Pulling the White Rabbit Out of the Hat: Consuming Brands in Imperial China

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We trace branding in China from the Song Dynasty (960-1127) to contemporary times. In many cases brands were developed by consumers or the government, instead of or in addition to the seller. This demonstrates a consumer initiated branding system that developed independently of brand management initiatives. The contention that multiple stakeholders define the brand in the marketplace challenges the conceptualization of brand management as a manager centered activity. Rather than assuming that managers define brands through marketing communication, the co-creative nature of brand development suggests that brands evolve in co-operative circles where successful brands align themselves with the consumers they seek to establish relationships with.

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The Impact of Arousal on Judgment Correction
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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the conditions under which people can correct the effects of arousal experienced during judgment. Specifically, it investigates how motivation and judgment mode (memory- or stimulus-based judgment) interact to affect people’s tendency to correct the influence of unrelated emotional arousal on judgment of brands.

Research on mental contamination, correction and discounting suggests several factors that may affect correction (Wilson and Brekke 1994; Schul and Burnstein 1985; Schul and Mazursky 1990). Two factors discussed in the literature serve as the basis for our conceptualization. The first is related to the timing of processing of the discounting context relative to encoding of the information. According to Schul and colleagues, if the discounting information is presented prior to encoding of other information, it might be easier to discount the irrelevant information; if the discounting information is presented after encoding, it might be more difficult to discount the irrelevant information. This argument suggests that when considering the effect of arousal experienced during judgment on correction, there might be differences between conditions of memory-based judgment and stimulus-based judgment. Under stimulus-based judgment (compared to memory-based judgment), aroused people might have more difficulties separating their arousal from the rest of the information. In memory-based judgment, because the encoding of judgment target information and the experienced arousal take place at different points in time, it might be easier to filter out the arousal from the judgment. The second factor in the basis of our conceptualization is motivation. Researchers suggest that to permit discounting, people should be motivated to render accurate judgment (e.g., Wilson and Brekke 1994; Schul and Burstein 1985). Based on these two factors we propose that:

**H1:** Arousal, mode of judgment, and motivation, will interact to affect people’s judgment and ability to correct their judgment.

**H2a:** In memory-based judgment, under high motivation, arousal experienced during judgment will not affect judgment.

**H2b:** In memory-based judgment, under low motivation, arousal experienced during judgment will affect judgment.

**H3:** In stimulus-based judgment, under both high and low motivation, arousal will affect judgment.

**Method**

The effect of arousal on judgment and correction was examined using a 2 (arousal: moderate vs. high) x 2 (motivation: low vs. high) x 2 (mode of judgment: memory vs. stimulus-based judgment) fully between-subject design. The dependent variable was attitude toward a brand (Abr), which participants learned about from an ad presented to them. Participants were 438 undergraduate students in introductory courses in business at a Midwestern university; they participated in the experiment in exchange for extra credit points.

Arousal was manipulated using music. Based on pretesting, we chose two pieces: *Binary Finary* by Ricky Grant for the high arousal condition and *Closing Time* by Tom Waits for the moderate arousal condition.

To manipulate the participants’ motivation, we used an accuracy goal procedure (Maheswaran and Sternthal 1990). Participants in the high motivation condition were told that the study was related to a company’s market research, and that their evaluation would be heavily weighed in the company’s decision. For the low motivation condition, participants were asked to complete a scale about their attitude toward the brand as a part of pilot testing.

Mode of judgment was manipulated as follows. In the stimulus-based conditions, participants were asked to complete a scale to measure their attitude toward the ad while viewing the ad. In the memory-based condition, participants participated in a two-session experiment which consisted of encoding and judgment sessions. We used several procedures described in the literature to ensure that people only encoded information in the first session without forming any judgment (Lichtenstein and Srull 1987).

The judgment target was the brand presented in an ad, measured on a four-item scale, with seven points for each item (Miniard et al. 1991).

**Results**

ANOVA revealed significant interaction between arousal, motivation and judgment mode to affect Abr ($F(1, 422)=3.98, p<.05$). Moreover, under conditions of memory-based judgment, arousal had a significant effect on Abr only under low motivation condition ($p(2-tail)<.05$). The effect of arousal on Abr under condition of high motivation was insignificant ($p(2-tail)=.7$). Interestingly, the results under stimulus-based judgment reveal an opposite pattern. Under conditions of stimulus-based judgment, arousal had a significant effect on Abr only under high motivation ($p(2-tail)<.1$). The effect of arousal on Abr under conditions of low motivation was insignificant ($p(2-tail)=.8$).

**Discussion and Conclusion**

Results of the study support all hypotheses with one exception. In stimulus-based judgment under low motivation, arousal did not have impact on people’s attitude toward the brand. One alternative explanation may be related to the effect of people’s motivation. According to Stapel, Kooman, and Zeelenberg (1998), if participants are more motivated to think, we will see an enhanced effect on judgment. In contrast, when they do not think much about the judgment, we will be less likely to see an effect. Although this explanation might explain the pattern observed in stimulus-based judgment, it is inconsistent with the pattern observed under memory-based judgment.

Another explanation may be related to the mechanisms that govern the effects of arousal on judgment. It is possible that various mechanisms will dominate the effect of arousal on judgment under different conditions and that each of these mechanisms require different conditions for people to be able to correct their effect on judgment. Future research should examine the circumstances under which each of the processes for the effect of arousal on judgment take place and the nature of each of those mechanisms.