

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD at the University of Warwick**

**Permanent WRAP URL:**

<http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/91496>

**Copyright and reuse:**

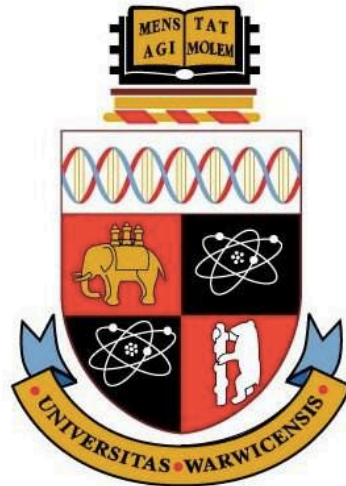
This thesis is made available online and is protected by original copyright.

Please scroll down to view the document itself.

Please refer to the repository record for this item for information to help you to cite it.

Our policy information is available from the repository home page.

For more information, please contact the WRAP Team at: [wrap@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:wrap@warwick.ac.uk)



Ambient advertising: An examination of ad features  
influencing consumer engagement

by

Megan Robyn Lee Yuen

Thesis

Submitted to the University of Warwick

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Warwick Business School

March, 2017

*To my beloved parents,*

*Michael & Wendy*

# Table of contents

---

<b>List of tables</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>List of figures</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>Declaration</b>	<b>xv</b>
<b>Abstract</b>	<b>xvi</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Overview	1
1.2 Research objectives	2
1.3 Research contribution	4
1.4 Research overview	4
<b>2 Literature review</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1 Introduction	6
2.2 Out-of-home advertising	7
2.2.1 Outdoor advertising	7
2.2.2 Stealth marketing	11
2.2.3 Dahlén's creative media	14
2.2.4 Ambient advertising	17
2.3 Engagement	24
2.3.1 Experiential marketing	24
2.3.2 Interactivity	28
2.4 Related advertising concepts	31

2.4.1 Advertising clutter	32
2.4.2 Creativity effects	35
2.5. Summary	38
<b>3 Methodology</b>	<b>41</b>
3.1 Introduction	41
3.2 Consumer focus groups	42
3.2.1 Instruments	42
3.2.2 Sampling	53
3.2.3 Data collection	55
3.3 Content Analysis	56
3.3.1 Instruments	56
3.3.2 Sampling	60
3.3.3 Data collection	61
3.4 Personal interviews	62
3.4.1 Instruments	62
3.4.2 Sampling	64
3.4.3 Data collection	66
3.5 Summary	68
<b>4 Findings</b>	<b>70</b>
4.1 Introduction	70
4.2 Focus group findings	70
4.3 Content analysis results	75
4.3.1 Components	78

4.3.2 Placement	79
4.3.3 Medium	81
4.4 Consumer interview findings	85
4.5 Summary	88
<b>5 Discussion</b>	<b>90</b>
5.1 Introduction	90
5.2 Ad features	91
5.2.1 Components	92
5.2.2 Placement	110
5.2.3 Medium	142
5.3 Ad novelty	193
5.3.1 Volitional attention	193
5.3.2 Word of mouth participation	204
5.4 Consumer perceptions	212
5.4.1 Ad perceptions	212
5.4.2 Brand perceptions	221
5.4.3 Perceptions of ambient advertising as a practice	226
5.5 Summary	235
<b>6 Conclusion</b>	<b>242</b>
6.1 Research contribution	242
6.1.1 Theoretical contribution	242
6.1.2 Methodological contribution	248
6.1.3 Managerial contribution	250

6.2 Research limitations	256
6.3 Suggestions for further research	261
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>265</b>
<b>Reference List</b>	<b>307</b>

# List of tables

---

3.1 Summary of literature referenced in focus group interview guide	45
4.1 Summary of focus group participant data	71
4.2 Emergent groups and categories from focus group data	72
4.3 Sample of focus group participant quotes used to develop categories	72
4.4 Schema of categories	76
4.5 Frequencies of subcategory ad features	77
4.6 Summary of interview participant data	86
4.7 Data summary of ads encountered by interview participants	87



# List of figures

---

3.1 Bench advertising Nestlé Kit Kat chocolate bar	47
3.2 Subway turnstile advertising CoverGirl LashBlast mascara	48
3.3 Tactile sidewalk pavers advertising Lego's Education Centre in Australia	49
3.4 Airport baggage carousel advertising for Casino de Venezia	50
3.5 Water drinking fountain advertising Scotch Brite sponges	51
3.6 Wall advertising for Stihl high pressure cleaners	52
3.7 Coding form developed for content analysis	59
5.1 Ad for a shopping centre depicting the barcode symbol at a zebra crossing	93
5.2 Ad for a hair salon depicting a product feature at a zebra crossing	94
5.3 Ad for household cleaner depicting the product effect using a zebra crossing	94
5.4 Ad for an office products retailer depicting the product and the product effect using a zebra crossing	95
5.5 Ad for hair-strengthening product depicting the product, the feature and the effect	97
5.6 Ad for knives depicting the product, the product target and the product effect	97
5.7 Ad for aquariums integrating the actual product into the ad	104
5.8 Ad for disposable diapers integrating a modified version of the product into the ad	105
5.9 Ad for sushi restaurant incorporating the product representation into the ad using an escalator decal	106
5.10 Ad for sushi bar incorporating the actual product through sampling promotion	107

5.11 Ad for toilet paper incorporating the actual product into the ad	108
5.12 Example of ad placement where consumer comes into direct contact with ad while on foot	111
5.13 Example of ad placement where consumer comes into direct contact with ad while in a vehicle	112
5.14 Example of an ad placed out of reach of the consumer	113
5.15 Example of an ad incorporating tactile appeals in ad message	117
5.16 Example of an ad incorporating olfactory appeals in ad message	117
5.17 Ad incorporating auditory appeals into an ad message placed out of consumer reach	121
5.18 Example of ad placement at entry/exit point where consumer is on foot	125
5.19 Example of ad placement at entry/exit point where consumer is in vehicle	125
5.20 Example of ad placement at entry/exit point with limited visibility	126
5.21 Example of ad placement at a waiting point	133
5.22 Example of ad placement where consumer is held captive	134
5.23 Example of ad placement where the consumer is exposed to the ad for the duration of an activity	134
5.24 Example of an ad placed at a waiting point with no experiential appeals	140
5.25 Example of a 3-dimensional ad using promotional street art	144
5.26 Example of an ad using a fabricated medium with no provision of utility to the consumer	157
5.27 Example of an ad featuring two-way communication	162
5.28 Example of an ad using a fabricated medium to provide physiological value to consumers	170
5.29 Example of an ad using an existing medium to provide physiological value to consumers	171

5.30 Example of an ad incorporating the actual product into the ad message, where the consumer has no experience with the product	172
5.31 Example of an ad allowing consumers to have experience with the product	173
5.32 A camera ad incorporating the actual product to demonstrate a product feature	187
5.33 A cereal ad representing the product feature of containing real fruit	188
A.1 Example of an ambient ad that uses shared elements of shape and design between the product and the medium	265
A.2 Example of an ambient ad that uses shared elements of colour and shape between the product and the medium	266
A.3 Example of an ambient ad that uses shared elements of physical orientation between the product and the medium	267
A.4 Example of an ambient ad that uses shared elements of texture between the product and the medium	268
A.5 Example of an ambient ad that uses shared elements of movement between the product feature and the medium	269
A.6 Example of an ambient ad that uses shared elements of functionality between the product and the medium	270
A.7 Example of an ambient ad that depicts the product	280
A.8 Example of an ambient ad that depicts the product effect	281
A.9 Example of an ambient ad that depicts the product target	282
A.10 Example of an ambient ad that depicts a symbol	283
A.11 Example of an ambient ad that depicts a related feature	284
A.12 Example of an ambient ad that depicts a product feature	285
A.13 Example of an ambient ad that incorporates the actual product into the ad	285
A.14 Example of an ambient ad that incorporates a modified product into the ad	286

A.15 Example of an ambient ad where the product is not included	287
A.16 Example of an ambient ad where the product is not included	287
A.17 Example of an ambient ad with which the consumer makes direct contact	288
A.18 Example of an ambient ad with which the consumer makes direct contact	289
A.19 Example of an ambient ad which is out of reach from the consumer	290
A.20 Example of an ambient ad placed at a waiting point	290
A.21 Example of an ambient ad placed at an entry/exit point	291
A.22 Example of an ambient ad placed at an other indoor location	292
A.23 Example of an ambient ad placed at an other outdoor location	293
A.24 Example of a 2-dimensional ambient ad	294
A.25 Example of a 3-dimensional ambient ad	295
A.26 Example of an ambient ad utilising a pre-existing medium	296
A.27 Example of an ambient ad utilising a fabricated medium	296
A.28 Example of an ambient ad using one-way communication	297
A.29 Example of an ambient ad using two-way communication	298
A.30 Example of an ambient ad using two-way communication	299
A.31 Example of an ambient ad providing physiological value	300
A.32 Example of an ambient ad providing informational value	301
A.33 Example of an ambient ad providing consumers experience with the product	301
A.34 Example of an ambient ad providing no benefit of branding	302
A.35 Example of an ambient ad featuring demonstration of feature/result/benefit	303

A.36 Example of an ambient ad featuring demonstration of feature/result/benefit	304
A.37 Example of an ambient ad featuring representation of feature/result/benefit	305
A.38 Example of an ambient ad with no benefit demonstrated	306

# Acknowledgements

---

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to several people who were invaluable during this journey.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisors, Dr. Scott Dacko and Dr. David Arnott, for their guidance, support and inspiration during my time in the doctoral programme. Thank you for giving of your time, knowledge and expertise, and for aiding in my development as a researcher. I will always be grateful for your encouragement, as well as the confidence that you placed in me.

I would like to thank the outstanding institution of Warwick Business School, which I am proud to call my academic home. I am greatly appreciative of the many opportunities with which I was provided to develop as a doctoral researcher. I am also thankful for the financial support that I received via the WBS Doctoral Scholarship programme. Special thanks to the staff of the Doctoral Programme Office for all the support and advice they provided to me during my time at the school.

I am eternally grateful to all those who participated in this study; my research would be nothing if not for your involvement. I sincerely thank each and every one of you for giving of your time and patience in contributing to my research; the findings that have resulted are truly invaluable to me.

I am very thankful to every person who encouraged, motivated and inspired me to complete this dissertation: my family, friends, classmates, advocates. I appreciate every person who has lent his or her support or advice to help see me through this most challenging journey.

Thank you to my brother, Stefan, for always supporting me, even when I bounce from one extreme to the next. Nobody understands me like you do, and you always know exactly what to say to encourage me, regardless of the outcome. Thank you for being the person I can always count on.

To Rishi, you have been by my side from the very beginning, and you are still here at the very end. I cannot thank you enough for all you have done, and all that you have sacrificed to make this possible. I am so grateful for everything you have been to me, and everything you continue to be.

Finally, my deepest and most heartfelt thanks go to my parents, Michael and Wendy. Without you, I would not be where I am and I would not be the person that I have become. You have made all this possible; you have been the motivation I needed to fulfil this dream. I cannot imagine completing this journey if not for your unwavering patience, support and love. You continue to inspire me to do better, and to be better. There are simply not enough words in this world to tell you how grateful I am to have you in my life. Everything I have and everything I am, I owe to you both. I love you without end.

# Declaration

---

This thesis is presented to the University of Warwick in partial fulfillment of the requirements for admission to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The author declares that the material contained in this thesis is entirely her own work. As per standard practice, the subject matter developed builds upon existing theory, and clear citations and references are provided as necessary.

Although material contained herein may be submitted for publication at a later date, the author has not published any work that forms part of this thesis.

The author declares that no part of this thesis has been submitted to another university or educational institution for consideration of a degree or otherwise.



# Abstract

---

Ambient marketing is one of the fastest-growing out-of-home advertising methods, for the past 15 years, although formal research into this field is very limited. This research study investigates a particular subset of ambient ads, where physical features within the external environment are incorporated into the ads in some way, using an exploratory research design. The research addresses consumer engagement with ambient ads, through discussion of individual ad features and their influence on stimulating consumer interest in these ad messages, and consumer perceptions generated from these ads.

The literature review presents theory and findings of existing ambient advertising, including various research perspectives on definitions of ‘ambient’ advertising. Related marketing practices are discussed, including stealth marketing, creative media and the wider practice of traditional OOH advertising. In addressing engagement within advertising, experiential marketing and interactivity concepts are reviewed, as well as ad clutter and creativity effects of traditional advertising.

Due to the lack of existing literature into engagement with ambient messages, a series of five focus groups was conducted in order to identify categories of ad features, further developed through content analysis pre-tests. A content analysis of 494 ambient ads was conducted to illustrate marketers’ use of the identified ad features. In total, 15 interviews were conducted to provide further insights, coupled with focus group findings, into the influence of these features on consumer engagement with ambient ads.

The findings presented indicate how each identified ad feature influences consumer engagement with ambient message, and with the advertised brands. The effects of ad novelty are discussed, where volitional attention and generation of word of mouth result from the perceived creativity of ambient ads. Consumer perceptions towards ambient ads, brands and the practice as a whole are presented. Throughout the discussion, the findings are analysed to suggest to marketers how ambient advertising practices can be developed to encourage engagement with ad messages, and provide brand experiences to consumers.

# 1 Introduction

---

## 1.1 Overview

Ambient advertising is an ever-evolving communications method that integrates brand messages into non-traditional mediums within the public environment. By making use of commonplace objects found within the public space, every physical surface carries the potential to convey a message, from the brand to the consumer. Practitioners are devising increasingly creative and integrated messages into the out-of-home (OOH) environment, and making greater use of interactive features in ads. Ambient advertising is thus evolving, from simply capturing consumers' attention in unexpected locations, to creating a brand experience for the consumer, through engagement.

Within the past decade and a half, ambient marketing has gained popularity among practitioners, and has become one of the fastest-growing marketing communications methods, based upon physical proliferation (Shankar & Horton 1999, Concord 2001) and advertising spending (PQ Media 2007). PQ Media (2007) reports a 6.4% increase in the advertising industry in 2006, with a surge in spending towards alternative OOH resulting in a 27.0% rise for the same period, and 14.1% for 'alternative ambient' specifically. More recent figures indicate that while advertising channels such as Internet and mobile advertising have surpassed the growth rate of ambient advertising, the grouping of digital and alternative advertising garners the largest revenue for the OOH advertising sector (PQ Media 2014). The growth of ambient marketing, or alternative OOH advertising, has resulted in the establishment of the practice, as separate and distinct from outdoor advertising, warranting research efforts into this specific segment.

Despite such growth, ambient marketing has only been researched and explored minimally within academia, and much of the literature available is purely conceptual. Currently, no precise or widely accepted definition of ambient marketing has been established, within either academia or practice, resulting in a myriad of OOH ads being classified under the umbrella of 'ambient'. As the

practice continues to evolve, there have been increased efforts to distinguish ambient marketing from OOH advertising, and the last five years have seen a notable increase in empirical studies into consumer responses to ambient ads.

The word 'ambient' has been defined as "*relating to the immediate surroundings of something*" and even includes a marketing definition: "*relating to or denoting advertising that makes use of sites or objects other than the established media (e.g. by placing slogans on the backs of bus tickets)*" (Oxford 2016). Despite this common definition associating ambient ads with their surroundings, there exists a lack of focus on this relationship within the literature, and noticeably, in researchers' definitions of 'ambient' advertising. The researcher therefore, examines those ads that focus on integration of the medium into the ad, establishing a relationship between the ad message and its surroundings, through choice of medium and placement.

The use of commonplace objects as advertising media, and the placement of these ambient ads within consumers' immediate surroundings, allows for and even encourages physical interaction between the consumer and the ad. In many instances, an ad's placement forces a consumer to come into contact with it. However, these interactions between the consumer and the ad, whether voluntary or involuntary, have largely been unaddressed in the literature, and present an important area of examination within this study.

## **1.2 Research objectives**

Within the context of this research, 'ambient' ads, or marketing, will refer to out-of-home marketing communications methods that employ non-traditional physical spaces which are not typically designated to advertising messages, and which are primarily located within consumers' immediate external environment. In particular, the research is directed towards ambient campaigns, in which there exists a relationship between the message and the medium used, where the medium itself is relevant in a consumer's processing of the marketing message, through its shape, colour, texture, physical orientation or function (see Appendix I).

The primary focus of this research is to understand how consumers interact with these ads as a result of their placement within their immediate environments. The researcher aims to present an investigation of consumer perceptions of ambient marketing, as individual ads and as a practice, and of creativity or novelty within these ads. Accordingly, the following specific research objectives are presented as follows:

- I. To analyse ambient marketing campaigns in order to identify different features of these ads as compared to other forms of advertising, both traditional and non-traditional, which impact upon consumer engagement with an ad
- II. To identify the ways in which marketers integrate and manipulate these features into ambient ads to prompt consumer engagement with the ad and, by extension, the brand and/or product
- III. To examine the varying extents to which consumers engage with ambient ads with respect to the physical contact made with these ads, including the generation of word-of-mouth, as a result of them being placed in the consumer's immediate environment and/or the use of objects typically found within the OOH environment
- IV. To understand which ad features affect a consumer's interest to engage with an ambient ad, particularly when this contact is voluntary, and how this engagement can be encouraged
- V. To identify and develop an understanding of consumer perceptions of ambient advertising, in terms of individual ads, and the practice as a whole, as a result of ad placement in consumers' immediate environments, and the use of commonplace objects as the ad medium

The above research objectives serve to produce a greater understanding of consumer interaction with ambient ads, for both forced and voluntary encounters, by identifying how consumers choose to engage with ads and their motivations for doing so. As a result of these interactions, the research explores how consumer affect is generated or diminished by contact with ambient ads, and how consumers view the practice. From these research objectives, the

researcher seeks to provide marketers with a clearer understanding of how to encourage these interactions and to engage more deeply with consumers through ambient media.

### **1.3 Research contribution**

The main contribution of the research is to develop an understanding of the varying levels of consumer engagement with ambient ads, from merely noticing to willingly interacting with an ad. By analysing specific ad elements, the researcher aims to illustrate how ambient ads are unique from other advertising methods, and how this leads to particular consumer perceptions of, and interactions with, these ads.

The research provides an empirical analysis of a large sample of ambient ads to identify the features that marketers implement in an attempt to garner consumer attention. Discussions with consumers who have encountered ambient ads through pictorials, and in actuality, provide insight as to the effectiveness of these executions, and why a consumer might want to engage with an ad, based on its message, placement and medium.

Managerial implications are also considered, as developing an understanding of how consumers engage with ambient ads can be extrapolated into practical applications, such as considering the design of an ad or deciding its placement. Recognising the ways in which particular elements can impact consumer response provides indicators as to how managers could manage or modify ads, in order to produce the desired interaction between the consumer and the ad.

### **1.4 Research overview**

The researcher aims to identify and investigate the features of ambient marketing that makes these ads distinct from other types of OOH advertising, and examine how consumers perceive and interact with ambient ads. These objectives are achieved through a mixed-methods research design, initially exploring consumer responses to ambient ads through focus groups. The data

from these focus groups serve to develop an image content analysis of ambient ads, which will distinguish and categorise ad elements that are deemed to impact upon consumer interaction with ads. Elements unique to ambient ads are then identified and examined with respect to consumer perception and behaviour, through a series of personal interviews. This qualitative data is considered to provide a multitude of possible behavioural responses and circumstances for interaction between a consumer and an ad.

The findings are presented in two parts, based on each data collection method, with the content analysis findings being presented quantitatively, before being discussed in conjunction with the qualitative data derived from the focus groups and personal interviews. The content analysis provides a classification of ambient ad elements, definitions of each, and identifies the key components that distinguish ambient ads from any others. The focus group and interview findings both provide insight into consumer perceptions of and engagement with ambient ads, where focus group participants have discussed pictorial examples of ads, and interviewees recall actual encounters with real-world ads. Emerging theories are discussed to provide an understanding of consumers' conative and affective responses to ambient advertising, but more importantly, the underlying reasons for these outcomes. As a result, managerial implications are considered and presented within the discussion, to demonstrate the practical effectiveness of ambient ads in driving desired consumer behaviour results.

## 2 Literature review

---

### 2.1 Introduction

In order to begin to answer the research questions outlined, a review of the available literature pertaining to ambient advertising has been conducted, focusing on consumer engagement and ad perceptions. An examination of literature in these areas allows for identification of findings that would benefit from further investigation, with respect to ambient marketing. Due to the lack of literature on ambient media specifically, the broader umbrella of OOH advertising provides a wider set of findings, to understand how consumers interact with media outside of the home, which could later be investigated for ambient ads specifically.

In order to understand how consumers may want to engage with or avoid ambient ads, related marketing theory has been examined, and concepts extracted that could be applied to ambient advertising research. Creative advertising and its appeals are reviewed, as ambient ads could be considered novel executions, due to medium choice and placement. The effects of ad clutter are also studied, to gain an understanding of how consumers engage with ad messages in an ever-growing advertising environment.

The research aims are centred on consumer engagement, with the creation of brand experiences for consumers through use of unconventional mediums, and the immediacy of ambient ads, allowing for physical interaction. As a result, the topics of experiential marketing and interactivity have been researched, although these concepts are not directly related to ambient advertising. Despite this, the ideas of experience and interaction are immediately relevant to the research objectives of this study, and pertinent theory is applied to ambient communications.

The literature review aims to identify areas necessitating further research into ambient advertising concepts, without limiting the discussion to theory developed for ambient media only. As literature surrounding ambient advertising is fairly fragmented, examining literature from related fields is useful

in theory generation, for understanding how, and why, consumers engage with ambient ads.

## **2.2 Out-of-home advertising**

As discussed within the introductory chapter, ambient marketing falls under the umbrella of OOH marketing, which is largely comprised of traditional outdoor advertising. With the greatest pool of research centred on traditional outdoor ads, this area is the starting point of the literature review. Alternative OOH ads include ambient media and stealth marketing, although the latter mainly relies on people, rather than a physical medium, to advertise products. However, both practices attempt to reach consumers by using non-traditional means to break through ad clutter, so stealth marketing has been researched in an effort to identify potential methods of reaching consumers through ambient messages. Dahlén's research into creative media presents another alternative OOH media. While divergent from ambient media as researched in this study, 'creative media' presents similarities between the two practices, particularly in terms of unexpected use of media, and has thus been explored in detail.

### **2.2.1 Outdoor advertising**

Within this study, 'outdoor advertising' refers to traditional outdoor media, namely posters and billboards, as suggested by Shankar & Horton (1999). For over the last two decades, many academics (e.g. Woodside 1990, Bhargava & Donthu 1999, Taylor et al 2006, Osborne & Coleman 2008) have attested to the growth of outdoor advertising as a significant mass medium, with Lichtenthal et al (2006) citing even more impressive growth rates for non-traditional types of OOH advertising, such as street furniture, and outdoor media besides posters and billboards. These observations are echoed by advertising and marketing reports such as Concord Media (1998, 2001) and PQ Media (2007) citing OOH and ambient advertising as one of the fastest growing marketing sectors. While more recent advertising efforts are focused on more technology-driven channels, such as digital, mobile and social media marketing, the previous popularity of outdoor



advertising provides insights as to the adoption of ambient media strategies, as both practices represent OOH advertising methods.

The reported surge in outdoor advertising is due to several factors, the first of which is the declining effectiveness of traditional in-home media vehicles, such as television, radio and print advertising, but also due to the benefits that outdoor advertising presents to marketers. A comprehensive list of these advantages is presented by Taylor et al (2006) and include 24-hour presence, high reach, and frequency of exposure, visual impact, and higher economic efficiency, as compared to traditional advertising, in terms of both cost per thousand exposures and typically lower costs of production. Furthermore, of particular interest to marketers, is the potential ability to place OOH advertisements close to the point of sale (POS). While cited, with reference to billboard advertising in particular, these benefits can be extrapolated to virtually all types of OOH advertising, although there are a few exceptions due to the medium and location used, and other academics have reiterated several of these claims (e.g. Gannett 1981, Whitehill King & Tinkham 1990, Lopez-Pumarejo & Bassell 2009).

In addition to these conceptual advantages of outdoor advertising, empirical findings have demonstrated tangible benefits of this medium. Outdoor advertising has been shown to break through advertising clutter to capture consumers' attention (Woodside 1990, Lopez-Pumarejo & Bassell 2009), improve brand awareness (Gannett 1981, Bhargava & Donthu 1999, Belch & Belch 2014), and increase recall of the advertised product and/or brand (Whitehill King & Tinkham 1990, Lichtenthal et al 2006,), as well as serve as a reminder to consumer, prior to purchase (Lichtenthal et al 2006, Lopez-Pumarejo & Bassell 2009). Research data has also illustrated that outdoor advertising can produce an increase in sales (Eastlack & Rao 1989, Bhargava & Donthu 1999), and generate word-of-mouth effects (Whitehill King & Tinkham 1990). Additionally, OOH advertising has also been accepted as a means of strengthening an integrated marketing communications strategy (Lichtenthal et al 2006, Taylor et al 2006, Lopez-Pumarejo & Bassell 2009). As a form of OOH advertising, it can be postulated that ambient marketing can reap similar

benefits, and possibly to a greater extent, due to the additional benefit of allowing for engagement with these ads, and providing a brand experience to the consumer.

Further research investigates the effectiveness of outdoor advertising and how this can be improved. Research by Donthu et al (1993), Bhargava et al (1994), Osborne and Coleman (2008), and van Meurs and Aristoff (2009) suggests that recall and brand/product recognition of outdoor advertising is increased when few words are included in the ad, and where single-minded or straightforward messages are communicated. Consumers engaging in word-of-mouth (WOM) of the advertisement also improve recall levels; and brand/product recognition may be enhanced by inclusion of the product name or brand logo, product pictorials, and minimal product information. However, it should be noted that excessive brand identification, distracting content, and pricing information, are all found to detract from the creative appeal of outdoor advertising. Bhargava et al (1994) demonstrate a correlation between recall levels of outdoor advertising and variables such as product price, awareness of the advertised product, length of campaign, appeals used, and type of outdoor media employed. As these studies examine traditional outdoor advertising, such as billboards, posters and digital billboards or 'smartboards' (Osborne & Coleman 2008), similar research on less conventional outdoor mediums, including ambient ads, should be undertaken to investigate whether these results are consistent across other OOH advertising methods. As Bucci (1973) and Young (1984) report, recall scores may underrepresent the impact or effectiveness of outdoor advertising. This finding suggests the need for other measures to be used to depict the success of this medium, and possibly the use of qualitative research to produce more balanced results, as well as exploration into an understanding of how and why consumers react to outdoor advertising, in the manners suggested by the authors above. Consumer affect towards both the ad and the brand are possible alternative metrics to determine the effectiveness of ambient and other OOH advertising.

Outdoor advertising presents its own limitations; firstly, there is a lack of research into this advertising area despite its widespread growth and acceptance

within the industry (Whitehill King & Tinkham 1990, Woodside 1990, Bhargava & Donthu 1999, Katz 2003). As suggested by these authors, this research deficit is due to the challenge in replicating outdoor advertising exposure in a research lab, necessitating field research, which is costly and limits the amount of control by the researcher. Other reasons include the dominance of television advertising, resulting in significantly more research attention being devoted to this medium, as well as the difficulty in isolating the results of outdoor advertising due to it typically being integrated into a broader marketing strategy employing other media (Whitehill King & Tinkham 1990, Taylor et al 2006). These explanations also hold true for ambient marketing, as a sub-category of OOH advertising, being under-researched, with further challenges due to the significant fragmentation of ambient media, as well as the lack of a standardised and accepted definition of 'ambient' advertising.

Further to this lack of research, other shortcomings as to the use or acceptance of outdoor advertising also exist. In the findings of Lichtenthal et al (2006), only products or messages fulfilling certain criteria will garner positive results when used for business-to-business markets, indicating that this media has limited value in this field. Additionally, as advertising is placed within the public domain, advertising regulations restrict specific classes of products, such as tobacco and alcohol, from employing this medium, particularly due to its exposure to minors. Furthermore, Lopez-Pumarejo and Bassell (2009) postulate an increase in activism against billboards, due to the visual clutter of this medium and the resentment that it generates among consumers. As this ad clutter extends from established advertising media to commonplace objects within the environment, this consumer backlash may spread to ambient media, as Storch (2008) suggests intrusion into consumers' private realm. Finally, van Meurs and Aristoff (2009) perceive a decline in the appeal of poster advertising, and note that consumers are becoming increasingly critical of outdoor advertising. However, this last observation presents an opportunity for ambient marketing, as a non-traditional and unexpected vehicle to capture consumers' attention and, thus, interest and engagement, to rejuvenate the OOH advertising industry, although further investigation is required to validate this argument.

Following from this idea, in order to negate these disadvantages, traditional outdoor advertising has evolved into the broader sphere of OOH advertising, demonstrating a movement from conventional posters and billboards to 3-dimensional and digital billboards and, more recently, alternative outdoor media such as bus shelters, taxicabs, blimps and skywriting. Furthermore, this diversification is only expected to grow, as marketers seek increasingly novel communications strategies (Whitehill King & Tinkham 1990), and outdoor advertising is accepted to be “*the only unavoidable realm from which to reach progressively elusive customers*” (Lopez-Pumarejo & Bassell 2009, p.38), as consumers continue to ignore traditionally placed advertisements.

As outdoor and broader OOH advertising practices evolve in order to capture consumer attention and interest, marketers are utilising more creative appeals, in an effort to reach consumers and communicate brand messages. While favourable results have been demonstrated in terms of attention, brand awareness, recall, and sales, consumer affect towards the practice of traditional OOH ads has been seen to be primarily negative. Despite these unfavourable perceptions, WOM has been demonstrated as an outcome for individual campaigns. These results suggest areas of research for ambient advertising, in its use of non-traditional OOH media channels, to identify how consumers perceive these ads, and the resulting affect towards ads. Additionally, research into the affect produced by ambient ads, whether positive or negative, is a possible requirement to determining the WOM generated by these ads.

### **2.2.2 Stealth marketing**

Stealth marketing is defined as “*marketing that is not immediately perceived as marketing*” (Dacko 2008, p.497), or “*surreptitious marketing practices that fail to disclose or reveal the true relationship with the company that produces or sponsors the marketing message*” (Martin & Smith 2008, p.45). As such, consumers may not be aware that they are being exposed to advertising messages. Kaikati and Kaikati (2004) classify stealth marketing into six categories: viral marketing, brand pushers, celebrity marketing, bait-and-tease marketing, marketing in video games, and marketing in pop and rap music. Due to consumer

defensiveness towards advertising, stealth marketing seeks to reach consumers mainly via sources that they consider to be credible, such as peers and 'unsponsored' celebrities or blogs, so that these messages are perceived to be authentic rather than branded. Roy and Chattopadhyay (2010) suggest that stealth marketing also includes activities that consumers and/or competitors may or may not be aware of, such as database marketing, sub-branding and ambush marketing. They steer away from the solely negative connotations associated with this practice, by illustrating legitimate marketing strategies that are also covert. Stealth marketing practices may not be intended to be intentionally deceptive, but rather as a means to break through clutter to reach consumers where traditional advertising is unable (Rotfeld 2008, Martin & Smith 2008).

Stealth marketing presents benefits to marketers such as cost effectiveness in reaching consumers as compared to traditional advertising, as well as producing buzz and PR (Kaikati & Kaikati 2004, Ahuja et al 2007). Although they do not conduct any empirical testing, Kaikati and Kaikati (2004) suggest that, depending on the stealth tactics used, this strategy could generate awareness and consumer interest, as well as promote trial and even adoption, such as indicated by the surge in cognac sales subsequent to the release of Busta Rhymes song 'Pass the Courvoisier'. To further the use of stealth marketing, Roy and Chattopadhyay (2010) cite examples of campaigns, games and technological use, to address issues such as childhood obesity and drug theft, and to encourage positive behaviours, such as non-violent negotiations and interest in particular career paths.

Despite these advantages, stealth marketing faces major obstacles in becoming an accepted advertising method among advertising associations and regulators. The main controversy behind stealth marketing lies in the non-disclosure of compensation, monetary or otherwise, by those shilling for the brand, which largely relegates stealth marketing to the realm of unethical advertising, and is also considered deceptive (Petty & Andrews 2008), exploitative and potentially intrusive (Martin & Smith 2008). Studies indicate that consumers produce negative brand evaluations when covert marketing

efforts are revealed, although this response is attenuated by brand familiarity and perceived appropriateness of the advertising method (Wei et al 2008, Milne et al 2009). Ashley and Leonard (2009) have found a decline in brand trust, brand commitment and repeat brand purchase after a covert website was revealed, where the latter finding is echoed by Milne et al (2009). As a result, brands employing stealth marketing potentially face strong consumer backlash (Kaikati & Kaikati 2004, Martin & Smith 2008), which has led to regulation efforts, such as disclosure of celebrity endorsements in interviews, or making fake blogs illegal in the UK (Roy & Chattopadhyay 2010). It is believed that stealth marketing will generate further consumer scepticism and defensiveness towards advertising (Goodman 2006, Milne et al 2009). Further to these ethical issues, stealth marketing also suffers from a lack of control in the dissemination of marketing messages, due to the reliance of middlemen to advertise brands to consumers, as well as negative portrayals of brands by anti-brand advocates (Kaikati & Kaikati 2004).

Kaikati and Kaikati's (2004) category of brand pushers presents a useful parallel to ambient advertising with the study of brand engagement. The pair defines brand pushers as *"hired novice actors and actresses who approach unsuspecting people in real-life situations by personally slipping commercial messages in trendy bars, music stores, and tourist hot spots"* (p.10). One case study presented was that of Sony Ericsson with the 2002 launch of its camera phone in Seattle, Washington. Novice actors and actresses were hired to ask tourists to take pictures of them using the camera phone. This allowed consumers to directly interact with the product and engage with the brand, through trial of the actual product and a high-technology feature. While Kaikati and Kaikati do not provide any measurements as to the outcomes of this strategy, they highlight the resulting brand engagement. Incorporating the actual product, or some variation of it, into an ambient ad has been observed in several campaigns, which would allow for a similar degree of interaction and trial with the product as the 2002 Sony Ericsson approach, but in a transparent and consensual manner. This concept suggests that ambient ads may be able to bring about a high degree of

consumer engagement with the brand, although further research is needed to provide empirical results.

While both distinct practices, stealth marketing and ambient advertising exhibit commonalities that can translate into the latter garnering similar results. These similarities may include the ability to garner consumer attention through unconventional messaging and placement, as well as generation of WOM and buzz through individual consumer networks, social media and wider PR. Where the typically covert nature of stealth marketing has been demonstrated as garnering negative perceptions and backlash from the public, the more transparent practice of ambient advertising may not suffer these outcomes. Further research is needed to determine how consumers attend to and engage with these unconventional ambient messages, how WOM may be spread, and the ways in which consumers perceive these ads and the practice as a whole.

### **2.2.3 Dahlén's creative media**

In reiterating Marshall McLuhan's popular expression "*the medium is the message*", Dahlén (2005) suggests that the medium used is an integral component in conveying an advertising message. This stream of literature is presented as a separate topic to ambient advertising, due to a key difference in the integration of the medium into the message. The basis of this research study investigates ambient advertising where the medium is physically integrated into the message, through commonalities of shape, colour, texture, physical orientation or function with the advertised product. Dahlén and his colleagues conceptualise ambient communication as integration of the attributes of the medium into the message being communicated to the consumer. An example of Dahlén's concept is the use of eggs to advertise life insurance, where the eggs represent fragility of life, and the eggshell as the protective agent. While many parallels can be made between both the researcher's and Dahlén's concepts of ambient advertising, this clear distinction between the two definitions underlines the need for separate discussions. As a result, Dahlén's idea of ambient advertising will be referred to as 'creative media'.

Investigations by Dahlén and his colleagues (Dahlén 2005, Dahlén & Edenius 2007, Dahlén et al 2009a, Dahlén et al 2009b) illustrate the advertising benefits in selecting creative media to communicate marketing messages, where the advertisement is designed such that the medium implicitly conveys the message. Creative media allows for associations to be developed between the brand and the medium (Sparkman & Locander 1980, Dahlén 2005), and this may persist even after the brand has been removed from the medium (Dahlén et al 2009a). Based on the latter implication, Dahlén et al (2009b) suggest that marketers utilise media that are currently unexploited, in order to take advantage of this association that develops. While Karo (2002) suggests new media for advertising, including banana peels and coffee cups, Dahlén (2005) finds that using distinctive, surprising media which are congruent with the brand, allows for attributes of the medium to be transferred onto perceptions of the brand, such as conveying speed and power when advertising an energy drink in an elevator. While this is distinct from ambient marketing, insofar as the mediums used within the latter share physical features with the product, rather than brand attributes, it may be possible that consumers may develop similar associations between a specific brand and the ambient medium being used. It is further possible for these associations to help shape consumers' brand perceptions, such as the use of mediums that provide value to the consumer or the surrounding environment, which highlights another area for further investigation.

Use of creative media in advertising has also demonstrated an increase in consumers' perceptions of ad credibility (Dahlén & Edenius 2007, Dahlén 2005), more favourable attitudes towards the brand and the ad (Dahlén 2005) as well as the advertising message (Dahlén & Edenius 2007), as compared to traditional advertising. These results may be due to the reduced competition with other advertisers when the medium used is new and unexpected, thereby communicating with consumers in a more distinctive manner than traditional marketing communications (Sparkman & Locander 1980, Burke & Srull 1988, Dahlén & Edenius 2007). In addition, where consumers recognise obvious attempts at advertising, such as through traditional advertising media, these



messages are more readily ignored, reducing attention and recall (James & Kover 1992, Donthu et al 1993, Goodstein 1993), whereas non-traditional media serve to negate these effects, with consumers perceiving these messages to have less persuasive intent. Ambient marketing using non-traditional media may also benefit from being less recognisable than traditional advertising, thus generating similar consumer attitudes and perceptions.

To further this understanding of consumer avoidance of traditional advertising, escalating negative consumer attitudes towards advertising may be due to increasing ad clutter (Speck & Elliott 1997). Creative use of media provides an avenue for messages to break through this clutter (Dahlén & Edenius 2007, Dahlén et al 2009b), resulting in more effective communication of brand messages. In addition, consumers also perceived greater value from advertising messages utilising non-traditional media, which generated increased purchase intention, as well as word of mouth (Dahlén et al 2009b). As another example of non-traditional advertising, ambient campaigns may also generate similar results, by breaking through ad clutter, and adding value to consumers.

More recent findings presented by Rosengren et al (2015) demonstrate a shift in consumer perceptions and attitudes. Whereas Dahlén's (2005) research underlines the role of surprise in producing positive ad and brand attitudes, Rosengren et al (2015) provide empirical findings that demonstrate that perceived surprise was not found to be a significant mediator of brand attitude or purchase intention. Instead, they stress the importance of both novelty and congruence, or a contextual fit, between the ad message and the medium, discussed by Smith et al (2007) and Sasser and Koslow (2008). Rosengren et al identify that brands that employ contextual elements in their messaging are perceived as providing greater advertising value to consumers, and caring about their consumers. These perceptions were demonstrated to mediate the positive effects of creative media on both brand attitudes and purchase intentions of the brand. Through comparisons made between ambient, non-ambient and traditional executions of the same ad, they find that such congruence, also referred to as the relevance dimension of creativity, is crucial to the creation of consumer engagement. Applying these findings to the researcher's definition of

ambient advertising, it can be postulated that similar outcomes may be produced due to the same concept of congruence, albeit through physical integration rather than shared attributes.

#### **2.2.4 Ambient advertising**

Having reviewed several related communications methods, a comprehensive review of ambient advertising is presented. The literature surrounding ambient advertising is limited, with interest in the topic observed in only the last six years, despite first being published in 1999 by Shankar and Horton. Not only are the definitions of 'ambient advertising' varied from one researcher to the next, but the terminology is also disparate. While this researcher has adopted the term 'ambient advertising', similar to Luxton and Drummond (2000), Chatterjee (2011), Jurca (2012), Jurca and Madlberger (2015) and Hutter (2015), 'ambient media' (Shankar & Horton 1999, Turk et al 2006, Sula & Banyar 2015), 'ambient marketing' (Lee Yuen & Dacko 2011, Bargenda 2015) and 'ambient communication' (Gambetti 2010, Biraghi et al 2015, Rosengren et al 2015) have all been used by researchers to denote the same concept. Additionally, several researchers consider ambient advertising solely as a guerrilla marketing tool and absorb ambient advertising into this category (e.g. Hutter & Hoffmann 2011, Chionne & Scozzese 2014). The lack of a unified concept of ambient advertising is underlined by the fact that a considerable portion of the available literature is dedicated to defining the term and establishing boundaries of the practice.

Shankar and Horton (1999, p.306) simply define ambient marketing as "*non-traditional out-of-home media*", and attempt to categorise it according to the environment in which it is placed, derived from Concord's (1998) classification system. These categories were devised based on the advertising environment: retail, leisure, travel, other, academic, community and corporate. While this system provides a useful starting point for identifying various types of ambient ads, many described by Shankar and Horton have since evolved to become mainstream advertising vehicles, such as train/bus/taxi ads, posters placed in bathroom stalls, sponsorship opportunities, and video screens, which are now considered part of the digital realm. These media channels can all be argued to

have evolved into traditional marketing, and no longer fit under the umbrella of ambient advertising.

Luxton and Drummond (2000) provide a much more specific definition of ambient advertising as compared to Shankar and Horton. Luxton and Drummond (p.735) characterise ambient marketing as “*the placement of advertising in unusual and unexpected places (location) often with unconventional methods (execution) and being first or only ad execution to do so (temporal)*” (emphasis in the original). However, by limiting ‘ambient advertising’ to only those campaigns which are the first or only of its kind, this definition excludes a vast number of executions which would be considered ambient media by practitioners, due solely to the lack of this type of first-mover advantage.

An assessment of previous research definitions devised by Shankar and Horton (1999), Luxton and Drummond (2000), and Lee Yuen and Dacko (2011), has resulted in Jurca (2012) formulating her own definition of ambient advertising. She asserts that ambient advertising is “*an unconventional form of advertising based on creativity, that can convey direct and contextual messages by using and transforming existing elements of the environment in a way that surprises the target audience*” (p.217). This definition of ambient advertising very closely matches the research definition used in this study, as it was partly based on the researcher’s own definition. However, the definition is limiting in its assertion that only existing elements may be transformed, without considering the integration of a new medium constructed for the purpose of conveying an ambient ad message. Furthermore, Jurca indicates that surprise is a key element of ambient advertising. It can be argued that surprise, while suggested to produce favourable results (e.g. Hutter & Hoffmann 2011, Hutter 2015), is not necessary for an ad to be considered ambient, especially when considering repeat encounters with an ad, or the same medium or placement manipulated by another brand. Furthermore, as discussed in the previous subsection, empirical findings from Rosengren et al (2015) negate the role of surprise in mediating brand attitudes and purchase intention. Particularly for this research study,

further research is needed to determine the role of surprise in affecting a consumer's willingness to engage with an ambient ad.

Biraghi et al (2015) provide the final definition that will be presented. Through discursive analysis of practitioner interviews, Biraghi et al (p.16) define ambient communication as a "*relational hub that occurs and dissolves into the physical environment, which catalyses, triggers, and hosts life moments and generates emergent interactions among brands and people in their own space*". This definition most closely articulates the concept of ambient advertising and the corresponding research objectives of this research study. Biraghi et al speak to several elements that this researcher has utilised in her conceptualisation of ambient advertising: integration of the ad message into the physical environment, the ability of consumers to experience the ad message in a physical manner, and the resulting engagement between the consumer and the brand.

The divergence among researchers as to the terminology and definitions of ambient advertising extends into perceptions of the functionality of the practice. Shankar and Horton (1999, p.309) assert that ambient marketing is primarily employed "*to communicate with consumers close to the point of sale*", suggesting that these messages serve as reminders to consumers in arousing and persuading impulsive purchase decisions. Conversely, Luxton and Drummond (2000) argue that ambient marketing is a supportive and reinforcing medium, rather than directly persuasive in driving purchase behaviour. Jurca's (2012) definition, centred on surprising the consumer, echoes assertions made by Lee Yuen and Dacko (2011) that ambient ads are aimed at breaking through ad clutter to reach consumers, differentiating the brand, and targeting consumers more effectively than through mass media. Similar proposals have been made in Hutter's work (Hutter & Hoffmann 2011, Hutter & Hoffmann 2014, Hutter 2015) and Jurca's further work with Madlberger (2015). Gambetti (2010) proposes that small companies use ambient advertising to generate brand awareness, whereas large companies are able to use these ads to differentiate their brand, and to build brand salience and affinity amongst consumers. Rosengren et al (2015) provide evidence that surprise is no longer adequate for producing

favourable attitudes, but that *“the aim of ambient communication is increasingly to get consumers to approach advertising”* (p.27).

Despite these differences in perceived functionality, the consensus among these researchers is that ambient advertising is not used as a stand-alone tool to fulfil marketing objectives. Instead, researchers argue that ambient advertising represents an arguably powerful tool in a wider integrated communications strategy (e.g. Shankar & Horton 1999, Luxton & Drummond 2000, Gambetti 2010, Jurca 2012, Biraghi et al 2015). Researchers also tend to attribute ambient ads to non-interruptive communications, where ads are seen to be integrated into consumers’ daily lives and environments rather than disruptive (Gambetti 2010, Biraghi et al 2015, Rosengren et al 2015).

Compared to early conceptualisations of ambient advertising, more recent literature focuses on the evolution of these ads as a facet in creating a brand experience for the consumer to strengthen the consumer-brand relationship (e.g. Gambetti 2010, Chionne & Scozzese 2014, Biraghi et al 2015, Saucet & Cova 2015). Gambetti (2010) views ambient communication as a form of corporate communication using environmental elements in order to prompt consumer engagement. Her research is built on the concept of experiential marketing, and she proposes that these brand experiences are developed through Schmitt’s (1999) concepts of sensory, cognitive, affective, behavioural and relational marketing. She notes that ambient ads use context cues, which she defines as *“environmental features that help create the atmosphere that determines people’s individual and collective experience of their daily lives—to involve consumers emotionally and give meaning and symbolic value to their experiences”* (p.38). Gambetti asserts that these context cues thus serve to produce the experiential dimension of ambient ads. She further suggests (p.44), *“In today’s society, it is context clues (e.g. presence, mood and behaviours of other people, geographical location, lighting, noise and other sensory stimuli, and brand-environment fit) rather than performance clues (related to product features and performance) that determine both product differentiation and the customer satisfaction generated by a unique, positive experience of a product and brand.”*

While Gambetti's (2010) paper presents two short case studies of ambient campaigns, there is no empirical testing conducted to determine the validity of the effectiveness of context clues versus performance clues, which the researcher aims to address. She further perceives a shift in advertising content from static, one-way communications to dynamic and interactive two-way communications. However, Hutter's (2015) content analysis results illustrate that less than a quarter of a sample of 340 ads incorporated interactive elements to allow for two-way communication with consumers. Additional research is thus needed to demonstrate how marketers are trying to communicate with consumers in actuality. A final area requiring further research based on Gambetti's work is her idea that the interactive channels of ambient ads triggers both consumer participation in the brand experience *and* propagation of the brand message through the consumers' social networks. While the two case studies she includes in her paper illustrate the buzz generated by both campaigns, she does not investigate the WOM created at the level of the individual consumer. Further research is thus needed to understand consumer experience with ambient ads, in terms of both engaging with an ad, and the WOM generated by these first-hand interactions.

Gambetti, with her colleagues, furthers her examination of ambient communication through a discursive analysis of insights provided by marketing professionals. Biraghi et al (2015) echo Gambetti's original (2010) assertion that consumers are not passive spectators of ambient communications, but rather participants in the construction of the ad message, and the creation of the brand experience. However, the findings of their discourse analysis indicate that marketers demonstrate 'ambivalence' towards the practice and its executions, primarily developing ads tactically to surprise consumers and create buzz. Biraghi et al reveal that professionals are sceptical as to the effectiveness of ambient communication, which limits how they adopt the practice to produce brand experiences for consumers. Biraghi et al treat these findings as "detrimental" to the practice of ambient communication, and stress that marketers should exploit the potential of these ads to foster engagement between the consumer and the brand. They recommend that ambient media be

accepted as a multisensory and participatory communications channel that would “*allow the brand to get physically rooted in the fabric of consumer life, becoming a dialogic enabler for meaning-making and exchange of values among brand, consumers, and peers*” (p.16). Presenting marketing professionals with empirical investigations of the effectiveness of ambient advertising elements in eliciting consumer engagement may encourage more strategic executions towards the goal of building a brand experience for consumers.

In their conceptual framework, Jurca and Madlberger (2015, p.53) propose “*creativity, unexpectedness, engagement, and subtlety as ambient advertising characteristics that can facilitate an optimal level of schema incongruity that itself strengthens advertising effectiveness*”. The pair postulates that these characteristics, moderated by perceived advertising clutter and advertising literacy, can produce positive audience attitudes, advertising awareness and brand awareness, which generate sales. They acknowledge that levels of engagement vary between ads, and establish the proposition that higher engagement would lead to increased schema incongruity, which could result in greater brand and ad effectiveness. Jurca and Madlberger present this proposition based on a review of relative literature, but do not conduct any empirical testing to confirm their ideas.

Few researchers have investigated the concept of ambient advertising through empirical methods, which has resulted in a fragmented understanding of the effectiveness of ambient ads. The first identified empirical study was conducted by Turk et al (2006), which investigated the use of washroom posters in promoting HIV/AIDS behavioural change. The posters were designed with a reflective surface to create a mirror, with an accompanying ad message with the headline “I can get it, I can prevent it”, and placed over urinals in four Jakarta washrooms. Although the design of the washroom poster does not fall within the definition of ambient advertising for this research study, the ad could be adapted easily to fit the researcher’s definition (for example, if the poster was produced as a decal with a cut-out in place of the reflective material, and adhered to a washroom mirror). The main quantitative study provides evidence that the poster was able to influence behavioural intentions of safe sex practices. More

interestingly, though, were the findings of the pre-testing focus groups, where participants appreciated the novelty of the idea with the use of the reflective surface, and their interaction with the ad in contributing to the ad message. These preliminary findings suggest positive consumer perceptions of ambient ads when the consumer is a co-creator in the construction of the ad meaning. Similarly, Sula and Banyar (2015) find positive consumer attitudes towards ambient advertising and a desire to see greater use of the practice. These findings, however, were primarily based on questions of the creativity of ambient ads, and do not consider the dimension of consumer engagement.

Hutter (2015) provides empirical findings through investigation of the unexpectedness of locational and executional ambient ad elements. She conducts a content analysis of 340 ambient ads to identify these elements. The results indicate that ambient ads primarily comprise the following features: focus on differentiation from the surroundings, use of nonconventional 2-dimensional mediums, and one-way communication. The elements of surprise most used were optical illusions, manipulation of an expected condition (e.g. form, colour, and/or material) in an unexpected way, and addition or insertion of visual elements in an unexpected way. The subsequent experiment conducted by Hutter produces evidence that the surprise effects of ambient ads prove more effective than conventional advertising in garnering attention. The study also finds that an ambient ad, when compared to a traditional billboard, generates more positive consumer attitudes toward both the ad and the brand. Hutter's (2015) study suggests a useful methodology that can be adapted for identifying ad elements that would lead to engagement with an ad, and resulting consumer attitudes on the ad and the brands using ambient advertising.

In conceptualising ambient advertising and the brand experience it affords to consumers, Gambetti (2010, p.49) highlights a crucial research implication: "*the future research agenda should focus on analysis of the consumer engagement process in urban touch-points as a fundamental effectiveness parameter of ambient communication initiatives*". The research objectives presented in the introductory chapter address this key issue, and the research



study thus aims to produce empirical findings to provide insights on consumer engagement with ambient ads.

## **2.3 Engagement**

Having reviewed ambient advertising and surrounding OOH marketing practices, a discussion of engagement concepts in the literature is presented. The topics of experiential marketing and interactivity are addressed in the literature review. Experiential marketing and the incorporation of human experience into the advertising encounter are not unique concepts to ambient advertising, or any particular marketing practice, but these ideas can be easily applied and adapted to investigations into ambient ads. Similarly, interactivity as a concept is referred almost exclusively to Internet and related advertising, but the theory of interactivity can be translated into ambient ads, particularly as the investigation is focused on consumer engagement based on the set of physical interactions with an ad.

### **2.3.1 Experiential marketing**

The marketing literature has shown a shift in research interest towards the brand experience. While this trend is observed starting just before the turn of the century, as early as 1982, Holbrook and Hirschman have examined experiential aspects of consumption. This stream of literature focuses on similar consumption experiences, but there have been wider investigations into brand experience, defined by Brakus et al (2009, p.53) as *“subjective, internal consumer responses (sensations, feelings, and cognitions) as well as a behavioural responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand’s design and identity, packaging, communications and environment”*. While not as extensive as the literature surrounding consumption experiences, there have been research efforts focused on experiential marketing and communications. This research area has been identified as pertinent to developing an understanding of consumer interaction with ambient ads. Firstly, ambient advertising, as a communications channel, allows the brand to broaden a consumer’s brand

experience. Secondly, ambient ads provide consumers the opportunity to have a physical experience with the brand prior to purchase, furthering the brand experience.

While Holbrook and Hirschman's (1982) research discusses consumption experiences only, the theory can be adapted and transferred to brand messages. The pair asserts the importance of stimulating consumers beyond utilitarian function, to target consumer aspects of fantasies, feelings and fun. They suggest strategies for brands to consider, such as aesthetics, multisensory engagement, dimensions of communication, product-related imagery, and the role of fun and playfulness in consumer enjoyment. Pine and Gilmore (1998) also assert the importance of multisensory appeals in creating positive brand experiences for consumers. While developed for consumption experience, these suggestions all related to ambient marketing, as an outlet for consumers to engage with the brand, through communications channels that can be seen to be less utilitarian in conveying ad information, as compared to traditional ad media.

Triantafillidou and Siomkos (2014) further the discussion on consumption experience by investigating the post-experience outcomes of satisfaction, nostalgia, WOM and behavioural intentions. The pair presents their own dimensions of consumer experience: hedonism, flow, escapism, learning, challenge, socialisation, and communitas. The most relevant findings with respect to this research study are the relationships between favourable brand experiences and resulting positive consumer satisfaction and WOM generated. The hedonism dimension, which is "*related to positive feelings of pleasure, fun, excitement and enjoyment*" (p.527), is seen to produce consumer satisfaction. Whereas consumers have been shown to avoid ad messages, it may be possible for ambient ads to generate positive consumer perceptions by providing consumers with fun and pleasurable ad experiences through use of unconventional mediums. Triantafillidou and Siomkos also find that hedonism is not seen to influence immediate WOM behaviour, but that consumers "*will spread positive WOM to enhance their status and self-worth because they had lived a pleasurable and fun experience*" (p.535). While these findings relate to consumption experience, there is a suggestion that hedonic appeals in ambient

ads could translate into positive WOM generated by consumers. This outcome would then allow the brand message to reach consumers that had not come into contact with the ad itself.

Schmitt's research, both as an individual and in conjunction with other researchers, provides theory as to brand experience in a broad sense, including communications. Schmitt (1999, p.57) asserts that what consumers are looking for are "*products, communications, and marketing messages that dazzle their senses, touch their hearts, and stimulate their minds...to deliver an experience*". In this paper, he makes comparisons between traditional and experiential marketing, most notably characterising the former as focused on functional features and benefits and the latter on consumer experiences through sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioural and relational values. More importantly, Schmitt provides a framework for managing experiences through use of strategic experiential modules (SEMs) and experience providers (ExPros), which form the basis of Gambetti's later (2010) discussion of ambient communication. Schmitt's SEMs are categorised by the type of experience offered to the consumer: sensory, affective, creative cognitive, physical, behavioural, and social-identity. Sensory, or SENSE marketing, and creative cognitive, or THINK marketing, were seen to be the most relevant to ambient advertising within this research study. Schmitt (p.61) describes SENSE marketing as "*creating sensory experiences, through sight, sound, touch, taste and smell*", and THINK marketing as "*appeal[ing] to the intellect with the objective of creative cognitive, problem-solving experiences that engage customers creatively*". Social-identity, or RELATE marketing, could also be applied to ambient ad research. Schmitt (p.62) asserts that RELATE marketing "*expands beyond the individual's personal, private feelings, thus relating the individual to something outside his/her private state*". He uses the example of brand communities, such as that of Harley-Davidson, whereas Gambetti (2010) translates this concept to ambient communications through sharing of consumer experience through dialogue and content, including photos, videos and comments. Schmitt includes use of communications and spatial environments as tools, or ExPros, in helping to create these experiences for consumers. These suggestions can be implemented in ambient ads in an attempt to reach

consumers in a more engaging manner as compared to traditional advertising, by creating a brand experience for the consumer.

Building on Schmitt's original work, Brakus et al (2009) and Zarantonello and Schmitt (2010) further the discussion of brand experience. Brakus et al dissect brand experience into four dimensions: sensory, affective, intellectual and behavioural. They present a scale by which to measure brand experience for the consumers, where brand experience affects consumer satisfaction and loyalty. Of important note is their assertion that experiences can occur even when a consumer does not have an interest in the brand, and can be both positive and negative. These claims are relevant to ambient advertising, which can reach a broad cross-section of consumers due to placement in the public domain. An ambient ad can thus reach and create a brand experience for consumers who were not previously involved with the brand, or who are not the primary target. Additionally, ambient ads should be considered as generating both positive and negative consumer perceptions and responses. Both these observations present areas for further research, with specific reference to consumer engagement with ambient ads.

Zarantonello and Schmitt (2010) built upon the brand experience scale developed by Brakus et al (2009) to profile consumers and predict their consumer behaviour. The pair also utilises the same four dimensions of brand experience. 'Sensory' refers to stimulation of any of the five senses (sight, sound, touch, taste and smell); 'affective' to feelings generated by the brand; 'intellectual' to the ability to involve consumers in their thinking; and 'behavioural' to physical responses and interactions with the brand. Zarantonello and Schmitt state that the intensity of the brand experience varies based on the extent to which the four dimensions are evoked. Extrapolating this concept to ambient advertising, the use of commonplace objects within the OOH environment lends well to marketers considering or implementing all four dimensions when developing an ambient ad. An investigation into the usefulness or influence of these four dimensions, particularly the behavioural dimension resulting in consumer interaction with ads, would be appropriate for this research study.

Rayport (2013) narrows the discussion of brand experience specifically to advertising opportunities. He argues that traditional advertising, in attempting to reach consumers through repetition, mass presence and interruption, is becoming increasingly less effective. He suggests that marketers consider what their advertising can do for consumers as they move away from standard ad messaging, execution and placement. Rayport suggests strategic placement of ads according to the four spheres: public, social, tribal and psychological. The social sphere refers to where consumers interact and relate to each other; the tribal sphere relates to identity through affiliate groups; and the psychological sphere encompasses where consumers attach thoughts and feelings to language. The public sphere is seen to be most pertinent to ambient advertising, and it *“typically engages consumers during moments of downtime when they’re moving between one point or activity and the next and have attention free for new inputs”* (p.79). Rayport recommends four guidelines for effectively implementing ads in the public sphere: (1) relevance in context to the consumer’s environment or activity, (2) helping consumers problem-solve or fulfil a personal objective, (3) as branded interventions that reach consumers in a targeted and useful manner, and (4) providing consumers with experiences that are engaging, stimulating and captivating. These guidelines all serve as considerations for ambient ad executions in providing communications that Rayport suggests must be both welcome and useful to the consumer.

The above discussion on the research into the various facets of experiential marketing, while typically not directly addressing consumer experiences with ad messages, indicates the ideas that can be applied to ambient advertising. Investigation into the concepts identified would aid in broadening the understanding of the role ambient ads play in a consumer’s brand experience, and how these ads can provide engaging encounters through sensory appeals, aesthetics and placement.

### **2.3.2 Interactivity**

Heeter (2000) asserts that the concept of interactivity is both overused and also lacking in definition. This ambiguity has led to the term being used in multiple

contexts although it is most widely accepted as Internet-related advertising. For example, Kaye and Medoff (2001) simply equate 'interactive advertising' to 'online advertising'. Interactivity is principally researched as advertising via website, but has evolved to include social media (e.g. Rohm et al 2013, Shultz & Peltier 2013, Tsimonis & Dimitriadis 2014) and even interactive television advertising (e.g. Bellman et al 2012, Jenne & Van den Broeck 2014, Zorn et al 2016).

Heeter (2000, p.6) defines an interaction as "*an episode or series of episodes of physical actions and reactions of an embodied human with the world, including the environment and objects and beings in the world*". This definition broadens the concept of interactivity beyond online advertising and allows offline advertising, including ambient, as capable of providing interactivity effects to consumers. Johnson et al (2006) champion the use of interactivity across platforms, asserting, "*to be useful and valid, conceptualisations of interactivity need to transcend contexts and applications*" (p.36).

Despite the relevance of 'interactivity' to Internet-based communications in advertising research, several parallels have been identified in interactivity between Web ads and ambient ads. As Liu and Shrum (2002) point out, traditional advertising communicates with consumers through interruption, whereas web advertising is integrated into a consumer's web-surfing activity. This lack of interruption allows consumers to more easily avoid an ad than with traditional advertising. Ambient ads can be viewed in an identical manner, as ads are typically placed where consumers are engaging in other activities in the OOH environment. It would thus be useful to identify how consumers can be encouraged to interact with ambient ads, as Liu and Shrum indicate that consumers do not have to do anything in particular to avoid a non-interruptive ad.

The concept of two-way communication, as identified by Hutter (2015) in ambient advertising, is discussed as a dimension of interactivity (e.g. Sundar et al 1998, Lombard & Snyder-Duch 2001, Liu & Shrum 2002, Johnson et al 2006). Two-way communication typically refers to transmission of data between the brand and the consumers in both directions. From the perspective of online

advertising, feedback from the consumer to the brand includes ad-clicks, contacting the company online and making purchases through a website (Liu & Shrum 2002). Two-way communication has been demonstrated to produce positive affect (Sundar et al 1998). While the interactive elements of ambient ads are entirely different, the concept of interactivity can be translated to ambient media and thus can be suggested to influence consumer perceptions, or interest, as proposed by Hutter (2015).

Researchers highlight the varying levels of interaction that can be afforded to consumers (e.g. Heeter 2000, Liu & Shrum 2002, Johnson et al 2006, Liu & Shrum 2009). Lombard and Snyder-Duch (2001) identify five variables of interactivity: number of inputs from the user to medium, number and type of characteristics that can be modified by the user, extent to which each characteristic can be changed, speed with which user inputs effect change in medium, degree of communication between the user and the medium. While these variables are discussed in relation to Internet advertising, the first variable can easily be adapted to ambient ads. Bioca and Delaney (1995) describe a number of user inputs that can bring about a change in the medium, including voice/audio, haptic, kinetic, facial and eye movements, and psychophysiological. As these inputs are all physical motions, these can be integrated into ambient ads to bring about a change in the medium and allow consumers to become part of the ad message when they come into contact with an ad. However, Lombard and Snyder-Duch (2001) indicate that the effectiveness of each of these inputs has not been demonstrated with regards to providing consumers with an interactive experience. It would be useful to identify how marketers implement any of these inputs into ambient ads, and how this process might influence consumer engagement.

Lombard and Snyder-Duch (2001) also discuss, as their third variable of interactivity, the range of change that could be brought about by users. Within technological communication, interactivity can be manipulated, by controlling the quantity of features to which consumers are exposed, and their level of control over how they can respond to these messages. Similarly, with ambient ads, marketers are able to manipulate the ad features and placement of an ad to

encourage consumers to interact with an ad. However, researchers in the field of online advertising insist that higher levels of interactivity do not necessarily produce positive results in persuading consumers (Heeter 2000, Coyle & Thorson 2001, Sundar et al 2003, Liu & Shrum 2009). For ambient ads, the possibility exists that highly interactive ads may not be received positively by consumers. Furthermore, consumers may perceive highly interactive ads as intrusive when they have little control over their interactions with these ads.

Most researchers refer to interactivity as the ability of users to bring about a change in the message, medium or experience. By this definition, only a subset of ambient ads would be considered interactive, as not all ads implement channels for consumer input, to create a corresponding change in the ad. However, Lombard and Snyder-Duch's (2001, p.59) concept of 'engagement' is more relevant for ambient ads than strict 'interaction'. The pair defines engagement, or involvement, as occurring when "*part or all of a person's perception is directed toward objects, events, and/or people created by the technology, and away from objects, events and/or people in the physical world*". For research into ambient ads, 'technology' can simply be replaced by 'ad', with the concept retaining its identical meaning. Examining engagement effects, and interactivity effects, where possible, of ambient ads, would be helpful in developing an understanding of the features that encourage consumer engagement, the varying levels of consumer involvement, and how consumer perceptions are affected as a result.

#### **2.4 Related advertising concepts**

The preceding literature review has revealed that the primary objective of alternative OOH media is to break through ad clutter by avoiding traditional and expected advertising channels, leading to a review on the concept of advertising clutter. With the aim of understanding how ads capture consumer attention, ad clutter is examined to identify its effects on a consumer's ability to notice an ad and subsequently engage with it. Other effects of ad clutter are presented, including its impact on consumer attitudes and perceptions. Separate from research by Dahlén and colleagues, where the medium is the creative element,



the section on creativity effects examines studies of creative ad executions making use of traditional media, mainly television and print, to understand how consumers respond to ad creativity beyond the use of unexpected media. These responses will be extrapolated to propose how consumers might engage with ambient media, as a channel for creative advertising.

#### **2.4.1 Advertising clutter**

Consumers are increasingly exposed to marketing messages, with estimates ranging from 1500 per day in 1984 (Jhally 1998) to 3600 per day in 1996 (Kotler 2003). These figures are likely to be out-dated due to further saturation of traditional media outlets, as well as the proliferation of alternative media vehicles, including mobile, digital, social media, stealth, viral, guerrilla and ambient advertising. For any medium, the level of advertising and promotional messages surrounding consumers comprises advertising clutter (Speck & Elliott 1997, Elliott & Speck 1998, Rosengren 2008). Further to this description, researchers differentiate *perceived* ad clutter as an individual consumer judges that the advertising levels in a particular medium are excessive (Speck & Elliott 1997) and irritating (Elliott & Speck 1998) or intrusive (Ha 1996).

Within the last few decades, studies into attitudes to advertising have revealed a generally increasing negative sentiment among consumers (e.g. Zanot 1984, Pollay et al 1990, Mittal 1994, Yoon et al 1996, Ashill & Yavas 2005). Findings from these studies indicate that these negative consumer attitudes are not limited by geographic region, nor medium, although studies have centred around either television advertising or advertising in general. Furthermore, Goldman and Papson (1994, 1996) discover that consumers harbour feelings of scepticism, cynicism, resentment and hostility towards advertising. Elliott and Speck (1998) produce results to indicate that consumers' attitudes to advertising are affected by excessive advertising, as well as disruptive advertising. With marketers strengthening their efforts to reach consumers through larger volumes of advertising, as well as through alternative strategies, consumers are increasingly bombarded by advertising, and these negative attitudes are likely to continue growing.

Although research on advertising clutter primarily focuses on television advertising, perceived ad clutter exists within every media outlet, although the levels vary across each. In their study, Elliott and Speck (1998) investigate the perceived ad clutter levels across various media, with results indicating that media with higher ad content may not necessarily be perceived to constitute excessive advertising, or clutter, as compared to those with lower levels of ad content. As such, television, comprised of approximately 25% advertising, has been found to exhibit the highest levels of clutter, and Yellow Pages the least cluttered, despite the latter being virtually entirely composed of advertisements. These findings suggest that consumers may be tolerant of higher advertising levels without perceiving clutter, which Elliott and Speck (1998) propose is due to frequency of exposure to the medium, as well as whether consumers are forcefully exposed to advertising. Further to this suggestion, Bogart (1990) proffers that advertising is seen to be more intrusive when the consumer is more highly involved with the medium being used. In this way, when engaged in a television programme, advertising via this medium is seen to be more intrusive than if a consumer were leafing through a magazine while waiting for an appointment. While these ads are viewed as disruptive to a consumer's activity, ambient ads are viewed as integrated into a consumer's environment and activities, and therefore non-interruptive (Gambetti 2010, Biraghi et al 2015, Rosengren et al 2015). Perceived intrusiveness for traditional disruptive advertising cannot be extrapolated to a non-interruptive medium. It is thus unclear as to how consumers perceive these ads as contributing to clutter and the perceived intrusion of these ads, suggesting an area for further research.

In addition to negative attitudes amongst consumers towards advertising, ad clutter also proves problematic for marketers. As suggested by Taylor et al (2006), when consumers are bombarded with advertising messages, they control their processing of this information through selective perception. Burgoon et al (1994) conceptualise this process as comprising four stages: selective exposure, attention, comprehension, and retention. Through selective exposure, consumers limit their awareness to advertising messages relevant to their behaviours and attitudes, with attention occurring when consumers actively attend to the

advertisement subsequent to exposure. Consumers may then engage in comprehension, where they assimilate these messages with reference to pre-existing beliefs, before retention occurs, whereby consumers tend to remember salient advertising messages. All four stages must be fulfilled for an advertising message to effectively reach a consumer.

Selective perception thus results in a limited number of advertising messages being processed by consumers, while the vast majority are ignored. Supporting this premise, studies show that clutter results in consumers adopting advertising avoidance strategies in order to lessen their exposure to marketing messages (Speck & Elliott 1997, Elliott & Speck 1998). Furthermore, Rosengren's (2008) findings indicate that this avoidance is not restricted to advertising messages, but also occurs for publicity, due to the prevalence of what she terms 'editorial clutter'. Therefore, even when advertising campaigns are executed to garner PR, the resulting publicity may not be effective in breaking through clutter to reach consumers. Additional research is required to understand how consumers' avoidance strategies might extend to ambient messages and the engagement that marketers hope to achieve through these ads.

Advertising clutter also results in lowered brand recall among consumers, which is moderated by several factors, such as length of the exposure (Mord & Gilson 1985), involvement (Cobb 1985), intrusiveness (Ha 1996), brand familiarity (Kent & Allen 1994, Rosengren 2008) and speed of cognition (Johnson & Cobb-Walgren 1994). Excessive advertising is found to produce negative consumer attitudes (Ha 1996, Elliott & Speck 1998). As conventional advertising media are becoming increasingly saturated, it is important to understand how clutter is pervading non-traditional media, including ambient marketing, and whether the latter produces the same results among consumers as traditional advertising vehicles.

Rumbo (2002) and Kaikati and Kaikati (2004) note that marketers are increasingly adopting alternative advertising media in order to break through clutter, as well as incorporating shock appeals into advertisements. Ambient marketing, which integrates advertising features used to break through clutter, such as use of alternative media vehicles and unavoidable placements, thus

presents marketers with a viable advertising vehicle with which to effectively reach consumers, in theory. It is therefore necessary to investigate if these results are attained in real-world settings, and how consumers perceive and respond to these types of marketing efforts within an increasingly cluttered advertising landscape.

#### **2.4.2 Creativity effects**

Despite marketers' reliance on creativity to produce successful campaigns, Zinkhan (1993) notes that research into this area is minimal, largely due to the difficulty in measuring this subjective feature. Yang and Smith (2009) echo the lack of research in this area, however, there has been additional literature being produced within the last decade and a half. This research interest coincides with the rise in alternative marketing communications methods that marketers have been employing in order to break through advertising clutter.

Researchers present some variation among definitions of 'creativity' within advertising, although a general consensus exists that creativity refers to novelty, originality and unexpectedness within advertising messages as compared to 'typical' advertisements (e.g. Ang & Low 2000, Pieters et al 2002, Till & Baack 2005, Ahmad & Mahmood 2011). Other researchers include more specific terminology, such as 'atypicality' (Goodstein 1993) and 'divergence' (Tellis 1998, Smith & Yang 2004). Similarly, Taylor et al (1994) investigate brand differentiating messages (BDMs), which are advertising messages that emphasise a unique benefit of the product, "*either a tangible product attribute or an intangible (image-based) dimension*" (p.33).

In addition to the novelty component, some researchers posit that creativity is also comprised of relevance (Smith & Yang 2004), where the ad message is pertinent to a consumer's needs. Similarly, Heckler and Childers (1992) and Lee and Mason (1999) express advertising incongruity as a function of unexpectedness and relevance, although their findings suggest that incongruence can also be defined as a combination of unexpectedness and irrelevance, in promoting ad recognition and recall. Ang and Low (2000) interrelate relevance with meaningfulness, and they postulate that emotional

content is yet another facet of creativity in advertising. They insist that meaningfulness be coupled with novelty, as consumers must derive added value from the advertising for it to be perceived as creative.

While these dimensions of creativity are applicable across all media, ambient marketing provides an additional outlet for creativity via choice of media vehicle, as well as integration or congruence executed between the vehicle and the brand or product being advertised, and also allows for consumers to physically interact with the advertising message. These elements provide further opportunities for creative executions, which necessitate an understanding of how consumers perceive creativity within this medium, as well as how they react to such campaigns, and how they can be effective at capturing consumer attention and engagement.

In their study of magazine advertising, Pieters et al (2002) produce findings that advertising originality garners increased consumer attention, which satisfy their postulation that 'original' or creative advertisements, due to their divergence from the norm, will stand out amidst the multitude of ordinary advertisements. At a cognitive level, this can be explained by Berlyne's (1971) theory that an unexpected stimulus, such as an ad that is divergent from the norm, arouses the individual and prompts him or her to engage in deeper cognitive elaboration in an attempt to resolve this unexpectedness. Using schema theory, Goodstein (1993) echoes these claims, suggesting that individuals are motivated to more deeply process a stimulus when it is incongruent with their category expectations, in keeping with work by Fiske and Taylor (1991). Yet another supporting theory is provided by Yang and Smith (2009), based on desire to postpone closure (DPC), whereby individuals with high DPC are seen to be more open-minded and less defensive when processing information. They suggest that creative advertisements increase consumers' DPC, generating curiosity and leading to deeper processing, thus enhancing consumers' viewing intentions.

Several studies have produced findings to support the premise that incongruent stimuli lead to more elaborative processing, including Srull (1981), Meyers-Levy and Tybout (1989), Heckler and Childers (1992), Lee and Mason

(1999) and Rosengren et al (2013). Thus, an advertisement is more deeply processed when it is unique, compared to other advertising, which forms the basis of Jurca and Madlberger's (2015) conceptual framework of ambient advertising effectiveness. Through integration of this incongruence into marketing efforts, creative advertising, as compared to typical advertising efforts, is found to increase consumer attention to the advertisement (Goodstein 1993, Pieters et al 2002, Yang & Smith 2009), generate positive affect (Taylor et al 1994, Ang & Low 2000, Stone et al 2000, Yang & Smith 2009), and enhance purchase intent (Kover et al 1995, Yang & Smith 2009). Dahlén et al (2008) find that advertising creativity increases perceived marketing efforts by consumers, and perceived brand quality, which has been found to generate greater brand interest. Modig and Rosengren (2014) further find that advertising creativity positively affects consumers' perceptions of both product quality and product value. Additionally, while some (e.g. Haberland & Dacin 1992) argue that creative advertising may result in attention and recall of advertisement elements, viewers may be distracted from the advertised brand, reducing brand memory. However, Pieters et al (2002), Till and Baack (2005) and Lehnert et al (2011) all find that creative advertisements enhance recall for both the execution and the brand.

Contrary to these findings, however, Goodstein's (1993) research indicates that atypical advertisements can produce less favourable attitudes among viewers when compared to typical advertising, although it is unclear as to the degree of atypicality that garners this result. Ang and Low (2000) produce similar findings, but only when the advertisement is designed to elicit negative feelings, such as those within shock advertising and demarketing, diminishing attitudes towards the advertisement, but without affecting attitudes towards the brand or purchase intention. Furthermore, Till and Baack (2005) find that creative advertisements have no effect on brand attitudes, as compared to control advertisements, and that the former was also ineffective in stimulating purchase intention.

These research studies, whether producing results favourable or unfavourable to creative advertising, have been conducted using traditional

marketing media, namely television, magazine and print. This indicates a research gap with respect to creativity within non-traditional advertising, necessitating examination of creativity and its effects in other media, particularly alternative media, which provide another facet for creative execution. With reference to ambient marketing, it would be useful to investigate how this advertising medium specifically employs creative appeals and how these influence consumers to attend to and engage with an ad, and the perceptions towards the ad and the brand following these brand experiences.

## **2.5. Summary**

The literature review highlights the need for investigation, both empirical and conceptual, into the engagement effects of ambient advertising, as asserted by Gambetti (2010). Currently, some conceptual work has attempted to address the concept of engagement in ambient advertising, but no empirical studies have been produced to examine the ad features that encourage consumers to interact with ambient ads, within the definition used in this study. Virtually no empirical studies investigate the consumer perceptions and attitudes resulting from a consumer's ability to either engage with or co-create ad meaning of ambient ads.

As alternative OOH media and even traditional posters and billboards have been found to break through advertising clutter, it is likely that ambient ads would also benefit from this outcome to capture consumer attention, as a precursor to engagement. Outdoor advertising, Dahlén's creative media and creative ads within conventional media have all demonstrated positive consumer attitudes as compared to traditional ads, which could also be true for ambient ads. Where stealth marketing, through the use of brand pushers, allows consumers to interact with the brand and the actual product, ambient ads may adopt a similar strategy but in a more transparent manner, where consumers are aware that an ad message is being communicated. The possibility of this engagement with the actual product through ambient advertising will be investigated, and the resulting impacts on consumer attitudes towards the ad and the brand. The researcher aims to determine whether ambient ads will produce the increased perceptions of ad credibility and favourable attitudes

towards both the ad and the brand that has been demonstrated when creative media is used, as compared to traditional media.

The concept of experiential marketing presents the idea of providing consumers with a compelling experience with the brand, through use of multisensory appeals, aesthetics and interactive elements. Placement in the public sphere has also been proposed as a strategic tool in allowing the consumer to engage with an ad, and reach the consumer in a meaningful and stimulating manner. As ambient ads belong to the public domain, the researcher is interested in determining which appeals would be effective in driving engagement. Literature on interactivity, while primarily used for Internet-based advertising, presents useful concepts for application to ambient advertising. The researcher aims to discuss the varying levels of interactivity, or interactive elements, that ambient ads can provide to consumers, and the extent to which this variation impacts upon engagement. As both concepts of experiential marketing and interactivity have been seen to produce both positive and negative consumer attitudes towards ads, the researcher intends to understand how varying degrees of ad interactivity influences consumer attitudes and ad perceptions.

Clutter has been seen to have negative effects on consumers' attitudes towards advertising, and avoidance of ad messages. While creative advertising may attenuate these effects, it is uncertain whether ambient ads would be perceived as creative executions or adding to clutter. Creative advertising has been shown in several studies to prompt deep cognitive processing when encountered, increasing attention to the ad, and further enhancing ad and brand recall, generating positive affect and stimulating purchase intent. If perceived as creative, ambient ads may be able to produce similar outcomes, where the researcher aims to address the attention to and subsequent engagement with an ad, and the influence on consumer affect for the ad and, ultimately, the brand.

The review of the literature presented indicates where further research is needed to develop a deeper understanding of ambient advertising, particularly as these ads provide a brand experience for the consumer. The researcher has identified a need for investigation into the ad elements that foster engagement



with the consumer, and the ad and brand perceptions that result from these interactions. Especially as the current literature on ambient advertising is fairly fragmented, the researcher hopes to address some of these research gaps through development of a corresponding research methodology.

# 3 Methodology

---

## 3.1 Introduction

Having completed the literature view, it has been identified that there is an evident lack of research into the aspect of consumer engagement with ambient ads, pointing to an interpretivist research paradigm in order to “*generate or inductively develop a theory or pattern of meaning*” (Creswell 2014, p.9). By focusing on socially constructed perceptions of reality, adopting an interpretivist approach would allow for theory generation through understanding of consumers’ own views of ambient advertising.

A mixed-methods research plan has been devised, with an initial exploration of consumer perceptions of ambient ads through focus groups. Utilising a broad range of questions, the focus groups were designed to identify a number of potential consumer responses to ambient ads, and how these are shaped by particular ad features. Analysis of the focus group findings would allow for the emergence of categories to be further developed in the content analysis, which aims to produce a classification of ad features that can be seen to influence consumer engagement with ambient ads. Finally, in order to provide context to the results of the content analysis, personal interviews with consumers exposed to ambient ads were conducted. These interviews sought to provide real-life insights into consumers’ interest in ambient ads, and the ways in which actual ads have prompted or discouraged engagement.

By combining both qualitative and quantitative research methods, the researcher aims to produce a comprehensive, objective and reliable understanding of the various possible consumer engagement outcomes with ambient ads. The purpose of the mixed-methods approach is not only to identify the potential responses an ad may evoke in consumers, but also how these can be influenced by marketers through ad execution and implementation.

### **3.2 Consumer focus groups**

With no substantial research providing either empirical evidence, or suggesting theory into consumer engagement with ambient ads, preliminary exploration of this phenomenon employed a series of focus groups. The aim of the focus group exercise was not to generate theory through attainment of theoretical saturation; rather it was to amass a variety of viewpoints through discussion of a broad range of facets of ambient advertising. By asking participants to imagine themselves encountering a particular ad, the researcher sought to discover the range of consumer responses to the ad, with respect to the varying levels of engagement. These outcomes were then analysed to identify the ad features that influence behavioural responses, which would form the basis of the subsequent content analysis. The more direct questions pertaining to consumer perceptions of ambient advertising as a practice and the brands employing this form of communication with consumers provided insights that would be explored further through personal interviews.

The main objective of choosing the focus group method was to investigate consumer opinions of ambient ads through participants debating and challenging one another. This process was considered to yield as many different responses to ads as possible, to aid in development of the content analysis categories. Another crucial aim of focus groups was to identify consumer perceptions and behaviours as expressed by participants, rather than the researcher alone, which is fundamental in exploratory research (Bryman & Bell 2015). Thus focus groups were acknowledged as most suitable for preliminary examination of consumer engagement with ambient ads, and perceptions of the practice.

#### **3.2.1 Instruments**

An interview guide was developed, based on the preceding literature review, comprising several broad, open-ended questions and prompts, regarding consumers' perceptions of ambient marketing, including how they attend to, engage with, and respond to, ambient marketing messages, and how they

perceive brands which do make use of ambient campaigns. Participants were also asked to discuss how receptive they are to ambient marketing as a practice, and how it compares to other forms of advertising.

As a form of creative advertising, through use of alternative media, questions on ambient ads were devised based on literature surrounding outcomes and perceptions of creativity in advertising, as reviewed in the preceding chapter. None of the questions posed to participants directly addressed the particular ways in which a consumer might engage with an ambient ad. Instead, questions were developed to prompt participant discussion on the central outcomes of creative advertising: attention, recall and purchase intention. Avoiding direct questions on engagement with ambient ads aided in preventing the introduction of response bias into the discussion, while asking more general questions aimed to prompt dialogue on particular ad features that participants distinctly related to ambient ads.

The first set of questions sought to understand participants' ability to notice ambient ads, which most directly addressed the phenomenon of consumer engagement with ads, as noticing an ad was deemed the first stage in engagement. Very broad questions were posed to participants, such as "What would allow you to notice an ambient ad?" in order to allow key themes to emerge from the data, being participant-driven. However, prompts and follow-up questions were devised based on findings within the literature review. Since creativity has been seen to increase a consumer's attention towards an ad (Goodstein 1993, Pieters et al 2002, Yang & Smith 2009), as well as relevance (Heckler & Childers 1992, Lee & Mason 1999, Ang & Low 2000, Smith & Yang 2004) and visibility of outdoor ads (Woodside 1990, Lopez-Pumarejo & Bassell 2009), these three concepts were included as prompts when participants were asked to identify features that would attract their attention to an ad. Subsequent questions sought to investigate the recall effects of ambient ads, based on findings by Whitehill King and Tinkham (1990) and Lichtenthal et al (2006) that suggest that creative ads improve ad recall over typical ads, starting with the broad question, "Would you remember an ambient advertisement? Why (or why not)?"

Due to Haberland and Dacin's (1992) suggestions that creative ads diminish brand recall, although subsequent research countered these findings (Pieters et al 2002, Till & Baack 2005, Lehnert et al 2011), the follow-up question asked participants whether they would remember the advertised brand. A second follow-up question was devised to investigate the effects of ad repetition on recall, due to research indicating that creative advertising benefits from increased ad recall, with repeated exposures to the ad (Tellis 1997, Ahmad & Mahmood 2011, Lehnert et al 2011). Another question was developed to determine if consumers would be able to recall either the ad, or the brand, without being aided, followed up by an opposing question on aided recall at the POS, due to Shankar and Horton's (1999) postulation that ambient ads serve as a reminder to consumers at the POS, which Luxton and Drummond (2000) assert as being the main objective of ambient advertising. A final question into ad recall was prompted by research indicating that brand familiarity is a moderator of brand recall (Kent & Allen 1994, Rosengren 2008) and repetition effects (Anand & Sternthal 1990, Campbell & Keller 2003). Participants were asked if they would be able to recall an ambient ad without prior brand familiarity.

Participants were then requested to suggest the effect of encountering an ad on their purchase intention, where prompts were listed to explain to participants the various stages of the purchase funnel. A series of follow-up questions was devised asking participants to hypothesise their behavioural outcomes based on varying ad and product features, in the event that these features were not mentioned in participant answers. The features examined were product type and price, brand familiarity, repeated exposure, proximity to the POS, and the degree of consumer engagement due to the ability to interact with ambient ads, based on suggestions of increased purchase intent for creative ads (Kover et al 1995, Dahlén et al 2009b, Yang & Smith 2009). This was the only question which directly addressed consumer engagement with the ad, but only with reference to purchase intention, rather than asking participants how they would engage with an ad. The subsequent question asked, "Would you tell someone about an ambient ad that you encountered? What would encourage you to do so?" in an effort to determine whether WOM would be generated from

exposure to an ambient ad, as preceding literature indicated that WOM is likely to be produced from creative ads (Whitehill King & Tinkham 1990, Phillips & Bradshaw 1993, Dahlén et al 2009b).

The final set of questions was designed to investigate participants' attitudes towards, and opinions of, ambient marketing practices. As creative ads were found to generate positive affect (Taylor et al 1994, Ang & Low 2000, Stone et al 2000, Dahlén 2005, Dahlén et al 2008, Modig & Rosengren 2014, Rosengren et al 2015), participants were asked about their opinions of ambient ads, to determine if these findings were also true for ambient advertising. A follow-up question was included, asking participants to discuss their perceptions on the intrusiveness of ambient ads, to expand upon Storch's (2008) inconclusive findings, as well as to investigate whether ambient ads would be determined to contribute to advertising clutter and lead to perceived clutter, adding to Bogart's (1990) and Ha's (1996) research on ad clutter. Participants were questioned as to their perceptions of brands that made use of ambient advertising, due to the conflicting results of creative advertising on brand perceptions, as presented by Goodstein (1993), Ang and Low (2000) and Till and Baack (2005). Participants were also asked to discuss their perceptions of ambient advertising as a practice, as compared to other types of advertising, in an attempt to understand if ambient ads would produce negative sentiments as typical of advertising in general (Zanot 1984, Pollay et al 1990, Mittal 1994, Yoon et al 1996, Ashill & Yavas 2005). Finally, participants were asked to share any further thoughts or comments. A summary of the literature used to develop the questions for each topic and its themes is presented in Table 3.1 below, and the complete interview guide can be found in Appendix II.

**Table 3.1 Summary of literature referenced in focus group interview guide**

Topic	Theme	Literature referenced
Attention	Creativity, novelty	Goodstein 1993 Pieters et al 2002 Yang & Smith 2009
	Relevance	Heckler & Childers 1992 Lee & Mason 1999 Ang & Low 2000 Smith & Yang 2004

	Visibility	Woodside 1990 Lopez-Pumarejo & Bassell 2009
<b>Recall, retention</b>	Creativity, novelty	Whitehill King & Tinkham 1990 Lichtenthal et al 2006
	Brand recall	Haberland & Dacin 1992 Pieters et al 2002 Till & Baack 2005 Lehnert et al 2011
	Repetition	Tellis 1997 Ahmad & Mahmood 2011 Lehnert et al 2011
	Relation to POS	Shankar & Horton 1999 Luxton & Drummond 2008
	Brand familiarity	Anand & Sternthal 1990 Kent & Allen 1994 Campbell & Keller 2003 Rosengren 2008
<b>Behavioural outcomes</b>	Purchase intent	Kover et al 1995 Dahlén et al 2009b Yang & Smith 2009
	Engagement	Schmitt 1999 Turk et al 2006 Gambetti 2010 Hutter 2015 Rosengren et al 2015
	Word of mouth	Whitehill King & Tinkham 1990 Phillips & Bradshaw 1993 Dahlén et al 2009b
<b>Attitudinal responses</b>	Attitudes to ad	Taylor et al 1994 Ang & Low 2000 Stone et al 2000 Dahlén 2005
	Perceived intrusiveness	Bogart 1990 Ha 1996 Storch 2008
	Attitudes to brand	Goodstein 1993 Ang & Low 2000 Till & Baack 2005 Dahlén et al 2008 Modig & Rosengren 2014 Rosengren et al 2015
	Perceptions of practice	Zanot 1984 Pollay et al 1990 Mittal 1994 Yoon et al 1996 Ashill & Yavas 2005

To further stimulate discussion, and to allow participants to have reference examples when providing and debating answers to questions outlined in the interview guide, six examples of ambient marketing were selected, and A4-sized photographs of these campaigns presented to participants. These six pictorials were selected from the sample of ads to be used for the content analysis, and were chosen on the basis of representing different product categories, locations, placements and mediums. The six pictorials used within the focus groups are shown in Figures 3.1 through 3.6.



**Figure 3.1 Bench advertising Nestlé Kit Kat chocolate bar  
(Kit Kat 2008)**





**Figure 3.2 Subway turnstile advertising CoverGirl LashBlast mascara (CoverGirl 2010)**



**Figure 3.3 Tactile sidewalk pavers advertising Lego's Education Centre in Australia (Lego 2008)**



**Figure 3.4 Airport baggage carousel advertising for Casino di Venezia (Casino di Venezia 2007)**



**Super Absorbent**

We were asked to show Scotch-Brite's USP super absorbent. So, we wanted to find a novel way to demonstrate Scotch-Brite super absorbent sponge to our consumers. We attached the sponge to water taps that are found all over the city. Whenever the tap was used, the consumer saw a clear and effective demonstration of it's superb absorbency. This created a buzz in the city and the clients saw an increase in awareness & Sales.

Figure 3.5 Water drinking fountain advertising Scotch Brite sponges (Scotch Brite 2009)



**Figure 3.6 Wall advertising for Stihl high pressure cleaners (Stihl 2008)**

### **3.2.2 Sampling**

As the purpose of the focus groups was to initialise exploration of the research objectives through seeking variation within ambient marketing concepts, as per Miles and Huberman (2013) and Corbin and Strauss (2008), probability sampling was not deemed necessary. However, a range of consumer demographics was seen to be useful in promoting differing participant responses, thus convenience sampling was chosen in selecting participants. It was not necessary for focus group participants to have had prior exposure to ambient marketing, as attaining a variety of responses was feasible through hypothetical or imagined encounters with the array of ambient marketing pictorials presented to each group. The researcher adopted the approach used in Shama's (1992) marketing research, whereby focus group participants were selected by the researcher in conjunction with a recruiter.

As Trinidad & Tobago was the home country of the researcher, and a recruiter was previously identified, two pilot focus groups were scheduled there, while recruiters were sourced within the United Kingdom (UK). A third focus group in Trinidad & Tobago was planned after the pilot study was deemed successful, using the local recruiter. Upon returning to the UK, the researcher was able to confirm two separate recruiters, one in Milton Keynes and another in Leicester, to source participants for a group in each city. Between these two groups, half the participants were London-based, in order to examine consumer perceptions and attitudes across varied advertising landscapes.

Similar to Shama (1992), focus group participants were selected and coordinated in order to produce heterogeneous groups, featuring variation in gender, age, education, profession and income. This was done not only to obtain as many different consumer opinions and perspectives as possible, as identified by Levine and Moreland (1998), but also to approach a random sample as closely as was feasible, further aiding in developing a valid study, as ambient marketing reaches a diverse cross section of consumers due to its placement within the external environment. As far as possible, this diverse cross-section of consumer groups was maintained both across and within all focus groups. However, it was noted that a high degree of disparity within each group can prolong or reduce

consensus (Stewart et al 2007), so this was taken into account when recruiting participants and selecting groups. As far as possible, participants between the ages of 18 and 65 were selected, English-speaking, with a minimum high school education. The recruiters adhered to these criteria, with the exception of one male participant, aged 67, which the researcher deemed permissible.

Participants for the two pilot groups in Trinidad & Tobago were first selected. Based on Morgan's (1997) recommendation of using smaller groups when participants are highly involved in the research topic, and Blackburn and Stokes' (2000) recounts of managing large groups, each focus group comprised five participants. At this size, groups were manageable, and allowed for each participant to participate meaningfully. Although larger groups have shown to be successful in countless studies, and Morgan (1997) suggests group sizes of six to 10 participants, the first pilot group ran for 90 minutes, and the second for 80 minutes, it was decided that subsequent groups should remain at five participants each, as participants were not being compensated monetarily, and any additional participants would lengthen the focus group time. The pilot groups were used to assess the group dynamics and to determine if the interview guide should be modified, although it was determined unnecessary to do so, in keeping with the iterative process of data collection and analysis of Tracy (2012). Participants were not given individual incentives, but instead were provided with refreshments in gratitude for their cooperation, in keeping with suggestions by Stewart et al (2007). The researcher discouraged monetary incentivisation due to the bias introduced with respect to characteristics of income, education and occupation of respondents.

The third, fourth and fifth groups were conducted in Trinidad & Tobago, Milton Keynes and Leicester, respectively. While the sample of respondents may not have been 'representative' of the entire population, it was seen to be 'illustrative' of the general population (Blackburn & Stokes 2000). As the researcher did not aim to attain theoretical saturation through focus group discussions, five groups were considered sufficient in identifying ad features to be expanded upon in the content analysis, and perceptions into ambient advertising practices to be explored through the ensuing personal interviews.

### **3.2.3 Data collection**

The researcher adopted the role of the facilitator of the focus groups. Participants were requested to sign consent forms and to complete short personal information forms, before being briefed as to the purpose of the study and the concept of ambient marketing. Broad, introductory questions were asked to ascertain the group's general views of ambient marketing and their levels of exposure to these types of messages.

Following this initial stage of questioning, participants were presented with the selected ambient marketing pictorials, and asked to envision themselves encountering the ads within their natural external environments, with reference to the campaign's actual placement, which follows the approach used by Dahlén et al (2009b). In so doing, group members were more actively participating rather than simply observing, and were able to provide more realistic accounts of their reactions to and perceptions of the ambient message. After an initial dialogue, the researcher began asking questions as devised in the interview schedule, with attempts to maintain the discussion in keeping with the order of the schedule.

Each focus group was recorded on both video and audiotape, and subsequently transcribed and analysed. In this way, the data collection and analysis processes occurred concurrently, as per theoretical sampling and logical analysis guidelines. All data was stored and managed using NVIVO software, to facilitate easier coding and analysis, and visual representation of the data, concepts, and relationships discovered.

Data collection and analysis were conducted in tandem, employing iterative methods to identify areas necessitating deeper investigation with each subsequent focus group and its analysis, so that the data from each group builds upon the last. Code development, where each code represented an ad feature, was also performed iteratively, with primary codes being developed from the data from the first group, and being refined with each subsequent set of data, as themes emerged. These codes were developed into a classification system, by grouping related ad features together, in order to produce the basis of the



categories and subcategories that would be further developed through the subsequent content analysis.

### **3.3 Content Analysis**

Following the insights gleaned from the focus group findings, a content analysis method was chosen to be developed and implemented, with this approach demonstrating considerable use in the analysis of ad content since 1975 (Wheeler 1988). The focus of the content analysis was to analyse how ambient executions incorporate elements to encourage consumer engagement with the ads. As Kassarian (1977, p.8) states, *“The signs and symbols are the units of analysis rather than the intent of the communicator or the actions of the interpreter.”* The purpose of this content analysis is thus to identify the variable features within ambient ads that affect a consumer’s intent to engage with these advertising messages, and determine the usage of these elements in practice.

Kolbe and Burnett (1991, p.244) assert that content analysis *“provides an empirical starting point for generating new research evidence about the nature and effect of specific communications”*. Content analysis is thus seen to be highly appropriate for the purposes of this study, due to the lack of research and empirical study into consumer engagement with ambient ads. Considering the difficulty of accessing a variety of real-life ads in person to observe consumer responses, Kassarian (1977) suggests content analysis as a useful tool when it is problematic to source participants. Content analysis is further thought to provide a suitable platform for unobtrusive measures (Webb & Roberts 1969, Webb et al 1981) and evaluation of communications (Kolbe & Burnett 1991), and to create a more objective framework around qualitative research (Kassarian 1977), such as the focus group and interview data produced in this study.

#### **3.3.1 Instruments**

To conduct the content analysis, a coding form and accompanying coding manual were developed. With little research exploring consumer engagement with

ambient ads, the categories used in the coding form were mainly devised from data extracted from the preceding focus groups, where participants discussed features and ad modifications that would bring about varying degrees of engagement with an ad. The primary literature source for the formulation of the categories to be included in the coding form was Hutter's (2015) study, adopting two of the same categories used in her content analysis, as the focus group data indicated that both categories and their options impacted upon consumer engagement with an ambient ad. From Hutter's content analysis, one category of level of interaction was replicated, and her three categories regarding dimensionality were combined into a single category for this study. The remaining seven categories were devised based on focus group data.

The focus group data indicated that a consumer's interest in noticing and further engaging with an ambient ad was contingent on the following components: immediacy, dimensionality, likeness to product, benefit derived from ad, communication with ad, and demonstration of any product benefit. Participants also suggested that the elements depicted by the ad influenced how they might notice or engage with the ad, such as whether the product was portrayed in the ad, or a relevant feature or symbol.

To address the element of communication with the ad, Hutter's (2015) category was replicated in this study, with the subcategories of either one-way or two-way communication. Focus group participants noted dimensionality as a factor in engaging with an ad, as addressed in Hutter's study, although she separates dimensionality into three categories: classical 2D media, new 2D media and 3D media, each with their own subcategories. For the purposes of this study, the single category of dimensionality was divided into two subcategories only, namely 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional media, as the concept of 'classical' versus 'new' media would evolve with growth of ambient advertising. The descriptors of 'classical' and 'new' would then depend on advertisers' use of any particular medium, and on the individual consumer's exposure to ambient ads and the varying media used.

In devising the remainder of the categories based on focus group findings, three main groups were formulated: components, placement and medium. Each

group was divided into relevant categories and subcategories. The subcategories were identified through analysis of focus group data, examination of ambient ads, and a stage of pre-testing with additional judges. In addition to these categories, fields were included for judges to enter ad details of the assigned number, brand, product and medium in order to ensure that the same ads were being compared, and to identify any differences in overall ad perceptions between judges.

The pre-test phase was an iterative process designed to refine and supplement the categories devised by the researcher alone, in accordance with Sayre's (1992) guidelines. After a preliminary coding form and accompanying codebook were developed, two independent judges were recruited to participate in the pre-test, with both judges being employed within the marketing industry. Each judge was given 30 randomly selected ads from a sample collected through an online database to code using the coding form and codebook provided. To create a random sample, each ad was assigned an ad number, and an online number generator was used to select the ads to be included in each sample.

For each iteration of testing, judges were allowed to select multiple subcategories for each category, indicating their order preference, as well as add or amend subcategories to reflect their ad perceptions. After each iteration, the researcher compared the coding choices between the two judges, and feedback on the coding process, and revisions were made to the coding form and codebook before a subsequent round of pre-testing was initiated. Three iterations were performed with the two judges, with a new set of 30 ads being provided for each iteration, after which no further changes were proposed by the judges for any categories or subcategories. An additional two judges, with non-marketing backgrounds, were recruited to participate in the third iteration of pre-testing, to ensure clarity of categories and definitions, as developed by the researcher. The resulting coding form is shown in Figure 3.7 overleaf, and the final version of the codebook can be found in Appendix III.

**AD DETAILS**

Ad number: \_\_\_\_\_

Brand: \_\_\_\_\_

Product: \_\_\_\_\_

Medium: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. COMPONENTS**

**\*Select all that apply**

*1a. Ad depicts:*

Product \_\_\_\_\_

Product effect \_\_\_\_\_

Product target \_\_\_\_\_

Feature/component \_\_\_\_\_

Symbol \_\_\_\_\_

*1b. Product use in ad:*

Actual product \_\_\_\_\_

Modified product \_\_\_\_\_

Product representation \_\_\_\_\_

Product not included \_\_\_\_\_

**2. PLACEMENT**

*2a. Immediacy:*

Direct contact \_\_\_\_\_

Out of reach \_\_\_\_\_

*2b. Ad location:*

Waiting point \_\_\_\_\_

Entry/exit point \_\_\_\_\_

Other indoor location \_\_\_\_\_

Other outdoor location \_\_\_\_\_

**3. MEDIUM**

*3a. Dimensionality:*

2-dimensional \_\_\_\_\_

3-dimensional \_\_\_\_\_

*3b. Provenance:*

Pre-existing \_\_\_\_\_

Fabricated \_\_\_\_\_

*3c. Ad communication:*

One-way communication \_\_\_\_\_

Two-way communication \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Select all that apply**

*3d. Benefit of branding:*

Physiological value \_\_\_\_\_

Informational value \_\_\_\_\_

Experience with product \_\_\_\_\_

No benefit \_\_\_\_\_

*3e. Demonstration of  
feature/result/benefit:*

Demonstration of actual benefit \_\_\_\_\_

Representation of benefit \_\_\_\_\_

No benefit demonstration \_\_\_\_\_

**Figure 3.7 Coding form developed for content analysis**

### **3.3.2 Sampling**

A total of 507 pictorial ads was selected from the website Ads of the World (adsoftheworld.com), spanning a 10-year period from 2005 to 2015. This initial ad set was distilled to 494 ads to be included in the content analysis, after removing duplicates and other ads later deemed unsuitable. This website was chosen as it was seen to contain the largest online database of ambient ads, and was also used by Hutter in her (2015) study. The website provides images of ambient campaigns produced worldwide, amassed through submissions by advertising agencies, private individuals and corporations. While Hutter included three other websites from which to select ads for analysis to yield a sample of 340 ads, the Ads of the World website alone was deemed as providing a considerable sample size for the purposes of this research study. Although the website featured around 5,000 ads categorised under 'Ambient', this classification appeared to represent any OOH ad that fell beyond traditional 2-dimensional billboards and posters.

In order to include only ambient ads that fit the researcher's definition, each ad within the 'Ambient' category was viewed and judged as either relevant to the study or extraneous. This process was undertaken by the researcher in conjunction with an assistant, a graduate marketing student. Both the researcher and the assistant had to agree on each ad's eligibility in order for it to be included in the sample. Only one ad from a particular campaign was selected; any repeat ads were disregarded once they were variations of the same ad. If an ad for the same brand were featured in a separate campaign, the ad would be considered for inclusion into the sample. For pictorials featuring multiple ads in a single image, such as illustrating several versions of an ad for a campaign, the researcher, together with the assistant, selected a single ad to be used for analysis. The pre-test ads were included in the final sample, as these had not been previously coded by the researcher.

In order to explore ad characteristics that would prompt or encourage consumer engagement, ads that employed scare tactics or shock appeals were excluded from the study, as they were perceived to promote feelings of disgust, sadness, anger and other negative feelings. This strategy was found to be used

primarily by public interest groups or non-government organisations, and in demarketing campaigns, and all ads in these categories were omitted from the sample. While not all ads among these groups utilised shock or were perceived as creating feelings of aversion among consumers, these ads were all eliminated from the sample to promote consistency and validity in the study. Thus, only ambient ads for purchasable goods and services were considered for inclusion in the final sample.

### **3.3.3 Data collection**

The researcher and a second judge, a marketing industry professional, undertook the activity of coding each of the ads for the data collection process. Similar to the judges used in the pre-test, the second judge in the primary coding exercise participated in several training sessions from the researcher, which spanned a ten-day period. The 494 ads comprising the sample were saved as electronic files by the researcher, and an electronic copy of this folder sent to the second judge, as well as an electronic and hard copy of the coding handbook, identical to that of the researcher. An electronic coding form was developed using the online Survey Monkey programme, which featured identical categories and options as the coding form presented in Figure 3.7. As the second judge preferred to use hard copies of the coding form rather than completing the coding exercise electronically, 500 copies of the coding form were provided by the researcher. Upon completion of the coding activity and return of the materials from the second judge to the researcher, the latter input this data into the Survey Monkey database, collated with her own responses.

As per the instructions given in the coding handbook, each ad was analysed individually and coded on a separate coding form. Every ad was analysed as a stand-alone ad, despite some pictorials referencing other media channels being used in conjunction with the ambient ad. The ads were analysed by ad number, which equates to chronological order from oldest to most recent. Both the researcher and second judge were allowed to change any of their coding choices up until the coding forms were handed over from the latter to the former.

Following completion of the coding exercise by both judges, and all data input into the Survey Monkey online database, the data was then electronically exported to SPSS for data management and analysis. Data analysis allowed for identification of the most commonly implemented ad features and frequencies of multiple features being used in conjunction with each other. The quantitative data was then used to theorise the effectiveness of individual ad features on consumer engagement, and the extent to which a consumer would likely interact with an ad. To supplement this data and emergent theory, a series of interviews was conducted with consumers who shared their actual experiences with ambient ads.

### **3.4 Personal interviews**

Conducting personal interviews allowed the researcher more in-depth exploration into the specific consumer interactions evoked by ambient ads. These interviews provided an understanding of why these responses resulted and how they were influenced, with particular reference to the ad features presented in the content analysis. Where the focus group responses were based on participants' hypothetical encounters with ambient ads, each interview participant was selected based on his or her actual experience with an ambient ad. Asking interviewees to reflect on their encounters with ads allowed for identification of particular behaviours in response to these ads, as well as the features that encouraged any engagement. Participants were then probed in order to develop an understanding of why any engagement, or lack thereof, occurred, and how an ad could be manipulated to foster engagement. Perceptions of ambient ads, both in terms of individual ads and the practice as a whole, were investigated to recognise how marketers could advance ambient advertising to produce favourable consumer responses.

#### **3.4.1 Instruments**

The interview guide was developed from the original focus group interview schedule, with the questions modified to address an individual participant's

actual engagement with an ad. Similar to the focus group questions, a range of questions was asked, and not limited to direct questions regarding consumer interaction, in order to avoid respondent bias. Once again, primarily open-ended questions were posed to participants, as these elicit more in-depth responses than closed questions. However, some close-ended questions were initially asked in order to determine appropriate open-ended follow-up questions, which then provided respondents with opportunities to elaborate upon preliminary answers. A variety of questioning styles was used, as suggested by Kvale (2014), such as introducing, follow-up, probing, specifying and interpreting questions, to more deeply investigate concepts that emerged from the focus group data. Follow-up questions, as suggested by Kvale (2014), allowed interviewees to clarify and elaborate upon answers, particularly when subjective values and benefits were given. Probing questions, also per Kvale (2014), were asked at times to explore why certain features, values or benefits were important to the respondent, as well as to understand why certain behavioural responses and consumer perceptions were elicited by the ambient advertisement.

In contrast to focus groups, this interview guide comprised more specific and targeted questions, and a list of potential follow-up questions was devised. Prompts were again included with questions, in the event that the participant needed further clarification or stimulation before giving a response. Additionally, prompts also aided the researcher in steering the participant's responses, if the question was misinterpreted or if the participant did not address a particular concept or issue. Prompts were also used to pursue secondary questions, contingent upon the responses given. The prompts used were modified from those used in the focus groups, based on the answers provided in the latter.

This interviewing strategy adopted a mainly reflexive approach, by first asking the participant to recall an encounter with an ambient marketing message and posing a series of questions based on these experiences and reactions. In this way, the participant was induced to be reflective, not only in recounting these events, but in explaining how their behaviour had been influenced, and offering reasons as to why this happened. From this, the researcher was able to relate relevant ambient marketing processes, as identified within the literature review,



and direct more specific questions towards the respondent, as allowed for by semi-structured interviewing techniques. While questions were posed that explored respondents' ability to notice and remember the ambient ad encountered, and how their purchase intention was affected, interactive ad elements were probed in each of these three parts. As far as possible, the researcher attempted to ask about consumer engagement only after respondents made mention of any such outcomes, so as not to introduce respondent bias.

Following this line of questioning, participants were asked more general questions as to their views of ambient marketing as a practice, brand perceptions of those who make use of ambient marketing, and insights into effective marketing communications strategies, similar to the interview guide used during the focus groups. Furthermore, any issues or concepts that arose which were not previously considered or investigated by the researcher were then pursued during the interview, and subsequently explored through supplementary literature reviews and in successive interviews. Through the iterative process of data collection and analysis, the researcher was able to identify responses that needed clarification or where further questioning could be directed. In these instances, follow-up interviews were conducted to provide a more complete data set for each participant. The interview guide developed for this stage of research is exhibited in Appendix IV.

### ***3.4.2 Sampling***

An initial random sampling approach was adopted in recruiting interview participants, whereby each participant was required to fulfil the criterion of having previous exposure to at least one ambient marketing campaign. This process was conducted in two phases, the first being in London, UK and the second in Trinidad & Tobago. As the aim of the study is centred on theory development, theoretical generalisability was the focus of the research plan, negating the need for random sampling throughout the qualitative sampling process. As a result, a convenience sampling approach was subsequently undertaken, where the initial interview participants served as recruiters themselves for a snowball sampling process.

To source initial participants in London, the researcher visited two areas in London: Farringdon and Green Park. Farringdon was chosen due to the installation of an ambient ad earlier with the year, and Green Park due to its tourist population and leisurely atmosphere, leading to a greater diversity in consumer groups approached, as well as consumers being more approachable in this environment. Conducting these sampling exercises in a metropolitan city such as London increased the likelihood of identifying consumers who had previously encountered some form of ambient marketing. At these sites, the researcher conducted random sampling with the aim of finding participants who met the stipulation of prior exposure to ambient ads.

For the second phase of sampling conducted in Trinidad & Tobago, a current ambient campaign was identified in the capital city of Port of Spain, through focus group respondents there. The campaign was for Nestlé's Kit Kat chocolate bar using a bench as the advertising medium, and located within the multi-use foyer of a cinema complex. The researcher randomly approached consumers outside the building, as well as inside the complex, but not within the immediate vicinity of the actual ad, so as not to bias respondents. In this way, participants were selected who independently recalled the Kit Kat bench without the researcher prompting or aiding their memory in any way.

All consumers, both in the UK and in Trinidad & Tobago, were approached in an identical manner, whereby the researcher introduced herself as a doctoral student conducting research, and asked interested potential candidates to examine the same ambient marketing pictorials used in the focus group research (Figures 3.1 through 3.6). Campaigns specific to the area in which respondents were recruited were not shown, due to Bucci's (1973) findings that biased recall is produced when consumers are asked about identified outdoor campaigns. The Kit Kat ad pictorial as seen in Figure 3.1 was not shown to potential candidates in Trinidad & Tobago due to its similarity to the local Kit Kat ad. Candidates were then given a brief explanation of ambient marketing, and asked if they had ever encountered this type of advertising. Respondents answering in the negative were thanked for their time, while those who answered positively were prompted for more information to assess whether the

advertising was, in fact, ambient marketing, and if a short interview could be conducted. Due to time constraints and convenience, only one interview was conducted immediately on-site, while all other interviews were conducted at either another public location, over the telephone or Skype, at the convenience of participants and at the researcher's own discretion, due to logistics and safety concerns.

Following these two cycles of random sampling to yield an initial set of interview candidates, the participants were asked to provide information for potential candidates, who had also come into contact with an ambient ad. Participants were encouraged to suggest members of their close networks who they strongly felt would have been eligible for the study based on their lifestyles and consumer habits. This focused convenience sampling method was employed with the purpose of investigating ambient marketing effects for a larger sample of ads, to better understand the influence of a wider variety of ad features than those provided by the initial random sampling methods.

A total of 15 semi-structured interviews was conducted, in order to provide context to the content analysis findings. No attempts were made to attain theoretical saturation, due to the inexhaustible variations of ambient ad campaigns. Instead, the interview participants were employed to allow the researcher to closely examine the influence of individual ads and their respective ad features on consumers' ability and willingness to engage with these ads.

### ***3.4.3 Data collection***

The researcher conducted all personal interviews first-hand, in order to control the quality of the data collected and maintain consistency within the research study. Each interviewee was briefed about ambient marketing, and again shown the examples of various campaigns as seen in Figures 3.1 through 3.6, which served to clarify the term 'ambient marketing' as used within the study, and to remind the respondent as to the scope of ambient marketing. Where participants were interviewed over the telephone or Skype, a copy of the interview guide seen in Appendix IV and the pictorials were emailed to each respondent, immediately prior to the interview, for this same purpose. As per the interview

guide, respondents were first asked to recall and describe a personal encounter with ambient marketing. Following this, more specific questions were asked, in accordance with the prepared interview guide, and also to explore issues and concepts raised by the participant.

As far as possible, personal interviews were conducted in quiet public locations, such as cafés and public parks, as well as respondents' places of business. While the last of these is discouraged by Bryman and Bell (2015) due to noise and interruptions, office locations tended to be convenient for interviewees, and conference or meeting rooms, where possible, were used to conduct interviews, in an attempt to negate these disruptions. Where interested participants were unable to be interviewed in person, the researcher was able to contact these individuals and conduct the interview over telephone or Skype, where convenient. Not only did this help to protect both the safety of both the researcher and the respondent, but such environments provided a more natural and relaxing setting for participants to engage in more informal and unstructured dialogue with the researcher. As these interviews were not incentivised, the researcher made all attempts to conduct the interviews at a time and place that was convenient to each participant, whether in person or via telephone or Skype. This helped to encourage participation, as well as to enable a thorough and complete interview to be performed in each instance.

All interviews were recorded on audiotape only, as all interviews were one-on-one, and there were no inter-participant interactions to record, nullifying the need for video recordings. The audio data was subsequently transcribed, and stored and managed through NVIVO, in preparation for analysis. As with focus group data, interview data was collected and analysed in tandem, and the coding process developed through this iterative process. The primary codes were identified as the subcategories produced from the content analysis, with secondary and tertiary codes developed through a grounded theory approach to analysing the data, as themes emerged. With each level of coding, codes were either added or modified with coding of each subsequent data set, necessitating re-coding of earlier data until each level of codes was consistent across all interview data. The coding process is detailed in the following chapter.

### **3.5 Summary**

With limited existing research into consumer interaction with ambient ads, a mixed-methods research plan was developed, which allowed for concepts and theory to emerge from the resulting data. A series of focus groups was first conducted in order to identify possible ad features that influence a consumer's ability or willingness to engage with an ad. The focus group findings formed the basis of the content analysis, which examined how marketers implemented these ad elements in a variety of real-life ads in order to attract consumer attention and foster engagement. Personal interviews were conducted with consumers who had encountered ambient ads, to examine how the identified features affected actual consumer response, and to understand various ways in which ads could be revised to garner more favourable reactions.

Focus group participants were selected with the use of recruiters, relying on convenience sampling, while efforts were made to produce heterogeneous groups. Five focus groups were conducted, with three in Trinidad & Tobago and two taking place in the United Kingdom. Six pictorials were presented to participants, who were then asked to imagine encounters with the ads in order to hypothesise their responses to the ads. The researcher avoided asking directly about consumer engagement to reduce respondent bias, instead asking a range of questions pertaining to the main effects of creative advertising, namely attention, recall, and purchase intention. As ambient advertising was considered a subset of the larger umbrella of creative advertising, the focus group guide was largely developed from the literature review of the latter. To supplement existing literature on ambient ads, direct questions were posed to participants on their perceptions of the practice, and ads and brands that make use of it. Focus group data collection and analysis were conducted iteratively to determine where the researcher could ask additional follow-up questions or probe more deeply into specific ad features mentioned in subsequent groups.

The focus group findings allowed for identification of ad features that were thought to impact upon consumers' engagement with ambient ads. These features formed the basis of several categories and subcategories that were developed in the content analysis. Through several iterations of pre-testing, a

complete schema of categories and subcategories was produced, and used to perform a content analysis of 494 real-world ambient ads, obtained from an online database. The content analysis provided insights into the various ways in which marketers combined or implemented elements that would encourage consumer interaction with the ads, and identification of the most common features used. Theory development commenced at this stage in the research process, with projections made as to the effectiveness of individual ad elements in garnering consumer engagement, and to what extent.

To supplement the findings and emergent theory of the content analysis, 15 personal interviews were conducted. Participants were presented questions similar to those in the focus groups, although their responses were based on actual experiences with ambient ads rather than hypothetical encounters. Participants were again asked a range of questions rather than directly examining interaction alone. Similar to the focus group exercises, each interview ended with a series of questions asking directly about the participant's perceptions of ads, and brands, utilising ambient advertising, and views of the practice as a whole. The interview data was collected and analysed iteratively, and the findings used to support theory developed from the content analysis, or to provide additional insight as to the usefulness of the ad features discussed, in prompting consumer engagement. This mixed-methods research plan was regarded as a comprehensive approach to fulfilling the research objectives of the study.

# 4 Findings

---

## 4.1 Introduction

At each stage of the research methodology, the instrument was devised, data collected, and the findings analysed, before proceeding to the subsequent phase. The three data sets yielded findings that contributed to fulfilling the research objectives by building on the preceding set, with the initial focus groups being developed from existing literature. This chapter provides a summary of both the qualitative and quantitative data produced from the three stages of data collection, before the research objectives can be examined through an in-depth discussion of the findings.

The focus group findings illustrate a sample of the participant contributions that were indicative of the categories that would be further developed in the content analysis. The results of the content analysis elaborate on these categories by developing the subcategories and identifying individual ad features considered to affect consumer engagement. Quantitative analysis provides frequencies of these elements in real-world applications, allowing for recognition of how these ad features are integrated into ads, in order to develop theory as to the effects on consumer interaction. Finally, the interview findings summarise the interview process, participant data and the real-world ads discussed.

## 4.2 Focus group findings

The five focus groups comprised 25 participants in total, with Groups 1, 2 and 3 conducted in Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago. Groups 4 and 5 were conducted in Milton Keynes and Leicester, respectively, in the United Kingdom. A summary of the participant data is shown in Table 4.1 overleaf. As the length of the focus group exercises varied from 75 to 105 minutes, individual participants were sufficiently able to express their opinions without the exercise being overly time-consuming.

**Table 4.1 Summary of focus group participant data**

Group	Name	Age	Profession	Education Level
1	Mike	56	Retiree	High school
1	Nick	22	Student	High school
1	Kandice	33	Project manager	Undergraduate
1	Melissa	26	Hotel employee	Undergraduate
1	Will	18	Student	High school
2	Kenny	67	Retiree	High school
2	Shawn	21	Student	High school
2	Hasine	27	Graduate student	Undergraduate
2	Ryan	34	Advertiser	Undergraduate
2	Gabi	30	Office manager	Undergraduate
3	Karla	41	Law student	Undergraduate
3	Gayatri	58	Housewife	High school
3	Billy	63	Retiree	Undergraduate
3	Johann	22	Musician	Undergraduate
3	Suraya	26	Linguist	Undergraduate
4	Miriam	18	Student	High school
4	Linda	51	Company director	Postgraduate
4	Andrew	62	Business consultant	Postgraduate
4	Dave	56	CEO	Postgraduate
4	Jackie	37	Housewife	Postgraduate
5	Adam	29	Strategy consultant	Postgraduate
5	Ellen	26	Auditor	Undergraduate
5	Nigel	51	Chef consultant	Diploma
5	Jane	56	Magistrate	Postgraduate
5	Alex	21	Student	High school

Following transcription of the data, the researcher entered into the coding process. Four first-level codes were applied to the focus group data: attention, memory, purchase behaviour, and perceptions. Once the data was



separated into these four broad sets, participant references to interacting or engaging with the ad, or ‘using’ an ad, were extracted from each set. This ‘interaction’ data was coded using three primary codes of Components, Placement and Medium. The three data subsets were then subjected to an iterative coding procedure in order to achieve a classification of ad features, through systematic coding and re-coding of the data until discreet categories emerged. The process yielded the categories shown in Table 4.2 below, and is illustrated by the sample quotes in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.2 Emergent groups and categories from focus group data**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Category</b>
<b>Components</b>	Elements depicted
	Product incorporation
<b>Placement</b>	Immediacy
	Ad location
<b>Medium</b>	Dimensionality
	Provenance
	Ad communication
	Benefit of branding
	Demonstration of feature/result/benefit

**Table 4.3 Sample of focus group participant quotes used to develop categories**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Sample quotes</b>
Elements depicted	<p><i>“Being very close to the real thing, that grabs at me...wow, it’s so much like a Kit Kat.” (Karla, Group 3)</i></p> <p><i>“Make it intriguing; make it look like a product which it is actually trying to sell, because the ones we find are the best are the ones which actually look like the product.” (Linda, Group 4)</i></p> <p><i>“...because it’s one of those things where you see [the medium] and you instantly think, ‘Of course that looks like Lego.’ But it wouldn’t normally come to you...they saw it—basically how clever it is.” (Ellen, Group 5)</i></p>

	<p><i>“When the ambient ad shows its practicality or its use, that makes it stay better than if it’s something creative that doesn’t apply to its purpose.” (Gabi, Group 2)</i></p> <p><i>“With the Stihl, they don’t have a big picture of the power washer, but they have the end results.” (Johann, Group 3)</i></p> <p><i>“With [the casino ad], it’s the movement and the roulette wheel effect; it’s the whole concept of the thing moving and looking like something that a lot of people have seen.” (Jackie, Group 4)</i></p>
Product incorporation	<p><i>“...you think that’s a cool idea when you see it’s an actual sponge and you interact with it physically...you touch it, you feel it, you know it’s a sponge.” (Johann, Group 3)</i></p> <p><i>“Because of the fact that it’s a sponge, water is going into it and disappearing, then the idea...will make the product remain with me.” (Bill, Group 3)</i></p>
Immediacy	<p><i>“It’s in your face.” Kandice, (Group 1)</i></p> <p><i>“...eye level probably has a lot to do with it. For example, the Stihl ad...it will bring my attention to it.” (Suraya, Group 3)</i></p> <p><i>“You’d have to come across it; it would have to be in your face. A bit like stepping over something—you’d have to look at it to step over it.” (Jackie, Group 4)</i></p>
Ad location	<p><i>“That is where the beauty of this thing comes in, because you’re now forced to see the ad, no matter what you do.” (Mike, Group 1)</i></p> <p><i>“...where you have it located and how many people will actually interact or have a reason to go to that particular thing that you’re using...since it’s in your external environment—things that you have to interact with.” (Hasine, Group 2)</i></p> <p><i>“I also like this LashBlast ad because, at that kind of exit, you’ll see it regularly.” (Suraya, Group 3)</i></p> <p><i>“...context is really interesting because—with the casino one, with the bench one and with the Lego one—it’s all sort of places that you’re waiting or places that</i></p>

	<i>you're going to be kind of bored or wanting to engage with something.</i> (Adam, Group 5)
Dimensionality	<p><i>"The texture is changing, so you're actually interacting with that."</i> (Johann, Group 3)</p> <p><i>"I would personally go up and rub my feet on this while I'm on the subway or wherever this is."</i> (Shawn, Group 2)</p>
Provenance	<p><i>"They actually use an object that people would really use."</i> (Nick, Group 1)</p> <p><i>"That's what they have going for them, that it's something you use every day, something that you can interact with."</i> (Billy, Group 3)</p> <p><i>"...these things are actually useable things so there's this actual added value to it. I don't mind paying for that, for a bench [to use]."</i> (Linda, Group 4)</p>
Ad communication	<p><i>"At the Olympic Stadium in Berlin, when you go to the gentleman's toilets, on the urinals, at the bottom is like the grass of a pitch and it has a goal. And each of them has a football. So the idea is that you have to score a goal."</i> (Alex, Group 5)</p> <p><i>"If you go and use the fountain, if you turn on the water and you see it running and you see the sponge absorbing, it all starts to come together."</i> (Billy, Group 3)</p> <p><i>"I think interaction is important, as opposed to something you walk past or walk along."</i> (Miriam, Group 4)</p>
Benefit of branding	<p><i>"It's people-friendly and it's useable by the people!"</i> (Mike, Group 1)</p> <p><i>"I would say these—the bench especially—are providing a civic reward; it's actually serving a civic purpose."</i> (Linda, Group 4)</p> <p><i>"If it was on a running route or something like that and it had utility or value to it, then I might begin to notice the brand more...it's not just about seeing it; it's about engaging or doing something with it."</i> (Adam, Group 5)</p>

Demonstration of feature/result/benefit	<p><i>“With [the Scotch Brite ad], you press it, [water] comes out, it soaks up; you see it working. I would remember that. I would go up to it, just to see if it was an actual sponge.” (Miriam, Group 4)</i></p> <p><i>“If you saw the actual physical product...if you interact with it and see how the actual sponge is absorbing the water and it’s not dripping...” (Johann, Group 3)</i></p> <p><i>“The Scotch Brite, it’s basically from a sponge. So when people go to actually use it, they actually tie in absorbing water because they’re actually doing something with the water.” (Nick, Group 1)</i></p>
---	--

The focus group findings resulted not only in the identification of analysis categories, but also provided insights into possible subcategories. To further develop the subcategories to represent individual ad features, actual ads were examined through the content analysis and the subsequent pre-test phase.

#### **4.3 Content analysis results**

Having determined the groups and categories through the focus group analysis, the first phase of the content analysis aimed to identify the subcategories and the definitions of each. These objectives were achieved through both the researcher’s preliminary examination of a subset of ads and the iterative pre-test process. The researcher’s investigation of ads, coupled with indicators derived from the focus group data, produced a preliminary list of subcategories and definitions. The multiple rounds of pre-testing yielded additional subcategories and clarification of the definitions. Interjudge reliability was calculated after each pre-test iteration, with the concluding round of pre-testing resulting in an agreement rate of 95.2% between the two judges. The final coding selection comprised nine categories, further divided into 27 subcategories, as presented in Table 4.4 overleaf.

**Table 4.4 Schema of categories**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Subcategory</b>
<b>Components</b>	Elements depicted	Product Product effect Product target Feature Symbol*
	Product incorporation	Actual product Modified product* Product not included
<b>Placement</b>	Immediacy	Direct contact Out of reach
	Ad location	Waiting point Entry/exit point Other indoor location Other outdoor location
<b>Medium</b>	Dimensionality	2-dimensional 3-dimensional
	Provenance	Pre-existing Fabricated
	Ad communication	One-way communication Two-way communication
	Benefit of branding	Physiological value Informational value* Experience with product No benefit
	Demonstration of feature/result/benefit	Demonstration of actual benefit Representation of benefit* No benefit demonstration

\* Subcategories identified inductively through pre-testing

Having devised a conclusive schema of categories, the principal content analysis of the 494 ads was conducted by the researcher and second judge. Interjudge reliability was calculated in accordance with Kassirjian's (1977) approach, and adopted extensively in content analysis of advertising content (e.g. Rice & Lu 1988, Gross & Sheth 1989, James & Vanden Bergh 1990, Biswas et al 1992). The interjudge reliability of the principal content analysis was found to be 94.6%, ranging from 88.2% to 98.7% for individual categories. These figures were all well above Kassirjian's (1977) recommended minimum level of reliability of 85%.

The frequency of each of the 27 subcategories was determined and presented in Table 4.5 below. For two categories, Elements depicted and Benefit of branding, judges were allowed to select multiple codes for their responses, whereas the remaining seven categories produced aggregate frequencies of 100%.

**Table 4.5 Frequencies of subcategory ad features**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Subcategory</b>	<b>Frequency (%)</b>
<b>Elements depicted</b>	Product	40.8
	Product effect	26.2
	Product target	16.3
	Feature	46.5
	Symbol	9.1
<b>Product incorporation</b>	Actual product	5.7
	Modified product	1.4
	Product not included	92.1
<b>Immediacy</b>	Direct contact	93.7
	Out of reach	6.3
<b>Ad location</b>	Waiting point	31.4
	Entry/exit point	10.6
	Other indoor location	12.4
	Other outdoor location	45.6
<b>Dimensionality</b>	2-dimensional	45.8
	3-dimensional	54.2
<b>Provenance</b>	Pre-existing	88.8
	Fabricated	11.2
<b>Ad communication</b>	One-way communication	72.9
	Two-way communication	27.1
<b>Benefit of branding</b>	Physiological value	4.9
	Informational value	0.7
	Experience with product	4.2
	No benefit	91.6
<b>Demonstration of feature/result/benefit</b>	Demonstration of actual benefit	2.9
	Representation of benefit	45.5
	No benefit demonstration	51.6

### **4.3.1 Components**

The Components group comprised two main categories: Elements depicted and Product incorporation. Judges were required to select as many of the listed elements presented in each ad pictorial when coding the Elements depicted category. For Product incorporation, only one code out of a possible three was selected for each ad. This group was devised with the aim of identifying the physical messaging tools used by marketers when developing ambient ads. Examples of ads depicting each of the subcategories of the three main groups can be found in Appendix V, and individual ad examples will be identified in the presentation of results in the subsections below.

#### *4.3.1.1 Elements depicted*

This main category comprised five subcategories, to identify which elements featured prominently in ambient ads. Although not clearly identified by individual participants, the collective findings from the focus groups suggested that consumers would engage differently with an ad, based on the elements portrayed. Participants were particularly intrigued by ads that bear a likeness to the product, and by ads that show the effects or results of the product.

Of the 494 ads examined, 40.8% featured the **product**, where the ad depicted the branded good being advertised or its packaging, whether the actual good was used or was represented in the ad (see Figure A.7). The **product effect**, where the ad portrayed the effect, output or result of the product being advertised, or a metaphor of any of these, was highlighted in 26.2% of ads (see Figure A.8). The **product target** was included in 16.3% of ads and is defined as the ad depicting the object upon which the product will be used (e.g. a fertilizer ad represented by a super-sized plant), where the product will be used, or a metaphorical representation of either (see Figure A.9 for another example). A **symbol**, where the product is portrayed in the ad through use of an abstract or generic character(s) related to the good or service (e.g. an ad for a social media platform featuring hash [#] symbols), was represented in 9.1% of the ads in the sample (see Figure A.10 for another example). The most widely used depiction was the **feature**, where the product is not depicted in its entirety, but is instead

represented by a physical product attribute or object, component or artefact associated with or comprised by the good or service (e.g. an ad for a zoo depicting a giraffe), as seen in 46.5% of the ad sample. Two examples of ads depicting feature elements are shown in Figures A.11 and A.12.

#### *4.3.1.2 Product incorporation*

The focus group findings indicated that participants were interested in engaging with ads that integrated the actual product, or a version of the product adapted to the ad, into the branded message. The main category of Product incorporation was partitioned into three subcategories with the aim of identifying how the product being advertised was used in the ad, and how often the consumers were able to engage with the actual product through these ads.

The **actual product** was integrated into 5.7% of ads, where the *actual* product, as manufactured and sold commercially, was incorporated into the ad (e.g. an ad for a Mini Cooper incorporated the actual vehicle into the ad; see Figure A.13 for another example). For **modified product**, the *actual* product was used in the ad, but manipulated or altered in some way so as to differ from the original product being sold (e.g. large/small-scale version of the product, fragment of product used), and was seen in 1.4% of ads (an example is provided in Figure A.14). Thus 7.1% of ads were determined to allow consumers the ability to engage with some form of the actual product being advertised, prior to purchase or trial. The remaining 92.1% of the ads examined comprised the remaining subcategory of **product not included**, where the product was not included in the ad in any way, whether in actuality or represented pictorially (two examples can be seen in Figures A.15 and A.16).

#### **4.3.2 Placement**

The Placement group aimed to determine where marketers position ads in order to bring consumers into contact with the messages. This group again comprised two main categories of Immediacy and Ad location. For both options, judges were required to select the best option from the subcategories provided.



#### *4.3.2.1 Immediacy*

Ambient ads have been defined as being placed within consumers' immediate environment, which suggests allowing consumers to come into contact with an ad. The focus group data indicated that consumers would be more likely to interact with an ad if the ad were placed where they would make physical contact with it or if it were directly in their line of sight. The main category was divided into two subcategories: direct contact and out of reach.

The vast majority of ads, at 93.7% of the sample, allow for **direct contact**, with the consumer, whether he chooses to or not, being able to make direct physical contact with the ad, i.e. touch the ad medium in some way (e.g. touch by hand, walk over, sit on, et cetera). Direct contact is also made when the consumer is brought to a point immediately facing the ad, whether by choice or by design. Two examples of ads with which consumers can make direct contact can be seen in Figures A.17 and A.18. However an ad may still be considered as being located within a consumer's immediate environment even when the ad is **out of reach**, being placed such that the consumer cannot come into direct physical contact with the ad, such as using overhead telephone wires, as seen in Figure A.19. Marketers' use of out of reach placement is infrequent, at 6.3% of the sample ads.

#### *4.3.2.2 Ad location*

Selecting an ambient ad location is pivotal in steering consumers to come into contact with the message, and facilitating any type of engagement, and can further influence the duration of the interaction. The consensus among focus group participants was that consumers would be more likely to engage with ambient ads when they were placed at points where consumers were forced to come into contact with the ad and/or where this contact is prolonged.

An ad placed at a **waiting point**, such that the ad is placed at a location where consumers will be found waiting for a good or service that may or may not be related to the ad (e.g. bus stop, airport, et cetera; see Figure A.20 for one example), or where a consumer will be engaged while using a product or service, can allow for lengthy contact between a consumer and the ad. A total of 31.4% of

the ads investigated were seen to be located at waiting points. Consumers could also be encouraged or even obligated to interact with an ad when it is placed at an **entry/exit point**, such that the ad is placed at a point of ingress or egress, such as to a building, terminal, transit station, vehicle, et cetera; 10.6% of the ads surveyed were found in these locations (one example can be seen in Figure A.21).

Ad locations were also categorised as indoor or outdoor, besides being placed at waiting and entry/exit points. Due to the immeasurable number of locations where ambient ads could be placed, these ads were grouped into two broad categories of indoor and outdoor to exclude the more specific location points discussed in the preceding paragraph. An ad placed in any location found within an indoor close-walled and roofed environment, excluding waiting, entry or exit points was classified as **other indoor location**, comprising 12.4% of the sample ads (see Figure A.22 for an example). An ad found in **other outdoor location** is one where the ad is placed in any other location found within an open or uncontained environment (see Figure A.23 for one example). This final subcategory was the largest of the four, where 45.6% of the ads in the sample were found in these locations.

### **4.3.3 Medium**

The Medium group comprised five main categories, further divided into 13 subcategories. As detailed in the previous chapter, the Dimensionality and Ad communication categories and subcategories were derived from Hutter's (2015) study. Thus both categories were not devised through the inductive pre-testing process, although both categories were identified as pertinent to this research from the focus group findings. The development of the five main categories sought to identify the physical ad features employed by marketers in ambient executions to subsequently analyse how these elements potentially foster consumer engagement.

#### *4.3.3.1 Dimensionality*

Focus group participants indicated that dimensionality of the ad would influence a consumer's interest in engaging with an ad, with 3-dimensional ads suggested as more effective than 2-dimensional. Hutter's (2015) classification of ad dimensionality consisted of three main categories and nine subcategories, but was simplified for the purposes of this research study due to the evolving perceptions of 'classical' and 'new' media. Thus dimensionality was partitioned into two objective subcategories: 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional.

Where the advertisement was flat, and occupied only two dimensions, such as those placed on floors or walls, the ad was identified as **2-dimensional**, as were 45.8% of the sample ads (one example can be seen in Figure A.24). When the ad was seen to occupy the three dimensions of height, width and depth, the ad was considered **3-dimensional**, and featured in 54.2% of the ads (one such example is shown in Figure A.25).

#### *4.3.3.2 Provenance*

Provenance of the medium refers to the origin of the medium used in the ambient ad. Focus group findings pointed to varying perceptions in the utility provided by the ad when a medium was constructed for advertising benefit, as compared to branding of existing mediums, and suggested that engagement could be influenced, based on this difference. The main category was split into two diametrically opposite subcategories.

The majority of the sample ads were categorised as **pre-existing**, where 88.8% of the ads featured an ad medium that was present prior to the development and implementation of the ad. For pre-existing mediums, the ambient ads were therefore designed to fit onto or adapted to the medium (see Figure A.26 for one example). A total of 11.2% of the ads were considered **fabricated**, where an ad medium was designed and constructed by the advertiser and placed into the environment to advertise a specific product (one such example is shown in Figure A.27).

#### *4.3.3.3 Ad communication*

While focus group participants made indirect references to Ad communication specifically, Hutter (2015) indicates that two-way communication is useful in gaining consumer interest through 'interactive elements', and thus was investigated in this study. Both the main category of Ad communication and its two subcategories, One-way communication and Two-way communication, were directly adopted from Hutter's content analysis.

Despite Hutter's suggestions, the majority of the sample ads, at 72.9%, utilised only **one-way communication** where the consumer's presence or engagement does not produce any change in the ad; and consumer response to the ad does not alter the ad in any way (see Figure A.28 for one example). A total of 27.1% of the sample did make use of **two-way communication**, with the ad featuring interactive elements where the consumer brings about a particular change in the ad or ad effect (e.g. a noise being emitted when the ad is stepped on; another example is shown in Figure A.29), or becomes a part of the ad installation (e.g. the ad displaying a consumer's weight after standing on the ad, as seen in Figure A.30). In ads employing two-way communication, the consumer's presence or interaction produces a response from the ad itself.

#### *4.3.3.4 Benefit of branding*

To determine whether there was any benefit offered to the consumer by integrating an ad message into a particular medium, the judges were required to consider the value offered by the branding process only, rather than the utility offered by the medium itself. For any ad that made use of a fabricated medium, comparisons of the value provided were made between the medium being present, or absent, from the environment. The focus group findings suggest that providing some form of value to the consumer, or allowing the consumer to trial a product in some way prior to purchase would encourage both consumer interaction and positive perceptions of the brand. Judges were required to code each ad for as many different forms of value observed. The main category consisted of four subcategories.

An ad that was seen to offer **physiological value** was one that provided the consumer with a physical benefit, such as a place to rest or shelter, refreshment, safety or privacy, et cetera. Of the sample, 4.9% of the ads provided consumers with some form of physiological value, and one example is shown in Figure A.31. Very few ads, at only 0.7%, offered **informational value**, where the ad provided information to the consumer besides that pertaining to the product or brand, such as reporting weather conditions, directions, or health statistics (another example is seen in Figure A.32). In 4.2% of the ads, consumers were allowed **experience with product**, where the ad allowed the consumer to trial the product or observe the product, whether the actual product or a modified version of it, was being used in some way, as can be seen in Figure A.33. The vast majority of the ads examined provided **no benefit**, with no foreseeable benefits extended to the consumer, comprising 91.6% of the sample (one example is shown in Figure A.34).

#### *4.3.3.5 Demonstration of feature/result/benefit*

The focus group findings suggested that the ability to observe the product in action and how it works would encourage consumers to engage with an ambient ad. While the initial subcategories identified only whether the actual benefit was demonstrated or not, the pre-testing gave rise to a third subcategory where the feature, result or benefit was represented as a metaphor.

Despite indications that **demonstration of actual benefit** would encourage interaction, only 2.9% of the sample ads portrayed the product benefit in actuality (i.e. the product function, expected results or value to the consumer) through use or incorporation of the actual product into the ad (e.g. an ad for security glass being used at a bus shelter housing money and inviting the public to attempt to break it, as seen in Figure A.35). An additional example of demonstration of ad benefit is presented in Figure A.36. The majority of ads instead chose to portray a **representation of benefit**, where 51.6% of the ads demonstrated the product benefits as a metaphor rather than in actuality. For this subcategory, the actual product may or may not be used, but the benefit seen by the consumer is representative of the product (e.g. an ad for hot sauce using a

hand dryer to convey the heat given off when consumed; a further example can be seen in Figure A.37). A total of 45.5% of the sample featured **no benefit demonstration**, where the ad does not demonstrate any benefit of the product or its effectiveness (see Figure A.38 for one example).

The findings in this section illustrated how the focus group data influenced the design of the content analysis, and the development of its categories and subcategories. The content analysis findings were presented as quantitative results, identifying the frequencies at which individual ad elements were implemented in a sample of real-world ads. The significance of these rates will be analysed and discussed in the subsequent chapter.

#### **4.4 Consumer interview findings**

Random and convenience sampling techniques generated a total of 15 participants contributing to the data set of interview findings. The UK phase of sampling produced three participants out of 143 approached, with three different ads being recalled. In Trinidad & Tobago, the random sampling phase yielded five participants out of 112 consumers approached, with all respondents recalling the Kit Kat bench described. Snowball sampling resulted in an additional seven interviewees meeting the participation criteria out of a pool of 23 candidates, supplied by the five previous participants. Demographic information of the 15 interview participants is summarised in Table 4.6 overleaf, and main features of the ads described presented in Table 4.7.

The 15 interview participants discussed seven different primary ads, although additional ads were mentioned in some instances, to further highlight participant reactions, behaviours and perceptions. These qualitative findings are considered to provide evidence to support or refute theory developed from the content analysis, and to understand how consumers actually responded to the ad features identified in the content analysis. The interview findings are analysed and discussed in the following chapter, with presentation of sample quotes from participants, to compare to theory emerging from the content analysis.

**Table 4.6 Summary of interview participant data**

<b>Participant, age</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Profession</b>	<b>Education</b>
<b>Amelia, 29</b>	Trinidad & Tobago	Attorney	Undergraduate
<b>Amrit, 26</b>	Trinidad & Tobago	Banker	Undergraduate
<b>Janice, 32</b>	Trinidad & Tobago	Office manager	Undergraduate
<b>Julie, 38</b>	Trinidad & Tobago	Sales manager	Postgraduate
<b>Marco, 31</b>	England	Personal trainer	Undergraduate
<b>Melissa, 24</b>	Canada	Social worker	Undergraduate
<b>Nikolai, 27</b>	Trinidad & Tobago	Architect	Undergraduate
<b>Panagiotis, 30</b>	Greece	Assistant brand manager	Postgraduate
<b>Patricia, 53</b>	Trinidad & Tobago	Lecturer	Postgraduate
<b>Paul, 59</b>	England	Teacher	Undergraduate
<b>Peter, 29</b>	Trinidad & Tobago	Engineer	Undergraduate
<b>Robert, 27</b>	Trinidad & Tobago	Surveyor	Postgraduate
<b>Ronald, 18</b>	Trinidad & Tobago	Student	High school
<b>Sean, 36</b>	Trinidad & Tobago	Cinematographer	Undergraduate
<b>Vishal, 28</b>	Trinidad & Tobago	Pharmacist	Undergraduate

Table 4.7 Data summary of ads encountered by interview participants

Participant	Country	Product	Location	Placement	Medium
<b>Amelia</b>	Trinidad & Tobago	Kit Kat chocolate bar	Cinema complex	Within playroom	Bench
<b>Amrit</b>	Trinidad & Tobago	Kit Kat chocolate bar	Cinema complex	Within playroom	Bench
<b>Janice</b>	Trinidad & Tobago	Kit Kat chocolate bar	Cinema complex	Within playroom	Bench
<b>Julie</b>	Trinidad & Tobago	Kit Kat chocolate bar	Cinema complex	Within playroom	Bench
<b>Marco</b>	England	Red Bull energy drink	Road	Mobile	Automobile
<b>Melissa</b>	Canada	IKEA rug	Subway terminal	Station floor	Floor decal
<b>Nikolai</b>	Trinidad & Tobago	Kit Kat chocolate bar	Cinema complex	Within playroom	Bench
<b>Panagiotis</b>	Brazil	Sprite soft drink	Beach	On seashore	Beach shower
<b>Patricia</b>	Canada	Truly Nolan pest control	Motorway	Mobile	Automobile
<b>Paul</b>	USA	Unknown	Airport	At baggage claim	Baggage conveyer
<b>Peter</b>	Trinidad & Tobago	Kit Kat chocolate bar	Cinema complex	Within playroom	Bench
<b>Robert</b>	Trinidad & Tobago	Kit Kat chocolate bar	Cinema complex	Within playroom	Bench
<b>Ronald</b>	Trinidad & Tobago	Kit Kat chocolate bar	Cinema complex	Within playroom	Bench
<b>Sean</b>	Spain	Axe body spray	Metro station	Exit staircase	Stairs
<b>Vishal</b>	Trinidad & Tobago	Kit Kat chocolate bar	Cinema complex	Within playroom	Bench



#### **4.5 Summary**

Five focus groups were conducted, comprising 25 participants, which produced data resulting in the identification of the three overarching groups used to examine consumer engagement with ambient ads: components, placement and medium. The focus group data was analysed to develop these groups into the main categories that would be established as the basis of the content analysis. Sample quotes were provided to illustrate how these categories were identified, with some quotes suggesting further subcategories. The nine identified categories were elements depicted, product incorporation, immediacy, ad location, dimensionality, provenance, ad communication, benefit of branding, and demonstration of feature/result/benefit.

In order to devise the subcategories, cues were taken from the focus group findings, and further developed through examination of ambient ad pictorials taken from the sample of 494 ads. Twenty-three subcategories were established, and the pre-testing phase of the content analysis allowed for inductive identification of an additional four subcategories. The definition of each subcategory was developed through the same process, with the researcher devising each definition through ad examination, and further refined through pre-test iterations. Each subcategory represented a particular ad element, and the frequencies with which each was implemented in real-world ads were investigated and presented. These rates illustrate the extent to which marketers incorporate particular elements into ads, and provide insight into the approaches brands take to engage with consumers through ambient media.

The personal interviews were conducted to ascertain how consumers engage with ambient ads in the real world, by investigating responses to actual encounters with ads. Fifteen interview participants recounted their experiences with seven different ads, and discussions included how each came into contact with the ad, the extent of the interaction, and individual perceptions of the ad, the brand and the practice of ambient advertising.

Where the content analysis focused on examining how marketers design and implement ambient ads, the interviews investigated the subsequent consumer responses, most notably, the varying forms of engagement between

participants and the ads encountered. The findings from each of these methods are analysed, compared and discussed in the following chapter.

# 5 Discussion

---

## 5.1 Introduction

The content analysis findings, presented in the preceding chapter, provide a snapshot of the use of ad features in ambient ads over the last 10 years. This chapter analyses and discusses these quantitative results, in conjunction with the qualitative findings from the focus groups and consumer interviews, to understand how individual ad elements encourage consumer engagement. The examination of the 494 ads in the content analysis produces an investigation of the ways in which individual ad elements are implemented in ambient ads, and how these features can stimulate engagement and contribute to a brand experience for the consumer. The focus group findings help to support concepts of how engagement may result, and the extent to which consumer interactions may develop or be influenced. The consumer interviews provide further insight as to the varying outcomes of engagement based on participants' actual encounters and experiences with ambient ads.

The discussion first presents an analysis of the individual ad elements as they have been used in practice, providing examples of actual ambient ads to identify how various elements have been integrated into these mediums. The analysis is structured based on the three main groups of ad elements, and their resulting categories and subcategories, as identified through the focus group and content analysis processes. Concepts are developed regarding the effectiveness of ad elements on consumer engagement, based on examination of ambient advertising practices. The focus group and consumer interview findings provide evidence to support conceptual development, and aid in identifying further areas for consideration when designing and executing ambient ads. The aim of the first part of the analysis is to assess how marketers implement ad features to foster engagement, to determine how consumers respond to individual features, and to identify opportunities for marketers to more effectively create a brand experience for consumers.

The second part of the discussion then examines how the identified ad features contribute to consumers' perceptions of ad novelty, and how this further influences engagement. Consumer behaviour due to perceived novelty of ambient ads is examined, first through discussion of volitional attention consumers give to novel ad messages. Subsequently, the discussion investigates how consumers engage with ad messages beyond the moment of encounter, through generation of word of mouth.

The third part of the discussion presents an analysis of the consumer perceptions of ambient ads obtained from the qualitative findings of the focus groups and consumer interviews. This section examines consumer perceptions of ambient ads and the brands that communicate with consumers through this medium. Brand evaluations and inferences made by participants based on the use of ambient mediums are discussed. Finally, participants' perceptions of ambient advertising as a practice are presented, which examines consumer attitudes to this communication channel, as well as feelings of intrusiveness and tolerance of these ads. The discussion also presents consumer views and ideas of the growth of ambient advertising, and projected consumer acceptance as the practice evolves. The aim of this discussion is to understand how consumers accept ambient advertising in their personal spheres, and to present considerations for marketers as the practice proliferates.

## **5.2 Ad features**

This section analyses the ad features identified in the content analysis of the sample of 494 ambient ads, which were classified into categories and further subcategories. The aim of this discussion is to recognise how marketers are integrating individual ad features into ambient ads to generate consumer engagement with both the ad and the brand. The discussion is focused on the quantitative results of the content analysis, with theory development aided by insights from the preceding focus group findings and subsequent consumer interviews. A key objective of this discussion is to assess the effectiveness of actual ambient ad executions in fostering a brand experience for the consumer,

and to highlight particular areas where marketers may be underutilising ad elements to fulfil this objective.

### **5.2.1 Components**

As presented in the previous chapter, the components group comprised two categories: Elements depicted and Product incorporation. Each of these categories will be discussed below in relation to their subcategories, which identify individual ad features indicated by focus group participants as potential influencers of consumer engagement.

#### *5.2.1.1 Elements depicted*

Marketers were seen to depict five different ad elements in ambient ads, namely the product, an associated feature, the product effect, the product target or a related symbol. While ads were seen to focus on a particular element, multiple elements were seen in many ads, and any combination of these five elements could be integrated into an ad. The element that was most frequently used, in almost half of the ads sampled, was depiction of a feature associated with the product, followed closely by depiction of the product. This is unsurprising, as advertisements for goods typically showcase the branded good in the ad through integration with the chosen medium. However, for service offerings, it is difficult to depict the actual service through a single physical medium, thus these brands primarily rely on portraying a feature of the service, or its effect, the product target or a related symbol.

Symbols were the least used element depicted, which is a strategic choice by marketers, as the abstract quality of symbols can limit the association between the ad message and a particular brand, dampening the brand experience for the consumer. Figure 5.1 overleaf is an example of an ad for a shopping mall using a zebra crossing to denote a symbol, namely a barcode. As a symbol, the barcode can be attributed to any commercial product, rather than to the shopping centre, likely creating only a weak brand experience for the consumer. This can be compared to other executions using a zebra crossing but

depicting elements more closely associated with the particular brand, seen in Figures 5.2 through 5.4.



**Figure 5.1 Ad for a shopping centre depicting the barcode symbol at a zebra crossing  
(Liquidação Shopping Curitiba 2008)**

Bubble Hair Salon and Spa  
Ambient Execution

True styling that's very you  
**Bubbles**  
www.bubblespa.in

**The Challenge**  
Bubbles Hair Salon is tucked away near a flyover in Alwarpet, Chennai. Although its location is not a handicap, it isn't a huge plus either. Our ambient challenge was to create a buzz around Bubbles in the neighborhood.

**The Solution**  
For a short burst on a weekend, we recreated a comb-shaped zebra crossing adjacent to the salon. We achieved this effect by placing a temporary transparent sticker on to the road.

**Figure 5.2 Ad for a hair salon depicting a product feature at a zebra crossing (Bubbles 2010)**



**Figure 5.3 Ad for household cleaner depicting the product effect using a zebra crossing (Mr Clean 2006)**



**Figure 5.4 Ad for an office products retailer depicting the product and the product effect using a zebra crossing (FedEx Kinko's 2006)**



Figures 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 all depict ad elements more easily associated with the particular brand when compared to the barcode symbol used by the shopping centre in Figure 5.1, with all four ads using zebra crossings, allowing for clear comparisons to be made. The hair salon ad in Figure 5.2 depicts a hair comb, and its placement adjacent to the salon allows for consumers to more easily associate the ad with the individual salon. However, the use of a hair comb, as an undifferentiated feature, can again be associated with any other salon, or can be extended into other hair manufacturers, service providers or retailers. The Mr Clean ad shown in Figure 5.3 depicts the product effect being shown to create a clear association between the ad and the product, and more clearly allows the consumer to identify the brand with the use of the logo. The ad seen in Figure 5.4 for an office goods retailer depicts both the product and its effect, for consumers to easily identify the branded retailer and the product offering.

Although no ad was found using the zebra crossing to depict the product target, the comparison of the four advertisements using the same medium suggests two ways in which marketers can strengthen the brand experience for consumers just by manipulation of the elements depicted. Firstly, the more closely the elements depicted relate to the particular brand, the easier for the consumer to associate the ad with the brand, and the experience with the particular brand is more easily identified and attended to by the consumer. Secondly, incorporating multiple element depictions creates a more meaningful brand experience, as each element serves as a brand cue in the ad message. Two ads that each incorporate three ad elements are shown in Figures 5.5 and 5.6 overleaf to illustrate this point.

**Ponytail Train Handle**

**Challenge**  
As a local beauty salon franchisee, Johnny Andrian launched a hair-strengthening product. They wanted to communicate it with a low budget but with an impactful result.

**Solution**  
Sometimes our daily activities can cause our beautiful long-hair to break and fall off. How much broken hair or hair-fall caused by accidental pulls? Therefore, we are proposing a ponytail as a passenger handle substitute in public transportation such as commuter trains to demonstrate how strong your hair is. The main reason we are using trains is because it is a frequently-used mode of transportation for urban people.

**Result**  
An amusing, fascinating and memorable out-of-the-ordinary ambient ad that can create amusement because people can actually see, touch and feel it themselves. The outcome? Many people will inquire about this product and try it at a Johnny Andrian salon.

**Figure 5.5 Ad for hair-strengthening product depicting the product, the feature and the effect (Johnny Andrian 2009)**

The advertisement consists of three sequential panels showing an elevator door. In the first panel, a large, realistic red lobster is mounted on the elevator door. In the second panel, a hand is seen holding a knife, positioned to cut through the lobster. In the third panel, the hand is still holding the knife, but the lobster is gone, leaving a dark, hollow space where it was. This visual metaphor suggests that the knives are so sharp they can cut through anything, including a lobster.

**Figure 5.6 Ad for knives depicting the product, the product target and the product effect (Kagatani 2012)**

The qualitative findings from the focus groups and consumer interviews refer to the concept of element depiction through discussion of likeness to the product. Focus group participants first identified that not only is depiction of the element useful in recognising the ad, but that implementing the element such that there is a resemblance or likeness to the product creates interest and subsequent engagement. One respondent shares her views of the depiction of the product and its likeness to the branded good, drawing from the CoverGirl and Kit Kat pictorials, seen in Figures 3.2 and 3.1 respectively:

*“...with the [CoverGirl] turnstile, this is very subtle, but it gets across the entire point of this product, because it looks exactly like the product and everything, with the long lash brush. And the Kit Kat bench is also very subtle, but I think I prefer that, because it’s more of a surprise to me...if I sat down on this bench, and then I looked across and realised it was a Kit Kat—I’m sitting on a Kit Kat...it’s better for me, that feeling of recognising the product; I know what it is.”*

(Kandice, Group 1, age 33, project manager)

The participant suggests that the medium choice is crucial in effective depiction of the product, as both mediums she discusses have been, in her opinion, subtly manipulated to look like the branded product. She refers to her level of hypothetical engagement with the brand as feeling surprise at being able to recognise the product, and subsequently the brand, within a medium due to the likeness between the two.

The concept of likeness to the product is not limited to depiction of the element of product only, but can apply to product effect, product target, symbol or feature, insofar as marketers integrate the element into the medium to portray this resemblance. Another focus group participant relates his perceptions of the Casino de Venezia pictorial, seen in Figure 3.4.

*“This is unique [points to Casino de Venezia pictorial] because you see it, and you see a carousel that is looking like a roulette wheel, so your eye is drawn to it. And then you’re curious; you want to see more. You want to understand more, so you start looking.”* (Dave, Group 4, age 56, CEO)

The participant refers to the likeness of the ad and medium to a feature of the service being offered, namely the integration of a roulette wheel into the baggage carousel based on the shape and functionality of the latter. He illustrates not only how a consumer might perceive this likeness between the medium and the feature, but also how a consumer may address this novelty. He indicates his curiosity and wanting to see more, signalling his desire to engage with the ad and, by extension, the brand. Another focus group participant describes her interest in the Stihl ad, seen in Figure 3.6, due to the depiction of the product effect, with a likeness to the actual results claimed by the brand:

*“If I’m driving down the road and I see a dirty wall and this clean patch, I’d think, what is that patch?...They don’t have a big picture of the power washer, but they have the end results...and if I see this Stihl ad, I might think, ‘Okay, this thing is looking like it could work, or it’s reliable.’”* (Johann, Group 3, age 22, musician)

The focus group findings thus indicate that the particular ad element depicted can create interest in the ad and lead to consumer engagement when the element is integrated into the ad such that it is recognisable as the product, product effect, product target, feature or symbol.

The sentiments of focus group participants are echoed by interviewees, who were able to recount their experiences with actual ads. The concept that likeness to any of the five elements creates a compelling encounter for consumers and their engagement with ads is illustrated in further examples from interview participants. One example is as follows, where the participant was asked how he responded to the Kit Kat bench he encountered:

*“Look, a Kit Kat! It obviously defines what a Kit Kat is, in a bench form, in a seating form...It’s in the form of the product itself; it’s not just on a flat piece of surface. So, visually, it stimulates something in my mind...it just looks exactly like a Kit Kat bar, which is its intention, on a different scale...it obviously resembles the product, and that’s the intention—to remind the consumer of what the product is, by placing it on something that will remind them of what it is or what it looks like.”* (Nikolai, age 27, architect)

Nine participants recounted experiences with the Kit Kat bench in Trinidad & Tobago, all describing the bench as a large-scale replica of the chocolate bar, and asserting the likeness of the ad to the advertised product. Another participant recounted his experience with the same ad, noting his engagement with the ad in paying attention to the detail of the ad in representing the product:

*“The more realistic they make the product—in terms of the look of the product and you know what it is—and they design it exactly like that, that kind of strikes me. To me, I like to pay attention to detail, so when I see that, it would immediately stand out to me. It just wasn’t any regular flat bench that they marked up ‘Kit Kat’. It actually was like how they have the ‘K’s, and how they would have the striations on the chocolate itself; it was just like that, the texture. It actually looked like a chocolate. So that, to me, was extremely original, when I was sitting down and thinking about it.”* (Vishal, age 28, pharmacist)

The above participant, in detailing the nuances of the ad and its resemblance to the actual product, illustrates his engagement with the product beyond merely noticing its existence. He thus demonstrates the role of the likeness of the ad to the product in creating a brand experience for himself. Another participant, having encountered the same ad, provides an account of her experience with the bench:

*“If we’re using the Kit Kat example, my prior knowledge of the brand assisted greatly in remembering that this [bench] is associated with this brand...The association—again, it depends on the product—would be created because the connection would be made; if it’s not something in your personal life, it’s something in your everyday life, then. So it sort of establishes that sort of rapport between the product and the consumer, as opposed to any other kind of advertising, really...if you’re actually sitting on the what it’s supposed to be, and it looks like the product, then you make that connection, and then it stays with you. Even if it diminishes over time, it stays with you.”* (Julie, age 38, sales manager)

The participant makes reference to the association, or “connection”, formed between herself, as the consumer, and the ad based on the likeness to the product. Furthermore, she describes this encounter as establishing “rapport” with the product, indicating that the ad delivers not just an ad message, but also an engaging exchange between the consumer and the product. A fourth participant having encountered the Kit Kat bench details not just her encounter with the ad, but also the resulting engagement, which can be clearly observed from her response:

*“It’s the only one of its kind, [where] no other brands in chocolate in Trinidad advertise like that; they don’t have an actual advertising medium to look like or feel like or any kind of experience connection with the product like that—like that type of experience. That’s why I say it’s personal, because you have to interact with it. So you see this bench and it looks like a chocolate—it’s not a Charles, it’s not a Cadbury’s, it’s not an anybody else; it’s a Kit Kat. Although it is a bench, you do have a personal experience with seeing something like that. It’s like you’re connecting with something that, in your mind, it brings you joy, it’s something you’ve had before that you consumed—it either has its negative or positive connotations attached—and it brings that back. That’s the experience I’m talking about, like something you really enjoy, as chocolate is—as Kit Kat is, particularly—that’s what connects you with the bench. When you see that bench, it’s like you think about, ‘Hey, I like Kit Kat, how it tastes and how it feels.’ Everything just connects you back. That’s how it’s a personal connection in that regard, too.” (Janice, age 32, office manager)*

The participant above does not only describe her encounter with the ad, but also explains the “experience” that she has with the ad, signalling a clear establishment of a brand experience for this participant. A fifth participant recounts her experience with the Truly Nolan Pest Control services ad, executed as a Volkswagen Beetle using a combination of paint design and three-dimensional elements to resemble a cartoon mouse. In this example, the likeness

is not to the product, but to the product target. This participant shares her response to encountering the ad while driving:

*“There’s a little [Beetle] on the highway, and it’s very eye-catching because it looks just like a mouse...they put a tail, whiskers and ears and a nose and eyes...And then you see the Truly Nolan pest service logo, and you realise that they’re advertising pest control services. But you see the mouse and, right away, it grabs your attention...here is an ad that grabs my attention; it is synonymous with what the service is. And it’s a win-win situation for the company because, as soon as you see the mouse, you know what the service is. So they’ve chosen an excellent [medium] to put their ad on. It’s kind of like the [Casino di Venezia ad], with the numbers on the conveyor belt, looking like a roulette wheel...the association is excellent.” (Patricia, age 53, lecturer)*

The five participants indicate the role of likeness to a physical element that provides “stimulating” encounters, fosters “rapport” between the brand and the medium, and allows for an “association” to be formed between the ad and the brand. These responses all signal consumer engagement as a result of the likeness of an ad element depicted through appropriate medium choice.

The responses not only provide insight into how ad elements can be used to foster consumer engagement, but also support the claims that this engagement results from the incongruity of a commonplace object being manipulated to look like a different (branded) object. This idea can be explained by adapting concepts developed by Berlyne (1971), Fiske and Taylor (1991), Goodstein et al (1993) and Jurca and Madlberger (2015) to this dimension of ambient advertising. Based on the concept of schema incongruity, the novelty of integrating an ad message into a medium to create a likeness to the ad element (product, product effect, product target, feature or symbol) increases the level of schema incongruity and leads to curiosity or interest in the ad, thus resulting in engagement with the ad to resolve this unexpectedness.

Participants did not indicate that depiction of any particular ad element was more or less effective than another, insofar as the element was portrayed

with a likeness to the actual object comprising the ad message. This idea suggests that marketers should thoughtfully select ambient mediums to integrate the ad message in such a way that the consumer is easily able to recognise both the ad message and the product, through likeness of the ad to the particular element, and subsequently the brand, being advertised. Additionally, when incorporating any element through an ambient medium, marketers must carefully consider how the particular element represents not just the advertised product, but also the particular brand, in order to provide consumers with a branded experience that they can identify, rather than a generic product experience.

#### *5.2.1.2 Product incorporation*

Similar to stealth marketing, ambient ads allow consumers the opportunity to interact with the actual product, or a version of it, but in a transparent and controllable manner. Stealth marketing, through use of brand pushers, can be seen to allow consumers to not only interact with the actual product, but consumers then become co-creators in the brand experience. Incorporating the product in some way into an ambient ad gives consumers the option to have an experience with the product, thus creating a brand experience. However, very few ambient ads are developed to take advantage of the benefits of exposing consumers to the actual product. Only 7.1% of the sample ads were seen to allow consumers to interact with either the actual product or a modified version.

Television, print and billboard advertising, as well as other traditional advertising channels, limit consumers to observing a product being used by others, and then envision how they would utilise the product themselves. Traditional print media also reduces consumer interaction with the brand to pictorial or graphic representations of the product. Ambient media, however, can provide consumers with the opportunity to interact with the actual product without the consumer having to purchase the product or examine the product at the POS. Figure 5.7 overleaf provides an example of an actual aquarium being installed at a bus shelter, allowing consumers to engage with the product outside of a retail environment. The use of an actual aquarium signals to consumers that



the product can be installed at any location, with the ad copy reading, “*Aquario Mania. Bring life anywhere.*” Not only does the incorporation of the actual product strengthen the ad message, but also provides a brand experience for the consumer in an unexpected location.



**Figure 5.7 Ad for aquariums integrating the actual product into the ad (Aquario Mania 2009)**

The same concept is applied when a modified version of the product is incorporated into the ad. While modified versions do not allow consumers to interact with the product as it would be commercially produced or sold, and thus used by the consumer post-purchase, consumers are still afforded a brand experience as the product is integrated into the ad in some way. Figure 5.8 overleaf shows an example of a large-scale replica of disposable diapers integrated into a children’s swing-set. Consumers are able to engage with the product, though not the version sold in stores, with their children becoming co-creators of the ad message, participating in a brand experience.



**Figure 5.8 Ad for disposable diapers integrating a modified version of the product into the ad (Pampers 2012)**

Not all ads were seen to allow consumers to be part of the creation of the ad message. However, incorporation of the product, whether the actual product or a modified version, provides consumers with a stronger brand experience than encountering a pictorial, graphic or other representation of the product, or no inclusion of the product in the ad. The vast majority of the ad sample, roughly 93% of the 494 ads examined, did not include either the actual product or a modified version. One such example is seen in Figure 5.9 overleaf. The ad for a sushi restaurant utilises the handrail of an escalator to depict the product and restaurant feature, namely the sushi and the conveyor belt serving style.



**Figure 5.9 Ad for sushi restaurant incorporating the product representation into the ad using an escalator decal (Sushiroll 2008)**

The ad allows for engagement due to the presence of other ad features, such as depiction of the product and feature, direct contact with the consumer, and placement where consumers are waiting on the escalator. Thus, when the actual product is not incorporated into the ad in some way, other ad features must be relied upon for consumer engagement. The sushi ad in Figure 5.9 can be compared to another sushi ad, seen in Figure 5.10 overleaf. The executions are considerably different, with varying locations and dimensionality, but both ads depict the product. Additionally, the key difference is the use of sampling in the latter ad, providing consumers with a brand experience through trial of the actual product.

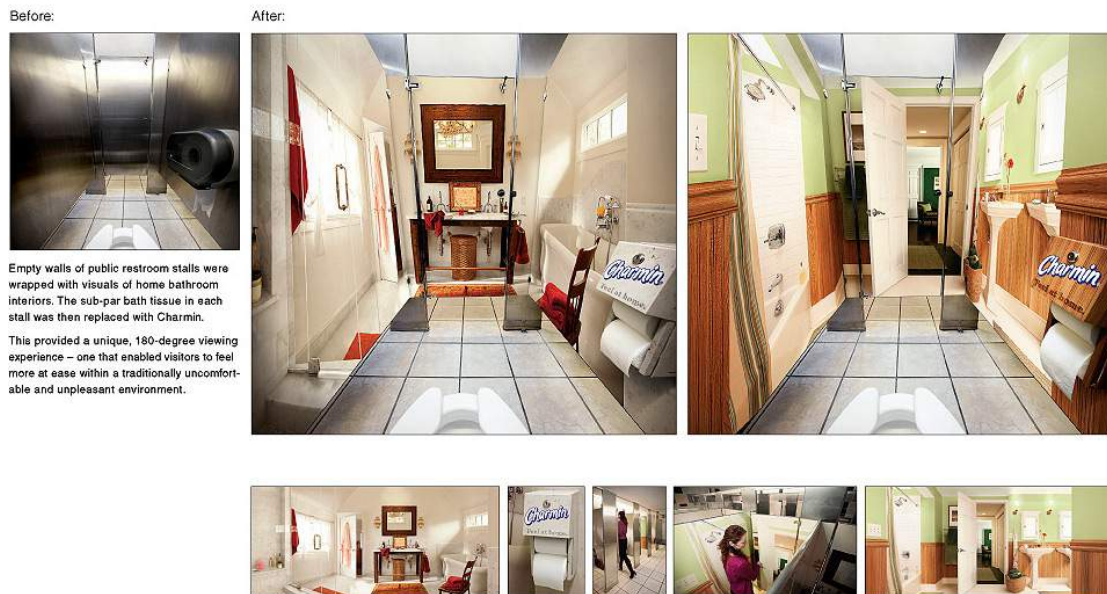


**Figure 5.10 Ad for sushi bar incorporating the actual product through sampling promotion (Tsunami Sushi Bar 2011)**

As previously outlined in the methodology, each ambient ad in the sample was analysed as a stand-alone ad, rather than in conjunction with any other marketing or promotional strategy. As such, the ad seen in Figure 5.10 was not categorised as incorporating the actual product into the ad, but provides an example of a broader strategy for marketers to consider in providing consumers with a brand experience revolving around an ambient medium.

Sampling methods need not be limited to a promotional strategy used in conjunction with an ambient ad, but instead can be integrated into a stand-alone ad to provide consumers the opportunity to trial the product. Figure 5.11 overleaf shows an example of an for Charmin toilet paper, where the stalls of a public washroom have been re-designed to look like a private home washroom, with the commercial toilet paper replaced with Charmin. Not only does the washroom interior encourage consumers to feel at home in a public space, but the use of the actual product in the ad allows consumers to trial the brand, creating a multi-faceted brand experience.

## Charmin Public Restroom Stall Wraps



**Figure 5.11 Ad for toilet paper incorporating the actual product into the ad (Charmin 2012)**

The focus group findings alone provide consumer insight into the use of the actual product in ambient ads, as no interview participant described an ad that included this ad feature. Of the six ads presented in the focus groups, the Scotch Brite ad, shown in Figure 3.5, was the only one that incorporated the actual product into the ad, using a modified large-scale version of the sponge integrated into a drinking fountain. Examples of participant reactions to this ad are provided as follows:

*“I think it’s not as visually capturing as the others, but when you get to it, you think it’s a cool idea, when you see it’s an actual sponge [Suraya agrees] and you interact with it physically...you touch it, you feel it, you know it’s a sponge, you know it’s doing the job.” (Johann, Group 3, age 22, musician)*

The participant above suggests that use of an actual product in an ad encourages consumer interaction with the aim of clarifying if the product is real and can be experienced as the product would be in a real-world setting. Many participants who recognised that a modified version of an actual product was being incorporated into the ad further indicated that they would want to interact with

the ad to verify the authenticity of the product. An excerpt from another focus group is as follows:

*Miriam: I would remember that. I would go up to it, just to see if it was an actual sponge.*

*Linda: This one [points to the Scotch Brite pictorial] would intrigue me to the extent that I would walk over to it, absolutely. As Miriam said—the sponge—you want to feel it [Miriam and Jackie agree]; [to know] is it real? You'll definitely go up to that one, and you will remember it.*

(Group 4: Miriam, age 18, student; Linda, age 51, company director)

These sentiments demonstrating curiosity in determining the nature of the product are echoed by an interview participant who was also presented with the pictorials used in the focus groups. He gives his response to the Scotch Brite water fountain as follows:

*"I just, personally, am bombarded by signs. The Scotch Brite one...if I see this, I'm not going to drink from the fountain, but I'm obviously going to walk up to it and touch it, and that creates a different avenue for me to remember the product by, as opposed to just seeing it on a sign. I'm going to touch it because their intention was to create this Scotch Brite pad in a big 3-D representation here...I'm going to touch it to see if it feels like a sponge." (Nikolai, age 27, architect)*

While the participant above did not encounter the Scotch Brite ad, he based his response on his experience with an actual ambient ad, reiterating his interest in wanting to engage with ambient ads due to various novel and/or unique features as compared to traditional advertising. A final example of another participant response is given:

*"I'd just remember how cool it was that they turned a drinking fountain into the concept of an absorbent sponge [Alex agrees], and basically having it infinitely absorbent by having it...Now, if it were really super cool and interesting and innovative, I might go research the brand afterwards to see what they're about [Alex agrees]—'Oh,*

*that's a cool idea; I wonder what that's about?' It might create an interest in me."* (Adam, Group 5, age 29, strategy consultant)

The participant expresses his interest in not only engaging with the ad at the moment of encounter, but also extending this involvement with the brand even after the encounter has concluded.

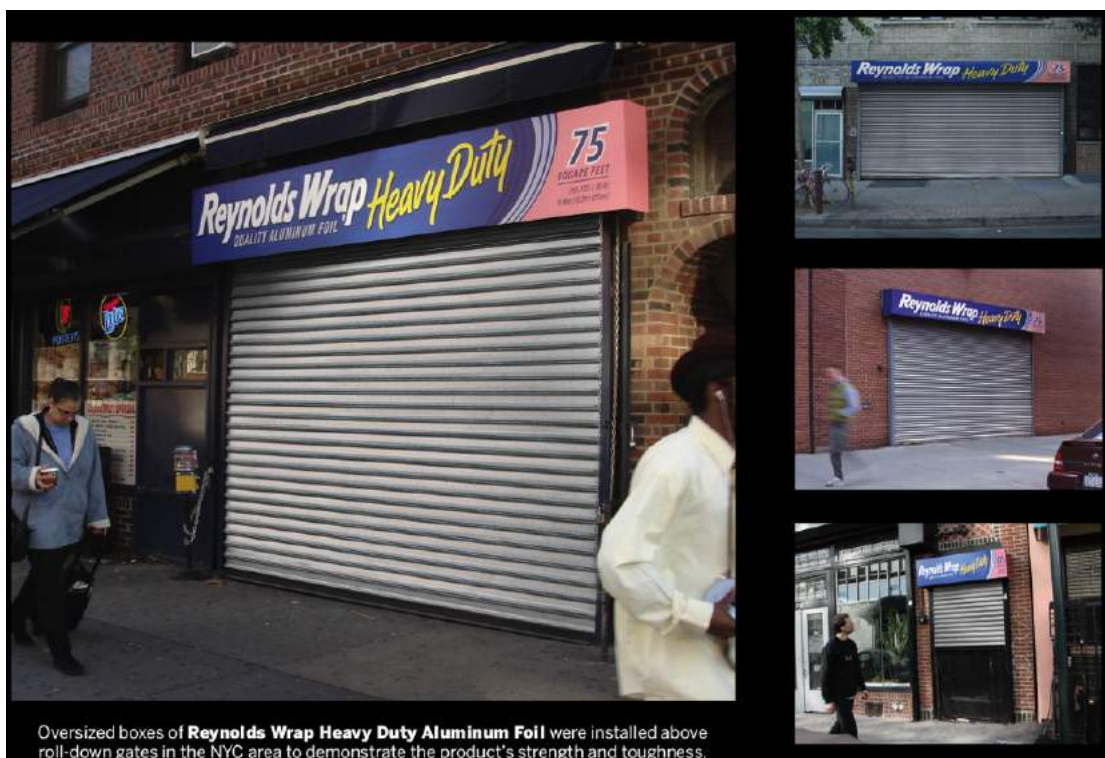
The responses all indicate a level of curiosity in the integration of an actual product into the ad, again suggesting the concept of schema incongruity and engagement with the brand and more elaborative processing of the ad, as demonstrated by Srull (1981), Meyers-Levy and Tybout (1989), Heckler and Childers (1992), Lee and Mason (1999) and Rosengren et al (2013). Apart from fostering consumer engagement due to the novel experience of encountering the actual product in an ad, product integration in a commonplace medium can be seen as producing a brand experience relevant to consumers' environments and activities, as suggested by Rayport (2013) for ads placed in the public sphere. As Rayport notes, ads placed in the public sphere reach consumers during their moments of downtime, moving between activities, and thus having more attention available for new inputs. The unexpectedness of inclusion of the actual product in an ambient ad tends to pique consumer interest to engage with the product itself, and by extension the ad and the brand, thus providing the consumer with both product and brand experience. As few ambient ads currently incorporate the product into the ad, this presents an opportunity for marketers to further differentiate their ads from traditional media, and even from the vast majority of ambient ads that do not capitalise on the chance to provide consumers first-hand experience with the product.

### **5.2.2 Placement**

The concept of placement of ambient ads refers to the position of the ad respective to its surroundings in the OOH environment. Two placement categories were identified through the focus group and content analysis exercises, namely immediacy and ad location. Immediacy is analysed through examination of the ad's position relative to that of the consumer; ad location is investigated as it relates to consumers' movements or activities.

### 5.2.2.1 Immediacy

Examination of the sample of 494 ambient ads revealed that ad placements could be positioned either within direct contact of the consumer or out of the consumer's reach. The vast majority of the ads investigated, at 93.7% of the sample, allowed consumers to come into direct contact with the ad during their activities, either on foot or in a vehicle. These integrations of ads in mediums with which a consumer comes into contact is expected of marketers' objectives to break through ad clutter to reach consumers through unexpected placement, as identified by many ambient advertising researchers (e.g. Shankar & Horton 1999, Luxton & Drummond 2000, Hutter & Hoffmann 2011, Jurca 2012, Hutter & Hoffmann 2014, Hutter 2015, Jurca & Madlberger 2015). Figures 5.12 and 5.13 provide examples of ambient ads with which consumers are brought into direct contact, through movement on foot and in a vehicle, respectively.



**Figure 5.12 Example of ad placement where consumer comes into direct contact with ad while on foot (Reynolds 2007)**



Placement of ads where consumers are able to come into direct contact with the ad enables the marketer to reach the consumer without the consumer having to make an effort to encounter the ad. Using mediums located where consumers would typically be in contact with an unbranded medium essentially brings the consumer face-to-face with the ad, whether he or she chooses to engage with the ad message or not. Kaikati and Kaikati (2004) suggest using stealth marketing to reach consumers where they are vulnerable to ad messages, which can be achieved through ambient advertising with the use of unexpected placements with which the consumer would be in contact.



Client: Jointfit Roller Gel  
Message: "Solusi Tepat Untuk Sendi"  
Creative: Tan Liana & Windy Andina  
Account: Nety Satriana & Monika Maya  
Producer: Marwah Utomo



**Figure 5.13 Example of ad placement where consumer comes into direct contact with ad while in a vehicle (Jointfit 2013)**

These ads that make direct contact with the consumer can be contrasted with an ad that is placed out of the consumer's reach, as seen in Figure 5.14. Out-of-reach placements are less likely to garner consumer attention, as the consumer has to make more of an effort to encounter the ad as compared to ads placed within a consumer's immediate environment. This idea is apparent in the limited use of out-of-reach placements by marketers, with only 6.3% of the sample ads incorporating this ad element. These ads do not gain the face-to-face quality of

ambient ads placed within a consumer's immediate environment, and are thus more easily ignored or avoided.



**Figure 5.14 Example of an ad placed out of reach of the consumer (Electrolux 2005)**

Participants from the focus group and interview exercises provide insights to support the theory that ads placed within a consumer's immediate environment prompt consumers to notice the ad. In one focus group, a participant refers to direct contact based on the placement of the ad within her line of sight:

*"I think eye-level probably has a lot to do with it [Johann and Gayatri agree]. For example, the Stihl ad—I obviously don't know a lot about power washers, but if I walk along a wall, and I see a big white patch on the wall, I'll think, 'What's going on here? They started cleaning and they didn't finish the job?' But it will bring my attention to it."* (Suraya, Group 3, age 26, linguist)

The participant suggests effective placements of ambient ads within a consumer's line of sight in order to establish direct contact between the ad message and the consumer. She goes on to suggest that ads placed at floor-level, for example, would not garner her attention. However, another participant within the same focus group challenged her views, to suggest that any form of direct contact, regardless of its position in relation to the consumer's line of sight, would effectively capture the consumer's attention. The participant argues:

*"I also agree that [effectiveness in capturing attention] is based on the novelty of the ads...For example, the Lego ad—you're actually interacting with that...that will impact you very well. You'll be able to touch it physically. You'll feel a difference, you'll look at it, and remember that you walked over this non-skid mat, and it was Lego...to catch my attention, physical interaction will definitely help it a lot."* (Johann, Group 3, age 22, musician)

The argument above is echoed by an interview participant who encountered an ad for IKEA, using a floor decal designed as a Persian rug, placed in a subway terminal. The direct physical contact between the participant and the ad was sufficient the ad to gain her attention:

*"You had to walk over it. When you're walking over it, you read what it is, you see it...I walked on it, I took notice of it; I was interested in it."* (Melissa, age 24, social worker)

Another interview participant provides evidence to support the theory that ad placements that bring the consumer into direct contact with the ad message are effective in capturing consumer attention. When reflecting upon her encounter with a Kit Kat ad placed within a movie theatre atrium, she ascribes her ability to notice the ad to the face-to-face placement of the ad within her immediate environment:

*"It's located right outside [the theatre], when you're walking into the theatre and when you're walking out of the theatre. So its location is a very important part of it; you have to pass there at some point. And it is also meant to be a bench, as well; so granted that if you're*

*looking for a seat, you can't really avoid it."* (Amelia, age 29, attorney)

A final interview participant provides her recount of a mobile ambient ad, as opposed to the stationary ads discussed above. As an ad not fixed in position, the likelihood of ignoring the ad is greater than one that is located where a consumer typically goes. The participant asserts that the mobile quality of the advertisement caused her to notice the ad, rather than more easily ignoring the ad when compared to a stationary ad, as the ad makes its way into her personal sphere, indicating direct contact:

*"I think because it's in my space, I came across it, because I don't think if the car was just parked on the side of the road and I drove past on the freeway, that I would have instantly noticed...but the fact that it was in my space and I saw this vehicle and I wanted to get closer to see what on earth is that; I think it creates interest...there's a lot more going on internally than just looking at a billboard and driving on. So it will grab your attention for longer than if a billboard just flashed in front of you."* (Patricia, age 53, lecturer)

The responses above indicate that marketers' strategy of primarily placing ads in locations where the consumer is brought face-to-face with an ad can be extremely effective at bringing consumer attention to the ad message, due to the direct contact between the consumer and the ad. Ad attention is examined as noticing an ad and is a necessary precursor to engagement. However, the above discussion is limited to ad attention garnered through direct contact, but does not address how direct contact can subsequently foster consumer engagement. To understand how a consumer's direct contact with an ad can encourage consumers to engage with the ad message, concepts are adapted from experiential marketing literature to aid theoretical development.

Literature from Schmitt and colleagues (Schmitt 1999, Brakus et al 2009, Zarantonello & Schmitt 2010) suggests the use of a multisensory strategy in order to stimulate consumer engagement, allowing the brand to provide the consumer with a brand experience. In her conceptual discussion of ambient advertising, Gambetti (2010) reiterates the use of sensory appeals as one

dimension of building an experience for the consumer and fostering engagement between the consumer and both the ad message and the brand. Thus, a discussion of multisensory engagement between consumers and ambient ads is presented.

While almost all ambient ads allow consumers to come into direct contact with these messages, not all of these ads provide consumers with multisensory experiences. While every ambient ad relies on a consumer's sense of sight to convey the ad message, many ads can be seen to provide consumers the opportunity to engage with the ads through the tactile sense. A total of 76.3% of the ads with which consumers come into direct contact were seen to allow consumers to experience the ad through tactile engagement. Further, two ads of the sample of 494 were identified as providing olfactory stimulation, and only a single ad integrated either music or sound effects into the ad message to appeal to consumers auditory sense. No stand-alone ambient ads were seen to engage consumers through the sense of taste, although the sushi ad shown in Figure 5.10 combines with a sampling promotion to engage consumers through taste appeals. Figures 5.15 and 5.16 present examples of ads which incorporate tactile and olfactory appeals, respectively.

While many ads were seen to provide consumers with the opportunity for tactile engagement, most of these ads limited this experience to the consumer's ability to touch or feel the ad when brought into direct contact with the message. Only a small proportion of these ads integrated the sense of touch into the communication of the ad message, as exhibited in Figure 5.15. This ad makes use of the warm air of the hand dryer to disseminate the ad message, which highlights the warming feature of the condoms. Similarly, the ad shown in Figure 5.16 integrates olfactory components into the ad in order to communicate the ad message of the floral-scented fabric softener with the use of real flowers to convey this feature.



Figure 5.15 Example of an ad incorporating tactile appeals in ad message (Durex 2007)

**Lenor flower buckets**

**The challenge:**  
Create awareness for Lenor flower-scented laundry softener.

**Creative execution:**  
Replace the flower buckets of the Romanian florists with Lenor bottle-shaped buckets, emphasizing the flower fragrances of Lenor softener in a free of charge and powerful way.

The flower buckets from most Romanian flower shops are neutral and kind of dull. The simple action of replacing them, offered the brand free media space with great exposure, highlighting the product benefit in a fresh way.

**Results:**  
The idea came to life in the flower shops all across Magheru Avenue, one of Bucharest's most circulated street, between 15.000-20.000 pedestrians per day. On an on-spot qualitative research, in terms of creativity and distinctiveness, on a scale from 1-5 (5 being the maximum), 85% of the respondents rated the idea above 4.

Figure 5.16 Example of an ad incorporating olfactory appeals in ad message (Lenor 2010)

Research concepts indicate that multisensory appeals in advertising represent one strategy in creating brand experiences that are fun and compelling (Holbrook & Hirschman 1982), positive (Pine & Gilmore 1998), and seen to stimulate consumers' minds (Schmitt 1999). These multisensory appeals can also be seen to align with Rayport's (2013) recommendation of providing consumers with a stimulating and compelling ad experience when ads are placed in the public sphere. Below are examples of responses from focus group participants based on the multisensory engagement that they project will occur when encountering ambient ads:

*Dave: But that chocolate [points to Kit Kat pictorial], that does it for me. And that is highly interactive [Miriam nods]; I'd want to touch it, and then I'd say, 'Okay, I'm going to have to buy one of those.'*

*Andrew: You want to put your fingers in there [indicates Kit Kat logo embossed on bench in pictorial], don't you, and feel that? [Miriam nods.]*

*Jackie: Sit down and get surrounded by chocolate!*

(Group 4: Dave, age 56, CEO; Andrew, age 62, business consultant; Jackie, age 37, housewife)

While their discussion is based on a hypothetical encounter with the Kit Kat ad, the participants indicate their desire to engage with an ambient ad that allows for tactile sensation. By speaking to the "interactive" nature of the ad, the participants are referring to the engagement of the ad through multiple senses. Further support of multisensory appeals in building a brand experience is provided by interview participants, based on actual encounters with a similar Kit Kat bench:

*"You can't just use one of your senses—which is sight—to notice this ad. Using touch—or feel—it helps build up that connection between you and the product. As in you can interact with it; you can have some physical interaction with the bench. Because it's not just sight; you get to touch and feel. It's just another way of interacting with the product, I guess. It gives you another reason to remember it."*

(Nikolai, age 27, architect)

The participant above asserts that engagement of multiple senses in attending to an ad deepens the “connection” between the consumer and the product, signalling the establishment of a brand experience. Further interview participants make reference to the tactile engagement as a novel way to engage with an ad:

*“That it’s new; it’s innovative. It is not what we’re accustomed to; it has a degree of imagination to it. It also targets, I guess, more of the visual aspects of advertising, so that it makes—the fact that you can sit on it, touch it, that sort of thing—makes it more tangible.”*  
(Amelia, age 29, attorney)

Another recount is provided by the interview participant below:

*“Because you could actually interact with it, like touch it or sit on it. So, [with] normal ads on TV, you can’t interact with it; with billboards, you can’t go up and touch it. This, you could actually feel the engraving of the ‘Kit Kat’ in the bench.”* (Robert, age 27, surveyor)

These participants refer not only to the ability to “touch” the ad and engage with the medium through tactile senses, but that the novelty of the experience encourages them to participate in the brand experience in this way. Interestingly, both versions of the Kit Kat ad, as presented in the focus groups and as described by interview participants, do not integrate tactile appeals into communication of the brand message, as exemplified by the ad in Figure 15.15. Despite this, participants were still interested in engaging with the ad through touch, suggesting to marketers that the opportunity alone for consumers to experience an ad through a sense other than visual can create a multisensory brand experience. As no interview participants described ads that integrated tactile appeals into communication of the ad message, there is no evidence to demonstrate how consumers would respond to this sensory strategy. Instead, the researcher can only propose that this integration would further encourage consumer participation in the brand experience, as engagement of multiple senses helps the consumer to process the ad message through sensory and



additional cognitive appeals, as developed from Schmitt's (1999) framework of SEMs.

It should be noted that, while many ambient ads provide consumers with the opportunity for sensory engagement through tactile appeals, the extent of the multisensory experience is dependent upon the individual consumer. For example, similar to the response above detailing the "physical interaction" with the Lego ad and walking over the ad, focus group participants limited their projected interaction with the same ad to walking on or over the ad, without engaging with the ad through any further sense of touch. These interactions can be contrasted with earlier examples of respondents, who suggested that they would want to touch or feel the Scotch Brite ad to determine whether the sponge was real. Thus, even when multisensory appeals are integrated into the ad message, consumers are not automatically provided with a multisensory experience, as the extent of the experience is determined by the individual choices made by consumers to engage with these ads.

To experience senses of touch, smell and taste, consumers must be in immediate or close proximity to the ad to participate in this multisensory engagement. Using senses of both sight and hearing, however, does not necessitate consumers to be in the same proximity to the ad, as these senses can be engaged from a distance. Thus, an ad which is placed out of the consumer's reach is found to only appeal to consumers through sight, limiting its effectiveness in creating a brand experience as the consumer is neither in direct contact with the ad, nor are multiple senses engaged. However, a single ad was seen to incorporate the use of auditory appeals in an effort to attract consumer attention and engagement to the ad, which was placed out of consumer reach. This ad is seen in Figure 5.17 overleaf.



**Figure 5.17 Ad incorporating auditory appeals into an ad message placed out of consumer reach (Calcutta School of Music 2009)**

One interview participant encountered an ad that was placed on a beach, allowing for direct contact, although he states that he was not close enough to the ad to notice it first-hand, indicating that the ad was placed out of his individual reach. He attributes his noticing of the ad due to the crowd formed around the ad, a beach shower designed to resemble a Sprite soda dispenser. He describes his experience of attending to the ad below, and provides a suggestion for ads that are placed out of reach of consumers:

*“I was sitting far away, but if you were in close proximity, then you would definitely notice the ad. I was quite far because it was a very long beach—a couple hundred metres, maybe—so you couldn’t tell clearly what it was [the crowd] was looking at...I would have noticed it if I were in quite close proximity...Maybe if there was music coming from this location—not something extremely loud, but something that would attract my attention—I might have noticed the ad first.”*

(Panagiotis, age 30, assistant brand manager)

The participant’s suggestion of music being incorporated into the ad to draw consumer attention when the ad is placed out of reach is akin to the strategy taken in the ad shown in Figure 5.17.

Placements of ads out of consumer reach are less likely to foster engagement when compared to ads placed within consumers' direct contact, as they are less likely to be noticed due to the location within consumers' immediate environment. Incorporating additional sensory appeals, namely auditory elements that can be perceived without the consumer being in the ad's immediate proximity, can help to attract consumer attention beyond the sense of sight only. Based on Schmitt's (1999) SEM framework and Rayport's (2013) recommendations for ads placed in the public sphere, even without direct contact, the use of multisensory appeals for out-of-reach ads are more likely to draw consumer attention, stimulate consumers and engage them in a brand experience, when compared to out-of-reach ads relying on the sense of sight alone. Furthermore, as multisensory engagement is frequently cited in works by Schmitt and colleagues as a key experience provider (ExPro) in brand engagement, it is entirely possible that multisensory appeals used in out-of-reach ads may be more compelling and encouraging of a brand experience than ads with which consumers can come into contact, when only a single sense, namely sight, is engaged.

The discussion identifies several implications for marketers when designing and executing ambient ads, with considerations of immediacy within a consumer's environment. Firstly, marketers should make use of multisensory appeals in ambient ads, particularly auditory and olfactory stimulants, rather than relying on visual alone or commonly included tactile engagement. With only three ads out of a sample of 494 ambient ads communicating to consumers via their sense of hearing or smell, this strategy is vastly underutilised in attempts to provide a brand experience for the consumer. Furthermore, marketers should consider extending the brand experience to incorporate consumers' sense of taste, when advertising food items or other edible products, through sampling promotions developed in conjunction with an ambient ad. Use of multisensory appeals in ambient advertising can further the evolution of the practice, from simple attempts to break through clutter, to providing a brand experience for the consumer.

Marketers should consider the integration of multisensory appeals into the communication of the ad message, to provide consumers with a more engaging experience, as compared to multisensory appeals that are not relevant to the context of the ad. While this practice has only been observed for tactile engagement, it should nonetheless be considered when incorporating any sensory appeal, apart from visuals. Many ads have been seen to provide consumers with the opportunity to engage with them, through tactile sensation, due to placement where consumers are brought into direct contact with the ads. However, much of this tactile involvement is due to the novelty of branded mediums within a consumer's immediate environment, rather than as an aid in processing the ad message. Moving forward with the practice, marketers should view integration of any sensory appeal as an additional outlet for the consumer to become involved in the ad message, thus creating a meaningful multisensory ad experience.

A further consideration for marketers is the use of multisensory appeals in out-of-reach ads in order to attract consumer attention, since visuals alone may not encourage consumers to notice the ad due to placement outside of their immediate environments. Due to the distal locations of out-of-reach ads, only auditory stimulants can be integrated into these ads, and can be integrated thoughtfully into the ad message to not only attract attention to the ad, but also to create a brand experience for the consumer through engagement of an additional sense.

Finally, the vast majority of ambient ads have been identified as being placed where consumers can come into direct contact with these messages. Increased utilisation of out-of-reach placements will need to be explored, as marketing messages, whether ambient or other OOH messages, populate the objects and mediums that consumers typically encounter in their OOH activities due to immediacy. Marketers, thus, need to be mindful of competing with other advertising in the same OOH spaces, extending ambient advertising to less populated placements, and incorporating multiple sensory stimulants to attract attention and possibly create a brand experience for the consumer.

#### *5.2.2.2 Ad location*

The content analysis results demonstrated that 31.4% of ambient ads were placed at locations where consumers would be found waiting, and another 10.6% of ads were located at entry/exit points. A total of 12.4% of the ad sample comprised ads placed at other indoor locations, and the most common placement category was other outdoor locations, utilised by 45.6% of ads. While indoor and outdoor locations represent additional placement considerations for marketers, the key discovery within this category is that 42% of the ads within the sample were seen to force consumers to come into contact with an ad message. Ad placements at waiting, and entry/exit points, represent ads that the consumer is unable to avoid. From a marketer's perspective, these unavoidable ads achieve the objectives of definitively reaching the consumer, regardless of how the consumer chooses to attend to the ad message. However, marketers need to understand the impacts of these placements on the consumer engagement process, and the extent to which consumers are willing to attend to an ad message when they are forced to do so. As a result, the discussion presented in this section focuses on the placement of ads where consumers are forcibly exposed to ambient messages.

Interactions with ads placed at entry/exit points are typically short-lived, as the contact with these mediums is brief as the consumer continues with his or her activity. Figures 5.18 and 5.19 overleaf present examples of ads placed at two different kinds of entry/exit points, where the former is encountered by consumers on foot and the latter when in a vehicle. These placements, as ambient media, are considered unexpected and non-traditional, and are discussed within this context.



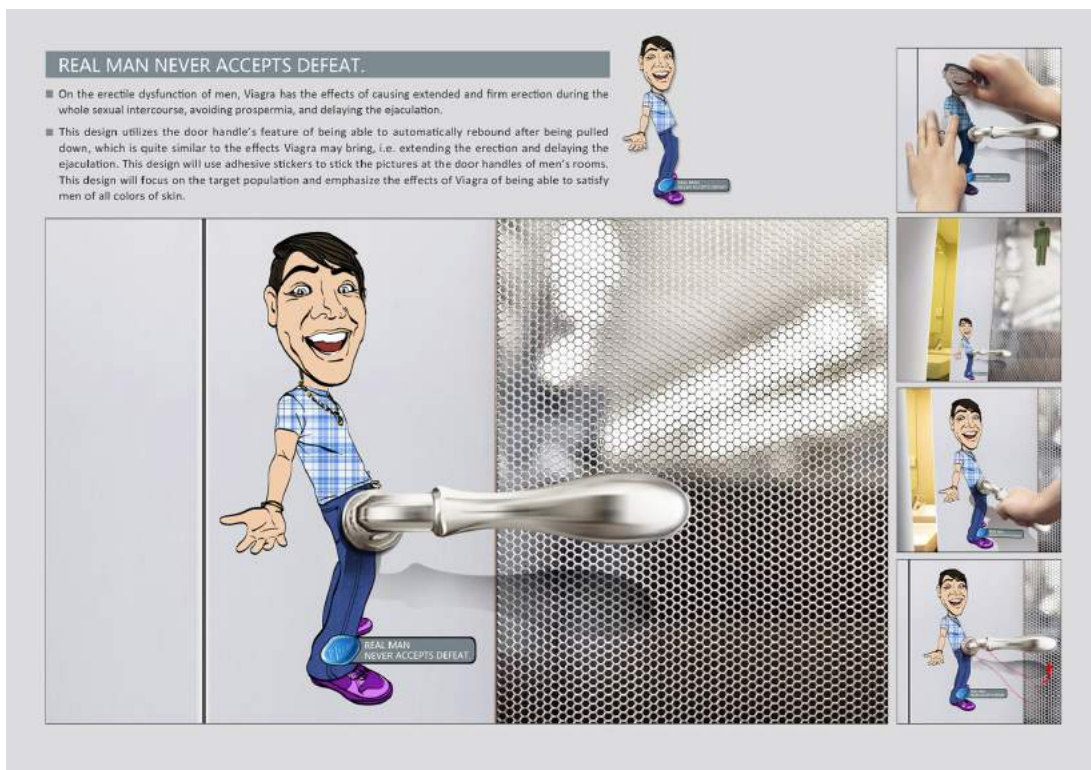
**Figure 5.18 Example of ad placement at entry/exit point where consumer is on foot (McCain 2008)**



**Figure 5.19 Example of ad placement at entry/exit point where consumer is in vehicle (Mama Of 2009)**

Placement of ads at entry and exit points virtually guarantees that consumers will come into contact with the advertising messages, even briefly, when ingressing or egressing the particular building, structure or physical space. However, marketers cannot rely on placements at these points for consumer

engagement, or even for consumers to notice the ad simply because the consumers are steered towards the ad. The visual appeals of the ad shown in Figure 5.18, with bright colours and the ad occupying the entire frame, can be compared to the ad in Figure 5.20, which is considerably less prominent, with a decal limited to the area around the door handle only.



**Figure 5.20 Example of ad placement at entry/exit point with limited noticeability (Viagra 2013)**

In addition to the difference in the scale of the ads, as placed on the doors, the revolving doors used in the ad in Figure 5.18, would typically provide the consumer with a lengthier exposure to the ad as compared to the ad in Figure 5.20. While the extents to which a consumer would engage with both of these ads is dependent on each individual, the comparison between the two ads clearly demonstrates that placement at a point of entry or exit can only force the consumer to be exposed to the ad. Placement alone at these points will not necessarily prompt the consumer to attend to the ad, but other executional

elements will determine the engagement and resulting brand experience that is afforded to the consumer.

Two of the interview participants encountered two different ads placed at exit points, providing support for the effectiveness in placement at these points in forcing the consumer to notice the ad message. One of these responses is as follows, where the respondent encountered an ad for IKEA rugs while exiting a Toronto Subway station:

*“You couldn’t really miss it...it was in a high-traffic area, on my way out [of the station]. It was somewhere you had to walk over, basically. It was at an exit from one station to the other, so that caused me to notice it...I walked on it. I took notice of it.”* (Melissa, age 24, social worker)

The participant goes on to assert that the execution of the ad itself and the visual appeals piqued her interest in the ad and the branded message, where the placement initially brought the ad to her attention. Similarly, another interview participant attributes his ability to notice the ad due to the ad placement at an exit point, where the ad was placed on the stairs at a Metro station exit in Barcelona. When asked about his encounter with the ad, the respondent provided the following account:

*“You’re coming out of a dark Tube station, and you look up, and [there it is]. It’s pretty cool! You’re coming out of a Metro, and you walk up and see this pop of colour. You don’t expect that. I walked up [those stairs]...because that was the only exit. People notice; you have to notice. You will notice, unless you’re on a mobile phone. No, but you have to see it; you have to look at the steps and look up as you exit. And then you’ll see this thing and wonder what it is...it’s completely unavoidable; it’s in your face.”* (Sean, age 36, cinematographer)

The respondent above goes on to explain his intrigue with the ad due to the visual aspects of colour and the use of a pre-existing medium to convey the ad message. Both responses provide evidence that placement of ads at entry and exit points can effectively capture consumer attention, however, both



respondents attribute their engagement with the ad to other executional elements. Marketers should not assume that forcing a consumer to come into contact with an ad through placement at entry/exit points would result in consumer engagement with the ad beyond physical contact.

The focus group participants provide further insights into ad placements at entry and exit points. These discussions of the CoverGirl mascara ad, utilising a turnstile at a subway station (seen in Figure 3.2), provide mixed results as to the effectiveness of the ad placement in capturing consumer attention and fostering brand engagement. While most participants suggest that they would not notice the ad due to its placement, a few participants indicate that they would not just notice, but also engage with the ad due to its location at an entry/exit point.

*Kandice: I think the mascara ad is great, because you're going to have to go through that turnstile when you're leaving [the station], so you are going to notice it. You have to; you don't have a choice! The poster on the side, too, is going to bring your attention to it as well, and you're going to make that connection that the turnstile is supposed to represent the mascara wand.*

*Melissa: Yes! Maybe it's because we're women, and it's a product that's relevant to us, and that's why we would notice it, but the guys here wouldn't. It looks like the product, and even though you're in and out of that turnstile in a second or two, I'll make that connection, also, like you said.*

(Group 1: Kandice, age 33, project manager; Melissa, age 26, hotel employee)

By describing the associations made between the product and the medium used, the respondents above signal a greater degree of engagement with the ad beyond either coming into contact with the message due to its placement, or merely noticing the ad. Conversely, another participant provided a response that indicates a considerably lower level of involvement with the ad due to its placement:

*“I’d notice it because I have to walk through that [turnstile], but it’s not going to make me do anything with the ad. I would just walk through and think, ‘That’s clever’, but that would be it.”* (Jane, Group 5, age 56, magistrate)

These responses indicate that even brief encounters with an ambient ad, when consumers are forcibly exposed to the ad message, can result in some degree of consumer engagement, and is likely influenced by the relevance of the advertised product to the individual consumer. This concept is similar to Rayport’s (2013) recommendation of creating ads that are relevant to consumer activities and environments when placing ads in the public sphere, where the product is seen to be relevant to consumers’ interests or needs.

While there are some suggestions that a brand experience can be created even through use of placements where consumers have limited exposure to the ad, many more participants suggest that the particular placement of the CoverGirl ad would not warrant any attention to the ad. Many participants indicate that they would not likely notice the ad in this placement, due to the briefness of the encounter, as detailed in the sample responses below.

*“The example with the mascara, it’s in a Tube place. Again, my mode when I’m in a Tube place, isn’t to look and admire my surroundings; it’s to get in and out as fast as humanly possible [Alex agrees].”*

(Adam, Group 5, age 29, strategy consultant)

Respondents in other groups echo the sentiments of the respondent above, citing the fleeting exposure to the ad as the reason for not attending to the ad:

*“The thing is, it’s creative, but you don’t really have time to stop and [look at] that when you’re moving. When you’re at a subway station, everybody’s on the move, quick, rushing to get to their subway. They’re not going to stop to watch this, plus you’ll be keeping people back if you stop to watch it, to look at what it is.”* (Will, Group 1, age 18, student)

A third example is given by a respondent from another group, who elaborates upon his projected encounter with the ad, and claims that he would not notice

the representation of the mascara wand in the turnstile, nor the poster juxtaposed with the ambient ad.

*“I just think each placement has to help you to assimilate it. For instance, this is very clever, but when you go through one of these things, you’re always very slightly concerned that you’re going to get stuck in it. So you always go through quickly, and you’re always just a little bit concerned as you go through it, which would take your concentration away from just the view of the surrounding medium.”*

(Andrew, Group 4, age 62, business consultant)

A final example of the responses towards the CoverGirl ad is presented below, with one participant offering an alternative placement for the same ad execution in more effectively garnering attention.

*Ryan: In the case of the exit carousel [points to CoverGirl pictorial], you’ll be in a hurry. So if you’re going in or out of the location, you’re really not concerned with what’s around you [Gabi shakes head]. Okay, so it’s interesting, but would it be noticed when you’re in that part of the way?*

*Kenny: I don’t think so.*

*Hasine: And I imagine a number of other people would be passing at the same time; you’re not going to stand up there and gaze at what is that particular ad [Shawn, Kenny and Ryan nod].*

*Gabi: Yes, as you said, the mascara you wouldn’t even notice.*

*Ryan: Maybe a mall—a place of leisure—because you’re maybe not in a hurry if you’re at West Mall<sup>1</sup> as you would be at City Gate<sup>2</sup>, for instance. So, something like this, if you’re at City Gate, you wouldn’t notice it.*

(Group 2: Ryan, age 34, advertiser; Kenny, age 67, retiree; Hasine, age 27, graduate student; Gabi, age 30, office manager)

The responses provide insights into two different aspects of ad location. Firstly, ads located at entry and exit points may not be perceived by consumers due to

---

<sup>1</sup> West Mall is an upscale shopping mall in western Trinidad & Tobago

<sup>2</sup> City Gate is the largest public transportation hub in Trinidad & Tobago, located in the centre of Port of Spain, the country capital

the short exposure time to the ad. This avoidance can be mitigated by extending the consumer's time with the ad, such as use of revolving doors or carpark barriers, as seen in Figures 5.18 and 5.19 respectively. While these encounters can still be considered short-lived, any additional time with the ad would increase the likelihood of the consumer noticing and attending to the ad.

Secondly, the last response above indicates that placement at entry and exit points cannot be considered in isolation, as the respondent differentiates between consumer habits at places of leisure and those at busy or crowded locations. He offers the suggestion of a more effective placement in a mall, where consumers are able to move more leisurely as compared to busy transport terminals. This suggestion presents a two-fold consideration for marketers when placing ads at entry and exit points. Firstly, the brevity of the encounter must be taken into account when designing the ad, and the elements incorporated into the ad, in order to capture consumer attention at these points. Secondly, every entry and exit point cannot effectively capture consumer attention, and marketers thus need to contemplate the surrounding environment in which these entry/exit points are located, to identify suitable locations in which to engage the consumer.

The responses above support findings by Rosengren et al (2015) that elements of surprise, such as unexpected placements, are no longer sufficient to engage consumers with an ad. Marketers may view these forced ad exposures as valuable in bringing the consumer into contact with the ad, effectively breaking through clutter to reach the consumer, as suggested by many OOH and ambient media researchers (e.g. Woodside 1990, Dahlén & Edenius 2007, Dahlén et al 2009b, Lopez-Pumarejo & Bassell 2009). However, Rosengren et al (2015, p.27) assert that the aim of ambient communications, instead, should be *"increasingly to get consumers to approach advertising. And, creating advertising value is an important prerequisite to achieve this."* These strategies have been identified to a greater extent in ads placed at waiting areas, as presented in the following discussion.

Similar to placement at entry and exit points, ad locations at waiting points were also seen to forcibly expose consumers to ad messages. However,

the key difference between entry/exit points and waiting points is the length of time that the consumer typically spends with the ad, allowing for a better opportunity for marketers to create a brand experience for consumers at the latter locations. Waiting points were defined to include locations where consumers are actually found waiting, such as at bus stops or at elevators, or where they are held captive for a period of time over which they have no immediate control, such as on public transportation, or when completing an activity, such as using a urinal or sink in a washroom. Figures 5.21, 5.22 and 5.23 present examples of each of these three 'waiting' points.

In contrast to interactions at entry/exit points, bringing consumers into contact with the ad in locations where they typically have a prolonged interaction with the ad, such as in waiting areas, is more likely to improve ad noticeability, as a precursor to engagement with the ad. Furthermore, the act of waiting, or being held captive in a particular location, presents marketers with an opportunity to reach consumers where they may exhibit feelings of boredom, and are more open to engaging with any stimulant in their surroundings. Marketers have demonstrated an awareness of this idea, as three times as many ambient ads are placed at waiting points when compared to ad locations at entry and exit points. The discussion thus focuses on identifying the ways in which consumers might interact with ads at these locations, and how marketers can make use of these placements to provide consumers with meaningful brand experiences.



**Figure 5.21 Example of ad placement at a waiting point (Norwegian 2012)**



Figure 5.22 Example of ad placement where consumer is held captive (Fiat 2006)

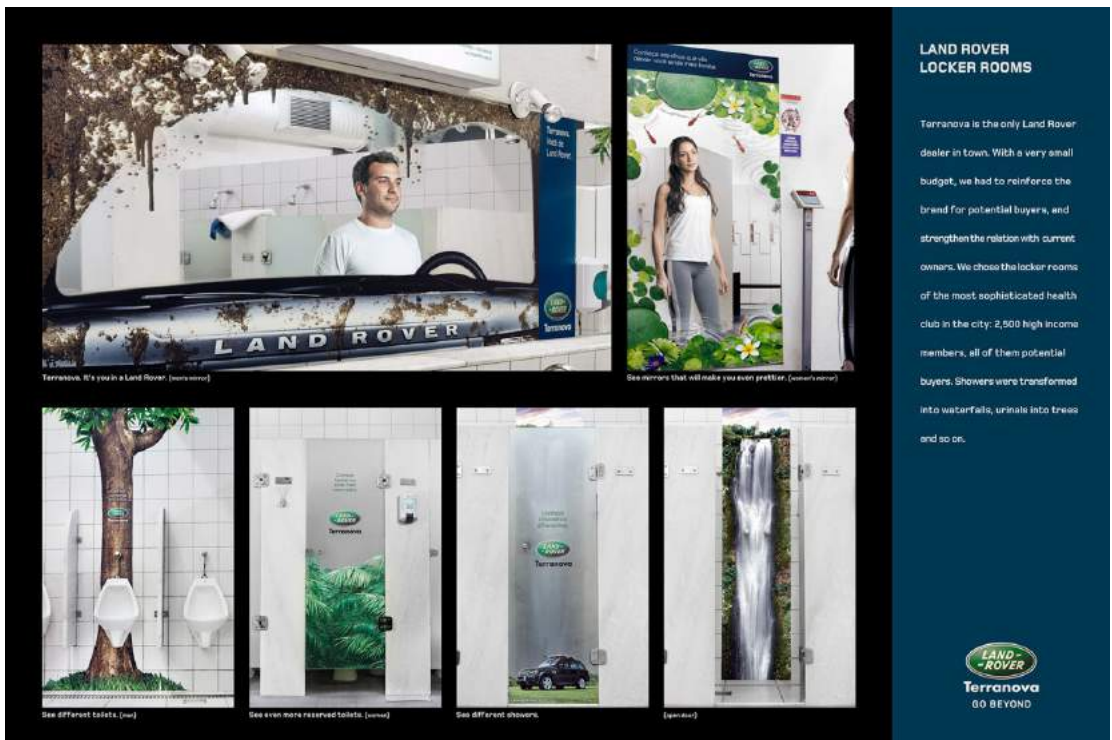


Figure 5.23 Example of ad placement where the consumer is exposed to the ad for the duration of an activity (Land Rover 2010)

Advertising at bus stops is a common and mainstream advertising channel, as marketers take advantage of the prolonged exposure that consumers have with the ad message at these locations. Many bus stops, particularly in urban areas, incorporate advertising space into the physical shelter, making this an expected ad location for traditional posters. Ambient advertising, however, through integration of the ad message into the actual medium, provides consumers with novel ad experiences, when compared with mainstream bus stop ads. Figure 5.21 provides an example of how a typical bus shelter can be transformed into a brand experience for the consumer, with Norwegian Airlines promoting its flights to Helsinki. As Finland is well known for its sauna culture, the ad capitalises on this association to send a more meaningful ad message than a traditional poster advertising the fare. The ad thus integrates the ad element of feature depiction, with a likeness to the particular feature. Similarly, the ads shown in Figures 5.22 and 5.23 incorporate ad features associated with the advertised product, in order to stimulate consumers while they are in contact with these ads.

As with placements at entry and exit points, placing ads at waiting points simply brings the consumer into contact with the ad, such that the ad message is unavoidable. The placement in itself does not necessarily prompt consumer engagement, or deliver a brand experience, for the consumer. However, incorporation of elements unique to ambient advertising can effectively transform a waiting point into a brand experience for the consumer, distinguishing ambient advertising from conventional ads placed at the same locations.

The focus group findings demonstrate how consumers can interact with ads placed at waiting points, where the Casino de Venezia ad, seen in Figure 3.4 was the centre of the discussion in this area. The ad was located in an airport in Italy, placed within the baggage claim area, where the medium was a baggage carousel. When compared to ads encountered while the consumer is transient, placement of ads at waiting points provide lengthier exposure to ads and plausibly increases the likelihood of the ad being noticed, which the focus group



findings support. When asked why she thought the Casino di Venezia ad was the best at attracting attention, one focus group participant answered simply:

*“The practicality of it would be one thing, as in where you have it located and how many people will actually interact or have a reason to go to that particular object that you’re using. The [baggage] carousel for me is the best out of the lot, since it’s in your external environment—something that you have to interact with.”* (Hasine, Group 2, age 27, graduate student)

A participant within the same group expanded upon the response above, noting that the exposure was not only unavoidable, where the consumer is required to interact with the particular medium, but referring also to the length of the exposure:

*“Especially if you’re waiting anywhere [Gabi and Kenny nod]. So, this casino ad is absolutely fabulous. How long are you going to be waiting for your bags? And it makes it fun, because a lot of people think, ‘Oh, I have to wait for luggage again!’”* (Ryan, Group 2, age 34, advertiser)

Participants in other focus groups also related noticing the ad due to the placement at waiting points and the duration of these encounters, but further provided insights as to engaging with the ad through processing of the ad message. An example of such a response is given:

*Dave: I think, because you have to stand there for a length of time—a period of time—[Andrew agrees], it will dawn on you. The roulette wheel is a very good ad, because, invariably, we all stand at these carousels [Linda nods] for at least fifteen minutes. And that’s enough time to say, ‘Oh, what’s that?’ and then say, ‘Oh, it’s supposed to be a roulette wheel’ [everyone nods and agrees] in that time.*

*Jackie: Because it’s so novel, you notice it; you remember it. And you’re waiting a long time.*

(Group 4: Dave, age 56, CEO; Jackie, age 37, housewife)

A final example is provided below, where participants suggest not just the effectiveness of the ad placement in capturing their attention and even recall, but also their willingness to engage with the ad at this location.

*Nigel: I think I would definitely remember the carousel [Alex nods], because you've been on a long flight and waiting at the carousel for your luggage to come in, so that would make it a lot nicer if you went there. You would remember it, definitely...it's always horrible waiting at the carousel for your luggage, because everyone's in a rush to get to their car, and they're pushing their trolleys in and standing in front of you.*

*Jane: It would occupy you.*

*Nigel: It would occupy you, I would say that [Ellen and Alex nod]; you wouldn't forget it. You would remember that, definitely.*

*Ellen: I think part of it is that it's something that enhances your experience; it's a pleasant change from the norm. It's a nice change from the normal, dull airport that you're in, which is usually an unhappy situation. And you have a sort of nice distraction. You're happier waiting for your luggage.*

*Jane: It makes the mundane more interesting.*

*Adam: Like Ellen said, if you're bored waiting for your bag to come out, it's something fun that you can play with...the context is really interesting because—with the casino one, with the bench one and with the Lego one—it's all sort of places that you're waiting [Jane and Alex nod], or places that you're going to be kind of bored or wanting to engage with something [Jane agrees; Alex nods].*

*Alex: I like the interactivity. I've frequented casinos before. And I like the fact that it involves me with it; it brings me into their world. Obviously it's advertising for the casino et cetera, but it just brings me in. If I were with my friends, travelling, I'd start putting bets on [everyone agrees], like, 'I bet you mine's on 36!' That sort of thing.*

(Group 5: Nigel, age 51, chef consultant; Jane, age 56, magistrate; Ellen, age 26, auditor; Adam, age 29, strategy consultant; Alex, age 21, student)

The focus group findings support the concept that placement of ads at waiting points not only improves the likelihood that an ad will be noticed, but further suggests that consumers will engage with ads at these locations due to the tedium associated with waiting.

The above findings are not limited to imaginary encounters with ambient ads, but also extend into several participants' actual experiences with ads placed where they might have to wait. One interview respondent reported noticing an ad very similar to the Casino di Venezia ad, while in a Las Vegas airport, and shared his experience with the ad as follows:

*"It was fun to see that sort of ad, especially in [Las] Vegas, where there are loads of casinos around. I'm not sure that it was publicity advertising in that sense, or whether it was just decoration, because it was [Las] Vegas. Maybe it was, I don't know...I didn't really interact with it, besides getting my bag, maybe that's because I don't enjoy gambling. But I thought it was quite amusing; I thought it was quite clever. I think it's probably quite clever, in the sense that it attracts people, and before they realise it, they're thinking about it."* (Paul, age 59, teacher)

Similarly, another interview participant explained that her noticing of the Kit Kat ad was partly due to the having to wait within the vicinity of the ad, although consumers are not necessarily forced to wait in the location. Rather, the Kit Kat ad is placed in a play area within a cinema complex, close to the theatre entrance. One of these respondents gave the following account:

*"Because of where it's situated, we kind of have to [pass by it], because it is situated where you have to go line up to get to the movie. So it works to their advantage in times when it's a popular movie and there's a long line, and you have to actually stand there for a while and wait, so it's sort of a captive time. You can't sit on it at that point, since you're waiting in the line, but you have the time while you're there to*

*notice it and figure out that it's a Kit Kat bar."* (Julie, age 38, sales manager)

In referring to her ability to "figure out" the ad during this encounter with the ad, the respondent above signals the effectiveness of placing an ad at a waiting point in order to prompt consumer engagement. Another interview respondent, discussing the same ad, described a different waiting experience, and how this translated to him noticing the ad:

*"I was actually waiting on another friend to come out [of the theatre]...[the bench] was available...right in the middle of the playroom, there it was. So it was the only convenient piece of apparatus that you can sit on...I will always go towards the bench to wait for [my friends]."* (Vishal, age 28, pharmacist)

Where the first respondent indicates that she noticed the ad because of the wait that she was forced to endure, the second respondent chose to use the branded bench while waiting voluntarily. Together, focus group and interview findings thus signal that consumers notice ads due to prolonged exposure to the ad, and that consumers can find value through these placements by engaging with the ad. While the interview participants did not recount levels of involvement with the ad that focus group participants projected, the findings nonetheless provide evidence for the effectiveness of ad placements at waiting points in order to stimulate consumer engagement.

Placing ambient ads at entry/exit points and at waiting points, without providing some degree of value to the consumer through the ad message, results in the ambient ad being akin to a traditional OOH advertisement. Although ambient ads are distinct from traditional OOH ads in the integration of the medium into the ad message, the consumer involvement offered by ads differs based on execution factors, namely the extent of engaging features integrated into the ad. The Norwegian Airlines ad shown in Figure 5.21 can be compared to another bus stop ad, as shown in Figure 5.24 overleaf.



**Figure 5.24 Example of an ad placed at a waiting point with no experiential appeals (ETV 2006)**

The Norwegian Airlines ad in Figure 5.21 provides consumers with an experience of being in a sauna, as the ad message communicates this associated feature with the product offering of flights to Helsinki, through multisensory appeals of both strong visuals and tactile sensations. These appeals can then target consumer feelings of fantasy or fun, as suggested by Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) and create a positive brand experience for consumers (Pine & Gilmore 1998). Creating this experience for consumers can be seen to establish a sense of presence, and allow consumers to be transported to another locale, through the mediated environment, as suggested by Lombard and Ditton (1997). While this experience is not computer- or digitally-mediated, as Lombard and Ditton primarily discuss, the realism of the medium in representing the sauna can be seen to evoke presence, which Lombard and Ditton (1997) assert are likely to be highly involving for the consumer, and thus fosters consumer

engagement. The ad shown in Figure 5.24, however, does not provide any experiential or multisensory engagement for the consumer. This ad is still considered ambient due to the use of the bus shelter medium to represent the smashed glass created by a football, in order to convey the television channel's World Cup coverage. However, while ambient, the lack of experiential appeals to consumers or engagement of multisensory channels does little to distinguish this ad from a conventional OOH ad placed at a bus stop.

The discussion provides an implication for marketers that relates to the execution of the ad and incorporation of ad elements in order to capitalise on the captive audience at these locations, and ultimately provide a meaningful ad experience for the consumer. Following Rayport's (2013) recommendations, marketers should consider ad placement at waiting points to be branded interventions, which Rayport defines as "*entering the lives of consumers in targeted and useful ways when and where they're desired and needed*" (p.79). At these locations, where consumers comprise a captive audience and are actively looking for distracting stimuli, marketers should consider incorporating elements into these ads to provide value to these consumers, whether informational, utilitarian or entertaining. Reliance on ad placements where consumers are held captive is not enough to stimulate engagement alone, but adding value to consumers at these points can lead to the provision of a brand experience for the consumer.

A further implication for marketers is the concept of forcibly exposing consumers to ambient ads due to placement at entry/exit and waiting points. Rumbo (2002) notes that overexposure to advertising messages causes consumers to be more cognitively defensive and can lead to resentment, and Speck and Elliott (1997) discuss how consumers employ personal strategies to avoid ads. However, when ads become unavoidable, due to the ad location, this may result in consumers perceiving ads to be intrusive when they are not able to manage the ad exposure. The concept of intrusiveness will be discussed in the section on brand perceptions, but remains an important implication when considering ad location, as nearly half of the ambient ads examined were found in these placements where consumers are forced to encounter the ad. Marketers

should thus consider either utilising locations where consumers have more control over the ad exposure, or creating meaningful or enjoyable experiences for consumers at these placements, rather than using them to simply reach consumers in a forceful manner.

### **5.2.3 Medium**

The content analysis results revealed five categories related to medium choice that would impact upon consumers' ability to first notice and subsequently engage with an ambient ad. Dimensionality and ad communication, as adapted from Hutter's (2015) works, were investigated, as well as provenance, utility and demonstration of feature/result/benefit, as identified from the focus group findings. While two categories were classified for each the components and placement group, five categories were developed for the medium-related group. This difference indicates that medium choice allows marketers a greater degree of ad manipulation in order to garner both consumer attention and engagement.

#### **5.2.3.1 Dimensionality**

The content analysis findings revealed that marketers rely on 3-dimensional mediums only slightly more than 2-dimensional mediums, with 54.2% of the sample ads comprising the former and 45.8% of the latter. Two-dimensional ads consist mainly of decals, murals and posters, all of which were integrated some way into the surrounding environments. Common mediums used for 2-dimensional advertising are walls, zebra crossings, road signs, washroom mirrors and urinals. Three-dimensional ads, however, consist of considerably more varied executions, with respect to the mediums used and fabrications.

Examination of dimensionality differs considerably between this research study and those of Gambetti (2010) and Hutter (2015). Hutter's (2015) development of categories and subcategories of dimensionality is largely based upon Gambetti's (2010) concepts and categories of ambient communications. Gambetti (2010) establishes three categories: 2-D Traditional and Innovative Print and Pictorial Media (e.g. classical and high-tech billboards, street furniture, transit advertising), 3-D Artifact-Based Media (e.g. shopping bags, plastic cups,

furniture, balloons), and 4-D Motion-Based/Interactive Media (e.g. touchscreen panels, Bluetooth posters, flash mobs). Many of these identified components were not included in the content analysis sample of this research study due to the lack of integration between the medium and the ad message. Conventional advertising in framed or allocated advertising space, especially, were thus excluded from the sample, and from the development of further categories and subcategories relating to dimensionality in the content analysis.

While the content analysis demonstrates a fairly balanced use of 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional mediums, with marginally greater use of 3-dimensional executions, these results are divergent from those of Hutter (2015). Where the researcher's content analysis produced a single category of dimensionality comprising two subcategories, Hutter develops three categories relating to dimensionality: Classical 2D media, New 2D media, and 3D media. These three categories consist of eight subcategories altogether. Hutter's findings indicate that marketers prefer to use 'New 2D media', with subcategories of new transit advertising, new street furniture, new billboard and promotional street art. The differences between the content analysis of this research study as compared to Hutter's (2015) is thus primarily due to varying definitions of ambient advertising and the types of ads included in each of the samples. For example, billboards were excluded from the researcher's sample, as these were considered mainstream advertising and not integrating the medium into the ad message. Hutter, however, includes 'new billboards', which she exemplifies by luminous panels and installations, in the category of new 2D media. Similarly, she classifies promotional street art, such as graffiti and chalk stencil, as new 2D media, whereas the researcher largely omitted such executions from the sample, except when integrated into the ad message. An example of one such instance is shown in Figure 5.25, where graffiti was created for the purpose of the advertisement, but integrated into the ad design as a means of representing a brand feature, namely the colourful and graphic designs of Havaianas flip flops.





To generate buzz for the U.S. launch of Havaianas flip flops, building-sized murals were commissioned at multiple locations around New York City. Giant 3-D rubber thongs and corresponding white outlines were then placed over them to, quite literally, capture the spirit of the colorful Brazilian brand. Also, limited-edition Havaianas, based on the mural art, will be made available soon.

**Figure 5.25 Example of a 3-dimensional ad using promotional street art (Havaianas 2008)**

Gambetti (2010, p.36) refers to 3-D Artifact-Based Media as “*objects positioned in unusual, out-of-place contexts and used as advertising tools*”, asserting the surprise factor associated with these mediums. Hutter (2015) echoes this claim, stating that 3D media has the greatest power of surprise when compared with Classical 2D media and New 2D media. However, as Rosengren et al (2015) find that surprise is not sufficient to foster consumer engagement, the usefulness of 3-dimensional ads must be examined beyond the surprise factor of these ads.

Traditional OOH advertising, primarily posters and billboards, present consumers with 2-dimensional images, and are identified as ‘classic 2D media’ by both Gambetti (2010) and Hutter (2015). Ambient advertising, however, has been seen to employ both 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional mediums, with the content analysis identifying slightly greater use of the latter. The benefit of using 3-dimensional objects is the resulting ‘vividness’ of the consumer’s perception of the medium, which draws consumers’ attention and interest. While Choi and Taylor (2014) discuss vividness in terms of mental imagery, through virtual advertising, the concept can be adapted to real-world tangible objects. In their study of 3-dimensional online advertising, Choi and Taylor (2014) find that 3D ads improve consumers’ brand attitudes and purchase intentions, when compared to 2D ads, in keeping with findings from Li et al (2002) and Debbabi et al (2010). Choi and Taylor suggest that 3D ads may enhance consumers’ acceptance of the message due to the vividness of the imagery, which leads to more realistic product imagery and corresponding favourable attitudes. While these studies all examine 3-dimensionality through virtual experience, the concept of dimensionality and realistic product imagery can be extrapolated to ambient advertising. Three-dimensional ads, thus, can allow for more realistic representation of 3-dimensional products, and thus greater likeness to the product as compared to 2-dimensional ads of 3-dimensional products. For 2-dimensional products, the added third dimension is not likely to impact upon the likeness to the product.

Focus group participants largely avoided discussing dimensionality, although several responses implicitly addressed 3-dimensional mediums. For

example, one respondent mentions the difference in “texture” when moving from a flat tiled area onto the tactile pavers used to advertise the Lego Education Centre. For the same ad, another respondent details the specific shape of the knobs of the tactile paver as “flat and broad”, referencing the 3-dimensional quality of the medium. Both respondents reference 3-dimensionality implicitly as a feature allowing them to notice an ad. A third respondent indicated that he would likely better recognise the ads shown in the pictorials if encountering them in the actual environment, due to being able to recognise their “3-dimensional form”. Focus group respondents likely did not discuss dimensionality due to the presentation of the ads as 2-dimensional pictorials.

The focus group participants suggest that dimensionality plays a role in allowing a consumer to notice an ad, but largely do not speak to engagement, with the exception of one participant whose response to the Lego ad was as follows:

*“I would personally go up and rub my feet on this while I’m on the subway or wherever this is...because it’s 3-dimensional, it’s not just some flat sticker on the ground, or a flat poster or billboard. I would want to actually feel that for myself, feel the [knobs] and feel that it’s just like giant Lego.”* (Shawn, Group 2, age 21, student)

The respondent above indicates that his engagement with the ad would be as a result of the 3-dimensionality of the ad, which would stimulate his tactile sense. Based on Schmitt’s (1999) work, and further suggested by Gambetti’s (2010) investigation, the 3-dimensional feature of many ambient ads may provide an additional sensory outlet, namely touch sensations, with which consumers can engage to further the development of the brand experience.

Interview participants support the theory that 3-dimensional ads provide an additional sensory cue by which to notice the ad, but also that the dimensionality allows for the medium to represent the product through realism and likeness to the product. One respondent shares his experience as follows:

*“The shape made me notice it, but not like a poster shaped like a Kit Kat. This ad wasn’t just flat; it was in a 3-D design, and they made it actually look like a Kit Kat bar. It was like a visual cue. But it was the*

*same as the Kit Kat bar, and it had the marks and the [brand name] and everything, just like what a Kit Kat bar would have, and the lines, everything.” (Vishal, age 28, pharmacist)*

Another respondent echoed these sentiments, indicating that the 3-dimensionality of the medium caused her to notice the ad, due to its likeness to the actual product:

*“Because a print ad showing you a Kit Kat is so typical, whereas this ad has a 3D dimension, so the 3D dimension where it physically appears like a Kit Kat bar, minus the fact that you can’t eat it; I can’t eat the paper [of a print ad], but, I mean, my point is it looks more like it in a 3D version...Billboard advertising, newspaper, television—these things are all 2-dimesnional, things that are basically just giving you information without giving you a means of recollection. So any ad that is 3D, that is innovative, that shows imaginative capabilities, I think that is more likely to stand out to me, even if it isn’t something that I could physically use it for.” (Amelia, age 29, attorney)*

Both respondents above indicate that the 3-dimensionality of the ad created a realistic product representation, which garners consumer attention. Other respondents suggest that the 3-dimensionality of the same Kit Kat ad not only captures their attention, but further creates interest and fosters engagement with the ad. One response is given below, when the participant was asked what caused him to notice the Kit Kat ad:

*“The attractiveness of the ad, that’s like the colours that they use, the shapes that they use, not just putting a sticker on a wall, the more creative things of using the shapes. It’s 3-dimensional advertising, not the typical paper on a wall. That attracts me to the ad, that it was 3-dimensional—a bench—and I just thought it was different and kind of interesting, not the kind of ad I’m used to seeing for Kit Kat, or any other product, for that matter. And the fact that’s it’s 3-dimensional and it’s a real bench, you can sit on it too; but a Kit Kat poster doesn’t really do anything for me since it’s flat and on a wall...yes, I went over*

*to it to see what it was about and get a good look at it. With benches, people usually advertise on the back of the bench, which you see everywhere. But using the actual shape of the chocolate, the colour and the whole design of the chocolate bar to make a bench, that is what drew me to it, literally.” (Amrit, age 26, banker)*

The respondent attributes his attention and further interest and engagement with the ad due to the “creative” use of 3-dimensionality, suggesting the novelty of this feature in OOH advertising. The respondent further asserts that the 3-dimensionality of this ad provides utility to the consumer, as it can function as a place to sit. An additional respondent refers to both the novelty of 3-dimensionality and its use in creating a likeness to the product for the Kit Kat bench, resulting in his engagement with the ad:

*“This type of advertising is necessary, because I’m sure consumers are—well, I am—tired of the old signage and billboards. And this new way is—how do I say this—it reminds me of the product all over again. It’s much better than normal signage and whatnot, because you can go and play with the product. It actually reminds you of the product; it’s a 3-D representation of the product...When I say ‘play with it’, I mean that it’s interactive; it just stimulates me.” (Nikolai, age 27, architect)*

While the first two responses indicate attention to the ad due to likeness to the product as a result of 3-dimensionality, the two respondents who further engaged with the ad suggest that this behaviour was due to the novelty of a 3-dimensional ad. While Rosengren et al (2015) find that the novelty effect alone of non-traditional mediums has no mediating effects of advertising value, these findings of perceived surprise were investigated through ad placement. The discussion on placement did lend support to these findings that additional value has to be created for the consumer to engage with an ambient ad beyond merely noticing it. However, participant insights into dimensionality indicate that the novelty of incorporating or fabricating 3-dimensional objects into ad messages not only provides an additional visual cue by which consumers can notice an ad, but also encourages consumer engagement. The findings thus support Jurca and

Madlberger's (2015) proposition that higher unexpectedness of an advertisement leads to an increase in schema incongruity. Participants have been seen to approach an ambient ad as a result of the novelty of the 3-dimensional property of these ads, stimulating interest and curiosity.

While most interview participants encountered 3-dimensional ads, and findings suggest the effectiveness of these ads in prompting consumer attention and engagement, one participant provides insights into the usefulness of 2-dimensional ads. As the only interviewee to encounter a 2-dimensional ad, her response shows that 2-dimensional ads can still be seen to be effective at capturing consumer attention. Her response, when asked how she noticed the ad, is presented below.

*"I really think it was because it was on the ground. Because if it had been a poster on the wall, I think that it would have been something more innocuous. But because it was on the ground and it was pretending to be a carpet that was on the ground, it was something kind of different. It was a large-scale Persian rug, [in an] unusual place, [as a] decal on the floor. I really think it being on the floor made a big difference; if you stuck the same decal mid-way through on a wall somewhere and put the same thing, it would just become another billboard or advertisement. I think the unusual aspect of it was that it's a rug and you're walking on it." (Melissa, age 24, social worker)*

The key differentiating feature between the Ikea rug ad that the respondent describes, and a traditional poster or billboard, is the placement of the ad relative to its surroundings. In addressing the 2-dimensionality of the ad, the respondent notes that placing the same ad on a wall essentially reverts the ad to a conventional OOH ad, insisting that the integration of the ad's placement on the ground, where a rug would typically be found, contributed to her being able to notice the ad. However, the respondent indicates that the novelty feature of the ad in gaining her attention and further interest was not due to the 2-dimensional quality of the ad, but rather its placement relative to both the ad message and its surroundings. As no focus group participants alluded to being able to notice an

ad due to its 2-dimensional property, the findings suggest that 2-dimensionality on its own is not likely to garner consumer attention or engagement. Instead, 2-dimensional ads must incorporate other features of novelty or value to the consumer in order to stimulate consumer interest. The respondent above cites novelty of the 2-dimensional ad she encountered due to placement or position in the external environment, and likeness to the advertised product. Additionally, marketers can consider incorporating novelty factors for 2-dimensional ads such as inclusion of the actual product or providing physiological or information value to consumers, in order to encourage consumer engagement.

The content analysis findings show that marketers focus slightly more on 3-dimensional ambient ads as compared to 2-dimensional. However, the insights provided by consumers support claims by Gambetti (2010) and Hutter (2015) that 3-dimensional ads are more surprising for consumers, providing novel ad experiences, which then encourage consumer engagement. While 2-dimensional ads have been shown to attract consumer attention, this interest is not due to the dimensionality of the ad, but rather the integration of other novel ad features. Conversely, the introduction of 3-dimensional OOH ads has been shown to gain consumer attention, interest and engagement due to the novelty of 3-dimensionality, when compared to traditional OOH advertising, namely posters and billboards. The novelty of this experience is furthered by the integration of other ad elements, such as likeness to product or provision of utility or value to the consumer as a result of the dimensionality. Marketers are thus encouraged to make greater use of 3-dimensional objects in the external environment, whether pre-existing or fabricated, for ambient ad executions, in order to not just gain consumer attention, but to further stimulate interest and encourage consumers to engage with the ad.

#### *5.2.3.2 Provenance*

The findings of the content analysis reveal that marketers rely very heavily on integrating ad messages into existing mediums within the OOH environment, which comprised 88.8% of the sample ads examined. Thus, roughly only one in ten ads was seen to make use of mediums fabricated for the purpose of ambient

advertising. While the quantitative findings do not provide any suggestions of how pre-existing and fabricated mediums may affect consumer engagement, the qualitative findings suggest that each has a distinct role to play in providing a brand experience for the consumer.

A pre-existing medium, such as an object that is already established within the surrounding environment and serves its own purpose, can be related to Rayport's (2013) recommendation that ads placed within the public sphere be relevant in context. However, he suggests that it is the ad message that should be relevant to the consumer's experience at the time of the encounter, whereas the use of pre-existing mediums relies on the object itself being relevant to the consumer's activity. As such, while the medium being used by a consumer is pertinent to his or her OOH activity, such as bus shelters, elevators or zebra crossings, the ad message may be entirely unrelated to the consumer's activity at the point of ad encounter. The focus of ambient ads on integration of the ad message into a particular medium does not, in itself, create relevant and targeted ad messages for consumers at the point of encounter. However, while the ad message may not necessarily be pertinent to each consumer's OOH activity, the use of pre-existing mediums allows brands to reach consumers without interrupting their activity (Gambetti 2010, Biraghi et al 2015, Rosengren et al 2015). For ads placed in the public sphere, Rayport (2013) notes that this lack of intrusion can encourage consumers to engage with an ad, whereas Liu and Shrum (2002) assert that, for online advertising, non-interruptive ads can be easily avoided by consumers.

Insights provided by participants in both the focus group and interview processes suggest that consumers are interested in engaging with ambient ads that make use of pre-existing mediums, due to the novelty of the experience. Focus group participants indicate that the ability to recognise a product element (product, feature, product target, product effect or symbol) within a medium generates interest, and can provide an engaging experience for the consumer. One such response to the Lego ad integrated into a tactile paver is given:

*"I think if it's in an everyday place that you've been frequently, and it's something different; or if it's something that you're used to seeing,*



*like a park bench, but it's suddenly different, so it's just sort of built into your everyday routine, but it just stands out more...It's one of those things where you see it and you instantly think, 'Of course that looks like Lego.' But it wouldn't normally come to you. So I think the fact that they saw it, basically how clever it is, the object that they use just stands out more from the regular [unbranded] ones that you're used to seeing...You're able to form an association between the product and the [medium] they're using, and it makes that [medium] interesting; it's a clever way to advertise." (Ellen, Group 5, age 26, auditor)*

The respondent above notes that the likeness of the medium to the product allows her to form an association between the two, and that the novelty of this integration attracts her attention, and creates interest. A respondent from another group details this interest that is generated as a result of integration of the ad message into an existing medium:

*"It is unusual; it titillates your mind; it is different. You're thinking about the message, because when you look and you see something, you start to think because you're seeing it out of context. You start going beyond the [medium] itself. The Lego [ad], for instance—it's something practical that you use all the time, but you suddenly see it in a different context. Because 'Lego' now is on it, and of course it is there for the purpose of non-skid. Then suddenly you think, 'Wait, this non-skid mat is in fact just like the Lego block; it looks just like it.' And your mind will put the two things together and suddenly, wow, that's nice; that's a nice idea. Similarly, I find with this [Casino de Venezia] roulette wheel, it's something that you know, but you see it in a completely different context. And because it's in an unusual context, it will stick in your mind; you will tend to remember it...it's being familiar with the [medium] they're using but seeing it in a completely different context. And because it's clever, it's interesting. And anything that's interesting and clever will catch on and engage people." (Billy, Group 3, age 63, retiree)*

While most ads encountered by interview participants were fabricated for the purpose of advertising, one respondent who encountered an ad using a pre-existing medium echoes the sentiments of the focus group participants. She explains that the ability to recognise a product element, namely the product target in the Truly Nolan pest control ad to which she was exposed, attracts her attention, stimulates curiosity, and produces an experience with the brand:

*“There’s a little Beetle on the highway, and it’s very eye-catching because it looks just like a mouse. They put a tail, whiskers, ears and a nose and eyes. And just the shape of the vehicle with those extras looks like a mouse...I think that it fit the profile of the product perfectly, that it was the right shape of car, the right colour to catch your attention, and the right features of the mouse. The fact that a car is a mouse is very unusual and quite humorous...It was driving on the highway, just a few cars ahead of me, and I got a little glimpse. And as I got closer, I thought, ‘Oh, wow! It looks just like a mouse!’ Moving on the highway, it’s really like a little mouse, moving in and out of vehicles. So I think there’s more of a power of association seeing it move in the traffic than seeing parked up in the parking lot. In the parking lot, you’re curious, so you want to get closer to see how they turned this car into a mouse...to see the whiskers and the face on the front of the car, then I wanted to walk around the back of the car and see if the tail was there, and if it was really the Truly Nolan mouse car.”* (Patricia, age 53, lecturer)

The interview participant above reiterates suggestions by focus group participants that the ability to recognise a product element in an existing medium attracts attention, interest and engagement with the ad message. Whereas the sample quotes from the focus group participants reference a likeness to the product for the Lego ad, and to the feature for the Casino de Venezia ad, the respondent above suggests that product realism is not necessary to prompt engagement. She describes the car being outfitted to look like a cartoon mouse, painted yellow, rather than a realistic representation of an actual mouse. An additional interview participant notes the likeness to the product, but

also the association between the medium choice and the ad message. He recalls his encounter with a Red Bull car as follows:

*“I think it’s quite clever. I’m not sure, but I think it stays in your subconscious mind. It’s quite smart, because it leaves its imprint in your head...It got my attention, seeing a car made to look like a can of Red Bull, but it was driving by, so I didn’t have the opportunity to really interact with it, other than seeing it as it drove by. But I thought it was a clever way to advertise, rather than a billboard or something you see all the time; it’s definitely more interesting than that...It makes you think of the drink; you can’t miss that connection with Red Bull, even though I don’t drink Red Bull, personally...The connection is that it looks like a can of Red Bull, but also that it’s on the go, since it’s a car driving around. So you get that message that Red Bull gives you the energy you need to stay on the go.”* (Marco, age 31, personal trainer)

The respondent above signals his engagement with the brand by not only recognising the product through the fabrication of the medium, but also making an association between the moving car and the product feature of providing energy to “stay on the go”. Both interview respondents above indicate the effectiveness of appropriate medium selection in integrating the ad message in order to stimulate consumer interest and engagement with the ad and the brand.

A final example of a participant’s insights into the resulting interest and engagement of integration of an ad into an existing medium is provided by an interviewee encountering an Axe ad at an exit staircase:

*“Because it’s just on the ground; it’s just there. A billboard, you have to create, but this ad is using something that’s already there! You can’t avoid seeing it, but it’s not as if they created something; they used a pre-existing structure, which I think is ingenious. It makes you realise how clever they are to find something that already exists to put an ad on. And it’s something you already have to use! So you can’t really get away from it, in that sense...It’s not obtrusive; it’s not like a massive billboard, taking up space. It’s using a built environment to*

*convey a message...I think it's interesting; I think it's clever. It's attractive. I didn't pay any attention to the posters on the wall along the stairs, but I definitely paid attention to this ad." (Sean, age 36, cinematographer)*

The respondent above does not relate his interest in the ad to the likeness of any product element, but reiterates claims by focus group and interview participants that the integration of an existing medium into the ad message attracts attention and leads to engagement with the ad. The collective responses indicate that consumer interest in ambient ads using pre-existing mediums extends beyond the surprise factor of the medium being used to communicate an ad message. Rather, respondents assert that the “cleverness” of these ads is due to the appropriate integration of the ad message into an object with which consumers already come into contact. These encounters provide novel experiences for the consumer, as a result of seeing a commonplace object in the context of an ad message, particularly when the medium is chosen to allow for recognition of a product element.

While ads using fabricated mediums are far less common than those integrated into existing mediums, the former may be more effective at stimulating consumer engagement than the latter. Fabricating a medium for the purpose of advertising allows marketers the opportunity to place the ad within the OOH environment where the message is relevant to the consumer, following from Rayport's (2013) framework for consumer engagement through the public sphere. Furthermore, similar to pop-up stores or even permanent branded installations, ads using fabricated mediums can be seen to provide engaging, refreshing or compelling experiences, as suggested by Rayport. He notes that these experiences are “*surprising, experientially rich, and brand-focused*”, including “*temporary acts that crop up in the midst of everyday life*” (2013, p.80).

One response to illustrate the relevance of the ad message and its fabrication to consumer activity in the OOH environment is provided below:

*“They might place that [Scotch Brite water fountain] where they know people are going to run past in a park, where they're sweaty*

*and want to refresh themselves, [or] have a drink of water.” (Kandice, Group 1, age 33, product manager)*

The respondent indicates that, due to the fabrication of the medium rather than reliance on an existing medium, the ad message can be placed where the consumer can engage with it based on his or her activity. Another response is given below regarding the Kit Kat ad shown in the focus groups, but with a similar sentiment:

*“If the Kit Kat bench was in a park where I can sit down, then I’d [say], great, I love the Kit Kat bench; I’m happy for the advertising because it does something for me. I’m happy to interact with it and to have it be in my personal space, because a park is where I’d most want to use it, and take that break that they’re suggesting with the ad. But, I suppose, even if they put it somewhere that I’m rushing around, like a Tube station, if I need to wait for a train or something, I would also be happy to have the ad there, and have that break. I suppose a bench is a clever object to use since it offers respite, regardless of where you put it or what people around are doing.”*

*(Adam, Group 5, age 29, strategy consultant)*

The respondents above both suggest that these fabricated mediums can be placed where the ad message is relevant to consumer activity, leading to consumer engagement with the brand. The respondents further address the provision of value in ads, where the ad provides some degree of utility to the consumer. While this ad feature is discussed in detail in Section 5.2.3.4, it must be referenced with respect to fabrication of the medium, as both ads shown in the focus groups that featured fabricated mediums, namely the Kit Kat and Scotch Brite ads, were seen to provide utility to consumers. Furthermore, two of the three ads encountered by interview participants that made use of fabricated mediums were also seen to provide utility. Within the content analysis sample, 56 ads were identified as employing a fabricated medium, with 17 of those ads seen to provide some form of utility to consumers. Thus, provision of utility through use of a fabricated medium is a fairly common executional strategy in ambient advertising.

The Scotch Brite and Kit Kat ads shown in the focus group exercises are seen to provide utility to consumers, but are able to further demonstrate the relevance of the ad message to consumers' activity as a result of the ability to fabricate and place an ad message where consumers are more likely to engage with it. The same observation can be made for ads that do not provide utility to consumers, with an example seen in Figure 5.26 below. The ad shown in Figure 5.26 illustrates how ambient ads using fabricated mediums can be placed within consumers' OOH environment to provide ad messages that are relevant and unintrusive to consumer activity, which Rayport (2013) suggests stimulate consumer engagement. As similar ads were not shown within the focus groups, and no interview participants encountered an ad using a fabricated medium without offering utility, further investigation is needed to understand how relevance of the ad message to consumer activity influences consumer engagement.



**Figure 5.26 Example of an ad using a fabricated medium with no provision of utility to the consumer (Ariel 2014)**

An additional benefit of fabricating a medium for the purpose of ambient advertising is the ability to create an ad that features a likeness to a product element, which has been previously demonstrated to encourage consumer

engagement. By constructing a medium that would typically be found in the OOH environment, marketers would be allowed greater flexibility in representing the product in some way, as compared to being restricted to an existing medium.

Interview participants provide insights to support the idea that fabricated mediums can encourage consumer engagement through the resulting likeness to the product or a related element. One such response is given as follows:

*"It's so subtle, yet so obvious to somebody who knows about it. I think it's out there but, on the other hand, it's mind-stimulating...Seeing a bench in the shape of a Kit Kat for a Kit Kat ad is unique for me, and I'd never experienced any such advertising like that before...Maybe 'subtle' is not the correct word to use, but it was somewhat toned down, in the sense that it wasn't just a big billboard with the label of a Kit Kat on it, saying 'Kit Kat'. As soon as you saw it, you saw this unusually-shaped bench, and once you took notice of it, you realise it's a bench, and then you look at the colour, and the type of chocolate they had, then you notice right away that it is Kit Kat. It's not something that it's out there for you; you had to take notice of it, and then once you took notice of it, you began to understand a bit more of what it actually was, and you make that connection to Kit Kat."*

(Peter, age 29, engineer)

The respondent above details his engagement with the ad as a result of the construction of the bench to produce a realistic representation of a Kit Kat bar. His response indicates that the likeness to the product not only allows him to notice the ad, but also stimulates cognitive processes to relate the ad message to the product and the specific brand, signalling engagement and a brand experience. Similarly, another respondent recounts his engagement with the Sprite beach shower as a result of the fabrication of the shower to replicate a soda dispenser:

*"It looked exactly as if people were getting sprayed with Sprite. It looked exactly like it looks in the cinema when they fill the cup, and Sprite comes pouring from the soda machine; it was exactly like that—same colour, same way the water pours down—and it was very*

*funny...I wanted to go and see it, to check it out, observe it, see how nice it looks and how funny it is; because it looked exactly as if people were taking a shower with Sprite.” (Panagiotis, age 30, assistant brand manager)*

The respondent above details his engagement with the ad, beyond simply noticing the ad, but wilfully attending to the ad as a result of the likeness to the product feature that resulted from the fabrication of the medium.

The findings above suggest that marketers can effectively stimulate consumer engagement not only through integration of the ad message into appropriate mediums, but also through the fabrication of mediums. Construction of mediums to provide utility is suggested to prompt consumer engagement, and will be further detailed in Section 5.2.3.4. In fabricating mediums for the purpose of advertising, marketers have further flexibility to place the ad where the message is relevant to consumer activity at the point of ad encounter, encouraging consumer engagement. Whether an ad makes use of an existing medium, or a medium is fabricated to convey the ad message, qualitative findings suggest that the product element (product, product effect, product target, feature or symbol) must be represented in the choice of medium, and recognisable to consumers, in order to stimulate engagement. Recognition of the product element within pre-existing mediums has been seen to trigger consumer interest, as a result of the cleverness of appropriate medium selection, in which to integrate the ad message. This recognition can be enhanced for fabricated mediums, where the medium can be further manipulated to represent the product element, as compared to pre-existing mediums.

These findings provide several implications for marketers in their execution of ambient ads. Firstly, as marketers primarily use pre-existing mediums, they must be mindful that the novelty lies not in the choice of medium, but rather the integration of the ad message into the medium, where an appropriate medium choice portrays a product element. Thus marketers need to carefully select mediums that can represent the product element appropriately and can be recognised by consumers, rather than choosing mediums based on surprising placements or novelty factor. Secondly, marketers need to be mindful



of targeting consumers, by placing fabricated mediums or choosing existing mediums where the ad message is relevant to consumer activity, in an effort to encourage consumer engagement. Despite their limited use, fabricating a medium for the purpose of ambient advertising allows marketers greater flexibility, in placing a message where it is relevant to consumers' activity at the point of encounter, when compared to using existing mediums that are established within a particular environment. Finally, marketers primarily rely on pre-existing mediums in which to integrate their ad messages, which provide novel ad experiences for consumers, as they identify product elements within commonplace objects, stimulating engagement. However, fabricating a medium that fits within the surrounding environment can produce the same effect, and can be manipulated further to provide utility to consumers, to be placed where relevant, and to generate a strong likeness to the product element. As all three of these ad features are demonstrated to encourage consumer engagement with ad messages, marketers are thus urged to consider greater use of fabricated mediums for the purpose of ambient advertising, within the limits that these mediums continue to replicate objects that would be typically found within the OOH environment.

#### *5.2.3.3 Ad communication*

Gambetti (2010) suggests that marketers are moving away from one-way communication to two-way communication within ambient advertising. Similarly, Hutter and Hoffmann (2011) suggest that ambient media often directly involves the consumer through incorporation of interactive elements into the ad message. However, Hutter's later (2015) findings illustrate that ambient ads predominantly exhibit only one-way communication, as seen in 76.8% of her ad sample. Even with the variation in definitions of ambient advertising, the results of the content analysis within this research study produce similar results to those of Hutter, identifying 72.9% of ambient ads using one-way communication only, as compared to 27.1% of the ad sample integrating outlets for two-way communication.

Gambetti (2010, p.36) categorises ads featuring two-way communication as 4-D Motion-Based/Interactive Media, which she defines as “*all motion-based interactive promotional initiatives stimulating consumers’ active participation in the message*”. She further classifies these media into three groups: *event-products*, such as interactive posters, *people-animated panels*, such as exhibits of typical consumer life, and *event-actions*, such as flash mobs and other urban guerrilla tactics. While Himpe (2008) asserts that conventional OOH ads use one-way or non-interactive communication, studies by Hutter and Hoffmann (2011) and Hutter (2015) suggest that two-way or interactive communication involves consumers in the ad message and gains consumer interest.

Two-way communication is parallel to the concept of interactivity in Internet-related advertising, with transmission of data between the consumer and the message, in both directions (e.g. Sundar et al 1998, Lombard & Snyder-Duch 2001, Liu & Shrum 2002, Johnson et al 2006). Gambetti (2010) notes that interactive media comprise motion-based inputs, which is akin to Bioca and Delaney’s (1995) category of kinetic user inputs, when examining ambient ads. Gambetti (2010) suggests that ambient advertising is evolving to focus on these messages with two-way communication in an attempt to engage consumers, as “*this new audience consists not of passive spectators but of co-creators of a brand experience based on consumer activation*” (p.39). Based on Schmitt’s (1999) framework of experiential marketing, Gambetti (2010) suggests that the dimension of physical experience encourages interactivity and direct involvement in consumers’ co-creation of ad messages, which provides a brand experience for the consumer. Light switches, elevators and carpark barriers are all seen to provide two-way communication between the message and the consumer, where the ad message is delivered due to an effect triggered by the consumer. A further example is shown in Figure 5.27, where consumers are directly involved in the creation of the ad message.



**Figure 5.27 Example of an ad featuring two-way communication (Ryo Dental Office 2013)**

Focus group participants support the concept that ads featuring elements of two-way communication or interaction are effective in prompting consumer engagement with the ad message, and the brand. When asked why she would choose to approach particular ads that she has identified, one respondent states simply:

*“I think interaction is important, as opposed to something you walk past or walk along.”* (Miriam, Group 4, age 18, student)

In her response, the participant above suggests that she is more interested to engage with the Scotch Brite water fountain, as compared to the Lego tactile pavers or the Stihl wall ad, which are seen as providing only one-way communication. Of the six pictorials presented to focus group participants, the Scotch Brite water fountain is the only ad that features any element of two-way communication, in that consumers are able to activate the flow of water, which is then seemingly absorbed by the sponge, delivering the ad message that the sponge is highly absorbent. Another focus group participant elaborates on the hypothetical effectiveness of this ad in engaging his attention and interest:

*“If you go and use the fountain, if you turn on the water and you see it running and you see the sponge absorbing, it all starts to come together; that is when you will really take notice of it, and you understand what the ad is all about. It’s not as immediate as some of the others, but that’s because you have to turn on the water first before you see that absorption happen; but then, for me, the message comes across more powerfully.”* (Billy, Group 3, age 63, retiree)

The respondent notes that, for ads featuring two-way communication, recognition of the ad message may not occur as quickly as for ads using one-way communication, as the effect first needs to be triggered. However, he asserts that the ad interactivity prompts engagement, as the consumer participates in the delivery of the ad message. He further suggests that this involvement is more effective in communicating the ad message as compared to non-interactive ads. Another respondent reiterates suggestions of interactivity encouraging engagement, as well as lack of immediate recognition of the ad message:

*“What’s interesting about the Scotch Brite one is there is a level of interactivity there. It’s a water fountain, and when you put the fountain on, the sponge looks like it’s absorbing everything, which I think is kind of fun...immediate impact, no, but that level of interactivity makes it more engaging. When you talk about interactivity, some of these [other ads] don’t really have that element for me, but I may be thinking about them, or I’m going to be engaging with them physically. But the ones that I remember best all have an element of interactivity in them, like the piano stairs or the endless bin or the bottle bank with the scoring system. I remember those because you’re doing something with them, and there’s an element of fun to them.”* (Adam, Group 5, age 29, strategy consultant)

The three respondents refer to interactivity as the concept underscores the reciprocity in communication, with the consumer able to bring about a change in the medium, message or experience.

Only a single interview participant encountered an ambient ad that featured two-way communication, which was the Sprite-branded beach shower. His recount of his experience with the ad is as follows:

*"I went and tried it out! And I was laughing! I went under it; and as soon as I went under it, you would press a button and water would fall on you. So I had a Sprite shower! I laughed, and I thought it was pretty smart and funny. I wanted to try it out, out of curiosity and to be taken a photograph of...I think it's creative because they took something that is located on every beach, and they changed it, and they made it more fun. And they had more people engaging with it. A shower on the beach is something that many people need to use, but they turned it into an ad, and into something funny. I really liked the interactivity of it, and also seeing other people interact with it, and their reactions...Yes, being able to interact with the ad was really important to making it funny. If it were the same shower but people weren't allowed to use it, it would just be a giant Sprite machine; but it was because you could shower under it, that's what made it funny, and made me want to try it." (Panagiotis, age 30, assistant brand manager)*

The respondent indicates his engagement with the ad and the brand, which he attributes to the interactive elements of the ad message. He further highlights that the interactivity is a key ad feature, as consumers participate in the co-creation of the ad message, resulting in a novel and engaging brand experience. The participant asserts that without the interaction between the consumer and the ad, the identical ad would not convey the same ad meaning, or stimulate the same degree of interest and wanting to engage with the ad.

Finally, a focus group participant was able to give further insight into ad interactivity and the resulting consumer engagement. The participant recalls an actual ambient ad that he encountered, providing the following response:

*"At the Olympic Stadium in Berlin, when you go to the gentleman's toilets, on the urinals, at the bottom is like the grass of a pitch and it has a goal. And each of them has a football. So the idea is that you*

*have to score a goal...Maybe this is too much information, but it makes a routine bodily function more fun! [Laughs.] The ladies probably think it's disgusting, but it's fun for the lads to interact with something like this when you're doing something so routine and mundane, even if its an ad." (Alex, Group 5, age 21, student)*

The participants who have had actual encounters with interactive ambient ads support the insights provided by those exposed to pictorials, confirming theory put forward by Gambetti (2010), Hutter and Hoffman (2011) and Hutter (2015) that interactive elements in ambient ads involve consumers in the ad message, creating engaging brand experiences. Participant insights indicate that consumers are interested in not only engaging with ads that provide interactivity, but also fulfilling the role in delivery of the ad message.

Despite the insights provided by participants that ambient ads featuring two-way communication foster consumer engagement, the content analysis findings demonstrate that marketers are not capitalising on this opportunity, instead primarily producing ads with no interactive elements. Hutter (2015) suggests several reasons for the lack of interactive elements, such as newness and uncertainty of ambient ad effectiveness, cost differentials and ad objectives, and loss of control over the ad message when relying on consumers to trigger an effect. She suggests that if consumers are not close enough to the ad to trigger the effect, the ad message is not delivered nor observed by other consumers. However, as the content analysis has identified that 93.7% of ambient ads allow for direct contact between the ad message and the consumer, marketers are already making use of ad placements where consumers have the opportunity to interact with ads. To create interactive experiences for consumers, marketers thus need to make greater use of elements of two-way communication, integrated into ad placements currently being employed.

Although interactive ads are both predicted, and shown, to be more engaging for consumers, as compared to ads featuring only one-way communication, roughly three quarters of ambient ads examined over a 10-year period contain no interactive elements. However, despite the lack of opportunities for consumers to trigger an effect in an ad and subsequently bring

about a change in the message, medium or experience, many focus group and interview participants refer to “interaction” with ads using only one-way communication. Where many participants discuss their “interactions” with an ad, or “interactivity” of ambient ads that do not allow for two-way communication, the concept identified is actually that of engagement, as identified in Lombard and Snyder-Duch’s (2001) work. As discussed in the literature review, with their research into interactivity of online advertising, the pair notes that “engagement” is consumer perception directed towards objects and events created by technology, with no necessary reciprocity between the consumer and the message. For ambient advertising, this concept of engagement is adapted to comprise consumer perceptions directed towards messages, mediums and experiences within the OOH environment, even for ads limited to one-way communication.

Insights gleaned from the qualitative data suggest that participants view ads with one-way communication as interactive due to the ability to come into direct contact with the ad, despite not being able to bring about a change in the message or medium. Participants indicate that their involvement with an ad results in perceptions of interactivity, although the degree of involvement with an ad is dependent upon each individual consumer at the point of encountering an ad. One focus group member shares his perceptions of two ads shown within the group exercise, where both ads were categorised as providing one-way communication only:

*“I think if it’s more interactive, you’ll have something to do with that item; it’s more memorable. So if I went to the airport and saw a big roulette wheel, I’d start thinking, ‘I wonder what number my bag’s going to land on!’ And I’ll start playing with the idea mentally. Therefore, I would sort of create a memory from it with that kind of interaction. Where if I saw that [Stihl ad] on the wall, I might look over it and see it more as a piece of art. And, therefore, I’d just look at it and brush over it. I like it, but I won’t remember it because it has no direct impact on me being involved with it.” (Alex, Group 5, age 21, student)*

While neither ad allows for two-way communication, the respondent above perceives the ad to be interactive due to his projected involvement with the ad message, signalling his engagement with the ad.

Interview participants with actual exposure to ambient ads also mention “interaction” with ads providing only one-way communication, as a result of the ability to come into direct contact with the medium. One interviewee shares her perceptions of the Kit Kat bench that she encountered:

*“I think it’s really good, because it really gets your attention and it forces you to interact with the product—not the immediate product—but it gets you to think about it...If you have to interact with their product, then they’re going to get in your face; that’s the best way to get somebody to notice your product.”* (Janice, age 32, office manager)

In her response above, the participant notes that her interaction goes beyond the ad, and suggests that the ad message allows for interaction with a version of the product, stimulating engagement. Her response suggests that the likeness to the product, as a replica of a Kit Kat chocolate bar, encourages this engagement. Another participant encountering the same ad echoes these claims of engagement due to direct contact with the ad:

*“It’s not like the usual signage, telling you to have a break, have a Kit Kat. That does nothing for me. But this Kit Kat bench is unique because you can interact with it; you can have some physical interaction with the bench...it’s not just sight; you get to touch and feel, which gives you another way of interacting with the product.”* (Nikolai, age 27, architect)

In contrast to the preceding respondent, the respondent above attributes his perceptions of interactivity to the multisensory involvement of the ad, engaging his tactile sense, but also through direct contact. A final example is provided by the interviewee who encountered the Truly Nolan pest control car:

*“If it was a billboard, you’d probably just notice there’s a billboard there with that ad on it. But having this little car in your space just tooling up and down the highway, and you come across it, I think it’s*



*a lot more innovative and interactive to encounter the actual car in your space...you see the mouse and, by association in your head, you see the car, and the car is the mouse, and you think of the mouse as the pest and that Truly Nolan is a pest control service provider. So there's a lot more going on internally than just looking at a billboard and driving on. So it will grab your attention for longer than if a billboard just flashed in front of you. When it was stationary, I was able to walk right up to it and examine the features closely, and see where the tail was attached, and the ears and these little things. So I had a longer interaction with it when it was stationary, but nevertheless, when it's passing me on the highway, it grabs my attention right away." (Patricia, age 53, lecturer)*

The respondent above again indicates perceived interactivity as a result of direct contact with the ad. Additionally, she compares the car to billboard, noting that the former is perceived as interactive, even when stationary. She further asserts that her "interaction" with the car is lengthier when in a stationary position, as she was able to examine the medium and engage with the ad message.

The respondents all indicate that even ambient ads that limit ad messages to one-way communication with the consumer continue to be perceived as engaging, although not truly interactive. The findings suggest that the interest shown towards these ads is due to the consumers' direct contact with the ad, as messages are integrated into consumers' OOH activity. This outcome is in keeping with Rayport's (2013) recommendation for ads placed in the public sphere to be relevant to consumers' OOH activity in order to encourage engagement. Furthermore, the integration of ad messages results in these ads being non-interruptive to consumer activity, which also fosters consumer engagement (Liu & Shrum 2002, Gambetti 2010).

The examination of the current use of interactive elements in ambient advertising identifies several implications for marketers. Firstly, marketers are encouraged to incorporate two-way communication features into ambient ads in order to foster consumer engagement with the ad message. The findings indicate that consumers are stimulated to engage with an ambient ad when they trigger

an ad effect, and become co-creators of the ad message. In this way, the consumer becomes involved in the delivery of the ad message, and can be seen as an active participant in the brand experience. With only about a quarter of ambient advertising featuring interactive elements for consumers, there is a considerable opportunity for marketers to provide engaging brand experiences through use of two-way communication.

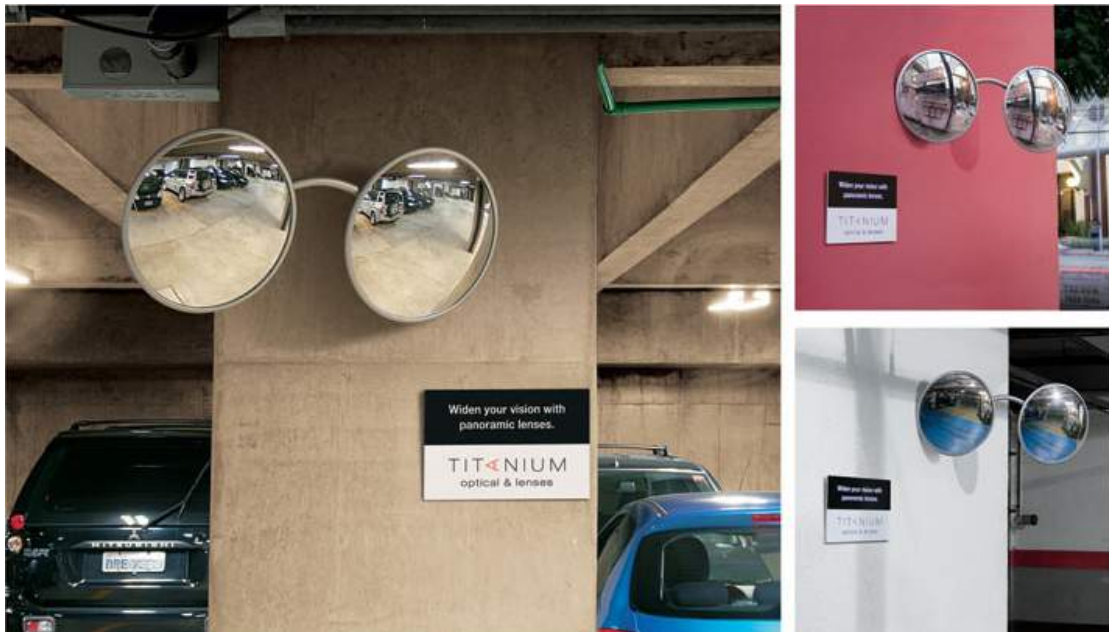
A second implication for marketers is the indication that ads limited to one-way communication can still be perceived as interactive, and stimulate interest and engagement. However, marketers should consider that this perceived interaction results from consumers' direct contact with these ads, and is not likely to occur when ads are placed out of consumer reach. Additionally, placement of the particular medium must be carefully chosen in order to integrate the message into consumers' OOH activity at the point of ad encounter. Where marketers prefer to limit the ad message to one-way communication, integration of the ad into consumer activity can produce relevant and non-interruptive messages, which prompts consumer interest and engagement.

#### *5.2.3.4 Benefit of branding*

In investigating the added value provided to consumers through ambient advertising, the ads are examined based on the benefit of branding, rather than the inherent value of the particular medium being employed. For example, streetlights, zebra crossing, tactile pavers and escalators can all be seen to provide some degree of utility to consumers while conducting their typical OOH activity. However, this utilitarian value persists whether the medium is unbranded or used to convey an advertising message. In contrast, a small subset of ambient ads has been identified as providing added value to the consumer as a result of branding efforts. The ad sample examined in the content analysis identified that 4.9% of ads provide physiological value to consumers, 4.2% of ads allow consumers to experience the product in some way, and 0.7% of ads provide information value to consumers.

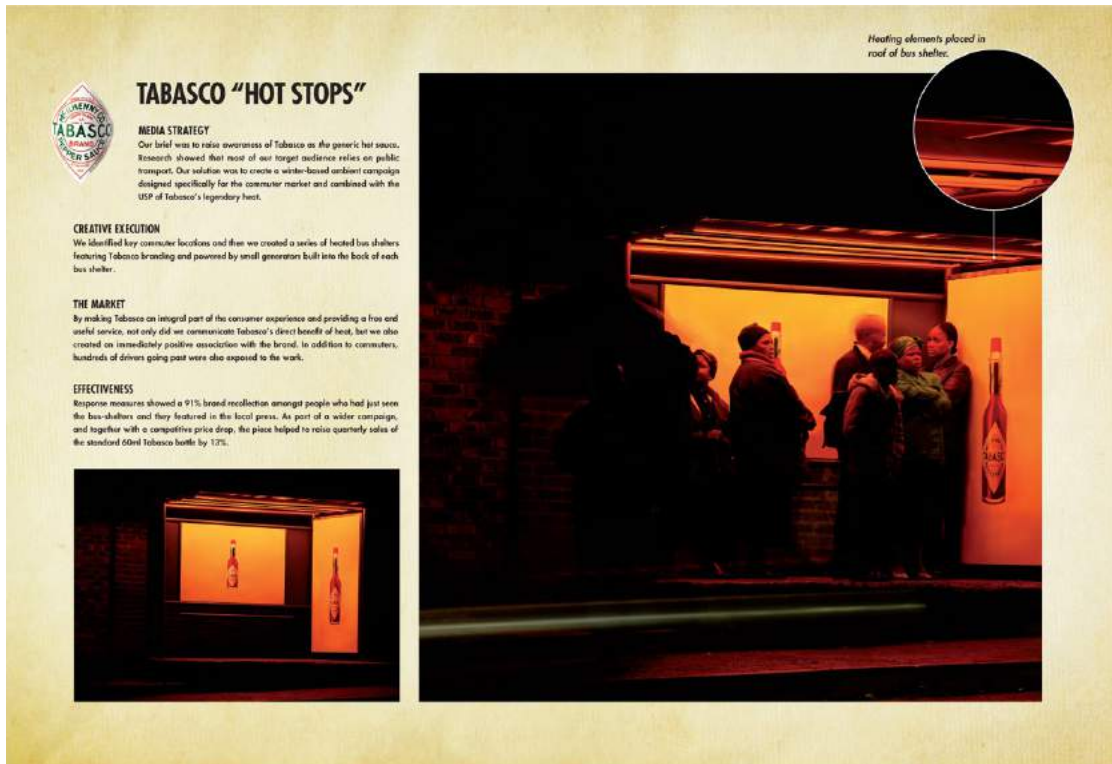
Ads providing physiological value are generally seen to add value to consumers through construction of a medium that provides utility. Of the 24 ads

identified as providing physiological value to consumers, 18 were developed using fabricated mediums, most often benches, which provide a place of rest for consumers during their OOH activity. An example of an ad seen to provide physiological value through use of a fabricated medium is seen in Figure 5.28 below, in contrast to an ad lending value to consumers through an existing medium, as seen in Figure 5.29.



**Figure 5.28 Example of an ad using a fabricated medium to provide physiological value to consumers (Titanium 2006)**

The ad seen in Figure 5.28 provides value to consumers through fabrication of parabolic mirrors to allow consumers to more easily navigate through a carpark, related to seeing more clearly with Titanium lenses. The ad example shown in Figure 5.29 is seen to provide utility to consumers by providing heating at an existing bus shelter, related to the heat effect of the Tabasco hot sauce. Regardless of whether a medium is fabricated or pre-existing, the provision of added value to the consumer results from the branding initiatives.



**Figure 5.29 Example of an ad using an existing medium to provide physiological value to consumers (Tabasco 2009)**

Informational value was typically seen in ads produced by public-interest groups and non-government organisations, and in demarketing campaigns, such as to reduce drink driving, smoking or water waste. However, these ads were excluded from the content analysis sample, which was limited to ads for purchasable goods and services. As a result, while many ambient ads within the public sphere include informational value, this feature is seldom included in ambient ads for consumer products, as seen in less than 1% of the ad sample. The information provided to consumers was the communication of factual material, such as sports statistics, or displayed users' weight when engaged with the ad.

As discussed in Section 5.2.1.2, ads that incorporate the product into the ad, whether the actual product or a modified version, are seen to stimulate engagement with the ad message. While many of these ads allow consumers to have experience with the product as a result of the product being integrated into the ad, this is not true for all ads of this type. Even when the actual product is

incorporated into the ad, consumers may not be able to personally experience the product, as seen in the example shown in Figure 5.30.



**Figure 5.30 Example of an ad incorporating the actual product into the ad message, where the consumer has no experience with the product (Xtratherm 2014)**

In the example seen in Figure 5.30, the actual Xtratherm insulation product is used to build birdhouses during the winter, which allows birds the opportunity to experience the product, but not actual consumers. As such, this ad was not seen to provide experience with product, as compared to the ad seen in Figure 5.31 overleaf. The ad shown in Figure 5.31 not only incorporates the product into the ad, but further allows consumers to experience the product effects firsthand, while engaging in their OOH activity. These ads that allow for experience with the product are seen to encourage consumer involvement, as discussed in the section addressing product incorporation (Section 5.2.1.2), with the added value to the consumer of engaging with the product prior to the POS.



A different use of medium is chosen for the launch of 3M Privacy Filters which are specifically designed for laptop computers. Above urinals, on top of the laptop posters, real privacy filters are placed. This way the person looking at the display straight from the front was able to read the message but from sideways it was just a black poster. This way it is aimed to show the benefit of the product in a situation where the target audience is "sensitive" to the privacy issue.



**Figure 5.31 Example of an ad allowing consumers to have experience with the product (3M 2009)**

Physiological value, informational value and experience with product can all be seen to add value to consumers. As less than 10% of the ad sample integrated any of these three value-added features into the ad message, the three features will be grouped together for ease of discussion, amassed as ads providing utility to the consumer. Ads that do not allow for experience with the product, or provide either physiological or informational value, are identified as providing no benefit, comprising 91.6% of the sample.

In their examination of advertising creativity and benefits to consumers, Rosengren et al (2013, p.328) assert that "*advertisers need to offer something to consumers in order to earn their attention*". Research suggests that consumers expend time and cognitive effort in order to obtain value, typically through information and entertainment, from an ad (Ducoffe 1995, Ducoffe 1996, Dahlén et al 2009b). Thus, ambient ads that provide some form of added value to consumers are theorised to stimulate consumer engagement, as the utility offered by these ads attract consumers to use the medium, and become involved with the ad message. While the use of utilitarian appeals in advertising is

commonly discussed in marketing texts and research literature, the incorporation of utilitarian mediums has not been investigated. The utilisation of functional mediums is unique to ambient advertising, as these messages make use of commonplace objects within the OOH environment that consumers typically use, whether branded or unbranded.

Qualitative research findings support the idea that functional ambient ads encourage engagement with the ad message and the brand, as a result of utilising commonplace objects with which consumers typically engage. In particular, the use of fabricated mediums is suggested to encourage engagement with the specific brand. In this instance, the branding initiative provides the consumer with an object from which the consumer can derive value, where that medium would otherwise not be present. Within the focus groups, the Scotch Brite water fountain and the Kit Kat bench ads were seen to provide utility to consumers, both due to physiological value. One group participant shares his perspective of hypothetical encounters with both these ads:

*"With the Scotch Brite one, if it was on a running route or something like that, and it had utility or value to it, then I might begin to notice the brand more...The more I engage with the actual object—not necessarily seeing it, [but] engaging or doing something with it—then I might become more familiar with that brand. And I'm more likely to engage with that ad when it's doing something for me, providing me some sort of benefit—a tangible benefit, like giving me a drink of water, or somewhere to sit down when I'm in a park." (Adam, Group 5, age 29, strategy consultant)*

The respondent references both ads seen to provide utility, qualifying the physiological value as "tangible benefits". He asserts that these benefits of utilising functional mediums in which to integrate ad messages would lead to engagement with the medium, due to the utility, which would be extended to engagement with the particular brand. Another focus group participant echoes these claims, suggesting that the utility of the medium allows for noticing of the ad message and recognition of the brand:

*“To me, personally—the Kit Kat ad—I would actually not react to it until I probably would sit down [on it], because it looks actually like a real bench, so I wouldn’t notice it until I’m walking and I’m tired and want to sit down. And then, when I do sit down and I look at the bench, I would say, ‘Wait, I’m sitting down on chocolate! It’s a Kit Kat!’...And with the [Scotch Brite] water fountain, they actually use an object that people would really use...[when people] are actually using it, they will see it; people are going to be using it all the time.” (Nick, Group 1, age 22, student)*

The respondent indicates that while he may not notice the ad while conducting his typical OOH activity, having the need to use the ad medium, a bench in this instance, would alert him to the ad’s presence, and thus expose him to the brand being advertised. Further to noticing the ad, he projects that he would then recognise the ad message, signalling engagement with the product and the particular brand. Both participants project that their encounter with the ad first stems from wanting or needing to use the medium due to the utility offered to consumers, which subsequently leads to engagement with both the ad message and the brand. Thus, the functionality of the selected mediums provides the first touch-point for the creation of a brand experience for the consumer. These activities are similar to Rayport’s (2013, p.79) concept of ‘branded interventions’, where ads are placed in the public sphere “*entering the lives of consumers in targeted and useful ways when and where they’re desired or needed*”, which he suggests as a strategy in effectively engaging consumers with the ad and the particular brand.

Interview participants, in their recounts of actual exposure to ambient ads, support claims made by focus group participants that the use of functional mediums stimulates consumer engagement with both the ad message and the brand. Furthermore, interviewees indicate that engagement is prompted by not only gaining value from these mediums, but is also due to the novelty of this ad feature. As medium functionality is a feature unique to ambient advertising, participants highlight the novelty of this experience as capturing attention and generating interest, as suggested by Jurca and Madlberger’s (2015) framework of



schema incongruity in ambient advertising, leading to engagement. One interview participant shares his experience with the Kit Kat bench ad:

*“Normal advertisements are not interactive, when something like this comes up, it will catch my attention more than a regular advertisement...because if I walk into the cinema, and I have to wait on someone, I can go and sit on the Kit Kat bar...I find it interesting because it’s an ad that is used as a bench. It’s not like a billboard that just shows a picture; this actually has a use. There’s usability and functionality to it; so if I need to sit down, I can use that bench, and interact with a Kit Kat.”* (Robert, age 27, surveyor)

The respondent indicates his attention and interest towards the ad as a result of the functional quality of the ad, seen to provide value by allowing consumers to sit on the ad medium, as it is executed as a bench. In comparing the ambient ad to traditional billboard advertising, the respondent signals the novelty of the ad experience in allowing consumers to make use of an ad medium which lends physiological value to the consumer. Another interview participant shares a similar response, highlighting the role of the functional medium and its novelty in the creation of the brand experience:

*“Most other advertising is simply just bombarding you and taking up your time, whether it be TV, newspaper, billboards. You have to give the time to it, whereas this, by sitting on it, is still advertising this product, but it’s not taking anything from you; you are actually gaining from it...it’s serving a purpose. I can sit on it; I can do something with it, and also admire the fact that it looks like a Kit Kat. And it makes it more memorable—‘I sat on a Kit Kat bench’ as compared to ‘I saw a Kit Kat ad in the newspaper’ that I am probably not going to remember because it didn’t do anything for me...It adds to the experience of the advertisement, that it actually gives you something to do with it. I can actually use it; it’s functional.”* (Amelia, age 29, attorney)

Further to her response, the interview participant goes on to state that, while she did make use of the bench by sitting on it during her first encounter with the ad, she did not do so on every subsequent encounter. However, when asked how

the ad message impacts upon her interest in the ad when she did not choose to sit on the bench, she asserts that the message is not diluted, providing the following rationale:

*"...because I could use it, it's just that it was a choice I made to not use it at that point...because it was still functional, regardless of whether I used it or not. It doesn't change the ad or what it's trying to tell me, whether I use it or I don't; it still looks like a Kit Kat, and it's still a bench that people can sit on. Just the fact that you can use it makes it interesting and unique from other types of advertising."* (Amelia, age 29, attorney)

The respondent thus indicates that consumers do not necessarily need to make use of the functional medium in order to perceive this novel feature of the ad message. She suggests that the ability alone of the medium to provide value to consumers generates interest, although she does not indicate how her brand experience is affected. A response from another interview participant gives further insight into the influence of utilising the medium as it relates to creation of the brand experience:

*"It stands out in the sense that it's original and, basically, when you sit down on the Kit Kat bar, this actually, in a sense, stimulates or generates thoughts of an actual Kit Kat. So it would kind of position that into the mind, then...I don't use the bench every time, even though I see the ad each time I'm at the cinema. If I just see it, I still think it's original and interesting. But when I actually have to use the bench, like when I'm waiting for someone, I'm kind of grateful that Kit Kat has made the bench because there isn't anywhere else to sit! So I'm happy for the ad, then, and it just reinforces that Kit Kat brand in my mind...It lets me better make that association between the bench and Kit Kat, and what Kit Kat is doing for me."* (Vishal, age 28, pharmacist)

The respondent above, similar to the previous respondent, indicates that the functionality of the medium can still be perceived as a novel ad feature whether or not the consumer makes use of the medium. These perceptions of novelty are typically translated into interest or curiosity, which encourages engagement

with the ad and the brand. However, the respondent above suggests that the extent of the brand experience is greater when the consumer actually derives the value offered by the medium, where the ad is utilised for that purpose.

These findings present three key implications for marketers to consider when developing ambient ads to foster consumer engagement. Firstly, the integration of utility into ads is seen to attract consumer attention, based on the individual's want or need to use the particular medium, and to benefit from the value offered. While a consumer may not intend to engage with the medium due to the ad message, the provision of utility generates an attractive avenue through which a consumer could become more involved with the message and the brand. Secondly, incorporation of functionality or utility through ambient advertising is generally perceived as a novel ad feature, which is shown to stimulate interest and curiosity, and further lead to engagement between the consumer and the ad, as well as the particular brand. Utility is viewed as an additional advertising feature that can be used to earn consumer attention, in keeping with the suggestion made by Rosengren et al (2013). Furthermore, the novelty of utility within advertising can be perceived even when the consumer does not actually use the medium or personally derive value from the ad. Marketers should thus consider that the *opportunity* to lend value to consumers can be perceived as a novel ad feature, and can result in consumer engagement. However, the third implication for marketers recognises that the brand experience is likely to be strengthened when the medium is actually used, and the value is transferred to the consumer. As a result, marketers are encouraged to not only consider integrating functional ad features into ambient ads, whether through physiological value, informational value or experience with the product, but also to place these ads where the benefit is relevant to the consumer, or desired or needed, as recommended by Rayport (2013) in providing a brand experience to the consumer.

An additional axis of value identified through qualitative research findings is the component of entertainment value. Ducoffe (1995, 1996) finds that consumers are interested in expending additional time and cognitive effort to engage with ads that provide value, including entertainment value. This

dimension of advertising benefit is not investigated through the content analysis, however, due to the subjectivity of perceived entertainment for both individual ads and consumers. Nonetheless, the findings from focus group and interview data suggest that participants identify entertainment value in ambient ads, although to varying degrees, based on the ad execution. Many participants make reference to a particular ad making them smile, or bringing an element of interest into a typical OOH medium and environment. As one focus group participant asserts, ambient ads have the power to “*make the mundane more interesting*” (Jane, Group 5, age 56, magistrate). Participants indicate that the entertainment value of an ambient ad encourages consumer involvement with the ad message, as an enjoyable activity, which prompts engagement with the ad and the brand. Excerpts from two different focus groups are provided to demonstrate how participants perceive ads to provide entertainment value and engaging experiences:

*Linda: And this casino ad is sort of entertainment value.*

*Dave: You get to the airport, you're tired, you're fed up; you just want to get where you're going. And you walk into the baggage hall to collect your suitcase, and you see that. And it sort of helps you to—I would imagine; I could just see myself relax a bit.*

*Andrew: Usually, the carousel has a negative emotion [everyone agrees emphatically]. And you sit there, and another bag comes through, and you see the same ones going round and round again.*

*Linda: And, like you say, you can enliven that very mundane or depressing activity, by saying, 'What number do you think mine's going to come out on? Is it going to be red?'*

(Group 4: Linda, age 51, company director; Dave, age 56, CEO; Andrew, age 62, business consultant)

The group discussion above indicates that the Casino de Venezia baggage carousel ad is found to be entertaining as it provides a welcome distraction from an unpleasant activity. While the ad does not feature any true interactive elements, participants continue to suggest that the ad message is involving, and project their participation in the brand experience, due to the ad's entertainment

value. Similarly, another focus group discussion signals that value within ambient advertising extends beyond utilitarian value, to include entertainment value as well:

*Adam: With the Lego one—I already love Lego—so it would certainly remind me of the connection I had with the brand, and would make me smile, and perhaps increase the positive feelings I had towards it.*

*Nigel: For me, it doesn't even have to be a product or brand I already know or like. For instance, I don't go to casinos; I think [the ad] is really good, though, and quirky, and it made me smile. Lego, the same—made me smile. I think they're very nice, and they made me smile, and I think they're good fun.*

*Adam: Yes, for the casino ad, I'd remember that because that has value to me, in terms of it makes me smile, or it makes a boring journey more interesting or more fun...Again, it's all on that axis of it has value to me; there's utility there, or it's alleviating my boredom, or it's doing something. You helped me out; I've bonded with you; I like that, you know. I could see that level of interactivity because, for me, that interactivity is all about value, be that in entertainment, or be that in some more utilitarian aspects.*

(Group 5: Adam, age 29, strategy consultant; Nigel, age 51, chef consultant)

The preceding excerpt indicates that the general concept of providing some form of value to the consumer plays a role in the creation of an engaging and enjoyable brand experience. The two participants in the group demonstrate varying levels of engagement with the ad message, with one participant noting the “smile” factor of these ads, while another asserts a “connection” and “bond” forming between himself and the brand as a result of the value bestowed unto him. This participant further suggests that the provision of value to consumers could influence his attitudes or affect towards the brand, which will be discussed in detail in Section 5.4.2.

Interview participants provide further support for the theory that value, including entertainment value, of ambient ads can stimulate engagement with

the ad and the brand. One participant provides the following account of her encounter with the Kit Kat bench, previously seen to provide physiological value, but also seen to provide a “fun” experience:

*“Well, it brought a smile to my face, so I guess it made me happy a little bit [laughs]. But it was not amazement or anything like that, but it intrigued me enough to look at it and say, ‘Hey, that’s a cool idea—a bench that’s shaped like a chocolate bar.’ It’s something fun to come across while I’m waiting in line at the cinema, or even when I’m just ambling through the lobby.”* (Julie, age 38, sales manager)

Similar to focus group participants, the respondent above references the “smile” and “fun” factors of the ambient ad she encountered, and notes that this perception stimulated her curiosity to engage with the ad beyond merely noticing its presence. Another interview participant provides his recount of exposure to the Sprite beach shower ad, where he also refers to the “fun” of seeing this ad:

*“It made me laugh! To see people taking a shower under a Sprite machine, that was so funny to me, and to lots of people also! A lot of people were laughing and taking pictures. Even just to stand and watch people looking at it was funny, to see their reactions and how people were posing under the shower for pictures...Yes, it serves a purpose because you can use the shower, but even when I was just looking at other people interacting with the ad, that was quite fun for me, as well.”* (Panagiotis, age 30, assistant brand manager)

The respondent above details his perceptions of the ad being fun and entertaining, even when he was not engaging with the medium first-hand, but rather in the experience provided to him and other consumers. In this instance, similar to the Kit Kat bench, the medium provides physiological value, but the respondent perceives the ad as having the added benefit of entertaining consumers.

Findings provided by focus group and interview participants support the idea that the novelty of ambient advertising can be perceived as offering entertainment value to consumers. The responses above highlight the variation

in perceived value between consumers towards the same ad, as well as differing levels of engagement between ads. While some respondents noted that a particular ad was “fun” or made them smile, others asserted deeper levels of engagement with both the ad message and the brand, and yet others within the participant sample did not address entertainment value in any way when describing their experiences with ambient ads. The subjective perceptions of value due to entertainment does not allow for quantitative analysis of this dimension of value within this research study, and is thus presented as an area for further research.

The vast majority of ads are seen to not provide an objective benefit of the branding initiative, comprising 91.6% of the content analysis ad sample. While many of these ads may be perceived by consumers as providing entertainment value due to their novelty and creative execution, marketers rarely choose to provide consumers with the added value of utility or functionality when developing ambient ads. However, even when no benefit of branding is provided to the consumer, the brand itself may stand to benefit from use of commonplace mediums within the OOH environment. Gambetti (2010, p.41) states, “*ambient communication’s ability to blend harmoniously and unobtrusively with the surrounding environment is especially important...[helping] to create and shape the urban scene both as landmark features in their own right and as active components of the space they occupy.*” Some evidence for this establishment of an ambient ad as a landmark within its surroundings is given by one focus group discussion below:

*Dave: I would seek that [Kit Kat bench] out; I would take a walk just to go past it and smile.*

*Andrew: It becomes a landmark.*

*Jackie: I’ll meet you there.*

*Linda: I’ll meet you by the Kit Kat bench. Or I’ll meet you by the Scotch Brite fountain. Definitely. You might do that with this [points to Stihl pictorial], you know. Because, if it’s as big as it looks, if it’s a bit prominent in its size, you might find that becoming a bit of a landmark as well. Whereas I don’t think the Lego one would; and [the*

*Casino de Venezia ad] is in the airport so you don't have easy access to it [Jackie nods]. And I don't think you'd do that with that one [points to CoverGirl pictorial]. So these three—the Kit Kat, the Scotch Brite and the Stihl—definitely have the potential to become local landmarks that you would make your way to [Miriam nods], and therefore, in a sense, that would reinforce it [Jackie nods], because you'd be seeing it every day; you're actually going to it.*

*Miriam: Yes, because you can say, 'I'll meet you by the bench in the mall, but it could be so many different benches. But if you say 'the Kit Kat bench', everyone's going to know exactly what you're talking about, and where to go.*

*Jackie: Yes, and you'll be thinking about it, and telling people about it.*

*Linda: Absolutely. That's the other thing—you would tell people about it and, therefore, you'd be then advertising for the people.*

*(Group 4: Dave, age 56, CEO; Andrew, age 62, business consultant; Jackie, age 37, housewife; Linda, age 51, company director)*

The group discussion above lends support to the idea that ambient ads can be established as landmark features, as a result of the physicality of the objects and their placement within the surrounding environment. The participants suggest that the uniqueness of the particular medium, as a result of its branding, allows it to stand apart from typical unbranded mediums, creating an object that can be easily identified within its surroundings, establishing it as a landmark. Furthermore, the group participants above indicate that placement is crucial to give rise to this outcome, as the ads must be accessible within the public sphere. An interview participant indicates how this idea of establishment of an ad as a landmark can occur with actual encounters with ambient ads:

*"I was actually waiting on another friend to come out [of the theatre] and the bench was available...right in the middle of the playroom, there it was. It was the only convenient piece of apparatus that you can sit on, so I will always go towards the bench to wait for [my friends]...I'll tell my girlfriend to meet me at the bench, because she knows what I'm talking about, but I'll tell other people to just meet*



*me in the playroom since they might not know the Kit Kat bench itself.” (Vishal, age 28, pharmacist)*

The respondent supports claims made by the preceding focus group participants that the ability to recognise a particular branded medium could lead to perceptions of the ad being a landmark within its surroundings. While the respondent suggests that communicating the ad to others is effective only when they are previously familiar with the object, the ad has become a personal landmark for him when in that particular location. Both sets of sample quotes illustrate engagement with the ad as a result of its ability to be identified within its surroundings, due to the branding of a commonplace object.

The findings suggest that, even when the medium is not seen to provide any benefit to the consumers, engagement can still arise as a result of the branding initiative. These ads can be seen to prompt some degree of engagement due to the integration of the ad message into mediums in the OOH environment with which consumers are familiar, and can be distinguished from typical or unbranded mediums of the same type. The novelty of this feature allows ads to be easily recognisable from the surroundings, and can establish the ad as a landmark within its surroundings, as suggested by Gambetti (2010). For this outcome to be realised, marketers must thus choose or place mediums where they are easily recognised and accessed within the public environment. Furthermore, these ads must persist over a period of time to allow for establishment of the ad within its surroundings, where short-lived ambient ads are not likely to benefit from this association and the engagement it fosters with consumers.

Despite the potential benefit of engagement due to establishment of an ad within a consumer’s surroundings, the benefits extended to consumers through utilitarian value is seen to more effectively attract consumer attention and engagement. As most ads do not provide any benefit to consumers in their branding of ambient mediums, the research findings identify a missed opportunity for marketers to provide a greater experience for consumers and to generate positive brand perceptions as a result of the added value. Marketers are encouraged to develop ambient ads that provide either physiological or

informational value, or to allow consumers some degree of experience with the product, in order to involve consumers with the ad message, and to create a brand experience in which consumers will want to participate. In adding value to consumers' OOH activity, brands may be able to not only distinguish themselves from competitors, but also from the ad clutter surrounding consumers within the OOH environment.

#### *5.2.3.5 Demonstration of feature/result/benefit*

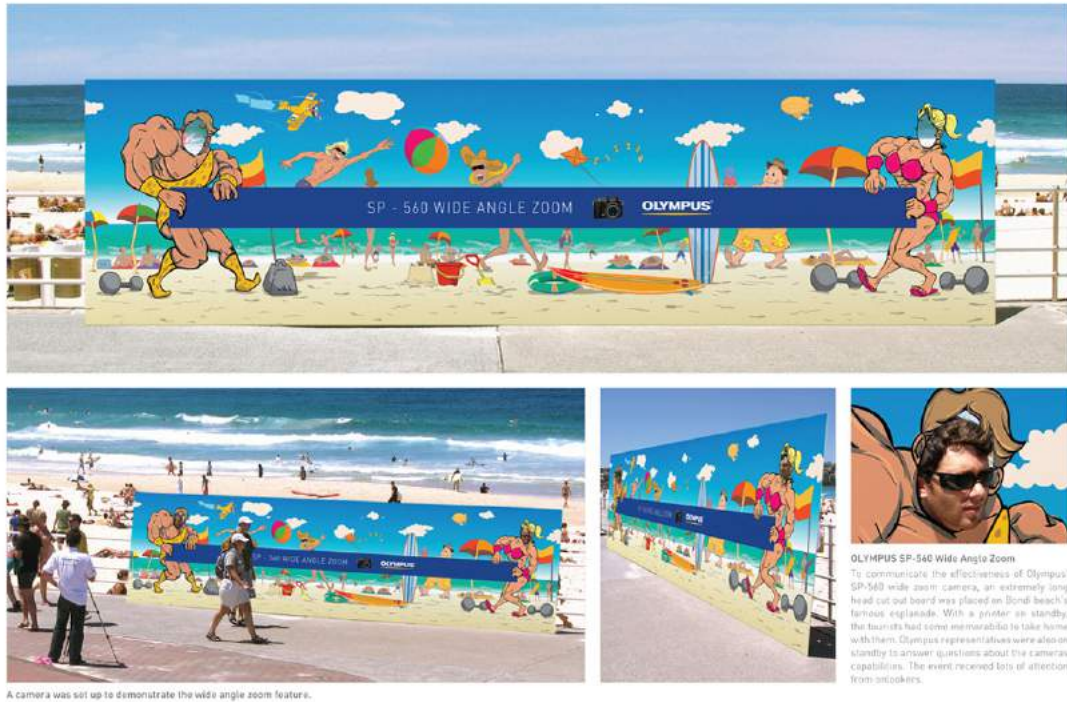
The final ad feature that is discussed, in drawing consumer attention and encouraging engagement, is the demonstration of a product feature, result, or benefit, herein grouped as product functionality. While marketers seldom use ambient advertising to demonstrate a product's actual functionality, comprising only 2.9% of the ad sample, product functionality is often represented through ambient ads, as seen in 45.5% of the ad sample.

Communication of a product's functionality or effectiveness is a typical and widely-used advertising strategy, frequently discussed in marketing texts (e.g. Belch & Belch 2014, Kotler & Keller 2015). However, while these practices can be easily demonstrated or represented through television, print and online advertising, these mediums do not allow consumers first-hand experience with the product and its effectiveness. With OOH advertising, consumers can come into physical contact with objects into which the product effect is integrated, where consumers can observe or experience these effects without use of a mediated channel.

Researchers refer to these types of ads that demonstrate a product's effectiveness in several ways: informational (Rossiter & Percy 1987), utilitarian (Johar & Sirgy 1991), hard-sell (Okazaki et al 2010), functional-rational (Heath 2011) and functional, as opposed to experiential, (Zarantonello et al 2013). These ads that demonstrate product functionality include utilitarian appeals, referencing a product's attributes, performance and applications, as well as the benefit or values that consumers may derive from product use, and result in a cognitive consumer response (Abernethy & Franke 1996). In contrast, Zarantonello et al (2013) distinguish functionality from experiential ad appeals

to consumer emotion, sensation, feelings, imagination and lifestyle to prompt affective responses. However, the inclusion of creative cognitive appeals in the framework of experience providers (Schmitt 1999, Gambetti 2010) indicates that the incorporation of functional appeals into ambient ads may encourage consumer engagement with the ad and brand.

The incorporation of the actual or modified version of a product has been previously seen to encourage consumers to engage with the product, and possibly to partake in first-hand experience with the product. Additionally, incorporation of the product into the ad can allow the consumer to witness the functionality of the product or assess its quality, where the ad showcases a feature, result or benefit of the product. Figure 5.32 provides an example of an ad where the consumer is provided with first-hand experience with the product and the key feature being communicated. In this example, the typical cut-out poster is fabricated to be extra long, allowing consumers to experience the functionality of the wide-angle lens of the camera. Without the camera, the poster alone would communicate to consumers the benefit of the wide-angle feature, but including a photographer with the actual camera allows consumers to observe this feature in action. Additionally, the use of the cut-out poster lets consumers become co-creators of the brand experience, as they themselves are integrated into the ad message.



**Figure 5.32 A camera ad incorporating the actual product to demonstrate a product feature (Olympus 2009)**

As an example of an ad demonstrating product functionality, the ad seen in Figure 5.32 can then be compared to one that *represents* similar functional product attributes, as shown in Figure 5.33. In the ad seen in Figure 5.33, the actual contents of the cereal box are not used in the ad, but the ad is executed such that the product feature is communicated, namely the real fruit found in the cereal. Ads that represent product functionality, as opposed to actual demonstrations, can engage consumers as they also use creative cognitive appeals, although the extent of the engagement is likely to be less than when consumers are provided first-hand experience with the product.



**Figure 5.33 A cereal ad representing the product feature of containing real fruit  
(Post 2006)**

Typically, the actual product is integrated into the ad in order to allow consumers to observe or interact with the product so that the effectiveness or functionality of the product is communicated. The content analysis findings indicate that every ad that demonstrates product functionality incorporated the actual product or a version of it, with the exception of a single ad. This ad was the Stihl pressure washer ad, which was also presented within the focus groups, which demonstrates the results of the product, through use of a dirty wall in which a section was cleaned for the purpose of advertising. A focus group participant shares her perceptions of this ad:

*“I could tell you that the Stihl ad is the only one that gives me an idea of the effectiveness of the product. And while all the ads are creative and they say something in my mind—like the Kit Kat looks delicious—the Stihl ad is results-oriented. It’s the only ad that tells me what the product is going to do for me, and the benefits that the product is going to give me. It tells me about the product’s effectiveness...yes, the other ads might be more interesting to interact with, since this is just a wall, but I get a better idea of what the product is, or can do, with this one.”*

(Melissa, Group 1, age 26, hotel employee)

The response above indicates that functional appeals in ambient ads can engage consumers with the ad message as they observe the results or benefits of the product. The participant suggests, however, that this particular ad may not be as involving as other ambient ads due to the execution of other ad features, such as medium used and dimensionality, but she notes that the demonstration of the product functionality is a feature that engages her with the advertised product.

Focus group participants responding to the Scotch Brite water fountain, however, provide support for the idea that ads that demonstrate product functionality encourage consumer engagement. The Scotch Brite ad, as compared to the Stihl ad, integrates a version of the actual product in the ad, suggesting that product incorporation, as discussed in Section 5.2.1.2, again plays a role in stimulating engagement. A focus group participant suggests that the ability to observe first-hand the product effectiveness in an ad engages her with the ad message:

*“With this, you press it, it comes out, it soaks up; you see it working. If it’s the actual sponge that they’re using in the ad, like the picture says it is, you’re getting to see the real product working; you get to see it yourself. It’s like how you see products in infomercials on television, except that you get to see this in real life! You get to see it actually working. I’d want to use the fountain just to see how that sponge works, and I’ll know that Scotch Brite is a good brand, then.”* (Miriam, Group 4, age 18, student)

The respondent above indicates her interest in wanting to interact with the ad due to its ability to demonstrate the product effectiveness, signaling her engagement with the ad message and with the brand. Further, she attributes positive brand attitudes towards this demonstration of functionality, and as a result of being able to observe the product results first-hand. Another focus group respondent shares a similar response:

*“At this point, for me, functionality is most important. So some of the ads, like this ad [pointing to Scotch Brite pictorial] would be really effective—I’m looking at someone drinking water and, wow, you mean that sponge could really absorb all that water? If I were to see that actually happening, that would make me want to try the fountain myself, to see it actually working, and if it works, that’s really impressive! And I would definitely keep that Scotch Brite brand in mind when I need this kind of product.”* (Karla, age 41, law student)

Both respondents indicate wanting to engage with the ad in an effort to observe the results of the product. Both responses signal stimulation of curiosity due to the product functionality, and an interest in becoming personally involved with the ad message, thereby participating in a brand experience.

Insights from the focus group findings support the idea that ads demonstrating a utilitarian product attribute, such as feature, performance or application, can create engaging brand experiences for the consumer. Where the actual product is not integrated into an ad, the consumer may still be interested to engage with the ad message, although product incorporation can be seen to help create a brand experience for the consumer. Gambetti (2010) suggests that

context clues, as compared to performance clues, play a greater role in determining product differentiation and customer satisfaction due to creation of a unique and positive brand experience. However, ads which demonstrate product functionality through ambient advertising can be seen to integrate both context and performance clues into the ad message, providing an additional dimension of engagement in the generation of a brand experience.

With only 2.9% of the ad sample comprising ads that demonstrate an actual feature, result or benefit of a product, no interview participants were able to provide accounts of actual exposure to this type of ad. While the focus group findings are useful in providing insights into engagement with this ad feature, no further evidence can be provided to support these projected behaviours, and thus identifies an area for further research. The lack of incorporation of this ad feature in ambient advertising is likely due to its use as a persuasive appeal (Petty & Cacioppo 1986, Johar & Sirgy 1991, Zarantonello et al 2013), whereas Luxton and Drummond (2000) suggest that ambient advertising is used as a supportive and reinforcing medium rather than directly persuasive. Other researchers view ambient advertising as a tool in generating brand awareness by breaking through ad clutter (Gambetti 2010, Hutter & Hoffmann 2011, Jurca 2012, Hutter & Hoffmann 2014, Hutter 2015, Jurca & Madlberger 2015), rather than directly driving purchase behaviour. Additionally, the use of functional appeals is limited to products offering utilitarian value, rather than hedonistic or 'value-expressive' benefits (Johar & Sirgy 1991). Finally, many researchers view advertising appeals as dichotomous, making use of either functional or experiential appeals (e.g. Rossiter & Percy 1987, Johar & Sirgy 1991, Okazaki et al 2010, Heath 2011, Zarantonello et al 2013), where ambient ads are primarily focused on the latter.

Despite the lack of actual demonstration of product functionality, almost half of the ad sample was seen to represent the product functionality, indicating that marketers are interested in communicating product attributes to consumers through ambient advertising. Ads representing product functionality are thought to engage consumers with the ad message as they make use of commonplace objects within the OOH environment to characterise or symbolise a product



feature, result or benefit. The novelty of this encounter is likely to stimulate curiosity and interest in engaging with the ad to understand the ad message, through creative cognitive appeals, suggested by Schmitt (1999) and Gambetti (2010) as generating a branded experience for consumers. The extent of this engagement, however, is not likely to be as considerable as that where the product is integrated into the ad and the actual functionality can be observed, as the latter provides an additional feature for engagement through product incorporation. The unexpectedness of using commonplace objects to communicate product functionality, where the product itself is not incorporated into the ad, can still be thought to augment schema incongruity and curiosity, as suggested by Jurca and Madlberger (2015). However, no participant insights can be offered to support or further these theories, as none of the focus group pictorials featured representation of feature/result/benefit, and no interviewees encountered ads of this nature. Further research is thus needed to identify whether representation of product functionality in ambient ads stimulates interest to the point of engagement, and how consumers respond to such ads.

Just over half of the ads examined in the content analysis sample comprised ads that did not attempt to demonstrate or represent product attributes in any way. These ads are not considered to engage consumers through functional or utilitarian appeals, where engagement may be fostered through any of the other previously mentioned ad features. However, with almost half the ads either demonstrating or representing product functionality, marketers are interested in communicating utilitarian product attributes through ambient advertising. While further research is needed to provide insights into the effectiveness of these appeals in stimulating consumer interest and engagement, the findings presented suggest that engagement can occur due to the incorporation of this feature into the message. Although not all products allow for the use of utilitarian appeals, such as hedonistic or value-expressive products, if marketers aim to communicate product attributes through ambient advertising, it is recommended that they place greater value on the incorporation of the actual product into the ad. Similar to brand pushing, through stealth marketing, ambient mediums allow marketers the opportunity

to bring consumers into direct contact with the product, and provide first-hand experience with the feature, result, or benefit being communicated (Kaikati & Kaikati 2004). Marketers are thus encouraged to exploit the advantage of ambient mediums to allow consumers to engage with the product, and to experience the product benefits outside of the POS.

### **5.3 Ad novelty**

While the preceding discussion presents findings of individual ad features and their influence on consumer engagement, the novelty factor of several of these features is seen to contribute to consumer engagement. An unexpected trend within participant responses is the suggestion that ambient ads can attract attention and interest to the point that consumers voluntarily engage with these ad messages, even when there is no need to do so. The following section thus examines the ad features that contribute to consumers' volitional attention to ambient ads. Additionally, the novelty of ambient advertising, as compared to traditional advertising and conventional OOH ads, is seen to not only engage consumers with the ad message at the time of encounter, but can be extended into participation in word-of-mouth activity. The second section thus examines how consumers are encouraged to spread WOM of an ambient ad, based on the ad novelty and engagement with the ad message.

#### **5.3.1 Volitional attention**

In contrast to the more typical avoidance of traditional media, an unexpected finding from the qualitative data is the interest that consumers display in wanting to engage with ambient ads. Where Speck and Elliott (1997) identify 'avoidance strategies' that consumers adopt to resist the oversaturation of ad messages, Goldman and Papson (1994) indicate that ad clutter can provoke feelings of resentment and hostility towards advertising. Rumbo (2002) echoes the development of consumer resentment towards ad clutter, and further suggests that this overexposure to advertising can lead to consumers developing heightened cognitive defences against ad messages. Furthermore, van Meurs and

Aristoff (2009) note the declining appeal of poster advertising, and Lopez-Pumarejo and Bassell (2009) suggest an increase in activism against billboard advertising due to the visual clutter, as first evidenced by Rumbo (2002). With ad clutter, including other OOH advertising mediums, seen to provoke negative consumer sentiment and behaviours towards messages, the concept of volitional attention towards ambient advertising suggests an examination of the ad features that lead to this phenomenon.

The investigation into volitional attention to advertising was initially prompted by a discussion between participants of the first focus group conducted. In none of the focus groups were participants directly asked about volitional attention to ambient ads, but were asked follow-up questions once the topic was raised by a participant. Having identified this commonality amongst focus group participants, interviewees were specifically asked about their engagement with the ads they encountered. Interview participants were asked to describe not only how they attended to the ads, but also whether there was a particular need to engage with the ads, such as due to choice of medium. The respondents all indicate that they chose to engage with the ad due to the perception of novelty, as a result of one or more of the ad features identified in the content analysis.

Firstly, many participants reference the likeness to the product in stimulating interest and curiosity to drive volitional attention. As previously discussed, multiple ad features can contribute to likeness to product element. Primarily, the product element (product, product effect, product target, feature or symbol) must be depicted in some way. Likeness to the product element can then be enhanced through dimensionality, typically 3-dimensional mediums, and the fabrication of mediums can also produce a more realistic representation of the particular product element.

One interview participant, having encountered the Kit Kat bench at the cinema, details why she would choose to sit on this bench, specifically, even when other unbranded benches are within the same area:

*"If I went to a park and there were five benches, and I saw a big block of chocolate, I mean, obviously I would go and sit down on the big*

*block of chocolate, just for its uniqueness. It's different from what you see; it reminds you, too, about chocolate, and Kit Kat in particular—because of its shape, it's unique to Kit Kat, et cetera.”* (Janice, age 32, office manager)

In her response, the participant notes that the novelty of the likeness to the product would encourage her to voluntarily engage with the particular ad and brand. Another interview participant describes her volitional attention to the Truly Nolan pest control car, where encountering the car in a stationary position allowed her to engage with the ad message, and the brand. She again suggests that her interest in voluntarily attending to the ad is due to the likeness of the medium to the product target:

*“When I saw the car parked in the parking lot, I did approach it, yes. Having seen it driving past me on the highway, I was curious to see it up close when it was parked. So I walked around the car to see all the mouse features that were added on, to see all the little things they put on the car to make it look like a mouse.”* (Patricia, age 53, lecturer)

For this ad, the description of the ad previously given by the respondent indicates that the likeness to the product element was due to the depiction of the product target through appropriate medium choice. While the medium was pre-existing, the participant describes the shape of the medium and its 3-dimensional property, as well as the inclusion of features particular to a mouse, as effective in conveying the ad message. A third participant shares his experience with a Sprite branded beach shower as follows, when asked if he needed to use the shower:

*“I laughed and I told my friends that I have to try it. And I walked towards it; I waited because there was quite a queue of people wanting to do it, for the same reason that I was going to do it. And I waited, and then I tried it. I also photographed it. And sometimes on beaches, you can spend a little time waiting for the line for the shower, but this made the wait funnier, so you didn't really care...I wanted to try it out—curiosity and to be taken a photograph of. I've never seen a shower on a beach being turned into something else—anything. So*

*seeing a shower being turned into a soda machine that looks exactly like a soda machine was a first for me.”* (Panagiotis, age 30, assistant brand manager)

In his detailed account of his ad experience, the respondent indicates that his interest in voluntarily attending to the ad is due to the likeness of the fabricated medium to the product feature of a soda dispenser, but also the water through the shower representing the clear Sprite beverage. Furthermore, the respondent above not only states that he chose to engage with the ad despite not needing to do so, but further that he was willing to expend his effort, through waiting, in order to participate in the brand experience.

The first respondent indicates that the likeness to the product is novel to her, and would encourage her preference to engage with the branded medium over a similar unbranded medium. The second and third respondents provide evidence for further engagement, by approaching the ad messages, even when there was no need to do so, or no value is added to their OOH activity by engaging with the ad. Furthermore, these respondents suggest the usefulness of ambient mediums in providing compelling and engaging experiences for consumers, as suggested by Rayport (2013), as they are seen to make efforts to engage with the ad messages, as they deviate from their typical OOH activity.

Ad placement at waiting points was also seen to encourage consumers to engage with the ad message, even when no utility is offered by the ad or branded medium. However, as previously discussed, one benefit of ambient ads has been identified as entertainment value. While placements at entry or exit points have been shown to simply bring a consumer into contact with an ad, with reliance on other ad features to stimulate interest, placement at waiting points encourages engagement as consumers actively attempt to distract themselves from the unpleasant task of waiting. At waiting points, ambient ads can be seen to provide entertainment value while consumers are conducting a mundane OOH activity. An excerpt from a focus group indicates how consumers might be encouraged to engage in volitional attention to an ambient ad while waiting at the airport:

*Andrew: So the thing here [pointing to Casino de Venezia pictorial] is that everybody places their bets on where their luggage will land!*

*That would make you want to do that, wouldn't it? It would sort of trigger some sort of funniness, while you're bored and waiting for your bag.*

*Dave: This is interesting [pointing to Casino de Venezia pictorial]—actually this is very conversational while you're standing waiting there, just to pass the time [Linda agrees]. But it still gives you the impression of a casino.*

*Andrew: I would make a bet with my wife, 'Which colour is your suitcase going to come out on? Is it red or black?' [Everyone laughs.]*

*(Group 4: Andrew, age 62, business consultant; Dave, age 56, CEO)*

Similar to responses from other focus groups, the participants indicate their desire to become involved with the ad message as a distraction from an unpleasant OOH activity. An interview participant reiterates the idea that the novelty of ambient ads can help to alleviate boredom when placed at waiting points:

*"I always go to use the Kit Kat bench when I'm waiting on someone. It's the only place to sit in that area, but there are other areas in the lobby where you can sit, but those are all normal chairs and benches. And because the Kit Kat bench there is the only one I've ever seen, I only get to interact with it when I'm at the cinema. So I like to use it whenever I have that opportunity. Maybe if a lot of the benches were Kit Kat benches, I probably wouldn't care enough to use it or not use it; I would just sit wherever was convenient. But because it's just that one, I prefer to use it over the regular seats...I guess it makes the wait just a little bit less boring because it's providing some element of interest to me." (Robert, age 27, surveyor)*

The respondent indicates that the novelty of the bench, as compared to unbranded benches, encourages his volitional attention, and brings interest to a mundane OOH activity. In comparison with the Casino de Venezia ad, representing a roulette wheel through a baggage carousel, the Kit Kat bench is suggested to provide a less involving experience for the consumer. Whereas the Kit Kat product can be eaten, the roulette wheel is an object with which

consumers would typically interact in a casino, suggesting that this representation would create a more engaging experience for consumers.

The ability of consumers to come into direct contact with ambient ads is identified as another ad feature that encourages volitional attention. The use of commonplace objects within the environment to convey ad messages is typically perceived by participants as a novel experience, and the ability to come into direct contact, or “interact”, as many respondents suggested, can be seen to stimulate interest in engaging with the branded medium and its ad message. In response to the group discussion on the Kit Kat bench ad, the participant below shares her views on the novelty of the direct contact offered by most ambient ads:

*“I think an ad that I can interact with would definitely impact me more, simply because I haven’t really had that kind of experience in my life yet, so it will impact me more than an ad I’m just seeing. So it would make me interested in the ad, and some of these ads would make me curious enough to go check them out, see what they’re about—the Scotch Brite, the Kit Kat and the Lego.” (Suraya, Group 3, age 26, linguist)*

While the Scotch Brite ad is seen to be truly interactive, offering two-way communication between the ad message and the consumer, the Kit Kat and Lego ads provide only one-way communication. Thus, when the respondent refers to “interactivity”, she is in fact describing the direct contact that the consumer makes with these ads. An interview participant provides support for the concept that the ability for direct contact with ambient ad messages stimulates curiosity and can result in volitional attention:

*“For sure I wanted to sit on the bench—just to sit and feel it, to be honest; then I just got back up...No, I didn’t need to use the bench; I didn’t need to sit down for any reason. But it was compulsive for me to try it out; like I need to sit down on this to see what it’s like, that sort of thing. It just stimulated something in my brain to try it out...It’s a different form of interaction, not just looking at it like a*

*sign. You can walk up to this thing and touch it; you can use your sense of touch to interact with this ad.” (Nikolai, age 27, architect)*

The respondent above not only indicates his interest in engaging with the ad, but also suggests that this curiosity extended into compulsion for him to attend to the ad. Similar to the preceding focus group participant, the respondent above refers to the “interactivity” of the ad, despite the lack of two-way communication, signalling the direct contact with the ad as a feature that stimulates his interest to wilfully engage with the ad. He further notes the role of multisensory engagement in creating interest for him to participate in volitional attention, where multisensory appeals have been previously discussed as a key component of ambient advertising in creating a brand experience.

A further benefit of direct contact with ambient ads is the potential to offer consumers utility, particularly physiological value. Thus, the novelty of not just contact with, but also utility derived from, an ambient ad can be seen to provide an experience with the ad, and also with the brand. Several focus group respondents clearly stated that, when given the choice between an ambient ad and a similar unbranded medium, they would wilfully choose to interact with the branded object. For example, when discussing the Scotch Brite water fountain, these focus group respondents offered the following opinions:

*Nick: So let’s say it’s in a park, and I pass the park every day to go to work or to go to school, et cetera, and I feel for water. I would rather go drink water from there, probably—or I would remember that—than go to a normal, regular water cooler.*

*Kandice: Yes. I’d probably say, ‘Yeah, I want to use the sponge cooler.’...Because this isn’t your run-of-the-mill water cooler! It’s made out of a sponge! It just makes it more interesting to drink from a cooler like that than a regular one that you see everywhere.*

(Group 1: Nick, age 22, student; Kandice, age 33, project manager)

These responses signal a clear preference for the branded medium of the ambient ad over an unbranded object that provides the same degree of utility to the consumer. Physiological value has been previously discussed to show that the provision of utility to the consumer through ambient mediums encourages



engagement. Furthermore, the novelty of the experience of gaining utility from an ambient ad stimulates curiosity and interest, even when consumers have no need for the utility offered by the medium at the time of encounter. Beyond choosing to use a branded medium, in preference over one that is unbranded, interview participants commonly recount using a functional ad medium due to interest in the ad message, rather than out of need. One such response is given by a participant who identifies her volitional attention to the Kit Kat bench ad:

*“The norm is not really something that you would interact with. And it serves a functional purpose as well. But at that time, like I said, I didn’t need to [use it], but it was interesting, so I sat on it anyway, to be able to say that I had sat on a bench shaped like a Kit Kat bar...I wanted to sit on it because of the association in my head of how a Kit Kat tastes and the enjoyment you get from eating it, I suppose. I don’t know, maybe I thought that you might get the same kind of enjoyment sitting on it!”* (Julie, age 38, sales manager)

While the respondent references direct contact and likeness to the product, her ability to sit on the bench, despite not having any need to use the bench, and the “functional purpose” of the medium results in her volitional engagement with the ad. Similarly, the participant who encountered the Sprite beach shower further supports the idea that the ability to derive utility from an ambient ad encourages engagement, and can produce volitional attention:

*“No, I clearly wanted to try it out—to try taking a shower under a soda machine. We were staying at a hotel pretty close by, so I didn’t need to use the showers on the beach, but I wanted to try using this shower, for fun.”* (Panagiotis, age 30, assistant brand manager)

The respondent above reiterates the sentiment from the previous participant that there was no immediate need to engage with the particular ad, in order to benefit from the utility being offered. Despite this, the respondent above also wilfully chose to engage with the ad, and to participate in the brand experience being offered.

A further dimension of volitional attention identified through the qualitative research findings is the interest exhibited by participants to take

pictures of the ambient ads they encounter. As noted by the participant who used the Sprite beach shower, the novelty of ambient ads can be seen to encourage consumers to engage with the ads by taking photographs or, more recently, digital pictures. These pictures may be shared with consumers' personal contacts, such as through email or instant messaging, or spread through wider social media networks, such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, to generate WOM. Particularly as many consumers own smartphones, integrated with a camera and Internet capabilities, it is easy for consumers to both take pictures and share them, all from the same device, encouraging this behaviour.

A trend among focus group participants was the desire to capture an image of an ambient ad due to its incongruence with other types of advertising. An excerpt from one group discussion is provided:

*Mike: I'm a very difficult consumer. I'm a consumer like this – nobody ever tells me what to buy. This consumer believes it's my money, and I decide what in Heaven's name I want to buy. So every product I purchase, I do research on. However, with response to the ambient ad, I will take out my camera and say, 'Wow, that thing looks great!' and take a picture of it. For example, if I saw that Kit Kat bench, I surely would take a picture of it. Or even this baggage handler, I would take a picture of it [Kandice nods]. I would definitely tell people about these ads, if I saw them, and I would show them my picture too [everyone laughs].*

*Melissa: I think it comes down to the type of ad, just as we saw here. If you see that [CoverGirl] turnstile ad, you're not necessarily going to stop and take a picture of it. It depends on the type of ad.*

*Kandice: I think the Kit Kat and the casino are the best, because you can instantly see what the product is; I would take my phone out to take pictures of those, and also the Lego one.*

(Group 1: Mike, age 56, retiree; Melissa, age 26, hotel employee; Kandice, age 33, project manager)

As with every focus group, the individual participants differed in their perceptions of creative ambient ads, and also the ads of which they would be interested to take pictures. The desire to take a picture of one ad over another will vary not only according to the ad execution and the integration of the identified ad features, but also due to individual consumer perceptions and experiences with advertising. Another group discussion indicates how consumers may be stimulated to take pictures of ambient ads, and further to share with others:

*Miriam: The casino one, I'm not really into casino things, but I would think it was really cool. I'd show my friends; I'd take pictures of it and show my friends.*

*Andrew: The Kit Kat's very clever, and it makes you want to go out and sit on that bench, doesn't it? It really is very attractive. And the shape of the bars at the back here [indicates back of bench in Kit Kat pictorial] look just like the bars of the chocolate [Dave nods]. And, as Miriam was saying, you'd want to take a photograph of that [Miriam laughs and agrees] and send it round to your friends.*

*Miriam: Yes, it's how they use something that you always see, and make it look like something else, like a luggage [carousel] looking like a roulette wheel.*

(Group 4: Miriam, age 18, student; Andrew, age 62, business consultant)

Similar to the previous group discussion, the participants above indicate that they would be interested to take pictures of certain ads based on individual perceptions of creativity and novel experiences. Both group discussions, however, suggest the interest to take pictures of ads due to the likeness to the product element, as it is recognised or represented within objects commonly found within the OOH environment. Similarly, one interview participant attributes his desire to take a picture of the Axe staircase ad he encountered to the use of a pre-existing medium:

*"I actually took a picture, because I remember I thought it was so strange to see that. It struck [me], because, like I said, I'd never seen*

*this before. I took a picture because I enjoyed what they tried to do; I appreciated it...I thought it was very different—ingenious is the word that I want to use. It's really interesting to get people's attention using pre-existing spaces.”* (Sean, age 36, cinematographer)

While these responses show consumer interest in taking pictures of ambient ads due to the perceived novelty of these messages, one interview participant further indicates that the action of taking pictures *with* an ambient ad, where the consumer is photographed while engaging with the ad, can provide another outlet by which the consumer enjoys the experience created by the brand:

*“Being able to use the shower, which was an ad, was already an enjoyable experience for me; it was fun. And the fact that I was posing for my friends and they were taking my photo, this made it more enjoyable.”* (Panagiotis, age 30, assistant brand manager)

The respondent notes that the experience of using the ad medium is enhanced by having his picture taken while engaging with the ad, suggesting further enjoyment of the ad message. As several participants above indicate their willingness to share these pictures with friends, WOM is generated by these picture-taking activities, which is further discussed in the subsequent section.

Whereas advertising clutter has been seen to result in consumers' avoidance of advertising (Speck & Elliott 1997, Elliott & Speck 1998) and publicity messages (Rosengren 2008), the participant responses provide evidence to illustrate the appeal of ambient ads in not only drawing attention to an ad, but also attracting consumers to go out of their way to engage with ads. The respondents provide evidence that they engaged with ambient advertising not just when a need arose, but also due to curiosity or interest. Volitional attention to ambient ads can be explained by Jurca and Madlberger's (2015) conceptual framework of schema incongruity. The unexpectedness of the ad features discussed can be thought to increase levels of consumers' schema incongruity, although Jurca and Madlberger propose engagement as an antecedent of schema incongruity, rather than an outcome. The pair suggests that schema incongruity can lead to advertising effectiveness, using metrics of audience attitude, advertising awareness and brand awareness, which are all

positioned as drivers of product sales. However, this research study investigates consumer engagement as an outcome in its own right, resulting from the use of the identified ad features, and would thus be considered as a demonstration of advertising effectiveness, rather than as Jurca and Madlberger's element of schema incongruity.

While broader concepts of schema incongruity are not explicitly explanative of ambient advertising, the novelty of the ad features identified can be thought to serve as unexpected stimuli within consumers' OOH environments, prompting deeper cognitive elaboration to resolve this unexpectedness (Berlyne 1971, Fiske & Taylor 1991, Goodman 1993). Yang and Smith (2009) further this concept to suggest that creative advertisements can generate curiosity within consumers, to produce deeper cognitive processing, and enhance consumers' viewing intentions. This augmented intent to view or engage with an ambient ad is demonstrated through respondents' participation in volitional attention.

### ***5.3.2 Word of mouth participation***

Whereas current research into word of mouth focuses on consumers' experiences with a product or service, instances of ambient ads being shared virally prompted investigation into consumers' interest in telling others about an ad, as opposed to the product itself. Preliminary investigation into ambient ads shows ads being spread through email, social media websites, and both advertising and personal weblogs. Focus group participants were asked to identify which of the six ads shown in the pictorials they would tell others about if they were to actually encounter these messages, and what would prompt them to respond in such a way. Interview participants were similarly asked whether they had told others about the ads encountered, and why they had or had not done so. The findings are presented in this section.

In general, many focus group respondents indicate that they would tell others about an ambient ad, based on the examples shown to the groups. When asked to explain why, many participants use subjective and ambiguous terms, such as referring to an ad's "impact", or describing it as "interesting" and "quirky", as well as stating that the ad had left an "impression" on them. Despite

the subjectivity within participants' answers, the most widely cited feature for spreading word of mouth is ad "creativity" and "novelty", as well as the atypicality of the ads as compared to traditional advertising, where respondents label ambient ads as "different", "innovative" and "unusual". In addition, respondents make mention of the unexpectedness of the ad locations, and mediums used, as a cause of spreading word of mouth about the ad. An excerpt from one group illustrates these points as follows:

*Dave: It just seems really smart.*

*Miriam: They're really different; I wouldn't expect to see a sponge as a drinking fountain.*

*Andrew: Yes, that's it, yes.*

*Linda: Or a roulette wheel as the carousel.*

*Andrew: Some of these—these three particularly [referring to Scotch Brite, Casino di Venezia and Kit Kat pictorials]—are surprising.*

*Linda: And very innovative uses of the medium.*

*Andrew: You wouldn't expect to come across these things, and you sort of [think], 'Wow!'*

(Group 4: Dave, age 56, CEO; Miriam, age 18, student; Andrew, age 62, business consultant; Linda, age 51, company director)

Respondents also refer to the ability to come into direct contact with the ad as a reason for engaging in word of mouth, and more so if the ad offers some form of utility, including entertainment value. The focus group excerpt below provides an example of one such dialogue among participants when asked to identify ad features that would prompt them to tell others about the ad:

*Jane: If it was fun.*

*Alex: Yes, interactivity, again.*

*Jane: Back to if it did something for me, or made me laugh, or if I thought they would find it amusing. If I saw something that was funny, I would tell you.*

(Group 5: Jane, age 56, magistrate; Alex, age 22, student)

In addition, several participants assert that they would not just tell others about the ad, but that they would also encourage others to see or interact with it for themselves, as exemplified in the response below:

*“If the ad had impressed me that much, I would certainly pass it on to other people—‘Have you seen so-and-so? You must look out for it.’...The fact that it’s different—different to what we’ve been accustomed to today.”* (Kenny, Group 2, age 67, retiree)

The findings indicate that both the novelty of ambient ads as compared to conventional advertising, particularly the ability to come into direct contact with or derive utility from an ad, would help to encourage a consumer to participate in word of mouth about an experience with an ad.

Interview participants echo the same reasons for engaging in word of mouth as outlined above, where many respondents confirm that they did tell others about the ad. One participant shares her WOM participation when asked if she told others about the ad:

*“Yes, because it’s a cool bench, so I showed everyone around me, ‘Look, that’s a Kit Kat!’ Yes, I do think I would have told maybe a family member, but I can’t remember exactly who. But, yes, I would have told other people about it who were not there at the time. Maybe it could have come up in conversation; it may have come up when I was going to purchase something and I would have seen the Kit Kat and [said], ‘Do you know I saw this at MovieTowne and it was advertised in this way?’”* (Amelia, age 29, attorney)

The respondent notes that she not only told others about the ad at the time of encounter, but also engaged in WOM subsequent to her ad experience. However, interview participants generally suggest that consumers are likely to point out an ad, only to others who are with them, at the time of exposure. An example of one such response is given below, when the interviewee was asked if she told others about the Kit Kat bench that she had encountered:

*“My daughter was with me, and I pointed it out to her, as far as, ‘That’s cute; what do you think of that?’ And she [thought] it was really cool,*

*and wanted to take a big bite out of it! But other than that—because it was just us—no.”* (Julie, age 38, sales manager)

The findings indicate that a consumer is much more likely to tell others about an ad while in the vicinity of the ad, as compared to participating in word of mouth following ad exposure.

Participant responses support the theory that pleasurable consumer experiences, which provide feelings of fun and enjoyment, will result in the generation of positive WOM (Triantafillidou and Siomkos 2014). The findings that exposure to ambient ads are likely to prompt WOM support those by Dahlén et al (2009b), who find that the use of creative media results in increased WOM, beyond that of traditional media. For ambient ads, the creativity of the ad extends beyond the medium alone, and is also derived from the consumer’s ability to come into direct contact with, and possibly obtain utility from, an ad, suggesting an even greater likelihood that WOM will be generated. Finally, as respondents also refer to placement as a factor in wanting to tell others about an ad, Whitehill King and Tinkham’s (1990) findings that OOH ads produce WOM effects are supported.

The consensus among focus group participants indicate that the Kit Kat, Scotch Brite, Casino di Venezia and Lego ads would likely generate word of mouth about these ads, whereas most focus group participants agree that they would not likely tell others about either the Stihl or CoverGirl ad. While the Kit Kat, Scotch Brite and Lego ads have the advantage of brand familiarity in prompting respondents to suggest telling others about these ads, the Casino di Venezia brand was not familiar to any of the respondents, but is still typically identified by participants as an ad that would be spread through word of mouth, as all four ads are identified by respondents as being engaging and demonstrating novel uses of commonplace mediums. In contrast, respondents indicate that the perceived lack of both discernibility and brand visibility reduce the likelihood that either the Stihl or CoverGirl ads would be noticed at all, and thus would not be able to prompt word of mouth. In addition, many respondents suggest that these two ads did not significantly transform the original medium,



as compared to the other four ads shown, which they suggested would prevent them from wanting to tell others about the ad.

Interview participants offer further insight into the actual lack of participation in word of mouth, where several interviewees did not tell others about the ad they had encountered. While one participant suggests that, as a non-user of the product, he is not encouraged to talk about the ad, others indicate that the topic of advertising is not one commonly discussed among peers, and “not an everyday topic”, but also that each of the ambient ads encountered did not make a sufficient impact on any of these respondents. One participant shared her views below:

*“[I] didn’t really feel like anyone else would be interested; it was interesting, but it wasn’t life-changing...it’s interesting for an advertisement. For something that you see—how many advertisements do we see a day? Thousands. So it’s interesting in that it’s something different from the norm. But I just feel like it would take a lot for me to tell somebody about an advertisement that I saw; I don’t know how much interest other people would have in that. It’s not an interest of mine.”* (Melissa, age 24, social worker)

The respondent above previously noted that besides walking over the ad encountered, which was a floor decal of a rug, she did not engage further with the ad. In addition to the lack of interest in the topic of advertising in general, participants who did not demonstrate volitional attention to the ads encounters, also were not interested in participating in WOM. This finding further suggests that engagement with an ambient ad plays a central role in helping to create an experience, between the ad and the consumer, who can be prompted to generate word of mouth, as a result. Thus, when a consumer does not perceive to have had an experience with the ad, it is not likely that he or she will engage in word of mouth about the ad, more so when the topic of advertising does not naturally arise in conversation with others.

In addition to investigating whether consumers would engage in word of mouth for an ad and why, respondents were further asked to identify what they would tell others about the ad, to determine if they would also include the brand

in their ad descriptions. One focus group participant provided the following explanation:

*“You’d say, ‘Hey, I saw a Lego ad.’ And, ‘I see a Stihl ad.’ Because, first of all, in order to identify the ad—you’re going to call the [brand] name—‘I saw a Stihl ad, with just a clean patch.’ [Or] ‘I saw a Kit Kat ad where you see this [bench].’ So you’ll immediately call the name of the product.” (Billy, Group 3, age 63, retiree)*

While discussing word of mouth, many respondents, similar to the one above, refer to both the brand and the product in their projected descriptions to others, however only where respondents had previously identified being familiar with the brand. Where consumers were not familiar with the brand, they typically omit the brand name, mentioning only the product or service being advertised, particularly for the Casino di Venezia ad, which participants generally refer to as “the casino ad” or the “roulette wheel” when discussing word of mouth. As most interviewees were familiar with the brands encountered prior to ad exposure, the interview data can only confirm the consensus among participants to include the brand name for familiar brands when describing the ad to others. However, one interview participant provides the following explanation, when asked how his brand familiarity affected his participation in word of mouth:

*“The fact that Sprite is well known would make it easier for me to talk about it. If it were another brand, I would still want to talk about it, but not that much, because maybe it was not such a well-known brand that I would want to explain it to others—with Sprite, it’s pretty crystal clear. With Sprite, it’s easier for people to visualise...so if I tell them it was a shower like this, they would have the exact picture that I would be describing to them.” (Panagiotis, age 30, assistant brand manager)*

While several other participants allude to familiarity with the brand being easier for others to recognise or understand the ad, the respondent above provides a detailed account of the benefit of brand familiarity in encouraging word of mouth for an ambient ad, especially due to the likeness to the product. The findings thus generally indicate that brand familiarity would likely result in a consumer including the brand name when telling others about an ambient ad, whereas a

lack of familiarity will likely lead to a consumer mentioning only the product or service category. These findings support Gambetti's (2010) assertion that large, or established, companies can make use of ambient advertising to differentiate the brand and build brand salience. While she suggests that small companies can use ambient advertising to build brand awareness, this is not likely to be conveyed through WOM, as unknown or unfamiliar brands are typically not mentioned when talking about the ad.

In addition to spreading word of mouth, respondents further suggest taking photographs of ads encountered, as discussed in the preceding section. Furthermore, several respondents noted that they would share the picture with friends and through social media platforms, as suggested by one focus group respondent below:

*"I could definitely see myself making a Facebook photo of the Kit Kat bench, just because everyone knows Kit Kat, and it's very easy to understand what they're saying."* (Adam, Group 5, age 29, strategy consultant)

Another participant, this time an interview participant, suggested a similar outcome, based on his personal experience with an ambient ad, and observing those around him when in the vicinity of the ad. His response is as follows:

*"I was telling my friends about it. I also sent them a photo of me under the shower. And I think this was the case with other people as well, because there were people pointing towards their friends and telling them to come and check it out. I think a lot of photos were posted on social media, definitely. So I think word of mouth worked; people were really talking about it to others."* (Panagiotis, age 30, assistant brand manager)

While participants mainly suggest sharing of ambient ad pictures directly with personal friends, rather than through social media networks, it should be noted that social media platforms have exhibited substantial growth within recent years, with the number of Facebook users doubling between 2011 and 2014, with a current worldwide membership of 1.35 billion (Statista 2014a). For the same period, Twitter membership grew from 19 million to 63 million users

(Statista 2014b). In addition, the focus groups and interviews were conducted prior to the advent of Instagram, currently the most popular photo-sharing website with a current membership of 200 million users (Statista 2014c). The implications of social media growth not only provide additional avenues through which consumers can share photographs of ambient ads, as identified by younger participants, generally between the ages of 18 and 36, but also indirectly expose a much larger population to the ad. The perceived creativity of ambient ads, as an alternative advertising medium, thus is likely to encourage not just word of mouth, but also sharing through social media to reach an ever-growing online population, which serves as a tremendous benefit to ambient advertisers, particularly due to the typically short-lived campaigns in singular locations, which limit consumer reach. Marketers should therefore, not only consider ad exposure due to location and placement of an ambient ad, but also incorporate novel and engaging ad features, such as likeness to the product or interactivity, to encourage consumers to spread word of mouth and share the ad via social media, to vastly increase consumer reach. However, as previously noted, it is shown that consumers are more likely to share ad photos for brands which are not only familiar to them, but to the wider population, as the brand familiarity aids in recognition and understanding of the ad message.

As a result of perceived ad creativity, largely based on novelty of medium and placement features, it is reasonable to project that a consumer will engage in WOM about an ad encountered. Furthermore, brand familiarity appears to greatly increase the likelihood that a consumer participating in WOM would not only tell others about the ad, but also name the particular brand being advertised, as brand familiarity more easily allows a consumer to describe the ad, and subsequently for others to visualise the ad message. Further to telling others about an ad, some consumers are likely to share photographs of the ad that was encountered, with the growth of social media possibly further encouraging ad sharing, helping to vastly increase consumer reach through viral proliferation. Consumers' participation in word of mouth for an ad not only helps to bring additional consumers into contact with the ad, whether directly or

indirectly, but is also a signal for consumers' positive feelings towards ambient ads, as discussed in the following section.

#### **5.4 Consumer perceptions**

At present, very little research exists with reference to consumer perceptions of ambient advertising, or the brands that make use of these practices. As a relatively new and unexplored area of marketing, it is crucial for marketers to understand how consumers perceive these types of ads, in order to evolve the practice. Especially as ambient ads reach consumers within their personal space in the OOH environment, it is necessary to understand how consumer attitudes towards ambient ads, and the brands that use ambient mediums, are affected. With Storch's (2008) inconclusive investigation into perceived intrusiveness of ambient ads, further research is warranted to understand consumer perceptions of ambient advertising practices.

Within focus groups and interviews, the final set of questions posed to participants centred on their perceptions of ambient ads, whether based on actual encounters or on the pictorials presented. Respondents were asked to identify features of ambient ads that they liked or disliked, as well as to comment on their overall thoughts on ambient marketing as a practice, whether positive or negative, and how it compares to other advertising methods. After analysis of the responses, the discussion below presents the benefits of ambient marketing, as perceived by participants, as well as consumer concerns regarding the practice, and the potential effects of ambient ads on brand perceptions.

##### **5.4.1 Ad perceptions**

Beyond being used to break through ad clutter to reach consumers, creative advertising has been seen to generate positive consumer affect (Taylor et al 1994, Ang & Low 2000, Stone et al 2000, Dahlén 2005, Dahlén et al 2008, Modig & Rosengren 2014, Rosengren et al 2015). The use of novel and unexpected ad features has been seen to contribute to the perceived creativity of ambient advertising, and the resulting effects on consumer attitudes are presented in this

section. In identifying features that contribute to positive consumer affect towards ambient ads, marketers can be better informed as to the key elements to consider when developing ambient ads.

The results of the qualitative research findings reveal consensus among both focus group and interview participants perceiving ambient ads to be creative and unusual. Furthermore, these perceptions of novelty of ambient advertising are seen as translating into positive consumer affect towards these ads, with participants signalling their interest, liking and positive attitudes towards these ads. The findings that the perceived creativity of ambient ads generates positive consumer affect are consistent with empirical findings from Taylor et al (1994), Ang and Low (2000), Stone et al (2000) and Yang and Smith (2009), rather than Goodstein's (1993) research that found atypical ads to result in less favourable attitudes. Previous research findings also indicate favourable attitudes generated as a result of schema incongruity of creative or atypical ads (Lee & Schumann 2004, Dahlén & Edenius 2007, Halkias & Kokkinaki 2013). Furthermore, Wang (2006) finds that higher levels of engagement lead to increased message involvement and positive affect towards the message and the ad.

The most commonly recurring perception related by participants is that of ambient marketing being "creative", whether as a descriptor of the practice or when being compared to other advertising methods. When asked to suggest something they liked about ambient ads, every participant within the study mentioned creativity or a similar connotation. An example of one such response is provided below:

*"I like the creativity of it, that they're thinking outside the box; this is not the conventional type of advertising. It's not what you would see or what you're exposed—or over-exposed—to." (Janice, age 32, office manager)*

The general trend among respondents is that the creativity of ambient ads is largely due to its atypicality as a result of the ad features unique to ambient advertising, as discussed under groupings of components, placements and mediums. Additionally, each participant not only perceived ambient ads as being

creative, but they also all expressed an appreciation and liking for the ad originality as compared to more commonly encountered types of advertising. Below is an example of one respondent's explanation:

*"As it is right now, I find it a very good way of advertising. And the main reason [why] I appreciate advertising like this is the fact that it actually evokes your mental—your psyche—and it makes somebody think. So anything like that, where you can occupy your mind and actually see the kind of innovation that people actually think about, to me, is a plus...I look at it in the sense that it's original, and it evokes a certain way of thinking. And the originality and innovation, to me, basically stand out with this type of marketing."* (Vishal, age 28, pharmacist)

Another respondent provides a similar response to those of the preceding participants, as given below:

*"I like it because it's out of the box, completely; it's not traditional advertising, and this is what I like. It's very creative, and it puts your brain to use. It's smart and—most of the times—it's funny, from the photos that's you've shown me...it doesn't use traditional means, so it goes one step further."* (Panagiotis, age 30, assistant brand manager)

The responses exemplify the typical perceptions provided by participants, in that they like and enjoy the creativity offered by ambient marketing, mainly due to the fact that it engages them in deeper thought processing as compared to traditional ads, in understanding and assimilating the ad message. As every respondent within the qualitative research stages provides a similar response to those given above, it is reasonable to extrapolate that consumers are likely to not only identify and appreciate the creativity within an ambient ad, but also to develop a liking of the ad as a result.

Many participants within the study refer to the ability to come into direct contact with ambient ads, commonly referred to as "interactivity", with particular mention of the functionality or utility of the mediums used, as features that result in positive consumer attitudes towards the ad, as well as towards ambient ads in general. The consensus among respondents is that ad

functionality, primarily due to the choice of medium, adds value to the consumer by providing a physical benefit that was perceived as “*people-friendly and useful*” (Mike, Group 1, age 56, retiree). Having been asked what they liked about ambient advertising, one group provides the following responses:

*Andrew: You have a functional thing here [points to Lego pictorial] that has a really important function. But you’ve also found another use that complements it.*

*Dave: I think that’s excellent, the way you put that. It’s the utilitarian nature of the objects, and you’re using it as a two-fold purpose...It’s clever; and it makes me feel good about Lego that they’ve used an object that serves an important function to pedestrians.*

*Linda: Yes, I definitely think that—actually, it’s a sort of value-for-money feel about it...you think, so much money is pouring into it—my money—that’s pushing up the price of the product, and all it is, is a big hole that it goes down into, whereas these things are actually usable things, so there’s this added value to it. I don’t mind paying for that, to be able to use a bench. This one [points to Scotch Brite pictorial] is providing me with a drinking fountain. I appreciate that, yes, they want to advertise, but they’ve also provided me with a drink [Dave, Jackie and Miriam murmur in agreement]. That’s great...I would say these—the bench especially—are providing a civic reward; it’s actually serving a civic purpose.”*

(Group 4: Andrew, age 62, business consultant; Dave, age 56, CEO; Linda, age 51, company director)

The excerpt illustrates the perception commonly held by participants that functionality within an ad adds value to the consumer, thus translating into positive feelings towards the ad, particularly when compared to most other types of ads, which typically do not provide any benefit to the consumer. Furthermore, the perceptions of functionality of ad mediums can be seen to extend beyond the branding initiatives. Where one participant above notes the value offered to consumers due to the functionality of the fabricated mediums, namely the Kit Kat bench and Scotch Brite water fountain, other participants in



the same group note the functionality of the Lego ad, despite the tactile pavers providing the same utility even when unbranded.

The benefit of ambient ads over traditional advertising is their placement within consumers' immediate vicinity, which allows consumers to come into direct contact with the ad, as well as medium selection, which may allow for usability. An interviewee explains her positive feelings towards the Kit Kat bench ad that she encountered, as a result of its functionality:

*"The bench is something people can use, even if they don't know what Kit Kat is, even if they never heard of it before; and I [think] it's considerate, and a greener way of advertising because it's reusable. It's reusable, long-lasting; it's not a one-and-done. And you're not going to [deplete it] by using it; it's reusable. It's not diminishing in any way. It's going to be something that could be there today; you could take that bench and throw it outside tomorrow and use it again, and it would be somewhere useful to somebody."* (Janice, age 32, office manager)

The respondent above perceives functional ambient ads as "considerate", which reiterates the aforementioned concept of these ads being "people-friendly", in their ability to provide value to consumers, which is not seen to diminish from multiple uses. Similarly, another interviewee provides the following response when asked what he liked about the Kit Kat bench ad that he encountered:

*"The fact that it's functional; they actually thought of a way in which you could actually not purchase the product [but] use the product without paying a price. So they kind of give a competitive advantage to this product. Others—I don't know, but at least I didn't see [any]—didn't really think of this particular idea. So for them to come up with that, and to use it as a bench, and to place it somewhere that's a high-traffic area—in the [cinema] there—it's really original. So it would definitely give that advantage."* (Vishal, age 28, pharmacist)

The respondent above not only reiterates similar perceptions to the preceding participants, but also raises another point echoed by other participants, where the immediacy of the ad allows for direct contact with the brand and the product, without necessitating purchase. Additionally, similar to many other participants,

the respondent above perceives the functionality of the ad to be a novel feature when compared to typical advertising, which further contributes to positive consumer perceptions of ambient ads.

The added value afforded to consumers through branding initiatives is thus seen to create positive consumer perceptions and even liking of such ads. These findings lend further support to Ang and Low's (2000) research that provides evidence that perceived creativity generates positive affect, where their definition of 'creativity' encompasses an element of adding value to the consumer. While the pair refers to this value in terms of emotional content, the physical component of perceived utility can also be seen to add value to the consumer, and lead to positive affect in a similar way.

As previously identified, the benefits of branding extend beyond utility through physiological and informational value, to provision of entertainment value to consumers, more similar to Ang and Low's concept of emotional content. Ads which participants refer to as "interesting" were typically perceived as providing entertainment value, although these perceptions differ between consumers for individual ads. With every participant indicating a liking for ambient ads as a result of some benefit provided by these ads, whether utilitarian or entertaining, one example is given below:

*"I love the mascara brush...because I think it's such a clever combination of the bristles of the brush in the turnstile to actually see that it could be the brush of the mascara brush. I think it's just brilliant. It wouldn't enhance your [Adam's] Tube journey, would it? But it would enhance mine."* (Jane, Group 5, age 56, magistrate)

In her assertion that the ad would enhance her OOH activity, the respondent above signals her liking of the ad and positive affect towards it. Similarly, an interview participant details his liking of the Sprite beach shower ad, due to the entertainment value of the ad message, rather than the utility offered:

*"I liked that it was something that I had never seen before; I liked that it was a funny experience, that you could actually interact with it and have your friends do it, and talk about it. I liked how it was set up, and how it looked as if it was exactly the real thing. It made a*

*positive impression because it really worked, because it was realistic—in terms of what you were seeing, it looked as if it were the real thing. It made an impression because, while taking a shower, it was funny. It was a fun experience for me, and I enjoyed it a lot.”*

(Panagiotis, age 30, assistant brand manager)

A final example of liking of the ad and the development of positive affect towards the ad message is provided by the interview participant who encountered the Truly Nolan pest control car:

*“It’s a little mouse with all these features driving down the highway! I think it’s really cute. It makes a cartoon out of the car—a moving cartoon. The fact that somebody’s taken the trouble to dress up this car as a mouse is kind of humorous; I think it’s funny. I think it’s attractive and funny, and I really enjoy encountering it. It doesn’t annoy me, then; there are some ads that just, you know, you don’t look at them twice. But I really enjoy seeing the car, because it’s not always in your face, either. You know, you’ll come across it every now and again.”* (Patricia, age 53, lecturer)

The responses above together demonstrate how ambient ads can lead to consumer liking due to their atypical features as compared to traditional advertising, which participants perceive as added value of the ad message, either through utility or entertainment.

A common reference that participants make when indicating their liking of an ambient ad is the integration of the ad message into its surroundings, while allowing for recognisability of the product, or the likeness to a product element. One respondent refers to these integrations as “synergies”, as seen in his response:

*“It’s all these synergies coming together that make these ads really, really good; because it’s the relationship between many things, and the Education Centre, the Lego, the fact that the Lego is being used for a practical purpose, and where it is situated—just like the Kit Kat ad. It’s all these things coming together that make this very, very clever advertising. With the Lego, it’s the shape of the non-skid knobs,*

*and how it looks like Lego, and it's practical, just like Lego is a practical toy. And the Kit Kat, it's telling you to take a break, and it's giving you a bench that looks just like a Kit Kat. It's synergistic; I love these two ads, in particular, because of how those synergies come together and make sense for the ads and what it's trying to tell you."*

(Billy, Group 3, age 63, retiree)

The integration of these ad messages into commonplace mediums within the OOH environment is unique to ambient advertising, and is seen as a key dimension of generating positive affect among consumers. A final example is given below, by an interview participant encountering an Ikea rug decal:

*"It's a decal on the floor, [with] the cohesion between it being a rug on the floor, the juxtaposition of it being a really fancy rug in kind of a grungy part of the station. All these things, I think, make it different, make it special. I feel like it kind of rewards people who are paying attention, a little bit...Some people would just walk through that [CoverGirl turnstile] and won't even notice it. But for the people that do notice it and know what it is, it's kind of like you have a little moment with it. And it's nicer, then, than if it was just the billboard alone...I like that it could be innocuous if you weren't paying attention; I think that's the really special quality."* (Melissa, age 24, social worker)

The respondent above echoes the sentiments of other participants that the ambient ad using an unexpected medium was preferable to using a typical medium, such as a billboard. Furthermore, she indicates that the integration of the ad into its surroundings provides entertainment value to her such that she perceives her enjoyment of the ad as a "reward" for noticing it. These responses all signal the development of positive consumer affect as a result of features unique to ambient advertising.

The aforementioned features that participants are seen to appreciate about ambient ads are those that provide some form of value to the consumer, where Dahlén et al (2009b) note that high perceived value produces positive consumer responses. Furthermore, non-traditional advertising, which generates little controversy, has been seen to generate positive consumer emotions and

even liking (Dahlén 2005, Dahlén et al 2009b), which is observed for ambient ads as well. Thus, in further support of research by Ducoffe (1995, 1996), Dahlén (2005) and Dahlén et al (2009b), the cumulative responses suggest that consumers are much more likely to derive entertainment value from ambient ads, as opposed to information value, but with a very strong likelihood of a consumer developing a liking for such ads, and even other positive responses such as improved brand perceptions. The generation of positive ad attitudes towards ambient advertising, due to novel and unexpected ad features, supports the concept of increased schema incongruity when encountering these ads, as demonstrated in previous research (Lee & Schumann 2004, Dahlén & Edenius 2007, Halkias & Kokkinaki 2013). Finally, the engagement resulting from these novel features, and the positive affect seen due to consumers' involvement with ambient ad messages, is in keeping with Wang's (2006) research.

The positive affect that consumers exhibit towards ambient ads serves as a signal to marketers that should encourage greater use of these ad messages, particularly as they have been addressed within this research study, namely through integration of the message into the medium and/or its surroundings. While many other examples of 'ambient' ads are seen to simply place ad messages within the OOH environment, without any perceivable integration of the ad into the medium or surroundings, ambient ads as discussed within this research study are shown to generate positive affect. The Ads of the World online database, from which the content analysis ads were selected, present roughly 5,000 ads categorised as 'ambient', yet only 494 ads were seen to integrate the ad message into the medium or surroundings. Although repeat ads from the same campaign were omitted from the sample, as well as ads using shock appeals or demarketing, this disparity illustrates the fact that marketers are not currently making considerable efforts to integrate the ad message into consumers' OOH environment. Marketers are therefore urged to undertake more thoughtful and integrated approaches to developing ambient ad messages, in terms of the medium used and its placement, in order to capitalise upon the positive consumer affect that is generated towards these ads.

#### **5.4.2 Brand perceptions**

As with ad perceptions, little research currently exists as to consumers' perceptions of brands which use ambient advertising. The creativity and novel features of ambient ads are thought to generate positive brand attitudes, as previous research into schema incongruity demonstrates the favourable ad and brand attitudes due to encounters with novel ad messages or experiences (Lee & Schumann 2004, Dahlén & Edenius 2007, Halkias & Kokkinaki 2013). Furthermore, Gambetti & Graffigna (2010) find that engagement plays a role in creating positive brand attitudes, where ambient ads have been seen to provide engaging brand experiences for consumers.

Focus group and interview participants lend support to the theory that the novelty factors of and engagement with ambient ads lead to the formation of positive brand attitudes. In several instances, the ads encountered through pictorials or in actuality are seen to reinforce positive brand attitudes, where participants were familiar with the brands prior to encounter. One example is presented below when the interviewee had previously asserted that his attitude towards the Axe brand would not change after exposure to the ambient ad:

*"...because it was purely different from the norm, different from what they usually do. But then Axe has some really way-out, far-out commercials, so you'd expect that they would do stuff that's different."*

(Sean, age 36, cinematographer)

In the instance above, the respondent indicates that he was previously aware of not only the Axe brand, but of their outlandish advertising efforts, so while he perceived the ambient execution to be "different from the norm", he believed this to be consistent with the brand's marketing strategy. However, many of the focus group and interview participants agree that the likeability of ambient ads, as previously discussed, would lead to more favourable brand perceptions. While most of these respondents simply referred to increased positive feelings towards a particular brand, several participants identified specific brand perceptions that they would develop as a result, such as "creative", "innovative" and "cutting-edge", but also "quirky", "fun" and "interesting".

One focus group participant reiterates the idea that ambient ads serve to reinforce brand perceptions, but furthers his favourable brand attitudes due to the perceived “effort” of ambient ads, as compared to traditional advertising:

*“One of the things that you like about Lego is that it is innovative; it is clever. There are so many little things—you can do almost anything with Lego. And the innovative use of the colour and the knobs and so on reinforces that view of the product...I find that you see a lot of advertising on TV, particularly, and so little thought has gone into these adverts. And it’s a complete turn-off—well, it is to me [Dave and Jackie agree]. And so a company that puts a lot of effort and thought into producing something that is clever and witty, and makes a little statement, and brings out a little empathy, if you like, to my mind, I’ll have a much warmer feeling towards them [everyone agrees], because they’ve actually taken the trouble to try and approach me.” (Andrew, Group 4, age 62, business consultant)*

Further to the perceived thoughtfulness of ambient ads in integrating the ad message into the medium used and/or its surroundings, participants indicate developing positive affect towards brands that provide utility to consumers, due to the medium used. One focus group participant shares his views:

*“With the sponge—if it were on my running route and that actually helped me and didn’t mean that I drank water around London, then, great, that would have value to me. And, you know what, my feelings towards that brand would actually probably improve.” (Adam, Group 5, age 29, strategy consultant)*

These sentiments are echoed by an interview participant, who refers to the utility of the Kit Kat bench she encountered:

*“Actually, I felt like it was kind of personal! I don’t know how to describe it—that Kit Kat cares enough that they’d put a big block of chocolate for you to sit on! It was kind of more like Kit Kat spent a lot of money to get in my face; it made me feel like that; they made me feel that they really wanted me to know their product and to see it and to actually interact with it and be there. It made me feel*

*personalised, that Kit Kat cares enough to make a bench for me to sit on, to be able to use when I'm at the cinema.” (Janice, age 32, office manager)*

The provision of utility to consumers, especially when the medium is fabricated and provides value to consumers that would otherwise not be obtained, is seen to produce positive affect towards the brand, as a result of these branding efforts. Where Rosengren et al (2015) find that the use of non-traditional mediums, as compared to traditional advertising, generate perceptions of the brand caring about consumers, the same findings are illustrated in participant responses. Additionally, the positivity towards the brand extends beyond the use of non-traditional mediums, as the ads provide utility to consumers as well. Thus, it is plausible to project that even greater brand affect is generated when the non-traditional medium offers utility to the consumer, as compared to entertainment value alone. However, further research is needed to verify and quantify consumer affect towards brands using ambient advertising, and the varying degrees of value offered to consumers.

The use of non-traditional mediums to communicate ambient ad messages further generates perceptions of high advertising value, which are then positively transferred onto perceptions of brand quality. This finding is in keeping with previous research into non-traditional media, which finds that advertising acts as a signal on which consumers draw conclusions about the brand, where high perceived value of the advertising effort leads to perceptions of high perceived value of the brand (Kirmani 1990, Dahlén et al 2008, Modig & Rosengren 2014, Rosengren et al 2015). Rosengren et al (2015) find that an ad using a non-traditional medium generates perceptions of higher advertising value, as compared to the same ad placed in a traditional medium. These perceptions are then seen to mediate positive effects of ambient messages on brand attitudes, and brand purchase intention. Several respondents support these findings, where participants report perceptions of high ad value as a result of the “effort” made to advertise through ambient or non-traditional mediums. Below is a focus group participant’s response to the Scotch Brite ad if the Scotch



Brite brand had been replaced with an unfamiliar brand, such as the hypothetical Mighty Sponge brand:

*“I would think that if the advertisers went through a lot of time and money to put the sponge there, I would think that they are probably a good brand, even if I don’t know the brand, and they put the sponge on the [water] fountain. But if you’re a no-name brand—a generic brand—you wouldn’t do that, because you don’t have the money, you’re not out there, you’re not worldwide, not well known. So I would most likely see it’s Mighty Sponge; I never heard of that brand, but it could be a pretty good brand, so I might buy it. And because they went through the effort to make a sponge into a water fountain, I would think, let me try that.”* (Shawn, Group 2, age 21, student)

Even for an unfamiliar brand, the respondent above asserts that the perceived high quality of the ambient ad would prompt him to perceive the brand quality as also being high, due to the marketing effort that he perceives the brand to exert. The respondent further signals his purchase intention as a result of the perceived ad value, in keeping with Rosengren et al’s (2015) findings. Similarly, when asked about his reactions to brands using ambient ads, one interviewee who had encountered the Kit Kat bench ad provides the following response:

*“The actual product stood out in my mind, that the people behind this product are so creative; it stands above the rest...because, in my mind, a company that would spend this type of money on advertising relates to me of the product being a good product...I guess it’s marketing on the whole. Because ever since [I was] growing up, you know the big brands. Take, for instance, Nike—you relate Nike to being a good product because of the amount of ads, the type of celebrities doing the ads. So for you to get your product on an airport carousel, your company must have some sort of good product. I’m already familiar with the Kit Kat brand, and I like the product; I think it’s a good chocolate. So seeing this ad just reaffirms that it’s a good brand with a good product.”* (Amrit, age 26, banker)

Not only did the respondent above attribute high product quality to the brand that he had encountered, but also for the examples provided within the pictorials, due to the perceived expense of advertising using an unconventional medium. The consensus among participants is the perception of high ad value of ambient advertising, and the perceptions of brands making use of these non-traditional mediums as being correspondingly high in quality. Several respondents further demonstrate their perceptions of increased product quality of brands using ambient advertising, by suggesting that they would be willing to pay a premium for the particular product. One such response is provided below, where the participant asserts that she would be willing to use the Truly Nolan pest control service based on the ad encountered, but also that she would be willing to incur higher costs:

*"I would be inclined to think that they are very visible, and so they probably offer a better service than a smaller service provider, and because they're so well known, that they're probably worth the premium."* (Patricia, age 53, lecturer)

The three responses above represent the views commonly held by participants that ambient advertising is perceived as having greater ad value over traditional advertising, which produces consumer perceptions of higher quality of the brands using these mediums.

The findings presented within this section support previous research into brand perceptions of creative or unexpected advertising. The novelty of the ad features used within ambient ads can be seen to produce favourable brand attitudes, as a result of increased schema incongruity (Lee & Schumann 2004, Dahlén & Edenius 2007, Halkias & Kokkinaki 2013) and engagement with these brand experiences (Gambetti & Graffigna 2010). The findings also provide evidence to support Gambetti's (2010) claim that large brands can use ambient communication to build brand affinity. Furthermore, ambient ads are seen to produce perceptions of the brand caring about consumers and increased ad value, leading to positive brand affect, in support of findings by Rosengren et al (2015).

Marketers are thus encouraged to utilise ambient advertising as a means of augmenting brand perceptions, particularly through the provision of added value to the consumer. This value can include utilitarian value due to the medium used, but can also comprise entertainment value, as consumers respond positively to brands using either appeal, or a combination of the two. For established or well-known brands, ambient ads can be seen to reinforce positive brand perceptions, where small or unknown brands can benefit from perceptions of high quality, as a result of the perceived ad value of ambient mediums.

#### **5.4.3 Perceptions of ambient advertising as a practice**

Whereas advertising efforts typically garner negative consumer responses (e.g. Zanot 1984, Pollay et al 1990, Mittal 1994, Yoon et al 1996, Elliott & Speck 1998, Ashill & Yavas 2005), ambient ads have not only been seen to elicit largely positive responses from participants, but the consensus among respondents was that they would actually want to see more of ambient advertising. This finding was unexpected due to its incongruence with existing literature indicating that consumers are increasingly avoiding advertising efforts (Speck & Elliott 1997, Elliott & Speck 1998, Rosengren 2008). However, a typical participant response is given by an interviewee who encountered the Kit Kat bench ad:

*"I think it's new to me, and I think it's quite catchy. And I like the creativity behind it. And I would actually like to see more advertisements in that form, I guess."* (Peter, age 29, engineer)

Similar to many participants, the respondent above notes that the creativity of the ambient ad that he encountered, coupled with the relative newness of the practice as compared to mainstream advertising media, prompts him to want to see additional ambient ads. Likewise, when asked what he disliked about ambient ads, one interviewee provides the following response:

*"I don't think I do. I actually like it. I think we should do more of it...different ads, though, different creative spins for different products."* (Sean, age 36, cinematographer)

Akin with most participants, the respondent above asserts that he could not find anything unlikeable about ambient ads; and similar to almost every participant, he indicates that he would want to see greater use of ambient ads. However, the respondent above places the caveat that he would want to see ambient ads executed in different ways, rather than repetitions of the same ad, which several participants indicate could become “boring”. Another interview participant indicates interest in the increased use of ambient advertising, again with the suggestion that campaigns demonstrate variation:

*“I think it’s great if it catches on; it’s unique; it would definitely change the landscape of marketing if it is that they use it a lot, because they wouldn’t be doing the same thing over and over. So that would help. And, compared to seeing a TV ad and all these things that annoy you after a while, this would have a greater likelihood of being effective. I’d rather see a Kit Kat advertised as a bench than on a billboard or in a magazine.”* (Hasine, Group 2, age 27, graduate student)

Thus, increased use of ambient ads as a marketing tool would likely be found acceptable and even enjoyable to consumers, especially when variation between ads is maintained.

In discussing their perceptions of ambient advertising practices, many participants compare ambient ads to traditional and mainstream advertising. The consensus from both focus group and interview participants is that ambient ads are perceived to be preferable to traditional advertising media, due to the perceived novelty of ambient ad messages. One interview participant shares her views:

*“It’s definitely something new; I think that, personally, you get tired of seeing the same crap everywhere that’s not creative, kind of like polluting walls and polluting your television, your computer. At least this has some imagination, some creativity to it. I think that it definitely makes you look twice, so it’s effective, because I wouldn’t look twice at any of the ugly real estate ads that just bombard me on my walk home...I definitely like these ambient ads better than your boring, typical advertising.”* (Melissa, age 24, social worker)

Another example of such a response is presented below, by an interviewee having encountered a Truly Nolan car ad:

*“I much prefer the ambient. And because we lead such busy lives, we don’t have time to look at posters and billboards; they just kind of fade into the landscape...I would say that you don’t need it to be as frequent as billboard and media advertising; it can be a lot less invasive than those kind of ads and yet still be very memorable...If you use your medium effectively, you can create that instant association between your product and your ad that just jumps into the consumer’s mind immediately. And I think that that creates a very positive image of the product that you’re trying to sell, much more so than just a billboard or just an ad on TV; it’s much more memorable.”* (Patricia, age 53, lecturer)

Similarly, another interview participant provides her perceptions of ambient advertising, when asked for her thoughts of the practice, in general:

*“Definitely it’s quirky and interesting, and I guess I prefer to deal with something like that. And, actually, I would be more inclined to try a product if it’s using that kind of interactive and different medium...Again, just the parallel between print or TV—or any other type of advertising—it’s cute, for example, if it were something that actually required you to walk through it, and you were physically interacting with something, as opposed to just seeing a flat, 2-dimensional image...I think it’s definitely better, in terms of not screaming at the consumer. And because it’s demonstrating the product in a unique format, it will get a positive response from consumers, as opposed to being bombarded by images or sounds or celebrities. Definitely, even if the interaction is just one time, it’s something that leaves a lasting impression.”* (Julie, age 38, sales manager)

While each respondent above details varying reasons for their perceptions of creativity of the ambient ads encountered, the collective findings demonstrate that consumers prefer to engage with ambient ads, as compared to mainstream

media. The novelty of the features due to the components, placements and mediums used in ambient advertising contributes to consumers' perceived creativity of these ads, and enjoyment of ambient advertising practices.

In addition to the positive outcomes of ambient advertising, participants were asked to detail their dislikes of specific ambient ads, however, most respondents report that they have no negative perceptions of the ads either encountered or shown through pictorials. Furthermore, participants were asked to detail their negative perceptions of the practice as a whole, and were also asked how they felt about the intrusiveness of ambient ads, in an effort to further Storch's (2008) research. Many participants claim that they had no negative feelings towards ambient advertising as a practice, with the consensus being that they enjoy these types of ads, as detailed above, and only a few perceive ambient ads to be *potentially* intrusive. No interview participants report feeling that the ambient ad that they had encountered was intrusive, and no focus group participants suggest that they personally perceive ambient ads as intrusive, based on the pictorials shown. However, several focus group participants identify how other consumers may find these ads to be intrusive. Respondents suggest that forced contact with the medium, and "overuse" of ambient media could potentially be perceived as intrusive. As discussed under features of placement, forced contact with an ad message is seen to arise when the ad is placed at entry or exit points, and also at locations where consumers are found to be waiting. One example is provided by a focus group participant:

*"I was going to say it's unavoidable—some of these things, you don't have a choice but to interact with these things. Like at the baggage carousel—I have to see that ad, even if I'm not interested. Or the mascara at the exit, you have to get through that [turnstile], so you have to interact with that ad. I mean, I personally don't mind, because I like these ads, but I can see how some people might think they're intrusive. Some people might not want to interact with a casino ad, or with a mascara ad, but they have to, because of where these ads are located." (Kandice, Group 1, age 33, project manager)*

The respondent suggests that the forced contact with ambient ads, dependent upon placement, can be perceived as intrusive to some consumers. Additionally, one group provides some debate over not just the forced contact with ambient ads, but the direct contact allowed by these ads. These participants suggest that the ability to come into direct contact, even when not forced to do so as a result of the ad's placement, might be perceived as intrusive by some consumers:

*Shawn: It's basically forcing that memory into your head. I'm looking for a water fountain: 'Alright, while you're drinking from the water fountain, you might as well look at my sponge!' Basically, you have no choice, because I want to drink water but your sponge is there. So it could be [intrusive].*

*Gabi: Once it's interactive, then I think it's going to be invasive, like the sponge, because if I have to touch it, then I guess I have to touch the Scotch Brite sponge. I'm thinking, if it is interactive, then I would understand why people would find this intrusive, but I don't think I got this [feeling].*

*Hasine: I agree. I can see certain things being a problem in being intrusive—like you said, I have no choice but to look at the [Scotch Brite] sponge because you put it there. But once it's not affecting me in any great way, I'm fine with it.*

*Ryan: I don't really agree with you, because nobody is forcing you to drink from the water fountain; it's a choice you're making. You can drink from another one that doesn't have the sponge, that's all!*

*Hasine: I suppose so, and even if there isn't another water fountain around, I guess nobody is actually forcing you to drink from it. You could just choose not to use it. So if you did think it was intrusive, you don't have to interact with that ad.*

(Group 2: Shawn, age 21, student; Gabi, age 30, office manager; Hasine, age 27, graduate student; Ryan, age 34, advertiser)

As the participants above refer to the “interactive” nature of ambient ads, this engagement is seen to be due to the direct contact with the ad rather than the use of two-way communication. Additionally, the participants do refer to the

potential intrusiveness of the ad due to the desire to benefit from the utility offered by the medium. However, as one of the group participants notes, the engagement is not forced, as consumers have the choice to make contact with the ad or avoid it, if they prefer. Again, however, the focus group participants do not personally perceive intrusiveness due to utility or direct contact of ambient ads, but it is suggested as a potential source of perceptions of intrusion.

The final suggestion of intrusiveness is the proliferation of ambient advertising. Several participants suggest the possibility of perceived intrusiveness if ambient messages are overused and become mainstream. Below is a focus group excerpt to illustrate these perceptions:

*Nigel: It would be intrusive if it were in every place, to me.*

*Adam: Yes, it needs to be transitory and temporary. If all of a sudden, Lego had that stamp on every single step on every corner...*

*Jane: [Interrupts.] Or every single bench in Hyde Park for Kit Kat.*

*Adam: Yeah, then I would actively begin to dislike it, because the intrusion's only welcome as a clever subversion of the current reality [Alex and Nigel agree]. If it became [the norm], it would just become nuts.*

(Group 5: Nigel, age 51, chef consultant; Adam, age 29, strategy consultant; Jane, age 56, magistrate)

An interview participant provides a similar response, indicating negative sentiments if ambient messages become widely proliferated:

*"I think it's good seeing it, but it's not good seeing it everywhere. If you're walking around, and everywhere something keeps reminding you of something—like products—then that's not good; everything becomes too commercialised." (Marco, age 31, personal trainer)*

The respondents above indicate that widespread use of ambient media would be perceived as being intrusive, or conjuring negative affect towards the practice, although limited use of these ads is seen as enjoyable. However, while participants suggested that overuse of ambient ads could be seen as intrusive, the research study does not consider measurement of acceptable levels of ambient media usage, which is thus identified as an area for further research.



Based on the views provided by the participants above, it is possible that forced contact with ambient messages, and proliferation of ambient media, may shift consumers' perceptions of ambient advertising from enjoyable to intrusive. This perceived intrusiveness is likely to occur when consumers consider ambient ad levels to add to clutter rather than break through it, as Ha (1996) finds that an individual consumer will judge ads to be intrusive as a result of perceived ad clutter.

In contrast to the findings on intrusiveness, every participant states that they do not perceive ambient ads to be intrusive, even when forced to use a medium carrying an advertising message, largely because they view conventional advertising to be much more intrusive in comparison. An example of one such response is provided below:

*"How do I feel about it? I suppose we have to accept that there is going to be a degree of publicity and advertising. If I had the choice between it being on a billboard—or at the side of the road—or on a carousel in the airport, I'd certainly rather it be in the airport than spoiling the countryside." (Paul, age 59, teacher)*

The respondent above, like many others, indicates that ambient ads are preferable to billboards, which are seen to be more intrusive due to their incongruent placement within the environment. However, respondents typically suggest that they do not feel ambient ads to be intrusive due to the perceived creativity and cleverness of the ads, whether on their own or when compared to traditional advertising. This discovery is in keeping with the finding that participants enjoy ambient ads and indicated that they wanted to see more of these types of messages. A focus group participant shares the following perceptions to illustrate this point:

*"It's more of an acceptable intrusion because it is not being forced upon you; it is almost pleasant because it is clever. Anything that is clever, you look and you admire; it becomes a pleasant thing...obviously you are pleased, whereas other advertising is just downright aggravating...But you're participating in something, i.e. you're looking at a television show that you want to see; someone*

*interrupts your [programme] to show you something that you do not want to see; therefore you may now build resentment. You're looking at football—or anything—and you're happy, and people interrupt it to show you something else; it becomes annoying. When you are walking down there [points to Kit Kat pictorial] and you happen to see [that], there's nothing intrusive about having a Kit Kat bench that you're sitting on. It's not interrupting the flow of your life. It blends into the flow of your life, and therefore becomes more acceptable to you.” (Billy, Group 2, age 63, retiree)*

The response above provides an example where participants indicate that ambient ads are not intrusive, as they do not interrupt concurrent activity. Research into ambient advertising highlights the non-interruptive characteristic of these messages within consumers' OOH environments (Gambetti 2010, Biraghi et al 2015, Rosengren et al 2015), and Rayport (2013) further suggests that this lack of interruption can encourage engagement with the ad message. The respondent above supports this finding, attributing this lack of interruption in OOH activity to positive attitudes towards ambient advertising as a practice.

While most respondents indicate that they do not find ambient ads to be intrusive due to their enjoyment of the ads, largely due to the perceived creativity and novelty, the responses above suggest that ambient ads are perceived to be less disruptive when compared to conventional advertising. Elliott and Speck (1998, p.37) suggest that “*disruption is less likely in print media since readers control the duration of ad exposure*”, which helps to further explain the views above. Similar to print advertising, as opposed to television and radio advertising, consumers can typically control the length of their exposure to ambient media, making it less likely to be considered a disruption. Even when exposure to ambient ads is lengthy, such as in waiting locations, the presence of the ad does not disrupt the consumer's activity, whereas radio and television ads interrupt activities, namely listening to music and watching a programme. Thus, even where interaction with an ambient ad is forced upon a consumer, as long as the ad is not disruptive of their actions, it is likely that these ads will not be perceived as being intrusive. Furthermore, based on participants' responses,

even when an ad is interruptive of their activity, the enjoyment derived from the ad through its creativity, as compared to traditional advertising, is likely to negate any perceptions of intrusion.

While Storch's (2008) investigation into perceived intrusiveness of ambient advertising proved inconclusive, the findings presented above indicate that consumers generally do not perceive ambient ads to be intrusive. This lack of intrusiveness is due to the perceived creativity of the practice, and the non-interruptive nature of these ads, when conducting activities within the OOH environment. However, it must be noted that ads for goods and services do not typically make use of shock appeals, as with the ad investigated by Storch. Instead, these ads make use of ad appeals aligned with Schmitt's (1999) framework of experience providers, namely sensory, affective, creative cognitive, physical and relational dimensions. Although the ad investigated by Storch is for a purchasable service, namely a thriller and horror television channel, the use of shock tactics is typically limited to ads used for public awareness and demarketing. Further research is thus needed to understand how consumers perceive intrusiveness of these messages that use shock or scare tactics. However, the findings above demonstrate conclusively that ambient advertising for purchasable goods and services is not seen to generate feelings of intrusiveness or negative sentiment towards the practice. Conversely, ambient ad practices are enjoyed by consumers, considered to be pleasant ad experiences, and are seen to foster positive attitudes towards these messages.

The findings above are encouraging for marketers to utilise ambient advertising to communicate ad messages to consumers, as consumers view the practice positively, and enjoy encountering these ads. As Storch's (2008) research suggests the possibility of perceived intrusiveness due to the use of shock appeals within ambient ads, especially as consumers typically come into direct contact with these messages during their OOH activity, marketers are discouraged from using scare tactics within their messages. Instead, marketers should focus on integrating features based on Schmitt's (1999) framework to provide compelling and enjoyable brand experiences for consumers. While ambient ads are generally not perceived to be intrusive, marketers must be

mindful of placements of ads where consumers are forced to come into contact with the ad message, as this can be potentially viewed as intrusive within a consumer's personal space, within the OOH environment. Finally, while marketers are urged to make greater use of ambient advertising, the proliferation of the practice into a mainstream form of advertising is highly discouraged. Not only can overuse of ambient advertising be perceived as intrusive and foster negative sentiments, but the benefits of the novelty of these ad messages will be lost if the practice evolves from atypical to conventional.

## **5.5 Summary**

The analysis and discussion presented within this chapter focused primarily on the individual ad features identified within the content analysis as influencing consumer engagement with ambient ad messages. Projections were made as to the impacts each ad feature would make on consumer engagement, based on concepts and theories identified within the preceding literature review. The quantitative data produced from the content analysis was used to demonstrate how marketers currently employ ad features within actual ambient advertising practices. Insights provided from the qualitative data, through focus groups and interviews, illustrate the effectiveness of these practices in encouraging consumer engagement with ad messages, and implications for marketers were addressed for each ad feature. These implications suggest to marketers how ambient ads could be developed or executed in order to produce messages that stimulate engagement, by providing a brand experience to consumers. The concept of ad novelty of ambient advertising was then examined, where features unique to ambient ads were identified, and their impacts upon behavioural responses reviewed. The specific responses investigated as a result of ad novelty were volitional attention, where consumers were seen to actively participate in the communication of ad messages, and the generation of word of mouth, as consumers share their experience of encountering ambient ads with others. Finally, consumer perceptions were examined and discussed, which addressed perceptions of ambient ads, brands that make use of these messages, and the practice in general.

Within the section examining ad features, features were grouped according to the content analysis schema of categories: components, placement and medium. A total of nine categories and 27 subcategories of features were analysed and discussed. Under the category of components, ads depicting product elements of product, product target, product effect, feature and symbol were discussed. Marketers were seen to mainly depict the product or product feature within ambient ads. While there was no indication as to whether depiction of one product element over another impacts upon consumer interest to engage with ambient ads, the key finding was that a likeness to the particular product element would stimulate engagement. This engagement occurs as a result of appropriate medium selection, and integration of the element into the medium, to produce a recognisable and identifiable product element. When the actual product is used in an ad, whether as sold commercially or a modified version of the product, a brand experience is seen to be created, as consumers are able to engage with the product outside of the POS. However, marketers largely do not include the product in any way when developing ambient ads, signalling a missed opportunity to drive consumer engagement and provide compelling brand experiences for consumers.

Investigation of placement features indicated that marketers primarily place ads where consumers can come into direct contact with the ad messages. This strategy is seen to improve the likelihood that consumers will engage with these messages, as compared to ads that are placed out of consumer reach. Due to the use of commonplace objects to transmit ambient messages, these mediums are seen to engage consumers through multisensory appeals when placed within direct contact, as consumers are able to perceive ad messages through tactile senses, as well as visually. In addition, auditory, olfactory and taste senses can be engaged when consumers are brought into direct contact with ads, although taste appeals are seen as sampling strategies used in conjunction with ambient campaigns, rather than integrating taste appeals into the actual ads. While marketers seldom place ads out of consumer reach, engagement with these ads can also be augmented through multisensory

appeals, namely auditory and olfactory, as consumers are not able to use tactile senses to perceive ads placed out of reach.

Examination of forcing consumers to come into contact with ambient ads indicated that ads placed at entry/exit points or waiting areas would urge consumers to notice the ad message, but not necessarily foster engagement. Particularly when ads are placed at entry and exit points, where consumers have short-lived contact with these messages, engagement is not likely to be generated, therefore marketers must rely on other ad features to stimulate consumer involvement at these locations. Conversely, ads placed at waiting points are seen to encourage engagement, as they can provide a welcome distraction for consumers, due to the ad novelty, during an unpleasant activity. As almost a third of ambient ads were seen to be placed at waiting areas, marketers are encouraged to provide brand experiences for consumers at these locations, through thoughtful transformation of the medium, rather than using these locations to simply communicate ad messages where consumers are held captive.

The discussion of features due to the medium used first identified dimensionality as a component influencing engagement. Marketers were seen to produce 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional ads almost equally, with slightly greater use of the latter. However, 3-dimensional ads are demonstrated to more effectively engage consumers, due to the stimulation of tactile senses, and the ability to produce a greater likeness to the product element through the additional dimensionality. Furthermore, the novelty of 3-dimensional ads within consumers' OOH environment is seen as another motivator of consumer engagement with these ad messages. Marketers are thus encouraged to make greater use of 3-dimensional ads, to both garner attention and engagement with the ad message.

The provenance of ambient ad mediums was considered as another feature influencing engagement. While marketers heavily rely on pre-existing mediums in which to integrate ad messages, the findings indicate that fabricated mediums, particularly ones that offer some benefit or value to the consumers, are more likely to stimulate engagement with the ad and the brand. Consumers

are willing to engage with ad messages using pre-existing mediums, when the chosen medium clearly communicates the product element. However, the use of fabricated mediums allows marketers greater flexibility to represent the product element realistically, as well as placement of these ad messages where the ad message is relevant to consumer activity, both of which are seen to encourage engagement. The findings thus suggest to marketers to consider greater use of fabricating mediums for the purpose of communicating ad messages.

While two-way communication has been suggested in previous research to stimulate interest and engagement with ambient messages, almost three-quarters of the ads examined showed only one-way communication. Two-way communication allows for consumers to become co-creators of the ad message as they trigger a particular ad effect, which provides an interactive experience and fosters engagement with the ad message. Ads featuring only one-way communication are still seen to be engaging, due to the direct contact consumers have with these messages, and the novelty of the ad mediums, but not as a result of the lack of interactivity. Marketers are thus urged to incorporate greater use of two-way communication and interactive elements when developing ambient ads.

The benefit of branding of ambient mediums was seen to provide value to consumers through physiological value, informational value, and experience with the product. Additionally, while not examined in the content analysis, qualitative findings demonstrated that consumers also gain entertainment value through ambient advertising. Utilitarian and entertainment value are both seen to stimulate consumer interest and curiosity, leading to engagement with these ad messages. Furthermore, consumers are seen to engage with utilitarian mediums, despite not demonstrating a need for the particular utility offered by the ad, where engagement results due to the novelty of the value provided by these ads. However, less than 10% of ads within the content analysis sample provided any form of utility to consumers, indicating that marketers should make greater use of these ad features in order to engage consumers and provide brand experiences. While ambient ads, in general, are seen to provide entertainment value due to the novelty of the ad features identified within this study, these perceptions are subjective, and vary between both consumers and

ad executions, making it difficult to predict how consumers may collectively engage with ambient ads due to entertainment value.

The final ad feature investigated was the demonstration of product functionality, whether a product feature, result, or benefit. Only about 3% of the ambient ad sample comprised ads that demonstrated the actual product functionality, primarily due to incorporation of the actual product in the ad, whereas marketers preferred to represent product functionality through the medium used. In more than half the ads examined, no attempts were made to demonstrate product functionality in any way. Qualitative findings into this ad feature were limited, due to the lack of actual consumer encounters with these types of ads, but projections were made that demonstrating or representing product functionality would engage consumers through creative cognitive experiences. Incorporating the actual product into ambient ads to demonstrate product functionality is suggested to engage consumers, more than through representation, akin to the use of brand pushers in stealth marketing to allow consumers to have first-hand experience with the product and the brand. Marketers are therefore encouraged to consider integration of actual products into ambient ads, to provide a brand experience for the consumer.

The identified ad features are seen to provide novel and unexpected ad experiences for consumers when encountering ambient ads. The novelty of encountering these types of messages is seen to result in volitional attention in several instances, where participants recounted voluntarily engaging with ambient ads, and even diverging from their OOH activity to do so. This finding is unexpected due to consumer avoidance and negative sentiment towards advertising, as identified in the literature review. However, the novelty of ambient ad features, particularly the provision of utilitarian or entertainment value, has been demonstrated to stimulate interest and curiosity within consumers, and lead to volitional attention to these ads. In particular, ads that exhibit a likeness to the product element are seen to attract volitional attention, as well as placing ads at waiting points and where consumers can come into direct contact with ad messages. Furthermore, participants showed an interest in taking pictures of or with ambient ads, as a dimension of volitional attention,



which could then be shared to spread the ad message to others who may not have encountered the ad. Participants suggest generating word of mouth by sharing these pictures through social media networks, augmenting the ad reach. Further investigation into the generation of word of mouth indicates that the novelty of ambient ads, and their atypicality from conventional advertising, stimulates participants to tell others about the ad they encountered, although specific ad features have not been identified as driving word of mouth behaviour. However, brand familiarity has been identified as a motivator to spread word of mouth, as receivers would be more likely to understand the ad message when the consumer is attempting to convey a familiar brand or product. For unfamiliar brands, participants indicate that they would still likely engage in word of mouth, but not include the brand name when describing the ad.

The final section within the discussion addressed consumer perceptions of ambient advertising. With growing negative sentiment towards advertising efforts, ambient media presents an opportunity for marketers to reach consumers in a way that can generate positive affect and liking of the ad, as well as positive brand perceptions. The discussion demonstrates that consumers are likely to enjoy ambient ads due to the value derived as a result of the creativity, direct contact and possible utility offered by these ads. Participants further assert wanting to see an increase in the number of ambient ads encountered, encouraging marketers to make greater use of the practice.

Brands communicating with consumers through ambient mediums have been perceived positively, with positive affect being generated for these brands, especially for lesser-known brands. Positive perceptions of familiar brands are seen to be reinforced through ambient advertising, and several participants note improved brand affect towards these brands, especially when the brand is perceived to care for consumers. This perception of consumer care is typically demonstrated through use of mediums that provide utility, such as physiological value, to the consumer. Furthermore, the high perceived value of ambient ads typically translate into high perceived value of the advertised brands, where these brands are thought to be of high quality, leading to positive consumer attitudes towards these brands.

Finally, the investigation into perceptions of ambient advertising, as a practice, demonstrates that consumers prefer these ad messages to traditional advertising, and participants demonstrate positive attitudes towards ambient advertising, in general. Examinations of perceived intrusiveness of ambient advertising found that participants do not view these messages as intrusive, but suggest forced contact with these ads as potentially intrusive. Proliferation and overuse of ambient advertising, to the point that it can be considered mainstream media, is also identified as potentially producing perceptions of intrusiveness, and negative affect towards the practice. However, consumers are seen to generally like ambient advertising efforts, particularly due to the non-interruptive characteristic of these ads within the OOH environment, and due to the features unique to ambient ads, which are seen as unique and engaging. These positive perceptions of ambient advertising perceptions should encourage marketers to make greater use of ambient media as discussed within this study, most notably through integration of the ad message into the medium and/or its surroundings.

# 6 Conclusion

---

## **6.1 Research contribution**

Following the analysis of findings produced from the content analysis, focus groups and interview stages of the research, a detailed discussion of the ad features influencing consumer engagement was presented. The key contributions of this study are highlighted within this chapter, first discussing the theoretical contributions of the study, and how the findings further existing research within ambient advertising, and wider marketing literature. The methodological contribution is then presented, based on the use of the mixed-methods approach within the study to demonstrate the effectiveness of ambient advertising features in stimulating consumer engagement. The suggestions provided within the analysis and discussion are then summarised and presented as the managerial contribution, with the aims of identifying how marketers can develop ambient ads that interest consumers to engage with these messages, and create a brand experience for consumers within the OOH environment.

### ***6.1.1 Theoretical contribution***

The research presented contributes to the limited literature on ambient marketing, and also furthers findings on out-of-home advertising, alternative advertising media and Dahlén's investigations into use of creative media. The findings further the discussion on creative advertising on the whole, which focuses on ads perceived to be creative within mainstream media, rather than perceived creativity of non-traditional media channels. The findings add to research into engagement, particularly engagement with unconventional advertising media, and involvement of consumers with advertising messages. Finally, the research contributes to investigations of consumer perceptions of non-traditional media, through examination of perceptions of ambient ads and the practice as a whole, as well as brands that make use of these messages. The discussion below details these contributions, and identifies specific research findings that add to each area of existing literature.

The study provides empirical investigation into ambient advertising efforts, where much of the existing literature is purely conceptual, although providing useful theory on which to build further research. While Shankar and Horton (1999) suggest the role of ambient advertising in driving sales, Luxton and Drummond (2000) view these ads as reinforcing and serving as brand reminders, and many more researchers assert the primary role of ambient ads as breaking through clutter to reach consumers where traditional messages cannot (e.g. Hutter & Hoffmann 2011, Jurca 2012, Hutter & Hoffmann 2014, Hutter 2015, Jurca & Madlberger 2015). However, Gambetti (2010) first discusses the role of ambient advertising in engaging consumers with ad messages and brands, followed by several research studies investigating consumer-brand relationships (e.g. Chionne & Scozzese 2014, Biraghi et al 2015, Saucet & Cova 2015). This research study builds upon this concept of consumer-brand engagement, and provides empirical findings to identify how ambient ads can be developed to foster this relationship. Building upon Hutter's (2015) investigation of ad dimensionality and the use of one-way and two-way communication in ambient ads, the findings extend to produce nine categories and 27 subcategories of ad features that are seen to influence consumer engagement. Each ad element is discussed in detail to develop theoretical claims, based on surrounding concepts within advertising literature, of how each feature can stimulate consumer interest and motivate consumers to engage with ambient messages. Qualitative data findings are then used to provide further insights to support these concepts, or suggest where further research is needed to investigate these effects.

The research adds to Gambetti's (2010) and Hutter's (2015) suggestions of engaging consumers through use of interactive or two-way communication elements, by providing findings to support this concept. Furthermore, dimensions of ambient advertising have been developed and discussed which have not been previously recognised within advertising literature, which identify features that contribute to consumer engagement with ambient ads and brands. The findings show that engagement is encouraged due to features relating to components, placements and mediums, and specific ad features are identified as prompting engagement. The features seen to foster engagement are product

incorporation, multisensory stimuli, and integration of messages into mediums such that a likeness to the product element is produced. Placements where consumers come into direct contact with advertising messages, already commonly used in practice, encourage engagement, as well as placements at waiting areas, as consumers actively seek out stimuli that distract from the unpleasant task of waiting.

The findings contribute to existing data of forced ad exposures by researchers within OOH advertising and ambient advertising (e.g. Woodside 1990, Dahlén & Edenius 2007, Dahlén et al 2009b, Lopez-Pumarejo & Bassell 2009). The study indicates that these placements can be effective in garnering consumer attention, as consumers are forcibly exposed to ads, which thus break through advertising clutter, but without necessarily encouraging consumers to engage with these ad messages. Instead, as suggested by Rosengren et al (2015), the findings indicate that these messages must add value to consumers in order to produce engagement. This value is identified within the content analysis as physiological or informational value, as well as consumer experience with the actual product. Additionally, participant findings indicate that perceived entertainment value also fosters engagement with these ad messages.

The examination of two-way communication within ambient advertising adds to research into interactivity, which is centred on Internet-based advertising, where about a quarter of ambient ads are seen to provide reciprocity between the consumer and the ad message. Where there is considerable research into interactivity of online advertisements, (e.g. Sundar et al 1998, Lombard & Snyder-Duch 2001, Liu & Shrum 2002, Johnson et al 2006), ambient ads that feature two-way communication are found to provide engaging and compelling brand experiences for consumers, as specifically suggested by Schmitt (1999), Gambetti (2010) and Hutter (2015), where this study provides empirical findings to support concepts developed by these researchers.

The concept of volitional attention, as a result of perceived ad novelty, contributes to ambient advertising literature, as it has not been previously identified or discussed by any researcher within this field. The idea of volitional attention fits with suggestions by Rosengren et al (2015) that the aim of ambient

advertising is to encourage consumers to approach these ad messages. Ads that exhibit a likeness to the product element, due to appropriate medium selection, have been seen to stimulate consumer interest and curiosity in these messages, and foster engagement. Similarly, ads that provide some form of value to consumers, whether utilitarian or entertainment, are demonstrated to encourage consumer engagement and develop the consumer-brand relationship.

The study also adds to findings by Woodside (1990) and Whitehill-King and Tinkham (1990) of the generation of WOM following encounters with ads found within the OOH environment. While these studies investigate WOM produced by traditional OOH advertising, this study specifically investigates WOM effects of ambient advertising, as a non-traditional ad medium, similar to Dahlén et al (2009b). These findings support previous research that creative or non-traditional media stimulate WOM, due to the perceived novelty of these messages (Dahlén et al 2009b), and perceptions of brand experiences being fun and pleasurable (Triantafillidou and Siomkos 2014).

The findings expand upon work by Lopez-Pumarejo and Bassell (2009) and van Meurs and Aristoff (2009) into consumer perceptions of OOH advertising, as ambient advertising falls within this marketing umbrella. The research into ambient advertising expands upon existing work in alternative media and Dahlén's creative media. While distinct from stealth marketing, the research considers literature from Kaikati and Kaikati (2004), Martin and Smith (2008) and Ashley and Leonard (2009) in assessing consumers' perceptions of brands using ambient marketing, as a potentially intrusive ad medium, and one which uses placements where the consumer is vulnerable. More closely related to Dahlén's creative media, the research into ambient advertising builds upon his range of works (Dahlén 2005, Dahlén & Edenius 2007, Dahlén et al 2009a, Dahlén et al 2009b) into understanding how consumers respond to ads utilising novel media. This study finds that, similar to creative media, ambient ads are able to break through advertising clutter due to the perceived novelty of the ad features used within the practice, particularly those that are unique to ambient ads, such as provision of utility or likeness to the product element. Further to breaking through clutter, these ad features are seen to stimulate consumer

interest and curiosity in these ad messages, to produce engagement between the consumer and the ad message, as well as the brand. Additionally, similar findings are produced that indicate positive consumer affect towards ads as a result of perceived creativity, adding to research of creative media and creative appeals within traditional advertising (e.g. Taylor et al 1994, Ang & Low 2000, Stone et al 2000, Lee & Schumann 2004, Dahlén 2005, Dahlén & Edenius 2007, Dahlén et al 2008, Halkias & Kokkinaki 2013, Modig & Rosengren 2014, Rosengren et al 2015).

This research adds to existing literature on creativity within advertising, by exploring the perceptions of novelty, specifically within ambient advertising. While several researchers define ad creativity (e.g. Heckler & Childers 1992, Goodstein 1993, Taylor et al 1994, Tellis 1998, Lee & Mason 1999, Ang & Low 2000, Stone et al 2000, Pieters et al 2002, Smith & Yang 2004, Till & Baack 2005, Ahmad & Mahmood 2011), creativity has been expressed as a dimension of ads within mainstream media, namely television and print. For ambient advertising, the research provides findings that the practice itself of ambient advertising is perceived as creative, due to ad features that are novel and unexpected, and unique to these messages. The investigation of ad novelty adds to existing literature, as the findings indicate positive influences on consumer interest in engaging with creative ad messages, as well as on ad and brand perceptions, due to perceived ad novelty.

The findings build upon existing research of brand perceptions of creative or incongruous advertising messages, with existing studies indicating positive attitudes due to consumers' perceived novelty of these ads (e.g. Lee & Schumann 2004, Dahlén & Edenius 2007, Gambetti & Graffigna 2010, Halkias & Kokkinaki 2013). The study produces findings that support this concept of positive consumer affect arising from perceived ad novelty, and enjoyable brand experiences provided by ambient ads, specifically. These brand attitudes are seen to reinforce existing positive attitudes, and further augment this positive affect, particularly for brands with which a consumer is not familiar. Furthermore, the high perceived ad value of ambient advertising is found to be transferred onto brand perceptions, where these brands are also thought to be of

high quality. This finding supports and expands upon current works into perceptions of ad value, as provided by (Kirmani 1990, Dahlén et al 2008, Modig & Rosengren 2014, Rosengren et al 2015).

Consumer affect towards and perceptions of ambient ads, as an additional advertising channel, are also examined, in an effort to expand upon research into advertising clutter (e.g. Speck & Elliott 1997, Elliott & Speck 1998, Rosengren 2008), and the findings of increasing negative sentiment towards advertising in general (e.g. Zanot 1984, Pollay et al 1990, Mittal 1994, Yoon et al 1996, Ashill & Yavas 2005). The research helps to further Ha's (1996) work into perceived intrusiveness of advertising, and more directly builds upon Storch's (2008) study of perceived intrusiveness of ambient advertising, by producing empirical findings into intrusiveness of ambient ad messages. These findings indicate that consumers do not typically perceive ambient ads as intrusive, due largely to the perceptions of novelty of these ads, as well as the non-interruptive nature of this form of advertising, as suggested by Gambetti (2010), Biraghi et al (2015) and Rosengren et al (2015), as well as Rayport (2013) for ads placed within the public sphere. Furthermore, qualitative findings suggest how consumers may potentially develop perceptions of intrusiveness of ambient ads, identified as forced exposures to ambient advertising, particularly for interactive ads, and proliferation of ambient advertising to the point that the messages are no longer perceived as novel.

The investigation of engagement within ambient advertising contributes to more general literature on advertising engagement, and the provision of brand experiences, as based on Schmitt's (1999) work, and including research by Brakus et al 2009, Zarantonello and Schmitt (2010), Rayport (2013), Triantafillidou and Siomkos (2014), as well as Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) and Pine and Gilmore (1998). The findings presented within this study demonstrate that dimensions of compelling brand experiences, as identified by these researchers, are seen to encourage consumer engagement, particularly the use of multisensory stimuli, relevant placement of ad messages, and aesthetic appeals. Schmitt's (1999) framework of experience providers is particularly useful in identifying the ways in which marketers can develop ads, based on



sensory, affective, creative cognitive, physical and relational dimensions of experience, as developed by Gambetti (2010) for research into ambient advertising, specifically. Most notably, the study responds to calls by Gambetti (2010) for research into engagement with ambient advertisements, and provides empirical findings to demonstrate how specific ambient ad features can encourage consumers to engage with ad messages and the advertised brands, and create enjoyable brand experiences for consumers.

The findings provided in this study have been shown to make a theoretical contribution to several different streams of advertising literature, although to varying degrees. The most significant contributions are to ambient marketing and the wider field of OOH advertising, and the use of creative appeals in advertising. In addition to expanding upon existing theory, the study provides methodological contributions as well as practical advertising considerations for marketers, as discussed below.

### ***6.1.2 Methodological contribution***

Due to the lack of empirical research into ambient marketing, the research contributes to discussions surrounding the topic, through implementation of commonly accepted methodologies. The use of a mixed-methods approach to investigate ambient ads and their ability to engage consumers with the ad message and the brand contributes to empirical findings of ambient advertising, in general, and specifically as a strategic tool for consumer engagement.

Through a quantitative content analysis of a sample of 494 ambient ads, the study identifies categories of ad features that are seen to influence consumer engagement. As true exploratory research, these categories were devised based on qualitative findings from focus groups, as no empirical studies currently examine the concept of engagement within ambient advertising. Moreover, existing literature lacks discussion of specific and executional ad features that would serve to engage consumers with ambient messages. Thus, reliance is placed upon focus group findings, rather than conceptual literature, to form the foundation of the content analysis category development. Within these categories, iterative pre-testing of ad coding develops a series of subcategories of

ad features identified within ads used in the content analysis. Each ad feature category is thus separated into individual elements that can be integrated into ambient ads.

The qualitative data provides consumer insights into the influences of individual ad features on engagement. These findings not only suggest to marketers the features with which consumers are more interested to engage, but also where there is disparity between consumer interest and marketers' use of these ad features in actual ambient ads. The interview findings provide recounts of actual ambient advertising, and demonstrate specific engagement behaviours that consumers exhibit when encountering these ads in the real world, rather than in a laboratory setting. In conjunction with the focus group findings, the qualitative data indicates various ways in which consumers may engage with ambient advertising as a result of the specific ad features identified within the content analysis. These insights allow for an understanding of the possible engagement outcomes of implementing an ambient campaign, and consumer perceptions of brands that advertise through ambient media. The qualitative findings further illustrate consumer perceptions of individual ads, and the practice as a whole, identifying an interest in ambient ads, and suggesting that marketers make greater use of these mediums.

Comparisons made between the quantitative and qualitative findings signal to marketers where they are not currently capitalising on the benefits of identified ad features to motivate consumer engagement. The analysis of these individual ad elements identifies which features marketers include within ambient ad executions, to suggest where specific ad features may be overused or underutilised. Thus, comparing consumer insights with current ambient advertising practices reveals the ad features on which marketers should place greater reliance, to attract consumer attention, interest and engagement, as well as further considerations for integrating these features into ambient ads. The research presented then provides and identifies future research opportunities, and accepted methodological platforms upon which to build further understanding of ambient advertising.

### **6.1.3 Managerial contribution**

Although only a subset of ambient ads is considered within this study, the findings provide a wealth of insights useful for marketing managers, and many suggestions to marketers to improve upon current ambient advertising practices. With a lack of empirical findings of outcomes resulting from exposure to ambient ads, the study suggests how consumers may be interested in engaging with ambient ads, and demonstrates how consumers are stimulated by novel ad features to engage with these ad messages in actuality. The findings not only illustrate possible engagement behaviours due to specific ad features, but also the consumer perceptions that result from this engagement.

The findings indicate that consumers are interested in engaging with ads where the product element is recognisable and identifiable within the medium chosen to communicate the ad message, regardless of which product element is used. However, the depiction of symbols is discouraged, due to its abstract character, which can then be attributed to not only alternative brands, but also other products. Instead, marketers should consider integrating product elements that are closely related to the specific brand, in order to engage consumers with the ad message, and also to create an identifiable brand experience for them. Incorporating multiple product elements into the ad message will further aid in fostering engagement, as each element serves as a product or brand cue, increasing schema incongruity and the resulting interest in the ad message.

The integration of the product, whether the actual version as sold commercially or a modified version for use within the ad, is largely avoided by marketers, identifying a missed opportunity to bring consumers into direct contact with the product outside of the point of sale. As the use of brand pushers in stealth marketing is suggested as an effective strategy to allow consumers in the public sphere to have first-hand experience with the product, ambient advertising can also provide this opportunity, but in a transparent manner, where consumers are aware of the advertising effort. Additionally, as marketers frequently use ambient advertising to communicate product functionality or product attributes, they are further encouraged to incorporate the product into these ads, rather than relying on representation of these product benefits, to

provide consumers with first-hand experience of them. As the vast majority of ambient ads do not demonstrate product incorporation, marketers should consider how their products can be integrated into ad messages to allow consumers the opportunity to engage with the product directly, and create a brand experience that is relevant to consumers' OOH activities.

The direct contact that consumers typically have with ambient ads, as they are placed within their immediate OOH surroundings, can provide them with multisensory experiences, as they engage both visual and tactile senses. Additionally, few ads are identified as engaging consumers' auditory, olfactory and taste senses, where incorporation of these appeals, in addition to visual and tactile, is likely to produce further interest to engage with the ad message. As nearly all ambient ads are placed where consumers can come into direct contact with the message, marketers should consider how they can create multisensory experiences for consumers, even when the sensory appeal does not help to communicate the brand message, as the novelty alone of the experience can encourage consumers' engagement with the ad and the brand. However, integration of multisensory appeals to convey the ad message is likely to further encourage engagement and consumer participation in a multisensory brand experience. Although marketers rarely place ads out of consumer reach, the use of auditory appeals in these ads can further attract consumer attention, where tactile senses cannot be utilised, to provide consumers with an additional sensory input through which they can notice and further engage with the ad message.

Marketers' limited use of out-of-reach placements suggests an opportunity to reach consumers as consumers' immediate environments become overpopulated with ad messages, not limited to ambient media. While ads placed beyond consumer reach do not benefit from tactile engagement, and are likely less noticeable due to the lack of immediacy within the consumers' OOH environment, the use of multisensory appeals, namely auditory or olfactory stimuli, can improve the noticeability of these ads. These placements, along with multisensory engagement, can work to break through clutter within consumers' immediate surroundings within the public sphere, and should be considered a

useful tactic in capturing consumer attention and interest beyond typical ambient ad placements.

The placement of ambient ads at entry and exit points, and at waiting locations, are thought to force consumers to come into contact with these ad messages. While forcing consumers to encounter ad messages, these placements do not necessarily allow for engagement with the ad message or the brand. At entry/exit points, marketers must take into account the brevity of these ad exposures, which are not always suitable for placement of ad messages, especially where consumers are hurried or otherwise distracted by their activities or surroundings, such as at busy transit hubs. To encourage consumers to engage with ads at entry and exit points, these placements must be thoughtfully chosen, based on consumer activities at these locations, where consumers are afforded the opportunity to direct their attention to these messages, or where they have greater individual control over the duration of the ad exposure.

Placements at waiting points are also intended to force consumers to come into contact with ad messages, but these ads can be seen to provide enjoyable and welcome distractions from the unpleasant activity of waiting. As consumers are interested in distracting stimuli at waiting points, marketers should provide some form of value to consumers at these locations, in order to encourage engagement with the ad message and the brand. Informational, physiological or entertainment value are all shown to stimulate consumer involvement with the ad message, and are therefore encouraged for integration into ads placed in waiting areas. Similar to placements at entry and exit points, ad placement where consumers comprise a captive audience does not necessarily encourage engagement, but the incorporation of other stimulating features can help to create a brand experience for consumers where they are in contact with the ad for an extended period of time.

The unexpectedness of 3-dimensional advertising encourages consumer engagement due to the provision of novel ad experiences. While 2-dimensional ads can effectively attract consumer attention and even foster engagement, these outcomes are not due to the dimensionality of the medium, but rather as a result

of other ad features incorporated within the message. Conversely, 3-dimensionality of ads attracts consumer attention and interest, due to the novelty of the dimensionality when compared to conventional OOH advertising, and the use of commonplace mediums within the environment to communicate ad messages. While marketers currently make slightly greater use of 3-dimensional mediums, as compared to 2-dimensional advertising, this practice is further encouraged to stimulate consumer interest and engagement with ambient ad messages.

Marketers typically integrate ad messages into existing objects within the OOH environment, rather than fabricating these mediums for the purpose of advertising. Marketers must consider that the perceived novelty of ambient advertising is not due to the choice of medium and surprising locations, but rather to the integration of ad messages into appropriate mediums, chosen to represent product elements that can be easily recognised by consumers. Mediums should be chosen or placed where the ad messages are relevant to consumer activity at the point of ad exposure, in order to stimulate engagement with the ad message. More effective targeting can likely be achieved through use of fabricated placements, as marketers have the flexibility to place an ad where the message is relevant within the OOH environment. Furthermore, consumers perceive the integration of ad messages within existing mediums as novel experiences, when the product element is identifiable through appropriate medium selection. However, fabricating a medium that fits within its surroundings, as a commonplace object that would exist within that environment, can produce the same effect, and the medium can be further manipulated to produce a strong likeness to the product element. Marketers should thus consider greater utilisation of fabricated mediums, once they are designed and placed where the same unbranded medium would typically be found.

Despite previous research suggesting the usefulness of two-way communication in providing engaging experiences with ambient messages (Gambetti 2010, Hutter 2015), about three-quarters of ambient ads are limited to one-way communication only. Consumers are more likely to engage with ads

where they are co-creators of the ad message, such as triggering of an ad effect, as compared to ads that limits their role to passive spectators. With two-way communication, consumers become active participants of the brand experience, as they are involved in the delivery of the ad message. Marketers are thus strongly urged to integrate interactive elements within ambient ads in order to stimulate engagement, and to provide a participative and compelling brand experience to consumers.

As ambient ads make use of commonplace objects that consumers typically use within their OOH activities, the provision of utility to consumers is a feature unique to ambient mediums. The provision of utility can bring consumers into contact with an ad message as the medium is utilised, and thus encourage engagement with the brand. The uniqueness of this feature creates a novel ad experience for consumers, and stimulates interest and curiosity in the ad and the associated brand, leading to engagement with both. This interest is seen to persist even when the consumer does not personally utilise the medium, or benefit from the value offered, where the opportunity alone to gain value from a medium is perceived as a novel ad feature. However, the brand experience is likely strengthened when the consumer does utilise the medium, thus benefitting from the utility offered, suggesting that marketers carefully consider placements of these mediums where the utility offered is relevant to consumer activity within that location. Marketers, however, seldom provide utility through ambient advertising mediums, whether as physiological value, information value or experience with the product. They are therefore urged to consider generating greater utility, beyond entertainment value, to consumers, to not only differentiate the brand from competitors, but also from typical ambient ads that offer no utilitarian value. Particularly as this feature is unique to ambient advertising, marketers should aim to provide utility through these mediums, in order to deliver an ad message that benefits the consumer, as well as the brand.

Where no utility is offered to consumers through branding initiatives, marketers can still benefit from the ad novelty resulting in landmark formation, for long-term or permanent campaigns. The branding efforts allow consumers to distinguish these mediums from unbranded ones, leading to perceptions of these

ads as personal landmarks within the OOH environment, which can be communicated with others. For this outcome, marketers must transform the branded medium sufficiently from the same unbranded mediums, and place these messages where they are accessible to the public, and allow the ad medium to become established within its surroundings.

The novelty of ambient advertising, particularly due to likeness to product elements, interactivity, and provision of utility, encourages consumers to not only engage with these messages, but to deviate from their OOH activity to do so. These features were further seen to encourage consumers to generate word of mouth for the ad and the brand, especially when the brand is well known. Marketers should not just attempt to reach consumers where they will be surprised by these messages, or where consumers are forcibly exposed to these ads, but to provide novel ad experiences due to the features unique to ambient ads. In so doing, consumers are encouraged to tell others about the ad, and spread these ads through social media networks, extending the ad reach and visibility through these platforms.

Within this study, a subset of ambient ads are examined, where the ad message is integrated into the medium and/or its surroundings, which is seen to produce positive consumer affect towards these ads and the respective brands. However, most ads classified as 'ambient' within practice do not demonstrate this integration. Marketers should more carefully consider integrated approaches when developing ambient ads, with deliberate attempts to incorporate the medium and ad placement into the delivery of the ad message, to create or augment positive ad and brand attitudes.

To further improve brand perceptions, some form of value to the consumer, whether utilitarian or entertainment, should be provided through the medium used. Additionally, the perceived high value of ambient advertising is seen to be transferred onto consumers' brand perceptions. Through provision of utility, established brands can reinforce or augment positive brand perceptions, and unknown brands can benefit from perceptions of high brand quality due to the perceived effort and value in the development of ambient messages.



Finally, although not researched within this study, marketers are discouraged from using scare tactics and shock appeals within ambient advertising, particularly where consumers are forcibly exposed to these messages, which may foster negative sentiments towards these ads and the practice as a whole. These sentiments can include feelings of intrusiveness, as unpleasant ambient ads are placed within consumers' personal space within the OOH environment. However, participants do not currently perceive ambient advertising to be intrusive, instead viewing these messages as enjoyable and compelling, due to the novelty of the practice, and the non-interruptive nature of these ads while consumers conduct their typical activities within the public environment. As such, even though participants are interested in seeing greater use of ambient mediums, marketers are dissuaded from growing the practice to the extent that it becomes a mainstream advertising vehicle. Once viewed as mainstream, or conventional, the benefits of the perceived novelty of these ads will likely diminish, including positive affect towards these ads and brands, and consumer interest to engage with these messages.

It is hoped that the findings presented would encourage the growth of ambient marketing as a practice, and more thoughtful consideration of the implementation of ad features unique to ambient ads that encourage consumer engagement. The study presents a range of executional features for marketers to contemplate when developing ambient ads, with suggestions as to how each can encourage engagement, and identification of features that are not perceived as novel or stimulating. These implications suggest to marketers how ambient advertising practices can evolve to produce engaging brand experiences for consumers, and positive perceptions of these ads, and the brands, using these messages.

## **6.2 Research limitations**

The central limitation of the study is the assumption that consumer engagement is an objective of marketers' development and execution of ambient ads. The main purpose or final objective of any advertising is typically to influence purchase intention and initialise sales. However, many researchers cite the use

of ambient advertising to break through ad clutter to reach consumers where traditional advertising cannot. Ambient advertising objectives are identified as building brand awareness, influencing brand attitudes, generation of PR and buzz, ad and brand recall, and product sales (Luxton & Drummond 2000, Gambetti 2010, Jurca & Madlberger 2015). While Gambetti (2010) proposes the need for further research into consumer engagement with ambient ads, the existing literature on ambient advertising does not address engagement as an explicit advertising objective. Furthermore, Jurca and Madlberger (2015) perceive engagement as a contributor to schema incongruity, rather than as a measure of advertising effectiveness. While engagement is thought to provide meaningful brand experiences for consumers, which then affect ad attention, ad and brand perceptions, and generation of WOM, the research study does not indicate how engagement may result in primary research objectives of brand awareness, ad and brand recall, purchase intention or actual sales.

The research into ambient advertising, as presented within this study, is limited to a particular subset of ads, as defined by the researcher. Both in existing literature and in advertising practice, many other examples of ads can be considered 'ambient', but do not fit with the researcher's definition of the practice, and are thus excluded from the investigation. Other researchers into ambient advertising provide varying definitions of the practice, and thus assess these ads in ways differing from those of this research study. As a result, the findings of this research study are limited to ads where the message is integrated into the medium and/or its surroundings, and cannot be generalised to all other ads considered 'ambient' by researchers or practitioners.

In addition to the specific research definition of ambient advertising, the examination of ads through the content analysis is limited to those of purchasable goods and services. The research findings thus do not address appeals used in ambient ads outside of this ad group. Ambient ads developed to generate public awareness or to discourage particular consumer activities, such as smoking or drink driving, are not considered within the sample group. Shock and scare tactics used in these ads, typically for demarketing and education of social issues, are thus not investigated. Due to the shock and negative emotional

appeals used in many of these ads, the findings of this study cannot be generalised to these ad groupings, which are not likely to demonstrate similar positive affect towards ads and their brands, or of the practice of ambient advertising. Additionally, as Storch (2008) suggests, consumers may differ in their perceptions of intrusiveness for these ads.

The qualitative findings demonstrate various ways in which consumers may engage with ambient ads, but do not address the differences in consumer engagement, based on individual ads or specific consumer demographics or psychographics. The qualitative findings can only suggest how consumers may engage with ambient ads, and indicate ad features influencing this behaviour, but cannot address the subjective interest that consumers exhibit towards individual ads. The desire to engage with an ambient ad or to be involved in the communication of an ad message is a choice of the individual, shaped by personal perceptions of novelty and incongruity. As a result, the qualitative findings are limited to illustrating particular engagement behaviours, and cannot be generalised to all or even most consumers coming into contact with an ambient ad.

The study does not consider the evolution of ambient advertising practices, although Gambetti (2010) mentions an 'evolutionary shift' in ambient messaging content, from one-way communication to interactive experiences. The ads within the content analysis sample are examined as a singular group, spanning 10 years' of actual ambient ads. Comparisons cannot be made between ambient advertising practices at particular points in time, and are unable to demonstrate trends in marketers' use of these ads. While suggestions are made for marketers to consider in future development of ambient ads, the practice may already be moving in the direction proposed by the researcher.

The generalisability of the findings within the study is limited due to the small sample size used within the qualitative research stages. To allow for empirical generalisability, probability sampling is needed, and quantitative data would be more beneficial in determining the extents to which consumers engage with ambient ads. Quantitative analysis of a large sample representative of the general population would be useful in producing a clearer understanding of the

benefits of ad features in effecting engagement. However, the qualitative findings are seen to provide useful insights into the ways in which consumers can engage with ambient ads, and the ad features influencing this behaviour.

Where focus group participants are asked to predict changes in their behaviour as a result of exposure to ambient ads, interviewees' responses are based on recall rather than measured observation, thus limiting the reliability of the findings. The small sample size limits the generalisability of the findings, especially as responses to a variety of ads are discussed. The limitations of focus groups are also considered, particularly the small group sizes, reducing generalisability of the findings. Group effects must also be taken into account, where the collective findings may not be inclusive of all participants, and can lead to a greater degree of agreement within the group that is a skewed representation of group members' views (Bryman & Bell 2011). While focus groups have been conducted in several locations, in order to maximise variation among participants and within responses, this data and resulting analysis are somewhat limited to the particular locations, and to those comprising populations of similar demographic and cultural features. As such, the analysis and discussion provided may not adequately account for consumer characteristics beyond those exhibited by focus group participants, limiting generalisability.

The criterion for participation of having encountered an ambient ad is reliant upon the individual being able to recall such an encounter. Therefore, the results do not take into account consumers who have been exposed to ambient ads and not noticed, or those who have noticed but do not recall an ad. The findings offer suggestions as to engagement with ambient ads only for those who both noticed and remembered an ad, without identifying how ads can affect, or fail to affect, the general population of consumers exposed to an ad. Additionally, interviewees were expected to give their accounts of ad encounter, which could not be verified, as the researcher had not encountered the ads personally, with the exception of the Kit Kat bench ad in Trinidad & Tobago. The findings may therefore include inaccurate descriptions of ads and recall of the resulting perceptions and behaviours.

Further to the stipulation that participants had to have noticed and remembered an ambient ad, this sample produces a research bias, particularly in the examination of consumer perceptions. It is possible that consumers who either did not notice or recall encounters with ambient ads hold differing perceptions of these ads, and advertising in general, resulting in avoidance or ignoring of ambient ad messages. However, the study does not consider perceptions or behaviours of consumers who were unable to recall encounters with ambient ads. As a result, avoidance behaviours, as a contrasting outcome to engagement, are not investigated.

Due to research design, interview candidates were shown pictorials of ambient marketing executions, in order to illustrate the type of marketing research that was being investigated. However, these pictorials may have served as a recall aid, where respondents were reminded of similar executions, triggering the memory of their actual encounter with an ambient ad. This potential reminder effect may have influenced the degree of independent recall of the ambient advertisement that was discussed in the interview. However, as the concept of ambient advertising is largely unknown to the average consumer, these pictorials are deemed necessary in explaining this type of marketing communication to candidates, in order to gauge whether they had encountered a similar ad or not, to determine their qualification to participate in the study.

Finally, specific ad features could only be theorised with respect to influence on consumer engagement, where no qualitative findings provide further insight into participant responses. Specifically, the ad feature of demonstration of product functionality has not been not discussed by any interview participant, as none encountered ads that included this feature. Additionally, as focus groups have been used to develop the categories and subcategories of the content analysis, individual ad features are not identified prior to the focus groups being conducted. As a result, the six pictorials shown to group members do not encompass all of the ad features for participants to discuss and share insights. However, as these findings require additional research building on this study, they are presented below as suggestions for further research.

### **6.3 Suggestions for further research**

Based on the findings produced from the data analysis, several theories have emerged which are shown to require further investigation in order to be confirmed. Critical evaluation of the research method also present several areas in which research could be furthered, especially through use of empirical quantitative testing. These suggestions of areas for further research are discussed in this section.

Firstly, while the research examines ad features that can influence consumer engagement with ad messages and their respective brands, further research is encouraged to understand the benefits of these engagements to marketers. Future studies should investigate how consumer engagement might impact outcomes such as brand awareness, brand recall, purchase intention and actual sales. Furthermore, quantitative analysis of these benefits are encouraged, as well as measurable effects on ad and brand attitudes or affect, and WOM generated, as a result of engagement with ambient ads. Research into variation of consumer demographics and psychographics on ad perceptions and interest in engagement would aid marketers in creating more targeted ad messages, and the features that would best influence desired consumer outcomes.

Future research should investigate how consumers actually respond to ambient advertising at the time of these exposures, where this study relies on participant recounts of these encounters. Observation of consumer engagement at the point of ad encounter would provide further insight into the variation of engagement responses among consumers towards an individual ad, including avoidance and disinterest. Quantitative surveys can be used subsequent to observation of these encounters in order to analyse ad and consumer variables that account for these differences in levels of engagement. Avoidance strategies, as investigated within print and broadcast media by Elliott and Speck (1997), and Liu and Shrum (2002) for online advertising, should be examined for ambient advertising, due to their placements within consumers' OOH environments, and the use of mediums with which consumers would typically come into contact.

Further research into specific ad features would be useful in developing the understanding of how these features impact upon consumer engagement. Specifically, incorporation of the product in ambient ads, as a tactic fairly unique to non-traditional OOH ads, should be examined to understand how consumers are willing to engage with, and participate in, brand experiences with the actual product, and to observe or take part in the demonstration of product functionality and product attributes. The use of multisensory appeals, particularly the use of olfactory and auditory stimuli, presents another area for further research, as ambient ads currently rely heavily on visual and tactile stimuli only. Understanding how consumers engage with additional stimuli might encourage marketers to make greater use of these appeals within ambient advertising.

Another area highlighted for further research is the provision of utility to consumers due to the medium used, and benefits of the branding initiatives. Physiological value, in particular, is unique to ambient advertising, and should thus be examined in further detail to allow marketers to better understand the effectiveness of this feature within ambient advertising, especially as it is rarely provided within ads. The use of fabricated mediums, or transformation of existing mediums, to add value to consumers' OOH activities should be researched to understand how consumers are encouraged to engage with the ad message and brand as a result of this branding benefit, and how their ad and brand perceptions, particularly affect, are influenced. Furthermore, additional research should address whether these outcomes affect brand awareness, brand recall, purchase intentions and actual sales. Further to utilitarian value, future research should address consumer perceptions of entertainment value derived from ambient ads. These perceptions are seen to be subjective, based on individual consumer values and experiences, and vary due to each ad execution.

Specific marketing messages have been omitted from the ad sample, which is limited to advertising for purchasable goods and services. Further research is needed to investigate the impacts of other types of ad messages, namely for purposes of demarketing and building public awareness of societal issues, on engagement and consumer perceptions of these ads and the specific

behaviours that these ads aim to change. In many instances, shock and scare tactics have been observed within these ads, which are not addressed within this study, and varying emotional appeals, such as sympathy or disgust, used to convey the ad message to consumers, which differ from the appeals used in product ads. Future research into ambient advertising should consider these ad groups, and their impacts upon consumer responses, including ad engagement, awareness, and ad perceptions.

To further Storch's (2008) study, further research is suggested into investigations of shock appeals within advertising, including for purchasable goods and service. Using shock to promote brand messages, particularly where consumers are forced to come into contact with the ad, is likely to have a different impact upon a consumer's interest to engage with the ad and the brand, as compared to positive and compelling experience providers, recommended by Schmitt (1999). Consumer perceptions of these ads and brands, as well as attitudes towards the practice of ambient advertising, may be affected by the use of shock appeals within ads, and thus requires further investigation to understand how these practices should be managed.

The study investigates ambient ads as stand-alone messages, in order to understand and isolate ad features that influence consumer engagement. However, researchers commonly refer to ambient ads being integrated within a wider marketing campaign (e.g. Shankar & Horton 1999, Luxton & Drummond 2000, Gambetti 2010, Jurca 2012, Biraghi et al 2015, Rosengren et al 2015), comprising other advertising media. Future research should thus investigate the role of ambient messages within a broader integrated campaign, to provide an understanding of the value of ambient ads in achieving campaign objectives. Additionally, future research should investigate how engagement with ambient messages may be affected when used in conjunction with mainstream media.

The final suggestion for further research based on the discussion presented pertains to the newness of ambient advertising as a practice. While these ads are not found to be intrusive, this may be due to the lower levels of ambient ads as compared to mainstream media. Additionally, over time, the growth and evolution of ambient messaging is likely to produce a shift in



consumer affect towards these ads. The perceived creativity and novelty of particular ad features is likely to become diluted as ambient advertising practices grow, and perceptions of individual ads and the practice in general will likely be affected. Repeated or long-term use of particular mediums and placements should be investigated in future studies, and their impacts upon consumer perceptions of novelty of these ads. Finally, the long-term evolution of ambient practices in general should be investigated, such as through longitudinal studies, to identify ambient advertising trends and the usage of individual ad features. This research would benefit marketers in identifying how they must develop ads to keep up with industry trends, as well as highlight underutilised features to capitalise on sustaining novelty of ambient messages.

While several findings require further research to be confirmed, and further quantitative testing would help to improve the generalisability and validity of the study, the findings presented do demonstrate some key theory of ambient advertising and its usefulness to marketers. The author is confident that the study provides value to the field of advertising research, and establishes a solid foundation upon which subsequent research studies could be built.

# Appendix

---

## Appendix I: Examples of ambient marketing campaigns



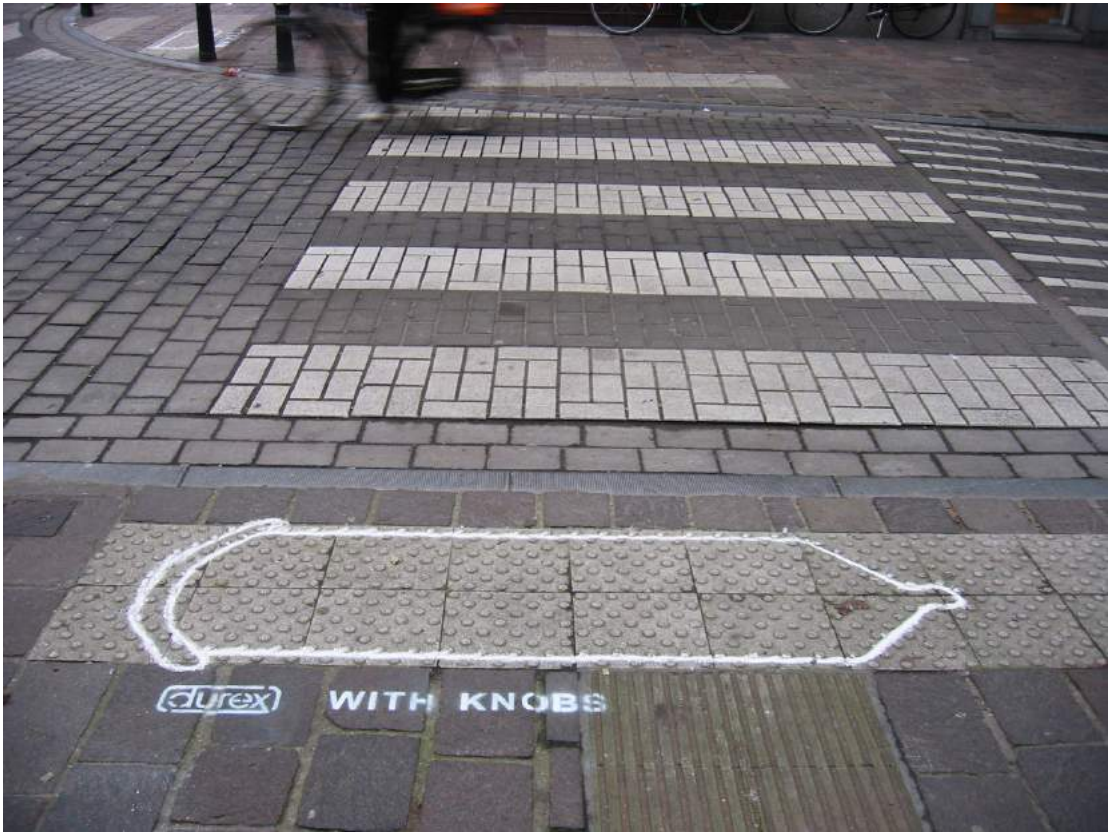
**Figure A.1 Example of an ambient ad that uses shared elements of shape and design between the product and the medium (Café Brazil 2009)**



**Figure A.2 Example of an ambient ad that uses shared elements of colour and shape between the product and the medium (Ikea 2008)**



**Figure A.3 Example of an ambient ad that uses shared elements of physical orientation between the product and the medium (McDonald's 2009)**



**Figure A.4 Example of an ambient ad that uses shared elements of texture between the product and the medium (Durex 2011)**



**Figure A.5 Example of an ambient ad that uses shared elements of movement between the product feature and the medium (National Geographic 2005)**



**Figure A.6 Example of an ambient ad that uses shared elements of functionality between the product and the medium (Schweppes 2006)**

## Appendix II: Focus group interview guide

1. Welcome and introduction
2. Distribution of consent forms
3. Explanation of ambient marketing
4. Questions and preliminary thoughts
5. Presentation of examples
6. Questions and discussion
7. Distribution of personal information forms
8. Thanks

### Ambient marketing is:

*Alternative out-of-home marketing communications methods which employ non-traditional physical spaces or objects that are not typically designated to carry advertising messages, and which are located within consumers' immediate external environment.*

- **Emerging, unconventional/non-traditional advertising method**
- **Found outside the home, in your (the consumer's) external environment**
- **Using common physical objects in the surroundings rather than traditional posters and billboards**

1. Have any of you seen or heard of this type of advertising prior to today?
  - What were your impressions of this type of advertising?

>>Presentation of ambient marketing pictorials to group<<

For this exercise, please envision yourself encountering these types of advertisements in your typical/everyday outdoor environment, in order to discuss the following questions.

2. In your typical external environment, what would make you notice an ambient advertisement?
  - What would cause you to not notice this kind of advertising?
3. What features would help attract your attention to an ambient ad?
  - Prompts:
    - creativity/novelty/unexpectedness
    - relevance/salience
    - visibility
    - incongruence
4. How well would you remember an ambient advertisement?
  - What would cause you to forget an ad like this?
  - To what extent would you remember the specific brand being advertised?
  - How does repeated exposure to the ad affect your ability to remember the ad?



5. What features or attributes do you think would help you to remember the **ad**?  
- What features or attributes do you think would help you to remember the **brand**?

6. How well would you be able to remember or recall this brand without being reminded [unaided recall]? Why?  
- How does seeing the ad or brand at the point of sale affect you (and your memory of the ad) [aided recall]? Why?

7. To what extent would you be able to remember an ambient advertisement if you were not familiar with the product or brand? Why?

8. How would encountering this type of advertising affect your consumer behaviour?

Prompts:

- awareness of brand or product
- familiarity with brand or product
- consideration of product or brand within purchase decision
- purchase
- change in consumer attitude
- no change/not affected

- How do you think this is affected by the product type being advertised?  
- product vs. service

- How do you think this is affected by your familiarity with the brand?

- How do you think this is affected by the price of the product?

- How do you think this is affected by repeated exposure to the ad?

- How do you think this is affected by the proximity to the point of sale?

- How do you think this is affected by the degree of consumer engagement (your ability to interact with the advertisement)?

9. What would encourage you to tell someone about an ambient advertisement that you encountered?

- Why would you not tell someone?

10. What is your overall opinion of ambient marketing as a practice?

- How intrusive do you think this type of advertising is?

11. What is your opinion of brands that make use of ambient marketing?

12. How do you think ambient marketing compares to other types of advertising?

13. In closing, do you have any additional thoughts or comments which you would like to discuss?

## **Appendix III: Content analysis coding manual**

### **Content analysis codebook**

#### **Instructions**

Code every ad given as objectively as possible, using a new coding form for each.

Code one ad at a time, completing the entire coding form, before advancing to the subsequent ad. However, you may re-visit and change any previous coding choices, if necessary.

Choose the *best* single option for each numbered selection, with the exception of Sections 1a. and 3d., where you are asked to select as many answers as applicable. Provide a coding response for each numbered selection.

Analyse each ad with respect to the medium used, placement and surroundings, as seen within the pictorials provided or videos shown. Use only the information provided in the pictorial or video viewed. Do not attempt to extrapolate the ad's external environment, or imagine how others might interpret or interact with an ad.

Analyse each ad as the individual being exposed to the ad firsthand, and not as an individual observing a consumer coming into contact with the ad.

#### **Ad details**

Be sure to include the ad number (as provided by the researcher), brand, product and medium under the AD DETAILS section at the beginning of the form.

If the brand is unclear, write "Unknown" in the space provided.

If the product being advertised cannot be determined, write "Unknown" in the space provided.

Provide only basic details of the medium used, and refrain from using adjectives, unless necessary. Details of colour, size and placement do not need to be included when stating the medium used.

## Coding definitions

Below are the definitions for each code or label in each category.

### 1. COMPONENTS

**\*\*For this category, select as many options deemed applicable to the ad**

*1a. What elements are incorporated into the ad?*

**Product:** the ad depicts the branded good being advertised or its packaging, whether the actual good is used or is represented in the ad

**Product effect:** the ad portrays the effect, output or result of the product being advertised, or a metaphor of this

**Product target:** the ad depicts the object upon which the product will be used (e.g. a fertilizer ad represented by a super-sized plant), where the product will be used, or a metaphorical representation of either

**Feature:** the product is not depicted in its entirety, but is instead represented by a physical product attribute or object, component or artefact associated with or comprised by the good or service (e.g. an ad for a zoo depicting a giraffe)

**Symbol:** the product is portrayed in the ad through use of an abstract or generic character(s) related to the good or service (e.g. an ad for a social media platform featuring hash [#] symbols)

*1b. How is the product being advertised used or represented in the ad?*

**Actual product:** the *actual* product, as manufactured and sold commercially, is incorporated into the ad (e.g. an ad for a Mini Cooper incorporates the actual vehicle into the ad)

**Modified product:** the *actual* product is used in the ad, but manipulated or altered in some way so as to differ from the original product being sold (e.g. large/small-scale version of the product, fragment of product used)

**Product not included:** the product is not included in the ad in any way, whether in actuality or represented pictorially

### PLACEMENT

*2a. Is the ad placed within the consumer's immediate external environment?*

**Direct contact:** the consumer, whether he chooses to or not, is able to make direct physical contact with the ad, i.e. touch the ad medium in some way (e.g. touch by hand, walk over, sit on, etc.); the consumer is brought to a point immediately facing the ad, whether by choice or by design

**Out of reach:** while the ad remains in a consumer's immediate environment, it is not placed such that the consumer can come into direct physical contact with the ad

*2b. Where is the ad placed within the external environment?*

**Waiting point:** the ad is placed at a location where consumers will be found waiting for a good or service that may or may not be related to the ad (e.g. bus stop, airport, etc.), or where a consumer will be engaged while using a product or service

**Entry/exit point:** the ad is placed at a point of ingress or egress, such as to a building, terminal, transit station, vehicle, etc.

**Other indoor location:** the ad is placed in any other location found within an indoor (closed-wall, roofed) environment

**Other outdoor location:** the ad is placed in any other location found within an open or uncontained environment

## **MEDIUM**

*3a. What is the dimensionality of the ad?*

**2-dimensional:** the advertisement created is flat and 2-dimensional, such as those placed on floors or walls

**3-dimensional:** the advertisement occupies 3-dimensional space; the medium used features height, width and depth

*3b. What is the provenance of the ad medium?*

**Pre-existing:** the ad medium was present prior to the development and implementation of the ad; therefore the ad was designed to fit onto the medium

**Fabricated:** the ad medium was designed and constructed by the advertiser and placed into the environment to advertise the specific product

*3c. How is the ad communicating with the consumer?*

**One-way communication:** ads in which the consumer's presence or interaction does not produce any change in the ad; consumer response to ad does not alter the ad in any way

**Two-way communication:** the ad features interactive elements where the consumer brings about a particular change in the ad or ad effect (e.g. a noise being emitted when the ad is stepped on), or becomes a part of the ad installation (e.g. the ad displaying a consumer's weight after standing on the ad); the consumer's presence or interaction produces a response from the ad itself

**\*\*For this category, select as many options deemed applicable to the ad**

*3d. What benefit is the ad able to provide to the consumer due to the branding of the medium(as opposed to the same medium that remains unbranded)?*

*(For ads determined to have been fabricated for the purpose of advertising, consider not only the effects of the branding on the medium, but also the presence of the ad itself.)*

**Physiological value:** the ad provides the consumer with a physical benefit, such as a place to rest or shelter, refreshment, safety or privacy, etc.

**Informational value:** the ad provides information to the consumer besides that pertaining to the product or brand, such as reporting weather conditions, directions or health statistics

**Experience with product:** the ad allows the consumer to trial the product or observe the product, whether the actual product or a modified version of it, being used in some way

**No benefit:** no foreseeable benefits extended to the consumer

*3e. How does the ad convey the product benefits to the consumer?*

**Demonstration of actual benefit:** the ad portrays the product benefit in actuality (i.e. the product function, expected results or value to the consumer) through use or incorporation of the actual product into the ad (e.g. an ad for a sponge showing its effectiveness in absorbing water)

**Representation of benefit:** the ad demonstrates the product benefits as a metaphor rather than in actuality; the actual product may or may not be used, but the benefit seen by the consumer is representative of the product (e.g. an ad for hot sauce using a hand dryer to convey the heat given off when consumed)

**No benefit demonstration:** the ad does not demonstrate any benefit of the product or its effectiveness

## Appendix IV: Complete interview guide

1. Personal introduction
2. Assessment of candidate
3. Distribution of consent form
4. Questions and discussion
5. Distribution of personal information form
6. Thanks

### Introduction:

My name is Megan Lee Yuen, and I'm doing my PhD in marketing at Warwick Business School.

### Assessment of candidate:

1. Have you seen any unusual/unconventional outdoor advertising, besides posters and billboards? Please tell me about it.
2. Have you seen anything similar to this?  
*Present examples to candidate.*  
These are examples of ambient marketing.

Highlight features of ambient marketing:

- **Emerging, unconventional/non-traditional advertising method**
- **Found outside the home, in your (the consumer's) external environment**
- **Using common physical objects in the surroundings rather than traditional posters and billboards**

Ensure that candidate understands term "ambient marketing".

Ask if candidate has encountered ambient marketing recently.

Ask if candidate is willing to participate in a brief (20 minute) interview.

### Consent form

1. Please tell me about an ambient advertisement that you encountered recently (within the last 5 years).
  - brand
  - product category
  - location (country, city)
  - placement (within environment)
  - medium
2. What caused you to notice this ad?
  - location and/or placement
  - medium used
  - brand familiarity
  - product and/or product category familiarity

**Why?** (apply laddering technique until root answer is determined)

If this/these feature(s) changed, how would that affect your ability to notice the ad?

What would allow you to better notice this ad?

3. How are you affected by multiple encounters with the ad?
- Do you notice the ad each time? Why or why not?
  - Do you pay more or less attention to the ad? Why or why not?
  - How would you be affected if the same ad were placed in a new location? Why?

4. What caused you to remember this ad?
- location and/or placement
  - medium used
  - brand familiarity
  - product and/or product category familiarity

**Why?** (apply laddering technique until root answer is determined)

If this/these feature(s) changed, how would that affect your ability to remember the ad?

What would allow you to better remember this ad?

5. How did you respond to this advertisement?
- recalled ad only
  - considered purchasing product
  - purchased product
  - researched product or brand
  - change in consumer attitudes
  - word of mouth
  - direct response

6. Why did you respond to the advertisement in this way?
- features of the ad
  - features of the product
  - features of the brand
  - impulse purchase
  - increased awareness/familiarity

7. Why did you not consider/purchase/tell someone else about the advertisement?

8. How would you have responded if:
- the ad were closer to the POS?
  - you saw the ad more frequently?
  - the ad were in a familiar (unfamiliar) location?
  - you were more familiar (unfamiliar) with the brand?
  - the product were cheaper (more expensive)?

9. What do you like about this ad? Why?
10. What do you like about this type of advertising? Why?
11. What do you dislike about this ad? Why?
12. What do you dislike about this type of advertising? Why?
13. How do you think ambient marketing compares to other types of advertising?



**Appendix V: Examples of ambient ads demonstrating ad elements**



**Figure A.7 Example of an ambient ad that depicts the product (IWC 2006)**



Figure A.8 Example of an ambient ad that depicts the product effect (Ajax 2009)

**KarstadtQuelle Insurance. "Bowling lane".**



KarstadtQuelle Insurance is making the best use of bowling lanes by advertising dental implant coverage. Banners with faces printed on were attached to the wall at the end of the lanes. When a bowling ball hits the pins it looks like teeth being knocked out.

**Figure A.9 Example of an ambient ad that depicts the product target (KarstadtQuelle 2006)**

**SLOVAK SCHOOL ARCHERY CLUB** [ssik.sk](http://ssik.sk)

**Why**  
Slovak Archery Club wanted to raise awareness of their archery lessons, but lacked the budget to do anything large scale.

**What**  
We used the statues from the most crowded areas in Bratislava to surprise passers-by and establish a direct mental link to the archery courses.

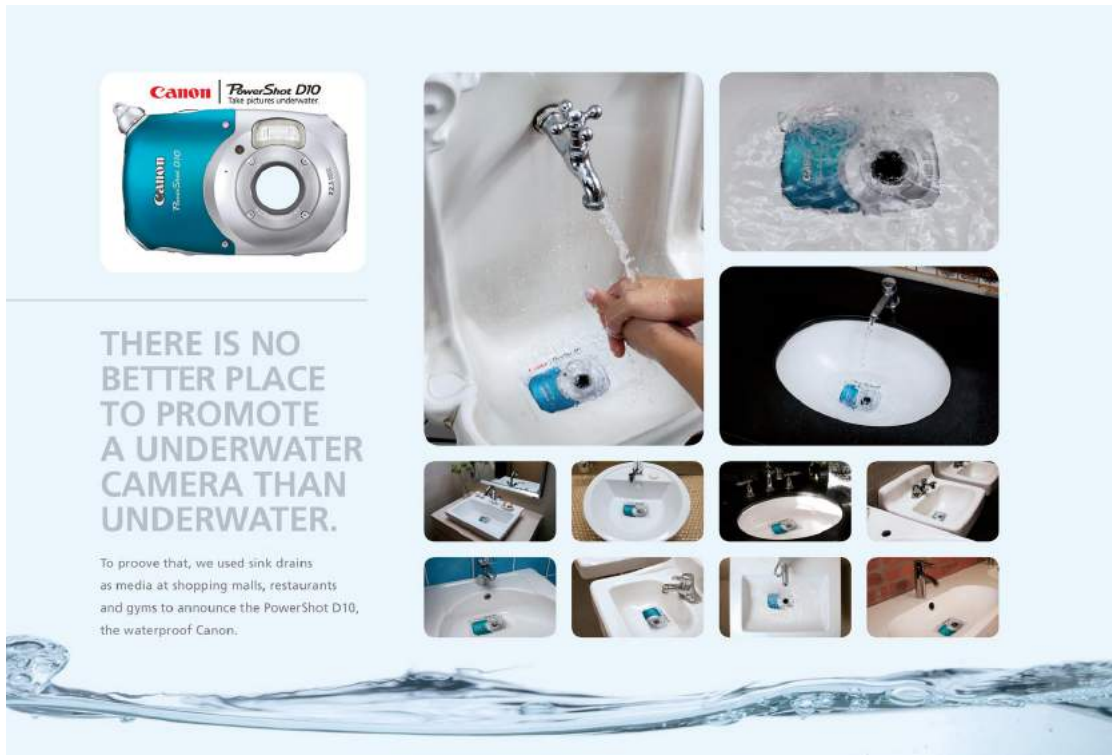
**How**  
We placed real red apples on the heads of the statues. On the apples, a sticker invited people to visit [ssik.sk](http://ssik.sk), the archery club's website. When the first batch of apples disappeared, we delivered a new one. And so on, until the day passed.

**Results**  
The school reported the biggest amount of inquiries in their whole history, by both e-mail and telephone. **Bullseye!**

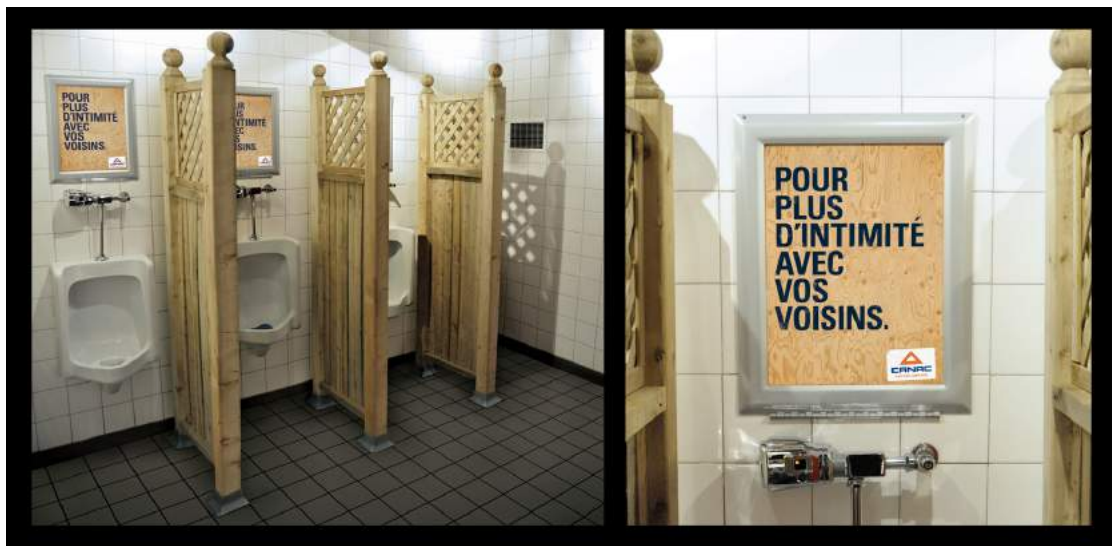
**Figure A.10 Example of an ambient ad that depicts a symbol (Slovak School Archery Club 2013)**



**Figure A.11 Example of an ambient ad that depicts a related feature (Discovery Channel 2010)**



**Figure A.12 Example of an ambient ad that depicts a product feature (Canon 2013)**



**Figure A.13 Example of an ambient ad that incorporates the actual product into the ad (Canac 2014)**



**Figure A.14 Example of an ambient ad that incorporates a modified product into the ad (3M 2006a)**



Figure A.15 Example of an ambient ad where the product is not included (Accessorize 2006)



Figure A.16 Example of an ambient ad where the product is not included (Pepto Bismol 2009)





### MacFries Pedestrian Crossing

During the biggest public festival in Switzerland, the Zurichfest, McDonald's is confronted with heavy competition, even concerning core products like fries. A lot of independent stalls offer fast food. Fortunately the festival is the only time during the year when official street markings, like pedestrian crossings, are taken out of function.

This enabled us to use the crossing in front of one of our restaurants and have it re-styled into a portion of fries.



**Figure A.17 Example of an ambient ad with which the consumer makes direct contact (McDonald's 2010)**



**Figure A.18 Example of an ambient ad with which the consumer makes direct contact  
(Deutsche Oper Am Rhein 2007)**

**Case: ZB 104 Stereo**

**THE CHALLENGE**  
The client, a local radio station, requested a new media opportunity that created awareness in large traffic areas.

**THE IDEA**  
Use the cables, phone and electricity lines as a musical notation sheet.

**THE RESULT**  
Smiles and plenty of nods of approval. Our client was extremely satisfied with the feedback.

**Figure A.19 Example of an ambient ad which is out of reach from the consumer (ZB 104 Stereo 2007)**

**Quiksilver, Original Thinking - Ramp.**  
A real skateboard ramp was mounted on the side of a typical danish bus shed providing pass time activities for the waiting passengers.

**Figure A.20 Example of an ambient ad placed at a waiting point (Quiksilver 2006)**



**Translation :**  
Birdy folding bike

**Creative interpretation :**  
By utilizing the property of the automatic door, cleverly demonstrate the easy folding feature of the bike.



Door closed (Before)



Door opened (After)

**Figure A.21 Example of an ambient ad placed at an entry/exit point (Birdy 2010)**



**OREO**  
Milk's favorite cookie.

The traditional dunk of an Oreo cookie into a glass of milk was dramatized with the use of a panoramic elevator in a shopping mall. This attention-grabbing use of new media gave us one more way to show that Oreo is milk's favorite cookie.



**Figure A.22 Example of an ambient ad placed at an other indoor location (Oreo 2010)**



**Figure A.23 Example of an ambient ad placed at an other outdoor location (Nando's 2011)**



**Figure A.24 Example of a 2-dimensional ambient ad  
(Duracel 2006)**



**Figure A.25 Example of a 3-dimensional ambient ad  
(Seramis 2008)**





**Figure A.26 Example of an ambient ad utilising a pre-existing medium (Gold's Gym 2006)**

## Rejoice "HAIR HOCKEY"

### CHALLENGE

To show Rejoice shampoo's promise of smooth hair – an oversized benefit shared by an entire category – in a more engaging way.

### EXECUTION

Branded air hockey tables were constructed and strategically placed in malls, salons and college dorms. The surface of the tables was made to look like strands of hair where Rejoice-branded pucks would smoothly slide across.

### RESULTS AND EFFECTIVENESS

The activity generated much excitement and helped increase top-of-mind brand awareness to 61%.



**Rejoice**  
For extra-smooth hair.

**Figure A.27 Example of an ambient ad utilising a fabricated medium (Rejoice 2012)**



**Figure A.28 Example of an ambient ad using one-way communication (Folgers 2006)**



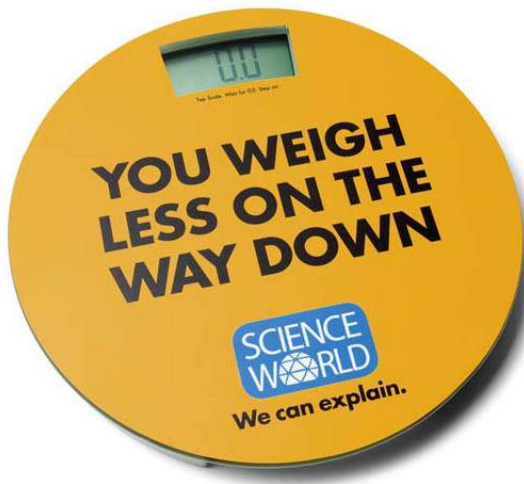
**Figure A.29 Example of an ambient ad using two-way communication  
(Durex 2006)**



**Figure A.30 Example of an ambient ad using two-way communication (Fitness First 2011)**



**Figure A.31 Example of an ambient ad providing physiological value (Nivea 2008)**



Scales were mounted inside commercial and residential elevators allowing riders to test this fact.

**Figure A.32 Example of an ambient ad providing informational value (Science World 2008)**



Shortly after the first snowfall of the season, fresh apples were hung from bare trees in high traffic pedestrian areas demonstrating the availability of fresh produce throughout the winter at Calgary Farmers Market.

**Figure A.33 Example of an ambient ad providing consumers experience with the product (Calgary Farmers Market 2009)**



**Figure A.34 Example of an ambient ad providing no benefit of branding (Fitness Company 2006)**



**Figure A.35 Example of an ambient ad featuring demonstration of feature/result/benefit (3M 2006b)**



# Chip-resistant Dinnerware







### Challenge

Corelle dinnerware has low brand awareness and very few people even know chip-resistant dinnerware exists. How can we demonstrate this USP in a clever way whilst also generating sales for our product?

### Solution

We created an attention grabbing sales portal. Through implementing custom made vending machines placed in targeted areas, we grabbed the attention of passersby. They were able to purchase a plate of their choosing and then watch as it drops remaining without cracks or chips, NONE WHATSOEVER.

### Results

10% sales increase in one month.




**Figure A.36 Example of an ambient ad featuring demonstration of feature/result/benefit (Corelle 2011)**



**Figure A.37 Example of an ambient ad featuring representation of feature/result/benefit (Crest 2008)**



This piece took place at Allsport, one of Curitiba's gyms, and informed people about the karate classes .

**Figure A.38 Example of an ambient ad with no benefit demonstrated (Allsport 2008)**

# Reference List

---

- 3M. (2006a). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 11 July 2010].
- 3M. (2006b). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 11 July 2010].
- 3M. (2009). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 12 July 2010].
- Abernethy, A., & Franke, G. (1996). The information content of advertising: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Advertising*, 25(2), p.1-17.
- Accessorize. (2006). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 12 July 2010].
- Ahmad, W. & Mahmood, Z. (2011). An empirical investigation of the association between creative advertising and advertising effectiveness in Pakistan. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 3(2), p.32-52.
- Ahuja, R., Michels, T., Walker, M. & Weissbuch, M. (2007). Teen perceptions of disclosure in buzz marketing. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 24(3), p.151-159.
- Ajax. (2009). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 15 September 2010].
- Allsport. (2008). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 13 April 2016].
- Anand, P. & Sternthal, B. (1990). Ease of message processing as a moderator of repetition effects in advertising. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 27(3), p.345-353.
- Ang, S. & Low, S. (2000). Exploring the dimensions of ad creativity. *Psychology & Marketing*, 17(10), p.835-854.
- Aquario Mania. (2009). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 16 April 2016].
- Ariel. (2014). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 20 April 2016].

- Ashill, N. & Yavas, U. (2005). Dimensions of advertising attitudes: Congruence between Turkish and New Zealand consumers. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 23(4), p.340-349.
- Ashley, C. & Leonard, H. (2009). Betrayed by buzz? Covert content and consumer-brand relationships. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 28(2), p.212-220.
- Belch, G. (1982). The effects of television commercial repetition on cognitive responses and message acceptance. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9(1), p.56-65.
- Belch, G. & Belch, M. (2014). *Advertising promotions: an integrated marketing communications perspective* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Berlyne, D. (1970). Novelty, complexity, and hedonic value. *Perception and Psychophysics*, 8, p.279-286.
- Bhargava, M. & Donthu, N. (1999). Sales response to outdoor advertising. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 39(4), p.7-18.
- Bhargava, M., Donthu, N. & Caron, R. (1994). Improving the effectiveness of outdoor advertising: Lessons from a study of 282 campaigns. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 34(2), p.46-55.
- Bioca, F. & Delaney, B. (1995). Immersive virtual reality technology. In: F. Bioca & M. Levy, eds. *Communication in the Age of Virtual Reality*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. p.57-124.
- Biraghi, S., Gambetti, R. & Graffigna, G. (2015). An ecological definition of ambient communication: A discursive conceptualization. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 21(1), p.5-19.
- Birdy. (2010). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 18 April 2016].
- Biswas, A., Olsen, J. & Carlet, V. (1992). A comparison of print advertisements from the United States and France. *Journal of Advertising*, 21(4), p.73-81.
- Blackburn, R. & Stokes, D. (2000). Breaking down the barriers: using focus groups to research small and medium-sized enterprises. *International Small Business Journal*, 19(1), p.44-67.
- Bogart, L. (1990). *Strategy in advertising: Matching media and messages to markets and motivations* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Lincolnwood: NTC Business Books.

- Brakus, J., Schmitt, B. & Zarantonello, L. (2009). Brand experience: What is it? How is it measured? Does it affect loyalty? *Journal of Marketing*, 73(3), p.52-68.
- Bryman, A. & Bell, E. (2015). *Business research methods* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bubbles. (2010). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 18 April 2016].
- Bucci, R. (1973). Erroneous recall of media. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 13(4), p.23-27.
- Burgoon, M., Hunsaker, F. & Dawson, E. (1994). *Human communication*. London: Sage.
- Burke, R. & Srull, T. (1988). Competitive interference and consumer memory for advertising. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 15(1), p.55-68.
- Café Brazil. (2009). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 11 July 2010].
- Calcutta School of Music. (2009). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 15 July 2010].
- Calgary Farmers Market. (2009). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 20 April 2016].
- Campbell, M. & Keller, K. (2003). Brand familiarity and advertising repetition effects. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 30(2), p.292-304.
- Canac. (2014). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 20 April 2016].
- Canon. (2013). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 19 April 2016].
- Casino di Venezia. (2007). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 11 July 2010].
- Charmin. (2012). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 20 April 2016].
- Chatterjee, S. (2011). A study on ambient advertising: Marketing novelty going bust. *Research Journal of Social Science and Management*, 1(2), p.86-91.

- Chionne, R. & Scozzese, G. (2014). Some evidence on unconventional marketing: Focus on guerrilla marketing. *International Business Research*, 7(12), p.153-166.
- Choi, Y. & Taylor, C. (2014). How do 3-dimensional images promote products on the internet? *Journal of Business Research*, 67(10), p.2164-2170.
- Cobb, C. (1985). Television clutter and advertising effectiveness. In AMA (American Marketing Association), *Proceedings of the 1985 AMA Educators' Conference*. Chicago: American Marketing Association.
- Concord. (1998). *Ambient Media 1998*. London: Concord.
- Concord. (2001). *Ambient Media 2001*. London: Concord.
- Corbin, J. & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research: techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). California: Sage.
- Corelle. (2011). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 20 April 2016].
- CoverGirl. (2010). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 2 February 2011].
- Coyle, J. & Thorson, E. (2001). The effects of progressive levels of interactivity and vividness in Web marketing sites. *Journal of Advertising*, 30(3), p.65-77.
- Crest. (2008). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 2 February 2011].
- Creswell, J. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). California: Sage.
- Dacko, S. (2008). *The advanced dictionary of marketing: Putting theory to use*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Dahlén, M. (2005). The medium as a contextual cue: effects of creative media choice. *Journal of Advertising*, 34(3), p.89-98.
- Dahlén, M. & Edenius, M. (2007). When is advertising advertising? Comparing responses to non-traditional and traditional advertising media. *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, 29(1), p.33-42.
- Dahlén, M., Rosengren, S. & Törn, F. (2008). Advertising creativity matters. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 48(3), p.392-403.
- Dahlén, M., Friberg, L. & Nilsson, E. (2009a). Long live creative media choice: the medium as a persistent brand cue. *Journal of Advertising*, 38(2), p.121-129.

- Dahlén, M., Granlund, A. & Grenros, M. (2009b). The consumer-perceived value of non-traditional media. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 26(3), p.155-163.
- Debbabi, S., Daassi, M., & Bail, S. (2010). Effect of online 3D advertising on consumer responses: The mediating role of telepresence. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 26(9-10), p.967-992.
- Deutsche Oper Am Rhein. (2007). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 15 September 2010].
- Discovery Channel. (2008). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 15 September 2010].
- Donthu, N., Cherian, J., & Bhargava, M. (1993). Factors influencing recall of outdoor advertising. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 33(3), p.64-72.
- Ducoffe, R. (1995). How consumers assess the value of advertising. *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, 17(1), p1-18.
- Ducoffe, R. (1996). Advertising value and advertising on the web. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 36(5), p.21-35.
- Duracell. (2006). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 12 July 2010].
- Durex. (2006). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 12 July 2010].
- Durex. (2007). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 14 July 2010].
- Durex. (2011). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 2 February 2011].
- Eastlack, J. & Rao, A. (1989). Advertising experiments at the Campbell Soup Company. *Marketing Science*, 8(1), p.57-71.
- Electrolux. (2005). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 12 July 2010].
- Elliott, M. & Speck, P. (1998). Consumer perceptions of advertising clutter and its impact across various media. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 38(1), p.29-41.
- ETV. (2006). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 14 July 2010].



- FedEx Kinko's. (2006). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 12 July 2010].
- Fiat. (2006). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 15 September 2010].
- Fitness Company. (2006). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 15 September 2010].
- Fitness First. (2011). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 19 April 2016].
- Fiske, S. & Taylor, S. (1991). *Social cognition*. Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley.
- Folgers. (2006). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 15 September 2010].
- Gambetti, R. (2010). Ambient communication: How to engage consumers in urban touch-points. *California Management Review*, 52(3), p.34-51.
- Gambetti, R. & Graffigna, G. (2010). The concept of engagement. *International Journal of Market Research*, 52(6), p.801-826.
- Gannett. (1981). *The Effect* [video] New York: Gannett Foundation.
- Goldman, R. & Papson, S. (1994). Advertising in the age of hypersignification. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 11, p.23-53.
- Goldman, R. & Papson, S. (1996). *Sign wars: The cluttered landscape of advertising*. New York: Guildford Press.
- Gold's Gym. (2006). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 12 July 2010].
- Goodman, E. (2006). Stealth marketing and editorial integrity. *Texas Law Review*, 85(1), p.83-152.
- Goodstein, R. (1993). Category-based applications and extensions in advertising: Motivating more extensive ad processing. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 20(1), p.87-99.
- Gross, B. & Sheth, J. (1989). Time-oriented advertising: A content analysis of United States magazine advertising. *Journal of Marketing*, 53(4), p.76-83.
- Ha, L. (1996). Advertising clutter in consumer magazines: Dimensions and effects. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 36(4), p.76-84.

- Haberland, G. & Dacin, P. (1992). The development of a measure to assess viewers' judgements of the creativity of an advertisement. . In: J. Sherry & B. Sternthal, eds., 1992. *Advances in Consumer Research*. Provo, UT: Association for Consumer Research.
- Halkias, G. & Kokkinaki, F. (2013) Increasing advertising effectiveness through incongruity-based tactics: The moderating role of consumer involvement. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 19(3), p. 182-197.
- Havaianas. (2008). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 16 April 2016].
- Heath, R. (2011). The secret of television's success: Emotional content or rational information? After fifty years the debate continues. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 51(1), p.112–123.
- Heckler, S. & Childers, T. (1992). The role of expectancy and relevancy in memory for verbal and visual information: what is incongruency? *Journal of Consumer Research*, 18(4), p.475-492.
- Heeter, C. (2000). Interactivity in the concept of designed experiences. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 1(1), p.3-14.
- Himpe, T. (2008). *Advertising is dead: Long live advertising*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Holbrook, M. & Hirschman, E. (1982). The experiential aspects of consumption: Consumer fantasies, feelings and fun. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9(2), p.132-140.
- Hutter, K. (2015). Unusual location and unexpected execution in advertising: A content analysis and test of effectiveness in ambient advertisements. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 21(1), p.33-47.
- Hutter, K. & Hoffmann, S. (2011). Guerrilla marketing: The nature and concept and propositions for further research. *Asian Journal of Marketing*, 5(2), p.39-54.
- Hutter, K. & Hoffmann, S. (2014). Surprise, surprise: Ambient media as promotion tool for retailers. *Journal of Retailing*, 90(1), p.93-110.
- Ikea. (2008). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 15 September 2010].
- IWC Watch. (2006). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 15 September 2010].

- James, E. & Vanden Bergh, B. (1990). An information content comparison of magazine ads across a response continuum from direct response to institutional advertising. *Journal of Advertising*, 19(2), p.23-29.
- James, W. & Kover, A. (1992). Observations: Do overall attitudes toward advertising affect involvement with specific advertisements? *Journal of Advertising Research*, 32(5), p.78-83.
- Jennes, I. & Van den Broeck, W. (2014). Digital TV innovations: Industry and user perspective. *The Journal of Policy, Regulation and Strategy for Telecommunications, Information and Media*, 16(6), p.48-59.
- Jhally, S. (1998). *Advertising and the End of the World*. [video] USA: Media Education Foundation.
- Johar, J. & Sirgy, M. (1991). Value expressive versus utilitarian advertising appeals: When and why to use which appeal. *Journal of Advertising*, 20(3), p.23-33.
- Johnny Andrian. (2009). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 18 April 2016].
- Johnson, G., Bruner, G. & Kumar, A. (2006). Interactivity and its facets revisited: Theory and empirical test. *Journal of Advertising*, 35(4), p.35-52.
- Johnson, R. & Cobb-Walgren, C. (1994). Aging and the problem of television clutter. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 34(4), p.54-62.
- Jointfit. (2013). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 20 April 2016].
- Jurca, M. (2012). What is and why do we need ambient advertising? A theoretical approach. In: Proceedings of the International Conference 2012, *Marketing – from Information to Decision, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition*. Cluj Napoca, Romania, p.210-221.
- Jurca, M., & Madlberger, M. (2015). Ambient advertising characteristics and schema incongruity as drivers of advertising effectiveness. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 21(1), p.48-64.
- Kagatani. (2012). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 21 April 2016].
- Kaikati, A. & Kaikati, J. (2004). Stealth marketing: how to reach consumers surreptitiously. *California Management Review*, 46(4), p.6-22.
- Karo, M. (2002). Disruptive media planning. In: J. Dru, ed., 2000. *Beyond disruption*. New York: John Wiley.

- KarstadtQuelle. (2006). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 15 September 2010].
- Kassarjian, H. (1977). Content analysis in consumer research. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 4(1), p.8-18.
- Katz, H. (2003). *The media handbook: A complete guide to advertising media selection, planning, research, and Buying* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Kaye, B. & Medoff, N. (2001). *Just a click away: Advertising on the Internet*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Kent, R. & Allen, T. (1994). Competitive interference effects in consumer memory for advertising: The role of brand familiarity. *Journal of Marketing*, 58(3), p.97-105.
- Kirmani, A. (1990). The effect of perceived advertising costs on brand perceptions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 17(2), p.160-171.
- Kit Kat. (2008). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 11 July 2010].
- Kolbe, R. & Burnett, M. (1991). Content-analysis research: An examination of applications with directives for improving research reliability and objectivity. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 18(2), p.243-250.
- Kotler, P. (2003). *Marketing management* (11<sup>th</sup> ed.). Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.
- Kotler, P. & Keller, K. (2015). *Marketing management* (15<sup>th</sup> ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Kover, A., Goldberg, S. & James, W. (1995). Creativity vs. effectiveness? An integrating classification for advertising. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 35(6), p.29-39.
- Kvale, S. (2014). *InterViews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). California: Sage.
- Land Rover. (2010). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 19 April 2016].
- Lee, E. & Schumann, D. (2004). Explaining the special case of incongruity in advertising: Combining classic theoretical approaches. *Marketing Theory*, 4(1/2), p.59-90.

- Lee, Y. & Mason, C. (1999). Responses to information incongruity in advertising: The role of expectancy, relevancy and humor. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 26(2), p.156-169.
- Lee Yuen, M. & Dacko, S. (2011). Ambient marketing: Towards a modern definition. In: Proceedings of the Academy of Marketing Conference 2011, *Marketing Fields Forever*. Liverpool, UK, p.1-8.
- Lego. (2008). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 11 July 2010].
- Lenor. (2010). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 20 April 2016].
- Lehnert, K., Till, B. & Carlson, B. (2011). Current issues in advertising effectiveness: Creativity and repetition: Consumer recall and wearout. In: AMA (American Marketing Association), *AMA Summer Educators' Conference Proceedings*, 22, p.42-43.
- Levine, J. & Moreland, R. (1998). Small groups. In: D. Gilbert, S. Fiske, & G. Lindzey, eds., 1998. *Handbook of Social Psychology, Volume 2* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill, p.415-469.
- Li, H., Daugherty, T. & Biocca, F. (2002). Impact of 3-D advertising on product knowledge, brand attitude, and purchase intention: The mediating role of presence. *Journal of Advertising*, 31(3), p.43-57.
- Lichtenthal, J., Yadav, V. & Donthu, N. (2006). Outdoor advertising for business markets. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 35(4), p.236-247.
- Liquidação Shopping Curitiba. (2008) [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 11 April 2016].
- Liu, Y. & Shrum, L. (2002). What is interactivity and is it always such a good thing? Implications of definition, person, and situation for the influence of interactivity on advertising effectiveness. *Journal of Advertising*, 31(4), p.53-64.
- Liu, Y. & Shrum, L. (2009). A dual-process model of interactivity effects. *Journal of Advertising*, 38(2), p.53-68.
- Lombard, M. & Ditton, T. (1997). At the heart of it all: The concept of presence. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 3(2), p.0.
- Lombard, M. & Snyder-Duch, J. (2001). Interactive advertising and presence: A framework. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 1(2), p.56-65.

- Lopez-Pumarejo, T. & Bassell, M. (2009). The renaissance of outdoor advertising: From Harlem to Hong Kong. *American Journal of Business*, 24(2), p.33-39.
- Luxton, S. & Drummond, L. (2000). What is this thing called 'ambient advertising'? In: Proceedings of the ANZMAC (Australian & New Zealand Marketing Academy Conference) 2000, *Visionary Marketing for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Facing the Challenge*. Gold Coast, Australia, p.734-738.
- Mama Of. (2009). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 18 April 2016].
- Martin, K. & Smith, N. (2008). Commercializing social interaction: The ethics of stealth marketing. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 27(1), p.45-56.
- McCain. (2008). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 16 April 2016].
- McDonald's. (2009). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 15 September 2010].
- McDonald's. (2010). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 2 February 2011].
- Meyers-Levy, J. & Tybout, A. (1989). Schema congruity as a basis for product evaluation. *The Journal of Consumer Research*, 16(1), p.39-54.
- Miles, M. & Huberman, A. (2013). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). California: Sage.
- Milne, G., Rohm, A. & Bahl, S. (2009). If it's legal, is it acceptable? Consumer reactions to online covert marketing. *Journal of Advertising*, 38(4), p.107-122.
- Mittal, B. (1994). Public assessment of TV advertising: Faint praise and harsh criticism. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 34(1), p.35-53.
- Modig, E. & Rosengren, S. (2014). Can advertising creativity affect product perceptions and retailer evaluations? *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 23(6), p.452-461.
- Mord, M. & Gilson, E. (1985). Shorter units: Risk-responsibility-reward. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 25(3), p.9-19.
- Morgan, D. (1997). *Planning focus groups*. California: Sage.
- Mr Clean. (2006). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 11 July 2010].

- Nando's. (2011). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 19 April 2016].
- National Geographic. (2005). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 2 February 2011].
- Nivea. (2008). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 11 July 2010].
- Norwegian. (2012). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 21 April 2016].
- Olympus. (2009). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 17 April 2016].
- Okazaki, S., Mueller, B. & Taylor, C. (2010). Global consumer culture positioning: Testing perceptions of soft-sell and hard-sell advertising appeals between U.S. and Japanese consumers. *Journal of International Marketing*, 18(2), p.20-34.
- Oreo. (2010). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 15 September 2010].
- Osborne, A. & Coleman, R. (2008). Outdoor advertising recall: A comparison of newer technology and traditional billboards. *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, 30(1), p.13-30.
- Outdoor Advertising Association of America (2010). *Outdoor media formats*. [Online]. ([www.oaaa.org](http://www.oaaa.org)). (Accessed 7 April 2010).
- Oxford University Press (2016). Oxford dictionaries. [Online]. ([www.oxforddictionaries.com](http://www.oxforddictionaries.com)). (Accessed 22 February 2016).
- Pampers. (2012). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 21 April 2016].
- Pepto Bismol. (2009). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 16 April 2016].
- Petty, R. & Andrews, J. (2008). Covert marketing unmasked: A legal and regulatory guide for practices that mask marketing messages. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 27(1), p.7-18.
- Petty, R. & Cacioppo, J. (1986). The elaboration likelihood model of persuasion. *Advances in Experimental Psychology*, 19, p.123-205.
- Phillips, H. & Bradshaw, R. (1993). How customers actually shop: customer interaction at the point of sale. *Journal of the Market Research Society*, 35(1), p.51-62.

- Pieters, R., Warlop, L. & Wedel, M. (2002). Breaking through advertising clutter: benefits of advertisement originality and familiarity for brand attention and memory. *Management Science*, 48(6), p.765-781.
- Pine, B. & Gilmore, J. (1998). Welcome to the experience economy. *Harvard Business Review*, 76(4), p.97-105.
- Pollay, R., Tse, D. & Wang, Z. (1990). Advertising, propaganda, and value change in economic development: The new cultural revolution in China and attitudes toward advertising. *Journal of Business Research*, 20(2), p.83-95.
- Post. (2006). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 11 July 2010].
- PQ Media. (2007). *Alternative out-of-home media forecast 2007-2011*. Connecticut: PQ Media LLC.
- PQ Media. (2014). *Global digital & alternative media revenue forecast 2014-2018* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Connecticut: PQ Media LLC.
- Quiksilver. (2006). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 2 February 2011].
- Rayport, J. (2013). Advertising's new medium: Human experience. *Harvard Business Review*, 91(3), p.77-84.
- Rejoice. (2012). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 21 April 2016].
- Reynolds. (2007). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 14 April 2016].
- Rice, M. & Lu, Z. (1988). A content analysis of Chinese magazine advertisements. *Journal of Advertising*, 17(4), p.43-48.
- Rohm, A., Kaltcheva, V., & Milne, G. (2013). A mixed-method approach to examining brand-consumer interactions driven by social media. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 7(4), p.295-311.
- Rosengren, S. (2008). Publicity vs. advertising in a cluttered environment: Effects on attention and brand identification. *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, 30(2), p.27-35.
- Rosengren, S., Dahlén, M. & Modig, E. (2013). Think outside the ad: Can advertising creativity benefit more than the advertiser? *Journal of Advertising*, 42(4), p.320-330.



- Rosengren, S., Modig, E. & Dahlén, M. (2015). The value of ambient communication from a consumer perspective. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 21(1), p.20-32.
- Rossiter, J. & Percy, L. (1987). *Advertising and promotion management*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Rotfeld, H. (2008). The stealth influence of covert marketing and much ado about what may be nothing. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 27(1), p.63-68.
- Roy, A. & Chattopadhyay, S. (2010). Stealth marketing as a strategy. *Business Horizons*, 53, p.67-79.
- Rumbo, J. (2002). Consumer resistance in a world of advertising clutter: The case of Adbusters. *Psychology & Marketing*, 19(2), p.127-148.
- Ryo Dental Office. (2013). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 19 April 2016].
- Sasser, L. & Koslow, S. (2008). Desperately seeking advertising creativity: Engaging an imaginative '3Ps' research agenda. *Journal of Advertising*, 37(4), p.5-19.
- Saucet, M. & Cova, B. (2015). The secret lives of unconventional campaigns: Street marketing on the fringe. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 21(1), p.65-77.
- Sayre, S. (1992). Content analysis as a tool for consumer research. *The Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 9(1), p.15-25.
- Schmitt, B. (1999). Experiential marketing. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 15(1), p.53-67.
- Schweppes. (2006). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 15 September 2010].
- Science World. (2008). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 13 April 2016].
- Scotch Brite. (2009). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 11 July 2010].
- Seramis. (2008). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 15 September 2010].
- Shama, A. (1992). Transforming the consumer in Russia and Eastern Europe. *International Marketing Review*, 9(5), p.43-59.

- Shankar, A. & Horton, B. (1999). Ambient media: advertising's new media opportunity? *International Journal of Advertising*, 18(3), p.305-321.
- Slovak School Archery Club. (2013). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 22 April 2016].
- Stihl. (2012). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 20 April 2016].
- Smith, R. & Yang, X. (2004). Toward a general theory of creativity in advertising: Examining the role of divergence. *Marketing Theory*, 4(1/2), p.31-58.
- Smith, R., MacKenzie, S., Yang, X., Buchholz, L. & Darley, W. (2007). Modeling the determinants and effects of creativity in advertising. *Marketing Science*, 26(6), p.819-833.
- Sparkman, R. & Locander, W. (1980). Attribution theory and advertising effectiveness. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 7(3), p.219-224.
- Speck, P. & Elliott, M. (1997). Predictors of advertising avoidance in print and broadcast media. *Journal of Advertising*, 26(3), p. 61-76.
- Strull, T. (1981). Person memory: Some tests of associative storage and retrieval models. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Learning and Memory*, 7(6), p.440-463.
- Statista. (2014a). Number of monthly active Facebook users worldwide from 3rd quarter 2008 to 3rd quarter 2014. New York: Statista, Inc.
- Statista. (2014b). Number of monthly active Twitter users in the United States from 1st quarter 2010 to 3rd quarter 2014. New York: Statista, Inc.
- Statista. (2014c). Number of monthly active Instagram users from January 2013 to March 2014. New York: Statista, Inc.
- Stewart, D., Shamdasani, P. & Rook, D. (2007). *Focus groups: Theory and practice* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). California: Sage.
- Stihl. (2008). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 15 September 2010].
- Stone, G., Besser, D. & Lewis, L. (2000). Recall, liking and creativity in TV commercials: A new approach. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 40(3), p.7-18.
- Storch, B. (2008). *Ambient advertising – an intrusion of consumers private sphere?* Norderstedt: Grin Verlag.

- Sula, T. & Banyar, M. (2015). An empirical study of public perceptions on ambient media. *International Journal of Strategic Innovative Marketing*, 2(4), p.49-64.
- Sundar, S., Hesser, K., Kalyanaraman, S. & Brown, J. (1998). The effect of Web site interactivity on political persuasion. In: Proceedings of the International Association for Media and Communication (IAMCR) 1998, 21<sup>st</sup> General Assembly & Scientific Conference. Glasgow, UK.
- Sundar, S., Kalyanaraman, S. & Brown, J. (2003). Explaining Web site interactivity: Impression formation effects in political campaign sites. *Communication Research*, 30(1), p.30-59
- Sushiroll. (2008). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 14 April 2016].
- Tabasco. (2009). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 17 April 2016].
- Taylor, C., Franke, G. & Bang, H. (2006). Use and effectiveness of billboards: Perspectives from selective perception theory and retail-gravity models. *Journal of Advertising*, 35(4), p.21-34.
- Taylor, C., Wilson, R., & Miracle, G. (1994) The impact of brand differentiating messages on the effectiveness of Korean advertising. *Journal of International Marketing*, 2(4) p.31-52.
- Tellis, G. (1997). Effective frequency: one exposure or three factors? *Journal of Advertising Research*, 37(4), p.75-80.
- Tellis, G. (1998). *Advertising and sales promotion strategy*. Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley.
- Till, B. & Baack, D. (2005). Recall and persuasion: does creative advertising matter? *Journal of Advertising*, 34(3), p.47-57.
- Titanium. (2006). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 14 April 2016].
- Tracy, S. (2012). *Qualitative research methods: Collecting evidence, crafting analysis*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.
- Triantafillidou, A. & Siomkos, G. (2014). Consumption experience outcomes: Satisfaction, nostalgia intensity, word-of-mouth communication and behavioural intentions. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 31(6/7), p.526-540.
- Tsimonis, G. & Dimitriadis, S. (2014). Brand strategies in social media. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 32(3), p.324-344.

- Tsunami Sushi Bar. (2011). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 19 April 2016].
- Turk, T., Ewing, M. & Newton, F. (2006). Using ambient media to promote HIV/AIDS protective behaviour change. *International Journal of Advertising*, 25(3), p. 333-359.
- van Meurs, L. & Aristoff, M. (2009). Split-second recognition: what makes outdoor advertising work? *Journal of Advertising Research*, 49(1), p.82-92.
- Viagra. (2013). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 14 July 2010].
- Wang, A. (2006). Advertising engagement: A driver of message involvement on message effects. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 46(4), p.355-368.
- Webb, E. & Roberts, K. (1969). Unconventional uses of content analysis in social science. In: G. Bergner et al, eds. 1969. *The analysis of communications content: Development in scientific theories and computer techniques*. New York: Wiley, p.319-332.
- Webb, E., Campbell, D. Schwartz, R., Sechrest, L. & Grove, J. (1981). *Non-reactive research in the social sciences*. Texas: Houghton Mifflin.
- Wei, M., Fischer, E. & Main, K. (2008). An examination of the effects of activating persuasion knowledge on consumer response to brands engaging in covert marketing. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 27(1), p.34-44.
- Wheeler, D. (1988). Content analysis: an analytical technique for international marketing research. *International Marketing Review*, 5(4), p.34-40.
- Whitehill King, K. & Tinkham, S. (1990). The retention and learning of outdoor advertising. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 29(6), p. 47-51.
- Woodside, A. (1990). Outdoor advertising as experiments. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 18(3), p.229-237.
- Xtratherm. (2014). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 20 April 2016].
- Yang, X. & Smith, R. (2009). Beyond attention effects: modelling the persuasive and emotional effects of advertising creativity. *Marketing Science*, 28(5), p.935-949.
- Yoon, K., Muehling, D. & Cho, C. (1996). A comparison of Korean and American attitudes towards advertising. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 2(4), p.231-245.

- Young, E. (1984). Visibility achieved by outdoor advertising. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 24(4), p.19-21.
- Zanot, E. (1984). Public attitudes toward advertising: The American experience. *International Journal of Advertising*, 3(1), p.3-15.
- Zarantonello, L. & Schmitt, B. (2010). Using the brand experience scale to profile consumers and predict consumer behaviour. *Brand Management*, 17(7), p.532-540.
- Zarantonello, L., Jedidi, K. & Schmitt, B. (2013). Functional and experiential routes to persuasion: An analysis of advertising in emerging versus developed markets. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 30(1), p.46-56.
- ZB 104 Stereo. (2007). [image online] Available at: [www.adsoftheworld.com](http://www.adsoftheworld.com) [Accessed 14 July 2010].
- Zhao, X. (1997). Clutter and serial order redefined and retested. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 37(5), p.57-73.
- Zielske, H. (1959). The remembering and forgetting of advertising. *Journal of Marketing*, 23(1), p.239-243.
- Zinkhan, G. (1993). Creativity in advertising: Creativity in the Journal of Advertising. *Journal of Advertising*, 22(2), p.1-3.