

Chapter 50

The Influence of Content and Trust on Consumers' Intention to Accept Mobile Advertisements

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ABSTRACT

A new model for investigating consumers' behavioral intention in mobile advertising is developed and related to mobile marketing theory and practice. Hypotheses are tested about the hierarchical structure and the effects of the factors that precede consumers' acceptance of mobile advertisement. The results suggest that attractive content and trust in advertisers are key predictors of mobile device users' behavioral intention towards mobile advertising. The findings lead to a modification and extension of Fishbein's behavioral intention model and its application in the research on advertising effectiveness.

INTRODUCTION

The growth of mobile advertising has opened a new area for research. Previously, advertising and marketing researchers paid considerable attention to consumers' attitude toward advertisements in

the major media (Homer, 1990). The research has shown that consumers now ignore advertising more than they did in previous decades. At the same time, however, Internet advertising seems to generate positive consumer attitudes (Schlosser et al., 1999) and the rapid proliferation of mobile devices has created a new channel for marketing

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(Tsang et al., 2004). Hence, consumers' attitudes toward advertising in the mobile media have gained significant attention among both researchers and business practitioners (Bauer et al., 2005; Ferris, 2007; Karjaluoto and Alatalo, 2007; Lee et al., 2006; Okazaki et al. 2007).

Acceptance research has provided important insights in explaining the success of mobile advertisement (Bauer et al., 2005). This research stream has investigated a myriad of aspects that affect consumers' attitude toward mobile marketing. These attitudes reflect the degree to which consumers identify with the advertising (MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989). Schlosser et al. (1999) reveal that mobile device users' attitude towards mobile marketing is less resistant to change than are consumers' attitude towards advertising in general. For example, prior research indicates that context, credibility and subjective norm are positively related to consumers' intentions to participate in mobile marketing (Karjaluoto & Alatalo, 2007; Lee et al., 2006). However, little is known about the hierarchical structure and effects of the underlying factors that antecede consumers' behavioral intention to accept specific mobile advertising content.

The present study examines consumers' behavioral intentions in the context of mobile marketing. Extending the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) proposed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), the study responds to the recent call for research (e.g., Nantel & Sekhavat, 2008; Okazaki et al., 2007) on advertisement content and trust in the advertisers as the key predictors of consumers' willingness to participate in mobile advertising. In particular, by employing PLS structural equation modeling and the composition of higher-order constructs comprising their underlying variables, the study investigates (1) the hierarchical structure; (2) the relative effects of the factors that precede consumers' intention to accept mobile advertisement; and (3) provides evidence that validates the model and discusses whether such a conceptualization is generalizable across consumer groups.

The article is structured as follows. After this introductory section, we offer a literature review on the theoretical foundations of the study. Moreover, we establish a research model and formulate hypotheses based on previous literature. Thereafter, we present our research design, measures, data analysis and the results. Finally, we conclude the article by discussing the implications of the study.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

The literature suggests that intention towards action is the best predictor of individuals' behavior (e.g., Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Behavioral intention measures the strength of consumers' conscious plans to perform the target behavior, such as consumers' acceptance of mobile advertising. Nantel and Sekhavat (2008) argue that the content of marketing messages significantly influence the behavioral intentions evoked by mobile advertisement. They further include the concepts of credibility and trust in the advertiser as important dimensions of the source of these messages. Thus, content and trust need further investigation as the key determinants of consumers' perception on mobile advertising.

Advertisement Content

Mobile advertising depends upon consumers' acceptance. Rettie et al. (2005) show that although their initial attitudes toward mobile advertising are sometimes negative, many consumers are prepared to accept advertising if the content appeals to them. Similarly, Muk (2007) reports that the relevance of the advertising message content and the perceived value of the offering are of great importance in the success of advertising via mobile devices. According to Muk (*ibid.*), this is due to that these factors have the largest impact on attitude toward advertising by reducing the perception of intrusiveness and, thus, increasing the acceptance of mobile advertisements.

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