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ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

AN INVESTIGATION OF VERBAL VERSUS VISUAL PERSUASIVE ELEMENTS
IN TRAVEL AND GAMBLING POP-UP ADVERTISEMENTS

Paper presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Master of Science Degree in

Communication & Media Technologies

Elizabeth Karras

Department of Communication

Rochester Institute of Technology

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The members of the committee approve the thesis of Elizabeth Karras presented on October 28, 2005.

Bruce Austin

Bruce Austin

Thesis Advisor/Department Chair

Grant Cos

Grant Cos

Thesis Advisor

Eugene Fram

Eugene Fram

Thesis Advisor

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Table of Contents

I.	Abstract	4
II.	Introduction	
	a. Anti-Pop-Up Sentiment	5-6
	b. Ad-Blocking Software	6-7
	c. Effectiveness of Pop-Up Advertisements	7-8
	d. Lessening the Annoyance Factor	8-9
	e. The Future of Pop-Up Advertisements	9-10
III.	Research Question	10-11
IV.	Rationale	11-12
V.	Literature Review	
	a. Internet Advertising	12-14
	b. Persuasive Advertising Appeals	15-19
	c. Experiential Consumption	19-20
VI.	Method	21-22
VII.	Results	22-32
VIII.	Discussion	32-34
IX.	Conclusion	34-36

AN INVESTIGATION OF VERBAL VERSUS VISUAL PERSUASIVE ELEMENTS IN TRAVEL AND GAMBLING POP-UP ADVERTISEMENTS

Elizabeth Karras
Communication and Media Technologies
Rudy Pugliese
Master of Science
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Although pop-up advertisements generate ill will, these ads, have an above average click-through rate compared to other forms of Internet advertising such as the banner ad, illustrating the significance this form has in modern day advertising. Travel and gambling ads are analyzed in the following study. Previous literature includes studies on factors that play an integral role in the success or failure of an online advertisement, the effectiveness of internet marketing on internet users, persuasive appeals used in advertising, and experiential consumption. Research on pop-up advertisements has focused primarily on tactics, their effects on the consumer, and their failures and successes. An analysis of visual and verbal persuasive devices was performed.

Advertising surrounds us in many different forms. One shape modern advertising takes is the pop-up advertisement on the Internet. Pop-ups are ads that appear on an Internet user's computer while the user is surfing the web. These ads are received by the user in exchange for content on the website. With newer pop-up advertisements, advertisers can measure virtually every impression, every click, and every sale (and aborted sale); although they do not necessarily account for consumers who view an item on the web and purchase it in the store. Even though pop-ups generate ill will, these ads have an above average click-through rate as compared to other forms of Internet advertising such as the banner ad.

If successful, the few seconds that a pop-up ad is flashed would persuade the viewer to follow its instructions whether it is to click-through to the website, enter a contest, make a purchase, etc. "In the past, ads were focused on click-through rates, but today functionality has become the priority as it serves to enhance these click-through rates" (D'Alise, 2001, para.12). Although online ads account for a small percentage of media spots, more companies are taking advantage of the low production costs and the ability to quickly develop a range of ads aimed at specific groups.

First, the social context in which pop-up advertisements are situated in will be presented and discussed to provide an understanding of the importance of researching this type of advertising.

Anti-Pop-Up Sentiment

Web surfers themselves have created "anti-pop-up" groups that combat the use of the pop-up ad on websites. These groups have created their own anti-pop-up portals and membership groups such as "Pop-Ups Must Die." The "Pop-Ups Must Die" site in particular

offers ways to eliminate pop-up ads, give alternatives to pop-ups, and also offers an opportunity to join a club of anti-pop-up surfers.

Advertisers appear to be more concerned with what middlemen, such as Internet Service Providers and software makers, might do on the consumer's behalf. For example, service providers such as Google announced to their customers that pop-up ads of any kind are not allowed on their website. AOL also announced their decision to install a pop-up blocking option on their browser for all users of its AOL Internet service, following up on its decision to ban third-party pop-up ads in October 2003 with its much-hyped launch of AOL 8.0 (Morrissey, 2003, para.12). Other companies such as iVillage and EarthLink are quickly joining companies like AOL and Google and are adding pop-up blocking options to their sites.

Ad-Blocking Software

Following the Internet Service Providers' lead, everyday users are investing in ad-blocking software so that their web experience will be easier. Sullivan (2003) argued that web users are tired of pop-ups and other intrusive forms of online advertising and are increasingly using software to block ads (p. 12). Pop-up blockers are now ubiquitous and there is a certain buzz around tools that block ads easily and efficiently. An anti-advertising sentiment is building and these online ads play a large role in it. "Commercial ad-blocking software that zaps pop-ups indicates there are consumers whose hatred of pop-ups runs so deep they're willing to pay good money to retaliate" (Wegert, 2002, para.3).

Despite the backlash on pop-ups, marketers and advertisers do not necessarily find pop-up blocking software as a threat. Melissa Gluck, an analyst for Jupiter Communications, notes that these "killer" applications are nothing for advertisers to worry about. She states,

"Ad-blocking software has been around for years, getting consumers to download software is difficult enough without a serious value proposition" (Wegert, 2002, para.4).

Effectiveness of Pop-Up Advertisements

Pop-up ads also offer benefits to companies who use them. Besides the fact that there is a high click-through rate, as well as brand recognition and site awareness, pop-ups also can hold a lot more than the traditional Internet banner ad and can take a much more creative approach. Consumer response to these visual-rich ads has been significant according to Allie Shaw, Vice President of worldwide marketing for the New York-based Unicast, an Internet advertising solution provider (D'Alise, 2001, para.4). Another benefit to advertisers pop-ups have is the fact that it can function as its own "mini" website. This means the surfer does not have to leave the website they were looking at to view the pop-up. In some incidences, a transaction can occur in the pop-up window for things such as items for sale, making pop-up advertising the best way to go due to its quickness and ease.

These ads may be perceived as an annoyance but pop-ups have been confirmed to be more than just that. Not surprisingly, Jackson (2001) found that pop-up ads are 50% more likely to be noticed than banner ads (para.3). Companies continue to invest in pop-up ads regardless of the claims made by consumers that it can damage their reputation. Between January and July 2002, companies bought 11.3 billion pop-up ad impressions (Regan, 2002, para.2).

Despite a plethora of facts and information claiming that pop-up ads are ineffective as well as a host of tools for suppressing ads and the technical infrastructure that supports them, these ads still have somewhat of an influence on consumers, and quite possibly more than the consumer believes. As previously stated, some web users consider these ads annoying and

unnecessary yet in a recent study done by Dynamic Logic; Internet users are actually more tolerant of pop-ups than previously thought. Results of the survey showed seventy-two percent of U.S. Web users accept limited use of pop-ups, and forty-seven percent agree as many as two to six ads per hour are "appropriate" to support free content (Wegert, 2002, para.2).

With the amount of pop-up advertisements on the web and the number that are clicked closed almost seconds after appearing on the computer screen, one would think pop-ups were an inconclusive attempt to market. Yet studies show this format has staying power when used and positioned correctly. Pop-ups are most successful for site marketing but not as well for general advertising (Calishain, 2003, p.29). Companies that use these ads tend to be "niche" sites that are not necessarily looking for brand awareness but want to build traffic to their sites. Large companies are even jumping on the "pop-up" bandwagon. "According to a report by AdRelevance (a subsidiary of Media Metrix) big-name companies such as Amazon.com have more than 300 unique online ads each, and a third of Internet advertisers' surveyed use 5 or more" (George, Blickstein, 2000, p.17). Marketing professor David Reibstein makes the claim that pop-up ads are more effective when they relate to the site the viewer is viewing ("Inc.com," 2003, para.5). Simply put, a company will not reach different segments with the same ad. For example, a company like Amazon.com can mold their ads to fit a particular segment. They can create different ads that cater to different consumers who may like mystery novels, or rock CDs, or horror movie DVDs.

Lessening the "Annoyance Factor"

The actual construction and components of a pop-up ad can increase its efficacy as a form of advertising. First the pop-up must attempt to side step the "annoyance factor."

Regardless of how much the pop-up can be debated about, it still is some form of irritation to a surfer. There are three steps that can be taken to avoid this. First, target pop-ups as carefully as possible, because pop-ups don't work for every type of surfer. Second, avoid repeated pop-ups in the same visit. Third, be sure the pop-up is either very informative or very entertaining, since either of these attributes will help the ad seem less annoying (Beard, 2001, para.4).

As discussed above, the trick is to minimize the "annoying" aspects" of pop-ups "through appropriate targeting and messaging," says Sarah Fay, president of Boston-based Internet advertising agency Carat Interactive. "They are obviously more intrusive - the consumer cannot not notice them, since he or she has to click them closed to make them go away. This is good for advertisers if a relevant message is delivered to a well-targeted audience, but it's very bad if the message is in no way interesting to the consumer" (Rosenbaum, 2002, para.2).

The Future of Pop-Up Advertisements

Like some web users, market analysts find pop-up ads to be a "marketing fad" that will either fade or evolve with time. "Many analysts see pop-up ads as part of a transition from staid banner advertising to more dynamic -- but less annoying -- online ad formats" (Regan, 2002, para.4). Initial formats of online advertising such as banner ads created a vacuum for innovative online advertising designers to reinvent the wheel. These designers have created visually-rich media including interstitial or superstitial ads (full-length TV commercials for the Internet), 3D portals (gateways to virtual cities to conduct e-business), and streaming-media ads (D'Alise, 2001, para. 3).

The future of pop-up advertisements looks assuring and full of possibilities. Even its harshest critics agree that pop-ups, with a bit of tinkering can be a useful tool. Online advertisements are part of the growing web marketing strategies, which will make it harder for people to simply ignore ads. The technology is already in our homes thanks to cheap, powerful PCs and cheap, fast broadband. Three new methods for online advertising described by D'Alise (2001) include Veon Studio, a design tool that lets users create, design, and manage a visual-rich media ad; environmental ad which combines television and the Internet by allowing the viewer to access the company's website via the television commercial; and value-added personalization in which the user's Internet history is used to personalize pop-ups and other advertisements (para. 19). Sometime in the near future, there may be guidelines set in place by the Internet Advertising Bureau (IAB) for pop-ups, but there is no chance of pop-ups disappearing anytime soon. They have been proven successful and many companies use them and buy them for their businesses. Doug MacFarland, of Advertising.com, spoke to the IAB at their recent forum and defended the use of pop-up ads. McFarland claimed that, "You continue to do it because they are effective ad units for some advertisers," he said, comparing the unit to business reply cards (BRCs) in magazines" (Morrissey, 2003, para.5). Denise Garcia of the GartnerG2 Company stated that "Eventually, Internet ads will look a lot more like television ads, and people will know what to expect when they go online"(Regan, 2002, para.5).

Next, the research question central to the study will be presented.

Research Questions

The question addressed by the study reported here is:

- What differences are there in the visual and verbal persuasive devices in travel and gambling pop-up advertisements?

Rationale

The further understanding of pop-up advertisements and their persuasive devices is important to the scholarly community. As illustrated above, there exists a variety of information on online advertising and its successes and failures. Previous literature has examined persuasive appeals in goods and services advertising but not online. The current study will look at persuasive devices in service (specifically gambling and travel ads) advertising online in the form of a pop-up ad, hence seeking to “fill the gap” in research on pop-up Internet advertising and differences that exist in persuasive tools used.

The results of this project also benefit society. Pop-up advertisements are prevalent in many people’s lives since the use of the Internet has skyrocketed and the exposure to Internet advertising is high. According to Komperda (2003), online advertising revenues soared to a peak of \$8.09 billion in 2000 and reached \$6.3 billion for 2003, before reaching a projected \$8.1 billion by 2006 (p. 42). Despite the money advertisers are willing to pay, pop-ups have been considered notoriously annoying to Internet users. The use of pop-up blocking software has increased as ISP’s and web surfers alike put up a resistance against these ads. Although a world without advertisements is far-fetched, further understanding of devices used in pop-up advertisements can help to fade the “annoyance factor” and assist in the evolution of the pop-up in Internet advertising. The progression from simple, static, and inexpensive online pop-up ads to eye-catching rich media advertisements has shown how much can change in a limited amount of time. While understanding the consumer effects and marketing implications of pop-ups is important, the value of this project is that it will seek to

find differences in the verbal and visual persuasive devices used in travel and gambling pop-up ads.

On a personal level, this research interested me because I have grown up in the age of technology, surrounded by computers. I've experienced a variety of Internet advertising and have endured the "irritation" of the pop-up advertisement. Additionally, my career in interactive online advertising has drawn my attention to this pop-up form as I work "behind the scenes" and am part of the creation process.

Literature Review

The scope of the literature analyzed in the current study consists of three broad categories of (1) Internet Advertising; (2) persuasive advertising appeals; and (3) experiential consumption.

Internet Advertising

Previous observations suggest that many marketing factors play an integral role in the success or failure of an online advertisement. Goldsmith and Lafferty (2002), report that marketing communications consists of sales, promotion, public relations, direct marketing, and advertising and are all important components of e-commerce strategies (p.318). Internet advertising, specifically, has a large role in e-commerce though its effectiveness has been questioned. Goldsmith and Lafferty (2002) observed, "Internet advertising has since been attacked on a variety of accounts as nonsensical, uninformative, unfocused, forgettable, and generally ineffective" (p.319). The lack of format and organization of the different types of Internet advertising confuses and angers the viewer. "Online advertising has been especially described as ineffective because of the low click-through rates for banner ads, its often lack

of useful information, its dullness or lack of interest, it is often offensive, and the fact that sometimes it confuses consumers” (Goldsmith, Lafferty, 2002, p.319).

In contrast, Goldsmith and Lafferty found several accounts that argue that online advertising can be successful in generating sales. An important factor that helps determine an ad’s success is “attitude-toward-the-ad” which is defined as “a pre-disposition to respond in a favorable or unfavorable manner to a particular advertising stimulus during a particular exposure occasion” (Goldsmith & Lafferty, 2002, p.319). When consumers like an advertisement about a brand, there is a greater chance of them liking the brand and is more likely to buy it. Goldsmith and Lafferty also suggested that the dislike of advertising might be slowly changing as consumers are feeling more and more entertained rather than annoyed by these ads. This study’s results show that Internet advertising (banner ads, pop-ups, etc.) received strong opposition by some consumers, advertisers, and companies alike and help to show the surrounding situation in which pop-up ads are placed. These advertisements are proven to be fairly irritating but despite that fact, they continue to be used and are shown to be successful under the right circumstances.

Evans, Wedande, Ralston, and Van’t Hul (2001) discovered that participants in their study found Internet advertisements as highly annoying (especially banner and pop-up boxes) or were immune to them and didn’t notice them any longer” (Evans, Wedande, Ralston, Van’t Hul, 2001, p.155). They also established that over 70 percent of respondents found web advertisements a distraction while surfing on the Internet. This study assists in setting up a context in which online advertisements exist in and helps to explain why online advertisements are considered a “controversial” subject with critics and Internet users alike either hating them or praising them.

Wolin and P. Korgaonkar (2003) found gender was a key variable for marketing analysis. In this study gender is defined as a binary construct: male or female, and is termed gender as opposed to sex because gender is viewed as both a biological and sociological process (p.376). Every week, 102 million adults in the United States log onto the Internet, a fairly equal amount of men and women. According to this study males believe web advertising is more enjoyable than magazine and newspaper advertising; more useful than newspaper and radio advertising; and more informative than newspaper advertising (p.379). Compared to males, females believe Web advertising is more annoying than magazine and newspaper advertising; more offensive than magazine, radio, and television advertising; more deceptive than television advertising; and more useful than television advertising (p.379).

Many companies are turning to the Internet to advertise their product or service. Korgaonkar and Wolin (2002), examined the Internet user and the effectiveness of Internet advertising. The results of their study indicate that heavy users of the Internet believe advertising on the Web to be honest and believable, entertaining and enjoyable, informative and helpful (Korgaonkar, Wolin, 2002, p.197). Medium users' attitudes towards marketing on the Internet are positive but less so than heavy users. Korgaonkar and Wolin also found that light users' attitudes towards Web advertising are least favorable (p.197). This study offers suggestions to marketers such as considering livelier and less standardized designs for advertisements for heavier users. When designing ads for lighter users, care should be taken to design honest, clear, and enjoyable ads. This information can be applied to the current study because it breaks down Internet users into groups and suggests different persuasive tactics for targeting them. Certain aesthetic factors can be altered to make the advertisement less "annoying" and more of a motivator to interact with the ad.

Persuasive Advertising Appeals

Scott (1994) challenges past consumer research dealing with advertising images with the underlying assumption that pictures are reflections of reality. Scott presents an alternative view in which visuals are a convention-based symbolic system. Pictures may be cognitively processed rather than absorbed automatically. Scott argues that current conceptualizations of advertising images are disproportionate with what ads are really like, and that many images are complex figurative arguments. “Advertising images can be understood as a discursive form, like writing, capable of subtle nuances in communication or, like numbers, capable of facilitating abstraction and analysis” (Scott, 1994, pg. 264).

Scott’s study explains the process that can be involved in analyzing a visual, similar to the process involved in analyzing text or numbers and helps justify why the content codebook is similar for both verbal and visual persuasive devices in the current study.

Albers-Miller and Stafford (1999) explored differences in advertising appeal usage between goods and services across four different countries. More specifically, they investigated the proposition that the use of rational and emotional appeals will depend on both the product type advertised and the country in which the advertisement ran. Albers-Miller and Stafford related the rational appeal to the audience’s self-interest by showing product benefits and in contrast, emotional appeals are grounded in the emotional, experiential side of consumption (p.44). Across countries, rational appeals seem to be used more readily for goods, as compared to services. For emotional appeals, there was a significant effect for country but not for product type. This finding suggests that across cultures, cognition changes little, while emotions change considerably (Albers-Miller, & Stafford, 1999, p.52).

This research done by Albers-Miller and Stafford provides examples of persuasive appeals used in advertising therefore providing a guide in the creation of the appeals in the current study's codebook.

Fugate (1998) examined the humor appeal used in the promotion of U.S. goods and services. He found that humorous advertising of services appears to be an effective promotional technique. Although effective, Fugate felt there were several disadvantages to using the humor appeal in advertising. First, humor focuses the consumer's attention on the content of the advertisement rather than the benefits of the product - the ad becomes a comedy sketch rather than an exercise in communications. Second, humor can upset viewers- just because one person finds it funny doesn't mean everybody reading, watching or listening will. Third, humor can undermine the brand.

On the other hand, Fugate also found that humor grabs attention and shows we're human - we can laugh and smile with the rest of humanity, and makes people like the company and by extension improves their brand image. These results show that an appeal in an advertisement can be successful when used properly, but detrimental when used incorrectly.

In current advertising practice it's rare to find magazines ads that lead off with a direct verbal claim. "Instead of straightforward claims that a brand possesses some attribute or delivers some benefit, one encounters pictures of dress shirts stacked in the freezer (Cheer), detergent bottles wearing miner's helmets (Purex), or measuring cups full of blue sky (Tide) (McQuarrie, Phillips, 2005, p.7). McQuarrie and Phillips (2005) found that when consumers are presented indirect metaphorical claims, they become more receptive to multiple positive inferences about the advertised brand. In addition, when the indirect

metaphorical claim takes the form of a picture, consumers are more likely to spontaneously generate such positive inferences at the time of ad exposure.

This trend away from direct claims has been in place for many years, decades even. McQuarrie and Phillip (2005) reported the incidences of figurative pictures in ads approximately doubled during the years 1954-1999 and that during the course of the 20th century, pictures came to occupy an ever-increasing portion of magazine ads, even as the number of words steadily decreased (p.7-8). They rationalized for this picture-use increase by stating that consumers of magazine advertising are busy and distracted, with little capacity to process advertising messages.

Indirect claims elicit benefits for which no explicit statements have been made. Rather consumers are invited to construct multilayered meanings that are not actually given in the text. Metaphors represent a type of indirect claim because they make claims in a figurative way. The ad's message is not outright stated but implied. Consumers are able to realize an advertiser has invited them to elaborate on how an incongruity can be solved, not that the ad is an incomprehensible error.

Several researchers contend that the openness or ambiguity of pictures in advertising is what makes them persuasive. This study found that unframed pictures were found to be less persuasive than words or words combined with pictures. It has even been suggested that advertisers turn to pictures when they don't want to take responsibility for their advertising messages (McQuarrie, Phillips, 2005, p. 9).

The findings showed that participants that viewed other forms of metaphors either verbal or anchored visuals appeared to generate additional inferences only on reflection when prompted.

These findings relate to the current study by illustrating how visuals are more powerful in receiving an immediate response and help to justify the verbal and visual persuasive devices created for the content codebook.

Advertisers use a variety of attention-getting tactics to create ads that gain attention and increase processing. Most authors agree that some basic level of processing attention is necessary for persuasion to occur from exposure to an advertisement. “Moreover, increased processing attention is known to lead to greater information processing and more positive attitudes” (Campbell, 1995, p. 226). Advertisers must use these attention-getting tactics efficiently. Contrary to the belief that any attention increase is desirable, there is evidence that there can be negative outcomes associated with increases in processing attention (Campbell, 1995, p. 226). For instance, an increase in processing attention can result in counter-arguing and consumers can be led to second-guess the advertiser. Some believe that advertisers use advertising tactics inappropriately to try and manipulate consumers. “Evidence suggests that younger Americans consumers (Generation X) are more cynical and distrusting of advertising manipulation than earlier generations (Campbell, 1995, p. 226).

One attention-getting tactic explored by Campbell is to delay brand (and usually product category) identification until the end of the ad. This type of ad is also known as the “mystery ad” with a goal to increase processing attention by creating suspense. Another tactic examined by Campbell is borrowed interest appeal. With this tactic the advertiser includes something in an ad that is believed to be inherently involving and arousing to the target audience. The use of cute puppies, beautiful women, and important themes (relationship between a mother and her child) are all examples of the borrowed interest tactic.

The degree to which these borrowed interests fit can influence the processing attention given to the ad.

Campbell found that if attention-getting tactics create imbalance among consumer's perceptions of personal and advertiser's investments to and benefits from the advertisement, they might elicit inferences of manipulative intent. It was also found that such inferences of manipulative intent could lower the persuasiveness of the ad.

Campbell (1995) discovered that a consumer's inferences of manipulative intent are related to measures of personal benefits, personal investments, advertiser's investments, and that these variables mediate the relationship between the attention-getting tactics and inferences of manipulative intent. For the purpose of this study, inferences of manipulative intent are found to lower advertising persuasion as measured by ad attitudes, brand attitudes, and purchase intentions (Campbell, 1995, p. 225).

Campbell's study assists in explaining some of the persuasive tactics used in the pop-up advertisements analyzed in the current study. This study also examined the importance of earning the consumer's trust, which is also an important element in advertising.

Experiential Consumption

Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) studied consumer behavior involving a steady flow of fantasies, feelings, and fun encompassed by what they termed as an "experiential view." The experiential perspective explores the symbolic meanings of more subjective characteristics like cheerfulness, sociability, and elegance (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982, p.134).

Many nonverbal cues are projected by a product that must be seen, heard, tasted, felt, or smelled to be appreciated properly (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982, p.134). In

consumption situations like watching a movie or eating at a restaurant, several sensory channels operate simultaneously. This type of consumption seeks fun, amusement, fantasy, sensory simulation, and enjoyment.

Holbrook and Hirschman also found that there were contrasts in experiential consumption among religions and nationalities in the types of entertainment preferred, hedonic motives for engaging in leisure activities, and resulting levels of enthusiasm expressed. The experiential perspective seems to focus on cognitive processes that are more subconscious and private in nature (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982, p. 136).

One's purchase decision is obviously only a small component in the string of events involved in the overall consumption experience. The argument Holbrook and Hirschman pose throughout is that although satisfaction constitutes an important experiential component, the stream of associations that occur during consumption may be equally important experiential aspect of consumer behavior. Holbrook and Hirschman's work help to explain the selection of the genre of pop-up advertisements used in the current study. Both travel and gambling ads are essentially selling an experience to a consumer similar to eating in a restaurant or going to the movie theater.

There has been a substantial amount of market and consumer research on Internet advertising as well as studies on the appeals used in advertising. While previous literature examines persuasive devices in advertising, it does not examine their existence online in the pop-up advertisement. The current study's research will explore the differences in verbal and visual persuasive devices used in travel and gambling pop-up ads.

Method

An empirical study explored the differences between visual and verbal persuasive elements in gambling and travel pop-up advertisements. Past research generally focused on Internet advertising, persuasive appeals, and experiential consumption. The current study examined visual and verbal persuasive devices of gambling and travel pop-up advertisements.

Selection of Advertisements

The sample was selected based on its convenience to the researcher. The researcher found the sample of pop-up advertisements for the study by searching travel and gambling websites and receiving and printing out in color on a quality printer, the respective sites pop-up advertisements.

Each advertisement chosen was selected from a different website or company in order to reduce the effect of brand-specific advertising. The final sample consisted of ten gambling advertisements and ten travel advertisements, totaling twenty advertisements.

Analysis

A content codebook guided the analysis of both the gambling and travel pop-up advertisements (Appendix B, Appendix C). The primary investigator carefully considered different dimensions and created a checklist known as the content codebook. There were three main steps in the procedure. The first step involved the selection of the pop-up advertisements. The second step involved the development of a comprehensive series of categories of visual and verbal persuasive elements and devices. There are two categories, verbal and visual; eleven factors for the verbal category; thirteen factors for the visual category. Each of the twenty advertisements were examined and sorted into gambling and

travel categories. The third step involved coding each advertisement the content codebook procedures (Appendix A).

Procedure for Analysis

All twenty advertisements were coded once by the primary investigator and then were placed aside for one week. After this week had passed, the primary investigator re-coded the same twenty advertisements to check if the results were the same.

The coder reviewed the advertisements and marked on a corresponding checklist sheet that is stapled to the advertisement, what visual/verbal persuasive elements existed by referring to the content codebook.

When both content analyses were completed, the responses on both checklists for verbal and visual persuasive devices were compared. If differences existed for a response, the advertisement was re-coded until a repetitive response was achieved (same response twice) for the item or category to help with the accuracy.

Results

Overview

After twenty advertisements were analyzed and coded by the primary investigator, qualitative results were found and reported below. The advertisements used were found from popular gambling and travel websites such as newyorkcasino.com and expedia.com, respectively. The purpose of this investigation was to explore the differences that exist between visual and verbal persuasive devices in travel and gambling pop-up advertisements. In addition, this investigation illustrates themes that occurred more often than not throughout the pop-up advertisements. As a reminder, ten gambling pop-up advertisements and ten travel

pop-up advertisements were reviewed. Advertisements were coded as more than one factor in a category if found fit.

Qualitative Analysis

The research question answered by the qualitative analysis is: “What differences are there in the visual and verbal persuasive devices in travel and gambling pop-up advertisements?” This analysis is organized by persuasive verbal and visual elements in both gambling and travel pop-up advertisements.

Persuasive Verbal Elements in the Pop-Up Advertisements

First, the investigator considered the persuasive verbal elements in both travel and gambling advertisements. The following qualitative data discovered that text (coded as expressions in the content codebook) in gambling pop-ups was more often in color than in black. Actually, in all gambling advertisements except one, the verbal elements were in color. The text in gambling advertisement number seven consisted of only seven words all in a simple black text (see Exhibit A). Compared to other gambling advertisements like ad number one, which has bright gold and red-colored text, ad number seven appears primitive and similar to the “out-of-date” banner ad.

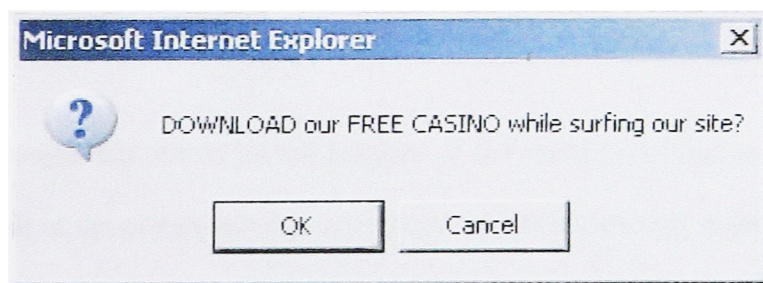


Exhibit A

Similarly, the text in travel pop-up ads was also more often in color than in black. All of the travel ads used colored text except in one instance. The text in travel advertisement

number nine is in black but unlike in the gambling ad discussed above, it is accompanied with a scenic colored image.

Based on the analysis, the text is more often in color than in black in both gambling and travel pop-ups. This trend follows the new wave of Internet advertising with eye-catching media rich ads discussed previously in the study (“future of pop-up advertisements” section).

In both gambling and travel advertisements text was more often used than numbers. Not surprisingly, all advertisements possessed words, while six travel ads and eight gambling ads possessed numbers. Travel and gambling ads both use numbers and words to offer a reward. In most of the gambling advertisements, numbers were used to support the text and express a bonus or reward amount (Exhibit B). Similarly, travel ads used numbers as part of the expression and offered discounts to the viewer (Exhibit C).



Exhibit B



Exhibit C

The arrangement of text for the purpose of this study is defined as the arrangement in which the words in the advertisements are placed within the ad. For instance, in gambling advertisement number four, the text is symmetrical and balanced throughout the ad. Travel pop-up number six is asymmetrical with text dominantly on the right side of the ad. The text in gambling ads was predominately symmetrical. Unlike gambling ads, the text in travel ads was equally asymmetrical and symmetrical.

An area where verbal elements of gambling and travel advertisements differ significantly is their interactivity. The text in travel pop-ups were most often still with no motion or request of action. The text in gambling ads frequently requested a user to “click-through” to a website. Most gambling ads that popped-up on the investigator’s screen desired the user to continue on to a gaming website. Travel ads did offer rewards of discounts, but did not necessarily request a user to follow through to another site immediately. This may be because travel accommodations are not necessarily made on a spur of the moment “click through” the way a game can be played.

As discussed in the review of literature, some advertisers delay brand recognition in the advertisement as an attention-getting tactic. Following this study, company identification was delayed in both gambling and travel ads (for the nature of these advertisements, see below in Persuasive Visual Elements in the Pop-Up Advertisements). The mystery of the ad may prompt a user to investigate the ad further rather than immediately get “annoyed” and close the window.

Literal verbal messages were more often used than figurative messages in gambling and travel ads. For example, travel advertisement number one uses a literal message of “Book early and save!” This particular ad may be trying to catch a “thrifty” shopper’s eye by showing a short and “to the point” message.

As a reminder, the study done by McQuarrie and Phillip (2005) examined the concepts of direct and indirect claims. They found a theme of advertisements straying away from the use of conventional verbal claims towards a more “image-heavy” approach. Results from the current study showed that most often verbal persuasive devices in both gambling and travel advertisements used both words and pictures to create a claim.

A reward was most often offered in both gambling and travel advertisements. The author of the current study defines reward as when the text in the advertisement is offering the viewer a reward or prize. Most often ads in both travel and gambling were coded as having a “reward argument.” For example, gambling ad number nine offers a reward of money by stating “Buy \$50, get \$200 free!” Similarly, travel ad number three offers a reward of “money back” or a “discount” by stating “Get up to \$100 off last minute deals.”

The verbal persuasive category of “appeal” is defined by the investigator for the purpose of this study as what the advertisement is attempting to “pull” from the viewer. For example, in travel advertisement number nine the text “appeals” to a success story by asking a user to view the “Fiji Honeymooner’s Album” filled with happy couples of the past who have used the site to book their honeymoon. In gambling advertisement number seven the text appeals to both “downloading” and “price” by stating, “Download our free casino while surfing our site.” The two appeals found most often in verbal persuasive devices in gambling ads were download and click-through. Most commonly the “download” appeal asked users to download a casino game. These results were not surprising to the investigator because they coincide with the above findings of the current study such as the interactivity component, which found “click-through” to be the most common “action” in gambling pop-ups. In travel ads, the top two persuasive devices used in the text were purchase and price.

The placement of text was not only analyzed on whether it was symmetrical or not but also whether it was dominant, subordinate, or equal with the images in the ads. The results differed between gambling and travel advertisements. In gambling pop-ups the text

was most often in the foreground and more dominate than the images (Exhibit D). In travel pop-ups the text and images were most often equal throughout the ad (Exhibit E).



Exhibit D



Exhibit E

The investigator for the purpose of the current study defined the verbal persuasive device of “involvement” as the amount of comprehension and attention needed to process the text. In both gambling and travel ads, the text was more often high involvement than low involvement showing that text in the ads reviewed require a higher level of attention and comprehension to read and understand. A viewer may have to take a few seconds or longer to examine the text and process it.

Persuasive Visual Elements in the Pop-Up Advertisements

Second, the investigator considered the persuasive visual elements in both travel and gambling advertisements. The visual persuasive devices used in gambling and travel advertisements were more often in color than in black and white. Gambling advertisement number one possessed eight different colors within the visual alone while travel advertisement number one had the highest number between both gambling and travel ads with fourteen different colors used in the image alone. Color has widely been used in advertising to influence emotional behavior. According to a study done by Lee and Barnes (1990) on magazine advertisements, advertisers are not using color to improve advertising

response among target consumers (p. 29). With the creation of the Internet, production costs and development for a color advertisement are not significant which may account for the differences in the results of both studies.

Travel advertisements used realistic imagery and pictures more often than animated and unrealistic images. In every travel advertisement but one, realistic images were used. In travel advertisement number five animated pictures were used to visually describe what the text was saying (Exhibit F).



Exhibit F

Gambling pop-ups on the other hand used both realistic and unrealistic imagery equally throughout the ads in the current study. Gambling advertisement number four has animated visuals that resemble a slot machine. Gambling ad number ten uses real images of people holding a winning check. A “dream-like” sequence seems to be common throughout gambling ads. They sell an experience that consumers engage in to take a chance and win a “dream” prize. Several features of gambling also follow this “dream-like” or “unreal” sequence such as the colors, noise, design of machines, etc. This allows the advertiser to use more animated and less realistic images.

The most common shape that gambling and travel pop-up advertisements took was rectangular.

The arrangement of the imagery in travel ads was more often asymmetrical than symmetrical. In travel advertisement two, images of European destinations were abstractly placed on the pop-up in junction with verbal elements. In gambling advertisements the visual elements were equally asymmetrical and symmetrical. For instance, in gambling

advertisement number one the images of people enjoying themselves in a casino bar are symmetrical with two people on each side of the advertisement. In gambling advertisement number two the images are not symmetrical with two dice on the right side of the ad and no image on the left side.

Still visuals were used for both gambling and travel pop-ups. Unlike the verbal elements, the actual images did not ask a user to interact with the ad. For example, gambling advertisement number six has images of dice, cards, and a roulette table but none blatantly prompt a user to action. Rather, they interest a user and perhaps symbolize what a consumer may like most about a casino or gambling. Similarly, travel advertisement number six possesses an image of people riding a bike on the beach but does not prompt the user to do anything. The images seem to support the text and overall message rather than stand on their own.

Recognition of the company was delayed most often in both gambling and travel advertisements. In gambling advertisement number two (Exhibit G), there is no recognizable logo or image synonymous with a brand. Similar to the verbal elements, visual elements played on the appeal of suspense and withheld the company/brand name. Although not often used, Exhibit H shows a pop-up with the immediate company recognition. A consumer can see the shape of “Mickey Mouse’s head” as well as images of the castle and people dressed as Disney characters.

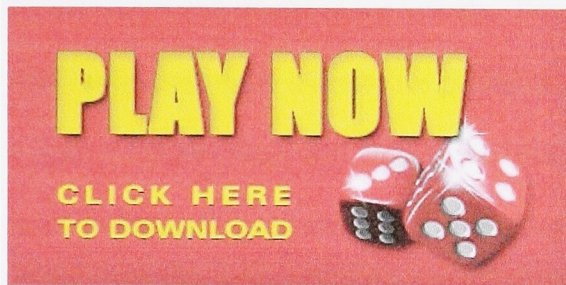


Exhibit G



Exhibit H

In both gambling and travel visual elements, literal messages were used more often than figurative messages. In fact, all the advertisements in the study used literal visual devices. Reasoning for this may be that in order to “sell” an experience like a vacation or to convince a user to give a credit card number online, the ad must appear as credible as possible.

Travel images offered an intrinsic value to the viewer in most cases. For instance, in travel advertisement number eight the image of people lounging in two beach chairs on a deserted beach offers a user with a hectic workweek an intrinsic value of the thought of being able to turn off their cell phone and not check email from this location. Aside from personal, gambling ads also offered a reward. Gambling advertisement number three has images of thousands of dollars illustrating a potential cash reward or winning.

Not surprisingly the most common appeal used in travel advertisements was enjoyment. Enjoyment was defined for the current study as when the image in the ad illustrates an opportunity for the user to enjoy themselves away from the norm of the day-to-day grind of work, kids, etc. Travel advertisement number ten shows a couple enjoying themselves and taking pictures at a castle. Most commonly, people “get away” to take time to relax and enjoy themselves. Gambling ads on the other hand, most often appealed to power/status and image in the visuals. Power/status is defined for the purpose of the current study as appealing to a desire for power or status in society. Image appeal is defined as how a person thinks others will view them. For example, gambling advertisement number nine has a picture of a gold and diamond encrusted watch, which to some, signifies wealth and power. Gambling advertisement number eight has an animated picture of a man with sunglasses looking stereotypically “cool” which appeals to a person’s image.

Images in travel ads were most often equal in emphasis and dominance with the text. Unlike travel ads, the images in gambling pop-ups were frequently placed in the background of the text.

Visual persuasive devices in gambling and travel advertisements were analyzed and coded as low-involvement. These visuals required less attention and thought to process than the verbal elements. A reason for this may be that travel and gambling advertisements are simple and precise. For example travel advertisement number one shows people enjoying themselves at Disney World. The picture does not require much of a thought-process because what is happening in the image is easy to understand. Gambling advertisement number four shows an animated image of a slot machine. This image, like the travel advertisement, is recognizable immediately and does not require a deep understanding. Pop-

ups only have a limited time to affect the viewer, making complex images inefficient. The results reported above will be discussed further in the following section.

Discussion

As previously discussed in the social context section, pop-up advertisements are cheap and innovative with relatively low production costs. Advertisers have the opportunity to reach an innumerable amount of people with the Internet virtually in every home, office, and even back pocket with the invention of handheld devices. Hence, the design and persuasiveness of the ad is critical. As shown throughout the persuasive appeals section in the literature review, different appeals were used for different types of service and good advertisements. In looking at the results reported above, different visual and verbal persuasive appeals were used between travel and gambling pop-ups. For instance, gambling ads frequently used download and click-through verbal appeals while travel ads most often used purchase and price. Appeals even differed between verbal and visual devices with travel ads most often using the enjoyment visual appeal and gambling advertisements most often using power/status and image visual appeals. Similar to results found in Campbell (1995) tactics such as delaying brand was commonly used making the pop-up more of a “mystery” in an attempt to pique interest and persuade a user to pay attention to the ad. The results above also reported that direct verbal claims were rare and that most frequently both text and images were used to present a claim. These results are comparable to the findings by McQuarrie and Phillips (2005) discussed in the literature review.

A user may be experientially consuming online when they receive these pop-up ads on their screens. This all depends on the reasons they have for being online. Sánchez-Franco and Roldán (2005) supported the established idea that there are two types of online users, the

experiential user and the goal-directed user. An experiential user shows ritualized orientations exploring the web in their daily quest for the latest interesting sites, while a goal-directed user utilizes the web for its informational value and purchase utility – such as directly searching for information to complete a task or to reduce purchase uncertainty (Sánchez-Franco & Roldán, 2005, para.15).

With this being said, travel and gambling pop-up advertisements reviewed in the current study were most often designed to meet the needs of experiential users. Results showed that gambling pop-ups frequently asked a user to click-through and most commonly used download and click-through appeals alluring to the experiential user's interest in exploring exciting websites. Both gambling and travel pop-ups used colored imagery and text appealing to the experiential user's involvement in an activity for the non-cognitive responses it could provide rather than for utilitarian purposes. Similarly, travel advertisements most often appealed to enjoyment, while gambling ads frequently appealed to power/status and image stirring a feeling of pleasure and enthusiasm. This satisfies the experiential users need to be more impulsive, exploratory, and playful.

Sweeney (2004) established that a website does indeed offer a service and that all organizations with a website, whether selling goods or services, or merely providing information, offer a service through that website. Travel and gambling pop-ups provide a service to the user. In contrast to selling consumer goods, services are distinguishable by unique characteristics because they are intangible and have intrinsic value resulting from a process or performance (Kanso, Kitchen, 2004, p. 202). Gambling and travel pop-ups provide a service that ultimately leads to the consumer purchasing an experience. For

instance, a consumer purchases a ticket on a cruise not because of the tangible ticket, but rather for the experience on the boat and the destinations it visits.

Are advertisers acting socially sensitive when it comes to pop-ups?

Gambling ads fall into the category of controversial or socially sensitive advertising. These ads are prone to offending different groups of people. “Advertisements for gambling and alcohol, or those that have potentially racist or sexist images, may arouse feelings of offence that can have a negative effect on the campaign, or the brand name in general” (Waller, Fam, Erdogan, 2005, p.11). Advertisers are deliberately using these “hard-to-ignore” tactics to gain attention. This prompts the investigator to ask the question why advertisers would use such an “in-your-face” and abrasive form of advertising for gambling sites if their content can be considered offensive? This puts the advertisers in a situation of needing to consider a variety of cultures when creating ads. “Countries located in the same regions do not have similar views regarding what offends them when it comes to advertising certain products” (Waller, Fam, Erdogan, 2005, p.10). Advertisers take cultural differences and make an effort to create images real people will imitate. Due to the nature of gambling and travel exchanges culture is very important. Kanso and Kitchen (2004) found that culture plays a greater role in services than in merchandise trade as consumers tend to see service through their own cultural lenses” (p.206). Depending on the experiences and perceptions of each group, the ad may encounter resistance or on the “flip-side” may become “catchy.” Travel pop-ups, although not deemed controversial, must be sensitive as well. Several of the ads and all of the sites the ads originated from included international travel.

Conclusion

The current study sought to find what differences existed between verbal and visual persuasive devices in gambling and travel Internet pop-up advertisements. An analysis was performed on twenty pop-up ads: ten gambling and ten travel to answer the research question stated previously in the study. Previous literature revealed that there has been a substantial amount of market and consumer research on Internet advertisements and its successes and failures as well as research on different types of appeals used in advertising. The current study sought to “fill the gap” in pop-up Internet advertising and the use of persuasive appeals by examining the differences in persuasive verbal and visual devices used in travel and gambling ads.

The current study’s results are limited to gambling and travel advertisements chosen by the author. They are not a sample of the entire population of pop-up advertisements on the Internet. It will provide a representative of the millions of advertisements “popping up” on the World Wide Web. Another limitation is that the criteria by which these advertisements have been coded are deemed “acceptable” by the author for this study and may not necessarily apply to all of the advertisements on the Internet. The codebook for the current study may be limited to gambling and travel ads and may not extend to other types of pop-ups. In addition, the author was solely responsible for coding the advertisements. The primary investigator did not use another person to code the advertisements, which may leave certain categories not coded as reliably as they would be with two different people looking at the advertisements.

Further research related to the current study could include a topic such as expanding on the idea discussed by Holbrook and Hirschman of experiential consumption and explore

the differences in how experiential and goal-directed users “experience” pop-ups. Also the examination of gambling and travel pop-up advertisements across cultures and countries with either the above suggested method or another form of content analysis would extend the current study. Similarly, one could take a look at standardized versus localized advertising methods amongst pop-up advertisements. Lastly, another topic that could further the current study is the exploration of travel and gambling advertisements in other mediums (i.e. magazines) using the above-suggested method or another form of content analysis.

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Appendix A:

Content Coding Procedures

Purpose:

This study is for a Communication and Media Technologies Master's thesis project, which is exploring the differences between verbal and visual persuasive devices in gambling and travel pop-up advertisements. Please take the time to code the advertisements using the content codebook carefully in order to help with the accuracy of the thesis.

Instructions:

Take the pop-up advertisement clearly labeled with its genre (gambling or travel), number (one through ten), and date the analysis was performed, with a corresponding checklist sheet (labeled the same as the ad with genre, number, and date). Staple the advertisement and the checklist together so that nothing is misplaced.

First, look at the advertisement and begin coding the verbal persuasive devices by following the content codebook and examining the advertisement simultaneously. If a category is reached that may not be clearly understood, look at the provided document labeled "verbal persuasive devices explanation." This document provides a description of what the categories in the content codebook are.

Second, look at the advertisements and began coding the visual persuasive devices by following the content codebook and marking the corresponding checklist while examining the advertisement simultaneously. Staple the ad and the checklist together. Again, if you reach a category that is not clearly understood, look at the provided document labeled "visual persuasive devices explanation." This document will provide a clear description of the category in the codebook.

Once these steps are completed, place all advertisements aside for one week. After this week has passed, perform the same steps as mentioned above again on all the advertisements for both visual and verbal persuasive devices using a clean checklist with the new date of the performed analysis on it, the genre, and number again (do not use the marked-up checklist from the first round of analysis to avoid confusion). Staple this sheet to the ad and first checklist.

When both content analyses are complete, compare the responses on both checklists for verbal persuasive devices. If differences exist for a response, re-code until a repetitive response is achieved (same response twice) for the item or category to help with the accuracy.

Next, compare the responses on both content codebooks for visual persuasive devices. If differences exist for a response, re-code until a repetitive response occurs (same response twice) for the item or category to help with the accuracy.

Once the coding process is complete, report results to primary investigator.

Appendix B

Verbal Persuasive Messages

MAIN COLOR OF TEXT

Black

Color

How Many?

TEXT

How many words

How many numbers

ARRANGEMENT OF THE TEXT

Symmetrical

Asymmetrical

COMPANY LOGO/TEXT

Immediate

Delayed

VERBAL MESSAGE

Figurative

Literal

VERBAL CLAIM

Direct

Combination (Verbal & Visual)

ARGUMENT

Reward

Personal

Community

APPEAL

Click-through

Purchase

Enter Contest

Recognition

Power/Status

Image

Price

Self-Esteem

Play on Guilt

Play on Fear of Loneliness

Sex

Tradition

Download
Play Game
Success Story
Money
enjoyment

PLACEMENT OF TEXT

Background
Foreground
Equal with Visual

DOMINANCE OF TEXT

Main Focus
Background
Equal emphasis with Visual

INVOLVEMENT

High Involvement
Low Involvement

Appendix C

Visual Persuasive Elements

MAIN COLOR OF IMAGE

Black & White

Color

How Many?

ANIMATION

Unrealistic/Animated

Realistic/Real Objects Used

SHAPE

Rectangle

Circle

Triangle

Square

ARRANGEMENT of IMAGERY

Symmetrical

Asymmetrical

INTERACTIVITY

Moving

Click-through

Still

COMPANY RECOGNITION

Immediate

Delayed

VISUAL MESSAGE

Figurative

Literal

VISUAL CLAIM

Direct

Combination (Verbal & Visual)

ARGUMENT

Reward

Personal

Community

APPEAL

Click-through

Purchase
Enter Contest
Recognition
Power/Status
Image
Price
Self-Esteem
Play on Guilt
Play on Fear of Loneliness
Sex
Tradition
Download
Money
Play Game
Success Story
enjoyment

PLACEMENT OF VISUALS

Background
Foreground
Equal with Verbal

DOMINANCE OF VISUAL

Main Focus
Background
Equal Emphasis as Verbal

INVOLVEMENT

High Involvement
Low Involvement

Appendix D:

The unit of analysis for the verbal persuasive elements is per expression. The coding elements for verbal persuasive elements are defined as follows:

Color of text: The color of the words is to be examined and assessed on whether they are black or in color. If the words are black, the coder must report that. If the words are in color, the coder must report how many colors are used.

Text: The coder must report how many numbers and words are in the pop-up ad.

Arrangement of the text: The arrangement of the words is to be examined and assessed on whether they are arranged within the ad symmetrically or asymmetrically. If the words are balanced on both the left and right in the advertisement, they are symmetrical. If the words in the advertisement are not balanced on either side of the advertisement, it is reported as asymmetrical.

Interactivity: Words are coded as moving when the text is moving on screen and in the advertisement. If the words prompt/ask for a click-through to a website, it is coded as click-through. The words that are still with no motion or prompting to an action are coded as still.

Company recognition: When the company slogan is blatantly displayed in the ad it is coded as outright. If the company logo/brand is not shown or is not immediately obvious it is coded as delayed.

Verbal Message: If the message that the text is sending uses literary devices such as metaphors and/or similes, etc making a connection to something that is inanimate or not normally associated with the advertisement, it is coded as figurative. If the text is directly related and associated to the advertisement with no figurative meaning, it is coded as literal.

Verbal Claim: A claim is coded as direct verbal claim if only text is used in the advertisement. A claim is coded as combination if the text is accompanied with a visual in the advertisement.

Argument: The argument is coded as reward if the words in the advertisement are offering a reward or prize. The argument is coded as personal if the advertisement offers intrinsic value to a viewer such as a chance to rejuvenate from work or time to spend with friends. The argument is coded community if the text in the advertisement appeals to belonging to a group. For example leisure gamblers may be affiliated with gambling clubs at certain hotels. For traveling ads, travelers may belong to a hotel club or frequent flyer program.

Appeal: The click-through appeal is coded when the text of the advertisement is prompting a user to click-through. The purchase appeal is coded when the text is prompting for a user to purchase. The enter contest appeal is coded when the text prompts the user to enter a contest. When the text is used to promote the company or program it is coded as recognition. When the text is appealing to the viewer's need or desire for power or status in society, it is coded as power/status. When the text is appealing to how a person thinks they'll be viewed by others, it is coded as image. When the text is appealing to price, its similarly coded as price. Self-esteem is coded when the text appeals to the viewer's feeling of self-worth and how the product can increase it. If

the text in the advertisement plays on guilt, such as having a long overdue vacation for your spouse, it is coded as play on guilt. When the text of the ad plays on the fear of loneliness, such as being home alone while your friends are at a casino, the appeal is coded as fear of loneliness. When sex appeal is used in an ad it's coded as sex appeal. When the text of the advertisement appeals to tradition, such as a parent following in the steps of family tradition and taking a family trip, it is coded as tradition. When the advertisement prompts a user to download a program the ad is to be coded as download. If the ad is citing a success story, then it is to be coded as success story. When winning or gaining money is mentioned in the ad, it is coded as money. Finally, enjoyment was defined for the current study as when the image in the ad illustrates an opportunity for the user to enjoy themselves away from the norm of the day-to-day grind of work, kids, etc

Placement of text: When the text is placed in the front of the image, it's coded as foreground. When the text is placed behind the image, it is coded as the background.

Dominance of the text: When the text is the main focus rather than the image and the viewer is drawn to it, it is coded as the main focus. If the text is secondary to the image and is not the main focal point, then it is coded as background.

Involvement: The advertisement is coded high involvement when the viewer needs to put more thought into the text rather than a quick glance. If the text does not require more than an initial glance it is coded as low-involvement.

Appendix E:

The unit of analysis for the visual persuasive elements is per image. The coding elements for visual persuasive elements are defined as follows:

Color of image: The color of the image is to be examined and assessed on whether they are black or in color. If the images are black, the coder must report that. If the images are in color, the coder must report how many colors are used.

Animation: When real images are used the ad is coded as realistic/real objects used. When a cartoon-like figure or animation is used, the ad is coded as unrealistic animated.

Shape: When the shape of the ad takes a rectangular shape it is coded as rectangle. Similarly, the ad is coded as circle if it takes a circular shape; the ad is coded as triangle if it takes a triangular shape; and lastly, the ad is coded as square, if the ad takes the shape of a square.

Arrangement of the Imagery: The arrangement of the images is to be examined and assessed on whether they are arranged within the ad symmetrically or asymmetrically. If the images are balanced on both the left and right in the advertisement, they are symmetrical. If the images in the advertisement are not balanced on either side of the advertisement, it is reported as asymmetrical.

Interactivity: Images are coded as moving when the pictures are moving on screen and in the advertisement. If the imagery prompt/ask for a click-through to a website, it is coded as click-through. The images that are still with no motion or prompting to an action are coded as still.

Company recognition: When the company logo is blatantly displayed in the ad it is coded as outright. If the company logo is not shown or is not immediately obvious it is coded as delayed.

Visual Message: If the message that the image is sending uses literary devices such as metaphors and/or similes, etc making a connection to something that is inanimate or not normally associated with the advertisement, it is coded as figurative. If the image is directly related and associated to the advertisement with no figurative meaning, it is coded as literal.

Visual Claim: A claim is coded as direct visual claim if only visuals are used in the advertisement. A claim is coded as combination if the image is accompanied with an image in the advertisement.

Argument: The argument is coded as reward if the visuals in the advertisement are offering a reward or prize. The argument is coded as personal if the advertisement offers intrinsic value to a viewer such as a chance to rejuvenate from work or time to spend with friends. The argument is coded community if the images in the advertisement appeal to belonging to a group.

Appeal: The click-through appeal is coded when the image of the advertisement is prompting a user to click-through. The purchase appeal is coded when the image is prompting for a user to purchase. The enter contest appeal is coded when the image prompts the user to enter a contest. When the image is used to promote the company or program it is coded as recognition. When the image is appealing to the viewer's need or desire for power or status in society, it is coded as power/status. When the image is

appealing to how a person thinks others will view them, it is coded as image. When the image is appealing to price, its similarly coded as price. Self-esteem is coded when the image appeals to the viewer's feeling of self-worth and how the product can increase it. If the image in the advertisement plays on guilt, such as having a long overdue vacation for your spouse, it is coded as play on guilt. When the image of the ad plays on the fear of loneliness, such as being home alone while your friends are at a casino, the appeal is coded as fear of loneliness. When sex appeal is used in an ad it's coded as sex appeal. When the image of the advertisement appeals to tradition, such as a parent following in the steps of family tradition and taking a family trip, it is coded as tradition. When the advertisement prompts a user to download a program the ad is to be coded as download. If the ad is citing a success story, then it is it to be coded as success story. When winning or gaining money is mentioned in the ad, it is coded as money. Finally, enjoyment was defined for the current study as when the image in the ad illustrates an opportunity for the user to enjoy themselves away from the norm of the day-to-day grind of work, kids, etc

Placement of image: When the image is placed in the front of the text, it's coded as foreground. When the image is placed behind the text, it is coded as the background.

Dominance of the image: When the image is the main focus rather than the text and the viewer is drawn to it, it is coded as the main focus. If the image is in secondary to the text and is not the main focal point, then it is coded as background.

Involvement: The advertisement is coded high involvement when the viewer needs to put more thought into the image rather than a quick glance. If the image does not require more than an initial glance it is coded as low-involvement.