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Journal of Marketing Management ›

Volume 29, 2013 - Issue 3-4: Special Issue 1: Retailing in a Connected World; Special Issue 2: CRM: Technology Adoption, Business Implications, and Social and Cultural Concerns

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The wallpaper matters: Digital signage as customer-experience provider at the Harrods (London, UK) department store

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Pages 338-355 | Published online: 09 Apr 2013

Cite this article https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2013.766628

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Abstract

This paper draws on the construct of brand experience to investigate the previously little-researched role of digital signage (DS) in retail atmospherics. Face-to-face between-subjects survey experiments were carried out at permanent DS installations in the UK: a pretest in a university (n = 103), and a field trial at the Harrods department store, London (n = 437). Findings demonstrate the effectiveness of DS sensory-affective advertisments (little functional information), whereas previous studies concern mainly cognitive content. DS content high on sensory cues evokes affective experience. DS ads that are high in factual information evoke intellectual experience. Evoked affective experience is more associated with attitude towards the ad and approach towards the advertiser than is evoked intellectual experience.

Summary statement of contribution: The findings indicate that incidental brand-related stimuli on DS can lead to evaluative judgments such as attitudes. Such stimuli can also work by evoking sensory and affective experiences and eliciting approach behaviour towards an advertiser. Practical implications arise as ‘affective’ DS ads can increase shoppers’ approach towards an advertiser and the store that carries the ads, especially in generating loyalty from first time shoppers.

Keywords:

digital signage | experiential message cues | customer experience

Acknowledgements

We thank the editors and anonymous reviewers for many helpful suggestions, the Harrods store for access and ad production, and ROI Team and Brunel University for resources.

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