Framing Effects in Advertising

There is an extensive literature on the role of framing effects in decision-making. Some of the research in this area has focused on the framing of choice alternatives (i.e., in terms of gains or losses) and decision-makers' perceptions of risk (Tversky and Kahneman 1973, 1974; Kuhn 1997; Highhouse, Paese, and Leatherberry 1996). Other research has investigated framing and how consumers weigh issue-relevant facts when choosing between alternatives (Feldman and Lynch 1987; Wright and Rip 1980; Bettman and Sujan 1987).

In communication research, however, framing is defined as the act of selecting and emphasizing certain facts in a message in order to influence its interpretation and the subsequent evaluation of issue-relevant arguments (Entman, 1993). In the context of advertising, a frame is a central organizing idea that suggests to consumers what they should attend to and which information is important (Nelson, Oxley and Clawson 1997). Frames are different from persuasive arguments in that they typically do not present the audience with new information. Instead, frames activate information in long-term memory (e.g., categories, decision rules, or heuristics) (Nelson, Oxley, and Clawson 1997; Shiv, Edell and Payne 1997).

Overview of Research on Framing Effects in Advertising

Research on framing effects in advertising has focused on positively and negatively framed claims and their effect on consumers' brand evaluations and purchase intentions (Smith 1996; Shiv, Edell and Payne 1997; Homer, 1992; Maheswaran and Meyers-Levy 1990). Other research has focused on the role of advertisements as frames