Winning business via Instagram: The impact of brand visualisation on customer behaviour while consuming Instagram posts

Indra de Kort

School of Humanities and Digital Sciences

Master degree: Communication- and information sciences

Track: Business communication and digital media

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Tilburg University, Tilburg

Supervisor: PhD candidate A.J. Nanne

Second reader: I.I.M. Vanwesenbeeck

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Abstract

Due to the increasing number of businesses on Instagram, it is essential to know which Instagram posts influence customer behaviour. In this study, the concept of brand visualisation is further explored; current literature acknowledges the importance of brand visualisation in product packaging. However, brand visualisation in SNS marketing is still an unrepresented topic. Our goal was to identify what effects brand visualisation have on customer behaviour, such as brand attitude and purchase intention. In addition, previous literature suggested that brand attention could be a mediating variable for this proposed relationship between brand visualisation and customer behaviour. However, not everyone uses Instagram for the same reasons, so the type of motivation was identified as a possible moderating variable between brand visualisations and brand intention. For this purpose, motivations from the Uses and Gratifications model were divided based on the brand focus of the motivation. This study was examined by performing an online survey with an experimental design, which was completed by 208 respondents. This survey establishes a link between brand visualisations in Instagram posts and customer behaviour, such as brand attitude and purchase intention. Identifying the relationship between brand visualisation and customer behaviour in our study deepens the current literature. Contrary to our expectations, brand attention was not a mediating variable between brand visualisation and customer behaviour. Furthermore, the type of motivation to be on Instagram was not a moderating variable on the link between brand visualisation and brand attention. Finally, the researcher identified several possibilities for future research.

Keywords: Brand visualisation, brand attention, brand attitude, purchase intention, type of motivation, Instagram,

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With over one billion monthly active users, Instagram is one of the most popular social network sites, also known as SNSs (Newberry, 2021). Not only those numbers are impressive, the average time per day spent by a user is 30 minutes, which shows that people embed Instagram into their daily life (Newberry, 2021). The use of Instagram is also interesting for businesses; more than 81% of the users find products or services they are interested in on Instagram, with 50% of the total number of users even making a purchase after discovering them on the platform (Newberry, 2021). Although the statistics for business are promising, there is still some uncertainty about the mechanisms behind why Instagram works well for businesses.

As Instagram becomes increasingly popular among companies, the competition grows (Yanuar et al., 2021). Therefore, it is crucial to stand out, and visualisations are one way to achieve this (Miles, 2019). Because Instagram is an SNS focused on sharing photos and videos, it is often seen as visually appealing (Miles, 2019). This research will focus on a particular branch of these visualisations, namely the visualisations aimed at the brand itself or a product of a specific brand, also known as brand visualisations. This research will investigate what influences these types of visualisations have on customer behaviour. A previous study by Lazard and Atkinson (2015) conducted research on the impact of visuals compared to text, which showed that visual content is an essential factor for persuasive message processing. Furthermore, their study showed that the brain is more capable of remembering and recalling visual aspects than textual aspects. This uncertainty makes it essential to broaden the literature on the influences of differences between visualisation types rather than focusing on textual cues. Other studies on brand visualisation identified that different brand visualisations on packages

positively affect customer behaviour and expectations, such as brand sophistication (Van Rompay et al., 2009) and the expectation of quality (Krishna et al., 2010; study 2).

The effect of brand visualisation can be explained by a study by Gustafson and Chabot (2007) that examined that advertising is one of the possible ways to stimulate brand awareness (brand awareness is the measure of how memorable and recognisable a brand is to its target audience.). This research will focus on a specific part of brand awareness, namely brand attention. Brand attention is the extent to which advertisements influence customers' brand recognition (Pieters et al., 2002). In this current study, the researcher will examine whether brand-attention influences the relationship between brand visualisation and customer behaviour. However, there is another critical variable, which is what motivates people to be on Instagram.

Not everyone has the same motivation to use the platform, and, therefore, it is important to understand what the different motivations are for people to use Instagram. To get a better understanding of the different motivations Muntinga et al. (2011) established that there are three possible categories for people to engage with brand-related content on social media. One of those categories is the consuming category, where people mainly look at brand-related content or read certain reviews. In this study, the focus will be on the dimension of consuming content and the underlying motivations behind this dimension.

These underlying motivations are classified based on the Uses and Gratifications theory (Sung et al., 2010). This theory states that people will be looking for media that fulfil their needs and lead to a certain level of satisfaction (Lariscy et al., 2011). Therefore, people will choose and use that medium based on their motivations; for example, when someone is looking for entertainment, they will not immediately think of LinkedIn, which is an SNS that focuses more on work relations. Shang et al. (2017) researched the influence of motivations within Uses and Gratification on social networking sites. They concluded that different needs result in different

resonance responses in media use. In our research, this study will propose new insights by dividing the motivations of the Uses and Gratification theory into two groups, namely, brand-focused motivations and non-brand focused motivations. Furthermore, this research will examine the influence of the type of motivation on the relationship between brand visualisation and customer behaviour.

The last and perhaps most important part is customer behaviour. Ultimately, posts on Instagram are a marketing tool to change people's behaviour from a business perspective (Miles, 2019). Our research focuses on two components of customer behaviour: the attitude towards the brand (brand attitude) and the degree to which someone is willing to purchase a product/service (purchase intention). Brand attitude is defined as a personal evaluation, emotional feeling, and behaviour tendency that an individual keeps (Teo et al., 2019). Furthermore, purchase intention shows how likely people are to buy a specific article (Alalwan, 2018). Within the field of research, it is common to do an experiment in which brand attitude and purchase intention are measured to see if a difference between two groups affects customer behaviour. (Alalwan, 2018). This research will focus on these two components of customer behaviour and will examine how brand visualisation influences customer behaviour.

Through this research, marketers can respond to the extent to which customers need brand visualisation. The results will show whether the use of brand visualisation has a positive effect on customer behaviour. By taking this into account, they are responding to the needs of Instagram users, which positively impacts their customer behaviour. On a scientific level, the current literature between visualisation and customer behaviour is being deepened. Previously, it was only about the textual/visual differences, but this research dives deeper into the differences between different visual images. In addition, this research will broaden the theory of the importance of brand attention and will look deeper into the influence of different motivations on brand attention.

Those different concepts lead to the following question:

RQ: To what extent do brand visualisations influence customer behaviour while consuming content on Instagram, and what part do brand attention and type of motivation play in that relationship?

Theoretical Framework

Brand Visualisations And Customer Behaviour

Brand visualisation is a well-known term in marketing research. However, to acknowledge how brand visualisations work, a clear definition should be defined. Brand visualisations are brand visuals within advertisements that emphasise the brand or a particular product of a brand (Aaker, 2010). Furthermore, Fill (2013) conducted a study that identified corporate names, logos, typeface, colours as key elements of brand visualisation. Therefore, in our study, visual branding is defined as follows: visual branding exists of visuals related to the brand (corporate names, logos, typeface and colours) used in advertisements to emphasise the brand or specific products of that brand.

Previous research on brand visualisation by Aaker (2010) describes that multiple components affect companies' brand identity, with visual cues as one of them. This finding means that companies make themselves recognisable through typology, images and other style forms. This suggestion is endorsed by the research of Lazard and Atkinson (2015). They found that brand visualisation (in this case, a logo) positively impacts persuasive message processing, making people more likely to be influenced by visuals than text alone.

For the underlying mechanism explaining why brand visualisations are compelling, we must turn to the literature on how the human brain processes messages. A series of studies conducted by Childers and Houston (1984) have shown that visual images are stored more quickly and effectively in the human brain than text messages. This process enables brand visualisations to remember an advertisement and activate this memory easier. The process of those actions is referred to as the Picture Superiority Effect (Childers & Houston, 1984). This effect can explain the results of studies by Aaker (2010) and Lazard and Atkinson (2015) by explaining why visuals enhance persuasive message processing. It also indicates that

researchers should focus on visuals rather than text messages in upcoming research on brand visualisation.

Although brand visualisation is a relatively large concept, there is close to no research found about the specific effects of specific brand visualisation on customer behaviour. Nevertheless, some studies indicate what effects brand visualisations have on customer behaviour. However, those studies do not focus on online SNS posts but on brand visualisation on product packaging and the effects on customer behaviour. One of these studies shows that the use of brand visualisations on product packaging positively affects the opinion of consumers focused on brand sophistication (Van Rompay et al., 2009). In addition, the use of brand visualisations on product packaging was found to positively impact the expectation of quality (Krishna et al., 2010; study 2). Since there is no literature found about the effects on brand visualisation in an online environment, our study will follow the line of results of those studies. This concretely means that it is expected that brand visualisation will positively affect customer behaviour. More precisely, it is expected that the presence of brand visualisation will stimulate levels of brand attitude and purchase intention.

To create a shared understanding, we will go through what is meant by the term "customer behaviour". Both brand attitude and purchase intentions are part of the concept of customer behaviour (Spears & Singh, 2004). Customer behaviour is an essential measurement of customers' opinions towards the brand. However, subsequent to brand attitude and purchase intention, other variables belong to customer behaviour, such as quality, that is more specific towards a specific aspect of a brand (Spears & Singh, 2004). Customer behaviour can be described as how customers view a specific product or brand. In research, these variables are often used to measure the extent to which another variable affects them (Spears & Singh, 2004). The same construct is happening in our study, in which the researcher examines the influence of brand visualisations on brand attitude and purchase intention.

More specifically, brand attitude is about the general attitude towards a brand; for example, it can measure how joyful people are towards a specific brand (Spears & Singh, 2004). Furthermore, there is also purchase intention, which measures the extent to which a customer would like to buy a certain product of a brand. Both are indicators of how a specific brand is perceived by the customers (Spears & Singh, 2004). However, there is an essential difference between the two variables; purchase intention is more about actual buying behaviour, which is further in a customer's buying process than brand attitude (Spears & Singh, 2004). Therefore, it is more likely that there are effects on brand attitude than on purchase intention (Spears & Singh, 2004). In our research, both brand attitude and purchase intention will be used to measure customer behaviour.

With the knowledge of the available literature, a gap regarding the relationship between brand visualisation in Instagram posts and customer behaviour can be identified. Currently, there is no literature about the effects of brand visualisations in Instagram posts. However, there are indications from previous research of Van Romay et al. (2009) and Krishna et al. (2010) that brand visualisations positively impact customer behaviour. Since there is a gap within the literature, our research will focus on whether there is a relationship between the presence of brand visualisations and customer behaviour. Our expectations are that the same constructs of previous research would appear and, therefore, we expect that brand visualisations enhance participants levels of customer behaviour, such as brand attitude and purchase intention.

As mentioned before, it is expected that brand visualisations will positively influence customer behaviour due to the processing factor of the brain. Therefore, we expect the relationship to be explained by considering brand attention as a mediator. This reasoning will be explained in detail in the following paragraphs.

Brand Attention As A Mediator

Previous research has found that both brand visualisation and customer behaviour have a different relationship with brand attention. Researchers examined relationships between the variables brand visualisation with brand attention (Alba & Chattopadhyay, 1985) and between the variables brand attention and customer behaviour (Gustafson & Chabot, 2007). Therefore, this study supposes that brand attention could play a role in the relationship between these variables. However, before we discuss this idea in more detail, we need to clarify the definition of brand attention in this study. Brand attention is the extent to which an advertisement influences customers' brand recognition (Pieters et al., 2002). This concept is often measured by the brand recall, which is a measurement that tests the ability of customers to correctly recall a brand from memory when asked about a specific product category (Alba & Chattopadhyay, 1986). Furthermore, brand attention is part of brand awareness, which is defined as to what extent customers and potential customers are aware of the particular business and its products. (Gustafson & Chabot, 2007).

Now that there is a common understanding of the concept of brand attention, we would like to elaborate on why the expectations are that this variable mediates the relationship between brand visualisation and customer behaviour. Previous studies have examined a relationship that brand visualisation affects the extent to which a brand is remembered (Alba & Chattopadhyay, 1985). This result would mean that brand visualisation positively impacts brand attention. The reason for this mechanism is that the human brain is trained to remember visuals and is able to link certain products to a specific brand (Alba & Chattopadhyay, 1985). Therefore, when they see either the associated product or brand, they will be able to recall this, and the brand will be top of mind because of it (Alba & Chattopadhyay, 1985). In order to illustrate how it operates in practice, a scene will be sketched. Suppose a woman sees an advertisement for a chocolate bar of the brand Milka. She also knows other brands like Tony's and Côte d'Or. By seeing the

Milka logo in the advertisement and cognitively determining that it is chocolate, the woman subconsciously connects Milka and chocolate. When the woman is asked the next day by her friends which chocolate brands she knows, she is more likely to mention Milka, as she recognises it through the visual advertisement. In this example, the effect of brand visualisation on brand attribution is shown, which means that brand visualisation ensures that a brand is recognised and associated with the relevant product group. In our research, it is expected to examine the same process in which brand visualisation positively influences brand attention. Concretely, exposure to brand visuals will likely result in better brand recognition.

In addition, brand attention is also related to customer behaviour. The study of Trivedi (2013) showed that being able to recall a brand or its associated ads has a positive impact on the actual buying behaviour of customers. These findings would mean that brand recall directly stimulates purchases. Besides the study of Trivedi (2013), other studies on brand awareness would motivate that showing the brand name or brand products can positively impact customer behaviour (Zhang, 2020; Rossiter, 2014). Those findings are due to how the human brain reacts to memorising a brand. Since a brand or product in question is the first thing that comes to mind through brand awareness, it comes up quicker when asked about the relevant product category. As a result, people show more affection for the brand in question, as they immediately remember only that particular brand (Gustafson & Chabot, 2007). Referencing back to our earlier example, when the woman in the sketch is asked which chocolate she would like, she will quickly think of Milka. She associates the brand Milka with chocolate, which is why Milka comes first in her mind. Furthermore, she will have a more positive attitude towards the brand and show more intention to purchase a Milka chocolate bar since this is a brand she is familiar with and she recently heard of. This process shows how brand attention can directly impact customer behaviour. Therefore, the expectations are raised that brand attention would positively influence customer behaviour.

In our research, we expect to see the same process. This would mean that the presence of brand visualisations will activate the cognitive memory of the brand. A reaction to brand visualisation implies that this particular brand would be on top of mind through brand attention. Since brand attention is activated, people are more likely to show affection towards the brand by positively adjusting their brand attitude and purchase intention (Trivedi, 2013). This would mean that when people are able to recall a brand successfully, they will show increased levels of brand attitude and purchase intention. This expectation would assume a relationship between brand attention and customer behaviour.

Based on the identified gaps within the literature combined with previously mentioned studies and theories, we come to the following hypotheses:

H1A: People exposed to an ad with brand visualisation through a logo score higher for brand attitude than those exposed to an ad without brand visualisation.

H1B: People exposed to an ad with brand visualisation through a logo score higher for purchase intention than those exposed to an ad without brand visualisation.

H2A: Brand attention will positively mediate the effect of brand visualisations on brand attitude.

H2B: Brand attention will positively mediate the effect of brand visualisations purchase intention.

Motivations

Since everyone has a different motivation for using Instagram, each user processes an Instagram post differently (Muntinga et al., 2011). Therefore, it is expected that different motivations will most likely lead to differences in customer behaviour. In this study, two different types of motivations are proposed, namely brand focused motivations and non-brand focused motivations. Based on previous literature it is expected that people that have a brand

focused motivation will look for brand visualisations, and therefore, they will form positive behaviour towards the brand. It is proposed within this study that this will lead to higher levels of brand attitude and purchase intention. In the upcoming paragraphs, we will argue which individual motivations belong to which type of motivations. Furthermore, we will discuss the underlying process in detail why we think those types of motivations influence the relationship between brand visualisation and customer behaviour.

In order to gain more insight into motivations, the Uses and Gratifications model was developed. This model prescribes that users are satisfied when their underlying motivations for using the platform are met. In our research, we use the Uses and Gratifications model to differ motivations regarding brand focus. Although it is a popular model for research into motivations, there are several criticisms of the Uses and Gratifications model. One of the most essential criticisms indicated by the researcher is that there is no well-founded classification of motivations. This criticism implies that every researcher classifies the Uses and Gratifications model differently, which means that various categories have an inevitable overlap and that all motivations are defined differently in various studies (Vettehen, 1998). In our research, we decided to adopt the categories of previous research by Buzeta et al. (2020) to avoid this particular limitation of this model.

This study will focus on the consumption of Instagram content, which addresses actions with low engagement levels, such as watching a brand-related video or reading online reviews (Muntinga et al., 2011). The study of Buzeta et al. (2020) identified five different motivations for consuming Instagram content: entertainment, remuneration, empowerment, integration & social interaction and information. However, we argue that when these separate motivations are compared, one aspect stands out between the motivation, namely the level of brand focus. The motivations remuneration, empowerment and information are all somewhat focused on brand-related content on Instagram, while the other motivations (Entertainment; Integration & Social

interaction) are not focused on branded content. Below, we will elaborate on these two proposed types, highlighting the separate motivations found by Muntinga et al. (2011).

Furthermore, it is expected that those types of motivations will influence the relationship between brand visualisation and customer behaviour. The reasoning for this is that based on previous research that expectations are that people with a brand-focused motivation will focus more on the brand visualisation within an Instagram post, which will result in more positive customer behaviour. We will elaborate on those expectations in detail in the final paragraphs of this theoretical framework.

Brand Focused Motivations

The motivations, remuneration, empowerment, and information belong to the group that focuses on a particular brand while consuming Instagram. To create mutual understanding, the different motivations will be described briefly. First, the motivation rumination was identified, which means that people have the motivation to be involved in brand-related social media, as they expect a financial benefit (Muntinga et al., 2011). This motivation can take various forms, such as participating in contests or discounts (Wang & Fesenmaier, 2003) or expecting a financial benefit in the workplace (Nov, 2017). The second motivation belonging to this group is empowerment, which is a motivation to use social media to influence businesses or other customers. For example, in his study, Kaye (2007) found that people use social media blogs to verify the news on mainstream news channels. In addition, empowerment is also used on social media to express opinions and influence others (Alhabash & Ma, 2017). Lastly, the motivation of information seeking is mentioned in several studies as a motivation for using social media. However, the motivation information includes finding the information directly or learning new things (Papacharissi & Rubin, 2000; Ko et al., 2005). Within this research the following description will be used for this motivation: the need to be on SNS to look for either primary or specific brand-related information within this research. While all three motivations are

different, they all seek to a certain extent for brand-related components in Instagram content in order to fulfil their motivations.

Non-brand Focused Motivations

The motivations entertainment and integration & social interaction belong to the group that does not focus on brand-related content. According to the research by Alhabash and Ma (2017), the motivation of entertainment is the most prevalent on Instagram, which indicates that people often search for entertainment on Instagram. Entertainment is described as a motivation to find entertainment and enjoyment. This concept incorporates the idea from the study by Korgaonkar and Wolin (1999), where it was defined as escaping from the real world, where fun and entertainment are prioritised. Integration & social interaction is the most extensive motivation. However, this also leads to more confusion about the comprehensiveness of the term. For example, some studies describe this motivation as people using the platform to find the same kind of people (Jahn & Kunz, 2012) and that it is a motivation to find others with the same interests (Ko et al., 2005; Yin et al., 2019). However, within this research, social interaction is formulated as wanting to feel connected to a specific community or keeping up to date with acquaintances, where interaction between people is essential. Both these motivations do not focus on brand components while consuming content on Instagram.

Type Of Motivation As A Moderator

In this study, the researcher creates a new step within the literature, examining the consequences of the dissension of motivations on brand focus. Based on previous theories it is expected that this dissension to affect the relationship of brand visualisation with customer behaviour. The reasoning behind this is that the researcher argues that people with a brand-focused motivation will focus more on the brand visualisation within an Instagram post, which will result in more positive customer behaviour.

To explain the relationship between the type of motivation and customer behaviour, a step back to the Uses and Gratifications model is needed. This model argued that people are satisfied when there is an alignment between the user's motivation and a brand's content (Muntinga et al., 2011). We argue that if people have a brand-focused motivation, they will feel satisfied when consuming content that contains brand visualisation since this matches their motivation. Previous research has found that this will lead to more positive customer behaviour such as brand attitude and purchase intention (Saleem et al., 2015). In order to look for satisfaction, people with a brand focused motivation will look more for brand visualisation within an Instagram post than someone who does not have a brand focused motivation and therefore will perceive the posts differently. As earlier mentioned, we expect the type of motivation to moderate the relationship between brand visualisations and customer behaviour.

H3: *Type of motivation (brand focus vs non-branded focus) will serve as a moderator between brand visualisation and brand attention.*

Conceptual Model

Based on these hypotheses, a conceptual model to show our expectations was created, which can be found in figure 1. Customer behaviour consists of both measurements, namely brand attitude and purchase intention. It is proposed that brand attention mediates the relationship between brand visualisation and customer behaviour, whereas the type of motivation moderates the relationship between brand visualisation and customer behaviour.

Figure 1

Conceptual model
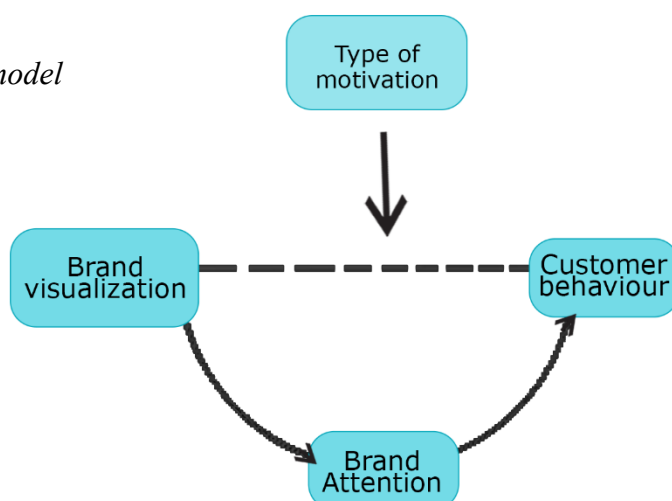
Methods

Design

A strict procedure was used to ensure that this study is reproducible for future research. First, the researcher decided that a survey with an experimental design would be the most appropriate for this research question. Two different stimuli were used for the experimental design that differed in brand visualisation. With this design, we could influence the way brand visuals were used. Those differences in brand visuals were tested for purchase intention and brand attitude. This design created two conditions (the stimulus included brand visuals or the stimulus did not include any brand visuals).

Stimulus

Two different stimulus types were formed based on a screenshot from a Pringles advertisement since it is assumed that many participants know Pringles (which ensures equality in basic knowledge about the product and the brand for both groups) (Haberman, 2015). All elements have been removed. Since we focused on crisps, potatoes with crisps were placed in the middle of the Instagram post. However, contrary to the group without brand visualisation, the stimuli that contained brand visuals a Pringles-can is shown. The Instagram post is blurred in both stimuli, and the word "fresh" is used in both stimuli. We aimed for similar stimuli so that we could compare them fairly. Figure 2 shows the different stimuli.

Figure 2

Stimuli with brand visualisation and without brand visualisation

Participants

For this study, participants were required to meet certain conditions in order for the study to be reliable. Only people with an Instagram account were eligible to participate in this study since only those who have an Instagram account can base their answers on former experience and thus better estimate their online behaviour (Olschewski et al., 2021). Furthermore, it was required that participants were between 18 and 34 years old, corresponding to the majority of Instagram users (Newberry, 2021). The researcher used a convenience sample by distributing the survey to his circle of connections and asked them to forward it to people they knew to mimic a snowball effect so that there were enough participants to represent each condition.

There was a total of 229 participants who finished the survey. After cleaning the data (2 participants did not agree to the consent, 5 participants were too young to participate, 3 were too old to participate, and 11 participants indicated that they did not use Instagram), 208 participants met the preconceived requirements. Those participants had roughly equal (103 saw stimulus with brand-related visual, 105 saw stimulus with non-brand-related visuals) distribution among the two brand visualisation related conditions. The participants appeared to identify themselves as female (53.37%). At the same time, the average age proved to be 24.01 years old (*SD* = 3.49), the youngest proved to be 18 (the minimum age to participate), and the oldest was 34 (the maximum age to participate). The participants mostly appeared to have obtained a bachelor's degree.

Procedure

A strict procedure was followed to make the study replicable for future research. Participants were asked to complete the survey anonymously via Qualtrics.com. Before the start of the survey, participants were informed about the study and asked for their active consent. Without explicitly mentioning the purpose of the study, participants were able to read what was

going to happen within the survey and what they could expect if they were willing to participate. After giving their permission, the first part was about their demographics, such as age, gender and degree, followed by questions about their Instagram usage. Then we used a set of questions to measure motivations (Appendix B, Based on Buzeta et al. (2020)). Next, the participant was randomly assigned to a condition (either one that gets a brand-related visual or without a brand-related visual). After seeing the stimulus matching their condition, they answered questions measuring brand attitude and purchase intentions. The final question was used to measure brand attention through brand recall. Finally, the participant is thanked for participating, and a debrief takes place.

Measurements

Brand Attention

Brand attention is measured by brand recall and is used to check whether people have acknowledged the brand's presence. In our study, we asked from which brand the advertisement was. In order to have a successful brand recall, people who saw a stimulus with brand visualisation had to answer Pringles, and the people who saw a stimulus without brand visualisation had to name that there was no brand. Any answer other than the above was characterised as an unsuccessful brand recall. Since brand attention was only measured with brand recall on single-item scale, so the researcher is not able to confirm a reliability scale. An overview of the results of this measurement can be found in table 1.There is no further specification possible on mean and SD since it was either a successful recall or an unsuccessful recall.

Table 1

Overview of Conditions and Successful Recall (N = 208)

		Condition	
		Brand visualisation $N = 105$	Non brand visualisation $N = 103$
Measurement of brand recall	Successful	82 (78%)	53 (51%)
	Unsuccessful	23 (22%)	50 (49%)

Customer Behaviour

For both measures under the concept of customer behaviour, namely brand attitude and purchase intention, we asked several questions based on a 7-point Likert scale. Based on the questions regarding each individual measurement, an average was taken as the value for brand attitude and purchase intention. The questions were derived from different surveys, which improved their reliability. Validity was also ensured by using multiple questions for one type of measurement. To test whether the questions are reliable for measuring customer behaviour, two separate reliability analyses were examined. The first one focused on brand attitude; this subscale consisted of 5 items (α = .81). The second one focused on purchase intention and consisted of a subscale of 4 items (α = .87). Since both α-values are above .70 this scale is considered reliable. The questions that were asked and the corresponding studies are conveniently shown in Appendix A. All participants completed the questions regarding the subscale of brand attitude (M = 3.62, SD = 1.11) and the subscale of purchase intention (M = 3.01, SD = 1.31).

Motivations

In order to measure motivations, a part of the measurement pool of Buzeta et al. (2020), who measured each motivation separately, was used. In our research, we followed the same

structure; however, the researcher decided to use fewer questions per motivation in order to reduce the time of the survey. Statements were given about each motivation separately, and the respondents had to indicate how much they applied based on a 7-point Likert scale. An overview of those statements is available in Appendix B.

After this, the scores of brand-focused motivations (Remuneration, Empowerment and Information) were added up and divided by the number of statements. This calculation revealed the score for brand-focused motivations for each participant. Subsequently, the same was done for the non-brand-focused motivations (Entertainment and Integration & Social interaction), resulting in a score for non-brand-focused motivations.

To test whether the questions are reliable for measuring the motivations, two separate reliability analyses were examined. The first one focused on the brand-focused motivations, what consisted of questions regarding remuneration, empowerment and information; this subscale consisted of 9 items (α = .82). The second one focused on non-brand focused motivations, which consisted of questions regarding entertainment and integration & social interaction. This consisted of a subscale of 7 items (α = .75). Since both α-values are above .70 this scale is considered reliable.

In order to know the preferable type of motivation, the individual scores of brand-focused motivations (M = 3.57, SD = 1.14) and non-brand-focused motivations (M = 4.35, SD = 1.00) were compared. The respondents were placed under the type of motivation for which they scored the highest. The difference in motivations was calculated by subtracting the score for non-branded motivations from the score for branded motivations. In total, 167 people were categorised as having a preference for non-brand-oriented motivations. In comparison, 39 people were categorised as having a preference for brand-oriented motivations. Two participants were not categorised as they scored equally high for both types of motivation.

Data analysis

Several analyses were performed to answer the research question. First, two separate independent T-tests were done to examine if there was a relationship between brand visualisation and customer behaviour. The first one focused on the existence of the relationship between brand visualisation and brand attitude, while the other T-test examined if the relationship between brand visualisation and purchase intention exists. In addition, to examine whether brand attention was a mediator between brand visualisation and customer behaviour multiple tests were examined. A chi-square was examined on whether there was an effect between brand visualisation and brand attention. Furthermore, two separate independent T-tests were used to investigate the relationship between brand attention and customer behaviour, both focusing on one out of the two identified components of customer behaviour. Lastly, two ANOVAs were executed to examine whether type of motivation influenced the relationship of brand visualisations and customer behaviour (one for each component of customer behaviour).

Results

Within this part, we will discuss the results of the studies. In order to get a better understanding of the results, it is vital to have information on how they were coded. The variables used were: brand visualisation (0 means no brand visualisation in the stimulus, 1 means brand visualisation present in the stimulus), brand recall (0 means recall not successful, 1 means brand recall successful), motivations (0 means a preference for a non-brand focused motivation, 1 means a preference for a brand focused motivation), brand attitude (the mean) and purchase intention (the mean).

The Effect Of Brand Visualisation On Customer Behaviour

To test the hypothesis that visuals with brand placements score better on customer behaviour than visuals without brand placements, two separate independent T-tests were used. In both tests all assumptions were met, apart from a normal distribution (Brand attitude: With brand visuals: $z_{skewness} = -1.51$, $z_{kurtosis} = -0.26$; without visuals: $z_{skewness} = 2.16$, $z_{kurtosis} = -0.18$; Purchase intention: With brand visuals: $z_{skewness} = 0.86$, $z_{kurtosis} = 1.77$; without brand visuals: $z_{skewness} = 2.38$, $z_{kurtosis} = -1.21$) and therefore bootstrap was used.

On average, the participants given a brand visualised ad showed a higher attitude towards the brand ($M = 3.94$, $SD = 1.01$) than people without seeing the brand visual within the ad ($M = 3.30$, $SD = 1.29$). This difference, -0.64, BCa 95% CI [0.35, 0.94], was significant $t(206) = 4.35$, $p < .001$, and represented a medium effect size $d = 0.55$. Therefore, we can conclude that stimuli with brand visualisations encourage brand attitude more than stimuli without brand visualisation. This result was in line with our expectations and supports hypothesis 1A.

On average, the participants given a brand visualised ad showed higher purchase intentions ($M = 3.31$, $SD = 1.29$) than people without seeing the brand visual within the ad (M

= 2.70, *SD* = 1.26). This difference, −0.61, BCa 95% CI [0.26, 0.96], was significant *t*(206) = 3.44, *p* = .001, and represented a medium effect size of *d* = 0.48. Therefore, we can conclude that stimuli brand visualisations positively encourage purchase intention more than stimuli without brand visualisation. This result was in line with our expectations and supports hypothesis 1B.

Brand Attention As Mediator Between Brand Visualisation And Customer Behaviour

In order to test the mediating effect of brand-attention, several statistical tests were done to measure the direct effects of brand-attention. A chi-square was performed to see if there was a relationship between brand visualisation and brand attention. In addition, two independent t-tests were conducted to examine the relationship between brand attention and customer behaviour. One independent t-test was focusing on the relationship between brand attention and brand attitude and the other one the relationship between brand attention and purchase intention.

Firstly, the chi-square, which focuses on investigating a possible relationship between brand visualisation and brand attention. The results showed a significant difference in the successfulness of recalling the brand, X^2 (1, *N* = 208) = 16.20, *p* < .001. People who saw the stimuli with brand visualisation were more likely to correctly recall the brand than people who did see the stimuli without brand visualisation (78.1% to 51.5%). There was a small effect size (*V* = .28).

In order to test whether there is a relationship between brand attention and customer behaviour. The first focused on the relationship between brand attention and brand attitude. All assumptions were met for performing the independent t-test. On average, the participants who remembered the brand showed higher brand attitude (*M* = 3.63, *SD* = 1.08), than those who did not remember the brand (*M* = 3.61, *SD* = 1.17). This difference, −.02, was not significant *t*(206) = −.09, *p* = .93. Therefore, we can conclude that brand attention did not influence brand attitude.

Furthermore, another independent t-test was performed to examine a relationship between brand attention and purchase intention. All assumptions were met for performing this independent t-test. On average, the participants who remembered the brand showed higher purchase intention (M = 3.11, SD = 1.30), than those who did not remember the brand (M = 2.83, SD = 1.32). This difference, −.28, was not significant t(206) = −1.47, p = .14. Therefore, we can conclude that brand attention did not influence purchase intention.

The chi-square results show a direct effect of brand visualisation on brand intent, with people who saw stimuli with brand visualisation scoring higher on brand attention than people who saw stimuli without brand visualisation. However, the two individual independent t-tests show that brand attention has no significant effects on customer behaviour. Therefore, brand-attention cannot play a mediating role between brand visualisation and customer behaviour. This result contradicts our expectations and does not support our hypotheses 2A and 2B.

Type Of Motivation As Moderator Between Brand Visualisation And Brand Attention

In order to examine whether type of motivations affects the relationship between brand visualisation and customer behaviour two two-way ANOVAs were conducted. The first ANOVA tested whether type of motivation was a moderator between brand visualisation and brand attitude, while the other ANOVA focused on type of motivation as a moderator between brand visualisation and purchase intention. For both ANOVA's we will only focus on the interaction effects, since we already established the direct effects by conducting independent T-tests (see the part of: The Effect Of Brand Visualisation On Customer Behaviour). All assumptions for conducting both ANOVAs were met.

The first ANOVA revealed that type of motivation did not serve as a moderator between brand visualisation and brand attitude, F(1,202) = .04, p = .835, partial η2 = .000. The second ANOVA revealed that type of motivation did not serve as a moderator between brand visualisation and purchase intention, F(1,202) = .97, p = .327, partial η2 = .005. Therefore, we

can conclude that type of motivation did not affect the relationship between brand visualisation and customer behaviour. This result is contradicting with our expectations and does not support H3.

Overview Of The Results Of The Conceptual Model

An overview of the results regarding brand attitude is available in the conceptual model overview in Figure 3. A similar overview regarding the results of purchase intention can be found in Figure 4. The red lines indicate an insignificant result, while the black lines indicate a significant result. The number of stars on top of the statistics shows the relationships' significance levels.
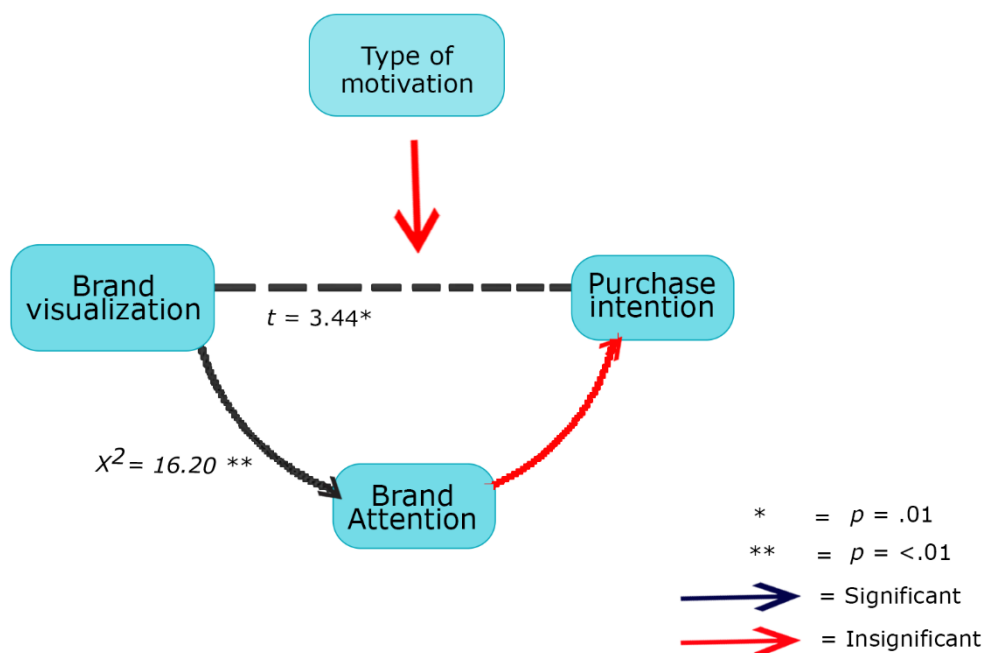
Figure 3

The conceptual model with statistic results regarding brand attitude
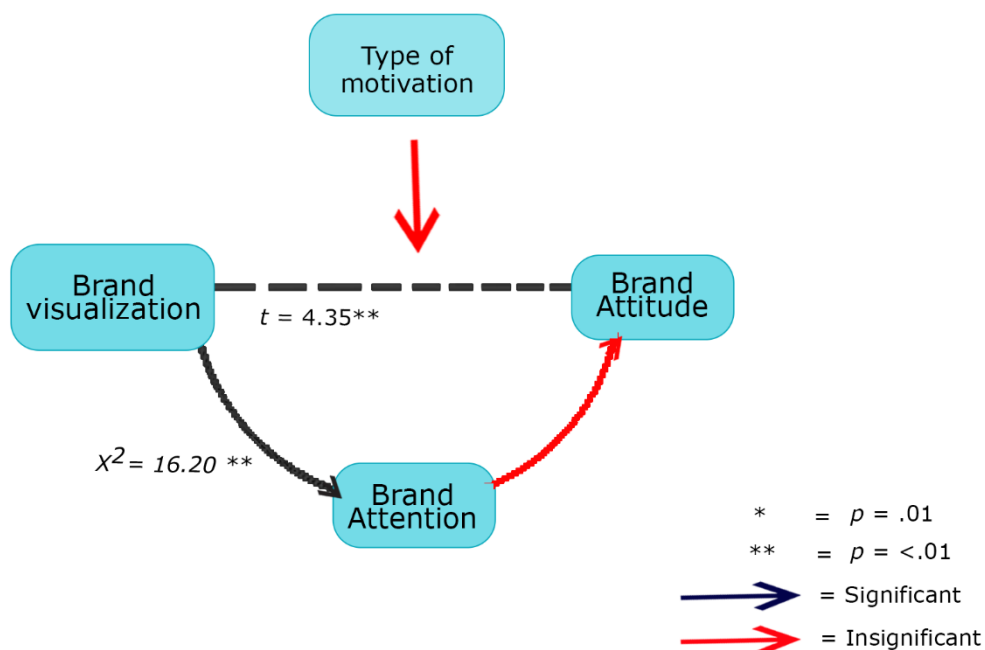
Figure 4

The conceptual model with statistic results regarding purchase intention

Type of motivation

Brand visualization

$t = 3.44*$

Purchase intention

$X^2 = 16.20 **$

Brand Attention

*	=	$p = .01$
**	=	$p = <.01$
		= Significant
		= Insignificant

Discussion

This study was designed to establish a possible relationship between brand visualisation and customer behaviour, such as brand attitude and purchase intention. In addition, the variable brand attention was examined as a mediator. Furthermore, the type of motivations for Instagram usage was expected to be a moderating variable of this mediation effect.

Partly due to the information overload on Instagram, it is essential to stand out and investigate how brand visualisation in Instagram posts affects brand attitude and purchase intention. In addition, we have defined two different types of motivations that people have when they consume brand-related content on Instagram, namely brand-focused motivations and non-brand-focused motivations. Based on the results, we can conclude that brand attention was not a mediator between brand visualisation and customer behaviour. Furthermore, our results suggest that type of motivation to use Instagram did not serve as a moderating variable between brand visualisation and brand attention. The following paragraphs will explain what this means for current literature and identify plausible reasons for the unexpected results.

The first (combined) hypothesis is about the effect of brand visuals in Instagram posts on brand attitude and purchase intention. Through our results, these hypotheses can be supported. We expected that these connections would appear because of brand attention, which we measured through brand recall. Our hypothesis that these connections came about through the mediator of brand attention is not supported by the results. The results showed that brand visualisation has a significant influence on brand attention. However, the mediating effect is not there due to insignificant results of brand attention on both brand attitude and purchase intention. This finding is mainly noteworthy due to the mixed results in previous studies on the relationship between brand attention and brand attitude (Rossiter, 2014; Wilson et al., 2015) or purchase intention (Memon et al., 2016; Khurram et al., 2018). Those earlier studies indicated a positive link between brand attention and customer behaviour.

In this study, the relationship between brand attention and customer behaviour was insignificant. A point of interest here is that specific measurements were different. For example, the study by Khurram et al. (2018) measured actual purchase rather than purchase intention. This effect is even more surprising, as an actual purchase is one step further in a buyer process than purchase intention alone (Sheth, 1973). Possible reasoning for this difference between the studies could be that the product in our stimuli is seen as hedonic. Hedonic products are those that are more often bought from a luxury point of view, while utilitarian goods are those that are needed from a basic need. Although crisps can be seen as both luxurious and utilitarian, as it is also officially a food product, it is generally seen as hedonic. A previous study by Bui and Kemp (2013) found that hedonic products are more emotion dependent. Therefore, it could be that the hedonic product does not evoke many emotions. Based on Bui and Kemp's (2013) research, this could mean that people are less optimistic about their customer behaviour due to the lack of emotions they feel regarding the Instagram post. The current study creates uncertainty about a relationship between the two components since this contradicts previous literature. Due to the contrasts seen in the present study, further research will be necessary to know whether there is a link between brand attention and customer behaviour.

Next, the significant parts of this analysis will be discussed. First, brand visualisation positively influenced both brand attitude and purchase intention. This finding means that brand visualisation increases customers brand attitude and intention to buy in the presence of brand visualisation. Furthermore, this finding deepens the current literature of brand visualisation, which only compared visual ads with textual ads (Lazard & Atkinson, 2015). Furthermore, brand visualisation has only been studied on the packaging. It was found that the presence of brand visualisations has a positive influence on brand sophistication (Van Rompay et al., 2009) and on the expectation of quality (Krishna et al., 2010; study 2). In our study, it is about brand visualisations that are involved within the advertisement. Therefore, we can conclude that our

study offers a deeper insight into the use of brand visualisation by providing the insight that a brand-related visual has a positive influence on customer behaviour within Instagram posts, such as brand attitude and purchase intention.

In addition, according to the mediation analysis, there was a significant effect of visualisation on brand attention. This finding implies that people who had seen the stimuli with brand visualisation were more able to estimate which brand they had seen compared to people without a brand visualisation, which needed to indicate that there was no brand in the Instagram post. This finding aligns with previous studies indicating the importance of brand visualisation on brand recognition. For instance, there is research by Abed (1994) that indicates that visual images have a positive influence on human memory. In addition, the research by Klerkx and Van Meurs (2006) has shown that brands benefit from visual images and that these have a positive influence on brand attention through brand recall. Our current research confirms and supports this theory.

Finally, we also expected a moderating effect of the type of motivation between the variables brand visualisation and brand attention, where people with a brand-oriented motivation would score higher in brand attention than people with a non-brand-oriented motivation. However, the results showed that our research could not support this hypothesis (H3).

A plausible reason for the insignificant result of the moderation analysis could be that people did not have a predominant motivation, causing people to have conflicting motivations, which may have affected the results. This finding is not in line with our results. By doing a paired t-test, we examined that the two types of motivations did not interfere with each other, $t(208) = -12.80$, $p = .000$. Therefore, we can conclude that people often have a dominant motivation. However, this does not mean that the two types of motivation do not influence each other. The study by Fishbach et al. (2010) could give a possible explanation why the results

were contradicting to our expectations. In their study, Fishbach et al. (2010) found that two types of motivation (as is the case in our research) can work against each other, which means that the motivations do not work as expected. They use the four combined studies to show that evaluations of individuals counteract each other through self-control. People have conflicting motivations, and it depends on their emotional state which type of motivation they prefer. When people are in a happy emotional state, they will be able to make better judgements in self-control, so they will show their preferred motivations more strongly and therefore may show the expected customer behaviour. This line of thinking would mean that people's emotional status plays a role in choosing the various conflicting motivations. Their research shows that people in a happy state can best identify their motivations. By controlling for this, we can better demonstrate their preferable motivations, which could provide purer data. As a result, the effects of motivations could be different in other studies. To prevent this from happening in the future, we will have to test whether people are happy, allowing them to highlight motivations more accurately. See a summary of all hypotheses in Table 2, which is on the next page.

Table 2

Hypotheses Summary

	Hypotheses	
H_{1A}	People exposed to an ad with brand visualisation through a logo score higher for brand attitude than those exposed to an ad without brand visualisation.	Confirmed
H_{1B}	People exposed to an ad with brand visualisation through a logo score higher for purchase intention than those exposed to an ad without brand visualisation.	Confirmed
H_{2A}	Brand attention will positively mediate the effect of brand visualisations on brand attitude.	Not confirmed
H_{2B}	Brand attention will positively mediate the effect of brand visualisations purchase intention.	Not confirmed
H3	Type of motivation (brand focus vs non-branded focus) will serve as a moderator between brand visualisation and brand attention.	Not confirmed

Limitations And Future Research

In the section above, we have already discussed that our stimulus contains a product that is considered hedonic. Therefore, it would have been more reliable if a utilitarian product had been chosen. This reliability limitation has to do with the fact that hedonic products are more concerned with price and budget, whereas utilitarian products are essential products in the eyes of customers (Okada, 2005). In this case, the underlying idea could be that money plays a less prominent role with utilitarian products, which would make it less likely to be a factor influencing the customer behaviour of Instagram users. This reasoning would be in line with Okada's (2005) research, which found that in hedonic products, the concept of money and budget play a more significant role than in utilitarian products. Therefore, in the future, utilitarian products should be chosen in stimuli rather than products.

In addition, our research can be processed on a larger scale by replicating the research for the other phases of the Cobra model (Muntinga et al. 2011, Buzeta et al., 2021). Considering the results and limitations, the structure of this research can be applied to the contribution and creation phases. In these future studies, it can be expected that the same effects will emerge. However, more assertive customer behaviour will likely be identified in these phases. The idea behind this is that both categories are further along in a customer's buying process. Earlier research has shown that this creates a stronger connection between the brand and the customer, which leads to more robust customer behaviour.

Furthermore, our results suggest that brand-related visuals have a positive effect on brand attitude and purchase intentions. We have now examined a positive relationship between brand visualisation and customer behaviour. It would be interesting to further explore this finding by analysing the effects on customer behaviour on Instagram in future research. Our research only addresses the effect of brand visualisation on customer behaviour, but visual branding is more extensive than that; it also affects the statistics in terms of Instagram usage. For further research, we can look at the effects of brand visualisation on Instagram exposure. This concept can be measured by looking at the number of likes, the number of comments, and the extent to which people are willing to follow the brand or the company. Here, a good balance can be made between the exposure that a company wants to achieve on Instagram and how this affects customer behaviour.

Finally, there is a limitation concerning the motivations of the Uses and Gratifications model. These motivations have never been divided by focus type, while our research uses this concept. Due to the lack of literature on splitting up the motivations, it is possible that the motivations do not differ (enough) from each other. However, this was also the most substantial gap in the literature, so we saw this as an opportunity to strengthen the theoretical field. Unfortunately, this gap remains after our study due to our insignificant results.

Further research will have to be conducted to determine whether these motivations differ enough from each other in terms of brand focus. It could provide a new dimension of the Uses and Gratifications model, strengthening the theory. The best way to study this is to measure brand perception per motivation (Romaniuk & Sharp, 2003). This concept measures how participants think a particular motivation (e.g., entertainment) focuses on brands. The scale that Romaniuk & Shark introduced could be used to ask people whether motivation is related to brands. When researching this subject, it should be examined whether the motivations differ significantly in this respect, and if so, which motivations can be classified as brand-oriented. The follow-up study could have been conducted prior to this research to avoid this limitation. In this way, the motivations could be categorised more accurately in terms of brand focus. However, it was decided to continue with this current study immediately due to time constraints.

Managerial And Scientific Implications

The current study provides managers responsible for Instagram posts with an understanding of the importance of brand visualisation in Instagram posts. Therefore, it is recommended to use visual brand attributes in Instagram posts. This way, brand attitude and purchase intention are stimulated. If a manager does not consider this, competitors may do so, and their market share may be threatened.

Scientifically, this research also supports previous academic research in brand visualisation. This research provides an in-depth look at the use of branded visualisations. Where previous research only compared ads with visualisations with ads with text, our research goes a step further by comparing visualisations with branded content and without branded content. In addition, this research contributes to expanding the theoretical literature on brand attention. It was found that this variable is not a mediating factor between brand visualisation and brand attitude/purchase intention. Further research will have to focus on the exact role of brand attention, as other studies have found a link, but the current study cannot support this.

Finally, this research produced more information about the (missing) effects of Uses and Gratifications motivations on the relationship between brand visualisation and brand recognition, which contrasts with previous research. Further research has to examine whether the results depend on the participants' emotional state.

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Appendix A

Questions for measuring brand attitude and purchase intention

Questions regarding brand attitude: based on previous literature (AB - Coyle and Thorson, 2001; Prendergast et al., 2010; Teo et al., 2019; CDE – Dodds, 1991) – Measured on a 7-point Likert scale

A. I believe the brand from the Instagram post is an appealing brand

B. I believe the brand from the Instagram post is a brand with a positive mindset

C. I believe the brand from the Instagram post stands for having a pleasant time

D. I think the brand from the Instagram post is my favourite crisps

E. I would like to follow the brand from the Instagram post on social media

Questions regarding purchase intention: based on previous literature (AB - Coyle and Thorson, 2001; Prendergast et al., 2010 ; Teo et al., 2019 ; C – Dodds, 1991 ; D - Duffett, 2015; Alalwan, 2018) – Measured on a 7-point Likert scale

A. It is very likely that I will buy the brand from the Instagram post

B. I will purchase the brand from the Instagram post the next time I want to have crisps

C. I will definitely try new flavours of brand from the Instagram post

D. Suppose that a friend called you last night to come over and ask you if you want any crisps. Would you recommend him/her to purchase brand from the Instagram post?

Appendix B

Table 3: Pool of questions to measure motivations, based on Buzeta et al. (2020)

U&G	Sub-motive	Item	Source
Entertainment	Enjoyment	I use Instagram because it is entertaining	Quan-Haase and Young (2010)
	Relaxation	I use Instagram because it relaxes me	Quan-Haase and Young (2010)
	Play/fun	I use Instagram because it is fun	Ko et al. (2005)
Integration and social interaction	Social interaction	I can meet people like me on Instagram	Jahn and Kunz (2012)
	Bandwagon	Instagram comforts me by letting me know the thoughts and opinions of others	Rathnayake and Winter (2018)
	Community building	Instagram helps me to be part of a community that I would not otherwise have been part of	Rathnayake and Winter (2018)
	Social connectedness	On Instagram, I feel comfortable communicating with other people	Chen (2011)
Information	Information seeking	I use Instagram to look for information about products or brands	Papacharissi and Rubin (2000)
	Communicatory utility	Instagram gives me something to talk about with my friends	Whiting and Williams (2013)
	Social information	I use Instagram to feel involved with what's happening with other people	Quan-Haase and Young (2010)
	Self-documentation	I use Instagram to remember special events	Sheldon and Bryant (2016)
	Information sharing	I use Instagram to share information that may be of use or interest to others	Smock et al. (2011)
Remuneration	Remuneration	I use Instagram in order to access discounts and promotions	De Veirman et al. (2017)
	Remuneration	I use Instagram to take part in a competition	De Veirman et al. (2017)
Empowerment	Empowerment	On Instagram, I want to give suggestions to other users	De Veirman et al. (2017)
	Empowerment	On Instagram, I want to influence companies and organisations	De Veirman et al. (2017)