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The integrated mobile advertising model: The effects of technology- and emotion-based evaluations[☆]

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ABSTRACT

Because of the interactive property of mobile devices, our interest lies primarily in differences in how advertising and mobile technologies are perceived and judged. Drawing on the technology acceptance and mobile advertising literature, this paper assumes that responses to mobile advertising depend on a two-dimensional structure of attitudes: technology-based evaluations (utilitarian considerations) and emotion-based evaluations (hedonic considerations). Mobile advertising is affected both by characteristics of ad communication and by users' voluntary choices of mobile technology. Thus, the study proposes and examines an integrated advertising model that combines the effects of mobile technology and advertising itself. Using data collected from Korean consumers, the research hypotheses are supported, showing that an integrated approach proves to provide a robust framework for predicting mobile advertising effectiveness. The results also reveal that more experienced consumers consolidate their ability to distinguish information quality from performance expectations more than inexperienced users do. Theoretical implications to mobile advertising research are discussed, and practical suggestions for managers responsible for executing mobile advertising strategies are proposed.

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1. Introduction

Advertising strategies for new mobile devices (e.g., smart phones) appear to be a key marketing promotion in the era of mobile commerce. Although Short Message Service (SMS) is the most popular channel for mobile ads, SMS does not allow consumers to voluntarily interact with ad content, as it is a push-based strategy that involves “pushing” messages containing ads without the user's permission. Unlike SMS, mobile advertising that uses 3 G technology allows consumers to voluntarily access the content they need. This technology relies on a pull-based strategy that adopts a wireless platform with the capacity to browse contents and use a call-through response mechanism. As such, mobile ads are now using interactive displays and value-added services, which are unique to mobile ads that use 3 G technology, to deliver tailored services and target customers. These characteristics will increase the quantity of 3 G-device mobile strategies that facilitate active communication between advertisers and consumers. In fact, the literature on mobile technology has

shown that interactivity on mobile devices is positively related to consumer commitment and dispersion of social networks for product and service information (Kolsaker and Drakatos, 2009).

The Web Advertising Model, proposed by Ducoffe (1996), is, in theory, a well-defined framework for predicting attitudes toward mobile advertising (Shavitt et al., 1998; Tsang et al., 2004). However, questions about the links between beliefs in mobile technology and attitudes toward advertising go unanswered because mobile ads are designed by the human-machine interface and its active interaction between individuals and mobile systems (Hausman & Siekpe, 2009). Simply put, the Web Advertising Model seems to overlook the influence of users' perceptions toward mobile technology that facilitates access to the ad services that it produces. In addition, Davis and his colleagues (Davis, 1989; Davis et al., 1989) have proposed the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to explain how computer adoption is determined by technology-based beliefs (e.g., usefulness). However, evidence of how consumers' perceptions of mobile technology are related to attitude and actual response to mobile advertising is lacking. This paper explores the theoretical framework of a two-dimensional structure of attitudes (i.e., technology- and emotion-based evaluations) that better explains mobile ad effectiveness. That is, our study proposes an integrated model of technology- and emotion-based evaluations for predicting responses to mobile advertising.

Based on the Heuristic-Systematic Model (Chen & Chaiken, 1999), this paper also examines how users' experiences with mobile services may moderate the link between mobile technology acceptance and

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attitudes toward advertising. As experienced individuals believe in their ability to discriminate information quality from performance expectations (e.g., Castañeda et al., 2007; Venkatesh et al., 2003), they tend to be more accepting of and responsive toward mobile ads than inexperienced users are. Thus, this study expects consumer experience to have a moderating effect on mobile services.

The following section reviews theoretical frameworks in the field of mobile communication. We then develop and examine the integrated advertising model, finally turning to a discussion of theoretical and managerial implications.

2. Conceptual frameworks

2.1. Technology acceptance model

TAM's theoretical background stems from the theory of reasoned action (TRA) (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) and the theory of planned behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991). TRA posits that users' beliefs determine attitudes and intentions, which then influence actual behaviors. TPB elaborates on TRA by adding the construct of perceived behavior control as an independent determinant of intentions and behaviors. On the basis of these theories, TAM was developed to account for technology use in the workplace (Davis, 1989). TAM assumes that two basic beliefs – perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use – are the primary reasons for adopting technology. Perceived usefulness refers to “the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance” (Davis, 1989, p. 320) whereas perceived ease of use refers to “the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort” (Davis, 1989, p. 320). Individuals are likely to adopt new technologies when they perceive those technologies to be useful and easy to use.

Thus, TAM predicts that these perceptual beliefs are positively related to attitudes toward information technologies, which then determine intention to use and actual behavior. TAM studies have provided consistent results of perceptions of usefulness and ease of use for attitudes toward the Web (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000) and e-commerce (Kleijnen et al., 2004; McCloskey, 2003–2004). According to TAM, perceived usefulness increases when consumers feel that mobile technology is easy to use which, in turn, affects positive attitude formation. Conversely, acceptance of mobile technologies may decrease if consumers do not perceive the usefulness of new technologies based on a perception of being easy to use.

2.2. Web advertising model

Ducoffe's (1996) Web Advertising Model assumes that three antecedents – entertainment, irritation, and informativeness – are the main determinants of attitudes toward advertising on the World Wide Web, as Web-based internet services promise active interaction between sellers and buyers. Along these same lines, one study has found that entertainment strongly affects attitude toward mobile ads (Tsang et al., 2004), suggesting that consumers prefer form (i.e., entertaining features) over content (i.e., content features) when adopting mobile services. This phenomenon may be accelerated by the rapid development of mobile technologies in the realm of multimedia services, such as games and movie clips.

While entertainment is seen as an internal factor for consumers' approach to ads and as a positive psychological feeling, irritation is viewed as a negative psychological feeling and represents consumers' avoidance of the advertising (Ducoffe, 1996; Lin, 1999). Additionally, entertainment is a positive intrinsic motivator (driver) whereas irritation is a negative intrinsic motivator (inhibitor) (Davis et al., 1992). Elliot and Speck (1998) observe that individuals report negative responses (i.e., avoidance of the ad and negative feelings about it) when presented with significantly cluttered ads or when their information seeking is hindered by such ads. The

recent phenomenon of steeply decreasing click-through ratios in Web ads may indicate a typical avoidance response for users facing overloaded, spamming ads.

Web advertising research has shown that entertainment and irritation constructs are robust predictors of attitudes and intentions (Brackett & Carr, 2001; Shavitt et al., 1998; Tsang et al., 2004), implying that attitudes toward mobile advertising may be formed by emotional judgments. However, results of informativeness studies have disconfirmed the effect of attitudes toward mobile ads (Brackett & Carr, 2001). Considering the weak effect of informativeness, Okazaki (2004) has proposed the concept of “infortainment,” a portmanteau of “information” and “entertainment,” which suggests that information characteristics in mobile ads may be available only when associated with entertainment elements.

2.3. Technology- and emotion-based evaluations

Over the last two decades, studies have proposed a two-dimensional structure of attitude that accounts for affective vs. cognitive attributes (Burke & Edell, 1989) and hedonic vs. utilitarian considerations (Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000). Affective attributes refer to feelings and emotions that correspond to hedonic considerations while cognitive attributes relate to the quality of usefulness that corresponds to utilitarian considerations of consumption. This distinction between attitudinal dimensions is important in understanding the effect of mobile advertising because mobile ads depend on beliefs about both technology-based evaluations and emotion-based evaluations delivered as mobile services.

In the same vein, TAM has been criticized for depending primarily on external factors (e.g., usefulness) and not considering internal factors (e.g., affect and emotion) (Djamasbi et al., 2010). In terms of these critical issues, TAM may not sufficiently explain consumers' responses and service adoptions in mobile commerce; it may, in fact, be necessary to add emotional dimensions that influence attitude formation and individual judgments. To clarify the distinction between beliefs about mobile technology and advertising, this paper conceptualizes technology- and emotion-based evaluations as a two-dimensional structure of attitude derived from Motivation Theory. Motivation Theory states that individuals are motivated to use new technologies based on extrinsic rewards (e.g., usefulness, social pressure) or intrinsic rewards (e.g., enjoyment, fun) (Davis et al., 1992; Igbaria et al., 1996; Venkatesh et al., 2003). Extrinsic motivation relates to how performing activities increases meaningful outcomes while intrinsic motivation is associated with the actual process of performing activities (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Within the scope of our study, Motivation Theory posits that usefulness and ease of use are external motivators whereas entertainment and irritation are internal motivators for information technology usage. Therefore, our study assumes two different sources of beliefs: technology-based evaluation (usefulness and ease of use as external motivators) and emotion-based evaluation (enjoyment and irritation as internal motivators). Empirical evidence has demonstrated the interplay of affective-cognitive dimensions (Burke & Edell, 1989) and how it uniquely influences attitudinal judgments and behaviors (Dubú et al., 2003). Consumers are likely to access advertising content that offers the information they need but that also offers enjoyment and pleasure. Based on these arguments, this paper assumes that mobile technology acceptance and attitudes toward mobile ads are derived from different sources of beliefs, that is, technology-based evaluations and emotion-based evaluations, respectively. This paper thus presents the following hypotheses:

H1. (a) Technology-based evaluations (perceived usefulness and ease of use) are related to acceptance of mobile technology while (b) emotion-based evaluations (entertainment and irritation) are related to attitudes toward mobile advertising.

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