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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:

Action	Target Completion Date
Dissertation Proposal Defense	July 1, 2011
Pre-test design and implementation	September 1
Finalize Survey Instrument	September 1
Interactivity Manipulation Programming	October 1
Finalize panel participants	October 1
Survey Implementation and Data Collection	November 1
Thinkfinity Project Update	December 1
Data Analysis	February 1, 2012
Reporting and Conference Submission	April 15