

THE IMPACT OF ADVERTISING CONTENT ON THE CONSUMPTION OF SNACK FOOD: EVIDENCE FROM BACK-OFFICE EMPLOYEES IN VIETNAM

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Abstract: *This study investigates the impact of social media advertising content on the impulsive buying behavior of snack food products among back-office employees in Vietnam. Drawing on the S-O-R model and Impulse Buying Theory, six hypotheses were developed and tested with survey data from 357 administrative, HR, and finance staff. SEM results reveal that product transparency enhances perceived quality, while exclusive offers improve consumer attitudes, thereby stimulating impulsive purchases. The study suggests developing authentic and sustainable advertising content to help businesses engage customers more effectively.*

• Keywords: *integrated marketing and communication (IMC), advertisement, social media, back-office employee, impulsive buying behavior, SEM, SOR.*

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1. Introduction

Numerous studies examining the impact of video advertisements on impulsive buying behavior have reported positive results. However, little research has focused specifically on video advertisements content - a creative strategy that discloses production processes, ingredient sourcing, and packaging procedures, while subtly showcasing product strengths. Such content is both discreet and persuasive, stimulating consumer purchase behavior in a natural and sustainable manner.

Against this backdrop, the present study investigates the influence of video advertisement content on the impulsive buying behavior of back-office employees. This study is guided by a single overarching research question: How do the elements of video advertisement content affect consumers' impulsive buying behavior? The findings are expected to contribute new insights and practical implications for food companies, enabling them to design more effective content strategies to enhance future Integrated Marketing and Communication (IMC) campaigns.

2. Theoretical background and hypothesis development

2.1. Theoretical background

This study is grounded in the integration of the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework, developed by Mehrabian and Russell in 1974, and the Impulse Buying Theory, introduced by Hawkins-Stern in 1962, to examine the impact of video advertisements on the impulsive buying behavior of snack food among back-office employees in Vietnam.

The S-O-R framework has proven highly effective in exploring the determinants of consumer purchasing behavior, particularly in the context of online shopping. In this study, the Stimulus (S) refers to video advertisement content - backstage materials that typically highlight production processes, packaging procedures, ingredient origins, and the individuals and factors involved in product creation. Based on the characteristics of this content pillar, the proposed stimulus factors include: (1) Product Transparency and (2) Exclusive Offers.

Next, the Organism (O) captures the internal information processing of back-office employees in Vietnam when exposed to these video advertisements, reflecting both their emotional responses and cognitive evaluations. Through the transparent information provided by ad content, viewers are able to perceive the quality of the featured product (Zhang & Shi, 2022), while consumer attitudes are also significantly shaped by promotions and exclusive offers. Accordingly, the proposed organism factors in this model are: (1) Perceived Quality and (2) Attitude toward Video Advertisements.

Finally, the Response (R) represents consumer behavioral outcomes shaped by cognitive processing and emotional engagement stimulated by these video advertisements, which, in turn, foster purchase behavior. Specifically, drawing on Impulse Buying Theory (Hawkins-Stern, 1962), ad content often delivers authentic, relatable visuals that create situational influences, lowering consumer resistance. When coupled with exclusive offers, these stimuli increase the likelihood of unplanned, immediate purchases.

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In summary, applying these foundational theories through a study employing Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) provides valuable insights into how ad content integrated into video advertisements influences consumer behavior among back-office employees in Vietnam, with a particular focus on impulsive buying behavior.

2.2. Research hypothesis development

2.2.1. Product information transparency

Product transparency refers to the extent to which information about a product's attributes, quality, sourcing, and manufacturing processes is presented clearly and accessibly. As noted by J. Yang & Battocchio, (2020), such transparency can substantially enhance consumer trust and engagement, particularly within the food and beverage industry. Moreover, transparency in advertising content - such as providing insightful information about production processes - has a significant influence on perceived quality. Studies indicate that when brands are transparent about how their products are created, including the origin and composition of ingredients, consumers tend to evaluate those products as being of higher quality. In addition, transparent advertising strategies that reflect brand values enhance consumer trust and foster positive attitudes, particularly when the content is perceived as fair and authentic. Therefore, this study proposed the following hypotheses:

H1: Product transparency positively influences perceived quality

H2: Product transparency positively influences attitude toward advertisements

2.2.2. Exclusive Offers

Exclusive offers are promotional incentives, such as discounts, limited-time deals, or special access, embedded directly within video or social media advertisements. By fostering a sense of urgency and exclusivity, these offers stimulate faster purchasing decisions among viewers. According to Dou & Zhang, (2023), exclusive promotions presented during video viewing can generate a sense of urgency, thereby motivating consumers to engage in purchasing behavior. Furthermore, when combined with authentic content, exclusive offers cultivate distinctive perceptions of product quality and strengthen perceived savings, thereby improving attitudes toward the advertisement and increasing the likelihood of immediate purchase. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H3: Exclusive offer positively influences perceived quality

H4: Exclusive offer positively influences attitude toward advertisements

2.2.3. Perceived quality

Numerous studies have demonstrated that perceived quality plays a pivotal role in consumer purchase decision-making. When consumers evaluate a product as being of high quality, their purchase intention

increases significantly. This effect becomes even more pronounced when such perceptions are reinforced by engaging advertising content. Moreover, attractive displays and quality perceptions are recognized as key drivers of impulsive buying behavior, underscoring the relationship between perceived quality and unplanned purchases (Karahana, 2024). Therefore, this study proposed the following hypotheses:

H5: Perceived quality positively influences impulsive buying behavior

2.2.4. Attitude toward advertising

Yaprak & Coban (2023) argued that emotionally driven purchasing behavior can positively enhance consumers' attitudes toward social media advertising, thereby influencing impulsive buying behavior. In addition, prior studies have confirmed the relationship among consumer attitudes, purchase intention, and impulsive buying behavior (Peña-García et al., 2020). Therefore, in this context, the present study proposes the following hypotheses:

H6: Attitude toward advertisement positively influences impulsive buying behavior.

3. Research method

3.1. Sample and data collection

The study employed a quantitative approach through an online survey conducted from March to May 2024, without geographical restrictions, to ensure objectivity in measuring perceptions of online video advertising. Data were collected using a Google Form comprising three main sections: (1) screening questions; (2) demographic information; and (3) measurement items for the constructs. A 5-point Likert scale was applied to capture five constructs with 27 items. A non-probability convenience sampling method was adopted with screening criteria including: (1) respondents had to be back-office employees in one of two departments administration & human resources, and finance & accounting; and (2) respondents had previously purchased snack food products after watching a video advertisement on any social media platform, including TikTok, Shopee, Facebook, or YouTube.

The survey was distributed online via email, Zalo, and Facebook Messenger. 400 questionnaires were distributed, yielding 391 responses. Of these, 34 were excluded due to poor response quality, resulting in a valid response rate of approximately 91.30%. Thus, 357 valid responses were retained for data analysis.

The collected data were analyzed using SPSS 27.0 and AMOS 24.0 to describe the sample, assess the reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of the measurement scales, test the model fit, and evaluate the research hypotheses.

3.2. Measures

A structured questionnaire was designed to evaluate the dependent variables, including product transparency

(PIT), exclusive offers (EIO), perceived quality (PQ), attitude toward video advertisements (EAT), and impulsive buying behavior (IBB). Table 1 presents the sources of measurement scales, the number of measurement items, and their reliability, indicated by Cronbach's Alpha and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). All observed items demonstrated factor loadings greater than 0.6 and composite reliability (CR) values exceeding 0.7, confirming the internal consistency of the indicators within the scales at an acceptable level. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of all constructs were above 0.7, satisfying the required reliability threshold. Furthermore, all AVE values were greater than 0.5, providing evidence of convergent validity across the constructs in the model.

Table 1: Measurements

Factor & Number of scales	Source	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
Product Transparency (PIT) - 08 items	(Liu, 2013) and (Chen et al., 2021)	0.861	0.866	0.549
Exclusive offers (EIO) - 06 items	(Büyükdag et al., 2020) and (Palazon & Delgado-Ballester, 2009)	0.866	0.549	0.668
Perceived Quality (PQ) - 03 items	(Dodds et al., 1991)	0.840	0.668	0.631
Attitude toward Video Advertisements (EAT) - 04 items	(Shareef et al., 2018)	0.837	0.631	0.568
Impulsive Buying Behavior (IBB) - 06 items	(Akram et al., 2018) and Self-Development	0.842	0.850	0.589

4. Research results

4.1. Participants

The demographic of respondents shows the general characteristics of the study participants. The number of women (58.8%) was nearly half-time more than that of men (41.2%). Most participants ranged in age from 20 to 34, and the largest age group was 25-34 (51.3%). The majority of the participants came from the North of Vietnam (68.1%). More than half of respondents had a bachelor's degree (57.1%). A large proportion of respondents worked in finance and accounting (73.1%), whereas a smaller share were employed in administration and human resources (26.9%). As office workers, the survey participants held the most leadership positions (38.7%), followed by employees (34.5%) and the least specialists (5.0%).

The biggest reason office workers buy snack food through video advertisements is "Product information is provided more clearly" (54.6%), "More convenient" (23.5%), "More exclusive discounts" (11.8%), and "Video advertising is more intuitive" (10.1%). Besides, the frequency of Purchase through video advertisements of Back-office employees is mostly 1 time per 1-3 months (43.7%), and the frequency of Purchase of Snack Food through video advertisements is the same, about 1 time per 1-3 months (56.3%).

4.2. Structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis

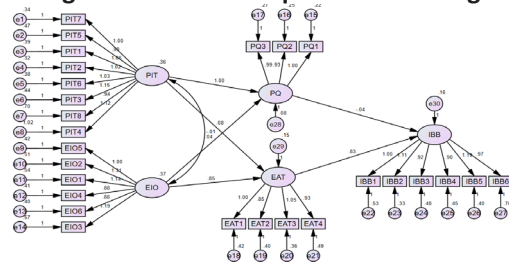
The structural model was tested after confirming the reliability and validity of the measurement model. The fit indices met the following criteria: CMIN/df = 3.947 (≤ 5 , Bentler & Bonett, 1980); CFI = 0.912 (> 0.9); TLI = 0.990 (> 0.9); RMSEA = 0.075 (< 0.08 , Hu & Bentler,

1995; Garver & Mentzer, 1999). Moreover, all parameter estimates in the model are statistically significant at the 5% level, confirming that the measurement model demonstrates a good fit with the observed data. Based on the Estimate table, the author has compiled the necessary information for hypothesis testing (Table 2) as follows:

Table 2: Results of Analysing the SEM model

Hypotheses	Relationship	Estimate	S.E	P value	Results
H1	PQ <--- PIT	1.004	0.075	0.000	Supported
H2	EAT <--- PIT	0.083	0.052	0.115	Not supported
H3	PQ <--- EIO	0.040	0.044	0.356	Not supported
H4	EAT <--- EIO	0.849	0.084	0.000	Supported
H5	IBB <--- PQ	-0.39	0.047	0.408	Not supported
H6	IBB <--- EAT	0.827	0.082	0.000	Supported

Figure 2: Structural Equation Modelling



Source: Author's analysis

The SEM results reveal that three of six hypotheses (H1, H4, and H6) were supported ($p < 0.05$), and three hypotheses (H2, H3, and H5) were not supported. Among these, product transparency (PIT) ($\beta = 1.004$) had the strongest direct effect on perceived quality (PQ), but product transparency (PTI) did not have an impact on attitude toward advertisements (EAT). In addition, exclusive offers (EIO) were found to have a strong effect on attitude toward advertisements (EAT) ($\beta = 0.849$), but no significant impact on perceived quality. Lastly, while perceived quality (PQ) does not significantly predict impulsive buying behavior (IBB), exclusive in-video offers (EIO) show a substantial positive effect on impulsive buying behavior ($\beta = 0.827$).

5. Discussion and conclusion

5.1. Discussion

The findings of this study provide meaningful insights into the mechanisms through which advertising content and exclusive offers shape consumer behavior in the context of social media advertising. Out of the six proposed hypotheses, three (H1, H4, and H6) were supported, whereas H2, H3, and H5 were not, suggesting that the effects of BTS-based advertising are more nuanced than initially expected.

First, product transparency (PIT) demonstrated the strongest direct effect on perceived quality (PQ) ($\beta = 1.004$). This result aligns with prior studies emphasizing that transparent communication regarding production processes and ingredient sourcing can substantially enhance consumer perceptions of product quality (Chang, 2014; Zhang & Shi, 2022). However, PIT did not significantly influence attitude toward advertisements

(EAT), which diverges from earlier findings (Buell et al., 2017) that suggested transparency fosters positive consumer attitudes. A possible explanation lies in the nature of ad content: while it effectively conveys product authenticity and quality, it may not necessarily evoke favorable affective responses toward the advertisement itself. This highlights a potential boundary condition of transparency its effect may be limited to cognitive evaluations (quality perception) rather than emotional or attitudinal dimensions.

Second, exclusive offers (EIO) were found to significantly shape consumer attitudes toward advertisements ($\beta = 0.849$) but did not influence perceived quality.

Finally, the relationship between perceived quality (PQ) and impulsive buying behavior (IBB) was not supported, contradicting previous research that identified perceived quality as a strong driver of purchase behavior (Lee et al., 2022; P. Yang et al., 2024). One possible explanation is that impulse buying, by its very nature, is less influenced by rational quality assessments and more by situational and emotional triggers. Supporting this interpretation, EIO exhibited a substantial positive effect on IBB ($\beta = 0.827$), reinforcing the view that urgency-driven promotions stimulate unplanned purchases. These results suggest that impulsive buying is more strongly rooted in affective responses than in cognitive evaluations of quality.

Taken together, the findings extend both the S-O-R framework and Impulse Buying Theory by clarifying the distinct pathways through which transparency-based and promotion-based stimuli operate. Transparency influences cognitive perceptions of quality, whereas promotional urgency affects affective responses and directly drives impulsive buying. This dual mechanism underscores the importance for marketers to carefully balance transparency and promotional strategies when designing social media advertisements, particularly in food-related industries.

5.2. Implications

5.2.1. Theoretical implications:

This study provides empirical evidence in the Vietnamese context regarding the distinct effects of product transparency and exclusive offers on impulsive buying behavior. The findings demonstrate that in social media advertising, transparency primarily strengthens cognitive evaluations (perceived quality), whereas exclusive in-video offers serve as affective triggers that directly stimulate impulsive buying. This clarifies the specific dynamics of the S-O-R model in emerging markets such as Vietnam, where consumers simultaneously value brand authenticity and remain highly responsive to situational promotional cues.

5.2.2. Managerial implications

Based on the discussion above, the author proposes four managerial implications for practitioners to consider when designing future IMC strategies:

First, manufacturers and brands should develop transparent content to strengthen long-term consumer trust. In particular, within Vietnam's food industry, product safety and quality are persistent concerns. Firms are encouraged to utilize ad content to disclose production processes, ingredient origins, and safety standards. This approach helps build brand credibility, especially in a market where consumers are increasingly skeptical of "exaggerated" advertising.

Second, advertising campaigns will be more successful if they incorporate exclusive offers to stimulate impulsive buying behavior. The findings show that exclusive promotions embedded in video ads (e.g., discount codes revealed only after watching a TikTok, Shopee Live, or YouTube Shorts advertisement) exert a strong influence on impulsive purchases. Vietnamese firms can leverage time-limited promotions to align with the fast-paced shopping habits of office employees, who are often constrained by time.

Third, instead of relying solely on short-term promotions, firms should combine them with transparent messaging to simultaneously encourage immediate purchases and build long-term trust. For instance, a video advertisement could showcase a clean and safe production process while offering an exclusive discount for the first order.

Finally, companies should specifically target the back-office employee segment to increase sales. Employees in administration, human resources, finance, and accounting typically have short lunch breaks and often opt for junk food or snack food as a substitute for main meals. Businesses can design concise, engaging video ads on platforms frequently accessed by this group (e.g., TikTok, Facebook), embedding exclusive offers to boost the likelihood of immediate purchases during limited time windows.

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