

The Relation between Positive Brand Emotions and Recall

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Abstract

Brand memory and ad memory is a kind of mental storage that consumers apply to while making decisions about brands and buying. A positive ad memory for a given brand plays an effective role for consumers to develop a positive emotion towards that brand. One of the positive factors of ad memory is ad likability. Ad likability is one of the most important factors that helps recall ads and improve ad memory for brands.

In this study, the relationships between ad likability, ad memory and emotions to brands were examined. The method and questionnaire techniques were devised in accordance with the hypothesis that liked ads are recalled more and ad likability affects feelings toward a given brand positively. The variables of ad likability of university students were also investigated. The study included 1208 students studying at Selcuk University in Turkey. All students were sampled randomly and inquired by a survey.

Keywords: Ad Likability, Brand, Recall, Emotions

Literature Review

How advertising works is the most important issue prized both academically and sectorally. Understanding this process will contribute much to deciphering the codes to effective advertisement. Effective advertisement means the realization of the desired effects of ad communication on consumers. Such effects on consumers created by means of ads include positive feelings toward the ad, brand recall, ad recall, persuasion, and buying. Specific research studies designed to determine the variables of these effects will assist greatly in the subject of effective advertisement. Three of the specific factors that make ads effective on consumers, namely brand memory, ad memory and ad likability, are especially important.

Recall is physiological factor that play key role in human life related to every things. Recall rather than recalling knowledge from mind has more forward function as human internal process. At the same time, recall described as one of the important physiological factor of learning process. The historical knowledge and experiences have significant impacts on current thinking, senses, and behaviors (Foster, 2008). If we accepted consumption behaviors as learning action, we can say recall has start up function for customer behavior and decision process.

How data from all communication activities that consumers are exposed to are encoded and organized in one's memory is the most important factor that affects the decision-making process of consumers (Bettman, 1979).

The theories on how recall works, in classical description, encoding, storage, and retrieval are three phases of recall. Beside those contemporary theories, recall has selective and interpretive phases. In other word, recall uses for more than storing knowledge. After learning new knowledge and storing than recall select this knowledge, interpretive, and integrated with old knowledge. In this way, learned and remembered things use in efficiently since contemporary theorizes explain recall as dynamic process (Foster, 2008).

Ads manifest their effect in the human brain by evoking emotions, connotations, and recalls associated with a given brand (Du Plessis, 2005). In this sense, recall need to be managed in brand communication as process.

One of the important models on mechanism of recall process is semantic network that explain knowledge storage in mind as collaborated nodes. Whenever a node coded in mind, it becomes potential sources of activation for the others nodes. The activation time of recall happens based upon on node code. Brand imagine and brand identification occur when consumers read for brand components (Keller, 1993). The advertisement and other communication applications create recall networks. The interaction of brand collaboration senses are important behaviors and preferences with respect of brands. (Ratnayake, Broderick and Mitchell, 2010). In this case, the positive recall of consumers on brand may be one of the factors for brand preferences of consumers. Especially being remembered by consumers as good brand create dominant prefer factor for the brand (Hansen and Christensen, 2007).

The first duty of an ad is to attract attention to remind consumers of the message. Emotion, here a stimulating and attention-drawing factor, triggers and reinforces associations created by ads. This can also be described as a learning process (Du Plessis, 2005). Ad likability is one of the most important feelings that activate memory. Tulving and Thomson emphasize the encoding process while explaining the effects of ad likability on memory. One of the most important factors involved in encoding and storing the received data and retrieving it at a later time is reminder signs and clues. Positive reminders are highly effective during storage and recall (Tulving and Thomson, 1973). In cases of ad unlikability, as the opposite term of ad likability, the message can be totally rejected during the encoding process or create a negative consumer reaction against the brand during the recall process (Youn, Sun ie., 2001). Brand Recall Brand awareness is a dominant factor when it comes to deciding which brand the consumer will consider at the time of purchasing (Hansen and Christensen, 2007).The senses of consumers for brand and advertisements play main role for perching.

The most fundamental aim of advertising is to succeed in entering the consumer's mind, namely occupying a place in the consumer's memory. However, brand recall and ad recall are not enough for ad communication to be able to persuade consumers to buy. A positive connotation in the consumer's memory will bring along desirable consumer behavior, which is mainly achieved by ad likability. When consumers like the ads that they are exposed to, they tend to recall and recognize them and develop a positive memory for the brand. Liked ads are better recognized and recalled. Ad likability, therefore, can be said to be the positive marker of brand memory and ad memory.

Emotions have an important role in directing responses to stimuli. Recalled data with stronger emotional background will ultimately lead to greater attention to stimuli. The existence of positive emotional background about ad recall stimulates feelings more. A negative emotional background, on the other hand, causes the stimulant to be evaluated with adverse feelings. When exposed to an ad, consumers make their decisions in line with stimulant indicators as to whether to pay attention to it or not, and emotions play a decisive role in this process. Even in cases in which ads evoke emotions but fail to draw enough attention to the stimulant, consumers can still recall at least the visual and verbal content. This is regarded as one of the reasons that explain why it is better for ads to induce positive emotional responses in consumers (Du Plessis, 2005). Feeling is measurement of behaviors thought brand and advertisement. The brand preferences objective depends on advertisement feeling either negatives or positives (Hansen and Christensen, 2007).

Ad likability means a positive emotion and a feeling of satisfaction toward ads. Unlikability, however, can be explained as a negative feeling of dissatisfaction and averseness. It has been expressed elsewhere that individuals tend, as a reactionary response, to welcome positive emotions and avoid negative ones. In this regard, ad likability can be said to be an important factor in the process of advertising and of its efficaciousness on consumers. Ad likability as a concept is not equivalent to entertainment, nor is it only finding an ad funny. On the other hand, meaningful message contents, empathetic ads, and ads with a warm tune may well create ad likability (Du Plessis, 2005). The transferring of positive sense create advertisement preference. Brand from advertisement is positive factor of sales. Also, increasing amount of advertisement create pure caution of watchers where advertisement preference is one of the factors for keeping recall in leave (Fam and Waller, 2004).

Ad memory created through ad communication is effective in the process of persuading consumers and making them buy. Ad recall during the consumer-behavior process does not always lead to persuasion or buying, but it is an important factor in persuading consumers to buy (Bettman, 1979; Ambler and Burne, 1999; Braun-La Tour and Zaltman, 2006; Mowen, 1990; Du Plessis, 2005). Therefore, failure of consumers to recall or recognize an ad poses a problem in terms of the desirable effects (awareness, persuasion, buying) that brands aim to make.

Consumers generally tend to recall ads that they like or evaluate to be positive (Keller, 1987; Youn, Sun et al., 2001; Du Plessis, 1994; Walker and Dubitsky, Greene, 1992; Leigh, Zinkhan and Swaminathan, 2006).

Erik Du Plessis reported a mainly positive correlation between ad likability and recall (Du Plessis, 1994). This correlation is also confirmed by the results of other studies in literature. In their research study, Walker and Dubitsky determined that ad likability was closely related to such ad measurement techniques as recall, brand preference, and persuasion. In the surveys conducted by Millward Brown and Ogilvy Center research companies, it was found that there was a linear correlation between the variables of ad likability, awareness, and persuasion (Walker and Dubitsky, 1994). Another researcher who studied ad likability, Greene, stated that there was a strong correlation between likability and persuasion (Greene, 1992). It was also found in Copy Research Validity Project, one of the most important studies ever conducted about advertising efficacy, that there was a significant correlation between ad likability and sales (Haley and Baldinger, 1991).

In the present study, the correlation between recalling television commercials and ad likability and the sense of brand preference was investigated.

Methodology

The measurement of memory performance is basically carried out by two methods (as direct measurement tests): recall and recognition tests (Krishnan and Chakravarti, 1999). Recognition may be interpreted as recall with an extreme amount of aid. Recognition is different from recall and in its extreme form it may reflect pictorial holistic information storage in the memory rather than processed and evaluated information (Hansen and Christensen, 2007). Research studies investigating recall and recognition have been designed to detect the traces of advertising in memory. The difference between the two methods derives from the different clues and materials used to stimulate memory. Recognition is based on viewing, whereas recall is basically a result of the activation of memory by oral communication. This distinction between the two scanning methods is essential in understanding memory better. Recognition is something about whether individuals remember what they previously saw or heard. Recall, however, refers to forming or reconstructing a

piece of information in their minds without an external assistance (Loftus and Loftus, 1976; Mowen, 1990; Du Plessis, 1994).

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between recall in television commercials and ad likability. The study is expected to test the validity of the following hypotheses.

H 1. Liked ads are recalled more.

H 2. Ad likability affects feelings toward a given brand positively.

H 3. Ad likability in TV commercials may vary depending on likability variables.

Students included in this study were asked to tell without assistance what recent TV commercials they recalled. Recall technique was used to stimulate their memory. What was considered important here was not which specific commercials they recalled, but how much they liked the commercials they recalled in their answers. An interval scale with a score band from 1 to 10 was used for the assessment of their level of ad likability. This scale was especially preferred because of its efficiency (Buddenbaum and Novak, 2001; Bailey, 1994) in detecting the significant variations found in descriptions of feelings made by the subjects included in the study.

In order to assess the ad likability variables of the participants in the survey, a likability scale was designed by taking into consideration other likability scales and descriptive adjectives used by researchers in previous studies focusing on ad likability (Biel and Bridgewater, 1990; Biel, 1998; Greene, 1992; Walker and Dubitsky, 1994; Du Plessis, 1994). The likability scale developed by Biel and Bridgewater (1990) was taken as the basis for the present study, and some of the descriptive adjectives used by other researchers studying the same topic were also adapted and added to this scale. Descriptive adjectives in literature were investigated, similar ones were combined, and different likability descriptions that were thought to contribute significant results to the research were included in the scale used in this study.

Prepared by utilizing all variables and descriptive words devised for ad likability in literature, the ad likability scale was taken as the main basis for the assessment of ad likability variables of the participants surveyed in this study and comprised of such variables as ‘creative’, ‘meaningful’, ‘entertaining’, ‘realistic’, ‘warm’, and ‘clear’. Each factor was presented to the

subjects with their specific descriptive adjectives. The words describing likability variables used in the survey were selected after a comprehensive scan of the literature (Aaker and Stayman, 1990; Du Plessis, 1994; Du Plessis, 2005; Biel and Bridgwater, 1990; Biel, 2004; Haley and Baldinger, 1991; Greene, 1992; Walker and Dubitsky, 1994).

The data from the research study conducted by using a survey technique were obtained from 1208 students at Selcuk University, one of the biggest universities in Turkey with a student population of almost 60,000. In the study, 1208 samples were randomly selected among students. The data obtained was analyzed and evaluated using normal frequency curve.

Conclusion

Table 1. Order of Significance of Likability Variables Effective in Ad Likability

Likability Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Creative	1045	4,0354	1,75012
Meaningful	1045	3,9167	1,62587
Entertaining	1045	3,7043	1,58284
Realistic	1045	3,6086	1,52593
Warm	1045	3,1445	1,56506
Clear	1045	2,5780	1,74222
Valid N (listwise)	1045		

All the subjects participated in the survey were asked to answer the question ‘Which likability criterion is more important for you to like a TV commercial?’ and to list the likability variables for their answers in order of importance. Normal frequency curve analysis of the data obtained showed that the most effective likability variable for TV commercial was ‘creative’ ($\bar{X} = 4,0354$). Then the variables ‘meaningful’ ($\bar{X} = 3,9167$), ‘entertaining’ ($\bar{X} = 3,7043$), ‘realistic’ ($\bar{X} = 3,6086$), ‘warm’ ($\bar{X} = 3,1445$), and ‘clear’ ($\bar{X} = 2,5780$) follow, respectively.

Table 2. The Correlation between Ad Likability and Brand Emotions & Recall

Statements	N	Mean		Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
I recall the ads I like more	1205	4,2456	,02484	,86232
If I like an ad, this affects my brand emotions positively	1204	3,8513	,03026	1,05003
I do not recall ads I do not like	1204	3,3156	,03371	1,16974
I have a negative attitude toward the brands whose ads I do not like	1203	3,0607	,03036	1,05291

The analysis of the effects of ad likability on brand emotions and recall showed that there was a correlation between them. The investigation was performed by Likert type scale. The answer choices to the statements used in the survey were ‘totally disagree / disagree / neutral / agree / totally agree’. Participants showed a greater tendency to recall those ads they liked ($\bar{X} = 4,2456$). For proof check of this variable, the same participants were asked to answer the level of not recalling the ads they did not like, and it was found that they did not recall the ads they did not like ($\bar{X} = 3,3156$). The answers to questions about the effects of ad likability on brand emotions revealed that ad likability affected brand emotions positively ($\bar{X} = 3,8513$), whereas unlikability had an adverse effect ($\bar{X} = 3,0607$).

Table 3. Order of Relation Between Recall and Likability

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic
Recall 1 Liking	983	138,00	1,00	139,00	8,2848	,19414	6,08697	37,051
Recall 2 Liking	910	25,00	1,00	26,00	7,5055	,13541	4,08484	16,686
Recall 3 Liking	810	79,00	1,00	80,00	7,2531	,17225	4,90240	24,034
Valid N (listwise)	693							

The question ‘Which of the commercials you have watched recently do you recall?’ was asked to investigate the relationship between recall and ad likability, and they were also asked to rate their level of ad likability on an interval scale of a score band from 1 to 10. Participants specified the first commercial they recalled and rated the likability level for it, and then they

also stated and rated the second and third commercials they recalled next, respectively. When the normal frequency curves of the ad likability level of the recalled ads were compared, it was detected that the likability level of the first recalled ad was the greatest ($\bar{X} = 8,2848$), and that of the second was ($\bar{X} = 7,5055$), which was greater than the third ($\bar{X} = 7,2531$). This result indicated that as the level of recall got greater, so did ad likability.

As a result, there was a significant correlation between ad likability and recall. Liked ads tended to be recalled more, and it was observed that as the level of recall increased, so did ad likability. Thus, 'ad likability' should be taken into consideration when it comes to ad memory. In the answers to the questions devised to measure which factors created ad likability, it was found that the most important qualities of ads were their being creative, meaningful (useful, informative, and suitable), and entertaining. Another important finding of the study was that ad likability affected brand emotions positively. As results, there are correlation within advertisement preference, sense for brand, and recall. The positive sense and positive recall help positive sense for advertisement and brand.

The methodology used in this study, including consumer groups from different socio-demographic background, is regarded significant and necessary in terms of improving the subject of the relationship between the variables of ad memory and ad likability. With regard to consumer behavior, it is important that the two variables operate in the same direction and with the same strength. Negative recall might not be effective in persuasion. On the other hand, it seems more likely for a strong consumer memory formed by such positive feelings as likability to create desired effects in consumer behavior.

In conclusion, memory factor, that is, occupying a place in the consumer's mind, is important with respect to advertising, and it is also a sectoral obligation necessitated by competition. Ads are one of the most important stimuli in securing the existence of a brand in memories. They are used to activate consumers' memories when needed. However, while ad recall is important, attention should also be given to how they are recalled. Ads, especially TV commercials, hold a place in memory as positive or negative images. What creates the image is the background of communication media such as advertising, which the brand has formed in time. At this very point, likability is regarded as one of the most important factors that create positive images and feelings for brands. Further research on other specific variables

like ad likability that are regarded significant and related to ad recall will shed light on the subject of ad memory.

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