

Consumer Engagement in Social Media Advertising

: An Examination of Advertising Acceptance Model in WeChat*

Abstract



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This study attempts to investigate the theoretical flow of the antecedents and consequences of consumer engagement in WeChat Moments advertising. The study explores what features of advertising information on social media mobile applications (i.e., WeChat) are related to consumer engagement with the information and how that in turn influences consumer acceptance of the new advertising practice. Results of the study suggest that consumer engagement is positively affected by perceived interactivity, perceived informativeness, perceived enjoyment, and personal involvement. The study further shows that consumer engagement predicts advertising acceptance. Data also reveals the moderating role of utilitarian/hedonic shopping tendencies in the effects of the features of the advertising. Finally, the study provides a discussion, with theoretical and practical implications, of the mediating role of consumer engagement in the context of social media.

Keywords: Social Media Advertising, Engagement, Social Commerce, Online Shopping, China

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INTRODUCTION

In January, 2015, WeChat, one of the leading social media channels with a mobile platform successfully established as an advertising system, rolled out its so-called WeChat Moment advertising. It is distributed through the WeChat public accounts of companies in the “Moments” feed. This feed is like Facebook’s Newsfeed page, with attractive texts, pictures, and external HTML5 links. It is well-known that WeChat stresses the importance of user experience, so the Moments advertising is carefully designed regarding how, when, and whom to display to. The ads are distributed based on consumer segmentation data, which indicates that the ad content could be more relevant to receivers, and shared only among the social circle of a particular WeChat contact. The presentation of the ads in a user’s WeChat platform is highly dependent upon the responses of his/her own contacts. When one blocks or does not respond to an ad, the probability is only 20% that one’s friends see this ad later. But if one likes or leaves a comment on the ad, the probability rises to 95% (Pingwest, 2015). This mechanism makes WeChat users perceive the ads as not simple marketing information delivered by a company, but rather as contents shared or liked by their friends. In addition, by using graphic, image, HTML5, and so forth, WeChat Moment designs its ad content to generate interaction between receivers and contents and to thus strengthen the entertaining features of ad content. Finally, unlike the users of other

social media advertising (e.g., ads on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.), WeChat users are able to control, with an opt-out function, the presentation of the ads in their Moments feed. Thus a key to the success of this advertising system is for WeChat users to opt in. If users opt out, the ad is not presented to target consumers. Therefore, in examining the effectiveness of WeChat Moments advertising, it is critical to explore WeChat users’ intention to accept the ads.

The current paper, thus, attempts to explore how the aforementioned features of WeChat Moment advertising—perceived interactivity, perceived informativeness, perceived enjoyment, and personal involvement with the advertising - influence users’ continuous intentions to accept this form of advertising through engaging with the ad content. In the literature pertaining to social media, one of the critical constructs is considered to be consumer engagement. Yet less attention has been given to the role of consumer engagement in advertising effectiveness. Based on the predictive power of consumer engagement found in consumer behavioral outcomes such as brand loyalty and purchase intention (Hollebeck, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014; Schau, Muñiz, & Arnould, 2009), this paper explores its role in advertising acceptance. In understanding the theoretical flow, this work examines how user’s shopping-relevant personal traits (i.e., utilitarian/hedonic shopping tendencies) influence the effects of the features of social media advertising. This additional examination will allow a demonstration of the more sophisticated effects of the four features

of advertising, shedding light on which type of shopper is more/less responsive to which feature of advertising.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Antecedents and Consequences of Consumer Engagement

Consumer engagement is a multidimensional construct which consists of cognitive, affective, and participant dimensions (Reitz, 2012). In engaging with marketing-related information, consumers cognitively and affectively appreciate and also participate in it. Consumer engagement in social media is driven more by consumers' voluntary participation such as sharing, commenting, or co-creating information. Hence, a critical component in understanding consumer engagement in social media is the experiential value, that is its participatory dimension.

Although social media offer a great convenience and ease for active involvement of consumers, empirical studies have shown that consumers are not naturally engaged (Jones, Ravid, & Rafaeli, 2004; Joyce & Kraut, 2006; Preece, Nonnecke, & Andrews, 2004). This implies that appropriate antecedents are necessary to drive consumers to begin to engage. Motivations to use brand-related information in social media (e.g., sociality, information, entertainment, relevance, etc)(Muntinga, Moorman, & Smit, 2011; Tsai & Men, 2014; Wang & Fesenmaier, 2003) lends a

logic to why the aforementioned features of the advertising may serve as antecedents to predict consumer engagement with the advertising. Interactivity is indeed a unique feature of social media advertising. Perceived interactivity is defined as the extent to which users perceive communication to be two-way, controllable, responsive, accessible, and satisfying (Cyr, Head, & Ivanov, 2009; Mollen & Wilson, 2010). It has been found to facilitate consumer engagement in contents/media (O'Brien & Toms, 2008; Schneiderman & Plaisant, 2005; Sundar, Bellur, Oh, Jia, & Kim, 2014). Perceived informativeness is a critical aspect in examining overall ad value (Ducoffe, 1995) and further reduces perceived irritation of advertising (Edwards, Li, & Lee 2002). This leads consumers to formulate more favorable attitudes toward the ad (Gao & Koufaris, 2006) as well as to viral behavior in social network sites (Lee & Hong, 2016). Another key driver of advertising, along with the utilitarian value, is the hedonic component. Perceived enjoyment positively affects the evaluation of facebook native advertising (변혜민·심성욱, 2016). It further generates an intrinsic motivation to adopt new technology (Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1992; Moon & Kim, 2001), increases online activities (Schmidt & Spreng, 1996), and facilitates personal engagement (Calder, Malthouse, & Schaedel, 2009). In addition, the targeted advertising according to WeChat users' data is a huge benefit to advertisers in enhancing consumer engagement. Indeed, engagement with the ad content is facilitated by personal involvement,

defined as “a person’s perceived relevance of the object based on inherent interests, needs, and values” (Zaichkowsky, 1985, p. 342). Higher personal involvement with brands results in greater external search (Beatty & Smith, 1987) and elaboration on information to a greater extent (Burnkrant & Sawyer, 1983; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). In the current context, it is, thus, assumed that if the message content of brand/product displayed on WeChat Moments is highly related to users, they would have greater motivation to engage in the message. While prior research suggests that the features of WeChat Moment advertising – perceived interactivity, perceived informativeness, perceived enjoyment, and personal involvement – may facilitate WeChat users’ engagement with the advertising, little is known about which feature of the advertising is more/less significant in predicting users’ engagement. We, thus, posit the following hypothesis and research question.

- *H1: a) perceived interactivity, b) perceived informativeness, c) perceived enjoyment, and d) personal involvement positively affect consumer engagement in WeChat Moments advertising.*
- *RQ1: Of the WeChat Moments advertising features hypothesized above, which is the most significant antecedent of consumer engagement?*

More than a few studies have suggested that engagement is positively associated with attitudinal and behavioral consequences in a computer-mediated environment. For example, consumer

engagement in a virtual brand community strengthens consumer satisfaction, loyalty, empowerment, emotional bonding, and so forth (Brodie, Ilic, Juric, & Hollebeek, 2010). Further, a user’s engagement with a message induces positive attitude toward the website, and further increases the user’s intention to recommend the site to others and curiosity about the site (Sundar et al., 2014). Similarly, engagement in marketing promotional contents strengthens intellectual and emotional experiences and consequently increase word-of-mouth intention of the contents (전종우, 2016). Engagement in online media generates positive advertising effectiveness by increasing favorable attitudes toward the ad and intention to click on the ad (Calder et al., 2009). These findings suggest that advertising avoidance may be reduced by individuals’ experiential value through engaging with the ad content. That is, consumers would be less eager to opt out of ads in their Moments if they have engaging experience with ad information. The following hypothesis is, therefore, presented.

- *H2: Consumer engagement with advertising positively affects user’s continuous intention to accept WeChat Moments advertising.*

Moderating Role of Shopping Tendencies

Consumer research suggests that a personal trait, a shopping tendency, determines shopping behavior (Angst, Agarwal, & Kuruzovich 2008; Kim & Eastin, 2011; Wolfinbarger & Gilly,

2001). Especially, in the context of online shopping, consumers' shopping motivation (utilitarian/hedonic motivation) is a critical factor to determine their information search (김화동, 2016). In this regard, the examination of the moderating role of shopping tendencies would offer further insights on the effectiveness of the advertising. The current research defines shopping tendencies as the consumer's trait/tendency of shopping motivation, not the consumer's state of motivation in a specific point of shopping. While the features of the advertising in WeChat influence consumer response to the ads, their shopping tendencies may determine the effects of each advertising feature, suggesting that the effect of the features could be varied by consumer shopping tendencies; for consumers with utilitarian shopping tendencies – characterized as goal-focused, efficient, and rational nature of shopping (Babin, Darden, & Griffin, 1994) – the features of informativeness or personal involvement may matter more than the other features. On the other hand, for those with hedonic shopping tendencies – characterized as valuing the fun and enjoyment of shopping (Babin et al., 1994) – they are likely to desire emotional gratification (i.e., enjoyment) brought about by the advertising. Hence, perceived enjoyment from advertising information or interactive features would perhaps be more critical to get them engaged with the ad contents. Given no empirical evidence on the relationships between shopping tendencies and advertising features, the following research question is presented to further explore how shopping tenden-

cies influence the effect of each feature of WeChat Moment advertising on consumer engagement.

- *RQ2: How does a consumer's utilitarian or hedonic shopping tendency moderate the effects of the features of WeChat Moment advertising – perceived interactivity, perceived informativeness, perceived enjoyment, and personal involvement – on consumer engagement in advertising?*

METHOD

Sample

Data were collected in Beijing, China, through a web-based survey administered by a market research firm. A prerequisite for this study was that participants must be WeChat users who have been exposed to WeChat Moments advertising. After eliminating incomplete responses from a total of 855, the final responses of 821 were analyzed. The gender distribution was almost equal with 49.9 percent males and 50.1 percent females. Their mean age was 36.6 years old. On average, the subjects used WeChat for 1.5 hours on a typical weekday.

Data Collection Procedures

To create an online survey, the researcher used Qualtrics, a web-based survey platform. The survey opened with study information. First, if they agreed to take part in the study, participants were

asked to click the “proceed” button at the bottom of an informed-consent notice. Second, to exclude individuals who had never received WeChat Moment advertising, the survey asked participants whether they were WeChat users and whether they had ever received WeChat Moment advertising. Third, participants were presented with questions measuring their perceptions of WeChat moment advertising they had received (i.e., perceived interactivity, perceived informativeness, perceived enjoyment, and personal involvement), multifaceted dimension of consumer engagement with the ads that they received in general (i.e., cognitive, affective, and participatory engagement), and intention to accept WeChat Moment advertising in the future. Finally, they were asked to answer demographic questions such as age, gender, education, income, and so forth.

Operational Measures

All variables of interest were measured with a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). To measure perceived interactivity, Gao, Rau, and Salvendy's (2006) interactivity scale was adapted to WeChat advertising context ($M = 3.52$, $SD = .85$, $\alpha = .97$). Some of the items include ‘I felt that I had a lot of control over my WeChat Moments advertising viewing experiences’, ‘WeChat Moments advertising makes me feel the company wants to listen to its customers’, and ‘I can give my response without any delay’. For perceived informativeness, a scale from prior

research (Cheng, Blankson, Wang, & Chen, 2009) was adapted to the current study context ($M = 3.64$, $SD = .85$, $\alpha = .91$). Some examples of the items include ‘WeChat Moments advertising is a convenient source of product information’, ‘WeChat Moments advertising makes product information immediately accessible’, and ‘WeChat Moments advertising informs me about the latest products and information available on the market’. To measure perceived enjoyment, a four item, Likert-type scale was used (e.g., ‘I found WeChat Moments advertising is interesting’, ‘I found WeChat Moments advertising is entertaining’, and ‘I found WeChat Moments advertising is enjoyable’) ($M = 3.34$, $SD = 1.09$, $\alpha = .94$) (Hassanein & Head, 2007). Zaichkowsky's (1994) personal involvement inventory, a semantic differential scale paired with polar terms including ‘unimportant/important’, ‘means nothing/means a lot to me’, ‘irrelevant/relevant’, etc. was employed to measure personal involvement in WeChat Moments advertising ($M = 3.23$, $SD = 1.05$, $\alpha = .97$). Reitz's (2012) scale was modified to measure consumer engagement in WeChat Moments advertising from the perspectives of cognitive, affective, and participatory dimensions ($M = 3.49$, $SD = .92$, $\alpha = .96$). A few examples of the items include ‘When I am on WeChat, I get mentally involved in WeChat Moments advertising’, ‘WeChat Moments advertising is satisfying’, and ‘I respond to comments in WeChat moments advertising’. Intention to accept WeChat Moments advertising was operationalized as user's willingness to receive

WeChat Moments advertising in the future and measured on a four item, Likert-type scale ($M = 3.61$, $SD = .86$, $\alpha = .86$) (Muk & Chung, 2015). Some of the items include ‘If the opting-out mechanism is easy, I would receive WeChat Moments advertising’, ‘If advertisers would offer privacy protection, I would receive WeChat Moments advertising’, and ‘As long as I could opt out easily, I would receive WeChat Moments advertising’. Finally, as moderators, utilitarian (e.g., ‘I just buy what I want to’, ‘While shopping, I find just an item I look for’, ‘The purpose of shopping is to find exactly what I am looking for’, etc.) ($M = 3.66$, $SD = .69$, $\alpha = .73$) and hedonic shopping tendencies (e.g., ‘Shopping is a truly a joy’, ‘compared to other things, shopping is truly enjoyable’, ‘I enjoy shopping for its own sake, not just for the items I may purchase’, etc.) ($M = 3.78$, $SD = .67$, $\alpha = .85$) were measured on four-item and ten-item, Likert-type scales respectively (Babin et al., 1994) (see Appendix for measurement items).

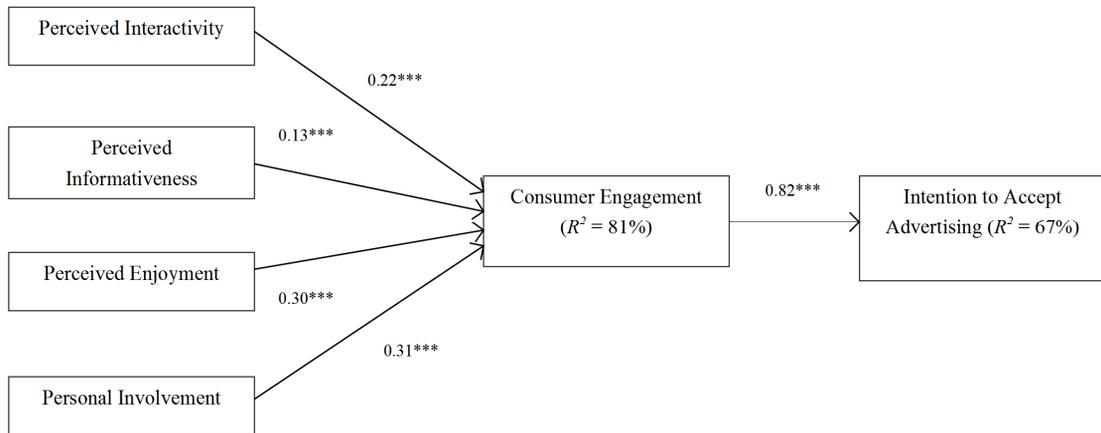
RESULT

Testing Antecedents and Consequence of Consumer Engagement

Path analysis was performed to test H1 that predicts that perceived interactivity, perceived informativeness, perceived enjoyment, and personal involvement are positively related to consumer engagement. The parameter estimates for paths (see <Table 1>) indicated that perceived interactivity had a positive effect on consumer engagement ($\beta = 0.22$, $p < .001$). H1a was thus supported by the data. Exhibiting a positive relationship, perceived informativeness positively affected consumer engagement ($\beta = 0.13$, $p < .001$), providing support for H1b. Supporting H1c, perceived enjoyment was found to have a positive effect on consumer engagement ($\beta = 0.30$, $p < .001$). H1d, predicting a positive relationship between personal involvement in WeChat Moments advertising and consumer engagement was also supported ($\beta = 0.31$, $p <$

Table 1 Standardized Path Coefficients in Structural Model

Hyp.	Path Coefficients	Estimate	p-Value
H1a	Perceived Interactivity → Consumer Engagement	.22***	< .001
H1b	Perceived Informativeness → Consumer Engagement	.13***	< .001
H1c	Perceived Enjoyment → Consumer Engagement	.30***	< .001
H1d	Personal Involvement → Consumer Engagement	.31***	< .001
H2	Consumer Engagement → Intention to Accept Advertising	.82***	< .001



Note: $n = 821$. Path entries are standardized coefficients (betas). Goodness of fit: $\chi^2 = 42.39$, $df = 4$, $p < 0.001$; root mean square error of approximation = 0.10; comparative fit index = 0.99; Tucker-Lewis index = 0.97; standardized root mean square residual = 0.02. *** $p < 0.001$.

Figure 1 Testing model of advertising acceptance in a social media platform.

.001). Data further supported H2, which assessed a positive effect of consumer engagement on intention to accept WeChat Moments advertising ($\beta = 0.82$, $p < .001$). Comparisons of the strength of relationships between each of antecedents and consumer engagement demonstrated that the most significant feature of the advertising that affects consumer engagement was personal involvement, followed by perceived enjoyment. The least significant predictor to influence consumer engagement (RQ1) was found to be perceived informativeness. In addition, as shown in Figure 1, model fit indicators showed that the fit of the hypothesized model was fairly acceptable; $\chi^2(4) = 42.39$, $p < .001$, TLI = .97, GFI = .98, AGFI = .91, and CFI = .99, RMSEA = .10,

SRMR = .02. R^2 statistics indicated that the theoretically derived structural model explained 81 percent of the variance in consumer engagement in WeChat Moment advertising, and 67 percent of the variance in intention to accept the advertising.

Moderating Effects of Shopping Tendencies

To answer RQ2, a series of Hayes' PROCESS macro (Model 1) were conducted to test the moderating roles of utilitarian and hedonic shopping tendencies in the effects of the four antecedents in consumer engagement. While controlling hedonic shopping tendencies, utilitarian shopping tendencies significantly influenced the

effects of perceived interactivity (β interactivity x utilitarian tendency = .08, $SE = .02$, $p < .001$.), perceived informativeness (β informativeness x utilitarian tendency = .08, $SE = .03$, $p < .01$.), and personal involvement (β involvement x utilitarian tendency = .06, $SE = .02$, $p < .01$.) on consumer's engagement in the advertising. That is, the results confirmed that the effects of the three antecedents on consumer engagement are dependent upon the level of utilitarian shopping tendencies. Specifically, the effects of perceived interactivity, perceived informativeness, and personal involvement at the low level of utilitarian tendencies (mean minus one $SD = 3.10$) were .71, .61, and .55 (CI95, 5,000 bootstrapped samples [.65, .77], [.54, .67], [.50, .60]). At the medium level (mean $SD = 3.78$) they were .77, .66, and .59 (CI95: [.72, .82], [.61, .71], [.55, .62]). And finally at the high level (mean plus one $SD = 4.45$)

they were .82, .72, and .63 (CI95: [.78, .88], [.66, .78], [.59, .67]). The results suggest that the effects of the three antecedents increase as utilitarian shopping tendencies are higher. However, the effect of perceived enjoyment on consumer engagement was not influenced by utilitarian shopping tendencies ($p > .05$). On the other hand, the data demonstrated that while controlling utilitarian shopping tendencies, hedonic shopping tendencies influenced the effect of perceived informativeness on consumer engagement (β informativeness x hedonic tendency = .07, $SE = .02$, $p < .01$.). The higher hedonic shopping tendencies produced the greater effect of perceived informativeness on engagement in the advertising. The effect of perceived informativeness was .63 (CI95, 5,000 bootstrapped samples [.57, .69]) at the low level of hedonic shopping tendencies (mean minus one $SD = 2.97$), .68

Table 2 Results of Moderation Analyses

Effects (b) of Perceived Interactivity, Perceived Informativeness, and Personal Involvement on Consumer Engagement, 95% CI [Lower, Upper]				
		Perceived Interactivity	Perceived Informativeness	Personal Involvement
<i>Utilitarian Shopping Tendencies</i>	at Low Level (mean minus one $SD = 3.10$)	.71, [.65, .77]	.61, [.54, .67]	.55, [.50, .60]
	at Medium Level (mean $SD = 3.78$)	.77, [.72, .82]	.66, [.61, .71]	.59, [.55, .62]
	at High Level (mean plus one $SD = 4.45$)	.82, [.78, .88]	.72, [.66, .78]	.63, [.59, .67]
<i>Hedonic Shopping Tendencies</i>	at Low Level (mean minus one $SD = 3.10$)		.63, [.57, .69]	
	at Medium Level (mean $SD = 3.78$)		.68, [.63, .73]	
	at High Level (mean plus one $SD = 4.45$)		.73, [.66, .79]	

([.63, .73]) at the medium level (mean $SD = 3.66$), and .73 ([.66, .79]) at the high level (mean plus one $SD = 4.35$). Yet the study yielded no moderating effects of hedonic shopping tendencies on the effects of the other three antecedents – perceived interactivity, perceived enjoyment, and personal involvement ($p > .05$). Detailed results of the moderated mediation analyses are presented in <Table 2>.

Discussion

Since WeChat introduced a new format of advertising, the so-called WeChat Moments advertising, this new system of advertising has attracted the attention of other advertising practitioners. In academia, however, empirical evidence is still scant. This study applies existent knowledge from computer-mediated media research to the advertising context. In doing so, it attempts to empirically look at how the unique features of in-feed advertising in WeChat Moments contribute to increasing WeChat users' engagement in the ad contents and how this leads to their acceptance of the advertising format. This study suggests that, in addition to an individual's previously identified personal factors (Chu & Kim, 2011; Tsai & Men, 2013), consumer engagement with ads on social network sites is driven by such advertising features as interactivity, informativeness, enjoyment, and personal involvement. That is, the more WeChat users perceive the ad information to be interactive, informative, enjoyable, and

self-relevant, the more likely they are to engage with it. Of these four characteristics, the two that are more significant in leading to consumer engagement with the ad contents are perceived enjoyment and personal involvement. This finding supports the distribution mechanism of WeChat Moments advertising based on consumer segmentation. It further shows that for ad effectiveness what is indeed crucial in a social media platform is the delivery of relevant and customized ad information. In addition, the finding is in line with the current trend showing that people consume content that is fun and interesting. In the advertising clutter of social media, arousing excitement and pleasure is one of the key motivations to get users engaged with marketing-relevant contents (Wong, Tan, Tan, & Ooi, 2015; Shi, 2017).

This study further shows that consumers' shopping tendencies is a significant factor to determine online information process by examining the moderating effects on the features of advertising information. The findings appear to indicate that the effects of advertising features on engagement with ads are moderated by a personal trait – an individual's utilitarian/hedonic shopping tendencies. For individuals with higher utilitarian shopping tendencies, the data suggests that their engagement is mostly determined by the features of interactivity, informativeness, and personal involvement. For utilitarian shoppers, it is more important to obtain relevant and useful information in an interactive way. In contrast, the moderating effect of hedonic tendencies appears

only in the feature of informativeness. This suggests that utilitarian shoppers may be more responsive to the features of advertising that would help them evaluate advertising information in a more rational manner. The quality of contents would, therefore, determine utilitarian shoppers' subsequent behavior (i.e., engagement). The data are inconsistent with the reasonable assumption that emotional gratification (i.e., enjoyment) is more critical to getting hedonic shoppers engaged with ad content. Indeed, the data suggest that hedonic shopping tendencies do not seem to affect enjoyment gratification by social media advertising. Rather interestingly, shoppers with higher hedonic tendencies are more responsive to the feature of informativeness similar to those with higher utilitarian tendencies. This may be because ad content is brand/product-relevant information for its own sake. Thus for individuals with higher hedonic tendencies, the feature of informativeness would also be a critical determinant in determining engagement. On the other hand, regardless of one's shopping tendencies a basic requirement to activate consumer engagement with ad content is the feature of enjoyment. To examine our assumption, it would be useful to explore the relationship between hedonic shopping tendencies and the features of informativeness and enjoyment in the context of non-brand/product relevant contents (i.e., personal stories).

By exploring the mediating role of consumer engagement in relationships between advertising features and advertising acceptance, this study further extends the scope of research on behav-

ioral intention. A body of theoretical knowledge that predicts behavioral intention (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein, 1979; Legris, Ingham, & Collette, 2003; Mathieson, 1991) suggests that attitude is a primary factor determining behavioral intention. This study shows that rather than attitudes, engagement can serve as another critical driving force to induce behavioral intention. Findings show that the multidimensional construct of engagement – composed of cognitive, affective, and participatory dimensions (Reitz, 2012) – work well at predicting users' intention to accept the ads in WeChat Moments. In this regard, it would be interesting to explore which construct would better predict intention to accept social media advertising by comparing the proposed model with a revised model which replaces consumer engagement in advertising with advertising attitude. This would extend our knowledge on predictors of behavioral intentions.

Managerially, given great autonomy and control over advertising exposure in WeChat Moments with opt-out option, strategic message development (based on big data) in terms of both hardware and software is required if WeChat users are to fully immerse themselves in the advertising information process. A key for success in social media advertising is targeted advertising based on consumer segmentation, as this helps cut off advertising clutter and reduce advertising intrusiveness thereby resulting in engagement with the ads. Further, while such interactive features as embedding pictures, external HTML5 links, and so forth are part of the nature of social

media advertising, advertisers should recognize that such interactive features should be employed to improve basic roles of advertising: advertising informativeness and entertainment. Advertisers further need to segment consumers based on not only demographic factors but personal traits (i.e., shopping tendencies) that help develop effective advertising messages.

Although the results of the study offer interesting and significant insights in the context of social media advertising, limitation to WeChat which centers on messaging application restricts the capacity to generalize the results. Shopping-oriented social media platforms may result in different findings that perhaps suggest significant roles of hedonic shopping tendencies in the effec-

tiveness of social media advertising. To generalize the proposed model to social media advertising, future research should explore in diverse social media platforms concerning advertising information. In addition, employing the online panel of a research firm for sample limits the generalizability of the findings. More representative sample is required to generalize the findings to the population of WeChat users. This study examined four features drawn from the characteristics of WeChat Moment advertising. Other features of the advertising that affect the acceptance of the advertising (e.g., social presence, ad credibility, ad irritation, invasion of privacy, etc.) may need to be further examined to increase the explanatory power of the model.

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Appendix: Measurement Items

Perceived Interactivity

1. I felt that I had a lot of control over my WeChat Moments advertising viewing experiences.
2. I can choose freely what I want to see.
3. My actions decide the kind of experiences I get when viewing WeChat Moments advertising.
4. WeChat Moments advertising makes me feel the company wants to listen to its customers.
5. WeChat Moments advertising provides me an opportunity to give my feedback.
6. WeChat Moments advertising can create a conversation between the company and the customer.
7. WeChat Moments advertising gives me the opportunity to respond in more than one way (e.g. click through to have detailed information, participate in an ongoing campaign).
8. I feel connected with the company by WeChat Moments advertising.
9. I feel connected with an exciting campaign or activity by WeChat Moments advertising.
10. WeChat Moments advertising makes me feel like a member of the customer community of the company.
11. I can give my response without any delay.
12. I can get desired answer fast when I request for further information.
13. I can get instantaneous information when I respond to WeChat Moments advertising.
14. WeChat Moments advertising information seems interpersonal.
15. I feel like having an interpersonal communication when receiving WeChat Moments advertising.
16. I can respond to WeChat Moments advertising and get a reply like I am communicating with a real person.
17. I feel attracted by WeChat Moments advertising and enjoy seeing the advertisement.
18. WeChat Moments advertising is playful.
19. WeChat Moments advertising increases my curiosity towards the company and the product.

Perceived Informativeness

1. WeChat Moments advertising is a convenient source of product information.
2. WeChat Moments advertising makes product information immediately accessible.
3. WeChat Moments advertising informs me about the latest products and information available on the market.
4. WeChat Moments advertising supplies relevant product information.
5. WeChat Moments advertising is a good source of up-to-date product information.
6. WeChat Moments advertising helps me get special product price news.

Perceived Enjoyment

1. I found WeChat Moments advertising is interesting.
2. I found WeChat Moments advertising is entertaining.
3. I found WeChat Moments advertising is enjoyable.
4. I found WeChat Moments advertising is Pleasant.

Personal Involvement

I think WeChat Moment Advertising is:

1. Unimportant – Important
2. Boring – Interesting
3. Irrelevant – Relevant
4. Unexciting – Exciting
5. Means nothing – Means a lot to me
6. Unappealing – Appealing
7. Mundane – Fascinating
8. Worthless – Valuable
9. Uninvolving – Involving
10. Not needed – Needed

Consumer Engagement

1. When I am on WeChat, I get mentally involved in WeChat Moments Advertising.
2. I am able to make product related decisions regarding the brand and/or product based on the information presented in WeChat Moments Advertising.

3. I feel like I learn a tremendous amount of information about the brand and/or product featured WeChat Moments Advertising.
4. I have a much greater understanding about the brand and/or product featured in WeChat Moments Advertising.
5. I find the experience with WeChat Moments Advertising to be pleasurable.
6. WeChat Moments Advertising is satisfying.
7. I read comments in WeChat Moments Advertising.
8. I respond to comments in WeChat Moments Advertising.
9. I posted a comment in WeChat Moments Advertising.
10. I click “like”
11. I click the link/image/icon for further information.
12. I do other activities (e.g., watch a video, play a game, etc.)

Intention to Accept Advertising

1. If the opting-out mechanism is easy, I would receive WeChat Moments advertising.
2. If advertisers would offer privacy protection, I would receive WeChat Moments advertising.
3. As long as I could opt out easily, I would receive WeChat Moments advertising.
4. If signing up with WeChat Moments Advertising is easy, I would receive WeChat Moments advertising.

Utilitarian Shopping Tendency

1. I just buy what I want to.
2. While shopping, I find just an item I look for.
3. I feel disappointed if I have to go to another store to complete my shopping.
4. The purpose of shopping is to find exactly what I am looking for.

Hedonic Shopping Tendency

1. Shopping is truly a joy.
2. I continue to shop, not because I have to, but because I want to.
3. Compared to other things, shopping is truly enjoyable.
4. I enjoy being immersed in exciting new products.
5. I enjoy shopping for its own sake, not just for the items I may purchase.

6. I have a good time when shopping because I am able to act on the spur-of-the-moment.
7. While shopping, I feel the excitement of the hunt.
8. While shopping, I am able to forget my problems.
9. While shopping, I feel a sense of adventure.
10. Shopping is not a very nice time out.

국문초록

소셜 미디어 광고에 대한 소비자 참여

: 광고 수용 모델에 대한 고찰

본 연구는 중국 소셜 미디어 모바일 앱 중의 하나인 위챗 모먼트에서 집행되는 광고 효과를 소비자 참여의 선행요소 및 결과의 이론적 흐름을 통해 알아보고자 한다. 소셜 미디어 광고의 어떤 요소들이 광고에 대한 소비자 참여에 영향을 미치고 나아가 새로운 형태의 광고 수용 의도에 영향을 미치는지 연구한다. 연구 결과는 인지된 상호작용성, 인지된 정보유용성, 인지된 즐거움 및 개인 관여도가 광고에 대한 소비자 참여에 긍정적 영향을 미치고 광고에 대한 소비자 참여는 지속적인 광고 수용 의도에 긍정적인 영향을 미치는 것을 보여준다. 본 연구 결과는 또한 소비자의 실용적/쾌락적 쇼핑 성향이 소비자 참여와 긍정적 상관관계를 가지고 있는 광고 요소의 효과를 조절하는 역할을 하고 있음을 보여준다. 마지막으로, 본 연구는 소셜 미디어상에서 매개자 역할로서의 소비자 참여를 이론적, 실무적 관점에서 논의한다.

주제어: 소셜 미디어 광고, 인게이지먼트, 소셜 커머스, 온라인 쇼핑, 중국