One-Step and Two-Step Advertising Information Flows on Social Media: How Chinese College Students Find and Distribute Information about Advertised Products Using Renren

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Master of Science

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This thesis titled
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by

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has been approved for
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ABSTRACT

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One-Step and Two-Step Advertising Information Flows on Social Media: How Chinese College Students Find and Distribute Information about Advertised Products Using Renren

Director of Thesis: Hugh J. Martin

The purpose of this study is to examine how Chinese college students find and distribute advertising information on Renren, from a theoretic perspective of a One-Step and Two-Step Flow of Communication.

The method for collecting data used an online survey questionnaire. Respondents were recruited by sending survey invitations to the researcher’s friends on Renren.com, a Chinese equivalent of Facebook.

This study has four main findings. First, the classic Two-step Information Flow is still the dominant pattern of advertising information flow on Renren. Second, Renren users’ interest in different product types is positively correlated with their willingness to distribute information to other users. Third, Renren users’ interest in entertaining and informative ads is positively correlated with their likelihood of obtaining information from instant ads and their willingness to distribute information to others. Fourth, gender and frequency of Renren use do not influence Renren users’ choice of information sources about advertised products or their willingness to distribute information.
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents, Yaqin Hao and Peijie Xu, and my fiancé Wei Xu

with love.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis is a labor of encouragement and love shared by many. I would like to give my special thanks to my thesis advisor, Dr. Hugh J. Martin. Without his strong support and superior editing skills, this work would not have been possible. I also want to thank the other two committee members Dr. Jatin Strivastava and Dr. Hong Chen, and my graduate program advisor Dr. Mike Sweeney, for their advice and frequent assistance in the past two years.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This study is designed to investigate how advertising information flows to users on Renren, a Chinese social media network that is the equivalent of Facebook. The study has two main purposes. The first purpose is to test the classic Two-Step Flow of Communication theory and the emerging One-Step Flow of Communication theory on a popular Chinese social networking site (SNS) Renren. The second purpose is to provide implications for improving advertising effectiveness on Renren and other SNSs in terms of extending and enhancing the advertising’s influence on potential customers.

The development of new technologies and resulting changes in society have led some scholars to challenge the classic Two-Step Flow of Communication model, which states that media messages are filtered through opinion leaders before reaching the mass audience (From two-step, 2012, p4). The emerging alternate model, the One-Step Flow of Communication, argues that the advances in media technology, such as the improved database and message targeting technologies, have led to a change so that media messages can simply travel from communication professionals directly to highly targeted audiences (Bennet and Manheim, 2006, p215; Stansberry, 2013, p2-3). Therefore, it is important to put both theories to a test in a current and practical situation.

Renren is one of the most noteworthy social media platforms in China today and it is the type of technology that Bennet and Manheim argues can create a one-step flow. Renren not only created a revolution in people’s daily communication patterns, it also helped bring a significant change to the traditional advertising business. Like Facebook, Renren provides advertisers a platform where they can interact directly with their brands’ fans (Rogers & Chapman & Giotsas, 2012, p98) and also serves as an online community
where users can exchange opinions about products and services with their online friends. This change “highlights the role of the consumers in determining the effect and effectiveness of advertising” (Pongiannan, 2013, p62). Therefore, examining how the advertising messages on Renren flow among and impact social media users is important for making effective advertising strategies in future.

Understanding the advertising information flow pattern on Renren is significant for at least two reasons. First, it will contribute to the ongoing development of mass communication theories. By testing and comparing the two competing theories of communication processes, this study will update our existing knowledge of the two classic theories in the Internet era. Second, the study will expand applications of the information flow theory. By studying some possible influences on how advertising information flows on Renren.com, we will have a better understanding about how to use the theories to guide the advertisement strategies making process on social network sites.

Improving the effectiveness of advertising on social media is significant for three reasons. First, advertising is important to Renren’s business. The main revenue source of Renren is advertising, but it is becoming difficult for Renren to pick up new advertisements (PrivCo., 2013; Renren Financial Report., 2011-2013; Lulu, 2013). A better understanding of the effectiveness of advertisements on Renren can help Renren create a more efficient advertising environment to generate more revenue. Second, advertising effectiveness is important to advertisers who are considering using Renren. Like Facebook users, Renren members are used to exchanging authentic and detailed personal information (Trends E-Magazine, 2012, p23; Lipsman & Mudd & Rich &
Bruich, 2012, p40). Learning how to improve the influence of advertisements in this information environment can help advertisers turn Renren into an efficient and cost saving platform to advertise their products or services. Finally, this study will have reference value for other social media sites. Renren is one of the largest social networking websites. Exploring factors that can lead to a successful advertising business on Renren will provide valuable implications for other social media websites.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

An Overview of Advertising Business on Renren

Since it was founded in December 2005, Renren has become the most popular and successful real name social networking service website in China. In its latest announcement, Renren claimed that it had approximately 206 million activate users as of December 31, 2013 (Renren, 2013). Renren users mainly focus on generating and sharing interesting textual, visual, and audio content, which seems appealing to advertisers given that advertising is all about “delivering a company’s message and reinforcing the brand awareness” (Trends E-Magazine, 2012, p22).

The business model for traditional media is using content to attract an audience and selling advertisers access to that audience to make a profit (Rochet & Tirole, 2003, p.991; Evans, 2008, p.361-363). Advertising also plays a significant role in supporting search engines such as Google (Google, 2013; Best Accounting Schools, 2013) and social media websites such as Facebook (MarketLine, 2013, p2). However, unlike traditional media, search engines and social media do not pay for the production of content. Instead, they rely on various news media and numerous web users to provide the content at almost no cost (Shaver, 2003, p.250-251). The Renren Company gets significant support from advertising as well. In 2010, 2011, and 2012, online advertising accounted for 41.8%, 50.5%, and 30.6%, respectively, of Renren’s total net revenues (Renren 2012 Annual Financial Report, 2013, p11). Besides online games, advertising is the biggest revenue source to Renren Co (Renren 2012 Annual Financial Report, 2013, p8).
However, Renren currently is having a hard time attracting advertisers, which is indicated by its declining revenues. In 2011 and 2012, the number of brand advertisers on Renren decreased from 301 to 277, and the average annual spending by brand advertisers declined from approximately US $181,000 to US $165,000 (Renren 2012 Annual Financial Report, 2013, p43). Moreover, the shrinking trend of Renren online advertising continued through 2013. During the third and fourth quarter in 2013, Renren had sharp sequential decreases in online advertising revenue, which declined 11.2% and 17.9%, respectively, from the corresponding periods in 2012 (Renren 2013 Quarter 3 Financial Report, 2014, p1; Renren 2013 Quarter 4 Financial Report, 2014, p1). Many companies still are not confident that their advertising investment on real name social networks is effective compared to other advertising options (Trends E-Magazine, 2012, p 22). Hence, there arises a need for understanding how advertising works on these social media websites.

Advertising on real name social media has unique features compared to traditional media. For instance, advertisements can be targeted to individuals by collecting and analyzing their personal information and online behavior (Rogers & Chapman & Giotsas, 2012, p99). Like Facebook, Renren’s giant database of member information potentially allows advertisers to target the group of members that contains the most potential customers. Advertisers can differentiate audiences according to their location, gender, interest, education, workplace, and even relationship status (Castelli, Egleston, & Marx, 2013. p30; Wasserman, 2012). Moreover, advertising on real name social networks websites is different from general Internet-based advertising because social networks
create an interactive environment for both advertisers and individual social media users (Hyojung, Shelly, & Jon., 2011, p62; Downes & McMillan, 2000; Muntinga & Moorman & Smit, 2011, p13). On one side, SNSs like Facebook and Renren allow brands to build communities and interact with their fans (Hyojung, Shelly, & Jon., 2011, p.62; Downes & McMillan, 2000). On the other side, Renren provides a platform where individual users can share advertisements they like with their virtual community friends (Mayfield, 2008; Holland & Baker, 2011, p40). This characteristic is unique to social media and thus is worthy of attention.

Historically, it is difficult to measure the effectiveness of advertisements because advertisers had a limited ability to know when someone was exposed to an advertisement and then purchased a product. There are several reasons to explain the measurement difficulties. First, according to the law of diminishing returns, adding more of a single factor of production will yield lower per unit returns after the factor has accumulated to a certain point. This means when advertising spending reaches a certain amount, the per-unit additional investment on advertising may generate less than the equivalent unit of economic returns (Heibroner & Thurow, 1981; Samuelson & Nordhaus, 1989; Picard, 1989). This decreasing effect is usually very hard to measure. Second, poorly designed advertisements may fail to reach the target audience (Moorman, Neijens, & Smit, 2002; King, Reid, & Macias, 2004). For example, if an ad did not express the advertising message clearly, or was placed in the wrong medium, then measuring the effectiveness of the ad is meaningless. Third, some advertising effects could not be measured directly or
measured in the short term such as brand awareness and customer referral (Hanssens, 2001, p2).

Renren, however, provides a platform where advertisers can directly measure consumer interactions with an advertisement (Trends E-Magazine, 2012; MarketLine, 2013; Mayfield, 2008; Hyojung, Shelly, & Jon., 2011). Advertisers know if someone clicked on an advertisement, and whether that person then visited the advertiser’s website and purchased a product. Advertisers can also create a community of customers on Renren who will remember to buy the company’s products or services when the need arises (brand loyalty), or recommend the brand to their friends (community effect). These effects can also potentially be measured with a high degree of accuracy using digital tools provided by Renren. Accessing Renren’s database and advertising tools is beyond the scope of this study.

Advertising Message Flow from a Perspective of the Two-Step & One-step Flow of Communication Theory

DeFleur (2010) argued that in pre-media societies, news and information traveled mainly by word of mouth and circulated in places where people got together, such as coffee houses and taverns. When mass media such as newspaper and radio came along, the process of news transmission was changed. Oral distribution became the second stage of information flow that took place after the information was presented in mass media (DeFleur, 2010, p172-173).
In 1948, Paul Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet published *The People's Choice*, which investigated factors influencing voters’ decisions during a presidential election. They discovered that one of the main sources of information about this political event was not mass media, but other people. There were certain well-informed individuals who paid more attention to mass media than others did, and thus played a central role as opinion leaders informing and influencing others.

Based on the findings of *People’s Choice* and follow-up studies (Merton, 1949; Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955; Lazarsfeld & Menzel, 1963), the theory of the Two-Step Flow of Communication was established. The theory states that mass media does not have a magic bullet effect on the audience; instead, individuals selectively attend to media presentations (Merton, 1949; Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955). Mass communications often move in two stages---from the media to opinion leaders who pay direct attention to media content, and then by word of mouth from opinion leaders to other people (DeFleur, 2010, p180). In addition, the theory predicts that personal influence from families and acquaintances is more important and persuasive in decision making than information from the media (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955).

Since this theory was developed, it was repeatedly tested in various situations and widely used in different fields. One of the most noticeable application areas is advertising and marketing (Glock & Niosia, 1966; Poltrack, 1985; Crispell, 1989; Leiss, 1992). Advertising on mass media used to be perceived as a direct and powerful way to deliver the advertising messages to every audience without distinction as supported by the Silver Bullet Theory. However, this assumption was completely overturned by the
establishment of the Two-Step Flow of Communication theory., Today’s marketers are not only attempting to reach potential consumers directly through advertising campaigns on mass media, but also making special efforts in targeting consumers who are more knowledgeable about their products and make influential comments about products in their communities (Crippell, 1989; Leiss, 1992; Hirschman & Wallendorf, 1982).

However, the in-depth study of information flow in the Internet era led some researchers to question the Two-Step Flow of Communication theory (Bennett & Manheim, 2006; Thorson & Wells, 2012; Stansberry, 2013). They pointed out that communication between Internet users has been changed by evolving media tools (improved database and message targeting technologies), changing audience practices (fragmentation of the mass audience and selective exposure to digital media), and the sociological shifts from modern to late modern society (social isolation and individuation) (Bennett & Manheim, 2006, p215; Thorson & Wells, 2012, p4; Stansberry, 2013, p3).

Some researchers argue (Bennett & Manheim, 2006) the combination of all these changes has led to a transition from the Two-Step Flow of Communication pattern to a new One-Step Flow of Communication pattern, where communication professionals can directly and effectively target selected individuals with a highly specific message (Bennett & Manheim, 2006, p215). These scholars also argued that this transition of the information flow pattern has also brought a revolution to advertising. Instead of just encouraging opinion leaders to impact people’s thoughts and views about a product or service, today’s strategic marketers are increasingly taking advantage of data-mining technologies to
target specific groups of individuals to produce interaction between potential customers and advertised brands (Bennett & Manheim, 2006, p216).

There are two key aspects in distinguishing the one-step information flow model from the two-step information flow model. The first one is whether people obtain advertising information mainly from advertising organizations via advertisements or if they obtain information from people they know via word of mouth. The second one is whether people are willing to transmit advertising information (possibly mixed with their own opinions) to their communication circles or not. Thus, there are two issues to discuss: Renren users’ choice of an “information source” and their “willingness to spread information”.

Influencing Factors on Audience’s Attitudes towards Advertising Messages on SNSs

Researches examining advertising effectiveness identified gender, frequency of social media use, product type and advertisement content feature as important mediating variables.

First, some researchers found that many demographic characteristics, such as gender, age, educational background, and income level, are influencing factors for the effectiveness of advertisements in electronic media. This study will include all the characteristics mentioned above, but researcher will not be asking any specific research questions about them except gender. This is because the target group of this thesis is active users of Renren.com, which is mostly consisted of students, these demographic
characteristics including age, educational background, and income level are commonly shared among these respondents.

Gender difference influences the factors such as reachability, understandability, attractiveness, attention, promptness to follow for effectiveness of advertisements in electronic media (Pongiannan, 2013, p9; Goodrich, 2014, p39-40) Therefore, this thesis will examine the impact of gender on people’s reactions to the advertising information on Renren. Individual users may get information about a product from advertisers, from other users, or from both types or sources. Users can also decide if they want to keep the information to themselves, or transmit it to other users. The following research questions are proposed:

- \( RQ_1 \): Does gender difference has an influence on people’s choice of information sources about products advertised on social media?
- \( RQ_2 \): Is there a relationship between gender and people’s likelihood to spread information about products advertised on social media?

Second, while some researchers found that the frequency of social media use (such as Facebook) is positively related to users’ participation in activities on social media (Heiberger & Harper, 2008, p29; HERI, 2007). However, another researcher found that the frequency of social media use can be both positively and negatively correlated with users’ activity on social media (Junco, 2012, p170). These results suggest that the frequency of social media use (such as Facebook and Renren) may influence users’ willingness to interact with advertisements on that media. Thus, the following research questions are developed:
- **RQ3**: Does the frequency of Renren use influence with Renren users’ choice of information sources about products advertised on social media?

- **RQ4**: Is the frequency of Renren use associated with Renren users’ likelihood to distribute advertising information to their Renren friends?

Third, many previous studies showed that “product types” can also exert influence over consumers’ attitudes towards and purchase intentions for advertised products (Chang & Chen & Tan, 2012; Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000; Okada, 2005). Consumers perceive products in two primary categories: hedonic and utilitarian. While hedonic products are characterized by affective and sensory experiences of aesthetic or sensual pleasure, utilitarian products are instrumental, goal-oriented, and accomplish a functional or practical task (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Batra & Ahtola, 1991, p161; Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000, p60; Voss & Spangenberg & Grohmann, 2003, p310; Chang & Chen & Tan, 2012, p635). Though few products are purely hedonic or purely utilitarian, most products can be seen as superior on either a hedonic dimension or a utilitarian dimension (Chang & Chen & Tan, 2012, p635; Dhar & Wertenbroch, p60). This study will examine how Renren users’ interest in different product types affects their attitudes toward advertising messages. Two research questions are developed:

- **RQ5**: Does Renren users’ interest in different product types (hedonic and utilitarian) influence their choice of information sources about products advertised on social media?
o RQ6: Does Renren users’ interest in different product types (hedonic and utilitarian) influence their likelihood to distribute advertising information to their friends on social media?

Fourth, some studies reported that two “advertisement content features” significantly affect an advertisement’s value and also affect the audience’s attitudes towards the advertising information (Brackett & Carr, 2011, p25; Saxena & Khanna, 2013, p20; Yang, 2012, p51; Chung & Austria, 2010, p582-583). The first feature is whether the ad is informative. This is a main characteristic of an advertisement that enables audiences to rationally evaluate the advertised products by conveying information about the products, service or brand (Saxena & Khanna, 2013). The second feature is whether the ad is entertaining. Advertisements with this feature fulfill audience needs for escapism, diversion, aesthetic enjoyment or emotional release (McQuail, 1987; Saxena & Khanna, 2013). Results of some studies suggest that providing entertaining and informative content increases the value of an advertisement for the audience (Saxena & Khanna, 2013, Yang, 2012). Therefore, two additional research questions are proposed:

o RQ7: Is there a relationship between Renren users’ interest in different advertisement content features (informative and entertaining) and their choice of information sources about products advertised on social media?

o RQ8: Does interest in different advertisement content features (informative and entertaining) influence with Renren users’ likelihood to transmit advertising information to their friends on social media?
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH MODEL

In this research model, information source and willingness to spread information are two dependent variables, while gender, frequency of Renren use, Renren users’ interest in different product types, and Renren users’ interest in different advertisement content features are four independent variables (Figure 1).

The first dependent variable, “information source,” is divided into two categories, which are “advertisers” and “friends”. The information source advertisers is operationalized as instant ads (ads that are displayed instantaneously on individual users’ Renren community according to the collected data about them). The information source is operationalized as recommended ads (such as advertisements liked or shared by a user’s friends) and user experiences (such as information about individuals’ experience with a product that they share with other users on Renren). Whether an individual user would like to choose any of the four information sources to obtain advertising information on Renren will be represented by four Yes or No questions, where 1 is No and 2 is Yes.

The second dependent variable, willingness to spread information is categorized into three groups, which are keeping information about advertised products to oneself, spreading information about advertised products, and doing nothing about advertising information. Keep information is operationalized using three possible responses to an ad: (a) clicking on an ad to find out more about a product (Click on); (b) searching for further information that is not in the ad about the advertised product (Search Info); and (c) clicking on the ad to buy the product (Buy). Correspondingly, spread information is
operationalized by three possible responses: (a) click on the ad to tell people I like it (Like); (b) comment on the ad (Comment); and (c) share the ad with my Renren community (Share). The study will ask Renren users how likely they are to take each of the actions above using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not likely and 5 is very likely.

The first independent variable, gender, will be operationalized by asking Renren users if their gender is male or female.

The second independent variable, use frequency, will be operationalized as the number of times a Renren user visits his or her Renren community. This is an ordinal measure with categories ranging from several times a day to every few weeks or less often. Responses are categorized to two groups: a least once a day and less often.

The third independent variable is interest in different product types. Product types has two primary categories: hedonic and utilitarian. Hedonic products are operationalized in three sub-groups: (a) hotels &/or flights (Hotels); (b) leisure &/or restaurants (Leisure); and (c) movies &/or CDs (Movies). Utilitarian products are also operationalized in three sub-groups: (a) personal computers (PCs); (b) school &/or office supplies (Supplies), and (c) distance education &/or recruitment (Education).

The fourth independent variable, advertisement content features, has the two categories of informative and entertaining. The first category, informative, is operationalized with three items: (a) “advertisements that tell me about new products or services” (Intro) (b) “advertisements that tell me the price of products or services” (Price); and (c) “advertisements that give me new information about products or services” (Info). The second category, entertaining, is operationalized with five items: (a) “advertisements
that use a creative idea to promote products or services” (Idea); (b) “advertisements that use fun content to promote products or services” (Content); (c) advertisements with endorsements by celebrity I admire” (Celebrity); (d) “advertisements that have an attractive design” (Design); and (e) “advertisements that I can talk about with my friends” (Topic).

Figure 1. Research Model
**Table 1. Dependent Variables**

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<tr>
<th>Dependent variables (DV)</th>
<th>Subscales</th>
<th>Items</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Information Source</td>
<td>Advertisers</td>
<td>instant ads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>recommended ads, user experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to Spread Information</td>
<td>Keep</td>
<td>Click on, Search Info, Buy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spread</td>
<td>Like, Comment, Share</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do nothing</td>
<td></td>
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**Table 2. Independent Variables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variables (IV)</th>
<th>Subscales</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use Frequency</td>
<td>At least once a day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less often</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in Product Types</td>
<td>Hedonic</td>
<td>Hotels, Leisure, and Movies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Utilitarian</td>
<td>PCs, Supplies, and Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in Advertisement Content Features</td>
<td>Informative</td>
<td>Intro, Price, Info</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Entertaining</td>
<td>Idea, Content, Celebrity, Design, Topic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4: METHOD

The method for collecting data used an online survey questionnaire. The study used a convenience sample because respondents were recruited by sending survey invitations to the researcher’s friends on Renren.com. This means the sampling frame consisted of those friends, who were asked to then pass the invitations to their friends on Renren.com. This technique is known as snowball sampling.

Snowball sampling does not produce generalizable results. A study’s findings can only be generalized to a population if the sample is representative of that population, which usually requires that respondents be randomly selected. However, convenience samples are often used in exploratory research, which is the case here (Zikmund & Babin, 2006, p11-23). This thesis explores the possibility that advertising information flows on Renren.com follow a new pattern. The study tries only to detect such patterns among the survey respondents, but is not intended to generalize to a larger population.

The questionnaire included nine questions that are described in the previous section on the model. The questionnaire also included five additional demographic measures. First, respondents were asked about their age by the end of year 2013. This is an ratio measure. Second, they were asked about gender and the two choices included male and female. This is a nominal measure. Third, they were asked for their occupation, and the six choices included (a) “student”, (b) “private company employee”, (c) “government employee”, (d) “self-employed entrepreneur”, (e) “unemployed”, and (f) “other”. This is a nominal measure. Fourth, respondents were asked about their education and the four choices included (a) “high school degree”, (b) “some college”, (c)
“bachelor’s degree”, and (e) “graduate degree”. This is an ordinal measure. Finally, respondents were asked their monthly income using an ordinal scale from a blue book of university graduate employment 2011 (MyCOS, 2012). The categories ranged from no income to more than 8,000 RMB.

A draft of the survey was submitted on Oct 25th, 2013 for approval by the Institutional Research Board (IRB) at Ohio University. After approval was received on Oct 28th, 2013, a pilot study was conducted to see if the questionnaire needed any adjustments. The research recruited 30 on campus Chinese students as respondents for the pilot study. They were either volunteers or recommended by researcher’s friends, and no incentive was provided. All respondents received a link to the online questionnaire on Qualtrics.com via emails. After filling out the pilot individually, they were convened together to give their advice to researcher in person. According to the feedback, several minor changes were made, such as eliminating confusions created by language translation and resolving technical problems caused by Qualtrics survey software. Since no change related to the research questions were made, there was no need to resubmit the final questionnaire to the IRB.

An English copy of the final questionnaire is included in Appendix A. This copy includes citations for all of the questions that were adapted from previous surveys. This appendix also has English copies of the recruitment messages that were used to attract respondents. Appendix B has a Chinese copy of the questionnaire.

The final survey was posted on Qualtrics.com from Oct. 23 to Nov. 26, 2013. The early notification about the survey was sent to all researcher’ Renren friends one week
before the survey was initiated. The first recruitment email was sent out on Oct. 23, 2013. After that, a reminder email was sent out every week till Nov. 26, 2013. All recruitment messages was sent via researcher’s Renren account. In the meantime, a recruitment message was posted and constantly renewed on researcher’s Renren community to encourage individuals to redistribute the questionnaire link. All qualified respondents had to meet three criteria: they were users of Renren.com, they were Chinese native speakers, and they were aged 18 or older. In the process, no incentive was provided for the purpose of recruitment, but all participants were free to require a copy of the study report by leaving their contact information at the end of the questionnaire.

The recruitment messages reached over 500 individuals and resulted in visits to the Qualtrics questionnaire by a total of 322 people. 286 people answered only part of the questions and 210 people completed the entire questionnaire. The final completion rate was 65%.

Table 3. Respondents’ Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19-22</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>(15.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-25</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>(72.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-50</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>(12.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>(100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Respondents were Renren users aged 19 to 50. The largest number of respondents were ages 23 to 25, accounting for 72.7% of the total sample population.

Table 4. Respondents’ Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>77 (42.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>106 (57.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>183 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A small gender gap was observed in this survey, since there were slightly more female participants (57.9%) than male participants (42.1%).
Table 5. Respondents’ Occupation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(71.0%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private company employee</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(17.5%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government employee</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2.2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed entrepreneur</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.5%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1.1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7.7%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>183</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(100%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most respondents, 71.0% were students, only 17.5% were private company employees. The proportion of all other occupations combined, including government employees, self-employed entrepreneurs, unemployed, and other, was only 11.5%.

Table 6. Respondents’ Educational Background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Background</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completed some college</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1.1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor degree</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(42.6%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate degree or above</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(56.3%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>183</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(100%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As for the educational background, the highest academic degree obtained or currently being pursued for 56.3% of the respondents was graduate degree or above, while for 42.6% of them was bachelor’s degree.

*Table 7. Respondents’ Income Level*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No income</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(43.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 - ¥5000</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(37.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than ¥5000</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(19.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since most respondents were enrolled students at the time, 43.7% of the participants had no income, while 37.2% were at the monthly income level of 0 ~ ¥5000 and 19.1% were at the level of more than ¥5000.

All in all, the majority of respondents were students aged from 19 to 23, with bachelor’s degree or above. Most of them had no income or middle income.

The number of survey respondents is an issue for statistical power. Statistical power is the probability that a statistical test will reject the null hypothesis when the null is false. Sample size affects statistical power, which increases as the size of the sample increases. Power is also affected by the probability level that the researcher selects;
power increases as the probability level increases. Power is also affected by the effects size (Rauniar & Shah, 2002, p1-5)

In this study, the researcher will use a probability ≤ .05 to reject the null hypothesis. The sample size of 286 combined with this smaller probability will likely reduce statistical power in the study.

Table 8. Respondents’ Use Frequency of Renren

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>at least once a day</td>
<td>95 (36.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less often</td>
<td>168 (63.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>263 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were asked how often they used Renren, and results in Table 8 show that 36.1% said at least once a day. Another 63.9% of all respondents used Renren every few weeks or less often. Therefore, most respondents in this study were not very active user of Renren.
Table 9. Respondents’ Interest in Product Types (1 = not interested, 5 = very interested)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hedonic</th>
<th></th>
<th>Utilitarian</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Avg.</td>
<td></td>
<td>PC</td>
<td>Avg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.28)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1.33)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supplies</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.40)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1.35)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movies</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.40)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1.45)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results in Table 9 show the mean and standard deviation for the items in each product category. The product type of movies &/or CDs had the highest average 3.3, and the product type of personal computers had the lowest averages 2.1, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not interested and 5 is very interested. In addition, the product type of distance education &/or recruitment had the largest variance (std = 1.45). These results suggest that Renren users have strongest interest in movies &/or CDs and least interest in personal computers advertised on Renren.

Based on the theories discussed in the literature review, all six items were grouped to two categories according to their product nature: hedonic and utilitarian. However, Cronbach’s alpha for interest in the 3 hedonic items (Hotels, Leisure, movies) and 3 utilitarian items (PCs, Supplies, and Education) was .64 and .66, respectively. On one hand, the values of two alphas would not be increased by removal of any item from its own group. On the other hand, all 6 items were strongly correlated ($\alpha = .76$). These
results indicated that respondents did not differentiate between two product types as predicted.

Table 10-1. Respondents’ Interest in Advertisement Content Features (1 = not interested, 5 = very interested)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Informative</th>
<th>Entertaining</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intro</td>
<td>Avg. 2.7</td>
<td>Idea Avg. 3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Dev</td>
<td>(1.35)</td>
<td>(1.41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>Avg. 2.5</td>
<td>Content Avg. 3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Dev</td>
<td>(1.32)</td>
<td>(1.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Info</td>
<td>Avg. 2.6</td>
<td>Celebrity Avg. 2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Dev</td>
<td>(1.32)</td>
<td>(1.48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>Avg. 3.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Dev</td>
<td>(1.35)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Avg. 2.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Dev</td>
<td>(1.41)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results in Table 10-1 show the mean and standard deviation for the items in each advertisement category. The entertaining ads that use fun content to promote products or services had the highest averages 3.7, and the informative ads that tell the price of products or services had the lowest average 2.5, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not interested and 5 is very interested. In addition, the entertaining ads with endorsements by celebrity had the largest variance (std = 1.48). These results suggest that Renren users
have strongest interest in ads using fun content for promotion and least interest in ads telling about product price.

Table 10-2. Respondents’ Interest in Advertisement Content Features (1 = not interested, 5 = very interested)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Informative Avg</th>
<th>Entertaining Avg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Std. Dev)</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on previous discussion, “advertisement content features” was divided into two categories: “informative” and “entertaining”. These scales were based on the results of a Cronbach’s alpha test. The informative subscale consisted of 3 items (α = .79). The three items were interest in Intro, Price, and Info. The scale ranged from 1 to 5. The entertaining subscale consisted of 5 items (α = .76). The five items were interest in Idea, Content, Celebrity, Design, and Topic. The scale also ranged from 1 to 5. All items appeared worthy of retention from both scales: removal of items lead to lower alpha values.

Respondents’ interest in each kind of advertisement content feature was measured on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not interested and 5 is very interested. Responses were first summed and then divided by 3 and 5, respectively, for each item in informative advertisements and in entertaining advertisements. Interest can range from 1 to 5 for informative and entertaining advertisements.
Results in Table 10-2 show that Renren users have stronger interest in entertaining advertisements (M = 3.2, SD = 1.11) than in informative advertisements (M = 2.6, SD = .99).
CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

Research Question 1

The first research question asked if gender difference has an influence on people’s choice of information sources about products advertised on social media.

Chi-square tests were conducted to compare by gender the number of respondents who did and the number of those who did not obtain advertising information under three conditions: when they directly exposed to instant ads, when they received recommended ads from friends, and when they received user experiences from friends.

Table 11-1. Chi-square tests for the differences by gender in willingness to choose instant ads to obtain information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Instant ads</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(44.2%)</td>
<td>(55.8%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(37.7%)</td>
<td>(62.3%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(\chi^2 (df = 1, n = 183) = .76, p > .05.\)
Table 11-2. Chi-square Tests for the Differences by Gender in Willingness to Choose Recommended Ads to Obtain Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Recommended ads</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(29.9%)</td>
<td>(70.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(25.5%)</td>
<td>(74.1%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2$ (df = 1, n = 183) = .44, $p > .05$

Table 11-3. Chi-square Tests for the Differences by Gender in Willingness to Choose User Experience to Obtain Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>User experience</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(39.0%)</td>
<td>(61.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(43.4%)</td>
<td>(56.6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2$ (df = 1, n = 183) = .36, $p > .05$

As shown in Table 11-1 and Table 11-2, more female respondents (62.3% and 74.1%) than male respondents (55.8% and 70.1%) obtained advertising information when they directly exposed to instant ads and when they received recommended ads from
friends. As shown in Table 11-3, more male respondents (61.0%) than female respondents (56.6%) obtained advertising information when they received user experiences from friends. However, users’ gender did not affect willingness to choose three information sources to get advertising information, since all $p$-values were greater than the set significance level of .05.

In addition, friends’ recommendations seemed to be the most popular information source for both male and female. This means that most Renren users obtain advertising information from their friends rather than directly from advertisers.

The answer to the first research question is no. Gender does not have an influence on people’s choice of information sources about products advertised on social media.
Research Question 2

The second research question asked if there is a relationship between gender and people’s likelihood to spread information about products advertised on social media.

Independent-samples t-tests were conducted to compare by gender how likely respondents were to keep advertising information to themselves, distribute advertising information on Renren, and do nothing about the information under three conditions: when directly exposed to instant ads, when they received recommended ads from friends, and when they received user experiences from friends.

Table 12. T-test for Differences in Likelihood to Spread Advertising Information of Male and Female Respondents (1 = not likely, 5 = very likely)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Instant ads a</th>
<th>Recommended ads b</th>
<th>User experience c</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Keep</td>
<td>Spread</td>
<td>Do nothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. for male</td>
<td>2.4 (1.1)</td>
<td>1.9 (4)</td>
<td>3.2 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Std. dev.)</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>1 (6)</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. for female</td>
<td>2.5 (1.0)</td>
<td>3.2 (1.5)</td>
<td>1.7 (1.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Std. dev.)</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>2 (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: (a: d.f. = 179; b: d.f. = 131; c: d.f. = 105)

All differences were n.s.

a. Male (n = 77), female (n = 106); b. Male (n = 54), female (n = 79); c. Male (n = 47), female (n = 60)
According to Table 12, gender did not have an impact on Renren users’ likelihood to distribute advertising information on Renren since all of the obtained $p$-values exceeded the set significance level of .05.

In addition, results also showed that Renren users were most likely to ignore advertising information on Renren, less likely to keep the advertising information to themselves, and least likely to spread advertising information to their online community under all three conditions. This means that most people do not try to be opinion leaders to distribute advertising information on Renren.

The answer to the second research question is no. There is no statistically significant relationship between gender and people’s likelihood to distribute advertising information they obtained from advertisers and friends.
Research Question 3

The third research question asked if the frequency of Renren use influences with Renren users’ choice of information sources about products advertised on social media.

Chi-square tests were conducted to compare the number of respondents who did and the number of those who did not obtain advertising information from three different information sources. The comparison was made between users who signed on Renren at least once a day and those who signed on less often.

Table 13-1. Chi-square Tests for the Differences by Use Frequency in Willingness to Choose Instant Ads to Obtain Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Instant ads</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(35.4%)</td>
<td>(64.6%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(43.0%)</td>
<td>(57.0%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

χ² (df = 1, n = 193) = 1.11, p > .05.
Table 13-2. Chi-square Tests for the Differences by Use Frequency in Willingness to Choose Recommended Ads to Obtain Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Recommended ads</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(26.6%)</td>
<td>(73.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(27.7%)</td>
<td>(72.3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2 (df = 1, n = 191) = .03, p > .05$

Table 13-3. Chi-square Tests for the Differences by Use Frequency in Willingness to Choose User Experience to Obtain Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>User experience</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(35.9%)</td>
<td>(64.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(44.4%)</td>
<td>(55.6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2 (df = 1, n = 186) = .137, p > .05$
The difference between two users who signed on Renren at least once a day and those who signed on less often in obtaining advertising information from instant ads, ads recommended by friends, and user experiences shared friends was not significant, since all the $p$-values exceeded the set significance level of .05. In addition, friends’ recommendations seemed to be the most popular information source, regardless of the frequency of Renren use.

Therefore, the answer to the third research question is no. The frequency of Renren use does not influence with Renren users’ choice of information sources about products advertised on social media.
Research Question 4

The fourth research question asked if the use frequency of Renren is associated with Renren users’ likelihood to spread advertising information to their Renren friends.

Independent-samples t-tests were conducted to compare by use frequency of Renren how likely respondents were to keep advertising information to themselves, distribute advertising information on Renren, and do nothing about the information under three conditions: when directly exposed to instant ads, when they received recommended ads from friends, and when they received user experiences from friends. The comparison was conducted between users who signed on Renren at least once a day and those who signed on less often.
Table 14. T-test for Differences by Use Frequency in Likelihood to Spread Advertising Information (1 = not likely, 5 = very likely)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Instant ads a.</th>
<th>Recommended ads b.</th>
<th>User experience c.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kee p Spread</td>
<td>Do nothing</td>
<td>Kee p Spread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. For at least once a day</td>
<td>2.4 1.8 3.0</td>
<td>2.2 1.9 2.9</td>
<td>2.3 1.9 3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Std. dev.)</td>
<td>(1.0 1.0 1.5)</td>
<td>(1.0 1.0 1.6)</td>
<td>(1.0 .99 1.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. for less often</td>
<td>2.4 1.8 3.3</td>
<td>2.2 1.8 2.9</td>
<td>2.5 1.9 2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Std. dev.)</td>
<td>(1.0 1.1 1.5)</td>
<td>(1.1 1.0 1.6)</td>
<td>(1.1 1.0 1.6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: (a d.f. = 189; b d.f. = 134; c d.f. = 105)

All differences were n.s.

a. At least once a day (n = 78), less often (n = 113); b. At least once a day (n = 57), less often (n = 79); c. At least once a day (n = 50), less often (n = 57)

Results of Table 14 showed that respondents’ frequency using Renren did not have an influence on their likelihood to distribute advertising information on Renren, since all the p-values exceeded the set significance level of .05.
Therefore, there is no statistically significant relationship between frequency of Renren use and users’ likelihood to spread advertising information. The answer to the fourth research question is no.
Research Question 5

The fifth research question asked if Renren users’ interest in different product types (hedonic and utilitarian) influence their choice of information sources about products advertised on social media.

Pearson’s correlation coefficients were used to assess the relationship between Renren users’ interest in every type of products &/or services and how likely users were to choose among three sources to obtain information about those products on Renren. The correlations were between responses indicating how interested users were in different products, and responses indicating whether users obtained advertising information from instant ads, recommended ads from friends and user experience shared by friends.
Table 15. Pearson’s correlations for how interest in different product types affects the likelihood to choose different information sources (1 = not likely, 5 = very likely)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hedonic</th>
<th>utilitarian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hotels</td>
<td>Leisure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instant ads</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommended ads</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User experiences</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Interest in a product based on 1 = not interested, 5 = very interested.

Respondents for individual items varied (185 ≤ n ≤ 202)

*Correlation significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

**Correlation significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Results from Table 15 show there was a positive and significant correlation between Renren users’ likelihood to obtain information from ads on Renren and their interest in hotels &/or flights ($r = .15$, $n = 193$, $p < .05$), personal computers ($r = .23$, $n = 193$, $p < .01$), and school &/or office supplies ($r = .16$, $n = 193$, $p < .05$), respectively. However, the correlations are all relatively weak.

In conclusion, the fifth research question cannot be answered in this paper, since respondents did not differentiate between hedonic and utilitarian products. However, results suggest that users’ interest in some product types influence their choice of information sources on social media. Renren users who have stronger interest in hotels
&/or flights, personal computers, school &/or office supplies are more likely to obtain information from instant ads on Renren.
Research Question 6

The sixth research question asked if Renren users’ interest in different product types (hedonic and utilitarian) influence their likelihood to distribute advertising information to their friends on social media.

Pearson’s correlation coefficient was used to assess the relationship between Renren users’ interest in every type of products &/or services and how likely users were to distribute advertising information they obtained from instant ads, recommended ads from friends and user experience shared by friends.
Table 16. Pearson’s Correlations for How Interest in Product Types Affects the Likelihood to Transmit Advertising Information (1 = not likely, 5 = very likely)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instant ads</th>
<th>Hotels</th>
<th>Leisur e</th>
<th>Movies</th>
<th>Computers</th>
<th>Supplies</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keep</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.22**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spread</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>.23**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do nothing</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended ads</th>
<th>Hotels</th>
<th>Leisur e</th>
<th>Movies</th>
<th>Computers</th>
<th>Supplies</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keep</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.34**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spread</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.26**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do nothing</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>User experiences</th>
<th>Hotels</th>
<th>Leisur e</th>
<th>Movies</th>
<th>Computers</th>
<th>Supplies</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keep</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>.26**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do nothing</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.20*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Interest in a product based on 1 = not interested, 5 = very interested.

Respondents for individual items varied (66 ≦ n ≦ 202)

*Correlation significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

** Correlation significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 16 shows first that Renren users’ interest in different product types was positively and significantly correlated with their willingness to keep advertising information obtained from all three sources to themselves, since all p-values were less
than the set significance level of .05 level (2-tailed). The size of the correlations ranged from .19 to .34, so this relationship is consistent but weak.

Table 16 shows second that Renren users’ interest in different product types was also positively correlated with their willingness to distribute advertising information obtained from all three sources to their Renren community, for the p-values were less than the set significance level of .05 level (2-tailed). The size of the correlations ranges from .17 to .34, so this relationship is weak.

However, there were four exceptions. Renren users’ interest in leisure &/or restaurants did not significantly correlate with the likelihood to distribute information obtained from instant ads or user experience from friends. In addition, Renren users’ interest in personal computers did not significantly correlate with the likelihood to distribute information obtained from recommended ads or user experience from friends.

Table 16 also shows there were no significant correlations between product type and likelihood of doing nothing, since all p-value exceeded the set significance level of .05.

In summary, the sixth research question cannot be directly answered in this paper, since respondents did not differentiate between hedonic and utilitarian products. However, results suggest that the more an individual is interested in product types mentioned in test, the more likely he or she is to keep and distribute the advertising information obtained from advertisers and friends on Renren.
Research Question 7

The seventh research question asked if there is a relationship between Renren users’ interest in different advertisement content features (entertaining and informative) and their choice of information sources about products advertised on social media.

Pearson’s correlation coefficients were used to assess the relationship between Renren users’ interest in different advertisement content features and their likelihood to choose among three sources to obtain advertising information on Renren.
Table 17. Pearson’s Correlations for How Interest in Advertisement Content Features Affects the Likelihood to Choose Different Information Sources (1 = not likely, 5 = very likely)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Informativ e</th>
<th>Entertainin g</th>
<th>Instant ads</th>
<th>Recommended ads</th>
<th>User experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informativ e</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.65**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainin g</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instant ads</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommended ads</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User experience</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Interest in informative ads and entertaining ads based on 1 = not interested, 5 = very interested.

Respondents for individual items varied (185 ≤ n ≤ 202)

*Correlation significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

**Correlation significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

According to Table 17, users’ likelihood of getting advertising information from instant ads was positively correlated with their interest in informative ads (r = .21, n = 192, p < .01) and entertaining ads (r = .15, n = 193, p < .05). Furthermore, compared to entertaining elements, informative elements of an advertisement have a slightly stronger influence on respondents in choosing instant ads as their information source. However, both correlations are relatively weak.
The answer to the seventh question is yes. The more interested Renren users’ are in both informative and entertaining ads, the more inclined they are to accept advertising information from instant ads on Renren. And interest in informative ads has a slightly greater influence than interest in entertaining ads.
Research Question 8

The eighth research question asked if Renren users’ interest in different advertisement content features (informative and entertaining) influences with their likelihood to transmit advertising information to their friends on social media.

Pearson’s correlation coefficients were used to assess the relationship between Renren users’ interest in different advertisement content features and the likelihood of distributing the advertising information under three conditions on Renren.
**Table 18. Pearson’s Correlations for How Interest in Advertisement Content Features Affects the Likelihood to Transmit Advertising Information (1 = not likely, 5 = very likely)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Informative</th>
<th>Entertaining</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instant ads</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>.46**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spread</td>
<td>.36**</td>
<td>.36**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do nothing</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep</td>
<td>.41**</td>
<td>.41**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recommended ads</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spread</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>.38**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do nothing</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>-.17*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td>.40**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>User experience</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spread</td>
<td>.45**</td>
<td>.39**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do nothing</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>-.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Interest in informative ads and entertaining ads based on 1 = not interested, 5 = very interested.

Respondents for individual items varied (88 ≦ n ≦ 202)

*Correlation significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

**Correlation significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

According to Table 18, people who were interested in entertaining ads (r = .38, p < .01) were more likely to distribute advertising information obtained from ads recommended by their friends than those who were interested in formative ads (r = .33, p < .01); people who were interested in informative ads (r = .45, p < .01) were more likely
to distribute advertising information obtained from user experience shared by friends than those who were interested in entertaining ads ($r = .39, p < .01$).

In addition, respondents’ interest in both informative and entertaining advertisements was positively and significantly correlated with their tendency of both keeping advertising information to themselves and distributing advertising information to their Renren community, since all $p$-values was less than .01. Moreover, respondents were more likely to keep advertising information to themselves than to distribute advertising information under all three conditions, regardless of their interest in different advertisement content features.

The answer to the eighth research question is yes. Renren users’ interest in entertaining ads has a stronger influence on respondents in spreading information from recommended ads, whereas interest in informative ads has a stronger influence on respondents in spreading information from user experiences. Furthermore, the more interested Renren users’ are in both informative and entertaining advertisements, the more inclined they are to keep information to themselves and spread information on Renren. Finally, Renren users are more likely to keep information to themselves than distribute information on Renren in general.
CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study had some findings that showed positive and significant correlations between variables, and other findings that showed no difference between averages for different types of users. The discussion will first address the significant findings, and then address the findings that were not significant.

This was an exploratory study that examined the flow of advertising information on Renren.com to see if the classic two-step model of information flow exists on social media. The two-step flow is when information comes from a opinion leaders (in this case Renren friends) on Renren. The study also asked if a one-step information flow exists on social media. The one-step flow is when information comes directly from advertisers on Renren. However, if a Renren user redistributed an ad he or she saw, no matter directly from advertisers (instant ads) or from their friends, the person became an opinion leader and thus a part of two-step flow process.

First, the study’s findings are consistent with the two-step flow of information. Results in Table 9 indicate that friends’ recommendation is the most popular source among all three sources discussed in this study for Renren users to obtain advertising information on Renren. In addition, results in Table 10 and Table 16 indicate that most Renren users do not try to be opinion leaders to distribute advertising information on Renren. Therefore, the classic Two-step Information Flow pattern is still the dominant form of advertising information flow on Renren and most people are at the second stage (informative receivers rather than opinion leaders) of the information flow process.
Implications from this finding is that advertisers should take advantage of the influence of opinion leaders on Renren to promote their products &/or services.

Second, results in Table 7 suggest that Renren users do not differentiate between hedonic and utilitarian products &/or services tested in this study. However, Renren users have strongest interest in movies &/or CDs and leisure &/or restaurants, and have least interest in personal computers and hotels &/or flights advertised on Renren. This means Renren.com is not an advertising platform equally effective for every product. Implications from this finding is that advertisers should decide whether to choose Renren for promotion according to their own products or services.

Third, results in Table 8-1 suggest that Renren users have strongest interest in ads using fun content, creative ideas, attractive design for promotion. Results in Table 8-2 indicate that, Renren users have a stronger interest in entertaining ads than in informative ads in general. Implications from this finding is that advertisers may take advantages of these entertaining elements to improve the popularity of their advertised products/services among the media users.

Fourth, the literature review suggested that “product types (hedonic & utilitarian)” can exert influence over consumers’ attitudes towards advertised products. Results in Table 13 suggest that Renren users who have stronger interest in hotels &/or flights, personal computers, and school &/or office supplies are more likely to obtain advertising information from instant ads on Renren. In addition, results in Table 14 suggest that the more an individual is interested in product types mentioned in test, the more likely he or she is to keep and distribute the advertising information obtained from advertisers and
friends on Renren. This means that one-step information flow exists among individuals with interest in hotels &/or flights, personal computers, and school &/or office supplies, while two-step information flow exits among individuals with interest in all product types tested in this study.

Fifth, the literature review suggested that “advertisement content features (informative & entertaining)” significantly affect the audience’s attitudes towards the advertising information and providing entertaining and informative content can increase the value of an advertisement for the audience. Results in Table 15 and Table 16 are consistent with this prediction. First, the more interested Renren users’ are in both informative and entertaining ads, the more inclined they are to accept advertising information from instant ads on Renren. Second, the more interested Renren users’ are in both informative and entertaining advertisements, the more inclined they are to keep information to themselves and spread information on Renren. This indicates that both one-step and two-step information flow patterns exist among individuals with interest in entertaining and informative ads. Furthermore, Renren users’ interest in entertaining ads has a stronger influence on respondents in spreading information from recommended ads, whereas interest in informative ads has a stronger influence on respondents in spreading information from user experiences. Therefore, the implications are in order to create a viral effect of an ad, advertisers should improve the entertainment of it; in order to create a viral effect of individuals’ own experiences with certain products &/or services, they need to add more facts and information.
Sixth, the literature review suggested that gender difference can influence the reachability and attractiveness of an advertisement on social media. As shown in Table 9 and Table 10, gender does not influence with users’ choice of information sources about products advertised on Renren or their likelihood to distribute advertising information obtained from all the three sources.

Seventh, the literature review suggested that the frequency of social media use can be both positively and negatively correlated with users’ activity on social media. As shown in Table 11 and Table 12, the frequency of Renren use does not associate with Renren users’ choice of information sources about products advertised on Renren or the likelihood to distribute advertising information on Renren.
CHAPTER 7: LIMITATIONS

One main limitation of this study is that the survey sample is limited on its representativeness for all Renren users. The study used snowball sampling to produce a convenience sample. Convenience samples cannot be generalized to the population of Renren users. As introduced in the preliminary analysis, the majority of the participants in this study are students aged from 19 to 23, with bachelor’s degree or above. Most of them have no income or middle income. In order to be more convincing, future study should include more representative participants with diverse educational backgrounds, at different income levels, and in distinct age groups. Future studies could also use methods, such as random digit dialing, to identify a representative sample of Renren users.

Another limitation is that this study only discussed four possible influencing factors (gender, frequency of Renren use, interest in different product types, and interest in different advertisement content features) of Renren users’ choice of information source and their willingness to spread advertising information on Renren. Future studies should expand the list of factors that influence interest in advertised products to include questions about whether users have purchased the products, and other variables such as income level and educational backgrounds. Income and education were not analyzed in this study because the majority of respondents were college students aged from 19 to 23. Many demographic characteristics were commonly shared among them. In this study, the educational background of most respondents was bachelor degree or above and most of them had no income or middle income (0 - 5000RMB). Thus, there is not enough difference to make a significant comparison.
REFERENCES


American Academy of Advertising.


MyCOS Digital Information Co.

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APPENDIX A: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE (ENGLISH)

The Question Body

Group I. In the first group of questions, we want to ask about how often you use Renren.

(1) How often do you use Renren (Pew Research Internet Project, 2013, p9)?
   1. Once a day
   2. 3-5 days a week
   3. 1-2 days a week
   4. Every few weeks
   5. Less often

Group II. In the second group of questions, we want to ask some questions about the
advertisements on Renren.

(2) Have you ever noticed any advertisements on Renren?
   1. No (if they answer no, they will be directed to the end of the questionnaire)
   2. Yes

(3) What kinds of products or services advertised on Renren are most likely to
interest you? For each item tell us how interested you are on a scale of 1 to 5,
where 1 is not interested and 5 is very interested (Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000, p63; Batra & Ahtola, 1991, p315).
   1. Hotels &/or flights 1 2 3 4 5
   2. Leisure &/or restaurants 1 2 3 4 5
   3. Movies &/or CDs 1 2 3 4 5
   4. Personal computers 1 2 3 4 5
   5. School &/or office supplies 1 2 3 4 5
   6. Distance education &/or recruitment 1 2 3 4 5

(4) Next, we would like to know what advertisements are most likely to interest you.
For each item tell us how interested you are on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not
interested and 5 is very interested.
   1. Advertisements that tell me about new products or services 1 2 3 4 5
   2. Advertisements that tell me the price of products or services 1 2 3 4 5
   3. Advertisements that give me new information about products or services 1 2 3 4 5
   4. Advertisements that use a creative idea to promote products or services 1 2 3 4 5
   5. Advertisements that use fun content to promote products or services 1 2 3 4 5
6. Advertisements with endorsements by celebrity I admire 1 2 3 4 5
7. Advertisements that have an attractive design 1 2 3 4 5
8. Advertisements that I can talk about with my friends 1 2 3 4 5

Group III. Next, we want to ask some questions about how you and your Renren friends interact with the advertisements on Renren.

(5) Have you ever paid attention to the advertisements the instantly displayed on your Renren page?
1. No
2. Yes

(6) How likely are you to take each of the following actions if you find an advertisement on Renren is interesting? Answers on scale from 1-5, where 1 is not likely and 5 is very likely (Trends E-Magazine, 2012).
1. I would click on the ad to find out more about the product 1 2 3 4 5
2. I would search for further information that is not in the ad about the advertised product 1 2 3 4 5
3. I would click on the ad to buy the product 1 2 3 4 5
4. I would click on the ad to tell people I like it 1 2 3 4 5
5. I would comment on the ad 1 2 3 4 5
6. I would share the ad with my Renren community 1 2 3 4 5
7. I would do nothing 1 2 3 4 5

(7-1) Have you ever paid attention to advertisements that your Renren friends recommended or shared with you?
1. No
2. Yes

(7-2) If they answer yes to (7-1) - How likely are you to take each of the following actions when your friends recommend or share advertisements on Renren? Answers on scale from 1-5, where 1 is not likely and 5 is very likely (Trends E-Magazine, 2012).
1. I would click on the ad to find out more about the product 1 2 3 4 5
2. I would search for further information that is not in the ad about the advertised product 1 2 3 4 5
3. I would click on the ad to buy the product 1 2 3 4 5
4. I would click on the ad to tell people I like it 1 2 3 4 5
5. I would comment on the ad 1 2 3 4 5
6. I would share the ad with my Renren community 1 2 3 4 5
7. I would do nothing 1 2 3 4 5

(8-1) Have you ever paid attention to your Renren friends’ experiences of shopping for or using products or services that they shared on Renren?
1. No
2. Yes

(8-2) If they answer yes to (8-1) - How likely are you to take each of the following actions when your Renren friends share their experiences shopping for and using products and services? Answers on scale from 1-5 (Trends E-Magazine, 2012).
1. I would click on the experience to find out more about the product 1 2 3 4 5
2. I would search for further information that is not in the experience about the introduced product 1 2 3 4 5
3. I would click on the experience to buy the product 1 2 3 4 5
4. I would click on the experience to tell people I like it 1 2 3 4 5
5. I would comment on the experience 1 2 3 4 5
6. I would share the experience with my Renren community 1 2 3 4 5
7. I would do nothing 1 2 3 4 5

Group IV. Now we would like to ask for some information about you. Your responses will remain confidential. We will not report any individual responses; only aggregate responses will be used in our report.

(9) How old will you be by the end of year 2013?

(10) What is your gender?
1. Male
2. Female

(11) What is your occupation ((MyCOS, 2011)?
1. Student
2. Private company employee
3. Government employee
4. Self-employed entrepreneur
5. Unemployed
6. Other, please specify ________________________________

(12) What is your current educational background / highest level of education completed (Pew Research Internet Project, 2013, p4)?
1. High school degree
2. Completed some college
3. Bachelor’s degree
4. Graduate degree

(13) What is your monthly income level (MyCOS, 2012)?
1. No income
2. Less than ¥ 1000
3. Between ¥ 1001~ ¥ 2000
4. Between ¥2001~¥3000
5. Between ¥3001~¥4000
6. Between ¥4001~¥5000
7. Between ¥5001~¥6000
8. Between ¥6001~¥7000
9. Between ¥7001~¥8000
10. More than 8000

Asking for a Copy of This Study Report

If you want to request a copy of the report on our survey results, please enter your name and an e-mail address here where we can send you the report. If not, please move to the end of the survey.
Name ________________ Email address ________________

The Ending Sentence

This is the end of this survey. Thank you for your participation.
APPENDIX B: RECRUITMENT MESSAGES (ENGLISH)

Early Notification

Dear friend,
Within the next several days, you will be receiving a brief online questionnaire on your Renren usage habits and your overall attitudes towards the advertising information on Renren. Once you receive the email invitation, I would really appreciate if you could spare a few minutes to complete the questionnaire. Your participation will help me have a deeper understanding about advertising messages on Renren.

You have to be 18 or older to take this survey. This study will not disclose any personal information, for all data will be collected anonymously. You will have the right to require a copy of the study report after it is finished. If you have any question during any process, feel free to contact Jiaojiao Xu at jiaojiao_0312@hotmail.com.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Jiaojiao Xu
Graduate Student, E.W. Scripps School of Journalism, Ohio University

Recruitment Email

Dear friend,
You will find a brief online survey about your Renren usage habits and your overall attitudes towards the advertising information on Renren. I notified you several days ago about this research study. Your support and patience would greatly help me with my study.

The first page of the survey will have complete disclosure and content information that you need to read before beginning to answering questions. Thank you for your cooperation.
Select the link below and enter your responses.

Follow this link to the Survey:
Take the survey
Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:
http://rrurl.cn/gOJUaw

If you have any questions, feel free to contract Jiaojiao Xu at jiaojiao_0312@hotmail.com.
Sincerely,

Jiaojiao Xu
Graduate Student, E.W. Scripps School of Journalism, Ohio University

Reminder Email

Dear friend,
About a week ago, I sent you a research survey about your Renren usage habits and your overall attitudes towards advertising on Renren. I’m sending you a follow up email to remind you of taking this survey if you haven’t yet. In case the link to the questionnaire has been deleted from your email account, I have included it again. Thank you for your cooperation.

Select the link below and enter your responses.

Follow this link to the Survey:
Take the survey

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:
http://rrurl.cn/gOJUaw

If you have any questions, feel free to contract Jiaojiao Xu at jiaojiao_0312@hotmail.com.

Sincerely,

Jiaojiao Xu
Graduate Student, E.W. Scripps School of Journalism, Ohio University
问题主体

问题组一：在这组问题中，我们将提问你使用人人网的频率。

（1）你多久上一次人人网？

1. 一天数次
2. 一天一次
3. 每周3-5天
4. 每周1-2天
5. 每隔几周一次
6. 很少

问题组二：这组问题将围绕人人网广告提问。

（2）你曾经注意到过人人网上的广告吗？

1. 没注意过（直接导向问卷结尾）
2. 注意过

（3）在人人网上，哪种商品或服务的广告最有可能吸引你？请选择数值表示你感兴趣的程度。1代表完全不感兴趣，5代表非常感兴趣。

3. 酒店及或飞机 1 2 3 4 5
4. 餐厅及或休闲设施 1 2 3 4 5
5. 电影及或音乐CD 1 2 3 4 5
6. 个人电脑 1 2 3 4 5
7. 学习用品及或办公用品 1 2 3 4 5
8. 远程教育及或用人招聘 1 2 3 4 5

（4）哪种人人网广告最有可能吸引你？请选择数值表示你感兴趣的程度。1代表完全不感兴趣，5代表非常感兴趣。

1. 介绍新产品的广告 1 2 3 4 5
2. 提供已知商品的新信息的广告 1 2 3 4 5
3. 提供价格资讯的广告 1 2 3 4 5
4. 创意促销的广告 1 2 3 4 5
5. 内容有趣的广告 1 2 3 4 5
6. 有我喜欢的明星代言的广告 1 2 3 4 5
7. 造型设计别致的广告 1 2 3 4 5
8. 能够成为谈资的广告 1 2 3 4 5
问题组三：接下来这组问题将围绕你和你的人人网友是怎样与人人网广告互动的。

(5) 你是否关注过人人网上的即时性广告？
1. 否
2. 是

(6) 如果你觉得一条人人广告有趣，你会采取下列哪些做法？请选择数值表示你会采取这一做法的可能性。1代表完全不可能，5代表非常有可能。
1. 我会点击该广告了解更多信息 1 2 3 4 5
2. 我会通过别的渠道搜索广告商品的更多信息 1 2 3 4 5
3. 我会点击该广告并购买广告商品 1 2 3 4 5
4. 我会点击“赞”告诉大家我喜欢该广告 1 2 3 4 5
5. 我会评论该广告 1 2 3 4 5
6. 我会把该广告分享到我的人人主页 1 2 3 4 5
7. 我什么也不会做 1 2 3 4 5

(7-1) 你是否关注过你的人人网友为你推荐或分享的人人广告？
1. 否
2. 是

(7-2) 如果问题(7-1)你回答了“是”，请回答本题——当你的人人网友给你推荐或分享人人广告时，你会采取下列哪些做法？请选择数值表示你会采取每种做法的可能性。1代表完全不可能，5代表非常有可能。
1. 我会点击该广告了解更多信息 1 2 3 4 5
2. 我会通过别的渠道搜索广告商品的更多信息 1 2 3 4 5
3. 我会点击该广告并购买广告商品 1 2 3 4 5
4. 我会点击“赞”告诉大家我喜欢该广告 1 2 3 4 5
5. 我会评论该广告 1 2 3 4 5
6. 我会把该广告分享到我的人人主页 1 2 3 4 5
7. 我什么也不会做 1 2 3 4 5

(8-1) 你是否关注过你的人人网友为你分享的他们购买或使用某种产品或服务的经验？
1. 否
2. 是
（8-2）如果问题（8-1）你回答了“是”，请回答本题——当你看到你的人人网友分享他们的经验时，你会采取下列哪些做法？请选择数值表示你采取每种做法的可能性。1 代表完全不可能，5 代表非常有可能。
1. 我会点击该广告了解更多信息  1  2  3  4  5
2. 我会通过别的渠道搜索广告商品的更多信息  1  2  3  4  5
3. 我会点击该广告并购买广告商品  1  2  3  4  5
4. 我会点击“赞”告诉大家我喜欢该广告  1  2  3  4  5
5. 我会评论该广告  1  2  3  4  5
6. 我会把该广告分享到我的人人主页  1  2  3  4  5
7. 我什么也不会做  1  2  3  4  5

问题组四：现在我想了解一些你的个人信息。你的所有答案都将严格保密。在此提交的每一份问卷结果都只会被用做统计，而不会被单独展示。

（9）截止到到 2013 年底你的年龄为：

（10）你的性别是：
    1. 男
    2. 女

（11）你现在的学历背景/到目前为止所获得的最高学位是：
    1. 高中
    2. 大专
    3. 本科生/本科
    4. 研究生/硕士

（12）你的职业是：
    1. 学生
    2. 私企员工
    3. 政府职员
    4. 创业者
    5. 无业
    6. 其他，请具体说明______________________________

（13）你的月收入水平：
    1. 无收入
    2. 少于 1000
    3. 介于 1001-2000
    4. 介于 2001-3000
5. 介于 3001-4000
6. 介于 4001-5000
7. 介于 5001-6000
8. 介于 6001-7000
9. 介于 7001-8000
10. 大于 8000

关于获取一份本研究的报告

如果你想要一本我们调查研究结果的报告，请在一下空栏中填写你的名字和邮箱地址，我们将会把报告电子版发送至你的邮箱。否则，请直接进入问卷结尾。
姓名 _____________ 邮箱地址 _____________

结束语

你已完成本问卷。衷心感谢你的参与！
APPENDIX D: RECRUITMENT MESSAGES (CHINESE)

提前通知

亲爱的朋友：
在未来几天内，您将会收到一份网上调查问卷。问卷的目的是调查您的人人网使用
习惯和您对人人网广告的态度。当您收到邀请函时，请您抽出几分钟时间完成问
卷。在此我将致以最诚挚的谢意。您的参与将会帮助我加深对于人人网广告的理
解。
参与问卷调查的条件是必须年满18岁。本次问卷将采取不记名形式，所以不涉及
个人隐私泄露问题。您有权在研究结束之后通过邮件等方式索取一份研究报告。无
论您在任何阶段有任何问题，均可通过邮箱 Jiaojiao_0312@hotmail.com 与研究
者取得联系。
我谨在此提前感谢您的配合。

许娇蛟
俄亥俄大学斯克利普斯新闻学院，研究生。

答卷志愿者征募邮件

亲爱的朋友：
您好！
这封邮件包含了一份简短的调查问卷。问卷的目的是调查您的人人网使用习惯和您
对人人网广告的态度。几天前，我已发送了一封邮件邀请您参与这项研究。您的支
持和耐心将会给予我极大的帮助。
问卷的第一页将会对本研究进行详细的内容介绍和信息公开。在开始回答问题前，
请您仔细阅读此页。在此请允许我对你的参与和配合表示诚挚的谢意。
请选择以下任意一种方式并开始回答问卷
直接点击链接：
回答问卷
或复制以下网址并粘贴到浏览器：
http://rrurl.cn/g0Juaw

如果您有任何问题，请随时通过邮箱 jiaojiao_0312@hotmail.com 与我取得联
系。

许娇蛟
俄亥俄大学斯克利普斯新闻学院，研究生。

答卷志愿者征募提醒邮件

亲爱的朋友：
您好！
约一周前，我给您发送了一封关于您的人人网使用习惯和您对人人网广告的态度的调查问卷。这是一封邮件后继提醒邮件。如果您还未回答问卷，希望您能够抽出宝贵的几分钟完成调查。假如问卷链接已被删除，您可以在本邮件中重新找到链接。
谢谢您的支持与配合！
请选择以下任意一种方式并开始回答问卷

直接点击链接：
回答问卷
或复制以下网址并粘贴到浏览器：
http://rrurl.cn/g0JUaw

如果您有任何问题，请随时通过邮箱 jiaojiao_0312@hotmail.com 与我取得联系。

许娇蛟
俄亥俄大学斯克利普斯新闻学院，研究生。