• 2023 Proceedings of the Conference of the American Academy of Advertising •

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CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ADVERTISING

Martin Eisend, Editor
European University Viadrina,
Germany

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Preface

This volume of the 2023 Proceedings contains the pre-conference, competitive research, and special topics sessions presented at the 2023 annual Conference of the American Academy of Advertising held in March 23-26 in Denver Colorado. The papers in this volume are organized in the order in which they appeared in the 2023 Conference Program. In total, 119 competitive research papers and ten proposals for special topic sessions were submitted for double-blind review. A total of 77 papers and 7 special sessions were accepted for presentation at the conference. Competitive papers were organized into 20 thematic sessions. The special topics sessions were coordinated by AAA's President Kelly Chu from DePaul University. This Proceedings' volume compiles summaries and abstracts of the pre-conference and special topics sessions, as well as competitive research papers' abstracts, extended abstracts, and full papers. There were two pre-conference sessions: "Changing Tides: How Advertisers Are Shifting Their Gender Portrayals in Commercial Communications," organized by Sophia Mueller and Kasey Windels (both University of Florida), and "A Compass to Help Navigate the Academic Landscape Early on in a Career," organized by Liselot Hudders and Dieneke Van de Sompel (both Ghent University).

This conference was very successful thanks to the efforts of many people. I want to thank all AAA members and all authors, presenters, session chairs and moderators, and reviewers of the conference for their excellent work, dedication, and commitment to AAA. Additionally, I wish to acknowledge and thank the sponsors who provided financial support for the various conference events and awards, as well as our Conference Manager, AMC Source for organizing and executing the conference. Special thanks also go to my fellow members of the Executive Committee, for their support, help, and guidance throughout the submission and review process. It was an honor to serve as Vice President and Proceedings Editor for 2023. I hope this 2023 Proceedings will be a useful source for researchers, educators, and practitioners in the field of advertising.

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PRECONFERENCE SESSION: CHANGING TIDES: HOW ADVERTISERS ARE SHIFTING THEIR GENDER PORTRAYALS IN COMMERCIAL COMMUNICATIONS

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Sara Elizabeth Grossman, Founder of CODE-mktg
Kevin Tydlaska-Dziedzic, CEO of BKN Creative
Paige Wiese, CEO of Tree Ring Digital
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Minjie Li, University of Tennessee
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Linda Tuncay Zayer, Loyola University

Overview

Gendered portrayals in advertising have been a hot research topic for decades. Studies have shown that men and women in advertisements have historically been constrained to certain roles which are bound by gendered stereotypes and norms: women are either sex bombs, housewives, or nagging hags, and men are either bread winners, or incompetent fathers. In his meta-analysis of gender in advertising research, Eisend (2010) found that advertisers mirror social change. Though countries around the world are slowly inching toward gender egalitarianism, current research indicates that many are stalling in their movement to equality (England et al., 2020). However, there is evidence that advertisers have picked up on even subtle changes in gender norms and roles, as the traditional constraints on how gender has been portrayed in advertising are indeed breaking down. There has been a marked rise in the use of femvertisements, dadvertisements, and the incorporation of transgender and non-binary individuals in commercial communications (Dua, 2021; Bukszpan, 2016; North, 2014). These newer forms of advertising – which speak to our slow but steady shift in gender roles and norms - are just beginning to garner research attention.

The goal of this session was to open a dialogue among academics and professionals about gender, sex, and sexual orientation, examining how agency demographics and norms have shifted, as well as how advertising representations have evolved. This session examined how gender in advertising has changed over the past five decades, including how women, men, transgender, and non-binary individuals are depicted. While academics often analyze consumer responses, we rarely assess the agency side of the advertising equation. The session began with a panel of women and LGBTQIA+ practitioners. This was a particularly interesting discussion, given that the advertising business is still reflective of the fictional agency in Mad Men: predominantly white and cisgender. Participants debated the contemporary portrayals of gender in advertising, but also discussed their own experiences as minority employees. The session then shifted to the academic perspective. Researchers who focus on gender representations in advertising, including on the topics of femvertising, dadvertising, and LGBTQIA+ representations, discussed how far advertisers have come in their gendered portrayals, and how long they still have to go.

The half-day pre-conference was divided into two panels.

Panel 1: Practitioner Perspectives: Changes in Gender Representations in Advertising

Syah B., Founder of Syah B. Consulting
Sara Elizabeth Grossman, Founder of CODE-mktg
Kevin Tydlaska-Dziedzic, CEO of BKN Creative
Paige Wiese, CEO of Tree Ring Digital

The first panel of four professionals explored (1) gender, sex and sexual orientation in agency life and how it has changed over the past decade and (2) best practices when developing authentic advertisements targeting women and LGBTQ+ individuals.

Panel 2: Academic Outlook: Changes in Gender Representations in Advertising

Catherine Coleman, Texas Christian University
Minjie Li, University of Tennessee
Wanhsiu Sunny Tsai, University of Miami
Linda Tuncay Zayer, Loyola University

The second panel of four academics explored (1) current findings regarding the representation of women and LGBTQ+ individuals in advertising and (2) recommendations to advertisers to avoid stereotypical representations.

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PRE-CONFERENCE SESSION:
A COMPASS TO HELP NAVIGATE THE ACADEMIC LANDSCAPE EARLY ON IN A CAREER

Liselot Hudders, Ghent University
Dieneke Van de Sompel, Ghent University
Alexander Pfeuffer, University of Georgia
Claire Segijn, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities
Michelle Nelson, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Emma Beuckels, Ghent University
Steffi De Jans, Ghent University

Overview

This AAA pre-conference aimed to unite PhD-candidates and academics in an early stage of their career to share advice and gain insights in professional academic skills. It provided an opportunity to expand participants' network and get to know each other informally, discussing some common and recurring matters in a professional academic career. The session united scholars from different countries, elaborated on global similarities and differences in pursuing a PhD and fostered academic international exchange opportunities. Liselot Hudders and Dieneke Van de Sompel (*Ghent University*) hosted a networking session in which participants reflected on common dilemma's in academia. Alexander Pfeuffer (*University of Georgia)* talked about the differences in pursuing an academic career in different countries. Michelle Nelson (*University of Illinois*) discussed how cultural exchanges, visits and cross-cultural collaborations can lead to cultural understanding, theory development, and transformative research. Claire Segijn (*Minnesota University*) dealt with time management and healthy working habits. Steffi De Jans and Emma Beuckels (*Ghent University*) discussed the publishing and review process.

Session 1 - Reflecting on Your Academic Career

Liselot Hudders, Ghent University
Dieneke Van de Sompel, Ghent University

Young academics often struggle with similar issues and come across comparable challenges. This interactive session opened up the debate about some of these concerns, such as research ethics, the insecurity of an academic career, work-life balance etc. The session provided participants the opportunity to reflect on their academic career path and created a network opportunity.

Session 2 – Same Same, But Different? Pursuing Academia in the United States and Across the Globe

Alexander Pfeuffer, University of Georgia

This interactive talk discussed expectations and challenges in pursuing an academic career in different international contexts, including expectations in graduate education, resources and mentorship, work-life balance, and navigating the job market. Participants discussed common expectations, potential challenges, and pertinent resources involved in navigating graduate programs and pursuing academic careers in different international contexts. This session provided a perspective on how cultural differences may manifest in academia and offered an opportunity to discuss and share strategies to mitigate related challenges.

Session 3 – The Value of Cultural Exchanges and Research Visits

Michelle Nelson, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

This session provided insights into the ways that cultural exchanges and visits and cross-cultural collaborations among graduate students and professors can lead to enhanced cultural understanding, theory development, and transformative research. The logistics, the benefits, the tribulations, and the fun of cultural collaborations were discussed. Specific guidance for building a global network, understanding the importance of communication and cultural humility, and expanding the research footprint were covered.

Session 4 - Time Management: Learning Healthy Work Habits Early on in Your Career

Claire Segijn, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities

Time management skills are an essential part of being an academic scholar. The number of tasks assigned to academics as well as pressures to perform have increased over the years (Houston et al., 2006; Kinman & Johnson, 2019). This has negative implications for well-being and job performance (Kinman & Johnson, 2019; Kinman & Wray, 2014). The session focused on healthy work habits early on in someone's career. Evidence-based time management skills (Silvia, 2007) were discussed.

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Session 5 – Going Through the Publication Process in Advertising Research: Some Practical Guidelines

Emma Beuckels, Ghent University
Steffi De Jans, Ghent University

Preparing, submitting and revising manuscripts often comes with many challenges. This session provided tips on how to ethically and effectively go through the publication process and how to overcome common pitfalls. First, ethical issues arise, as researchers have responsibilities towards the research community, participants, institutions, and funders (NESH, 2022). In addition, once a manuscript is considered finished, many questions arise on how to deal with the peer review-process. This session therefore provided participants insights in how to respond effectively and constructively to peer reviews and use it to improve the work (Bagchi et al., 2017).

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HIGH HOPES FOR FRONT-OF-PACK NUTRITION LABELS? A CONJOINT ANALYSIS ON THE TRADE-OFFS WITH HEALTH CLAIMS, BRAND AND PRICE FOR DIFFERENT CONSUMER SEGMENTS.

Elke Godden, University of Antwerp
Lukar Thornton, University of Antwerp
Yana Avramova, University of Antwerp
Nathalie Dens, University of Antwerp

Abstract

An increasing number of studies investigate the effect of front-of-pack (FOP) nutrition labels on consumer choice without considering differences in consumer preferences for product attributes. This study used a choice-based conjoint analysis to test consumers' preferences for four product attributes (5 levels of a FOP nutrition label, absence/presence of a nutrition claim, brand (unfamiliar, private label or premium) and 5 levels of price) when they coexist (n = 1156). As the consumer preferences showed distinct patterns (multimodality), consumers were subsequently clustered based on how a FOP nutrition label (Nutri-Score) influenced their food choices. Three consumer segments were identified, each valuing the Nutri-Score label differently. The label effectively seems to nudge one segment toward healthier choices (n = 456), while in contrast, another segment is unexpectedly steered toward unhealthier food choices by the label (n = 343). The third segment is only consistently nudged by the FOP label's extremes (n = 357). The segments also differ in their preferences for other product attributes (brand and price), health involvement, and self-reported understanding and use of the Nutri-Score, but not in the measured socio-demographic variables (age, sex, education, social class), dieting or smoking habits. In summary, consumers vary in their food label preferences, and studies that pool consumers may fail to capture these nuances, leading to biased results. This study shows that FOP labels do not steer all consumers toward healthier choices and may even have adverse effects for some. This suggests combining different policies and marketing strategies to reach all consumer segments.

THE ETHICAL NATURE AND CARING PRACTICE OF PATIENT INFLUENCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Erin Schauster, University of Colorado Boulder
Erin Willis, University of Colorado Boulder
Mark Heisten, University of Colorado Boulder

ABSTRACT

This is the first study to examine the ethical nature of patient influence on social media using in-depth interviews. Social media strategies rely on honest and respectful communication with followers, yet there is limited understanding of patient influencers, their relationship with followers, and the ethical nature of their work. Specifically, care ethics would suggest that these social media relationships focused on sharing disease experiences are mutually respectful, interdependent, and empathetic. Patient influencers serve in a unique role of both patient and information liaison positioning them as a potential caregiver and an ideal candidate to understand ethics of care. The current findings suggest that influencers exhibit moral awareness, engage in honest and respectful communication, exhibit sensitivity when information sharing, feel a sense of responsibility and obligation toward other patients, and serve as a connection to help build a bridge of understanding beyond the dyadic relationship of care and among a wide network of stakeholders.

PATIENT INFLUENCERS: PROMOTERS OR PEERS?

Marjorie Delbaere, University of Saskatchewan
Erin Willis, University of Colorado Boulder

Abstract

Social media is increasingly being used to promote both health behaviors and healthcare products. Pharmaceutical marketers have been quick to adopt the use of social media influencers to increase disease and brand awareness. This practice has led to a blurring of the lines between advertising, public relations and health communication. As a result, we have seen the birth of a specialized type of influencer, one that we call a *patient influencer*. Given the nascent stage of this phenomenon, no conceptualization currently exists that establishes a common understanding of this new concept to help distinguish if from other similar, but distinct, concepts. Based on a review of the literature and in-depth interviews with 27 patient influencers, this research proposes a definition for the relatively new concept of a *patient influencer.*

COMMUNICATING WITH COLLEGE STUDENT NON-DRINKERS: USING THE SIX-SEGMENT MESSAGE STRATEGY WHEEL TO CREATE ADVERTISING MESSAGES THAT RESONATE

Joyce Wolburg, Marquette University
Eric Haley, University of Tennessee

Abstract

Some students enter college eager to experiment with drinking while others choose to be non-drinkers. Yet, non-drinkers cope with many pressures that can jeopardize their commitment. This begs the question: how can colleges and universities help students remain non-drinkers? This qualitative study utilized a series of online focus groups to give voice to 20 college student non-drinkers, who shared their insights to help other non-drinkers stay true to their goals. Using Taylor's (1999) Six-Segment Message Strategy Wheel, participants evaluated a series of statements to discover which message strategy resonates best and why. In addition to their recommendations for message strategy, they shared their ideas for making non-drinking more visible on campus.

PARENTAL AWARENESS OF THEIR CHILDREN'S MEDIA CONSUMPTION, ONLINE BEHAVIORAL ADVERTISING, AND ONLINE SURVEILLANCE

Deepti Khedekar, University of Colorado Boulder

Abstract

This study investigates how parents' mediation of the online content their children consume on their internet connected devices is interconnected with parental knowledge of online behavioral advertising (OBA) and the covert surveillance mechanisms that enable it. Through a critical interpretive analysis of data collected from 83 parents, the study finds that many parents are indeed aware that their children could be the targets of personalized advertisements online. Many also understand that personalized ads are closely associated with online data collection activities. However, despite this awareness and despite their persuasive knowledge regarding advertisements, for various reasons highlighted in this study, a majority of parents are unable to monitor and mediate their children's use of these devices. Interestingly, some parents are unconcerned about targeted advertising, and few even welcome the data collection and algorithmic personalization of content for their children. Several hurdles to parental awareness and mediation were identified. Practical implications for advertisers, scholars, parents, educators, and policy makers were discussed.

THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL DISTANCE AND MESSAGE FRAMING ON YOUNG ADULTS' RESPONSE TO THE ANTI-VAPING PSAS ON INSTAGRAM: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL REACTANCE

Jung Min Hahm, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT)
Jeong-Yeob Han, University of Georgia

Abstract

The purpose of this study was (a) to investigate the effect of perceived social distance from message source and message frame on psychological reactance, attitude toward vaping cessation, and intention to quit vaping and (b) to investigate the mediating role of psychological reactance and attitude toward vaping cessation on intention to quit vaping. Findings show that message frame did not have a direct effect on attitudinal or behavioral intention change but did have a direct effect on the level of psychological reactance. Perceived social distance from message source directly and indirectly, through psychological reactance and attitude toward vaping cessation, affected intention to quit vaping.

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF PERSONALITY, LOYALTY, SATISFACTION AND WORD-OF-MOUTH ADVERTISING AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Abstract

Little research has explored how undergraduates' satisfaction with their major influences student-driven, coproduced services marketing efforts. This study explores the relationship between personality traits, satisfaction (SAT), word-of-mouth (WOM), and perceived loyalty (PL) within the context of students' choice of major. Structural equation modeling evaluated the relationships among the variables and showed that SAT directly drives WOM and negative word-of-mouth (NWOM). WOM leads to an increase in PL. The Big Five personality traits revealed that students scoring high in agreeableness were more likely to be loyal, satisfied, engage in WOM, and score high in PL. Statistically significant relationships exist between conscientiousness and PL and WOM. WOM is perceived as being more credible than traditional marketing communications efforts and personality influences who spreads information the most effectively. Understanding which students the best promoters are is useful to administrators when selecting student influencers to participate in student produced promotional efforts.

Introduction

The institution of higher education is facing challenges that are unlike any disruptions that it has faced before. Increasingly, young adults are starting to question the value of higher education. According to Pew research, the American public still generally sees value in higher education and believes that higher education is essential to future success. The economic advantages of possessing an advanced degree are both evident and increasing (Parker 2019). However, there has been a trend towards dissatisfaction with the university as an institution. Admissions scandals, degree mills, maladministration, and the perceived high cost of higher education have all reduced the perceived value of higher education among members of the public (Milley and Dulude 2020; Parker 2019). This services marketing issue is further compounded by the fact that the current demographic that higher education serves are decreasing in number. In fact, college enrollment is at the lowest point in two decades (Lederman 2019). While there is more skepticism regarding higher education, interest in higher education has been increasing. However, students attending community colleges tend to be more confident that their education has value than those enrolled in the 4-year university system (STRADA 2021). Because of the current context, higher education exists in a fiercely competitive environment where the value of its service faces increasing scrutiny while its customer base is shrinking. Given the current context, understanding how creating an educational experience that satisfies individual students relates to generating positive word-of-mouth has never been more essential to college and university administrators.

Most scholars agree that higher education easily fits the characteristics of a service industry. "Educational services are intangible, heterogeneous, inseparable from the person delivering it, variable, perishable and the customer (student) participates in the process" (Shank, Walker and Hayes 1996). Further, higher education fits the definition of service because it is an intangible product that "cannot be physically possessed. It can only be experienced" (Shostack 1977, p.177). However, other research shows that the higher education industry possesses some distinctive features that must be considered (Canterbury 2000). According to Canterbury (2000), an ongoing challenge facing higher education is defining the product. Is the product the programs and majors, is it the students themselves, or is it the students' experience? Much of the previous research on service quality in higher education has focused on improving and implementing new academic programs assuming that these aspects of higher education are the service product being marketed. However, less research has explored improving students' satisfaction or the students' experiences while obtaining a degree (Joseph, Yakhou and Stone 2005). By its very nature, higher education is a co-created experience meaning that the students directly participate in value creation, and their experience is a key element in value creation (Dollinger, Lodge and Coates 2018). Universally, educational research acknowledges the fact that students who are satisfied learn more and benefit more from their educational experiences when they are satisfied, and their psychological needs are being met (Zhen, Liu, Ding, Wang, Liu, and Xu 2017). In fact, students are drawn to majors that they believe will meet these needs. Therefore, the more students co-create value, the more value, and satisfaction they receive.

While academics and educational outcomes remain central, the university also facilitates "relational connections solidify learning and broaden students' experiences" (Felten, Gardner, Schroeder, Lambert, Barefoot, and Hrabowski 2016, p.107). Therefore, the relational benefits that they generate from higher education could increase both their satisfaction and loyalty. Very little research has explored the influence of relational benefits, satisfaction, and loyalty (Shukla and Pattnaik 2021). Furthermore, effective higher education institutions align their resources, policies, and practices with their goals and student bodies (Felten et al. 2016). Therefore, individual differences play a role in both in student satisfaction and the value that students derive from their education. And one would anticipate that when these goals are met and priorities aligned, undergraduate students and alumni will share their positive experiences with others.

Even though it is in the students' and universities' best interests for students to be satisfied with their major, students often struggle to predict which choices will bring happiness, whether it be a choice of major or even a choice of university (Sipilä, Herold, Tarkiainen, and Sundqvist 2017). Therefore, students often rely on the experiences of others. Word-of-mouth (WOM) constitutes one of the essential means by which product and brand information is communicated. WOM is defined as informal, unpaid interpersonal communication that consumers direct at other consumers regarding an organization, brand, service, or product (Meuter, McCabe, and Curran 2013; Goyette, Ricard, Bergeron, and Marticotte 2010; Harrison-Walker 2001; Westbrook 1987). Marketers, advertisers, managers, and social scientists widely accept that WOM customer interactions can significantly influence consumers' responses to products and their advertising (Meuter, McCabe, and Curran 2013; Herr, Kardes, and Kim 1991). WOM can consist of interpersonal communication (Gilly, Graham, Wolfinbarger, and Yale 1998), or it can be facilitated by various electronic channels such as email, social media, and other online forums (Chu and Kim 2017; Doh and Hwang 2009; Lee and Youn 2009; Phelps, Lewis, Mobilio, Perry, and Raman 2004).

Although there are many factors, or antecedents, that organizations can influence to generate more positive WOM and prevent negative word-of-mouth (NWOM) or complaints (COM), the influence of individual personality traits on WOM and customer satisfaction remains largely unstudied. Personality traits are an individual difference variable that plays a predetermined part in the customer experience that is beyond a marketer or advertiser's control. Within the realm of social science, the Big Five Index (BFI) is the most established framework for understanding personality. Therefore, this research employs the BFI to better understand the various individual differences that can affect students' motivations to engage in service related WOM or NWOM. As the role of technology increases in product promotion, particularly through social media, more promotional messaging is generated by the consumers themselves (Anastasiei and Dospinescu 2018). Although brands are losing more control of their marketing, they are gaining insights about consumers through the data that is collected through the internet and mobile devices. The web-based marketing environment is providing unparalleled information about individual consumer traits and their consumer preferences (Adamopoulos, Ghose and Todri 2018). As higher education is a high-involvement service product, or a product that customers identify with and consciously devote a great deal of thought to prior to purchase (Gillis, Johansen, and Vivek 2018), prospective student consumers are highly engaged information sharing and gathering. Research has found that consumers of a high-involvement product are more likely to engage in WOM as part of their extensive deliberation process (Akbari, Salehi, and Samadi 2015). However, little WOM research focuses on high-involvement products (Gu, Park, and Konana 2012), particularly service products or coproduced products. Therefore, this research has three basic goals: (1) exploring the influence of student satisfaction on WOM and (2) understanding the relationship between student satisfaction, WOM, and personality traits as defined by the BFI and (3) uncovering how student satisfaction, WOM, and personality traits ultimately relate to perceived loyalty.

Theoretical Background and Literature Review

Word-of-Mouth (WOM)

An essential outcome of customer satisfaction is WOM (Lang and Hyde 2013). According to Cross and Smith (1995), the ultimate test of the customer relationship is whether the customer is willing to promote and advocate for the service or defend the service against detractors. Research suggests that WOM is one of the most effective and credible communication channels (Keller 2007; Neilsen 2009) and one of the strongest forces shaping consumer behavior and decision making (Whyte 1954; Arndt 1967). Due to its credibility and impact, generating positive WOM is a primary marketing goal for many organizations and brands.

The valence of WOM communication has also been widely studied. A body of research has explored the impact of both WOM and NWOM/COM. WOM occurs with the greatest level of frequency for high-involvement products (Gilly et al. 1998). Studies show that positive WOM increases customers' intentions to purchase a product by reducing the perceived risk (Dichter 1966) and creates a favorable image of the firm (Arndt 1967). Likewise, Reichheld and Sasser (1990) found that positive WOM both reduces the need for marketing expenditures and increases revenue when new customers are attracted. WOM is also known to facilitate consumer engagement (Nielsen 2009), which is needed for consumer understanding of a high-involvement product like higher education and to successfully coproduce the educational product. On the other hand, NWOM/COM can reduce the credibility of a brand's advertising (Solomon, 1998). Therefore, WOM can work both ways. WOM can build success by building a brand image. Alternately, NWOM or complaints can discourage potential buyers from brands and damage organizations' reputations (Holmes and Lett 1977).

Because of WOM's centrality to marketing communications, it is essential to understand what motivates word-of-mouth among consumers. According to De Matos and Rossi (2008), the antecedents of WOM include satisfaction, loyalty, quality, commitment, trust, and perceived value. When it comes to positive WOM, satisfaction and commitment, or loyalty, are the most influential constructs. Satisfaction has a greater influence on WOM than loyalty (De Matos and Rossi 2008). However, using the same antecedent factors, De Matos and Rossi found customer (dis)loyalty to have a stronger relationship with NWOM than (dis)satisfaction. Therefore, loyalty and satisfaction seem to be the most important constructs related to WOM. Sundaram, Mitra, and Webster (1998) also studied factors that motivated WOM communication; however, their study focused on more specific motivational factors. In their study, participants were motivated to engage in positive WOM to help the company for self-enhancement, altruism, and product involvement. Alternatively, NWOM was motivated by altruism, vengeance, anxiety reduction, and advice-seeking (Sndaram et. al. 1998). Like WOM, much of the existing research on customer complaints focus on the antecedents of COM (Thota 2004). Hirschman's model (1970) indicated that the individual characteristics that motivated complaining behavior included sophistication, cognitive evaluation, and perceived worthwhileness. NWOM or COM are of particular concern because they are thought to be more powerful than positive product references (Nyilasy 2006; Burzynski and Bayer 1977).

Although many marketers have considered WOM to be an alternative to advertising, WOM and advertising are now considered to be two highly interrelated communication channels (Hogan, Lemon, and Libai 2004; Vázquez-Casielles, Suárez-Álvarez, and del Río-Lanza 2013). For instance, advertising that stimulates both positive WOM and customer curiosity are particularly impactful (Rubinson 2009). WOM is powerful because it is more credible than communication that is created by an organization. Unlike traditional advertising, WOM usually consists of two-way communication. WOM also provides consumers with product experience-related information that reduces risk (Wilke 1990; Derbaix and Vanhamme 2003). Given the high credibility of WOM relative to other sources of marketing communication, even small increases in WOM can have large rewards. Overall, WOM makes advertising and marketing more effective (Keller and Fay 2012).

Word-of-Mouth and Customer Satisfaction

One of the key drivers of WOM is customer satisfaction (Anderson 1998). Satisfaction can be defined as an emotional evaluation in response to owning or using a product or service (Hunt 1977) resulting from the product or service meeting expectations (Oliver 1980). Successful organizations are established on customer satisfaction because satisfied customers provide a range of benefits. Satisfied customers purchase more products, are less influenced by competing brands, are more loyal, provide more positive WOM, and are less price sensitive (Zineldin 2000; Hansemark and Albinsson 2004; Angelova and Zekiri 2011).

Researchers have defined customer satisfaction in many ways. The most widely accepted definition of customer satisfaction is an evaluative determination that is made post-choice regarding a purchasing decision (Day 1984). Customer satisfaction is distinct from product or brand attitudes because it is specifically focused on an interaction with a particular product or service (Oliver and Westbrook 1991). In the satisfaction literature, emotions play a vital role in consumption (Oliver and Westbrook 1991). This is particularly true within the realm of services marketing. In the services marketing context, student customers expect relational benefits from their university because of their long-term relationship and investment in the institution (Gwinner, Gremler, and Bitner 1998).

Personality Traits and Satisfaction

Research indicates that consumption emotions, such as satisfaction, can impact behavioral intentions, including both WOM and eWOM and, ultimately, loyalty (Yu and Dean 2001; Derbaix and Vanhamme 2003; Hicks et al. 2005; White and Yu 2005; Gruen, Osmonbekov, and Czaplewski 2006). Commitment (or loyalty), trust, and customer satisfaction are important antecedents to WOM (Lang and Hyde 2013). Antecedents to customer satisfaction have been among the most studied aspects of customer satisfaction (Dahl and Peltier 2015). However, even though they are connected to emotions, the research has not explored the influence of individual differences, such as personality traits, on customer satisfaction for a high-involvement and coproduced service product.

Personality serves as one of the most important factors that define an individual (Allport 1937; McAdams and Olson 2010). According to Allport (1937, p. 48), personality is "the dynamic structure within the person of those psychophysical arrangements that indicate his [or her] distinctive adjustments to surroundings." Personality is also often described as an individual's thought, behavior, and feelings that remain relatively consistent across time and situation (Caspi and Roberts 1990; McAdams and Olson 2010).

To understand the concept of personality, most researchers use traits. These traits form a dispositional outline of psychological individuality. The use of personality traits allows for comparison and accounts for behavioral consistencies (McAdams and Olson 2010). The most popular personality trait taxonomy is the Big Five model (John, Naumann and Soto 2008). The 44-item Big Five Inventory (BFI-44) created by John, Donahue, and Kentle (1991) measures the five traits of openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (the traits spell the acronym OCEAN). These five traits can be used to describe anyone's personality. Openness (O), also referred to as intellect, is characterized by imagination, curiosity, and exploration. Conscientiousness (C) is embodied by dependability, constraint, and desire to achieve. Extraversion (E) is described as warm, outgoing, and cheerful. Agreeableness (A) consists of honesty, modesty, and generosity. Neuroticism (N) combines sadness and anxiety (McCrae and Costa 2008). Producing alpha reliability coefficients ranging between .75 and .90, research employing the BFI-44 has generated acceptable to excellent internal consistency reliabilities (John and Strivastada 1999). The underlying Big Five model is replicated by factor and content analyses of the BFI's differential measurements (Mount and Barrick 1995).

Emotions and their relationship to marketing remain an under researched area. Gountas and Gountas (2007) found that both positive and negative emotions can influence customers' evaluations of the service they receive and their intention to repurchase in the future. Derbaix and Vanhamme (2003) found that both negative and positive emotions, as well as surprise, were strongly correlated with communicating with others. According to Wetzer, Zeeleberg, and Pieters (2007), the most important emotions in NWOM situations were anger, dissatisfaction, irritation, and frustration. Personality traits, particularly neuroticism, have strong relationships with emotions, particularly negative emotions (Rusting and Larsen 1997). In addition to negative emotions, positive emotions also relate to satisfaction and WOM. Even after accounting for the effect of dissatisfaction, Zeelenberg and Pieters (2004) found that regret and disappointment had a positive effect on the extent of NWOM. On the other hand, White (2010) found that different emotions influenced WOM and repurchase intentions. However, little research had explored customer satisfaction, WOM, and emotions (Krishen, Berezan, Agarwal and Robison 2020). Previous research has found that sociability has a positive relationship with positive WOM intentions (Ferguson, Paulin, and Bergeron 2010). Therefore, targeting the individuals with the personalities that are most predisposed to spreading positive WOM would be of great benefit to marketers.

Hypotheses and Research Questions

The following hypotheses and research questions were tested through our analysis. The RQs explored the relationship between satisfaction (SAT) and WOM and the relationships between satisfaction, WOM, perceived loyalty (PL), and the Big Five personality traits (OCEAN), The first area that was addressed was the relationship between SAT and WOM. Prior research shows that there is a statistically significant relationship between SAT and both WOM and NWOM or COM (Anderson 1998; Maxham 2001; Ladhari 2007; Wetzer, Zeelenberg, and Pieters 2007; Eisingerich, Auh, and Merlo 2014).

RQ1: Within the context of college major choice, what is relationship between student SAT and WOM?

H1a. Greater college major SAT among college students leads to increased WOM.

H1b. Greater college major SAT leads to decreased NWOM (or COM).

H1c. Greater college major SAT leads to a positive total effect on perceived loyalty (PL).

The next two hypotheses connect student WOM to PL:

H2. Increased WOM among students leads to increases in PL.

H3. Increased NWOM (or COM) among students leads to decreases in PL.

The second area that we examined was the relationship between the Big Five (BFI-44) traits and satisfaction, WOM, and PL. Very little previous research has explored the relationship between personality and SAT

(Mooradian and Olver 1997; Vázquez-Carrasco, and Foxall 2006), WOM (Ferguson, Paulin and Bergeron 2010; Mooradian and Swan 2006; Mooradian and Olver 1997), and PL (Bove and Mitzifiris 2007; Ibrahim and Najjar 2008; Lin 2010).

Although no previous research has explored the relationships among WOM, SAT, PL, and the BFI, the previous research suggests that happy personality traits of extraversion and emotional stability (Hills and Argyle 2001; Costa and McCrae 1980) could lead to greater SAT, PL, and positive WOM (Pavot, Diener, and Fujita 1990; Hayes and Joseph 2003; Tkach and Lyubomirsky 2006). Likewise, the personality research seems to predict that those who score lower on emotional stability will report lower levels of satisfaction and loyalty and that those reporting lower levels of extraversion will be less likely to engage in WOM (Hills and Argyle 2001; Costa and McCrae 1980). Therefore, the research posed the following question and tested the following hypotheses.

RQ2: What is the relationship between student SAT, WOM, and personality traits (BFI-44)?

Student Agreeableness (A)

- H4a. High A scores lead to increased major SAT.
- H4b. High A scores lead to increased major WOM.
- H4c. High A scores lead to decreased NWOM (or COM).
- H4d. High A scores lead to a positive total effect on PL.

Student Extraversion (E)

- H5a. High E scores lead to increased student SAT.
- H5b. High E scores lead to increased student WOM.
- H5c. High E scores lead to increased student NWOM (or COM).
- H5d. High E scores lead to an ambiguous total effect on PL.

Student Conscientiousness (C)

- H6a. High C scores lead to increased major SAT.
- H6b. High C scores lead to increased major WOM
- H6c. High C scores lead to decreased major NWOM (or COM).
- H6d. High C scores lead to a positive total effect on PL.

Student Neuroticism (N)

- H7a. High N scores lead to decreased major SAT.
- H7b. High N scores lead to decreased major WOM.
- H7c. High N scores lead to increased major NWOM (or COM).
- H7d. High N scores lead to a negative total effect on PL.

Student Openness (O)

- H8a. High O scores lead to increased major SAT
- H8b. High O scores lead to increased major WOM.
- H8c. High O scores lead to decreased major NWOM (or COM).
- H8d. High O scores lead to a positive total effect on PL.

Methodology

A sample of undergraduate students responded to a survey to measure personality and satisfaction within the context of their experience with their selected undergraduate majors. Even though students' satisfaction with their chosen majors was not a research question for this study, it provides the context for the study of personality, word-of-mouth, and satisfaction among the upcoming consumer audience comprised primarily of millennials. Higher education is an excellent context for studying WOM because a student's choice of major is a high-involvement consumer choice, which makes WOM much more salient. Responses to a survey instrument including the measures of satisfaction, word-of-mouth, and loyalty from the American Customer Satisfaction Model (ACSM) and the BFI-44 were solicited through an anonymous online survey administered to students attending four institutions of higher education consisting of three public institutions and one private institution. Surveys were distributed in two geographic regions of the United States. Participating students were not required to complete the survey as part of a class. However, some students earned a small amount of course credit or extra credit for participating.

Overall, 849 participants completed enough of the survey to constitute a usable response for data analysis. Responses from students with undecided or more than one major were excluded. 774 students remained after narrowing the data set to students listing a single major. With a sample of 50.6% female (N = 392) and 48.2% male

(N = 373) students, the sample approximated the current male-female ratio in higher education. More students attending public education institutions (87.7%, N = 679) responded to the survey than private college students (9.9%, N = 77).

Model and Results

Model

Our model is a Structural Equation Model, which draws elements from the existing literature on WOM (Anderson 1998; Söderlund 1998; Lang and Hyde 2013; Berger 2014). The foundational structure of our model is that the satisfaction (SAT) experience of the customer directly drives WOM and complaining (COM) behaviors or NWOM. We posit that higher satisfaction leads to increased WOM but decreased NWOM or complaints (COM). Further, when customers engage in positive WOM, this increases their perceived loyalty (PL) to that brand while engaging in complaining behavior tends to reduce it.

Previous research has demonstrated that the Big Five personality traits can influence the individual experience of satisfaction (Mooradian and Olver 1994; Mooradian and Olver 1997; Hayes and Joseph 2003; Tkach and Lyubomirsky 2006; Gountas and Gountas 2007; Faullant, Matzler and Mooradian, 2011). This corresponds closely to the happy personality described in the well-being literature (Pavot, Diener, and Fujita 1990; Hayes and Joseph 2003; Tkach and Lyubomirsky 2006).

Therefore, we further conjecture that the Big Five personality traits will influence individual satisfaction in our model. Additionally, we posit that personality traits are a significant factor that influences WOM and complaining behaviors (COM).

This leads us to the model structure seen visually in Figure 1. Each of the endogenously determined latent variables SAT, WOM, COM (NWOM), and PL are measured reflectively by the questions listed in Appendix A. Each of the personality traits, openness (O), conscientiousness (C), extraversion (E), agreeableness (A), and neuroticism (N) are exogenously determined and are scored from individual responses to the BFI-44.

Results

The model was estimated using maximum likelihood procedures in the SEM toolkit of the STATA software package. The path coefficient estimates and standard errors can be seen in Table 1 (Please see Table 1). The large number of observations gathered for this study cause the standard chi-squared goodness of fit statistic to be unreasonable.

Table 2 displays multiple goodness of fit statistics that all support the model. The root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA) value is .0663 and falls below the upper limit of 0.07 suggested by Steiger (2007). The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) value of 0.957 exceeds the cutoff suggested by Hu and Bentler (1999), with the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) of 0.938 following closely behind[1]. Combined with the standardized root mean squared residual (SRMR) score of 0.035, Hu and Bentler (1999) suggest that our probability of Type I and Type II error are quite low (Please see Table 2).

Many of the hypothesized relationships among the latent variables are confirmed in the estimates reported in Table 1. Increased satisfaction leads directly to increased WOM and decreased COM confirming H1a and H1b. The positive effect of WOM on perceived loyalty hypothesized in H2 also receives support from the data. However, the model is unable to confirm or disconfirm H3 as the coefficient for the effect of COM (or NWOM) on perceived loyalty is of the expected sign but fails to generate statistical significance.

The coefficient estimates in Table 1 show us the direct effects of personality traits in our model. The table reveals that agreeableness leads to greater satisfaction and WOM while the effect on COM is negligible. Extraversion has no direct effects on any of our latent constructs. Conscientiousness leads to increases in WOM while neuroticism leads to decreased satisfaction. Openness leads to greater complaints. Hypothesis 4a, 4b, 6b, and 7a all receive support while hypothesis 8c was refuted by direct effects.

While the results in Table 1 are telling about the effects of personality on SAT, WOM, and loyalty relationships, it is necessary to consider both the direct and indirect effects for the full breadth of the relationships to come into view. Table 3 presents the total effects of the model, incorporating both the direct and indirect effects among the variables in the model (Please see Table 3).

The total effects reveal that the effect of increased satisfaction as it operates through the channels of WOM and complaints results in a positive effect on perceived loyalty and a confirmation of hypothesis 1c.

Taking the direct and indirect effects of personality into account, we also see the increased agreeableness leads to even higher WOM, and the traits of extraversion and conscientiousness both lead to increased WOM as well. Neuroticism leads to decreased WOM. These support hypotheses 4b, 5b, 6b, and 7b. Little effect of personality on complaints was found, but the magnitude of the effect of openness was increased in the positive direction furthering to counter our hypothesis 8c. The effects of personality through indirect channels persist in impacting perceived loyalty.

Agreeableness, extraversion, and conscientiousness all lead to increases in perceived loyalty, while neuroticism leads to decreases in perceived loyalty. This supports hypotheses 4d, 5d, 6d, and 7d. The only trait with no significant effect on perceived loyalty is openness. Openness was the only trait having a significant effect on complaints but the effect of complaints on perceived loyalty is so mild that no indirect effects carry over to influence perceived loyalty.

Discussion

This research contributes to the current research on personality and marketing and advertising by exploring the influence of Big Five personality traits on student customer WOM, SAT, and PL within the context of a high-involvement purchase, a college education. This research furthers existing research on WOM by supporting the finding that greater SAT combined with a high involvement service product led to increased positive WOM (Anderson 1998; Soderlund 1998) and decreased COM or NWOM (Anderson 1998; De Matos and Rossi 2008). Our research also found that increased WOM led to increases in perceived loyalty (PL). Regarding the Big Five personality traits (RQ2), our research found that student consumers scoring high in agreeableness were more likely to be loyal, satisfied, engage in WOM, and scored higher in loyalty. However, scoring high in agreeableness did not decrease the likelihood of COM or NWOM. High extraversion scores lead to increased satisfaction and WOM. However, the study did not yield statistically significant results when exploring the relationship between extraversion and complaints and PL. High conscientiousness scores did not lead to higher levels of satisfaction or decreased complaints. However, statistically significant relationships exist between conscientiousness and both loyalty and WOM. Students with high scores in neuroticism experience decreased SAT, WOM and less PL. High neuroticism scores did not lead to increased COM or NWOM. Those scoring high in openness did not experience higher levels of SAT or PL.

Understanding how student personality traits connect with WOM, SAT, and PL is essential for advertising and service marketing managers and educational administrators. Consumers, such as students, have more choices than ever before. Satisfying customers remains key to cultivating positive WOM and generating PL. Interpersonal communication plays a central role in helping potential customers make choices about products and services. Previous research has explored the relationship between the Big Five personality traits and brand evangelism. Brand evangelists actively spread positive WOM about brands while attempting to influence others' purchasing habits. While associated with WOM, the term brand evangelism is distinct from WOM communication because it is often unprompted, usually positive, and converts consumers to a particular brand (Doss 2014).

Doss and Carsten's (2014) research on brand evangelism found that brand evangelism is significantly related to extraversion, openness, and neuroticism. However, this study found that students scoring high in extraversion, openness, and neuroticism did not score high on PL. It was not clear if this difference was a function of the younger age of the student population or if it is more difficult to generate loyalty in the context of a high-involvement product category. As organizations and brands work to cultivate relationships with customers who will endorse and support their brands, it is important to consider brand loyalty. Oliver (1999, p.34) defines brand loyalty as a strong commitment to repurchase a brand regularly into the future despite situational influences and marketing efforts encouraging brand switching. Even though loyal consumers usually are satisfied, satisfaction does not necessarily predict loyalty (Oliver 1999). Maintaining long-term relationships with customers improves a brand's future viability and profitability (Grönroos 1995). Long-term customers have reduced price sensitivity, greater receptivity to new products and services that the firm offers, and increased resistance to competitors (Dick and Basu 1994; Keaveney 1995; Bolton and Lemon 1999). According to the results, increased WOM generates greater PL. Therefore, universities could potentially increase student loyalty by fostering WOM communication about their college major experience. Encouraging student WOM as well as loyalty and identification with their major could help current students mature into alumni who support the university financially or by sending future generations of students to the university.

In addition, in an age where brand influencers and micro-celebrities are hired to cultivate WOM, organizations may derive more benefits from such efforts by determining which consumers are most likely to spread the word about high-involvement (requiring a great deal of thought and/or resources) organizations, products, and services. According to the results of this study, students scoring high in agreeableness, conscientiousness, and extraversion are most likely to engage in WOM. Those scoring high in openness slightly more likely to engage in NWOM or complaints (COM). Therefore, loyal customers exhibiting these traits are desirable because they are more likely to engage in WOM. Influencers and organizations should make a special effort to engage with and satisfy these individuals.

Students scoring high in neuroticism are less likely to be satisfied and loyal. Because neurotics are less likely to be satisfied and loyal, they are less likely to be an organization or services most profitable customers. It is probably more efficient for firms to focus on the customers that generate more benefit, namely, the customer that scores high in conscientiousness, agreeable, extraversion, and openness. One of the greatest contributions of this study is identifying customers that will provide the most benefit to an organization that provides a high-involvement service product, such as a university. Because high-involvement products tend to require a greater investment in time and resources (Taylor 1999), courting the right customers is important. Courting customers with the happy personality (extraversion and emotional stability) is a positive start. But this research goes further by showing that the most desirable customers are agreeable, extroverted, emotionally stable, and conscientious. Likewise, organizations need not worry too much about dissatisfied neurotics. They are the most difficult to satisfy and less likely to provide the desired outcomes PL and WOM. However, although difficult to satisfy, neurotics are unlikely to complain.

Although the research uncovered some interesting findings regarding student consumers and a high involvement co-produced product, there are limitations to our study. It is also possible that there is a difference between communicating online versus face-to-face. Future research could explore how students communicate about their satisfaction with their major online versus in person. Second, only current university and college students were surveyed. Future research could explore how alumni perceive their choice of major and if NWOM or COM post-graduation contributes to regret. Finally, we did not survey prospective students regarding how WOM and eWOM affect their decision making as they are choosing their individual majors.

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Tables

Table 1

Effects of Personality on SAT, WOM, and PL

	SAT	WOM	COM (NWOM)	PL	ss1	ss2	ss3	wom1	wom2	wom3	Sc	scx	pl1	pl2
A	0.281***	0.162***	0.025											
	(0.078)	(0.061)	(0.040)											
E	0.053	0.067	0.029											
	(0.055)	(0.043)	(0.024)											
C	0.114	0.098*	-0.023											
	(0.075)	(0.058)	(0.035)											
N	-0.135**	0.005	0.022											
	(0.058)	(0.045)	(0.027)											
O	-0.041	0.084	0.055*											
	(0.069)	(0.054)	(0.031)											
SAT		0.863***	-		1	0.846***	1.056***							
			0.137***											
		(0.043)	(0.019)		-	(0.044)	(0.041)							
WOM				0.832***				1	1.194***	1.185***				
				(0.047)				-	(0.033)	(0.034)				
COM (NWOM)				-0.080							1	9.197**		
				(0.112)							-	(4.392)		
PL													1	0.941***
													-	(0.039)

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 2

Goodness of Fit

Goodness of fit	
Observations	710
X^2	271.7
degrees of freedom	66
p-value	0
RMSEA	0.0663
CFI	0.957
TLI	0.938
SRMR	0.0351

Table 3

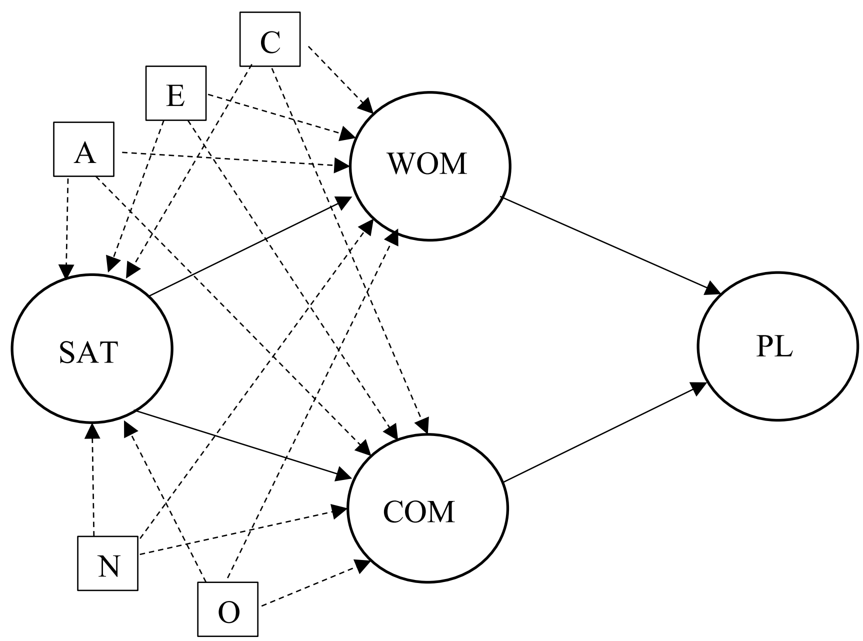
Total Effects of the Model

	SAT	WOM	COM (NWOM)	PL	ss1	ss2	ss3	wom1	wom2	wom3	Sc	scx	pl1	pl2
A	.281***	.405***	-.0138	.338***	.281***	.238***	.297***	.405***	.483***	.479***	-.0139	-.127	.338***	.318***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.734)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.734)	(0.755)	(0.000)	(0.000)
E	.0534	.113*	.0212	.0927*	.0534	.0451	.0564	.113*	.135*	.134*	.0212	.195	.0927*	.0871*
	(0.331)	(0.052)	(0.397)	(0.060)	(0.331)	(0.331)	(0.331)	(0.052)	(0.052)	(0.052)	(0.397)	(0.401)	(.060)	(.060)
C	.114	.197**	-.0387	.167**	.114	.0965	.121	.197**	.235**	.233**	-.0387	-.356	.167**	.157**
	(0.130)	(0.014)	(0.282)	(0.014)	(0.130)	(0.131)	(0.130)	(0.014)	(.014)	(0.014)	(0.282)	(0.262)	(0.014)	(0.014)
N	-.135**	-.112*	.0403	-.0962*	-.135**	-.114**	-.143**	-.112*	-.134*	-.132*	.0403	.371	-.0962*	-.0905*
	(0.019)	(0.067)	(0.148)	(0.062)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.067)	(0.067)	(0.067)	(0.148)	(0.140)	(0.062)	(0.062)
O	-.0414	.0481	.0607*	.0352	-.0414	-.035	-.0437	.0481	.057	.057	.061*	.558	.035	.0331
	(0.551)	(0.515)	(0.061)	(0.574)	(0.551)	(0.552)	(.552)	(.515)	(.515)	(0.515)	(0.091)	(0.216)	(0.574)	(0.574)
SAT		.863***	-.137***	.729***	1	.846***	1.056***	.863***	1.0306***	1.0224***	-.137***	-1.26***	.729***	.686***
		(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	-	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
WOM				.832***				1	1.194***	1.185***			.832***	.783***
				(0.000)				-	(0.000)	(0.000)			(0.000)	(0.000)
COM				-.0795							1	9.197**	-.0795	-.0748
(NWOM)				(0.479)							-	(0.036)	(0.479)	(0.479)
PL													1	.941***
													-	(0.000)

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Figure 1

**Visual Representation of the Model
(Relationships among BFI and WOM, SAT, COM, and PL)**



IS MY PHOTO WORTH A THOUSAND ADS?: UNDERSTANDING COLLEGE-AGED CONSUMERS' PERCEPTIONS ON "PERSONALIZED MYSELFIE ADVERTISING"

HoYoung Anthony Ahn, Pepperdine University

Abstract

Using in-depth interviews (n=24) and a qualitative projective technique with *personalized myselfie advertisements* (n=96), this study examined how college-aged consumers perceive the practice of *personalized myselfie advertising* —a prospective advertising strategy incorporating consumers' brand-related selfies and photographs into social media advertising. Inductive data analyses revealed four themes regarding college-aged consumers' experiences with posting their brand-related selfies and photos on SNSs: "Brand loyalty does matter," "I am hip," "Seizing what life offers," and "I am not a walking billboard for brands." Four patterns were also discovered in how they interpreted *personalized myselfie advertising*: "Me in ads? Another ego booster," "The more relevant, the more enthusiastic," "Cool ads but creepy," and "Advertising calculus." The overall findings suggest that the idea of *personalized myselfie advertising* has promise, but advertising professionals should proceed cautiously.

SPECIAL TOPIC SESSION: CREATING A SOCIAL MEDIA LISTENING CENTER

Itai Himelboim, University of Georgia
Brandon Boatwright, Clemson University
Courtney Childers, University of Tennessee
Jameson Hayes, University of Alabama
Lance Porter, Louisiana State University

Abstract

Social media plays a growing role in advertising's teaching and research. Many advertising programs around the country and the world understand the need to establish social media monitoring labs to support their scholarly and pedagogical goals. But where to start? This panel hosted faculty who created and maintained social media monitoring labs in their own institutions who shared their experiences and helped participants navigate through the range of issues they may face as they establish their own social media centers.

Panel Summary

The panelsist discussed, shared their experiences, and made suggestions for the audience, in areas related to budget, purpose of lab, social media platforms and usage, faculty and staff capacity, the physical space, and broader issues related to teaching, research and outreach strategic priorities.

Tools. When it comes to selecting a paid listening service for a social media listening lab, like Brandwatch, Meltwater, and Sprinklr, it's crucial to consider various factors. Panelists discussed some of the strengths of paid applications including advanced features, wider data access, better customer support, and less impact of social media platforms changes to their public APIs (e.g., Twitter). However, these platforms can be expensive, and budget constraints may make them challenging to access. On the other hand, free applications are available, but they may have limitations in terms of features and data access. Panelists discussed the social media listening services that they are using in their labs, and the considerations involved in selecting these services.

Budget. Running a social media listening lab can be expensive, and recurring costs like social media monitoring platforms need to be addressed. Different labs have different approaches to funding, and they must develop business models that work for them. These models can include cost-sharing arrangements, charging for services, grants, or institutional budgets. Panelists discussed their labs' business models and how they support and sustain their academic and educational activities.

Physical space and technology are critical considerations when setting up a social media listening lab. There are different options, including designated spaces vs. existing computer labs, and classroom-sized teaching spaces vs. smaller social media "war rooms." The type of hardware required will depend on the lab's goals and objectives. Panelsist discussed their key considerations when deciding on a physical space and technology.

Purpose. Social media centers serve various purposes, including research, training, and teaching. Each purpose requires different skill sets, from basic social media analytics to social network analysis and coding skills for machine learning analysis. Faculty and graduate students need to have the appropriate skills to run an effective social media listening lab. Panlists discussed the skills required for different purposes and shared their experiences in acquiring and developing these skills.

THIS IS #AD OR #NOTAD: HOW DISCLOSURE AND MESSAGE APPEAL IMPACT INFLUENCER MOTIVES AND CONSUMER RESPONSE TO BRANDED CONTENT

Mengtian Jiang, University of Kentucky
Yiran Su, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Abstract

This study investigates how consumers respond to two message strategies – disclosure and message appeal – used by social media influencers when making product recommendations. The study employed a 2 (types of message appeal: influencer-benefit *vs.* other-benefit) × 3 (types of disclosure: #ad *vs.* #notad *vs.* control) between-subjects online experiment. We recruited 246 US Instagram users from an online professional panel to evaluate one of six Instagram posts. Results showed that both disclosure type and message appeal had significant main effects on inferred influencer motives. The #notad disclosure generates more altruistic motives and fewer profit motives compared to the #ad disclosure and control condition. Other-benefit message appeals elicited more altruistic motives but did not increase profit motives compared to influencer-benefit appeals. Additionally, altruistic (self-serving) motives were positively (negatively) associated with consumer perceptions of influencer credibility, leading to more favorable attitudes toward both the post and the influencer. The study also found that the #notad (vs. #ad) disclosure and other-benefit (*vs.* influencer-benefit) message appeals have positive indirect effects on post and influencer attitudes via the serial mediation of two motive perceptions and influencer credibility. These findings suggest influencers use non-sponsorship disclosure (#notad) to highlight unpaid branded content, as well as using other-benefit appeals or creating prosocial content to elicit altruistic motives to increase persuasive effectiveness.

MINGLING WITH MIQUELA: UNDERSTANDING HOW SPONSORSHIP DISCLOSURE AFFECTS CONSUMERS' PARASOCIAL INTERACTION WITH VIRTUAL INFLUENCERS

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Eunjin (Anna) Kim, University of Southern California
Zihang Ee, University of Southern California

Abstract

Virtual influencers refer to digital agents that imitate the appearance and content of human influencers. While scholars have increasingly examined this novel phenomenon, limited research has assessed consumers' parasocial interaction with virtual influencers. To the best of our knowledge, no research has examined whether parasocial interaction differs for sponsored and non-sponsored content. Guided by the persuasion knowledge model (PKM), the present study addresses these gaps by examining consumers' parasocial interactions with Miquela (@lilmiquela), a prominent virtual influencer with three million Instagram followers. Using computational methods, we extracted 276 posts from Miquela's Instagram profile and 16,876 English-language user comments. Sentiment analyses of text and emojis indicated a positivity bias for Miquela's Instagram posts and user comments, regardless of sponsorship disclosure. However, the sponsored content possessed significantly more positive sentiment than the non-sponsored content across Miquela's Instagram posts and user comments. Topic modeling revealed that consumers were confused about Miquela's identity as a robot or human. Consumers also provided polarizing emotional responses: Some proclaimed their love for Miquela and complimented her beauty. Yet, others reacted with fear and psychological reactance. Overall, our findings offer valuable insights for brands that intend to harness the power of virtual influencers.

WILL BRANDS MAKE IT IF THEY FAKE IT? EXPLORING THE EFFECTS OF CGI INFLUENCER DISCLOSURES IN SPONSORED SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

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Haley Hatfield, University of Georgia
Jooyoung Kim, University of Georgia

Abstract

CGI (computer-generated imagery) influencers have become a popular tool for brands to promote their products, as they can be made to look, act, and communicate as brands please. However, CGI influencers' existence has prompted questions and concerns among consumer protection advocates and regulators, as these virtual influencers cannot always be readily discerned from their human counterparts, and their profiles can reflect unrealistic or inhuman body proportions. Consumers may be misled if they do not know that an influencer endorsing a product is not human and experience harmful effects if they compare themselves to unattainable beauty standards. While regulatory approaches exist in some countries to require disclosure for edited and manipulated images on social media posts, the practice of computer-generating influencers does not require disclosure. The present study draws on the theoretical frameworks of persuasion knowledge and Signaling Theory as well as the theoretical construct of trust to examine the effects of CGI influencer disclosures. Results show that such disclosures hold the potential to activate consumers' persuasion knowledge and reduce body comparison, but also lead to less favorable perceptions regarding the influencer and brand. Implications for various stakeholders, including scholars, regulators, brands, and content creators are discussed.

HOW DOES DISCLOSING AI'S INVOLVEMENT IN ADVERTISING INFLUENCE CONSUMER RESPONSES? A TASK-DEPENDENT PERSPECTIVE

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

Abstract

Artificial intelligence (AI) has been widely applied to the advertising industry, but there is no consensus in the current practice on disclosing AI's involvement in advertising to consumers. We believe consumers have the right to know about the technology behind the ads and scholars can take the lead in the issue of AI disclosure. Accordingly, we conducted an online experiment to explore how the disclosure of AI for ad placement versus ad creation influences consumers' word-of-mouth (WOM) intent. The results indicated that when consumers believed AI was better for high complexity tasks, they expressed greater intent to share the ad placed by AI than the ad created by AI. The serial mediation from perceived task objectivity to machine heuristic was confirmed to account for the observed effects. These findings are believed to be meaningful to both theory building and practice of AI advertising.

EXAMINING ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF CONSUMERS' LUXURY BRANDS ENGAGEMENT ON INSTAGRAM

Eunseon Kwon, Texas Christian University
Tae Rang Choi, Texas Christian University

Abstract

This study investigates the key antecedents and outcomes of consumer brand engagement (CBE) in the context of luxury brands on social media. Based on data collected from 547 nonstudent, young female consumers who follow luxury brands on Instagram, the results reveal that predicting variables (consumer involvement, need for status signaling, and brand self-expressiveness) have a differing effect on the CBE dimensions (cognitive processing, affection, and activation) and the brand outcomes (brand attitude, brand usage intention, and self-brand connection). The study provides valuable managerial and academic implications and suggestions for future research.

HELP! I AM ADDICTED TO BRANDS AND IMPULSE BUYING ON SOCIAL MEDIA! EXAMINING PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AND SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION AS DRIVERS OF BRAND ADDICTION AND IMPULSE BUYING

Angeliki Nikolinakou, University of Georgia
Joe Phua, Southern Methodist University
Eun Sook Kwon, Rochester Institute of Technology

Abstract

As social media becomes increasingly prevalent in the everyday lives of million of users, it is important to identify mechanisms of addiction on social media. Our study is one of the first to specifically examine the relationship between social media addiction and addiction to brands and buying in the context of the "components" model of addiction and the I-PACE model. We conducted a survey with social media users 18-44 years of age and examined the effects of positive (mindfulness, self-esteem, happiness) and negative (emotional suppression, anxiety and loneliness) psychological well-being states on social media addiction and brand addiction/impulse buying. Results were analyzed with structural equation modeling, indicating that social media addiction is driven by negative psychological well-being, while brand addiction/impulse buying is driven both by positive psychological well-being as well as social media addiction. We suggest ways companies could protect consumers' psychological well-being as well as prevent and contain addiction on social media.

THE ROLES OF SOCIAL MEDIA MOTIVATION AND TECHNOLOGY FLUIDITY FACTORS IN SHAPING NEWSFEED ADVERTISING EFFECTIVENESS

Xiaowen Xu, Butler University
Carolyn Lin, University of Connecticut

Abstract

Extant research examining how user motivation and the technology attributes of a social media platform may conjunctively influence newsfeed advertising effectiveness is very limited. This exploratory study tested a conceptual model that integrated social media motivations and technology fluidity alongside consumer evaluation of and engagement with newsfeed ads to explain purchase intention. Results show that while information seeking and self-expression motivations were positively related to ad engagement, the opposite was true for entertainment and socialization motivations. Both the Information-seeking motivation and perceived technology fluidity of the Facebook platform were positive predictors of perceived ad value. As perceived ad value was associated with ad engagement, both variables were positively linked to purchase intention.

A NEW GRID IN TOWN? NEW PERSPECTIVE ON SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING MESSAGE STRATEGY AND CREATIVE APPEALS – EXPLORATORY RESEARCH

Dorit Zimand-Sheiner, Ariel University
Ofrit Kol, Ariel University
Shalom Levy, Ariel University

Abstract

This study aims to contribute to the literature on social media advertising by suggesting a new strategy-creative grid (consisting of shared experience vs. personal message strategy and informational vs. transformational creative execution) and examining its effect on consumer engagement. Facebook ads were designed according to the grid and using an online survey, the effectiveness of each grid combination was examined on the three facets of consumer engagement (cognitive, psychological, and behavioral), and for two products. Results indicate that the informational creative appeal is preferable for all Facebook ad conditions, demonstrating that Facebook is a high-involvement platform. The effectiveness of message strategy differs by product type and the effect of interactions between message strategy and creative appeal is significant only for the high involvement product. Theoretical and practical implications for social media advertising are discussed.

SPECIAL TOPICS SESSION:
BRIDGING RESEARCH AND PRACTICE: ADVERTISING'S ROLE IN PROMOTING SUSTAINABILITY

Moderator: Qimei Chen, University of Hawai`i at Manoa

Panelists: Dana Alden, University of Hawai`i at Manoa
Steven Edwards, Southern Methodist University
Carrie La Ferle, Southern Methodist University
Lynn Kahle, University of Oregon
Shelly Rodgers, University of Missouri Columbia
Sela Sar, University of Illinois Urbana Champaign

Overview

Given the importance of increasing research on effectively communicating the value of sustainable consumption while minimizing stakeholder dismissal of such communications as greenwashing, this special-topics session brought together several impactful scholars and leaders in the areas of advertising and marketing communications to share their views on advertising's role in promoting sustainability research and practice and to foster a vibrant discussion on several crucial topics related to sustainable marketing communication.

One definition of sustainable consumption refers to consumer "actions that result in decreases in adverse environmental impacts as well as decreased utilization of natural resources across the lifecycle of the product, behavior, or service" (White, Habib, and Hardisty 2019, p. 24). Thus, sustainable consumption includes behaviors such as voluntarily reducing one's consumption (McDonald et al. 2006); choosing more sustainable products (Luchs, Brower, and Chitturi 2012); conserving natural resources during product use (Lin and Chang 2012; White, Simpson, and Argo 2014); and utilizing more sustainable post-consumption behaviors such as recycling and upcycling (Winterich, Nenkov, and Gonzales 2019).

Unfortunately, consumers are often reluctant to make sacrifices or trade-offs to support more sustainable options such as green products (Lin and Chang 2012) and are also resistant to sustainability interventions (Gonzalez-Arcos et al. 2021). In addition, the pathway to becoming a more sustainable business can be challenging. For instance, past research suggests that businesses may incur short-term increased costs or potential losses if they seek inclusion on lists such as the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI). Other research indicates that although sustainability initiatives may not benefit a firm's bottom line in the short run, they can decrease risks associated with the threat of loss caused by negative environmental changes such as the increasing frequency of climate-related disasters (Flammer, Toffel, Viswanathan 2021).

Given that more sustainable patterns of both consumption and business life are central to addressing sustainability challenges such as global climate change (Schanes, Giljum, and Hertwich 2016), other forms of pollution, and supply chain inequity, advertising has a crucial role to play in helping businesses, organizations and governments effectively communicate with consumers and other stakeholders.

In this special topics session, six panel members brought their various interdisciplinary perspectives to show approaches to address how to connect advertising research and practice on sustainability; advertising's role in fostering sustainable consumption and ethical issues in sustainability advertising. Insights shared in this session enhanced our understanding of the challenge and opportunities of using advertising and marketing communication to promote sustainability. Qimei Chen, Noborikawa Endowed Chair Professor of Entrepreneurship, Marketing, and Information Technology at the Shidler College of Business, University of Hawai`i at Manoa served as a moderator bridging between the panel members and the audience with her research experience in advertising, marketing communication and branding.

Advertising Research and Practice on Sustainability

The panel discussion started with Dr. Shelly Rodgers, the outgoing Editor-in-Chief, *Journal of Advertising* (JA) and Maxine Wilson Gregory Chair Professor of Strategic Communication at the School of Journalism, University of Missouri Columbia. Dr. Rodgers brought her rich experience of being the editor of JA for the past three years and shared her observations on the urgency of stressing advertising's role in promoting sustainability. She emphasized the particular need for a common definition and unified framework and illustrated her thoughts on four potential directions for future sustainability and advertising research, that is, consumer responses to corporate sustainability (Choi et al., 2019); longitudinal studies on consumer attitude change on sustainability over time (Barrios et al. 2017); cultural factors that affect attitudes toward environmental messages (Barrios et al. 2017); and moving beyond the focus of message effects as one-way communication of sustainability practices (Golob et al. 2022).

Dr. Dana L. Alden, the Editor-in-Chief, *Journal of Sustainable Marketing* (JSM) and the Co-Chair of RISM (Research Innovation in Sustainable Marketing) 2023 Symposium, and William R. Johnson Jr. Distinguished Professor at Shidler College of Business, University of Hawai`i at Manoa shared his understanding of the role of academic journals in advancing research on sustainable marketing communication and emphasized his view that a leading journal voice is needed in the field of marketing to help move the sustainability agenda to the next level. He further described his vision of investing in JSM. Working with JSM's strong ERB, Dr. Alden noted that he aims to help this journal become the leading source of marketing-related (and marketing communication-related) contributions to reducing the threats of global warming and increasing fair trade. To this end, Dr. Alden invites AAA scholars to submit their related work to JSM and also welcomes suggested special issue topics or commentaries.

Dr. Sela Sar, President, American Academy of Advertising (AAA) and Professor of Advertising and Director of the Institute of Communications Research, College of Media, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign then shared his view of the Academy's crucial role in bridging sustainability-related advertising research and practice. Specifically, he believes that AAA can facilitate networks between academic scholars from across disciplines who have similar research interests (i.e., sustainable consumption); promote advertising research activities through organizing a pre-conference session on advertising research and sustainable consumption; form special sustainability-focused research committee and research group; and encourage collaborative/interdisciplinary research project on sustainable consumption. Dr. Sar ended his talk by calling for a collaborative effort among AAA members to put together sustainability-related research repositories and teaching databases.

Advertising's Role in Fostering Sustainable Consumption

Dr. Lynn R. Kahle then offered his perspective on advertising's role in fostering sustainable consumption, i.e., advertising should achieve a strong response to communications about sustainability and climate change, ads should link recommended actions to higher-order values and even religiosity, thus imbuing the communications with greater importance. He further cautioned the challenge of sustainable marketing communication and the possibilities of companies' effort being compromised by negative spill-over effects from other companies' (in the same industry) environmental transgression.

Dr. Steven M. Edwards, Marriott Endowed Chair Professor of Insights and Analytics, Temerlin Advertising Institute, Southern Methodist University further described advertising's role in fostering sustainable consumption in that brands and agencies must act to ensure consumers take action. He pointed out that independent verification was crucial to ensure that ESG claims being made were authentic because brands that tout their sustainability efforts often face backlash for greenwashing. In fact, greenwashing fears are driving pullback from brands highlighting their efforts, forcing brands to do more sustainability work under the radar, leading to green hushing, i.e., companies purposely under-promising their sustainability goals so that they can over-deliver. Dr. Edwards suggested that the best approach to sustainable marketing is for brands to inspire people to lead greener lives. To illustrate, Dr. Alden shared a recent and ongoing point-of-purchase marketing communication research conducted by himself and his research team in nudging consumers to make more sustainable choices in a retail take-out food context.

Ethical Issues in Sustainability Advertising

The session concluded with commentary on ethical issues in sustainability advertising by Dr. Carrie La Ferle, Altshuler Distinguished Teaching Professor and Meadows Distinguished Teaching Professor, Temerlin Advertising Institute, Southern Methodist University. She discussed six main greenwashing tactics, i.e., image, misleading labels, red herring, irrelevant claims, vague terms and no proof/substantiation. Using a Cascade Connective Home research case and noting the importance of measuring actual sustainable behavior as opposed to intentions, Dr. La Ferle further illustrated the need for companies to help consumers to understand and trust sustainable claims, to focus on benefits at the individual level when promoting sustainable products and to provide roadmaps when nudging people into new sustainable habits.

To conclude, academic journals are among the "most visible and impactful agents of change in the discipline" (Yadav 2018). The American Academy of Advertising provides a major platform on which researchers and practitioners can exchange knowledge. Furthermore, in today's increasingly fragile world, as advertisers look for ways to grow markets while building long-term brand relationships, advertising is the perfect conduit for "communicating sustainability for the green economy" (Kahle and Gurel-Atay 2014). As a result, we believe that this special-topics session provided a thought-provoking discussion on the role of advertising and other communication channels in promoting more sustainable consumption and we hope that the discussion we summarized here can inspire more scholars to join our endeavor.

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I LAUGH AT YOUR PAIN: EFFECTS OF VIOLATION OF SOCIAL NORMS AND AFFECT ON EVALUATION OF ADS THAT ARE BOTH HUMOROUS AND VIOLENT

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Abstract

From nighttime talk shows to candy bar ads, violent humor captures audiences' attention and elicits both positive and negative emotional responses. Research demonstrates the effectiveness of violent humorous ads in increasing consumers' attention and recall. However, at a certain "tipping point" these ads can also alienate consumers and increase negative attitudes toward the ad, brand, or product. We examined this tipping point, and the mechanisms underlying it, using a 2 (violence level: high, low) x 2 (violence provocation: present, absent) between-subjects online experiment. Participants (*n*= 394) viewed an ad, then answered questions to assess perceptions of violation of social norms (VSN), affect and arousal, attitudes toward the ad and brand, and purchase intention. Interaction analyses revealed that ads with high unprovoked violence elicited the greatest VSN and negative affect. VSN predicted attitudes toward ad and brand and purchase intention while negative affect only predicted purchase intention, indicating different mechanisms underlying these consumer outcomes. Practical and theoretical implications are discussed.

YOU'RE ON MY TEAM! IMPACT OF TEAM IDENTIFICATION AND TEAM PERFORMANCE ON THE EFFICACY OF GAMBLING SPORTS SPONSORSHIP

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Abstract

Many public health concerns arise that the sponsorship of sports by gambling brands may normalize gambling in society and therefore enhance gambling rates. However, to the best of our knowledge, no research has yet empirically investigated how gambling sports sponsorships affect young adults, and how they contribute to the normalization of gambling. The current study investigates how team identification affects young adults' affective responses toward the gambling sponsor, their normative perceptions of gambling and their commitment toward the gambling sponsor (i.e., long-term behavioral and attitudinal disposition toward the brand). In addition, we also examine the moderating role of team performance. We conducted a 2 (team identification: low versus high) by 2 (team performance: win versus loss) between-subjects quasi-experimental design among 182 young adults (18 to 29 years). The results show that highly-identified fans have a more positive attitude toward the gambling sponsor (compared to young adults with a low team identification), which further enhances their normative perceptions of gambling and their commitment toward the gambling sponsor. There were no moderating effects of team performance.

HERE’S A TIP:
LESS INFORMATION IS MORE MOTIVATION FOR NONGREEN CONSUMERS

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Kibum Youn, University of Tennessee

Abstract

This study investigates the role of brand authenticity in consumer response to green advertising with sustainability information framed as tips. Study 1 finds that a single green tip is more effective at increasing brand attitudes for nongreen consumers, whereas multiple tips is more effective for green consumers. Study 2 extends these findings by demonstrating the effects when the number of sustainability tips is not in the ad itself but merely mentioned. Brand authenticity is the mechanism for these interacting effects. Using motivational theory, we explore how the right amount of sustainability information is critical for persuading consumers with low environmental concern.

Introduction

An increasing number of consumers report sustainable behaviors, but some consumers are slow or resistant to change their attitudes. Most advertising and marketing communication research focuses on persuasion for “green” consumers who already have a high level of concern for the environment and are thus more likely to be open to new green behaviors or products (Barbarossa and De Pelsmacker 2016). The more difficult task is changing the attitudes of consumers who have low levels of environmental concern. For these individuals, the issue of environmental conservation is one of low involvement, so they lack the motivation to pay attention to or process the information in green advertising. Providing the right amount of sustainability-related information could help low environmental concern (nongreen) consumers become greener over time. But what is the best format to present this information? How can brands cultivate greener attitudes in those with low environmental concern?

Advertisers often adopt assertive messages to promote a specific sustainable action, e.g., Plant for the Planet’s, “Stop talking, start planting” appeal (Kronrod et al. 2012). However, these assertive appeals often backfire among those with low environmental concern, entrenching existing attitudes and behaviors (Kronrod et al. 2012). One way to reduce psychological reactance is by expanding the choice set. Motivational Theory (Miller and Rollnick 1991) stresses the importance of framing interventions to mitigate psychological reactance. This is mainly done by providing choices to influence negative behaviors such as smoking (Cunningham, Faulkner, Selby and Cordingly 2006) or alcohol consumption (Miller 1996). The concept of providing multiple options for sustainable behaviors could be effective in green advertising as well. Framing the same product or behavior message as optional tips can make the same information more palatable to nongreen consumers. Based on Motivational Theory, providing multiple tips should cause consumers to positively modify their attitudes because they are reminded of their agency or free will in the matter, i.e., they can choose one of several options to adopt more sustainable behaviors, *but only if they want to*. Additionally, tips could also increase the perception that the message source is authentic and socially responsible (Ekebas-Turedi, Kordrostami and Benoit 2021) because the source appears to have abundant information or ideas about the subject.

However, presenting multiple tips could also backfire for nongreen consumers. Consumers high in environmental concern may prefer multiple sustainability tips since all the information is already congruent with their values. The mechanism for these effects will be perceived brand authenticity, a crucial factor in the increasingly crowded context of green advertising (Kaur, Kumar, Syan and Parmar 2021; Pittman, Oeldorf-Hirsch and Brennan 2022). However, providing a single sustainability tip as part of a green advertisement may increase brand attitudes for consumers with low environmental concern, since they may not be motivated to process multiple pieces of information on a low-interest topic. The current paper seeks to understand how nongreen consumers respond to one or many tips.

The present study makes several contributions. First, we identify a new green advertising strategy of adding behavioral tips into sustainable product ads. These messages can be easily tailored to match the individual level of environmental concern (i.e., adding more tips for those with high environmental concern). Second, we import motivational theory from psychology into marketing communication literature as a fertile theory for future research. Finally, we connect the novel messaging strategy to differential effects on authenticity, identifying a message-specific relationship to authenticity.

Theoretical Framework

Green Advertising

Green advertising is marketing communication involving any messaging that promotes environmentally oriented consumption behavior (Kilbourne 1995). For the most part, consumers recognize green advertising (Kong and Zhang 2014; Mattes, Wonneberger and Schmuck 2014). Economic, cultural, and social trends have increasingly emphasized the importance of sustainability to the point that consumers across all generations (e.g., Gen Z, Gen X, Boomers) are now willing to spend more on sustainable products (Petro 2022). However, some consumers do not adopt sustainable behaviors and hold unfavorable attitudes toward green advertising. Thus, a critical challenge for green advertising effectiveness is connecting with these consumers.

Academic research has increased efforts to understand how different messaging strategies impact green ad effectiveness. Scholars have studied different types of green advertising message framing or appeals (Kareklas, Carlson and Muehling 2014; Matthes, Wonneberger and Schmuck 2014) as well as how to promote different types of benefits. For example, Green and Peloza (2014) determined that when consumers are experiencing public accountability, they are more persuaded by other-benefit appeals, but in private, they prefer self-benefit appeals. Pittman, Read, and Chen (2021) found that emotional (fear-based) appeals were more effective (compared to functional appeals) on social media because the "presence" of other people on Instagram and Facebook (compared to a regular, non-social website) causes consumers to think more about how certain products are polluting the environment.

As green advertising becomes more common and even expected, perceptions of greenwashing have also increased as consumers are increasingly skeptical of sustainability claims (Segev, Fernandes and Hong 2016). Greenwashing refers to exaggerated beliefs or unsubstantiated claims about environmental support (Sheehan 2015) and is seen as a shallow attempt to cash in on the increased popularity of sustainable goods and services (Matthes 2019). Consumers are skeptical of green campaigns if they think the brand lacks authenticity (Pittman and Sheehan 2020) or cannot be trusted (Matthew and Wonneberger, 2014). This confusion surrounding green advertising (Chen and Chang 2013) damages overall consumer confidence in green products (Delmas and Burbano 2011), particularly among consumers with low environmental concern (Magnier and Schoormans 2015).

Message Receiver Characteristic: Environmental Concern

Individuals vary in their degree of environmental concern – their beliefs about many different green issues (Bhatnagar and McKay-Nesbitt 2016; Chang, Zhang, and Xie 2015). Green consumers, or those with high environmental concern (HEC), are more likely to see green advertising as relevant (Chang, Zhang, and Xie 2015), willing to pay more for premium products from environmentally responsible companies (Rahman, Park, and Chi 2015), adopt green behaviors such as using public transportation or seeking to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (Bhatnagar and McKay-Nesbitt 2016), and believe that green ads have greater informational utility (Matthes and Wonneberger 2014) than low environmental concern (LEC) individuals (Newman et al. 2012). Most green advertising research focuses on outcomes related to HEC consumers already predisposed toward sustainable behaviors. The more challenging task is motivating and persuading those who do not necessarily see the value of or need for sustainable products.

Since green advertising generally targets HEC consumers (Schmuck et al. 2018), less is known about message designs that influence LEC consumers (Pittman, Read, and Chen 2021). LEC individuals are more likely to scrutinize green ads (Magnier and Schoormans 2015; Do Paco and Reis 2012). Influencing LEC individuals to adopt green behaviors is critical to achieving collective environmental goals but is challenging because these individuals place lower importance on environmental issues (Matthes, Wonnenberger, and Schmuck 2014). As a result, environmental ads are inherently unappealing (Chang, Zhang, and Xie 2015).

Message framing is one strategy that influences LEC individuals (Newman et al. 2012). Emergent research has identified emphasizing the personal benefit (Mo, Liu, and Liu 2018), using third-party endorsement on eco-seals (Bickart and Ruth 2012), applying a guilt appeal (Shin, Ki, and Griffin 2017), and priming environmental issue importance (Chang, Zhang, and Xie 2015) to stimulate more favorable attitudes toward the ad and behavioral intentions among LEC consumers. Thus, in line with extant research, we propose that HEC consumers will be more responsive to green advertising than LEC consumers:

H1: HEC consumers will have higher brand attitudes toward a green ad compared to LEC consumers

When message receivers view an issue as important, they are more willing to comply with the persuasive request (Kronrod, Grinstein, and Wathieu 2012). Since HEC individuals place high importance on the environment, any amount of green information is acceptable because it is congruent with their attitudes and beliefs (Kronrod, Grinstein, and Wathieu 2012). On the other hand, too much environmental information might trigger LEC consumers (Pittman, Read and Chen 2021), who are more likely to perceive a green message as an imperative that runs counter to their existing behavior and values. The perceived inconsistency of the brand's values with their own will generate a more negative attitude toward the ad sponsor. An ad with too strong of an appeal can make LEC consumers feel irritated, as though the brand is trying to guilt them into action (Lim and Hong 2022). All this suggests that less is more when it comes to information and persuasion of green ads on LEC consumers. On the other hand, brands that focus *only* on the product benefits and fail to provide *any* prosocial or environmental information in green ads risk either being ignored by LEC consumers or, worse, perpetuating stereotypes of greenwashing: brands only care about profit, not the environment. But what if there was a way to frame environmental information so that a) it first gets the attention of LEC consumers, and then b) is perceived as authentic? If green messages could be framed in the right way, it might be the right amount and type of information that LEC consumers were willing to process, despite their low motivation and involvement with the issue of environmental sustainability.

Motivational Theory

A relevant theoretical framework is Motivational Theory (Miller and Rollnick 1991), a therapeutic approach that emphasizes presenting information in different ways to best mitigate reactance. This is mainly done by communicating with subjects in a way that highlights the power of individual agency and choice (Cunningham, Faulkner, Selby and Cordingly 2006; Miller 1996). Traditionally, motivational theory has been used in behavior intervention treatments. For example, Loud et al. (2021) found that smokers rated smoking cessation tips more effective than a regular message, regardless of whether they actually wanted to quit. Similarly, Cunningham et al. (2006) found that framing health information as safer smoking tips got respondents to smoke fewer cigarettes over a 3-month period compared to a control condition. Thus, presenting environmental information as tips may reinforce individual choice and reduce reactance.

We believe motivational theory can help with prosocial attitude change for LEC consumers as well. Specifically, the idea of framing relevant sustainability information as optional tips that LEC consumers can choose could switch their actual or anticipated attitudes from negative to positive Schneider et al. 2017). Traditional green advertising can seem morally judgmental (Kärnä et al. 2001) or guilt-inducing (Chang 2015) and cause reactance in nongreen consumers (Kwon and Ahn 2020), or it might simply contain too much information that they lack the motivation or ability to process (Pittman, Read and Chen 2021). However, framing the same product or behavior message as tips can make the same information more palatable to LEC consumers. Adding a sustainability tip as ostensibly optional information should cause consumers to consider a sustainable action or goal they would otherwise ignore. Any subsequent positive attitude change would result from their free will, not obedience to an authority whose values may not align with their own.

However, a green ad that provides *too* many tips runs the risk of providing too much information that LEC consumers lack the motivation to process. Because environmental sustainability is a low-involvement issue for these consumers (Lee and Cho, 2022; Nagar 2016), they will likely have negative attitudes toward a brand they perceive to be giving them more information than they are willing to process. On the other hand, HEC consumers will prefer the ad with multiple tips because all the ideas and information are congruent with their values and require little effort to process (Pittman, Read and Chen 2021). Thus, we propose our primary set of hypotheses:

H2a: LEC consumers will have higher brand attitudes toward a green ad with a single tip (compared to multiple tips)

H2b: HEC consumers will have higher brand attitudes toward a green ad with multiple tips (compared to a single tip)

Matching the number of tips with consumers' involvement level should also increase the perception that the brand sending them the message is authentic and socially responsible (Ekebas-Turedi, Kordrostami and Benoit 2021). For both HEC and LEC consumers, the brand will appear to have abundant information and ideas about the subject, which should connote perceptions of authenticity. Brand authenticity is critical for green advertising efforts (Kaur et al. 2021; Pittman, Oeldorf-Hirsch and Brennan 2022) to be successful, particularly with LEC consumers who are already wary of greenwashing (Zinkhan and Carlson 1995). Thus, we propose brand authenticity will be the mediator for our primary hypotheses (See Figure 1 for our conceptual model):

H3a: For LEC consumers, the positive effect of a single tip ad on brand attitude is mediated through brand authenticity

H3b: For HEC consumers, the positive effect of a multiple tips ad on brand attitude is mediated through brand authenticity

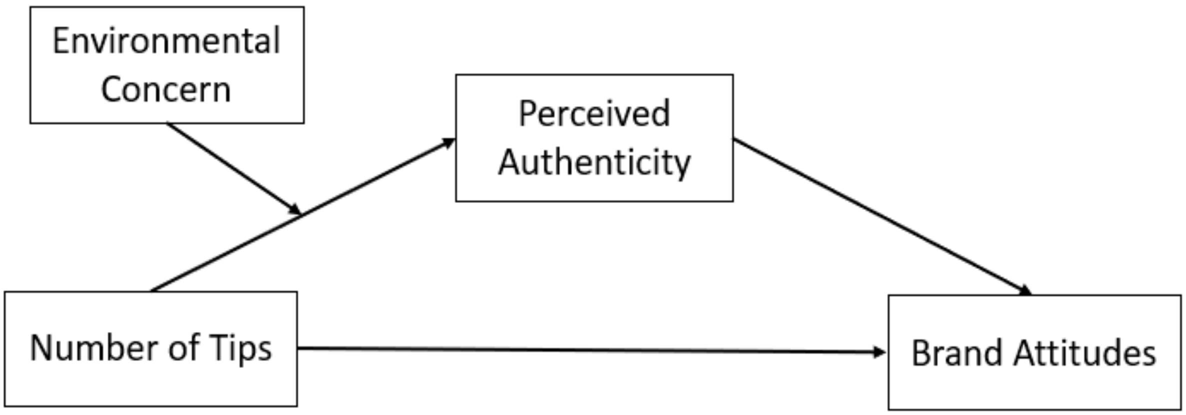


FIGURE 1: CONCEPTUAL MODEL

To test these hypotheses, we now turn to the experimental studies. In line with previous green advertising research, we chose coffee mugs (Green and Peloza 2014; Han et al. 2019) as the product for study 1, and beverages (juices) (Yang et al. 2015) as the product for study 2. We then discuss our findings in light of their theoretical and practical implications and conclude with suggestions for future research.

Study 1

Participants and Design

The purpose of Study 1 was to provide an initial test of the conceptual model. We recruited 160 participants from Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk), and they received monetary compensation for their participation. To ensure data integrity and follow best practices for this platform, we only recruited participants who lived in the United States and had achieved a 90 percent or greater HIT approval percentage (Kees et al. 2017). Furthermore, we employed robot and attention checks. Nine participants were excluded from the sample because they either failed the attention check or failed to complete the online experimental survey; thus, we retained 151 participants (70.2% male (n = 106), average age = 34.56, and SD = 9.7).

We employed a single-factor (number of sustainable tips: low (1) vs. high (3) between-subjects experimental design. Participants were asked to read a consent form and confirmed their agreement by starting the online experiment. Then, participants indicated their level of environmental concern. Next, participants were randomly assigned to one of the two experimental conditions (the number of the sustainable tip: low (e.g., 1-tip) vs. high (e.g., 3-tip). Following exposure to the ad, participants indicated their perceived authenticity and brand attitudes. An attention check was included before demographic information was collected.

Manipulations

In the single tip condition, the ad copy read: "Our new line of mugs is made with 100% sustainable materials and keeps your coffee hotter, longer! Here is a tip: keeping a reusable or eco-friendly mug at work lets you enjoy your coffee without putting extra plastic into the environment 🌎." The multiple tips condition had the same text, but with two additional tips after the first tip: "Brewing your own coffee is best, but if you're going to buy, buy fair trade to ensure that the beans are grown sustainably ☕," and "Composting is a natural way of recycling your ground coffee beans. You can turn the waste into mulch to fertilize your yard or garden 🌼."

To confirm our tip manipulation, we conducted a separate pretest on Mturk (n=100, same screen procedure as main study), assessing our stimuli with a single item: "This ad is trying to give me a lot of tips" 1 = *strongly* *disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). Results confirm that the 1-tip ad (M=4.23, SD=2.42) was perceived as having fewer tips than the 3-tip ad (M=5.53, SD=1.55, t(77)=-2.835, p=003. Thus, our information-as-tips manipulation was confirmed.

Measures

Environmental concern (*M*=5.71, *SD*=1.20, α=0.76) was measured with two items ("I am worried about the state of the world's environment," and "I am willing to make sacrifices to protect the environment"; 1 = *do not agree at all*; 7 = *strongly agree*; adapted from Schmuck, Matthes, and Naderer 2018). Attitude toward the brand was measured with two items (*M*=5.90, *SD*=1.00, α=0.71) on a seven-point bipolar scale (bad/good, unfavorable/favorable; Spears and Singh 2004). Brand Authenticity was measured with three items adapted from Pittman and Sheehan (2021): "____ seems like a brand that: reflects important values people care about/connects people to what's important/is authentic" ("*M*=5.70, *SD*=1.07, α=0.82).

Results

First, we assumed that consumers with high environmental concern would have higher brand attitudes than those with low environmental concerns. To test H1, we utilized a simple linear regression. As predicted, the result of the simple linear regression indicated that participants with high environment concerns showed higher brand attitudes than those with low environment concerns (β = .45). The overall model fit was 37.9% of the variance of brand attitudes (F (1, 149) = 91.05, $p < .001$). Thus, H1 was supported.

Next, to test H2a and H2b about the interaction effect between environmental concerns and the number of the sustainable tip in the green ad on brand attitudes, we used Hayes' PROCESS model 1 (Hayes and Montoya 2017). The Model included number of tips as the predictor variable, environmental concerns as the moderator, and brand attitude as the dependent variable (moderation analysis). We evaluated demographic information such as age, gender, and income as covariates in our analyses, but none of these were significant (*p*s > 0.05). Thus, we removed covariates in our further analyses and discuss them no further. The result of Model 1 via Hayes' PROCESS (5,000 bootstrapped subsamples) showed the main effect of environment concerns (β = .437 S.E. = .048, and $p < .001$) on brand attitudes. In addition, as we predicted, we found the interaction effect between the number of tips in the green ad and environmental concern on brand attitudes (β = .194 S.E. = .096, and $p < .05$). Specifically, participants who had low environmental concern showed higher brand attitudes when they were exposed to a 1-tip condition than those who were exposed to a 3-tip condition, which was marginally significant (β = -.29 S.E. = .158, and $p < 1.0$ (.068). On the other hand, participants who had high environmental concern showed higher brand attitudes when they were exposed to a 3-tip condition than those who were exposed to a 1-tip condition; but it was not statistically significant (β = .097 S.E. = .148, and $p > 0.05$ (.512). We further examined a floodlight analysis using the Johnson-Neyman technique (Hayes and Montoya 2017; Spiller et al. 2013). The results revealed that the main effect of the number of the tip in the green ad was significant at the 95% level for participants with environmental concern values of 4.121 or lower (β = -.364, SE = .184, and $p = .05$), but not higher. Thus, H2a was supported, but not H2b.

FIGURE 2: RESULT OF MODEL 1 (STUDY 1)

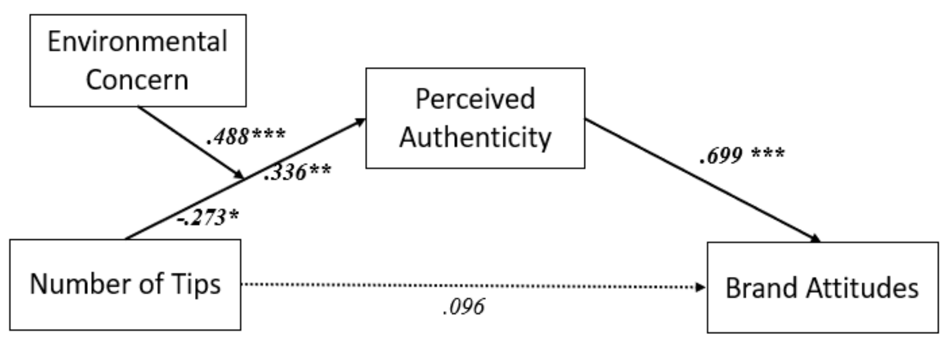
Lastly, to test H3 about the moderated mediation effect of perceived authenticity on brand attitudes, we utilized Hayes' PROCESS model 7 (Hayes 2013; Preacher, Rucker, and Hayes 2007) using a bootstrapping approach (5000 bootstrapped samples) number of sustainable tips in the green ad as the predictor, environmental concern as the moderator, and the two-way interactions between the those two as the independent variables, perceived authenticity as a mediator, and the brand attitude as the dependent variable (moderated mediation analysis). As we predicted, the index of moderated mediation was statistically significant (Index = .235, SE = .099, and 95% CI [.028, .418]. Specifically, the result of Model 7 showed the main effects of both the number of sustainable tips in the green ad (β = -.273 S.E. = .118, and $p < .05$) and environment concerns (β = .488 S.E. = .048, and $p < .001$) on perceived authenticity. In addition, the result showed the interaction effect between the number of tips in the green ad and environmental concerns on perceived authenticity (β = .336 S.E. = .096, and $p < .01$). Moreover, the main effect of perceived authenticity on brand attitudes was statistically significant (β = .699 S.E. = .051, and $p < .001$).

Additionally, the index of the conditional indirect effect of the number of the sustainable tip in the green on brand attitudes via perceived authenticity was statistically significant at low levels of environmental concerns (Index = -.441, SE = .161, and 95% CI [-.743, -.102]), but not at high levels (Index = .028, SE = .084, and 95% CI [-.143, .190]). When participants had low environmental concerns, the 1-tip condition generated more positive brand attitudes than the 3-tip condition through high perceived authenticity. However, this moderated mediation effect disappeared when participants had high environmental concerns. Thus, H3a was supported, but not H3b (see Table 1).

TABLE 1. Results of model 7 (Study 1)

	M (Perceived Authenticity)			Y (Brand Attitudes)		
Antecedent	Coeff.	S.E.	*p* [CI]	Coeff.	S.E.	*p* [CI]
X (The number of tips)	-.273	.118	.022 *	.096	.102	.347
W (Environmental Concerns)	.488	.048	.000 ***	-	-	-
X X W	.336	.096	.001 **	-	-	-
M (Perceived Authenticity)	-	-	-	.699	.051	.000 ***
Constant	5.735	.059	.000 ***	1.913	.297	.000 ***
	R^2 = .486, MSE = .527 F(3, 147) =46.413, $p < .001$			R^2 = .561, MSE = .383 F(2, 148) =94.532, $p < .001$		

Note. 5000 Bootstrapping samples
* = $p < 0.05$, ** = $p < 0.01$, and*** = $p < 0.001$.



	Direct	Index = .096, SE = .102, and 95% CI [-.106, .299] *n.s*
With low environmental concern	Indirect	Index = -.441, SE = .161, and 95% CI [-.743, .-102] ***sig.***
With high environmental concern	Indirect	Index = .028, SE = .084, and 95% CI [-.143, .190] *n.s*

FIGURE 3: OVERALL RESULT (STUDY 1)

Discussion

Study 1 reveals that the number of tips has a differential impact on brand attitudes depending on the consumer's level of environmental concern. While HEC consumers indicate favorable brand attitudes regardless of the number of tips, LEC consumers report significantly *less* favorable brand attitudes when presented with multiple (versus one) tip. Thus, framing information as tips may be more effective for LEC consumers when only tip is featured. Our results also reveal that authenticity mediates the relationship between the number of tips and brand attitudes.

Study 2

In Study 2, we further test our conceptual framework by adopting a more stringent test of our hypotheses. An alternative explanation for the observed results in Study 1 could be the varying lengths of the messages. To address this potential explanation, we present the tips as a number in Study 2, making message length invariant across the conditions.

Participants and Design

We recruited 240 participants from Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) and they received monetary compensation for their participation. Following the same exclusion criteria as Study 1, twelve participants were excluded; thus, we retained 228 participants (62.3% male (n = 142), average age = 36.93, and SD = 10.75). Study 2 used a between-subjects design with three experimental conditions.

Procedure

After providing their informed consent, participants responded to measures of environmental concern and were randomly assigned to one of three conditions (number of sustainable tips: low (1 tip) vs. middle (10 tips) vs. high (25 tips). We then measured attention checks, perceived authenticity, and brand attitudes. Lastly, participants' demographic information was collected.

To confirm our tip manipulation, we again conducted a pretest on Mturk (n=100, same screening procedure as the main study). Results confirm that the 1-tip ad (M=4.21, SD=2.51) was perceived as having fewer tips than the 10-tip ad (M=5.15, SD=1.48, t(77)=-2.049, p=022), which was in turn perceived as having fewer tips than the 25-tip ad (M=6.16, SD=1.05, t(76)=-3.453, p<.001). Thus, our information-as-tips manipulation was confirmed.

Measures

Environmental concern (*M*=5.49, *SD*=1.35, α=0.82), attitude toward the brand (*M*=5.80, *SD*=1.19, α=0.80), and brand authenticity (*M*=5.61, *SD*=1.10, α=0.84) were all measured with the same items at Study 1.

Results

First, we assumed that HEC consumers would have higher brand attitudes LEC consumers. To test H1, we utilized a simple linear regression. As predicted, the result of the simple linear regression indicated that participants with high environment concerns showed higher brand attitudes than those with low environment concerns (β = .56). The overall model fit was 40.3% of the variance of brand attitudes (F (1, 226) = 152.59, p < .001). Thus, H1 was supported.

Next, to test H2a and H2b about the interaction effect between environmental concerns and the number of sustainable tips on brand attitudes, we used Hayes' PROCESS model 1 (Hayes & Montoya, 2017) with the number of the sustainable tip as the predictor, environmental concerns as the moderator, and two-way interactions between the two as the independent variables, with brand attitude as the dependent variable (moderation analysis). The result of Model 1 via the Hayes' PROCESS (5,000 bootstrapped subsamples) showed a main effect of environmental concerns on brand attitudes (β = .559 S.E. = .043, and p < .001). As predicted, we found the interaction effect between number of the tips in the green ad and environmental concerns on brand attitudes (β = .219 S.E. = .052, and p < .001). Specifically, LEC participants showed higher brand attitudes when they were exposed to a 1-tip condition than those who were exposed to 10-tip or 25-tip conditions, which was statistically significant (β = -.299 S.E. = .085, and p < .01). On the other hand, HEC participants showed higher brand attitudes when they were exposed to a 25-tip condition than those who were exposed to 1-tip or 10-tip conditions, but this was not statistically significant (β = .139 S.E. = .096, and p > 0.05 (.148). We further examined a floodlight analysis using the Johnson-Neyman technique (Hayes and Montoya 2017; Spiller et al. 2013). Results revealed that the main effect of the number of the tip in the green ad was significant at the 95% level for participants with environmental concerns values of 5.202 or lower (β = -.145, SE = .074, and p = .05), and 6.836 or higher (β = .213, SE = .108, and p = .05. Thus, H2a was supported, but not H2b.

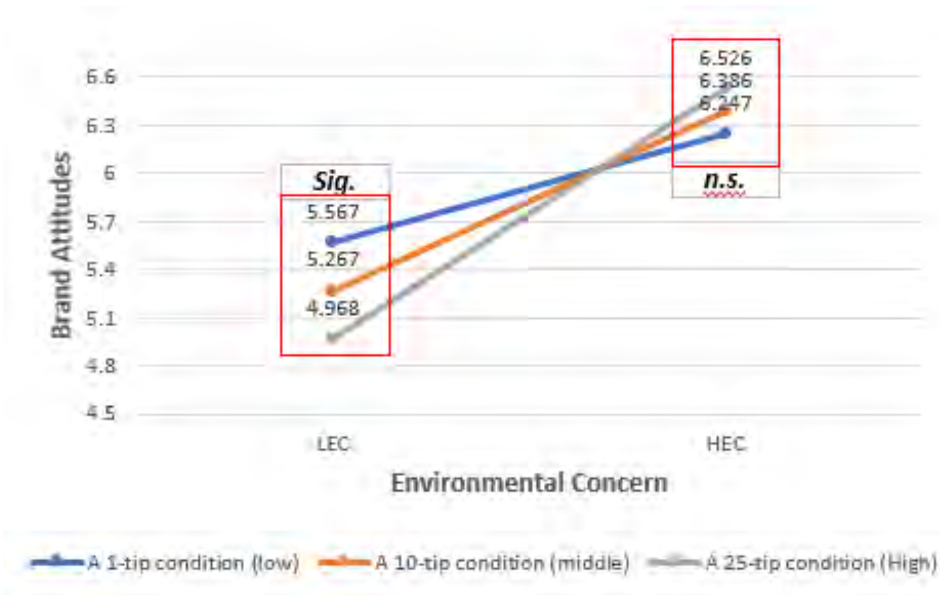


FIGURE 4: RESULT OF MODEL 1 (STUDY 2)

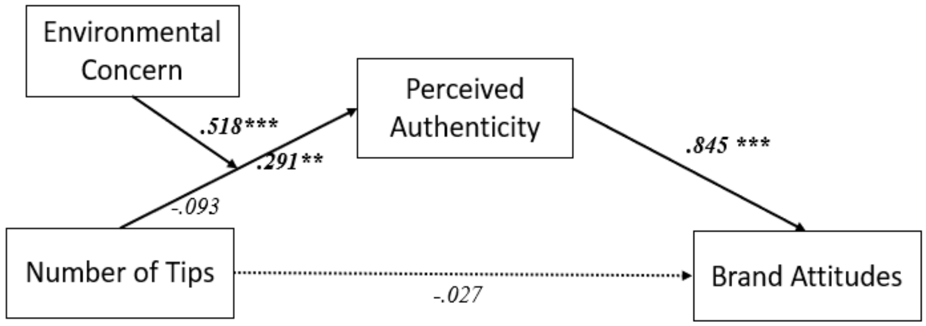
Lastly, to test H3 about the moderated mediation effect of perceived authenticity on brand attitudes, we utilized Hayes' PROCESS model 7 (Hayes 2013) using a bootstrapping approach (5000 bootstrapped samples) with the number of tips as the predictor, environmental concerns as the moderator, and the two-way interactions between those two as the independent variables. Perceived authenticity was the mediator and brand attitude was the dependent variable (moderated mediation analysis). As predicted, the index of moderated mediation was statistically significant (Index = .246, SE = .073, and 95% CI [.085, .371]. Specifically, the result of Model 7 showed the main effect of environmental concerns (β = .518 S.E. = .04 and $p < .001$) on perceived authenticity. Results showed the interaction effect between the number of tips in the green ad and environmental concerns on perceived authenticity (β = .291 S.E. = .049, and $p < .001$). Moreover, the main effect of perceived authenticity on brand attitudes was statistically significant (β = .845 S.E. = .042, and $p < .001$).

Additionally, the index of the conditional indirect effect of the number of the sustainable tip in the green on brand attitudes via perceived authenticity was statistically significant both at low levels of environmental concerns (Index = -.286, SE = .103, and 95% CI [-.474, -.067]) and at high levels (Index = .028, SE = .076, and 95% CI [.050, .347]). It revealed that when participants had LEC, the 1-tip condition generated more positive brand attitudes than other conditions (10-tip or 25-tip) through high perceived authenticity. On the other hand, when participants had HEC, the 25-tip condition generated more positive brand attitudes than other conditions (10-tip or 1-tip) through high perceived authenticity. Thus, both H3a and H3b were supported (see Table 2).

TABLE 2. Results of model 7 (Study 2)

	M (Perceived Authenticity)			Y (Brand Attitudes)		
Antecedent	Coeff.	S.E.	*p* [CI]	Coeff.	S.E.	*p* [CI]
X (The number of tips)	-.093	.069	.178	-.027	.059	.648
W (Environmental Concerns)	.518	.040	.000 ***	-	-	-
X X W	.291	.049	.000 ***	-	-	-
M (Perceived Authenticity)	-	-	-	.845	.042	.000 ***
Constant	5.549	.056	.000 ***	1.050	.238	.000 ***
	R^2 = .471, MSE = .704 F(3, 224) =66.402, $p < .001$			R^2 = .645, MSE = .523 F(2, 225) =204.067, $p < .001$		

Note. 5000 Bootstrapping samples
* = $p < 0.05$, ** = $p < 0.01$, and*** = $p < 0.001$.



Direct Index = -.027, SE = .059, and 95% CI [-.143, .090] *n.s*

With low environmental concern Indirect Index = -.286, SE = .103, and 95% CI [-.474, .-067] ***sig.***
With high environmental concern Indirect Index = .205, SE = .076, and 95% CI [.050, .347] ***sig.***

FIGURE 5: OVERALL RESULT (STUDY 2)

Discussion

Study 2 adopted a more stringent test of our hypotheses and corroborated Study 1's results. Specifically, results revealed more robust support for our hypothesis that a single (versus multiple) tips will generate more favorable attitudes among LEC consumers. Thus, presenting information as tips is more effective with only one tip. However, this finding only applies to LEC consumers. The number of tips does not influence brand attitudes for HEC consumers. Additionally, authenticity mediates the relationship between number of tips and brand attitudes, consistent with Study 1.

General Discussion

Motivating LEC consumers to adopt sustainable behaviors remains a critical challenge. Advertising research has identified that assertive messages can backfire on the message source and entrench existing attitudes (Kronrod et al. 2012). One way to mitigate this effect is offering multiple choices, so the participant feels less of a threat to freedom. Many brands have endorsed this idea when communicating their environmental sustainability tips. For instance, Tentree tweeted "Tips for a zero-waste pumpkin" with five actions for Halloween. REI offered 25 ways to take climate action. Does the number of tips influence attitudes toward the message source? Through two empirical studies in different product categories, we find that many (versus one) tips have a more negative effect on brand attitudes for LEC consumers. The difference is less significant for HEC consumers, indicating that those who care the most about the environment are receptive to a brand offering *any* tips. Our findings also reveal the role of authenticity. For LEC consumers, more tips are perceived to be less authentic. Consumers may infer the brand is trying too hard to demonstrate its environmental commitment.

The present study makes several contributions. First, to our knowledge, this is the first study to examine tips to promote sustainable behavior. We show that the number of tips – presented as information and a numerical reference – impacts LEC consumers. While many green ads target green consumers, we offer new insight into green ads for LEC consumers. Second, we outline a potential boundary condition for motivational theory. Presenting more tips to LEC consumers may not generate the desired effect. Finally, we identify the role of authenticity in mediating the observed effects. Interestingly, we show how the number of tips influences authenticity, outlining a message-specific connection.

Theoretical Implications

Motivational theory predicts that providing multiple options or choices can enhance the individual's motivation to carry out the desired behavior. Research in the health context has provided empirical support, and one may expect that these findings extend to the environmental sustainability context. Interestingly, we find that multiple tips (versus a single) tip *depresses* brand attitudes for LEC consumers. The context may explain the observed effect. Smokers or heavy users of alcoholic beverages may be motivated to change their behaviors because they recognize a problem. Individuals with LEC have low motivation to act more sustainably and may not see an immediate need to change their behavior. One sustainability tip may help to focus the problem and provide an actionable step toward addressing it. The current research contributes to motivational theory by providing a boundary condition for its expected effects.

Practical Implications

Brands, not-for-profit organizations, and influencers offer tips to adopt more sustainable behaviors. Some messages offer one tip, while others offer five tips (Dr. Bronner's) or even 35 (Love Mother Earth). Our findings demonstrate that the number of tips is less consequential for HEC than LEC consumers. Messages with multiple tips may inhibit adoption of the recommended behavior because consumers perceive them to be less authentic than a single tip. Thus, the organization should understand its target audience. A potential extension of our findings may relate to the amount of distinct environmental issues or actions contained in an ad. LEC consumers may have more favorable brand attitudes when the brand focuses on one issue or action.

Limitations and Future Research

The present research has several limitations. First, we focused on lower-involvement products (coffee mugs and juice). LEC consumers may be more skeptical of green advertising in higher-involvement products (Haley and Pittman 2020), so that scenario may offer a boundary condition for the environmental tips (Magnier and Schoormans 2015). Second, we did not measure intended or actual behavior related to adopting the tips. However, given the less favorable brand attitudes for LEC consumers for many (versus one) tips, we expect a comparable effect on intended behavior. Nevertheless, future research should capture intended behaviors for tips and test out the effect of tips in different product categories.

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Appendix

Study 1 Stimuli

Single tip condition

Multiple tips condition

Study 2 Stimuli

Single tip condition	10 tips condition	25 tips condition
		

WHICH EXECUTIONAL ELEMENTS WORK? LESSONS FROM A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF VIRAL VS. NON-VIRAL ADVERTISING

Juliana Fernandes, University of Florida
Sigal Segev, Florida International University

Abstract

In an attempt to provide more depth and breadth to the understanding of viral advertising, this study analyzes the content of 684 viral video ads and compares them to non-viral video ads shared online between 2009 and 2019. Focused on the analysis of several executional elements (i.e., ad appeals, celebrities, slogans, popular music, visual and sound effects), our findings highlight the dominance of emotional appeals, celebrities, and popular music in viral ads compared to their non-viral equivalents. Results from this study detail the dominant creative elements that each type of ad employs, providing a better understanding of the executional elements that make viral advertising. These findings might help determine the effectiveness of specific message elements in driving ad sharing. We further discuss the theoretical and managerial implications of this study.

EXAMINING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF RETARGETING DISPLAY ADS WITH ONLINE DEMARKETING CAMPAIGNS: THE ROLE OF BROWSER SETTINGS

Hye Jin Yoon, University of Georgia
Yoon Joo Lee, Washington State University
Shuoya Sun, University of Georgia
Jinho Joo, Boise State University

Abstract

Retargeting is a form of advertising served to people who have previously interacted with the business's digital presence. With higher click-through rates than regular display ads, retargeting has gained popularity with advertisers over recent years. This research tests how the congruency of the campaign shown on a brand's homepage and a following retargeting ad could impact retargeting effectiveness with a demarketing campaign as a case of online brand activism. Further, media context effects are tested by varying the browser setting where the demarketing retargeting ads appear. Guided by the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), an online experiment finding shows that in a news browser setting, users perceived that the retargeting ad had a higher quality argument, perceived importance, and attitude when the retargeting ad matched with the earlier demarketing homepage content. These ad evaluation differences were not present in a shopping browser setting. It was found that this different effect emerged through the mediation role of perceived congruency. The results have timely theoretical and practical implications for digital ads, online brand activism, and a greater internet usage era.

HOW CONSUMERS' MOTIVATIONS SHAPE BRAND LOYALTY VIA ENGAGING WITH DIGITAL CONTENT MARKETING? THE ROLE OF FLOW, CONTENT VALUE, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL OWNERSHIP

Quan Xie, Southern Methodist University
Chen Lou, Nanyang Technological University

Abstract

Content marketing is an effective approach to brand communication on social media and may inspire people to develop a sense of 'ownership' toward the product/brand featured in branded content. Drawing on the Theory of Psychological Ownership and the Uses and Gratification Theory (U&G), this study proposed a comprehensive framework to explicate how individual motivations serve as precursors of psychological ownership toward products featured in content marketing, via two processing routes or intermediaries, namely consumers' flow experience and perceived content value. As such, this study identified six motivations explicating why consumers engage with content marketing – *content inspiration, brand love, brand conversation, incentive, pastime,* and *personal identity*. Specifically, we found the following antecedents – the motivations of content inspiration, brand love, brand conversation, and personal identity – positively predicted psychological ownership, via increasing flow and content value, respectively. Furthermore, psychological ownership was positively related to brand loyalty. These findings propose a comprehensive model explaining the process through which content marketing affects psychological ownership and subsequent brand loyalty.

CAN ADVERTISERS DRIVE SALES *AND* SPREAD JOY? EXAMINING THE BENEFITS OF JOY-FRAMES ON DIGITAL CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT

Kristen Sussman, Texas State University
Laura Bright, University of Texas at Austin
Gary Wilcox, University of Texas at Austin

Abstract

Advertisers could benefit from a more complete understanding of the role of the discrete emotion of joy on behavioral responses to an advertisement. Current research exploring framing effects of discrete emotion tends to live in the news media, science communication or health communication streams of literature and gives more attention to negative emotions such as fear or anger. To address this gap, we employ a text analytic process to computationally measure word associations of joy using a real-world advertising sample of Facebook. Using the NRC lexicon, natural language processing was used to measure the sentiment and discrete emotion in a corporate brand advertising sample collected that included 3,407 ads (e.g., observations) from eight advertisers. Results from three tests of mediation effects found that joy, fully mediated the effect of sentiment on advertising clicks, but did not mediate advertising shares or comments. The findings suggest that joy may be useful in supporting more desirable outcomes in advertising. Theoretical and managerial implications are discussed with regard to advertising design and strategy.

THE MORE THINGS CHANGE, THE MORE THINGS STAY THE SAME: MEDIA PLANNING IN 2022 AND BEYOND

Courtney Carpenter Childers, University of Tennessee
Eric Haley, University of Tennessee

Abstract

Academically, media planning as a profession does not receive a great deal of research attention in the advertising literature. As the media landscape is rapidly changing, it is important to bring the voice of the media planner/strategist to the table. Via qualitative method, this study focuses on the contemporary role of media planners in the United States advertising industry. Fifteen media planners/strategists were interviewed. Five key themes emerged, including (1) "It depends on the client" (2) "Meeting the audience where they are" (3) "Bringing the client along with us" (4) "It's all about measurement and metrics" and (5) "Education is tied to expectations." Insights from this study contribute to our knowledge of practitioner theories of advertising, inform marketers of what to expect from ad agency planners, and help advertising educators to best prepare students in the development of contemporary media plans.

SPECIAL TOPIC SESSION: INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION AND THE POWER OF SYNERGY. HOW BRINGING TOGETHER THOSE WHO DEVELOPED, RESEARCH AND TEACH IN IMC CAN ENABLE BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE FUTURE OF THE DISCIPLINE.

Gayle Kerr, Queensland University of Technology
Frank Mulhern, Northwestern University
Philip Kitchen, ICN-Artem
Jerry Kliatchko, University of Asia and the Pacific
Ian Lings, Queensland University of Technology
Vijay Viswanathan, Northwestern University
Vesna Zabkar, University of Ljubljana

Academic papers, written by one or a few co-authors, have changed thinking and practice in marketing communications in the past, and doubtless will continue to do in the future. But imagine bringing together thought leaders from some of the most significant papers in IMC history, and from universities across the world, to evaluate where IMC is now, plan research for the present and hence influence the future of the discipline. This constitutes the power of synergistic thinking, involving all AAA attendees who research and teach in IMC, and enabling the desired, future-telling strategy for this Special Topics Session.

Are We Integrating or Are We Falling Apart?

In 1998, Schultz and Schultz outlined their vision for transitioning marketing communication into the 21st century. They argued that marketing communication was in transition, moving from the historical 4P-centric marketing approaches of the 1960s to a new, interactive marketplace in the twenty-first century.

Twenty years later, we see many of their premonitions come true. Technology has become the integrator of brand activities, creating a dynamic flow of information between the organization and its stakeholders. Digital has not only provided a new way to connect companies and customers, but also new ways to capture and understand customer information and personalize the message.

Now that everything is connected, it seems that integration is a given. Except that in IMC, integration is not an artefact of technology, but the enactment of strategy. This leads us to consider a few strategic observations of the academic field of IMC and question whether scholars can innovate the theories and concept to serve the industry better.

Are we still struggling with Schultz's 4th level of strategic integration? Is technology overriding strategy in the proliferation of tactification? Data collection is easier, copy is automatically AI-generated and measurement is instant, but are we communicating and measuring the right things?

Or are we looking for new practices to augment? Like customer experience or even engagement. Is CX the most meaningful context for IMC? Or has the CX paradigm superseded IMC?

And how do we make the link to sustainability and social responsibility in marketing?

Is the blurring of our disciplinary boundaries like advertising and public relations a signal of integration or evidence of each discipline's need to widen their skills for financial necessity?

Are we specializing, rather than integrating? And perhaps those financial returns bring organizational stability.

And if we are not effectively renewing refreshing, re-analysing the dynamics of integrated marketing communication, what is being done instead?

Rationale for This Session

IMC now appears at a pivotal juncture. While technology facilitated integration, it has also decreased its strategic importance and its visibility. Everything has become integrated (although rarely well-integrated) and the tactics of juxtaposed promotion has been superimposed upon the strategic imperatives of IMC.

Undoubtedly, the client-side dynamics of IMC – which acted as a major facilitator underpinning its observance and as a marked and needed corrector to misguided marketing, may have been forgotten.

This session affirms the strategic importance and value of IMC. To do so, it leverages one of the key outcomes of IMC – synergy – to find a solution. It seeks to bring together those who know most about IMC, from all times in its history and all parts of the world, to share their ideas, inspire new thinking and strengthen IMC for the future. Perhaps indeed this could even be a type of reinvention.

This is necessary for our research, for our teaching, and for the practice of marketing communication in a way that involves all parties.

In terms of research, of the 2.13 million references to IMC over the past 20 years, only ten articles ever published in JA include IMC in the title. Only one of those in the last five years. In the Journal of Marketing Communication, 27 IMC articles were identified, including two from this year. Of course, many more IMC-related articles have been published, but they are not always identified as IMC. The field has progressed and has more potential than ever before, because of technology, customer data and metrics. But perhaps it is due for a reconceptualization going forward.

In terms of teaching, enrolment in IMC programs has been impacted by COVID and the ability of international students to travel. However, strong recruitment for IMC programmes continues around the world. Thus, the subject has strong appeal, resonance and meaning for students, many of whom go on into marketing and communications practice.

Both research and teaching, the essential remits of academia, provide a strong rationale to reconsider IMC. For a teaching perspective, we need a clear framework to study and evaluate IMC. From a practitioner perspective, the concept of IMC and its practice enjoyed a marked renaissance during COVID, which hopefully continues well into the future.

Value of the Session

This session is valuable to any conference attendee who researches or teaches in IMC. The session may be especially useful for junior faculty and doctoral students whose understanding of the discipline and its evolution may be limited. Even for seasoned educators, there is value in exploring different ideas and approaches to IMC research and teaching. And for those championing IMC programs, it is essential to consider the development of the discipline.

The session also has value for AAA. The collaborative nature of this conference makes it the perfect venue for dialogue and discussion. Further, AAA has always been the academic association which has supported IMC. From its early days to its conference papers to recognizing its protagonists. Its journals have also run special issues on IMC.

Equally, the session is critical for the evolution of IMC. The next steps in the discipline depend upon the thinking and the investment of today.

And finally, the idea of re-evaluating and possibly re-inventing is useful for all discipline areas. This IMC session might well provide the model and impetus to rethink advertising or marketing or other disciplines. Along these lines, it is good for doctoral students and early-career faculty/staff to understand the importance of challenging where we are. And being inspired that those who have moulded IMC are quite willing to be open about challenging their initial ideas.

IMC Foundational Thinkers and New Champions

This session will bring together the Brains Trust of IMC. This includes its foundational thinkers, such as Philip Kitchen and Frank Mulhern, its later adopters such as Gayle Kerr and Jerry Kliatchko, and its newer advocates such as Vesna Zabkar, Vijay Viswanathan and Ian Lings. All are strong contenders in IMC research and IMC teaching.

The session also invites those who teach and research in IMC, including staff at all levels of experience and graduate students, and perhaps those with most to gain, to interact and share their ideas and vision for IMC renaissance and perhaps reinvention.

Structure of the Session

The session will focus on ideas sharing and problem solving, using thinking techniques to collect and evaluate new ideas.

Part 1: Where are we now

The purpose of the introductory session is to provide an overview of the current state of IMC and any possible solutions our thought leaders can offer for its renewal, renaissance and reinvention. Reflecting on their decades of research and teaching, our IMC thought leaders will help identify problems to solve and a focus of the thinking for the session.

Part 2: Where could we be

Building on the ideas of our speakers, creative thinking techniques will be used to generate new imaginings of what IMC could become and what its purpose might be. This session will be led by Gayle Kerr, an accredited deBono Trainer and powered by the synergy of ideas and participation of those present.

Part 3: What is the way forward

The results of the ideation are examined and voted upon, and a way forward is proposed.

Beyond the Session

This session has been designed to spark interest and generate action on reimagining IMC. It is therefore hoped that the conversation will continue beyond the session through research collaboration and collegial discussion. Ideally, to develop a paper or promote a special issue in the Journal of Advertising. Further, it would be worthwhile to report back at the 2024 AAA Conference to update our progress.

WHY ARE SAD OR TOUCHING VIDEO ADS SHARED? THE POWER OF EMOTIONAL INTENSITY

Chang-Won Choi, University of Mississippi
Linwan Wu, University of South Carolina

Abstract

This study examines the effect of emotional factors, such as pleasure, arousal, and intensity, on online video ad-sharing intentions. Previous studies found that the emotions evoked by online video ads could influence consumers' ad-sharing intentions. However, those studies have shown inconsistent results. Thus, how and which emotional factors trigger consumers' ad-sharing behaviors remains uncertain. To resolve discrepant results from previous studies, this research proposes that emotional intensity is an important factor triggering ad-sharing intentions based on the theory of social sharing of emotion and the emotion regulation theory. Specifically, this study investigated the effects of emotional factors, including intensity, arousal, and pleasure, on ad-sharing intentions through self-expression, social interaction, altruism, and entertainment motives. The results showed that the indirect effect of emotional intensity on online video ad-sharing intentions mediated by social interaction was the greatest. Emotional arousal also positively influenced consumers' intentions to share online video ads. The effect of emotional intensity was attenuated when emotional arousal increased. However, emotional pleasure did not have direct or indirect effects on ad-sharing intentions.

PREDICTING SHARES OF YOUTUBE VIDEO ADS BY ANALYZING EXPRESSED EMOTIONS FROM USER COMMENTS

Chang-Won Choi, University of Mississippi
Linwan Wu, University of South Carolina

Abstract

Although viral advertising researchers have found that emotions evoked by a video ad influence consumers' ad-sharing intentions, little research has been conducted on the relationship between emotions and ad-sharing behaviors in real social media settings. The current study examined if expressed emotions from YouTube comments can predict shares of video ads on social media. A total of 206,649 comments were collected from 979 YouTube video ads between January and May 2021. YouTube comments were categorized into expressed high pleasure, high arousal, and high intensity by using supervised machine learning algorithms. The relationship between expressed emotions and the number of shares was analyzed using a negative binomial GLM. The results showed that expressed emotional intensity from YouTube comments was significantly related to the number of shares. However, expressed emotional pleasure and arousal were not. Interaction effects between expressed emotional intensity, pleasure, and arousal were also not found. Theoretical and practical implications were discussed.

THE LAST CHANCE DANCE: THE INTERPLAY OF PRINCIPLE OF SCARCITY AND SOCIAL PROOF IN SOCIAL MEDIA CONTEST MESSAGING

Sun-Young Park, University of Massachusetts Boston
Gamze Yilmaz, University of Massachusetts Boston
Janna Septembre, University of Massachusetts Boston

Abstract

This study examined the effects of interaction between message framing and social norms on attitudes toward social media contests and brands, and participation intentions. This study also investigated the moderating role of brand involvement and social media contest engagement on the frames-norms interaction effects on participation intentions. A 2 (framing: gain or loss) × 2 (norm: unpopular or popular) between-subjects experimental study was conducted to test the hypotheses. The findings showed that gain-framed vs. loss-framed messages led to more positive outcomes when the social media contest was deviant (i.e., unpopular norm) while loss-framed vs. gain-framed messages generated more favorable responses when the contest was normative (i.e., popular norm). Yet, brand involvement and social media engagement overrode these interaction effects on participation intentions. The findings are discussed considering social psychology theories, such as principle of scarcity and social proof, prospect theory, deviance regulation theory, and heuristic information processing. Practical implications are advanced for strategic use of messaging in social media contests.

ACTIVE OR PASSIVE CONFORMITY? THE ROLE OF YOUTUBE COMMENT RANKING ALGORITHM IN SHAPING CONSUMER RESPONSES TO SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING

Yang Feng, University of Florida
Huan Chen, University of Florida

Abstract

To maximize the social impact, many brands create social issue campaigns and upload them to social media, such as YouTube, to arouse consumer conversation. Notably, the comment ranking algorithm used by YouTube plays a significant role in shaping consumer responses to such campaigns. Informed by literature on algorithmic popularity bias and algorithm-shaped norms, we took a grounded theory approach by conducting in-depth interviews with 23 YouTube users. Extending previous literature on the role of peer comments and social media campaigns, we conceptualize a process of consumer conformity in the algorithmic social media environment. In particular, four types of conformity (i.e., passive conformity, indirect conformity, direct conformity, and active conformity) emerged from the interview results. As such, this research explains the mechanisms underlying the influence of top comments on consumer responses to social issue campaigns uploaded on YouTube.

MESSAGE FRAMING IN CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR) ADVERTISING ON SOCIAL MEDIA DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Kyeongwon Kwon, Florida State University
Jaejin Lee, Florida State University
Cen Wang, Shandong University

Abstract

Corporations have seen increasing demand from the public to adjust to the social impact of COVID-19, promoting them to engage in various types of corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. By systematically investigating CSR advertising messages on social media, this study explored how corporations have responded to COVID-19. The findings show that corporations immediately responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by adopting CSR practices in myriad areas of social concern and strategically framing those efforts through CSR advertising. This study contributes to the body of CSR advertising literature by providing an instrument for scholars and practitioners to reevaluate the role of business and CSR initiatives during the times of high uncertainty.

THE POWER OF ANTHROPOMORPHIC APPEALS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CORPORRATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR) ADVERTISING: WITH MEDIATION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CLOSENESS AND MODERATION OF TYPEFACES

Hyun Ju Jeong, University of Kentucky

Abstract

This research investigates the dynamic effectiveness of brand anthropomorphism in environmental CSR advertising. Using two experimental studies, it reveals greater compliance of consumers for environment-friendly purchases with the presence (*vs.* absence) of brand anthropomorphism (Study 1) and local-brand (*vs.* global-brand) anthropomorphism (Study 2) in CSR. In both studies, the psychological closeness consumers feel from brand anthropomorphism and specifically local-brand anthropomorphism mediates these outcomes. Further, the mediating role of psychological closeness occurs when these anthropomorphic appeals are paired with hand-written typefaces; however, this mediation disappears when the anthropomorphic appeals are compatible with machine-written typefaces. Study implications are discussed.

GEN Z'S RESPONSE TO CSR MESSAGES IN THE CONTEXT OF BRAND PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Saima Kazmi, University of Colorado Boulder
Christopher Vardeman, Towson University
Harsha Gangadharbatla, University of Colorado Boulder

Abstract

Purpose in advertising is on the rise. Research shows that CSR messages in advertisements often lead to more favorable attitudes and behavior. However, is using a CSR message always the best thing to do? Are there situations in which CSR messages in ads produce undesirable or counterproductive results? The current study is designed to test the interaction effects of ads with CSR or purpose-driven messages when shown either before or after positive or negative brand performance news on attitudes toward the ad and brand, and purchase intentions. An online experiment (2X2X2) was conducted with subjects drawn from both Amazon Turk and undergraduate courses at two different universities to represent Gen Z. Results indicate that, controlling for LOHAS and environmental behaviors, attitudes and purchase intentions were most favorable for ads with CSR messages that follow the news of a brand's high performance on CSR metrics. Similarly, when the news is about negative performance, the attitudes and purchase intentions are least favorable for groups where subjects were presented with a CSR message whether the news was received prior to seeing the ad or after.

HOW NEUTRALIZATION AFFFECTS SUBSEQUENT PROSOCIAL BEHAVIORS: THE ROLE OF MATERIALISM AND MORAL IDENTITY

Yuhosua Ryoo, Southern Illinois University
Soheil Kafiliveyjuyeh, Louisiana State University
WooJin Kim, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Seo Jeong Heo, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Abstract

When consumers are made aware of their inconsistent ethical behavior, they feel guilt and justify their past misconduct through neutralization. This article examines post-neutralization behavior: Whether neutralization causes participants who have refused to donate to one campaign rectify their moral lapse by donating to a subsequent campaign. Materialism and moral identity are shown to interact within individuals. In the absence of neutralization, highly materialistic consumers donate more for subsequent causes regardless of moral identity levels, while lowly materialistic consumers donate more when they have high moral identity. Neutralization prevents this compensatory behavior and decreases donations from highly materialistic consumers. They donate more only when they also have high moral identity. This research examines a series of fundraising campaigns on social media to explore post-transgression and post-neutralization behavior.

SPECIAL TOPIC SESSION:
ADVERTISING WITH PURPOSE: HOW ADVERTISING CAN BE USED FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Moderators:
Kathrynn (Kate) Pounders, University of Texas at Austin
Sukki Yoon, Bryant University

Overview

Advertising ethics and the impact that advertising has on society has received renewed attention in recent years. For example, see the special issues of prominent journals, including past calls such as "Gender and Diversity" in the *Journal of Advertising Research* and "Marketing for a Better World" in the *Journal of Marketing*, and current/ongoing special issues such as "Inclusive Advertising for a Better World" in the *Journal of Advertising* and "Pro-Social Advertising Messages" in the *Journal of Advertising Research*.

Industry is also taking notice – agencies and brands are taking more of a stance on social issues than ever before. For example, brands such as Nike and Proctor and Gamble produced ads supporting Black Lives Matter movement, Aerie lingerie brand embraced both inclusivity and body positivity, and luxury fashion brands such as Versace have started including plus-size models on their runways. Additionally, Patagonia founder Yvon Chouinard is giving away his company to a trust and nonprofit organization, with all future profits donated to help fight climate change.

This special session seeks to highlight the importance of the role that advertising plays in potential negative unintended societal consequences, but also highlights how advertising can be used for social change and transformation. This will be accomplished through a panel of experts: Dr. Minette (Meme) Drumwright, Dr. Eric Haley, Dr. Carrie La Ferle, Brittny Phar, and Dr. Ray Taylor (see bios in Appendix 1).

Much of the research on advertising ethics and ramifications of advertising have been examined at the micro or macro levels. For example, Drumwright and Murphy (2004) examined advertising ethics and moral myopia among advertising practitioners, with a similar focus recently by Richardson-Greenfield and La Ferle (2021) assessing industry professionals' perceptions, process, and approach to advertising ethics. Zayer and Coleman (2015) explored advertising professionals' perceptions of how gender portrayals influence their strategic choices. Additionally, much recent work has been focused on macro-level issues, such as gender stereotypes (e.g., Pounders 2018; Eisend 2019), age stereotypes (e.g., Taylor 2022), and depictions of race and ethnicity in advertising (e.g. Harrison, Thomas and Cross 2017; Wu, Krey and Cruz 2022), as well as sustainability (e.g., Baek and Yoon 2015), and health messages (e.g., Pounders, Royne and Lee 2018).

The panelists on this special session will explore the often-overlooked and unique meso-level of advertising ethics and the ramifications that advertising can have on society and in advertising scholarship. The meso level encompasses organizations or groups of organizations whose conduct influences the advertising business—whether agencies, clients, media, industry associations, or regulators. The meso level is important because the organizational cultures of ad agencies have a strong influence on the moral sensitivities of advertising practitioners. Particularly germane to this session, the solutions to some macro level problems to which advertising contributes can only be addressed through collaborative efforts at the meso level (Drumwright and Kamal, 2016). Dr. Eric Haley will discuss how brands and agencies are moving from engaging in corporate social responsibility to PURPOSE and social change; Dr. Carrie La Ferle will discuss the importance of producing compelling, authentic, and responsible advertising, as well as the significance of cultural intelligence and retaining hires through inclusivity practices, and developing more effective brand messaging; Brittny Pharr, will discuss the perspective of a multicultural agency insider and how good intentions can lead to unintended consequences, if purpose is pursued without clear objectives, a proper assessment of the landscape, a stakeholder analysis in the context of Black Lives Matter; Dr. Meme Drumwright will discuss workplace ethics, networks of complicity, and networks of empowerment, and Dr. Taylor will conclude the session with a discussion of what types of contributions advertising journals are looking for in the domain of advertising and society.

Provided increasing attention to advertising, ethics, and society in both academia and industry, we are confident that this session will be well-received and attended by audience members. Our panel consists of experts in the field, as well as an industry participant with firsthand experience of how Proctor and Gamble responded to the

Black Lives Matter movement. We believe that it will offer a contribution that would be unlikely to be found elsewhere at the conference.

The ideas exchanged during the session will be further shared and discussed in various academic/industry settings. The session chairs and panelists will continue the conversations through various outlets. That is, the ideas and suggestions may morph into: future subjects of research articles and special issue themes of scholarly journals (e.g., JCIRA special issue; Sukki Yoon), the industry application by C-level executives (e.g., ANA's Global CMO Growth Council; Carrie La Ferle), op-eds, news articles, and columns in popular media (e.g., Forbes magazine, Charles Ray Taylor; op-eds, Meme Drumwright), and practices in marketing/advertising agencies (e.g., Burrell Communications: Brittny Pharr). Most important, the session attendees will have numerous stories to tell in classrooms after returning to their home institutions.

Below is a summary of each panelist's talk that will be given if the special session is accepted.

From CSR To PURPOSE

Eric Haley, University of Tennessee

PURPOSE is one of the most talked about buzz words in advertising. Traditional agencies are developing PURPOSE divisions, hiring Chief Purpose Officers. New agencies (Purpose Agencies) are being formed to focus solely on helping clients transition to purpose.

So, what is PURPOSE and how is that any different from corporate social responsibility. To those engaged with Purpose, it's vastly different. CSR is something a company does in addition to its main business. Purpose is embedded in the core functionality of a business. The ability to create profit is needed to create the systemic social change desired. While we want to impact product sales, we also want to use our power to make lives better, to address hate, economic justice, sustainability, opportunity, consumer empowerment, etc.

Purpose challenges advertising agencies to think beyond our traditional outcomes of sales. If clients are wanting our communications expertise to assist with social transformation, then how do we staff, how do we act and how do we measure our impact? In ad research, this forces us to broaden our perspective on what is advertising scholarship as well.

Accelerating Brand Growth by Leveraging Culture for Good

Carrie La Ferle, Southern Methodist University

Advertisers need to find ways to grow markets while building brand relationships with consumers. In today's diverse, yet environmentally fragile world, both tasks involve leveraging cultural understanding in the talent hired and the work produced.

Organizations know they need to reach culturally diverse audiences to build their brands and optimize marketing investments. To do this, marketers must produce compelling, authentic, and responsible advertising. While many marketers recognize the importance of hiring a diverse range of employees, they don't always know how to create a working environment to leverage the diversity.

A recent report from the Association of National Advertisers (ANA) has indicated a disconnect between having a genuine desire to recruit for diversity and knowing how to retain diverse employees. According to one CEO leading their agency's diversification efforts, "A company's emphasis on its unique culture can get in the way of inclusivity…they hire for diversity….(but) often try to assimilate that candidate into their own culture." The report indicates this is prevalent for African, Hispanic, and Asian American hires but also wider to include factors such as age, gender, and faith.

Training in cultural intelligence is a first step in working toward more diverse hires, retaining those hires through inclusivity practices, and developing more effective brand messaging. Cultural intelligence increases your ability to recognize and understand how culture (broadly defined from race and ethnicity, to generational and gender, to even corporate culture) influences interactions with people from diverse contexts. We need to work on helping all individuals in our industry to have the skills to carry out inclusivity.

Advertising After Black Lives Matter: Losing Perspective in Pursuit of Purpose

Brittny Pharr, University of Texas at Austin

8:46: the number of minutes the world watched in horror, as another Black life was taken in an act of police brutality. 8:46 would also become synonymous with a racial awakening that not even Corporate America could ignore. In 2020, George Floyd's death sparked global outrage and prompted organizations to evaluate their commitment to diverse consumer segments. One company after the other made public declarations of their commitment to the *Great Pledge* – that is the nearly $50 billion allocated to prioritizing the Black consumer segment, to increasing diversity spend, or donated to worthy causes – along with an overall promise to "do better".

The advertising industry was not excluded from the scramble to 'get it right,' as clients began to call on their agencies to give an account of their diversity efforts, in addition to launching searches to add a multicultural agency to their roster. With millions at stake and the possibility of new clients on the roster, the industry would be thrown into a figurative battlefield, full of whirlwind RFPs and tussles over diverse talent. Just over two years later, barely a fraction of those commitments have been realized and companies are facing the reality of having to give an account of the progress, or the lack thereof. And some agencies are still trying to pick up the pieces.

As brands pursue what it means to be purposeful and socially responsible, through the perspective of a multicultural agency insider, we'll examine how good intentions can lead to unintended consequences, if purpose is pursued without clear objectives, a proper assessment of the landscape, a stakeholder analysis and realistic evaluation and goal setting.

Creating Safe and Fair Workplaces in Advertising

Minette (Meme) Drumright, University of Texas at Austin

If marketers and advertisers want to be forces for good, they must be attuned not only to the effects of the advertising that they create on consumers and the culture more generally but also to the workplaces in which their work is created. Workplaces in advertising are often characterized by rough-and tumble-behavior that is uncivil at best and that can be demeaning, discriminatory, harassing, or worse. Uncivil and unsafe workplaces can have devastating effects on individual workers and create toxic organizational cultures in which people cannot do their best work. Meme Drumwright and Peggy Cunningham have interviewed more than 70 people working in a variety of companies, including advertising agencies, in which unethical behavior has persisted, often as an open secret. Drawing on network theory and behavioral ethics, their findings explain how and why unethical behavior can persist and how and why it can be disrupted. Because of their communication skills, marketers and advertisers can play important roles in creating safe and fair workplaces in their own companies and beyond.

Major Research Needs and Common Pitfalls in Publishing Advertising and Society Research

Charles R. Taylor, Villanova University

Dating back to early advertising researchers such as Charles Sandage and Gordon Miracle, there has long been attention paid to how advertising affects society. However, there can be little doubt that the past decade or so has seen even more interest in advertising and society topics among the public and a concomitant increase in academics publishing research on these topics. This presentation will outline some key areas associated in advertising in need of additional research, including corporate social responsibility programs, sustainability and "green" advertising, privacy policies of advertisers, native advertising, issues related to advertising to minorities, gender issues, and advertising to vulnerable populations. Specific research needs and common reasons why papers are rejected on these topics will be outlined and discussed.

References available upon request

BABY ANIMALS IN WILDLIFE CONSERVATION CAMPAIGNS

Tae Hyun Baek, Sungkyunkwan University
Sukki Yoon, Bryant University

Abstract

This research investigates the effect of baby animal appeals in anti-poaching advertising on wildlife conservation intentions. In Study 1, participants who viewed a baby tiger in an advertisement had higher empathy and stronger wildlife conservation intention than those who viewed an adult tiger (viz., the baby animal effect). Study 2 replicates the effect among promotion-focused participants but not among prevention-focused individuals. After viewing a baby (vs. adult) animal, promotion-focused participants exhibited higher wildlife conservation intention, but prevention-focused participants showed no such preference. Theoretical and practical implications for social marketers are discussed.

I'M FLATTERED, SO I'M IN YOUR GREEN INITIATIVE! THE EFFECT OF A FLATTERY MESSAGE ON GUESTS' GREEN BEHAVIOR BY HOTEL SEGMENTS

Eun Yeon Kang, Kutztown University of Pennsylvania
Lucy Atkinson, University of Texas at Austin
Yoon Hi Sung, Yonsei University

Abstract

Convincing hotel guests to adopt pro-environmental behavior is crucial for hotels' green corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices. With an emphasis on flattery as a persuasive tactic and hotel segments' characteristics, this study examined the flattery effects on guests' responses to a hotel's towel reuse program. Findings showed that a flattery message generated greater feelings of guilt in the luxury hotel segment than in the mid-priced and economy hotel segments. Also, it revealed two key mediators, the feeling of guilt and perceived CSR motives, in the relationship between a flattery message and guests' responses (i.e., hotel image, attitudes toward a hotel, towel reuse intentions), which was moderated by hotel segments.

SELF-CONSTRUAL AND GREEN ONLINE BEHAVIORAL ADVERTISING: THE MODERATING ROLE OF ALGORITHMIC AWARENESS AND THE MEDIATING ROLE OF SELF-ESTEEM

Dongchan Lee, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Sela Sar, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Abstract

This research examines how consumers' self-construal and algorithmic awareness interact to influence their self-esteem, which functions as a psychological factor that explains consumer responses to green advertising in the context of online behavioral advertising (OBA). The results show a moderated mediation effect. Specifically, (1) self-construal interacts with algorithmic awareness to influence self-esteem, and (2) self-esteem mediates the relationships between self-construal and consumer attitudes and purchase intention toward green advertising differently depending on algorithmic awareness. Only when consumers have algorithmic awareness, do consumers with interdependent (vs. independent) self-construal show more favorable attitudes and higher purchase intention through self-esteem. Theoretical and managerial implications are discussed.

ARE INTERACTIVE PSA FORMATS ALWAYS GOOD? TESTING THE IDENTIFIABLE VICTIM EFFECT WITH INSTAGRAM CAROUSEL POSTS FOR PRO-ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGNS

Ja Kyung Seo, University of Georgia
Hanyoung Kim, University of Kentucky
Youngjee Ko, University of Georgia
Hye Jin Yoon, University of Georgia
Jeong-Yeob Han, University of Georgia
Youngji Seo, Temple University

Abstract

Social media public service announcements (PSAs) promoting pro-environmental attitude and behavior intention seek to benefit from the availability of the interactive social media post format, such as a carousel format. The present study examines the boundary conditions for the effect of the identifiable victim effect in pro-environmental PSAs by jointly considering its delivery format on social media. By implementing an online experiment with a 2 (a single identified victim vs. non-identifiable statistical victims) x 2 (a single-page vs. a carousel format) between-subjects factorial design with message-induced empathy as a measured mediator, this study found that the message featuring non-identifiable animal victims with statistical information was more effective in promoting pro-environmental behavior intention through eliciting empathy when a single-page format (vs. a carousel format) was used. Yet, contrary to predictions, the message with a single identified victim was not more effective when a carousel format was used. The results of this study shed light on the importance of matching social media PSA formats with message framing and offer theoretical and practical implications for interactive advertising on social media.

DISENTANGLING CONTROL AND PERSONALIZATION: EXPLORING THE EFFECTS OF AD CHOICE AND AD PERSONALIZATION IN DIGITAL ADVERTISING EFFECTIVENESS

Xiaohan Hu, San Diego State University
Kevin Wise, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Abstract

Technology has changed how we process mediated information by enabling more interactive and relevant communication processes. Today, media communication is primarily shaped by both user control, where media users actively choose and determine their media experience, and system control, where media technologies and their underlying algorithms automatically generate and push relevant information to users. Understanding how both these processes influence media users' perceptions of and responses to media messages is thus an important yet relatively unexplored topic in advertising research. This study explores how ad choice, representing self-controlled advertising communication, and ad personalization, representing system-controlled advertising communication, influence media users' responses, including perceived control, ad attitude, and visual attention. Findings from an experiment showed that having ad choice in determining which ad to view enhanced media users' perceived control, which positively influenced attitude toward the ad. While the effect of ad choice on visual attention was not significant, ad personalization was found to increase visual attention. Results also showed that ad choice could significantly affect media users' perceived personalization, which further enhanced ad attitude. Theoretical and managerial implications of these findings are discussed.

CONSIDERING CONSUMER PRIVACY: INFLUENCES OF AD, PERSONAL PRIVACY, AND PRODUCT USE FACTORS ON EFFECTIVENESS OF SMART DEVICE ADS

Yongick Jeong, Louisiana State University
Jessica Shaw, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
H. Dat Tran, Louisiana State University

Abstract

Smart devices are a growing presence in our lives. They offer a wealth of benefits, but also open the door to potential privacy issues such as breaches, disclosure of personal data, and more. This study examines the influences of three ad-accompanying privacy factors (e.g., ad context factors, personal privacy factors, and product factors) on the effectiveness of smart device ads. Results show the three factors have varying influences on attitude toward ads and purchase intentions of smart devices, while brand recall is minimally affected. Practical implications and suggestions for future research are also discussed.

PRIVACY PARADOX IN AUGMENTED REALITY ADVERTISING: THE EFFECT OF USER SATISFACTION AND PRIVACY CONCERNS ON CONSUMER RESPONSES

Jiyoon Han, San Diego State University
Eun Yeon Kang, Kutztown University of Pennsylvania
Yoon Hi Sung, University of Oklahoma
Seungae Lee, Hanyang University

Abstract

Social media have provided various Augmented Reality (AR) applications from simply providing in-app face filters to more practical and integrated shopping experiences. Numerous brands have attempted to use the AR functions on social media to improve their interactions with consumers. Two experimental studies investigated the effect of AR usage on consumer response toward brand-sponsored content through perceived personalization (Study 1), and further whether user satisfaction from the interactive AR experiences would be transferred to consumer response toward sponsored content via perceived personalization and how the effect would vary by privacy concerns (Study 2). Findings showed that AR use in sponsored content was likely to enhance users' perceived personalization, which subsequently positively influenced consumer response toward sponsored content. Moreover, user satisfaction from the AR experiences was found to positively influence consumer evaluations of sponsored content, which worked only for those with medium or high privacy concerns toward mobile advertising. Implications and future research are discussed.

THE EFFECTS OF PERSONALIZED SOCIAL MEDIA POLITICAL ADVERTISING ON ATTITUDE FORMATION: THE ROLE OF PERSONALITY AND POLITICAL ORIENTATION

Ewa Maslowska, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Su Jung Kim, University of Southern California
Khadija Vakeel, DePaul University
Morana Fudurić, University of Zagreb
Jakob Ohme, Freie Universität Berlin

Abstract

Personalized advertising has attracted significant attention from both the industry and academia. However, previous research on its effectiveness has brought inconclusive results. In response, this study investigates the effectiveness of personality-based political advertising, while considering the role of the source of the message and political orientation of the recipient. We find that the effect of the source on the attitude toward the source is moderated by political orientation with liberals being more positive when the message comes from a democratic or an independent source and conservatives being more positive toward a republican source. However, the independent source is better evaluated by liberals than conservatives only when the message does not match the recipient's personality. We conduct robustness checks and find that the results change slightly depending on the personality scale used, providing methodological insights for future research on personalized advertising.

SPECIAL TOPIC SESSION: PREPARING ADVERTISING PRACTICE AND RESEARCH FOR A WORLD OF BLOCKCHAIN, CRYPTOCURRENCIES, NFTS, METAVERSE, AND DAOS

Harsha Gangadharbatla, University of Colorado Boulder
Sun Joo (Grace) Ahn, University of Georgia
Max Lenderman, Platinum Balloon
Mark Heisten, University of Colorado Boulder

Overview

Web 3.0, the latest iteration of the world wide web, is being heralded as the next big thing. If web 2.0 is all about user-generated content and social media, web 3.0 builds on that to add the concepts of decentralization, blockchain technologies, and token-based economics to a participatory culture (Fenwick & Jurcys, 2022). Furthermore, it calls for a blending of the physical and virtual worlds through the use of mobile aps, AR glasses and VR headsets among other technologies so as to allow people to have real time interactions and experiences across distance, something that is referred to as the Metaverse (Lovich, 2022).

Advertisers are increasingly interested in the metaverse for the potential to create, own, buy, and sell virtual objects, land, and experiences using blockchain applications like cryptocurrencies and non-fungible tokens (NFTs) among other things. Many brands including but not limited to Nike, Wendy's, Samsung, Coca-Cola, Louis Vuitton, Adidas, Gucci, Ferrari, Vans, Ralph Lauren, and Forever 21 have already embraced the metaverse in a big way. For instance, in November 2021, NIKE launched an interactive world called NIKELAND in Roblox, a metaverse platform that provides immersive experiences for its users (Mileva, 2022). Such interactive worlds provide brands the opportunity to host mini games, customize individuals' avatars using branded gear and outfits, sell virtual products and NFTs, and allow for users to share their experiences. In addition to the metaverse, blockchain, crypto, and NFTs, web 3.0 is also ushering in a new type of organizations called the Decentralized Autonomous Organizations (or DAOs). DAOs have the potential to impact the future of advertising agencies.

The current panel melds together industry professionals and academics to discuss the various web 3.0 technologies and their potential use in advertising research and practice. This panel was designed to be of interest to anyone looking to learn more about web 3.0 technologies either for research opportunities or for designing new undergraduate courses in it as it applies to the advertising industry. In other words, if you had heard all the buzzwords but were confused about where to start and what it all means for the future of advertising, this panel was for you.

A Primer on Blockchain, Crypto, NFTS, Metaverse, and DAOS

Harsha Gangadharbatla, University of Colorado Boulder

Dr. Gangadharbatla introduced the audience to the basics of a database and the concept of a decentralized unhackable database, also called the blockchain. Bitcoin is considered the very first application of blockchain so he went over the basics of this peer-to-peer electronic cash system (Nakamoto, 2008). Then, he introduced the audience to all of the web 3.0 technologies that will be discussed in this special topics session. These web 3.0 technologies are all based on the concepts of decentralization, blockchain, and token-based economics, and present numerous opportunities for advertising research and practice. After this broad introduction, individual panelists took a deep dive into each and presented the audience with either practical applications or exciting research opportunities.

Cryptos and NFTS in Advertising

Max Lenderman, Platinum Balloon

One of the technological innovations underlying web 3.0 is the blockchain. In this presentation, Max Lenderman introduced the audience to the basics of a blockchain and its various applications. Then, he focused on one of the applications—cryptocurrencies—and its use in the advertising industry. Using case studies and/or use cases, Lenderman walked the audience through some specific examples of how brands can leverage blockchain and its applications like cryptocurrencies in achieving their communication and business objectives.

Next, Lenderman talked about NFTs. Tokenization and blockchain-based ownership rights are already rocking the marketing and advertising world. Starbuck's announcement to start an NFT-based loyalty program in mid-September just created the largest web3 onboarding experiment in human history. Nike has made over $250 million after releasing their NFTs in 2022. It is estimated that 28.6 million wallets traded NFTs in 2022. So, of course, marketers took notice. Lenderman talked through the best and worst case studies of branded NFTs and explained the hurdles facing the market in mass adoption. He discussed the levers of community, utility and dopamine that drive NFT marketplaces and projects and how marketers can take advantage of these levers to create opportunities for new audiences and innovative loyalty programs.

Advertising Scholarship in the Metaverse: How Should We Approach it?

Sun Joo (Grace) Ahn, University of Georgia

The concept of the metaverse was first coined in the science fiction novel Snow Crash published 30 years ago, serving as the pregenesis concept of the next groundbreaking development in communication and technology fields for several decades. Today, the concept of the metaverse is complicated and often discussed as a multidimensional notion, generally referring to multiple interconnected virtual worlds where large numbers of users can simultaneously interact in embodied form. Although the metaverse as a concept has yet to fully form, Dr. Ahn presented a layout of how advertising can be studied at the unit level of triadic relationships among consumer, media, and engagement behaviors in the metaverse space. Using what we know thus far about immersive virtual environments and how they relate to advertising practice and scholarship, Dr. Ahn introduced new directions in advertising theory and research in the metaverse in the years to come.

DAOs and the Future of Advertising Agencies

Mark Heisten, University of Colorado Boulder

The pandemic changed the way that organizations think about work, productivity, team, and culture. Advertising agencies over the past twenty years have persevered enormous changes yet guarantee no continued success. Innovative and considered approaches to organizational design are required due to industry consolidation, consumer- and influencer-generated content, and a relative "buyer's market" for account services, among others. Another interesting development in the last two decades or so is the rise of crowdsourcing and its application in advertising (e.g., super bowl ads, agencies such as Victors & Spoils that rely on crowdsourcing for talent). While these crowdsourced models have not been quite successful, they have been folded into, what is collectively known as, web 3.0 technologies. One such web 3.0 technological innovation is the decentralized autonomous organization (DAO). In this talk, Mark Heisten outlined the history of web 3.0., its chief characteristics, and its application in the advertising industry. He then focused mainly on DAO as an alternate model for future advertising agencies and evaluated the merits and implications of using blockchain technology and DAO in advertising business among other things.

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TARGETING LGBTQ+ INDIVIDUALS IN ADVERTISING: CONSUMERS' PERSPECTIVES THROUGH A PHOTOVOICE STUDY

Evgeniia Belobrovkina, University of Missouri
Shelly Rodgers, University of Missouri

Abstract

Responding to multiple calls for more research on ads targeting the LGBTQ+ group, the present study conducted a photovoice project aimed to understand perceptions of LGBTQ+ individuals of ads targeting them online and through other channels, e.g., about the stereotypical representation of LGBTQ+ individuals. Thematic data analysis provided four major themes: (1) artificial attention and care from brands, (2) stereotypes about rich sex life and promiscuous sex, (3) stereotypes-based online targeting with two subthemes (beauty and fashion), and (4) LGBTQ+ is "the real thing." Overall, findings indicate that stereotyping of the LGBTQ+ group in advertising exists in various forms, including targeted online ads. The study also raises points about negative consumers' reactions to Pride Month ads due to their awareness of rainbow capitalism and about consumers' desire to see ads with a message that LGBTQ+ individuals are not very unique but are normal people living a normal life. The study suggests several theoretical and practical take-aways and determines new directions for future research.

WHEN BRANDS DON'T PRACTICE WHAT THEY PREACH: A PROPOSED MODEL OF THE EFFECTS OF HYPOCRISY, BRAND-CAUSE FIT, AND MESSAGE TYPES ON WOMEN'S RESPONSES TO FEMVERTISEMENTS

Sophia Mueller, University of Florida
Kasey Windels, University of Florida

Abstract

Since Dove first saw immense success through their "Real Beauty Campaign" in 2004, a variety of brands have been jumping onto the femvertising bandwagon. However, not all brands are reaping the same million-dollar rewards that Dove has seen. Current research indicates that this may be in part due to the fit between the brand and the cause (high or low), as well as the message type (brand activist or brand optimist). Further, a number of brands which have engaged in femvertising have landed in hot water when it was uncovered that their corporate practices do not align with advertising claims. This study proposes a model of women's responses to femvertisements, which takes a number of variables into consideration, including brand-cause fit, message type, perceived brand hypocrisy, brand authenticity, brand credibility, brand trust, and attitudinal outcomes. The model is tested and validated through an experiment conducted with 440 women. Contributions to the literature, as well as managerial implications are addressed. Limitations of the study are noted and directions for future research are presented.

FROM SURVIVING TO THRIVING AT ADVERTISING AGENCIES: THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF LGBTQ+ IDENTIFIED PRACTITIONERS

Kasey Windels, University of Florida
Minjie Li, University of Tennessee
Sophia Mueller, University of Florida

Abstract

In a recent Gallup poll, 20.8% of Generation Z adults identified at LGBTQ+, but no research has examined their experiences while working in advertising. Using in-depth interviews with 10 LGBTQ+ advertising professionals, we examine how members of this community navigate the agency culture. The findings reveal 1) the efforts made by LGBTQ+ workers to assimilate into the dominant culture; 2) the tensions encountered as they are asked to bring their whole selves to work, though they may not necessarily feel structurally supported in those efforts; and 3) the emotionally charged situations they have to endure, which oftentimes act as a catalyst for them to stand up not only for themselves in the workplace, but for LGBTQ+ representation in advertising.

INVISIBLE AND UNPAID LABORS: THE ADVERTISING INDUSTRY'S RACE AND ETHNICITY PROBLEMS

Kasey Windels, University of Florida
Noura Ibrahim, University of Florida

Abstract

Despite 50 years of programming such as the Minorities in Advertising Internship Program, the advertising industry is still overwhelmingly White. This study uses in-depth interviews with 14 advertising professionals of various races and ethnicities to examine how they experience working in the advertising industry. The findings reveal several forms of invisible and unpaid labor that people of color are made to perform. Drawing from theoretical concepts that emphasize how organizations are increasingly seeking value through the commodification of workers' subjectivities (e.g. their mind, bodies, emotions), the findings reveal how agencies capitalize upon and benefit from workers' race and ethnicity as well as the invisible and unpaid labors performed because of that identity.

INCORPORATING VR INTO TOURISM MARKETING: THE EFFECTS OF IMMERSION AND TEMPORAL DISTANCE ON DESTINATION IMAGE

Jihoon (Jay) Kim, University of Alabama
Sai Datta Mikkilineni, University of Alabama
Miahong Huang, University of Alabama

Abstract

As marketers begin to rely on more interactive forms of advertising to promote travel products and services, examining the effectiveness of interactive ads is crucial. In the current study, we investigated the potential of virtual reality (VR) to provide new and innovative avenues for promoting destination image and to test its interaction effect with psychological distance. We examined (a) the effects of media modality (high immersion: VR vs. low immersion: 2D) on destination image and (b) the interplay between psychological distance (e.g., temporal) and virtual tourism using a lab experiment ($N = 111$). Results show that experiencing the VR tour improved destination image, compared to the 2D video tour, via spatial presence and enjoyment. Results also show that when planning for distant-future travel, individuals who experienced the VR tour preferred concrete hotel information to abstract hotel information. The theoretical and managerial implications of VR experience in tourism marketing are discussed.

CONSTRUCTING A "METAVERSE" TYPOLOGY BASED ON AFFORDANCES AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESSES: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Yan (Anna) Liu, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Prativa Subedi, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Jingyu Liu, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Veranika Paltaratskaya, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Michelle Nelson, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Abstract

This study responds to calls for research to help conceptualize "the Metaverse" in advertising research. The Metaverse is an emerging phenomenon that lacks a widely accepted academic definition. Previous attempts in determining the characteristics of Metaverse and distilling typologies have primarily focused on a technological perspective, ignoring the user perspective central in advertising research, and leading to limitations in theoretical development. While the technology devices and features will continue to evolve, the perceived affordances (i.e., users' perceived capabilities given the technologies) and psychological processes that are associated with metaverse experiences will likely remain stable across different contexts and technologies. Therefore, this paper takes an inductive approach to distill affordances and psychological processes within the metaverse experience to come up with a typology for future theoretical and empirical research. Using a systematic review of metaverse literature across four databases, we distilled affordances (social connections and content generation) and psychological processes (interactivity, motivation, and immersion) to form a typology that is deeply rooted in past research but is generalizable to future advertising and relevant domains.

SOCIAL VIRTUAL INFLUENCER EFFECTIVENESS: ENVIRONMENTAL FACTOR AND SOURCE TRUST

Huan Chen, University of Florida
Chen Lou, Nanyang Technological University
Ye Wang, University of Missouri – Kansas City
Yugyung Lee, University of Missouri – Kansas City

Abstract

The existing research on virtual influencers and advertising has primarily focused on their endorsement in commercial contexts, without considering the formats and dynamics of the media environment. To address these gaps, this study was designed to investigate the effectiveness of virtual influencers' endorsement of social causes, guided by media richness theory and source credibility theory. Specifically, the study aimed to test the impact of two factors - environmental factor (virtual reality vs non-virtual reality) and source trust (disclosure vs non-disclosure) - on consumers' receptivity to a social cause endorsed by virtual influencers. A between-subjects experiment was conducted, using a 2x2 design that tested two variables - video format (360-degree video vs. regular video) and backstage disclosure (yes vs. no). The results indicated that the interaction between video format and the presence of backstage disclosure had a significant effect on consumers' perceived authenticity of the virtual influencer and their role model influence. Furthermore, the study found that the perceived authenticity and role model influence of the virtual influencer mediated the effect of users' attitudinal evaluation of virtual influencers and their donation intention.

HUMAN-LIKE VS ANIMATED: AS VIRTUAL INFLUENCERS PROLIFERATE WHICH LEADS TO ADVERTISING EFFECTIVENESS?

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Eunjin (Anna) Kim, University of Southern California
Zihang E, University of Southern California
Heather Shoenberger, Pennsylvania State University

Extended Abstract

Social media influencers (SMIs) have been incredibly effective in the advertising arena, and virtual influencers (VIs) are an intriguing counterpart with the potential to harness the positives of human influencers with additional control over content and expression. In fact, brands have been increasingly partnering with VIs who are artificial in nature while displaying the same type of content as real human influencers. VIs exist on a spectrum of levels of anthropomorphism in terms of their appearance from quite obviously anime-like to almost indistinguishable from a human. Despite the wide range of VIs (e.g., anime-like to human-like), limited studies have examined people's perception about different types of VIs. As VIs are increasing in demand for collaboration with brands, more empirical research is needed to fully understand what role VIs play in advertising and what impact the difference between human-like and anime-like VIs has on brand promotion.

In this research, we discuss two types of VIs: human-like VIs (HVIs) and anime-like VIs (AVIs). H1: HVI (vs. AVI) endorsements will lead to more favorable message attitudes; H2: Message credibility will mediate the effect of HVI (vs. AVI) endorsements on message attitudes; H3: Sponsorship disclosure will lead to lower message credibility; H4: The mediating effect of message credibility will be moderated by sponsorship disclosure such that the mediating effect of message credibility will be enhanced when sponsorship is not disclosed rather than disclosed.

Overall, participants showed more positive message attitudes when they were exposed to HVI endorsements compared to AVI endorsements. Further, Instagram posts with sponsorship disclosure led to a lower perception of message credibility than those with no disclosure. Regarding the moderated mediation, we found that the mediating effect of message credibility is significant only when sponsorship was not disclosed. However, the superior effect of HVIs over AVIs disappeared when sponsorship was disclosed as the message credibility was uniformly low for both conditions, leading to a non-significant mediation. This is one of the first studies to investigate the role of the type of VIs (HVIs vs. AVIs) and sponsorship disclosure plays in consumer responses to their brand endorsement effectiveness, in terms of message credibility and message attitudes.

We believe our research advances the prior literature in multiple ways. First, our findings confirm the utility of the computers are social actors (CASA) paradigm to explain the effectiveness of HVI (vs. AVI) endorsements. The CASA paradigm suggests that people react to computers and digital agents as if they were actual social actors. Second, this study further supports the negative effects of sponsorship disclosure. Third, our results show that the importance of message credibility as a crucial precursor for promoting positive attitudes is carried over to the context of VI advertising as well. This study also provides useful insights for marketing and social media professionals by showing that VIs can be a viable alternative to endorsing celebrities or SMIs. First, it is recommended that marketers may want to use HVIs over AVIs since participants have more favorable attitudes toward HVIs than AVIs. The disparity in message attitude and credibility between the HVI and AVI, despite having the same content and format, exemplifies the need to maximize the realism of VI characters to make the audience believe they genuinely exist. Additionally, companies should work to increase perceived transparency not only that they are virtual but also about their partnerships with brands as a way to develop trust.

SPECIAL TOPIC SESSION: COMPUTATIONAL APPROACHES TO ADVERTISING RESEARCH: ONGOING AND EMERGING CHALLENGES AND LESSONS

Itai Himelboim, University of Georgia
Marla Stafford, University of Nevada – Las Vegas
Jisu Huh, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities
Joseph Turow, University of Pennsylvania
Dror Walter, Georgia State University
Yotam Ophir, University at Buffalo
Ewa Maslowska, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Abstract

Big data has revolutionized advertising research in both academia and industry. The availability of large-scale, cross-platform, real-time data on consumer interactions with brands, products, and each other provides new research opportunities. Computational approaches, including machine learning and other novel analytical tools, are often used to identify patterns and extract meaning from unstructured text, such as large volumes of user-generated content. However, the potential for new research avenues also presents theoretical and methodological challenges and ethical concerns. As computational analysis becomes more popular among advertising researchers, faculty, and graduate students, this panel facilitated a discussion among experts focusing on these opportunities and challenges, lessons learned in recent years, and best practices for researchers.

Panel Summary: Key topics

Panelists discussed ethical concerns related to computational methods in advertising research, as well as our responsibility as advertising researchers to ensure that the academic community, industry, and policymakers are aware of these ethical issues. Additionally, as many graduates enter the advertising industry with knowledge of computational approaches, which provides an advantage during the hiring process, panelists discussed the ethical implications of using these methods in industry, including algorithmic bias and privacy concerns for users.

Researchers and graduate students are increasingly incorporating computational methods into their research, as coding has become more accessible and easier to implement. It is not uncommon for students to use codes that they have not written or read to apply computational methods. Panelists discussed their concerns regarding this practice, including differences across types of analysis (e.g., supervised vs. unsupervised) and whether the code is open-source (e.g., Hugging Face) or closed-source (e.g., Azure, Chat GPT).

As the field of advertising research evolves, it is becoming more common for researchers, advisors, journal reviewers, and editors to collaborate with individuals who possess advanced computational skills. For those who are not computational researchers themselves, it is crucial to have a foundational understanding of certain concepts and possibly even some related skills. Panelists discussed essential concepts and skills that everyone in the field should possess.

Lastly, panelists discussed the opportunities and challenges surrounding the use of computational methods in industry, and how businesses can best leverage these methods to drive innovation and growth while protecting their consumers.

MESSAGE STRATEGY MEMORY AND MEMES: AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF TAYLOR'S SSSW USING BLENDED AND UNBLENDED ANTI-VACCINE MESSAGE STRATEGIES

Elizabeth Crisp Crawford, North Dakota State University
Laura E. Thomas, North Dakota State University
Murphy Anderson, North Dakota State University

Abstract

Since the COVID-19 vaccines were introduced, audiences have been barraged with messages from various sources regarding vaccination, making it difficult for pro-vaccination messages to cut through the clutter. To understand the effects of anti-vaccine memes, this research explores the influence and memorability of anti-vaccination message strategies using Taylor's Six-Segment Message Strategy Wheel (SSSW). Participants systematically evaluated the memes according to strategy using a point system allowing for blends. Then, in a second study, their influence was tested according to a number of individual difference variables including personality (BFI), decision-making style, and dogmatism along with demographic variables, and a vaccine attitude scale. Behavioral influence and memory were the outcomes. Blended strategies were the most prevalent, rational appeals were the most popular strategies for memes and perceived to be the most influential, and emotional appeals were the most memorable. Individual differences and inclusion of imagery also affected audience responses to the memes.

WHEN THE WORLD STOOD STILL: CRISIS RESPONSE ADVERTISING DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Frauke Hachtmann, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Abstract

This qualitative study explores how some of the most successful advertising agencies' professionals experienced the COVID-19 pandemic and what they learned from serving clients when consumers were forced into lockdown, brands slashed their media budgets, and social unrest unfolded simultaneously. Using a grounded theory approach, a complex crisis response advertising model was developed, which suggests that complex causal conditions (different phases of the COVID-19 pandemic) shaped the phenomenon (different stages of crisis response advertising), while the contextual (health and safety; consumer behavior; and technology) and intervening (economic pressures; social unrest; political polarization) conditions influence three strategic meta categories deployed by advertising agencies(consumer-facing work; agency operations; serving clients) to bring about a set of consequences/effects (a changed world; acceleration of trends, brand transformation vs. demise, the empowered consumers, future of (agency) work; better crisis preparedness) that are part of a new post-crisis reality. The crisis itself accelerates existing trends, serving as a catalyst for change. The CCRA model is expressed as a cycle because complex crises permanently change the marketplace. Every future complex crisis creates a new reality.

CONFRONTING VACCINE MISINFORMATION: HARNESSING VACCINE ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS

Ilwoo Ju, Purdue University
Hwanseok Song, Purdue University
Temi Wright, Purdue University

Abstract

The current study examines how vaccine advertising can motivate people to confront vaccine misinformation disseminators despite some level of vaccine conspiracy beliefs. Drawing on the Integrated Model of Behavioral Prediction (IM), the current survey study (n = 1,070) addresses two timely *background influence* factors (vaccine conspiracy beliefs and vaccine advertising exposure) that affect the IM pathways (attitudes, social norms, perceived behavioral control) to misinformation confrontation intention. We found (a) vaccine conspiracy beliefs serve as a behavioral inhibitor of vaccine misinformation confrontation intention, (b) the influence is mediated through the IM pathways, and (c) the mediating paths are transformed from negative to positive as vaccine advertising exposure increases. To effectively communicate and fight against health misinformation, particularly in populations with deep-seated mistrust or poor health literacy, we need to include media vaccine advertising campaigns. The theoretical implications and the utility of health advertising campaigns during a health crisis are discussed.

MESSAGES FOR HEALTH RISK PREVENTION IN THE POST-COVID-19 PANDEMIC: INTERPLAY OF SELF (VS. OTHER) BENEFIT APPEAL AND ANTHROPOMORPHISM

Sujin Kim, Louisiana State University
SoYoung Lee, Rowan University

Abstract

Preventive health risk messages became increasingly prevalent during pandemic. However, little is known about how these messages should be designed to influence people's actual preventive health risk behaviors. Based on the theory of information processing fluency, this research investigates the interaction effect between self (vs. other) benefit appeals and anthropomorphism upon subsequent consumers' prosocial behaviors. Specifically, the effect of self-benefit appeals is stronger than other-benefit appeals if anthropomorphism is void. Moreover, the effect of other-benefit appeals is moderated by anthropomorphism that matches the processing fluency. Additionally, this research examines the mediating role of intrusiveness on such interaction effects. Implications regarding health campaigns and prosocial behaviors are further discussed.

UNDERSTANDING AND INCREASING EVERYDAY PERSUASION KNOWLEDGE ABOUT POLITICAL ADVERTISING

Michelle Nelson, University of Illinois at Urbana- Champaign
Kirby Cook, University of Illinois at Urbana- Champaign
Eric Haley, University of Tennessee
Chang- Dae Ham, University of Illinois at Urbana- Champaign
Veranika Paltaratskaya, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Abstract

Past research has demonstrated that U.S. voters do not know much about political advertising or the way that it is regulated. In the context of the Persuasion Knowledge Model (PKM), and through a qualitative approach, our study explores the ways in which people encounter political advertising in their everyday lives and what U.S. voters think (conceptual PK) and feel (evaluative PK) about political advertising. We gauge voter response to a brief video designed to increase political advertising literacy. Twenty-five voters from across demographics were interviewed. Findings suggest that people rely on disclaimers to identify the source (conceptual PK), which is problematic given the lack of regulations in digital media related to source identification. The open-ended queries allowed a wider variety of coping responses and engagement processes to emerge in our study, including avoidance *or* attention, with beliefs in some value for heuristic information, such as names and political parties. Overall, there was consensus about not liking negative or misleading advertising (evaluative PK). After viewing the video, participants were surprised to learn that commercial products were regulated for truth-in-advertising, but political ads were not. They felt that everyone would benefit from learning more from the video. Implications for theory and public policy are presented.

A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COVERT ADVERTISING RECOGNITION AND CONSUMER ATTITUDES

Louvins Pierre, University of Connecticut

Abstract

Consumers do not always recognize the persuasive intent of covert forms of advertising. Thus, when exploring consumers' evaluations of these specific ads it is important to measure if, and to what extent, they recognize it as an ad. Amidst the current research, conflicting findings exist on what effect ad recognition exerts on attitudinal reactions. This systematic review found that the effects observed in most studies are negative. Additionally, among these studies, those employing an article-style ad display more negative relationships than social media-style ads. Similarly, studies using binary measures of recognition uncovered more negative relationships compared to continuous measures. Moreover, brand attitudes had fewer negative relationships with ad recognition compared to advertising attitudes and publisher/poster attitudes.

TAKING ADVERTISING RESEARCH INTO THE WILD: A MOBILE EYE-TRACKING STUDY OF ATTENTION TO THE AD AND AD RECALL IN REAL-LIFE MEDIA ENCOUNTERS

Julian Felix Kopka, University of Wuppertal
Lennart Borgmann, University of Wuppertal
Tobias Langner, University of Wuppertal

Abstract

Drawing consumers' limited attention to advertising in drastically shifted media environments represents the greatest challenge for advertisers. Research on media and advertising reception based on real-life observation and eye-tracking is critical to understand attention allocation. Yet, such studies are rare. Our first study therefore starts by addressing consumers' native media behavior, using mobile eye-tracking combined with interviews, conducted in 12 consumers' homes. The results affirm that various phenomena (e.g., individual prime time, smartphone centricity, screen arrangement, ad avoidance) make it challenging to break through the immense clutter and garner consumers' attention. Thus, in our second study, we focus on attention tactics drawn from a systematic literature review of leading marketing communication textbooks and journal articles. We investigate their effectiveness in real-life media encounters, using mobile eye-tracking in 60 consumers' homes. The results show that the tactics' effectiveness for gaining (time to first fixation) and holding (total gaze duration) attention varies: Size and sound elements facilitate initial attention, as do the color red and faces and eyes, but other striking color schemes and pictorial elements hinder it. Color has no overall effect on gaining attention. For holding and intensifying attention, influencers, testimonials, and emotional scenes exert positive effects, but celebrities, babies, children, and humor do not. Faces and eyes and erotic stimuli have conflicting impacts on holding attention. Ultimately, we confirm that attention correlates with ad recall.

INFLUENCE OF CONSUMERS' AFFECTIVE STATES ON AD ATTENTION: A FIELD STUDY

Maral Abdollahi, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities
Xinyu Lu, Shanghai International Studies University
Debarati Das, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities
Jisu Huh, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities
Jaideep Srivastava, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities

Abstract

This study examined how consumers' affective states influenced their selective attention to ads with different attention-inducing characteristics. Applying mood management theory, this study conducted a naturalistic field study during the 2021 Super Bowl game broadcast, where participants rooting for one of the two competing teams were recruited in advance and asked to report their spontaneous responses to commercials aired during their assigned quarters, using an online questionnaire. The results demonstrated some support for the linkage between consumers' temporary affective states and their selective attention to different types of ads. Consumers in negative affective states were more likely to seek exciting, emotional, and positively valenced ads to improve their affective state as compared to consumers in positive affective states. This study lends empirical support to the largely untested effects of consumers' temporary affective states on selective attention to ads. Additionally, this study provides useful practical implications for affect-based ad targeting strategies.

SPECIAL TOPIC SESSION: THE FUTURE OF DATAVEILLANCE IN ADVERTISING THEORY AND PRACTICE

Moderator: Claire Segijn, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities

Panelist[1]
Daisy Dong Zhang, University of Amsterdam
Pranav Patil, Nextdoor
Devin Reiter, Fortnight Collective
Hari Sundaram, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Joanna Strycharz, University of Amsterdam

Abstract

Dataveillance in Advertising: In our current digital society, an enormous volume, variety, and velocity of data is available online (Huh & Malthouse, 2020). Advertising companies collect, process, and share information on individuals for personalized communication, computational advertising, or algorithmic decision-making purposes. Thus, recent developments in the advertising practice contribute to dataveillance, i.e., the automated, continuous, and unspecific collection, storage, and processing of digital traces (Büchi et al., 2022). Data collection and processing by corporations may trigger consumers' perception of being surveilled (Farman, Comello, & Edwards, 2020; Segijn et al., 2021). This awareness of data collection practices and privacy threats in general are known to diminish the effects of data-driven advertising by inducing cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses among consumer (e.g., Ham, 2017). The current panel proposes to open a dialogue on the role of dataveillance in advertising theory and practice by means of an interactive panel discussion with the audience discussing the topic from the consumer (social science), industry, data (computer science) and regulatory/ethics perspective. We will end with a discussion about what is next for the topic and implications for advertising theory and practice.

The Consumer Perspective: Digital advertising nowadays frequently evokes the feeling of being surveilled among consumers. A nationally representative survey among Dutch adults revealed that compared to other actors, advertisers are the most common perceived source of surveillance and advertising is also the most common perceived purpose of surveillance. Complementary, qualitative in-depth interviews showed that consumers hold various folk theories of who is surveilling them for what purposes, among which "companies do everything for money" being one of the most prominent theories. Being under surveillance, consumers perceive a power imbalance between the commercial actors and themselves, have concerns over unethical practices and their data, and feel creeped out and violated by surveillance practices. However, they also appreciate benefits such as personal relevance, convenience, and helpfulness. These findings provide insights into the consumer perspectives on dataveillance in advertising.

The Industry Perspective: In the agency world there is nothing better than unlocking insights for your clients. Then harnessing those insights into actions. And finally seeing those actions move the market. Historically, behavior and attitudes were paramount when coming up with strategies. And where data was important, it was not the end all be all. Today things have shifted. Clients want certainty for the dollars they spend. Therefore truly understanding behavior is made more practical and actionable with dataveillance. And there are many schools of thought. To me, here are two worth surfacing. The first is by knowing how your customers behave, shop and act digitally, we will be more informed on how to speak to them. On the inverse, by being so hyper focused there is a tendency to lose the plot.

Data Science Perspective: There is a profound information asymmetry and imbalance in power between corporations that track and those individuals that they follow. What might a computational ecosystem that values consumer consent and information symmetry look like? Might the advertising ecosystem thrive with new business models if we reimagined the current ecosystem with one of consensual interaction? We may have to rethink how

[1] Panelist are listed on order of presentation.

(and where) we conduct auctions and how data is stored and priced and transparently reveal gains if individuals choose to participate.

Regulatory/ethics perspective[2]*:* Data collection for personalized advertising can have many great advantages such as helping customers find products that are relevant to them and helping them explore new products that fit their taste. However, we have to be aware of the potential legal and ethical risks associated with this technology. Personalized advertisements can target and manipulate consumers into purchasing goods and services they don't need and would have never purchased. Among other things these goods can be very costly, risky or unhealthy as we have seen with predatory lending schemes or ads that promote unhealthy lifestyles or body images. This is particularly troubling if the target group are children or young consumers, consumers with gambling or addiction issues and consumers from marginalized communities. It is ample time for the law to step in. The law is what we need to turn to find a good middle ground between the risks and advantages of this technology.

[2] Original contribution by Dr. Sandra Wachter

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN TIKTOK USES AND GRATIFICATIONS ACROSS THE UNITED STATES, SPAIN, AND CHILE

Tao Deng, DePaul University
Lizardo Vargas-Bianchi, Universidad de Lima
Marta Mensa, University of North Texas

Abstract

This cross-cultural study of TikTok uses and gratification explores how TikTokers in the United States, Spain, and Chile differ in their use of the popular social media platform. Through a survey (English, Latin American Spanish, and European Spanish versions) of 556 TikTok users with similar demographic characteristics across the three countries, we established multigroup measurement models that support cross-country measurement invariance. Our findings indicate that Chileans are the least engaged in TikTok, but average Chilean TikTokers have more followers than their American and Spanish peers. TikTokers' uses and motivations of the platform are associated with their countries' national cultural values. For example, users in Chile and Spain (collectivistic) favor TikTok as a socialization tool more than users in the USA (individualistic). Chileans (high uncertainty avoidance) tend to avoid self-expression and archiving on TikTok compared to Americans (low uncertainty avoidance). In terms of gender differences, men in general were less likely than women to use TikTok for consuming and participating, as well as for escape, entertainment, and information seeking. Chilean men were the least in the use of TikTok for participating and entertainment, as compared to Spanish and American men.

SHORT VIDEO MARKETING STRATEGY: EVIDENCE FROM SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEURS ON TIKTOK

Huan Chen, University of Florida
Dalong, Ma, University of Northern Colorado
Bhakti Sharma, University of Florida

Abstract

Social media plays a crucial role in the growth and development of entrepreneurial businesses. Entrepreneurs leverage social media as an essential marketing tool due to its low cost, fast response, and high interactivity. As social media platforms continue to evolve, entrepreneurs are finding more diversified and multifaceted ways to utilize this tool. Recently, the emergence of short video social media platforms like TikTok has gained tremendous popularity, making it worth examining how entrepreneurs are utilizing this unique type of social media for their marketing practices. Guided by the use and gratification theory, this study explores how entrepreneurs perceive and interpret TikTok as a marketing tool to connect with consumers and achieve business success.

EXPLORING SCREEN-AD CONGRUENCE EFFECTS ON VISUAL AESTHETICS AND AD LIKEABILITY IN SOCIAL MEDIA

Olga Shabalina, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Michelle Nelson, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Abstract

While there is common understanding among advertising designers that social media platforms have a unique architecture and desired visual aesthetic, there are very few studies in the advertising and social media literature that explore how design decisions such as congruence between the screen and the advertisement's mechanical features affect ad aesthetic appreciation. Based on the Gestalt principle of Similarity and the Fluency Theory of Aesthetic Pleasure, we introduce the concept of *screen-ad congruence* (defined as similarity between the ad and the screen in perceptual features: shape, symmetry, and orientation) and test its two dimensions (shape, symmetry) on perceptions of visual aesthetics and ad likeability across two experiments. Study 1 focused on screen-ad congruence in shape. Results showed that ads congruent with the screen in shape were liked more and generated higher perceptions of visual aesthetics. Study 2 tested effects of screen-ad congruence in symmetry and orientation. The findings showed that ads congruent with the screen in symmetry were visually more pleasing and liked more than asymmetrical ads. Overall, the results demonstrate that screen-ad congruence is an important source of perceptual fluency that has the potential to generate favorable evaluative responses toward advertising in social media.

INSIDE A SOCIAL MEDIA BRAND SAFETY ALGORITHM: A COMPUTATIONAL INVESTIGATION OF SUBREDDITS, TOXICITY, AND ADVERTISING INVENTORY

Chris J. Vargo, University of Colorado Boulder
Toby Hopp, University of Colorado Boulder
Pritha Agarwal, University of Colorado Boulder

Abstract

This study looks at a brand safety system for the social media platform Reddit, focusing specifically on the content that advertising is, and is not, served alongside. The study uses AI built by Google to detect content typically deemed as "unsafe" by advertisers, including toxicity, identity-based attacks, threatening language, profanity, and insults. Through an analysis of 2,267 active subreddits and 2.74 million submissions spanning three months in 2022, we found that subreddits with advertising tend to have slightly lower levels of toxicity compared to subreddits with no ads. However, 85% of the Reddit inventory studied here was deemed safe for ads. Dozens of subreddits were deemed safe for advertising by Reddit but were in the top 100 for prevalence of unsafe behaviors. Subreddits with more subscribers tend to be more toxic but also are more likely to be ad friendly. Combined with the finding that ad-friendly subreddits had slightly heightened levels of user engagement, there appears to be a relationship between the general popularity of a subreddit and Reddit's decision to monetize it with ads.

ANTECEDENTS OF PURCHASE INTENTION IN RESPONSE TO ADVERTISING DELIVERED BY VOICE ASSISTANTS: THE DYNAMIC ROLE OF SOCIAL PRESENCE, PRIVACY CONCERNS, AND PERCEIVED CONTROL

Nancy. H. Brinson, University of Alabama
Steven Holiday, University of Alabama
Jessica George, University of Alabama

Extended Abstract

According to eMarketer (2021), 135.5 million U.S. adults (40.5%) have used a voice assistant (VA) to aid them with a host of tasks, including purchasing products. As such, the use of voice-assisted advertising is forecasted to grow exponentially over the next decade. While advertisers have long had access to data reflecting consumers' online search and purchase activities, voice assistants take the personalization process a step further. They capture all information obtained from consumers' direct inquiries with their VA, including information that the consumer may not intend for the device to record. Additionally, smart speakers can engage in a complex dialog with users while simultaneously gathering information, comparing product features, summarizing online reviews, and considering the users' past purchases to present more personalized product recommendations (Dawar and Bendle 2018; Hsieh and Lee 2021). These human-like interactions VAs have with consumers are designed to resemble conversations with another person (Jones 2018; Lee and Cho 2020), making marketing-driven interactions seem less like promotional messages and more like friendly advice to the user (Whang and Im 2021).

Currently, there is limited research examining consumer response to different forms of advertising delivered by voice assistants. While previous studies indicate that consumers respond positively to conversation-based interactions with voice assistants due to their human likeness (Ghosh and Eastin 2020), the intrusive data collected by these devices and their ability to suggest specific products or services without being prompted could raise significant privacy concerns for users (Lau et al. 2018; Liao et al. 2019; Alepis and Patsakis 2017).

Using a theoretical foundation of Social Presence Theory (SPT) and Psychological Reactance Theory (PRT), this 2 (shopping list vs. search commands) x 3 (organic, brand-integrated, or advertisement responses) within and between subject experimental study examines factors that influence perceptions of promotional messages delivered by a voice assistant (including social presence, perceived control and privacy concerns); and how they work together to predict purchase intention. Results indicate that promotional messages in response to both a shopping list and search-oriented query were significantly more effective at eliciting purchase intent when the consumer felt in control of the interaction and experienced a sense of social presence with the voice assistant. The first finding supports the results of Schweitzer and colleagues (2019), indicating that as users build relationships with their VAs, their interactions are more positively perceived when they feel superior to the device. They suggest that the voice assistant as a "servant" experience stimulates a sense of beneficial closeness that encourages the consumer to incorporate the VA into their self. Regarding the second finding, data suggest that less overt forms of promotional messaging (e.g., brand-integrated sponsorships) were better received by VA users, perhaps because they are perceived as a word-of-mouth recommendation from a friend rather than a paid advertisement. These insights contribute to advertising practice by encouraging the creation of messages that are delivered in a conversational tone (rather than a promotional one) to reinforce the social nature of the relationship between consumers and their VAs.

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ADVERTISING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) AGENTS: THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL PRESENCE, SINCERITY, AND SOCIAL BENEFIT APPEALS

Y. Greg Song, University of Texas at Austin
Jeongmin Ham, University of Texas at Austin
Eunjoo Jin, University of Texas at Austin
Matthew Eastin, University of Texas at Austin

Abstract

The current research delves into two unique advantages that conversational artificial intelligence (AI) agents offer to consumers: social and utilitarian benefits, as well as the sincerity of their conversation and the effect that advertisements displaying these characteristics could have on consumers' perceptions. In doing so, this study represents the first to look at how advertisers can strategically promote conversational AI agents to consumers. The findings of this study indicate that promoting AI agents' social benefits and emphasizing their sincere personalities influence consumers' perceptions of human-AI interaction to become more socially present. Consumers' perceived social presence leads to more favorable attitudes toward the advertisement and the use of the promoted AI agent. On the other hand, without the mediating role of social presence, accentuating the utilitarian benefits of AI agents in the advertisement is more effective than highlighting their social advantages in influencing consumers' positive attitudes. The current study contributes to the literature on social presence, parasocial interactions, and brand personalities. Moreover, the study's findings provide managerial guidelines for using sincerity and perceived benefits appeals in advertising AI agents.

IS ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) SUPERIOR TO HUMAN?: RETHINKING THE ROLE OF AGENT KNOWLEDGE IN PERCEIVED AUTONOMY, SUPERORDINATE INTENTIONS, AND COPING MECHANISM WITH INFLUENCER MARKETING

Dongchan Lee, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Chang-Dae Ham, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Abstract

Despite the exponential growth of influencer marketing, little research has examined how consumers' coping mechanism differs with two types of influencers (AI vs. human). Drawing on the persuasion knowledge model, action identification theory, and construal level theory, we redefined agent knowledge as a core belief that drives different autonomy perceptions of the influencers. Employing two single-factor between-subject experiments, study 1 revealed that consumers perceived AI (vs. human) as a heteronomous agent, which guides a low-level construal devoid of perceived superordinate intentions. Based on the findings, study 2 identified that consumers' agent knowledge of AI (vs. human) negatively affected attitudinal and behavioral changes, being sequentially mediated by source credibility and perceived persuasion effectiveness respectively. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

WHEN YOU WILL BUY A PRODUCT RECOMMENDED BY AN AI (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)-POWERED VOICE ASSISTANT: THE MODERATING ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY AFFORDANCES

Mark Yi-Cheon Yim, University of Massachusetts Lowell
Sameed Khan, University of Massachusetts Lowell
Chan Yun Yoo, Saint Joseph's University

Abstract

The current study examines the underlying process through which the unique media aspects of voice assistants (VAs) affect users' evaluations and thus examines in what conditions media richness would shape users' purchase intention of voice assistant-recommended products via mental simulation. Findings reveal that when users perceive high levels of technology affordance for VAs, such as controlling home devices, they are likely to enhance their mental simulation triggered by a rich media format, consequently shaping increased purchase intention for the product recommended by the VAs. Yet, such positive effects of technology affordance disappear as users accumulate experience with VAs.

CONSUMERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE MOTIVES BEHIND INFLUENCER COLLABORATIONS

Veronica Thomas, Old Dominion University
Kendra Fowler, Youngstown State University
Faa Taheran, Old Dominion University

Abstract

Within the social media community, influencers engage in a variety of collaborative practices such as tagging, reposting content from, or forming partnerships with other influencers and brands. While such collaborative efforts are a known practice, less is understood about how influencer collaborations affect consumers' perceptions of the partnering influencers, specifically when a status differential exists within the influencer-influencer collaboration or influencer-brand collaboration. We suggest that such collaborative practices, specifically those where the focal influencer has a higher status than the collaborating partner, may help to weaken consumers' perceptions that the influencer's actions are purely self-focused. A pilot study, analyzing Instagram posts of 622 influencer-influencer collaborations and 1,347 influencer-brand collaborations, provides evidence that influencers engage in collaborations with other influencers and brands of different status levels. Two studies then support our theorizing that influencers who collaborate with lower-status influencers are perceived as less self-serving and more altruistic, while influencers who collaborate with lower-status brands are only perceived as less self-serving.

UNDERSTANDING AUTHENTICITY IN NON-CELEBRITY SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS: ANTECEDENTS AND OUTCOMES

Osnat Roth-Cohen, Ariel University
Sigal Segev, Florida International University
Yu Liu, Florida International University

Abstract

The personal authenticity of social media influencers (SMIs) is emerging as a central component that underlies influencers' persuasive power. However, little research explores the factors that contribute to SMI's perceived authenticity when they partner with brands and its potential effect on followers' responses. This study proposes a conceptual framework that draws the antecedents of influencers' authenticity (i.e., expertise, post objectivity, influencer-brand congruence) and its impact on advertising effectiveness (i.e., attitude toward the post and purchase intention) in influencer endorsement. A SEM analysis of survey data from 315 Instagram users in the U.S. supports the proposed model. Specifically, results show that influencer expertise, post objectivity and influencer-brand congruence are positively associated with perceived authenticity, which in turn, positively affect attitude toward the post and purchase intention of the endorsed brand through the mediating role of influencer trustworthiness. This framework contributes to the literature about SMIs' endorsement by establishing the role of authenticity as a key factor in driving effective content. Findings from this study provide several practical implications for effective authenticity management strategies for SMIs.

INFLUENCER MARKETING EFFECTIVENESS: AUTOMATED MEASURES OF USER'S SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT TOWARD INFLUENCER POSTS AS INDICATORS OF ATTITUDINAL AND BEHAVIORAL OUTCOMES

Daniel Bruns, University of Wuppertal
Steffen Prior, University of Wuppertal
Tobias Langner, University of Wuppertal

Abstract

Measuring the success of influencer campaigns is considered to be the most important challenge of influencer marketing, according to recent surveys among practitioners. The present paper provides a comparison of different approaches that measure campaign success based on freely accessible data: engagement rates (like-follower-ratio, LFR, and comment-follower-ratio, CFR) as well as sentiment scores of user comments analyzed using lexicon-based approaches (LIWC and VADER) and a machine learning Naïve Bayes (NB) sentiment classifier. We examine the convergent, discriminant, and predictive validity of these metrics. Linear mixed-effects regressions reveal that only the NB classifier and LIWC converge positively with a measure of attitude toward the post. CFR correlates negatively with post attitude, indicating that lower overall attitudes toward an influencer marketing post yield more user comments. Predictive validity with regard to brand attitude, purchase intention, price premium, and positive word of mouth was found only for the NB classifier and partially for VADER. These findings suggest that engagement rates and lexical approaches provide only limited validity to indicate post attitude or to predict the attitudinal and behavioral outcome variables. The machine learning approach of the NB classifier presented here can serve as a valuable performance indicator and helpful controlling tool for marketers.

THE ROLE OF INFLUENCER-FOLLOWER RELATIONSHIP IN SHAPING FOLLOWERS' PERCEPTIONS AND BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS

Khalid Alharbi, University of South Carolina

Abstract

This study looks at the impact of the relationship between social media influencers and followers on consumers being inspired by influencers and perceiving mutual benefits in this relationship, which could increase how consumers value and respond to influencers' endorsement. Using an online panel (N = 560), the results indicate that when the relationship between an influencer and a follower is strong, there is a greater likelihood that the follower will be inspired by the influencer and think that they share reciprocal benefits with the influencer. The finding of the serial mediation analyses suggest that inspiration and perceived mutual benefits mediates the effects of influencer-follower relationship on consumers' behavioral intentions, including purchase intention and eWOM. The value and response of consumers to an influencer's endorsement can be affected by the extent to which they are inspired by an influencer and by their perception of the mutual benefits from their relationship with an influencer. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

CHALLENGES OF COMMUNICATING THE RISKS OF SKIN-LIGHTENING PRODUCTS IN THE AGE OF DIGITAL DISTORTION AND TOXIC SELFIE CULTURE: THE ROLE OF PSA SAFETY CAMPAIGNS

Hyosun Kim, Indiana State University

Abstract

A one-factor (risk severity: mild vs. serious) online experiment was conducted to examine whether selfie editing and posting behavior predict skin-lightening product purchase intentions. Results revealed that selfie editing and selfie posting frequency were key predictors—unlike race, gender, and age—of purchase intent for a hypothetically created skin-lightening cream, Power Brightening Cream. Following a subsequent exposure to the FDA's PSA, alerting the public to the health risks of hydroquinone-containing skin-lightening products to mimic behavioral targeting tactics, the intervention significantly lowered purchase intentions. Risk severity, the seriousness of risks, did not have any effect on purchase intent. However, risk severity affected eWOM intentions through risk perception.

THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF SELF-CARE CULTURE ON WOMEN'S WELL-BEING

Brooke Listwin, University of Saskatchewan

Abstract

Self-care culture exists within the individualistic consumer culture interest of enhancing "the self" (Grénman, Hakala, and Mueller 2019). Self-care culture is focused on improving one's vital appearance and attractiveness to achieve a happier more successful life. Self-care culture, however, drives the feminine ideals that women must continue to self-better and improve to present a social status that is capable and fit. Participating in self-care culture is also a modern luxury that many young women may not have the money or time to fully participate in, leading to their well-being and self-identity as the ideal women being harmed. This paper discusses the dark side of the happiness industry, and the potential negative effects self-care culture may be having on women's self-worth, self-esteem, resulting in restoration of one's identity through symbolic consumption. This paper provides considerations for marketers within this industry and the call for future research within the self-care industry.

THE WARM-GLOW EFFECT OF CONSUMER PURCHASE IN CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING: WITH THE ROLES OF ON PURCHASE TYPE AND CONSUMPTION CONTEXT

Hyun Ju Jeong, University of Kentucky

Abstract

While the effectiveness of cause-related marketing (CRM) for companies and their nonprofit partners has been well documented, its benefit to consumers is surprisingly absent. Drawing on the warm-glow effect, this research addresses this gap with three experimental studies about *whether, when*, and *how* CRM messages drive consumers to find psychological rewards from their cause-related purchases. Study 1 finds that the presence of CRM messages is more effective in anticipating warm-glow feelings than the absence of CRM messages. Extending this preliminary finding, Study 2 finds that CRM messages tied to experiential purchases (dining) prompt more warm-glow feelings than those tied to material purchases (clothing). Study 3 further reveals that the greater outcome of experiential (*vs.* material) purchases for CRM messages can be optimized when it is paired with shared consumption (consumption with others) rather than personal consumption (consumption alone). Furthermore, warm-glow feelings serve as a psychological mediator accounting for how CRM leads to purchases, particularly when the messages are strategically compatible with experiential purchases and shared consumptions. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed with specific reference to the effectiveness of CRM on the consumer side.

IS IT TOO EARLY? APPLICATION OF VIRTUAL HUMANS IN NARRATIVE PERSUASIONS FOR CAMPAIGNS MITIGATING CLIMATE CHANGE MISINFORMATION

Won-Ki Moon, University of Florida
Y. Greg Song, The University of Texas at Austin
Lucy Atkinson, The University of Texas at Austin

Abstract

The impact of misinformation about climate change on public opinion has become a critical social issue. Literature suggests that narrative persuasion can contribute to increasing public engagement in the issue and induce behavioral changes. To examine the effect of narrative persuasion in the context of public service announcements (PSAs), we developed and tested a research model that included three mediators: identification, attitude toward the advertising campaign, and attitude toward the sponsor of the advertising message. Also, we added the type of storyteller (actual human scientist vs. virtual human scientist) as the moderator in the model. Our results show that an actual human evoked a higher level of identification than a virtual human. However, both storytellers can persuade audiences to have positive attitudes toward PSAs and the sponsor of PSAs that enhance their intention to share advertising messages and participate in climate change campaigns. The output of this research could be applied to the development of narrative-type advertising messages in various contexts, including PSAs and marketing communications.

A CROSS-CULTURAL STUDY OF CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS ON TWITTER: A COMPUTATIONAL COMPARISON OF AMERICAN AND SOUTH KOREAN INFLUENCERS

Haseon Park, University of Minnesota
Jameson Hayes, University of Alabama
Brian C. Britt, University of Alabama
Rebecca K. Britt, University of Alabama

Abstract

The growing body of advertising research highlights the role of social media influencers (SMIs) communicating with consumers, reaching a wide range of international consumers across the geographical and national boundaries. Addressing the need to understand how SMIs from different cultural backgrounds connect with consumers, this study takes a computational approach to explore the patterns and characteristics of the U.S. and South Korean SMI networks on Twitter. Drawing from calculative and relational trust-building that differs across individualistic and collectivistic culture, this study investigated the extent to which SMIs are interconnected with consumers engaging through social media networks and uncovered the influence of specific content characteristics on driving reach and engagement observed from 338,996 tweets. Results from network analyses and computerized textual analyses revealed notable cultural differences of interconnectedness among SMIs and engaging consumers. Additionally, the proportion of affective, social, and cognitive content, respectively, showed a significant and unique impact on facilitating engagement through SMI networks. Theoretical and managerial implications are discussed.

OPTIMIZING BRANDED CONTENT FOR BEAUTY AND FASHION INFLUENCERS FROM A MEDIA RICHNESS PERSPECTIVE: HOW POST TOPIC AND VISUAL TYPE INTERTWINE TO BOOST CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT

Yang Feng, University of Florida
Quan Xie, Southern Methodologist University

Abstract

Marketers continually seek ways to enhance social media users' interests in products through collaborating with social media influencers. Given the popularity of influencer marketing on Instagram, the objective of this research is to uncover the optimal combination of topic type (reflect information complexity) and visual type (reflect media richness) of sponsored posts to boost consumer engagement from the angle of media richness theory. Using real branded posts from the top 1,000 beauty and fashion influencers, we detected a discrepancy between the empirical content creation practices adopted by beauty and fashion influencers and the theory-driven optimal content creation practices. In particular, while rich medium like videos shall be used for a topic (e.g., introducing a beauty product) that requires detailed information, lean medium like photos shall be adopted for a topic (e.g., get the same look of the influencer through purchase the product) that can be conveyed in a straightforward way. As such, the results provide both theoretical and practical implications.

SIGNALING BRAND INCLUSIVITY WITH A PINCH OF TABOO: UNDERSTANDING TABOO ADVERTISING EFFECTIVENESS WITH THE OKCUPID CASE

Mengtian Jiang, University of Kentucky
Eda Anlamlier, University of Nevada – Las Vegas
Sevincgul (Sev) Ulu, Southern Illinois University
Colleen Harmeling, Florida State University

Abstract

Using a case study approach, this study investigates factors that influence the effectiveness of advertising that uses sociocultural taboos to promote diversity and inclusion. Through an empirical investigation with 584 U.S. adults, this research examines the influence of ad relevance and ad taboo level on consumer response to OkCupid's DTF advertising campaign. This research also investigates the underlying mechanisms of consumer perceptions of ad value and brand inclusivity. The results demonstrate that perceived personal relevance with the ad enhances ad value perceptions, which in turn increase brand inclusivity perceptions and the subsequent consumer behavioral intention toward the brand. However, this indirect effect is moderated by the ad taboo level, with the indirect positive effect decreasing as the ad taboo level increases. Overall, this research provides insights into designing effective taboo-based inclusive advertising campaigns that resonate with diverse consumer segments.

INSIGHTS INTO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ADVERTISING DURING THE RECESSION

Kibum Youn, University of Tennessee

Abstract

This study explores why investments in marketing, such as the active increase in advertising spending along with an appropriate message appeal that resonates with consumers, are essential during an economic downturn. Drawing upon the congruity theory and accessibility–diagnosticity framework, the results of this experimental study showed the price discount appeals in advertisements during a recession is more effective than the superior experience appeal, which is mediated by perceived advertisement diagnosticity. This research contributes to extending existing literature examining the dynamic relationship among message appeals, the state of a recession, and consumers' purchase intention as well as providing more effective propositions on what specific appeals need when economic crises occur.

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