

Show me your hands: hand visibility & promotional video effectiveness

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Abstract

This study reports on a field experiment testing whether speaker's hands visibility in a promotional video increases click-through rates. The prediction is based on media richness theory. The theory suggests that availability of additional non-verbal cues leads to increased trust and persuasion in mediated communication, yet the theory is based primarily on comparing different media types. We test the mechanism more directly by adding or subtracting specific non-verbal cue in a promotional video, namely visibility of the speaker's hands and hand gestures. The effect of hand visibility on click-through rate was marginally significant and in the predicted direction. Implications, potential boundary conditions and future research directions are discussed.

Keywords: hand gestures, media richness theory, field experiment.