

**Recall and Recognition Effectiveness on Brands Presented in Different Visual Planes and Advertisement Contexts During a Sport Telecast**

*Brad Hill, Griffith University*

*B. Christine Green, University of Texas at Austin*

**Marketing**

**Saturday, June 1, 2013**

**20-minute oral presentation  
(including questions)  
(Room 406)**

**Abstract 2013-185**

**8:55 AM**

The purpose of this study was to compare effectiveness of three different types of sponsor brand advertising contexts typically used during telecast of major sport events; field perimeter signage, pull-through or “crawlies” and commercial break advertisements. By themselves, each type of context has demonstrated favourable brand recall and recognition results. Yet, empirical research appears scant on comparative analysis to determine if differences exist among them in terms of their effectiveness. Considering the different contexts in which these advertisements are executed varied results might emerge. Understanding effectiveness among these advertising contexts and determining whether one context maybe more fruitful than another would provide practical utility for advertisers and sponsors particularly for decisions in relation to return on investment.

Field perimeter signage and pull-through advertisements are displayed simultaneously within the sport event broadcast enabling brand messages to be more readily processed by television viewers as they may be more attentive. Conversely, advertisements screened during commercial breaks interrupt the sport event broadcast and are shown away from the event perhaps leading to decreased processing attention. Differences exist on memory for processing information between proximal and distal visual planes (Barkley & Gabriel, 2007). Sponsor signage is displayed around the perimeter of playing fields and is located in one’s distal visual plane as it requires television audiences to process brand information that is beyond players and officials participating in the match being played. On the other hand, pull-through advertisements move along the bottom of the television screen displaying brand messages that are layered on top of game play and appear in front of players or match officials making these advertisements located in one’s proximal visual plane.

Interference theory posits that processing of a stimulus may be affected by temporal relationships the stimulus has with what preceded it leading to a decrease in performance (Spitz, 1963). Sponsor field perimeter signage and advertisements in commercial breaks are preceded by extraneous stimuli to the brand advertised which could lead to deleterious effects. Players, officials and the sport event itself being in front of sponsor field perimeter signage are likely to interfere with processing of brand information. Stimuli from the context of the sport event and prior commercial break advertisements are likely to interfere with processing of brand information advertised in later commercial breaks. Conversely, pull-through advertisements layered on top of players, officials and the sport event in proximal visual plane appear to be interference free. Furthermore, Rosli, Tan, Proctor and Gray (2011) indicated gradients of visual attention exist between proximal and distal planes whereby, greater and faster visual attention is given to stimuli in proximal than distal plane. Taken together, interference theory and greater visual attention to information in proximal plane suggests processing pull-through advertisements are more likely to achieve enhanced memory for brand information than field perimeter signage and advertisements in commercial breaks.

Effects of gender where women were found to demonstrate greater memory of distal and proximal target objects presented in photographs than men have been found (Barkley & Gabriel, 2007). Yet, effects of aging on proximal and distal visual processing are less clear. Faubert (2002) suggests effects of aging on visual perception and working memory capacity become evident when computational loads reach a certain level of complexity even when tasks are relatively simple. Given the quantity of stimuli broadcast within a sport event computational loads could be high making processing of brand information difficult as age increases. Reliance might be toward the perceived easier brand processing, due to less interference, found in proximally located pull-through advertisements.

Involvement in sport has been found to affect consumer memory for brand messages. The degree to which a consumer thinks about a sport or their interest in the sport could affect processing brands among the varied advertisement contexts. Exploring effects of age, gender, thoughts of and interest in a sport within the different

## 2013 North American Society for Sport Management Conference (NASSM 2013)

advertisement contexts not only is useful for adding discussion on visual processing but, provides utility from a marketing standpoint given sport marketing trends towards young adult to adult males.

### Method

One-hundred and seventeen people from community groups throughout a mid-sized east-coast Australian city (60 male, 57 female) with average age  $M = 32.9$  ( $SD = 18.4$ ) viewed a televised recording of an international Rugby 7's match comprising two seven minute halves. Apart from field perimeter sponsor signage (distal visual plane) from the broadcast, editing software was used to insert two (one in each half) pull-through advertisements (representing proximal visual plane) and three advertisements within the half-time commercial break of the recording. After viewing the recording, participants were asked to rate their levels of thinking about the sport of Rugby, their interest in Rugby and to recall and recognize brands that may have been seen during the broadcast.

### Results

A series of binary logistic regression analyses were conducted to predict effects of age, gender, thoughts of and interest in Rugby on brand recall and recognition for target brands presented in proximal or distal visual planes or commercial pod. Age of television viewer was found to contribute to predictions of brand recall and recognition presented in proximal visual plane and commercial pod. Increasing interest in Rugby boosted recall of brands however, increasing thoughts about Rugby decreased brand recall and recognition. No gender associations on recall or recognition of target brand for proximal or distal visual planes or advertisement in commercial break were found. Cochran's Q test with post-hoc tests revealed pull-through ads significantly out-performed other advertisement contexts in terms of recall but commercial break ad demonstrated significant brand recognition

### Discussion

Consistent with Rosli, Tan, Proctor and Gray (2011) processing a stimulus presented in distal visual plane or, in the case of this study, sponsors perimeter signage demonstrated weaker affects. This result might have been due to greater attentional demands and slower processing that emerges because of the increased distance of visual search and possibly interference of players and officials. Some evidence supporting greater attentional demands on processing distal information is gleaned through contribution of aging on processing proximal information. Faubert (2002) suggests reducing load on processing increases with age. Hence, increased reliance on processing pull-through ads in proximal visual plane suggests attempts to reduce the quantity of stimuli broadcast during sport events.

Findings that different advertisement contexts achieved best brand recall and recognition suggests different memory processes were used. Recall uses brand links while recognition uses brand traces (du Plessis, 1994). Processing brands in proximal visual plane appear to illicit strong brand links while, commercial break ads develop strong brand traces. Recall and recognition have different implications and coupled with findings of different effectiveness results for pull-through and commercial break ads, marketers need to understand what outcomes they desire before using an advertisement context.

The findings that thoughts of Rugby reduced brand recall and recognition while interest increased recall on target brand in commercial break are intriguing. This suggests sport marketers need to focus on affective rather than cognitive processing communication strategies within these contexts to limit use of central routes to persuasion and engage peripheral sources. Overall, evidence suggests processing brand messages presented in visual proximal plane such as pull-through advertisements are more effective than sponsor field perimeter signage displayed in distal visual plane. However, advertisements in commercial breaks still appear most effective given recognition is regarded as more closely linked to consumer behaviour decision-making processes.