

New Synovate Healthcare Study Shows Advertising Effectiveness Of Ads By Drugs And Pharmaceutical Com

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In the MTR, on the bus, within newspapers and magazine, and not to mention on television, there are increasingly more advertisements on various types of drugs and medicines.

Synovate, one of the world's largest market research firms, today released findings on a study investigating the advertising effectiveness of drug and disease-related ads.

Results show that such ads are effective in raising Hong Kong consumers' awareness of their own health, but less are prompted to action to purchase or take the drugs shown in the advertisements. Chin Ka Lok is also found to be the most recognized spokesperson for a drug brand, followed by Charlene Choi and Kay Tse.

The Synovate Healthcare study on effectiveness of drugs and disease-related advertisement looks into which channels do most Hong Kong respondents recall in seeing these ads, whether such ads prompt them to pay more attention to their health and take further actions about the products advertised, the most recognized spokespeople from these ads, and how much consumers spend on drug purchases.

The study surveyed 1013 Hong Kong respondents using telephone research methodology CATI.

Effectiveness of drugs and disease-related ads

The top drugs and disease-related advertisement most Hong Kong respondents recall are related to cancer, by one in four people. Over 70% indicated they have seen a drug or disease-related ad on television, the top medium, followed by one in four from newspapers.

Commented Carmen Li, Research Director of Synovate Healthcare in Hong Kong: "It is really within these two to three years that we are seeing more drugs and disease-related ads around. Government efforts to educate the public about different illnesses, and even wide spread news on well known figures struck by cancer for example, all make the public more aware of such ads.

"Data show television is an effective medium for drug ads. As video prompt on television is more contextual than medium such as printed ad, that is, more explanation can be shown through visual and voice description, consumers are finding drugs and disease-related ads on TV more memorable."

Results also show drugs and disease-related ads are effective in raising respondents' awareness of their own health, but less people are prompted to action to purchase or take the drugs shown in the advertisements: One in three respondents (36%) said these ads have raised their health consciousness, while close to 15% have indicated they have purchased/taken the drugs because of the ads; searched for more information online; or asked their doctors for more information.

A good news for advertisers, 38% of respondents indicated they found drug and disease-related ads trustworthy.

Said Li:

"Consumers rely heavily on the authoritative doctor figure, where before they try out something new, they prefer to seek the advice from doctors first. This does not mean drug ads are ineffective however. By educating consumers that such medicines and newly-improved drugs are available, it is the first step to empower consumers to ask and find out more from their doctors, to establish a dialogue on their own health, versus the traditional one-way flow of information."

The most memorable celebrities starred in drug ads are...

The study found that close to 30% of respondents feel a drug or disease-related ad is friendlier with the use of celebrities. This is especially true for the younger segment, indicated by 33% of the 15 to 19 years-old group, versus 17% of the 55 to 64 group.

So which celebrities are top of mind for respondents from the drug ads they have seen?

1st spot: Chin Ka Lok - 42%
2nd: Charlene Choi - 35%
3rd: Kay Tse - 30%
4th: Harlem Yu - 28%

"Celebrity endorsement seems to work for Hong Kong consumers when advertising for drugs and related products. They make talking about medicines and illnesses less heavy on the heart - in many ways by making these ads friendlier and

the topic more approachable, it is easier for consumers to discuss with others.

"In addition, the current regulation in Hong Kong is that drugs and pharmaceutical companies are not allowed to mention prescription drug's brand name on television. By using a celebrity icon in an integrated marketing approach, consumers can easily spot the association from printed ads, which allows the display of prescription drug's name, with the celebrity's presence across different channels," explained Li.

Spending on drugs and medicines

Findings show Hong Kong respondents spend the most on Western medicines (on average HKD \$445 per month), followed by Chinese medicines (on average HKD \$267 per month), and supplements such as vitamins and calcium pills (on average HKD \$102 per month).

"Women spend on average more than men, likely with roles as care takers at home. Also from many studies we have conducted, women are found to be more health conscious than men," commented Li.

About this Synovate Healthcare study on advertising effectiveness

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About Synovate

Please visit <http://www.synovate.com/>

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