

Exploring the Advertising Effectiveness of Podcasts: a Congruence Theory Perspective

Dr. Jung-Kuei Hsieh

Department of Business Administration, National Taipei University, New Taipei City, Taiwan

Abstract

Podcast listenership and influencer activity have grown at a remarkable pace, drawing increasing interest in podcast-based advertising. Despite the clear commercial benefits this presents for content creators and platform operators, the academic literature offers little guidance on how to maximize the impact of such advertising. This study addresses that gap by applying congruence theory as its theoretical lens, investigating how two distinct forms of congruence shape audience responses to podcast advertisements, specifically their perceived advertising irritation and persuasiveness, and how these reactions subsequently drive advertising attitudes and purchase intentions. To explore these relationships, a conceptual model was developed and tested using data gathered through an online survey. Structural equation modeling, conducted via SmartPLS, was employed to analyze the data. Findings reveal that congruence cues embedded in podcast advertising, namely the alignment between podcast content and advertisement content and between the podcaster's image and the advertised product, positively influence how audiences perceive both advertising irritation and persuasiveness. Furthermore, both of these perceptions were confirmed as significant predictors of advertising attitudes and purchase intentions. These findings offer nuanced insight into the psychological and behavioral mechanisms through which podcast advertising operates, shedding light on strategies that can enhance its overall effectiveness. From a scholarly standpoint, this research extends the online advertising literature into the relatively underexplored domain of podcasting, while also offering actionable takeaways for digital marketing practitioners seeking to optimize their podcast advertising strategies.

Keywords: Podcast, Advertising Effectiveness, Congruence Theory, Purchase Intention, Advertising Attitude