

ADVERTISING FOLLOWING NEGATIVE PUBLICITY:
THE EFFECT OF CONTENT AROUSAL ON POSITIVITY AND ATTITUDE
TOWARD THE BRAND AFTER A CORPORATE CRISIS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates whether positive emotion-arousing ads following a corporate crisis can evoke positivity and repair attitude toward the brand. A fractional factorial experiment was conducted to examine participants' emotional variance and attitudinal change in response to a positive emotion-arousing ad following negative publicity on a brand. As a result, 1) based on physiological measures, reading negative news stories about a corporate crisis was neither an arousing nor a negative emotional experience; viewing a positive emotion-arousing ad was arousing and decreased negative emotion compared to a neutral ad, but positive emotion evoked by both content-arousal levels was not different. 2) According to self-reported emotion, however, participants reported negative emotion after reading negative news stories about a corporate crisis; they continued to report positive emotion and arousal after viewing a positive ad compared to after viewing a neutral ad. 3) Finally, viewing a positive emotion-arousing ad resulted in an increase of favorable attitude toward the ad compared to viewing a neutral ad; however, there was not a main effect of content arousal on brand attitude mediated through attitude toward the ad. Even though, viewing a positive emotion-arousing ad and a neutral ad both led to an increase of favorable brand attitude.