PERSUASION IN THE LIGHT OF RESEARCH ON ADVERTISING MESSAGES

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Abstract. *The research presents the process of advertising message and the mechanisms of its influence on consumer decisions. The goal of the article is to present the findings to the research question: Do the methods and techniques used in tourism advertising messages have an impact on society? To give answer to our research question, the diagnostic survey method was adopted and a research tool was used in the form of a questionnaire, which in the interactive version was filled in by the participants of the most popular online forums. The questionnaire was available on several social networks and on a special generated page for this purpose from February 1 to May 31, 2016. The research shows that the very important mechanism of persuasion is the impact of the identification process with the person's respect and authority. An important role in the process of persuasion is also played by the content of the advertising message, which brings the recipients pleasant associations and entertains. The rules of influence used in advertising messages are no longer a new or emotional topic. Still, some moral doubts give rise to those of them which, through their physical characteristics, are difficult to grasp for human abilities and perceptive abilities, and therefore also in many cases foreign and unwanted.*
Keywords: Rules of exerting influence, persuasion, advertising message.

Introduction

The research was conducted as a questionnaire survey which contained 15 closed, multiple-choice questions. The questionnaire was available on several social networks from February 1 to May 31, 2016. The sample was random and anonymous. The main research goal of the study was as follows: "Do the methods and techniques used in tourism advertising messages have an impact on society"? Simultaneously, side questions have been formulated with an intent to narrow the main problem:

− Which type of advertising is the most liable for manipulation?
− What factors affect the effectiveness of advertising?
− Do recipients purchase products under the influence of advertising means?
− What is the attitude of society to advertising?
− What age group is the most susceptible to advertising mechanisms?
− To what extent is society aware of the topic of influence, persuasion and manipulation?
− Does the society feels manipulated by advertising?

Due to the targeted purpose of the research, a hypothesis was made; *"The methods and techniques contained in tourism advertising messages have an impact on society"* (Bialecki, 1992). It can be an important role in the process of creating a brand strategy for companies in various sectors of the market (Mrozowicz & Ziaja, 2012). Virtual space is becoming a huge market for this kind of activity in the present times (Ochoa Siguencia & Sadowska, 2019).

The basis for the formulation of individual research questions and the hypothesis was the analysis of literature and content referring to the subject of the sources of influence (Cialdini, 2017; Hogan, 2001; Lakhani, 2013).

With the help of these materials we come to the conclusion that using the elements contained in the mass media and the general form of the recipient are more likely to act on the purchase of the promoted product. However, the number of occurrences and huge advertising messages become monotonous and consequently begin to irritate the recipients, which reduces the effect of manipulation. Consumers' awareness of techniques of exerting influence also reduces the effect of their impact; however, address messages are certain that advertising is not a reliable source of information about a given product. Unfortunately, they still have a sense of manipulation at the source, or the sense of exerting influence in their subconscious. It follows that even if your ads are a well-known phrase among the mass, social networking is still a dangerous source of manipulation of the audience.

The research was purely cognitive and therefore can be used for deeper analysis that studies issues related to the influence of tourism businesses.

Mechanisms of social influence in advertising messages

As Cialdini (2017) notes: "Psychologists have long been aware of the power of human striving for compatibility between words, attitudes and deeds", which significantly affects the shopping motivation. An indispensable role in this process is played by marketing perception of the situation, the so-called privileged moments (Cialdini, 2017; Hogan, 2001; Lakhani, 2013), directed by

impact emitters for acceleration and methods of satisfying previously stimulated needs.

Where does the power of mechanisms of social influence come from? Man, as a social being, but at the same time the biologically determined product of phylogenetic existence as a member of the human community is characterized by "(...) tendency to trigger the entire sequence of such mechanical behaviour by the appearance of only one specific feature in the environment. The ability to react to this trait (trigger) usually turns out to be very beneficial for the body, because it enables immediate implementation of adequate action without going into detailed and time-consuming analysis of all available information" (Cialdini, 2017).

The essence of such automation, (...) the advantages of such shortening are related to the effectiveness and economics of the action - reacting automatically to an important trigger, the body saves precious time, energy and own mental resources that can be used for something else (...). (...); however, it increases the probability of making a mistake, especially in the case of automatic and unreflective response, (...) when some other entity tries to induce in the body the given automatism (by means of purposeful manipulation of the presence of triggers) ".

The cognitive-social mechanism mentioned above is associated with mechanisms of persuasion and manipulation. The most important element that distinguishes persuasion from all manipulative manipulations is the assumption "that the recipient is an intellectually active entity, and the broadcaster has honest intentions and intentions" (Hogan, 2001). In the case of manipulation, it is generally assumed that "this is a form of deliberate exertion on the flow of a second person or a group in such a way as to realize, without being aware of it, actions that meet the needs of the manipulator" (Siemieniecki, 2007, 15). It is considered to be "conscious and intentional concealment of the real goals of actions, masking the fact of intentional influence on individuals or groups of people" (Grzywa, 2010; Nagody-Mrozowicz, 2017).

In this paper, it was deliberately decided to omit the problems of psycho-manipulation and behaviour modelling through the sub-progical (subliminal) message due to the huge complexity of the issue, the controversial outcome of research, and thus also the scientific polarization of views and their ambiguity. This problem itself is extremely interesting and worthy of interest not only on the scientific side, but above all practical and social.

According to Lewiński, an effective persuasive act should consist of five overlapping spheres: participation in the discourse, understanding the object of persuasion, submission to persuasion, internalization of acquired beliefs and behaviour consistent with the sender's intentions (Lewiński, 2009). Manipulation is one of the threats that can be encountered in a globalized

world. The dangers associated with it are constantly increasing along with technological progress and the development of mass media, through which it can be used on an unprecedented scale.

Puzynina (1992) proposes to divide the manipulation into two types:

– *Manipulation by means of language* - exerting influence through appropriate application of linguistic means (syntactic dimension, features of expression and grammatical structures, e.g. presupposition, paraphrase, periphrases, metaphor).

– Language manipulation - the use of language content as a kind of code that serves the transmission of data (semantic dimension, meaning and meaning of expression).

A very popular manipulation technique included in advertising messages is fragmentation. It consists in showing only a few selected features of the product or service, or only the content of the promotional offer that will attract the viewer's attention.

Other issues are left out. In this case, the consumer receives a message about impoverished content, filtered and deformed (Lepa, 1997). The potential client is not able to objectively evaluate the advertised goods, moreover, the sender of the message seeks to limit the rational assessment as much as possible and make him/her want to buy. Instead, s/he becomes a victim of fragmentation, because s/he learns that a given article is new, better, unseen, rare, unique (keywords - keys). These adjectives are ambiguous, they can be interpreted in many ways, and their rejection becomes almost impossible. They work like the so-called "triggers" by Cialdini (2017), which open the mind of the buyer to the planned content or direct its actions to the suggested, indicated purpose of consumption.

The message manipulation techniques are another manipulative technique in advertising (Cialdini, 2009). Most often found in commercials, where the results of research and the opinion of scientific authority are shown, probably not existing or presented in a veiled and unclear way.

It belongs to this kind of manipulation by the authority of the pseudoscientific congregation of specialists in which the actors are professional actors. In this way, the creator of the advertisement wants to inspire confidence in the target group, and the famous actor, musician, sportsman, model, popular weather presenter, singer, word of the referee of quality and reliability, a trust steward, becomes an authority in advertising.

The next popular method is varieties of valuation words, flattery and compliments. Their task is to convince the recipient that the product is unique, unique and innovative, which will satisfy the most sophisticated desires and needs.

Such phrases that improve the product serve to distinguish it from other, every day, "everyday" and "inferior" ones (Lepa, 1997). Currently, a lot is heard about a healthy lifestyle, being close to nature, living in harmony with the natural environment, while alerting the recipient against all "traditional", "ordinary" preparations contained in everyday products (Bralczyk, 2000)

For this reason, the advertising producers patented a new way to increase the efficiency of the advertising message; they began to influence the recipient suggesting a healthy lifestyle, only after buying a specific product. This type of communication includes assurances such as: "Naturally good", "Natural taste", "Good by nature", "Joy from Nature", "You have it in nature" or "Inspiration draws straight from the mountains" (Quotes from advertising tendencies) Word - the trigger evokes the encoded image, releases positive emotions and triggers the intended reaction.

Very often in advertising messages you can meet with phrases and memorable sentences. They are catchy, because they refer to snappy slogans and proverbs matched to the advertised product. After that, they use the so-called confirmation effect when the decision of the decision maker coincides with the heard motto. Thanks to such a procedure, a relationship is created between the recipient and the sender of the message, as a result of which the client begins to trust the intentions of the creators of the advertisement. The play of words in sentences evokes curiosity because of the accuracy, and the viewer watching an advertising spot will certainly not be indifferent to the suppositions coded in inspirations such as "Let yourself be carried away by fantasy" or "Life takes on colours". (Quotes from advertising trends). In fact, these words mean nothing, but rather trigger, or rather trigger, positive images and associations. Their meaning is therefore instrumental.

Methodology and research results

Survey research was carried out at the turn of 2015/2016. At the pilot stage of the research, problems, questions and research hypotheses were formulated. Prepared at the initial stage and made available in the proper questionnaire, the questionnaire contained 15 closed multiple-choice questions that diagnose the respondents' opinions on persuasive mechanisms used by advertising messages. The questionnaire was available on several social networks and on the generated page. The survey could be completed anonymously from February 1 to May 31, 2016, which ensured impartiality and anonymity of the research. It should be emphasized that the participation in the study was entirely voluntary and un-sponsored, which significantly affected the size of the sample. Perhaps a longer period of questionnaire activity would affect the number of turnout, but a form of voluntary participation in the study provides representativeness of

views and attitudes that consciously as shown, can be regarded as realistic and true.

In the specific phase of the study, a sample of N = 98 was obtained (61% women and 39% men). The selection of the sample was random. The structure of the study group was dominated by people aged 18-34 (54%), with secondary education (70%), living in a city (88%), describing their material situation as good (88%).

These studies demonstrate that the respondents were affected by the greatest transfer of television advertising, almost everyone gave opinions that they buy under the influence of advertising and first place was followed by groceries and household appliances.

The content of advertising messages that mainly attracts the recipient's attention are: humour (66%) and thrilling music (50%), accompanied by: a catchy advertising slogan (28%) and emotional charge (26%).
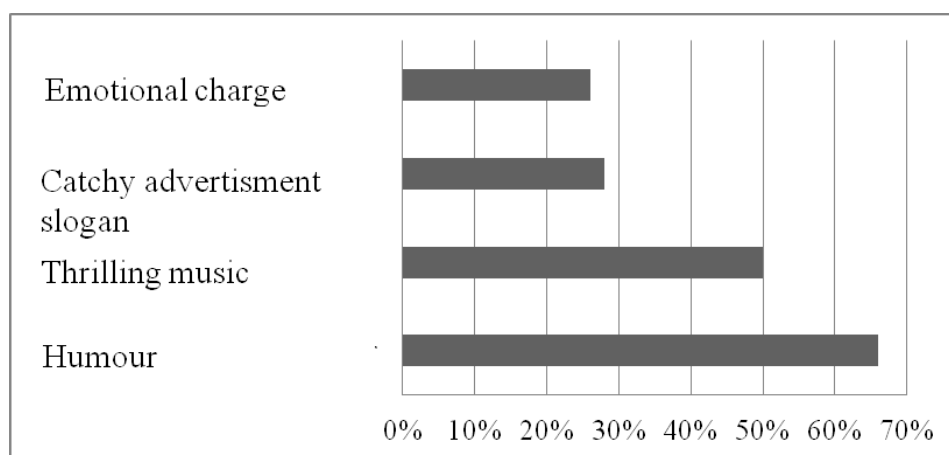

*Figure 1 **Advertising messages' content** (own study)*

The advertising media, which attract the attention of the respondents in a special way, are TV (68%), street billboards (54%) and the Internet (52%).
The respondents almost unanimously admitted that they made purchases under the influence of advertising 90%). The most commonly bought goods were: food (68%) and home appliances (64%). The respondents assessed the quality of the content of advertisements fairly low: they were indifferent (44%) or bored (34%) and even irritated (28%). The respondents expressed the opinion that children (40%), adolescents (26%) and the elderly (24%) were the most susceptible to the impact of advertising.

Persuasion and related techniques of exerting influence were known to every third subject (28%); perhaps it was about assisted recognition, not spontaneous recognition. The respondents, on the other hand, believed that the content of advertisements was not credible (66%), which was not covered by

the law of every tenth respondent (12%). Every third respondent (30%) felt that the content of advertisements was being manipulated.

Conclusion

In the light of the research carried out, several conclusions can be drawn:
- Consumers are susceptible to advertising impact, especially one that is based on emotional impact. Humour and music form the basis of an advertising message.
- The quality of the advertising message is low and unreliable, so the impact on consumer behaviour does not reach its persuasive potential.
- Consumers are generally aware of the fact that the advertising message next to the information content contains a suggestive message motivating to choose a given product.

The issue of influencing human behaviour includes many threads. One of them is modelling the impact of the group and learning social behaviour by following and internalizing the norms and rules of conduct used in it. Persuasive mechanisms, which are based on phylogenetically shaped social processes, are almost completely unnoticeable due to their naturalness.

The research hypothesis put forward: *"The methods and techniques included in tourist advertisements of tourist enterprises have an impact on society."* has been confirmed after analysis of the obtained test results.

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The influence of the processes of influence that accompany the individual throughout his/her life and which regulate interpersonal relationships form the basis of social life cannot be overestimated. In conclusion, it should be stated that the universality of persuasive mechanisms, both those regulating interpersonal relations as well as those contained in advertising messages, makes their subtle impact to undetectably modify the decision-making processes of the individual.

Summary

The research shows that despite the critical perception of the blogosphere, especially through the Internet, it is an influential group that inspires and motivates the actions of their customers, so it can not be underestimated, and there should be established strong cooperation and it should be treated as another medium to influence the purchasing decisions of customers. With the influence of elements contained in the mass media and their general form, the customers are more inclined to buy

promotional products. However, a huge number of advertising messages makes them become monotonous and consequently begin to irritate the possible customers, which reduces the effect of manipulation.

Acknowledgements

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