

Women better than men when it comes to visuospatial abilities

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(PhysOrg.com) -- Differences in contextual advertisement and store location placement explain why women are better able than men to recognize dramatic new products reports a new research paper from the Richard Ivey School of Business.

The authors say the research will help companies that are bringing new [products](#) to the marketplace.

“We designed three studies based on what researchers already knew about how men and [women](#) understand visual information,” Theodore J. Noseworthy, the study’s lead author said. “We showed men and women advertisements for various products. Some people saw a product that looked normal, whereas others saw one that looked extremely different. We showed advertisements of these products either alongside ads for similar products, or with ads for completely unrelated products.

"Our results show that women are better than men at figuring out an extremely unusual product, as long as the product is promoted among competing products.”

The evidence shows that due to superior visuospatial abilities, females have a heightened ability to identify visually different products that are promoted among competitors. They discriminate relational information among competing advertisements and use this to identify unusual products that would otherwise go unrecognized.

Females may be able to use the [advertising](#) context to identify an extremely new and different product, but this performance is not without a cost. The study indicates that women tend to evaluate the products more favorably despite paying less attention to advertising claims. The results have important implications for research on product development and advertising.

“Marketers and new product design specialists can use our research results to better plan their new product introduction strategies, including promotion and distribution decisions,” said June Cotte, Associate Professor of Marketing at Ivey Business School. “This research can help them negotiate for more favourable ad placement, including for web advertising, as well as shelf placement decisions.”

Provided by University of Western Ontario

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