data collection progressed, advertising campaigns for the antacid brands were more
visible. Again, it is difficult to determine what impact, if any, this had on subjects’
responses.

Nonetheless, the statistically significant effects for the antacid category hold
potentially interesting implications for the advertising of new or less familiar brands.
From a competitive standpoint, established brands need to carefully monitor such claims,
even when it appears that their brands are not the primary target of a competitive attack.
Negated claims have been typically accepted as conveying only a parity comparison
between brands, and only until recently have the parity brands begun to challenge that
assumption. The results presented here provide some empirical evidence that such
challenges are justified.

From a consumer welfare standpoint, regulators should attend to the linguistic
complexity of claims, especially when they are intended to convey health-related
information. Consider, for example, the recent surge of advertising for prescription
medication. While these advertisements may not always be for new brands, advertising
will be the first source of information about these products for a majority of the general
public. Because consumers tend to rely on advertisements to learn about brands during
their initial introduction, combined comparative claims should be carefully scrutinized
during this phase.

Measurement Issues

One of the goals of this research was to approximate copy-testing methods
employed in surveys for litigation purposes. However, as already mentioned, one of the
shortcomings of these studies was the sample size. Because of the funneling technique,