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Examiners: drs. Ynte van Dam, dr.ir. Arnout Fischer

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TUM School of Management

Department of Business Administration, Marketing and Consumer Research

Examiner: Prof. Dr. Jutta Roosen

Presented by:

Janka Engbertz (880227225020)

Hübschmannstraße 30

09112 Chemnitz (Germany)

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1 Introduction

The search for effective and meaningful ways to address customers remains one of the challenges in marketing management, both for B2B and B2C marketers (Fill, 2001). Marketing literature typically distinguishes between B2B and B2C approaches to customer acquisition and communication (Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006). For example, B2B companies often constrain their budgets to personal communication with buying center members. B2C firms, in contrast, invest hundreds of millions of Dollars to emotionally target end consumers.

With the opportunities of Web 2.0 technologies as a means to share information more completely and to reach out to new target groups (Jap and Mohr, 2002), more and more B2B firms also think of selling and communicating directly with end consumers (Morris and Morris, 2002). Considering developments of raising consumer awareness towards sustainability (Belz and Peattie, 2009) or the want for individualized products (Addis and Holbrook, 2001), it becomes increasingly important for B2B firms to embrace the elusive end consumer and contribute to holistic consumption experiences. To that end, moving onto the social media platform as an additional form of communication seems promising, also because these channels demand negligible spending. Evidence from marketing practice shows that addressing the end consumer is of value to industrial firms whose products become components of consumer goods (Webster, 2000). Intel, for example, has successfully started marketing its computer chips directly to consumers in the hope to increase consumer demand for their products. Fortunately for Intel, the rise in consumer demand went hand in hand with a rising computer manufacturer demand for Intel chips rather than Motorola or non-branded ones. In addition to these practical findings, research suggests that communication strategies between B2B and B2C companies increasingly resemble each other, finding that both make use of the same marketing mix and emphasize elements of interaction and network marketing (Coviello and Brodie, 2001). Hence, they may also make use of the same channels, especially when aiming at consumers.

Facing this new reality, industrial marketers are presented with the challenge to address a new target group they do not directly sell to, but whose demand finally drives their companies' sales. This principle is referred to as derived demand and is typically found in industrial goods where demand for one product results from the need for another good or service in consumer markets (Belch and Belch, 2012). Users of beverage containers, for example, don't consume the service of the container itself, but because they wish to

partake in consumption elsewhere. The packaging is a means to an end, which is getting access to the drink enclosed. Still, as demand for a drink served in a specific beverage container increases, so do the factors for producing that particular container. It directly follows that B2B marketers may be just as concerned about the demand for the ultimate consumer product as the actual B2C provider, e.g. the soft drink firm. With respect to the new opportunities of the Internet and social media, there seems to be room for a generally applicable, consumer-oriented approach to effective communications. The challenge of setting up an additional end consumer channel (e.g. social media), however, is not the establishment and management of the channel itself. Neither is it the necessity to move to a new field of marketing activities. Rather, B2B firms need to find ways that make their communication (messages) meaningful even to the end consumer. Despite altered consumer needs that raise higher expectations on product packaging, the enhancement of derived demand for beverage cans via stressing product features is only little promising. Consumer interest in a packaging is generally modest as long as certain product standards are fulfilled. Hence, further starting points for consumer marketing are warranted.

Despite current developments that indicate an increasing end consumer focus among B2B companies, few literature is available that offers guidance in the formulation of marketing communications, particularly advertising. Acknowledging the similarities between B2B and B2C marketing in structures and objectives, the remainder of this thesis applies insights from existing B2C-related advertising models to the peculiarities of B2B products when directed towards consumers. The most important advertising models, such as DAGMAR (Colley, 1961) or the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986), are therefore discussed at the beginning. In these models the undisputed importance of affect (e.g., emotional responses), cognition and attitude and their structural relationships to the field of advertising is outlined. In light of the difficulties connected to the general application and implementation of traditional consumer response models, this thesis seeks to move beyond most existing models, and advance theory by looking “on advertising more thoroughly through the consumer's eyes” (Mick and Buhl, 1992, p. 317). By adopting an experiential, meaning-based view on marketing communications this approach seeks to address important factors from existentialism and experience marketing that motivate and shape advertising meanings. Marketing literature increasingly acknowledges the experiential view to better understand consumer behavior (Achrol and Kotler, 2012; Hirschman and Holbrook, 1986; Pine and Gilmore, 1999). The role of life themes in consumers' advertising experiences (Mick and Buhl, 1992) and the need of communication to connect to consumers' lifeworlds are treated as prerequisite to provide

value. The concepts of lifeworld and consumer value and their interrelationships are hence put at the core of the thesis and delineated in a conceptual model, which describes the role of lifeworld and its potential variables in the consumer response process. The model is assessed through a quasi-experimental study design featuring two 'lifeworld manipulated' videos. The emergence of consumer value and attitude is then assessed. Findings corroborate the proposition that lifeworld connection is indeed a driver of consumer value in advertisement. Discussion focuses on the implications for advertising theory and consumer research.

The thesis contributes to existing knowledge of advertising effectiveness. Along with the experiential view, a new set of variables is introduced that is able to impact on consumer value and drives behavioral intentions toward the advertised industrial good. Importantly, these variables do not refer to product features but to the setting and content of the communication measure. Rather than trying to embed feature-related associations in consumer memory, meaningful communication might try to connect with the lifeworlds of their audiences, e.g. by including relevant and authentic sceneries, people and content. This distinction is important as end consumers may not be interested in the benefits of industrial goods as those are typically tailored to the needs of processing companies (e.g., the drink producer in the case of beverage cans). Hence, the experiential view seems easier to implement for B2B marketers while still allowing to present selected product benefits (e.g., regarding sustainability or customization).

2 Marketing Communications Process

One of the central functions of marketing is to build, at least for some time, some type of psychological relationship between consumers and a product or service (Walker and Olson, 1991). Marketing communications are generally understood as the specific “blend of advertising, sales promotion, public relations, personal selling, and direct-marketing tools, that the company uses to persuasively communicate customer value and build customer relationships” (Kotler and Armstrong, 2006, p. 398). Their role is to persuade consumers to associate a product or service with some satisfying benefit or goal that is of value to the consumer, which eventually leads to a relationship. Rather than occasionally providing product information, contemporary advertising is conceived of as a universal communications arena (Mick and Buhl, 1992). The effectiveness of marketing communications in this arena depends on the specific objective of the advertiser (American Marketing Association, 2009). At the most basic level, advertising effectiveness represents some form of human response to marketing communications. A response means the receiver’s set of behavioral, cognitive and affective reactions after seeing, hearing, or reading a message incorporated in an advertisement. Effectiveness is achieved by positively influencing the mental processes towards a product or brand, eliciting desirability and encouraging purchase. The delivery of effective communication is therefore in the imperative of marketing communications (Belch and Belch, 2012).

Typically, marketers look for purchase decisions towards their products as a measure of effectiveness. However, many advertising effects are long-term in nature (Lavidge and Steiner, 1961) and a purchase decision does not follow immediately from the advertising sequence (Kotler and Armstrong, 2006). Hence, advertisers may set different goals throughout the decision-making process. Only awareness is identified to be the one communications objective necessary at all times as it serves to initiate product attitudes and purchase intention (Percy and Rossiter, 1992). For new products, advertisements often aim to create awareness and product knowledge, forming some tentative attitudes towards a brand first before moving up to stimulate final purchase (Lavidge and Steiner, 1961; Percy and Rossiter, 1992). In this vein, brand attitudes have become another widely used measure to assess the effectiveness of particularly advertising (Belch and Belch, 2012). They have been determined as “a relative enduring, unidimensional summary evaluation of the brand that presumably energizes behavior” (Spears and Singh 2004, p. 56), comprising the degree of likeability and the overall favorable or unfavorable evaluation.

In advertising research there are a number of consumer response models. The body of work views consumer mental processing in terms of the 'hierarchy of effects', such as the DAGMAR (Colley, 1961), the Lavidge and Steiner's (Lavidge and Steiner, 1961), and the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986). Later adaptations of consumer response models, inter alia the FCB Grid (Vaughn, 1986) or the Rossiter-Percy (1985) Grid replace the sequential manner with integrative frameworks (Vakratsas and Ambler, 1999). All these models are based on the assumption that advertising messages must be able to influence consumers' attitudes toward the product presented in the ad, therefore highlighting the role of attitude development for effectiveness. In the following, the most important of this group of models are discussed to provide an overview.

2.1 Consumer Response Models

2.1.1 Persuasive Hierarchy Models

The 'predictive measurement of advertising effectiveness' (Lavidge and Steiner, 1961), before it was coined 'hierarchy of effects' (Palda, 1966), may be seen as catalyst of all the hierarchical models (Barry, 1987). This approach regards the individual as an active learner who proceeds through a linked chain of steps which represent the classical behavioral components of a consumer response (Lavidge and Steiner, 1961). In total there are seven steps: (1) unawareness of existence; followed by (2) awareness or attention to the brand after exposure with (3) accumulation of product knowledge; then moving to the affective stages of (4) liking the product; (5) building a preference for the product; and finally (6) conviction and (7) actual purchase. The consumer first develops a cognitive structure which is later complemented by strong and positive feelings towards the product and finally, conviction and purchase of the product. Kotler and Armstrong (2006) similarly use these stages, but refer to them as 'buyer readiness stages'. The basic premise of these models is that advertising effects occur over a certain period of time with the consumer fulfilling each step before entering the next one. The percentage of prospective customers gradually declines when moving up the steps as awareness is easier to elicit than to motivate final purchase. DAGMAR (Defining Advertising Goals for Measured Advertising Results) is a similar model and consists of four steps only to enable measurable objectives for each stage: Namely they are (1) awareness; (2) comprehension; (3) conviction and (4) purchase (Colley, 1961).

The notion of a hierarchy of effects was first incorporated into a more general consumer behavior model by Howard and Sheth (1969). Their "symbolic communication" comprising attention, brand comprehension, attitude, intention and purchase is outlined as the

response sequence of buying behavior, following the S-O-R paradigm as introduced by Woodworth (1929). Critics of the hierarchical models, however, argue that consumers must not necessarily go through the entire sequence before making a purchase (Palda, 1966). In the event of an impulse purchase without preexisting knowledge, for example, a consumer may move up several steps simultaneously. Further, researchers argued that the notion of a highly involved consumer may be inapplicable for some types of purchases (Belch and Belch, 2012). These concerns opened up room for the development of alternate orderings of the response elements cognition, affect and behavior.

2.1.2 Low-involvement hierarchies

The emerging importance of product trial and usage experience has led to the perhaps most intriguing type of response hierarchies, the low-involvement hierarchies. Involvement has become one of the central elements in the research on advertising effectiveness. Low-involvement hierarchies base upon the notion that attitude formation differs depending on the consumer's level of involvement with the advertisement. Rothschild (1984, p. 127) defines involvement as a "state of motivation, arousal or interest. Its consequences are types of searching, information-seeking and decision-making". It depends on the nature and amount of motivation, opportunity and ability to process information presented in the advertisement (MacInnis and Jaworski, 1989; Petty and Cacioppo, 1983). Motivation means the extent to which consumers engage in more effortful thinking (Petty and Cacioppo, 1983). Opportunity considers distractions or limited exposure time which may impede attention and drag it to a stimulus other than the advertisement. Ability refers to the consumers' skills provided by knowledge structures to interpret the presented information (MacInnis and Jaworski, 1991).

The elaboration likelihood model (Petty and Cacioppo, 1983) examines the amount and nature of elaboration or involvement that is dedicated to information processing. It posits two routes through which an advertisement can influence consumer's attitude formation; the high involvement, or central, route; and a lower involvement, or peripheral, route. When the processing antecedents are high, attitudes will be changed using the central route as advocated by the persuasive hierarchies (Krugman, 1966). High involvement typically produces attitude changes as a result of cognition-laden factors (e.g. sophisticated arguments) that may last longer due to higher salience in memory and are a better predictor to subsequent behavior. It shall be noted, that the central route is more difficult to achieve in the sense that message-recipients must be motivated as well as able to think about a message. The peripheral route usually emphasizes affect-laden factors (e.g. celebrity endorsers) and basic cues, which are easier to elicit than cognition. They do

not require extensive consumer knowledge of a product (category) and are therefore more suitable in low involvement situations. These cues include whether or not the advocacy falls within the latitude of acceptance or rejection, association with transient situational utility, or whether more secondary cues, such as credibility, attractiveness, or powerfulness are reflected. However, a peripheral induced attitude change is less long-lasting and consequently requires continuous repetition of the cue (Petty, Cacioppo and Schumann, 1983).

2.1.3 Integrative Models

The enduring and extensive attention which is drawn to the hierarchy of effects in advertising underscores its continuing academic and practical relevance (Barry, 2002). Since its development no other comprehensive alternative model of how advertising works has gained general acceptance within the marketing community (Weilbacher, 2001). With expanded steps to the original association model, some researchers find the notion of a sequential hierarchy could actually stay intact and are of value in predicting behavior (Preston and Thorson, 1983). Others, however, argue that initial processing could actually happen at each stage of the decision-making process. This, in turn, would mean that all three order hierarchies (cognition-affect-behavior, behavior-affect-cognition, and affect-cognition-behavior) are feasible (Vaughn, 1986).

In line with this thinking, the FCB-grid developed for the advertising agency Foote, Cone & Belding reveals three more classifications in addition to the rational consumer. The “lazy consumer” behaves first, then learns as a result of behavior and finally develops an attitude. The “feeling consumer” develops affective reactions before exhibiting cognition and finally behavior. The “imitative consumer” on the other hand follows other consumers and so adapts a sequence of cognition-affect-cognition (Vaughn, 1986). Rossiter and Percy (1985) provide a development to the FCB-grid. Their communication effects model regards awareness as a necessary condition for advertising effectiveness and replaces the thinking/feel dimension with a more motivational one, based on the elaboration likelihood model. The communication effects model proposes the following response sequence: a consumer (1) has the category need; (2) is aware of the brand as an option within the class; (3) has at least a tentatively favorable brand attitude toward it; (4) intends to buy it, although this intention may still be quite latent; and (5) experiences no barriers to purchase facilitation, such as distribution unavailability or inability to meet the price or pricing terms. The resemblance to the hierarchy of effect’s response sequence (e.g. Howard and Sheth, 1969) is obvious. There is, however, one fundamental difference between the two. The Rossiter and Percy model does not assume that the effects occur in

any hierarchical order. In fact, they may be generated simultaneously or at different times with varying degrees of strength. For example, a consumer may have the category need and may face no barriers to purchase facilitation, but makes an "impulse" selection, indicating that brand awareness, brand attitude, and brand purchase intention are created at the very last moment at the point-of-purchase.

2.2 Limitations of the Hierarchy Models and new Realities of Marketing

The problem with the hierarchy models is that they, to a large extent, base on a one-way view of communication with the marketer being the communicator or sender and the consumer being the mere receiver of communications. Participants in the marketplace are assumed to look more or less the same and to react to ads through linear stages or limited persuasion routes. It follows that marketing planning may take place internally, independent of the consumer, and that it is not tailoring of the message but its delivered quantity which plays the critical role in the communication process. McCracken (1987) calls this the information approach to advertising. In this information-processing view, the more messages are delivered, the faster the consumer moves along the prescribed path to final purchase (Schultz, 1993). In current marketing practice, however, it can be observed that advertising campaigns fundamentally differ from each other, making it somewhat unrealistic that advertising produces the same reaction patterns within its viewers. The preceding discussion further shows that consumer responses to marketing communications are in many ways too complex to follow a simple hierarchy model since affective, cognitive or behavioral reactions may occur in a non-fixed order. Hence, it seems reasonable to examine the consumer and potential reactions more closely before designing marketing communications. Rather than persuasion as emphasized in the hierarchy models, it is communication that provides the foundation of successful consumer-marketer relationships in the increasingly interactive environment of advertising (Duncan and Moriarty, 1998). Accordingly, a new mindset for contemporary marketing is needed which puts the consumer in the focus of any marketing activity to improve our understanding of the underlying mechanisms that link marketing communications with favorable outcomes (Belch and Belch, 2012; Mick and Buhl, 1992).

Recent shifts in the phenomenology of marketing support this finding and likewise emphasize the role of the consumer, demanding a philosophical orientation for marketing communications (Achrol and Kotler, 2012). Any new paradigm should focus on understanding potential customers and their consumption context first and then build back towards the product. This thinking is in line with Muniz and O'Guinn (2005) who even

favor a major recast of existing marketing communications models. According to these authors, marketing communications have been under theorized, drawing too much attention to the isolated individual mind and an outdated and impoverished view of human mediated communication and consumption. Contemporary reality demonstrates that consumer-product relationships have become more complex and dynamic. On the one hand the rise of brands plays a major role for modern consumption societies. Brands are now shaped and negotiated in a social constructivist manner between the consumer and a company (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2005). On the other hand, the advent of interactive media contributes to changing the character of marketing communications. Some marketing scholars even think that with the Internet and its new possibilities the traditional marketing function is coming to an end (Holbrook and Hulbert, 2002). Thanks to the interactive possibilities of social media platforms, end users are enabled to mutually interact with the company and other consumers while alternatively sending or receiving information. These enriched communication opportunities reinforce the question whether traditional approaches may adequately measure the effectiveness of interactive media (Pavlou and Stewart, 2000). Even more so, these new realities of marketing warrant a different type of advertising models. Instead of describing sequences of response and behavior, any new model should aim to incorporate the significance of existentialism and experience in advertising research to capture the role of consumers in more detail. The elements of such a new approach are outlined in the next section.

2.3 Elements of a New Approach

2.3.1 Consumer-Centered Communications

The evolving service-dominant logic (S-D logic) seeks to move marketing thinking away from a goods-dominated and marketer-oriented logic to a more consumer-oriented value creation (Vargo and Lusch, 2004, 2008). The S-D logic, one of the most important contributions to the development of marketing theory of the last decade (Cova, Ford and Salle, 2009) is a perspective to view any marketing activity as an offering of a value proposition (Vargo and Lusch, 2008). One of its central premises is that value is always created by all participants in the exchange activity. Hence, companies do not provide a product with inherent value as value emerges only when the customer uses the product and receives a benefit (Holbrook, 1994; Vargo and Lusch, 2004). Accordingly, the consumer is regarded co-creator of value. In this vein, what firms do rather than marketing to customers, is market with their customers.

Highlighting the essential role of consumers in the value creation process contributes to opening up the heavily criticized black box nature of post consumption (Grönroos, 2006). In order to becoming successful, marketers must understand what makes communicated content valuable to their consumers. Recently, it has been argued that in their (advertising) messages, marketers shall better reflect sociocultural influences, such as meanings, motivations, and imagery (Keller, Sternthal and Tybout, 2002) as well as the roots and dynamics of (brand) authenticity (Leigh, Peters and Shelton, 2006). Against this background, it is crucial for firms to put the consumer to the center of their communication strategy and understand how they can provide value and meaning with their messages. Based on this notion, marketing communications shall be meaningful, which means delivering relevant content about a product via appropriate channels.

2.3.2 Creation of Consumer Value

Meaningful communication and value for the consumer are connected with meaning being the source of value (Richins, 1986). Meanings range from very specific to more abstract and influential meanings, such as goals, values and motives and may be organized hierarchically (Walker and Olson, 1991). Typically, value is conceptualized as involving a relationship between quality received for the price paid. Zeithaml (1988) calls this customer perceived value which is the consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product based on a perception of what is received and what is given. However, this rather economic formulation often does not fully capture the total value of consumption objects as particularly memories and experiences cannot be described at a price level (Belk, 1988; Richins, 1994). The well-known approach of means-end chain theory (Gutman, 1982) holds that the core reason why consumers choose products is fulfillment of their values. Human values are defined as "concepts or beliefs about desirable end states or behaviors that transcend specific situations, guide selection or evaluation of behavior and events, and are ordered by relative importance" (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987, p. 551). Likewise, communication that fits consumers' value system may become meaningful and, thus, be valued. The connection between meaning and value in consumption and human value structures as reflecting the self is based on the fact that the latter provides the basis for the former (Holbrook, 1994). That is, values (plural) represent the standards against which consumption experiences provide value (singular) and meaning (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1986; Holbrook, 1994).

While most existing research focused on "the value of customers for a firm," it is the perspective of "value for the customer" (see, for example, Zeithaml, 1988) and its enhancement in advertisement that is of interest in the present investigation. Consumer

value is understood to carry four components “as a relativistic (comparative, personal, situational) preference characterizing a subject’s experience of interacting with some object” (Holbrook and Corfman, 1985, p. 40). As the S-D logic posits consumer value is not derived from a company offering, but rather stems from learned perceptions and preferences based on evaluations of the probable and resulting consequences (Woodruff, 1997). There is no guarantee that value is perceived but it may emerge in the context of usage, embedded in the individuals’ personalized experiences (Payne, Storbacka and Frow, 2008).

In line with the previous discussion, effective marketing communications do not only depend on the viewers' processing of the advertised content but also on the value they provide (Mick and Buhl, 1992). This means that communication effectiveness results from a valuable advertising experience. In an attempt to renew existing advertising models, Vakratsas and Ambler (1999) concluded to integrate the intermediary effects of emotion, activity and value into one model. In their seminal article, Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) propose an experiential perspective of consumer behavior as alternative to information processing.

2.3.3 The Advertising Experience

The experiential view treats brands as myths and advertising as myth-producing sourcing from anthropology (Stern, 1995) and seems promising from several perspectives. First and most importantly, consumer experience increasingly matters to consumers and marketers as point of differentiation between commoditized products and services (Pine and Gilmore, 1999). Further, the evolving ‘digital revolution’ and its new interaction possibilities put the consumption experience at the center of their communication (Achrol and Kotler, 2012). In this vein, structuring consumption experiences and different pathways to value creation provides a sophisticated starting point to explore the content of consumer communications. The concept of experience serves as a basis for developing a framework of meaningful marketing communications in the present investigation. In the traditional advertising models the term experience was referred to as prior experience, product usage experience or product trial (e.g. Vakratsas and Ambler, 1999; Vaughn, 1986). However, experience is reaching further and includes experiences consumers made throughout the consumption process, including perception, imagination, thought, emotion, desire, volition and action (Woodruff Smith, 2007). Experiences differ in strength and intensity, that is some are more intense than others and they may vary in length depending on the amount of reflection. Long-lasting experiences should affect consumer satisfaction and loyalty (Oliver, 2010; Petty and Cacioppo, 1986).

Conceptualizations of experience reveal notable overlaps to assumptions made in the hierarchy models. The Thought-Emotion-Activity-Value (TEAV) model (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1986) encompasses all central tenets of understanding consumption phenomena, including the traditional components cognition, affect and behavior (Howard and Sheth, 1969) as used in the hierarchy models. Resulting affective responses may occur independent of cognition or recognition. Activity is related to behavior and does not only include physical gestures, but also mental and nonverbal action as well as vocalization (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1986). Consumption activities finally result in value, but also the anticipation of value will lead to certain consumption activities. There are different types of value coexisting in the consumption experience (Holbrook, 1994; Sheth, Newman and Gross, 1991), e.g., economic value, social value, hedonic value, and altruistic value (Holbrook, 2006). Unlike the hierarchy models, the experiential view does not assume a temporal sequence of thought, emotion, activity and value but highlights the importance of each single effect and their interplay. The consumer's consumption experience might begin in any of the four subregions thought, emotion, value, activity, and then might rather freely move among the various areas (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1986).

2.3.4 Phenomenological Foundations of the Advertising Experience

To design a meaning-based approach of consumer communications, the hybrid model draws from complementary scholarship which so far has had little influence on empirical advertising research. The concept of lifeworld or 'Lebenswelt' is one of the manifestations of existential phenomenology. Lifeworld indicates the current residency or surrounding world of individuals as it includes personal life themes and life projects (Mick and Buhl, 1992). This lifeworld is dynamic and made of everyday lived experiences through which meaning is prioritized in the individual's social, cultural and historical context (Husserl, 1936/1970). Namely, each person sees the world differently to a substantial degree and hence human phenomena should be studied as they are subjectively lived and experienced (Mick and Buhl, 1992). Lived experiences, an individual mental construction, deliver meaning to the individual and are prioritized in some form by those individuals (Woodruff Smith, 2007). It is assumed that the more the sender's field of experience overlaps with that of the receiver, the more effective a message is likely to be (Kotler and Armstrong, 2006). This rather philosophical orientation provides a way from which to explore consumer experience in a non-dualistic manner, which means that consumers are not viewed as separated from their surrounding physical world (Thompson, Locander and Pollio, 1989). Likewise, advertisements should not treat consumers as separated from their lifeworld. From theories of semiotics we further maintain that advertising is a "culturally constituted system of symbols" (Mick and Buhl, 1992, p. 318) in which products

or services are strategically configured to fit people. Consumers then interpret ads in an effort to understand their surrounding world and develop a sense of self (McCracken, 1987).

Phenomenology also plays a role in the development of consumer value. Vargo and Lusch (2008, p. 7) acknowledge that “[] value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary [] “. To emphasize that the experiential nature of value is phenomenological in spirit (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982) recent work even suggests using the term value in experience instead of consumer value. However, the nature of phenomenological value has not been determined yet.

Recently, service management literature has suggested the following central premises of value in the experience, which are also valid for a general application (Helkkula, Kelleher and Philström, 2012). Value in experience is an “intrasubjective, socially intersubjective, context- and situation-specific phenomenon that is both lived and imaginary, constructed and based on previous, current, and imaginary future experiences” (Helkkula, Kelleher and Philström, 2012, p. 66). Since the human experience is a dynamic construct, that is in constant change as we engage with others in our lifeworlds (Thompson, Locander and Pollio, 1989), experiences of value are affecting how customers make sense of past and future experiences. Situation-specificity of value is determined by the individual social context each customer is living in, depending on personal interests and personal lifeworld context. Hence, the context of communications should aim at connecting with the lifeworld in which the customer experiences value to achieve successful integration into the customer-to-customer network content. The intersubjective nature of value in the experience acknowledges customers' individual and collective relational engagement with the world and how to make sense of it at an individual and collective level (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009).

In this sense, value does not only emerge from integration of the various physical resources provided by organizations, but also results from customers integrating additional cultural and social surroundings of their lifeworld by means of, among others, sharing certain experiences with other customers. These findings align with Vargo and Lusch's (2008) foundational premise of the previously introduced S-D logic, which describes that value is experientially determined by beneficiaries or actors, indicating C2C value co-creation. Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004) assert that such co-created experiences become the very basis of value. They define co-creation as engaging customers as active participants in the consumption experience, with the various points of

interaction being the locus of co-creation of value. Value may be received through indirect interactions with the phenomenon, for example by word-of-mouth recommendations, reviews or advertisements, but may also emerge from a complete imaginary experience without any actual contact to the product or service provider (Helkkula, Kelleher and Philström, 2012).

Accommodating advertising into the consumer's real world or lifeworld will be of great help to clarify the nature of communications (Vakratsas and Ambler, 1999). It may serve as contribution to dissolving some of the recently forwarded criticism concerning a void in how behavior and our surrounding reality are connected to the building blocks of matter and to the theories of mind and body (Achrol and Kotler, 2012). As a consequence of such thinking, marketing communications seeking to deliver meaningful experiences should reflect the lifeworld of consumers.

2.3.5 The Role of Congruence in the Advertising Experience

There are a couple of other factors that can form and influence consumer's attitude towards advertising and value creation and hence shall be reflected in the model. One of these is congruence. While lifeworld connection in the broadest sense considers the match between the advertised content and the viewer as well as his surrounding lifeworld, advertising research found that also congruence of the advertising context and advertised product is of high relevance in producing effective communications (de Pelsmacker, Geuens and Anckaert, 2002; Russel, 2002). Congruence effects have been studied across a diverse set of domains (Cesario, Higgins and Scholer, 2008; Dijkstra, 2008). Following associative network theory (Collins and Loftus, 1975), it seems likely that the more shared links exist between the communication message and the communications object, the greater is the perceived congruence. Heckler and Childers (1992) found that congruence may actually be two-dimensional. On the one hand, there is relevancy which refers to the extent to which the information contained in the stimulus contributes to or intrudes a clear identification of the main theme or message being communicated. Expectancy on the other hand reflects the degree to which information fits into a predetermined pattern or structure evoked by this theme. A fit may be expected when an individual's knowledge structure or schema (Fiske and Taylor, 1991) derived from inter alia prior experience concerning the communications object is consistent with knowledge structure provided by the communication message. Messages that are congruent with an individual's product orientation have considerable impact on the success of marketing communications or the self. They are processed more fluently and evaluated more positively (Lee and Aaker, 2004). Further, congruence facilitates different aspects of the

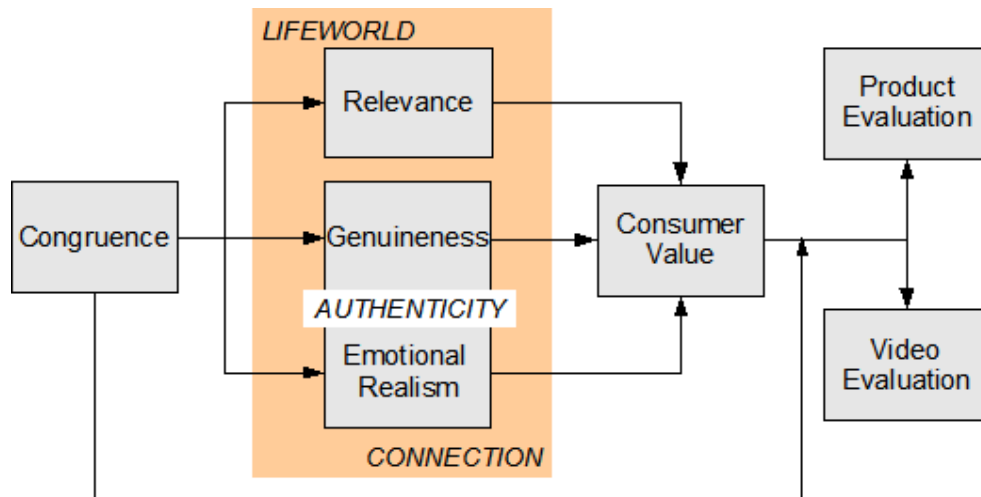
communications process, such as image transfer or attitude towards an advertisement.

In sum, the experiential view postulates that marketing communications can become meaningful if they connect with the value structure of consumers as put forth in means-end models or personal experiences made in lifeworlds. The content of meaningful communication may relate to the variety of consumption meanings (e.g., utilitarian value, enjoyment, or self-expression). Starting from this assertion, the next section entails the development of a model of meaning-based communications, drawing on insights from experiential research. The model includes the concepts of lifeworld and value which are embedded as broader categories to embrace the concept of value co-creation. A detailed conceptualization is offered.

2.4 Consumer Communications Framework

Summarizing the previous discussion, figure 1 depicts the conceptual framework. The framework treats communication effectiveness in terms of overall product evaluation, resulting from a valuable advertisement-person interaction. The consumer as message-receiver is viewed as positioned in a larger psychological field. He brings a variety of resources to the advertisement consumption process, resulting in thoughts, emotions and actions, according to the TEAV model mentioned earlier. Hence, it is possible that different executions of a communications effort will elicit varying individual degrees of lifeworld connection which are captured as message relevance and authenticity. Product-message congruence is added as moderator and mediator variable that may contribute to the emergence of consumer value and/or enhance communication effectiveness. Together, these components constitute the degree of “meaningfulness” of marketing communication directed to consumers and, therefore, mediate the effect on product preference.

Figure 1 Research Model



In the next sections, the model variables will be discussed in more depth. Additionally, the research hypotheses that constitute the model will be developed.

3 Research Model and Hypotheses

3.1 Evaluation

Advertising effectiveness as the ultimate desired outcome of any marketing campaign may manifest as internal evaluations of the advertised product and the advertisement. In this vein an advertisement can work in several directions. On the one hand, the advertisement stimulus itself serves as indicator of advertising success if it evokes attitudinal and behavioral outcomes, such as talking about the advertisement or seeking further information about the featured product. On the other hand, attitudes towards the advertised product play a role as a favorable or unfavorable reaction to an advertising stimulus (Brown and Stayman, 1992).

In the present investigation, consumer value is considered as positive attitude to the ad, Aad. Already Holbrook (1994) noted that attitude (like vs. dislike) and evaluation (good vs. bad) reflect the basic notion of consumer value. Product evaluation, on the other hand, refers to the featured product in the advertising stimulus. Considering that the advertising videos used here as stimulus featured a specific event as an offering of lifeworld

connection, further behavioral outcomes which do not directly reflect consumer value are assessed. These outcomes rather relate to the event itself or the video embeddedness into social media. In the following this outcome will be called video evaluation.

3.2 Consumer Value

Advertising value has been defined as “a subjective evaluation of the relative worth or utility of advertising to consumers” (Ducoffe, 1995, p. 1). Literature suggests that liking of an ad may be the best indicator for advertising effectiveness (Brown and Stayman, 1992). Using attitude towards the ad conveys this notion of liking and consumers’ various feelings and judgments during exposure to an advertising stimulus and whether a favorable or unfavorable reaction has been evoked (MacKenzie and Lutz, 1989). While seeing an advertisement several types of value are offered to the consumer. Hedonic elements provide entertainment value while forwarded interest is viewed as an evaluation of curiosity (Raman and Leekenby, 1998). Consumers prefer seeing advertisements that have more entertainment and pleasurable elements (Pollay and Mittal, 1993). Concluding, the concept of consumer value as used in this thesis refers to both attitude toward the ad and the hedonic value of consumption experiences. In addition, attitude towards the ad has been shown to have a direct effect on further behavioral outcomes, including attitude towards the advertised product and other behavioral intentions (Brown and Stayman, 1992), that is, if consumers “like” the ad, they are more likely to purchase the product. It is concluded that highly perceived value of advertising positively reflects consumer evaluation of the product and video.

H1a: The product evaluation will be more positive the higher the consumer value.

H1b: The video evaluation will be more positive the higher the consumer value.

3.3 Message Relevance

From the hierarchy models it can be learned that involvement is a major element in defining and assessing the dimensions of marketing communications effectiveness. However, involvement has been variously defined among consumer scientists who make it an ambiguous concept. The variation in uses has lead to the conclusion that there is a so called “involvement family” encompassing a range of similar constructs with affective, cognitive and behavioral origins (Roser, 1990). Though advertising involvement has been defined as the number of connections a consumer makes between the ad and the personal life (Krugman, 1966), this research prefers using the term relevance to point out the connectedness towards the message as opposed to other concepts. In the advertising

domain, involvement is often manipulated by making the ad “relevant” (Zaichowsky, 1985, p. 342). As a conceptualization of involvement, message relevance refers to the interest the consumer puts forward a communications effort (Zaichkowsky, 1985).

Upon receiving messages consumers engage with these messages. The level of message elaboration will not only vary with motivation, ability and opportunity to process advertising information, but also depend on the level of relevant lifeworld connection. Once individuals find that an advertisement has personal relevance, they should be more likely to act on the information contained in the message which in turn has an impact on attitudes. Influencing the degree of self-relevancy of products and services hence delivers marketers with the possibility to raise consumer motivation to learn about and shop for products (Walker and Olson, 1991). The relevance of objects is largely determined by personal values and reflects the importance of objects for consumers (van Ittersum et al., 2007). Individual variations in relevance are hence explained by personal differences in values or desires. The background is that individuals select products with attributes that deliver consequences, which in turn contribute to reach desired end-states or to value fulfillment as formulated by means-end chains (see Kahle and Xie, 2008 for a discussion). However, means-end chains can be more broadly viewed as representing the relationship between the self and the product since product attributes are capable to produce strong-emotive states in consumers. The ends in means-end relationships are aspects of consumer's activated self-schema (Walker and Olson, 1991). Which part of the self-schema may be activated depends on the aspects in the present decision situation. If the “ends” vary with the prevailing context, it seems likely that also the product-related meanings to which the ends are connected will differ. Hence, when the ends in an activated means-end chain represent more aspects of self, consumers should elicit higher level of consumer motivation and involvement. A greater amount of self-relevant and important meanings are activated. In contrast, less involving situations tend to activate rather psychosocial consequences, which are less strongly related to the self. Consumers might spend less time on comparison or shopping as a result of smaller levels of motivation.

Consequently, the activation of meaning or value should only be related to behavior when aspects of the self are given in the specific situation. For advertising this is the case when aspects of the self are mentioned in the advertisement context or message. Emerging meanings are supposed to be self-relevant, a further rationale for the use of relevance instead of involvement.

3.4 Message Authenticity

With increasing levels of involvement, message authenticity is required to derive a fit between actual and desired consumption (Beverland, 2009). Authenticity has become a key component of post-modern societies which ponders such questions as who they are (based on what they consume) and what their existence means (Gilmore and Pine, 2007; Zavestovski, 2002). In consumer research the construct of authenticity has gained considerable interest in the tourism sector (e.g. Wang, 1999) and has more recently also shifted into the brand management and marketing literature (e.g. Beverland, Lindgren and Vink, 2008).

Consumers seek out authentic (brand) experiences (Holt, 1997), authentic products and, as argued here, also authentic messages in advertisements. Since the market is saturated with various marketing communications, formulation of messages must be sharper. Perceptions of authenticity have been shown to enhance affective and cognitive message thoughts as well as overall attitude towards the ad (Ross, Johnstone and Gazley, 2010) and hence contribute to manipulating the meaning, strength and believability of an ad (Beverland, Lindgren and Vink, 2008). It heavily impacts communication effectiveness (Grayson and Martinec, 2004) and has potential significance for consumption experiences (Chronis and Hampton, 2008). Because authenticity is not inherent in an object but a personal assessment made by a consumer through the filters of individual experiences (Grayson and Martinec, 2004), authenticity may adopt multiple personal and social meanings (e.g. Leigh, Peters and Shelton, 2006). The very same communications message can represent several things to many people, which makes authenticity a “problematic concept” (Costa and Bamossy, 2001, p. 398) and finding a universal applicable definition difficult.

In an attempt to explain the complex nature of authenticity, Gilmore and Pine (2007, p. 97) posit that it manifests in two ways, “Is the offering what it says it is?” and “Is the offering true to itself?”. This first standard captures feelings of trustworthiness and honesty whilst the second standard touches upon notions of genuineness and consistency of an external entity. This twofold distinction explains why some things are perceived as authentic without being real at the same time. Disneyland, for example, is perceived as authentic by some consumers although it is a commercial theme park and not real or ‘what it says it is’. But still every element of Disneyland is true to itself as it intends to evoke the genuine Disney feeling (Costa and Bamossy, 2001). This example demonstrates that authenticity can be seen as a product feature and as experiential outcome. As a product feature,

authenticity may either mean objective or indexical authenticity, which is “the authenticity of originals” (Wang, 1999, p.352; Grayson and Martinec, 2004). Iconic authenticity, the authentic reproduction of things respectively, follows the basic premises of constructivism, suggesting that authenticity is not inherent in the product but the result of human interpretation of the product. In constructing authenticity, consumers are motivated to realize associated benefits, such as escape, feelings of absurdness and connection with the past. Existential authenticity on the other hand relates to the internal and experiential activities of the consumer by which emotional realism is created (Bagnall, 1996). It comprises individual feelings and the consumer’s desire to find his or her authentic self, involving a state of being true to oneself and being authentically transferred to another reality. The emotional realism enables and enhances the consumption experience and refers to lived experience as is known from the lifeworld concept (Chronis and Hampton, 2008). Despite the multiplicity of terms, there is agreement across the literature that authenticity encapsulates what is genuine, real, and true (Grayson and Martinec, 2004; Beverland, 2009) in the consumption experience. Since both forms of authenticity are influential for the consumption experience, they are both covered in the research.

Understanding how consumers attribute authenticity to a product and how it can be produced by a marketer has implications for B2B companies in their goal to reach consumers. Participation in authentic experiences, with the aid of an object, facilitates developing a stronger sense of self. This positive effect may tie the consumer more closely to the product while reducing anti-advertisement attitudes. These may further be reduced via positioning communication message around normative goals since authenticity is a moral commitment (Beverland, 2005). A realistic and genuine presentation of the issue to advertise is likely to enhance fit of source and audience while positively influencing cognitive and affective message processing, message acceptance and favorable attitude formulation.

To recap, the difficulty with creating a lifeworld connection is to obtain an authentic core while remaining relevant. Research suggests that individuals are more likely to accept message claims they perceive as relevant (Eppright et al., 2002). In addition, perceptions of authenticity have been shown to increase attitudes toward the ad (Ross, Johnstone and Gazley, 2010). These empirical findings lend strong support on the theoretically derived contention that marketing communications that connect with the lifeworld of their audience are valued by these consumers. It is expected that with greater customization and adaptation to the unique features of the recipient (Dijkstra, 2008) the tailoring effectiveness of messages increases. Given the inseparable link between determinations

of authenticity and personal goals as put forward by means-end chains (Beverland, 2009), lifeworld is understood to compose of relevance and authenticity. Due to its capability to deliver implications for relevant and authentic marketing communications content, lifeworld connection is highly essential to increase the eventual effectiveness and likeability of an advertisement (Fill, 2001).

H2: The consumer value will be more positive, the more relevant the communication is to him or her.

H3: The consumer value will be more positive, the more the communication is perceived as genuine.

H4: The consumer value will be more positive, the more the communication is perceived as emotional realistic.

3.5 Product-Advertising Congruence

Empirical research on the role of congruence as affecting advertising effectiveness has been demonstrated several times but shown different directions. Findings from product placement indicate that higher levels of congruence are characterized through significant contributions of the product to the story line and a match of visual or verbal connections (Russell, 2002). A match of product and advertising context may thus lead to greater attitudinal evaluations and hence moderate the relationship between value and evaluation.

H5a: The effect of consumer value on product evaluation is moderated by congruence.

H5b: The effect of consumer value on video evaluation is moderated by congruence.

In addition to the moderating effect on the relationship between consumer value and evaluation, congruence may play a role in the development of consumer value. However, the effect of congruence does not seem to be direct in nature (Russell, 2002). One possibility in the present framework is a mediating role of lifeworld connection. Initial support for the possibility of mediation stems from research about celebrity endorsers in advertising (Kapitan and Silvera 2011). The advertised content is perceived as more authentic when the endorser matches the advertising message (Kapitan and Silvera, 2011). Transferred to the context in the present investigation, congruence of the product and the advertised message is expected to increase perceived authenticity. It directly follows that genuineness and emotional realism as the two components of authenticity

potentially mediate the effect from congruence on consumer value. The mediating role of relevance may be explained by schema theory. When an advertising stimulus (e.g., an advertisement) is presented, the viewer attempts to match it with an existing category evoked from memory. If the advertised product fits the communication message, it should be easier to activate a respective category from memory, generally resulting in enhance relevance of the stimulus (Kamins and Gupta, 1994). Taken together, the following mediation hypotheses can be stated:

H6a: The higher the product-message congruence, the more relevant is the communication.

H6b: The higher the product-message congruence, the more the communication is perceived as genuine.

H6c: The higher the product-message congruence, the higher is the emotional realism of the communication.

4 Methodology

4.1 Design and Stimuli

In order to test the hypotheses, a survey was conducted using an experimental stimulus. Lifeworld connection, as one of the independent variables, was manipulated using two different videos to create sufficient variability in consumer responses. Product-advertising congruence was used for mediation and moderation analyses. Dependent variables included consumer value, product evaluation and video evaluation. A questionnaire was developed in German language and distributed online among Germany from December 14th 2012 to January 6th 2013. Participants were invited via e-mail, online social networks and mailing lists of different German universities.

Participants got randomly assigned to initially watch one of two communication videos, showing young people at either a consumer or sports event. To ensure similarities between the videos, the same product category was used and stimuli followed a similar structure. At first, the general setting was established before introducing the brand and delivering product claims. Both videos ended with a reference to the brand's webpage. Stimuli were of roughly the same length (1:18 min and 1:42 min) and featured beverage cans as object of advertisement. In order to reduce any brand bias, advertisements used the same logos and brand name, Dositionair. Dositionair is a brand introduced by Ball Packaging Europe, one of the leading can manufacturers worldwide, to reach consumers

in the German speaking areas of Europe. Its aim is to provide information and different creative interaction opportunities for consumers centering the beverage can. The consumer event video gave a summary on an event series which was held in pedestrian areas in different cities all over Germany during summer 2012. Passers-by were invited to taste from cans while promoters provided environmental information about the packaging. The other video featured a Polo Sport event, which had its own beverage can created. Also here potential environmental benefits of the packaging were highlighted. The videos particularly differed along dimensions of authenticity. It was assumed that the pedestrian setting would execute higher levels of involvement due to its every-day life character and general access to the event. The Polo video on the other hand was viewed to carry some kind of exclusiveness in terms of access to the event as well as interest. Authenticity referred to the setting in general but also to the spoken word. The statements in the consumer event were assumed to be more authentic as true and exact information about the recycling of cans was provided. In contrast, the Polo video tried to make an environmental point in claiming that using beverage cans would cause less waste to the organizers. A pretest supported the assumption. Both videos are provided in the CD appendix.

After seeing the video, all participants proceeded through the same questionnaire. They were asked to indicate their level of authenticity (genuineness and emotional realism) and relevance they would assign to the video, congruence between advertising and beverage can as well as their level of value and video and product evaluation. Scales included either seven-point semantic differentials or were assessed using a seven-point, Likert-type format, where 7 = strongly agree. See appendix 1 for the full questionnaire.

4.2 Measures

Construction of the instrument began with a careful review of the extant literature to identify relevant measures for the key constructs. In general, applicable existing measures were identified that were either directly applied or slightly adapted to fit the research goals. These measures were divided into the different sections of the survey:

4.2.1 Message Relevance

Wang and Calder (2006) offer a short scale of involvement, suited to explore aspects of relevance. 1 = not at all involved; not at all interested; skimmed it quickly; paid little attention and 7 = very involved; very interested; read it carefully; paid a lot of attention.

4.2.2 Message Authenticity

To capture the genuine and credible standard of authenticity as a product feature, insights from the 'Big Five' personality traits (Goldberg, 1992) were used. Literature suggests that the 'Big Five' and authenticity similarly relate to well-being and social life (Wood et al., 2008) and do hence overlap. Sincerity has been reformulated to fit consumer behavior and brand literature, dissecting into the facets of honest, sincere and real (Aaker, 1997). Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with these facets on a 7-point Likert scale. The item true was added by the researcher to assess trustworthiness as further aspect of product authenticity.

In order to obtain information about authenticity as experiential outcome, self-brand connection items (Escalas and Bettman, 2003) were used. These aim at measuring whether brands become connected to consumer's mental representations of self and hence are suitable to capture the internal realm of the consumer. The scale was modified to fit the research context and reduced to two items. Agreement was indicated along the indicators identification and connection with the presented situation. To provide a holistic picture of emotional realism, the researcher freely added the following items: imaginability to be one of the persons shown in the advertisement and to participate in a similar event.

4.2.3 Product-Advertising Congruence

Product-advertising congruence borrowed four adapted statements from Speed and Thompson's (2000) congruence scale, which initially considered global congruence perception between brands and events: logical connection between the video and beverage cans; fit of visual element and music to beverage cans; similarity of image of the video and image of the beverage cans; movie and the beverage can fit together well.

4.2.4 Consumer Value

Consumer value was measured in terms of consumer's preference orientation towards the advertisement using the attitude toward the ad scale (MacKenzie, Lutz and Belch 1986; MacKenzie and Lutz 1989). Measures of attitude help researchers to understand and explain a greater portion of the variance in consumer behavior (Voss, Spangenberg, Grohmann, 2003). The following items were included on a semantic differential: 1 = unfavorable; bad; unpleasant and 7 = favorable; good; pleasant.

Additionally, the hedonic value of the advertisement was assessed by using some of the items provided by Voss, Spangenberg, Grohmann (2003) on a seven-point semantic

differential: 1 = dull, not fun, not enjoyable and 7 = dull; fun; enjoyable. Holbrook (1994) identified entertaining to constitute a vital part of value. Hence, this item was added to the survey.

4.2.5 Evaluation

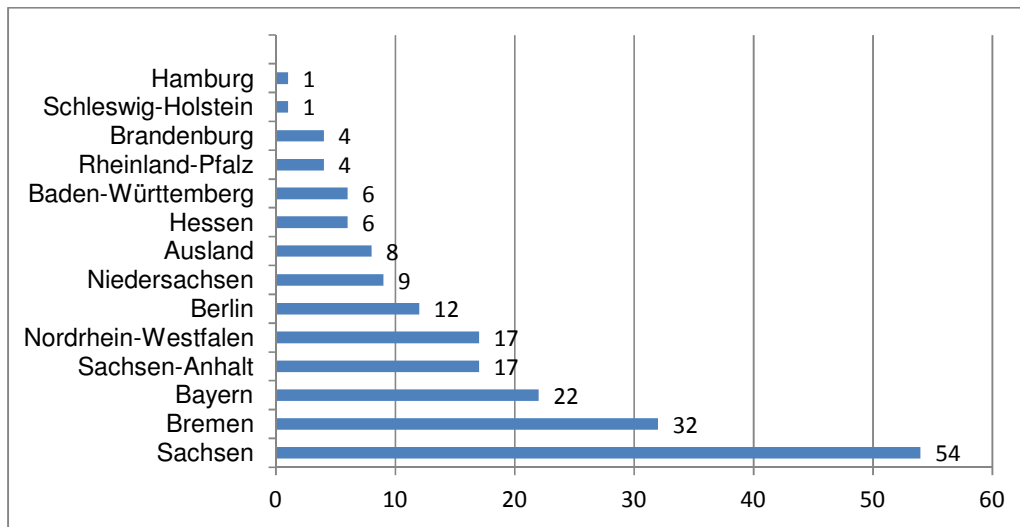
To measure evaluation of the product and video, attitude scales again served as a basis. General attitude towards beverage cans as packaging were again adapted from MacKenzie and Lutz (1989) on a Likert rating scale: beverage cans are favorable; I like beverage cans; beverage cans are positive. Further, purchase intentions were assessed, one of which was formulated negatively: If I will go to the supermarket, there is a good chance I would buy a drink in a beverage can; If I was thirsty now, I would not consider buying a drink in a beverage can; If I was thirsty now, I would consider drinking from a beverage can.

Measures of video evaluation included likelihood to attend the event, willingness to share the video on Facebook as well as harmony between video and beverage cans. Additionally, increased interest in the product category as result of the advertisement was measured.

5 Results

Of 301 clicks on the survey link, 196 questionnaires were finally and satisfactory completed. This complies with a response rate of 65.12 %. 110 participants were female and 86 were male. Age varied between 64 and 14 years with a mean age of 27 years and 4 months. Participants were recruited from all over Germany. Of 16 federal states 13 are represented in the study. Three participants chose not to indicate their place of residence. Figure 2 provides an overview on the population distribution. More than 50 % of participants live either in Saxony, Bremen or Bavaria.

Figure 2 Number of Participants among Federal States



Education ranged from lower secondary education to university levels, though the majority of participants had a higher educational background (85%), with equal shares between A-levels and university degrees (83 people with A-level and 83 people with university degrees). Six respondents did not indicate their educational level. Monthly net income varied between below 1000 Euro and more than 4000 Euro. Almost 60 % of the respondents stated to receive lowest income levels.

The multi-item scales, factor loadings, and Cronbach alphas are listed in table 1. Small and negative factor loadings were removed from further analysis. All scales are sufficiently reliable to be used in further analysis. For authenticity and evaluation two factors were extracted using Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation. It was shown that the authenticity dimension of lifeworld indeed splits into the two components of genuineness and emotional realism as theoretically discussed. Genuineness was extracted with an Eigenvalue of 5.29 and emotional realism with an Eigenvalue of 1.06. Cumulative, the factors explain 79.4 % of variance. Product evaluation had an Eigenvalue of 3.68 and accounts for almost 46% of the variance in the data. Movie Evaluation explains 16.34 % of variance and was extracted with an Eigenvalue of 1.3. In sum, the two factor solution explains 62.34% of variance. For further analysis both these factors were used to investigate the influence of authenticity and evaluation.

Table 1 Overview of Multi-Item Scales

| Constructs and Indicators | Factor loadings | Variance Extracted | Cronbach's alpha |
|---|-----------------|--------------------|------------------|
| <i>Relevance</i> | | | .811 |
| 1 nicht aufmerksam : sehr aufmerksam | .753 | | |
| 2 nicht interessiert : sehr interessiert | .879 | | |
| 3 nicht gespannt : sehr gespannt | .814 | | |
| 4 nicht involviert : sehr involviert | .753 | | |
| <i>Authenticity 1: Genuineness</i> | | | .918 |
| 1 unglaublich : glaubwürdig | .911 | | |
| 2 unehrlich : ehrlich | .910 | | |
| 3 realitätsfern : realitätsnah | .859 | | |
| 4 nicht authentisch : authentisch | .901 | | |
| <i>Authenticity 2: Emotional Realism</i> | | | .78 |
| 1 Ich könnte mir vorstellen, eine der Personen aus dem Video zu sein. | .886 | | |
| 2 Ich könnte mir vorstellen, an einer vergleichbaren Veranstaltung teilzunehmen. | .869 | | |
| 3 Ich kann mich mit der dargestellten Situation identifizieren. | .908 | | |
| 4 Ich fühle mich mit der dargestellten Situation verbunden. | .871 | | |
| <i>Consumer Value</i> | | | .931 |
| 1 schlecht : gut | .856 | | |
| 2 negativ : positiv | .845 | | |
| 3 nicht aufregend : aufregend | .745 | | |
| 4 unattraktiv : attraktiv | .867 | | |
| 5 nicht amüsant : amüsant | .771 | | |
| 6 nicht unterhaltsam : unterhaltsam | .876 | | |
| 7 mag ich nicht : mag ich | .926 | | |
| <i>Product-Advertising Congruence</i> | | | .812 |
| 1 Die im Video vermittelte Botschaft passt zu Getränkedosen. | .844 | | |
| 2 Das Video und die Getränkedose stehen für ähnliche Sachen. | .801 | | |
| 3 Es besteht eine logische Verbindung zwischen Getränkedosen und den im Video gezeigten Inhalten. | .835 | | |
| 4 Die visuellen und musikalischen Elemente aus dem Video passen zum Image von Getränkedosen. | .714 | | |
| <i>Product Evaluation</i> | | | .67 |
| 1 Ich finde, Getränkedosen sind etwas Gutes. | .888 | | |
| 2 Ich mag Getränkedosen. | .906 | | |
| 3 Wenn ich jetzt Durst hätte, würde ich auch aus einer Getränkedose trinken. | .643 | | |
| 4 Wenn ich jetzt im Supermarkt ein Erfrischungsgetränk kaufen würde, käme auch eines aus der Dose Betracht. | .802 | | |

| | | | |
|---|------|-----|------|
| Video Evaluation | | .57 | .737 |
| 1 Das Video hat meine Neugierde auf Getränkedosen gesteigert. | .725 | | |
| 2 Die visuellen und musikalischen Elemente aus dem Video passen zu Getränkedosen. | .631 | | |
| 3 Wenn das im Video gezeigte Event in meiner Nähe stattfinden würde, würde ich hingehen wollen. | .794 | | |
| 4 Ich würde das Video bei Facebook " liken " bzw. " teilen " | .844 | | |

To check for normality as condition for regression analysis, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was applied for the entire data set. Except for consumer value and product evaluation, all constructs deviate from normal distribution as table 2 shows.

Table 2 Test of Normality

| <i>Constructs</i> | <i>Statistic</i> | <i>Df</i> | <i>Sig.</i> |
|--------------------|------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Relevance | .070 | 196 | .021 |
| Genuineness | .074 | 196 | .011 |
| Emotional Realism | .098 | 196 | .000 |
| Congruence | .083 | 196 | .002 |
| Consumer Value | .055 | 196 | *.200 |
| Video Evaluation | .099 | 196 | .000 |
| Product Evaluation | .057 | 196 | *.200 |

* This is a lower bound of true significance.

One possible explanation is that responses are skewed towards the extreme due to video manipulation and hence negatively affect normal distribution for the manipulated variables. Manipulation check via ANOVA revealed significant differences for all the skewed variables except relevance depending on which video had been viewed. Visual inspection of the histogram for relevance however showed that deviation was not severe. For the remaining variables, inspection of the histograms demonstrated slightly left-skewed distribution. Bearing in mind the underlying manipulation, distribution was tested separately for the two videos. Interestingly, output shows that for the more authentic video featuring the consumer event, data is normally distributed for almost all variables except genuineness. Distribution of genuineness $D(196) = .048$, however, is close to $p = .05$ from which normal distribution is assumed. The histogram similarly looked rather normally distributed. For the rather inauthentic video of the Polo Sport, analysis shows that only genuineness, emotional realism, congruence and movie evaluation are significantly non-normal.

As a result, it might be interesting not to consider overall distribution, but distribution in each group. Alternatively, methodologists suggest using parametric tests even if non-normally distributed data might infer robustness of parameter estimates. But multiple regression has typically proven robust against non-normally distributed data (Hair et al., 2010). This seems a reasonable choice when comparing the Q-Q plots of the normally distributed variables against those of the non-normally ones without differentiating between the groups. Q-Q plots for value and product evaluation indicate that most of the values do not exactly fall on a straight line though these constructs are normally distributed, but are instead very close to the diagonal. The picture doesn't change much when looking at the remaining non-normally distributed variables. Also here pretty straight lines, with negligible skews were identified. In light of these findings, parametric were applied in further analysis.

5.1 Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses were assessed using (moderated) multiple regression analysis (Aiken and West, 1991). A series of different regressions is run to test the different hypotheses. Dependent variables in the analyses are consumer value, product evaluation and video evaluation. The remaining variables either serve as independent, moderator or mediator variables. In the following, first the direct effects are analyzed, followed by moderator analysis and mediator analysis.

5.1.1 Direct Effects

Consumer value was expected to influence product and subsequent video evaluations. For product evaluation, the regression analysis revealed that value ($\beta = .329$) significantly influences product evaluation, explaining 10.4% of the variation ($F = 23.584$, $p < .001$). Consumer value ($\beta = .660$) also has a direct effect on video evaluation, accounting for 43.3% of its variance ($F = 150.105$, $p < .001$). Consequently, hypotheses H1a and H1b are supported.

Table 3 Regression Scores of Consumer Value on Product and Video Evaluation

| <i>Dependent</i> | Product Evaluation | | | Video Evaluation | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------------|----------|------------------|----------------|----------|
| | <i>Beta</i> | <i>t-value</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>Beta</i> | <i>t-value</i> | <i>p</i> |
| <i>Independent Variable</i> | | | | | | |
| Value | .329 | 4.856 | .000 | .660 | 12.252 | .000 |

Hypotheses H2 to H4 consider the drivers of consumer value and are tested with multivariate regression analysis. The F value of this equation is 118.272 ($p < .001$). Jointly,

the lifeworld variables (i.e., relevance, genuineness and emotional realism) account for 64.3% of data variation in consumer value. As can be seen from the table 4, relevance ($\beta = .252$), genuineness ($\beta = .535$) and emotional realism ($\beta = .177$) significantly predict consumer value, supporting hypotheses H2, H3 and H4.

Table 4 Regression Scores of Lifeworld as Antecedent to Consumer Value

| <i>Independent Variables</i> | <i>Dependent Consumer Value</i> | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|----------|
| | <i>Beta</i> | <i>t-value</i> | <i>p</i> |
| Relevance | .252 | 5.324 | .000 |
| Genuineness | .535 | 9.126 | .000 |
| Emotional Realism | .177 | 3.013 | .003 |

5.1.2 Moderator analysis

H5a and H5b consider the moderating influence of congruence on the relationships between consumer value and product and video evaluation. To avoid multicollinearity, the independent variables were first mean-centered. Afterwards the product of congruence with value has been calculated and entered as the third predictor. Moderated regression analysis reveals significant moderation effects on both relationships ($p < .02$ and $p < .001$, respectively). Hence, hypotheses H5a and H5b are supported.

Table 5 Moderator Analysis

| <i>Independent Variables</i> | <i>Product Evaluation</i> | | | <i>Video Evaluation</i> | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|----------|-------------------------|----------------|----------|
| | <i>Beta</i> | <i>t-value</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>Beta</i> | <i>t-value</i> | <i>p</i> |
| Congruence | .154 | 1.914 | .057 | .465 | 8.552 | .000 |
| Value | .218 | 2.678 | .008 | .370 | 6.757 | .000 |
| Congruence x Value | .172 | 2.569 | .011 | .191 | 4.230 | .000 |

5.1.3 Mediation Analysis

To test if the mediation between product-advertising congruence and consumer value by lifeworld is conditional, mediation was applied using a series of regression analysis with three equations (Baron and Kenny, 1986). First, the interaction of potential mediator (e.g. relevance) and independent variable (congruence) was assessed (regression 1). Second, value is regressed on the independent variable while adding the lifeworld variables that are not the mediator as covariates (regression 2). The additional variables serve as control variables in the equation as this was closest to the research model, postulating that all lifeworld variables affect consumer value (see figure 1). Third, consumer value is regressed on all four variables (i.e., the independent variable, the mediator and the control variables; regression 3). The regression models are presented with mediation tests for

relevance first, followed by genuineness and emotional realism. Tables 6 – 7 provide the detailed regression coefficients for each potential mediator.

Table 6 Mediation Analysis with Relevance as Mediator

| <i>Dependent</i> | Regression 1 | | | Regression 2 | | | Regression 3 | | |
|------------------------------|--------------|----------------|----------|--------------|----------------|----------|--------------|----------------|----------|
| | Relevance | | | Value | | | Value | | |
| <i>Independent Variables</i> | <i>Beta</i> | <i>t-value</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>Beta</i> | <i>t-value</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>Beta</i> | <i>t-value</i> | <i>p</i> |
| Congruence | .286 | 4.153 | .000 | .031 | .468 | .640 | .041 | .662 | .509 |
| Relevance | | | | | | | .253 | 5.334 | .000 |
| Genuineness | | | | .579 | 8.208 | .000 | .513 | 7.658 | .000 |
| Emotional Realism | | | | .228 | 3.585 | .000 | .166 | 2.736 | .007 |

Table 7 Mediation Analysis with Genuineness as Mediator

| <i>Dependent</i> | Regression 1 | | | Regression 2 | | | Regression 3 | | |
|------------------------------|--------------|----------------|----------|--------------|----------------|----------|--------------|----------------|----------|
| | Genuineness | | | Value | | | Value | | |
| <i>Independent Variables</i> | <i>Beta</i> | <i>t-value</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>Beta</i> | <i>t-value</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>Beta</i> | <i>t-value</i> | <i>p</i> |
| Congruence | .690 | 13.293 | .000 | .267 | 4.371 | .000 | .041 | .662 | .509 |
| Relevance | | | | .320 | 6.001 | .000 | .253 | 5.334 | .000 |
| Genuineness | | | | | | | .513 | 7.658 | .000 |
| Emotional Realism | | | | .347 | 5.447 | .000 | .166 | 2.736 | .007 |

Table 8 Mediation Analysis with Emotional Realism as Mediator

| <i>Dependent</i> | Regression 1 | | | Regression 2 | | | Regression 3 | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------|--------------|----------------|----------|--------------|----------------|----------|
| | Emotional Realism | | | Value | | | Value | | |
| <i>Independent Variables</i> | <i>Beta</i> | <i>t-value</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>Beta</i> | <i>t-value</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>Beta</i> | <i>t-value</i> | <i>p</i> |
| Congruence | .600 | 10.441 | .000 | .084 | 1.391 | .166 | .041 | .662 | .509 |
| Relevance | | | | .278 | 5.873 | .000 | .253 | 5.334 | .000 |
| Genuineness | | | | .585 | 9.316 | .000 | .513 | 7.658 | .000 |
| Emotional Realism | | | | | | | .166 | 2.736 | .007 |

A significant effect was found for genuineness as mediator effect only. Looking at table 9 indicates that this results from non-significant second regression analyses for relevance and emotional realism. When considering the independent variable in the second regression without adding covariates, all three potential mediators showed significant effects. But when adding genuineness as control variable, effects are not significant.

Table 9 Mediation Overview for 2nd Step Regression

| <i>Dependent</i> | Regression 2 Relevance | | | Regression 2 Genuineness | | | Regression 2 Emotional Realism | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|----------|-----------------------------|----------------|----------|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------|
| | <i>Beta</i> | <i>t-value</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>Beta</i> | <i>t-value</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>Beta</i> | <i>t-value</i> | <i>p</i> |
| <i>Independent Variables</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| Congruence | .031 | .468 | .640 | .267 | 4.371 | .000 | .084 | 1.391 | .166 |
| Relevance | | | | .320 | 6.001 | .000 | .278 | 5.873 | .000 |
| Genuineness | .579 | 8.208 | .000 | | | | .585 | 9.316 | .000 |
| Emotional Realism | .228 | 3.585 | .000 | .347 | 5.447 | .000 | | | |

As illustrated in tables 6-8, the third regression already reveals that genuineness has a stronger effect than expected. The amount of mediation is called the indirect effect. Either full or partial mediation may occur. The type of effect can be assessed using significance tests. Perfect mediation holds when the independent variable shows no effect when the mediator is controlled (Baron and Kenney, 1986). This seems to be case for genuineness as the effect of congruence is not significant anymore and Beta dropped by .226 from .267 to .041 (see table 7). Genuineness also significantly correlates with congruence ($r = .69$; $p < .01$), supporting the second assumption for full mediation. No significant mediation appears for relevance or emotional realism as the second regression is not significant for the independent congruence variable. Consequently, H6a and H6c are rejected as soon as genuineness is introduced as control, while H6b is supported.

5.2 Additional Analyses

5.2.1 Additional Regression Analyses

To fully capture the role of genuineness in the model, another full three-step regression with genuineness as sole mediator between congruence, relevance and emotional realism on the one side and consumer value on the other side was applied.

Table 10 Additional Mediation Analysis with Genuineness as Mediator

| <i>Dependent</i> | Regression 1 Genuineness | | | Regression 2 Value | | | Regression 3 Value | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|----------|-----------------------|----------------|----------|-----------------------|----------------|----------|
| | <i>Beta</i> | <i>t-value</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>Beta</i> | <i>t-value</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>Beta</i> | <i>t-value</i> | <i>p</i> |
| <i>Independent Variables</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| Congruence | .442 | 7.651 | .000 | .267 | 4.371 | .000 | .041 | .662 | .509 |
| Relevance | .129 | 2.566 | .011 | .320 | 6.001 | .000 | .253 | 5.334 | .000 |
| Genuineness | | | | | | | .513 | 7.658 | .000 |
| Emotional Realism | .353 | 5.863 | .000 | .347 | 5.447 | .000 | .166 | 2.736 | .007 |

Still, perfect mediation holds true for congruence as the effect is not significant when entering genuineness in the regression. Applying significance tests, genuineness partially mediates the effects of relevance and emotional realism. Introducing genuineness, the

effect of relevance is reduced by .067 (.320 – .253) and of emotional realism by .181 (.347 - .166).

To compare the effects of each variable on value, total effects as the sum of direct and indirect effects are presented in conjunction with the share between direct and indirect effects. These are as follows: The effect of relevance on value is by 79.1% mediated by genuineness (.320 = .253 + (.129 * .513)). Regarding emotional realism, the effects are rather equally distributed with 47.8% accounting for the direct effect and 52.2% accounting for the indirect effect (.347 = .166 + (.353 * .513)). The effect of congruence is dominated by the indirect effect (.267 = .041 + (.442 * .513)). This supports the view that genuineness is the only mediator of the congruence-value relationship, and the partial effects through relevance and emotional realism are artefacts because of the intercorrelations between either of these and genuineness.

A second analysis tests an additional path between video and product evaluation. As discussed earlier, several studies have shown that there is a direct effect of Aad on additional behavioral outcomes (Brown and Stayman, 1992). Since video evaluation captures additional behavioral elements of the advertising stimulus, its effect on final product evaluation has been examined. As expected, the effect was significant, explaining 23% of data variance ($F = 59.259, p < .001$)

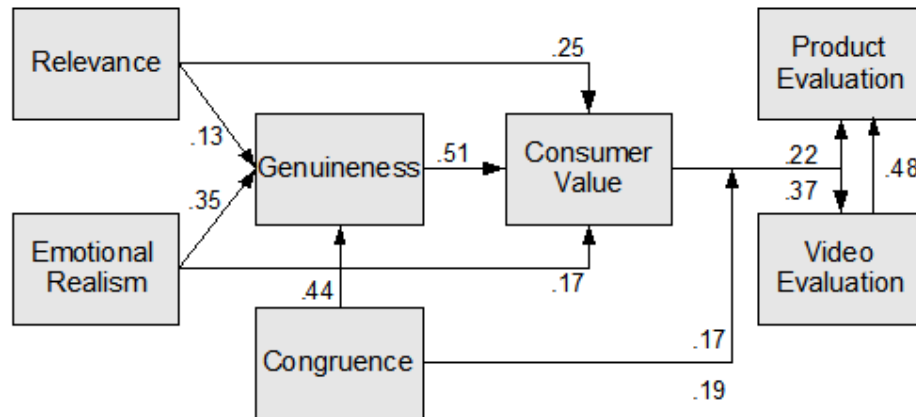
Table 11 Regression Analysis Scores of Video on Product Evaluation

| Dependent | Product Evaluation | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|----------|
| <i>Independent</i> | <i>Beta</i> | <i>t-value</i> | <i>p</i> |
| Video Evaluation | .484 | 7.698 | .000 |

A third test replicated the previous analyses but included age and gender as control variables. Notably, age had no influence on any variable. Likewise, gender did not impact any of the variables, except for product evaluation. Here, male respondents evaluated beverage cans more favorably. However, this influence did not affect any other variables, such that all interpretations remain valid. Concluding, all reported findings are robust even when age and gender are controlled.

Adapting all findings from the post-hoc analysis to the previously developed model requires reconfiguration of this model. The entire revised model is shown in the following figure 3.

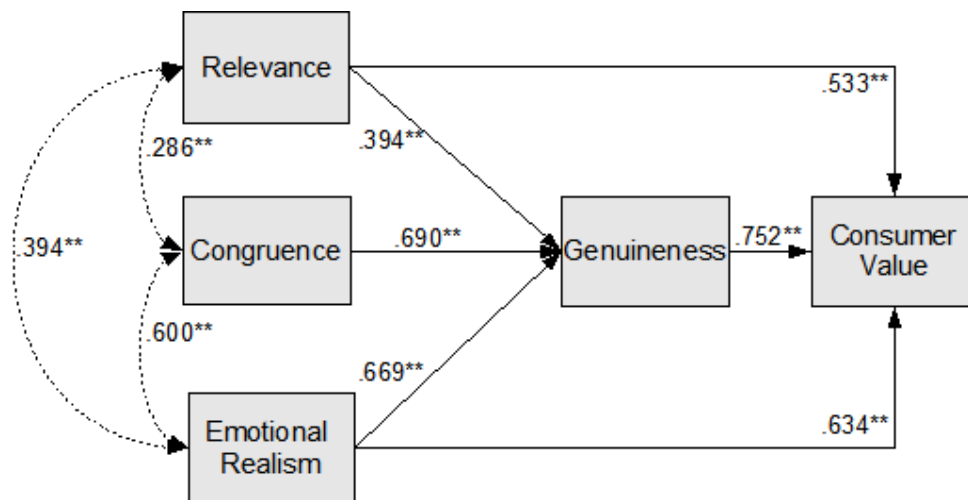
Figure 3 Revised Conceptual Model with Regression Coefficients



5.2.2 Path analysis

To gain further insight into the relationships among the lifeworld variables, the revised causal model was tested using path analysis. Path calculations are especially valuable when intercorrelations between independent variables are given. Similar to regression, the structure of the interrelationships are determined to assess the general fit of relationships using correlation equations (Hair et al., 2010). Correlations among the variables are shown in figure 4.

Figure 4 Correlational Path Model



Some correlations were nearly exactly predicted and some differences were found. Starting with the relationship between congruence and genuineness, the correlation of .690 is compared with the indirect effect operating through relevance and emotional realism. The indirect effect is calculated as the sum of $(.286 * .394)$ and $(.600 * .669) = .514$. Comparing this to the direct effect (.690) indicates a residual value of .176. This result supports the previous findings that emotional realism and relevance indeed play a role in determining genuineness. Since the residual is different from zero, the direct path from congruence on genuineness further explains variation in genuineness.

The next analysis considers the interrelationships between congruence, emotional realism and relevance. When relevance is treated as dependent variable, the residual becomes $.050 = (.286 - (.600 * .394))$. Since the residual is close to zero, the indirect path seems to fully account for the direct effect. Indeed, regression results indicate that emotional realism ($\beta = .348, p < .001$) impacts relevance, whereas congruence has no additional effect ($\beta = .077, p = .351$). Similarly, the path could be reversed regarding emotional realism as dependent variable. In contrast to the previous path, there is a high residual value of $.487 = (.600 - (.286 * .394))$ indicating that emotional realism is not perfectly explained by congruence and relevance and other variables may play a role. Testing via regression analysis unveils that both congruence ($\beta = .531$) and relevance ($\beta = .243$) exert significant effects (all $p < .001$). The findings suggest that the relational pattern is more complex than assumed in the original and revised model. Future research is needed to resolve this issue.

6 Conclusions

The understanding of processes and activities that consumers engage in when selecting, purchasing, using, and evaluating products and services to fulfill their values is crucial to guide marketers in the creation of stimuli that motivate consumers to form positive evaluations about the company's products. This study has explored the concept of lifeworld connection as a way from which to develop meaningful consumer-centered marketing communications. The model developed in this study is an integration of relevance, emotional realism and genuineness as features of lifeworld, and a modified attitude towards the ad model, including consumer value, video and product evaluation. The role of lifeworld connection as a driver of advertising effectiveness has been examined. Further, the role of congruence as moderator between consumer value and attitude towards the product as well as advertisement evaluation was investigated. The empirical findings suggest that lifeworld connection through relevance and perceptions of authenticity (i.e., genuineness and emotional realism) can enhance cognitive and affective message thoughts towards the advertisement, thereby generating consumer value and positively influencing attitude towards the ad and the product. The role of attitude development as a function of cognition and affect mentioned in the traditional models (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986) therefore remains undisputed.

In the initially outlined model, lifeworld connection was regarded as mediator between product-advertising congruence and consumer value. In this model, however, complete mediation was not identified. Rather, only genuineness was a significant mediator of the relationship. By changing the arrangement of variables and conceptualizing genuineness as the sole mediator, mediation of the relationships between congruence, relevance, emotional realism and value was observed. Two reasons for this adjustment can be suggested. First, literature has indicated the role of product claim strength made within an advertisement (Andrews and Shimp, 1990) and its importance in creating message acceptance (Megehee, 2009). Especially for less trustworthy product claims, high cognitive message processing was revealed. Product claims were also a vital element in the stimuli used in this research and constituted one of the main points of differentiation in lifeworld manipulation. Their trustworthiness was assessed using genuineness. Especially in the low lifeworld manipulation product claims were hardly convincing and sincere, which might have lead to high cognitive processing of the message, distributing high negative scores on genuineness and, therefore, causing a more important effect than expected. Second, the manipulation check revealed that differences between the two videos actually

worked for authenticity but not relevance, attributing again more importance to the effect of genuineness.

The effect of consumer value on product evaluation (10.4% explained variance) was less than on video evaluation (43.3%). This indicates that there are more relevant factors explaining evaluation, especially for product evaluation. These comprise, among others, prior product experience, brand knowledge and in this case environmental attitudes and values which have not been in the focus of this study.

7 Discussion and Implication

7.1 General Discussion

Already 60 years ago, communication researchers found that in generating meanings for media messages people attempt to make the world congruent with their own lives (Mick and Buhl, 1992). This indicates that individuals' motivation and meanings of life are reflected in the motivations and meanings of advertising experiences. In consumer science, the construct of advertising involvement or, as used in the present investigation, relevance partially captures this notion (Krugman, 1966). In an attempt to deepen the existential significance of advertising and enhancing the importance of the consumer viewpoint in advertising research, the conceptual model centers around a meaning-based approach towards marketing communications. With the introduction of lifeworld connection as a means to reflect the individual consumer viewpoint from which meanings are formulated, the emergence of consumer value is suggested. For the first time, the present research offers a conceptualization by treating lifeworld in terms of relevance and authentic features of emotional realism and genuineness. Findings from the empirical study lend strong support for the contention that advertisements that connect with consumers' lifeworlds indeed lead to consumer value creation and enhance advertising effectiveness.

Understanding and investigating a consumer's lifeworld appears to present a promising stream of research on advertising effectiveness. However, so far little research has been conducted to theoretically and empirically outline the idea of lifeworld connection. Efforts to understand the effects of lifeworld on consumer value and product evaluation should therefore receive a higher priority in future research. Since the importance of the concept for advertising is just developing, not all aspects of the lifeworld phenomenon might have been contained in this study. First of all, it has to be noted that no hierarchical order of lifeworld components was assumed in the initial model. Rejection of hypotheses H6a and

H6c as well as post-hoc analyses, however, indicate that genuineness has a pivotal role within the value creation process. Second, results suggest that not the entire effect from lifeworld connection on consumer value can be explained by the variables used in this research. Future research that identifies additional sources of variation appears to be necessary to completely account for variation in the relationships involving lifeworld, congruence and value. This leads to the assumption that other factors may capture the nature of lifeworld. Their identification and impact deserve further consideration in subsequent research. Potential factors that are additionally reflective of lifeworlds may derive from concrete life projects manifesting life themes (Mick and Buhl, 1992).

A comprehensive analysis is also needed to clarify on the direction of relationships between lifeworld and congruence. Since lifeworld could be viewed as fit of advertising and person in a widest sense, future research should discuss to which extent perceptions of product-advertising congruence are inherent in this relationship already. Specifically, authenticity seems to carry notions of congruence, as path analysis has shown congruence seems to be closely connected with emotional realism and not with relevance. The relationship between emotional realism and relevance is less clear. Experiments that allow for tests of causation may be useful in this regard.

Summarizing, these research findings can be used to develop and expand theories of the role of existentialism in advertising and lifeworld connection to enhance advertising effectiveness. This goes beyond the information view that is concerned with the hierarchy of effects (McCracken, 1987). The experiential view seems better able to understand the customer and respond to his or her needs and wants. Theorizing about lifeworld connection in advertising thus seems promising.

7.2 Limitations

A limitation of the present research regards the manipulation of advertising videos. The aim of using two different videos was to create variability in consumers' perceptions of lifeworld connection. This means that in the course of creating stimulus material, various aspects of the lifeworld phenomenon were altered. Some of these alterations were due to the impracticability of producing a natural viewing experience of the stimulus as participants were beforehand informed about the scientific intentions of the study. Their answers might have deviated. Also, data was collected at the end of the video only and might thus not adequately reflect the amount of self-relevant thinking that occurred while subjects were watching.

Further, as the manipulation targeted at altering lifeworld connection, more than one variable was affected by the stimulus. This meant that data analysis could not follow typical procedures in experiments (e.g., ANOVA, planned contrasts). Rather, responses were pooled and jointly analyzed with regression analysis. An experiment that manipulates each facet of lifeworld separately could provide additional insights. Although more than one variable was affected by the stimulus, the video itself might not have been sufficiently successful in manipulating all dimensions of lifeworld connection. Specifically, the manipulation of relevance was difficult and results revealed that relevance did not differ across conditions. This calls for enhancement in a further study.

As has been shown in previous studies, product category significantly influences attitude and should hence be chosen carefully to avoid biased study outcomes (Brown and Stayman, 1992). Since beverage cans are not primarily serving a consumption need, the results may reflect the modest relevance of beverage cans to consumers which could hence not evoke reflected self-relevant consumer thinking. A new study using a mixture of stimuli from different product categories might however avoid potential biasing effects (Brown and Stayman, 1992) and actually might lead to positive results which even confirm the first connections within the initial lifeworld model. More intense research is needed.

7.3 Practical Implications

This research has several important implications for B2B firms that want to target and successfully communicate with end consumers. Using lifeworld as a starting point for consumer communications seems promising for these companies since this way their advertisement may be of value to consumers although initial interest for the product category was low. By incorporating relevant themes from consumers' lifeworlds into the advertising context, the advertisement still may generate value without initial interest for the product category. Social media platforms will be of help in this regard as a means to reach consumer more easily.

Life story interviews (Mick and Buhl, 1992), personal narratives of informants' own lives, represent an additional qualitative approach to design meaningful advertising campaigns delivering implications for plot, settings and characters. Such qualitative approaches are particularly fruitful as they reach deeper than quantitative techniques. Web 2.0 technologies may assist the marketer in conducting these life story interviews to identify relevant life themes of their target groups. Ideally, both methods are combined in order to

inform B2B firms about all relevant aspects to be considered. The research also shows that when designing campaigns it is of high importance to maintain a close fit between the product and the advertising. Since advertisements that aim to connect with consumers' lifeworlds contain less concrete meanings, pretesting for product-advertising congruence is warranted.

It has to be noted that meaningful communications are able to reach important advertising goals. Specifically, this research has shown that offering valuable communications to consumers will be rewarded with increased product attitudes. Moreover, consumers show extra-behavior in terms of word of mouth (e.g., 'liking' or sharing the video at Facebook), intentions to participate in future brand activities (e.g., event attendance) or looking for additional information about the product. Findings like these demonstrate that communication means more than providing product information. Instead, perceived authenticity and relevance are powerful drivers of advertising effectiveness. Although it is more complicate to 'touch', the concept of lifeworld has a lot to offer which is beyond the strategies as put forth by traditional advertising models. If companies are open to such new insights and rather vague concepts, important company goals (e.g., increased sales through derived demand) can be met.

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Appendix 1

Sample Questionnaire

Consumer Communications for B2B companies

Introductory Text

Bitte unterstützen Sie uns in einer wissenschaftlichen Studie zur Wirkung von Informations- und Kommunikationsvideos bei Konsumenten. Dazu möchten wir Ihnen gern eines von mehreren Videos eines Getränkedosen-Herstellers zeigen. Darin geht es um eine Veranstaltungsreihe, bei der Eigenschaften der Getränkedose präsentiert wurden. Das Video, welches Sie gleich sehen werden, wurde dabei zufällig ausgewählt. Im Anschluss daran möchten wir Ihnen einige Fragen dazu stellen. Bitte beachten Sie, dass uns Ihre ehrliche Meinung interessiert.

Ihre Antworten werden anonym behandelt. Insgesamt dauert die Befragung nicht länger als 10 Minuten. Vielen Dank für deine Unterstützung!

Video 1 (Consumer Event in Pedestrian Area)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TwypOdSeUQ>

Video 2 (Consumer Event "Polo Sport")

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x5K8kgD3Gp4>

QUESTIONS

Q1 Während ich das Video gesehen habe, war ich ...

| | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------------------|
| nicht interessiert | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | sehr interessiert |
| nicht aufmerksam | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | sehr aufmerksam |
| nicht gespannt | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | sehr gespannt |
| nicht involviert | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | sehr involviert |

Q2 Bitte bewerten Sie, wie das eben gesehene Video auf Sie wirkt.

| | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--------------|
| unehrlich | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | ehrlich |
| unglaublich | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | glaubwürdig |
| realitätsfern | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | realitätsnah |
| nicht authentisch | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | authentisch |

Q3 Bitte bewerten Sie das Video anhand der nachfolgenden Begriffe:

| | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--------------|
| schlecht | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | gut |
| negativ | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | positiv |
| nicht aufregend | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | aufregend |
| unattraktiv | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | attraktiv |
| nicht amüsant | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | amüsant |
| nicht unterhaltsam | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | unterhaltsam |
| mag ich nicht | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | mag ich |

Q4 Im Folgenden interessiert uns Ihre Meinung zu verschiedenen Aspekten rund um das Video. Inwieweit stimmen Sie den folgenden Aussagen zu?

| | Stimme überhaupt nicht zu | | | | | | Stimme völlig zu |
|--|---------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|------------------|
| 1. Ich könnte mir vorstellen, eine der Personen aus dem Video zu sein. | | | | | | | |
| 2. Ich könnte mir vorstellen, an einer vergleichbaren Veranstaltung teilzunehmen. | | | | | | | |
| 3. Ich kann mich mit der dargestellten Situation identifizieren. | | | | | | | |
| 4. Ich fühle mich mit der dargestellten Situation verbunden. | | | | | | | |
| 5. Die im Video vermittelte Botschaft passt zu Getränkedosen. | | | | | | | |
| 6. Das Video und die Getränkedose stehen für ähnliche Sachen. | | | | | | | |
| 7. Es besteht eine logische Verbindung zwischen Getränkedosen und den im Video gezeigten Inhalten. | | | | | | | |
| 8. Die visuellen und musikalischen Elemente aus dem Video passen zum Image von Getränkedosen. | | | | | | | |
| 9. Ich finde, Getränkedosen sind etwas Gutes. | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 10. Ich mag Getränkedosen. | | | | | | | |
| 11. Das Video hat meine Neugierde auf Getränkedosen gesteigert. | | | | | | | |
| 12. Die visuellen und musikalischen Elemente aus dem Video passen zu Getränkedosen. | | | | | | | |
| 13. Wenn ich jetzt Durst hätte, würde ich auch aus einer Getränkedose trinken. | | | | | | | |
| 14. Auch wenn ich jetzt Durst hätte und es nur Getränke in der Dose zu kaufen gäbe, würde ich absolut kein Getränk in einer Dose kaufen. | | | | | | | |
| 15. Wenn ich jetzt im Supermarkt ein Erfrischungsgetränk kaufen würde, käme auch eines aus der Dose in Betracht. | | | | | | | |
| 16. Wenn das im Video gezeigte Event in meiner Nähe stattfinden würde, würde ich hingehen wollen. | | | | | | | |
| 17. Ich würde das Video bei Facebook " liken " bzw. " teilen ". | | | | | | | |

Q5 Zum Abschluss möchten wir Sie noch um die folgenden persönlichen Angaben bitten:

5.1 Ihr Geschlecht:

5.2 Ihr Geburtsjahr:

5.3 In welchem Bundesland sind Sie derzeit wohnhaft?

5.4 Wie hoch ist Ihr monatliches Bruttoeinkommen? Bitte zutreffendes Auswählen!

> 1000 Euro; 1001 – 1500 Euro; 1501 – 2000 Euro; 2001 – 3000 Euro; 3001 – 4000 Euro;< 4001 Euro

5.5 Ihr höchster Schulabschluss:

Noch kein Abschluss; Haupt-/Volksschule; Fachabitur; Abitur (Gymnasium); Hochschule, anderer Abschluss

Declaration in lieu of oath

By JANKA ENGBERTZ

This is to confirm my master thesis was independently composed/authored by myself, using solely the referred sources and support.

Munich, _____
(04.02.2013)