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## Advertisers and Audiences: How Their Views on Advertising Effectiveness Differ

*This marks the first survey of an on-going collaboration with LinkedIn to understand the attitudes of consumers and business executives*

**ROCHESTER, N.Y. – July 21, 2009** – Advertisers and marketers spend a great deal of time crafting ads that they think are effective. Consumers who view these ads at times have different ideas.

These are some of the results of a new LinkedIn Research Network/Harris Poll of 2,025 adults surveyed online between June 24 and 26, 2009 and 1,015 advertisers from agencies or corporations who are involved in the advertising decision making process surveyed online between June 22 and 30. This is the first survey, as part of a new partnership, between Harris Interactive and LinkedIn.

“The Harris Poll has a long history of providing unique insights describing how and why consumers and business executives can think differently about the same issue,” said George Terhanian, President, Global Solutions, Harris Interactive. “We see LinkedIn and its critical mass of senior business executives across all industries, company sizes and geographical locations as an ideal partner for these kinds of polls,” Terhanian concluded.

### Effectiveness of Advertising Types

When it comes to types of ads, advertisers and consumers agree on the effectiveness of some, but disagree on others.

- While over half of advertisers believe ads that make people stop and think (53%) and ads that give people new information (51%) are very effective, just three in ten consumers (30% and 29% respectively) feel the same;
- One-quarter of advertisers (26%) think ads that are integrated into the feel of the program, that is has the same tone as the program it is based in, are very effective compared to just 7% of consumers;
- When it comes to ads that show before/after, 24% of advertisers say they are very effective while 13% of consumers say they are very effective;
- One in five advertisers (21%) say ads that reinforce a message already known are very effective compared to 10% of consumers;
- Consumers and advertisers both like ads that amuse – 34% of consumers and 41% of advertisers say entertaining ads are very effective and one-third of both consumers (33%) and advertisers (32%) say funny ads are very effective. But there is a fine line in amusement as just one in ten consumers (11%) and 14% of advertisers say ads that don't take themselves seriously are very effective. In fact, almost one in five consumers (18%) say these ads are not at all effective; and,

- Looking at advertisements that might not work two in five consumers (41%) and one-third of advertisers (32%) believe that scary ads are not at all effective. Also, over one-quarter of consumers (27%) and 18% of advertisers say ads about a serious topic that make people feel slightly guilty are not at all effective.

### **Addressing the Economic Crisis**

Advertisers are using certain types of strategies for addressing the economic crisis, but is it working with consumers?

- Three in five advertisers (61%) say they are using a “value proposition” strategy, promoting sales, coupons and discounts and almost three in five consumers (57%) say that this strategy is working very well or well to help them sell their products or services;
- Two in five advertisers (39%) are using “empathy”, that is the companies understand what consumers are going through. But only one-quarter of consumers (24%) say empathy works very or somewhat well and one-third (33%) say it does not work at all;
- One-quarter of advertisers (25%) say they are using cheerleading - we’ve made it through tough times before, we’ll do it again, and we can help you do it. Almost two in five (38%) of consumers, however, say that these types of ads do not work at all;
- There is one type of ad addressing the economic crisis advertisers may want to use more - “luxuries for less”. Less than one in five advertisers (18%) say they are using it while one-third of consumers (34%) say these types of ads work very well or well in selling products or services; and,
- Among consumers, there is a generational divide as the younger age groups (18-34) are more likely to say each of these four strategies works very well or well. In fact, over half of 18-34 year olds (51%) say they think “luxuries for less” works very well or well compared to just 19% of those 55 and older.

### **So What?**

“Advertisers and those to whom they are advertising tend to see the world somewhat differently. For a particular television ad, for example, advertisers are often thinking sales while consumers are more likely to think of the ad as something they liked watching,” according to Marianne Foley, Senior Vice President, Strategic Initiatives at Harris Interactive.

“The LinkedIn/Harris Poll suggests somewhat otherwise—we see more of a convergence. While the order of magnitude differs, advertisers and their audiences tend to agree on what is most effective and what is least effective.”

“This isn’t the most important story though. The research indicates that in this current economic environment, messages that talk money are of paramount interest to consumers,” according to Foley. “Ads that emphasize value propositions or ‘luxuries for less’ appeal to consumers more so than empathy and cheerleading. On the other hand,

advertisers rate empathy and cheerleading above 'luxuries for less' on the list of themes they are using. This is an incredibly valuable piece of information for advertisers to know right now."

**TABLE 1**  
**EFFECTIVENESS OF ADVERTISING TYPES**

"How effective do you think each of these characteristics of advertising are?"

*Percent Saying "Very Effective"*

Base: Advertisers and U.S. adults

|                                                                                                                                                                     | Advertisers | Consumers |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|
|                                                                                                                                                                     | %           | %         |
| Ads that make me stop and think                                                                                                                                     | 53          | 30        |
| Ads that give me new information                                                                                                                                    | 51          | 29        |
| Ads that are entertaining                                                                                                                                           | 41          | 34        |
| Ads that are informative                                                                                                                                            | 37          | 30        |
| Ads that are funny                                                                                                                                                  | 32          | 33        |
| Ads that have a product demonstration                                                                                                                               | 27          | 20        |
| Ads that are integrated into the feel of the program (i.e. not a product integration into a program, but an ad that has the same tone as the program it's based in) | 26          | 7         |
| Ads that show before/after                                                                                                                                          | 24          | 13        |
| Ads that reinforce a message I already know                                                                                                                         | 21          | 10        |
| Ads that don't take themselves seriously                                                                                                                            | 14          | 11        |
| Ads about a serious topic that may leave me feeling slightly guilty                                                                                                 | 5           | 6         |
| Ads that are scary                                                                                                                                                  | 3           | 3         |

**TABLE 2**  
**EFFECTIVENESS OF ADVERTISING TYPES - ADVERTISERS**

"How effective do you think each of these characteristics of advertising are?"

Base: Advertisers

|                                                                                                                                                                     | Very effective | Somewhat effective | Not that effective | Not at all effective |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                     | %              | %                  | %                  | %                    |
| Ads that make me stop and think                                                                                                                                     | 53             | 41                 | 5                  | 1                    |
| Ads that give me new information                                                                                                                                    | 51             | 45                 | 3                  | *                    |
| Ads that are entertaining                                                                                                                                           | 41             | 48                 | 9                  | 1                    |
| Ads that are informative                                                                                                                                            | 37             | 54                 | 9                  | 1                    |
| Ads that are funny                                                                                                                                                  | 32             | 56                 | 10                 | 2                    |
| Ads that have a product demonstration                                                                                                                               | 27             | 56                 | 15                 | 2                    |
| Ads that are integrated into the feel of the program (i.e. not a product integration into a program, but an ad that has the same tone as the program it's based in) | 26             | 52                 | 20                 | 3                    |
| Ads that show before/after                                                                                                                                          | 24             | 53                 | 20                 | 3                    |
| Ads that reinforce a message I already know                                                                                                                         | 21             | 53                 | 22                 | 4                    |
| Ads that don't take themselves seriously                                                                                                                            | 14             | 48                 | 29                 | 9                    |
| Ads about a serious topic that may leave me feeling slightly guilty                                                                                                 | 5              | 33                 | 44                 | 18                   |
| Ads that are scary                                                                                                                                                  | 3              | 22                 | 43                 | 32                   |

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Note: \* indicates less than 0.5%

**TABLE 3**  
**EFFECTIVENESS OF ADVERTISING TYPES - CONSUMERS**

"How effective do you think each of these characteristics of advertising are?"

Base: All U.S. Adults

|                                                                                                                                                                     | Very effective | Somewhat effective | Not that effective | Not at all effective |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                     | %              | %                  | %                  | %                    |
| Ads that are entertaining                                                                                                                                           | 34             | 53                 | 8                  | 5                    |
| Ads that are funny                                                                                                                                                  | 33             | 52                 | 10                 | 5                    |
| Ads that are informative                                                                                                                                            | 30             | 58                 | 8                  | 4                    |
| Ads that make me stop and think                                                                                                                                     | 30             | 55                 | 9                  | 5                    |
| Ads that give me new information                                                                                                                                    | 29             | 60                 | 7                  | 4                    |
| Ads that have a product demonstration                                                                                                                               | 20             | 55                 | 18                 | 7                    |
| Ads that show before/after                                                                                                                                          | 13             | 50                 | 25                 | 12                   |
| Ads that don't take themselves seriously                                                                                                                            | 11             | 42                 | 29                 | 18                   |
| Ads that reinforce a message I already know                                                                                                                         | 10             | 47                 | 30                 | 12                   |
| Ads that are integrated into the feel of the program (i.e. not a product integration into a program, but an ad that has the same tone as the program it's based in) | 7              | 45                 | 34                 | 14                   |
| Ads about a serious topic that may leave me feeling slightly guilty                                                                                                 | 6              | 29                 | 38                 | 27                   |
| Ads that are scary                                                                                                                                                  | 3              | 20                 | 36                 | 41                   |

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**TABLE 4**  
**ADDRESSING THE ECONOMIC CRISIS**

“Thinking about your current advertising strategy, are you actively addressing the economic crisis in any of the following ways?”

Base: Advertisers

|                                                                                                             | Total | Time in advertising |            |             |           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|---------------------|------------|-------------|-----------|
|                                                                                                             |       | Less than 5 years   | 5-10 years | 10-15 years | 15+ years |
|                                                                                                             | %     | %                   | %          | %           | %         |
| Value propositions (i.e., same behaviors with a lower price tag – ex: sales, coupon discounts)              | 61    | 62                  | 53         | 60          | 63        |
| Empathy (i.e., we understand what you are going through)                                                    | 39    | 32                  | 35         | 40          | 42        |
| Cheerleading (i.e., we’ve made it through tough times before, we’ll do it again, and we can help you do it) | 25    | 27                  | 30         | 22          | 24        |
| Luxuries for Less (i.e., don’t give up your luxuries, get them for less)                                    | 18    | 22                  | 19         | 20          | 17        |
| None of these                                                                                               | 12    | 7                   | 12         | 13          | 12        |
| I am not addressing the economic crisis in any way                                                          | 12    | 13                  | 15         | 12          | 11        |

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**TABLE 5**  
**IF ADDRESSING THE ECONOMIC CRISIS IS WORKING**

“Different advertisers are addressing the current economic conditions in different ways. Which of the following do you think works best to sell their products/services?”

Base: All adults

|                                                                                                             | WORKS VERY WELL/ WELL (NET) | Works very well | Works well | Works somewhat well | Does not work at all |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|------------|---------------------|----------------------|
|                                                                                                             | %                           | %               | %          | %                   | %                    |
| Value propositions (i.e., same behaviors with a lower price tag – ex: sales, coupon discounts)              | 57                          | 17              | 41         | 35                  | 8                    |
| Empathy (i.e., we understand what you are going through)                                                    | 24                          | 6               | 18         | 43                  | 33                   |
| Cheerleading (i.e., we’ve made it through tough times before, we’ll do it again, and we can help you do it) | 19                          | 4               | 15         | 42                  | 38                   |
| Luxuries for Less (i.e., don’t give up your luxuries, get them for less)                                    | 34                          | 8               | 25         | 43                  | 23                   |

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**TABLE 6**  
**IF ADDRESSING THE ECONOMIC CRISIS IS WORKING – BY AGE**

“Different advertisers are addressing the current economic conditions in different ways. Which of the following do you think works best to sell their products/services?”  
*Percent saying “Works very well/Well”*

Base: All adults

|                                                                                                             | Total | Age   |       |       |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
|                                                                                                             |       | 18-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55+ |
|                                                                                                             | %     | %     | %     | %     | %   |
| Value propositions (i.e., same behaviors with a lower price tag – ex: sales, coupon discounts)              | 57    | 65    | 66    | 55    | 48  |
| Empathy (i.e., we understand what you are going through)                                                    | 24    | 30    | 32    | 19    | 17  |
| Cheerleading (i.e., we’ve made it through tough times before, we’ll do it again, and we can help you do it) | 19    | 27    | 20    | 15    | 15  |
| Luxuries for Less (i.e., don’t give up your luxuries, get them for less)                                    | 34    | 51    | 39    | 29    | 19  |

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

## Methodology

This **LinkedIn Research Network/Harris Poll** was conducted online within the United States June 24 and 26, 2009, among 2,025 adults (aged 18 and over) and between June 22 and 30, 2009 among 1,105 advertisers.

For the adults, figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents’ propensity to be online. Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

For the advertisers, figures for company size and type were weighted where necessary. The advertiser respondents for this survey were selected from LinkedIn’s members who have agreed to participate in survey research.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words “margin of error” as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

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*These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.*

***The Harris Poll*® #80, July 21, 2009**

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