

## Advertorial

# How to arrange images carefully when designing digital video advertisements?

## INSIGHTS FROM AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY

This article will share recent PhD findings of a study conducted on consumer visual memory and digital video advertising strategies submitted to Griffith University, Australia. This study consists of two experiments which investigated the consumer visual memory for digital video advertisements based on the theoretical assumptions of two social psychology theories which are elaboration likelihood model and social information processing theory by Wyer 2003.

Importance of images when designing video advertisements?

Video marketing is unique among online marketing methods. It only takes one video marketing campaign to build up highly targeted traffic for a long time. In general, most marketing research tools are verb-centric and need to be enriched with techniques that accommodate non-verbal expressions of perception as all these stimuli reach the brain through visual systems. Hence, arranging visuals carefully when designing digital video advertisements becomes necessary. Through two qualitative field experiments, we found that digital video advertisements will become successful and will render several benefits to the viewers, if it is arranged by considering 'social cognition'. The goal of social cognition is to provide mechanistic, process-oriented explanations of complex social phenomena. The five social cognition stages of information retrieval; comprehension of the information; encoding the information; attitude persuasion and consumer decision making were used in this study to evaluate the consumer visual memory for digital video advertisements.

Over two decades ago, Researchers identified that consumer research has largely ignored product relevant information stored in visual memory. Even after 20 years later, this concept was echoed by reminding that most marketing research tools are verb-centric and need to be enriched with techniques that accommodate non-verbal expressions of perception and learning as all these stimuli reach the brain through visual systems. However, recently Researchers identified that a combination of topics such as visual merchandising; social cognition; visual memory; repeated viewing of vi-

visual memory remains relatively unexplored in advertising, as it needs to combine with social psychology. Consequently, this article combines these two knowledge gaps by integrating the two different fields of advertising and social psychology to help digital video advertising agencies to carefully design their advertisements by arranging the images properly within the video.

Video captioning traditionally asks for a comprehensive description of videos, although detailed descriptions of individual objects are not commonly included. Most methods employ frame-level interrelated features among objects while training, which makes detecting vision-language relationships difficult. Without identifying the classes and locations of distinct objects nor determining the transition paths among them, these data-driven image-based video captioning methods simply cannot explain the activities based on visual features alone. The objects in a visual are placed to serve a variety of functions, such as drawing the viewer's attention to a certain place or establishing a visual flow from top to bottom. Since the background objects are noticeable in an advertisement, organising the objects properly throughout the scenes becomes important.

In the next section, we discuss about these five important digital video advertising strategies which will help you to understand your audience.

**Information Retrieval: Object Information Memory**

Memory research has taught us that human memory is fallible, imprecise and susceptible to interference. Although observers are capable of recalling thousands of images, it is widely assumed that these memories lack details. In contrast to this assumption, we show here that long-term memory can store many objects with details from an image. Major findings from these two experiments indicated that although participants were able to encode large objects (such as buildings, furniture, walls, garden, trees) with a size of more than a quarter of the visual, smaller objects were not noticed during the video viewing, such as floating brand logo, floating brand quota, or brand name within the advertisement. This was found to be due to the abstract view in digi-



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tal video advertisements.

Thus, digital video advertisements were found to be ineffective in viewing smaller objects occupying less than 2/3 of the screen. Developing an effective system for detecting small moving objects poses several challenges, for example, a non-invasive detection method for honeybees must not interfere with their flight during recording. Due to the lack of visual information in a high-resolution video, it becomes harder to detect tiny objects. Visuals on object information memory literature supports the contention that viewers remember the object information mostly by activating strategic memory. Research has shown that eye movements are closely associated with cognitive functions such as attention, memory, and decision-making. Besides revealing information about feelings and desires to others, eye movements can also be actively involved in brain functions. Further, strategic memory activation can be done by adding visual details of previously viewed objects, such as repeating the product information in more than one or two scenes within the advertisement.

**Comprehension of the Information: Visuals with Multi-Cultural Symbols**

Advertising that is multicultural or integrated is a method of advertising that seeks simultaneously to reach culturally diverse audiences through the development of cultural representations (e.g., advertisement sources, symbols, traditions, beliefs, values, attitudes, and/or objects) from multiple cultural backgrounds. In this context, multicultural advertising is regarded as an innovative



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way to reduce costs while targeting diverse consumer segments. In academic marketing literature, it has been suggested that the marketing practices of firms operating in different cultures would be fundamentally different. Several conceptual arguments have been developed in the literature that are based on the premise that different cultures have a different market structure, demand pattern, and buyer behaviour, which has led to the assumption that marketing practices of companies from diverse cultures will also differ.

The visuals depicting locations associated with cultural symbols (for example: Japanese Temples/ The fleur de Lys/ Taj Mahal/ African Elephants) in advertisements played a vital role due to the different atmospheres presented to customers from different countries. For example, Asian advertisements use traditional buildings which shows the unique

cultural architecture. This aspect was found to be an attractive attribute for non-Asians as they are not familiar with the locations and the ability to look at a different place makes them curious to watch the entire advertisement by further facilitating information retrieval process.

**Encoding of Information: Intercultural communication through comparing marketing mix elements**

Marketing mix elements can be considered as the most visible activity within a company, and these are heavily influenced by cultures, which are widely recognised as important factors in economic development, demographic behaviour, and general business policies around the world. The 4Ps of price, product, place, and promotion can direct how people interpret the messages they receive. Extensive use of multi-cultural symbols within the advertisements can increase the intercultural communication aspects by making it comparable with different marketing mix elements used in different countries. For example, comparing quality levels of the product based on the price we pay (Price), different elements associated with the product in different countries (Product), ease of access (Place) and different promotional channels (Promotions). For example, McDonald's menu in India has no beef or pork products.

**Attitude Persuasion: Emotional engagement through story-based video advertisements**

People prefer to think in narratives rather than in arguments, thus it can have a positive impact on how buyers think and perceive a brand or product. Storytelling advertising allows businesses to set themselves

apart from their competition while also assisting in the development of new or existing relationships with potential or existing clients. As a major visual encoding strategy, it was identified that when arranging visuals for video advertisements, it is necessary to arrange the visuals considering the order of the story.

For example, the first scene can be about the product, the second scene can be about the benefits of the product, and the third scene can be about the product information such as brand logo, price, and quality. This component makes our lives easier by making the story of the advertisement understandable which means that consumers have a clear idea about the product information and product benefits.

**Consumer Decision Making: Improving brand trust levels**

The visual aspect of video commercials contributes to the understanding and awareness of cultural information by participants. Ability of adding cultural symbols in the advertisement itself helps to develop brand trust levels in a better way. A key component of intercultural communication is businesses adapting their messages according to their target audiences' cultures. As a result, they may use many different aspects of cultural symbols to become more similar to gain the approval of their intended audience. For example, using cultural symbols, when selling global street food products in Tourism sector.

In conclusion, when arranging visuals for standard video advertisements, it is not necessary to spend more time in designing small objects within the visuals. Due to the abstract view of the digital video advertisements, participants will not remember all the details regarding the small objects within the visuals. The visuals depicting locations associated with cultural symbols plays a vital role due to the different atmospheres presented to customers from different countries. Intercultural communication through comparing marketing mix elements successfully tap into the market along with the consumer choice. As a major visual encoding strategy, it was identified that when arranging visuals for video advertisements, it is necessary to arrange the visuals considering the order of the story. Further adding cultural symbols in the advertisement was found to be a factor which helps to develop brand trust levels.

## TAKE ONLY PHOTOGRAPHS - LEAVE ONLY FOOTPRINTS

# Identifying visitor satisfaction for recreational planning in National Parks

National parks have been charged with the dual mandate of providing quality recreation opportunities to visitors while protecting park resources. Protected area managers in many parts of the world share similar responsibilities. Accordingly, recreational planning in national parks has to ensure a balance between the objective of enhancing people's enjoyment of their stay with those of minimising the impacts on habitats and wildlife and increasing the visitor's concern for environmental conservation. Enhancing the welfare benefits of visitors, in line with these objectives, is one of the expected outcomes of recreational planning in national parks. Theoretically, if a visitor's satisfaction regarding the level of enjoyment at the park is high, it is assumed that his/her welfare benefits would also increase.

Our study was carried out at Horton Plains National Park (HPNP) which is located in the Central Highlands, and at a distance of 225 km from the capital city of Colombo. HPNP is the highest tableland in Sri Lanka, with altitudes ranging between 2100 and 2300 m. The mountain peaks of Kirigalpotta (2389 m) and Totupola Kanda (2357 m), the second and third highest mountains on the island, arise from these plains. The 3162-ha area that forms the present national park was first designated as a nature reserve in 1969 and as a national park thereafter in 1988. HPNP is a

park that is popular with visitors, both local and foreign, for its unique properties and ecosystem attracting year round, a higher number of visitors. The annual visitation numbers to the park exceed 150,000 persons though visitors are allowed to walk only along two nature trails (Baker's Fall (6 km) and the World's End (4 km)).

We conducted a questionnaire survey in order to gather data on visitor satisfaction levels and visitor perceptions regarding existing recreational activities and services. The questionnaire was administered to elicit the satisfaction of the respondent on animal sightings, safety measures, visitor crowding at viewing points along the nature trails, the entry fee, and facilities such as cafeteria, washrooms, safe drinking water and interpretive services. The feedback given by the visitor was then recorded for formulating the relevant data. A Likert scale ranging from 1 (lowest) to 7 (highest) was used to measure the satisfaction level indicators.

According to the results, the existing visitor satisfaction level at HPNP is 5.74. The study looked at satisfaction regarding the following six dimensions among visitors: animal sightings, visitor safety measures, visitor facilities (i.e. cafeteria, washrooms and safe drinking water), visitor crowding, interpretive services, and entry fee. Satisfaction depends on the perceived value, which is the visitor's assessment of services based on the percep-



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tion of 'what is received and what is given'. When it is applied to these six dimensions, it becomes abundantly clear that visitor perception directly influences visitor satisfaction. The results suggest the need for park management to take steps to improve opportunities for more animal sightings,

visitor safety measures, interpretive services and visitor facilities while reducing the likelihood of congestion at viewing points.

Visitor perceptions in the visitor survey, the respondents stated that they were not satisfied with the number of animal sightings on the nature trail due to crowding and poor visibility on either side of the trails. To address this problem, viewing decks could be established/improved on the five viewpoints (Red bridge, Chimney pool, Baker's fall, Snake World's end and Greater World's end) along the nature trails of HPNP which would relieve the pressure on visitors from overcrowding that leads to reduced satisfaction levels for a significant number of visitors. In addition, it was revealed that, at present, the available park interpretive facilities are minimal.

Thus, the respondents highlighted the importance of introducing interpretive facilities such as interpretive talks, guide services along the trails, provision of brochures or self-guided brochures, more way-side exhibits, proper visitor centers with film screenings on wildlife and properly managed nature trails.

It was also found that in order to enhance their wilderness experience, visitors were willing to pay more for new recreational activities such as opportunities for trekking to Totupola Kanda and Kirigalpotta, rented cycling facilities, and guided services during their stay in the park. Restaurant facilities, clean washroom facilities,

safe drinking water facilities, proper vehicle park facilities, and summer huts along the nature trails were among other facilities that visitors proposed with regard to improvements in HPNP to enhance visitor satisfaction.

Among safety concerns while at the park, they listed the fear of animal attacks and fear of falling from viewing decks and mountain ridges, and expected to have safety measures to be put in place to minimise the potential risks and dangers. Thus, they proposed safe nature trails, safe viewpoints, and the positioning of wildlife officers at each viewpoint. It is evident that some of the services entailed in the proposals made by visitors would result in eco-tourism initiatives that involve local communities as their co-operation would be of use in eco-tourism development, in turn granting the locals' concessions by way of employment and income-generating opportunities.

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