Learning from the Ad or
Relying on Related Attitudes:
The Moderating Role of Involvement

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The study examines how 1) the level of involvement and 2) the strength of product-related attitudes consumers hold determine jointly the effectiveness of message claims and source credibility. It is shown that these factors interact in determining the effectiveness of message quality. When individuals hold weak related attitudes, high involvement enhances message effectiveness. However, when they hold strong related attitudes, high involvement detracts from message effectiveness. Involvement also moderates the joint effectiveness of source credibility and message quality. Under low involvement, consumers use the source as a simple acceptance or rejection rule and it is considered independently of the message. When involvement is high, the source provides the context for the interpretation of the message and thus an interactive effect was expected.

Research on advertising effectiveness and persuasion has documented the difference between two alternative routes to persuasion (e.g., Abelson 1976, Chaiken 1980, Petty et al., 1983). The most commonly used categorization in the context of advertising effectiveness is that which distinguishes between the central and the peripheral routes. The central route is utilized when consumers actively engage in comprehending and evaluating the message claims. Attitude change results from a systematic processing of message information and requires an enhanced cognitive effort. A newly formed or a modified attitude is postulated to be relatively enduring, resistant to counterattack, and predictive of behavior (Petty and Cacioppo 1980, Sherman 1987). In contrast, attitude change via the peripheral route occurs if it originates from relatively simple persuasive cues that are considered independently of message content. For example, consumers may form attitudes by processing cues such as the attractiveness of the message communicator, the number of ar-
Arguments in the message, the declared expertise of the communicator, or other accessible non-content cues (see Chaiken 1987 for a review).

The central-peripheral framework postulates that the central route is utilized and message information is processed systematically when consumers are both motivated and able (Petty and Cacioppo 1986). In the marketing domain, involvement or personal relevance were manipulated to tap the differences in levels of motivation (e.g., Petty et al., 1983). Specifically, involvement with a product was operationally defined as a function of its direct personal relevance (or consequence) and the degree of consumers' concern to form a reasoned opinion (e.g., Petty and Cacioppo 1980). Utilizing this operational definition, it was postulated that high involvement enhances message processing and utilization of the central route. Conversely, low involvement is associated with relying on peripheral cues and accordingly, attitude change is more likely to be affected via the peripheral route.

Recent research has suggested that the nature of knowledge individuals possess may also channel judgment processes via the central and the peripheral routes. Wood and associates (Wood 1982, Wood et al., 1985) focused on the availability of attitude-relevant knowledge (i.e., the beliefs, attitudes, and prior behaviors that existed in memory before the message was presented) and accessibility of that knowledge during a later judgment. They suggested that levels of retrieval of previously acquired attitude-relevant information mediates the relative utilization of message content vs non-content cues. Specifically, they postulated that higher levels of retrieval enable individuals to critically evaluate the validity of message arguments and thus to process the message systematically. In contrast, low levels of retrieval induces participants to focus more on structural (non-content) features and thus to utilize the peripheral route. Accordingly, Wood et al. (1985) demonstrated that low-retrieval individuals were unaffected by variations in message quality (see also Petty and Cacioppo 1986).

Let us focus on a particular type of related knowledge that is relevant in the context of product choice. In this context, we shall use the term related knowledge to describe beliefs and attitudes that are not specific to the brand but rather pertain to the category of products to which the specific brand belongs. Such category knowledge is likely to be retrieved from memory when brand attitude is formed (e.g., Chalken and Baldwin 1981). Clearly, consumers differ in the extent and nature of such knowledge (e.g., Wood 1982). When prompted to form an attitude toward a new computer brand, for example, some consumers may retrieve well-defined and stable attitudes toward the product class (e.g., "I hate computers" or "I don't like handling complex equipment"). They may also possess a well-defined set of beliefs regarding the characteristics of the product (e.g., functional capabilities, usage occasions). Others may lack such well-defined attitudes and beliefs if the product is novel and unfamiliar to them. According to this analysis, consumers who hold strong related attitudes can systematically evaluate and validate the message, as opposed to those who have weak related attitudes and lack the grounds for such consideration. As a consequence, related attitudes may promote systematic processing. In order to explore this issue, the present study distinguishes between individuals who hold strong attitudes and those who hold weak attitudes relevant to the evaluation of the stimulus product.

The above discussion suggests that involvement has two consequences in persuasion. First, involvement is associated with increased perceived costs and benefits.
related to a purchase decision. As involvement increases, consumers are willing to exert more effort and spend more time to improve the quality of their decision. For example, they may examine a potentially desired brand's ad more carefully and systematically to learn about its characteristics when they learn that it is available than when the purchase decision is inconsequential. Therefore, as much of past research has shown (e.g., Petty and Cacioppo 1986), high involvement induces consumers to utilize content-relevant attributes more extensively.

Second, involvement is associated with commitment to and reliance on related attitudes and previously made choices (Schul and Burnstein, 1988, see also the discussion on "position involvement" in Chaiken and Stangor 1987). When consumers hold strong attitudes toward the product class, this commitment may increase as involvement heightens. Highly involved consumers may be more concerned with validating the message and defending their existing attitudes and are likely to engage in biased information processing (cf. Abelson 1986, Chaiken and Stangor 1987). Particularly, related attitudes will more strongly rival or override message information (Chaiken and Baldwin 1981). As a consequence, related attitudes of highly involved individuals may impede consideration of new incoming information. When involvement is low, however, processing message information is less likely to be inhibited by related attitudes. In this situation, related attitudes may facilitate the processing of issue-related arguments (Wood et al., 1985).

The primary indication for the type of processing people utilize (i.e., central/systematic vs peripheral/heuristic) in the present study is the effectiveness of the message. By definition, if people hold weak related attitudes and process information systematically, they attend more to the claims themselves. Therefore, strong messages ought to influence people's attitudes more than moderate messages. Our analysis suggests that highly involved consumers ought to be more affected by message quality (i.e., strong vs moderate messages) than low involved individuals when they lack or have weak related attitudes. However, the opposite should occur when they hold strong attitudes, in this case the impact of message quality is expected to diminish as involvement increases. Statistically, this implies that involvement and strength of consumers' related attitudes should interact in determining the effect of message quality.

In the advertising context, there is another important type of knowledge that might be considered upon message receipt. Consumers may retrieve and rely on prior knowledge about the source communicating the message or advocating brand purchase (e.g., Craig and McCann 1978). This type of knowledge is noteworthy in this context as advertisers often associate the message with a familiar source (e.g., newscasters, movie stars) in attempting to enhance the credibility, believability, and objectivity that might induce consumers to form a favorable response (Assael 1984). The joint effectiveness of source credibility and message information is addressed as the second issue of concern in this study. To assess the impact of source credibility, the present study distinguishes between high and low credibility of the source.

As traditionally theorized, source information serves as a peripheral cue in attitude change. Accordingly, source information is likely to be utilized in forming attitudes mainly when involvement is low (Johnson and Scileppi 1969, Mizerski et
al, 1978, Petty et al, 1983, Rhine and Severence 1970) Under this condition, the credibility of the source may affect attitude by serving as a simple acceptance or rejection cue thus eliminating the need for elaborating on message content. In contrast, high involvement consumers become more concerned with "seeking the truth" about the characteristics of the new brand. In this situation, individuals tend to focus and process the message while the source is unimportant in its role as a simple acceptance or rejection cue. According to this reasoning, the effects of source credibility (the peripheral cue) and that of the message (the central cue) are complementary or additive.

However, findings concerning the role of source credibility as a peripheral cue have been equivocal. Other studies (e.g., Anderson 1981) noted that source and message information interact in determining the effectiveness of a message. Specifically, strong arguments are more persuasive when they are presented by a credible source while moderate arguments are less persuasive when presented by a credible source (see also studies by Heesacker, et al, 1984, Puckett et al, 1983).

Involvement may have a moderating role in determining the conditions under which source credibility and message quality interact or combine additively to determine attitude change (cf Petty and Cacioppo 1984). Particularly, under low involvement a positive source may enhance persuasion regardless of message quality. In this case, the message will be interpreted independently of the credibility of the source and the effects of message quality and source credibility will be additive. When involvement is high, however, individuals examine the nature of the message more carefully. Under this condition, the credibility of the source may provide the context for the interpretation of the message (Hannah and Sternthal 1984). In addition, source credibility may guide the extent of the cognitive effort consumers are willing to exert in processing the message and thereby moderate the impact of message information (Petty and Cacioppo 1984). Under high involvement, therefore, source credibility interacts with the quality of the message in determining an attitudinal response. Overall then, this analysis implies a triple interaction whereby involvement moderates the joint effectiveness of source credibility and message strength.

The Study

Overview

The stimulus used in the study was a new computerized library search package. Information about the package was presented in the form of an ad. Prior to ad exposure, two measures of attitudes pertaining to related domains were elicited. This measurement enabled the distinction between subjects who had strong related attitudes and those who had weak related attitudes.

Following the measurement of related attitudes and a short distraction task, the ad was presented. Subjects were exposed to one of eight ad versions produced by the manipulation of the following factors: 1) Involvement (high vs low personal relevance) 2) Quality of the arguments contained in the ad (strong vs moderate), and 3) Source credibility (high vs low).

Our first hypothesis is concerned with the interplay between the strength of related attitudes and the level of involvement in determining the effectiveness of
message quality. Specifically, we expected that when individuals lack or hold weak attitudes within related domains, the effect of message quality (i.e., the difference between strong and moderate messages) becomes more pronounced as involvement increases. Conversely, when related attitudes are strong, increased involvement will be associated with stronger reliance on those attitudes and a corresponding diminishing impact of message quality. Thus, we expected to observe a three-way interaction among strength of related attitudes, involvement, and message quality.

The second hypothesis concerns the joint effectiveness of source credibility and message quality in determining evaluative responses. This analysis focused on whether these relationships are additive, interactive, or whether involvement moderates these relationships. A moderating effect of involvement should be reflected in a three-way interaction among involvement, message quality, and source credibility, namely, the effects of message quality and source credibility will be additive under low involvement and interactive under high involvement.

**Subjects**

Two hundred and forty-one students enrolled in introductory marketing courses participated in the study. They were run in eight separate sessions. To avoid confounding session affiliation with experimental condition, all the experimental conditions were conducted simultaneously in each of the sessions. Assignment of participants to conditions within sessions was random.

**Procedure**

A pretest was conducted among 30 students (other than those participating in the study). Its purpose was to search for a product that would meet three criteria. First, the product had to be novel so that subjects would not hold prior attitudes toward the product itself. Second, there should be identifiable attitudinal domains in the class of that product so that attitude toward the specific product could be influenced by related attitudes subjects held. Third, the product should be potentially involving among the sampled population.

The chosen stimulus was a new computerized library search package. It should be noted that no competing package was available at that time on campus. Moreover, the study was conducted a short while before such package was actually installed, a fact that was unknown to the subjects at the time the study was conducted.

The pretest revealed that there are two domains in which attitudes toward use of library services in general were predictive of the attitude toward the newly offered computerized library search. They consisted of 1) subjects' judgments about the contribution of journal articles to the quality of term projects, and 2) the judged contribution of library services to the quality of such projects. These were considered, therefore, as the domains defining the related attitudes.

The study's purpose was presented to subjects as a periodical evaluation of students' consumption, activities, and interest patterns. Subjects were first handed a page with questions intended to elicit their evaluations about the two related attitudes (i.e., the contribution of journal articles and library services). A short distraction task (7–10 minutes) was subsequently administered, which focused on
their judgments about a new coupon booklet offered to students for reduced restaurant prices.

Immediately after the distraction task, each subject was given one of the eight message versions about the new package, presented in a form of an ad. Then, they were handed the final questionnaire. It contained judgments concerning the characteristics of the new package, the source of the message, attitude toward the new package, intention to use it, and measures collected for checking the manipulations (see below).

**Related Attitudes**

Prior to ad exposure, subjects were asked to indicate their evaluative judgments about the contribution of journal articles and library services to the quality of their projects (as indicated earlier). Both measures were rated on 7-point scales. The two measures were highly correlated ($r = 0.58, p < 0.01$) and were averaged to create an index of related attitudes. Individuals with averaged related attitudes that ranged between 3 and 5 (on the 7-point scale) were considered to have “weak attitude” while those with extreme levels were considered to hold “strong attitude.” There was only one subject whose score on this index fell on the lower extreme. This individual was excluded from subsequent analyses. This procedure categorized 113 individuals in the strong attitude cells and 128 individuals in the weak individual cells.

**The Ads**

Eight ads were constructed, one in each combination of message quality (strong vs moderate) X source credibility (high vs low) X involvement (high vs low). They are discussed in turn.

**Message Quality** In the strong message versions, the following characteristics were emphasized: 1) examples of scientific disciplines for which a computerized search would be particularly helpful, 2) a short description of the procedure for retrieving bibliography according to concepts and keywords, 3) the ability to search for a subset of the available reference list pertaining to a joint definition of several concepts, 4) the connection to international interlibrary source network, and 5) the option to obtain an immediate hard copy of the relevant list.

In the moderate message versions, the following characteristics were presented: 1) the new package can be installed in a variety of computer terminals, 2) it can be handled both through single language and dual language terminals, 3) a large memory is assigned for this package so that the user does not have to be concerned about the length of the desired list, 4) the package is flexible so that the information between the data base and the user can flow through several communication networks, and 5) the response provided by this package is almost immediate.

**Source Credibility** In the high credibility versions, subjects were informed that several other students majoring in the humanities and in social sciences have recommended the use of such new package after learning about the characteristics of the new package. In the low credibility versions, subjects were informed that a person who obtained information about the new package from the company’s sales representative has recommended this package.
Involvement Subjects assigned to the high involvement conditions were informed that a new computerized package devised to assist students in their studies will soon be available for their use. Subjects assigned to the low involvement conditions were informed that a new computerized package was recently created in a well-known university located overseas and is available, on a limited basis, to students enrolled at that university (see Petty et al., 1981 for a manipulation in a similar context). Salience of the involvement manipulation was enhanced by presenting it as the first item of information on the first (separate) page of the booklet.

Dependent Measures

After they were exposed to the message, subjects were handed a questionnaire. Its first page included measures of intention to use the new package (1 = definitely not, 7 = definitely yes) and attitude (1 = very bad, 7 = very good). Next, two sets of measures intended to assess the manipulations were included. The first set focused on attributes of the new package inferred from the message. It contained six judgments rated on 7-point scales (e.g., efficiency, effort exerted, ease of handling the package). The second set asked subjects to make two judgments about the source, one pertaining to the credibility of the source and the other to its importance for the subject.

Results

Manipulation Checks

Six questions concerning various aspects of the message were asked. Responses to these questions were averaged (Alpha = 0.87) to yield an index of message strength. Subjects exposed to the “strong message” indicated higher ratings (mean = 5.39) than did subjects exposed to the more moderate message (mean = 5.08, F(1,237) = 10.25, p < 0.01). A concern related to this check was whether the quality of the message per se intrigued subjects differentially, that is, whether those exposed to the strong message became more involved and motivated to learn more about the package than those exposed to the moderate message. To address this concern, subjects were asked whether they were interested in obtaining more information about the package. No difference was obtained on this measure between the two groups (mean = 5.67 for the strong message group and 5.72 for the moderate message group, F(1,237) < 1). To assess the effectiveness of the source manipulation, one measure of source credibility and one of source importance were considered. The two measures were highly correlated (alpha = 0.70), and were averaged to form an index of source credibility. Subjects assigned to the high credibility conditions perceived the recommendation as being more credible (mean = 4.69) than those in the low credibility conditions (mean = 4.23, F(1,237) = 6.00, p < 0.01). Despite the somewhat different nature of these judgments (i.e., credibility and importance) they were also significant when tested individually (F(1,237) = 3.80, p < 0.05 and F(1,237) = 16.78, p < 0.02) for the two judgments, respectively.
**Attitudes and Intentions**

A four-way ANOVA with Related attitudes, Involvement, Message quality and Source credibility as between-subject factors was performed on the attitude measure. Overall, two main effects were observed. First, subjects with strong related attitudes (mean = 5.96) were more favorable about the new package than subjects with weak related attitudes (mean = 5.39, F(1,237) = 16.26, p < 0.01). Second, subjects evaluated the new package more favorably when the ad contained strong arguments (mean = 5.80) than when the arguments were moderate (mean = 5.51, F(1,237) = 7.01, p < 0.01).

Our first hypothesis concerned the triple interaction among level of involvement, strength of related attitudes, and message quality. Specifically, we postulated that when consumers have strong related attitudes, the difference between strong and moderate messages will be less pronounced under high involvement conditions. In contrast, when consumers have weak related attitudes, the difference between strong and moderate messages will be more pronounced under high involvement.

Figure 1 displays the mean attitudes obtained in these conditions. The three-way interaction effect among related attitudes, involvement, and message quality (F(1,237) = 3.70, p < 0.05) was significant. As expected, the impact of message information was higher under the weak related attitudes/high involvement conditions as well as under strong related attitudes/low involvement conditions. This was confirmed by analysis of the simple effects conducted for the comparisons among these cells. Within the weak related attitude condition, the difference between strong and moderate messages was significant for subjects in the high involvement conditions (F(1,237) = 4.91, p < 0.03) but not in the low involvement conditions (F(1,236) < 1). Conversely, within the strong related attitude conditions, message impact was significant under low involvement (F(1,236) = 6.20, p < 0.01) but not under high involvement (F(1,237) < 1).

This analysis is well suited for purposes of comparison with previous analyses and findings in this area of research. It might be argued that related attitudes emerge from consumers' idiosyncratic prior experiences, and thus the assignment of subjects to the two related attitudes levels is not random, nor does it capture the full scale of this variable. In order to examine this issue, we ran a regression analysis whereby related attitudes were handled as continuous variables, while
Table 1. Intention to Use the New Package

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<tr>
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<th>Strong Related Attitudes</th>
<th>Weak Related Attitudes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High Involvement Mean (SD)</td>
<td>Low Involvement Mean (SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Message</td>
<td>6 23 (1 03)</td>
<td>6 52 (0 87)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Message</td>
<td>6 10 (1 26)</td>
<td>5 91 (1 27)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

involvement and message quality were coded as dummy variables. The interaction terms between the dummy variables and the continuous variable were also inserted as additional predictors. The regression analysis revealed patterns of prediction that were similar to those obtained in the ANOVA. The interactions significant in the ANOVA were significant also in the regression analysis.

A similar pattern was observed for the intention measure (Table 1, F(1,237) = 3 19, \( p < 0 07 \)). In fact, the correlations between attitudes and intention computed within all the eight cells produced by the three-way interaction were strong and significant (correlations varied between \( r = 0 60, p < 0 001 \) and \( r = 0 84, p < 0 001 \)). Thus, for our purposes in the present study attitudes and intentions were indistinguishable.

It should be noted that although creating an index of attitude-intention to serve as a dependent variable would be justified in light of the statistical result, treating them as separate constructs is important and meaningful in this paradigm. For example, in the Petty et al. (1983) study higher correlation between attitude and intention was found under the high involvement than under the low involvement condition (see also their discussion concerning these relationships). Thus, for comparison purposes attitude and intention were analyzed as distinct dependent variables even though no systematic difference was found in our study.

The Impact of Source Credibility

Our second issue of concern involved the impact of source credibility. Our hypothesis suggested that source credibility functions as a peripheral cue under low involvement but as a central cue under high involvement. This is supported by the triple interaction obtained among involvement, message quality, and source credibility (F(1,237) = 4 84, \( p < 0 03 \)). Specifically, Figure 2 shows that the impact of source credibility is determined by the extent of involvement and the quality of the message, within the low involvement conditions, message and source effects were additive (the interaction between source credibility and message quality was not significant, F(1,237) < 1). However, within the high involvement conditions, source credibility amplified the effect of the message quality (the interaction effect was significant (F(1,237) = 7 37, \( p < 0 01 \))). As in the previous analysis, the pattern of attitude judgment was highly correlated with that of the intention measures within each of the eight cells (correlations varied between \( r = 0 67, p < 0 001 \) and \( r = 0 87, p < 0 001 \) in the eight cells).

Next, a second possibility was tested, according to which source credibility functions always as a peripheral cue. As such, its effect should reflect a mirror-image of that of the message. The triple interaction between source credibility, related
Figure 2. The Effects of Involvement and Source Credibility on Message Effectiveness

attitudes, and involvement was not significant \((F(1,237) < 1)\), nor was the two-way interaction between source credibility and involvement \((F(1,237) < 1)\).

Overall, the findings suggest that the function of source credibility depends on the level of involvement. It functions as a peripheral cue only under low involvement. Under high involvement, source and message information interacts in determining the effectiveness of the message.

Discussion

The present study focused on the role of involvement in determining the relative utilization of message information and attitudes toward product-related domains in influencing brand attitudes. The findings have shown that highly involved consumers are more influenced by message information than low involved consumers when they lack or have weak related attitudes. In contrast, the opposite pattern was observed when consumers hold strong related attitudes, in this case message information became less effective as involvement increased.

Two consequences of motivation were considered in the present study. One consequence originates from consumers’ concern to form a reasoned attitude. High involvement is associated with enhanced costs and benefits that are expected from the product. It is related to increased perceived risk resulting from product mis-purchase and psychosocial risk (Bauer 1967) as well as to increased expected benefits from the product as reflected in its personal meaning and its ability to provide pleasure and affect (Laurent and Kapferer 1985). These costs and benefits increase consumers’ motivation to form a veridical opinion. If consumers are presented with an ad advocating the purchase (or use) of that product, they tend to engage more extensively (as compared with unmotivated consumers) in a systematic consideration of the arguments presented in the ad.

The other consequence is reflected in the degree of commitment to related attitudes. Related attitudes in this process function either as readily available evaluative responses that bias incoming information or as summary indexes whose informational basis is subject to enrichment and updating by message arguments. Specifically, when involvement is high, consumers may 1) bias processing of message information to defend their existing related attitudes, 2) rely on readily accessible
attitude and thereby ease the response process, or 3) be distracted by the available attitude even if a genuine attempt is made to process message information. The relative importance of each of these reasons is yet to be investigated in future research. However, the outcome under these conditions is quite clear, the consideration of message claims is less "objective" and the new attitude is likely to be biased in the direction of the related attitudes. When involvement is low, the strength of commitment to related attitudes is lessened, related attitudes, in this case, function as a baseline that is updated by issue-related attribute information. Under low involvement, therefore, related attitudes will facilitate, rather than inhibit the reliance on issue-related information in forming new attitudes.

The present study extends the central-peripheral processing paradigm as outlined in Petty et al. (1983) in two major aspects. First, our study is concerned with related knowledge effects and involves the interplay between reliance on message information and existing related attitudes under different levels of involvement. The pattern of a two-way involvement X message quality interaction obtained in the present study resembles that which was predicted by Petty et al. only when consumers held weak related attitudes. However, according to our reasoning, an opposite pattern of this interaction should be expected when consumers hold strong related attitudes.

The second aspect focuses on the impact of source credibility. In accordance with recent conceptual extensions of the central-peripheral framework (Petty and Cacioppo 1984), the present study demonstrates that the role of source credibility in determining advertising effectiveness is contingent upon the levels of personal involvement. The findings have shown that when involvement is low, message information and source credibility affect attitude in an additive fashion. That is, subjects consider the source independently of message information. However, when involvement is high, the source credibility interact with message information in determining the new attitude. Namely, strong arguments produce more favorable attitudes when presented by a credible source and moderate arguments yield less favorable attitudes when presented by a credible source. Thus, the three-way interaction (involvement X message quality X source credibility) appears to provide a more general account of the role of source credibility than the two-way interaction (involvement X source credibility) as presented in the original formulation by Petty et al. (1983).

The findings may suggest how advertising messages ought to be tailored in order to increase their effectiveness. When consumers do not hold strong related attitudes, attitude change follows the traditional predictions of the central-peripheral framework, if personal involvement is high, message information is important whereas if personal involvement is low, peripheral cues should be employed. However, when consumers do hold strong attitudes pertaining to related domains, a different strategy is recommended. When personal involvement is high, the ad should concentrate on the relevant attitudinal domains, making those domains that have most favorable implications most salient. The study suggests that as the impact of related attitudes increases, that of the information about the brand itself decreases. As a consequence, the advertiser ought to focus on those related attitudes and incorporate ad retrieval cues (Keller 1987) to enhance the accessibility of those attitudes. For example, when individuals are in need for a particular new medicine (high involvement situation) they may be more positively predisposed toward the
drug upon learning that it is manufactured by a company whose other products are highly reliable than by learning about the characteristics of that brand.

Finally, implications can also be drawn with respect to the selection of the source advocating the purchase of the product. When involvement is high, advertisers ought to consider the joint effectiveness of the source and the message. Specifically, they should select an endorser whose credibility bears directly on the arguments and promotes the persuasibility of those arguments. When personal involvement is low, advertisers should be concerned more with the extent to which the endorser is liked and evaluated in general, and less with its evaluation in the context of the message content. Under this condition, the source serves as a simple acceptance or rejection cue and does not bias the interpretation of message information.

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