

Traditional and digital media advertising preference: a descriptive evaluation of Billings, Montana mothers

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ABSTRACT

Understanding consumers allows marketers to tailor specifically to a target market effectively. Digital advertising methods are relatively new compared to more established traditional advertising methods; the introduction and proliferation of the Internet and digital devices have steadily increased digital advertising use by marketers. Preferences within digital advertising and within traditional advertising have been explored; however, as digital media usage has increased, preference between the two methods has not been examined. Research indicates mother consumers in America conduct a majority of the household shopping across numerous product categories. An understanding of media channel preference for this demographic group could increase marketing campaign reception and indicate to marketers how marketing dollars should be budgeted for mother consumers. Marketing allocation success could be significantly improved with a better understanding of consumer preference between the traditional and digital media channels. Mothers in Billings, Montana with children living in the home under the age of 18 years old were asked to complete a mail survey to determine mother media preference between traditional and digital media advertising. There were 285 mother consumers' responses to the mail survey request. A t-test and ANOVA analysis were used to show mothers' preference for traditional media channels over digital. A significant difference was found in mother media channel preference for traditional media channels ($M= 2.63$, $SD= 0.71$) over digital media channels ($M= 1.68$, $SD= 0.57$) conditions; $t(285) = 1.97$, $p < .000$. The ANOVA results were significant, $F(5,1698) = 128.239$, $p = .000$, indicating a statistically significant difference between channel preference within the pairs of the six media channels studied. This study provides marketers information about the media channel preferences for mother consumers that can be used to effectively target the consumer preference and behavior of this demographic group wielding significant purchase power.

Key Words: Advertising Effectiveness, Brand Loyalty, Location Based Advertising (LBA), Marketing Return on Investment (ROI), Viral Marketing

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BACKGROUND

Consumer media channel preference has continued to be debated by marketers, as many marketers have switched from traditional advertising allocation to digital or have increased their Internet advertising spending in response to the rising costs of traditional advertising in comparison (Chao et al., 2012). Although consumer preference does not remain static, research on consumer media channel preference has been limited (Chao et al., 2012).

With 78.6% of the U.S. population using the Internet ("Internet World Stats", 2014), phenomenal growth has occurred in digital media. Advertising revenue from the Internet peaked in the third quarter of 2012 with revenues of \$9.26 billion, marking an 18% increase over previous years ("Internet Advertising Revenues", 2012). This growth includes social networking sites like Facebook.com, Twitter.com, personal blogs, and has fueled the continued digital advertising growth ("Consumers Driving, 2010"; "U.S. 2010 Digital", 2011). Facebook, the most popular social networking site, is also the most visited site on the web, passing both Google.com and MySpace.com in 2010 (Lipsman, 2010). Facebook advertising revenue increased 35.9% from 2011 to 2012 and surpassed growth expectations in 2013 ("eMarketer", 2012). Facebook.com earned a staggering revenue of \$6.99 billion for advertising in 2013, increasing total revenue by 55% over the previous year (Edwards, 2014). A significant portion of Facebook.com's popularity and new account growth is derived from mother consumers who accounted for 36 million Facebook.com users as of February 2010 (as cited in Bohan, 2010). A more conservative number was estimated in 2012 research by eMarketer with 28 million moms using social media, and approximately 82% of those mother social media users have children in the home under 18 years old ("Marketers", 2012). Mothers check Facebook more frequently than other users within a 24 hour time period and are more likely to use wireless devices to check Facebook content ("Moms and Media", 2012).

Marketing research focusing on mothers makes sense for several reasons. The total population is comprised of over 50% females who make 80% of the purchases (Banyte, et al., 2007). Women control 85% of consumer purchases ranging from vehicles to health care, with women controlling over 90% in categories such as new home purchases, vacations, and food ("Marketing to Women", n.d.; Williams, 2010). The amount of household spending controlled by mothers is estimated at 85% (Bailey, n.d.) and includes additional product categories compared to purchases made by females without children. This segment offers additional potential for marketing researchers due to substantial purchase power and control coupled with the responsibility of a wide range of purchases (Banyte et al., 2007; "Marketing to Women", n.d.; Williams, 2010).

A new marketing strategy is necessary to target women consumers. Advertising campaigns where the product is merely advertised in a pink color is not an effective promotional campaign successful in reaching women (Costa, 2010). An online study in the United Kingdom showed 80% of polled mothers would not make a purchase before consulting other mothers using the site (Costa, 2010). Understanding mother media preference and external influences is important to understanding what will be effective with this target market group (Belch & Belch, 2011).

It is important for marketers to know the influence digital media has on mothers to understand the return-on-investment (ROI) for digital advertising campaigns. A 2010 RAMA study showed that e-mail advertising and online communities are similar in influence for both genders; however, males who used social media were more likely to be influenced by (1) Internet

advertising, (2) instant messaging, and (3) blogs ("Social Media", 2010). A more complete picture can be provided by a preference study including both digital and traditional media advertising rather than preference studies within each media channel. Understanding this complete picture will ensure marketers understand consumer preference and how to capture mother consumer attention with advertising geared specifically towards their preferred method of advertising communication.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Preferences within digital advertising and within traditional advertising have been explored; however, "academic research that focuses on comparisons between traditional media and online advertising is limited, and it may take some years before significant research publications are available" (Chao et al., 2012, p. 21). Chao(2012) suggested that additional research is necessary to further understand consumer advertising preferences in relation to predicting effectiveness of the media channel used, understanding age or generational differences that might exist, and examining potential shifts in preference. The Internet, or online media, falls under the spectrum of digital media (Karimova, 2011), and the comparison of different media channels is scarce (Wakolbinger, Denk, & Oberecker, 2009). Thus, media channel preference between digital and traditional media channels is currently unknown for a powerful consumer segment of mother consumers (Danaher & Rossiter, 2011; Pookulangara & Natesan, 2010). Due to a responsibility for a wide range of purchases, massive purchase power, inclination to pass along word of mouth (WOM), and increasing online presence, mother consumer media preference is significant to marketers (Banyte et al., 2007; Copeland, 2009; Costa, 2010; Gordon, 2009; Phelps, Lewis, Mobilio, Perry, & Raman, 2004). The first half of 2011 showed consistent growth in e-commerce spending with approximately \$1 discretionary spending of every \$10 spent online, remaining constant during the recent recession ("comScore Reports", 2011). Mothers self-reported the Internet as the most essential medium to everyday life (DeCesare, 2011). Compared to the general population they spend more time online, and they have an increased propensity towards Smartphone ownership that allows marketers the potential for additional digital access to this consumer group (DeCesare, 2011). Social media continues to increase with mothers as well, with 62% of all mothers with a Facebook.com account (DeCesare, 2011). Without an understanding of mother preference between traditional and digital channels, marketers may forfeit significant sales revenue and potentially misallocate marketing dollars. The allocation of marketing dollars to unsuccessful campaigns or the use of unproductive channels for a target market results in ineffectively spent advertising dollars and decreased potential sales revenue. Advertising expenditures increased to \$144 billion in 2011, up .8% from 2010 ("Kantar Media", 2012). Consequently, effective strategies for reaching target audiences continues to be of the highest importance, especially for target audiences with the purchasing power and range of purchases of mother consumers.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The goal of this quantitative descriptive research study is to determine mother media preference between digital and traditional media advertising. To avoid sampling error, the study used a purchased mail survey administered to 2,104 mothers with children living in the home under the age of 18. A minimum sample size of 252 was necessary for analysis determined by a

power analysis using G*Power (see Appendix A). Advertising preference for six media channels was measured, including both digital and traditional mediums. Traditional channels include radio and television, while digital channels measured include online webpage advertising, e-mail messages, text messaging, and social media advertising. The mean average of the digital channels and the mean average for the traditional channels are compared using a paired-samples t-test to determine if a significant difference in advertising preference exists for the mother population. The observed preference frequencies of each of the measured channels are also compared using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to determine if a significant difference exists in preference between each channel variable. An understanding of preference for mother consumers will allow marketers to determine the best marketing budget allocation based on the preferred channel mothers express.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions address the Billings, Montana mother population with children living in the home to determine mother media channel preference between traditional and digital media methods.

- Q1.** Is there a significant difference in advertising preference between traditional and digital media for the mother population?
- Q2.** Is there a significant difference in advertising preference between radio, television, web, e-mail, text messages, and social media advertising for the mother population?

HYPOTHESES

- H1₀.** There is no difference in preference between traditional or digital media advertising for mother consumers.
- H1_a.** There is a difference in preference between traditional or digital media advertising for mother consumers.
- H2₀.** There is no difference in preference between radio, television, web, e-mail, text messages, and social media advertising for mother consumers.
- H2_a.** There is a difference in preference between radio, television, web, e-mail, text messages, and social media advertising for mother consumers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous Research

Although research has indicated that traditional media is waning in comparison to digital media methods, the research conducted by BIGresearch in 2008 showed no decrease in consumer influence in the electronic purchase category for traditional advertising (“Word of Mouth Influences”, 2008). Traditional media such as television, direct mail, and e-mail have remained steady influencers for consumers in making electronic purchases (“Word of Mouth Influences”, 2008). In 2008, 88.9% of consumers watched television weekly, 77.9% read advertisements they received in the mail, and 70.2% listened to the radio displaying a heavy exposure to traditional media advertising (“Word of Mouth Influences”, 2008). In addition, consumers reported

newspaper advertisements were more influential in 2008 compared to 2007 in both electronic and apparel purchases (“Word of Mouth Influences”, 2008).

Traditional marketing focuses on consumer attitude information and mass-marketing tactics, while digital, or e-marketing, efforts use information obtained from data collection methods from actual consumer purchases to provide insights into consumer behavior (Mulhern, 2009). The digital nature of the data provides significant insight almost instantaneously compared to other marketing research methods used in traditional channels (Malhotra, 2010). This data is collected over a period, and is capable of recording multiple transactions between a consumer and a brand to provide a picture of a relationship compared to a picture of just one transaction. Transactional theory has evolved into an exchange theory focused on consumer feedback and preference relating to the relationship developed through past and future experiences and interactions between a consumer and a brand and the purchase intent the consumer has with the brand in the future.

The relational exchange theory of marketing portrays a shift away from the traditionally accepted one-way transaction theory of consumer marketing (Lefaix-Durand & Kozak, 2009). Transaction theory was based on planned advertising messages and mass-marketing communication efforts using demographic information for a target segment (Mulhern, 2009; Romaniuk & Gugel, 2010; Vargo & Lusch, 2004). Relational exchange focuses on the consumer brand interaction and on fostering continued communication between the two (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). The adaptation of relational exchange theory in marketing allows continued communication between the consumer and the brand in an effort to target a consumer need more effectively. This communication encourages brand loyalty and consumer participation that was unattainable with the previously supported transaction theory (Dwyer et al., 1987).

Arndt (1979) described the relationship between a firm and consumer outside of the context of transactional theory and declared properties of a long-term relationship and the effects on consumer behavior. In the 1980s, marketers determined that consumer behavior and loyalty to a firm is influenced by previous interactions (Styles, Patterson, Ahmed, 2008). The primary differentiation between the two exchange theories is the interconnected, personal, and customer centered, communication between the firm and customer (Schakett, 2009).

Media channels using relational marketing techniques employ a prolonged communication between the firm and consumer instead of the short transaction time-period representative of transactional theory (Dwyer, et al., 1987). The development of a relationship separate from the confines of the singular transaction emphasizes the relational aspect of the initial transaction and creation of perceptions that influence the probability of repeat transactions. The determination of future consumer purchases is based on customer perceptions founded on trust between the consumer and firm (Dwyer et al., 1987; Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

Starting in the 1990s, the adoption of global economic activity and technological advances like the Internet and handheld wireless devices increased the ability and frequency of relational exchanges between consumers and firms. This new technology allowed marketers to reach consumers with advertising data and picture content without regard to the current physical location of the consumer or the specific time of day (Mulhern, 2009). The interaction and two-way communication have led many to claim that the Internet is more effective than traditional advertisements (Chen, 2006). The digitization of media content and the resulting network effects have broadened the reaches of relational theory and have also instilled a new user-control over marketing messages that was absent in transactional theory (Mulhern, 2009).

Strategies for relational theory only work with the two-way communication instead of the push marketing used in traditional marketing channels. Without the permission or opt-in from consumers, there is no two-way communication. A focus on convenience and benefit value for the consumer can increase the likelihood that consumers will participate, which in turn will increase the overall success of the campaign (Ashley, Noble, Donthu, & Lemon, 2011).

The new user-control of interaction accompanies the premise of a consumer focus in relational theory (Mulhern, 2009). Advertising designed using relational exchange theory focuses on the customer and their individual needs. The advertisements are requested by the consumer and the content is matched directly to criteria outlined by the consumer (Mulhern, 2009). Relational exchange theory is grounded on commitment and trust as the basis of the exchange process between firms and consumers. Consumers expect to be consulted to determine what marketing messages they will receive and how they will receive those messages. Relational exchange increases the likelihood of advertising effectiveness through control offered and customer focus. The tailored advertising success of a campaign intended for one individual is directly measurable by the firm.

Sales performance is also affected by the number of individuals who decide to opt-in and participate in relational marketing practices; consumer participation is necessary for the two-way communication and therefore paramount to the success of the campaign using relational techniques (Ashley et al., 2011). A firm can control some of the factors that affect the consumer's decision to participate in relational marketing programs such as the inconvenience to participate and the benefits the consumer will gain by participating (Ashley et al., 2011). Other factors outside the control of the firm include the frequency the consumer shops at a store of location, their involvement with the brand, and importantly-privacy concerns involving their participation (Ashley et al., 2011).

Measurement tools have shown marketing executives the exact cost in marketing allocation to obtain a new customer (Schakett, 2009). The purpose of relational marketing is to foster a positive, lasting relationship with the consumer in efforts to create customer loyalty (Schakett, 2009). This customer loyalty decreases overall advertising expenses for a firm, as customer procurement for replacement of a customer is more costly than customer retention (Tehrani, 2008). A relationship to foster customer loyalty can be developed through digital means emphasizing customer satisfaction with online purchases and translates into loyalty to the online retailer (Kim, Kim, & Kandampully, 2009).

Consumer Segmentation

Marketing theory has historically included what marketers refer to as the Four P's of marketing (product, price, place, and promotion) and the use of mass marketing implementation (Malhotra, 2010). Digital advertising, or new media, has increased the ability of marketers to target smaller segments of consumers with specified interests or purchase behavior rather than to use the blanket advertising method for large consumer groups (Truong et al., 2010). This has allowed Internet advertising, which largely began in 1994, to become a major advertising medium (Taylor, 2009).

As digital marketing, or e-marketing, is the primary method used in relationship building with consumers, an understanding of e-marketing is essential. A digital presence in a global marketplace allows marketers to communicate with a larger segment of the selected target market. Studies have shown digital advertising efforts that emphasize interactivity are more

successful than non-interactive online advertising formats (Taylor, 2009). Interactivity is used in relational theory to maintain continuous communication between marketing executives and consumers, build relationships, and increase customer loyalty (Martin & Todorov, 2010).

An increasing use of the Internet has decreased overall consumer attention to traditional marketing channels in a majority of product categories (Copeland, 2009). A direct relationship exists between digital media and paid search, signifying that digital media marketing offers a valuable role in gaining consumer attention, engaging consumers, and driving sales (Copeland, 2009). Brand messages become less important as decisions are aided with digital methods such as word of mouth (WOM) and other advertising mediums (Andjelic, 2010).

A study recently found that marketing managers measure online and offline advertisements differently (Cheong et al., 2010). Compared to 1994 findings, the 2010 study shows how offline media advertisements focus primarily on reach and frequency, while online media focuses primarily on click-through-rates, unique visitors to a page, number of page views, and ad impressions to make media evaluations (Cheong et al., 2010). Measuring click-through-rates (CTR) and new membership quantitative data to gauge advertising success is an example of a potential research method used to gauge advertising success in the online context (Pfeiffer & Zinnbauer, 2010). Measurement using CTR and new membership works well for businesses operating solely in an online context, but fails to measure all variables of success for brick and mortar locations or businesses with both storefronts and digital operations (Pfeiffer & Zinnbauer, 2010).

Researchers have suggested that for businesses with online operations and no physical storefront, the singular use of online marketing campaigns can be successful only once the brand has gained recognition and brand awareness (Pfeiffer & Zinnbauer, 2010). Traditional methods are necessary to obtain recognition and brand awareness, at least initially, for a business to remain successful (Pfeiffer & Zinnbauer, 2010). Despite the observation about different life-cycle stages of a brand needing different advertising methods and the need for businesses to use both traditional and digital advertising channels, researchers have not determined which method continues to be the most successful advertising channel. Software programs to observe consumer behavior in response to e-marketing in the online environment lack the comparison for traditional advertising effectiveness (McMahan, Hovland, & McMillan, 2009). One reason is that although the software is very successful in measuring variables such as CTR or new members in the online context, offline measurement is conducted differently and often not directly comparable.

Observation measures actual purchases, while purchase intent needs to be measured using other methods. Purchase intent can also play a very important role in measuring the success of a marketing campaign, as purchases may not take place immediately after the consumer views or hears the advertising. Latent purchases derived from marketing messages and brand awareness campaigns can be considered successful. Observation techniques in a lab setting can weaken the validity of the measurement as respondents do not always react and behave the same in laboratory settings, as they know they are being watched. This is true of laboratory setting using software to track consumer purchase behavior in simulated settings as well (McMahan et al., 2009).

Other external factors can affect the success of an advertising campaign. Competitor advertising can effectively increase or decrease another firm's sales (Pfeiffer & Zinnbauer, 2010). For online advertising, the weather and holiday schedules affected the amount of time consumers spend online, which increased the amount of time consumers viewed advertising

content (Pfeiffer & Zinnbauer, 2010). Consumers spend less time online when the weather is nice and more time online around holidays (Pfeiffer & Zinnbauer, 2010).

Research in Malaysia using undergraduates as research participants has shown a difference in media preference between male and females (Omar et al., 2010). In addition, although television was found to be the most available media to this demographic group studied, the results indicated that these young Malaysian adults preferred online media (Abidin, Omar, Mahmud, Rosli, & Rahman, 2011). Media preference was found to have a significant relationship with lifestyle factors such as family background, standard of living, and access to the Internet (Abidin et al., 2011).

Not all research indicates greater consumer influence from digital media. Two international studies reported higher influence from traditional media compared to other digital media options. Australian participants over 18 years old who own cell phones and have daily Internet access preferred traditional advertising to new media (Danaher & Rossiter, 2011). In addition, a New Zealand study of participants ranging from 14 to 30 years old concluded that 46% of the participants preferred advertising received by television, 5% preferred online advertisements, and 2% preferred SMS text messaging advertisements (as cited in Danaher & Rossiter, 2011). However, consumers are not always influenced primarily by one medium. Young adults, individuals between 18 and 34 years old, watch television and surf the web simultaneously approximately 45% of the time ("Word of Mouth Influences", 2008). This same demographic group will watch television and listen to the radio or engage in other activities about one fourth of the time ("Word of Mouth Influences", 2008).

The decline of traditional marketing is reiterated in 2009 when approximately 400 magazines and 140 newspapers stopped publishing while only a few transferred to a purely online format (Zillman, 2010). However, examples of digital and traditional media operating together effectively can be found. Research into digital and traditional print newspapers found that the cannibalistic effects of traditional media becoming ineffective with the introduction of digital newspapers could be avoided because many readers use print and digital newspapers for different reasons (Flavian & Gurrea, 2009). Digital newspapers were used by readers to obtain up to date information rather than waiting until the following day for all news or the breaking news of the day (Flavian & Gurrea, 2009). Avoidance of this cannibalistic effect as described by the authors is currently possible and expected in the future as well.

Traditional and digital channels are accepted as distinct from one another (Danaher & Rossiter, 2011; Pookulangara & Natesan, 2010) with traditional marketing methods in decline according to conventional wisdom. Despite the anecdotal wisdom, 47% of U.S. small businesses do not use digital media advertising methods (Barone, 2011). Some researchers propose that traditional methods are initially necessary for brand awareness and recognition for a business to achieve success (Pfeiffer & Zinnbauer, 2010). Other research has suggested that digital advertising is in fact bigger than traditional marketing and is "increasingly woven into the fabric of our business and consumer culture" ("Razorfish Outlook Report", 2011, p. 5). Conflicting expectations for media channel dominance and consumer preference necessitates research on consumer media preference between traditional and digital media advertising.

Further investigation of traditional and digital media channels may provide additional information into past research findings as well as provide future implications for the current preference study. The proposed research plan will explore consumer preference between the two media channels, which use different exchange theories, to examine whether a model can be developed to assist marketers in determining how to best advertise to mothers with children

living in the home. The insight gained from this data and potential understanding gained from a developed model would assist in suggesting how marketers should advertise to mother consumers.

Digital and Traditional Channels

Television

Television is one form of traditional media using one-way communication methods. In television advertising, marketing messages provide a message to the consumer with no possible communication return method from the consumer. The effectiveness of television advertising is questioned based on a few reasons, (1) the availability of devices such as DVR and Tivo recording devices that allow consumers to skip commercials by fast forwarding, (2) consumer admissions that they prefer programming without commercials and avoid them, (3) advertising length in a one hour program has increased in the past 50 years, and (4) consumers are simultaneously watching television and multi-tasking and do not fully focus on program content or advertisements during the program (Rubinson, 2009).

Multitasking consumers is not a new problem, but instead can be viewed as an opportunity for marketers. Consumers who are watching television are often also online ("Razorfish Outlook Report", 2011; Zigmond & Stipp, 2010). Having online access while watching television provides a very useful search tool for consumers to access brands, interact, and review products as well as make immediate purchases online (Zigmond & Stipp, 2010). Additional research into consumer search behavior is suggested in addition to a continuous monitoring of television consumption to understand usage further (Zigmond & Stipp, 2010).

Technology has changed the way television operates and many digital packages are able to introduce some interaction into their traditional television advertising. Digital boxes allow two-way communications with options for consumers to click on the advertisements or even listing of businesses. Individuals interested in homes can view a virtual walk-through of a home using this two-way communication through cable television. With continued interaction options increasing, television is moving away from the standard one-way, push, media channel of the past ("Razorfish Outlook Report", 2010).

Television has also moved into the digital format with online TV viewing from digital devices such as computers, tablets, and Smartphones. Although the commercials still exist, they have evolved into a new shortened period with the majority of broadcast networks offering the commercial ad space to one brand for an entire show in the form of video advertising. Consumer online viewing of television with top networks like ABC, CBS, NBC, FOX, and the CW has continued increasing over the past year ("U.S. 2010 Digital", 2011).

In a 2009 study, television advertising was found to increase sales impact by increasing brand awareness (Rubinson, 2009). Although some support the decline of traditional media, others have found continued marketing relevance. One reason for this is the incorporation of two-way communication methods integrated with new technological advances.

A study of consumer television consumption correlated with actual purchases of those consumers shows that a higher engagement with the show increases the likelihood that consumers will remember the ads during the show (Poltrack & Bowen, 2011). The study segments consumers beyond demographic categorization to increase the effect marketers have on targeting an audience most likely respond based on the type of product advertised and the target

consumer segment attempted to reach (Poltrack & Bowen, 2011). At the time of the printing of this journal article, no comparable studies were published about research for consumer engagement with the medium and brand recall.

The percentage of individuals reached through television has decreased from 2010 to 2012 from 89.5% to 88.3% while Internet and mobile phone have both increased ("Media Comparisons Study", 2012). As a medium, television is able to reach a broad age range of consumers, of varied incomes, and individuals over 18 spend more hours in a day with television compared to any other media ("Media Comparisons Study", 2012). Women reported spending approximately 5.42 hours in a day with television, more hours than any other media, and accounting for almost half of the media exposure they receive ("Media Comparisons Study", 2012).

Internet Advertising

Both the Internet and digital advertising using the Internet are relatively new. However, access and frequency continue to increase with U.S. penetration levels at 96% in 2009, leading marketers to invest in the viability of the medium ("Razorfish Outlook Report", 2010). Investment in digital advertising including Internet advertising is also on the rise with creative models developed frequently ("U.S. 2010 Digital", 2011).

Internet advertising allows a two-way communication model to be developed between consumers and marketers that is advantageous to marketers because they are able to tailor advertising based on specific information and permissions granted from consumers. Internet advertising is quick and inexpensive compared to traditional advertising methods and future expectations include that digital advertising will remain a constant part of the daily lives of consumers (Pergelova, Prior, & Rialp, 2010). Advertising on the Internet has shown more efficiency in the long term and indicates that further study is needed to differentiate between Internet mediums such as paid search, social networking, and others (Pergelova et al., 2010).

Women spend 3.26 hours per day on average compared to men at 2.75 for time spent with Internet media ("Media Comparisons Study", 2012). Internet advertising can include pop up advertising, banner ads, paid search, advertising on social media, and others. The communication tools available are numerous with two-way communication being a major driving factor in the success of these methods (McMahon et al., 2009).

Social Media

The use of social media in the U.S. saw continued growth in 2010, with 90% of the population accessing a social networking site each month ("U.S. 2010 Digital", 2011). Gender usage rates for 2009 and 2010 show that on average, women are spending more time online compared to men, and have increased their usage amount at a much faster rate ("U.S. 2010 Digital", 2011). The average user was on a social networking site 12% of the time, averaged 4.5 hours monthly, and frequented Facebook the majority of the time ("U.S. 2010 Digital", 2011). Of the U.S. adult population, about 4% reported making a purchase decision based on information from a social network ("Media Comparisons Study", 2012).

During 2010, Facebook remained number one in status for social networks ("U.S. 2010 Digital", 2011). The next frequented sites were MySpace.com, LinkedIn.com, Twitter.com, Tumblr.com, and Formspring.me ("U.S. 2010 Digital", 2011). The demographic use changed slightly in 2010, with younger users increasing Facebook usage, and young adults 18-34 increasing Twitter.com usage ("U.S. 2010 Digital", 2011).

The motivation behind technology use changes across these sub-segments (Walter & Fortner, 2009). Advertising methods across these sub-segments need to change as well to remain relevant (Walter & Fortner, 2009). WOM communication from social network sites has been proven to influence purchases and as the mother consumer gets closer to completing a purchase, digital and social channels intensify their influence on the purchase made (Walter & Fortner, 2009).

Although consumers of all ages are taking advantage of new technologies and digital access, research indicated that young adults 18-34 are using social networking sites and other online forums more than older adults ("Social Media", 2010). The online environment has proven a valuable tool in making connections with consumers much easier than traditional marketing methods ("Social Media", 2010). Traditional marketing still holds a valuable role in advertising; however, digital media devices are being used to engage consumers in a relationship with marketers continuously ("Social Media", 2010). A majority of shoppers rely on personal WOM conversations when sharing information about a recent purchase, indicating that although users are more influenced by digital media methods, they may continue to share their experience with a retailer or brand through traditional word of mouth channels ("Social Media", 2010).

Age is not the only demographic studied. The influence of friends in online social networks also plays a role in individual purchase behavior (Iyengar, Han, & Gupta, 2009). Individuals in the middle-income level were heavily influenced by other individuals in the same social network, but individual users in the higher income level showed little to no influence from other peers in a social network (Iyengar et al., 2009). The success of the social networking appears to be dependent on which individuals are studied, as individuals in the middle-income bracket are more likely to be influenced by peers in social networks, and individuals in the higher income bracket are more likely to be influential.

According to market research conducted by Facebook in 2009, out of U.S. mothers who are online users, 65% are on Facebook (as cited in Engel, 2010). Of those 65% of U.S. mothers who use Facebook, 94% of them are accessing at least one time per week (as cited in Engel, 2010). In addition, 53% of these online mothers using Facebook have children under the age of five (as cited in Engel, 2010). For average social media users, having a child was shown to increase social media usage by 33%, while heavier users were shown to increase their social media use by 68% after having a child according to eMarketer's 2009 study (as cited in Engel, 2010).

Wireless Phones

Wireless phones provide marketers with numerous ways of interacting with consumers. One is through coupon offerings and location-sharing applications. Apps like Shopkick are increasing in popularity with consumers as they offer incentives for customers through loyalty programs for shopping in a store or scanning an item with a barcode reader while in particular store locations (Shankar, Inman, Mantrala, Kelley, & Rizley, 2011). The effort made by brands to participate in loyalty programs such as with the Shopkick app stem from increasing foot traffic to store locations, and also increasing the amount of time consumers spend while in the store, potentially increasing the amount spent while shopping (Malhotra, 2010). Another example of customer interaction with brands through wireless phones is proximity marketing.

Proximity marketing has been called "the very embodiment of the future of marketing strategy" (Romanov, 2012, p. 33). It uses a consumer's location derived from GPS on cellular

devices to advertise to consumers who are near a business. Convenience plays an important role in the success of this type of marketing. Digital marketing messages are sent to consumers through the use of their Smartphones (Romanov, 2012). With 85% of consumers in the U.S. over 18 owning a mobile device of some kind, the reach is tremendous (Romanov, 2012).

Smartphone ownership for mothers is even higher than the general population, with mothers being 38% more likely than the general population to own the device ("BabyCenter", 2012). In fact, mothers are found to be some of the earliest adaptors of new technology and spend much more wireless usage time than the average consumer ("Infographic", 2012). Smartphone usage includes access to the Internet through the mobile device.

Cellular devices are not only able to make the conventional telephone calls, but they are also able to provide wireless access to the Internet, Blue-tooth capabilities, and text messaging functions. These features are some of the results of technological advances and a changing consumer acceptance of the technology. Acceptance is increasing with 37% of the online population accessing social media with mobile devices, with mothers leading the way with more than half of online mothers accessing social media using mobile devices ("Infographic", 2012).

Proximity marketing is a goldmine for marketing research as it allows the collection of consumer information necessary to the brand and marketing manager to determine how effective the marketing efforts are (Romanov, 2012). The data is especially important due to the short amount of time required for data collection and the availability of the data and data analysis to managers. Marketing managers are able to process and disseminate the necessary information about the marketing message and reception of consumers almost immediately based on the digital nature; this early data availability and action based on the data is not possible using traditional marketing channels.

Women over 18 also spend more time using media on their mobile phones ("Media Comparisons Study", 2012). Women spend an average of .84 hours per day compared to men with .51 hours per day ("Media Comparisons Study", 2012). Although women are spending more time than men with mobile phone media, the overall influence on purchasing decisions for the entire sample was only 0.8% from mobile media.

Research Methods and Design

A quantitative descriptive research method was used to measure mother consumer preference. As surveys are a common form of quantitative data collection for primary data collection (Malhotra, 2010), thus a researcher developed survey was used to measure mother consumer media preference. Based on the sample size and nature of the research questions, a t-test and ANOVA were used to determine preference between traditional and digital advertising media and to determine preference between each of the six media channels measured. Traditional and digital media preference was measured for a sample population of Billings, Montana mothers with children living in the home 18 and under (See Appendix B). Validity was addressed by first testing the survey method with a sample group in a pilot study of 30 participants prior to performing the research for the target segment (Fowler, 2009).

A survey is an excellent way for marketing researchers to determine preference for consumers without the intrusion and costs associated with other data collection methods (Malhotra, 2010). Preference for this research is defined as the favored media channel for the specified consumer group to receive their marketing and advertising messages. Observation

methods alone would fall short in measuring preference based on the unknown factors, such as price, that also affect consumer purchase decisions (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2012).

A survey method provides participants participation opportunities, which might not be afforded through other research methods based on time constraints and location stipulations. This method was also selected based on the length and financial cost of the research project. Survey administration of the questions necessary for understanding preference of the selected consumer group best served the purpose of this research study to generalize for the mother population.

Mother consumers from Billings, Montana were selected in an effort to obtain a manageable sample for study based on convenience to the researcher's geographic location. Billings is the largest city in the state and has a diverse cultural background. The city is also a main shopping location for many and is the largest "urban area" and "regional hub for more than half a million people" located between Spokane, Washington and Fargo, North Dakota (Olen, 2009).

A sample group of Billings, Montana mothers with children 18 and under living in the home was obtained through DirectMail.com; the same vendor used to obtain the participants of the larger sample. A sample of 30 surveys was collected to verify each individual was able to understand and answer the survey questions. The appropriate approval from the IRB was obtained prior to any research collection taking place and after completion of the pilot test, the validity was tested and then further research was completed for the full data collection of the larger sample.

The researcher used Cronbach's alpha to test the validity and reliability expected in the survey responses of the pilot study (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). The resulting Cronbach's Alpha value for the six items was ($\alpha = .720$). The traditional measures consisted of two items ($\alpha = .748$), and the digital measures consisted of four items ($\alpha = .744$). A value between 0 and 1 indicates the reliability of the survey instrument, with obtained values closer to 1 being more reliable (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). The validity of the pilot-test was measured prior to the administration of the survey instrument to the 2,104 individuals with the expectation that the reliability of the survey instrument needed to be ($\alpha = .70$) or higher. This is a commonly accepted minimum Cronbach's Alpha value for a reliable survey (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

Population

Billings, MT has a population of 104,170 individuals, of which 77.4% is adults over the age of 18 years old (U.S. Census, 2010). The female portion of the entire Billings adult population is 40.6% (U.S. Census, 2010). Only 25% of the adult female population are mothers with children living in the home under 18 years of age (U.S. Census, 2010).

The target population consisted of Billings, MT mothers with children in the home 18 years old and younger. This includes 10,446 individuals, which is approximately 71% two-family households and 29% single mother households (U.S. Census, 2010). The sample included only adult mothers, determined by the age restriction of 18 years and older, or approximately 10% of the entire Billings, MT population (U.S. Census, 2010).

Sample

The adult mothers in Billings, MT with children making up 10% of the Billings population is the target population of the research study. Of these 10,446 individuals, 2,104 individuals received requests to participate in the study. The sample list was purchased from this third-party vendor because DirectMail.com offered the most complete list available, with approximately 80% of the sample available for purchase. The number of individuals requested to participate is based on research indicating mail surveys have an average response rate of 13% (Malhotra, 2010).

A minimum sample size of 252 individuals was based on a calculation using G*Power to determine digital and traditional media channel preference of mother consumers. This assumes the effect size (d) to detect will be 0.05, $\alpha=0.05$, with a power of 80%. The sample size has been determined using an a priori t-test for means using the G*power analysis, version 3.0 to determine the minimum sample size required for the research.

A probability sampling design was selected based on the use of the findings to develop a model projectable to a larger population outside of the sample used (Malhotra, 2010). Although probability sampling often means greater cost and time, this method will best suit the necessity for statistical purposes and generalizable conclusions (Malhotra, 2010). The type of probability sampling method used was simple random sampling (SRS), similar to the lottery as each individual in the sampling frame has a known and equal chance of being selected (Malhotra, 2010). The actual SRS process was completed by the third party purchasing company when the mailing list was purchased. This is mostly due to necessity and cost restrictions, as purchasing a list of more than 8,000 individuals to use one third of the names in the actual mailing would be impractical and costly. The SRS method will be used through the generation of a selection pattern by the third party's computer system and the names generated will be the purchased list for the researcher. Each of the purchased names was mailed a survey requesting participation in the research project.

Findings

Consumer preference is important in understanding and properly allocating an advertising budget profitably; preference between traditional and digital media channels is significant in understanding this consumer preference. Marketing literature currently does not examine whether traditional or digital marketing will be the dominant marketing channel of the future, and hence which is the best allocation of marketing resources (Danaher & Rossiter, 2011). A quantitative, descriptive research approach using a survey was used to determine mother preference between traditional and digital media.

This chapter presents the data analysis and results of the collected survey information from the mother participants. Descriptive statistics for the sample are reported including information describing participant age and household income. Following the descriptive statistics, the response rate is discussed. Next, the t-test and ANOVA analyses conducted are described to test the hypotheses posed by the research. Lastly, an evaluation of the results is described in the chapter.

Results

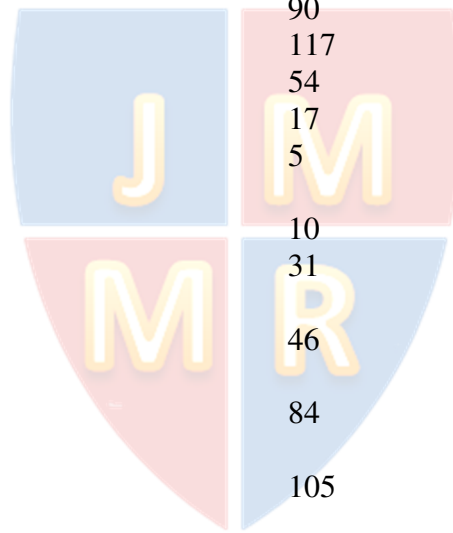
Of the 2,103 surveys mailed to mother consumers living in Billings, Montana, 285 of the 302 surveys were returned were usable. Surveys that included responses indicating the participant was not at the addressed residence, stating the addressee had no children or no children 18 or younger in the household, and surveys returned with no completed responses met the criteria to define the survey as unusable. The total sample consisted of 285 survey responses collected from mothers with children living in the home 18 years old and younger. These consumers were all mothers living in Billings, Montana, and were on average 42 years of age. The average participant had an two kids 18 and younger living in the home. Mother consumers reported using the Internet an average of 17 hours per week. Of this total Internet usage, the participants spent 7 hours online at home, 6.5 hours at work, and 3 hours accessing the Internet on cellular devices. A small usage level was self-reported for the categories School and Other. The total for these two categories combined averaged less usage than 30 minutes per by participants.

A household income of \$60,001 to \$100,000 was reported by 32.6% of mother participants. The highest income measurement was comprised of the majority of participants, with respondents self-reporting 40.7% having a household income of \$100,001 or more. Another 17.8% reported a household income between \$40,001 and \$60,000, 12% with a household income between \$20,001 and \$40,000, and 3.9% with a household income of \$20,000 or less.

Survey response rate is important to ensure the sample will accurately reflect the population of interest. Malhotra (2010) reported the average mail response rate at 13%. Surveys were mailed to 2,103 mother consumers in Billings, Montana. A relevant response rate of 13.6% was achieved. Incentives often increase survey participation, and the study did not offer any incentives for participation, further indicating that the response rate is a significant number. The expected response rate for this research surpassed the expected response rate of 13% for mail survey research. Based on expectations for mail survey response rates according to Malhotra (2010) and other researchers, the response rate obtained for this study appeared to meet academic standards.

Table 1
Sample Demographics

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Billings Mother Residents	285	100
Internet Usage		
0 hours per week	1	.4%
1-5 hours per week	55	20.7%
6-10 hours per week	80	30.1%
11-20 hours per week	65	24.4%
21 or more hours per week	84	31.6%
Number of Children		
1 Child	90	34.5%
2 Children	117	44.8%
3 Children	54	20.7%
4 Children	17	6.5%
5 or more Children	5	1.9%
Income		
\$0-\$20,000	10	3.9%
\$20,001-\$40,000	31	12%
\$40,001-\$60,000	46	17.8%
\$60,001-\$100,000	84	32.6%
\$100,001 or more	105	40.7%



A t-test is used to determine if a statistically significant difference exists between traditional and digital channel preference. Traditional channels included radio and television commercials, and digital channels included online advertising, e-mail, text messages, and social media. A mean average was computed for traditional channel preference by averaging participants' responses to question one part a and b which asked the preference level for radio and television. A mean average was computed for digital channel preference by averaging participants' responses to question one part c, d, e, and f which asked the preference level for online, e-mail, text messages, and social media channels. The mean average of digital preference is compared to the mean average of traditional channel preference to make a determination about which is the preferred channel for mother consumers. A t-test was conducted to compare the traditional media preference mean to traditional media preference mean. The analysis found that there was a statistically significant difference in mother media channel preference between traditional media channels and digital media channels at the .05 significance level, $t(284)=1.97, p < .000$.

Table 2
T-Test Results for Comparison of Traditional and Digital Media Preference

Media Type	n	M (SD)	95% CI	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
Traditional	285	2.63 (.71)	[2.55, 2.71]	1.97	284
Digital	285	1.68 (.57)	[1.62, 1.75]		

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the relationship between each of the preference levels measured for six media channels of mother consumers living in Billings, Montana with children in the home 18 years old and younger. The ANOVA was statistically significant, $F(5,1698) = 128.239$, $p = .000$. The statistically significant p value indicates that at least one pair of media channel preferences is not equal. Additional analysis is necessary to determine which pair or multiple pairs do not have equal mean values.

Table 3
ANOVA Results of Media Channel Preference

Media Type	SS	<i>df</i>	MS	F	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	453.908	5	90.782	128.239	.000
Within Groups	1202.034	1698	0.708		
Total	1655.941	1703			

The additional post hoc analysis compared each pair of the six media channels to determine if a statistically significant difference in mean value preference exists. Radio and Television preference is one pair that the null hypothesis of equal mean preference cannot be rejected at the .05 significance level, $t(567) = -0.522$, $p < .602$. E-mail and Social Media preference is the other pair where the null hypothesis of equal mean preferences cannot be rejected at the .05 significance level, $t(565) = -1.622$, $p < .160$. This indicates that other variable pairs are statistically significant and an order of preference can be derived from the mean averages to indicate the highest preferred medial channel and the lowest preferred media channel.

All other pair combinations were found to be statistically significant at the .05 significance level indicating that the null hypothesis that the mean averages of those pairs is equal can be rejected. There is a statistically significant difference in mean averages between the other pairs of media channels.

A mean average was computed for each channel preference by averaging participants' responses to the components of the Likert scale used in question one. Using this mean score and

the post hoc analysis showing which pair combinations were statistically significant, an order of media channel preference can be developed for mother consumers. Radio and Television, the two traditional media channels measured, were found to be the most preferred advertising method for this consumer group. However, the research was unable to determine which of the two was the most preferred. Online advertising was ranked as the second most preferred media channel. E-mail and Social media were found to be the third preferred media channel, with the results unable to indicate which was more preferred over the other between these two channels. The least preferred media channel for mother consumers was text messaging.

Table 4
Media Channel Mean Comparison

Media Type	n	df	t	p
Radio				
Television	284	567	-0.5221	0.6018
Online	283	566	6.3855	0.0000
E-mail	285	568	13.8271	0.0000
Text	285	568	22.6811	0.0000
Social Media	282	565	12.3791	0.0000
Television				
Online	283	565	-6.6493	0.0000
E-mail	285	567	13.8221	0.0000
Text	285	567	22.1215	0.0000
Social Media	282	564	12.4159	0.0000
Online				
E-mail	285	566	6.7914	0.0000
Text	285	566	13.4798	0.0000
Social Media	282	563	5.3133	0.0000
E-mail				
Text	285	568	5.7204	0.0000
Social Media	282	565	-1.6216	0.1055
Text				
Social Media	282	565	-7.7903	0.0000

Evaluation of Findings

There was a significant difference in mother media channel preference for traditional media channels ($M= 2.63$, $SD= 0.71$) and digital media channels ($M= 1.68$, $SD= 0.57$) conditions; $t(284) = 1.97$, $p < .000$. These results suggest that mother consumers in Billings, MT prefer traditional media methods over digital methods. Specifically, the results suggest that when mothers are exposed to advertising media, they prefer traditional channels such as television and radio. Consumer media channel preference is tied to an increased openness to

receive the message conveyed in that advertisement (Cramphorn, 2011). Understanding consumer preference for traditional media channels over digital media channels shows that the shift by many marketers towards digital media use may not prove as effective when the target consumer group is mothers.

On average, preference for television ($M= 2.65$) and radio ($M= 2.62$) advertising was higher than any other media channel measured for the sample group. Because the analysis was unable to reject the null hypothesis that the mean averages of this media channel pair were not equal, the understood preference is for traditional media channels and not one of them specifically.

Digital media channel preference included averages for online ($M= 2.13$), e-mail ($M= 1.62$), text messages ($M= 1.26$), and social media ($M= 1.72$) advertising preference for mother consumers. Online advertising was ranked as the second most preferred media channel. E-mail and Social media were found to be the third preferred media channel, with the results unable to indicate which was more preferred over the other between these two channels. The least preferred media channel for mother consumers was text messaging. Using this ranking, it can be understood that because mother consumers have reported text messaging as the least preferred media channel to receive advertising messages, their decreased preference for this channel means they are less open to receiving the advertising message conveyed in text form (Cramphorn, 2011).

Rather than a focus on relational exchange theory, focusing on the brand interaction between the consumer and brand with a fostering of continued communication between the two (Vargo & Lusch, 2004), consumers reported a preference for a more transactional style of communication direct from the brand. Mother consumers showed a higher channel preference for communication channels where marketers communicated with them, but where consumers are unable to communicate back, such as with a one-way creative message aimed at a target segment (Mulhern, 2009).

Many researchers have indicated that digital advertising has been demonstrated to be more effective than traditional advertising because of the engagement factor and two-way communication model for the overall market ("BIGresearch's SIMM 11", 2008; Chen, 2006; Copeland, 2009; Zillman, 2010). The collected data indicates that for mothers with children living in the home, traditional media channels are preferred ($M= 2.63$, $SD= 0.71$) to digital media channels ($M= 1.68$, $SD= 0.57$) conditions; $t(284) = 1.97$, $p < .000$.

Findings indicating a preference for traditional media channels are inconsistent with previous research which found that e-mail was the most preferred media channel ("The 2012 Channel", 2012). This previous research compared e-mail, direct mail, Facebook, LinkedIn, Mobile apps, SMS, Telephone, and Twitter. The lack of comparison to include other traditional media methods such as television and radio in the 2012 research is a significant point of interest to highlight the findings in this study. Additional traditional channels could in future research could further develop the findings comparing digital and traditional media channels.

Although the 2012 top media channel preference findings are not identical to this research, the findings obtained do appear to be consistent with the New Zealand study of 14-30 year olds who reported a high preference for television advertising and low preference for text messages (as cited in Danaher & Rossiter, 2011). This media channel preference for New Zealand male and female participants is consistent with the media channel preference reported by mothers with children in the home studied in Billings, Montana.

Using this mean score and the post hoc analysis showing which pair combinations were statistically significant, marketers can use the developed order of media channel preference for mother consumers to target this powerful consumer group more effectively. Radio and Television, the two traditional media channels measured, were found to be the most preferred advertising method for this consumer group. Although the research was unable to determine which of the two was the most preferred, marketers can still use this information to successfully allocate marketing budgets to the appropriate media channel based on this expressed preference for traditional media channels. The least preferred media channel for mother consumers was text messaging, indicating that mother consumers are not as receptive to this intrusive two-way communication channel when compared to other available media channels.

Summary

The relevant response rate of mother consumers in Billings, Montana was 13.3%. This high participation rate uncovered mother preference as self-reported by individuals with children living in the home who were 18 years old and younger. The findings described consumers who are mothers as using the Internet an average was 17 hours weekly; however, a t-test and an ANOVA analysis showed these mothers preferred to receive marketing messages via television compared to all other channels measured.

Mother consumers self-reported that the second most preferred media channel for advertising messages was radio. This was found to be statistically significant in comparison of all six media channels; showing traditional media methods such as television and radio were preferred over the four digital media channels studied.

CONCLUSIONS

Contrary to traditional wisdom about declining traditional media channel effectiveness, mother consumers in Billings, Montana self-reported a higher preference of traditional media channels. Preference for the traditional media channels television and radio were highest. Preference for text messaging was the lowest for mothers with children living in the home under 18 years old. Future advertising campaigns can be developed based on the self-reported media channel preference of mother consumers. This ensures that the marketing message is received and that the cost of marketing to this specific demographic group is utilized effectively.

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