Adolescents and handheld advertising: The roles of brand familiarity and smartphone attachment in the processing of mobile advergames

# Details

## Year

2020

## DOI

10.1002/cb.1822

## Issued

2020

## Language

English

## Volume

19

## Issue

5

## Start Page

## End Page

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## Type

Journal article

## Journal

Journal of Consumer Behaviour

## Publisher

Wiley

## Topics

Content-related issues

## Sample

The sample consisted of 98 adolescents (M = 14.95, SD = 1.25, range = 13–18, female = 4.0%)

# Abstract

Many adolescents are inseparable from their smartphones on which they are often confronted with covert advertising-like mobile advergames. This study explores the roles of brand familiarity and smartphone attachment in adolescents’ abilities to recognize the commercial intent of advergames. Moreover, it considers the potential indirect effects of brand familiarity and smartphone attachment on the susceptibility of young consumers to mobile advergames. An experiment (N = 98) was conducted, which showed that brand familiarity moderates the effect of playing advergames on the recognition of the commercial intent of advergames. Furthermore, smartphone attachment was found to facilitate the recognition of the commercial intent of advergames, such that adolescents who experienced higher levels of smartphone attachment (when compared to lower levels) were better able to differentiate between advergames and non-commercial games (games without advertising). Interestingly, no association between smartphone attachment and brand responses were found—suggesting that smartphone attachment did not affect adolescents’ compliance with the advertised message.

# Outcome

Brands in advergames serve as advertising cues that enable adolescents to recognize the commercial intent of advergames. Brand familiarity moderates this effect.

There is a positive association between smartphone attachment and adolescents' ability to identify the commercial nature of advergames. Adolescents who are more attached to their smartphones are better able to differentiate between commercial and noncommercial mobile messages.

No indication is found that smartphone attachment moderates the indirect effect of playing advergames on brand responses via the recognition of commercial intent.