

Social cognition and design

Psychology



**ASSIGN
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Mr James Smith Chief Executive Officer Wendy's Food Incorporated 432
South Green Road Philadelphia, PA 19019 USA Dear Mr James Smith: A

couple of decades back, I worked for one of the largest chain stores in the world: Burger King International. Throughout my entire career at the company, it has been my observation that it was usual for customers to rush in the main entrance, walk right up at the service counter, and become rather mean when placing their orders.

As an employee myself, it was likewise usual to experience aberration and difficult times when looking for a parking space outside the store.

Oftentimes, if not always, I would have to wander around for 10 to 15 minutes in order to locate a space, and it was rather common for my co-workers to report to work late despite the fact that they arrived earlier.

Parking lots would definitely place someone in an infuriating situation. Then, I discovered that my rude clients were just reacting according to their individual encounters in the parking area before they rushed into the main door. The point that I want to make is that what we experience influences our reaction to the next experience, which eventually influences our reaction to situations that take place after that. In other words, the initial experience primed us to act in a particular way. This is what we call priming, specifically, a positive priming by spreading activation.

According to Daniel Reisberg (2007), what happens when we get primed is that initial stimulus activates a portion of a certain representation or connection in our implicit memory prior to performing an act. This representation is incompletely activated until another stimulus is met, making someone aware of the situation. Numerous studies regarding the impacts of priming on television advertisements have been conducted in the <https://assignbuster.com/social-cognition-design/>

past, and they all presented strong evidence linking positive priming through spreading activation to product consumption. Spreading activation, in laypeople's term, means that similar stimulus like images, music/sounds, or words are linked to each other, creating a network of stimulus that are activated when a stimulus conforms with an existing stimulus within an implicit memory of a person.

A study conducted by Jennifer Harris et al. (2009) from Yale University found out that the use of priming on television advertisements affects consumers' eating behaviour. The study argues that advertising for food and beverages “communicates potentially powerful food consumption cues” (Harris et al., 2009), which cover imageries of eye-catching models, taking snacks at inappropriate time, and constructive feelings connected with the food. These stimulus primed viewers to decide or act in a certain way, as initial impressions matters a lot. Previous encounters shape subsequent attitudes or feelings toward a product or a service.

I am sharing you these because this can be an effective way to market Wendy's products and services to the public. This “spreading activation” technique can influence audience behaviour in choosing what, when and where to eat. For instance, a McDonald advertisement evoking an attractive model, eating a piece of a luscious, juicy, and visually-enticing hamburger primes the audience by using aesthetics stimuli, which form a network of images and emotions: colour, texture, the reaction of the model, the name of the store. These stimulus are partially activated, and once a viewer encounters the same stimulus, say from images found outside a physical McDonalds store, there is a higher possibility that particular person will rush into the store and buy McDonalds products.

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Science has already proven the influence of priming and spreading activation on advertisements to consumers' eating behaviour. This is a great opportunity for Wendy's to increase its revenue by investing in advertisements that employ positive priming by means of spreading activation. I hope you have a positive response to this proposal.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[South West Public Relations Consulting]

Works Cited

Harris, J. L, Bargh, J. A., & Brownell, K. D. (2009). Priming effects of television food advertising

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