Editor's Desk

60 Robust Years

Of Advertising Research, and Counting

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The *Journal of Advertising Research* (*JAR*) has been a cutting-edge venue for advertising research for more than 60 years (nearly 250 issues, if you're counting). The range of topics has never been richer and, with bourgeoning platforms steeped in evolving algorithms and artificial intelligence, never as complicated.

To stay current, the editors of the *Journal* continue to respond to a body of high-quality submissions, and we are proud of our boundary-spanning role. The only constant: Our goal and focus of informing advertising scholars and practitioners with evidence-based papers that keep track of the evolving field of marketing, even as they honor and respect long-established practices and traditions.

To that end, our latest number offers seven studies that connect with a number of touchpoints, ranging from the effects of eco-harmful media practices on consumer perceptions, to varying effects of CSR advertisements across different age cohorts; from the emergence of double-jeopardy effects when targeting loyal niche audiences, to finding differences in the perceptions of consumers and professionals on the nature of creativity in advertisements; from direct-to-consumer advertisements and prescription-drug profitability, to a view of a typology of multiple-media users. And, finally, an examination of the effectiveness of speech rates in audio commercials.

In "**Why Do People Choose to Multitask with Media? The Dimensions of Polychronicity as Drivers of Multiple Media Use—A User Typology**," (please see page 251) Helen R. Robinson and Stavros P. Kalafatis (both at Kingston Business School) introduce a new Polychronicity-Multiple Media Use scale to identify heterogeneity among a sample of 315 digital natives in the United Kingdom.

In their research, the authors found three distinct segments of multimedia users: "information seekers," "connecteds," and "instinctives." The first cohort focuses almost exclusively on "surfing the Internet plus texting," and "watching television plus texting some of the time." The key for engagement with this audience is to find information across a variety of media vehicles.

"Connecteds," in turn, "consider their multiple media use to be driven by compulsion; in addition, they value multiple media use to assimilate media content and gain associated social benefits." The combination of vehicles aims to give them the social connections that they crave.

Finally, for "instinctives" most often "multiple media use is driven predominantly by their comfort with media multitasking and the associated feeling that such behavior is convenient for them."

In articulating the utility for marketing practitioners in more effective planning of multimedia advertising campaigns, the authors suggest that "instinctives" are the most attractive audience in that they use most of the media combinations most (or at least some) of the time. "Information seekers" are limited in the combinations that they employ, and "connecteds" rarely use combinations.

The common ground for all subsets in all advertising is the creative product. "**Quantifying the Advertising-Creativity Assessments of Consumers versus Advertising Professionals: Does It Matter Whom You Ask?**" by Erik Modig and Micael Dahlen (both at the Stockholm School of Economics, please see page 324) examines the perceptions of advertising professionals as well as of consumers regarding creativity encountered in advertisements.

Such comparisons are useful, especially when differences are found in the different populations. The authors found that "both consumers and practitioners are capable of rating advertising creativity, but that they adopt significantly different perspectives as to exactly how to weigh the different dimensions of creativity."

A key finding in this study is that "consumers may, as a target group, be equipped even better than professionals to provide input on such elements of creativity as execution and appropriateness, with the result that the final product is appreciated and rewarded by consumers."

One key takeaway: When they consider design components of their messages, advertisers need to clearly understand how the advertisement may be meaningful for consumers. To drive that message home, the authors' work in examining prior research identified a glaring gap in that most advertising agencies have yet to develop any formalized definitions of advertising creativity.

With more insight into delivering messages that connect, Emma Rodero (UPF Barcelona School of Management) seeks to understand not just if consumers receive a message but how well they understand it. "**Do Your Ads Talk Too Fast to Your Audience? How Speech Rates of Audio Commercials Influence Cognitive and Psychological Outcomes**" (please see page 337) is grounded in a sample of 200 English- and Spanish-speaking adults whose psychophysiological measures (heart rate and skin conductance), memory tests, and self-reported data were compiled to understand the respondents' ability to process speech at different rates of speed.

Three different speeds were utilized for the study: 160, 180, and 200 words per minute. The author found that "the messages must be conveyed fast enough to keep the listener's attention, but always at a moderate rate. At 180 words per minute, the phonological loop can fulfill its function of retaining information."

The findings show that self-reported arousal was greatest, the perceptions of the advertisements were less negative, and participants could effectively process the message with high emotional activation at 180 words per minute. Strategically, the author suggests that "using fast speech style to convey information in a short period should be avoided if the goal is for listeners to understand and better remember the information."

In other words, the faster the speech rate, the lower the information density needs to be.

Yet another compelling article involves audience niches and loyalty effects. "**The Myth of Targeting Small, but Loyal Niche Audiences: Double-Jeopardy Effects in Digital-Media Consumption**," by Harsh Taneja (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; please see page 239), provides strong evidence that the old belief—that small, niche markets are loyal and should be the focus of media efforts—is not a wise strategy. The author finds that "double-jeopardy effects were much stronger in the head rather than the tail or, in other words, stronger among popular sites."

A key insight from this research is that "it is imperative to direct one's marketing effort at growing reach if one has to grow loyalty, both in terms of behavior (*i.e.*, repeat visitors) and in terms of attitudes." Finally, the author suggests that "even in digital media the overall popularity of the outlet, measured by reach, and therefore exposure-based metrics, will remain important currencies in evaluating the advertising worth of media properties."

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For readers of these pages 10 to 15 years from now (journals such as ours have an exceptionally long shelf life), a point of context: As we go to press, COVID-19 is very much a part of our way of life and, by extension, our life's work.

The extraordinarily good (and hopeful) news is what we are witnessing at our end of the research spectrum: We marvel at the adaptive nature of the advertising industry as it evolves to meet the changing needs of the marketplace. During this challenging time period, I have been surprised (and pleased) that the submissions to the *Journal of Advertising Research* have continued at a relatively high clip.

Reaching out to colleagues about their research activities, they are quick to tell me the need for social distancing and remaining home has afforded them "found time" for important projects that otherwise might have been put on the "back burner." In desperately sad times, we encourage submissions across all areas of advertising and brand research.

If you are not sure about the propriety of your manuscript for the *JAR*, I welcome your inquiries. Please send an abstract to give me an idea of what your research entails, and I will give you an indication of its potential value for our readership. When in doubt, it is always best to ask the editor.

As the *Journal of Advertising Research* continues to grow and evolve, as always, I welcome your feedback.