

New Trends in Advertising Research

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Part 5

Content and Context in Advertising

The content and context of advertising messages have always been a concern of researchers in trying to understand how they were constructed to identify tendencies on advertising and to recognize the processes that make them efficient. Each message conveys meanings contained in the information about products or services, and those values in which they are supported, which is aimed to be transmitted either in an informational or transformational way. Thus, we can state that advertising works as a narrative fiction whose contents are framed by characters and staging that have the final purpose of involving and seducing the consumer. These characters play a fundamental role in transforming the products into symbols and in serving as identification models for consumers. Understanding advertising contents helps us to understand the impact that messages might have.

We selected seven studies on content and context in advertising for inclusion in this book. The selected studies show as some messages are constructed in the contents level and how they contribute for the advertising messages efficiency at the contexts level.

Francisco C. Pereira and Ana Antunes show the main trends in cosmetics advertising in Portugal through an exploratory study. They used a sample of 169 cosmetic advertisements. The results suggest that this advertising is mainly directed towards women, although the male target has been gaining importance over the years, and that there are differences in the advertising design due to gender. The appeals made are mostly informational or suggestive and use characters as models. The messages are centered in the body and, by using these products and benefiting from its results, in the possibility of solving the target's problems with his/her body but also maintaining youth, delaying ageing and being more beautiful.

Paulo Cardoso and Manuel Fonseca in this study try to understand the fundamental nature and common threads of road safety campaigns in Portugal. They have used all campaigns developed in Portugal to analyze the messages. The results show that the most frequent content in messages is death. A strong, dramatic tone is used to

reinforce this type of argument in an attempt to appeal to people's sense of responsibility as citizens. Entertainment approach is also used, but frequently combined with the informative and advice approach.

Nathalie Dens, Patrick De Pelsmacker and Wim Janssens give in their study a contribution to the current knowledge of controversial advertising. They have investigated the effect of an incongruent mild disgust appeal on brand recall and brand attitudes in a non-student population. They also explored the moderating role of brand type, product category involvement and individual differences. The study was conducted through a web survey, with 244 respondents of a convenience sample exposed to one of the four different combinations of advertising and brand type. They concluded that disgust appeals consistently lead to a more negative Aad than non-disgust ads. Consequently, their study found no support for advertising professionals to use disgust appeals of the type studied here.

Nathalie Dens, Patrick De Pelsmacker and Wim Janssens examine in their study the effect of scantily dressed models of both genders used in advertising on men and women's body esteem. The results show that nudity in advertising has a negative effect on consumers' body esteem compared to dressed models, similarly for both men and women.

Márcia Gonçalves, Pedro Brito and Helena Hszrek show an experimental study to test how two dimensions of an ad's music – its format (instrumental/vocal) and familiarity (familiar/non familiar) – affect two psychological variables: recall and attitudes. The results broadly support the hypothesis that music can affect listeners' attitudes. Further, ads with familiar music and ads with vocal music tend to produce more favourable attitudes than ads with unfamiliar music and ads with instrumental music, respectively.

Fred Bronner and Stephan Vedkamp try to identify in their study if the mood varies with the times when the messages of the media are received and whether differs from media to media. They used a representative sample of about 1000 respondents (aged 13 and above). They concluded that there is a relation between mood and media experience and that this relationship differs for print and broadcast media.

Verolein Cauberghe and Patrick De Pelsmacker propose a study to identify the impact of two dimensions of television program induced interactivity on advertisement and brand recall of an embedded commercial. They collected responses of 246 respondents. The results show that program induced 'two ways communications' (playing along with a quiz) had a strong negative impact on ad and brand recall. The negative effect of user control (amount of possible clicks in the additional information about the program) was also noticeable, but less prominent. There also appeared to be an interaction effect of two way communication and user control on ad and brand recall. A moderate level of user control results in better recall when the respondent had no play along possibilities, but leads to less recall when he/she could play along with the Quiz.



FRANCISCO COSTA PEREIRA is Full Professor, Chair of Advertising Psychology and Chair in School of Communication and Media Study of the Polytechnic of Lisbon. His research interests include media and advertising, public relations and research methods. His publications include a lot of peer-reviewed publications in national journals and books and some in international journals and books. Francisco Costa Pereira is the coordinator of Advertising Observatory in Portugal with Jorge Verissimo.



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New Trends in Advertising Research presents a wide spectre of recent studies and works whose aim is to demonstrate how advertising works drawing special attention to the role of culture, the advertising content, new technologies, and to the way advertising agencies develop appropriate practices to make advertising campaigns efficient.

The book has 29 chapters framed in five parts. The first part – *How Advertising Works* – presents six studies that show dimensions of messages conception, the organization of motivations, the imply-benefit attributes, and how celebrities can contribute to the effectiveness of messages. The second part discusses effects of *Product Placement and Sponsorship*. The third part – *Advertising & Culture* – presents six studies that show the way in which cultures and subcultures may influence advertising and advertising effects. The fourth part on new *Technologies of Information and Communication (TIC)* includes five studies on new advertising platforms. The last part presents seven studies on *Content and Context Factors in Advertising*.

The book addresses itself to the advertising professionals, to advertising communication researchers, as well as to graduate and undergraduate students of advertising and communication, who want to be informed about the latest research within these areas.

