

Faith and Advertising: Understanding How Religiosity Influences Responses to Gay Models in Mainstream Ads

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This research examines how consumer religiosity moderates heterosexual consumers' responses to ads featuring gay versus heterosexual models for luxury and value brands. Past research shows using gay models in luxury ads can increase positive responses among heterosexual consumers due to stereotypical associations between gay men and luxury consumption. A 2 (gay vs. heterosexual models) x 2 (luxury vs. value brand) x moderating variable (religiosity) experiment was conducted with 332 heterosexual participants. Results showed a three-way interaction effect on attitude and product evaluation. For low religiosity consumers, gay models increased ad attitude and product evaluation for luxury but not value brands. However, for high religiosity consumers, heterosexual models garnered more positive responses regardless of brand type. The findings demonstrate the importance of considering consumer religiosity and product type in utilizing gay imagery. Matching models to audience religiosity and brand associations can enhance ad effectiveness.

Keywords: word; luxury brand, diversity, gay ads, luxury advertising, religiosity