

COMPARATIVE VERSUS NONCOMPARATIVE ADVERTISING:
PRINT ADVERTISING INTENSITY AND EFFECTIVENESS

by

SHANA MEGANCK

(Under the Direction of Wendy Macias)

ABSTRACT

This research study looked at the effect of different levels of comparative advertising (i.e., noncomparative, low comparative and high comparative) on effectiveness as measured by attitude toward the advertisement, attitude toward the brand, purchase intention and recall. Since comparative advertising has become more prevalent since its legitimization in 1971, it is important to further research the topic for the purpose of bettering our understanding of the effectiveness of this advertising tactic. An experiment was conducted to test the hypotheses. The findings show that although there was a clear distinction between the different intensity levels of the comparative ads, there was not a statistically significant difference between the effectiveness of comparative and noncomparative print advertisements when looking at attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand, purchase intention and recall. Although respondents' attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand, purchase intention and recall were all slightly different at the various intensity levels the results were not statistically significant.

INDEX WORDS: Comparative, Noncomparative, Advertising, Attitude toward ad, Attitude toward brand, Purchase intention, Recall

COMPARATIVE VERSUS NONCOMPARATIVE ADVERTISING:
PRINT ADVERTISING INTENSITY AND EFFECTIVENESS

by

SHANA MEGANCK

B.A., Mary Baldwin College, 2003

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the University of Georgia in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2005

© 2005

Shana Meganck

All Rights Reserved

COMPARATIVE VERSUS NONCOMPARATIVE ADVERTISING:
PRINT ADVERTISING INTENSITY AND EFFECTIVENESS

by

SHANA MEGANCK

Major Professor: Wendy Macias

Committee: Spencer Tinkham
Leara Rhodes

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
August 2005

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	1
2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT.....	5
3 METHODOLOGY	16
4 RESULTS	23
5 DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS.....	27
6 REFERENCES	33
APPENDICES	37
A ADVERTISEMENTS.....	37
B QUESTIONNAIRE.....	40

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

Comparative advertisements have been widely used in print and television media since their use was legitimized by a Federal Trade Commission (FTC) ruling in 1971 (Donthu, 1992). In this ruling the FTC issued a policy statement that encouraged the use of comparative advertising as being more informative for consumers as well as more effective for advertisers. The FTC defined a comparative advertisement as one which “compares alternative brands on objectively measurable attributes or price, and identifies the alternative brand by name, illustration or other distinctive information” (Federal Register 1979, p. 47328). The FTC also noted that comparative advertising, or advertising that identifies a competing product or service, is characterized by three distinct features: it should be factual and informative; it should explicitly or by implication make clear what comparison is being made; and it should not mislead the consumer about other products or services with which comparisons might be made (Federal Register 1979, p. 47328).

For the purpose of this study noncomparative advertising will be defined as any advertisement that uses a one-sided message in order to communicate facts about the brand (e. g., Coke is great). That is, a noncomparative ad is any ad that does not use a comparison brand. In contrast, researchers have most often operationally defined a comparative ad as one that compares two or more specifically named or recognizably presented brands of the same generic product class; and makes such a comparison in terms of one or more specific product attributes

(Anderson and Walker; 1991; Farris and Wilkie, 1975; Scammon, 1978). For this study this definition will be altered to say that comparative advertising involves a comparison of a sponsored brand to a competitive brand(s) in an advertisement (e.g., Coke is better than Pepsi) (Barry, 1993).

The last 25 years have witnessed the birth and rapid growth of comparative advertising (Chattopadhyay, 1998). Different studies conducted in recent years have found that comparative advertisements comprise about 30 to 40 percent of all ads being run (Aaker, Batra and Myers, 1996; Donthu, 1992; Pechmann and Stewart, 1990; Robinson, 1994). Comparative advertising is increasing with some practitioners even using comparative advertising against their own brands (e.g., Tide compares itself to Cheer) (Barry, 1993).

Rogers and Williams (1989) found that both academic researchers and practitioners agreed that comparative advertisements achieve better message recall than noncomparative advertisements. This finding has been confirmed by several researchers in more recent years (Pechmann and Stewart, 1990; Pechmann and Ratneshwar, 1991; and Rose, Miniard, Barone, Manning and Till, 1993). Given that comparative advertisements make up 30 to 40 percent of all advertising (as previously stated), it is important to further research the topic to achieve a better understanding of the effectiveness of this advertising strategy; in comparison to the often used and applauded noncomparative ad.

Much research on the topic of comparative advertising, up to this point, has focused on political advertising (Johnson-Cartee and Copeland, 1989; Kaid and Boydston, 1987; Merritt, 1984; Pinkleton, 1997; Pinkleton, 1998; Roddy and Garramone, 1988; Shapiro and Rieger, 1992). Yet, these results may not apply to consumer products outside the political arena. Product advertising and political advertising are processed differently because claims in political

advertisements have a greater chance to appear subjective and are difficult to verify; therefore, it is not relevant to do a review of the literature on the topic of political advertising (Sorescu and Gelb, 2000).

This study contributes to the ongoing debate of whether comparative or noncomparative advertising has a more positive effect on the consumer. Several researchers (Buchanan, Jane and Maheswaran, 2000; Donthu, 1992; Etgar and Goodwin, 1982; Goodwin and Etgar, 1980; Iyer, 1988; Pechmann and Retneshwar; 1991; Pechmann and Stewart, 1990; Pechmann and Stewart, 1991; Rogers and Williams, 1989) have found that comparative advertising is more effective, while other researchers (Amundsen and Murphy, 1981; Belch, 1981; Goodwin and Etgar, 1980; Gorn and Weinberg, 1984; Pechmann and Stewart, 1991; Pinkleton, 1998; Rogers and Williams, 1989; Shimp and Dyer, 1978) have found that noncomparative advertising is more effective, or just as effective, as comparative advertising.

There are two main gaps in the comparative advertising literature that this study investigates effectiveness and intensity. There has been little research conducted on comparative advertising intensity (i.e., degree of comparativeness as will be explained later) and effectiveness (e.g., recall, purchase intention and attitudes) of print advertising. Therefore, it is an area with much left to discover. This study is designed to move this area forward.

Therefore, the main purpose of this research is to examine the effect of the comparative advertisement's intensity on effectiveness of the advertisement. In particular, this study employs a three cell experimental design to assess the effect of comparative advertising intensity on consumers' attitude toward the ad (an overall evaluation of a specific advertising execution), attitude toward the brand (an overall evaluation of the brand presented in the ad), purchase

intention (consumers' overall intent to purchase the product) and recall (overall recollection of the information in the advertisement).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND HYPOTHESES

This chapter will review the relevant the literature that has been conducted on the topic of comparative versus noncomparative advertising, as well as specify the hypotheses for the current study.

Effectiveness of Comparative Advertising

The effectiveness of comparative advertisements has been studied and tested by numerous academic and industry researchers since the legalization of comparative advertising in 1971. The results of these studies have been mixed and conflicting, in that there are a variety of findings supporting both positive and negative aspects of comparative and noncomparative advertising. This has prompted many researchers to explore the cause behind such diverse outcomes regarding advertising effectiveness of comparative advertisements including: effects of comparative ads versus noncomparative ads (Donthu, 1992), impact of comparative ads (Etgar and Goodwin, 1982; Gorn and Weinberg, 1984; Pechmann, 1990), and attitude toward advertisement, attitude toward the brand, recall and purchase intentions of comparative advertisements' brands (Iyer, 1988; Pechmann, 1991).

Previous research and reviews on comparative versus noncomparative advertising report mixed results (Grewal and Kavanoor, 1997). For this reason, Grewal and Kavanoor (1997) conducted a meta-analysis that examined the efficacy of comparative advertising. The analysis showed that comparative advertisements were more effective than noncomparative

advertisements in generating attention, message and brand awareness, favorable attitudes toward the sponsored brand and increased purchase intention.

Comparative advertising has also been shown to increase consumer involvement with the message, possibly because of consumers' natural tendency to be drawn to the negative atmosphere that surrounds comparative advertising (Donthu, 1992). Therefore, Donthu (1992) believed that as the intensity of a comparative advertisement increased, its recall would also increase due to its ability to stimulate involvement with the message being communicated. Donthu looked at differences in comparative advertisements and developed a measure of comparative advertising intensity (CAI) based on these differences. Donthu then tested the effectiveness of comparative advertisements, when compared to noncomparative advertisements, after they had been classified based on intensity. Donthu's intensity scale included three classification levels: noncomparative, low intensity and high intensity comparative ad. The results of the study showed that comparative advertisement recall was directly related to intensity. As the intensity of the ad increased, its recall also increased. "Consumers tend to recall more intense comparative ads than less intense comparative ads (Donthu 1992, p. 56)." However, in the case of consumers' attitude toward the ad, it increased with lower levels of intensity and decreased at higher levels. More precisely, consumers seemed to have a positive attitude for comparative ads up to a certain amount of intensity, but their attitude dropped after the comparative ad became exceedingly intense. In other words, comparative ad intensity's relationship with attitude toward the ad was found to be an inverted U-shape.

Gorn and Weinberg (1984) also studied the impact of comparative advertising versus noncomparative advertising on attitude, and in addition, on perception (perceived difference between the challenger and the brand leader). Results showed that comparative advertisements

were successful in reducing the perceived difference between the challenger and the brand leader across the three product categories investigated (cigarettes, golf balls and toothpastes). While the results of their study suggest that comparative advertising can bring the challenger (a brand which is not the category leader) closer in people's minds to the leader, the type of ad did not affect attitude. But, perhaps a longer exposure to the ad was needed to affect attitude. Gorn and Weinberg (1984) therefore concluded that when looking at attitude toward the ad, comparative advertising was in fact less effective than traditional advertising. However, when looking at the impact of comparative and noncomparative advertising on perception, support was provided for the continued use of comparative advertising. They noted that one possible approach to developing more effective comparative advertising is to construct an ad that is two-sided (the ad presents some positive and some negative characteristics of the sponsor's brand) in addition to making a direct comparison with a competitor. One-sided (positive only) messages would be expected to generate more counterarguing than two-sided (positive and negative) messages because the latter seems to be more honest, which generally creates greater acceptance of a key claim (Gorn and Weinberg 1984).

Direct Comparative Advertising

The relative effectiveness of two-sided versus one-sided comparative advertising appeals, in terms of impact on initial attitudes, was studied by Etgar and Goodwin (1982). In addition to the idea that two-sided ads are often more effective, they proposed that direct comparative advertisements (naming one or more competitors or "comparison brands" in an ad) also play a part in increasing comparative advertising effectiveness. Muehling and Stoltman (1990) noted that comparative advertisements containing direct references to a well-known competitor are inherently more involving than noncomparative ads. Muehling and Stoltman (1990) concluded

that in addition to perceiving the comparative message as being more relevant, subjects who viewed the format paid more attention to, elaborated on, and were able to recall more message points than did subjects exposed to a similar, though noncomparative, ad.

Pechmann and Stewart (1990) studied the effectiveness of ads making comparative claims in the three most common market share conditions that advertisers face (low, moderate and high). Their research found that direct comparative claims attract attention and thereby enhance purchase intention for low-share brands but detract from purchase intention for established brands (i.e., moderate or high share) by increasing awareness of competitors and sponsor misidentifications. This research found that if established brands use a comparative advertising strategy, the consumer is more likely to remember and associate the ad with the competitor.

Pechmann and Stewart (1991) sought to contribute to a better understanding of direct comparative advertising. The study looked at direct comparative advertising (compare two brands and name them specifically) in terms of its effectiveness at persuading consumers to choose the advertised brand rather than other competing brands. They examined two primary issues—whether the comparative advertisement’s effects on brand choice were moderated by the advertised brand’s market share, and whether its effects on brand choice were mediated by its attention-getting power. According to Pechmann and Stewart (1991), there are at least two reasons why consumers might pay more attention to direct comparative ads than to other ads: the “novelty hypothesis” and the “index hypothesis.” The “novelty hypothesis” states that direct comparative ads might be more attention-getting because they are more original than other ads. The “index hypothesis” relates to the idea that the most typical type of direct comparative advertisement compares a low-share brand to a much higher share competitor or comparison

brand. In this case, the name of the high-share comparison brand might serve as an index and attract attention to the entire ad.

The results of Pechman and Stewart's (1991) study demonstrated that the efficacy of direct comparative advertising is reliant on the relative market position of the advertised brand. For established brands with low market shares (not well-known, e.g., The Switch), direct comparative ads (e.g., "Coke is better than Pepsi") were more effective than both indirect comparative ads (a comparative ad that does not name one or more competitors or "comparison brands" in an ad; e.g., "Coke is better than the leading brand") and noncomparative ads at persuading subjects to choose the advertised brand rather than other competing brands. In addition, direct comparative ads were also more effective for promoting especially high share brands (well-known brands, e.g., Coke). Nevertheless, all three types of ads (noncomparative, direct comparative and indirect comparative) seemed to be about equally effective for promoting moderate-share brands (e.g., Dr. Pepper).

Type of Information in Comparative Advertising

Iyer (1988) investigated the effectiveness of another type of comparative advertising—factual information versus evaluative information. Iyer hypothesized that attitude toward and intention to use a brand would be greater when a comparative ad used factual information (logical, objectively verifiable descriptions of tangible product features) rather than evaluative information (emotional, subjective impressions of intangible aspect of the product). Iyer also hypothesized that attitude toward a brand and intention to use a brand would be higher when a comparative ad was used to promote a new brand rather than an established brand. Iyer (1988) concluded that a comparative format that emphasizes factual information is best suited for a new brand launch (advertising a new product). In general, his research supported the idea that attitude

was influenced by verbal content (factual information versus evaluative information), although intention to use a brand was not and that a comparative format might be useful for new brand introductions.

Jain and Maheswaran (2000) also looked at the effectiveness of comparative advertising with respect to the type of information that was contained within the advertisement. Jain and Maheswaran (2000) studied the different attribute types that could be featured: search and experience. Search qualities can be determined by inspection prior to purchase and/ or use (e.g., “XX computers have 10 MB of memory capacity”). Experience qualities, on other hand, cannot be determined prior to purchase, consumption, or both. A brand must be bought and used for a period of time before an experience attribute claim can be evaluated (e.g., “XX indoor/ outdoor carpeting will not mildew or rot for at least 3 years”). Jain and Maheswaran (2000) concluded that noncomparative ads might be more effective than comparative ads for experience attribute claims; however, for search attribute claims, comparative and noncomparative advertisements might elicit similar levels of believability and overall effectiveness.

Summary of Comparative Advertising Effectiveness

As noted, comparative ads are being used increasingly in print and television media (Aaker, Batra and Myers, 1996). Yet, there is a major controversy regarding comparative advertising effectiveness. The results are extremely mixed and vary from “very effective” (Buchanan, Jane and Maheswaran, 2000; Donthu, 1992; Iyer, 1988; Etgar and Goodwin, 1980; Etgar and Goodwin, 1982; Gorn and Weinber, 1983; Pechmann and Retneshwar, 1991; Pechmann and Stewart, 1990; Pechmann and Stewart, 1991; Rogers and Williams, 1989) to “not as effective as noncomparative ads” (Belch, 1981; Goodwin and Etgar, 1980; Gorn and Weinberg, 1984; Pechmann and Stewart, 1991; Pinkleton, 1998; Rogers and Williams, 1989).

Previous academic research findings on the topic currently fall under one of three classifications: positive (comparative advertising is superior to noncomparative advertising), negative (noncomparative advertising is superior), and neutral (there is no difference between comparative and noncomparative advertising) (Rogers and Williams, 1989).

Theoretical Framework

One theory that might add to our understanding of the effectiveness of comparative advertising is negativity bias. Broadly stated, the negativity effect is defined as a situation where the consumer assigns more importance to negative information and discounts equally believable positive information in a variety of information-processing tasks (Cover, 1986). In other words, under many conditions negative information is more powerful in affecting attitudes and behavior than positive information that seems comparably credible and extreme. Consumers tend to favor or assign disproportionate value to negative information in the decision-making process (James and Hensel, 1991). Therefore, negativity bias theory could help to elucidate the reason behind the effectiveness of comparative advertising because it explains the idea that comparative ads have been shown to increase consumer involvement with the message (Donthu, 1992). For example, when consumers look at a comparative advertisement they are more involved with the message because negative information is more powerful in affecting attitudes and behavior, and hence the greater the intensity (the stronger the comparison, which increases the negativity) of the comparative advertisement, the greater consumers' recall, attitude toward the ad, purchase intention and attitude toward the brand due to the increased subject involvement with the message.

Negativity bias theory has been used in comparative advertising studies to encompass the idea that the negative is unexpected (Fiske, 1980; Kellerman, 1989), more easily recalled and

considered more informative than pro-sponsor advertising (Stone,1996) because it elicits greater attention. Negative ads appeal to emotion, rather than logic, thereby eliciting higher recall levels and a more positive attitude (Nugent, 1987). Lau (1982) argued that negative information is unexpected, in the case of political ads, and as a result stands out disproportionately, which in turn can lead to higher recall. Most recently it was used by Sorescu and Gelb (2000) in which they noted that “the most prevalent finding of positive results for negative advertising is that negativity is memorable” (p.26).

Other theories that have been applied to comparative advertising research are attribution theory (Sparkman and Locander, 1980), inoculation theory (Etgar and Goodwin, 1982) and the hierarchy of effects model of advertising (Pechmann and Stewart, 1991). Sparkman and Locander’s (1980) use of attribution theory states that there are three advertising factors that influence attributions: content, context and source. They concluded that attributional processes were evoked by the context in which an advertisement appeared. Thus, with content constant, attributions can be changed by the advertisement’s context and source.

Other than attribution theory, inoculation theory has also been used for research on the topic of comparative versus noncomparative advertising. Inoculation theory, used by Etgar and Goodwin (1982), deals with the use of negative statements that attacked well-defined prior beliefs concerning an attitude, object or issue. Etgar and Goodwin concluded that resistance to future attacks by the compared-to-brands needs to be demonstrated before inoculation theory could be fully entertained in their study. Pechmann and Stewart (1991) looked at the hierarchy of effects model of advertising for focusing on the mediating role of attention. Pechmann and Stewart (1991) concluded that according to this model, the likelihood that an ad would affect consumers’ purchase intentions and behaviors was at least partially contingent on its first

attracting their attention. While these theories have helped understand comparative advertising to some degree, they have fallen somewhat short and a new theory may hold greater promise to further this research area.

Negativity bias theory was chosen for this study because it is impossible to consider or actually make a purchasing decision, except perhaps in the case of an absolute monopoly (a company or brand having exclusive control over a particular product or service category), without making one or a dozen comparisons. So in that sense, all advertising is comparative. Therefore, according to this approach all advertising is not only comparative, but it is also all negative because in the process of selling a product, it is automatically downgrading (saying something is negative about) all of its competitors (Bernstein, 1992). Whereas, previously applied theories have not been able to fully explain comparative advertising, the negativity bias shows promise in explaining the psychological processes at work.

Hypotheses

Following the review of the key literature, the next section details the hypotheses for this research study. Comparative advertisements have been found to be superior in eliciting actual sales, gaining brand awareness and recall (Donthu, 1992; Iyer, 1988), improving brand attitudes (Etgar and Goodwin, 1982; Pechmann, 1991), improving attitudes toward the advertisement and raising purchase intentions (Pechmann, 1992). However, a number of research findings show little or no difference between traditional and comparative advertising (for both print and TV) in terms of attitude toward brands and/or ads (Gorn and Weinberg, 1984), brand awareness, brand or product recall (Pechmann, 1991), purchase intention and persuasiveness (Pechmann, 1992). Comparative advertisements have been shown to be inferior in generating brand preference, and in fact, they may contribute to preference for the named competing brand. Despite some

conflicting findings most studies support the premise that comparative print advertisements are more effective than noncomparative print advertisements. Therefore, the first set of hypotheses is:

H1: Comparative print advertisements will have a higher attitude toward the advertisement than noncomparative print advertisements.

H2: Comparative print advertisements will have a higher attitude toward the brand than noncomparative print advertisements.

H3: Comparative print advertisements will have a higher purchase intention than noncomparative print advertisements.

H4: Comparative print advertisements will have a higher message recall than noncomparative print advertisements.

A closer look at comparative advertising and the numerous studies previously conducted on the topic indicate that there are many different types of comparative advertisements. Some comparative advertisements are explicit, name the competing brand, and make comparisons on more than one attribute. Other comparative advertisements make only an overall comparison and use the “leading brand” approach without even naming the “compared to” brand, and the message is extremely subtle in nature (Donthu, 1992). Given that there are such significant variations between comparative advertisements, it is not surprising that results in this area are so mixed. Therefore, computing the effectiveness of comparative advertisements, and comparing its effectiveness with noncomparative advertisements, makes sense only after the intensity of the comparative advertisement has been accounted for (Donthu, 1992).

The next several hypotheses address this issue:

H5: Consumers' attitude toward a comparative print advertisement will be more positive if the comparison level is higher.

H6: Consumers' attitude toward the brand will be more positive if the comparison level is higher.

H7: Consumers' purchase intention will be more positive if the comparison level is higher.

H8: Consumers' recall of the print advertisement will be greater if the comparison level is higher.

The reason the following definitions were chosen for attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand, purchase intention and recall is because these are the most commonly used measures of effectiveness in the advertising literature. For this study, attitude toward the ad will be defined as how the viewer thinks/ feels when or after he/she views an advertisement. Attitude toward the brand will be defined as an overall evaluation of the brand presented in the ad (Brown and Stayman, 1992). Purchase intention will be defined as consumers' overall intention to purchase the product (in this case use the web site) (Phillips, 1996). Recall will be measured in three ways: one unaided question, one aided question and four true/false statements, because researchers do not agree on the best way to measure it (aided or unaided). Recall will be defined as how the viewer recollects the information present in the ad immediately after viewing the ad (Jacob and Hoyer, 1987).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

An experiment was the method chosen to analyze the hypotheses due to the cause/ effect relationship under investigation. Most other studies conducted on the topic of comparative versus noncomparative advertising effectiveness have also used an experiment (Donthu, 1992; Goodwin and Etgar, 1980; Gorn and Weinber, 1984; Iyer, 1988; Jain, Buchanan and Maheswaran, 2000; Pechmann and Ratneshwar, 1991; Pechmann and Stewart, 1990). A three-cell design (noncomparative, low comparative and high comparative) was used to test the effectiveness of comparative advertising. The dependent variables were attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand, recall and purchase intention.

Independent Variable

Due to the fact that comparative advertising comes in a varying degree of intensity levels, computing the effectiveness of comparative advertisements on consumer attitude makes sense only after the intensity of the comparative advertisement has been accounted for. In 1992 Naveen Donthu determined that most comparative ads might be classified on the following four dimensions:

1. Does not name the “compared to” brand or used the “leading brand” approach (e.g., “Our detergent is better than the leading brand.”) (X1=0); explicitly names the competing brand (e.g., “Our soap is better than Dove soap.”) (X1=1)

2. Makes overall comparisons (e.g., “Our brand is better than Tide.”) (X2=0); makes comparisons on one or more attributes (e.g., “Toyota gives more miles per gallon than Honda and costs \$2000 less than Honda.”) (X2=1).
3. Two-sided (positive and negative) comparisons (e.g., “Our beer costs a little more but tastes better than Coors.”) (X3=0); one-sided only (e.g., “Our computer costs less than IBM and runs faster than Apple computer.”) (X3=1).
4. Less than 50 percent of the time spent/space on comparisons (X4=0); more than 50 percent of the time/space spent on comparisons (X4=1).

For any given comparative advertisement, its intensity (CAI) may be computed as:

$$CAI = X1 + X2 + X3 + X4$$

Therefore, a noncomparative advertisement will have CAI = 0, and at the extreme, a very intense comparative ad will have CAI = 4. All other comparative ads will have a CAI score anywhere between 0 and 3.

Consequently, the basic idea proposed here is that all comparative ads may be classified on the intensity scale where

CAI = 0 implies noncomparative or very low intensity comparative ad

CAI = 1 implies low intensity comparative ad

CAI = 2 implies somewhat intensive comparative ad

CAI = 3 implies intensive comparative ad

CAI = 4 implies very intensive comparative ad

Due to the limitations of this study, such as time and cost, the five levels above were reevaluated in that CAI = 0 was considered a noncomparative advertisement; CAI = 1 and CAI = 2 were

considered a low intensity comparative advertisement; and CAI = 4 and CAI =5 were considered a high intensity comparative advertisement.

Creation of Stimulus Materials

Comparative (low and high intensity) and noncomparative print advertisements were created based on the definition of both comparative advertising (Barry, 1993) and noncomparative advertising, as stated earlier. In other words, comparative print advertisements were created using a “fake” product and included one advertisement that compared the sponsored brand to an overall category and one advertisement that compared the sponsored brand to another brand. A noncomparative print ad was also created and consisted of an advertisement that did not make any comparison, or simply stated an advertisement that contained a one-sided message. The creation of the advertisements was based on factors that Donthu (1992) considered to be important for future research when analyzing the effects of comparative versus noncomparative print advertising. These factors included consumers’ response to the ad, response to the brand, recall of the advertisement, purchase intention and demographics of the target audience.

The product category (search engine for historical figures’ quotes) was chosen because college students often have to do research for classes and are looking for quotes from historical figures. Therefore, this was deemed a relevant product category for the sample. The three separate ads (noncomparative, low intensity comparative and high comparative) were created by a professional artist starting with the same visual and the same base copy for all three. The copy was later altered to manipulate the comparative level. The only thing that varied between the three ads was slight word changes to create different levels of comparativeness. Starting with the

same base copy and altering only a few words helped to avoid any confounding variables (see Appendix A).

Procedure

Subjects were recruited from a large, introductory public relations class from a large southeastern university. Packets were created and handed out that contained one advertisement (either noncomparative, low intensity comparative or high comparative), two consent forms (one for participant and one for investigator) and a questionnaire. Subjects were randomly assigned to one of the three treatment groups. Students were asked to read the consent form, but not look at the advertisement or start the questionnaire until they were told to do so. After signing the consent form, subjects were allowed to view the advertisement for two minutes.

After viewing the ad, each subject was asked to return the ad to the envelope and not look at it again while they completed a brief questionnaire which contained questions regarding attitude toward the advertisement, attitude toward the brand, purchase intention and message recall, as well as a sequence of demographic information (see Appendix B). These questions were compiled from past research studies on the topic (Brown and Stayman, 1992; Donthu, 1992; Phillips, 1996; Jacob and Hoyer, 1987), as well as from industry opinions on what was important to consider when measuring consumers' response to an advertisement and/or the effectiveness of an advertisement. Effectiveness was defined in terms of attitude toward the advertisement, attitude toward the brand, purchase intention and recall (Donthu, 1992).

Variables:

The following definitions were employed in this study given that they are the most often used in advertising academic research.

Attitude toward the ad was measured with nine seven-point, semantic differential statements (unappealing/ appealing, unbelievable/ believable, unimpressive/ impressive, unattractive/ attractive, uninformative/ informative, not clear/ clear, non eye-catching/ eye-catching, unlikable/ likable and unconvincing/ convincing). Attitude toward the ad was defined as an overall evaluation of a specific advertising execution (Brown and Stayman, 1992). Reliability was found to be acceptable (Chronbach alpha=0.87).

Attitude toward the brand was measured with three seven-point, semantic differential statements (bad/good, likeable/not likeable and not enjoyable/ enjoyable). Attitude toward the brand was defined as an overall evaluation of the brand presented in the ad. Reliability was tested and found to be acceptable (Chronbach alpha=0.71).

Purchase intention was measured by two seven-point, semantic differential statements (likely/ unlikely and improbable/ probable). Purchase intention was defined as consumers' overall intent to purchase the product (in this case use the web site) (Phillips, 1996). Reliability was tested and found to be acceptable (Cronbach alpha=0.92).

Recall was measured by one unaided question (What brand was being advertised in the ad you just saw?), one aided question (Which of the following was the brand of search engine advertised in the ad you just saw?) and four true/false statements which were designed to measure objective facts from the advertisement (Jacoby and Hoyer, 1987).

Pretest

A pretest was conducted to test the manipulation of the independent variable and ensure the clarity of the questionnaire. The 36 subjects used for the pretest were recruited from a mid-level, graphic design class at a large southeastern university. After conducting the pretest a few slight changes were made to the questionnaire in order to increase clarity. Manipulation checks

were run to test whether the stimulus materials clearly demonstrated no comparison, low comparison and high comparison. An ANOVA and post hoc Turkey were utilized ($F = 16.068$ and $p < 0.001$) and indicated that three levels were achieved.

Attitude toward the ad was defined as an overall evaluation of a specific advertising execution (Brown and Stayman, 1992). Reliability was found to be acceptable (Cronbach alpha=0.84). Attitude toward the brand was defined as an overall evaluation of the brand presented in the ad. Reliability was tested and found to be acceptable (Cronbach alpha=0.89). Purchase intention was defined as consumers' overall intent to purchase the product (in this case use the web site). Reliability was tested and found to be acceptable (Cronbach alpha=0.91). According to the pretest, overall comparativeness did affect attitude toward the advertisement ($p = 0.06$), but the attitude toward the brand ($p = 0.28$) and purchase intention ($p = 0.87$) were not statistically significant.

Sample

The sample for this experiment was recruited from an Introductory Public Relations class at a large southeastern university. The 229 subjects who participated in the experiment were college students of both genders from diverse age and college major groups. The sample was 19% male and 81% female. One-hundred and fifty-eight of the 229 students (69%) were 20 years old or less and 71 fell within 21-25 years of age. Ninety-six percent of the students studied had some college education, 4% were college graduates and less than 1% had some graduate school education. As far as college major there was a lot of diversity including 17% of the students sampled majoring in advertising, 17% in public relations, 7% in journalism, 5% in speech communications, 4% in consumer journalism, 4% in telecommunications, 3% in political science, 3% in sociology, 2% in English, 2% in marketing and 2% undecided.

The demographics of this sample was similar to those used in previous studies on the topic (Donthu, 1992) of the effectiveness of comparative versus noncomparative advertising, and were therefore deemed appropriate for the present study.

The subjects were also asked whether or not the product category was one they utilized, in order to gain some insight into the external validity of the experimental results. The sample not only uses search engines frequently (49% daily and 30% weekly), but also often accesses search engines for the more specialized purpose of finding historical quotes (23.5% monthly 45% less than once a month).

Data Analysis

After the data were collected, the researcher analyzed the responses using SPSS to determine whether comparative print advertising results created overall positive or negative feelings toward the ad, positive or negative feelings toward the brand, positive or negative purchase intentions, and positive or negative recall of the ad. The researcher accounted for the intensity specified for each individual ad in order to determine whether intensity (based on the intensity scale noted above and used by Donthu (1992) influenced the overall effectiveness of a comparative advertisement.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Manipulation Checks:

The effective use of different comparison levels requires that the subjects' view a statistically significant difference between the noncomparative ad, the low intensity comparative ad and the high intensity comparative ad. To determine whether the differentiation in comparison levels was successful, subjects were asked to answer a series of questions regarding the intensity of the comparison in the ad viewed. Three five-point semantic differential questions (strongly disagree/strongly agree) were used. In these statements, subjects were asked to indicate whether the ad viewed compared itself to another brand, whether the level of competitive comparison in the advertisement was high, and whether the ad made a direct comparison to another brand which was named. The results of the manipulation checks for the various intensity levels were all statistically significantly different. That is, there was a statistically significant difference (0.001) between all three levels of comparison—no comparison ($M = 2.35$) and low comparison ($M = 2.85$), low and high comparison ($M = 4.42$), no and high. An ANOVA and post hoc Turkey were utilized ($F = 133.41$ and $p = 0.001$).

Tests of Hypotheses

To test the hypotheses a t-test was used for hypotheses 1 through 4 and an ANOVA was used for hypotheses 5 through 8.

Hypothesis 1 states that comparative print advertisements will have a higher attitude toward the advertisement than noncomparative print advertisements. Hypothesis 2 states that

comparative print advertisements will have a higher attitude toward the brand than noncomparative print advertisements. Hypothesis 3 states that comparative print advertisements will have a higher purchase intention than noncomparative print advertisements. Hypothesis 4 states that comparative print advertisements will have a higher recall than noncomparative print advertisements. Based on the t-test results, these hypotheses were not supported. In other words, there is not a statistically significant difference between the effectiveness of comparative and noncomparative print advertisements when looking at attitude toward the brand ($t = 0.87$, $p = 0.23$), attitude toward the ad ($t = -0.49$, $p = 0.50$), purchase intention ($t = -1.45$, $p = 0.91$) and recall ($t = 0.70$, $p = 0.18$). For example, respondents who viewed a noncomparative advertisement ($M = 5.3$) had similar attitude toward the ad as those who viewed a comparative advertisement ($M = 5.2$). Respondents who viewed a noncomparative advertisement ($M = 5.3$) had similar attitude toward the brand as those who viewed a comparative advertisement ($M = 5.3$). Respondents who viewed a noncomparative advertisement ($M = 4.7$) had similar purchase intentions as those who viewed a comparative advertisement ($M = 5.0$). Respondents who viewed a noncomparative advertisement ($M = 2.4$) had similar recall as those who viewed a comparative advertisement ($M = 2.4$).

Hypothesis 5 states that consumers' attitude toward a comparative print advertisement will be more positive if the comparison level is higher. Hypothesis 6 states that consumers' attitude toward the brand will be more positive if the comparison level is higher. Hypothesis 7 states that consumers' purchase intention will be more positive if the comparison level is higher. Hypothesis 8 states that consumers' recall will be greater if the comparison level is higher. Based on the ANOVA results presented in Tables 1 and 2, these hypotheses are not supported. That is, respondents attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand, purchase intention and recall were

all slightly different at the various intensity levels, but still not statistically significant (attitude toward ad $F = 1.04$, $p = 0.35$; attitude toward brand $F = 1.41$, $p = 0.25$; purchase intention $F = 1.17$, $p = 0.31$; recall $F = 0.24$, $p = 0.78$). For example, respondents reported a more positive attitude toward the ad for the no comparison advertisement ($M = 5.3$) than for a low comparison ad ($M = 5.3$) or a high comparison ad ($M = 5.1$). Respondents reported a more positive attitude toward the brand for the low comparison ad ($M = 5.5$) than the no comparison ad ($M = 5.3$) and the high comparison ad ($M = 5.2$). Respondents reported a higher purchase intention for the low comparison ad ($M = 5.1$) than the high comparison ($M = 5.0$) and the no comparison ($M = 4.7$). Respondents reported the same amount of recall for the no comparison ad, low comparison ad and high comparison ad ($M = 2.4$).

Table 1
Effectiveness of Advertising Based on Intensity Level

Mean Table

N=229	No Comparison	Low Comparison	High Comparison
Sample Size	77	79	73
Attitude toward ad	5.3	5.3	5.1
Mean, Std. Dev.	0.8	1.0	0.9
Attitude toward brand	5.3	5.5	5.2
Mean, Std. Dev.	1.0	1.3	1.1
Purchase Intention	4.7	5.1	5.0
Mean, Std. Dev.	1.7	1.5	1.8
Recall	2.4	2.4	2.4
Mean, Std. Dev.	0.7	0.8	0.7

Table 2

Effectiveness of Advertising Based on Intensity Level

ANOVA Table

	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Ratio (D.F. 2, 228)	p
Aad	1.68	0.84	1.04	0.35
Abr	3.69	1.85	1.41	0.25
PI	6.60	3.30	1.17	0.31
Recall	0.26	0.14	0.24	0.78

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Comparative ads have been shown to increase consumer involvement with the message, and therefore it was hypothesized that as the intensity of the comparative advertisement increased, its recall would increase due to its ability to increase subject involvement with the message being communicated. Additionally, it was hypothesized that consumer attitude toward a comparative ad, toward a brand and purchase intention would also be a function of the intensity of the ad.

The results of the study showed that recall of a comparative advertisement, attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand and purchase intention were not greatly affected by the intensity of the comparison. That is, as the intensity of the ad increased the effectiveness of the ad stayed relatively consistent. The results of this research study support previous research which found that comparative advertising was not more effective than noncomparative advertising (Amundsen and Murphy, 1981; Belch, 1981; Gorn and Weinberg, 1984; Pinkleton, 1998; Shimp and Dyer, 1978).

Negativity bias theory states that under many conditions negative information is more powerful in affecting attitudes and behavior than positive information that seems comparably credible and extreme. In the case of comparative advertising, the comparative ad explicitly encourages the consumer to think negatively about the compared to brand, which in turn gives them a relatively more positive attitude toward the comparison brand. For example, “Coke is

better than Pepsi,” makes the consumer think negatively about Pepsi, and therefore think more positively about Coke. The negativity bias theory did not hold true in this study, possibly because it does not explain the psychological processes that are happening when consumers process comparative advertising. People may not have thought negatively about the brand that was being compared; therefore, they did not think more positively about the comparison brand. However, this is only one study and future research should continue to apply this theory with other products/ brands, different variables and various age groups.

More research will, of course, have to be directed at the issue of comparative advertising effectiveness before we have definitive answers on just what conditions lead to better comparative advertising results. However, it is important to note that the reason for this inconsistency in the hypothesis and the results could be based on number of factors including: the measurement environment, the measurement itself, the number of ad exposures, the types of subjects used, the type of media used and/ or the type of product advertised. The measurement environment (i.e., a classroom) may have been distracting or unsuitable for some subjects. Advertisements often need to be viewed more than once to retain information and/ or obtain the desired effectiveness because such factors as brand loyalty are enduring and hard to change with just one ad and/ or one ad exposure. Only students were used for the current experiment, which may not be generalizable to the population as a whole. Print was the only medium tested. Using another medium (i.e., TV) may change the results. The product advertised may not be of interest to some subjects and therefore may not have generated the level of attention that was needed.

It is clear from the literature that comparative and noncomparative advertising are both effective under certain conditions. As noted earlier, comparative advertisements have been noted as effective in eliciting sales, gaining brand awareness, increasing recall (Donthu, 1992; Iyer,

1988), improving brand attitudes (Etgar and Goodwin, 1982; Pechmann, 1991) and raising purchase intentions (Pechmann, 1992). In contrast, little or no difference has been seen in the effectiveness of traditional and comparative advertising when it comes to attitude toward the brand or attitude toward the advertisement (Gorn and Weinberg, 1984), brand awareness, brand or product recall, brand preference (Pechmann, 1991), purchase intentions and persuasiveness (Pechmann, 1992).

Along the same lines, this study does not say that comparative advertising is ineffective; it just indicates that intensity may not play a role in the effectiveness of the advertising and that both noncomparative and comparative advertising are effective. The visual of the ad may have dominated the verbal component of the ad in this experiment. The subjects were asked “If you were going to search for a historical figure’s quote today, which search engine would you use?” Sixty percent of the subjects replied that they would use the hypothetical search engine tom.com while only 32 percent replied google.com which is the search engine the majority (80%) normally use. This indicates that all test ads regardless of comparison level were very effective in communicating and persuading the subjects.

Therefore, although the results were inconsistent with the hypothesis, it can be noted that under some circumstances and for eliciting certain responses and results, both comparative and noncomparative advertising are effective. One cannot say that comparative advertising is unequivocally better or worse than noncomparative advertising, which is clear from the literature reviewed and the results of this study.

Implications

With the increase in comparative advertising since its legitimization in 1971 (Chattopadhyay, 1998), it is important academics to continue research on the topic in order to better understand what makes it effective, how it is beneficial, when to use it, when not to use it, etc. In general, this study has added to the research on comparative advertising effectiveness by looking at different dependent variables (i.e. attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand, purchase intention and recall), independent variable (i.e. intensity) and method than other studies that have been conducted on the effectiveness of comparative versus noncomparative advertising. Regardless of whether the hypotheses were supported or not, there is still a conclusion that can be made. This conclusion only takes advertising practitioners one step closer to understanding issues such as when it is best to use comparative advertising and what type of comparative advertising is most effective.

This study can only help further the research that has been done on the topic, in hopes of bettering people's understanding of this advertising tactic. Therefore, advertising practitioners will benefit from this research because they will have more understanding of how the intensity level of comparative advertising affects effectiveness (when defining effectiveness as attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand, purchase intention and recall). Practitioners can take the knowledge and the results from this study and use it to further their decision-making process when looking to either use comparative advertising or deciding what advertising tactic to implement.

Limitations of the Study

A study using college students was designed to test the hypothesis, so the study was fairly limited when looking to make assumptions about society as a whole. We cannot generalize to

society as a whole by looking at only one portion of the population. Additionally, only one product category was tested, which also limits generalizability and could account for the lack of differentiation between levels.

Also, the quantitative analysis involved interaction between the researcher and the subject during the experimental process (i.e., handing out the materials, etc.). This raises the issue of value laden and biased research due to the fact that the experimenter could have made uncontrollable gestures that might have skewed the respondents' answers.

Another potential limitation of the study was that subjects were exposed to test ads only one time. In the real world, consumers are typically exposed to an advertisement more than once. As a result, the findings of the present study may not fully generalize to situations in which consumers are exposed to an ad multiple times.

Finally, with less limited resources, such as time and money, a more thorough analysis could probably be completed on the effectiveness of comparative versus noncomparative advertising because a larger sample and more methods could be used to further the research process.

Directions for future research

Due to the mixed results that are repeatedly appearing from one research study to the next on the effectiveness of comparative versus noncomparative advertising, it is important to test the reliability of the experiment using the same four dependent variables (attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand, recall and purchase intention) again on a different population, a larger sample size and/ or with a different medium (e.g. TV)

However, alternate measures of comparative ad effectiveness, other than attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand, purchase intention and recall, could also be used in the future.

For example, other dependent variables such as competitive brand positioning, attitude toward comparative brand, initial brand trial, message believability, creating brand loyalty, creating brand awareness and discouraging competition might be studied. The ultimate goal of comparative advertising is to increase the sales of the product being advertised and there are many factors, beyond the dependent variables used in this study, that play a role in the consumers' final decision to purchase a product.

REFERENCES

- Aaker, David, Batra, Rajeev and Myers, John G. (1996). *Advertising Management: Fifth Edition*. Prentice Hall: New Jersey.
- Amundsen, Mary S. and Murphy, John H. (1981). The Communications: Effectiveness of Comparative Advertising for a New Brand on users of the Dominant Brand. *Journal of Advertising*, 10 (1), 14-20.
- Barry, Thomas E. (1993). Comparative Advertising: What Have We Learned in Two Decades? *Journal of Advertising Research*, 33 (2), 19-30.
- Belch, George E. (1981). An Examination of Comparative and Noncomparative Television Commercials: The Effects of Claim Variation and Repetition on Cognitive Response and Message Acceptance. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18, 333-349.
- Bernstein, Sid. (1992). All Advertising is Negative. *Advertising Age*, 21.
- Brown, Stephen P. and Douglas M. Stayman. (1992). Antecedents and Consequences of Attitude toward the Ad: A Meta-analysis. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 19 (June), 34-51.
- Buchanan, Bruce, Jain, Shailendra Pratap and Maheswaran, Durairaj. (2000). Comparative Versus Noncomparative Advertising: The Moderating Impact of Prepurchase Attribute Verifiability. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 9 (4), 201 – 222.
- Chattonpadhyay, Amitava. (1998). When Does Comparative Advertising Influence Brand Attitude? The Role of Delay and Market Position. *Psychology and Marketing*, 15 (5), 461-475.
- Cover, Albert D. (1986). Presidential Evaluations and Voting for Congress. *American Journal of Political Science*, 30 (4), 786- 801.
- Donthu, Naveen. (1992). Comparative Advertising Intensity. *Journal of Advertising*, 32 (6), 53-58.
- Donthu, Naveen. (1998). A Cross-Country Investigation of Recall of and Attitude Toward Comparative Advertising. *Journal of Advertising*, 27 (2), 111-122.

- Droge, Cornelia and Darmon, Rene' Y. (1987). Associative Positioning Strategies Through Comparative Advertising: Attribute Versus Overall Similarity Approaches. *Journal of Marketing Research*, XXIV, 377-388.
- Etgar, Michael and Goodwin, Stephen. (1980). An Experimental Investigation of Comparative Advertising: Impact of Message Appeal, Information Load, and Utility of Product Class. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 17 (2), 187-202.
- Etgar, Michael and Goodwin, Stephen. (1982). One-Sided versus Two-Sided Comparative Message Appeals for New Brand Introductions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 8 (4), 460-466.
- Fiske, Susan T. (1980). Attention and Weight in Person Perceptions: The Impact of Negative and Extreme Behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 38 (6), 889-906.
- Gorn, Gerald J. and Weinberg, Charles B. (1983). Comparative Advertising: Some Positive Results. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 10.
- Gorn, Gerald J. and Weinberg, Charles B. (1984). The Impact of Comparative Advertising on Perception and Attitude: Some Positive Findings. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 11 (2), 719-728.
- Grewal, Dhruv and Kavanoor, Sukumar. (1997). Comparative versus Noncomparative Advertising: A Meta-Analysis. *Journal of Marketing*, 61 (4), 1-15.
- Hensel, Paul J. and James, Karen E. (1991). Negative Advertising: The Malicious Strain of Comparative Advertising. *Journal of Advertising*, 2.
- Iyer, Easwar S. (1988). The Influence of Verbal Content Relative Newness on the Effectiveness of Comparative Advertising. *Journal of Advertising*, 17 (3), 15-22.
- Jackson, Donald W., Brown, Stephen W. and Harmon, Robert R. (1979). Comparative Magazine Advertisements. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 19 (6), 21-26.
- Jacoby, Jacob, and Hoyer, Wayne D. (1987). *The Comprehension and Miscomprehension of Print Communication*, Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Jain, Shailendra Pratap, Buchanan, Bruce and Maheswaran, Durairaj. (2000). Comparative Versus Noncomparative Advertising: The Moderating Impact of Prepurchase Attribute Verifiability. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 9 (4), 201-211.
- Johnson –Cartee, Karen S. and Copeland, Gary A. (1989). Southern Voters' Reaction to Negative Political Ads in 1986. *Journalism Quarterly*, 66 (4), 888-893.
- Kaid, Lynda L. and Boydston, John. (1987). An Experimental Study of the Effectiveness of Negative Political Advertisements. *Communication Quarterly*, 35 (2), 193-201.

- Kellerman, Kathy. (1989). The Negativity Effect in Interaction. *Human Communication Research*, 16 (2), 147-183.
- Lau, Richard R. (1982). Negativity in Political Perceptions. *Political Behavior*, 4 (December), 353-377.
- Lavidge, Robert and Steiner, Gary A. (1961). A Model for Predictive Measurements of Advertising Effectiveness. *Journal of Marketing*, 25 (4), 59-62.
- Manning, Kenneth C., Miniard, Paul W., Barone, Michael J., Rose, Randall, L. (2001). Understanding the Mental Representation Created by Comparative Advertising. *Journal of Advertising*, 30 (2), 27-39.
- Merritt, Sharyne. (1984). Negative Political Advertising: The Effect of Claim Type and Brand Loyalty. *Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, 13 (3), 27-38.
- Muehling, D.D., Stoltman, J.J. (1990). The Impact of Comparative Advertising on Levels of Message Involvement. *Journal of Advertising*, 19 (4).
- Nugent, J.F. (1987). Positively Negative. *Campaigns and Elections*, 7 (6), 47-49.
- Pechmann, Cornelia and Ratneshwar, S. (1991). The Use of Comparative Advertising for Brand Positioning: Association versus Differentiation. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 18 (2), 145-160.
- Pechmann, Cornelia and Stewart, David W. (1990). The Effects of Comparative Advertising on Attention, Memory, and Purchase Intentions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 17 (2), 180-192.
- Pechmann, Cornelia and Stewart, David W. (1991). How Direct Comparative Ads and Market Share Affect Brand Choice. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 31 (6), 47-56.
- Phillips, Barbara J. (1996). Consumer Interpretation of Complex Advertising Images and the Impact of Verbal Anchoring on Consumer Response. Doctoral Dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin.
- Pinkleton, Bruce E. (1997). The Effects of Negative Comparative Political Advertising on Candidate Evaluations and Advertising Evaluations: An Exploration. *Journal of Advertising*, 26 (1).
- Pinkleton, Bruce E. (1998). Effects of Print Comparative Political Advertising on Political Decision-Making and Participation. *Journal of Communication*, 48 (4), 24-36.
- Rogers, John C. and Williams, Terrell G. (1989). Comparative Advertising

- Effectiveness: Practitioners' Perceptions Versus Academic Research Findings. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 29(5), 22-38.
- Roddy, Brian L. and Garramone, Gina M. (1988). Appeals and Strategies of Negative Political Advertising. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 32 (4), 415-427.
- Rose, Randall L., Miniard, Paul W., Barone, Michael J., Manning, Kenneth C., and Till, Brian D. (1993). When Persuasion Goes Undetected: The Case of Comparative Advertising. *Journal of Marketing research*, 30 (August), 315-330.
- Scammon, Debra. (1978). Comparative Advertising: A Reexamination of the Issues. *The Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 12 (2), 381-392.
- Shapiro, Michael A. and Rieger, Robert H. (1989). Comparing Political Advertising on Radio. *Journalism Quarterly*, 69 (1), 135-145.
- Shimp, Terence A. and Dyer, David C. (1978). The Effects of Comparative Advertising Mediated by Market Position of Sponsoring Brand. *Journal of Advertising*, 7 (Summer), 13-19.
- Snyder, Rita. (1992). Comparative Advertising and Brand Evaluation: Toward Developing a Categorization Approach. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 1 (1), 15-30.
- Sorescu, A. B. and Gelb, B. D. (2000). Negative Comparative Advertising: Evidence Favoring Fine-Tuning. *Journal of Advertising*, 29 (4), 25-40.
- Sparkman, Richard M. and Locander, William B. (1980). Attribution Theory and Advertising Effectiveness. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 7, 219-224.
- Stone, Roger. (1996). Positively Negative. *New York Times*, February 26, A13.
- Walker, Beth A. and Anderson, Helen H. (1991). Reconceptualizing Comparative Advertising: A Framework and Theory of Effects. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 18, 342-247.
- Wilkie, William L. (1975). Comparison Advertising: Problems and Potential. *Journal of Marketing*, 39 (4), 7-15.
- Yi, Huiuk, Phelps, Joseph E. and Roskos-Ewoldsen, David R. (1998). Examining the Effectiveness of Comparative Advertising: The Role of Attitude Accessibility. *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, 20 (1).

APPENDIX A
ADVERTISEMENTS

Noncomparative Advertisement



Our writers only quote themselves.

Where to find what historical figures said, not what others said about them. Tom.com is a non-interpretive site where you can read writings by historical figures from the Founding Fathers to Colin Powell. We don't edit and interpret.

Form a more perfect union between the history and the present.



Low Intensity Comparative Advertisement



Unlike other search engines, our writers only quote themselves.

Where to find what historical figures said, not what others said about them. Tom.com is a non-interpretive site where you can read writings by historical figures from the Founding Fathers to Colin Powell. History books and other search engines edit and interpret; we don't.

Form a more perfect union between the history and the present.



High Intensity Comparative Advertisement



Unlike Google, our writers only quote themselves.

Where to find what historical figures said, not what others said about them. Tom.com is a non-interpretive site where you can read writings by historical figures from the Founding Fathers to Colin Powell. History books and Google edit and interpret; we don't.

Form a more perfect union between the history and the present.



APPENDIX B
QUESTIONNAIRE

CONSENT FORM

I, _____, agree to participate in a research study titled “ADVERTISING TODAY” conducted by Shana Meganck from the Department of Journalism at the University of Georgia (804-370-0733) under the direction of Dr. Macias, Department of Journalism, University of Georgia (706-542-4984). I understand that my participation is voluntary; I can stop taking part at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty. I can ask to have information related to me returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

I will not benefit directly from this study. My part in this study will last for 20 minutes. If I volunteer in this study, I will be asked to do the following things:

- 1) View an advertisement for 1 minute.
- 2) Answer survey questions pertaining to the advertisement viewed.
- 3) Record demographic information.

No discomfort or stresses are expected. No risks are expected. In order to make this study a valid one, some information about my participation will be withheld until after the study. The only people who will know that I am a research subject are members of the research team. No information about me, or provided by me during the research, will be shared with others, except if necessary to protect my rights or welfare (for example, if I am injured and need emergency care); or if required by law.

The researcher will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project, and can be reached by telephone at: 804-370-0733.

I understand that I am agreeing by my signature on this form to take part in this research project and understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form for my records.

_____ Name of Researcher	_____ Signature	_____ Date
-----------------------------	--------------------	---------------

Telephone: _____	E-mail: _____	
------------------	---------------	--

_____ Name of Participant	_____ Signature	_____ Date
------------------------------	--------------------	---------------

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher.

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to Chris A. Joseph, Ph.D. Human Subjects Office, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu

Thank you for participating in this study. There are no right or wrong answers. I am looking for your honest responses. Please follow the instruction throughout carefully. Let the researcher know if you have any questions.

Part I

Instructions:

Please remove the advertisement from the envelope when you are instructed to do so. You may look at the advertisement for up to one minute. The researcher will tell you when one minute is up.

When you are finished looking at the advertisement, please put it back in the envelope and turn to the next page. DO NOT REFER BACK TO THE ADVERTISEMENT as you respond to the remainder of the questions.

1. What brand was being advertised in the ad you just saw? _____

Please turn to the next page.

2. Which of the following was the brand of search engine advertised in the ad you just saw (pick only one)?
- a) msn.com
 - b) Google.com
 - c) yahoo.com
 - d) tom.com
 - e) metacrawler.com

Based on what you just read which of the following statements is true and which is false?
Remember: Base your answers only upon what you think the site said or implied.

	<u>Circle one answer</u>		
	<u>True</u>	<u>False</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
3. The brand advertised is better than the leading brand.	1	2	3
4. The brand advertised only searches history written by historical figures.	1	2	3
5. Using the search engine advertised is one way to reduce clutter while searching for historical fact.	1	2	3
6. The search engine advertised occasionally provides interpretations of historical figures quotes.	1	2	3

Directions: Please answer the following questions for the advertisement you just saw by putting an X to indicate where your thoughts and opinions fall.

The advertisement was:

- | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Unappealing | : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : | Appealing |
| Unbelievable | : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : | Believable |
| Unimpressive | : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : | Impressive |
| Unattractive | : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : | Attractive |
| Uninformative | : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : | Informative |
| Not Clear | : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : | Clear |
| Non eye-catching | : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : | Eye-catching |
| Extremely unlikely | : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : | Extremely likely |
| Unconvincing | : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : | Convincing |
| Overall disliking | : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : | Overall liking |

Part II

These final questions are used for statistical classification purposes only. As with all the information in the survey, your responses are strictly confidential.

Directions: Please answer the following questions by circling the appropriate answer or filling in the blank.

1. What is your sex? Male ___ Female ___

2. In which range does your age fall?
___ 20 years old or less ___ 21-25 years old ___ 26-30 years old ___ 31-35 years old
___ 36-40 years old ___ 41-45 years old ___ 46-50 years old ___ 51 years or older

3. What is your level of education?
___ Didn't complete high school ___ Completed high school ___ Some college
___ College graduate ___ Some graduate school ___ Completed graduate school

4. What is your employment status?
___ full-time (30-40 hours a week) ___ part-time (less than 30 hours a week)
___ self-employed ___ Stay-at-home parent ___ full-time student ___ Other (fill in)

5. What is your major in school?

6. What do you think is the purpose of this study?

7. Please feel free to make any additional comments about the Web site or this study.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY.