ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF CROSS-MEDIA USAGE:
A STUDY OF A TV PROGRAM’S OFFICIAL WEBSITE

By

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To my family
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 LITERATURE REVIEW</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced TV</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Involvement Concept</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Involvement</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation-Opportunity-Ability (MOA) Framework</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses and Gratifications Research</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactivity</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product Placement</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 CONCEPTUALIZATION</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesized Model</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antecedents of Cross-Media Usage</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consequences of Cross-Media Usage</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The TV program, “Gossip Girl,” and its Official Website</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Design</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures and Instrument</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 RESULTS</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Profile</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model Testing</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-1</td>
<td>Constructs, indicators, and key statistics of the final model</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-1</td>
<td>Hypothesized structural model</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-1</td>
<td>The hypothesized cross-media usage model</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-2</td>
<td>The revised cross-media usage model</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-3</td>
<td>The final cross-media usage model</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Marketers have now embraced online channels as a core device of their marketing communication mix in response to the growing availability of broadband Internet access. Along with the online marketing trend, TV Websites have become a vital companion to TV networks. Also, TV Websites provide valuable opportunities for marketing applications in the form of interactivity. In light of the importance of TV Websites to TV networks and marketers, this study explores the causal relationships among and within the antecedents and consequences of TV viewers’ cross-media usage (the use of a TV program and its official Website). The antecedent factors are program involvement, motivation and ability to process Website information, and frequency and duration of the Website patronage. The consequences factors include Website loyalty, the use of a sponsor’s interactive online product placement, attitude toward the sponsor, and purchase intention.

A total of 250 respondents participated in the current study. The findings of this study conclude that program involvement has a positive effect on TV viewers’ motivation to process information on the TV program’s official Website (H1). Also, motivation has direct relationships with frequency and duration of the Website patronage (H2 and H3, respectively). However, program involvement does not show a positive influence on TV viewers’ ability to process
content on the TV program’s official Website (H4), and the ability to process Website information construct does not have a negative and significant effect on duration of Website visits (H5). Moreover, a positive effect of motivation on ability to process Website information emerged in the mechanism. The first consequence of cross-media usage, Website loyalty, was confirmed to be influenced by both frequency and duration of Website visits (H6 and H7, respectively). It has a direct and positive influence on the use of the sponsor’s interactive online product placement (H8) and, in turn, changes the TV viewers’ attitude toward the sponsor (H9) after exposed to those brand-related enhanced TV features. In the end, the results revealed that positive attitudes toward the sponsor can subsequently affect TV viewers’ purchase intentions (H10). In conclusion, the cross-media usage model developed in the present study could be viewed as the groundwork to explain TV viewers’ behavior before and after they patronize a TV program’s official Website. Implications of these findings and directions for refinement and future research are discussed.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

A Website is considered the most important form of interactive advertising (Sicilia, Ruiz, & Munuera, 2005). With a higher level of interactivity, the Internet represents the future of marketing communications (Ghose, & Dou, 1998) and is appreciated for its potential to provide in-depth information, in addition to creating virtual product experiences (Klein, 2003); “the World Wide Web is the most recent and popular addition to the new media repertoire, which fascinates both business and consumers because of its enormous potential for interaction” (Wu, 2005, p. 46).

Since consumers are spending more time on the Internet than on any other marketing channel, some marketers have now embraced online channels as a core device of their marketing communication mix (Edelman, 2007). Along with this online marketing trend, TV networks have established their presence on the Internet to increase cross-media usage, specific to the use of TV and the Internet, among their target audiences. It was a great fear among TV networks that the fast-growing Internet use would siphon off TV viewers, especially the young audiences (Phipps, 2000; Downey, 2007). However, Downey (2007) revealed that TV viewers’ use of the Internet is not at the expense of their TV viewing. In addition, about 48 percent of 13 to 24-year-old Internet users visit a TV Website at least once a week. Based on the fact, TV Websites have become a vital companion to TV networks. TV networks can pull in viewers by providing services not available on the TV. After the viewers’ Website visits, they are armed with a better understanding of the TV program and are then pushed to watch the TV program on the TV set (Ha & Chan-Olmsted, 2004). Thus, TV networks have to take the TV viewers’ cross-media usage in mind and manage viewership across TV and the Internet in the age of media fragmentation.
As the convergence of TV and the Internet, TV Websites are expected to provide a new environment of hybrid media content, including e-commerce, information, online games, music, advertising, etc. (Arlen, 2000; Ha and Chan-Olmsted, 2004). TV Websites are designed to market on-air programs (Kershbaumer, 2000; Chan-Olmsted, 2000), develop viewership, and fulfill communication needs of TV fans (Ha, 2002; Ha & Chan-Olmsted, 2001; 2004). In this sense, enhanced TV is a term used to indicate “the use of Internet features to improve (enhance) the viewing experience” (Ha & Chan-Olmsted, 2004, p.620).

It is the TV programmers’ belief that enhanced TV features can help build loyalty among viewers, increase retention, and attract new subscribers (Fahey, 2000; Griffin, 1996) through the interaction between viewers and TV networks on the Internet. From the marketers’ point of view, TV Websites provide valuable opportunities for marketing applications in the form of interactivity. Cultivation of the subculture of deeply passionate fans (“fandom”) (Ha, 2002; Ha & Chan-Olmsted, 2002), increasing online broadband video use (Nielsen, 2007), and combining e-commerce with the influence of celebrity culture (Olijnyz, 2007) are important insights for marketers to develop engaging interactive communication on TV Websites. Besides basic Internet advertising instruments, product placement has extended its territory onto TV Websites such as CWTV.com.

In academic research, scholars have studied the branding effects of enhanced TV among viewers, ranging from Website visit experience (Ha & Chan-Olmsted, 2001) and loyalty toward TV networks (Ha & Chan-Olmsted, 2004) to the viewers’ interests in e-commerce on TV Websites (Ha & Chan-Olmsted, 2002). Ha and Chan-Olmsted (2004) stated that enhanced TV features are significant predictors for branding and marketing TV networks on TV Websites; however, these features are still underutilized and many viewers have not visited a TV Website.
In light of the importance of TV Websites to TV networks and marketers, this study aims to explore the causal relationships among and within the antecedents and consequences of TV viewers’ cross-media usage. More specifically, consumer behavior in the situation of TV and Internet convergence is emphasized throughout the present study. To gain a better understanding of TV viewers’ cross-media usage, the current study will underline the involvement effect on Website patronage. Two other antecedent factors, motivation and ability to process Website information, will be discussed using the Internet uses and gratifications theory and the motivation-opportunity-ability (MOA) framework, respectively. Frequency and duration of the Website visits will also be discussed. In addition, several consequences of cross-media usage will be examined, such as Website loyalty, the use of a sponsor’s interactive online product placement, attitude toward the sponsor, and purchase intention.

To contribute to existing research in the TV industry and interactive advertising field, the current context develops a structural equation model that is based on previous research and is expected to integrate several previously unspecified and unrelated research streams. Once a structural equation model of TV viewers’ cross-media usage is developed, this research will be able to explain why TV viewers visit TV programs’ official Websites after watching TV programs, how they perceive the Websites, their use of a sponsor’s interactive online product placement, their attitude toward the brand placed on the Website, and their purchase intentions.
Enhanced TV refers to “the use of Internet features for enhancing the viewing experience of TV viewers” (Ha & Chan-Olmsted, 2001, p.237). There are four types of enhanced TV features (Hurst, 2000): (1) fan-based features, (2) game-based features, (3) information-based features, and (4) programming-based features. Fan-based features focus on satisfying viewers’ desires to get closer to the stars of the show, such as cast information, while game-based features are aimed at simulating the fun and excitement of a particular game. Information-based features are used to meet viewers’ needs for extended content. This could include, for instance, the information that supplements news, weather, and sports. Programming-based features deliver customized programs through personalized channel selections (e.g., TV schedule, video-on-demand, etc.).

Ha and Chan-Olmsted (2001) have been pioneers in enhanced TV research areas. They initiated a study using a rigorous Solomon’s four group experiment to examine the impact of enhanced TV features on TV viewers’ loyalty toward the TV networks and their interest in TV commerce. They found that the subjects’ interest and experience in TV commerce were generally low and did not differ among subjects with different levels of awareness of enhanced TV features.

Later in 2002, Ha developed three enhanced TV strategy models after conducting both quantitative and qualitative analyses on TV Websites: (1) The “welcome all” model, which offers features to both viewers and non-viewers to promote the existing TV network’s programs; (2) The “fans-friendly” (in-depth) model, which is a kind of Website designed to please loyal viewers with sophisticated enhanced TV functions aimed at converting current viewers to fans;
and (3) The “hello” model, which assumes that visitors have no prior knowledge about the TV program. The “hello” model is utilized to extend the reach of the TV network as well as to attract visitors to become viewers of the TV network’s programs (Ha, 2002, p.243-244). Of these three, the “fans-friendly” model is known as being the most interactive; however, the usability is not high due to some requests for special software installation and broadband access. Ha’s (2002) models are implied to explain the importance of target audience segmentation and the selection of strategic enhanced TV functions.

Moreover, Ha and Chan-Olmsted (2004) conducted a national study of Internet users’ use of enhanced TV features on cable TV Websites to discover the dynamics of cross-media usage in electronic media. They also underlined the role of cable TV Websites in cable TV network branding and viewership. The researchers concluded that younger Internet users seem to use TV Websites more often than older Internet users. Additionally, the enhanced TV features are currently underutilized, and many TV viewers have not gone onto the cable network Websites. However, the increasing numbers of the usage of enhanced TV features can positively predict viewer loyalty, subscriber loyalty, and potential new subscribers for cable networks. Ha and Chan-Olmsted (2004) also pointed out that cable networks need to increase their efforts in promoting their Websites as well as informing the viewers about enhanced TV features available on the cable network Websites.

Overall, most of the research in the enhanced TV field has focused on the managerial implications for the TV industry, including TV viewers’ experience of TV Website patronage, TV networks branding and viewership through TV Websites, and viewers’ interest in TV commerce. There has been an abundance of research integrating the antecedents and consequences of TV viewers’ cross-media usage into one model in addition to examining
marketers’ efforts on employing enhanced TV features as a vehicle for online product placement. Therefore, this study is designed to provide valuable insights on how TV viewers process the TV Website information, their loyalty toward TV Websites, their use of brand-related enhanced TV features, and their brand attitudes as well as purchase intentions. To do this, the present research utilizes and applies extant literature on involvement, motivation-opportunity-ability (MOA) framework, uses and gratifications, interactivity, and product placement.

**The Involvement Concept**

Involvement is an internal state of arousal that consists of intensity, direction, and persistence properties (Bettman, 1979; Mitchell, 1979; 1981; Shimp, 1982; Andrews, 1988). The intensity of involvement is the degree of arousal that can engage consumers in specific goal-related behaviors (Mitchell, 1979; Andrews, Durvasula, & Akhter, 1990). The direction here means the target (e.g., the advertised brand or an element of the advertisement) of the involvement intensity level (Mitchell, 1981; Andrews, Durvasula, & Akhter, 1990), while the involvement persistence indicates the duration of the intensity (Andrews, Durvasula, & Akhter, 1990). These three major involvement properties are grounded in motivation (Andrews, Durvasula, & Akhter, 1990), which can drive individuals from an initial state to a desired state (Bettman, 1979).

The essential attribute of involvement is revealed as the perceived personal relevance of the target object based on the consumer’s needs, goals, and values (Petty & Cacioppo, 1981; Zaichkowsky, 1985; Celsi & Olson, 1988; Griffith, Krampf, & Palmer, 2001; Park, Lee, & Han, 2007). Thus, a consumer’s level of involvement is determined by the degree of personal relevance. Celsi and Olson (1988) suggested that the concept of personal relevance is “personally relevant to the extent that consumers perceive it to be self-related or in some way instrumental in achieving their personal goals and values” (p.211). They further stated that when personally
relevant knowledge is activated in memory in a particular situation, a motivational state (felt involvement) is created (Celsi & Olson, 1988). The concept of felt involvement refers to consumer’s psychological experience when he/she is motivated (Celsi & Olson, 1988). It is similar to Rothschild and Houston’s (1977) “response involvement.”

Rothschild and Houston (1977) have distinguished three distinct types of involvement: “situational involvement” (SI), “enduring involvement” (EI), and “response involvement” (RI). Situational involvement refers to the conditions in which a stimulus is received, whereas enduring involvement is identified as the intrinsic characteristics of the recipient. Response involvement is defined as “the complexity or extensiveness of cognitive and behavioral processes characterizing the overall consumer decision process” (p.5). Rothschild and Houston (1977) conceived the idea that situational involvement and enduring involvement combine to influence response involvement. This concept has been widely accepted in the literature (e.g., Bloch & Richins, 1983; Celsi & Olson, 1988).

Andrews, Durvasula, and Akhter (1990) have labeled four major research streams of involvement: (1) attention/processing strategies, (2) personal/situational involvement, (3) audience/process involvement, and (4) enduring/product involvement (p.30).

Attention/processing strategies have contributed to the examination of the state of involvement. Studies included under this field have conceptualized involvement relating to attention levels and the direction of processing (e.g., Gardner, Mitchell, & Russo, 1978; Mitchell, 1979; 1981; Andrew, 1988). Mitchell (1981) stated that “attention” and “processing” are two critical stages of the information acquisition process that are affected by the level and direction of involvement. Thus, involvement is defined as “an individual level, internal state variable that indicates the
amount of arousal, interest or drive evoked by a particular stimulus or situation” (Mitchell, 1979, p.194).

The personal/situational involvement field represents the manipulation and/or measurement of the antecedents of involvement, which includes involvement definitions based on the idea that “people are likely to become personally involved with an issue when they expect it to have significant consequences for their own lives” (Apsler & Sears, 1968, p.162). Extending from this point of view, Petty and Cacioppo (1981) employed personal relevance manipulations and elicited different subsequent persuasion strategies for low and high involvement conditions.

Moreover, the audience/process involvement is defined as “the allocation of attentional capacity to a message source, as needed to analyze the message at one of a series of increasingly abstract representation levels” (Greenwald & Leavitt, 1984, p.591). Here, the “increasingly abstract representation levels” indicate various involvement levels. The explanation offered is that low-involvement levels require less capacity, while high-involvement levels need greater capacity. This notion has advanced the knowledge of the consequences of involvement.

Finally, the enduring/product involvement research stream is the integration of enduring involvement and product involvement due to the fact that the preexisting experience and knowledge-structure terminology are found in both conceptualizations. In this field, individuals are expected to have relatively stable and enduring involvement levels with a particular stimulus (Andrews, Durvasula, & Akhter, 1990). Therefore, Andrews, Durvasula, and Akhter (1990) concluded that this conceptualization differs from other involvement definitions by viewing the enduring/product involvement as situationally-specific or transitory in nature.

**Program Involvement**

Program involvement has been defined and conceptualized differently in previous studies (Moorman, Neijens, & Smit, 2007); some examples include viewer drive for closure (Kennedy,
1971), suspense (Bryant & Comisky, 1978), prior arousal (Mattes & Cantor, 1982), emotional reaction (Pavelchak, Antil, & Munch, 1988), and distraction (Mundorf, Zillmann, & Drew, 1991; Anand & Sternthal, 1992). Program involvement is often applied to examine the influence on commercial effectiveness (Singh & Churchill, 1987; Schumann & Thorson, 1990) and has produced mixed results (Moorman, Neijens, & Smit, 2007).

Scholars in the “negative school” stated that to present a commercial during an involving program will diminish its recall due to limited information-processing capacity (Kennedy, 1971; Bryant & Comisky, 1978; Feltham & Arnold, 1994; Newell, Henderson, & Wu, 2001). Soldow and Principe (1981), for example, found that presenting a commercial in a less involving program appears to be a better approach to achieve brand and sales-message recall, obtain more favorable attitude toward the commercial, and generate greater purchase intention. Their reasoning for this finding concerned the point that when viewers become more involved in a program, they seem to become less attentive to and receptive to commercials inserted in the program.

Conversely, some scholars have noted a positive relation between program involvement and advertising effectiveness (e.g., Lloyd & Clancy, 1991; Lord & Putrevu, 1996). This point of view maintains that when viewers are engaged in a program, they would demonstrate more favorable responses to commercials carried by the program. Krugman (1983) suggested that when an involving program is interrupted by an interesting commercial, the momentum of arousal does carry over. Thus, program involvement has a carryover effect on commercials, since arousal can result in better information-processing.

Besides these two research streams, there are some researchers who consider that an inverted-U relationship is the better way to understand the effect of program involvement on ad
recall (Tavassoli, Shultz II, & Fitzsimons, 1995). Based on the Yerkes-Dodson Law (1908), this research stream proposes that arousal has a positive effect on performance, but only from resting levels up to moderate levels of arousal (Tavassoli, Shultz II, & Fitzsimons, 1995). When levels of arousal become too high, a decrease occurs in performance. In other words, although program involvement has a positive effect on processing commercials, the amount of attention given to interpret the program will distract viewers from processing commercials when the level of involvement increases to too high (Moorman, Neijens, & Smit, 2007). Therefore, program involvement can both increase and decrease the advertising effectiveness, depending on the level of involvement.

Based on previous research findings, the author proposes that program involvement will have a positive effect on TV viewers’ information acquisition process in the existing research design.

**Motivation-Opportunity-Ability (MOA) Framework**

In consumer literature, the motivation-opportunity-ability (MOA) model has been applied extensively in an effort to explain the insights of how consumers process information (e.g. Batra & Ray, 1986; MacInnis & Jaworki, 1989; MacInnis, Moorman, & Jaworski, 1991; Thorbjørnsen & Supphellen, 2004). This model argues that consumers will only process information from a stimulus when they possess the motivation, opportunity, and ability to do so. As a result, the degree of information processing is conceived as influencing a consumer’s attitude (Clark, Abela & Ambler, 2005). Petty and Cacioppo (1981) stated in the older elaboration likelihood model (ELM) that motivation and ability are two of the determinants of the route to persuasion. When a persuasion message is used to induce attitude change via the “central route,” recipients need to have the necessary motivation to think about issue-relevant information and have the ability to
process the message. On the contrary, a recipient’s attitude change is not based on the careful consideration of issue-relevant argumentation when under the “peripheral route” (Petty & Cacioppo, 1984). The following section reviews the concepts of motivation, opportunity, and ability proposed in previous studies.

**Motivation**

Motivation indicates a consumer’s desire or readiness to process external stimuli (MacInnis, Moorman, & Jaworski, 1991). According to Hoyer and MacInnis (2007), motivation is affected by the extent to which a stimulus is personally relevant to consumers. Consumers view something as important and personally relevant when it is: (1) consistent with their values, goals, and needs; (2) perceived risky; and/or (3) moderately inconsistent with previously acquired knowledge or attitudes (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007). In Bayton’s (1958) study, motivation is “the drives, urges, wishes, or desires which initiate the sequence of event known as behavior” (p.282). Later in 1985, Park and Mittal defined motivation as goal-directed arousal due to the fact that motivation does not always end in action.

Therefore, “goal-relevant behavior” is one outcome of motivation (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007, p.49). When motivation is high, consumers are more willing to do things that make it more likely they will achieve goals. Motivation also affects consumers’ information processing and decision making (MacInnis & Jaworski, 1989; Goodstein, 1993). When consumers are highly motivated, they devote more effort to thinking, comprehending and evaluating the information, and try to remember it for later use. Mitchell (1981) proposed in his model that motivation influences two dimensions of processing: direction of attention and intensity of processing. The final outcome of motivation is involvement, the psychological state in consumers (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007). The term “felt involvement” is therefore used to describe the psychological experience of a motivated consumer (Celsi & Olson, 1988).
Opportunity

MacInnis, Moorman, and Jaworski (1991) defined opportunity as “the extent to which distractions or limited exposure time affect consumers’ attention” (p.34). With higher levels of opportunity, consumers can allocate more attention to the stimulus. In previous studies, barriers to opportunity are mostly identified as distractions, limited exposure time, and information overload (Festinger & Maccoby, 1964; Osterhouse & Brock, 1970; Wright, 1980; Batra & Ray 1986; MacInnis, Moorman, & Jaworski, 1991). Take Hoyer and MacInnis’ (2007) research for example; they listed several factors that impede consumers to take an action. First, they discussed how time can affect consumers’ opportunity to make decisions, process information, and perform certain behaviors. Consumers may consume more during a specific season, engage in limited information processing when under time pressure to make decisions, or be exposed to an incomprehensible ad due to lack of exposure time, etc. Second, distraction implies any kind of situation that diverts consumers’ attention. For instance, background music or attractive commercial models can distract consumers from an advertised message. The third factor is the amount of presented information. Consumers need real and enough information to help them make a purchase decision. The repetition of information is another factor that needs to be considered. If consumers are exposed to a message repeatedly, they can easily process the message because they have more chance to think about and remember it. Finally, the more consumers can control the flow of information (e.g., what message is presented, for how long, and in what order), the better they can remember and learn from the information.

Ability

Ability is defined as consumers’ “skill or proficiency in interpreting information” (MacInnis & Jaworski, 1989, p.7). The availability and accessibility of relevant information account for the foundation of processing ability (MacInnis, Moorman, & Jaworski, 1991). Thus,
if consumers’ ability to process information is high, they may engage in active decision making. According to Hoyer and MacInnis (2007), prior knowledge and experience, cognitive style, complexity of information, intelligence, education, age, and money are all factors that affect consumers’ abilities to process information and make decisions. One explanation is that knowledgeable consumers are able to think more deeply about information than consumers who are equally motivated but with less knowledge about information. That is, high ability occurs when necessary knowledge and/or prior experience for comprehending information is present and is accessed. In addition, consumers can also vary greatly in cognitive style, which refers to their preference for how information should be presented. Some consumers prefer to process information visually, while other are adept at processing information verbally (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007). The complexity of information to which consumers are exposed can also influence the ability to process information. Hoyer and MacInnis (2007) noted that when information becomes more complex, consumers’ ability to process information decreases. Moreover, consumers who are more intelligent and educated are expected to better process more complex information and make decisions. Age has also been related to the differences in processing ability, whereas the lack of money can impede consumers’ motivation to engage in buying behavior.

Since the MOA model has been widely used in previous research, and it offers valuable insights into how consumers’ information processing levels differ in response to motivation, opportunity, and ability levels, it is important to include the MOA model in the present study when trying to understand the information processing levels.

**Uses and Gratifications Research**

The uses and gratifications theory appears to be ideally suited for studying the psychological and behavioral tendencies in association with audience media use (Lin, 1996;
Severin & Tankard, 1997; Lin, 1999; Korgaonkar & Wolin, 1999). From the uses and
gratifications perspective, it is assumed that media users are goal-directed and actively involved
in media usage (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974a). People actively select certain media and
media content in order to satisfy various social and psychological needs (Katz, Blumler, &
Gurevitch, 1974a; McLeod & Becker, 1981; Palmgreen, 1984). These needs usually “take the
form of (1) strengthening or weakening, (2) a connection-cognitive, affective, integrative (3)
with some referent –self, friends, family and tradition, social and political institutions, others”

McQuail, Blumler, and Brown (1972) disclosed four functions of audience gratification:
(1) **diversion** happens when a media text provides an escape from reality and emotional release;
(2) **personal relationships** means the audience creates personal relationships with the characters
in media content, including “substitute companionship” and “social utility” (Katz, Blumler, &
Gurevitch, 1974b, p.513); (3) **personal identity** (or **individual psychology**) refers to personal
reference, reality exploration, and value reinforcement; and (4) **surveillance** indicates that the
audience has obtained an understanding of the world by consuming a media text. Katz,
Gurevitch, and Haas (1973) found empirical regularities in an individual’s preference for using
different media that is associated with the specific functions involved. Different mediums seem
to offer a unique combination of **attributes**, the characteristic **content**, and social and physical
**contexts**; thus, it is also a scholars’ interest to understand what attributes may render a medium
more or less likely to satisfy different needs (Katz, Gurevitch, & Haas, 1973). Later in 1974(b),
Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch concluded seven logical steps indicating what the previous
investigations of audience uses and gratifications were concerned with: (1) the social and
psychological origins of (2) needs, which generate (3) expectations of (4) the mass media or
other sources, which lead to (5) differential patterns of media exposure (or engagement in other activities), resulting in (6) need gratifications and (7) other consequences, perhaps mostly unintended ones (p. 510).

**Internet Uses and Gratifications**

Stemming from the tradition of uses and gratifications research, this theoretical approach has been employed to study computer-mediated communication, such as Internet usage motivations (e.g. Morris & Ogan, 1996; Lin, 1999; Kprgaonkar & Wolin, 1999; Papacharissi & Rubin, 2000; Stafford, Stafford, & Schkade, 2004; Song, LaRose, Eastin, & Lin, 2004; Ko, Cho, & Roberts, 2005). The Internet requires a relatively higher level of interactivity than traditional media and has evolved from mass media attributes to an “endless feast of niches and specialties” (Ha & James, 1998, p. 2). Therefore, the Internet users can actively seek out information to fill their needs, and the usage is also recognized as goal directed (Lin & Jeffres, 1998).

Miller (1996) noted that users’ online activities are motivated by seeking gratifications through interaction, escape, entertainment, and surveillance. Eighmey and Mccord (1998) stated that one primary use of computer-mediated communication involves entertainment and exploration. Their findings consistently revealed that entertainment value, personal relevance, and information involvement are strong motivational factors and are more likely to be related to the use of the World Wide Web. Also, clarity of purpose, controversy, and credibility are found to be consistent with previous research. Moreover, personal involvement and continuing communication are two new factors found in their research; the former indicates the capacity of a Website to make visitors feel welcome, and the latter centers on the amount of time visitors would like to spend on a Website and/or their revisit at a later time. Eighmey’s (1997) field application supported Eighmey and Mccord’s (1998) research, by outlining the following statements: (1) Website users are assisted by information placed in an enjoyable context; (2)
Website users are assisted by organizational ideas that make sense in terms of the strategic purpose of the Website; (3) Website visitors are assisted by efficiently executed designs (p.65). Both these two studies agree that “information becomes a relationship in Web-based communication” (Eighmey, 1997, p.66).

Korgaonkar and Wolin (1999) categorized the Internet users’ motivations and concerns into seven types of gratification factors: (1) social escapism motivation, (2) transaction-based security and privacy concerns (including the reluctance of computer banking, the security fears of online purchasing, etc.), (3) information motivation, (4) interactive control motivation, (5) socialization motivation, (6) nontransactional privacy concerns (relating to privacy in general), and (7) economic motivation (or shopping and buying motivations). They suggested that consumers use the Internet for many reasons other than information retrieval.

Papacharissi and Rubin (2000) developed five primary motives for Internet usage: interpersonal utility, pastime, information seeking, convenience, and entertainment. The authors found the distinctions between instrumental and ritualized Internet usage, and they highlighted the potential of the Internet as an alternative to face-to-face interaction. Based on Papacharissi and Rubin’s (2000) scale, four motivational dimensions (information, convenience, entertainment and social interaction) were used in Ko, Cho, and Roberts’ (2005) study. They utilized structural equation modeling to clarify major constructs in motivations for Internet usage and further confirmed the effects on other constructs in interactive advertising context.

Recently, Stafford, Stafford, and Schkade (2004) assessed Internet-specific content and process gratifications, the messages carried by a Website, and the actual use of a Website (Culter & Danowski, 1980), respectively. Some Website users may be motivated by the need for specific information on a site, while other users may be motivated by the pleasurable experience of the
Web surfing (Stafford, Stafford, & Schkade, 2004). They also revealed that Internet users’ site choices are more motivated by “content consideration” than by “recreational browsing” (p. 267). More importantly, recognition of the fact that the Internet is a social environment facilitating interpersonal communication and activities, Stafford, Stafford, and Schkade (2004) newly identified the Internet social gratification as an important construct in the model of Internet use.

As seen above, the application of uses and gratifications for Internet use has been acknowledged as an effective way to examine users’ experience associated with Internet usage in cumulative research evidence. Therefore, it is proposed as an important construct to help discover the insights of consumers’ cross-media usage.

**Interactivity**

Interactivity has been proposed as generating great benefits for both marketers and consumers (Chen, Griffith, & Shen, 2005). It can be a useful tool for creating brand identity (Upshaw, 1995), facilitating online relationship marketing (Cuneo, 1995), converting consumers who are interested in becoming more interactive (Berthon, Pitt, & Watson, 1996), and having greater control over information-seeking process (Hoffman & Novak, 1996).

Interactivity has been defined in the literature in various ways. Scholars have studied it from different perspectives, ranging from communication to instructional technology to human-computer interaction to marketing (Wu, 2006). For example, Hoffman and Novak (1996) considered interactivity as a medium feature, while Refaeli and Sudweeks (1997) defined interactivity from a communication perspective. Blattberg and Deighton (1991) defined interactivity as individuals and organizations communicating directly with one another regardless of distance or time. In marketing, Ghose and Dou (1998) presented a list of 23 forms of interactivity tools, which offers a good fit when studying content of Web sites.
McMillan and Hwang (2002) used individual perceptions to categorize definitions into (a) process, (b) feature, (c) perception, and (d) a combination of process, feature, and/or perception. Along these definitions, Steuer (1992) defined interactivity as “the extent to which users can participate in modifying the form and content of a mediated environment in real time” (p.84), which appears to be the most often cited definition.

Wu (2006) revealed the dichotomy of interactivity research streams in previous interactivity studies. Some examples include Rafaeli’s (1988) objective and subjective interactivity, Williams, Rice and Rogers’ (1998) actual and perceived interactivity, McMillan’s (2000) feature-based and perception-based interactivity, as well as Liu and Shrum’s (2002) structural and experiential interactivity. Similarly, objective /actual/feature-based interactivity focuses on the features or capabilities of media to increase the potential for interaction in general, whereas subjective/perceived/perception-based interactivity is a psychological state experienced by users during the interaction process (Unz & Hesse, 1999; Sundar, Kalyanaraman, & Brown, 2003; Wu, 2005; Chen, Griffith, & Shen, 2005; Sundar, & Kim, 2005). It was also found that perceived interactivity plays a mediating role in the effect of actual interactivity on attitude toward a Web site (Wu, 2005).

When conducting interactivity-related research, researchers often delineate a set of dimensions to cluster web-based functions. Steuer (1992) stated three factors of interactivity: (1) speed of interaction (or response time); (2) the range of interactivity, which refers to “the amount of change that can be effected on the mediated environment”; (3) mapping, which refers to “the way in which human actions are connected to actions within a mediated environment” (p.85-86). Moreover, Ha and James (1998) mentioned five dimensions of interactivity to fulfill different communication needs: (1) playfulness, (2) choice, (3) connectedness, (4) information collection,
and (5) reciprocal communication. In addition, Wu (2000) presented three dimensions of perceived interactivity: (1) perceived control over the (a) site navigation; (b) the pace or rhythm of the interaction; (c) the content being accessed, (2) perceived responsiveness from (a) the site-owner; (b) from the navigation cues and signs; (c) from the persons online, and (3) perceived personalization of the site with regard to (a) acting as if it were a person; (b) acting as if it wants to know the site visitor; and (c) acting as if it understands the site visitor. McMillan and Hwang (2002) found that “direction of communication”, “user control” and “time” appear frequently in previous studies in terms of elements of interactivity (McMillan & Hwang, 2002). They further concluded three dimensions of perceived interactivity: real-time conversation, loading speed, and ability to engage the consumer.

Furthermore, Cho and Cheon (2005) asserted that the most frequently used dimensions appear to be human-message interaction and human-human interaction. Human-message means that users can select, search, edit, or even revise the messages by interacting with them. There are three aspects that address human-human and human-message interaction in the context of marketing: (a) consumer-message interactivity; (b) consumer-marketer interactivity; and (c) consumer-consumer interactivity. Consumer-message interactivity occurs when consumers actively interact with online marketing communication messages by editing, manipulating, and searching for information. Consumer-marketer interactivity is the most researched field that focuses on two-way interaction between sender/sources/marketers and receivers/audiences/consumers. Since consumers can also interact with other users/consumers on the Internet, consumer-consumer interactivity is therefore an important aspect that includes a variety of user-oriented interactive functions (Cho & Cheon, 2005).
As shown in prior studies, interactivity is an essential construct in the study of the Internet and new media that facilitates and improves communications. It is a crucial concept that leads to better differentiation and higher involvement (Ha & Chan-Olmsted, 2001). Applied to the present mechanism, the use of interactivity and its applications are considered to be critical factors of effective Internet branding.

**Product Placement**

New technology development, such as the digital video recorder, has made it easier for consumers to avoid advertising messages in the traditional media arena. As a result, product placement is one of the widely used alternatives in response to consumers’ avoidance of traditional advertising. Balasubramanian (1994) defined product placement as “a paid product message aimed at influencing movie (or television) audiences via the planned and unobtrusive entry of a branded product into a movie (or television program)” (p.31). It is the inclusion of brand relevant identifiers in any form of media in return for payment from advertisers (Baker & Crawford, 1995; Karrh, 1998; Morton & Friedman, 2002; McCarty, 2004).

Product placement has been examined differently in prior marketing research, including content analysis of its presence in media (e.g. Diener, 1993; Sapolsky & Kinney, 1994), surveys among practitioners (e.g. Pardun & McKee, 1996), qualitative research of its meaning to viewers (e.g. DeLorme, Reid, & Zimmer, 1994), studies of viewers’ knowledge and inferences (Balasubramanian, 1991), and experimental tests on viewers’ memory, attitude change, and/or purchase intention (e.g. Gupta & Lord, 1998; Gupta, Balasubramanian, & Klassen, 2000).

As a strategic marketing tool, product placement began to receive greater attention from marketers and producers after Reese’s Pieces’ successful placement in the feature film *E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial*. Hershey claimed a 65 percent increase in sales of Reese’s Pieces after the release of the film (Karrh, 1998). Since then, increasing product placements have been found
across different forms of media, such as novels, plays, songs, television programs, movies, and online games (Karrh, 1998; Gould & Gupta, 2006; Ferle & Edwards, 2006; Lee & Faber, 2007).

Reasons that addressed the growth of product placement were discussed in Karrh’s (1998) review. First, advertisers have the desire to utilize the special characteristics of the medium that chose to place brands. For example, movies and popular TV shows are available for viewers via syndication and the video rental market for decades. These programs also have a global reach that is appealing to marketers. In terms of the strong persuasive power, movies can affect viewers’ social judgments, especially those judgments made right after their exposure to a movie. “Audiences can have powerful responses to a movie, and those affective responses may transfer to any brand(s) included in the film” (Karrh, 1998). Another reason in respect to the prevalence of product placement is “the opportunity for implied endorsement from celebrities” (Karrh, 1998). As a paid promotion device, product placement is a more subtle celebrity endorsement. It is conceivable that audiences are willing to buy products used by stars on-screen (J. Walter Thompson USA, 1989).

DeLorme, Reid, and Zimmer (1994) uncovered three themes of moviegoers’ interpretations of brands encountered in movies: (1) appreciating realism, or brand props that are associated with “viewers’ interpretations of real life or of the objective world”; (2) noticing the familiar, or brand props that are associated with “viewers’ past experiences and/or knowledge”; and (3) relating to characters, or brand props that “viewers consider implicit endorsement by characters through visual and/or verbal associations, depictions, and portrayals” (DeLorme & Reid, 1999, p.88). Later, in 1999, DeLorme and Reid extended above movie-specific experiences to four consumption-specific situations of everyday life: (1) tools for purchasing decisions, (2) tools for identity and aspirations, (3) change and discomfort, and (4) belonging and security.
These findings provided important insights for marketers about the role of product placement in the marketing communication mix.

Product placement has a greater impact on audience than is typically found with comparable advertising exposures (Karrh, McKee, & Pardun, 2003). With a greater reach than traditional advertising, product placement offers marketers a way to show consumers the brand in natural settings (Nelson, 2002). Additionally, consumers are less likely to be skeptical about brand message (Obermiller, Spangenberg, & MacLachlam, 2005), less likely to activate the knowledge of persuasion strategies (Friestad & Wright, 1994), and can consciously attend to the brand-related content (Lee & Feber, 2007) when compared to traditional advertising. Due to the presence of product placement on the Internet, the effectiveness of product placement will be examined in the current study.
CHAPTER 3
CONCEPTUALIZATION

Hypothesized Model

Extending from previous theories, this study proposes a hypothesized theoretical model that incorporates several variables of antecedents and consequences of cross-media usage. Constructs in this model are used to demonstrate the relationship between program involvement, motivation and ability of processing Website information, frequency and duration of Website visits, Website loyalty, the use of a sponsor’s interactive online product placement, attitude toward the sponsor, and purchase intention (see Figure 3-1).

Antecedents of Cross-Media Usage

There is a widespread agreement that levels of program involvement can lead to different levels of arousal (Mitchell, 1979; Singh & Churchill, 1987; Pavelchak, Antil, & Munch, 1988; Andrews, Durvasula, & Akhter, 1990). Although a variety of definitions can explain the concept of involvement (Petty & Cacioppo, 1981; Moorman, Neijens, & Smit, 2007), only two levels of program involvement (low/high) are frequently contrasted in previous studies (Tavassoli, Shultz II, & Fitzsimons, 1995). Petty and Cacioppo (1981) asserted that “in high involvement situations, the persuasive message under consideration has a high degree of personal relevance to the recipient, whereas in low involvement situation, the personal relevance of the message is rather trivial” (p.20).

In the present study, program involvement is defined as “an active, motivated state signifying interest and arousal induced by a television program” (Moorman, Neijens, & Smit, 2007, p.127). Viewers with higher involvement are expected to pay more attention to the TV program and decide to watch the program instead of being exposed to other stimuli. In addition, they are more willing to process information from the TV program than other viewers. Therefore, these viewers are more likely to be heavy viewers of the program and to be considered as TV fans (Fiske, 1992; Ha, 2002; Ha & Chan-Olmsted, 2004).
The consensus among scholars shows that the uses and gratifications approach has been quite fruitful in understanding users’ motivations and concerns when it comes to using the Internet. Based on the consumer-level point of view (Stafford, Stafford, & Schkade, 2004), the core concept of uses and gratifications research is audience activity; motivations are key components of audience activity (Rubin, 1993). With this in mind, Ko, Cho, and Roberts’ (2005) four types of motivations are applied to the current study: information, convenience, entertainment, and social interaction. Flanagin and Metzger (2001) noted that motivations for media use are somehow different from person to person. Some TV viewers might go onto the TV program’s official Website with multiple motivations, while other TV viewers visit the TV program’s official Website with only a single motivation.

As noted above, TV viewers who indulged themselves with a TV program are active and motivated while processing program-related information. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that viewers with a high level of program involvement are more likely to have certain motivations to visit a TV program’s official Website and to process the Website information.

**H1**: The level of TV viewers’ program involvement will have a positive effect on the motivation of processing information on the TV program’s official Website.

It has also been highlighted in previous studies that consumers are motivated to use a certain medium more frequently when higher media usage value (e.g. entertainment, information) is provided (Ko, Cho, & Roberts, 2005).

**H2**: The motivation of processing information on a TV program’s official Website will have a positive effect on the frequency of the TV program’s official Website patronage.

Furthermore, it is proposed in this study that TV viewers who have a high degree of certain motivations to go onto the TV program’s official Website and to process Website information are more likely to stay longer to satisfy their motivations.
**H3**: The motivation of processing information on a TV program’s official Website will have a positive effect on the duration of the TV program’s official Website patronage.

Besides motivation effect on processing Website information, ability is another important factor to be considered in this framework. The ability to process and comprehend information is influenced by intelligence or education (Anderson & Jalson, 1980), relevant knowledge or experience (MacKenzie, 1986), and message difficulty (Yalch & Elmore-Yalch, 1984). According to MacInnis & Jaworski, (1989), lack of ability implies that “knowledge structures necessary to perform more complex operations either do not exist or cannot be accessed” (p.7).

Consistent with this notion, Thorbjørnsen and Supphellen (2004) suggested that it is useful to distinguish between domain and process knowledge in online information processing. These two types of knowledge correspond to consumers’ ability in understanding, interpreting, and accessing Website information. Applied to this paper, domain knowledge pertains to knowledge about the content of the TV program and its official Website, while process knowledge refers to TV viewers’ proficiency and experience in using the TV program’s official Website and managing several information formats. However, the opportunity factor is not included in this forum due to its irrelevance to program involvement concept and attributes. Since the opportunity is related to the distraction within information processing, there is no contribution it could make to the examination of TV viewers’ cross-media usage.

Hence, it is assumed that TV viewers with high levels of program involvement will possess better knowledge about the program (domain knowledge) and the ability to process the Website information.

**H4**: The level of TV viewers’ program involvement will have a positive effect on the ability of processing information on the TV program’s official Website.
Accordingly, with greater ability (both domain and process knowledge) to process program-related information, it is presumed that less time will be needed to search and/or browse a TV program’s official Website (shorter visit duration).

**H5**: The ability of processing information on a TV program’s official Website will have a negative effect on the duration of the TV program’s official Website patronage.

**Consequences of Cross-Media Usage**

The importance of brand loyalty has been widely recognized in marketing literature. From the market’s standpoint, researchers have applied this concept to explain how consumers purchase and/or behave in the marketplace, the economics of information (e.g. Farley, 1964), repeat purchasing behavior (e.g. Jacoby & Kyner, 1973), etc. Most of the theory base for brand loyalty is related to how consumers evaluate alternatives and their decision-making (Schultz & Bailey, 2000). Jacoby and Kyner (1973) presented a set of necessary and collectively sufficient conditions to define brand loyalty: it is (1) the biased (i.e., nonrandom), (2) behavioral response (i.e., purchase), (3) expressed over time, (4) by some decision-making unit, (5) with respect to one or more alternative brands out of a set of such brands, and (6) is a function of psychological (decision making, evaluative) processes (p.2). Baldinger and Rubinson (1996) have suggested defining brand loyalty with both attitudinal and behavioral components.

Brand loyalty is the core value of brand equity (Aaker, 1991). Possessing greater brand loyalty among consumers can create better sales of the brand (Howard & Sheth, 1969). Aaker (1991) further noted that brand loyalty can lead to several marketing advantages, such as reduced marketing investment, an increase in new customers, and greater trade leverage. Additional marketing benefits are found in Dick and Basu’s (1994) study. For example, they found favorable word of mouth and greater resistance to competitive strategies to be results of brand loyalty among loyalty consumers.
In the present conceptualization, brand loyalty is utilized to explain Website loyalty after TV viewers’ Website patronage. Wang, Pallister and Foxall (2006) have used Website loyalty to test Internet buyer behaviors. They found that consumers transfer their existing brand loyalty from traditional markets to the brand’s Website in the Internet market. Since a Website is considered a brand carrier and an extension to sponsor corporation’s operations (Palmer and Griffith, 1998), Ha and Chan-Olmsted (2004) believed that TV Websites should be treated as a brand extension of TV networks.

Just like how retailers wish to keep customers in a store longer and to have them return more often, it is postulated in the context that frequency and duration of Website visits have a positive effect on Website loyalty. The more frequently repeated patronage of a TV program’s official Website that occurs, the more likely it is for Website loyalty to develop among TV viewers.

**H6**: The frequency of a TV program’s official Website patronage will have a positive effect on the loyalty of the TV program’s official Website.

Furthermore, the longer the time TV viewers spend on visiting a TV program’s official Website, the more likely they are to develop loyalty to the TV program’s official Website. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

**H7**: The duration of a TV program’s official Website patronage will have a positive effect on the loyalty of the TV program’s official Website.

From a marketer’s viewpoint, consumers have become less responsive to traditional advertising (Belch & Belch, 2007). As a result, marketers have been searching for new effective ways to deliver advertising messages. One such effective method is sponsorship. Sponsorship is a “cash and/or in-kind fee paid to a property (sports, entertainment, non-profit event or organization) in return for access to the exploitable commercial potential associated with that property” (International Events Group, 2000, p.1). It is a promotional activity that is
considered useful for branding (Cronwell, Roy, & Steinard, 2001). Cornwell (1995) defined sponsorship-linked marketing as “the orchestration and implementation of marketing activities for the purpose of building and communicating an association to a sponsorship” (p.15). The use of sponsorship-linked marketing can be found all across traditional media, such as magazines, television, newspapers, and it is now being employed in the Internet environment. Drennan and Cornwell (2004) noted that the Internet is attractive for sponsors because of its dynamic and interactive nature combined with personalization technologies and tracking facilities to make it an “effective and accountable medium with unlimited creatively” (Shen, 2002, p.59).

The capacity of interactive activity on the Internet is one of the most salient advantages that differentiates the Internet from conventional media. Interactivity is credited for adding value to the communication process. Therefore, interactivity is always a key factor when studying the Internet (Rafaeli & Sudweeks, 1997) and relevant marketing applications. It is important to understand the interactivity of the Internet and its possible utilizations for sponsors, which can lead to more effective persuasion, engagement, and interaction with online consumers (McMillan & Hwang, 2002; Drennan & Cornwell, 2004).

For instance, the interest in product placement has begun to expand to Website content. Because of its capacity for interactivity, product placement on the Internet platform makes it somewhat different from those placed in traditional media (e.g., TV programs, movies). Unlike passively watching television or movies, Internet users can now actively interact with brand-related information. To be more specific in differentiating product placement on the Internet, which incorporates interactive functions, from those product placements in traditional media, the term “interactive online product placement” is therefore created in the present study. “Interactive online product placement” is defined in this study as the inclusion of brand identifiers in interactive features on Websites in return for commercial
considerations. It is a potential marketing tactic aided by technological innovations. In this regard, those enhanced TV functions with any sponsor’s product and/or brand placed in them are denoted by interactive online product placement.

Additionally, it was shown in Holland and Baker’s (2001) study that Website loyalty leads to cognitive, affective, and behavioral reactions from consumers, such as repeat visits, favorable attitudes toward the Website, etc. Therefore, it seems rational to propose that once Website loyalty is formed among TV viewers, they are expected to use the sponsor’s interactive online product placement features more frequently than other surfers on TV programs’ official Websites because of the high degree of exposure. The hypothesis is as follows:

**H8**: The loyalty of the TV program’s official Website will have a positive effect on the usage of the sponsor’s interactive online product placement.

The effects of advertising on consumer outcomes (e.g. attitude toward the brand, purchase intention) are always part of marketers’ concerns. In research on TV Websites, the benefits of enhanced TV usage are shown in previous findings; e.g., increasing TV viewers’ loyalty, keeping subscribers, and attracting new subscribers (Ha & Chan-Olmsted, 2004). Moreover, Ha and Chan-Olmsted (2001) examined the effects of specific enhanced TV features on their interest in e-commerce. The results showed that the more TV Website visitors used enhanced TV features, the more they were likely to confirm their online purchase intentions. Glass (2007) has also added value to previous product placement research when he confirmed the effects of product placement in the online gaming environment on attitude change and purchasing intention. Based on this conceptual framework, it is postulated that the use of interactive online product placement will affect attitude toward the brand, and attitude toward the brand exerts an influence on purchase intention.
**H9:** The usage of the sponsor’s interactive online product placement will have a positive effect on attitude toward the brand.

**H10:** The attitude toward the sponsor’s brand will have a positive effect on purchase intention.
Figure 3-1. Hypothesized structural model
CHAPTER 4
METHODOLOGY

The TV program, “Gossip Girl,” and its Official Website

The CW Television Network (The CW), as a merger of Warner Brothers Entertainment (majority owner of The WB) and The CBS Corporation (owners of UPN), was launched at the beginning of the 2006-2007 television season. It is America’s fifth broadcast network and the only network targeting 18 to 34-year-olds. As a successor to The WB and UPN, The CW features a mixture of programming from both television networks. Its prime-time schedule includes popular TV series: "America's Next Top Model", "Gossip Girl”, “Beauty and The Geek”, “Smallville”, etc. (CWTV.com, 2008).

The CW’s official Website offers many features, including downloadable ringtones, wallpapers, an online store, games, a message board, VIP lounges for fans, promotional pictures of shows, episode guides, clips for new episodes, several streaming full-length episodes, cast information, and many other features. Moreover, in some cases there is an online poll that discusses upcoming shows’ storylines.

“Gossip Girl” is a prime-time soap opera produced by The CW Television Network. It is an American TV teen-oriented drama based on a popular novel of the same name, written by Cecily von Ziegesar. The show first aired in the US on September 19, 2007. It was considered to be one of the more anticipated new shows of the 2007-2008 TV season, and it was placed in the top ten new shows list that measured viewer awareness (OTX, 2007). The first episode of “Gossip Girl” attracted 3.65 million viewers (Mitovich, 2007). It was noted to have held the best audience retention of The CW’s always-reliable show, “American’s Next Top Model,” by only losing 21 percent of adults 18 to 34 for a 2.2 average rating (Fitzgerald, 2007). Along with the online buzz and its success on different media platforms, such as DVR usage, online streaming,
and iTunes, “Gossip Girl” “saw a 21% increase with women 18-34 (3.37rtg v. 2.79rtg), 20% increase among adults 18-34 (2.34rtg v. 1.95rtg) and 11% increase in female teens (5.51rtg v. 4.97rtg) who recorded and watched the show up to 7 days after premiere compared to those who only watched live” (The CW Blog, October 10, 2007). Later, after “Gossip Girl” returned on April 21, 2008, JustJared.com (April 22, 2008) revealed that “Gossip Girl” helped The CW score its highest ratings ever in the Monday 8 to 9pm timeslot among audiences of 18 to 34-year-olds (1.9/6) and women of 18 to 34-year-olds (2.9/8).

Besides the basic Website features mentioned earlier, the official Website of “Gossip Girl” incorporates many enhanced TV functions that visitors can interact with. The main page of the Website is designed as a room setting in the real world that includes a laptop, a television, a cell phone, some clothing, and many other elements associated with the program. Once users click on one of the properties/icons, the item (or product) will be enlarged and show more details about a specific topic. For example, the television set on the main page plays a clip of the next episode automatically when entering the Web page, and it can be clicked to watch the clip on a bigger screen and with better quality. Website visitors can access most of the Website by interacting with the properties/icons on the main page (although some pages can only be accessed by the traditional method). Take the “Virtual World” for example, a user can click on the link displaying “Virtual World” (traditional method), or interact with the outdoor billboard on the main page to access the Virtual World page.

As stated earlier, this research examines the antecedents and consequences of cross-media usage among TV viewers by employing the TV program, “Gossip Girl,” and its official Website as the stimuli for this research. Since it includes both traditional (TV program) and new media (TV program’s official Website) capacities and has attracted quite a number of subscribers to
watch the TV program, it is considered to be ideal for this research design and is expected to show meaningful findings.

**Research Design**

An online survey was employed in the current research, and was conducted from May 10th 2008 to May 31st 2008. During this time period, participants were asked to click the link, http://www.jou.ufl.edu/faculty/echo/GossipGirl/, which led them to the self-reported questionnaire. The questionnaire started with two screening questions, aimed at categorizing participants into two groups: (1) people who had watched the TV program, but had not visited the official Website; and (2) people who had watched the TV program and had visited the official Website. People who had never watched the TV program before were not included in this study.

Nine latent constructs were examined in this study: program involvement, motivations (information, convenience, entertainment, social-interaction) and ability (domain/process knowledge) of processing Website information, frequency and duration of Website visits, the Website loyalty, the usage of the sponsor’s interactive online product placement, attitude toward the sponsor, and purchase intention. Question items for the ability of processing Website information and the use of sponsor’s interactive online product placement were constructed by the researcher due to the lack of an adaptable existing measure or previously validated scales in the literature. Also, for the measurement of frequency and duration of Website visits, two close-ended questions were added to each of the constructs.

Structural equation modeling (SEM), a hybrid of factor analysis and simultaneous equation modeling (Kaplan, 2000), was used to test the current hypothesized model. The benefit of this methodology is that the measurement error is noted to provide a more accurate causal relationship among latent constructs (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998). Since the
concept of the antecedents and consequences of cross-media usage is complex and proposed to possess various factors, SEM is proper for identifying the relationships among the nine constructs. AMOS 5, by using the method of maximum likelihood, was utilized for performing data analysis.

**Participants**

In order to recruit TV viewers who had watched the TV program, “Gossip Girl,” and had visited the TV program’s official Website as well, participants were recruited through the online social communities of Myspace.com and Facebook. According to Blackshaw (2008), Myspace.com and Facebook are the top 2 social networking sites and represent over 98 percent of the overall 86.7 million unique users as of March, 2008. Pew Internet and the American Life Project (2008) also showed the notable numbers that about one-in-five Americans (22%) uses a social networking site. As a result, these online social activities can be deeply embedded into users’ lives (Thelwall, 2008). Users are able to share photos, music and videos, maintain blogs, and encourage group interactions through instant messaging, email, online forums, and chat rooms on social networking sites (Gangadharbatla, 2007). In addition, these sites engage users by “letting them create content and become vanguards of different brands” (Gangadharbatla, 2007).

Therefore, Myspace.com and Facebook were chose as the channels to recruit participants for the current study. Groups formed for “Gossip Girl” fans were found on both Websites. During the survey period (from May 10th 2008 to May 31st 2008), the researcher of this study first posted a survey invitation on the forums of these fan clubs. The purpose of the research and some requirements for participating in the study were explained in the message. Fans of “Gossip Girl” could connect to the survey by clicking on the link attached in the message. However, after the first few days, the responses were less than the
researcher’s expectation. Therefore, in order to boost the number of responses, the researcher sent out a cover letter with survey related information to a total of 1,000 potential participants among group members who were living in the U.S. and were 18 or above. By the end of the survey period, a total of 250 respondents had participated in the survey.

Among the 250 participants, there were 43 who had watched the TV program, “Gossip Girl,” but had not visited the official Website; the other 207 had watched “Gossip Girl” and had visited the official Website. To develop a model that incorporated the cross-media usage behavior, a total of 207 subjects were included in the final analysis. However, the remaining 43 responses were still analyzed with the focus on why these viewers had not visited the official Website, especially those who had high program involvement.

**Measures and Instrument**

Appendix A, B, and C show the questionnaires used in this study. Since the online survey technique makes it possible to precisely determine suitable respondents, this survey started with two screening questions: “Have you ever watched the TV program *Gossip Girl* on the CW?” and “Have you ever visited the official Website of the TV program *Gossip Girl*?” If respondents had never watched the TV program, “Gossip Girl,” they did not have to answer further questions except demographic ones (see Appendix A). If respondents had watched the TV program, “Gossip Girl,” but had never visited the TV program’s official Website, they were asked the reason why they had never visited the Website and some questions related to their program involvement (see Appendix B).

Appendix C shows the whole design of this survey. Besides the initial screening questions, the program involvement was measured using a 12-item scale adopted from Norris and Colman (1992). The participants were asked to describe their feelings about the TV program, “Gossip Girl,” on a seven-point semantic differential scale. The 12 items included: not at all
entertaining/very entertaining; did not feel involved/felt involved; not very suspenseful/very suspenseful; could not concentrate/could concentrate; was not relaxed/was very relaxed; very boring/very interesting; learnt nothing/learnt a great deal; did not enjoy/enjoyed very much; was not absorbed/was very absorbed; did not feel tense/felt very tense; did not attend very closely/attended very closely; general quality was very low/general quality was very high.

Borrowed from Ko, Cho, and Roberts’ (2005) study, motivations were measured in four dimensions: information, convenience, entertainment, and social interaction. For information motivation, the three items included: to learn about unknown things; it is a good way to do research; and to learn about useful things. For convenience motivation, questions selected were: it is convenient to use; I can get what I want for less effort; I can use it anytime, anywhere; and it is easy to use. Items for entertainment motivation were: to pass time; I just like to surf the Website; it is enjoyable; it is entertaining; and it is my habit. Finally, items used for social interaction motivation were: I wonder what other people said; to keep up with latest updates; to express myself freely; and to meet people with my interests. The wording of scale items were modified to fit appropriately in the context of the current study. A seven-point scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), was used to measure respondents’ motivations for going onto the official Website of the TV program “Gossip Girl” and their information acquisition process.

The ability of information processing was measured by a four-item scale generated from the definition of ability in this study. Two items were created to measure participants’ domain knowledge about the content of TV programs and the official Website. Another two items were constructed to measure participants’ process knowledge on their experience and proficiency in using and managing different information formats. On a scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree)
to 7 (strongly agree), participants were asked to evaluate their own ability of processing the information on the TV program’s official Website. The four items included: (1) I believe I am knowledgeable about the TV program; (2) I believe I am knowledgeable about the content of the TV program’s official Website; (3) I believe I am experienced and proficient in surfing the TV program’s official Website; and (4) I believe I am able to manage various information formats on the TV program’s official Website.

Frequency and duration of Website visits were measured by using open-ended and close-ended questions. First, two open-ended questions for frequency and duration constructs were adopted from Thorbjørnsen and Supphellen (2004): “How many times have you visited the Website during the last month?” and “How many minutes do you spend on the Website on average?”, respectively. Two addition close-ended questions for frequency construct included: “How often do you usually visit the Website on average?” (less than one visit per month = 1, visit almost everyday = 7) and “How frequently do you visit the Website on average?” (rarely = 1, frequently = 7). Another two close-ended questions for duration construct were: “I spend a significant amount of time at the Website” (strongly disagree = 1, strongly agree = 7) and “How would you rate your visit duration of the Website on average?” (short-duration = 1, long-duration = 7).

Aaker’s (1991) three-item brand loyalty scale was applied to the current context to measure Website loyalty. The original items were modified according to the different attributes of the online environment. Participants reported on the items, “I am committed to the Website,” “I would be willing to visit the TV program’s official Website rather than other Websites,” and “I would recommend the TV program’s official Website to others” using a range from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).
To determine the use of the sponsor’s interactive online product placement, participants were asked to rate several brand-related interactive functions. After exploring the official Website of the TV program, “Gossip Girl,” the researcher found that the brand “Verizon Wireless” had interactive online product placement on the official Website. The sponsor, “Verizon Wireless,” was shown on a “cell phone” icon on the main page of the official Website, which could lead to the “Gossip Girl Music” section by clicking the icon. In the “Gossip Girl Music” section, it was easy to find instances of “Verizon Wireless” being placed on the Web page. According to above findings, the use of a sponsor’s interactive online product placement was measured with four questions: (1) Have you ever clicked on/interacted with the icon showing on the main page of the TV program’s official Website? (never = 1, frequently = 7); (2) How would you describe your usage of the music section on the TV program’s official Website? (rarely use = 1, frequently use = 7); (3) How frequently do you visit the specific brand-related Web page within the TV program’s official Website? (never = 1, frequently = 7); and (4) How would you describe the degree of your interactions with the brand’s independent official Website linked through the TV program’s official Website? (no interaction = 1, many interactions = 7).

Based on MacKenzie, Lutz, and Belch’s (1986) study, attitude toward the brand was measured with three 7-point semantic differential scales (favorable/unfavorable, good/bad, and pleasant/unpleasant). In addition, the test of purchase intentions among TV viewers was uncovered by using three 7-point semantic differential scales (likely/unlikely, probable/improbable, and possible/impossible), which originated from MacKenzie, Lutz, and Belch’s (1986) research.

Since measurement items employed in the current study were constructed or modified by the researcher, the present study first performed a confirmatory factor analysis for each construct.
for the final verification of unidimensionality (Gerbing & Anderson, 1988). Selected scales were all confirmed by doing so. The results from first-order confirmatory factor models indicated that the item-loading estimates on their factors were significant (p<.001). Furthermore, a reliability test of the final scales was conducted. The reliability coefficient alpha for each construct was higher than .70, except for the frequency of Website visits (Cronbach $\alpha = .55$) and duration of Website visits (Cronbach $\alpha = .28$). Hence, the open-ended question items in frequency and duration constructs were deleted for purification purposes. The resultant reliability measures improved after deleting the open-ended question items (Cronbach $\alpha = .93$ for frequency of Website visits, and Cronbach $\alpha = .88$ for duration of Website visits). The purified final measure instruments for structural equation analysis are presented in Table 4-1.
Table 4-1 Constructs, indicators, and key statistics of the final model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latent Constructs</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Confirmatory Factor Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I found the show not at all entertaining / very entertaining.</td>
<td>6.72</td>
<td>.667</td>
<td>.76&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I did not feel involved / very involved in the show.</td>
<td>6.11</td>
<td>1.214</td>
<td>.68&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The show was not very suspenseful / very suspenseful.</td>
<td>6.22</td>
<td>.970</td>
<td>.69&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I could not concentrate / could concentrate when watching the show.</td>
<td>6.51</td>
<td>1.056</td>
<td>.42&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I was not relaxed / relaxed when watching the show.</td>
<td>6.03</td>
<td>1.196</td>
<td>.34&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I found the show very boring / very interesting.</td>
<td>6.71</td>
<td>.773</td>
<td>.62&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I learnt nothing / learnt a great deal from the show.</td>
<td>5.04</td>
<td>1.638</td>
<td>.62&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I did not enjoy / enjoyed the show very much.</td>
<td>6.79</td>
<td>.616</td>
<td>.69&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I was not absorbed / very absorbed in the show.</td>
<td>6.44</td>
<td>1.064</td>
<td>.75&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I did not feel very tense / felt very tense when watching the show.</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>1.951</td>
<td>.39&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I did not attend very closely / attended very closely to the show.</td>
<td>6.28</td>
<td>1.257</td>
<td>.67&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The general quality of the show was very low / high.</td>
<td>6.31</td>
<td>.988</td>
<td>.75&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Index</td>
<td>6.16</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>Cronbach α = .85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation to</td>
<td>process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Information motivation</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>.82&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Convenience motivation</td>
<td>5.34</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>.73&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Entertainment motivation</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>.86&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social-interaction motivation</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>.79&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Index</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>Cronbach α = .88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to</td>
<td>process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Domain knowledge</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>1.04&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Process knowledge</td>
<td>5.06</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>.67&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Index</td>
<td>5.25</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>Cronbach α = .81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of</td>
<td>Website visits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>visits</td>
<td>How often do you usually visit the Website on average?</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>.87&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How frequently do you visit the Website on average?</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>1.00&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Index</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>Cronbach α = .93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4-1. Continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latent Constructs</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Confirmatory Factor Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duration of Website visits</td>
<td>I spend a significant amount of time at the Website.</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>.91&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visit duration of the Website on average</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>.81&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Index</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>Cronbach α = .88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website loyalty</td>
<td>I am committed to the Website</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>.91&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I would be willing to visit the Website rather than other Websites.</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>.80&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I would recommend the Website to others.</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>.72&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Index</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>Cronbach α = .88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Usage of the Sponsor’s Interactive Online product placement</td>
<td>Clicked on/ interacted with the “cell phone” icon</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>.72&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The usage of the “Gossip Girl Music” section</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>.64&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How frequently do you visit the Verizon Wireless service page?</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>.80&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The degree of your interactions with the independent Verizon Wireless’ official Website.</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>.76&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Index</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>Cronbach α = .82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude toward the sponsor’s brand</td>
<td>To me, Verizon Wireless that sponsors “Gossip Girl” is</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1) unfavorable / favorable (7)</td>
<td>5.07</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>.93&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1) bad / good (7)</td>
<td>5.48</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>.94&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1) unpleasant / pleasant (7)</td>
<td>5.15</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>.93&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Index</td>
<td>5.23</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>Cronbach α = .95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase intention</td>
<td>I would purchase the service from Verizon Wireless</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1) unlikely / likely (7)</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>.96&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1) impossible / possible (7)</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>.92&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1) improbable / probable (7)</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>.98&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Index</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>Cronbach α = .97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Factor significance: p<.01
b Loading was set to 1.0 to fix construct variance
CHAPTER 5
RESULTS

Subject Profile

Among a total of 250 participants in the survey, there were 43 who had watched the TV program, “Gossip Girl,” but had not visited the official Website. In this group, 2 (4.7%) were male and 41 (95.3%) were female. Their ages ranged from 18 to 33. Their mean age was 21.2. Although they reported that they never went onto the official Website, the mean value of their overall program involvement was high (M = 5.8, \( \sigma = 1.25 \)). “I did not enjoy/I enjoyed the show very much,” “I found the show very boring/very interesting,” and “I found the show not at all entertaining/very entertaining” were scored highest (M = 6.41, 6.37, and 6.35 respectively) by this group of participants. The participants’ insights as to why they never visited the official Website could be categorized into four types of reasons: “I have not had a reason/I felt no need to go onto the Website” (65.1%), “I have no time” (18.6%), “I did not know there was an official Website” (14%), and “I go visit other Websites instead” (2.3%).

Another group of 207 participants were differentiated due to their prior experience of watching the TV program, “Gossip Girl,” and surfing on the official Website. This group was included for testing the hypothesized cross-media usage model. Among the 207 respondents, 21 (10.1%) were male and 186 (89.9%) were female. Their ages ranged from 18 to 46, but most (92.8%) were between the ages of 18 and 25. The mean age was 21.2.

As Table 4-1 illustrates, the overall program involvement score was very high (M = 6.16). The mean of “I did not enjoy/enjoyed the show very much” (M = 6.79) was rated the highest followed by “I found the show not at all entertaining/very entertaining” (M = 6.72) and “I did not feel involved/very involved in the show” (M = 6.71). For users’ motivation to process Website information, convenience motivation showed the highest mean value (M = 5.34). For the ability
to process Website information construct, the mean score of domain knowledge (M = 5.43) was higher than the mean of process knowledge (M = 5.06). In terms of the frequency of Website visits, the average of visit times among participants were 5.43 times during the last month. However, participants’ self-administrated results of “How often do you usually visit the Website on average?” and “How frequently do you visit the Website on average?” were relatively low (M = 2.94 and 3.30, respectively) compared to other variables. The average length of time respondents spent on the official Website were 20.13 minutes. The mean of the items “I spend a significant amount of time at the Website,” and “Visit duration of the Website on average” were 3.19 and 3.48, respectively. For the Website loyalty construct, “I would recommend the Website to others” showed the highest mean value (M = 4.59). “Gossip Girl Music” was the most frequently used interactive product placement for the sponsor (M = 3.64). Attitude toward the brand, “Verizon Wireless,” and purchase intentions of it were favorable (M = 5.23 and 4.41, respectively). Generally, the means of frequency of Website visits, Duration of Website visits, Website loyalty, and the use of the sponsor’s interactive online product placement were below the mid-point of the scale (M = 3.12, 3.33, 3.94, and 2.70 respectively).

**Model Testing**

Several underlying assumptions for SEM (normality, sampling adequacy, and no extreme multicollinearity) (Hair et al., 1998) were validated and confirmed to be acceptable before the researcher conducted the main hypothesis testing. The researcher examined ten research hypotheses by using structural equation analysis with the method of maximum likelihood. AMOS 5 was employed to perform the data analyses.

The exogenous variable was program involvement. There were eight endogenous variables, including motivation to process Website information, ability to process Website information, frequency of Website visits, duration of Website visits, Website loyalty, usage of
the sponsor’s interactive online product placement, attitude toward the sponsor, and purchase intention. The first step of current model testing was to estimate the goodness-of-fit for the hypothesized model. In the current study, the $X^2$ test was significant and suggested that the estimated model did not fit well with the observed data. Nevertheless, the $X^2$ test is sensitive to sample size and often leads to model rejection. Thus, scholars suggested that if an $X^2$/degree of freedom ratio does not exceed five, the model fit is acceptable (Bentler & Bonnet, 1980; Bentler, 1989; Bollen, 1989). Since the $X^2$/degree of freedom ratio of the current hypothesized model was estimated as 1.96 ($X^2 = 1178.13$, $df = 550$), CFI was .90, NFI was .82, and RMSEA was .68, the researcher can conclude that the hypothesized model was acceptable despite the significant $X^2$ statistic.

However, after examining the significance of the regression weights, the researcher found that nine out of ten constructs showed significant direct effects as expected ($p<.001$). The only exception was that ability to process Website information did not show a significant relation with duration of Website visits (H5: $\beta = .16$, $p>.05$). The result failed to prove the hypothesized negative relationship between these two constructs (see Figure 5-1).

To improve the model, modification indices were used to determine any theoretically meaningful paths/relationships missed in the original model. We found that the motivation to process Website information was directly related to the ability to process Website information ($p<.001$). Thus, the path was added in the revised model. The added path makes sense, given that the more the Website users are motivated to process Website information, the better the ability they will possess to process Website information.

The revised model with an added path (motivation to process Website information $\rightarrow$ ability to process Website information) was tested (see Figure 5-2), and the fit statistics were better than
The standardized $\beta$ coefficients were examined to evaluate the estimated causal relations. Eight out of ten associated measures and relationships were significant at $p<.001$, except for the relationship between program involvement and ability to process Website information (H4: $\beta = .08$, $p>.05$), and the relationship between ability to process Website information and duration of Website visits (H5: $\beta = .09$, $p>.05$). Interestingly, the result suggested that ability to process Website information had a positive influence on duration of Website visits, which was opposite to the proposed negative effect.

The non-significant results (H4 and H5) make sense when we consider that even if TV viewers are involved in a TV program, they do not consequently possess more ability to process the Website information. Also, the more knowledge TV viewers have to process Website information does not lead to shorter duration of their Website visits due to some updates, new posts, and so on. In this regard, two paths (program involvement $\rightarrow$ ability to process Website information and ability to process Website information $\rightarrow$ duration of Website visits) were deleted from the model. As shown in Figure 5-3, the new model fit the observed data better than the previous two models, with statistical significance of the regression weights for all constructs ($X^2 = 877.67$, $df = 545$, $X^2/df$ ratio = 1.61, CFI = .94, NFI = .85, RMSEA = .054).

The final model strongly supports eight out of ten research hypotheses. As Figure 5-3 illustrates, program involvement showed a positive influence on motives to process the information on the TV program’s official Website (H1: $\beta = .47$, $p<.001$). Also, motivation was confirmed to have a positive effect on frequency (H2: $\beta = .77$, $p<.001$) and duration of Website visits (H3: $\beta = .84$, $p<.001$). In other words, once TV viewers are motivated to process the information on the TV program’s official Website, they tend to visit the Website more often and
longer. However, H4 and H5 were not supported in the current study. The result revealed that the higher level of program involvement does not directly lead to better domain and process knowledge (ability) to process the information on the TV program’s official Website. Moreover, a better ability (both domain and process knowledge) to process Website information does not consequently lead to less duration of Website patronage. TV viewers do not spend less time browsing the TV program’s official Website even though they have a better ability to process the Website information. As proposed, more frequent (H6: $\beta = .26$, $p<.01$) and longer duration (H7: $\beta = .73$, $p<.001$) of Website visits can generate higher Website loyalty. Website loyalty was found to have a positive effect on the use of a sponsor’s interactive online product placement (H8: $\beta = .68$, $p<.001$), which in turn led to a positive attitude toward the sponsor (H9: $\beta = .41$, $p<.001$) and purchase intention (H10: $\beta = .72$, $p<.001$). Finally, a new causal relationship (motivation to process Website information $\rightarrow$ ability to process Website information) emerged in the final model ($\beta = .80$, $p<.001$).
Figure 5-1. The hypothesized cross-media usage model

$\chi^2 = 1178.13, df = 550, p < .05$
$\chi^2/df$ ratio = 1.96
CPI = .90
NFI = .82
RMSEA = .068
Figure 5-2. The revised cross-media usage model

\[
\chi^2 = 92.99, df = 549, p < .05 \\
\chi^2/df ratio = 1.81 \\
\text{CFI} = .92 \\
\text{NFI} = .83 \\
\text{RMSEA} = .063
\]

*Path significance p < .001
Figure 5-3. The final cross-media usage model

\[ \chi^2 = 877.67, df = 545, p < .05 \]
\[ \chi^2/df = 1.61 \]
\[ CFI = .94 \]
\[ NFI = .85 \]
\[ RMSEA = .054 \]

*path significance p < .01
**path significance p < .001
Summary

This study offers a comprehensive framework to predict and evaluate the relationships among and within the antecedents (program involvement, motivation and ability to process Website information, frequency and duration of Website visits) and consequences (Website loyalty, the usage of sponsor’s interactive online product placement, attitude toward the sponsor and purchase intention) of cross-media usage. The current cross-media usage model provides evidence that program involvement has a positive effect on TV viewers’ motivation to process information on the TV program’s official Website (H1). Also, motivation has direct relationships with frequency and duration of the Website patronage (H2 and H3, respectively). However, program involvement does not show a positive influence on TV viewers’ ability (domain and process knowledge) to process content on the TV program’s official Website (H4), and the ability to process Website information construct does not have a negative and significant effect on duration of Website visits (H5). Moreover, a positive effect of motivation on ability to process Website information emerged in the mechanism. The first consequence of cross-media usage, Website loyalty, was confirmed to be influenced by both frequency and duration of Website visits (H6 and H7, respectively). It has a direct and positive influence on the use of the sponsor’s interactive online product placement (H8) and, in turn, changes the TV viewers’ attitude toward the sponsor (H9) after exposed to those brand-related enhanced TV features. In the end, the results revealed that positive attitudes toward the sponsor can subsequently affect TV viewers’ purchase intentions (H10).
Antecedents of Cross-Media Usage

First, the present research demonstrates that program involvement directly influences motivation to process information on the TV program’s official Website. Program involvement seems to glue TV viewers to the TV program and induce program-related interest/arousal, resulting in several kinds of goal-directed motivations to browse the TV program’s official Website. Four types of motivations, information, convenience, entertainment, and social interaction, were used in the current study design. Convenience, followed by information and then entertainment, were the most prevalent motivations to explain TV viewers’ use of the TV program’s official Website. Since TV viewers’ motivation to satisfy their needs by browsing the TV program’s official Website does not always rely on only one aspect (Ko, Cho, & Roberts, 2005), the findings suggest that TV viewers would like to visit the official Website in order to get information and/or be entertained easily and with less effort. However, social-interaction motivation did not appear to be much of a driving factor to encourage TV viewers to try the official Website. The explanation for that might be because the TV viewers do not have this kind of need and/or the TV program’s official Website does not serve well in terms of providing social-oriented Website functions for viewers to interact with other viewers.

In support of recent uses and gratification applications (e.g., Ko, Cho, & Roberts, 2005), TV viewers who have high information, convenience, entertainment, and/or social interaction motivations for using the TV program’s official Website tend to visit the Website more often and stay on the Website longer to fulfill their corresponding motivations. Even so, the result shows that the average visit frequency during the last month was not high. As shown in the Pew Internet and American Life Project (2006), the act of hanging out online is one of the most popular activities for people to spend their leisure time. In this regard, the results show that TV viewers do not visit the TV program’s official Website as frequently as they go visit other Websites.
On the other hand, the effect of program involvement on TV viewers’ ability to process information on the TV program’s official Website was not supported in this study. Even though a weak relationship can be found between the two constructs, the result was not significant. Another unexpected finding of this study is that ability to process Website content does not have a negative influence on duration of Website patronage; instead, there was an insignificant positive relationship. The finding revealed that even if TV viewers are knowledgeable and experienced in surfing the TV program’s official Website, they still tend to have long-duration navigation of their Website visits.

Another unexpected relationship to emerge from this study was that motivation was found to have a positive effect on ability to process Website information. TV viewers who are highly motivated to process the content on the TV program’s official Website will end up with more domain knowledge about the TV program and its official Website, in addition to having a better process knowledge, such as being experienced and capable of using and managing different information formats on the Website.

**Consequences of Cross-Media Usage**

TV viewers’ visit frequency and duration of the TV program’s official Website were found to be relevant to the formation of Website loyalty. Consistent with Holland and Baker’s (2001) findings of site brand loyalty, TV viewers tend to return to the TV program’s official Website because they expect the Website to be of value and enjoyable to them. Additionally, if TV viewers remain at the TV program’s official Website by choice and are receiving valuable exchanges for their time, that means they prefer to navigate the official Website rather than clicking away from the Website. Taking the above findings into account, repeat visits and duration of visit are considered to be effective indicators of favorable attitude leading to Website loyalty (Holland & Baker, 2001).
In the present context, the effect of Website loyalty on TV viewers’ use of a sponsor’s interactive online product placement received significant support. Since Website loyalty shares the same concept with brand loyalty in the traditional marketing context, TV viewers who show higher loyalty toward the TV program’s official Website tend to hold commitment to repatronize (Oliver, 1999) the official Website consistently and, in turn, this results in more chances to interact with those brand-related enhanced TV functions. Despite the proven positive relationship, the mean of the exact uses of a sponsor’s interactive online product placement were low; this underlines the fact that these features are still underutilized.

Four levels of interaction were examined in this research design to see the depth of TV viewers’ interaction with brand-related enhanced TV features, including the use of an interactive product icon placed on the main page, a program-related section sponsored by the brand, a service page under the official Website, and the independent cooperate Website linked through the official Website. Marketers would have to reinvestigate their interactive online product placement strategy to be more effective and enticing to TV viewers for them to continue navigating brand-related information on the Internet.

In terms of advertising effectiveness, TV viewers’ use of a sponsor’s interactive online product placement was found to have a positive influence on their attitude toward the sponsor as well as on purchase intentions. Interactive online product placement, defined as the inclusion of brand identifiers in interactive features on Websites in return for commercial considerations, is a new marketing platform investigated in the current study that combines the concepts of product placement in new media and interactive Website features. In a study examining the difference between ads placed in a creative media choice and ads placed in a traditional medium, Dahlén (2005) concluded that a congruent creative media choice can enhance brand association and
consumers’ evaluation about the ad and brand. By using new and unexploited media, relevant ad placements can foster more ad creditability and affect brand communication positively. In regards to such features seem to have the potential to increase TV viewers’ favorable feelings about the advertised brand. Moreover, research on enhanced TV has revealed that TV networks can benefit from employing these interactive functions on TV Websites (e.g., maintaining viewer loyalty, keeping viewers, and attracting new viewers (Ha & Chan-Olmsted, 2004)). The usage of enhanced TV features is therefore considered as a positive predictor for branding outcomes (Ha & Chan-Olmsted, 2004). Agreeing with extant literature, this study identifies that brand-related enhanced TV functions seem to have a positive effect on inducing positive brand attitudes among TV viewers. Furthermore, building on the historical evidence of acceptability of product placement, Balasubramanian, Karrh and Patwardhan (2006) assumed that “such acceptance will likely continue into the future as emergent digital communication technologies present new opportunities to tailor or customize placement” (p.133). Russell (2002) noted that consumers tend to have a positive attitude change after being exposed to a product placement, even though the recognition of the brand was low. In the current study, the impact of a sponsor’s interactive online product placement on brand attitudes was acknowledged empirically and theoretically.

Another commercial outcome that concerns marketers is TV viewers’ purchase intention after their interaction with a sponsor’s interactive online product placement. Consistent with prior literature that presented significant effects of product placement exposure and enhanced TV features on Website users’ purchase intention, the current study provides a similar positive result where TV viewers’ purchase intention toward sponsor’s product and/or service were influenced by their use of sponsor’s interactive online product placement.
Additional Findings

Some other insights were gathered from TV viewers who had not visited the TV program’s official Website. The results revealed that these TV viewers enjoy the show very much and find the show very interesting and entertaining; however, they have not been motivated enough to check information on the official Website. Extracted reasons for not visiting the TV program’s official Website are categorized as following: (1) I have not had a reason/I felt no need to go onto the Website; (2) I have no time; (3) I did not know there was an official Website; and (4) I go visit other Websites instead.

First, some respondents who were engaged in the TV program stated that they did not have a reason/need to go onto the official Website, and they were not interested in seeing the Website content. Since media users are active and goal-directed in their media use behavior (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974a, Park & Mittal, 1985), their desire or readiness, in this case, to process content on the TV program’s official Website was not generated and activated by their program involvement. Also, limited free time is another obstacle to a TV viewer’s Website patronage. TV viewers are not able to allocate more attention beyond the TV program itself due to their own time management and value judgment. Moreover, some TV viewers reported that they do not know the presence of the TV program’s official Website. The lack of promotion of the official Website may be the explanation for this finding. The promotional spots and scrollers on the TV screen would be an important way to encourage viewers to try the Website (Ha & Chan-Olmsted, 2001). Hence, TV networks have to display the Website address and advertise those interesting enhanced TV functions that viewers can use. Finally, there were some participants who commented that they go to visit other program-related Websites (including blogs) to satisfy their needs instead. That is, TV networks are facing the challenges from other online sources, such as entertainment news and/or other user-generated content. Since the new
technologies and broadband facilities have made it easy for consumers to contribute, share, and create content on the Internet environment, TV networks need to keep up with the dynamic online marketing environment by understanding TV viewers’ needs and providing enhanced TV features that are catered to them. Edelman (2007) suggested that community cultivation and content management are important skills for marketers to use to attract consumers’ attention.
CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSION

This research proposes the cross-media usage model as the groundwork to explain TV viewers’ behavior before and after they patronize a TV program’s official Website. Particularly, program involvement, motivation for Website information acquisition, and frequency and duration of Website visits act as the role of antecedents that can influence the consequences of cross-media usage. The ability to process Website information was proposed to be influenced by program involvement and have a negative effect on duration of visits. However, the result reveals that its relationship with the motivation construct is the only path that exists in the final model. In addition, Website loyalty is found to affect the TV viewers’ usage of the sponsor’s interactive online product placement and leads to better brand attitude and purchase intentions. These summative results present significant contributions to the existing literature and provide practical implications in terms of cross-media marketing communication.

First of all, to convert a passive audience to become active participants of a TV program is a TV network’s goal. Even though the average of TV viewers’ program involvement was found to be high, there were still some TV viewers that had never visited the TV program’s official Website. From TV networks’ brand building standpoint, TV networks need to promote the TV program’s official Website to make more users fully utilize the enhanced TV features. Networks not only to benefit from these interactive functions by increasing viewer loyalty, keeping subscribers, and attracting new subscribers (Ha & Chan-Olmsted, 2004), but these functions also make their branding efforts more cost-effective.

To entice TV viewers to go onto the TV program’s official Website more often and stay longer, TV networks have to examine the actual use of each enhanced TV feature to see if they are all catered to TV viewers’ needs. Some of these features include information-searching,
finding whatever they want with less effort, entertainment acquisition, and interactions with other viewers. As indicated in the current study, TV viewers’ social interaction motivation is not as highly fulfilled as other motivations; therefore, further research can be conducted to study such discrepancy.

In terms of the Website content, Holland and Baker (2001) suggested that “a site must build relevant and valuable content, providing sufficient depth and breadth to warrant consumer involvement” (p.38). They proposed that personalization and community building are the most fruitful tactics for inducing consumer participation in marketing communications. Since broadband penetration and consumer adoption of new technologies have facilitated the Internet marketing endeavors, TV networks can employ rich interactive media, such as enhanced TV functions, to build engaged communities and develop brand advocates through fandom cultivation on the TV program’s official Website.

From marketers’ points of view, the positive effects of interactive online product placement on advertising outcomes (e.g., brand attitude and purchase intentions) are uncovered in the present study. As a hybrid of different marketing applications, interactive online product placement integrates the advantages of interactive Website features and product placement that provides rich, interactive content and lets the users experience the full brand without clicking away from the Website. Nevertheless, the finding shows that interactive online product placement on a TV program’s official Website is still underutilized. To stimulate TV viewers’ interest about a sponsor’s product and/or service as well as to stimulate their demands for these product and/or service, marketers have to study the usability and popularity of these brand-related enhanced TV features to improve the existing marketing communication.
This research has some limitations that mostly relate to sampling issues. Regarding the gender bias of the existing sample (23 were male and 227 were female), the results could not fully reflect the cross-media usage of male viewers. As a result, the current cross-media usage design may only apply to study female viewers. Hence, the future examination of this cross-media usage model should recruit a more balanced sample to see if this model can be used to study the general audience. In addition, since the participants were recruited through social networking Websites (Myspace.com and Facebook), especially through some fan clubs that normally gather loyal viewers, the results may have been different if more general viewers from the population were recruited in the sample. Moreover, by recruiting participants online and using an online survey, it was difficult to recruit the sample only from the United States. Even though the TV program, “Gossip Girl” has been aired in other countries for global marketing efforts, the fans from other countries would have responded differently from Americans to the interactive online product placement for an US brand (Verizon Wireless). Furthermore, with the growing availability of broadband Internet access, the popularity of user-generated content Websites, and the prevalence of online streaming video, viewers can now subscribe to the TV program solely on the Internet. Therefore, some participants might not be readily qualified to be included in the current cross-media usage design.

In future studies, it would be valuable to replicate the present study with more representative samples. It would also be interesting to apply the existing research design to examine TV viewers from other countries to see if the model is capable of being generalized internationally, and further, to compare the cross-media usage models between different countries. Moreover, since the TV program used for the present study is a fictional TV series that targets 18 to 34-year-olds, it could bring in more perspectives if different types of TV programs
other than fictional ones were included in future research. For example, to apply the current cross-media usage model to study sports shows and their official Websites would help discover the insights of sport fans. Different types of sports shows would reveal the cross-media usage among different groups of people for a variety of ages. Once more types of TV programs and more viewers are examined, researchers would be more confident to apply the cross-media model to understand general TV viewers. Furthermore, it would be worthwhile to conduct future research about the newly identified concept, interactive online product placement. For better use of this new interactive advertising approach, it would be useful to know how interactive online product placement has been employed across different Websites, what strategies allow for better use of this new form of product placement, and how to deliver the maximum branding impact (e.g., brand awareness, brand recall, etc.). For example, researchers could compare the interactive online product placement strategies employed on different Websites to gain better knowledge about the current stage of its marketing use, and/or include more brands to compare the effect of interactive online product placement efforts. It would also be important for marketers to become familiar with this new marketing practice in order for them to fully utilize it for generating better marketing revenue.

In conclusion, considering the Internet is an ever-changing important marketing channel, this study helps us understand why TV viewers are motivated to go onto the TV program’s official Website; how they are engaged with the Website and, in turn, become loyal to the Website; how they actually use the sponsor’s interactive online product placement; and what the outcomes for marketers’ interests were. For TV networks, the results of the present study underline some valuable insights about cross-media usage among TV viewers. For advertisers/marketers, the results disclose the commercial value delivered by TV viewers,
especially the effect of the new marketing approach (i.e., interactive online product placement) on consumers’ marketing responses. Hence, the researcher of the current study believes that this study enriches our knowledge about the effectiveness of interactive marketing and advertising in the age of media convergence.
APPENDIX A
SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Part A. Please read the following question carefully, and check one choice from the scale that most closely reflects your opinion or feeling.

1. Have you ever watched the TV program “Gossip Girl” on the CW?
   (1) Yes
   (2) No

Part B. The following are demographic questions that will only be used for statistical analyses.

1. What is your gender?
   (1) Male
   (2) Female

2. How old are you?
   ________________________ years old.

3. What is your occupation?
   _______________________________________________________

The survey ends here. Thank you for your participation!
APPENDIX B
SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Part A. Please read the following question carefully, and check one choice from the scale that most closely reflects your opinion or feeling.

1. Have you ever watched the TV program “Gossip Girl” on the CW?
   (1) Yes
   (2) No

2. Have you ever visited the official Website of the TV program “Gossip Girl” (http://www.cwtv.com/shows/gossip-girl)?
   (1) Yes
   (2) No

3. Please simply provide the reason(s) for why you have not visited the official Website of the TV program “Gossip Girl”.
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

4. How do the following statements describe your feelings about “Gossip Girl”?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I found the show not at all entertaining</th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
<th>(7)</th>
<th>I found the show very entertaining</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I did not feel involved in the show</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>I felt very involved in the show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The show was not very suspenseful</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>The show was very suspenseful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could not concentrate when watching the show</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
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<td>(6)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>I could concentrate when watching the show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was not relaxed when watching the show</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>I was very relaxed when watching the show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I found the show very boring</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>I found the show very interesting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I learnt nothing from the show</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>I learnt a great deal from the show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I did not enjoy the show at all</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>I enjoyed the show very much</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I was not absorbed in the show | (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) | I was very absorbed in the show
---|---|---
I did not feel very tense when watching the show | (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) | I felt very tense when watching the show
---|---|---
I did not attend very closely to the show | (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) | I attended very closely to the show
---|---|---
The general quality of the show was very low | (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) | The general quality of the show was very high
---|---|---

Part B. The following are demographic questions that will only be used for statistical analyses.

4. What is your gender?
(1) Male
(2) Female

5. How old are you?
________________________________ years old.

6. What is your occupation?
________________________________________________________________________

The survey ends here. Thank you for your participation!
APPENDIX C
SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Part A. Please read the following question carefully, and check one choice from the scale that most closely reflects your opinion or feeling.

1. Have you ever watched the TV program “Gossip Girl” on the CW?
   (1) Yes  
   (2) No  

2. Have you ever visited the official Website of the TV program “Gossip Girl” (http://www.cwtv.com/shows/gossip-girl)?
   (1) Yes  
   (2) No  

3. How do the following statements describe your feelings about “Gossip Girl”?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1)</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I found the show not at all entertaining</td>
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<td>I found the show very entertaining</td>
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<tr>
<td>I did not feel involved in the show</td>
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<td>I felt very involved in the show</td>
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<tr>
<td>The show was not very suspenseful</td>
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<td>I could not concentrate when</td>
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<td>I was not relaxed when</td>
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<td>I was very relaxed when</td>
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<tr>
<td>I found the show very boring</td>
<td>(1)</td>
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<td>(5)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>I found the show very interesting</td>
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<tr>
<td>I learnt nothing from the show</td>
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<td>(6)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>I learnt a great deal from the show</td>
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<tr>
<td>I did not enjoy the show at all</td>
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<td>I enjoyed the show very much</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was not absorbed in the show</td>
<td>(1)</td>
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<td>(7)</td>
<td>I was very absorbed in the show</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I did not feel very tense when</td>
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<td>(2)</td>
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<td>(6)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>I felt very tense when</td>
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<td>watching the show</td>
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<td>watching the show</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I did not attend very closely to the show (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) I attended very closely to the show (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7)

The general quality of the show was very low (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) The general quality of the show was very high (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7)

4. How do you agree/disagree the following statements about the official Website of “Gossip Girl”?

(A) I go onto the official Website to learn about unknown things about “Gossip Girl”.
   Strongly disagree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Strongly agree

(B) Visiting the official Website is a good way to do research about “Gossip Girl.”
   Strongly disagree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Strongly agree

(C) I go onto the official Website to learn about useful things about “Gossip Girl.”
   Strongly disagree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Strongly agree

(D) The official Website of “Gossip Girl” is convenient to use.
   Strongly disagree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Strongly agree

(E) I can get what I want for less effort through the official Website of “Gossip Girl.”
   Strongly disagree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Strongly agree

(F) I can go onto the official Website of “Gossip Girl” anytime, anywhere.
   Strongly disagree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Strongly agree

(G) The official Website of “Gossip Girl” is easy to use.
   Strongly disagree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Strongly agree

(H) I go onto the official Website of “Gossip Girl” to pass time.
   Strongly disagree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Strongly agree

(I) I just like to surf the official Website of “Gossip Girl.”
   Strongly disagree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Strongly agree

(J) The official Website of “Gossip Girl” is enjoyable.
   Strongly disagree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Strongly agree

(K) The official Website of “Gossip Girl” is entertaining.
   Strongly disagree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Strongly agree

(L) Going onto the official Website of “Gossip Girl” is my habit.
   Strongly disagree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Strongly agree
I wonder what other people say about the “Gossip Girl.”

Strongly disagree (1)  (2)  (3)  (4)  (5)  (6)  (7)  Strongly agree

I go onto the official Website to keep up with latest updates about “Gossip Girl.”

Strongly disagree (1)  (2)  (3)  (4)  (5)  (6)  (7)  Strongly agree

I go onto the official Website of “Gossip Girl” to express myself freely.

Strongly disagree (1)  (2)  (3)  (4)  (5)  (6)  (7)  Strongly agree

I go onto the official Website of “Gossip Girl” to meet people with my interests.

Strongly disagree (1)  (2)  (3)  (4)  (5)  (6)  (7)  Strongly agree

5. How do you agree/disagree the following statements regarding “Gossip Girl” and its official Website?

(A) I believe I am knowledgeable about “Gossip Girl.”

Strongly disagree (1)  (2)  (3)  (4)  (5)  (6)  (7)  Strongly agree

(B) I believe I am knowledgeable about the content of the official Website of “Gossip Girl.”

Strongly disagree (1)  (2)  (3)  (4)  (5)  (6)  (7)  Strongly agree

(C) I believe I am experienced and proficient in surfing the official Website of “Gossip Girl.”

Strongly disagree (1)  (2)  (3)  (4)  (5)  (6)  (7)  Strongly agree

(D) I believe I am able to manage various information formats (e.g., Flash, Real Media, etc.) on the official Website of “Gossip Girl.”

Strongly disagree (1)  (2)  (3)  (4)  (5)  (6)  (7)  Strongly agree

6. Please answer the following questions.

(A) About how many times have you visited the official Website of “Gossip Girl” during the last month?

________________________________________________________________________

(B) How often do you usually visit the official Website of “Gossip Girl” on average?

Less than one visit per month (1)  (2)  (3)  (4)  (5)  (6)  (7)  Visit almost everyday

(C) How frequently do you visit the official Website of “Gossip Girl” on average?

Rarely (1)  (2)  (3)  (4)  (5)  (6)  (7)  Frequently

7. Please answer the following questions.

(A) When visiting the official Website of “Gossip Girl,” about how many minutes do you spend on the site on average?

________________________________________________________________________
(B) I spend a significant amount of time at the official Website of “Gossip Girl.”
   Strongly disagree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Strongly agree

(C) How would you rate your visit duration of the official Website of “Gossip Girl” on average?
   Short-duration (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Long-duration

8. How do you agree/disagree the following statements which describe your feelings about
   “Gossip Girl” and its official Website?

   (A) I am committed to the official Website of “Gossip Girl.”
      Strongly disagree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Strongly agree

   (B) I would be willing to visit the official Website of “Gossip Girl” rather than other Websites.
      Strongly disagree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Strongly agree

   (C) I would recommend the official Website of “Gossip Girl” to others.
      Strongly disagree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Strongly agree

9. How do following statements describe your usage of some functions on the official Website of
   “Gossip Girl”?

   (A) Have you ever clicked on/ interacted with the “cell phone” icon showing on the main page of
      the official Website of “Gossip Girl” (see the picture shown below)?
      Never (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Frequently

   (B) How would you describe your usage of the “Gossip Girl Music” section on the official
      Website of “Gossip Girl”?
      Rarely use (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Frequently use
(C) How frequently do you visit the Verizon Wireless service page (see the picture shown below) within the official Website of “Gossip Girl”?

Never (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Frequently

(D) How would you describe the degree of your interactions (e.g., click links, download music, watch video clips, etc.) with the independent Verizon Wireless’ official Website (http://www.verizonwireless.com/b2c/index.html) linked through the official Website of “Gossip Girl”?

No interaction (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Many interactions

10. Please rate the following statements according to your feelings.

(A) To me, Verizon Wireless that sponsors “Gossip Girl” is

Unfavorable (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Favorable

Bad (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Good

Unpleasant (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Pleasant

11. Please rate the following statements according to your feelings.

(A) If I were in the marketplace, I would purchase the service from Verizon Wireless.

Unlikely (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Likely

Impossible (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Possible

Improbable (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Probable
Part B. The following are demographic questions that will only be used for statistical analyses.

1. What is your gender?
   (1) Male
   (2) Female

2. How old are you?
   ________________________ years old.

3. What is your occupation?

   ____________________________________________________________

   The survey ends here. Thank you for your participation!


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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jhih-Syuan Lin enrolled in the Department of Advertising of the College of Journalism and Communications at the University of Florida in August 2006, and graduated with a Master of Advertising degree in 2008. She received her bachelor’s degree in advertising from the College of Communication at the National Chengchi University, Taipei, Taiwan. Her research interests include Internet advertising, new media effect, product placement, and international advertising.