

# Using multiple pictures in an ad? Different perspectives can confuse consumers

June 25 2014

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Have you ever wondered what it would be like to see the ocean from a private balcony at a luxury resort? Self-imagery is a powerful marketing tactic and many ads use pictures that help you see yourself using a product or service. According to a new study in the *Journal of Consumer Research*, showing photos from multiple perspectives can have a negative effect on how a person processes the information in an ad.

"The use of photos showing the advertised product or service from multiple perspectives is very common in [ads](#). However, we show that these multiple perspective ads can have negative as well as positive effects," write authors Yuwei Jiang (Hong Kong Polytechnic University), Rashmi Adaval (Hong Kong University of Science and Technology), Yael Steinhart (Tel Aviv University), and Robert S. Wyer Jr. (Chinese University of Hong Kong).

Across four studies, the authors examined how ads using pictures taken from either the same perspective or from multiple perspectives impact product evaluations. In one study, participants were asked to view two ads for a resort hotel, each consisting of four photos. In some ads, the photos were taken from the same perspective, while in others they were taken from different perspectives. Participants were then asked to form a story about their own experience at the resort.

Participants who viewed the ads with photos from different perspectives expressed more difficulty in coming up with their own story and were also more likely to form a negative evaluation of the resort. These results

underscore the need for brands to use care when placing both pictures and imagery instructions in the same ad.

"If the purpose of the ad is for consumers to immerse themselves in a particular experience, the use of [pictures](#) from multiple perspectives in the same ad should be avoided. When [photos](#) from multiple visual perspectives have to be included, we suggest brands should try to use an informational approach over a storytelling approach," the authors conclude.

**More information:** Yuwei Jiang, Rashmi Adaval, Yael Steinhart, and Robert S. Wyer Jr. "Imagining Yourself in the Scene: The Interactive Effects of Goal-Driven Self-Imagery and Visual Perspectives on Consumer Behavior." *Journal of Consumer Research*: August 2014.

Provided by University of Chicago

Citation: Using multiple pictures in an ad? Different perspectives can confuse consumers (2014, June 25) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-06-multiple-pictures-ad-perspectives-consumers.html>

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