Understanding Advertising Creativity

How perceptions of creativity influence advertising effectiveness

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Dissertation for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Ph.D.,
in Business Administration
Stockholm School of Economics, 2012

Understanding Advertising Creativity: How perceptions of creativity influence advertising effectiveness

ISBN 978-91-7258-872-1

Front cover illustration:
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Back cover photo:
Cecilia Nordstrand, 2012

Printed by:
Ineko AB, Stockholm 2012

Keywords:
Advertising, creativity, advertising effectiveness, consumer marketing, marketing communications, brand management

To
Science and creativity

Foreword

This volume is the result of a research project carried out at the Marketing and Strategy department at the Stockholm School of Economics (SSE).

This volume is submitted as a doctor's thesis at SSE. In keeping with the policies of SSE, the author has been entirely free to conduct and present his research in the manner of his choosing as an expression of his own ideas.

SSE is grateful for the financial support provided by the Torsten and Ragnar Söderberg Foundations which has made it possible to fulfill the project.

Göran Lindqvist

Director of Research
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Richard Wahlund

Professor and Head of the
Marketing and Strategy Department

Acknowledgements

First, I would like to thank the Torsten and Ragnar Söderberg Foundations for generous financial support. Without your help this research and my years towards this PhD thesis would not have been possible. I hope that you will find my thesis a valuable contribution in line with the goals of your foundations.

Besides financial support the journey towards this thesis would not have been possible without the generous intellectual and emotional support by colleagues, friends and family.

First, I would like to thank my three supervisors and researcher gurus Micael Dahlén, Sara Rosengren and Karl Wennberg. Micael, you truly are a marketing phenomenon. The small glimpses into your brilliant mind, that you so generously have offered me during these years, have change my way of thinking and doing research. You have always been there with your insights, help and support and for that I am very grateful. Sara, your support and feedback during our numerous coffee breaks have been invaluable for the progress of this thesis and also (equally important) my mental health. You are one of the brightest and most thorough researchers I have met and thus an important role model. Karl, with your knowledge, guidance and cheerful spirit, you impersonate the best things I know about research: intelligence, curiosity and generosity. Even though our areas of expertise differ, your enthusiasm has inspired me to be a better researcher and academic colleague.

I would also like to thank the person that has been my wingman during these four years. Jonas Colliander, I am very grateful for all the shared laughs, discussions and struggles, not to mention the late nights in hotel rooms all over Europe. I am very grateful for being able to count on you, both as a trusted colleague and a close friend.

Another person that has played a vital role in the making of this journey is my boss and role model, researcher Magnus Söderlund. The way you pursue your search for new knowledge has brought me a lot of inspiration and I hope that I one day can leave a similar footprint in the academic world as you have. You have always cared that I have had the mental peace to focus on my own research and develop my own way of thinking. Thank you for that.

I would also like to thank all my other present and past colleagues at Center for Consumer Marketing: Claes-Robert Julander, Fredrik Lange, Fredrik Törn, Hanna Berg, Henrik Sjödin, Jens Nordfält, Joel Ringbo, John Karsberg, Karina Töndevold, Mikael Hernant, Niclas Öhman, Nina Åkestam, Per-Jonas Eliasson, Peter Gabrielson, Rebecca Gruvhammar och Susanna Erlandsson. You have all contributed to a stimulating and joyful working environment.

During the years I have had the privilege to study for brilliant scholars in courses and research seminars. Anders Westlund, Björn Alm, Corinne Kruse, Henrik Uggla, James Burroughs, Johan Roos, Lars Engwall, Lars Strannegård, Page Moreau and Tiffany White, I would like to thank you for the knowledge and feedback that you so generously have been given me. I would also like to thank all respondents to the numerous questionnaires that led up to this research. Specifically, I want to thank Henrik Callerstrand, who contributed with data while working on his master thesis. I would also like to thank Marie Tsujita for helping me with all the practical details that come with every little steps towards a PhD title.

Besides my professional support I would also express my deepest gratitude to my family and friends. Magnus, Katarina, Fredrik and Niklas, without you I would never have been able to pull this through. You inspire me every day and it is a gift to be a part of your family. I am also very grateful for the support, help and feedback from my dear friends Daniel Glasman, David Järnland, Erik Nilsson, Gustaf Rössner, Jaqcueline Kothbauer, Josef Danell, Mattias Bernow and Mikael Rolker. A special thank to Henrik Lethagen who was my companion during the first small steps towards this thesis.

Last, I would like to give my deepest thank to my wife Karolina. Even though you only participated on the last half of this journey it is safe to say that I would not have made it through without you. You are the friendly reviewer, the perfect sentence, the clearest thought, and everything that makes my life fantastic.

Stockholm, October 22, 2012

Erik Modig

Contents

Chapter 1

ADVERTISING CREATIVITY AS A FIELD OF RESEARCH

Advertising is defined as "the activity or profession of producing advertisements for commercial products or services" in order to "describe or draw attention to (a product, service, or event) in a public medium in order to promote sales or attendance" (New Oxford American Dictionary, 2010, online access August 2012). In 2010, total spending on advertising worldwide surpassed USD 442 trillion and is projected to increase by 5% until 2015 (PriceWaterhouseCoopers, 2011). Research testifies that advertising has a direct effect on firm performance, such as sales (Leone, 1995), profit (Erickson and Jacobson, 1992), brand equity (Aaker, 1996; Keller, 1998), and firm value (Joshi and Hanssens, 2004). Indirectly, via increased brand equity, advertising spending can lead to increased price premiums and lower price sensitivity (Ailawadi, Neslin, and Lehmann, 2003; Kaul and Wittink 1995; Sethuraman and Tellis, 1991), contribute to greater product differentiation (Kirmani and Zeithaml, 1993), and work as a protection against substitute products (Mela, Gupta, and Lehmann, 1997).

However, research show that advertising effectiveness, estimated by advertising elasticity (the effect of an increase or decrease in advertising spending on the market share or sales) is as low as zero to 0.2, meaning that not all advertising is beneficial for the firm (Vakratsas and Ambler, 1999; Tellis, 2009). One reason might be that the amount of advertising consumers are exposed to have increased markedly and consumers pay less attention to ads and often hold a negative opinion about advertising in general (Gruscll, 2008; Rosengren, 2008). Advertisers face the challenge of securing advertising effectiveness by producing advertisement that gets the consumers' attention and shape their attitudes and behavior.

One suggested way to reach these objectives is creativity. Both influential advertising professionals such as David Ogilvy (Ogilvy, 1983) and Bill Bernbach (Dane 1965; Andrus, 1968), and industry awards such as the Clio (www.clioawards.com) and One Show (www.oneclub.org) support the notion that what makes advertising effective is creative excellence. This is an opinion that is shared in today's advertising industry as advertising agency professionals see creativity as the best tool for achieving advertising success and believe that creativity is what really works in advertising (Nyilasy and Reid, 2009a). Two of the leading advertising effectiveness reports—The Gunn Report and the IPA Effectiveness Report—estimate that campaigns that are awarded for creativity are on average eleven times more efficient (higher impact on market share for additional advertising spending) compared to non-awarded campaigns (Gunn et al., 2010). Academic research also indicates that a higher level of creativity has a positive impact on adverting effectiveness (e.g. Smith, Chen, and Yang, 2008; Dahlén, Rosengren, and Törn, 2008). To summarize, creativity is one important tool to achieve advertising effectiveness. This thesis sets out to review the academic research on advertising creativity, to contribute to a theoretical understanding of the concept. In so doing, it plays a part in advertisers understanding and use of advertising creativity.

Especially, this thesis aims to answer a reoccurring plea within the field of advertising research for more contributions about advertising creativity (White, 1972; Zinkhan, 1993; Sasser and Koslow, 2008). One specific gap in advertising creativity research to date is that studies have predominately focused on issues regarding the production of advertising creativity (Sasser and Koslow, 2008). Current research need to better understand the response to creative advertisements by documenting how advertising professionals and consumer assess and value creativity (Bernardin and Kemp-Robertson, 2008; Sasser and Koslow, 2008). This seems especially important as empirical studies to date reveal that advertising professionals seems to have no formalized understanding about how advertising creativity work (El-Murad and West, 2004; Nyilasy and Reid, 2009a). In addition, research has predominately used an information processing perceptive in explaining the positive effects of creativity advertising (Sasser and Koslow, 2008). To fully understand the effects advertising creativity has on consumers, current research should initiate in new perspectives and new theories about how advertising creativity might work is needed (Sasser and Koslow, 2008). In the next sections I will specify in more detail the purpose of the thesis and its academic and practical relevance.

Purpose of the Thesis

The purpose of this thesis is to improve the understanding of the role of creativity within advertising. More specifically, the goals are to: a) increase knowledge how different judges of advertising – researchers, consumers, and advertising professionals – perceive creative advertising, and b) investigate how these perceptions affect advertising effectiveness. I do this in six studies. The first two studies investigate the two perspectives of consumers and advertising professionals. The following four studies

investigate how perceptions of advertising creativity can influence advertising effectiveness. The findings are presented in five articles.

Academic Relevance of the Thesis

Each single article is communicating within a specific area of academic research and the main focus in each separated article might be outside the boarders of advertising creativity and the scope of this thesis. Their separate contributions to other areas of research can be found in each article. However, in this section I will present their relevance for advertising creativity research. This overall contribution and relevance of the articles and the seven studies can be summed up in four different aspects.

First, this thesis takes the opportunity to summarize current academic research about advertising creativity and thus participate in the academic perspective on adverting creativity. As such, one intended contribution of this research lies not only in the empirical investigations but also in the review of existing literature. To my knowledge the only similar review of the research area was presented by Sasser and Koslow (2008), who reviewed 66 academic articles. This thesis offers academic relevance by including additional articles (in total 107) in the academic review and thus find new potential research agendas and update our current knowledge of advertising creativity.

Second, in addition to the academic and the more commonly used advertising professional perspective, this thesis offers new knowledge on how consumers assess advertising creativity. Thus, this thesis answers to the call for more studies on the consumer perspective of advertising creativity (Bernardin and Kemp-Robertson, 2008; Sasser and Koslow, 2008). This might be of particular interest as research suggests that

consumers have become more advertising savvy and are able and inclined to assess the value of single advertisement (Dahlén and Edenius, 2007; Dahlén, Granlund, and Grenros, 2009). You could argue that consumers have in one sense become advertising mediums themselves, as the use of their "own" brands on blogs, Twitter, or Facebook has increased exponentially (Nielsen, 2011, 2012). Their presence in social media and in channels such as YouTube has given consumers a behind-the-scenes look into advertising and how it work. This might affect how they judge and value advertising creativity. By including the consumer perspective this thesis aims to add new insights about how advertising creativity might work.

Third, this thesis present one of few studies that compares advertising professionals and consumers assessment of advertising creativity and related concepts such as divergence, relevance, craftsmanship, humor and advertising effectiveness. Thereby contributing to the current research stream about how audiences respond and evaluate advertising creativity (Smith et al., 2007; Yang and Smith, 2009). Especially the findings expand the literature that has studied the differences between consumer and advertising professionals assessment (White and Smith, 2001; Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan, 2003; West, Kover, and Caruana, 2008). The findings show that advertising research might need to re-assess which factors that explain consumers and advertising professionals' judgments of advertising creativity. In addition, findings suggest that research need to further develop the understanding on how advertising professionals differ in their view of advertising creativity relative to advertising effectiveness.

Fourth, academic research has predominately used an information processing perspective to explain the positive effect creativity has on adverting effectiveness (Sasser and Koslow, 2008). Previous research have focused on how a creative advertising increase processing, which in turn lead to a stronger impact on classical hierarchy-of-effects measurements such as ad attitude, message recall, brand attitude and

purchase intention (see Smith, Chen, and Yang, 2008; and Sasser and Koslow, 2008 for review of previous studies). This thesis complements and contributes to this stream of research in three ways. First it expands the literature about signaling effects of adverting creativity (Dahlén, Rosengren, and Törn, 2008). Findings show that award winning creative advertisement signals more perceived sender effort and expense, compared to non-award winning advertisements, which in turn has a positive effect on brand evaluation. This finding contributes by strengthen the notion that the positive effect on brand evaluation might not only be explained by increased processing but could also be explained by signal theory. Second, this thesis employ what can be called an out-of-the-box thinking when it comes to potential effects advertising creativity might have. By showing that advertising creativity can enhance the perceived and real creativity of the audience (the reader of the creative advertisement) it contributes to existing theories on how advertising creativity work. Finally, the last study highlights how advertising creativity relates to other areas of research (in this case the artistic style of images in advertising design) in an attempt to find similarities and opportunities for theoretical synergies as well as new ways of thinking about advertising creativity.

Practical Relevance of the Thesis

Both industry reports and academic articles clearly tell that creativity is beneficial for the success of advertisements (e.g, Gunn et al., 2010; Smith, Chen, and Yang, 2008) Findings indicates that advertising creativity has a positive effect on purchase intentions (Smith et al., 2007; Smith, Chen, and Yang, 2008) and has a direct impact on the financial performance of firms (Im and Workman, 2004). Research also shows that advertising creativity has a positive impact on brand attitude and interest (Smith, Chen, and Yang, 2008; Dahlén, Rosengren, and Törn,

2008), which indirectly affects firm performance (e.g. Aaker 1996; Keller 1998). Consequently, these arguments should be sufficient to demonstrate the practical relevance of adverting creativity, and thus this thesis. At the same time, however, advertisers find it difficult to manage creativity within the advertising planning process (Kover, Goldberg, and James, 1995; Hackley, 2003). In that sense, this thesis can be seen as one step in an attempt to increase the understanding and use of advertising creativity and thereby potentially milder those difficulties. I will present this practical relevance by highlighting four different areas in which this thesis contributes to advertising practice.

First, advertising professionals, who are largely responsible for allotting advertising funding, have no unified theories on how creativity can be used to increase advertising effectiveness (El-Murad and West, 2004). Even though they believe it works, advertising professionals believe the only relevant rule for creativity is that there is no rule (Nyilasy and Reid, 2009a). In this regard, there is a potential value of reviewing and summarizing existing literature on advertising creativity in order to help bridge the gap between academia and practice. The literature review in this thesis could expand the knowledge of advertising creativity, and provide advertisers and advertising agencies with tools that will enable them to more effectively develop and evaluate advertising strategies. This could potentially improve firm competitiveness.

Second, advertising professionals face the question of whether consumers are able to judge the creativity of an advertisement and if their judgments influence advertising effectiveness (White and Smith, 2001). Both within advertising research and practice there is a history of relying on the judgment of advertising professionals when assessing advertising creativity (Dahlén, Rosengren, and Törn, 2008). As previously stated, current research calls for more studies on consumer response to advertising in order to better understand how advertising really works (Bernardin and Kemp-Robertson, 2008; Sasser and Koslow, 2008). This research contributes to advertising practice by showing that consumers

are indeed able and willing to assess the creativity of an advertisement and that those assessments have impact on advertising effectiveness. It also shows that consumers – compared to advertising professionals – value humor, craftsmanship and relevance to a higher degree in their assessment of creativity. This gives the advertising industry directions for the planning of creative advertisements.

Third, research shows that successful planning of creative advertisements is dependent on a "creative code" within each agency (Stuhlfaut, 2011). This means that the "collection of implicit theories about an advertising agency's creative product that are held by people within a creative department" influence the success of the agency (Stuhlfaut, 2011, pp. 283). This is of particular interest as research indicate that advertising professionals share little consensus about what constitutes creative advertisements (West, Kover, and Caruana, 2008) and that few have a formal definition of advertising creativity (El-Murad and West, 2004). Thus, by documenting consumers' and advertising professionals' different ways of evaluating creative advertisements, this thesis can offer one first step in an attempt to construct a more coherent "creative code" within the advertising agencies. That could potentially be helpful in the production of creative advertisement and improve advertising planning and success.

Fourth, by applying an out-of-the-box perspective on the potential effects of advertising creativity, this thesis shows that advertising creativity is not only a mission for the advertising industry but also beneficial to the individual consumer and owners of media vehicles (publishing houses, TV channels etc.). This could in turn affect the interest and planning of creative advertisements as the positive effects benefit additional stakeholders. This could transform advertising from a "natural evil" to a common good, which could potentially benefit advertising professional both on a professional and a private level.

Outline of the Thesis

The remainder of this thesis is divided into three parts. First, I summarize what is already known about advertising creativity with the help of a 3P-framework (place, person, and process, cf. Sasser and Koslow, 2008). This section offers a deeper understanding of advertising creativity and serves as a roadmap for my investigations. Based on the questions derived from this review and the potential gaps found in previous research, I formulate a research agenda for my own studies. In the second part, I present my methodology and studies, and explain how they are relevant to the research questions. The results are then presented in a brief introduction of the five articles. The third and final part consists of a general discussion based on the findings of the studies. In this section, I tie the five articles together and summarize the thesis' overall contribution to academic research. I then provide suggestions for advertising professionals and marketers with the aim of helping them to better understand and utilize advertising creativity to improve their advertising planning. I also point out limitations with the current research and potential directions for future research.

Chapter 2

UNDERSTANDING ADVERTISING CREATIVITY

Definition of Creativity

The academic interest in creativity began with J. P. Guilford's 1950 address to the American Psychology Association where he initiated the call to define, measure and improve creative ability (Guilford, 1950). Since then there has been significant efforts in defining what creativity is and how it should be measured (Meusburger, 2009). In the New Oxford American Dictionary (2010, online access August 2012) creativity is defined as "The use of the imagination or original ideas", thus, highlighting the importance of doing something original (i.e., something that is not dependent on other people's ideas, and is inventive and unusual) in order to be creative. This definition is dominant in traditional tests of creativity, such as the "unusual uses" test, which mainly focus on the ability to engage in divergent thinking (Meusburger, 2009).

A more elaborate definition is offered by Oldham and Cummings (1996, p. 608), "Products, ideas, or procedures that satisfy two condition: (1)

they are novel or original and (2) they are potentially relevant for, or useful to an organization". This definition, with small differences in the words used, has become dominant throughout academia and in textbooks on creativity (Meusburger, 2009). It refers to an original idea as something divergent (tending to differ from the norm or develop in a different direction), and highlights that creativity combines both divergence and relevance (closely connected with or appropriate to the matter at hand). However, what is defined as divergent and relevant may be in reference to the creator, society, or the domain within which the creation occurs (Meusburger, 2009), meaning that what is defined as creative or not is in relation to a specific field, person or culture.

One of the goals with this thesis is to contribute to the definition and understanding of creativity within the field of advertising research. In terms of an initial viewpoint, this research relies on the opinion each individual holds about what is—or is not—creative, regardless of previous definitions or which reasoning each single individual use to arrive at their final opinion. As such, the thesis follows the psychological research that relies on "laymen theory" in defining a concept (Elsbach and Kramer, 2003; Puccio and Chimento, 2001). In other words, if a person says something is creative, then it is creative for that person.

I have chosen this approach for three reasons. First, as divergence and relevance may both relate to the creator and to the field in which they create, it is impossible for more than one person to share the same underlying definition of creativity. In other words, each individual has his or her own perceptions about what is divergent or relevant, which means that defining creativity on the basis of these concepts can, at best, give us a good estimate. Second, research has shown that respondents use other factors besides divergence and relevance in their definitions of advertising creativity (e.g., West, Kover, and Caruana, 2008). Only by not limiting my view to these two elements can I find new perspectives. Third, one of the main goals of this thesis is to document how different audiences perceive advertising creativity and how their perceptions

differ. If I were to use a formal definition, I would limit the studies contained herein before they began. This method of relying on each individual subjective definition of creativity allows for the study of how different respondents assess creativity.

Academic Perspectives on Advertising Creativity

The first academic article about advertising creativity, entitled "The Dilemma of Creative Advertising" was published by Politz (1960) in Journal of Marketing. Since then, the stream of new articles on the subject has been steady, with a peak in 2008 when the Journal of Advertising devoted a special issue to the subject (Journal of Advertising, 2008, issue 4). In order to investigate the researchers' perspective and to document and summarize what is already known about advertising creativity, and to set a direction for my own research, I carried out a content analysis of all academic articles addressing advertising creativity.

In my search for articles, I used Stewart and Lewis's (2009) classification of the fifty highest-ranked journals in marketing academia (Stewart and Lewis, 2009). The list is an aggregate ranking of marketing journals based on 13 earlier rankings, making my search highly relevant for the academic field of marketing and advertising. Initially, I considered only searching for potential articles in journals that explicitly address advertising. However, as important articles about advertising creativity are published in broader marketing journals (e.g. Marketing Science), I decided to use this wider perspective for my search even though the majority of articles are published in the core advertising journals Journal of Adverting, Journal of Adverting Research, International Journal of Advertising. In the second step, I used the Business Source Premier database to search each journal for articles that included the words

"creativity/creative" and "advertising" in their headline, abstracts, or keywords. The last search was performed on September 11th, 2012. I cross-checked the list against previous listings of articles about advertising creativity (e.g., Michell, 1984; Sasser and Koslow, 2008; Smith et al., 2008). The additional articles found as a result of this cross-checking were added to my list. This search resulted in a list of 146 articles. Following this search, I read all of the articles to assess whether they dealt with advertising creativity, a process that narrowed the list to 107 articles (see Table 1). A similar approach was employed in Sasser and Koslow (2008), which review the content of 66 articles. The additional 41 articles in this review are derived from 30 articles originated from the years 2008 to 2012, two additional articles from the years 1960 and 1972 (before the start of Sasser and Koslow (2008) review), and nine articles that were from journals not included in their search. Michell (1984) reviewed the role creativity has in the client-agency relationship and as such it predominately used references on the client-agency relationship and not pre see on advertising creativity. In addition, Michell (1984) also included articles in popular press (e.g. Advertising Age) and text books in the review. I have exclude popular press articles and text books in this review, because they are not a part of the academic perspective that I want to investigate in this study.

Directions in advertising creativity research

In order to orient and classify the 107 articles, I distinguish between articles that are production-oriented and those that are response-oriented in their view of advertising creativity (Sasser and Koslow, 2008). Production-oriented articles investigate how the production of creative advertisements can be optimized, whereas response-oriented articles deal with how people react to creative advertisements. To further assess the various perspectives researchers have used within these two streams of research I will classify articles into a "3Ps" framework of place, person, and process (Sasser and Koslow, 2008). This framework has previously

been applied to advertising creativity by Sasser and Koslow (2008). Production-oriented articles can be classified in terms of whether they concern the places in which they produce creative advertising, the person who creates advertisements or the processes they use in developing creative advertisements. In the same sense, response-oriented articles can use place, person, and process to document how different creative media are perceived, how different audiences respond to creative advertising, and which processes audiences use when responding to creative advertising.

In my efforts to find gaps within advertising creativity research this framework offers direction for uncovering potential research questions for my own studies. One initial observation is that production-oriented issues have attracted the most attention (81 articles, 76%). One reason for the lack of response-oriented research on creativity might be that advertising research has centered on the advertising professional instead of the consumer, resulting in a natural avoidance of response-oriented studies that take the opinions and responses of customers into account. This lack of a consumer focus has been highlighted by other authors, who call for more customer/response-oriented articles (West, Kover, and Caruana, 2008; Sasser and Koslow, 2008). Thus, this thesis will focus on the response-side of advertising creativity in order to answer to this lack of research and reoccurring plea. The next sections review each of these six different perspectives. However, the first three sections that discussed production-oriented research will thus mainly report previous findings. The following sections about response-oriented research will in more detail describe and discuss existing theories. After that I will present my intended contribution towards a better understanding of advertising creativity.

Table 1. Academic articles about Advertising Creativity

Author	*Year*	*Title*	*Journal*
Production oriented Place focus			
Andrus	1968	Creativity - A Function for Computers or Executives?	Journal of Marketing
Keil	1975	Can You Become a Creative Judge	Journal of Advertising
Matthews	1975	A Two-course Survey of "Creative Country	Journal of Advertising
Politz	1975	Creativeness And Imagination	Journal of Advertising
Bursk and Sethi	1976	The In-House Advertising Agency	Journal of Advertising
Frazer	1983	Creative Strategy: A Management Perspective	Journal of Advertising
Michell	1984	Accord and Discord in Agency-Client Perceptions of Creativity	Journal of Advertising Research
Michell	1984	Agency Client Trends: Polarization versus Fragmentation	Journal of Advertising Research
Vandon Bergh, Smith, and Wicks	1986	Internal Agency Relationships: Account Services and Creative Personnel	Journal of Advertising
Hirschman	1989	Role-Based Models of Advertising Creation and Production	Journal of Advertising
Burke et al.	1990	A Knowledge-based System for Advertising Design	Marketing Science
Benedetto, Tamate, and Chandran	1992	Developing Creative Advertising Strategy for the Japanese Marketplace	Journal of Advertising Research
West	1993	Cross-National Creative Personalities, Processes, and Agency Philosophies	Journal of Advertising Research
Helgesen	1994	Advertising Awards and Advertising Agency Performance Criteria	Journal of Advertising Research
Kover and Goldberg	1995	The Games Copywriters Play: Conflict, Quasi-control, A New Approach	Journal of Advertising Research
Murphy and Maynard	1996	Using Judgment Profiles to Compare Advertising Agencies and Clients' Campaign Values	Journal of Advertising Research
Taylor, Hoy, and Haley	1996	How French Advertising Professionals Develop Creative Strategy	Journal of Advertising
West and Berthod	1997	Antecedents of Risk Taking Behavior by Advertisers: Empirical Evidence and Management Implications	Journal of Advertising Research
Reid, Whitehill King, and Delorme	1998	Top-Level Agency Creatives look at Advertising Creativity Then and Now	Journal of Advertising
West	1999	360 of Creative Risk	Journal of Advertising Research
West and Ford	2001	Advertising Agency Philosophies and Employee Risk Taking	Journal of Advertising
Hill and Johnson	2004	Understanding creative service: a Qualitative Study of the Advertising Problem Delineation, Communication and Response (APDCR) Process	International Journal of Advertising
Im and Workman	2004	Market Orientation, Creativity, and New Product Performance in High Technology Firms	Journal of Marketing
Sutherland, Duke, and Abernathy	2004	A Model of Marketing Information Flow	Journal of Advertising
Horsky	2006	The Changing Architecture of Advertising Agencies	Marketing Science
Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan	2006	Do Marketers get the Advertising They Need or the Advertising They Deserve?	Journal of Advertising
Sasser, Koslow, and Riordan	2007	Creative and Interactive Media Use by Agencies: Engaging an IMC Media Palette for Implementing Advertising Campaigns	Journal of Advertising Research
Li et al.	2008	The Effects of Agency Creativity on Campaign Outcomes	Journal of Advertising
Verbeke et al.	2008	Finding The Keys to Creativity in Ad Agencies	Journal of Advertising
Waller	2010	Does Doing Good Do Good? How Pro Bono Work May Benefit	Journal of Advertising Research

		Advertising Agencies	
Sluhlaul	2011	The Creative Code - An organisational influence on the creative process in advertising	International Journal of Advertising
Oliver and Ashley	2012	Creative leaders' Views on Managing Advertising Creativity	Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice
Production oriented, Person focus			
Auer	1976	Creative Advertising Students: How Different?	Journal of Advertising
Reid	1977	Are Advertising Educators Good Judges of Creative Talent?	Journal of Advertising
Vaughn	1982	Point of view: Creatives versus Researchers: Must They Be Adversaries	Journal of Advertising Research
McGann	1986	Editorial: Advertising Education	Journal of Advertising
Andrews and Smith	1996	In Search of the Marketing Imagination: Factors Affecting the Creativity of Marketing Programs for Mature Products	Journal of Marketing Research
Ewing and Jones	2000	Agency Beliefs in the Power of Advertising	International Journal of Advertising
Young	2000	Creative Differences between Copywriters and Art Directors	Journal of Advertising Research
H Murad and West	2003	Risk and Creativity in Advertising	Journal of Marketing Management
Hackley	2003	How Divergent Beliefs Cause Account Team Conflict	International Journal of Advertising
Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan	2003	What Is Creative to Whom and Why? Perceptions in Advertising Agencies	Journal of Advertising Research
Devinney, Dowling, and Collins	2005	Client and Agency Mental Models in Evaluating Advertising	International Journal of Advertising
Hackley	2007	The Trouble with Creatives: Negotiating Creative Identity in Advertising Agencies	International Journal of Advertising
Nyilasy and Reid	2009a	Agency Practitioners Theories of How Advertising Works	Journal of Advertising
Nyilasy and Reid	2009b	Agency Practitioners' Meta-Theories of Advertising	International Journal of Advertising
Ashley and Oliver	2010	Creative leaders	Journal of Advertising
Production oriented, Process focus			
Politz	1960	The Dilemma of Creative Advertising	Journal of Marketing
White	1972	Creativity: The x Factor in Advertising Theory	Journal of Advertising
Winter and Russel	1973	Psychographics and Creativity	Journal of Advertising
Daniels	1974	The Second Meaning of the Word "Creative Should Be First in the Hearts of Advertising People	Journal of Advertising
Stephens and Burke	1974	Zen Theory and the Creative Course	Journal of Advertising
Dillon	1975	The Triumph of Creativity Over Communication	Journal of Advertising
Reid and Rotfeld	1976	Toward an Associative Model of Advertising Creativity	Journal of Advertising
Bengtson	1982	Creativity s Paradoxical Character: a Postscript to James Webb Young s Technique for Producing Ideas	Journal of Advertising
Vanden Bergh, Reid, and Schorin	1983	How Many Creative Alternatives to Generate?	Journal of Advertising
Durgee	1985	Depth Interview Techniques for Creative Advertising	Journal of Advertising Research
Blasko and Mokwa	1986	Creativity in Advertising: A Janusian Perspective	Journal of Advertising
Blasko and Mokwa	1988	Paradox, Advertising and the Creative Process	Current Issues & Research in Advertising
Stewart	1992	Speculations on the Future of Advertising Research	Journal of Advertising
Tautman and Hsieh	1993	Creative Tactics and the Communication of a "Good Taste" Message	Journal of Advertising Research
Zinkhan	1993	Editorial: Creativity in Advertising	Journal of Advertising
Kover	1995	Copywriters Implicit Theories of Communication: An Exploration	Journal of Consumer Research
O'Connor, Willemain, and Maclachlan	1996	The Value of Competition among Agencies in Developing Ad Campaigns: Revisiting Gross's Model	Journal of Advertising
Goldenberg, Mazursky, and Solomon	1999	The Fundamental Templates of Quality Ads	Marketing Science
Johar, Holbrook, and Stern	2001	The Role of Myth in Creative Advertising Design: Theory, Process and Outcome	Journal of Advertising
Hackley	2003	Account Planning: Current Agency Perspectives on an Advertising Enigma	Journal of Advertising Research
El-Murad and West	2004	The Definition and Measurement of Creativity: What Do We Know?	Journal of Advertising Research

Chong	2006	How do Advertising Creative Directors Perceive Research?	International Journal of Advertising
Toubia	2006	Idea Generation, Creativity, and Incentives	Marketing Science
Bernardin and Kemp Robertson	2008	Envisioning the Future of Advertising Creativity Research: Wildfire 2008: Creativity with a Human Touch	Journal of Advertising
Djafarova	2008	Why Do Advertisers Use Puns? A Linguistic Perspective	Journal of Advertising Research
Frevelles et al.	2008	Envisioning the Future of Advertising Creativity Research: The Concept of "Imaginative Intensity in Advertising	Journal of Advertising
Goldenberg and Mazursky	2008	When Deep Structures Surface	Journal of Advertising
Griffin	2008	From Performance to Mastery	Journal of Advertising
Heiser, Sierra, and Torres	2008	Creativity via Cartoon Spokespeople in Print Ads	Journal of Advertising
Rossiter, John R.	2008	Envisioning the Future of Advertising Creativity Research: Defining the Necessary Components of Creative, Effective Ads	Journal of Advertising
Sasser	2008	Creating Passion to Engage Versus Enrage Consumer Cocreators with Agency Co-conspirators: Unleashing Creativity	Journal of Consumer Marketing
Stewart, Chen, and Wan	2008	Envisioning the Future of Advertising Creativity Research: Creative and Effective Advertising: Balancing Spontaneity and Discipline	Journal of Advertising
Borghini et al.	2010	Symbiotic Postures of Commercial Advertising and Street Art	Journal of Advertising
Jayanti	2010	A Netnographic Exploration: Listening to Online Consumer Conversations	Journal of Advertising Research
Campbell	2011	Commentary: Evidence Proves the Future Is Now	Journal of Advertising Research
Response oriented, Place focus			
Dahlén	2005	The Medium as a Contextual Cue	Journal of Advertising
Dahlén, Friberg, and Nilsson	2009	Long Live Creative Media Choice	Journal of Advertising
Response oriented, Person focus			
Kover, James, and Sonner	1997	To Whom Do Advertising Creatives Write? An Inferential Answer	Journal of Advertising Research
White and Smith	2001	Assessing Advertising Creativity Using the Creative Product Semantic Scale	Journal of Advertising Research
West, Kover, and Caruana	2008	Practitioner and Customer Views of Advertising Creativity	Journal of Advertising
Response oriented, Process focus			
Stewart and Koslow	1989	Executional Factors and Advertising Effectiveness: A Replication	Journal of Advertising
Haberland and Dacin	1992	The Development of a Measure to Assess Viewers' Judgments of the Creativity of an Advertisement: A Preliminary Study	Advances in Consumer Research
Kover, Goldberg, and James	1995	Creativity vs. Effectiveness?	Journal of Advertising Research
Ang and Low	2000	Exploring the Dimensions of Ad Creativity	Psychology & Marketing
Stone, Besser, and Lewis	2000	Recall, Liking, and Creativity in TV Commercials: A New Approach	Journal of Advertising Research
Pieters, Warlop, and Wedel	2002	Breaking Through the Clutter: Benefits of Advertising Originality and Familiarity for Brand Attention and Memory	Management Science
Smith and Yang	2004	Toward a General Theory of Creativity in Advertising: Examining the Role of Divergence	Marketing Theory
Tellis et al.	2005	Modeling the Microeffects of Television Advertising: Which Ad Works, When, Where for How long, and Why?	Marketing Science
Till and Baack	2005	Recall and Persuasion	Journal of Advertising
Ang, Lee, and Leong	2007	The Ad Creativity Cube: Conceptualization and Initial Validation	Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science
Smith et al.	2007	Modeling the Determinants and Effects of Creativity in Advertising	Marketing Science
Baack, Wilson, and Till	2008	Creativity and Memory Effects	Journal of Advertising
Dahlén, Rosengren, and Törn	2008	Advertising Creativity Matters	Journal of Advertising Research
Pools and Dewitte	2008	Getting a Line on Print Ads	Journal of Advertising
Smith, Chen, and Yang	2008	The Impact of Advertising Creativity on the Hierarchy of Effects	Journal of Advertising
Heath, Nairn and Bottomley	2009	How Effective is Creativity?	Journal of Advertising Research
Yang and Smith	2009	Beyond Attention Effects: Modeling the Persuasive and Emotional Effects of Advertising Creativity	Marketing Science
Kim, Han, and Yoon	2010	Advertising Creativity in Korea	Journal of Advertising

Sheinin, Varki, and Ashley	2011	The Differential Effect of Ad Novelty and Message Usefulness on Brand Judgments	Journal of Advertising
Theoretical Reviews			
Sasser and Koslow	2008	Desperately Seeking Advertising Creativity	Journal of Advertising

Production-oriented, place—where creative advertisements are produced

As creative production requires a dynamic organization open to ideation and artistic expression (Sutton and Hargadon, 1996), and given that companies' own efforts to promote creativity usually fail (Amabile, 1996), creative campaigns are regularly handled by advertising agencies (Horsky, 2006; Sasser and Koslow, 2008). Thus, research on the place has focused on how client-agency relationships (e.g., Hackley, 2003), agency organization (e.g., Bursk and Seth, 1976) and culture (e.g., Stuhlfaut, 2011) impacts on creative production. One reoccurring topic is the tension between clients' more systematic approach to advertising planning and creativity, compared to agencies' more intuitive, spontaneous approach (Andrus, 1968; Michell, 1984; Hackley, 2003). If not handled properly the client–agency relationship can negatively influence agency creativity (Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan, 2006), which in turn affect campaign outcomes (Li et al., 2008). Some research suggests that professionals that might lack an understanding of creative ability might benefit from using a more systematic approach (Keil, 1975, Matthews, 1975; Burke et al., 1990) or that the client–agency relationship negotiate and uses similar theories of how creativity works (Stuhlfaut, 2011). One suggested route is to use an in-house agency as this could increase the perceived advertising creativity (Bursk and Seth, 1976), if the firm has internal creative abilities (Horsky, 2006). Research has also documented differences in the view of adverting creativity within an agency, which potentially lead to tension (Vanden Bergh, Smith, and Wicks, 1986; Hirschman, 1989; Kover and Goldberg, 1995; Sutherland, Duke, and Abernethy, 2004). Some articles have introduced managerial

strategies and methods to handle these differences in the view on creativity (Frazer, 1983; Hill and Johnson, 2004; Verbeke et al, 2008; Stuhlfaut, 2011). This might be of particular interest to international networks as there are differences between the view and use of creativity in different countries (Benedetto, Tamate, and Chandran, 1992; Taylor, Hoy, and Haley, 1996; West, 1993). As research show that there is a positive linkage between risk-taking and creativity (El-Murad and West, 2003), research have documented how agencies can plan and control the necessary risk (West, 1999: West and Berthod 1997; West and Ford, 2001).

To sum up, agencies need to handle the tension, both with the clients and within the agency, which arises from different approaches to advertising creativity. One suggested way is to negotiate a common creative code in order to minimize tension and optimize creative performance.

Production-oriented, person—who produces creative advertisements

Creative advertisements are evidently the result of the skill of a creative person. Ever since Guilford (1950), researchers in various fields have tried to pinpoint characteristics and skills that are associated with creative ability (Kilgour, 2006; Sternberg, 2006). To sum up what makes a person creative, besides *environment* (place), *thinking style* and *confluence* (process) research on creativity in general highlight that creative persons have *intelligence*, *personality* and *motivation* (Sternberg, 2006). Within the field of advertising, articles about the creative person have used two different perspectives. First academics have showed that individual traits such as ability for problem solving (Andrews and Smith, 1996), intrinsic motivation (Andrews and Smith, 1996) and risk taking (El-Murad and

West, 2003; Andrews and Smith, 1996) positively influence creative ability.

The second stream of person-oriented research has focused on how different stakeholders in the production of advertisements view advertising creativity. Research shows that the advertising professionals consider creativity to be one of the most important concepts within advertising production (Kover, Goldberg, and James, 1995; Nyilasy and Reid, 2009a; Ashley and Oliver, 2010). However, their assessment of what is creative differ depending on if they are client or agency (Devinney, Dowling, and Collins, 2005) or on their position within the adverting agency (Vaughn, 1982; Young, 2000; Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan, 2003). For example, account executives judge "strategy" as the most important component of creative advertising, while creatives emphasize the importance of "artistry" (Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan, 2003). Research also shows that these divergent beliefs are usually a source of conflict (Hackley, 2003; Hackley and Kover, 2007).

To sum up, research shows that within advertising production, creativity is viewed as one, if not the most, important component of successful advertising (Nyilasy and Reid, 2009a). However, what constitutes a creative advertisement is dependent on individual assessment and still subject to ongoing debate and differs depending on agency and person (Stuhlfaut, 2011).

Production-oriented, process—how creative advertisements are produced

The majority of research suggests – contrary to advertising professionals (Nyilasy and Reid, 2009a, 2009b) – that the process of producing creative advertisements is not a mystery, but a sequenced process entailing at least two steps: incubation and illumination (White, 1972;

Blasko and Mokwa, 1986, 1988; Johar, Holbrook, and Stern, 2001; Toubia, 2006; Kilgour, 2006). The process can be demonstrated by citing famous copywriter James Webb Young.

> First, the gathering of raw material – both the materials of your immediate problem and the materials which come from a constant enrichment of your store of general knowledge. Second, the working over of these materials in your mind. Third, the incubation stage, where you let something, besides the conscious mind do the work of synthesis. Fourth, the actual birth of the Idea – the "Eureka! I have found it!" stage. And fifth, the final shaping and development of the idea to practical usefulness. (White 1972, p. 29)

Today, researchers would call the first four steps of this process "divergent thinking"—the mental process of coming up with new ideas (Kilgour, 2006; Toubia, 2006). The fifth and final step would encompass the problem solving ability of creativity (El-Murad and West, 2004), which has in advertising creativity research mainly been referred to as "relevance" (Smith and Yang, 2004; El-Murad and West, 2004). One specific interest in advertising creativity research has been to offer processing tools to advertising professionals to ensure a creative output. In so doing, authors have linked a more creative output to advertisement design templates (Goldenberg, Mazursky, and Solomin, 1999; Goldenberg and Mazursky, 2008), interview techniques (Durgee, 1985), and the use of puns (Djafarova, 2008), cartoon spokespeople (Heiser, Sierra, and Torres, 2008), consumer conversations (Jayanti, 2010) and consumer co-creation (Sasser, 2008).

To sum up, there seems to be a general sequence in the mental process of producing creative advertisement. However, there seems to be a big difference in which specific thinking styles different professionals prefer and use within the two steps (Griffin, 2008) and as showed, research have linked several different methods to increased creative output. The creative process might be similar but yet different for each person, meaning that people have to find their own optimized process.

Response-oriented, place—responses to a creative advertising medium

The majority of response-oriented articles focus on creative advertising executions and not on how the placement of an advertisement can be creative in itself. In contrast, Dahlén (2005) and Dahlén, Friberg, and Nilsson (2009) investigate how a creative choice of medium can influence advertising effectiveness. They show that the advertising in itself need not to be creative but by placing the advertisement in a creative (e.g., fire distinguisher), compared to a traditional, such as regular print ads, medium it results in stronger brand associations, and higher advertisement credibility, attitude, and brand attitude (Dahlén, 2005; Dahlén, Friberg, and Nilsson, 2009). In addition, by placing an advertisement in a more creative medium, a brand can be associated with the medium itself even after the advertisement had been removed, suggesting that the medium could become a cue that reminds consumers of the brand (Dahlén, Friberg, and Nilsson, 2009). Consequently, advertisers can achieve perceptions of creativity by using the medium instead of with the design of the advertisement. This might be of particular interest when the advertising design is pre-determined or in similar way limited towards a creative design.

To sum up, there is more to advertising creativity than creative execution within the limits of the advertisement design. Advertisers could think outside the advertisement when pursuing a creative strategy and pose questions about potential creative placement. This stream of research could also further investigate a creative choice of situation or timing in order to develop the research within this perspective. However, although there is room for further investigations, I have decided to focus my own efforts on the person that evaluates the creativity and their processing of creative advertisements.

Response-oriented, person—differences among audiences

Several authors have stressed the importance of including different perspectives on advertising processing (Lautman and Hsieh, 1993; Kover, James, and Sonner, 1997; Sasser and Koslow, 2008; Dahlén, Rosengren, and Törn, 2008;). However, only three articles to date have compared different audiences' responses to creative advertisement. This lack of research works as a start for my own investigations. Thus, I will review and discuss this literature stream in more detail in order to find where current research can add knowledge and contribute to the field. In the following sections I review the articles and sum up by proposing a direction for my own studies.

Kover, James, and Sonner (1997) compare how a sample of 103 advertising creatives and 69 respondents from the general public respond to three types of advertisements: winners of creativity awards, EFFIE winners for effectiveness, and non-winners of awards for either creativity or effectiveness. The results show significant differences. The creatives responded more positive to advertisements that had won awards, while consumers responded positively to advertisements that evoked feelings of personal enhancement (Kover, James, and Sonner, 1997). Even though this suggests that advertising creatives primarily produce advertisements that meet other professionals' preferences, it does not contribute to the knowledge of how different audiences view creative advertisements. In order to address that question, the focus must shift to the perceived creativity of the advertisement.

White and Smith (2001) assess how 43 advertising professionals, 61 participants representing the general public, and 189 students judged creative advertisements. They showed the respondents 15 print advertisements, after which they compared how the respondents ranked the advertisements. They found significant differences in the overall

rankings among the three samples. Students consistently gave the highest rankings, while advertising professionals gave the lowest and the general public gave the mid-range scores. In order to better understand these differences, they included measures of originality, logic, and well-craftiness as sub-dimensions of advertising creativity. They found no significant differences in the assessment of originality and logic, while well-craftiness rankings were significantly lower for advertising professionals. Nevertheless, they were unable to clearly measure how these three sub-dimensions contribute to the overall judgment of creativity.

In a similar experiment, West, Kover, and Caruana (2008) investigate the definitions of advertising creativity that advertising professionals and consumers use. They analyzed 52 professional and 126 consumer definitions of advertising creativity. They found that even though there were similarities in terms of which sub-dimensions the two samples used, there were significant differences in how often these sub-dimensions occurred in each definition.

These three articles, especially White and Smith (2001) and West, Kover, and Caruana (2008), suggest that there are significant differences in how advertising professionals and consumers assess advertising creativity. However, no study has measured these differences and no larger representative sample has been used. This is one gap in the literature that I will address with my own research.

Response-oriented, process—how advertising creativity works

The second area that I will analyze and discuss in more detail is the literature stream concerning how audiences process creative

advertisements. An analysis of the research highlights two main areas of interest. Researchers are either interested in how the respondents assess the level of creativity, or how those assessments impact on the respondents' processing of the ad and the brand. The former focuses on documenting factors, or what some authors call sub-dimensions or determinants, of creative ads. 13 articles deal explicitly with such factors (see Table 2). The latter concerns the effects this process has on various communication goals. 15 articles document different effects of advertising creativity. In the following sections I will look closer at these two streams of research.

Table 2. Response, process oriented articles

Factors of adverting creativity				*Effects of advertising creativity*
Haberland and Dacin, 1992 Ang and Low, 2000 White and Smith, 2001 Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan, 2003 El-Murad and West, 2004 Smith and Yang, 2004 Ang, Lee, and Leong, 2007 Smith *et al.*, 2007 Smith, Chen, and Yang, 2008 West, Kover, and Caruana, 2008 Yang and Smith, 2009 Kim, Han, and Yoon, 2010 Sheinin, Varki, and Ashley, 2011	→	Advertising Creativity	→	Stewart and Koslow, 1989 Kover, Goldberg, and James, 1995 Stone, Besser, Lweis, 2000 Ang and Low, 2000 Pieters, Warlop, and Wedel, 2002 Tellis *et al.*, 2005 Till and Baack, 2005 Smith *et al.*, 2007 Dahlén, Rosengren, and Törn, 2008 Smith, Chen and Yang, 2008 Baack, Wilson, and Till 2008 Poels and Dewitte, 2008 Yang and Smith, 2009 Heath, Nairn, and Bottomley 2009 Sheinin, Varki, and Ashley, 2011

Factors of advertising creativity

The literature dealing with factors of creativity has mainly focused on how these factors correlate with the overall judgment of creativity. Study participants are typically asked to subjectively rate different factors and the overall creativity in advertisements, with the objective of testing whether different pre-determined factors can predict the overall rating (e.g., White and Smith, 2001; Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan, 2003; Smith et al., 2007; Smith, Chen, and Yang, 2008; Smith and Yang, 2004). An alternative approach is to use a exploratory qualitative studies rely on in-depth interviews in order to find new sub-dimensions (e.g., West, Kover, and Caruana, 2008; Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan, 2003). In addition to these empirical studies, other authors have made conceptual contributions by summarizing and discussing previous findings (e.g., El-

Murad and West, 2004; Smith and Yang, 2004). I will now discuss what we today know about different factors of advertising creativity.

Even though researchers have used different labels, all published studies have measured the factor of divergence in some way (see Table 3). This factor of creativity reflects a deviation from the norm—a stimulus that previous information does not lead one to expect (Haberland and Dacin, 1992). Divergence corresponds to unexpectedness in the sense that advertisements inconsistent with other advertisements in the same product category (see Smith and Yang, 2004).

Table 3. Empirical Studies on Conceptualizations of Advertising Creativity*

Study	*Divergence*	*Relevance*	*Craftsmanship*	*Other Factors*
Haberland and Dacin, 1992	Originality	Meaningfulness, condensation		Reformulation
Ang and Low, 2000	Novelty	Meaningfulness		Positive feeling
White and Smith, 2001	Originality	Logic	Well-crafted	
Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan, 2003	Originality	Strategy	Artistry	
Ang, Lee, and Leong, 2007	Novelty	Meaningfulness, connectedness		
Smith *et al.*, 2007	Divergence	Relevance		
Smith, Chen, and Yang, 2008	Divergence	Relevance		
West, Kover, and Caruana, 2008	Originality	Relevance, goal directed	Execution	Derisive, humor
Yang and Smith (2009)	Divergence	Relevance		
Kim, Han, and Yoon, 2010	Originality	Considerateness, product relevance		Clarity
Sheinin, Varki, and Ashley, 2011	Novelty	Usefulness		

* There are additional authors that have studied factors of advertising creativity (Smith and Yang, 2004). However, these studies are presented in textbooks or in academic journals and conference proceedings which I consider outside the scope of this thesis. None of these post-dates 2001 which also makes them of less relevance for our current understanding of the assessment of advertising creativity. Therefore I have excluded these contributions in this thesis. Please see Smith and Yang, 2004 for review of these contributions.

Although divergence is generally regarded as a necessary criterion for an advertisement to be considered creative, other criteria must also be met (e.g., Haberland and Dacin, 1992; El-Murad and West, 2004; Smith et al., 2007). Unless the divergent element conveys some meaning about the advertised product, divergence does not necessarily mean creativity. Relevance, which is also referred to as "logic," "meaningfulness," "connectedness," or "strategy," complements divergence by turning creativity into an instrument that connects and highlights the advertised product in relation to consumers' problem solving and goal attainment (e.g., Ang et al., 2007; El-Murad and West, 2004; Smith et al., 2007).

A number of studies also find that craftsmanship, which is sometimes labeled "execution" or "artistry," contributes to advertising creativity among professionals and consumers (e.g., White and Smith, 2001; Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan, 2003). The reason could be that craftsmanship and "artistry" might be connected to creativity as artists are associated with creative ability. Thus, a more well-crafted advertisement is likely to be associated with higher levels of creativity.

There is also some support for the inclusion of humor as a factor of advertising creativity (West, Kover, and Caruana, 2008; Kim, Han, and Yoon, 2010). However, the connection between humor and creativity is relatively new and unconventional in the field of advertising. This might be because of the focus on advertising professionals' assessments of creativity (West, Kover, and Caruana, 2008). Consumers, in contrast to advertising professionals, have no personal interest in watching advertising and thus humor might be viewed as a way of offering value or meaning to the audience, which in turn can connect it with creativity. Within psychology literature there is a long tradition of connecting humor with creative ability (Koestler 1964; Smith and White 1965; Treadwell 1970; Ziv 1976; Wycoff and Pryor 2003).

In addition to these four common dimensions, Haberland and Dacin (1992) refer to reformulation which concern the necessity that viewers

reformulate their attitudes towards an advertised product in order for an advertisement to be viewed as creative. Contemporary research on advertising creativity classifies reformulation not as a factor but as a potential effect of advertising creativity, associated to the change of attitudes among the audience. Thus, reformulation connects with advertising creativity research as a measure of effectiveness (Smith and Yang, 2004). The positioning of "effectiveness" as a part of creativity voids its usefulness as an explanatory variable. The constructs have not been considered as factor of creativity in more recent creativity research.

To sum up, there is a general agreement that divergence and relevance are two important factors of advertising creativity. However, exploratory studies suggest that craftsmanship and humor might also explain perceptions of creativity (West, Kover, and Caruana, 2008), especially for consumers.

Effects of advertising creativity

The other stream of research regarding the processing of creative advertisements focuses on the effects on how the audience perceives the advertisement, the advertised product, and the brand. This stream of research follows a process-outcome perspective in which a creative advertisement catches the attention of the audience, leading to cognitive processing, which in turn results in emotional and attitudinal changes (e.g., Smith, Chen and Yang, 2008; Yang and Smith, 2009). The sequence of effects follows what is called the hierarchy-of-effects model (Lavdige and Steiner, 1961; Smith, Chen, and Yang, 2008). Articles have documented advertising creativity's positive effect on recall (Stone, Besser, and Lewis, 2000; Pieters, Warlop, and Wedel, 2002; Till and Baack, 2005; Baack, Wilson, and Till, 2008; Sheinin, Varki, and Ashley, 2011), advertisement attitude (e.g., Kover, Goldberg, and James, 1995; Ang and Low, 2000; Till and Baack, 2005; Smith et al., 2007), brand attitude (e.g., Ang and Low, 2000; Till and Baack, 2005; Smith et al., 2007), brand interest (Dahlén, Rosengren, and Törn, 2008; Smith,

Chen, and Yang, 2008), perceived brand ability (Dahlén, Rosengren, and Törn, 2008), brand trust (Sheinin, Varki, and Ashley, 2011), and purchase intention (Kover, Goldberg, and James, 1995; Smith et al., 2007; Smith, Chen, and Yang, 2008).

The majority of articles have explained the positive effects by using information processing theory, meaning that a divergent and yet relevant content that is creative advertising lead to increased attention (Pieters, Warlop, and Wedel, 2002; Till and Baack, 2005; Smith et al., 2007; Smith, Chen, and Yang, 2008; Baack, Wilson, and Till, 2008), greater motivation (Smith et al., 2007), arousal (Ang and Low, 2000; Poels and Dewitte, 2008; Heath, Nairn, and Bottomley 2009), affect (Yang and Smith, 2009; Sheinin, Varki, and Ashley, 2011), and a willingness to postpone the purchase decision and thus stay open to evaluate advertised alternatives (Yang and Smith, 2009). These processing effects then in turn affect the viewers' evaluation of the advertisement and the brand.

Few authors have introduced alternative theories on how advertising creativity work. One exception is Heath, Nairn, and Bottomley (2009) who argue that creativity does not lead to higher attention, but that the emotional content in creative advertisements lead to more arousal which in turn leads to less attention and counter arguments, making the advertisement more effective. Thus, they argue in one sense against existing theory that creative advertisement leads to more arousal and thus more affect (Kover, Goldberg, and James, 1995; Ang and Low, 2000). However, they still use an information processing approach. The only exception to this approach is Dahlén, Rosengren, and Törn (2008) who explains the positive affect of creative advertisements by signal theory. They show that creative advertisements signal greater marketing effort on behalf of the advertiser and the brand, resulting in more brand interest and perceived brand quality.

To sum up, during the last years we have witnessed numerous studies that document the positive effects of advertising creativity. Creativity is

linked to each stage in the hierarchy-of-effects and is predominantly explained by information processing theory. However, alternative theoretical perspectives, or focus on other dependent variables might enhance our knowledge of advertising creativity.

Table 4. Response, process oriented articles

Article	Theory	Dependent factor(s)
Kover, Goldberg, and James, 1995	Emotional connection, information processing	Ad attitude, Purchase intentions
Stone, Besser, Lewis, 2000		Ad attitude, recall
Ang and Low, 2000	Information processing: arousal	Ad and brand attitude
Pieters, Warlop, and Wedel, 2002	Information processing: attention	Recall
Tellis *et al.*, 2005	Information processing	
Till and Baack, 2005	Information processing: attention	Recall, Ad and brand attitude
Smith *et al.*, 2007	Information processing: attention, motivation, depth of processing	Ad and brand attitude, Purchase intentions
Dahlén, Rosengren, and Törn, 2008	Signal theory: sender effort	Perceived brand quality, brand interest
Smith, Chen and Yang, 2008	Information processing: attention	Attention, Interest, Depth of processing, Ad and brand attitude and purchase intentions
Baack, Wilson, and Till 2008	Information processing: attention	Recall, Recognition
Poels and Dewitte, 2008	Bioinformational theory of emotion	
Yang and Smith, 2009	Information processing: affect, desire to postpone closure	Viewing intentions, purchase intentions
Heath, Nairn, and Bottomley 2009	Processing, emotive content (arousal) lower attention and counter argument	
Sheinin, Varki, and Ashley, 2011	Information processing: affect	Recall, ad and brand attitude, brand trust

Towards a Better Understanding of Advertising Creativity

On the basis of this body of research, I have identified three areas in which there seem to be gaps or inconclusive findings in the literature. I will now address these areas and formulate a research agenda that sets the ground for my six empirical studies.

Who Should Judge Advertising Creativity?

A number of studies have advanced the literature on advertising creativity by testing how such creativity impacts advertising effectiveness (e.g. Smith, Chen, and Yang, 2008; Dahlén, Rosengren, and Törn, 2008). In concluding that creativity in advertising impacts favorably on receivers, these studies have predominantly relied on adverting professional definitions of creative advertising by either using an expert jury to assess creative advertisements or by only using the divergence/relevance factors of creativity. Recent studies find that other receivers (e.g. consumers) are indeed able to assess the creativity of advertising and that these evaluations have impact on their attitude towards the advertisement and the brand (Dahlén, Rosengren, and Törn, 2008; West, Kover, and Caruana, 2008). However, this literature has not systematically matched different audiences' assessments with advertising effectiveness. If consumers are able and inclined to assess and consequently reward advertising creativity, it becomes vital to understand how they make their assessments. Furthermore, it would be particularly interesting to match consumers' assessments with those of advertising professionals in order to compare and evaluate existing research on how advertising creativity might work.

What's in Advertising Creativity

Knowledge about how to systematically plan for advertising creativity seems to be lacking in the advertising industry (Nyilasy and Reid, 2009a), and there seems to be a gap between what researchers and advertising professionals know and what they believe (Nyilasy and Reid, 2009a). Although creativity is a valuable subject matter for advertising, the ways in which it can be operationalized are not obvious (Sasser and Koslow, 2008; West, Kover, and Caruana, 2008). Many of the positive effects of creative advertising have been measured and explained in terms of the combination of divergent, but relevant, content that is attributed to creative advertising (e.g., Smith et al., 2008; Yang and Smith, 2009). Still, research shows that there may be other factors that might explain creativity (West, Kover, and Caruana, 2008). Factors such as craftsmanship or humor might also be included in assessing of creative advertising (West, Kover, and Caruana, 2008). To date, no study has tested these dimensions with consumers and advertising professionals assessment of advertising creativity. To fully understand advertising creativity, research needs to take into account what dimensions constitute advertising creativity and how they contribute to the various effects of creative advertising.

Effects of Advertising Creativity

Although creativity has been the focus of the advertising industry for many years, more extensive research on the connection between advertising creativity and measures of advertising effectiveness has only emerged in the last decade (i.e., Ang and Low, 2000; Stone, Besser, and Lewis, 2000; Pieters, Warlop, and Wedel, 2002; Till and Back, 2005; Ang, Lee, and Leong, 2007; Smith, Chen, and Yang, 2008). The focus has been on a information processing theory, which links advertising creativity with communication effectiveness and different hierarchy-of-effects measures (e.g., Smith, Chen, and Yang, 2008). However, Dahlén,

Rosengren, and Törn (2008) used signal theory to show that creative advertisements signaled greater sender effort to the consumer. By partaking in this perspective, by asking the question could creativity signal additional information to the audience?, new insight might be found and developed.

Studies on the effects of advertising creativity have used a traditional hierarchy-of-effects perspective, documenting how creativity influences processing and attitude of the advertisement and the brand. However, advertising creativity research might need to move beyond the traditional communication objective perspective to find new insight in how creativity might work. For example, research has shown that consumers who are exposed to a brand might not only be affecting on how they think about the brand per se but also on how they think themselves (e.g. Fitzsimons, Chartrand, Fitzsimons, 2008). In an experimental setting, Fitzsimons, Chartrand, and Fitzsimons (2008) showed that consumers that were exposed to the logo of Apple, who they perceived the more innovative, compared to an IBM logo Apple logo, the consumers perceived themselves as more innovative and also performed better in an creativity test. Could this also be the case for creative advertising, meaning that it can make consumers more creative themselves?

Creativity has in some cases shown to be a mediator in other fields of advertising research (e.g. Heiser, Sierra, and Torres, 2008). For example Heiser, Sierra, and Torres (2008) explained the positive effect of a cartoon spokesperson in an advertisement in terms of perceptions of advertising creativity. This shows that creativity can serve as a mediator of previously investigated effects. This thesis asks the question if there might be other areas within advertising research that can be explained and extended by investigating the role that advertising creativity might play?

Chapter 3

INTRODUCING THE ARTICLES

In the sections above, I have summarized what is known about advertising creativity today and discussed paths for future research. On the basis of this conceptual understanding and discussion, I will now present my own research in order to explain how this thesis contributes to the understanding of advertising creativity. In this section, I present an overview of the five articles, each of which contributes to how to measure, evaluate, and plan creative advertisements.

The first article develops the understanding on how consumers assess creativity differently than advertising agency professionals (White and Smith, 2001; West, Kover, Caruana, 2008), by testing how both groups weigh the factors divergence, relevance, craftsmanship and humor. The findings highlight that consumers weight relevance, craftsmanship and humor to a higher degree in their assessment of advertising creativity. The second article shows that advertising professionals reason differently when addressing the creativity or the effectiveness of an advertisement. The findings are particular interesting when considering the importance of a common understanding within agencies and between agencies and clients (Hackley, 2003; Stuhlfaut, 2011). The third article takes a new perspective on "creative" and "effective" advertisements by comparing

the effects on the advertised brand for advertisements that have won either a creativity award or an effectiveness award. The findings show that creative advertisements is perceived by consumers to signal more sender effort and expense when compared with "average" and "effective" advertisements, which in turn positively affect brand attitude, interest and word-of-mouth intentions. The fourth article takes an "outside-the-box" perspective on the positive effects of creative advertisements. It shows that creative ads not only benefit the advertised brand but also the media vehicle and those who are exposed to the advertisement. This introduces a new perspective on the effects of creative advertising by measuring effects on other stakeholders. The fifth article links creativity to the emerging literature on the effects of artwork included in marketing tools. By investigating the role of art in advertising, the article shows that by enhancing perceptions of creativity, the inclusion of art can lead to positive effects on the advertised brand.

Methodology

The first step in this research process was to document the researcher perspective on advertising creativity. Thus, a theoretical analysis was first conducted leading to the list of 107 academic articles that I have described earlier. For the empirical studies some specific requirements was set in order to be able to investigate the research questions. As this thesis sets out to test how different audiences perceive advertising creativity, samples from different populations were necessary. Most important was the inclusion of a large consumer and advertising professional sample to enable investigations and comparison of how these two audiences view advertising creativity. These two requirements were the foundation of study 1 and 2, which explore how consumers and advertising professionals think about advertising creativity. Study 3 to 5 are experimental studies used to investigate potential side effects that creativity might have on consumers and media vehicles. Study 6

connects creativity with the emerging field of how artistry in advertising design influence effectiveness. The specifications for all seven studies are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Studies

Study	*Focus*	*Sample*	*Article(s)*
1. Consumer creativity study	Empirical	4,398 consumers	1, 2 and 3
2. Advertising professional creativity study	Empirical	2,201 advertising professionals	1 and 2
3. Side effects of creativity on consumers (1)	Empirical	274 consumers	4
4. Side effects of creativity on consumers (2)	Empirical	129 consumers	4
5. Side effects of creativity on media vehicles	Empirical	121 students	4
6. Creativity and art in advertisements	Empirical	255 students	5

Article 1: What if advertising creativity is for everyone?

Exploring the Perceptions of Consumers versus Practitioners

Authors: Erik Modig and Micael Dahlén

Status: Second-round review in the Journal of Advertising

This study compares how consumers and advertising professionals assess advertising creativity. Studies have shown that consumers and practitioners assess advertising creativity differently (Smith and White, 2001; West, Kover, and Caruana, 2008) however, no study has formally tested these differences. In order to better understand how advertising creativity works, this study compares the differences between consumers' and advertising professionals' assessments of creative advertising by documenting how they weight the underlying factors divergence, relevance, craftsmanship, and humor.

In order to compare these assessments, this article uses a sample of 20 advertisements with various degree of creativity. The study was conducted using an Internet survey, which is similar to the procedure used by Dahlén, Rosengren, and Törn (2008). The consumer sample encompassed a representative cross-section of the working population, which was derived from an Internet survey panel provided by a professional market-research firm. A total of 4,398 consumers participated. To address the advertising professional population, we used a list of e-mail addresses compiled by the national advertising association, which resulted in 2,201 valid responses. All respondents were randomly exposed to one of the 20 stimulus advertisements and then asked to complete a questionnaire, as in Smith and White (2001).

By extending the research about consumers' (e.g., White and Smith, 2001; Dahlén, Rosengren, and Törn, 2008; West, Kover, and Caruana, 2008) and advertising professionals' (e.g., White and Smith, 2001; West et al., 2008) assessments of advertising creativity, this study confirms that consumers are able judges of advertising creativity and that their assessments differ from those of advertising professionals. Significant differences are found between the two samples in terms of the four factors. The findings specifically show that consumers find divergence to be less important when judging creativity. At the same time, consumers are more prone to weight in relevance, craftsmanship, and humor than advertising professionals. These findings add to existing theories on how

consumers and advertising professionals reason about advertising creativity. One explanation for these differences could be that consumers focus less on the "how" of advertising and more on the "what is in it for me" perspective. Consumers might attribute more importance to relevance, humor, and craftsmanship because they view these elements as simple measures of advertising value. These findings suggest a need to revise existing theories and form new theories that take consumers' assessments into account.

In relation to advertising planning, the investigation suggests that both consumers and advertising professionals appreciate advertising creativity, but that they adopt two different perspectives on this mutual goal. In this respect, consumers might not only function as a resource for pre-tests of the overall, explicit level of creativity in an advertisement before it leaves the drawing table, but they might also offer inspiration for and indications of those aspects of creativity that they find most important. To this end, they may, as a target group, be even better equipped than the professionals to provide input on dimensions of creativity such as humor, craftsmanship and relevance.

Article 2: Does it matter what you look for?

What practitioners see in "creative" versus "effective" advertisements

Authors: Erik Modig and Micael Dahlén

Status: First-round review in the International Journal of Advertising

This paper investigates how advertising professionals assess advertising creativity compared to advertising effectiveness by posing the question:

Does it matter whether agencies aim for creativity or effectiveness when producing an advertisement? On the one hand, one would not expect a focus on creativity or effectiveness to matter, as most advertising literature to date merges the two. For example, several authors suggest that effectiveness is invariably the result of creativity (Kover, 1995; Nyilasy and Read, 2009a). On the other hand, the existence of separate awards for creativity and effectiveness in many markets suggests that the outcomes of creativity-based work and effectiveness-based work differ in practice.

The article extends the findings and the vocabulary found in the large body of research on advertising professionals' assessments of advertising creativity (e.g., White and Smith, 2001; Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan, 2003; West, Kover, and Caruana, 2008) to include advertising professionals' assessments of advertising effectiveness. With few exceptions (Kover, 1995; Nyilasy and Read, 2009a, 2009b), assessments of advertising effectiveness have been neglected in previous research. Therefore, this paper furthers the understanding of advertising effectiveness and the ways in which advertising works by detailing the experience and tacit knowledge that advertising professionals share.

The article also uses data from study three on advertising professionals and compares the ratings on advertising creativity and effectiveness with those of the factors divergence, relevance, craftsmanship and humor for 20 real advertisements.

The findings show that what advertising professionals are looking for affects their perceptions of advertisements. Advertising professionals rate advertisements differently on the four sub-dimensions divergence, relevance, craftsmanship and humor depending on whether they are asked to assess advertising creativity or advertising effectiveness. The results indicate that the trend in the advertising literature to merge the two concepts might be misleading. Advertising literature should rather treat creativity and effectiveness as separate constructs. Although

research finds that advertising effectiveness is closely linked to creativity, different factors contribute to an advertisement's effects in the minds of the advertising professionals. This paper contributes to a deeper understanding of these differences.

The understanding of the differences between different judges may also enhance the advertisement planning process by highlighting different perspectives and common ground both within agencies (e.g., between "creatives" and "strategists"), and between agencies and clients. This could be of particular importance as research show that the communication between agencies and clients are a reoccurring issue for conflict and ineffectiveness (Hackley, 2003; Hackley and Kover, 2007; Stewart, Cheng, and Wan, 2008).

Article 3: Consumer-perceived signals of "creative" versus "efficient" advertising

Investigating the roles of expense and effort

Authors: Erik Modig, Micael Dahlén and Jonas Colliander

Status: Second-round review in the International Journal of Advertising

This paper takes a broader perspective on advertising creativity than articles one and two by investigating whether creative advertising can have positive effects on consumer perceptions of a brand and whether "too efficient" advertising can have negative effects on consumer perceptions of a brand. By using marketing signal theory (e.g., Dahlén, Rosengren, and Törn, 2008; Kirmani and Rao, 2000; Whysall, 2005)

this paper examines whether consumers make inferences about brands not only on the basis of *what* is explicitly communicated but also on the basis of *how* the message is communicated. More specifically, the paper hypothesizes that high (low) perceived advertising expense and effort signal positive (negative) properties about the brand to consumers.

The hypotheses are tested on the data from study one. However, it focuses on three different types of the sampled advertisements: creativity-award-winning, effectiveness-award-winning and non-award-winning advertisements. The results show that highly creative advertising might have positive effects on brand attitude, brand interest, and brand word-of-mouth, while efficient advertising might have corresponding negative effects. We find that advertisements with higher-than-average perceived expense and effort have a positive effect on consumer evaluations and that advertisements with lower-than-average perceived expense have a negative effect. This research contributes to the signal theory perspective on advertising creativity and shows that creativity signal both higher perceived sender effort and expense.

In this regard, advertisers should be aware of the signals that they send to consumers and carefully consider the fact that *how* advertising communicates can have both positive and negative effects on consumer perceptions of a brand. This suggests that the traditional division between "creative" and "effective" advertising should be reassessed, and that consumer perceptions of expense and effort could add important input for advertising effectiveness measurements.

Article 4: Think Outside the Ad

Can Advertising Creativity Benefit More than the Sender?

Authors: Sara Rosengren, Micael Dahlén, and Erik Modig

Status: Second-round review in the Journal of Advertising

This paper take a "think-outside-the-box" approach to the effects of advertising creativity in order to find effects that might have been neglected by the previous dominated communication objectives perspective on the effects of advertising creativity. The article pose the question "Can advertising creativity benefit more than the sender?". By referencing to the literature on consumer creativity the article test whether advertising creativity might benefit both consumers and the media vehicles in which the advertisements are placed. More specifically, the findings show that creative advertising can make consumers who are exposed to the advertising more creative and increase the perceived value of the advertising's media context.

The questions are tested in three experimental studies. The first study exposed consumers to more versus less creative ads and showed that the consumers who were exposed to the creative advertisement performed better in a standard test of creative ability. The reasoning builds on, and contributes to, two bodies of research. First, it shows that the exposure of a more creative advertising lead to increased consumer processing of the advertisement (e.g., Baack, Wilson, and Till, 2008; Smith, Chen, and Yang, 2008) and that a heightened level of processing can impact favorably on consumer creativity (e.g., Burrought and Mick, 2004; Dahl and Moreau, 2002, 2007). Second, the study show that the exposure to creative advertising also heightened the perceived level of own creativity

which in turn impact on actual creativity as it makes the consumer more prone to take a creative perspective (e.g., Tiernay and Farmer, 2002. 2011). The effects were then confirmed in a follow up study. The third study manipulates the advertising creativity in a magazine and showed that enhanced creativity favorably effects consumer-perceived value of the media context.

These three studies find that creatively "thinking outside the box" in advertising can give us additional insight on how advertising creativity might be valuable for other stakeholders than the advertiser. The findings add to existing knowledge by showing that advertising creativity may impact consumers in ways that are beneficial not only to senders but to consumers as well. Advertisers could use this finding as an inspiration to explore new potential positive effects on consumers.

Article 5: Advertising artistry and brand evaluation

Can art in advertisements increase perceived creativity and luxury and enhance advertising effectiveness?

Author: Erik Modig

Status: First-round review in the Journal of Marketing Communication

This article takes a new perspective on advertising creativity and links it to the literature about artistry in advertising design. It shows that perceptions of creativity explain the positive effects on brand evaluation

found when images of artworks are added to an advertisement. The findings bridge the two streams of research about artwork in advertising and advertising creativity. By answering the question: How does the presence of visual art influence the way consumers view an advertisement?, this article introduces advertising creativity to another stream of research.

Research on the potentially positive effects of the inclusion of art on consumer perceptions of the advertised brand is scarce, and the only studies explain the positive effect on brand evaluation by enhances perceptions of luxury (Hagtvedt and Patrick 2008a and 2008b). This article adds to this stream of research by showing that perceptions of creativity mediate the positive impact on brand attitude, interest and perceived brand ability.

The study was conducted by included images with different level of artistry in an identical advertisement. The study was distributed to undergraduate students at a large university in a west European country. Each respondent was asked to help evaluate an advertisement's design for the chosen brand. They were provided with a booklet containing one of the five advertisements as well as the questionnaire. The respondents were not made aware of the existence of five different versions of the advertisement or the purpose of the study. In total, 255 completed questionnaires were collected.

The article extends the research on advertising creativity and on artistry in advertising imagery. First it shows that the inclusion of an artwork in an advertisement can influence perceptions of creativity. This corresponds to previous research on how advertising professionals can achieve advertising creativity (e.g., Goldenberg, Mazursky, and Solomon, 1999; Goldenberg and Mazursky, 2008). Second, this paper extends the understanding of how the level of artistry in advertising imagery influence brand evaluation by showing that perceptions of advertising creativity are a mediator of the effects.

Chapter 4

DISCUSSION

The aim of this thesis was to contribute to the understanding of creativity within advertising. Specifically, this thesis has addressed the issues of who should judge advertising creativity, how that creativity should be measured, and the effects on marketing objectives of such creativity. This thesis contributes to existing theories about advertising planning and effectiveness by extending prior research (e.g. Sasser and Koslow, 2008; Nyilasy and Reid, 2009a). By presenting the two largest studies to date on consumers' and advertising professionals' perceptions of advertising creativity, this thesis offers confirmation of existing theories and new insights about how advertising creativity works. It also offers new, "creative" perspectives, which hopefully highlight inspiring directions for future research, not only with regard to advertising creativity but also in relation to the broader field of advertising effectiveness research.

In the following section, I discuss how this thesis contributes to advertising research and to advertising practice. Even though each of the five articles included in this thesis contributes to a specific stream of research, this discussion focuses on their contributions to the understanding of advertising creativity as a whole and how that creativity

correlates with advertising effectiveness. For more information on specific studies and their findings, please see the individual articles.

Contribution to Advertising Research

Even though some researchers view creativity as the heart of advertising production, several facets of creativity's functions have not been addressed. In fact, academics have repeatedly asked for more research on advertising creativity (White, 1972; Zinkhan, 1993; Sasser and Koslow, 2008). This thesis answers these calls and seeks to contribute to this growing stream of research.

Synthesizing Advertising Creativity Research

The starting point of my thesis reviews 107 academic articles about advertising creativity. Although every article cannot be offered the space it needs or might deserve in any literature review (Hart, 1999), I have sought to present a detailed overview of research about advertising creativity to date. My literature review is relevant since researchers have stated that much research in the field lacks an understanding of previous knowledge, and hence cumulative progress on the issue of Advertising Creativity has been unnecessarily slow (Sasser and Koslow, 2008). My review extends that of Sasser and Koslow (2008) by including 41 additional articles. Especially this thesis offers a discussion of the 30 most recent article published between 2008 and 2012, which is important given the rapid expansion of the field. Overall, the literature review indicate that the extant research have primarily focused on the production side of advertising creativity by answering to questions regarding how advertising agencies should organize themselves, how individuals can become creative, and which processes can be used to produce more creative advertisements. On the other hand, my review

highlights a dearth of studies on the response-oriented side of advertising creativity. Hence, the review highlights some gaps in the literature that I have sought to fill.

Judges of advertising creativity

This thesis adds to the growing number of articles that show that consumers are able and inclined to assess the overall level of creativity within an advertisement (Dahlén, Rosengren, and Törn, 2008). In so doing it answers to calls for more studies on consumer response to advertising (Bernardin and Kemp-Robertson, 2008; Sasser and Koslow, 2008). This thesis shows that consumers are indeed able to assess the creativity of an advertisement and that they rate effectiveness higher for advertisements they judge as creative. This finding add to previous research that shows that advertising professionals' and students' assessments of creativity influence perceived advertising effectiveness (e.g., Smith, Chen and Yang, 2008; Dahlén Rosengren, and Törn, 2008). However, this research show that even though consumers value creativity in the same sense as advertising professionals they need not judge the level of creativity equally. This suggest that consumer opinion are important when evaluating advertising creativity.

By quantitatively matching consumers' assessments with those of advertising professionals I have sought to extend the literature that compares consumers' and advertising professionals' perspectives on advertising creativity (White and Smith, 2001; Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan, 2003; West, Kover, and Caruana, 2008), as well as the literature on advertising in general (Nyalisy and Reid, 2009a).

Definition of advertising creativity

One aim with this thesis was to contribute to the knowledge about how we can and should measure advertising creativity. By quantifying the differences in advertising professionals' and consumers' assessments, this thesis contributes to this research stream about how audiences define and assess advertising creativity (e.g. Smith and Yang, 2004; Smith et al., 2007; Kim, Han, and Yoon, 2010). The findings suggest a broader perspective on creativity is needed in the field, given to the currently predominating focus on 'divergence' and 'relevance' as the sole factors important for creativity. Specifically, my studies show that when it comes to defining advertising creativity, taking into account the consumer perspective add value to current research. This validates previous findings that show that consumers use additional factors in their definitions of creativity, compared to professional advertisers (West, Kover, and Caruana, 2008; Kim, Han, and Yoon, 2010). As there seems to be a lack of consensus within the advertising industry on how consumers assess advertising creativity, the findings in my thesis may help to serve as a bridge between the differences between 'the professionals' definition' and 'the consumers' definition' of advertising creativity (Kover, Goldberg, and James, 1995; El-Murad and West, 2004; Nyilasy and Reid, 2009a). My findings show that, in comparison to advertising professionals, consumers view divergence as less important, while 'relevance', 'humor', and 'well-craftiness' as relatively more important dimensions of creativity. This implies that different groups define advertising creativity by adopting a "what's in it for me" perspective that reflects their own position. As a result, a definition of advertising creativity must take the specific role of the audience and its goals into account.

A result of my findings is that advertising creativity would benefit from adapting the socio-cognitive of creativity as 'context specific' (Amabile, 1997). Consequently, the goals and needs of the sampled advertisements and respondents need to be considered when analyzing data. As shown

in Article 1, consumers and advertising professionals use different strategies to assess creativity depending on which advertisement they evaluate. This finding raises the question of whether creativity can be defined in the sense of a common definition relevant to all individuals and advertisements. My conclusion from this research suggests that there can be no such unified definition of creativity, as each individual makes his or her own subjective judgment, a judgment that can also differ depending on the situation or culture (compare to Kim, Han, and Yoon, 2010). This finding questions the notion found in previous research that creativity can always be defined as something 'divergent' and 'relevant' (e.g. Smith and Yang, 2004; Smith et al., 2007; Smith, Chen and Yang, 2008). Theories adopting too narrow a definition of creativity will not fulfill the potential of creativity in advertising. Notably, however, the four factors presented in Articles 1 and 2 can serve as a tool for predicting the level of creativity, even though all aspects need not be significant in all situations. This finding both revises and re-formulates extant theories on assessments of advertising creativity.

Effects of Advertising Creativity

This thesis contributes to the understanding of advertising effectiveness in three ways. First, it uses a signal theory perspective on advertising creativity and shows that consumers' perceptions of *how* advertising messages are conveyed impact the effectiveness of those messages. Article 3 shows that advertising creativity signals above-average sender expense and sender effort, which in turn favorably impact brand attitudes, brand interest, and brand WOM intentions. This shows that advertising creativity might not only enhance persuasion but also send signals about the brand. By contrasting above-average creative advertisements with "effective" advertisements that signaled below-average sender expense, my research challenges the prevailing distinction between creative and effective advertising. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first study

to address this issue using a large-scale quantitative study involving real brands. As such, my research furthers the research seeking to link advertising creativity with signal theory (as Dahlén, Rosengren, and Törn, 2008), and thus contributes to the understanding of how consumers process creative advertisements. Surely, more research is needed about how advertising really works and what signals that are sent to consumers through more or less creative advertising.

Second, Article 4 takes an "out-of-the-box" perspective on the effects of advertising creativity. It moves beyond the traditional hierarchy of effects to show that creative advertisements can enhance both perceptions of the advertising medium and the creativity of the viewer. By examining effects that are not connected with the advertised product and brand, this research shows that creativity might benefit more than the sender. The findings that creative advertisements also affect the medium and the viewer, suggest that additional stakeholders, such as media owners (publishing houses and TV stations), should be included in theories on the effectiveness of advertising creativity.

Third, Article 5 connects creativity with research on art infusion, as it shows that creativity mediates the positive effect the inclusion of art in advertisements can have on brand evaluation. This research therefore connects advertising creativity with a new stream of research and shows that perceptions of creativity might play a role in explaining other phenomena in marketing literature. This research corresponds with signal theory in the sense that the presence of art signal creativity, which in turn affect brand evaluation. Future research should investiage other advertising elements that might signal creativity and thus contribute to the overall perception of creativity. Such an investigation would help researchers better understand how specific advertising elements can influence advertising creativity.

Contribution to Advertising Practice

Creativity as an advertising strategy

Creativity has the ability to enhance processing of an advertisement, which in turn can result in a more elaborate cognitive response in the form of stronger brand recall and an improved understanding of the advertising message (e.g., Smith et al., 2008; Yang and Smith, 2009). Through a unique combination of divergent, relevant, well-crafted and humorous content, creative advertising can offer value to the consumer, which translates into more favorable attitudes towards the advertisement and the advertised brand. These attitudes have been shown to have an impact on purchase intentions. Hence, creative advertisements has the potential to impact sales both directly via enhanced persuasion and indirectly via enhanced brand attitudes. Therefore, advertisers should pursue a creative strategy in cases where enhanced brand attitude can be translated into increased sales.

As consumers become more advertising savvy, traditional methods of persuasion might become less efficient. Creative advertising might therefore be of extra interest, as it can benefit advertisers by offering real value to consumers as well as a chance to communicate with consumers without the risk of triggering persuasion knowledge. By offering creative advertisements, brands provide real value to consumers in exchange for their attention.

Using the "right" judge of advertising creativity

This thesis shows that although consumers' and advertising professionals' judgments of creativity work in the same way – there is a positive relationship between their creativity assessments and advertising

effectiveness – these two groups differ in terms of the importance they attribute to various factors, including divergence, relevance, craftsmanship and humor. Advertisers may therefore be well advised to include consumers in the planning process to a higher degree and welcome their opinions on the development of creative advertisements. Such activities might be of specific interest in relation to relevance, craftsmanship and humor in advertising, as consumers seem more likely to value these dimensions of advertising creativity.

A common language for advertising creativity

Advertising agencies seem to have no formalized techniques or definitions for judging advertising creativity (El-Murad and West, 2004). Clients are dependent on the judgments of the individuals who manage their accounts and the codes used by specific creatives (Stuhlfaut, 2011). An improved, unified understanding of creativity might guarantee a higher level of creative output. The results of my research suggest that agencies would benefit from developing and implementing a common understanding of creativity and techniques for its measurement on the basis of current research. This thesis might serve as an initial step towards such a definition.

Who can benefit from advertising creativity?

As shown above, advertisers and brand managers have much to win from considering the level of creativity in their advertising. Advertisers can directly influence the impact of their advertisement by increasing the level of creativity. Brand managers can use creative advertising as a route to enhance brand attitudes among consumers, which in turn should result in increased sales.

As shown in article four, advertising creativity is not only beneficial for the advertised brand but also for the individuals in the audience, as such creativity can rub off on the audience. Advertising creativity is therefore not only a mission for advertisers – it is also relevant on a macro level for media partners, individuals and the advertising industry. Creativity can shift advertising from an "unavoidable evil" to content that offers value to the individual consumer. As this might enhance society's general attitude towards advertising, creativity should be a goal for the entire advertising industry in relation to refurbishing its somewhat tarnished reputation. In addition, creativity can enable media owners to offer additional value to their readers. This might allow advertising to turn from a necessary source of revenue into a strategic tool that can be used to offer value to the reader and, in the long run, to increase the value of the media outlet.

Limitations

In this thesis I have aimed at making a contribution to the academic literature on advertising creativity. The thesis is not a comprehensive guide about how to successful plan creative advertising, but one attempt to help researchers and professionals in approving advertising theories and practice. Given this aim and scope I have had to make certain choices regarding methods and perspectives. These choices come with limitations and implications on my results and contribution. Each article has its own specific limitations, which is stated in each article. In the following section I will highlight certain overall limitations with the research methods employed.

One limitation is that these studies are carried out in a western European country and therefore dependent on specific cultural aspects from this part of the world. It might not be the case that creativity is assessed in a similar way in other parts of the world. Further, the implementation and

use of creativity within the advertising industry might be different across various nations and cultures, which put a limit on the external validity of the studies presented. This needs to be taken into account when considering the suggestions and implications for management in this thesis.

Besides these limitations in external validity, there is an obvious methodological limitation in how we treat creativity as a dichotomous variable in some of the studies. As we can observe in article 1 there are levels of creativity, which suggest that creativity is more nuanced than a 'yes' or 'no' variable. By treating creativity as a yes or no variable we do not control for variance or any specific level of creativity in the tests. When we test a more versus a less creative advertisement we have little knowledge about how high or low these measures are, compared to "normal" advertisements. Future research should test how different levels of "high" versus "low" creative advertising might affect different measures of effectiveness.

Another methodological limitation is the fact that we do not perform any follow up studies. Without repetition of studies it is hard to say that the effects that are discussed in this thesis will be consistent over time or how long they will endure. Even though we suggest that creative advertising has an impact in the long run, no study to date has measured the long-term impact of advertising creativity on for example brand equity and sales. Future research should do several studies over a longer time period in order to measure the effects of creativity over time.

Another limitation is that we do not compare the relative effect of creativity compared to other advertising strategies. Even though advertising professionals and research suggest that creativity is one of the most powerful tools to outperform competition we do not control for that in these experiments. This might be a goal for future studies about advertising creativity in order to answer the question not only that advertising creativity matters, but if it matters the most.

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