

Promotional Products—The Key Ingredient to Integrated Marketing:

How Promotional Products, Print and Television Advertising Impact Consumer Perception

Many traditional forms of advertising and promotion are losing ground to newer media. This trend presents opportunities for the promotional products medium. However, very little research exists documenting the effectiveness of promotional products when compared to and combined with other traditional forms of advertising such as television and print.

To further research this, a study utilizing the most critical demographic group ages 18-34 years was conducted for PPAI by researchers at Louisiana State University and University of Texas at San Antonio. The study which was conducted in a controlled environment, measured the:

- effectiveness of promotional products and compared them to two other media, television and print advertising
- synergistic effects of promotional products when used along with these other media
- consumer's preferred medium for information about a product or brand

Those in the 18-34 age group are among the hardest for marketers to reach, one that nicely coincides with the population available in a university setting. From an advertising perspective, this audience is usually highly desirable.

If promotional products have an impact on this critical demographic group then the utility of the medium is likely to be expandable to other age segments.

The Method:

Participants in the study were exposed to three forms of advertising—television, print and promotional products. They were then asked to complete a 60-item questionnaire measuring their **perceptions** of the advertising.



Clever advertisers opt for a media mix with **synergy, credibility and referral impact—** promotional products make the difference!

New findings empirically prove promotional products can move minds in the tough 18-34 demographic, thanks to a 2006 study by university researchers.

In particular, the questions measured the following:

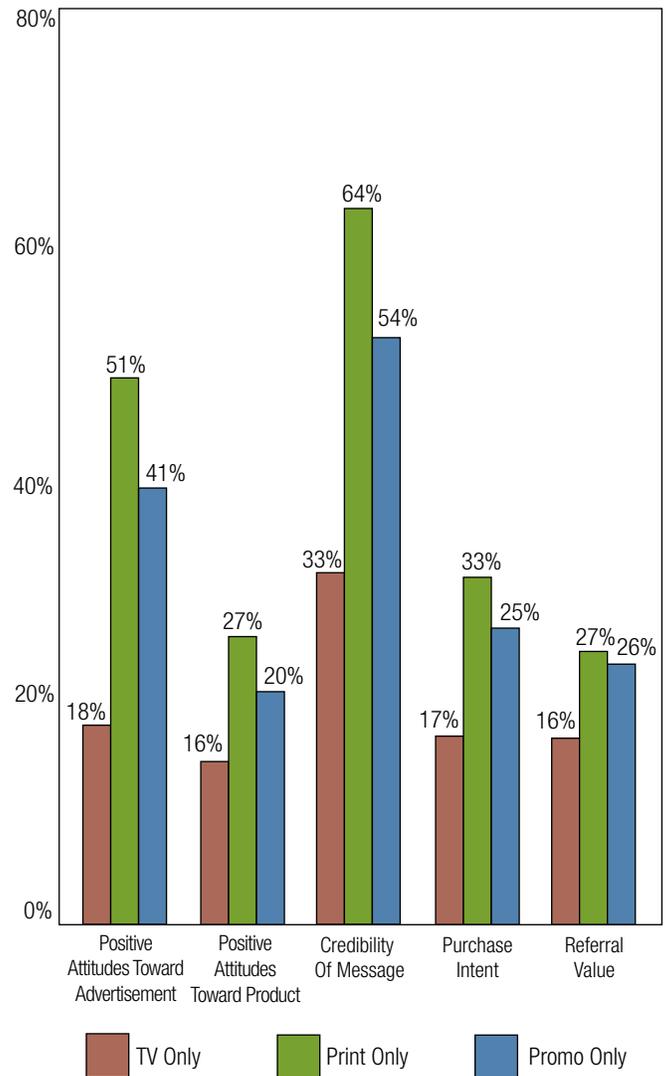
- advertisement credibility
- attitudes toward product, advertisement or promotional product
- product purchase intention
- referral value
- impressions of the advertisement
- perceptions about the product

East of Chicago Pizza graciously provided the advertisements for the study for a new pizza product. The company had previously run both the television and print ads. The promotional product created for the experiment was a 6 1/2" x 3 3/4" refrigerator magnet reproducing the front page of the print ad along with a calendar for the coming year. The sample consisted of 310 college students of whom 57% were female and 43% male in the 18-34 age group. Seven different groups of students were recruited for the study and each group was exposed to a different condition. These were:

	Medium	Number	% of Sample
Group 1 (control)	TV Only	46	14.8%
Group 2 (control)	Print Only	51	16.5%
Group 3 (control)	TV-Print	35	11.3%
Group 4 (experimental)	Promotional Product	42	13.5%
Group 5 (experimental)	TV-Promotional Product	44	14.2%
Group 6 (experimental)	Print-Promotional Product	50	16.1%
Group 7 (experimental)	TV-Print-Promotional Product	42	13.5%

Additionally, the research instrument also involved questions about media use, including an item requesting respondents to rank their preferred information sources.

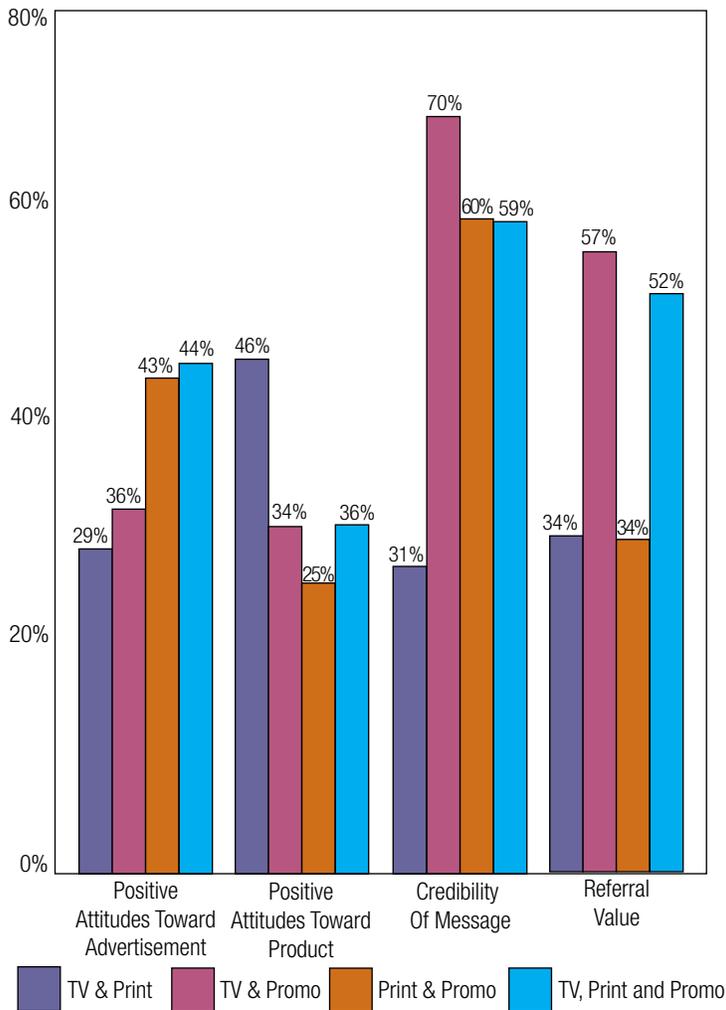
Key Findings: Chart 1 Advertising Effectiveness Of The Three Mediums



- While the print ad came in first overall, the promotional product **outperformed television across the board.**
- Respondents preferred advertising through a promotional product to the television ad in terms of their positive attitudes toward the ad (41% to 18%), positive attitude toward the product (20% to 16%), message credibility (54% to 33%), purchase intent (25% to 17%) and referral value (26% to 16%).
- Adding a promotional product to the media mix generated **favorable attitudes** toward the ad in all cases (up to **44%**) (See Chart 2).

Chart 2

Advertising Effectiveness Of Promotional Products In Comparison With TV And Print



* No statistically significant differences were found for purchase intent and hence is not presented in chart above

- Integrating a promotional product with the television commercial **outpaced** the two other media alone in **message credibility** and **referral value**.
- Integrating a promotional product with television and print increased **referral value** as well as **credibility of the message**.

Synergy

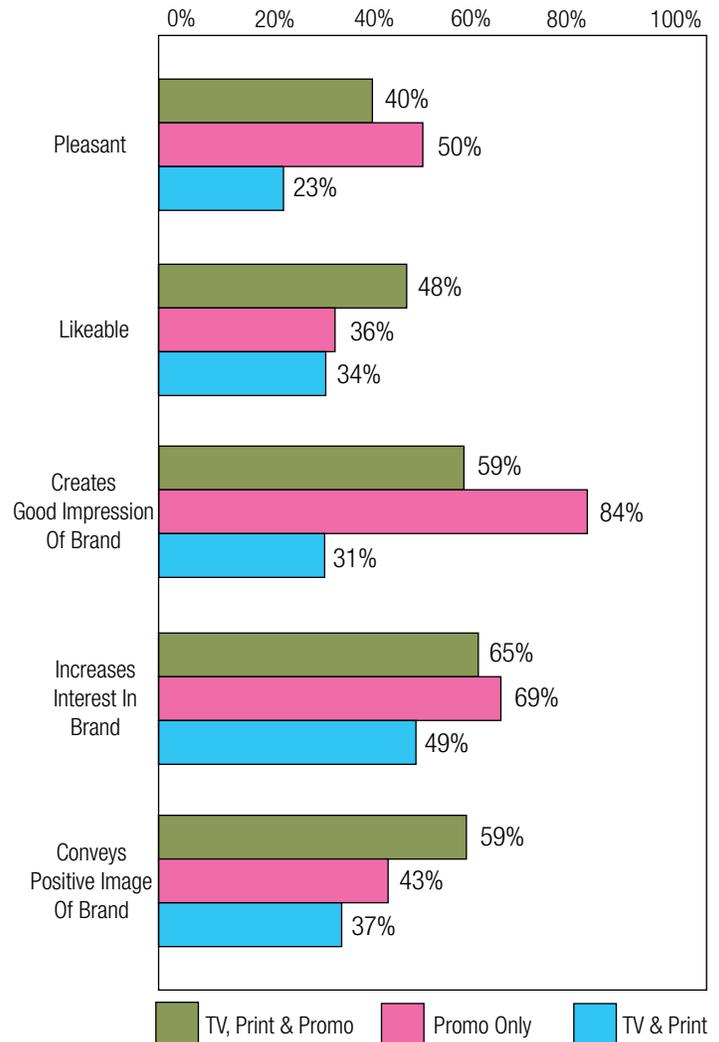
Promotional products when used in synergy with other mediums led participants to develop a more positive outlook toward the ad and the brand.

- In this study, groups who were exposed to promotional products tended to rate the message more positively than those groups not exposed to a promotional product (See Chart 3).

Chart 3

Respondents' Evaluation Of Advertising Messages

(Exposure to TV and Print together vs. TV and Print with Promotional Product vs. Promotional Product alone)



- In some instances, the **use of a promotional product as the ad medium alone achieved maximum impact**, up to 69% in increasing brand interest and 84% in creating a good impression of the brand.

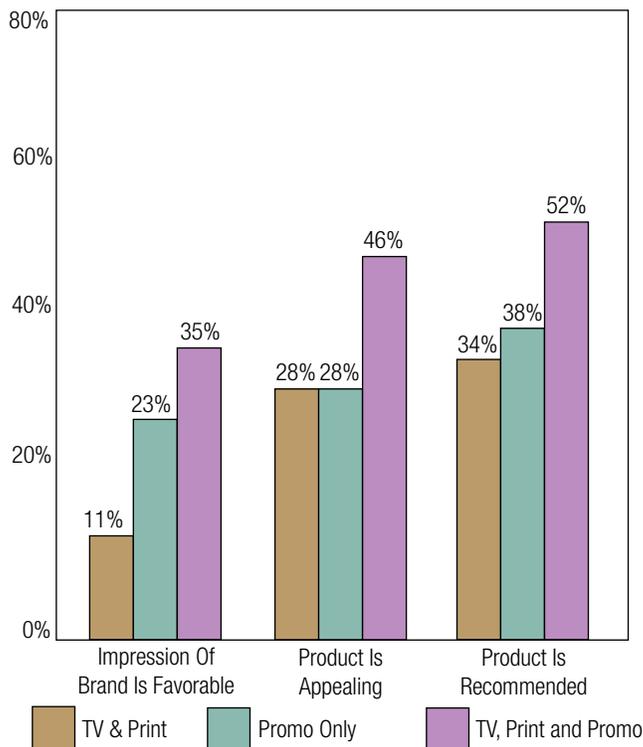
Brand Evaluation and Product

- In most conditions, the receipt of a promotional product as an ad medium is more effective in developing positive attitudes toward the product or brand than exposure to a TV commercial in conjunction with a print advertisement (See Chart 4).
- In all cases integrating the promotional product with a TV commercial and print advertisement proved more effective than the use of promotional products alone, or TV commercials and print advertisements in combination.

Chart 4

Respondents' Evaluation Of Brand Or Product

(TV and Print vs. TV and Print with Promotional Product vs. Promotional Product alone)



Media Information Preferences

In addition to the actual experimental testing, respondents were also asked to indicate their top three generally preferred sources of information on food. The findings revealed:

- Promotional products were the **second most preferred source of information following television advertising** (see table below).

Respondents preferred sources of information in rank order	%
Television	27.3%
Promotional Products	16.3%
Billboards	10.3%
Magazines	9.4%
Internet	8.4%
Radio	7.8%
Posters	7.0%
Newspapers	6.6%
Word-of-Mouth	5.1%
Yellow Pages	1.8%

- Interestingly, while respondents advised that they prefer television commercials as a source of food product information, the experimental study revealed otherwise; statistically showing a more positive product and brand response with print advertising and promotional products over television commercials.

In a nutshell, promotional products

- may be effectively employed as a **stand-alone advertising medium** (second to television in terms of reported information value)
- **add to the media mix, creating impact** by supplementing other advertising media such as television and print
- are a **useful information and reminder medium**
- **enhance impressions about both the brand and product**
- **Contribute to consumer intent to buy**

The Authors

This study, using scientific methodology and statistical techniques, serves as baseline research to further document the value of promotional products in today's competitive marketplace. The experiment was conducted in November 2006 for PPAI by Dr. Richard Alan Nelson, Ph.D. (Professor, Louisiana State University), Dr. Ali M. Kanso, Ph.D. (Professor, University of Texas at San Antonio) and Dr. H. Paul LeBlanc III, Ph.D. (Assistant Professor, University of Texas at San Antonio). A detailed report will be available for purchase in February 2007 at the PPAI Bookstore & Resource Center. E-mail bookstore@ppa.org.