

The Psychology of Decision-Making: Background Music Used in Advertising

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the importance of background music used in advertising, and how knowledge of the strategies advertisers use may psychologically influence a consumer's decision to buy what the advertisement is selling. In this study, music was removed from both a preexisting movie trailer and television commercial and replaced with two new options to isolate the music factor of an advertisement and determine which song caused participants to prefer one advertisement over the other. The new advertisements were then each placed into two surveys, Survey A and Survey B. Survey A had an information slide with general facts about psychology and advertising that appeared before participants watched the advertisements, while Survey B had statistics about teenagers spending time watching television. Survey A received 109 responses, and Survey B received 123 responses, all from participants ages 13-19 at a mid-sized, suburban high school. In the case of the movie trailer, participants preferred the advertisement using the song that advertisers would expect, while with the television commercial, the opposite occurred. Although this was not the study's hypothesis, the main conclusion is that the song used in an advertisement greatly impacts consumers' likelihood to give into an advertisement. There was no correlation between knowledge of advertiser's strategies and participant's choices. The findings are relevant because they help advertisers see how effective their existing criteria is for the songs they decide to use in their advertisement. The study implies that advertisers need to do further research to ensure that their commercials' and trailers' success is due to the music they select, being that they spend a significant amount of money on it, since consumers are heavily persuaded by background music to go see a movie and/or buy a product.

Introduction

Commercial breaks are infamous for causing that twinge of disappointment when they abruptly disrupt a period of relaxation while watching a television show. As fast-forward is usually not an option, viewers are forced to wait patiently for their program to return. It is during this crucial, short time period where advertisers must grab their attention, such as through the use of background music. Whether it is the new *Star Wars* movie trailer, or an infomercial selling Oxyclean, there is almost always background music playing. Although to the naked ear, consumers may believe its only purpose is to set the mood or fill in empty noise, it turns out that background music can be one of the most influential parts of an advertisement. Some advertising companies spend millions of dollars on only twenty seconds of a song, according to an interview with Natalie Chetkovich, editor at a leading content and entertainment marketing agency called Trailer Park (Chetkovich, 2017). Although to consumers this may seem overbearing, advertisers understand the value in what they are creating.

Consumers seem to pay little attention to background music even though those in charge of creating commercials and trailers find it significant. A great deal of thought goes into song selection, for there are specific jobs dedicated to doing just that. After reading articles on this subject as well as conducting interviews with professionals in the field, it is clear that there is specific criteria that goes into choosing background music. The problem is, how do advertisers know that their criteria is effective, and that the success of an advertisement is not due to another factor of the advertisement altogether?

From the perspective of a consumer, viewers of television commercials and movie trailers react in stronger ways to them than they might realize. If an advertisement appeals to

someone, they are more likely to buy the product/see the movie being promoted. The frightening part is that consumers do not know why. Viewers may think that they want to see a movie because it seems interesting, when in reality, it may very well be that the steady beat playing in the track was keeping them stimulated and paying attention to the trailer in the first place.

Literature Review

The first article relevant to this study was *Background music as an influence in consumer mood and advertising responses* by Judy I. Alpert from St. Edward's University and Mark I. Alpert from The University of Texas at Austin, which discusses the emotional response of consumers to background music in advertisements. The article explains how mood impacts behavior, evaluation, and recall - all key elements to having a successful advertisement. This helped with the idea of incorporating the psychology of decision-making into this project, for if people respond well to the music used in a commercial, this could influence whether or not they buy whatever it is selling. It also explains that background music in advertisements may be associated with the product being sold, which is where the importance of recall comes into play. In addition, the article reveals that various elements of music are all relevant to the mood that the commercial creates- tempo, mode, dynamics, rhythm etc. Additionally, Alpert & Alpert (1991) wrote another article on the same topic, *Contributions from a musical perspective on advertising and consumer behavior*, which focused more on the specific properties of music mentioned previously, and how it is essential that the music chosen for the commercial is in sync with the message that the advertisement is evoking. The article identifies that the way the music works also has to do with the consumer and their level of cognitive arousal, as well as the consumer's perception of the music. The same consistent theme as their other article remains about

background music having an influence on creating the right mood for the advertisement. The article points out that music is not the only contributing factor to a successful advertisement; rather, it is one piece of a complex puzzle that must fit together with the other pieces to create a clear, and harmonious picture.

One article that focused primarily on a song's tempo contributing to the level of attention of the audience is *The impact of background music tempo and timbre congruity upon ad content recall and affective response*, by Steve Oakes from the University of Liverpool Management School, and Adrian C. North from the School of Psychology, University of Leicester. The purpose of the paper is to link ad recall with the tempo of the song; the authors predicted that perhaps a faster tempo could make an advertisement seem shorter, reducing chances of boredom.

Another article that was informative to this field of research regarding the levels of arousal having to do with music is *The effects of background music on consumers' desire to affiliate in buyer-seller interactions*, written by Laurette Dubé, Jean-Charles Chebat, and Sylvie Morin, all from Université de Montreal. Though at first this article did not seem relevant to background music used for advertising purposes, because it deals with in-store interactions between customers and employees, there was a significant amount of information in its background about how different tempos lead to different levels of arousal, which influence one's emotions. The researchers included a multitude of different studies attempting to find which tempos lead to the optimal level of arousal, which seems to have varied results. Therefore, the importance of combining the correct tempo with other elements that help to create the overall message of the advertisement is even more important because the same tempo may not always have a consistent level of arousal.

Another article that was helpful to learning about background music in advertisements was *Effectiveness of a radio spokesperson's gender, vocal pitch and accent and the use of music in radio advertising*, from the journal *Business Research Quarterly*. The article states that more than 80% of advertisements utilize background music, proving a significance among advertisers in its importance. It also includes the fact that sometimes music will silence when crucial information is being presented- this can be seen not only informative television commercials, but also in movie trailers. Whenever there is a serious moment in a trailer, the music will cut out, whether it be the punchline to a comedic one, or the intense moment of a horror film trailer. In this sense, not only is the presence of music a huge part of a trailer, but the absence is as well. Knowing if and when to use music throughout the advertisement is another key factor that must be carefully considered by advertisers in order to have the greatest impact and likeness of recall for consumers. This information again stresses the crucial level of importance in making sure the music and message are coherent.

Reading these articles was helpful because they illustrate just how much thought goes into selecting background music, and show the relationship between factors of music and the advertisements themselves.

To enter the conversation, a study was conducted regarding how the knowledge of various advertising techniques through the use of background music impacts consumers' likeliness to buy the products being advertised. In other words, if consumers understood how influential background music was to advertisements, would they notice it more, and would that impact their susceptibility to the strategies?

Methods

To test not only how effective background music in advertising, but if consumers care about it as much as advertisers believe they do, a survey was created with the help of professionals in the music, movie, and psychology fields. Participants were made up of CP, Honors, and AP students between the ages of 13-19 at a mid-sized suburban high school.

The essential method behind this survey was to take the music out of already existing commercials and trailers, and replace it with both songs that are similar to the music that was originally used, and songs that would be classified as inappropriate for the specific advertisement. In this paper, the song that advertisers would classify as a suitable fit for the commercial/trailer will be referred to as the expected song, whereas the songs that would not be considered an appropriate match will be referred to as the unexpected option. Determining these songs was done with the help of Mrs. Chetkovich, as well as Bobby Gumm, who also works for Trailer Park, and is in charge of selecting music for the movie trailers they work on.

Beginning with the movie trailer, which was for the film *A Cure For Wellness*, the original song that Trailer Park chose for the official trailer was "I Wanna Be Sedated," cover by Mirel Wagner. When explaining the reason they chose this specific song, Mrs. Chetkovich claims that the "music drives the whole back end of the trailer. Slowing the piece down and highlighting the lyrics gives it a creepy haunting feeling," compared to the original version of the song by The Ramones (Chetkovich, 2017). According to Mr. Gumm, a common tactic used when selecting background music for movie trailers is to take an older, well-known song, and create a more modern version of it, in order to appeal to multiple audiences (Gumm, 2016). The reason for not using the original song for the expected example was to remove any bias in case

participants had already seen the trailer. The song chosen for the expected option was “Hotel California,” by The Eagles. Both this song as well as the cover of “I Wanna Be Sedated” were in a similar minor key, were in the same soft rock genre, and were by bands popular around the same time period (the 1970s). The lyrics talk about checking into a hotel that one can never leave, which fit with the trailer, since the main character is being admitted to a mental hospital. As for choosing the unexpected song, this was more challenging. The song needed to be considered one that advertisers would not choose for this kind of trailer, but it could not be blatantly obvious that it was a poor choice for the film’s subject matter. After careful consideration, the song “Crazy Train,” by Ozzy Osbourne, was selected. While the lyrics may be fitting for the trailer, no other elements of the song were. It was from a heavy metal hard rock genre, had an upbeat tempo, and changed the overall mood of the trailer.

As for the commercial, this part of the survey’s purpose was to test more specific elements of what makes a song more appealing to consumers by using two versions of the exact same song. As previously stated, using covers of songs is a common tactic that advertisers use. In this advertisement, the same song as the original version of the commercial was used, but with two different versions of it. The commercial used for this study was one selling Kraft Macaroni and Cheese that used the song “What I Did For Love,” cover by Engelbert Humperdinck, which was a more slow and dramatic version of the original song. In this experiment, the expected example was the cover by Josh Groban, which had a similar key, tempo, and mood. The unexpected example was the original song “What I Did For Love” from the musical *A Chorus Line*. This song is uptempo, has a choir of people singing rather than just one singer, and overall has an old-fashioned sound.

Once the advertisements were prepared, they were placed into a survey, where participants were asked to watch both versions of each advertisement, and select which one they preferred. Before doing so, respondents were asked general questions about how often they watch television and see movies, where they primarily see movie trailers and commercials, and what their feelings were towards these advertisements. For the movie trailer, the expected option, which was “Hotel California,” was presented as the first option, while “Crazy Train,” the unexpected option, was the second one. In the television commercial section, the unexpected option, which was the original Broadway recording of “What I Did For Love,” was the first option, while the expected option, the cover by Josh Groban, was the second option.

Because this experiment also examined the psychology of decision-making, two separate surveys were created, each the exact same, except for one factor. In both surveys, before the participants watched the trailer and commercial, they were asked to read a slide of information. The first one, Survey A, gave a brief background on the psychology of decision-making and how editors choose background music (See Appendix A). This was to test if knowing about the significance of background music would influence the participant’s choices, and if they differed from those taking the other survey, Survey B, which had a filler slide of statistics about teenagers spending time watching television (See Appendix B). It is important to note that the number of responses in Survey A and B slightly varied; Survey A received 109 responses, while Survey B received 123 responses.

Results

General Results

A majority of participants, 70% in Survey A, 65% in Survey B, see movie trailer advertisements once a week or more, reporting that the main platform they view them on is YouTube (51% Survey A, 48% Survey B). 62% in Survey A and 58% in Survey B said their general feelings towards movie trailers were that they enjoyed them when the trailer was for a specific film that they were looking forward to seeing. In Survey A, 62%, and in Survey B, 65% of participants agreed on a scale from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree” that the primary reason they see a movie in theaters is because they saw a movie trailer for it.

There was not one clear result as to how much time participants spend watching television per week, but the majorities in both Survey A and B included the time frames of one to three, four to six, and six to nine hours per week. Participants’ general feelings about television commercials were that they are bothersome, and that when they come on, they will do other activities, such as going on their phones, when fast-forwarding is unavailable (62% Survey A, 55% Survey B). On a scale of one to five, one being not interested at all, five being completely invested in them, participants said while watching television commercials, their attention level is at either a one (28% Survey A, 25% Survey B), or a two (41% Survey A, 46% Survey B). However, on a scale from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree,” a majority of participants agreed that seeing a commercial advertising a brand that they are already familiar with helps them remember the product more, and makes them more likely to buy it when they are in a store and see the product (52% Survey A, 54% Survey B).

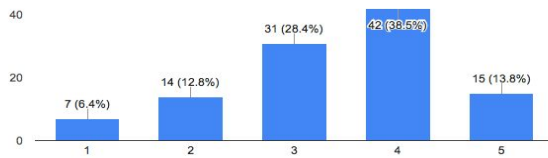
Movie Trailer Results

Participants in both surveys preferred the movie trailer for the film *A Cure For Wellness* that used the song “Hotel California” as the background music. In Survey A, 78% of participants said they preferred this song to “Crazy Train,” compared to 89% in Survey B.

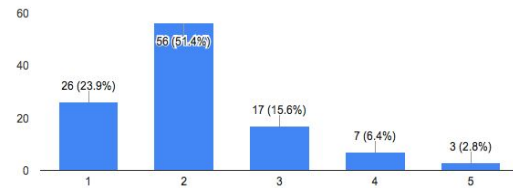
One question that contained a source of error asked if participants recognized either of the songs used in both versions of the trailer. There were options asking if the participants recognized one of the songs, or both, but an option stating that the participants did not recognize either song was not included by mistake. Even still, 64% in Survey A and 70% in Survey B reported recognizing both songs, meaning there is less of a chance that there was bias regarding knowing one song and not the other.

Finally, respondents were asked to rate on a scale of one to five of how likely they would be to go see the film *A Cure For Wellness* if they saw the trailer using the song they preferred, one being they would never see it, five being they definitely would, versus how likely they would be to see the trailer using the song they did *not* prefer. The majority of participants in both Survey A and B (39% and 35%) said that there was a four out of five chance that they would see the film if they saw the trailer using the song they selected. If the trailer did not use the song they selected, the majority of respondents in both surveys said that there was a two out of five chance that they would go see the film (51% in Survey A, 41% in Survey B), as shown in the graphs below (Survey A in blue, Survey B in green).

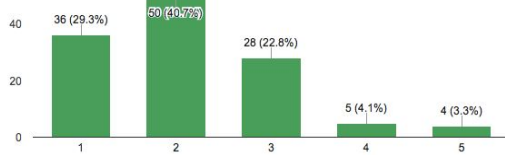
On a scale of 1 to 5, if you saw the trailer "A Cure For Wellness" using the song you preferred, how likely would you be to go see the film, 1 being you would never see it, 5 being you definitely would see it?
(109 responses)



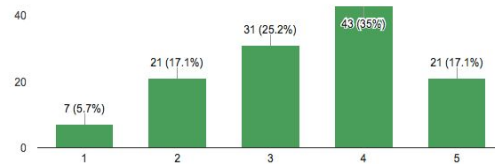
On a scale of 1 to 5, if you saw the trailer "A Cure For Wellness" using the song you did NOT choose, how likely would you be to go see the film, 1 being you would never see it, 5 being you definitely would see it?
(109 responses)



On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely would you be to go see the film "A Cure For Wellness" if you saw the trailer using the song you did NOT choose, 1 being you would never see it, 5 being you definitely would see it?
(123 responses)



On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely would you be to go see the film "A Cure For Wellness" if you saw the trailer using the song you preferred, 1 being you would never see it, 5 being you definitely would see it?
(123 responses)

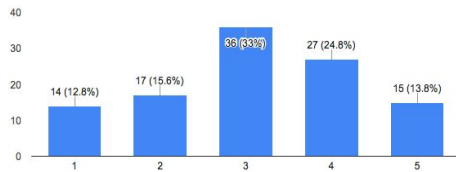


Television Commercial Results

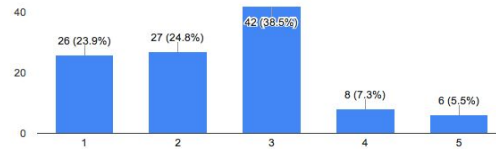
After watching both versions of the Kraft Macaroni and Cheese Commercial, participants preferred the unexpected option, the cover of “What I Did For Love” from the Broadway musical *A Chorus Line* (65% in Survey A, 64% in Survey B). When asked if they realized that both commercials used the same song but different versions of it, a majority of participants, 67% in Survey A and 83% in Survey B, said that they did not. Just like with the movie trailers, participants were asked to rate on a scale of one to five how likely they would be to buy the product being advertised if they saw the commercial using the song they selected versus if they saw it using the song they did not. In both Surveys A and B, the majority of participants rated their likeliness to buy the product if they saw the commercial using the song that they preferred a three out of five, (33% Survey A, 32% Survey B) with the second highest majority being a four out of five (25% Survey A, 28% Survey B). If they saw the trailer using the song that they did

not prefer, participants in Survey A still had a majority of three out of five (39%), the second highest being two out of five (25%), while Survey B had a majority of two out of five (35%), with the second highest being a one out of five (30%), as shown in the graphs below (Survey A in blue, Survey B in green).

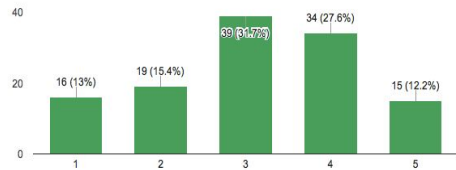
On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely would you be to buy Kraft Macaroni and Cheese if you saw the commercial using the song you preferred, 1 being you would never buy it, 5 being you definitely would buy it?
(109 responses)



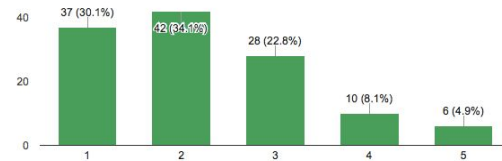
On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely would you be to buy Kraft Macaroni and Cheese if you saw the commercial using the song you did NOT choose, 1 being you would never buy it, 5 being you definitely would buy it?
(109 responses)



On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely would you be to buy Kraft Macaroni and Cheese if you saw the commercial using the song you preferred, 1 being you would never buy it, 5 being you definitely would buy it?
(123 responses)



On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely would you be to buy Kraft Macaroni and Cheese if you saw the commercial using the song you did NOT choose, 1 being you would never buy it, 5 being you definitely would buy it?
(123 responses)



Discussion

This study tested multiple aspects regarding the music that advertisers choose for their television commercials and movie trailers, as well as how knowledge can impact the psychology of decision-making in consumers. There are three main takeaways after examining the results that require further explanation: in both surveys, the first option was the preferred option, the information slide that differentiated Survey A from Survey B did not have an impact on participants' responses, and background music does impact the likeliness of a consumer to go see a movie/buy a product.

Option One Was Preferred

As previously stated, the survey was set up so that in the movie trailer portion, the version of the advertisement that advertisers would predict to be a better fit was the expected option, was presented as “Option One” in the survey. For the television commercial, the expected option was presented as “Option Two.” In the case of the movie trailer, consumers chose what advertisers believed that they would, that being the song “Hotel California.” As for the television commercial, consumers preferred the original Broadway recording of “What I Did For Love,” as opposed to what advertisers expected they would choose, which was the cover by Josh Groban. This finding has multiple implications, the first being that the hindsight bias could have been a factor, as discussed with professor Justin Kantner who teaches psychology courses at California State University, Northridge. Due to the fact that in both cases, the first option was the preferred option, there is a possibility that after the participants had seen the first advertisement, they had it in mind while watching the second one. If they had already formulated their own opinion after watching the first advertisement, they may have held a bias while watching the second one. There is also the possibility that because the Kraft Macaroni and Cheese commercial was a humorous one, the joke may not have seemed as funny the second time, causing the participant to attribute the success of the commercial to the song used the first time they saw the advertisement. Even still, this finding is surprising, because advertisers seem to have a great deal of confidence in their choices to be spending millions of dollars on the music they feel will be successful. Based on these results, perhaps the criteria that advertisers use to determine which songs are the best fit for an advertisement is not as dependable as it could be.

Effect of Providing Information About Advertising

A consistent trend throughout examining the data was that the results between Survey A and Survey B were quite similar, almost exact in certain cases. This shows that from a consumer standpoint, whether they are more aware of the motives behind why advertisers select certain songs for their trailers and commercials does not influence their perceptions and opinions of what they watch. Even if viewers know that advertisers may be using strategies to get an advertisement to appeal to them, as long as it works, they are not bothered by this, and will still formulate their own ideas about what they are watching. For advertisers, this is a strength, because they can continue to manipulate elements of music used in their advertisements to appeal to their demographics, and see how consumers react to their methods. In terms of the psychology of decision-making, consumers' knowledge of advertisers' strategies did not impact their likeliness to see a movie or buy a product. What does matter to consumers, in the end, is their opinions. Perhaps the most significant finding of this study proves exactly that; whether or not the song that participants chose was used greatly impacted their likeliness to do what the advertisement wanted them to.

Background Music Influences Decisions

Though not the original intent for this study, the overarching finding came to be that consumers are influenced to go see a movie or buy a product based on whether or not the advertisement uses a song that they prefer. As seen by the graphs on page 12, whether it was Survey A or B, a suspenseful movie trailer, or a humorous advertisement for macaroni and cheese, participants showed that whether or not the song that they preferred was used is a significant influencer in their likeliness to give in to an advertisement. In Surveys A and B, if

participants saw the trailer for the film *A Cure For Wellness* using the song that they preferred, there was a four out of five chance that they would go see it in theaters, compared to if the trailer used the song that they did not prefer, where the chances dropped to two out of five. As for the television commercial for Kraft Macaroni and Cheese, although a majority of participants in Survey A said that there was a three out of five chance that they would buy the product regardless, the second highest results in the case that the song they preferred was used was a four out of five, compared to the second highest in the case that the song they did not prefer was used, which was a two out of five. For Survey B, the majority of participants said that there was a three out of five chance they would buy the product if the song they preferred was used, and a two out of five chance that they would buy the product if the song that they did not choose was used. Clearly, the chance of people seeing a movie or buying a product significantly drops if a song is used in an advertisements that does not appeal to them. For consumers, this means that they may make their decisions based on specific elements, like music, that appeal to them, more than they realize. For advertisers, this finding is vastly important, because this means that choosing the right song could be someone's deciding factor in whether or not they do what the advertisers hope they will. It especially means that more consideration can be given to the criteria that advertisers use to deem a song as a successful fit for an advertisement, as shown when noticing that participants in this study ended up preferring a song for a commercial that they were not expected to by 65%. If advertisers better understand what makes a song successful in a commercial, they can have more confidence the next time they spend their money on a song that their advertisement will be successful because of that song working with all of the other elements that go into creating an advertisement.

Limitations/Future Research

While this study opens the door to the idea that music, advertising, and psychology all work together when creating the ideal advertisement, there were limits and flaws that came along with it. When the first round of participants were asked to select their race at the beginning of the survey, it became apparent that there was not an option for Hispanic and Latino Americans. To avoid skewing the results, for the rest of the survey rounds, participants were asked to choose the race closest to their own, or to leave the question blank if they did not feel comfortable answering it. Although this was not a significant element of this particular study, future work may examine if there is a difference between the responses of various races. Another difference that would be interesting to examine in the future is that between genders, which unfortunately was not a factor that there was room to fit in the scope of this particular project. Another source of error was, as previously mentioned, that when participants were asked if they recognized either of the songs in the movie trailer, there was not an option that said that they did not recognize either. Again, although this was not an essential element to the study, it could have influenced the results for that particular question, which was meant to examine if the respondents had any bias when choosing which trailer that they preferred. Survey B also had 14 more respondents than Survey A, which did not seem to have an influence in the results overall. For future work, a more diverse and even larger sample size could be used, being that a majority of participants came from an AP level class and were between the ages of 15-18. The sample size was sufficient, being that 109 people participated in Survey A and 123 people participated in Survey B, but with more time, there could always be more. Part of the reason that there was not more in this particular survey was because the participants were all from a high school, and parent consent forms needed to be

signed and returned, as required by the Institutional Review Board, for students to participate. In future studies, it would be interesting to change the order of the commercials and trailers to see if the hindsight bias was in fact a factor that had a significant influence. Also, because there was no way to tell if participants actually read the information slide, it would be interesting to add in a quiz on the information before they could move on to watch the advertisements, to ensure the participants absorbed what they were reading.

Conclusion

Overall, advertisers are right to put as much thought as they do into the songs they choose for their commercials and movie trailers. Consumers report that it does in fact matter to them that they like the music being used in the advertisements that they see, and it significantly impacts their likeliness to see a movie or buy a product being advertised. Having the knowledge of the strategies that advertisers use and background information on the psychology of decision-making did not influence participants' choices in which advertisements they preferred. In the case of the television commercial, participants chose the option that advertisers would not expect them to, which shows that there is room for improvement when determining the criteria advertisers use to deem a song successful for a specific advertisement. There is reason for doing more research on the advertisers' part, for if they have more confidence in what they are spending their money on, it is more likely that they will choose a song for their advertisement that will cause consumers to respond well to it, making it a successful movie trailer/television commercial.

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Appendix A

Section 1: Background Music in Television Commercials and Movie Trailers (A)

I am a...

- a) Male
- b) Female
- c) Other

I am ___ years old

- a) 13
- b) 14
- c) 15
- d) 16
- e) 17
- f) 18
- g) 19

My ethnicity is...

- a) White American
- b) Black or African American
- c) Native American
- d) Alaska Native
- e) Asian American
- f) Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander
- g) Two or more races (multiracial)

The class I am taking this in is ___ level

- a) CP
- b) Honors
- c) AP

How often do you see movies trailers, whether it be on television, youtube, etc.?

- a) never
- b) once or twice a year
- c) 3-5 times a year
- d) every few months
- e) once a month
- f) twice a month
- g) once a week or more

Where do you primarily see movie trailers?

- a) Television commercial breaks
- b) Youtube advertisements
- c) Previews in the movie theater
- d) On internet database homepages, such as yahoo
- e) I search for them myself on the internet

What are your general feelings towards movie trailers that come on while you are watching something else (television show, youtube video, etc.)?

- a) They're all boring; I don't really care to bother watching them.
- b) I'll watch them if they come on during a television commercial break.
- c) I like them when I'm excited for a specific movie to come out.

d) I love them! I always am looking for them so I can find new movies to see.

When you do watch them, what do you like best about movie trailers?

- a) The story line
- b) Seeing which new films my favorite actors are in
- c) The music used in them
- d) The cinematography/graphics
- e) Seeing the title of the film pop up-at the end

I primarily decide to see a movie because I saw the trailer for it.

- a) Strongly Agree
- b) Agree
- c) Disagree
- d) Strongly Disagree

How many hours of television do you watch per week?

- a) less than one
- b) 1-3
- c) 4-6
- d) 6-9
- e) 10-15
- f) 15-20
- g) 20+

What are your general feelings towards television commercials?

- a) They bother me- if they come on and I cannot fast forward them, I will turn off the TV or leave the room.
- b) They bother me- if they come on and I cannot fast forward them, I will go on my phone or change the channel.
- c) They're annoying, but if I can't fast forward, I'll watch them.
- d) I enjoy watching them if I am interested in the product being advertised.
- e) I love them! It's always interesting to see what people are selling.

Assuming you cannot fast forward and are left to watch television commercials, how interested in them would you say you are on a scale of 1-5, 1 being not interested at all, and five being completely invested in them.

1 2 3 4 5

What do you like best about television commercials?

- a) The product being advertised, if I am interested in it.
- b) The story line
- c) The background music
- d) The information used in them to educate the viewer about the product
- e) The humor used in certain situations

Seeing a commercial advertising a brand I am already familiar with helps remind me about the product, and makes me more likely to consider buying it while I am in a store and see it.

- a) Strongly Agree
- b) Agree
- c) Disagree
- d) Strongly Disagree

Section 2: Information

You will now be given some general information about the strategies that advertisers use in television commercials and movie trailers to draw the viewer in, as well as some explanations from a psychological standpoint as to why we respond well to certain types of music used in advertising.

It is essential that you pay attention to this information, and keep it in mind while you go through the next two parts of the survey, where you will be asked to watch movie trailers and television commercials and choose the one you prefer.

What to keep in mind about psychology:

- When we take in information, anything that makes it easier to process that information makes us more likely to pay attention to the stimulus. This is called cognitive processing.

- When the tempo, volume and genre of the music playing and activity occurring on screen match, it is easier for us to mentally process the stimuli.

-When something is easy for us to process, we associate more positive emotions towards it.

-When a stimulus is disfluent, such as an exciting action scene using slow waltz music, our brain finds this harder to process, and we feel more negatively towards it.

What to keep in mind about advertising strategies:

-An advertising editor's goal is to use music to make you as the viewer either feel, or do something.

-Editors know which songs will likely catch the attention of their target audiences.

-Editors will sometimes use specific tempos of music, depending on the trailer/commercial, to keep viewers more stimulated, and therefore force us to pay attention.

-One common strategy editors use to attract multiple audiences is using modern versions of older songs.

Section 3: Movie Trailer

You will now watch two of the same movie trailers for the film “A Cure For Wellness”, each one using a different song in the background. Once you have watched both of them, please select the trailer you prefer.

For the movie trailers, there are two links below for you to view them. First, click each link to watch the trailers, and come back to select which one you prefer.

Option 1:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bzs9-8QHhF8XSkpzNndsYXZPWFU/view?usp=sharing>

Option 2:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bzs9-8QHhF8XUXByT3U3VUJyQmc/view?usp=sharing>

Which trailer did you prefer?

- a) Option 1
- b) Option 2

Did you know and/or recognize either of the songs used in the two trailers?

- a) I knew/recognized the song in Option 1
- b) I knew/recognized the song in Option 2
- c) I knew/recognized both songs

Why do you think the option you chose was best suited for this trailer? Explain.

On a scale of 1 to 5, if you saw the trailer "A Cure For Wellness" using the song you preferred, how likely would you be to go see the film, 1 being you would never see it, 5 being you definitely would see it?

1 2 3 4 5

On a scale of 1 to 5, if you saw the trailer "A Cure For Wellness" using the song you did NOT choose, how likely would you be to go see the film, 1 being you would never see it, 5 being you definitely would see it?

1 2 3 4 5

Section 4: Television Commercial

You will now watch two of the same television commercials advertising Kraft Macaroni and Cheese. Once you have watched both of them, please select which one you prefer.

For the television commercials, there are two links below for you to view them. First, click each link to watch the commercials, and come back to select which one you prefer.

Option 1:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bzs9-8QHhF8XZll6dVU1SWRaemM/view?usp=sharing>

Option 2:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bzs9-8QHhF8XOVJQdDI4WHRuVIU/view?usp=sharing>

Which commercial did you prefer?

- a) Option 1
- b) Option 2

In as much detail as possible, please explain why you chose the option you did. Be sure to mention whether you chose option 1 or 2, what you liked about the song, how you feel it added to the commercial, and any other elements of it you found helpful.

Were you able to tell that each of these commercials had the same song, but different versions of it?

- a) Yes
- b) No

On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely would you be to buy Kraft Macaroni and Cheese if you saw the commercial using the song you preferred, 1 being you would never buy it, 5 being you definitely would buy it?

1 2 3 4 5

On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely would you be to buy Kraft Macaroni and Cheese if you saw the commercial using the song you did NOT choose, 1 being you would never buy it, 5 being you definitely would buy it?

1 2 3 4 5

Appendix B

Section 1: Background Music in Television Commercials and Movie Trailers (B)

I am a...

- a) Male
- b) Female
- c) Other

I am ___ years old

- a) 13
- b) 14
- c) 15
- d) 16
- e) 17
- f) 18
- g) 19

My ethnicity is...

- a) White American
- b) Black or African American
- c) Native American
- d) Alaska Native
- e) Asian American
- f) Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander
- g) Two or more races (multiracial)

The class I am taking this in is ___ level

- a) CP
- b) Honors
- c) AP

How often do you see movies trailers, whether it be on television, youtube, etc.?

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- d) every few months
- e) once a month
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Where do you primarily see movie trailers?

- a) Television commercial breaks
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What are your general feelings towards movie trailers that come on while you are watching something else (television show, youtube video, etc.)?

- a) They're all boring; I don't really care to bother watching them.
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- c) I like them when I'm excited for a specific movie to come out.

d) I love them! I always am looking for them so I can find new movies to see.

When you do watch them, what do you like best about movie trailers?

- a) The story line
- b) Seeing which new films my favorite actors are in
- c) The music used in them
- d) The cinematography/graphics
- e) Seeing the title of the film pop up-at the end

I primarily decide to see a movie because I saw the trailer for it.

- a) Strongly Agree
- b) Agree
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How many hours of television do you watch per week?

- a) less than one
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Assuming you cannot fast forward and are left to watch television commercials, how interested in them would you say you are on a scale of 1-5, 1 being not interested at all, and five being completely invested in them.

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What do you like best about television commercials?

- a) The product being advertised, if I am interested in it.
- b) The story line
- c) The background music
- d) The information used in them to educate the viewer about the product
- e) The humor used in certain situations

Seeing a commercial advertising a brand I am already familiar with helps remind me about the product, and makes me more likely to consider buying it while I am in a store and see it.

- a) Strongly Agree
- b) Agree
- c) Disagree
- d) Strongly Disagree

Section 2: Information

You will now be given some statistics on the time teens spend watching movies and television in their day to day lives. Please read over this information carefully before you proceed to the next part of the survey.

Teen Television Statistics/Facts

-The average teenager spends more time in front of the television than any other activity besides sleeping.

-Television viewing increases in pre-teen years and declines after age 12.

-Adolescents aged 9-14 spend over 20 percent of waking hours watching television, compared to 9 percent on hobbies and 3.5 percent on homework.

-By age 18, a teenager will have seen 350,000 commercials

Teen Media Statistics/Facts

-Aided by the convenience and constant access provided by mobile devices, especially smartphones, 92% of teens report going online daily.

-Nearly three-quarters of teens have or have access to a smartphone and 30% have a basic phone.

-[Advertising] companies are targeting [teens] where they hang out: in apps, in games, and on websites that stream music and video and offer other downloadable content.

-Facebook is the most popular and frequently used social media platform among teens; half of teens use Instagram, and nearly as many use Snapchat.

Section 3: Movie Trailer

You will now watch two of the same movie trailers for the film "A Cure For Wellness," each one using a different song in the background. Once you have watched both of them, please select the trailer you prefer.

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Which trailer did you prefer?

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- a) I knew/recognized the song in Option 1
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On a scale of 1 to 5, if you saw the trailer "A Cure For Wellness" using the song you preferred, how likely would you be to go see the film, 1 being you would never see it, 5 being you definitely would see it?

1 2 3 4 5

On a scale of 1 to 5, if you saw the trailer "A Cure For Wellness" using the song you did NOT choose, how likely would you be to go see the film, 1 being you would never see it, 5 being you definitely would see it?

1 2 3 4 5

Section 4: Television Commercial

You will now watch two of the same television commercials advertising Kraft Macaroni and Cheese. Once you have watched both of them, please select which one you prefer.

For the television commercials, there are two links below for you to view them. First, click each link to watch the commercials, and come back to select which one you prefer.

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<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bzs9-8QHhF8XZll6dVU1SWRaemM/view?usp=sharing>

Option 2:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bzs9-8QHhF8XOVJQdDI4WHRuVIU/view?usp=sharing>

Which commercial did you prefer?

- a) Option 1
- b) Option 2

In as much detail as possible, please explain why you chose the option you did. Be sure to mention whether you chose option 1 or 2, what you liked about the song, how you feel it added to the commercial, and any other elements of it you found helpful.

Were you able to tell that each of these commercials had the same song, but different versions of it?

- a) Yes
- b) No

On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely would you be to buy Kraft Macaroni and Cheese if you saw the commercial using the song you preferred, 1 being you would never buy it, 5 being you definitely would buy it?

1 2 3 4 5

On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely would you be to buy Kraft Macaroni and Cheese if you saw the commercial using the song you did NOT choose, 1 being you would never buy it, 5 being you definitely would buy it?

1 2 3 4 5