis and Kelley 1953); *trustworthiness* is the integrity and believability of a communicator (Erdogan 1999); and *attractiveness* is about the impact of the similarity, familiarity and liking of a communicator on the effectiveness of a message (McGuire 1985). While the extant literature has provided support for the importance of source credibility in brand endorsement research, this approach has been criticized in that it considers the persuasiveness of an endorser an autonomous from the endorsed brand/product and overlooks other factors in the endorsement process (McCracken 1989).

Through the lens of *associative learning* (Anderson 1976; Rumelhart, Hinton and McClelland 1986), researchers found that the use of an endorser works as a positive associative link that transfers positive feelings about the endorser to the endorsed brand/product (Keller 1993; Till and Shimp 1998). Similarly, the *meaning transfer model* (McCracken 1989) asserts that an endorser provides symbolic meanings to a brand/product via the associations consumers hold regarding the endorser. The cherished attributes and symbolic meanings can then be acquired by consumers through consumption as part of their self-image construction (Escalas and Bettman 2005; McCracken 1989). The difference in the meaning transfer process is in part due to the match between the endorser and the endorsed brand/product in terms of images and cultural meanings (McCracken 1989).

In support of that view, the *match-up hypothesis* delineates that when a *fit* exists between the image of an endorser and the image of a brand/product, consumers are likely to form positive evaluations toward the message and the brand/product (Kamins 1990). For example, when an endorser's physical attractiveness is congruent with an attractiveness related product (e.g., cosmetics), the match-up effect is likely to be evident (Kahle and Homer 1985). That is, the merit of the endorser-product matching information increases in the fit condition and, therefore, influence consumer evaluation as it is relative to consumers' existing knowledge structures and helps them adapt to the environment (Lynch and Schuler 1994). Koernig and Page (2012) applied the match-up hypothesis to services marketing and found that the match-up effect is significant only when the attractiveness level of a service provider is congruent with consumer expectations for the type of service. Adding to the general belief of "what is beautiful is good," the empirical findings suggest that what is *expected* and *appropriate* regarding the endorser-product association are also important for enhancing the persuasiveness of brand endorsement (Wright 2016). As endorsers and brands/products can match up with regard to a wide range of attributes, extant research has examined the congruency of expertise (Till and Busler 2000), trustworthiness (Kamins and Gupta 1994), attractiveness (Kahle and Homer 1985), personality (Batra and Homer 2004), and more. There are also other factors (e.g., cultural values) that may play an important role in determining endorser matchup effects (Choi, Lee and Kim 2005).

The Effect of Self-Influencer Congruence

While most literature has focused on the endorser-product association, Choi and Rifon (2012) argued that consumers' relationship to an endorser is another important dimension of brand endorsement configuration. Because endorsers often represent referents that have significant relevance upon consumers' evaluations, aspirations or behavior (Escalas and Bettman 2005), they are likely to motivate consumers' acceptance or desire to consume endorsed brands and products as a way to obtain endorser-conveyed meanings and associations. Considering that consumers are likely to emulate the attitudes and behavior of endorsers to be like them (Kelman 1961), and they use brands and products as a means by which they express and enhance their self-concepts (Sirgy 1982), Choi and Rifon (2012) found that the congruence between consumers' ideal self-image and a celebrity endorser's image significantly led to favorable consumer attitude toward the ad and increased purchase intention. However, the congruence between the celebrity endorser and the endorsed product only directly influenced consumers' attitude toward the ad.

Applied to the current context, it is reasonable to expect that self-influencer image congruence may serve as a motivational framework in the same fashion that influences consumer engagement with branded social media content, their evaluations toward the messages, and purchase intentions. The hypothesis is therefore put forth:

> **Hypothesis 1**: Consumers' higher degree of self-influencer congruence will lead to a) higher level of engagement with branded content, b) more favorite attitude toward branded content, and c) greater purchase intention.

Parasocial Identification

In addition to exerting influences on evaluative outcomes regarding brands/products (Choi and Rifon 2012; Kelman 1961), the congruence between a celebrity endorser's image and consumers' self-concept may even drive consumers to form parasocial identification, an imaginary relationship, with the endorser (Choi and Rifon 2007). Apart from social identification, which is the internalization process through which individuals identify with a social group (Tajfel and Turner 1986), parasocial identification is defined as the seeming face-to-face and one-side quasi-interactions between a media viewer and a media character (Horton and Wohl 1956). Media viewers "know such a persona in somewhat the same way they know their chosen friends: through direct observation and interpretation of his appearance, his gestures and voice, his conversation and conduct in a variety of situations" (p. 216). Parasocial identification pertains to the imagined interactions between a media viewer and a human character appeared in the media, which leads to the formation of parasocial relationships (Rubin and Perse 1987).

According to Nordlund (1978), if individuals whose primary needs for companionship or interpersonal interactions are unfulfilled to a reasonable extent in their social life, they are likely to fulfill these needs in alternative means. The performance of parasocial identification is thus legitimized by the assumption that individuals employ the same cognitive processes to evaluate media characters as they do to other people in everyday life (Rubin and Perse 1987). McQuail et al. (1972) suggest that a media viewer first determines the personality of a media character and then regards him or her as a surrogate of social relationships. With this regard, the motive to compensate for loneliness and the dependency on media usage both drive a media viewer to exhibit one-sided parasocial identification with a media character (Giles 2002; Giles and Maltby 2004).

Based on Bandura's (1986) social-cognitive theory, moreover, initiation of the identification process is due to the perceived image-congruence between an individual and a model, including celebrity, TV personality, or social media influencer, to name a few. Driven by the self-esteem motivation to enhance the ideal self, an individual would conform to the behavior and attitude endorsed by a model when they find the model's image resonant with theirs (Basil 1996; Choi and Rifon 2007). In the same vein, the performance of parasocial identification with media characters in traditional media could also happen in social media, given the interactivity that consumers nowadays are able not only to closely follow but also immediately interact with media characters such as social media influencers (Labrecque 2014). The repetitive contact with social media influencers could thus facilitate and foster parasocial identification. As such, the hypothesis is postulated:

> **Hypothesis 2**: Consumers' higher degree of self-influencer congruence will lead to greater parasocial identification with the social media influencer.

Previous research, on the one hand, has documented the effects of identification with celebrity endorsers on consumer behavior specific to social media contexts (Hung 2014; Jin and Phua 2014). Early research on traditional media, on the other hand, has demonstrated the mediating role of parasocial identification in determining how consumers enact a modeled behavior suggested by a celebrity (Basil 1996). Taken together, it is reasonable to argue that parasocial identification would correspondingly mediate the effects of self-influencer congruence on brand outcomes. The following hypothesis is proposed:

> **Hypothesis 3:** Consumers' parasocial identification with the social media influencer will mediate the relationship between self-influencer congruence and a) engagement with branded content, b) attitude toward branded content, and c) purchase intention, respectively.

Perceived Endorser Motive

Perceived endorser motive is another critical factor influencing the effectiveness of brand endorsement. It focuses on whether consumers perceive endorser motives as either being altruistic or self-serving (Drumwright, 1996). From an attributional perspective, previous research revealed that consumers exhibit correspondent inferences when evaluating celebrity endorsed advertisements although they are less likely to have a specific knowledge of what the endorser actually set to achieve (Kelley, 1972; Sparkman, 1982; Cronley, et al 1999). Consumers seek to determine the cause or motive for the endorser's willingness to be associated with the product. According to Heider (1958), there are two plausible causes for an endorser's promotion of a product: (1) personal factors internal to the endorser (intrinsic motive), and (2) situational factors external to the endorser (extrinsic motive). When consumers infer monetary incentives as the motivating factor for product endorsement from social media influencers (extrinsic motive), subsequently they will discount the intrinsic motive behind the brand endorsement, such as his or her belief in the qualities or features of the product (Kelley, 1972).

In the current context, while consumers are unlikely to have any knowledge regarding a social media influencer's actual motivation for endorsing a product or brand, however, they could infer a variety of motives. For example, consumers may infer that a social media influencer is seeking to enhance their image, reputation, or popularity by associating with a well-known brand or company. Second, consumers may believe these social media influencers are genuinely concern the welfare of their followers. They may also infer that those influencers care about getting helpful information to their followers. Additionally, a social media influencer may try to persuade followers to purchase endorsed products. Consistent with attribution theory, it is expected that perceived self-serving motive will discount the influence of parasocial identification on consumers' evaluation of the endorsement.

> **Hypothesis 4:** The relationship between parasocial identification and a) engagement with branded content, b) attitude toward branded content, and c) purchase intention, respectively, will be stronger for consumers who perceive less self-serving motive and weaker for those who perceive more self-serving motive.

Previous literature has documented the effect of endorser-brand congruence on brand attitude was moderated by perceived endorser motives. Kim, Lee and Kim (2017) found that perceived sponsor motives enhance the relationship between the attitude toward brand and behavioral intention. Rifon et al (2004) focused on perceived altruistic motives by examining the moderating influence of altruistic motive between the congruence effects on sponsor credibility. Consistent with these findings, it is reasonable to expect that a lack of congruence between an endorser's image and consumer's ideal self-image would stimulate cognitive evaluation about motive of the endorsement (Hastie, 1984), which leads to greater resistance towards the persuasive messages (Petty and Cacioppo, 1981). Therefore, we hypothesize that perceived endorser motive will moderate the influence of self-influencer congruence on the evaluation outcomes.

> **Hypothesis 5**: Perceived self-serving motive will moderate the indirect effect of self-influencer congruence on a) engagement with branded content, b) attitude toward branded the content, and c) purchase intention, respectively, through parasocial identification.

Methods

Data Collection

An online survey was conducted with adult social media users in China who were recruited by a Chinese marketing research firm. The questionnaire was developed first in English and then translated into Chinese. Back-translation was conducted by a bilingual third party company to endure the accuracy of translation. To achieve a presentative sample that can best capture social media usage in China, a national sample was recruited with respondents from different age groups, genders, regions, city size, and education level. The screening questions asked the respondents if they were active social media users and if they were following any influencers on social networking sites (SNSs). They were also asked to list their favorite social media influencers or the one they followed most frequently. Respondents who were not active SNS users or were not following any social media influencers were excluded from analysis. The identified Internet celebrities were cross-checked with a list of the most influential Internet celebrities in China published by the *Internet Week* Magazine in 2016. The cases wherein web celebrity was incorrectly identified were excluded from the sample.

Sample Characteristics

A total of 513 valid responses were collected between January 2017 and April 2017. Respondents are from 33 provinces across mainland China including Tier 1 cities such as Beijing and Shanghai, as well as Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities such as Hefei, Hangzhou and Anshan. The geographic location of all respondents is shown in Figure 1.

According to a 2015 report published by China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), the majority of social media users is under 50 years old. Our sample characteristic is consistent with this observation (18-34 years old = 412, 80.3%; 35-54 years old = 101, 19.7%) with a higher percentage of females (322 females, 62.8%). Compared with average internet users in China (CNNIC, 2015), our respondents are more educated (97% versus 42% with bachelor degree or more) and are more actively involved with SNSs: 56% of respondents have actively used more than three SNSs, and on average they spent 15.76 hours per week on social media. The top three most frequently used SNSs are WeChat (90.4%), Sina Weibo (85.6%) and QQ Zone (60.2%). Respondents indicated that smartphone is the major electronic device used to access SNSs (18.1% laptop users, 4.3% tablet users, and 77.4% smartphone users). Complete demographic details are provided in Table 1.

Measures

Parasocial Identification

The measures in this study were adapted from prior research. Parasocial identification was measured using 12 items from Schramm and Hartman (2008)'s identification with media characters scale, on 7-point Likert-type scales, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Respondents were asked to think about the social media influencer they listed previously while answering the questions. Items included "I carefully follow the behavior of this social media influencer," "I am aware of the aspects of this influencer that I really like," "I would like to know people who are similar to this influencer," "I hardly ever think about why this social media influencer does certain things he or she does," "I often wonder if this influencer is similar to me or not." The 12 items were summed to create a parasocial identification scale (Cronbach's α = 86.6).

Self-Influencer Congruence

To assess the congruence between social media influencer's image and respondents' ideal image, participants were first asked to rate the image of social media influencer they identified on a 7-point, 15-item, bipolar scale on attributed adopted from Choi and Rifon's study (2012). The image dimensions were rugged-delicate, excitable-claim, uncomfortable-comfortable, dominating-submissive, thrifty-indulgent, pleasant-unpleasant, contemporary-noncontemporary, organized-unorganized, rational-emotional, youthful-mature, formal-informal, orthodox-liberal, complex-simple, colorless-colorful, and modest-vain. These semantic differential scales have been considered and effective in related research (Sirgy, 1982). Consumer's ideal self-image was measured at the end of the questionnaire followed by demographic questions. The ideal self scale was identical to the influencer image scale for the purpose of obtaining a congruity index score by comparing the ratings of the same dimensions. The index of congruity between social media influencer's image and consumer's self-image (I_{index}) was obtained using the absolute-difference formula suggested by previous literature (Ericksen, 1997; Sirgy, 1985) where $I_{celebrity}$ = perceived celebrity image, I_{self} = ideal self-image of the respondent.

$$I_{index} = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \left| I_{celebrity} - I_{self} \right|$$

Perceived Endorser Motives

Rifon et al's (2004) scale was adopted by this study to measure consumer perceived endorser motives in social media context. Respondent were asked to indicate their feelings toward the following six statements based on 7-point Likert-type scales ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). These statements included: 1) social media influencers recommend brands because ultimately they care about their followers; 2) social media influencers do not genuine concerns for the welfare of their followers; 3) social media influencers really care about getting useful information to their followers; 4) social media influencers recommend brands to persuade me to buy their products; 5) social media influencers recommend brands because ultimately they care about their profits; 6) social media influencers recommend brands to creative a positive self-image. (Cronbach's α = .916).

Dependent Measures

The scale for attitude toward brand-related posts generated by social media influencers was adaptation of the attitude toward advertising scale developed by Muehling (1987). Three seven-point semantic differential items indicated SNS users' attitudinal responses to brand-related post on social media generated by an influencer: "bad/good," "negative/positive", and "unfavorable/favorable." According to Schivinski, Christodoulides, and Dabrowski (2016), consumer's engagement with brand-related social media content was measured by the following six statements based on 7-point Likert-type scales ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). These statements included 1) I read posts, including texts, pictures, videos, related to the brand, 2) I comment on posts related to the brand, 3) I share posts related to the brand, 4) I "like" posts related to the brand, 5) I create posts about the brand. Purchase intention toward advertised brand was measured by the following three statements based on 7-point Likert-type scales ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). These statements included 1) I am considering purchasing the brand, 2) It is likely that I will buy the brand, and 3) I am likely to make future purchases of the brand. The Cronbach's α for the dependent measures are .851 for attitude, .874 for engagement, and .907 for purchase intention.

Results

Data Analysis

The resulting self-influencer congruence scores represents the sum of the distances perceived by a consumer between his or her ideal self-image and the social media influencer's image identified by the same consumer, across all characteristics measured. The self-influencer congruence index score ranged from 0 to 58 with a mean of 16.27, a standard deviation of 8.53, and a median of 15. This indicates that the smaller the self-influencer congruence index score, the more congruent the individual perceives the social media influencer compared to his or her ideal image.

Pearson correlation analyses were performed to understand the relationships among variables. The results of the correlational analyses presented in Table 2 show that all correlations were statistically significant.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses 1(a) to 2 were tested with a path analysis using AMOS 7. The first set of hypotheses examined the direct effects of self-influencer congruence on engagement with brand on SNSs (H1a), attitude toward the branded content (H1b) purchase intention (H1c), and parasocial identification (H2). The results indicated that self-influencer congruence exerted significant influence on attitude toward branded content (β = - .18, $p < .01$), engagement with brand on SNSs (β = - .24, $p < .01$), purchase intention (β = -. 24, $p< .01$), and parasocial identification (β = -. 29, $p < .01$). It should be noticed that a negative coefficient β indicated a positive relationship between self-influencer congruence and attitude, engagement, purchase intention, and parasocial identification. As explained earlier, a smaller value of self-influencer congruence index should be interpreted as having a higher degree of congruence between consumer's ideal self-image and the perceived image of a social media influencer. Therefore, H1a, H1b, H1c and H2 were supported.

***Tests of mediation effects*.**

In order to test H3, the mediating role of parasocial identification in the effect of self-influencer congruence on brand outcomes, three mediator models with each of the brand outcomes were estimated respectively. The bootstrapping procedure (5,000 samples) with model 4 of the PROCESS macro was employed (Hayes 2013). For H3a, the model (F (2, 510) = 226.52, $p < .001$) showed that the direct effect of self-influencer congruence on engagement with branded content was not significant (β = -.03, 95% CI = -.09 to .03), but the indirect effect through parasocial identification was significant (β = -.20, 95% CI = -.26 to -.14). A full mediation was found and supported H3a. For H3b, the model (F (2, 510) = 116.85, $p < .001$) showed that the direct effect of self-influencer congruence on attitude toward the branded content was not significant (β = -.004, 95% CI = -.03 to .02), but the indirect effect through parasocial identification was significant (β = -.16, 95% CI = -.21 to -.12). A full mediation was found and supported H3b. For H3c, the model (F(2, 510) = 60.94, $p < .001$) showed that both the direct effect of self-influencer congruence on attitude toward the branded content (β = -.05, 95% CI = -.08 to -.02) and the indirect effect through parasocial identification (β = -.11, 95% CI = -.16 to -.07) were significant. A partial mediation was found, which supported H3c.

***Tests of moderating effects*.**

H4 proposed the moderating role of perceived self-serving motive in the effect of parasocial identification on brand outcomes. H5 proposed the moderating role of perceived sponsor motive in the indirect effect of self-influencer congruence on brand outcomes through parasocial identification. As such, H4 and H5 were tested simultaneously using the bootstrapping procedure (5,000 samples) with model 14 of the PROCESS macro (Hayes 2013). Three mediator models with each of the brand outcomes were estimated respectively. For H4a, the model demonstrated that the interaction between parasocial identification and perceived sponsor motive on engagement with branded content was significant (β = -.02, $p < .001$). Post-hoc probing revealed that the less perceived self-serving motive led to a stronger relationship between parasocial identification and engagement with branded content, and vice versa. H4a was thus supported. For H5a, the estimates of each indirect effect were investigated separately for a range of values of the perceived sponsor motive moderator ($\beta_{one\ SD\ \text{below the mean}}$ = -.17, 95% CI = -.23 to -.12; β_{mean} = -.14, 95% CI = -.19 to -.10; $\beta_{one\ SD\ \text{above the mean}}$ = -.12, 95% CI = -.16 to -.08). None of the 95% confidence intervals included zero, indicating perceived sponsor motive as a significant moderator in the indirect effect of self-influencer congruence on engagement with branded content through parasocial identification. H5a was also supported.

For H4b, the model showed no interaction between parasocial identification and perceived sponsor motives on attitude toward the branded content (β = -.002, p = .32). For H5b, however, the estimates of each indirect effect for a range of values of the perceived sponsor motive moderator ($\beta_{one\ SD\ \text{below the mean}}$ = -.05, 95% CI = -.06 to -.03; β_{mean} = -.04, 95% CI = -.06 to -.03; $\beta_{one\ SD\ \text{above the mean}}$ = -.04, 95% CI = -.06 to -.03) were significant. H5b was supported. Similarly, for H4c, the model showed no interaction between parasocial identification and perceived sponsor motive on purchase intention (β = -.001, p = .70). For H5c, the estimates of each indirect effect for a range of values of the perceived sponsor motive moderator ($\beta_{one\ SD\ \text{below the mean}}$ = -.04, 95% CI = -.06 to -.02; β_{mean} = -.04, 95% CI = -.05 to -.02; $\beta_{one\ SD\ \text{above the mean}}$ = -.03, 95% CI = -.06 to -.02) were significant. H5c was supported.

Discussion

Using influencers to promote products and brands on SNSs have become an increasingly important strategy among marketers and advertisers. According to eConsultancy, almost 60% of fashion and beauty brands have an influencer marketing strategy in place, with a future 21% plan to invest in it over the next year (Simpson, 2016). A recent survey indicated that 84% of marketers indicated they would launch at least one influencer campaign within the next twelve months (eMarketer, 2017). In a recent study conducted by Twitter, it was revealed that nearly 40% of Twitter users said they have made a purchase as a direct result of a Tweet from an influencer, showing the direct impact of influencer marketing on sales (Swant, 2016). Unlike mainstream celebrities, influencers are believed to be accessible, believable, intimate and easy to relate to (Watts and Dodds, 2007; Lyons and Henderson, 2005). Consistent with this observation, previous study found that social media influencers are perceived as more favorable regarding trustworthiness and similarity to oneself compared to traditional celebrities (Gräve, 2017). As influencers' endorsements are highly personal, catering to a specific group of audiences – their followers, it is less likely to trigger persuasion knowledge or consider as intrusive and disruptive. However, it remains uncertain to what extent consumers identify with social media influencers and the characters that make a social media influencer an effective brand endorser.

To fill this gap, the present study explores the effects of self-influencer congruence on brand engagement, brand attitude and purchase intention in China's dynamic social media context. The perceived motives of social media influencer's endorsement behavior, parasocial identification with the social media influencer, and their roles in the endorsement process were examined. The results of this study suggest that a high degree of congruence between the image of a social media influencer and the consumer's ideal self-image leads to effective endorsement outcomes. When a social media influencer's image is congruent with consumer's ideal self-image, consumers are more likely to engage with brand on SNSs, develop favorable brand attitude, and influence purchase decisions. These findings are consistent with previous literature in suggesting a positive influence of a self-endorser match-up on product evaluation and judgement (Choi and Rifon, 2012).

Previous studies have documented the imagined interactions between a media viewer and a human character appeared in the traditional media (Rubin and Perse, 1987). In the same vein, the findings indicated that the performance of parasocial identification could also happen in social media context. Despite the reality of not truly knowing influencers, consumers feel as if they do know them intimately through interactions on social media, forming the interpersonal relationships with them. The present study found that a higher degree of self-influencer congruence lead to greater parasocial identification with the social media influencer. In addition, consumers' parasocial identification mediates the relationship between self-influencer congruence and endorsement effectiveness. These findings explain how endorsement works in the current social media context. According to social cognitive theory, identification occurs when individuals confirm to the attitude or behavior advocated by influencers on social media. When consumers find an influencer's image desirable and resonant, they may aspire to be like the influencer through purchasing and using the product endorsed by the influencer to enhance their ideal self-image.

Additionally, this study contributes to the endorsement literature by identifying the roles of perceived endorser motives in consumer response to influencer's endorsement. The results of the present study suggest that consumer assessments of influencer's motives functions as a moderator in influencing the relationship between parasocial identification and endorsement effectiveness. Parasocial identification exerts greater influence on engagement, attitude and purchase intention when consumers infer less self-serving motives from the influencer's endorsement behavior. This finding can be explained by the elaboration likelihood model (ELM), in that those who have a low engagement level toward the persuasive message are likely to be influenced by peripheral cues, such as spokespersons in ads (Petty, Cacioppo and Schumann, 1983). Skepticism toward the influencer's motive in endorsing a brand enhances information processing (Rifon et al., 2004). When consumer consider why social media influencers endorse products or brands, it may generate more thought processing and therefore pay more attention to the arguments in the persuasive messages. However, when consumers infer less endorser motives, they are more likely to rely on peripheral cues, such as an endorser's image, when evaluating a persuasive message. Moreover, another important contribution of this research is the demonstration that the moderating function of perceived endorser motives on the effect of self-influencer congruence works through the parasocial identification. Perceived endorser motives were found to indirectly moderate the effect of self-influencer congruence on brand engagement, attitude and purchase through its direct impact the effect of parasocial identification. This finding enriches the current endorsement literature by explaining how endorsement works and its influence on brand evaluations.

Apart from its important findings, the study has limitations that need to be addressed. Frist, we measured the self-influencer congruence by using a "difference score". Criticisms of difference scores have mostly centered on issues associated with its reliability and validity. For instances, Cronbach (1958) argued against the use of profile similarity measures in perception research. Johns (1981) criticized researchers for using any type of simple difference or profile similarity measure. Therefore, an alternative measure for self-influencer congruence might be adopted for future research. Second, this study investigates the discrepancy between an influencer's image and consumer's ideal self-image. However, previous literature suggests that there are several kinds of self-concept, future studies should examine if a congruity between an influencer's image and consumer's other domains of self. Additionally, this study focused on the self-serving motive and its influence on the endorsement effectiveness. Other motivations should be examined by future research such as altruistic motive. Finally, our study employed self-reported survey questionnaire among SNS users while different research methods (e.g. experiments) might be used to explore the relationships between constructs that we have identified.

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Figure 1

Geographical distribution of the Respondents

Table 1

Demographic Profile

	Percentage	Frequency	M (SD)
Gender			
Male	37.2	191	
Female	62.8	322	
Age			
18-34	80.3	412	
35-54	19.7	101	
Education			
High school or below	2.1	11	
Bachelor's degree	87.1	447	
Postgraduate degree	10.7	55	
Average hours spent on social media			15.76 (9.932)
Electronic devices used to access SNSs			
Laptop	18.1	93	
Tablet	4.3	22	
Smartphone	77.4	397	
How many SNSs do you actively use?			
1-3	43.6	223	
4-6	47	241	
7 or more	9.6	49	
How many time did you use SNSs in the past week?			22.2 (40.08)
The most used SNSs			
WeChat	90.4	464	
Sina Weibo	85.6	439	
QQ Zone	60.2	309	
Baidu Forum	39.6	203	
Tencent Weibo	28.1	144	
Renren	30.6	157	
Zhihu	26.5	136	
Tianya Forum	26.1	134	
YY Live	22.4	115	
Douban	20.1	103	
Momo	16.4	84	

Table 2

Correlation Matrix of the Constructs

	Correlation matrix					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Parasocial identification		-. 29**	.44**	-.48**	.56**	.42**
2. Self-influencer congruence			-.07	.24**	-.17**	-.24**
3. Perceived endorser motive				.28**	-.41**	-.29**
4. Engagement					.37**	.69**
5. Attitude						.41**
6. Purchase intention						1
Mean	5.03	16.27	4.81	2.52	5.67	5.23
SD	.84	8.53	.68	.79	.90	1.04

** p <.01 (2-tailed)

Table 3

Results of Path Analysis

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
Engagement	<---	Self-influencer congruence index	-.149	.026	-5.637	**	par_1
Purchase intention	<---	Self-influencer congruence index	-.091	.016	-5.629	**	par_2
Parasocial identification	<---	Self-influencer congruence index	-.344	.050	-6.937	**	par_3
Attitude	<---	Self-influencer congruence index	-.056	.014	-4.049	**	par_4

** p <.01 (2-tailed)

UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER MARKETING AND ITS INFLUENCE ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOR: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

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Abstract

In the past few years, expenditure on influencer marketing has grown exponentially. This study serves as a preliminary research to explain the mechanism(s) underlying the effectiveness of influencer marketing. It proposes an integrated model to explain the impact of influencer marketing messages on social media followers, using advertising value theory and source credibility. We administered an online survey (N = 538) among social media users who followed at least one influencer. Partial least squares (PLS) path modeling results show that the influencer-generated content's informative value, and the influencer's trustworthiness, attractiveness, and perceived similarity to the follower positively predict a follower's trust in influencer-generated branded posts. Moreover, influencers expertise and attractiveness, as well as follower's trust in influencer-generated branded posts positively influences brand awareness. Put together: influencer-generated content's informative value, follower's trust in influencer branded posts, and follower's brand awareness jointly predict purchase intentions. This study also discusses the theoretical and practical implications of our findings.

“IS *INSTAFAMOUS* MORE TRUSTWORTHY THAN TRADITIONAL CELEBRITIES?” THE MEDIATING EFFECTS OF SOCIAL PRESENCE WITH INSTAGRAM INFLUENCERS AND THE MODERATING EFFECTS OF SELF-DISCREPANY ON CONSUMERS’ ATTITUDE TOWARDS LUXURY BRANDING

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Abstract

This study tested the influence of two types of celebrities (Instagram celebrities versus traditional celebrities) on consumers’ perception of source trustworthiness, attitude toward the endorsed luxury brand, envious feelings toward the celebrities, and feelings of social presence. To this end, the study drew from the literature on celebrity endorsement, source credibility model, social presence, and envy. A randomized two-group comparison between-subjects experiment (N = 104) revealed that consumers exposed to Instagram celebrities’ profiles and posts perceived the sources to be more trustworthy, experienced stronger social presence, felt more envious of them, and showed more positive attitude toward the endorsed brand, than those consumers exposed to traditional celebrities’ profiles and posts. Structural equation modeling (Mplus 8.0) and bootstrap confidence intervals indicated that feelings of social presence mediate the causal effects of Instagram celebrities on consumers’ perception of the endorsed brand. Furthermore, multiple regression analyses revealed moderating effects of consumers’ appearance-related self-discrepancy. Theoretical implications for studies on celebrity endorsements are provided. Ultimately, managerial implications for branding leveraging social media influencers, marketing communication strategies, and social commerce are discussed.

A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD? THE ROLE OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN CORPORATE CRISES: APPLICATIONS OF ASSIMILATION – CONTRAST EFFECTS AND ATTRIBUTION THEORY

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Chang Dae Ham, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign
Joonghwa Lee, University of North Dakota
Soojung Kim, University of North Dakota

Abstract

The positive impact of corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities on consumer reactions is widely discussed. However, minimal research has addressed how CSR plays diverse roles in insulating a company from negative impacts of corporate crises depending on the type of crises. To help fill this gap, we applied assimilation – contrast effects and attribution theory to an experimental study exploring a 2 (crisis type: product harm vs. moral harm) x 2 (CSR reputation: high vs. low) x 2 (CSR motives: intrinsic vs. extrinsic) between-subjects design. Two interaction effects were observed between crisis type and CSR reputation and crisis type and CSR motives on CSR skepticism, attitudes towards the corporation and purchase intention of the corporate products. The results indicated that CSR is a double-edged sword in the crisis, in that consumers' awareness of a company's CSR reputation and their inferences of CSR motives determines the valence of reactions within different crisis types. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

DOES THE CONGRUENCE BETWEEN MOTIVATIONAL DIRECTION AND FACIAL EXPRESSION IN ADS IMPACT FUNDRAISING PERSUASION?

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Abstract

The current study examined whether the image of facial expressions would convey the experiential state of approach (e.g., eagerness) or avoidance (e.g., vigilance), that might be compatible with the recipient's motivational orientation system, namely regulatory focus. Also, this study helps us understand whether this congruence would affect persuasion. Specific to the charitable ad context, this study manipulated visual images using four different facial expressions: happiness, contentment, anger, and sadness, and investigated whether these facial expressions would interact with individuals' chronic regulatory foci based on the intended motivational direction. The results indicated that regulatory fit produced by positive facial expressions resulted in greater advertising effectiveness such that promotion-focused recipients exhibited higher donation allocations when they were exposed to the happy facial expression inducing the approach motivation rather than the contentment facial expression evoking the avoidance motivation, whereas the opposite was true for prevention-focused recipients. Similar patterns were found in visual perceptions only for those with prevention focus. Even though differences between negative facial expressions were not statistically significant across all dependent variables, directions came up to our regulatory fit predictions (e.g., anger for promotion-focused participants while sadness for prevention-focused participants). These results confirmed that the motivational direction rather than the valence is more effective in producing regulatory fit effects on persuasion. Therefore, persuasive effects of facial expressions should be investigated in terms of motivational directions that extend beyond the valence-only model of emotion.

THE LONELY SAMARITAN: SOCIAL EXCLUSION INFLUENCES ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SELF-BENEFIT VERSUS OTHER-BENEFIT APPEALS IN CHARITABLE ADVERTISING

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Sukki Yoon, Bryant University, Smithfield, RI
Seeun Kim, Auburn University, Auburn, AL
Yung Kyun Choi, Dongguk University, Korea

Abstract

In two experiments, the authors demonstrate that consumers who feel socially excluded react more positively to charity advertising that uses altruistic, other-benefit, ad appeals rather than egoistic, self-benefit appeals. In Study 1, using a child poverty relief campaign, socially excluded consumers are more persuaded by other-benefit appeals than by self-benefit appeals, whereas the appeals have equal effects on consumers who feel socially included. Study 2 replicates the findings using a cancer research campaign and an amount-to-donate variable: other-benefit rather than self-benefit ad messages motivate socially excluded consumers to allocate more dollars to the charity, but the two message types equally motivate socially included consumers.

A CREDIBILITY OF AN INDUSTRY MATTERS IN CSR: THE INTERPLAY OF INDUSTRY TYPE AND MESSAGE TYPE ON HOW CONSUMERS RESPOND TO A COMPANY'S CSR

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Abstract

This study is designed to understand the role of industry credibility in CSR communication. The study selected two industries with varying levels of credibility – information technology (IT) and the financial services industry – to examine the effect of industry credibility on how consumers respond to a company's CSR. The results indicate that an industry with high credibility (e.g., IT) elicited more favorable consumer responses toward a company's CSR than an industry with low credibility (e.g., financial services). In addition, industry credibility moderated how consumers respond to a company's CSR messages. Specifically, the findings revealed that in the high industry credibility condition, there were no significant differences between messages on attitude toward the company and product evaluation. On the other hand, in the low industry credibility condition, a concrete message produced higher CSR outcomes than an abstract message. Lastly, the study found a mediating role of a socially responsible image on the interaction effect.

THE EFFECTS OF VISUAL HYPERBOLE AND HYPERBOLIC HEADLINE: EXAMINING THE MEDIATING ROLE OF PERCEIVED HUMOR AND PERCEIVED DECEPTION

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Abstract

Visual hyperbole is a widely used yet understudied rhetorical figure in advertising. This experimental study examined the effects of visual hyperbole and hyperbolic headline on ad attitude with two separate mediation analyses. The first mediation analysis included ads with plain visuals and ads with visual hyperboles without verbal information. The results suggest that ads with visual hyperboles are perceived more humorous than straightforward visuals, and perceived humor mediates the effect of visual hyperbole on ad attitude. The second mediation analysis found that hyperbolic visuals with a hyperbolic headline are perceived to be more deceptive than hyperbolic visuals without a headline, and perceived deception mediates headline on ad attitude. The two mediation analyses suggest that the optimal effect is achieved when a hyperbole is communicated through visual only. In addition, ad skepticism was not correlated with perceived deception, suggesting the advantage of visual when communicating something literally untrue.

THE POWER OF MUSIC IN ADVERTISEMENT: EXPLORING THE MODERATING ROLE OF LIFE SATISFACTION ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MUSIC-EVOKED NOSTALGIA

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Abstract

Nostalgia is a popular theme and well-established marketing appeal often used in the advertising campaigns and product designs. Previous research established the positive effect of nostalgia on forming positive attitude towards the advertisement. This paper aims to examine the role of life satisfaction in consumers' reaction to nostalgic music in an advertisement. It suggests that life satisfaction forms the lens through which individuals interpret and reconstruct past emotional experiences evoked by nostalgia. It further investigates the role of product category involvement in the interplay between life satisfaction and nostalgic music. Two experiments were conducted. The first study featured a 2 (nostalgic vs. non-nostalgic music) * 2 (high vs. low involvement) between-subjects design and tested the research hypotheses with 208 consumers. The second study featured two involvement conditions (high vs. low) and explored the underlying process behind the hypotheses. Linear regression was used to analyze the data in both studies. The results showed, for the low involvement product category, nostalgic music was more effective than non-nostalgic music for consumers with high life satisfaction, whereas non-nostalgic music was more effective for consumers with low life satisfaction levels. For the high involvement product category, life satisfaction did not moderate consumers' reaction to nostalgic music. This research suggests that past experiences evoked through nostalgic music are not static but are subject to bias and interpretation depending on an individual's current mindset. Hence the eventual effect of nostalgia is determined by an interaction between the past and the present. This paper warns against blind use of nostalgic appeals in advertising, points to the need to consider the audience's state of mind and suggests an opportunity to leverage life satisfaction influencers in designing effective advertising campaigns.

EXPLORING THE DISTRACTOR DEVALUATION EFFECT FOR BOTH EXTERNAL (ADVERTISEMENT) AND INTERNAL (MIND WANDERING) DISTRACTORS, AND OTHER RELATED TRAITS

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Abstract

Advertisements are often considered distractors because people are usually exposed to them while doing other primary tasks. Only rarely are advertisements the primary focus of attention, such as during the Super Bowl when people deliberately pay attention to them. Besides advertisements (which can be classified as external distractors), people can also encounter internal distractors when doing a primary task. For example, when reading a long and tedious article, people may fixate their eyes on part of the article but be thinking other thoughts unrelated to the article. These irrelevant internal thoughts are classified as mind wandering. Mind wandering was defined as the unintentional shifting of attention toward internal thoughts (Smallwood and Schooler 2006; Smallwood et al. 2007). It is further defined as a perceptual decoupling situation in which our attention shifts from processing the external environment to our internal thoughts and feelings (Smallwood, Fishman and Schooler 2007; Schooler et al. 2011). Previous studies have greatly explored individuals' reaction to advertisements (external distractors) while they are doing a primary task, however, reactions to mind wandering (internal distractors) are underexplored.

This paper takes a distractor devaluation theoretical approach, which proposes that non-goal objects (distractors) are more likely to receive a negative affective response than a positive one when people are engaged in a primary task (Raymond, Fenske and Tavassoli 2003; Fenske et. al. 2005). The distractor devaluation effect may occur because the distractors are perceived as goal impediment objects that can impair a goal-oriented process; thus people try to avoid them and have a negative attitude towards them (Cho and Cheon 2004). In other words, if we tag unrelated items as negative or inhibited, we may not process them again, thus helping us to accomplish our goals (Duff and Faber 2011).

The purpose of this study is to test whether the distractor devaluation effect can be applied to internal distractors (mind wandering thoughts), as well as external distractors (advertisement) when people are doing a primary task. Additionally, this study examines how personality traits and information encountering (IE) relate to people's responses to distractors. In the pretest, four Graduate Record Examination (GRE) articles and seven advertisements were used. Two articles that can elicit most mind wandering thoughts, controlled for difficulty level and interesting level, and two advertisements with neutral likeness and interest level were chosen as stimuli for the main study. Participants read two Graduate Record Examination (GRE) articles, with an advertisement embedded in the text for each one. For each article, after participants read for 1 minute, the page that had the reading materials and an embedded advertisement automatically advanced to the next page with questions asking about real-time mind wandering. After finished answering the mind wandering questions, participants resume reading and answered a comprehension question about the article and rated the embedded advertisement on a 5-point Likert Scale at the end. After finishing reading and answering questions about two articles, participants completed a Daily Mind-Wandering Questionnaire, The Big Five Inventory (BFI-44) questionnaire and a questionnaire measuring information encountering level.

Results showed a distractor devaluation effect for the advertisements, $t(103)=-5.90$, $p<0.01$; and a marginal effect of mind-wandering, $t(79)=--1.77$, $p=0.08$. In addition, real-time mind wandering and information encountering are positively correlated ($r=0.21$, $p=0.039$), daily mind wandering and Conscientiousness are negatively correlated ($r=-0.36$, $p<0.01$), which means that those people who experience mind wandering more frequently should also be more likely to experience information encountering (discover useful information accidentally), and be less conscientiousness. Future research can vary the type of primary task and test the noticing level for and memory of both types of distractors, in addition to emotional responses.

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THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN BRAND GLOBALNESS AND LOCALNESS FOR ICONIC GLOBAL AND LOCAL BRANDS

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Abstract

In important transitioning markets like China, local brands are rising to challenge established global brands while global brands endeavor to localize to stay relevant to local consumers. This study adopted a mix-method approach to provide cultural insights on the dynamic interplay between perceived brand globalness and localness. Focus groups and in-depth interviews were conducted first to explore Chinese consumers' meaning-making of iconic global and Chinese brands. The qualitative findings illuminated consumers' evolving understanding of global brands, and the complicated dynamics between perceived brand globalness and localness that vary between global and local brands. An online survey was subsequently administered to empirically assess the connection between brand globalness and localness across iconic local and global brand pairs in different product categories. The impacts of these brand perceptions on brand prestige and quality were also evaluated.

WHY ARE YOU AVOIDING ME? A CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISON OF ADVERTISING AVOIDANCE IN SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING

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Abstract

The growing global popularity of social media ads has become a serious nuisance for many users around the world. This study draws from collectivism and individualism to examine how cultural values and social media ads intersect with ad avoidance. Relying on two different countries—the U.S. and South Korea, both qualitative and quantitative method were used. In the case of a friend 'shared', 'commented', or 'liked', the level of ad avoidance varies by cultural values. Theoretical and managerial implications are discussed.

WHAT TO CLICK: EXPLORING CLICKING BEHAVIOR OF STUDENTS DURING ONLINE SHOPPING FROM A CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

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Introduction

The evolution of the Internet has contributed to a rapid escalation of e-commerce in the past years. With the increase in the number of personal laptops and household computers ownership and the ease of Internet access, online shopping has become a regular and daily behavior, which can not only parallel with traditional physical shopping but also replace it. Such as, in 2016 and 2017, Macy's closed dozens of its physical stores and one of the reasons identified by business analysts was moving sales online (Fast Company 2016).

Online shopping is an international trend, and it is very popular in the growing economies of Asia (Ganguly, Dash, Cyr and Head 2010). For example, Alibaba, a Chinese online shopping platform, developed in 2003, is considered to be one of the top online retailers competing with Amazon (Forbes 2017). Amazon and Alibaba that operate in 14 countries made $ 150 billion and $ 26 billion, respectively, in 2016 (Forbes 2017).

With the opening up and development of new international online markets and international online companies, world economy requires online shopping businesses to operate in a multicultural environment in order to understand similarities and differences that drive shopping behaviors in different countries. Such knowledge can inform international strategies to create presence of established companies in foreign markets and facilitate development of country-specific online shopping entrepreneurships. Culture is a collective mind programming, which distinguishes one group or category of people from the other (Hofstede 2001, p. 5). It is characterized by shared values, norms, and beliefs. Culture is also a powerful force of human behavior, including consumer behaviors. Behaviors specific to a culture may reinforce the form in which this culture is stored and expressed (Clarke 2004). Behavior is a result of individual's cultural value system, i.e., it is determined by certain cultural context. Therefore, one's cultural background can shape specificities of his/her shopping behavior, both offline and online. The present study focused on investigating cultural differences in online shopping behavior in two samples of students: American and Chinese.

Prior studies about cultural differences in online shopping behavior focused on how different cultural backgrounds affected people's trust in an online store, online shopping behavior adoption, online purchase intention, and perceived risk of online shopping (Dash and Saji 2007; Jarvenpaa and Tractinsky 1999; Ganguly et al. 2010; Gefen et al. 2003; Lee and Turban 2001; Kim and Park 2005; Stephens 2004; Yoon 2002; Salam et al. 2005; Suh and Hun 2003; Sultan et al. 2005). However, to our knowledge, little research has explored the relationship between cultural differences, measured with the use of Hofstede's cultural dimensions, and online consumers' clicking behavior when doing online shopping. Typically, online shopping websites consist of multiple product-specific pages that include multi-modal information about each product. Online shopper is exposed to and has a chance to explore product images of different sizes, product descriptions and reviews, price, shipping information, among others. Our study investigated which elements of a product-specific webpage customers are inclined to click on first and whether having different cultural backgrounds alters online clicking patterns when one browses a product-specific webpage.

The goal of this study was to explore the relationship between customers' cultural background and their clicking behaviors when shopping online. We studied Internet users' clicking behavior on a shopping website slightly modified from the Amazon version for the purposes of this study and their reactions to different elements of product-specific shopping webpages, such as products images, description, buyers' reviews, live chat with customer service, and others. The theoretical framework of cultural dimensions (Hofstede 1997) was applied in the present study to test whether differences in cultural orientations such as power distance, collectivism/individualism, long/short term orientation, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity/femininity would predict differences in clicking patterns. Study results will carry useful practical implications for marketing, retailing, and advertising practitioners who work in international and local foreign markets. The theoretical contribution of the paper is in applying the cultural dimensions framework in the online shopping context. The study also offers a methodological advancement where clicking behavior is measured by actual clicking on product-specific webpage elements rather than an intention to click.

Literature Review

Online Shopping as Behavior

Online shopping is defined as a process of purchasing products and services via the Internet (Li and Zhang 2002). Consumers are driven to do online shopping either by a well-recognized need in a product or by being spontaneously attracted by product 's appearance and functions. Often, online shoppers engage in searching for need-related products, evaluating them and comparing alternatives, and deciding to buy the ones, which fit their criteria best. Upon choosing a product, a transaction between a customer and an online seller is conducted and post-sales services are proffered (Li and Zhang 2002).

Online shopping burgeons as the Internet and Internet devices are becoming more accessible to people all around the world, with billions of digital buyers penetrating the cyberspace (Invespcro 2017). According to Invespcro (2017), 47.3% of total Internet population are online shoppers and nearly one in four online shoppers shops online at least once a week. The United States, as one of the top ten e-commerce countries, has a large population of online shoppers. According to a BigCommerce report (2017), 51% of Americans "prefer to shop online" and 80 percent of Americans with Internet access have made an online purchase in the past month alone (BigCommerce 2017, p. 3). According to Business Insider's (2017) premium research service, U.S. consumers spent $385 billion on online shopping in 2016, and the number will grow to $632 billion in 2020. In addition, "the number of online shoppers has grown by nearly 20 million from 2015 to 2016" (Business Insider p.1). Hundreds of millions of online shoppers spent $61 billion in the first quarter of 2015 and $68 billion in the first quarter in 2016, which indicates a growing trend (Business Insider p.1).

Online shopping as a popular behavior not only draws attention of profit-driven companies, but also evokes the interest of many scholars. Most prior research in the early phases of online shopping development has focused on exploring the factors that predict the behavior of shopping and intention to purchase things on the Internet (Gefen, Karahanna and Straub 2003; Ho and Wu 1999; Hsu, Yen, Chiu and Chang 2006; Li, Kuo and Rusell 1999; Li and Zhang 2002; Perea y Monsuwé, Dellaert and De Ruyter 2004). For example, Ho and Wu (1999) have found that there are five categories of factors that positively predict online shopping behavior, including online "stores' logistical support, product characteristics, technological characteristics of websites, relevant information provided, and the presentation at homepage" (p. 508). Some scholars have looked at the behavior from the perspective of customers' use of technology for shopping purposes and suggested that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use of the Internet as a medium influence the intention to shop online (Gefen, Karahanna and Straub 2003; Perea y Monsuwé et al. 2004). Also, because online shopping is a transaction which entails a risky interaction of buyers with sellers without seeing each other face to face in a physical space, researchers have proposed that customers' trust in online sellers is a crucial factor affecting people's online shopping behavior (Gefen, Karahanna and Straub 2003; Reichheld and Schefter 2000). Perea y Monsuwé and colleagues (2004) have synthesized online shopping literature and proposed that elements that influence online shopping behavior can be categorized into perceptional factors, such as perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use and enjoyment (Menon and Kahn 2002; Childers et al. 2001; Mathwick et al. 2001), and exogenous factors, such as consumer traits (Burke, 2002; Dabholkar and Bagozzi 2002; Brown et al. 2001; Eastin and LaRose 2000), situational factors (Wolfinbarger and Gilly 2001; Avery 1996)), product characteristics (Grewal et al. 2002; Elliot and Fowell 2000), previous online shopping experiences (Shim et al. 2001; Eastlick and Lotz 1999), and trust in online shopping (Yoon 2002; Lee and Turban 2001).

Culture as an important macro-level factor has also been studied in relation to online shopping. Culture represents a set of values of a group of people that determine people's motives, attitudes, intentions, and behaviors (Henry 1976). For example, cultural values can affect people's reactions toward potential risk of being taken advantage by others (Weber and Hsee 1998). As online shopping is an activity with a certain degree of risk, people with different cultural backgrounds may have different attitudinal and behavioral reactions toward online shopping. Studies found that Chinese consumers are more cautious and conservative in choosing risky financial options than American., German, and Polish consumers (Weber and Hsee 1998). Extant papers about cross-cultural online shopping behavior have compared behavioral differences among many countries such as the United States, China, Turkey, South Korea, Norway, and Germany (Ko et al. 2013; Smith et al. 2013; Weber and Hsee 1998). Previous studies focused on how different culture values affect online shoppers' perceptional factors such as perceived risk, perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use, of online shopping; however, they did not look into the physical behavior of customers when they shop online. Thus, this study aimed at filling the gap in the literature by evaluating if cultural differences between American and Chinese online shoppers, measured with the use of Hofstede's cultural dimensions, affected their clicking of elements on a shopping webpage.

Products Information & Online Clicking Behavior

Of various online shopping behaviors, we specifically focused on clicking behavior when people shop online. E-commerce environment don't allow consumers to see and touch the products directly, however, it provides related information on a webpage for customers to evaluate (Park and Kim 2003). The information pertaining to the product online generally encompasses images, video clips, quality information, ratings, and previous customers' reviews. Sometimes it is hard to tell whether a product is good or bad based on the images provided by the seller, because sellers want to represent the best side of the product. In this situation, reviews from previous buyers seem more authentic and useful than information provided by the seller (Floyd et al. 2014).

Recent research has studied the relationship between product reviews and online purchase intention but generated mixed results (Floyd et al. 2014). Some studies have indicated that online product reviews significantly influence customers' intention of purchase (Chen, Dhanasobhon and Smith 2008; Chevalier and Mayzlin 2006; Clemons, Gao and Hitt 2006; Ghose and Ipeirotis, 2006). Other research has found that the influence of reviews on purchase intention and behavior is negligible or situational (Chen, Wu and Yoon 2004; Chatterjee 2001; Duan, Gu and Whinston 2008; Li and Hitt 2008). Despite online reviews may play a key role in influencing people's attitudes and intention to purchase on the Internet, it has not been explored whether cultural differences affect whether people click on reviews. To our knowledge, it has also not been explored what other elements of a product-specific webpage online shoppers click and how cultural differences interfere with their clicking behavior.

Culture and Cultural Dimensions in Marketing and Advertising Research

Cross-cultural researchers have traditionally used Hofstede's (1997) definition of culture. Researchers adopting this definition typically study universal theories and concepts in their cross-cultural consumer research by examining variables and constructs that are common to all cultures (Luna 2001). Other scholars have defined the complex phenomenon of culture, as well. For example, another definition of culture in cross-cultural context is that culture "determines the coordinates of social action and productive activity, specifying the behaviors and objects that issue from both" (McCracken 1988, p. 73). Synthesizing these two definitions, we conclude that culture is unique to a specific group of people who share the same values, norms, and beliefs, it plays a role of lenses through which different phenomena are seen by these people (Luna 2001), and it shapes their behavior.

Hofstede (1984) argued that nations and their cultures commonly differ with regard to five dimensions: power distance, individualism and collectivism, long-term and short-term orientation, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity and femininity. Each of these five dimensions is explicated in the following sections. Marketing researchers have previously measured the impact of cultural values on consumer behavior using cultural dimensions, such as individualism and collectivism (Luna 2001). Many researchers examined the role of cultural values on consumers' attitude formation process in terms of attitude toward advertisements and/or products. For instance, Gregory and Munch (1997) conducted a cross-cultural study using individualistic and collectivistic dimensions to measure advertisement effectiveness. They found that advertisements that depicted norms and roles consistent with local cultural values were more effective than advertisements that did not. Scholars also found that marketers select to use different communication strategies in different contexts. In collectivist societies, the focus of advertising is upon status, symbolism, prestige, family or in-group benefits (Mooij 2004). However, the focus in individualist societies is on features such as design and performance (Soares 2007).

Power Distance

Power distance refers to values that relate to people's relationship with elderly and authority as well as dependence and independence values (Mooiji and Hofstede 2011). In high power distance cultures, everyone has his or her rightful place in a social hierarchy and, as a result, acceptance of authority comes naturally. In a high power distance nation, one's social status must be clear. In low power distance cultures, the focus is on equality in rights and opportunities. Hofstede (1984) described high power distance cultures as accepting the unequal distribution of power, which comes with a greater respect for authority, as opposed to low power distance cultures where social interactions occur horizontally and authority is often questioned. Generally, Asian, Latin American, and African countries score high and mostly North European countries score low on the power distance dimension (Etcoff et al. 2006). Applying the construct of power distance to the online shopping context, we posit that the authority can be represented by a webpage element where consumers can get official information about a product from a product representative (e.g., chatting with a product representative online). We hypothesized:

> **Hypothesis 1:** Participants who score high on power distance dimension will be more likely to click on "Life Chat" icon on the shopping webpage than consumers who score low on power distance.

Individualism and Collectivism

Hofsetede (1997) outlined the core characteristics of individualism and collectivism. While individualistic cultures nourish the notion of "I", collectivist societies structure their lives around "We" (Hofstede 1984). In an individualistic culture, people look after themselves and their immediate family only, while in a collectivist culture, people belong to an in-group. In individualistic cultures, identity is valued and people want to differentiate themselves from others. In collectivistic cultures, identity is based on a social network to which one belongs. Consumers in collectivist cultures may prefer particular brands or products because they represent status or satisfy their social need to their reference group (Aaker 1997). The United States is one of the most individualistic cultures in the world (Singelis et al. 1995). Among the large U.S. minority groups, African-Americans are found to be more individualistic than other groups.

As for collectivistic cultures, Asian cultures represent a good example (Singelis et al., 1995). People from collectivist cultures are expected to involve family and friends in the information search process (Doran 2002). They are more likely to consult people within their social network, for example, their friends, family, and colleges, to get information and consider their advice before making a purchase decision. At the same time, individualist consumers rely on internal knowledge based on their personal experiences (Doran 2002), since being independent is one of the characteristics of individualism. Taking the above into consideration, we hypothesized:

> **Hypotheses 2-3:** Collectivist participants will be more likely to click on "The Recommended Products From Customers who Bought This Product" (H2) and "Customer Reviews" (H3) than individualist participants.

Short- and Long-Term Orientation and High- and Low-Context Communication

Long-term orientation is defined as the extent to which a person or a society emphasizes pragmatic future perspectives than a short-term point of view (Mooiji and Hofstede 2011). Short- and long-term orientation also represents differences in seeking gratifications: short-term orientation is associated with obtaining immediate rewards (e.g., spending now) while long-term orientation is about postponing immediate pleasure for future success (e.g., saving for later stability). Long-term-oriented cultures score higher in literacy and reading ability and are more reliant on written information, whereas in short-term-oriented cultures, people depend more on communication from television as well as interpersonal interactions with friends and family. Reliance on written communication has been associated with low-context cultures, where a message has to spell out its meaning. I.e., information in a low-context message is carried in the explicit code of the message. Reliance on interpersonal and mediated visual communication has been linked to high-context cultures where information is part of a context and very little is made explicit (Mooiji and Hofstede 2011). High-context communication can be defined as inaccessible to an outsider, while low-context cultures are characterized by elaborative verbal message. Low-context and long-term-oriented cultures use text for communication of mediated messages and product descriptions while high-context and short-term-oriented cultures rely on symbolic, often visual mediated messages and product representations (Mooiji and Hofstede 2011). Asian cultures are typically considered to be high-context while Western nations represent low-context cultures (Smith et al., 2013). We hypothesized:

> **Hypothesis 4**: Long-term-oriented participants will be more likely to click on textual description of a product while short-term-oriented participants will be more likely to click on product images.

Uncertainty Avoidance

Uncertainty avoidance is defined as the extent to which people are threatened by the uncertain future or outcome and try to avoid a potential unpredictable situation (Mooiji and Hofstede 2011). People from cultures with strong uncertainty avoidance need rules and formality to structure their lives and are less open to change than people from cultures with low uncertainty avoidance (Mooiji and Hofstede 2011). Online shopping can be considered to be a risky behavior compared to traditional physical shopping (Lim et al. 2004) due to unpredictability in quality and fitting of the product, as well as other qualities, such as size and color. Therefore, it is reasonable to propose that people with high uncertainty avoidance will be more unwilling or more resistant to buy products online than people with low uncertainty avoidance. So we hypothesized:

> **Hypothesis 5:** Participants who score *low* on uncertainty avoidance dimension will be more likely to click "Add To Cart" than participants who score high on uncertainty avoidance dimension.

In addition, people with high uncertainty avoidance have been described as being inclined to rely on experts and authority for information searching (Mooiji and Hofstede 2011). Expert information on a shopping webpage can be represented by "Live Chat," "Product Description," "Read More…," and "Customer Reviews." From "Live Chat," "Product Description" and "Read More…", customers can get information concerning the products from the seller and customer service. "Customer Reviews" offer information from people who already bought and used the product and, thus, who can be regarded as experts. Thus, we proposed:

> **Hypotheses 6-9:** Participants who score *high* on uncertainty avoidance will be more likely to click on "Live Chat" (H6), "Product Description" (H7), "Read More…" (H8), and "Customer Reviews" (H9) than participants who score low on uncertainty avoidance.

Masculinity and Femininity

The masculinity/femininity dimension represents how structured and flexible gender roles are in a society. Masculine societies are described as success-oriented and assertive, while feminine societies are about caregiving, nurturing, and mildness (Hofstede 1984). The scholar defined masculine cultures as more aggressive, success-oriented and feminine cultures as milder, concerned with quality of life and caring for individual well-being. In this paper, we asked:

> **RQ1:** Will there be differences in clicking behavior between participants who score higher on masculinity vs. femininity dimension?

Where Do China and the United States are on Cultural Dimensions

In the present study, we asked participants from two countries: China and the United States, to participate in an online survey experiment. According to Hofstede Insights (2010), Chinese have higher degrees of power distance (80 for China vs. 40 for the U.S.) and long-term orientation (87 for China vs. 26 for the U.S.) than Americans. At the same time, Americans are more individualistic (91 for the U.S. vs. 20 for China) and risk-taking (uncertainty avoidance for the U.S. is 46 vs. 30 for China) than Chinese. Two countries score somewhat the on masculinity/femininity dimension (66 for China vs. 62 for the U.S.).

> **RQ2:** Will the country of origin, China vs. the United States, moderate the effects of each of the cultural dimensions on online shopping clicking behavior?

Method

Recruitment and Sample

A survey experiment was developed and administered to 432 students, including Chinese and American students, at a large Midwestern university. The students were recruited online, using two different strategies. First, an online recruitment system, SONA system, was used to invite students to participate in the study. This recruitment system allows anonymous research participation for extra credit that students can apply to a course of choice. The second recruitment strategy used was through university emailing. The Midwestern university where the study was conducted has a large population of international students, especially Chinese students, with 4,353 of them being enrolled in university courses at the time when the study was conducted. An emailing list of Chinese students was required from the university's Registrars' office for a small pay. It was important to use the emailing list as not many Chinese participants signed up for the study on SONA. No prerequisite or qualification criteria (other than the country of origin) were defined for participants before they took the survey experiment.

After three months of data collection, 432 students responded the survey. Of 432 responses to the study, we deleted incomplete and invalid cases as well as cases that came from students who were not American or Chinese. Thus, we were left with 224 valid cases to use in statistical analysis. Of the 224 valid responses, 68% were female and 63% were American. Average age was = 23 (SD = 2.42). The most frequent class standing of the sample was junior year (N = 68; 30%). See Table 1 for the sample description.

Study Administration and Procedure

The survey experiment was administered using Qualtrics survey system available at the university. The advantage of this system is that it allows recording which parts of visual stimuli study participants click on and then generating a heat map to show the most clicked regions.

The study took approximately 20 to 30 minutes to complete. There were two parts to the study. First, participants were asked to answer some questions with scales to obtain their scores on each of the five cultural dimensions (Yoo, Donthu and Lenartowicz 2011). Second, participants were shown four shopping webpages of different products. They were asked to click where they wanted to click as they usually do during online shopping. Based on their first clicks, a heat map was generated for each of the four products (Figure 1). Each of the stimuli webpages were divided to 11 regions described below. Once a participant clicked on a certain element of a webpage, the click was categorized as being within one of the 11 regions. The regions are listed in Table 3. At the end of the study, participants answered basic demographic questions.

Stimuli Description and Pretest

Stimuli images were screenshots took from the Amazon website and modified for the purposes of this study. For example, a "Life Chat" button was added to each of the pages and some minor elements were deleted from the pages. Four products were chosen for the study: 1) activity-tracking wristband, 2) coffeemaker, 3) insulated thermos, and 4) plastic drawer. The four products were selected based on the results of a pretest. Pretest participants (N = 43) from the same recruitment pool were invited to rate 12 online shopping webpages taken from Amazon in terms of product relevance and brand involvement. Four product pages with similar product relevance and brand involvement scores were selected for the main study.

Measures

The independent variables of the study were the five cultural dimensions: power distance, collectivism/individualism, long-/short-term orientation, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity/femininity. The dependent variables were the occurrences of clicking within each of the 11 regions of a shopping webpage (Table 3). If clicking occurred, it was recorded as "1." If it did not occur, it was recorded as "0." To create continuous clicking variables per each region, the dummy responses were summed across the four products. Thus, 11 continuous webpage region-related variables were created with the range from 0 (participant did not click on the region for any of the four product webpages) to 4 (participant clicked on the region for each of the four product webpages). Country of origin, China vs. the United States, was treated as a moderating variable.

Measures of Cultural Dimensions

Power distance dimension was measured in the present study with five 7-point items (e.g., "People in higher positions should avoid social interaction with people in lower positions," Yoo, Donthu and Lenartowicz 2011) with the overall Cronbach's α = 0.79 (Cronbach's α for American sample = 0.81; Cronbach's α for Chinese sample = 0.77). See Table 2.

The individualist/collectivist dimension was measured with the use of six 7-point items (e.g., "Individuals should sacrifice self-interest for the group," Yoo, Donthu and Lenartowicz 2011). The overall Cronbach's α was 0.81, while Cronbach's α-s for American and Chinese samples were 0.83 and 0.77, respectively. See Table 2.

The long- and short-term orientation was measured by six 7-poing items (e.g., "Working hard for success in the future") adopted from Yoo, Donthu and Lenartowicz (2011). The overall Cronbach's α was 0.80, while Cronbach's α-s for American and Chinese samples were 0.74 and 0.87, respectively. See Table 2.

Collectivism-individualism dimension was measured by six 7-point items referenced from Yoo, Donthu and Lenartowicz (2011). Items used for measuring included "Individuals should stick with the group even through difficulties," "Group welfare is more important than individual rewards," and others. The overall Cronbach's α was 0.81. Cronbach's for Chinese and American samples were 0.77 and 0.83, respectively. See Table 2.

The uncertainty avoidance dimension was measured by five 7-point items (e.g., "It is important to have instructions spelled out in detail so that I always know what I am expected to do") adopted from Yoo, Donthu and Lenartowicz (2011). The overall Cronbach's α was 0.86, while Cronbach's α-s for American and Chinese samples were 0.87 and 0.85, respectively. See Table 2.

Masculinity/femininity dimension was measured with the use four 7-point items (e.g., "There are some jobs that a man can always do better than a woman," Yoo, Donthu and Lenartowicz 2011). The overall Cronbach's α was 0.83, while Cronbach's α-s for American and Chinese samples were 0.81 and 0.82, respectively. See Table 2.

Clicking behaviors

Region 1: Product's Small Images. Region 1 contained several small images of the product. Each image showed a different side of a product. When shoppers clicked on any of the small images, it was recorded as "1" for region 1.

Region 2: Product's Main Image. Region 2 was the main image of the product located in the top left part of the webpage.

Region 3: Product's Name. Region 3 had the information about the name of the product as well as product category.

Region 4: Star Rating. Region 4 was the rating of the product out of five stars cumulatively calculated from the total ratings provided by previous buyers.

Region 5: Customer Reviews. Region 5 provided the number of reviews previous buyers wrote about the product.

Region 6: Price and Shipping. Region 6 contained information about the product's price and whether it was free to ship upon purchase.

Region 7: Product Description. Region 7 had the detailed information about the product, especially the appearance and functions or qualities of the product.

Region 8: "Read More…". Region 8 was the button for customers who wanted to read more information about the product.

Region 9: "Live Chat". Region 9 was the live-chat button for customers who wanted to learn more information from customer service in real life.

Region 10: "Add to Cart". Region 10 was the button for customers who had the intention to purchase the product.

Region 11: Recommended products. Region 11 contained several images of products similar to the current product, that were bought by other customers.

Results

Cultural Dimensions Descriptives

A mean score for power distance dimension was 2.54 (*SD* = 1.08), for collectivism/individualism dimension – 4.19 (*SD* = 1.17), for uncertainty avoidance dimension – 5.34 (*SD* = 0.90), long-term/short-term orientation – 5.16 (*SD* = 0.89), and masculinity/femininity – 3.13 (*SD* = 1.34). Cronbach's alpha for each of the five measures of cultural dimensions was satisfactory with a value of more than 0.7 (Table 2).

T-test analysis was conducted to test for mean differences of the five cultural dimensions between American and Chinese respondents. Unexpectedly, the results indicated no significant differences between American and Chinese respondents in terms of power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism, and long-term/short-term orientation (statistics are available by request). The only statistically significant difference found was related to masculinity/femininity in which Chinese respondents (M = 3.62, SD = 1.32) were indicated to be more masculine than American respondents (M = 2.83, SD = 1.26) with t = 4.48, $p < 0.001$.

Additionally, simple moderating analysis was performed using PROCESS statistical add-on to SPSS software (Hayes 2013) with the country of origin as a moderator and each of the five cultural dimensions as an independent variable entered in the analysis one at a time and each of the 11-region clicking ("0" to "1") as a dependent measure entered in the analysis one at a time. This analysis was performed to answer research question 2 that asked if the country of origin, China vs. the United States, would moderate the effects of each of the cultural dimensions on online shopping clicking behavior. No significant moderating effect was found (statistics are available by request). Further analysis was performed regardless of the differences between American and Chinese samples because such differences were not significant. Further analysis treated each of the cultural dimensions to be an individual-level rather than culture-level variable.

Clicking on webpage regions

This paper offers two representations of clicks on each of the 11 elements of product webpages. First, heat maps were generated for each of the four product webpages. The number of clicks on the elements is marked by color where red represents the most clicks, yellow and green represent moderate numbers of clicks, and blue represents few clicks (Figure 1). Second, the numbers of clicks summed across the four product webpages are presented in Table 3. It can be seen in Table 3 that respondents clicked the most on "Recommended Products" (M = 0.98, SD = 1.15) followed by small images of products (M = 0.61, SD = 0.87) and "Read More…" (M = 0.53, SD = 0.94). The least important regions were "Title" (M = 0.04, SD = 0.27) "Star Rating" (M = 0.06, SD = 0.33), and "Live Chat" (M = 0.08, SD = 0.36).

Hypothesis testing

Simple linear regression analysis was used to test relationships between the five cultural dimensions and eleven regions on Amazon shopping page. Each independent variable and each dependent measure was entered in the analysis one at a time. Only significant results are reported in this section due to the abundance of statistical information. Additional statistics are available by request.

Hypothesis 1 posited that participants who score high on power distance dimension would be more likely to click on "Live Chat" icon on the shopping webpage than consumers who score low on power distance. For power distance dimension, results showed a significant positive effect on "Live Chat" clicking (β = 0.047, $p < 0.05$). The higher participants scored on power distance, the more likely they were to click on "Live Chat". Power distance explained 2% of variance in the dependent measure ($R^2 = 0.02$). Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Hypotheses 2 and 3 stated that collectivist participants would be more likely to click on "The Recommended Products" and "Customer Reviews" than individualist participants. There were no statistically significant results for collectivism/individualism in terms of clicking on "The recommended Products" (β = -0.004, $p > 0.05$) and "Customer Reviews" (β = 0.035, $p > 0.05$). Hypotheses 2 and 3 were not supported. Interestingly, results showed that collectivism was negatively related to clicking on "Live Chat" icon (β = -0.049, $p < 0.05$), meaning that the more collectivist participants reported to be, the less likely they were to click on "Live Chat". Collectivism/individualism explained 2.3% of variance in clicking on "Live Chat" ($R^2 = 0.023$).

Hypothesis 4 proposed that long-term-oriented participants would be more likely to click on textual description of a product while short-term-oriented participants would be more likely to click on product images. There were no statistically significant results for short-/long-term orientation in terms of clicking on "Product Description" (β = -0.009, $p > 0.05$), "Customer Reviews" (β = 0.05, $p > 0.05$), and "Read More…" (β = -0.08, $p > 0.05$) as well as product main image (β =, p) and small images (β = 0.014, $p > 0.05$). Hypothesis 4 was not supported.

Hypotheses 5 through 9 posited that participants who score *low* on uncertainty avoidance dimension would be more likely to click on "Add to Cart," and participants who score *high* on uncertainty avoidance dimension would be more likely to click on "Live Chat," "Product Description," "Read More…," and "Customer Reviews". The results showed that uncertainty avoidance was positively related to clicking on "Customer Reviews" (β = 0.148, $p < 0.05$) and negatively related to clicking on "Live Chat" (β = -0.052, $p < 0.05$). Participants at higher levels of uncertainty avoidance were more likely to click on "Customer Reviews", which supports Hypothesis 9, but less likely to click on "Live Chat," which is the opposite from what was predicted in Hypothesis 6. Hypotheses 5, 7, and 8 were not supported. Additionally, uncertainty avoidance dimension was positively related to clicking on "Star Ratings" (β = 0.056, $p < 0.05$). Overall, people who scored higher on uncertainty avoidance were more likely to click on "Customer Reviews" and "Star Ratings" but less likely to click on "Live Chat." Uncertainty avoidance explained 2.5% of variance in clicking on "Customer Reviews" ($R^2 = 0.025$), 2.4% of variance in clicking on "Star Ratings" ($R^2 = 0.024$), and 2% of variance in clicking on "Live Chat" ($R^2 = 0.02$).

Research question 1 asked if there would be differences in clicking behavior between participants who score higher on masculinity vs. femininity dimension. Regression analysis did not reveal any significant results.

Discussion

This study is one of the first to investigate online clicking behavior in relationship to cultural differences. At first, we treated cultural differences as a macro-level variable that would help distinguish between the two groups of students, Americans and Chinese. We, however, found little statistical support for macro-level differences. Despite such differences are reported and online tools exist to compare different nations with regard to cultural dimensions (e.g., Hofstede Insights 2010), our study showed only one significant difference between the two samples. Chinese students were found to be more masculine than American students. This variable did not significantly affect clicking on different product webpage elements even when the country of origin was added to the analysis as a moderator. The lack of support for macro-level differences may be explained by the sampling methods used in the present study. First, we used a convenience sample. Second, we surveyed Chinese students who were present in the United States at the moment of data collection. These students are most likely to be more accustomed to American culture, both its online and offline representations. Also, being an international (Chinese) student at one of the major U.S. universities may signify a higher socio-economic status that could be less mirroring of the Chinese population in general.

In addition, the lack of support for the effects of culture as a macro-level factor can be related to the criticism of Hofstede's cultural dimensions framework in general. Cultural differences are often explored qualitatively and when quantitative social scientific methods are used for comparison, cultural factors are found to carry little power. Furthermore, English-language instruments create additional challenges in ensuring proper cross-cultural comparisons.

Nevertheless, the present study offers a unique investigation of how cultural differences as attributes of individuals – regardless of country of origin – may affect clicking behavior during online shopping. Although some cultures are different from others on a macro level, within each culture, individuals exhibit different levels with regard to cultural dimensions (Meyer 2014). As our study showed, these individual-level differences may alter what elements of shopping pages customers choose to click first.

The results showed that the power distance dimension was positively related to clicking on the "Live Chat" button. This finding is in line with our hypothesis. When people score high on power distance, they may be more likely to rely on authority, respect, rather than question, authority, and perceive hierarchical systems as a given. Thus, they might be more likely to choose to live chat with an official product representative. i.e., high power distance individuals may be more likely to ask for suggestions from people with high authority (professional sellers) in order to get more product-specific information.

Second, we found no significant relationships between collectivism/individualism dimension and clicking on regions such as "Recommended Products" and "Customer Reviews." A possible explanation of the lack of significant results is that consumers, regardless of their collectivism/individualism orientation, may tend to read reviews anyways to make their buying decisions. According to Mudambi and Schuff (2010), customers' purchase behaviors are affected by reviews.

Despite the fact that collectivism/individualism dimension did not affect our participants in clicking "Customer Reviews," uncertainty avoidance dimension did. As we hypothesized, high uncertainty avoidance led to a higher likelihood of clicking on "Star Rating" and "Customer Reviews." This result was in accordance with previous studies. For example, Sun and Zhang (2006) indicated that people with high uncertainty avoidance scores were more likely to be affected by subjective norms than those who scored low on uncertainty avoidance dimension. It is likely that when people are high in uncertainty avoidance, they are more likely to click on customer reviews in order to obtain more first-hand information and reduce risk associated with purchasing products online.

Interestingly, we found that collectivism/individualism was negatively related to clicking on the "Live Chat" button. I.e., participants who scored high on collectivism were less likely to click on "Live Chat." A possible explanation for this finding could be that people who are more collectivist tend to find suggestions from friends and other consumers rather than seek information from official authority, such as sales representative on a shopping website. For instance, Doran (2002) studied differences in online information seeking between North American and Chinese samples. Results of that study showed that Chinese respondents were more likely to search for information from personal sources while North Americans would use many sources to inform their decision. This could also explain why no significant relationship was found between collectivism/individualism and clicking on "Recommended Products" and "Customer Reviews." Perhaps participants who scored high on collectivism sought insights about products from interpersonal, face-to-face interactions rather than examining opinions of unknown people on the Internet.

Finally, the results of the study indicated what elements of product-specific webpages participants typically click. We found that regions that provided the promise of more information were the most clickable, including "Recommended Products," small product images, "Read More…," and "Customer Reviews." Self-explanatory regions of webpages such as "Star Ratings" were less likely to be clicked.

Limitations

This study has a number of limitations. First, the number of Chinese respondents to the survey experiment was lower than the number of American participants. In the future, it is recommended that the two samples should have an equal number of respondents when running cross-cultural comparisons. Second, one cultural dimension, indulgence vs. restraint, identified by Hofstede (Hofstede 2011) was not included in this study. Future research should include this dimension and other well-known cross-cultural differences to investigate if they affect online clicking behavior during shopping. Third, the study left some unanswered questions regarding insignificant relationships between collectivism/individualism, short- and long-term orientation and clicking on certain regions. Future researchers are recommended to study underlying reasons for these insignificant results or replicate the study and adjust for its methodological limitations to test for significance again. Fourth, we modified Amazon shopping pages to be used as stimuli in the present study. Amazon logo was removed from the stimuli and a few elements were modified so that the shopping webpages look generic rather than brand-specific. It was thought that Amazon, as the leading online retailer (Haucap and Heimeshoff 2014), would be the most appropriate site to use to create stimuli as it entails high consumer familiarity. However, participants' experiences with this online retailer and the extent of their online shopping in general were not measured. It is suggested to measure these variables in future studies. Finally, there are many other cultures, not only American and Chinese, that are important to study and compare in terms of online shopping.

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ATTRACTING FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT: USING BRAND SIGNALS TO OVERCOME INFORMATION ASYMMETRY AND IMPERFECT INFORMATION

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Abstract

Information asymmetry and imperfect information are common problems facing firms as they expand overseas. To overcome these problems, governments and their investment promotion agencies (IPAs) typically place country and market entry information online and in advertisements (Wilson and Baack 2012). In doing so, they use brand signals to build trust and communicate their expertise in market entry assistance. To understand how governments do this, the authors content analyze the slogans and logos found in 55 months of print advertising and 181 websites of countries engaged in foreign direct investment-seeking activities. The authors find that slogans and logos are frequently used across both samples, but their use is greater in advertising than on the web, which is likely due to the greater effort required to develop an advertising program than to maintain a website. Regardless of medium, logo use is greater than slogan use. In the sample, slogans tended to be generic or undifferentiated and do not appear to facilitate brand credibility. However, logos were better designed and incorporated elements of expertise and trust.

From a theoretical perspective, this study provides for a deeper understanding of foreign direct investment (FDI) promotion especially as it relates to brand building both on the web and in print advertising. It also extends our understanding of brand building within a specialized area of business-to-business (B2B) organizational buying. Specifically, we confirm that brand building tactics, such as the use of slogans and logos, are common practices among B2B actors when building brand equity in international markets. This adds to the growing literature emphasizing that businesses are susceptible to branding just as are consumers (Baack et al 2016; Brown et al 2011).

From a managerial perspective, our research highlights the need for differentiated slogans and for logos using territorial and cultural symbols as advocated by Wilson (2018). Based on the results of this study, it appears that many IPAs have not fully developed or articulated their competitive positioning strategy and subsequently incorporated it into their branding. Consequently, IPA slogans are often generic and undifferentiated and not likely to facilitate brand credibility. The absence of strong and unique associations likely hinders the development of a clear and robust country image making brand building and brand equity more difficult to achieve. Yet IPAs must endeavor to create highly differentiated slogans based on the locational and investment-servicing advantages that are truly unique to the country and to which businesses identify as important to the foreign site selection process.

Richardson and Cohen (1993) suggested that differentiated slogans are difficult to create because places are too geographically and culturally diverse to be represented in a slogan. If we are to accept this as true, then we must also accept that brand building at the country level is a wasted effort with hollow product claims. However, if we reject it as false, then IPAs must become more specific in its selection of country and investment-servicing attributes that help to differentiate it from competing countries, express its expertise, and beget trust. Identifying truly unique country attributes means that selected attributes might appeal to a narrower audience of potential investors and require IPAs to become more focused on the industries it appeals to for FDI. In support of this, research has shown that FDI promotion is more successful when IPAs explicitly target sectors within its economy (Harding and Javorcik 2011). Consequently, IPAs might consider focusing their brand building efforts within highly targeted media rather than general business publications. Such efforts are likely to better resonate with managers and be more persuasive.

Compared with the use of slogans, IPAs are more advanced with their use of logos. Most have developed graphically designed logos that aid brand recognition. However, IPAs can do more to integrate territorial and cultural symbols into their logo design to build brand credibility (Wilson 2018). Many IPAs have developed logos that contain abstract images that do not reinforce unique country attributes or align with their competitive positioning (i.e., slogan). Many also rely on stock-like images such as spheres, globes, and arrows. While these images reinforce the international nature of foreign investment, it does nothing to build unique associations with the country. IPAs need to dig deeper into their unique locational advantages and investment-servicing capabilities when designing their logos and make these features the focal point within their logos.

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FACING ANGER VERSUS FEAR: HOW INDIVIDUALS REGULATE LEVEL OF CONTROL IN RISK COMMUNICATION

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Abstract

Grounded in the motivational aspect of emotions, the current study proposes the underlying mechanism to explain how people in different levels of control (i.e., anger versus fear) are motivated to regulate their emotions. To further test this mechanism, this study utilizes various emotional appeals to examine different routes that individuals take to restore or maintain their level of control in the context of anti-terrorism communication. Angry people report greater feeling of control and more favorable ad attitude when exposed to a positive and high-dominance message as well as a negative and low-dominance message. In contrast, fearful people report similar results when exposed to four different emotional messages. In addition, the significant findings on ad attitude and behavioral intention is more prominent among angry people who have a higher need for control.

THE PRIMING EFFECTS OF SEXUAL EDITORIAL CONTENT ON ADVERTISING

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Hojoon Choi, University of Houston, Houston, TX

Abstract

This study examined how sexual editorial content influenced the evaluation of a sexually ambiguous advertisement and investigated the influence of a sex-related personal variable (Sexual Self-Schema; SSS) on ad processing and ad evaluation. The results indicate that the sexual (vs. non-sexual) editorial content (a) made the sexual attributes of the ad more accessible, leading participants to interpret the ambiguous ad more sexually, and (b) produced stronger interaction effects with various SSS levels to influence interpretation of the ad, attitude toward the ad and brand, ad involvement, and purchase intention. Implications and suggestions for theory and practice are discussed.

ATTENTION TO POLITICAL ADVERTISING DURING HIGH-SALIENCE POLITICAL NEWS EVENTS

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Abstract

This study examines how political advertising awareness rose and decreased over time during the 2016 U.S. presidential election. It employed a rolling cross section (RCS) survey (Brady & Johnston 1987) in which 100 respondents are sub-sampled each day from a large original national sample. This method allows examination of daily changes in advertising awareness for all major media (television, newspapers (print and online), websites, and social media) in samples that are daily cross-sections, but that can be considered representatively equivalent and thus an overtime "panel." RCS methodology allows investigation of questions about the impact of political advertising that cannot be answered with, for example, taken once or even several times during an election cycle.

Here, the relationship between important news events, both planned ones like the three presidential debates, and unplanned ones like two breaking news stories involving the candidates, and advertising awareness are studied. The two breaking stories were the October 9th "Access Hollywood" tape where Trump was recorded as bragging about kissing, groping, and having sex with women because "when you're a star they let you do that" (Fahrenthold 2016), and the October 28th Comey announcement that the Clinton email case was being reopened (Silver 2017).

While debates and candidate scandals increase attention to news (Masket 2014), there are no scholarly studies of what effect, if any, ebbs and flows in attention to political news has on paying attention to political ads. When significant news events occur, people may become highly sensitized to all political stimuli (Lang, Sanders-Jackson, Wang, & Rubenking 2013), leading to a prediction of enhancement of attention to political ads. In contrast, increased attention to news events may lead people to pay less attention to political ads, because their limited attentional capacity means ad attention is displaced by news attention.

Respondents were asked each day, "In the last week how many ads did you see for Clinton and Trump," and to mark all media in which they had seen ads for the two candidates. They were also asked extensive questions about their political interest, political knowledge, partisanship, and demographics. The paper looks in detail at the interrelationships among these variables and political advertising awareness. The RCS data were analyzed by a statistical technique called stacked regressions (Bertrand, Duflo and Mullainathan 2004), which take into account over-time changes in the relationship between predictors and the dependent variable. When the effects of all of political and demographic variables were controlled in these regressions, the effects of each of the three debates and the two breaking scandal stories had a significant and positive effect on advertising awareness. Thus when important political events occur during an election cycle, there is measurably increased attention to political advertising. This result, the value of RCS methodology, and many other more detailed findings of the study are discussed, as are methodological and theoretical caveats.

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THE EFFECT OF POLITICAL CANDIDATE AUTHENTICITY AND SOURCE CREDIBILITY ON VOTING BEHAVIOR IN THE 2016 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION: MESSAGE, MEDIA, AND TARGETING IMPLICATIONS FOR ADVERTISING PRACTICE

Kristen Cameron, University of Georgia
Joe Phua, University of Georgia
Spencer Tinkham, University of Georgia

Abstract

This study hypothesizes that authenticity in political campaign messaging has become more predictive of voting intension than source credibility (trustworthiness and expertise)- particularly for the winning ticket. This study originally predicted that source credibility had lost its predictive strength due to the preponderance of the authenticity-centered messages released by the Trump campaign. This proved to not be the case. Instead, source credibility-particularly the trustworthy dimension- was found to predict the U.S. Presidential Election outcome more than authenticity. While source credibility proved to be more predictive of vote preference than authenticity, both variables were found to be highly correlated with each other.

List of Authors

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