Public Abstract

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Graduation Term:SS 2011

Department:Journalism

Degree:PhD

Title:Promoting Cause Sponsorship on Corporate Web Sites: Perceived Control of Navigation, Natural Fit, and Created Fit

The purpose of the present research is to examine the role of perceived control of navigation in online sponsorship-linked marketing. Specifically, the proposed research examines the influence of three independent variables - perceived control of navigation, degree of natural fit, and created-fit type - on cognitive elaboration, attitude formation, and purchase intention in the context of cause sponsorship-linked marketing on corporate Web sites. Applying schema congruity theory (Mandler, 1982) and the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986; Petty, Priester, & Briñol, 2002), the present research conducts two experiments. The results showed that perceived control of navigation could influence attitude toward the Web site, attitude toward the brand and purchase intention. When perceived control of navigation was high, Type II created fit was significantly associated with fewer negative thoughts about the sponsorship, and more positive attitude toward the brand, attitude positive attitude toward the sponsorship, and higher purchase intention than low natural fit sponsorship. Theoretically, these results suggest that perceived control of navigation can influence brand attitude and purchase intention through attitude toward the Web site. Created fit, as a strategy drawing upon central route to persuasion depends upon high perceived control of navigation. Practically, this study suggests that corporate Web site is an ideal platform for communicating sponsorship associations, and created fit, assisted by Web-based interaction, can open up promising opportunities for companies that are of low fit with social causes.