

Television, Internet, and Internet Social Media Direct-To-Consumer Prescription Medication Advertisements: Intention and Behavior to Seek Additional Prescription Medication Information

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Abstract : Although direct-to-consumer prescription medication advertisements (DTCA) are viewed or heard in many venues, there does not appear to be any research for internet social media DTCA. We study the association of traditional media DTCA and digital media DTCA including internet social media of YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter with three different outcomes. There was one intentions outcome and two different behavior outcomes. The intentions outcome was the agreement level for seeking additional information about a prescription medication after seeing a DTCA. One behavior outcome was the agreement level for obtaining additional information about a prescription medication after seeing a DTCA. The other behavior outcome was the frequency level for obtaining additional information about a prescription medication after seeing a DTCA. Surveys were completed by 635 college students. Predictors included demographic variables, theory of planned behavior variables, health variables, and advertisements seen or heard. Also, in the behavior analyses, additional predictors of intentions and sources for seeking additional prescription drug information were included. Multivariate linear regression analyses were conducted. We found that increased age was associated with increased behavior, women were associated with increased intentions, and Hispanic race/ethnicity was associated with decreased behavior. For the theory of planned behavior variables, increased attitudes were associated with increased intentions, increased social norms were associated with increased intentions and behavior, and increased intentions were associated with increased behavior. Very good perceived health was associated with increased intentions. Advertisements seen in spam mail were associated with decreased intentions. Advertisements seen on traditional or cable television were associated with decreased behavior. Advertisements seen on television watched on the internet were associated with increased behavior. The source of seeking additional information of reading internet print content was associated with increased behavior. No internet social media advertisements were associated with either intentions or behavior. In conclusion, pharmaceutical brand managers and marketers should consider these findings when tailoring their DTCA advertising campaigns and directing their DTCA advertising budget towards young adults such as college students. They need to reconsider the current approach for traditional television DTCA and also consider dedicating a larger advertising budget toward internet television DTCA. Although internet social media is a popular place to advertise, the financial expenditures do not appear worthwhile for DTCA when targeting young adults such as college students.

Keywords : brand managers, direct-to-consumer advertising, internet, social media

Conference Title : ICBEMM 2017 : International Conference on Business, Economics and Marketing Management

Conference Location : Singapore, Singapore

Conference Dates : March 29-30, 2017