

***Abstract.** The objective of this research is to examine the effect of message's regulatory focus (promotion versus prevention) and product types (hedonic versus utilitarian) on advertising effectiveness, as well as how direct product experience alters these effects. The findings show that, for hedonic products, promotion messages are more persuasive, generate more positive product attitudes, and willingness to pay a higher price than prevention messages. For utilitarian products, prevention messages are more persuasive and generate more positive product attitudes than promotion messages. However, product trial moderates most of these effects. Managerial implications of these results are discussed.*

Keywords: Hedonic and utilitarian products, Product Trial, Regulatory focus.

ADVERTISING AND PRODUCT TRIAL: THE EFFECT OF MESSAGE'S REGULATORY FOCUS AND PRODUCT TYPE ON CONSUMER EVALUATIONS

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1. Introduction

One of the most challenging and important jobs for marketing practitioners is to select the advertising stimuli that will generate favorable emotional responses and will entice customers to buy the advertised product. Research has investigated the role of regulatory goals and foci in effectiveness of advertising campaigns (see Aaker and Lee, 2001; Kim, 2006). Two types of regulatory goals have been prominently featured in the literature: promotion goals, aimed at achieving positive outcomes, and prevention goals, aimed at minimizing negative outcomes (Higgins, 1997). Previous research findings document that when an individual's regulatory goals match the message frames in terms of regulatory orientation, that is, when there's *goal compatibility*, more positive persuasive effects result (Aaker and Lee, 2001).

Building on the prior research, this paper extends the notion of compatibility to the relation between consumers' goals in the context of purchasing hedonic versus utilitarian products and the type of advertising claim (promotion versus prevention) describing these two different product types. Moreover, although a significant body of work has contributed to understanding post-ad exposure effects of message's regulatory focus, it is noteworthy that research to-date has not examined how consumers' post-ad exposure evaluations are affected by *direct experience* with the product. Our work is designed to provide a broadened perspective related to the divergent effects of message's regulatory focus on attitudes and persuasion, and the impact of product trial on these assessments.

In an experimental setting, we test the joint effects of regulatory focus and product type on ad persuasiveness, product attitudes, and product value (measured as the amount willing to pay for the product), as well as how product trial alters these effects. We conduct our research in the Romania, where consumers have only recently been exposed to advertising and Western brands (Coulter, Price, and Feick, 2003; Gal and Kligman, 2000; Marody and Giza-Poleszczuk, 2000). Romania, like many of its Eastern European neighbors, is emerging from decades of a socialist economy where advertising was virtually non-existent. However, whereas consumers have been exposed to advertising after the fall of communism in 1989 and have accepted advertising in a free market economy, they have little confidence in advertising claims and techniques (Petrovici et al., 2007) and advertising is still in its infancy compared to western advertising (Seitz and Razzouk, 2006).

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows. First, we provide a review of relevant literature of regulatory goals and product types. Next, we take an adapted etic approach (Douglas and Craig, 2006), leveraging Western theories and empirical tests as the bases for our hypotheses related to the effects of message's regulatory focus and product type on ad persuasiveness, product attitudes, and price willing to pay, as well as on post-trial evaluations. Third, we discuss our ad-trial experiment in which we assessed post-ad exposure *and* post-trial evaluations. The post-ad exposure judgments help determine whether extant Western-based post-ad exposure findings related to message's regulatory focus (promotion versus prevention) in the context of

different product types (utilitarian versus hedonic) are replicable in this emerging market. They also serve as a base of comparison with post-trial evaluations to enable assessment of the product trial. Thus, this study will also shed more light on the long-running debate about whether theories developed in free markets can be applied to markets that are undergoing profound economical and political transformations.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. Regulatory focus theory

Regulatory focus theory (Higgins, 1997) has emerged as a powerful new theory for predicting how advertising persuasion might depend on a viewer characteristic called viewer's "regulatory focus." Proceeding from the fundamental principle that people approach pleasure and avoid pain, the theory distinguishes between two modes of motivation and self-regulation termed as promotion and prevention goals or foci (Higgins, 1997; 1998). Promotion goals relate to attaining positive outcomes such as accomplishments and aspirations and prevention goals relate to avoiding negative outcomes such as responsibilities, obligations, and security (Higgins, 1997).

Research on self-regulatory focus delineates the ways in which the two types of goals might be achieved. For example, a desired end state, which is associated with approach goals, may be achieved by maximizing the presence or minimizing the absence of positive outcomes. Similarly, an undesired end state, which is associated with avoidance goals, may be achieved by minimizing the presence or maximizing the absence of negative outcomes.

Building on regulatory focus theory, researchers have proposed that advertising persuasion might also depend on a message characteristic called "message's regulatory focus." Previous research findings document that when an individual's regulatory goals match the message frames in terms of regulatory orientation, that is, when there's *goal compatibility*, more positive persuasive effects result (Aaker and Lee, 2001).

2.2. Product type

Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) proposed two broadly different types of products: (1) primarily utilitarian products (e.g., hair dryers, washing machines, and lawn mowers), with tangible, objective features that offer functional benefits, fulfill utilitarian needs, and are meant to solve problems (Babin, Darden, and Griffin, 1994; Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard, 1993), and (2) primarily hedonic products (e.g., jewelry, perfumes, massages) with subjective, non-tangible features that fulfill experiential needs, and whose consumption produces enjoyment and pleasure. Products have in general both a hedonic and a utilitarian side (Voss, Spangenberg, and

Grohmann, 2003), but a distinction between products that are dominant on either the hedonic dimension or the utilitarian dimension can be made (Dhar and Wertenbroch, 2000).

Rossiter, Percy, and Donovan (1991) indicate that for products that are consumed for their hedonic benefits (e.g., perfumes, massages), people might have a transformational purchasing motive (i.e., promotion motive), which is evident in seeking benefits such as attractive appearance or exciting feeling. On the other hand, for utilitarian products (e.g., aspirin, detergent, insurance), people have an informational motive, which is negatively originated and directed toward removing or avoiding a certain problem (i.e., prevention focus).

2.3. Hypotheses development

2.3.1. Post-ad exposure effects on the dependent variables

Functional attributes help attain prevention goals, whereas hedonic attributes help attain promotion goals (Chernev, 2004). That is because a hedonic value of a product is defined as “the level of pleasure that the product or service is capable of giving to the average consumer,” and the utilitarian value of a product is “the level of usefulness of the product or service in solving the everyday problems of the average consumers.” Also, as discussed previously, utilitarian products are purchased with an informational motive in mind, motive that is negatively originated and directed toward removing or avoiding a certain problem (i.e., prevention focus). On the other hand, for hedonic products people have a transformational purchasing motive manifest in benefits such as attractive appearance or exciting feeling, motive which resembles the promotion goal.

Indeed, Micu and Chowdhury (2007) show that prevention messages are more persuasive for utilitarian products (i.e., vitamin water), whereas promotion messages are more persuasive for hedonic products (e.g., ice cream). Florack and Scarabis (2006) also found that people prefer a sun lotion with a prevention-focused claim to a sun lotion with a promotion-focused claim. They speculated that this preference is due to the main reason of purchasing sun lotion, which is prevention of skin damage, and thus prevention-focused. Thus, consistent with previous research conducted in the Western countries, we also hypothesized that:

H1: there is an interaction between product type and regulatory focus such that:

H1a: for hedonic products, a promotion focus ad will be more persuasive than a prevention focus ad,

H1b: for utilitarian products, a prevention focus ad will be more persuasive than a promotion focus ad.

H2: there is an interaction between product type and regulatory focus such that:

H2a: for hedonic products, a promotion focus ad will generate more positive product attitudes than a prevention focus ad,

H2b: for utilitarian products, a prevention focus ad will generate more positive product attitudes a promotion focus ad.

Value is an important variable in motivation and decision making. The price people are willing to pay for a product is a reasonable way to measure its value to that person (see Higgins et al., 2003). Previous research indicates that the monetary value assigned to a chosen object was higher when it was chosen using a strategy that matched the individuals' regulatory orientation (i.e., under conditions of goals compatibility) than when the strategy did not fit their orientation (Idson et al., 2003). Thus, based on these findings and our discussion preceding H1 and H2, we posit that:

H3: there is an interaction between product type and regulatory focus such that:

H3a: consumers will be willing to pay a higher price for a hedonic product advertised with a promotion versus a prevention focus appeal,

H3b: consumers will be willing to pay a higher price for a utilitarian product advertised with a prevention versus a promotion focus appeal.

2.3.2. Advertising and Trial effects on the dependent variables

An important stream of work has investigated the combined effects of advertising and trial. One significant finding is that once people have tried highly diagnostic products (i.e., products for which trial offers tangible, credible evidence of the product and its attributes), pre-trial advertising has little or no effect on their product evaluations (Hoch and Ha, 1986; Kempf and Smith, 1998; Micu, Coulter, and Price, 2009). Indeed, in the context of highly diagnostic products, trial experience forms a strong belief base because it is processed directly through the senses. "Since the validity of one's own senses is rarely questioned, these...beliefs are, at least initially, held with maximal certainty" (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975, p. 132). Furthermore, research shows that, if the salient attributes presented in the pre-trial advertising are mostly experiential (i.e., can be assessed only by directly experiencing the product), advertising does not have a significant effect on post-trial product evaluations (see Micu, Coulter, and Price, 2009; Kempf and Smith, 1998). Micu, Coulter, and Price (2009) also found that the price assigned to a product advertised by an attractive versus an average-looking model differed between conditions after ad exposure. However, after trial, there was no difference among experimental conditions with regard to price judgments. Thus, we expect that consumers' post-trial product evaluations will reflect their assessment of the highly diagnostic product, and hence, we hypothesize that:

H4: For both hedonic and utilitarian products, product trial will moderate the effects of message's regulatory focus on post-trial evaluations, such that, after product trial:

H4a: there will be no difference between the promotion and the prevention ad in consumers' attitudes toward the product,

H4b: there will be no difference between the promotion and the prevention ad in consumers' amount willing to pay for the advertised product.

3. Measurement and method

3.1. Experimental procedure

Seventy four undergraduate students at a large university in Romania participated in the research study for extra class credit. Participants ranged in age from 19-21 years old (median age = 20), and were about equally divided by gender (43.2% females). Most of the respondents reported coming from middle class (81.5%). Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four experimental conditions: 2 regulatory focus (promotion versus prevention message) x 2 product (hedonic versus utilitarian) types. Upon entry into the experimental session, participants were given a booklet containing the cover story, the focus ad, and the questionnaire, and were instructed not to communicate with others during the session.

To minimize hypothesis guessing, the cover story stated that this is a marketing study that asks participants to review marketing communications about a brand of chocolate (or paper towels) and provide feedback about those communications. Following the cover story, participants were exposed to the advertising message. After examining the message, they completed the manipulation checks and the post-ad (pre-trial) dependent measures. Next, they tried the product and then answered the post-trial dependent variables and the demographic information. At the end of the sessions, participants were debriefed and dismissed. There was no evidence of hypothesis guessing.

3.2. Product identification

Sixty-five undergraduate students from the same university rated several consumer products on a scale designed to classify products as primarily hedonic or primarily utilitarian (Voss, Spangenberg, and Grohmann, 2003). Based on the pretest, chocolate and paper towels were chosen for the experiment. Participants rated the paper towels significantly more functional ($M = 5.94$) than hedonic [$M = 4.61$, $t(35) = 5.47$, $p < .001$] and rated the chocolate significantly more hedonic ($M = 5.52$) than functional [$M = 4.71$, $t(28) = 3.92$, $p < .001$]. Both chocolate and paper towels have been previously used in studies of advertising effects among undergraduate students (see Dahlen and Lange 2004; Lilly and Walters 2000).

3.3. Development of ad stimuli

For each product, two advertising messages (one with a promotion focus and one with a prevention focus) were developed. The emphasis in the advertisement messages was varied on the approach (for promotion messages) versus avoidance (for prevention focus) oriented strategies (see Aaker and Lee, 2001). For chocolate/promotion focus message, the headline read “It’s simply fun to eat,” and the body copy emphasized promotion-focused benefits related to energy creation and bringing fun to one’s life. For chocolate/prevention focus message, the headline said “You’ll never be bored again!” and the body copy emphasized prevention-focused benefits related to feeling less bored and less fatigued. A fictitious name, Delicia, was used to avoid confounds with pre-existing knowledge of real brands. Similarly, the advertisements for the paper towels focused on either promotion-focused benefits or prevention-focused benefits. For paper towels, we used a fictitious brand name, Villa (see Appendix for advertising messages).

3.4. Dependent variables

Ad persuasiveness was measured with two 7-point semantic-differential scales: “Unpersuasive/Persuasive” and “Weak/Strong.” An ad persuasiveness scale was composed by the unweighted average of the two items ($r = .87, p < .001$) (items taken from Kempf and Smith, 1998). Product attitude was measured with four 7-point semantic-differential items, including: bad/good, poor/excellent, inferior/superior, and low quality/high quality (Marks and Kamins, 1988). A product attitude score was calculated for chocolate (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .92$) and for paper towels (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .91$). Finally, participants were asked to write the price (in Romanian currency, ROL) they are willing to pay for a chocolate/ a roll of paper towels shown in the advertisements.

4. Results

4.1. Manipulation checks

To check whether the product type was perceived as intended, a global hedonic score was obtained by combining two hedonic items ($r = .59, p < .001$) measured on a scale of 1 = “less hedonic” to 7 = “more hedonic” (Voss, Spangenberg, and Grohmann, 2003). A utilitarian score was obtained by combining two functionality items ($r = .33, p < .01$) measured on a scale of 1 = “less functional” to 7 = “more functional.” The results indicate that chocolate is more hedonic ($M = 5.76$) than utilitarian [$M = 4.72, t(42) = 5.41, p < .001$] and paper towels are more utilitarian ($M = 6.37$) than hedonic [$M = 4.25, t(29) = 8.07, p < .001$]. Thus, participants perceived the two products as intended. Additionally, participants

answered two questions measuring product diagnosticity (e.g., “The trial experience I just had was helpful in judging the quality of this product;” 1 = “strongly disagree” and 7 = “strongly agree”) (Kempf and Smith, 1998). Both chocolate ($M = 6.66$) and paper towels ($M = 6.45$) were considered highly diagnostic.

To check whether the messages used in our advertisements induced a promotion versus a prevention goal, participants were asked to rate the extent to which ads concerned enhancement or protection (see Aaker and Lee, 2001; Kim, 2006). Paired comparisons indicate that for chocolate, participants in the prevention focus condition thought the ad conveyed more ideas about protection than about enhancement [$M = 4.55$ vs. $M = 2.95$, $t(21) = 3.80$, $p < .01$]; participants in the promotion focus condition thought the ad conveyed more ideas about enhancement than about protection [$M = 4.00$ vs. $M = 3.34$, $t(21) = 2.62$, $p < .05$]. For paper towels, participants in the prevention focus condition thought the ad conveyed more ideas about protection than about enhancement [$M = 4.19$ vs. $M = 3.25$, $t(15) = 4.04$, $p < .01$]; participants in the promotion focus condition thought the ad conveyed more ideas about enhancement than about protection [$M = 5.07$ vs. $M = 2.96$, $t(13) = 3.54$, $p < .01$]. Thus the regulatory focus manipulation was successful.

4.2. Hypotheses testing

4.2.1. Post-ad exposure effect on the dependent variable (H1 through H3)

H1 states that there is an interaction effect on ad persuasiveness. A 2 (product type: utilitarian versus hedonic) x 2 (regulatory focus: promotion versus prevention) ANOVA shows an interaction effect [$F(1, 70) = 13.78$, $p < .001$], and follow-up analyses indicate that, for the hedonic product, the promotion message is more persuasive than the prevention message [$M = 4.86$ vs. $M = 3.75$, $t(42) = 2.60$, $p < .05$]. On the other hand, for the utilitarian product, the prevention message is more persuasive than the promotion message [$M = 4.97$ vs. $M = 3.43$, $t(28) = 2.59$, $p < .05$] (see Figure 1). Thus, H1 is supported.

To test H2, we ran a 2 x 2 ANOVA with pre-trial product attitude as the dependent variable. The results show a significant interaction effect [$F(1, 69) = 19.89$, $p < .001$]. For chocolate, the promotion message generated more positive product attitudes than the prevention message [$M = 5.39$ vs. $M = 4.27$, $t(41) = 3.69$, $p < .01$], whereas for paper towels, the prevention message generated more positive product attitudes than the promotion message [$M = 5.61$ vs. $M = 4.41$, $t(28) = 2.68$, $p < .05$]. Thus H2 is supported.

H3 states that there is an interaction effect on price willing to pay. A 2 x 2 ANOVA indicates a marginally significant interaction effect [$F(1, 70) = 3.90$, $p = .052$]. Participants were willing to pay a higher price for chocolate if they saw the promotion (versus prevention) message [$M = 4.77$ vs. $M = 2.73$, $t(42) = 2.40$, $p < .01$], which provides support for H3a. However, there was no difference between regulatory focus conditions with regard to price willing to pay for the utilitarian product.

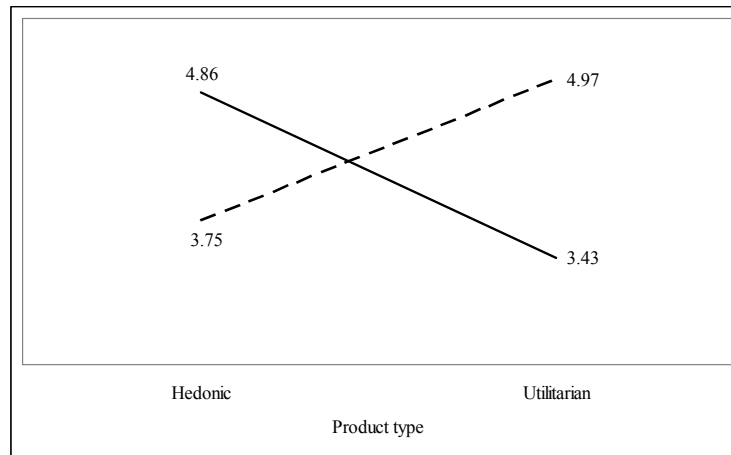


Figure 1. Advertising persuasiveness
Promotion focus (solid line) and Prevention focus (dashed line) means
for hedonic versus utilitarian products

4.2.2. Ad and trial effects on dependent variables

Hypothesis 4 posits that product trial would moderate the effect of message's regulatory focus and product type on post-trial evaluations, resulting in participants reporting the same level of post-trial product attitude and price willing to pay. To examine H4a, we conducted a mixed between-within subjects ANOVA with product type and regulatory focus as the manipulated variables and the product attitude as the repeated measure. The results show a significant effect of product attitude [*Wilks'* $\lambda = .42$, $F(1,68) = 93.16$, $p < .001$] and a product attitude by product type interaction [*Wilks'* $\lambda = .94$, $F(1,68) = 4.26$, $p < .05$]. Specifically, in contrast to the significant product type by regulatory focus interaction effect on *post-ad exposure* attitude (H2), we now found a non-significant interaction effect on *post-trial* attitudes, which provides support for H4a. However, product attitude increased significantly ($p < .05$) after trial in all experimental conditions (see Table 1 for means). Furthermore, the hedonic product generated more positive post-trial product attitudes ($M = 6.49$) than the utilitarian product ($M = 6.09$).

To examine H4b, we conducted a mixed between-within subjects ANOVA with product type and regulatory focus as the manipulated variables and price willing to pay as the repeated measure. We found a significant effect of price willing to pay [*Wilks'* $\lambda = .82$, $F(1,70) = 15.39$, $p < .001$]. Except for the utilitarian/promotion focus condition, participants were willing to pay a higher price for the product after trial compared to after ad exposure (see Table 1 for means). Contrary to our expectations, we found a significant interaction effect on price. Although there was no difference between regulatory focus conditions in price willing to pay for the utilitarian product

after trial, for the hedonic product, participants were willing to pay a higher price after trial if initially exposed to the promotion (versus prevention) ad ($M = 5.75$ vs. $M = 3.45$, $p < .05$) (see Figure 2). Thus, H4b is only partially supported.

Table 1

Means and Statistics for Tested Hypotheses

	Promotion appeal	Prevention appeal	Overall mean	Post hoc comparisons ^a
Pre-trial measures				
Ad Persuasiveness				
Hedonic product	4.86	3.75	4.31	ab
Utilitarian product	3.43	4.97	4.25	ab
Product attitude				
Hedonic product	5.39 ¹	4.27 ³	4.84	ab
Utilitarian product	4.41 ⁵	5.61 ⁶	5.05	ab
Price willing to pay				
Hedonic product	4.77 ²	2.73 ⁴	3.75	ab
Utilitarian product	2.82	2.94 ⁷	2.88	NS
Post-trial measures				
Product attitude				
Hedonic product	6.65 ¹	6.33 ³	6.49	NS
Utilitarian product	6.04 ⁵	6.14 ⁶	6.09	NS
Price willing to pay				
Hedonic product	5.75 ²	3.75 ⁴	4.60	ab
Utilitarian product	3.46	3.50 ⁷	3.48	NS

^a Post-hoc comparisons significant at $p < .05$ are shown by letters (e.g., ab represents a significant difference between the promotion appeal condition mean (a) and the prevention appeal mean (b)); NS indicates no differences between conditions significant at $p < .05$. Means having the same number at superscript are significantly different at $p < .05$

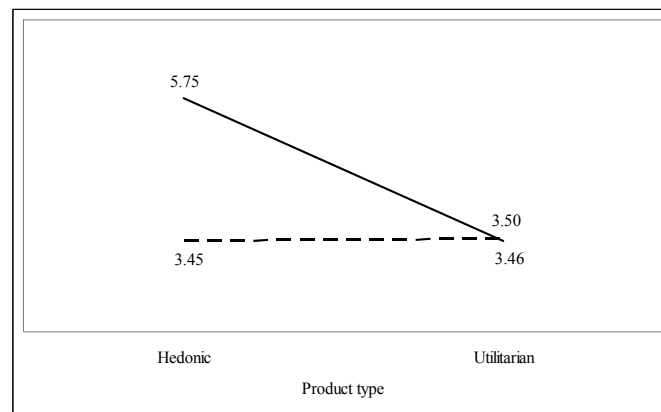


Figure 2. Price willing to pay (after trial) Promotion focus (solid line) and Prevention focus (dashed line) means for hedonic versus functional products

5. Discussions

Our research brings together multiple theoretical perspectives to hypothesize the effects of message's regulatory focus and product type on ad persuasiveness, product attitudes, and price willing to pay, as well as the extent to which product trial alters these effects. The findings provide practical insights for advertisers in formulating specific advertising claims focused on promotion versus prevention goals, when promoting utilitarian versus hedonic products.

5.1. Post-ad exposure effects

Our experimental results indicate that, under conditions of goal compatibility, more favorable persuasion effects occur. Specifically, the results show that, under conditions of goal compatibility, individuals have more positive product attitudes, and are more persuaded by the message, and are willing to pay a higher price for the advertised product than when the message is not compatible with one's goals. These findings are important for marketers trying to promote their hedonic or utilitarian products. Hedonic products help attain promotion goals (Chernev, 2004) and when the advertisements are framed based on promotion focus, such a compatibility results in consumers expressing more positive reactions to the ad. Utilitarian product attributes help attain prevention goals (Chernev, 2004); thus, when a utilitarian product ad is presented in prevention frames, viewers express greater persuasiveness and more positive product attitudes. Although the effect on price willing to pay was not significant, the means were in the expected direction.

5.2. How product trial alters the effects of message's regulatory focus and product type

Our research makes an important contribution to the literature on regulatory focus by looking beyond the immediate reactions to advertisements to examine how product trial alters the regulatory focus effects on product evaluations and price willing to pay. Our experimental findings indicate that, after a diagnostic product trial, there was no difference between the promotion and the prevention advertisements with regard to product attitude, regardless of product type. Because trial is maximally trustworthy in the case of a highly diagnostic products, as those used in this study, the product information from a less credible source (e.g., advertising), cannot significantly compensate for product assessment based on trial.

Interestingly, product attitude increased significantly after trial in all experimental conditions. Although Romanians have accepted advertising in a free market economy, they have little confidence in advertising claims and techniques (Petrovici, Marinova et al., 2007). Thus, they might have been more reticent when evaluating the products after ad exposure. However, the positive trial enhanced the initially held beliefs. These findings suggest that trial, because of its highly diagnostic

and tangible information, creates stronger beliefs about the product than does advertising, and if positive, may result in brand commitment (Smith and Swinyard, 1982). Furthermore, we found that post-trial product attitudes were more positive for the hedonic product than for the utilitarian product. This may be due to consumers attaching great importance to *product experience* for hedonic goods and services (Hirschman, 1980). Indeed, Hopkinson and Pujari (1999, p. 273) suggest the trial of a hedonic product that “creates the opportunity for individual dream” is likely to result in more favorable product evaluations.

With regard to price willing to pay, our expectations were only partially confirmed. As expected, after trying the utilitarian product, participants assigned similar prices to the advertised product whether exposed to promotion or prevention focus messages. However, for the hedonic product, participants exposed to the promotion ad were willing to pay a higher price after trial than those exposed to the prevention ad. Hence, one could argue that a prevention focus message does not do justice to promotion of a hedonic product.

6. Managerial implications and future research venues

Marketers are interested in ads that generate attention, create positive attitudes among consumers, increase product sales and product value to the consumers. Previous research on regulatory focus literature indicates that, under conditions of goals compatibility, more persuasive effects occur. Indeed, promoting a hedonic product with a promotion focus message and a utilitarian product with a prevention focus message offers the best pre-trial opportunity to persuade consumers that the advertised product is superior and is worth a higher price. The subsequent product experience moderates most of the effects of message’s regulatory focus on evaluations. However, our results show that a positive product experience can enhance consumers’ evaluations of the product, as well as the price consumers were willing to pay for the products, emphasizing the importance of giving consumers the opportunity to sample products. Furthermore, our findings indicate that hedonic products are evaluated more positively than functional products after trial. Consequently, product sampling should be an important part in promotional campaigns, especially for hedonic products, for which trial “creates the opportunity for individual dream” (Hopkinson and Pujari 1999, p. 273). Advertisers should also consider conveying promotion (vs. prevention) focus messages about hedonic products, which results in consumers’ willingness to pay a higher price for the hedonic products after trial.

Recently, Burgess and Steenkamp (2006, p. 338) argued that “it is paramount for the future of marketing science and practice that we conduct more research in so called *emerging markets*.” They also argued that “if at least weak generalizability holds for both high income countries and emerging markets, we can start to have confidence in the universality of the theory” (p. 349). Our findings demonstrate that promoting hedonic (utilitarian) products with a promotion (prevention) message initially generates positive product evaluations among our Romanian participants,

replicating work in Western markets (see Micu and Chowdhury, 2007). Thus, advertisers may be able to standardize or transfer appeals from Western countries to Romania. We speculate that our observed trial effects (i.e., diagnostic trial experience allowing for calibration of product evaluations) would generalize to highly industrialized countries. However, future research will need to examine contextual effects related to post-trial responses. Furthermore, previous research indicates that consumers from the emerging markets of Eastern Europe (e.g., Bulgaria and Romania) may differ with regard to their attitudes toward advertising, and thus their response to different advertising appeals (Petrovici et al., 2003). Thus future research may examine the extent to which the findings of the present study can be replicated in other emerging markets.

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Advertising Stimuli

Chocolate/promotion focus advertisement

Delicia: IT IS SIMPLY FUN TO EAT!

What could make your taste buds happier than our rich and delicious chocolate? The luscious milk cream and smooth chocolate create a taste combination that will bring fun to your life. Not to mention the instant energy it will give you so you can get through the day.

Delicia: Get the best of taste when it comes to choosing your own chocolate.

Chocolate/prevention focus advertisement

Delicia... and you'll NEVER BE BORED AGAIN!

Avoid ever having unhappy taste buds again, with our rich and delicious chocolate. The luscious milk cream and smooth chocolate create a taste combination that will remove all your boredom from your life. Not to mention that you can instantly feel less fatigued and able to get through the day.

Delicia: Don't sacrifice taste when it comes to choosing your own chocolate.

Paper towels/
promotion focus advertisement

HAVE FUN CLEANING with Villa Paper Towel by your side!

Have you thought that cleaning can be fun? With Villa Paper Towel, you can celebrate all of your life's moments, even the messiest ones. After all, messes are a part of life. Our very absorbent paper towel that is strong and soft like cloth makes cleaning faster and more efficient, leaving you with more energy for important things in your life. Don't sweat the messes; just soak them up. With Villa paper towel, you can spend your time enjoying life's surprises... even the messy bits.

Villa: a paper towel that will leave you with more energy so you can move on to more important things

Paper towels/
prevention focus advertisement

TAKE THE STRESS OUT OF YOUR MESS, with Villa Paper Towel by your side!

Messes are a part of life. And cleaning them can sometimes make us feel exhausted, frustrated, and annoyed. But not anymore! Our very absorbent paper towel that is strong and soft like cloth works wonders on your messes, so you avoid spending too much of time and effort cleaning. Don't sweat the messes; just soak them up. Villa is your ally to take the stress out of your mess.

Villa: a paper towel that removes all the frustration around cleaning.