

# When More Might Be Less: Can Advertisements Improve the Impact of Positive Media Content on a Brand?

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Track 3: Consumers

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## Imagine...

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...you were in the position of an advertising manager of a small company. You are approached by a print media company offering you a favorable news story as context for an ad you could place in the same magazine. Of course, at an extra charge.

Given your small advertising budget – how would you decide?

And, considering the media company, facing a “double market” with the ad space customers and the media consumers, would such a coupling be acceptable for the readers of the magazine?

- Germany: Baerns and Feldschow (2004: 139f.) found that 44% of all editors in chief reported that favorable editorial reports to support advertising efforts of advertisers are **standard practice**
- Mostly, media publishers and advertising departments – and not journalists – are willing to boost **advertising space sales pressure** journalist to offer couplings
- Media economical background: media companies' target of “two thirds of total returns from ad sales” (BDZV 2006: 6)  
→ content-plus-ad packages as ad sales argument

- Positive news stories about companies or brands more effective in influencing attitudes than advertisements (Chaiken, & Maheswaran, 1994; Jo, 2004)
- Effect of higher credibility of editorial content strongest under low involvement conditions (Chaiken, 1980; Chaiken, & Maheswaran, 1994), **but...**
- ...most experiments under **forced exposure conditions** known to possibly raise task involvement
- Research gap: effects of direct coupling of editorial content (e.g., news stories) and ads in the same media

- The more often information is repeated, the better it is remembered (D'Souza, & Rao, 1995: 37ff.; Hawkins, & Hoch, 1992)
- Effect of repetition is supplemented by different executions of the ad (Unnava, & Burnkrant, 1991)
- "Super Bowl Ads-Study" (Jin 2003-04): Newspaper articles about TV ads coming up later can increase viewers' recall after ad exposure
  - Different sources leave different memory traces, thus improving consumers' recollection
  - "memory trace refreshment" (Pham, & Johar, 1997)

# Hypothesis 1: Brand Recall

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If a positive editorial report about a brand appears in the same medium as an advertisement for the brand – i.e. there is “article/advertisement coupling” – then consumers’ recall of the brand will be higher than if the editorial report appears alone.

- Repetition (news story + ad) might trigger mere exposure effect (Zajonc 1968)
- Truth effect (validity effect): repeated statements are rated as more valid than statements heard or read for the first time (Arkes, Hackett, & Boehm, 1989; Hasher, Goldstein, & Toppino, 1977; Hawkins, & Hoch, 1992; Roggeveen, & Johar, 2002: 81)
- Subjective familiarity and thus believability (Roggeveen, & Johar, 2002) of the claim in the ad might be increased by having it read before in the news story
- Effects more pronounced under natural reading conditions, since then consumers should pay less attention to the editorial vs. ad nature of the content

## What happens if consumers actually *notice* the connection between ad and editorial content?

Three possibilities:

1. No motives assumed ("product is just interesting enough for writing about it")
2. Bribery by company assumed ("placing an ad in exchange for positive coverage")  
→ consumer devalues company ( $A_{\text{Brand}}$  ↓)
3. Editorial content assumed to be ploy to win advertising customers  
→ consumer devalues news content (perceived objectivity of the medium ↓)

Consumers possess persuasion knowledge about persuasion strategies (Friestad, & Wright, 1994)



## Competing Hypotheses 2a vs. 2b: Positive vs. Negative Effect on $A_{\text{Brand}}$

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If a positive news story about a brand appears in the same medium as an advertisement for the brand,

**H2a)** then consumers' attitude toward the brand will be **more positive** than if the news story appears alone.

**H2b)** then consumers' attitude toward the brand will be **more negative** than if the news story appears alone.

- Media Genre (e.g., special vs. general interest magazines) serves as **contextual cue**: preconception about the validity of the information contained in the magazine *before* reading it (Hallahan, 1999)
- Contextual cue **“credibility of media genre”** might moderate the negative coupling effect :
  - **Less credible genre**: “coupling = manipulation” logic might be triggered
  - **Credible genre**: repetition of the information might not be considered as persuasive attempt – truth effect might be triggered

## Hypothesis 3

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If a positive news story about a brand appears in the same example of a **media genre with high credibility** as an advertisement for the brand,

- then consumers' attitude toward the brand will be more **positive** and
- the objectivity of the editorial reports will be perceived more positively

than in an example of a less credible media genre.

- Participants: 246 Students (valid n=216) randomly assigned to one of our experimental conditions
- Fictional brand and magazines: no prior attitudes
- Product: fictional brand “SuperFast TFT” for a flatscreen (TFT) monitor → students’ involvement can be expected
- Medium: dummies of two fictional magazines from two media genres:
  - popular (general interest) magazine of boulevard style “Tempo! Tempo!” (less credible genre)
  - special interest computer magazine “PC Klar!” (credible genre)

		Forced Exposure		Natural Exposure	
		News Story only	News Story plus Ad	News Story only	News Story plus Ad
<b>Credibility of the Media Genre</b>	<b>Low</b> (General Interest Magazine)	<i>n</i> = 37	<i>n</i> = 32	<i>n</i> = 15	<i>n</i> = 30
	<b>High</b> (Special Interest Magazine)	<i>n</i> = 29	<i>n</i> = 18	<i>n</i> = 32	<i>n</i> = 31

**2 (positive news story only vs. positive news story plus advertisement) x 2 (credible genre vs. less credible genre) with involvement as covariate under two experimental exposure conditions**

- Typical designs:
  - Lack of realistic contexts for ad and news story: typically only the target ad, one single news story, and few distraction ads are presented in a booklet
  - Lack of realistic media contacts: forced exposure designs create the risk of informants being alerted to the experimental situation (hypothesis guessing)
- Call for realistic media use designs (Bronner, & Neijens, 2006; Derbaix, 1995; D'Souza, & Rao, 1995)
  - ➔ Comparing the impact of forced exposure vs. natural media contact (reading) situation in our experimental design

## Target News Story

Flachbild-Monitore

### SuperFast TFT™: Flachbildschirm im Temporausch



SuperFastTFT bringt die Display-Innovation des Jahres auf den Markt:  
Ein superschnelles 19" Display mit nur 8ms Reaktionszeit. Von Markus Lehmann

■ Wer kennt sie nicht – die nervtötenden Schlieren auf dem Flachbildschirm bei schnellen Bildfolgen? Die Ursache: Zu hohe Reaktionszeiten der TFT-Displays, für die die Schallmauer von 8 ms nicht zu knacken zu sein schien. Doch der Geschwindigkeitsrekord ist geknackt: Mit zwei Modellen liefert SuperFast TFT die ultimativen High-Speed TFT-Displays, die ab dem Sommer für schlierenfreies Bildschirmvergnügen sogar bei schnellsten Computergames sorgen.

**SuperFast TFT für extremes Tempo**

Mit dem 17" TFT FP71V und dem 19" TFT VP 191 wird SuperFast TFT Displays mit einer Reaktionszeit von nur 8ms (Gray-to-

Gray) anbieten. Insbesondere für farbinensitive, schnelle Darstellungen, wie Filme, Videobearbeitung oder realistisch animierte Computerspiele mit rasanten Bildfolgen sind hohe Reaktionszeiten unverzichtbar. Mit einer Pixel-Schaltzeit von nur vier ms gehören die störenden

Schliereffekte endgültig der Vergangenheit an.

**SuperFast: Innovative Elektronik**  
Die Steigerung der Reaktionszeit auf 8 ms wurde durch verbesserte Fließeigenschaften der Flüssigkristalle und durch eine opti-

mierte Elektronik ermöglicht. Das hat den Vorteil, dass genau der gewünschte Grauwert dargestellt wird und somit exakte Farbwerte angezeigt werden, ohne die Zelle zu überlasten.

**Multitalent SuperFast TFT: Perfektes Bild, perfekter Klang**

Beide Displays verfügen über eine digitale DVI-D Schnittstelle, die eine verlustfreie Signalübertragung vom Computer zum Monitor gewährleistet. Für perfekten Klang sorgen die integrierten SRS (Sound Retrieval System) Lautsprecher. SRS™ ist die weltweit führende 3D Sound Technologie.

Info:  
[www.fastresponsetime.com](http://www.fastresponsetime.com)



Der extrem schnelle SuperFast TFT-Monitor

## Target Ad



**GO XTREME**

**8 ms**

**8 ms**

**8 ms**

**8 ms**

**Superschnelle LCD-Displays.**

Mit nur 8 Millisekunden Reaktionszeit gehören die Design-Modelle VP171 (17") und VP191 (19") von SuperFast zu den schnellsten LCD-Displays im Markt. Perfekt für alle, die flüssige Darstellungen von rasanten Spielen und actionreichen Filmen wollen.

[www.fastresponsetime.com](http://www.fastresponsetime.com)

**SuperFast TFT™**   
the choice of professionals





# Makeup of the Dummy "Tempo! Tempo!" (General Interest Magazine)

## Typical Reading Direction

### Distraction Stories and Ads

Und... alle Handys fliegen weit!

Bei der Premiere des neuen iPhones...

BASF  
The Chemical Company

(...)

### Target Article SuperFast TFT

Flachbild-Monitore  
**SuperFast TFT™: Flachbildschirm im Temporausch**

SuperFast TFT bringt die Display-Innovation des Jahres auf den Markt: Ein superschnelles 19" Display mit nur 8ms Reaktionszeit. Von Markus Lehmann

Wie kennt sie nicht den nervtötenden Schereffekt auf dem Flachbildschirm? Sie schreiben, Bildigen? Die Ursache für hohe Reaktionszeiten der TFT-Displays, für die die Schaltzeit von 8 ms nicht zu knacken zu sein schien. Doch die Geschwindigkeitsreaktion ist gegeben. Mit zwei Modellen liefert SuperFast TFT die ultimative High-Speed-TFT-Display, die ab dem Sommer für schillerndere Bildschirmvergnügen sogar bei schnellen Computergames sorgen.

**SuperFast TFT für extremen Tempo**  
Mit dem 19" TFT FFFV und dem 19" TFT VP 191 wird SuperFast TFT Displays mit einer Reaktionszeit von nur 8ms (Grey-to-Black)...

### Distraction Stories and Ads

Sie sammeln neue Eindrücke. Wir sammeln Ihre Post.

LAGERSERVICE  
Deutsche Post

(...)

### Target Ad/ Alternative Ad

Superschnelle LCD-Displays.

8 ms

8 ms

8 ms

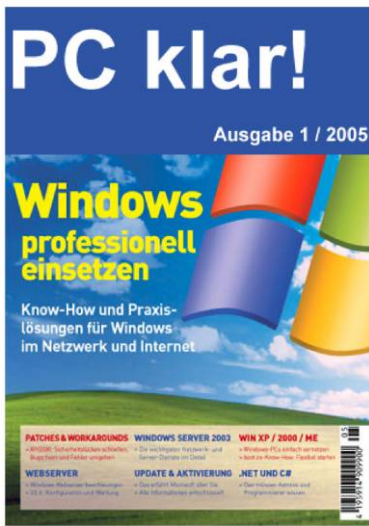
8 ms

evolution  
flexibilität oder verantwortung?

1.949 €

(...)





# Makeup of the Dummy "PC Klar!" (Special Interest Magazine)

## Typical Reading Direction

### Distraction Stories and Ads

### Target Article SuperFast TFT

### Distraction Stories and Ads

### Target Ad/ Alternative Ad

**Weniger Microsoft, mehr Komfort**

**evolution**

**acer**  
Empowering People

(...)

**Flachbild-Monitor**

### SuperFast TFT™ Flachbildschirm im Temporausch

SuperFast TFT bringt die Display-Innovation des Jahres auf den Markt: Ein superschnelles 19" Display mit nur 8ms Reaktionszeit. Von Markus Lehmann

**Wer kennt sie nicht** – die nervenden Schlieren auf dem Flachbildschirm bei schnellen Bewegungen? Die Ursachen zu beheben ist gar nicht so einfach. Die Reaktionszeit der TFT-Displays, für die man sich heute noch nicht zu schade ist, sind oft über 16ms. Das führt zu einem zeitlichen Versatz zwischen dem Bild und dem Ton, was das Erlebnis beim Spielen oder bei schnellen Bewegungen im Alltag stört.

**SuperFast TFT für ultimatives Tempo**  
Mit dem 19" TFT FFSTV und dem 19" TFT VP 191 wird SuperFast TFT Displays mit einer Reaktionszeit von nur 8ms (Gray-to-Gray) angeboten. Insbesondere für intensive schnelle Darstellungen wie Filme, Videobearbeitung oder realistische 3D-Computer Spiele sind diese TFT-Displays, für die man sich heute noch nicht zu schade ist, ein echter Gamechanger. Mit einer Reaktionszeit von nur 8ms (Gray-to-Gray) gehören die störenden Schliereneffekte endgültig der Vergangenheit an.

**SuperFast TFT** – das ultimative Flachbildschirm-Upgrade für Ihren Computer. Die Reaktionszeit von nur 8ms (Gray-to-Gray) sorgt für einen perfekten Klang beim Spielen und bei schnellen Bewegungen im Alltag. Das ultimative Flachbildschirm-Upgrade für Ihren Computer.

**MultiLayer SuperFast TFT** Perfektes Bild, perfekter Klang  
Diese Displays verfügen über eine verlustfreie Signalerzeugung vom Computer zum Monitor gewährleistet. Für perfekten Klang sorgen die integrierten SRS (Sound Retrieval System) Lautsprecher. SRS™ ist die weltweit schnellste 3D Sound-Technologie.

Info: [www.blaupunkt.com](http://www.blaupunkt.com)

**130 Dezibel. 5400 Watt. Der Velocity Vpw 460.**

**BLAUPUNKT**

(...)

**GO TREME**

**Superschnelle LCD-Displays.**

8 ms  
8 ms  
8 ms  
8 ms

**SuperFast TFT**

(...)

**evolution**  
responsibility

1.949 €

# Experimental Situation



- Only students who picked up the magazine dummies and read/ flipped through completely for at least 30 seconds remained in the sample
- Mean reading time: 3:48 minutes for natural reading conditions, 4:46 minutes for forced exposure
- Realistic willingness to pay for a “normal” issue with 140 pages of the magazine the test persons read:
  - General interest:  $M = 1.70 \text{ €}$
  - Special interest:  $M = 2.98 \text{ €}$

# Manipulation Check Genre Credibility

Free Elicitation Procedure: Key Features of the Genre				
	Special Interest	General Interest	Chi square	Sign.
credible/ serious	39.8%	0.8%	59.842	.000
unreliable	0.8%	5.9%		

Associations elicited relate closely to the newspaper credibility index (Meyer, 1988)

# H1: Brand Recall Under Forced Exposure

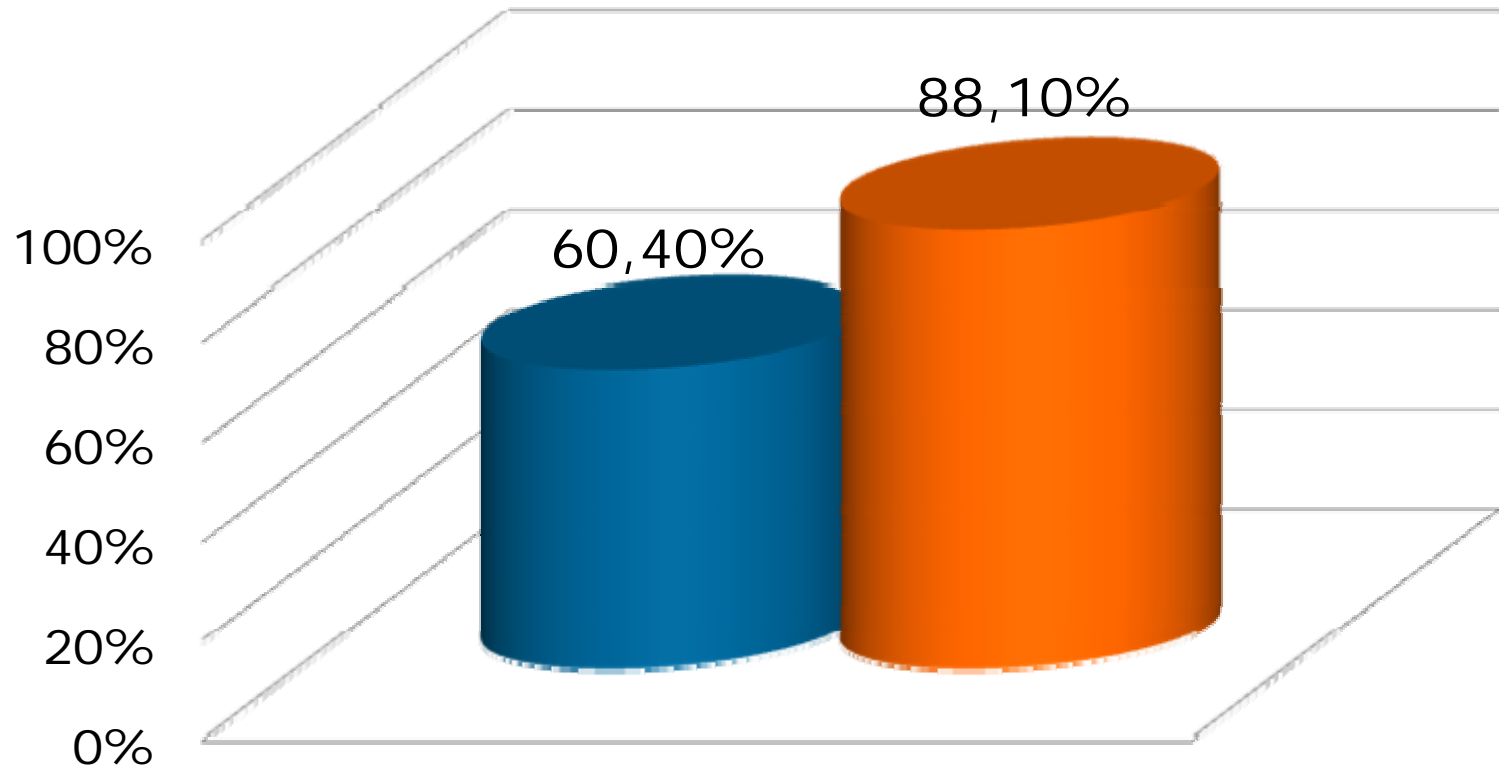
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## **Forced Exposure:**

high recall, but no significant difference between  
“news only” and “news + ad” condition  
( $F(1, 111) = 1.003, p = .319$ )

→ High recall caused by artificially high attention  
to the experiment at work?

# H1: Brand Recall Under Natural Exposure

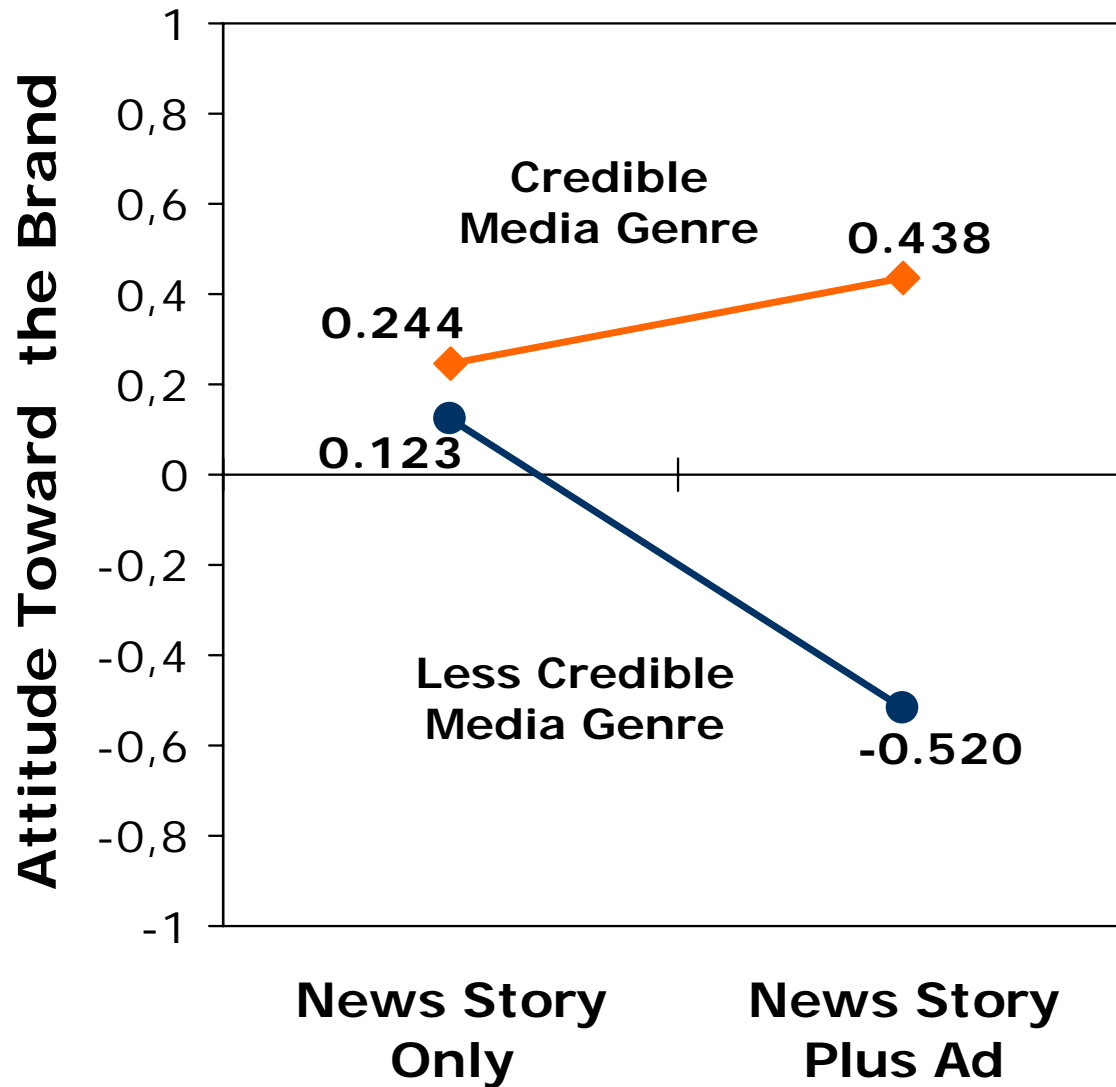


■ News Story Only    ■ News Story plus Ad

$p = .001$

- Under both forced exposure and natural exposure conditions: No significant main effect of coupling news story and ad on attitude toward the brand  
 $F(1, 111) = 1.003, p = .319$
  - But: under forced exposure, we found a significant interaction between coupling and credibility of magazine genre  
 $F(1, 111) = 4.101, p = .045$
- ➔ Single effect analysis to further investigate the moderating role of media genre

## Genre Effects on $A_{\text{Brand}}$ (Forced Exposure)





**Model not significant:**

$$F(4, 103) = 2.253, p = .068$$

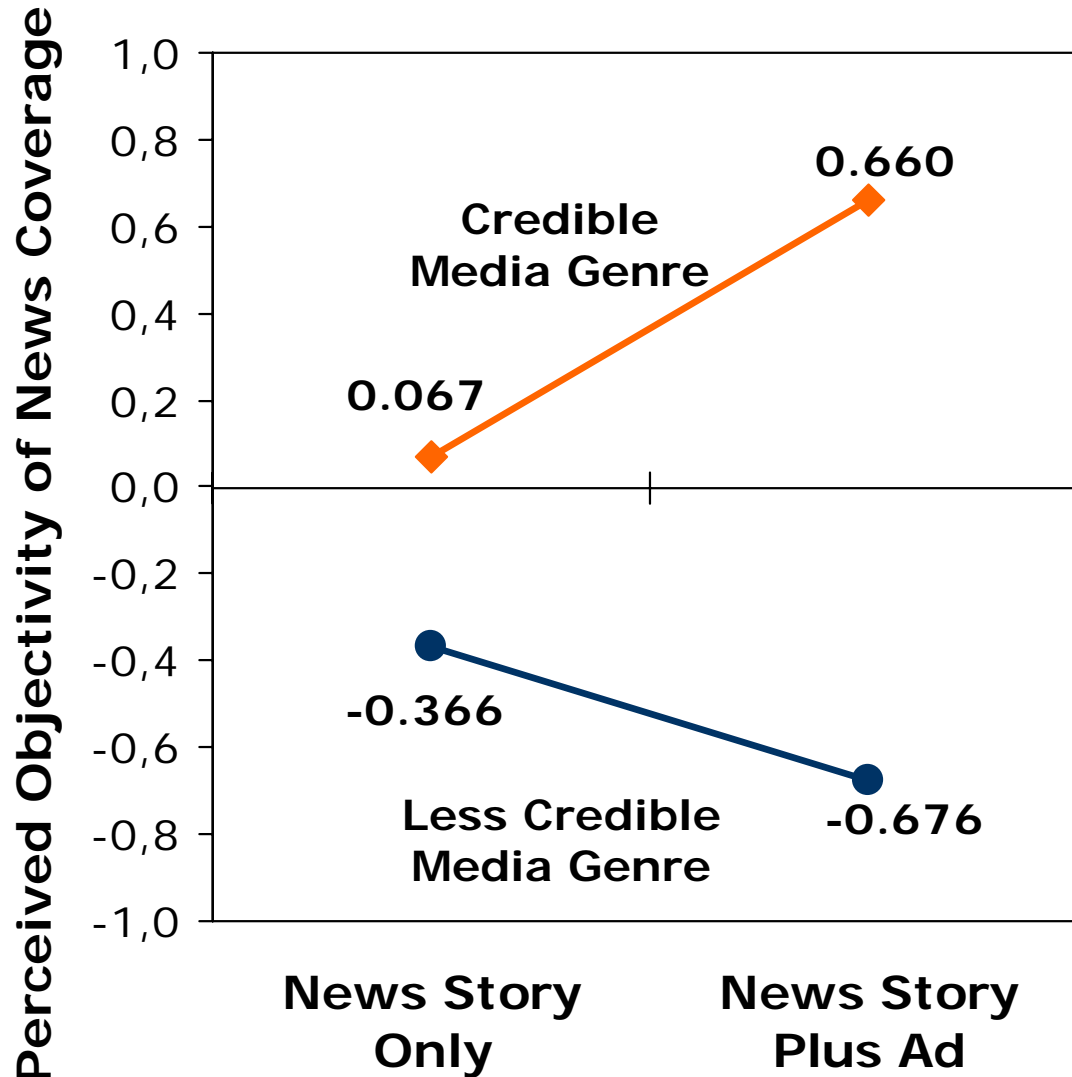
**Main effect of the coupling not significant:**

$$F(1, 123) = 3.042, p = .084$$

**Interaction media genre \* coupling not significant:**

$$F(1, 123) = 2.665, p = .105$$

# Genre Effects on Perceived Objectivity of Coverage (Natural Exposure)



- Under natural reading conditions, coupling leads to higher brand recall → effect would have been overlooked in a “classical” forced exposure study
- No effect of coupling news stories and ads on attitude toward the brand – neither positive nor negative
- Media genre effect under natural reading conditions:
  - in less credible media genres, coupling triggers the “manipulative intent heuristic”
  - in credible genres, however, familiarity and truth effect even lead to increased perceived objectivity in case of a coupling between ad and news story → if at all, ads and news stories should be coupled in credible magazine genres

- Long term effects of coupling ads and news stories:
  - Positive effect of recall on attitude toward the brand over time?
  - Decreasing devaluation of the medium over time (sleeper effect)?
- Brand knowledge: results valid also for brands already known to the consumer?
- Further media context effects on ad and news story effectiveness (e.g., Malthouse, Calder, & Tamhane, 2006; Wang, & Calder, 2006)
- Age effects: older consumers more affected by familiarity effects (Bieri, Florack, & Scarabis, 2006: 23)



**Thank you!**

## Effects of Media Reports on Brands

Anchoring the Brand in Consumers' Memory

Mere Exposure and the Truth Effect

Inferring Manipulative Intent: Boomerang Effects

Media Genre Credibility as Moderator

## Experiment

## Discussion and Implications

	Factor $A_{\text{Brand}}$
I would recommend products of SF TFT to my friends	+.831
The brand "SF TFT" is very credible	+.819
Products of SF TFT are absolutely high-grade	+.781
When I buy a computer monitor next time, SF TFT is my first choice	+.752
The brand SF TFT is really important to me	+.721
Eigenvalue	3.531
Percentage of Variance Explained	58.855%
Cronbach's $\alpha$	.859

Listwise  $N = 224$