Native advertising - from a consumer perspective

Elin Lindmark & Elin Millberg

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PREFACE

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The research area of this bachelor thesis is native advertising and the thesis was written during the spring semester 2018. We wrote this thesis in two different locations during the first four months, since we made our internships during this time. The internships were performed in Sweden and in Malta and these experiences gave us a lot of inspiration to our subject. The last part of the thesis was written at Halmstad University. By writing this essay we have gathered great knowledge about the process of a scientific assignment, online marketing and especially about native advertising.

We would like to thank our supervisor Ulf Aagerup for all the help and feedback we have received, which have been very valuable in the work process. We also want to thank all of the respondents who made it possible for us to perform our research. We are very thankful for everyone that gave us support during this time period.

Sincerely,

Elin Millberg
Elin Lindmark
ABSTRACT

Title: Native advertising from a consumer perspective
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Author: Elin Millberg and Elin Lindmark
Supervisor: Ulf Aagerup

Research questions:
How do consumers perceive native advertising compared to other online advertising?
How does the media channel affect native advertisements?
How do consumers receive native advertising?

Purpose:
The purpose of this study is to examine native advertising from a consumer perspective. A research will be done about how consumers perceive native advertising compared to other online advertising, how the media channel affects native advertisements and how consumers receive native advertising. Four different hypotheses are used to examine the research questions, which will entail new insights within the subject native advertising.

Theoretical framework:
The theoretical framework of this thesis consists of theories which are related to the research area native advertising. The main theories are about online advertising, native advertising, consumer perception, credibility and media source impact.

Method:
This study has a quantitative and deductive approach. An experiment was performed with a between-subject design where two surveys were used. The surveys were distributed by email and the primary data collection included responses from 106 respondents. The data analysis was performed through various diagrams, t-tests and Pearson's correlation test.

Empirical findings:
The empirical findings present the data from the experimental surveys through tables, diagrams and text. The results are based on 16 items with answer options which represented a Likert scale, one item with a two option answer and two open questions.

Conclusion:
In the conclusion, the research questions are responded. The results from the empirical findings show a more positive perception of native advertisements compared to banners from a consumer perspective. The media channel did not have any impact on the perceived credibility of a native advertisement. The results show that the respondents received native advertising as obvious advertising and therefore they did not feel persuaded by this kind of advertising.

Keywords: Native advertising, Online advertising, Credibility, Consumer perception
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The digitalization has entailed great changes and is still affecting the world we live in. This has resulted in that the new generation is today growing up in a society constantly connected to the internet, which provides a well understanding of the technology (Gilan & Hammarberg, 2016). The use of the internet has increased dramatically, at the millennium every second person had access to the internet in their homes, in Sweden. Today 95% of the population, from the age of twelve years, have access to the internet through several devices as smartphones, computers and tablets. The internet and digital services are used in principle by all age groups, virtually from the younger generation to the seniors (Internetstiftelsen i Sverige [IIS], 2017). The expansion of the internet has affected several factors, for instance, it has led to an increased speed, enhanced effectiveness and reduced distances (Gilan & Hammarberg, 2016).

The development of the internet has created several new possibilities from a company’s perspective. A fundamental area within companies that have been affected by the expansion of the internet is the marketing (Ström & Vendel, 2015). During the last years the trend has tremendously arisen of digital marketing on the internet and traditional marketing, as print and television, has been reduced. Within digital marketing, advertising is presented through various digital platforms and media channels. Three main types of media channels are owned media, paid media and deserved media. Owing to the digital marketing, the companies can reach out to a greater number of recipients since they extend to global markets (Gilan & Hammarberg, 2016). This has also created new possibilities for companies to manage the relationships with their consumers (Ström & Vendel, 2015). Digital marketing creates opportunities for a fast distribution of the marketing, an easier way to reach out to the desired target group and it is a cost-effective kind of marketing (IHM Business School, 2017).

One type of digital marketing that has expanded over the last years is native advertising. This is a kind of paid media and the design of this type of advertising is formed to look like its context (Gilan & Hammarberg, 2016). The content of the advertisement, its appearance and expression are cohesive with the rest of its surroundings where it is published. Native advertising is used on several kinds of platforms, for instance on news sites, search engines and in social media. Different types of native advertisements can be divided into a number of categories, like “in-feed ads” and “paid search ads” (Interactive Advertising Bureau [IAB], 2013). A common factor for these types of native advertisements is that they appear in stream as a part of the content which reduces the disruption of the consumer’s experience online. This type of advertising is a great contrast from other digital marketing such as banner advertisements. The banners are the opposite to native advertisements as they try to get attention by its placement and animation. The native advertising is a less distinctive marketing communication since it corresponds with the consumer’s online experience (Campbell &
Native advertising has become an increasing way of marketing, especially on news sites. This kind of advertising has become a new income source for news sites as the journalism has moved online (Carlsson, 2015).

1.2 Problem discussion

An important boundary within journalism is the one between editorial content and advertising and through the expansion of native advertising this boundary has been more blurred out (Schauster, Ferrucci, & Neill, 2016). At the same time, this kind of marketing is less intrusive for the consumers (Campbell & Marks, 2015). The native advertisements aim to be interesting, informative, engaging and relevant for the consumers since they appear in stream in the same format as the rest of the editorial content (Wang & Li, 2017). However, a repetitive concern that previous studies show is that the consumers not always are able to discern native advertisements from editorial content (Campbell & Marks, 2015; Carlsson, 2015; Schauster, Ferrucci, & Neill, 2016; Taylor, 2017; Wojdynski & Evans, 2015). According to (Campell and Marks, 2015) the native advertisements consists of different levels of secrecy. They assume that advertisers that use highly secretive native advertisements and try to deceive their consumers, may receive short-term advantages. However, advertisers who are seeking long-lasting relationships with their consumers should rather invest in native advertisements with a low secrecy (Campell and Marks, 2015).

It is important for the marketers to understand the consumer’s perception of advertising for their marketing to be perceived in a positive way (Rodgers & Thorson, 2000). How do consumers receive native advertising? When consumers are exposed to a kind of advertising several times they develop persuasion knowledge about how the advertisers try to persuade them. This knowledge facilitates for the consumers to understand when, why and how the marketers with their advertisements try to have an impact on them (Friestad & Wright, 1994). Are the consumers able to distinguish native advertisements and can they therefore use their persuasion knowledge for this kind of advertising?

Native advertising is used on several kinds of platforms and within this research the endemic in-feed advertisements are in focus which are published on news sites (Interactive Advertising Bureau [IAB], 2013). Companies are always looking for the most effective placement for their advertisements (Broeck, Poels, & Walrave, 2018) and advertising in newspapers has appeared since way back (Rodgers, Cameron, & Brill, 2005). It has been shown that the media context has an impact on the evaluation of online advertisements (Jeong & King, 2010). Previous studies show that advertisers publish their advertising on news sites to earn credibility from the news context with editorial content (Rodgers, Cameron, & Brill, 2005). Do news sites have an impact on the perceived credibility of native advertisements?

In a recently done study by the native advertising institute, it was found that 80% of publishers worldwide have a positive attitude against native advertising. This kind of marketing is a rising trend, 21% of the revenues for publishers worldwide came from native
advertising in 2016. This percentage is expected to be nearly doubled in 2020 to 40% (Native Advertising Institute [NAI], 2017). Viewing these numbers a conclusion can be highlighted that the consumers will be more exposed to native advertisements. Do consumers perceive native advertising as more positive compared to other kinds of online advertising as banners?

1.3 Purpose
The purpose of this study is to examine native advertising from a consumer perspective. A research will be done about how consumers perceive native advertising compared to other online advertising, how the media channel affects native advertisements and how consumers receive native advertising. Four different hypotheses are used to examine the research questions. This will entail new insights and comprehensions of the subject native advertising which will imply possibilities to reach more consumers, which will be useful for marketers.

1.4 Research questions
How do consumers perceive native advertising compared to other online advertising?
How does the media channel affect native advertisements?
How do consumers receive native advertising?

1.5 Delimitations
This research is limited within Sweden and has a consumer perspective. The research has a focus to examine one kind of native advertisements, these are the endemic in-feed advertisements which consist of editorial content. Within the study, two experimental surveys will be performed and these will include questions and items which are related to one native advertisement and two different Swedish news sites. The native advertisement is about the real estate market in Sweden and the news sites represents one daily newspaper and one evening newspaper. The choice of the advertiser and the news sites are based on their high brand awareness among consumers in Sweden.
1.6 Disposition

2.0 FRAME OF REFERENCES

This chapter consists of theories which are related to the research area native advertising. The main theories are about online advertising, native advertising, consumer perception, credibility and media source impact.

2.1 Online advertising

The revolutionized digitization has entailed possibilities for marketers to reach consumers in several new ways since the consumers’ time online has increased. The advertisers have enhanced their online marketing due to that consumers are using more digital and social media (Stephen, 2016) and the modern online advertising attracts the consumers (Jiménez, Arnaub, Hoyos, Forné, 2016). The most used social media is Facebook where online users between 16-25 years are the most common users. Another popular social media is LinkedIn where most of the users are between the ages 26-35 (Internetstiftelsen i Sverige [IIS], 2017).

Online advertising is a kind of digital marketing, which the consumers are exposed for meanwhile they are browsing the internet (Kotler, Armstrong, Harris, & Piercy, 2013). There are three main types of digital media channels which are used by the marketers to mediate their advertising messages. The different types are owned media, paid media and deserved media as mentioned above. Owned media represents the channels which are controlled by the company or the brand, for instance a company’s website. Paid media refers to media channels
where the marketers are paying for their advertising to be presented on specific platforms, examples of these channels are social media and news sites. Deserved media represents media channels where a company or a brand is promoted by consumers. The promotion can be performed through for example blogs and social media (Gilan & Hammarberg, 2016). There are different kinds of online advertisements, as search-related advertisements, display advertisements such as banners (Kotler, Armstrong, Harris, & Piercy, 2013) and sponsored links. Online advertising can also appear as advertisements that are similar to editorial content (Ha & McCann, 2008) like native advertisements (Joonghwa, Soojung & Chang-Dae, 2016). The purpose of online advertising is to create, retain and revitalize relationships with new and existing consumers (Jiménez, Arnaub, Hoyos, Fornèc, 2016).

2.2 Native advertising

2.2.1 The rise of native advertising

The concept of native advertising was introduced in 2011 by the venture capitalist Fred Wilson and since then this kind of marketing has had a great development (Egan & Tsao, 2015). However the idea of blending advertising within editorial content was not established by then. The phenomenon was used previously in for instance print, where it was called advertorials (Wojdynski, 2016). Native advertising is a kind of paid media with a content and a design which are similar to the platform where the advertisements are published (Joonghwa, Soojung & Chang-Dae, 2016). The native advertisements appear in the stream which make them less disruptive to the consumer's experience online (Campbell & Marks, 2015). The digitalization has been a contributing factor for the increase of native advertising. Because of the developed technology, the consumers have received an increased control since they have a greater possibility to choose what they want to view. The passive watching in magazines or on television has decreased since the technology has entailed increasing choices of digital channels, which has enhanced this consumer control. This is also an underlying factor for the rise of native advertising, it has become a new way for marketers to reach the consumers. The native advertising becomes an effective way for the marketers to reach the consumers in a more unobtrusive manner (Egan & Tsao, 2015).

2.2.2 Categories of native advertising

There are six types of categories of native advertisements that have been developed by the Interactive Advertising Bureau, IAB. The Interactive Advertising Bureau is a worldwide organization for online marketing. The organization has various tasks within native advertising, for instance, they make recommendations about standards and practices for native advertising. The categories within native advertising which are developed are in-feed ads, paid search ads, recommendations widgets, promoted listings, in-ad with native element ads and custom ads (Interactive Advertising Bureau [IAB], 2013).
2.2.2.1 In-Feed Ads
In-feed advertisements are the most commonly used kind of native advertisements (Einstein, 2015). There are three various types of in-feed advertisements which are used in different kinds of platforms. The first one is the endemic in-feed advertisement that consists of editorial content. These kinds of advertisements are published at news sites (Interactive Advertising Bureau [IAB], 2013). These types have been written by the publisher or in partnership with the advertiser, to make a content that blends in with the rest of the editorial content at the news site (Seligman, 2015). The linked in-feed advertisements are promotional advertisements and by clicking on these they transfer the consumer off the site to the content or to the landing page of a brand. Facebook, YouTube and LinkedIn are platforms where linked in-feeds are published. The third kind of in-feed advertisements are formed like a story included in the mainstream of other stories. The receiver can view these advertisements without being linked to a separate website. Instagram is a platform where these types of in-feed advertisements are published (Interactive Advertising Bureau [IAB], 2013).

2.2.2.2 Paid Search Ads
Paid search ads are often found in search engines. With these kinds of advertisements, the advertiser’s web page will be shown in the top of the search results above the organic results. The advertisements have the same design as the other results and links to another web page (Interactive Advertising Bureau [IAB], 2013). The paid search advertisements have shown to be a successful way of marketing. Google is a platform where these types of advertisements are used (Centaur Communications Ltd, 2006). These search advertisements are considered as native because of their functions and forms which are looking the same as the other search results that the consumer is looking for (Egan & Tsao, 2015).

2.2.2.3 Recommendation Widgets
Recommendation widgets are a type of native advertisements that are well integrated with the web page but do not appear as editorial content. The advertisements are communicated through a widget which is a software that is usually found on social media sites (Einstein, 2015). The recommendation widgets link the consumer off to another site (Seligman, 2015). These advertisements are used for example in connection with articles where the readers will be recommended similar articles and be received with phrases like “You may also like” and “Recommended for you” (Interactive Advertising Bureau [IAB], 2013). Recommendation widgets are also used by marketers to promote products, where the consumers are recommended similar products that they have previously viewed (Bateman, 2009).

2.2.2.4 Promoted Listings
Promoted listings are similar to the in-feed advertisements and paid search advertisements. However, they are developed within a separate category since they are often presented at online sites that usually do not include editorial content (Einstein, 2015). These advertisements are designed to look like products or services that are presented on a web
page. Promoted listings are published at for example e-commerce sites and by clicking on these the customers are linked to a brand or a product’s page (Interactive Advertising Bureau [IAB], 2013).

2.2.2.5 In-Ad with Native Element units
In-ad with native element units distinguish from the other categories because it is the only type that does not really adapt in-stream with the rest of its surroundings. It is usually placed outside of the editorial context and by clicking on these advertisements the consumer will be transported to another website (Interactive Advertising Bureau [IAB], 2013). These types of advertisements include branded content and are presented in traditional advertisements (Egan & Tsao, 2015). However, what makes this type of advertisement native is its content which is contextually relevant (Einstein, 2015).

2.2.2.6 Custom Ads
Custom ads are designed by advertisers and publishers for various purposes which entails that these kinds of advertisements have various forms. Therefore they do not fit into any of the other categories (Interactive Advertising Bureau [IAB], 2013). Custom advertisements can be very platform-specific as for instance custom playlists. Spotify is an example of a platform where these custom ads are used (Einstein, 2015).

2.2.3 Regulations for native advertising
It is important that the native advertisements have a proper labeling to give consumers a clarity that they are exposed for advertising (Schauster, Ferrucci, & Neill, 2016). Therefore it is important that some principles are followed for a transparency of the native advertisements. Preliminary the native advertising is regulated by the Swedish marketing law. According to this law, all marketing should be designed and presented with a clearness that it is advertising and it is also important that the advertisement presents who the advertiser is. Further fundamental rules that affect native advertising have been made by the International Chamber of Commerce, ICC. According to their regulations for marketing communication and principles regarding native advertising, it should be easy to identify advertisements as marketing as mentioned above (Interactive Advertising Bureau [IAB], 2017). The International Chamber of Commerce is a business organization that works worldwide. One of the missions the organization has is to help businesses with challenges and opportunities that have appeared within the digitalization (International Chamber of Commerce [ICC], 2015). Another organization that has developed guidelines for native advertisements is the Interactive Advertising Bureau, IAB, these guidelines are similar to the regulations made by the International Chamber of Commerce. According to the guidelines by the Interactive Advertising Bureau, the native advertisements must have a clearly advertising label. The word advertising and the name of the advertiser should be shown as part of the native advertisement. The receiver of the native advertisement should easily be able to identify the sender of the message. To mediate this information, the name of the company is usually being

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used. There are exceptions where only the brand is shown as a part of the advertising, which can be approved if the brand is well known among the consumers. To distinguish the advertisement from the editorial content, properties like the font or the size of the advertisement can be changed. Furthermore, two other business organizations in Sweden, Tidningsutgivarna and Sveriges Tidskrifter, have also developed guidelines for native advertising which mostly correspond with the guidelines made by the Interactive Advertising Bureau in Sweden (Interactive Advertising Bureau [IAB], 2017).

2.2.4 The boundary between editorial content and native advertising

A consequence that has appealed because of the rise of native advertising is a blurring boundary between editorial content and native advertisements, which is an important boundary within the journalism (Schauster, Ferrucci, & Neill, 2016). At the same time, this is an effective way for the marketers to reach out to the consumers without interrupting them (Egan & Tsao, 2015) and increase their brand awareness among the consumers (Carlsson, 2015). This kind of marketing aims to be interesting, informative, engaging and relevant for the consumers as the native advertisements appear in the stream, in the same format as the rest of the editorial content the consumer is enjoying (Wang & Li, 2017). On the other hand, it has been shown that the arising blurring boundary between editorial content and native advertisements may cause unethical concerns. These concerns have arisen since the consumers may not be able to interpret if the native advertisements are marketing or editorial content. In a previous study, journalists considered the native advertisements to deceive consumers, since they are not able to distinguish the advertisements from the rest of the editorial context. The journalists that participated in the study, assume that the native advertising becomes effective when it is deceiving (Schauster, Ferrucci, & Neill, 2016). According to Campell and Marks (2015), native advertisements consist of different levels of secrecy. They suggest that native advertisements which clearly presents a source disclosure are less secretive than the advertisements which are missing this transparency. They mean that the native advertisements which are very secretive are difficult to distinguish from the rest of the context and have a purpose to take advantage of the consumers’ trust of other editorial content. However, good native advertising presents a clear source disclosure and has a valuable content for the consumers which matches its surroundings. Advertisers that use highly secretive native advertisements and tries to deceive their consumers, may receive short-term advantages. Advertisers who are seeking long-lasting relationships with their consumers should rather invest in native advertisements with a low secrecy (Campell and Marks, 2015).
2.3 Perception
Perception is a great part of the consumers’ reception of knowledge about the world (Maund, 2003). Perception is a process where the consumers receive new impressions from the surroundings which are stored in the consumers’ memory (Wong & Malone, 2016). In the perceptual process, consumers are selecting stimuli from the environment and thereafter these stimuli are organized and interpreted. Stimuli are physical sensations in the surroundings which the consumers are affected by, like sights, sounds, smells, tastes and textures. The consumers’ perceptions are important in a marketing context for the advertisers to know how to reach the consumers (Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard, & Hogg, 2016). The consumers’ attitudes and beliefs are essential factors that affect the consumers’ perceptions and responses (Wong & Malone, 2016).

![Figure 2.0: Perception model (Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard, & Hogg, 2016)]

2.3.1 Consumer perception of advertisements online
When the consumers are exposed and perceive advertising, they gather information which they interpret and connect with their existing knowledge. They evaluate the information and develop attitudes and intentions of purchasing (Lavidge, 1961). In a traditional view, the advertisers have a large extent of control. In this view, they can decide which advertisements that are presented to the consumers, when the consumers are exposed to these and in what way. This control has changed through the development of the internet, which has entailed that the control for the most part rather belongs to the consumers. The consumers have a greater control since they are the ones who decide their own online experience, for instance, what websites that will be visited. Because of this switch of the control, the advertisers need to understand the consumers’ perspective for their marketing to be perceived in a positive way (Rodgers & Thorson, 2000).
It has been shown that several factors influence the consumers’ perception of advertisements. The entertainment which represents the form, the informativeness which refers to relevant content and the level of irritation of the advertisements are examples of factors which affects how valuable the consumers perceive the advertisements (Ducoffe & Curlo, 2000). Advertisements with an entertaining message have shown to be perceived with positive responses from consumers, which have increased the consumers’ interest to explore the advertising more. Irritation of advertisements has been perceived to be unwanted which have incurred when the advertisements have been deceiving (Wong & Malone, 2016). Other factors that assume to influence the consumers’ perceptions and responses to online advertisements are their motives which drive them to perform online activities. Previous studies have shown that if the advertising promotes the consumers’ motive, the consumers will have a positive attitude towards that online advertising. It has been shown that consumers are more susceptible to perceiving online advertisements when they do not have a specific target of their online experience. When the consumers’ motives are highly goal-directed, they are less likely to be affected by online advertisements (Rodgers & Thorson, 2000). For the consumers to be able to relate the online advertising to their emotions, it is important that the advertisement matches the rest of the content online where it is published. Consumers’ perception of advertisements online differ due to which kind of advertising they are exposed for (Stephen, 2016). More distracting online advertisements like banners have shown to be perceived as interrupting the consumer’s online experience (Campbell & Marks, 2015). This can be referred to “banner blindness” which means that the consumers are ignoring banners at websites or elements which have a similar look as banners (Porta, Ravarelli & Spaghetti, 2013). According to previous studies, consumers are perceiving editorial content to be more motivating to read compared with advertising messages. They are therefore paying more attention to editorial content which may be seen as a benefit of the native advertisements (Howe & Teufel, 2014).

**H1:** Consumers have a more positive perception of native advertisements compared to banners

### 2.3.2 Consumer perception of credibility online

#### 2.3.2.1 Source Credibility

An important factor that plays a major role when a consumer is about to judge information online is the source credibility (Fan, Miao, Fang, & Lin, 2013). Source credibility implies to what extent the consumer perceives the source as credible and assess the information as trustable (Shan, 2015). Source credibility entails how the positive attributes of the communicator influence the consumer’s acceptance of the information (Ohanian, 1990). Source credibility includes three elements which are attractiveness, expertise and trustworthiness (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2016). The attractiveness is an important dimension within source credibility when the consumer is about to judge received information. If the communicator is attractive it has been shown that the information influences the consumer’s...
attitude in a positive way. Expertise entails to what extent the consumer perceives a communicator to communicate valid statements. “Competence” and “authoritativeness” are two concepts that the element expertise is referred to. A previous study shows that a source with a higher level of expertise leads to a higher level of agreement among those who are exposed to the source. Trustworthiness is the extent to which the consumer gives faith and accepts the communicator and the information that is communicated. It has been shown that trustworthiness has an effect on attitude change. The results in a study that was made about persuasion and communication, showed that an opinionated message was more effective in creating attitude change when a communicator was perceived with a high level of trustworthiness compared to a non-opinionated message (Ohanian, 1990).

2.3.2.2 The Prominence-Interpretation Theory
A theory that is related to credibility is the prominence-interpretation theory, which has a purpose to understand how the consumers make credibility assessments online and to specific websites. According to the theory, two happenings appear when a consumer evaluates credibility online. The first thing is prominence which represents the consumer’s notification of something at a webpage. Thereafter the other happening appears which is the interpretation, which represents the judgment the consumer makes of the notification or the meaning the consumer creates for it. These two elements are important for the consumer to assess the credibility. There are several factors which affect the prominence, these are the consumer’s involvement, the topic of the exposure, the task the consumer has, the previous experiences the consumer has online and the individual differences. The interpretation is affected by mainly three factors which are the consumer’s assumptions, the consumer’s knowledge of the subject and the context like the environment (George, Giordano, & Tilley, 2016).

![Figure 2.1: The Prominence-Interpretation Theory](Image)

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2.3.2.3 Media source impact
Advertising is often found at several media platforms and companies are always looking for the most effective placement for their advertisements. The placement on a website has shown to be an important factor, for instance, to get a high amount of advertisement exposures and for high evaluations of the brand (Broeck, Poels, & Walrave, 2018). The kind of website is also important to take in consideration in an advertising perspective, it is common that advertisers choose to publish advertisements on websites with a context that is relevant to their products. It has been shown that the media context has an impact on the evaluation of online advertisements (Jeong & King, 2010). Advertising in newspapers has appeared since way back and there is a historical symbiotic relationship between advertisers and newspapers. This relationship entails that the news context with editorial content, provides credibility for the advertising and the advertising covers the cost of the news content. For instance, it has been shown that sponsorships within news sites online have received advantages because of the credibility of the news sites (Rodgers, Cameron, & Brill, 2005). Native advertising is used on several kinds of platforms and the endemic in-feed advertisements are published on news sites (Interactive Advertising Bureau [IAB], 2013). Two main factors that make the native advertisements effective at news sites are the design and the content of the advertisements. These factors make them look like they are produced by journalists which entails a credibility for the advertisements (Schauster, Ferrucci, & Neill, 2016).

H2: News sites affect the consumers’ perception of credibility of the message of native advertisements

H3: News sites affect the consumers’ perception of credibility of the advertiser of native advertisements

2.3.4 Consumer perception of persuasion
When consumers are exposed to advertising they need to interpret the messages the marketers want to mediate. After being exposed to several advertisements the consumers develop persuasion knowledge about how the advertisers try to persuade them. This knowledge facilitates for the consumers to understand when, why and how the marketers with their advertisements try to have an impact on them (Friestad & Wright, 1994). The more the consumers are exposed to online advertising, they will be able to resist more advertising messages and attempts of persuasion (Zarzosa & Fischbach, 2017). Persuasion knowledge has in previous studies been developed in two parts, the objective persuasion knowledge and the subjective persuasion knowledge. The objective persuasion knowledge represents the knowledge consumers have about a particular persuasion tactic that a marketer use. The subjective persuasion knowledge is consumers’ perception of how persuasion functions (Ham & Nelson, 2016). Consumers’ previous experiences of being exposed for advertisements affect their subjective knowledge. The subjective knowledge is influenced because of the memories consumers have from previous experiences (Carlson, Bearden & Hardesty, 2007).
The consumers can use their persuasion knowledge to interpret, evaluate and analyze persuasion attempts and then choose a tactic to use in response to the persuasion attempts (Friestad & Wright, 1994). The consumers’ persuasion knowledge prevents them from being convinced by the advertisements and makes them look at advertisements with a skeptical view (Taylor, 2017). For the consumers to be able to use their persuasion knowledge they need to be aware of a persuasion attempt (Wojdynski & Evans, 2015).

**H4:** Consumers do not feel persuaded by native advertising since they perceive they are exposed for advertising

### 2.4 Research model

![Research model diagram](image_url)

*Figure 2.2: Research model*
3.0 METHOD

In this chapter the choice of scientific methods are presented, thereafter the validity and the reliability of the study are examined. There are explanations of the data collection and the experiment that were performed. The hypotheses, the process of data analyses and the ethics of the study are thereafter presented. Further relevant areas within the method are also included in this chapter.

3.1 Research approach

This research has a deductive approach which entails that the study is based upon theories and from these theories, hypotheses have been developed. We have chosen this approach since we wanted to do the study through quantitative methods for data collection and analysis (Söderbom & Ulvenblad, 2016). There are two different options when choosing the approach of the method. One of them is the deductive and the other one is the inductive approach. The inductive approach entails a process where the scientists goes from empirical findings to theory (Jacobsen, 2002).

3.2 Research design

The research design is the plan for how we have chosen to answer the research questions. In the research, an explanatory design was applied since the aim was to study and compare two different samples. There are three types of research designs which are the explanatory, descriptive and exploratory. The explanatory design is used when causal relationships between variables are studied. The descriptive research design has the aim to portrait correct profiles, for instance, profiles of situations, persons or events. The third research design is called the exploratory research design which entails to seek new insights and is useful for clarifying a comprehension of a problem. (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornwill, 2009).

3.2.1 Qualitative and quantitative

We have chosen to do a quantitative study in this research because we wanted to do experimental surveys where a great number of respondents could be reached. There are two different kinds of methods, one of them is the qualitative method and the other one is the quantitative method. Within a qualitative method, it is common to use case studies, interviews and observations. An ordinary way in the process of analyzing qualitative data is to manage the data manually. In a quantitative method, there are several ways to collect data, for instance through surveys, interviews by telephone or by observations (Söderbom & Ulvenblad, 2016). Advantages of the quantitative method which were useful for the study were the possibilities to process lots of information with help from computer programs and to get a simple and structured overview of all the data. It simplified the presentation of exact numbers and percentages of responses from the surveys. This method also facilitated the examination of connections and abnormalities. Another advantage were that no personal relationships were created between the scientists and the respondents, this might otherwise affect the answers. A disadvantage of a quantitative method can be the difficulty to achieve a profound research in
comparison with a qualitative method and it can be difficult to include all different perspectives of the respondents’ answers (Jacobsen, 2002). To handle this negative aspects, limitations have been made within the subject, to have the possibility to create more specific survey questions and therefore get a deeper understanding and examination.

### 3.3 Validity and reliability

The credibility of a research usually includes validity and reliability. The meanings of validity and reliability differ depending on if a quantitative or qualitative method is used. Since we have chosen a quantitative method, the signification of quantitative validity and reliability were used (Söderbom & Ulvenblad, 2016).

The validity implies that the study is measured in a way that it intends and is supposed to be measured. It includes two different distinctions, which are the internal and the external validity (Söderbom & Ulvenblad, 2016). The internal validity concerns the theoretical concepts which are meant to be measured and how well these are represented by a number of variables. Within the study, an examination was made including the independent variable news sites and the dependent variable native advertisements. The examination represented two experimental surveys with a picture which was related to various items and questions. To make sure the right factors were measured, the same native advertisement was used in the two experimental surveys. The only factor that differed in the pictures that the respondents were exposed for, was the header of the news sites. By performing the experiment in this way, no other factors could have an impact on the variables that were measured and this improved the internal validity of the study. The experimental survey questions were translated from English to Swedish since the study was limited within Sweden. To get an accurate translation and to make sure the respondents perceived the questions correct, two external parts were used. First, we translated the questions by ourselves and to secure a correct translation two more persons got the assignment to translate the questions. Thereafter the translations were compared to make sure the interpretations were equal. By doing this additional check the internal validity of the study increased (Söderbom & Ulvenblad, 2016). The external validity of the study was improved since we reached respondents with various genders and ages when the data collection was performed. The external validity entails the possibility to generalize the results to similar contexts, companies or individuals (Söderbom & Ulvenblad, 2016).

When the experimental surveys were created, the risk of bias was considered and to minimize this risk the experimental surveys were made anonymous. The word native advertising was not used within the surveys, to make sure the answers were not affected by the respondents personal attitudes towards native advertising. We were accurate when the information about the research was written to the respondents, to make sure they did not figure out the purpose of the study. This was important to secure that the respondents did not respond in a way they thought they were suppose to answer (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornwill, 2009). All of these factors increased the reliability of the study. The reliability implies that an independent person or measurement should be able to make a repetition of the study and achieve the same results.
The reliability also entails the level of trustworthiness of the study (Söderbom & Ulvenblad, 2016). Another factor that improved the reliability was a Cronbach’s alpha that was performed, which showed a high internal consistency of the items that were used in the study (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornwill, 2009).

3.4 Data collection
There are two different types of data within data collection, which are the primary and secondary data. The credibility differ depending on the type of data, the scientists have a better control over the credibility of the primary data collection compared to the secondary data. In collection of primary data the scientists have knowledge about every part of the collection process and can therefore evaluate how it affects the credibility. The secondary data does not attain the same high level of credibility since the scientists do not know how the data has been collected and how the data has been processed (Jacobsen, 2002).

3.4.1 Primary data and secondary data
The primary data within the study was collected through two experimental surveys, which were distributed through email. Primary data means that the scientists have collected the data for the first time and by direct contact with the primary source. Other methods of collection of primary data are interviews and observations (Jacobsen, 2002). Within the study some statistical data was used which represents secondary data, this kind of data is collected by others than the scientists of the research. According to Jacobsen (2002) an important aspect to keep in mind when using secondary data is to be aware of that the sources of the information are trustworthy. Examples of secondary data are available statistics, accounts and other studies (Jacobsen, 2002).

3.4.2 Literature review
In this research different kinds of literatures were examined, both writings and digital literatures. Various databases were used, in particular the database OneSearch from Halmstad University. A profound reading in scientific articles and journals were done, with a focus on the research area of this study. The main databases that were used were ABI Inform, Emerald and Google Scholar. A few websites were useful to gather important and updated information within the subject native advertising. All the writings were gathered from the libraries of Halmstad University and Halmstad city. All these kinds of information sources gave a wide information foundation to the study.

3.5 Experimental surveys
Within this study, an experiment was performed with a between-subject design. This method was relevant since an experiment was done and the purpose was to compare and examine the responses from two different samples (Charness, Gneezy, & Kuhn, 2011). The method between-subject design was applied by dividing the respondents into two groups, one experimental group and one control group (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornwill, 2009). The respondents got two different surveys which included the same questions and items. These
were related to a picture which the respondents were exposed to. The picture looked like a screenshot from a news site and included one native advertisement which were published in the news context. The same native advertisement was used in the two surveys, the only thing that differed in the pictures were the header of the news site. The control group viewed the picture with a header of one of the greatest daily newspapers in Sweden. The experimental group was exposed for the picture when the header was changed to one of the greatest evening newspapers in Sweden (TU, 2017). The experiment was designed this way to be able to see if the news sites had any impact on the credibility of the native advertisement. To minimize the inaccuracy of the results and to make sure the right factors were measured, everything in the pictures looked the same except for the new site’s header. The first twelve items within the surveys were developed to make this experiment. Remaining questions and items in the surveys were compared in pairs to examine the perception of native advertisements compared to banners and to see if the persuasion knowledge was applied by the participants.

3.5.1 Experimental survey items and questions
The items and questions in the experimental surveys were based on the theories in the frame of references. The program Google Forms was used to create the experimental surveys and these included 17 items and two open questions. The first twelve items were based on the theory source credibility and the purpose was to examine if the media platform had any impact on the perceived credibility of the native advertisement. The three dimensions expertise, trustworthiness and attraction were used to develop these items and to be able to measure the credibility of the news sites, the credibility of the message and the credibility of the advertiser of the native advertisement. These first twelve items were used to be able to answer the hypothesis 2: News sites affect the consumers’ perception of credibility of the message of native advertisements and hypothesis 3: News sites affect the consumers’ perception of credibility of advertisers of native advertisements. These two hypotheses were based on the theory about media source impact. The items “I have a positive perception of this kind of advertising” and “I have a positive perception of display advertising as banners” were based on the theory perception. These items were related to the hypothesis 1: Consumers have a more positive perception of native advertisements compared to banners. The purpose was to compare these two items to be able to analyze which of the items that were perceived as most positive. The items “I do not feel persuaded by this advertisement” and “I experience this advertisement as obvious advertising” were based on the theory persuasion knowledge. These items were related to the hypothesis 4: Consumers do not feel persuaded by native advertising since they perceive they are exposed for advertising. The purpose was to examine the relationship between the two items. The item “I have been exposed for this kind of advertisements previously” was created to examine the amount of respondents that had been exposed for native advertising before. The purpose was to analyze if the responses from this
item could be related to remaining items. The last two questions asked about the gender and the age of the respondents.

1. I experience the message of this advertising as attractive
2. I experience the message of this advertising to have expertise
3. I experience the message of this advertising as trustworthy
4. I experience the message of this advertising as credible
5. I experience the advertiser of this advertising as attractive
6. I experience the advertiser of this advertising to have expertise
7. I experience the advertiser of this advertising as trustworthy
8. I experience the advertiser of this advertising as credible
9. I experience this news site as attractive
10. I experience this news site to have expertise
11. I experience this news site as trustworthy
12. I experience this news site as credible
13. I have a positive perception of this kind of advertising
14. I have a positive perception of display advertising as banners
15. I do not feel persuaded by this advertisement
16. I experience this advertisement as obvious advertising
17. I have been exposed to this kind of advertising previously
18. Gender
19. Age

3.5.2 Answer options
According to Statistiska Centralbyråns (1993), there are three elementary requirements when creating answer options. The first requirement is the mutually exclusive which entails that the respondents should only be able to select one answer option. The second requirement is the exhaustively which implies the importance to cover possible answer options to a large extent. The third requirement is the surveyable which means that all the answer options should have a fairly equal chance to be chosen (Statistiska Centralbyråns, 1993). In the creation of the answer options a consideration was taken of all of these elementary requirements. A Likert scale was used as answer options for 16 of the items in the surveys, where the respondents got to answer on a scale from one to five. This scale made it possible to make the items measurable and for the respondents to get a distinct definition of the answer options. The definitions of the answer options were:

1: Strongly disagree
2: Disagree
3: Neither agree or disagree
4: Agree
5: Strongly agree
For the item “I have been exposed for this kind of advertisements previously”, there were two answer options, since it was a yes or a no question. The last two questions in the experimental surveys were open questions and asked about the gender and the age of the respondents.

3.5.3 The performance of the experimental surveys
The program Google Forms was used at first to create a short survey for collection of email addresses. The survey began with a short explanation about the research and included four questions. The respondents were asked about their email address, their gender, their age and if they read newspapers online. The last question was made to make sure relevant participants were reached. This survey was sent out on two platforms which were Facebook and LinkedIn, where it was further spread by our contacts. By collecting the email addresses in this way we got a good control over all the respondents and reached individuals with various gender and age. After the first survey was performed, the experimental surveys were created in Google Forms and thereafter distributed to our respondents through the email addresses they had stated.

3.5.4 Sampling
The sampling frame of the study is based upon the population which represents people who reads Swedish newspapers online (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornwill, 2009). Around 80% of the Swedish population, from twelve years, reads a newspaper online sometime (Internetstiftelsen i Sverige [IIS]. A non-probability sampling was made to reach relevant participants, this entails that the probability was unknown regarding the selection from the population. A self-selection sampling was performed since the first survey was distributed on media platforms where requests about participation were done. The collection of data were based on the respondents who chose to participate in the study (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornwill, 2009).

3.6 Operationalization
According to Jacobssen (2002) we needed to concretize the concepts that were measured within the study and this process is called operationalization (Jacobssen, 2002). The main theory that was used to measure the respondents perception of credibility, was source credibility. According to this theory, source credibility includes three element which are attractiveness, expertise and trustworthiness (Ohanian, 1990). These three elements were used to measure the credibility of the news sites, the credibility of the message of the native advertisement and the credibility of the advertiser of the native advertisement. To examine the internal consistency of the items in the experimental surveys that were based upon the source credibility, a Cronbach’s alpha was performed. The Cronbach’s alpha entails a measurement of correlation of the responses from the questions in the experimental surveys, with other responses from questions within the surveys (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornwill, 2009). An alpha value that often considers to be adequate for a scale should be between 0,65-0,80 (Vaske, Beaman, & Sponarski, 2017).
3.7 Data analysis

After the data collection, various diagrams and the SPSS software were used to be able to analyze the data. T-tests were used where the mean values were compared between the experimental group and the control group. There are two kinds of t-tests which are the independent t-test and the dependent t-test. For the first twelve items, independent t-tests were made since the data from the two samples were gathered from different samples. The purpose was to examine causal inferences based on the results from the tests. For the items “I have a positive perception of this kind of advertising” and “I have a positive perception of display advertising as banners”, a dependent t-test were made. The responses from the two samples were merged for these items and thereafter a comparison were made of the mean values between the two items. The dependent t-test was used since the data from these items were gathered from the same participants. The merge of the responses were able to be made since all of the respondents in the two samples were exposed for the same items (Field, 2018). For the items “I do not feel persuaded by this advertisement” and “I experience this advertisement as obvious advertising”, a Pearson’s correlation test was made to examine if there was a relationship between these items (Field, 2018). Even within this test the responses from the two samples were merged. The correlation coefficient in the test made it possible to examine the strength of the linear relationship between these two items. The correlation coefficient can have a value between +1 and -1 and these two values represent a perfectly positive respective negative correlation (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornwill, 2009), a value of 0 represents that there is no linear relationship. This kind of correlation is called bivariate correlation (Field, 2018). The significance level that was used within all the tests were 0,05 which is a commonly used significance level. The significance level entails to what extent the difference between two samples have been caused by coincidence. The t-test examines if the differences between mean values are statistically significant (Stukát, 1993), this occur when the p-value is less than 0,05 (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornwill, 2009). Significance values within the Pearson’s correlation test which are less than 0,05 indicates a statistically significant relationship (Field, 2018). Since the significance level of 0,05 was used, it can be stated that 95 % of the results certainly is not caused by the chance (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornwill, 2009).

3.8 Hypotheses

3.8.1 Differences between mean values

For the hypothesis 1: *Consumers have a more positive perception of native advertisements compared to banners*, a dependent t-test was made to examine the differences between the mean values of the positive perception of native advertisements and the positive perception of banners (Field, 2018). The model below shows the two items that were used in the experimental study and which were compared with each other.
H1: Consumers have a more positive perception of native advertisements compared to banners

![positive perception of native advertisements](image)

**Figure 3.0: Consumers have a more positive perception of native advertisements compared to banners**

### 3.8.2 Causality

Two of the hypotheses within the study consisted of an independent and a dependent variable. Swedish news sites represented the independent variable, which included one daily news site and one evening news site. The dependent variable represented the credibility of a native advertisement. In hypothesis 2: News sites affect the consumers’ perception of credibility of the message of native advertisements, the dependent variable represented the credibility of the message of the native advertisement. In hypothesis 3: News sites affect the consumers’ perception of credibility of the advertiser of native advertisements, the dependent variable represented the credibility of the advertiser of the native advertisement. These hypotheses represented a possible and causal relationship between the two variables. Causality is an explanatory design and it implies that there should be a covariance between cause and effect. According to Jacobsen (2012), the cause and the effect should be close in time and the cause must arise first and the effect should occur after. There are two variables that have a relationship with each other and one of them is the independent variable which represents the cause and creates consequences. The other one is the dependent variable which represents the effect and the outcomes depend on the independent variable (Jacobsen, 2012). The models below represents the possible causal relationship between the news site and the credibility of a native advertisement which was tested in the study. To test these hypotheses t-tests were made to compare the differences between the mean values of the two samples (Field, 2018).
**H2:** News sites affect the consumers’ perception of credibility of the message of native advertisements

![Diagram](image)

*Figure 3.1: News sites affect the consumers’ perception of credibility of the message of native advertisements*

**H3:** News sites affect the consumers’ perception of credibility of the advertiser of native advertisements

![Diagram](image)

*Figure 3.2: News sites affect the consumers’ perception of credibility of the advertiser of native advertisements*
3.8.3 Correlation
For the hypothesis 4: Consumers do not feel persuaded by native advertising since they perceive they are exposed for advertising, a Pearson’s correlation test was made to examine if there was a bivariate correlation between the items “I do not feel persuaded by this advertisement” and “I experience this advertisement as obvious advertising” (Fields, 2018).

H4: Consumers do not feel persuaded by native advertising since they perceive they are exposed for advertising

![Figure 3.3: Consumers do not feel persuaded by native advertising since they perceive they are exposed for advertising](image)

3.9 Ethics
Three requirements were considered when performing the research since we reached the private sphere of individuals. These three basic requirements were the informed permission, the privacy requirements and the requirements to be correctly reviewed (Jacobsen, 2002).

The informed permission represents that the respondents participate in the study voluntarily. Before the study was performed, a request about participation was sent out to individuals. In this way, the respondents made a voluntary choice to participate in the study. The surveys began with a short explanation about the research and the concept native advertising was not used within the surveys. According to Jacobsen (2002), it is important to present information about the research for the respondents but it is essential that they do not get too much information. If the respondents get access to all the information about the study, the reliability decreases since the individuals might be able to understand the purpose of the research. Too much information might also result in few respondents because it could lead to information overload. (Jacobsen, 2002).

When this research was performed, a consideration was taken to the privacy requirements. To make sure the respondents felt confident to participate in the study, all the data collection were made anonymous. The most private information that was gathered from the surveys was about the gender and age which were used in the analyze. The privacy requirements represent an importance to consider the level of sensitive and private information that is collected. The
perception of sensitivity differs between individuals, therefore it is essential to consider the sensitivity of the information in relation to the individual (Jacobsen, 2002).

The requirements to be correctly reviewed represent an importance to review the results from the data completely and correct. To gather the data collection, to create correct diagrams and perform various tests, the programs Google Forms and SPSS software were used. No information in the collected data was excluded, the data collection was not changed in any way and the data was presented exactly as the respondents stated in their answers (Jacobsen, 2002).

4.0 EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The empirical findings are presented with tables and diagrams for a clear overview of the collected data from the experimental surveys. The findings begin with a presentation of the gender and ages of the respondents that participated in the surveys. Thereafter a Cronbach’s alpha is presented, which was made to examine the internal consistency of some of the items within the experimental study. Thenceforward, the results from the t-tests and the Pearson’s correlation test are presented in different tables which are divided based on the three research questions of the study. At the end of the empirical findings, a diagram shows the number of respondents that have been exposed for native advertising previously.

4.1 Gender and age

The surveys conducted 106 respondents where 45,3% were males and 54,7% were females. The ages of the respondents were divided into nine groups with an age range of four years between every group. The respondents were between 19 and 59 years old and the average age was 32 years. All of the respondents were readers of newspapers online. This was one of the questions that were asked before the experimental surveys were sent out, to make sure the surveys were responded by relevant participants for the study.
Diagram 4.0: Gender of respondents

Diagram 4.1: Age of respondents
4.2 Cronbach’s alpha
The Cronbach’s alpha was performed because the three concepts expertise, trustworthiness and attraction were used in items in the surveys to measure the same concept which was credibility. The answer options consisted of a Likert scale from one to five that was used as a measurement for the items. In the table Reliability Statistics, the Cronbach’s Alpha is presented and represents the reliability of the scale that was used in the research. The value of the Cronbach’s alpha is 0,748 which is positive since it showed that the three items were acceptable (Vaske, Beaman, & Sponarski, 2017).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reliability Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cronbach’s Alpha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0,748</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4.0: Reliability Statistics*

4.2.1 Item - Total Statistics
The table Item-Total Statistics includes the Corrected Item-Total Correlation which shows to what extent the items correlate with each other. The table shows that all of the items correlate well with the scale since the values of the Corrected Item-Total Correlation are higher than 0,3. The column Cronbach’s Alpha if Item Deleted, shows the values of the overall Cronbach’s Alpha if the items would be excluded from the calculation. According to Field (2018), all the values of the items should be around the same value as the overall Cronbach’s Alpha, which they are in this test of the internal consistency (Field, 2018).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item-Total Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Item-Total Correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractiveness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4.1: Item-Total Statistics*
4.2.2 Levene’s test for homogeneity of variances
According to Field (2018), the assumption of homogeneity of variance can be assumed in our case since the differences are not significant since the P-value is higher than 0,05 (Field, 2018).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene’s test for homogeneity of variances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Levene Statistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0,162</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4.2: Levene’s test for homogeneity of variances*

4.3 How do consumers perceive native advertising compared to other online advertising?
As the table shows there were 106 participants that answered how they perceive native advertising and banners. The mean value of the item about a positive perception of native advertising is 2,613 and the mean value of the item about positive perceptions of banners is 2,481. The table shows that the standard deviation of the items are equal, which entails that the groups are comparable (Wahlgren, 2008). Since the P-value is less than 0,05 the mean values of the two different items are statistical significant different (Stukát, 1993).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent t-test</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>P-value (confidence interval 95%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive perception of native advertising</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>2,613</td>
<td>1,126</td>
<td>&lt; 0,001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive perception of banners</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>2,481</td>
<td>1,079</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4.3: Dependent t-test - perception of native advertising compared to perception of banners*

4.4 How does the media channel affect native advertisements?

4.4.1 The news sites’ impact on the credibility of the message of native advertisements
As the row labeled N in the table shows, there were 53 participants in each group. The mean value of the credibility of the message of the native advertisement published on the daily news site is 7,981. The mean value of the credibility of the message of the native advertisement published on the evening news site is 8,792. The values of the standard deviation are equal within the two groups which makes them comparable (Wahlgren, 2008). The P-Value is higher than 0,05 which entails that the mean values of the two groups are not statistical significant different (Stukát, 1993).
4.4.2 The news sites’ impact on the credibility of the advertiser of native advertisements
As the results show in the table below there were 53 participants in each group. The mean value of the credibility of the advertiser of the native advertisement published on the daily news site is 8,698. The mean value of the credibility of the advertiser of the native advertisement published on the evening news site is 9,226. The values of the standard deviation are equal within the two groups which makes them comparable (Wahlgren, 2008). The P-value is higher than 0,05 which entails that the mean values of the two groups are not statistical significant different (Stukát, 1993).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>News site</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>P-value (confidence interval 95%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily news site</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>8,698</td>
<td>2,430</td>
<td>0,273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening news site</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>9,226</td>
<td>2,508</td>
<td>0,273</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5: Independent t-test - Credibility of advertiser

4.4.3 Perception of credibility of a daily new site compared to an evening news site
There were 53 participants in each group which were exposed for two different news sites. As the table shows from the independent t-test, the mean value for the daily news site is 8,717 and the mean value for the evening new site is 7,849. The P-value is 0,121 which is higher than 0,05 and this entails that there is not a statistical significant difference between the two items (Stukát, 1993).
### 4.5 How do consumers receive native advertising?

There were 106 participants that answered if they experienced the native advertisement as obvious advertising and if they did not feel persuaded by the native advertisement. The table which is based upon a Pearson’s correlation test shows that there is a strong positive correlation between the two items “obvious advertising” and “no reception of persuasion”. The values of the standard deviation are equal within the two groups which makes them comparable (Wahlgren, 2008). The P-value is less than 0.05 which indicates a statistical significant relationship (Field, 2018).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pearson’s correlation test</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean Value</th>
<th>Pearson correlation coefficient</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>P-value (confidence interval 95%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obvious advertising</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>3,584</td>
<td>0.898</td>
<td>1.111</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reception of persuasion</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>3,037</td>
<td>0.898</td>
<td>1.120</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4.7: Pearson’s correlation test*
4.6 I have been exposed to this kind of advertising previously
Of all the 106 respondents there was a majority of 88.7% that had been exposed for native advertising previously, this represented 94 respondents. The rest of the twelve respondents which represented 11.3% responded that they had not been exposed to this kind of advertising before.

Diagram: 4.3 Respondents previous exposures of native advertising

5.0 ANALYSIS

The analysis begins with the demographics of the participants in the research, thereafter there are three different sections based on the research questions of the study. The analysis are related to the theories in the frame of references and the analysis of the mean values are based on the Likert scale which represented the answer options in the surveys.

5.1 Gender and age
The data about the demographics of the participants in the empirical findings show a fair distribution of genders, were about half of the respondents were males and the other half were females. The distribution of ages of the participants was a bit uneven, the results show a majority of respondents with the ages 21-25. This may due to that Facebook was one of the platforms where the first survey was sent out for the collection of email addresses. Looking at all the online users in Sweden, over twelve years, the age group 16-25 years use Facebook the most. This might have been an affecting factor that caused the result of a majority of respondents with the ages 21-25. Looking at the platform LinkedIn, most users are between the ages 26-35 (Internetstiftelsen i Sverige [IIS], 2017), which can be seen as a contributing factor to an increased average age of the respondents of the study.
5.2 How do consumers perceive native advertising compared to other online advertising?

H1: Consumers have a more positive perception of native advertisements compared to banners

The results from the empirical findings show that both mean values of the items about the positive perception of native advertising and banners are around 2.5 which represent “disagree” on the Likert scale. This can be interpreted as generally all of the respondents do not agree to these items and this indicates that the respondents do not perceive native advertising and banners as positive, according to the scale. The P-value from the t-test are more interesting to examine in this case, since this shows that there is a statistical significant difference between the perceptions of these two kinds of advertising. Even though the perceptions do not seem to be positive of either of these items, the results show a higher mean value of positive perception of native advertising compared to banners. According to Howe & Teufel (2014), consumers are paying more attention to editorial content (Howe & Teufel, 2014). This can be one of the reasons of a more positive perception of native advertising compared to banners since the endemic in-feed advertisement, which was used in the study, consists of editorial content (Interactive Advertising Bureau [IAB], 2013). An advertisement that matches the rest of the content where it is published, facilitates for the consumers to relate the advertising to their emotions (Stephen, 2016). Native advertisements have a content and a design which are similar to the platform where they are published (Joonghwa, Soojung & Chang-Dae, 2016), which can be seen as another contributing factor of the results. The reason of a lower mean value of the positive perception of banners might be caused of the banners’ distinctive way of getting attention by their placement and animation, which is interrupting the consumers’ online experience (Campell & Marks, 2015). This can be related to irritation of advertisements which have been shown to be unwanted from a consumer perspective (Wong & Malone, 2016). The theory about “banner blindness” can have been another contributing factor of the results, which might entail that the respondents ignore banners and notice native advertisements to a greater extent (Porta, Ravarelli & Spaghi, 2013). Since the result shows a statistical significant difference between the perception of native advertising and banners, where the native advertising achieves a higher value, hypothesis 1 is accepted.
5.3 How does the media channel affect native advertisements?

H2: News sites affect the consumers’ perception of credibility of the message of native advertisements

H3: News sites affect the consumers’ perception of credibility of the advertiser of native advertisements

To examine how the media channel affect the credibility of the message and the credibility of the advertiser of native advertisements, the respondents were exposed for the same native advertisement but when it was published on two different news sites. To be able to measure the credibility, the items attractiveness, expertise and trustworthiness were used. As the results show from the Cronbach’s alpha, the source credibility was proved. This entails that the used items could be applicable to measure the credibility in this study (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2016). The results in the empirical findings indicate on a small difference between the daily news site and the evening news site regarding the mean values of the credibility of the message and the credibility of the advertiser of the native advertisement. These differences cannot be stated as correct though, since the two samples are not statistical significant different in none of the two t-tests (Stukát, 1993). This entails that the media platform did not affect the perceived credibility of the message and neither the credibility of the advertiser of the native advertisement. These results differ from the assumptions made by Schauster, Ferrucci, & Neill (2016), which claim that the design and the content of the native advertisements make these advertisements look like they are produced by journalists which provide a credibility for the advertisements (Schauster, Ferrucci, & Neill, 2016). According to Rodgers, Cameron, & Brill (2005), there is a historical symbiotic relationship between advertisers and newspapers where the media source seems to provide a credibility for the advertisement. However, this kind of relationship cannot be found in this study. These results can neither be related to previous studies where sponsorships within news sites have received advantages because of their placements at news sites (Rodgers, Cameron, & Brill, 2005). The reason why the media platform did not have an impact on the credibility of the native advertisement, might be because of several other factors that affects consumers’ credibility assessments. The results can be related to the prominence-interpretation theory, where the prominence of the native advertisement might has been affected by the consumers’ involvement, the topic of the advertisement and the previous experiences the consumers have online. The native advertisement within the experimental surveys was about the real estate prices within Sweden, which may have been perceived with various levels of involvement from the participants. Some of the respondents might have a high engagement within this subject, while the engagement is low among other respondents. Individual differences and various online experiences can also be seen as factors which play a role in the credibility assessments made by the respondents. The interpretation of the native advertisement might been affected by the respondents’ assumptions of the message and the advertiser of the advertisement. The participants’ knowledge of the subject of the advertisement and the sender
might also have an impact and the context where the advertisement was placed in (George, Giordano, & Tilley, 2016). If another experimental study had been performed where two different native advertisements were examined, the results may have been different. The results might then have been shown that the factors within the prominence-interpretation theory would have had an impact on the credibility assessments, which this study could not demonstrate. The results from the t-test of the credibility of the two news sites show that there is not a statistical significant difference between the perception of credibility of the daily news site and the perception of credibility of the evening news site. This entails that the respondents seems to have perceived the two news sites with the same level of credibility which might be the greatest reason why the perception of credibility did not differ of the native advertisement. The daily news site got a slightly higher mean value compared to the evening news site but according to the results the difference may as well have been caused by the chance. We expected the difference of perception between the daily news site compared to the evening news site to be larger and if the respondents’ perception of credibility of the news sites would have differed, the results might have been different. Because of these results, an analysis can not be done of which of the two news sites that had most impact on the native advertisement. As mentioned above, the results show that there are no statistical significant differences in the t-tests regarding the credibility of the message and the credibility of the advertiser which entails that the hypotheses 2 and 3 are not accepted.

5.4 How do consumers receive native advertising?

H4: Consumers do not feel persuaded by native advertising since they perceive they are exposed for advertising

The results from the Pearson’s correlation test indicate that there is a statistical significant relationship between the two items “I do not feel persuaded by this advertisement” and “I experience this advertisement as obvious advertising”. This entails that the consumers might have used their persuasion knowledge when they were exposed for the native advertisement in the experimental surveys. According to Friestad & Wright (1994), consumers develop persuasion knowledge after being exposed for several advertisements to understand when, why and how the marketers try to have an impact on them (Friestad & Wright, 1994). The results show a positive correlation, which proves that the respondents received the native advertisement as obvious advertising and simultaneously they did not feel persuaded by the advertisement. A contributing factor of the results might be that the respondents have been exposed for native advertising previously and therefore developed subjective persuasion knowledge (Carlson, Bearden & Hardesty, 2007), which they seem to have used in this case. Of all the 106 respondents, there was a majority of 88,7% that had been exposed for native advertising before which proves this statement. This can be related to Zarzosa & Fischbach (2017), who assumes that the more the consumers are exposed for online advertising, they will be able to resist more advertising messages and attempts of persuasion (Zarzosa & Fischbach, 2017). In the experimental surveys, the native advertisement that the respondents
were exposed for, can be related to objective persuasion knowledge which is the marketers’ specific persuasion tactic (Ham & Nelson, 2016). According to Wojdynski & Evans (2015), the consumers need to be aware of a persuasion attempt to be able to use their persuasion knowledge (Wojdynski & Evans, 2015), which the respondents seem to have been aware of according to the results. As Taylor (2017) assumes, the indication of the use of persuasion knowledge might entailed a skeptical view of the native advertisement from the respondents (Taylor, 2017).

The results in the empirical findings show that the mean value of the item “I experience this advertisement as obvious advertising” is close to four, which represents “agree” on the Likert scale. From this results, an interpretation can be made that most of the respondents experience the native advertisement as obvious advertising. A contributing factor of this result can be the several regulations that are established for native advertising. For instance, according to the Swedish marketing law, all marketing should be designed and presented in a way with a clearness that it is advertising. Another example is the guidelines by the Interactive Advertising Bureau, that for instance entail that the native advertisements must have a clearly advertising label (Interactive Advertising Bureau [IAB], 2017). The results which show a perception of the native advertisement as obvious advertising can be seen as an advantage for companies, relating to the assumptions of Campell & Mark (2015). Since they assumes that native advertisements with a clear source disclosure and low secrecy can entail long-lasting relationships between companies and their consumers (Campell & Marks, 2015). However, it might though be more effective for companies to have a high secrecy of their native advertisements, since the respondents in this study do not feel persuaded when the advertising is obvious. This can be related to Schauster, Ferrucci, & Neill (2016), which assume that the native advertising becomes effective when it is deceiving (Schauster, Ferrucci, & Neill, 2016). Another factor that proves this adoption is that the consumers might view the native advertisements with a skeptical view when they receive the advertising as obvious as previously mentioned (Taylor, 2017). Relating back to Campell & Mark (2015), the companies might though receive short-term advantages with native advertisements which are very secretive but according to this study these kinds of advertisements will be more forcible (Campell & Marks, 2015). Since the results show a statistical significant relationship between the two items within the Pearson’s correlation test, hypothesis 4 is accepted.
6.0 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, conclusions are made based on the empirical findings and the research questions within this study are responded. The chapter is divided into four parts which are dedicated to the three research questions and at last suggestions for further research are presented. The purpose of the study was to examine native advertisements from a consumer perspective to attain new insights into the subject native advertising, which has been achieved. The main areas within the subject that were examined were about how consumers perceive native advertising compared to other online advertising, how the media channel affects native advertisements and how consumers receive native advertising.

6.1 How do consumers perceive native advertising compared to other online advertising?

The results show a difference between the perception of native advertising and other online advertising. In this study, a comparison between native advertisements and banners was performed. A conclusion based on this comparison implies that the respondents have a more positive perception of native advertisements compared to banners. This result can be seen as positive and useful from both a company perspective and a consumer perspective. The companies may have a better chance to reach their consumers because of the knowledge that consumers rather want to be exposed to native advertising instead of other online advertising which in this case are banners. This can also can be seen as a confirmation of that the rising trend of native advertising is heading in the right direction. On the contrary, the consumers will be exposed to more native advertising because of the rising trend, which implies that they will be exposed for advertising that they perceive as more positive than other kinds of online advertising.

6.2 How does the media channel affect native advertisements?

From the results, a conclusion can be made that the media channel did not have an impact on the credibility of the message and neither on the credibility of the advertiser of a native advertisement. However, the results show that the respondents perceived the two news sites, that were used in the study, with the same level of credibility which is seen as a contributing factor to the results. There are also several other factors which influence the consumers’ credibility assessments which are seen as contributing factors. Since the results do not indicate that the media channel has an affect on native advertisements, it might be more effective for a company to focus on the content within the advertisement and to place it in a relevant context to improve the credibility instead of relying on the media channel to earn credibility.

6.3 How do consumers receive native advertising?

Based on the results a conclusion can be made that the respondents do not feel persuaded by native advertising and this can be related to their persuasion knowledge. The results show that the native advertising is received as obvious advertising and in this study, nothing indicates
that there is a blurring boundary between editorial content and native advertising. The rising trend of native advertising seems to has facilitated for the consumers to understand when, why and how the companies use native advertising to have an impact on them. This can be seen as positive for the consumers since they can evaluate the advertisements in an appropriate way without feeling deceived. The results can also be seen as useful from a company’s perspective since it presents a better knowledge about how consumers receive native advertising. Insights from the study indicate that companies will receive advantages and get a more effective marketing if they use native advertisements with a high secrecy since that will entail that the consumers feel persuaded of their advertising. One factor for companies to consider though is that a high secrecy might entail short-term advantages.

6.4 Suggestions to further research

In this study, one kind of native advertisements was examined, which were the endemic in-feed advertisements. For further research, it would be interesting to explore the other kinds of native advertisements to get a better overview of native advertising, from both a consumer and a company perspective. This research examined how the media channel, news sites, affect native advertisements. Since the results from this study show that the respondents perceived the two news sites with the same level of credibility, it would be interesting for further research to investigate additional news sites and various platforms where the perception of credibility differs. That would be more interesting since it would probably be more apparent of a possible impact that the media channel would have on the native advertisements. This would entail a better understanding for companies to know the best placement for their native advertisements and if they can earn credibility from different media channels. In this study a comparison between native advertising and banners was made, for further research additional kinds of advertising could be compared with native advertising. This would entail a better comprehension for companies of which types of advertisements the consumers perceive as most positive and therefore increase the possibility to reach more consumers. To extend and complete this research, additional examination could be done about ages and genders, to analyze further potential relationships and differences.
7.0 SOURCES


Elin Millberg & Elin Lindmark


Elin Millberg & Elin Lindmark

8.0 APPENDIX

8.1 Survey for collection of email-addresses

This was the first survey that was sent out for collection of email-addresses.

E-mailadress

Kort svarstext

Kön *

Kort svarstext

Ålder *

Kort svarstext

Läser du någon gång nyhetstidningar på internet? *

☐ Ja

☐ Nej
8.2 Experimental surveys

The two pictures that are shown below were used in the experimental surveys, one of them in each survey. These included a header of one of the most well-known daily news sites and a header of one of the most well-known evening news sites in Sweden. In this study these are anonymous and that is why they are not shown in the picture. The questions and items were the same in the two surveys and that is why they are just presented once.
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2. Jag upplever budskapet i annonsen som kompetent *

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3. Jag upplever annonsens budskap som tillförlitligt *

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4. Jag upplever annonsens budskap som trovärdigt *

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Elin Millberg & Elin Lindmark
6. Jag upplever annonsörens av annonsen som kompetent

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7. Jag upplever annonsörens av annonsen som tillförlitlig

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9. Jag upplever denna nyhetssida som attraktiv

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13. Jag har en positiv uppfattning av denna typ av annonsering *

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14. Jag har en positiv uppfattning av displayannonsering som banners *

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15. Jag känner mig inte övertygad av denna annonc *

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16. Jag uppfattar denna annons som uppenbar reklam *

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17. Jag har tidigare blivit exponerad för denna typ av annonsering *

○ Ja

○ Nej

18. Kön *

Kort svarstext

19. Ålder *

Kort svarstext
Elin Millberg
International marketing student

Elin Lindmark
International marketing student