



**ADVERTISEMENT CHARACTERISTICS:  
VIRALITY & PERSUASIVENESS**

**BY**

**MR. PAWEE TAECHOYOTIN**

**AN INDEPENDENT STUDY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL  
FULFILLMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF SCIENCE  
MARKETING MANAGEMENT  
FACULTY OF COMMERCE AND ACCOUNTANCY  
THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY  
ACADEMIC YEAR 2015  
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ENTITLED

ADVERTISEMENT CHARACTERISTICS:  
VIRALITY & PERSUASIVENESS

was approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Master of Science Marketing Management

on 30 W.A. 2559  
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Chairman



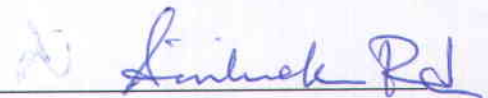
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## ABSTRACT

Advertising is an important tool that companies use to communicate with consumers. Companies use advertisements for various objectives from increasing sales to creating brand awareness. The success of the advertisement depends on its ability to persuade and its ability to reach a certain number of audience. A persuasive advertisement that is only seen by a small group of people will not benefit the company much so does an advertisement that is seen by a lot of people but fails evoke action. By conducting an experiment this research identifies how emotional and informative characteristics in advertisements affect virality and persuasiveness. The results indicate that emotional characteristics are linked with virality and informative characteristics are linked with persuasiveness. The results still hold in advertisements with both characteristics. The findings of this research should help companies design more effective and efficient advertisements.

**Keywords:** Advertising, Viral marketing, Word-of-Mouth, Advertisement Characteristics

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Mr. Pawee Taechoyotin




## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	(1)
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	(2)
LIST OF TABLES	(5)
LIST OF FIGURES	(6)
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Research Question	2
1.3 Significance of the Study	2
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES	3
2.1 Importance and Potential of Viral Marketing	3
2.2 Advertisement Characteristics and Categorizing Advertisements	4
2.2.1 Informative advertisements	4
2.2.2 Emotional advertisements	5
2.2.3 Hybrid advertisements	5
2.3 Consumers' Social Media Sharing Behavior	6
2.4 Consumers' Product Desire and Purchase Intent	7
2.5 Consumer Generated Word of mouth	7
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	9
3.1 Experimental Design	9
3.2 Research Instrument	9

	(4)
3.3 Participants	11
3.4 Experimental Procedure	12
3.5 Measures	13
3.5.1 Consumers' Social Media Sharing Behavior	13
3.5.2 Consumers' Product Desire and Purchase Intent	13
3.5.3 Consumer Generated Word of mouth	13
CHAPTER 4 RESULTS	14
4.1 Initial Analysis	14
4.2 Hypotheses Testing	15
4.2.1 Effects of Advertisement Characteristics on Sharing Behavior	15
4.2.2 Effects of Advertisement Characteristics on Product Desire and Purchase Intent	16
4.2.3 Effects of Advertisement Characteristics on Word of mouth	17
4.3 Results Summary	18
CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	19
5.1 Discussions	19
5.2 Marketing Implications	20
5.3 Recommendations for Further research	21
REFERENCES	23
APPENDICES	
APPENDIX A	25
APPENDIX B	27
BIOGRAPHY	29

**LIST OF TABLES**

Tables	Page
3.1 Advertisement Pretest Characteristic Scores	10
4.1 Advertisement Characteristic Scores	14
4.2 Dependent Variable Summary	15
4.3 Consumers' Social Media Sharing Behavior Comparison	16
4.4 Consumers' Product Desire Comparison	16
4.5 Consumers' Purchase Intent Comparison	17
4.6 Consumer Generated Advertisement Word of Mouth Comparison	17
4.7 Consumer Generated Product Word of Mouth Comparison	18
4.8 Summary of Hypotheses Results	18





## LIST OF FIGURES

Figures	Page
2.1 Categorizing Advertisement Characteristics	5
3.1 Experimental Procedure	12
5.1 Crafting Viral and Persuasive Advertisements	20



# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

Advertising is an important tool that companies use to communicate with consumers. Global advertising spending is forecasted to reach \$576 Billion in 2016 (statista.com). Companies employ advertisements for various objectives from increasing brand awareness to creating sales. The success of the advertisement can be broken down into two factors, 1. the advertisement's ability to persuade consumers to act accordingly and 2. the advertisement's ability to reach a certain number of audience. A persuasive advertisement that is only seen by a small group of people will not benefit the company much so does an advertisement that is seen by a lot of people but fails to evoke action. An advertisement without the combination of both factors will result in either an ineffective or a failed advertisement.

Traditionally in order to reach a large audience companies would spend large advertising budgets for a spot on popular shows or events such as the Super Bowl and primetime commercial slots. In this age with the internet and social media platforms, companies are shifting towards viral marketing, where the consumers become the channel of delivery.

Out of millions of advertisements that are launched every year only a handful truly achieve persuasion and virality. To gain a better understanding on how to create an effective advertisement this research investigates the relationship between advertisement characteristics particularly emotional and informative characteristics and their effect on the virality and persuasiveness of the advertisement.

Advertisement characteristics are defined by the method of communicating with the consumer. Emotional advertisements communicate through building emotions and informative advertisements communicate through educating, informing and demonstrating. This leads to the three advertisement categories; emotional advertisements with high emotional characteristics, informative advertisements with high informative characteristics and hybrid with both high

informative and emotional characteristics. Virality is the likelihood that consumers will share or retransmit the advertisement on social media. Persuasiveness is the advertisement's ability to create product desire and purchase intentions.

Understanding how emotional and informative characteristics affect virality and persuasiveness can provide practical marketing insights for companies to develop effective and efficient advertisements

## **1.2 Research Question**

The central research question addressed by this research is “How do emotional and informative characteristics in advertisements affect virality and persuasiveness?”

## **1.3 Significance of the Study**

This research makes several important contributions. First, many research on word-of-mouth and viral marketing uses already successful advertisements and retrospectively examines the characteristics, by conducting an experiment we can examine how advertisement characteristics directly affect the consumers. Second, the research's finding provides companies with direction on how to refine their advertisements to achieve various objectives. Viral marketing is more effective and cheaper than traditional media, but the success and failure depends on consumers sharing and retransmitting the content. If companies wish to generate a return on the advertisement they also need to persuade the consumer. Understanding what drives virality and persuasiveness can help companies craft optimal advertisements.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES**

Because the objective of this study is to research how different advertisement characteristics affect consumers' social media sharing behavior, product desire, purchase intent and word-of-mouth generation, the literature review starts with the discussion of the importance and potential of viral marketing, a discussion of the advertisement characteristics and how to categorize them and a review of the following key areas, from which the hypotheses have been developed. The review of related literature is organized as followed:

1. Importance and Potential of Viral Marketing
2. Advertisement Characteristics and Advertisement Categories
3. Consumers' Social Media Sharing Behaviors
4. Consumers' Product Desire and Purchase Intent
5. Consumer Generated Word-of-mouth

#### **2.1 Importance and Potential of Viral Marketing**

Advertising is an important communication tool between companies and their consumers. Advertisements are used for various purposes from creating brand awareness to increasing sales. Companies want their message to reach as many people as possible to achieve the highest results. Traditionally, companies have done so by paying large amounts for traditional media from primetime commercial spots to popular event commercials such as the Super Bowl. These channels provide a large audience for companies but are also attached with a hefty price.

In this certain age with the content-sharing ecosystem on social media becoming a part of everyday life, companies can benefit from viral marketing or word-of-mouth marketing. By definition viral marketing is "an advertising in which consumers tell other consumers about the product or service" (Pastore 2000). Instead of paying to advertise, companies use consumers as the channel of delivery (Corcoran 2009).

Abundant research shows how influential viral marketing or word-of-mouth marketing can be, affecting consumers' attitudes, preferences and decisions (Asch 1956, Katz and Lazarsfeld 1955). It is known to be profoundly influential on consumers' decisions (Witt and Bruce 1972; Herr, Kardes, and Kim 1991; Smith, Menon, Sivakumar, 2005). Not only does word-of-mouth impact individual behavior, it is also linked to company performances. Research suggests its impact on sales (Liu 2006), media ratings (Godes and Mayzlin 2004) and stock returns (Luo 2007). Word-of-mouth has also been shown to affect sales in various industrial contents from books (Chevalier and Mayzlin 2006), bath and beauty products (Moe and Trusov 2011), and restaurants (Godes and Mayzlin 2009). The potential and benefits of word-of-mouth has drawn significant attention among companies. A recent survey revealed 70% of firms plan to increase their word-of-mouth spending (WOMMA 2014).

Companies can design advertisements to possess certain characteristics to increase their chances of going viral. But in reality virality is neither the main nor the only objective for companies; sales, returns and profits also are key issues. Some content characteristics will have a better chance of going viral but will not generate sales. Some will generate sales but will barely be shared. Certain factors that make an advertisement viral might make it less persuasive.

## **2.2 Advertisement Characteristics and Advertisement Categories**

To establish a better understanding on how different content characteristics impact virality, persuasiveness and word-of-mouth, advertisements will be categorized in to three groups, emotional focused, informative focused and hybrid. Hybrid category is a combination of both emotional and informative characteristics.

**2.2.1 Informative advertisements** focus on communicating the product's quality and features and aim to persuade by reasoning with the consumer. This certain type of advertisement is based on reasoning, direct communication and hardly addresses the viewer's emotional side. Phone companies using informative advertisements will communicate how well built their phones are how many pixels

are in their screens and how fast their processors are. Car companies will show their vehicles speed, fuel efficiency or any performance that the consumers find interesting.

**2.2.2 Emotional advertisements** focus on building emotions with viewers through storytelling even though the story may disconnect with the product. This certain type of advertisement is based solely on emotions and hardly contains any information about the brand or product. Some emotional advertisements are able to evoke high emotions but in the end viewers don't recall what product the advertisement was trying to sell.

**2.2.3 Hybrid advertisements** are advertisements that succeed in both informing viewers about the product and instilling emotions. This type of advertisement evokes emotions like emotional advertisements but at the same time communicates about the product simultaneously. A combination of information and emotion allows the viewer to learn about the product and still enjoy the advertisement.

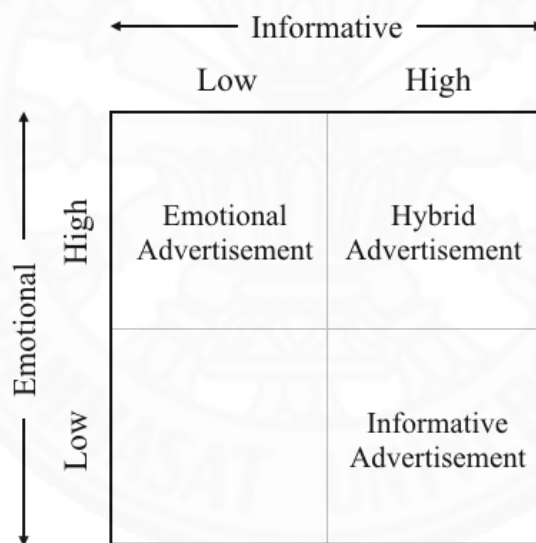


Figure 2.1: Categorizing Advertisement Characteristics

Since each type of advertisement uses different approaches to communicate, inform and persuade consumers, they should also affect impact and influence consumers differently.

### **2.3 Consumers' Social Media Sharing Behaviors**

When posting or communicating on social media companies' messages and advertisements are restricted to a certain audience. Without additional fees the content will only reach a limited number of people. When consumers share or retransmit the companies' content the message instantaneously increases its potential of being seen, heard and even being retransmitted again. This viral phenomenon benefits all companies in all industries and all sizes. The question is what certain type of content will be shared in the first place.

Out of millions of content published each year only a few actually go viral. Research suggests virality is not random and certain characteristics have been identified to be more viral than others. Content triggering emotions and content containing information have been shown to stimulate consumers' sharing behavior (Berger 2013).

Experimental studies show that emotion increases the tendency for people to share. Movies and articles are more likely to be discussed and shared if they contain high emotional intensity (Berger, Milkman 2012). Customers who are highly satisfied or highly dissatisfied are more likely to share their experience with others (Anderson 1998). People will forward emails with higher hedonic value (Chiu 2007). This can be because sharing can help people deal with their emotional states (Pennebaker 1999), talking and sharing can help people gain a deeper understanding of how they feel (Rime, Mesquita, Philippot, Boca 1991), it can help cope or reduce feelings of dissonance (Festinger, Riecken, Schachter 1956) or because talking and sharing can help deepen social connection (Peters, Kashima 2007).

Sharing is also increased when the content evokes arousal. Articles that evoke high arousal emotions such as awe and anxiety are more likely to be shared than low arousal emotions such as sadness (Berger, Milkman 2012). People are more willing to share an article when it evokes more amusement and less willing to share when it evokes more sadness. Informative advertisements contain no emotional appeal compared to emotional and hybrid advertisements. Based on how content evoking higher levels of emotion and arousal is more likely to be shared therefore it is hypothesized that:

**H1: Emotional, informative and hybrid Advertisements affect viewers' social media sharing behavior differently**

## **2.4 Consumers' Product Desire and Purchase Intent**

A companies' success depends on its ability to create sales and generate profits. But sales don't instantly appear nor do profits. The process begins from persuading customers to have desire for the product and eventually purchasing it. Advertising plays a major role in that process from acknowledging consumers the existence of the product to why they should purchase the product. It may be true that good products will eventually sell themselves. But advertisement certainly does shorten the time involved to achieve that certain point.

Informative advertisements heavily educate, demonstrate and state information about the product. They emphasize features, functions and attributes of the product. After watching this type of commercial whether viewers like it or not they will know what the advertisement is selling. This contrasts dramatically with emotional advertisements which use feelings and emotions. Since emotional advertisements generally do not communicate or inform viewers about the product or its usage, it is highly unlikely it will persuade viewers to want the product. If the advertisement fails to generate desire for the product, it should also fail to influence purchase intent therefore it is hypothesized that:

**H2: Emotional, informative and hybrid advertisements affect viewer's product desire differently**

**H3: Emotional, informative and hybrid advertisements affect viewer's purchase intent differently**

## **2.5 Consumer Generated Word-of-mouth**

Word-of-mouth is defined as a "personal communication between a receiver and a source that the receiver perceives as noncommercial" (Day 1971). Study shows offline conversation is much more frequent and is important as online conversations. Word-of-mouth has been thought to be extremely influential and



effective because of the inherent flexibility the messenger has to adapt to accurately transmit the information (Rogers 1986). Consumers also value opinions and information directly expressed to them by friends and family because it is perceived as unbiased, reflects the true opinion or experience of the message source and the source usually has nothing to gain from the receiver acting on the information provided. Thus companies will certainly benefit from creating advertisements that successfully create conversation between consumers. After seeing an advertisement, consumers could be influenced to share information concerning the advertisement or the product in the advertisement. But certainly not all advertisements generate conversation and not all conversation is about the same topic.

Advertisements focusing on different aspects should also result in different word-of-mouth generated by viewers. If the advertisement succeeds in generating word-of-mouth, the topic should be mainly on what the advertisement was communicating. Advertisements focusing on the product should spark viewers to talk about the product. Advertisements focusing on building emotions and storytelling should lead viewers to talk about the advertisement. It is thus hypothesized that:

**H4: Emotional, informative and hybrid advertisements affect advertisement word-of-mouth behavior differently**

**H5: Emotional, informative and hybrid advertisements affect product word-of-mouth behavior differently**

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The objective of this study is to research the how different advertisement characteristics affect consumers' social media sharing behavior, product desire, purchase intent and word of mouth generation. To achieve the objective an experiment was conducted by manipulating three subject groups with different advertisements. The first section describes the experimental design, research instruments employed in the experiment, participants and procedure. Lastly measurement items of dependent variables are described:

- Consumers' Social Media Sharing Behavior
- Consumer's Product Desire and Purchase Intent
- Consumer Generated Word of Mouth

#### **3.1 Experimental Design**

To test the hypotheses an experiment employing a 3 x 1 between-subjects design was conducted. Participants were assigned into three groups, each group representing a different advertisement, i.e., emotional, informative and hybrid. Participants were not informed about the experiment, the procedure or what was observed during the experiment. The experiment was designed to test how each type of advertisement affected 1) the sharing behavior of viewers, 2) the viewers' product desire, 3) the viewer's purchasing intent, 4) advertisement word of mouth and 5) product word of mouth generated by the advertisement.

#### **3.2 Research Instrument**

The advertisements used in the experiment were selected from real advertisements posted on the Internet by companies. By selecting global brand advertisements that haven't aired in Thailand participants are unlikely to have seen the advertisement. With participants unexposed to the advertisement allows the experiment to simulate how viewers react to actual advertisements during launch, emotions feel more intense and reactions are more genuine both increasing the

validity of the experiment. This scenario is extremely valuable due to the difficulty to replicate the same experiment and achieve the same results in an environment where the participants were previously exposed to the advertisement.

A pretest was conducted to ensure they were a good representative of the group. Twenty individuals evaluated the advertisements based on emotional and informative factors on a 7-point Likert scale. Since the advertisements were preselected by the researcher, to prevent any bias or predetermination the participants were asked to scale the advertisement on a wide range of emotions, i.e., amusement, excitement, sadness, happiness, anger and touching. Participants were also asked to scale how much information the advertisement contained.

The experiment required 3 advertisements each representing emotional, informative and hybrid advertisements. The characteristic scores rated by the participants were calculated to determine which advertisement was to be selected to represent which advertisement group.

Table 3.1: Advertisement Pretest Characteristic Scores

Variable	Advertisement 1	Advertisement 2	Advertisement 3
	Mean	Mean	Mean
Amusing	5.15	3.9	2.4
Exciting	3.1	2.55	3.4
Sad	1.5	1.5	1.2
Happy	4.15	5.65	3
Angry	1.55	1.6	1.55
Touching	1.35	4.1	1.25
Contains Useful Information	2.4	2.7	2.95
Contains Information about the Product	4.1	2.8	5.5

Participants reported Advertisement 1 was highly amusing with an average score of 5.15 and also contained information about the product with an average score of 4.1. Because Advertisement 1 contained high levels of both emotional and informative characteristics Advertisement 1 was selected to represent Hybrid Advertisements.

Participants rated Advertisement 2 high on the happiness score, an average of 5.65 but very low on how much information the advertisement contained an average of 2.8. Because Advertisement 2 scored high on emotional characteristics but low on informative characteristics, Advertisement 2 was selected to represent Emotional Advertisements.

Participants rated Advertisement 3 high on the amount of information the advertisement contained with an average score of 5.5 but low on all emotions. Because Advertisement 3 scored high on informative characteristics but low on emotional characteristics, Advertisement 3 was selected to represent Informative Advertisements.

### **3.3 Participants**

Viral marketing and social media is new and very unique. It involves a very specific generation with behaviors and lifestyles that are very unique. Randomly selected participants will not reflect the true potential of the experiment. Thus the experiment was conducted with undergraduates and MBA students. This group truly represents the generation of social media, instantaneous communication and viral marketing thus most fit for the experiment.

A total of 347 undergraduates and MBA students were recruited to participate in the experiment. The participants were assigned to one of three groups, each group representing a certain advertisement characteristic. Group 1 consisted of 120 participants represented the hybrid advertisement, Group 2 consisted of 112 participants represented the informative advertisement and Group 3 consisted of 115 participants represented the emotional advertisement. Participants were equally distributed among groups to ensure all groups are homogenous and prevent any difference between groups.

### 3.4 Experimental Procedure

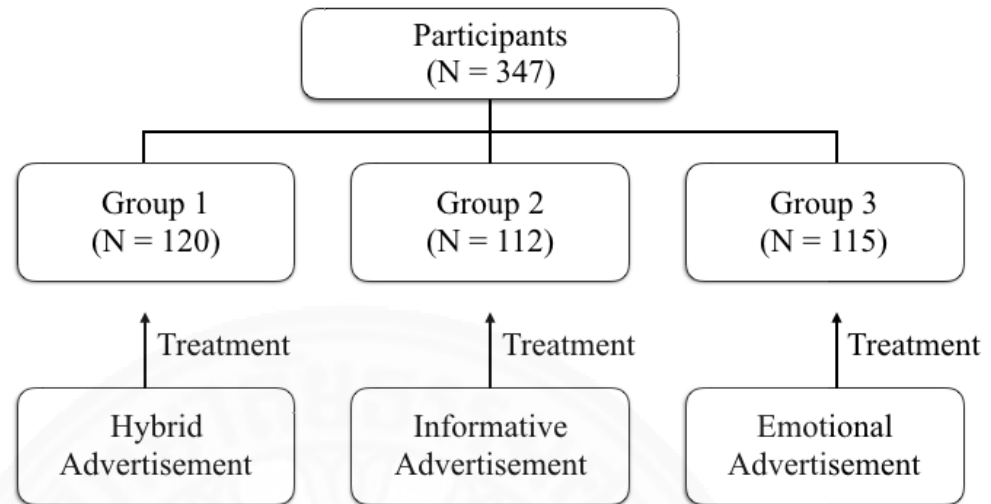


Figure 3.1: Experimental Procedure

Each group was shown an advertisement once and after watching participants were asked to complete an experimental task assessing how likely they would share the advertisement on social media, their desire and purchase intent for the product and would they talk about the advertisement or the product with friends and relatives. They were also asked to evaluate the advertisement's characteristics to double check whether it represented the correct attributes or not. (All evaluating questions were based on a Likert scale 1 = "Extremely disagree," and 7 = "Extremely agree")

In addition to collecting information used for testing the hypotheses, participants' gender, age, education, social media usage and sharing behavior was collected. This includes how frequently participants share content and what social media platforms they use, e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Line. Participants were also tested if they remembered what brand or product the advertisement was about.

### **3.5 Measures**

All constructs were measured by a 7–point Likert scale, ranging from “Extremely disagree” (1) to “Extremely agree” (7).

#### **3.5.1 Consumers’ Social Media Sharing Behavior**

The likelihood of consumers engaging in sharing the advertisement and social media was measured by using multi-item perceptual scales such as “I would share this advertisement on social media, e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Line, Whatsapp.”

#### **3.5.2 Consumers’ Product Desire and Purchase Intent**

Consumers’ product desire and purchase intent was measured by asking traditional advertising persuasiveness questioning (Morwitz et al., 2007). Survey responses are weaker measurements of advertising persuasiveness than actual purchasing because consumers may state they will purchase but finally they may not. But as long as product desire and purchase intention are in the same direction as actually purchasing, the results should still be valid.

#### **3.5.3 Consumer Generated Word of Mouth**

Consumer generated word of mouth includes the likelihood of consumers generating both word of about concerning the advertisement and the product. It was measured by the using multi-item perceptual scales such as “I will tell friends or family about this advertisement”.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

The results of the experiment are presented in this chapter. First the results of the initial analysis that was conducted to confirm the validity of the advertisements used in the experiment are displayed followed by the results of each hypotheses testing. Lastly a summary of all hypotheses and their results are included.

#### 4.1 Initial Analysis

First an analysis was conducted to confirm the advertisements used in the experiment were accurately representing the characteristics required for the hypotheses testing. This was done by checking the participants' content characteristics evaluation. The results are as follow:

Table 4.1: Advertisement Characteristic Scores

	Hybrid		Informative		Emotional	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Emotional Score	5.417	1.281	-	-	5.809	1.242
Informative Score	3.933	1.800	5.865	1.318	-	-

The content characteristics evaluated by participants are consistent with the results predicted prior to the experiment. Group 2 and 3 representing informative and emotional advertisements have a high score on their respective factors. Group 1 Representing hybrid advertisements have a relatively high score on both factors. Thus each advertisement correctly represents the intended characteristics necessary for the hypotheses testing. The following table summarizes the means and standard deviation of all dependent variables of each advertisement.

Table 4.2: Dependent Variable Summary

Variable	Hybrid		Informative		Emotional	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Virality	2.858	1.741	2.179	1.125	3.184	1.7856
Product Desire	2.967	1.420	3.598	1.657	2.115	1.1934
Purchase Intent	3.308	1.516	3.054	1.368	2.301	1.2809
Advertisement Word of mouth	3.083	1.732	2.920	1.465	2.947	1.6248
Product Word of mouth	2.833	1.626	3.170	1.445	2.283	1.3328

## 4.2 Hypotheses Testing

Each hypothesis was tested by comparing means of the three advertisements in each to identify the different affects each type of advertisement had on the dependent variables. Using regression and dummy coding to analyze the data shows the mean difference between the two groups and the significance of the difference.

### 4.2.1 Effects of Advertisement Characteristics on Sharing Behavior

#### (H1)

Hypothesis 1 predicted that different advertisements characteristics will affect viewer's sharing behavior differently. Participants that watched the hybrid advertisement ( $\bar{x} = 2.858$ ) and participants that watched the emotional advertisement ( $\bar{x} = 3.184$ ) reported they would be more likely to share the advertisement on social media than participants that watched the informative advertisement ( $\bar{x} = 2.179$ ). But there was no significant difference in sharing between the groups that watched the hybrid and emotional advertisements.



Table 4.3: Consumers' Social Media Sharing Behavior Comparison

	Virality			P-Value
	Mean (1)	Mean (2)	Mean Difference (1) - (2)	
Hybrid vs Informative	2.858	2.179	0.680	0.001
Hybrid vs Emotional	2.858	3.184	-0.328	0.158
Emotional vs Informative	3.184	2.179	1.007	0.000

#### 4.2.2 Effects of Advertisement Characteristics on Product Desire and Purchase Intent (H2 and H3)

Hypothesis 2 predicted there would be a difference in product desire between the three advertisement characteristics. Product desire was significantly different between the three groups. Participants that watched the informative advertisement reported desiring the product the most ( $\bar{x} = 3.598$ ) followed by the hybrid advertisement ( $\bar{x} = 2.967$ ) and the emotional advertisement ( $\bar{x} = 2.115$ ).

Hypothesis 3 predicted there would be a difference in purchase intent between the three advertisement characteristics. Only participants that watched the emotional advertisement ( $\bar{x} = 2.301$ ) reported significantly lower purchasing intent than the hybrid ( $\bar{x} = 3.308$ ) and informative ( $\bar{x} = 3.054$ ) advertisement.

Table 4.4: Consumers' Product Desire Comparison

	Product Desire			P-Value
	Mean (1)	Mean (2)	Mean Difference (1) - (2)	
Hybrid vs Informative	2.967	3.598	-0.632	0.002
Hybrid vs Emotional	2.967	2.115	0.852	0.000
Emotional vs Informative	2.115	3.598	-1.483	0.000

Table 4.5: Consumers' Purchase Intent Comparison

	Purchase Intent			
	Mean (1)	Mean (2)	Mean Difference (1) - (2)	P-Value
Hybrid vs Informative	3.308	3.054	0.255	0.181
Hybrid vs Emotional	3.308	2.301	1.007	0.000
Emotional vs Informative	2.301	3.054	-0.753	0.000

#### 4.2.3 Effects of Advertisement Characteristics on Word of mouth (H4 and H5)

Hypothesis 4 predicted there would be a difference in advertisement word of mouth generated by the three advertisement characteristics. Contrary to the hypothesis there were no significant differences in the advertisement word of mouth generated by the three different advertisements. The results do not indicate in any way that the three advertisements do not generate advertisement word of mouth; it only suggests that the likelihood of the three advertisements generating word of mouth were not different.

Hypothesis 5 predicted there would be a difference in product word of mouth generated by the three advertisement characteristics. Participants that watched the emotional advertisement ( $\bar{x} = 2.283$ ) reported the lowest product word of mouth. But there was no difference between the informative ( $\bar{x} = 3.170$ ) and hybrid ( $\bar{x} = 2.833$ ) advertisement.

Table 4.6: Consumer Generated Advertisement Word of Mouth Comparison

	Advertisement Word of mouth			
	Mean (1)	Mean (2)	Mean Difference (1) - (2)	P-Value
Hybrid vs Informative	3.083	2.920	0.164	0.440
Hybrid vs Emotional	3.083	2.947	0.136	0.536
Emotional vs Informative	2.947	2.920	0.027	0.895

Table 4.7: Consumer Generated Product Word of Mouth Comparison

	<b>Product Word of mouth</b>			
	<b>Mean (1)</b>	<b>Mean (2)</b>	<b>Mean Difference (1) - (2)</b>	<b>P-Value</b>
Hybrid vs Informative	2.833	3.170	-0.336	0.098
Hybrid vs Emotional	2.833	2.283	0.550	0.005
Emotional vs Informative	2.283	3.170	-0.886	0.000

### 4.3 Results Summary

The following table summarizes how different advertisement characteristics affect consumers' sharing behavior, product desire, purchasing intent, advertisement word of mouth.

Table 4.8: Summary of Hypotheses Results

<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Result</b>	<b>Additional Comments</b>
H1: Sharing Behavior	Supported	Hybrid and Emotional advertisements were more likely to be shared than Informative advertisements.
H2: Product Desire	Supported	Informative advertisements generated the highest product desire followed by Hybrid and Emotional advertisements
H3: Purchase Intent	Supported	Hybrid and Informative advertisements generated higher purchasing intent than Emotional advertisements
H4: Advertisement Word of Mouth	Not Supported/ Unexpected Findings	All three advertisements had no significant difference in generating advertisement word of mouth
H5: Product Word of mouth	Supported	Hybrid and Informative advertisements generated higher product word of mouth than Emotional advertisements

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION AND RECCOMENDATIONS**

This research investigated how advertisements affect consumers' social media sharing behavior, product desire, purchase intent and word of mouth generation. Advertisements were distinguished among three different types categorized by the content characteristics, e.g., emotional, informative and hybrid, a combination of both. After conducting an experiment, the research's results lead to important contributions and implications.

#### **5.1 Discussions**

Virality is defined as the tendency of an image, video, or piece of information to be circulated rapidly and widely from one Internet user to another. It was measured by evaluating participants' likelihood of sharing the content on social media. After comparing emotional and non-emotional advertisements together results suggest content that contain high emotional characteristics will have a higher chance of being shared and retransmitted on social media. This is consistent with prior research that content evoking higher levels of emotion and arousal is more likely to be shared. This still holds even adding hybrid advertisements with content that possesses a combination of emotional and informative characteristics to the comparison. Thus leads to the confirmation that emotions are positively correlated with virality and informative characteristics do not hinder the viral potential.

The persuasiveness of an advertisement is defined by how much the advertisement can make consumers want the product or service and eventually purchasing it. For the experiment it was measured by the consumers' intent rather on actual sale figures. Even though consumers' reported responses are a weaker measurement than actual sales, as long as product desire and purchase intentions are in the same direction as actually purchasing, the results are still valid. The results confirm content that inform, educate and demonstrate are better at persuading consumers. This suggests that product information is still a factor when consumers

consider whether they want the product or not. This still holds even when the advertisement evokes emotion while informing the consumer.

Consumers share information with friends and family all the time. Every conversation about a company's advertisement or product could create potential sales in the future. Word of mouth was measured with consumers' intentions on telling friends or family about a certain advertisement or product. The results find emotional, informative and hybrid advertisements were indifferent in generating word of mouth on advertisement. This does not indicate in any way that the three advertisements do not generate advertisement word of mouth; it only suggests that the likelihood of the three advertisements generating word of mouth were not different. However, word of mouth concerning the product was significantly higher in informative and hybrid advertisements. This was consistent with prior predictions since the two types of advertisements focused heavily on the product.

## 5.2 Marketing Implications

The results of this research have important marketing and advertising implications. It can be adapted by small to large companies in various industries. Considering how emotional and informative characteristics affect the consumer should help companies design viral and persuasive advertisements.

### Crafting Viral & Persuasive Advertisements

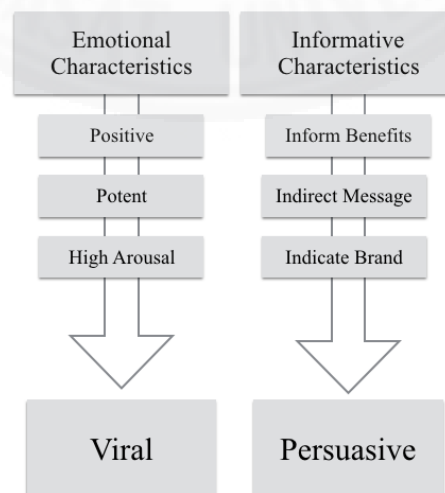


Figure 5.1: Crafting Viral and Persuasive Advertisements

Companies must consider both emotional and informative factors in order to increase the chances of virality and persuasiveness. The advertisement should possess a combination of emotions and information that conveys a message to the viewer.

Virality is linked to the emotional characteristics of advertisements. It generates wide awareness with minimal cost because the consumer is the channel of delivery. To achieve virality companies should focus on creating content with emotions that are positive, potent and evoke high arousal. By doing so the content will be more likely to be shared and retransmitted among consumers. Thus substantially increase the exposure and consumer reach.

Persuasiveness is linked to the informative characteristics of advertisements. It is an essential factor that will determine whether or not the advertisement achieves its objective. If the objective is to create sales, a persuasive advertisement should be able to make viewers desire the product after seeing the advertisement. To create a persuasive advertisement companies should focus on creating an advertisement that informs the usage and benefits of the product, communicates the message indirectly but firmly and indicate what brand or product the advertisement represents so the consumer can identify and remember.

In conclusion, emotional and informative characteristics employed individually will greatly benefit companies that apply them when designing their advertisements. But when combined together the result is a viral advertisement that is also persuasive. Companies could focus on an individual characteristic or profit from combining them to reach a large audience and generate sales along the way.

### **5.3 Recommendations for Further research**

The current research has examined how emotional and informative characteristics affect the virality, persuasiveness and word of mouth generation of advertisements. Further research might examine the same effect from each specific emotion. Two different emotions should stimulate consumers differently; a deeper research would certainly create a better understanding.

Researchers might also measure persuasiveness as the extent which the company succeeds in achieving its objective. For example, if the advertisement was to facilitate a new product launch after watching do consumers recall the product, the brand and what it does, if the company was announcing an event do consumers remember where and when the event will take place or if the company wants to communicate a message do the consumers understand and remember.

The current research used real advertisements in the experiment. This gives the benefits of authenticity and reflects real world results but makes it hard to control certain variables because the advertisements represented different products in different industries. Future researchers could conduct the experiment but use synthetic advertisements instead. Ideally, the advertisements used should represent the same product, communicate the same message and have the same objective. They should only differ on whether they focus on emotions, information or both.

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**APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A

### Questionnaire-English

Have you ever seen the video clip before?

**Yes**

**No**

Part 1: Please put a  in the box that reflects your opinion

Note: 1 = “Extremely Disagree”, 7 = “Extremely Agree”

Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel that this video <b>Amusing</b>							
This video makes me feel <b>Excited</b>							
This video makes me feel <b>Sad</b>							
This video makes me feel <b>Happy</b>							
This video makes me feel <b>Angry</b>							
This video makes me feel <b>Touched</b>							
This video contains useful information							
This video contains information about the product							
I will share this video on social media (e.g Facebook, Twitter, Line)							
I will tell others about this video							
I will tell others about the product in this video							
Watching the video makes me want the product							
I will buy the product in the near future							

Part 1: Please answer the following questions

1. Gender

- Male       Female

2. Age .....

3. Highest Education

- Post graduate degree  
 Bachelor's degree  
 Secondary Education

4. Which social media platforms do you use?

- Facebook       Youtube       Line       Twitter  
 Snapchat       Instagram       Whatsapp

5. What Smartphone do you use .....

How long have you been using this phone ..... years

6. How frequently do you share content on social media?

- Never       Sometimes       Often       Always

7. What brand or product does this video represent?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

8. How would you describe this video in three words?

1.....  
2.....  
3.....

## APPENDIX B

### Questionnaire-THAI

คุณเคยเห็นโฆษณาดังกล่าวมาก่อนหรือไม่

 เคย

 ไม่เคย

ส่วนที่ 1 ให้ทำเครื่องหมาย  ลงในช่องที่ตรงกับความเห็นของคุณมากที่สุด

หมายเหตุ: 1 = ไม่เห็นด้วยอย่างยิ่ง และ 7 = เห็นด้วยอย่างยิ่ง

คำถาม	1 ไม่เห็นด้วย อย่างยิ่ง	2	3	4	5	6	7 เห็นด้วย อย่างยิ่ง
ฉันคิดว่าคลิปนี้ตลก							
คลิปนี้ทำให้ฉันรู้สึกตื่นเต้น							
คลิปนี้ทำให้ฉันรู้สึกเศร้า							
คลิปนี้ทำให้ฉันมีความสุข							
คลิปนี้ทำให้ฉันรู้สึกโกรธ							
คลิปนี้ทำให้ฉันรู้สึกซึ้ง							
คลิปนี้ให้ความรู้							
ฉันคิดว่าคลิปชิ้นนี้บอกคุณสมบัติของสินค้า							
ฉันจะกด Share คลิปนี้ใน Social Media (เช่น Facebook, Line, Twitter)							
ฉันจะพูดถึงคลิปนี้ให้คนอื่นฟังอย่างแน่นอน							
ฉันจะบอกคนอื่นเกี่ยวกับสินค้าในคลิป							
เมื่อดูคลิปแล้วทำให้ฉันอยากใช้สินค้า							
ฉันจะซื้อสินค้านี้ในอนาคต							

ส่วนที่ 2 กรอกข้อมูลที่ตรงกับตัวของคุณมากที่สุด

1. เพศ  ชาย  หญิง

2. อายุ ..... ปี

3. ระดับการศึกษาสูงสุด

สูงกว่าปริญญาตรี

ปริญญาตรีหรือเทียบเท่า

มัธยมปลายหรือเทียบเท่า

ต่ำกว่ามัธยมปลาย

4. คุณใช้ Social Media อะไรบ้าง (เลือกได้มากกว่า 1 ช่อง)

Facebook  Youtube  Line  Twitter

Snapchat  Instagram  Whatsapp

อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ) .....

5. ท่านใช้ Smartphone ยี่ห้ออะไร .....ใช้ยี่ห้อนี้มาแล้วกี่ปี .....ปี

6. ปกติคุณกด Share บ่อยแค่ไหน

ไม่เคยเลย  นานๆครั้ง  บางครั้ง  เป็นประจำ

7. คลิปนี้เป็นของสินค้าและยี่ห้ออะไร

.....  
 .....  
 .....

8. ขอสามคำให้กับคลิปดังกล่าว

1.....  
 2.....  
 3.....

## **BIOGRAPHY**

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