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What makes an ad enjoyable? Analysing advertising appeals as viewed by Portuguese consumers

¿Qué hace que un anuncio sea atractivo? Análisis de los formatos creativos en publicidad desde la perspectiva de los consumidores portugueses

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Abstract

Nowadays, consumers are faced with a variety of media that convey myriad advertising messages, which struggle amidst a highly competitive environment, with a view to drawing the viewers' attention, raising awareness, creating interest and inspiring desire and, ultimately, leading to the purchase of the product/service at stake. For this, advertising professionals deliberately intertwine their selling arguments with emotionally-charged creative concepts.

It is the aim of this study to analyse the impact of the main creative appeals and to identify groups of consumers based on their attitudes towards them.

We have undertaken a quantitative study, by means of a survey administered to a convenience sample with a list of creative appeals, which had to be classified by the respondents according to their attitudes. Globally speaking, the preferred appeals were humour, music and animation. Nonetheless, it was possible to divide the respondents into three groups: 'Advertising fans', the 'rationally-minded' and the 'emotionally-minded'.

This study presents some limitations, especially as to the sample used. Apart from the reduced number of respondents and lack of more widespread geographic reach, some academic qualifications were underrepresented.

The results of this study offer some avenues to be explored by marketing and advertising professionals when it comes to deciding on the best creative approach to select for their advertising campaigns. Besides, this study paves the way to the development of future research on the issue of advertising appeals and its relationship with the psychographic characteristics of consumers.

Resumen

Los consumidores se enfrentan, hoy en día, a una variedad de medios que transmiten una amplia gama de mensajes publicitarios con el objetivo de atraer la atención del público, aumentar la conciencia de marca e inspirar el deseo, lo que lleva finalmente a la compra del producto o servicio. Con este fin, los anunciantes asocian sus argumentos de venta con conceptos creativos que apelan a la emoción. El objetivo de este estudio es hacer un análisis del impacto de los formatos creativos utilizados en publicidad e identificar diferentes grupos de consumidores según sus actitudes. Los autores realizaron un estudio cuantitativo, a través de la aplicación de un cuestionario formado por una lista de formatos creativos de publicidad, con el objetivo de recoger las opiniones de los encuestados. En general, los formatos preferidos eran humor, música y animación. Fue posible hacer una división de los encuestados en tres grupos: "Los fans de la publicidad", "Los racionales" y "Los emocionales". Los resultados de este estudio ofrecen a los profesionales de la publicidad y marketing algunas aplicaciones prácticas en relación a los enfoques creativos a utilizar en sus campañas. El trabajo abre camino para un mayor desarrollo de futuras investigaciones sobre los formatos creativos en publicidad y su relación con las características de los consumidores.

Keywords		Palabras clave
Advertising; ad messages; creative appeals; consumers; survey; attitudes		<i>Publicidad; mensajes publicitarios; formatos creativos en publicidad; consumidores; actitudes hacia la publicidad.</i>
Summary		Sumario
1. Introduction. 2. Associating meanings to products 3. The different creative appeals 4. Method 5. Data analysis. 5.1 Characterisation of the sample. 5.2 Attitude of consumers towards creative appeals in advertising. 5.3 Segments of consumers based on their attitude towards creative appeals. 6. Conclusions 7. References.		<i>1. Introducción. 2. Asociando significados a los productos. 3. Los diferentes formatos creativos. 4. Método. 5. Análisis de Datos. 5.1. Caracterización de la muestra. 5.2. Actitud de los consumidores en relación a los formatos creativos en publicidad. 5.3. Segmentos de consumidores según su actitud hacia los formatos creativos. 6. Conclusiones. 7. Bibliografía.</i>

	<p>1. Introduction</p>
	<p>Advertising communication – the conception of persuasive messages aimed at the masses – has a clear agenda: its main purpose is to make a specific message stand out from the clutter of similar messages with identical purposes. The aim of this communicative process is ultimately that of convincing the audience to acquire the specific product or service that is being divulged. For the successful pursuit of such a painstaking task and in order to successfully cut through the ad clutter, advertisers, in an increasingly more evident manner, speck their more rationally-minded selling arguments with emotionally-charged creative concepts, in an effort to associate memorable meanings with fact-laden brands (Myers, 1999: 5). In fact, emotional factors seem to play an important role in the processing and memorisation of ad messages (Holbrook & Hirschmann, 1982; Ray & Batra, 1983; Edson Escalas et al, 2004; hence the advisability of the widespread use of this strategy.</p> <p>Based on a systematization of some of the main creative appeals used in advertising, it was the aim of this study to analyse their impact with Portuguese consumers, by means of a survey administered to a convenience sample in the metropolitan area of Porto, consisting of 264 individuals. Additionally, it was our purpose with the present study to identify groups of consumers based on their attitudes as to the different advertising appeals that were proposed to them for assessment. Our survey instrument contained a list of creative appeals the respondents had to classify, according to their attitudes towards them. A descriptive analysis allowed the identification of the respondents' favourite appeals, followed by cluster analysis that detected groups of consumers with different attitudes towards the different appeals.</p> <p>From all the appeals responders had to classify (humour, product comparison, music, use of celebrities, product advantages, animation/cartoons, metaphors/analogies, slice-of-life, fantasy/surrealism, and product experts), the ones that gathered the most favourable attitudes were humour, music, and animation/cartoons. It was also possible to divide the respondents into three different groups: 'advertising fans' have an overall positive attitude towards all the creative appeals proposed; people in the 'rationally-minded' group express a clear preference for essentially rational appeals, such as ads that display 'product comparison', 'product advantages', and 'product experts'; finally, the members of the 'emotionally-minded' group display a preference for ads that contain 'metaphors', 'fantasy and surrealism'. The age of consumers does not diverge among the groups. However, the 'rationally-</p>

	<p>minded' group has a higher relative percentage of men, whereas the 'emotionally-minded' group presents a higher relative percentage of women.</p> <p>The limitations of the present study are mainly concerned with the features of sample used. Apart from the reduced number of respondents and a limited geographic reach, there was also a relative unbalance in terms of the representation of some academic qualifications. This is most visible in the dearth of respondents with primary education in the sample selected.</p> <p>This article presents the following structure: broadly speaking, we have divided it into two main parts, where, in the first, (1) we discuss the issue of brand construction in terms of association of emotional meanings to products or services as a strategy to increase likeability and memorisation, and (2) we justify our option for a set of creative formats, in that we feel they correspond to the most common models of creative strategies used in contemporary ads. This theoretical part is followed by a second part, which is dedicated to (3) a brief presentation of the methodological approach adopted, and (4) data analysis, based on the results of the survey, followed by the conclusions of the study.</p> <p>We believe that the results of this study can be further explored with advantage by marketers and advertisers when selecting the most adequate creative approach for their advertising campaigns. The conclusions we have drawn also concur to reinforce the need for further research on relating specific creative appeals with the psychographic characteristics of a given target audience.</p>
	<p>2. Associating meanings to products</p>
	<p>'Ads don't sell things – they sell brands', as Myers (1999: 218) most aptly tells us. The association of meanings to products or services has been a commonplace strategy in advertising ever since the existing number of products per category began to exceed what was strictly necessary to satisfy people's basic needs (Myers, 1994: 20). When it comes to factual approaches, the bare facts about a given product can be remarkably similar to its competitor's. Therefore, a factual approach will imply a limited scope in terms of promotion. However, when the most important thing about the divulgation of a product is what using it can mean to its audience (rather than what it physically is), there are myriad possibilities in terms of creative concepts that can be used to promote it (Coelho & Rocha, 2007: 27), since the set of meanings that is ascribed to it can be radically different from the ones that have been attributed to other products in the same category – and there lies the</p>

	<p>real differentiating factor when it comes to brands.</p> <p>People interact with ads. They negotiate the meanings ads propose to them, that is, they use the contents conveyed by advertising messages according to their own purposes and needs (Myers, 1999: 14), and according to the kind of individuals they are (Edson Escalas et al, 2004). They are never neutral receivers of a predetermined and fixed advertising message, but rather active interpreters of it (Myers, 1994: 187), with further interpretive layers being added to the previous readings with every new campaign for the same and similar products that is broadcast in the different media (Cook, 1992: 4).</p>
	<p>3. The different creative appeals</p>
	<p>Ads have been using different appeals for a long time. However, classifying these appeals in a consensual manner can be a hard task, since different authors tend to group them in different ways, even though they are often covering roughly the same ground with different nomenclatures. Most seem to agree on a main division between 'informative' and 'emotional' ads, with authors such as Cook (1992: 10) listing possible sets of approximate correspondences between those two categories and their respective execution techniques: these would be 'hard sell', which harps on the product's defining characteristics, exhorting the audience to act quickly on the strength of the information conveyed, as opposed to 'soft sell' approaches, which stress the (positive) after-effects using the product at stake, without the direct appeal of the previous technique; or 'reason' ads and 'tickle' ads, where the former pile up arguments that logically justify the purchase of the product, whereas the latter base their approach on appeals to mood, lifestyle and emotion.</p> <p>Another view by a contemporary academic of Cook's proposes five basic creative approaches in ads. These are 'argument', 'information', 'image', 'emotion' and 'entertainment' (Moriarty, 1991), which could be grouped under the major categories of 'rational/informational ads' and 'emotional/image' ads. However, this dichotomy is not always present or, at least, is diluted into further sub-classifications. For instance, Wells, Burnett and Moriarty (1989) point to other classifications, starting their definitions of possible creative executions with 'ads that have 'straightforward factual copy' or are 'straightforward and rational in tone', which include appeals such as demonstrations, comparisons, problem-solution ads, slice-of-life, spokespersons/endorsers and testimonials. Making the above formats less rational would be a matter of 'attitude' or even 'tone' in a specific ad (which will</p>

	<p>correspond to its kind of emotional approach). Humour is pointed by the authors as one of the possibilities in terms of conveying an advertising message with emotion.</p> <p>As to Belch & Belch (2004), they are very clear detailed as to the difference between 'advertising appeals' and their 'creative executions': according to them, 'appeals' are the basis of the message and, as in Cook (1992), they divide them into two major categories (1) informational/rational (which focuses on facts, distinctive product features and logical persuasion, and (2) emotional, which addresses the psychological feelings of consumers, rather than emphasizing conveyance of the products' characteristics. The authors point out that this appeal is very common in cases where there is not a marked difference between brands in the same product category.</p> <p>Belch & Belch also note that contemporary ads often combine characteristics of both appeals, making it more difficult to obtain a clear classification. As to the execution possibilities (which correspond to the presentation of the message), these would include straight sell, technical evidence, demonstration, comparison, testimonial, slice-of-life, animation, personality symbol, fantasy, dramatization and humour, with a number of combinatory presentations.</p> <p>More recent authors such as Yeshin (2006) also stress the main division between rational and emotional appeals, pointing to the existence of a number of sub-appeals, which are somewhat more detailed than the previous authors', although they come to describe approximately the same situations. These would be 'product feature', 'competitive advantage', 'price or value', 'quality', 'news', 'product or service popularity', 'ego or self-esteem', 'social acceptance', 'fear or anger', 'star appeals and testimonials', 'sensory' and 'novelty'. Although this list is already quite exhaustive, there are authors who provide even longer lists of possible appeals, which in some cases could reach a number of 24 (Appelbaum & Halliburton, 1993).</p> <p>This abbreviated incursion into the different categories proposed for creative appeals confirms the existence of a nomenclature quagmire, which we have decided to address by using the methodology options described in point 3 below. As we have seen from this brief overview of the literature on this subject, there are many creative appeals based on emotion: in fact, contemporary ads have come to assume the same characteristics of the entertainment programs they constantly interrupt in every media (Freitas, 2008: 127), in an effort to downplay their intrusive nature and borrow from other neighbouring discourses the credibility they lack as a discursive</p>
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	<p>genre. In this manner, they blur the borders between 'entertainment' and 'promotion', since their sharing of a number of external features makes it difficult to pinpoint exactly where one begins and the other ends (Leiss et al, 1990: 115; Cook, 1992: 29, Fairclough, 1995: 77).</p> <p>Although the ultimate aim of ads would be to sell (or, at least, to contribute to the generation of positive attitudes which may lead to the choice of product A instead of product B), this constant shifting of external features and appropriation of useful strategies makes one overlook that commercially-bound predetermination in order to enjoy the ad as an object of aesthetic fruition and contemplation (Nolke, 1993: 279; González Requena & Ortiz de Zárate, 1995: 12), which might make it easier to inspire the 'right' acquisition behaviour.</p> <p>The betting on creative appeals based on emotion as used by contemporary ads as an effective strategy for increasing sales (however uncertain this corollary may be) is backed by studies published as early as 1983 - which, in their turn, were already working on previous studies which tentatively suggested the same notions: that it was possible, and even probable that people in general (1) paid more attention to affective advertising; (2) processed the ad better when in presence of emotional appeals; (3) assessed the ad message in a more positive way when the appeals were affective; and, lastly, (4) remember the ad better under those circumstances (Ray & Batra, 1983: 543-544).</p>
	<p>4. Method</p>
	<p>It is the aim of the present study to analyse the impact of the creative appeals we have previously described. It was also our purpose to identify consumer groups according to the attitudes expressed as to the different appeals. The tool used for gathering data was construed with elements based on the review of existing literature on this specific subject. As described in point 2 above, we tried to identify the largest diversity in categories of creative appeals proposed by different authors. From these appeals, we selected the ones which we agreed covered the most ground, avoided redundancy, would provide a reasonable amount of data for analysis and for the formulation of conclusions, and, most importantly, that would be simple enough for our respondents to understand and classify. For this purpose, especially those appeals that are more frequent in emotional executions would have to be almost self-explanatory, but not so detailed or fragmented that they would end up hindering the respondent's understanding of the question. By the end of this process, we have reached a set of ten creative appeals that,</p>

	<p>in our opinion, illustrates the range of possibilities which are most commonly used in the creative conception of advertising messages. The final questionnaire was constituted by a list of ten advertising appeals which the respondents had to assess by means of a 5 point Likert scale (1= I totally dislike it; 5= I totally like it).</p> <p>Due to the exploratory nature of the present study, we have decided, at this stage, to use only one item to evaluate each appeal and just one evaluation indicator. In this case, the fact that the respondent enjoys or dislikes a given appeal is related with an affective component of attitudes and is connected with the concept of <i>advertising likeability</i> (L_{ad}), which evaluates the extent to which an individual enjoys or dislikes an ad (Bergkvist & Rossiter, 2008).</p> <p>The survey also included a set of variables that allow the definition of a social and demographic profile of respondents, such as age, gender, area of residence, etc.</p> <p>Our study was based on a quantitative approach, with the use of a non-probabilistic convenience sample of 262, both male and female, aged 18-65. This wide age range was meant to help us achieve a truer depiction of the population in its different age segments. This questionnaire was administered between February and April 2011, with a response rate of 90%.</p>																																								
	5. Data analysis																																								
	5.1 Characterisation of the sample																																								
	<p>The sample of the present study was constituted by 264 individuals, 53% female and 47% male (table 1). 22,7% were 18-25 years old, 24,6% were 26-35, 23,9% were 36-45, 18,9% were 46-55 anos, and, finally, 9,8% were 56-65. 4,9% of the respondents had primary education, 46,6% had secondary education, 38,3% had a B.A. and 10,2% had a M.A. All the respondents had their residence in the metropolitan area of Porto.</p>																																								
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th></th> <th>Frequency</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Gender</td> <td>Female</td> <td>140</td> <td>53</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Male</td> <td>124</td> <td>47</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="5">Age</td> <td>18 – 25</td> <td>60</td> <td>22,7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>26 – 35</td> <td>65</td> <td>24,6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>36 – 45</td> <td>63</td> <td>23,9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>46 – 55</td> <td>50</td> <td>18,9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>56 – 65</td> <td>26</td> <td>9,8</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="4">Academic qualifications</td> <td>Primary education</td> <td>13</td> <td>4,9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Secondary education</td> <td>123</td> <td>46,6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BA</td> <td>101</td> <td>38,3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>MA</td> <td>27</td> <td>10,2</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Frequency	Percentage	Gender	Female	140	53	Male	124	47	Age	18 – 25	60	22,7	26 – 35	65	24,6	36 – 45	63	23,9	46 – 55	50	18,9	56 – 65	26	9,8	Academic qualifications	Primary education	13	4,9	Secondary education	123	46,6	BA	101	38,3	MA	27	10,2
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	Total		264	100,0
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Table 1 – Gender, age and academic qualifications of respondents

5.2 Attitude of consumers towards creative appeals in advertising

The data analysis of consumers' attitudes towards creative appeals in advertising shows that two appeals gather the consumers' preference. Humour is the appeal respondents enjoy the most, with a mean score that almost reaches the top of the table (M=4,49; SD=0,68). This result demonstrates that the use of humour in advertising is effectively an appeal with a high degree of likeability. These results confirm the conclusions of Chung & Zha (2003) and Gulas & Weinberger (2006), which indicate the existence of strong positive relationships between a humorous advertisement and attitude towards the same advertisement.

Music also presents a very high score (M=4,27; SD=0,74), indicating that ads with sound tracks or jingles are enjoyed by consumers. These values confirm the results of researches by Fam & Waller (2006), which indicate that music is a key driver of likeability.

The following appeals obtained high mean scores, above the medium point of the scale: Animation (M=3,90; SD=0,84), Description of product's advantages (M=3,89; SD=0,79), slice-of-life (M=3,67; SD=0,80) and metaphors/analogies (M=3,66; SD=0,90).

Creative appeals	Mean	Std. Deviation
Humour	4,49	0,68
Music	4,27	0,74
Animation (cartoons)	3,90	0,84
Description of product's advantages	3,89	0,79
Slice of life	3,67	0,80
Metaphors/analogies	3,66	0,90
Product specialists	3,42	0,92
Comparison between products	3,36	0,98
Fantasy and surrealism	3,30	1,00
Use of celebrities	3,08	0,95

Table 2 – Attitude towards creative appeals in advertising

Finally, we come across a group of creative appeals that scored negatively, although in none of them the result has been too low, which means that no creative appeal is "thoroughly disliked". In the group of the less enjoyed we find the Specialists in the product, (M=3,42;SD=0,92), Comparison between products (M=3,36; SD=0,98), Fantasy and surrealism



		(M=3,30; SD=1,00) e, finally, Use of celebrities (M=3,08; SD=0,95).																																												
		5.3 Segments of consumers based on their attitude towards creative appeals																																												
		<p>Since it was our aim with the present study to identify different consumer segments based on their attitude towards creative appeals, we have decided to undertake a cluster analysis. On the path of Punj & Stewart (1983), we undertook a two stage cluster analysis using hierarchical and non-hierarchical methods.</p> <p>The first step was to identify the number of clusters present in the sample using hierarchical methods. Specifically, Ward's method with Squared Euclidean distance was used to identify the number of clusters within the sample. After examination of the agglomeration matrix and dendrogram, a three-cluster solution was used.</p> <p>Cluster one (n=131) represented 49,6% of the sample, cluster two (n=65) 24,6%, and cluster three (n=68) represented 25,8%.</p> <p>A summary statistic of the three-cluster solution that derived from the k-analysis is represented in Table 3. The cluster descriptions were based on the standardised scores that have a zero mean and a standard deviation of one.</p>																																												
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Creative Formats</th> <th>Cluster 1 (n=131)</th> <th>Cluster 2 (n=65)</th> <th>Cluster 3 (n=68)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Humour</td> <td>0,376</td> <td>-0,583</td> <td>-0,027</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Music</td> <td>0,404</td> <td>-0,619</td> <td>-0,005</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Animation (cartoons)</td> <td>0,316</td> <td>-0,993</td> <td>0,355</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Description of product's advantages</td> <td>0,470</td> <td>-0,167</td> <td>-0,602</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Slice of life</td> <td>0,424</td> <td>-0,443</td> <td>-0,239</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Metaphors/analogyes</td> <td>0,486</td> <td>-0,809</td> <td>-0,062</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Product specialists</td> <td>0,341</td> <td>0,419</td> <td>-0,945</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Comparison between products</td> <td>0,317</td> <td>0,055</td> <td>-0,569</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fantasy and surrealism</td> <td>0,501</td> <td>-0,781</td> <td>-0,108</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Use of celebrities</td> <td>0,265</td> <td>-0,126</td> <td>-0,265</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Creative Formats	Cluster 1 (n=131)	Cluster 2 (n=65)	Cluster 3 (n=68)	Humour	0,376	-0,583	-0,027	Music	0,404	-0,619	-0,005	Animation (cartoons)	0,316	-0,993	0,355	Description of product's advantages	0,470	-0,167	-0,602	Slice of life	0,424	-0,443	-0,239	Metaphors/analogyes	0,486	-0,809	-0,062	Product specialists	0,341	0,419	-0,945	Comparison between products	0,317	0,055	-0,569	Fantasy and surrealism	0,501	-0,781	-0,108	Use of celebrities	0,265	-0,126	-0,265	<p>Table 3 – Characteristics of the clusters – mean scores</p>
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		<p>The univariate <i>F</i>-tests indicate that the scores obtained in the ten variables related with the creative appeals were significantly different across the three clusters at the $p<0.01$ level. Therefore, multiple comparisons with Tukey's Honestly Significant Difference (HSD) and a post hoc test were executed to evaluate differences in the ten variables between the clusters (table 4).</p>																																												

Creative appeals	Advertising fans	Rational	Emotional	Global Mean	F	P	Post hoc
	(49,6%)	(24,6%)	(25,8%)	(100%)			
Humour	4,75 (0,48)	4,09 (0,63)	4,47 (0,70)	4,52 (0,64)	27,891	,000	1>3>2
Music	4,57 (0,54)	3,81 (0,66)	4,26 (0,59)	4,30 (0,66)	36,361	,000	1>3>2
Animation (cartoons)	4,17 (0,72)	3,06 (0,75)	4,20 (0,56)	3,91 (0,84)	63,001	,000	1,3>2
Description of product's advantages	4,27 (0,58)	3,76 (0,70)	3,41 (0,76)	3,93 (0,75)	39,654	,000	1>2>3
Slice of life	4,01 (0,59)	3,31 (0,75)	3,47 (0,85)	3,70 (0,77)	25,748	,000	1>2,3
Metaphors/analogies	4,10 (0,65)	2,93 (0,75)	3,61 (0,85)	3,69 (0,87)	54,888	,000	1>3>2
Product specialists	3,74 (0,72)	3,81 (0,70)	2,55 (0,74)	3,45 (0,89)	69,187	,000	1,2>3
Comparison between products	3,67 (0,94)	3,42 (0,83)	2,80 (0,83)	3,39 (0,95)	21,238	,000	1,2>3
Fantasy and surrealism	3,80 (0,73)	2,51 (0,85)	3,19 (0,98)	3,33 (0,98)	52,857	,000	1>3>2
Use of celebrities	3,34 (0,97)	2,96 (0,73)	2,83 (0,93)	3,12 (0,93)	8,094	,000	1>2,3

Table 4 – Cluster profile with the mean values across the ten variables and post hoc test

		<p>In order to identify demographic profiles of the clusters, cross-tabulation analysis was used for the variables gender and age (table 5). The X^2 statistic was employed in this case to assess whether there were any statistical differences. X^2 showed significantly differences between groups regarding gender (X^2 (2, N=264) = 8,260, $P=0.016$). Female respondents were considerably represented in the groups "Advertising fans" and "Emotional". On the other hand, male consumers, which are also well-represented in the "advertising fans" group, are in higher percentage in the "rational" group.</p> <p>The X^2 statistic was also employed to assess whether there were any statistical differences between groups regarding age. The results demonstrated that there is no significant difference between the three groups when it comes to the age of consumers (X^2 (8, N=264) = 9,856, $P=0.275$).</p>				
			Advertising fans	Rational	Emotional	Total
Gender	Female	70 (49,6%)	26 (18,7%)	44 (31,7%)	140 (100,0%)	
	Male	63 (50,4%)	38 (30,9%)	23 (18,7%)	124 (100,0%)	
Age	18 - 25	26 (44,1%)	17 (28,8%)	16 (27,1%)	59 (100,0%)	
	26 - 35	34 (52,3%)	12 (18,5%)	19 (29,2%)	65 (100,0%)	

	36 - 45	39 (61,9%)	10 (15,9%)	14 (22,2%)	63 (100,0%)
	46 - 55	22 (44,9%)	16 (32,7%)	11 (22,4%)	49 (100,0%)
	56 - 65	10 (38,5%)	9 (34,6%)	7 (26,9%)	28 (100,0%)

Table 5 – Scores on the gender differences between groups

Cluster 1 represents 49,6% of the sample used in the present study and was named “advertising fans”. This group obtained the highest scores in almost every appeal, except for “animation” and “product specialist”. Therefore, this is a group that generically enjoys creativity in advertising in its different executions. It is the largest of the three groups, with a strong representation of both male and female individuals.

Cluster 2 is constituted by 24,6% of the sample and was named “rationals”. This segment obtained the lowest scores in some of the appeals with a more hedonistic execution. Therefore, this group is the one that less enjoys “humour”, “music”, “animation”, “fantasy” and surrealism”. It is the smaller cluster, with a strong representation of male consumers.

Finally, cluster 3 is composed by 25,8% of the present study's sample and was named “emotionals”. This group essentially undervalues rational appeals such as “comparison between products”, “product advantages” and “product specialists”. In terms of dimension, it is similar to the “rationals” group, but, unlike the other, it has a strong representation of female consumers.

6. Conclusions

This study allowed us to reach several conclusions. Generically speaking, all appeals received a positive score, which means that, in general, consumers enjoy creativity in advertising.

There are appeals which, very clearly, are preferred by consumers. Interestingly enough, these are appeals that are connected with the most hedonistic aspects of advertising, directly related with its more entertaining side. Within this context, humour, music and animation/cartoons are the favourite appeals. The appeal with the lowest score was “use of celebrities”.

We could identify three different groups of consumers based on their attitudes towards creative formats. This means that opinions on this subject are not consensual. “Advertising fans” enjoy practically every creative appeal in advertising and encompass both male and female consumers. It is the largest group of the sample, confirming that, in general, consumers have a positive attitude towards the use of creativity in advertising. The “rational group”, with strong male representation, reveals a preference for more objective and

factual appeals, seeking mainly information about the product in advertising messages. Lastly, the “emotional group”, with marked female representation, reveals a preference for the more hedonistic appeals, deriving enjoyment from the entertainment component of advertising messages.

The results of the present study have some implications for marketing and advertising professionals, namely when it comes to the definition of the creative strategy and creative appeals to be used in the advertising messages. The fact that “humour”, “music” and “animation” are the most enjoyable appeals should be matter for thought for the development of advertising campaigns. The use of these appeals could lead to increased awareness and more effective likeability eventually leading to an improvement in memorisation of the persuasive message.

The demonstration that attitude towards the different appeals is not a consensual issue may constitute an alert to professionals as to the adequacy of the advertising message to the profile of the product's consumer. Judging by the results obtained, in campaigns addressed to the male consumer, more rational appeals such as “product advantage” and “product specialist” should, at least, be taken into consideration. In the case of products exclusively addressed to female audiences, professionals should consider the possibility of adopting a more emotional approach, using “animation”, “humour” and “music”.

One of the main limitations of this study has to do with the sample that has been used: it is a convenience sample with a relatively reduced scope, which might compromise its representative character and the possibility of extrapolating the results to a more comprehensive reality.

Another limitation is related with the fact that the appeals were presented to respondents in an abstract manner without a more detailed explanation about the possible creative executions of each appeal or without the presentation of concrete stimuli. However, this was just an introductory approach to this theme, which could be later explored and developed in future studies.

Thus, in future investigations, it would be relevant to explore and develop the tool for gathering data eventually attempting to create dimensions constituted by a number of items which describe in a clearer manner each of the appeals.

The character of this study paves the way to international research. Within this context, it could also be relevant to compare the extent to which cultural factors could lead consumers from different countries to display different attitudes

		towards the same appeal.
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