

Exploring the relationship between category buying and advertising awareness in a B2B context

Magda Nenycz-Thiel and Jenni Romaniuk*

Ehrenberg-Bass Institute for Marketing Science, University of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia

*Corresponding author:

¹Ehrenberg-Bass Institute for Marketing Science, University of South Australia, GPO Box 2471, Adelaide SA 5001, Australia.

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Abstract

A long-standing empirical generalisation is that brand buyers notice advertising for the brand they buy, more than non-buyers. This research tests this at category level, namely category buyers are more likely to notice advertising for brands in the category, than category non-buyers, and if proximity or involvement with category buying also heightens category advertising awareness. The testing context is business-to-business (B2B), buying in seven service and four durable categories. The results show that category buyers notice advertising for brands in the category than non-buyers, and those ‘in market’ are more likely to notice advertising than those ‘out of market’. However, involvement in decision making did not matter. These findings hold for advertising, personal (face-to-face or phone) or digital (online, mobile, or social) contact. This suggests there is no need to target decision makers as these buyers will naturally screen in category advertising more than non-decision makers.

Keywords: Business-to-Business, Advertising Awareness, Category Buying