a study of comparative advertising in Canada

by Gordon H. G. McDougall

CONSUMER RESEARCH
COUNCIL CANADA
Ottawa, Canada

CONSUMER RESEARCH COUNCIL CANADA

The Consumer Research Council carries out independent research of relevance to the consumer. It is funded by Consumer and Corporate Affairs Canada.

This research paper was commissioned by the Consumer Research Council Canada, but the views expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Members of the Council.

A STUDY OF COMPARATIVE ADVERTISING IN CANADA

by

Gordon H.G. McDougall
Associate Professor
University of Windsor

Prepared for
CONSUMER RESEARCH COUNCIL CANADA
Ottawa

March 1976

Published by:

Consumer Research Council Canada
P.O. Box 94, Station "A"
Ottawa, Canada
K1N 8V1

Cat. No.: RG25-1/3
ISBN 0-662-00524-4

CONSUMER RESEARCH COUNCIL CANADA

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The Consumer Research Council was instituted in 1974 as part of a reorganization of the functions of the Canadian Consumer Council. Funded by Consumer and Corporate Affairs Canada as an independent research body, the Consumer Research Council was operated under the following terms of reference:

1. to advise the Minister and the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs on consumer research activities which are being carried on in Canadian universities and elsewhere, and on the available sources of research on particular consumer problems;
2. to review research proposals in the field of consumer affairs; and
3. to commission research on consumer affairs, to provide assessments of completed research projects, and decide on their publication and distribution to the public and presentation to the Minister.

During the first year of the Council's operations, a stock-taking was made of research on consumer issues currently being undertaken in Canada. Outlook papers were commissioned and seminars held to assist in the development of future research priorities. In 1975, with a budget of $145,000, a series of research studies was commissioned in the following areas:

The professions

Redress mechasisms

Federal-provincial relations in the field of consumer protection

Product information preferences of consumers

Consumer interest in Canadian food policy

Access to government information

Business as an interest group in Canada: the case of competition policy, 1971-1975

The administration and enforcement of the Combines Investigation Act, 1960-1975

Consumer credit billing practices

Comparative advertising in Canada

Methodologies for measuring the effectiveness of consumer protection programs

Consumer co-operatives in the Maritimes

These studies are now being reviewed for publication by the Council.

Future activities of the Council were suspended in March, 1976, as part of current policies to reduce government spending.

Michael J. Trebilcock
Chairman

March 1977

ABSTRACT

Comparative advertising is considered by many to be a communication form that will provide consumers with better information upon which to base their purchase decisions. These advertisements contain statements that imply, either explicitly or implicitly, that one brand is superior to other brands in the marketplace. The product comparisons in these advertisements, e.g., Brand A lasts longer than Brand B, presumably help the consumer by stating in a straight forward manner that one brand is better than other brand(s).

This research examined three aspects of comparative advertising. First, the level of comparative advertising in Canada was determined. Second, the willingness and ability of advertisers to substantiate comparative claims was examined. Finally, a survey of consumers was conducted to ascertain their reaction to comparative claims.

The research found that comparative advertising constituted approximately twenty-four percent of the advertising in both television and magazines. In the newspapers surveyed fourteen percent of the advertisements were comparative. Overall, comparative advertising constituted nineteen percent of the advertisements in the three media. This relatively high level suggested that more information should be obtained on comparative advertising.

Advertisers who had used comparative ads were contacted and requested to substantiate their claims. Only fifty-four percent of the advertisers contacted provided material which supported their claims. Forty-six percent of the advertisers did not substantiate their claims because they were unwilling to reply (36%), unwilling to provide information (8%), or they provided information which did not support their claims (2%).

A consumer survey was conducted, and the results indicated that consumers were generally skeptical of comparative claims. In most cases, the consumers did not believe the comparative claims made by advertisers were true.

The investigation concluded that the information value of comparative claims was low. The behavior of many advertisers in refusing to substantiate their claims and the general distrust of the claims by consumers significantly reduced the potential effectiveness of this communication form. In order to improve the information value of comparison advertising it was recommended that stringent procedures be adopted to regulate this advertising area. Substantiating material would be required before a claim could be made and any claim that was accepted would be given a "Stamp of Approval." Comparative advertising can play a useful role in consumer decision making but only if the information is perceived as factual and reliable.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF EXHIBITS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The objectives of this report are threefold:

(1) to determine the level of comparative advertising in Canada

(2) to determine the willingness and ability of advertisers to substantiate the claims made in comparative advertisements

(3) to determine consumer reaction to specific comparative advertisements.

For the purposes of this investigation comparative, or comparison advertising is defined as:

> *Any advertisement that states or implies that information has been obtained or a test has been conducted on a comparative basis or that states or implies a particular market standing in relation to other similar products, whether the other products are named or not, shall be deemed as comparative.*

This definition includes three general types of comparative advertisements: the direct comparison (i.e., Brand A, lasts twice as long as Brand B); the indirect comparison (i.e., Brand A, lasts longer than any other product), and the market standing comparison (i.e., Brand A, outsells all other brands). Examples of these three types are provided in Exhibit 1. The rationale for this definition is that if a comparison is made, either implicitly or explicitly, consumers could assume a factual basis for the statement.

EXHIBIT 1

EXAMPLES OF GENERAL TYPES OF COMPARATIVE ADVERTISEMENTS

1. **Direct Comparison**

   (a) "Tests have shown Ban Roll-on will help stop wetness better than Arrid Extra Dry, Right Guard, Soft and Dri and Dial."

(b) "Purex Bleach gives you 14% more of a bleaching ingredient than Clorox Bleach."

(c) "Sweetheart Dish Soap gives you all the sparkling clean dishes you get from Ivory Soap for less money."

(d) "In an independent test of riding and handling ability of Mercury against Mercedes-Benz more people preferred Mercury than Mercedes-Benz."

2. **Indirect Comparison**

(a) "In two research studies on pain, at a major hospital and at an important university medical centre, the doctors reported Excedrin was significantly more effective than the regular aspirin tablet."

(b) "Rescue II Soap Pads outlast ordinary soap pads."

(c) "Bufferin is twice as fast as plain aspirin in getting out of the stomach and speeding to the headache."

(d) "Results of an independent survey of T.V. technicians shows that Zenith Chroma-color II has the fewest repairs of any color T.V."

3. **Market Standing Comparison**

(a) "La-Z-Boy is the largest chair company in the business."

(b) "Sales figures show that Ford Granada is outselling all newcomers combined."

(c) "Seagram's V.O., the world's largest selling Canadian Whiskey."

(d) "Allied Van Lines: Canada's number one mover."

Comparative advertisements are a direct method of attempting to convince consumers that one brand is superior to other brands in the marketplace. The unique aspect of these advertisements is the implication that factual information, often in the form of scientific tests or independent research, has been gathered as the basis of the claim. This factual information provides a legitimizing function for the advertisement. Previous research has shown that good evidence in persuasive communications is an important influence on audience attitude change.[1] Consequently, comparative advertisements which provide good evidence can be a significant influence on a consumer's decision to purchase a particular brand.

Comparative ads can give consumers the information they need to choose brands knowledgeably, especially if advertisers also document comparison claims and make test reports readily available to consumers.[2] The obvious danger is that advertisers could distort the claims. Because these advertisements imply a factual base (i.e., good evidence) for the claims, there is an absolute need for accuracy. Distorted claims can cause consumers to base their decisions on incorrect information.

Since 1971, the use of comparative advertisements has increased in the United States. The increase has been caused, in part, by the Federal Trade Commission's advertising substantiation program which was investigated to ensure that comparative ads are factual. With this program, a number of advertisers have been prosecuted for misleading comparative advertisements.[3]

While some Canadian advertisers feel that comparative advertising will not reach the level it has in the United States,[4] there is evidence and opinion to the contrary.[5] As the report will indicate, up to twenty percent of the advertisements placed in various media are comparative advertisements. This level justifies an examination of the area to determine the reaction of both advertisers and consumers to comparative advertising.

The remainder of the report will contain the following chapters:

(a) **Background** – a review of the theoretical and legal aspects concerning comparative advertising.

(b) **Level of Comparative Advertising** – a content analysis of the three major media to determine the level of comparative advertising in Canada.

(c) **Advertiser Claim Substantiation** – a survey of firms who have used comparative advertising to determine their willingness and ability to substantiate claims.

(d) **Consumer Reaction to Comparative Claims** – a survey of consumers to determine their belief in comparative claims.

(e) **Summary and Conclusions** – a discussion of the overall results of the study and the resultant implications for regulatory agencies and advertisers.

FOOTNOTES

[1] McCroskey, C.J., "A Summary of Experimental Research on the Effects of Evidence in Persuasive Communication," Quarterly Journal of Speech, April 1969, pp. 169-176.

[2] Woodside, A.G., "Comparative Ads Help Consumers if Test Results are Told, but Ultra-Ban 5000 Ad Claims Fail Student Tests," Marketing News, November 15, 1974, p. 5.

[3] Wilkes, R.E., and Wilcox, J.B., "Recent FTC Actions: Implications for the Advertising Strategist," Journal of Marketing, Vol. 38 (January 1974), pp. 55-61.

[4] Scott, T., "Brand X to Naming Names," The Financial Post, May 17, 1975, p. 23.

[5] Oliver, R.E., "Comparing Pros and Cons," The Financial Post, May 17, 1975, p. 23.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

This chapter reviews both the relevant literature and the legal aspects concerning comparative advertising. The chapter begins with a discussion of two definitions of comparative advertising followed by a consideration of the different types of comparative advertising and their possible effects on consumers. A brief history of comparative advertising and the evolving legal aspects are presented. Finally, some conclusions are provided.

Definition of Comparative Advertising

Comparative advertising may be defined in a narrow or a broad manner. The narrow definition requires that two or more brands must be specifically named and the comparison must be in terms of one or more specific product attributes.[1] The rationale for this definition is that explicit comparisons will evoke different consumer responses from those evoked by more traditional advertising appeals. Further, the specific attribute requirement provides a given dimension or unit of measurement common to both objects. Advertising that states a product is "best" without specifying the basis for the claim would be excluded.[2]

For this study, comparative advertising has been defined in broader terms. As noted in the introduction, any ad which explicitly or implicitly states a claim on a comparative basis (i.e., between products/services) whether the products/services are named or not will be considered a comparative ad. Thus, ads which stated that a brand is "best" or "Number One" are considered to be comparative even though no other brand has been named. The argument for including indirect comparisons, where competing brands are not named, is that consumers may assume that the claim is made on the basis of factual information. While some might argue that the claim "better" is mere puffery, the claim implies a comparison and a factual base. The onus is on the advertiser to provide accurate information and substantiate any comparative claims made.

The specific attribute requirement of the first definition was not employed in the definition for this study. Whether or not a product attribute was mentioned would not alter the basic thrust of the ad. Again, the consumer may assume a product is "better" than other products even if the dimensions on which the product is "better" have not been named. It is quite possible that explicit comparisons may illicit a different consumer response than implicit comparisons but this factor was not considered to be important in definitional terms. However, it was considered in the design of the consumer questionnaire.

On the basis of the narrow definition, a 1973 survey found that comparative ads comprised about seven percent of all ads at that time,[3] and estimates are that the proportion has increased substantially since then.[4] This current investigation will show the current rate to be higher, which can be partially attributed to the broader definition used in this study.

Types of Comparative Advertisements

Comparative advertisements can be classified in terms of a number of characteristics. As shown in Exhibit 2, the major characteristics are the type of comparison (direct or indirect), the degree of substantiation, and market standing.

EXHIBIT 2

MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS OF COMPARATIVE ADVERTISEMENTS

Characteristics	Example
Direct or Explicit	Brand A is better than Brand B
Indirect or Implicit	Brand A is better than other brands
Substantiation	Test show Brand A is better than Brand B
Unsubstantiation	Brand A is better than Brand B
Market Standing	Brand A outsells any other brand

MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS COMBINED

Characteristics	Example
Direct, Substantiated	Tests show Brand A is better than Brand B
Direct, Unsubstantiated	Brand A is better than Brand B
Indirect, Substantiated	Tests show Brand A is better than other brands
Indirect, Unsubstantiated	Brand A is better than other brands
Market Standing, Substantiated	Sales figures show that Brand A outsells any other brand
Market Standing, Unsubstantiated	Brand A outsells any other brand

A direct comparison is one in which the advertised brand and the competing brands are named. An indirect comparison does not name the competing brands. A substantiated claim states that specific evidence has been collected ot prove the claim (e.g., "tests show", "survey results reveal"). An unsubstantiated claim makes no such claim. A market standing comparison states that one brand is preferred over other brands. The preference may be in terms of sales figures (e.g., Brand A outsells them all) or preference date (e.g., More women prefer Brand A).

The importance of the characteristics is that their presence or absence may lead to greater or lesser acceptance of the claims by consumers. That is, a direct-comparison substantiated advertisement (Tests show Brand A is better than Brand B) may be believed more readily by consumers than an indirect comparison unsubstantiated advertisement (Brand A is better than other brands).

The rational for suspecting that consumer belief is a function of these characteristics is based primarily on previous research. It has been found that:

(a) Including good evidence may significantly increase immediate audience attitude change and source credibility when the source is initially perceived to be moderate-to-low credible, when the message is well delivered, and when the audience has little or no prior familiarity with the evidence included or similar evidence.

(b) Including good evidence may significantly increase sustained audience attitude change regardless of the source's initial credibility, the quality of the delivery of the message or the medium by which the message is transmitted.[5]

Other research on source effect suggests the more credible the source, the more likely the message will be accepted by the audience.[6] A message which includes "independent surveys" or similar symbolic statements should tend to increase the likelihood of audience acceptance. Because comparative advertisements as opposed to other advertisements present "factual" statements (e.g., "tests show", "independent survey results reveal") in the form of evidence, this evidence or substantiation should increase consumer belief in the advertising claim.

The probable effect of direct versus indirect comparisons in terms of consumer acceptance is not clear.[7] A direct comparison, which names competing brand(s), might be perceived as more reasonable by consumers because it appears more factual than an indirect comparison which implies superiority over all competing brands. The counter-argument is that the indirect comparison may be more acceptable to consumers because of its vagueness. Because the situation is unclear, the effect of direct and indirect comparisons will be examined in the consumer survey.

History of Comparative Advertising

Problems facing the advertising industry and advertisers have increased substantially in recent years. The advent of consumerism and government involvement in the advertising area has resulted in a substantial loss of credibility both for advertisers and their advertisements. After reviewing the major problems of advertisers, which range from the low credibility that consumers attribute to advertising to the overload of commercials in the media, one author offers the following advice to advertisers: "*The message is so clear and simple it could almost be an ad itself; back up your claims with facts, and people will start to believe you.*"[8]

However, what appears to be happening is that advertisers are using comparative advertising as a technique to increase credibility with the consumer. Comparative campaigns, otherwise known as "knocking" campaigns, usually take the form of comparing two or more brands on one or more dimensions and stating that "Brand A is better." The ad "knocks" the other brands in favor of the advertised brand. Some advertisers have assumed that they can increase their credibility by presenting the consumers with factual information (e.g., tests, surveys) which supports their "better than all others" claims.

Comparative advertising, as a form of communication, has been in existence since the early days of advertising. In 1925, an advertisement for Coca-Cola claimed that "Coca-Cola has an average sale of more than six million drinks for every day of the year."[9] However, the rapid growth of comparative advertising in recent years can be partially attributed to the United States Federal Trade Commission (FTC) substantiation program of 1972. The program required advertisers to submit, on demand, data supporting claims relating to product safety, performance, quality, or comparative price.[10] The objectives of the program were educational (public disclosure of the substantiating data would enable consumers to make more rational purchasing decisions) and preventive (to deter advertisers from making unsupported claims by publicly exposing such claims as being unsubstantiated).[11]

The response of many advertisers to this FTC substantiation program was to develop advertising campaigns based on the data used for substantiation. In one sense, the FTC program "opened the door" for more comparative advertisements because the program published guidelines endorsing "valid competitive claims" which would give the consumer more information. However, because of procedural problems and misunderstandings the program, in many cases, has not provided the consumer with more information.[12] As noted earlier, since the advent of the FTC program the use of comparative advertising has increased substantially.

Legal Aspects of Comparative Advertising

The major developments in the legal area occurred in the United States with the FTC substantiation program. Before 1972, advertisers had been employing the "Brand X" technique in comparative advertising. That is, instead of naming the competing brands, Brand X was used as a surrogate. FTC officials felt that the consumer would be able to make better choices if the competing brands were named. Advertisers who had a superior product could tell the public about its superiority and what other brands their product was superior to. Further, by encouraging advertisers to name competing brands, FTC officials felt that overall product performance would be improved. Overall, the major benefit of providing consumers with more direct factual information on brands was considered to outweigh any negative consequences.

A number of concerns have been expressed about the increase in comparative advertising particularly regarding the "fairness" or accuracy of the claims. Surveys and scientific tests may be manipulated to some degree and potentially misleading conclusions may be derived. The consumers' inability to understand the significance of the tests from a research standpoint leaves them vulnerable to this type of manipulation. Consequently, a paramount requirement is to ensure that all tests and surveys are fairly and reliably conducted.

The Canadian legal environment differs from the United States in that no explicit program has been developed in Canada to deal with comparative claim. The major legal guidelines for advertising are Sections 36, and 37 of the Combines Investigation Act, which deal with misleading advertising and misleading price advertising. The overall direction of this legislation and the recently adopted legislation contained in Bill C-2 is concerned with general misrepresentations including price, warranties, testimonials relating to products and services. The major impact of the new legislation appears to be in the broadening of the Act to include all misrepresentations made to the public rather than merely those contained in published advertisements.

Two sections of the legislation are concerned with certain aspects of comparative advertisements. Section 36(1)(b) prohibits representations that are not based on adequate and proper tests. In layman terms, this means an advertiser is not allowed to make an unsubstantiated claim. Section 36.1 prohibits the unauthorized use of tests and testimonials and prohibits the authorized use of tests and testimonials where the representor distorts the results of the test or the scope of the testimonial.[13] In simpler terms, an advertiser cannot use independent test results without approval. Further, the advertiser cannot take test results and use selected quotes out of context. For example, if a safety test concluded that a product was unsafe on four of five dimensions, the advertiser could not claim that his product was safe on the fifth dimension. The legislation does not provide any specific guidelines for comparative advertising.

While no specific program has been developed for comparative claims and no advertiser has been prosecuted solely on an ad that made comparative claims, there are some constraints which advertisers must and often do recognize. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation will not air a television commercial unless the facts in it are substantiated. A number of Canadian newspapers have a similar attitude.[14] Food and drug ads are monitored by National Health and Welfare and the Consumer Fraud Protection Branch of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. In addition, many advertisers using the comparative approach have submitted their tests for review in the Program of Compliance conducted by the Investigation and Research Branch, Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Finally, comparative advertisers are constrained by their competitors who obviously will challenge any comparative statement they feel is deceptive.

One problem faced by Canadian authorities is the impact of U.S. advertising in Canada. There is a tremendous amount of "spill-over" from U.S. advertising campaigns into the Canadian market. Over eighty-five percent of Canadian television homes receive U.S. broadcasts and over thirteen million issues of American publications enter Canada each month.[15] The majority of products advertised for sale in the U.S. are also available in Canada and it is probably difficult, if not impossible, for a consumer to distinguish between a U.S. or Canadian advertisement for a particular brand. Thus, any Canadian regulations concerning comparative advertising will be diluted by the impact of the "spill-over" effect.

Conclusions

The review of the relevant literature has shown that the use of comparative advertising has been increasing, primarily as a result of the FTC substantiation program. Two major issues arise from the review. First, the reaction of consumers to comparative advertising and various types of comparative ads requires examination because of the lack of knowledge in this area. Second, comparative claims of advertisers should be studied to ascertain the fairness and reliability of the statements. This report will consider these issues, along with the level of comparative advertising, in the following chapters.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Wilkie, W.L., and Farris, P.W., "Comparison Advertising: Problems and Potential," Journal of Marketing, Vol. 39 (October, 1975), pp. 7-15.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Shimp, T.A., "Comparison Advertising in National Television Commercials: A Content Analysis," (Paper presented to the Fall Conference of the American Marketing Association, Rochester, N.Y., August, 1975).

[4] Wilkie, W.L., and Farris, P.W., "Comparison Advertising: Problems and Potential, " Journal of Marketing, Vol. 39 (October, 1975), pp. 7-15.

[5] McCroskey, C.J., "A Summary of Experimental Research on the Effects of Evidence in Persuasive Communications," Quarterly Journal of Speech, April 1969, pp. 169-176.

[6] McDougall, G.H.G. and Fry, J.N., "Source and Message Content Credibility in Retail Advertising," Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, (forthcoming).

[7] Wilkie, W.L., and Farris, P.W., "Comparison Advertising: Problems and Potential," Journal of Marketing, Vol. 39 (October 1975), pp. 7-15.

[8] Greenland, L., "Advertisers Must Stop Conning Consumers," Harvard Business Review, July-August, 1974, pp. 18-28, 74.

[9] The Coca-Cola Company: An Illustrated Profile, P.O. Drawer.

[10] Wilkes, R.E., and Wilcox, J.B., "Recent FTC Actions: Implications for the Advertising Strategist," Journal of Marketing, Vol. 38 (January 1974), pp. 55-61.

[11] Gardiner, D.M., "Deception in Advertising: A Conceptual Approach," Journal of Marketing, Vol. 39 (January 1975), pp. 40-46.

[12] Wilkes, R.E., and Wilcox, J.B., "Recent FTC Actions: Implications for the Advertising Strategist," Journal of Marketing, Vol. 38 (January 1974), pp. 55-61.

[13] Misleading Advertising Bulletin, Special Issue, Ottawa, Consumer and Corporate Affairs, January, 1976.

[14] Personal correspondence between the author and the Competition Policy Branch, Consumer and Corporate Affairs, Ottawa.

[15] Zarry, P.T., "Advertising and Marketing Communications in Canada," in Thompson, D.N., and Leighton, D.S.R., (ed.), Canadian Marketing: Problems and Prospects, Wiley Publishers of Canada Limited, 1973, pp. 229-251.

CHAPTER III

LEVEL OF COMPARATIVE ADVERTISING

The first phase of this research determined the level of comparative advertising in Canada. To accomplish this objective, a content analysis of the three major mass media – television, magazines, newspapers – was conducted to ascertain the proportion of comparative advertisements to total advertisements carried by each of the three media.

Methodology

The methodology was relatively straightforward. For the vehicles (e.g., a particular magazine) sampled within each media, every advertisement was examined and classified as either a comparative advertisement or not per the stated definition. The total number of advertisements appearing in a particular vehicle were counted and the proportion classified as comparative ads determined the level. The overall results of the first phase survey are reported by each media: television, newspapers, and magazines.

Comparative Advertising on Television

Three Toronto television stations (C.B.C., C.T.V., and Global) were each monitored for one consecutive week (Monday to Sunday) between the hours of 7:00 p.m., and 10:00 p.m. The results by station are reported in Exhibit 3. The level of comparative ads was remarkably consistent, averaging approximately twenty-four percent for all three stations. The major point to be made concerning these results is that approximately one-quarter of evening television advertising is comparative advertising. As shown in Exhibit 4 of the 916 advertisements that appeared on the three television stations, 216 or twenty-four percent were classified as comparative ads.

Comparative Advertising in Newspapers

Seven Canadian daily newspapers were each monitored for a one week period (Monday to Saturday). The results, by newspaper, are reported in Exhibit 5, which also provides a breakdown between the number of comparative advertisements classified as local versus national. A local advertisement is one for a company/product selling only in the market area in which the product/company is advertising. For example – advertisements for a regional retailer located in one geographic area. A national advertisement is one for a company/product which is sold on a nationwide basis. The distinction is made because only national comparative advertisements were included in the second and third phases of the project. The reason for the exclusion of the local comparative advertisements was mainly cost and time constraints. In addition, because the advertisers were local, consumer reaction to their comparative claims would probably be somewhat ambiguous, because of the consumer's lack of knowledge or experience with the advertiser.

Approximately fourteen percent of newspaper advertisements were comparative ads (Exhibit 6). The percentages were relatively stable across the newspapers with only minor variations. Considering the comparative ads, thirty-three per cent were classified as national and sixty-seven percent as local. The majority of local comparative ads were placed by retailers and typical claims made were: "widest selection", "best service", "lowest prices", and "friendliest staff."

EXHIBIT 3

TELEVISION MONITORING – BY STATION*

1. C.B.C. – Toronto

Day	Comparative Ads	Other Ads	Total Ads	Percentage Comparative Ads
Monday	11	39	50	22
Tuesday	6	42	48	13
Wednesday	10	37	47	21
Thursday	10	33	43	23
Friday	14	32	46	30
Saturday	10	33	43	23
Sunday	11	32	43	26
TOTAL	72	248	320	23

2. C.T.V. – Toronto

Monday	7	31	38	18
Tuesday	9	27	36	25
Wednesday	9	32	41	22
Thursday	10	31	41	24
Friday	10	30	40	25
Saturday	8	29	37	22
Sunday	13	31	44	30
TOTAL	66	211	277	24

3. Global – Toronto

Monday	12	38	50	24
Tuesday	11	34	45	24
Wednesday	10	36	46	22
Thursday	13	31	44	30
Friday	9	32	41	22
Saturday	9	34	43	21
Sunday	14	36	50	28
TOTAL	78	241	319	24

**Daily monitoring from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.*

EXHIBIT 4

TELEVISION MONITORING – SUMMARY

Station	Comparative Ads	Other Ads	Total Ads	Percengate Comparative Ads
C.B.C.	72	248	320	23
C.T.V.	66	211	277	24
Global	78	241	319	24
TOTAL	216	700	916*	24

**Total number of ads in one week (7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.)*

EXHIBIT 5

NEWSPAPER MONITORING – BY NEWSPAPER

1. Toronto Globe and Mail

Day	Comparative Ads	Other Ads	Total Ads	Percentage Comparative Ads	Comparative Ads Local	Comparative Ads National
Monday	5	39	44	11	3	2
Tuesday	7	28	35	20	5	2
Wednesday	4	33	37	11	3	1
Thursday	4	31	35	11	2	2
Friday	9	22	31	29	5	4
Saturday	6	33	39	15	3	3
TOTAL	35	186	221	16	21	14

2. Toronto Star

Monday	8	49	57	14	5	3
Tuesday	6	46	52	12	4	2
Wednesday	12	80	92	13	8	4
Thursday	14	75	89	16	9	5
Friday	6	36	42	14	5	1
Saturday	10	51	61	16	6	4
TOTAL	56	337	393	14	37	19

3. Montreal Gazette

Monday	8	48	56	14	6	2
Tuesday	5	54	59	8	4	1
Wednesday	5	47	52	10	3	2
Thursday	12	59	71	17	9	3
Friday	3	40	43	7	2	1
Saturday	6	59	65	9	4	2
TOTAL	39	307	346	11	28	11

4. Halifax Chronicle – Herald

Monday	5	24	29	17	4	1
Tuesday	5	16	21	24	3	2
Wednesday	3	32	35	9	2	1
Thursday	8	31	39	21	5	3
Friday	2	24	26	8	2	0
Saturday	2	27	29	7	1	1
TOTAL	25	154	179	14	17	8

5. Winnipeg Tribune

Monday	6	21	27	22	5	1
Tuesday	5	24	29	17	4	1
Wednesday	9	43	52	17	6	3
Thursday	7	26	33	21	5	2
Friday	5	34	39	13	3	2
Saturday	5	27	32	16	3	2
TOTAL	37	175	212	17	26	11

6. Vancouver Sun

Monday	8	31	39	21	6	2
Tuesday	7	35	42	17	5	2
Wednesday	12	63	75	16	8	4
Thursday	8	36	44	18	5	3
Friday	5	45	50	10	3	2
Saturday	5	63	68	7	2	3
TOTAL	45	273	318	14	29	16

7. Ottawa Journal

Monday	5	25	30	17	4	1
Tuesday	5	32	37	14	3	2
Wednesday	4	29	33	12	3	1
Thursday	9	42	51	18	6	3
Friday	5	24	29	17	4	1
Saturday	7	39	46	15	5	2
TOTAL	35	191	226	15	25	10

EXHIBIT 6

NEWSPAPER MONITORING – SUMMARY

Newspaper	Comparative Ads	Other Ads	Total Ads	Percentage Comparative Ads	Comparative Ads Local	Comparative Ads National
Toronto Globe & Mail	35	186	221	16	21	14
Toronto Star	56	337	393	14	37	19
Montreal Gazette	39	307	346	11	28	11
Halifax Chronicle-Herald	25	154	179	14	17	8
Winnipeg Tribune	37	175	212	17	26	11
Vancouver Sun	45	273	318	14	29	16
Ottawa Journal	35	191	226	15	25	10
TOTAL	272	1623	1895	14	183	89

Comparative Advertising in Magazines

Nine magazines were monitored for comparative advertising. Six were Canadian publications and three were U.S. publications which had sizeable circulations in Canada. The magazines monitored and their Canadian circulations are reported in Exhibit 7. Two issues of each magazine were monitored with the exception of Time where three issues were monitored in part because it is a weekly publication. As shown in Exhibit 8, the level of comparative advertising by magazine ranges from a low of seventeen percent for Maclean's to a high of thirty-one percent for Good Housekeeping. The average level of comparative advertising across all nine magazines (see Exhibit 9) was twenty-four percent.

Summary

As shown in Exhibit 10, the level of comparative advertising across all three media was nineteen percent. The level for both television and magazines, where the majority of advertisers are national firms, was identical at twenty-four percent. It seems reasonable to conclude that national advertisers are currently using comparative advertising techniques in approximately one-quarter of their messages. Apparently these advertisers consider these techniques to be relatively effective in accomplishing their objectives.

The results of this first phase of the investigation suggest that comparative advertising is a significant form of advertising which warrants further study. The following two sections report on the willingness and ability of comparative advertisers to substantiate their claims and the reaction of consumers to comparative advertisements.

EXHIBIT 7

MAGAZINES MONITORED AND CANADIAN CIRCULATION

Magazine	Canadian Circulation*
Time	510,000
Good Housekeeping	157,000**
Chatelaine	993,000
Reader's Digest	1,256,000
Saturday Night	50,000
Miss Chatelaine	168,000
Family Circle	481,000**
MacLean's	767,000
Woman's Day	464,000**

**Source for Canadian publications: The Canadian Media Directors Council Media Digest 1974-75. Circulation figures from June 1973.*

***Audited Bureau of Circulation, December 1974 and December 1975.*

EXHIBIT 8

MAGAZINE MONITORING – BY MAGAZINE

Magazine	Issue	Comparative Ads	Other Ads	Total Ads	Percentage Comparative Ads
Time	1	4	18	22	18
	2	5	14	19	26
	3	9	23	32	28
TOTAL		18	55	73	25
Good Housekeeping	1	38	63	101	38
	2	16	55	71	23
TOTAL		54	118	172	31
Chatelaine	1	6	33	39	15
	2	8	23	31	26
TOTAL		14	56	70	20

EXHIBIT 8 (Cont'd)

Readers Digest	1	8	26	34	24
	2	4	18	22	18
TOTAL		12	44	56	21
Saturday Night	1	4	10	14	29
	2	6	16	22	27
TOTAL		10	26	36	28
Miss Chatelaine	1	8	30	38	21
	2	8	25	33	24
TOTAL		16	55	71	23
Family Circle	1	13	48	61	21
	2	14	52	66	21
TOTAL		27	100	127	21
Woman's Day	1	11	40	51	21
	2	13	53	66	20
TOTAL		24	93	117	21
MacLean's	1	3	16	19	16
	2	5	23	28	18
TOTAL		8	39	47	17

EXHIBIT 9

MAGAZINE MONITORING – SUMMARY

Magazine	Comparative Ads	Other Ads	Total Ads	Percentage Comparative Ads
Time	18	55	73	25
Good Housekeeping	54	118	172	31
Chatelaine	14	56	70	20
Reader's Digest	12	44	56	21
Saturday Night	10	26	36	28
Miss Chatelaine	16	55	71	23
Family Circle	27	100	127	21
Woman's Day	24	93	117	21
MacLean's	8	39	47	17
TOTAL	183	586	769	24

EXHIBIT 10

LEVEL OF COMPARATIVE ADVERTISING – SUMMARY

Media	Comparative Ads	Other Ads	Total Ads	Percentage Comparative Ads
Television	216	700	916	24
Newspaper	272	1,623	1,895	14
Magazine	183	586	769	24
TOTAL	671	2,909	3,580	19

CHAPTER IV

ADVERTISER CLAIM SUBSTANTIATION

For the consumer, an important element of comparative advertising is that the claims made are factual and can be substantiated. This second phase of the research examined the ability and willingness of advertisers to substantiate their claims. During the first research phase, all comparative claims were recorded and the advertising firms' products were identified. These firms were contacted by mail and requested to provide substantiating material for their claims. The remainder of this chapter discusses advertiser response to this request. In addition, the characteristics of the comparative advertisements are reported.

Characteristics of Comparative Advertisements

The first research phase revealed that a total of 671 comparative ads were placed in the vehicles surveyed within the three media. As mentioned previously, the local comparative advertisements (i.e., placed by a local versus a national firm) have been excluded. There remained a total of 488 national comparative ads to be further considered.

With any advertising campaign, the same advertisements are run a number of times. Consequently, the 488 advertisements often consisted of the same ad repeated, either in the same or different media. As shown in Exhibit 11, 73 different comparative ads were counted. These ads originated with 57 different companies. Any company with more than one comparative ad was selling more than one brand. For example, Bristol-Myers used the comparative advertising strategy for five of its brands. As shown, most companies ran only one comparative ad campaign.

EXHIBIT 11

NUMBER OF COMPARATIVE ADVERTISEMENTS – BY COMPANY

Number of Different Ads	Number of Companies	Number of Ads
1	46	46
2	8	16
3	2	6
4	0	0
5[a]	1	5
	57	73

[a] *To be read: One company used five different comparative ads for five brands that it sold.*

The ads were analyzed in terms of their characteristics. A detailed list of the claims is reported in Appendix A, and a summary of the characteristics is presented in Exhibit 12. Fourteen claims were market-standing comparisons and further examination showed that six of these ads were for alcoholic beverages. Possibly because of the legal constraints placed on these advertisers, the fact that more people prefer a particular brand of liquor is regarded as a major selling point. All of the market standing ads were indirect and unsubstantiated. That is, no competing brands were named and no supportive evidence was supplied. A typical market standing ad contained a statement such as: "The World's largest selling . . ." The form taken by the market standing ads (indirect, unsubstantiated) appears to make sense because many advertisers regard market standing information as confidential and, therefore, they would not substantiate this claim in their ads. Further, in claiming they outsell all other brands there is no need to name competing brands.

EXHIBIT 12

CHARACTERISTICS OF COMPARATIVE ADS

Major Characteristics	Number
Direct	8
Indirect	65
	73
Substantiated	16
Unsubstantiated	57
	73
Market Standing	14
Non-market standing	59
	73

MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS COMBINED
(Excluding Market Standing Advertisements)

Characteristics	Number
Direct-Substantiated	4
Direct-Unsubstantiated	4
Indirect-Substantiated	12
Indirect-Unsubstantiated	39
	59

As shown in Exhibit 12, the majority of comparative ads (excluding the market standing ads) were indirect and unsubstantiated. Thirty-nine or two-thirds of the remaining fifty-nine ads made comparisons which did not name the other products or provided substantiating evidence. Of the direct comparison ads, one-half were substantiated, but of the indirect ads, only thirteen percent were substantiated. On the basis of these results, it appears that the strategy of most comparative advertisers is to claim their brand is superior, but to omit both the names of the "inferior" brands, and the supportive evidence for the claim. Because these comparisons are somewhat ambiguous, it could be difficult for anyone, including the consumer, to determine the accuracy of the claims. The indirect, unsubstantiated claim is probably the safest type of comparison to be made and this might explain the high proportion of advertisers using this form of comparison.

Claim Substantiation

Fifty-seven companies who ran a total of seventy-three comparative ads were contacted by means of a letter to the marketing manager. As shown in Exhibit 13, the letter asked the firm to supply any information or test results which could substantiate the claim. A second letter was sent to all firms who did not reply to the first mailing. The following section discuss the results of this second phase of the survey.

EXHIBIT 13

LETTER SENT TO COMPARATIVE ADVERTISERS

October 16, 1975

Marketing Manager
Bristol-Myers Canada Limited
111 Richmond Street West
Toronto, Ontario, M5H 2G4

Dear Sir:

I am conducting a research study on the impact of comparative advertising in Canada. As part of this study, I am collecting information from business firms who have recently run a comparative advertisement. These advertisements contain a claim made on the basis of factual market information (e.g., Brand X outsells all other brands) or on test results (e.g., Brand X lasts longer than Brand Y).

In this regard, I have noticed a series of very effective advertisements concerning products marketed by Bristol-Myers. The brands advertised and the statements made are as follows:

Brand		Statement
(a)	Clarol Conditioner	Clarol has four times as much protein as any leading conditioner.
(b)	Bufferin	Bufferin is twice as fast getting out of the stomach and speeding to the headache than ordinary aspirin.
(c)	Final Net Hair Spray	Final Net holds three times longer than the leading spray.
(d)	Ban Roll-on	Tests have shown that Ban Roll-on will help stop wetness better than Arrid Extra Dry, Right Guard, Soft and Dri and Dial.

I would appreciate it if you could send me a copy of the information or tests upon which the claims are based. This information will be used for analytical purposes in the study and your co-operation would be greatly appreciated.

If you would like a summary copy of the report, I would be pleased to provide it. Thank you in advance for your efforts on my behalf.

Yours sincerely,

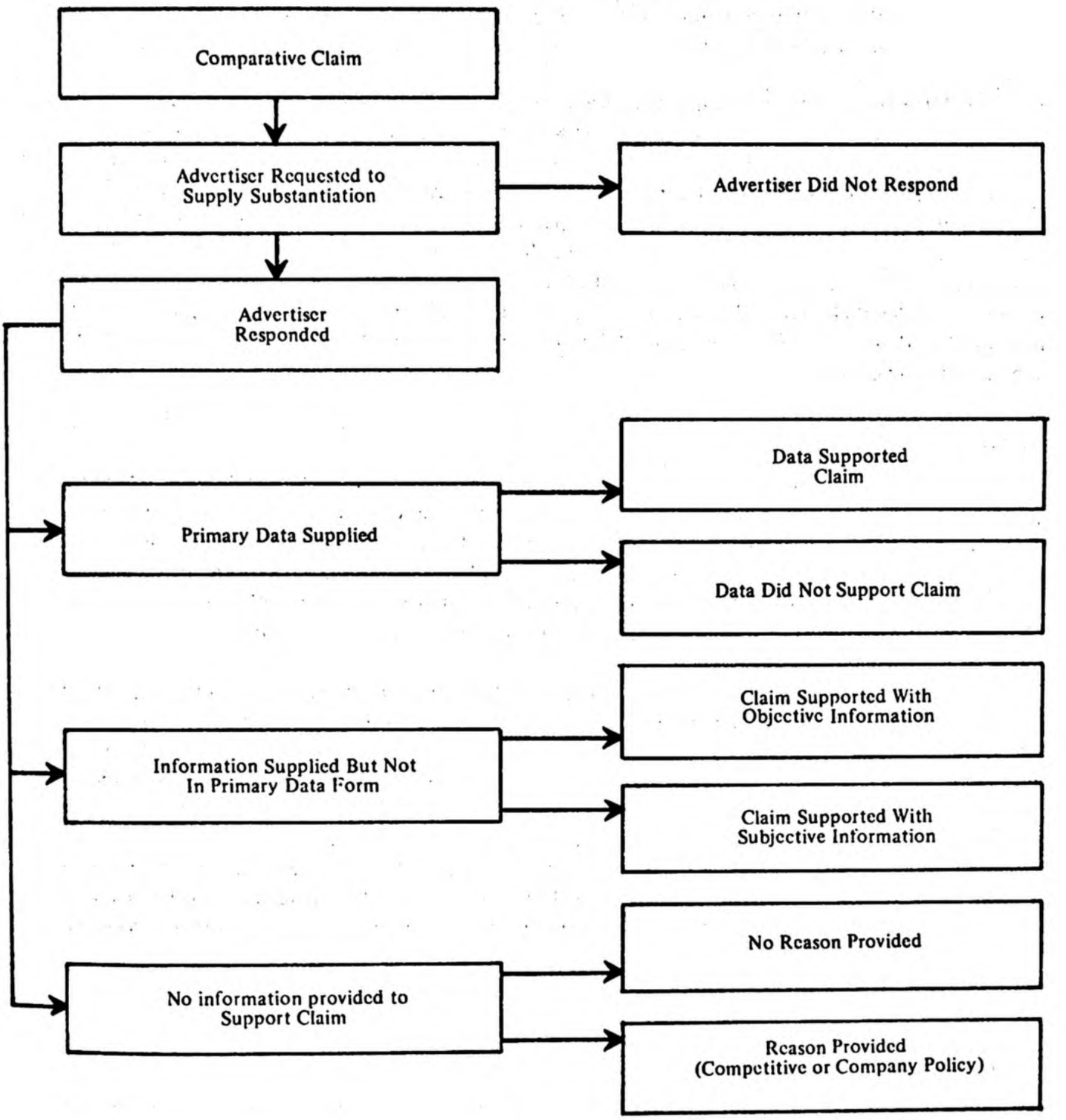
G. H. G. McDougall, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Faculty of Business Administration

Analysis Procedures

The responses were categorized with the use of a flow diagram as shown in Exhibit 14. The first step was to determine if the advertiser had responded to the request for substantiation. If the advertiser had not responded, then no further analysis was required. For the advertisers who did respond, the type of information which they provided determined their categorization. Three categories were established:

(1) Primary data supplied – The firm provided the basic test results upon which the claim was based. For example, if the claim was; "more women prefer Brand A in a survey of leading brands," then the company provided the actual survey results. This information allowed the researcher to evaluate the validity of the claim on the basis of the actual tests. It should be noted that the researcher assumed that the data the company provided was factual, complete, and that proper survey procedures (e.g., sample design) were employed.

EXHIBIT 14
ANALYSIS PROCEDURES FOR COMPARATIVE CLAIMS



(2) Information supplied but not in primary data form – in this case the firms did not supply the basic data upon which the claim was based but did provide information relating to the claim. For example, if the claim was: "The world's largest selling brand", the firm supplied information as to how the data was obtained (e.g., using company sales and Statistics Canada data) and used. However, the actual data was not provided. With this category it was assumed that the firms were entirely honest in their replies. That is, if a firm stated that they had data which supported their claim, then it was assumed that they, in fact, did have the data.

(3) No information provided to support claim – in this situation, the firm responded to the query, but did not either directly or indirectly attempt to support the claim that had been made.

After the advertisers' responses were categorized, the next step was to determine if the information provided supported the claim. This step was necessary for the first two categories. When primary data was supplied the task of determining whether the data did or did not support the claim was relatively straightforward. With the second category, the replies were further classified as supporting the claim in either an objective or subjective manner. The distinction between objective and subjective was made on the basis of the advertiser's response. For example, an objective response was considered one made on the basis of tests or market information. A subjective response usually included such phrases as, "on the basis of our information, we *feel*", or "it is our opinion that . . .". Thus, the firm did not state unequivocably that data was available to substantiate the claim.

Results

The results of the second phase of the investigation are reported in Exhibit 15. Only forty-seven replies were received concerning the seventy-three comparative claims. Therefore, thirty-six percent of the claims were not substantiated because the advertiser was unwilling to respond to the request for information. In addition, of the forty-seven replies a further six did not supply any information. In total, thirty-two claims or forty-four percent were not substantiated because the advertiser did not reply or provide the necessary information.

The unwillingness of a significant number of advertisers to substantiate their comparative claims is a fact which cannot be ignored. Part of the problem of consumer skepticism and distrust of advertisements can be attributed to the attitude and behavior of advertisers. If these advertisers are unwilling to provide the evidence upon which their claims are based, then it is also reasonable that consumers should disbelieve the claims. This state of affairs does not benefit either party. One of the main reasons for the use of comparative advertisements is that it provides the consumer with factual information upon which to base a brand decision. However, an absolute requirement is that the claim can and will be substantiated. The fact that forty-four percent of the claims were not substantiated because the advertiser was unwilling to provide information is cause for concern.

On the other hand, forty-one responses (56 percent) were received which provided evidence to support the claims. Fifteen of these responses were in the form of primary data (i.e., the actual test/information). In thirteen of the fifteen cases the data clearly supported the claim. In the remaining two cases, the data did not. The supporting evidence was rejected because in the first case it was apparent that a faulty study had been conducted, and in the second case the data did not support the claim that was made.

EXHIBIT 15

RESULTS OF ADVERTISER CLAIM SUBSTANTIATION

Number of comparative claims made	73
Number of responses to request for substantiation	47

Categorization of Responses

1. Data on which comparative claim based supplied		15
(a) Data supported comparative claim	*13*	
(b) Data did not support comparative claim	*2*	
2. Information supplied but not in primary data form		26
(a) Objective information used to support claim	*21*	
(b) Subjective opinions used to support claim	*5*	
3. Responded to request but refused to supply data		6
(a) Did not provide any information or attempt to support claim	*2*	
(b) Refused to supply information for competitive/company reasons	*4*	

SUMMARY

Proportion of firms responding to request for substantiation	*47/73 = .64*
Proportion of firms providing primary data which supported claims	*13/73 = .18*
Proportion of firms providing data, primary or indirect, which supported claims	*39/73 = .54*

A further twenty-six responses provided information in paraphrased form to support the claim. That is, the information was either excerpted or paraphrased from a report. The problem with this information form is that by selectively omitting various findings, a report may be distorting reality. Consequently, it is difficult to judge the overall accuracy of the information. As noted earlier, it was assumed that the information received was accurate.

The twenty-six responses were further classified into two categories. Twenty-one claims were classified as having substantiated the claim in an objective manner. Five claims were considered to be subjective substantiations. These latter claims could be disputed because they appeared to be based partially on opinion as opposed to entirely on fact. If only factual criteria were allowed, the claims would have not been supported.

Conclusions

The results of this second phase of the investigation would not be considered encouraging from a consumer's point of view. Only fifty-four percent of the claims were supported on the basis of primary or other information. Only eighteen percent of the claims were supported by primary data. Further, a total of forty-six percent of the claims were not supported because: the advertiser refused to respond (36 percent); the advertiser refused to supply the information (8 percent); or the information supplied did not support the claim (2 per cent).

CHAPTER V

CONSUMER REACTION TO COMPARATIVE CLAIMS

The objective of the third phase was to determine the reaction of consumers to comparative price advertisements. Of particular interest, was the extent to which consumers believe comparative claims. To accomplish this objective a questionnaire was designed and a convenience sample of 201 female respondents were interviewed in Toronto and Windsor.

Methodology

1. *Questionnaire*

The questionnaire was designed to accomplish two objectives. The main objective was to determine if consumers thought the factual statements (or comparative claims) of advertisers were true. A second objective was an attempt to determine what factors might cause a consumer to believe or disbelieve a comparative claim. Based on previous research it was felt that belief in a comparative claim could be a function of eight factors:

(a) reasonableness of claim (layout, claim itself, etc.)

(b) type of comparison (direct or indirect)

(c) degree of substantiation (independent survey, company run survey, no substantiation)

(d) credibility of company (well known, unknown)

(e) respondent knowledge of product category (experienced, inexperienced)

(f) respondent's general attitude towards advertising

(g) repetitiveness of message (frequently advertised, infrequently advertised)

(h) respondent demographics (age, income, education)

Because of time and cost constraints, the final questionnaire provided information related to only four factors:

(a) type of comparison (direct or indirect)

(b) degree of substantiation (substantiation, no substantiation)

(c) respondent's general attitude towards advertising

(d) respondent demographics (age, income, education)

The final questionnaire is presented in Appendix B. The questionnaire obtained measures of:

(a) general attitudes towards advertising.

(b) respondent reaction to three specific comparative advertisements.

The actual advertisements were shown during the interview and the respondents were asked about the claim, whether they believed tests were conducted, if they believed the tests were fairly conducted and the degree of influence the ad would have on them.

Analysis

Before the general analysis was conducted, a comparison was made between the two samples, Windsor and Toronto. The replies to each question were compared and in the majority of cases, there was little difference between the answers for the two cities. Consequently, the subsequent analysis did not control for the difference in city.

The analysis is reported in three stages, a general overview, consumer reactions to comparative claims, and factors affecting credibility of comparative claims.

1. *Overview*

In terms of general attitudes towards advertising, respondents stated that, on average, they read advertisements fairly often before going grocery shopping (Exhibit 17). They read advertisements for other products less frequently. While the majority of respondents read ads on a regular or periodic basis, almost one-quarter stated that they never read ads before they go shopping.

EXHIBIT 17

FREQUENCY OF READING ADVERTISEMENTS BEFORE SHOPPING

Frequency of reading advertisements before going grocery shopping:

	%
Regularly	32
Fairly Often	17
Once in a While	34
Never	17
	100

N = 201

Frequency of reading advertisements before shopping for other products:

	%
Regularly	19
Fairly Often	18
Once in a While	38
Never	25
	100

N = 201

When asked their opinion about statements concerning advertising, the respondents held fairly negative viewpoints (Exhibit 18). On the average, respondents "agreed" that advertising can persuade people to buy things they don't need and they slightly "disagreed" with the statement that most advertisers are honest. The respondents generally "agreed" that advertising can provide useful information about products but they also tended to "agree" that advertising should be more closely controlled by government. The results suggested that consumers see some positive aspects (i.e., useful information) but mainly negative aspects (i.e., persuasive, dishonest, closely controlled) of advertising.

The most important information sources when deciding to purchase were friends/relatives and magazines like Consumer Reports (Exhibit 19). Advertisements and salespeople were only considered to be slightly important as information sources. As an information source, advertising ranked third in importance behind friends/relatives and magazines like Consumer Reports.

2. *Consumer Reactions to Comparative Claims*

Three comparative advertisements, for Aim, Teflon II, and St. Joseph Aspirin for Children, were shown to consumers for their reaction to the statements and the tests substantiating the statements. Consumers, on average, thought that the Teflon claim was probably true, whereas, both the Aim and the St. Joseph ads received greater skepticism (Exhibit 20 to Exhibit 22). A majority of respondents (63 percent) thought the Teflon statements were based on actual tests but substantially fewer respondents considered the Aim claim (43 percent) or the St. Joseph claim (36 percent) to be based on actual tests.

Of the respondents who thought that tests were conducted, seventy percent thought the Teflon tests were fairly and reliably conducted. The respective percentages for Aim and St. Joseph were forty-eight and sixty-six. Probably the most important figure to consider is the proportion of respondents who thought that tests were conducted and that the tests were fair and reliable. The results for the three ads were: Aim – 21%, Teflon – 44%, and St. Joseph – 24%. In all cases, less than one-half of the consumers felt that fair and reliable tests were conducted and in two of the three cases **less than twenty-five percent** concurred.

While these three ads may not represent the spectrum of comparative advertisements, the relatively small proportion of consumers who accepted presumably factual statements should be of considerable concern to all advertisers. If similar results were obtained for a wider cross-section of comparative ads, then much of the assumed impact of these ads is lost. Previous research in other fields has indicated that substantiated evidence should increase the audience's predisposition towards the message. What has occurred in this study is that the substantiation has been suspected by a majority of respondents. If people don't believe the tests were fair or were conducted, then the claim is probably not enhanced by the statements concerning the tests.

The respondents were also asked how much the ad would influence them to purchase the product. A majority of consumers stated "not at all" for both the Aim and St. Joseph ads while forty-four percent had a similar response for the Teflon ad. With regard to these results it should be noted that the respondents were probably under some subtle pressure to answer negatively. Studies on advertising have found that it is not socially acceptable to "believe" advertisements or to agree that an ad can "influence" one to buy a particular brand. As a result, there is probably some bias caused by this social pressure.

EXHIBIT 18

GENERAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS ADVERTISING

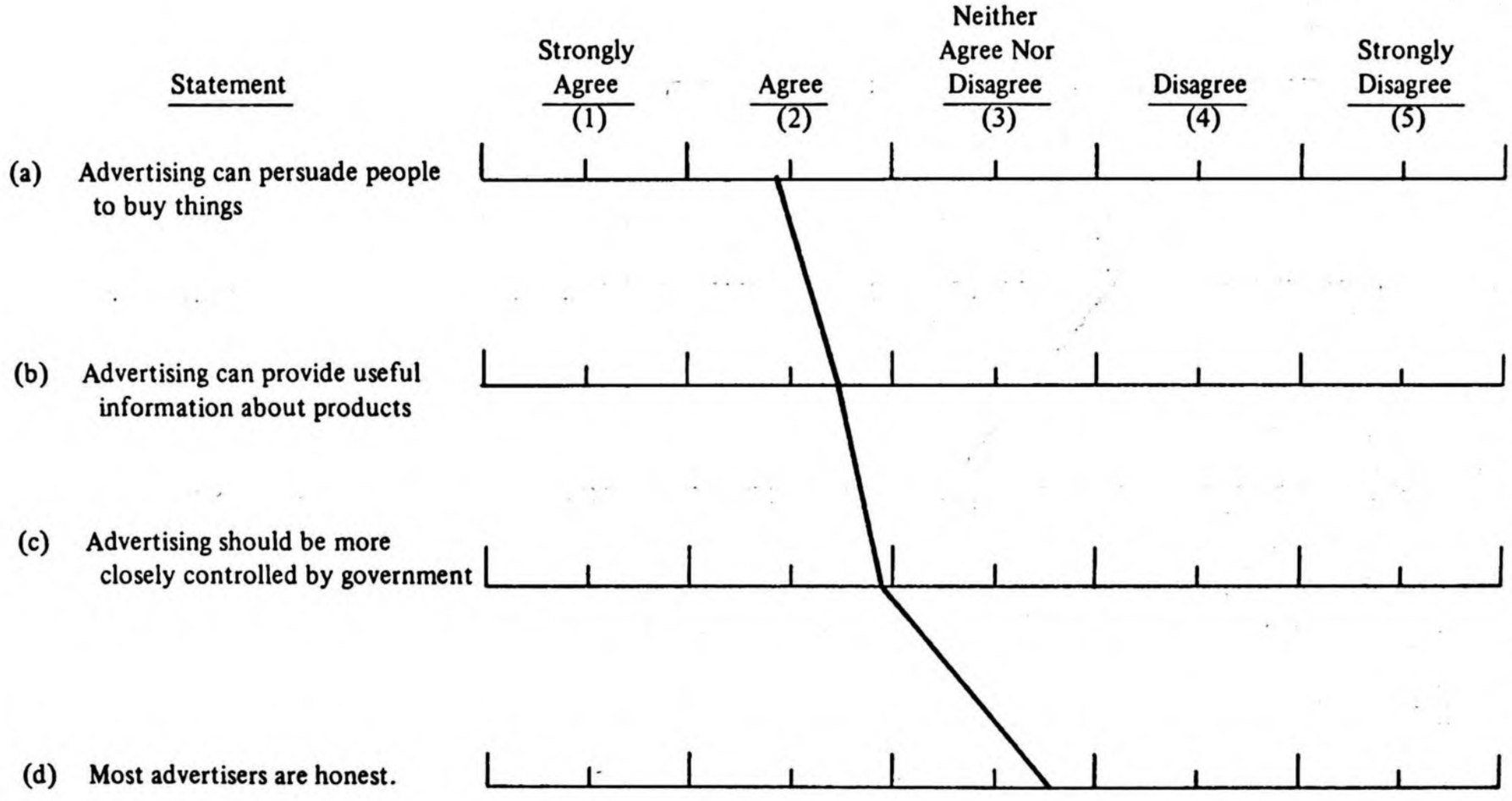


EXHIBIT 19

IMPORTANCE OF INFORMATION SOURCES

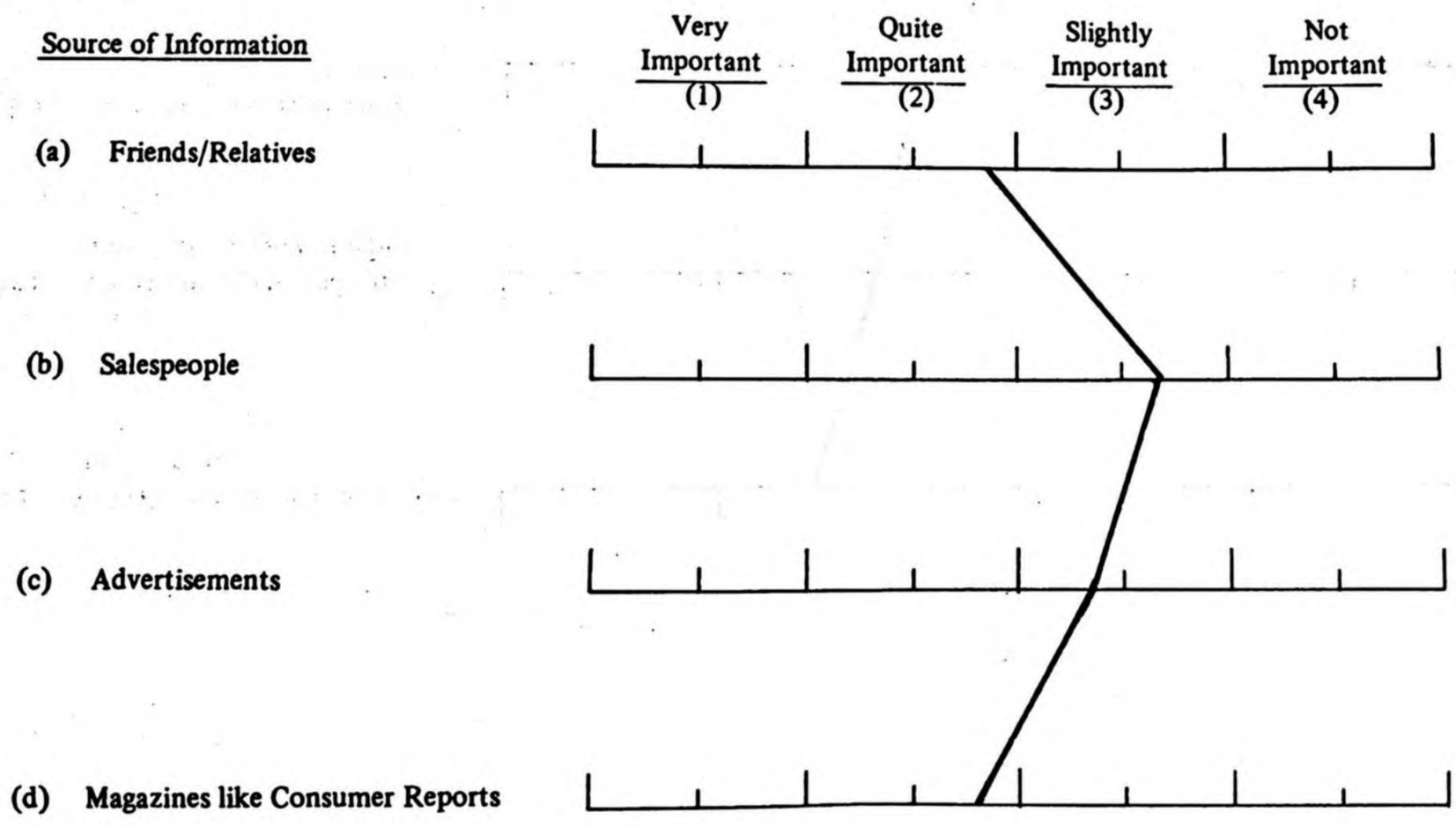


EXHIBIT 20

CONSUMER REACTIONS TO AIM TOOTHPASTE COMPARATIVE AD

Advertisement A: Aim Toothpaste – in tests with more than 1,300 children against both leading fluoride brands, children prefer Aim by almost 2 to 1.

1. Do you think the statement is?

	%
True	5
Probably True	27
Don't Know	30
Probably Not True	24
Not True	14
	100

2. Do you think the statement is based on actual tests?

	%
Yes	43
Don't Know	18
No	39
	100

3. If Yes, (to Question 2), do you think the tests were fairly and reliably conducted?

	%
Yes	48
Don't Know	24
No	28
	100

4. When buying toothpaste, how much would this ad influence you to buy Aim toothpaste?

	%
A Great Deal	1
Somewhat	10
A Little	13
Not at All	76
	100

EXHIBIT 21

CONSUMER REACTIONS TO TEFLON COOKWARE COMPARATIVE AD

Advertisement B: Teflon Cookware – in actual kitchen tests, housewives preferred TEFLON 3 to 1 over the standard finish.

1. Do you think the statement is . . . ?

	%
True	27
Probably True	37
Don't Know	14
Probably Not True	14
Not True	8
	100

2. Do you think the statement is based on actual tests?

	%
Yes	63
Don't Know	14
No	23
	100

3. If Yes (to Question 2), do you think the tests were fairly and reliably conducted?

	%
Yes	70
Don't Know	19
No	11
	100

4. When buying cookware, how much would this ad influence you to buy Teflon cookware?

	%
A Great Deal	9
Somewhat	30
A Little	17
Not at All	44
	100

EXHIBIT 22

CONSUMER REACTIONS TO ST. JOSEPH ASPIRIN FOR CHILDREN COMPARATIVE AD

Advertisement C: St. Joseph Aspirin for Children — among doctors naming a brand in a national survey, St. Joseph Aspirin for Children is the one more Doctors give to their own children than any other brand.

1. Do you think the statement is . . . ?

	%
True	14
Probably True	30
Don't Know	11
Probably Not True	24
Not True	21
	100

2. Do you think the statement is based on actual tests?

	%
Yes	36
Don't Know	20
No	44
	100

3. If Yes (to Question 2), do you think the tests were fairly and reliably conducted?

	%
Yes	66
Don't Know	12
No	22
	100

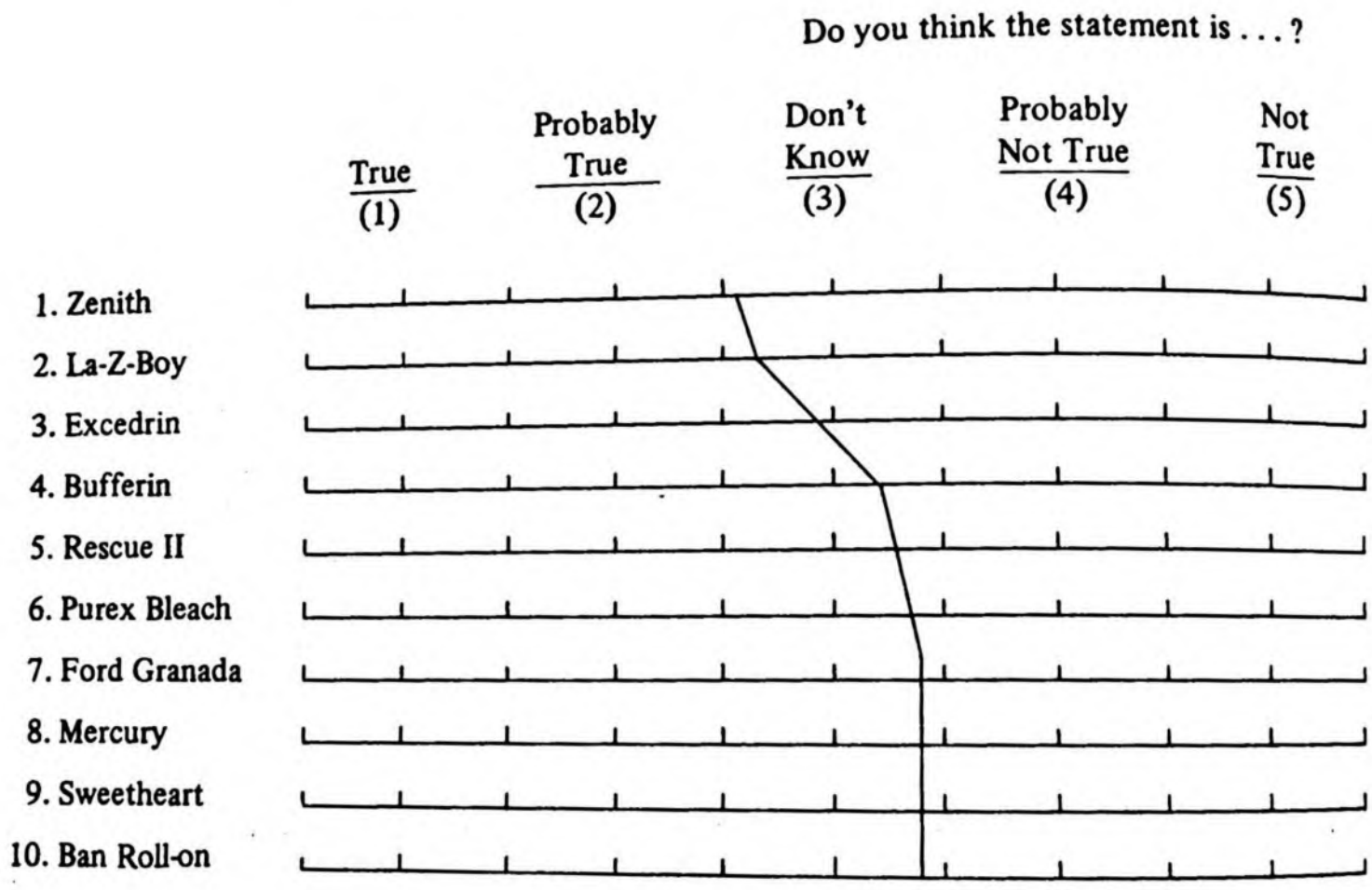
4. When buying aspirins, how much would this ad influence you to buy St. Joseph Aspirin for Children?

	%
A Great Deal	8
Somewhat	19
A Little	15
Not at All	58
	100

Respondent reaction to ten comparative claims was also determined. As shown in Exhibit 23, the claim receiving the "best" evaluation was the Zenith statement which respondents, on average, thought was probably true. The lowest evaluation was given to the Ban Roll-on statement and the average evaluation for the claims ranged from "probably true" to slightly below "don't know".

EXHIBIT 23

CONSUMER BELIEF IN COMPARATIVE CLAIMS



The comparative claims were:

1. "Results of an independent survey of T.V. technicians shows that Zenith Chromacolor II has the fewest repairs of any color T.V."

2. "La-Z-boy is the largest chair company in the business."

3. "In two research studies on pain, at a major hospital and at an important university medical centre, the doctors reported Excedrin was significantly more effective than the regular aspirin tablet."

4. "Bufferin is twice as fast as plain aspirin in getting out of the stomach and speeding to the headache."

5. "Rescue II Soap Pads outlast ordinary soap pads."

6. "Purex Bleach gives you 14% more of a bleaching ingredient than Clorox Bleach."

7. "Sales figures show that Ford Granada is outselling all newcomers combined."

8. "In an independent test of riding and handling ability of Mercury against Mercedes-Benz more people preferred Mercury than Mercedes-Benz."

9. "Sweetheart Dish Soap gives you all the sparkling clean dishes you get from Ivory Soap for less money."

10. "Tests have shown Ban Roll-on will help stop wetness better than Arrid Extra Dry, Right Guard Soft and Dri and Dial."

Further analysis of these results is provided in Exhibit 24, where the "don't know" responses have been removed. Consumers who replied "don't know" can be considered to have reserved judgement on the claim possibly due to the lack of knowledge concerning the product or the claim. Only three out of the ten claims presented had a greater percentage of people who thought the claim was true or probably true as opposed to probably not true or not true. These findings were similar to the results obtained for the three comparative ads: the majority of respondents did not think that most of the comparative claims were true. It appears that, for these consumers, comparative advertisements were treated with a great degree of skepticism and distrust. While no statements can be made concerning the relative credibility of comparative ads versus non-comparative ads, these results question the effectiveness of comparative ads on the credibility dimension.

EXHIBIT 24

CONSUMER BELIEF IN COMPARATIVE CLAIMS "DON'T KNOW" RESPONSES REMOVED

Percentage that thought claim was:

Claim	True or Probably True	Probably Not True or Not True	Total
Zenith	70	30	100
La-Z-Boy	67	33	100

Excedrin	54	46	100
Bufferin	43	57	100
Rescue II	32	68	100
Purex Bleach	36	64	100
Ford Granada	33	67	100
Mercury	32	68	100
Sweetheart	32	68	100
Ban Roll-on	33	67	100

3. *Factors Affecting Comparative Claim Credibility*

The final stage of the analysis examined possible factors which might affect belief in the comparative claims. As stated previously, belief could be related to:

–general attitudes towards advertising (i.e., the more negative respondents are towards advertising, the more likely they will disbelieve the comparative statements).

–respondent demographics (i.e., age, education, and income could influence belief although the direction of the influence is not clear)

–type of comparative claim (i.e., indirect claims, which do not name another brand, are more likely to be accepted than direct claims, which name another brand)

–degree of substantiation (i.e., substantiated claims, which state that tests were conducted, are more likely to be accepted than unsubstantiated claims)

The relationship between belief and attitudes/demographics was tested by means of multiple regression analysis. As shown in Exhibit 25, belief for each of the thirteen claims was regressed against the independent variables. The results, not shown, can be summarized as follows:

(a) Belief in comparative claims was not strongly related to either general attitudes towards advertising or respondent demographics. While certain variables showed a significant relationship (in a statistical sense) with belief the highest explanation of belief as a function of attitudes and demographics was approximately sixteen percent. In other words, the ability to predict the degree of belief in any of the thirteen claims on the basis of attitudes and demographics was low.

(b) Substantial variation was found in the relative importance of the independent variables relationship to each of the thirteen claims. This means that none of the independent variables had a consistently strong relationship for all thirteen claims.

EXHIBIT 25

GENERAL REGRESSION MODEL

Dependent Variable

Belief (that the comparative claim was true).

Independent Variables

1. General attitudes towards advertising (four statements)

2. Importance of information sources (four sources).

3. Respondent demographics (age, income, education).

(c) Of the independent variables considered, four variables were most often related to belief. Recognizing that the relationship was not strong and with respect to some claims was not present, it was found that respondents' belief in a comparative claim would increase when:

–they agreed with the statement: "Most advertisers are honest"

–they stated that magazines like Consumer Reports "were important" as an information source

–they disagreed with the statement "Advertising can persuade people to buy things they don't need."

–they stated that advertisements "were important" as an information source.

(d) The demographic variables contributed little to the explanation of belief in the comparative claims. This means that belief was not generally related to respondent age, education or income.

While these results might appear to be somewhat contradictory they should be taken in context. First, the results are suggestive only and should not be considered conclusive. Second, the results may indicate that belief is related to the degree of information sought. That is, those people who actively seek information from magazines like Consumer Reports and advertisements may have more "stored" information with which to judge the comparative claims. Further, it is worth noting that most comparative claims are true and the "active" information seekers may recognize this.

The influence of the type of claim and the degree of substantiation on consumer belief was examined by a comparison of the results to eight of the comparative claims. These eight claims were selected in terms of their characteristics and, as shown in Exhibit 26, the eight ads were balanced in that pairs of ads had similar characteristics. By examining the average scores for each pair of ads, a general picture of the effect of the characteristics can be determined. Before discussing the results it should be recognized that the major factor affecting belief is probably the brand itself, not the type of claim. That is, the fact that the Ban Roll-on claim is direct and substantiated may be far less important than the fact that the ad is for Ban Roll-on. Again, any conclusions reached must be taken within the context of this study and the advertising claims under investigation.

The greatest degree of belief was obtained for the two indirect substantiated ads. Further, the four indirect ads received a higher degree of belief than the four direct ads. Substantiated ads resulted in higher belief than unsubstantiated ads but the impact of substantiation was lower than the impact of indirect comparisons. To summarize, belief was increased when (a) the ad was indirect and, (b) the claim was substantiated.

Conclusions

In summary, the consumer survey has shown that:

Respondents, in general, have somewhat negative attitudes towards advertising.

Respondents indicated a fair degree of skepticism towards comparative claims. In the majority of cases, more respondents did not believe the claims than believed the claims. This suggests that the generally negative feelings expressed about advertising are also prevalent with respect to comparative advertisements. While advertisers have attempted to increase the credibility and potential influence of their messages with these claims, the effectiveness has been substantially reduced by consumer disbelief. As a specific example, a majority of consumers who examined the three comparative ads *did not believe* that tests were conducted or that the tests were fairly and reliably conducted.

Belief in comparative claims was not strongly or consistently related to general attitudes towards advertising or respondent demographics. While some relationships did exist, it seems more likely that belief is related to knowledge of the brand and attitudes towards the brand. That is, if a consumer is currently using a brand or has favorable attitudes towards a brand, she is more likely to accept a comparative claim than if she is not using it or has negative attitudes. General attitudes towards advertising and her particular demographics probably play a far lesser role than brand experience.

EXHIBIT 26

CONSUMER BELIEF IN TYPE OF COMPARATIVE CLAIMS

Claim	Type of Claim	Mean Score
Mercury	Direct, Substantiated	3.41*
Ban Roll-on	Direct, Substantiated	3.44
Zenith	Indirect, Substantiated	2.53
Excedrin	Indirect, Substantiated	2.96
Purex	Direct, Unsubstantiated	3.81
Sweetheart	Direct, Unsubstantiated	3.44
Rescue II	Indirect, Unsubstantiated	3.30
Bufferin	Indirect, Unsubstantiated	3.23

*To be read: Respondents, on average, evaluated the Mercury comparative claim at 3.41. An evaluation of 1 would be given if all respondents thought the claim was "true" and an evaluation of 5 would be given if all respondents thought the claim was "not true".

Comparisons

1. Direct versus indirect claims

	Mean Score
Direct	3.40
Indirect	3.01
Difference	.39

On average, indirect claims had a higher degree of consumer acceptance than direct claims.

2. Substantiated versus unsubstantiated claims

	Mean Score
Substantiated	3.09
Unsubstantiated	3.32
Difference	(.23)

On average, substantiated claims had a higher degree of consumer acceptance than unsubstantiated claims.

The type of comparative ad appears to influence belief. Ads which were indirect (no competing brands named) and substantiated (tests conducted) received greater belief than direct, unsubstantiated claims. This conclusion must be considered in the limited context of the specific claims used.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

Since the Federal Trade Commission substantiation program was instigated in 1972, comparative advertising has increased significantly in the United States. The results of this investigation have shown that a high proportion of Canadian advertising is also in the form of comparative advertising. Approximately twenty-four percent of all television and magazine advertising is comparative and fourteen percent of newspaper advertising is in the same category. Clearly, the current advertising practices that are present in the United States have been adopted in Canada as well.

For consumers, the main benefit of comparative advertising is that it will presumably allow them to make better decisions because of meaningful, factual information on brands. Two requirements are necessary for this benefit to be obtained. First, the advertiser must present statements that are based on facts. Second, the consumer must believe the statements are truthful. If either of these requirements are not met, then the benefit is lost.

The second phase of this investigation attempted to measure the factual nature of comparative claims by determining advertisers' willingness and ability to substantiate their claims. Advertisers who had used comparison advertising were asked to substantiate their claims. The results indicated that only fifty-four percent of the seventy-three comparative claims were substantiated with either primary data or other information. Thirty-six percent of the claims were not substantiated because the advertiser was unwilling to reply to the request for information. A further eight percent of the advertisers who did respond refused to provide information relating to the claim. In only eighteen percent of the cases did the firm provide the basic data (i.e., the actual study or test) upon which the claim was based.

The unwillingness of many advertisers to substantiate their claims does not mean they cannot support their claims, but it does provide a strong indication of their attitude towards providing the information. Considering the current climate, particularly with respect to the consumerism movement, this type of attitude is not acceptable. Advertisers who will not provide information on a voluntary basis may find themselves in a situation where they are required to provide it on an involuntary basis.

As a final comment, it would seem reasonable to assume that consumers would place little confidence in claims which are not willingly substantiated by advertisers.

The third phase of the research measured consumers' reactions to comparative claims. A survey of 201 respondents determined the degree to which consumers thought the claims made by advertisers were truth. In general, more consumers thought the thirteen claims examined were "not true" as opposed to "true". The skepticism with which consumers treated the thirteen claims is a strong indication that the communication value of these claims is low. The negative attitudes consumers have towards advertising in general is reflected in their distrust of the factual nature of the claims.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the main benefit of comparative advertising, as a means of providing the consumer with better information upon which to base their decisions, is not occurring in Canada. This is because many companies are unwilling to substantiate their claims and consumers generally distrust the claims. The information value of comparative claims is low because of advertiser actions and consumer attitudes.

While the basic idea that comparative advertising provides better information has merit, it is apparent that modifications are required in order to upgrade the information value of comparative ads. Therefore, it is recommended that an advertising regulatory body, either at the government or industry level, implement the following procedures which are designed to improve the credibility of valid comparative claims:

1. A comparative ad is defined as:

   "An advertisement that states or implies that information has been conducted on a comparative basis or that states or implies a particular market standing with relation to other similar products, whether the other products are named or not, shall be deemed as comparative."

2. Any company planning on using comparative advertisements be required to provide evidence in support of that claim to a regulatory body.

3. The evidence provided must be in the form of primary data. That is, the basic study or evidence on which the claim is based must be submitted.

4. All evidence the firm has pertaining to the claim must be submitted.

5. The regulatory body approve or disapprove the claim based on the primary data and its relationship to the claim.

6. Any firm which has approval to run a comparative ad be allowed to state that fact in their advertising.

7. All evidence concerning the claim be made available to anyone requesting the information.

In effect, these recommended procedures are designed to provide a "Seal of Approval" for any claim that is substantiated. If advertisers can note in their advertisements that the claim has been approved it should increase the confidence level of consumers viewing the claim. Further, by providing complete access to the information, any consumer or interested party can remove any doubts by personally examining the information. By instigating these procedures comparative advertising can be a valuable source of information for the consumer and a useful technique for advertisers.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Armstrong, G.A., and Russ, F.A., "Detecting Deception in Advertising," MSU Business Topics, Spring, 1975, pp. 21-31.

Bauer, R.A., and Greyser, S., Advertising in America: The Consumer View, Harvard University Press, Boston, 1968.

Canada Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, Trade Practices Branch, Misleading Advertising Bulletin, Ottawa.

"Care in Comparison Urged: Cosmetics Market Tacks Hit.," Advertising Age, March 18, 1974, p. 1.

Christopher, M., "NBC Spells Out New Formal Guides for Comparative Spots," Advertising Age, January 28, 1974, p. 1.

Christopher, M., "ABC Comparative Rules Stress Test Procedures," Advertising Age, March 18, 1974, p. 1.

Cohen, D., "Surrogate Indicators and Deception in Advertising," Journal of Marketing, Vol. 36, (July, 1972), pp. 10-15.

Collington, R., "Trends to More Consumer Information Will Continue," Marketing, January 22, 1973, p. 3.

Edmonds, E., "Comparative Ads Get CAAB Go-Ahead," Marketing, December 9, 1974, p. 1.

Firestone, O.J., The Economic Implications of Advertising, Carswell Co. Limited, London, Canada, 1968.

Gardiner, D.M., "Deception in Advertising: A Conceptual Approach," Journal of Marketing, Vol. 39, (January, 1975), pp. 40-46.

Good, W.S., "Canadian Attitudes Towards Advertising: A Pilot Study," The Canadian Marketer, Fall, 1973.

Greenland, L., "Advertisers Must Stop Conning Consumers," Harvard Business Review, July-August, 1974, pp. 18-28, 74.

How Advertising in Canada is Developing Self-Regulation, Report to the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Advertising Advisory Board, Toronto Star Limited, November 26, 1974.

McCroskey, C.J., "A Summary of Experimental Research on the Effects of Evidence in Persuasive Communications," Quarterly Journal of Speech, April 1969, pp. 169-176.

McDougall, G.H.G., and Fry, J.N., "Source and Message Content Credibility in Retail Advertising," Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, (forthcoming).

Oliver, R.E., "Comparing Pros and Cons," The Financial Post, May 17, 1975, p. 23.

Scott, T., "Brand X to Naming Names," The Financial Post, May 17, 1975, p. 23.

Shimp, T.A., "Comparison Advertising in National Television Commercials: A Content Analysis," Paper presented to the Fall Conference of the American Marketing Association, Rochester, N.Y., August 1975.

Taylor, W.D., "Comparative Advertising: A Powerful Selling Tool When It's Not Abused," Advertising Age, Vol. 46 (April 25, 1975), p. 58.

Taylor, W.D., "NBC Sets Guidelines for Comparative Advertising Complaints," Advertising Age, Vol. 46 (January 8, 1975), p. 8.

Trytten, J.M., "Advertising Can't Manipulate Your Consumer, " Sales Management, Vol. 113 (July 22, 1974), p. 36.

Vlanoff, S.M., "Comparison Advertising: An Historical Retrospective," Working Paper, Marketing Science Institute, Cambridge, Mass., February, 1975.

Wilkes, R.E., and Wilcox, J.B., "Recent FTC Actions: Implications for the Advertising Strategist," Journal of Marketing, Vol. 38 (January 1974), pp. 55-61.

Wilkie, W.L., and Farris, P.W., "Comparison Advertising: Problems and Potential," Journal of Marketing, Vol. 39 (October 1975), pp. 7-15.

Wright, P.L., and Barbour, F., "The Relevance of Decision Process Models in Structuring Persuasive Messages," Communication Research, Vol. 2, (October 1975).

Woodside, A.G., "Comparative Ads Help Consumers if Test Results are Told, but Ultra-Ban 5000 Ad Claims Fail Student Tests," Marketing News, November 15, 1974, p. 5.

APPENDIX A

COMPARATIVE ADVERTISEMENTS – DETAILED CLAIMS

Company	Product	Claim	Type of Claim*	Media**
Kimberly-Clark	Kotex Lightdays	New oval shaped Kotex Lightdays are the most natural, thinnest, most effective, most portable feminin pad ever developed for between period uses.	I,U	M
Kraft Foods	Kraft Cheese Slices	The best tasting process cheese slices around.	I,U	M,TV
Reynolds Aluminum	Reynolds Wrap	Reynolds Wrap keeps frozen and refrigerated foods fresher longer than plastic wrap.	I,U	M
Canadian Tampax	Tampax Tampons	More women buy Tampax tampons than all other tampons combined because they trust them.	I,U,MS	M
Dominion Dairies	Light n'Lively Ice Milk	Light n'Lively contains less than half the fat of ice cream. Yet, it's every bit as smooth . . . ice-creamy-tasting. And, even more refreshing.	I,U	M
Carter Wallace	Nairspray	It gets below the skin-line so your legs feel smoother and stay smoother longer.	I,U	M
Alberto-Culver	F.D.S.	F.D.S. keeps your soap and water fresh - longer than soap and water alone.	I,U	M
Alberto-Culver	New Dawn 2-Hair Colour	The world's most expensive hair colour.	I,U	M,TV
Norwich Pharmacal	Norforms	Norforms. Easier than a douche.	I,U	M
Playtex	Playtex Tampons	And tests show that more women prefer the Playtex applicator.	I,S	M
Seagram's	Seagram's V.O.	The world's largest selling Canadian whiskey.	I,U,MS	M,N
Seagram's	Bolshoi Vodka	Bolshoi. The smoothest vodka you can buy.	I,U	M
Canadian Schenley	Stock '84 Brandy	The world's largest selling brandy.	I,U,MS	M,N
Canadian Schenley	Schenley Liquors	In just three short years, we've won more medals than any other distiller in the world.	I,S	M,N
Avis	Avis	The Wizard of Avis is our computerized reservation system. It's the best in the business.	I,U	M,N
Allied Van Lines	Allied Van Lines	Canada's number one mover.	I,U,MS	M,N
Somerset Importers	Johnny Walker	Johnny Walker is the world's largest selling scotch.	I,U,MS	M
Carrier Air Conditioner	Carrier Air Conditioner	It's the central air conditioner unit that creates only half the sound power of the next quietest you can buy.	I,U	M
Rickett and Coleman	French's Mustard	That's why we're America' #1 taste.	I,U,MS	M
Colgate Palmolive	Colgate Toothpaste	Only a dentist can give him a better fluoride treatment.	I,U	M
Colgate Palmolive	Dynamo	Dynamo gets your whole wash clean, clean, clean for less, less, less.	D,U	M

Company	Product	Claim	Type of Claim*	Media**
Litton	Vari-Cook Micro Oven	Best cooking results ever.	I,U	M
Armstrong Cork	Congoleum Flooring	A no-wax, Shinyl Vinyl floor stays fresher looking longer.	I,U	M
Armstrong Cork	Armstrong Solarian	Its special Mirabond wear surface keeps its shine, without waxing or buffing, for longer than an ordinary vinyl flooring.	I,U	M
3M	Rescue II Soap Pads	Outlasts ordinary soap pads.	I,U	M
Proctor and Gamble	Ivory Liquid	Helps keep hands looking younger.	I,U	M,TV
Proctor and Gamble	Crest	Over the last twenty years, we've gathered scientific proof that Crest's fluoride fights cavities . . . from clinical tests using thousands of kids.	I,S	M,N,TV
Proctor and Gamble	Sure	Most anti-perspirant sprays go on wet and oily, compared to Sure which goes on dry, And, Sure keeps you drier.	I,U	M,TV
Dupont	Teflon II	In actual kitchen tests, housewives preferred Improved Teflon 3-to-1 over the standard finish.	I,S	M
Economics Laboratory	Jet-Dry	No dishwashing detergent can prevent water spots. Jet-Dry can because it works in the rinse cycle.	I,U	M
Plough	St. Joseph Aspirin for Children	Among doctors naming a brand in national survey, St. Joseph Aspirin for Children is the one more doctors give to their own children than any other brand.	I,S	M
Plough	Solarcaine	America's number one relief from sunburn pain.	I,U,MS	M
T. J. Lipton	Wishbone Salad Dressing	America's favorite salad dressing.	I,U,MS	M
General Foods	Gaines-burgers	The canned dog food without the can.	I,U	M
General Foods	Top Choice Dog Food	Better for your dog than real hamburger.	I,U	M
Ralston-Purina	Purina Cat Chow	More cats love Purina Cat Chow than any canned cat food. It's the number one cat food in America.	I,U,MS	M
Lever Brothers	Aim	In tests with more than 1,300 children against both leading fluoride brands, children preferred Aim by almost 2 to 1.	I,S	M
Deluxe Upholstery	La-Z-Boy	Because you've made us the largest chair company in the business.	I,U,MS	M
John Labatt	Labatt's Lager Beer	Largest selling beer in Canada.	I,U,MS	N,TV
Hitachi	Hitachi	No colour gaps like ordinary colour TV's.	I,U	M,TV

Company	Product	Claim	Type of Claim*	Media**
Canadian Kayes Fibre	Chinet Paper Plates	Because Chinet Paper Plates are stronger than ordinary paper plates, you won't be embarrassed at a crucial time.	I,U	TV
Andres	Andres Baby Duck	Largest selling wine in Canada.	I,U,MS	TV
Johnson & Johnson	J-Cloths	Laboratory tests have shown that J-Cloths are twice as absorbant as other cloths under ordinary conditions.	I,S	M,TV
Ford	Mercury	In an independent test of riding and handling ability of Mercury against Mercedes-Benz, more people preferred Mercury than Mercedes-Benz.	D,S	TV
Ford	Ford Granada	Independent tests on noise carried out on Ford Granada, Cadillac Seville, and Mercedes-Benz show Ford is consistently as quiet or quieter than either of the other cars.	D,S	TV
Ford	Lincoln-Continental	In tests conducted by the Nationwide Consumers Institute of Lincoln-Continental against Cadillac, consumers chose Continental 44-9 over Cadillac.	D,S	TV
Kendall	Curad Bandages	Don't stick like other bandages.	I,U	TV
Gillette	Firm and Free Hair Spray	Tests show that Firm and Free holds longer under tests of steam than any other leading aerosol.	I,S	M,TV
Quaker Oats	Puss'n Boots Cat Food	Canada's largest selling cat food.	I,U,MS	M
Alberta Distilleries	Alberta Pure Vodka	Best selling vodka at a popular price	I,U,MS	M
U.S. Borax	Borateem Plus	Removes stains better than ordinary bleach.	I,U	M
Scholl	Scholl Hair Remover	Compare hair removers and you'll choose Scholl.	I,U	M
Chesebrough-Pond's	Cutex Nail Polish	Covers as well as high priced and dries faster.	I,U	M
Purex	Sweetheart Dish Soap	Sweetheart Dish Soap gives you all the sparkling clean dishes you get from Ivory Soap for less money.	D,U	M
Purex	Purex Bleach	Purex Bleach gives you 14% more of a bleaching ingredient than Clorox Bleach.	D,U	M
Wella	Wella Balsam Hair Conditioner	Makes your hair more beautiful than any other imitator.	I,U	M,TV
Morton-Norwich	K-2R	Lifts more spots than any other spot remover.	I,U	M
Cotter	E-Z-Kare Paint	Less porous, easier to clean than ordinary latex paint.	I,U	M,TV
Western Mandata	Clorox Bleach	No toilet bowl cleaner kills germs more effectively than Clorox.	I,U	M
Benson & Hedges	Viscount Cigarettes	Lowest in "tar" and nicotine of all Canadian King Size cigarettes.	I,U	M

Company	Product	Claim	Type of Claim*	Media**
Warner-Lambert	Schick II	Tests in our laboratory using an electronic device show that there is less blade pull with Schick II Teflon blades than other leading blades.	I,S	TV
American Motors	Gremlin	Gremlin goes farther on a tank of gas than any other car.	I,U	TV
Canada Packers	Dial Very Dry Deodorant	Right Guard calls itself anti-stain. Sure promises to keep you drier. Arrid says it isn't sticky. New Dial Very Dry Anti-Perspirant does it all.	D,U	TV
Zenith	Zenith Chromacolor II	Results of an independent survey of T.V. technicians shows that Zenith Chromacolor II has the fewest repairs of any color T.V. set.	I,S	TV
Corby's Distillery	Grand Duke Vodka	Grand Duke. One of the world's three greatest vodkas.	I,S	M,N
Burmah-Castrol	Castrol Super GTX	What Super GTX has that other multigrade oils don't have is our unique detergent package.	I,U	M,N
Volkswagen	Volkswagen Rabbit	The world's least expensive safety car?	I,U	M
B.M.W.	B.M.W. 2002	Now you know why we claim: There is no better small car.	I,U	M
Bristol Myers	Clairol Conditioner	Condition has four times as much protein as any leading conditioner.	I,U	M
Bristol Myers	Excedrin	In two research studies on pain, at a major hospital and at an important university medical centre, the doctors reported Excedrin was significantly more effective than the regular aspirin tablet.	I,S	M,TV
Bristol Myers	Bufferin	Bufferin is twice as fast getting out of the stomach and speeding to the headache than ordinary aspirin.	I,U	M,TV
Bristol Myers	Final Net Hair Spray	Final Net holds three times longer than the leading spray.	I,U	M,TV
Bristol Myers	Ban roll-on	Tests have shown that Ban Roll-on will help stop wetness better than Arrid Extra Dry, Right Guard, Soft and Dri and Dial.	D,S	M

I=Indirect, D=Direct, U=Unsubstantiated, S=Substantiated, MS=Market Standing
***M=Magazine, N=Newspaper, TV=Television*

APPENDIX B

CONSUMER QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX B

CONSUMER QUESTIONNAIRE

As part of a research project by a member of the Faculty of Business Administration at the University of Windsor we are asking people their views about advertising. Your help in answering a few questions is of great importance to the study we are doing.

1. In general, how often do you read advertisements:

   a. before you go grocery shopping?

   Regularly _____ Fairly often_____ Once in a while _____ Never_____

   b. before you go shopping for other products?

   Regularly _____ Fairly often _____ Once in a while _____ Never_____

2. I am going to read some statements which have been made about advertising. For each one, please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with it.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. Advertising can persuade people to buy things they don't need.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Advertising can provide useful information about products.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. Advertising should be more closely controlled by government	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. Most advertisers are honest	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

3. People use different sources of information when deciding to buy a particular brand of a product. In general, how important are each of the following sources of information to you?

	Very Important	Quite Important	Slightly Important	Not Important
a. Friends/Relatives	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Salespeople	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. Advertisements	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. Magazines like Consumer Reports	_____	_____	_____	_____

I am going to show you copies of actual advertisements that have appeared in magazines and I would like to get your comments on some statements in the ads.

Advertisement "A"

4. In this ad for Aim toothpaste, the statement is made that ". . . in tests with more than 1300 children against both leading fluoride brands, children prefer Aim by almost 2 to 1."

a. Do you think the statement is . . .?

true. . ___ probably true. . ___ don't know. . ___ probably not true. . ___ not true. . ___

b. Do you think the statement is based on actual tests?

Yes. . ___ No. . ___ Don't know. . ___

If Yes: c. Do you think the tests were fairly and reliably conducted?

Yes. . ___ No. . ___ Don't know. . ___

d. When buying toothpaste, how much would this ad influence you to buy Aim toothpaste?

A great deal. . ___ Somewhat. . ___ A little. . ___ Not at all. . ___

Advertisement "B"

5. In this ad for Teflon cookware, the statement is made that "In actual kitchen tests, housewives preferred TEFLON 3 to 1 over the standard finish."

a. Do you think the statement is . . .?

true. . ___ probably true. . ___ don't know. . ___ probably not true. . ___ not true. . ___

b. Do you think the statement is based on actual tests?

Yes. . ___ No. . ___ Don't know. . ___

If Yes: c. Do you think the tests were fairly and reliably conducted?

Yes. . ___ No. . ___ Don't know. . ___

d. When buying cookware, how much would this ad influence you to buy TEFLON cookware?

A great deal. . ___ Somewhat. . ___ A little. . ___ Not at all. . ___

Advertisement "C"

6. In this ad for St. Joseph Aspirin for Children, the statement is made that ". . . among doctors naming a brand in a national survey, St. Joseph Aspirin for children is the one more doctors give to their own children than any other brand."

   a. Do you think the statement is . . .?

   true. . ___ probably true. . ___ don't know. . ___ probably not true. . ___ not true. . ___

   b. Do you think the statement is based on actual tests?

   Yes. . ___ No. . ___ Don't know. . ___

   If Yes: c. Do you think the tests were fairly and reliably conducted?

   Yes. . ___ No. . ___ Don't know. . ___

   d. When buying aspirin, how much would this ad influence you to buy St. Joseph Aspirin for Children?

   A great deal. . ___ Somewhat. . ___ A little. . ___ Not at all. . ___

7. Now I'm going to read some advertising claims that have recently appeared in newspapers, magazines or on television. For each of the statements, could you tell me how true you think it is:

   a. In an advertisement for Ban Roll-on deodorant the statement was made that:

   "Tests have shown Ban Roll-on will help stop wetness better than Arrid Extra Dry, Right Guard, Soft and Dri and Dial."

   b. In an advertisement for the Ford Granada automobile the statement was made that:

   "Sales figures show that Ford Granada is outselling all newcomers combined."

   c. In an advertisement for Excedrin aspirin the statement was made that:

   "In two research studies on pain, at a major hospital and at an important university medical centre, the doctors reported Excedrin was significantly more effective than the regular aspirin tablet."

   d. In an advertisement for Purex bleach the statement was made that:

   "Purex Bleach gives you 14% more of a bleaching ingredient than Clorox Bleach."

   e. In an advertisement for Rescue II soap pads the statement was made that:

   "Rescue II Soap Pads outlast ordinary soap pads."

   f. In an advertisement for La-Z-Boy chairs the statement was made that:

   "La-Z-Boy is the largest chair company in the business."

g. In an advertisement for Zenith Chromacolor II television set the statement was made that:

"Results of an independent survey of T.V. technicians shows that Zenith Chromacolor II has the fewest repairs of any color T.V."

h. In an advertisement for Bufferin aspirin the statement was made that:

"Bufferin is twice as fast as plain aspirin in getting out of the stomach and speeding to the headache."

i. In an advertisement for Sweetheart dish soap the statement was made that:

"Sweetheart Dish Soap gives you all the sparkling clean dishes you get from Ivory Soap for less money."

j. In an advertisement for the Mercury automobile the statement was made that:

"In an independent test of riding and handling ability of Mercury against Mercedes-Benz more people preferred Mercury than Mercedes-Benz."

Do you think the statement is . . .?

	True. .	Probably true. .	Don't know. .	Probably not true. .	Not true. .
a.	___	___	___	___	___
b.	___	___	___	___	___
c.	___	___	___	___	___
d.	___	___	___	___	___
e.	___	___	___	___	___
f.	___	___	___	___	___
g.	___	___	___	___	___
h.	___	___	___	___	___
i.	___	___	___	___	___
j.	___	___	___	___	___

The following section is for statistical purposes only in helping us analyze the survey results.

8. What is your age? (Check one)

a. 18 - 24 ____
b. 25 - 34 ____
c. 35 - 44 ____
d. 45 - 54 ____
e. 55 - 64 ____
f. 65 & over ____

9. a. What is your marital status?

Single ____
Married ____
Widowed, separated, divorced ____

If Married or Widowed, Separated, Divorced

b. Do you have any children? Yes ___ No ___

c. If Yes, how many? ____

10. What is the highest grade of school or college that you have completed? (Check one)

a. Primary or elementary . . . . . ____

b. Some high school . . . . . ____

c. High school graduate or trade school . . . . . ____

d. Some college or college graduate . . . . . ____

11. IF MARRIED: What is the highest grade of school or college that your husband has completed? (Check one)

a. Primary or elementary . . . . . ____

b. Some high school . . . . . ____

c. High school graduate or trade school . . . . . ____

d. Some college or college graduate . . . . . ____

12. Total family income before taxes (Check one)

a. Under $3,000 a year ____

b. $3,001 to $5,000 ____

c. $5,001 to $7,000 ____

d. $7,001 to $10,000 ____

e. $10,001 to $15,000 ____

f. $15,001 to $20,000 ____

g. Over $20,000 ____