The Examination of Personal Factors That Impact the Choice of Advertising Medium

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Personal factors and psychological factors may create different perception towards different media. Gender may play an important role in determining the relative effectiveness of comparative and non-comparative advertising appeals (Chang, 2008). Nowadays, people are moving towards online advertising, mobile advertising or well known as wireless advertising. Understanding consumers is a basic tenet of marketing and advertising (Burns & Lutz, 2006). The integration of advertising medium between traditional and online advertising also has become more and more popular nowadays. Newspaper websites are attracting a lot of readers and is considered a lucrative for online businesses. Questionnaire and copy testing have been adopted for this study. The finding shows that personal factors especially gender does impact the advertising medium.

JEL Classification: M37

1. Introduction

Today, we are all participating in a new media revolution, brought on by the incredible achievements in communications technology that is digital interactive media and the information superhighway. The highway is the Internet, and it is already the fastest growing medium in history. Before radio and TV, was human advertising and personal selling. Technology keeps on developing. It has already give us the DVD, satellite communication, cellular phones, PC, internet and World Wide Web and the software to make it simple enough for virtually anybody to use. And on the launching pad, about to blasts off is interactive TV. With growing consumer acceptance of all this wizardry,

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prices plummeted making most of these affordable to the masses (Arens, 2006).

Advertising is a viable and valuable form of communication and able to create high revenue for the economy. This study seeks to compare Malaysian consumers' attitudes towards online Advertising is a viable and valuable form of communication and able to create high revenue for the economy. This study seeks to compare advertising and traditional advertising. Dou, Nielsen, and Tan, 2002 state that even though technological changes create uncertainty and our understanding of consumer usage preferences on the internet are still emerging, it is clear that online advertising is now a fact of life. They further added that as a credible medium, the internet should be automatically considered as part of a company's strategic media mix. Most of the research that has been done especially on online advertising has focused on Western consumers and economies and no studies have tapped into personal factors. In response to these gaps, this study attempt to identify the power of traditional advertising and online advertising and the effect of these mediums on Malaysian consumers to determine the consumers' preferences especially in terms of personal factors.

Specifically, this study tries to answer the following problem:
1.   Do personal factors (gender, age, marital status, educational background, income, occupation) have any impact on the advertising media preferences?

The study is based on the comparison between two types of major advertisement that is traditional advertisements and online advertisement. The author trying to explore whether personal factors have any impact towards these two mediums. The overall objectives of this study is to analyse which media is more effective and able to attract Malaysian consumers, creating brand awareness and in the end, to achieve the total customer satisfaction. The reason behind to carry out the study is because lately, there are many types of media for advertisements in Malaysia. However, there are not many studies have been found tapping into this matter on whether personal factors have any impact on the media preferences. Nowadays, gender and age can be considered as important factors to be explored in advertising because different gender and age have different

perceptions and interest towards advertising. Marketers must know how to target and segment the market carefully. Therefore, this study attempt to explore customer behaviour for both types of media preferences. Since there is no study has been conducted relating to personal factors and advertising in Malaysia, therefore the finding is a new contribution. Also, this study has included different races (i.e. Malay, Chinese, Indian and others). Therefore, the findings are different from previous studies.

2. Literature Review

As stated earlier, there is absence of literature on personal factors in advertising especially in Asian studies. Therefore, most of the literatures were based on Western studies. Apart from that, most of the studies do not comparing both traditional and online advertising medium. This has made it difficult to check whether the research question or problem statement was not answered by the past studies. This study is definitely a new contribution in Malaysian studies especially in advertising.

2.1 Roles and Functions of Advertising

William, Sandra, John and May (2007) mention that over time, as the practice of advertising evolved, it played many different roles. It started out as a way to identify the maker of goods and that continues to be an important role even today. As technology, such as printing press, made it possible to reach a wider audience, advertising became more focused on providing commercial information along with identification of the product's maker. Because of the advances of industrialization which made it possible to produce more goods than the local market could absorb, advertising took on the role of creating demand for a product, which was done through two techniques: (1) hard sell approaches that use reasons to *persuade* consumers, and (2) soft-sell approaches that build an *image* for a brand and touch consumers' emotions.

One of the most important creative strategy decisions involves the choice of an appropriate appeal. Some promotional messages uses rational appeals and are designed to communicate information regarding a product or service and appeal to the logical aspects of the

consumer decision-making process. Other messages appeal to feelings in attempt to evoke some type of emotional reaction. William, Sandra, John and May (2007) also declare that persuasion sometimes uses the psychological appeal of the product to the consumer as the focus of a message strategy. An appeal connects with some emotion that makes the product particularly attractive or interesting, such as security, esteem, fears, sex and sensory pleasure. Although emotion is at the base of most appeals, in some situations appeals can also be logical, such as saving money for retirement. Appeals generally pinpoint the anticipated response of the audience to the product and the message. For example, if the price is emphasised in the ad, then the appeal is value, economy or savings. If the product saves time or effort, then the appeal is convenience. Advertisers use a status appeal to establish something as a high quality, expensive product. Persuasions, emotions response of the consumers' are part of consumer behaviour towards certain products or services. It may have negative or positive consequence towards products or services.

Arens (2006) also claim the purpose of advertising is also to identify products and differentiate them from others. It enables to communicate information about the products, its features, and its place of sale. Advertising may induce consumers to try new products and to suggest reuse, increase product use and this will stimulate the distribution of a product. Jaishri and Shruti (2006) agree that advertising aims at increasing usage. It attempts to generate sales by highlighting the variety of uses of a product, and the frequency of use. For example, advertisements highlight the various uses of mixers and grinders and shampoo advertisements advising viewers to wash their hair at least twice a week.

2.2 Perspective on Consumer Behaviour

Consumers' attitudes towards advertising and in particular attitudes towards advertisement are important to study as these attitudes are a major antecedent of brand awareness and brand attitudes (Lutz 1985, Rossiter & Percy 1997). Researchers in international and European consumer behaviour (e.g. Howkins, Best & Coney 1989; Van Raaij 1989) also propose that consumer attitudes and behaviour are interrelated, and attitudes may indicate a change or development in

their purchase behaviour. For instance, if consumers are showing increased belief in advertising, or favourable attitude towards advertising in general, companies may interpret this as an indication to a corresponding increase in use of their final purchase. Lutz (1985) defines general advertising attitude towards advertising as a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favourable or unfavourable manner to advertising in general.

Arens (2006) claim advertisers spend a lot of money to keep individuals and groups of individuals (markets) interested in their products. To succeed, they need to understand what makes potential customers behave the way they do. The advertiser's goal is to get enough relevant market data to develop accurate profiles of buyers in order to find the common ground (and symbols) for communication. This involves the study of consumer behaviour (the mental and emotional process and the physical activities of people who purchase and use goods and services to satisfy particular needs and wants). The behaviour of organizational buyers (the people who purchase products and services for use in business and government) is also very important.

As for online, Xia, Zafar, Morry, Goh, Tham and Lim (2003) believe although the Internet has traditionally been viewed and managed as a technical innovation, the acid test of e-commerce lies in the incorporation of consumers' needs and preferences into the nuts and bolts and Web site design and the marketer's e-commerce business concepts. E-commerce is no different from any other business model in that if an Internet marketers fails to develop a Web site (i.e. business location and customer interaction protocol) that delivers a satisfactory online experience and meaningful benefits (both as perceived by the online site visitor) the marketer will not succeed. Successful businesses are responsive to the needs and preferences of their customers.

According to Chingning, Ping, Risook, and Michael (2002) literature in advertising and Information Systems suggests that advertising in both traditional media and the Internet is either easily ignored by the audience or is perceived to have little value. Bogart (1985) argued that chances of careful processing of advertisements are lowered by the high number of advertisements competing for individuals'

attention on a daily basis. Limited time and mental resources make it difficult for the audience to dedicate sufficient attention to most advertisements. The development of the Internet is resulting in great growth of online advertising. This is making the competition for attention more intensive.

The intrusive tactics advertisers employ when competing for consumers' attention can be 'annoying' to the audiences (Sandage & Leckenby, 1980; Zhang, 2000; Rettie, Robinson &Jenner, 2001). Consequently, studies tend to show a generally negative public attitude towards advertising (Zanot, 1981; Alwit & Prabhaker, 1994). However, the above findings are not sufficient to deny the value of advertising as a vehicle of conveying information to the intended audiences. How the Internet should be differentiated from more traditional means of advertising is still under study (Eighmey, 1997; Bezjian et.al. 1998; Chen and Wells, 2000).

2.3. The Importance of Personal Factors in Advertising Strategies

The Internet has become a viable alternative to traditional media such as television and billboards. Of interest is the continuing and steady rise of online traffic well after the subsiding of enthusiasm associated with the dot-com craze. Although current figures fail to meet previous expectations, the online environment has established itself as a unique venue for commerce that has high growth potential. In the context of consumers interacting with an ad, the importance or relevance of the ad to consumers' current information needs would determine how involved a consumer is, which in turn would affect his or her perception of the ad's value (Chingning, Ping, Risook and Michael, 2002). This is in line with the discussion of a consumer's cognitive or affective needs (also called psychological motives) such as information learning, entertainment, personal identity, parasocial interaction, companionship and escape (Blumler, 1979; Katz et al, 1974; Rubin, 1981; 1983).

Apart from all of these, age, education, and income also serve as the basis for most advertising strategies and most of the advertisers using this basis to design message and choose appropriate media for the target market. According to William, Sandra, John and May

(2007), people in different stages of life have different needs. An advertising message must be geared to the target audience's age group and should be delivered through a medium that members of that group use. Age is a key factor in media plans because age usually determines what media to watch, listen or read.

AGE	RADIO	TV	CABLE	MAGAZINES	NEWSPAPERS	ONLINE
18-24	16%	11%	13%	17%	7%	13%
25-34	23	18	20	21	13	23
35-44	25	19	22	23	21	28
45-54	17	16	17	18	21	22
55-64	9	13	12	10	15	5
65 plus	10	24	15	10	23	9

Media Usage by Age
Adopted from: 'Advertising Principles and Effective IMC Practice' by William, Sandra, John and May (2007)

The level of education attained by consumers is also an influence on the advertising strategy. For advertisers, education tends to correlate with the type of medium consumers prefer as well as the specific elements or programs within a medium. Consumers with lower education are higher users of television especially cable. Consumers with higher education prefer printed media, the Internet and selected radio and cable stations. As for income, it may be the most often used demographic indicator for many advertisers. In respect to actual growth, Asia has seen a huge rise in spending by Chinese consumers. Companies such as Coke, Nike and Procter & Gamble are taking note of this by orientating their advertising to the Chinese in China. Advertisers like BMW is targeting their ad campaign towards this huge market (William, Sandra, John and May, 2007).

3. Methodology

Questionnaire and copy testing have been used for this study purposes. For questionnaire survey, out of 400 questionnaires distributed 358 were returned. The respondents are both internet users and non-internet users which comprised of all ages from 18 years and above. It takes nearly six months to complete the study. The research instruments have been designed easy to follow and the questions are particularly easy to answer and comprised of 6

sections. The designs of the questionnaires were based on Likert Scale (1932) as a method and multiple choices for the demographics section. In this study, simple random sampling method is selected. The population for this study is Malaysians that lives in Klang valley that uses both traditional and online medium. Malhotra and Peterson (2005) asserts that *simple random sampling* is a probability sampling technique in which each element in the population has a known an equal probability of selection. These samples are from all respondents including students, working people and marketers

A combination of copy testing and pre-testing advertisement has been used to addresses issues related to the effectiveness of each advertisement. According to Kinnear and Taylor (1996) copy testing is used in practice to refer to all aspects (colour, graphics, pictures, action, and so on) of ads appearing in all media. For copy testing purposes, around 40 potential respondents from different ages (18 years onwards) were involved in the process. Print ads test by Dillon, Madden and Firtle (1994) has also being used for magazines and newspapers advertisements. From these tests, the following information has been obtained.

- Brand recall
- Persuasion
- Attractions
- Pre and post purchase intentions

Those 40 respondents were tested from all mediums, online and traditional. Around 20 different advertisements from each types of medium (including newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, SMS and MMS). They were asked to complete the questionnaire. Then they were given advertisements from all types of mediums. In order to conduct the test, group of respondents were invited in a comfortable room to view several commercials for all mediums. They were given advertisements from newspaper, followed by magazines, radio, TV and Internet. Before viewing all the advertisements, each respondent was asked brand preference information about a number of product categories. After viewing the commercials and advertisements, respondents were again asked to express their brand preferences. When the respondents completed the questionnaire and had been exposed to around 20 to 25 minutes of all types of advertisements

from every type of mediums, they were given a second questionnaire and asked to record their recall of any advertisements that had been showed and played. They were asked a range of questions to examine their level of recall and preferences, ranging from whether or not they have heard any advertising at all, to naming the brand that have been advertised. The results from those processes have determined the effectiveness and preferences for the advertisements by consumers'.

In order to test the effectiveness of radio advertisements, central location methodology by Erica Riebe and John Dawes (2006) has been used. However, the researcher made slight changes to suit with Malaysian environment. This method was chosen because it provided the optimum balance between realism and the ability to control for effects that might distort results. The respondents were played a radio broadcast (which in reality it was a recording). The radio recording consists of a combination of music and radio commercials. Each respondent was exposed around 20 to 25 minute mixtures of advertising and music, but was randomly allocated.

Since there is no study tapped into personal factors in advertising, this study has improved previous studies by looking into personal factors and combining both questionnaire and copy testing in one study.

Hypothesis was drawn from the study:-
H_1 : There are no significance differences between the usage of Internet advertising and the usage of other mass media for personal factors as sources of advertising information.

4. Findings

The table shows that personal factor which is the dimension of consumer behaviour that is entered into the regression model and R = .488, R Square = .238. The ANOVA table shows that F value of 55.537 is significant at 0.000 levels. The results show that around 24% of the variance (R-square) in customer satisfaction has been significantly explained by the independent variable. The coefficient table shows that personal factors has positive relationship with customer satisfaction

The analysis shows that:

- Personal factors (such as gender, age, marital status, educational background, income, occupation and location) give an impact to customer satisfaction on the types of advertising media preferences.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	488 [a]	.238	.234	.42289

a. Predictors: (Constant),personal factors

ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	19.864	2	9.932	55.537	.000 [a]
	Residual	63.487	355	.179		
	Total	83.351	357			

a. Predictors: (Constant), personal factor

b. Dependent Variable: customer satisfaction

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.870	.172		16.652	.000
	personal factor	.289	.041	.419	7.107	.000

a. Dependent Variable: customer satisfaction

4.1 Hypothesis Testing

At the 0.05 significance level, there is a strong evidence to reject H_1 (mean = 0.27, standard deviation = 1.961, P-value = 0.009. Since the results are significance at 0.05, the alternative hypothesis of H_1 is asserted indicating that there are significance differences between the usage of Internet advertising and the usage of other mass media for personal factors as sources of advertising information.

5. Conclusion

From the study, it shows that personal factors do impact the choice of advertising medium. Among the traditional and online advertising, Malaysian still prefer television as the best medium. Although online is considered as alternative medium, but it is peaking up and many Malaysians tend to move towards online medium. Malaysian government is promoting the use of technology in Malaysia. Many schools, colleges and universities are encouraged to use online as a medium of interaction. The only limitation for this study is to have many people that uses both mediums especially adults that age 50 and above. Most of this group of people were not IT literate.

Consumer behaviour is one of the factors that create customer satisfaction. Advertising can awaken problem recognition and shift attitudes, both of which can result in repeat or change behaviour (Barry, 2002). The study shows that males and females exhibit different beliefs and attitudes toward traditional media advertising and online advertising which stimulated consumer behaviour and satisfaction. In fact, educational background and race also reveal diverse attitudes towards advertising media preferences. Discerning differences of gender advertising effectiveness offers direct marketers the opportunity to spend advertising expenditure in a more targeted fashion. Studies concerning males' versus females' general advertising effectiveness levels indicate that gendered differences are apparent. If gendered advertising beliefs, attitudes, and consumer behaviour pattern exist, it is vital for advertisers to recognize them, understand them and use them to design gender specific advertisements (Lori & Korgaonkar, 2003). The study also reveals that the usage of both medium shows a difference. Internet user may use Internet as a source of information including for advertisement more often compared to the non-user where non user obviously is prone more towards traditional advertisements. Both medium have own advantages and disadvantages. The study has shown that the advantages of traditional advertising medium have captured consumers' attention which leads to their satisfaction. Since this is a new study in Malaysia, the results from the study has contributes the new body of knowledge.

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