Disclosing brand placement to young children

# Details

## Year

2017

## DOI

10.1080/02650487.2017.1335040

## Issued

2017

## Language

English

## Volume

37

## Issue

4

## Start Page

## End Page

## Authors

De Pauw P.;Hudders L.;Cauberghe V.

## Type

Journal article

## Journal

International Journal of Advertising

## Publisher

Informa UK Limited

## Topics

* Literacy and skills
* Content-related issues
* Online safety and policy regulation

## Sample

98 third-grade students/children between 8 and 10 years old, equally divided by gender, recruited from four West-European primary schools in a rural area

# Abstract

In spite of the EU's prohibition on brand placement in children's programs, it is argued
that children may still be exposed to this advertising format in many occasions.
Consequently, and as children may have even more difficulties than adults to
distinguish the commercial content from the editorial media content in which it is
embedded, an advertising disclosure may be necessary to enable them to cope with
brand placement. Entailing two one-factorial between-subjects experiments, the
current article examined how different types of brand placement warning cues
influenced cognitive advertising literacy and the attitude toward the placed brand,
among children between 8 and 10 years old.
In a first study, it was investigated how these outcomes were influenced by warning
cues with different perceptual modalities (no vs. auditory vs. visual cue, N = 98). The
results showed that a visual warning cue was more effective than an auditory warning
cue (vs. no warning cue) in triggering cognitive advertising literacy. However, this
activated cognitive advertising literacy could not account for the effect of the visual
warning cue on brand attitude.
In a follow-up study, it was examined whether the effectiveness of this visual warning
cue was influenced by the timing of disclosure (cue prior to vs. during media containing
brand placement, N = 142). Additionally, it was tested whether the effect of the cue on
brand attitude could be explained by cognitive advertising literacy if children's sceptical
attitude toward the brand placement format was taken into account. The results
showed that cognitive advertising literacy was higher when the cue was shown prior to
than during the media content. This cue-activated cognitive advertising literacy resulted
in a more positive brand attitude, but only among children who were less sceptical
toward brand placement. This positive relation disappeared among moderately and
highly sceptical children.
These findings have significant theoretical, practical and social implications.

# Outcome

"Visual warning cues were more adequate than the auditory warning cue (in comparison with no cue) in activating the cognitive advertising literacy for brand placement within chuildren. This result is in in line with the psychological literature finding visual stimuli superior in terms of ease of processing and memorization. Significant differences in cue effectiveness may also be expected between a forewarning cue and a cue that is presented concurrently with the sponsored content. In particular, a forewarning cue is likely to be more adequate than a concurrently displayed cue among children. As children may not be expected to process both the disclosure and the editorial plus the commercial content at the same time, a cue that is displayed prior to the media containing brand placement should be more promising.
However, the study could not find an association between (cue-activated) cognitive advertising
literacy and a reduced susceptibility for advertising effects forms on contemporary advertising formats. This phenomenon is by the fact that children’s contemporary advertising strongly appeals to their emotions, which may distract them from processing the commercial message in a cognitive, elaborate way, and may ultimately prevent them to critically evaluate the advertisement, the advertised brands or products." (De Pauw et al., 2018, pp. 11-12)