



ASSOCIATION FOR CONSUMER RESEARCH

Labovitz School of Business & Economics, University of Minnesota Duluth, 11 E. Superior Street, Suite 210, Duluth, MN 55802

The Impact of Regulatory Focus on the Effect of Two-Sided Advertising

Arnd Florack, University of Basel, Switzerland

Simon Ineichen, University of Basel, Switzerland

Rahel Bieri, University of Basel, Switzerland

The authors examined the impact of regulatory focus on the persuasive effects of two-sidedly communicated advertisements. Since individuals in a promotion focus are less sensitive to negative information and more likely to rely on their affective responses toward an advertisement than individuals in a prevention focus, the authors predicted more positive effects of two-sided ads compared to one-sided ads for promotion-focused recipients than for prevention-focused recipients. In an experiment, a promotion or prevention focus was induced. Then, participants considered one-sided or two-sided ads. Supporting the predictions, the two-sided ads led to a more positive evaluation of the presented products for promotion-focused participants, but not for prevention-focused participants.

[to cite]:

Arnd Florack, Simon Ineichen, and Rahel Bieri (2008), "The Impact of Regulatory Focus on the Effect of Two-Sided Advertising", in NA - Advances in Consumer Research Volume 35, eds. Angela Y. Lee and Dilip Soman, Duluth, MN : Association for Consumer Research, Pages: 947-948.

[url]:

<http://www.acrwebsite.org/volumes/13345/volumes/v35/NA-35>

[copyright notice]:

This work is copyrighted by The Association for Consumer Research. For permission to copy or use this work in whole or in part, please contact the Copyright Clearance Center at <http://www.copyright.com/>.

- Churchill, Gilbert A. Jr. (1979), "A Paradigm for Developing Better Measures of Marketing Constructs," *Journal of Marketing Research*, 16, 64-73.
- Darley, John M. and Daniel T. Gilbert (1985), "Social Psychological Aspects of Environmental Psychology" in *Handbook of Social Psychology*, ed. Gardner Lindzey and Elliot Aronsen, New York: Random House, 949-991.
- Donovan, Robert J. and John R. Rossiter (1982), "Store Atmosphere: An Environmental Psychology Approach," *Journal of Retailing*, 58, 34-57.
- Eroglu, Sevgin A., Karen A. Machleit and Lenita M. Davis (2003), "Empirical Testing of a Model of Online Store Atmospherics and Shopper Responses," *Psychology and Marketing*, 20, 139-150.
- Gardner, Meryl P. and George J. Siomkos (1986), "Toward a Methodology for Assessing Effects of In-Store Atmospherics," in *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 13, ed. Richard J. Lutz, Ann Arbor, MI: Association for Consumer Research, 27-31.
- Gerbing, David W. and James C. Anderson (1988), "An Updated Paradigm for Scale Development Incorporating Unidimensionality and Its Assessment," *Journal of Marketing Research*, 25, 186-192.
- Guéguen, Nicolas and Christine Petr (2006), "Odors and Consumer Behavior in a Restaurant," *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 25, 335-339.
- Holahan, Charles J. (1982), *Environmental Psychology*, New York: Random House.
- Jöreskog, Karl G. and Dag Sörbom, (2004), *LISREL 8.7 Computer Software*, Lincolnwood, IL: Scientific Software International.
- Kokko, Teemu (2005), *Offering Development in the Restaurant Sector-A Comparison between Customer Perceptions and Management Beliefs*, Helsingfors: Publications of the Swedish School of Economics and Business Administration, Nr. 140.
- Kotler, Philip (1973), "Atmospherics as a Marketing Tool," *Journal of Marketing*, 49, 48-64.
- Kwortnik, Robert J. Jr. (2003), "Clarifying "Fuzzy" Hospitality-Management problems with Depth Interviews and Qualitative Analysis," *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 44, 117-129.
- Lee, Nick and Graham Hooley (2005), "The Evolution of "Classical Mythology" within Marketing Measurement Development," *European Journal of Marketing*, 39, 365-385.
- MacCallum, Robert C., Michael W. Browne and Hazuki M. Sugawara (1996), "Power Analysis and Determination of Sample Size for Covariance Structure Modeling," *Psychological Methods*, 1, 130-149.
- Mamalis, Spyridon, Mitchell Ness and Michael Bourlakis (2005), "Tangible and Intangible Store Image Attributes in Consumer Decision Making: The Case of Fast Food Restaurants," *WSEAS Transactions on Information Science and Applications*, 2, 1705-1714.
- Mattila, Anna S. and Jochen Wirtz (2001), "Congruency of Scent and Music as a Driver of In-Store Evaluations and Behavior," *Journal of Retailing*, 77, 273-289.
- McElroy, James C., Paula C. Morrow and Sevo Eroglu (1990), "The Atmospherics of Personal Selling," *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*, 10, 31-41.
- Mehrabian, Albert and James A. Russell (1974), *An Approach to Environmental Psychology*. Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Milliman, Ronald E. (1982), "Using Background Music to Affect the Behavior of Supermarket Shoppers," *Journal of Marketing*, 46, 86-91.
- _____ (1986), "The Influence of Background Music on the Behavior of Restaurant Patrons," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 13, 286-289.
- Parasuraman, A., Leonard L. Berry and Valarie A. Zeithaml (1988), "SERVQUAL: A Multiple-Item Scale for Measuring Customer Perceptions of Service Quality," *Journal of Retailing*, 64, 12-40.
- _____ (1991), "Refinement and Reassessment of the SERVQUAL Scale," *Journal of Retailing*, 67, 420-450.
- Parasuraman, A., Valarie A. Zeithaml and Leonard L. Berry (1994), "Alternative Scales for Measuring Service Quality: A Comparative Assessment Based on Psychometric and Diagnostic Criteria," *Journal of Marketing*, 70, 201-230.
- Spangenberg, Eric A., Ayn E. Crowley and Pamela W. Henderson (1996), "Improving the Store Environment: Do Olfactory Cues Affect Evaluations and Behaviors?" *Journal of Marketing*, 60, 67-80.
- Walsh, W. Bruce, Kenneth H. Craik and Richard H. Price (2000), *Person-Environment Psychology*, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Ward, James C., Mary J. Bitner and John Barnes (1992), "Measuring the Prototypicality and Meaning of Retail Environments," *Journal of Retailing*, 68 194-220.
- Wilson, Stephanie (2003), "The Effect of Music on Perceived Atmosphere and Purchase Intentions in a Restaurant," *Psychology of Music*, 31, 93-112.
- Yalch, Richard F. and Eric R. Spangenberg (2000), "The Effects of Music in a Retail Setting on Real and Perceived Shopping Times," *Journal of Business Research*, 49, 139-147.

The Impact of Regulatory Focus on the Effect of Two-sided Advertising

Arnd Florack, University of Basel, Switzerland
 Simon Ineichen, University of Basel, Switzerland
 Rahel Bieri, University of Basel, Switzerland

Advertisers attempt to present products as positive as possible, praising the advantages of the advertised products. Sometimes, however, it is beneficial to rely on two-sidedly communicated-ads mentioning not only the benefits but also the shortcomings of a product

(Crowley and Hower 1994; Etgar and Goodwin 1982; Insko 1962; Kamins and Assael 1987; Lumsdaine and Janis 1953; Pechmann 1992). However, the persuasive effects of two-sided ads are limited and cannot be generalized (Belch 1981; Bohner et al. 2003; Golden and Alpert 1987; Hovland, Lumsdaine and Sheffield 1949; for an overview see Crowley and Hower 1994). In this paper, we argue that the recipients' regulatory focus (e.g. Higgins 1997; Higgins et al. 1994) is an important factor that accounts for differential effects of two-sided advertising.

The regulatory focus influences to what extent individuals rely on substantial arguments of a message and/or on affective responses when forming judgments (Florack, Scarabis and Gosejohann 2005; Pham and Avnet 2004). Prevention-focused individuals rely more on the substance of a message than promotion-focused individuals, whereas promotion-focused individuals are more likely to rely on their affective responses toward an ad. The feeling of credibility elicited by an ad is an affective response, and this feeling is elicited to a greater extent by two-sided ads (Golden and Alpert 1987; Settle and Golden 1974; Smith and Hunt 1978; Sternthal, Phillips and Dholakia 1978). Therefore, we expect a generally higher credibility of the two-sided ads compared to the one-sided ads. We also expect participants with a promotion focus to more heavily rely on this positive cue. As for the substantial content, regulatory focus theory suggests that prevention-focused individuals are more sensitive to negative information (Higgins 1997, 1998, Higgins and Tykocinski 1992). Combined with the differential relevance of mentioned product shortcomings, the differences in reliance on affective responses and substantive arguments should lead to more positive effects of two-sided advertising for promotion-focused recipients than for prevention-focused recipients.

To test these hypotheses we conducted two experiments. In experiment one, we measured chronic regulatory focus and then presented to the participants a series of three ads, either one-sided or two-sided. For every product, there was a one-sided ad that mentioned only the product advantage, and a two-sided ad that mentioned both, the product advantage and the product disadvantage. After the presentation of each ad, participants rated the advertised product. We averaged the dependent measures for the three ads. All analyses were computed with the aggregated scores. Regression analysis revealed a significant interaction between ad type and regulatory focus on the evaluation of the products: The stronger the promotion focus was, the stronger the positive effect of the two-sided ads compared to the one-sided ads.

In experiment two, we applied a 2 X 2 Design, with the factors *regulatory focus* (promotion vs. prevention) and *ad-type* (one-sided vs. two-sided). Both factors were manipulated between participants. We measured the credibility of the ads and the evaluation of the products. Regulatory focus was primed with a modified version of the d2 attention test (Brickenkamp, 2002). The instruction was altered to either highlight loss- and non-loss feedback for priming a prevention focus or gain- and non-gain feedback for priming a promotion focus. Again, participants saw a series of three ads that were two-sided in one condition and one-sided in the other condition. After the presentation of each ad, participants judged the credibility of the ad and evaluated the product. As expected, participants rated the two-sided ads as more credible than the one-sided ads. An ANOVA with the factors ad-type (two-sided vs. one-sided) and regulatory focus (promotion vs. prevention) and the evaluation of the product as dependent measure yielded a significant interaction between ad-type and regulatory focus. In the promotion focus condition, participants evaluated the products more positively when two-sided ads were presented than when one-sided ads were presented.

In order to investigate the underlying process of the effects of two-sided ads in the promotion focus condition, we tested whether the effects of the two-sided ads were mediated by the credibility of the ads in the promotion focus condition (Baron and Kenny, 1986). In line with the results of the ANOVAs, regression analyses showed that the type of the ad was significantly related to the product evaluation and the credibility of the ad. Furthermore, the effect of the ad-type on the product evaluation is no longer significant when credibility is also entered in the regression equation, while the effect of the credibility of the ad is significant. A subsequent *Sobel test* showed that the reduction of the effect of the ad-type on the product evaluation is significant.

Taken together, the analyses show that in the promotion focus condition, the effect of the ad-type on product evaluation is mediated by the credibility of the ad. Further, our results have implications for marketing managers and advertisers. They suggest that two-sided ads are more effective when consumers are in a promotion focus and, therefore, rely on their affective responses. In particular, two-sided advertising might be effective for products linked to a promotion focus. Recent research has found that a regulatory focus is associated with certain product categories or the framing of a product category (Florack and Scarabis 2006; Zhou and Pham 2004). For advertising in such categories, two-sided ads should be effective.

References

- Belch, G. E. (1981), "An Examination of Comparative and Noncomparative Television Commercials: The Effects of Claim Variation and Repetition on Cognitive Response and Message Acceptance," in *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18, 222-249.
- Bohner, G., S. Einwiller, H. Erb and F. Siebler (2003), "When Small Means Comfortable: Relation between Product Attributes in Two-sided Advertising," in *Journal of Marketing Research*, 43, 15-19.
- Brickenkamp, R. (2002), "Test d2: Aufmerksamkeits-Belastungs-Test," 9. Edition, Göttingen: Hogrefe.
- Crowley, A. E. and W. D. Hower (1994), "An Integrative Framework for Understanding Two-sided Persuasion," in *Journal of Consumer Research*, 20, 561-574.
- Etgar, M. and S. A. Goodwin (1982), "One-sided versus Two-sided Comparative Message Appeals for New Brand Introductions," in *Journal of Consumer Research*, 8, 460-465.
- Florack, A. and M. Scarabis (2006), "How Advertising Claims Affect Brand Preferences and Category-Brand Associations: The Role of Regulatory Fit," in *Psychology & Marketing*, 23, 741-755.
- Florack, A., M. Scarabis and S. Gosejohann, S (2005), "Regulatory focus and consumer information processing," in *Applying social cognition to consumer-focused strategy*, ed. F. R. Kardes, P. M. Herr and J. Nantel. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 235-263.
- Friedman, R. S. and J. Förster (2000), "The Effects of Approach and Avoidance Motor Actions on the Elements of Creative Insight," in *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 79, 477-492.
- Golden, L.L and M. I. Alpert (1987), "Comparative Analysis for the Relative Effectiveness of One-sided and Two-sided Communications for Contrasting Products," in *Journal of Advertising*, 16(1), 18-28.
- Higgins, E. T. (1997), "Beyond Pleasure and Pain," in *American Psychologist*, 52, 1280-300.