

Digital advertising and purchase intention of a mobile phone brand

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Abstract

In recent years, digital advertising has undergone significant changes, especially in the mobile phone industry, which has greatly influenced consumers' purchasing behavior. This study explores the impact of digital advertising on consumers' purchase intention toward Huawei smartphone brands. With the gradual increase in the frequency of digital advertising for mobile phone brands, consumers' purchase intention toward Huawei smartphones has become more easily influenced by digital advertising. Digital advertising delivers information and shapes brand images through various platforms while interacting with consumers. This study aims to evaluate the impact of digital advertising on consumers' purchase intention toward Huawei smartphone brands. Through reviewing and analyzing the relevant literature, a questionnaire was first designed using a four-point Likert scale. The sample was selected using a probability sampling method, which ensures that each collected sample has an equal chance of being selected. A total of 385 valid questionnaires were collected. Second, reliability and validity tests were conducted on the sample data to ensure the reliability and validity of the data. Finally, the influencing factors of digital advertising on consumers' purchase intention toward mobile phone brands were examined. The findings show that factors of digital advertising, such as smart ad placement, messaging, and branding, have statistically significant correlations with product features, brand image, product price, and social influence in the process of forming purchase intention. Based on the results, this study proposes relevant recommendations for mobile phone brands to enhance consumers' purchase intention through digital advertising.

Keywords: digital advertising, purchase intention, Huawei smartphones, brand image, social influence

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1. Introduction

The rapid development of internet technology in the new era, mobile communications (especially 5G), and big data analytics, the global business environment is undergoing profound changes. Traditional marketing methods that rely on TV, newspapers and outdoor advertising are gradually weakening, and consumer attention has shifted to online on a large scale, and social media, search engines, short video platforms and e-commerce platforms have become the main channels for brands to gain user attention (Bauerová & Kopřivová, 2025; Krishen et al., 2021). In this context, digital advertising has gradually evolved into a core component of corporate marketing strategies. However, the degree of “exposure” of advertising is not the same as the degree of “effectiveness”, and what companies really care about is whether digital advertising can effectively influence consumer perception and further translate it into actual purchase intent (Ghose & Todri-Adamopoulos, 2016; Stewart et al., 2018).

This problem is particularly typical in the smartphone industry. At present, the competition in the mobile phone market is fierce, and the trend of homogenization of products in function and appearance is obvious, and consumers face more uncertainty in the process of brand selection. Therefore, enterprises need to not only rely on the technical advantages of the product itself, but also strengthen brand awareness and highlight differentiation through digital advertising, thereby influencing consumer decision-making. In other words, digital advertising has become a key bridge connecting “brand information” and “consumer purchase intention”, and its mechanism is worthy of in-depth discussion. Therefore, exploring the relationship between digital advertising and consumer purchase intention is highly theoretical and practically relevant.

Among the many mobile phone brands, Huawei has outstanding research value. First, from the perspective of market performance, Huawei has long ranked among the top three smartphone shipments in the world and has maintained a leading position in the Chinese market, with a high brand recognition and user base. Although its global market share has fluctuated in recent years due to changes in the external environment and supply chain constraints, Huawei still maintains strong competitiveness in the domestic market and high-end market through continuous technological innovation (such as imaging technology, chip research and development, and HarmonyOS operating system) and brand strategy adjustment (Tse et al., 2024; Zeng & Yao-zhong, 2023). Secondly, from the perspective of development path, Huawei has experienced a process from rapid growth to limited adjustment to gradual recovery, which makes it typical and representative in brand communication and marketing strategies.

It is even more important to note that in the current environment, digital advertising is not only a tool for Huawei product promotion but also an important means of brand reshaping. Through digital advertising, Huawei not only conveys product function information, but also continuously strengthens its brand image of “leading technology” and “independent innovation”, thereby influencing consumers' perception of the value of its products (Li & Galanza, 2024; Wang et al., 2022). This transmission path from “advertising information-consumer cognition-purchase intention” is the core issue of this study. Choosing Huawei as the research object not only helps to deeply understand how enterprises can achieve brand breakthroughs through digital advertising in a complex market environment, but also provides valuable experience for other mobile phone brands (such as Xiaomi, OPPO, VIVO, etc.). At the same time, this study is also of certain significance for enriching the theoretical research in the field of digital marketing and consumer behavior, especially in the context of high-tech products and high-engagement decision-making, and the discussion of the mechanism of digital advertising has practical value.

The study aimed to analyze the characteristics of digital advertising employed by mobile phone brands and its relationship with consumers' purchase intentions. Furthermore, it sought to examine, from the perspective of consumer cognition, the mechanisms through which digital advertising influenced product features, brand image,

price perception, and social influence in the formation of purchase intentions. Lastly, the study aimed to provide decision-making references for brands to optimize their digital marketing strategies. Specifically, the study evaluated and analyzed the performance of digital advertising of mobile phone brands across three dimensions: smart ad placement, messaging, and branding. It also assessed consumers' purchase intentions in terms of product features, brand image, price, and social influence. In addition, the study examined the significant relationship between the effectiveness of digital advertising and consumers' purchase intentions. Finally, based on the survey results, a digital advertising plan was proposed.

2. Methods

Research Design - This study employed a quantitative research design to examine digital advertising and its impact on consumers' purchase intentions. The study used a descriptive-correlational research design. The descriptive component aimed to depict the current practices of smartphone brands in the field of digital advertising and the characteristics of consumer responses. Meanwhile, the correlational component measured the strength and direction of the relationships among the different dimensions of digital advertising and purchase intention. Through this research design, the study described the current market environment and analyzed the statistical relationships between digital advertising strategies and consumer behavior.

Participants of the Study - This study selected 385 Huawei smartphone users from various regions across China as participants to ensure sample breadth and representativeness. Participants were primarily recruited through online survey platforms and social media platforms such as WeChat, Weibo, and TikTok. To ensure sample randomness, we employed a combination of random sampling and stratified sampling methods.

Research Instrument - The main research tool of this study was a structured questionnaire, which was designed based on the conceptual framework of the study and the main variables "Digital Advertising" and "Purchase Intention". The questionnaire content is compiled around the main dimensions of each variable, aiming to systematically measure the effectiveness of digital advertising in mobile phone brand marketing and the influencing factors of consumer purchase intention. The questionnaire is divided into two parts. The first part is "Digital Advertising", which includes smart ad placement, messaging, and branding. The second part is "Purchase Intention", which includes product features, brand image, product price and social influence. To ensure the content validity of the research tool, the first draft of the questionnaire will be submitted to three experts with professional backgrounds in business administration and marketing for review and revision. The focus of expert review includes the clarity of question formulation, the relevance of content and the scientific design of the scale. The revised questionnaire was pilot tested with a sample size of 30 people to test the reliability of the questionnaire. Internal consistency is assessed by calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficient, where α values of 0.70 or above are considered acceptable for reliability.

Table 1
Reliability Test Result

Variables	Cronbach Alpha	Number of Items	Interpretation
Digital Advertising			
Smart Add Placement	0.900	5	Excellent
Messaging	0.874	5	Good
Branding	0.848	5	Good
Purchase Intention			
Product Features	0.877	5	Good
Brand Image	0.914	5	Excellent
Product Price	0.876	5	Good
Social Influence	0.906	5	Excellent

Data Gathering Procedure - After identifying the respondents, the official collection of data began. The target audience for data collection and interviews consisted of Chinese consumers of smartphone brands, including individuals who currently used or had previously used mobile phone brands. The purpose of this study was to examine the correlation between digital advertising and consumer purchase intentions. Respondents with a certain

degree of consumer experience and knowledge of mobile brand marketing activities were selected to obtain more representative and empirical data. The study used purposive sampling, focusing on consumers who used smartphones and had purchase experience as the sample group. This method ensured that respondents could make accurate judgments and effectively respond to inquiries about digital advertising, brand image, and product functions. The questionnaire was primarily distributed through online surveys. The investigators used online platforms such as WeChat, Questionnaire Star, email, and mainstream social media channels to distribute questionnaire links to potential respondents to increase the response rate and expand sample coverage. This method not only effectively saved time and costs but also ensured anonymity and data confidentiality while improving the enthusiasm and authenticity of respondents' answers. In addition, for some interviewees who could be reached, such as smartphone users in the researchers' workplaces or partner universities, paper questionnaires were distributed offline to ensure the diversity of data sources and the appropriateness of the sample distribution.

Data Analysis - The collected data were statistically analyzed using SPSS. The study employed descriptive statistics, particularly the mean, standard deviation, and frequency distributions, to summarize respondents' responses across the dimensions of digital advertising (intelligent advertising, messaging, and branding) as well as purchase intent (product features, brand image, product price, and social impact). Correlation analysis used the Pearson correlation coefficient to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between each dimension of digital advertising and each dimension of purchase intent.

Ethical Considerations - Ethical considerations were observed in the conduct of the research to ensure that all information gathered was used solely for research purposes and to maintain the quality and integrity of the study. The researchers obtained ethical approval from the LPU Office of Research Ethics. The confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents were also ensured by not collecting their names while they were answering the questionnaires. The researchers ensured that the respondents participated voluntarily and answered the questionnaires according to their own free will. Lastly, the researchers ensured that none of the respondents were hurt or harmed during the study and that their safety and security remained a top priority.

3. Result and discussion

Table 2

Summary Table of the Respondents' Level of Effectiveness of Digital Advertising

Dimensions	Composite Mean	VI	Rank
Smart Ad Placement	2.52	Agree	1
Messaging	2.50	Agree	3
Branding	2.51	Agree	2
Overall Composite Mean	2.51	Agree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 - 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

Table 2 provides a comprehensive overview of the three-dimensional data of digital advertising. The overall comprehensive average is 2.51, which is classified as “agree”. The focus is on the strategic positioning of promotional content. Brand development and information transmission are not very important. These findings show that digital advertising is relatively effective at the technical level, that is, in terms of advertising. The fact that users noticed these advertisements on the platforms they often use proves this. This view is consistent with the findings of Liu et al. (2022), who emphasize the key role of digital marketing communication in attracting consumers' attention and promoting initial connections with the audience. Regarding the dimensions that received moderate scores, branding reached a weighted mean of 2.51, while messaging followed closely with a mean of 2.50; notably, both metrics fall within the “Agree” classification. However, the content and communication aspects remain comparatively weaker. Messaging shows the lowest composite mean, highlighting that while the ads may be visually engaging, they do not sufficiently convey clear product information or deep brand values. This imbalance between delivery efficiency and content quality helps explain why overall effectiveness is moderate rather than strong. As noted by Cheng and Zhang (2022), digital advertising must move beyond traditional information cognition to a deeper logic of content cognition to truly provide value and influence the consumer's decision-making process.

Table 3
Summary Table of the Respondents' Level of Purchase Intentions

Dimensions	Composite Mean	VI	Rank
Product Features	2.50	Agree	2
Brand Image	2.49	Disagree	3
Product Price	2.46	Disagree	4
Social Influence	2.52	Agree	1
Overall Composite Mean	2.49	Disagree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 - 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

As shown in Table 3, a comprehensive summary of the dimensions affecting consumers' purchase intention is provided. The total compound average is 2.49, which is interpreted as "disagree". The value obtained by the weighted average calculation result is 2.52 (agree), which shows that social impact is the dimension of obtaining the highest ranking. This finding shows that external factors, such as the influence of age and social recognition, currently have a more significant impact on respondents' purchase decisions than internal factors (including price fairness and brand awareness). As Lin, et al. (2022) observed, the attitude towards advertising on Chinese social media is widely influenced by these external social symbols, which are often proven to be more convincing than traditional product indicators. The weighted average of product characteristics is determined to be 2.50 (agree), while the brand image is found to be 2.49 (disagree). However, product price ranked the lowest with a weighted mean of 2.46, interpreted as "Disagree". The data suggests that overall purchase intention is moderate but leans toward the negative, reflecting a general lack of strong motivation to finalize a purchase. This finding aligns with the research by Liu, et al. (2022), who emphasize that digital marketing communication must effectively capture consumer attention across multiple dimensions to overcome such inertia. The lower rankings for brand image and product price suggest that these areas specifically require strategic improvement. Ultimately, while the brand maintains some technical appeal, it has yet to convert this into a cohesive value proposition that consistently motivates consumers to buy.

Table 4
Relationship Between the Effectiveness of Digital Advertising and the Purchase Intention of Consumers

Smart Ad Placement	rho-value	p-value	Interpretation
Product Features	0.680**	< 0.001	Significant
Brand Image	0.652**	< 0.001	Significant
Product Price	0.630**	< 0.001	Significant
Social Influence	0.532**	< 0.001	Significant
Messaging			
Product Features	0.661**	< 0.001	Significant
Brand Image	0.679**	< 0.001	Significant
Product Price	0.648**	< 0.001	Significant
Social Influence	0.632**	< 0.001	Significant
Branding			
Product Features	0.650**	< 0.001	Significant
Brand Image	0.662**	< 0.001	Significant
Product Price	0.654**	< 0.001	Significant
Social Influence	0.631**	< 0.001	Significant

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Table 4 clarifies the correlation between the effectiveness of digital advertising and the purchase intention. Given that all the p values calculated in the table are less than 0.001, it can be determined that the relationship between the variables is statistically significant. In all dimensions, the correlation coefficient indicating positive correlation is found to be moderate to intensity, indicating that there is a positive correlation between the increase in digital advertising and the increase in purchase intention. These results are consistent with the assertions put forward by Liu, et al. (2022). They believe that strategic digital marketing communication is crucial to attracting consumers' attention and improving the overall effectiveness of advertising. From a practical standpoint, this means that digital advertising is not merely a tool for visibility but plays a meaningful role in influencing consumer decisions. However, the strength of these relationships varies across dimensions, reinforcing the observation that while advertising is effective overall, its impact is uneven. As noted by Cheng and Zhang (2022), the value and

influence of digital advertising depend heavily on moving beyond traditional information delivery to a deeper logic of content cognition. This variability emphasizes that while technical placement is important, the resonance of the brand message and image remains critical for translating exposure into a final purchase decision.

Table 5

Proposed Action Plan for the Digital Advertising Strategy and Purchase Intention of Huawei Mobile Phones

Key Result Area Objectives	Strategies	Persons Involved Expected Outcome
Messaging To improve message clarity and information quality regarding product features.	Information-Rich Content Strategy: Develop “Feature Spotlights” that use high-clarity infographics and short-form videos explaining technical specs (e.g., chip performance). Add content display of “daily usage scenarios”, such as battery life, photography, games and office real usage scenarios, to help consumers understand how product functions meet the needs of real life. Optimize the structure of advertising information, transform complex technical parameters into more intuitive and understandable expressions, and reduce the situation where consumers “see advertisements but cannot truly understand the value of products”.	Marketing Manager, Content Creators, Product Specialists Significant increase in consumer understanding of product features; transition from “Disagree” to “Agree” in future surveys.
Product Price To align price perception with perceived product value and competitive positioning.	Value-Based Communication: Launch a “Value Justification” campaign highlighting premium components (Kirin chips/imaging) to justify high-end pricing. Strategic Promotions: Use targeted promotional offers to mitigate negative price sensitivity. Strengthen the correlation between product core performance and price in advertisements, highlight the advantages of chip performance, imaging system and durability, and enhance consumers' awareness of “value for money”. Combined with student discounts, installment payments and limited-time giveaways, reduce consumer sensitivity to price and enhance product competitive attractiveness.	Store Manager, Pricing Analysts, Digital Marketing Team Shift in perception from “unreasonable price” to “premium/worth it” value proposition; improved competitive standing.

4. Conclusions

Specifically, this study aimed to evaluate and analyze the performance of digital advertising of mobile phone brands across three dimensions: smart ad placement, messaging, and branding. It also aimed to examine consumer purchase intention in terms of product features, brand image, product price, and social influence. In addition, the study sought to determine the significant relationship between digital advertising effectiveness and consumers' purchase intentions. Finally, based on the survey results, a digital advertising plan was proposed.

- Smart ad placement was the most effective dimension of digital advertising, indicating strong visibility and alignment with user behavior.
- Product features, brand image, product price, and social influence were identified as factors influencing purchase intention rather than direct measures of purchase intention.
- Digital advertising effectiveness significantly influenced consumers' purchase intentions.
- An action plan was proposed to improve the digital advertising effectiveness and purchase intentions of Huawei mobile phone customers.

Recommendations - It is recommended that the digital marketing team of mobile phone brands further optimize the frequency and push rhythm of advertisements on the basis of maintaining high advertising exposure and accurate delivery advantages to avoid consumer disgust caused by repeated exposure. At the same time, the advertising can be dynamically adjusted based on users' browsing time, interests and preferences and platform

usage habits to improve consumers' acceptance of advertising content and overall advertising effect. It is recommended that mobile brand management and digital marketing teams should not only focus on a single advertising exposure effect, but should comprehensively optimize from multiple influencing factors such as product characteristics, brand image, product price, and social impact. Especially in terms of brand value shaping and price perception, consumers' understanding of the overall value of products should be strengthened through more real, clear and close to consumer needs through digital advertising content. At the same time, it can be combined with social media interaction, user reviews and word-of-mouth communication to further enhance consumers' trust and purchase motivation for the brand, so as to gradually convert existing product interest into actual purchase intention.

It is recommended that the digital marketing team of mobile phone brands further improve the overall quality and communication consistency of digital advertising, especially in terms of advertising content, brand presentation and accurate delivery. Since the research results show that the effect of digital advertising will significantly affect consumer cognition, enterprises should pay more attention to consumers' understanding and feelings of advertising information, and enhance consumers' positive perception of product value, brand image and product advantages through content design that is closer to user needs and more authentic brand expression, so as to increase the possibility of subsequent purchases. The marketing management team of the mobile phone brand may adopt the Proposed Action Plan, this structured approach will help balance technical ad placement with high-quality content, ensuring that digital exposure effectively translates into a stronger, consistent desire to purchase. Future researchers may consider longitudinal shifts in digital advertising as technology evolves, additionally, expanding the scope to compare different smartphone brands or measuring actual sales data instead of just intention would provide a more complete picture of marketing conversion.

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