The Telepresence Effect: Changing Attitudes Via Virtual Tours in Marketing Communications

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Virtual online tours enable a consumer to immerse themselves in environments without physically being in them, usually in the hopes of encouraging positive attitudes toward the advertiser. Two studies demonstrate how consumer and advertiser interactivity, unique to virtual tours, leads to telepresence (e.g., immersion), which then leads to positive attitudes.

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Asymmetric Conformity to Positive and Negative Advice
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The ubiquity of online ratings has facilitated word-of-mouth transmission but researchers have yet to fully understand whether and how rating valence interacts with intrinsic product quality to affect consumer’s ultimate product evaluation. We show that positive and negative WOM advice asymmetrically influences the evaluation of good and bad experiential products.

Leaps and Tweaks: The Impact of Version Numbers on Product Attractiveness
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When consumers evaluate products with version numbers smaller numerical gaps between version numbers can enhance product appeal. Three studies show that this effect occurs when the existing version has a decimal number while the new version has a whole number suggesting a more substantive leap after several incremental ones.

Mental Representation of Attitudinal Ambivalence
Amit Surendra Singh, Ohio State University, USA
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An ambivalent attitude has both positive and negative reactions associated with it. In this research the underlying structure of oppositely-valenced components is investigated. Preliminary evidence indicates positive and negative thoughts about an object being stored together in memory. Further effect of situational relevance on accessibility is studied.

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How Hunger Facilitates Dieting: The Paradoxical Effect of Hunger When Individuals are Primed With an Environmental Dieting Cue
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This research examines the influence of an environmental dieting cue in interaction with hunger. Results reveal that the cue a screensaver showing thin human-like sculptures by the artist Alberto Giacometti reduced unhealthy food intake especially in hungry individuals. Thus the dieting cue was effective when it was actually needed.