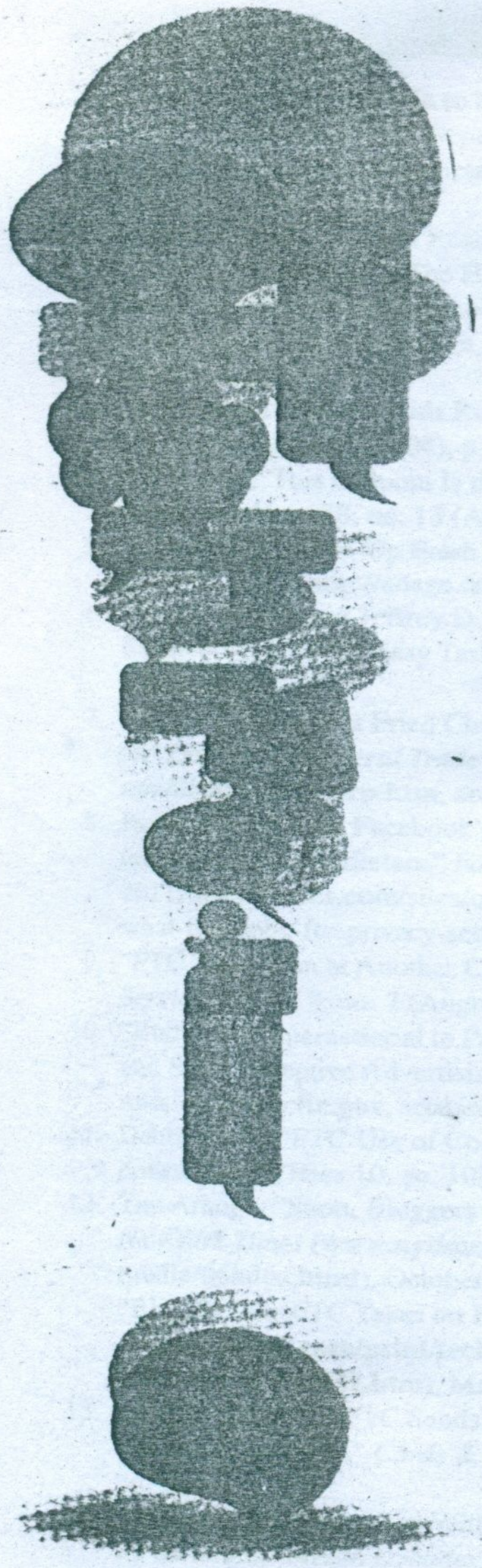
EVALUATING AN INTEGRATED MARKETING PROGRAM

From Chapter 15 of *Integrated Advertising, Promotion, and Marketing Communications*, Sixth Edition. Kenneth E. Clow and Donald Baack.
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EVALUATING AN INTEGRATED MARKETING PROGRAM

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After reading this chapter, you should be able to answer the following questions:

1. What are the three broad categories of evaluation tools used to evaluate IMC systems?
2. How do marketing teams match evaluation methods with IMC objectives?
3. What forms of message evaluations can be conducted to assess IMC programs?
4. Which evaluation criteria are suggested by the positioning advertising copytesting (PACT) system?
5. How do online evaluation systems assist advertising managers in assessing the quality of a firm's Internet activities?
6. What types of behavioral evaluations can be employed to assess IMC programs?
7. What criteria should be used to assess the overall IMC program?
8. How are evaluation programs adjusted to match international operations?

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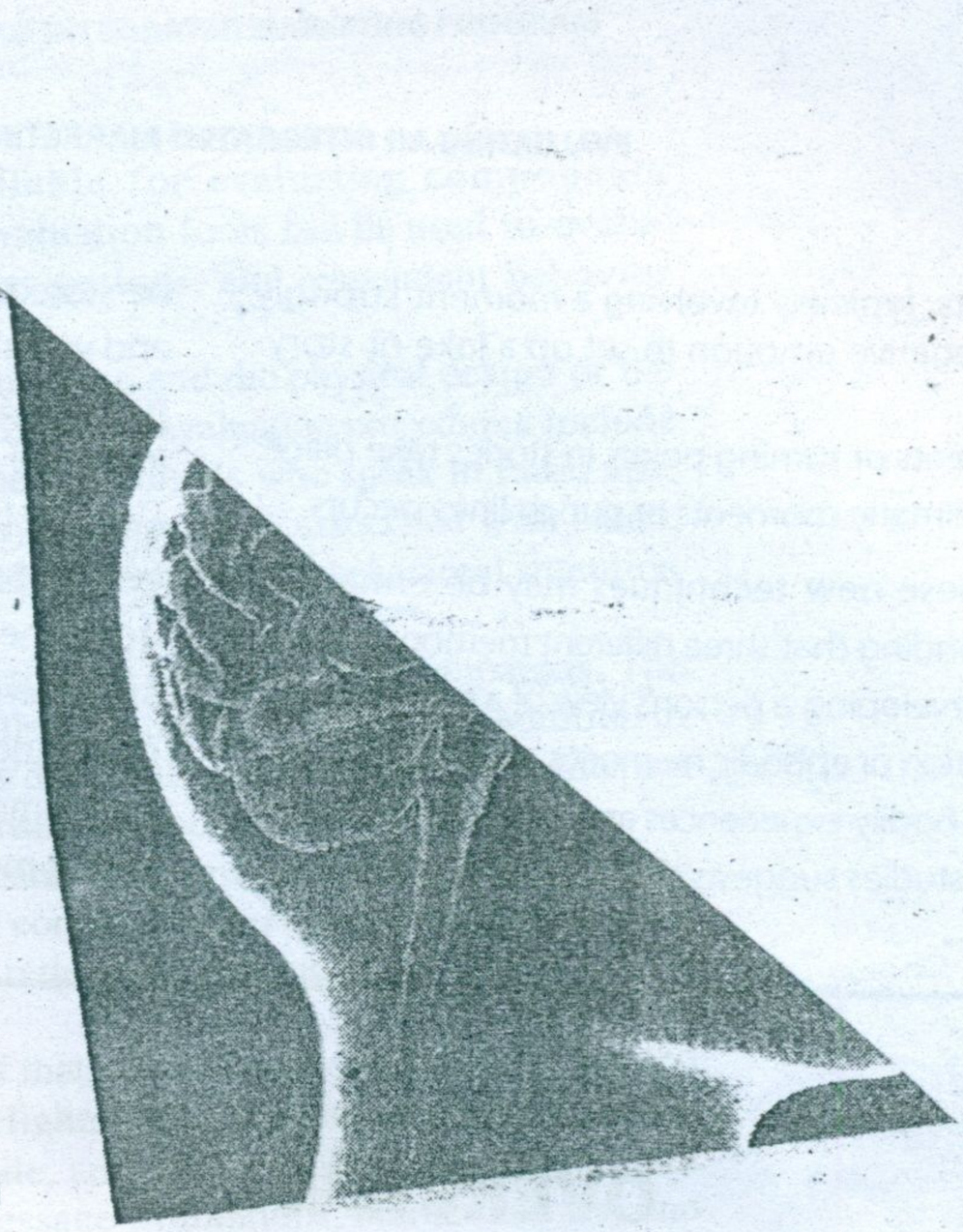
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NEUROMARKETING ON THE CUTTING EDGE

If any one theme emerges from the interviews with members of the various advertising agencies featured in this textbook, it would be that company executives demand clear and convincing evidence that marketing and advertising actually work. Tangible measures such as increases in store traffic, Web site hits, coupons redeemed, and sales provide behavioral evidence. Many times, of course, other factors influence these outcomes, and a time lag, from when the ad ran to when the behavior occurred, also become involved.



Advertising agencies continue to look for methods to refine the development and delivery of marketing messages. Many techniques are available, including day-after-recall tests and studies of brand perceptions and loyalty. What remains is finding real-time data suggesting that an advertisement has captured and kept a viewer's attention.

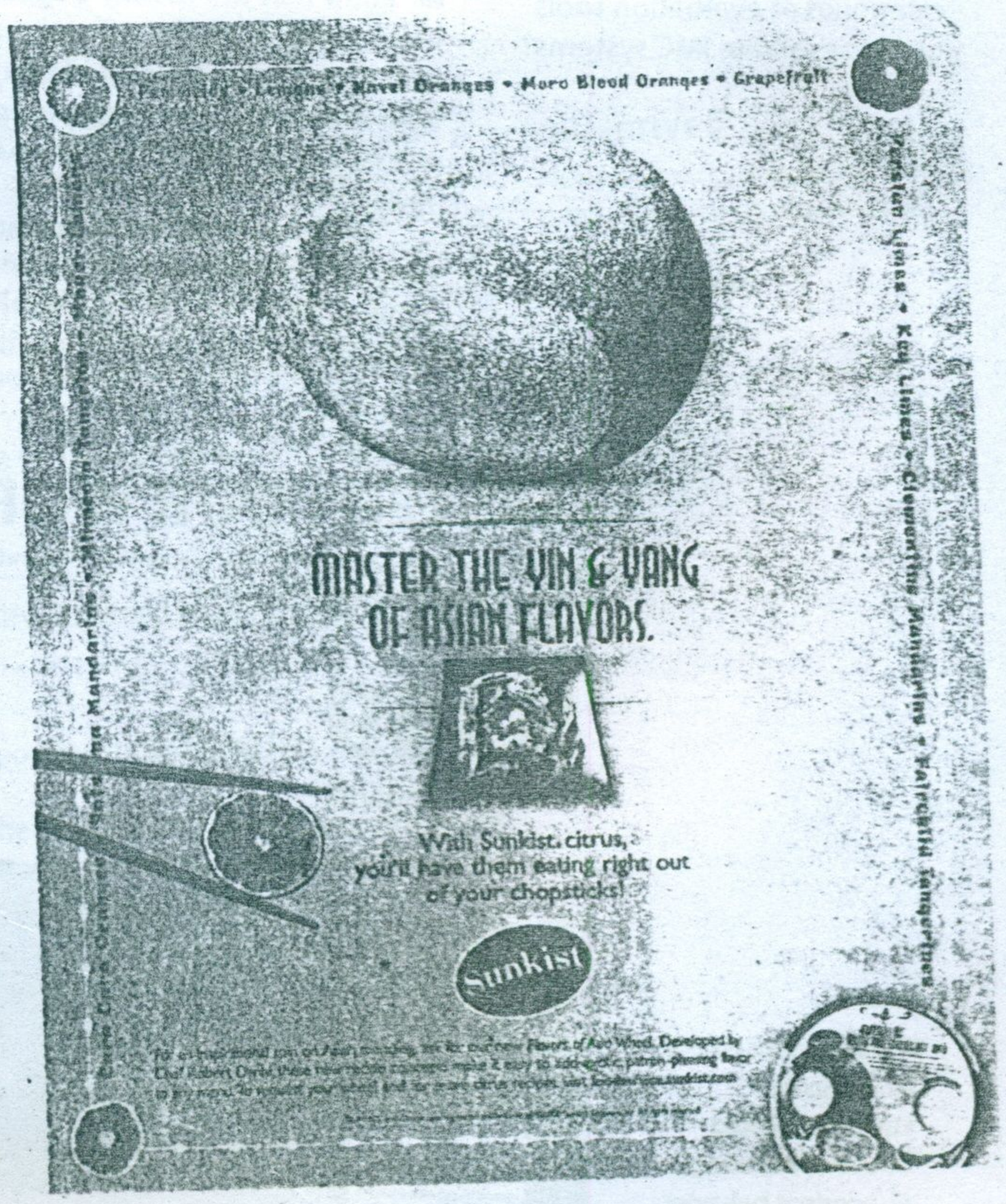
Sands Research, Inc., led by its chairman and chief science officer, Dr. Steve Sands, is a leading neuromarketing firm. The company pioneered developments in applications that draw on cognitive neuroscience technology to provide unique insights into consumer responses to television and print advertisements, product packaging, and digital media. By combining its technology with before- and after-questionnaires, Sands Research provides a comprehensive, objective analysis of the viewer's engagement in the marketing material being presented by an advertiser.

Recently, Dr. Sands announced a breakthrough in the rapidly growing area of applying neuroscience to market research. Sands Research uses high-density arrays of EEG (electroencephalograph) sensors to capture brainwave activity across the full brain at 10,000 times a second, per sensor. In essence, this means the firm has the ability to study the impact a message has on capturing a person's attention and track times of peak interest as the person stays engaged with that message.

Traditional methods of analyzing the impact of an advertisement use rating statements and open-ended questions that tend to be verbally biased. They may also fail to completely measure the impact of the nonverbal components of commercials, including music and visuals. Creative people have long suspected that traditional research approaches, such as day-after-recall testing, unfairly reward overly rational advertising and penalize emotional executions.

Research suggests that when commercials quickly capture attention, they tend to generate more "peak" moments during the run. Peak moments of attention increase positive feelings toward commercials and potentially influence recall. Peaks are likely to occur when:

- Important news, such as the announcement of a strong price promotion, is provided.



Courtesy of Sunkist Growers.

- Inciting incidents, typically involving a moment strongly charged with negative emotion to set up a joke or story-line, appear.
- Surprising moments or turning points in stories take place.
- The delivery of climatic moments or punch lines occurs.

The value of these new techniques may be enhanced through the understanding that three different memory systems may be involved in developing a person's view of a brand: knowledge memories, emotion or episodic memories, and action or procedural memories of bodily experiences and physical sensations. Evidence from these studies suggests that these memories might be stored in different parts of the brain. Consequently, a rational and verbal memory might be reported but emotional or episodic memories may not. This would explain the under-reporting of the impact of musical and visual cues in advertisements.

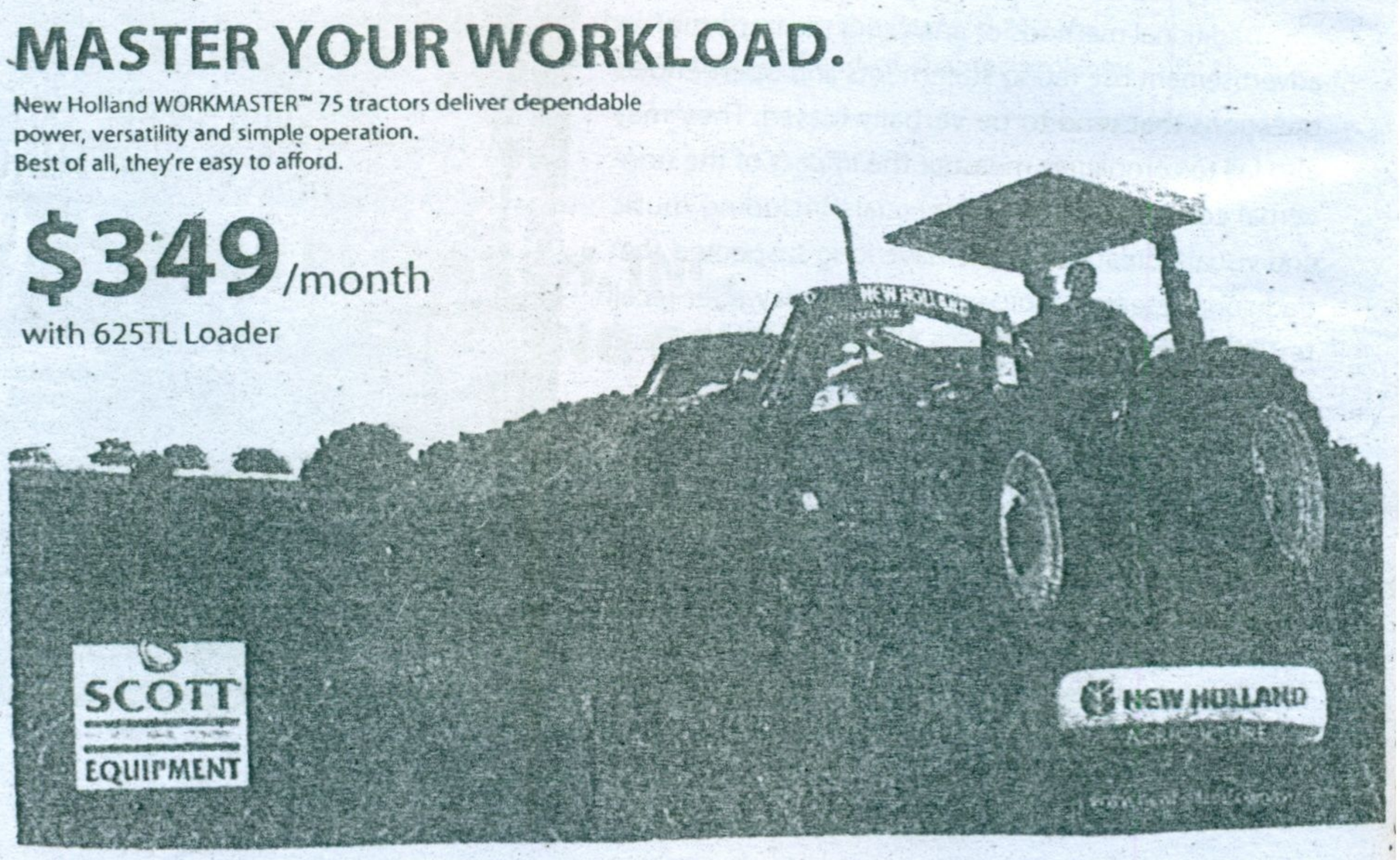
The full impact of these new technologies has yet to be realized. At the least, Sands Research suggests the company can help an advertiser create an advertisement with the greatest potential for capturing attention from storyboard to the run of the commercial. And, an exciting new era in marketing measurement may be well underway.[1]

OVERVIEW

OBJECTIVE 1
What are the three broad categories of evaluation tools used to evaluate IMC systems?

John Wanamaker, a well-known nineteenth-century department store owner, was one of the first to use advertising to attract customers to his store. He once remarked, "I know half the money I spend on advertising is wasted, but I can never find out which half." Evaluating the effectiveness of advertising has become increasingly difficult. In today's environment, company executives demand measurable results because of the high costs of advertising campaigns. The challenge for advertising account executives and others who prepare ads continues to be offering evidence that those campaigns are successful.

To meet the growing insistence for accountability, research and media experts spend time and energy seeking to develop new and accurate measures of success. These measures, known as **metrics**, should accurately portray the effectiveness of a marketing communications plan, which may not be easy.



▶ This advertisement for the Scott Equipment could be evaluated using respondent behavior techniques by the number of inquiries and purchases.

This chapter considers the methods available for evaluating components of an IMC program. Three broad categories of evaluation tools can be used to evaluate IMC systems: message evaluations, online evaluations, and respondent behavior evaluations.

Message evaluation techniques examine the message and the physical design of the advertisement, coupon, or direct marketing piece. Message evaluation procedures include the study of actors in advertisements as well as the individuals who speak in radio ads. A message evaluation program reviews the cognitive components associated with an ad, such as recall and recognition, as well as emotional, attitudinal, and behavioral intention responses.

Online evaluation metrics examine online advertising and marketing campaigns. The Internet provides a unique set of metrics not available with traditional media. In addition to click-throughs, companies can track such metrics as dwell rate and dwell time. The Internet provides highly accurate, real-time measures of consumer reactions.

Respondent behavior evaluations address visible customer actions, including store visits, inquiries, or actual purchases. This category contains evaluation technique measures that use numbers, such as the number of coupons redeemed, the number of hits on a Web site, and changes in sales.

The emphasis on providing compelling proof that advertising actually works has led to a greater emphasis on respondent behaviors. Higher sales, increases in store traffic, a greater number of daily Internet hits on a Web site, and other numbers-based outcomes appeal to many managers. At the same time, message evaluations, online metrics, and behavioral responses help the marketing manager and advertising team build short-term results and achieve long-term success.

Matching Methods with IMC Objectives

OBJECTIVE 2

How do marketing teams match evaluation methods with IMC objectives?

Marketers choose methods of evaluation that match the objectives being measured.[2] An advertising campaign with the objective of increasing customer interest in and recall of a brand will be measured using the level of customer awareness as the metric. Normally, this means the marketing team measures awareness before, during, and after the ads have run. At other times, objectives vary. Redemption rates measure the success of a campaign featuring coupons, which means behaviors (purchasing) rather than cognitive processes (recall) are being tested. Redemption rates reveal the number of items purchased, with and without coupons.

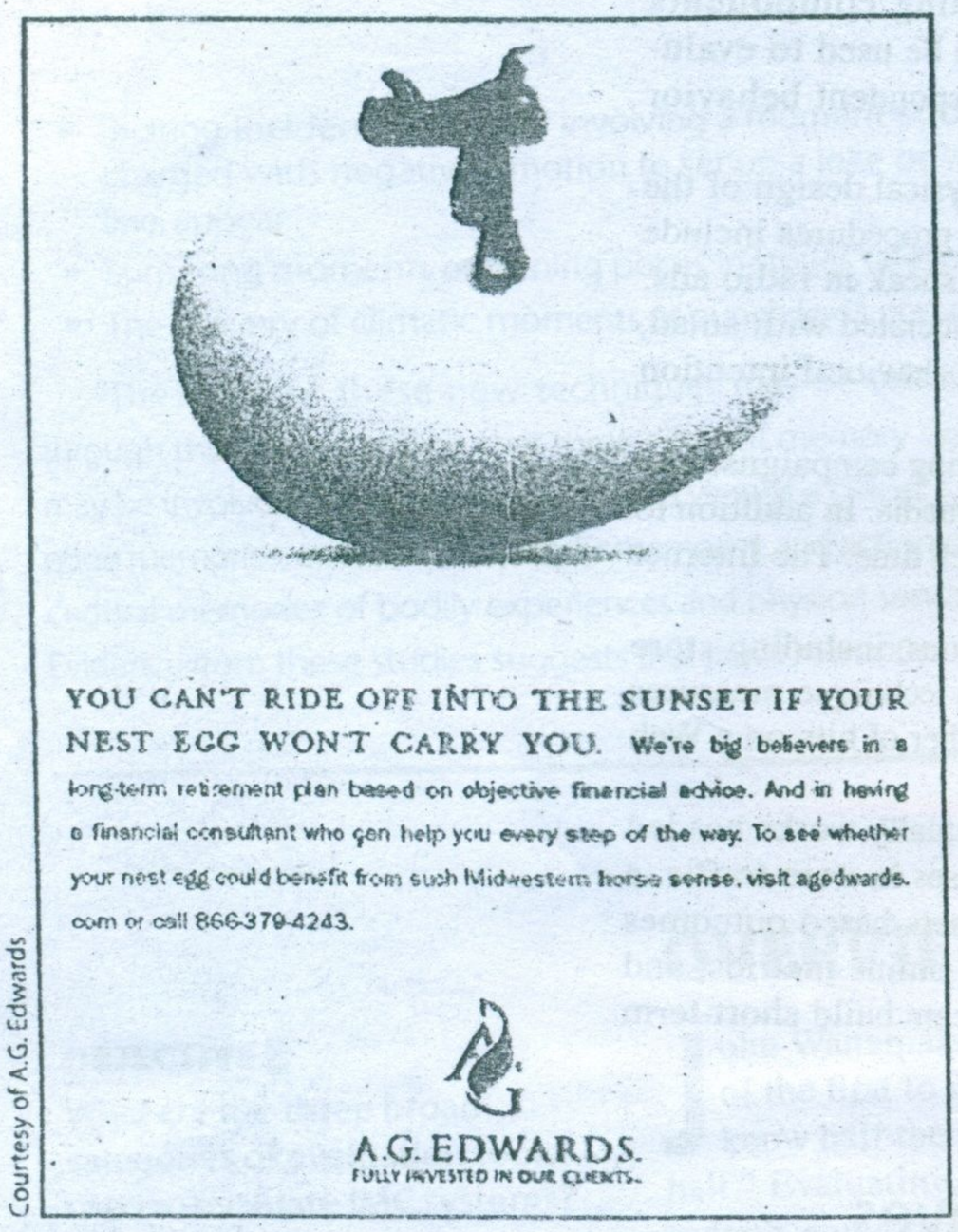
Several levels are used to analyze an advertising or IMC program. They include the following:

- Short-term outcomes (sales, redemption rates)
- Long-term results (brand awareness, brand loyalty, or brand equity)
- Product- and brand-specific awareness
- Awareness of the overall company
- Affective responses (liking the company and a positive brand image)

The temptation may arise to overemphasize the first factor, short-term outcomes, without considering the long-term impact of a campaign or marketing program. The company endeavors to maintain a voice that carries across campaigns over time.

In light of the overall marketing and advertising goals, the marketing manager then considers the various options for evaluating advertising. Selection of evaluation procedures takes place prior to launching a campaign. An ad placed in a trade journal can contain a code number, a special telephone number, or a special Internet microsite to track responses. For coupons, premiums, and other sales promotions, code numbers are printed on each item to identify the source.

In general, careful planning prior to initiating an IMC program allows the evaluation of the campaign to be easier and more accurate. At the same time, the evaluation of



Courtesy of A.G. Edwards

▲ Careful planning prior to launching a campaign can help a company such as A.G. Edwards better evaluate the effectiveness of advertising.

a specific advertisement or marketing piece may be difficult, because many factors affect the outcome being measured: For instance, a retailer may run a series of newspaper and radio ads to boost store traffic. In order to measure the impact of the ads, the retailer keeps records of store traffic before, during, and after the campaign. Unfortunately, the traffic count might be affected by other factors, even something as simple as the weather. If it rains for 2 days, the traffic count will probably be lower. Further, the store's chief competitor may run a special sale during the same time period, which also affects traffic. A TV program, such as the season finale of a major series, or even a special program at the local high school (commencement, school play), could have an impact. In other words, many extraneous factors could affect results. When reviewing an advertising program, these factors should be considered.

Performing one analysis normally does not adequately assess the influence of the impact of an advertisement on a company's image. Even though store traffic was low, the ad may have been stored in the buyer's long-term memory, which may make a difference later. Conversely, the same ad may have been awkward or offensive in some way. The store owner may believe the weather affected the outcome instead of a poor advertising design. Consequently, company leaders consider short- and long-term implications when assessing an IMC program.

OBJECTIVE

What forms of message evaluations can be conducted to assess IMC programs?

Message Evaluations

Evaluation or testing of advertising communications occurs at every stage of the development process. This includes the concept stage before an advertisement is produced. Testing at that stage often involves soliciting the opinions of a series of experts or from "regular" people. Ads can be tested after completion of the design stage but prior to development. Television commercials can be designed using a **storyboard**, such as the one shown in this section for Maidenform. Print ads can be analyzed using artist sketches.

Although ads and marketing pieces can be tested prior to production, most advertising agencies perform a small amount of pretesting, primarily due to the lack of reliable test results. Elena Petukhova from The Richards Group advertising agency notes that, "We really don't trust the results of pretests using boards, because the format makes a difference. Consumers are used to seeing the finished product, so when you show them a mockup or sketch they tend not to see it very positively. It is difficult for them to make the transition to what the ad will look like after production, and in their minds they compare it to finished ads, which produce low evaluation scores. Whenever possible, we wait until after production to test ads."[3]

As shown in Figure 1, the primary methods currently used by companies and advertising agencies to evaluate advertising and ad campaign messages are advertising tracking research and copytesting. Each fits with different circumstances, advertising methods, and IMC objectives. For the future, a promise method of advertising evaluation involves cognitive neuroscience.

ADVERTISING TRACKING RESEARCH

A common method of evaluation involves tracking an advertisement by one of the major advertising research firms, such as Nielsen IAG or Millward Brown. Tracking research examines ads that have launched. This in-market research method monitors a brand's performance and advertising effectiveness. Tests can be performed at specific times or intervals or continuously. Ad tracking provides a general measure of the effect of the media weight (i.e., spending level), the effectiveness of the media buys, and the quality of the ad's message

and execution. Ad tracking examines the relative impact of a message compared to the competition and over time.

Nielsen IAG provides ad tracking. The company offers a syndicated database of real-time brand and ad performance tracking based on more than 210,000 program television episodes and 250,000 commercials. In addition to television ads, the service can be used to evaluate Internet ads and in-cinema campaigns. Nielsen conducts thousands of surveys daily measuring viewer engagement with TV programs and the effectiveness of each advertisement on network and cable television channels.[4]

Ad Tracking Methodology With ad tracking, research respondents are usually shown a brief portion of an advertisement or a few stills from a TV ad with the brand name removed or not visible. Respondents are asked if they recognize the company, which measures brand and ad recognition. They are then asked to identify the brand being advertised, which measures unaided brand awareness. When they are unable to correctly identify the sponsor, they are given a list of brands and asked to identify the correct brand, which measures aided brand awareness. In addition to recognition and unaided and aided brand awareness, tracking research also measures:

- Memorability
- Likability
- Unaided and aided message *recall*
- Unaided and aided campaign recall

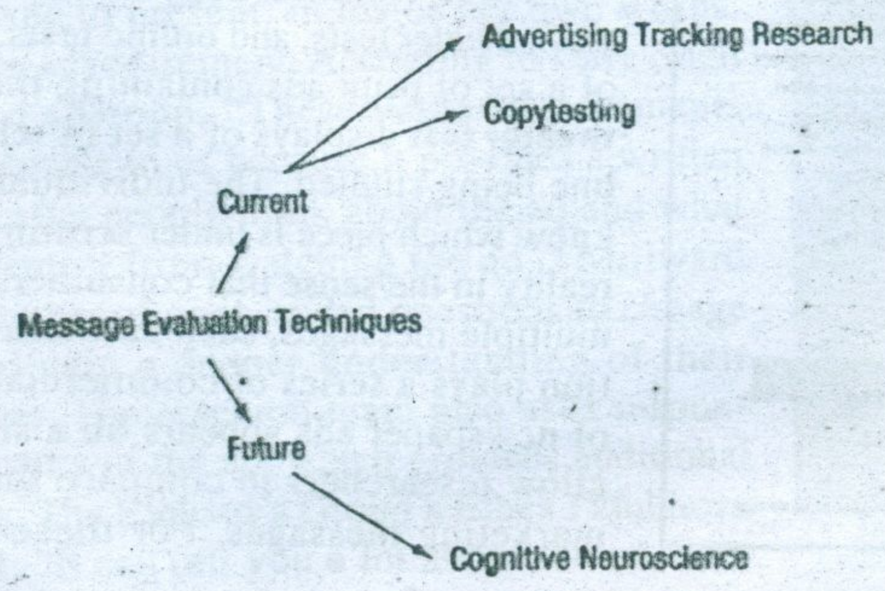
Similar techniques are available for magazines. Mediamark Research & Intelligence's AdMeasure tracks recall and response to advertisements in every issue of 200 magazine titles. Affinity has produced a competing service, the American Magazine Study Print Ad Ratings, which tracks ad measurements across 125 magazine titles.[5]

When mcgarrybowen advertising agency created a campaign for Burger King, the agency used ad tracking to measure the brand's impression score. Both Burger King and its primary rival were measured using YouGov Brandindex's impression score which asks respondents "Do you have a general positive feeling about the brand?" Prior to the campaign launched, Burger King's impression score was 24.4 compared to McDonald's score of 48.9. During the campaign Burger King's score rose to a high of 45.1 then dropped at the end to 38.4. At the same time McDonald's impression score fell to 34.8. By tracking these results before, during, and after the campaign, marketers from Burger King and mcgarrybowen were able to obtain accurate measures on the campaigns effectiveness in creating a more positive impression of the restaurant chain.[6]



Courtesy of Maidenform

▲ A storyboard for a Maidenform TV advertisement.



◀ **FIGURE 1**
Evaluating advertising messages



Flair Jewelry

▲ Tracking measures can now be used to evaluate print ads in magaziñes, in addition to television and the Internet.

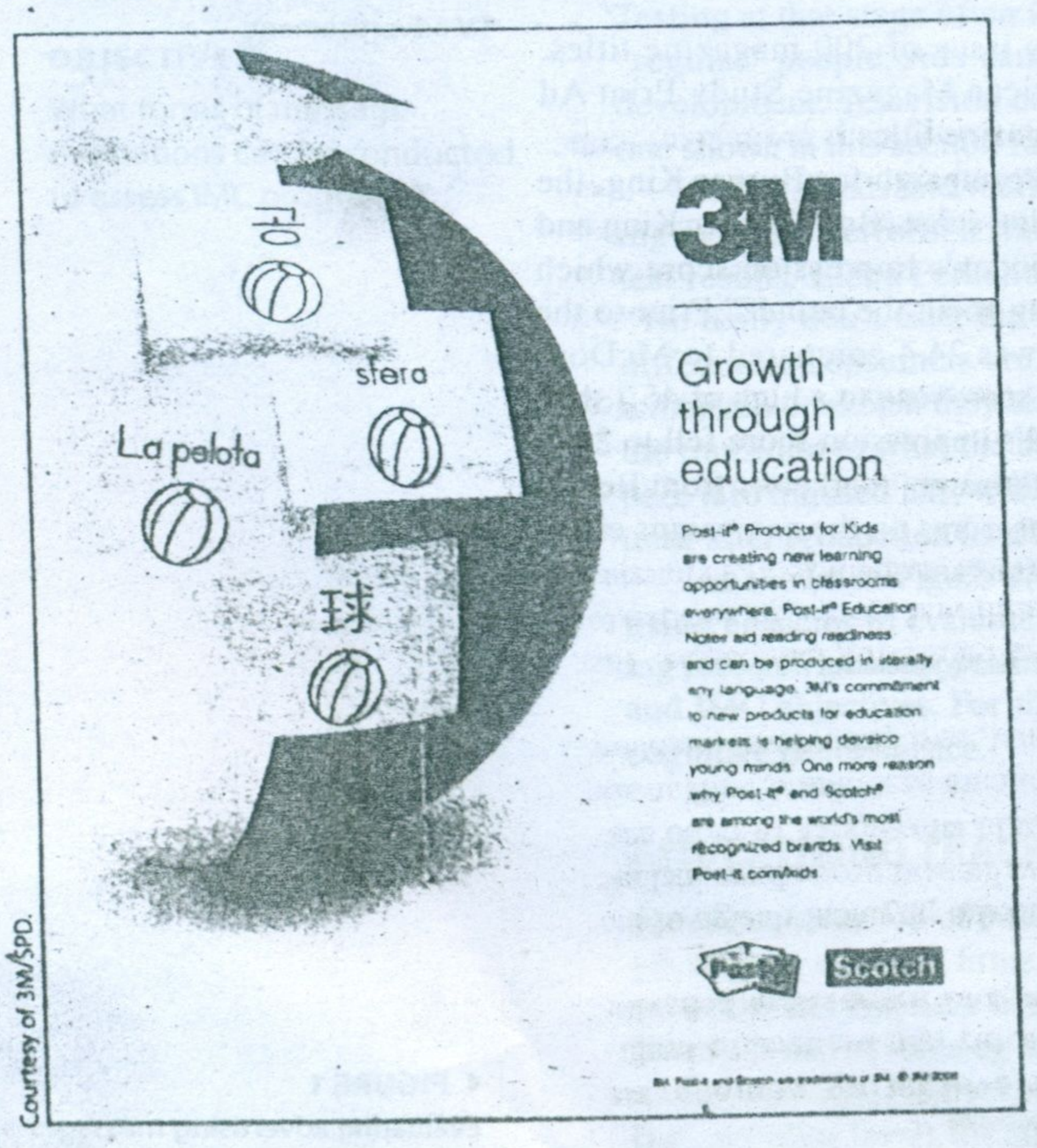
Report Cards and Benchmarks Dave Snell of The Richards Group reported the tracking by Nielsen IAG offers a continuous "report card" as well as a "benchmark." Within the second or third week of a new campaign, the ad tracking research provides two types of information about a new advertisement's performance. First, it shows how the new ad performs in comparison to the brand's competitors. Second, it indicates show how well the advertisement performed in relation to those from previous campaigns.

Nielsen IAG also builds a benchmark for a company as it measures ad performance over months and years. These benchmark data are especially valuable when a new campaign launches. New ads can be compared to previous ones along various dimensions to ensure the ads performed as expected. The benchmark from previous ads provides a better indicator of performance than would comparisons with competitors or ads for similar products.

Tracking services can also "help us to know when wear-out is beginning to set in," says Dave Snell. Measuring the advertisement's effectiveness on a biweekly basis and graphing those measures indicates when an advertisement starts to lose its impact. At that point, the agency and client can switch to a new campaign, bring back a previous ad, or modify the current commercial.

The Richards Group's Elena Petukhova notes that ad tracking includes the disadvantage of failing to provide any diagnostics. The data indicate how the ad performs in relation to the competition. against previous ads, and over time. They do not provide information about why an advertisement did not perform well. Other types of research are explores the reasons why an advertisement failed. In essence, ad tracking research indicates when an advertisement has worn out or is not performing, but it does not tell the agency what to do.

▼ Copytesting provides valuable input for advertising agencies and clients such as 3M about the effectiveness of ads.



Courtesy of 3M/SPD.

COPYTESTING

The second form of message evaluation, **copytests**, assesses the finished marketing piece or one in the final stages of development. **Copytesting** elicits responses to the main message of the ad as well as the presentation format. Television and print ads have long been tested using copytesting procedures. Online print and video ads were seldom copytested, but that trend is changing. According to Jeff Cox, CEO of ARSgroup which performs copytesting, about 75 percent of the firm's clients now test at least some of their digital ads during development.[7]

Three common copytesting techniques are portfolio tests, theater tests, and online tests. A **portfolio test** displays of a set of print ads containing the one being evaluated. A **theater test** displays of a set of television ads including the one being studied. The individuals who participate do not know which piece is under scrutiny. Both techniques mimic reality in the sense that consumers normally are exposed to multiple messages, such as when a radio or television station plays a series of commercials in a row or when a set of newspaper ads appears on a single page. The tests also allow researchers to compare the target piece with other marketing messages. For these approaches to yield the

optimal findings, all of the marketing pieces shown must be in the same stage of development, such as preproduction ads or finished ads.

Internet copytesting can replace both the portfolio and theater tests for copytesting. Online copytesting costs less and produces more immediate results. One of the advertising firms featuring online testing procedures, including copytesting is Millward Brown. Typically, an agency client will perform copytests five to eight times per year. Copytests provide an advertising agency with the in-depth potential of an ad under ideal circumstances. When tests take place online, consumers pay more attention to the ad than they would for a television show, radio program, or while reading a magazine. Therefore, copytesting results offer a measure of the ad's potential when it receives the viewer's complete, 100 percent attention.

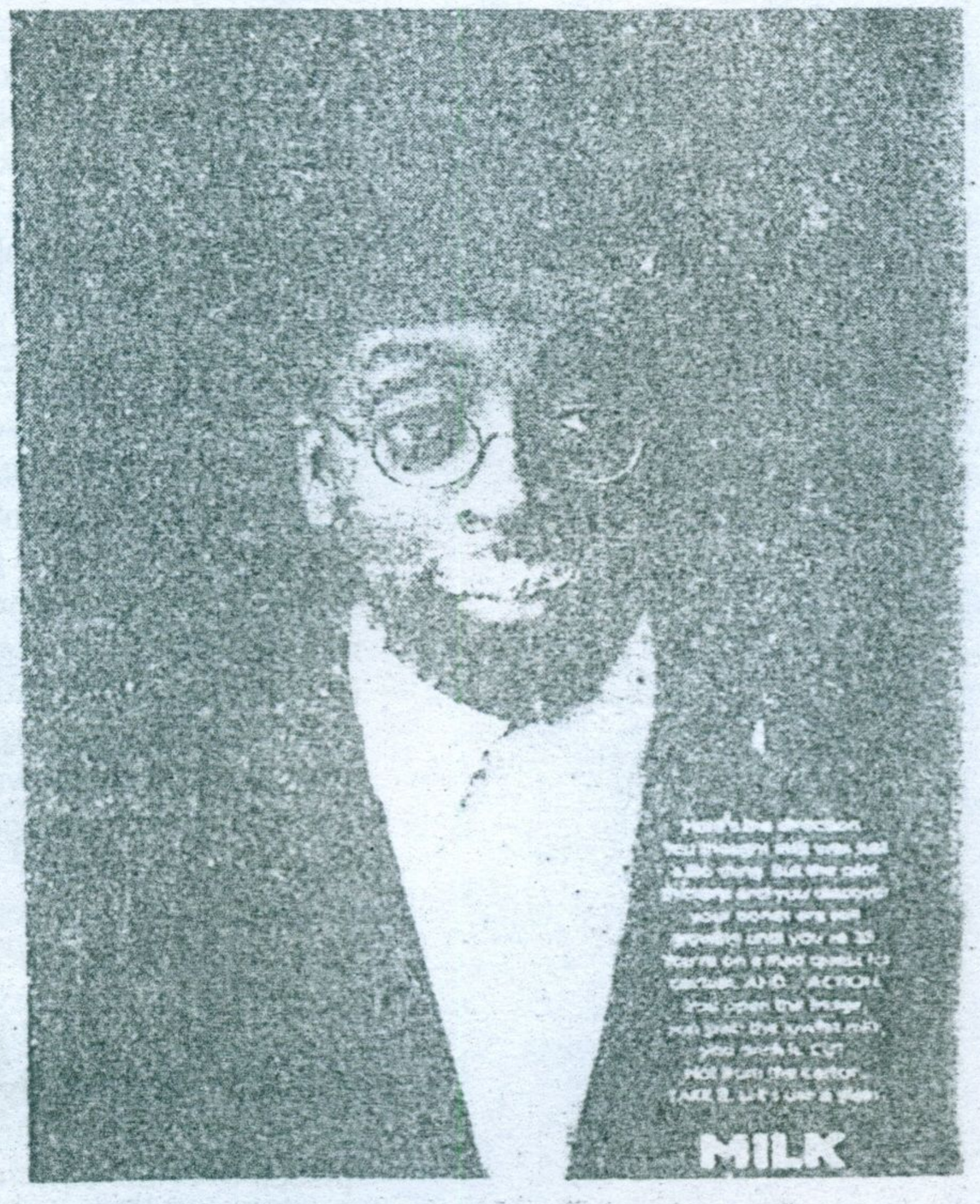
Copytesting are used for finished ads that have already been launched. Millward Brown typically copytests the ad using 150 respondents. Quantitative questions address issues such as:

- Breakthrough ability
- The brand message and image
- The level the ad and brand memory
- Levels of enjoyment
- What the ad communicates
- How well the intended message was communicated
- Potential responses (i.e., likelihood of making a purchase)
- Persuasive power of the advertisement
- Engagement of the viewer with the ad and brand

Testing Emotional Reactions In addition to these measures, Millward Brown provides a second-by-second emotional reaction chart that indicates how viewers feel about an advertisement to be shown on television. As they watch the commercial on a computer screen, respondents move the computer mouse to indicate their feelings, one direction for positive feelings the other direction for negative feelings. By superimposing these 150 emotional reaction tests onto one graph, the client sees how the feelings and emotions of the respondents change throughout the advertisement. This information has value valuable because it indicates when emotions change. Although the test does not measure the level of emotion but rather changes in emotion, these data provide sufficient evidence for the agency to develop hypotheses or best practice ideas to assist in making future advertisements.

Verbatim Comments The final pieces of information provided to clients by Millward Brown and other agencies are the verbatim comments of the respondents. Each respondent is asked to present, in his or her own words, thoughts about the advertisement. According to Dave Snell from the Richard's Group, "These verbatim comments are extremely valuable to us because it provides a written commentary on what people think about the ad and what thoughts are foremost from watching the ad."[8] Millward Brown asks a number of open-ended questions to engage respondents and gain a deeper understanding of their thought processes. The research team also asks respondents to tell the story of the ad, which provides additional valuable insights. The Richard's Group's Elena Petukhova commented that, "It can tell you a lot about the ad, both

▼ Verbatim comments obtained through copytesting can be valuable when evaluating advertisements, such as *this one featuring* Spike Lee.



positive and negative. It tells you what the customer sees and thinks and how the ad story came across to them."[9]

As noted, ad tracking does not generate information regarding the reasons an ad did not perform well or what to do to correct it. Copytesting procedures can provide some of this information. Advertising creatives can then determine what to do next. By using continuous ad tracking and copytesting, an agency can build a benchmark for a particular client on an advertisement's performance. The agency can also gain ideas on what works and what does not for consumers for that particular product category and brand.

Copytesting Controversies Some controversy regarding copytesting remains. A number of advertisers and marketers strongly believe that copytesting favors rational approaches over affective and conative (action-inspiring) methods. To correct this potential deficiency, some research firms have added emotional tests to copytesting procedures.

Further, some marketers believe copytesting prior to production stifles the creativity needed to produce ads that will stand out in the clutter. Recently, creatives working for brands including Nike, Volkswagen, Budweiser, and Target have been allowed to skip the copytesting phase of advertising design and move straight into production. When the agency Wieden + Kennedy created "the man your man could smell like" campaign for Old Spice cologne, the brand's parent firm Procter & Gamble allowed Wieden to skip the concept testing stage completely. Also, the approval process for the Old Spice campaign was streamlined to just one P&G executive.[10]

Unless the client insists on preproduction copytests, agencies are now moving directly into production and perform them after the ad launches. Many advertisers believe copytests are likely to lead to ad messages about the product benefits that are believable and understandable to members of a focus group or copytest panel. Most consumers in focus groups will know little, if anything, about how to create an effective advertisement. Most creatives believe it does not make sense to have them serve as final judges of an advertisement's quality.

Although a number of marketing professionals do not favor using copytests at all, the majority believe they are necessary, primarily due to accountability issues. Jeff Cox, CEO of ARSgroup a copytesting agency argues that, "Copytesting can squelch creative, but the marketplace and the world's largest advertisers see value in doing this."[11] When the time comes to support a decision for a high-dollar advertising campaign, advertising agency and company executives want evidence that supports the investment. Also, advertising agencies can use the results of copytesting to perfect future ads and campaigns by understanding what works and what does not work in a given marketplace.

EMOTIONAL REACTION TESTS

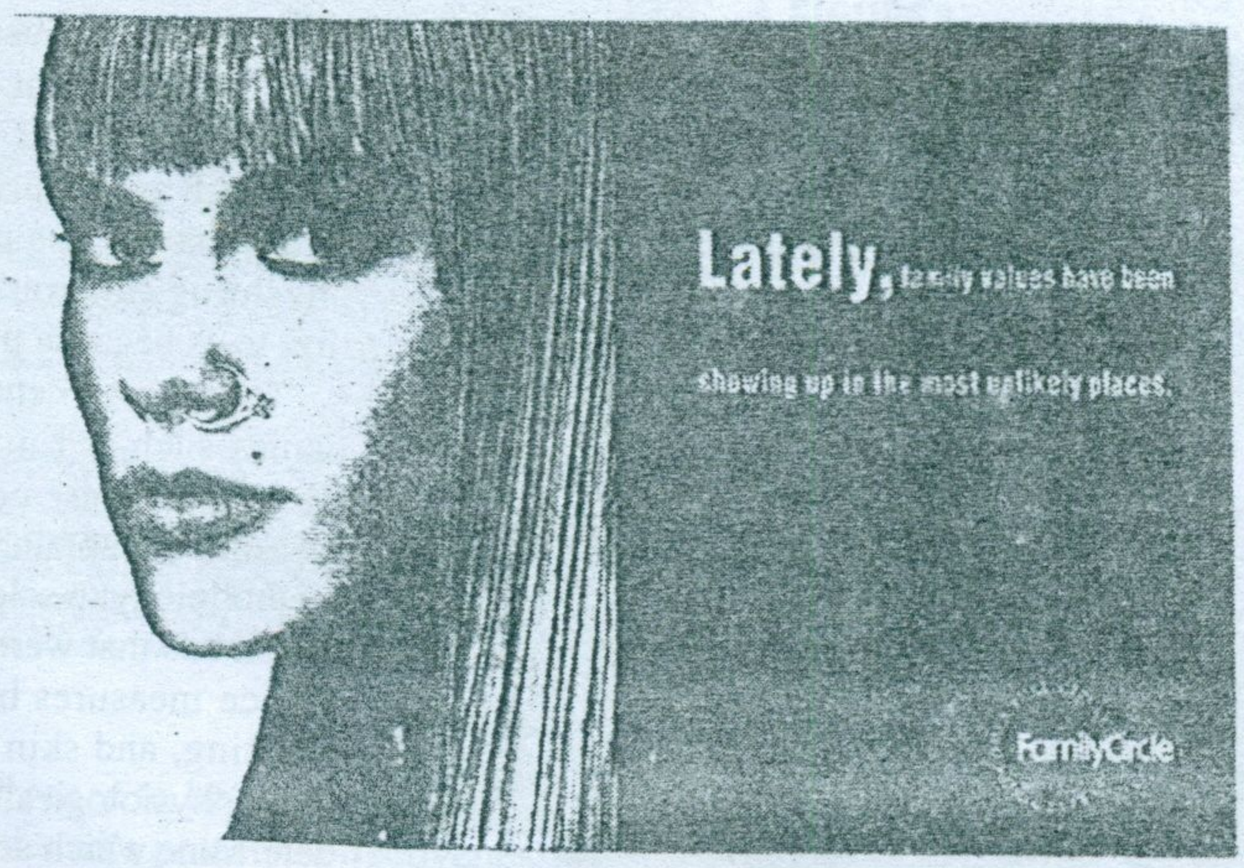
Many advertisements seek to elicit emotional responses from consumers. Emotional ads are based on the concept that messages eliciting positive feelings are more likely to be remembered. Also, consumers who have positive attitudes toward ads develop more positive attitudes about the product. This, in turn, should result in increased purchases.[12]

Measuring the emotional impact of an advertisement can be difficult. The simplest method involves asking questions about an individual's feelings and emotions after viewing a marketing communication piece. An alternative method, a **warmth monitor**, relies on the concept that feelings of warmth are positive when they are directed toward an ad or a product. To measure warmth, subjects are asked to manipulate a joystick or the mouse on a computer while watching a commercial, moving one direction for warmer and another for cooler.[13]

The warmth meter was developed at the University of Hawaii. Individuals viewed advertisements in a theater-type lab featuring a big-screen television. Those who felt negatively about what they were watching pulled a joystick downward. Those who felt more positively pushed the joystick in the opposite direction. As they watched a commercial, the subjects constantly moved the joystick, thereby conveying their feelings during every moment of the ad. The results of the 20 participants were tallied into one graph and then placed over the commercial. This technology allowed the advertiser to see the parts of

the commercial that elicited positive emotions and which parts elicited negative emotions.[14]

A similar technology has been developed by Reactions & Opinions, Inc., for use on the Internet. The company can easily poll 1,000 or more people who view an advertisement online. As individuals watch the ad on streaming video, the participants use a mouse to move a tab on a sliding scale from 1 to 10. When they like what they see, they slide the tab toward the 10. Those who do not like what they see slide the tab toward the 1. After the data have been collected, a graph will be superimposed over the advertisement to indicate the likable and dislikable parts of the commercial. The Internet offers the advantage of allowing subjects to provide ratings at their convenience. If the agency needs a focus group to discuss the ad, subjects can be selected from the participants. The focus group session can even be held online.[15]



Courtesy of The Family Circle Inc.

▲ Conducting emotional reaction tests or biometrics would help Family Circle determine viewer's reaction to this advertisement.

Another approach to measuring emotional reactions is **biometric research**, which involves measuring physiological reactions to advertisements and marketing messages. The Innerscope company specializes in biometric research. Carl Marci, CEO and chief science officer stated that, "Innerscope strongly believes that unconscious emotional responses direct attention, enhance learning, and memory, and ultimately drive behaviors that our clients care about." Innerscope puts test subjects in a living room setting. A device on the television tracks eye movement to track the subject's attention to stimuli. At the same time a special belt worn by the subject collects data about the person's heartbeat, perspiration levels, respiration, and body movements. By integrating all of these biological measures, Innerscope measures the level of emotional engagement of viewers during every second of the ad via their emotional, unconscious responses to what they see.[16]

Time Warner built a 9,600 square foot media lab in Manhattan for its own operation but also leases to clients for biometric research. The cost is $50,000 for basic focus groups to $120,000 for research using biometrics. Similar to Innerscope, biometric belts are available to measure physiological reactions to ads. Cameras can measure eye movements and two-way mirrors allow for client observation.[17] Rather than rely on consumers telling researchers how they are reacting via some type of warmth meters, biometrics measure actual emotional reactions. Individuals can lie about how they feel with a warmth meter, but bodily reactions to ads are difficult to fake.

COGNITIVE NEUROSCIENCE

In recent years, significant advances have occurred in **cognitive neuroscience**, a brain-image measurement process that tracks brain activity. As noted in the opening vignette for this chapter, it tracks the flow and movement of electrical currents in the brain. One study using cognitive neuroscience (psychophysiology) demonstrated that the currents in a subject's brain indicated a preference for Coke or Pepsi that are the same as for the product a person chooses in a blind taste test. According to neuroscientist Justin Meaux, "Preference has measurable correlates in the brain; you can see it." Richard Silberstein, an Australian neuroscientist, used physiological measurements of the brain to show that successful ads tend to generate higher levels of emotional engagement and long-term memory coding.[18]

Consider a sexually provocative advertisement under development. Members of a focus group may enjoy the ad but cover up these feelings by saying it was sexist and inappropriate. These responses may be due to the desire for social acceptance. In a copytest for the same ad, a respondent may also offer socially acceptable answers even though he is not face-to-face with the researcher. The individual may not move



Courtesy by permission of Maidenform, Inc.

▲ Cognitive neuroscience tests can be used to study the impact of this advertisement for Maidenform.

the computer mouse to report his true feelings in a study using an emotional monitor. The negative stigma attached to sex in advertising often affects self-reported reactions. A physiological arousal test, such as cognitive neuroscience, may provide a better indicator of a person's true response. Many advertising researchers believe physiological arousal tests are more accurate than emotional reaction tests because physiological arousal cannot easily be faked.[19]

The most recent research in this area has been undertaken by companies such as EmSense, Neuro-Focus, Sands Research, and OTX Research. These companies experiment with portable devices that measure both brain waves and biologic data. Coca-Cola employed this methodology to select ads to run on the Super Bowl. Coke produced a dozen ads that were evaluated by the EmSense device. The EmSense device measures brain waves and monitors breathing, heart rates, blinking, and skin temperatures as consumers watch ads. Through these physiological measurements, Coca-Cola researchers were able to determine which ads to run during the Super Bowl. Some Super Bowl commercials were modified to produce higher levels of emotions.[20]

Frito-Lay used neuroscience to test product packaging. The company discovered that matte beige bags of potato chips picturing potatoes and other healthier ingredients did not trigger anterior cingulated cortex activity (the area of the brain associated with guilt) as much as shiny potato chip bags.

Frito-Lay's chief marketing officer, Ann Mukherjee, said, "Brain-imaging tests can be more accurate than focus groups." After a focus group rejected a Cheetos advertisement, Frito-Lay tested the commercial using neuroscience methods. The ad featured a woman taking revenge on someone in a Laundromat by putting orange snack food in a dryer that was full of white clothes. The focus group participants felt the prank made Frito-Lay look mean-spirited. The neuroscience test showed women loved the commercial.[21]

Cognitive neuroscience reveals physiological reactions to a message. It shows where brain activity occurs and, to some extent, the level of activity. It can identify times when a test subject becomes enthralled with a message. It also indicates when the person merely focuses on the logo or an attractive woman in the commercial. The methodology identifies positive and negative emotions and the intensity of the emotions by the amount of neurons firing. This methodology enables scientists (and marketers) to understand the information being processed, where it is being processed, and how the individual reacted to the ad or marketing piece. Although still in its infancy, cognitive neuroscience offers great potential for evaluating advertising and marketing.

Evaluation Criteria

OBJECTIVE 4
Which evaluation criteria are suggested by the positioning advertising copytesting (PACT) system?

Each of the evaluation programs mentioned thus far require quality evaluation criteria. One helpful program, **positioning advertising copytesting (PACT)**, was created to evaluate television ads. It was formulated by 21 leading U.S. advertising agencies.[22] Even though PACT examines the issues involved in copytesting television ads, the principles can be applied to any type of message evaluation system and all types of media. Figure 2 lists the nine main principles to follow when testing a written or verbal marketing communication piece.

Any advertising procedure should be *relevant to the advertising objective being tested*. For a coupon promotion designed to stimulate trial purchases, marketers should evaluate coupon's copy in order to determine its ability to stimulate those purchases. An evaluation of attitudes toward a brand requires a different instrument.

Researchers should agree on how the results are going to be used when selecting test instruments. They should also agree on the design of the test in order to obtain the desired results. This will be especially important during the preparation stage in an advertisement's development, because many tests are used to determine whether the advertisement eventually will be created.

- Testing procedure should be relevant to the advertising objectives.
- In advance of each test, researches should agree on how the results will be used.
- Multiple measures should be used.
- The test should be based on some theory or model of human response to communication.
- Tha testing procedure should allow for more than one exposure to the advertisement, if necessary.
- In selecting alternate advertisements to include in the test, each should be at the same stage in the process as the test ad.
- The test should provide controls to avoid biases.
- The sample used for the test should be representative of the target sample.
- The testing procedure should demonstrate reliability and validity.

FIGURE 2
Copytesting principles of PACT

Source: Based on PACT document published in the *Journal of Marketing* 11, no. 4 (1982), pp. 4–29.

The research team should also select a *cutoff score* to be used following the test. This prevents biases from affecting findings about the ad's potential effectiveness. Many advertising agencies use test markets for new advertisements before they are launched in a larger area. A recall method used to determine if people in the target market remember seeing the ad should have a prearranged cutoff score. In other words, the acceptable percentage may be established so that 25 percent of the sample should remember the ad in order to move forward with the campaign. An advertisement that does not achieve the percentage has failed the test.

Using multiple measures allows for more precise evaluations of ads and campaigns. A well-designed ad may fail one particular testing procedure yet score higher on others. Consumers and business buyers who are the targets of marketing communications are complex human beings. Various people perceive individual ads differently. As a result, advertisers usually try to develop more than one measure to be certain greater agreement can be reached about whether the ad or campaign will succeed and reach its desired goals.

The test to be used should be *based on some theory or model of human response to communication*, which makes it more likely that the test will accurately predict the human response. Enhancing the odds that the communication will produce the desired results (going to the Web site, visiting the store, or making a purchase) when an ad launches becomes the objective.

Many testing procedures are based on a single exposure. Although in many cases this may be sufficient for research purposes, sometimes *multiple exposures* are necessary to obtain reliable test results. For complex ads, more than one exposure may be needed. The human mind comprehends only so much information in one viewing. The marketing team should make sure a person can and will comprehend the ad to determine whether it achieve the desired effects.

Often ads are tested in combination with other ads to disguise the one being examined. Placing the test marketing piece in with others means the test subjects do not know which ad is being evaluated. This prevents personal biases from affecting judgments. To ensure valid results, *the alternative ads should be in the same stage of process development*. When ad copy is being tested prior to ad development, then the alternative ads should also be in the ad copy development stage.

Next, adequate controls are put in place to *prevent biases and external factors from affecting*

▼ Following the principles of PACT will ensure a better evaluation of this ad for Chic Shaque.



Courtesy of Joplin Globe.

results. To help control external factors, researchers often use experimental designs. When conducting experiments, researchers hold as many things as constant as possible and manipulate one variable at a time. With a theater test, the temperature, time of day, room lighting, television program, and ads shown can all be the same. Then, the researcher may display the program and ads to an all-male audience followed by an all-female audience. Changing a single variable (gender) makes it possible to see if the ad, in a controlled environment, was perceived differently by men as opposed to women.

Field tests can also be effective. Testing marketing communications in real-world situations offers value, because they approximate reality. When conducting field tests, such as mall intercepts, those performing the testing seek to control as many variables as possible. Thus, the same mall, same questions, and same ads are shown. Then, researchers manipulate age, gender, or other variables one at a time.

As with any research procedure, sampling procedures are important. The *sample being used should be representative of the target population*. A print ad designed for Spanish-speaking Hispanic Americans should be tested using a Spanish questionnaire or interview format.

Finally, researchers continually try to make tests *reliable and valid*. Reliable means "repeatable." In other words, if the same test were given five times to the same person, the individual should respond in the same way each time. If a respondent is "emotional" on one iteration of a warmth test and "neutral" when the ad is shown a second time, the research team will wonder if the test is reliable.

Valid means "generalizable." Valid research findings can be generalized to other groups. For instance, when a focus group of women finds an ad to be funny, and then a group of men reacts in the same way, the finding that the humor was effective becomes more valid. This would be an increasingly valuable outcome if the results were generalizable to people of various ages and races. Many times an ad may be reliable, or repeatable in the same group, but not valid or generalizable to other groups of consumers or business buyers.

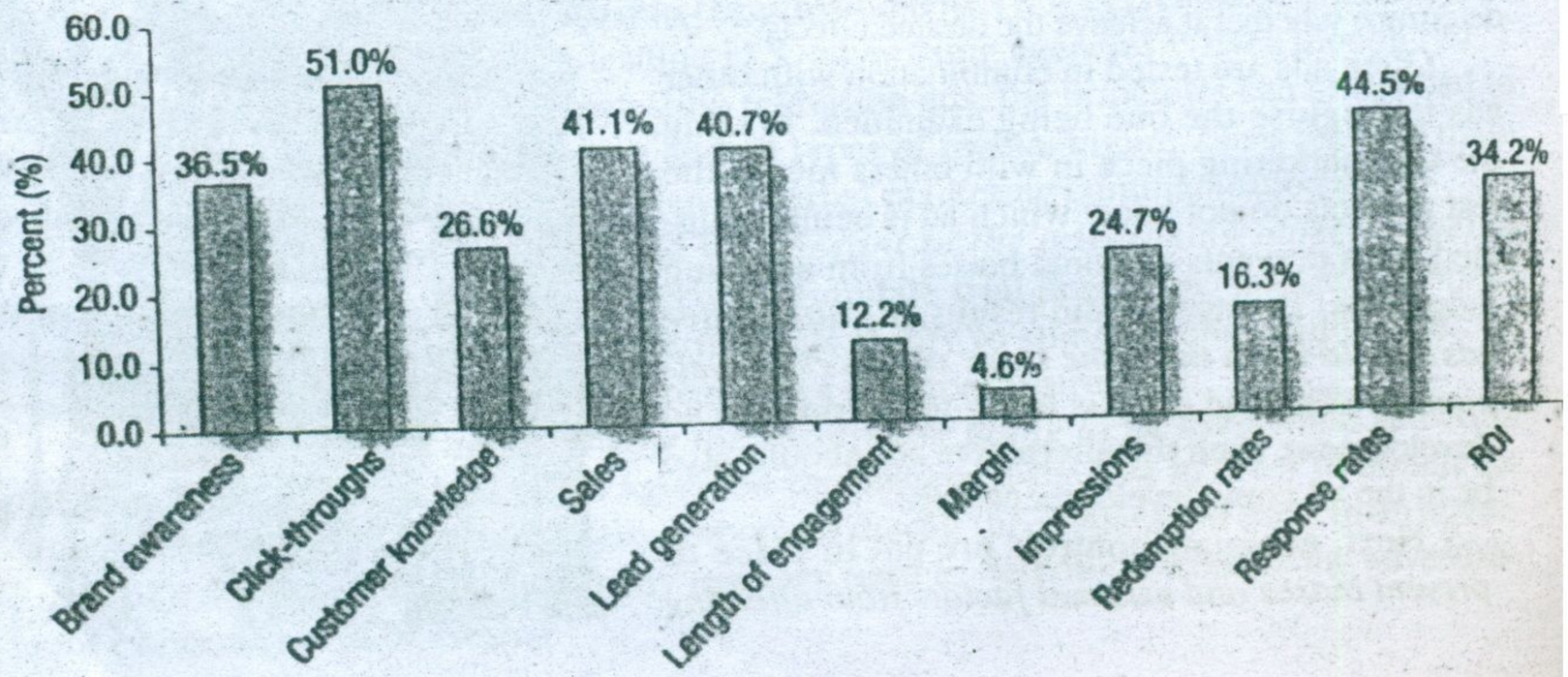
The PACT principles are useful when designing tests of short-term advertising effectiveness. They are also helpful when seeking to understand larger and more long-term issues such as brand loyalty and identification with the company. Generating data that document what a company is doing works should be the objective. When this occurs, the company and its advertising team have access to valuable information.

Online Evaluation Metrics

OBJECTIVE
How do online evaluation systems assist advertising managers in assessing the quality of a firm's Internet activities?

To evaluate digital marketing communications from the Internet, a number of metrics are available that provide hard and soft data. Figure 3 identifies methods of measuring digital marketing and the percentage of companies using each method.

Click-throughs remain the primary method used to measure the impact of online advertising. The number of click-throughs provides an idea of how many people who see an online ad click it and go to the Web site. Once there, additional metrics, such as



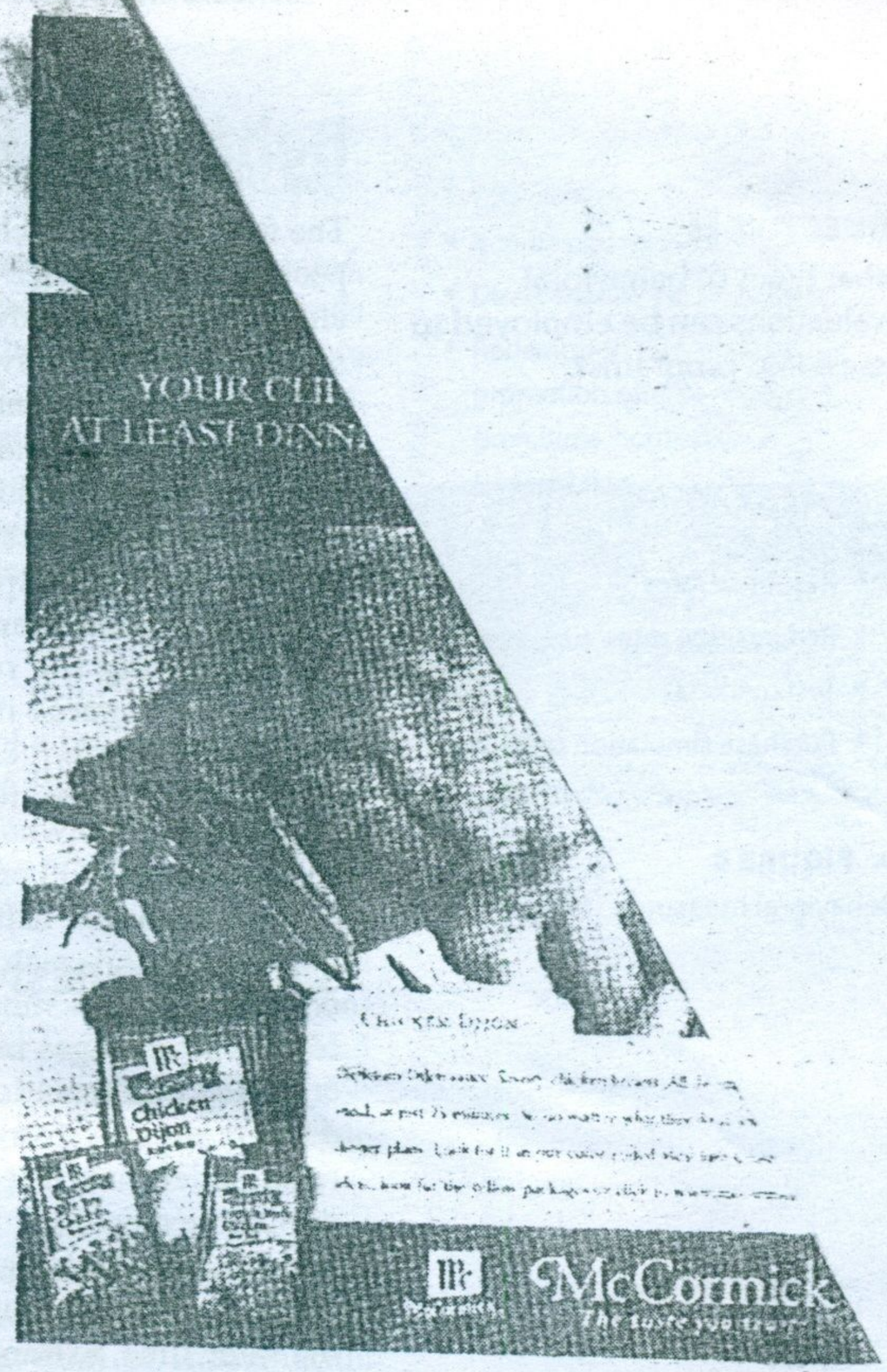
▶ FIGURE 3
Measuring effectiveness of interactive marketing

Source: Based on Larry Jaffe, "Follow the Money." *Promo* 20, no. 11 (November 2007 Sourcebook), pp. 5–10.

length of engagement, dwell rate, dwell time, redemption rates, response rates, and sales, become available. Redemption rates and response rates occur when visitors to the site take an action. Sales occur when the individual makes the purchase online. *Dwell rate* measures the proportion of ad impressions that resulted in a user engaging with the ad, such as clicking it or just mousing over it. *Dwell time* measures the amount of time users spend engaged with a particular advertisement. *Length of engagement*, a newer metric, measures how long the person stays at a Web site. It offers a surrogate of a person's interest in the product and the site being visited.

AdKnowledge introduced an online management tool called MarketingMatch Planner to evaluate Internet advertising campaigns. MarketingMatch Planner software includes two components: Campaign Manager and Administrator. Campaign Manager records traffic to a site and performs postpurchase analysis. Administrators integrate Web ad-buy data and performance analysis with the firm's accounting and billing systems. In addition, MarketingMatch Planner can integrate third-party data, including audience demographics, from the following sources:

- MediaMetrix for basic demographics
- NetRatings for gross rating points (GRP) and other ratings instruments
- Psychographic data from SRI Consulting
- Web site ratings and descriptions from NetGuide
- Web traffic audit data from BPA Interactive[23]



▲ By using technology such as MarketMatch Planner, the McCormick company can track who went to the Web site to see recipes.

Marketers view digital data results in light of the company's IMC objectives. An IMC objective of building brand awareness requires something other than Internet sales data to be assessed. An Internet ad might bring awareness to a brand but not lead to an online purchase. This may occur when a consumer or business uses the Internet to gather information but then makes the actual purchase at a retail store or by telephone. In that situation, the analysis of an Internet advertising campaign may not reflect all of the brand awareness or sales that the campaign generated.

One of the newest forms of online evaluations is measuring and monitoring *Web chat*. A company called WiseWindow developed software (Mass Opinion Business Intelligence, MOBI) that can swiftly analyze large numbers of opinions on the Web, blogs, Twitter, and social networking sites such as Facebook. MOBI can provide continuous, real-time information concerning consumer sentiment about a brand, business, or advertising campaign from millions of sites virtually instantaneously. Companies including Kia, Best Buy, Viacom, Cisco Systems, and Intuit utilize the software to analyze how customers, employees, and investors feel.

Gaylord Hotels applied sentiment analysis software called Clarabridge to determine how customers feel about the company's network of upscale resorts. From the sentiment analysis Gaylord concluded that the first 20 minutes of a guests visit were the most critical and there was five ways the company could increase the likelihood that guests would recommend the hotel to others. For instance, the web chat analysis revealed it was important to take a new guest to a location rather than just point out where it was or show them on a map. Before this sentiment analysis, Gaylord believed there were 80 things it had to do. David C. Kloeppel, chief operating officer for Gaylord Hotels, stated, "We learned that the first 20 minutes of the hotel experience was of vital importance to our guests. Our hypothesis became, if we could prefect the first 20 minutes of the experience, we could drive positive overall guest satisfaction."[24]

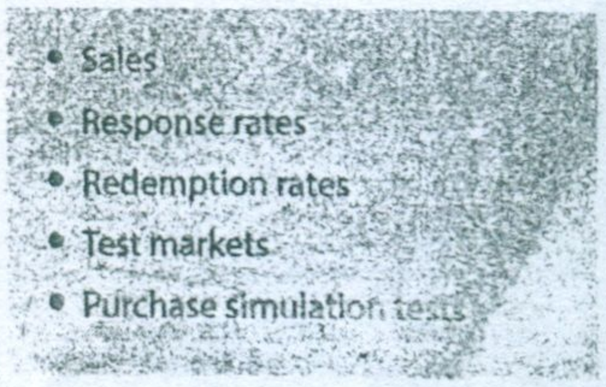
Behavioral Evaluations

OBJECTIVE
What types of behavioral evaluations can be employed to assess IMC programs?

The first part of this chapter regarding message evaluations focuses on insights into what people think and feel. Some marketers contend that sales represent the only valid evaluation criterion. An advertisement may be fun and enjoyable, but if sales do not increase sales, it was ineffective. The same reasoning applies to other marketing communication tools, such as consumer promotions, trade promotions, and direct marketing tactics.

It may be true that tangible results should be the bottom line of any marketing program; however, not all communication objectives can be measured using sales figures. Leaders of companies with low brand awareness may be most interested in the visibility and memorability aspects of a communication plan, even though a marketing program designed to boost brand awareness does not result in immediate sales.

Measuring the results of a consumer promotion campaign featuring coupons using sales figures is easier than measuring the results of a television advertising campaign. Consequently, effective promotions evaluations involve the study of both message and behavioral elements. This section describes behavioral measures (see Figure 4).



▲ **FIGURE 4**
Behavioral measures

SALES AND RESPONSE RATES

Measuring changes in sales following a marketing campaign is relatively simple. Retailers collect information from universal product codes (UPCs) and scanner data. These data are available on a weekly and, in some situations, daily basis for each store. Many retail outlets have access to real-time sales information that can be accessed at any point during the day.

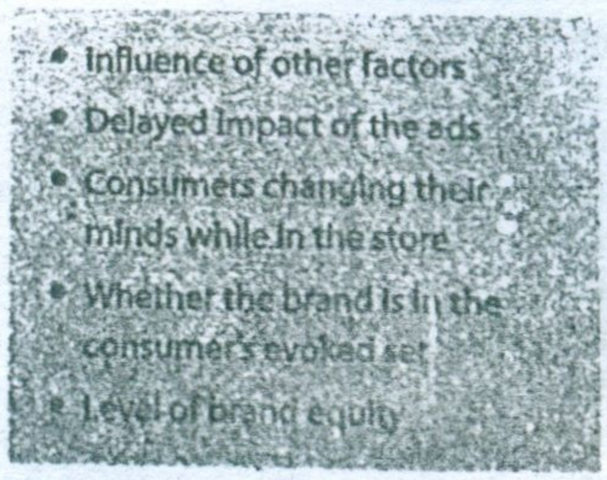
Scanner data make it possible for companies to monitor sales and help both the retailer and the manufacturer discover the impact of a particular marketing program. At the same time, extraneous factors can affect sales. In a multimedia advertising program, it would be difficult to know which ad moved the customer to action. A company featuring a fall line of jackets may be affected by a cold snap. If so, what caused the customer to buy—the ad or the weather? Firms utilizing trade and consumer promotion programs must account for the impact of both the promotion and the advertising when studying sales figures. Sales provide one indicator of effectiveness; however, they may be influenced by additional factors.

As highlighted in Figure 5, advertisements may be the most difficult component of the IMC program to evaluate, for several reasons. As just noted, distinguishing *the effects of advertising from other factors* may be difficult. Advertisements create short- and long-term effects, and consumers and businesses see them in many different contexts. The direct impact of one advertisement or one campaign on sales will be difficult to decipher.

Advertising often has a delayed impact. Many times consumers encounter ads and are persuaded to purchase the product, but will not actually make the buy until later, when they actually need the item. A woman may be convinced that she wants to buy a new pair of jeans in response to a sexy and effective advertisement by Calvin Klein. Still, rather than buying them herself, she leaves several well-placed hints for her husband before her next birthday, which could be several months later. The problem could be that her husband purchased another brand or a different gift. So, she either waits for another special occasion for her husband to buy the jeans or she makes the purchase herself at a later time.

Many times consumers may decide to make purchases based on an advertisement but *change their minds when they arrive at the retail store.* A competing brand may be on sale, the store could be out of the desired brand, or the salesperson could persuade the customer that another brand is better. In each case, the ad was successful on one level but another factor interfered before the purchase was made.

Further, *the brand being advertised may not be part of the consumer's evoked set.* Upon hearing or seeing the ad, however, the brand moves into the evoked set. Thus, even



▲ **FIGURE 5**
Advertising is difficult to evaluate

when the brand is not considered at first, it will be in the future when the need arises or when the consumer becomes dissatisfied with a current brand.

Advertising helps generate brand awareness and brand equity. Although sales may not be the result immediately, *the ad may build brand equity*, which, in turn, will influence future purchases.

Measuring the effects of trade and consumer promotions, direct marketing programs, and personal selling on actual sales is easier. Manufacturers can study the impact of trade promotions by observing changes in sales to the retailers at the time the promotions are being offered. The same holds true for consumer promotions, such as coupons, contests, and point-of-purchase displays. Many manufacturers' representatives push hard to get retailers to use the company's POP displays. At the same time, the retailer might be more interested in the effects of the display on sales. Using scanner data, both the retailer and the manufacturer can measure the impact of a POP display. Retailers normally use POPs that have demonstrated the ability to boost sales.

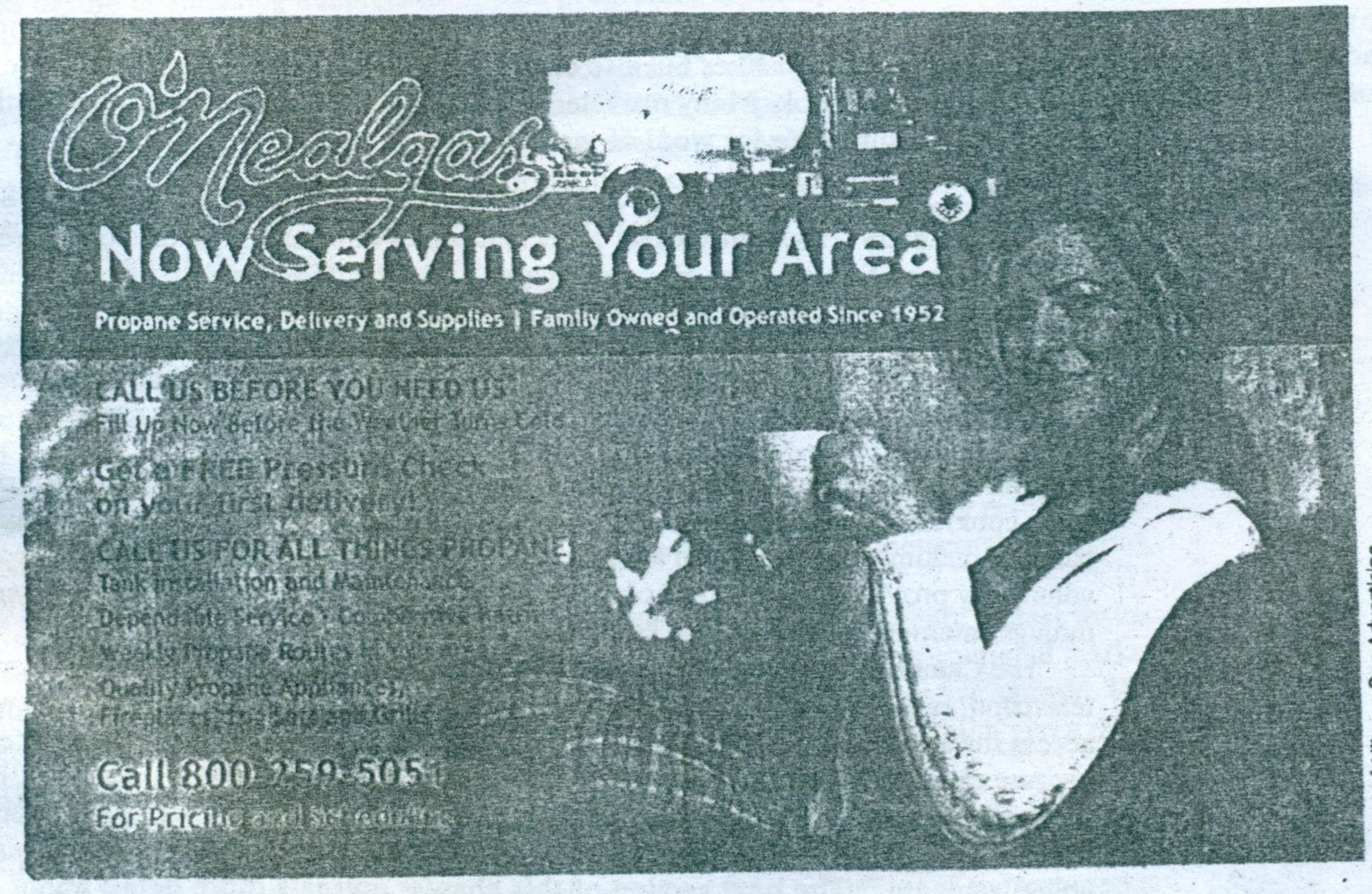
- Changes in sales
- Telephone inquiries
- Response cards
- Internet responses
- Direct-marketing responses
- Redemption rate of sales promotion offers—coupons, premiums, contests, sweepstakes

▲ **FIGURE 6**
Tracking marketing responses

POPAI To track the impact of POP displays, Anheuser-Busch, Frito-Lay, Procter & Gamble, and Warner-Lambert joined together as initial sponsors of a program developed by Point-of-Purchase Advertising International (POPAI). In the initial study, POPAI tracked 25 different product categories in 250 supermarkets nationwide. Sponsors paid between $50,000 and $75,000 to receive customized data about the POP displays featuring particular brands. Using POPAI data holds an advantage in that that each firm sees the impact of the POP for its brand and also receives comparative data showing how well the display fared against other displays. The POPAI program features a low cost. Sponsors of the POPAI program attained valuable data at a much lower cost than if they had sought the information on their own.[25]

A wide variety of responses to marketing communications programs are available besides sales. Figure 6 lists some of the responses that can be tracked.

Toll-Free Numbers One method of measuring the impact of an advertisement, direct mailing piece, TV direct offer, or price-off discount to a business customer involves assigning a toll-free number to each marketing piece. A great deal of information



◀ One measure of effectiveness of this O'Nealgas advertisement is the increase in the number of phone calls made for pricing and scheduling.

Courtesy of Alliance One Advertising



Used with the permission of Kraft Foods Inc.

▲ Kraft Foods can measure how many individuals access the QR code contained in this advertisement for Parmesan cheese.

can be collected during an inbound call. Sales data can be recorded and demographic information gathered. Psychographic information then can be added by contacting various commercial services.

In business-to-business situations, a toll-free number provides contact names to help the vendor discover who performs the various functions in the buying center. As a result, a toll-free number provides sales data to determine which marketing program would be best and generate valuable information that can be tied to the sales data. Knowing who responds to an offer helps a firm better understand its customers and the right approach for each target group.

QR Codes and Facebook Likes Two new methods of evaluation are QR code responses and Facebook "likes." Many ads now have a QR code that consumers can access with their mobile phones. Some are to a company's website while others are for special deals or information. The advertisement for Kraft Parmesan Cheese in this section includes a QR code consumers can access. A company can count how many individuals access the QR code. It is even possible to gather information about individuals who access the QR code.

With the increased popularity of Facebook, a new measure of a brand's popularity is the number of individuals who "like" a brand. Companies can count the number of likes but also correlate the likes to special offers that are made on the brand's Facebook. Many marketers consider fans "liking" a brand or something a brand does is a surrogate for word-of-mouth endorsement.

Response Cards Response cards collect customer information as the forms are filled out at the time of an inquiry. Response cards carry the disadvantage of providing less data. Consequently, commercial sources are needed to obtain additional demographic and psychographic information, because response cards solicited from current customers contain information the firm may already have in its database.

Internet Responses Internet responses provide quality behavioral measures. By using cookies, a marketing team obtains considerable information about the person or business making the inquiry. In addition, many times the person or business responding voluntarily provides a great deal of helpful information. Responses to direct advertising through Internet views may also be tracked.

The Canadian Tourism Commission tested direct-response ads that were placed on television, radio, direct mail, and online. Each ad used a different URL for viewers to access for additional information. To the tourist, there was no perceivable difference, because each URL took the person to the designated Canadian Tourism site. The Tourism Commission could track which ad the person viewed and which URL the person used. This made it possible to count the number of visitors from each of the direct-response advertisements.[26] The next section of this chapter presents more detail about online evaluation methods.

Redemption Rates Various kinds of redemption rates are used as behavioral effectiveness measures. Coupons, premiums, contests, sweepstakes, and direct-mail pieces can be coded to record redemption rates. Comparing a current campaign with previous campaigns makes it possible for a firm to examine changes made in the design or advertisement's execution. Marketers review the results in light of positive or negative changes in redemption rates.

Immediate changes in sales and redemptions are offer form of behavioral evaluation. An advertiser or company may use them and fail to see "the forest for the trees." One campaign, advertisement, or promotions program should be viewed in the context of all other marketing efforts. Behavioral measures are best when the team sees them as part of the bigger picture.

TEST MARKETS

Test markets allow company leaders to examine the effects of a marketing effort on a small scale before launching a national or international campaign. An organization can examine several elements of a marketing communication program in one setting. If the test market achieves success, the likelihood that the national campaign also will be effective increases. Test markets measure the effects of a campaign in a new country before launching a full-scale international effort. Test market programs are used to assess:

- Advertisements
- Consumer and trade promotions
- Pricing tactics
- New products

Test markets provide cost-effective methods to analyze and then make changes in marketing efforts before millions of dollars are spent on something that will not accomplish its objectives. Ads can be modified, promotions revised, and pricing policies revisited before undertaking a more widespread program. For example, McDonald's tested new ads that touted cleaner restaurants and friendlier service. The goal of the commercials was to test a campaign emphasizing McDonald's effort to improve in-store and drive-through service. Two television spots and one radio spot were produced and aired in Tampa and Seattle. Reactions from the test markets provided McDonald's marketing team and the advertising agency information about the impact of the ad campaign, the parts of the message that should be modified, and whether the campaign should be launched nationally.[27]

Test markets hold the advantage of resembling an actual purchasing situation more than any of the other tests discussed thus far. Making sure that the site selected for the test market strongly resembles the target population will be the key. A product targeted toward senior citizens should be studied in an area with a high concentration of seniors.

The test market campaign should resemble the national or full marketing plan, if possible. A lengthy time lapse may cause a company to experience differing results. Marketers try to make sure the test market provides a mirror image of the actual marketing program.

A test market can be as short as a few days or as long as 2 to 3 years. A test that is too short may yield less reliable results. If the test market is too long, the national market situation may change and the test market may no longer be a representative sample. The greater drawback is that the competition can study what is going on, which gives them time to react to the proposed marketing campaign.

Competitive Responses Competing companies can respond to a test market program in one of two ways. First, some firms may introduce a special promotion in the test market area in order to confound the results. This may reduce sales for the product, making the



Andrey Bandurenko/Fotolia

▲ Marketers can use scanner data to measure the results of a test market.

campaign appear to be less attractive than it actually was. The second approach involves not intervening in the test market, but instead using the time to prepare a countermarketing campaign. Firms that use this tactic are ready when the national launch occurs, and the impact may be that the test market results are not as predictive of what will happen.

Scanner Data Scanner data make it possible for results from test market campaigns to be quickly available. The figures help determine the acceptability of test market results. A firm can design several versions of a marketing campaign in different test markets. Scanner data assist marketers in comparing the sales from each test market to determine which version works best. For example, in one test market the firm may present an advertising campaign only. In the second test market, coupons may be added to the ad program. In the third test market, a premium will be combined with advertising. The results from each area help the marketing team understand which type of marketing campaign to use.

Test markets provide the opportunity to test communication ideas in more true-to-life settings. Test markets can examine trade and consumer promotions, direct marketing, and other marketing communication tools. They are not quite as accurate when assessing advertising, because changes in sales take longer and the test market program may not be long enough to measure the full impact. In any case, test markets are valuable instruments when examining specific marketing features and more general communications campaigns.

PURCHASE SIMULATION TESTS

Instead of test markets, marketing researchers employ purchase simulation tests. *Simulated purchase tests* present a cost-effective approach to examine purchase behaviors. Research Systems Corporation (RSC) specializes in purchase simulation studies. RSC tests the impact of commercials by studying consumer behaviors in a controlled laboratory environment.

Consumers are asked if they would be willing to buy products in a variety of ways, using various methods. They might be asked about purchase intentions at the end of a laboratory experiment. In this situation, however, intentions are self-reported and may be a less accurate predictor of future purchase behaviors. RSC does not request consumer opinions, ask them to describe their attitudes, or even ask if they plan to purchase the product. Instead, RSC creates a simulated shopping experience. Subjects choose from a variety of products they would see on a store shelf. After completing a simulated shopping exercise, the subjects are seated and watch a television preview containing various commercials. The participants are asked to view the TV program as they would watch any TV show at home. The test ad is placed in with other ads, and the subjects do not know which ad is being tested.

After completing the preview, the subjects participate in a second shopping exercise. Researchers then compare the products chosen in the first shopping trip to those selected in the second. Shifts in brand choices are at least partly due to the effectiveness of the advertisement, because it was the only variable that changed.

This methodology provides the advantage of using test procedures that do not rely on opinions and attitudes. Among other things, this means that RSC's procedure would work in international markets as well as domestic markets.[28] In some cultures, subjects tend to seek to please the interviewer who asks questions about opinions and attitudes. As a result, the answers are polite and socially acceptable. The same subjects may also seek to provide answers they think the interviewer wants to hear. By studying purchases instead of soliciting opinions, subjects are free to respond in a more accurate fashion.

Any methodology designed to tap into behaviors rather than emotions and feelings features a built-in advantage. Opinions and attitudes change and can be quickly affected by other variables. Observing behaviors and changes in behaviors gets more quickly to the point of the experiment, which is whether the buyer can tangibly influenced by a marketing communications tool.

In summary, the systems that are available to examine respondent behaviors are response rates, online metrics, test markets, and purchase simulation tests. Marketers employ programs in conjunction with one another and also with the message evaluation techniques described earlier. None of these approaches is used in a vacuum. Instead, the data generated and findings revealed are tested across several instruments and with numerous groups of subjects. In that manner, the marketing department manager and the advertising agency can try to heighten the odds that both short- and long-term goals can be reached through the ads, premiums, coupons, and other marketing communications devices used. Even then, the job of evaluation is not complete.



Yuri Arcurs/Fotolia

▲ Rather than field test markets, researchers can use simulated shopping exercises.

Evaluating the Overall IMC Program

OBJECTIVE 7
What criteria should be used to assess the overall IMC program?

As has been noted throughout this textbook, the expenditures companies make for marketing communications has led CEOs and other executives to continue to push for greater accountability. These individuals, as well as stockholders and boards of directors, want to know what type of return results when a firm spends a large sum of money on an advertising campaign or other marketing activity. The idea is to try to discover the *return on investment (ROI)* of an advertising and promotions program.

Little agreement can be found regarding what "ROI" means when applied to a marketing program. No consensus exists regarding how to measure marketing ROI. In one study, more than 70 percent of marketers said it would be difficult to measure the impact of advertising and marketing on sales. The same number predicted that it would be extremely difficult for the marketing industry to reach any agreement on what constitutes ROI for marketing. The most common are behavioral responses, such as incremental sales, total sales, and market share.[29]

This confusion will likely continue, even as company executives try to justify advertising and marketing expenditures. This means those in the marketing profession will keep trying to identify ways to measure the impact of marketing communications, ultimately in dollars and cents.

Many years ago, Peter Drucker outlined a series of goal areas that are indicative of organizational health. These goals listed in Figure 7 match well with the objectives of an IMC program.[30] As marketers struggle to find a way to measure ROI of marketing communication expenditures, understanding the various measures of overall health of an organization can provide valuable insight on how marketing communications contributes.

Market share has long been linked to profitability. It demonstrates consumer acceptance, brand loyalty, and a strong competitive position. The IMC planning process should help the marketing team understand both market share and the relative strengths and weaknesses of the competition. IMC programs are designed to hold and build market share.

Innovation includes finding new and different ways to achieve objectives. This applies to many marketing activities, including new and unusual trade and consumer promotions, public relations events and sponsorships, e-commerce and e-active programs, and the firm's advertising efforts.

Productivity reflects the industry's increasing emphasis on results. IMC experts are being asked to demonstrate tangible results from IMC campaigns. Both short- and long-term measures of the effects of advertisements and promotions demonstrate the

- Market share
- Level of innovation
- Productivity
- Physical and financial resources
- Profitability
- Manager performance and development
- Employee performance and attitudes
- Social responsibility

▲ **FIGURE 7**
Overall health of a company
Source: Based on Pater Drucker, *Management: Tasks, Responsibilities, Practices* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974).

"productivity" of the organization in terms of gaining new customers, building recognition in the marketplace, determining sales per customer, and through other measures.

Physical and financial resources are important to an IMC program. Physical resources include the most up-to-date computer and Internet capabilities. The firm must provide sufficient financial resources to reach this goal. Scanner technologies and other devices that keep the firm in contact with consumers are vital elements in the long-term success of an IMC plan.

Profitability remains vitally important to the marketing department and the overall organization. Many IMC managers know that more than sales are at issue when assessing success. Sales must generate profits in order for the company to survive and thrive.

Manager performance and development is possibly an overlooked part of an IMC program. Effective marketing departments and advertising agencies must develop pipelines of new, talented creatives, media buyers, promotions managers, database Webmasters, and others in order to succeed in the long term. Also, new people must be trained and prepared for promotion for more important roles.

Employee performance and attitudes reflect not only morale within the marketing department, but also relations with other departments and groups. An effective IMC plan consists of building bridges with internal departments so that everyone is aware of the thrust and theme of the program. Satisfied and positive employees are more likely to help the firm promote its image.

Social responsibility can be linked to the long-term well-being of an organization. Brand equity and loyalty are hurt when the firm is known for illegal or unethical actions. Therefore, marketing leaders should encourage all of the members of an organization to act in ethical and socially responsible ways.

When these goals are reached the firm's IMC program works well. Beyond these targets, IMC plans should continually emphasize the evolving nature of relationships with customers. Retail consumers and business-to-business buyers should be constantly contacted to find out how the company can best serve their needs.

Simply stated, this book implies a series of key performance targets for IMC programs that can guide the actions of the marketing department and the advertising agency both in the short term and for the long haul. Firms that are able to maintain one clear voice in a cluttered marketplace stand the best chance of gaining customer interest and attention as well as developing long-term bonds with all key publics and stakeholders. An effective IMC program helps set the standards and measure performance and, in the end, becomes the model for marketing success for the entire organization.

International Implications

OBJECTIVE

How are evaluation programs adjusted to match international operations?

Many of the techniques described in this chapter are available worldwide. IMC programs should be assessed in several ways, including: domestic results, results in other countries, and as an overall organization.

Individual advertisements and promotional programs are examined within the countries in which they appear. Due to differing standards regarding advertising content, they must be evaluated in light of local cultures and purchasing habits.

Many times, advertising and promotional programs are assessed across national boundaries. For example, a campaign launched in Europe leads to evaluations in individual countries such as France, Spain, and Italy, but also as a collective, such as the European Union. Measures of attitudes are difficult to collect. Sales are easier to assess due to the use of the Euro in all of these nations; however, inflation rates and other statistics are affected by local conditions.

It is advisable to contract with local advertising agencies to discover which techniques are most viable in other countries. In some nations using coupons may be viewed as a sign of poverty, and users are either secretive or embarrassed about redeeming them. In those situations it helps to study results in light of the cultural norms that are present.

Numerous multinational conglomerates assess advertising and promotional efforts through regional offices. Pacific Rim information will be combined with information

from Europe, Africa, and other places. The goal is to make sure an overall image and theme is projected worldwide.

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SUMMARY

Assessing an IMC program often involves examining the effects of individual advertisements. These efforts are conducted in three major ways: message evaluations, online evaluation metrics, and evaluating respondent behaviors. A wide variety of techniques can be used. Most of the time, marketing managers and advertisement agencies apply several different methods in order to get the best picture of an ad's potential for success. Advertisements are studied before they are developed, while they are being developed, and after they have been released or launched.

The guiding principles for any marketing tool include agreement on how test results will be used, pre-establishing a cutoff score for a test's results, using multiple measures, basing studies on models of human behaviors, creating multiple exposures, testing marketing instruments that are in the same stage of development, and preventing as many biases as possible while conducting the test. Many times, certain members of the marketing team may not be objective, especially when they had the idea for the ad or campaign. In these instances, companies retain an outside research agency to study the project.

Message evaluations take place at every stage of the development process. Methods that may be employed include advertising tracking research, copytesting, emotional reaction tests, and cognitive neuroscience.

Positioning advertising copytesting (PACT) is primarily used to evaluate television advertisements. Nine key principles are involved. The principles may be applied to any type of message evaluation system and all types of media.

Online evaluation metrics include the use of click-throughs, dwell rates, dwell time, and length of engagement. Interactive data are carefully evaluated in light of the company's IMC objectives. The newest form of evaluation is measuring and monitoring Web chat.

Behavioral evaluations consist of sales and response rates, toll-free number responses, response cards, Internet responses, and redemption rates. Test markets assess advertisements, consumer and trade promotions, pricing tactics, and acceptance of new products. Purchase simulation tests offer cost-effective methods to analyze the impact of advertising and promotion on immediate consumer purchase responses.

IMC plans guide the entire company. Therefore, more general and long-term criteria should be included in any evaluation of an IMC program. When the IMC theme and voice are clear, the company is achieving its long-range objectives, the principles stated in this book are being applied efficiently and effectively, and the company is in the best position to succeed at all levels, including in all international operations.

Key Terms

metrics Measures that are designed to accurately portray the effectiveness of a marketing communications plan.

message evaluation techniques Methods used to examine the creative message and the physical design of an advertisement, coupon, or direct marketing piece.

online evaluation metrics Methods used to examine online advertising and marketing campaigns.

respondent behavior evaluations Methods used to examine visible customer actions, including making store visits, inquiries, or actual purchases.

copytests Tests that are used to evaluate a marketing piece that is finished or is in its final stages prior to production.

portfolio test A test of an advertisement using a set of print ads, one of which is the ad being evaluated.

theater test A test of an advertisement using a set of television ads, including the one being evaluated.

warmth monitor A method to measure emotional responses to advertisements.

biometric research A method to measure physiological reactions to advertisements and marketing messages.

cognitive neuroscience A brain-image measurement process that tracks brain activity.

positioning advertising copytesting (PACT) Principles to use when assessing the effectiveness of various messages.

Review Questions

1. What are the three categories of evaluation tools that can be used to evaluate IMC systems?
2. What common IMC objectives are matched with methods of evaluation?
3. What are message evaluations?
4. What is advertising tracking research? What does it help the marketing team assess?
5. Describe the use of portfolio tests and theater tests in copytesting programs.
6. What is a warmth monitor? What does it measure?
7. Describe the advantages and uses of cognitive neuroscience as a method for evaluating advertising and marketing programs.
8. What are the positioning advertising copytesting principles that are used to help advertisers prepare quality ads and campaigns?
9. Define the terms click-throughs, dwell rate, dwell time, and length of engagement. How are these measures used to evaluate marketing communications?
10. What are the primary forms of behavioral evaluations that can be used to test advertisements and other marketing pieces?
11. How are behavioral responses to marketing messages measured?
12. What items can be evaluated using test markets?
13. Describe a purchase simulation test.
14. Name and describe the criteria that can be used to assess the impact of the overall IMC program, as noted in this chapter.
15. What differences occur when international marketing programs are assessed?

Critical Thinking Exercises

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Create an advertising approach for one of the following products. Put the idea down in three or four sentences. Organize a small focus group of four other students in your class or individuals you know. Ask them to evaluate your advertising concept. What did you learn from the exercise?
   a. Retail pet store
   b. Baseball caps
   c. Computers
   d. Sweaters
   e. Watches
2. Pick out five print advertisements. Organize a small focus group of four to five other students in your class or individuals you know. Ask the group to discuss the ads. What do they like? What do they dislike? Write a summary of the evaluation of the ad and the process you used.
3. Form a group of five other students or individuals. Ask each person to write down two advertisements they enjoyed and their reasons. Ask individuals to write down two advertisements they dislike and their reasons. Finally, ask them to write down an advertisement they believe is offensive and their reasons. Ask each student to read his or her list comparing ads that were liked, disliked, or were considered to be offensive. What common elements did you find in each category? What were the differences?
4. Are sales figures important when evaluating integrated marketing communications? How should hard data such as redemption rates and store traffic be used in the evaluation of marketing communications? In terms of accountability, how important are behavioral measures of IMC effectiveness?
5. From the viewpoint of a marketing manager of a large sporting goods manufacturer, what types of measures of effectiveness would you want from the $5 million you pay to an advertising agency for an advertising campaign? Knowing that evaluation costs money, how much of the $5 million would you be willing to spend to measure effectiveness? What type of report would you prepare for your boss?
6. A clothing manufacturer spends $6 million on trade promotions and $3 million on consumer promotions. How would you measure the impact of these expenditures? If an agency was hired to manage these expenditures, what type of measures would you insist the company utilize?
7. Look through a magazine. Make a record of how many advertisements include methods for measuring responses. How many list a code number, a toll-free number, or a Web site? Just listing a toll-free number or a Web site does not ensure that the agency or firm will know where the customer obtained that information. How can the advertising agency or firm track the responses from a specific advertisement in the magazine you examined?
8. In some Asian countries, it is improper to talk about oneself. Therefore, people often are too embarrassed to answer questions about feelings and emotions. Those who do answer the questions would tend to provide superficial answers. Explain the advantages of a simulated purchasing test methodology in this situation. What other methods of evaluating feelings and emotions could an agency use in Asian countries?

Integrated Learning Exercises

1. Pick three print or television advertisements that give Web site URLs. Visit each site. Was the Web site a natural extension of the advertisement? What connection or similarities did you see between the Web site and the advertisement? Do you think your response was tracked? How can you tell?
2. Decision Analysts, Inc. is a leading provider of advertising and marketing research. The company's Web site is www.decisionanalyst.com. Access the site and investigate the various services the company offers. Examine the advertising research services that are available. Write a short report about how advertising research services provided by Decision Analysts could be used.
3. Ipsos-ASI (www.ipsos-asi.com) is an advertising research firm with a high level of expertise in ad testing and measurements. Access the company's products and services. What services are offered? When would the various services be used? How would each be used?
4. AdKnowledge is a firm that excels at measuring Internet traffic and Internet advertising. Access the Web site at www.adknowledge.com. What services does the company offer? Describe a research project that you feel this company could do successfully to assist in advertising or Internet research.
5. ComScore is a firm that measures Internet traffic and Internet advertising. Access the Web site at www.comscore.com. What services does the company offer? Describe a research project that you feel this company could do successfully to assist in advertising or Internet research.
6. Millward Brown provides marketing and advertising evaluations. Access the company's Web site at www.millwardbrown.com. Describe the various services offered by the company. Suppose you want to evaluate an advertising campaign for Sunkist. Identify and discuss what Millward Brown tools you would use.

Student Project

CREATIVE CORNER

After leaders at PepsiCo and Starbucks became concerned about the diminishing supply of fresh, clean water, they teamed together to sell Ethos Water. The product's distribution has expanded, and it is now sold in major grocery stores, convenience stores, and drug stores. The goal of Ethos Water is to ensure that children throughout the world have clean water.

Access the Ethos Water Web site at www.ethoswater.com. After reviewing the site, design a print ad for a magazine aimed at college students in your area. When you have finished designing the ad, trade your ad with another student or ask him or her to show it to 10 students not enrolled in this class. Explain to the student how to conduct a copytest to gather attitudes and opinions about the ad. Before conducting the copytest, make a list of questions that you want to ask. Some suggestions are:

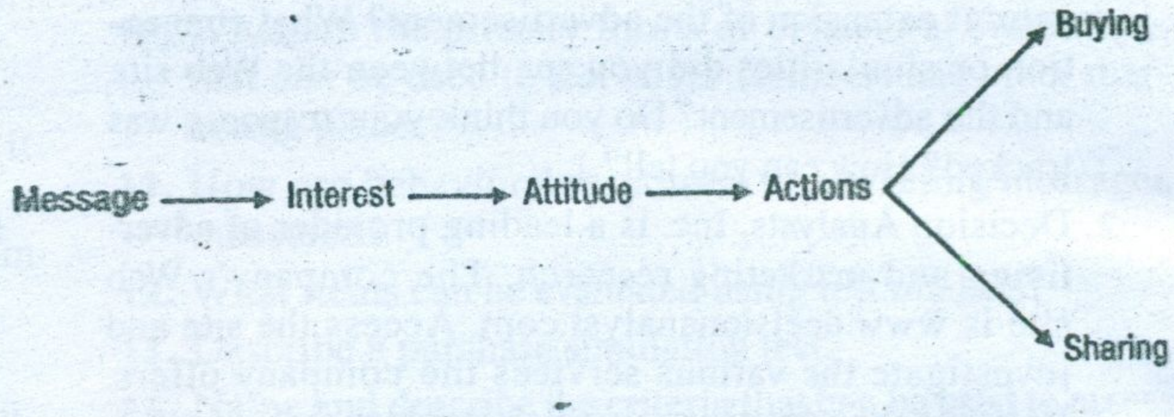
1. Have you ever heard of Ethos Water?
2. What do you think is the primary message of this advertisement?
3. Does the copy make sense? Is it understandable?
4. Does the visual attract your attention?
5. What types of feelings does the ad elicit?
6. How likely would you be to access the Ethos Water Web site for more information?
7. What is your overall evaluation of the advertisement?

It is important that someone else conduct the copytest for you to gain honest answers. Respondents are less likely to be honest, especially about any negative feedback, if you show them the advertisement and they know you designed it.

CASE 1 SPYCH MARKET ANALYTICS

A new age of marketing communication evaluation may be under way. Spych Marketing Analytics, which was founded in 2008, provides innovative solutions for companies seeking a better understanding of the future market environments, including the Gen Y and Millennial consumer segments, the advancement of technology, and the quickly evolving world of customer experience. The company tries to delve into the insights and emotions of these groups, providing an innovative portal into the psyches of these markets through its program called Empathic Youth Research and other mixed methodological approaches to consumer insights. CEO Benjamin Smithee argues that, "You have to look at the foundations and fundamentals of the advertising industry, and right now we are seeing a dramatic paradigm shift in the ways marketing communications are delivered and consumed." The media include traditional advertising venues, public relations, but also social media and mobile technologies, utilized by an evolving set of consumers.

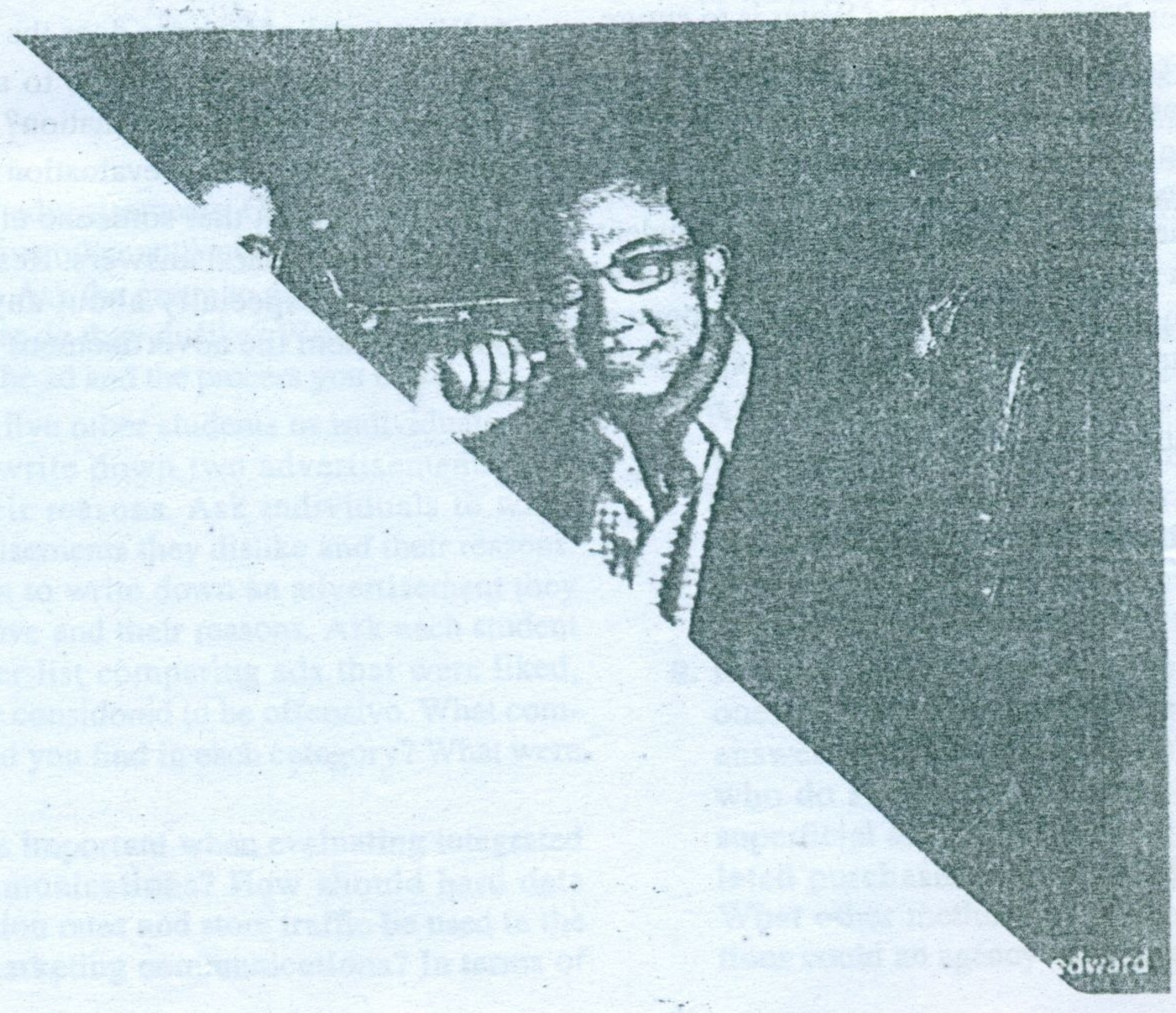
Company employees work to enhance every aspect of the market research process. On its web site, the organization proclaims, "... we create natural environments for our respondents, ...oking rich insights and opinions that surface only through ...natural and empathic interactions" Further, "The Spych ...ce maximizes the return your team obtains from each ...coming fallacies often associated with traditional ..."



▲ **FIGURE 8**
Moving from message to buying/sharing

To achieve these ideals, the company employs innovative concepts regarding marketing metrics and consumer understanding. The concepts are based on the importance of going beyond simply engaging customers to include "re-advertising." CEO Benjamin Smithee notes a new model in which "sharing" becomes a second important outcome from a marketing effort as shown in Figure 8.

Spych seeks to identify levels of engagement in terms of "intensity," in which a message is shared with friends and others. The concepts of "share-ability" and "virality" take on particular importance in Spych parlance. As Spych Marketing Analytics brand strategist Landon Ledford notes, "We ask the question, does this pass the traditional advertising test and then lead to sharing?" He notes that in previous times an ad might be shared



◀ Spych Brand Strategist Landon Ledford and CEO Ben Smithees.

with one or two other people, such as when a person would tear an advertisement out of a newspaper or magazine and give it to a friend. Now, a message can quickly be re-posted to 200-plus Facebook friends.

In essence, Spych bases its conclusions regarding a message's success with "engagement" with an advertisement being measured first by "click commitment," which is the willingness of a person to click on an ad on a medium such as Twitter, making that decision in 3 seconds or less, and second by "socialization" or passing the advertisement on to others.

Taking the next step, new technologies allow for tracking of shares and targeted marketing capabilities unlike anything we have ever possessed. Beyond simply counting the number of times a marketing message has been passed along to others, the company can examine the "social profiles" of those receiving re-advertisements and focus on the influences most relevant to a brand, rather than the generic traditional means of targeting. The reasoning behind such tracking goes to the heart of the target market. A new generation of consumer shops in a new manner, communicates through channels that have not been previously available, and responds to companies and marketing messages in ways which we have never seen.

The ultimate goals of these measures and concepts remain the same as in any traditional marketing effort. Return visits to various vendors, repeat purchases, word-of-mouth endorsements, and feeling a connection (brand loyalty) with a company, all of which lead to increased sales over time suggest that a marketing program has achieved success. Re-advertising and sharing with others enhance the prospects of reaching the right audience, sending the right message, and creating longer term relationships with the company. As CEO Smithee summarized, "The more layers you can seamlessly integrate, the better chance of getting something sticky."

1. Would the concepts used to measure marketing success match with the message evaluation methods presented in this chapter? Why or why not?
2. Compare the concepts used by Spych with the terms "behavioral response" and "attitudinal response."
3. What roles do "emotions" and "logic" play in the Spych approach to marketing communications?
4. What roles to social media and hand-held technologies such as smart phones play in today's marketing environment? How will they evolve in the future?

CASE 2 HANES: EVALUATION AND BRAND LOYALTY

Kelsey Van Sickle proudly accepted the promotion to brand manager for the Hanes line of men's undergarments. The line includes undershirts, briefs, boxers, and boxer briefs. The line has been widely distributed in a variety of stores, ranging from Kohl's and JCPenney to less expensive retailers.

The Hanes tagline "Wait 'til we get our Hanes on you" has served the company well. Brand awareness remains high. Kelsey was interested in enhancing or improving brand loyalty. She had all of the marketing tools at her disposal, including bonus packs, coupons, contests or sweepstakes, price-off deals, plus several incentives to be offered to retail stores, most notably cooperative advertising.

The advertising agency employed by Kelsey had recently encountered a public relations problem. Celebrity endorser Charlie Sheen had run into legal problems and was dropped. Sheen and basketball legend Michael Jordan appeared in a series of humor-based commercials for Hanes products.

The agency and Kelsey viewed the moment as an opportunity. Kelsey suggested that a new campaign should be developed, perhaps one more focused on product quality. She wondered whether greater long-term loyalty emerges from perceptions of quality as opposed to simply competing based on price or consumer promotions. She concluded that a well-designed consumer promotions program might enhance an advertising campaign.

The primary competitors for Hanes men's underwear may be found in three areas. First, higher-priced products designed to entice wealthy or fashion-conscious consumers are available in stores such as Saks Fifth Avenue. Second, comparable products, especially those produced by Fruit of the Loom, are on the market. Hanes competes for both consumer loyalty and shelf space with these items. Third, lower-end and generic undergarments are often sold side-by-side with Hanes and Fruit of the Loom.

Kelsey charged the advertising agency with engaging in some basic product and brand research. She wanted focus groups with members that purchase Hanes to tell her why they buy the items. She also wanted them to explain whether they were brand loyal or if buying Hanes was simply a habit that could be influenced by consumer promotions. Finally, she wanted to know what kinds of advertisements would cause them to take the time to watch the commercial and pay attention to its content.

Pricing was an additional concern. In 2008, a major recession had begun that reached many countries. Kelsey had heard that consumers had trended to more cost-conscious purchases, even for basic clothing necessities such as underwear. She wondered if an optimal price-quality perception could be established for Hanes.

1. What IMC objectives are important to Kelsey?
2. What types of message evaluation techniques should Hanes and the advertising agency use when developing the next set of commercials for television and print (magazines)?
3. Are there any online evaluation metrics that would be valuable to Kelsey's efforts?
4. What types of respondent behavior evaluations should Hanes and the advertising agency employ for the next set of commercials?
5. Which consumer promotions should Hanes use? How should they be evaluated?
6. What long-term IMC criteria should be used to assess the Hanes men's underwear brand?



gosphotodesign/Fotolia

▲ Kelsey suggested a new campaign for the Hanes line of men's underwear she now managed.

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Go to **mymktlab.com** for Auto-graded writing questions as well as the following Assisted-graded writing questions:.

1. Are sales figures important when evaluating integrated marketing communications? How should hard data such as redemption rates and store traffic be used in the evaluation of marketing communications? In terms of accountability, how important are behavioral measures of IMC effectiveness?
2. ComScore is a firm that measures Internet traffic and Internet advertising. Access the Web site at www.comscore. com. What services does the company offer? Describe a research project that you feel this company could do successfully to assist in advertising or Internet research.
3. Mymktlab Only—comprehensive writing assignment for this chapter.

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