5-19-2017

# Effectiveness of YouTube Advertising: A Study of Audience Analysis

Paula R. Rodriguez
prr2905@rit.edu

Rochester Institute of Technology

School of Communication

College of Liberal Arts

Effectiveness of YouTube Advertising: A Study of Audience Analysis

by

Paula R. Rodriguez

A *Thesis* submitted

in partial fulfillment of the Master of Science degree

in Communication and Media Technologies

Degree Awarded:

May 19, 2017

The members of the Committee approve the thesis of

Paula R. Rodriguez presented on May 5, 2017

_____

Andrea Hickerson, Ph.D.
Director and
Associate Professor of Communication
School of Communication


_____

Ammina Kothari, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
School of Communication
Thesis Advisor


_____

Jonathan Schroeder, Ph.D.
William A. Kern Professor in Communications
School of Communication
Thesis Advisor


_____

Grant Cos, Ph.D.
Director, Communication & Media
Technologies Graduate Degree Program and
Associate Professor of Communication
School of Communication

Acknowledgments

This past year and a half that I have been at the Rochester Institute of Technology will be an experience that I will always remember and cherish. First and above all, I want to thank God for giving me the strength, courage, and perseverance to complete not only my thesis but my master's degree. I would also like to thank my parents, Jose and Sarah Rodriguez, I will always be grateful for your unconditional love, encouragement, and support throughout this journey. Thank you to my brothers, sisters, and fiancé for always being there when I needed you and for all of your love.

I would also like to thank my primary advisor Dr. Ammina Kothari, thank you for your constant support, guidance, patience, dedication and for always encouraging me to keep going and to do my best. Without your guidance I would not have been able to complete this thesis, I will be forever grateful. Thank you to Dr. Schroeder for taking the time to read my ideas and for providing great feedback. Thank you to the Rochester Institute of Technology and the staff of the School of Communication for giving me the opportunity to be a part of this great family. Thank you to senior staff assistant, Helen Adamson, for always caring about me and my classmates and always being willing to help and assist me.

Last but not least, thank you to all of my classmates for making this journey a great experience, I will greatly miss you all.

Table of Contents

EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUTUBE ADVERTISING:

STUDY OF AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

Paula R. Rodriguez

School of Communication

College of Liberal Arts

Master of Science in Communication & Media Technologies

Term Degree Awarded: Spring Semester 2017 (2165)

Abstract

Social media have become an important platform for companies to connect with their target audience and make an impression. With the rise of digital platforms, effectiveness of advertisements has become an important area of study for marketers to determine the most efficient and appropriate medium of communication to place their advertisements. Drawing on the media richness theory framework, this study investigates YouTube advertising effectiveness based on the multiplicity of cues in the videos and the possible feedback channels offered by the platform. Using a cross-sectional survey method, participants from the Dominican Republic ($n = 109$) and the United States ($n = 112$) were recruited to fill-out a questionnaire asking for their opinions about how they connect with YouTube advertisements and what cues were crucial for them to understand, relate, or react to the message in the video. A significant relationship was found between race/ethnicity and education of participants and their preferences for cues needed to make a successful advertisement. The results also showed that feedback option on YouTube is not considered important for engagement with the brand.

*Keywords*: social media, media richness theory, YouTube, cues, feedback, advertising effectiveness

Effectiveness of YouTube Advertising: A Study of Audience Analysis

Social media platforms play a major role in distributing a company's messages to their target audience. Since the digital platforms have become so prominent, a channel selection has become an important area of study for marketers to determine the most efficient and precise medium of communication to transmit a message (Shinnawy & Marcus, 1997). The media richness theory argues that certain communication channels are richer than others depending on the characteristics the channel possesses to convey the information, especially the feedback and the cues the medium can provide (Dennis & Kinney, 1998). The theory has mostly been tested within the realm of traditional forms of communication such as face-to-face conversations, emails, and so forth (Dennis & Kinney, 1998; Otondo, Scotter, Allen & Palvia, 2008); therefore, most of the research has been focused on traditional media. When applied to the emerging media channels, the theory has only been applied to social media in the workspace (Lo & Lie, 2008; Shinnawy & Marcus, 1997) opening up the opportunity to examine its applicability on social media targeted at individuals.

This study, drawing on existing research of advertisements on social media and guided by the media richness theory, investigates how YouTube users, when exposed to advertisements, respond to feedback and multiple cues embedded in the video. Studies (Calder, Malhouse, & Schaedel, 2009; Coursaris, Osch, & Balogh, 2016; Li & Lo, 2014) focusing on social media advertising effectiveness have argued that consumer engagement and advertising effectiveness are linked. Calder, Malhouse, and Schaedel (2009) state that the interaction the user has with the site where the advertisement was placed, and the brand recognition does determine advertising effectiveness. At the same time, Li and Lo (2014) and Coursaris, Osch and Balogh (2016) argue that the amount of time the viewer spends on the ad will increase brand or product recognition, therefore, making the message more effective.

D'ambra, O'Connor, and Rice (1998), Dennis and Kiney (1998), and Kwak (2012), based on the media richness theory have been focused on the importance of a medium's richness in reducing uncertainty and argue that the richer the medium the more effectively the message is transmitted in the workspace. The main findings have been focused on cues and feedback when determining performance and reducing the uncertainty of the message and task equivocality. These studies have argued that feedback and cues are crucial since they allow individuals to have better performance with their duties. A study by Dennis and Valacich (1999) supports the fact that because new media is emerging, the media richness theory should be extended and applied to the new media platforms and task performance in the workspace.

Calder et al. (2009), Coursaris et al. (2016), Li and Lo (2014), D'ambra et al. (1998), Dennis and Kiney (1998), Dennis and Valacich (1999), and Kwak (2012) have explored and studied social media advertising effectiveness, the media richness theory in new media in the workspace, and the importance of selecting a rich communication channel. What remains to be explored is the effectiveness of social media advertising, in the case of this study, YouTube, based on the cues and feedback the channel presents. Despite an increased interest in social media and the media richness theory, it is surprising that very few studies have been focused on the topic, especially from the perspective of new media and the theory. Since the media richness theory has been mostly applied to either new media in the workspace or the importance of a channel's richness, it is important to consider this new perspective of YouTube advertising and how the theory helps in determining its effectiveness.

It is also important to conduct a study that determines how the cues and feedback a channel presents affect advertising effectiveness for various reasons. First of all, understanding how these factors influence the effectiveness of an ad can be helpful for companies to determine where their advertisement investment will be most profitable since

the advertisement will be better received. In the case of this study, it will help them understand if YouTube is an effective channel to place advertisements, and how consumers perceive or interpret the products or services being launched in this social media platform. Second, this study can contribute to existing research, but with a new perspective not explored before, and can fill the research gap on the topic and the theory. Third, companies can explore other similar social media platforms and consider how the cues and the feedback presented by this study can affect other platforms and advertising effectiveness. This research can orient businesses as to where their investment can more likely generate consumer engagement and therefore become an effective medium. The purpose of this survey-based study was to test the media richness theory within the context of the YouTube platform by exploring the relationship between audience engagement and advertisement effectiveness on the site based on the channel specific cues and feedback. The study surveyed YouTube users from the United States and the Dominican Republic to determine if advertising effectiveness and media richness may differ depending on the culture.

## Theoretical Perspective

The media richness theory (Daft & Lengel, 1986) defines different communication media as possessing specific characteristics that determine its ability to carry information, ranging from low (or lean) to high (or full) richness (Smith, 2014). The theory argues that all communication channels vary in their ability to enable individuals to communicate and to change the understanding of the messages; this knowledge is understood as a medium's richness. The media richness theory "places all communication media on a continuous scale based on their ability to communicate a complex message" (Carlson & Zmud, 1999, p.55). The communication channels that can adequately clarify or transmit a message are considered to be rich mediums, therefore, are higher on the scale. On the other hand, the communication

channels that lead the receiver of the message to require more time to decode the message transmitted are considered less rich, therefore, lower on the scale.

The media richness theory is mostly focused on two criterias: multiplicity of cues and immediacy of feedback. The multiplicity of cues is a crucial factor for a communication channel; this refers to the multiple ways a message can be communicated, such as with non-verbal cues like facial expressions and verbal cues such as tone of voice (Dennis & Kinney, 1998). The more cues a communication medium can provide and the receiver perceive, the richer the medium is considered. "When verbal or nonverbal cues are removed, it can take longer and be more difficult to fully understand a message" (Dennis & Kinney, 1998, p. 260). The immediacy of feedback refers to the options the medium gives the user to obtain or provide immediate feedback. The lack of immediate feedback can reduce the accuracy of a communication and can take longer for the receiver to complete the task or purpose of the message fully. "Feedback is important to the speed and effectiveness of communication because it enables the sender to recognize the extent to which the receiver understands the message and to adjust the message presentation accordingly" (Dennis & Kinney, 1998, p. 260).

The channel selection that enables both of these options is considered to be the richer medium. One of the main reasons individuals select a communication medium to deliver or receive a message is to reduce equivocality or any possible misinterpretations. If a message is ambiguous or unclear, it becomes a harder task for the receiver to decode the information. "The more equivocal a message, the more cues and data are needed to interpret it correctly" (Dennis &Valacich, 1999, p. 4). The further interpretation the consumer has to partake, and the more cues needed that the medium does not provide, the leaner or less rich the channel selection is considered.

The media richness theory argues that certain media channels can transmit a message more effectively based on whether the information is used in circumstances of equivocality or uncertainty.

> Uncertainty exists when a framework for interpreting a message is available, but there
> is a lack of information to process (i.e., there are well understood predetermined
> responses to potential problems). Equivocality occurs when there are multiple and
> possibly conflicting interpretations for the information or the framework with which
> to interpret it. (Dennis & Valacich, 1999, p. 1)

Equivocality requires the members to converge to an agreement on one interpretation of the information; in these cases, individuals tend to prefer a medium with higher richness. On the other hand, when uncertainty is presented, one person in the group has to clarify the information, therefore, in this case, leaner media could be preferred. For the communication to be successful, both the sender and receiver have to agree that the receiver understood the message.

Dennis and Valacich (1999) state that five characteristics affect communication, and therefore, media richness. The characteristics presented are (a) immediacy of feedback, which determines the rapidness of the bi-directional communication; (b) symbol variety, which determines the number of ways that the information can be communicated; (c) parallelism, which refers to the number of conversations that can be happening simultaneously; (d) rehearsability which, refers to how the medium allows individuals to rehearse the message before sending it; and (e) reprocessability, which relates to the amount of time a message can be re-read and examined. The media, especially social media platforms, present many capabilities where these characteristics will vary depending on the platform and situation. Even though not all channel selections will have all of these features, the one that encompasses the most can be considered the richer medium. At the same time, a medium's

richness will depend on the situation and what characteristics are needed to reduce uncertainty, equivocality, or to enable a better transmission and interpretation of the message.

Dennis and Kinney (1998), Dennis, Kinney, and Hung (1999), Dennis and Valacich (1999), and Otondo, Scotter, Allen, and Palvia (2008) have explored the media richness theory and its most important elements. Dennis and Kinney (1998) analyzed the relationship between a communication medium's richness and task equivocality in the workspace. They used the two most important factors of the theory which are cues and feedback to analyze if the more immediate the feedback and the more cues presented increased a medium's richness and if the use of richer mediums led to better performance for equivocal tasks. The study found that the individuals did find certain mediums to be richer than others based on the cues and feedback as proposed by the theory, but they also found that matching a medium's richness to task equivocality did not improve the performance.

Past research on the media richness theory has been focused on an individual's perceptions and beliefs of a medium's richness instead of experimenting with the actual performance in the workplace. Dennis et al. (1999) conducted a study to analyze the performance of a lean and rich medium and how the decision time for a task and communication satisfaction was affected. The study found that the use of leaner mediums did require the teams to work longer; therefore, the decision process was longer than the teams with richer mediums, but the communication satisfaction was positive in both situations. The study also found that a medium's richness affected more women than men. It is important to consider how YouTube advertisement effectiveness may vary depending on gender.

Dennis and Valacich (1999) proposed that the media richness theory should be extended, since many media capabilities are essential to communication processes. They argue that symbol variety, parallelism, feedback, rehearsability, and reprocessabilty should be taken into account when determining task performance. This article presents a new

perspective on the media richness theory and displays factors that can be considered when analyzing YouTube advertisements and the medium's capabilities; but they seem to dismiss the fact that the cues and the feedback previously analyzed have focused on traditional communication channels and need to be applied to new emerging media before extending the theory.

Many scholars have also identified how different types of media vary in richness. Otondo et al. (2008) examined two aspects of the media richness theory by focusing on the effectiveness of the media. They reviewed the association of media richness and communication outcomes with the type of media. The study found that media type and message content were more associated with communication outcomes than with media richness, and that media type was more linked to satisfaction than effectiveness. This study is indicating that the media richness theory is a poor predictor of the effects of media type on communication outcomes. This research opens a gap in the literature to understand and study how an individual media channel can affect a communication outcome, in the case of my study, how YouTube advertisements are considered effective or not effective in transmitting the information.

Most of the studies (Dennis & Kinney, 1998; Dennis, Kinney, & Hung, 1999; Dennis & Valacich, 1999; Otondo et al., 2008) have applied the theory to traditional media or media in the workspace; therefore, there is a gap in the scholarship when it comes to understanding how the theory can be applied to social media platforms based on the cues and the feedback the channels provide. At the same time, the theory has never been considered in the context of advertising effectiveness and how the cues and feedback make an advertisement effective. This study tested the media richness framework in a video-based social media platform.

**Literature Review**

**Social Media Usage**

Boyd and Ellison (2008) define a social network as "web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of those users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system" (p.211). The authors argue that social networking sites vary in the features they present; some allow video-sharing capabilities, blogging, or instant messaging. Because of the different capabilities social networking sites offer, the audience on these platforms has been significantly growing over the years. People are utilizing their smartphones, tablets, and computers to access this digital platform that not only serves as entertainment but as a way for advertisers to reach an intended audience. The way individuals use a medium and the reasons for the use are constantly evolving. Because of this, the media richness theory needs to be applied to new media platforms to determine which communication channels can be considered rich or lean.

Kwak (2012) analyzed how online media can be considered rich or lean based on media use and communication motives. The author examined how consumers actively use a communication channel based on their social and commercial communication reasons. The study found that the mediums that provide more cues and benefits are more appropriate for equivocal tasks; at the same time, it found that richer mediums are appropriate for instrumental motivations and leaner mediums are mostly used for ritual motives. This study supports the fact that certain mediums are richer than others based on the cues the communication channel presents, therefore, it can be argued that YouTube can be analyzed based on the benefits and cues the channel offers.

Flanagin and Metzger (2001) analyzed how individuals use new media in comparison to traditional media, especially the internet and the needs that might be satisfied in these new media environments. The study found that communication needs have not changed with the evolution of new media. Mass media was found to be used for informational and leisure

purposes and mediated interpersonal technologies were used for personal experiences such as relationship formation, problem-solving, and persuasion purposes. The study found ten needs that new media satisfies which were information, learning, play, entertainment, persuasion, social bonding, relationship formation and maintenance, problem-solving, status, and insight. This study supports the fact that individuals select communication channels based on their ability to satisfy needs, therefore, their ability to convey the information.

On the other hand, Soukup (2014) focused on social media usage but more specifically YouTube. He argues that YouTube is a massive platform that can be used for multiple purposes such as advertisements, archival work, education, entertainment, journalism, political communication, art and culture, religion, healthcare, military, fandom, interpersonal communication, and observation. Because this platform is so diverse, the author argues that communication theories will need to be re-constructed to analyze this platform that is constantly evolving.

YouTube shows that ordinary people have things to communicate. It challenges the ideas of a mass audience. It cuts across categories, it is not merely a video sharing site; it is more important than a social media site; it is more than a communication channel; it is more than a place for creativity; it is more than a place for semi-private sharing; though it is all these things. (Soukup, 2014, p. 25)

After analyzing past research on the YouTube platform, this author clearly states that new research is needed on the platform, and theory needs to be adapted based on what this medium provides.

Online video advertising, even though it is relatively new, is an essential part of Google's monetization model for YouTube. In 2012, advertisements were shown on more than 3 billion YouTube views each week. (Pashkevich, Dorai-Raj, Kellar, & Zigmond, 2012; Plummer, Rappaport, & Hall, 2007). Since YouTube advertising has become so important not

only for revenue but brand impressions, the scholars Pashkevich, Dorai-Raj, Kellar, and Zigmond (2012) analyzed advertisements in this platform. The authors compared the effectiveness of traditional in-stream ads to the TrueView in-stream advertising, which refers to the new YouTube feature that allows individuals to skip the advertisement being presented after a few seconds. The study found that skippable advertisements were effective on a per-impression basis and that formats like TrueView in-stream ads could improve the viewing experience for users and at the same time be effective for the company launching the ad.

**Advertising Effectiveness**

There is ample scholarship on advertising effectiveness. Calder el al. (2009) analyzed the relationship between consumer engagement and advertising effectiveness, and found that both personal and social interactive engagements affected the reaction to the advertisement being observed, therefore, its effectiveness. The study also discovered that another factor involved in the effectiveness was the interaction of the user with the website where the ad was displayed. When analyzing YouTube advertising, the definition of effectiveness in the current study is incredibly linked to consumer engagement; therefore, it is important to understand what is producing consumer engagement in this platform.

Pikas and Sorrentino (2014) analyzed the effectiveness of online advertisements, especially on social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, based on the consumer's perceptions. The study found that most of the individuals were not receptive to the advertisements in the social media sites and that most of them were annoyed by them. Another key finding was that allowing people to skip the commercials after a few seconds was not effective because they did not typically voluntarily decide to watch the ads; therefore, their overall conclusion was that advertising on these social media sites was not proving to be effective. This study supports the fact that YouTube advertisements should be further studied and that effectiveness should be focused on a different perspective. At the

same time, the study shows key findings on YouTube advertisement effectiveness, most of which are negative, therefore, it allows for other research to expand those results based on the medium's richness.

The authors Li and Lo (2014) analyzed the effects of the ad length, positioning, and context congruity in an online video advertising context. The study found that ad length did have an effect in brand recognition, where the longer ads were more recognized and memorable. The study also found that if the advertisement was related to the video the user was about to observe, the brand recognition and effectiveness increased. Overall, the study showed that ad length and context were crucial for brand recognition and effectiveness.

Coursaris et al. (2016) analyzed the results of a theoretical combination of three standpoints for analyzing brand messages that were purchase involvement, message appeal, and message richness. The authors examined if the higher the customer is involved with the brand, the more informational the message appeal, and if the lower the brand involvement, the more transformational the message appeal. The authors were also analyzing if the more transformational the messaging appeal, the higher the consumer engagement. The study found that purchase involvement and message appeal are linked; the richer the medium, the more appealing the message. When determining if YouTube advertisements are effective, it is key to be able to identify what is appealing to the consumers and what can generate a purchase; therefore, this study presented an original perspective on informational and transformational advertising.

Despite the many studies focusing on the media richness theory and advertising effectiveness, none to my knowledge have examined a social media platform like YouTube in order to determine how the cues and the feedback the medium offers determines effectiveness of an advertisement.

## Research Questions

Dennis (2009), Dennis and Kinney (1998), and Shinnawy and Marcus (1997) argue that two of the most important factors of the media richness theory are the cues and the feedback the channel offers; therefore, the following research questions are proposed:

RQ1: What cues are necessary for the viewer to engage with the ad on YouTube?

RQ2: What cues are necessary to make an advertisement memorable on YouTube?

RQ3: What cues are effective in communicating the advertising message clearly to YouTube viewers?

RQ4: Does feedback mechanism increase positive perception of the advertisement?

## Methodology

This study employed a cross-sectional survey method to collect the data. "A cross-sectional survey collects data to make inferences about a population of interest (universe) at one point in time. Cross-sectional surveys have been described as snapshots of the populations about which they gather data" (Lavrakas, 2008, p. 1). This was an appropriate approach because the goal was to collect comparative demographic data and the attitudes or opinions of Dominicans and Americans who regularly interact with YouTube platforms.

"A survey is a method of gathering information from a sample of people, traditionally with the intention of generalizing the results to a larger population. Surveys provide a critical source of data and insights" (Vannette, 2015, p. 1). This study used a survey design because it provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population in the United States and Dominican Republic by studying a sample of that population (Creswell, 2014, p. 155). YouTube advertising is very common in both the Dominican Republic and the United States and to understand its effectiveness, a large number of responses were needed, since the study required multiple opinions and a broad range of data

to obtain a valid result. Before the data was collected, this study was approved by the Institutional Review Board at the Rochester Institute of Technology.

The data was collected by means of a questionnaire containing 45 items. The majority of these were Likert-like items based on a scale from "entirely disagree" to "entirely agree." Other questions focused on demographic data such as gender, age, and education level. The data was collected by simple random sampling from both the Rochester area and the Dominican Republic. "A simple random sample (SRS) of size $n$ consists of individuals from the population chosen in such a way that every set of individuals has an equal chance to be the sample actually selected" (Moore & McCabe, 2006, p. 219).

In the United States 112 participants were recruited and in the Dominican Republic 109 participants were recruited, either in person or online, obtaining a total of $N = 221$ responses. Using an online and paper option, recruited participants were given a questionnaire that contained a cover letter detailing the study and their rights, followed by several questions regarding their past experiences with cues and feedback in YouTube advertising. The survey was completely anonymous, optional, and all participants were asked to verbally or virtually give their consent. In the case of online surveys, by reading the cover page presented and participating in the survey the participant was virtually giving consent.

Participants were approached in person by randomly selecting them in public places such as shopping malls, airports, airplanes, neighborhoods, and university campuses. They were provided with the option of a paper questionnaire or a mobile device to fill out the survey. Participants were approached online by posting the survey in the social media sites Facebook, Snapchat, and Reddit.

In order to obtain the cues that were analyzed in this study, I watched a total of ten randomly selected advertisements in order to determine which were the most predominant verbal and non-verbal cues presented in the ads. The cues selected were defined as:

Music referred to the background sound in the advertisement, instrumental or with lyrics.

Tone of voice referred to the level of the voice of the actor or the narrator such as, agitated, happy, serious, and so forth.

Physical appearance of the actors referred to the actor's physique, what they were wearing, the makeup, the hair, skin color, and so forth.

Body movements referred to how the actors in the videos were moving, such as dances, walking, sitting down, jumping, and so forth.

Scenery referred to the surroundings in the advertisements, the setting where it took place, or the set prepared for the ad.

Narration referred to the script being spoken by the actors or the narrator of the advertisement.

Facial expressions referred to the expressions being shown with the actors' faces in the advertisements, such as smiles, crying, anger, happiness, and so forth.

The terms advertising effectiveness and engagement were crucial terms in this study and were defined as the following:

Advertising effectiveness is accomplished if the advertisement achieves any type of engagement or reaction to the advertisement being observed. This engagement is what guides the consumer to ultimately purchase the product or service.

Highly engaged readers are more likely to be exposed to ads; ads carried by vehicles with more engaged readers will therefore, be more effective; and a vehicle with highly engaged readers should command a premium price for advertising space. It is engagement with a website that causes someone to want to visit it, download its pages, be attentive to it, recommend it to a friend, or be disappointed if it were no longer available. (Calder et al., 2009, p. 321)

On the other hand, advertising engagement was also defined as having the viewer not only react to the advertisement, but at the same time understand it, remember it, and relate to it. "To think about what engagement really means, let us return to the basic notion of a sense of being connected with something" (Calder et al., 2009, p. 322). Understanding engagement means understanding the different experiences that the consumers have in connecting with the advertisement being observed.

The surveys that were completed with the paper option, were transferred to the mobile option in order to merge the data and to be able to code and transfer all of the information into SPSS. For the demographic data I ran frequencies and for the variables I ran a Chi-Square test where the demographic data was the independent variables, and the cues and feedback related questions were the dependent variables.

## Results

### Demographic Profile

Out of the 221 participants, 56.6% were female, and 48% were between the ages of 18-24. In terms of education, 52% of the participants had a bachelor's degree as their highest education, and 58.4% were employed for wages. Individuals from the Dominican Republic and the United States were recruited for this study and 52.5% of the participants identified as Hispanic or Latinos, and the responses based on geographic location were split almost evenly with the United States having a total of 50.7% (see Table 1).

Table 1

*Demographics of Participants*

| Demographic Variable | Total | |
|---|---|---|
| | *n* | % |
| Gender | | |
| Male | 96 | 43.4 |
| Female | 125 | 56.6 |
| | | |
| Age (years) | | |
| 18-24 | 106 | 48.0 |
| 25-34 | 70 | 31.7 |
| 35-44 | 19 | 8.6 |
| 45-54 | 19 | 8.6 |
| 55 or older | 7 | 3.2 |
| | | |
| Education | | |
| Some high school, no diploma | 3 | 1.4 |
| High school graduate, diploma or equivalent | 7 | 3.2 |
| Some college credit, no degree | 35 | 15.8 |
| Trade/technical/ vocational training | 1 | 0.5 |
| Associate degree | 3 | 1.4 |
| Bachelor's degree | 115 | 52.0 |
| Master's degree | 46 | 20.8 |
| Doctorate degree | 11 | 5.0 |
| | | |
| Occupation | | |
| Employed for wages | 129 | 58.5 |
| Self-employed | 36 | 16.3 |
| Out of work and looking for work | 6 | 2.7 |
| Out of work but not currently looking for work | 2 | 0.9 |
| Homemaker | 4 | 1.8 |
| Student | 39 | 17.6 |
| Unable to work | 5 | 2.3 |
| | | |
| Ethnicity/race | | |
| Caucasian | 85 | 38.5 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 116 | 52.5 |
| Black or African American | 6 | 2.7 |
| Asian or Pacific Islander | 14 | 6.3 |
| | | |
| Geographic location | | |
| Dominican Republic | 109 | 49.3 |
| United States | 112 | 50.7 |

To test the relationship between the variables, I used a Chi-square ($\chi^2$) test of independence that provided the following responses to the research questions:

**RQ1: What cues are necessary for the viewer to engage or relate with the ad on YouTube?**

Participants' education, occupation, and race/ethnicity were found to have a significant relationship to cues necessary to engage or relate to an advertisement on YouTube.

**Based on education.** Participants considered many cues to be crucial to relate to an advertisement. Those with a bachelor's degree (55.3%) found music, $\chi^2$ (42, $N = 221$) = 91.37, $p < .001$, as well as the physical appearance of the actors (57.9%), $\chi^2$ (42, $N = 221$) = 69.08, $p < .005$, to be important to relate to the advertisements, in contrast to the participants with some college credit but no degree who completely disagreed that physical appearance is an important cue to relate. Therefore, it can be implied that the higher the education level, the more important music and physical appearance of the actors are considered for the viewers to relate to the advertisements. Similarly, participants with a bachelor's degree (59.1%) found body movements to be an important cue to relate to the advertisements, $\chi^2$ (42, $N = 221$) = 69.03, $p < .005$, in contrast to the participants with some college credit but no degree (28.6%), who disagree completely that this is an important cue to relate to an ad. Participants with a bachelor's degree (57.9%) also found narration to be a crucial cue to relate to an advertisement, $\chi^2$ (42, $N = 221$) = 76.38, $p < .001$, compared to those with some college credit but no degree (40.7%) who disagree that this is an important cue. Therefore, it can be implied that the higher the education the more important body movements and narration are considered to be to relate to an advertisement.

Three cues were found to have no significant relationship with education: (a) tone of voice, $\chi^2$ (42, $N = 221$) = 61.52, $p < .026$; (b) scenery, $\chi^2$ (42, $N = 221$) = 71.04, $p < .003$; and (c) facial expressions, $\chi^2$ (42, $N = 221$) = 72.69, $p < .002$.

**Based on occupation.** The participants who were employed for wages (67%) found music to be an important cue to relate to the advertisement, $\chi^2$ (36, $N = 221$) = 90.34, $p < .001$. Therefore, it can be implied that those who are professionally working consider music to be more important than those participants who are not. No significant relationship was found between participants' occupation and the following cues: (a) tone of voice, $\chi^2$ (36, $N = 221$) = 47.54, $p < .094$; (b) actor's physical appearance, $\chi^2$ (36, $N = 221$) = 44.86, $p < .148$; (c) body movements, $\chi^2$ (36, $N = 221$) = 60.87, $p < .006$; (d) scenery, $\chi^2$ (36, $N = 221$) = 60.08, $p < .007$; (e) narration, $\chi^2$ (36, $N = 221$) = 62.98, $p < .004$; and (f) facial expressions, $\chi^2$ (36, $N = 221$) = 43.55, $p < .181$.

**Based on race/ethnicity.** Participants who identified as Hispanic/Latinos (60.6%) found music to be crucial to relate to an advertisement, in contract to those who identified as Caucasian (66.7%), who completely disagreed that music was important to relate to an advertising video, $\chi^2$ (18, $N = 221$) = 45.80, $p < .001$. Hispanic/Latinos also reported that the physical appearance of the actors was crucial to relate to an advertisement (59.6%), compared to those who identified as Caucasian (63.4%), who completely disagreed that physical appearance of the actors was important, $\chi^2$ (18, $N = 221$) = 41.85, $p < .001$. Hispanic/ Latinos (60.5%) also found scenery to be an important cue to relate to an advertisement compared to those who identified as Caucasian (74.1%), $\chi^2$ (18, $N = 221$) = 47.78, $p < .001$. Similarly, participants who identified as Hispanic/Latinos (53.9%) found narration to be a necessary cue to relate to the advertisement, compared to those who identified as Caucasian (81.5%), who strongly disagreed that this is an important cue, $\chi^2$ (18, $N = 221$) = 70.33, $p < .001$. In other words, there is a significant relationship between race/ethnicity and how individuals respond

to the cues presented in YouTube advertisements. Hispanic/Latinos consider cues to be more important than Caucasian participants. Three cues did not show significant relationships based on the ones that help the participants relate to the brand: (a) tone of voice, $\chi^2$ (18, $N =$ 221) = 36.53, $p < .006$; (b) body movement, $\chi^2$ (18, $N = 221$) = 34.21, $p < .012$; and (c) facial expressions, $\chi^2$ (18, $N = 221$) = 40.86, $p < .002$.

**RQ2: What cues are necessary to make an advertisement memorable on YouTube?**

Participants' education, occupation, and race/ethnicity were found to have a significant relationship with individuals' preferences about what makes a YouTube advertisement memorable. In response to research question two, education, occupation, and race/ethnicity reported to be significant in the preferences the participants had to make an advertisement memorable.

**Based on education.** Participants with a bachelor's degree (66.7%) as their highest education level find the scenery of an advertisement to be crucial in making an advertisement memorable, compared to those with some college credit or no degree (29.0%) who completely disagree, $\chi^2$ (42, $N = 221$) = 41.85, $p < .001$. The test also showed some significance in the narration cue based on the education of the participants. The participants with a bachelor's degree (59.2%) as their highest education level consider narration a very important cue to make an advertisement memorable, compared to those with some college credit or no degree (71.4%) who mostly disagree that this is an important cue to make an advertisement memorable, $\chi^2$ (42, $N = 221$) = 89.28, $p < .001$. Therefore, it can be implied that the higher the education level the more important the narration and scenery cues are considered to make an advertisement memorable.

There were many others cues that showed no significant relationship based on participants' education and what they considered to be important to make an advertisement memorable. Music, $\chi^2$ (42, $N = 221$) = 73.11, $p < .002$; tone of voice, $\chi^2$ (42, $N = 221$) = 63.59,

$p < .017$; actor's physical appearance, $\chi^2$ (42, $N = 221$) = 70.14, $p < .004$; body movements, $\chi^2$ (42, $N = 221$) = 59.06, $p < .042$; and facial expressions, $\chi^2$ (42, $N = 221$) = 53.90, $p < .103$ did not show any significant relationships.

**Based on occupation.** The participants who are employed for wages (64.1%) found music to be crucial for an advertisement to be memorable compared to students (30.4%), $\chi^2$ (36, $N = 221$) = 70.16, $p < .001$. Therefore, it can be implied that the individuals who are currently employed for wages and are professionally working consider music to be important in comparison to students who are not working. None of the other cues showed a significant relationship based on participants' occupation: (a) tone of voice, $\chi^2$ (36, $N = 221$) = 34.10, $p < .559$; (b) actor's physical appearance, $\chi^2$ (36, $N = 221$) = 46.81, $p < .107$; (c) body movements, $\chi^2$ (36, $N = 221$) = 40.68, $p < .272$; (d) scenery, $\chi^2$ (36, $N = 221$) = 44.91, $p < .146$; (e) narration, $\chi^2$ (36, $N = 221$) = 40.27, $p < .287$; and (f) facial expressions, $\chi^2$ (36, $N = 221$) = 35.92, $p < .472$.

**Based on race/ethnicity.** Participants who identify as Hispanic/Latinos (54.7%) reported that they consider the physical appearance of the actors to be important to remember an advertisement compared to those who identify as Caucasian (63.0%), who completely disagree that physical appearance of the actors is crucial, $\chi^2$ (18, $N = 221$) = 41.73, $p < .001$. At the same time, many cues did not show a significant relationship between the participant's race and ethnicity: (a) music, $\chi^2$ (18, $N = 221$) = 26.14, $p < .097$; (b) tone of voice, $\chi^2$ (18, $N = 221$) = 19.75, $p < .334$; (c) body movements, $\chi^2$ (18, $N = 221$) = 16.33, $p < .569$; (d) scenery, $\chi^2$ (18, $N = 221$) = 30.23, $p < .035$; (e) narration, $\chi^2$ (18, $N = 221$) = 39.47, $p < .002$; and (f) facial expressions, $\chi^2$ (18, $N = 221$) = 25.85, $p < .103$. Participants seem to mostly agree on the cues that they consider important to remember an advertisement. Hispanic/Latinos have shown that they somehow relate to the advertisements by the physical appearance of the

actors, but Caucasians seem to believe that cues are not so important to make an advertisement memorable based on their occupation.

**RQ3: What cues are effective in communicating the advertising message clearly to YouTube viewers?**

Significant relationships were found between participants' education, race/ethnicity, and what cues they considered to be effective in communicating the advertising message on YouTube.

**Based on education.** The participants with a bachelor's degree (58.0%) as their highest education level found music to be a crucial cue to better understand an advertisement message, $\chi^2$ (42, $N = 221$) = 89.51, $p < .001$. On the contrary, the participants with some college credit but no degree (30.0%) completely disagree. Participants with a bachelor's degree (55.4%) as their highest education level also found tone of voice to be an important cue to better understand an advertisement, $\chi^2$ (42, $N = 221$) = 69.53, $p < .005$. On the contrary, those with some college credit but no degree (33.3%) completely disagree. Therefore, it can be implied that the higher the education level the more important the music and tone of voice cues are to make an advertisement memorable.

Also, based on the education level, the participants with bachelor's degree (61.3%) found the physical appearance of the actors to be crucial to better understand an advertisement, $\chi^2$ (42, $N = 221$) = 83.74, $p < .001$. On the contrary, those with some college credit but no degree (29.6%) completely disagree that this is an important cue. The participants with a bachelor's degree (56.3%) as their highest education level also found scenery to be an important cue in order to better understand an advertisement, $\chi^2$ (42, $N = 221$) = 88.90, $p < .001$. On the contrary, those with some college credit but no degree (31.8%) completely disagree that this is an important cue. Therefore, it can be implied that the higher

the education level the more important the cues of physical appearance of the actors and

scenery are considered to better understand an advertisement.

Three cues presented no significant relationship based on education as the participants

did not consider them important to help them understand a message in an advertisement.

These were (a) body movements, $\chi^2$ (42, $N = 221$) = 73.49, $p < .002$; (b) narration, $\chi^2$ (42, $N =$

221) = 73.46, $p < .002$; and (c) facial expressions, $\chi^2$ (42, $N = 221$) = 71.84, $p < .003$.

The participants with a bachelor's degree (52.9%) as their highest education level

considered that the cues in the videos help them to better understand the advertisement

message presented, $\chi^2$ (42, $N = 221$) = 75.35, $p < .001$. In comparison, those with some

college credit and no degree (27.8%) considered that the cues were not crucial in helping

them understand the advertisement message. Therefore, it can be implied that the higher the

education, the more important the cues are considered to better understand an advertisement

message. There were no significant results when asked if the cues in the video helped the

participants better understand the brand, what they have to do to purchase the product or

service, and the benefits of the product.

**Based on race/ethnicity.** Participants who identified as Hispanic/Latinos (55.7%),

reported that music is crucial to better understand an advertisement in comparison to

Caucasian participants (65.0%), who completely disagree that music is important to better

understand an advertisement, $\chi^2$ (18, $N = 221$) = 42.71, $p < .001$. Participants who identified

as Caucasian (81.8%) also reported that they completely disagree that scenery is an important

cue to better understand an advertisement, compared to Hispanic/Latinos (55.0%) who

completely agree that scenery is crucial to better understand an advertisement, $\chi^2$ (18, $N =$

221) = 43.91, $p < .001$. At the same time, Hispanic and Latinos reported that narration is an

important cue to better understand an advertisement (51.0%). On the contrary, Caucasian

participants (82.4%) reported that they completely disagree that narration is key to

understand an advertisement, $\chi^2$ (18, $N$ = 221) = 37.18, $p$ < .005. Also, Hispanic and Latinos

(42.6%) consider facial expressions to be crucial to better understand an advertisement. On

the contrary, Caucasian participants (57.7%) reported that they completely disagree that this

is an important cue, $\chi^2$ (18, $N$ = 221) = 41.25, $p$ < .001. Two cues did not report significant

results when it came to the necessary cues for participants to better understand an

advertisement based on their ethnicity. Tone of voice, $\chi^2$ (18, $N$ = 221) = 39.98, $p$ < .002, and

body movements, $\chi^2$ (18, $N$ = 221) = 26.83, $p$ < .082, did not report any significant results.

The test showed a significant difference in how the participants felt about the cues in

the videos based on their ethnicity. Hispanic/Latinos (56.8%) felt that the cues were

imperative for them to understand the brand in the video, compared to those who identified as

Caucasian (76.2%) who completely disagreed that the cues were necessary for them to

understand the brand launching the message, $\chi^2$ (18, $N$ = 221) = 49.56, $p$ < .001. Similarly,

Hispanic/Latinos (48.8%) felt that the cues in the video helped them better understand the

benefits of the product or service, compared to Caucasian participants (72.0%) who reported

that the cues in the video did not help them understand the benefits of the product or service,

$\chi^2$ (18, $N$ = 221) = 45.87, $p$ < .001. There were no significant results for questions asking if

the cues helped them better understand the message, or how to purchase the product.

**RQ4: Does feedback mechanism increase positive perception of the advertisement?**

Participants' geographic location and education were found to have a significant

relationship with their preferences to engage with the comments/feedback section in

YouTube.

**Based on education.** The participants with a Bachelor's degree (57.7%) as their

highest education level do not use the comments section in YouTube, $\chi^2$ (7, $N$ = 221) = 29.23,

$p$ < .000. Therefore, it can be implied that the lower the education the more likely the

participants are to use the comments section. Participants with a higher education achieve a

better understanding of what is being presented to them, therefore, they do not need to comment or feedback on the video being observed.

**Based on geographic location.** The Chi-square test found one significant relationship based on the participant's geographic location. Participants living in the Dominican Republic (59.9%) reported that they did not use the comments section in YouTube compared to those located in the United States (69.6%), who reported that they did use the comments section in YouTube, $\chi^2$ (1, $N = 221$) = 17.64, $p < .000$. This difference is explained by the fact that in the Dominican Republic there is a different culture when it comes to commenting on videos; Americans tend to want to express their opinions more, therefore, these results are based on a cultural difference.

The test showed no significant results based on questions asking the participants (a) if they felt the need to ask the company a question after watching an advertisement, (b) if they feel the need to give their opinions on the ads, (c) if they do not feel the need to obtain or give feedback, and (d) if they feel confused about the product or service after watching an advertisement. The responses were evenly split in all of the demographic variables. Therefore, it can be implied that feedback is not considered important in the perception of an advertisement.

**Other Findings**

**Gender.** The Chi-square test did not show any significant relationships based on the participant's gender. Both males and females expressed similar feelings towards YouTube advertisements, the cues presented, and the feedback on the YouTube platform.

**Age.** According to the Chi-square test, there was a significant relationship between age of the participant and the likelihood of skipping the YouTube advertisements after the first few seconds, $\chi^2$ (24, N = 221) = 50.86, p < .001. The younger participants aged 18-24 (59.1%) entirely agree that they skip the advertisements after the first few seconds, in contrast

to those aged 25-34 (42.9%), who entirely disagree. Therefore, it can be implied that the older the participants the more likely they are to finish watching a YouTube advertisement.

**Discussion**

The purpose of this study was to analyze YouTube advertising effectiveness based on the media richness theory, more precisely the two most important factors of the theory: multiplicity of cues and immediacy of feedback. The results of this study are partially consistent with the media richness theory; the multiplicity of cues was found to be important to engage/relate, better understand, and recall an advertisement, therefore, they are very linked to advertising effectiveness. The results, however, do contradict the media richness theory (Daft & Lengel, 1986) in the aspect of feedback; the theory argues that the immediacy of feedback makes a channel richer, but in the case of YouTube, feedback was not considered important.

The findings of this study vary by the independent variables, in this case the demographics. The first research question inquired what cues are necessary for the viewer to engage or relate to an advertisement on YouTube. The results showed that cues were considered important based on education, occupation, and race/ethnicity of the participants. Based on their education, the cues (music, physical appearance of the actors, body movements, and narration) were considered important to relate to an advertisement on YouTube. Based on the participant's occupation, music was considered the most important cue to relate to an advertisement. This study supports Calder et al.'s (2009) research that showed that engagement affected the reaction to the advertisement being observed, therefore, its effectiveness. Since engagement with the advertisements is used to determine its effectiveness, in order to engage with an advertisement participants considered that the cues were crucial; therefore, this supports the fact that cues are crucial for YouTube advertising to be effective.

Research question two inquired what cues are necessary to make an advertisement memorable on YouTube. Based on the participant's education, those with higher education considered scenery and narration to be an important cue, and based on the participant's occupation music was considered crucial. Research question three inquired about what cues were important for the participants to better understand the message being sent. Based on the participant's education, music, tone of voice, physical appearance of the actors, and scenery were considered crucial to better understand the message, and therefore, reduce uncertainty. These results demonstrate the importance of cues in making an advertisement effective. These cues allowed the participants to not only better understand the advertisements and reduce uncertainty, but they also enabled them to relate to the advertisement and to make it memorable. These results concur with Dennis and Kinney (1998) who found that increased multiplicity of cues leads to better performance. They also found that the mediums were better understood and handled if they presented multiple cues.

On the other hand, results showed that race/ethnicity had completely different results, therefore altering the responses. Participants who identified as Hispanic/Latinos considered music, physical appearance of the actors, scenery, and narration to be important cues to relate and to remember an advertisement. Hispanic and Latinos also considered music, scenery, narration, and facial expressions crucial to better understand an advertisement. On the contrary, those who identified as Caucasian completely disagree that any of these cues are significant. These findings relate to the research presented by Leonar, Scotter and Pakdil (2009), who found that cultural norms inhibit the use of particular types of media or the acceptance of new media. Their analysis highlighted that the difference in cultural patterns have a dramatic effect on the perception of media. This explains the results based on the participant's ethnicity/race, as Hispanic and Latinos considered cues to be important while those who identified as Caucasians disagreed. This shows that depending on race/ethnicity

and culture, people consume media differently and consider certain aspects of the channel to be more important than others.

This study contradicts the findings of Dennis and Valacich (1999) as they found that feedback is important for improving understanding because it enables mid-course corrections in the message transmitted. In the case of this study, feedback was not considered an important element for the advertisement to be effective. On the other hand, this study supports Shinnawy and Marku's (1997) results since they found that the media richness theory is only partially applicable to new media and should be adapted selectively when considering new media. In the case of this study, the only aspect of the media richness theory that was applicable was the multiplicity of cues. My findings confirm that there is partial utility in using the media richness theory to test newer media platforms.

The findings based on gender found no differences, as participants expressed the same feelings towards YouTube advertisements, the cues presented, and the feedback on the YouTube platform. The results contradict Dennis et al. (1999), who found that individuals did find certain communication channels to be richer than others, but women had a harder time with the cues and the performance. In other words, gender does not influence how participants evaluate the effectiveness of advertisements.

The results in this study demonstrate that both visual and auditory cues are crucial for an advertisement to be effective and for companies to generate profit. This study has contributed to the understanding of what specific cues must be considered for the audience to better understand, relate/engage, and remember the advertisement. At the same time, it has demonstrated that on a social media site such as YouTube, companies launching the ad do not have to worry as much about the feedback, since it will not alter the effectiveness of their advertisements.

**Limitations and Directions for Future Research**

There are certainly some limitations to consider when interpreting these results. Since the sample size was fairly small the results cannot be generalized to the entire population under study. At the same time, because of the time limit, no experiments were conducted to verify the results of the survey, and no in-depth interviews were conducted to get more nuanced results about how the participants interact with YouTube advertisements.

In this study, I have offered insights about the importance of cues for advertising effectiveness, I have demonstrated the cues that are considered the most important for the viewer to relate/engage, understand, and remember an advertisement. I found evidence that the multiplicity of cues does reduce uncertainty, therefore partially supporting the media richness theory. Since social media is a growing phenomenon, a lot of research remains to be done in order to understand the most effective channels to launch an advertisement. Because of this, companies can explore other social media platforms and consider how the cues and the feedback presented by this study can influence other platforms and advertising effectiveness. Not all social media platforms present the same characteristics, therefore, it is important to adapt the theory to the specific platform under study. At the same time, my study can be expanded by conducting an experiment where the participants are shown advertisements and later asked what cues helped them better understand, feel connected, or remember the ads; they can also be asked if they felt the need to give feedback on the advertisements observed.

**Conclusion**

The results in this study have demonstrated that multiplicity of cues are needed for an advertisement to be more effective. Individuals tend to engage with the communication channels that provide more cues because it facilitates the understanding of the message and leaves less room for misinterpretations. Communication has not changed over the years,

people are still selecting the channels that they feel better satisfy their needs; therefore, it is crucial for companies to not only identify those needs but also to comprehend what cues the advertisement should provide in order for it to be effective.

At the same time, this study showed that when it comes to advertising, consumers do not feel the need to give feedback. In a social media site such as YouTube, where the most important cues are presented, individuals tend to better comprehend the message, and therefore, not feel the need to comment or give feedback. Understanding these factors is helpful for companies to determine where their advertisement investments will be most profitable, and where the message will be better received and understood. This study has contributed to existing research, but with a new perspective that can be applied to other social media sites.

References

Boyd, D. M., & Ellison, N. B. (2007). Social network sites: Definition, history, and

scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *13*(1), 210-230.

doi:10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00393.x

Calder, B. J., Malthouse, E. C., & Schaedel, U. (2009). An experimental study of the

relationship between online engagement and advertising effectiveness. *Journal of*

*Interactive Marketing*, *23*(4), 321-331. doi:10.1016/j.intmar.2009.07.002

Carlson, J. R., & George, J. F. (2004). Media appropriateness in the conduct and

discovery of deceptive communication: The relative influence of richness and

synchronicity. *Group Decision and Negotiation*, *13*(2), 191-210.

doi:10.1023/b:grup.0000021841.01346.35

Carlson, J. R., & Zmud, R. W. (1999). Channel expansion theory and the experiential

nature of media richness perceptions. *Academy of Management Journal*, *42*(2),

153-170. doi:10.2307/257090

Coursaris, C. K., Van Osch, W., & Balogh, B. A. (2016). Informing brand messaging

strategies via social media analytics. *Online Information Review*, *40*(1), 6-24.

doi:10.1108/oir-02-2015-0062

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods*

*approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Daft, R. L., & Lengel, R. H. (1986). Organizational information requirements, media

richness and structural design. *Management Science*, *32*(5), 554-571.

doi:10.1287/mnsc.32.5.554

D'ambra, J., Rice, R. E., & O'connor, M. (1998). Computer-mediated communication and

media preference: An investigation of the dimensionality of perceived task

equivocality and media richness. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, *17*(3),

164-174. doi:10.1080/014492998119535

Dennis, A. R., & Kinney, S. T. (1998). Testing media richness theory in the new media:

The effects of cues, feedback, and task equivocality. *Information Systems

Research*, *9*(3), 256-274. doi:10.1287/isre.9.3.256

Dennis, A. R., Kinney, S. T., & Hung, Y. C. (1999). Gender differences in the effects of

media richness. *Small Group Research*, *30*(4), 405-437.

doi:10.1177/104649649903000402

Dennis, A., & Valacich, J. (1999). Rethinking media richness: towards a theory of media

synchronicity. *Proceedings of the 32nd Annual Hawaii International Conference

on Systems Sciences. 1999. HICSS-32. Abstracts and CD-ROM of Full Papers*.

doi:10.1109/hicss.1999.772701

Flanagin, A., & Metzger, M. (2001). Internet use in the contemporary media

environment. *Human Communication Research*, *27*(1), 153-181.

doi:10.1093/hcr/27.1.153

Foss, K. A., & Littlejohn, S. W. (2009). Media Richness Theory. In *Encyclopedia of

communication theory* (1st ed., pp. 642-643). Retrieved from

http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781412959384

Kwak, H. (2012). Self-disclosure in online media: an active audience perspective.

*International Journal of Advertising*, *31*(3), 485. doi:10.2501/ija-31-3-485-510

Lavrakas, P. (2008). Encyclopedia of survey research methods. *SAGE Publications Ltd*.

doi:10.4135/9781412963947

Leonard, K. M., Van Scotter, J. R., & Pakdil, F. (2009). Culture and communication:

Cultural variations and media effectiveness. *Administration & Society*, *41*(7), 850-

877. doi:10.1177/0095399709344054

Li, H., & Lo, H. (2014). Do you recognize its brand? the effectiveness of online in-

Stream video advertisements. *Journal of Advertising*, *44*(3), 208-218.

doi:10.1080/00913367.2014.956376

Lo, S., & Lie, T. (2008). Selection of communication technologies—A perspective based

on information richness theory and trust. *Technovation*, *28*(3), 146-153.

doi:10.1016/j.technovation.2007.05.017

Moore, D. S., & McCabe, G. P. (2006). *Introduction to the practice of statistics* (5th ed.).

New York, NY: W.H. Freeman.

Otondo, R. F., Van Scotter, J. R., Allen, D. G., & Palvia, P. (2008). The complexity of

richness: Media, message, and communication outcomes. *Information &*

*Management*, *45*(1), 21-30. doi:10.1016/j.im.2007.09.003

Pashkevich, M., Dorai-Raj, S., Kellar, M., & Zigmond, D. (2012). Empowering online

advertisements by empowering viewers with the right to choose. *Journal of*

*Advertising Research*, *52*(4), 451-457. doi:10.2501/jar-52-4-451-457

Pikas, B., & Sorrentino, G. (2014). The effectiveness of online advertising: Consumer's

perceptions of ads on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. *The Journal of Applied*

*Business and Economics*, *16*(4), 70-81. Retrieved from

http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.rit.edu/docview/1566175341?accountid=108

Plummer, J. T., Rappaport, S. D., & Hall, T. (2007). *The Online advertising playbook:*

*Proven strategies and tested tactics from the advertising research foundation*.

Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Shinnawy, M. E., & Markus, M. L. (1997). The poverty of media richness theory:

explaining people's choice of electronic mail vs. voice mail. *International Journal*

*of Human-Computer Studies*, *46*(4), 443-467. doi:10.1006/ijhc.1996.0099

Soukup, P. A. (2014). Looking at, with and through YouTube. *Communication Research*

   *Trends*, *33*(3), 3-34. Retrieved from

   http://search.proquest.com/docview/1566387376?pq-origsite=summon

Valacich, J. S., Paranka, D., George, J. F., & Nunamaker, J. F. (1993). Communication

   concurrency and the new media. *Communication Research*, *20*(2), 249-276.

   doi:10.1177/009365093020002004

Vannette, D. (2015, April 8). What is a survey? Retrieved from

   https://www.qualtrics.com/blog/what-is-a-survey/

Appendix

**Survey Protocol**

The following is a survey protocol to collect information from individuals about their experiences with YouTube advertisements.

You are invited to participate in a research study about the effectiveness of YouTube advertisements. The purpose of this study is to understand how YouTube users rate the effectiveness of advertisements encountered while browsing videos. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before completing the questionnaire. The study is being conducted by Paula Raquel Rodriguez from Rochester Institute of Technology, School of Communication.

**STUDY PURPOSE** The purpose of this study is to understand YouTube advertisement effectiveness based on two of the most important factors of The Media Richness Theory, cues and feedback. This study also serves as my thesis to complete my master's degree in Communication and Media Technologies from Rochester Institute of Technology.

**PROCEDURES FOR THE STUDY:** If you agree to be in the study, you will complete a questionnaire about your YouTube use and perspective on the advertisements, which should take 5 – 10 minutes of your time.

**CONFIDENTIALITY** the survey instrument will assign you a unique id and your demographic information collected in this study, will be used for data analysis purposes only.

**PAYMENT**   You will not receive payment for taking part in this study.

**CONTACTS FOR QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS** for questions about the study, contact the researcher: **Paula Raquel Rodriguez** at (585)358-6609 or email: prr2905@rit.edu. For questions about your rights as a research participant or to discuss problems, complaints or concerns about a research study, or to obtain information, or offer input, contact the Rochester Institute of Technology, Institutional Review Board, University Services Center, Suite #2400, **Rochester, NY 14623,** 585-475-7673 **or by email at hsro@rit.edu**

**VOLUNTARY NATURE OF STUDY** Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part or may leave the study at any time. Your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not affect your current or future relations with the investigator.

1. What gender do you most identify with:

- o   Male
- o   Female
- o   Prefer not to answer -

2.  Age:

- o   18 - 24 years old
- o   25 - 34 years old
- o   35 - 44 years old
- o   45 - 54 years old
- o   55 years or older

3. Education: What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?  If currently enrolled, highest degree received.

- o   Some high school, no diploma
- o   High school graduate, diploma or equivalent
- o   Some college credit, no degree
- o   Trade/technical/vocational training
- o   Associate degree
- o   Bachelor's degree
- o   Master's degree
- o   Doctorate degree

4.  Occupation:

- o   Employed for wages
- o   Self-employed
- o   Out of work and looking for work
- o   Out of work but not currently looking for work
- o   A homemaker
- o   A student
- o   Retired
- o   Unable to work
- o   Other:  Specify: _____  -

5.  Ethnicity/race:

- o   Caucasian
- o   Hispanic or Latino
- o   Black or African American
- o   Native American or American Indian
- o   Asian or Pacific Islander

      o   Other:  Specify: _____

      o   Prefer not to answer

6.  What is your current geographic location?

    City_____

    Country _____

7.  Do you use the social media YouTube?

Yes        No

8. Have you ever watched a YouTube advertisement?

Yes        No

9. Do you like watching video advertisements in YouTube?

Yes        No

10. After watching an advertisement do you identify the brand/product or service launching the ad?
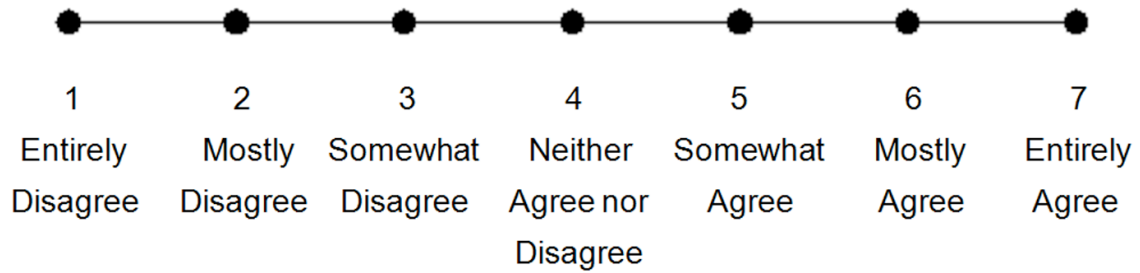
Yes        No

11. After watching an advertisement on YouTube how do you react to it?

      o   Research about the product or service
      o   Purchase the product or service
      o   Consider the product or service
      o   Ignore the advertisement
      o   Get annoyed for having my video interrupted
      o   Other: Specify _____ -

12. Do you use (comment or read) the comments section in YouTube?
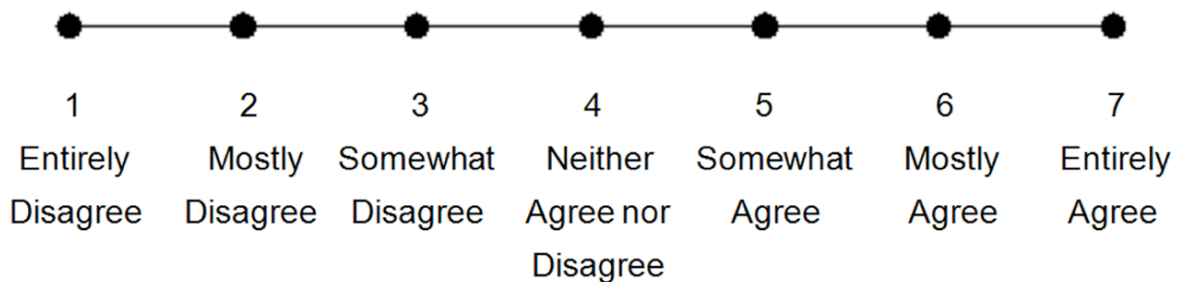
Yes        No

Please use the following scale to select the number that best represents how you feel about YouTube advertisements:

|  1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Entirely Disagree | Mostly Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Agree | Mostly Agree | Entirely Agree |

**Viewing**

I always skip the advertisements after the first few seconds 1  2  3  4  5  6  7

I only watch the ad when I am interested in the product or service 1  2  3  4  5  6  7

I only watch the ad if I am familiar with the brand, product or service 1  2  3  4  5  6  7



|  1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Entirely Disagree | Mostly Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Agree | Mostly Agree | Entirely Agree |

**The following cues make the advertisement memorable (I remember the cues for a long time):**

Music    1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Tone of voice 1  2  3  4  5  6  7
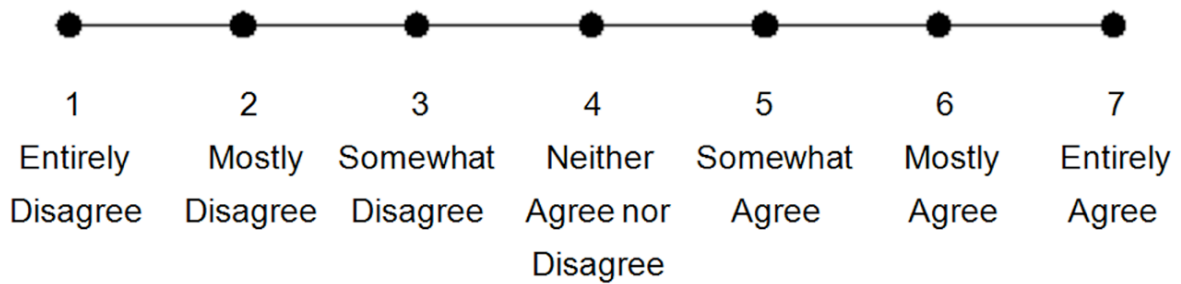
Actors physical appearance 1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Body movements 1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Scenery 1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Narration 1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Facial Expressions 1  2  3  4  5  6  7

**The following cues help me understand the advertisement message better:**

Music    1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Tone of voice 1   2   3   4   5   6   7
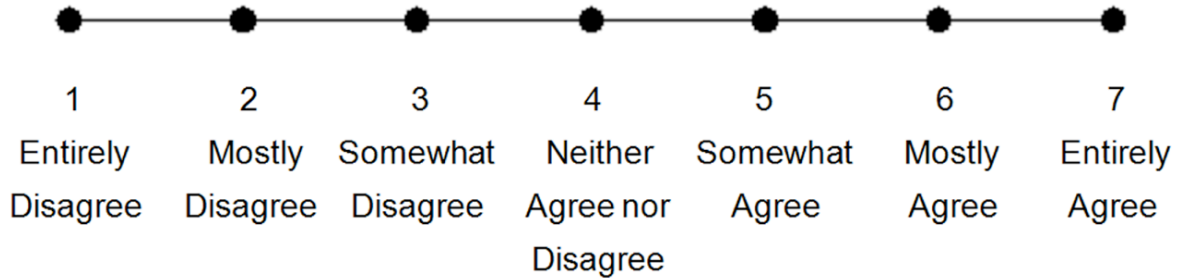
Physical appearance of the actors 1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Body movements 1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Scenery 1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Narration 1   2   3   4   5   6   7
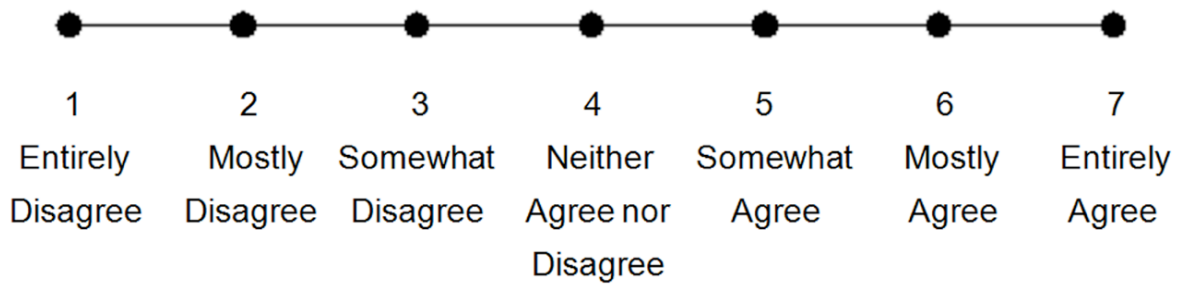
Facial Expressions 1   2   3   4   5   6   7



**The cues in the video help me better understand:**

The brand  1  2  3  4  5  6  7

The message  1  2  3  4  5  6  7

What I have to do to purchase the product 1   2   3   4   5   6   7

The benefits of the product/service  1   2   3   4   5   6   7

**The following cues help me relate (feel connected) to the brand or the product/service**

Music    1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Tone of voice 1   2   3   4   5   6   7

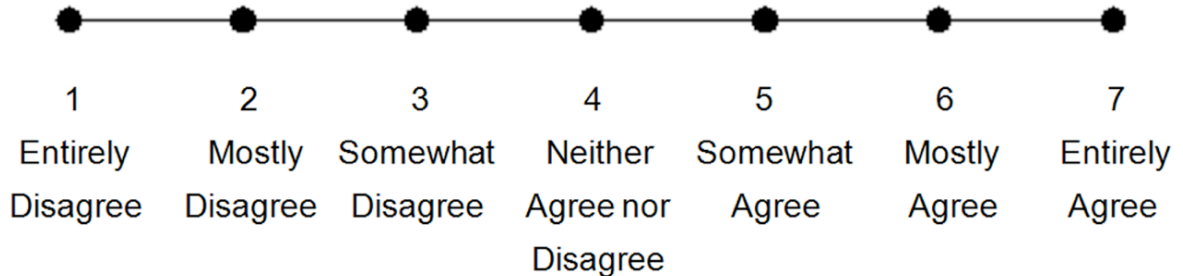Actor's physical appearance 1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Body movements 1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Scenery 1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Narration 1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Facial Expressions 1   2   3   4   5   6   7



**Feedback**

**After watching an advertisement:**

I feel the need to ask the company a question about the product   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

I feel the need to give my opinion on the ad   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

I do not feel the need to obtain or give feedback    1   2   3   4   5   6   7

I feel confused about the brand/ product/ service   1   2   3   4   5   6   7