



Journal of Advertising >

Volume 39, 2010 - [Issue 2](#)

3,652 | 117

Views | CrossRef citations to date | 3

Altmetric

Original Article

Measuring Soft-Sell Versus Hard-Sell Advertising Appeals

Shintaro Okazaki, Barbara Mueller & Charles R. Taylor

Pages 5-20 | Published online: 04 Mar 2013

🗨️ Cite this article 🔗 <https://doi.org/10.2753/JOA0091-3367390201>

Sample our
Humanities
Journals
>> **Sign in here** to start your access
to the latest two volumes for 14 days



📖 References

🗨️ Citations

📊 Metrics

🖨️ Reprints & Permissions

Read this article

🔗 Share

Abstract

The terms "soft sell" and "hard sell" are well known to advertising scholars and practitioners. Despite wide-spread use of these terms, generally accepted definitions do not exist. Attempts to measure soft-sell and hard-sell appeals have typically been unsophisticated, relying on a single item that classifies an ad into one category or the other. This study is designed to provide a deeper understanding of the concepts "soft sell" and "hard sell," and to examine whether they are better measured on a single dimension than on two distinct dimensions. The main objective of the study is to develop and validate a method for measuring soft-sell and hard-sell appeals. To this end, candidate items were generated via a review of prior literature, supplemented by content analysis, a free-association task, expert judgment, and focus groups. The measurement instruments were then purified and validated using a pretest with a sample of student participants, and further validated using a general consumer sample.

Results indicate that soft-sell appeals can be measured using a 12-item, 3-factor index, whereas hard-sell appeals can be measured using a 15-item, 3-factor index.

This article is part of the following collection(s):

[50 Years of the Journal of Advertising](#)

Related research 

People also read

Recommended articles

Cited by
117

Information for

[Authors](#)

[R&D professionals](#)

[Editors](#)

[Librarians](#)

[Societies](#)

Opportunities

[Reprints and e-prints](#)

[Advertising solutions](#)

[Accelerated publication](#)

[Corporate access solutions](#)

Open access

[Overview](#)

[Open journals](#)

[Open Select](#)

[Dove Medical Press](#)

[F1000Research](#)

Help and information

[Help and contact](#)

[Newsroom](#)

[All journals](#)

[Books](#)

Keep up to date

Register to receive personalised research and resources by email



Sign me up



Copyright © 2026 Informa UK Limited [Privacy policy](#) [Cookies](#) [Terms & conditions](#)

[Accessibility](#)

 Taylor and Francis Group

Registered in England & Wales No. 01072954
5 Howick Place | London | SW1P 1WG