

Message Design Factors and Advertising Disclosures*

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*Many factors affect the processing of disclosures. By the way, this is 8-point font size!

Disclosure Modality

- Dual modality disclosures (audio and video) are better recalled than single modality disclosures (especially video only).
- Audio-only disclosures are better recalled than video-only disclosures.
- In practice, almost all television disclosures are video-only.

Disclosure Size, etc.

- Improving disclosure conspicuity (size and contrast) can increase message recall.
 - “Modem Required. Sold Separately.” – 4pt. font
- Shorter disclosures are comprehended better than longer disclosures.
- Disclosures that have fewer characters per inch, occupy a larger area, and are more isolated are more noticeable than disclosures without these features.

Disclosure Distraction

- Background noise and ad clutter tend to reduce the awareness of disclosures.
- Distinctive “peripheral cues” (color, celebrities, music, scenery,...) can interfere with viewers’ processing of message disclosures – especially if the cue is unrelated to the message disclosure.
- Listerine corrective ad disclosure

Disclosure Specificity and Length

- General advisories and claims (e.g., “read the label,” “consult your doctor”) tend not to be comprehended as well as more specific information.
- However, disclosure length should not be favored in increasing specificity. Again, shorter disclosures are recalled better than longer disclosures.

Disclosure Understanding

- Target market viewers may have difficulty understanding disclosures at times. Their ability levels (age, education, special product knowledge) in processing the disclosures should be considered.
- Children and disclosures (“Some assembly required” vs. “You have to put this together”)