

# One ad content's explicitness and explicitness and

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One of the first definitions of the two appeals were expressed by Mueller (1987), who proposed that soft-sell appeal creates mood and atmosphere through a beautiful scenery or an emotional story, while hard-sell appeal shows explicit information about the brand name and recommendations and the performance contributes to the competitive advantage of the product. Another approach presents the two appeals as contradicted message strategy appeals, the soft-sell/image appeal which has image oriented content and uses associations with the brand rather than reasons to buy the product, and the hard-sell/direct approach which has sales orientation, comparative content and strong message arguments (Alden, Steenkamp, and Batra, 1999). It is revealed from the study of Beard (2004) that the debate between the two message strategy approaches was heated from the early 1911, in a trade journal called Printer's Ink, between U. S. automotive advertisers who were arguing the benefits of "atmospheric" or "impressionistic" and "reason why" advertisements. This conflict was still ongoing in 1997, in an Advertising Age issue between the supporters of the advertising which is based on emotions and its aim is to entertain and connect with the consumers, and of the rationally based advertising that sells.

Okazaki, Mueller and Taylor (2010) conducted a research for the hard-sell and soft-sell appeal because they recognized the lack of a wide accepted definition of these appeals in the scientific world and the lack of a measurement scheme to capture them. A definition close to the Mueller's was proposed, but slightly modified. Consequently, a soft-sell appeal is subtle and

indirect and seeks to induce affective reaction to the consumer. It is image-centered using attractive scenery, emotional stories or other indirect ways.

On the other hand, a hard-sell appeal refers to a sales-oriented, direct appeal with references to the features and factual information of the performance of the product advertised, with recommendations and explicit mention of the brand name. Often, it uses direct comparisons with competing products. The focus of this appeal is to induce rational thinking. The appeal can be measured by taken into consideration three aspects: the degree of feeling and thinking developed to viewer, the level of the ad content's explicitness and implicitness and the focus of the ad to facts or image. In their study, Okazaki, Mueller and Taylor (2010) suggest that the extensive use of feelings or emotions, implicit or indirect messages and product-image format in the ads is attached with the soft-sell appeal, whereas the considerable use of cognitive processing or thinking, explicit or direct messages and product-information format in the ads is attached with the hard-sell appeal. The two appeals will be used in the study to provide insight on which approach influences consumers' purchase intention to buy sustainable apparel products the most in different advertisements of a sustainable apparel product.

Moreover, the results of the research of Okazaki, Mueller and Taylor (2010) will contribute to the support of one of my hypotheses, which will be presented in a following chapter. Further knowledge is needed on the formation of the purchase intention influenced by advertisement.