

2002

The World Wide Web as a vehicle for advertising movies to college students: an exploratory study

Xiaoge Hu

Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_theses



Part of the [Mass Communication Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Hu, Xiaoge, "The World Wide Web as a vehicle for advertising movies to college students: an exploratory study" (2002). *LSU Master's Theses*. 1060.

https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_theses/1060

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at LSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in LSU Master's Theses by an authorized graduate school editor of LSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact gradetd@lsu.edu.

**THE WORLD WIDE WEB AS A VEHICLE FOR ADVERTISING
MOVIES TO COLLEGE STUDENTS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY**

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the degree
Master of Mass Communication

in

The Manship School of Mass Communication

by

Xiaoge Hu

B.A., Xiangtan University of China, 1997

December 2002

© Copyright 2002
Xiaoge Hu
All rights reserved

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am most indebted to Dr. Xigen Li, my thesis chair, for his inspiration in completing this thesis, and his excellent guidance and constant support during the course of this research. Dr. Li's insightful advice proved invaluable in this study.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank the members of the advisory committee, Dr. Richard Alan Nelson and Dr. Alan D. Fletcher, for proofreading my thesis and providing helpful suggestions, constant support and enormous patience.

I also owe special thanks to my parents for their unceasing love, cultivation and confidence in me. Xie Xie.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
LIST OF TABLES.....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	vii
ABSTRACT.....	viii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE VIEW.....	4
Traditional Media and New Media.....	4
Movie Advertising in Different Media.....	9
The Web as an Advertising and Promotional Medium.....	9
The Effectiveness of Internet Advertising Compared with TV Advertising	11
The Potential Value of Advertising on the Web	16
Movie Online Advertising and Movie Promotion Websites	19
Uses and Gratifications.....	21
Summary.....	23
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH QUESTIONS	24
CHAPTER 4: METHOD.....	26
Key Concepts and Operational Definitions.....	26
Sample	27
Questionnaire Development.....	28
Measurement Validity	29
Data Analysis	30
CHAPTER 5: RESULTS	31
Surfing Online Versus Watching TV	31
Which Advertising Attracts People to See a New Movie	33
Actions before Going to the Cinema	33
Attractiveness of Movie Promotion Web Page Activities	35
Motives for Surfing Movie Promotion Websites before Going to a New Movie	36
CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION	38
Usages of Television and the Internet.....	38
Media Usage Patterns for Low Involvement Movie Choices.....	38
Affinity for Advertising	39
What Works on Movie Promotion Websites	40
Motivational Factors for Using Movie Promotion Websites	42

Gratification Factors.....	43
Data and Design Limitations.....	43
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS	46
REFERENCES	48
APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE	56
VITA.....	59

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Means of Different Motives For Surfing Movie Promotion Websites Before Going to See a New Movie.....	37
--	-----------

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Time Spent Online vs. Watching TV.....	31
Figure 2: Change of Usage of Internet vs. TV Compared to Last Year.....	32
Figure 3: Persuasive Degrees of Different Movie Advertising Formats.....	34
Figure 4: Comparison of Different Actions Before Going to the Cinema.....	35
Figure 5: Attractiveness of Different Movie Promotion Website Devices.....	36

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to explore the World Wide Web as a vehicle for advertising movies to college students. Through a survey of LSU students, this study finds that online promotions as vehicles for advertising movies have great potential. Movie promotion websites are rated the second most effective form of movie advertising after television.

The study found that people surf movie promotion websites mainly for movie show times, movie plot and cast information to compare film choices, and movie ticket purchases. The huge amount of data available and the 24/7 access to the internet is an important advantage. However, even though the World Wide Web is proving an excellent media vehicle for movie advertising, it is still too early to determine whether or not it will supplant TV advertising of movies in the near future.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The importance of the World Wide Web as an advertising medium has been rapidly gaining ground in recent years. It has recently been suggested (Ducoffe, Sandler, and Secunda, 1996) that “continuing developments in the area of new media technology represent the most important influence on the future of the advertising industry over the next 10 to 15 years.” The tremendous growth of the internet and the World Wide Web in recent years supports this view. This growth is of particular significance to the advertising industry as advertiser-supported Websites have proliferated on the internet (Hoffman, Novak, and Chatterjee, 1995).

Driven by big gains in PC penetration and Web usage, by 2005, online advertising will be an \$18.8 billion market in the United States, up from \$7.9 billion in 2001, according to GartnerG2, a research service from Gartner, Inc (January 4, 2002). No other internet feature offers as much versatility as the web. The web’s technology allows businesses to use it for several purposes: as an information retrieval source, as a sales tool, as a distribution channel, and as a customer support tool (Sandberg, 1998; Peterson, Balasubramanian, and Bronnenberg, 1997).

Concurrently to sponsoring websites through advertising, many companies are also setting up their own websites as an alternative way to reach consumers. The companies wish to promote their image, provide product information to their

visitors, promote awareness about the company's current and/or new products, or sell their products directly on the web.

Nevertheless, advertising expenditures on the web are currently small relative to those for standard media. For example, 1995 web expenditures have been estimated at 312 millions of dollars for the web versus 38.1 billions for the television medium (Jupiter Communications, 1996). However, the astonishing growth of web users in recent years, the rapidly increasing commitments by numerous companies to establish a presence on the web, as well as the growing proportion of overall company advertising budgets dedicated to web advertising, all suggest a formidable potential for web-based advertising in the years to come. In 1995, the number of ad-bearing sites on the web was fifty times greater than it was two years before (CASIE report, 1995).

The trend has been growing for movie studios to dedicate websites to the promotion of their forthcoming films. The creation of a website potentially serves as a source of information about the film (e.g., plot, stars, trailers, etc.). In addition, it may serve to induce awareness of a new film, to enhance the site visitors' intentions to see a film, and consequently increases the likelihood of ticket purchase upon opening. Moreover, after a film's release, the website may serve to maintain the awareness and interest of filmgoers during the film's box-office run (Fred Zufryden, 2000).

There are numerous films released each year, all fighting for available screens. This has led to a trend characterized by substantially increased advertising expenditures to cut through the clutter and marketing costs for new

films that are running out of control (Eller, 1996). In fact, it has been reported that marketing costs for domestic movie releases have more than quadrupled in the last 15 years and averaged nearly \$18 million dollars per film in 1995. These staggering figures have led some to question whether studios need to spend in advertising and marketing as much as they do (Eller, 1996).

In this thesis, the researcher tries to explore users' internet usage and TV usage compared to last year, to find out which movie advertising is more likely to attract people to see a movie, and explore the main reasons why people surf movie promotion websites.

In order to analyze the World Wide Web as an advertising vehicle for movie, the researcher reviewed the past-published literature on the replacement of new media over the old media, the internet as an advertising vehicle, the effectiveness of internet advertising compared with TV, the potential value of advertising on the web, and gratification resulting from advertising.

This thesis mainly seeks to find out which form of advertising is more likely to prompt people to see a movie and the main reasons why people surf movie promotion websites.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Traditional Media and New Media

The internet is an information infrastructure comprised of thousands of computers connected by thousands of paths--a global network of networks, or a Metanetwork (Carr and Snyder, 1997, p. 368). More specifically the internet is a loosely configured web of corporate, educational and research computer networks around the world (Tetzeli, 1994). The internet supports local, regional, national, and international communications and uses as varied as its constituents. Few technologies have spread as quickly, or become so widely used, as computers and the internet. These information technologies are rapidly becoming common fixtures of modern social and economic life, opening opportunities and new avenues for people. Once reserved network now also acts as a conduit of information for private business and personal use for the military, then scientists, the government, and universities, this international computer. Every sort of business and subject area can be found somewhere on the internet.

One of the most frequently heard predictions is that television as we know it today will soon be largely replaced by computer-based activities, such as surfing the web (Negroponte, 1995). Even those who do not think television will disappear soon point to data that indicate television usage among PC users is already declining and predict large reductions in TV usage (Coffey and Stipp, 1997). Thus, the discussion about the relationship between the traditional mass

media and the new digital media has been dominated by this one aspect--the usage of computer and internet will reduce the TV viewing.

The web was founded for government and educational use, so it is no surprise that its early adopters were students, professors, and scientists (Korgaonkar and Wolin, 1999). Given the educational emphasis in its early years, commercial activity was originally frowned upon (Strangelove, 1993). Today, a great variety of people have found that they could use the web for reasons beyond educational information retrieval. This growth reflects the fact that the web users of today are not limited to the professors, students, and scientists of the early days.

Numerous surveys document more people are joining "the internet crowd." One university analysis states that the general demographics of the web's user population moved closer to the characteristics of the general population for the first time (Georgia Tech Graphic, Visualization, and Usability Center, October 1998). Now nearly one in four "netizens" has a high-speed connection, according to new survey data released recently by Gartner Dataquest (2001). This means, that of the 65 million U.S. households that now actively use the internet, about 24% are using high-speed services such as cable modems and DSL. Between the end of 2000 and June 2001, 8.4 million new internet users have gone online (Thorsberg, 2001). That's a 15% increase in just over half a year.

Today some estimates place nearly half of the entire adult population of the United States online (Computer Industry Almanac, Inc., March 21, 2002). The *UCLA Internet Report* (November 29, 2001) survey of 2,000 households also provides a trove of information about how Americans interact with their

computers. This indicates more than 72% of Americans have some form of access to the internet, up from 67% in 2000. Of those not yet on-line, 44.4% expect to get connected in the next 12 months. Asked to rate the internet's importance as a source of information, more than 90% said it is moderately to extremely important. The study also reports 54% of Americans now use the internet. There is also a trend for young people to be over represented on the web. Fully 75% of 14-17 year-olds and 65% of 10-13 year-olds now use the internet in this country. The cable television industry had a similar demographic profile in the early 1980s. If that is an indicator, the internet will continue to be part of the fabric of our lives in years to come (see, for example, National Telecommunications and Information Administration and the Economics and Statistics Administration, February 2002).

There are many research studies exploring use of the internet and the impact that usage has on television viewing. In fact, internet users are turning their backs on the traditional media (25% report a decrease in TV use) (McKillen, 2002). According to Forrester Research, Inc. (2002), 10% of people with three or more years of web experience show an active decrease in their TV use; just 12% of people with limited or no web experience have decreased their TV viewing. Fully 15% of people who have broadband at home have shown decreases in TV time (compare to 9% of people who don't have broadband at home with decreased TV use). Additional evidence is found in Edison Media Research's latest data. It is known that video streaming downloads are equally distributed among the most experienced internet users (in all age groups from 12- to 54-year-

olds). These individuals are even more likely to click on web advertising and make online purchases (Edison Media Research, January 2001).

It is stunning how, in a very short period of time, the internet has become such a necessity for a large percentage of U.S. households. One-third of Americans would give up TV if forced to choose between at-home internet access and television. Among those who watch or listen to streaming media, nearly half would forsake their televisions to keep internet access. Half of younger Americans (age 12 to 24) say they would give up their TVs in order to keep their home internet access (Gilbert, 2001).

All the above reports support the prediction that television will soon be largely replaced by computer-based activities. However, Steve Coffey and Horst Stipp (1997) believe that the existing data on the impact of computer use on television use are quite limited and that there isn't any good evidence for a measurable decline in television usage as a result of PC activity today. Coffey and Stipp's (1997) study focuses on the interactions between the usage of the traditional and the new electronic media, instead of the replacement of traditional media by the new media. The data of Coffey and Stipp's study indicate that there is no compelling evidence suggesting PC users will give up or drastically curtail TV usage in the near future. Also the data suggest that, overwhelmingly, PC users are interested in the new media as well as television. They use the various media because they derive different benefits from them, but there are also connection points. Their data suggest that television and PC use are evolving in a manner that is quite different from the "PCs will replace TV" scenario. Instead of replacement,

the data show interactions between the media in which television often impacts PC activity and internet use. Coffey and Stiff's research suggests that speculations about the disappearance of television should be dismissed and that content providers and advertisers should further explore the evolving interactions between the media.

Promotions and advertising, particularly those on television, appear to be very powerful bridges between these media. The data show how TV promotions can drive web traffic. They suspect that commercials can do the same thing encouraging those who are interested to go to the web and find out more about the product they are considering buying. Thus, they recommend research exploring that issue and believe that the interconnections between these media are of great importance for content providers and advertisers.

As time goes by, the internet business community has become an extremely successful and profitable industry. The internet's present development is like that of the cable television industry in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Advertising agencies now adopt the internet into their everyday planning. There are a variety of articles on the tremendous growth of the internet found in many publications, including the prestigious *Journal of Advertising Research*, which explore the prospects and effectiveness of the internet as an advertising medium. The "new advertising" seeks to make a direct connection, and many advertisers and marketers view the internet as the best means to that end. Supporting this assumption is research that estimates the internet will capture 50 million users in five years. Interestingly, television took 13 years and radio 38 years to reach this

level of market penetration (Wilcox, 1999). It may be too early to tell if the internet will ever become a wildly successful advertising medium, but there is certainly evidence showing the web quickly has becoming an important communications medium and a necessary productivity tool (McKillen, 2002).

Movie Advertising in Different Media

Of newspapers, radio, and television, the latter has been rated as the most influential advertising medium in affecting attendance decisions. Of these three media, television is closest in form and content to the theatrical trailers. Radio can create an enticing aural ambience that encourages listeners to visualize scenes. Radio may be the best medium for selling musicals and music-oriented movies, because until recently its high fidelity sound could not be duplicated by TV. Unlike radio and TV messages, the newspaper message is not transitory; its effectiveness does not depend on the audience's strict attention at the moment of presentation. What's more, newspapers provide essential information about show times and locations (Austin, 1989). The World Wide Web assembles many of the advantage of the newspapers, radio and television mentioned above and seems to be an ideal medium for movie advertising. But will movie promotion websites become the most influential advertising format for prompting people to see a movie?

The Web as an Advertising and Promotional Medium

Advertising on the web began in 1994 when the first commercially available browser was introduced and the first banner advertisements were sold. The World Wide Web, as a communications medium, is fundamentally different

from television. Audience members have much more control over exposure to material on the web than they do over television. They can actively choose which website they wish to visit and when they wish to visit it, while off-web audience members are at the mercy of media schedules (Gallagher, 2001).

More and more companies are setting up their own websites to advertise and promote their products. The internet is potentially an attractive advertising medium. It provides product information to its visitors, promotes awareness about the company's current and/or new products, or sells its products directly on the web. Internet advertising has now reached the point at which many companies are considering it as being a viable alternative to traditional media. Many advertisers have already built the internet into their media mix. Driven by big gains in PC penetration and web usage, web/online advertising expenditures are predicted to reach \$7.1 billion by 2002.

In their study of leading advertising executives, Ducoffe, Sandler, and Secunda (1996) report that continuing developments in the area of new media technology are thought to represent the most important influence on the future of the advertising industry over the next 10 to 15 years. Executives expect new media technology to lead to vast increases in the supply of media content and a transformation in the relationship among various media and consumers.

As networks proliferate, audiences will increasingly segment themselves into smaller groups offering advertisers greater ability to target interested prospects. There are approximately 2 billion moviegoers each year (Alaska Grafix Onscreen Advertising (2002) and Moviefone hosted 2.7 million monthly unique

visitors to *Moviefone.com* (Moviefone, 2002). There are many other websites targeted to movie goers, such as *movieweb.com*, *Hollywood.com/movies*, etc. providing millions of moviegoers each week with a complete, free directory of movies, show times, theater locations, the ability to purchase tickets in advance, and original movie content, news and reviews.

From the survey done by America Online, the internet outranks magazines and radio as a source of movie information for AOL members. While 45% of those surveyed said they look on the internet, 44% said they turn to magazines and 36% listened to the radio for movie information. AOL did not report how many checked the local newspaper, likely the top source of information, or relied on TV commercials for movie details (Hillebrand, 1999).

The Effectiveness of Internet Advertising Compared with TV Advertising

The web is a hypertext medium. Unlike mass media such as television, radio, newspapers, magazines, and outdoor billboards, the multimedia capacity of hypertext permits the use of text, graphics, animation, video, and sound, alone or in any combination. The use of multiple modes of communication has the potential to increase effectiveness by synergistically conveying different aspects of a message in each mode (Gallagher, 2001).

While the web has surfaced as an important advertising and promotion medium and competed with traditional media, there is a dearth of empirical studies comparing the relative effectiveness of the web as an advertising medium versus traditional media.

In a study by Bush, Bush, and Harris (1998), it was found that “many organizations are uncertain or divided on how effective internet marketing is to their organizations.” This conclusion is not surprising given that the internet is a new medium. It is important to find out what are their perceptions of the web relative to other media on key media attributes, based on companies’ experience of using the web. As with any other media, the web is expected to have relative advantages and disadvantages as an advertising medium. What are they?

In Elaine K. F. Leong’s 1998 article, the findings describe how advertisers perceive the effectiveness of websites relative to eight other main media on 10 key media attributes. The following are the web managers’ perceptions and implied reasons how and why they are using the new medium:

1. The website is excellent for conveying information and detail.
2. The website is cost-effective.
3. The website is a rational medium. Unlike television, which is perceived to be excellent in its ability to stimulate emotions, the website is perceived to be a rational medium, communicating detailed information to its audience.
4. The website is effective in precipitating action.
5. The website is effective for both short- and long-term promotional objectives. While the website is perceived to effective for precipitating action, web managers also perceive the medium to be effective for creating brand/product/corporate awareness,

communication product/brand image, and communicating corporate image, that is, long-term objectives.

Yoon and Kim (November/December 2001) point out that internet advertising differs from traditional media advertising in many ways. Among the most salient characteristics are: (1) unlimited delivery of information beyond time and space, (2) unlimited amounts and sources of information, and (3) the ability to target specific groups or individuals.

Ducoffe (1995) addresses three key factors—informativeness, irritation, and entertainment—which are the starting point for explaining how consumers assess the value of advertising. Rotzoll, Haefner, and Sandage (1989) argue that advertising's informational role is its chief function. Consumers, themselves, report that advertising's ability to supply information is the primary reason for approving of it (Bauer and Greyser, 1968). Consumers rate informativeness as the single factor most strongly correlated with overall advertising value (Ducoffe, 1995). Among other scholars, Sandage (1972) asserts that advertising helps society achieve abundance by informing and persuading members of society in respect to products, services, and ideas. Carey (1960) regards advertising as an institution that supplies market information needed in the exchange between buyers and sellers. Alwit and Prabhaker (1992) suggest that the ability of advertising to entertain can enhance the experience of advertising exchanges for consumers.

Much of what Stigler (June 1961) and other economists asserted about the informational role of advertising is even more relevant today with internet

advertising. The fundamental advantage of internet advertising is the access to greater amounts of dynamic information as a resource for both the consumer and the advertiser. From the advertisers' point of view, they cannot obtain the information about the consumer from traditional media. On the internet, consumers are not a captured audience. Unlike with television or magazine ads, the consumer can easily compare information about competing products with a click or two of their mouse. At the same time the consumers are searching for information, the advertisers are recording their actions for future use (Wilcox, 1999).

However, probably one of the most significant differences may be the interactivity of internet advertisements. What this interactivity implies for the media audience is that it confers them with the ability to choose and respond to a particular advertisement of their liking. Katherine Gallagher (2001) points out that the interactive capacity of hypertext changes audience members from passive receivers of information to active participants in its construction. Each individual audience member controls the amount or rate of information he or she wishes to acquire from a commercial message (Shimp, 1997). Hyperlinks can free audience members to move nonlinearly between and within messages, accessing as much or as little information as they want, in the order they want—not necessarily as the advertiser would prefer.

Hoffman and Novak (1996) conclude that, in a hypertext environment, consumers are not passive and captive as they are assumed to be in advertising models of mass media advertising. Rather, they are active participants in

managing the content with which they interact, rendering traditional advertising approaches ineffective.

Compared to traditional mass media, the web audience has more control over exposure and attention to advertising. Consumers can turn the page or change the channel; they have not had as much control over when and where they could be exposed to a message; this was mostly under the control of the media planner. The web's various search engines, browsers and software choices give audience members much more control over message exposure and attention. (Gallagher, 2001). For example, PopUpCop and similar "adbuster" software stops popup advertising and "restores tranquility" to the net.

Another consequence of increased consumer control of exposure is that audience members can choose, if they wish, to return regularly to a website, thereby exposing themselves repeatedly to the advertising content. The implication for advertising effectiveness depends on whether a website is successful in bringing them back; if it incorporates new and interesting material that serves to retain audience interest. Interactive sites don't only provide material to be passively viewed, but also provide opportunities for audience members to engage in some kind of exchange with the site or its sponsor.

Interactivity means the internet has much more capacity for "talking back and with" the sponsor than the other mass media do. Interactive functions are numerous but include enhancements such as online problem diagnostics, games, virtual reality displays, and user groups—as well as variations on interactive

functions that have been used in other media, such as coupons, dealer locators, surveys, and contact information.

Compared to internet advertising, traditional media often possess rather little value to consumers for the following two significant reasons (Ducoffe, Sandler, and Secunda, 1996):

1. The tremendous number of advertisements that individuals are exposed to on a daily basis makes it impossible to give significant attention to most of them (Bogart, 1985). Even if individual advertisements are truly useful, people have neither the time nor the mental resources to dedicate sufficient attention to glean something of value from most of them.
2. The majority of advertising exposures reach individuals when they are not shopping for the product or service being advertised so most messages are simply not relevant to consumer concerns at the time of exposure.

The Potential Value of Advertising on the Web

Media context is thought to have an important influence on the value of advertising (Ducoffe, 1995). Previous studies show, for example, that consumers think newspapers carry the most informative, reliable, and believable advertising whereas television and radio rate lower on these attributes (Bauer and Greyser, 1968; Becker, Martino, and Towners, 1976; Grotta et al., 1976). Television advertising, on the other hand, is reportedly the most entertaining (Larkin, 1979). Within a medium, individuals who select a particular media vehicle may regard

advertising that fits closely with the editorial environment to be of greater value because it addresses their particular interests (Aaker and Brown, 1972; Cannon, 1982).

In their study of leading advertising executives, Ducoffe, Sandler, and Secunda (1996) report that continuing developments in the area of new media technology are thought to represent the most important influence on the future of the advertising industry over the next 10 to 15 years. Executives expect new media technology to lead to vast increases in the supply of media content and a transformation in the relationship among various media and consumers.

Hawkins (1994) identified a number of the web's early-forecasted benefits and drawbacks that have the potential to influence advertising value. These include:

1. Giving users access to information not immediately accessible to them.
2. Providing information that will be more relevant to consumers.
3. Ensuring flexibility; online ads can be altered quickly and easily in response to consumer needs and changing market conditions.
4. Executing transactions directly by consumers in response to ads, thus increasing both speed and convenience of purchases or inquiries.
5. Limiting production quality. Technology has still not advanced to the point where web advertising can fully compete with television

and print. In the short run at least, this latter factor should detract from the value of web advertising.

There exists another research issue that, despite its importance, has not been adequately addressed in current internet advertising studies. It concerns whether we can define certain product characteristics or dimensions that are responsible for favoring the internet over traditional media. Very few studies have looked into this issue of product-media matching with the purpose of determining the best fit between them. Yoon and Kim (2001) compared the differences in media characteristics between the internet and traditional media, and determined those product characteristics that are the most influential in the choice of internet advertising. They found that the internet is better for advertising high-involvement products, while the TV is better for low-involvement products. Is this true for movies as well, since they are seen as a low-involvement entertainment product?

Unfortunately, our understanding of the motives for using internet advertisements is incomplete (Clawson, 1993). Since the internet is widely accepted as a new medium breaking the traditional boundaries of media advertising, any attempt to distinguish between traditional media and the internet should include a broader base of understanding media audiences' needs and preferences. Bezjian-Avery et al. (1998) argued that a cognitive matching is necessary between system properties (i.e., being visual or verbal) and the consumer's preferential needs (i.e., preferring visual or verbal presentation) in order to ensure maximum persuasion. It is therefore easy to understand that

internet advertising may differ from traditional advertising in its effectiveness for certain kinds of consumers and for certain kinds of advertisements (Yoon and Kim, 2001). This is especially important in light of the current shift in advertising strategy that favors deriving maximum response from selected target groups over the efficiency of providing maximum exposure to many unknown audience groups with a minimum cost.

Sellers once had an advantage because only they held the knowledge that gave them power with reference to a product or service they sold; in the past, consumers had to work hard to become well-informed about products and services. However, today's web search software is yielding information that puts consumers on the same level with the professional (Martin, 1996). As a result, it is clear to many internet experts that to succeed in this environment, we need a better understanding of the web user. For example, Hagel and Armstrong (1997) state, "To become profitable, the organizers of the virtual community must understand and address this newly empowered customer's needs." A study in the mid-1990s found that 90% of websites were developed without asking existing customers what they wanted. In their rush to have an internet presence, many firms that ordinarily employ sound research practices abandon their logic and develop ineffective websites (Nadilo, 1998).

Movie Online Advertising and Movie Promotion Websites

There are many kinds of online advertising for movies: banner ads, superstitious ads, and "eyebasters" (ads that "blast through" web pages) on sites devoted to particular films and products such as the innovative BMW Films

(*bmwfilms.com*) which is the home of *The Hire*, a series of downloadable streaming short action films created by Hollywood's finest talent to promote BMW cars, and other wide-ranging locales such as America Online (*AOL.com*), *Amazon.com*, and even the World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc. *WWF.com* site. A banner, although standard in size (468 x 60), can contain static or animated content. Banners appear at the top of each web page and in dynamic rotation. A superstitial is an exciting format of advertising but interrupts the user experience similar to pop-ups. These can work in a number of formats from subtle uses of flash to video. They can mimic television adverts to help push existing campaigns running across various advertising mediums to maximise reach and brand awareness. The eyeblaster is an advert that is served through eyeblaster's web server (<http://www.eyebaster.com>). Innovative and eye catching, these messages grab the user's attention by the unusual form and ad placement. An eyeblaster is, in effect, a layer page that runs over the targeted site. The formats are usually either flash or video with various movements (for more information, see also BT Openworld, 2002).

The movie promotion websites aim to spark interest among two types of moviegoers: those who want basic information like show times and theater locations, and hard-core fans searching for "a ton of hidden content," explains Elizabeth Jones, Fox's director of internet marketing (cited in Gilbert, 2001). For example, *Moviefone.com* (launched in 1989) now covers 200 markets across the country and 30,000 screens. Often, film websites succeed in generating considerable hype in anticipation of a film's release (e.g., *Star Wars*, *Austin*

Powers, etc.). These sites can be very elaborate and may provide various attractions, including games, pictures, trailers, and online merchandise offers to enhance site traffic, attract attention, and peak viewers' interest in a particular film. However, "Sites built specifically for films rarely see traffic spikes of more than one month," said the report cited by Gilbert.

Zufryden (2000) conducted research focusing on the development and empirical testing of a variable mathematical model approach for predicting a film's box-office performance as a function of film website activity, as well as other relevant explanatory variables. The study results supported the idea that a film website may provide an effective means to promote and maintain film awareness as well as influence site visitors' intention to see a new film.

Uses and Gratifications

Uses and gratifications have been elaborated extensively by several researchers (e.g, Katz, Blumer, and Gurevitch, 1974; Rosengren Wenner, and Palmgreen, 1985; McGuire, 1974). For example, Mendelson's (1964) study of radio suggested several types of gratifications, including forming companionship, counteracting boredom, and acquiring information. Berelson's (1959) study of newspapers suggested many motives, such as the need for information, social prestige, social contact, and respite. Rubin's (1981) study of television gratifications led to several typologies including relaxation, habit, entertainment, information, and escape.

As audiences were presented with more and more media choices, greater research attention was directed at why audiences selected the media and content

they did and the rewards they derived from them (Austin, 1989). Contemporary researchers have used the gratifications concept to study the new technologies. Shaver (1983) conducted focus group interviews and found two major gratifications related to cable television. They were “variety” and “control over viewing.” Other studies (Phillips, 1982; Waterman, 1984; Levy and Fink, 1984) on videocassettes suggested gratifications of choice, time, and mobility. Rafaeli (1986) found that users of electronic bulletin boards felt “recreation, diversion, and entertainment” as the principal motivations for use followed by “communications” and “learning what others think.” Thus, user gratification research has been quite fruitful in understanding consumers’ motivations and concerns.

The gratifications approach assumes an active audience. Audiences purposefully select and attend to media and content to satisfy various needs (Austin, 1989). The uses and gratifications approach has traditionally been applied to content other than advertising, such as the program type for television, etc. However, advertising is part of the mass media, its information content has utility value, and arguably it provides gratification. Some researchers have reported a negative attitude toward advertising among consumers (Alwit and Prabhaker, 1992; Mittal, 1994; Pollay and Mittal, 1993); however, Shavitt, Lowrey, and Haefner (1998) used a large national sample and found a highly favorable attitude. They conclude more Americans like advertising than dislike it, they enjoy the advertisements they see, and most importantly they find advertising informative and useful in guiding decision making.

Summary

Every new advance in new media technology has had large consequences on old media. The new media technology always influences traditional media as a competitive replacement, and reduces the use of traditional media since people's level of media consumption generally keeps constant. The discussion about the impact of the new digital media on the use of the traditional mass media has been dominated by predictions of a rapid decline in television viewing as a result of the increased popularity of the internet and other computer-based activities.

As another new media technology, online advertising raises new challenges to traditional advertising. Although many researchers have done studies on online advertising, only Yoon and Kim (2001) have looked online advertising's impact on traditional advertising for specific products such as shampoo. The use of website promotion for new films is now common. However, there has been little information published to date about the degree to which movie advertising is more likely to prompt people to see a movie. Despite an extensive literature review, no one seems to have researched the value of websites as movie advertising vehicles.

This study will look at college-age consumers' motives as to why they surf movie promotion websites, analyze how many surf the web for information before going to the cinema, and determine what gratifications they found in doing so.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to explore the World Wide Web as an advertising vehicle for movie, this thesis focuses on the following critical questions:

RQ1: Do college-age users of websites spend more time surfing online compared to watching TV?

One of the most frequently heard predictions is that television will soon be largely replaced by computer-based activities, such as surfing the web. Many national companies have begun shifting chunks of their advertising budgets from TV to websites because of the increasing internet usage. This question tries to find out if LSU students spend more time online by decreasing their TV viewing time.

RQ 2: Which type of movie advertising is most likely to prompt college-age users to see a movie?

As noted earlier, there is no previous study done on which movie advertising is most likely to prompt users to see a movie. This question will evaluate the different effective degrees of multiple movie advertisements and their ability to prompt people to go to the cinema.

RQ 3: Will a movie promotion website be a viable alternative to TV advertising of the same movie?

Because of the growth of web users in recent years, there are rapidly increasing commitments by numerous companies to establish a presence on the web. The researcher is interested in finding out whether movie promotion websites will be a viable alternative to TV advertising of movie, or whether

various other promotions and TV ads serve to drive people to the movie promotion websites.

RQ 4: Of the movie websites promotion devices, which has the highest degree of attractiveness in drawing college-age users to see a movie? Compared with other film advertising options, movie promotion websites provide much more information and entertainment. This question will test the which movie promotion devices are the most powerful in bringing individuals to film sites.

RQ 5: What are the major motives respondents cite for using movie promotion websites?

Movie promotion websites works as an informational source, as a sales tool and as a customer support tool. They also provide much more information and entertainment options than TV advertising of movies is able to. One assumption of the gratifications approach is that audience members are self-aware and can articulate their reasons and interests for selecting media. This question tries to find out what are the main motives why college-age people surf movie promotion websites.

CHAPTER 4

METHOD

This study used a survey tool to provide answers the research questions. An analytical survey was conducted of a sample of 201 Louisiana State University (LSU) students. These analytical surveys attempted to find out:

1. whether college-age young people spent more time online in contrast to the time spent on watching TV.
2. whether they were more likely to get movie information from movie promotion websites or not,
3. which form of movie advertising (TV or online) is more likely to attract college-age audiences to see a movie,
4. what main motives are cited by those for going to movie promotion websites, and
5. what proved most attractive among website promotion options once users went to such sites.

Key Concepts and Operational Definitions

Certain important terms need to be discussed and clarified. Advertising on the web has been labeled electronic advertising and refers to advertising that is delivered to users of electronic information services (Hawkins, 1994). For purposes of this thesis, a movie promotion website is defined as follows: A movie promotion website is a kind of advertising forum located on the internet which provides specific information related to a new movie (from production stories to

trailers), entertainment (such as games related to the new movie), and other devices designed to attract people to see the film.

Used in this thesis are the following other definitions:

Time online/on TV: This means the total time people spend surfing online or watching TV per week.

Promotion devices: Visual, aural, and written information packages—often interactive—on movie promotion websites that boost interest in a specific production and prompt people go to see the film.

Motives: The reasons why people surf movie promotion websites.

WOM: News and information passed through word of mouth.

Sample

Since this study aims to investigate the different attributes of film-oriented TV ads and movie promotion websites, the target respondents selected were all moviegoers. Although a nationwide survey would have been ideal, in view of the amount of time required to complete the study and the fairly large number of questions to code, the respondents were confined to college students. A convenience sample of 201 respondents at Louisiana State University ultimately took part in the study.

The research instrument was a 14-question, self-administered questionnaire that took an estimated five minutes to complete. The survey was administered during two weeks in May 2002. The 201 students were drawn from a broad array of courses offered during the day program throughout the LSU campus. Surveys were administered during class time in randomly selected

classes of different majors, thus eliminating the possibility of any respondent completing the survey twice. The day of the week and the time of day were both randomly selected. A total of 220 questionnaires were distributed and 201 questionnaires were retrieved.

Questionnaire Development

In constructing the survey items specific to this study, the author reviewed the questionnaire items in prior media uses and gratifications research (e.g., Rubin, 1981; Greenberg, 1973). Ultimately, respondents were asked to provide four types of information in order to measure the dependent and independent variables. First, the LSU students indicated to what extent they watch television and surf online; second, they rated the attractiveness of movie advertising across six different media: newspapers, radio, television, WOM, internet/web; third, respondents evaluated the attractiveness of different movie promotion devices; and finally, their gender, ways of surfing online, and level of computer skills.

The first section asked questions with regard to a student's web and television experience. Subjects were asked to: (1) estimate the amount of time spent on the web per week; (2) estimate the amount of time spent watching TV per week; and (3) indicate if they were increasing their time on the web by decreasing TV viewing. The second and third sections contained questions designed to elicit responses about the effectiveness of different media types and web promotion activities. In the last section respondents were asked to respond to demographic questions including class rank and gender.

Advertising attractiveness and the attractiveness of movie promotion website activities were evaluated on a 5-point Likert scale with response options ranging from “lowest” to “highest.” The actions before going to the cinema were evaluated for attractiveness with five response options: “always,” “usually,” “sometimes,” “rare,” and “never.”

Measurement Validity

Measurement validity can only be achieved when a measuring device accurately measures what it is supposed to measure (Wimmer and Dominick, 2000). There are four types of validity—face validity, content validity, criteria validity, and construct validity. Among them, content validity are more related to this study. Content validity refers to whether a measurement instrument accurately measures competency as it is defined conceptually (Wimmer and Dominick, 2000).

The measurements used in this study come from several former studies. These include Brackett and Carr (2001) analysis of cyberspace advertising vs. other media, Appiah’s (2001) analysis of ethnic identification on adolescents’ evaluation of advertisements, Wolburg and Pokrywczynski’s (2001) research on psychographic analysis of Generation Y college students, and Yoon and Kim’s (2001) analysis about whether or not the internet is more effective than traditional media. As an established measurement, therefore, the face validity and content validity for this study is assured.

Data Analysis

As part of this thesis, the researcher analyzed the data mainly from the following four aspects. First, the study looked at whether people spend more time online than on TV, compared to last year. Second, this study explored which form of movie advertising is more likely to attract people to see the film in a conventional movie theatre. Third, the study tried to find out whether movie promotion websites have become a viable alternative to TV advertising of movies. Fourth, the study tested the different degrees of attractiveness of movie promotion devices. Finally, the study explored what are the major motives respondents cite for using movie promotion websites.

The data was analyzed using SPSSWIN 10, a widely accepted professional statistical analysis application. One statistics procedure was involved in this study: comparison means. The means helped the researcher to determine the different levels of persuasiveness for the various movie advertising media and compare how movie promotion website options increase or decrease likely use.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

Surfing Online versus Watching TV

The researcher measured an individual's use of two media sources: television and the internet. The author began by asking two questions (see the Appendix):

1. In a typical week, about how much time do you spend using the Internet?
2. In a typical week, about how much time do you spend watching TV?

The respondents to this question were classified into seven groups of (1) don't use, (2) less than an hour, (3) 1-3 hours, (4) 3-6 hours, (5) 6-11 hours, (6) 11-20 hours, and (7) more than 20 hours. From Figure 1, we can see that 26% of the respondents spend 6-11 hours online per week and 36% of the respondents spend 11-20 or more hours online, while only 18% of the respondents spend 6-11 hours on TV and 17% of the respondents spend 11-20 and more hours on TV.

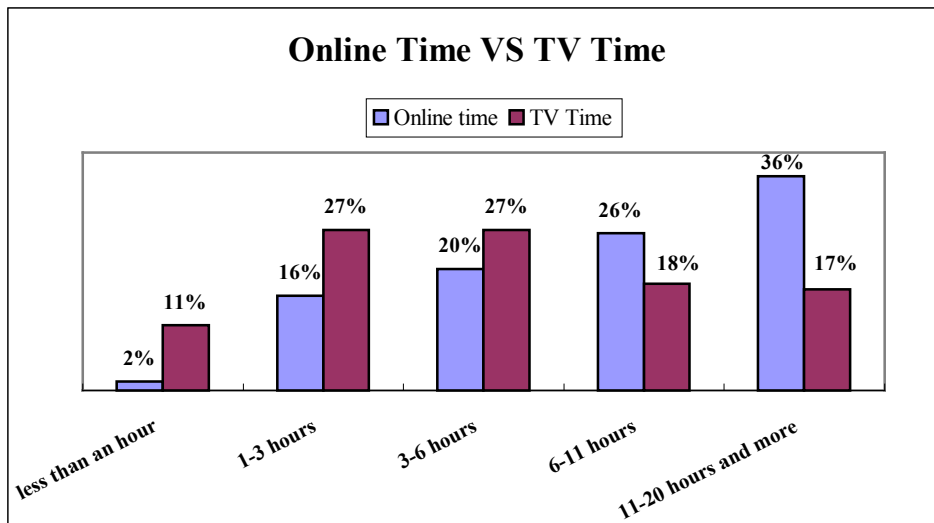


Figure 1
Time Spent Online vs. Watching TV

From Figure 2, we can see that 24% of all respondents have increased online hours a lot, while only 1% of all respondents increased TV hours a lot; 34% of all respondents have increased online hours somewhat compared to 11% increased TV hours somewhat; 34% of respondents have remained the online hours and 40% respondents have remained TV hours; 6% have decreased online hours, while 34% said they have decreased TV hours somewhat; and only 2% of all respondents reported that they have decreased online hours a lot, however, 14% said they have decreased a lot on TV hours.

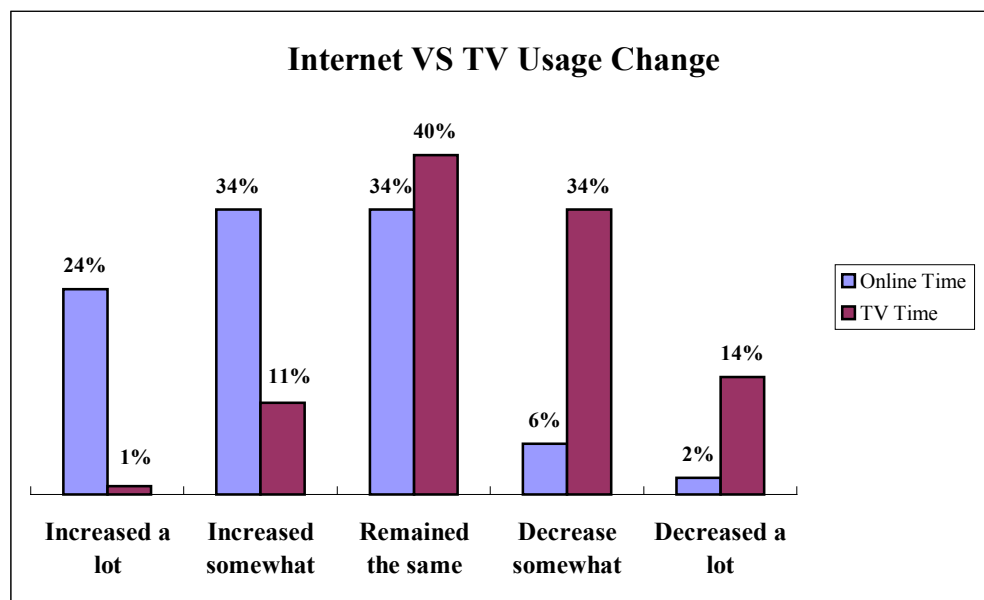


Figure 2
Change of Usage of Internet vs. TV Compared to Last year

The findings can be interpreted that LSU students will have more chances to bump into online advertising than TV advertising.

Which Advertising Prompts People to See a New Movie

Because of the researcher's interest in measuring the effects of different types of movie advertising, the components were limited to media sources that comprised the base advertising types. These included hearing or seeing about the movies through magazines, newspapers, television, the internet, other people and other sources (see Appendix for question wording). Figure 3 shows that among all these movie advertising formats, TV ads had the highest attractiveness of 3.57, followed by movie promotion websites with 2.67, WOM with 2.36, newspaper ads with 2.17, billboards with 2.2 and radio ads with 2.25. The result shows that TV advertising is still the most attractive movie advertising for college-age people, but it also suggests that movie promotion websites are a developing and attractive ad medium. Despite being a new promotional medium with a very short history, online is already more popular with college moviegoers than newspaper, billboard and radio advertising.

Actions Before Going to the Cinema

The researcher then measured the actions LSU students reported they take before they go to the cinema. These responses were classified in three ways:

Act 1: After seeing movie advertising on TV, I go and see that movie.

Act 2: After seeing movie advertising on TV, I look for more information on movie promotion website, and then decide whether to see that movie.

Act 3: I look for information on a movie promotion website before planning to see a movie.

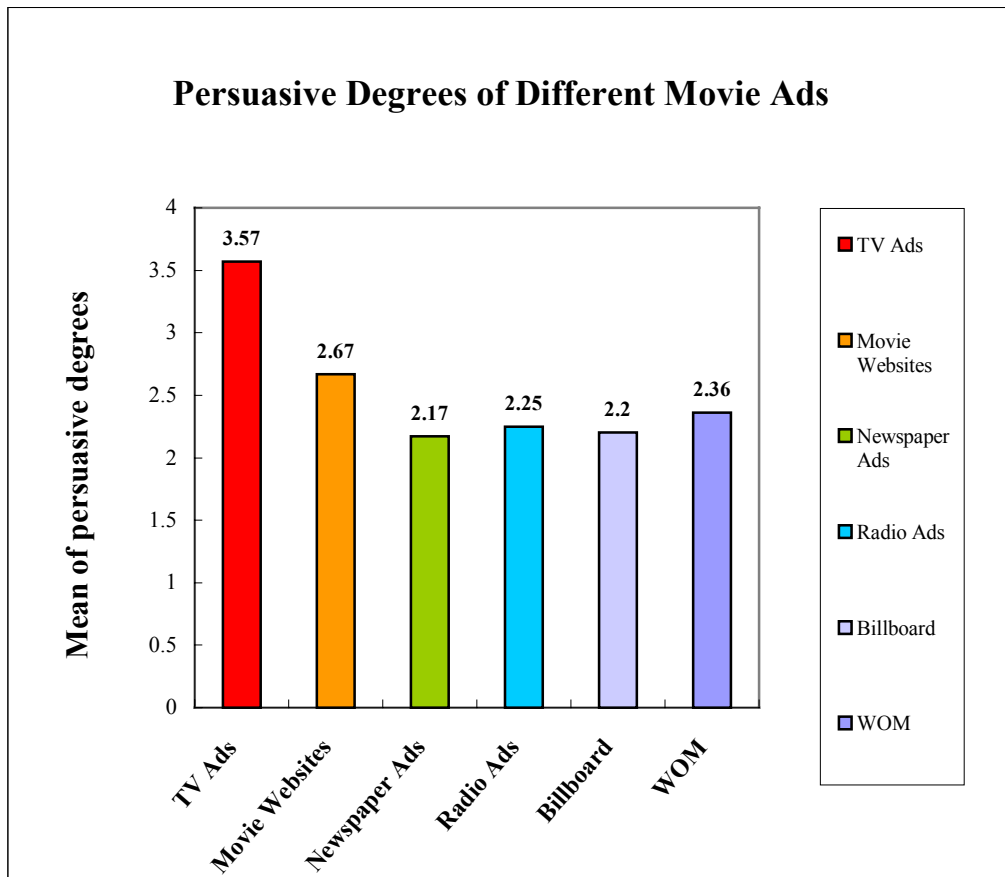


Figure 3
Persuasive Degrees of Different Movie Advertising Formats

From Figure 4, 21.9% of all respondents usually go online after they watch a film TV ad before they go to the cinema, 19.9% of all respondents usually go online for movie information before go to see a movie even if they haven't seen a TV ad, and 18.4% of all respondents usually go to the cinema after they watch movie advertising on TV. Among the "sometimes" section of the actions the respondents take, going to the cinema after watching a TV ad occurred 54.7% of the time, followed by act 2 and act 3. However, among the never section, only 1.5% never go to the cinema after they watch movie advertising, while

16.9% of respondents never go online for movie information before they take off to their local cineplex.

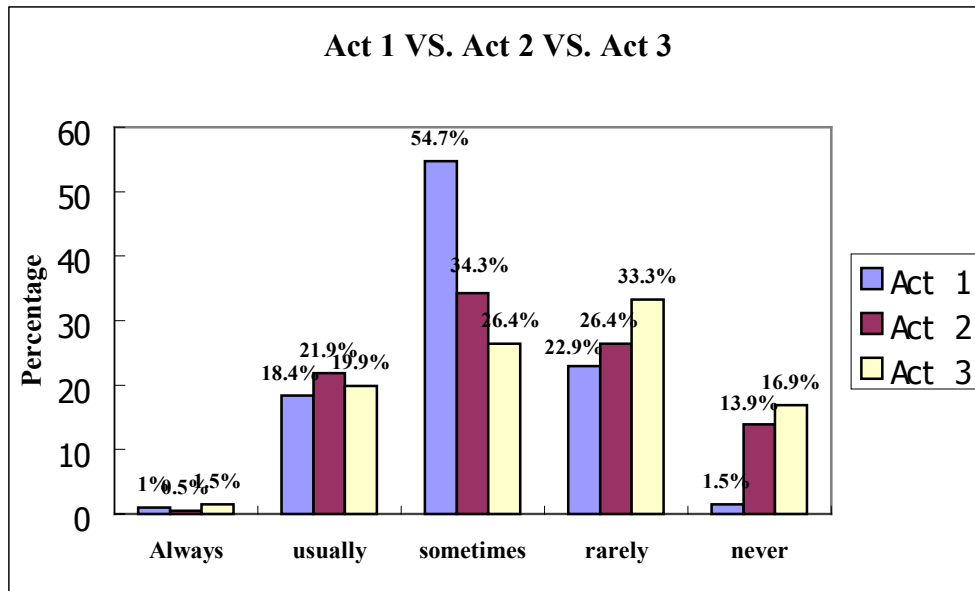


Figure 4
Comparison of Different Actions before Going to the Cinema

Attractiveness of Movie Promotion Web Page Activities

Comparison of means was used to determine which movie promotion web page devices were more effective in attracting people to plunk down the price of admission to see a new movie. Here the researcher looked at the different degrees of attractiveness for various commonly used movie promotion web page devices: trailers, pictures, critic reviews, games, and stories related to the production. From Figure 5, we can see that trailer has the highest degree of attractiveness, followed by pictures, critic reviews, stories, and games bringing up the rear.

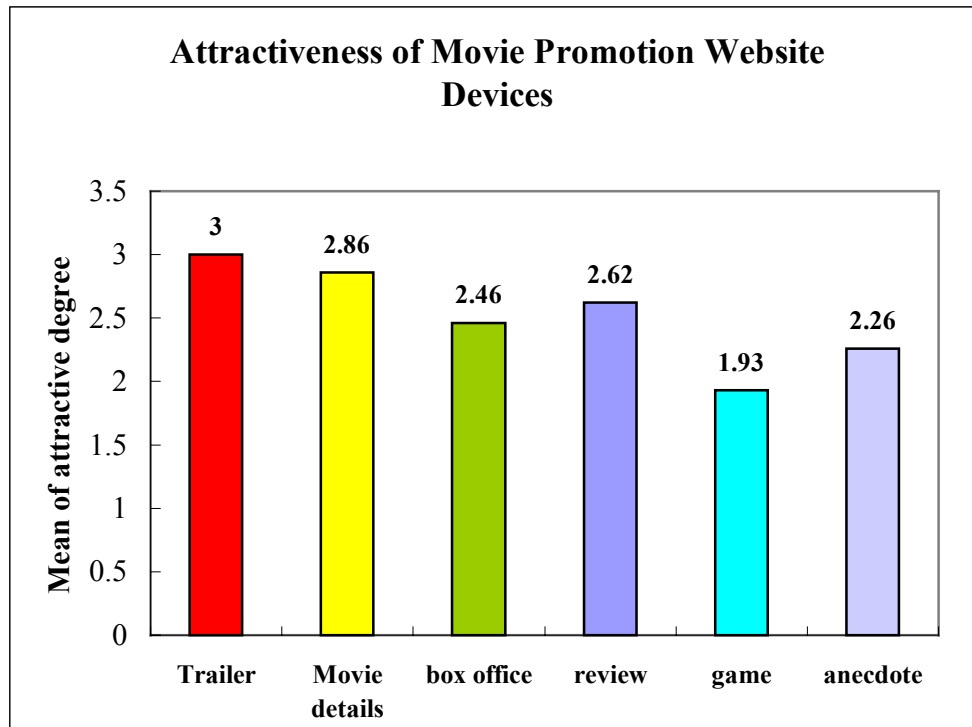


Figure 5
Attractiveness of Different Movie Promotion Website Devices

Motives for Surfing Movie Promotion Websites before Going to a New Movie

To further illustrate motivations why college-age filmgoers surf movie promotion websites before going to see a new movie, see Table 1. The results document that the mean is highest because of a desire to find out a particular movie's show time is 3.00, followed by desire for more general movie information with 2.95, closely linked to a 2.70 for people who did not see a TV ad about the film, trailed by "getting information about different movies and deciding which movie to see" with mean of 2.02. All the other reasons came in with a mean of 1.87 or below and thus were not as important.

Reasons	Mean
Time	3.00
Movie information	2.95
Didn't watch movie ad	2.70
Get information of different movies	2.02
Easier to get information online	1.87
Ticket	1.86
Fast way to get information online	1.86

Table 1
Means of Different Motives For Surfing Movie Promotion Websites
Before Going to See a New Movie

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

Usages of Television and the Internet

The result shows that LSU students spend more time online compared to last year while spend less time on watching TV. For example, 58.2% of LSU students have increased their online hours and 47.7% LSU students have decreased their time on TV compared to the last year. These findings are a clear indication that television usage among LSU students has declined.

The studies reported in the literature review tell us that the new media have an impact on TV, that marketers and advertisers should realize the internet is a good advertising and marketing medium, and that marketing and advertising spending may shift from TV to the internet. This data reported in this thesis is a further indication of these trends, but alone do not necessarily prove that television, at least as we know it today, will soon be largely replaced by computer-based activities such as surfing the web.

Media Usage Patterns for Low Involvement Movie Choices

TV advertising is still the most effective medium prompting people to go to see a movie. The findings of this thesis suggest that Yoon and Kim's (2001) belief that TV is a better medium for the advertising of low-involvement products such as films is valid. However, as demonstrated here, for LSU college students' movie promotion websites are already the second most persuasive form of advertising. With people's media usage patterns changing—where people are beginning to spend more time online than on TV, the movie promotion websites

will be an increasingly important advertising format. Especially when it comes to decision-making, where consumers need detailed information to decide which movie to see, online sites are likely to dominate.

In general, this thesis indicates some users prefer TV advertising, some prefer movie promotion websites, while others prefer both. From Figure 2, 21.9% of all respondents usually go online after they watch TV ad before they go to the cinema, and 19.9% of all respondents usually go online for movie information before go to see a movie. This data also confirms Steve Coffey and Horst Stipp's (1997) hypothesis that TV promotions and advertising messages can drive people go online to search out more information about the products they are considering buying. Hence, film production companies and local theater chains can use the interconnections between TV and the internet to more efficiently allocate their advertising expenditures. An obvious consideration is to decrease their advertising time on TV and save money.

Affinity for Advertising

Going to the cinema is one of the most popular entertainments USA people enjoy, so if they want to go to the cinema, they will search different media for movie information. Affinity for advertising in a particular medium is measured by the degree to which a person decides to see a new movie after seeing a specific kind of media advertising. However, as documented here, there is no relation between the hours people spend online and on TV with the actions college-age moviegoers take before they go to a local theater. Thus, no matter how many hours spent online or on TV, most of the respondents in this survey

searched movie information online. The results of this research, therefore, also give indications for the following strategies and improvements:

1. to increase the effectiveness of their messages, advertisers should link both TV and online advertising message strategies and design more integrated media plans.
2. to reduce the amount of repetitive movie advertising to college-age students on TV, which is costly, since a relative large portion of respondents will surf the movie promotion websites for details after watching fewer airings of studio TV ads.

What Works on Movie Promotion Websites

Compared to television, the web has much more capacity for interactivity including games, virtual reality displays, user groups, coupons, dealer locators, surveys and contact information. How to best design effective movie promotion websites and use these interactive functions is a very important question.

One has to keep in mind that attending the cinema is a kind of entertainment. So the movie promotion website is better to be an entertainment destination in itself. The *Planet of the Apes* website is a good example of an elaborate promotion website design. It offers up a cinematic trailer complete with QuickTime video and Flash-embedded audio and the ability to display in 10 languages; a create-your-own-postcard download; a search for hidden trading cards; a series of behind-the-scenes videos; access to an official online gift store; and a link to a Yahoo-hosted auction. Visitors can also get information about

Project A.P.E., a 14-week treasure hunt that leads fans to movie props hidden all over the globe.

However, up to now, industry research indicates that the best movie sites are basic, simple-to-navigate service destinations. For example, websites promoting movies are important for production houses to invest in, but Forrester Research analyst Eric Scheirer argues (as cited in Gilbert, 2001) that the some sites such as *Planetoftheapes.com* are fancier than they need to be. “Money must be spent to serve user goals,” he says. Those goals include buying tickets, reading reviews and checking locations. *Planetoftheapes.com* features a pop-up window that lets users search for nearby theaters. But that and other basic tools, he says, are dwarfed by the fancy graphics and swirling images.

This thesis shows that among the activities targeted to college-age youth, trailers are the most attractive and then come movie details, reviews, box office, anecdotes and games. This results as to why people surf movie promotion websites support Scheirer’s view that simple and straight forward is better. In order to satisfy people’s need for information and to prompt people to see a movie, movie promotion websites should pay particular attention to the following:

1. *show times of movie*: according to the findings of this thesis, the highest mean for why people surf movie promotion websites is show time information, so the show times should be placed in an area which is very easy and convenient to find.
2. *movie promotion website devices*: from consumer feedback in this thesis, emphasis should be given to highlighting the trailer, an

activity which predicted the greatest likelihood of going out to buy tickets.

Motivational Factors for Using Movie Promotion Websites

The motives people express for using movie promotion websites are related with the effectiveness of the website relative to television. According to Leong (September/October 1998), a website is excellent for conveying information and detail. Television advertising doesn't have enough time to provide specific information on products, nor easily compare different products of the same category at the same time. On the internet, just like Wilcox (February 1999) says, consumers can easily compare information about competing products with a click or two of their mouse.

When people have not watched movie ads on TV and want to go to the cinema, they can go online to search movie information. In this thesis, among the reasons for surfing movie promotion websites, the mean of "did not watch movie ads" comes out first with the mean of 2.7015. "Get information about different movies" had a mean 2.0149, the second most popular reason for surfing online.

These findings among college-age moviegoers adds evidence to prove another value that TV advertising does not have: unlimited delivery of information beyond time (Yoon and Kim, 2001). This is also one of the benefits of advertising value of the web identified by Hawkins (1994): the web gives users access to information not immediately accessible to them. As more and more people go online and decrease their time on TV, movie promotion websites should prove a really a good replacement for TV advertising. Though TV is still a

popular medium, people may switch channels when advertisements air or watch a channel that does not provide movie ads.

Gratification Factors

Moreover, the characteristics of websites have an advantage over time if they cater to the values of advertising most important to consumers addressed by Ducoffe (1995): high levels of informativeness, less irritation and more entertainment. And if you do not like what you find, it is easy to just click and close the window. Within this approach, consumers (audience members) are considered active participants who use the media to satisfy needs and receive a number of “gratifications.”

This study shows that movie promotion websites already play an important role in attracting people to go to the cinema and this kind of online advertising is diminishing the importance of movie TV advertising alone. As noted by many academics, as well as practitioners, consumers’ information-seeking orientation led to the earlier popularity of the web and still continues to draw new users to the medium.

Data and Design Limitations

We expect the usage of different media to also vary based on the demographics, i.e., the characteristics of the audience. Each of the major media has unique capabilities and unique audience characteristics. For example, middle income, high-school educated viewers and their families are the heaviest users of television (Arens and Bovée, 1994). Additionally, older women view television

the most and teenage females the least. In the context of the web, measuring precisely who is using it is still difficult to establish.

This thesis presents a glimpse at college-age students interest in movies and the web. The sample used, however, was a convenience sample and the population was composed only LSU students. Compared to the Newspaper Association of America's latest survey (as reported in Forrester Research, Inc., 2002), this study only documents the percentage of LSU students who have decreased their usage of TV compared to last year. We are still not sure why this is so, or what increased availability of broadband access at home (via cable modem or DSL) will do to further erode television viewing for many college-age moviegoers.

Future researchers may well want to do a national survey, to increase the value of this research. The data reported here were also limited in other ways, so it will also be important to collect demographic information including age, income level, occupation, education, and ethnicity.

Different kinds of movies may need different kinds of advertising. Some kinds of movies which have strong visual effect, such as an action film, may not need promotion websites to provide detailed information in order to attract people to see it. TV advertising may well enough. However, other kinds of movies, such as romantic pictures lacking strong visual and audio effects, may need detailed information to build an audience. Whether this observation is true or not needs future research.

Another limitation of this study involves the attractiveness measures used to evaluate the various movie advertising formats. In the future, research can clarify when given a choice consumers prefer TV ads or online sites or both. Findings here suggest the later, but more study needs to be done on what most motivates ticket purchases. It would be desirable to use an experimental study to evaluate the attractiveness of different movie advertising. There are two reasons: first, some people do not have access online; second, there are limitations of the technology for those who do have internet access. Though there are trailers available on movie promotion websites, many people cannot access them because of the low online speed. Visual and audio effects of advertising are among the most attractive factors encouraging people to see a new movie. But if people cannot see the trailers online, in theater and TV advertising of movies will still take leading roles promoting new movies.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS

Today the web is continuing to rise in influence, and the growing availability of broadband access such as cable and DSL connections will only help this along. The rapidly dropping prices in personal computers, and the invention of low-cost “internet appliances” are also helping to spread internet use more broadly throughout society. As a result, the web is becoming more and more a part of everyday life, and less the quirky news story that it used to be.

The findings of this study add significantly to our understanding when comparing different forms of media advertising, especially online versus television. Hoffman and Novak (1996) were among the first to address the implications of the web as an important and different environment faced by consumers and marketers. Yoon and Kim (2001) subsequently sought to compare the differences in media characteristics between the internet and traditional media, then determine product characteristics that are the most influential in the choice of internet advertising, and, finally, identify product-related factors responsible for media use.

The findings of this thesis indicate that the TV is still the best media for the movie advertising because it peaks interest in an otherwise low involvement purchase. However, online sites are increasingly popular and this study suggests that audiences use movie promotion websites for many more purposes than the often-overemphasized reason: to retrieve information. Audiences also surf online to buy movie tickets and play games, among other reasons.

In addition, it is clear that practitioners and researchers need to pay more careful attention to the needs of web users if they are to unravel this new and different medium's full potential. Examining these needs may provide the means to understanding the underutilized potential of the web. The growth of advertising on the web indicates that further studies should analyze users' perceptions of the medium as well as the advertising on the medium.

In sum, this study suggests that the monitoring of website activity may better prompt people go to see new movies. Movie promotion websites should give more space to those promotion devices that are most attractive to users.

REFERENCES

- Aaker, David S., and Phillip K. Brown (1972). Evaluating vehicle source effects. *Journal of Advertising Research* 12(4), 11-16.
- BT Openworld (2002). Advertising Products on BTopenworld; available online at http://www.btonlineads.co.uk/downloads/advertising_products.doc.
- Alaska Grafix Onscreen Advertising (2002). Demographics: Who sees your ad?; available online at <http://www.akonscreen.com/demo.html>
- Alwit, Linda F., and Paul R. Prabhaker (1992). Functional and belief dimensions of attitudes to television advertising. *Journal of Advertising Research* 32(5), 30-42.
- Amazon.com, <http://www.Amazon.com>
- America Online (AOL), <http://www.aol.com>
- Appiah, Osei (2001). Ethnic identification on adolescents' evaluations of advertisements. *Journal of Advertising Research* 41(5), 7 -16.
- Arens, William F., and Courtland L. Bovée (1994). *Contemporary Advertising, 5th ed.* Burr Ridge, IL: Irwin.
- Austin, Bruce A. (1989). *Immediate Seating: A Look at Movie Audiences.* California, Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Austin Powers (1999)*. Los Angeles: New Line Productions, Inc. See the official film series web site at http://www.austinpowers.com/index_shag.html.
- Bauer, Raymond A., and Stephen A. Greyser (1968). *Advertising in America: The Consumer View*. Boston, MA: Harvard University.
- Becker, L. B., R. A. Martino, and W. M. Towners (1976). Media advertising credibility. *Journalism Quarterly* 53, 216-22.
- Berelson, B. (1959). The state of communication research. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 23(1), 1.
- Bezjian-Avery, Alexa, Bobby Calder, and Dawn Iacobucci (1998). New media interactive advertising vs. traditional advertising. *Journal of Advertising Research* 38(4), 23-33.
- Bogart, Leo (January 1985). War of the words: Advertising in the year 2010. *Across the Board* (The Conference Board).

- BMW Films, <http://bmwfilms.com>, an online site featuring streaming short action films promoting BMW cars.
- Brackett, Lana K., and Benjamin N. Carr Jr. (2001). Cyberspace advertising vs. other media: Consumer vs. mature student attitudes. *Journal of Advertising Research* 41(5), 23-10.
- Bush, Alan, Victoria Bush, and Sharon Harris (1998). Advertiser perceptions of the internet as a marketing communications tool. *Journal of Advertising Research* 38(2), 17-28.
- Cannon, Hugh M. (1982). A new method for estimating the effect of media context. *Journal of Advertising Research* 22(5), 41-48.
- Carey, James W. (1960). Advertising: An institutional approach. In *The Role of Advertising in Society*, C. H. Sandage and Vernon Fryburger, eds., Homewood, IL: Richard D. Irwin, 3-17.
- Carr, Houston H., and Charles Snyder (1997). *The Management of Telecommunications*. Chicago, IL: Irwin.
- CASIE: The Coalition for Advertising Supported Information and Entertainment (1995). CASIE Guiding Principles of Interactive Media Audience Measurement; available online at http://www.ciadvertising.org/studies/student/96_fall/burnett/guide.html.
- Clawson, Pat (August 23, 1993). Study: Consumers want interactive TV. *Electronic Media*.
- Coffey, Steve and Horst Stipp (1997). The interactions between computer and television usage. *Journal of Advertising Research* 37(2), 61-66.
- Ducoffe, Robert H. (1995). How consumers assess the value of advertising. *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising* 17(1), 1-18.
- Ducoffe, Robert H., Dennis Sandler, and Eugene Secunda (Spring 1996). A survey of senior agency, advertiser, and media executives on the future of advertising. *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, 18(1), 1-19.
- Edison Media Research (January 2001). Internet VI: Streaming at a crossroads; available online at <http://www.edisonresearch.com/Internetvisum.htm>.
- Eller, Claudia (May 31, 1996). The biz-marketing costs run out of control. *Los Angeles Times*.

Eyeblaster, <http://www.eyebaster.com/>.

Forrester Research, Inc. (2002). Factors that increase consumers' reliance on web content. Cannibalization of offline media by type of web use. *The Digital Edge* (Newspaper Association of America); available online at <http://www.naa.org/TheDigitalEdge/DigArtPage.cfm?AID=4072>.

Gallagher, Katherine (2001). The medium is not the message: Advertising effectiveness and content evaluation in print and on the web. *Journal of Advertising Research* 41(4), 57-71.

GartnerG2, a research service from Gartner, Inc. (January 4, 2002). GartnerG2 says online advertising to grow from \$7.9 billion in 2001 to \$18.8 billion by 2005. *Managing Information Newsletter*, 9; available online at http://www.managinginformation.com/news/content_show_full.php?id=294 as part of the larger publication located at <http://www.managinginformation.com/newsletter/issue9.htm>.

Gartner Group Research (2001). Gartner Dataquest survey shows 61 percent of U.S. households actively using the internet. Of households online, one in four access the web via high-speed connection; available online at http://gartner.com/5_about/press_releases/2001/pr20010829b.html.

Georgia Tech Graphic, Visualization, and Usability Center (October 1998). GVU's 10th WWW survey; available online at http://www.cc.gatech.edu/gvu/user_surveys/survey-1998-10/.

Gilbert, Jennifer (August 6, 2001). Lights, camera -- streaming video? Promoting movies online costs a bundle and is rarely worth the investment. *Marketing Focus*; available online at <http://www.business2.com/articles/web/0,1653,16725,FF.html>.

Greenburg, B. S. (1973). Viewing and listening parameters among British youngsters. *Journal of Broadcasting* 17(2), 173-88.

Grotta, G. L., Ernest F. Larkin, and B. J. Carrell (1976). News vs. advertising: Does the audience perceive the journalistic distinction? *Journalism Quarterly* 53, 448-56.

Hagel, John III, and Arthur G. Armstrong (1997). *Net Gain: Expanding Markets Through Virtual Communities*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Hawkins, Donald T. (1994). Electronic advertising: An online information system. *Online* 18, 74-85.

- Hillebrand, Mary (September 2, 1999). AOL movie marketing is effective, study says. *E-Commerce Times*; available online at <http://www.ecommercetimes.com/perl/story/1136.html>
- Hirschman, Elizabeth C., and Craig J. Thompson (1997). Why media matter: Toward a richer understanding of consumers' relationships with advertising and mass media. *Journal of Advertising* 26(1), 43-60.
- Hoffman, Donna L., and Thomas P. Novak (1996). Marketing in hypermedia computer-mediated environments: Conceptual foundations. *Journal of Marketing* 60(3), 50-68.
- Hoffman, Donna L., Thomas P. Novak, and Patrali Chatterjee (1996). Commercial scenarios for the web: Opportunities and challenges. *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication* 1(3); available online at <http://www.ascusc.org/jcmc/vol1/issue3/hoffman.html>.
- Hollywood.com, <http://www.Hollywood.com/movies>.
- Internet Movie Database, <http://www.IMDb.com>.
- Internet use takes a toll on television viewing. (November 30, 2001). *National Science Foundation*; available online at: <http://www.newswise.com/articles/2001/11/INTERNT2.NSF.html>.
- Journal of Advertising Research* (1961-present). New York: Advertising Research Bureau.
- Jupiter Communications (September 3, 1996). Ad revenues jump 83% in second quarter, according to Jupiter AdSpent Data. Press release.
- Katz, Elihu, Jay G. Blumler, and Michael Gurevitch (1974). Utilization of mass communication by the individual. In *The Uses of Mass Communications: Current Perspectives on Gratifications Research*, J. G. Blumler and E. Katz, eds. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 19-32.
- Korgaonkar, Pradeep K., and Lori D. Wolin (March/April 1999). A multivariate analysis of web usage. *Journal of Advertising Research* 39(2), 53-68.
- Larkin, Ernest F. (1979). Consumer perceptions of the media and their advertising content. *Journal of Advertising* 8(2), 5-7, 48.
- Leong, Elaine K. F. (September/October 1998). Comparing the effectiveness of the Web site with traditional media. *Journal of Advertising Research* 38(5), 44-50.

- Levy, M. R., and E. Fink (1984). Home video recorders and the transience of television broadcasts. *Journal of Communication* 34(2), 56-71.
- Martin, Michael H. (February 5, 1996). Why the web is still a no-shop zone. *Fortune*, 127.
- McGaughey, Ronald E., and Kevin H. Mason (Summer 1998). The internet as a marketing tool. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice* 6(3), 1-11.
- McGuire, William J. (1974). Psychological motives and communication gratifications. In *The Uses of Mass Communications: Current Perspectives on Gratifications Research*, J. G. Blumler and E. Katz, eds. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 167-196.
- McKillen, Dan (March 2002). Web still growing by two million new U.S. users per month. *Medical Marketing and Media*, 10-11.
- McQuail, Dennis (1983). *Mass Communication Theory: An Introduction*. London: Sage.
- Mendelson, H. (1964). Listening to radio. In *People, Society, and Mass Communication Gratifications*, L. A. Dexter and D. M. White, eds. Glencoe, IL: Free Press.
- Mittal, Banwari (1994). Public assessment of TV advertising: Faint praise and harsh criticism. *Journal of Advertising Research* 34(1), 35-54.
- Moviefone (2002). *MediaSpace 2002*; available online at <http://mediaspace.aol.com/index.adp?fname=mov>.
- Moviefone.com, <http://www.Moviefone.com>.
- Movieweb.com, <http://www.movieweb.com>.
- Nadilo, Rudy (June 8, 1998). On-line research taps consumers who spend. *Marketing News*.
- National Science Foundation (November 30, 2001). Internet use takes a toll on television viewing; available online at: <http://www.newswise.com/articles/2001/11/INTERNT2.NSF.html>.
- National Telecommunications and Information Administration and the Economics and Statistics Administration (February 2002). A nation online: How Americans are expanding their use of the internet. Executive summary. Washington, DC; available online at <http://www.ntia.doc.gov/ntiahome/dn/html/execsum.htm>.

- Negroponte, Nicholas (1995). *Being Digital*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Nie, Norman H., and Lutz Erbring (2000, February 17). Stanford Institute for the Quantitative Study of Society; available online at <http://www.cecs.csulb.edu/~rice/internet2.ppt>.
- Pastore, Michael (August 9, 2001). Web traffic in July: That's entertainment. *dc.internet.com*; available online at http://dc.internet.com/views/article.php/2111_863201.
- Peterson, Robert A., Sridhar Balasubramanian, and Bart J. Bronnenberg (1997). The marketing implications of the internet for consumers. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 25(4), 329-346.
- Phillips, A. F. (1982). Attitude correlates of selected medial technologies: A pilot study. Unpublished study, Annenberg School of Communication, University of Southern California.
- Planet of the Apes* (2001). Los Angeles: 20th Century Fox, Inc. See the official film web site at <http://www.planetoftheapes.com/>.
- Pollay, Richard, and Banwari Mittal (1993). Here's the beef: Factors, determinants, and segments in consumer criticism of advertising. *Journal of Marketing* 57(3), 99-114.
- Rafaeli, S. (1986) The electronic bulletin board: A computer-driven mass medium. *Computers and the Social Sciences* 2(3), 123-36.
- Rosengren, Karl Erik, Lawrence A. Wenner, and Philip Palmgreen (1985). *Media Gratifications Research: Current Perspectives*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- Rotzoll, Kim, James E. Heafner, and Charles H. Sandage (1989). Advertising and the classical liberal world view. In *Advertising in Society: Classic and Contemporary Readings on Advertising's Role in Society*, Roxanne Hovland and Gary B. Wilcox, eds. Lincolnwood, IL: NTC Publishing Group.
- Rubin, Alan M. (1981). An examination of television viewing motivations. *Communication Research* 8(2), 141-165.
- Sandage, Charles (1972). Some institutional aspects of advertising. *Journal of Advertising* 1(1), 6-9.
- Sandberg, Jason (1998, July 20). It isn't entertainment that makes the web shine; It's dull data. *Wall Street Journal*.

- Schwartz, Evan I. (1997). *Webnomics*. New York: Broadway Books, a Division of Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc.; also published in Middlesex, England: Penguin Books.
- Shaver, J. L. (1983). The uses of cable TV. Master's thesis, University of Kentucky.
- Shavitt, Sharon, Pamela Lowrey, and James Haefner (1998). Public attitudes toward advertising: More favorable than you might think. *Journal of advertising Research* 38(4), 7-22.
- Shimp, Terence A. (1997). *Advertising, Promotion, and Supplemental Aspects of Integrated Marketing Communications, 4th ed.* Forth Worth, TX: Dryden.
- Star Wars* (1997). Los Angeles: Lucasfilm Ltd. See the official film series web site at <http://www.starwars.com>.
- Stigler, George J. (June 1961). The economics of information. *Journal of Political Economy*, 69(3), 213-225.
- Strangelove, Michael (1993). Advertising on the internet: Myths, facts, and tips. *Internet Business Journal* 1(6), 4-5.
- Tetzeli, Rick (March 7, 1994). The internet and your business. *Fortune* 129(5), 86-96.
- Thorsberg, Frank (August 30, 2001). Internet use jumps 15 percent. *PCWorld.com*; available online at <http://www.pcworld.com/news/article/0,aid,60044,00.asp>
- UCLA Internet Report* (November 29, 2001). Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Center for Information Policy Internet Project; available online at <http://ccp.ucla.edu/pages/internet-report.asp>.
- Waterman, D. (1984). The prerecorded home video and the distribution of theatrical feature films. Paper presented to the Arden Teachers' Conference on Rivalry among Video Media, Harriman, NY.
- Wilcox, Gary (February 1999). Internet marketing: Advertising as information. *Texas Business Review*, 4-6.
- Wimmer, Roger D., and Joseph R. Dominick (2000). *Mass Media Research: An Introduction, 6th ed.* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Wolburg, Joyce M., and James Pokrywczynski (September/October 2001). A psychographic analysis of Generation Y college students. *Journal of Advertising Research* 41(5), 33-52.

World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc., <http://www.wwf.com>.

Yoon, Sung-Joon, and Joo-Ho Kim (November/December 2001). Is the internet more effective than traditional media? Factors affecting the choice of media. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 41(6), 53-60.

Zufryden, Fred (2000). New film website promotion and box-office performance. *Journal of Advertising Research* 40(1/2), 55-65.

APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE

Survey

3. In a typical week, about how much time do you spend using the Internet?
 - a. Don't use
 - b. Less than an hour
 - c. 1-3 hours
 - d. 3-6 hours
 - e. 6-11 hours
 - f. 11-20 hours
 - g. More than 20 hours
4. In a typical week, about how much time do you spend watching TV?
 - a. Don't use
 - b. Less than an hour
 - c. 1-3 hours
 - d. 3-6 hours
 - e. 6-11 hours
 - f. 11-20 hours
 - g. More than 20 hours
5. Has the time you spent on the Internet changed compared to last year?
 - a. Increased a lot
 - b. Increased somewhat
 - c. Remained the same
 - d. Decreased somewhat
 - e. Decrease a lot
6. Has the time you spent watching TV changed compared to last year?
 - a. Increased a lot
 - b. Increased somewhat
 - c. Remained the same
 - d. Decreased somewhat
 - e. Decreased a lot
7. How often do you go to the movies?
 - a. Twice a week or more
 - b. Once a week
 - c. Every two weeks
 - d. Once a month
 - e. Every two months
 - f. Every six months or less
 - g. None

8. Please indicate the degrees of persuasiveness of the following movie promotions, which may prompt you to see a movie. (lowest 1 to highest 5)
- | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. TV advertisement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| b. Movie promotion website | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| c. Newspaper Ad | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| d. Radio Ad | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| e. Billboard | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| f. WOM | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
9. Nowadays, movie studios dedicate websites to the promotion of their forthcoming films, which serves as a source of information about the movie (e.g., plot, stars, trailers, etc.). Which of the following apply to you?
- | | | | | | |
|---|--------|---------|-----------|--------|-------|
| a. After seeing movie advertising on TV, I go and see that movie. | Always | usually | sometimes | rarely | never |
| b. After seeing movie advertising on TV, I look for more information on movie promotion Website, and then decide whether to see that movie. | Always | usually | sometimes | rarely | never |
| c. I look for information on a movie promotion Website before planning to see a movie. | Always | usually | sometimes | rarely | never |
| d. None of the above | | | | | |
10. Why do you surf movie promotion websites? Please circle the degrees of reasons.
- | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------|---|---|---|--------|
| a. For movie information | low 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 high |
| b. For times | low 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 high |
| c. For tickets | low 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 high |
11. If you visited movie Websites, please rate the degree of attractiveness of the following movie promotion activities.
- | | | | | | |
|--|-------|---|---|---|--------|
| a. Trailer | low 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 high |
| b. Movie details | low 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 high |
| c. Box office | low 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 high |
| d. Review | low 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 high |
| e. Game | low 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 high |
| f. The anecdotes of the making of the movie. | low 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 high |
| g. Don't use movie website | | | | | |

12. The reasons you surf movie promotion websites before you see a movie are:
- Didn't watch movie advertising.
Strongly agree agree neutral disagree strongly disagree
 - It is easier to get information online about a movie.
Strongly agree agree neutral disagree strongly disagree
 - Get information of different movies and decide which movie to see.
Strongly agree agree neutral disagree strongly disagree
 - It is fast to get information online about a movie.
Strongly agree agree neutral disagree strongly disagree
 - Don't use movie promotion website
13. How are your computer skills?
- Excellent good medium marginal poor
14. The way you get online is:
- ISDN (on campus)
 - Cable modem
 - Dial-up
 - More than one way
 - Don't go online
15. What year are you in school?
- Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Graduate student
16. What is your gender?
- Male Female

VITA

Xiaoge Hu was born on October 15, 1975, in Hunan, China. In 1993, she entered the undergraduate program in Foreign Languages Department at Xiangtan University. She then received the Bachelor of Arts degree in English Linguistics and Literature in 1997. Upon graduation, she worked as an assistant teacher at Xiangtan University for three years. In 2000, she began her graduate study in the Manship School of Mass Communication at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge.