

Research on the Influence of Advertising Content on Consumer Purchasing Behavior Based on Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)

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Abstract. Advertising content is the foundation of advertising. Advertising content contains a lot of information and experience to convey to the consumer. How consumers deal with advertising content cognitively will affect the effectiveness of marketing personnel in delivering advertisements to consumers and lead to changes in purchasing behavior. This literature review studies the cognitive processing of consumers' four types of advertising content (informational advertising, comparative advertising, emotional advertising, social responsibility advertising) based on Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), and studies their impact on consumers' purchasing behavior. ELM points out two cognitive processing routes, namely the central route and the peripheral route. According to research, informational advertising and comparative advertising use the cognitive processing approach of the center route. Emotional advertising and social responsibility advertising are processed by consumers using peripheral routes. The research finds that informational advertising and comparative advertising participate in the cognitive processing of consumers through the central route. The characteristics and information about the product in the advertising content will affect the cognition, and ultimately affect the consumer's purchase intention. Emotional advertising and social responsibility advertising participate in the process through the peripheral route. These ads can influence consumers' impressions of brands and, ultimately, purchase intentions.

Keywords: Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), Advertising content, Consumer behavior.

1. Introduction

Consumer buying behavior is heavily influenced by the content of ads, making it a key area of study for marketers and researchers. Advertising is an important way to persuade consumers to buy certain products or services, and is a tool used to attract consumers and promote sales. Nowadays, advertisements are not only used to attract consumers' attention. Moreover, consumers know all kinds of information about products through advertisements. The content of the advertisement can determine the image of the product, it can be seen as a representative of the brand and its products. It is a psychological process to generate purchase motivation, quality assurance, purchase decision, and to form the cognition of the product in the mind of the customer.

Understanding how advertising messages affect consumers' decision-making processes is critical to developing effective marketing strategies and optimizing advertising campaigns. The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) provides a valuable framework for studying the impact of advertising content on consumer behavior, which considers the different levels of cognitive elaboration that consumers engage in when processing persuasive information. ELM divides the routes to consumer attitude change into central route and peripheral route [1]. Consumers will carefully consider the information provided by advertisements when forming their attitudes towards advertising brands. The information in advertisements is caught, analyzed, and considered by consumers, which will lead to a change of attitudes or form a new attitude. This persuasive process is called the central route of attitude change for consumers to treat advertising with high participation. In contrast to the central route, the peripheral route of attitude change is to form and change attitudes without consumers actively considering the characteristics of the brand and its strengths and weaknesses. Its persuasive

effect is generated by associating the brand with the positive or negative aspects implied in the advertisement.

At present, there are few research on the advertising content based on ELM. Also, most studies on advertising based on ELM focus on a specific form of advertising. Differentiate with previous studies, the purpose of this study is to explore the impact of different kinds of advertising contents on consumer cognitive process based on ELM, and then explain the impact on consumer behavior. Literature review is used to carry out the research. The findings of this study will help improve the effectiveness of advertising content. Understanding how consumers process advertising information and the factors that influence their decision-making process can provide valuable insights for marketers aiming to develop persuasive and impactful advertising campaigns. It is hoped that this literature review will enhance understanding of the complex interplay between advertising content and consumer behavior, enabling marketers to optimize their strategies and drive desired consumer responses.

2. Advertising Content

2.1. Type and Form of Advertising Content

Content is core for the whole advertisement. Advertising content should depict not only the associations of the surrounding brand, such as packaging, logo, colors, or mascot, but also the benefits of the brand. The definition of advertising content types is the characteristics of advertisements created by communicators [2]. In recent years, there has been a lot of research that classifies advertisements according to their content. Some researchers divide advertising content into subjective and objective content. Subjective content includes evaluations and emotional perceptions or impressions of the product, while objective content includes numerical values of product attributes [3].

Other researchers, however, categorize advertising content more detailed. Brandes and his colleagues use the term of informational advertising in their study, Informational advertising focuses on providing detailed information about a product or service [4]. It is designed to communicate the features or advantages of products to potential consumers, helping them make informed purchasing decisions. In their study, they tried to find the relationship between death – related messages of artists and sales of their works. Another category is emotional advertising, which uses emotional induction or storytelling to trigger emotional resonance among consumers. It can trigger an emotional response from consumers and create an emotional connection. Therefore, it is an effective means to attract consumers to have a positive emotional attitude towards the product or brand [5].

Also, some of the researchers studied the comparative advertising between analgesic products. They discovered that comparative advertising could be used to boost his own brand image and lower that of a targeted competitor [6]. Comparative advertising highlights the advantages and unique features of products or services by comparing them with competitors. It can show consumers why products of this brand are better or more valuable. Social responsibility advertising emphasizes corporate social responsibility and sustainable development. It promotes the company's activities such as charity, social welfare and environmental protection, which can shape the company's social image and values [7].

2.2. Importance of Researching on Advertising Content

Some researchers stated that, on average, increased advertising exposure has only a small positive effect on consumer responses [8]. Therefore, brands should consider how they can better use their advertising budgets to stimulate more consumers to buy. The number of advertisements is not the only factor that determines the success of advertising marketing. The content of the advertisement is also important. The importance of advertising content is mainly related to the influence of advertising on consumer behavior and marketing effect. Through the research of advertising content can enhance

the brand image, improve the advertising effect, and gain a competitive advantage in the competitive market.

Through advertising content, brands can communicate their unique proposition, product features and brand story, helping to build brand awareness and recognition. Studying advertising content can help brands understand which content elements and creative strategies effectively communicate their brand image, increase brand loyalty among consumers, and build an emotional connection with their target audience [9]. In addition, the advertising content is one of the key factors that affect the advertising effect. Studying the content of an advertisement can reveal which elements, messages, or emotions have a positive impact on the resonance and impact of the advertisement [10]. By understanding the impact of advertising content on the effectiveness of advertising, brands can optimize advertising creativity and communication strategies to improve the effectiveness and return of advertising. Moreover, different media channels and audience groups have different preferences for advertising content. Research on advertising content helps to customize advertising content according to the characteristics of different media platforms and audiences. This helps to improve the visibility and influence of advertisements in different media and achieve better market coverage and audience acceptance. In this process, marketers can gain a competitive edge in the market by continuously improving and innovating advertising content to maintain differentiation from competitors.

2.3. The Influence of Advertising Content on Consumer Cognitive Process and Behavior Change

Informational advertising content can help consumers understand the characteristics, functions, uses, ingredients and other information of products or services. Through informational advertising, consumers can have a more comprehensive understanding of the product [4]. The content of advertisement can help consumers understand the problem products can solve or meet the needs. Also, advertising is an important means to shape brand image and enhance brand awareness [11]. Consumers can perceive the brand's values, personality characteristics, and the association with the target audience from the advertising content, which can promote the formation of brand impression. Comparative advertising compares the brands themselves to competitors, which can emphasize the strengths and uniqueness of their products or brands. Comparison between brands can help consumers gain a clearer understanding of the differences between different options and thus influence their purchasing decisions [12]. Besides, comparative advertising can improve consumers' awareness and popularity of the brand in the advertisement. Because of the comparison of different brands, consumers will become familiar with the brand and increase the purchase behavior [13].

Emotional advertising can trigger consumers' emotional resonance and emotional experience. Consumers will have a positive or negative emotional attitude towards a product or brand based on the emotional elements of the advertising content, which will influence their purchasing decisions [14]. Social responsibility advertising can play an important role in the cognitive process of consumers. Such advertisements can convey social responsibility information and related issues to attract consumers' attention and stimulate their interest. It can also help consumers build a positive cognitive structure that connects the business to the values of social responsibility. In addition, social responsibility advertising can have a positive impact on the image and affinity of a business or brand [7]. When consumers perceive a company's positive actions in terms of social responsibility, they are likely to have a more positive attitude toward the company, which will have an impact on their purchasing decisions [15]. When consumers are aware of a business or brand's active efforts in social responsibility, they may be inclined to choose to support such a business or brand [16]. Socially responsible advertising can stimulate consumers' moral feelings and sense of responsibility, making them more likely to buy products or services that are in line with corporate social responsibility values [7].

At the same time, consumers' perceptions of the advertising content can influence their buying behavior. If consumers' perception of a product or brand changes, such as its quality, performance,

service, etc., they may adjust their satisfaction, recommendation intention and word-of-mouth communication behavior. Their feedback and evaluation may change as their perceptions change. Also, their attitudes may adjust accordingly. They may view the product or brand more positively or more negatively, influencing their behavior and decision-making. In addition, cognitive processing of consumers can lead to changes in their preferences and choices. When consumers' perception of a product or brand changes, they may change their degree of preference or change their choice behavior. Rather than the initial choice, they are more likely to seek out other new brands or products that better meet their needs based on the new cognitive processing.

3. The Influence of ELM on Advertising Content

3.1. Central Route

In central route, consumers will analyze and think about the advertising content in detail, and evaluate the logic, persuasion, and credibility of the advertisement. They will carefully consider the message and argument of the advertisement, think more deeply, and form meaningful cognitive structures. Through the central route, consumers understand the advertising content more deeply, for longer, and are more susceptible to the impact of the advertising content [17]. When consumers think about the theme, information, and arguments of the advertising content, they carry out cognitive processing through the central route [18]. That is to say, advertising content such as informational advertising and comparative advertising mentioned before, which can provide information for consumers to make choices and stimulate thought, uses the cognitive processing of the central route. Through the cognitive processing of the central route, consumers will think more deeply about the characteristics, functions and advantages of the products or services presented in the advertisements. They may evaluate the arguments, evidence, and logic in the advertisement. Thus, forming the belief and attitude towards the product. If advertising can provide strong, reliable information and is aligned with the values and needs of consumers, consumers may develop positive attitudes and thus influence their purchase intentions.

3.2. Peripheral Route

When consumers do not have enough motivation or cognitive resources to think deeply when accepting advertising content, they will choose the peripheral route for processing. In this route, consumers mainly rely on the external characteristics of advertising content, such as the form of advertising, emotional appeals, celebrity endorsement and so on [18]. Through the simplification of advertising content, consumers form an understanding of advertising through emotional response and heuristic judgment. The peripheral route has a relatively shallow understanding of advertising content and is more susceptible to external factors. Similar to the previously mentioned emotional advertising and social responsibility advertising, advertising content based on brand impression and emotional feelings will use the cognitive processing process of the peripheral route.

Another type of advertising that uses peripheral routeways for cognitive processing is celebrity endorsement advertising. A study found that consumers prefer to follow celebrity endorsements if they do not consider the quality and attributes of the product in detail [19]. Celebrities in advertisements generate a lot of publicity and instant attention. Sales increased when an attractive model was paired with the target product (tissue paper) and decreased when the product was paired with an unattractive model [17]. Celebrity endorsement is regarded as an important means to meet the purpose of advertising, that is, to influence consumers' purchasing behavior. The results of the study showed the relationship between celebrity endorsement and the purchasing behavior of the respondents [20]. The appearance of celebrities in TV advertisements inspires the purchasing behavior of audiences, who are convinced by the attractiveness and professionalism of the brand ambassadors in the advertisements. The results of the study showed that the physical beauty and expertise of the endorser/celebrity had a considerable impact on purchase intention. According to ELM, the peripheral process of behavior and attitude change caused by advertising stimulation is

related to the role of celebrity endorsement advertising. These celebrity - sports, movie or advertising mascots can have an impact on the buying intentions of the city's fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) industry [21]. Companies use advertising to create interest and desire for customers to buy a brand.

4. Conclusion

In general, when consumers process advertising content through the central route and the peripheral route, they will have different impacts on consumers' purchasing decisions. When consumers carry out cognitive processing through the central route, they will deeply think and analyze the advertising content. They carefully consider the information in the advertisement and evaluate the features, advantages and value of the product or service. On the other hand, consumers may compare the different information they receive to make the best purchase choice. Compared with central route, when consumers conduct cognitive processing through peripheral routeways, they mainly rely on the external features and emotional appeals of advertising content. They may form a simple understanding of advertising based on emotional responses and heuristic judgments. The peripheral route has a relatively shallow understanding of advertising content and is more susceptible to external factors. Therefore, through the peripheral route, consumers' purchase decisions may be influenced by external characteristics such as emotion and brand image. In other words, different cognitive routes will have an impact on consumers' decision-making, and then affect their purchasing behavior.

This study can help marketers better formulate advertising marketing strategies and design advertising content, such as informational advertising and comparative advertising, which are cognitively processed by consumers through the central route content needs to increase the accuracy and reliability of advertising content. These ads should be further improved in terms of advertising content. On the other hand, social responsibility advertising and emotional advertising process advertising content with the peripheral route. These advertisements put more emphasis on consumer reaction. Marketers should pay more attention to how the contents of these advertisements will make consumers feel. In addition, celebrity endorsement advertisements are also advertisements that use peripheral routes to influence consumer cognition in this process, marketers should pay attention to the selection of celebrity models that are more compatible with the brand to represent the brand, so as to increase consumers' positive impression of the brand. In the process of advertising marketing, marketers can combine different types of advertising content for marketing to achieve the best impact. The research results of this study are helpful for marketers and brands to choose different advertising contents. The combination of different advertising contents can not only increase consumers' trust in product quality but also enhance brand image. Consumers will be more inclined to choose this product. Also, there are limitations in this study more types of advertising content can be selected for future research.

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