The Consumption of Concepts: The Hedonic and Utilitarian Effects of Perceived Interactivity on the Consumption of Digital Information

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Thinkfinity Grant
Mid-Project Status Report

Project Title:
The Consumption of Concepts: The Hedonic and Utilitarian Effects of Perceived Interactivity on
the Consumption of Digital Information

Cornerstone #: 3

Principal Investigators:
Jennifer Thomas, Professor of Information Systems, Seidenberg
Larry Chiagouris, Professor of Marketing, Lubin
Colleen P. Kirk, Doctoral Student in Marketing, Lubin

Date: May 31, 2011

PROJECT STATUS

Original Goals:

1. Project Description: The purpose of this experimental study is to use the theoretical
frameworks of the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989) and environmental
psychology (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974) to test the theory that perceived interactivity
affects human response to the consumption of digital information. This study is
important for industry but also for education, which is one of the largest consumers of
information, and research defining the drivers of this consumption in digital form is
limited.

2. Methodology – Procedures:
   a. This study is a 3x2 factor experimental design. Researchers understand that
      considering the involvement of human subjects, the study is subject to approval
      by the Pace IRB.
   b. A random sample of 180 participants from a population of adults over the age of
      18 will be solicited, ensuring a broad range of demographic profiles.
   c. Participants will be randomly assigned to three interactivity levels: high
      interactive digital medium, low interactive digital medium, and print medium,
      with two different task orientations.
d. The treatment will consist of media such as a magazine that has been specially
manipulated to serve as a high-interactive, low-interactive, or print treatment,
and participants will be assigned learning goals or task-oriented goals.
e. Participants will receive a pre-test, a treatment (exposure to the medium), and a
post-test. The treatment will be accessed via a web link, in the case of digital
media, or via the distribution of print materials.
f. Variables will be measured using published scales from the appropriate
literature.

3. Methodology - Analysis: Data analysis will be conducted using structural equation
modeling, considered an optimal technique for evaluating the impact of explanatory
mediating variables in an experimental design study (Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002).

4. Original Timetable:

   a. January 2010 – Finalize study implementation details, plan detailed study
      schedule.
   b. Spring 2011 – Assemble scales, testing instruments. Finalize interactive media
treatments.
   c. Summer 2011 – Test participants.
   d. Fall 2011 – Analyze results. Write article and submit for conference
      presentation/publication.

Progress to Date:

Theoretical background for this project was presented at the Academy of Marketing Science
conference in Miami, Florida in May, 2011, and reviewer and audience comments are being
incorporated into the project.

This project is based on the doctoral dissertation of Colleen P. Kirk, and as such implementation
has been postponed to ensure full participation and approval by all of Colleen’s committee
members. The dissertation proposal, including all details of study implementation, sampling,
pre-testing, interactivity development, and measurement scales, has been written and
benefitted from several revision cycles. In addition, estimates for potential participant panels
have been obtained. Colleen’s proposal defense, delayed due to the full schedules of various
committee members, is now scheduled for July 1. After this date, implementation of the study
will begin.
Impact on Students: None to date

Impact on Faculty: None to date

Next Steps:

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<td>Finalize Survey Instrument</td>
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<td>Interactivity Manipulation Programming</td>
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