

Increasing Authenticity and Reducing Skepticism Toward Brand Activist Advertising: How Fit and Appeals Influence Women's Responses to Femvertisements

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Many brands employ femvertisements (women's empowerment advertisements; Skey, 2020), including those that produce gender-neutral products (i.e., Google®), products for men (i.e., RAM®), and products for women (i.e., Dove®; Sternadori & Abitbol, 2019). Brands producing women-oriented products are considered to have a high fit with feminist messages, while brands that producing male-oriented products have low fit. Research on brand-femvertising fit shows that different appeals are used for advertisements from high and low fit brands (Sterbenk et al., 2021). Given femvertising is rooted in corporate social responsibility (CSR), it is unsurprising that advertisers lean on appeals derived from this construct in their advertisements. Consumer-oriented, employee-oriented, or philanthropic-oriented appeals can be found in femvertisements disseminated today. A structural model is proposed to clarify the relationship between femvertising characteristics and consumer responses. A between-groups experimental design utilizes six stimulus advertisements to address the proposed research questions and hypotheses. Limitations and directions for future research are outlined.

Keywords: Femvertising, authenticity, consumer-brand identification, skepticism, attitudes

