

Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility Advertising: Advertising Effectiveness as a Function of Viewing Context

Key Words: Advertising; Memory; context; brand; CSER

Abstract

This study investigated the effects of Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility (CSER) advertising, and programme-advertisement congruency, on advertising effectiveness. In a between-subjects design, participants ($N = 128$) viewed either three CSER or three neutral advertisements for the same brands embedded in either a 'sustainable' or 'neutral' programme. Measures of memory for advertising (free recall, cued recall, and brand recognition), and buying intention were obtained. The percentage recall and buying intention scores were significantly higher for CSER than neutral advertisements, but there was no effect on brand recognition. There were no significant effects of programme type nor significant interactions between programme and advertisement types found. The effectiveness of CSER advertising as measured by free recall was found to vary as a function of the brand being advertised, which was attributed to differences in the type of message being carried by the advertisement.

Given companies large investments in advertising (Guttmann, 2019) and the large amount of advertising the public are exposed to, predicted as between 4,000 and 10,000 advertisements a day (Marshall, 2015), it is crucial for advertisers to understand how to make their advertisements interesting, relevant and memorable so they serve their commercial purpose (Bushman, 2007). The literature, indicates that the content of advertisements, and the emotions they elicit, effects advertisement memorability, which is regarded as a good measure of advertisement effectiveness, as consumers who remember advertisements have a higher likelihood of purchasing products (Gunter, 2000). In this study we assess free recall, cued recall and brand recognition as independent, but related, measures of advertisement memorability.

This study looks at the efficacy of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) advertisement content. CSR is a company's commitment to increasing its beneficial impact on society, whether that be environmental, social or philanthropic, whilst minimizing its harms (Mohr et al., 2001). The literature suggests CSR activities are no longer considered an optional strategy for business but instead an "inescapable priority" (Porter & Kramer, 2006, p.78). This study replicates and extends the literature in three ways: First, we use three different measures of memory to assess the effectiveness of the advertisements, which has not been done in the CSR advertising literature. Second, we examined the effect of context, namely whether the programme surround would influence advertising effectiveness. Again, we could find no CSR study which examine the congruence effect. Third, and perhaps most importantly, we used actual advertisements rather than those using fictitious brands which have been used in the past and which present problems for the ecological validity of the study. Further, we attempted to ensure both sets of advertisements were similar in terms of their emotional vs rational appeal.

CSR policies focusing on environmental responsibility (CSER) such as the incorporation of environmentally sustainable business operations are increasingly expected

from companies as consumer concerns about the environment are rising (Chitra, 2007). In 2017, 87% of consumers reported a positive attitude toward companies supporting environmental issues (Cone, 2017). Such consumer attitudes has made environmental concerns a top issue on the agenda of industry (Bush, 2008).

Advertising has been demonstrated to play an important role in communicating a brand's pro-environmental attributes and products (Leonidou et al., 2011) and in increasing consumer awareness of CSER (McWilliams & Siegel, 2000). CSER advertising, also known as green advertising, is exemplified by an advertisement that shows the relationship between a product/service and the physical environment, promotes a green lifestyle or presents a corporate image of environmental responsibility (Banerjee et al., 1995).

CSR is a significant investment for many companies (Meier & Cassar, 2018) due to the perception that CSR activities help in attracting investors and customers, and in gaining employee and supplier loyalty (Portney, 2008). There is, however, mixed evidence of the cost-effectiveness of CSR (Chen & Lee, 2017; Melo & Garrido-Morgado, 2012). The CSR literature focuses on CSR's effects on financial performance e.g., capital market benefits (Dhaliwal et al., 2014) so there is little research addressing CSR's influence on value to consumers (Peloza & Shang, 2011) specifically in retail (Schramm-Klein et al., 2016). Indeed, it has been suggested and demonstrated that the perhaps cynical CSER advertising of "sinful firms" might actually backfire (Oh et al., 2017).

The existing literature suggests CSR improves brand image. For example, the interviews with consumers conducted by Servera-Francés and Piqueras-Tomás (2019) indicated that brands with CSR policies are rated as higher in perceived trust, value, loyalty, and satisfaction. Such interviews suggest that CSR has a positive effect on consumers' perception of brands; however, they are limited by potential social desirability bias (Kuokkanen, 2017). Sen and Bhattacharya (2001), in an early study, demonstrated CSR

policies effectively improve brand image, brand value, and lead to more purchases from consumers. However, such results lack external validity as subjects were exposed, in quick succession, to a company's CSR record and new product information, which is unlikely to occur in the marketplace, as is the provision to consumers of a company's full CSR record.

CSER has been demonstrated in the literature to enhance brand image (Gatti et al., 2012), increase consumer buying intentions (Grimmer & Bingham, 2013), and increase brand loyalty (Du et al., 2007). Furthermore, interviews with consumers have revealed that CSER positively effects consumers evaluation of a company and their buying intention (Mohr et al., 2001). However, as is the case with the CSR literature, such studies use methods of providing CSER information which lack ecological validity e.g., by providing information sheets, and methods of data collection (e.g., interviews) that are susceptible to social desirability bias. We hoped that our methodology will increase the ecological validity of the current study.

One central question for researchers has been the extent to which it is more effective to use emotional rather than rational messages in CSER advertising. Andreu et al. (2015) examined consumers' responses to two types of CSR initiatives (environment-related and employee-based) using two types of message appeals (emotional and rational) across two service types (hedonic and utilitarian). They found rational appeals more effectively communicated environment-related CSR initiatives, whereas emotional appeals more effectively communicate employee-based CSR initiatives. The rational message appeals affect consumers' CSR awareness and emotional responses in utilitarian service.

This distinction between advertising of utilitarian and hedonic brands is interesting but has apparently not been explored in the CSR advertising literature. This is potentially important as Zarantonello & Schmitt (2010) found when they investigated whether different consumers prefer different experiential appeals and whether experiential types moderate the relationships between brand attitude and purchase intention. They identified five types of consumers:

hedonistic, action-oriented, holistic, inner-directed, and utilitarian consumers. They established that the relationship between attitudes and intentions is strongest for holistic consumers and weakest for utilitarian consumers.

Nielsen (2015) found that brands with CSER advertising campaigns experienced sales growth of 3% more than brands that did not promote CSER efforts, suggesting the benefits of CSER advertising on brand growth. Additionally, Barton et al. (2018) findings that 64% of consumers reported they find brands that actively communicate their CSER policies through advertising more attractive than those brands that do not suggests the benefits of CSER advertising on attitudes toward brands. Empirically, CSER advertisements are indicated to increase the perception of brands environmental benefits, which is demonstrated to enhance attitudes towards (Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2008) and buying intention (Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012) of brands. In line with such findings, Schmuck et al. (2018) found that CSER advertisements enhanced attitudes toward and intention to buy of a brand. However, as noted, studies have limited ecological validity due to their use of fictitious brands. Such studies generalisability to different advertising modes is also limited due to only print advertising being investigated. Print advertising is demonstrated to differ from television advertising in that memory was better for print than television advertising (Furnham & Williams, 1987) suggesting further research is needed using television advertising and genuine brands to determine the effects of CSER advertising on advertising effectiveness including intention to buy.

Advertising is suggested to create an information processing climate conducive to consumer scepticism (Obermiller et al., 2005). Such scepticism may limit the effect of CSER content on advertising effectiveness as the positive effects of CSER on brands are demonstrated to be moderated by the authenticity of corporations perceived motivation (Sen & Bhattacharya,

2006). Therefore, it is important to continue to investigate whether CSER improves consumer's attitude towards and buying intention of the brand when communicated through advertising.

In a very different and interesting paper, Martinez et al. (2015) investigated whether a CSER message could activate the defensive motivational system (resulting in inaction) or the appetitive motivational system (inspiring positive physical action). The results clearly suggested that positive messages emphasizing the benefits of environmentally responsible behaviour (as opposed to those focused on the negative) are more likely to achieve positive results.

Context

Television advertisements are presented in the context of a programme, either within or between programmes. Programme context has been demonstrated by the literature to affect the effectiveness of advertising (Furnham et al., 1998). Factors such as involvement, entertainment, enjoyment (Norris et al., 2003) and programme quality (Integral Ad Science, 2019) are also indicated to influence advertisement effectiveness. Kwon et al. (2019) recent meta-analytic review supports previous findings of programme context effects as greater programme liking positively affected advertisement memory, whereas highly arousing, humorous, violent, sexual, and suspenseful programme content reduced advertisement memory. However, the correlations between programme context and advertising memory were found to be weak suggesting that programme context does not have a large effect on advertisement effectiveness.

Programme-advertisement congruence, how the content in the advertisement and programme semantically match, is perceived to be important in influencing advertisement effectiveness by 87% of UK consumers (Integral Ad Science, 2019) However, the effects of programme-advertisement congruence on memory for advertising, and therefore advertising effectiveness, remains in dispute. There are rival hypotheses - the Cognitive Priming hypothesis (De Pelsmacker et al., 2002) and the Cognitive Interference hypothesis (Furnham

et al., 2002) – which make contrary predictions. Some studies (e.g., King et al., 2015; Leka et al., 2013) have found no effect of programme content nor programme-advertisement congruence on advertisement recall. The literature is therefore mixed with respect to the effects of programme context and programme-advertisement congruence on advertisement effectiveness.

This study

This study will utilise a well-established methodology (Akram et al., 2018; Wong et al., 2019) to test whether the CSER content of an advertisement, the context in which the advertisement is embedded, and programme-advertisement congruency, affects consumers memory for the advertising information and buying intention of the brand. The effects will be tested for each brand (IKEA, H&M and Old Mout) to establish whether CSER advertising has effects for all brands or whether such effects are impacted by the type of brand and type of CSER advertising message. We spent some considerable time finding advertisements, products and contextualised programmes that were both consistent with our experimental design and the hypotheses we wished to test, and retained ecological validity.

We tested three hypotheses focusing on two issues: advertising type (CSER vs neutral) and programme context (congruent vs non-congruent). The first hypothesis (H1) was that there would be a main effect of advertisement type: advertisements will be better remembered, and buying intention will be higher when participants are exposed to advertisements showing the CSER efforts of the brand, in comparison to the neutral advertisements for the same brand.

The second hypothesis (H2) was that there would be a main effect of programme type: advertisements will be better remembered and buying intention will be higher when participants are exposed to advertisements in the neutral programme compared to the sustainable programme.

The third hypothesis (H3) was that there would be an interaction between programme and advertisement type: memory would be better and intention to buy stronger when there was a CSER advertisement embedded in a congruent programme.

Method

Participants

One hundred and twenty-eight participants were recruited using a volunteer sample online participant panel, Sona ($N = 84$) and through a snowball sample online ($N = 58$). A power analysis using the G*Power (Faul et al., 2007) software revealed that this sample size would provide adequate power of .80 to detect a medium effect size ($f = .25$; Cohen, 1988). The sample was composed of only females to control for the observed gender difference in pro-environmental beliefs (Kalof et al., 2000) and attitudes toward green advertising (Haytko & Matulich, 2008). The age range was 18-60 years old ($M = 25.0$ years, $SD = 11.4$ years). The participants were from Europe (65%), Asia (33%) and America (2%). Twenty two percent of participants stated that they had previously seen one of the advertisements shown¹.

Materials

Stimuli.

The generalisability of experimental results depends heavily on stimulus materials used and it is very difficult in this area to find advertisements and programmes that are sufficiently matched on all salient factors.

¹ When the 29 participants who had seen at least one of the advertisements previously were removed from the analysis, the same pattern of results was observed so the analysis on the complete data set is reported.

The sustainable programme (Planet Earth 2 Episode 6: Cities) had a theme emphasising the importance of sustainability and the effects humans are having on the world. The neutral programme (The Mind Explained Episode 2: Dreams) explained the psychology and physiology of dreams. These programmes were selected as they are both documentaries, which are suggested to elicit a high level of attention in viewers (Hoffman & Batra, 1991) and were produced by major media providers (the BBC and Netflix respectively) and are therefore of very high quality. A pilot study was conducted to identify the sustainability message and emotional content in each programme and to verify that the humorous and sexual content of programmes was matched and that the sustainable programme was rated as significantly more sustainable and emotional than the neutral programme.

Both programmes were edited to be 20 minutes long. Ten minutes into each programme, three brands were advertised: H&M, Old Mout, and IKEA. H&M is a fast fashion high street clothing brand, Old Mout is a cider company and IKEA is an affordable furniture and homeware store. For each brand, an advertisement that showed CSER or was neutral, with respect to environmental issues, were selected (see Table 1). The CSER advertisements met the criteria for green advertisements under Banerjee et al. (1995) classification as they either promoted a green lifestyle or presented a corporate image of environmental responsibility and were confirmed to be suitable for use in a pilot study. Between brands, the CSER advertisements did not significantly differ in sustainability ratings. Within each brand, advertisements were matched for factors such as length (+/- 10 seconds), humour and sexual content. The brands were selected as each had run advertising campaigns featuring CSER and non-CSER advertisements for the same product. They were also chosen because the CSER messaging for each brand was distinct (cutting carbon emissions, recycling, and preserving the natural world) allowing us to make comparisons between different approaches to CSER advertising.

We spent considerably effort in trying to find these advertisements which fulfilled our criteria, and were as matched as possible on such things as the nature of the appeal.

Insert Table 1 here

Questionnaires.

The questionnaires used to measure free and cued recall of the advertisements were taken from Wong et al. (2019). The free recall questionnaire was given to participants first and instructed participants to recall anything they could about each advertisement. The cued recall questionnaire then instructed participants to recall the brand name, message, and scenes within the advertisements they had just seen. Both questionnaires were scored out of nine, with a point allocated to brand, message and scene details for each advertisement (with a maximum of three points for each advertisement). The final memory measure was a brand recognition test in which participants had to select the brand logos they had viewed in the advertisements. For each advertisement, a grid was presented with the correct brand logo and its eight major competitors as distractors, participants received one point for each of the three brand logos they correctly identified. The buying intention questionnaire was adapted from Zeng (2008) and participants were asked to rate four questions. Two questions, 'I would like to buy ... products in the future' and 'I will make a special effort to buy ... products' were rated on a scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (10). The other two questions were; 'the likelihood of purchasing ... products is' very unlikely (1) to very likely (10), and 'my willingness to buy ... products is' very low (1) to very high (10). Thus, the participants buying intention scores were out of 40 for each brand.

Procedure

Having completed the consent form, the participants watched one of the 20-minute television programmes (sustainable or neutral) with one set of advertisements (CSER or neutral) embedded 10 minutes into the programme. Following the end of the television programme participants filled out questionnaires on their memory of the advertisements (free recall, cued recall, and brand recognition) and buying intention. Finally, participants were debriefed about the true aim of the experiment, given the opportunity to withdraw their data and thanked for their participation. The experiment was granted ethical approval by the relevant Departmental Ethics Committee.

Results

All memory scores (i.e., free recall, cued recall and brand recognition) were converted to a percentage scale prior to analysis.

Correlations

The correlations between the measures of memory and buying intention are presented in Table 2.

Insert Table 2 here

Inspection of Table 2 indicates that all measures of memory were significantly positively correlated. Brand recognition and cued recall were also significantly positively correlated with buying intention but there was no significant correlation between free recall and buying intention.

Free recall

The mean percentage free recall scores as a function of advertisement type, programme type, and brand, are presented in Table 3.

Insert Table 3 here

A mixed ANOVA showed that between participants, the main effect of advertisement type was significant, $F(1, 124) = 7.82, p = .006, \eta_p^2 = .059$, with CSER advertisements ($M = 51.2\%$) being recalled significantly better than neutral advertisements ($M = 41.7\%$). However, the main effect of programme type was not significant, $F < 1$ (Sustainable: $M = 45.0\%$; Neutral: $M = 47.9\%$), nor was the interaction between programme and advertisement type, $F < 1$. Within participants, there was a significant effect of brand, $F(2, 248) = 73.82, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .373$, and Bonferroni-corrected pairwise comparisons revealed that free recall of the H&M advertisements ($M = 62.9\%$) was significantly higher than for the IKEA advertisements ($M = 49.7\%$) which in turn was significantly higher than for the Old Mout advertisements ($M = 27.0\%$). There was also a significant interaction between type of advertisement and brand, $F(2, 248) = 4.38, p = .014, \eta_p^2 = .034$, (see Figure 1) but no significant interaction was found between the type of programme and brand, $F < 1$, nor between brand, advertisement type, and programme type, $F < 1$.

Insert Figure 1 here

A simple effects analysis revealed that for IKEA, there was no significant difference in free recall between advertisement types, $F < 1$. For H&M, there was a significant difference between advertisement types, $F(1, 124) = 23.23, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .158$, with the CSER advertisement being significantly better recalled than neutral advertisement. For Old Mout, there was also a significant difference between advertisement types, $F(1, 124) = 4.13, p = .044, \eta_p^2 = .032$, again with the CSER advertisement being significantly better recalled than the neutral advertisement.

Cued recall

The mean percentage cued recall scores as a function of advertisement type, programme type, and brand, are presented in Table 4.

Insert Table 4 here

A mixed ANOVA found that between participants, the main effect of advertisement type was significant, $F(1, 124) = 9.19, p = .003, \eta_p^2 = .069$, in that CSER advertisements ($M = 68.8\%$) were recalled significantly better than neutral advertisements ($M = 56.8\%$). Neither the main effect of programme type, $F < 1$ (Sustainable: $M = 64.1\%$; Neutral: $M = 61.4\%$), nor the interaction between programme type and advertisement type was significant, $F < 1$. Within participants, there was a significant effect of brand on cued recall, $F(2, 248) = 97.52, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .440$. Bonferroni-corrected pairwise comparisons revealed that H&M ($M = 86.3\%$) was significantly better recalled than IKEA ($M = 65.7\%$) which was significantly better recalled than Old Mout ($M = 36.3\%$). There was no significant interaction between the type of advertisement and brand, $F(2, 248) = 1.32, p = .270, \eta_p^2 = .011$, the type of programme and brand, $F < 1$, nor between brand, advertisement type, and programme type, $F < 1$.

Brand recognition

A factorial ANOVA revealed that there was no effect of advertisement type, $F(1, 124) = 1.42, p = .236, \eta_p^2 = .011$ (CSER: $M = 89.1\%$; Neutral: $M = 84.9\%$), programme type, $F < 1$ (Sustainable: $M = 87.5\%$; Neutral: $M = 86.5\%$) and no significant interaction between programme type and advertisement type, $F < 1$. A Cochran's Q test was used to examine the effect of product type on brand recognition, and this was found to be significant, $Q(2) = 26.56, p < .001$. Bonferroni-corrected pairwise comparisons (McNemar tests, $\alpha = .05$) revealed that

brand recognition for the H&M advertisements ($M = 99.2\%$) was significantly higher than for both IKEA ($M = 82.8\%$) and Old Mout ($M = 78.9\%$). There was no significant difference between the percentage recognition scores for the IKEA and Old Mout brands.

Buying intention

The mean buying intention scores as a function of advertisement type, programme type, and brand, are presented in Table 5.

Insert Table 5 here

A mixed ANOVA found that between participants, the main effect of advertisement type was significant, $F(1, 124) = 4.74, p = .031, \eta_p^2 = .037$ (CSER: $M = 17.0$; Neutral: $M = 15.5$). The main effect of programme type was not significant, $F(1, 124) = 1.14, p = .289, \eta_p^2 = .009$ (Sustainable: $M = 16.6$; Neutral: $M = 15.9$), nor was the interaction between programme type and advertisement type, $F < 1$. Within participants, there was a significant effect of brand on buying intention, $F(2, 248) = 62.04, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .333$. Bonferroni-corrected pairwise comparisons revealed that buying intention for IKEA ($M = 18.8$) was significantly higher than for H&M ($M = 17.4$) which in turn was significantly higher than for Old Mout ($M = 12.5$). There was no significant interaction between type of advertisement and brand, $F(2, 248) = 1.66, p = .192, \eta_p^2 = .013$, type of programme and brand, $F(2, 248) = 1.03, p = .357, \eta_p^2 = .008$, or between brand, advertisement type and programme type, $F < 1$.

Discussion

The first hypothesis that there will be a main effect of advertisement type was supported as advertisements were better recalled and buying intention was higher when participants were

exposed to advertisements showing the CSER initiatives of the brands, in comparison to neutral advertisements for the same brands. These results corroborate earlier research findings (Grimmer & Bingham, 2013; Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012; Schmuck et al., 2018) suggesting that at present CSER advertising has clear advantages.

This effect occurred across free and cued recall suggesting CSER content improved advertisement effectiveness. No such effect was found for brand recognition, possibly due to ceiling effects. The positive effect of CSER advertising on buying intention evident here supports previous findings that this type of advertising increases the intent to buy (Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012; Schmuck et al., 2018). These results suggest that for genuine brands being advertised on television, CSER content significantly increases intention to buy, consistent with findings of consumers preference for brands supporting environmental issues (Cone, 2017).

The finding that CSER content improves recall of advertising information can be explained by the evolutionary advantage of selective attention towards potential threats (Nairne, 2010). CSER content may have elicited such evolved attention preference, due to the common understanding of the climate crisis and its threats (Poortinga & Pidgeon, 2003), therefore increasing attention to, and recall of, CSER advertising information. Further, CSER advertisements were found in the pilot study to be significantly more emotionally arousing than the neutral advertisements. If, as Easterbrook (1959) suggested, emotionally arousing stimuli elicit more attention, this could explain the better recall for the CSER than the neutral advertising information, and is consistent with the findings of Andreu et al. (2015).

We found different effects of CSER content on free recall of advertising information between brands. Such differences may be attributed to differences in the product category. IKEA sells utilitarian products, whereas both H&M and Old Mout products can be classified as experiential. Strahilevitz and Myers (1998) found that consumers responded more positively

to CSER advertising when the advertisement was for an experiential than a utilitarian product category. Therefore, CSER content in advertising may not have significantly affected free recall of IKEA advertising information due its utilitarian products resulting in consumers responding less positively to CSER information. In a similar vein, Du et al. (2011) suggested that CSER efforts have smaller benefits for market leaders (which IKEA can be considered), than market challengers; H&M, and particularly Old Mout can be considered to be, which may explain the pattern of results.

Another possibility is that the difference in the effectiveness of the CSER content on the free recall of information observed between brands could be attributed to the particular type of 'green' advertising used. Both H&M and Old Mout advertising included CSER efforts closely aligned with their brand identity (e.g., the recycling of clothes for H&M) whereas the IKEA CSER messaging was more generic, and concerned the reduction of carbon emissions. These differences in messaging, and in particular the alignment between the message and the brand identity, may go some way to explaining the different effects on free recall of CSER information between brands, and this clearly needs further investigation. It may also be the case that an individual's prior attitudes toward a brand will influence the effectiveness of CSER content. Prior knowledge of the brand's sustainability credentials may make a viewer sceptical of the CSER claims made in the advertisement. Servaes and Tamayo (2013) found that the positive impacts of CSER only occur for companies with good prior reputations as corporate citizens whilst Varadarajan and Menon (1988) demonstrated that scepticism weakens the response to cause-related marketing campaigns. Differences in participants' prior knowledge of the brands and their sustainability efforts may therefore explain the differences in CSER advertisings effect on free recall between brands.

These differences partly explain the different results from studies in this area. There are often subtle differences in the advertising messages as well as the products concerned which

can have dramatic effects on results as researchers have found when examining the effects of sexual imagery in television advertising (King et al., 2015; Leka et al., 2013). This challenged the reliability of findings as they are always dependent on actual advertisements available to study.

The second hypothesis that there will be a main effect of programme on advertisement effectiveness was not supported, as the programme type within which the advertisements were embedded had no effect on advertisement memory or buying intention. This suggests that the context in which the advertisements were presented did not affect their memorability nor intention to buy of the brands. These results are consistent with the recent literature that suggests the context in which advertisements are found does not influence their effectiveness (King et al., 2015; Leka et al., 2013).

Consistent with the findings of no main effect of programme type on advertising effectiveness, the third hypothesis that there would be an interaction between programme type and advertisement type is also not supported. The findings, therefore, support neither the Congruity Priming hypothesis (De Pelsmacker et al., 2002), nor the Cognitive interference hypothesis (Furnham et al., 2002) but are consistent with the recent literature that the programme-advertisement congruency does not influence advertisement effectiveness (King et al., 2015). The findings suggest that the Integral Ad Science (2019) finding that 87% of UK consumers perceive advertisement relevance to the programme context as important, does not translate into measured behaviour. Thus, although consumers perceive such congruence as important, it does not have an impact on advertising effectiveness.

Overall, there was a positive effect of CSER content on advertisement effectiveness, in terms of better memory for the advertising information and a greater intention to buy. The findings also suggest that the effectiveness of CSER content varies as a function of the brand being advertised – and that this may be related to the nature of the environmental message

carried – and how that message is connected to the brand. Furthermore, the findings indicate that the context in which the advertisement is shown, and the programme-advertisement congruence, does not significantly affect memory of advertising information nor intention to buy.

As with many studies, this one has a number of limitations. It would have been desirable to have a larger and more representative sample, in order to examine the influence of individual differences. In particular, it would be interesting to measure the participants' values as well as their consumer habits, as these could have a considerable impact on how individuals process CSER messages and buy products. It would also have been desirable to have a wider range of advertisements to test, though obtaining these can be problematic.

Despite the modest nature of this paper, there are some conclusions that can be tentatively drawn from these results. First, the fact that the environmental surround or programme context has little effect on the power of the advertisement has important implications for product placement, suggesting that potential viewing figures and viewer demography may be as important as the particular type of programme within which the advertisements are placed. Second, and despite a number of caveats, CSER advertising does seem to be effective, though there are many issues related to brand identity and messaging that need exploration. Further work could well explore the efficacy of different types of CSER messages both within and between different brands.

From a marketing perspective it is clear that simply switching to, or emphasising, CSER messaging is no guarantee of success, particularly if there is a strong trend to do so. Clearly some products are much more amenable to a CSER message than others. Certainly, it seems worth the effort to consider how a brand might be marketed anew from a CSER perspective. Further, there may be very different effects if the advertisement takes a very clear and distinct rational vs emotional approach which may interact with particular types of

consumers (Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2010). There is, however, no doubt that CSER issues are on the agenda for many consumers which are reflected in all the media and which, therefore, suggest those in brand management practice and research need to take very seriously.

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Table 1.*Content and message of advertisements*

Brand	CSER advert	Neutral advert
IKEA	Ideas for how to cut carbon emissions A better world starts at home	Relax into greatness Wonderful everyday
H&M	Recycling clothes through store Together we can close the loop	Female empowerment Clothes make you feel special
Old Mout	Product that is recyclable, natural and vegan Partnership with WWF in line with their logo the Kiwi bird	Be a kiwi not a sheep Kiwi taste for adventure

Table 2.*Pearson correlations between measures of buying intention and memory*

Variable	1	2	3	4
1.Brand recognition	-			
2. Free recall	.420**	-		
3. Cued recall	.476**	.727**	-	
4. Buying Intention	.231**	.106	.186*	-

* $p < .05$ level, ** $p < .01$ level

Table 3.

Mean percentage free recall as a function of type of advertising, type of programme and brand

		Type of Advertising			
		Neutral		CSER	
Type of Programme	Brand	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Neutral	IKEA	51.0	28.1	53.1	36.8
	H&M	54.2	23.6	75.0	18.9
	Old Mout	19.8	23.7	34.4	31.1
Sustainable	IKEA	47.9	30.5	46.9	33.7
	H&M	53.1	25.2	68.8	16.8
	Old Mout	24.0	25.7	29.2	29.0

Table 4.

Mean percentage cued recall as a function of type of advertising, type of programme and brand

		Type of Advertising			
		Neutral		CSER	
Type of Programme	Brand	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Neutral	IKEA	63.5	36.3	69.8	38.2
	H&M	75.0	30.5	94.8	12.3
	Old Mout	26.0	30.2	39.6	36.4
Sustainable	IKEA	62.5	33.6	66.7	37.9
	H&M	82.3	30.5	93.8	17.8
	Old Mout	31.3	34.8	47.9	39.7

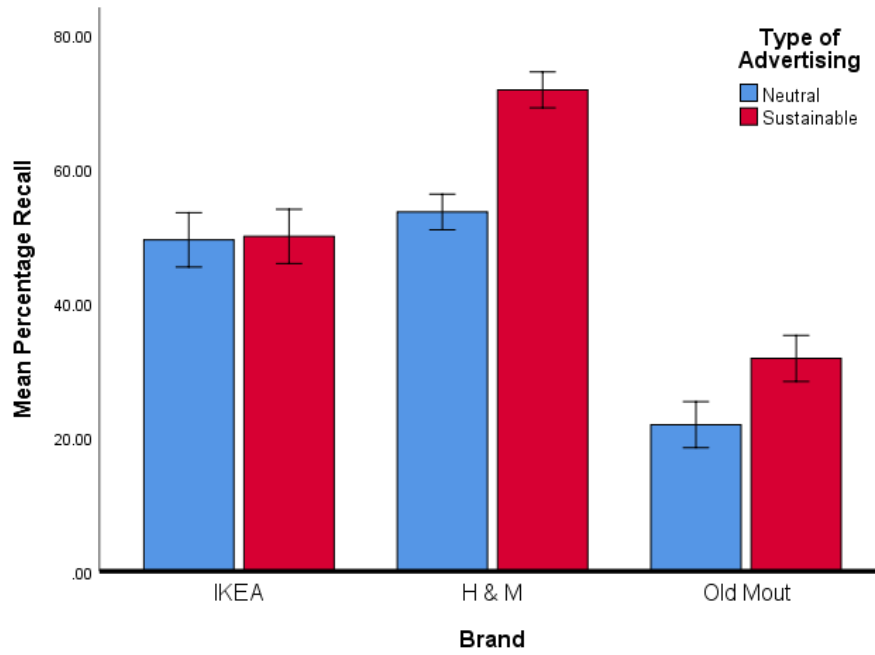
Table 5.

Mean buying intention score as a function of type of advertising, type of programme and brand

		Type of Advertising			
		Neutral		CSER	
Type of Programme	Brand	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Neutral	IKEA	19.0	3.6	18.8	5.0
	H&M	15.7	5.1	17.9	7.3
	Old Mout	10.3	5.5	13.5	6.4
Sustainable	IKEA	18.3	6.0	19.0	3.5
	H&M	17.1	5.3	18.9	3.5
	Old Mout	12.5	6.2	13.8	6.7

Figure 1.

Mean percentage free recall as a function of type of advertising and brand.



Note: Error bars show standard errors.