An Impulse Purchase Conformity Tool for Interactive Television Advertising

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ABSTRACT

Various studies have proposed factors of impulse purchase in different advertising mediums like website, mobile, traditional retail store and traditional television. However, to the best of researchers’ knowledge, none of the impulse purchase model is dedicated towards impulse purchase tendency for interactive TV (iTV) advertising. This study focuses on the development of an impulse purchase conformity tool for iTV advertising. The tool is mainly designed to help advertisers determine the effectiveness and persuasiveness of the iAd design, which can increase impulse purchase tendency towards the advertised product. The conformity tool encapsulates the elements of persuasive advertising and consumer behavior theory based on the system approach. Findings from the expert reviews has shown that majority of the experts agreed and perceived the conformity tool as useful to the advertisers; help to increase the effectiveness of the iAd design; and help to increase impulse purchase tendency among consumers.

Keywords: Interactive television advertising, persuasive advertising, impulse purchase, conformity tool

I INTRODUCTION

Interactive television (iTV) is not new, but has existed since the 1950's. After several decades of trial, iTV technology is now getting massive attentions from technologist and also academics. Propelling further to this was the recent marriage of Internet and TV that has spurred interests of many to exploit the potentials of this technologies convergence. After all, advertising still remains as the main profit contributors to in TV broadcasting. The modern features of iTV provide new opportunities for advertisers to increase the effectiveness of TV advertising messages through interactive advertising (iAd). In general, the goals of iAd prone to be similar to traditional TV advertising, which means many of the traditional measures of advertising effectiveness remain relevant, even in a world of interactive media. However, iAd also has some properties that expand the range of potential objectives and that facilitate the acquisition of traditional measures of advertising effectiveness as deliberately discussed in (Pavlou& Stewart, 2000; Cauberghe& De Pelsmacker, 2006; Giotis&Lekakos, 2009).

As far as impulse purchase is concerned, the importance of impulse purchase have been widely recognized in traditional commerce, which allows the marketers to attract customers in many ways such as store position products, store promotion, product packaging in an enticing way to increase impulse purchase, and getting consumers to be impulsive (Dholakia, 2000).

Meanwhile, various studies have proposed the factors of impulse purchase in different domain such as website, mobile, traditional retail store and traditional television. However, to the best of researchers’ knowledge none of the impulse purchase model is dedicated to increase impulse purchase in iTV advertising. In fact, some elements and guidelines that should be considered when developing the iTV advertising are not clearly identified in the existing models.

Therefore, this study focused on the development of a conformity tool of impulse purchase for interactive television advertising. The conformity tool was deliberately designed to assist advertiser to determine the effectiveness and persuasiveness of the iAd design, which can influence the impulse purchase tendency towards advertised product.

II ITV ADVERTISING

Advertising through iTV allows users to have two-way communication by sending or requesting additional information back to the advertiser or programmer (IAB, 2011; Digisoft, 2004). In general, the traditional TV advertising uses push model, where advertisers send information to passive and non-interactive viewers (Vennou et al., 2009). On the contrary, interactive advertising in iTV is based on the original pull model, where the viewers have active access to the contents and active interaction with the services, where they are able to purchase or receive the information requested for specific goods via remote control (Kelly & Wolf, 1997).

A review of relative papers and reports (Bellman, 2004; Cauberghhe&Pelsmacker, 2006; IAB, 2011; Vennou, Mantzari&Lekakos, 2011) lead to the conclusion that iAd can be categorized into four main types: (1) Impulse Response - enables direct
prompt for action to the viewer through an on-screen button directly associated with remote control’s colored button, (2) Microsite – dividing the screen into two parts; a part where the interaction with the advertisement takes place, and the part where the program flows normally, (3) DAL(Dedicated Advertiser Location) - provides appearance of graphics in full screen, the existence of more choices and the flexible data collection, and (4) MiniDAL(Mini Dedicated Advertiser Location) – a more flexible presentation because they offer the ability to choose either the full screen mode or the Picture in Picture mode.

Through the years, impulse purchase has also been made easier by innovations, such as telemarketing, debit cards, and credit cards. In the last decade, rapid developments in information technology have substantially changed the landscape of consumer behavior. The retailing availability for the Internet has brought about an increase impulse purchase (Madhavaram&Laverie, 2004). Consequently, impulse purchase accounts for a large volume of product sales every year contributing to interactive television advertising (Hausman, 2000). Thus, this study will focus on impulse purchase conformity tool for iTV advertising.

III IMPULSE PURCHASE

Several researchers have proposed variety of definitions of impulse buying. As an example, Rook (1987) defined it as an unplanned purchase, which happens when a consumer experiences positive effects when exposed to a stimulus. Later, Piron (1991) integrated the definition and proposed a new comprehensive definition of impulse buying. Particularly, it contains four characteristics, which are suggestion, reminder, pure, and unplanned impulse buying. Suggestion occurs when a consumer sees a product and tries to visualize the need for it (Stern, 1962). Meanwhile, reminder occurs when a consumer is reminded to purchase the product when he or she sees it (Stern, 1962). Pure impulse purchase occurs when a consumer purchases products impulsively. The consumer may remember about running out of that product or may still remember an advertisement about the interest of item, which sparks the impulse purchase. On the contrary, unplanned impulse buying occurs when consumers do not plan to do any purchasing, but search for and take advantage of promotions in the market (Stern, 1962). The common link across these different types of impulse purchase is that the purchase is a result of an exposure to the stimulus (Piron, 1991).

This study agrees with the latter definition of impulse purchase - unplanned impulse buying. It is also claimed that impulse buying involves an emotional reaction to the stimulus such as the product, packaging and point-of-purchase display. In addition, this study also associates the impulse purchase tendency with persuasiveness. Simply because, in order to make consumers buy impulsively, persuasive elements play significant parts in influencing the consumers to buy the product (Trocchia&Janda, 2002).

A few researchers have studied impulse purchase behavior for different requirements. Dholakia (2000) proposed one of the most detailed theoretical frameworks that explain the impulse buying process. Meanwhile, Dittmar, Beattie, and Friese (1996) explained why consumers purchase products impulsively and Adelaar, Chang, Lancendorfer, Lee, and Morimoto (2003) studied on how media formats have an influence on impulse buying intentions. However, these previous researches do not include how impulse purchase occurs in iTV advertising.

Therefore, this conformity tool will focus on impulse purchase in iTV advertising. This tool will determine the effectiveness and persuasiveness of iAd design, which can increase impulse purchase tendency towards advertised product. In other words, when the iAd design embeds as many persuasive elements as possible, it will increase the impulse purchase tendency towards advertised product/brand.

IV METHODOLOGY

The Figure 5 explains that this study involves two phases of activities which are specification identification and conformity tool.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Output</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>Specification identification - Document study - Preliminary study</td>
<td>Impulse purchase and persuasive elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 2</td>
<td>Convert elements gathered in phase one to conformity tool</td>
<td>Analysis from expert on conformity tool elements</td>
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Fig.5. Methodology in this study

The activities involved in the first phase include document study and preliminary study. From this phase, data regarding impulse purchase and persuasive elements were gathered. The second phase is to convert the data gathered in phase one to conformity tool. From this phase, the analysis from expert on conformity tool was gathered.
IMPULSE PURCHASE CONFORMITY TOOL FOR iTV ADVERTISING

A. Preliminary Study

Before the development of conformity tool was carried out, a survey was done with 80 advertisers in Malaysia. The objective of this survey was to determine whether there is a need to develop such a tool. During the survey the advertisers were also asked whether they will use the tool and is the tool important to them.

B. Analysis of preliminary study

Result from the preliminary study (Figure 1) shows that majority of the advertisers (90%) said that such tool is important and will bring much benefits to them and they are interested to use and even buy such a tool. Meanwhile, 7% of the advertisers said such a tool is not important to them and they will not use it, and 3% have no comment about such tool.

As a conclusion, it shows that there is a need to develop a conformity tool that can help advertiser to determine the effectiveness and persuasiveness of the advertising design that can increase the impulse purchase tendency among consumers. In addition, most of advertisers perceived the idea of having such tool will help them to provide a good quality advertisement regardless an interactive or non-interactive advertising.

C. Elements of Persuasive Advertising in the Conformity Tool

The conformity tool consists of the three major categories; strategy, general tactics, and media specific tactics (Armstrong, 2010). These categories are presented in an order that reflects a natural progression in the design process. They begin with the more general issues and move to the more specific. In formulating these categories, the system approach was used. Generally, the system approach is a problem-solving method which helps in analyse the problem and identify alternative solutions, then evaluate the effectiveness and worth of the solution. By using system approach in formulating these categories, it offers opportunities for advertisers to improve the effectiveness of their advertising in delivering long term benefits for sellers and consumers.

The strategy section is organized into four areas; information, influence, emotion, and mere exposure. Then it follows by general tactics section which is more detail than the previous section. It is divided into four areas; resistance, gaining acceptance, crafting the message, and attracting attention. Last categories are media specific tactics, which include still media, motion media and interactivity. Interactivity was added to the original list (Armstrong, 2010) which is not included. Since the focus of this study is towards the impulse purchase tendency in iTV advertising, thus the interactivity element is seen as crucial to cater for both interaction and navigation styles. Table 1 shows descriptions of each element.

Table 1. Descriptions of persuasive advertising elements in the conformity tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STRATEGY</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>The information in advertisements should emphasize on product characteristics, price descriptions, emphasizes of product quality, and include product distribution which is when and how to get the product in order for consumer to be impulsive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence</td>
<td>Influence is important to motivate customers to buy impulsively. It is focus more on examining the strategies that advertisers can employ to influence consumers to take action. Thus, the advertisement should include the reason and proof why product is important and widely used. Another example to influence consumers by giving special promotion, free gift or rewards for additional purchase. In addition to enhance believability, support by providing trial and free sample for new product.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mere exposure</td>
<td>Mere exposure emphasizes on advertisement which have not provide information or emotion but only the product, brand name or logo. For example when consumers see a product or brand in a familiar and positive situations, they will remember the product and associate that product with the good feeling stimulated by the situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion</td>
<td>Emotion emphasizes on the process of convincing consumers to make a purchase. For example once people have become familiar with the brand, advertiser can shift the emphasis from information toward emotion. Thus,</td>
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An advertisement with emotional elements such as happiness, trust, enjoyment, enthusiasm, and self-identity can affect consumer expectations toward the product.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>GENERAL TACTICS</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Attention</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Advertisement must first gain attention if it is to have any impact. In order to get attention from consumer, advertiser should emphasize brand identifiers in using logos to express meanings or emotions. In addition, advertisement should consider a short memorable slogan (tagline) with the brand name and benefit, as well using attractive visual, and attractive model that support product.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Message</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message is important in getting consumers to be impulsive. It deals with the crafting of messages to communicate information through words, pictures, sound, and colour. For example, using powerful text and interesting, attractive tone, the message simplicity and clarity, using informative color and illustration and the argument used should be rational in order to make consumer buy impulsively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acceptance</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles for gaining acceptance should be considered for all advertising. Once the audience is in a receptive mode, the advertisement should seek acceptance of the message. All of acceptance elements such as demonstration of product problem and solution, show data evidence, endorsement by celebrities, experts or consumers, product comparison, word of mouth and testimonial should be clear in order to be accepted by consumer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resistance</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are main sources for resistance to persuasion. First, a person might already have a strong belief on an issue and thus be unwilling to consider other viewpoints. And second, a person might be averse to rational arguments about a particular topic. So, much advertising seeks some type of behavioural change, so the action on reducing resistance is often relevant. Example of resistance elements are demonstrate product in new perspectives, consider using story, brand emphasis, credible spokesperson and customer involvement.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>MEDIA SPECIFIC TACTICS</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Still Media</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Still media emphasize on messages that contain complex information. It allows the customer to decide when to read an advertisement and at what pace. Still media consist of elements such as headline, pictures, text, structure of body text, typeface and layout which play an important role in order to make an advertisement more quality and create a high perceived value for the product.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Motion Media</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Motion media focus on how to create advertisement that emphasize on emotional rather than informative appeals. It much focuses on simple demonstrations reinforcing consumer beliefs rather than changing them. Motion media consists of scenes, voice, music and sound, pace, video, transition, animation, graphic, audio, effect and 3D images that play an important role to present the creative advertisement that can generate high emotional appeal until able to persuade consumer to buy impulsively.</td>
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Next section shows the detail on how conformity tool will function together with the interface displays.

D. User Interface of the Conformity Tool

First, this conformity tool requires user to log into the system (Figure 1).

![Figure 1. Login Interface.](image)

Next, the system will display the three main categories, which are strategy, general tactics and media specific tactics. The strategy sections is divided into four areas; (1) information, (2) mere exposure, (3) influence and (4) emotion as shown in Figure 2.

![Figure 2. Strategy elements](image)

Where as Figure 3 shows the general tactics section, which consists of (1) attention, (2) message, (3) acceptance and (4) resistance.
The third section is the media specific tactics, which consists of; (1) still media, (2) motion media, and (3) interactivity (see Figure 4).

Furthermore, if advertisers need to know more explanation for each element, they could click the tiny square besides each elements and the explanation of elements will be displayed (as shown in Figure 5).

After completing the list checking, the system will show percentage of impulse purchase tendency in the iAd design (as depicted in Figure 6). The system will calculate how many elements were applied in design of the iAd. If more elements applied, the higher the estimated impulse purchase tendency will be.

VI  SYSTEM EVALUATION

The conformity tool was validated through expert review method. Six experts went through the review process and the they were chosen based on the following criteria: (1) they possess qualifications in advertising, marketing or related areas, and/or (2) they have been working, studying, researching, or teaching in advertising/marketing area for at least five years.

A. System Analysis

The objective of the expert review was to validate the proposed elements included in the tool and also to measure experts’ perceived usefulness of the tool. During the review, the experts were asked whether they agree or not with the following statements, (1) the conformity tool is helpful to advertiser, (2) the conformity tool help to increase the effectiveness of the iAd design, (3) the conformity tool help to increase the persuasiveness of the iAd design, and (4) the conformity tool help to increase the impulse purchase tendency of the iAd.

B. Findings

Figure 7 shows the analysis from the experts’ feedbacks.

From the analysis summary as depicted in Figure 9, majority of the experts agreed that the conformity tool is helpful to the advertiser (100% agreed); can help to increase the effectiveness (100% agreed) and persuasiveness (100% agreed) of the iAd design; and also help to increase the impulse purchase tendency of the iAd (83.34% agreed).

In addition, experts were also encouraged to give their additional comments about the conformity tool. Table 2 displays the comments from all of the experts. Some comments were rephrased from the original versions to convey clearer meaning.
Moreover, findings from the expert reviews has shown that majority of the experts agreed and perceived the conformity tool as useful to the advertisers; help to increase the effectiveness and persuasiveness of the iAd design; and help to increase impulse purchase tendency towards advertised product.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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REFERENCES


From the comments as depicted in Table 2, it can be concluded that majority of the experts inquired for clearer explanations of some elements in the conformity tool. Besides that, two of the experts suggested the inclusion of images or symbols to some elements to make it recognizable. Also, three of the experts suggested ways to improve the performance of the conformity tool.

VII CONCLUSION

This study agrees with the effect of persuasive advertising in making the consumer to buy impulsively. Hence, three categories of persuasive advertising from (Armstrong, 2010) are studied and enhanced as the main reference to conform the impulse purchase level in iTV advertising. The impulse purchase conformity tool for iTV advertising is specifically designed for advertiser. By developing this application it will not only helps advertiser to create effective advertisement but it can also be a guide to the new advertisers to learn to design effective advertising.

Table 2. Comments from the experts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expert</th>
<th>Expert Reviews</th>
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| Expert 1 | 1) The conformity tool is very helpful to help advertiser to determine to the effectiveness and persuasiveness of advertising design.  
2) The conformity tool can increase the impulse purchase level of the iAd design in order to make consumers buy impulsively. |
| Expert 2 | 1) It is a good study because it focus on behaviour that never been studied in oversea. In oversea they just focus on the profit without studying the behaviour.  
2) The study also look into value of buying culture among Malaysian. |
| Expert 3 | 1) The elements in conformity tool could be further explained to avoid vaguness.  
2) The conformity tool could be improved by looking into loyalty perspectives in addition to the impulse purchase aspect. |
| Expert 4 | 1) The benefit from using the conformity tool could have been optimized if an ideal number of 5-6 users (i.e. advertisers) could evaluate the same iAd using the tool and then calculate the average result. |
| Expert 5 | 1) The conformity tool could have been better with insertion of images/symbols for relevant elements to make them clearer and easier to understand.  
2) The tool provides excellent guide to the advertiser especial for the beginner as it help them learn how to create an effective iAd. |
| Expert 6 | 1) Overall the conformity tool is easy to understand but might need more explanations for some elements.  
2) The conformity tool could have been better with insertion of images/symbols for relevant elements to make them clearer and easier to understand. |