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# Direct and Indirect Approaches to Advertising Persuasion

## Which Is More Effective?

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While research suggests that advertisers can affect a particular belief intended to be changed (the intended belief) either directly by mentioning it or indirectly by mentioning other beliefs associated with it, the consequences of the two approaches are not clearly understood. Also, relatively little attention has been paid to visual elements that are not equivalent, but related, to verbal content. This study investigated the impact of 1) the directness of verbal claims (direct or indirect) and 2) the existence of visual cues about the intended belief (present and absent). It was found that persuasion was enhanced by visual cues that suggest the intended attribute. Results also indicated that when visual cues were absent, indirectly induced persuasion showed more stability over time than directly induced persuasion. Implications of the findings for understanding advertising effects are discussed.

### Introduction

Many forms of advertisements rely on a combination of verbal and visual elements to convey an intended message. An ad may or may not contain verbal claims about the intended message; an ad might or might not include visual stimuli about the intended message. It is necessary to understand the effects of these elements in order to design effective communication programs. This study is designed to investigate the impact of verbal and visual elements in advertisements on persuasion and its stability over time.

#### *Directness of Verbal Claims*

Advertisements frequently emphasize salient attributes of products so that consumers' beliefs about these attributes will be changed and these beliefs will then influence consumers' attitude toward products and purchase behavior. Therefore,

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much research has focused on mentioned beliefs and related them to attitude or purchase intentions (Mitchell and Olson, 1981). But what are the effects of advertisements on unmentioned beliefs?

Substantial research has shown that when people receive information about certain aspects of a stimulus, they go beyond the information given. An audience exposed to an ad may develop beliefs about unmentioned aspects of a product through the process of inferential belief formation (e.g., Huber and McCann, 1982). According to these findings, an ad addressing one attribute can indirectly affect beliefs about other unmentioned attributes of a product.

Advertising effects on unmentioned aspects suggest that advertisers may be able to change certain beliefs without mentioning them explicitly. Hence, there are two ways to change a particular belief with verbal claims: 1) a direct approach by attacking an intended belief to be changed, and 2) an indirect approach by attacking beliefs associated with an intended belief. An intended belief here refers to the particular belief that advertisers intend to change ultimately, regardless of what attributes are explicitly mentioned in the ad. In this study, persuasion based on either direct or indirect verbal claims will be called "direct or indirect persuasion," respectively.

We can illustrate direct and indirect verbal claims to change the intended belief in the following way. Suppose one intends to change consumers' beliefs about Attribute A; that is, Attribute A is the intended attribute. In a direct approach, an ad makes verbal claims directly about Attribute A; that is, the explicitly mentioned attribute (A) is the same as the intended attribute (A). In an indirect claim, one may verbally attack Attribute B, hoping that beliefs about Attribute B will induce beliefs about Attribute A; that is, the mentioned attribute (B) is different from the intended attribute (A).

The first purpose of this study is to compare the consequences of making direct and indirect verbal claims for persuasion. Given the two alternative approaches to persuasion, the following questions arise: What is the difference between direct and indirect approaches? Which approach should be used to change a certain belief during the campaign? In order to answer such questions, the two approaches are compared in the present study. In particular, this study examines the impact of the two approaches on the stability of persuasion over time.

### *Visual Elements in an Ad*

Recently, there has been a growing interest in the impact of visual elements of advertisements on persuasion (e.g., Mitchell, 1986). Mitchell and Olson (1981) examined the effects of visual and verbal components separately by comparing the advertisements that contained only one element (a picture or verbal claims). It was found that picture-only ads can yield more favorable brand beliefs than the verbal-message-only ads. However, the interaction between verbal claims and pictures was not explicitly investigated in this study.

Several researchers have examined the impact of the visual content of advertisements by investigating its relationships with verbal content, rather than by examining visual elements independent of context (i.e., verbal messages) (e.g., Edell and Staelin, 1983; Taylor and Thompson, 1982). Taylor and Thompson (1982) suggested that visual elements containing the information equivalent to verbal

messages do not affect persuasion, compared with when verbal messages are presented alone. Edell and Staelin (1983) have examined the effects of so-called framed pictures, pictures that portray the same descriptions of the product as the verbal paragraph. There were no significant differences in persuasion between verbal-content-only and equivalent-verbal-and-visual-content conditions. When an ad contained unframed pictures, people showed slow responses to the advertisements.

While these studies have provided useful insights for understanding the effects of visual ad stimuli, there remains an unexplored area. These studies have examined the visual stimuli that are either unrelated or equivalent (redundant) to the verbal messages, but another type exists between these two extreme cases; that is, visual stimuli that are related, but not equivalent, to the verbal content. For example, an ad making verbal claims about an attribute (e.g., the size of a car) can contain pictures about another attribute (e.g., passenger safety) that is related to the attribute overtly stated in the verbal message. What are the effects of such visual elements?

The second purpose of this study is to investigate how such a visual component of an ad affects persuasion. In particular, this study examines how visual stimuli related to verbal messages affect the processing of the information in the verbal messages.

## Conceptual Framework

In this section, a conceptual framework is proposed for answering the questions raised: What is the impact of the directness of verbal claims on the temporal stability of persuasion? What are the effects of related visual cues on persuasion?

### *Stability of Persuasion*

How stable are persuasion effects achieved by direct and indirect verbal claims? One psychological theory provides some insights for exploring this question. Studies of so-called generation effects have shown that information generated by an individual is remembered better than presented information (e.g., Doshier and Russo, 1976; Slamecka and Graf, 1978). These findings seem to be applicable to the current context of advertising effects. In a direct verbal claim, persuasion is based on the messages provided by an ad. In an indirect verbal claim, on the other hand, persuasion is based on inferences generated by an ad recipient. As a result, we may expect that indirectly induced beliefs last longer than directly induced beliefs, since they are based relatively more on self-generated information than on externally provided information.

Several rationales are available for this prediction. First, indirect persuasion involves more extensive processing of ad information than direct persuasion. Direct persuasion is based on the processing of ad information about the mentioned attribute. In contrast, indirect persuasion involves processing ad information about the mentioned attribute, retrieving the association between the mentioned and intended attributes, and making inferences about the intended attribute. The more extensive the processing of information is, the more accessible is the information ( Craik and Lockhart, 1972). Second, indirect persuasion requires more cognitive effort than direct persuasion, and this effort increases memorability. Also, inference

making in indirect persuasion enhances the activation of semantic features and increases the likelihood of gaining access to the trace in memory (Anderson and Reder, 1979). It is therefore hypothesized that:

H1: Beliefs induced by indirect verbal claims will show higher stability over time than beliefs induced by direct verbal claims.

### *Effects of Visual Stimuli on Persuasion*

One view is that people are not passive processors of information, but active interpreters who make educated guesses about unobserved attributes and generate inferences about their associations (e.g., Huber and McCann, 1982; Yi, in press). This view suggests that when a person sees an ad emphasizing one attribute, the person may infer other related attributes if the association between the two attributes is recognized or accessed. If the association between the two attributes is not accessible to the person, he or she may not make inferences about the unmentioned related attribute. The indirect effect will therefore depend on the accessibility of the interattribute association: that is, the readiness with which the association information is retrieved from memory and utilized in stimulus encoding (Biehal and Charkravarti, 1983; Tulving and Pearlstone, 1966). But what determines information accessibility?

Lynch and Srull (1982) note that self-generated and externally provided cues are important determinants of information accessibility. In the advertising context, visual cues may suggest the attribute intended to be changed and increase the awareness of that attribute. It has been found that one can enhance accessibility of the association between objects by making the associated objects salient (Anderson and Bower, 1973). If these stimuli remind ad recipients of the intended attribute, the ad recipients are likely to recognize its association with the attribute overtly mentioned in the ad and make inferences about the intended belief accordingly. That is, visual cues about an intended attribute can facilitate ad effects on the intended belief through a priming-like process. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

H2: Ad recipients' beliefs about an intended attribute will be higher when an ad contains visual cues that suggest the intended attribute than when it does not.

## Method

### *Subjects*

Subjects were 120 MBA students and business school staff at a major western university (male = 73, female = 47). In a laboratory experiment, subjects were presented with print ads of the Hyundai Excel, an imported car from South Korea. These subjects were chosen because they seemed to have high motivation and ability to process the information in the automobile ad. The test product category (i.e., automobiles) of this study should be highly involving to them. The average age of the participants was 28, and most of them (85%) had owned at least one car. Most subjects (80%) also indicated that they had heard of the test brand.

### *Ad Stimuli*

A focus group interview was conducted with 20 MBA students who were not included in the main study. After writing down salient attributes of the test brand, participants were asked to indicate weak attributes of the test brand. Participants were also asked to list the attributes that would be related to each attribute elicited and to give their beliefs of the relationship between the attributes. They indicated their beliefs on a scale ranging from +10 (perfectly positive relationship) to 0 (no relationship) to -10 (perfectly negative relationship), which has been used in previous research (John et al., 1986).

Most participants (65%) considered "repair costs" a relatively weak attribute of the test brand. Therefore, repair costs were chosen as the intended attribute to be changed by the ad. For the intended attribute (repair costs), "dependability" was found to be highly associated; many participants (55%) mentioned this attribute with the mean response of +6.1 on the perceived relationship scale. Based on these results, repair costs and dependability were selected as the foci of the ad stimuli.

Print ads were used in this study, since they generally provide a high opportunity to respond deeply. It is also easy to manipulate the message content of print ads, a feature critical to the experimental treatment. The ads varied on two factors: the directness of verbal claims and the existence of visual cues.

*Directness of Verbal Claims Manipulation.* The directness of verbal claims was manipulated by varying verbal messages, which consisted of manufacturers' claims and testimonials from owners of the test brand or magazines. In the direct approach, the ad made verbal claims about the intended attribute (low repair costs); that is, the intended attribute was explicitly mentioned in the ad. In the indirect approach, the ad made verbal claims about high dependability; that is, the intended attribute (repair costs) was not mentioned, but a related attribute (dependability) was mentioned. The structure and the number of message claims used in the ads were approximately the same between the direct and indirect approaches. Examples of direct and indirect verbal claims are given in Table 1.

*Visual Stimuli Manipulation.* The existence of visual stimuli was manipulated by either inclusion or noninclusion of a picture that suggests or hints at the intended attribute (i.e., repair costs). The visual stimulus was selected from a set of pictures in a pilot study with doctoral students. A picture of a person standing in front of an auto mechanic with a repair bill in one hand was chosen for this study.

*Manipulation Checks.* Manipulation checks were taken to ensure that the treatments were effective. First, the verbal claim manipulation was checked by examination of whether the ad stimuli contained verbal claims about the manipulated attribute (dependability or repair costs). In the pilot study with eight doctoral students, each ad stimulus was reviewed. After seeing each ad stimulus, they were asked, "What attributes are explicitly mentioned in the ad?" Agreement among their responses ascertained that each ad stimulus contained verbal messages about the manipulated attribute. Second, the visual cue manipulation was also checked in the pilot study. Doctoral students examined a set of potential visual cues, and

**Table 1.** Examples of Direct and Indirect Verbal Claims Used in the Study

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**Examples of direct verbal claims***Get a Hyundai Excel, Make Maintenance Unbelievably Easier*

Owners say Hyundai Excel requires extremely low repair costs; in one survey by a research organization, people who owned Hyundai Excel were asked to report repair costs since delivery; the results showed that overall Hyundai repair costs were one of the lowest

Drive a Hyundai Excel And save big bucks

*A Running Commentary on Hyundai Performance*

"There are not yet sufficient data to compare with other cars because of its youth, but Hyundai Excel is likely to lead to one of the lowest maintenance costs."—*Car and Driver*

**Examples of indirect verbal claims***Drive a Hyundai Excel, Excel Any Other Car In Dependability*

Owners say Hyundai Excel is extremely reliable; in one survey by a research organization, Hyundai Excel has been rated extremely reliable by its owners; Hyundai Excel comes with sensible features like front-wheel drive, four-wheel independent suspension for rugged dependability

Drive a Hyundai Excel. And enjoy its performance

*A Running Commentary on Hyundai Performance*

"Value, rather than price, is what Hyundai Excel expects to deliver—none of the fear that accompanies a cheap Yugo or the uncertainty of a used car. It is one of the most trouble-free cars sold in the United States."—*Car and Driver*

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they wrote what attributes the visual cues or pictures suggested. All of their responses indicated that the picture chosen for this study did suggest the intended attribute (repair costs). Finally, the correlation between dependability and repair costs was calculated based on subjects' belief measures in the main study. Results indicated that the two attributes were indeed significantly associated with each other ( $r = +.51, p < 0.001$ ).

### *Experimental Design and Procedure*

The hypotheses were tested in the context of a  $2 \times 2$  between-subject design with the directness of verbal claims (direct or indirect) and the existence of related visual cues (present or absent) as the two factors. Here, 30 subjects were randomly assigned to each of four treatment conditions: 1) direct verbal claims with visual cues, 2) direct verbal claims without visual cues, 3) indirect verbal claims with visual cues, and 4) indirect verbal claims without visual cues. To check whether this procedure produced an essentially "random assignment" of subjects to treatments, analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were run on several descriptive variables, such as age, gender, automotive experience, and brand knowledge. The initial equivalence of the four groups seemed to be achieved; none of the treatment effects was significant ( $p > 0.20$ ).

Subjects performed the experimental tasks in small groups of five to seven in a research room. Subjects were told a disguised purpose of the study consisting of the evaluation of advertisements in preproduction form. After reading and signing a consent form, each subject was given an envelope of several booklets. Each subject was told to complete the booklets in the order presented. Once the subject finished a booklet, he or she was asked to put the finished booklet in the envelope, to move to the next, and not to refer back to it later. This procedure is consistent with prior studies in this area (e.g., Olson et al., 1982). It was also emphasized

that all the questions concerned the subjects' own thoughts and feelings, and that there were no right or wrong answers.

In the first booklet, subjects were asked for general background information, such as their age, gender, and experience with automobiles. Automotive experience was measured by asking the question, "How much experience have you had with automobiles in general?" Subjects answered on 11-point scales, ranging from "not at all" to "very much." These variables were used as covariates in the analyses.

In the next booklet, each subject saw an ad that was designed to change his or her belief about the test brand. The ads varied on two aspects: 1) verbal messages, and 2) visual cues. The ad contained verbal messages about either repair costs or dependability, depending upon whether the subject was assigned to direct or indirect verbal claims conditions. The ads also varied as to the presence of visual stimuli suggesting the intended attribute. After seeing the ad, subjects were asked to write down their own thoughts and feelings about the ad on a blank sheet, consistent with the cover story.

In the final booklet, subjects were asked to state their beliefs (*B*) about the salient product attributes, which had been identified in a pilot study. Product beliefs were assessed by asking subjects to indicate the likelihood that the test brand would possess each attribute. Subjects answered on 11-point scales, ranging from "very unlikely" to "very likely." Also, subjects' knowledge about the test brand was assessed with the question, "How knowledgeable are you about Hyundai Excel?" Their responses ranged from "not at all" (0) to "very much" (10). This task completed the main study.

During the main study, subjects were not told about the follow-up study. This step was taken to eliminate any bias from the subjects. If they were told that there would be a follow-up study, they might suspect the apparent connection between the two studies. It might induce a bias in that during the first study some subjects might attempt to remember what they reported.

One week after the main study, the subjects were again contacted via mail for a follow-up study. They were asked for their beliefs about the test brand, and they were paid \$2.00 for returning the questionnaire. These delayed responses were collected from 91 out of the 120 subjects who had participated in the first study.

### *Limitations*

Several limitations of this study should be noted. First, this study assumes high involvement information processing by using a highly involving product class (i.e., automobiles). Prior research has shown that automobiles are a high-involvement category (e.g., Zaichkowsky, 1985). It may be interesting to investigate whether the findings are generalizable to low-involvement situations. Second, the subjects (i.e., students) are limited in nature, and they saw the test ads in an artificial experiment. Since this procedure was somewhat foreign to the subjects, it might have reduced the realism of the study. Third, selection bias might have been present in the follow-up sample; only 91 out of 120 subjects (75%) responded to the follow-up study. Comparison of the respondents and nonrespondents revealed no difference in the intended belief, but there might have been an unmeasured nonresponse bias that may have distorted the results.

**Table 2.** ANOVA Results for the Intended Belief and Its Change Rate

Source	Intended Belief (B <sub>i</sub> )			Change Rate of B <sub>i</sub>		
	MS	F	p	MS	F	p
<b>Main effects</b>						
Visual <sup>a</sup>	24.3	7.3	.01	0.09	2.61	.11
Verbal <sup>b</sup>	6.5	2.0	.16	0.00	0.03	.86
<b>Interaction effects</b>						
Visual X						
Verbal	1.2	0.4	.55	0.15	4.45	.04

<sup>a</sup>Existence of visual cues suggesting the intended belief (presence or absence).

<sup>b</sup>Directness of verbal claims (direct or indirect verbal claims about the intended belief).

## Results

Analysis of variance was used to test the hypotheses with the SPSSX program. In order to capture any unpredicted interaction effects, a two-way ANOVA was conducted, allowing for possible interaction effects. Table 2 gives the results of the analyses for persuasion and its stability.

### *Check for Demand Characteristics*

In a repeated measurement design like this study, it is possible that demand characteristics may bias the results. Hence, the purpose of the study was disguised, and subjects were not informed in advance of the follow-up study to eliminate any demand characteristics. Furthermore, subjects were asked about the perceived purpose of the study at the end of the study to check for any demand characteristics. The results showed that no subjects guessed the research hypotheses of the study, indicating that few demand characteristics were operating.

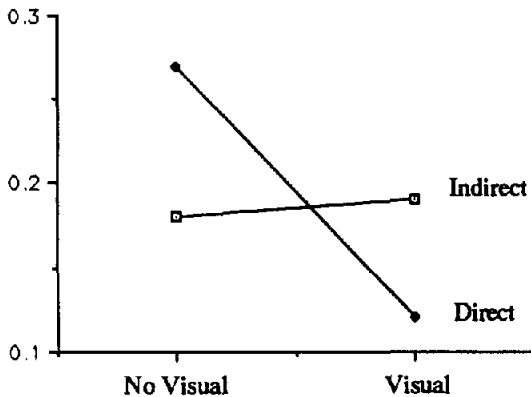
### *H1: Stability of Persuasion*

H1 predicts differential stability of persuasion achieved by direct and indirect verbal claims. Since the delayed measures of persuasion were taken a week after the ad exposure, the (in)stability of persuasion over a week was used to analyze the effects of direct and indirect verbal claims. The persuasion instability was operationalized as a rate of change in the intended belief over a week. Specifically, for 91 subjects who participated in both the main experiment and the follow-up study, the change rate was obtained by dividing the absolute difference between the immediate and delayed measures of the intended belief by the immediate measure; that is,  $|B_i^{t_1} - B_i^{t_2}|/B_i^{t_1}$ , where  $t_1$  and  $t_2$  indicate the immediate and delayed measurement occasions, respectively. Therefore, this measure is interpretable as the percentage of change in the persuasion over time. See Cook and Flay (1979) for measures of the temporal stability of persuasion.

A two-way ANOVA was performed on the instability measure of the intended belief (see Table 2). The main effect of the directness of verbal claims was not significant ( $F = 0.03$ ,  $p > 0.15$ ). However, the interaction between the directness of verbal claims and the existence of visual cues was significant ( $F = 4.45$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) revealed that none of the covariates



Decay Rate of the Intended Belief



**Figure 1.** Means of the belief change rate for experimental cells.

had significant effects; for example, the effect of brand knowledge was insignificant ( $F = 0.17$ ,  $p > 0.68$ ). The conclusions did not change with covariate analysis; the main effect of the directness of verbal claims remained insignificant ( $F = 2.84$ ,  $p > 0.10$ ), while the interaction effect was still significant ( $F = 4.63$ ,  $p < 0.03$ ).

Figure 1 reveals the pattern of interaction effects for the intended belief change. When visual cues were absent, the change rate was lower in the indirect verbal claim condition than in the direct verbal claim condition (18% versus 27%,  $p < 0.05$ ). That is, when an ad contained no visual stimuli about the intended belief, the indirect verbal claims produced more stable persuasion than the direct verbal claims, as hypothesized. However, when visual cues were present, there was no significant difference in the change of persuasion between direct and indirect verbal claims (19% versus 12%,  $p > 0.08$ ). That is, the change did not differ between directly and indirectly induced beliefs when ads contained visual cues. Thus, visual elements moderated the effects of the directness of verbal claims on persuasion stability. Overall, the effects of the directness of verbal claims on persuasion stability seemed to be more subtle than hypothesized in H1.

### *H2: Effects of Visual Stimuli on Persuasion*

H2 predicts that visual ad stimuli suggesting an intended attribute will enhance the belief about the intended attribute. This hypothesis was tested by examining the main effect of visual cues on the intended belief in the ANOVA (see Table 2). Belief measures were therefore treated as intervally scaled data as in previous studies (e.g., Mitchell, 1986; Mitchell and Olson, 1981). As hypothesized, the main effect of visual cues was significant ( $F = 7.3$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), and the intended belief was higher for ads with visual cues (7.5) than for ads without visual cues (6.6).

Analysis of covariance was also conducted by including covariates, such as gender, previous experience with autos, and knowledge about the test brand. Among these covariates, only brand knowledge was found to have a significant effect ( $F = 12.7$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). However, the findings did not change substantially; the main

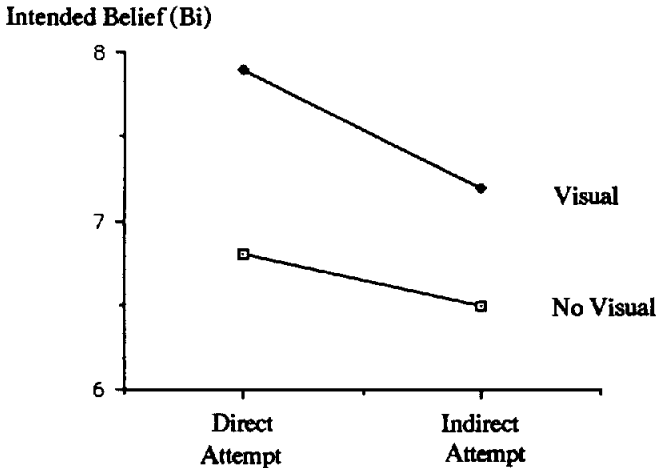


Figure 2. Means of the intended belief (B<sub>i</sub>) for experimental cells.

effect of visual cues was still significant ( $F = 4.3, p < 0.04$ ), whereas the main effect of the directness of verbal claims was still insignificant ( $F = 2.6, p > 0.11$ ).

The means of the intended belief for experimental cells are illustrated in Figure 2. In the direct approach, the intended belief was increased by the inclusion of visual cues (6.77 versus 7.87,  $p < 0.01$ ). In the indirect approach, the intended belief was also enhanced by adding visual cues (6.50 versus 7.20,  $p < 0.05$ ). Overall, H2 is strongly supported by the data.

## Discussion and Implications

Does persuasion stability differ between direct and indirect approaches? What are the effects of visual components in an ad on persuasion? To answer these questions, the present study has examined how the directness of verbal claims and the existence of visual stimuli influence persuasion and its stability. In particular, this study has investigated the effects of ads that varied in 1) the way an intended message is conveyed with verbal claims (directly or indirectly), and in 2) whether or not an intended message is suggested by visual stimuli.

It was hypothesized that visual stimuli triggering an intended attribute would facilitate the advertising effect on the intended belief. As hypothesized, an intended belief was higher when visual cues were present that suggested or hinted at the intended attribute than when such visual cues were absent. Visual cues increased persuasion either by reinforcing the effect on the mentioned intended attribute, as in the direct approach, or by facilitating inferences about the unmentioned intended attribute, as in the indirect approach.

This study extends the current research on visual stimuli by examination of another type of visual cue. In the indirect approach of the present study, verbal claims are made about the attributes that are related to, but different from, the intended attribute. Thus, visual cues about the intended attribute are not redundant but related to the verbal messages by suggesting the intended attributes that are associated with the attribute mentioned in the ad message. We have found that

inclusion of such visual cues associated with the intended attribute enhanced the intended belief (see Fig. 2).

The differential stability of persuasion between direct and indirect approaches was found, but it was more complex than originally expected. The persistence of ad-induced persuasion over time was different between direct and indirect approaches only when visual cues were absent, whereas it was not different when visual cues were present. This result might be explained by the memory superiority of pictures over words (Childers and Houston, 1984). Once visual cues concerning the intended attribute are included in the ad, they might dominate the persistence of persuasion because pictures are better remembered than words.

We can find several implications of the findings for advertisers. We have seen that indirect approaches can induce as much persuasion as direct approaches and that visual cues about the intended message increase both direct and indirect persuasion. Advertisers can use an understanding of direct and indirect approaches to persuasion in designing ad messages. Indirect approaches to persuasion might be more effective than direct ones in certain instances. Suppose a firm intends to enhance consumer perceptions of certain attributes of a brand. Some beliefs might be more difficult to change directly through external influences than others. In such cases, it may be useful to take an indirect approach by a focus on attributes that are relatively easy to change, yet related to the intended attributes. Such an indirect approach can be reinforced by use of visual cues that suggest the intended attribute.

It was also found that indirect approaches induce more persistent persuasion over time, especially when an ad contains only the verbal copy. Depending upon the goal of a campaign, advertisers might adopt different strategies. For example, if the primary goal is to achieve persuasion that is resistant to change, advertisers might use an indirect approach to persuasion that facilitates self-induced persuasion.

A further implication concerns the measurement of advertising effectiveness. Recall or recognition of the ad content has often been used to measure the effectiveness of an ad. This measure assumes that attention to and comprehension of the ad claims are the main mediators of advertising effects (Beattie and Mitchell, 1985). Yet, this traditional measure may fail to capture a large portion of ad effectiveness: that is, indirect effects on unmentioned beliefs. This points to a need for an alternative measure of ad effectiveness that captures both direct and indirect effects.

The present study might also be generalized to product decisions. Suppose several attributes are associated in the mind of consumers. Some attributes are subjective and difficult to evaluate, while others are relatively objective and easy to judge. The firm should concentrate the production budget on improving the latter type of attributes, since they will be less affected by ads. On the other hand, the advertising budget can be allocated more to an emphasis on the former type of attributes. Thus, the findings of this study may be helpful for the efficient allocation of resources.

### *Future Research*

The present study can be extended in several directions. First, we can explore further the factors that make unmentioned attributes salient or accessible to ad recipients and thereby facilitate indirect effects of verbal claims. The ad environ-

ment may prompt certain attributes and induce inferences about them. For example, an ad emphasizing the large size of a car may produce inferential beliefs about safety, when safety is prompted by the context (e.g., editorial programs like a crime story). Second, we should investigate the processes underlying differential persistence of ad-induced beliefs. The differential stability is hypothesized to stem from differential elaboration or cognitive effort. These mediators should be directly examined to gain more insights into the phenomenon.

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