only on the first ad condition. The percentage of subjects that said the sponsor was superior to the comparison brand on speed of relief increased with delay from 3.6% to 14.8% (See Figure 4). Recall that the combined comparative claim in the first ad copy condition featured the negated parity comparison (e.g., “The most advanced pain reliever/antacid. Advil/Pepcid isn't faster”). Although subjects did not report the parity comparison in the ad-communication questions, their answers to the opinion question suggests that, at least immediately after exposure, subjects did not believe the sponsor was faster than the comparison brand. Over time, however, their opinion reflects the implied superiority on speed of relief. Information integration that takes place over time may have led subjects to forget the source of the information and to attribute the sponsor superiority claim to their beliefs (cf. Johnson and Raye 1981).

Brand Preference

In order to assess brand preference, subjects were presented with the following scenario:

Imagine that you need to purchase a [TARGET CATEGORY] today… You have 15 points to allocate between brands. Indicate how likely you would be to purchase each of the following brands by assigning some of those 15 points to each of them. More points indicate a greater chance that you would purchase that brand. You must not exceed 15 points, so add up the points at the end to make sure you have assigned only 15 points between all brands. You may change the number of points you assign to each brand until you feel comfortable that they reflect your intended choice.

Subjects then viewed a list of three brands, the ad sponsor, the comparison brand featured in the ad, and a well-known filler brand. The computer program was designed to detect when subjects erroneously assigned more than 15 points and prompted them to try