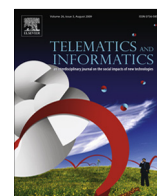




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# Attitudes toward mobile advertising among users versus non-users of the mobile Internet



Alicia Izquierdo-Yusta <sup>a,\*</sup>, Cristina Olarte-Pascual <sup>b</sup>, Eva Reinares-Lara <sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Department of Business Administration, Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Empresariales, Universidad de Burgos, Plaza Infanta Elena s/n, 09001 Burgos, Spain

<sup>b</sup> Department of Economy and Enterprise, Facultad de Ciencias Empresariales, Universidad de La Rioja, Ed. Quintiliano, c/La Cigüeña 60, 26004 Logroño, Spain

<sup>c</sup> Department of Business Administration, Facultad de Ciencias Jurídicas y Sociales, Universidad Rey Juan Carlos, Paseo de los Artilleros s/n, Campus de Vicalvaro, 28932 Madrid, Spain

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## ABSTRACT

Marketing communication strategy via mobile phone constitutes a promising approach to companies because it enables to reach appropriate audiences at the right time and place. The main aim of this research is to determine key factors that create new opportunities for commercial communications by considering consumer attitudes toward mobile advertising. The proposed causal model of attitudes and intentions toward mobile advertising highlights potential differences between users of smartphones with Internet capabilities and non-users. The theoretical model integrates the influences of control, reference groups, perceived added value, and ease of use on attitudes toward mobile advertising, as well as the relationship of these effects with intentions toward advertising, mediated by mobile Internet usage. The sample is 612 respondents who receive advertising by their mobile phones. Our results reveal, similar to other research, that attitudes exert positive influences on intentions to receive advertising, especially among those who already have access to the Internet on their mobile phones. However, regarding these variables, the experience does not contribute to positive attitudes.

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## 1. Introduction

With the emergence of mobile communications, mobile advertisement enables advertisers to deliver personalized advertising information to consumers at the right time and place. Consumer can not only receive advertisement information through the push-type delivery method but can also proactively retrieve advertisement information via the pull-type method. Mobile carries typically have personal information on their subscribers; therefore, designing a personalized advertisement based on a subscriber's profile and preferences is deemed conceivable. This personalized advertisement can then be delivered to the personal handset device to maximize the advertisement and marketing effects.

Modern developments in advertising through mobile devices creates high expectations for improved communications and competitiveness in most business sectors, both consumer and industrial markets (Salo, 2012), in parallel with a high degree of skepticism and defensiveness among consumers toward the arrival of such commercial messages. Even with these developments, the effectiveness of advertising in mass media continues to decline, particularly in the face of the modern global recession. Yet three signals suggest the likely success of advertising through mobile devices.

\* Corresponding author. Tel.: +34 (9)47259036; fax: +34 (9) 472542110.

E-mail addresses: [aliciaiz@ubu.es](mailto:aliciaiz@ubu.es) (A. Izquierdo-Yusta), [cristina.olarte@unirioja.es](mailto:cristina.olarte@unirioja.es) (C. Olarte-Pascual), [eva.reinares@urjc.es](mailto:eva.reinares@urjc.es) (E. Reinares-Lara).

First, the growth of mobile devices has been substantial in the past two decades (Khalifa and Shen, 2008; Zhang and Mao, 2008). The mobile phone has achieved the 6.8 million subscribers with a global penetration rate of 96% (ITU, 2013), showing the number of users a growing trend. A Spanish level, there is a penetration rate of 128.4%, with 20.8 million smartphones, standing in the middle of the European countries (Netsize, 2012). Second, from the point of view of advertising investment is expected that mobile advertising has the second investment and is the medium that will grow in the next five years (IAB Europe, 2011). By way of illustration, it should be noted that even though we are immersed in a crisis in the advertising industry, advertising investment on mobile marketing in Spain during 2012 exceeded 90 million, an increase of 45% over 2011 to all activities of mobile marketing (Mobile Marketing Association, 2012). Third, the development of increasingly sophisticated mobile devices offers new alternatives for interacting with consumers, including through enriched communication options. In this sense, mobile advertising constitutes a second phase of digital advertising, penetrating various aspects of people's lives through improved wireless Internet services and the latest generations of mobile technology (e.g., 2G, 2.5G, 3G, 4G).

In their efforts, the firms seek to segment consumers according to various criteria, such as demographics, location, or the type of mobile terminal being used. In this sense it is important to take account of several advantages, including the personal nature of mobile advertising, which should result in high response rates (Barutcu, 2007), as well as the ubiquity of mobile phones (Olla and Atkinson, 2003; Pagani, 2004), which support communications that reflect the location of the user (Rodríguez Perlado and Barwise, 2005). By providing information on products that interest consumers, including price, promotional activity and brand information, properly formatted for each consumer's mobile device, advertisers allow consumers to obtain detailed product information quickly. If consumer can properly receive and view advertising content custom-tailored for them, it will leave a good impression and increase their desire to purchase the product.

That is, mobile advertising can reach appropriate audiences at the right time and in the right place at a relatively low cost (Facchetti et al., 2005). Despite these favorable conditions and market analyses that indicate consumers are aware of advanced mobile services, many people remain reluctant to use their mobile phones to receive marketing communications (Fogelgren-Pedersen et al., 2003; López et al., 2008). In such a scenario, we need additional analyses to specify and clarify the implications of mobile marketing and commercial communication for different audiences, such as those who use versus do not use mobile Internet access.

Prior research on mobile advertising has sought some insight into the relationships between marketing stimuli and consumer responses (Barwise and Strong, 2002; Bauer et al., 2005; Lee, 2003; Soroa-Koury and Yang, 2010; Xu, 2006/2007). Communication is the key link; the audience's interest in proposals offered by suppliers depends largely on several variables. For example, consumers' attitudes toward advertising have been widely studied (Dutta-Bergman, 2006; Shavitt et al., 1998), largely on the basis of theories derived from studies on attitudes toward brands (Bauer and Greyser, 1968; Durvasula et al., 1993; Lutz, 1985; Muehling, 1987). In order to provide a solid theoretical basis for examining the adoption of mobile advertising, this paper draws on two schools of thought regarding the nomological structure (Lee, 2009) of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975): (i) the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989) and (ii) the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991). Since TAM and TPB have been used in many studies to predict and understand user perceptions of systems use and the probability of adopting an online system (Gefen et al., 2003; Hsu et al., 2006; Wu and Chen, 2005), they are the most appropriate tools for understanding mobile advertising adoption. This investigation, similar to others, (Lee, 2009; Igbaria et al., 1995; Mathieson, 1991; Taylor and Todd, 1995) proposes to integrate both models, TAM and TPB, in order to provide a more comprehensive model of mobile advertising.

Empirical evidence in support of these models, applied to mobile advertising, highlights the usefulness of the attitude variable as decisive for mobile phone users' intentions and behavior in terms of accepting mobile advertising (Karjaluo et al., 2008; Lee et al., 2006; Tsang et al., 2004), as well as mobile phone adoption (Lee, 2003) and its use as a promotional communication medium (Bauer et al., 2005). However, analyses of the factors that determine attitudes toward mobile advertising and the relationships among attitudes, intentions, and behaviors remain somewhat contradictory.

In response, we investigate in depth the antecedents and consequences of attitudes toward mobile advertising, using a causal measurement model that considers the influence of control, reference groups, perceptions of added value, and perceived ease of use on attitudes towards mobile advertising, as well as the relationships of these effects with intentions toward such advertising, as mediated by people's use of the mobile Internet. Accordingly, we structure this article in three parts: First, we review our theoretical background, including extant literature on the Internet and mobile advertising, to establish the relationships we propose in our theoretical model. We also provide some research hypotheses. Second, we detail our research methodology and conduct an empirical study with a representative sample of 612 recipients of mobile advertising in Spain, featuring both users of mobile Internet and consumers who choose not to access this service. Third, we present the study results and findings, along with their implications and a few limitations.

## 2. Background and assumptions

### 2.1. Adoption of wireless Internet services through mobile technology

Although technology use determinants have been studied for years (e.g., Davis, 1989; Mathieson, 1991; Moore and Benbasat, 1991; Thompson et al., 1994; Taylor and Todd, 1995; Venkatesh and Davis, 2000), as Karahanna and Straub

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