

# **The interplay of LGBTQ imagery in advertising, Intimacy Cues and Perceptions of Brand Coolness.**

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## **Abstract**

A growing body of research focuses on what makes brands cool. Brand coolness resides in characteristics of brands but achieves personal meaning for consumers through an interpretive process that is subjective and particular to each consumer. In a mainstreaming dynamic (i.e. using LGBTQ imagery in mainstream media), many brands are capitalizing on LGBTQ imagery to communicate affiliation with that subculture. In this research, we focus on advertising cues, and specifically physical intimacy cues in increasingly prevalent advertisements depicting gay and lesbian couples, to address the impact such imagery has on perceptions of brand coolness and downstream brand outcomes.

**Keywords:** Brand coolness, physical intimacy cues, LGBTQ imagery, subculture affiliation