Title  An Analysis of the Practice and Theory of the Advertising of Consumer Services: Creation of a Framework for Effective Advertising

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE PRACTICE AND THEORY OF THE ADVERTISING OF CONSUMER SERVICES: CREATION OF A FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE ADVERTISING

by

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy to Luton Business School, University of Luton

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE PRACTICE AND THEORY OF THE ADVERTISING OF CONSUMER SERVICES: CREATION OF A FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE ADVERTISING

Kathleen Mortimer

Abstract

The objective of this study was to establish whether consumer services need to be advertised differently from goods and, if so, in what way. A review of the services advertising and the general advertising literature revealed discrepancies between not only the services advertising theory and generic advertising theory but also between services advertising theory and services advertising practice. Exploratory research and a further literature review were undertaken to investigate the rationale and any justification for these inconsistencies. The programme of research culminated into a services consumer behaviour and advertising framework that was tested and verified.

Phase one of the empirical research consisted of two pieces of exploratory analysis, which examined the UK advertising industry from different angles to establish how consumer services are advertised. Firstly, a content analysis of 270 service and goods advertisements was performed to compare the amount and type of information they contained. Secondly, nine in-depth personal interviews with advertising practitioners were conducted to explore their views on how services should be advertised. A discussion of the findings from the exploratory research and a further literature review led to the development of fourteen hypotheses.

Phase two also comprised of two pieces of empirical research. Firstly, the hypotheses were tested by undertaking a questionnaire survey, which explored the buying behaviour of 400 consumers who had recently purchased a variety of different consumer services. The results from the survey were then
utilised, alongside further advertising literature, to create advertising guidelines which were compared with the executional tools utilised in a selection of award winning, successful service advertisements.

The final framework classifies services into four groups: high involvement utilitarian, high involvement experiential, low involvement utilitarian and low involvement experiential. The buying behaviour relevant to each category in terms of information search and evaluation is provided. In addition, the influences of motivation and opportunity as well as the involvement dimensions i.e. importance and interest, are included. The framework also contains appropriate advertising appeals and specific executional guidelines for each classification.
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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to establish how consumer services should be advertised. A strong theoretical foundation for the investigation is provided through the integration of the services advertising literature with other related areas of study, such as the generic advertising literature and aspects of information search and evaluation from consumer behaviour. This integrative approach leads to the identification of discrepancies between not only the services advertising theory and generic advertising theory but also between services advertising theory and services advertising practice. An understanding and reconciliation of these inconsistencies is sought by conducting considerable primary research into how consumer services are purchased and the role of advertising in that process. The end result of the inquiry is the creation of a comprehensive framework that details the purchasing behaviour and appropriate advertising guidelines for four distinct service types.

Before exploring the subject further, some clarity on terminology may be helpful. Due to its integrative nature, this thesis includes an examination of the literature on “products”, “goods” and “services”. For the purposes of consistency this work henceforth utilises the word “goods” as meaning an offering which is tangibly dominant and “service” as meaning an intangibly dominant offering (Shostack, 1977) (see section 2.3 for a more detailed discussion). The term ‘product’ is employed when there is no clear differentiation between goods and services and therefore includes both categories. Such definitions are prevalent in previous studies (e.g. Swartz et al., 1992; Gabbott and Hogg, 1998).

This chapter begins with a justification for the undertaking of this investigation into consumer services advertising. There follows a discussion of the study’s major aims and objectives and the...
type of research process undertaken in order to achieve them. Finally an overview of each chapter is provided.

1.2 Justification for the study

Services industries now dominate the UK economy. They employ 77 percent of the country’s workforce and are responsible for 70 percent of its Gross Domestic Product (National Statistics, 2002). Similar statistics can be found throughout the Western economies. It is therefore not surprising to find that academics are motivated to understand the characteristics of services along with their impact on services management and, more specifically, services marketing.

The deregulation of the US professional service industry in the late 1970s created a more competitive environment and the realisation of the importance of services marketing (Fisk, 1993). Tripp (1997), who has undertaken one of the few reviews of the services advertising literature, proposes that at least 77 studies were conducted between 1980 and 1995 with the majority of these concentrating on professional services. From the examination of these articles, Tripp (1997) concluded that services advertising research was still in its infancy and that “the challenge to services advertising researchers will be to move beyond single-shot studies into programmatic theory testing” (p. 36). This call seems to have gone largely unheeded. Although research in the area has continued since 1995 the studies still only address specific issues in services advertising such as the use of radio (Abernethy et al., 1997), humour (Fugate, 1998) and symbols (Cobb-Walgren and Mohr, 1998). Some research has also been undertaken on services advertising within an international context (Ha, 1998; Albers-Miller and Stafford, 1999). Despite these developments of knowledge in particular areas, two fundamental questions remain largely unanswered: Do services need to be advertised differently from goods; and, if so, in what way?

The information available to answer these questions is sparse. The services advertising literature consists mainly of conceptual frameworks which have not been operationalised or tested in the
marketplace (e.g. Hill and Gandhi, 1992; Mittal, 1999). The empirical studies that have been conducted to date are mainly content analyses to establish whether goods and services are being advertised differently. Acknowledging the popularity of this type of analysis, Grove et al., (1997) posit that more empirical work utilising survey methods of inquiry is needed to explore the ingredients necessary for effective services advertising. They also identify a need to examine suitable message appeals for services advertising. This study responds to both of these requests.

The thesis firstly brings together relevant research from both the services advertising and the generic advertising literature. Services advertising research appears to have developed as an offshoot of services marketing research. Advertising is perceived as a tool to assist consumers with the challenging decision-making process created by the service characteristics of intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity and perishability (George and Berry, 1981). This rather myopic approach has resulted in an almost complete lack of cross-fertilisation with the extensive body of general research on how advertising works, despite the absence of strong evidence that services need to be, or are being, advertised differently from goods (e.g. Cutler and Javalgi, 1993). This thesis attempts to bridge this gap by examining both areas of knowledge and applying general advertising theories to a services context. The identification of a dearth of empirical underpinning in the services advertising literature leads to the undertaking of two exploratory research projects examining how services are being advertised. The results from these studies reveal a second inconsistency between services advertising theory and practice. They demonstrate that the advertising industry perceives very little difference between services and goods and that practitioners do not develop services advertising in line with the conceptual frameworks.

As the relationship between advertising and consumer behaviour is inexorably linked it has also been necessary to examine the information search and evaluation literature from both the product and services domains. There is considerable evidence to suggest that the amount of effort put into the decision making process can be quite low for a range of different products (e.g. Beatty
and Smith, 1987; Heaney and Goldsmith, 1999). Such lethargy is caused by low levels of motivation, opportunity or ability (Schmidt and Spreng, 1996; Moorthy et al., 1997). An examination of these antecedents reveals that they may be particularly relevant to consumer services and are therefore incorporated into the discussion and examined in the service context for the first time.

The findings from the exploratory research and the literature on advertising theories, services advertising and consumer behaviour are combined to create a Services Consumer Behaviour and Advertising Framework which is tested and developed.

1.3 Delimiters

It is necessary to establish three boundaries of this study before proceeding further. Firstly, this research only examines advertising. An analysis of advertising objectives from the US and UK reveals a similarity in that they all contain reference to four characteristics of advertising: undertaken by an identified sponsor, paid for, nonpersonal and communicated through the media. For example, The American Marketing Association defines advertising as "any paid form of nonpersonal communication about an organisation, product, service or idea by an identified sponsor" (Belch and Belch, 1998). In addition to these points, some definitions go further to provide reference to the purposes of advertising. The UK Chartered Institute of Marketing states that advertising is used to "promote a product, service or message" (cim.co.uk, 2003). Wells et al., (2000) define advertising as a communication used to "to persuade or influence an audience". A more relevant definition for the purposes of this study is provided by De Pelsmacker et al., (2001) because of the reference to using advertising to provide information, which is a common theme throughout the thesis. He defines advertising as a "paid, nonpersonal communication through various media by business firms, nonprofit organisations and individuals who are in some way identified in the advertising message and who hope to inform and/or persuade members of a particular audience".
The main forms of media used by advertisers in the UK are newspapers, magazines, television, radio, cinema and outdoor (Fill, 2002). However, the industry is dominated by newspapers, magazines and television, which account for 89% of advertising expenditure (WARC, 2002). These latter media types that are therefore utilised in the research when UK service advertisements are examined.

This study does not include the other elements of the marketing communications mix, which are normally identified as Sales Promotion, Personal selling, Direct Marketing, Public Relations (Fill, 2002). The reason for this is that, as stated above, some work has already been carried out in this area and topics requiring further investigation have been identified, thereby providing this study with a clear remit. In addition, a focus on the specific domain of advertising enables a detailed examination to be undertaken which would be difficult if other elements of the mix were incorporated. Nonetheless, the author acknowledges the importance of integrated marketing communications and appreciates that the frameworks created in this thesis may well be utilised as part of an integrated marketing communications strategy (Pickton and Broderick, 2001).

Secondly, the thesis concentrates solely on consumer services. Such a focus has historically gained less attention than professional services due to the service industry deregulation in the USA in the 1970s. That situation has now passed (Tripp, 1997) and it should be recognised that the majority of advertising expenditure is being spent in consumer services. In 2002 five of the top twenty UK advertisers were in the consumer service sector, the largest two being BT with a budget of nearly £92m and McDonalds spending £40m.

Lastly, this research is restricted to the UK. Although other British colleagues have investigated specific services such as financial services (e.g. Bejou et al., 1998; Harris and Devlin, 1999), or explored branding and consumer behaviour with reference to services (e.g. De Chernatory et al., 1999; Gabbott and Hogg, 1994) the author is unaware of any studies which have examined UK
consumer services advertising as a whole. Consequently, this is a field that can make an important contribution to knowledge. The vast majority of work in this domain is US-based and yet the impact of culture on advertising content, style and strategy is well-documented (Albers-Miller and Stafford, 1999). For example, the US theories on how advertising works tend to be of a linear nature, while the European approach is more holistic (Lannon, 1992). It has also been found that UK advertisements contain less information than their American counterparts (Weinberger and Spotts, 1989). It is therefore important to establish whether the present services advertising models are relevant in the UK.

1.4 Aims and objectives

The aim of this study is to determine how consumer services should be advertised and to create a theoretically and empirically informed framework for effective advertising. This is achieved by addressing the following objectives

- To determine the similarities and differences between the services advertising and generic advertising bodies of literature
- To confirm if service advertisements are different from goods advertisements in terms of informational content
- To establish whether advertising practitioners perceive the advertising of services to be different from goods
- To reveal the purchasing behaviour of consumers buying a range of different services
- To identify the advertising strategies used in effective service advertisements
- To develop a Services Consumer Behaviour and Advertising Framework
1.5 The research Sequence

These objectives have been achieved by adopting an evolutionary approach, responding to the findings at various stages in the research. This form of development resulted from surprising results early in the study, which had an impact on the direction that needed to be followed. More specifically, the initial objective of the research was to develop the services advertising theories and create a framework of effective service advertisements. However, it became clear during the early stages of the study that the understanding of services advertising would benefit from knowledge already well established in general advertising research on how advertising works and on the major influences on consumer behaviour. The main elements of the general advertising frameworks were therefore brought into the services domain where they were tested and analysed.

This evolutionary approach is diagrammatically presented in Figure 1. The following bullet points describe each stage.

- **Stage 1**
  An examination of the service advertising literature revealed an abundance of conceptual frameworks with little empirical underpinning. These findings were reflected upon and lead to an examination of the generic advertising literature to reveal a lack of cross-fertilisation between the two areas.

- **Stage 2**
  There was some evidence to suggest that the clear distinction between services and goods advertising was unjustified and propositions were therefore formed to test whether classifying products into goods and services was helpful. These propositions were tested by conducting an analysis of informational content. The results showed that characteristics other than the goods/services dimension were influencing the way a product was advertised. To establish the identity of the influences it was necessary to explore the advertising practitioners' views on services advertising. A reflection on the findings revealed further
support for the need for cross-fertilisation between goods and services and for services to be
categorised by involvement and the utilitarian/experiential dimensions.

• Stage 3

The consumer behaviour literature was revisited to establish the influences that these
dimensions may have on information search and evaluation. From this examination a
services consumer behaviour framework was created, based on a number of propositions.
These were tested by undertaking primary research in the form of questionnaires. These
results indicated that there were four clear groups of service purchasers and led to the
creation of a services consumer behaviour framework.

• Stage 4

The literature on advertising strategies and executional tools were examined to create
appropriate advertising guidelines for these four groups. These were tested by an
examination of effective advertisements and the results were reflected upon.

• Stage 5

The outcome of this analysis enabled the framework to be developed into the Services
Consumer Behaviour and Advertising framework.

Figure 1 indicates that the research moves between a number of activities and utilises various
research methods in order to achieve its objectives. Such real-life research does not fit
comfortably into any specific research paradigm. Nonetheless, the programme of study does have
some similarities with the realism approach which is considered to be appropriate for the
studying of marketing research in the "real" world (Healy and Perry, 2000) Healy and Perry
(2000) compared the realism paradigm with positivism and constructivism. They proposed that
the ontology of realism should be defined as real but with some imperfections. This differs from
the positivism ontology where realism is seen as real and predictable and from constructivism
where reality only exists in a person's mind. The epistemology for positivism is based on the
assumption that the findings are true. Conversely in constructivism the findings are seen as
subjective. The epistemology of the realism paradigm is that the findings are probably true.
### Figure 1. Research Sequence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory</th>
<th>Reflection and Conceptualisation</th>
<th>Practice</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Services Advertising Literature Review</td>
<td>Reflection of review</td>
<td>Stage 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising Theories Literature Review</td>
<td>Creation of propositions</td>
<td>Content Analysis</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reflection of results</td>
<td>Practitioners interviews</td>
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<tr>
<td>Further Consumer Behaviour Literature Review</td>
<td>Creation of propositions</td>
<td>Questionnaires</td>
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Realism can therefore be seen as a middle stage between positivism and constructivism. Indeed, Healy and Perry (2000) refer to the epistemology of realism as being “value-aware”. Realism researchers are aware that reality is imperfect and influenced by society. One of the criticisms of the realism paradigm is that findings are often based on a small and non-random sample and
therefore is weak in achieving population validity. Nonetheless, some researchers see this as an acceptable weakness in order to study a "real" situation in a natural setting (Gill and Johnson, 2002).

The similarities between the realism paradigm and the approach adopted in this study are particularly evident in two areas. Firstly Healy and Perry (2000) posit that realism research uses several data sources to achieve triangulation so that reality can be observed through a number of different perception. Secondly, analytic generalisation, that is, theory building, rather than theory testing, can be used as a tool to measure the quality of realism research (Yin, 1994). Both triangulation and analytic generalisation are present in this research.

One example of a methodology used extensively in realism research is Action Research. Action Research is the bringing together of theory and practice by testing out theories in real-life situations. This methodology adopts a cyclical movement, which incorporates observation, reflection and planning before rotating on to the next observation. This movement is similar to the way in which this study continually shifts between theory, reflection and practice.

The approach adopted in this study also has similarities with the well-established Kolb’s learning model (Loo, 2002). In this model learning is presented as a four-stage cycle where the experience of an event leads to reflection, the formation of concepts and then the testing of these concepts in a new situation, as shown in Figure 1.2.
Gill and Johnson (2002) identify both inductive and a deductive learning methods in the model. A deductive research method entails the development of a conceptual and theoretical structure prior to its testing thorough empirical observation. To do this it is necessary to identify the main concepts, which have to be operationalised, and measured so that a theory or hypothesis can be tested (Botterill, 2001). Gill and Johnson (2002) suggest that deduction is represented on the left-hand side of the Kolb’s cycle, where abstract conceptualisation are tested through an empirical study. This deductive approach can be identified in this study in stages 2, 3 and 4 where hypotheses have been developed, based on previous findings from both exploratory analysis and literature reviews, and then tested empirically. These findings are then generalised to theoretical propositions (Yin, 1994).

The left-hand side of the Kolb’s model represents induction, where theories are formulated based on reflecting on past experiences (Gill and Johnson, 2002). This approach links with the exploratory qualitative research undertaken in the second study in stage 2 with advertising practitioners to establish people’s views and opinions on the advertising of services. The purpose
of this research was to understand what was happening in the advertising industry with no predictions or expectations of the outcomes.

Both deduction and induction have strengths and weakness. Deductive research is criticised by some researchers because it imposes a scientific logic to human beings who do not necessarily act logically. It is argued that social sciences are not like natural sciences in that they are dealing with people who are subjective and not predictable. To study social sciences it is therefore necessary to observe behaviour and to take into account the environment in which this behaviour is undertaken (Ozanne and Hudson, 1989). However deductive researchers argue that such methods are unstructured and unreliable because they cannot be repeated.

It has been suggested that using multiple methods to examine the same problem, is one way to cancelling out these strengths and weakness (Gill and Johnson, 2002). Such an approach, utilising both qualitative and quantitative methodological can provide greater validity and reliability (Fischer, 1990). This study has examined the way in which services are bought and advertised through utilising a variety of research methods, as indicated in Figure 1. These various methods taken together have produced convergent findings and have enabled triangulation to take place. The final outcome is a framework that is a representation of reality.

During the development of this research some sections of the study have been accepted for publication. More specifically, the literature review and the two pieces of exploratory research have formed the basis of three articles, which have been published during the period of study. A conceptual paper on the relevance of generic advertising theory to services advertising was also chosen for inclusion in a special edition on services promotion for the Journal of Services Marketing. The publishing process has provided constructive academic feedback through reviewers’ comments, which has lead to further refinement and clarification. Copies of all four articles can be seen in Appendix A.
1.6 Outline of the Thesis

The research is divided into nine chapters, which are diagrammatically presented in Figure 1.3. This chapter provides an overview of the presentation of the study.

Chapter 2 principally focuses on a review of the literature on services advertising. The discussion is preceded by an outline of the main characteristics of services and their impact on the decision-making process. Many of the conceptual guidelines in the services advertising literature address this influence and such an underpinning is necessary to understand their origins. The numerous services advertising conceptual works are discussed and compared to provide an understanding of the development of the subject. An examination of the conceptual frameworks with reference to empirical research is then performed to establish the current state of knowledge.

In Chapter 3 the extensive research into how advertising works is examined. An outline of the chronological development of this knowledge is provided, beginning with the persuasion theories and concluding with integrative models. The acknowledgement of the impact that involvement has on advertising necessitates a detailed discussion on the construct. The chapter supplies a framework that brings together the present thinking on the subject. It finally identifies the main differences between the services advertising and general advertising literature and discusses the benefits of greater cross-fertilisation between the two areas.

The limited empirical results identified in Chapter 2 do not provide a clear picture of how services are being advertised in the UK. Two exploratory studies were therefore undertaken to address this lack of knowledge and these are explained in Chapter 4. The first is a content analysis that was conducted to compare the level of information contained in service and goods advertisements. The second exploratory study consists of qualitative personal interviews, held with advertising practitioners in order to ascertain their perception of the goods/service divide and the impact that service characteristics have on the advertising strategy they adopted. The chapter contains the methodology, results and discussion of these two pieces of primary research.
The previous three chapters identify a gap between services advertising theory and practice; and between services advertising theory and advertising theory. A further exploration of the consumer behaviour literature and its relevance to services is conducted in Chapter 5, to understand and explain this variation. This investigation confirms that the two classification tools adopted in the advertising literature: levels of involvement and the utilitarian/experiential divide, can be applied to services. In addition, evidence suggests that levels of motivation, ability and opportunity to collect and evaluate information may also have an impact on services consumer behaviour and the role that advertising can play in that process. These major influences are therefore incorporated to form a proposed Services Consumer Behaviour Framework. During this process a number of hypotheses are created.

Chapter 6 explains the methodology adopted to test the hypotheses. It describes in detail the steps undertaken to design a self-administered questionnaire for investigating services consumer behaviour. In order to provide a range of services for analysis, respondents were required to choose a single service from a list of 12 services and to answer questions regarding the purchase of that one service in terms of information search and evaluation. It was also necessary to develop a multi-dimensional scale for the operationalisation of motivation, ability and opportunity. The stages of this development are provided in this chapter.

The statistical analysis of the research results is presented in Chapter 7. The respondent profiles are described and the data examined in order to undertake hypothesis testing. The findings are then discussed and analysed. They reveal a need for changes to be made to the proposed framework, thereby creating the final version of the Services Consumer Behaviour Framework.

The purpose of Chapter 8 is to develop the Framework further by incorporating appropriate advertising guidelines. This process is initiated by an examination of the literature on advertising strategies and executional tools for both goods and services. This literature is considered with reference to the findings from the previous chapters, to create a list of advertising appeals and executional tools for each of the four categories of service identified earlier. The propositions are
then tested by examining them with reference to a sample of service advertisements that have been recognised as effective in terms of providing a positive contribution to a business (Duckworth, 1996). The sample was obtained from the Institute of Practitioners Advertising Effectiveness awards, which are presented every two years in the UK. The results from this analysis are compared with the proposed framework and alterations made to create the Services Advertising Framework.

Chapter 9 identifies the main contributions to knowledge that have resulted from this study, and provides a conclusion of the primary findings. In brief, it has been found that levels of involvement and the utilitarian/experiential dimensions of a service do have an influence on how consumers buy services and these dimensions can therefore be utilised to classify services into four groups. There are, however, differences in the way goods and services are purchased, particularly for high involvement utilitarian services where levels of motivation, ability and opportunity are low. These differences in buyer behaviour have an impact on the suitability of certain advertising appeals and executional tools. Emotional appeals are effective for a range of service types and tools to tangibilise the service and create a trustworthy image are also recommended in the guidelines.

The combination of theory and practice evident throughout the study has both managerial and academic implications and they are discussed in some detail. Limitations of the study and future areas of research are also examined.
Chapter 2: Services Advertising

Chapter 2
Services Advertising

Chapter 3
Advertising Theory

Chapter 4
Services Advertising Practice

Chapter 5
Development of Services Consumer Behaviour Framework

Chapter 6
Methodology

Chapter 8
Development and Testing of Services Advertising Framework

Chapter 7
Results

Chapter 9
Conclusion: Creation of Services Consumer Behaviour and Advertising Framework
2. Services Advertising

2.1 Introduction

The acceptance that services are distinct enough from goods to benefit from a different marketing approach has been a gradual process. Fisk et al., (1993), who examined the evolution of services marketing literature, suggest that the first work to address this issue was published in the 1950's as a result of the growing importance of the service economy in the USA. Adopting an evolutionary metaphor, they refer to this early period of development as the "Crawling Out" stage which included the publishing of 120 pieces of work up to 1979. The major outcome from this work was the acknowledgement that services needed to be marketed differently from goods (e.g. Shostack, 1977) due to the four unique service characteristics: intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity and perishability.

Fisk et al., (1993) then identified a shift in development, boosted by the deregulation of services industries in the USA in the 1980s, which they term the "Scurrying About" period (1980-1985). During this time, 287 articles were published and research gradually moved away from the services vs goods debate to examining specific topics, such as service satisfaction and service encounters. Important conceptual models, such as the GAPS service quality model, were developed and this led to greater interest in this area (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Momentum to publish in the area continued, with 720 publications being produced in the "Walking Erect" period (1986 – 1993).

Research into services advertising provides a small contribution to the publications referred to above. The deregulation of services industries in the late 1970s in the USA resulted in a pool of activity concentrating on professional advertising and it could be argued that this area is still receiving undue attention. Tripp (1997) found that the vast majority of the services advertising studies that were conducted between 1980 and 1995 concentrated on medical, legal or accounting professions. She
suggested that services advertising research was still in the "Scurrying About" stage and that it was time to develop theories that transcended specific service industries and moved away from the professional arena into other domains of the service industry.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the work that has been undertaken in the area of consumer services advertising, although references to work in the professional arena will be examined where they are felt to be useful. The services advertising conceptual frameworks are presented initially and then examined with reference to the results from empirical work.

Before addressing the services advertising literature a brief examination of the service characteristics which have created the distinction between services and goods is conducted. This is followed by a review of service classification tools and of the literature on services buyer behaviour. All these areas have a direct impact on how the services advertising research has developed and therefore an understanding of them is necessary.

2.2 Service Characteristics

The characteristics that distinguish services from goods have been of interest to academics since the 1960s (Edgett and Parkinson, 1993). Although it is argued that there are elements of goods and services in many "products" (see discussion in Section 2.3), it is now generally accepted that services are distinct enough from goods to warrant separate attention (Zeithaml et al., 1985; Burton, 1990). These distinguishing features can be classified into four main areas: intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity and perishability. It is important to examine these characteristics because they have a direct impact on how services are purchased and consequently how services should be promoted.
2.2.1 Intangibility

Intangibility is often described as the main distinguishing factor between goods and services (Levitt, 1981). The intangibility of a service refers to the fact that it does not physically exist or, in other words, “it cannot be stored on a shelf, touched, tasted or tried on for size” (p.73, Shostack, 1977). In addition to this physical intangibility, Bateson (1995) suggests that services can also be mentally intangible in that they are difficult for the mind to grasp. He proposes that intangibility is the most important critical goods-services distinction from which all other differences emerge. Certainly, the impact of intangibility is evident throughout the services consumer behaviour and advertising literature because it increases the level of risk that the consumer perceives in the purchase process (Zeithaml, 1981). Advertising is seen by some researchers as a tool to reduce this intangibility by presenting information and physical evidence (e.g. Berry and Clark, 1986).

2.2.2 Inseparability

A service is produced and consumed simultaneously through “a deed, act or performance” (Berry 1980). This is obviously very different from the manufacturing industry where production and consumption are completely separate. The consequence of this is a much more personal and closer relationship between the consumer and the service provider facilitated by the personal interaction, which is often necessary to provide the service. In some cases, the consumer can affect or shape the performance of the service (Gronroos, 1978). The level of consumer involvement in this activity will vary depending on whether the service is people-based e.g. a holiday, or equipment-based as in car repair (Thomas, 1978). This service characteristic also increases the perceived level of risk, as the process and outcome of the service is often reliant on the performance of an individual at a particular point in time.

2.2.3 Heterogeneity

Because many services are provided by individuals, there is the potential for high variability in the delivery of the service (Zeithaml et al., 1985). Consequently, it is difficult to guarantee that every
service delivery will be consistent in terms of either the process or the outcome. This heterogeneity of services creates new challenges for marketers. The role of the front-line staff is obviously paramount in ensuring a good service and internal marketing is needed to achieve this (Lovelock, 1981; Booms and Bitner, 1981). Quality consistency is also important in reducing perceived risk attached to the purchase decision-making process (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Advertising can be utilised to communicate with staff as well as customers and present guidelines on levels of service quality acceptable to both parties (Fryar, 1991).

2.2.4 Perishability

It is not possible to separate the production of a service from its consumption and consequently a service cannot be stored or kept for later (Zeithaml et al., 1985). It is therefore important for the service provider to manage demand levels so that customers' needs are satisfied while keeping wastage to a minimum. Ways of achieving this include selective pricing and advertising can be used to communicate these price differences (Lovelock, 1981).

2.2.5 Lack of Ownership

Although lack of ownership is not listed as a major service characteristic by many service marketers (Zeithaml et al., 1985; Baron and Harris, 1995; Glynn and Barnes, 1995; Rust et al., 1996; Van Looy et al., 1998; Kasper, 1999; Zeithaml and Bitner, 2000) it is recognised by some as being the fifth distinguishing feature (Palmer, 2001; Lovelock et al., 1999; Gabbott and Hogg, 1998). Lack of ownership refers to the fact that ownership is not transferred from the seller to the purchaser when the service is purchased. The purchaser has only temporary access to or use of it. Consequently what is owned is the benefit of the service not the service itself. The result of this is a lack of enduring involvement in the service, only in the benefit (Gabbott and Hogg, 1998).

Despite its inclusion in the list of service characteristics, little reference is made to lack of ownership in the services marketing literature. Palmer (2001) suggests that the main implication of this
characteristic is in the design of distribution channels, with direct methods being more common than the use of intermediaries. Bateson (1995) proposes that lack of ownership results in the customers only having access to a facility when the service is being performed and therefore there is a reduction in customer control for example choosing between using one’s own car and using the bus with its restrictive timetable. Clemes et al., (2000) examined this reduction in customer control and found some evidence of it for mass services such as airlines, and recreation facilities.

2.3 Classification of Services

Although it is now generally accepted by marketing academics that services require separate attention (Zeithaml et al., 1985), little agreement has been reached on whether all services should be marketed in a similar fashion or whether further categorisation within the service sector is necessary. Some writers suggest that classifying offerings as either a good or a service is too simplistic because of the heterogeneity within each group and the homogeneity across the groups. Shostack (1977) argued that a continuum is more useful than clear-cut groupings and created a scale which ranges from tangible dominant to intangible dominant, as illustrated in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 Shostack’s tangibility continuum
Kotler (2000) supports this idea of a continuum by identifying five categories of offer: purely tangible goods, tangible goods with accompanying services, a hybrid offering with equal parts of goods and services, a major service with minor accompanying goods and lastly pure services. A continuum can also be created through examining how offerings can be evaluated. Zeithaml (1981), developing the work of Nelson (1970), posits that goods and services lie on a continuum ranging from easy to evaluate to difficult to evaluate. The easy to evaluate goods are those that are high in search qualities, that is their attributes can be seen and evaluated before purchase. The middle section is made up of goods and services that are high in experience qualities where their attributes can only be evaluated when they are being consumed, e.g. restaurant meals and holidays. The last section consists of services that are difficult to evaluate, even after consumption has taken place, because of high credence qualities e.g. car repairs and medical operations.

Another approach to classification is based on the assumption that services and goods are distinct and concentrates on developing classifications for services alone. Lovelock (1983) brought together previous work in this area to propose that services do not only vary in terms of tangibility and ease of evaluation, but also in the following characteristics that can be used to cluster similar services together:

- **The nature of the service act**
  
  This consists of four categories, a tangible act on people (e.g. haircut) a tangible act on things (e.g. dry-cleaning), an intangible act on people (e.g. theatre) or lastly, an intangible act on things (e.g. banking).

- **Type of relationship with the customer**
  
  These categories are based on whether the service delivery is continuous (e.g. banking) or discrete (e.g. train journey) and whether there is a formal or non-formal relationship between the service provider and its customers.

- **Level of customisation and judgement in the service delivery**
In some services a high level of customisation may be possible, e.g. a taxi service, while in others the provider cannot alter the service to deal with individual customer needs e.g. fast food restaurant.

- **Nature of demand and supply**

These four categories are based on wide and narrow demand fluctuations over time and the relationship between peak demand and capacity. Lovelock uses the example of some hotels where demand varies considerably and sometimes exceeds supply.

- **Method of service delivery**

This classifies depending on whether the customer goes to the organisation, the organisation goes to the customer, or they transact at arm’s length. The other criterion is whether the service outlets are on a single site or multiple sites.

These classifications are important because, as discussed later in this chapter, they have been utilised to create specific groups of services with different advertising strategies (Hill and Gandhi, 1992).

Bowen (1990) performed a review of service typologies and found that nineteen different characteristics have been used to classify services in sixteen different studies (e.g. Judd, 1964; Thomas, 1978). Despite this obvious interest in the subject, none of the classification schemes have been empirically tested. He created another classification approach that was based mainly on levels of customisation and the employee/customer relationship.

This lack of consensus on how services should be classified results in an inconsistency across much of the services advertising research that makes it difficult for findings to be compared and knowledge to be developed. This issue has recently been identified by Ha (1998) who states that "studies on services advertising must take an additional step to analyse each service type before making any conclusions on the distinctive creative strategies of services advertising as a whole". Unfortunately, the appropriate service type is not agreed upon. The conceptual works of Hill and Gandhi (1992) and Legg and Baker
(1987) were consistent in utilising the Lovelock framework. However, other studies have not utilised any of the multi-dimensional approaches, adopting singular characteristics such as experiential and utilitarian features (Stafford and Day, 1995), search qualities (Stafford, 1996; Mitra et al., 1999; Ha, 1998), level of contact (Hill and Gandhi, 1994) and balance of power (Cobb-Walgren and Mohr, 1998). There are also studies which examine services as a whole (e.g. Cutler and Javalgi, 1993; Abernethy and Franke, 1996; Abernethy et al., 1997).

The way in which services are classified obviously has a considerable impact on research findings and is found to be one of the main differences between the services advertising literature and the general advertising theories. This is, therefore, an issue that will be revisited in Chapter 3 with reference to the generic advertising literature and examined in the exploratory studies in Chapter 4.

2.4 Consumer Behaviour for Services

The service characteristics of intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity as indicated earlier have an impact on the way in which services are purchased. Turley and LeBlanc (1993) propose that these characteristics lead to consumers perceiving the purchase of a service as posing a greater risk than buying a tangible good, the largest area of risk being associated with the service performance and the financial impact of a poor purchase. Purchasing a service has also been identified by others as a challenging task because of the high risks involved in making the wrong decision (Murray and Schlacter, 1990; Zeithaml, 1981) and the high level of monetary and psychological costs associated with service switching (Zeithaml, 1981).

Gabbott and Hogg (1994), who conducted a review of the consumer behaviour literature in this area, identified the impact of these characteristics on all three stages of the decision making process: information search, comparison and evaluation. This section will adopt the same structure to identify
the differences in consumer behaviour between goods and services and will then discuss the possible roles for advertising with relation to this process.

It should be noted here that examining consumer behaviour with reference to three stages is obviously a rather simplistic approach. Chisnall (1995) refers to such models containing a series of sequential steps taken by a purchaser, as decision process models. Although they include no appreciation of influences on order or importance of stages, they do provide a basis for developing discussion on consumer buyer behaviour and are popular in advertising research (Chisnall, 1995). (See section 3.2.1 for further discussion with reference to advertising). However, it is important to recognise the existence of multi-variance approaches such as the Howard and Sheth model (1969) and the Engel, Kollat and Blackwell model (1978) as cited by Chisnall (1995). These attempt to propose the impact that internal and external influences have on the buying process, although they too have been criticised for ambiguity and difficulties in measurement (Sternthal and Craig, 1984).

Such models have been designed for both goods and services (Palmer, 2001). Nonetheless, it has been recognised that they do not fully address the purchasing process that is undertaken for services. Fisk (1981) created a model specifically for services and this is included in the following discussion, where appropriate.

2.4.1 Information Search

Gabbott and Hogg (1994; 1998) propose that service characteristics have an impact on the information sources used, the type of information available and the way that consumers use that information. Firstly, information can be provided from both internal and external sources. Internal sources of information arise from a person's memory created by past purchase experiences, including experiences in the product class. A study by Murray (1991) found that if consumers do have relevant prior knowledge, this information is more influential on the decision when purchasing a service than when a
good is being considered. He suggested that this may be because the information is perceived as reliable and credible and therefore levels of risk are reduced.

If this prior knowledge is not available then the consumer will collect information from external sources. Consumer behaviour literature has categorised information sources in a number of ways. Beatty and Smith (1987) described them as media, retailer, interpersonal and neutral. Andreasen (1968) placed more emphasis on the relationship between the source and the receiver and utilised four classifications:

- Impersonal advocate;
- Impersonal independent;
- Personal advocate; and
- Personal independent.

Impersonal advocate sources include print and broadcast advertising, while impersonal independent sources are articles or programmes in the media. Personal advocate sources are salespersons and employees of the service provider, and personal independent sources are friends and relatives.

The type of information available for consideration will depend on the type of service being purchased. If the service is high in search qualities then accessing relevant information is easier. However, many services are high in experience qualities and these are more difficult to assess prior to purchase (Nelson, 1970). Gabbott and Hogg (1994) propose that experiential information is only available through pre-purchase trial, observation or reliance on the experiences of others. As the first two sources are generally not available when purchasing services, consumers place great emphasis on personal sources of information. Such information is sought because it is perceived to be more credible and less biased than other sources of information and therefore again the level of risk is reduced (Zeithaml, 1981). Murray (1991) also found evidence for this difference and suggested that communication strategies in service organisations should be designed to encourage positive word-of-
mouth activity. He suggests that this can be achieved by using endorsers who are similar to the customer to simulate such activity.

The work by Mitra et al., (1999) also supports the proposal that personal sources of information are increasingly important as the service becomes less tangible, but found evidence that impersonal sources also increase in relation to tangibility. One explanation for this finding may be that other service characteristics are influencing information search. There is evidence to suggest that consumers are more reliant on the views of friends and family when buying people-related services than purchasing thing-related services (McColl-Kennedy and Fetter, 1999; Friedman and Smith, 1993; Ettenson and Turner, 1997). Assael (1998) also proposes that if the purchase is of a utilitarian nature then information on product attributes may be useful and nonpersonal sources of information are relied upon. If the purchase is experiential more emphasis is placed on symbols and imagery and personal sources of information are more important.

A study by Venkatraman and Dholakia (1997) also questions a predominance of personal information sources. They examined the information search behaviour of consumers when comparing competing goods and services and found that personal sources were not used more for services but that impersonal sources, such as advertising, were used less. One could argue that the result has the same consequence from an advertising point of view, which is that the role of advertising in providing information is diminished.

2.4.2 Comparison

After the information has been collected, the consumer needs to compare the alternatives, using a list of attributes, in order to create an evoked set of alternatives from which to choose. The fact that the service characteristics of intangibility, inseparability and heterogeneity make this activity difficult to accomplish is generally agreed, due to the lack of tangible attributes to aid comparison. Less clear is the impact that this has on the way comparisons between services are made. It is argued by some that
the lack of experiential information results in consumers placing more emphasis on what they can see, for example peripheral tangible cues such as uniforms, equipment and interior deco as an indication of quality (Shostack 1977; Berry 1980). Advertising has been identified as a way of presenting this physical representation of the service to consumers to aid comparison (Berry and Clark, 1986).

Alternatively, Young (1981) suggests that the lack of search qualities and the personal involvement of consumers in the service consumption results in the consumers placing more emphasis on their feelings about the service and making comparisons on an emotional rather than rational dimension. This approach is condoned by Zeithaml et al., (1990) who state that consumers are influenced by the overall image of the service provider. Again, advertising has been identified as a tool for creating this strong corporate image (Berry, 1987).

The impact of the service characteristics on the evoked set size and the number of features compared is clearer. It has been found that purchasers of services have a smaller evoked set than goods purchasers (Zeithaml, 1981). Friedman and Smith (1993), in their study on childcare purchases, found a maximum of two service providers were considered. The work of Turley and LeBlanc (1993) also found that evoked sets often consisted of two service providers and that companies were evaluated on three features, compared with goods purchases where six evaluative criteria were often used. These findings highlight the importance for service providers to have “top of the mind” awareness in order to be included in this exclusive list and to identify the features that are being employed to compare alternatives.

Because of the challenges facing consumers when purchasing services, it has been suggested that some consumers reduce the size of their evoked set to one, that is they often wish to routinise purchase behaviour and become brand loyal (Zeithaml, 1981). This loyalty is placed with the service provider, not the service, because of the heterogeneity of the service itself. Gabbott and Hogg (1994) posit that this loyalty can become quite strong, resulting in a sense of ownership e.g. “my hairdresser” and a more stable relationship than those experienced with goods.
2.4.3 Evaluation

It has been suggested that an important difference between service and good purchase behaviour is in the evaluation process. This evaluation can take place preconsumption, during consumption and post consumption and the consumer utilises different attributes at each stage to undertake the task (Fisk, 1981; Zeithaml et al., 1990). For example, process dimensions such as service responsiveness and empathy with the consumer are normally evaluated as the service is being provided and consumed (Parasuraman et al., 1991). These three stages contain some similarity with the search, experience and credence qualities discussed earlier (Nelson, 1970; Zeithaml, 1981).

The evaluation procedure is of significant importance to those researchers attempting to identify dimensions of service quality and their relationship with customer expectations and satisfaction. An overall positive experience may lead not only to brand loyalty but also to positive word-of-mouth activity. It is obviously paramount that advertising does not raise consumers' expectations of the service to be provided and thereby lead to low levels of satisfaction.

2.4.4 Services consumer behaviour and advertising

The examination of services consumer behaviour has identified some areas which may impact on the role of services advertising. The service characteristics, particularly intangibility and heterogeneity, result in a reliance on internal sources of information. It may therefore be important for advertising to create a memorable corporate image and act as a reminder of a positive experience, to ensure that the service provider is included in the evoked set. If the internal search does not reveal sufficient information, then the consumer searches externally and relies heavily on personal sources of information. Advertising can therefore be designed to imitate a word-of-mouth situation and employ trustworthy endorsers to add credibility. Providing information and tangible cues may also be important to assist the customer to make comparisons and reduce the perceived level of risk.
The importance of personal sources of information would suggest that advertising is less influential in persuading people to buy services. Venkatraman and Dholakia (1997) posit that Direct Marketing and Public Relations may be more effective in creating a positive and personal impression on the customer. However, a study by Cotter et al., (1996) on marketing communication intensity found that consumer service firms were spending similar amounts on advertising to non-service firms and that the impact of advertising on sales was also comparable. An examination of top advertisers across the world's ten largest advertising markets indicates that the service sector, more specifically financial services, travel and transport and entertainment, is well represented, which would suggest that their contribution to sales is considered of value (Anonymous, 1999).

The next section will discuss the role of services advertising further by exploring the literature on the subject in order to establish the present level of knowledge. This begins with an examination and comparison of normative frameworks of advertising content that have been proposed since 1981. The empirical research that underpins this normative material is then discussed.

2.5 Advertising Guidelines

Services advertising has been conceptualised to address many of these issues identified above. The first managerial framework by George and Berry (1981) proposes that the main role of services advertising is to tangibilise the service in the minds of the consumer in order to reduce perceived risk. These guidelines are still used as the foundation for much of the research in this area. More specifically, they recommend that services advertisements should:

Advertise to employees

Because a service is a performance, the quality of the service provider is of the utmost importance. Advertising can be used to give the employees guidelines and motivation to achieve certain performance levels.
**Capitalise on word-of-mouth**

The intangibility of a service results in increased importance being placed on personal recommendation as in word-of-mouth communication. Advertising can be utilised to encourage this.

**Provide tangible cues**

Perceived risk can be reduced by ensuring that the advertisement contains tangible cues associated with the service as indicators of the level of quality.

**Make the service understood**

Intangibility can lead to difficulties for the consumer in understanding what is on offer. Advertisements need to help reduce this. Tangible cues can also be used in an advertisement to make understanding easier.

**Apply advertising continuity**

Advertising continuity can contribute to service differentiation by creating a coherent image.

**Promise what is possible**

Advertisements can be used to portray the service encounter realistically and therefore influence customers’ expectations.

These guidelines incorporate many of the issues identified in the research undertaken on consumer behaviour for services. They are based on the assumption that the main objective for services advertising is to tangibilise the service by encouraging word of mouth, providing cues, showing the service encounter and creating a strong brand image.

A more emotional approach was posited by Firestone (1983). He identified five roles for services advertising:

**To create the company’s world in the mind of the customer**

This is achieved by communicating the company’s activities and values.
To build the appropriate personality for the company

This is a long-term goal achieved through consistency and familiarity.

To identify the company with the customer

The company image must match the customers' values, lifestyles and attitudes.

To positively influence company personnel in terms of how they deal with customers

Advertising must also represent and reflect the views of the company staff

To help open the door for sales representatives

These are again based on the problems of intangibility but approach the problem from a more emotional stance, which has been receiving growing acceptance in recent years.

The next conceptual framework was produced by Legg and Baker (1987) who approach the subject by examining the problems that consumers face when purchasing services. They identify three stages in the decision making process where advertising can be utilised to assist the customer. Firstly, they propose that consumers find it difficult to understand service offerings and therefore advertising should aid that understanding. This can be achieved by providing relevant tangible objects such as symbols, utilising concrete, specific language and dramatising the service performance and/or its benefits.

Dramatisation is an advertising executional technique where “the focus is on telling a short story with the product or service as the star” (p. 281 Belch and Belch, 1998). Such an approach may include showing the service encounter, but not necessarily. An example of placing emphasis on the benefits is the Barclaycard advertisement (see Appendix G) where the consequences of not using the insurance available with Barclaycard are highlighted in the story (this advertisement is analysed in Chapter 8).

Legg and Baker (1987) refer to these strategies as using vivid information, that is producing a strong or clear impression on the senses, but add a proviso that the effectiveness of these vividness strategies would vary depending on the type of service. For example, utilising the Lovelock (1983) classification framework, they propose that services that involve a tangible action, such as restaurant, may be more
suited to dramatisation than an intangible action, such as banking, where concrete language may be more appropriate. The newness of the service would also increase the importance of creating understanding.

Secondly, consumers find it difficult to develop a list of potential service providers, referred to as an evoked set (Zeithaml, 1981) and therefore firms should attempt to connect their name with the service category in order to be remembered and included in people's evoked sets. This can be achieved through repetition in advertising and/or interactive imagery, which is the linking of two items together. For example, the nature of the service can be shown in a pictorial form such as the One to One logo or through the name itself e.g. Meals on Wheels. Finally, Legg and Baker (1987) acknowledge that evaluation takes place in three stages for services and propose that, at the pre-consumption stage, advertisements containing information about behind-the-scenes operation, rules or policies may be useful as indicators of service quality. Consumption and post-consumption evaluation can be assisted by presenting the actions or events that occur during the service delivery in order to manage expectation.

The most developed set of guidelines is provided by Hill and Gandhi (1992). Acknowledging earlier works, they summarise the role of services advertising as the following:

**Concreteness**

To make the service more tangible by showing physical evidence, using concrete language and encouraging word of mouth.

**Representation**

To present the service provider and the customer in the advertisements, because of the inseparability of the service encounter.

**Documentation**
Provide documentation to indicate the level of service being provided e.g. performance record, success rates.

**Sequence of Events**

To show the service encounter through a sequence of events.

They also utilise the Lovelock (1983) classification scheme, but go further than previous work by proposing specific advertising guidelines for the various service categories. For example, it is considered more important to show the service provider if close contact between the two parties is necessary for the service to be provided, e.g. visiting a beauty salon, than with an interaction over the phone, such as dealing with a credit card company. This is one of the few studies which attempt to explain “interrelationship between the characteristics of services and advertising guidelines” (p 69).

However, the author is unaware of any work that has tested the proposed relationships.

Mittal (1999) has produced the most recent services advertising framework. He suggests that the main service characteristic that influences advertising is tangibility and that tangibility is made up of a number of different elements, which need to be addressed separately. He proposes eight different advertising strategies for services as shown in Table 2.1 and then links these strategies with the different types of tangibility.

Instead of suggesting that different types of services require different advertising, in line with the Hill and Gandhi work, Mittal (1999) states that the relevance of each approach varies depending on the advertising objective and the particular service aspect being communicated. He identifies three advertising goals, Brand Identity, Positioning and Demand Creation. If the goal is Brand Identity, physical representation such as vehicles or symbols and logos is recommended. If the advertisement is attempting to position the brand, emphasis may be placed on either the inputs, processes or outcome. Inputs could again be depicted by physical representation. He uses an example of Southwest Airlines showing casual crew to position itself as a “fun” airline. Process could be promoted by providing
performance documentation or showing the service being performed. Outcome could be emphasised by showing customers enjoying the consumption of the service. The third advertisement goal, Demand Creation, could be achieved by showing the service being performed and consumed, perhaps through a case history approach.

The work of Mittal is important in a number of aspects. It firstly shows that in terms of managerial guidelines little has changed since George and Berry (1981). His main contribution is the proposal that advertising objectives and types of intangibility need to be considered when suggesting the "correct" way to advertise services. Saying that, he does not attempt to categorise different services using the tangibility elements and proposes later in his paper that tangibilisation may not be a problem.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2.1 Mittal's Services Advertising Strategies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advertising strategy</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical representation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Documentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>System documentation</td>
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<td>Performance documentation</td>
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<td>Consumption documentation</td>
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<td>Episodes</td>
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<td>Service consumption</td>
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<td>Service performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service process</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case history</td>
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Source: Adapted from Mittal (1999)
"Whereas most services have some tangible components, their differentiating appeal might well lie in some intangible aspect of service process or outcome. There is no need to shirk from using such intangible appeals. Indeed, handling intangibility is advertising's special talent" (p. 115)

It is interesting to compare this with a quote from Shostack twenty-two years earlier.

"To create a service reality that will stay in the consumer’s mind, marketers must work against the media’s capacity to abstract. Since a service is already abstract, marketers must strive to establish tangible representations for it" (p. 722)

This comparison reveals a subtle but important change in services advertising thinking from a concern that media may make a service even more abstract to a proposal that advertising can be used to promote an intangible aspect of a service. Secondly, Mittal (1999) emphasises the importance of using transformational advertising to communicate his episode strategies. Both of these subjects will be discussed in more detail in Section 2.6.

In order to assimilate the notions of these principal authors and draw together the common themes running through the literature, the basic dimensions covered by each are summarised in Table 2.2. The table enables us to see, at a glance, how ideas have developed from one framework to another and illustrates the areas of similarity. It is possible to group the proposals together into four common themes which exist across the majority of the five frameworks: tangibilising the service, showing the service encounter, encouraging word of mouth and building a consistent brand image. Overall there is a progression from the managerial orientation discussing the role of services advertising to a more practical approach guiding advertising content. For example, the suggestions that services advertising should "Make services understood" has developed into specific advertising tactics such as utilising concrete language and documentation. In fact, the first proposals by George and Berry (1981) are so wide that many of the tactical suggestions would assist in reaching their goals. It is also interesting to
note that the importance of building a consistent brand image has not been explicitly identified in the
two more recent services advertising frameworks. Putting these trends to one side, the table indicates
clearly that there have been no important leaps forward in services advertising theory during the last
twenty years, which suggests that the subject is still in its "Scurrying About" stage (Tripp, 1997).

The normative and empirical research on the four themes identified in the table will now be examined
to establish levels of utilisation and effectiveness.

2.6 Analysis of Main Characteristics

2.6.1 Encouraging word-of-mouth communication

A number of studies have identified the strong influence of personal recommendation in the purchase
decision making process of services. This is particularly prevalent if the consumers have no prior
experience of the service themselves (Gabbott and Hogg, 1994; Davis et al., 1979; Murray, 1991), if
the service is difficult to evaluate (Mitra et al., 1999) or if the service is people-related (McColl-

George and Berry (1981) in the first services advertising framework propose that advertising should be
used to encourage word-of-mouth communications. More specifically, they suggest that
advertisements should encourage customers to talk to non-customers, be targeted at opinion leaders
and include customers' comments. Haywood (1989) suggests that advertising can be created in a way
that results in the advertisement becoming a topic of conversation in itself, by using celebrities or
introducing a witty catch-phrase such as 'Where's the beef?' A British example could be 'It's good to
talk'. Advertising can be used to impersonate word of mouth by using testimonials from spokespersons
that customers perceive to be similar to themselves (Murray 1991, Venkatraman and Dholakia, 1997)
or to show people talking about the service (Hill and Gandhi, 1992). Lastly, service advertisements
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tangibilisation by providing cues and documentation</strong></td>
<td>Provide tangible clues</td>
<td>Create company’s world in mind of the customer</td>
<td>Tangible clues</td>
<td>Physical evidence</td>
<td>Physical representation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Make services understood</td>
<td></td>
<td>Concrete language</td>
<td>Concrete language</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rules and policies</td>
<td>Documentation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Showing the service encounter</strong></td>
<td>Promise what is possible</td>
<td>Influence company personnel in how to deal with customers</td>
<td>Dramatisation</td>
<td>Service encounter</td>
<td>Service encounter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advertise to employees</td>
<td></td>
<td>Show service delivery</td>
<td>Show provider and customer</td>
<td>Show delivery/process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Word of Mouth</strong></td>
<td>Word of mouth</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Word of mouth</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Building a consistent brand image</strong></td>
<td>Advertising continuity</td>
<td>Build appropriate personality</td>
<td>Repetition/interactive imagery</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify the company with the customer</td>
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</table>
can tie in with sales promotion techniques and communicate an incentive to recommend the service to another (Turley, 1990).

These executional tactics have been expressed elsewhere in the services advertising literature with reference to showing the service encounter (Legg and Baker, 1987; Hill and Gandhi, 1992) and adopting a testimonial approach (Mittal, 1999). Employing celebrities is a also recognised executional tool when advertising low involvement goods or services, where the peripheral cues have more impact than informational content (Petty and Cacioppo, 1983) and links with the theory of liking the advertisement and transferring that positive feeling on to the brand (Biel, 1990).

If the customer is acquiring information from personal sources then it could be argued that the role of services advertising is to build on that knowledge and reassure the customer that the right decision is being made. This again has been identified through the importance placed on portraying a consistent, strong and trustworthy brand image (Firestone, 1983).

Although there has been some investigation into how word-of-mouth communication operates (e.g. Archer and Wesolowsky, 1994) there has been little research into whether advertising is being used to encourage such communication or whether it is effective. One of the few empirical studies in services, by Mangold et al., (1999), found that word-of-mouth communication stimulated by a service firm’s advertising accounted for less than ten percent of total word-of-mouth activity and the majority of that communication was negative.

2.6.2 Tangible cues

The intangibility of services has been recognised as an important characteristic which advertising is able to address. Reddy et al., (1993) suggest that “to remain competitive, a service firm must tangibilise or concretise its image in the mind of the consumers” (p. 14). One way in which tangibilisation can be achieved is for advertisements to show the physical elements, or tangible cues of
the service (Shostack, 1977) e.g. cheque books, membership cards or appearance of the service location. Mudie and Cottam (1993) state that the cues chosen must be relevant and of a motivating nature to the consumer. Examples used to illustrate this point include a carrier bag, which was considered not relevant, and an air stewardess, which was.

The importance of tangibles is recognised by Parasuraman et al., (1988) who include them as one of five quality dimensions in their SERVQUAL scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality, the other four being reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. They define tangible cues as verbal descriptions or photographic evidence of physical facilities, equipment, appearance of personnel and the service promised. This SERVQUAL scale was utilised by Day (1992) to identify the frequency of quality cues in magazine advertisements. She found that tangible cues had the highest frequency of the five dimensions and were represented in all ten categories of service advertisements. An explanation for their popularity is provided in the study by Clow et al., (1996), who tested the impact of including the five quality dimensions in optician advertisements. It was found that the inclusion of tangible cues reduced consumers’ perception of perceived risk and increased consumers’ perception of perceived expertise.

It has also been suggested that tangibilisation can be achieved through the use of symbols and logos, such as the Legal and General umbrella, which suggests protection and is part of a clear corporate image (Hill and Gandhi, 1992). This links with the importance of a strong and consistent brand image, which will be discussed in Section 2.6.6. This proposal of using visual and verbal tangible cues was investigated by Stafford (1996) who examined the use of two advertising strategies put forward by Berry and Clark (1986): physical representation strategy and documentation strategy. She found that the verbal cues were more effective for both experience and credence services and that the visual element had little impact on the effectiveness measures. However, Stafford did point out that the visual symbols used were generic to the service type rather than the specific service provider e.g. symbol of a bed for a hotel, and this may have affected the results. It is also important to clarify that verbal cues are
not necessarily of the documentation type. A study by Stern (1988) into the use of figurative language in services advertising concluded that language can be used to tangibilise the service using such techniques as similes and metaphors, with or without visual symbols, so that a picture can be formed in the consumer’s mind.

2.6.3 Documentation

The provision of documentation in the form of facts and figures about the service and the service provider has also been identified in the advertising frameworks as a way of assisting consumers to tangibilise the service and to make comparisons between alternatives.

It would therefore seem logical to find that service advertisements contain more information than goods advertisements. However, empirical work to date does not present a clear conclusion. For example, Resnik and Stern (1977) initially found the ‘institutional’ category of advertisements, which consisted mainly of services, to contain a higher percentage of informational cues than all the goods categories. This percentage dropped, however, to one of the lowest when the survey was repeated 14 years later (Stern and Resnik, 1991) due, they suggest, to a greater emphasis being placed on image positioning across the whole service sector. This longitudinal effect was endorsed by De Pelsmacker and Geuens (1997) who found that the percentage of service advertisements containing no informational cues increased from 48% in 1975 to 71% in 1995.

A meta-analysis of nearly 60 content analyses concludes that services tend to have lower amounts of information than goods advertisements (Abernethy and Franke, 1996). It should, however, be noted that all these studies utilise the Resnik and Stern criteria, which have been criticised for the product orientated categorisation of information and its measurement of frequency of types of information rather than frequency of pieces of information (Abernethy and Franke, 1996; Laband, 1989). The studies examined in the meta-analysis also group all the services together under general headings such as “retailers, restaurants, banks and insurance” (Resnik and Stern, 1977) which makes it impossible to
establish any differences that exist within the various types of services. It is also important to note that all these studies in the meta-analysis were conducted in the USA. Taylor (1983) performed one of the few content analyses in the UK, using the same criteria, and found that only 17% of the advertisements in women’s magazines had no information cues. This would suggest that there is more information in the UK service advertisements than the US equivalent, but this conclusion needs to be confirmed by further investigation.

A more extensive content analysis was undertaken by Grove et al., (1995) which concentrated on four types of information that were considered to be applicable to both goods and services. These were price, guarantees/warranties, documentation of performance and availability. In this work the opposite situation is found, that is that service advertisements contained more information than goods advertisements. (The removal of the other information categories included in the Resnik studies may explain this discrepancy). This study is important in that it goes one stage further and uses the Shostack (1977) continuum to classify goods and services in terms of level of tangibility. The results reveal that the amount of information increases in relation to the intangibility of the good or service. This would suggest that service providers are using factual information as a tool to create a more tangible offering.

The discrepancy in results means that it is still unclear whether services advertisements contain more or less information than goods. Tripp (1997) suggests that these discrepancies may be due to different coding categories, the variance in the sample size and robustness of the content analyses in terms of methodology. The variation in the way that services are grouped together may also have an impact.

Some work has also been completed to establish the type of information that advertisements provide. Abernethy and Butler (1992) concluded that service advertisements generally lack price, component and availability information compared with goods advertisements, but they often include performance information. Unfortunately, these results were not cross-tabulated with different goods or service
types. However, perhaps more importantly, they developed their work to establish the information that consumers wish to receive in advertisements and found that there was no significant difference between services and goods (Butler and Abernethy, 1994). In both cases the customers wanted information on the value of the offering (a rather vague term which included not only price and special promotions but also the explanation of the offering) and availability. This finding is of interest because it is one of the few studies which incorporates the views of consumers and reveals that they do not consider the goods/service divide to have an impact on the informational content of the advertisement.

An investigation into the most effective information for inclusion in legal services advertising found that the inclusion of pricing improves consumers perception of economic value but diminishes the perception of professional competence (Milliman et al., 1991). An offer of free consultation has the opposite effect. It improves perception of professional competent but significantly reduces the perception of economic value.

To summarise, there is no consensus of opinion on whether service advertisements contain more information than goods or whether the inclusion of information increases the effectiveness of the advertisement.

2.6.4 Use of emotion

Evidence suggests that a high level of information content is an indication of a logical and rational approach to the decision making process (Golder and Johnson, 1983). A low level of information would, therefore, imply that the decision making process is being undertaken on a more emotional or image-related basis, where feelings are influencing the outcome. This debate on the rational versus emotional appeal of services advertising has been in existence throughout the development of the subject. Urwin (1975) was the first to propose that emotional appeals such as peace of mind can be effective for new services because rational motives are not enough. Young (1981) developed this idea by positing that a customer is personally involved in the delivery of many services and consequently
makes an emotional evaluation of the total experience. In consequence, he suggests that the hierarchy of effects model for services should be in the order of affective, conative and then cognitive (see section 3.2.1). This idea of personal involvement is cited more recently by Stern (1997) who suggests that relationship marketing is very important in services and that services advertising can play a role in creating a feeling of intimacy with their customers by presenting a caring, considerate and committed image.

It is therefore logical to posit that service advertisements can play a part in building this relationship with the customer by utilising emotional appeals and approaches. However, the results from the empirical research again lack consistency. Cutler and Javgani (1993) conducted a content analysis of magazine advertisements and measured the use of emotion within the headline, type of appeal used and type of process. They found that the use of emotion is more evident in the service advertisements than in the goods advertisements on all three counts. This finding is supported (be it weakly) by Turley and Kelley (1997) who found that “a slight” majority (50.5%) of the consumer service advertisements use emotional appeals.

Zinkhan et al., (1992) examined television advertisements alongside a number of advertising models to establish any differences between service, goods and retail advertisements. They found that services advertisements utilise the transformational (emotional) approach more than the goods advertisements. However, again the argument is weakened by the fact that the majority of the service advertisements (60%) adopted the informational approach, so although the transformational approach was more evident in service than goods advertisements, it was not being used extensively.

Perhaps the lessons to be learnt from these studies is that emotional appeals are being used at least as much in services advertising as in goods advertising. The inconsistencies in these studies on both informational content and emotional appeal may be due to the lack of classification of services. Ha (1998) concludes that “studies on services advertising must take an additional step to analyse each
service type before making any conclusions on the distinctive creative strategies of services advertising as a whole" (p. 101). Very few of these studies have utilised any of the classification schemes discussed earlier. Grouping together such a wide variety of services, and goods incidentally, render the findings rather unhelpful.

Some work has also taken place to establish the level of effectiveness of rational and emotional advertising for services with, again, varying results. A body of research by Stafford and colleagues has tested the effectiveness of rational and emotional approaches in terms of attitude to the advert, attitude to the service, level of recall and patronage intention. They have found that the rational approach is more effective in all respects for both experiential services and utilitarian services, as well as for services high in credence qualities and high in experience qualities (Stafford and Day, 1995; Stafford, 1996; Stafford and Stafford, 2000). However, Mattila (1999) challenges this conclusion. She produced evidence to suggest that, when advertising hotels to consumers unfamiliar with the service category, the emotional message strategy is the most successful in terms of liking the advertisement, attitude towards the brand, service expectation and future purchase intentions.

Other types of message appeal have also been brought into the debate. Padgett and Allen (1997) argue that analysing message appeals purely in terms of 'rational' and 'emotional' is unhelpful, as a service advertisement needs to communicate both functional and symbolic meanings about the service experience. They suggest an argumentative/narrative dichotomy. An argumentative advertisement is one that presents logical ideas not enacted by a character. They can therefore convey functional attributes which people will either agree with or create counter arguments against. Narrative advertisements tell a story and use characters, plot and a setting. They may still communicate information but also suggest certain feelings linked with the consumption of the service. Padgett and Allen (1997) suggest that this approach is a useful way to create a strong service brand image because a service is an experience that will create feelings and emotions. Mittal (1999) also suggests that transformational advertising in the form of episodes or stories can be effective. He defines transformational advertising as that which links an intangible service feature with an intangible life
experience so that the consumer can relate to the feature being promoted. He argues that a consumer’s world is made up of social and psychological experiences that are very subjective and intangible. The challenge is to capture these experiences in the advertising so that they seem relevant and positive.

2.6.5 Showing the service provider/service encounter

The performance of the service providers’ employees is obviously critical to the success of any service and the interaction between employees and customers is one of the strong differentiators between services and goods. It would therefore seem sensible for the frameworks to suggest that services advertising should present the service provider and show the service encounter in order to give both parties guidelines as to what is expected of them. If employees are not clear of their role this can create a difference between the quality specifications for a service, customer expectations and the actual delivery of that service (Zeithaml et al., 1988a; Fryar, 1991). However, this needs to be done carefully. If the campaign suggests levels of service that the employees cannot obtain, this may result in a reduction in staff motivation and an increase in any performance gap (Acito and Ford, 1980; Bateson, 1995). This dramatisation of the service interaction can also help in consumer understanding and assist in expectation management, especially when it is a new service or expectations are presently incorrect (Legg and Baker 1987). Mattila (1999), who examined the use of emotion in service advertisements, found that portraying employees in the advertisement was more effective if an emotional appeal was being adopted when aiming the communication to new users.

Showing or describing employees in service advertisements is endorsed by a number of other writers (e.g. Gronroos, 1982; Firestone, 1983). Stephens and Faranda (1993) established, through an advertising experiment, that showing front-line personnel was more effective than presenting the CEO or back-office employees in terms of the respondents’ level of cognitive processing and their attitude towards service quality.
Nonetheless, there is conflicting evidence as to whether practitioners are adopting this approach. Abernethy and Butler (1993) discovered that service advertisements in newspapers contained more illustrations or descriptions of contact people than goods advertisements, while Cutler and Javalgi (1993) in their study found no such evidence. Hill and Gandhi (1994) proposed that the inclusion of company personnel and customers was higher in advertisements for discrete services and where there was a high level of customer contact. These confusing results may again be due to the variation in classification techniques.

2.6.6 Continuity and image development

As discussed earlier, the purchase of some services is perceived to be a time-consuming and stressful task (Murray and Schlacter, 1990; Zeithaml, 1981). Consumers are therefore keen to eliminate this stress by routinising purchase behaviour and becoming brand loyal to a service provider (Snyder, 1986; Gabbott and Hogg, 1994; 1998)

Brand loyalty is obviously the result of many factors including a positive service experience and a quality evaluation, which is provided by the total services marketing mix (Stell and Fisk, 1986). The way in which service expectations are satisfied through the customer-provider interface is fundamental in creating customer loyalty, particularly with a high involvement service (Bloemer and De Ruyter, 1999) and achieving this through internal marketing is considered by some to be more important than branding issues (De Chernatony et al., 1999).

Nonetheless, advertising can obviously contribute to the creation of brand loyalty by portraying a clearly-defined corporate image which can assist in differentiating the service provider from its competitors through the use of both rational and emotional strategies (Meenaghan, 1995). A strong service image has been identified as an important strategic variable that can lead to a competitive advantage (Bharadwaji and Menon, 1993). Evidence from both the financial services and tourism industries suggests that its influence may have an even greater impact on the decision making process when service attributes are difficult to evaluate and the perceived risk is high (Andreassen and
A study of holiday makers by Andreassen and Lindestad (1998) found that corporate image influenced perceived quality and customer satisfaction, which then lead onto customer loyalty, a finding endorsed by Arora and Stoner (1996) in the retail sector. In other words, once a consumer has decided to view a company in a positive light, perhaps due to a positive experience, this results in customer loyalty, which has an influence on all future perceptions of that company's activities (Nguyen and LeBlanc, 1998; Dick and Basu, 1994). It would therefore follow that once a good corporate image has been created it becomes quite difficult for loyal customers to change their perception of the company, which can give companies a strong competitive advantage.

One of the significant ingredients of brand loyalty is trust (Dick and Basu, 1994), which has been identified by a number of service marketers as an important element in service consumer behaviour because of intangibility and high perceived risk (Mitchell, 1999). Berry and Parasuraman (1991) contend that "Effective services marketing depends on the management of trust because the customer typically must buy a service before experiencing it" and that "customer-company relationships require trust". The creation of trust is of great benefit to the marketer because, in a similar way to brand loyalty, it leads to a relationship commitment and a positive perception of the company (Morgan and Hunt, 1994).

There have been some suggestions as to how this trusting image can be created. Berry (1987) states that the continual and consistent use of specific symbols, formats or themes can create a clear corporate or brand image, with the opportunity of becoming a power brander. Advertising can also be used to give the impression of a large and popular service provider, with the implication that other people have trusted the provider and therefore their standard of service must be of an acceptable level (Shiller, 1995; Choi and Kim, 1996). This consistent and dependable image addresses affective elements of trust such as integrity and sincerity. The containment of guarantees and qualifications may address more cognitive elements of trust. Onkvisit and Shaw (1989) endorse the importance of brand-name recognition and suggest that the image of the brand can be enhanced through tangible objects.
such a piece of rock, or an umbrella, for such organisations as insurance companies. They add the proviso that the branding exercise must be linked to a clear salient attribute in order to separate itself from being considered a commodity.

This recognition of the importance of brand image and trust may explain why service advertisements do not often provide extensive information to assist people in making rational and informed decisions. The advertisers may be concentrating on creating a strong and consistent corporate image (Stern and Resnik, 1991).

2.7 Conclusions

This section has presented current knowledge on services advertising, from both a theoretical and empirical standpoint and considered with reference to consumer behaviour. Much of the content can be summarised in the following table that demonstrates the origins of the advertising objectives and the tools proposed to achieve them.

Table 2.3 Impact of services consumer behaviour on services advertising

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consumer Behaviour</th>
<th>Advertising Objectives</th>
<th>Tools</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dependence on Personal Sources</td>
<td>Encourage WOM</td>
<td>Testimonials/Catch Phrases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Search Qualities</td>
<td>Assist in Evaluation</td>
<td>Documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Level of Perceived Risk</td>
<td>Tangibilise the Service</td>
<td>Provision of Tangible Clues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Trial due to Inseparability</td>
<td>Tangibilise the Service</td>
<td>Show the Service Encounter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Evoked Set</td>
<td>Strong Brand Image</td>
<td>Strong Brand Identity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The majority of these guidelines have been proposed as suitable for all services. Only Hill and Gandhi (1992) and Mittal (1999) have attempted to relate appropriate strategies to specific types of services and they utilise different service characteristics to achieve this. This examination of services advertising literature has therefore revealed a number of important issues that require further investigation:

- The majority of the work discussed is based on the premise that services need to be tangibilised in the minds of the consumer in order to reduce the level of perceived risk. Nonetheless, there is little agreement on how this should be achieved.

- The recognition of the role of emotion in services advertising is growing, despite the lack of empirical evidence. This stream of research questions the importance of documentation and concrete language proposed in many of the original frameworks.

- There is a paucity of evidence with respect to the effectiveness of the service advertisement guidelines. Much of the research is of a conceptual nature or in the form of content analysis. The few attempts at measuring effectiveness address specific and narrow areas of the subject area.

- There is general consensus that some form of classification of services is required, but no agreement has been reached on the most important service characteristics and the impact that these characteristics should have on the advertising guidelines.

- There is little convincing evidence from the content analyses that the advertising practitioners are adopting the services advertising guidelines. This observation needs to be confirmed within the UK context and explored further.

This evaluation of the present literature indicates a lack of direction and a need to establish a well-tested and valid foundation of knowledge on which future research can be anchored. It is hoped that an examination of the extensive research that has taken place on advertising and how it works may contribute to this development.
Chapter 3: Advertising Theory

Chapter 2 Services Advertising

Chapter 3 Advertising Theory

Chapter 4 Services Advertising Practice

Chapter 5 Development of Services Consumer Behaviour Framework

Chapter 6 Methodology

Chapter 8 Development and Testing of Services Advertising Framework

Chapter 7 Results

Chapter 9 Conclusion: Creation of Services Consumer Behaviour and Advertising Framework
3. Advertising Theory

3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the various theories that have been proposed to explain how advertising works. A good understanding of the effect that advertising has on the consumer’s decision making process is useful, not only to justify advertising expenditure but also to implement relevant effectiveness measures and ensure the success of future campaigns. However, one general theory has not been forthcoming. As Jones (1991), a leading practitioner and academic in the field stated, “we have made little real progress to date along the path to enlightenment” (p196). He goes on to predict that “advertising’s effects may eventually be demonstrated by a multiplicity of specific theories, each relating to small numbers of circumstances, rather than by any single unified theory”. This prediction has proven to be correct. Broadbent (1992) identified 456 theories of how advertising works. Fortunately, many of these theories can be grouped into a smaller number of categories to assist in analysis (Vakratsas and Ambler, 1999) and can be examined chronologically to appreciate how knowledge of the effects of advertising has developed over time. This section will therefore begin with a discussion of the original Persuasion models, developed mainly in the 1960s, and examine how they have grown in complexity as an increasing number of influences have been identified and incorporated, leading to the evolution of integrated frameworks. The chapter also includes a discussion on the advertising of low involvement products, the impact of advertisement likeability and the role of semiotics. The relevance of these topics will become apparent in later chapters, particularly in Chapter 5 where the impact of involvement and emotion on consumer behaviour and advertising is examined and Chapter 8 where the service advertising strategies are proposed.

It should be noted that the evolutionary approach to this research has resulted in the need to refer to relevant literature at a number of points in the study. As a consequence, some areas of the advertising literature are not contained in this chapter because they are examined elsewhere. More specifically, some consumer behaviour models are discussed in section 2.4, cognitive processing is examined in
section 5.4.2/3 and the literature on advertising appeals and executional tools is reviewed in section 8.2.

Before commencing the discussion, it should be noted that all of the theories discussed in this chapter are referring to the advertising of products, that is goods and services. None of the work in this area (with the exception of Rossiter et al., 1991), acknowledges the need to treat services differently from goods. Nonetheless, it will become evident that the research is very "goods" biased, with the proportion of services included in empirical studies being insignificant. Consequently, the appropriateness of the theories in a services context is presently unexplored. The possibilities for cross-fertilisation between these two streams are discussed in more detail at the end of the chapter.

3.2 Advertising Theories

3.2.1 Persuasion Models of Advertising

The first attempts to explain the impact that advertising may have on the purchase decision-making process originated from writings on general selling techniques. Barry and Howard (1990), who conducted a thorough review of the early advertising literature, found that the idea of consumers progressing through a number of stages towards a sale was acknowledged as early as the 1900s. This 'hierarchy of effects' proposition was developed to create the AIDA model, identifying the stages as Attention, Interest, Desire and Action, which is generally attributed to Strong (1925) and became the backbone of advertising theory in the 1960s. Colley (1961) was one of the first researchers to develop the theory further. He suggested that the purpose of advertising was to increase propensity to buy by moving the customer along the levels of the communication spectrum. They were:

Unawareness - Awareness - Comprehension - Conviction – Action

Advertising should therefore firstly make the subject aware of the existence of the product or service, then impart some information about its benefits, create a positive feeling towards it and lastly
encourage the consumer to make some move toward purchasing the product. This is an example of a Persuasion model, which makes the assumption that advertising can carry the buyer through these stages. Colley (1961) suggested that the advertising objective may concentrate on certain stages in the process, depending on the market situation and the role of other elements in the marketing communications mix. Lavidge and Steiner (1961) proposed a similar model in the same year. They described advertising "as a force which must move people up a series of steps." (p. 59) These steps were:

Awareness – Knowledge – Liking – Preference – Conviction – Purchase

They agreed that advertising could concentrate on particular parts of the journey from awareness to purchase and also suggested that the length of the journey time might vary depending on the level of psychological and/or economic commitment of the purchaser. For example, an impulse purchase would mean that a consumer would progress through the stages almost simultaneously. This was one of the first acknowledgements of the role of involvement in the decision-making process. They also proposed that the six steps indicated three major functions of advertising: the cognitive component, which includes awareness and knowledge, affective component, where attitudes and preferences are formed and lastly the conative component, which links with conviction and purchase. Specific measuring devices were proposed to establish whether each of these stages had been achieved e.g. recall measurements, rating scales for preference and market and sales tests.

The hierarchy of effect models have been developed but not fundamentally changed (Barry and Howard, 1990). For example, the conative stage was sub-divided into trial and adoption, a distinction which would seem to be important for low involvement products (Rogers, 1962) and an additional stage of retention was proposed to acknowledge the importance of remembering the advertising message (McGuire, 1978, cited in Belch and Belch, 1998). However, all the hierarchy models support the order of cognitive, affective and conative components. Meanwhile, other researchers have
questioned the relationship between, and the order of, the effects proposed by the models. Palda (1966) found little evidence to support the hierarchy of effects model and questioned the assumption that each of the steps contributed to an increased probability of purchase. For example he proposed that users of a brand may have higher recall of an advertisement because of that usage and therefore the purchase was influencing recall, not recall influencing purchase. He examined the data provided by two commercial advertising studies. In the first study his results suggested a movement of customers from awareness to liking and onto attitude change. However the link between liking and brand usage was weak. In the second study he found a concurrent relationship between awareness and market share but no evidence that one preceded or influenced the other.

Krugman (1965) proposed that in a low involvement situation consumers may be influenced by high repetition of an advertisement and may buy because of that familiarity, deciding whether they like the product or not after they have experienced it. This would therefore suggest a cognition-conation-affect sequence. Alternatively, Zajonc and Markus (1982) proposed that preferences could be decided purely on an emotional basis, which would suggest that affect could be the first stage of the process. It has also been proposed that behaviour changes can sometimes precede attitude change (Joyce, 1967), particularly if a difficult decision had to be made between very similar products (Ray, 1973). This situation has been referred to as the dissonance/attribution model, where the consumer may be influenced by a non-media source and then strive to justify the decision afterwards by gathering positive information on the brand purchased and negative information on competitors.

It became increasingly evident that the creation of a hierarchy of effects model suitable for all purchase situations was too simplistic an approach and that any future frameworks needed to identify and incorporate the major influences on the purchasing process. Two such frameworks were developed in the 1980s, both of which identified the impact of involvement (Petty and Cacioppo, 1980; Vaughn, 1986). Before examining these models it is considered helpful to briefly visit some of the most important contributions in the involvement literature.
3.2.2 Involvement

The influence of involvement on consumer behaviour is a subject area, which has received considerable attention, and yet still lacks some clarity and consistency in results (Costley, 1988). One reason for this is that involvement has been defined to signify involvement with the product (Greenwald and Leavitt, 1984), with the advertisement (Petty and Cacioppo, 1984) and with the medium (Krugman, 1967). To complicate matters further, these areas are not mutually exclusive. Laurent and Kapferer (1985) suggest that involvement with the product influences the buying behaviour of the consumer and the way in which communications are processed.

Product involvement can be sub-divided further into enduring involvement and situational involvement (Dholakia, 1998). Enduring involvement is an ongoing relationship with a product class that is independent of the purchase situation (Houston and Rothschild, 1977; Celsi and Olson, 1988). Situational involvement arises from a specific situation, such as the purchase, referred to by Mittal (1989) as purchase decision involvement. This research will concentrate on situational product involvement and the consequences of that on the role of advertising in the buying process.

A simple but useful definition of product involvement that has received general acceptance is that of personal relevance (Zaichkowsky, 1985; Greenwald and Leavitt, 1984). This definition was influenced by the seminal work of Krugman (1965, 1967) who suggested that high involvement was characterised by a number of “bridging experiences” or connections compared with low involvement where there was little or no personal connection.

If it is assumed that level of product involvement has an influence on the decision-making process and the role advertising can play within that process, then it may be useful to category products and services using this variable. In order to do this, it is necessary for involvement to have some operational scale of measurement. Laurent and Kapferer (1985) measured the level of involvement
with 14 different products amongst housewives and concluded that the consumer involvement profile
needed to consist of four dimensions:

- The perceived importance of the product and the perceived importance of the consequences of a
  mispurchase
- The subjective probability of a mispurchase
- The hedonic value of the product class
- The perceived sign value of the product class.

They found that relationships did exist between the facets, but one facet could not be fully predicted by
another. For example, chocolate and irons were perceived to have similar levels of sign but had very
different levels of risk importance. They also found that the dimensions had different influences on
consumer behaviour. For example, when the product was perceived to be important that greatly
influenced the extensiveness of the decision process compared with the other facets of involvement.
They therefore proposed that any measurement of involvement needed to include all of the antecedents
(Kapferer and Laurent, 1985).

The measurement of involvement has developed since the work of Laurent and Kapferer (1985).
Zaichkowsky (1985, 1987) constructed a measure containing twenty items, including levels of
relevance, need, value and interest. This tool has been utilised by a number of researchers (e.g. Celsi
and Olson, 1988) and is designed for the measurement of product, product decision and advertisement
involvement. It has also been compared with a purchase decision involvement scale proposed by Mittal
(1989) which produced very similar results (Foxall and Pallister, 1998). The Zaichkowsky scale has
been developed further by McQuarrie and Munson (1992) who incorporated a two-factor structure,
measuring importance and interest equally. It has been found that the incorporation of both elements
enables the scale to measure involvement in both utilitarian and experiential products and services with
high criterion validity and is a strong predictor of information search and processing behaviour (McQuarrie and Munson, 1992).

Rothschild (1979) proposed that products lie on a continuum of consumer interest of high to low involvement. This continuum theory was adopted by Vaughn (1980) and utilised in his FCB grid. Vaughn (1980) also developed the idea that involvement was not only high or low but could also be classified in terms of the level of emotion in the decision.

The fact that all major advertising theories and frameworks from this point in time include the impact of involvement illustrates the significance of its influence on the subject area.

**The influence of involvement on cognitive processing**

Petty and Cacioppo (1980) were one of the first to acknowledge the importance of involvement in the understanding of advertising. They proposed that involvement did not affect the order of the three stages identified in the Persuasion models, but did have an impact on the amount of cognitive processing being undertaken, that is the level of effort or elaboration put into interpreting the advertisement. Their proposals were incorporated into the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) (Petty and Cacioppo, 1980, 1984) which is now recognised as an important milestone in the development of advertising theory (Vakratsas and Ambler, 1999).

The ELM states that persuasiveness of an advertisement can be achieved in two ways, depending on the likelihood of elaboration taking place. If that likelihood is high, and the person has the motivation and ability to process the information, then the individual follows the “central route” where extensive cognitive processing takes place and persuasiveness can be achieved by presenting a strong and logical argument. This route is normally taken if the product is of personal relevance at that point in time, in other words, of high involvement. If the likelihood is low the individual proceeds down the peripheral route where little effort is taken to analyse the arguments. The person is therefore not influenced by
facts and figures but by peripheral cues which are easy to consume such as the celebrity, music, visual imagery etc. Later development of the model recognised the existence of a continuum between high and low involvement and consequently the recognition of a middle stage where the propensity to acquire and process information is situated between the two extremes (Petty and Cacioppo, 1984; Cacioppo and Petty, 1984)

This theory was tested and endorsed in an experimental design on undergraduate students (Petty et al., 1983) where it was found that the celebrity status of the product endorser had a positive impact on attitudes towards the low involvement product but no effect on the attitude to the high involvement product where information on the product had most impact. Other studies have confirmed that either a strong argument or a negative message in the advertisement creates cognitive processing from involved participants while a weaker or positive message is more effective for low involvement subjects (Hennessey and Anderson, 1990; Martin and Marshall, 1999; Park and Hastak, 19950.

Gotlieb and Swan (1990) also tested the ELM by examining the effect of different levels of ability to process information and differing advertisement content. This study is of particular interest because it examines the advertising of a legal advice service, which is high in credence qualities and therefore difficult to evaluate even after the service has been experienced. The results supported the model. It was found that higher involvement did lead to more cognitive processing and therefore supported the ELM. Those subjects who did not have sufficient ability to process the information were not affected by the persuasive arguments put forward in the advertisement.

Nonetheless, the model has been criticised for its simplification in the classification of peripheral cues. It has been suggested that the importance of the cues depends on the characteristics of the product, the individual, the situation and the advertisement. A cue classed as peripheral can be considered a central cue if no more information is provided (Cole et al., 1990; Mazursky and Schul, 1992). A peripheral cue may also have more influence over the consumer if the product is of an experiential nature rather
than for an utilitarian product where the advertisement should present more attributes and factual information (MacInnis and Jaworski, 1989; Johar and Sirgy, 1991; Shavitt, 1990, 1992). For example, an unpublished study by Shavitt et al., (1992) found that the attractiveness of the people in the restaurant being advertised had an impact when the restaurant was being promoted using value-expressive goals but that impact was less when utilitarian needs were being addressed. In other words, the model implies that all high involvement decisions are of a cognitive nature and all low involvement are of an affective nature, which is incongruent with other theories which acknowledge the existence of high involvement emotional decision-making e.g. FCB grid (see following section).

The number of different routes through cognitive processing has also been questioned (Mitchell, 1980; Meyers-Levy and Malaviya, 1999). Greenwald and Leavitt (1984) suggested that there were four levels of processing. Preattentive is where an advertisement is largely ignored (previous work suggested that some communication may be achieved without cognitive processing taking place (Leavitt et al., 1980)). Focal attention is where an advertisement conveys only one or two words. Comprehension is where some cognitive processing takes place, and elaboration is when both the advertisement content is communicated and the information is elaborated on. The outcome of this elaboration will vary depending on previous attitudes towards the brand (Mazursky and Schul, 1992; Batra and Ray, 1986a). It can have a positive effect if it leads to the receiver creating support arguments, or a negative effect if the receiver produces counter-arguments. What is in general agreement across these studies is the strong relationship between levels of involvement and levels of cognitive processing.

### 3.2.3 Integrative Models

The impact that involvement has on the decision making process, and consequently the role of advertising within it, has been acknowledged in all the major advertising developments since the creation of the ELM. There is also general acceptance that there are three elements of the process,
cognition, affection and conation. Integrative models have attempted to bring together these influences by suggesting a number of different situations in which advertising may be operating.

**FCB grid**

This grid was created by the staff at Foote, Cone and Belding advertising agency to assist in advertising planning and was then developed into a communication model (Vaughn, 1980, 1986). Using two continuum scales measuring involvement and level of emotion, the model creates four types of products/services, each having a different hierarchy of effects and advertising approach.

**Figure 3.1 FCB Grid**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Involvement</th>
<th>Think</th>
<th>Feel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Informative</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Economic)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn – Feel – Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affective</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Psychological)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel – Learn – Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low Involvement</th>
<th>Think</th>
<th>Feel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Habitual</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Responsive)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do – Learn – Feel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Satisfaction</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Social)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do – Feel – Learn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Vaughn (1986).

For the high involvement, thinking product it is proposed that the cognitive or learning stage of the hierarchy is prominent and therefore the advertising objective should be to provide specific information and show a demonstration to aid learning. The affective, or feeling, stage is the first stage when purchasing a high involvement feeling product and therefore these should be advertised by placing emphasis on the executional elements of the advert and create impact. This links closely with
the peripheral route of the Elaboration Likelihood Model. Low involvement, thinking products are bought with little consideration and consequently advertising should be used to remind people of the brand and encourage them to try it, if they have not already done so. The objective of the advertising for low involvement feeling products should be to gain attention.

The grid has been used in a number of studies to position over 250 goods and services by conducting interviews with more than 20,000 consumers (Vaughn, 1986; Ratchford, 1987). It was a major step forward from the hierarchy of effects models, acknowledging that the level of involvement and level of emotion existing in the decision-making process can affect the sequence of stages a person goes through and the appropriateness of various advertising strategies. It has also been acknowledged as a useful planning tool, particularly for creative personnel. The work by Weinberger and Spotts (1989) finds some support for its adoption by practitioners. They performed a content analysis, which found that not only did advertisements for high involvement products and services contain more factual information than low involvement products, but also the advertisements for rational product purchases contained more information than the emotional purchases.

**Developments of the FCB grid**

The grid has been developed further by Rossiter et al., (1991) who identified a number of weaknesses in the framework. Firstly, they argue that the FCB grid concentrates on brand attitude and does not acknowledge the importance of brand awareness before attitude can be achieved. They have therefore built this stage in the Rossiter-Percy grid, splitting it into two types: Brand Recognition and Brand Recall. Brand Recognition is when the brand is chosen at the point of purchase. In this situation it is important to show the packaging and name of the brand in the advertisement to aid recognition. In the Brand Recall situation the brand must be remembered before the point of purchase which Rossiter et al., (1991) recognise as important in the purchase of services. They suggest that brand recall can be strengthened by using the advertising to link the brand name with the category need, with the use of
such creative approaches as jingles, using a well-known personality, repetition of message and repetition of the advertisement.

Secondly, Rossiter et al., (1991) question the involvement scales used in the FCB grid and simplify this measurement by defining involvement purely in terms of perceived risk. They argue that consumers see the purchase, at that particular point in time, as either a high or low risk decision and their grid therefore utilises this dichotomous approach.

The think-feel dimension is also developed. Their main criticism of this scale is that it does not allow for negative feelings, which can be highly motivational. To overcome these problems Rossiter et al., (1991) propose that the grid should consist of an informational and transformational dimension. Informational motivations are defined as negatively-originated motives, which have arisen from a negative situation from which the consumer is motivated to find relief. They are divided into five types, problem removal, problem avoidance, incomplete satisfaction, mixed approach-avoidance and normal depletion. The role of advertising in these situations is to communicate that the good or service can provide relief from this negative situation. This is achieved by providing information on the item to show that it can solve the problem. Transformational motives are linked to reward and an increase in pleasure rather than just solving a problem. They are divided into three types, sensory gratification, intellectual stimulation and social approval. In these cases the good or service is providing some sort of reward or benefit.

The grid therefore consists of six boxes, two involved with brand awareness and four representing the different types of decision-making processes. The grid also indicates that a new target audience may well be highly involved in the product initially but as they become more familiar their involvement decreases. Consequently, the characteristics of the product and the individual have an influence on the most appropriate advertising content.
The Rossiter-Percy grid provides appropriate creative tactics for each of the boxes on the grid, which are more detailed than those provided in the FCB grid. Creative tactics proposed for informational products are generally more rational and suggest suitable number of benefits that the advertisement should contain, while the guidelines for transformational products and services are more emotionally based. For example, when advertising a high involvement/ transformational brand the guidelines state that “people must identify personally with the product as portrayed in the ad and not merely like the ad” (Rossiter et al., 1991 p.19). These tactics are examined more closely in Chapter 8.
Recent Integrated Models

Although the ELM (Petty and Cacioppo, 1980, 1984), FCB grid (Vaughn, 1980, 1986) and Rossiter-Percy grid (Rossiter et al., 1991) are the models most recognised in the advertising literature, work continues to improve understanding of this area. Taylor (1999), acknowledging the work of others before him, has created a six-segment message strategy wheel that, he suggests, incorporates all the existing models, and more. The purpose of the model is again to categorise products using a number of criteria and link the categories with relevant creative strategies. Categorisation is achieved chiefly by using transmission and ritual communication, known elsewhere as rational and emotional influences and involvement, referred here as personal importance. However, as its name suggests, two more sections are added. The two emotional categories are divided into three. In between the ego-based self-actualisation approach (high involvement) and “life’s little pleasures” (low involvement) is a category of buying behaviour based on social approval. Ratchford (1987) acknowledges that this dimension was absence from the FCB grid because a scale for measuring it was not developed.

Research also indicated a need for an additional category in the transmission section to incorporate the buying situation where information was needed but urgency overrode this need. Taylor then attempted to link these groupings with eleven message strategies proposed by Laskey et al., (1995). The testing of the model resulted in a certain grouping of products within the categories, although it was a small sample of 178 respondents and some items were spread over a number of categories e.g. clothes were quoted in all three emotional sections. There was also no testing of the effectiveness of the message strategies for each category. However, the model does identify other influences on the decision making process such as time available, the importance of which is identified in forthcoming discussions with reference to opportunity.

Huey (1999) has also identified the influence of time on consumer behaviour. Moving away from boxes, he created a three-dimensional non-linear helix model based on time, medium and message. He recognised that consumers do not often start from the beginning, with no knowledge of products or brands, as the linear models suggest, or progress through a set routine until the purchase is made. The
message and media are arranged like a spiral staircase, graphically indicating that consumers decide which communications they are going to respond to, and how and when. This process can be rational or irrational and can take a minute or several years depending on complexity, competition and priority of the purchase. The purpose of this model is to challenge existing thinking.

In contrast Ambler (1998) brings together much of the previous work in the area to propose that the elements of affect and cognition should be incorporated into any advertising model together with experience, as in the consumer’s memories of past experiences and past advertisements. This then creates an Experience, Affect, and Cognition (EAC) Space. All these elements play a part in the decision-making process but their relevance will depend on the environment, specific goals, competitive content and the advertisement history.

3.2.3. Hierarchies for low involvement purchases

An appreciation of the importance of involvement led to the development of a field of research which concentrates on low involvement purchases. Krugman (1965,1967) has again influenced most work in this area. He examined television advertising and suggested that television was a low involvement medium, which was capable of gradually changing people’s perceptions by utilising repetition and salience to encourage trial. Only at this point, after trial, may an attitude about the product or service be formed. Although it has been argued that the level of involvement with a TV advertisement can vary (Mitchell, 1980), Krugman’s idea of purchase taking place before attitude formation, as mentioned earlier, has been generally accepted. Ray (1973) refers to this as a low involvement hierarchy which consists of a learn, do, feel sequence where learning takes place with little attention and attitude effect, and can lead to a product being bought on trial due purely to its familiarity created by repetitive and memorable advertising.

Smith and Swinyard (1982) also place great emphasis on trial, suggesting that advertising is viewed as biased while direct experience is much more influential. If trial is not easy to accomplish it has been
suggested that advertising can be conducted to encourage consumers to find other sources of information, such as word-of-mouth (Smith and Swinyard, 1982) or to convey search attributes (Wright and Lynch, 1995).

A long-term study on the way in which grocery products are bought, undertaken by Ehrenberg and colleagues, has resulted in the proposal that the influence of advertising of low involvement products on the consumer is much weaker that the Persuasion models would suggest, referred to in many texts as the weak theory of advertising. Ehrenberg (1997) proposes that when communicating with new purchasers of a brand, advertising can be used the encourage consumers through the stages of Awareness, Trial, Reinforcement, and Nudging (ATR&N). Awareness is still required as the first stage to create familiarly with the brand. This can lead to a trial purchase, without any real feeling being developed about the product. After the purchase has taken place and the product is considered acceptable, advertising can only provide reinforcement for the decision by maintaining awareness and providing reassurance that the right decision was made. This results in “nudging” the consumer into trying the brand again. The role of advertising is therefore to ensure that the brand is salient i.e. that consumers are familiar with it (Ehrenberg et al., 1997a,b).

Their approach for established products also adopts this Reinforcement and Nudging principle because of continual competitive activity (Barnard and Ehrenberg, 1997). Empirical evidence they have collected on buying habits over a number of years, suggests that very few consumers are totally brand loyal to one product or service. The majority of consumers have split-loyal repertoires. They have a small consideration set of possible brands, within which they buy, and these brands are bought in similar proportions over time. The role of advertising for an established brand is therefore to reinforce such purchase decisions so that the product stays within this consideration set and occasionally nudge the consumer towards noticing that particular brand. The result of this nudging is not market growth but the maintenance of existing market share (Jones and Ehrenberg, 2000). Salient advertising, through repetition, is important as competitive brands are also trying to maintain if not strengthen their
position. It therefore needs to act as a reminder and support existing behaviour by “creating attention, impact, memory traces and perhaps memory associations for the brand, rather than being strongly persuasive” (Ehrenberg and Scriven, 1997, p 40).

The importance and impact of repetition has become an important area for further investigation. There are two main schools of thought. On one side of the argument, it is proposed that brand salience can be best achieved by repetition because sufficient frequency portrays a brand as being popular, which has an influence of consumers’ perception (Miller and Berry, 1998) and is also able to link specific needs through association (Alreck and Settle, 1999). The alternative proposal is that creativity is necessary to gain the attention and the imagination of the viewer and, if this exists, a much less frequent campaign can be just as effective (Jones, 1991).

This debate on the influence of advertising and the importance of repetition is an ongoing one (e.g. McDonald, 1996; Jones and Ehrenberg, 2000). Although the importance of repetition must be recognised, for the purposes of this study, the ingredients of an effective advertisement are of more interest.

Likeability
There has been considerable research into the relationship between attitude to an advertisement and attitude to a brand, and the influences on that relationship. There is evidence to suggest that if a person likes an advertisement this emotion can be transferred to the brand itself (Brown and Stayman, 1992).

In fact, likeability has been identified as one of the most accurate effectiveness measures in terms of predicting recall and persuasion (Biel, 1990; Joyce, 1991). Biel (1990) tried to establish the ingredients of “likeability” and discovered that “meaning” and “energy” are the most important ingredients. The term “meaning” is made up from a number of ingredients such as true-to-life, credible and having personal relevance. “Energy” can be referred to as liveliness and enthusiasm. Thorsen (1991) found that the advertisements which are liked are those where the consumers experience considerable emotional flow from the advert and this leads to greater recall and more favourable brand
attitudes. This can also have consequences for level of involvement in the advertisements and motivation to process the advert (Kamp and MacInnis, 1995). One of the few British studies in this area, by Leather et al., (1994), found that the ingredients for likeability are similar in both the UK and the USA and consist of stimulation and entertainment which can be created by the use of music, originality and distinctiveness.

The strength of the relationship between advertisement and brand likeability will vary depending on the type of product being advertised. For example, MacInnis and Jaworski (1989) suggest that a close relationship between the attitude to the advertisement and the brand exists when the levels of motivation (or involvement) are low. This transfer of positive emotional responses is a result of conditional learning and therefore as the level of cognitive processing increases the subject is able to distinguish between the two and the attitudes to the product are less influenced by such executional tools as music, attractiveness of people, humour etc. These findings are congruent with the Elaboration Likelihood Model.

The relationship can also depend on whether the product is new or established. If the brand is new, the influence of the perception of the advertisement is stronger and exists in both the low and high involvement product categories (Gardner, 1985). The attitude to the advertisement also can affect the brand cognitive activity. In other words, if the subject feels positive towards the advertisement, he or she is more likely to accept any information it contains (MacKenzie et al., 1986). However, this influence is again weakened by familiarity with the brand (Machleit and Wilson, 1988; Machleit et al., 1993). This effect of advertising attitude to cognitive activity was one of the main findings from the meta-analysis performed by Brown and Stayman (1992) on research in this area. They proposed that the relationship may not always be a straight transfer of feelings from the advertisement to the brand. The transfer may be a result of the more positive and motivated cognitive processing that has arisen from liking the advertisement. This would then suggest that liking the advertisement may be an important consideration for advertisements of both utilitarian and self-expressive products and
services. This is supported by the work of Jones (1997) who performed an analysis of effective advertisements and found they have three general characteristics:

"(1) They are likeable and offer a reward for watching because they are entertaining and amusing. (2) They are visual rather than verbal. (3) They say something important and meaningful about the brand being advertised."

These findings support the proposal that the influences of cognition and affect cannot always be examined separately, but operate concurrently and have an impact on each other.

3.2.4 Semiotics

Semiotics is the examination of conscious and subconscious meanings that are transmitted to consumers through non-verbal signs and symbols (Belch and Belch, 1998). An individual makes sense of what they see in relation to their culture and past experiences (Lawes, 2002). Lawes (2002) illustrates this point by using an example of biscuits being packaged in gold coloured paper to signify luxury, with the link between gold and luxury being a cultural connection. She defines cultures as "the ways that people communicate with each other consciously and unconsciously through things such as language, visual images and music". Staying with the biscuit example, she explains how semiotics needs to be continually monitored because meanings change over time. The use of gold can be perceived as rather downmarket by some and real luxury chocolates may be packaged using a contrasting theme of understatement and restraint, again resulting from changes in culture.

Semiotics is an important area of advertising research where meanings are consistently being portrayed through the use of signs and symbols. Williamson (1978) explains how the meaning of one sign can be transposed onto a brand (e.g. actress and perfume). The signs are deciphered by the receiver to create meaning, which increases their involvement in the advertisement e.g. the presence of the Times newspaper in a hotel room suggests that the room is occupied by an successful and educated person.
This meaning is reached by the reader by bringing together the symbol and its connotation (Dyer, 1982).

An understanding of semiotics has been identified as a tool for advertisers to use in addressing the challenges that tangibilisation present in services advertising (Hill and Gandhi, 1992, Stern, 1988) and ties in with the earlier discussions on tangibilisation and image development (section 2.6.2/2.6.6). For example, it is possible to tangibilise a service by showing a celebrity in the advertising because the consumer transfers the image of the person on to the service. Indeed, many of the advertising executional tools discussed in Chapter 8 are successful due to their semiotic messages rather than overt explanations e.g. slice-of-life, animation. Its contribution to our understanding of how advertising works must therefore be acknowledged. However, it is a specialist area of research, which is normally undertaken through in-depth interviews with advertising respondents, and is therefore considered to be outside of the remit of this study.

3.3. Discussion with reference to services advertising

This examination of the two bodies of research (chapter 2 and chapter 3) reveals a surprising lack of commonality between the services advertising literature and the advertising theories. The services advertising literature has developed from the services marketing research which proposes that the purchase of services is perceived to be a high-risk and difficult task due to the characteristics of tangibilisation and heterogeneity. Services advertising is seen as a tool to address these issues by providing tangible cues, documentation and information on the service encounter. These discussions are very different from the extensive research that has been taking place since the 1900s on how advertising works. The lack of cross-fertilisation between the two areas is illustrated by the fact that neither the ELM nor the FCB Grid have been utilised in the discussion of services advertising, with the notable exception of Stafford and Day (1995). It is
also interesting to note that only one common reference appears in two recent review articles from each area (Mittal, 1999; Vakratsas and Ambler, 1999).

One fundamental difference between the two bodies of research is the acknowledgement of the role of involvement. This construct has been incorporated in the generic advertising literature since the 1960s and is an important classification tool in many of the frameworks that have been developed since. Conversely, a literature search, which includes all the main services marketing journals, reveals that “Involvement” does not appear in any article titles on services advertising and is only included in the titles of four articles on services marketing (Bloemer and de Ruyter, 1999; Edgett and Cullen, 1992; Gabbott and Hogg, 1999; McColl-Kennedy and Fetter, 2001).

The other significant disparity between the two bodies of research is the acknowledgement of the role of emotion. Although emotion in the decision-making process has been investigated to some extent in a services context, clarity is still required to establish where and when it is most influential (Turley and Kelley, 1997; Stern, 1997). In the advertising theories the importance of emotion is again acknowledged by its inclusion in the major frameworks.

The need to establish a solid basis for the development of services advertising theory has been identified (Tripp, 1997). The author proposes that such a foundation could be formed from a cross-fertilisation of these two bodies of research. Indeed, it is hard to establish why this convergence of knowledge has not already taken place, particularly when one considers that all the major advertising frameworks have been tested on goods and services with no difference in the results reported in either the original or subsequent work (e.g. Gotlieb and Swan, 1990). It is also important to remember that the justification to advertise services differently from goods is still weak. Despite numerous content analyses, it is still unclear whether services are being advertised differently from goods (e.g. Grove et al., 1995; Abernethy and Franke, 1996).

Perhaps more importantly, there is no evidence, from academics or practitioners, to suggest that the present services advertising guidelines are more effective than the general guidelines.
Cross-fertilisation of the two subject fields would enable the relevance of these general advertising theories to be clarified and would establish areas of commonality and disparity between goods and services, which can only be of benefit to everyone involved in the advertising industry.

3.4. Conclusion

The question of how advertising works has still not been answered by a simple theory or model. The extensive research, which is being undertaken in this area, reveals the growing complexity in the relationship between advertising and consumer behaviour. Nonetheless, some progress has been made. It is now generally agreed that cognition, affection and experience are all key intermediate advertising effects (Vakratsas and Ambler, 1999). Furthermore, there are two major influences on their role in the advertising process. The first is the level of involvement. If involvement is high the consumer pays more attention to advertising and elaborates on the information provided. The level of cognitive processing is therefore the important factor here. If involvement is low then the behavioural element of the consumer response is most important and advertising should be aimed at encouraging trial or reminding consumers of a familiar brand. There is evidence to suggest that affect is more important for low-involvement goods because the decision is less significant and consequently consumers are more influenced by how they feel, rather than facts and figures.

Another important variable, which some models have included, is the type of product or service being bought. If it is an experiential product then the decision-making will be emotionally based compared with a utilitarian product, where a more rational approach to the problem will be adopted. Other contextual influences that have been identified are advertising goal, competition, product life-cycle and the target market.

The main role of advertising has been defined as the creation of a clear brand image through the promotion of functional and symbolic value. This is achieved through a combination of salience or creativity and repetition, the latter being identified as more important for low involvement products.
Although any framework created from these findings can obviously be criticised for eliminating much of the discussion and detail that the literature review contains, it is considered a useful exercise to summarise the main points in order to apply them to the services setting. The table below adopts the four quadrant framework, utilised by Vaughn (1986) and Rossiter et al., (1991) to present how the advertising literature examines advertising in terms of type of product and level of involvement. These characteristics have an impact on how the different products are bought and the most appropriate advertising approach for each category.

Table 3.1 General Consumer Behaviour and Advertising Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Involvement</th>
<th>Utilitarian</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High motivation and ability</td>
<td>Limited info search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extensive info search</td>
<td>Limited cognitive processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cognitive processing</td>
<td>Category evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attribute evaluation</td>
<td>Emotional advertising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Informational advertising</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>No information Search</td>
<td>No information Search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No evaluation</td>
<td>No evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Informational/Emotional advertising</td>
<td>Emotional advertising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encourage trial and reminder</td>
<td>Encourage trial and reminder</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This review of the general advertising literature has identified a lack of cross-fertilisation between the services advertising literature and the advertising literature and indicated that the advertising literature is more developed in terms of well-tested frameworks and a general agreement on the main influences on advertising strategy. There seems to be no good reason why the two areas of research should be so diverse and it may therefore be possible to borrow some of this advertising knowledge and apply it to a services setting.
Before exploring this further it is necessary to establish how services are being advertised, and how that differs from goods. This research is approached from two perspectives. Firstly, a detailed content analysis of product and service advertisements is conducted to verify how practitioners are approaching the advertising of services. Secondly, advertising practitioners are interviewed to establish their perception of services advertising and the main influences on the creative approach.
Chapter 4: Services Advertising Practice

Chapter 2
Services Advertising

Chapter 3
Advertising Theory

Chapter 4
Services Advertising Practice

Chapter 5
Development of Services Consumer Behaviour Framework

Chapter 6
Methodology

Chapter 8
Development and Testing of Services Advertising Framework

Chapter 7
Results

Chapter 9
Conclusion: Creation of Services Consumer Behaviour and Advertising Framework

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4. Services Advertising Practice

4.1 Introduction

Despite numerous conceptual frameworks proposing how services should be advertised, there is a lack of empirical data to indicate whether these frameworks are used by advertising practitioners. Several content analyses have been conducted to examine the amount and variety of informational content, emotional appeals and presentation of the service provider in service advertisements, but the results are confusing, due perhaps to differences in methodologies and coding categories (Tripp, 1997). It should also be noted that these studies, with one exception (Taylor, 1983), have all been based in the US.

It is therefore important to examine the relationship between the theory and practice of services advertising and establish if practice is different from theory and, if so, in what way and why. These questions are answered by undertaking two pieces of exploratory research. The first is a content analysis of information contained in both services and goods advertisements. Tangibilisation is identified in Chapter 2 as a common theme running across all the major conceptual frameworks and one of the tools available to achieve tangibilisation is to provide documentation (e.g. Legg and Baker, 1987; Hill and Gandhi, 1992). However, it is still not clear whether service advertisements contain more information than goods advertisements (e.g. Abernethy and Franke, 1996). Some clarity in this area would assist in identifying a clear and distinctive role for service advertisements. In addition the level of documentation can be used as an indication of whether the purchaser of the service is adopting a rational or emotional approach and therefore the findings also provide an insight into this area.

This first piece of research is undertaken by testing three hypotheses. A hypothesis is defined in the Oxford Concise English Dictionary as “a supposition made as a starting point for further investigation from known facts”. It should be noted that the research paradigm adopted in this study is more of a realism approach than positivist and consequently the results from hypotheses testing are designed to build theories rather than test them. Under such conditions a small and non-random sample is considered acceptable. (See discussion in Section 1.5)
Although the results from content analyses indicate how services are being advertised they do not provide an explanation as to why a certain creative strategy is adopted. This insight is provided by the second piece of exploratory research, which examines services advertising from the perspective of practitioners working in UK advertising agencies. The study identifies, firstly, the service characteristics that the practitioners perceive to be the most important and, secondly, how these characteristics influence the way in which they construct service advertisements. No such investigation has previously been undertaken in the UK or US, to the author’s knowledge, and therefore the results will make an important contribution to our understanding of advertising practice.

These two pieces of research examine both the input and output of the advertising industry and will provide an insight into how and why services are being advertised differently from goods. A comparison is then undertaken to identify areas of commonality and discrepancy between the practice and the theories in both the services advertising and general advertising literature.

4.2 Informational Content of Service Advertisements

4.2.1 Background

Services marketing literature proposes that it is important to minimise the level of intangibility that exists within services because it is positively correlated with the level of perceived risk involved in the decision-making process (Berry and Parasuraman, 1991; Legg and Baker, 1987; Zeithaml et al., 1985). Advertising can play a role in this tangibilisation process by providing useful information on the service being provided so that the consumers know what to expect and can make more informed comparisons between alternatives (George and Berry, 1981; Shostack, 1977; Cutler and Javalgi, 1993). Importance is placed on such information “because they want to know what they are buying and why they should buy before making a purchase decision” (Berry and Parasuraman, 1991 p. 93).

It is important to establish whether practitioners are adopting this informational approach and whether it is universal across all service sectors or is influenced by specific service characteristics. These
questions can be answered by examining existing service advertisements and establish how it is actually done in practice. This type of knowledge development is referred to as "theory-in-use" (Zaltman et al., 1982). Although informational content has been a popular area of advertising research, the literature review in Chapter 2 reveals that it is still unclear whether service advertisements do contain a wider variety of information than goods advertisements. Studies conducted in the 1970s provide evidence that they did, but more recent work suggests that during the last twenty years the informational content in service advertisements has diminished (Resnik and Stern, 1997; Stern and Resnik, 1991; De Pelsmacker and Geuens, 1997). This finding is endorsed by the meta-analysis conducted by Abernethy and Franke (1996) who concluded that service advertisements contain less types of information than goods advertisements. The opposite situation was found in an extensive study undertaken by Grove et al., (1995).

The purpose of this phase of research is, therefore, firstly to establish whether advertising practitioners promoting services use advertising as a tool to provide concrete language and documentation to aid tangibilisation. As most of the work in this area has found that goods advertisements contain more information types than service advertisements (Abernethy and Franke, 1996), the following hypothesis will be tested:

**Hypothesis 1:** UK product advertisements contain a wider variety of factual information than UK service advertisements.

It is also important to examine the variety of information contained within both the service and goods categories, to establish whether there may be a relationship between the type of good and service and the information content. This may assist in creating a classification system for service advertising strategies. As little work has been done in this area (Grove et al., (1995) being the exception), the following null hypothesis will be tested:
Hypothesis 2: There is no relationship between the variety of information in advertisements and the type of good/service being advertised.

Lastly, it is useful to examine the types of information the advertisements contain to establish any patterns. Abernethy and Butler (1992) concluded that service advertisements generally lack price, component and availability information compared with goods advertisements, but they often include performance information. However, their results were not cross-tabulated with different goods or service types. This research will therefore investigate this relationship by testing the following null hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: There is no relationship between the type of information in advertisements and the type of good or service advertised.

4.2.2 Methodology

The advertisements in this research were examined by performing a content analysis. This is an observational research method that can be used to examine an array of communication forms such as advertising and printed materials (Kolbe and Burnett, 1991). It enables the researcher to observe the content of communications and categorise it in order to examine trends and make comparisons. This observation is unobtrusive and therefore has no effect on the data itself (Weber, 1985).

Kassarjian (1977), whose article on the subject is considered to be an important milestone in the development of this methodology (Kolbe and Burnett, 1991), describes content analysis as “a scientific, objective, systematic, quantitative and generalisable description of communications content” (p. 10) and provides guidelines to achieve these characteristics. He states that objectivity is achieved by providing clear rules and procedures to ensure that any analyst, utilising the same rules, would reach similar conclusions. This is obviously important to remove any researcher’s bias. Systematisation refers to the fact that specific instructions are needed to ensure consistency in the
inclusion and exclusion of communications content. Lastly, the results should be in a form where statistical analysis is possible. These guidelines have been incorporated into this research.

Sample

The content analysis was conducted on magazine and television advertisements, so that comparisons could be made with the research already undertaken in this area. Due to the low number of service advertisements in general interest magazines, it was necessary to obtain a stratified sample of magazine advertisements from Sunday colour supplement magazines, where service advertisements were much more evident. These were taken from four publications on Sunday 19th October 1997. The advertisements in the 'Radio Times' of that week were also added to this sample, in order to ensure that the sample of service advertisements was of an adequate size compared with product advertisements. This totalled 123 advertisements, once duplications had been removed.

The TV advertisements were taped from 9th October to 12th October 1997 and included ITV and Channel 4, with daytime and evening coverage. This cross-section was considered important as previous studies had found significant differences in the informational content of daytime compared to evening advertisements (Resnik and Stern, 1977). Duplication of advertisements reduced the original number from 163 to 147.

Category Definition

It was obviously necessary to produce a list of criteria, which could act as the framework for recording the presence of 'information' within the communication. Work in this area has already been conducted by Resnik and Stern (1977) who created a list of fourteen categories which have been widely used by other researchers (e.g. Weinberger and Spotts, 1989; Dowling, 1980; Stern and Resnik, 1991, Healey and Kassarjian, 1983; Norton and Norton, 1988) for use in both TV and magazine advertising. The categories have been described as "an objective scheme for evaluating overt information content and act as a useful tool for analysis" (Stern et al., 1981, p. 40). This objectivity is...
illustrated by the intercode reliability of 99.4\% that was achieved in the same study. The fourteen categories are as follows:

- Price-value
- Quality
- Performance
- Components or contents
- Availability
- Special offers
- Taste
- Nutrition
- Packaging or shape
- Guarantees and warranties
- Safety
- Independent research
- Company research
- New Ideas

To assist in classification each criterion is accompanied by questions that the information should assist in answering. For example, component or contents information should be able to answer the following questions: "What is the product composed of, what ingredients does it contain and what ancillary items are included with the product?" (Stern et al., 1981).

The list has been criticised by some for being product-orientated (for example, information on taste and nutrition is obviously only relevant to food) and for measuring the frequency of types of information rather than the frequency of pieces of information (Abernethy and Franke, 1996; Laband, 1989). Nonetheless, it is felt that these disadvantages are outweighed by the advantage that this is a
tried-and-tested list for use in such content analysis, which enables comparisons with earlier studies to be made. The same criteria have therefore been adopted for this research. Each advertisement was also classified as being a good or a service and by type e.g. holidays.

**Interjudge reliability**

If more than one judge is involved in classifying the advertisements it is important to reach a reasonable level of interreliability. Kassarjian (1977) suggests that 85% is an acceptable result. This level was achieved in this study by adopting a number of checks. Firstly, this analysis, which was conducted by three judges, including the author, was preceded by extensive training in how to analyse the advertisements, with the use of a detailed instruction sheet. Two pilot tests were then performed on a sample of advertisements and discussions held on those where judgement varied in order to reach a final decision. The discussions were based mainly on the definition of quality and performance. There was also some clarity required over the amount of factual information that a visual could provide. This was clarified by referring back to the original definition of informative advertisements which was when “a typical viewer could make a more intelligent buying decision after seeing the commercial than before seeing it” (p37, Stern and Resnik, 1991). For example, an advertisement for Marriott hotels contained a visual of a successful and attractive couple in bed with the headline “Room 154 want to see the city, Next time”. Although the visual, from a semiotic perspective, could have communicated images of quality and escapism these images were not considered to be adequately overt to enable the consumer to make a more informed decision.

The total analysis was then performed, with 20% of the advertisements being examined by all the judge to test consistency. An example of a coding sheet, showing the results of two judges, can be seen in Appendix B. The advertisements that produced radical discrepancies from the coding exercise were removed from the sample, bringing the number analysed to 249 in total, 150 product advertisements and 99 service advertisements.
4.2.3 Results

Analysis was conducted through the use of the SPSS software package and examined with reference to the three hypotheses.

**Hypothesis 1:** UK product advertisements contain a wider variety of information than UK service advertisements

The hypothesis was tested using the t test for two independent samples. The mean number of information categories for product advertisements was 2.82 items per advertisement, which compares with the mean number in service advertisements of 2.4. The difference between the two means was 0.416 which is found to be significant at the 5% level (t = 0.03). These figures therefore result in Hypothesis 1 being supported. There is a significant difference between the amount of information categories in product and services advertisements. Product advertisements contain more variety of information than service advertisements. Although these results are in line with the majority of other analyses on informational content, they are contradictory to service advertising theories, which posit that advertising should contain more information to assist in tangibilisation.

The results were also analysed using the four informational cues utilised in the study by Grove et al., (1995): Price, Guarantees, Performance and Availability. The results did not support the findings of the original study, which found that service advertisements held more variety of information than goods advertisements. No significant difference was found between the two categories (t = 0.7 at 5% significance level) indicating that the information content of goods and service advertisements is the same. It can therefore be concluded from the results of both analyses that there is no evidence of service advertisements containing more variety of information than goods advertisements.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no relationship between the number of information categories in advertisements and the type of good/service being advertised

Because some of the groupings of goods and services only contained a small number of advertisements, this analysis was undertaken on the nine largest groupings, taken from the original
eighteen groups. Table 4.1 presents the average number of information categories that each of these contained.

Table 4.1 Number of information categories by type of product

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Advertisements</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cars</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cosmetics and Perfume</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drink</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Advertisements</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Holidays and Hotels</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telecoms</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A glance at the table would suggest that there is a wide variation of means within both categories. To statistically test whether this variation is significant indicating a relationship between the variety of information provided and the type of product or service, a one-way ANOVA test was performed between these nine categories. This produced an f ratio of 3.8 at a significance level of less than 1%. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. The level of variation between the number of information categories contained in the advertisements is evidence of a relationship between the variety of information contained and the type of product or service being advertised. When the same analysis is performed on all products and all services separately it reveals that the variation within the product sector is significant at less than 1% (f ratio = 6.7) However, the overall differences within the service advertisement category is not significant at the 5% level (f ratio = 2.2). The findings were analysed further, by a series of post-hoc comparisons using the
Tukey's test to establish where the greatest differences between each individual type exist (as recommended by Diamantopoulos and Schlegelmilch, 2000). These results are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Comparison of information contained in good/service advertisements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Product/Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Cars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Cosmetics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Drink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Holidays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Financial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>Telecoms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>Transport</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows how the advertisements compare with each other in terms of information content. The light grey area indicates how the goods advertisements compare with the other goods advertisements. The medium grey area presents a comparison of service advertisements with goods advertisements. The dark grey area indicates how the service advertisements compare with each other. A cross represents an area of significant difference between two advertisements, at the 5% significance level. If Hypothesis 2 were proven, one would expect all the goods advertisements to be similar to each other.
i.e. a few, if any, crosses in the light grey area, all the service advertisements to be similar to each other
i.e. a few, if any, crosses in the dark grey area, but a significant difference between the goods and
service categories i.e. numerous crosses in the medium grey area to indicate heterogeneity. Such a
pattern is not apparent.

One can see that the variety of information contained in car advertisements is significantly different
from all the other categories, except holidays. This is an example where the advertising of a good is
more similar to the advertising of a service than with any of the other goods. If cars were removed
from the analysis there would be no significant differences between the goods advertisements and only
one between the goods and the service advertisements which is holidays. More differences would then
exist in the service sector, between telecoms and holidays, transport and holidays and transport and
retail.

The table clearly indicates that these significant differences only exist in the minority of cases. Almost
two-thirds of the comparisons are similar and these similarities exist not only within the two
categories, but also between them. For example, the informational content of cosmetics
advertisements is similar to all the service advertisements. The statistics therefore reveal that any
variation in the number of informational categories is not related to whether the advertisement is for a
good or a service. In fact, there is more discrepancy within the service sector than between the service
and the goods sectors. It is therefore unhelpful to categorise advertisements into these two groupings.
Other factors need to be taken into account to explain the results. This area is explored further in the
Discussion section.

Hypothesis 3: There is no relationship between the type of information in advertisements and the
type of product or service advertised.

Table 4.3. indicates the types of information contained in the advertisements. It can be seen that the
information most frequently included is referring to Contents, Packaging, Availability and
Performance. For example, 57% of all the product advertisements and 71% of all the service advertisements contained information on Content. These results are similar to those found in the meta-analysis (Abernethy and Franke, 1996) which also recorded Performance, Availability and Contents as having the highest frequency in advertisements overall, followed by Price and Quality. The discrepancy over the popularity of Packaging as a form of information is surprising. One explanation may be that the meta-analysis examined advertisements using a wide variety of media including newspapers, radio and posters, where the showing of a package is either not possible or less effective. The advertisements in this study appeared either on television or in magazines, where the showing of packaging is more appropriate.

It can be seen that Content, Packaging, Availability and Performance are the most popular forms of information to be included in advertisements. It was therefore decided to concentrate on these four and examine the relationship between these information types and the type of product and service being advertised. This is achieved by performing a number of chi-square tests. The first test is on these four types of information and the nine most frequently occurring product/service advertisements (Table 4.4). This test produced the results shown on the last row of the table.

These results indicate that there is a significant relationship between these types of information and the advertisement type, at the 0.05 significance level. Hypothesis 3 is therefore disproved. The amount of each type of information varies significantly enough to prove that the characteristics of each individual good or service influence the type of information being included in its advertisement. However, this result is not that surprising due to the wide variety of goods and services being compared.
Table 4.3 Type of information by product

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N°</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packaging or shape</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Offers</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taste</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guarantees</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Ideas</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Research</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company Research</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>423</td>
<td>228</td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 4.4 Examination of advertisements by four information types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Contents</th>
<th>Packaging</th>
<th>Availability</th>
<th>Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goods</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cars</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cosmetics and Perfume</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drink</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sig. of Chi-Square</strong></td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Services</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holidays and Hotels</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telecommunications</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sig. of Chi-Square</strong></td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sig. of Chi-Square (total)</strong></td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is of more interest, taking the analysis one stage further, is to find out if there is such a wide variation within the two categories. The chi-square test is therefore performed on each informational type for the group of goods advertisements and the group of service advertisements. These results reveal some interesting findings. Firstly, five of the groups are still significant within the 10% level. In other words, there are significant differences in the use of packaging, availability and performance information contained in the goods advertisements and packaging and performance information contained in the service advertisements. These results are not surprising when one considers the
variation in the characteristics of the offerings. For example, information on availability is important for cars, where distribution is limited, compared with food or drink, where extensive distribution makes such information unnecessary. Similarly, information on performance is much more relevant when comparing financial services, than for holidays and hotels. These results provide further evidence of the need to find characteristics other than the straightforward good or service classification, in order to predict not only levels of informational content, but also the most useful types of information. It should also be noted that the inclusion of packaging information in the service advertisements is mainly due to the retail advertisements. It has been argued that the retail service has a high level of tangibility within it (Shostack, 1977) and therefore the information they contain would be expected to have similarities with both the goods and the service advertisements.

The three areas where similarities do exist are in the provision of availability and contents information in the service advertisements and the provision of contents information in the goods advertisements. The high level of contents information being provided across all the service advertisements may be the result of practitioners actively tangibilising the service by describing what the service consists of. Another reason for this occurrence may be due to the complexity of the offering e.g. there is more information to impart on the content of a holiday or a financial service than on a bottle of perfume or a drink.

4.2.4 Discussion and Conclusion

This research provides no evidence to suggest that practitioners are including more a wider variety of factual information in service advertisements than product advertisements in order to assist in tangibilising the offer. This is surprising, considering the amount of academic evidence which suggests that service advertisements have a role to play in this tangibilisation process, and that effectiveness is increased by that inclusion (Stafford and Day, 1995; Stafford, 1996) and indicates an important gap between services advertising theory and practice.
The findings also reveal that there is significant variation within the goods and the service categories in terms of the type of information included in the advertisements. This diversity would suggest that neither goods nor services can be meaningfully grouped together and treated as a homogeneous category. The heterogeneity that exists within products has been acknowledged in the general advertising literature and products are categorised by characteristics such as levels of involvement and the utilitarian/experiential divide (e.g., Vaughn, 1980). However, the appropriate characteristics for categorising services have not been agreed upon and considerable research into services advertising still views services as a unified whole (e.g., Cutler and Javalgi, 1993; Abernethy et al., 1997). The variance within the service sector that has been identified in this study may explain why such studies are not producing a clear picture of what is happening.

Some work has already been done to group services into appropriate categories. Grove et al. (1995) utilised scales of tangibility, as proposed by Zeithaml (1981) and Shostack (1977), and found a relationship between the amount of different information and the intangibility of the product or service. The same two scales were applied to the results in this study to discover whether their findings could be replicated. The results of this are displayed in Figure 4.1. This application required judgements to be made because some of the goods and service categories were different to those examined in the Grove et al. (1995) research. Those categories marked with * have been taken from the Shostack scale, although Transport is listed as Airlines and Financial is listed as Investment Management. Holidays are listed in the Zeithaml scale (indicated by a #). Unfortunately, Food, Retail and Telecoms are not on either of the scales, and have therefore been placed where it was felt most appropriate, taking into account such characteristics as the level of service involved in the purchase and the consumption of the offering.
From high to low tangibility

It can be seen that no clear relationship between these two variables can be found in this study and therefore there is no relationship between the level of tangibility of the good or service and the amount of different information contained in their advertisements. This inconsistency of results could be due to the different goods and service categories involved in this analysis, the difference in UK to USA advertising approaches, or the time lapse between studies.

The results can also be analysed utilising the experiential-utilitarian dimension, which has been identified as an important classification tool in the general advertising frameworks. It is generally accepted that holidays are an experiential purchase (Stafford and Day, 1995) and financial services, such as credit cards and banks are utilitarian (Weinberger and Spotts, 1989). Telecoms and Transport are more difficult to classify. Weinberger and Spotts (1989) propose that long-distance phone calls could be experiential as they may be perceived as a treat, but local phone calls have not been
classified. Transport is also ambiguous because airline travel has been previously classified as experiential while railway transport has been classified as utilitarian (Bloemer and De Ruyter, 1999).

**Figure 4.2 Relationship between variety of information and service type**

It can be seen in Figure 4.2 that the pure experiential service, holidays, clearly contains a wider variety of information than the other three. It is interesting to compare this result with those of Day (1992) who found that experiential services such as amusement parks and restaurants had less quality cues than utilitarian services such as automotive repair and healthcare. Although quality cues are based on many dimensions, the most frequent dimension is tangible cues, which can consist of verbal descriptions and information of physical facilities and equipment utilised the service (Day, 1992).

Other studies have also found that less information is required to purchase an experiential product because the decision is more image-based and less rational (Pratt, 1998; Mittal, 1989b). The results from this exploratory study suggest that the distinction between utilitarian and experiential services is not clear-cut. The impact of this service characteristic on consumer behaviour will be explored in detail later in this thesis.

Lastly, the results from this exploratory research show that there are similarities in the use of content and availability information contained in service advertisements. This may compensate for not being able to show the packaging, which most goods advertisements include. However, it is surprising that
service providers do not utilise other details such as performance, guarantees, price and quality statements in order to help the customer tangibilise the service and make comparisons, when evidence would suggest that this information is considered useful by consumers. In fact, none of the other informational types show any consistency of use within either the goods or the service groupings, suggesting that other factors are influencing the inclusion of information in the advertisements.

In summary, this exploratory research has firstly identified that service advertisements do not provide a wider variety of information to assist the consumer in tangibilising the service, despite the fact that the inclusion of this information is proposed in many of the services advertising frameworks. One explanation for this discrepancy could be that the tangibility problem is not an issue in the eyes of the advertising industry. Certainly, a glance at many service advertisements reveals an image and brand building basis to their execution rather than a rational informative approach. Secondly, the research has illustrated that the degree of variety within the good and service sectors necessitates more specific classification by characteristics. A number of alternatives have been discussed, but conflicting results necessitate further work. Lastly, the study has revealed no clear pattern in the inclusion of certain types of information.

In order to explore these areas further it is considered necessary to go “behind the scenes” and examine the views of the advertising practitioners who are creating these services advertisements. A clear understanding of their approach to services advertising should provide some explanation of the gap between services advertising theory and practice and may assist this research to cross the divide.

4.3 Services Advertising: The Agency Viewpoint

4.3.1 Background

Content analyses of service advertisements, both in the UK and USA, reveal that advertising practitioners are not creating services advertisements in line with the recommendations put forward by conceptual frameworks offered in the academic literature (e.g. Hill and Gandhi, 1992; Mittal, 1999).
The differences between theory and practice exist with reference not only to the informational content as examined in the first piece of exploratory research, but also to encouraging word of mouth (Mangold et al., 1999) and showing the service encounter (Cutler and Javalgi, 1993). The purpose of this phase of research is to discover why this discrepancy between theory and practice exists by establishing the views of creative directors in advertising agencies.

More specifically, the research examines two areas of services advertising which need clarification. The first objective is to establish how creative directors classify services. In the literature it can be seen that some studies analyse services as a whole (e.g. Abernethy et al., 1997, Cutler and Javalgi 1993, Abernethy and Franke 1996) while others adopt a single segmentation technique, for example, examining experiential and utilitarian features, (Stafford and Day, 1995), search, credence and experience qualities (Stafford, 1996, Mitra et al., 1999), level of contact (Hill and Gandhi, 1994) and balance of power (Cobb-Walgren and Mohr, 1998). Lastly, two writers have brought together groups of characteristics to create service clusters (Bowen 1990, Lovelock 1983) which have been adopted by others (e.g. Hill and Gandhi, 1992). The earlier examination of the general advertising literature also revealed additional dimensions that are used for classification, such as levels of involvement (Vaughn, 1980), levels of elaboration (Petty and Cacioppo 1980) and informational/transformational dimensions (Rossiter et al., 1991). Despite the lack of clarity in this area, no research has been undertaken to establish the views of advertising practitioners on the classification of services. This exploratory research is therefore designed to fill this hiatus and provide an important insight into how the advertising industry perceives services advertising.

The second objective is to establish the extent to which services advertising is perceived by the creative directors to be different from the advertising of goods and how these differences manifest themselves in terms of the strategic and executional approaches being adopted. More specifically, this research will establish the practitioners’ view on the importance of the four areas identified in the analysis of the major conceptual studies in services advertising, which are as follows:
• tangibilise the offering;
• show the service encounter;
• encourage word-of-mouth communication; and
• build a strong brand image.

4.3.2 Methodology

Semi-structured qualitative interviews were used in this exploratory research in order to examine the experiences of the interviewee in some depth. Such an approach provides enough freedom for interviewees to put forward ideas and views that the interviewer may have been unaware of and yet still enables the interviewer to have some control over the interview content to ensure that all areas of interest are discussed (Seidman, 1991). This control is achieved by using a combination of main questions to direct the discussion, follow-up questions to explore certain topics in more depth, and probes which are utilised when answers are incomplete or when interviewees need some encouragement to continue (Rubin and Rubin, 1995).

Contacts with the creative directors were made by sending out letters to all medium-sized full service advertising agencies within a 20-mile radius of the research centre location in South East of England. This size of agency, with an annual billing of between £2m and £4m, was specifically chosen to ensure that the creative director had experience of a wide range of different accounts and also had significant influence over the final advertisement. Such experience is less evident in larger agencies, where specialisation can result in creative teams working in one specific product or service area. It was also considered important to interview people from full-service agencies, that is agencies that provide a range of services including creative work, production and media buying, to ensure that the creative director was involved in all aspects of the account. The South East of England has the highest concentration of advertising agencies in the country and there were found to be 14 agencies in this designated area. These agencies were identified utilising the Advertisers Annual, a directory of U.K. advertising agencies. Follow-up phone calls to the creative directors were successful in obtaining nine
interviews. Patton (1981) refers to this sampling approach as typical purposeful sampling which is a method suitable for qualitative analysis, where a trade-off is often necessary between gaining detailed information and the desire to generalise. A large random selection, which is often the approach adopted in quantitative research to ensure representativeness, is not possible in interview studies because of its dependence on large numbers. Randomness is also not achievable due to the consent which must be obtained from interview participants. However, this type of sampling method can establish connections among the experiences of the individuals for the purposes of discussion.

Personal interviews took place from February to August 1999. A duplication of experiences and opinions became evident after analysing six interviews but, to ensure an adequate research base, three more were conducted. Glaser and Strauss (1967) refer to this replication of findings as 'theoretical saturation'. The conditions under which the interviews took place were kept as consistent as possible. All the interviews were undertaken in the boardroom, away from distractions (with one exception, where one was not available), the introduction to the interview was read so that the same atmosphere and expectations were set, and all the interviewees were men. Although this male domination was not intentional, it is representative of the population of creative directors.

Tape-recordings of all the interviews were made and then typed up into transcript form for analysis. There is presently some debate as to whether the analysis should be performed from the tapes so that nothing is lost in terms of tone of voice or particular emphasis on words, which may change the meaning. However, Gordon and Langmaid (1988) suggest that the decision should be influenced by whether the researcher is aurally dominant or visually dominant. The researcher concluded, after attempting both approaches, that she was the latter. To avoid the potential problems of working with written accounts of the interviews alone, any significant emphasis in the voice was noted on the transcripts.

The transcripts were coded into subject categories to enable comparisons to be made across the nine interviews. Dey (1993) states that categories need to be ‘grounded’ conceptually and empirically. The topic areas used in this analysis resulted from the literature review on service advertisements and
identification of the significant areas being discussed. However, it is also important that such a list of codes is not so restrictive that data are forced to fit the structure and unexpected findings are not accommodated. The code list therefore included miscellaneous areas under each heading to fulfil that need for flexibility. A copy of the interview protocol and a sample interview transcript are provided in Appendix C and D respectively.

**Interview Structure**

The purpose of the personal interviews was to discover creative directors' views on the two main areas as identified from the services advertising literature:

- The classification of goods and services
- The role of services advertising.

An interview guide approach was adopted in the interviews (Patton, 1981), where the interviewer decides on the sequence and wording of questions in the course of the interview. However, in this case the topics to be covered were not specified in advance. The interview introduction stated that the purpose of the research was to examine the differences between advertising theories and practice. The interviewee was not informed of the specific interest in services advertising until later in the interview, in order to avoid creating any bias in the initial exploratory questions. However, some follow-up questions and probing were necessary in Section 2 to ensure that the four main executional characteristics that have been identified in the conceptual frameworks were discussed.

The interview structure was identical for all respondents. The researcher commenced by requesting the interviewee to describe the accounts he had recently worked on. Although this approach took time, it did put the interviewees in a relaxed frame of mind and provided the interviewer with some idea of their experience in service accounts, which was referred to later in the interview. Frey and Oishi (1995) suggest that the initial questions should be easy to respond to and of interest in order to motivate the respondent. The structure of the interview was then changed by providing the interviewees with 18 cards. Each card had one of the following consumer good or service written on it:
Table 4.5 List of goods and services utilised in interview exercise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Washing Powder</th>
<th>Car</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Cosmetics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewellery</td>
<td>Drink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast Food Outlet</td>
<td>Hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday</td>
<td>Retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry-Cleaning</td>
<td>Airline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit Card</td>
<td>Telecoms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car Repair</td>
<td>Car Breakdown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo Processing</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These goods and services were chosen to cover a wide range in terms of characteristics such as tangibility, evaluation qualities, level of emotion and involvement. The quantity of cards was decided upon in order to provide a substantial exercise which would concentrate the mind and yet not be so time-consuming as to dominate the whole interview. The respondents were asked to sort the cards into groups where the items had a common characteristic, which would influence the creative approach adopted. The purpose of this activity was to establish the characteristics that creative directors considered important.

It was anticipated that interviewees' reasoning behind the groupings would bring up some of the issues in services advertising which could then be explored further. Those topics that did not emerge were to be brought up for discussion later in the interview.

After completion of the card activity, the interviewer let the interviewee know that all following questions would refer to services advertising. They were asked to discuss experiences of working on service accounts and to identify any differences that might exist compared with products. The
conversation was guided so that the four dimensions of services advertising identified from the
literature were discussed.

4.3.3 Findings and Discussion

Practitioners’ experiences

All the creative directors had extensive experience in a wide variety of accounts. Due to the size of the
agencies in which they worked this experience covered all elements of the marketing communications
mix and included clients in both the consumer and trade sectors. A number of the directors had
previously worked in larger agencies in London before setting up their own agencies and referred to
some experiences gained in that environment. Consumer services which they had been specifically
involved with included London Luton airport, Autoglass window repair, Hertz rent-a-car, Budget rent-
a-car, Mercedes after sales service, Thomas Cook, Woolworth, Canada Life insurance, World

Classification of goods and services

The interviewees were asked to group together the 18 offerings with common characteristics, which
could result in a similar creative approach being adopted.

All the participants were uncomfortable in performing this task. They felt strongly that it depended on
the specific advertising objectives and target group and that every campaign was different and had to
be approached with an open mind. In fact, two interviewees only undertook the exercise when they
were informed of the characteristics to use for classification. (These have therefore been excluded from
this first analysis.)

Only one participant grouped the cards into goods and services at this point and it is felt that he had
prior knowledge of the interviewer’s intentions (some communication had taken place between the
participant and a colleague who had already been interviewed by the researcher). The other
practitioners did not recognise the service/goods divide as the overriding characteristic. This finding,
in itself, suggests that the impact of service characteristics per se is perhaps not perceived to be as important by practitioners as it is by academics.

The majority of directors, five of the nine participants, classified the goods and services using a utilitarian and experiential approach. A number of different terms were used such as, “a necessary evil”, “reactive”, “grudge” and “distress purchases” as opposed to “luxury”, “pleasure” and “tangible benefits”. Cards being grouped under the utilitarian heading included *washing powder, retail, food, credit card, insurance, telecoms, car repair, car breakdown, and dry-cleaning* while *jewellery, cosmetics, car, drink, hotel, holiday and airlines* were considered experiential. The only areas of doubt seemed to be *fast food and photo processing* which appeared in both listings.

When this distinction was explored further, the participants explained that people were more motivated to buy pleasurable goods and services and were interested in the advertisements. With utilitarian offerings, the advertisements had to fight harder to get attention and many contained more detail. One interviewee summed it up as the difference between wants and needs. This finding provides support for the think/feel and informational/transformational divide incorporated in the two general advertising integrative frameworks discussed in Chapter 3 (Vaughn, 1980, Rossiter *et al.*, 1991) and suggests that there is some synergy between these frameworks and advertising practice.

Three of the participants used level of involvement to group the cards. For example, one interviewee referred to a group consisting of *photo processing, fast food, and dry cleaning* as periphery, while *credit card, insurance, car breakdown service and car repair* were recognised as big, long-term decisions. The influence of involvement on the decision-making process is again well established and built into the general advertising frameworks (e.g. Vaughn, 1980). This is therefore further evidence of the link between general advertising frameworks and practice.

Lastly, the type of relationship between the service provider and the customer was also used as a classification tool. One participant identified *credit cards, insurance and telecoms* as being a
continuous relationship or, in his own words “these people know that they have got you”. This statement does link up with some of the services advertising literature. The impact of the type of relationship was recognised by Lovelock (1980, 1983) and developed by Hill and Gandi (1992) who proposed that an advertisement for a service with a continuous relationship should create a good image by including tangible aspects and by showing the service encounter. If the relationship is discrete, more emphasis should be placed on documentation.

When the creative directors were asked specifically to split the cards into goods and services, only two people found this exercise easy and completed it correctly (in agreement with the author’s definitions). Two of the interviewees found the classification unhelpful and confusing. Not only was there confusion between goods and services but also on the definitions of products, goods and services.

“I mean, the Abbey National (Building Society), as far as I am concerned, you might say it is a service, but it is a product because it is a clearly defined package, this is what I put in and this is what I get out”.

“A product is a service is a brand”.

Although these two interviewees did not agree with the academic view of what constitutes a service, they also did not agree with each other. Both used airlines as an example to make their point with one suggesting that easyJet was a product because there was very little element of service to the experience, and the other arguing that easyJet was a service because it was too basic to be a product.

The other five participants found the exercise fairly straightforward but did make some mistakes in their classification, particularly with retail and fast food. This result is perhaps not surprising. Shostack (1977) in her classification continuum, placed fast food on both sides of the tangibility line. Retail is also recognised as a mixture of product and service. Two practitioners also classed holidays as a good, which is more unexpected.
Definitions and characteristics of services

The interviewees identified intangibility as the most prominent of all the service characteristics, which is in line with much of the services advertising literature (e.g. George and Berry, 1981). They also acknowledged that a service was abstract and not manufactured.

"Services are usually doing things for me that I can't do or haven't got the knowledge to do for myself"

"A service is something that you are offering. It is being able to facilitate what you want done."

These definitions are following a similar route to Berry (1980) who described a service as a "deed, act or performance". Only one practitioner mentioned the perishability characteristic, with reference to holidays, airlines and hotels.

The respondents also recognised services as being an add-on to goods in order to differentiate and provide additional value, as the following quote illustrates:

"Something that is not produced but goes off the back of something else".

In this case the participant was referring to car insurance, car breakdown services and repair, which are often sold as additional features on a new car. Delivery was also quoted as a service, which was promoted to differentiate a good. These examples support the work of Kotler (2000) who identified the mixture of goods and services that is often offered to the customer. The promotion of both goods and services in the same advertisement is an area that has not been explored in the literature but was a common occurrence in the practitioners' experience. The practitioner who had worked on the
Woolworth account stated that the advertisements had two objectives. They were firstly making the service element more attractive in order to change the perception of Woolworth from a last stop call to a first-stop call, while also promoting its range and availability of goods. The practitioner working on Autoglass also provided an example of this overlap between goods and services, explaining that the objective of a recent advertising campaign they had run for Autoglass was to inform consumers that they could now supply and fit car radios.

**Characteristics of services advertising**

It is important to note that there was again a general reluctance to suggest that one type of advertising was fundamentally different from another:

"Broadly, you don’t think it is a product or a service, you just get on with the issue"

"It all comes down to the brief".

These quotes provide evidence of the importance and influence of the advertising objective and brief provided to the creative personnel. When these areas were explored in a little more depth one theme did emerge which was the importance of trust:

"Services are really reliant upon trust"

"It is a trust thing and services are usually asking me to trust them"

"You are selling trust and a relationship and an understanding".

This theme on the importance of building trust was an interesting finding and emerged without prompting in the majority of the interviews. As discussed in Chapter 2, the role of trust in creating
brand loyalty and thereby diminishing the perceived levels of risk has been recognised in the literature (Berry and Parasuraman, 1991; Mitchell, 1999). How this trust can be created is discussed in the following sections.

**Tangibilising the service**

Although the practitioners acknowledged that tangibilisation was the major difference between goods and services they did not recognise advertising as a tool to address this issue. Their views are in contradiction with the earlier academic writings on the subject (e.g. Shostack, 1977, George and Berry, 1981) but support the more recent work of Mittal (1999) who states that tangibilisation is not a problem. The practitioners recognised the role of symbols such as the Direct Line red telephone, but placed more emphasis on showing the benefit of the service or, alternatively, the unpleasant consequences of not having the service, rather than the features of the service itself. For example, the practitioner working on the London Luton Airport account stated that it was possible to show the interior of the airport to assist the consumer in imagining the experience, but that convenience of the airport location and flight destination were the most important influences on the decision. This finding is in line with the recognition that benefits may be particularly important to customers of services because of their lack of ownership (Gabbott and Hogg, 1998). Nonetheless, all agreed that it depended on the type of service being discussed and were reluctant to generalise. There was also recognition of the importance of factual information for the utilitarian services such as credit cards and of how such information could be utilised to create a feeling of trust:

"You want to establish credentials....promote the fact that you have been around for a long time and are very trustworthy."

"You have to provide the facts and figures, and if you have to, you have to support them"
These findings endorse the work of Day (1992) who found that utilitarian services, such as insurance and financial services, contained a higher percentage of assurance cues than the experiential services such as airlines, hotels and travel agents. Assurance cues consisted of “references to training or competency of employees, accreditation, awards or length of time the firm has been in business” (Day, 1992, p. 57). The content analysis discussed in this chapter found no evidence to suggest that advertisements for utilitarian services held more information per se. However, a closer examination of types of information included does reveal that 58 per cent of financial advertisements contained information on performance data compared with only 8 per cent of holiday and hotels. This importance placed on assurance cues ties up with the need to gain the trust of the consumer, which was communicated strongly in the interviews.

Showing the service encounter

The creative directors’ views on this subject varied greatly, from the opinion that showing the service encounter was essential to it being the last resort. The majority felt that it was useful to portray the interface with the organisation as pleasurable and easy. Showing the service provider was one way of creating a friendly and approachable image and a number of the participants cited the Woolwich Building Society advertisements, which adopted this approach some time ago:

“That is probably ten years ago and that image is firmly with me, that is my image of the Woolwich”

“You need to put a face behind what you are putting down in text”.

The practitioner working on the ParcelForce account stated that people are always included in the advertisements to illustrate the service being provided. He explained that in the past these people were employees but staff changes meant that photographs could not be used. The policy was therefore
adapted to utilise models. The practitioner was not convinced that showing the service provider was influential because he felt that most consumers knew they were not real people.

Showing the service provider supports the work of Hill and Gandhi (1994) which is the only research that has tested the propensity to show the service provider, encounter and customer against different types of services. They found that services which were of a discrete nature or which required a high level of customer contact did show the service provider and the customer more often than services without these characteristics. The building society example would fit into the second category.

Some kind of visual image was considered important for customers to see the service in their mind’s eye and imagine themselves being there. Two of the participants cited a MasterFit advertisement where they showed the technicians working on the cars. However, it was acknowledged that the expectation created by such advertising had to be lived up to by the service provider, if disappointed and dissatisfied customers were to be avoided.

**Encouraging word-of-mouth communication**

All the participants reinforced the academics’ view that word-of-mouth communication plays a major part in the success of any business. It was also acknowledged that the intangibility of services could result in greater emphasis being placed on personal recommendations, particularly for what was referred to as “pure services”, such as plumbers and builders:

“There is a validity the moment someone you know has told you about something”.

However, all the participants were also sceptical of the role that advertising could play in encouraging word-of-mouth. The directors were not using service advertisements to encourage customers to talk about the advertisement (Haywood, 1989) or provide an incentive to recommend the service to another (Turley, 1990). However, their comments did support the work of Mangold et al., (1999) who found
that very little word-of-mouth communication was stimulated by advertising. The practitioners felt that
the only real way to encourage discussion about a service was to ensure that the service met or exceeded expectations:

"We don’t let our clients get into a situation where they promise something that they cannot deliver."

Testimonials, case histories and endorsements were recognised tools for dramatising a word-of-mouth situation, but the interviewees felt that the public were "not taken in" by such statements:

"People are ad literate and they understand that advertisers and companies are really trying to sell them something".

Testimonials by celebrities were viewed more positively, because they provided the service with a personality, an identity, and not only personified word-of-mouth but also appealed to a specific target audience. The use of celebrities to encourage word-of-mouth activity has been identified by Haywood (1989) as a way of making the advertisement a topic of conversation. It has also been found that celebrities are particularly effective when advertising low involvement products (Petty and Cacioppo, 1980).

Building a strong brand image

Lastly, brand building was considered by all the participants to be of utmost importance for both goods and services and seen as the main objective of advertising. BMW and Virgin were cited as examples of clear and consistent branding campaigns, the latter interestingly covering both the goods and service sectors. One difference that was identified between goods and service advertising was that corporate branding in services was often necessary to build familiarity and trust for the service provider, upon which the individual services offerings could be sold. Such brand recognition was obtained through
establishing a consistent brand identity and communicating that through substantial advertising campaigns using the main media:

“It is the brand which gives me the trust”.

“Advertising on a national level does that. People begin to trust you because they hear your name a lot and they think you are big. If you are big you are trustworthy”.

The practitioner working on ParcelForce provided an example of such information. He stated that it was important to communicate the size of the business and that they used statistics such as “we deliver to 70 million homes” and “we deliver to 97% of the whole world” in order to achieve this image.

These results suggest that it is essential for service providers to have a heavy presence in the media in order to create and maintain a trustworthy image and that the corporate brand should be emphasised rather than specific offerings. This is an interesting finding because the importance of brand building is acknowledged in three of the conceptual frameworks discussed in Chapter 1. George and Berry (1981) suggest that a coherent image should be created by maintaining advertising continuity and Legg and Baker (1987) endorse the importance of repetition. Firestone (1983) adopts a more emotional stance and suggests that advertising can be utilised to build an appropriate personality for the company. There is also evidence in the services marketing literature to suggest that building a strong and trustworthy brand image is important (Berry and Parasuraman, 1991; Bharadwaji and Menon, 1993). This may therefore be an area where services advertising can make a significant contribution.

If the image of the brand is having an impact on the decision making process, that would suggest that emotion is influencing that process. The effectiveness of emotional advertising for services was discussed in a number of the interviews and it was generally felt that emotion plays a part in most decisions:
"I don’t think people make a purely rational response to anything".

The practitioners illustrated this by citing examples from both the experiential and utilitarian sectors. For example, portraying the consequences of being stranded at the side of the road waiting for the car recovery service, or having your wallet stolen on holiday with no insurance, was very emotional. These examples reflect the negatively-originated motives discussed by Rossiter et al., (19991) where the role of advertising is to communicate that the product can provide relief from this negative situation. Others identified the importance of achieving a consistency between the image of the brand and the image of the consumer:

"First Direct promote this idea that they are young, modern and a bit techy. They are making an emotional appeal ... but providing basically the same service".

4.3.4 Summary

The purpose of this research was to establish, firstly, how agency personnel classify services and secondly, their views on how services should be advertised. The results reveal a fundamental difference between services advertising theory and practice. Creative directors are not influenced by the fact that they are advertising a good or a service. Indeed, some have difficulty in distinguishing between the two. The main influence on their creative approach is the specific advertising objective for that campaign and this objective can be common across all sectors e.g. selling a benefit, creating awareness or building a strong brand image. This approach is in line with the work of Enis and Roering (1981) who were concerned about the goods/services divide. They argued that "neither goods nor services are marketed. What is marketed is a bundle of benefits" (p. 3). Marthur and Kenyon (1998) support this view, stating that the goods/services classification is unhelpful because it is based on inputs and not outputs. This would suggest that the emphasis on benefits is appropriate for both goods and services.
Nonetheless, the practitioners did identify certain characteristics that can influence the advertising strategy adopted. More specifically, they did recognise the utilitarian/experiential divide and the impact of involvement. These findings suggest that there is more synergy between the general advertising theories and advertising practice and that these theories are being utilised in both goods and services advertising. This cross-fertilisation is therefore taking place in practice despite the gulf that exists between the two streams of research.

Because the practitioners do not approach the advertising of services differently from goods, they do not hold strong views on how services should be advertised. Although they recognise that services are intangible this is not considered an important issue because the creative directors are continually dealing with intangible elements such as benefits and imagery for both goods and services. This approach is very different from most of the services advertising literature, which has placed great emphasis on intangibility and the role that advertising can play in tangibilising the service. It is only in the more recent work of Mittel (1999) that the importance of tangibilisation has been questioned. The practitioners do acknowledge the possibility of showing the service provider but do not condone the use of services advertising to encourage word-of-mouth communication. One area that is recognised as requiring specific attention is the advertising of high involvement utilitarian services, where there is a necessity to create a feeling of trust by including documentation and building a strong and familiar corporate image.

This discrepancy between services advertising theory and practice provides an explanation for the differing results that content analyses have provided. The services advertising research has been an offshoot of services marketing research, resulting in great emphasis being placed on service characteristics such as intangibility. The advertising industry approaches the subject from the opposite direction with emphasis on the outcomes and benefits to the consumer rather than the inputs, which results in the redundancy of the good/service boundary. The practitioners are interested in the augmented product or service and how it is perceived by the target audience.
4.4 Conclusion

The findings from these two pieces of exploratory research have provided an insight into the way services are presently being advertised in the UK. The first, and perhaps most fundamental, finding is that goods and services are not being advertised differently and that there is too much diversity within the service sector to talk about “services advertising” as a whole. The content analysis revealed wide disparity in terms of amount and type of informational content provided in the service advertisements. The reason for this disparity, as revealed in the practitioners’ interviews, is that the creative directors do not perceive the advertising of services to be fundamentally different from the advertising of goods.

The advertising of both sectors is concerned with selling the benefit of the product and creating a strong brand image that ties up closely with the contents of the advertising brief. The advertising strategy is influenced by characteristics other than the goods/service divide. This provides an explanation as to why some service and goods advertisements are more similar to each other than they are to others in their own category.

If this is the case, then it is necessary to establish the most influential characteristics of services so that meaningful sub-groups within the service sector can be created. The content analysis revealed that levels of tangibilisation did not seem to offer a useful classification tool and this was confirmed by the practitioners, who did not perceive tangibilisation as an important issue. The practitioners felt that advertising was influenced more by whether the good or service was of a utilitarian or experiential nature. Consumers buying experiential products were motivated and enjoyed the purchasing process because of its positive outcome. Advertisements for utilitarian products had to work harder and convince the consumer that the product was necessary. The practitioners also recognised the influence of involvement on the decision-making process and consequently on the role of advertising in that process. Both of these classification tools have already found wide acceptance in the general advertising literature and yet, as discussed in Chapter 3, receive little recognition in the services advertising literature.
The findings from these two pieces of exploratory research mark a turning point in the direction of the thesis. They provide strong evidence to suggest that the general advertising theories discussed in Chapter 2 are as appropriate for services as they are for goods. Whether they should be utilised instead of or in addition to the service advertising guidelines still requires investigation. The next chapter will explore the influence of involvement and utilitarian/experiential divide on service consumer behaviour in order to examine these influences further in the services context.
Chapter 5: Development of Services Consumer Behaviour Framework

Chapter 2: Services Advertising

Chapter 3: Advertising Theory

Chapter 4: Services Advertising Practice

Chapter 5: Development of Services Consumer Behaviour Framework

Chapter 6: Methodology

Chapter 8: Development and Testing of Services Advertising Framework

Chapter 7: Results

Chapter 9: Conclusion: Creation of Services Consumer Behaviour and Advertising Framework
5. Development of Services Consumer Behaviour Framework

5.1 Introduction

The analysis of the services consumer behaviour and advertising literature in Chapter 2 identified four roles for service advertisements: tangibilisation, showing the service encounter, encouraging word of mouth and building a consistent brand image (George and Berry, 1981; Firestone, 1983; Legg and Baker, 1987; Hill and Gandhi, 1992; Mittal, 1999). Although these roles are evident throughout the conceptual works, they all lack strong empirical underpinning. The exploratory research undertaken in this study reveals that this may be because advertising practitioners do not perceive the advertising of services to be fundamentally different from the advertising of goods. They indicate that advertising strategies are more influenced by the level of product involvement and the utilitarian or experiential dimensions of the offering. These characteristics have received acceptance in the general advertising research (see Chapter 3) but receive little attention in the services advertising frameworks.

The purpose of this chapter is to explore these findings further by revisiting the literature to establish the impact that levels of involvement and the utilitarian/experiential dimension can have on the purchase of services. There is also a discussion on the influence of motivation, opportunity and ability, which the author proposes may be important in understanding how many services are purchased. During this debate a number of hypothesis are generated which are empirically tested later in the study. The chapter concludes by creating a Services Consumer Behaviour Framework, which puts forward a decision-making process for four different types of service.
5.2 The influence of the utilitarian/experiential dimension on services consumer behaviour

One of the main influences of consumer behaviour that general advertising frameworks and theories acknowledge is the degree of emotion involved in the decision. The advertising literature has placed great emphasis on the relationship between cognition and affection to establish their relative importance and influence. Vakratsas and Ambler (1999), who presents an overview of much of this literature, conclude that cognition, affection and experience are all key intermediate advertising effects, which need to be incorporated into any advertising model, but their dominance may vary depending on the type of product or service being bought. This classification tool is also utilised in the main integrative advertising frameworks, the FCB Grid (Vaughn, 1986) and Rossiter-Percy Grid (Rossiter et al., 1991).

Classifying products in terms of a utilitarian/experiential divide has been identified as important because this characteristic has an impact on all stages of the decision-making process. When purchasing an experiential product the process is emotionally based and influenced by the image of the brand and the consumer's self-concept (Johar and Sirgy, 1991). Consequently, a minimal information search is undertaken, with few brand comparisons and few features being considered (Pratt, 1998; Mittal, 1989b). The purchase of a utilitarian product is undertaken in a more rational approach where factual information is analysed and logical comparisons are made (Johar and Sirgy, 1991).

The role of emotion in the services decision-making process has received some acknowledgement in the literature. It is proposed that emotion is a significant influence on many service purchases due to the consumer's personal involvement in the consumption (e.g. Young, 1981; Stern, 1997). Others have identified the differences in the purchase behaviour of utilitarian and experiential services (Stafford and Day, 1995, Mattila, 1999). Buck et al., (1995) attempted to measure the levels of affective and rational involvement for a number of goods and services and found that insurance, phone calls, credit
cards and postal services were mainly rational decisions, while the purchase of airlines had similar levels of affect and reason.

Further evidence of the importance of emotion can be found in the tourism literature, an area that encapsulates the majority of the high involvement experiential services where the anticipation of pleasure is a major motivator. Gnoth (1997) constructed a model of tourism motivation and identified a direct relationship between emotion and behaviour, often without the interference of cognition. This is supported by the work of Mattila (1999) who found that an emotional message strategy was more effective than a utilitarian approach when advertising hotels. This pleasure-seeking and self-actualisation approach to holiday purchases has an impact on the sources of information used, with personal experience and friends and family being the most popular sources of information (Oppermann, 2000). Fodness and Murray (1998, 1999) found when people used only one source of information, personal experience was the most popular and when two sources were utilised, friends and family were identified as the most relied upon. The utilisation of information sources such as personal experiences and WOM is of particular interest because it may influence the way in which advertising is used. This preference for personal sources of information would suggest that nonpersonal sources such as advertising may be more popular for utilitarian services. These areas need to be investigated further and are therefore addressed in the hypotheses below.

Emotion also influences the evaluation technique adopted. Assael (1998) posits that if the purchase is of an experiential nature then evaluation is performed by looking at the brand as a totality, which represents a set of experiences or fantasies. A strong brand image is therefore important through the use of symbols and brand imagery. Vaughn (1986) talks of placing emphasis on psychological and emotional motives such as building self-esteem or enhancing one's own ego or self-image. This type of appeal is referred to as transformational, which is defined as an appeal which links the offering to a familiar personal experience which the person can relate to in his or her own life (Mittal, 1999).
Laskey et al., (1995) split transformational advertising into User image, Brand image and Use occasion. What the various definitions have in common is the emphasis on emotions and imagery.

The importance of a strong brand image has been identified by a number of writers and ties in very closely with the importance of trust in the purchase of services (Berry and Parasuraman, 1991). Andreassen and Lindestad (1998) report that a company’s image has a greater impact on the decision-making process when service attributes are difficult to evaluate. Their study of holiday purchasers found that the corporate image influences perceived quality and customer satisfaction, which then leads to customer loyalty. Arora and Stone (1996) also found brand familiarity to improve perceptions of quality.

This review of the literature would suggest that the experiential/utilitarian divide might be a useful classification tool for services, due to the influence it has on the decision-making process in terms of information search and evaluation. However, this impact may not be consistent across all services. Section 5.3 posits that very little information search is undertaken for any type of service that is considered to be of low involvement. It is therefore necessary to examine the influence of involvement before developing appropriate hypotheses.

5.3 The influence of involvement on services consumer behaviour

When the services advertising literature is compared with the general advertising theories, one of the main differences identified is in the classification of different goods and services. The services advertising literature contains a number of tools for classification, as discussed in Section 2.3 in Chapter 2, but researchers in this area have not reached a consensus as to the most effective classification approach. This is very different from the advertising literature where there is general agreement that products need to be grouped by level of involvement. An examination of the three main advertising frameworks shows that they all contain involvement as an important element in the

As discussed earlier, it is also important to note that these grids were (implicitly if not explicitly) designed for both goods and services and yet have not previously been incorporated fully into the services domain. The original testing of the FCB grid contained five services. Life insurance, car insurance and credit card were placed in the high involvement/think quadrant, steak restaurant was in the high involvement/feel quadrant and fast food restaurant was in the low involvement/feel quadrant (Ratchford, 1987). Weinberger and Spotts (1989), in utilising the FCB grid to analyse informational content, placed credit cards and banks in the low involvement/think box and long-distance phone calling the low involvement/feel category. They found that the level of informational content varied between the categories, with the high involvement/think category having the highest number of informational cues, followed by the low involvement/think category and then the two “feel” quadrants. They reported no difference in the results between the services and the 36 goods categories examined.

The general advertising literature proposes that if involvement is low, the consumer puts very little effort into the decision-making process (Assael, 1998). A paucity of information is collected and he or she is influenced by emotional strategies in communications such as the celebrity, music, visual imagery etc because these can be absorbed with a low level of attention or cognitive processing (Petty and Cacioppo, 1980,1984). Evaluation takes place based on little information but is influenced by specific isolated pieces of knowledge such as the cheapest brand or the most popular brand, referred to as non-evaluative strategy. There is consequently greater emphasis on providing entertaining and enjoyable advertising so that the advertisement is noticed and processed with very little effort (Leather et al., 1994). The main advertising objective is to encourage trial for a new brand or remind customers of a familiar brand so that it is kept in the small evoked set (Ray, 1973; Smith and Swinyard, 1982; Ehrenberg and Barnard, 1997)
When involvement is high, the consumer puts more effort into the decision-making process in terms of information search and evaluation because the decision is perceived as important (Laurent and Kapferer, 1985). This level of importance is related to the perceived risk of choosing the wrong brand. Bettman (1973) refers to perceived risk as an inherent risk of a product class, which increases with variation in the perceived product quality, the importance of the decision and the price. He goes on to suggest that consumers try to reduce this risk by collecting information on the product class, although this information has to be perceived as useful and trustworthy. Such conditions are obviously relevant to the purchase of many services, such as mortgages and holidays, where there is a long-term risk of making the wrong decision, aggravated by intangibility and inseparability.

The only research specifically on involvement and services is to be found outside the advertising domain. Bloemer and De Ruyter (1999) examined the relationship between involvement and customer loyalty and found that positive emotions felt during the service encounter for a high involvement service e.g. restaurant, holiday camp and travel agency, had a stronger impact on customer loyalty than for a low involvement service e.g. public services, railways and fast food. Gabbott and Hogg (1999) utilised the Laurent and Kapferer (1985) involvement scale to measure the five antecedents of involvement for nine different services and concluded that involvement was indeed an important influence on consumer behaviour for services. Lastly, McColl-Kennedy and Fetter (2001) found a relationship between levels of involvement and external information search. They compared the buying behaviour in terms of search effort and search source for two credence services: life insurance and furnace overhaul, with two experiential services: exercise club and Caribbean vacation. They found that the level of involvement influences the amount of external search undertaken for both types of services although the influence of the two involvement constructs, interest and importance, does vary depending of the type of service being purchased.

There is, therefore, evidence to propose that both the utilitarian/experiential divide and the level of involvement may have an impact on the way services are purchased and consequently the way services
should be advertised. It is therefore possible to examine services by classifying them into four groups as identified in the general advertising literature: high involvement utilitarian (HU), high involvement experiential (HE), low involvement utilitarian (LU) and low involvement experiential (LE). The following hypotheses have been developed from the literature so far examined in this chapter. They predict the consumer behaviour for each of the categories in terms of information search and evaluation.

**Information search hypotheses**

H1 Purchasers of HU services undertake a more extensive information search than purchasers of HE services.

H2 Purchasers of LU and LE services undertake the same level of information search.

H3 Purchasers of HU services undertake a more extensive information search than purchasers of LU services.

H4 Purchasers of HE services undertake a more extensive information search than purchasers of LE services.

H5 Personal sources of information are more utilised in the purchase of HE services than HU services.

H6 A reliance on personal experience reduces the use of other information sources.

H7 Advertising is utilised more by consumers in HU services than the other three categories.

**Evaluation hypotheses**

H8 Purchasers of HU services undertake more evaluation than purchasers of HE services.

H9 Purchasers of LU and LE services undertake the same level of evaluation.

H10 Purchasers of HU services undertake more evaluation than purchasers of LU services.

H11 Purchasers of HE services undertake more evaluation than purchasers of LE services.

An examination of the hypotheses indicates that the purchasers of HU services are expected to undertake a more extensive information search and evaluation than all the other categories. The
consumer behaviour of the HE purchaser will be less complex than HU, relying more on personal sources of information. Nonetheless, the consumer behaviour of the HE purchaser will be more extensive than the two low involvement services, where very little activity is expected. There is also evidence to suggest that there may be a group of purchasers who depend heavily on personal experience and consequently adopt a routinised approach to decision making.

Although these hypotheses are based on considerable literature on the consumer behaviour, there is a stream of research, which questions some of these assumptions and may be specifically relevant to services. The next section examines this subject area.

5.4 The influence of motivation, opportunity and ability on consumer behaviour

Research in both consumer behaviour and advertising confirms that involvement is one of the main influences on the decision-making process and its importance as a classification tool was endorsed in the practitioners' interviews as discussed in Section 4.3. Consumers who are highly involved in a purchase put more time and effort into the buying process to ensure that the right decision is made. They are therefore receptive to appropriate communications and willing to process relevant information. However, a closer examination of the literature reveals that involvement alone may not be enough to ensure that these activities are undertaken comprehensively and that the consumer may need to have necessary levels of motivation, opportunity and ability to partake fully in each stage of the process. The literature that explicitly discusses the impact of motivation, opportunity and ability (referred to as MOA) examines their impact on the processing of advertising information (Batra and Ray, 1986; MacInnis et al., 1991; Poiesz and Robben, 1996). Nonetheless, a close examination of the research on consumer behaviour reveals that motivation, opportunity and ability are also required for a complex decision-making process to be undertaken.
5.4.1 Information Search

Consumers use information to assist them in reaching a decision on which good or service to purchase. Collecting this information can be either an active or passive activity. Assael (1998) identifies several factors which encourage active searching, these being:

- High consumer involvement
- High perceived risk
- Little product knowledge and experience
- Clear goals in terms of product attributes
- Less time pressure
- High price
- More product differences
- Cost-effectiveness of information search.

This list would suggest that a high level of involvement is not enough to guarantee that a detailed purchasing process is undertaken. Indeed, empirical studies in this area have consistently found that most consumers search for little pre-purchase information, even when a range of these characteristics is present. For example, a study by Claxton *et al.*, (1974) found that 65% of appliance buyers used one source of information accompanied by one store visit. Beatty and Smith (1987) examined over fifty empirical studies in this area and found that, in addition to involvement, it was necessary for consumers to lack product class knowledge, have time available to perform the search i.e. opportunity, (both identified by Assael (1998)) and also enjoy shopping, which could be seen as a form of motivation. A more recent investigation by Schmidt and Spreng (1996) identified levels of ability, motivation, costs and benefits as being the main influencers on levels of external information search.

Moorthy *et al.*, (1997) suggest that there needs to be a level of uncertainty for purchasers to be motivated enough to undertake an information search. They found that if consumers are aware of differences between the brands and are uncertain which is the best to choose they will collect further information. Alternatively, little search is undertaken if one brand is perceived to be clearly the best or
if all the alternatives are perceived to be the same. This will only be the case, however, if the consumers have faith in the quality of the information available (Urbany et al., 1989). A number of studies on the UK financial services sector provide support for these findings. Foxall and Pallister (1998) expected that perceived brand differences would be the influential variable within involvement. However, they found that the uncertainty and confusion that existed within the financial product market resulted in consumers perceiving the information sources as untrustworthy and consequently preferring to use independent and personal sources to reduce risk. Heaney and Goldsmith (1999) also found that consumers would only perform external information searches if they perceived the information to be beneficial and the consumers who already had knowledge of the banking industry were those who performed the more extensive external information searches. This may be because they are interested in the subject as well as having the cognitive ability to understand the issues.

The financial services industry has also been examined by Beckett et al., (2000) who measured levels of involvement and uncertainty, which resulted in the identification of four types of consumers. The “repeat-passive” consumers have low levels of involvement and repeatedly buy from the same service provider. This links with this routinised purchase behaviour proposed by Gabbott and Hogg (1994). The “rational-active” consumers are highly involved in the decision-making and confident in terms of product complexity. They are able to make carefully considered decisions in a rational manner. Thirdly, there are the “relational-dependent” consumers who are highly involved but not in control because they cannot process the complex information available. They therefore depend on information from third persons, be it from service providers or from friends and family. Lastly, there are consumers who do not have involvement with the financial products and do not have the ability or confidence to make decisions and therefore no purchase is undertaken.

Beckett et al. (2000) were able to link these different types of behaviour with the type of financial service being purchased. The repeat-passive behaviour was very evident in the relationship with banks providing current accounts. Once the choice of bank was made, which was influenced by friends and
family as well as the image and reputation of the provider, most consumers remained with the same bank unless a problem arose. The rational-active behaviour was more prevalent with reference to insurance products, where more switching took place, particularly influenced by price. The relational-dependent behaviour seemed to be linked with investment and pension products. In these situations consumers relied on third party advice and placed emphasis on the brand image. They created a relationship with the service provider, where trust and loyalty is the key.

5.4.2 Cognitive Processing

There is considerable evidence to suggest that communications which stimulate cognitive processing and elaboration are successful in terms of various effectiveness measures such as recall, recognition of the ad and brand, brand attitudes and purchase intentions (Robben and Poiesz, 1993; Poiesz and Robben, 1996; MacInnis et al., 1991). It is therefore important to establish the antecedents of this activity. An important contribution in this area is the elaboration likelihood model (ELM) (section 3.2.2). Petty and Cacioppo (1980, 1986) propose that a consumer has to have motivation and ability to process the content of the message for cognitive processing to take place. Motivation is defined as a desire to process brand information and ability as a skill or proficiency in interpreting the brand information. If these criteria are not present the consumer adopts the peripheral route and is influenced more by executional and emotional cues, such as the use of celebrities, music and imagery (Petty and Cacioppo, 1980). Mackenzie and Spreng (1992) tested the ELM by manipulating levels of motivation in an advertising experiment and found that increases in motivation led to increases in cognitive processing, decreases in the impact of peripheral cues and increases in the impact of brand attitudes on purchase intentions. Garbarino and Edell (1997) also found that motivation and ability can have a significant influence of the decision-making process. They performed an experiment measuring cognitive effort and found that the majority of respondents, especially those with less ability, were not motivated enough to put more effort towards the brands which demanded additional analysis. If the alternatives were perceived as similar, they would choose the brand, which was the easiest to
comprehend, and would even pay a premium for it. The likelihood of choosing the less difficult alternative was increased under time pressure.

Other writers have developed these filters by adding opportunity into the equation, defined as the receiver's lack of control over "exposure time, message length, the number of arguments in a message and distracter thoughts evoked by competing messages" (Batra and Ray, 1986b, p. 434). MacInnis and Jaworski (1989) created an Integrative Attitude Formation Model which presents ability and opportunity as moderators of motivation, that is a lack of ability and/or opportunity results in a reduction of processing motivation. Robben and Poiesz (1993) refer to two types of ability: capacity as in a person-related ability and opportunity as an environment-related ability. They argue that although the term 'ability' could encompass both constructs, it was helpful to separate them when deciding how to increase cognitive processing. They used the example of increasing exposure time in an advertising experiment when opportunity has no effect if the receiver does not have the ability to understand the message.

5.4.3 Stimulation of cognitive processing

If the lack of motivation, opportunity and ability (MOA) leads to reduction of cognitive processing (which, in turn, leads to a less effective advertisement), then advertisements which demand less MOA will be more successful for customers who are lacking in any of these dimensions (Mackenzie and Spreng, 1992). Such an advertisement has to minimise the demands of the consumer and communicate in a different way.

The ELM model proposes that the lack of motivation and ability results in the consumer taking the peripheral route and being influenced by the executional cues in the advertisement which appeal to the more emotional side of their personality. MacInnis et al., (1991) also propose that utilising specific executional tools can enhance a certain level of cognitive processing. For example, appealing to hedonistic needs, utilising creative and unusual executions and making the brand more relevant and
curious can increase motivation. The lack of opportunity can be addressed by repeating information so that it can be more easily absorbed and reducing the time needed for processing by using more visual communication. Lastly, they propose that ability can be enhanced by providing a context for understanding e.g. using examples and demonstration. Cognitive processing can also be increased if the consumer likes the advertisement. A meta-analysis by Brown and Stayman (1992) found that positive feelings towards the advertisement are not always transferred directly to the brand. The transfer may be the result of more positive and motivated cognitive processing.

This argument therefore suggests that an experiential advertising approach which includes imagery and emotional appeals such as adventure and romance (Cutler and Javalgi, 1993) may be appropriate not only for experiential products (Johar and Sirgy, 1991) but also for utilitarian products where there is a lack of MOA.

5.4.4 Evaluation

The earlier discussion on consumer behaviour for services identified that decisions are often made from an evaluation of smaller evoked set and fewer criteria than goods purchasers (Zeithaml, 1981; Turley and Le Blanc, 1993; Hill and Motes, 1995). This reduction in activity is due to the difficulties of comparison and the high perceived risk caused by the service characteristics. It could be argued that the consumers do not have sufficient levels of MOA to undertake a detailed evaluation. Consequently, evaluation is taking place at a category level, based on the overall image of the service provider, rather than a detailed analysis of each alternative (Zeithaml et al., 1990). Indeed, evidence from outside the services domain suggests that as complexity increases (that is, lack of ability) consumers either base their decision on the single most important characteristic, referred to as the lexicographic model (Wahlers, 1982) or place more emphasis on affect rather than cognition, even in high involvement utilitarian purchases such as computers (Marks et al., 1988). Bettman (1982) also acknowledged that "level of involvement alone is probably not sufficient to insure evaluation. Other factors probably need to be present, such as few alternatives, knowledge, lack of time pressure, and so on" (p. 90).
Others argue that category-based processing will only occur when information on the product being purchased fits in with knowledge of the category and then an overall judgement will be made. This approach is also adopted in low involvement situation. If the information on the product is incongruent with the category scheme then evaluation of individual attributes of the object will take place, known as the piecemeal process (Lee, 1995).

5.4.5. MOA and Services

Although MOA does not appear to have been discussed explicitly in the context of services, an examination of the characteristics of many services, particularly the high involvement utilitarian types, would suggest that many of the antecedents leading to a lack of motivation, opportunity and ability are evident in this context. More specifically, this thesis proposes that there may be a lack of MOA due to the following:

- **Difficulties in evaluating search attributes for comparisons**
  
  The intangibility of services makes it difficult for consumers to compare and evaluate alternatives (Murray, 1991; Gabbott and Hogg, 1994; Andreassen and Lindestad, 1998; Harris and Devlin, 1999). These difficulties may demotivate consumers and demand higher levels of ability.

- **Complexity of the information**
  
  It has been recognised that the average consumer finds it difficult to fully understand financial services and consequently tends to rely on independent financial advisors (Thwaites, 1995). Beckett *et al.*, (2000) studied the financial services industry and revealed a group of potential customers who find the information available too complicated to process and therefore either utilise information from third persons or are incapable of making a decision and consequently make no purchase.

- **Inability to understand the issues**
A number of the services advertising guidelines propose that intangibility makes it difficult for consumers to understand what the service consists of (George and Berry, 1981; Legg and Baker, 1987).

- **Levels of risk**

  Purchasing a service is seen by some consumers as an unpleasant task. The high risks involved in making the wrong decision as well as the monetary and psychological commitment involved result in extreme levels of stress. Consumers try to minimise this discomfort by routinising their purchase behaviour (Murray and Schlacter, 1990; Zeithaml, 1981; Gabbott and Hogg, 1994)

- **Little perceived difference between alternatives**

  Lack of product differentiation in the financial services sector, coupled with the level of complexity, results in consumers seeing little difference in the services on offer (Ennew, 1995). Such a situation can result in consumers undertaking little information search (Moorthy et al., 1997)

- **Heterogeneity of service provision**

  The implication of heterogeneity is that the experience of consuming a service and its outcome may vary from day to day, particularly when there is a degree of personal interaction (Zeithaml et al., 1985; Murray and Schlacter, 1990). This lack of consistency may reduce levels of motivation because it adds complications to the decision process.

- **Information sources perceived as untrustworthy**

  A study by Foxall and Pallister (1998) revealed that there was a lack of confidence and trust in the UK financial services industry and consumers perceived that the information provided by the service providers was unreliable.

These characteristics create complications and the service purchasers need high levels of motivation, ability and opportunity to deal with these issues if they are determined to undertake a detailed complex decision-making process. If high levels of MOA do not exist then the consumer adopts a 'short-cut' approach and makes a decision based on third-party endorsement, past experience or the corporate
image of the service provider. Such an approach has already been associated with the purchase of experiential services, as discussed earlier in this chapter (Pratt, 1998; Mittal, 1989b). The result of the lack of MOA may therefore be a similarity between the purchase of utilitarian and experiential services.

The lack of MOA has an impact on all stages of the decision-making process and has implications for the role of services advertising within that process. It is therefore necessary to establish whether levels of MOA are influencing the decision-making process for services and if that influence varies depending on the type of service in question. As this area of the research is of an exploratory nature the following null hypotheses have been developed for testing:

Ho12 There is no relationship between levels of MOA and the utilitarian/experiential dimension of high involvement services.

Ho13 There is no relationship between MOA and levels of information search for high involvement services.

Ho14 There is no relationship between MOA and levels of evaluation for high involvement services.

If MOA were found to have an influence on services consumer behaviour, this would provide a solid explanation for the discrepancy that exists between services advertising theory and services advertising practice. It would explain why service advertisements are not containing more information than goods advertisements and provide support for the employment of emotional appeals and brand imagery in service advertisements.
5.5 Developing the Services Consumer Behaviour Framework

The discussion on advertising theories in Chapter 3 concluded in the construction of the framework presented again in Table 5.1 to illustrate the differences between high and low involvement and the experiential/utilitarian divide.

The primary and secondary research that has been undertaken since that point in the discussion means that the framework can be developed specifically for services and include the most important influences of consumer behaviour. More specifically the framework will incorporate the following:

- It has been recognised that involvement is a continuum (Vaughn, 1986; Ratchford, 1987) and that there may be an intermediate stage where level of involvement is diminished by past experience and knowledge (Rossiter et al., 1991; Assael, 1998). Therefore, high involvement but familiar services may be purchased through routinised decision-making. This may be particularly relevant for services where the decision-making process is seen by many as tedious and/or difficult.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Involvement</th>
<th>Utilitarian</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>High motivation and ability</td>
<td>Limited info search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extensive info search</td>
<td>Limited cognitive processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cognitive processing</td>
<td>Category evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attribute evaluation</td>
<td>Emotional advertising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Informational advertising</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>No information search</td>
<td>No information search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No evaluation</td>
<td>No evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Informational/Emotional advertising</td>
<td>Emotional advertising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encourage trial and reminder</td>
<td>Encourage trial and reminder</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(Zeithaml, 1981; Murray, 1991). In this scenario, the evaluation takes place at a category level and the advertising objective is to reassure the consumer that the right decision is being or has been made. The consistency of the brand image is obviously important here because it is essential to communicate the fact that the brand identity is the same as when it was last purchased and that there is no need to consider alternatives.

- The presence of MOA in the purchase of high involvement utilitarian services may result in an emotional approach to the decision making process in terms of limited information search, limited cognitive processing and category evaluation. The advertising objective would therefore be to enhance MOA by the adaptation of various emotional cues. However, if there is sufficient MOA the advertisement should contain information and a strong, logical argument so that cognitive processing and attribute evaluation can take place. This type of appeal is referred to as Informational (Zinkhan et al., 1992; Laskey et al., 1995).

- The influence of personal sources of information, particularly in the high involvement experiential route, should be acknowledged because it can change the role of advertising. If a consumer is placing great emphasis on little but valued information from a personal source the role of advertising is not to provide information but to reassure the consumer of his or her decision, through presenting a strong and confident brand image.

The changes have been incorporated below to create a framework for the services decision making process as shown in Table 5.2.
Table 5.2 Proposed Services Consumer Behaviour Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Involvement</th>
<th>Utilitarian</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High MOA</td>
<td>Extensive info search</td>
<td>Limited info search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited info search</td>
<td>Limited cognitive processing</td>
<td>Importance of personal sources of information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low MOA</td>
<td>Limited info search</td>
<td>Limited cognitive processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited info search</td>
<td>Category evaluation</td>
<td>Limited cognitive processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routinised</td>
<td>No information search</td>
<td>No information search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category evaluation</td>
<td>Category evaluation</td>
<td>Category evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>No information search</td>
<td>No information search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No evaluation</td>
<td>No evaluation</td>
<td>No evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has extended the general advertising theories into the service domain for the first time. More specifically, an examination has been undertaken of the impact that levels of involvement and the utilitarian/experiential dimension can have on the purchase of services. The investigation has been achieved by bringing together a number of research streams, for example from the financial services and tourism literature. The conclusion reached from this analysis is that there is disparity in the way that services are purchased and that some of this divergence can be captured by the involvement and utilitarian-experiential dimensions.

In addition, the chapter contains a review of the literature on the impact that motivation, opportunity and ability have on buyer behaviour. This discussion concludes that these dimensions may be particularly relevant in the context of services and provide justification for a more experiential approach to services advertising.

From this analysis, a proposed Services Consumer Behaviour Framework has been created. This framework segments services into seven different categories based on service and consumer
characteristics and proposes a decision-making process for each one. The framework can now be tested by examining the hypotheses upon which it is based. The next chapter will explain the methodology adopted to achieve this.
Chapter 6: Methodology
6. Methodology

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to detail the development of a methodology to test the proposed Services Consumer Behaviour Framework, which has been created in Chapter 5. The framework has evolved from the literature on services advertising, general advertising and consumer behaviour, as well as the findings from exploratory research presented in Chapter 4.

The framework posits that services are bought differently in terms of information search and evaluation behaviour depending on the level of involvement and the utilitarian/experiential characteristics of the service. However, it goes further than the grids of Vaughn (1986) and Rossiter et al., (1991), who also utilise these influences, by firstly addressing itself specifically to consumer services. The main consequence of this approach is the inclusion of a routinised decision-making process which is placed between the high and low involvement dimensions. Secondly, it incorporates the intervening variables of motivation, opportunity and ability. Research indicates that if consumers have low levels of any of these three characteristics they undertake a diminished information search and evaluation procedure (MacInnis and Jaworski, 1989; Bettman, 1982). These dimensions may therefore help to explain why many products identified as high involvement are often bought quickly, with little thought or evaluation (Claxton et al., 1974: Beatty and Smith, 1987). The researcher posits that a lack of motivation, opportunity and ability is particularly prevalent in the purchase of many services due to service characteristics such as intangibility and heterogeneity (see section 5.4.5).

A proposed relationship between these independent, intervening and dependent variables is presented in Figure 6.1.
In order to establish the relationship between these variables it is necessary to test the hypotheses that have been developed in the preceding chapter. These are as follows:

**Information search hypotheses**

**H1** Purchasers of HU services undertake a more extensive information search than purchasers of HE services

**H2** Purchasers of LU and LE services undertake the same level of information search

**H3** Purchasers of HU services undertake a more extensive information search than purchasers of LU services

**H4** Purchasers of HE services undertake a more extensive information search than purchasers of LE services

**H5** Personal sources of information are more utilised in the purchase of HE services than HU services.

**H6** A reliance on personal experience reduces the use of other information sources

**H7** Advertising is utilised more in HU services than the other three categories.

**Evaluation hypotheses**

**H8** Purchasers of HU services undertake more evaluation than purchasers of HE services

**H9** Purchasers of LU and LE services undertake the same level of evaluation

**H10** Purchasers of HU services undertake more evaluation than purchasers of LU services
Purchasers of HE services undertake more evaluation than purchasers of LE services

**MOA hypotheses**

**H12** There is no relationship between levels of MOA and the utilitarian/experiential dimension of high involvement services.

**H13** There is no relationship between MOA and levels of information search for high involvement services.

**H14** There is no relationship between MOA and levels of evaluation for high involvement services.

This chapter consists of three sections. The first section explains the methodology utilised to measure the variables and to test the relationships between them. Due to the lack of operationalisation of the MOA constructs it has been necessary to develop a reliable and valid multi-dimensional attitude scale for use in this research. The second section details the stages undertaken to achieve this. Lastly, the chapter contains the findings of the pilot research.

### 6.2 Research Design

The purpose of this study is to examine consumer behaviour and establish relationships that can be used to predict future outcomes. Such an approach, as discussed in the Chapter 1, is an example of a positivism paradigm, which is the most dominant in consumer research, although interpretivism is recognised as providing an important contribution to the understanding of how consumers behave (Ozanne and Hudson, 1989). A positivism approach often employs the use of a questionnaire in order to derive data that can be statistically tested so that relationships between variables can be established (Botterill, 2001) and this approach has been adopted for this research.

A number of other data collection methods are available for such an investigation, capable of providing both qualitative and quantitative information for analysis. One-to-one interviews are
effective in exploring people’s attitudes and opinions and can enable the interviewers to investigate into various topics further when felt appropriate and deal with areas of misunderstanding (Oppenheim, 1992). Focus groups can also provide relevant qualitative data through discussion and questioning (Sekaran, 1992). However, both of these methods have substantial disadvantages. Oppenheim (1992) suggests that the respondent may feel under pressure to provide a sensible and useful answer, even if it may not be accurate. Although a similar situation can also exist with questionnaires (Kirk-Smith, 1998) the pressure to perform is less, due to the impersonal interaction between the researcher and the respondent, particularly for self-administered questionnaires. Results from interviews can also be influenced by interviewer bias in that the respondents can be encouraged to answer in a certain way, or the answers can be interpreted subjectively (Oppenheim, 1992).

The decision to use questionnaires was made to enable information to be collected from a larger sample in a consistent manner. However, it is recognised that this research design also has limitations in terms of reliability and validity which need to be acknowledged (Kirk-Smith, 1998). This questionnaire asks people to recall their buying behaviour with reference to a particular purchase that took place recently. The assumption is therefore being made that the respondents accurately remember the purchase and also that the questionnaire provides the appropriate response mechanisms for them to provide that information. These limitations are minimised by firstly providing the respondents with a wide choice of different purchases to choose from so that they can select the one that is best remembered, and secondly providing a wide choice of responses to the questions in order to cover most eventualities. Due to its predictive nature, the assumption is also being made that the respondent will behave in a similar way in the future. Although prediction is a common objective for questionnaires in consumer research (Botterill, 2001) it should be acknowledged that the situation may change due to identified or unidentified influences (Kirk-Smith, 1998). The prediction of behaviour is strengthened, however, by basing the results not only on the findings of the questionnaire but also on other relevant work identified in the literature.
The decision to use questionnaires was also influenced by the extensive work that has already been undertaken in the development and operationalisation of two of the most influential variables. The first of these is in the measurement of involvement. Multi-dimensional scales have been utilised in questionnaires previously and achieved high scores in terms of reliability and validity (e.g. Zaichkowsky, 1985; McQuarrie and Munson, 1987). The second variable is the information search where again an appropriate rating scale has already been created by Andreasen (1968) and utilised in a service context by Murray (1991).

Such developments have not featured in the literature on motivation, opportunity and ability. Attempts to measure these constructs were found to be in their infancy and it has been necessary to operationalise these variables. The development of these scales is discussed in the second section of this chapter.

6.2.1 Sample
An examination of studies in this area reveals a propensity to use undergraduate and/or masters students as a sample of the population (Zaichkowsky, 1987; McQuarrie and Munson, 1987; Herr and Poiesz, 1998). This finding is perhaps not surprising when one considers that in one volume of the Journal of Consumer Research in 2001, 89% of the articles utilised student samples (Peterson, 2001). However, it was felt that some of the high involvement services which needed to be included in this research would not be relevant to the student population with their limited finances e.g. mortgages and car repair, and students would consequently not be a representative sample of the service-buying public. This concern was substantiated by a study by Peterson (2001) who found that students were more homogeneous than non-students and that using a student sample to represent non-students could produce incorrect results.

For this study it was considered necessary to reach people who had a range of discretionary spending power and were in a position to purchase a variety of services. The sample was consequently obtained.
using a non-random stratified sampling procedure, referred to as quota sampling. This is achieved by setting a ‘quota’ of respondents from specific groups within the population (de Vaus, 1996). For this survey the main emphasis was placed on obtaining a sample of respondents who had a similar range of income to the population. In addition, there is evidence to suggest that gender and age can also influence consumer behaviour context (Hill and Motes, 1995). Consequently, quotas were set on these characteristics to ensure that the sample reflected similar proportions to the population. Quota sampling is popular in the social sciences because it is relatively effective and can be completed in a short period of time (Sarantakos, 1998).

The quotas were achieved by distributing questionnaires to employees of two universities, part-time mature students, masters full-time students and employees of a local manufacturing company. A total of 600 questionnaires were distributed which resulted in 400 completed questionnaires suitable for analysis, a number which compares favourably with similar surveys in this area (Mittal, 1989b; Pratt, 1998; McQuarrie and Munson, 1992). Although some questionnaires were distributed through internal mail systems the response rate utilising this approach was found to be small. Asking people directly whether they would be kind enough to fill in the questionnaire and returning to collect them from individuals, the personal approach, created a much higher response and consequently many questionnaires were distributed in this manner. This approach to the administration of the questionnaire has been identified by Sarantakos (1998) as a way of promoting a high response rate.

The pilot questionnaire was distributed to a cross-section of the staff of the University of Luton in a similar fashion to that adopted by Zaichkowsky (1985). This non-random convenience sampling technique is considered to be appropriate for pilot testing because the representativeness of the sample is less important than developing scales and exploring patterns in the data (de Vaus, 1996). The respondents occupied a variety of posts within the institution to ensure representation of all income levels. The questionnaires were returned through the internal mail service of the university or personally. This activity was undertaken until 100 valid questionnaires were obtained for analysis,
which was considered to be an adequate number to test the reliability of the measuring tools e.g. to conduct factor analysis (Kline, 1994) and to reveal any problem areas before proceeding further.

6.3 Questionnaire construction

When constructing a questionnaire it is crucial to ensure that respondents understand what is being asked of them and are in a position to provide valid and useful responses (De Vaus, 1996; Sarantakos, 1998). This is particularly important when the questionnaire is being self-administered due to the lack of opportunity to clarify issues that might arise during completion. Successful communication can be hampered by an inappropriate use of language, the type of questions being asked and the order in which they are presented.

6.3.1 Use of language

As this was a self-administered questionnaire, it was important to ensure that all respondents, with varying backgrounds and levels of education, understood the language used. This was achieved by using simple, unambiguous language with a clear frame of reference (de Vaus, 1996). For example the respondent was asked to “Please choose (and tick against) one service from the list below which you have bought for yourself in the last three months”. This sentence utilises simple language and yet provides clear guidelines to firstly assist the respondents in choosing an appropriate service in terms of whom the purchase was for and when it was undertaken and secondly to ensure that they respond in the correct manner.

It was also necessary to ensure that the wording of questions motivated the respondent to continue on to the next question. Oppenheim (1992) suggests that this can achieve by being polite and by making the questions seem interesting and relevant. The questionnaire was therefore written in a way that expressed an appreciation of the time and effort provided by the respondent. The respondents were thanked for their participation at the beginning of the process and asked politely to answer each
question. The clear guidelines on answering the questions and the logical question order were also designed to motivate the respondents to participate further.

One particular issue was the use of the word “brand” which pre-tests revealed to be rather confusing, particularly when referring to services where the brand name was often, but not always, the name of the service provider. It was therefore used interchangeably with the word “service” depending on the nature of the sentence. A number of changes were also made to the language used on Andreasen’s (1968) sources scale (described in section 6.4.6.) in order to simplify the wording. For example “pre-purchase deliberation” was changed to “consideration” and “buy the first purchase alternative I found” was replaced by “bought the first one I found”.

6.3.2 Open and Closed Questions

The questionnaire was designed in order to achieve simplicity, intelligibility and clarity (Converse and Presser, 1986). It consisted of 11 questions with a combination of open and closed responses. Closed questions are used extensively in questionnaires because they are quicker to answer and easier to analyse, (Oppenheim, 1992; Bell, 1987). They are particularly appropriate for self-administered questionnaires where motivation of the respondent may be lacking due to the absence of the interviewer (de Vaus, 1996). The provision of possible answers can assist in interpretation and help to achieve consistency. However, they must be chosen carefully as the question can only provide meaningful results if the selection of responses offered is appropriate and covers all eventualities. If an appropriate answer is not provided respondents will choose an available but inappropriate alternative (de Vaus, 1996). This issue is of particular relevance to question 7, where descriptions of evaluation are provided. This question, as discussed later, was tested before and after the pilot test to ensure comprehension and appropriateness.

A variety of closed questions or forced-choice response formats were utilised in the questionnaire including a semantic differential format (Question 1), a Likert scale (Question 2) and a multi-choice
approach (Question 7). The rationale for choosing these formats is discussed in section 6.4, where each question is examined in detail.

Open-ended questions were utilised in the questionnaire in two ways. Firstly, it was necessary to use open-ended questions in order to enable the respondents to provide information on their particular purchase. For example, they were required to list the important features that were considered when comparing alternatives (Question 4). Such information could only be obtained using open questions because of the variety of answers that could be relevant depending on the type of service being purchased. Secondly, a qualitative response was requested to provide the researcher with an understanding of the reasoning behind the quantitative answers and to ensure that no significant results had been missed e.g. 'What was the one main reason for choosing that alternative?'. Oppenheim (1992) states that open-ended questions do provide the respondents with the freedom to answer as they see fit and yet are not used extensively due to the time and effort needed both to answer the question and analyse the responses.

6.3.3 Question Order

Question order can also have an impact on the response given. For example, the meaning of a given question can be interpreted differently depending on the question preceding it (Converse and Presser, 1986). Oppenheim (1992) states that the order should be logical and take into account the likely reactions of the respondents. To achieve this the question order reflects the stages that a consumer may go through in making the purchase decision, starting with the level of involvement with the product and concluding with questions on the specific brand chosen.

From a practical point of view the order of questions was also influenced by the layout of the questionnaire. It was felt important to limit the size of the questionnaire to two sides of A4, which could then be folded into a small booklet. It was therefore necessary to use this limited space carefully so that the questions were easy to read and provided adequate space for answers. In order to achieve
this, the order was changed slightly between the pilot and the final version of the questionnaire. A copy of the final questionnaire can be seen in Appendix E. The construction of each question will now be explained in some detail.

6.4 Questionnaire structure

As stated above, the order of the questions did vary slightly between the pilot version and the final version of the questionnaire. This section refers to the order presented in the final version.

6.4.1 Choice of service

The questionnaire began by asking the respondents to choose one service that they had bought during the last three months, from a list of twelve services. They were then asked questions about their purchase behaviour with reference to the service they had chosen. This approach avoids the pitfalls of hypothetical questions e.g. asking respondent to imagine what they would do in a certain situation (Converse and Presser, 1986) but does mean that the quality of answers is dependent on the person’s memory. This may not be a problem if the decision is an important one but low involvement purchases may take place with little thought. To minimise the recall problems associated with such retrospective search reporting, the time period for remembering the purchases was set at three months, less than the accepted maximum period of six months (Converse and Presser, 1986).

In order to establish whether consumer behaviour is influenced by levels of involvement and the experiential/utilitarian dimension, it was necessary for the research to explore the purchase behaviour of services in all four quadrants of the Services Consumer Behaviour Framework. The list of services that the participant had to choose from initially consisted of fourteen different services which were classified into high (H) and low (L) involvement services and experiential (E) and utilitarian (U) purchases. The initial step was to classify services which were included in the FCB grid (Vaughn, 1980, 1986; Weinberger and Spotts, 1989) e.g. insurance as a HU service, restaurant as a HE service.
and fast food and phone-calling as LE services. Studies into emotional and rational appeals in services advertising also provided some classification guidelines, with car repair, photo processing, and car recovery being classified as rational or utilitarian (Stafford and Day, 1995: Stafford, 1995) and holidays being classed as experiential (Stafford and Day, 1995). Mortgages and savings accounts were placed in the HU category to represent financial services which are perceived to be complex and difficult purchases (Thwaites, 1995). Another four services were included in the list to provide the respondents with a wide variety of choice and to ensure adequate representation in each quadrant, these being airline, theme park, dry cleaner and cinema.

After some exploratory testing it was found that participants had, on average, purchased five of these services over the last three months, with a range from 3 to 10. All participants in the exploratory study ticked restaurant and it was therefore decided to remove that service in order to encourage a spread across the other options. Telecommunications providers were also removed because there was confusion between the mobile phone provider and the service provider. These changes created a list of twelve services; 5 HU services, 3 HE services, 2 LE services and 2 LU services, as listed in Table 6.1.

Respondents were initially requested to choose one service from the twelve. The choice of service was monitored as the questionnaires were returned and it was found that a large number of respondents were choosing experiential services, particularly Airlines, Holidays and Cinema. This result is perhaps not surprising when it is known that people are much happier talking about experiential rather than utilitarian services (McColl-Kennedy and Fetter, 1999). A revised version of the questionnaire was therefore created which did not include these services in the list of options. This revision took place approximately mid-way through the data collection procedure and resulted in a reduction in the dominance of HE services and forced respondents to choose other alternatives, fast food and insurance being popular. It was particularly difficult to obtain information on dry cleaning, which reduced the total of LU services. However, as much of the analysis is based on type of service rather than
individual services, with particular emphasis on HU and HE services, the distribution of services was considered to be acceptable (see Table 7.6 in Chapter 7).

### Table 6.1 Twelve services and their classifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of service</th>
<th>Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Savings account</td>
<td>HU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortgage</td>
<td>HU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car Repair</td>
<td>HU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>HU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car recovery service</td>
<td>HU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airline travel</td>
<td>HE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme park</td>
<td>HE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday</td>
<td>HE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry cleaner</td>
<td>LU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo processing</td>
<td>LU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast food</td>
<td>LE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinema</td>
<td>LE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.4.2 Question 1 - Level of involvement

Although the operationisation of the involvement construct has been attempted by numerous researchers (e.g. Celsi and Olson, 1988; Jain and Srinivasan, 1990; Mittal, 1989) many have been influenced by two major but somewhat contradictory contributions to this area provided in 1985 by Zaichkowsky and by Laurent and Kapferer. Zaichkowsky (1985) proposed that involvement was an unidimensional construct and created a 20-item scale to produce a single score. This has since been
developed by McQuarrie and Munson (1987, 1992) into a two-factor structure measuring Importance and Interest.

Laurent and Kapferer (1985) argued that involvement was multi-faceted and therefore should not be expressed in a single score. Their Consumer Involvement Profile scale measures what they consider to be the five antecedents of involvement e.g. risk importance, risk probability, sign value, interest and pleasure, which they suggest provides a better understanding of the nature of the involvement than combining a number of variables to create one dimension.

Both operationalisations were considered for use in this study. It has been proposed that the Laurent and Kapferer (1985) approach may be more appropriate for services because the five facets reflect some of the main influences on services consumer behaviour. For example, the multi dimensional scale includes two elements of risk, risk probability and risk importance, and thereby may respond to the higher level of risk associated with the purchase of services (Gabbott and Hogg, 1999). For the purposes of this study, however, it was felt that the more recent McQuarrie and Munson (1992) scale was most suitable. It measures the involvement construct itself rather than the antecedents and incorporates both Importance and Interest, which are designed to capture cognitive elements such as risk as well as affective elements such as sign and pleasure. It has also be recently used to measure involvement in both utilitarian and experiential goods and services with high criterion validity and found to be a strong predictor of information search and processing behaviour (McQuarrie and Munson, 1992; McColl-Kennedy and Fetter, 2001).

McQuarrie and Munson (1992) concluded that the 20 item pairs of the original Zaichkowsky's scale were rather long for some applications and the choice of vocabulary limited use to certain respondents e.g. the word 'superfluous' was considered not easy to understand by all respondents. They also criticised the scale for measuring evaluation instead of involvement on some items e.g. valuable-worthless. The McQuarrie and Munson scale consists of 10 items, each item being rated on a ten point
bi-polar scale. The two-factor approach links with previous work on the dimensions of involvement, which identified both a rational and an emotional element in the involvement construct (Laurent and Kapferer, 1985).

One change was made to the scale in order to anglicise it. One of the original items consisted of a scale from 'dull' to 'neat'. Neat is American slang, which means good or excellent in the U.S.A. but tidy or well proportioned in the UK (Concise Oxford English Dictionary, 1995). It was therefore replaced with 'intriguing', after discussions with American and English colleagues.

The experiential/utilitarian classification adopted was tested for its reliability by placing an item in the centre of Question 1 on involvement. The item adopted a semantic differential format so that it could be answered in the same way as the involvement items and ranged from 'necessity' to 'treat'. This measurement of the value-expressive element of the service is based on the work of Chaudhuri (1993) who, when testing the FCB Grid (Vaughn, 1980), measured the amount of pleasure that a product could give in order to place products in the 'think' and 'feel' quadrants of the grid. Clarification of this dimension is important in order to confirm that the service has been placed in the correct quadrant in the framework.

6.4.3 Question 2 – Motivation, opportunity and ability
It was necessary to develop a new scale to operationalise these three constructs. The stages undertaken to achieve this are explained in detail in the second part of this chapter.

6.4.4 Questions 3 and 4 - Measurement of evaluation
Evaluation is often measured by counting the number of choices evaluated and the number of factors used in the decision process (e.g. Hill and Motes, 1995; Mittal, 1989b). This approach was incorporated in this questionnaire to provide a simple indication of the level of complexity that existed in making comparisons between alternatives. These questions also provided an opportunity to test
concurrent validity with previous research into services consumer behaviour which has found evoked sets to be as small as two, based on three features (Turley and LeBlanc, 1993).

As stated earlier, these questions required an open-question approach due to the wide variety of potentially relevant answers, depending on the service being purchased.

6.4.5 Question 5 – Choice of brand

The respondents were required to state the name of the brand that they finally chose. This question was included because it was easy to answer and thereby motivational. More importantly, the question introduced a personal and practical element to the questionnaire which did not exist in the large measurement scales that the respondent had just completed. Lastly, the question acted as a check in that it confirmed that the questions were being answered with reference to the service type that had been identified at the beginning of the questionnaire.

6.4.6 Question 6 – Information sources

Prior research into information search has concentrated on a number of dimensions including sources of external information, amount of effort put into the search or type of information sought (Beatty and Smith, 1987; McColl-Kennedy and Fetter, 1999). This study concentrates on the utilisation of information sources by adopting a rating scale created by Andreasen (1968) which has already been applied and tested in a services setting (Murray, 1991; Mitra et al., 1999). This scale was chosen because it included both internal and external information sources and therefore provided the opportunity to examine the varying importance of these different sources in relation to other variables. It identifies seven sources of information; impersonal advocate (IA), impersonal independent (II), personal independent (PI), personal advocate (PA), direct observation (DO), personal experience (PE) and outright purchase (OP). The original Andreasen scale of 25 items was shortened to 17 items because of the inappropriateness to services of the direct observation and demonstration
measurements, which were therefore removed. This resulted in 3 items in each of the six categories, except for Personal Experience with two items.

Other operationalisations of information search were examined and deemed unsuitable for this study. Single-item measures such as that used by Mittal (1989b) would not have provided a sufficient insight into the use of different information sources. The seven-factor scale specifically designed for services by McColl-Kennedy and Fetter (1999, 2001) was also dismissed due to its inclusion of effort measures e.g. "I would be interested in reading information about how this service is performed" and "I usually take many factors into account before purchasing this service". They seemed to duplicate measurements in this study of motivation and evaluation respectively. Similarly, the scales utilised by Beatty and Smith (1987) contained measurements of the amount of time devoted to the search and this duplicated measurements in this study on opportunity.

6.4.7 Question 7 - Measurement of evaluation.

Evaluation can be undertaken at a number of different levels. A complex decision-making process consists of an attribute-based or piecemeal approach (Lee, 1995). Alternatively, many decisions are made emotionally and influenced by the overall image of the brand i.e. are category-based (Marks et al., 1988; Zeithaml, et al., 1990, Mittal, 1989b). Decisions can also be made based on the single most important characteristic i.e. the lexicographic approach (Wahlers, 1982). Lee (1995) established that products being considered for purchase are compared with knowledge of the category and, if there is agreement, category-based processing will occur and an overall judgement will be made. This approach is often adopted in low involvement situations. If the information on the product is incongruent with the category scheme then evaluation of individual attributes of the object will take place.

In order to establish the type of evaluation that has been undertaken, the different methods were taken from the literature to create a range of activity from attribute to impulsive. These were presented to the
respondents in three different forms and the respondent was requested to choose one from each group of three. This was designed to test alternate-form reliability. The respondent was expected to identify the same type of evaluation from each of the three groups (Litwin, 1995). It also enabled the polarisation of the answers to be achieved. This approach was tested in the pilot survey and subsequently changed as discussed in paragraph 6.6.4.

6.4.8 Question 8 – Main reason for purchase

This qualitative open question was included in order to understand what the main influence was when making the purchase decision and to capture any alternatives which were not identified in question 7 due to its forced response format.

6.4.9 Questions 9 – 10 The role of advertising in the process

Cognitive processing is often measured within an advertising experiment by asking subjects to list their thoughts after they have seen the advertisements (e.g. Gotlieb and Swan, 1990). Although such an approach could not be adopted here, the amount of information that is known about the advertising in the service category provides an indication of the level of attention given to the advertisements and the amount of cognitive processing that takes place. The respondents were therefore asked to list up to three advertisements that they remembered clearly and, to prove their recall, describe the message being communicated. They were also required to state if advertising had assisted them in making the decision and, if so, in what way.

These qualitative open questions were of a speculative nature and designed to give the researcher an insight into the way advertising was being perceived and utilised by the respondents during the decision-making process.
6.5 Development and validation of Motivation, Opportunity and Ability scales

It has been acknowledged that high levels of motivation, opportunity and ability (MOA) need to be present before a consumer actively participates in the three main elements of the decision-making process: information search (Claxton et al., 1974, Beatty and Smith, 1987; Moorthy et al., 1997) cognitive processing of information (Petty and Cacioppo, 1984; MacKenzie and Spreng, 1992, Garbarino and Edell, 1997) and evaluation (Bettman, 1982). Without the presence of these antecedents, search activity and cognitive processing is reduced, which has an impact on the type of evaluation undertaken. Earlier discussion hypothesised that the role of MOA may be particularly influential in the service context due to the following conditions:

- Lack of search attributes for comparisons
- Complexity of the information
- Inability to understand the issues
- Lack of interest (particularly for utilitarian services)
- Time constraints
- Little perceived difference between alternatives
- Heterogeneity of service provision
- Information sources perceived as untrustworthy

One of the objectives of this thesis is to examine the role of MOA in the purchase of services and establish its level of influence. It is therefore necessary to operationalise MOA so that it can be identified and measured. Previous measurements of these elements have been created predominately through the use of single generic operationalisations. For example, motivation has been measured by asking the question “To what extent do you think the information on this homepage is interesting?” (Robben and Poiesz, 1993; de Heer and Poiesz 1998). Such single-item measures have been criticised for low reliability and for merging complex concepts into one question (Churchill, 1979). Most of the work in this area has also been based on the processing of advertising information (e.g. Batra and Ray, 1986a) and not on the decision-making process. It was therefore necessary to design multi-scale
attitude measures for MOA and this has been achieved by following the suggested procedure for developing better measures proposed by Churchill (1979) and utilised in a number of other similar studies (e.g. Eastman et al., 1999; McColl-Kennedy and Fetter, 1999, Miller et al., 2000).

Churchill (1979) proposed that the following stages were necessary for the development of accurate multi-item scales:

- Specify domain of construct
- Generate sample of items
- Collect data
- Purify measure
- Collect data
- Assess reliability
- Assess validity

This approach to the development of measures has therefore been adopted for this study.

6.5.1 Stage 1: Specify domain of construct

The first stage involves specification of the domain of the construct to clarify exactly what the scale is measuring. Rossiter (2002) proposes that a construct should be defined in terms of the object, the attribute and the rater entity. An example used to illustrate this point is to develop “service quality” into “IBM’s service quality as perceived by IBM managers”. In this research the definitions of MOA have been constructed by applying Rossiter’s (2001) guidelines to the work of MacInnis et al., (1991) who performed a review of measuring techniques used in this area. They define motivation as goal-directed arousal. For this research, the definition of motivation is the goal-directed arousal of consumers to source and process brand information. It is important to note that this is not the definition supported by some writers who define motivation as the importance of the purchase decision (e.g. Celsi and Orson, 1988; Batra and Ray, 1986a). However, this approach is not appropriate because it
can be argued that importance is an antecedent of motivation and more closely related to the involvement construct.

Opportunity is defined as the extent to which time constraints or distractions influence the amount of effort put into the decision-making process by consumers. This definition has again been adapted from the work of MacInnis et al., (1991) who have influenced the work of other researchers in the area (e.g. Batra and Ray, 1986) often with reference to the time required to cognitively process an advertisement.

Lastly ability is defined as the consumers' skill or capability to understand and evaluate the information available. A high ability therefore implies a level of prior knowledge, which assists in interpreting brand information (MacInnis et al., 1991).

6.5.2 Stage 2: Generation of sample items

In order to achieve content validity it is important to ensure that the items in the scale derive from the original constructs. The item generation process therefore involved a detailed analysis of the literature in this area. Discussions on motivation as a goal-directed arousal centre round the enthusiasm, desire and keenness of consumers to participate in the decision-making process. A study by MacInnis et al., (1991) reveals that the construct has been measured in three different ways. Firstly, motivation has been operationalised by reflecting factors that are antecedents of motivation. This is illustrated in the work of Robben and Poiesz (1993) who used the following question: "to what extent do you think the billboard is interesting?" and Celsi and Olson (1988) who examined the importance of the decision.

The use of the words 'interest' and 'importance' duplicate the terminology utilised in the involvement measure and illustrate the lack of clarity that presently exists between the two constructs. Although the word 'interest' was incorporated in the pilot test of this study, it was removed from the final survey in order to avoid any contamination. Secondly, motivation has been operationalised by examining outcomes such as the number of cognitive responses to an advertisement (Celsi and Olson, 1988).

Such an approach has been criticised because the motivation construct is not being measured and the outcomes may be influenced by motivation, ability and opportunity.
For the purposes of this study motivation is measured by assessing arousal or eagerness of the consumer to collect and process information, which is considered by MacInnis et al., (1991) to be a truer measure of motivation in that it measures the construct itself rather than its antecedents or outcomes.

MacInnis et al., (1991) suggested that “the barriers to opportunity measurement are significant”. Some research has been undertaken to measure distraction, such as using diaries and video cameras to identify levels of attention. Other attempts have manipulated the opportunity to process brand information, by enforcing time constraints or changing the amount of information in the advertisement, and examined the outcomes (Batra and Ray, 1986). The identified weakness of measuring cognitive outcomes is that the result can be influenced by other variables (MacInnis et al., 1991). Robben and Poiesz (1993) and de Heer and Poiesz (1998) concentrate on the aspect of time available to make the decision and it is this approach which has been adopted in this work.

Most previous measurements of ability have consisted of knowledge testing, either objectively by asking respondents questions with reference to the particular product they have bought, or subjectively by asking respondents how knowledgeable they perceive themselves to be (MacInnis et al., 1991). Although the objective knowledge testing operationalisation is the strongest predictor of ability out of the two measures, it is not suitable for the questionnaire in this study due to the range of services on which the respondents are able to answer questions. Robben and Poiesz (1993) and De Heer and Poiesz (1998) examined the understandability construct to establish levels of ability. It could be argued that understandability and ability are more closely related than level of knowledge, which is an antecedent of both constructs. This approach was therefore also considered when creating the item pool.

Following an extensive literature review (Chapter 5) a total of 5 items for each of the three elements of MOA were incorporated in the scale. This number was necessary to include the various dimensions of
the construct and to incorporate slightly different terminology and meaning for testing. The five items were sufficient to cover these different dimensions and to provide an item pool from which a refined final measure could be constructed. For example, the motivation construct was measured by the following five statements:

- I looked at a number of alternatives before making the decision
- Some information I collected was very interesting
- I put a lot of effort into making the right decision
- I was keen to examine all the available information
- I couldn’t be bothered to spend much time on it.

The statements include the desire or keenness to perform a comprehensive evaluation of the alternatives by examining the attitude towards evaluation and the process outcome. They also include a negative term to check understanding and ensure that the respondent has an adequate level of concentration when filling in the questionnaire (Oppenheim, 1992).

To ensure face validity all fifteen statements were given to a number of work colleagues who were asked to classify them into the three groups. This sample was chosen carefully to ensure that they had no prior knowledge of the literature in the area and therefore would provide an objective and uncontaminated response. Results showed that three of the statements were misinterpreted by more than one colleague and these were rewritten to improve clarity and retested with confirmatory results.

The attitude measurement was constructed utilising a Likert scale, the reliability of which is well established in the collection of subjective data such as attitudes (Nunnally, 1978).

6.5.3 Stage 3/4; Purifying the MOA scale

The 15-item scale was incorporated into the questionnaire and tested on 100 respondents in the pilot survey. In line with the Churchill’s (1979) paradigm, it was necessary to test the reliability of the scale, that is the consistency in which the instrument measures the construct. This consistency is strong if random or chances errors are low.
Firstly, the reliability was assessed by calculating coefficient alpha, which examines the inter-item consistency reliability (Sekaran, 1992). This calculation is based on the assumption that items measuring the same single construct should be highly intercorrelated, with those measuring other influences revealing a low correlation. Churchill (1979) states that the coefficient alpha should be the first measure to examine the quality of the measuring instrument followed by a factor analysis. He proposes that this order is most appropriate because it enables items with weak correlations to be identified and removed before undertaking a factor analysis to verify the dimensions. To proceed with a factor analysis first, which is adopted by some, can create "many more dimensions than can be conceptually identified" (Churchill, 1979, p. 69).

As the MOA scale is made up of three independent factors, each one was examined separately. It was found that each set of five items was drawing from the appropriate single construct. Nonetheless, the reliability of the scale was strengthened by eliminating two items from each of the three dimensions. This reduction in items produced a coefficient alpha of 0.838 for ability, 0.849 for opportunity and 0.74 for motivation, all of which being above the level of 0.70 which is considered to be an acceptable level of internal consistency for a scale under development (Nunnally, 1978).

The scale dimensionality was then examined by performing an exploratory factor analysis of the nine remaining scales. The two main methods of extracting the factors, principal component analysis and common factor method, were compared. Principal component analysis has been identified as most appropriate when the main objective is to identify the minimum number of factors needed to explain the maximum amount of variance and this was therefore chosen to extract the factors (Hair, 1998). The complications associated with the common factor method, e.g. the lack of a single solution, also influenced the decision (Hair, 1998). As an unrotated factor solution does not always provide a clear factor structure it was decided to run the analysis with a rotation of factors. This rotation can be orthogonal, that is at right angles, or oblique which in not at right angles. Kline (1994) suggests that if the orthogonal approach provides a simple structure then the Varimax rotation should be adopted. If an
oblique approach is more effective that the most appropriate rotation is the Direct Oblimin. The Varimax rotation has proven to be very successful in providing a clear separation of the factors in previous research (Hair, 1998) and been used in the development of other scales in consumer research and advertising (Miller et al., 2000; Machleit et al., 1990). It was therefore utilised in this study and was able to identify a clear solution.

The number of factors to be extracted was decided utilising the latent root criterion which is the most commonly used technique and which classed all factors with latent roots greater than 1 to be significant and all below one to be insignificant and therefore disregarded (Hair, 1998). This approach resulted in a clear three-factor solution, as predicted, with eigenvalues of 2.3, 2.3 and 1.9, producing an accounted variance of 73% (Table 6.2). Only factor loadings greater than 0.4 are reported in the tables, to assist in interpretation.

6.5.4 Stage 5: Collect data

The purified scale of nine items was incorporated into the final questionnaire, which was distributed to a sample of 600 respondents and created 400 usable responses. This data was then utilised to perform additional testing of the scale.

4.5.5 Stage 6: Assess reliability

Firstly, the reliability was assessed by calculating the coefficient alpha for each scale and dimension. The results, as indicated in Table 6.3, confirm that the three dimensions are reliable in terms of internal consistency, all being above Nunnally’s (1978) acceptable level of 0.70. Reliability dimensionality was then re-examined by performing an exploratory factor analysis on the remaining scales, using a principal component analysis with a Varimax rotation, as recommended by Kline (1994). Again, only factor loadings greater than 0.4 were included in the final scale. This resulted in a clear three-factor solution, as shown in Table 6.4.
Table 6.2 Factor analysis of MOA scale with Varimax rotation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale Items:</th>
<th>Factor Loadings</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 1</td>
<td>Factor 2</td>
<td>Factor 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunity</td>
<td>Ability</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I found some of the information difficult to understand</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some aspects of the service were just too complicated</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I got a bit confused when comparing the brands</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I put a lot of effort into making the right decision</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was keen to examine all the available information</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I couldn't be bothered to spend much time on it</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The whole process was a bit of a rush</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There wasn't the opportunity to spend much time on it</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had to make a quick decision</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eigenvalue</strong></td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>% variance</strong></td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>% cumulative variance</strong></td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>73.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.5.5 Stage 6: Assess reliability

Firstly, the reliability was assessed by calculating the coefficient alpha for each of the three dimensions. The results, as indicated in Table 6.3, confirm that the three dimensions are reliable in terms of internal consistency, all being above Nunnally's (1978) guidelines of 0.70. The scale dimensionality was then re-examined by performing an exploratory factor analysis of the nine remaining scales, using a principal component analysis with a Varimax rotation, as recommended by Kline (1994). Again, only factor loadings greater than 0.4 were included to assist interpretation. This resulted in a clear three-factor solution, as shown in Table 6.4.
6.5.6 Stage 7: Assess validity

In order to assess construct validity it is necessary to ensure that the measure is behaving in the way that previous theories on the subject would predict. The lack of previous work in the area of MOA with reference to consumer behaviour prohibits convergent validity to be undertaken. However, nomological validity can be achieved by examining the relationship between this measure and measures of other constructs which are theoretically related. Such comparisons can be made by examining relevant results from the final survey, which will be presented in detail in the next chapter.

As the scale measures three distinct dimensions, it is possible to examine each one separately. However, the MOA literature states that a consumer requires all three elements before activity can take place and therefore an overall MOA rating was created bringing together the means of all three elements. This MOA score was compared with levels of information search and evaluation to establish whether a positive relationship existed between these constructs, as the theoretical framework proposes. This comparison revealed that levels of MOA did correlate with evaluation (Spearman’s 0.349, sig. 0.000) as expected. However, there was no correlation between MOA and information search (Spearman’s 0.109, sig. 0.69) which was surprising. The individual constructs were examined to investigate into this result and it was found that the ability construct had a negative relationship with both information search and evaluation, in a similar way to the findings in the pilot study. This negativity was having an impact of the total mean scores for MOA and therefore contaminating the results. The exercise was therefore undertaken once more with Ability omitted from the calculation and the results indicated a stronger correlation between MO and information search (Spearman’s
0.317) and MO and evaluation (Spearman's 0.476). These results suggest that both Motivation and Opportunity are responding in the expected manner.

Table 6.4 Factor analysis of final MOA scale with Varimax rotation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale Items</th>
<th>Factor Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I found some of the information difficult to understand</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some aspects of the service were just too complicated</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I got a bit confused when comparing the brands</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I put a lot of effort into making the right decision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was keen to examine all the available information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I couldn't be bothered to spend much time on it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The whole process was a bit of a rush</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There wasn't the opportunity to spend much time on it</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had to make a quick decision</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eigenvalue</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% variance</td>
<td>25.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% cumulative variance</td>
<td>49.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The negative relationship that ability has with information search and evaluation is unexpected and is examined and discussed further in Chapter 7.

6.6 Findings from the Pilot

6.6.1 Problems of data analysis

The face validity of the pilot questionnaire was generally high, with the patterns of response as predicted. However, the pilot did reveal some areas which needed attention.
On a number of the questions the analysis of the results was made unnecessarily complicated by the coding procedure adopted. This was particularly problematic on the MOA scale where the lower numbers signified high activity and the high numbers signified low activity e.g. a 5 represented low motivation, opportunity or ability. This situation was rectified in the final version of the questionnaire by changing the headings so that a 1 signified Strongly Disagree instead of Strongly Agree.

When answering the question on involvement a number of respondents did not circle a number on each horizontal scale. The final version therefore incorporated more detailed instructions to aid understandability as well as formatting changes to distinguish lines.

The pilot test revealed that there was a lack of understanding of question 4 that asked, “How many different alternatives did you consider?” Some respondents answered none and yet had obviously made a purchase. It was decided that the word “alternative” was ambiguous, with some respondents interpreting it to mean alternatives in addition to the brand that was purchased, instead of including the brand that was purchased. Question 4 was therefore changed to “How many different services did you consider?”

6.6.2 Testing the involvement scale

This scale has been designed to be of a two-factor structure, measuring two elements of involvement, interest and importance, as well as providing an overall involvement score (McQuarrie and Munson, 1992). Following their approach, reliability was assessed with Cronbach’s alpha within and between the two factors. The total scale produced an alpha of 0.83 and when Interest and Importance were examined separately they produced an alpha of 0.88 and 0.84 respectively, indicating a strong internal consistency with each of the subscales. These results are similar to those found by McQuarrie and Munson (1992) who report coefficient alphas for the sub-scales of between the low 0.80’s and 0.90, depending on the product, and for the overall scale of 0.95. The results are also similar to those of McColl-Kennedy and Fetter (2001) who also undertook an exploratory factor analyses of individual products and reported an average Cronbach alpha of 0.85.
The scale dimensionality was then examined by performing an exploratory factor analysis, using the Varimax rotation, again in line with the procedure followed by McQuarrie and Munson (1992). This resulted in a clear two-factor solution, with eigenvalues of 3.47 and 3.12, producing an accounted variance of 65.94%. The factor loadings can be seen in Table 6.5. Unfortunately, the lack of detailed results in the McQuarrie and Munson (1992) study makes direct comparisons unavailable. However, comparisons can again be made with the work of McColl-Kennedy and Fetter (2001) who provide a summary of factor analyses undertaken for four different services and reported eigenvalues ranging from 2.30 to 3.92.

6.6.3 Measuring information search

The examination of the sources of information used to aid the respondent in making a purchase decision produced some interesting results. Nonetheless, the dichotomous structure of the question prevented any insight into the extent to which various sources of information were utilised. Such information would provide a more accurate picture of the use of available sources. For example, the results revealed that 95% of the respondents were relying on some form of past experience, but not the extent. Consequently, the choice of answer options was increased from two to three, with a middle state of “Yes moderately” being placed between “Yes extensively” and “No, not at all”.

6.6.4 Measuring evaluation

An examination of the results in the evaluation question revealed that the three descriptions for attribute, category and no evaluation were being interpreted differently. In only 24% of the cases did responses give the same answer for all three options A closer examination revealed that there was no relationship between question 3 and question 1 and 2 and the results from question 3 were therefore removed from the pilot data analysis. Some informal qualitative feedback from respondents also revealed that there was no relevant answer for repeat purchasers of familiar services. Although some internal consistency was evident between the evaluation type and both the number of features and
Table 6.5 Factor Analysis of Involvement Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale Items</th>
<th>Factor 1 interest</th>
<th>Factor 2 importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Important to me – unimportant to me</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boring to me – interesting to me</td>
<td>0.751</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant to me – irrelevant to me</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exciting to me – unexciting to me</td>
<td>0.837</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Means nothing to me – means a lot to me</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appealing to me – unappealing to me</td>
<td>0.724</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of concern to me – of no concern to me</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dull - intriguing</td>
<td>0.877</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matters to me – doesn’t matter to me</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fun – not fun</td>
<td>0.891</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eigenvalue</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% variance</td>
<td>34.72</td>
<td>31.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% cumulative variance</td>
<td></td>
<td>65.94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results from this exploratory stage were reassuring and provided some evidence of construct validity. For example, the results revealed that there was a relationship between the different types of services, their perceived level of involvement and how they were evaluated. High involvement services...
such as airline travel and savings accounts were being evaluated more than low involvement services such as fast food and dry cleaners. However, the difference in evaluation between the high and low involvement services was not as defined as the literature would suggest, with many high involvement purchases being evaluated at category level. There was also little difference between experiential and utilitarian purchases at both levels of involvement in terms of evaluation. Further investigation revealed that when the involvement measure was split into interest and importance, importance was more closely related to evaluation, with no apparent relationship between interest and evaluation. This was a finding that required further exploration in the final survey.

The initial results provided support for the proposition that MOA may intervene in the relationship between involvement and buyer behaviour. For example, there was a stronger relationship between involvement levels and motivation than with involvement levels and evaluation. There was also a significant relationship between all three elements of MOA and evaluation. As motivation and opportunity increased more effort was placed into the evaluation process. Interestingly, the relationship between ability and evaluation was a negative one. As ability decreases the evaluation activity increases. This was a surprising result, which again needed to be examined in the final survey.

An analysis of the sources of information used also provided some interesting results. There was evidence to suggest that word of mouth was more prominent for high involvement experiential purchases than the other categories, thereby supporting previous work in this area (Oppermann, 2000; Fodness and Murray, 1998, 1999). The influence of past experience on the decision-making process was also very strong, with the vast majority of purchasers indicating that this played a part in the decision. This may be one reason why most respondents did not utilise independent sources of information to assist in their evaluation. This was particularly evident for HU service purchasers and may again be an indication of the role of motivation in the decision. A relationship was also found between level of motivation and the use of advertising as a source of information.
6.6.6 Incorporation of demographic profiles.

Although details of demographic profiles were not requested in the pilot questionnaire, it was felt to be a useful addition for the final survey for two reasons. Firstly, such details enable there to be a cross-check of profiles between the sample and population to ensure a true representation. Secondly, there is evidence to suggest that gender, age and income do have an influence on involvement (Zaichkowsky, 1987) as well as search and evaluation behaviour in the services context (Hill and Motes, 1995). For example, women spent more time collecting information for low involvement services than men. It was therefore interesting to explore these relationships further.

The age brackets were decided upon after an examination of literature on the use of age as a segmentation tool. The category of over 50s has been used extensively, referred to in places as the grey market (Carrigan and Szmigin, 1999). The 16-25 group was created to encapsulate the younger, more carefree consumer who may have fewer responsibilities and concerns than the middle group. The three income groups were based on the work of FitzGerald and Arnott (1996) who examined the demographic effects in the airline industry and found that gender, age and income all had an impact on how marketing communications were perceived and influenced purchase behaviour.

This classification data was requested at the end of the questionnaire, as suggested by Oppenheim (1992) due to the level of involvement and commitment of the respondent at the end compared with the beginning of the process.

6.7 Conclusion

The first section of this chapter examines and justifies the methodology undertaken to perform the major empirical contribution of this study. The questionnaire construction in terms of language use, types of question and question order are discussed before a detailed examination of each question is undertaken. A comprehensive review of existing operationalisations of the identified variables is
presented, in order to bring together the most relevant measures for this study. In some cases, such as the involvement variable, it has been possible to utilise an existing scale, which has already been shown to reach acceptable criteria in terms of reliability and validity (McQuarrie and Munson, 1992). In other areas, such as evaluation, a measurement device has been created based on a cross-section of relevant literature.

Very little work has been undertaken in the area of motivation, opportunity and ability in terms of operationalisation and therefore a new multi-dimensional scale has been created and tested for inclusion in the questionnaire. This has been achieved following the procedure developed by Churchill (1979) as detailed in Section 2.

Lastly, the chapter contains the findings from the pilot testing of the questionnaire and the changes that were implemented in response to those findings before undertaking the final survey. The results from this final survey are presented in the next chapter.
Chapter 7: Results

Chapter 2
Services Advertising

Chapter 3
Advertising Theory

Chapter 4
Services Advertising Practice

Chapter 5
Development of Services Consumer Behaviour Framework

Chapter 6
Methodology

Chapter 8
Development and Testing of Services Advertising Framework

Chapter 7
Results

Chapter 9
Conclusion: Creation of Services Consumer Behaviour and Advertising Framework
7. Results

7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the analysis of results from the self-administrated questionnaire and thereby test the proposed Services Consumer Behaviour Framework. The chapter consists of four sections. Firstly, an examination of the representativeness of the sample is performed followed by an analysis to establish any demographic impact on the findings. Descriptive statistics are then provided for all 10 questions to provide an overview of the results. The data set is then analysed in order to test the following hypotheses, as developed in Chapter 6:

Information search hypotheses

H1 Purchasers of HU services undertake a more extensive information search than purchasers of HE services
H2 Purchasers of LU and LE services undertake the same level of information search
H3 Purchasers of HU services undertake a more extensive information search than purchasers of LU services
H4 Purchasers of HE services undertake a more extensive information search than purchasers of LE services
H5 Personal sources of information are more utilised in the purchase of HE services than HU services
H6 A reliance of personal experience reduces the use of other information sources
H7 Advertising is utilised more in HU services than the other three categories.

Evaluation hypotheses

H8 Purchasers of HU services undertake more evaluation than purchasers of HE services
H9 Purchasers of LU and LE services undertake the same level of evaluation
H10 Purchasers of HU services undertake more evaluation than purchasers of LU services
H11 Purchasers of HE services undertake more evaluation than purchasers of LE services
MOA hypotheses

Ho12 There is no relationship between levels of MOA and the utilitarian/experiential dimension of high involvement services.

Ho13 There is no relationship between MOA and levels of information search for high involvement services.

Ho14 There is no relationship between MOA and levels of evaluation for high involvement services.

It should be noted that a realism paradigm is being adopted in this study and consequently the results from hypotheses testing are designed to build theories rather than test them. Under such conditions a non-random sample is considered acceptable (see discussion in Section 1.5).

7.2 Representativeness and influence of demographic factors

7.2.1 Sample representativeness

A quota sampling design was adopted in this study to reach a good representation of the service-buying public, who had a range of discretionary spending power and were in a position to purchase a variety of services. More specifically, the technique was utilised to ensure that the sample had a similar profile to the population in terms of income, gender and age. This information was requested in line with previous work which found that these three demographic factors have an influence on involvement (Zaichkowsky, 1987), as well as search and evaluation behaviour in the services context (Hill and Motes, 1995; FitzGerald and Arnott, 1996).

The quotas were achieved by distributing 600 questionnaires to the employees of two universities, part-time mature students, masters full-time students and employees of a local manufacturing company. This resulted in 400 completed questionnaires suitable for analysis. Although there is a
slight variation in terms of gender and age, these were considered to be at an acceptable level for this analysis, particularly when one considers that considerable work in this area has been completed utilising student samples (Zaichkowsky, 1987; McQuarrie and Munson, 1987; Herr and Poiesz, 1998).

### 7.2.2 Gender

The sample of respondents consisted of 49% males and 51% females. This is a good reflection of the population which produces a consistent 50/50 split between male and female (Office for National Statistics, 2002).

### 7.2.3 Age

The percentage of respondents in each age group can be compared with the working population figures as shown in Table 7.1. It can be seen that the sample contains a slightly higher percentage of younger people and a smaller percentage of older people than the population as a whole. This may be because part-time students, a significant proportion of the sample, are generally younger and at the beginning of their careers. Another reason may be that the older employees are often in more demanding jobs within organisations and therefore less likely to fill in and return the questionnaire. However, one could argue, at the risk of upsetting the “grey market”, that the buyer behaviour of the younger group is of greater interest due to their more significant lifetime value.

The bulk of the purchasers, between 26 and 50 years of age, are represented accurately in the sample.

**Table 7.1: Sample and population profile by age**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Population*</th>
<th>Age groups</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-25</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16-24</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-50</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>25-49</td>
<td>62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 50</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50-60+</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Adapted from the Office of National Statistics (2000).*
7.2.4 Income

Participants were required to place themselves in one of three income brackets. The percentages of each group and a comparison with the population are illustrated below. It is clear that the two profiles are very similar. There is a slight discrepancy in the number of people earning under £20,000 and this may be because of the difference in age range as discussed above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income range</th>
<th>Sample profile</th>
<th>Population profile*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below £20,000</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£20,000-£40,000</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above £40,000</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The sample was therefore considered to be an acceptable representation of the population as a whole and consequently suitable for analysis. The impact of these demographic factors is examined in the next section.

7.2.5 Demographic effects

The impact of demographic factors on buying behaviour in services is a fairly unexplored area, with the exception of McColl-Kennedy and Fetter (1999). It is therefore important to establish whether sex, age or income have a significant influence on the decision making process.

Gender

An examination of the influence of gender on the decision-making process reveals that gender has no impact on the level of motivation and opportunity, the amount of search undertaken or the level of evaluation. This finding corresponds with the work of McColl-Kennedy and Fetter (1999) who found no relationship between gender and buying behaviour except for the purchase of haircuts.
Hill and Motes (1995) also found no overall relationships although when specific services were examined they found that women spent more time in deciding which dry cleaner to use than men and utilised more information sources when purchasing car repair services. Such significant results were not found in this study. This may be because of the time lapse, or the different purchasing behaviour in the US and UK.

Table 7.3 Spearman's correlation of gender with consumer behaviour variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MO</th>
<th>Information Search</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>0.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. level</td>
<td>0.592</td>
<td>0.532</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.3 Descriptive Statistics

Age

An examination of the relationship between age and the main elements in the decision-making process reveals that as people get older they do seem to have higher levels of motivation and opportunity. Nonetheless, the relationship is weak and does not have an impact on the level of information search and evaluation undertaken.

Table 7.4 Spearman's correlation of age with consumer behaviour variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MO</th>
<th>Information Search</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.136</td>
<td>0.086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. level</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>0.088</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Income

An examination of the relationship between income and the main elements in the decision-making process reveals that people with lower and higher incomes have very similar behaviour in terms of the amount of information collected and level of evaluation.
Table 7.5 Spearman’s correlation of income with consumer behaviour variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MO</th>
<th>Information Search</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>0.016</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>0.098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. level</td>
<td>0.757</td>
<td>0.173</td>
<td>0.064</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can therefore be concluded that none of these demographic factors are having a significant influence on purchasing behaviour and consequently they do not require inclusion in any future frameworks.

7.3 Descriptive Statistics

This section describes the data set that has been generated by each question by presenting descriptive statistics such as frequencies and means. The data are also tested for validity where appropriate by comparing answers from similar questions and checking that the data are behaving in the expected manner.

The questionnaire initially requires the respondent to recall the purchase of one service from the list provided. All the questions are then answered with reference to this chosen service.

7.3.1 Distribution of service types

The frameworks put forward in Chapter 6, based on the FCB grid (Vaughn, 1986) and Rossiter-Percy Grid (Rossiter et al., 1991), propose that services can be classified by high and low involvement and by the amount of utilitarian or experiential influence involved in the decision. The questionnaire was therefore designed to capture the buying behaviour with relation to 12 different services, as listed in Table 7.6, which can be grouped into these four categories, as shown in Table 7.7. These will be referred to as HU, HE, LU and LE during this discussion. One can see from the frequency statistics in both tables that there is a reasonable spread across the four categories. The percentage of respondents choosing to answer questions on the purchase of a LU
service is, however, rather low, mainly due to the unpopularity of dry cleaning. As much of the analysis is on type of service rather than individual services, with particular emphasis on HU and HE services, the distribution of services was considered adequate for the analysis to be conducted.

Table 7.6 Frequency of specific service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service classification</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE</td>
<td>Fast food</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Airline</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU</td>
<td>Photo processing</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Holiday</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE</td>
<td>Cinema</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Car repair</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Savings account</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU</td>
<td>Drycleaner</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Mortgage</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Car recovery</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Theme Park</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>400</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.3.2 Testing the involvement scale

The McQuarrie and Munson (1986, 1992) involvement scale was incorporated into the questionnaire to establish the accuracy of the involvement classifications utilised from previous work in the area (Weinberger and Spotts, 1989; Bloemer and De Ruyter, 1999; Ratchford, 1987). This scale is of a two-factor structure, measuring both Importance and Interest. The scale has been found to measure involvement in both utilitarian and experiential products and services with high
Table 7.7 Frequency of service type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High involvement utilitarian</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High involvement experiential</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low involvement utilitarian</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low involvement experiential</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>400</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

criterion validity and to be a strong predictor of information search and processing behaviour (McQuarrie and Munson, 1992; McColl-Kennedy and Fetter, 2001).

Scale reliability in this research is found to be strong with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.87 for importance and 0.90 for interest, both ratings being above 0.70, the recognised level of acceptability (Nunnally, 1978). These figures are similar to those found in the original study where they recorded a coefficient alpha of 0.95 for involvement overall and low to mid 0.80s for importance and interest on individual products (McQuarrie and Munson, 1992). The scale dimensionality was also examined by performing an exploratory factor analysis of the ten items, using a principal component analysis with a Varimax rotation, as recommended by Kline (1994). This results in a clear two-factor solution, as expected, with eigenvalues of 3.7 and 3.3, producing an explained variance of 70% (Table 7.8). The factor analysis also indicates that the new item of "dull-intriguing" which replaced "dull-neat" has produced a factor loading of 0.847, which is compatible with the other original items.

Direct comparison of the factor analysis results with the McQuarrie and Munson (1992) study cannot be made due to the lack of detailed results provided in their article. However, comparisons can again be made with McColl-Kennedy and Fetter (2001) who provide a summary of factor analyses performed on four different services and report eigenvalues in a similar range, from 2.30
to 3.92. Only factor loadings greater than 0.4 are reported in the table below to assist in interpretation.

Table 7.8 Factor Analysis of Involvement Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale Items:</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Important to me – unimportant to me</td>
<td>0.856</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boring to me – interesting to me</td>
<td>0.800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant to me – irrelevant to me</td>
<td>0.788</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exciting to me – unexciting to me</td>
<td>0.862</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Means nothing to me – means a lot to me</td>
<td>0.675</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appealing to me – unappealing to me</td>
<td>0.847</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of concern to me – of no concern to me</td>
<td>0.829</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dull - intriguing</td>
<td>0.847</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matters to me – doesn’t matter to me</td>
<td>0.884</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fun – not fun</td>
<td>0.881</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eigenvalue</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% variance</td>
<td>37.37</td>
<td>33.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% cumulative variance</td>
<td></td>
<td>70.626</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Convergent validity can be tested by comparing the levels of involvement measured by this scale with the a-priori high and low involvement classifications taken from the literature (section 6.4.1).

An overall involvement scale is obtained by taking an average of the two sub-scales, as undertaken in the original study (McQuarrie and Munson, 1986, 1992). This comparison is presented in Table 7.9, with high involvement being identified by a low number. The shaded areas represent the high involvement services.
This table indicates that the involvement measures do not clearly distinguish between the high and low involvement classifications. An explanation of this result is provided by examining the two sub-scales, importance and interest.

Table 7.9 Services in order of involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service classification</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Holiday</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Theme park</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Airline</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Savings account</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE</td>
<td>Cinema</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU</td>
<td>Photo processing</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>1.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Mortgage</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Car repair</td>
<td>4.98</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>5.03</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Car recovery</td>
<td>5.05</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE</td>
<td>Fast food</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>1.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU</td>
<td>Drycleaner</td>
<td>5.90</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The individual importance means for each service are then examined as presented in Table 7.10.

One can see that the importance measure does separate the high and low involvement services in a more predicted manner than the involvement scale. The low involvement services have a lower importance score than the high involvement services, although the differences between car recovery and photo processing are quite small.

If the interest scores are examined in a similar way one can see why there is no relationship between interest and the high and low involvement classifications (Table 7.11). Some low
involvement services are considered to be very interesting, such as cinema, while a number of high involvement services are very low in interest, such as insurance and mortgages.

Table 7.10 Services in order of importance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service classification</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Mean Importance</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Holiday</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Mortgage</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Savings account</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>1.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Car repair</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>1.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Airline</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>1.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Theme park</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Car recovery</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>2.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU</td>
<td>Photo processing</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU</td>
<td>Drycleaner</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>1.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE</td>
<td>Cinema</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>1.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE</td>
<td>Fast Food</td>
<td>5.37</td>
<td>2.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A re-examination of the table with reference to the utilitarian/experiential divide reveals that the experiential services are receiving higher mean scores for interest than the utilitarian services, with the exception of fast food, which is considered less interesting than photo processing and a savings account. Although fast food was identified by Vaughn (1980, 1986) as a low involvement experiential service, perhaps, in today's UK society, a visit to a fast food restaurant is considered to be a mundane and problem-solving decision rather than a treat, as it was twenty years ago in the US. It is interesting to note that the advertising practitioners also had difficulty in categorising fast food as either a utilitarian or experiential service (Section 4.3.3).
The measurement of importance is therefore found to be related to the high and low involvement dimensions, while the measurement of interest relates to the utilitarian/experiential dimension.

This is displayed in Table 7.12.

**Table 7.11 Services in order of interest**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service classification</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Mean Interest</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Holiday</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Theme park</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE</td>
<td>Cinema</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Airline</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>1.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU</td>
<td>Photo processing</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>2.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Savings account</td>
<td>5.19</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE</td>
<td>Fast food</td>
<td>5.23</td>
<td>1.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Car recovery</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>1.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Mortgage</td>
<td>6.74</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Car repair</td>
<td>7.45</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU</td>
<td>Drycleaner</td>
<td>7.54</td>
<td>1.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>7.79</td>
<td>1.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.12 indicates that all the services classified as high involvement services are considered by the respondents to be important purchases and low involvement purchases are perceived to be low in importance. In a similar way, all the experiential services are considered to be interesting compared with the utilitarian services. The HE services therefore received a high overall involvement scale because of the combination of substantial importance and interest levels. This finding would suggest that it is necessary to measure involvement by examining interest and importance separately, rather than utilising an overall involvement score. This point is revisited later in the chapter.
Table 7.12 Influence of type of service on importance and interest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Utilitarian</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High involvement</td>
<td>High importance</td>
<td>High importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low interest</td>
<td>High interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low involvement</td>
<td>Low importance</td>
<td>Low importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low interest</td>
<td>High interest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The utilitarian/experiential divide can also be examined with reference to the measurement on emotion, which was a separate item placed in the centre of the involvement scale. This item, which provides a scale from necessity to treat, reveals that the experiential services are perceived to be more of a treat than the utilitarian services. This significant difference is also evident when the means of HU and HE services and LU and LE services are compared (see Table 7.13). This result provides additional criterion validity for the utilitarian/experiential classifications.

These results indicate that there are different types of services and that they can be classified in terms of level of involvement and the utilitarian/experiential divide, with each category having distinct characteristics.

Such a classification tool, however, is only useful if the differences between each group have some influence over the way in which those services are purchased in terms of information search and evaluation. This is explored by testing the hypotheses.
Table 7.13 Comparison of emotion level by service type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Type</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>T value</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Utilitarian services</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>11.18</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiential services</td>
<td>6.10</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU services</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>9.02</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE services</td>
<td>5.60</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU services</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE services</td>
<td>6.54</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.3.3 Testing the MOA scale

As discussed in the previous chapter, the reliability of the MOA multidimensional scale has been assessed by calculating the coefficient alpha for each of the three dimensions. The results, as indicated in Table 7.14, confirm that the three dimensions are reliable in terms of internal consistency, all being above the Nunnally's (1978) guidelines of 0.70.

Table 7.14 Coefficient alpha for motivation, ability and opportunity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension of scale</th>
<th>Cronbach's alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An exploratory factor analysis, using a principal component analysis with a Varimax rotation, was also performed resulting in a clear three-factor solution, and a cumulative variance of 72% (details provided in Chapter 8).
7.3.4 Sources of information

Question 6 examines the use of a number of information sources, including both internal and external. More specifically, it includes impersonal advocate (IA), impersonal independent (II), personal independent (PI), personal advocate (PA), personal experience (PE) and outright purchase (OP). The individual items are added together to form totals for each type of source and all the external sources: word of mouth, advertising, salespeople and printed material, are totalled to provide an overall search total of information search.

One significant finding from examining the frequencies of information search is how little the external sources of information are utilised. Table 7.15 presents the mean of each external source from a range of scores from 0 to 6. As an illustration, the figures indicate that respondents have, on average, collected information from one source of printed material, such as a magazine article, consumer report or report by a product specialist to a moderate extent, before undertaking the purchase. This result supports other studies that have found a low level of external search (Beatty and Smith, 1987; Moorthy et al., 1997). For example, Claxton et al., (1974) found that the majority of appliance buyers utilised one source of information accompanied by one store visit.

Table 7.15 Means of external sources of information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Word of Mouth</th>
<th>Advertising</th>
<th>Salespeople</th>
<th>Printed material</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>1.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further validity is provided by examining the relationship between impulse and external sources (Table 7.16), which indicates that as purchase decisions become more impulsive respondents are less likely to utilise the information sources available.
Table 7. 16 Pearson's correlation between sources of information and impulse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pearson's correlation</th>
<th>Word of mouth</th>
<th>Salespeople</th>
<th>Printed material</th>
<th>Advertising</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Impulse</td>
<td>-0.173</td>
<td>-0.005</td>
<td>-0.345</td>
<td>-0.141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. level</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.3.5 Evaluation

Question 7 was designed to encourage respondents to provide an overview of the evaluation process. They were provided with six alternatives ranging from very little evaluation, "just past experience", to considerable evaluation, "detailed evaluation of a number of alternatives". The table below indicates the popularity of each evaluation method as a percentage of the total number of respondents. It is interesting to note that only a small number of respondents had completed a detailed evaluation of the alternatives despite the range of services being examined.

Table 7. 17 Percentage of evaluation response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation method</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of one or two important factors</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just past experience</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detailed evaluation of a number of alternatives</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A feeling it was the right service for me</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall impression of the brand</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A &quot;try it and see&quot; approach</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These evaluation figures can also be examined with reference to questions 3 and 4 on the questionnaire, which asked for the number of alternatives considered and number of features compared. The results indicate that respondents were making evaluations based on an average of...
three alternatives and considering three features. These results corroborate previous work in this area. Turley and LeBlanc (1993) found that evoked sets often consist of two service providers that are evaluated on three features, compared with goods purchases where evaluation is performed using six features. Hill and Motes (1995) also found that the majority of people buying services utilised an evoked set of 2-3 choices, which were evaluated on more than three factors.

These three measures: number of alternatives, number of features and level of evaluation, correlate strongly together (Table 7.18) as would be expected.

Table 7.18 Spearman’s correlation between number of features, alternatives and evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spearman’s correlation</th>
<th>Number of features</th>
<th>Number of alternatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>0.469</td>
<td>0.520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. level</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.3.6 Main reason for purchase

The opportunity for the respondents to provide some qualitative feedback was provided to ensure that no strong influence on evaluation had been overlooked in the quantitative questions. The results in Figure 7.1 indicate that price is an important influence in that final decision. This is particularly the case for high involvement services. Location, availability and convenience are more important for low involvement service purchases. Quality is evenly divided between the two groups, although not a popular response.
7.3.7 Role of advertising in the decision-making process

Questions 9 and 10 were designed to establish how aware the respondents were of the advertisements appearing around them and to provide some idea of the level of cognitive processing being carried out. The majority of the respondents did recall relevant advertisements, with 30% remembering one advert, 12% remembering two and 14% remembering three. Table 7.19 indicates that these recall levels varied by service category.
Table 7.19 Recall of one or more advertisements by service category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service category</th>
<th>% recalling one or more advertisement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The obvious pattern can be detected from these figures. This is due to a weak relationship between recall and levels of involvement (Spearman’s correlation = 0.117 sig. 0.043) and no relationship between recall and the emotional/utilitarian classification (Spearman’s correlation = 0.038 sig. 0.508).

It is interesting to compare these results with the last question which investigated the impact that advertising had on the respondents’ decision. Although 56% of the respondents could recall at least one advertisement, only 30% stated that advertising had assisted them in making a decision. These 30% of respondents were spread across the four categories as presented in Table 7.20.

Table 7.20 Respondents influenced by advertising by service category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service category</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The figures reveal that the advertising of LU services is having little impact on the purchase decision. This result is not surprising when one considers that the LU category consisted of dry cleaning and photo processing, both services where advertising budgets are fairly low and consequently there would be few advertisements to remember. The situation is quite different for LE services, where 33% acknowledged the role of advertising. Again, an examination of the services helps to explain this result. Both cinema and fast food are promoted more extensively. Indeed, McDonald's was 15th in the top twenty advertisers in 2002, with a budget of £40m (WARC, 2002). The difference between HU and HE is less significant, with advertising having more impact generally for HE services. The contribution of advertising as an information source is explored more fully in section 7.4.1.

7.4 Testing the hypotheses

The descriptive statistics provide evidence of face and construct validity. It is therefore appropriate to analyse the results in order to test the Services Consumer Behaviour framework that was constructed in Chapter 6. This investigation is conducted by testing the 14 hypotheses. A brief statement of the main findings follows each hypothesis. An explanation of the analysis undertaken to reach that finding is then provided. The hypotheses are grouped into three sections; information search, evaluation and MOA. Each section concludes with a summary of the main findings presented in the form of a four-quadrant table in order to highlight differences in the four types of services. The table will also include the findings with respect to levels of involvement, which were discussed in the Descriptive Statistics section (Table 7.12). Parallels can be drawn between the findings and the proposed framework by comparing the two tables. Areas of congruity and incongruity are then identified and discussed.

7.4.1 Information search hypotheses

H1 Purchasers of HU services undertake a more extensive information search than purchasers of HE services

*Not supported. The information search for HU and HE services is very similar.*


H2\textbf{Purchasers of LU and LE services undertake the same level of information search} \textit{Supported. There is no significant difference between the two categories}

H3\textbf{Purchasers of HU services undertake a more extensive information search than purchasers of LU services} \textit{Supported. There is a significant difference between HU and LU}

H4\textbf{Purchasers of HE services undertake a more extensive information search than purchasers of LE services} \textit{Supported. There is a significant difference between HE and LE}

In order to test the first four hypotheses the amount of information search conducted in each service category was examined. This was achieved by calculating the mean score of the external sources of information utilised and performing an independent samples t test to identify significant differences. These results are presented in Table 7.21 below.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{HU services} & \textbf{HE services} & \\
\hline
4.31 & 4.51 & \\
\hline
\text{t}=0.392 & \text{Sig. 0.696} & \\
\hline
\text{t}=1.134 & \text{Sig. 0.258} & \\
\hline
\text{t}=2.111 & \text{Sig. 0.036} & \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Level of information search for each service type}
\end{table}

The table reveals firstly that there is no significant difference in the level of information search being undertaken by purchasers of high involvement utilitarian services and high involvement.
experiential services. H1 is therefore not supported. This similarity between HU and HE services can be endorsed further by performing an independent sample t test on the number of alternatives and features that the HU and HE respondents considered. This analysis reveals no significant differences between the two categories (alternatives $t = 0.597$ at sig. 0.551 and features $t = 1.641$ at sig. 0.102).

The congruity between these two categories is contrary to literature in this area. Information search for utilitarian services is posited to be more complex and of a more rational nature than the information search for experiential services, which is more dependent on personal sources of information and emotionally based (Johar and Sirgy, 1991; Assael, 1998; McColl-Kennedy and Fetter, 1999). The advertising practitioners also perceived the advertising of utilitarian products to contain more information than experiential advertising (Section 4.3.3). One explanation for these results is the effect that a lack of motivation, opportunity and/or ability is having on the purchase of HU services. This area will be investigated in Section 7.4.3.

It can also be seen in Table 7.21 that the information search being undertaken for LU and LE services is very similar. This provides support for H2 and also indicates that the utilitarian/experiential divide is having little impact on information search at both levels. The opposite is true for the impact of involvement. Table 7.21 indicates that the information search for LU services is significantly less than HU services and the LE services are also being purchased based on less information than HE services. These results thereby provide support for H3 and H4. The findings are also in line with previous studies in this area that propose that purchasers of low involvement products utilise minimum effort in the buying process (Laurent and Kapferer, 1985; Bettman, 1973). Further confirmation of a lack of information search can be obtained by examining the amount of impulse purchases performed for low involvement purchases compared with high involvement purchases. As Table 7.22 indicates, there is a significant difference between the two groups and low involvement purchases are being undertaken with little information search or evaluation.
Table 7.22 Comparison of the number of impulsive decisions by high and low involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>T value</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High involvement</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>8.817</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low involvement</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the two sub-scales of involvement are examined it can be seen that both importance and interest show some correlation with levels of information search, with importance being the main influence (Table 7.23). The examination of levels of interest and importance in section 7.3.2 indicates that levels of importance were the same for HU and HE services, which could be an explanation for the similar levels of information search.

Table 7.23 Relationships between importance, interest and levels of information search.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Search</th>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>Interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson's correlation</td>
<td>0.157</td>
<td>0.126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance level</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, it should be remembered that levels of external search are generally low. Although the mean for external search of high involvement purchases is higher than low involvement purchases, at 4.40 compared with 3.22, these statistics indicate that most high involvement purchasers are still only utilising one or two sources of information. Unfortunately, the results from this scale cannot be compared directly with other studies utilising the same scale due to the lack of detail in reporting results (Murray, 1991). Nonetheless, there is evidence that many high involvement purchase decisions are being made based on one piece of information and one store visit (Claxton, et al., 1974, Beatty and Smith, 1987).

**H5** Personal sources of information are utilised more in the purchase of HE services than HU services.
Previous studies have found that WOM, or personal sources of information, are predominant in the purchase of high involvement experiential services such as holidays (Oppermann, 2000; Fodness and Murray, 1998, 1999). As this reliance may have implications for the advertising of these services it was felt important to investigate this further. It was found that there is no significant difference between the two groups, as shown in Table 7.24. There is therefore no support for H5.

Table 7.24 Comparison of the use of WOM for HU and HE services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>T value</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HU services</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>0.287</td>
<td>0.775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE services</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This result reinforces the earlier finding of compatibility in the way in which HU and HE services are being purchased with reference to information search.

**H6**  
A reliance of personal experience reduces the use of other information sources

*Not supported. Past knowledge from personal experience is supplemented with new information.*

Both the advertising and service advertising literature suggest that a dependence on experience results in a reduction of effort placed into the decision-making process. People buy a service they are familiar with and thereby create a routinised activity. Such an approach to decision making may be particularly popular when purchasing complex and intangible services (Rossiter et al., 1991, Murray, 1991; Gabbott and Hogg, 1994). It was, therefore, felt necessary to include a routinised route in the consumer behaviour framework (Section 5.5). However, these results do not provide strong support for this reliance on personal experience. The impact of personal experience on the decision-making process is difficult to analyse because it is present across all the services. A total of 94% of respondents indicated that they had personal experience of purchasing the service before. This suggests that most purchases are of a repeat nature. The buyers therefore have knowledge available to them based on the experience of previous purchases. However, as
Table 7.25 indicates, there is no evidence to suggest that as personal experience increases the utilisation of other sources of information decreases, with relation to specific information sources or the amount of external search as a whole.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Word of mouth</th>
<th>Advertising</th>
<th>Salespeople</th>
<th>Printed material</th>
<th>Search total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal experience</td>
<td>-0.003</td>
<td>-0.063</td>
<td>-0.068</td>
<td>-0.051</td>
<td>-0.059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig, level</td>
<td>0.953</td>
<td>0.212</td>
<td>0.175</td>
<td>0.314</td>
<td>0.236</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Previous knowledge seems to be considered alongside new information and is not the sole influence. The consequence of this finding will be discussed further in section 7.5.4.

**H7** Advertising is utilised more in HU services than the other three categories.

*Not supported. Advertising is utilised more for purchases of experiential services*

The literature proposes, firstly, that the information search for experiential services is mainly based on personal experience and word of mouth (Oppermann, 2000; Fodness and Murray, 1998, 1999) and, secondly, that purchasers of low involvement products conduct little information search (Laurent and Kapferer, 1985). It has therefore been hypothesised that advertising will be utilised as a source of information for HU services more than any of the other three categories. In order to prove this it was necessary to perform an independent samples t test on the levels of advertising in each category, as indicated in Table 7.26.

The table indicates that advertising is not being utilised more in the purchase of HU services compared with HE services and therefore the findings do not support H7. It can be seen that the level of involvement is having little impact on the use of advertising during the information search, with HU and LU purchases both having low scores. Advertising for experiential services, both for high and low involvement purchases, is having a much greater impact. This would suggest that the
utilitarian/experiential divide is having a greater influence on the use of advertising than either levels of information search or evaluation.

Table 7.26 Impact of advertising for each service type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>HU services</th>
<th>HE services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>1.632</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>0.104</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.927</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary of Information Search

The levels of information search are generally low for all services in terms of how many sources of information are used and how many alternatives are compared. However, there are differences in how services are purchased in terms of information search.

People buying high involvement services are undertaking a more extensive information search than the low involvement purchases. There is no difference between the level of information search undertaken for HU services and HE services. However, the purchasers of experiential services do gather information from advertising more than their utilitarian counterparts. These findings are presented in the table below, which is a development of Table 7.12.
Table 7.27 Influence of type of service on information search

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High involvement</th>
<th>Utilitarian</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High importance</td>
<td>High importance</td>
<td>High importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low interest</td>
<td>High interest</td>
<td>High interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate info search</td>
<td>Moderate info search</td>
<td>- advertising</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low involvement</th>
<th>Utilitarian</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low importance</td>
<td>Low importance</td>
<td>Low importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low interest</td>
<td>High interest</td>
<td>High interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief info search</td>
<td>Brief info search</td>
<td>- advertising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- impulse</td>
<td>- impulse</td>
<td>- impulse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.4.2 Evaluation hypotheses

H8 Purchasers of HU services undertake more evaluation than purchasers of HE services

*Not supported.* Purchasers of HE services undertake more evaluation than purchasers of HU services

H9 Purchasers of LU and LE services undertake the same level of evaluation

*Supported.* There is no significant difference between these two categories

H10 Purchasers of HU services undertake more evaluation than purchasers of LU services

*Supported.* Purchasers of HU services undertake more evaluation than LU purchasers

H11 Purchasers of HE services undertake more evaluation than purchasers of LE services

*Supported.* Purchasers of HE services undertake more evaluation than LE purchasers

In order to test these four hypotheses it was necessary to compare the level of evaluation being performed for each of the four service categories. Due to the ordinal nature of the evaluation scale this was achieved by performing a nonparametric Mann-Whitney test, which compares the score
of a specified variable of two independent groups, in this case the mean rank, creating a U statistic (Foster, 2001). The results of this analysis are presented in Table 7.28.

Table 7.28 Level of evaluation for each service type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Type</th>
<th>Evaluation (No. of level)</th>
<th>Evaluation of a number of alternatives</th>
<th>Overall importance</th>
<th>A feeling it was the right service</th>
<th>A &quot;try it again&quot; approach</th>
<th>Just past experience</th>
<th>The future importance of evaluation when the purchase is of a low involvement service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HU services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU services</td>
<td>U=2042 Sig. 0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE services</td>
<td>U=3244 Sig. 0.457</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table reveals, firstly, that there is a difference in the level of evaluation being conducted by purchasers of high involvement utilitarian services and high involvement experiential services, but not in the direction proposed in H8. The hypothesis is therefore not supported. The literature posits that the HU services are evaluated at an attribute level and a more holistic approach is adopted for the HE services (Assael, 1998; Andreassen and Lindestad, 1998). The results in this study indicate that more evaluation is being undertaken for HE services than HU services. An examination of the evaluation performed for HU and HE services, as presented in Table 7.29, indicates how this figure is reached. It can be seen that more detailed evaluation is taking place on HE services (32%) than on HU services (21%). The other important difference between the two groups is the role of past experience, which has a greater impact on HU services than HE service purchases.
Table 7.29 Comparison of evaluation techniques used for HU and HE services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation (%) of total</th>
<th>Utilitarian services</th>
<th>Experiential services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Detailed evaluation of a number of alternatives</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of one or two important factors</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall impression of the brand</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A feeling it was the right service for me</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A “try it and see” approach</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just past experience</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again, the level of MOA may explain why high involvement utilitarian services are not being evaluated in the detail that would be expected for such high risk and important purchase decisions (Wahlers, 1982; Marks et al., 1988; Bettman, 1982) and this proposal is discussed in section 7.4.3.

It can also be seen in Table 7.28 that evaluation for LU and LE services is very similar. This provides support for H9 and indicates that the utilitarian/experiential divide is having little impact on evaluation when the purchase is of a low involvement nature.

The opposite is true for the impact of involvement. Table 7.28 indicates that evaluation for LU services is significantly less than HU services and the LE services are also being purchased with less evaluation than HE services. These results thereby provide support for H10 and H11 and endorse previous studies in this area (Assael, 1998; Laurent and Kapferer, 1985).

An examination of the relationship between interest and importance with evaluation reveals that importance is having the stronger influence on evaluation activity than interest (Table 7.30). These results support those of McColl-Kennedy and Fetter (2001) who also found that purchasers of both utilitarian and experiential services were influenced more by the perceived level of importance than of interest.
Table 7.30 Spearman’s correlation between importance, interest and levels of evaluation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>Interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.299</td>
<td>0.085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance level</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.095</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary of evaluation

The results of the analysis for evaluation are similar to the information search results, in that the relationship between HU and HE services is not as expected. There is no evidence of purchasers of HU services performing detailed and complex evaluation to ensure they make the right decision. Indeed, the results indicate that more effort is being put into evaluating HE services than HU services. The other results are as predicted. High involvement services are being evaluated more than low involvement services, with no significant difference between the evaluation of LU and LE services. The level of involvement seems again to have a strong impact on how services are purchased. These findings can therefore be added to Table 7.27, to create Table 7.31.

Although the results do reveal a difference in information search and evaluation for high and low involvement services, the overall level of activity in both areas is low. This result supports other studies that have found a low level of external search for goods generally (Beatty and Smith, 1987; Moorthy et al., 1997) with fewer features and fewer alternatives being analysed in the purchase of services in particular (Turley and LeBlanc, 1993; Hill and Motes, 1995).

One explanation for why people are undertaking important purchases with low levels of activity is that they lack motivation, ability and/or opportunity to complete a more demanding decision-making process. This effect of MOA will be discussed shortly. It is also useful to keep this finding in mind when considering the services advertising guidelines discussed in Chapter 2. If respondents are not prepared to collect and evaluate information it may be unhelpful to provide documentation and detailed data, which require some level of cognitive processing. A more entertaining and transformational approach may be more appropriate.
Table 7.31 Influence of type of service on evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Utilitarian</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High involvement</td>
<td>High importance</td>
<td>High importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low interest</td>
<td>High interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moderate info search</td>
<td>Moderate info search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average evaluation</td>
<td>- advertising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>High evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low involvement</td>
<td>Low importance</td>
<td>Low importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low interest</td>
<td>High interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brief info search</td>
<td>Brief info search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- impulse</td>
<td>- advertising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low evaluation</td>
<td>Low evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.4.3 MOA hypotheses

**Ho12** There is no relationship between levels of MOA and the utilitarian/experiential dimension of high involvement services.

Not supported, levels of MOA are lower for HU than for HE services

It has been posited that levels of MOA will be lower for utilitarian services than for experiential services, although a null hypothesis has been created due to the lack of supportive evidence. An examination of the levels of MOA prevalent in the HE and HU service purchases reveals that levels of MOA are indeed lower. Purchasers have less ability to understand and compare the information available on HU services than on HE services and are rather less motivated and have less time to do so (Table 7.32).
Table 7.32 Comparison of MOA between HU and HE services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>HU</th>
<th>HU</th>
<th>HE</th>
<th>HE</th>
<th>T test</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>2.054</td>
<td>0.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>2.684</td>
<td>0.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>5.482</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is also interesting to note that all levels of motivation, opportunity and ability for both categories of service are fairly low, that is just over the median point on the scale of 1 to 5. This result is surprising when one considers that these services are all classified as, and perceived by the respondents to be, high involvement purchases. Unfortunately, comparisons with results from other studies cannot be made due to the paucity of work in this area.

**Ho13** There is no relationship between MOA and levels of information search for high involvement services.

**Partially supported** There is no relationship between MOA and information search for high involvement purchases. Nonetheless, there is a relationship between MO and information search for HU services. The relationship between ability and information search is significant for both HU and HE services, but not as predicted.

One explanation for the similarities in the information search behaviour of HU and HE services is the influence of MOA on HU services where the characteristics of the service may result in a reduced level of MOA and consequently a less extensive information search (Foxall and Pallister, 1998; Heaney and Goldsmith, 1999).

The relationships between information search and MOA for HU and HE services were examined by performing a Spearman’s correlation, as presented in Table 7.33. Due to ability’s negative relationship, it has been separated from MOA to provide a clearer picture of its influence. MO is
therefore an average taken from the mean score for motivation and opportunity. Information search is a total of all the external sources of information utilised by the respondent.

Table 7.33 Spearman’s correlation of information search and MOA for HU and HE services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MOA</th>
<th>MO</th>
<th>Ability</th>
<th>MOA</th>
<th>MO</th>
<th>Ability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HU services</td>
<td>-0.970</td>
<td>0.308</td>
<td>-0.393</td>
<td>HE services</td>
<td>-0.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information search</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Significance level</td>
<td>0.397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.885</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table indicates there is a significant correlation between levels of MO and information search for HU services, which implies that MO may be having an impact on the consumer behaviour for HU services. It is necessary to investigate this relationship further to establish whether MO is an intervening variable between involvement and information search. Spearman’s correlations between the variables, specifically for HU services were examined and are presented in Table 7.34.

Table 7.34 Spearman’s correlation of interest, importance, MO and information search for HU services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MO</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Information Search</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MO</td>
<td>0.308</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>0.209</td>
<td>0.190</td>
<td>0.189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance</td>
<td>0.056</td>
<td>0.533</td>
<td>0.040</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This analysis reveals that although importance has been identified as a strong influence on information search for purchases overall, that influence is non-existent when HU services are
examined in isolation. Indeed, interest has a stronger relationship with information search than importance, although fairly weak. Examining the MO figures provides an explanation for this finding. Although interest and importance have no relationship with MO, MO has a significant relationship with Information search. These results therefore provide evidence that MO is indeed an intervening variable for the purchase of HU services.

The influence that MO has on information search seems to be most prevalent for HU services. The figures in Table 7.33 indicate that such a relationship does not exist for HE services. This result is expected due to the higher levels of MO for these purchases.

The negative impact of ability results in the need to examine its influence independently from the other variable. This impact is significant for both HU and HE purchases. An examination of the amount of information being sourced, presented in Table 7.34, explains these findings further. The mean score of the total external search for consumer with low ability is 4.59 compared with a mean of 2.48 for respondents with high ability. So those respondents with less ability are indeed collecting more information. A closer look at the popularity of information sources reveals that the consumer with more ability is using less of all four types of information: word of mouth, advertising, salespeople and printed material.

This negative impact of ability has not been identified in the literature explicitly but some work has been completed on the impact of knowledge levels, which found that consumers with extensive knowledge are not active information seekers (Kiel and Layton, 1981; Moore and Kehmann, 1980). Although this study does not facilitate the measurement of knowledge it would seem logical to assume that high ability to understand is the result of knowledge of the subject.

This area is discussed in further detail in section 7.5.2.
Table 7.35 Comparison of external sources of information for low and high ability respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Low Ability Mean</th>
<th>Low Ability S.D.</th>
<th>High Ability Mean</th>
<th>High Ability S.D.</th>
<th>T-Test</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Search Total</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>6.14</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word of mouth</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salespeople</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printed material</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ho14** There is no relationship between MOA and levels of evaluation for high involvement services are being influenced.

*Partially supported* There is no relationship between MOA and evaluation for high involvement purchases. Nonetheless, there is a relationship between MO and evaluation for high involvement purchases. The relationship between ability and evaluation is significant for HU services but not as predicted.

Again the literature proposes that all three antecedents need to be present before any detailed evaluation can be undertaken (Marks *et al.*, 1988; Bettman, 1982). However, the influence of ability has been separated from motivation and opportunity to establish its impact.

It was therefore necessary to examine the relationships between these variables by performing a Spearman’s correlation. The results are presented in Table 7.36.

Correlation analysis reveals that again there is a relationship between HU services and MO and that ability has a negative impact but at a weaker level. For HE services, the relationship between MOA and MO with evaluation is significant, probably due to ability having no influence on evaluation and thereby not contaminating the MOA statistic.
Table 7.36 Spearman’s correlation between evaluation and MOA for HU and HE services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>HU services</th>
<th>HE services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MOA</td>
<td>MO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>0.228</td>
<td>0.516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance level</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is necessary to look at the possible influencing variables with reference to evaluation to establish the relationships between them. The statistics are provided on both HU and HE services as both categories are being influenced.

Table 7.37 Spearman’s correlation between interest, importance, MO and evaluation for HU services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MO</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MO</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.516</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>0.209</td>
<td>0.190</td>
<td>0.134</td>
<td>0.139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance</td>
<td>0.056</td>
<td>0.533</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.898</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 7.37 it can be seen that MO is having a similar impact on evaluation for HU services as it had on information search. Interest and importance have no relationship with evaluation or with MO. Nonetheless, MO has a strong relationship with evaluation. Again it would seem that MO is interrupting the impact that involvement is having. Consumers perceive the purchases to be important but are not prepared to put effort into the decision-making process. A similar situation exists for HE services as indicated in Table 7.38.
Table 7.38 Spearman's correlation between interest, importance, MO and evaluation for HE services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MO</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MO</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.306</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>0.234</td>
<td>0.022</td>
<td>0.069</td>
<td>0.501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance</td>
<td>0.283</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.125</td>
<td>0.222</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although in this case there is some correlation between interest, and importance with MO, the independent variables are still both having an influence on levels of evaluation. Levels of motivation and opportunity are again intervening and influencing consumer behaviour.

Summary of MOA

This area of the research is of an exploratory nature and was consequently based on three null hypotheses. The first of these has been disproved. There is evidence to suggest that MOA levels differ for HU and HE services, with levels being lower for all three dimensions for HU purchases. Nonetheless, the three dimensions are not behaving in the predicted manner, with ability having a negative rather than positive impact. As ability increases consumers are reducing their level of information search and evaluation, not increasing it. These findings resulted in ability being examined separately so that a better understanding of its influence could be forthcoming. Such an examination revealed that MO is having an impact on information search and evaluation for HU services and on evaluation only for HE services. These results can thereby be added to the evolving Table 7.31 to create Table 7.39.

This table now summarises the way in which each service is purchased and thereby illustrates the influence that level of involvement and the utilitarian/experiential divide are having on consumer behaviour.
Table 7.39 Influence of type of service on MOA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High involvement</th>
<th>Utilitarian</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High importance</td>
<td>High importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low interest</td>
<td>High interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low levels of MOA</td>
<td>High levels of MOA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Influence of MO</td>
<td>Moderate info search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moderate info search</td>
<td>- advertising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Influence of MO</td>
<td>Influence of MO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average evaluation</td>
<td>High evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low involvement</th>
<th>Low importance</th>
<th>Low importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low interest</td>
<td>High interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No influence of MOA</td>
<td>No influence of MOA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brief info search</td>
<td>Brief info search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- impulse</td>
<td>- advertising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low evaluation</td>
<td>Low evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.5 Discussion

The questionnaire has provided insights into how different types of services are being purchased. The results support some of the proposals contained in the original framework and contradict others, leading to the need for some alterations to be implemented. The main findings and their implications will now be discussed.

7.5.1 Influence of involvement

The findings from this research provide support for utilising the involvement construct as a categorisation tool for services. There is a clear distinction in the purchasing process for high and low involvement services and this distinction has implications when examining appropriate advertising strategies. The use of involvement in advertising models is well established in the product literature and the findings suggest that there are similarities in purchase behaviour across the goods/services boundary.
The utilisation of the McQuarrie and Munson (1992) scale has provided an insight into not only the impact of involvement on services consumer behaviour but more specifically the impact of the two dimensions of involvement, importance and interest. The findings indicate that each service category has its own unique blend of interest and importance. High levels of importance exist across all the high involvement purchases while the interest dimension is most prevalent in the experiential services. Furthermore, importance has a greater influence on consumer behaviour overall than interest.

Other writers have also found that interest has minimal impact on the decision-making process e.g. McColl-Kennedy and Fetter (2001) who also utilised the McQuarrie and Munson (1992) involvement scale in a services context. Support is also found in the work of Laurent and Kapferer (1985) who were among the first to identify the pleasure dimension in involvement, and whose work has influenced other developments in the operationalisation of involvement (Mittal, 1989, Schneider and Rodgers, 1996, Jain and Srinivasan, 1990). An examination of their work, which was based on products, reveals that the extensiveness of the decision-making process was influenced predominantly by the perceived importance of the product and the negative consequences of a mispurchase. The pleasure facet had no influence on the choice process but did influence communication behaviour e.g. looking at advertising. Evidence of the link between interest and advertising is also found in these results. Advertising is utilised more for the experiential services than the utilitarian services. The construct of involvement and its operationalisation is an area that requires more investigation and is discussed in areas of further research (section 9.6.1.)

### 7.5.2 Influence of utilitarian/experiential divide

The findings also confirm that services can be distinguished by the utilitarian or experiential elements that they contain. Experiential services are considered to be more interesting than their utilitarian counterparts and of a more emotional nature. These dimensions are again already utilised in the general advertising literature and consequently the present boundary existing between the product and services literature in this area must be questioned.
The influence that these dimensions have on the purchasing process is less defined than the involvement construct. There is not a close relationship with levels of information search or evaluation. The purchasers of high involvement utilitarian services are not undertaking a more complex decision-making process than purchasers of experiential services. This low level of activity may be due to a lack of motivation, opportunity and/or ability.

7.5.3 Influence of MOA

The first important finding in this area is that purchasers of HE services have more motivation, opportunity and ability than purchasers of HU services. Although this result is as predicted, it is the first time that MOA has been examined in a services context and more specifically on services classified by the experiential/utilitarian dimension and is therefore an important initial step into the exploration of this research topic.

The impact that levels of MOA have on information search and evaluation is less straightforward, mainly due to the negative relationship which ability has with both of these stages in the decision-making process. This negative impact is not explicitly supported by previous literature. In fact, a number of studies have proposed that consumer ability is positively related to information search (Bettman and Park, 1980, Srinivasan, 1987, Schmidt and Spreng, 1996). Running in parallel to these studies, however, is also a body of research which proposes that a high level of relevant knowledge diminishes the need for information search and evaluation (Urbany et al., 1989; Assael, 1998; Beatty and Smith, 1987).

This contradiction over the influence of ability and knowledge is demonstrated clearly in the work of Schmidt and Spreng (1996). They propose that ability is influenced by educational level, objective product knowledge and subjective product knowledge and the higher the level of all these influences the higher the level of ability. However, they also argue that a higher subjective knowledge decreases the perceived benefits of external information search. One can therefore argue that if knowledge increases ability but also decreases the perceived benefits of external search, then increases in ability could result in reduced information search. Moorthy et al., (1997)
attempt to provide some consolidation by proposing that there is an inverted U-shaped relationship between personal experience and information search, with information search increasing until a level of knowledge is reached that prevents any further information search being worthwhile.

It would seem that the measurement of ability in this study is related closely to levels of product knowledge. One explanation for this is that, for the purposes of this study, ability is examined with reference to the number of information sources utilised during the purchase process. A consumer with a limited understanding of the choices available is in a position to increase that comprehension by collecting together and studying additional information. This situation is obviously different from measuring ability with reference to information processing where much of the MOA literature is based. When processing information in an advertising experiment the respondents are not able to increase their ability and existing levels therefore have a direct impact on information processing (e.g. MacInnis and Jaworski, 1989). The impact of ability therefore requires further investigation (see section 9.6.2.) and was isolated from this analysis so that the impact of motivation and opportunity could be observed.

### 7.5.4 Development of the framework

Each service category in the Proposed Consumer Behaviour Framework can now be examined in light of the findings. It should be noted here that the findings refer solely to consumer behaviour and consequently references to cognitive processing and advertising in the framework cannot be tested at this stage. These domains will therefore be explored in detail in Chapter 8.
As Table 7.40 indicates, it was proposed that two types of purchasers would exist in this category, that is those who were prepared to conduct a complex decision-making process and those who lacked MOA and consequently allocated less time and effort to the purchase. The findings provide little evidence of the active purchaser and considerable evidence of their inactive counterpart. These persons acknowledge that the purchase is an important one and yet undertake a limited information search and evaluation. They have low levels of motivation and opportunity and these dimensions have an impact on the amount of effort and time that is being allocated to the task in hand. It is therefore appropriate to eliminate the complex route from the framework.

High involvement experiential services

The behaviour of the consumer buying HE services is more in line with previous work on this subject. A limited information search is being performed during the purchase of these services. However, there is no evidence of reliance on personal sources, which is a surprising result. Indeed, the main source of information being utilised is advertising. Evaluation is higher than expected and surprisingly more comprehensive than that of HU services. Levels of motivation and opportunity are higher than for HU services and seem to have a positive impact on levels of evaluation but not on information search.
**Routinised route**

The original framework acknowledged the importance of past experience and proposed that some high involvement purchases may be undertaken following a routinised decision-making framework. This route is taken when the consumer relies on past experience and thereby avoids the difficulties of comparing and evaluating alternatives to make a final decision. However, the results did not support this proposal. They revealed that over 90% of the purchases were decided upon with some reference to past experience but that this did not result in a less comprehensive decision-making process. Because of this, the routinised decision-making route has been removed from the framework.

**Low involvement utilitarian and experiential services**

The results for these categories are as predicted. There is very little information search or evaluation being conducted in either of these categories. This is demonstrated by the predominance of impulsive behaviour in both information search and evaluation, which indicates that very little emphasis is being placed on the decision-making process. The main difference between the two categories is that LE services are considered more interesting by their purchasers and advertising plays a bigger part in the decision.

**7.6 Conclusion**

This chapter has examined the feasibility of the proposed Services Consumer Behaviour and Advertising Framework through the testing of fourteen hypotheses. The findings from the analyses have then been explored with reference to the framework, thereby highlighting domains of discrepancy and proposing suitable changes. The end result of this analysis is the revised Services Consumer Behaviour Framework as shown in Table 7.41.

Table 7.41 indicates that the differences between utilitarian and experiential services are not as distinct as previous literature suggests. It is dangerous to assume that HU services are being bought by completing an extensive information search and attribute evaluation. Likewise, the HE
services are not being purchased solely on an emotional basis with reliance on personal sources of information. The perceived importance in making the right decision for both HU and HE services is having an impact on levels of information search and evaluation. At the same time, low levels of motivation and opportunity in HU services are resulting in a moderate level of information search and lower evaluation. The outcome of these influences is that there are strong similarities between the two groups.

Table 7.41 Services Consumer Behaviour Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High involvement</th>
<th>Utilitarian</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High importance</td>
<td>High importance</td>
<td>High importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low interest</td>
<td>High importance</td>
<td>High interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low levels of MOA</td>
<td>High levels of MOA</td>
<td>Moderate info search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence of MO</td>
<td>Influence of MO</td>
<td>High evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate info search</td>
<td>Moderate info search</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence of MO</td>
<td>Influence of MO</td>
<td>High evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average evaluation</td>
<td>Moderate info search</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low involvement</th>
<th>Utilitarian</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low importance</td>
<td>Low importance</td>
<td>Low importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low interest</td>
<td>High interest</td>
<td>High interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No influence of MOA</td>
<td>No influence of MOA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief info search</td>
<td>Brief info search</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- impulse</td>
<td>- advertising</td>
<td>- impulse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low evaluation</td>
<td>Low evaluation</td>
<td>Low evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The purchasers of low involvement services do not perceive the purchase to be important and are therefore allocating little time or effort to the process. They often conduct a brief information search and often buy on impulse. The only distinction between the two groups is that advertising plays a more prominent role in the purchase of LE services.

These findings are examined with reference to advertising strategies in Chapter 8 in order to create appropriate advertising guidelines for each service category.
Chapter 8: Development and Testing of Services Advertising Framework

Chapter 2 Services Advertising

Chapter 3 Advertising Theory

Chapter 4 Services Advertising Practice

Chapter 5 Development of Services Consumer Behaviour Framework

Chapter 6 Methodology

Chapter 8 Development and Testing of Services Advertising Framework

Chapter 7 Results

Chapter 9 Conclusion: Creation of Services Consumer Behaviour and Advertising Framework
8. Development and testing of the Services Advertising Framework

8.1 Introduction

In order to produce an advertising framework that is of practical benefit, it is necessary to provide guidelines on the most appropriate message appeal and executional cues for the four types of services, as identified in Chapter 7. This objective is achieved firstly by reviewing the literature on advertising message appeals and executional tools, from both the goods and the service streams of research. From this review appropriate guidelines for each service category are created. These proposals are then tested by comparing them with a sample of UK service advertisements that have been recognised and awarded for achieving high levels of effectiveness. This comparison reveals some interesting findings, which are discussed and analysed to create the final Services Consumer Behaviour and Advertising Framework.

8.2 Advertising Strategies

Advertising strategies normally consist of two elements. The message strategy, also referred to as the appeal, is the general overall approach that the advertisement adopts. This should be distinguished from the execution strategy, which is defined as how the message is communicated.

8.2.1 Message Appeals

Despite an array of terminology, there is general agreement that there are two types of message appeal. The first of these appeals is of a rational nature. This has been defined by Stafford and Day (1995) as a presentation of factual information in a straightforward way, characterised by objectivity. Puto and Wells (1984) refer to this rational approach as informational advertising. Johar and Sirgy (1991) categorise it as the functional congruity route, which they define as the match between the beliefs of the product utilitarian attributes and the consumer's ideal attributes. They suggest that the functional
congruity route is similar to the central processing route in the ELM (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986). Such an offering is generally consumed inconspicuously and therefore self-image is not important (Johar and Sirgy, 1991).

The second appeal type is of an emotional nature and has been associated with such feelings as adventure, fear, romance and status (Cutler and Javalgi, 1993). Johar and Sirgy (1991) refer to this emotional approach as the self-congruity route, which is defined as the matching of the product’s value-expressive attributes and the consumer’s self-concept and likened to peripheral processing in the ELM (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986). An important feature of many self-congruity products is that they are consumed publicly and therefore the matching of the brand and consumer image is paramount (Johar and Sirgy, 1991). This type of appeal has also been defined as transformational, where the brand is linked with a positive and enjoyable experience (Puto and Wells, 1984; Rossiter and Percy, 1997).

There is also agreement that the type of appeal needs to match the product type for maximum effectiveness. A rational appeal is more effective for a utilitarian product whereas an emotional approach is suitable for value-expressive or experiential product (Johar and Sirgy, 1991). This contingency approach is evident in both the FCB grid (Vaughn, 1986) and the Rossiter-Percy Grid (Rossiter et al., 1991). The advertising practitioners in the exploratory research also recognised that advertisements for utilitarian products often needed to contain more information and work harder than those for experiential products because the consumers were more interested in the advertisements (Section 4.3.3).

Although this matching theory would seem logical, establishing the effectiveness of these two types of strategies for different types of products has created differing results. Shavitt (1990, 1992) performed a number of advertising experiments that supported the contingency approach. She tested utilitarian and value-expressive advertising appeals on two utilitarian products: air conditioners and coffee and two value-expressive products: greeting cards and perfumes. Results indicated that in all cases the appeal
that matched the product type was most effective. However, Laskey et al., (1995) tested the effectiveness of these two types of appeals in over 1,100 advertisements across a range of products and they found no evidence to support the work of Johar and Sirgy (1991). Many of the comparisons they tested identified no significant difference in effectiveness. Contradictory results are also found in the work on emotional and rational appeals in services advertising, with a body of research suggesting that a rational approach is more appropriate for both utilitarian and experiential services (Stafford and Day, 1995; Stafford, 1996).

Although the argument for emotional advertising for services is gaining pace it still lacks a strong empirical underpinning (Mittal, 1999; Mattila, 1999). For example, Swaminathan, et al., (1996) propose that transformational advertising is more likely to be used for services, due to the intangibility of services which leads to the tendency of services advertisements to concentrate on building brand image. They refer to the work of Zinkhan et al., (1992) which found that transformational advertising was more prevalent in services advertising than in goods advertising. However, a closer look at the results indicates that only 40% of the service advertisements were adopting a transformational approach and that no indication of effectiveness was provided.

Three main reasons have been put forward to explain the inconsistent results on the matching theory. Firstly, effectiveness has been measured in a number of different ways, for example, recall, persuasion and key message comprehension (Laskey et al., 1995). Secondly, rational and emotional appeals are being classified differently. A number of researchers have utilised Pollay's (1983) list of 42 rational and emotional appeals (e.g. Albers-Miller and Stafford, 1999) but there is little similarity between this list (see Appendix G) and that proposed by Moriarty (1991) which has been adopted in other studies (e.g. Cutler and Javalgi, 1993; Turley and Kelley, 1997). De Pelsmacker and Geuens (1997), acknowledging the lack of a recognised model for emotional advertising content, created another list which again added new definitions. Thirdly, there may be other product characteristics which have an
influence on the appropriate appeal e.g. maturity, product homogeneity (Johar and Sirgy, 1991; Swaminathan et al., 1996)

In summary, it is clear that there are two main message appeals which are referred to in this text as "informational" and "transformational" and that it is generally proposed that these appeals should match the characteristics of the good or service. However, not all results presented in empirical studies from both the products and services domain support this matching theory. The testing of this framework will provide an opportunity to examine this area further in the context of services.

8.2.2. Executional cues

Once the appeal has been agreed upon it is necessary for the advertiser to decide how the appeal is to be presented, that is the manner of creative execution. Again, a number of lists have been developed by various writers utilising different criteria (e.g. Laskey et al., 1989, 1995; Stewart and Koslow, 1989).

Stewart and Furse (2000) link executional factors with effectiveness measures and conclude that a strong brand differentiating message is the most important single factor in creating an effective advertisement in terms of recall and persuasion. More specifically, they found that effective recall was the result of a combination of factors such as the length of the advertisement and the number of times the brand name is mentioned as well as use of creative devices such as humour, demonstration and fantasy. Earlier studies have identified 160 executional cues available to choose from (Stewart and Koslow, 1989), an indication perhaps of the drive by advertisers to be unique. A more compact list of eleven alternatives is provided by Belch and Belch (1998) and presented in Table 8.1.
Table 8.1 List of executional cues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demonstration</th>
<th>Humour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Testimonials</td>
<td>Straight Sell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality</td>
<td>Scientific Evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slice-of-Life</td>
<td>Comparison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animation</td>
<td>Fantasy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dramatisation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If this list is compared with the executional cues identified in Chapter 2 as relevant for services, some similarity can be found, although the terminology differs in places. For example, a demonstration in a services context could be compatible with the showing of the service encounter which is a common theme running through the conceptual frameworks. A straight selling approach could be perceived as similar to documentation in that both utilise a rational appeal and provide information for the consumer to cognitively process. Lastly, the service consumption episode proposed by Mittal (1999) has affinity with the slice-of-life executional tool in that both present people similar to their target audience experiencing the product and its benefits.

In some cases, the terminology is the same. The use of testimonials and dramatisation have both been identified as ways to reduce risk and emulate word-of-mouth activity (Murray, 1991; Hill and Gandhi, 1992, Mittal, 1999). Fugate (1998) also proposes that humour may be an effective cue in services advertising, particularly for low involvement services, although this proposition is presently without empirical underpinning. None of the other cues on the lists above have been examined with reference to services.

Due to the lack of classification within the service sector little is known about the effectiveness of executional cues for the four types of services identified in the Service Decision Making Framework.
Consequently, in order to propose suitable executional approaches for each type, it is useful to examine the tools proposed in the FCB Grid (Vaughn, 1980, 1986) and Rossiter and Percy Grid (Rossiter et al. 1991). Both of these models adopt the same classification devices and, implicitly if not explicitly, were designed for goods and services. Their guidelines are presented in Table 8.2.

Some similarities can be seen between the executional tools included in these grids and those proposed by Belch and Belch (1998). In addition, the grids contain information such as the advertisement objective and the impact that the advertisement is to have on the consumer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FCB Grid</th>
<th>Rossiter Percy Grid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High involvement/think</td>
<td>Specific information Demonstration</td>
<td>Benefit claims must be acceptable and convincing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not important to like ad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Consider expert, objective presenter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Limit to 7 benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High involvement/feel</td>
<td>Executioanl Impact</td>
<td>Emotional authenticity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Segment by lifestyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>People identify with product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low involvement/think</td>
<td>Reminder</td>
<td>Simple problem-solution format</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not necessary to like advert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>One or two easy-to-learn benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low involvement/feel</td>
<td>Attention</td>
<td>Emotional authenticity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Advert must be liked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Single main benefit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Brand benefits are implicit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.3 Developing the Services Advertising Framework

It is possible to propose appropriate message appeals and executional tools for the four different service categories by amalgamating the above discussion from both the product and services literature with the Consumer Decision Making Framework. The most prominent executional tools identified in the services conceptual frameworks: physical representation, documentation, showing the service
encounter and strong brand image, are also included. These cues have been recognised as ways to
tangibilise the service in the minds of the consumer (see Chapter 2). However, their suitability for each
service category in terms of effectiveness has not previously been examined. They are therefore
included in all four classifications so that their impact can be examined.

The rationale for each proposal is provided below and these are then brought together to further
develop the advertising section of the Services Consumer Behaviour and Advertising Framework.

8.3.1 High involvement – utilitarian – low MOA

These consumers are buying a utilitarian high involvement service, which they acknowledge to be an
important purchase (see Chapter 7). Nonetheless, the results presented in Chapter 7 indicate that they
undertake a limited information search and evaluate mainly by examining one or two important factors
and basing their decision on experience.

Reference to the literature on executional tools is rather unhelpful for this category. Previous
frameworks such as the FCB grid (Vaughn, 1980, 1986) or the Rossiter/Percy Grid (Rossiter et al.
1991) make the assumption that purchasers of such products are always motivated and able to
undertaken a complex decision-making process. However, the current research has shown that the
service purchasers are not motivated enough to complete an extensive information search, cognitive
processing or detailed evaluation. It is therefore necessary to move away from demanding executional
tools such as documentation and adopt a more entertaining and light-hearted approach, despite the fact
that the appeal is still of an informational and rational nature. MacInnis et al., (1991) suggest that
motivation to notice and process information in an advertisement can be increased by appealing to
hedonistic needs and making the brand more relevant to the consumer. They propose the use of drama
i.e. illustrating brand benefits through story telling, testimonials, humour, surprise or even lack of
information. The construction of a strong and familiar brand image may also be relevant here because
it enables the consumer to make a decision without undertaking an extensive information search or
evaluation (Andreassen and Lindestad, 1998; Harris and Devlin, 1999). Mittal (1999) suggests that the advertising objective of brand identity can be achieved by using physical representation e.g. vehicles, uniforms etc. Lastly, the lack of motivation may result in the decision-making process being similar to a low involvement utilitarian decision in that a small number of rational benefits can be communicated (Rossiter et al, 1991).

From this discussion the following appeal and executional cues are proposed:

**Appeal**

- **Informational**
  - Physical representation
  - Documentation,
  - Showing the service encounter
  - Strong brand image

**Service advertising cues**

**General advertising cues**

- Dramatisation
- Testimonials
- Fewer rational appeals

### 8.3.2. High involvement – experiential

Here, emotion has a strong influence on the decision-making process due to the value-expressive attributes of the product (Johar and Sirgy, 1991). The consumers have higher levels of motivation, opportunity and ability and are interested in the decision-making process as well as acknowledging its importance. The results in Chapter 7 therefore indicate that, although information search is limited, as would be expected, levels of evaluation can be higher than for the HU services. The following list of executional tools is therefore proposed, based mainly on the FCB grid (Vaughn, 1980, 1986) and Rossiter-Percy grid (Rossiter et al. 1991). The proposal of segmenting by lifestyle links up with the self-congruity route (Johar and Sirgy, 1991) acknowledging the importance of a match between the image of the service and the consumer’s self-concept. Lastly, the impact of a strong corporate image in
the purchase behaviour of experiential services such as holidays has been identified in previous studies (Andreassen and Lindestad, 1998; Assael (1998).

### Appeal Transformational

**Service advertising cues**
- Physical representation,
- Documentation,
- Showing the service encounter
- Strong brand image

**General advertising cues**
- Emotional authenticity
- Testimonials
- Segment by lifestyle
- Emotional benefits

#### 8.3.3. Low involvement – utilitarian

It is acknowledged in the literature that the main aim of advertising for low involvement purchases is to create familiarity with a new product so that the consumer will try it. If trial has taken place advertising can maintain awareness and "nudge" the consumer towards buying the brand again (Vaughn, 1980; Ehrenberg and Barnard, 1997; Barnard and Ehrenberg, 1997). The role of advertising is therefore to ensure that the brand is salient and this salience can be achieved by repetition and/or creativity (Alreck and Settle, 1999; Jones, 1991). A strong brand image may assist in reminding consumers of the brand values. Because these services are low in involvement it is important that the advertisement is stimulating and gains attention although Rossiter et al. (1991) propose that it is not important for the consumer to necessarily like the advertisement. They propose that the advertisement should have a simple problem-solution format and a few easy-to-learn benefits. This low involvement route is identified in the ELM as the peripheral route where consumers are influenced by cues which are easy to absorb such as the celebrity, music, visual imagery etc (Petty and Cacioppo, 1981; 1984).

The following executional tools are therefore proposed.
Appeal
Service advertising cues
Physical representation,
Documentation,
Showing the service encounter
Strong brand image
General advertising cues
Creativity need to gain attention
Simple problem-solution format
One or two easy-to-learn rational benefits

8.3.4. Low involvement – experiential

The earlier discussion about low involvement advertising is clearly also relevant here. However, for these particular services it is also important that the advertisement is liked because this likeability can be transferred from the advertisement to the brand, as discussed in Chapter 3 (Brown and Stayman, 1992; MacInnis and Jaworski, 1989). This likeability is achieved through stimulation and entertainment, which can be created by the use of music, originality and distinctiveness (Leather et al., 1994). Possible executional tools are therefore the following:

Appeal
Services advertising cues
Physical representation,
Documentation,
Showing the service encounter
Strong brand image
General advertising cues
Attention
Emotional authenticity
Creativity in order to be liked
Single main benefit
Brand benefits are implicit

Transformational

Informational

Physical representation,
Documentation,
Showing the service encounter
Strong brand image

Transformational

Physical representation,
Documentation,
Showing the service encounter
Strong brand image

Attention
Emotional authenticity
Creativity in order to be liked
Single main benefit
Brand benefits are implicit
These guidelines can be brought together to correspond to the decision-making processes discussed earlier in the Services Consumer Behaviour Framework, to create the proposed Services Advertising Framework as shown in Table 8.3.

This framework brings together both the services advertising and the general advertising literature. It proposes that all services have some similarity in the way they should be advertised with reference to the first four executional tools, but also acknowledges the evidence to suggest that the level of involvement and the utilitarian/experiential divide have an impact on how the service should be advertised. These influences are well established in the general advertising literature but have gained little attention in the services arena.

Table 8.3 Proposed Services Advertising Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Utilitarian</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High involvement</td>
<td><strong>Informational</strong></td>
<td><strong>Transformational</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical representation,</td>
<td>Physical representation,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Documentation,</td>
<td>Documentation,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Showing the service encounter</td>
<td>Showing the service encounter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strong brand image</td>
<td>Strong brand image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dramatisation</td>
<td>Emotional authenticity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Testimonials</td>
<td>Testimonials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fewer rational appeals</td>
<td>Segment by lifestyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Emotional benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low involvement</td>
<td><strong>Informational</strong></td>
<td><strong>Transformational</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical representation,</td>
<td>Physical representation,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Documentation,</td>
<td>Documentation,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Showing the service encounter</td>
<td>Showing the service encounter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strong brand image</td>
<td>Strong brand image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creativity to gain attention</td>
<td>Creativity to gain attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Simple problem-solution format</td>
<td>Emotional authenticity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One or two easy-to-learn</td>
<td>Creativity in order to be liked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rational benefits</td>
<td>Single main benefit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Brand benefits are implicit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8.4 Methodology

The proposed advertising appeals and executional tools for each service category are explored by examining a selection of service advertisements that have been known to "work", that is were effective in achieving their objectives, and therefore can be used as examples of good practice. These advertisements were obtained from the winners of the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising Effectiveness awards. These awards have been in existence since 1981 and are presented every two years. In order to take part in the awards the advertising agency is required to submit a case study on a specific advertising campaign. The submission needs to contain information on the market situation, advertising objective, creative approach adopted and effectiveness, with particular emphasis on effectiveness utilising an array of different measures relevant to the advertising objective.

The identification of suitable advertisements for this study proved to be more difficult than anticipated due to the fact that the vast majority of the advertising effectiveness awards are given to goods advertisers. This finding in itself is of interest and may result from two situations; either those agencies involved in services advertising do not submit their work, or very few service advertisements reach adequate level of effectiveness to be considered for submission. The former cause seems doubtful considering that many of the agencies for service advertisers submit work for the goods accounts they work on, which places more likelihood on the latter cause.

In the year 2000 awards there were 33 winners: 20 consumer goods, 3 retail outlets, 4 non-for-profit organisations, 5 dot.com companies, and 1 consumer service which was Orange. This latter case study has been included in the analysis. A similar imbalance is found in the 1998 awards, where only three service advertisements were present in the final list of winners, these being First Direct, One2One and Pizza Hut. Because the mobile phone industry was already represented, the One2One case study was omitted, leaving First Direct and Pizza Hut. On further examination, the First Direct case study was also considered unsuitable due to its inclusion of two campaigns. Pizza Hut was therefore selected from the 1998 winners and further exploration of the 1996 award winners was conducted to increase
the number of advertisements analysed. This collection of case studies contained five services, Orange, Frizzell Insurance, BT, AA and Barclaycard. Again the mobile phone providers were removed which left Frizzell, AA and Barclaycard to be included in the analysis. Although this investigation provided a diverse range of five services for comparison, it should be noted that the range does not include an example of a HE service. However, it was felt inappropriate to include advertisements that were older than 1996 due to changes in advertising styles. An exploration of other advertising awards in order to fill the void of HE advertisements was also found to be unhelpful due to differences in award criteria e.g. emphasis on creativity rather than effectiveness.

Table 8.4 Advertisements chosen for analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand Name</th>
<th>Description of service</th>
<th>Type of service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>Mobile phone network provider</td>
<td>HU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frizzell Insurance</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>HU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>Car recovery service</td>
<td>HU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barclaycard</td>
<td>Credit card</td>
<td>LU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pizza Hut</td>
<td>Fast food outlet</td>
<td>LE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The purpose of this analysis of successful advertisements is to match each advertisement against the appropriate guidelines in the proposed framework in order to identify similarities and differences between the two. Such a comparison can then lead to necessary changes to the proposed framework. The analysis is based on the information on, and visuals of, the advertisements provided in the case studies. Copies of the visuals are contained in Appendix G.
8.5 Analysis of advertisements

8.5.1 Orange Case study (2000)

Background

Orange had joined the pre-pay phone market rather late and needed to catch up on its rivals One2One, Vodafone and BT Cellnet (White, 2000). The market was referred to as a "complex minefield" with many different call rates, vouchers and service charges. Consumers approached the market with cynicism and felt that all the operators were profiteering. It was therefore necessary to set the brand apart from this perception.

The purchase of a mobile phone network was perceived as a high involvement purchase. A different case study on One2One in 1998 states that "customers were confused and nervous about the purchase process" and "sought help from friends or business colleagues" (Barham, 1998, p 259). Some of this involvement was due to the necessity at that time to commit oneself to a continuous relationship with the network supplier and this situation obviously changed with the introduction of the pre-pay phone. However, one could argue that the low level of tangibility and high level of perceived risk in making the wrong decision still results in this being a high involvement purchase.

Creative Approach

Orange wanted to build on its image of being ""honest, friendly and straightforward" which separated it from its rivals. It had one simple message to communicate that emphasised that Orange did not have a service charge. This was communicated through using the word "voucher" and stating that a £10 voucher for Orange gave the consumer £10 worth of calls because there was no service charge. The executional approach was animation, with the V of voucher changing into scissors and cutting off the "er" which left the word "ouch" and ending with the strapline "there is no ouch in our voucher". Recall tests undertaken during the campaign revealed that this strapline was well remembered.
The creative approach was referred to as "seemingly naïve, childlike animation" and was utilised to "emphasise the simplicity and transparency of the Orange offering" (p. 4 White, 2000). The advertisement also contained a clear brand image with the use of orange and black throughout.

Examination of executional tools

The mobile phone market is perceived to be highly complex and therefore one would assume that a high level of motivation, ability and opportunity is required to undertake a comprehensive analysis of the alternatives available. However, this advertisement has been designed to simplify the operation and reduce the need for a high level of effort. This is therefore an example where little cognitive processing is being demanded because of limited levels of MOA.

The framework proposes that the following executional tools may be relevant. The items highlighted in bold indicate those that have been utilised in the advertisement.

**Informational**
- Physical representation,
- Documentation,
- Showing the service encounter

**Strong brand image**
- Dramatisation
- Testimonials
- Fewer rational appeals

Firstly, this advertisement does adopt a rational and informational appeal for this utilitarian service. Although its creative approach has been referred to as "childlike animation", the message itself is about price and comparing that price to those of competitors to create a brand-differentiating statement (Stanton and Burke, 1998; Stewart and Koslow, 1989). Nonetheless, the advertisement contains very few of the executional cues considered suitable for such a purchase. It does not attempt to tangibilise...
the service in any way e.g. neither the service nor elements of the service are presented through
dramatisation, testimonials or physical representation. This may be because of the low level of
customer contact that is required in this type of service (Hill and Gandhi, 1994).

This advertisement provides very little information when one considers how complex the mobile
phone market is. There is one clear message that communicates itself verbally and visually. The
advertisement concentrates on price, which was identified as an important consideration in the results
of the survey undertaken in this research. One reason for lack of information may be that the brand
name and what it stands for is well-known, and, as the earlier research revealed, past experience plays
a big part in most decision-making processes. Indeed, the advertisement builds on its image of being
"honest, friendly and straightforward" by tuning in to the thoughts of the consumers and enhancing
the relevance of the brand, as suggested by McInnis et al. (1991). This brand image is well
established and is being built upon and reinforced in this communication.

It can be seen that only two of the cues have been adopted in this advertisement. An examination of the
other advertising strategies in the framework reveals that this advertisement utilises cues more similar
to those advocated for low involvement utilitarian services in that it promotes one easy-to-learn
rational benefit, and utilises some creativity for the message to be noticed and remembered. It does
provide information, be it rather limited, in order to solve a problem. It would therefore seem that the
purchase is being approached in a similar way to a LU service, perhaps because of the limited MOA.
This point will be returned to later in the chapter.

8.5.2. Frizzell Insurance

Background

Frizzell Insurance was launched in 1923 and specialised in providing insurance to specific professions
such as civil servants, teachers and other public servants (Redhouse and Binet, 1996). These customers
were low risk and therefore fairly claim-free, which enabled the company to grow and flourish. They
were also loyal to Frizzell, with nine out of ten customers renewing their policies annually. This allegiance meant that the majority of their customers had been with them for a long period of time, some for more than 55 years. However, this situation changed in 1990 with the launch of Direct Line which challenged all previous industry norms. Ironically, one of the Direct Line's main differentiators was the type of service that Frizzell Insurance had been providing for many years: direct communication on the phone. By the end of 1990, many of the other insurance companies imitated Direct Line's approach, providing a direct service with competitive pricing and backing it up with extensive advertising. The effect of this change on Frizzell was a slow-down in enquiries. It was therefore decided to move away from affinity recruitment towards mainstream consumer advertising. This campaign was similar to a product launch in that very few people had previous knowledge of the company. Despite that, Frizzell had a much smaller advertising budget than the competitors.

The aim of the advertising was to create enquiries from the "right" sort of people. These people were defined as "traditional, responsible people, the sort who might spend their time gardening, doing crosswords, reading and taking caravan holidays in the Dordogne" (Redhouse and Binet, 1996, p. 113). They were cautious people who were looking for integrity and good service. Loyalty was an important factor to them, more important than financial deals that were more relevant to the 'high risk' consumer.

Creative Approach

The advertising proposition was therefore, "when you join Frizzell, you will never want to leave" and the objective of the advertisement was to position Frizzell Insurance as "honest, expert, trustworthy and helpful".

The advertisements achieved this goal by utilising real case studies, which showed people who had been with the company for many years. For example, one advertisement is the story of Mr and Mrs Leverton, who claimed on their insurance in 1957 when a lump of coal fell out of the fire and showed
the same couple 39 years later with the same insurance company. The use of black-and-white photography and news clips from the past adds to the nostalgic feel and provides authenticity. The approach is warm and gentle.

**Examination of executional cues**

Insurance is classed as a high involvement utilitarian service and the framework therefore proposes that the following executional tools are appropriate:

- **Informational**
- **Physical representation**
- **Documentation**
- **Showing the service encounter**
- **Strong brand image**
- **Dramatisation**
- **Testimonials**
- **Fewer rational appeals**

Firstly, this advertisement does not utilise an informational appeal. It adopts an emotional appeal of tradition and security (Pollay, 1983) for a utilitarian service. It achieves this through nostalgia and creating a feeling of warmth and belonging. It also tangibilises the service by showing customers claiming over the phone and receiving reimbursement in the post. Some versions of the advertisement also show the service provider answering the phone and dealing with claims forms (a physical element of the service). This inclusion of tangibilisation techniques may be because insurance policies are very difficult to evaluate, depending heavily on experience qualities which are only available when it is necessary to claim for reimbursement. Nonetheless, tangibilisation is not achieved through providing information such as price or speed of service, which differentiates it from other insurance companies such as Direct Line. The main message in this advertisement is that the company has been around for a long time and has many customers who are brand loyal. This approach creates a trustworthy and
reliable brand image, which is designed to gain the attention of and be appealing to sensible, low-risk purchasers. This is an example of segmenting by lifestyle, which has been identified as appropriate for the HE services (Rossiter et al., 1991).

8.5.3. AA

Background

The AA was losing its hold on the Recovery and Breakdown market, with the number of new members declining and existing members leaving (Leach and McKerr, 1996). This situation had arisen due mainly to competitors' activities. The RAC were repositioning themselves as the “The New Knights of the Road” and new competitors, such as National Breakdown were attracting customers through price reductions. The AA did not want to join in the price war, feeling that its service was superior and deserved a premium price. The problem was that this superiority was not communicated effectively to the consumers. Its campaign at the time, “very nice men”, communicated the friendly aspect of the service. The company wanted to continue to reinforce that image but place more emphasis on professionalism.

Creative approach

The creative approach chosen was to undertake a repositioning exercise and associate the service with the other emergency services, police, ambulance and fire brigade. The television advertisement shows the police, fire brigade and ambulances in action while the voiceover provides some figures on the size of the AA, questioning why it was not number 1,2 or 3. It ends with the line “To our members we’re the 4th Emergency Service”

The AA provides a breakdown and recovery service. The purchase of such a service can be classified as a high involvement decision due to the serious consequences of making the wrong choice, e.g. slow response rate. The AA can be equated with an insurance policy in that it is a service, which is only used when necessary but needs to be reliable and trustworthy when that situation arises. Because of
this problem-solving dimension, the service is a utilitarian one. A consumer is a member of the AA and therefore the relationship is of a continuous nature but contact is generally low, until something goes wrong. When providing the service the contact is high and quite personal.

The advertising objective was to reposition the AA away from the competition and alongside the other emergency services. It did this by describing itself as the 4th emergency service. The TV advertisement shows the other emergency services in action, followed by an AA man helping a customer. The voiceover provides some facts about the size of the company e.g. the biggest in the country, dealing with 13,000 calls for help a day. It also shows the service provider, the customer and some tangible equipment.

Examination of executional tools

The framework proposes that high involvement utilitarian services should be advertised by utilising the following executional tools:

- Informational
- Physical representation
- Documentation
- Showing the service encounter
- Strong brand image
- Dramatisation
- Testimonials
- Fewer rational appeals

Firstly, the type of appeal being utilised is debatable. This utilitarian service is being promoted by associating it with the three emergency services and thereby transferring the feeling of trust and professionalism that consumers have towards the three emergency services on to the fourth, with the implication that it is as reliable and professional as them. This association is irrational and of an
emotional nature. It links to distinctive and status appeals which can be considered as emotional (Pollay, 1983). The fact that the emergency services are in the same advertisement suggests some level of endorsement by the other services but there is no rational underpinning to this association. The purpose of this advertisement is to create a strong brand image of a professional company that can be trusted. The advertisement tries to win that trust by saying that the AA is the biggest breakdown service, but more importantly, that it is in the same class as the other emergency services, which are happy to be associated with the company. The importance of trust and its association in the consumers’ minds with large organisations are supported by the findings from the practitioners’ interviews.

The advertisement does provide a number of tangibilisation cues. It shows the customer and the service provider and contains facts and figures in the voiceover e.g. “we deal with 13,000 calls for help a day” and “assist someone in need every eight seconds”. Physical representation is provided by showing the AA vans and personnel in action in a number of short dramatisations.

8.5.4. Barclaycard (1996)

Background

Barclaycard was in an increasing competitive market, with a decreasing share of turnover. The company had run the same advertising campaign, with Alan Whicker, for nine years, and it was looking rather tired. International acceptability was also no longer an adequate competitive positioning (Feldwick et al., 1996).

Objectives of the advertising campaign were therefore to increase turnover and the share of new cardholders, in other words get the card, keep the card and use the card.

Most people saw all credit cards as being very similar, with hardly any measurable image differences between Barclaycard and Access. Barclaycard had the additional features of purchase cover and international rescue. Most customers seemed aware of these services but did not seem to value them.
They had negative attitudes towards credit cards generally and were rather suspicious of the catch involved. Advertising therefore had to make these benefits real and relevant and closely associated to Barclaycard to develop a new overall positioning for the brand as a premium quality service.

**Creative Approach**

Rowan Atkinson was chosen to replace Alan Whicker and used a dramatic mode, with Atkinson being a bungling secret agent called Richard Latham, with his assistant, Bough. These two secret agents encounter numerous difficulties which arise from not using Barclaycard e.g. carpets catch fire and wedding presents get broken. These incidents provide Bough with an opportunity to explain how these disasters could have been avoided if Barclaycard had been used and in this way promote the benefits.

The advertisements are entertaining and likeable and the results in the case study indicate that this positive feeling did move from the advertisement to the brand despite the level of mistrust that existed in the industry as a whole.

**Examination of executional tools**

Credit cards have been identified as low involvement, utilitarian purchases (Weinberger and Spotts, 1989). The executional tools proposed for this service type are as follows:

- **Informational**
  - Physical representation,
  - Documentation,
  - Showing the service encounter

- **Strong brand image**

- **Creativity to gain attention**

- **Simple problem-solution format**

- **One or two easy-to-learn rational benefits**
This advertisement is for a utilitarian service and presents a rational appeal, with the emphasis placed on convenience and economic benefits (Moriarty, 1991). However, these benefits are communicated through using humour and drama. The advertisement is funny and designed to create a warm feeling towards the advertisement and towards the brand. This advertisement is therefore another example where both informational and transformational appeals are utilised.

The advertisement does contain some executional cues aimed at tangibilising the service. Some physical representation of the service is present through showing the card in the advertisement. Information on purchase cover and international rescue are also included in the discussion between the characters in the plot. The service encounter is not shown in the advertisement, which is logical when one considers that the transaction is undertaken at a distance (Lovelock, 1983).

Consumers perceived all credit cards negatively and acknowledged little difference between the main players in the market (Feldwick et al., 1996). It was therefore important for Barclaycard to separate itself from this industry norm and create an individual and unique image. This individuality was achieved by creating a human and friendly image, while linking the benefits that Barclaycard provides with the brand name.

This advertisement is therefore in line with all the executional guidelines for the low involvement utilitarian services. It demonstrates what happens when this service is not purchased and identifies the problems that may occur because of that. However, this message is communicated in a creative manner, using a well-known celebrity and creating a warmth and emotion towards the advertisement which is more associated with a transformational advertisement.
8.5.5. Pizza Hut (1998)

Background

In the mid 90s Pizza Hut experienced a downfall in sales due to a number of environmental influences. Firstly the image of pizza had been damaged by continuous price promotions from all the pizza companies. Secondly, pubs were becoming a threat due to an expansion and development of pub food. Finally, a number of competitors in the casual dining category had been created, such as Balti and Thai restaurants (Poole, 1998).

Research had shown that going out for a pizza was an impulse decision based on top-of-the mind saliency and a clear positioning strategy based on occasion e.g. quick lunch. The objectives of the advertising campaign were to persuade lapsed customers to return by emphasising the “relaxed fun” of sharing a meal with friends and family.

Creative Approach

The creative approach adopted was one of humour and celebrities. It was designed to show the pleasure of a relaxed social interaction over a pizza. This message was communicated by utilising two celebrities, sometimes unusual pairs, sitting together, enjoying each other’s company and having a pizza. For example, one advertisement showed Lomu, the New Zealand rugby player, and Underwood, the England player.

Examination of executional tools

This advertisement is for a low involvement, experiential service. Appropriate executional cues are therefore the following:

Transformational

Physical representation,
Documentation,
Showing the service encounter
Strong brand image

- Creativity to gain attention
- Emotional authenticity
- Creativity in order to be liked
- Single main benefit
- Brand benefits are implicit

This advertisement promotes emotional benefits of enjoyment and relaxation (Pollay, 1983) and does so by utilising low involvement cues such as humour and celebrity endorsement to create a funny and memorable communication. This advertisement tangibilises the service by showing the service provider, customers and service encounter as well as the pizza itself. Physical representation is also provided through showing the interior of the restaurant. However, it contains very little documentation which is not surprising in a LE purchase where feelings are more important than undertaking a rational evaluation of alternatives.

Creating an enjoyable and fun brand image was very important for this advertisement in order to pull it away from cut-price promotions and position it as the first choice for pizzas. The advertisement wishes the customers to encourage trial and remind past customers of the pleasure of eating at Pizza Hut (Ehrenberg and Barnard, 1997).

The guidelines for low involvement experiential services are in line with the advertisement. For example, the advertisement is very creative and likeable. This likeability is achieved through humour and a story line, which implicitly includes the benefits of eating at Pizza Hut. The use of celebrities lines up with the peripheral cues for low involvement product contained in the ELM (Petty and Cacioppo, 1981; 1984). It is also important that the advertisement is liked because this feeling can be transferred on to the brand (Brown and Stayman, 1992; MacInnis and Jaworski, 1989).
8.6 Discussion

It is now possible to bring these analyses together in order to make some comparisons. The use of different advertising appeals will be examined firstly, followed by the executional tools.

8.6.1. Advertising Appeals

As discussed earlier in the chapter, there is evidence to suggest that advertising effectiveness is increased if the appeal matches the type of product being advertised (Johar and Sirgy, 1991). Conversely, some work on services advertising proposes that rational appeals are more effective for all services (Stafford and Day, 1995; Stafford, 1996). The results from the questionnaire reveal that consumers do find the experiential services more interesting and enjoyable, which suggests that a transformational approach can be used effectively for these services. In addition, the lack of MOA for utilitarian services result in the consumer adopting a more holistic approach to the decision-making process, which implies that such consumers may also be influenced by brand image and an emotional appeal.

The analysis of the award-winning advertisements provides clear evidence of the effectiveness of emotion in services advertising, with four out of the five advertisements containing some transformational appeal. The advertisement for Orange is the exception. It adopts a very rational comparison of price with competitors and provides a clear reason for either choosing or staying with Orange. Saying that, the case study does reveal that this communication is part of the overall objective to maintain a brand image of being “honest, friendly and straightforward” which is obviously fairly emotive. The rational approach is therefore the most dominant. Nonetheless, inclusion of a minor emotional appeal is evident.

The other advertisements utilise such executional tools as humour, dramatisation and celebrities to create transformational advertising for not only the experiential service, Pizza Hut, but also for high and low involvement utilitarian services. The objective of this approach is to communicate both
rational and emotional benefits and link these benefits to a positive experience. The Frizzell advertisement is the best example of a high involvement utilitarian service being promoted through linking the service to a feeling of security and safety. This finding would support the proposition that high involvement utilitarian services are often not being chosen through a detailed evaluation of the alternatives, but through more emotive issues such as likeability, familiarity and a compatibility between user and band image.

One can therefore conclude that transformational advertising can be effective for both experiential and utilitarian services and that the matching of appeal to type of product is not necessarily the most effective advertising approach. These empirical findings provide support for the conceptual work in this area that has posited the growing importance of emotion in services advertising (Mittal, 1999; Mattila, 1999; Swaminathan et.al., 1996).

8.6.2. Services Executional Cues

Firstly, it is possible to examine the use of executional tools as identified in the services advertising conceptual models, across the different types of services, to establish any patterns.

### Table 8.5 Analysis of services advertising tools against each advertisement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Executional Tool</th>
<th>Orange (HU)</th>
<th>Frizzell (HU)</th>
<th>AA (HU)</th>
<th>Barclaycard (LU)</th>
<th>Pizza Hut (LE)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical representation</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentation</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showing the service encounter</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong brand image</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Much of the services advertising literature proposes that services advertising should concentrate on tangibilising the service (e.g. George and Berry, 1981; Shostack, 1977; Berry and Clark 1986). This objective can be achieved through showing physical elements of the service, the service encounter, describing the equipment, facilities or service or linking the service to a tangible symbol or logo (Shostack, 1977; Parasuraman et al., 1988; Hill and Gandhi, 1992; Berry and Clark, 1986).

Conversely, Mittal (1999) suggests that the intangibility of a service is not a problem. Indeed, the intangible aspects of the service can be developed into characteristics that differentiate the service from competitors. The advertising practitioners interviewed in the exploratory research support this opinion, placing more emphasis on outputs as in the benefits rather than inputs (Chapter 5). It is therefore necessary to establish whether effective service advertisements are containing elements of tangibilisation.

Table 8.5 indicates that the many of the executional tools identified in the conceptual models are utilised in these effective service advertisements. Physical representation is present in four of the five advertisements, in the form of a claim form, vehicles, credit card and the interior of a restaurant.

Showing the service encounter is also included in the majority of the advertisements, be it in a restaurant, over the phone or at the side of the road. Hill and Gandi (1992, 1994) propose that it is more likely to find the service encounter portrayed in advertisements for discrete services and where there is a high level of customer contact. In the present examples, one could argue that although both insurance and car breakdown services involve a continuous relationship, the service encounter is discrete. During that encounter, for all three services, while the meal is being served or the problem is being addressed, customer contact is high compared to mobile phones or credit cards.

This level of customer contact may be one reason why the Orange advertisement used no tangible cues and yet was successful. Another explanation may be that the advertisement was reinforcing an existing well-known brand and consequently there was no need to explain the service to the consumer. The
other advertisements were either creating a new brand image, as in the case of Frizzell, or repositioning an existing one.

One can therefore conclude that tangibilisation is not necessary for services advertising to be successful. Nonetheless, it is effective to show the service encounter when customer contact is high and when the objective of the advertisement is to create a new or revised brand image.

The advertisements also provide clear evidence that service advertisements are not utilised to provide documentation. Only one out of the four utilitarian advertisements, the AA, contains documentation on the type of service provided. The other examples contain very little information. The inclusion of documentation also originates from the services advertising literature (e.g. Hill and Gandhi, 1992) and yet lacks empirical support. Three significant longitudinal studies have identified a considerable shift away from including information in services advertisements between the 1970s and 1990s (Resnik and Stern, 1977; Stern and Resnik, 1991; De Pelsmacker and Geuens, 1997). Results from the content analysis in Chapter 4 found that service advertisements do not contain more information than goods advertisements and this finding is in line with other work in the area (e.g. Abernethy and Franke, 1996). The unimportance of facts and figures also seems logical if one continues the discussion from above that few utilitarian services are purchased from completing an extensive decision-making process with a detailed attribute evaluation.

Lastly, the results provide strong evidence that services advertising is being utilised to create a strong brand image for the service provider. The importance of achieving this clear brand identity has been discussed throughout this study as a way of reducing the problems of intangibility, complexity and risk and leading to the consumers being brand loyal (Snyder, 1986; Gabbott and Hogg, 1994). It was also identified as important in the practitioners' interviews. More specifically, the practitioners stated that brand building was the main objective for all advertising. Clearly, if many services are being
purchased without a complex decision-making process being undertaken, as the questionnaire results illustrate, then the image of the brand has a strong influence on the final choice of service provider.

An important element of image for the high involvement utilitarian advertisements is trust. This perception was achieved by presenting a straightforward honest view of the industry (Orange), by presenting long-term and contented customers (Frizzell) and by associating the provider with trustworthy organisations (AA). This finding provides support for the views of advertising practitioners and discussions in the services advertising literature (e.g. Berry and Parasuraman, 1991).

The importance of trust is less evident in the low involvement advertisements, which is logical when one considers that the decisions are less important and can be changed easily.

8.6.3 General Executional Cues

In addition to the services executional tools, the proposed framework examined other executional tools that the literature suggested may be relevant to the four different types of products. Table 8.6 indicates which cues were evident in the sample of effective advertisements.

An examination of the low involvement advertisements reveals that the executional cues adopted for both Barclaycard and Pizza Hut are in line with the executional cues proposed in the original framework. The Barclaycard advertisement promotes rational benefits that are linked to the outcomes of using the service and utilises a problem-solving approach as advocated by Rossiter et al., (1991).

Nonetheless, it is difficult to describe the advertisement as purely informational because it does create a warm feeling towards the brand and therefore has been identified as having both elements of informational and transformational. The benefits of visiting Pizza Hut are of an emotional nature, e.g. enjoyment, and are linked to consumption. Both advertisements adopt a similar approach in communicating these benefits. They are entertaining and use humour and celebrities to gain attention.
Table 8.6 Examination of executional tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orange (HU)</th>
<th>Frizzell (HU)</th>
<th>AA (HU)</th>
<th>Pizza Hut (LE)</th>
<th>Barclaycard (LU)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Transform</td>
<td>Transform</td>
<td>Transform</td>
<td>Inform/transform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy to learn rational benefit</td>
<td>Dramatisation</td>
<td>Dramatisation</td>
<td>Emotional authenticity</td>
<td>Creativity to gain attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity to gain attention</td>
<td>Testimonials</td>
<td>Testimonials</td>
<td>Creativity in order to be liked</td>
<td>Showing people (not) enjoying benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple problem-solution format</td>
<td>Segment by lifestyle</td>
<td>Emotional benefits</td>
<td>Single main benefit</td>
<td>-Simple problem-solution format</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animation</td>
<td>Emotional benefits</td>
<td>Brand benefits are implicit</td>
<td>Easy to learn rational benefits</td>
<td>Humour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Celebrity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

and produce likeable and memorable advertising. This finding supports the advertising literature which posits that the main objective for low involvement advertisements is to encourage trial and this can be achieved by creating familiarity through repetitive and memorable advertising (Ray, 1973; Smith and Swinyard, 1982). The advertisements with the highest level of recall are well liked and salient (MacInnis and Jaworski, 1989; Ehrenberg and Barnard, 1997).

An examination of the executional cues adopted in the high involvement services advertisements is less straightforward. As Table 8.6 illustrates, the advertisements use an array of different approaches. This finding is perhaps not surprising when the advertising practitioner is constantly under pressure to produce a creative and eye-catching advertisement. One clear result is that none of the advertisements adopt the traditional high involvement utilitarian approach where documentation, comparisons and technical experts are utilised to provide sufficient information for cognitive processing to take place.
The current analysis therefore does not support the guidelines proposed by the FCB Grid (Vaughn, 1980, 1986) or the Rossiter and Percy Grid (Rossiter et al., 1991) but does support the proposal that low levels of MOA result in low levels of cognitive processing. Table 8.6 indicates that Orange is similar to LU purchases while AA and Frizzell utilise cues designated the HE services. These findings link up with those of the questionnaire which reveal that, although there are differences in the way high and low involvement services are purchased, the level of effort put into making a high involvement purchase is still relatively low in terms of information search and evaluation.

Although these similarities are important there are differences in the way high and low involvement services are advertised. The Orange, AA and Frizzell advertisement are less entertaining and more serious. This does not mean that they are less emotional, but as Rossiter and Percy (1997) explain, they are linked to negative, relief, motivations. For example, the AA advertisements could be viewed as a mechanism for moving customers from a fearful state to a relaxed state, knowing that they have a car recovery service akin to the professionalism of the police and ambulance service. Rossiter and Percy (1997) refer to this transition as problem avoidance. There is therefore a difference between the high and low involvement advertisements, not necessarily in terms of specific executional tools but in seriousness and purpose of the message. This finding is in line with results from the questionnaire which reveal that consumers perceive high involvement purchases as being much more important than low involvement purchases.

It is also possible to identify differences between the utilitarian and the experiential services, although as the selection of advertisements only contained one experiential service it is obviously dangerous to generalise too strongly. Nonetheless, the examination of the available advertisements does suggest differences between the two groups. Firstly, the utilitarian service advertisements concentrate on the benefits of using the service while the experiential service advertisements concentrate on the pleasure of consumption. This contrast would seem to be logical, as the experience of a utilitarian service is normally not the reason for purchase. For example, there is little pleasure in dealing with one’s bank or
insurance company compared with having a holiday or visiting a fast food outlet. The utilitarian service advertisements concentrate more on solving or avoiding a problem and do this by communicating a mixture of rational and emotional benefits. The main emotional message is this feeling of trust. This approach would seem to be more applicable to utilitarian services, where high levels of uncertainty and lack of ability have been identified.

The findings from the questionnaire revealed that the utilitarian and the experiential services are purchased similarly in terms of information search or evaluation. This result, as discussed in the previous chapter, does not find support in the consumer behaviour or advertising literature. Nonetheless, the result can be explained by the identification of two important influences which previous work fails to incorporate: the minimal impact of interest and the influence of motivation, ability and opportunity. The results from this analysis of advertisements provide support for the findings in Chapter 7 on the impact of motivation, opportunity and ability. These intervening variables have a significant influence on the purchase of HU services and consequently a more holistic and emotional advertising approach is being utilised for utilitarian as well as experiential services, as suggested by McInnis et al. (1991).

8.6.4 Developing the Services Advertising Framework

The findings from this analysis of advertisements enables Table 8.7 to be constructed. The table indicates that informational and transformational approaches can be utilised in the advertising of both high and low involvement services, although in the selection of advertisements analysed, a transformational approach was the most dominant. Both high and low involvement services can also be advertised by tangibilising the service. This tangibilisation can be achieved by presenting physical representation of the service, showing the service encounter, including the service provider and/or the customer and providing some information on the service. Demonstrating the service encounter, through dramatisation, may be particularly relevant depending on the type of service and the advertising objective. It is also interesting to note that in all four categories, the advertisements are
communicating benefits. It has been suggested that this may be especially important in services due to the lack of ownership in the purchase (Gabbott and Hogg, 1998).

Table 8.7 Services Advertising Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High involvement</th>
<th>Utilitarian</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Informational/Transformational</em></td>
<td><em>Transformational</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tangibilisation of service</td>
<td>Tangibilisation of service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Problem-solving approach</td>
<td>Show people enjoying consumption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Building image of trust</td>
<td>Segment by lifestyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Few rational benefits</td>
<td>Emotional benefits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low involvement</th>
<th>Utilitarian</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Informational/Transformational</em></td>
<td><em>Transformational</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tangibilisation of service</td>
<td>Tangibilisation of service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Problem-solving approach</td>
<td>Show people enjoying consumption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Entertaining</td>
<td>Entertaining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use of peripheral cues</td>
<td>Use of peripheral cues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Simple rational benefits</td>
<td>Brand benefit to be implicit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A successful utilitarian service advertisement does not need to provide extensive documentation. However, it is important to identify the problem that needs to be solved and explain how the advertised brand is able to relieve the consumer of that problem. The solution can be presented in the form of a brand image that the consumer can trust and thereby reduce the perceived level of risk. The advertising of low involvement services is of a more light-hearted nature, with the use of peripheral cues such as humour and celebrities to create an entertaining and likeable advertisement.
8.7 Conclusion

This chapter has brought together numerous areas of research in order to create service advertising proposals for the four different types of services identified in the Services Consumer Decision Framework. Firstly, the chapter contains a review of the literature of advertising appeals and executional tools relevant to both goods and services. This review is examined with reference not only to the literature discussed in Chapters 2, 3 and 5 but also the findings of the exploratory studies described in Chapter 4 and the quantitative research detailed in Chapter 7.

This amalgamation of knowledge is utilised to propose suitable advertising appeals and executional tools for each of the four service types. These proposals are then tested by examining a sample of consumer service advertisements, which have been noted for their high levels of effectiveness. The findings reveal that an emotional appeal can be effective for both utilitarian and experiential services. They also indicate that services advertisements are being utilised to tangibilise the service, although this is not achieved by providing documentation on the service being promoted. Creating a strong brand image is important across the whole spectrum of services, with particular emphasis on high involvement utilitarian services where an image of trust and reliability is an important objective for the advertisement.

Finally, the results indicate that there are distinct differences in the appropriate advertising strategies for the four different types of service. This finding provides support for classifying services by levels of involvement and the utilitarian/experiential divide. The effective advertising strategies are thereby brought together to produce the Services Advertising Framework for HU, HE, LU and LE services.
Chapter 9: Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to examine the potential for improved practice of consumer services advertising in order to ensure that such advertising is responsive to the needs of consumers. The objective was achieved by an examination of the services advertising framework and its implications. The results revealed a gap between the various elements of the framework and the requirements of consumers. Furthermore, the implications of the framework are significant for the development of consumer services advertising.

The main conclusions of this work are that the services advertising framework is applicable to a wide range of consumer services, and that it provides a structured approach to understanding the relationship between services advertising and consumer behavior. The framework is also useful for the design of services advertising campaigns and the formulation of theory and practice. It is hoped that this work will contribute to the development of understanding of services advertising and the consumer behavior towards "Walking Erect" (Volpe, 1990).
9. Conclusion, limitations and areas for further research

9.1 Introduction

The purpose of this thesis was to analyse, develop and test the theory and practice of consumer services advertising in order to create an effective advertising framework. This objective was achieved firstly by an examination of the services advertising and advertising literature. The review revealed a gap between the two areas of study and identified the opportunity to apply well-tested advertising theories to services. It was hoped that this cross-fertilisation would provide the foundation for development that the services advertising literature was lacking. The rationale of this approach became stronger as the study evolved. The gap that existed between the two bodies of literature had little justification. Furthermore, exploratory research revealed that the services advertising theory bore little relationship to the services advertising practice. Consequently, the study developed by assessing the applicability of general advertising models in the services context.

The main conclusions of this work are summarised in this chapter. They culminate in the development of the Services Consumer Behaviour and Advertising framework. Managerial and academic implications of the framework are then examined, followed by a discussion of limitations and areas for further research.

The thesis has developed a framework, which classifies services in a new way. It provides guidelines on consumer behaviour and advertising strategies for each four service categories, built on a solid foundation of theory and practice. It is hoped that this work will contribute to the development of an understanding of services advertising and assist researchers in taking the first few ‘wobbly steps’ towards “Walking Erect” (Tripp, 1997)
9.2  Main Contributions to knowledge

It is possible to identify ten distinct contributions to knowledge that have resulted from this study. The first seven presented in this section are with reference to services consumer behaviour. The last three propose effective advertising strategies for specific groups of services.

9.2.1  Services can be classified by levels of involvement

This research compares the services advertising and general advertising literature. This exercise reveals that one of the main distinctions between the two streams of research is in classification. In the general advertising literature it is recognised that high involvement products are purchased differently from low involvement products. Consequently, they need to be advertised differently. Involvement is therefore included in the majority of the general advertising frameworks to provide an insight into how advertising works. Meanwhile, the services advertising literature discusses such classification tools as search, experiential/credence qualities and employee/customer contact with no agreement as to their appropriateness. Investigation into this anomaly, which included the views of advertising practitioners and further review of the literature, revealed no strong justification for this disparity between the two sectors. The involvement construct is therefore utilised as a classification device for services in this research and found to be effective in forming two distinct service categories. Consumers perceive services to differ in level of involvement and this perception has an impact on how services are purchased. Purchasers of high involvement services are undertaking a more extensive information search and a more detailed evaluation of alternatives than purchasers of low involvement services.

The operationalisation of the involvement construct adopted in this study incorporates two dimensions, importance and interest. It thereby not only provides the opportunity to examine the impact of involvement on services consumer behaviour, but also identifies the elements within involvement that are influencing behaviour. It was expected that the perceived level of importance would have an impact on consumer behaviour for utilitarian services while interest would be more influential for experiential services. It was found, however, that both high involvement utilitarian and experiential
services are considered by consumers to be of high importance and it is this dimension of involvement which influences the level of information search and evaluation. Although experiential services are considered to be more interesting than utilitarian services, this high degree of interest does not have an impact on consumer behaviour.

9.2.2 Services can be classified by utilitarian/experiential dimensions

The study has also introduced the utilitarian/experiential divide as a classification tool for services. This device is again widely recognised in the advertising literature and incorporated into the major advertising frameworks. Such wide acceptance is not evident in the services advertising literature, although some discussion has taken place on the suitability of emotional advertising for some experiential services, such as holiday and hotels (Section 5.2). The advertising practitioners also identify the utilitarian/experiential divide as being a useful classification tool for both goods and services. The dimensions are therefore utilised as a categorisation device in this research and found to be effective in identifying two distinct groups of services. Consumers perceive experiential services to be more emotional and of higher interest than utilitarian services and these dimensions have an impact on consumer behaviour. However, the distinction is not as acute as the literature would suggest, due to the impact of motivation, opportunity and ability.

9.2.3 Motivation, opportunity and ability have been operationalised

An analysis of the MOA literature revealed that progress in the operationalisation of these constructs was in its infancy, particularly for applications other than advertising experiments. It was therefore necessary to develop a multi-dimensional scale to measure the presence and impact of motivation, opportunity and ability on the decision-making process. The utilisation of the scale has provided an opportunity to explore the relationships between these three dimensions and their impact on services consumer behaviour. It will hopefully facilitate further research in this area in both the goods and services context.
9.2.4 Motivation, opportunity and ability have an impact on services consumer behaviour.

This research reveals that motivation, opportunity and ability are important considerations in services consumer behaviour. The impact of MOA on cognitive processing in product advertising is generally accepted. This does not obtain, however, with reference to consumer behaviour as a whole. Although the influence of motivation, opportunity and ability on information search and evaluation are often considered and included in discussions, their impact on either products or services has never been explicitly identified, until now. This study has posited that the impact of MOA on services consumer behaviour may be significant due to service characteristics such as lack of search attributes, complexity and heterogeneity of service provision. The results confirm this association. They indicate, firstly, that purchasers of high involvement utilitarian services have lower levels of MOA than purchasers of high involvement experiential services and, secondly, that low levels of motivation and opportunity result in less information search and evaluation being undertaken. The ultimate effect of the lack of MOA is that a holistic and emotional approach to decision making is being undertaken for both experiential and utilitarian purchases.

9.2.5 The complex decision-making process is often not utilised for services

The consumer behaviour and advertising literature identifies a group of products that is perceived by academics and consumers as high in involvement, and consequently purchased after substantial effort in terms of information search and evaluation. It is therefore considered appropriate to provide considerable information in advertisements so that the consumer can undertake cognitive processing and attribute evaluation. This process has been identified as being particularly relevant in the purchase of high involvement utilitarian products. The evidence from this study indicates that this is not the case for services. Most service purchasers are not prepared to collect and analyse information in order to make the right decision, despite the fact that they are highly involved in the decision and recognise that the outcome is important and, in some cases, also interesting. The respondents minimise the process by depending on one or two sources of information, considering a small number of features and alternatives and being influenced by brand imagery and emotions. This rather languid approach to
the purchase explains why service advertisements do not need to contain extensive information and why emotional advertising can be effective.

9.2.6 Emotional advertising can be effective for services.

This study provides substantial support for the effective use of emotional appeals in services advertising. Furthermore, it illustrates that emotional advertising is suitable not only for experiential services, but also for utilitarian services. Evidence is provided by an analysis of successful UK service advertisements where emotional appeals, such as security and safety, have been utilised in advertisements for utilitarian services e.g. car recovery and car insurance. This finding is significant in that it challenges the underpinning of much of the original services advertising research which is based on the premise that services advertising should provide information and documentation in order to address the intangibility of the service.

However, the contribution of this work is to indicate not only that emotional advertising can work for consumer services but also why it works. The effectiveness of the emotional appeal links with the new understanding that high involvement utilitarian services are often not being chosen through a detailed evaluation of alternatives, but through more emotive issues such as likeability, familiarity and a compatibility between user and brand image.

9.2.7 Building an image of trust is important for utilitarian services.

Building a relationship of trust between the service provider and the consumer has been recognised as important in the services advertising literature (Section 2.6.6.) and acknowledged by advertising practitioners (Chapter 4) as a way of assisting consumers to make a purchase decision. The examination of the effective service advertisements provides evidence of such an approach being adopted. It reveals that services advertising is being utilised to create a trusting brand image linked to feelings of safety and security. This practice is particularly evident for high involvement utilitarian
services, presumably because of the perceived level of risk and high levels of complexity associated with such purchases. If the consumer’s decision is based on the image of the service provider, rather than a detailed evaluation of alternatives, then less motivation, opportunity and ability is necessary to undertake the purchasing task, thereby linking with the findings on services consumer behaviour.

9.2.8 Services advertising can be utilised to tangibilise the service

The utilisation of advertising to tangibilise the service is a recurring theme in the service advertising literature, originating from the seminal work of George and Berry (1981). The means for achieving tangibilisation have been identified as documentation, physical elements of the service, appearance of personnel and the use of symbols and logos. This view has been questioned more recently with Mittal (1999) stating that tangibilisation is not an issue. The opinions of advertising practitioners, as presented in Chapter 4, also revealed that tangibilisation is not considered to be as important as communicating the benefit.

The advertising analysis undertaken in this research provides fuel for the debate on tangibilisation by revealing that tangibilising the service is indeed still an important issue in services advertising.

However, tangibilisation is not achieved through providing documentation. Rather, it is in physical representation and showing the service encounter (the latter being particularly relevant for services when customer contact is high and when the objective of the advertisement is to create a new or revised brand image). The role of services advertising in creating the service in the minds of the consumers is significant because it is unique to services and therefore demonstrates that the differentiation between goods and services advertising is still necessary, despite the realisation that the two areas have a great deal in common.
9.2.9 High and low involvement services should be advertised differently

As stated earlier, one of the major differences in the general advertising and services advertising literature is the absence of discussion on the impact of involvement in the advertising of services. The findings from the practitioners’ interviews (Chapter 4) and the results of the quantitative research (Chapter 7) indicate that involvement has an impact on all goods and services in terms of consumer behaviour and advertising strategies. Indeed, it would seem logical to assume that if the decision-making process for high and low involvement services is different then one should detect variation in the way that high and low involvement services are advertised. The examination of effective service advertisements confirms this association. The low involvement service advertisements are, on the whole, more light-hearted, likeable and entertaining in their approach. They utilise peripheral cues, such as humour and celebrities to communicate their message. The high involvement services are more serious in their communication and address the level of importance perceived by consumers by reassuring them that they are making the right decision and creating a brand image based on reliability and trust.

9.2.10 Utilitarian and experiential services should be advertised differently

The discussion on consumer behaviour reveals that utilitarian services, particularly the high involvement category, are being purchased in an emotional manner without undertaking an extensive information search and evaluation, due to low levels of motivation and opportunity. The consumer behaviour of HU and HE services is therefore similar, which raises the question of whether services need to be classified by utilitarian and experiential dimensions or should be grouped together as high involvement services. There are differences in the way HU and HE services are being advertised, however, which support the argument for classification. The main distinction between these two groups is that the effective utilitarian service advertisements communicate the benefits of having the service while the experiential service advertisements concentrate on the pleasure of consumption. These approaches are in line with the reasons why the service might be purchased. A utilitarian service
is normally purchased in order to solve a problem and therefore the advertisements can show the benefits of no longer having the problem. The generation of a trusting and reliable brand image is also evident in the HU service advertisements. Experiential services are bought for fun and therefore the advertisement communicates the enjoyment experienced by consuming the service and links the brand with a particular lifestyle with which the consumer may wish to be associated.

9.3 Creation of a Services Consumer Behaviour and Advertising Framework

This thesis has adopted an evolutionary approach to the development of knowledge on consumer services advertising. The first stage of this development was the discovery of the significant gap, which existed between the services advertising literature and the generic advertising literature. Although the services advertising literature (Chapter 2) was perceived to be a separate and distinct research area there were two clear indications that this division between the two areas may be inappropriate. Firstly, the examination of generic advertising theories (Chapter 3) indicated that much of the research undertaken was considered to be applicable to goods and services. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, the exploratory research showed that advertising practitioners did not acknowledge the goods/services divide and undertook advertising for both sectors with an emphasis on benefits and outcomes (Chapter 4). The study therefore proceeded to create a proposed framework which incorporated much of the generic advertising theory whilst including some dimensions specific to services (Chapter 5).

The proposed consumer behaviour section of the framework then required testing in the 'real' world. This was achieved with reference to the results of the questionnaire survey (Chapter 7). The second section of the framework, which provides appropriate advertising strategies for each service category, was developed and tested by conducting an analysis of effective service advertisements (Chapter 8). The end result of the investigation is the creation of the Services Consumer Behaviour and Advertising Framework, which is presented in Table 9.1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consumer Behaviour</th>
<th>Experiential Consumer Behaviour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High importance</td>
<td>High importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low interest</td>
<td>High interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low levels of MOA</td>
<td>High levels of MOA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence of MO</td>
<td>Moderate information search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate information search</td>
<td>- advertising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence of MO</td>
<td>Influence of MO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average evaluation</td>
<td>High evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advertising strategy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Advertising strategy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Informational/Transformational</em></td>
<td><em>Transformational</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangibilisation of service</td>
<td>Tangibilisation of service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-solving approach</td>
<td>Show people enjoying consumption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building image of trust</td>
<td>Segment by lifestyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few rational benefits</td>
<td>Emotional benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consumer Behaviour</strong></td>
<td><strong>Consumer Behaviour</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low importance</td>
<td>Low importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low interest</td>
<td>High interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No influence of MOA</td>
<td>No influence of MOA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief information search</td>
<td>Brief information search</td>
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<tr>
<td>- impulse</td>
<td>- impulse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low evaluation</td>
<td>Low evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Advertising strategy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Advertising strategy</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Informational/Transformational</em></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-solving approach</td>
<td>Show people enjoying consumption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertaining</td>
<td>Entertaining</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use of peripheral cues</td>
<td>Use of peripheral cues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Simple rational benefits</td>
<td>Brand benefit to be implicit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The framework classifies services in four distinct segments and provides an insight into the decision-making process that a consumer undertakes when purchasing each type of service. In addition, it provides appropriate advertising guidelines for each service classification.

The framework consists of eight boxes. Four of the boxes describe the consumer behaviour for each service classification: high involvement utilitarian, high involvement experiential, low involvement utilitarian and low involvement experiential. The section referring to high involvement utilitarian consumer behaviour has been extracted from the framework for examination.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Utilitarian</th>
<th>Consumer Behaviour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High importance</td>
<td>Low interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low levels of MOA</td>
<td>Influence of MO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate information search</td>
<td>Influence of MO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The framework indicates that consumers perceive the purchase of HU services to be important but not very interesting. They have low levels of motivation, opportunity and ability and this has an impact on the decision-making process they adopt. They are not undertaking a complex decision-making process, as would be expected for such purchases. Indeed, the majority of purchasers of these services only conduct a moderate information search and evaluation procedure.
The framework then goes on to provide appropriate advertising strategy guidelines for the type of
consumer behaviour that has been identified. Table 9.3 shows the strategy that is relevant for HU
services.

### Table 9.3 Section of framework on HU advertising strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advertising strategy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informational/Transformational</td>
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<td>Tangibilisation of service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem-solving approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building image of trust</td>
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<tr>
<td>Few rational benefits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen that both informational and transformational appeals can work for HU services. As the
consumer behaviour section indicated, the consumer is not prepared to commit the necessary energy to
undertake a comprehensive analysis of the alternatives and may therefore be influenced by emotional
issues as well as rational information. The advertisement can also be used to tangibilise the service in
terms of showing the service encounter and providing physical representation. A problem-solving
approach is effective for these services because they provide a clear indication of rational benefits
without the need for extensive cognitive processing. Lastly it is important to create a distinct image of
the service provider that is trustworthy and reliable.

### 9.4 Managerial implications

The findings from this study have a number of managerial implications. The research has examined
services advertising as a sub-set of generic advertising, in the same way as practitioners do, and has
thereby transcended the artificial and unhelpful academic boundary between services and product
advertising theory.

The main classification tools employed in the general advertising literature: level of involvement and
utilitarian/experiential dimensions, have been found to influence the consumer buying behaviour for
services as well as products. They have therefore been utilised to categorise services into four distinct clusters. It is consequently now possible for service providers to have an insight into how their particular type of service is purchased and how it can be effectively advertised. This is important because not all services are bought in the same way and service advertisers face different challenges. For example, an advertiser of mortgages must be sensitive to the fact that, although the decision is considered important, most purchasers lack the motivation, ability and opportunity to really examine the alternatives. It is obviously crucial that the advertisers ensure information on their service and company is included in the limited information search and evaluation that is undertaken, particularly when the evoked set is generally small. Advertising can therefore be used as a tool to ensure that the brand name is familiar and to encourage the consumer to consider the service provider as a feasible option that can be investigated further. This branding exercise is particularly important when one considers the similarities across the financial services sector in terms of interest rates and other benefits. Consumers are looking for a company that can be trusted to solve their problems and therefore a strong, consistent and reliable image is important. Of course, if competitors are creating a similar brand image then this may not be enough.

The role of ability also has implications. Consumers who perceive themselves to be low in ability are collecting more information than those who feel that they understand the issues. Consequently any information being provided must be useful to those who are confused about alternatives and perceive the process as complex. Obviously, the service provider who convinces them that this is not the case and assists them in making a decision may well be perceived as helpful and trustworthy, leading to brand loyalty. Those consumers, who feel they understand the issues, that is high in perceived ability, are more difficult to reach because they are not collecting information but placing more emphasis on past experience. They could be consumers who are switching between brands to get a better deal. It may be necessary to construct a different advertising campaign for this group of customers.
Different challenges face the low involvement service advertiser. The decision here is based mainly on impulse and experience, with little thought being put into the decision-making process. Consequently, it is important to have “top of the mind awareness” through creative and entertaining advertising which demands no effort in terms of cognitive processing. Although this situation has been achieved in the past through the use of humour and celebrities, the need for the advertisement to be salient means that there is a constant requirement to try new ways to gain the consumer’s attention.

The findings of the research also highlight the effectiveness of tangibilising services in the minds of the consumer, not by producing dull information-laden communications, but by showing the service experience through personnel and the physical elements of the offering. The inclusion of these features may assist not only to help the consumer in understanding what the service consists of but also to differentiate the services from competitors.

9.5 Academic implications

The services advertising literature was making little progress. The necessity to develop guidelines, which transcended specific service industries, and to move away from professional services, as indicated by Tripp in 1997, had been largely ignored. As a result, current knowledge was based on numerous conceptual frameworks and specific isolated pieces of research. In order to break out of this academic impasse this research examined services advertising as an extension of advertising instead of an extension of services marketing. There it found no good reason why the two areas of research should not be closely related. This approach was supported by the practitioners who perceived very little difference between products and services.

This change in approach has resulted in the creation of a framework which acknowledges the differences and similarities between services and goods and proposes that services can be classified in
terms of levels of involvement and the utilitarian/experiential divide in much the same way as products.

By examining consumer behaviour and advertising strategies in terms of these four groupings, the framework is a significant step forward in the knowledge of how services are purchased and the role that advertising can play in that process. The framework not only examines the decision-making process, but also identifies the influences on that process. More specifically, it reveals that subsections on involvement: interest and importance, differ in their influence, depending on the type of service being purchased. The research also incorporates the influence of motivation, opportunity and ability that have never been specifically examined with reference to services. The results reveal that MOA plays a significant part in influencing the way that services are purchased and provides an explanation why service advertisements are supplying less information and more brand imagery.

The inclusion of both involvement and MOA measures in the quantitative research necessitated a clear differentiation between involvement and motivation, two constructs whose definitions have previously coincided. The dimensions of interest and importance have been explicitly used in motivation measures in some studies (e.g. Celsi and Orson, 1988; Batra and Ray, 1986) while other works identify importance and interest as antecedents of motivation and closely related to the involvement construct (MacInnis et al., 1991). This research provides support for the latter proposition by indicating that involvement and motivation are separately identified and that it is possible for consumers to be in a state of high involvement while having low motivation.

The conclusion from the study is that services do have characteristics that demand separate attention from goods, but also have many similarities. Their intangibility and heterogeneity results in the need for advertising to tangibilise the service in some way and in some cases reassure the customers that they are making the right decision in terms of trust. Conversely, there are similarities in the way in
which goods and services can be classified and should be advertised in terms of emotion, concentrating on benefits and creating a strong brand image.

9.6 Limitations

9.6.1 Views of advertising practitioners

The interviews with the advertising practitioners revealed that the advertising industry perceives services from a different angle to that of academics and does not agree with the notion that goods and services need to be advertised differently, a notion upon which much of the services marketing literature is based. Further evidence of this discrepancy between services advertising theory and practice is available from the findings of numerous content analyses, mainly based in the US, which have been unable to identify clear differences between goods and services advertising. Nonetheless, it should be acknowledged that the sample of creative directors interviewed in this exploratory study was drawn from a small number of medium-sized advertising agencies in the south-east of England. Any generalisation should therefore be approached with some caution.

9.6.2 Influences of consumer behaviour and advertising strategy

This research has concentrated on the two main influences on consumer behaviour: level of involvement and type of service, which is a reflection of the approach generally adopted in the advertising literature (e.g. Vaughn, 1980, 1986). In addition, the study has examined the impact that motivation, opportunity and ability may have on the decision-making process. Nonetheless, other influences have been identified, such as the maturity of the good and the characteristics of the target audience. For example, the Rossiter Percy grid (Rossiter et al., 1991) recognises a negative relationship between familiarity and involvement and incorporates this impact into the framework. Vakratsas and Ambler (1999) have also identified advertising goals as an important influence on advertising strategy and this dependency was acknowledged by the advertising practitioners and by Mittal (1999) when creating his services advertising guidelines. It is therefore important to
acknowledge that there are numerous other influences that may have an impact on consumer behaviour in addition to the major influences examined in this work.

9.6.3 Development of creative guidelines

Although it was the purpose of this study to provide specific service advertising guidelines for practitioners, the application of existing theories to actual advertisements has been challenging. This situation is mainly due to the lack of substantial research in this area. Little agreement exists on the definitions of or differences between advertising strategy and executional cues, with approaches such as humour and emotion appearing in work addressing both areas. This lack of clarity has resulted in numerous lists being compiled on executional tools which have little similarity (e.g. Vanden Berg and Katz, 1998; Belch and Belch, 2001). Consequently, there was no firm foundation of knowledge upon which to base the analysis. One could argue that this is one area of marketing where specific tools cannot be identified and placed into boxes. The need for an advertisement to be salient means that an approach that works in the past will not necessarily work in the future and thereby makes any perennial guidelines immediately redundant. It is therefore important to stress that this section of the framework provides advertising guidelines based on past success stories and the presumption that they may work in the future. However, the importance and influence of creativity must be recognised.

It should also be noted that the analysis of effective service advertisements was based on a small sample due to the lack of service advertisements available from the IPA Effectiveness Awards. The sample did also not include advertisements for high involvement experiential services. It would be therefore be beneficial to extend this study to incorporate other successful service advertisements to substantiate the findings.
Areas for future research

Role of interest within the involvement construct

The involvement construct utilised in this study consists of two main dimensions, importance and interest. The former is designed to identify such antecedents as risk importance and risk probability while the latter is intended to capture antecedents of involvement such as pleasure, relevance and the sign value of the purchase. Such influences have been utilised in numerous operationalisations of the construct (e.g. Mittal, 1989, Mittal and Lee, 1989, Celsi and Olson, 1988) which have been influenced by the work of Zaichkowsky (1980) and Laurent and Kapferer (1985).

This research provides confirmatory evidence that both dimensions do exist independently within the involvement construct. However, the findings also indicate that they behave in very different ways. Although interest is higher for experiential services than utilitarian services, as expected, it has little impact on the decision-making process in terms of level of information search and evaluation. The opposite is true for importance, which is high for both HU and HE services and has a strong influence on levels of information search and evaluation, resulting in a similar consumer behaviour across the two groups. This finding is contrary to previous work in the area which has found a reduction in the amount of information search undertaken, fewer brand comparisons and fewer features being considered for experiential services (Pratt, 1998; Mittal, 1989) as well as category rather than attribute evaluation (Assael, 1998, Andreassen and Lindestad, 1998).

The original testing of the McQuarrie and Munson (1992) scale did not find that interest had little influence on consumer behaviour. They report that importance was the main predictor of information search and processing for utilitarian products such as headache remedies and laundry detergents, while interest was the main predictor for cars, instant coffee and jeans. Nonetheless, there is some support for the weak influence of interest. Similar results to this study are found in the work on services by McColl-Kennedy and Fetter (2001) where interest made little incremental contribution to the
prediction of the outcomes. More significantly, Laurent and Kapferer (1985), found that the extensiveness of the decision-making process was influenced predominantly by the perceived importance of the product and the negative consequences of a mispurchase. The pleasure facet had no influence on the choice process but did influence communication behaviour.

It is therefore necessary to explore this area further to establish the role that interest plays in the decision-making process, across both goods and services. If it is confirmed that interest may contribute to overall involvement levels, but have no impact on consumer behaviour, then this association may lead to the possibility of involvement being measured purely by levels of importance. It is worthwhile to note here that importance has previously been recognised in the advertising literature as the main element of involvement. Vaughn (1986) measured involvement by asking whether the decision was important, required lots of thought and if there was a great deal to lose if the wrong decision were made, in other words, level of perceived risk. Rossiter et al., (1991) used perceived risk as an indicator of involvement. Others suggest that, although the risk and importance components of product involvement are related they are distinct constructs, (Laurent and Kapferer, 1985; Dholakia, 1997; Chaudhuri, 2000). Further investigation is therefore required to establish firstly, whether interest is a valid sub-scale in the measurement of involvement and, if not, whether risk captures all aspects of the importance dimension.

9.7.2 Further investigation into the influence of MOA on services consumer behaviour

This is the first study to examine the impact of motivation, opportunity and ability as explicit influences on consumer behaviour generally and specifically in the context of services. This thesis has consequently opened up a fruitful area for further investigation. For example, the research has found that purchasers of high involvement utilitarian services have low levels of MOA, which diminish information search and evaluation activity. Present knowledge on relationships between MOA and cognitive processing (e.g. Poiesz and Robben, 1993, 1996; MacInnis et al., 1991; MacInnis and Jaworski, 1989) would suggest that low levels of MOA would also reduce cognitive processing on the
advertising content of utilitarian services. However, the testing of this assumption has been outside the scope of this study. It is therefore necessary to explore this area further and test, firstly, whether levels of MOA are the same for a variety of goods and services advertisements and, secondly, whether levels of MOA have a similar impact on the amount of cognitive processing undertaken for different types of advertisement. A close correlation has been found between cognitive processing and high recall, positive brand attitude and strong purchase intentions. It is therefore important to understand the influences on cognitive processing and how it can be stimulated (MacInnis et al, 1991).

The new MOA scale, created in this thesis, also needs to be utilised in different consumer behaviour contexts. This will enable comparisons to be made across the product/service divide and establishes the impact that MOA has on information search and evaluation for a variety of goods and services. Such research will also assist in the understanding of the operationalisation of ability. The negative association that exists between ability and information search/evaluation is not in line with previous measurements of ability in cognitive processing studies. However, this inverse relationship may be due to the fact that respondents do not have the opportunity to increase their levels of knowledge in the same way as is possible during the decision-making process (section 7.5.6.).

9.7.3 Comparison of goods and services decision making process

Although this study has included some comparisons between services and goods in its preliminary discussions, e.g. content analysis, the development of the consumer behaviour framework has been based purely on an analysis of purchasing behaviour with reference to services. It would therefore be of benefit to utilise a similar research design to collect and analyse data on product purchases. Such a study would assist in highlighting areas of similarity and difference between goods and services generally, as well as between goods and services in each quadrant of the framework. For example, it would be interesting to understand what similarities and differences there are in the way that people purchase high involvement utilitarian goods and high involvement utilitarian services, and whether they are perceived by consumers to have similar levels of involvement and MOA. Such knowledge
could ultimately lead to the creation of a consumer behaviour and advertising framework designed for both goods and services, and lead to a clearer understanding of the main differentiating factors between goods and services.

9.7.4 Application of service marketing classification tools

The framework has adopted the classification tools of involvement and the utilitarian/experiential dimension from the generic advertising literature and brought them into the service context. The result has been the creation of four distinct groups of services that are purchased differently and require specific advertising appeals and executional tools referred to throughout the text as HU, HE, LU and LE.

However, it can be argued that each segment still contains a wide range of different services which could be segmented further by utilising some of the classification schemes proposed in the services marketing literature. An example can be provided from the use of Lovlock's (1983) five classification tools (see section 2.3). The first of these tools classifies services by the nature of the service act and consisted of four categories, tangible act on people, tangible act on things, intangible act on people and intangible act on things. If this approach is applied to the services in the HU quadrant of the advertising framework, the following categories emerge (Table 9.4).

These tools have not been empirically tested and it would therefore be a significant development to establish whether there is some commonality between them in terms of consumer behaviour and advertising strategies. The service typologies proposed by Bowen (1990) could be examined in a similar way. The outcome of this exploration could be a framework which incorporates both general and service-specific classification tools and thereby identifies groups of services with greater consistency.
Table 9.4 Application of Lovelock’s classification tool on HU services

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lovelock’s four types of service act</th>
<th>Service</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tangible act on people</td>
<td>Car recovery (often includes person)</td>
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<td>Tangible act on things</td>
<td>Car repair</td>
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<td>Intangible act on people</td>
<td>Insurance (life)</td>
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<td>Intangible act on things</td>
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<td>Mortgage,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Insurance (house/car)</td>
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References


Berelson, B. (1952), *Content Analysis in Communications Research*, Glencoes, III; The Free Press.


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Chartered Institute of Marketing (www.cim.co.uk).


De Chernatory, L., Segal-Horn, S. and Khan, S. (1999) 'How useful is the product versus services divide when developing services brands?', Proceedings of the 12th Services Marketing Workshop, University of Nottingham, November.

De Pelsmacker, P. and Guens, M. (1997) 'The use of different types of emotional appeals and information cues in magazine advertisements over time, and the degree of overall similarity of strategy: the Belgian case' EMAC.


Appendix A: Copies of articles

The following articles have been published from the work contained in this thesis. Copies of the articles are provided in this appendix:


• 'Are services advertised differently? An analysis of the relationship between product and service types and the informational content of their advertisements', *Journal of Marketing Communications*, Vol. 6, June 2000.


• Integrating advertising theories with conceptual models of services advertising, *Journal of Services Marketing*, Vol. 16(5).
<table>
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<th>Factual Information</th>
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<td>Product/service type</td>
<td>Wednesday, Cos, Articles, DFS, Computer, Perfume, Mail, Dividends, Bed, Paint</td>
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Appendix C: Interview Protocol

Research Objectives
The interviews have been designed to answer the following two questions;
- How do creative directors classify services
- What do creative directors perceive to be the main differences between goods and services advertising

Field Procedures
A letter was sent out to all medium sized full service advertising agencies within a 20 mile radius of the research centre location. These agencies were identified through the UK Advertisers Annual. Follow up phone calls were able to confirm nine interviews with creative directors. These interviews took place from February to August 1999.

Interview Structure
In order not to influence the respondents the interview will begin in a general manner. The outcome of this section will influence the rest of the interview, because some subjects will hopefully be brought up from his/her experiences. Those subject areas which have not been raised will then be put forward for discussion. This semi-structured approach will allow the interviewee to have some control over the order and type of information being discussed but the interviewer must ensure that all areas are covered.

Interview Coding
The interview will be taped and the transcript then typed and examined using the following coding scheme.

Services
Inseperability
Heterogeneity
Perishability
Tangibility
Categorisation of services
Misc

Role of services advertising
Need to tangibilised service
Need to differentiate
Need to minimise risk
Need to create personality
Misc

Tangibility
Factual information
Physical Evidence
Use of symbolic symbols
Misc

Advertising approaches
Rational approach
Emotional approach
Behavioural approach

serv
serv-sep
serv-het
serv-per
serv-tang
serv-cat
serv-misc
sad
sad-tang
sad-diff
sad-risk
sad-pers
sad-misc
tang
tang-info
tang-evid
tang-logo
tang-misc
app
app-rat
app-emo
app-beh
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Misc</th>
<th>app-misc</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Service Encounter</strong></td>
<td>enc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showing employees</td>
<td>enc-emp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showing customers</td>
<td>enc-cust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showing service encounter</td>
<td>enc-enc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showing both</td>
<td>enc-emp/cust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc</td>
<td>enc-misc</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Word of mouth</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Incentive</td>
<td>wom-inc</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dramatised</td>
<td>wom-plot</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage</td>
<td>wom-talk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Misc</td>
<td>wom-misc</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Brand Image</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Importance</td>
<td>bran-imp</td>
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<tr>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>bran-rep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency of theme</td>
<td>bran-con</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc</td>
<td>bran-misc</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Type of service</strong></td>
<td>type</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level of involvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationship with customer</td>
<td>type-cust</td>
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<tr>
<td>Type of search qualities</td>
<td>type-qual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level of tangibility</td>
<td>type-tang</td>
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<tr>
<td>Type of recipient</td>
<td>type-rec</td>
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<tr>
<td>Misc</td>
<td>type-misc</td>
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This enabled interviews to be compared by grouping together subject areas, without losing the individual comments and input. Each section contained a misc heading in order to include any information not included in the other codes.

**Interview Content**

My name is Kathy Mortimer and I am a lecturer and researcher at the University of Luton. Before joining the University I worked in advertising and promotion for about ten years so I am familiar with the advertising industry. My area of study is examining the differences between advertising theory and practice and the main purpose of this interview is for you to tell me about your experiences of putting together creative concepts on a variety of accounts. I anticipate that the interview will take about 30 minutes. Before we start please let me stress that it is your opinion or experience that I want to hear. There is no right or wrong answer. And I hope you don’t mind if I tape the interview. This enables me to concentrate on the conversation without worrying about writing everything down, and it helps with analysis later.

**General**

- I would like to start by discussing your work. Perhaps you could tell me about some of the products and services that you have been involved with during the last year or so.  
  *Purpose is firstly to break the ice by getting them to talk, secondly to establish which services, if any, the interviewee has worked on. These should be noted because they are referred to later.*

- Which one has been the most enjoyable to work on and why?
Purpose is to encourage the participant to talk in more detail about one specific account with the possibility that it may be a service. It may be an indication of the difficulties of working with services.

- There are obviously many types of products and services with different characteristics which may effect the creative approach adopted. Could you please look at these cards and try to group similar offerings together in piles. We can then discuss what those similarities are.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Insurance</th>
<th>Car</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dry-cleaning</td>
<td>Food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast Food Outlet</td>
<td>Drink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo processing</td>
<td>Washing powder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airline</td>
<td>Cosmetics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car repair</td>
<td>Jewellery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel</td>
<td>Retail</td>
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<tr>
<td>Car breakdown service</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Telecoms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Credit Card</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The purpose of this exercise is to establish how aware the interviewee is of service characteristics and this could then be taken further to discuss different ways of advertising them. It may bring us such issues as level of tangibility, whether the service is on a person or an object, equipment/people based, type of relationship i.e. formal or nonformal and level of personal interaction, continuous/discrete transactions, level of customisation, and utilitarian/experiential.

- I would like to learn about your experiences in working with services in some more detail. You mentioned ... are there any others that could be classed as services?

  *This probing is in case, now the topic of services has been explored more deeply, the interviewee is aware of more services not considered earlier.*

- Do you find any differences in coming up with a creative concept for services as opposed to products?
- What makes services different?
- Are the objectives generally similar?

**Tangibility**

- How have you made up for the fact that there is no “service” to show the customer?
- Have you included more factual information?
- Have you included physical representation of the service such as tickets, uniforms and physical surroundings?

**Buyer Behaviour**

- Have you adopted a more rational or a more emotional creative style with services? Can you give me some examples?
- Is there more emphasis on encouraging the customer to try the service?
- Do you think that services are purchased differently to products?

**Showing the service provider/encounter**

- Have you shown the service encounter in some of your campaigns?
- Which services were these for?
- Who did you include in this drama?
- What about communicating with employees?
Word-of-mouth communication

- In a previous interview it was said that service advertising could be used to encourage word-of-mouth communication. What do you think?
  - Projective questioning - expose issues that the interviewee may not of thought of, make them feel less self-conscious about holding an opinion
- How could this be achieved?

Brand Image

- Do you think brand building seems to be a big issue in advertising services?
- Does it have to be approached differently for services?
Appendix D; Transcript of Interview 4

I am a lecturer and a researcher at the University of Luton and my area of study is to examine the differences between advertising theory and advertising practice and the main purpose of our meeting today is for you to tell me about your experiences of putting together creative concepts on a variety of accounts. I anticipate that the interview will take about 30 minutes. Before we start please let me stress that it is your opinion or experiences of something that I want to hear. There is no right or wrong answer. And I hope you don't mind if I tape the interview. This enables me to concentrate on the conversation without worrying about writing everything down, and it helps with analysis later.

If we could start with a discussion about your work. Perhaps you could tell me about some of the products and services you have been involved with during the last two or three years.

A good example would be Tiptree Jams and the work we have done for that we have developed two executions and have taken them right through from concept level to execution with placement in the media. O their work over the last couple of years is Collins publishers where we have produced advertising for their Christmas campaign, which we had to pitch for and once successful we again had to follow it through right to placement in the media.

Which one has been the most enjoyable to work on and why?

I think the Tiptree one. I have not got any examples here but ... I worked as a free lancer for another agency and I am the account handler so I am in charge of the strategy and to develop it so that the creative brief is accurate and is going to say the right things. The creative person then has to work with that brief and come up with a concept, which fits the brief. My work makes it relevant whereas the creative work makes it impactful so that the relevant message is presented in that impactful way.

OK. I want you to do something for me. I have lots of cards here with different products and services. What I want you to do is to group them together using elements that are common to all the products and services in that group. I you can think of it from an advertising point. How would you advertise the different products and services and are there different characteristics that would help you to put them into groups.

Right they can be grouped in many ways. In terms of how you would advertise them, that varies tremendously because for example insurance is finance, as is credit cards, but insurance can be business to business, it can be consumer based, it can be household it can be car etc.

If you think of them all as consumer based.

They are all consumer based. What exactly are you looking for? I would struggle to group them. You could put car and car repair and car breakdown together but the way you advertise car repair is completely different from the way you advertise cars. There is no real link between them. There are some which are more interesting to work on that others and some which are deadly boring but you can make something of anything really. I would struggle to group them in any meaningful way.

Do you think there are characteristics, which would effect the advertising approach?

Every, every, you know, if you take insurance, it depends on what your objectives are. You might be doing corporate. When General Accident merged with Commercial Union they had a big corporate requirement to get the name across that they had merged which is completely separate from flogging an individual product so there is a difference within that, you might be pushing life cover, you might
be pushing pensions you might be pushing critical illness, all with different requirements so they are
too broad a category. Same with food, the way you market jam is very different from the way you
market frozen chicken. The work we did on Benedictine, a liquor, is very different from work on a
beer so it would be wrong to group them. To produce a manual or how to do advertising would not
necessary help you. It would be too inflexible. You have to look at the individual requirements. The
business objectives, marketing objectives and advertising objectives are important rather than which
group it is in. Washing powder adverts generally look the same and jewellery adverts generally look
the same but apart from that most of the others tend to vary. Even then when radian came out we were
told that clothes smell while before the emphasis was washing whiter, so different things come
through. I don’t think I have helped you on that.

Oh you are helping me. Let us look at it in another way. Another way we could look at it is the
utilitarian product or service and the experiential product or service. So there are some things that
you buy to solve problems and there are some which you buy for your own pleasure.

Like the grudge products, like car breakdown.

Yes. Could we split them using those categories?

You could but I don’t think it is necessarily meaningful. It makes to start to think in a certain way
about how you are going to advertise it and that could be the wrong way. You shouldn’t straightjacket
it to start with. (Group 1 car breakdown service, washing powder, dry cleaning, car repair and
insurance). These are the sort of grudge products and the others are not grudging purchases. There
might be some that overlap like credit cards and Telecoms but the rest are straightforward. But I still
don’t think it is a meaningful approach. When discussing the strategy it might be said that this is a bit
of a grudge purchase but it is only one comment out of many comments. It should not effect my
mindset out the outset. It should only be a consideration. It might mean that you have to take a
different approach in the way you motivate people white with the others if people want something it is
easier than if they don’t want it. All these things they need. There is a difference between needing and
wanting but it is quite close.

So the last exercise with the cards. Could you just group them together in products and services?

Products and services. That is interesting isn’t it?

(Pause while he sorted out the cards)

Sometimes it is the way things are portrayed. You have some very obvious products, which are cars,
washing powder, cosmetics, jewellery, food, and drink. And some obvious services, which are retail,
photo processing, although they produce a print so that could be woolly, car breakdown service, and
car repair. And an area, which sits in-between, depending on how you approach it. Dry-cleaning is a
service but also a product. It is probably more a service, if you put them on a continuum. Insurance,
they have products but they are also a service.

What products do they have?

Life cover, household insurance, critical illness, they are products. But you still go to Norwich Union,
or General Accident, they are providing a service, like a retailer. Credit cards provide a service in that
they enable you to buy things although they are a product because they are an individual item, so that
is a bit woolly. Fast food outlet, that is a service but you are buying a product, which is a fast food
outlet, so that is definitely a woolly one. Holidays are probably a product more than services. Hotels in
one sense you are getting pure service from it but it is more of a product.

It is more of a product?
Yes it is more of a product but not a pure product. Telecoms is again going to sit somewhere in the middle.

So you have got some obviously ones, and some that are more, So I have got five groups. The extreme examples of services are Fast food, car breakdown and car repair, and my next group is dry-cleaning, photo processing. My middle group is fast food, insurance, insurance, Telecoms, and then a group, which is quite close at being a product, which are holiday, hotel and airline and then products, which are food and drink.

**Good. Well done. You have done a tangibility continuum.**

Yes, and there is certainly greyness in the middle. If you put brand names on things, for example for Telecoms is it BT or is it Family and Friends. Family and Friends is definitely a product but it provides a service and BT is the service provider. It gets complicated.

*You think Family and Friends is a product?*

I would say it is a product.

*Why is it a product?*

Because it is an item which you can compare with somebody else’s. So you buy the BT service and then you have individual elements within it like Friends and Family. So classically they are a product although BT is a service. So it is woolly. One normally shouldn’t categorise them. What is going to do to the consumer, what are the benefits to the consumer, that sort of sort, therefore how are we going to advertise it? If you straightjacket yourself too much you could create problems.

*Let us put the cards away then thank you. That is the hard work done.***

Broadly you don’t think is it a product or a service, you just get on with the issue.

*There is an increasing amount of research taking place in the advertising of services. That is the particular area that I am looking at. Whether services should be advertised differently, and if they are advertised differently, whether the characteristics of a service effect the advertising strategy.***

Yes, it should do. It depends on how they are classified. Something that the agency sees as a service, the consumer may see as a product.

*That’s right. So this is the first stumbling block really because people are classifying them differently. You have got academics doing it one way, practitioners doing it another way. I haven’t started on the consumers yet.*

It would be interesting because hopefully the practitioners are closer to the consumer. If you were to talk to planners or market researchers you should get much closer to the consumer that if you talked to account handlers or creatives, who are obviously closer than the client.

*OK so I would like to know a little bit more about the experiences you have had working with services.***

I have worked for retail like Thomas Cooks and Woolworth’s and the big corporate end of Woolworth we did look at the time of service. That it wasn’t the last stop call, as it used to be, but the first stop call. Because of the products and the service, i.e. the friendliness and all the rest they could offer. But price of the products, its range of products, its availability of products are all product orientated things rather than the service because you are buying on the basis of the product at hand. At the corporate level what you need to do is make it a more attractive service to use that classification. If there is a
distinction you could argue that brands are more like services in that they are providing more than something totally functional. You buy Nescafe coffee, partly because you like Nescafe coffee and you like the taste and partly because it is Nescafe rather than an own label so you are taking something from the brand and that isn’t really a product, emotional, warm feelings which is arguably a service type territory. You felt good about it. So Woolies had to address its brand, its service element to make that more attractive, first call rather than last call, while pushing products to get the tills ringing. But we did divide it into products and service. With Thomas Cook, in the early 80’s to late 80’s when they had just started the retail price war in the holiday markets so it was very much product driven as that was what the consumer was after, £10 holidays, and no deposits. And the whole booking strategy changed, instead of booking early they were booking later and later to pick up the discount deal. They were buying a product rather than a service. And insurance I have worked on. Canada Life was one. We were advertising products, trying to sell products but we did do a corporate brochure, this is Canada Life and this is how good we are which is more a service. It is a balance between the two. So where there is a service element there are also product elements.

It is easier to push something like jam because it is a product but it is a product with a brand. It is not going to serve you but it does give you brand values and a payback for that.

One of the things which makes services different from products is the intangibility issue, we have not got anything to show.

That is like brands.

Yes OK. How can you get round that from an advertising point of view?

You are playing on the emotional side aren’t you. You are saying, this is the quality of the service, this is the heritage of the service, so that people feel good about what they are buying and it justifies their decision to go with it, perhaps paying a bit more. It might be that they feel the service is more like themselves, for people like you and me. There are many ways of getting that across.

So you think emotion is playing a big part in this.

In service it has to be, yes. If you take price and promotion out of it, if you walked into Sainsbury and you put the range to one side and the price to one side you are left with the persona, the. The people were nice, or I didn’t like them they weren’t helpful at all, the staff were too young or too old, it is an emotional reaction. I suppose you could sit down and make a comparison. They are more helpful than another one, which is more rational, but I think it is more emotional. You go away feeling good about it. The self-esteem is being driven by the emotional reaction that you are getting. So it is more emotional than practical or rational. Although it could be hard to quantify.

Because you said about the heritage of the service. Whether that is important.

To a certain extent it could be. It depends what you are buying. I could go to Homebase or B and Q and I go the Homebase. I feel more comfortable there. There is more quality there which is perhaps the Sainsbury persona coming in rather than the Woolies. They are positioned differently. The products are probably identical.

If we could move away from retail because there is a great product element in retail. Can you think of something like mortgages or insurance, how can you differentiate your service from other peoples.

You can not show it because there is nothing to show.

Well you can. We are presently mortgaged renewing and we are looking at price. You can be quite rational about it and say this is the term, this is the amount we want to borrow, and I want to have a fixed rate, which is the cheapest. And Invariability it is the ones you have never heard of.
And are you happy to go with the ones you haven't heard of?

Yes, they are not going to default on it, there are so many protection clause it does not matter. Perhaps different for a saving account we you have a face to face. We have a mortgage with xxx at the moment and I have never met anyone from .. It was organised through a financial advisor who said it was a good rate so we just went with it.

You did not need the reassurance of being with the Halifax

No, because if you like it is not my money it is their money they are giving to me. If you were saving you would be a little more aware of someone you have not heard of.

One of the ways of intangibility problem is to include more factual information. The other way is physical presentation, the inside of the bank. You show elements of the service.

What you are doing is building a feel for the service so the consumer says, that is a bit more like me, I like that. They have to feel comfortable with the image. If you see the Easijet uniform they are bright orange and polyester. But you don’t buy easyJet for the service you buy easyJet for the price, the product. Where as if you had a choose ... we would have preferred to have gone with Singapore because of its reputation, due to its advertising and word of mouth, but because of available we had to fly with Malaysia which was excellent. The service, the product was better than Singapore, the plane was better, bigger but the service was very similar. The rational product was different so you could have shown the product and that might have helped #, being more rational. If you put to much information the consumers don’t take it in anyway. The image is much better than the facts. So it is a difficult question, not because there is not answer to it but because there are many different answers. That is why the theory gets not quite useless but it if is out of a text book we can not apply it to a particular advertising problem because they are going to vary. The broad principles can be there. I tent to dig back into a textbook if I am really stuck and I need a framework to start thinking, you have a mind block so you o a SWOT analysis, hierarchy of effects. You use it as a tool. But if you use it too religiously it creates problems.

Buyer behaviour, we have touched on this, the rational and emotional idea. Do you think there is more emphasis on encouraging the customer to try the service?

More now than there used to be?

No the difference between products and services again. Would that be considered an objective for services?

Test the rest now try the best, all that kind of stuff. Experience, is obviously very important. You get it with products and services.

It is considered important in services because you can not evaluate the service because it is intangible you can not look. You can not know what it is like until you try it yourself.

Yes, I quite understand, but something like life insurance the only time you would try it is if you are dead, the crutch comes on car insurance is when you make a claim. So a look as the administration is satisfactory you have not means of experiencing it which is why that type of company are trying to have a dialogue with their customer base so that they feel something about the brand.

It is such long term relationship you can almost forget you are having it

Yes, you go through the renewal process and a year later it comes around again and nothing has happened in-between. To keep a relationship going. We have a lot of contact with General Accident
and I felt obliged to stay with them. That relationship has helped them to keep it. With the AA we have one of two bad experiences and felt less inclined to stay with them. And you might get to the point where you make an irrational decision and go to someone else even though they are more expensive on price.

*For some services it is difficult to build trial in, but like the AA is first year free to encourage people and see what happens.*

Yes I mean if you get someone to try it, inertia sets in anyway. Inertia is the millstone round the neck of marketing. Once it is there it is very difficult to shift.

*Another way of doing it is to show the service provider or show the service encounter. Do you thing that.*

It is a demonstration of the type of people you like. You had the Woolwich girl and the smiling face which was quite important because it moved that and us on from the words and tombstone advertising is important. Magazines know that if they have a female face on the front they sale more magazines than if they don’t. So show the service provider smiling and interactive does enable you to see yourself there Visualising is important.

*Like the Direct Line. Yes*

Yes that they are human and chatty and as long as their product lives up to that. You have to do ten minutes doing ones and two and threes to get anywhere and that could let them down. They say you do business with a human face and all that sort of stuff and you don’t you do it with a machine so it is an interesting dilemma.

*In a previous interview it was suggested that a service advertisement could encourage word of mouth communication. What do you think?*

So someone saw an ad, and felt positive about it and told their friends

*Either encourage it or to copy it*

Well one route is to show Joe public saying, oh this is brilliant. Like the stork-testing ad. I think on the TV it is less believable in press advertising again you think it is made up you still read what they are saying so in that sense using word of mouth as part of the advertising message can be effective. Whether an ad can encourage people to go and talk to other people I don’t know. People talk about advertising a lot. But is normally did you see the ad for or did you see the ad with so and so in and they talk about the ad rather than oh I am going out to buy. You would have to have a really intriguing creative strategy to encourage people to talk about it.

*Word of mouth is supposed to play an important part in the decision making process of services.*

Yes it is underrated. We have recently bought a bread maker.....totally based on word of mouth. If it is a new thing of which you don’t have experience then it is quite important.

*Like plumbers the name just gets passed along the street.*

Yes for a pure service it is very important, like plumbers or chippies. I want to get some pictures framed and you almost want to have someone say go to so and so because they are good and they are cheap. Rather than visit two or three and try to make some value judgement of them. So word of mouth or endorsement is very important which leads on to the whole area of celebrity endorsement. That does
work but sometimes the celebrity can become more important than the brand name. ....Woolies Joe Brown.

Lastly, brand image. Do you think that brand building is a big issue in the advertising of services?

If you define Commercial Union or Direct Line as the brand then the intangible benefits of values attached to that brand is obviously very important because ...Virgin is a good example, it is so flexible, people don’t worry. Particularly insurance, it is the brand that is the umbrella. Midland has just dumped their brand. It might effect how their new business goes. The logo is not dissimilar.

Perhaps you link with the brand image.

It is an ownership. Brand identity and brand values, which are separate but linked closely.

OK

Is that clear. There are not discrete departments and perhaps that is what practitioners are saying. It is what the service offers and what you need to communicate that is important. You are always trying to create action rather than opinion.
Appendix E: Final Questionnaire

This questionnaire is part of a study to find out how people buy consumer services and what the main influences are on that decision. It would be much appreciated if you could spend a few minutes answering these questions on a particular service you have recently bought.

Thank you very much for your time
Kathleen Mortimer
Luton Business School

Please choose (and tick against) one service from the list below which you have bought in the last three months.

Airline travel    Savings account    Photo processing
Dry cleaner      Cinema            Car repair
Fast food         Mortgage          Insurance
Theme park        Holiday           Car recovery service

You will now be asked some questions on how you reached your decision when purchasing the service you have indicated above.

1. How would you describe the service you have purchased?
   Please circle the appropriate number on each line of the horizontal scale.

   important to me: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 unimportant to me
   boring to me: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 interesting to me
   relevant to me: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 irrelevant to me
   exciting to me: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 unexciting to me
   means nothing to me: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 means a lot to me
   necessity: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 treat
   appealing to me: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 unappealing to me
   of concern to me: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 of no concern to me
   dull: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 intriguing
   matters to me: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 doesn’t matter to me
   fun: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 not fun
2. How did you compare the alternatives on the market to reach a decision?

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements by circling the numbers on the scales.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I looked at a number of alternatives before making the decision</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I found some of the information difficult to understand</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The whole process was a bit of a rush</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There wasn’t the opportunity to spend much time on it</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I put a lot of effort into making the right decision</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some aspects of the service were just too complicated</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was keen to examine all the available information</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I got a bit confused when comparing the brands</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had to make a quick decision</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. How many different services did you consider? ____________________________

4. How many different features of the service did you compare? ______________

   If possible, please list what the important features were. ________________

5. Which brand did you choose? ____________________________________________
6. When choosing which service to buy which of the following did you do? Please tick in the relevant box to indicate how extensively you undertook each of these activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Yes extensively</th>
<th>Yes moderately</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asked relatives for their opinion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tried to remember what alternative my friends use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked the opinion of salespeople</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thought about my previous involvement with this type of service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checked some printed consumer information sources for an objective view i.e. consumer reports</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relied heavily on past personal experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considered what a magazine article said about the service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid attention to print advertisements about the service before buying</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simply went ahead and made a selection without additional information or further consideration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked the opinion of a friend</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid attention to TV commercials about the service before buying</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bought the first one I found</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked the opinion of the owner or manager of the store</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read available information such as printed brochure, point of purchase display</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked the opinion of an employee of the firm offering the service such as a receptionist, delivery person etc</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made a purchase selection and did not worry about getting more information before buying</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read a report written by a knowledgeable third party e.g. a critic, authority in the field or product specialist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. How did you make that final decision? Please choose the one most appropriate answer from the list below by circling the letter next to it.

My final decision was based on:

A  Detailed evaluation of a number of alternatives
B  Evaluation of one or two important factors
C  Overall impression of the brand
D  A feeling it was the right service for me
E  A ‘try it and see’ approach
F  Just past experience

8. What was the one main reason for choosing that alternative?

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

9. Thinking of the advertisements for this type of service, please list up to three that you remember most clearly. If you can, express in a few words the message the advertising was trying to get across.

Advertiser  Message

1. ____________________________________________

2. ____________________________________________

3. ____________________________________________

10. Did advertising assist you in making your decision? If yes in what way? If not why do you think that was?

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

11. Can you please provide some information about yourself by ticking the appropriate box on each line.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex:</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age:</td>
<td>16-25</td>
<td>26-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income:</td>
<td>Below £20,000</td>
<td>£20,000-£40,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix F: Pollay’s advertising appeal classifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rational Appeals</th>
<th>Emotional Appeals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>Distinctive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenient</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheap</td>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural</td>
<td>Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisdom</td>
<td>Modesty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Productivity</td>
<td>Plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamed</td>
<td>Adventure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>Freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy</td>
<td>Vain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durable</td>
<td>Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern</td>
<td>Nurturance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technological</td>
<td>Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Ornamental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neat</td>
<td>Dear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Popular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Magic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relaxation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maturity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Morality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Humility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Untamed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Casual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sexuality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Affiliation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Succorance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix G: Advertising Visuals

Four of the advertising case studies, examined in Chapter 8, provided visuals of the TV advertisements being discussed. These are provided in this appendix, for information:

Frizzell
AA
Barclaycard
Pizza Hut
In 31 years the world has seen a lot of changes. But Mr Catherall is still with Frizzell Insurance.
The AA is the biggest breakdown patrol force in Britain.

So why aren't we No.1?

The AA is twice as big as our nearest competitor.

But we're not No. 2.

We deal with 13,000 calls for help a day.

But we're not even No. 3.

In fact the AA gets someone out of trouble every eight seconds.

We're proud to be No. 4.

To our members we're the 4th Emergency Service.
BARCLAYCARD

'TEAPOT' 60 SECONDS

Latham: Got the present, sir?
Bough: Of course Bough.

Latham: With my Barclaycard. Oh yes obviously Bough. I had a manilla envelope stuffed with cash so naturally I used Barclaycard.
Bough: It would have been insured against loss or damage.

Latham: Excuse me, Sir Brian.
Bough: Enough in the whip round then?
Latham: 75 pounds and 14p.
Bough: 14p! Who put that in? I don't suppose you bought it with your...

Latham: Bough! This is the wedding of the daughter of the head of MI7. There are four men on the roof, two in the choir and the vicar has no previous convictions. I think that's ample insurance for a china teapot.

Sound: Breaking teapot.
PIZZA HUT
***

TV ADS