

How does family life influence consumer response to television advertising?

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Family interaction and everyday activity strongly influence how television advertisements are experienced and interpreted at home, according to a new study in the *Journal of Consumer Research*.

"It is common to link advertising viewing at home to increased levels of materialism and domestic tension stemming from 'pester power' (children getting parents to buy something by asking for it repeatedly until they get it). While these are serious issues, we have found that creative and skilled viewers of television advertising in the family living room can overturn and personalize commercial advertising meanings for family and household benefit," write authors Laknath Jayasinghe and Mark Ritson (both University of Melbourne).

The authors placed [video cameras](#) in the living rooms of eight suburban family homes to study viewer behavior during [television advertising](#) breaks. They followed up with family group interviews where these consumers were shown excerpts of their recorded advertising response behavior and asked to comment and provide deeper context to their behavior.

The authors consider advertising response from a viewer-centered perspective, cautioning against conceptions of advertising response, engagement, and interpretation organized solely through broadcast media contexts and from a message processing perspective. The normal and routine situations and contexts that motivate advertising experiences, responses, and engagement at home are uncovered in precise detail and

demonstrated to significantly impact the process of advertising response and engagement. They also locate the presence of family interaction during the [television program](#) break, which challenges traditional perspectives of audience behavior in studies of advertising response.

"Companies should consider how family interaction, media [multitasking](#), and the place and time of viewing impact the ways consumers watch and engage with [television ads](#). They should also recognize that the same ad may be engaged with and interpreted differently at different times due to varying household interactions and activities that impact how it is viewed," the authors conclude.

More information: Laknath Jayasinghe and Mark Ritson. "Everyday Advertising Context: An Ethnography of Advertising Response in the Family Living Room." *Journal of Consumer Research*: June 2013.

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