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Effective framing strategies for services advertising: The impact of narrative, rhetorical tropes and argument on consumer response across different service categories.

KERRIE ANNE MCGINN

Doctor of Philosophy
Management Department
Cass Business School
June 2013

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ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the role of information framing strategies for services advertising. The framing strategy refers to the distinguishable pattern in the manifest advertisement (McQuarrie and Mick 1996) and represents the structural composition of the information presented (Tsai 2007). Focusing on services is an important line of enquiry which is in keeping with global economic developments and the evolution of services marketing as a distinct discipline within marketing. Despite the ever increasing importance of services for global economies, services advertising research remains underdeveloped compared to goods (Stafford et al. 2011). Information framing is important because how messages are presented to consumers has both direct effects on consumer responses, as well as mediated effects via the specific information processing styles triggered. This thesis is divided into three papers, each of which work towards improving our currently impoverished understanding of the effectiveness of different framing strategies for services. The first paper is a literature review, which offers a comprehensive review of the traditional and contemporary literature informing our knowledge of the impact of framing strategies on consumer responses to advertising. The next paper employs a content analysis methodology to shed light on the different framing strategies viewed as alternatives by modern services and to offer an overall perspective on the most frequently used framing strategies in practice. This paper also examines trends in the use of framing strategies across service types and identifies if any disparity exists between the findings of this study and optimal framing strategies as dictated by the theoretical background. The third and final paper in this thesis is a 3(framing strategy: argument v. metaphor v. narrative) x 2(mental intangibility: high v. low) x 2(customization: high v. low) between-subjects web-experiment (n = 663). This paper develops and empirically tests hypotheses related to the moderating impact of service characteristics on consumer response to framing strategies. This study raises interesting findings on the effectiveness of different framing strategies in enhancing comprehension and attitudes towards different types of services. Further, comparing the content analysis and experimental findings brings the disparity between how service practitioners are framing their advertisements versus effective framing strategies to light. This thesis therefore has important managerial implications.

CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

1.1. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

In addition to dominating the US economy, services are now major components of developed nations around the globe (Lovelock and Wirtz 2011). In 2011, services represented almost 80% of US GDP (CIA 2012). In keeping with the importance of services to modern economies, the academic field of services marketing has evolved and matured, to become a legitimate area of concern within the discipline of marketing (Fisk and Grove 2010). Despite an increasing acceptance of the service-dominated logic as a major force in marketing (Vargo and Lusch 2004), research related to the marketing of services lags behind that of goods (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2011). One line of inquiry which warrants attention is the effective promotion of services, in particular services advertising (Stafford et al. 2011). Economic turbulence has characterized recent years, yet global advertising spend has been on the increase, totaling $495 billion in 2012, an increase of 3.8% compared to 2011 (Baker 2012). More specifically, services advertising represents an important proportion of that spend; three of the top five ad spenders in the US in 2011 were services: Verizon Communications, AT&T and Comcast spent $7.4 billion combined (Advertising Age 2012). The difference between goods and services is well documented and accepted (e.g. Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry 1985; Zinkhan, Johnson, and Zinkhan 1992), and because of these differences, advertising strategies which are effective for goods cannot automatically be applied to services (Stafford 2005). A primary challenge for services advertisers is to offer 'a tangible and differentiating element to the marketing of services' (Lane and Russell, 2000: 22). While the growth of services marketing as a discipline indicates the academic community's acceptance of the need for research related to services advertising strategies, in reality research on services advertising is underdeveloped compared to that of goods. Services advertising is described as being 'in a stage of arrested development' (Stafford et al. 2011: 147).

One important advertising executional tool is the framing strategy, which is the distinguishable pattern in the manifest advertisement (McQuarrie and Mick 1996) and refers to the structural composition of the advertisement as opposed to the appeal or content. Information framing is important because how messages are presented to consumers can significantly impact their attitudes and intentions towards advertised products (Levin, Schneider, and Gaeth, 1998). In fact, the manner in which information is expressed may be more important than the content in terms of persuasion (McQuarrie and Mick 1996). Framing strategies prompt different information processing styles, which in turn guide the extent and

type of cognitive effort devoted to advertisement processing (e.g. Green and Brock 2000). Framing strategies exert a direct impact on consumer responses, as well as a mediated impact via the information styles prompted. The breadth of different framing strategies is wide and diverse, including argument, narrative, mental simulation, categorization and the variety of rhetorical schemes and tropes. Argument is a factual executional strategy, entailing explicit, to the point information presentation (Peracchio and Meyers-Levy 1997). Argument triggers piecemeal processing, which involves examining the implications of each piece of information individually and bringing them together in order to develop an overall judgment (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975, Anderson 1981). Advertisements with a narrative framing strategy have a story as a foundation and include characters, a setting, a plot and a time frame (Boller 1988, Padgett and Allen 1997). Narrative framing prompts transportation, a convergent process, which involves all mental systems and resources becoming devoted to the events occurring in the narrative (Green and Brock 2000). This is conceptually similar to the idea of getting 'lost' in a story (Nell 1988). Where narratives hook the audience as voyeurs into the story world, stimulating them to engage and empathize with the characters depicted, mental simulation invites the audience to cognitively formulate a behavioral episode similar to a story in structure (Escalas 2004). Also referred to as a consumption vision (Phillips 1996), mental simulation facilitates visions of the self behaving in an envisioned situation and experiencing either the process of interacting with the product or the outcomes of the behavior (Zhao, Hoeffler and Dahl 2009). Mental simulation persuades via the same mechanism as narrative, both framing strategies trigger transportation (Escalas 2004). A rhetorical figure is defined as an artful deviation from audience expectation (Corbett 1990). Rhetorical figures can be divided according to rhetorical schemes and tropes. These two categories of figuration fall at different points in terms of the deviation gradient, with schemes being less marked with deviation than tropes. The artful deviance inherent in rhetorical figures indicates to viewers to elaborate on the communicator's intentions in so marking the text (McQuarrie, Edward and Mick 1999). Tropes are undercoded semantically, and are therefore incomplete, and it falls to the viewer to fill in the gap and interpret the strong and weak implicatures facilitated by the rhetorical figure (McQuarrie and Mick 2005). Schemes are characterized by overcoding and excessive regularity, in that they present the viewer with redundant cues that directly illustrate the intended interpretations. Tropes therefore lead to greater viewer elaboration than schemes.

This thesis aims to compare the impact of a number of powerful information framing strategies on consumer response to services. An investigation of effective framing strategies for services advertising is relevant, because prior conceptual research recommends different framing strategies to increase the tangibility of services, yet this has largely been ignored empirically. For example, association is recommended to make intangible services more concrete (Berry 1980, Berry and Clark 1986, George and Berry 1981). Metaphor, a rhetorical trope, is a framing strategy which facilitates association between two separate domains because alluding to concrete domains can increase consumer comprehension of abstract, complex objects or concepts (Gibbs 1998). Therefore, metaphors are suggested to be uniquely suited to convey the abstract benefits of services. On the other hand, both dramatization (Legg and Baker 1987) and visualization (Miller and Foust 2003), which can be facilitated via narrative and mental simulation respectively, have also been recommended as effective advertising strategies for services. In spite of these long standing recommendations, few studies have examined the effectiveness of framing strategies for services advertising. In order to determine which framing strategies to test empirically via an experiment, an in-depth literature review on the implications of framing strategies for consumer response is carried out. Next, a content analysis research on service advertisements will be conducted to identify (a) the variety of framing strategies employed in practice, and (b) the frequency with which the different framing strategies are used. The literature review and content analysis combined will guide the choice of framing strategies for further empirical examination.

This research investigates the impact of information framing strategies on consumer responses to different categories of services. An important limitation of prior research in the field of services advertising is that it has largely concentrated on specific-service providers rather than general categories of services. This is evidenced by two important, comprehensive literature reviews on services advertising research, from 1980-1995 (Tripp 1997) and 1997-2011 (Stafford et al. 2011). Both reviews note that services advertising research is failing to create generalizable theory across service professions and industries, by focusing on a specific class of service provider, such as health care or legal services (e.g. Moser & Horace 2012, Moser et al. 2010). A key calling emerging from Stafford et al.'s (2011) review is to move beyond assessing the advertising strategies of specific professionals towards developing more normative guidelines that can help services develop appropriate promotional strategies. Lovelock (1983) argues that cross-fertilization of marketing strategies is possible

when different services share similar characteristics. This thesis takes a step towards addressing this call for action (Stafford et al. 2011) and takes heed of Lovelock's (1983) assertion to consider the role of framing strategies for different categories of services grouped by shared characteristics. In order to do so an extensive review of research on different service typologies is carried out (Appendix IV), to shed light on the characteristics available to aid the conceptual categorization of services. The service characteristics which are investigated further in this thesis (both the content analysis and the experiment) are selected based on (a) the impact of the service characteristic of consumer response to the service, and (b) the ability of different framing strategies to impact how consumers respond to the different service types. Mental intangibility (high versus low) and customization (high versus low) are selected as the two typologies across which to investigate the effectiveness of framing strategies.

A mentally intangible service lacks a clear mental representation; it is difficult to grasp, especially in cases where the evaluator lacks experience with the service (Finn 1985, McDougall and Snetsinger 1990).The services marketing literature argues for the importance of minimizing the level of intangibility associated with services (Parasuraman et al. 1988), the challenge facing marketers is to reduce the risk surrounding the purchase of products perceived to be mentally intangible, by making their offerings mentally, rather than physically tangible. As mentioned, framing strategies, such as association (via metaphor) (Berry and Clark, 1986), visualization (via mental simulation) (Legg and Baker 1987) and dramatization (via narrative) (Miller and Foust 2003) have been recommended to decrease the intangibility of services. The experimental research investigates whether framing strategies have the ability to reduce the mental intangibility and increase the comprehension of services. Further, the experiment investigates whether the mental intangibility variable moderates the impact of framing strategies on consumer comprehension and attitudes. Customized services are higher in experience and credence qualities (Zeithaml 1981) due to the active customer participation in and inseparability of the service process, increasing the risk associated with customized services. Such services are tailored to individual needs; therefore the emphasis tends to be on the service process (Kellogg and Nie 1995). Service evaluation is inseparable from the customer experience in interaction with the service provider, while utilitarian factors such as price tend to have less significance (Välikangas and Lehtinen 1994). For customized services high in experience attributes, the consumer may attempt to envision the whole progression of events associated with the service encounter.

Affective and symbolic responses are important in the evaluation of experience-centric services (Otto and Ritchie 1995). This thesis investigates the ability of different framing strategies to effectively portray the holistic service benefits, and the impact on consumer responses. The moderating impact of customization (high versus low) on the impact of framing strategies on consumer comprehension and attitudes is investigated.

1.2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary aim of this thesis is: *to extend our understanding of the role of framing strategies for services advertising*. To this end, more specific objectives include: (a) identifying and examining previous research on the use of framing strategies for services; (b) examining the use of framing strategies by service practitioners, specifically exploring trends in the use of framing strategies across service types, and (c) determining the effectiveness of framing strategies for different categories of services.

Each of the three papers is working towards the primary aim of this thesis – i.e. extending our knowledge of the role of framing strategies for services advertising. However, each paper also carries individual objectives. The first paper is the literature review (Chapter 2), which addresses objective (a) above. The key aim of this paper is to present a comprehensive review of the traditional and contemporary literature informing our knowledge of the impact of framing strategies on consumer responses to advertising. An objective of this review is to illustrate the variety of framing strategies available to marketers and to propose relevant variables which moderate their effectiveness. This paper adds to current knowledge on the topic of framing strategies in an advertising context. Firstly, literature on different framing strategies is amalgamated in order to critically analyze the effectiveness of specific strategies for modern marketers. This is the first time such diverse framing strategies as rhetorical tropes, narrative, mental simulation, categorization and argument have been conceptually compared and contrasted in one model. Secondly, this paper recognizes the role of individual difference variables on the effectiveness of framing strategies, and draws on findings from the extant body of literature in order to incorporate them in the conceptual model developed. Thirdly, this research introduces the moderating impact of relevant product characteristic variables, illustrating situations in which different framing strategies are expected to

outperform others. Finally, this topic has substantial scope for further research; as such recommendations for future research are developed.

The second paper (Chapter 3) also works towards the primary aim of the thesis of extending current knowledge about the role of framing strategies for services advertising. The individual objectives of this research are twofold, and relate to objective (b) above. The first is to identify what framing strategies services are employing in practice. This helps to generate a comprehensive overview of the different types of framing strategies, which will later guide the selection from which framing strategies are chosen for experimental research. This objective also raises an exploratory research question: What framing strategies are being used by services in practice to frame their marketing communications messages? Therefore prior to examining trends in the use of framing strategies across different service types, this content analysis explores the variety of framing strategies employed in practice. This will give an idea of the different framing strategies viewed as alternatives by modern services and also offer an overall perspective on the most frequently used framing strategies in practice. The second objective is to examine trends in the use of framing strategies across service types and to identify if any disparity exists between the findings of this study and the framing strategies recommended as most effective in prior academic research. This research makes an important contribution to prior work by generating knowledge related to service advertising practice, highlighting the disparity between the framing strategies recommended in prior academic literature to advertise services and the framing strategies used in current advertising practice.

The final paper is the experimental study presented in Chapter 4, which tackles objective (c) (determining the effectiveness of framing strategies for different categories of services). This research: investigates the effectiveness of three powerful framing strategies, narrative, metaphor and argument, for services advertising; and examines to what extent the impact of these strategies is contingent on the characteristics of the service, namely customization and mental intangibility. This study extends prior research on the impact of framing strategies on consumer response by comparing the effectiveness of narrative and rhetorical tropes, e.g. metaphor. Extant research is limited in that narrative is compared to argument (Mattila 2000) and rhetorics are compared to argument (McQuarrie and Phillips 2005), but no research compares the effectiveness of narrative and rhetorical tropes. A limited body of work examines the impact of mental simulation versus analogy in the context of radical new

products (Hoeffler 2003, Feiereisen et al. 2008). This study is in line with this research by comparing framing strategies which prompt transportation versus elaboration processing styles. The moderating impact of service type on consumer response to framing strategies has also been ignored. This research responds to the call for a focus on services advertising (Tripp 1997, Stafford et al. 2011), and introduces the notion of the moderating role of service characteristics on framing strategy effectiveness. This experimental study takes into consideration relevant service characteristics (service customization and mental intangibility), in order to develop knowledge which crosses industry boundaries, yet remains conscious of the complex and dynamic nature of the definition of services.

1.3. THESIS STRUCTURE

This thesis is written and presented in the format of three separate papers. Chapter 2, Chapter 3, and Chapter 4 are complete papers, each include an introduction laying out the background, objectives and contribution of the paper, as well as a discussion section presenting the findings, proposing avenues for future research and detailing managerial implications and limitations where necessary. Chapters 3 and 4 are empirical pieces, and so also include complete methodology sections, a presentation of results, and an analysis of the findings.

Chapter 2 is a literature review, which presents a comprehensive review of the traditional and contemporary literature informing our knowledge of the impact of framing strategies on consumer responses to advertising. While the rhetorical perspective has received a substantial amount of attention since the early ‘90s (e.g. McQuarrie& Mick 1992, 1996, 1999, 2003, 2005; Tom & Eves 1999; Toncar and Munch 2001; Gkiouzepas and Hogg, 2011), the role of mental simulation and narrative has traditionally received less attention in consumer behavior, although the implications of these framing strategies for marketing has received greater recognition recently (e.g. Hoeffler and colleagues 2003, 2004, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2012; Mattila 2000; Dal Cin 2005; Escalas 2004, 2007). This is the first literature review to draw on findings from research across the different framing strategies, to discuss the impact on consumer response and to summarize relevant moderating variables supported by empirical evidence in the literature. In the early stages of this review it became clear that

there is a lack of research across framing strategies, for example comparing rhetorical figures to narrative and mental simulation. Typically rhetorical figures are compared to argument (Toncar and Munch 2001) and narrative is compared to argument (Mattila 2000). There are scant exceptions to this, namely the small body of research which compares mental simulation and analogy for innovative products (Feiereisen et al. 2008, Hoeffler 2003). These studies raise important findings and challenge traditional thinking on the effectiveness of analogical reasoning for information acquisition (Gregan-Paxton and Roedder John 1997). This suggests that current knowledge of advertising strategies would benefit from further research comparing different framing strategies in a range of contexts. The lack of a unified terminology and definition of framing strategy is perhaps one reason for the lack of empirical research comparing different framing strategies.

Chapter 3 is a content analysis of the framing strategies used by different types of services. It explores the frequency with which such framing strategies as: argument, narrative, mental simulation and rhetorical schemes and tropes are employed by mentally intangible versus mentally tangible services, and customized versus standardized services. In line with previous work which employs content analysis to investigate theoretical predictions and to delve into the implicit intent of advertisers (e.g. Stafford, Spears , and Hsu 2003; Spears et al. 2006), this study uses content analysis to test theory related to effective framing strategies for different types of services. A substantial number of articles have employed content analysis methodology to investigate services advertising strategies (see Appendix I). While a variety of different variables have been explored, for example investigating the informational-transformational appeal (Zinkhan and Zinkhan 1989), no research has touched on the use of framing strategies by service advertisers. The content analysis builds on prior research on the impact of framing strategies on consumer responses and draws on resource matching theory (Anand and Sternthal 1990) to develop predictions pertaining to the frequency of framing strategies for each service type. Recommended content analysis procedure and guidelines are followed (Kassarjian 1977). Each ad was coded independently by two researchers (Stafford, Spears, Hsu 2003 and Laroche et al. 2011). The first author coded the entire sample (as in van Kuilenburg et al. 2011). Two postgraduate students in marketing were employed as research assistants to code half of the sample each; therefore each advertisement was coded by both the first author and a trained postgraduate student. The coders were trained extensively to identify the absence or presence of all variables. Findings are presented and discussed. This

paper has interesting implications for service marketers and a number of limitations are raised.

Chapter 4 is an experimental investigation of the impact of framing strategies on consumer response to different categories of services. A 3 (framing strategy: argument v. metaphor v. narrative) x 2 (mental intangibility: high v. low) x 2 (customization: high v. low) between-subjects web-experiment is conducted (n = 663). This paper develops and empirically tests hypotheses related to the moderating impact of service characteristics on consumer response to framing strategies. Drawing on resource matching theory (Anand and Sternthal 1990) and the need to balance the three types of cognitive load (Chandler and Sweller 1991), this study hypothesizes that narrative will be more successful in enhancing comprehension and attitudes to services characterized by high mental intangibility. Based on the unique ability of narrative to holistically portray the service experience (Bruner 1986) the attractiveness of narrative over metaphor and argument for optimizing comprehension and attitudes to customized services is also hypothesized. The mediating impact of information processing styles on the moderated impact of framing strategies on consumer comprehension and attitudes is also explored. This experimental methodology comprises four steps. The first is a pre-test (n = 94) to select four services, one at each end of both the level of mental intangibility and customization spectrums. In order to increase reliability, the final four services included in this experiment are from the same industry. First, twelve services are pre-tested, four from each of three industries – health and fitness, finance, and travel and tourism. In an experimental lab, each respondent randomly viewed one of the twelve service descriptions, followed by a questionnaire. Services selected from the travel and tourism industry best fit this study's requirements in terms of level of metal intangibility, customization and attractiveness, therefore the eight services from fitness and financial industries are rejected for further use. The services selected for the experiment are new services with fictitious brand names: Dream Trips, iCube, Cross Country and BeautifulStay. The second stage of the research involves another pre-test (n = 237) in order to develop a metaphor framing strategy for each service, to guarantee no significant differences in the level of figurativeness, metaphor comprehension, and familiarity with- and attitude to the base domain. Next, 12 advertisement stimuli are developed, using information gleaned from the second pre-test to ensure the argument and narrative framing strategies are conveying the same service attributes as the metaphor stimuli. The third and final stage of the experiment is the main study, which is conducted with an online consumer panel (n = 663), who are randomly and

evenly allocated to one of the twelve conditions. The findings are presented, beginning with an analysis of the moderating impact of individual difference variables, and controlling for these when necessary. This is because examining the influence of individual difference variables on consumer response to framing strategies is not the objective of this research, and potential confounding variables require controlling for. The main findings relating to the hypotheses are explored in detail for mentally intangible versus tangible services, and then for customized versus standardized services. Finally, findings on the mediating impact of information processing styles on the impact of framing strategies on consumer response to different service types is presented. This paper concludes with a discussion of the findings, a consideration of managerial implications, and a deliberation on potential limitations.

All three papers consider the role of information framing strategies, the information processing styles they trigger, and the impact on consumer responses. The first paper is not specific to services advertising, but considers prior research on the topic of framing strategies in the field of consumer behavior, psychology and learning, and also marketing communications. The content analysis employs findings from the literature review by using the breadth of framing strategies found and amalgamated in the literature (see Figure 2.2 Conceptual model), to guide the content of the coding booklet used to code the presence or absence of framing strategies in the sample of advertisements. The content analysis also draws on the theory discussed in the literature to develop hypotheses related to the effectiveness of different framing strategies for different types of services. The experimental study addresses the limitations of the content analysis research by measuring consumer comprehension and attitudes, and also measuring the influence of different consumer variables and controlling for these variables when necessary. But more importantly, the experimental findings on the effectiveness of framing strategies in generating higher comprehension and more positive attitudes are compared to the content analysis findings, i.e. the frequency with which service practitioners are employing framing strategies in practice. Specifically, comparing the findings from the experiment and content analysis reveals the disparity between effective framing strategies for each type of service (high/low mental intangibility and high/low customization) and trends in the use of framing strategies by different service types in practice. Because each paper is building on the previous one and all are presented in complete form, the discussion of the theoretical background and the development of the key independent variables is repetitive. For example, the discussion of particular framing strategies (argument, narrative, and rhetorical tropes) is repeated in

Chapter 2, 3 and 4. Also, the explanation of the service characteristics (mental intangibility and customization) is presented in Chapter 3 and repeated in Chapter 4. At the beginning of each chapter the reader will be signposted about content which has been previously presented, in order to avoid reader fatigue and to clarify the new contribution of each chapter.

CHAPTER 2:

LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of research on the impact of information framing strategies on consumer response to advertising: The moderating role of individual differences and product characteristics.

ABSTRACT

Information framing strategies have a powerful impact on how consumers respond to advertisements. The variety of framing strategies prompt different information processing styles which effect consumer's cognitive and affective responses to advertisements. The range of framing strategies is diverse, from argument and the breadth of rhetorical schemes and tropes, to categorization, narrative and mental simulation. The impact of specific framing strategies on consumer responses has received a substantial amount of attention in the literature, but there is a lack of research comparing different framing strategies, in particular comparing rhetorical figures to transporting framing strategies (i.e. narrative and mental simulation). Further, the definition of the concept is varied and lacks clarity. The purpose of this paper is to provide a comprehensive review of the literature which informs our knowledge of the role of information framing strategies in the context of marketing communications. The literature is amalgamated in order to analyze the diverse range of framing strategies in one conceptual model. This is the first time such diverse framing strategies as rhetorical tropes, narrative, mental simulation, categorization and argument have been conceptually compared and contrasted in one model. The moderating impact of both individual difference variables and product characteristics on consumer response to framing strategies are also considered. This topic has substantial scope for further research to advance our knowledge of the concept; therefore recommendations for future research are put forward.

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Global advertising spend in 2012 reached $495 billion, an increase in 3.8% since 2011. This figure is forecast to grow by more than 3% in 2013 (Baker 2012).Given the huge amount invested in advertising, it is crucial that ads are executed effectively to generate positive consumer responses. One important advertising executional tool is the framing strategy, which is the distinguishable pattern in the manifest advertisement (McQuarrie and Mick 1996) and refers to the structural composition of the advertisement as opposed to the appeal or content. Information framing is important because how messages are presented to consumers can significantly impact their attitudes and intentions about advertised products (Levin, Schneider, and Gaeth, 1998). In fact, the manner in which information is expressed may be more important than the content in terms of persuasion (McQuarrie and Mick 1996). Framing strategies prompt different information processing styles, which in turn guide the extent and type of cognitive effort devoted to advertisement processing (e.g. Green and Brock 2000). Framing strategies exert a direct impact on consumer responses, as well as a mediated impact via the information styles prompted. Researchers of rhetorical figures, one method of message framing, argue that advertisement messages can be presented in a variety of manners, and that one of these ways will be the most effective depending on the situational context (McQuarrie and Mick 1999).

The current state of literature on framing strategies is limited and is inconsistent in relation to the definitions and explanations of the concept. There is no universally accepted terminology of the concept of framing strategy, rather a number of close but slightly varied expressions exist. In their research on drama (narrative) and argument in advertising, Deighton, Romer and McQueen (1989) refer to the 'form' of advertising texts. The seminal researchers on rhetorics in advertising, McQuarrie and Mick (e.g. 1992, 1996), define rhetorical schemes and tropes as the 'stylistic variation'. Peracchio and Meyers-Levy (1997) refer to narrative and argument as 'ad executional strategies', whereas Escalas et al. (2004) use the term 'ad structure' and Wentzel et al. (2010) use the term 'representational format' for the same strategies. This research uses the term 'framing strategy' when referring to such information executional techniques as rhetorical figures, argument, narrative and mental simulation. Framing strategy is an appropriate terminology as it has been defined as a structural characteristic (Shimp, Urbany and Camlin 1988) and a strategy of advertising message

construction (Tsai 2007), which offers an adequate representation of the strategies analyzed in this research. This indicates that the unit of analysis is the structure, rather than the appeal or the content of the message. While the rhetorical perspective has received a substantial amount of attention since the early '90s (e.g. McQuarrie& Mick 1992, 1996, 1999, 2003, 2005; Tom & Eves 1999; Toncar and Munch 2001; Gkiouzepas and Hogg, 2011), the role of mental simulation and narrative has traditionally received less attention in consumer behavior, although the implications of these framing strategies for marketing has received greater recognition recently (e.g. Hoeffler and colleagues 2003, 2004, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2012; Mattila 2000; Dal Cin 2005; Escalas 2004, 2007). This is the first literature review to draw on findings from research across the different framing strategies, to discuss the impact on consumer response and to summarize relevant moderating variables supported by empirical evidence in the literature. In the early stages of this review it became clear that there is a lack of research across framing strategies, for example comparing rhetorical figures to narrative and mental simulation. Typically rhetorical figures are compared to argument (Toncar and Munch 2001) and narrative is compared to argument (Mattila 2000). There are scant exceptions to this, namely the small body of research which compares mental simulation and analogy for innovative products (Feiereisen et al. 2008, Hoeffler 2003). These studies raise important findings and challenge traditional thinking on the effectiveness of analogical reasoning for information acquisition (Gregan-Paxton and Roedder John 1997). This suggests that current knowledge of advertising strategies would benefit from further research comparing different framing strategies in a range of contexts. The lack of a unified terminology and definition of framing strategy is perhaps one reason for the lack of empirical research comparing different framing strategies.

The primary aim of this paper is to present a comprehensive review of the traditional and contemporary literature informing our knowledge of the impact of framing strategies on consumer responses to advertising. The purpose of this review is to illustrate the variety of framing strategies available to marketers and to propose relevant variables which moderate their effectiveness. This paper adds to current knowledge on the topic of framing strategies in an advertising context. Firstly, literature on different framing strategies is amalgamated in order to critically analyze the effectiveness of specific strategies for modern marketers. This is the first time such diverse framing strategies as rhetorical tropes, narrative, mental simulation, categorization and argument have been conceptually compared and contrasted in one model. Secondly, this paper recognizes the role of individual difference variables on the

effectiveness of framing strategies, and draws on findings from the extant body of literature in order to incorporate them into the conceptual model developed. Thirdly, this research introduces the moderating impact of relevant product characteristic variables, illustrating situations in which different framing strategies are expected to outperform others. Finally, this topic has substantial scope for further research; as such recommendations for future research are developed. The rest of this paper is organized as follows. The first section provides a detailed overview of the breadth of framing strategies found in the literature, including argument, narrative, mental simulation, rhetorical schemes and tropes, categorization, analogy and metaphor. The framing strategies are defined and the impact on consumer response as evidenced by prior research is analyzed. The following section elaborates on the information processing styles stimulated by each framing strategy. These include piecemeal processing, narrative transportation and elaboration. The mediating impact of these information processing styles on consumer responses is described. The next section introduces relevant variables which moderate consumer responses to framing strategies. These are separated according to individual difference variables and product characteristic variables. Individual variables encompass: emotional (affect intensity and empathy), competency (knowledge, cognitive capacity, metaphor thinking ability), processing style (tolerance of ambiguity, need for cognition and visualiser/verbaliser) and involvement. Product characteristics include innovativeness, intangibility and hedonic versus utilitarian nature of the product. Finally, a summary of the main points emerging from the literature and recommendations for future research are illustrated.

2.2. FRAMING STRATEGIES

2.2.1. Argument

Argument advertisements are defined as ‘purveyors of objective brand meanings that contain structured systems of attribute-benefit logic designed to convince audiences of the validity of specific brand claims’ (Boller and Olsen 1991: 172). In contrast to narrative framing which draws the audience into the advertisement (Chang 2009), argument framing holds the audience at arm’s length (Wells 1989). Argument framing is also referred to as a factual executional strategy, which involves clear, to the point, explicit content (Peracchio and

Meyers-Levy 1997). Argument ads present associationally or rationally connected ideas which can be objectively verified and evaluated for truth. They directly convey information about product features to the audience and use logic to persuade (Wells 1989, Chang 2009). Peracchio and Meyers-Levy (1997) draw on resource matching theory to explain the effectiveness of different framing strategies and illustrate that argument places less demands on cognitive resources than narrative framing. Argument framing involves a single explanation for the phenomenon which can be judged based on the weight of evidence available to the viewer. Adaval and Wyer (1998) and Mattila (2000) suggest that arguments encourage piecemeal information processing, which involves integrating the evaluations of each individual service attribute listed into a coherent overall judgment (Anderson 1981). In such information processing circumstances, negative evaluations may receive greater weight than positive evaluations (Birnbaum 1974, Adaval and Wyer 1998). This mode of thought can be characterized as logical psychological functioning, and is prompted when an individual views stimuli with both implicit and explicit arguments (Padgett and Allen 1997).

Consumer Response to Argument

The strength of argument advertisements lies in the clear manner in which functional product attributes and benefits are conveyed, the weakness is its inability to convey symbolic product meanings (Padgett and Allen 1997). Argument ads have the advantage of presenting logically connected ideas, thus limiting the number of potential interpretations of a brand image. They clearly convey functional product benefits and consequences, avoiding the risks inherent in 'open' advertisements (Ketelaar et al. 2008). However, because those ideas are based on logic, the customer is in a sense forced to argue for or against them (Padgett and Allen 1997). Such ads therefore may be useful for limiting multiple interpretations, but may create difficulties by forcing customers to agree or disagree with the information they provide. Another factor impacting the differential effect of argument versus narrative and rhetorics is the affect elicited by the different framing strategies. Argument framing per se doesn't prompt pleasure in the manner that rhetorical tropes do (Barthes 1985), nor does it have the potential to engender positive emotional responses that narrative framing prompts (Mattila 2000). On the other hand, argument requires less cognitive resources than narrative (Chang 2009) and rhetorical tropes (Mothersbaugh, Huhmann and Franke 2002). In situations where factors act to inhibit deeper cognitive processing (elaboration or transportation), and consumers are unwilling or unable to devote the cognitive resources necessary to comprehend

and process the advertising message, argument may prove an attractive framing strategy (McQuarrie and Mick 1996).

2.2.2. Narrative

McCann agency recently released an enchanting advertisement for the Norwegian airline 'Widerøe Airlines' which transports viewers into a world with beautiful scenery, a compelling relationship between a grandfather and his grandson, a tantalizing build and an endearing conclusion[1]. The story depicts a boy begging his grandfather to do a favorite magic trick, and his grandfather refuses. Feeling a rumble in the atmosphere the old man excitedly claps his hand and rubs his palms together. He brings his closed palms to his lips, and then with perfect timing appears to blow an airplane into the sky. The airplane is in fact just appearing over distant mountains. While this ad is aimed at a local market, it achieved viral success with the simple, beautiful and compelling story. This is an example of narrative framing, which has a story as a foundation and includes characters, a setting, a plot and a time frame (Padgett and Allen, 1997). Many scholars agree that much of the social information acquired in daily life is conveyed in a story-format; it is transmitted thematically in a temporal sequence and is constructed from an individual's life experiences (Schank and Abelson 1995, Adaval and Wyer 1998). Therefore it is asserted that individuals are naturally wired to organize information about people and their actions in a narrative manner (e.g. Bruner, 1986, 1990; Kerby, 1991; Schank, 1990). Advertisements with a narrative framing strategy have a story as a foundation and include characters, a setting, a plot and a time frame (Boller 1988, Padgett and Allen 1997). Narrative framing facilitates subjective interpretations which merge the facts presented into a coherent gestalt representing the experience (MacIntyre 1981). It is these stories which guide how we understand new experiences, form judgments, make decisions and develop attitudes in relation to the characters and events referred to in the story (Schank and Abelson 1995). How advertising information is presented can facilitate or impede with this process. Framing the information as a story stimulates viewers to imagine the implications of the product information holistically in the context of a series of events (Adaval and Wyer 1998). This description of narrative framing follows primary theorist Jerome Bruner's (1986, 1990) position that there are two modes of cognitive functioning used to understand experiences – paradigmatic and narrative modes of thought –

[1] This advertisement can be accessed here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=avHnr3tFJNs

and these function differently and lead to different outcomes, as described in Padgett and Allen (1997). The narrative mode of thought seeks understanding and the creation of meaning. It is based on the construction of stories which facilitate multiple interpretations of a particular experience. Stories are evaluated with a relaxed form of causal probability, and a lifelike explanation of events is sought, rather than one single correct explanation. This is because individual interpretations are not viewed as correct or incorrect, but as plausible explanations based on the individual's understanding. Bruner suggests that people engage in narrative mode of thought when presented with stimuli with chronologically connected events that are enacted by characters, both of which are characteristics of narrative framing.

Consumer Response to Narrative

Prior research in this area reveals that advertisements with a narrative format are in general evaluated more positively that argument ads. This is said to be attributed to the structural similarity between narratives and the information we acquire in daily life (e.g., Adaval & Wyer, 1998; Escalas, 2004; Polyorat, Alden, and Kim, 2007, Wentzel et al. 2010), and the strong affective responses narrative format elicits (Deighton, Romer, & McQueen, 1989; Green & Brock, 2000), as well as the ability of narratives to forge a connection between consumers and the brand advertised. (Escalas 2004).The temporal sequence of events is structurally similar to life experiences, helping to make new information easier to understand and making it seem more intuitively correct (Adaval and Wyer 1998). By interacting with and reacting to the advertised brand, characters are able to provide the audience with a surrogate experience of the functional and psychological benefits associated with use of the brand (Boiler 1988, Wentzel, Tomczak, and Herrmann 2010). Adaval and Wyer (1998) find that narrative is more effective in engendering positive consumer response than a list when undesirable features are mentioned and consumers have less difficulty imagining the consumption experience with narrative versus list format.

2.2.3. Mental Simulation

Where narratives hook the audience as voyeurs into the story world, stimulating them to engage and empathize with the characters depicted, mental simulation invites the audience to cognitively formulate a behavioral episode similar to a story in structure (Escalas 2004). A Whirlpool ad previously instructed the audience to 'imagine treating clothes so well they look

new longer' and lottery ads request viewers to 'dream a little dream' (Escalas 2004: 37). When advertisers adopt the strategy of stimulating viewers to imagine positive scenarios of themselves interacting with a product or service they are taking advantage of mental simulation framing. Mental simulation is described as the cognitive formulation of hypothetical situations or the reformation of real-life situations (Escalas and Luce 2003), and involves the imitative representation of an event or a series of events (Taylor and Schneider 1989). Also referred to as consumption visions (Phillips 1996), mental simulation facilitates visions of the self behaving in an envisioned situation and experiencing either the process of interacting with the product or the outcomes of the behavior (Zhao, Hoeffler and Dahl 2009). The tasks involved in mental simulation, i.e. imaging future goals and the means for achieving these goals, have been addressed in particular in the social cognition and health psychology literature. According to social cognition research focusing on self-regulation, the creation and maintenance of activities directed at solving problems is essential if an individual is to move from an existing to a future envisioned situation (Fisk and Taylor, 1991). In the health psychology arena, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) found that individuals succeeded in overcoming stressful situations by generating problem-solving activities and regulating their emotions to reduce stress in the future. Mental simulation has the ability to address the fundamental activities of self-regulation and coping and can be useful for envisioning the future (Taylor et al. 1998). Given that individuals are more likely to perform behaviors after they have imagined performing them (Anderson 1983), mental simulation has clear advantageous potential for the presentation of information. An explicit invitation to construct mental simulation, a high degree or verbal detail and a high degree of visual detail in the advertisement are all expected to prompt mental simulation (Lutz and Lutz 1978, Phillips 1996).

Consumer Response to Mental Simulation

In the social psychology arena, mental simulation has been shown to lead to positive changes in attitudes and behaviors (Anderson 1983; Gregory, Cialdini, and Carpenter 1982). This is argued to be particularly true when the simulation is self-relevant and reinforced (Gregory, Cialdini, and Carpenter 1982). From a consumer behavior perspective researchers agree that using mental simulation to depict a product experience can exert a powerful influence on consumers (Gregory, Cialdini, and Carpenter, 1982; Keller and Block, 1997; Petrova and Cialdini, 2005; Thompson, Hamilton and Petrova, 2009). Through mental simulation

consumers can summon previous experiences and integrate the product with their existing patterns of behavior (Taylor et al. 1998). McGraw and Mellers (1997) illustrate that the gap between the predicted value and actual value of consumption is reduced when consumers can imagine owning the product more clearly. Prior empirical research reveals the positive impact of mental simulation in terms of facilitating the visualization of a consumption experience and engendering positive behavioral intentions among potential consumers (Gregory et al. 1982). An advantage of mental simulation identified by Taylor et al. (1989) is that it gives rise to problem-solving activities. The researchers state that individuals stimulate in a manner that is concrete and involves highly specific stages in a video-like flow. Such simulation can facilitate emergent and new information relevant to the activities involved in the process.

2.2.3.1. Mental Simulation versus Narrative framing

The distinction between narrative and mental simulation is not made clear in the literature. Mental simulations tend to be structured as stories or narratives (Fiske 1993; Polkinghome 1989) and involve the generation of 'behavioral episodes (i.e. stories) in which we are the main character' (Escalas 2004:37). Mental simulation persuades via the same mechanism as narrative, both framing strategies trigger transportation (Escalas 2004). Escalas (2007) considers mental simulation to be a form of narrative self-referencing. The link between narrative and mental simulation as persuasion techniques is further reinforced by the argument that when individuals encounter narrative framed advertisements they are likely to adopt a holistic processing strategy by mentally simulating the events described in the story (Taylor and Schneider 1989). Chang (2009) states that the audience of narrative framing are likely to develop not only an understanding of the story plot, but are also likely to engage themselves in mental simulation. A recent study by Speer and colleagues (2009) uses brain scanning technology to highlight that people engage in vivid mental simulations of the events described in a story when processing narrative stimuli. van den Hende et al. (2007) describe how transported readers can imagine themselves as the protagonist in the scene of events, meaning transportation can be a form self-related imagery. As initially suggested by Lutz and Lutz (1978) and reiterated by van den Hende et al.; the use of mental imagery is a crucial element which allows the reader to envision the narrative. These studies lead to further confusion on the distinction between the two framing strategies. Both narrative and mental simulation are shown to provoke the cognitive formation of a series of events and both

engage the viewer in transportation. The impact of transportation on consumer response is discussed in detail in Section 2.3.2.

2.2.4. Rhetorical Perspective

In line with other framing strategies, rhetorics refer to the 'how' rather than the 'what' in terms of message expression. Rhetorics consist of the manner in which content is expressed and the design used to persuade audiences (Phillips and McQuarrie 2002). A rhetorical figure is defined as an artful deviation (Corbett 1990). In order for an expression to be classified as rhetorical, it must deviate from audience expectation but not be rejected as nonsensical, it should occur at the level of style rather than content, and it should conform to a template that is stable across different information content (McQuarrie and Mick 1996). Rhetorical figures can be contrasted to non-figurative statements, which are literal meanings expressed in expected or typical patterns (Huhmann 2008). When statements which could be traditionally classified as rhetorical figures, e.g. less figurative metaphors, are used commonly in everyday speech, they no longer deviate from expectation or violate norms. Therefore, it is useful to follow McQuarrie and Mick's definition of rhetorics as deviating relative to audience expectation in order to avoid issues related to the definition of violation of norms or conventions in style.

An overarching typology of rhetorical figures in advertising is proposed in McQuarrie and Mick's (1996) seminal research on rhetorics (See Table 2.1). This typology classifies figures according to the level of complexity and deviation, and discerns simple figures from more complex ones, positing an underlying distinction in how they impact information processing and persuasion. More complex figures require more elaboration and cognitive effort in order to understand the meaning as intended by the communicator, which can lead to greater persuasion. Because viewers are compensated for the extra cognitive effort devoted to processing in term of pleasure (Barthes, 1985), complex rhetorical figures are more appreciated than simple ones, and can have a more powerful effect on persuasion. McQuarrie and Mick's three level classification first distinguishes between two figurative modes, schemes and tropes. These modes are argued to fall at different points in terms of the deviation gradient, with schemes being less marked with deviation than tropes. Tropes are therefore expected to lead to greater viewer elaboration than schemes. Semantically, schemes are overcoded and tropes are undercoded. Undercoding, or excessive irregularity, is argued to

mark the text to a greater extent than overcoding (Eco 1979). Tropes are therefore incomplete, and it falls to the viewer to fill in the gap and interpret the strong and weak implicatures facilitated by the rhetorical figure (McQuarrie and Mick 2005). Schemes are characterized by overcoding and excessive regularity, in that they present the viewer with redundant cues that directly illustrate the intended interpretations. The excessive regularity inherent in schemes originates from sensory elements (e.g. the replication of syllables in rhyme), and the excessive irregularity inherent in tropes is a result of semantic elements (e.g. the wordplay supported by a relevant pictorial in resonance) (McQuarrie, Edward and Mick 1999). Empirical evidence provides support for the notion that sensory and semantic elements incur different levels in terms of processing depth, with semantic elements requiring deeper processing than sensory elements (Childers and Houston 1984).

Table 2.1 Taxonomy of Rhetorical Figures

Figuration	Rhetorical Figures (artful deviation)			
Figurative Mode	Schemes (Excess regularity)		Tropes (irregularity)	
Rhetorical Operation	Repetition	Reversal	Substitution	Destabilization
	• Rhyme • Alliteration • Anaphora • Epistrophe • Parison	• Antimetabole • Antithesis	• Hyperbole • Ellipsis • Epanorthosis, rhetorical question • Metonym	• Metaphor • Pun • Irony • Paradox
	Lower ⟵ Gradient of Deviation ⟶ Higher			

(McQuarrie and Mick 1996)

The second level of McQuarrie and Mick's typology outlines four groups of rhetorical operations, two schematic operations (repetition and reversal) and two tropic operations (substitution and destabilization). All of the figures in each of the four groups are characterized by a shared deviation gradient. A progressive order in terms of processing resources demanded has been established, with demand increasing in order from repetition, to reversal, to substitution, to destabilization (Mothersbaugh, Huhmann and Franke 2002). In a

complex trope of destabilization, the advertisement means more than is said, and depends on the audience to come up with the intended message. One example of destabilization is irony. This takes advantage of opposition. Another mechanism by which framing strategies attempt to persuade is comparison, e.g. metaphor, which will be discussed in detail in Section 2.2.5.2.

Consumer Response to Rhetorical Figures

Prior research within the realm of rhetorics illustrates that it pays to frame information with rhetorical figures. In contrast with non-rhetorical ads, those using rhetorics are argued to lead to greater attention (Berlyne 1971), positive attitudes and recall (McQuarrie and Mick 1996), longer retention (Tom and Eves 1999, Toncar and Munch 2001, McQuarrie and Mick 2003), greater persuasion (Tom and Eves 1999), are seen as offering greater reward for individuals with a higher need for cognition (Perrachio and Meyers-Malaviya 1994), contribute to the formation of brand images (King 1989), and create pleasure (Bowers and Osborn 1966, Tanaka 1994). Rhetorics also act to the benefit of persuasion in that they reduce counterarguments and source derogations (Sopory and Dillard 2002). Rhetorical figures are marked by artful deviance, and as such indicate to viewers to elaborate on the communicator's intentions in so marking the text (McQuarrie, Edward and Mick 1999). The assumption of relevance (Sperber and Wilson 1986) states that; when presented with marked text, the audience always assumes relevance on the part of the communicator, therefore readers readily comprehend that the communicator has established artful deviation in order to convey a message. The artful deviance which marks the text is the fundamental property by which rhetorical figures evoke elaboration (McQuarrie, Edward, Mick 1999). Artful deviation stimulates incongruity (Berlyne 1971), and it is the incongruity which provokes audience elaboration (Heckler and Childers 1992).There have been a number of studies examining the role of advertising incongruity on memory, judgments and attitudes (e.g. Edell and Staelin 1983; Sujan et al. 1986; Houston et al. 1987; Meyers-Levy &Tybout 1989), an important one of which distinguishes between two elements of incongruity; relevancy and expectancy (Heckler and Childers 1992). Expectancy refers to the extent to which information fits into a predetermined pattern evoked by an ad, and relevancy refers to the extent that a piece of information relates to the identification of the principal message expressed by the ad. Unexpected information is shown to provoke higher recall than expected information, and irrelevant information has been shown to evoke less recall than relevant information (Heckler and Childers 1992, Hwai, Lee and Mason 1999). Incongruity gives rise

to advertising polysemy, which is the occurrence of several interpretations of the same advertising message. Polysemy comes about when viewers develop different basic understandings of one message, as opposed to just different attitudes (Condit 1989). Advertising can be both synchronic, where polysemy occurs across two or more audiences at one point in time, or diachronic, with polysemy occurring in one individual on first and subsequent viewings of an ad (Putoni, Schroeder, Ritson 2010). The polysemy is evoked by indirect claims (McQuarrie, Edward and Philips 2005) and advertising openness (Ketelaar et al. 2008) which are facilitated by rhetorical figures. The incongruity prompted by artful deviance is how rhetorical structures rise above the advertising clutter and grab viewer's attention, engaging them to elaborate (Hwai, Lee and Mason 1999). The implications of audience elaboration for persuasion are discussed in Section 2.3.3.

Rhetorical figures also evoke what Barthes (1985) coined a 'pleasure of the text', which refers to the positive emotions that arise from processing a clever, complex, or amusing arrangement of signs. This has been illustrated as far back as 1971; Berlyne's empirical findings related to aesthetics show that incongruity can generate a pleasurable degree of arousal. The initial ambiguity present in the ad can be stimulating and the resolution which follows can create pleasure (McQuarrie and Mick 1992; Peracchio and Meyers-Levy 1994). In contrast to one-dimensional, simple texts, those which allow multiple interpretations are inherently pleasurable to viewers. For simple, closed texts, the viewer may extract pleasure from the information content, but the text itself does not offer a source of pleasure (McQuarrie, Edward, Mick 1999). The concept of pleasure of the text has been shown to be linked to ad attitudes (Mick 1992) and attitudes towards the product or service as the audience is likely to experience serendipitous emotions as a result of processing the ad (Meyers-Levy and Malaviya 1999).

2.2.5. Cognitive Comparison: Relating the novel to the familiar

A number of framing strategies use comparison as a mechanism to aid consumer learning and persuade them in advertising contexts. Such framing strategies include analogy, metaphor and categorization. Categorization has traditionally been treated as a mechanism for *organizing* rather than *employing* or *applying* knowledge (Fiske and Neuberg 1990). Therefore research on the topic of categorization has tended to concentrate on the transfer of knowledge as a side-effect of the organization of new stimuli, for example the transfer of

information when a tablet computer is categorized with existing kinds of computers (Gregan-Paxton and Roedder John 1997). Analogical learning theory delves further into the process by which consumers learn new information, focusing on the transfer of information from an existing to an impoverished domain. Therefore the analogical perspective offers greater understanding not just in how knowledge transfer is used to organize knowledge, but also how this transfer process is used to learn (Gregan-Paxton and Roedder John 1997). This review considers the implications of analogical learning and categorization for consumer information acquisition and the effectiveness of advertisement framing.

2.2.5.1. Analogy

When consumers come across the unknown or unfamiliar they often attempt to understand it by comparing it to something familiar. In doing so, consumers are learning via analogy. This involves five stages: '(a) accessing the base system; (b) performing the mapping between base and target; (c) evaluating the match; (d) storing inferences in the target; and sometimes, (e) extracting the commonalities' Gentner (1989: 200). The mechanism by which analogous structures work is based on the structure mapping theory of analogy (Gentner 1980, 82, 83, Gentner and Gentner 1983). Gentner's theory is based on the central tenet that analogies involve the mapping of knowledge from a base domain to a target domain, meaning that the relational system which is relevant to the base domain also applies to the target domain. Therefore analogical structures focus the audience on the relational commonalities between two independent objects, regardless of the physical properties of the objects in which the relations are embedded. New knowledge schema can be created as a side-effect of the analogical learning process (Forbus and Gentner 1983). The process of learning from analogies can pose challenges for the audience (Gentner and Toupin 1986, Gentner 1989). The access phase involves activating the audience's mental representation of the base in order to use this as a source of information about the target (Gregan-Paxton and Roedder John 1997). For example, the access phase would consider the reasons why consumers would use their knowledge about pen and paper (base) in attempting to understand tablets (target), when the first commercially successful tablet, Apple's iPad, emerged in 2010 (Cortimiglia, Frank and Seben 2012). After the base domain is accessed, mapping between the two domains takes place. This requires the generation of one-to-one correspondences between the consumer's mental representations of the base and target domains (Gentner 1983, 1989, Holyoak 1984). In order for learning to occur the correct object correspondences between the two domains

must be identified. Transparency of the object correspondences can facilitate or impede with this process; this refers to the extent that target domains resemble base domains (Gentner and Toupin 1986). When a lack of transparency exists, systematicity (the idea that individuals prefer mapping connected systems of relations led by higher-order relations with inferential import, over one-off predicates (Hofstader 1984)) is argued to compensate for the lack of resemblance between the two domains. Systematicity plays an important role by operating as an effective screening process so that only the predicate matches between the two domains which form coherent systems of relations are selected from the many possible matches. This facilitates the effective comparison between distinct and unrelated objects. It is important to note that for novice audiences, transparency or surface similarity is crucial to the success of the mapping stage in analogical learning (Gentner and Toupin 1986).

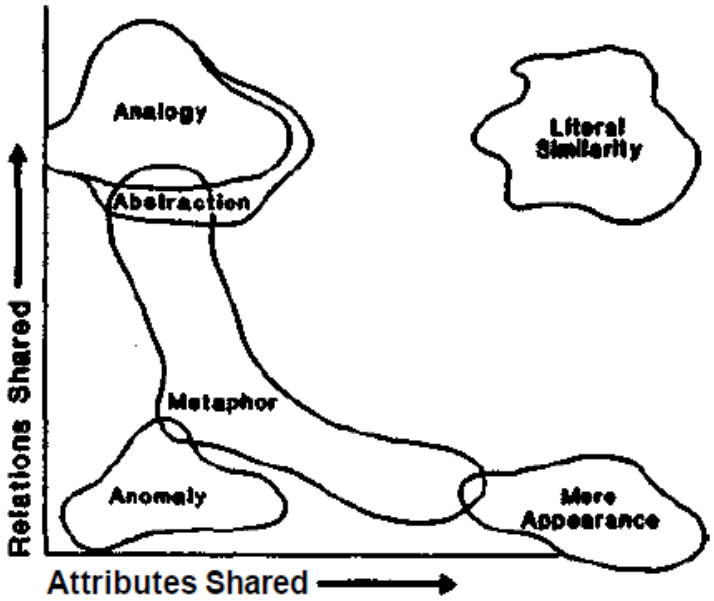
Types of similarity are classified according to whether the two domains share either relational structures (higher order predicates), object attributes (lower order predicates), or both. Figure 2.1 below illustrates different kinds of domain comparisons, ranging from literal similarity (which means both the base and the target share both attributes and relational predicates to the target, e.g. 'milk is like water') to anomalies (where neither attribute nor relational predicates are shared, e.g. 'coffee is like the solar system'). Mere appearance comparisons are opposite to analogies in that only physical appearance attributes, which are lower order predicates, of the two domains are shared. Therefore such comparisons are limited in their functionality; the audience can learn no more from a mere appearance comparison than the perceived physical attributes of the target object. Gentner points out that analogy and literal similarity are continua, rather than dichotomies, with the degree of attribute overlap representing the continuum. For both comparisons, relational structures are shared. When the two domains also have shared object attributes, then the comparison changes from an analogy to one of literal similarity.

Table 2.2 Kinds of Domain Comparisons

	Attributes	Relations	Example
Literal similarity	Many	Many	Milk is like water
Analogy	Few	Many	Heat is like water
Abstraction	Few	Many	Heat flow is a through-variable
Anomaly	Few	Few	Coffee is like the solar system
Mere appearance	Many	Few	The glass tabletop gleamed like water

(Gentner 1989:206)

Figure 2.1 Classes of Similarity Based on Predicates Shared



2.2.5.2. Metaphor

Metaphor is an example of a destabilization trope. Given the common use of metaphors in everyday language (Gibbs 1994), it should be noted that in order for a metaphor to be considered a rhetorical device of destabilization, it should deviate from audience expectation to a similar extent as other destabilization figures. If a metaphor is not deviant then it cannot be argued to have the same persuasive effects as other destabilization figures (Phillips and McQuarrie 2009). Metaphor overlaps with analogy (Figure 2.1) by taking advantage of cross-

domain comparisons to alter consumer response (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). Metaphors compare objects via analogy, by making use of the conceptual similarity between two objects originating from different domains (Stern 1990, Ward &Gaidis 1990). Metaphors affirm a fundamental similarity between two objects which are not expected to be associated and in doing so open up new inferences (McQuarrie and Mick 1996). In order to resolve a metaphor consumers must draw on inferences that find similarities between the objects presented (McQuarrie and Phillips 2005). The purpose of metaphorical comparison is to aid viewer's comprehension of abstract and intangible concepts or objects through comparison to more familiar, concrete domains (Phillips and McQuarrie 2009). Gentner et al. (2001) suggest that because metaphors are processed without the underlying conceptual theme being considered, they have great to have great potential to alter consumer belief systems. Through a metaphor the attributes of the target concept that match the metaphor become salient, and those attributes that do not match the context become less salient and are masked. From a consumer's perspective, viewing an advertisement using a metaphor should positively impact beliefs which are salient to the metaphor, and negatively impact beliefs that don't match the metaphor (Phillips and McQuarrie 2009). This impact is most likely when the object of the ad has intangible or abstract characteristics, supporting the rationale for the use of metaphors: alluding to concrete and common domains can increase consumer comprehension of abstract, complex domains (Gibbs 1994).

Consumer Response to Metaphors

Metaphors convey the main ad message (strong implicatures) and also render the viewer open to multiple, distinct inferences about the advertised service (weak implicatures) (Sperber and Wilson 1986; McQuarrie, Edward and Phillips 2005). This openness to both strong and weak implicatures renders metaphorical figures beneficial in terms of persuasion. As a complex rhetorical operation of destabilization, metaphor can also prompt consumer elaboration. In their research on rhetorical figures in advertising, McQuarrie, Edward and Mick (1999) illustrate the power of both metaphor and pun (rhetorical tropes) over rhetorical schemes in engendering positive ad attitude and more favorable than unfavorable elaboration. Phillips and McQuarrie's (2009) recent research on the properties of metaphors which impact consumer comprehension find that the power of metaphors lies in the figurativeness or gradient of artful deviation, as opposed to the cross-domain comparison facilitated by metaphors. This supports the argument that it is the artful deviation and irregularity of a

rhetorical figure, and not its assignment to a particular category (e.g. metaphor) that explains its distinctive impacts on consumer response to advertising (McQuarrie and Mick 1996). The findings indicate that figurativeness is of higher importance than metaphorical cross-domain comparison in altering consumer response to advertising. This implies that it is not the individual properties of different rhetorical figures that are important, but how much they deviate from audience expectation and how artful that deviation is. Therefore all destabilization figures should have the same impact on elaboration provided they are constant in terms of figurativeness. Gkiouzepas and Hogg's (2011) research looks at the properties of metaphor more closely, and find that ad visuals which synthesize, rather than juxtapose metaphorical objects are: more effective, stimulate greater elaboration and engender more positive ad and brand attitudes. This reinforces the importance of figurativeness – as synthesized objects are more figurative than juxtaposed ones. However, they illustrate that synthesizing conceptually similar rather than very dissimilar metaphorical object elicits more favorable consumer responses, because the cognitive resource demands of synthesized metaphors can couple with the challenge of processing conceptually dissimilar objects to the detriment of comprehension. This warns marketers about the risk associated with developing highly complex advertisements (both conceptually and visually) which can overwhelm consumer's cognitive capacities at a cost to persuasion.

2.2.5.3. Categorization

Categorization involves a comparison between a familiar (base) domain to an impoverished (target) domain. Unlike analogy and metaphor, categorization involves stating the target domain 'is' a member of an existing category, whereas metaphorical framing involves facilitating the identification of shared relations between the target domain and the category to which the base belongs. The key difference between categorization and metaphorical framing lies in the characteristics which can be mapped and transferred from the base to the target domain. Comparison can be made based on both attributes and relations. Attributes represent independent elements of an object. Using the example of a new medicine being compared to an antacid, Gregan-Paxton and Moreau (2003) identify such attributes as 'tablet' and 'stomach acid'. Relations, on the other hand, represent the link between two attributes, e.g. the 'tablet' *neutralizes* the 'stomach acid', hence 'neutralize' is a relational characteristic. Categorization involves asserting that an object is a member of an existing category; therefore it signals literal similarity between two domains. This means that both the attributes

and the relations of the base can be appropriately and relevantly mapped and transferred to the target domain (Gentner and Markman 1997). On the other hand, metaphorical thinking involves the mapping and transfer of only certain relations. Gregan-Paxton and Moreau (2003) empirically show that both analogy and categorization involve the transfer of shared relational information from a base domain to a target domain, whereas unlike analogical learning, categorization also results in attribute transfer between the two objects. It is thus suggested that participants in the analogy condition were less confident in their inferences than those in the categorization condition (Gregan-Paxton and Moreau 2003). This means that categorization involves less ambiguity than metaphor/analogy comparisons which can entail multiple inferences. This is in line with the rhetorical perspective which asserts that live metaphors (those that aren't used in daily language to such an extent they become literal language) are destabilization tropes, and as such are characterized by incongruity. Although categorization can illustrate unambiguous comparison between a familiar base and an impoverished target, it lacks the ability of metaphor tropes high in artful deviance to trigger elaboration, and pleasure via the ambiguity relief process.

Further, Gregan-Paxton and Moreau's (2003) research illustrates that while both categorization and analogy led to similar recall of alignable features, only categorization resulted in participant recall of nonalignable features. Alignable features are those which perform in a similar function in the relational system of the two domains, nonalignable features have a role in a relational system of one domain, but not in the other. This raises the issue: does categorization constrain learning when the target domain is not physically similar to the category members? The limitations of the use of categorization also apply to learning for innovative or abstract products and services, as consumers lack the schema in memory to allocate them to existing categories (Feiereisen et al. 2008). When faced with an innovative new product or service, consumers can encounter ambiguity regarding what category in which to place the innovative object. When consumers lack an established category for an object or concept, an established body of research suggests they tend to base their inferences on a single category, even if the object doesn't fit with this category (Murphy and Ross 1994, 1999, Ross and Murphy 1996). However, Stayman et al. (1992) illustrate that in high incongruity situations, consumers apply themselves to schema switching, which involves dropping an initially selected category in favor of a more relevant category. Gregan-Paxton, Zhao et al. (2005) argue that whether consumers are restricted to single category processing or whether they engage in multiple category processing depends on their familiarity with the

category and whether the category cue is perceptual or conceptual. When faced with a more familiar perceptually cued rather than conceptually cued category, single category processing occurs. However when the conceptually cued category is more, or at least as, familiar as the perceptually cued category, multiple category processing follows.

Table 2.3 Characteristics of Framing Strategies

	Explicitness	**Openness**	**Deviation from expectation**	**Imagery**	**Cognitive resource demand***
Argument	High	Low	Low	Low	Low
Rhetorical Schemes	Low-Med	Low	Low-Med	Low	Low
Rhetorical Tropes	Low	High	High	High	High
Narrative	Low	High	Med	High	High
Mental Simulation	Low	Med	Med	High	High
Categorization	High	Low	Low	Low	Med

*Refers to resources required to process the specific framing strategy. If high involvement exists greater resources will be allocated to processing regardless of framing strategy (Cacioppo & Petty 1984).

2.3. INFORMATION PROCESSING STYLES

Different framing strategies prompt different information processing styles. This is important because the impact of consumer response to advertisement framing strategies is a result of both the framing strategy and the information processing style. Framing strategies therefore have both a direct impact on consumer response as well as an indirect impact mediated by the information processing style triggered. This section introduces and explains the different

information processing styles, including piecemeal processing, elaboration and narrative transportation.

2.3.1. Piecemeal Information Processing

Piecemeal processing involves examining the implications of each piece of information individually and bringing them together in order to develop an overall judgment (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975, Anderson 1981). Piecemeal processing also assumes attributes are evaluated anew each time they are encountered (Hunt and Bashaw 1999). As opposed to basing a decision on the imagined series of events, as in narrative or mental simulation, consumers may assess the individual attributes or features of the advertised product. This is likely to occur when consumers are presented with an argument format, and when they lack prior knowledge to engage in category-based processing (Adaval and Wyer 1998). In summing the implications of each piece of information, negative information may receive greater weight (Birnbaum 1974, Adaval and Wyer 1998). After consumers have developed a judgment via piecemeal processing, they attempt to match this new information with information in memory, engaging in categorization. This form of processing is ineffective in situations where consumers lack the existing schemas in memory in order to categorize incoming information (Lehmann 1994).

2.3.2. Narrative Transportation

Transportation into a narrative is conceptualized as 'a distinct mental process, an integrative melding of attention, imagery, and feelings' (Green and Brock 2000:701). This definition of transportation is based on Gerrig's (1993) metaphorical description of a traveler, who moves away from his or her world of origin, rendering some elements of that world inaccessible, and returns to that world having been somewhat changed by the journey. This is similar to the feeling of getting lost in a story (Nell 1988). A similar concept is described by Escalas, Moore and Britton (2004) who suggest individuals are hooked, emphasizing the experiential involvement individuals engage in when processing a narrative. Green and Brock (2000) describe transportation as a convergent process, which involves all mental systems and resources becoming devoted to the events occurring in the narrative. This contrasts with the divergent characteristic intrinsic to elaboration and systematic processing styles. Because some aspects of the world of origin are argued to become inaccessible, real-world facts may

also be lost to the transported individual. This loss can be physical, for example, not noticing someone walking into a room, or psychological, which involves a subjective distancing from reality. The latter is important as while the individual's cognitive capacities are focused on the narrative, they may be less aware of real-world facts that contradict claims made in the story (Green and Brock 2000). This is why viewers of advertisements are likely to engage in less counterarguing and critical thinking when presented with a narrative versus argument framed advertisement.

A second important impact of transportation on consumer response is that it can engender strong emotions, even when the reader is aware the characters in the narrative are fictional (Gerrig 1993). Positive affect should represent an important goal for advertisers, as it has been argued to induce less systematic attention to the information presented (Forgas 1998), whereas negative affect is likely to induce more careful, systematic consideration of information (Schwarz 1990, Schwarz and Bless 1991). The reader's beliefs can be influenced by the experiences of those characters because of the emotional connection facilitated by transportation. When transportation occurs, the reader accepts not only the explicit claims made or enacted by characters, but the tacit features of the narrative are also accepted. The basic assertion put forward by Green and Brock is that the changes resulting from transportation into a narrative are linked to persuasion theories (Phillips and McQuarrie 2010). The deeper the transportation into a narrative, the greater the influence on consumer beliefs and the higher the likelihood that the advertising claims are accepted as true. This is due to a reduction in counterarguing and critical thinking, and an emotional connection with the characters and narrative plot (Phillips and McQuarrie 2010). Transportation can help to make a narrated experience seem more real for the viewer. Because direct experience can have a powerful impact on attitude formation (Fazio and Zanna 1981) and narrative transportation can act to offer a surrogate experience, the transportation facilitated by narrative can offer an effective means to persuasion. The strong affective responses and low levels of critical thinking elicited by transportation influence attitudes towards both the ad and the advertised brand (Escalas 2004).

2.3.2.1. Mental Simulation & Narrative Transportation

Mental simulation acts much in the same way as narratives in terms of the information processing style triggered (as discussed in Section 2.3.2.1). In the course of simulating

events, we engage in thinking about actual or future behaviors in the form of scenarios, which are similar to stories with ourselves as the primary actor. Therefore mental simulation has the potential to prompt narrative thought structure leading to transportation (Escalas 2004). An empirical examination of the mediating impact of transportation on consumer response illustrates that argument strength has no differential impact on attitudes under conditions of mental simulation, but an effect exists in the absence of mental simulation (Escalas 2004). This reinforces the distraction effect of transportation on consumers during processing.

Although drama (Deighton, Romer, and McQueen (1989), narrative (Mattila 2000), and mental simulation framing strategies all stimulate transportation, hooking the consumers in the ad, it has been suggested there may be differences in the extent to which different framing strategies transport consumers leading to varying consequences (Escalas 2004). However, no empirical research has compared the extent that consumers are transported in response to these framing strategies. This area requires further attention, particularly in light of evidence of the beneficial effects of transportation on consumer response to advertising (Mattila 2000, Escalas 2004).

2.3.3. Elaboration

Rhetorical figures are artful deviations from audience expectation, it is this artful deviation which stimulates incongruity (Berlyne 1971), and the incongruity in turn provokes high or central-route elaboration (Heckler and Childers 1992). Elaboration 'reflects the extent to which information in working memory is integrated with prior knowledge structures' (MacInnis& Price 1987:475), it refers to the amount and complexity of cognitive resources engaged by a stimulus (McQuarrie, Edward and Mick 1999). The elaboration likelihood model (ELM) (Petty and Cacioppo 1981) is one of two dual-process models which, alongside the heuristic-systematic model (HSM) (Chaiken 1980), has dominated persuasion research. The basic tenet of both the ELM and HSM is related to the amount of thought devoted to processing an advertising message. In conditions provoking high elaboration, central or systematic processing occurs. This involves the careful consideration of and critical attention paid to the arguments central to the message. Alternatively, in low elaboration conditions, a peripheral or heuristic route is prompted, where shallow cues serve to persuade (Green and Brock 2000). Elaboration is argued to impact persuasion through logical consideration and evaluation of message assertions. Elaboration involves a divergent focus, in that an individual

engaged in elaboration processing might simultaneously access other schemas and experiences, including opinions, previous knowledge, and memories. This is in direct contrast to transportation, which entails a convergent process, whereby all available cognitive capacities are focused on the events conveyed in the story or imagined in the mental simulation (Green and Brock 2000, Escalas 2004). Low and high levels of elaboration can be distinguished in terms of the response elicited, with the former evoking only a recognition response, and the latter constructing a connection between encoded information and prior knowledge, involving the integration of data from multiple knowledge structures (MacInnis and Price 1987).

In conditions of low elaboration, individuals will protect their cognitive resources and filter out advertisements believed to be irrelevant, or else devote available cognitive resources to another task, for example daydreaming (Petty and Cacioppo 1981). In low elaboration contexts argument or message claims are judged on the superficial analysis of positive or negative cues which aren't necessarily intrinsically linked to the advertised object. For example, model attractiveness may be relevant for a beauty product but acts as a peripheral cue for unrelated objects (Gorn 1980, Cacioppo and Petty 1984). Another low elaboration attitude development strategy is to generate simple inferences based on various cues such as the number of arguments presented. In conditions of high elaboration readers are expected to: pay attention to the appeal; access relevant associations and experiences from existing schema; scrutinize and elaborate on the encoded message in light of the available associations; and extract inferences about the strength of the ad assertions to make a judgment based upon careful and weighted consideration (Cacioppo and Petty 1984). Cacioppo and Petty (1984) suggest that once developed, attitudes are relatively enduring because the associations on which they are based are central to the advertised object and due to cognitive activity relevant to the object, leading to an integration of the attitude into schema in memory. The researchers go on to suggest that the attitude is predictive of behavior because the ad viewer has already: related the incoming information to their prior experiences and knowledge increasing their confidence about their attitudes; developed a stable evaluation which is easily accessible when behavior is required; and debated the suitable actions in relation to the advertised object for a variety of settings relevant to the individual which reduces the necessity for individuals to re-evaluate their attitude when the costs of the relevant behavior emerge. Increased elaboration leads to persuasion, but once the level of elaboration surpasses a certain threshold it can act to the detriment of persuasion; an

inverted U relationship between elaboration and persuasion is asserted in the literature (Keller and Block 1997, Escalas 2004). Transportation is argued to have no such relationship (Green and Brock 2000), however further research on the antecedents and consequences of different levels of transportation is necessary to understand this processing style further.

Table 2.4 Characteristics of Processing Styles

Processing Style	Process type	Product attribute learning	Level of Critical Thinking	Consumer Response
Piecemeal	Divergent	Systematic	High	Cognitive
Transportation	Convergent	Holistic	Low	Cognitive/ Affective
Elaboration (for rhetorical tropes)	Divergent	Systematic	Low	Cognitive/ Affective

2.4. INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCE VARIABLES

Individual differences can moderate the impact of framing strategies on consumer responses to marketing information. These differences can be categorized as emotional (affect intensity and empathy), competency (knowledge, cognitive capacity, metaphor thinking ability), processing style (need for cognition, tolerance of ambiguity and visualizer/verbalizer), and finally involvement.

2.4.1. Emotions

2.4.1.1. Affect Intensity

Varying degrees of emotional response to advertisements can be explained by different framing strategies, but also by individual differences. Relevant individual differences which impact consumer's affective responses to advertisements include affect intensity and empathy. Affect intensity is one variable which refers to the strength of emotion individuals feel and the range of emotions they experience (Larsen, Diener and Cropanzano 1987). This

bipolar construct places high intensity/variation individuals on one end and low intensity/variation individuals at the other. A relevant study examines the emotional responses of low and high affect intensity individuals to public service announcements designed to evoke emotions, finding that high affect intensity individuals had stronger emotional responses than low affect intensity individuals (Moore 1995). Further, a second study with a similar methodology finds that affect intensity moderates the impact of negative, positive and empathic feelings on attitude toward the brand (Moore, Harris and Chen 1995). A number of researchers agree that a narrative format engenders higher affective response than an argument format. However, Escalas, Moore and Britton (2004) illustrate that consumer emotional response to advertisements is a result of both ad framing and individual differences. They find that higher affect intensity individuals have stronger positive emotional responses than lower affect intensity individuals. Further, the positive impact of being transported via a narrative format on consumer response is moderated by the level of an individual's affect intensity. They illustrate that ads that transport high affect intensity individuals lead to more upbeat and warm feelings than those that transport individuals lower in affect intensity. This confirms the notion that consumer responses, in particular affective responses, are a function of both ad characteristics and individual difference variables. Whether affect intensity impacts the pleasure consumers experience after processing a rhetorical trope is uncertain. The pleasure experienced by consumers in response to complex rhetorical tropes is a result of the 'ambiguity-relief' process. Further empirical research on the moderating role of affect intensity on consumer response to rhetorical tropes warrants investigation.

2.4.1.2. Empathy

Empathy is defined as 'an involuntary and un-self-conscious merging with another's feelings' (Escalas and Stern 2003:567). Empathy is important in that it impacts the extent to which the audience of a narrative is transported into the story world (Slater and Rouner 2002). Van Laer et al. (2012) define narrative transportation according to the extent that the audience empathizes with the characters in the story, alongside the suspended reality experienced during the processing of the story. Empathy refers to the audience attempting to understand the experience of the character presented in the story, in other words to know and feel the world in a similar manner to the character (Van Laer et al. 2012). In order to successfully transport consumers, narratives must create story characters which the audience can

empathize with, i.e. empathic characters (Escalas, Moore and Britton 2004). For example, in the arena of health research, Slater and Rouner (2003) illustrate that empathic characters depicted in narratives encouraging healthy lifestyles trigger greater healthy eating habits among the audience of the narrative. A multi-process model was established by Escalas and Stern (2003) which shows that drama framing triggers sympathy, which stimulates empathy, which in turn enhances ad attitudes. High levels of empathy are linked to mental simulation, because engaging in self-referencing to previous experiences evokes empathy (Baumgartner, Sujan and Bettman 1992). Empathy has not been researched in the context of rhetorical tropes, though there is no theoretical grounding to suggest this variable should impact consumer response to rhetorical advertisements.

2.4.2. Competency

2.4.2.1. Knowledge

Knowledge is conceptualized as encompassing two dimensions, expertise and experience. Experience is concrete and actualized by the consumer, expertise is latent and virtually realizable by the consumer (Laroche, Bergeron and Goutaland 2003). Experience pre-empts expertise as engaging in an experience leads to an increase in expertise (Alba and Hutchison 1987). Prior knowledge is an important element in information processing which impacts individual's information interpretation (Brucks 1985), implying that the manner in which expert and novice consumers interpret advertising information is likely to differ. The knowledge held by novice consumers differs from experts in terms of the quantity, content and structure (Chi, Feltovich, Glaser 1981). A novice's memory structures are characterized by restricted information and scant interconnections, as opposed to an expert's complex memory structures which facilitate more elaborate inferential information processing (Peracchio and Tybout 1996). Expert consumers who are familiar with the advertised product employ their current knowledge to infer meaning from advertisements, and can understand the new information presented to them more quickly than novice consumers. Alba and Hutchison (1987) have long since suggested that the learning of new product information can be enhanced by improving a novice's ability to forge connections between the attributes presented. Matilla (2000) illustrates the interaction effect between information framing and consumer expertise, showing that narrative framing represents a valuable strategy for improving novice response to advertisements, and expert consumers were shown to be

unaffected by the manner in which information was presented to them. The experimental study found that novice consumers had considerably more negative product attitude and ad induced feelings when presented with the same product information in the list versus the narrative format.

2.4.2.2. Cognitive Capacity

Individual's cognitive capacities are limited; when their resources are consumed elsewhere there is less capacity available to process advertising (Lord and Burnkrant 1993). Given that different framing strategies require different levels of processing resources, cognitive capacity should be taken into account in the choice of advertising framing strategy. For example, the cognitive resources required to process both narrative ads (Chang 2009) and rhetorical tropes (Mothersbaugh, Huhmann and Franke 2002) are greater than those for argument ads. Chang's (2009) investigation of the response of consumers in high and low cognitive capacity conditions to narratives illustrates that the effectiveness of narrative formats depend on a sufficient availability of cognitive resources. When cognitive capacity is constrained, a narrative does not engage individuals cognitively and emotionally to a greater extent than an argument format. On the other hand in conditions of sufficient cognitive capacity, the narrative led to higher cognitive and emotional involvement, which favorably impacts ad and brand evaluation. This research suggests that the risk of the beneficial impact of narrative being eroded by consumer involvement in contextual surroundings needs to be mitigated by advertisers in their selection of advertisement placement in media. The moderating impact of manipulation intent salience on consumer response to narrative format is further investigated by Wentzel, Tomzcak and Herrmann (2010) who manipulate the availability of cognitive resources at the time of processing. When consumers have sufficient resources they resist transportation and engage in analytical processing. When, however, resources are limited their persuasion knowledge is not triggered, and the narrative stimulated transportation, the typical response to narrative. This conflicts with Chang's (2009) research, highlighting a need for further investigation into the issue of narrative formats, cognitive capacity and manipulation intent salience. In order for an ad to be processed as intended, sufficient opportunity for processing must exist (MacInnis and Jaworski 1989). Elements of the ad which are irrelevant to the central argument, for example music (Park and Young 1986) or an attractive source (Chaiken and Eagly 1983) can impede processing. The placement of the advertisement in the media can also impact the amount of excess cognitive

capacity available to devote to processing the advertisement. The literature is in agreement that the more involved consumers are in editorial content or contextual programs, the less cognitive resources available for processing advertisements, which has a negative impact on ad recall, recognition and processing (Kennedy 1971; Bryant and Comisky 1978; McGrath and Mahood 2004). The placement of advertisements can also influence consumer attitudes towards the advertised product. Transportation has been discussed in relation to narrative framed advertisements; however individuals can also be hooked by engaging programs, e.g. articles. Wang and Calder's (2006) experimental research illustrates that transportation into a medium in the environment in which an ad is viewed can impact responses to the ad both positively and negatively, depending on the position of the ad. Ads which are perceived to intrude on the pleasurable transportation experience (i.e. placed in the middle of a story article) negatively impacted consumer responses, whereas those placed at the end of the article were not perceived as intrusive are perceived more favorably, benefiting from the transportation experience. Thus the placement of ads in the media should be considered, and it is important to note that the positive affect solicited by transportation into a medium prior to viewing an advertisement can be transferred to the ad, underlining the role of environmental variables on consumer response to advertising.

2.4.2.3. Metaphoric Thinking Ability

This variable represents individual differences in the ability to think metaphorically. High metaphor thinking ability is positively correlated to consumer creativity in consumption situations. In an experiment testing the antecedents of consumer creativity, Burroughs and Mick (2004) find that the higher metaphor thinking ability group of consumers fared better in their development of creative solutions than those less adept at thinking metaphorically. Metaphor thinking ability is relevant in the context of framing strategies, because the sub-population of individuals with a high degree of metaphor thinking ability is more responsive to metaphors in advertising. Phillips and McQuarrie's (2009) experimental research reveals that, firstly, unlike those with less ability to think metaphorically, consumers with high metaphor thinking ability are responsive to both highly figurative and less figurative metaphors in incidental ad exposure conditions. The results reveal that high metaphor thinking ability consumers experienced a shift in beliefs following exposure to both less figurative and highly figurative metaphorical advertisements. Secondly, although experimental research reveals that highly figurative metaphors generate a shift in beliefs

regardless of the individual's metaphor thinking ability, the results reveal that consumers with high metaphor thinking ability are affected to an even greater degree (Phillips and McQuarrie 2009). This suggests that there exists a subgroup of consumers who are differentially responsive to metaphorical framing strategies, a notion that needs to be taken into account in future research on consumer response to metaphors.

2.4.3. Processing Style

2.4.3.1. Tolerance of Ambiguity

Tolerance of ambiguity has been conceptualized as a cognitive control style which refers to a mechanism for dealing with open-ended or unstructured stimuli (Foxman 1976). High tolerance of ambiguity is suggested to imply the ability to adapt (Klein, Gardner and Schlesinger 1962) and tolerance of ambiguity impacts the cognitive perception, interpretation and weight allocated to information (Norton 1975). While some individuals cope well with ambiguity, others dislike and avoid such situations (Budner 1962). Consumers low in tolerance of ambiguity are likely to interpret information which is vague, incomplete, unstructured, uncertain, contradictory, inconsistent or with multiple meanings as potentially posing a psychological discomfort or even threat (Budner 1962). Tolerance of ambiguity is relevant in situations where consumers are presented with too much, too little, or incongruous information. An ad can be ambiguous when there exists a lack of structure in the physical stimulus, and when it facilitates multiple interpretations by the reader (Budner 1962). Therefore an individual's ambiguity tolerance can impact how consumers process and respond to rhetorical figures and open ads. For example, the positive impact of resonance, a rhetorical trope, on ad liking, product attitude and unaided recall is shown to depend on both the successful resolution of the incongruity present in resonance, as well as individual's tolerance of ambiguity (McQuarrie and Mick 1992).

2.4.3.2. Need for Cognition

Need for cognition represents consumer tendency to derive pleasure from expending effort on cognitive activities. It can impact attitude toward the ad, recall and ability to comprehend the ad (Ketelaar et al. 2008). Need for cognition is linked to the likelihood that consumers will spontaneously elaborate on information (Cacioppo and Petty 1982) and impacts the extent of

cognitive resources allocated to message processing, which is a determinant of the type of processing strategy employed (Petty and Cacioppo 1986). As opposed to non-figurative structures, rhetorical figures are viewed as more rewarding for consumers with higher need for cognition (Perachio and Meyers-Malaviya 1994). Rhetorical figures are open and facilitate multiple interpretations (McQuarrie and Mick 2005). Such ads are more rewarding for consumers with a high need for cognition because they are more likely to generate an interpretation when presented with an open ad, and are more likely to experience enjoyment when creating that interpretation (Ketelaar et al. 2010). This suggests that it is not only the framing strategy which predicts differential responses to advertised information, but also individual differences in terms of need for cognition.

2.4.3.3. Visualiser/Verbaliser

In line with Childers, Houston and Heckler (1985), a consumer's inclination to process in a visual versus verbal manner is considered a preference style rather than an innate ability, because consumers possess many different processing skills, and it is their preferences which evoke them to select one processing strategy from the range of available alternatives. A number of studies on verbal (e.g. Capon and Davis 1984) and visual (e.g. Childers and Houston 1984, Edell and Staelin 1983, Holbrook and Moore 1981) information processing have been carried out. The literature presents a strong argument that visual processing (especially mental imagery) is an effective means of consumer learning when information acquisition is involved (e.g. Lutz and Lutz 1978). Two important studies indicate that consumer preferences moderate the effectiveness of whether the advertisement is presented in a visual versus a verbal manner. Rossiter and Percy (1978) show that consumers who have a preference for imaginal processing react more positively to visual advertisements. Further, a study by Smith, Houston and Childers (1984) highlights that 'schematic' consumers are more likely to engage in imaginal processing and create more vivid images than 'aschematic' consumers. These studies highlight the importance of taking individual characteristics into account when designing advertisements. The interaction effect of verbal versus visual presentation formats and framing strategies is relevant for this review. A study by Feiereisen, et al. (2008) illustrates the interacting effect of presentation format and framing strategy on consumer response to information for really new products. The results show that overall; the use of words is more effective than pictorials in enhancing comprehension of innovative products. A noteworthy exception is the beneficial impact of visual mental simulation over

verbal mental simulation for hedonic products. On the other hand, the results consistently show that verbal analogies work better than visual analogies in terms of consumer comprehension. The researchers explain this by suggesting that the less explicit properties of visual formats may fail to evoke an analogy between the base and target domain, further, pictures facilitate a wide range of inferences which can lead to misleading conclusions about the product attributes. These results indicate that visuals may work better with different framing strategies. The combination of visual/verbal presentation format and framing strategy, as well as the audiences processing preferences and the product type (utilitarian v. hedonic – see also Section 2.5.3) all interact and impact the effectiveness of advertisement framing strategies.

2.4.4. Involvement

The terms motivation and involvement have been used interchangeably in the literature, because of this the implications of both motivation and involvement on consumer response to advertisements are discussed in this section. MacInnis and Jaworski (1989) argue that 'motivation' is a broader construct, which refers to consumer's desire or intent to process brand information in an advertisements, though the term involvement has also been used with the same meaning (MacInnis and Jaworski 1989). Involvement is a key element in consumer evaluation of marketing offerings and refers to the extent to which consumers perceive a product to be relevant and personally important to them (Engel et al. 1995). In line with this definition, Laroche, Bergeron and Goutaland (2003:126) argue that 'involvement can be synonymous with 'importance, interest, attachment and/or motivation manifested towards an object'. High involvement purchase situations lead to a greater information search and more elaborate brand evaluations. High involvement situations are characterized by high expenditure and risk, low involvement situations tend to be simple evaluations about purchases. Involvement is affected by self-image, perceived risk, social factors and hedonism (Laurent and Kapferer 1985), and moderated by a consumer's identified need and ability to process the information (MacInnis and Jaworski 1989). Early research relating to consumer involvement and rhetorical structures reveals contradictory findings; high involvement consumers are shown to be unaffected by the openness of the advertisement (Kardes 1988), another study illustrates that high involvement consumers have more positive brand attitudes when presented with open-ended ad claims (Sawyer 1988). More recent research finds the use of tropes enhances the depth of cognitive processing and positively impacts ad and

product attitudes, but only for low involvement subjects (Toncar and Munch 2001). This is explained by the properties of rhetorical structures which motivate low involvement consumers to elaborate on the advertisement, whereas high involvement consumers are argued to be motivated to process the information regardless of how it is presented. In conditions of low involvement the ad may be perceived as more clever, entertaining and pleasurable, whereas high involvement consumers may experience heightened skepticism as they question why an indirect tactic is used to persuade them. In contrast, Peracchio and Meyers-Levy's (1997) research on resource matching and persuasion techniques argues that motivation must be high for the ad executional strategy to have a differential effect on consumer responses. They show that low motivated individual's evaluate ads heuristically and are therefore unaffected by the framing strategy, whereas high motivated individuals are impacted by the ad executional strategies. This is in line with Mattila (2000), whose research suggests that high consumer involvement is a prerequisite for the processing of narratives to occur and meaning to be inferred. This suggests that narrative framing is most effective in situations of high involvement and future research on consumer response to framing strategies needs to take involvement into account.

2.4.4.1. Involvement & Cognitive Capacity

The cognitive goal of high motivated individuals is an arduous one. They typically consider all of the information in the stimulus carefully, scrutinizing the ad claims (Petty et al. 1983). High motivated consumers tend to seek balanced attitudes based on the valid merits of a product that they can verify for truth with reasonable certainty (Chaiken, Liberman, and Eagly 1989; Petty, Cacioppo, and Schumann 1983). A variety of tasks are involved in achieving this goal, including: determining the key service claims while processing the ad copy and cross-referencing these claims with relevant aspects of the ad image to assert the validity of each claim with reasonable certitude. For example, to assess verbal ad copy claiming the superior quality of a beer, a motivated individual may scrutinize the image of the beer for quality related information, such as the richness of the beer's color and how the label conveys quality (Peracchio & Meyers-Levy 1994). Finally, the overall authenticity and plausibility of the service claims are determined, including the level of consistency and salience of exaggeration, so that a valid attitude to the service can be established. The extent and complexity of these cognitive activities indicate high motivated individuals have

substantial demands on their resources when engaged in ad processing (Peracchio and Meyers-Levy 1997).

Individuals lacking the motivation to effortfully process the ad claims are likely to engage in heuristic based processing, and attempt to form an overall impression of the service quickly, in doing so maintaining cognitive resources (Shanteau 1988). For example, less motivated consumers may select a salient or easily accessible heuristic cue, like the attractiveness of the ad image that facilitates quick and shallow attitude formation (Chaiken et al. 1989, Petty et al. 1983). As such, cognitive resources required to achieve such goals are low, in line with the meager resource made available by less motivated individuals for ad processing. As has been empirically illustrated, such individuals are insensitive to and unaffected by such ad executional characteristics as the framing strategy, e.g. argument versus narrative (Peracchio & Meyers-Levy 1997), or the ambiguity of the advertisement (Peracchio & Meyers-Levy 1994). This is because in low involvement situations, individuals are argued to engage in heuristic based processing regardless of the cognitive resources demanded by different ad elements, e.g. the framing of the ad copy. Given that less motivated ad recipients don't typically engage in substantiation of service claims, they are also less affected by variation in ad layout. The literature clearly asserts that involvement levels moderate the impact of framing strategies on consumer response, indicating this variable needs to be measured and either controlled or included as a moderating variable in future empirical research in this area.

Table 2.5 Moderating Individual Difference Variables

Emotional	Competency	Processing Style	Involvement
Affect Intensity	Knowledge	Tolerance of Ambiguity	
Empathy	Cognitive Capacity	Need for Cognition	
	Metaphor Thinking Ability	Visualizer/ Verbalizer	

2.5. PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS

Another set of variables which can moderate how consumers respond to different framing strategies are the product characteristics. Just as congruity must exist between the advertisement message appeal and the nature of the product (Johar and Sirgy 1991), congruity must exist between the framing strategy and product type. This review has briefly mentioned the moderating role of whether the product is utilitarian or hedonic in nature on consumer response to mental simulation versus analogy (Feiereisen, Broderick and Wong 2008). Other research considers the role of metaphors for promoting abstract concepts (Phillips and McQuarrie 2009). However, the moderating role of product characteristics has remained largely ignored in relation to information framing. This section reviews existing research and introduces relevant characteristics which warrant attention in future empirical research.

2.5.1. Innovativeness

Innovation adoption entails a learning cost on the consumer's behalf. New products frequently require consumers to adopt new behaviors or discontinue past behaviors (Castaño et al. 2008). According to prospect theory, losses loom larger than gains for potential consumers of novel market offerings (Kahneman and Tversky, 1984). The curse of innovation posits that consumers tend to undervalue innovations, and marketers tend to overvalue innovations as compared to the projected value by objective analysis (Gourville, 2005). These theories provide some explanation for the high failure rate of new products. By definition, consumers of really innovative new products hold limited knowledge about the product, whereas consumers of less innovative new products tend to hold enough knowledge so that a simple category identification should equip them with sufficient knowledge to comprehend the product attributes (Hoeffler 2003). For really new products greater learning is necessary to comprehend the product. Gregan-Paxton and John (1997) recommend the use of analogies involving the mapping of shared relations from an existing to an impoverished domain to enhance learning for new products. On the other hand, Hoeffler (2003) surmises that by representing a surrogate experience with a product, mental simulation can help to decrease the perceived risk associated with innovation adoption and can enable consumers to determine the behavior change required. Comparing mental simulation and analogy framing,

Hoeffler (2003) illustrates that participants presented with a mental simulation had less change in preferences that those with an analogy. It is argued that the measurement of preferences for new products can be improved by mentally simulating how a product integrates into current usage patterns. Mental simulation elicits relevant prior experiences which can be used to integrate the innovation with existing behavior patterns (Taylor et al. 1998). Further, generating a hypothetical future scenario via mental simulation can allow consumers to analyze how a new product fits with their current behavior patterns, and to estimate the extent of change required to realize the potential payoffs (Hoeffler 2003). These findings indicate that mental simulation represents an attractive framing strategy for innovative products, and the newness of the product should be considered in the selection of the advertisement framing strategy.

2.5.2. Intangibility

Different framing strategies may be more or less effective in advertising goods and services. One characteristic which is frequently cited as differentiating goods from services is intangibility. Intangible products are more problematic to appraise, which in turn affects uncertainty (Zeithaml and Bitner 2000). While there are few pure goods and services, most products have intangible or tangible dominant characteristics and can be placed closer to one or other extreme (Rust, Zahorik, and Keiningham 1996), and what defines an offering as a good or a service is the tangible or intangible essence of the market offering (Berry 1980). An abundance of research finds that intangibility is positively correlated with perceived risk (Finn, 1985, McDougall and Snetsinger 1990, Mitchell and Greatorex 1993, Murray and Schlacter 1990, Zeithaml and Bitner 2000). Perceived risk has been identified as an important factor which strongly influences consumer behavior, consumers suffer anxiety comparing and selecting services they know little about (Mortimer 2000). Laroche et al. (2001) capture the complexity of intangibility by illustrating the three dimensions of the construct: physical intangibility (inaccessibility to the senses), generality (general/specific service perception) and mental intangibility (mental representation). Recent research revealed that mental intangibility accounts for more variance in perceived risk than the other two intangibility dimensions (Laroche et al. 2004). A mentally intangible service lacks a clear mental representation; it is difficult to grasp, especially in cases where the evaluator lacks experience with the service (Finn 1985, McDougall and Snetsinger 1990).The services marketing literature argues for the importance of minimizing the level of intangibility associated with

services (Parasuraman et al. 1988), the challenge facing marketers is to reduce the risk surrounding the purchase of products perceived to be mentally intangible, by making the service mentally, rather than physically, tangible.

Advertising offers a powerful communications tool to mentally tangibilize services. The impact of mental intangibility on the effectiveness of framing strategies is not well understood. One line of research recommends the use of association to make abstract concepts more concrete (Berry 1980, George and Berry 1981, Berry and Clark 1986). Metaphor, a rhetorical trope, is a framing strategy which facilitates association between two separate domains because alluding to concrete domains can increase consumer comprehension of abstract, complex domains (Gibbs 1998). On the other hand dramatization (Legg and Baker 1987) and visualization (Miller and Foust 2003), which can be facilitated via narrative and mental simulation framing respectively, have also been recommended as effective strategies to reduce the intangibility associated with services. Greater cognitive resources are required to comprehend and process the attributes of mentally intangible services due the lack of consumer knowledge and schema in memory. The explicit nature of attribute claims made in argument advertisements can fail to illustrate the attributes of mentally intangible services which are difficult to convey. The positive affective response elicited by the ambiguity-relief process inherent in rhetorical tropes is contingent on consumer resource capability and availability for processing, it falls to the viewer to fill in the gap and interpret the meanings facilitated by the trope (McQuarrie and Mick 2005). In instances where cognitive resources are limited, the consumer can be obstructed in their task of resolving the ambiguity, for example they may be unable to mentally complete cropped objects in the ad, or unable to transfer the intended attributes from base to target domain in a metaphor (Peracchio and Meyers-Levy 1997). Although metaphor has long been recommended as a useful strategy for increasing the tangibility of services (Berry and Clark 1986) this may not be the most effective strategy because resources required to process the advertisement may be greater than those available. In such situations consumers can lack the processing resources required to substantiate advertisement claims, leading to frustration and the generation of non-product relevant, idiosyncratic thoughts, which in turn has a negative impact on attitude formation (Peracchio and Meyers-Levy 1997).

The difference between narrative transportation and central elaboration is not the amount of thought per se, meaning that the depth of cognitive processing can be the same, but the two

are qualitatively different. Elaboration entails critical attention to the central arguments in the story, and can be provoked by the artful deviation of tropes in advertisements, as the audience attempts to resolve the ambiguity and evaluate the product claims. Narrative transportation on the other hand is less consciously effortful, the audience "gets lost in the story" (Nell 1988, Green and Brock 2000), and rather than having to solve the puzzle in the advertisement, they are walked through the service process by the characters in the advertisement. Creating a surrogate service experience by walking the customer through using the service could lead to higher comprehension and reduce the risk associated with service consumption. Narrative transportation reduces critical thinking by absorbing cognitive resources into the narrative, which can act to the benefit of consumer response to risky consumption situations. Further, narrative framing can be useful to illustrated services, as it can convey information related to the abstract, intangible benefits linked to service consumption (Mattila 2000). This can be accomplished by depicting the characters in the narrative consuming the advertised service. The individual, subjective interpretations facilitated by narrative framing may be especially useful for services given that the value of many services lies in the consumption experience itself (e.g. Otto and Ritchie 1995). Nelson's (1970) search-experience-credence framework states that experience qualities can only be evaluated post-consumption, and as such are difficult to evaluate prior to consumption (Galetzka et al. 2006). In such instances advertising strategies should effectively depict the service experience, allowing viewers to evaluate it based on their own subjective criteria. In order to allow consumers to comprehend experiences, and because individuals organize information about people and their actions as a narrative, the concept of narrative framing seems to logically apply to services (Mattila 2000). These propositions require empirical investigation in order to be substantiated. The findings would offer substantial contributions to our impoverished knowledge of the moderating impact of product intangibility on consumer response to framing strategies.

2.5.3. Hedonic versus Utilitarian

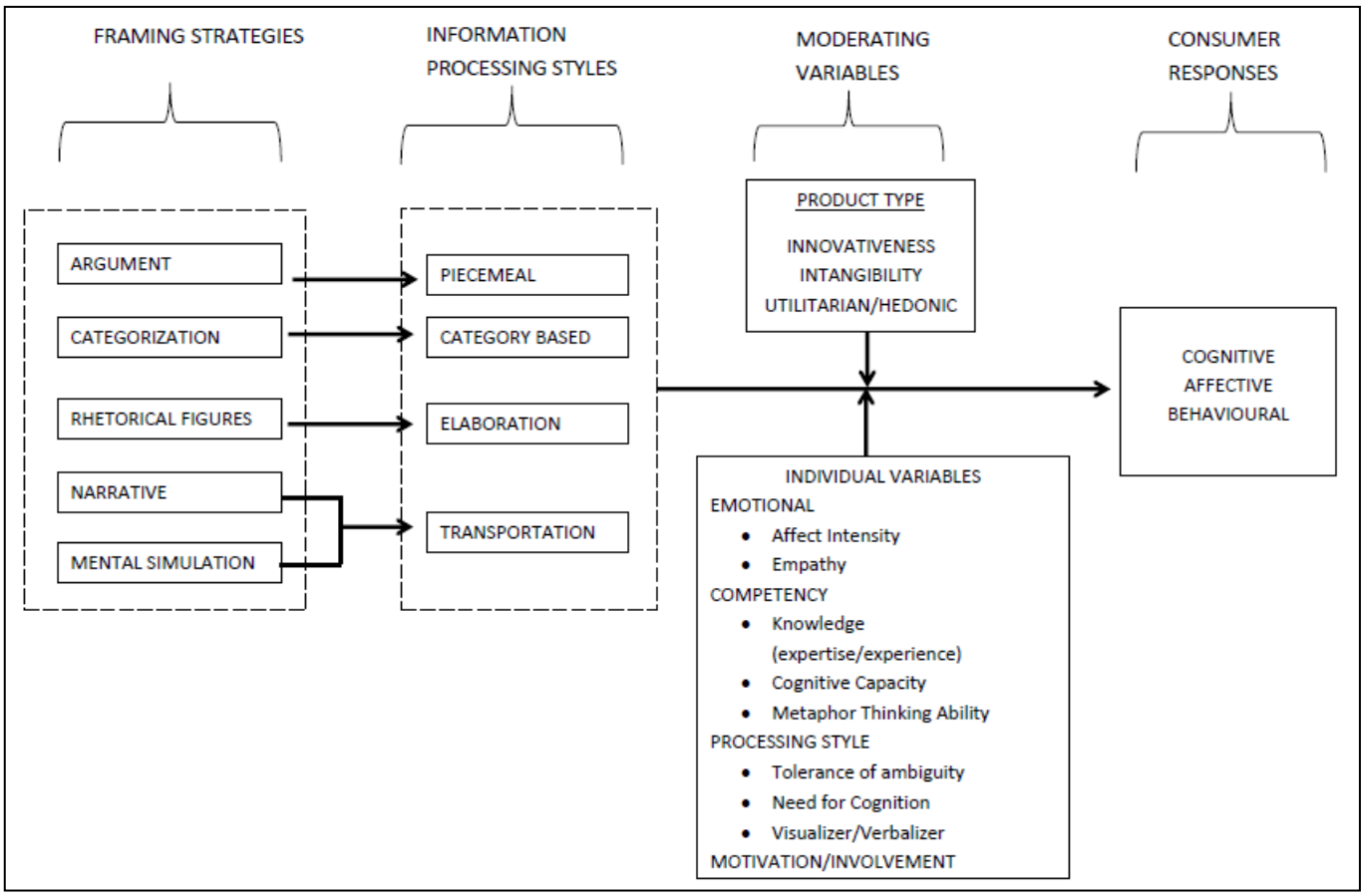
Underlying the product type – whether utilitarian or hedonic – are the motivational factors driving consumption. Consumer behavior can be motivated extrinsically or intrinsically, as originally devised by Koch (1956). Extrinsic motivation drives utilitarian consumption, where the consumption is perceived as a means to an end. Intrinsic motivation, on the other hand, governs hedonic consumption and the consumption experience is viewed as an end in its own right (Lofman, 1991). In line with utilitarian consumption, the information processing

model posits that the consumption choice is based on the useful function of the product (Becker, 1978). Consumers evaluate their product purchase decisions much as a 'craft' is judged, that is to the extent that the product performs its intended function. The value of a purchase is argued to lie in the economic benefits it provides (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982). Lofman's (1991) description of instrumental consumption echoes that of the information processing model. It is suggested that in such consumption situations the consumer tends to judge the market offering in terms of functional and psychosocial needs, and the consumption is firmly grounded in the consumer's immediate experiential surroundings. When engaging in utilitarian consumption, the consumer is asserted to behave as a logical thinker (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982), or rational, information processing problem solver (Lofman, 1991), whose decisions are aimed at fulfilling a specific functional need. Hedonic consumption, on the other hand, is described as being steeped in fantasies, feelings and fun, the symbolic meanings of more subjective characteristics tied to the offering become important, and the emphasis is on the consumption experience itself. Such consumption is linked to imaginative interpretations of reality, reflecting consumer's desires rather than reality (Singer, 1966). The market offering is evaluated based on the enjoyment that the consumer derives from the experience and the resulting emotions invoked (Klinger, 1971; Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982). Hedonic consumption is described as esthetic, intangible and subjective (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982). The role of the consumption experience in hedonic market offerings is underlined and the importance of the multisensory experience – including tastes, noises, scents and visual stimuli – is highlighted. Such multiple sensory modalities can result in emotive arousal, which is argued to be a primary goal for the purchase of certain service classes (e.g. theatrical and sporting events).

The consumer of hedonic products is viewed as an experiential being whose aim in consumption is enjoyment (Lofman, 1991). Hedonic experiences involve consumers emotionally and can entail considerable mental activity on their part (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982, Lofman, 1991). Consumers tend to weigh symbolic characteristics rather than tangible product features when making purchase decisions for hedonic products. For example, theatrical events tend to be chosen due to their capacity to transport consumers to a more alluring reality (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982). This suggests that the ability of a market offering to transport consumers is an important and valued aspect of the hedonic consumption. Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) suggest that the psychological experiences accompanying product usage represent the essence of the usage experience. They emphasize

the dynamic role played by emotions and fantasy images experienced by the consumer. Congruity theory argues that, in order to enhance advertising effectiveness, congruity must exist between the product type and the advertising appeal (Johar and Sirgy 1991). In particular, the use of hedonic (utilitarian) appeals is more effective when the product is perceived to be hedonic (utilitarian). Drawing on congruity theory, the characteristics of hedonic products suggest that transportation via narrative or mental simulation high in mental imagery represent attractive framing strategies for hedonic products. Conversely, the explicit nature of product attributes and piecemeal processing style triggered by argument framing suggests this is a useful strategy for utilitarian products.

Figure 2.2 Literature Review: Conceptual Model



2.6. CONCLUSION

This paper discusses current understanding of the concept of information framing by bringing together the diverse range of framing strategies in one conceptual framework. A review of the key literature is illustrated in order to offer an understanding of the role of framing strategies on consumer response to advertisements. The mediating information processing styles triggered by the various framing strategies are conveyed and potential individual different and product type moderating variables are explored. This helps to generate a comprehensive conceptual model and highlights specific areas which require further testing. A number of conclusions arise from this study. While some of the relationships presented have been empirically investigated, a degree of contradiction exists in the findings, and a substantial number of propositions require empirical analysis.

First, a clear finding emerging from this literature review is the lack of empirical research comparing different framing strategies across a range of contexts. It is rare that rhetorical figures are compared to narrative or mental simulation, with scant exceptions (Feiereisen et al. 2008, Hoeffler 2003). These studies generate important findings and challenge traditional thinking (e.g. Gregan-Paxton and Roedder John 1997) by indicating the differential effectiveness of mental simulation over analogies for really new products. Rhetorical figures are typically compared to argument in empirical studies (Toncar and Munch 2001) as is narrative framing (Mattila 2000). A lack of research compares transporting framing strategies and those that fall under the scope of rhetorical figures. This is perhaps due to the lack of a unified terminology and definition of the concept of framing strategies which may indicate that such diverse strategies as rhetorical tropes and transporting framing strategies are not viewed as alternatives. Narrative in particular represents an important framing strategy for intangible products (i.e. services) (Padgett and Allen 1997), contradicting traditional thinking which recommends association strategies (e.g. metaphor) to reduce the intangibility of services (Berry and Clark 1986). This indicates the need for further empirical testing comparing different framing strategies in order to increase our academic understanding of this topic. Also, while it is known that drama, narrative and mental simulation lead to attitude change via transportation; it is not known whether they transport consumers to varying degrees. Further empirical research is required to compare the extent that consumers are transported in response to these framing strategies.

Second, this conceptual model illustrates the role of individual difference variables on consumer response to different framing strategies. Further research is required in order to clarify and understand the impact of these variables for specific framing strategies. For example, it has been shown that affect intensity moderates the affective response experienced from being transported into a narrative (Escalas, Moore and Britton 2004). Whether affect intensity also moderates the affective response to tropes (i.e. the 'pleasure of the text') is not yet known. Further research is required to investigate if this individual variable moderates consumer response to rhetorical tropes. There exists a contradiction in the literature related to the impact of cognitive capacity on transportation into a narrative. On the one hand it is argued that sufficient cognitive capacity is required in order for a narrative to engage individuals cognitively and emotionally (Chang 2009), on the other hand it is asserted that consumers with high cognitive resources available resist transportation, engaging instead in analytical processing (Wentzel et al. 2010). Therefore the impact of varying cognitive resource levels on consumer response to rhetorical figures is also warranted. Contradiction also exists related to the role of consumer involvement in consumer response to different framing strategies. It is argued that motivation must be sufficiently high for framing strategies to impact consumer responses, as low motivation individuals evaluate advertisements heuristically (Peracchio and Meyers-Levy 1997). In contrast, research on the impact of rhetorical tropes indicates that tropes will positively impact attitudes to the ad and the brand, but only in conditions of low involvement (Toncar and Munch 2001). This is argued to be because the congruity inherent in rhetorical tropes motivates low involvement consumers to process the ad, whereas high involvement conditions consumers are argued to process the ad regardless of the framing strategy. Both the gaps and contradictions in the literature call for further research on the role of individual difference variables on consumer response to different framing strategies.

Finally, the advancement of research on framing strategies needs to be relevant and consistent with digital developments. 2012 saw a more than 6% rise in global advertisement spend on digital formats, and this is predicted to grow by a further 13.5% in 2013. Despite the prevalence of digital media in today's advertising media mix, how framing strategies impact consumer response to digital communications remains virtually untouched. One recent study examines the effectiveness of employing narrative versus argument to frame service response to integrity violating blog posts (Van Laer and de Ruyter 2010). This study shows that the combination of denial content and argument, and apologetic content and narrative framing

are more effective than alternative combinations. The impact of framing strategies on consumer response to customer reviews of products and services also warrants attention. Our understanding of the role of framing strategies for information presentation must extend to internet advertising, user generated content, and social media marketing. In summary, this literature review indicates substantial scope for future research on this area. This includes; developing our understanding of the effectiveness of different framing strategies by comparing transporting framing strategies to rhetorical tropes across different product types; clarifying and increasing our understanding of the moderating impact of individual difference variables on consumer responses to framing strategies; and finally, investigating the importance of framing strategies in a digital context.

CHAPTER 3:

CONTENT ANALYSIS RESEARCH

It's not what you say, it's the way you say it!
A content analysis of framing strategies for service advertising.

ABSTRACT

This study addresses the lack of knowledge regarding the effectiveness of framing strategies in the context of service advertising. Specifically, this research a) builds on resource-matching theory to conceptualize which framing strategies i.e. arguments, rhetorical tropes and narratives should be most effective in conveying the benefits of different types of services i.e. mentally tangible vs. mentally intangible and customized vs. standardized, and b) uses a content analysis of 475 print advertisements to examine whether advertising practitioners do use the theoretically optimal framing strategies. Findings from this study clearly demonstrate instances when practitioners are employing the theoretically optimal framing strategies to advertise services, as well as, importantly, instances when they are failing to use optimal framing strategies and therefore, not making the most of the vast sums of money allocated to advertising campaigns. Both mentally intangible and customized services are failing to take advantage of the benefits of transporting framing strategies; instead their advertising strategies are relying on rhetorical tropes and arguments.

Note to reader

This chapter is presented as a complete paper, with an introduction outlining the problem, objectives and contribution. The theoretical background is laid out and the hypotheses developed. Following this the methodology is explained, results presented, findings analyzed and a discussion is offered. It should be noted that in this paper, parts of the background are repetitive of certain sections from the literature review in Chapter 2. Notably, Section 3.2.3, which details the framing strategies analyzed in this study, includes sub-sections on argument and piecemeal processing (3.2.3.1); narrative and transportation (3.2.3.2); and rhetorical figures and elaboration (3.2.3.3). The content of these three sections is close to Section 2.2 in the previous chapter, in particular sub-sections on framing strategies: 2.2.1, 2.2.2 and 2.2.4. Further, it includes some of the literature on information processing styles presented in Section 2.3, in particular: 2.3.1, 2.3.2 and 2.3.3.

3.1. INTRODUCTION

Global advertising spend totaled $495 billion in 2012, an increase of 3.8% compared to 2011 (Baker 2012). We have a service dominated economy with services representing almost 80% of US GDP in 2011 (CIA 2012) and three of the top five ad spenders in the US in 2011 were services: Verizon Communications, AT&T and Comcast spent $7.4 billion combined (Advertising Age 2012). Despite having a global economy and ad spend dominated by services, current theoretical knowledge on services advertising is lagging behind that of goods (Stafford et al. 2011). In fact, following an exhaustive literature review, Stafford and colleagues (2011: 147) describe services advertising research as being in a 'state of arrested development'. One important advertising executional tool is the framing strategy, which is the distinguishable pattern in the manifest advertisement (McQuarrie and Mick 1996) and refers to the structural composition of the advertisement as opposed to the appeal or content. This research uses the term framing strategy when referring to such information executional techniques as rhetorical figures, argument, narrative and mental simulation. Although the same strategies have also been referred to as, for example, 'ad form' (Deighton, Romer & McQueen 1989), 'stylistic variation' (McQuarrie & Mick 1992, 1996), and 'executional strategy (Peracchio & Meyers-Levy 1997) the term framing strategy is deemed appropriate as it is defined as a structural characteristic (Shimp, Urbany and Camlin 1988) and a strategy of advertising message construction (Tsai 2007), which offers an adequate representation of the strategies analyzed in this research. The value of framing lies in the fact that the way messages are presented to consumers can significantly impact their attitudes and intentions towards advertised products (Levin, Schneider, and Gaeth, 1998). McQuarrie and Mick (1996) go as far as to state that the manner in which information is expressed may be more important than the content in order to persuade consumers. Framing strategies prompt different information processing styles, which in turn guide the extent and type of cognitive effort devoted to advertisement processing (e.g. Green and Brock 2000).

Despite the fact that 60% of global advertising spend comes from services (Neilson Global AdView Pulse 2012) the majority of research on framing strategies has been conducted in the context of FMCG's, with scant research considering the role of framing strategies to enhance the effectiveness of services advertising. The few exceptions include Adaval and Wyer's (1998) comparison of argument and narrative framing for vacations, and Mattila's (2000)

consideration of the role of narrative framing for restaurants. Due to the intangible nature of services, creating relevant and effective advertising strategies can raise particular challenges (Stafford et al. 2011). Prior work recommends the use of associations to make intangible services more concrete (Berry 1980, Berry and Clark 1986, George and Berry 1981). Metaphor, a rhetorical trope, is a framing strategy which facilitates association between two separate domains because alluding to concrete domains can increase consumer comprehension of abstract, complex objects or concepts (Gibbs 1998). Therefore, metaphors are suggested to be uniquely suited to convey the abstract benefits of services. Dramatization (Legg and Baker 1987) and visualization (Miller and Foust 2003), which can be facilitated via narrative and mental simulation framing strategies respectively, have also been recommended as effective advertising strategies for services. In spite of these long standing recommendations, no study has examined which framing strategies are used by practitioners to advertise services. In line with previous work which employs content analysis to investigate theoretical predictions and to delve into the implicit intent of advertisers (e.g. Stafford, Spears , and Hsu 2003; Spears et al. 2006), this study uses content analysis to test theory related to effective framing strategies for different types of services. Prior content analysis research examining services advertising is presented in Appendix I. While a number of different variables have been explored, for example investigating the informational-transformational appeal (Zinkhan and Zinkhan 1989), no research has investigated the framing strategy used to present the information.

It is largely acknowledged that all services cannot be tarred with the same brush (Johne and Storey 1998). They differ significantly with regards to, for example, the degree of customization and interaction between the service and the customers (Zeithaml 1981), as well as the degree to which they are mentally intangible (Laroche et al. 2001). Different services carry varying levels of risk and differ in the amount of cognitive capacity required to process the service attributes and benefits. Resource matching theory argues that the persuasive impact of a message is maximized when the resources allocated to processing match those demanded by the task (Anand and Sternthal 1990). Therefore the choice of framing strategy should depend on the characteristics of the service being advertised. This study has two main objectives. The first is to identify what framing strategies services are employing in practice. This helps to generate a comprehensive overview of the different types of framing strategies, which illustrates the variety of framing strategies from which specific strategies will be later identified for further experimental research. This objective also raises an exploratory research

question: What framing strategies are being used by services in practice to frame their marketing communications messages? This exploratory question is addressed prior to examining trends in the use of framing strategies across services, and disparities between the frequency of framing strategies found in this study and the framing strategies recommended as most effective in prior academic research.

The second objective is to examine trends in the use of framing strategies across service types and to identify if any disparity exists between the findings of this study and the framing strategies recommended as most effective in prior academic research. This research makes two contributions to prior work. First, this study generates knowledge related to service advertising practice, highlighting the disparity between the framing strategies recommended in prior academic literature to advertise services and the framing strategies used in current advertising practice. Secondly, this study acknowledges the limitation of previous services advertising research which focused on a single service profession, thus hindering the advancement of cross-industry knowledge (e.g. Moser & Horace 2012, Moser et al. 2010). The present research analyzes trends across groups of services characterized by high and low customization, and high and low mental intangibility, thus crossing industry boundaries while remaining conscious of the complex nature of services. This content analysis offers a solid foundation for future empirical research by establishing how framing strategies are employed by different types of services in practice, reflecting 'theory in use' knowledge development (Zaltman et al. 1982). The findings suggest that practitioners may not be using optimal strategies to advertise services, a finding which holds across the four types of services investigated.

3.2. BACKGROUND

3.2.1. Resource Matching Theory

The persuasiveness of a message is contingent on the consumer resource capacity available and allocated to processing the stimulus (Anand and Sternthal 1990). Message persuasiveness is maximized when the cognitive resources allocated by the consumer match those demanded by the task. If cognitive resources made available for processing are either in excess or insufficient to those required to process the ad stimuli in a manner which enables consumers to achieve their goals, persuasion is undermined (Peracchio& Meyers-Levy 1997). Executional characteristics of an ad, for example the advertising framing strategy, have an impact on the resources required to process an ad (Chang 2009). When the advertisement fails to absorb the cognitive resources allocated for processing, consumers generate more idiosyncratic, non-product related inferences to expending their surplus resources. Such inferences are unpredictable, and are shown to be less favorable compared to service-claim thoughts which are designed in such a way as to prompt favorable thoughts (Cacioppo and Petty 1979; Baumgartener, Sujan, and Bettman 1992; Peracchio and Meyers-Levy 1997). On the other hand, if the resources available for ad processing are insufficient to meet those demanded, individuals are impeded in reaching their goal of evaluating service claims and forming a well-reasoned judgment. Both advertisements which are very easy to comprehend and require minimal resources to process and advertisements that lure in and highly challenge individual's processing resources can fail to match resources available and can have detrimental consequences (Peracchio and Meyers-Levy 1997). The framing strategies required will be contingent on the contextual situation i.e. the characteristic of the services being advertised. This theory-confirming content analysis investigates whether the use of framing strategy matches the service type in terms of cognitive resource demand and congruence between the framing strategy and service type.

3.2.2. Service Characteristics

3.2.2.1. Mental Intangibility

Different framing strategies may be more or less effective in advertising goods and services. One characteristic which is frequently cited as differentiating goods from services is intangibility. Intangible products are more problematic to appraise, which in turn affects uncertainty (Zeithaml and Bitner 2000). While there are few pure goods and services, most products have intangible or tangible dominant characteristics and can be placed closer to one or other extreme (Rust, Zahorik, and Keiningham 1996), and what defines an offering as a good or a service is the tangible or intangible essence of the market offering (Berry 1980). An abundance of research finds that intangibility is positively correlated with perceived risk (Finn, 1985, McDougall and Snetsinger 1990, Mitchell and Greatorex 1993, Murray and Schlacter 1990, Zeithaml and Bitner 2000). Perceived risk has been identified as an important factor which strongly influences consumer behavior: Consumers suffer anxiety comparing and selecting services they know little about (Mortimer 2000). Laroche et al. (2001) capture the complexity of intangibility by illustrating the three dimensions of the construct: physical intangibility (inaccessibility to the senses), generality (general/specific service perception) and mental intangibility (mental representation). The physical dimension of intangibility reflects the degree to which a good cannot be touched or seen, its inaccessibility to the senses, and its lack of physical presence (Laroche et al. 2004). It is closely aligned with McDougall's (1987) definition of intangibility: 'the lack of physical evidence'. The second dimension, generality, reflects the difficulty consumers experience in precisely defining a specific good (Laroche et al. 2004). This follows Flipo's (1988) assertion that tangibility is a synonym for precision. A good or service can be described as general when consumers are unable to precisely identify the attributes, features and/or benefits. Conversely, goods/services are perceived to be specific when they facilitate a number of clear-cut definitions, features and benefits in the consumers mind (Laroche, Bergeron and Goutaland 2001). Laroche et al. (2004) offer the example of a car being 'a complex vehicle that one uses to get from Point A to Point B' as being general versus a car being 'an intricate machine; made of aluminum alloy; powered by an internal-combustion engine; with numerous features such as antilock braking systems, dual-side air bags, immobilizer theft-deterrent devices, air conditioning, etc' as being specific (p374). Mental intangibility is selected as the characteristic across which to examine the frequency of framing strategies because recent research reveals that mental

intangibility accounts for more variance in perceived risk than the other two intangibility dimensions (Laroche et al. 2004). A mentally intangible service lacks a clear mental representation; it is difficult to grasp, especially in cases where the evaluator lacks experience with the service (Finn 1985, McDougall and Snetsinger 1990).The services marketing literature argues for the importance of minimizing the level of intangibility associated with services (Parasuraman et al. 1988), the challenge facing marketers is to reduce the risk surrounding the purchase of products perceived to be mentally intangible, by making their offerings mentally, rather than physically tangible. Ease of imagination impacts affective and cognitive response to advertising stimuli. It entails the difficulty individuals are faced with when attempting to imagine using a service. When consumers are faced with services that are mentally intangible, they tend to lack prior experience with the service; they can experience difficulty envisioning themselves incorporating it into their daily routine. Typically, ease of imagination is positively correlated to consumer evaluation of new products, and difficulty of imagination is negatively correlated to consumer evaluation of new products (Zhao, Hoeffler and Dahl 2012). Advertising offers a powerful communications tool to mentally tangibilize services and increase the ease of imagination experienced by the audience. This content analysis investigates the use of different framing strategies for mentally intangible services in practice.

3.2.2.2. Customization

Customized services are adapted to individual consumers' needs (Kellogg and Nie 1995), entail a greater array of options, and involve flexibility and imagination over the course of the service process (Lovelock 1983). Standardized services offer little discretion to consumers in terms of the service process, and attributes such as speed, consistency and price savings are of greater importance (Välikangas and Lehtinen 1994). Standardized services are higher in search qualities (Shostack 1977), whereas customized services are characterized by experience and credence qualities (Zeithaml 1981). Nelson's (1970) search-experience-credence framework asserts that experience and credence qualities cannot be assessed prior to consumption, increasing the risk associated with customized services. Search attributes can be verified prior to purchase, therefore advertising for standardized services should be focused on providing information and increasing consumer knowledge (Jain, Buchanan and Maheswaran 2000, Galetzka et al. 2006). Because customized services are tailored to individual needs, the emphasis tends to be on the service process. As such, customized

services are more experiential in nature, with the experience being as important, if not more so, than the end benefits. Therefore, service evaluation is inseparable from the customer experience in interaction with the service provider, while utilitarian factors such as price tend to have less significance (Välikangas and Lehtinen 1994). The service experience is defined as 'the cognitive, affective and behavioral reactions associated with a specific service event' (Padgett and Allen 1997:52). For customized services high in experience attributes, the consumer may attempt to envision the whole progression of events associated with the service encounter. Affective and symbolic responses are important in the evaluation of experience-centric services (Otto and Ritchie 1995). For highly customized services the challenge lies in communicating the service experience, and conveying both the functional and symbolic benefits associated with consumer interaction with this experience.

3.2.3. Information Framing Strategies

3.2.3.1. Argument Framing

Argument framing, also referred to as expository (Wentzel, Tomczak and Hermann 2010) or lecture format (Wells 1989), presents rationally connected ideas which can be objectively verified and evaluated for truth (Padgett and Allen 1997). Argument framing directly conveys information about product features to the audience and uses logic to persuade (Wells 1989), for example the advertisement for Orange below. Argument framing encourages piecemeal information processing (Adaval and Wyer 1998, Mattila 2000), which involves integrating the evaluations of each individual service attribute listed into a coherent overall judgment (Anderson 1981). After consumers have developed a judgment via piecemeal processing, they attempt to match this new information with information in memory, engaging in categorization. This form of processing is ineffective in situations where consumers lack the existing schemas in memory in order to categorize incoming information (Lehmann 1994).

Figure 3.1 Argument Framing Strategy (Orange Network)

3.2.3.2. Transporting Framing Strategies: Narrative & Mental Simulation

Transporting framing strategies invoke transportation. This information processing style is neither systematic nor heuristic, but is a 'distinct mental process, an integrative melding of attention, imagery, and feelings' (Green and Brock 2000:701). Green and Brock (2000) describe transportation processing as a convergent process, which involves all mental systems and resources becoming devoted to the events occurring in the advertisement. This contrasts with the divergent characteristic intrinsic to elaboration and piecemeal processing. While the individual's cognitive capacities are focused on the narrative, they may be less aware of real-world facts that contradict claims made in the story (Green and Brock 2000). This is why

viewers of advertisements are likely to engage in less counter-arguing and critical thinking when presented with a transporting versus argument framed advertisement. A second important impact of transportation on consumer response is that it can engender strong emotions. The reader accepts not only the explicit claims made or enacted by characters, but the tacit features of the narrative are also accepted. There is an emotional connection with the characters and narrative plot (Phillips and McQuarrie 2010).

IKEA's 'Decorate for the holidays' print advertisement (Figure 3.2) by Zig advertising agency offers an example of how print can effectively be used to draw the audience into the story world of the advertisement. This simple, compelling story is set during the Christmas season and depicts two figures playing with a train set on the floor. Two mugs of tea, a watch, phone and keys lie abandoned on the couch and coffee table, reflecting the pressures of daily life being set aside. The audience is left to develop their own interpretation of the story. This is an example of narrative framing, which has a story as a foundation and includes characters, a setting, a plot and a time frame (Padgett and Allen, 1997). Prior research in this area reveals that narrative ads are evaluated more positively than argument ads (Adaval & Wyer 1998, Mattila 2000). Alongside transportation processing, the effectiveness of narrative is due to the structural similarity to the information we acquire in daily life (e.g., Escalas, 2004); the strong affective responses elicited (Green & Brock, 2000); and the ability of narratives to forge a connection between consumers and the brand advertised (Escalas 2004). By interacting with the advertised brand, characters in the story provide the audience with a surrogate experience of the functional and psychological benefits associated with the service. Presenting the information in a story stimulates viewers to imagine the implications of the product information holistically in the context of a series of events (Adaval and Wyer 1998). Transportation can help to make a narrated experience seem more real for the viewer. Because direct experience can have a powerful impact on attitude formation (Fazio and Zanna 1981) and narrative transportation offers a surrogate experience, the transportation facilitated by narrative can offer an effective means to persuasion. As the characteristics of narrative framing lend to its effectiveness in portraying experiences (Boller 1988), researchers are in agreement that narrative framing should be especially effective in the promotion of experiences (Padgett and Allen 1997, Adaval and Wyer 1998, Mattila 2000).

Figure 3.2 Narrative Framing (IKEA 'Decorate for the holidays')

A Whirlpool ad previously instructed the audience to 'imagine treating clothes so well they look new longer' and lottery ads request viewers to 'dream a little dream' (Escalas 2004: 37). When advertisers adopt the strategy of stimulating viewers to imagine positive scenarios of themselves interacting with a product or service they are taking advantage of mental simulation framing. Mental simulation is the cognitive formulation of hypothetical situations or the reformation of real-life situations (Escalas and Luce 2003). The consumer behavior literature is in agreement that using mental simulation to depict a product experience can exert a powerful influence on consumers (Gregory, Cialdini, and Carpenter, 1982; Keller and Block, 1997; Petrova and Cialdini, 2005; Thompson, Hamilton and Petrova, 2009). Through mental simulation consumers can summon previous experiences and integrate the product with their existing patterns of behavior (Taylor et al. 1998). The power of mental simulation in generating comprehension and positive attitudes to products with which consumers lack knowledge is empirically demonstrated (Hoeffler 2003, Feiereisen et al. 2008). In the course of simulating events, we engage in thinking about actual or future behaviors in the form of scenarios, which are similar to stories with ourselves as the primary actor (Escalas 2004). Escalas (2007) considers mental simulation to be a form of narrative self-referencing (Escalas 2007), and mental simulation has been found to persuade via the same mechanism as narrative, both framing strategies trigger transportation (Escalas 2004).

3.2.3.3. Rhetorical Framing

A rhetorical framing strategy represents an artful deviation from audience expectation (Corbett 1990). Rhetorical figures are marked by artful deviance, and as such indicate to viewers to elaborate on the communicator's intentions in so marking the text (McQuarrie, Edward and Mick 1999). Artful deviation stimulates incongruity (Berlyne 1971), this is how rhetorical structures rise above the advertising clutter and grab viewer's attention, engaging them to elaborate (Hwai, Lee and Mason 1999).). Rhetorical figures also evoke what Barthes (1985) coined a 'pleasure of the text', which refers to the positive emotions that arise from processing a clever, complex, or amusing arrangement of signs. The initial ambiguity present in the ad can be stimulating and the resolution which follows can create pleasure (McQuarrie and Mick 1992, Peracchio and Meyers-Levy 1994). The concept of pleasure of the text has been shown to be linked to ad attitudes (Mick 1992) and attitudes towards the product or service, as the audience is likely to experience serendipitous emotions as a result of processing the ad (Meyers-Levy and Malaviya 1999). Because rhetorical tropes place a high demand on cognitive resources and compensate viewers for the extra cognitive effort devoted to processing in term of pleasure (Barthes, 1985), they have a powerful effect on persuasion.

An overarching typology of rhetorical figures in advertising is proposed in McQuarrie and Mick's (1996) seminal research on rhetorical figures (see Table 3.1). This typology classifies figures according to their level of complexity and deviation, and discerns simple figures from more complex ones, positing an underlying distinction in how they impact information processing and persuasion. This three level classification distinguishes between two figurative modes: schemes and tropes. These are argued to fall at different points on the deviation gradient, with schemes being less marked with deviation than tropes. Tropes therefore lead to greater elaboration than schemes. Tropes are incomplete, and it falls to the consumer to fill in the gap and interpret the multiple meanings facilitated by the rhetorical figure (McQuarrie and Mick 2005). A progressive order in terms of processing resources demanded has been established across schemes and tropes, with demand increasing in order from repetition, to reversal, to substitution, to destabilization (Mothersbaugh, Huhmann and Franke 2002). This may imply differences in the effectiveness of complex destabilization tropes versus transporting or argument framing strategies in situations where cognitive capacity is limited.

Table 3.1 Typology of Rhetorical Figures

Figuration	Rhetorical Figures			
Figurative Mode	Schemes (Excessive Regularity)		Tropes (Excessive Irregularity)	
Rhetorical Operation	Repetition	Reversal	Substitution	Destabilization
Definition	Repetition of words or images	The combination of elements that are mirror images of one another in an expression.	Expression that requires an adjustment by the message recipient in order to grasp the intended content.	Expression where the initial context renders its meaning indeterminate – i.e. multiple coexisting meanings none of which offers final resolution.
	Low ⟸		Deviation Gradient	⟹ High

(Adapted from McQuarrie & Mick 1996:426)

Figure 3.3 Rhetorical Tropes (e.g. Visual Metaphor for Orange Network)

3.3. HYPOTHESES

This study has two main objectives. The first is to identify what framing strategies services are employing in practice. This helps to generate a comprehensive overview of the different types of framing strategies, which will later guide the selection from which framing strategies are chosen for experimental research. This objective raises an exploratory research question: What framing strategies are being used by services in practice to frame their marketing communications messages? Therefore prior to examining trends in the use of framing strategies across services (H1-H4), and disparities between the content analysis findings and the framing strategies recommended as most effective in prior academic research, RQ1 is explored.

RQ1: (a) What framing strategies are services using in practice, and (b) how frequently are the different strategies used?

This will give an idea of the different framing strategies viewed as alternatives by modern services (RQ1a), and also offer an overall perspective on the most frequently used framing strategies in practice (RQ1b). This will prove useful as a comparison when the empirical findings from the experiment emerge (Chapter 4). The second objective of the content analysis is to examine trends in the use of framing strategies across service types, and to compare the findings to framing strategies which would be theoretically effective in light of prior research. H1-H4 relate to the second research objective, and predict the frequency of the instance of different framing strategies across mentally intangible versus mentally tangible services, and customized versus standardized services.

3.3.1. Framing Strategies and Mental Intangibility

Greater cognitive resources are required to comprehend and process the attributes of mentally intangible services than mentally tangible services, due to the lack of consumer knowledge and schema in memory. The explicit nature of attribute claims made in argument advertisements can fail to illustrate the attributes of mentally intangible services which are difficult to convey. The positive affective response elicited by the ambiguity-relief process inherent in rhetorical tropes is contingent on consumer resource capability and availability for

processing. It falls to the viewer to fill in the gap and interpret the meanings facilitated by the trope (McQuarrie and Mick 2005). In instances where cognitive resources are limited, the consumer can be obstructed in their task of resolving the ambiguity. Metaphor, a destabilization trope, has long been recommended as a useful strategy for increasing the tangibility of services (Berry and Clark 1986). However, this study posits that metaphor may not be the most effective at generating positive consumer response to mentally intangible services because resources required to process the advertisement may be greater than those available. In such situations consumers can lack the processing resources required to substantiate advertisement claims, leading to frustration and the generation of non-product relevant, idiosyncratic thoughts, which in turn has a negative impact on attitude formation (Peracchio and Meyers-Levy 1997). The difference between narrative transportation and central elaboration is not the amount of thought per se, meaning that the depth of cognitive processing can be the same, but the two are qualitatively different. Transportation via narrative framing is less consciously effortful, the audience "gets lost in the story" (Nell 1988, Green and Brock 2000), and rather than having to solve the incongruity in a rhetorical trope, they are walked through the service process by the characters in the advertisement. Creating a surrogate service experience by walking the customer through using the service would lead to higher comprehension and reduce the risk associated with service consumption. Transportation reduces critical thinking by absorbing cognitive resources into the narrative, which can act to the benefit of consumer response to risky consumption situations. Narrative represents an important strategy for increasing comprehension and reducing risk associated with services of which consumers lack knowledge. Therefore, building on resource matching theory (Anand and Sternthal 1990), it is proposed that narrative represents a more effective framing strategy than rhetorical tropes or argument for mentally intangible services. Hence, this study expects that, provided that they follow the guidelines set in prior academic work, practitioners will use narratives more frequently than alternative framing strategies to advertise mentally intangible services. Based on the need to match the constrained resources during the processing of mentally intangible services, this study posits that narrative will be used more frequently by mentally intangible versus mentally tangible services.

H1: The incidence of narrative framing will be greater for mentally intangible than for mentally tangible services.

In contrast to mentally intangible services, mentally tangible services are easily grasped and understood, even when the consumer lacks experience with the service. Therefore the amount of knowledge held by novice or expert consumers is not expected to impact consumer's understanding of such services (Laroche et al. 2001). Consumers of mentally tangible services are equated to experts in their ability to comprehend the service features and benefits. Following prior research on the impact of consumer expertise on consumer response to ad framing, the audience of mentally tangible services expected to be unaffected by the advertisement framing strategy (Mattila 2000). This is because experts have 'well-defined, domain-specific knowledge structures' (Alba and Hutchison 1987, cited by Mattila 2000:37), with which incoming information related to new products will be matched. Therefore experts rely on their existing knowledge schemas to form a judgment regardless of the framing strategy employed (Mattila 2000). Given that mentally tangible services are easily comprehended regardless of consumer experience or familiarity with the service (Laroche et al. 2001), argument represents a logical strategy to clearly, explicitly and logically portray the attributes of such services. Argument framing directly conveys information about product features to the audience and uses logic to persuade (Wells 1989, Chang 2009). The explicit manner in which service attributes are portrayed may combine well with the easily grasped attributes of mentally tangible services in order to enhance consumer comprehension. In contrast, as argued above, the explicit nature of attribute claims made in argument advertisements can fail to illustrate the attributes of mentally intangible services which are difficult to convey. Argument format prompts piecemeal information processing which involves evaluating the implications of each individual attribute in order to make an overall judgment (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975). While argument may be explicit in its description of service attributes, piecemeal processing is inhibited when consumers lack the schema in memory with which to match incoming information (Lehmann 1994), which can be the case for mentally intangible services. Therefore, the following hypotheses related to the frequency of argument across mentally tangible versus intangible services is put forward:

H2a: The incidence of argument will be greater for mentally tangible than for mentally intangible services.

Given that consumers of mentally tangible services are suggested to be akin to expert consumers in terms of their ability to grasp the service, this study posits that metaphor also represents an effective strategy. As illustrated above, it is proposed that rhetorical tropes are

ineffective in situations characterized by constrained cognitive resources, namely the processing of mentally intangible services. Learning via metaphors is complex, and involves an effort on the part of the consumer to map knowledge from a base domain to a target domain, and to determine the relevant relational commonalities between the two. The access phase of learning via metaphor involves activating the audience's mental representation of the base in order to use this as a source of information about the target (Gregan-Paxton and Roedder John 1997). This can pose challenges for the consumer, and a high demand on the consumer's cognitive resources. In line with resource matching theory, it is hypothesized that greater cognitive resources are required to comprehend and process the attributes of mentally intangible services due the lack of consumer knowledge and schema in memory, leaving insufficient resources to solve the ambiguity inherent in metaphors. This can inhibit comprehension as the message intended by the marketer is either misinterpreted or not interpreted at all by the audience (Ketelaar et al. 2010). On the other hand, this research posits that rhetorical tropes will be beneficial for mentally tangible services, as consumers have sufficient resources to resolve the ambiguity in the advertisement, therefore have the capacity to solve the incongruity inherent in the advertisement and experience 'the pleasure of the text' (Barthes 1985). Upon solving the ambiguity inherent in the metaphor (as a destabilization trope), it is expected that the consumer will benefit from the 'ambiguity relief process' and that attitudes would be enhanced (Barthes 1985). Tropes will also trigger elaboration, breaking through the advertisement clutter, which can enhance recall (McQuarrie and Mick 1996) and retention (Tom and Eves 1999). Therefore the following hypotheses pertaining to the frequency of rhetorical tropes across levels of mental tangibility is put forward:

H2b: The incidence of rhetorical trope will be greater for mentally tangible than for mentally intangible services.

3.3.2. Framing Strategies and Customization

In the previous section (3.3.1) the beneficial impact of narrative over metaphor for mentally intangible services was hypothesized, based on resource matching theory and the need to balance the resources demanded by processing the service with the demands placed by the framing strategy itself. In this section the effectiveness of framing strategies for customized versus standardized services is considered. An argument is built regarding the benefit of narrative over metaphor and argument for enhancing consumer response to customized services. The reason for this however differs to the above section. Here the power of narrative over metaphor and argument is due to the fact that narrative offers a holistic understanding of the functional, symbolic and experiential service attributes. Therefore narrative is once again argued to be more effective than alternative framing strategies, this time for customized services, not because of its demand on cognitive resources, but because of its ability to effectively portray a consumption experience. Given that the focal benefit of customized services is the experience with the service provider, narrative represents an attractive framing strategy for such services. Experience qualities can only be evaluated during or post-consumption, and as such are difficult to evaluate prior to consumption (Galetzka et al. 2006). In such instances advertising strategies should effectively depict the service experience, allowing viewers to evaluate it based on their own subjective criteria. The comprehension of experiences lies at the core of narrative psychology (Bruner 1986), and narratives are individually effective in depicting experiences (Boller 1988), making narrative framing an attractive strategy for promoting customized services. Narrative framing can facilitate a surrogate experience, and transport the consumer into the world of the story, reducing critical thinking and negative cognitive response which can occur when consuming services high in experience and credence characteristics. The beneficial impact of narrative over argument in generating more positive affective and cognitive responses for consumption experiences has been empirically shown (Adaval and Wyer 1998, Mattila 2000). This study expects customized services to employ narrative framing in order to generate positive consumer response to advertisements. Therefore, the following hypothesis is tested:

H3: The incidence of narrative framing will be greater for customized than for standardized services.

The consumption of standardized services, where the focal benefit tends to be the service outcome, involves weighing the functional attributes, rather than affectively evaluating symbolic benefits. Standardized services are high in search characteristics; therefore new information about such services can be easily matched to existing schema in memory without placing excessive demands on consumer processing resources (Lehmann 1994). Such services can be clearly illustrated with argument framing. In contrast, prior research reveals that narrative is more effective than argument for customized services (Adaval and Wyer 1998, Mattila 2000). This is because argument is less effective at portraying the holistic service attributes and experiential process (Padgett and Allen 1997). Argument framing, which presents rationally connected ideas which can be objectively verified and evaluated for truth (Padgett and Allen 1997) directly conveys information about product features and uses logic to persuade (Wells 1989). This represents an appropriate framing strategy for standardized service where consumers are attempting to evaluate the functional service features and assess the end-benefits (Välikangas and Lehtinen 1994). Therefore the following hypothesis is put forward:

H4a: The incidence of argument will be greater for standardized than for customized services.

Standardized services are high in search characteristics; therefore new information about such services can be easily matched to existing schema in memory without placing excessive demands on consumer processing resources (Lehmann 1994). As mentioned, such services can be clearly illustrated with argument framing. Rhetorical tropes also represent an attractive framing strategy for standardized services. Rhetorical tropes are characterized by ambiguity, which is what facilitates 'the pleasure of the text' (Barthes 1985). The initial ambiguity present in the ad can be stimulating and the resolution which follows can create pleasure (McQuarrie and Mick 1992, Peracchio and Meyers-Levy 1994). Because rhetorical tropes place a high demand on cognitive resources and compensate viewers for the extra cognitive effort devoted to processing in terms of pleasure (Barthes, 1985), they have a powerful effect on persuasion. The pleasure experienced from solving the incongruity can be transferred to the service, increasing the consumer's attitude to the service. Based on the premise that standardized services are high in search characteristics with information available prior to consumption, if follows that they are more easily evaluated without placing excess demand on cognitive resources. If all of the cognitive resources made available to processing are not

absorbed by the incoming information about the new service, the consumer can be open to idiosyncratic inferences, which can generate unfavorable thoughts and lead to less positive product attitudes (Peracchio and Meyers-Levy 1994). Rhetorical tropes can address the important issue of cognitive resource matching, with excess resources used to solve the ambiguity in the advertisement, at the same time resulting in positive affective responses and communicating the service attributes implicitly. However, rhetorical tropes lack the ability of narrative framing to facilitate a surrogate experience, which is the key perceptual benefit on which customized services are evaluate. For this reason the following hypothesis is put forward:

H4b: The incidence of rhetorical tropes will be greater for standardized than for customized services.

3.4. METHODOLOGY

Content analysis offers a useful means of identifying trends that either support or oppose existing theory, as well as acting as a vehicle to establish trends on which new theory can be formulated (Kolbe & Burnett 1991). Content analysis is used to achieve the research objectives of examining trends in the use of framing strategies across different service types, and investigating whether any disparity exists between the use of framing strategies in practice and those strategies which were identified as theoretically most effective. This methodology facilitates objectivity via the provision of clear guidelines and procedures to ensure the generation of reliable findings (Mortimer 2000). The guidelines laid down by Kassarjian (1977) are incorporated in this study.

3.4.1. Sample

Print ads were selected as the medium for this research, because they facilitate standardized content analysis across ads, and because print represents an important media in terms of global ad spend, representing almost 30% of the $498 billion spend in 2011 (Neilson Global AdView Pulse 2012). In line with McQuarrie and Mick's (1992) research on the use of rhetorics in advertising, one issue from twenty of the top fifty US magazines (ranked based

on advertising revenue and circulation figures) was selected. To achieve this study's goal of having a breadth of service industries, different categories of magazines were included, for example: financial/business (e.g. Fortune, The New Yorker, and Time), and men's/women's/general lifestyle (e.g. Men's Health, Golf Digest, InStyle, Martha Stewart Living, and National geographic). Only full and half page advertisements were considered and advertisements that appeared more than once were removed from the sample, so as not to distort the results by mitigating for the influence of a single brand (Spears et al. 2006). This brought the sample of service advertisements to 200. The lifestyle magazines had a paltry amount of service advertisements, whereas approximately 80% of the advertisements in the business and financial category were for services. For this reason, additional issues were sourced from the most popular business/financial magazines in the UK (Forbes, The Economist, and Money Week), selected based on availability. In order to increase the sample size and the breadth of service industries, a further 140 advertisements were sourced from an online advertisement archive, which facilitated selection of advertisements based on country and date of publication and product type. The archive was selected based on the vast number of up to date advertisements and broad variety of service sectors advertised. This allowed a sample of advertisements from a broad range of service industries published in the same geographic regions and time frame as the offline sample to be collected (see Table 3.3). All the advertisements in the sample were published between 2007 and 2011. This brings the total advertisement sample in the analysis to 475 (see Table 3.2).

Table 3.2 Service Advertisement Sources

Genre	Magazine	Number of Service Ads
Financial/Business	The Economist Fortune Forbes MoneyWeek The New Yorker Time	181
Lifestyle (women, men, general)	Good Housekeeping O The Oprah Magazine Martha Stewart Living Good Homes Cosmopolitan InStyle Men's Health Gold Digest National Geographic Architectural Digest Gig Time Out People US Weekly OK! Weekly Star Magazine	154
Online Archive	'Coloribus' archive	140
Total		475

Table 3.3 Service Industries (North American Industry Classification System)

Service Industry	Frequency	%
Utilities	14	2.9
Retail trade	19	4
Transport	49	10.3
Information	46	9.7
Finance	159	33.5
Professional, scientific, technical	12	2.5
Education	23	4.8
Healthcare	13	2.7
Social assistance	2	.4
Arts, entertainment, recreation	95	20
Accommodation & food	18	3.8
Personal Care	2	.4
Social Advocacy	2	.4
Building Construction	9	1.9
Admin & Support	12	2.5
Total	**475**	**100**

3.4.2. Procedure

This study follows recommended content analysis procedure and guidelines (Kassarjian 1977). Each ad was coded independently by two researchers (Stafford, Spears, Hsu 2003 and Laroche et al. 2011). The first author coded the entire sample (as in van Kuilenburg et al. 2011). In doing so the coding scheme was amended as it became clear what framing strategies are available to and employed by service advertisers. The same coding scheme was used by the research assistants. Two postgraduate students in marketing were employed as research assistants to code half of the sample each; therefore each advertisement was coded by both the first author and a trained postgraduate student. The coders were trained extensively to identify the absence or presence of each framing strategy. Every ad was numbered and analyzed for the presence or absence of each framing strategy used as the primary method of persuasion, i.e. in the headline, sub-heading or primary visual advertisement elements. In instances where an advertisement appeared to be using several framing strategies, only the strategies deemed to be a primary method of structuring the verbal or visual elements were retained in the analysis (Décaudin and Lacoste 2011). The presence of each framing strategy was coded '1' and absence was coded '0'. Variables coded include the service type (mental intangibility and customization) and the framing strategy (argument, narrative, mental simulation, schemes and tropes (including metaphor, resonance, pun, paradox, and irony)). Given the wide range of rhetorical tropes, and the low frequency of individual tropes (e.g. metaphor, irony, resonance, parody, pun), the variety of individual tropes are collapsed under the category of rhetorical tropes. This allows for meaningful analysis with greater frequencies. Analyzing the frequency of different tropes in one category is appropriate, because research suggests that it is not the specific trope, but the level of deviation from expectation which impacts audience persuasion (Phillips &McQuarrie 2010). The reliability of both categories and interrater judgment are crucial issues in maintaining the reliability of content analysis research. In order to achieve category reliability all coders used the definitions of each framing strategy to guide their coding (Kassarjian 1977, Laroche et al. 2011). The definitions for all variables are grounded in the literature. For a detailed coding scheme see the coding schedule in the appendix (Appendix III). Trends in the use of framing strategies across mentally tangible versus mentally intangible services and customized versus standardized services were investigated using chi-square analysis (as in Décaudin and Lacoste 2011 and Laroche et al. 2011).

3.5. RESULTS

3.5.1. Interrater reliability

Interrater reliability was calculated for all framing strategy variables, including argument, narrative, mental simulation, rhetorical schemes and tropes (see table 3.4). Interrater agreement, calculated as a ratio of the coding agreement (r) to the total number of decisions (N), was assessed for all variables (Kassarjian 1977). These range from 78% to 95%. Because interrater agreement statistics have been criticized for failing to remove the likelihood of change agreement between judges, Cohen's Kappa (1960, 1968) is also assessed for each variable. Despite being overly conservative, this has been cited as the most widely used method of determining interjudge reliability in the behavioral science area (Perreault and Leigh 1989), and is used in recent content analysis studies (Allan 2008, Djafroava 2008).

Table 3.4 Interrater Reliability

Framing strategy variable	**Interjudge Agreement Percentage (1 – r/n)**	**Kappa value (Cohen 1960)**
Argument	78%	.54
Narrative	92%	.67
Mental Simulation	95%	.32
Rhetorical Schemes	89%	.59
Rhetorical Trope	81%	.62

Kappa values range from substantial (narrative and rhetorical tropes), and moderate (argument and rhetorical schemes) to fair (mental simulation) (Landis and Koch 1977). The moderate to fair Kappa values for argument, rhetorical schemes and mental simulation highlight the difficulty in achieving agreement for subjective advertising variables (Van Mulken 2003, 2006). It is not unusual to have low kappa values for variables requiring interpretation of an advertisement. For example, Van Mulken's (2003, 2006) research acknowledges the difficulty experienced by coders rating rhetorical structures, leading to Kappa values of .30 for rhetorical figures (schemes and tropes combined) (Van Mulken,

2003) and .427 for rhetorical tropes (Van Mulken 2006). To establish a final coding schedule for analysis, advertisements were revisited, discrepancies were discussed with the relevant researcher, and a consensus decision was made on the framing strategy of each advertisement (Abernethy and Butler 2001, Cicchirillo and Lin 2011, Turley and Kelly 1997).

3.5.2. Frequencies

Table 3.5 illustrates the frequency of the different service types. Over 70% of the sample of advertisements was for customized services. This is not unexpected as traditional services are becoming increasingly personalized and experience-centric (Michael et al. 2009). More services are mentally tangible than intangible, indicating that almost 60% of the advertisements were for easily grasped or well-known services. There was an almost even split between customized services which were coded as mentally tangible and intangible, yet standardized services were almost exclusively mentally tangible. This is because standardized services are high in search characteristics, meaning they can be evaluated prior to consumption and therefore have a strong mental representation (Jain, Buchanan and Maheswaran 2000).

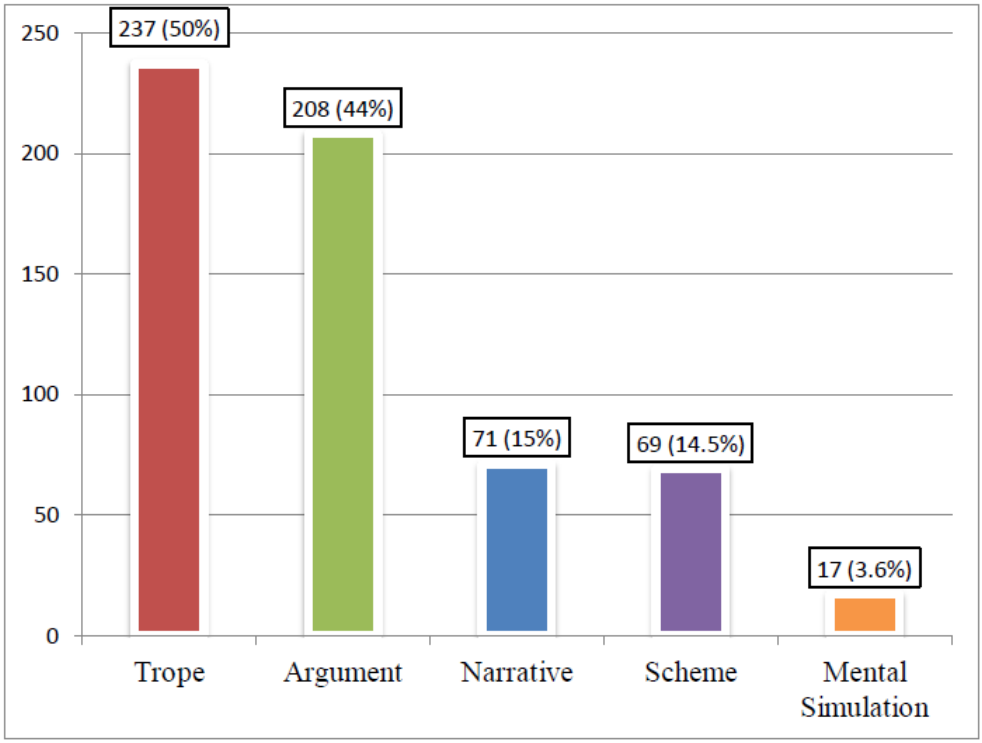
Table 3.5 Frequencies of Service Characteristics

	Mentally Tangible	**Mentally Intangible**	Total
Standardized	127 (27%)	12 (3%)	139 (29%)
Customized	155 (32%)	181 (38%)	336 (71%)
Total	282 (59%)	193 (41%)	475 (100%)

The frequencies of the framing strategies employed in the entire sample of service advertisements are presented in Figure 3.4. This sheds light on the questions posed in RQ1, which asks: (a) *What framing strategies are services using in practice, and (b) how frequently are the different strategies used?* The variety of framing strategies found in the advertisement sample include argument, narrative, mental simulation, rhetorical schemes and

rhetorical tropes (RQ1a). As the literature review (Chapter 2) illustrates, there is a lack of a unified terminology and definition of the concept of framing strategy. Therefore the content analysis proved useful in helping to bring to light the variety of framing strategies employed in practice. It also illustrates that strategies that prompt transportation (i.e. narrative and mental simulation), strategies that trigger elaboration (i.e. rhetorical schemes and tropes) and those that provoke piecemeal processing (i.e. argument) are all used as alternatives. Aside from helping to shed light on the use of framing strategies in modern marketing, this study also offers an important rationale for future empirical research comparing such diverse framing strategies as, for example, narrative versus rhetorical tropes.

Figure 3.4 Frequencies of Framing Strategies



In relation to RQ1(b), the findings illustrate that tropes were the most commonly used framing strategy, present in over half of the sample. Given the large number of tropes present and the complexity of this variable, the types of tropes present in the sample should be analyzed and broken down into categories. Ad hoc analysis reveals that metaphorical tropes (including metaphor and analogy) represent more than half of the rhetorical tropes present

(52.3%). The remaining 47.7% of tropes encompass resonance, pun, irony, paradox and the breadth of substitution tropes. Argument is also a frequently used strategy, present in 44% of the advertisement sample (see Figure 3.4). Narrative and mental simulation are the least frequently used strategies, present in only 15% and 3.6% of the advertisements respectively.

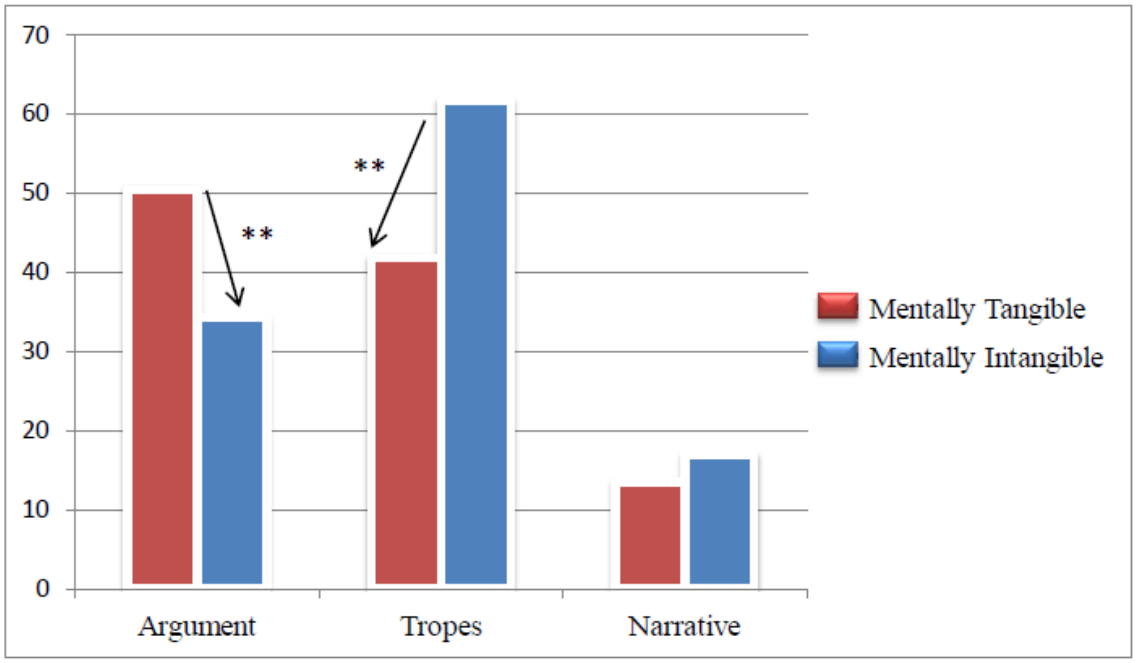
3.5.3. Use of Framing Strategies by Mentally Intangible versus Tangible Services

Table 3.6 presents the results for the use of framing strategies across mentally tangible and mentally intangible service types. **H1** predicts that the incidence of narrative will be greater for mentally intangible versus mentally tangible services. This **is rejected**. No significant difference in the use of narrative across service types is found (X^2 = 0.915, p = 0.339). Rhetorical tropes were the most frequently used framing strategy by mentally intangible services (62%), followed by argument (34%), narrative (17%), rhetorical schemes (16.6%) and mental simulation (2%). Post hoc tests reveal that metaphor is also used significantly more frequently by mentally intangible services, present in 36% of advertisements for mentally intangible services versus only 19.5% of those for mentally tangible services (X^2 = 14.85, p = 0.000). **H2a** posits that the incidence of rhetorical tropes will be greater for mentally tangible versus mentally intangible services. This **is rejected**; tropes are used significantly more frequently by mentally intangible (61.7%) than mentally tangible (41.8%) services (X^2 = 0.17.21, p = 0.000). H2b posits that argument is used more frequently by mentally tangible versus mentally intangible services. Argument is the most frequently used framing strategy by mentally tangible services, and is used more frequently in advertisements for mentally tangible (50%) than for mentally intangible services (34%) (p = 0.000). **H2b is therefore supported.**

Table 3.6 Framing Strategies across levels of Mental Intangibility

Framing Strategy	Mentally Tangible Services		Mentally Intangible Services		X^2	P	phi
	%	N	%	N			
Argument	**50.4**	142	**34.2**	66	11.50	0.000	-.160
Rhetorical Trope	**41.8**	118	**61.7**	119	17.21	0.000	.195
Narrative	**13.5**	38	**17.1**	33	0.915	0.339	0.050
Scheme	**13.1**	37	**16.6**	32	1.105	.293	.048
Mental Simulation	**4.6**	13	**2.1**	4	2.138	0.144	-.067

Figure 3.5 Frequency of Argument, Trope & Narrative across Mental Intangibility (high versus low)



**Significant at p = 0.000

3.5.4. Use of Framing Strategies by Customized versus Standardized Services

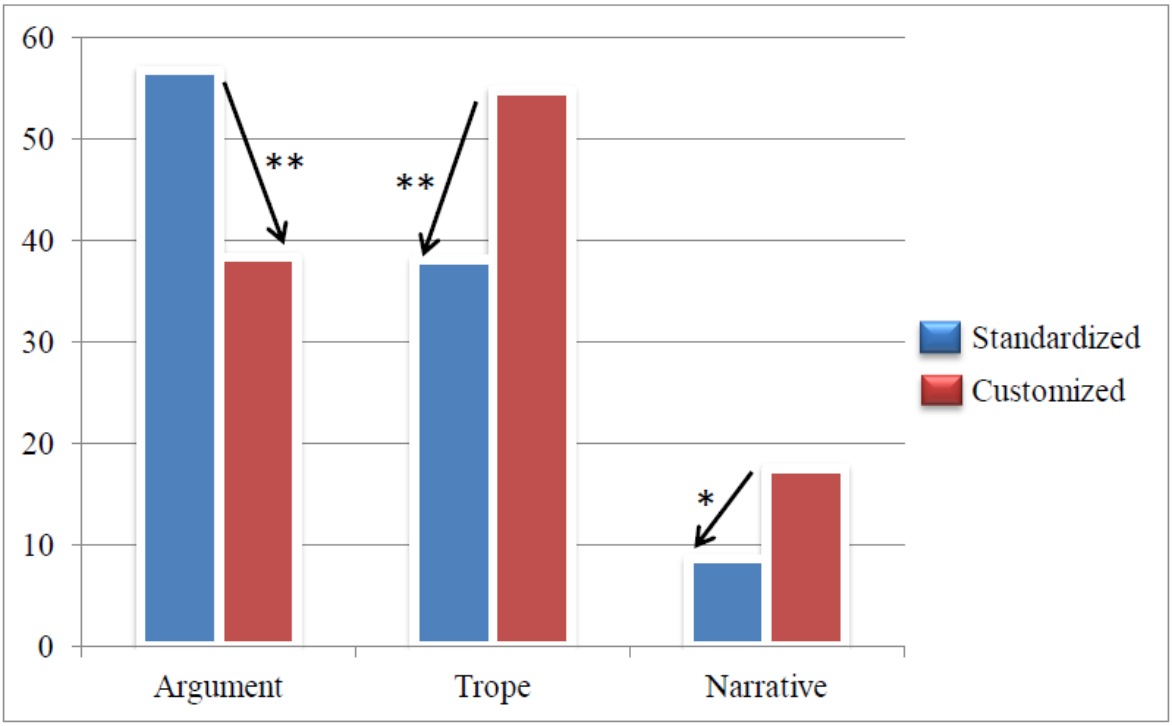
Table 3.7 illustrates the chi-square results of the employment of framing strategies across levels of customization. **H3** states that the incidence of narrative framing will be greater for

customized than for standardized services. This **is supported**; narrative was used twice as frequently by customized (17.6%) versus standardized (8.6%) services (X^2 = 5.48, p = 0.019). However, narrative is still only present in a minority of advertisements for customized services. Such services are found to use rhetorical tropes most frequently (55%), followed by argument framing (38%), and then narrative (17.6%), rhetorical schemes (14%) and mental simulation (3.6%). **H4a** predicts that the incidence of rhetorical figures will be greater for standardized than for customized services. This **is not supported**. The use of rhetorical tropes is significantly greater for customized (55%) than standardized (38%) services (X^2 = 10.25, p = 0.001). Standardized services are found to use argument most frequently (57%), followed by rhetorical tropes (38%), rhetorical schemes (15.85), narrative (9%) and mental simulation (3.6%). **H4b** predicts that the instance of argument will be greater for standardized than customized services, this **is therefore supported**.

Table 3.7 Framing Strategies across levels of Customization

Framing Strategy	Standardized services		Customized Services		X^2	P	phi
	%	N	%	N			
Argument	**56.8**	79	**38.4**	129	12.85	0.000	-.169
Trope	**38.1**	53	**54.8**	184	10.25	0.001	.151
Narrative	**8.6**	12	**17.6**	59	5.48	0.019	.114
Scheme	**15.8**	22	**14**	47	0.268	0.605	-.024
Mental simulation	**3.6**	5	**3.6**	12	0.00	1.000	-.001

Figure 3.6 Frequency of Argument, Trope & Narrative across Customization (high versus low)



**Significant at p = 0.000, *Significant at p<0.05

3.6. DISCUSSION

3.6.1. Findings

This research sheds light on the variety of framing strategies used by services in practice, which include argument, narrative, mental simulation, rhetorical schemes and rhetorical tropes. The literature review outlined in Chapter 2 illustrates the lack of unified terminology and definition of the concept of 'framing strategy'. This study represents an important contribution by showing that framing strategies that prompt transportation (i.e. narrative and mental simulation); strategies that trigger elaboration (i.e. rhetorical schemes and tropes); and those that provoke piecemeal processing (i.e. argument) are all used as alternatives. Along with bringing to light the variety of framing strategies employed in modern services marketing communications, this paper also offers an important rationale for future empirical research comparing such diverse framing strategies as, for example, narrative versus rhetorical tropes. Another finding of this study is the overall frequency that different framing strategies are employed by services in general (Figure 3.4). The frequency of rhetorical tropes in this ad sample reflects Phillips and McQuarrie's (2002) content analysis research on the use of rhetorical strategies over time. They find that the use of rhetorical figures, in particular destabilization tropes, grew increasingly over the study time frame (1954-1999). They suggest this is because advertisers have been assuming greater competency on behalf of consumer ability to process complex advertisements. Further, due to advertising clutter, consumers attend less to advertisements, and the incongruity inherent in tropes may help to break through the noise, provoke elaboration and stimulate brand related thoughts. The frequent use of tropes also reflects the myriad of empirical studies highlighting the beneficial impact of rhetorical tropes in advertising (e.g. Toncar and Munch 2001; Phillips and McQuarrie 2009).

Within the category of tropes, metaphor is the most frequently occurring. This is important as metaphor is often cited as an attractive framing strategy to reduce the perceived intangibility associated with services (Berry 1980, George and Berry 1981, Berry and Clark 1986). The use of argument framing is also high, 44% of the ads in the sample employ this strategy. While this is an effective method of minimizing the ambiguity surrounding advertisement claims, and presenting the attributes explicitly and logically, argument framing can be less

effective than both rhetorical tropes (e.g. McQuarrie and Mick 1992) and narrative (Adaval and Wyer 1998) in generating positive cognitive and affective consumer responses, depending on the type of service advertised. This strategy may therefore be overused in practice. Despite the substantial amount of research highlighting the potential benefits of narrative transportation in the presentation of information (e.g. Mattila 2000, Escalas 2004, and Feiereisen et al. 2008), narrative and mental simulation are the least employed framing strategies in this study. This suggests practitioners are failing to take advantage of the persuasive impact of transportation (Green and Brock 2000) and in particular are ignoring the potential benefits of narrative for services advertising (Mattila 2000). The fact that this study focuses on print media is not expected to impact the findings. Green and Brock (2000) contend that the narrative 'reader' can also be a listener, viewer or recipient of narrative information. Transportation is not limited to a specific medium, and both print and film media are shown to impact transportation to a similar extent (Green et al. 2008).

The findings reveal that tropes are the most frequently used framing strategy by mentally intangible services, with the majority of ads using metaphorical tropes in particular. While this confirms prior recommendations for reducing the abstractness of intangible concepts (Berry and Clark 1986), this study draws on resource matching theory (Anand and Sternthal 1990) and posits that the audience for advertisements for mentally intangible services may lack the cognitive resources to solve the ambiguity inherent in metaphor tropes. When promoting mentally intangible services, the incongruity of destabilization tropes may couple with the demands consumers face in attempting to understand the service attributes, and lead to insufficient resource demands to solve the ambiguity in the advertisement. This research instead recommends the use of narrative framing for mentally intangible services, as the temporal sequence of events illustrated in narratives is structurally similar to life experiences, helping to make new information easier to understand (Adaval and Wyer 1998). Narrative is present in only 17% of advertisements however, and is used no more frequently by mentally intangible versus mentally intangible services. This suggests that advertisers are relying on the ambiguity present in rhetorical tropes to stimulate elaboration for mentally intangible services rather than taking advantage of narrative transportation to hook consumers and offer a surrogate experience for a service which is difficult to grasp. Also, the fact that argument framing is employed in 34% of advertisements for mentally intangible services is concerning, as piecemeal information processing is obstructed in situations where consumers lack the existing schemas in memory in order to categorize incoming information (Lehmann 1994),

which can be the case for mentally intangible services (Laroche et al. 2001). Argument is the strategy most often employed by mentally tangible services, and is used significantly more frequently by mentally tangible versus intangible services. It is logical that argument is more likely to be used by mentally tangible versus intangible services given the ability of argument to explicitly illustrate the benefits of mentally tangible services. However, rhetorical tropes are also a frequently used strategy, present in more than 40% of advertisements for mentally tangible services. Mentally tangible services place less demand on consumer cognitive resources to process and evaluate than mentally intangible services. Rhetorical tropes can absorb excess cognitive resources which might otherwise generate idiosyncratic thoughts which are detrimental to positive attitude formation. By presenting the consumer with polysemous incongruity, rhetorical tropes demand greater resources than argument. Upon solving the incongruity inherent in the rhetorical trope, the consumer is expected to benefit from the 'ambiguity relief process', which can enhance attitudes (Barthes 1985). The findings of this content analysis reveal that mentally tangible services are effectively framing their advertisements, with argument and rhetorical tropes.

Table 3.8 FRAMING STRATEGIES ACROSS SERVICES: PRACTIVE v. THEORY

Service Type	**Theoretically Effective**	**Current practice**	**Disparity**
Mentally Tangible	Argument/Trope	Argument (50.4%) Trope (42%) Narrative (13.5%)	Match
Mentally Intangible	Narrative	Trope (62%) Argument (34%) Narrative (17%)	Mismatch
Standardized	Argument/Trope	Argument (57%) Trope (38%) Narrative (8.6%)	Match
Customized	Narrative	Trope (55%) Argument (38.4%) Narrative (17.6%)	Mismatch

While narrative, as predicted, is used more frequently by customized than standardized services, the findings still illustrate that narrative remains an underused strategy by

customized services. This goes against the empirically based recommendation of the use of narrative for experiential services (e.g. Mattila 2000), and suggests a need to rethink advertising framing strategies for such services. Narrative framing is uniquely suited to portray the attributes and benefits of experiential services (Boller 1988, Padgett and Allen 1997), yet the advantages of this strategy are being ignored by service practitioners. The use of argument in more than one third of advertisements for customized services is also concerning. Argument lacks the potential to implicitly portray the symbolic and emotional benefits of customized, experiential services. On the other hand, argument represents an appropriate framing strategy for standardized services where consumers are attempting to evaluate the functional service features and assess the end-benefits (Välikangas and Lehtinen 1994). Argument framing, which presents rationally connected ideas which can be objectively verified and evaluated for truth (Padgett and Allen 1997) directly conveys information about product features and uses logic to persuade (Wells 1989). Because standardized services are high in search characteristics, they are easier to evaluate as information is available prior to consumption. If all of the cognitive resources made available to processing are not absorbed by the incoming information about the new service, the consumer can be open to idiosyncratic inferences, which can generate unfavorable thoughts and lead to less positive product attitudes. Rhetorical tropes can address the important issue of cognitive resource matching, with excess resources used to solve the ambiguity in the advertisement, at the same time resulting in positive affective responses and communicating the service attributes implicitly. The findings of this content analysis study therefore reveal that advertisements for standardized services are effectively framed with both argument (57%) and tropes (38%). It falls to the service advertiser to consider the demands placed on consumer's cognitive resources at the time of processing (e.g. by the environmental or situational context, such as time to process or absorption in other cognitive activities) to determine the optimal framing strategy. As illustrated in table 3.8, the findings indicate that the most effective framing strategies are not necessarily being employed in order to match available resources for mentally intangible services, and to engender positive cognitive and affective consumer responses to customized services.

3.6.2. Limitations

This research suffers from certain limitations, although these shortfalls can also be considered avenues for further empirical investigation. While the service type is theorized to have an

important moderating impact on the effectiveness of framing strategies, this variable operates in conjunction with other individual difference variables in determining the effectiveness of the framing strategy. Notably, the methodology employed in this study hinders the measurement of consumer expertise, which impacts how incoming information is processed. Matilla (2000) illustrates the interaction effect between information framing and consumer expertise, showing that narrative framing represents a valuable strategy for improving novice response to advertisements, and expert consumers were shown to be unaffected by the manner in which information was presented to them. Advertisements deemed mentally intangible in this study in line with prior research (Laroche et al. 2001) may not be considered mentally intangible or demand excess cognitive resources for expert consumers. Importantly, the service characteristics are not empirically tested, so while definitions gleaned from the literature are used to identify whether a service is customized versus standardized (Kellogg and Nie 1995, Lovelock 1983, Zeithaml 1981) or mentally intangible versus tangible (Laroche et al. 2001, 2003, 2004), a more effective method of ascertaining the service type would be to survey a sufficiently large sample of respondents and ask them to rate the service type.

Another relevant individual variable which this study cannot control for is consumer involvement. Peracchio and Meyers-Levy's (1997) research on resource matching and persuasion techniques argues that motivation must be high for the framing strategy to have a differential effect on consumer responses. In line with the elaboration likelihood model, they show that low motivated individuals evaluate ads heuristically and are therefore unaffected by the framing strategy, whereas high motivated individuals are impacted by the ad executional strategies. In contrast, Toncar and Munch's (2001) research finds the use of tropes enhances the depth of cognitive processing and positively impacts ad and product attitudes, but only for low involvement subjects. This is explained by the properties of tropes which motivate low involvement consumers to elaborate on the advertisement, whereas high involvement consumers are argued to be motivated to process the information regardless of how it is presented. While there is contradiction in the extant literature on the moderating impact of involvement, it is clear this variable needs to be taken into account when determining the most effective advertising framing strategy.

Other relevant consumer characteristics which cannot be measured with the content analysis methodology employed include: need for cognition (Cacioppo and Petty 1982), tolerance of

ambiguity (Budner, 1962, Foxman 1976) and metaphor thinking ability (Burroughs & Mick 2004). These individual variables all impact how consumers process framing strategies as well as their cognitive and affective responses. Finally, the objectives of the advertisement are not taken into account, and different framing strategies may be more or less effective at achieving different objectives. For example, argument can be an effective means of informing in an unambiguous explicit manner, narrative is argued to create brand engagement (Padgett and Allen 1997), and rhetorical tropes are linked to advert recall (McQuarrie & Mick 1996, Tom & Eves 1999).

CHAPTER 4:

EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH

The role of framing strategies for services advertising:

An investigation across service types

ABSTRACT

The paper makes an important and timely contribution to services advertising by addressing the lack of knowledge surrounding effective framing strategies for services advertising. This paper develops and empirically tests hypotheses related to the moderating impact of service characteristics on consumer response to framing strategies. Drawing on resource matching theory (Anand and Sternthal 1990) and the need to balance the types of cognitive load (Chandler and Sweller 1991), this study hypothesizes that narrative will be more successful in enhancing comprehension and attitudes to services characterized by high mental intangibility. Based on the unique ability of narrative to holistically portray the service experience (Bruner 1986) the attractiveness of narrative over metaphor and argument for optimizing comprehension and attitudes to customized services is also hypothesized. A 3 (framing strategy: argument v. metaphor v. narrative) x 2 (mental intangibility: high v. low) x 2 (customization: high v. low) between-subjects web-experiment is conducted (n = 663). The results raise interesting findings, in particular highlighting the ineffectiveness of metaphor for services advertising. This reflects the 'dark side of openness' in advertising (Ketelaar et al. 2010), in particular for new services, which refers to the negative impact of ambiguity on consumer comprehension and subsequent attitude formation. Recommendations are put forward to enhance the persuasiveness of services advertisements contingent on the service type, and future research avenues are suggested.

Note to reader

As with the previous chapter, this chapter is presented as a complete paper, with an introduction, theoretical background, conceptual development, and hypotheses formation. Given the complexity of experimental design the methodology is presented in detail. The results are extensively presented, including hypotheses testing (moderated direct effect and mediated direct effect of framing strategies on consumer responses). Additional analyses is also carried out to further increase our understanding of the mechanisms by which framing strategies persuade, e.g. mediation among dependent variables. Finally, a concluding section explains the findings, provides managerial recommendations, presents the limitations and explores avenues for future research. It is important to note that sub-sections from the theoretical background (4.2) are once again reiterated in this chapter. Notably, sub-section 4.2.1, which details the framing strategies, is repetitive of section 3.2.3 in chapter 3. However, section 4.2.1 also discusses the implications of metaphor in detail, which is omitted from section 3.2.3 in the previous chapter. A detailed explanation of metaphorical framing is included in the literature review in sub-section 2.2.5.2. Secondly, sub-section 4.2.2 in this chapter describes the service characteristics (mental intangibility and customization). This is also included in section 3.2.2 in the content analysis. Resource matching theory is explained in both chapter 3 (3.2.1) and in this chapter (4.4.1), but it should be noted that this theory is developed further in this chapter. This chapter also introduces the notion of cognitive load theory (4.4.2) which has not previously been discussed, as an appropriate theoretical rationale for the hypotheses presented. The rest of the paper (sections 4.5- 4.11) is unique to this chapter.

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This experimental study builds on the content analysis paper outlined in chapter 3. The content analysis research suffers from certain limitations. Firstly, while theory supports the hypotheses regarding the effectiveness of different framing strategies for particular service types, no prior work has tested these hypotheses in an empirical setting. In this paper the impact of framing strategies on consumer response is empirically investigated, and more specifically, the moderating impact of service characteristics on the effectiveness of different framing strategies is examined. Secondly, content analysis research lacks the ability to measure and control for such individual differences as expertise, involvement and processing preferences (e.g. metaphor thinking ability, need for cognition and tolerance of ambiguity). This study addresses the limitations of the content analysis paper by measuring consumer comprehension and attitudes, measuring the influence of different consumer variables and controlling for these variables when necessary. Relevant service characteristics are manipulated (service customization and mental intangibility), which means the complex nature of services is taken into account and the impact of framing strategies across different service categories is illustrated.

This experimental research draws on resource matching theory (Anand and Sternthal 1990) to explain why certain framing strategies are likely to be more effective in different service contexts. Resource matching theory asserts that the persuasiveness of a message is contingent on the consumer resource capacity available and allocated to processing the stimulus. Message persuasiveness is maximized when the cognitive resources allocated by the consumer match those demanded by the task. If cognitive resources made available for processing are either in excess or insufficient to those required to process the advertisement stimuli in a manner which enables consumers to achieve their goals, persuasion is undermined (Anand and Sternthal 1990; Peracchio & Meyers-Levy 1997). In order to aid our understanding of why different framing strategies are more effective for particular service types cognitive load theory (Chandler and Sweller 1991) is borrowed from educational psychology. This theory relates to the enhancement of learning and offers a relevant and fitting explanation of the findings which emerge in this research. Persuasiveness is maximized by ensuring particular types of cognitive resources (also called cognitive load) are encouraged, and less demand is placed on more complex, demanding resources. There are

three different types of cognitive resources which can be required to understand and integrate information in working memory in order to develop knowledge schemas: intrinsic, germane and extraneous cognitive load (Chandler and Sweller 1991). This research relates the types of cognitive load to learning from advertisements, and posits that evaluating different types of services imposes varying levels of intrinsic load, and that information processing triggered by framing strategies poses varying levels of extraneous and germane cognitive load. In situations characterized by high intrinsic load, it is argued that persuasiveness is maximized when the demand placed on extraneous load is reduced and germane load is promoted.

The aim of this research is to investigate the effectiveness of three powerful framing strategies, narrative, metaphor and argument, for services advertising, and to examine to what extent the impact of these strategies is contingent on the characteristics of the service, namely customization and mental intangibility. This study extends prior research on the impact of framing strategies on consumer response by comparing the effectiveness of narrative and rhetorical tropes, e.g. metaphor. Extant research is limited in that narrative is compared to argument (Mattila 2000) and rhetorics are compared to argument (McQuarrie and Phillips 2005), but no research compares the effectiveness of narrative and rhetorical tropes. A limited body of work examines the impact of mental simulation versus analogy in the context of radical new products (Hoeffler 2003, Feiereisen et al. 2008). This study is in line with this research by comparing framing strategies which prompt transportation versus elaboration processing styles. The moderating impact of service type on consumer response to framing strategies has also been ignored. This research responds to the call for a focus on services advertising (Tripp 1997, Stafford et al. 2011), and introduces the notion of the moderating role of service characteristics on framing strategy effectiveness. This research takes into consideration relevant service characteristics (service customization and mental intangibility), in order to develop knowledge which crosses industry boundaries, yet remaining sensitive too the complex and dynamic nature of the definition of services.

The literature review (chapter 2) and content analysis (chapter 3) highlight a number of different framing strategies available to marketers to advertise their products or services. These include: argument, rhetorical schemes, rhetorical tropes, categorization, mental simulation and narrative. This paper concentrates on argument, narrative and rhetorical tropes (i.e. metaphor). Firstly, argument is chosen to represent a control, because in prior research both narrative and tropes are compared to and emerge as more effective than argument (e.g.

Mattila 2000 and Toncar and Much 2001 respectively). According to the content analysis results, argument is the most frequently used strategy to frame information in modern service advertisements. In contrast to more 'open' framing strategies, argument presents information in an explicit, logical manner, lacks ambiguity and can prevent misinterpretation of advertisement claims (Boller and Olsen 1991). Because of the frequency with which argument is currently used, as well as the fact that it directly contrasts open framing strategies by presenting an explicit, closed argument, this strategy is deemed a useful independent variable for this research.

The second most frequently used framing strategy in the content analysis is rhetorical tropes. Tropes are praised for their ability to provoke elaboration via the polysemous incongruity inherent in such advertisements (McQuarrie and Mick 1996). This means, in direct contrast to argument, tropes are open, facilitate multiple interpretations, and draw the audience into the advertisement to solve the ambiguity present (McQuarrie and Mick 2005). No research has compared rhetorical tropes to alternative framing strategies in the context of services, therefore empirical research is warranted. In particular, metaphor, a specific rhetorical trope, is recommended as an effective strategy to reduce the intangibility associated with services, by comparing the service to a more concrete domain (Berry and Clark 1986). This research intends to compare metaphor with alternative framing strategies to determine the effectiveness of this recommendation which has not yet been tested empirically. A rhetorical trope, in particular a destabilization trope, is more interesting for this research than a substitution trope or even a rhetorical scheme. This is because both substitution tropes and schemes are less marked with deviation than destabilization tropes, and therefore lead to less elaboration (McQuarrie and Mick 1996). Schemes are overcoded, and tropes are undercoded. Undercoding, or excessive irregularity, is argued to mark the text to a greater extent than overcoding (Eco 1979). Tropes are therefore incomplete, and it falls to the viewer to fill in the gap and interpret the claims facilitated by the rhetorical figure (McQuarrie and Mick 2005). The gradient of deviation which increases from schemes to tropes is discussed in greater detail in Section 4.2.1.3.

Finally, this research aims to compare both argument and rhetorical tropes to a framing strategy which operates in an entirely different manner, by provoking a different type of information processing. This research offers a timely comparison of the effectiveness of a framing strategy which prompts audience elaboration (i.e. rhetorical trope) to one that

triggers transportation (i.e. narrative). The choice of the final framing strategy included in this research is between narrative and mental simulation, as both are found to provoke transportation (Escalas, 2004). While mental simulation can represent a useful framing strategy for learning about really new products (e.g. Feiereisen et al. 2008), narrative is posited to be a more relevant framing strategy for this research, because it is argued that narratives are uniquely suited to portray experiences (Bruner 1986, Boller 1988), and the service experience often represents the key perceptual service benefit. However, it is important to note that transportation will be measured in this research, and its mediating impact will be analyzed. For this reason the results related to narrative framing may also apply to some extent to mental simulation, given that both strategies provoke transportation. See Section 2.3.2.1 for a more detailed discussion on the similarities and differences between narrative and mental simulation.

This paper begins by describing the background, defining and explaining the three framing strategies (argument, metaphor and narrative) and the service characteristics (mental intangibility and customization). It goes on to construct the conceptual framework by elaborating on resource matching theory and the different types of cognitive load (intrinsic, extraneous and germane). Based on this framework the hypotheses are developed. Next the methodology is laid out and the four steps in this experimental research are described in detail, including: a pre-test to identify four services, a pre-test to generate four metaphors, an expert panel to develop the final twelve stimuli, and finally an online experiment. This is followed by the results, beginning with an analysis of the overall model significance to hypothesis testing. This paper closes with the discussion, including an analysis of the findings, and a description of the managerial implications, limitations and future research.

4.2. BACKGROUND

This experimental study investigates the impact of framing strategies on consumer responses to services. In particular, the moderating impact of service customization and mental intangibility is investigated. This section defines and describes both (a) the framing strategies under analysis: argument, narrative and metaphor, and (b) the service characteristics (customization and mental intangibility).

4.2.1. Framing Strategies

4.2.1.1. Argument

Argument framing is defined as 'the purveyor of objective brand meanings that contain structured systems of attribute-benefit logic designed to convince audiences of the validity of specific brand claims' (Boller and Olsen 1991: 172). In contrast to narrative framing which draws the audience into the advertisement (Chang 2009), argument framing holds the audience at arm's length (Wells 1989). Argument framing is also referred to as a factual executional strategy, which involves clear, to the point, explicit content (Peracchio and Meyers-Levy 1997). Argument ads present associationally or rationally connected ideas which can be objectively verified and evaluated for truth. Argument ads directly convey information about product features to the audience and use logic to persuade (Wells 1989, Chang 2009). Peracchio and Meyers-Levy (1997) draw on resource matching theory to explain the effectiveness of different framing strategies and illustrate that argument places less demands on cognitive resources than narrative framing. Argument framing involves a single explanation for the phenomenon which can be judged based on the weight of evidence available to the viewer. Adaval and Wyer (1998) and Matilla (2000) suggest that argument formats encourage piecemeal information processing, which involves integrating the evaluations of each individual service attribute listed into a coherent overall judgment (Anderson 1981). In such information processing circumstances, negative evaluations may receive greater weight than positive evaluations (Birnbaum 1974, Adaval and Wyer 1998). This mode of thought can be characterized as logical psychological functioning, and is prompted when an individual views stimuli with both implicit and explicit arguments (Padgett and Allen 1997).

Argument & Piecemeal Information Processing

Traditional consumer learning processes include piecemeal processing (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975) and categorization (Meyers-Levy and Tybout 1989). Unlike holistic processing styles, piecemeal processing involves examining the implications of each piece of information individually and bringing them together in order to develop an overall judgment (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975, Anderson 1981). Piecemeal processing also assumes attributes are evaluated anew each time they are encountered (Hunt and Bashaw 1999). As opposed to basing a decision on the imagined series of events, as in narrative or mental simulation, consumers may assess the individual attributes or features of the advertised product. This is likely to occur when consumers are presented with an argument format, and when they lack prior knowledge to engage in category-based processing (Adaval and Wyer 1998). In summing the implications of each piece of information, negative information may receive greater weight (Birnbaum 1974, Adaval and Wyer 1998). After consumers have developed a judgment via piecemeal processing, they attempt to match this new information with information in memory, engaging in categorization. This form of processing is ineffective in situations where consumers lack the existing schemas in memory in order to categorize incoming information (Lehmann 1994).

4.2.1.2. Narrative

Many scholars agree that much of the social information acquired in daily life is conveyed in a story-format; it is transmitted thematically in a temporal sequence and is constructed from an individual's life experiences (Schank and Abelson 1995, Adaval and Wyer 1998). Therefore it is asserted that individuals are naturally wired to organize information about people and their actions in a narrative manner (e.g. Bruner, 1986, 1990; Kerby, 1991; Schank, 1990). Advertisements with a narrative framing strategy have a story as a foundation and include characters, a setting, a plot and a time frame (Boller 1988, Padgett and Allen 1997). Narrative ads which present a chronological series of events enacted by characters can be contrasted to argument framing which illustrates logically or rationally connected ideas not enacted by a character (Padgett and Allen 1997). Narrative framing facilitates subjective interpretations which merge the facts presented into a coherent gestalt representing the experience (MacIntyre 1981). It is these stories which guide how we understand new experiences, form judgments, make decisions and develop attitudes in relation to the

characters and events referred to in the story (Schank and Abelson 1995). How advertising information is presented can facilitate or impede with this process. Presenting the information in a story stimulates viewers to imagine the implications of the product information holistically in the context of a series of events (Adaval and Wyer 1998). Prior research in this area reveals that advertisements with a narrative format are in general evaluated more positively that argument ads. This is said to be attributed to the structural similarity between narratives and the information we acquire in daily life (e.g., Adaval & Wyer, 1998; Escalas, 2004; Polyorat, Alden, and Kim, 2007, Wentzel et al. 2010), and the strong affective responses narrative format elicits (Deighton, Romer, & McQueen, 1989; Green & Brock, 2000), as well as the ability of narratives to forge a connection between consumers and the brand advertised (Escalas 2004).The temporal sequence of events is structurally similar to life experiences, helping to make new information easier to understand and making it seem more intuitively correct (Adaval and Wyer 1998). By interacting with and reacting to the advertised brand, characters are able to provide the audience with a surrogate experience of the functional and psychological benefits associated with use of the brand (Boiler 1988, Wentzel, Tomczak, and Herrmann 2010). Adaval and Wyer (1998) find that narrative is more effective in engendering positive consumer response than a list when undesirable features are mentioned and consumers have less difficulty imagining the consumption experience with narrative versus list format.

Narrative Transportation

Transportation into a narrative is conceptualized as 'a distinct mental process, an integrative melding of attention, imagery, and feelings' (Green and Brock 2000:701). This definition of transportation is based on Gerrig's (1993) metaphorical description of a traveler, who moves away from his or her world of origin, rendering some elements of that world inaccessible, and returns to that world having been somewhat changed by the journey. This is similar to the feeling of 'getting lost in a story' (Nell 1988). A similar concept is described by Escalas, Moore and Britton (2004) who suggest individuals are hooked, emphasizing the experiential involvement individuals engage in when processing a narrative. Green and Brock (2000) describe transportation as a convergent process, which involves all mental systems and resources becoming devoted to the events occurring in the narrative. This contrasts with the divergent characteristic intrinsic to elaboration and systematic processing styles. Because some aspects of the world of origin are argued to become inaccessible, real-world facts may

also be lost to the transported individual. This loss can be physical, for example, not noticing someone walking into a room, or psychological, which involves a subjective distancing from reality. The latter is important as while the individual's cognitive capacities are focused on the narrative, they may be less aware of real-world facts that contradict claims made in the story (Green and Brock 2000). This is why viewers of advertisements are likely to engage in less counterarguing and critical thinking when presented with a narrative versus argument framed advertisement.

A second important impact of transportation on consumer response is that it can engender strong emotions, even when the reader is aware the characters in the narrative are fictional (Gerrig 1993). The reader's beliefs can be influenced by the experiences of those characters because of the emotional connection facilitated by transportation. When transportation occurs, the reader accepts not only the explicit claims made or enacted by characters, but the tacit features of the narrative are also accepted. The basic assertion put forward by Green and Brock (2000) is that the changes resulting from transportation into a narrative are linked to persuasion theories (Phillips and McQuarrie 2010). The deeper the transportation into a narrative, the greater the influence on consumer beliefs and the higher the likelihood that the advertising claims are accepted as true. This is due to a reduction in counterarguing and critical thinking, and an emotional connection with the characters and narrative plot (Phillips and McQuarrie 2010). Transportation can help to make a narrated experience seem more real for the viewer. Because direct experience can have a powerful impact on attitude formation (Fazio and Zanna 1981) and narrative transportation can act to offer a surrogate experience, the transportation facilitated by narrative can offer an effective means of persuasion. The strong affective responses elicited, and low levels of critical thinking triggered by transportation influence attitudes towards the ad and the advertised brand (Escalas 2004).

4.2.1.3. Rhetorics

The rhetorical perspective is one method of varying ad structure, which, particularly in the context of traditional goods, has received a substantial amount of attention since the early '90s (e.g. McQuarrie& Mick 1992, 1996, 1999, 2003, 2005; Tom & Eves 1999; Toncar and Munch 2001; Gkiouzepas & Hogg, 2011). In line with other framing strategies, rhetorics refer to the 'how' rather than the 'what' in terms of message expression. Rhetorics consist of the manner in which content is expressed and the design used to persuade audiences (Phillips

and McQuarrie 2002). A rhetorical figure is defined as an artful deviation (Corbett 1990). In order for an expression to be classified as rhetorical, it must deviate from audience expectation but not be rejected as nonsensical, it should occur at the level of style rather than content, and it should conform to a template that is stable across different information content (McQuarrie and Mick 1996). Rhetorical figures can be contrasted to non-figurative statements, which are literal meanings expressed in expected or typical patterns (Huhmann 2008). When statements which could be traditionally classified as rhetorical figures, e.g. less figurative metaphors, are used commonly in everyday speech, they no longer deviate from expectation or violate norms. Therefore, it is useful to follow McQuarrie and Mick's definition of rhetorics as deviating relative to audience expectation in order to avoid issues related to the definition of violation of norms or conventions in style. Prior research within the realm of rhetorics illustrates that it pays to frame information with rhetorical figures. In contrast with non-rhetorical ads, those using rhetorics are argued to lead to greater attention (Berlyne 1971), positive attitudes and recall (McQuarrie and Mick 1996), longer retention (Tom and Eves 1999, Toncar and Munch 2001, McQuarrie and Mick 2003), greater persuasion (Tom and Eves 1999), are seen as offering greater reward for individuals with a higher need for cognition (Peracchio and Meyers-Malaviya 1994), contribute to the formation of brand images (King 1989), and create pleasure (Bowers and Osborn 1966, Tanaka 1994). Rhetorics also act to the benefit of persuasion in that they reduce counterarguments and source derogations (Sopory and Dillard 2002).

McQuarrie and Mick's (1996) typology of rhetorical figures classifies figures according to the level of complexity and deviation, and distinguishes simple figures from more complex ones, positing an underlying distinction in how they impact information processing and persuasion. More complex figures require more elaboration and cognitive effort in order to understand the meaning as intended by the communicator, which can lead to greater persuasion. Because viewers are compensated for the extra cognitive effort devoted to processing in terms of pleasure (Barthes, 1985), complex rhetorical figures are more appreciated than simple ones, and can have a more powerful effect on persuasion. McQuarrie and Mick's three level classification first distinguishes between two figurative modes, schemes and tropes. These modes are argued to fall at different points in terms of the deviation gradient, with schemes being less marked with deviation than tropes. Tropes are therefore expected to lead to greater viewer elaboration than schemes. Semantically, schemes are overcoded and tropes are undercoded. Undercoding, or excessive irregularity, is argued to

mark the text to a greater extent than overcoding (Eco 1979). Tropes are therefore incomplete, and it falls to the viewer to fill in the gap and interpret the strong and weak implicatures facilitated by the rhetorical figure (McQuarrie and Mick 2005). Schemes are characterized by overcoding and excessive regularity, in that they present the viewer with redundant cues that directly illustrate the intended interpretations. The excessive regularity inherent in schemes originates from sensory elements (e.g. the replication of syllables in rhyme), and the excessive irregularity inherent in tropes is a result of semantic elements (e.g. the wordplay supported by a relevant pictorial in resonance) (McQuarrie, Edward and Mick 1999). Empirical evidence provides support for the notion that sensory and semantic elements incur different levels in terms of processing depth, with semantic elements requiring deeper processing than sensory elements (Childers and Houston 1984).The second level of McQuarrie and Mick's typology outlines four groups of rhetorical operations, two schematic operations (repetition and reversal) and two tropic operations (substitution and destabilization). All of the figures in each of the four groups are characterized by a shared deviation gradient. A progressive order in terms of processing resources demanded has been established, with demand increasing in order from repetition, to reversal, to substitution, to destabilization (Mothersbaugh, Huhmann and Franke 2002). In a complex trope of destabilization, the advertisement means more than is said, and depends on the audience to come up with the intended message. One example of destabilization is irony. This takes advantage of opposition. Another mechanism by which framing strategies attempt to persuade is comparison, e.g. metaphor. To see examples of different rhetorical figures please see the coding instructions booklet used in the content analysis research (Appendix II).

4.2.1.3.1. Metaphor

Metaphor is an example of a destabilization trope which falls under the umbrella of analogical structures, and which makes use of cross-domain comparisons to alter consumer response (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). Metaphors compare objects via analogy, by taking advantage of the conceptual similarity between two objects originating from different domains (Stern 1990, Ward &Gaidis 1990). Metaphors affirm a fundamental similarity between two objects which are not expected to be associated and in doing so open up new inferences (McQuarrie and Mick 1996). In order to resolve a metaphor consumers must draw on inferences that find similarities between the objects presented (McQuarrie, Edward and Phillips 2005). The purpose of metaphorical comparison is to aid viewer's comprehension of

abstract and intangible concepts or objects through comparison to more familiar, concrete domains (Phillips and McQuarrie 2009). Gentner et al. (2001) suggest that because metaphors are processed without the underlying conceptual theme being considered, they have great potential to alter consumer belief systems. Through a metaphor the attributes of the target concept that match the metaphor become salient, and those attributes that do not match the context become less salient and are masked. From a consumer's perspective, viewing an advertisement using a metaphor should positively impact beliefs which are salient to the metaphor, and negatively impact beliefs that do not match the metaphor (Phillips and McQuarrie 2009). This impact is most likely when the object of the ad has intangible or abstract characteristics, supporting the rationale for the use of metaphors: alluding to concrete and common domains can increase consumer comprehension of abstract, complex domains (Gibbs 1994). The idea that the positive impact of rhetorical figures on persuasion stems from their artful deviance which creates incongruity is not new (Berlyne 1971). If a metaphor is not deviant then it cannot be argued to have the same persuasive effects as other destabilization figures (Phillips and McQuarrie 2009). Given the common use of metaphors in everyday language (Gibbs 1994), it should be noted that in order for a metaphor to be considered a rhetorical device of destabilization, it should deviate from audience expectation to a similar extent as other destabilization figures.

Metaphors convey the main ad message (strong implicatures) and also render the viewer open to multiple, distinct inferences about the advertised service (weak implicatures) (Sperber and Wilson 1986; McQuarrie and Phillips 2005). This openness to both strong and weak implicatures renders metaphorical figures beneficial in terms of persuasion. As a complex rhetorical operation of destabilization, metaphor can also prompt consumer elaboration. In their research on rhetorical figures in advertising, McQuarrie and Mick (1999) illustrate the power of both metaphor and pun (rhetorical tropes) over rhetorical schemes in engendering positive ad attitude and more favorable than unfavorable elaboration. Phillips and McQuarrie's (2009) recent research on the properties of metaphors which impact consumer comprehension find that the power of metaphors lies in the figurativeness or gradient of artful deviation, as opposed to the cross-domain comparison facilitated by metaphors. This supports the argument that it is the artful deviation and irregularity of a rhetorical figure, and not its assignment to a particular category (e.g. metaphor) that explains its distinctive impacts on consumer response to advertising (McQuarrie and Mick 1996). These results hold except for one distinct sub group of consumers with high Metaphor Processing Ability (Burroughs and

Mick 2004) who engaged in higher elaboration and whose beliefs were shifted after viewing both figurative and non-figurative metaphors (Phillips and McQuarrie 2009). This highlights the importance of taking consumer characteristics into account in research related to consumer response to advertising strategies (see also Section 2.4). The findings indicate that figurativeness is of higher importance than metaphorical cross-domain comparison in altering consumer response to advertising. This implies that it is not the individual properties of different rhetorical figures that are important, but how much they deviate from audience expectation and how artful that deviation is. Therefore all destabilization figures should have the same impact on elaboration provided they are constant in terms of figurativeness. Gkiouzepas and Hogg's (2011) research looks at the properties of metaphor more closely, and finds that ad visuals which synthesize, rather than juxtapose metaphorical objects are more effective, stimulate greater elaboration and engender more positive ad and brand attitudes. Further, they illustrate that synthesizing conceptually similar rather than very dissimilar metaphorical objects elicits more favorable consumer responses. This reinforces the importance of figurativeness – as synthesized objects are more figurative than juxtaposed ones – as well as the content of metaphorical comparison.

Metaphorical Tropes & Elaboration

Rhetorical figures are marked by artful deviance, and as such indicate to viewers to elaborate on the communicator's intentions in so marking the text (McQuarrie, Edward and Mick 1999). The assumption of relevance (Sperber and Wilson 1986) states that; when presented with marked text, the audience always assumes relevance on the part of the communicator, therefore readers readily comprehend that the communicator has established artful deviation in order to convey a message. The artful deviance which marks the text is the fundamental property by which rhetorical figures evoke elaboration (McQuarrie, Edward, Mick 1999). Artful deviation stimulates incongruity (Berlyne 1971), and it is the incongruity which provokes audience elaboration (Heckler and Childers 1992).There have been a number of studies examining the role of advertising incongruity on memory, judgments and attitudes (e.g. Edell and Staelin 1983; Sujan et al. 1986; Houston et al. 1987; Meyers-Levy &Tybout 1989), an important one of which distinguishes between two elements of incongruity; relevancy and expectancy (Heckler and Childers 1992). Expectancy refers to the extent to which information fits into a predetermined pattern evoked by an ad, and relevancy refers to the extent that a piece of information relates to the identification of the principal message

expressed by the advertisement. Unexpected information is shown to provoke higher recall than expected information, and irrelevant information has been shown to evoke less recall than relevant information (Heckler and Childers 1992, Hwai, Lee and Mason 1999). This incongruity prompted by artful deviance is how rhetorical structures rise above the advertising clutter and grab viewer's attention, engaging them to elaborate (Hwai, Lee and Mason 1999). Rhetorical figures evoke what Barthes (1985) coined a 'pleasure of the text', which refers to the positive emotions that arise from processing a clever, complex, or amusing arrangement of signs. This has been illustrated as far back as 1971; Berlyne's empirical findings related to aesthetics show that incongruity can generate a pleasurable degree of arousal. The initial ambiguity present in the ad can be stimulating and the resolution which follows can create pleasure (McQuarrie and Mick 1992; Peracchio and Meyers-Levy 1994). In contrast to one-dimensional, simple texts, those which allow multiple interpretations are inherently pleasurable to viewers. For simple, closed texts, the viewer may extract pleasure from the information content, but the text itself does not offer a source of pleasure (McQuarrie, Edward, Mick 1999). The concept of pleasure of the text has been shown to be linked to ad attitudes (Mick 1992) and attitudes towards the product or service as the audience is likely to experience serendipitous emotions as a result of processing the ad (Meyers-Levy and Malaviya 1999).

Elaboration 'reflects the extent to which information in working memory is integrated with prior knowledge structures' (MacInnis and Price 1987:475), it refers to the amount and complexity of cognitive resources engaged by a stimulus (McQuarrie, Edward and Mick 1999). The elaboration likelihood model (ELM) (Petty and Cacioppo 1981) is one of two dual-process models which, alongside the heuristic-systematic model (HSM) (Chaiken 1980), has dominated persuasion research. The basic tenet of both the ELM and HSM is related to the amount of thought devoted to processing an advertising message. In conditions provoking high elaboration, central or systematic processing occurs. This involves the careful consideration of and critical attention paid to the arguments central to the message. Alternatively, in low elaboration conditions, a peripheral or heuristic route is prompted, whereby shallow cues serve to persuade (Green and Brock 2000). Elaboration is argued to impact persuasion through logical consideration and evaluation of message assertions. Elaboration involves a divergent focus, in that an individual engaged in elaboration processing might simultaneously access other schemas and experiences, including opinions, previous knowledge, and memories. This is in direct contrast to transportation, which entails

a convergent process, whereby all available cognitive capacities are focused on the events conveyed in the story or imagined in the mental simulation (Green and Brock 2000, Escalas 2004). Low and high levels of elaboration can be distinguished in terms of the response elicited, with the former evoking only a recognition response, and the latter constructing connection between encoded information and prior knowledge, involving the integration of data from multiple knowledge structures (MacInnis and Price 1987). In conditions of low elaboration, individuals will protect their cognitive resources and filter out advertisements believed to be irrelevant, or else devote available cognitive resources to another task, for example daydreaming (Petty and Cacioppo 1981). In low elaboration contexts argument or message claims are judged on the superficial analysis of positive or negative cues which aren't necessarily intrinsically linked to the advertised object. For example, model attractiveness may be relevant for a beauty product but acts as a peripheral cue for unrelated objects (Gorn 1980, Cacioppo and Petty 1984). Another low elaboration attitude development strategy is to generate simple inferences based on various cues such as the number of arguments presented. In conditions of high elaboration readers are expected to: pay attention to the appeal; access relevant associations and experiences from existing schema; scrutinize and elaborate on the encoded message in light of the available associations; and extract inferences about the strength of the ad assertions to make a judgment based upon careful and weighted consideration (Cacioppo and Petty 1984). Cacioppo and Petty (1984) suggest that once developed, attitudes are relatively enduring because the associations on which they are based are central to the advertised object and due to cognitive activity relevant to the object, leading to an integration of the attitude into schema in memory. The researchers go on to suggest that the attitude is predictive of behavior because the ad viewer has already: related the incoming information to their prior experiences and knowledge increasing their confidence about their attitudes; developed a stable evaluation which is easily accessible when behavior is required; and debated the suitable actions in relation to the advertised object for a variety of settings relevant to the individual which reduces the necessity for individuals to re-evaluate their attitude when the costs of the relevant behavior emerge. Increased elaboration leads to persuasion, but once the level of elaboration surpasses a certain threshold it can act to the detriment of persuasion; an inverted U relationship between elaboration and persuasion is asserted in the literature (Kelly and Block 1997, Escalas 2004). Transportation is argued to have no such relationship (Green and Brock 2000), however additional research on the antecedents and consequences of different levels of transportation is necessary to understand this processing style further.

4.2.2. Service Characteristics

An in-depth literature review was conducted in order to select service type dichotomies which are relevant, interesting and warranting empirical investigation. Appendix IV offers a summary of the characteristics used to classify services. Alongside a literature review on methods of categorizing services, the literature on services advertising research was also explored. Two service typologies emerged as relevant in terms of (a) impacting consumer response (comprehension and attitudes) to the service, and (b) the ability of different framing strategies to impact how consumers respond to the different service types. Mental intangibility (high versus low) and customization (high versus low) are selected as the two typologies across which to investigate the effectiveness of framing strategies.

4.2.2.1. Mental Intangibility

Different framing strategies may be more or less effective in advertising goods and services. One characteristic which is frequently cited as differentiating goods from services is intangibility. Intangible products are more problematic to appraise, which in turn affects uncertainty (Zeithaml and Bitner 2000). While there are few pure goods and services, most products have intangible or tangible dominant characteristics and can be placed closer to one or other extreme (Rust, Zahorik, and Keiningham 1996), and what defines an offering as a good or a service is the tangible or intangible essence of the market offering (Berry 1980). An abundance of research finds that intangibility is positively correlated with perceived risk (Finn, 1985, McDougall and Snetsinger 1990, Mitchell and Greatorex 1993, Murray and Schlacter 1990, Zeithaml and Bitner 2000). Perceived risk has been identified as an important factor which strongly influences consumer behavior: Consumers suffer anxiety comparing and selecting services they know little about (Mortimer 2000). Laroche et al. (2001) capture the complexity of intangibility by illustrating the three dimensions of the construct: physical intangibility (inaccessibility to the senses), generality (general/specific service perception) and mental intangibility (mental representation). The physical dimension of intangibility reflects the degree to which a good cannot be touched or seen, its inaccessibility to the senses, and its lack of physical presence (Laroche et al. 2004). It is closely aligned with McDougall's (1987) definition of intangibility: 'the lack of physical evidence'. The second dimension, generality, reflects the difficulty consumers experience in precisely defining a specific good

(Laroche et al. 2004). This follows Flipo's (1988) assertion that tangibility is a synonym for precision. A good or service can be described as general when consumers are unable to precisely identify the attributes, features and/or benefits. Conversely, goods/services are perceived to be specific when they facilitate a number of clear-cut definitions, features and benefits in the consumers mind (Laroche, Bergeron and Goutaland 2001). Laroche et al. (2004) offer the example of a car being 'a complex vehicle that one uses to get from Point A to Point B' as being general versus a car being 'an intricate machine; made of aluminum alloy; powered by an internal-combustion engine; with numerous features such as antilock braking systems, dual-side air bags, immobilizer theft-deterrent devices, air conditioning, etc' as being specific (p374). This study manipulates mental intangibility, rather than physical intangibility or generality. This is because recent research reveals that mental intangibility accounts for more variance in perceived risk than the other two intangibility dimensions (Laroche et al. 2004). The services in this study are by nature physically intangible, but generality is not manipulated in this research. A mentally intangible service lacks a clear mental representation; it is difficult to grasp, especially in cases where the evaluator lacks experience with the service (Finn 1985, McDougall and Snetsinger 1990).The services marketing literature argues for the importance of minimizing the level of intangibility associated with services (Parasuraman et al. 1988), the challenge facing marketers is to reduce the risk surrounding the purchase of products perceived to be mentally intangible, by making their offerings mentally, rather than physically tangible. Ease of imagination impacts affective and cognitive response to advertising stimuli. It entails the difficulty individuals are faced with when attempting to imagine using a service. When consumers are faced with services that are mentally intangible, they tend to lack prior experience with the service; they can experience difficulty envisioning themselves incorporating it into their daily routine. Typically, ease of imagination is positively correlated to consumer evaluation of new products, and difficulty of imagination is negatively correlated to consumer evaluation of new products (Zhao, Hoeffler and Dahl 2012).

Advertising offers a powerful communications tool to mentally tangibilize services and increase the ease of imagination experienced by the audience. The impact of mental intangibility on the effectiveness of framing strategies is not well understood. One line of research recommends the use of association to make abstract concepts more concrete (Berry 1980, George and Berry 1981, Berry and Clark 1986). Metaphor, a rhetorical trope, is a framing strategy which facilitates association between two separate domains because alluding

to concrete domains can increase consumer comprehension of abstract, complex domains (Gibbs 1998). On the other hand dramatization (Legg and Baker 1987) and visualization (Miller and Foust 2003), which can be facilitated via narrative and mental simulation framing respectively, have also been recommended as effective strategies to reduce the intangibility associated with services. An important objective of this research is to investigate the effectiveness of different framing strategies for mentally intangibles services.

4.2.2.2. Customization

Customized services are adapted to individual consumers' needs (Kellogg and Nie 1995), entail a greater array of options, and involve flexibility and imagination over the course of the service process (Lovelock 1983). Standardized services offer little discretion to consumers in terms of the service process, and attributes such as speed, consistency and price savings are of greater importance (Välikangas and Lehtinen 1994). Standardized services are higher in search qualities (Shostack 1977), whereas customized services are characterized by experience and credence qualities (Zeithaml 1981). Nelson's (1970) search-experience-credence framework asserts that experience and credence qualities cannot be assessed prior to consumption, increasing the risk associated with customized services. Search attributes can be verified prior to purchase, therefore advertising for standardized services should be focused on providing information and increasing consumer knowledge (Jain, Buchanan and Maheswaran 2000, Galetzka et al. 2006). Because customized services are tailored to individual needs, the emphasis tends to be on the service process. As such, customized services are more experiential in nature, with the experience being as important, if not more so, than the end benefits. Therefore, service evaluation is inseparable from the customer experience in interaction with the service provider, while utilitarian factors such as price tend to have less significance (Välikangas and Lehtinen 1994). The service experience is defined as 'the cognitive, affective and behavioral reactions associated with a specific service event' (Padgett and Allen 1997:52). For customized services high in experience attributes, the consumer may attempt to envision the whole progression of events associated with the service encounter. Affective and symbolic responses are important in the evaluation of experience-centric services (Otto and Ritchie 1995). For highly customized services the challenge lies in communicating the service experience, and conveying both the functional and symbolic benefits associated with consumer interaction with this experience.

4.3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual model underlying this experimental research analyzes the impact of framing strategies (i.e. argument versus metaphor versus narrative) on consumer responses (i.e. comprehension, attitude to the ad and attitude to the service) to services. Importantly, the conceptual model introduces the moderating impact of the service characteristics (i.e. level of mental intangibility and level of customization). This study hypothesizes that the impact of the framing strategy on consumer responses is moderated by the context (i.e. the type of service advertised). The conceptual model presented in figure 4.1 illustrates the direct impact of the framing strategy on consumer responses, hypothesizing that this is moderated by whether the service is high or low in terms of mentally intangibility and customization. The independent and moderating variables have been presented and discussed in section 4.2. In this section the consumer response variables are reviewed[2].

4.3.1. Dependent Variables:

4.3.1.1. Comprehension

Comprehension of the service is the first dependent variable considered in this model. This variable is important because comprehension is widely accepted to be a necessary prerequisite on which attitudes and behavior/purchase intentions are formed (Ratneshwar and Chaiken 1991). Mick's (1992) level of subjective comprehension (LSC) framework, suggests that comprehension does not simply occur at the message-based, surface level (objective comprehension), but also at the receiver-based level which reflects a deeper level of comprehension (subjective). This framework asserts that effects linked with deep comprehension (subjective) are stronger than those associated with shallow levels of comprehension (objective) (Greenwald and Leavitt, 1984). Comprehension related to self-relevant elaboration leads to the richest type of comprehension (Reeder, McCormick and Esselman 1987), and has the strongest influence on service attitudes (MacInnis and Jaworski 1989).

[2] Behavior Intent and Purchase Intent were also measured in this experiment, but are not considered to be the key dependent variables, so are not analysed in this thesis. Further, the ability of the framing strategy to alter purchase intentions is questioned, as a host of other factors impact this DV. Here we focus on comprehension and attitudes, which this study indicates can be impacted by the framing strategy employed.

Because the four services tested in this experimental research are all new services, consumer comprehension of the service is deemed a necessary dependent variable. It is expected that comprehension of the new services presented to participants is a necessary prerequisite for the development of positive attitudes (Bettman 1979). Moreover, framing strategies which facilitate subjective, deeper levels of comprehension, as well as comprehension of self-relevant service consequences, are expected to enhance participant attitude to the ad and attitude to the service. This study therefore investigates the direct impact of framing strategy on consumer comprehension, and the moderating impact of service type on this effect. Further, the mediating role of comprehension on the impact of framing strategies on consumer attitudes (attitude to the ad/attitude to the service) is investigated.

4.3.1.2. Attitude to the Ad

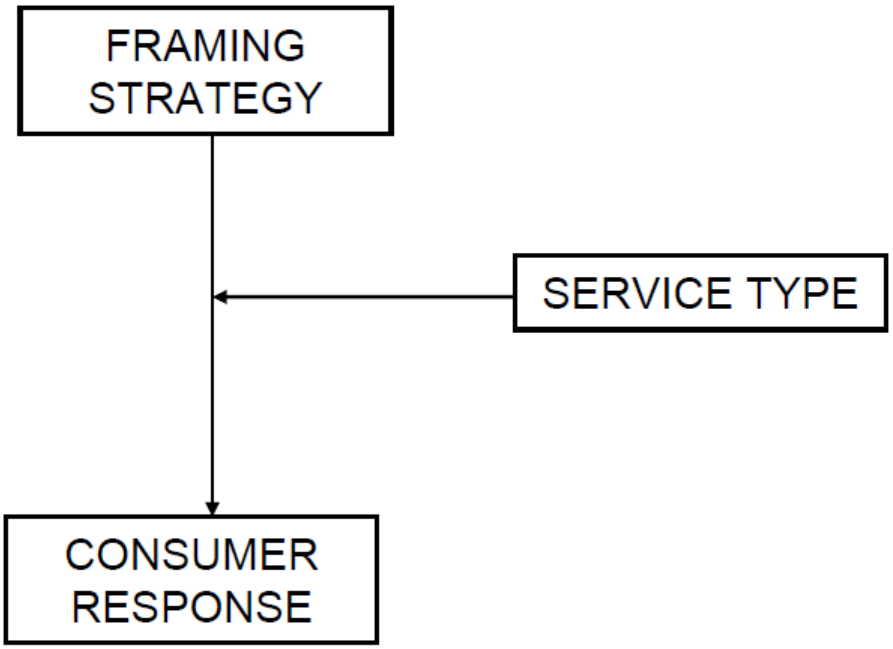
The second dependent variable under analysis in this study is attitude to the ad. This is a relevant variable because attitudes towards the advertised stimulus are asserted to influence consumer choice behaviour (Shimp 1981, Mitchell and Olsen 1981). This contrasts Fishbein's attitude theory, which argues that the only mediators of attitude development are beliefs. Mitchell and Olsen's (1981) research empirically illustrates the mediating impact of attitude toward the ad on consumer behaviour. This research has driven the use of Aad i.e. 'individual's evaluations of the overall advertisement stimulus' (Meuhling and McCann 1993: 25), as a dependent variable distinct from beliefs and atttitude to the brand. Attitude to the Ad is shown to have cognitive, affective and behavioural consequences on consumers. In relation to cognitive effects, ad attitude is shown to influence brand attribute beliefs (Hastak and Olson 1989), strength of and confidence in beliefs (Droge and Darmon 1987), ad credibility and persuasiveness (Gelb and Pickett 1983) and brand recall and recognition (Zinkhan, Locander and Leigh 1986). Attitude to the ad is also shown to impact affective responses. The most thoroughly investigated relationship is that between attitude to the ad and attitude to the brand (e.g. Laczniak and Carlson 1989, Lutz, MacKenzie and Belch 1983, Laczniak and Muehling 1990, Park and Young 1986). These studies illustrate the direct influence of attitude to the ad on brand attitudes under a number of different conditions (see Muehling and McCann (1993) for a thorough review). A number of studies empirically demonstrate a positive causal relationship between attitude to the ad and behavior and purchase intentions, with positive Aad leading to greater motivation to purchase (e.g. Moore and Hutchinson 1983, Shimp and Yokum 1981). The primary objectives of this paper are to

compare the impact of three important framing strategies on comprehension and attitudes and to investigate the moderating impact of service characteristics. As an additional analysis, this model will also test the mediating impact of attitude to the ad on attitude to the service, to offer greater insight into the relationship between the dependent variables.

4.3.1.3. Attitude to the Service

The final dependent variable investigated in this model is attitude to the service. A primary goal of advertising is to generate, enhance and maintain positive attitudes towards the advertised brand. For this reason attitude to the product or service is consistently used as a relevant and important dependent variable in research on the effectiveness of advertising variables, including framing strategies. One example is Samuelsen and Olsen's (2010) research on the impact of functional versus experiential claims across high versus low levels of involvement on attitude to the brand. Goode, Dahl, and Moreau's (2010) research on the influence of experiential analogies also considers the consequences for attitude to the ad and attitude to the product. Escalas's (2004) research on the interaction of argument strength and the presence/absence of mental simulation considers the consequences for attitude to the ad and evaluation of the product. While not the focal goal of this study, this research will investigate the mediating impact of comprehension on attitudes to the ad and attitude to the service (Ratneshwar and Chaiken 1991), as well as the mediating impact of attitude to the ad on attitude to the service (Lutz, MacKenzie and Belch 1983) (See Figure 4.3). The correlation between these variables is well tested and therefore not new, but this research tests these mediating relationships in order to examine how well they hold up in relation to the independent (framing strategies) and moderating (service characteristics) variables.

Figure 4.1 Moderated Direct Impact of Framing Strategies on DVs.



Further, the mediating impact of the information processing styles on consumer responses is also investigated where possible (Figure 4.2). In particular, the mediating impact of audience transportation on consumer response to narratives is tested. The mediating impact of audience elaboration in response to the rhetorical trope (i.e. metaphor) is also considered. The aim of this analysis is to provide support for the hypotheses, which are largely based on the type of information processing style triggered by the framing strategy. In order to understand and justify the findings, it is crucial to understand the extent to which consumers are hooked by the narrative stimuli, and to what extent they engage in high levels of elaboration triggered by the rhetorical trope. While well developed scales exist for transportation (Green and Brock 2000, Escalas 2004) and elaboration (McQuarrie and Mick 1999, Unnava and Burnkrant 1991, Fitzsimons and Shiv 2001), there is no scale available to test piecemeal processing. However, the relationship between argument framing and piecemeal processing is widely accepted (Anderson 1981, Adaval and Wyer 1998), therefore when rationalizing the findings it is fair to assume that when presented with argument stimuli, participants engage in piecemeal processing. Finally, in order to further develop our understanding of the

mechanisms by which different framing strategies persuade, mediation among the dependent variables is also investigated (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.2: Mediated & Moderated Impact of Framing Strategies on DVs.

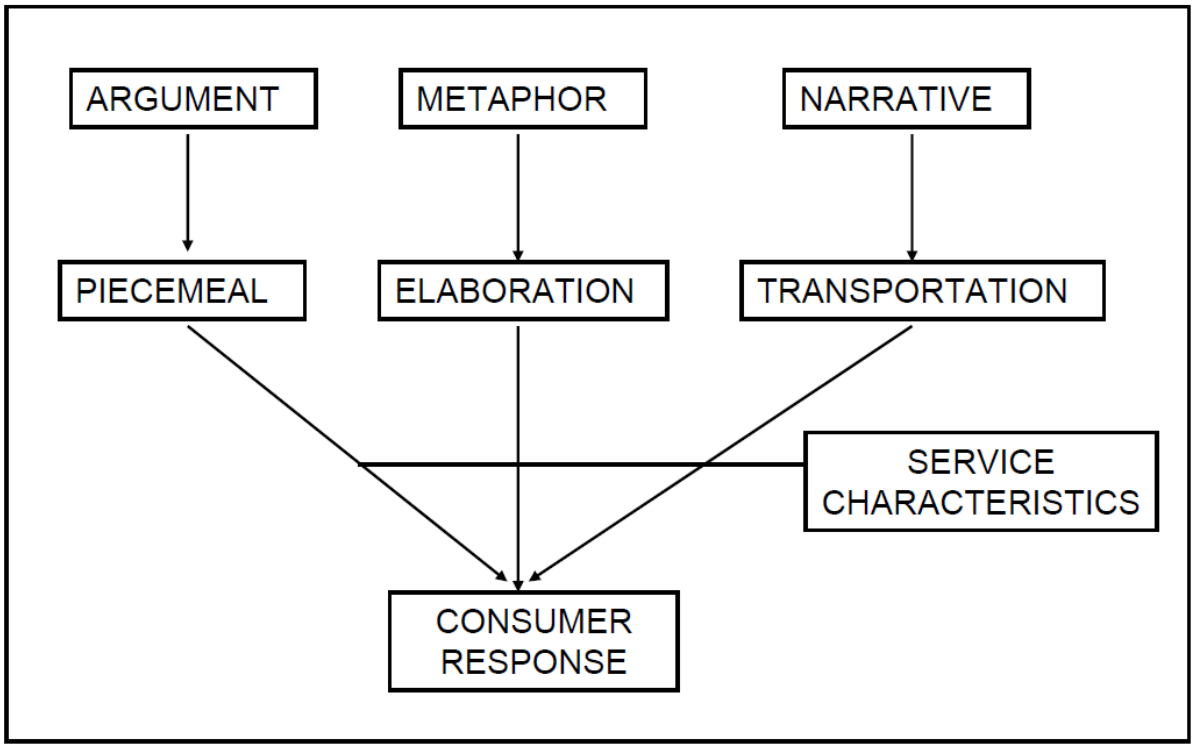
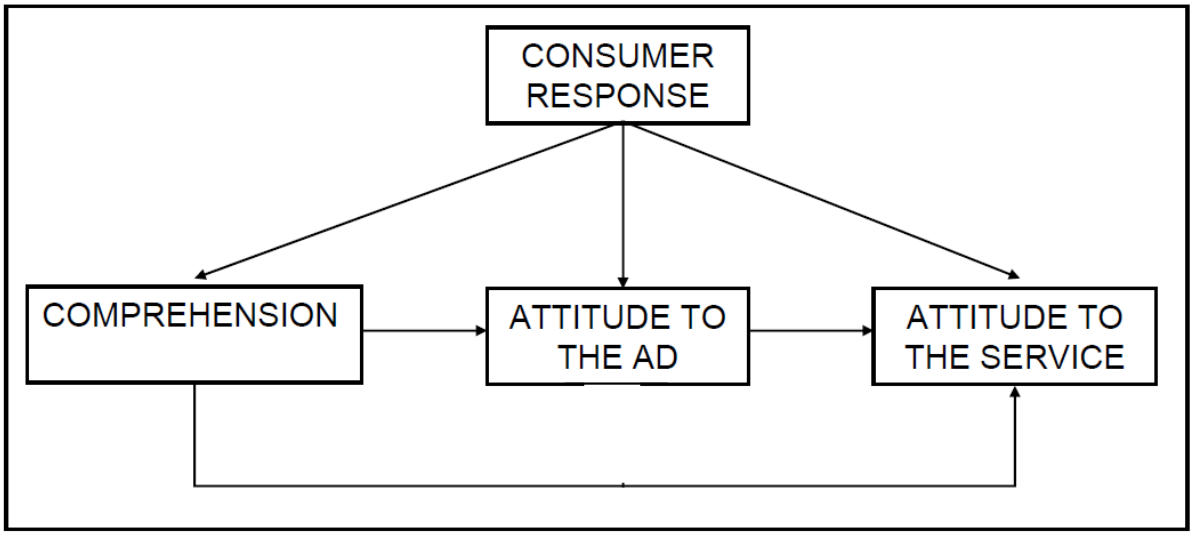


Figure 4.3: Mediation among Dependent Variables.



4.4. THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS

4.4.1. Resource matching theory

This study draws on resource matching theory (Anand and Sternthal 1990) to explain why certain framing strategies are likely to be more effective in different service contexts. It is important also to introduce the notion that consumers are cognitive misers, and expend the minimum resources required to process a given stimulus. The idea of cognitive miser was coined by Taylor (1981) and reiterated in Fiske and Taylor's (1984) seminal work 'Social Cognition'. It states that humans are frugal in the use of their limited cognitive resources, and naturally conserve them. Resource matching theory asserts that the persuasiveness of a message is contingent on the consumer resource capacity available and allocated to processing the stimulus. Consumer resources available to process an advertisement message are dependent on the cognitive capacity at a given time, while the resources allocated to processing are the minimum required by the task, in line with the idea of humans as cognitive misers. Message persuasiveness is maximized when the cognitive resources allocated by the consumer match those demanded by the task. If cognitive resources made available for processing are either in excess or insufficient to those required to process the advertisement stimuli in a manner which enables consumers to achieve their goals, persuasion is undermined (Anand and Sternthal 1990; Peracchio & Meyers-Levy 1997).

Extant studies have employed resource matching theory to consider the extent of consumer information processing for (a) stimuli with varying levels of complexity and therefore, place varying demands on cognitive resources, and (b) participants with varying levels of cognitive resources available to process based on age, need for cognition and other individual difference variables (Anand & Sternthal, 1990; Hahn & Hwang, 1999; Huhmann, 2003; Keller, Anand, & Block, 1997; Larsen et al., 2004; Meyers-Levy & Peracchio, 1995; Peracchio & Meyers-Levy, 1997). For example, Meyers-Levy and Peracchio (1995) investigate the impact of color on consumer response to ad stimuli in terms of consumer resource capacity. They show that in more effortful processing conditions, consumer attitudes are impacted by how available resources are matched by those demanded by the stimulus. The use of color in ads is argued to extend search time by distracting and using resources that would be allocated to process ad assertions and relevant images (e.g. Cahill and Carter 1976;

van Nes, Juola, and Moonen 1987). When adequate resources exist for extensive ad scrutiny, full-color ads are more persuasive than black-and-white ads. However, when the resources devoted to processing the stimulus are insufficient for extensive ad scrutiny, black-and-white ads are more persuasive than full-color ads. Thus the negative impact of more resource demanding color ads tends to exist in more cognitively demanding conditions when consumer resources are in shorter supply. The amount of resources made available to processing depends also on consumer motivation to process, supported by the elaboration-likelihood model (Petty & Cacioppo 1981, 1986).

4.4.1.1. Detrimental effect of insufficient or excess processing resources

Extant research clearly highlights the negative impact of failing to adequately match resources demanded to those made available for ad processing. Given that low involvement consumers typically engage in heuristic processing and are unaffected by framing manipulation, it is high involved consumers with which this study is interested. High involvement consumers make a large supply of cognitive resource available for processing. Peracchio and Meyers-Levy's (1997) experimental research reveals that when argument framing is used and the ad layout physically integrates verbal and visual elements, few resources are demanded to process the ad to achieve such goals as determining the service claims, cross-referencing with the image and developing judgments related to these claims. Under such conditions excess resources exist, and consumers generate more idiosyncratic inferences in expending their surplus resources. Such inferences are unpredictable, and are shown to be less favorable compared to service-claim thoughts which are designed in such a way to prompt favorable thoughts (Baumgartener, Sujan, and Bettman 1992; Cacioppo and Petty 1979; Edell and Staelin 1983; Kisielius and Sternthal 1984, Peracchio and Meyers-Levy 1997). Less favorable idiosyncratic thoughts are likely to offset the positive effect of favorable thoughts stimulated by service claims.

On the other hand, when the framing strategy is more resource demanding and the ad layout more complex, extremely high demands can be placed on already taxed high motivated individuals. If the resources available for ad processing fail to meet those demanded, individuals are impeded in reaching their goal of determining service claims, cross-referencing with visual elements and forming a well-reasoned judgment. Consumers are likely to generate favorable service-related inferences prompted by the ad claims, as well as

unfavorable idiosyncratic inferences triggered by frustration at the inability to adequately process the ad stimulus, or from processing non-relevant ad elements when attempting to determine and process service-assertion relevant ones. Such conditions challenge individual's processing capabilities and risk overwhelming the resources made available for processing to the detriment of attitude formation These findings indicate that, in attempting to maximize persuasion, advertisements which are very easy to comprehend and require minimal resources to process, or advertisements that lure in and highly challenge individual processing resources and overwhelm cognitive capabilities, can have detrimental consequences. In summary, the basic tenet of resource matching theory is that cognitive resources made available to process information are nomonotonically (i.e. inverted U-shaped curve) related to outcome variables (e.g. attitudes, recall, comprehension) when the resources demanded to process a task are held constant (Hu, Huhmann and Hyman, 2007).

4.4.2. Types of Cognitive Resources

This experimental research draws on resource matching theory i.e. matching the resources made available to processing to those required by the task (Anand and Sternthal 1990) to examine advertising effectiveness across different service contexts. Persuasiveness is maximized by ensuring particular types of cognitive resources, also called cognitive load (Chandler and Sweller,1991) are encouraged, and less demand is placed on more complex, demanding resources. To better explain this point it is necessary to draw on cognitive load theory, which describes the implications of how information is presented (e.g. framing strategy) based on balancing individuals' permanent knowledge base in long term memory, and their temporary conscious information processing in working memory (Kalyuga 2011). An important characteristic of working memory is that it is limited in terms of its capacity (Sweller 2004). Individuals can consciously process only a few items at any one time and for no longer than a few seconds. In situations which exceed these limits, working memory becomes overloaded and learning is negatively impacted (Kalyuga 2011). There are three different types of cognitive resources (or 'loads') which can be required to understand and integrate information in working memory in order to develop knowledge schemas: intrinsic, germane and extraneous cognitive load (Chandler and Sweller 1991). This research posits that learning about different types of services imposes varying levels of intrinsic load, and that learning via different framing strategies poses varying levels of extraneous and germane cognitive load. Cognitive load theory relates to resource matching theory in that it is

prescriptive in the need to balance the demand placed on working memory in order to ensure successful learning (Sweller 2003, 2004; Paas et al. 2003, 2004; van Merriënboer and Sweller 2005). In situations where knowledge in long term memory is lacking, a higher intrinsic load is placed on individuals, meaning a greater demand is placed on working memory's limited capacity. This research argues that in such situations, the framing strategy needs to place less demand on working memory and instead free up resources to process the new information. This can be achieved by reducing extraneous load and promoting germane load, explained in the following sections.

4.4.2.1. Intrinsic Cognitive Load

Intrinsic cognitive resource demand stems from the nature of the 'to be-learned information' (McCrudden et al. 2004). Intrinsic load can be defined as the demand placed by the internal complexity of the information to be learned, which is measured by the degree of interconnectedness between key elements of information which need to be integrated in working memory simultaneously i.e. element interactivity (Sweller 1994). An 'element' refers to any concept or procedure which needs to be or has already been learned. Low element interactivity means that different elements can be learned with little reference to other elements, thereby placing less demand on working memory load (Sweller 2010). Sweller (2010) offers the example of learning about the nouns of a foreign language or chemical symbols to illustrate low element interactivity tasks, and therefore tasks low in intrinsic load. Consider learning about the chemical symbol for copper, which can be learned independently of learning the symbol for iron. This means that working memory need only process the cognitive elements associated with symbol for copper, without the load associated with the symbol of an alternative chemical, e.g. iron. In contrast, high intrinsic load, and therefore high element interactivity, exists when elements interact and cannot be processed in isolation. The greater the interaction between elements, the higher the demand placed on working memory. Sweller (2010) offers the example of learning an algebraic equation. A novice learning about an equation (e.g. (a + b)/c = d, solve for a) must process each symbol (i.e. element) in the equation simultaneously in working memory in order for the equation to be comprehended. Therefore this represents a much higher intrinsic load than that of learning about a single chemical symbol. The level of intrinsic load demanded must take into account individual knowledge and experience.

The inherent difficulty (intrinsic load) associated with the incoming information is out of the advertiser's control, rather, the extent of intrinsic load demanded to process new information depends on consumer knowledge and expertise. Information that is familiar to the consumer is low in intrinsic cognitive load, whereas information that is unfamiliar to the consumer is high in intrinsic load, due to the lack of knowledge schemas in memory (McCrudden et al. 2004). McCrudden et al. (2004) offer the example of learning about lightning formation, suggesting this information poses low intrinsic load for a meteorologist, but high intrinsic load for someone who lacks prior knowledge on this topic. This study posits that mentally intangible services are high in intrinsic load, because consumers lack the knowledge schema in memory, therefore a greater demand is placed on working memory in order to process the many elements of the service, including attributes, benefits and the steps involved in the service process. Because consumers of mentally tangible services find the service easier to grasp as it relates to information they already have in working memory, mentally tangible services are posited to be lower in intrinsic load. Therefore in situations characterized by high mental intangibility, the aim of the framing strategy should be to free up resources to process the high intrinsic load. This can be achieved by directing resources away from extraneous load and toward germane load.

4.4.2.2. Extraneous Cognitive Load

In addition to the resources demanded by the information to be learned, the manner in which information is presented (e.g. framing strategy) also demands cognitive resources. The resources demanded by the design characteristics of the way information is presented (e.g. information framing strategy) can be both ineffective for learning, i.e. extraneous cognitive load, and effective for learning, i.e. germane cognitive load (Sweller et al. 1988, Paas and van Gog 2006). Extraneous load refers to cognitive processes which are not necessary for learning and are a result of suboptimal information presentation formats (Kalyuga 2011). It can easily be distinguished from intrinsic and germane load because it is always linked to the diversion of cognitive resources to activities which are irrelevant to learning. In other words, cognitive activities are diverted away from processing the intrinsic cognitive load. For example, engaging in search-and-match activities which are not key to learning and processing redundant information are both characteristic of extraneous cognitive load (Kalyuga 2011). Extraneous load is demanded by the way information is organized and presented, unlike intrinsic load, which is vital for learning about a new concept and refers to

the complexity of the incoming information or consumer knowledge schema in long term memory (Sweller 2010). When the manner in which information is presented leads the audience to conduct cognitive activities which are not relevant or do not aid the ostensible goals of a task (in this instance the task is learning about the attributes/benefits of a new service) a high extraneous load is imposed (Sweller 1988). For example, when text is presented one sentence at a time, as opposed to in a complete form, extraneous load may be greater. This is because the audience needs to save previously viewed text in memory, and then draw on this to process the information in its entirety (Dillon, 1992, 1996 – see McCrudden et al. 2004). Another example is when interacting text and graphical elements in instructional materials are separated across distance or time. In such instances integrating the information could demand search processes, and the recall of certain elements while other elements are processed in working memory (Kalyuga 2011). Overall, the findings from prior research indicate that actions taken to reduce extraneous load improves learning (Mayer 1999; Mayer & Moreno, 2002, 2003 – Cited in Paas and van Gog 2006). Extraneous cognitive load restricts learning in situations where intrinsic load is high, but not when intrinsic load is low, illustrating the need to reduce extraneous load in situations characterized by high intrinsic cognitive load. Given that intrinsic load is out of the advertiser's control (McCrudden et al. 2004), in situations with which the consumer lacks prior knowledge, i.e. mentally intangible services, it is important to reduce the extraneous cognitive load demanded. This study posits that the steps involved in analogical learning via metaphor i.e. '(a) accessing the base system; (b) performing the mapping between base and target; (c) evaluating the match; (d) storing inferences in the target; and sometimes, (e) extracting the commonalities' Gentner (1989: 200), pose high extraneous cognitive load on the consumer. For this reason it is suggested that metaphor is unlikely to enhance persuasiveness in situations characterized by high intrinsic load, e.g. learning about mentally intangible services.

4.4.2.3. Germane Cognitive Load

Germane cognitive load refers to the stimulation of resources directed at processing intrinsic cognitive load (Sweller, Van Merriënboer and Paas, 1998). This abstract concept means that an individual's cognitive activities are steered towards the intrinsic load – i.e. the key elements which need to be integrated and processed in order to develop new knowledge.

Cognitive load researchers suggest that in situations characterized by high intrinsic load, learning is enhanced when extraneous load is reduced and germane load increased. I.e. Consumer's resources are redirected away from those activities which negatively impact learning, to those that positively relate to comprehension and the generation of new knowledge schemas (Paas and van Gog 2006). Information presentation strategies shown to increase germane cognitive load include worked examples (e.g. Paas and van Merriënboer 1994). Worked examples are effective in increasing comprehension of the solution process. This is because they decrease extraneous load, freeing up more working memory to devote to cognitive activities which enable task-related learning, in other words increasing germane cognitive load (Paas and van Gog 2006). The task at hand in this research is learning about the attributes and benefits of the new service. Worked examples enhance comprehension of why the steps in a solution are effective (e.g. self explanations of the rationale) and when they should be applied (e.g. contextual inference). This means that a worked example ensures the learner knows the steps involved in a task, as well as when to deploy them and how they work (Gott et al. 1993, Paas and van Gog 2006). This study posits that narrative framing is akin to a worked example in terms of contextualizing the service process for the consumer, by mentally walking the consumer through the service attributes and benefits via the experience of the character in the narrative. Narrative provides rich contextual information surrounding the service process, and offers a linear, temporal sequencing of the service (Wise et al. 2009). Developing sequential narratives in memory has been shown to aid information processing (Robinson and Hawpe, 1986), and similar to worked examples, this study posits that narrative framing strategies prompt germane cognitive load. Increased extraneous load by definition decreases germane load, because they have competing influence on the allocation of cognitive capacities (Sweller 2010). Extraneous load diverts processing resources away from intrinsic load, whereas germane load directs resources towards the intrinsic load. Therefore, metaphor, which poses a high extraneous load, decreases germane load compared to narrative framing.

4.5. HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

4.5.1. The impact of framing strategies on consumer response across levels of mental intangibility

Section 4.4.1.1 illustrates the detrimental impact of failing to adequately match cognitive resources made available to process information to those demanded by the task. A mentally intangible service lacks a clear mental representation. It is difficult to grasp, especially in cases where the evaluator lacks experience with the service. Given that consumers learning about mentally intangible services are unfamiliar with the service and lack knowledge about the service attributes, it can be asserted that mentally intangible services pose a high intrinsic cognitive load (Chandler and Sweller 1991). Metaphor has long been recommended as a useful strategy for increasing the tangibility of services (Berry and Clark 1986). However, counter-intuitively and in line with resource matching theory this study hypothesizes metaphor is not the most effective for generating positive consumer response to mentally intangible services because resources required to process the ad may be greater than those available. Learning via metaphors is complex, and involves an effort on the part of the consumer to map knowledge from a base domain to a target domain, and to determine the relevant relational commonalities between the two. The access phase of learning via metaphor involves activating the audience's mental representation of the base in order to use this as a source of information about the target (Gregan-Paxton and Roedder John 1997). This can pose challenges for the consumer, and places a high extraneous cognitive load which is a preliminary to learning about the new service. In line with resource matching theory, it is hypothesized that greater cognitive resources are required to comprehend and process the attributes of mentally intangible services (intrinsic load), due the lack of consumer knowledge and schema in memory, leaving insufficient resources to solve the ambiguity inherent in metaphors (extraneous load). This can inhibit comprehension as the message intended by the marketer is either misinterpreted or not interpreted at all by the audience (Ketelaar et al. 2010).

The explicit nature of attribute claims made in argument advertisements can fail to illustrate the attributes of mentally intangible services which are difficult to convey. Argument format prompts piecemeal information processing which involves evaluating the implications of

each individual attribute in order to make an overall judgment (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975). While argument may be explicit in its description of service attributes, piecemeal processing is inhibited when consumers lack the schema in memory with which to match incoming information (Lehmann 1994). Unlike transportation into a narrative, which is a convergent process, whereby all available cognitive capacities are focused on the events conveyed in the story (Escalas 2004), processing arguments is a divergent strategy which means the consumer might simultaneously access other schemas and experiences, including opinions, previous knowledge, and memories (Green and Brock 2000). This has two implications. First, it means consumers have greater access to real world facts and evaluate the service more critically, which can impact attitudes. Moreover, when accessing schemas in memory, cognitive capacities might be diverted away from evaluating the features and benefits of the service (intrinsic load) to non-service relevant thoughts, which can increase extraneous load (Sweller 1994). For this reason argument is expected to pose greater extraneous load and less germane load than narrative. Argument also lacks a structural similarity to real life which means it may be less effective than narrative for consumers who lack existing knowledge to comprehend the ad message (Adaval & Wyer, 1998).

This study posits that narrative represents an important framing strategy for increasing comprehension and therefore reducing risk associated with services about which consumers lack knowledge, by creating a surrogate experience and walking the customer through using the service (Mattila 2000). Further, narrative framing can reduce the extraneous cognitive load posed by metaphors and instead promote germane cognitive load, much as a worked example does (Wise et al. 2009). As discussed in the theoretical assumptions, worked examples enhance comprehension by facilitating self-explanations of the rationale as to why the steps in a solution are effective. They also contextualize the example by showing a situation in which the solution applies (Wise et al. 2009). Worked examples focus the cognitive capacities on the intrinsic load by focusing the learner on the steps in the solution and a potential application of the solution. Therefore cognitive capacities are directed towards activities relevant to learning about the task (which represents the intrinsic load). This is the definition of germane load, therefore worked examples promote germane load. Narratives work in much the same way, by enabling consumers to mentally simulate the events in the service process and offering a rich contextualized illustration of the benefits of the service, in a linear, temporal sequence (van den Hende, Schoormans and Snelders 2008). Developing sequential narratives in memory is shown to aid information processing (Robinson and

Hawpe, 1986). In the context of mentally intangible services, narrative framing represents an appropriate strategy in terms of matching resources demanded to those required and therefore enhances comprehension. The following hypotheses are put forward relating to the impact of framing strategies on comprehension:

H1: When the service is mentally intangible, narrative will be more effective than metaphor in generating greater comprehension.
H2: When the service is mentally intangible, narrative will be more effective than argument in generating greater comprehension.

The next hypotheses relate to the impact of framing strategies on consumer attitudes. In section 4.3.1.1 the role of comprehension as a prerequisite to attitude formation is outlined. Therefore it is expected that a positive relationship exists between comprehension and attitudes, and that when comprehension of mentally intangible services is higher, so too will attitudes be**.** Section 4.2.1.3 outlines the positive impact of rhetorical tropes on attitudes provoked by the 'ambiguity-relief' process involved in resolving the ambiguity present in a verbal or visual product description (Mandler 1982; Meyers-Levy and Tybout 1989; Stayman. Alden, and Smith 1992). However, this positive affect is contingent on consumer resource capability and availability for processing. In instances where cognitive resources are limited, consumers will be obstructed in their task of resolving the ambiguity, and therefore the positive affect triggered by rhetorical tropes (i.e. metaphor) is eliminated. Moreover, when insufficient cognitive resources exist, consumers are impeded in their ability to substantiate ad claims, leading to frustration and the generation of non-product relevant, idiosyncratic thoughts, which negatively impacts attitude formation (Peracchio and Meyers-Levy 1997). Positive affect is shown to be linked with heuristic as opposed to systematic processing styles (Clore, Schwarz, and Conway 1994), indicating that the transportation prompted by narrative is theoretically likely to generate greater positive affect than the piecemeal processing promoted by argument. As Section 4.2.1.2 outlines, narrative stimulates transportation, a convergent process which reduces critical thinking by hooking a consumer into the events of the story (Green and Brock 2000). It can also trigger a positive affective response as the consumer identifies with the characters of the story world. For this reason narrative is expected to enhance consumer attitudes to the ad and attitudes to the service, and the following hypotheses are developed:

H3: When the service is mentally intangible, narrative will be more effective than metaphor in generating a more positive attitude to the ad.
H4: When the service is mentally intangible, narrative will be more effective than argument in generating a more positive attitude to the ad.
H5: When the service is mentally intangible, narrative will be more effective than metaphor in generating a more positive attitude to the service.
H6: When the service is mentally intangible, narrative will be more effective than argument in generating a more positive attitude to the service.

Learning about a mentally tangible service places a lower intrinsic load on consumer resources. Therefore the negative impact of extraneous cognitive load is reduced because fewer cognitive resources are required to process the intrinsic load. This means that even if resources are absorbed by extraneous load and directed away from intrinsic load, comprehension is unlikely to be negatively impacted. Moreover, increasing extraneous load may help to better match available resources and avoid the detrimental impact of excess resources being diverted to non-product related processing (Anand and Sternthal 1990). Following prior research on the impact of consumer expertise on consumer response to ad framing, the audience for mentally tangible services are equated to expert consumers in terms of access to schema in memory and therefore it is expected that consumer responses of such services are unaffected by the advertisement framing strategy (Mattila 2000). This is because experts have 'well-defined, domain-specific knowledge structures' (Alba and Hutchison 1987, cited by Mattila 2000:37), with which incoming information related to new products will be matched. Therefore experts rely on their existing knowledge schemas to form a judgment regardless of the framing strategy employed (Mattila 2000). Hypotheses 7-9 are developed for analysis as illustrated below:

H7: When the service is mentally tangible, the information framing strategy will not trigger significant differences in comprehension.
H8: When the service is mentally tangible, the information framing strategy will not trigger significant differences in attitude to the ad.
H9: When the service is mentally tangible, the information framing strategy will not trigger significant differences in attitude to the service.

4.5.2. The impact of framing strategies on consumer response across levels of customization

In the previous section (4.5.1) the beneficial impact of narrative over metaphor for mentally intangible services was hypothesized, based on resource matching theory and the need to reduce extraneous load and promote germane load in situations characterized by high intrinsic cognitive load. In this section the effectiveness of framing strategies for customized versus standardized services is considered. An argument is built regarding the benefit of narrative over metaphor and argument for enhancing consumer response to customized services. The reason for this however differs from the above section. Here the power of narrative over metaphor and argument is due to the fact that narrative offers a holistic understanding of the functional, symbolic and experiential service attributes. Therefore narrative is once again argued to be more effective than alternative framing strategies, not because of its demand on cognitive resources, but because of its ability to effectively portray a consumption experience. This section describes the role of narrative in the advertising of customized services high in experience attributes.

Customized services are higher in experience and credence qualities (Zeithaml 1981) due to the active customer participation in and inseparability of the service process, increasing the risk associated with customized services. Such services are tailored to individual needs; therefore the emphasis tends to be on the service process (Kellogg and Nie 1995). It follows that customized services are more experiential in nature with the experience being as important, if not more so, than the end benefits. From the customer's point of view, the experience is the key perceptual event. Therefore, service evaluation is inseparable from the customer experience in interaction with the service provider, while utilitarian factors such as price tend to have less significance (Välikangas and Lehtinen 1994). For customized services high in experience attributes, the consumer may attempt to envision the whole progression of events associated with the service encounter. Affective and symbolic responses are important in the evaluation of experience-centric services (Otto and Ritchie 1995). For highly customized services the challenge lies in communicating the service experience, and conveying both the functional and symbolic benefits associated with consumer interaction with this experience. The role of understanding experience lies at the heart of narrative psychology (Bruner 1986), and narratives are unique in their ability to convey experience (Boller 1988). Narrative framing facilitates subjective interpretations which merge the facts

presented into a coherent gestalt representing the experience (MacIntyre 1981). Presenting the information in a story stimulates viewers to imagine the implications of the product information holistically in the context of a series of events (Adaval and Wyer 1998). By interacting with and reacting to the advertised brand, characters are able to provide the audience with a surrogate experience of the functional and psychological benefits associated with use of the brand (Boiler 1988, Wentzel, Tomczak, and Herrmann 2010). Metaphor, on the other hand, facilitates learning through identifying shared relations between a target domain (i.e. the advertised service) and a base domain. Therefore analogical structures focus the audience on the relational commonalities between two independent objects, regardless of the physical properties of the objects in which the relations are embedded (Gentner 1989, Gentner et al. 2001). Through a metaphor the attributes of the target concept that match the metaphor become salient, and those attributes that do not match the context become less salient and are masked. This implies that metaphors only communicate information related to the shared relational characteristics between the two domains. Therefore the consumer is hindered in developing a holistic understanding of the symbolic and functional service experience. In light of the structural similarity of narratives to real life and their effectiveness at portraying consumer episodes, narrative is expected to outperform metaphor in terms of consumer comprehension of customized services. As outlined in the hypotheses related to mentally intangible services, argument framing triggers piecemeal information processing, a systematic processing style which involves the careful consideration of each individual service attributes on which a judgment is formed (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975). Argument lacks the structural similarity to real life which hinders this framing strategy from portraying symbolic and functional aspects of the consumption experience. The following hypotheses relating to the impact of framing strategy on consumer comprehension of customized services are developed:

H10: When the service is customized, narrative will be more effective than metaphor in generating greater comprehension.
H11: When the service is customized, narrative will be more effective than argument in generating greater comprehension.

Narrative is expected to have a more positive influence on consumer attitudes than argument and metaphor for customized services for several reasons. First, comprehension of narrative is hypothesized to be higher than argument and metaphor, and comprehension is widely

accepted to be a crucial prerequisite on which attitudes are formed (Ratneshwar and Chaiken 1991). Further, in line with Mick's (1992) LSC framework, subjective comprehension, which occurs at a deeper level, is more strongly associated with attitudes than objective comprehension. Because narrative facilitates comprehension of the holistic service experience, including the symbolic and experiential aspects of the process (Padgett and Allen 1997), narrative is more likely to lead to deeper comprehension than metaphor and argument. Also, comprehension related to self-relevant cognitive thought leads to the richest type of comprehension (Reeder, McCormick and Esselman 1987), and has the strongest influence on service attitudes (MacInnis and Jaworski 1989). When being transported into a narrative individuals empathize with the characters in the story world. This means they experience an 'un-self-conscious merging with another's feelings' (Escalas and Stern 2003:567) and know and feel the world in the story in a similar manner to the character (Van Laer et al. 2012). Therefore narrative facilitates self-relevant thought processes which in turn can have a powerful impact on attitudes (MacInnis and Jaworski 1989). Secondly, as discussed in the previous section, heuristic processing styles are associated with greater positive affect than systematic processing strategies (Clore, Schwarz, and Conway 1994). This suggests that transportation into a narrative will lead to more positive affect and therefore more positive attitudes to the service than learning via piecemeal processing triggered by argument or central elaboration triggered by rhetorical tropes. Therefore, the following hypotheses related to consumer attitudes are put forward for investigation:

H12: When the service is customized, narrative will be more effective than metaphor in generating a more positive attitude to the ad.
H13: When the service is customized, narrative will be more effective than argument in generating a more positive attitude to the ad.

H14: When the service is customized, narrative will be more effective than metaphor in generating a more positive attitude to the service.
H15: When the service is customized, narrative will be more effective than argument in generating a more positive attitude to the service.

Standardized services, in contrast, are high in search characteristics and the focal purchase driver tends to be the end-benefit (Välikangas and Lehtinen 1994). Given the nature of search attributes and the focus on utilitarian end-benefits, comprehension of such services is high

regardless of the framing strategy used. Because standardized services are high in search characteristics (Galetzka et al. 2006), consumers of such services can be equated to expert consumers, who have been shown to be unaffected by the framing strategy (Mattila 2000). As mentioned in the previous section, this is due to the fact that experts have existing domain-specific schema in memory, with which they relate incoming information to (Alba and Hutchison 1987, Mattila 2000). Expert consumers therefore rely on their existing knowledge schemas to form a judgment regardless of the framing strategy employed (Mattila 2000). Hypotheses 16-18 are presented below:

H16: When the service is standardized, the information framing strategy will not trigger significant differences in comprehension.
H17: When the service is standardized, the information framing strategy will not trigger significant differences in attitude to the ad.
H18: When the service is standardized, the information framing strategy will not trigger significant differences in attitude to the service.

4.5.3. The mediating impact of information processing styles on consumer response to framing strategies

To further improve our understanding of the mechanism by which different framing strategies impact comprehension and lead to attitude change, it is important to analyze whether information processing styles mediate the effect of framing strategies on the dependent variables. A well documented mediating impact is that of transportation on the influence of narrative framing on responses. Transportation into a narrative is defined as a 'distinct mental process, an integrative melding of attention, imagery, and feelings' (Green and Brock 2000: 701). It involves all of a consumer's mental systems and capacities converging and focusing on the events in the story. The benefit of this is that access to 'real-world' information is reduced, which in turn reduces critical thinking and leads to more positive attitude development (Green and Brock). It is therefore expected to mediate the differential effectiveness of narrative over the alternative framing strategies in generating more positive attitudes. Transportation is also expected to mediate the superior impact of narrative over argument and metaphor on comprehension, because being transported into the story enables consumers to mentally stimulate the activity of using the new product, which gives them a

surrogate-experience of the new product (Van den Hende et al. 2007). Because experience is a dimension of knowledge, and is a pre-requisite for expertise (Alba and Hutchison 1987), mentally stimulating a surrogate experience can help to increase knowledge and therefore heighten comprehension. To improve our theoretical knowledge of why narrative represents a more effective framing strategy for mentally intangible services (H1-H6) the following hypotheses are developed:

H19: The impact of narrative versus metaphor on (a) comprehension, (b) attitude to the ad, and (c) attitude to the service for mentally intangible services is mediated by transportation

H20: The impact of narrative versus argument on (a) comprehension, (b) attitude to the ad, and (c) attitude to the service for mentally intangible services is mediated by transportation.

To develop a more in-depth understanding of why narrative represents an optimal framing strategy for customized services (H10-H15), the following hypotheses are developed:

H21: The impact of narrative versus metaphor on (a) comprehension, (b) attitude to the ad, and (c) attitude to the service for customized services is mediated by transportation

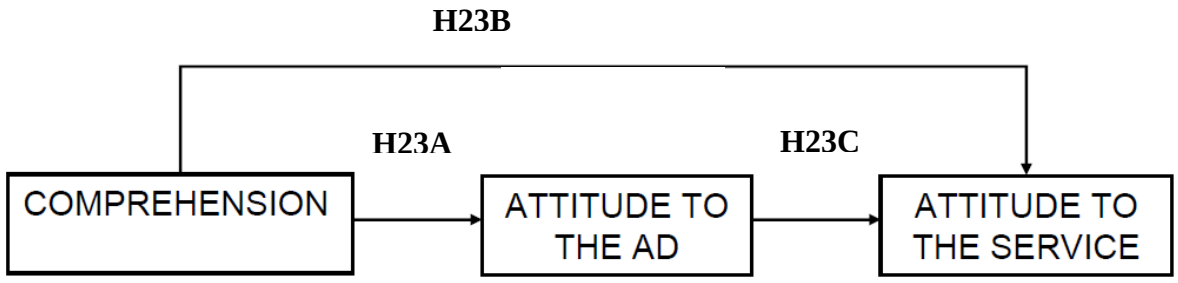
H22: The impact of narrative versus argument on (a) comprehension, (b) attitude to the ad, and (c) attitude to the service for customized services is mediated by transportation.

Additional analyses which don't directly relate to the hypotheses developed here will also be carried out. First, if the unexpected finding emerges that narrative is significantly more effective than metaphor or argument for mentally tangible or standardized services, the mediating effect of transportation on the impact of narrative over alternative framing strategies will be analyzed. Second, the literature informs us that rhetorical figures provoke elaboration in order to solve the incongruity inherent in tropes (McQuarrie and Mick 1996). This research proposes that the high elaboration provoked by metaphors represents an extraneous cognitive load, which is an ineffective match of cognitive resources in situations characterized by high intrinsic load (mentally intangible service). For this reason if, as expected, metaphor emerges as significantly less effective than alternative framing strategies in terms of consumer response to mentally intangible services, the negative mediating impact of consumer elaboration will be investigated.

4.5.4. Mediation among dependent variables

In light of the literature stating that comprehension is a necessary prerequisite on which attitudes are formed (Ratneshwar and Chaiken 1991) and because it is expected that comprehension of the new services will influence the impact of the effect of framing strategies on attitude development (Bettman 1979), the mediating impact of comprehension on attitude to the ad (H23A) and attitude to the service (H23B) is investigated. Further, the relationship between attitude to the ad and attitude to the brand has been empirically proven (e.g. Laczniak and Carlson 1989, Lutz, MacKenzie and Belch 1983, Laczniak and Muehling 1990, Park and Young 1986). This experiment replicates this link by investigating the mediating impact of attitude to the ad on the moderated direct effect of framing strategy (i.e. moderated by service type) on attitude to the service (H23C).

Figure 4.4 Mediation among dependent variables (hypotheses)



The following hypotheses are tested for each of the four service types:

H23A: The significant impact of the framing strategy on attitude to the ad for each service type is mediated by service comprehension.
H23B: The significant impact of the framing strategy on attitude to the service for each service type is mediated by service comprehension.
H23C: The significant impact of the framing strategy on attitude to the service for each service type is mediated by attitude to the ad.

4.6. METHODOLOGY

This section describes the methodology for the experimental study. It opens by introducing the experimental design, including a discussion of the method of administration and sample size. It elaborates on the four step methodology underlying the experimental method, including the service characteristic pre-test (n = 94), the metaphor development pre-test (n = 236), the stimulus design and the main experiment (n = 663). Finally, this section outlines the measures used in the experiment questionnaire.

4.6.1. Experiment Design

An experimental design is selected because it best fits with the goal of this study; i.e. to establish the effectiveness of narrative versus argument versus metaphor framing strategies across different types of services. Unlike exploratory or descriptive designs, experiments facilitate the identification of causal relationships between variables. This is because experiments enable the controlling of other potential independent or moderating variables. The ability to control for a number of different variables means that the researcher can be more confident that the causal relationships we find are 'true' (Churchill and Iacobucci 2004). This experiment is a 3 (framing strategy: metaphor versus narrative versus argument) x 2 (mental intangibility: high versus low) x 2 (customization: high versus low) between-subjects factorial design. A factorial design means each level of each factor (i.e. framing strategy, mental intangibility and customization) is combined with each level of the other, and between-subjects means that all groups consist of a unique sample of participants (Keppel and Wickens 2004) (see Table 4.1 below). A between-subject design is employed because it involves clarity of design and analysis and requires the least amount of statistical assumptions. It is important to note that between-subjects designs need a large number of participants because they can be less sensitive than alternative designs (Keppel and Wickens 2004). A contrasting factorial design is within-subjects, which involves one sample of participants responding to each experimental condition. This can serve to make the participants in each condition comparable, but has a number of disadvantages. Within-subjects designs introduce a nuisance variable which doesn't exist in between-subjects designs, and responding to a number of conditions can lead to respondent fatigue (Keppel and Wickens 2004).

A total of 663 respondents (online consumer panel) are randomly assigned to one of the twelve experimental conditions. Being a 'between-subjects' design, each respondent viewed only one advertisement, which helped to reduce respondent fatigue in light of already having a long and demanding questionnaire. The framing strategy is manipulated by using a narrative, metaphor or argument as the manifest pattern in the advertisement. The service type is varied through the use of services which are high versus low in mental intangibility and high versus low in customization as the advertisement focus.

Table 4.1 Factorial Design of Conditions

Condition	Mental Intangibility	Customization	Framing Strategy
1	High	High	Narrative
2	High	High	Metaphor
3	High	High	Argument
4	High	Low	Narrative
5	High	Low	Metaphor
6	High	Low	Argument
7	Low	High	Narrative
8	Low	High	Metaphor
9	Low	High	Argument
10	Low	Low	Narrative
11	Low	Low	Metaphor
12	Low	Low	Argument

4.6.2. Method of Administration

The main experiment involves an online experiment administered via Amazon Mechanical Turk in the time period August-September 2012. Mechanical Turk launched in 2005 as a means of crowdsourcing labor intensive tasks, and is now a frequently used as a supply of participants for experimental research (e.g. Eriksson and Simpson 2010). Specifically, this service is an online labor market which matches the supply and demand of 'human intelligence tasks' (HITs) (Paolacci et al. 2010). Employees called 'workers' are paid by

employers or ‘requesters’, to complete a HIT within a specified time for a nominated wage, called a ‘reward’. Only workers which meet criteria set by the requester can view and work on HITs, typical criteria include nationality or quality and quantity of previous work. Research suggests that a typical worker is prepared to work for an hourly wage of approximately $1.40 (Horton and Chilton, in press.). In light of the low hourly wage and the anonymity of the internet, it is necessary to assess the likelihood of an individual worker participating in the same experiment multiple times, and to investigate whether workers treat the tasks seriously. To avoid the issue of multiple responses, the twelve experimental conditions were each posted as individual HITs and data was collected for each condition one at a time to ensure unique workers in each condition. Therefore only one condition was live on Mechanical Turk at any one time. In order to track subjects to ensure independent responses across conditions, the unique ID of every worker who completed a HIT (condition) was recorded. By tracking subjects it is simple to identify those workers who have already participated in a condition of the current experiment. In order to ensure no workers partook in more than one experimental condition of the main study, the ID’s of workers who have previously participated in the experiment were posted at the top of the HIT and it was clearly specified they should not take part in the new condition. This ensured unique participants in each of the twelve experimental conditions.

Paolacci et al.’s (2010) research based on 1,000 Mechanical Turk workers offers a useful insight into the demographics and motivations of typical Mechanical Turk workers, as well as the quality of the data produced by this panel. Of the 1,000 respondents in the study, workers were from 66 different countries, with the plurality being from the Unites States (47%), followed by India (34%). Paolacci et al.’s (2010) illustrates the demographics of US workers. The majority are female (64.85%), which is consistent with previous analysis of online participants (Gosling et al. 2004). The average age of the workers was 36 years old, therefore slightly below that of both the US population, and the population of internet users. The education level of workers was found to be above that of the US population, potentially due to the relationship between early technology adoption and higher education levels. In terms of income levels, the distribution of income of the workers approximately represents that of the US population, though the income levels of Mechanical Turk workers was found to lie towards lower income levels. Importantly, Paolacci and colleagues note that, despite differences on a number of variables, internet participants tend to be closer to the US general population than do participants selected from university students. The demographic data

collected illustrates that the representativeness of Mechanical Turk data, in terms of gender, race, age and education, is at least as high as traditional subject pools. In relation to motivation to participate, Paolacci et al. find that Mechanical Turk represents the primary income source for less than 14% of the workers, although it was reported to be an important additional source of earnings. Almost 70% consider Mechanical Turk to be a fruitful way to use free time, a result which complies with prior research (Chandler and Kapelner 2010). To summarize, this important paper argues that Mechanical Turk workers are nearer to the general population of the US than participants recruited from universities (Paolacci et al. 2010). This point is reiterated by Buhrmester et al. (2011) who find that, compared to typical web samples, mechanical turk participants are slightly more representative of the population of the United States and are significantly more heterogeneous than standard university samples.

It should be noted that, following a pilot test of this experiment, it was decided that only US workers would be employed. In the pilot test the majority of respondents were from India, and the responses, in particular the open-ended questions were of very poor quality and a minimum of time was spent on the HIT. A pilot study using the criteria of US nationality as a filter generated much higher quality responses, with relevant, well developed responses to the open-ended questions, and much longer time spent on the HIT. An important advantage of Mechanical Turk is that it allows the creation of a homogenous population in terms of certain criteria (e.g. nationality) despite the ever increasing heterogeneity of the workers. Mechanical Turk offers an effective means of avoiding experimental bias (Orne 1962) and subject interaction (Edlund et al. 2009) because participants may be unaware they are working for an experiment, and complete the task with no interaction with the experimenter. Further, non-response bias is reported to be less of problem with Mechanical Turk when compared to other online samples (Paolacci et al. 2010). Finally, it is important to note that, alongside all web-experiments, this method of administration has the potential to suffer from less attentive participants than those supervised in a lab.

Table 4.2 Tradeoffs of Recruiting Methods

Table 1: Tradeoffs of different recruiting methods.

	Laboratory	Traditional web study	Web study with purpose built website	Mechanical Turk
Susceptibility to coverage error	High	Moderate	Moderate	Low
Heterogeneity of samples across labs	Moderate	High	High	Low
Non-response error	Low	High	High	Moderate
Subject Motivation	Moderate / High	Low	Low	Low
Risk of multiple responses by one person	None	Moderate	Moderate	Low
Risk of contaminated subject pool	Moderate	High	Moderate	Low
Risk of dishonest responses	Moderate	Low	Low	Low
Risk of experimenter effects	Low	None	None	None

(Paolacci et al. 2010)

4.6.3. Sample Considerations

The aim of this research is to create results which are generalizable beyond the scope of the participants in this experiment. Therefore it is necessary to have an adequate sample size to determine the power of the effects. This can be achieved via a priori power analysis, which entails the identification of Type I and II errors in relation to testing the null hypotheses (Cohen 1988). The power of this test lies in the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis when this is false, or, the probability of failing to find an effect when one exists (Keppel and Wickens 2004). This study used GPOWER analysis to conduct a priori power test. This analysis calculates the sample size required according to the significance level and desired effect size specified by the researcher. An ANCOVA test is conducted with GPOWER software because ANCOVA is the most frequently used test in this study (i.e. involvement is included as a covariate). To calculate the sample size deemed necessary to achieve the required power level, the researcher needs to set the alpha level, the desired effect size, the desired power level, the number of experimental groups, the degree of freedom, and the number of covariates. The significance level is set at 0.05, and the power level at 0.95. The

degree of freedom in this research ranges from 1-3, therefore this was set at 3 to be conservative and ensure an adequate sample size. The effect size is set at medium, 0.25 (Cohen 1988). As this experiment is a 2x3x3 factorial design, there are 12 groups. Because it is deemed necessary to control for consumer involvement in this study the number of covariates is specified as one. Based on these levels set by the researcher, GPOWER suggests that this experiment needs a minimum of 279 participants in order to determine the factorial effects with a power level of 0.95. Therefore the sample size must be at least 24 participants in each experimental condition.

Table 4.3 A priori analysis (GPOWER)

Input Parameters	**Effects**
Effect size f	0.25
α error probability	0.05
Power (1- β error probability)	0.95
Degree of freedom (df)	3
Number of groups	12
Number of covariates	1
Output Parameters	**Effects**
Noncentrality parameter λ	17.44
Critical F	2.64
Minimum Sample size	279
Minimum cell size	24
Power	0.95

This number of participants per cell in this experiment exceeds the minimum requirement (n = 24) with no less than 50 participants per cell. This is in line with recent experimental research published in the Journal of Consumer Research. For example, Mogilner, Shiv and Iyengar (2013) conduct several 2x2 between subjects experiments with cell sizes ranging from 22 to 47, varying across the experiments; Wan and Rucker (2013) conduct a series of experiments with participant numbers per cell ranging from 13 to 32; and Shapiro and Nielson's (2013) series of experiments had cell sizes ranging from 27 to 59 depending on the

experiment. Therefore this research is comfortably over the recommended minimum according to the a priori testing, as well as in line with current research using a similar methodology.

4.7. EXPERIMENT STEPS

This online experiment involves four steps (see Table 4.4). This experimental research deliberately employs extensive pretesting as opposed to only relying on manipulation checks (in particular to measure the service characteristics and standardize the metaphors) due to concerns related to manipulation check interpretation (Sigall & Mills 1998, Herr et al. 2012). The first pre-test identifies the four services; the second pre-test is used to develop appropriate metaphors and generate the advertisement copy for the argument and narrative advertisements. The third step involves designing the final 12 stimuli through extensive discussion with five expert judges. Finally the main experiment is conducted, participants are presented with a stimulus and the questionnaire contains further manipulation checks, and control, moderating, mediating and outcome variables.

Table 4.4 Steps in Experiment

Step	Objective	Sample Size	Sample Type	Method of Administration
1	Select four services	n = 94	Undergraduate students	Experimental lab (offline)
2	Select four metaphors	n = 237	US consumer panel	Mechanical Turk (online)
3	Design all 12 stimuli	n = 5	Marketing Expert judges	Debate (offline)
4	Main Experiment	n = 663	US consumer panel	Mechanical Turk (online)

4.7.1. Service Selection Pre-Test

The first step is to identify four services, one at each end of both the level of mental intangibility and customization spectrums. In order to increase internal validity, the final four services included in this experiment are from the same industry. First, twelve services are

pre-tested, four from each of three industries – health and fitness, finance, and travel and tourism. In an experiment lab, each respondent (n = 94) randomly viewed three of the twelve service descriptions, generating 280 cases for analysis. Respondents were marketing students from City University London and the London School of Economics. This pre-test was structured with a short introduction, then the participants were presented with the first service description and a short questionnaire, followed by a second service description and the same questionnaire, and finally a third service description and the same questionnaire again. The order in which the service descriptions were presented to the respondents was also randomized.

4.7.1.1. Service Descriptions

The service descriptions are fictitious brands based on real innovative services sourced from Springwise. This is an idea database which brings together 'the most promising business ventures, ideas and concepts' and offers updates on the latest innovations from around the globe (Springwise website). Searching this data base over a number of months led to the following 12 service descriptions (four for each of the three industries) being included in the first pre-test. See Appendix V for the 12 service descriptions in full which are included in this pre-test.

4.7.1.2. Measures

This first pre-test is aimed at selecting four services which fit the criteria in terms of mental intangibility and customization. Further, it is important to control for service attractiveness to ensure high internal validity. Perceived innovativeness is also measured. This is expected to vary across level of mental intangibility, with mentally intangible services being less familiar and because of this newer and potentially more innovative. Whether the service is perceived to be hedonic or utilitarian is also assessed, as this strengthens support for the hypotheses related to customized services. Measuring these variables can aid (a) the development of the rationale for the research hypotheses and (b) the explanation of the research findings. Therefore the measures include: mental intangibility scale, level of customization, nature of service (hedonic versus utilitarian), attractiveness scale, and innovativeness scale.

The mental intangibility of the service is measured on a three item scale, developed by Laroche et al. (2001). The items are measured on a seven point scale. The scale is found to have high internal reliability, Cronbach's alpha = 0.82.

Please indicate to what extent you agree with each statement by clicking on your answer.

I need more information about this service in order to make myself a clear idea of what it is.

MI1 Strongly Disagree/Strongly Agree

This is not the sort of service that is easy to picture.

MI2 Strongly Disagree/Strongly Agree

This is a difficult service to think about.

MI3 Strongly Disagree/Strongly Agree

The level of service customization is assessed by providing the respondents with a definition of customized and standardized services based on the literature (Lovelock 1983, Shostack 1977, Zeithaml 1981) and then asking them to rate the level of customization on a seven point likert scale.

Please read these definitions before answering the question below:

Customized services are adapted to meet the needs of individual customers. Customers can choose from an array of options and the service is flexible in terms of what it entails and how it is delivered. Employee skills are important as they customize the service for individual customers.

Standardized services are not adapted for individual customers, customers have little discretion in defining the service offering and how it is delivered. For such services speed, consistency and price savings are usually important to the customer.

How would you rate the service described above?

Cu1 Standardized/Customized

The nature of the service described, whether utilitarian or hedonic is measured in a similar manner to customization. Respondents are presented with a definition of utilitarian and hedonic services, grounded in the literature (Holbrook and Hirschman 1982, Lofman 1991),

and asked to rate the nature of the service on a seven point likert scale. Similar definitions are used to measure utilitarian versus hedonic benefits in Zhao, Hoeffler, Zauberman (2011).

Please read these definitions before answering the question below:	
Utilitarian services are functional, customers expect functional utility from these services and the economic benefits they provide are important.	
Hedonic services offer experiential benefits (e.g. fun, pleasure and excitement), and customers are primarily seeking enjoyment from experiencing the service.	
Hed1	Utilitarian/Hedonic

Service attractiveness is measured with a three item scale with three anchors: not at all attractive/very attractive, not at all interesting/very interesting, and not at all likeable/very likeable.

How would you describe the attractiveness of this service?	
ATTRACT1	Not at all Attractive/Very Attractive
ATTRACT2	Not at all Interesting/Very Interesting
ATTRACT3	Not at all Likeable/Very Likeable

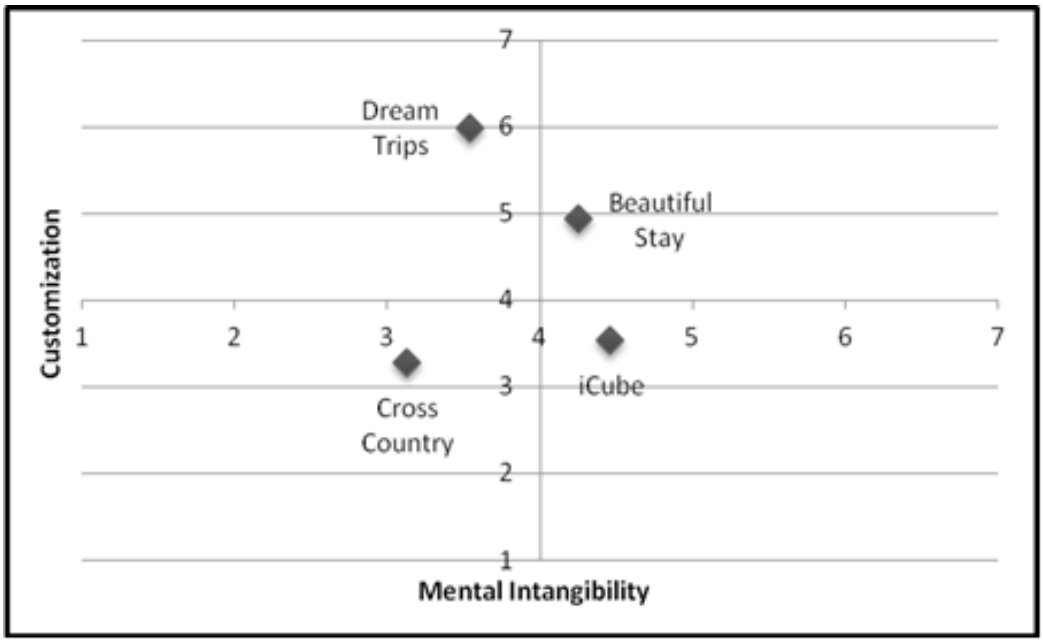
The innovativeness of the service is measured with a three item scale with three anchors: not at all innovative/very innovative, not at all novel/very novel, and not at all original/very original (Zhao, Hoeffler & Dahl 2009**).**

How would you describe the innovativeness of this service?	
INNOV1	Not at all Innovative/Very Innovative
INNOV2	Not at all Novel/Very Novel
INNOV3	Not at all Original/Very Original

4.7.1.3. Results

Services selected from the travel and tourism industry best fit the criteria in terms of level of mental intangibility, customization and attractiveness, therefore the eight services from fitness and financial industries are rejected for further use. The services selected for the experiment are therefore: Dream Trips, iCube, Cross Country and BeautifulStay. A one-way between groups ANOVA reveals a significant difference across the level of customization between the services ($F(3,288) = 44.82$, $p = 0.000$), with Dream Trips ($M = 5.99$) and Beautiful Stay ($M = 4.94$) significantly more customized than Cross Country ($M = 3.28$) and iCube (3.53). Interestingly, in line with theory on experiential services (Otto and Ritchie 1995), the two customized services are significantly more hedonic than the two standardized services ($F(3,288) = 39.295$, $p = 0.000$). Dream Trips ($M = 5.75$) and Beautiful Stay ($M = 5.30$) are more hedonic, and iCube ($M = 3.61$) and Cross Country ($M = 3.29$) are more utilitarian in nature. A significant difference in terms of level of mental intangibility was also found ($F(3,288) = 19.402$, $p = 0.000$); iCube (4.64) and Beautiful Stay ($M = 4.25$) are significantly more mentally intangible than Dream Trips ($M = 3.54$) and Cross Country (3.13). Perceived innovativeness was also measured. As is expected, innovativeness follows the same trend as mental intangibility, with mentally intangible services rated as more innovative than mentally tangible services ($F(3,288) = 5.806$, $p = .001$). Beautiful Stay ($M = 4.95$) and iCube ($M = 5.06$) are perceived to be more innovative than Cross Country (4.30) and Dream Trips (4.48). This is because mentally intangible services are more difficult to grasp and develop a mental representation, so one way the consumer might rationalize being unable to comprehend or mentally simulate the service process is because it is novel and innovative. As desired, a one-way ANOVA revealed no significant difference in the level of service attractiveness, the test of homogeneity of variances is significant at $p = 0.01$.

Figure 4.5 Service Characteristics (Results)



4.7.2. Metaphor Development Pre-Test

A second pre-test is conducted to develop a metaphor framing strategy for each service, in order to ensure no significant differences in the level of figurativeness, metaphor comprehension, and familiarity with- and attitude to the base domain. An online panel of 236 respondents was randomly presented with a metaphor followed by an identical questionnaire.

4.7.2.1. Metaphors

Twelve metaphors are pre-tested, three for each service type, in order to select one appropriate metaphor for each service. The metaphors are developed by an extensive online search for metaphors related to the four services. For example, BeautifulStay is based on a real service called ‘Onefinestay’ and iCube is based on ‘Qbic’ a hotel in Amsterdam. Online blogs, websites and social media sites were scoured for any metaphorical descriptions of the services. From this the metaphor of ‘space’ emerged for iCube, and the idea of consumer as ‘chameleon’ rose for BeautifulStay. In order to come up with several options for each service, apart from the online search, a brainstorming session was conducted among five marketing

experts (i.e. the same panel who later develop the argument and narrative stimuli). Please refer to Appendix VI to see all twelve metaphors that are tested in this pre-test in full.

4.7.2.2. Measures

Measures include level of figurativeness, anchored by artful/clever and straightforward/matter of fact (McQuarrie & Mick 1999, Phillips & McQuarrie 2009).

How would you rate the service description shown above?	
FIGURATIVENESS	Straightforward/Matter of fact – Artful/Clever

Respondent comprehension between the base and target (service) was measured with a single item scale anchored by not easy at all/very easy (Hoeffler 2003).

How easy is it to understand the comparison between [e.g. sleeping in space] and [e.g. staying in iCube hotel?	
METCOMP	Not at all easy/Very Easy.

Respondent attitude to the base domain (e.g. Outer space for iCube, Chameleon for Beautiful Stay) is measured with a three item, seven point likert scale, anchored by unfavorable/favorable, unpleasant/pleasant, and unappealing/appealing.

How would you rate your attitude to the concept of outer-space?	
BASE_ATT1	Unfavorable/Favorable
BASE_ATT2	Unpleasant/Pleasant
BASE_ATT3	Unappealing/Appealing

In line with Toncar and Munch (2001) and McQuarrie and Phillips (2005) respondents were posed an open-ended question on the meaning of the ad claim (strong implicature). They were then asked to list the attributes claimed and/or messages delivered for the brand (weak implicatures) (McQuarrie and Phillips 2005). Responses to these open ended questions are used to design the argument and narrative framing strategies, to ensure that similar service attributes are conveyed through all three framing strategies.

4.7.2.3. Results

The final four metaphors which are included in the experiment are selected based on no significant differences in the dependent variables (see Table 4.5). Level of figurativeness is not significantly different across iCube_Space (M = 5.21), BeautifulStay_Chameleon (M = 5.43), DreamTrips_Genie (M = 5.20), and CrossCountry_Airline (M = 4.36) (F (3,78) = 1.992, p = 0.112), meaning all four metaphors selected are perceived to be similar in terms of artful deviation. There is no significant difference in respondent familiarity with the base (F (3,81) = 1.176, p = 0.324); M*space* = 4.11, M*chameleon* = 4.27, M*genie* = 5.10, M*airline* = 4.60. Respondent comprehension of the metaphor is not significantly different across iCube_Space (M = 4.63), BeautifulStay_Chameleon (M = 4.62), DreamTrips_Genie (M = 5.30), and CrossCountry_Airline (M = 4.80) (F (3,81) = 0.828, p = 0.482). Finally, there is no significant difference in respondent attitude to the four metaphors, iCube_Space (M = 5.63), BeautifulStay_Chameleon (M = 5.36), DreamTrips_Genie (M = 5.15), and CrossCountry_Airline (M = 5.77) (F (3,81) = 1.132, p = 0.341).

Table 4.5 Metaphors - Descriptive Statistics and ANOVA Results

	iCube_ Space	**DreamTrips _Genie**	**CrossCountry _Airline**	**BeautifulStay _Chameleon**		
	Mean (SD)	**Mean (SD)**	**Mean (SD)**	**Mean (SD)**	**F**	**P**
Metaphor Figurativeness	5.21 (1.47)	5.20 (1.61)	4.36 (1.84)	5.43 (1.17)	1.992	0.112
Metaphor Comprehension	4.32 (1.29)	5.20 (1.39)	4.86 (1.78)	4.71 (1.71)	1.064	0.369
Attitude to Base	5.40 (1.45)	5.55 (1.08)	6.01 (0.98)	5.60 (1.08)	1.085	0.360

4.7.3. Design of Experimental Stimuli

Aside from selecting four metaphors which do not significantly differ in terms of figurativeness, comprehension or attitude to the base domain, another objective of the metaphor pre-test was to generate service claims to use in the argument and narrative framing strategies. This helps to maintain consistency in the service attributes (i.e. the message content) presented to the participants. This procedure is in line with prior research on tropes versus argument in advertising (Toncar and Munch 2001). To create service claims for the three stimuli, respondents of the metaphor pre-test were asked to identify weak and strong implicatures (i.e. the main service benefits and a list of other service attributes identified). Therefore the content of all three framing strategies is identical in terms of service attributes conveyed. In order to maintain internal validity, identical wording is used for the adjectives used to describe the services. The only difference in the service descriptions is how these benefits are framed, whether presented via metaphor, argument, or narrative. The metaphor and argument strategies are very similar in length, but the narratives are longer. This is necessary to develop the plot and introduce the character, characteristic of narrative framing (Green and Brock 2000; Phillips and McQuarrie 2009). The extra word length isn't used to refer to service attributes, merely to embellish the narrative. This is a method used also by Adaval and Wyer (1998) to embellish the thematic and temporal relatedness of the holiday locations presented in narratives but not in the argument format. The brand name and ad layout were both controlled for in order to maintain high internal reliability. The use of fictitious brand names ensures attitudes towards the service are based on information provided in the stimuli rather than developed from existing brand associations. Each ad stimulus has a heading in bold, and three bullet points, except for the narratives which don't use bullet points as this interrupts the flow of the story. The primary researcher developed the final stimuli following extensive discussion with four other experts in the area, in particular: an expert on narrative transportation, an expert on analogical reasoning, a services marketing expert and a researcher in consumer behavior. The stimuli were edited in line with the recommendations raised in discussions with the marketing experts.

4.7.4. Main Study

4.7.4.1. Development of the online experiment

The online experiment was developed with the software Qualtrics. Qualtrics is the leading global supplier of enterprise data collection and is used by 95 of the top 100 business schools globally [https://www.qualtrics.com/about-us. Accessed on 20/03/2013]. Twelve different questionnaires were created for each of the twelve experimental conditions. This is necessary because some questions have the fictitious brand name included; therefore a different questionnaire is needed depending on the advertisement stimulus shown. Qualtrics has a function to randomize which survey is presented to the participants, and also allows the researcher to decide on a quota of participants for each questionnaire, so that an even number of participants is allocated to each experimental condition. One web link to all of the questionnaires was generated. By clicking on this link the participant is randomly presented with one of the twelve questionnaires. This link was posted as a Mechanical Turk HIT alongside a brief introduction to the questionnaire (See Appendix X for full experiment questionnaire).

4.7.4.2. Questionnaire Measures

In this section all of the questions which are included in the experiment questionnaire are reproduced, including: manipulation checks, dependent variables, mediating variables and moderating/control variables.

4.7.4.2.1. Manipulation checks

(a) Narrative manipulation check

The manipulation check for narrative stimuli is measured using a five item scale, as in Chang (2009). The seven point scale is anchored by strongly disagree and strongly agree. The scale will be examined for reliability using Cronbach's alpha. Items marked with (R) are reverse coded.

After reading the service description, please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements:	
NARR1	There are characters in the service description
NARR2	There is a plot in the service description
NARR3	There is a time shift in the service description
NARR4	The service description reads like a story
NARR5	The service description directly addresses product attributes (R)

(b) Metaphor manipulation check

The metaphor manipulation is assessed by asking respondents to rate their agreement to the item: 'I think the service description presents the message…' on a seven point likert scale anchored by very literally and very metaphorically (Jeong 2008).

Stimuli which are framed as arguments are expected to rate low in both the narrative and metaphor manipulation checks.

4.7.4.2.2. Dependent measures

(a) Attitude to the service

Attitude to the advertised service is measured on a four item scale, adapted from two scales. The first is the three item scale in Delbaere, Phillips and McQuarrie (2011), with items: 'positive/negative', 'I like/dislike it' and 'very good/very bad service' (Cronbach's alpha = 0.94). A fourth item, 'pleasant/unpleasant' which is the third item used alongside 'positive/negative', 'I like/dislike it' instead of 'very good/very bad service' in prior research (McQuarrie and Mick 1992, Toncar and Munch 2001) is also added to this scale (Cronbach's alpha = 0.82 and 0.89 for the three item scale in the respective prior studies). To ensure high reliability Cronbach's alpha is assessed, as well as exploratory factor analysis to ensure unidimensionality.

What is your reaction to the service?	
ATT_SERV1	Negative/Positive
ATT_SERV2	I dislike it/I like it
ATT_SERV3	Very bad service/Very good service
ATT_SERV4	Unpleasant/Pleasant

(b) Attitude to the service description

Respondent attitude towards the service description is assessed using a four item scale adapted from a well documented and tested attitude toward the ad scale (Lutz et al. 1983; MacKenzie et al. 1986; Jeong 2008). The term 'service description' is used in lieu of 'ad' because the stimulus presented to consumers doesn't reflect the professional quality or visual imagery typical of published advertisements. The items are measured on a seven point scale. Cronbach's alpha is measured to capture scale reliability.

What is your reaction to the service description according to the statements below?	
I find this service description:	
ATT_SD1	Unfavorable/Favorable
ATT_SD2	Bad/Good
ATT_SD3	Unappealing/Appealing
ATT_SD4	Unpleasant/Pleasant

(c) Comprehension

In order to check whether the different framing strategies incur different costs or advantages in terms of comprehension, the comprehension difficulty of the service description is measured on a three item scale. The first two items are taken from McQuarrie and Mick's (1999) three item scale, as used in Gkiouzepas and Hogg (2011) which showed high reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.83). The third item, from McQuarrie and Mick's (1999) scale, looks at the meaning certainty of the service description; this was dropped as it is captured in the elaboration scale. Instead the clarity of the service description is assessed as in Pieters, Wedel and Batra's (2010) advertisement comprehension scale. Cronbach's alpha is measured to assess the reliability of the scale, and exploratory factor analysis will examine the reliability of its unidimsionality.

After reading the service description, I find it:	
COMP1	Difficult to understand/Easy to understand
COMP2	Confusing/Straightforward
COMP3	Unclear/Clear

(d) Behavior Intentions

Behavior intention towards the service is assessed using a four-item scale which is a combination of two existing scales (Feiereisen et al. 2008). The first three-items are extracted from a five-item scale to measure product preference: "This is a product I would like to try/ I would like to have more information about this product/ I would like to see a demonstration of this product" (Ait El Houssi, Morel and Hultink 2005). The Cronbach's alpha of the five item scale is 0.84. This study adds a fourth item which measures respondent word of mouth intention (Smith 1991), meaning the scale measures intention to try, desire for more information, desire for a demonstration and intention to recommend. The four item scale is anchored by strongly disagree and strongly agree. The reliability of the scale will be assessed with both Cronbach's alpha and an exploratory factor analysis for unidimensionality.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by clicking on your answer.	
BI1	This is a product I would like to try
BI2	I would like to have more information about this product
BI3	I would like to see a demonstration of this product
BI4	I would recommend this product to a friend

(e) Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is measured with a three item scale composed of two different scales. The first item is used alone in prior studies to assess likelihood of purchasing the service, anchored by not at all likely/very likely (Jeong 2008, Elder and Krishna 2012). The question refers to whichever fictitious brand is in the ad stimulus; therefore [Beautiful Stay] is replaced by CrossCountry, Dream Trips or iCube when appropriate. The second two items are adapted from Zhao, Hoeffler, Zauberman (2011), the first asks respondents how interested they are in purchasing the service, the second, how seriously they considered purchasing the service. It was found to have high internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .94). In order to ensure reliability in this research Cronbach's alpha is measured for the three item scale and exploratory factor analysis is performed to guarantee unidimensionality of the items.

How likely would you be to purchase [Beautiful Stay] service?	
PI1	Not at all likely/Very likely
How interested are you in purchasing this service?	
PI2	Not at all interested/Very interested
How seriously are you considering purchasing this service?	
PI3	Not at all seriously/Very seriously

4.7.4.2.3. Mediating variables

(a) Narrative Transportation

Transportation is measured with an 11 item scale, which is a reduced version of Green and Brock's (2000) twenty item scale, as in Chang (2009). Chang used a twelve item scale but the item 'the events in the story changed my life' is removed in this study, as the narratives in this story are not considered to either involve enough 'pathos' or be grotesque enough to have life changing consequences (Phillips and McQuarrie 2010). Items are measured on a seven point scale and Cronbach's alpha is measured to assess reliability. The items for the narrative, metaphor and argument conditions are reproduced below. In all four narrative conditions, the wording [Nicky's story] is used. In non-narrative conditions, i.e. the four argument and four metaphor conditions the wording [the service description] is used.

After reading the service description above, please indicate to what extent you agree with the statements below.	
TRANS1	While I was reading [Nicky's story/the service description], I could easily picture the events in it taking place.
TRANS2	While I was reading [Nicky's story/the service description], I found it difficult to tune out activity going on in the room. (R)
TRANS3	I could picture myself in the scene of the events described in the story.
TRANS4	I was mentally involved in the story while reading it.
TRANS5	After finishing [Nicky's story/the service description], I found it easy to put it out of my mind. (R)
TRANS6	I wanted to learn how [Nicky's story/the service description] ended.
TRANS7	[Nicky's story/the service description] affected me emotionally.
TRANS8	I found myself thinking of ways [Nicky's story/the service description] could have turned out differently.
TRANS9	I found my mind wandering while reading [Nicky's story/the service description]. (R)
TRANS10	The events in [Nicky's story/the service description] are relevant to my everyday life.
TRANS11	While reading [Nicky's story/the service description] I had a vivid image of the scene.

(b) Cognitive Elaboration

Respondent elaboration is measured with two separate scales. The first is the six item scale as in McQuarrie and Mick (1999). Items are measured on a seven point scale, with the first three anchored by 'not imagery provoking/ provokes imagery, dull/vivid and boring/interesting (Unnava and Burnkrant 1991), and the second three items anchored by 'I had few/many thoughts', 'the service description has one/multiple meaning(s)', and 'the service description has simple/complex meaning(s)'. Thus the scale measured both the imagistic and discursive elements of elaboration respectively (Gkiouzepas and Hogg 2011).

Please give your reaction to the service description according to the statements below:	
ELAB(A)1	Does not provoke imagery/ Provokes imagery
ELAB(A)2	Dull/Vivid
ELAB(A)3	Boring/Interesting
ELAB(A)4	I had few/many thoughts while reading this service description
ELAB(A)5	The service description has one/multiple meaning(s)
ELAB(A)6	The service description has simple/complex meaning(s)

Given the importance of this mediating variable in this investigation, and the fact that narratives are also high in imagistic elements, a second elaboration scale is also included to clearly differentiate the transportation and elaboration processes. To further investigate cognitive elaboration this study includes a three item scale adapted from Fitzsimons and Shiv (2001), and replicated in Chow and Luc (2006). These three items are measured by a seven point scale anchored by 'very little' and 'very much'.

Please give your response to the three statements by clicking on your answer.	
ELAB(B)1	The extent to which I thought about the advertisements
ELAB(B)2	The time I spent on thinking about the advertisements
ELAB(B)3	The amount of attention I paid to the advertisements

4.7.4.2.4. Control variables

The control variables are all individual difference variables which are measured and assessed for any significant moderating impact on the moderated direct impact of framing strategies on consumer response to the different service types. In instances where individual difference variables are found to have a significant moderating impact on the three dependent variables then they will be added as covariates to the analysis and therefore controlled for. This is because individual differences are not the primary focus of this research, but are measured in order to rule out confounding variables and maintain high internal validity.

(a) Involvement

Participant involvement with the service category is measured with a bipolar eleven item, seven point scale adapted from Zaichkowsky (1985), as used in Laroche et al. (2003), who found the scale to have high internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.94).

How do you perceive this type of service?	
INVOL1	Insignificant/Significant
INVOL2	Does not matter to me/Matters to me
INVOL3	Unimportant/Important
INVOL4	Worthless/Valuable
INVOL5	Means nothing to me/Means a lot to me
INVOL6	Non-essential/Essential
INVOL7	Useless/Useful
INVOL8	Of no concern to me/Of concern to me
INVOL9	Undesirable/Desirable
INVOL10	Superfluous/Vital
INVOL11	Boring/Interesting

(b) Knowledge

Prior knowledge of the advertised service is measured with a two item scale encompassing participant general knowledge of the service, and participant knowledge regarding the characteristics of the service (Chebat, Charlebois and Gelinas-Chebat 2001 – Cronbach's alpha = 0.84). The anchors of the seven point scale are 'very weak' and 'very strong'.

Before you read the service description, please indicate how weak or strong your level of knowledge regarding Beautiful Stay was by clicking on your answer.	
KNOW1	Before I read the service description my knowledge of Beautiful Stay was:
KNOW2	Before I read the service description my knowledge of the characteristics of Beautiful Stay was:

(c) Transportability

Transportability, which represents individual differences in the tendency to be transported into narratives in general, is measured with Dal Cin's (2005) twenty item scale. Each item is anchored by 'strongly disagree' and 'strongly agree'. This scale has been also been used in Mazzocco (2010).

Please indicate to what extent you agree with each statement by clicking on your answer.	
When reading for pleasure:	
TRANS_ABIL1	I can easily envision the events in the story.
TRANS_ABIL2	I find I can easily lose myself in the story.
TRANS_ABIL3	I find it difficult to tune out activity around me. (R)
TRANS_ABIL4	I can easily envision myself in the events described in a story.
TRANS_ABIL5	I get mentally involved in the story.
TRANS_ABIL6	I can easily put stories out of my mind after I've finished reading them. (R)
TRANS_ABIL7	I sometimes feel as if I am part of the story.
TRANS_ABIL8	I am often impatient to find out how the story ends.
TRANS_ABIL9	I find that I can easily take the perspective of the character(s) in the story.
TRANS_ABIL10	I am often emotionally affected by what I've read.
TRANS_ABIL11	I have vivid images of the characters.
TRANS_ABIL12	I find myself accepting events that I might have otherwise considered unrealistic.
TRANS_ABIL13	I find myself thinking what the characters may be thinking.
TRANS_ABIL14	I find myself thinking of other ways the story could have ended.
TRANS_ABIL15	My mind often wanders. (R)
TRANS_ABIL16	I find myself feeling what the characters may feel.
TRANS_ABIL17	I find that events in the story are relevant to my everyday life.
TRANS_ABIL18	I often find that reading stories has an impact on the way I see things.
TRANS_ABIL19	I easily identify with characters in the story.
TRANS_ABIL20	I have vivid images of the events in the story.

(d) Metaphor Thinking Ability

In order to assess participant ability to think metaphorically, Burroughs and Mick's (2004) nine item Metaphor Thinking Ability Sentence Completion test (MTA-SC) is administered. Participants are presented with truncates of sentences (e.g. 'Getting a gift is…'), and are requested to complete each sentence in a manner that someone not familiar with the concept would appreciate its meaning. These instructions therefore signal the use of metaphors through examples, but don't explicitly ask for them. Upon completion, each sentence is rated based on the presence of absence of metaphoric content; literal utterances achieve zero, metaphors integrated into literal language achieve one, and live metaphors achieve a score of two. Responses are rated independently by two researchers and interrater reliability is assessed.

Instructions

Below are a number of abstract concepts. For each concept, pretend that it is your job to get someone who is not familiar with the concept to appreciate its essence. You do this by completing the given statement in such a way that it paints a concise yet vivid image portraying a way of thinking about that concept. For example, if you were given the concept "being deceived" you might use your imagination and come up with:

Being deceived is...
...like suffering fingerprint smudges on the lens of truth.
...to make a deal with the Devil.
...equal to playing cards with someone who has an ace up their sleeve.
...to be sold the Brooklyn Bridge.
...like believing the fox will guard the chicken coop.

1. Watching a sunset is_____
2. Getting caught is_____
3. Helping someone is_____
4. Missing someone is_____
5. Putting things off is_____
6. Being in love is_____
7. Achieving a goal is_____
8. Watching television is_____
9. Getting a gift is_____

The analysis of this variable involves rating each statement from zero to two for its metaphoric content. Statements are rated: zero when they are literal completions, e.g. 'Helping someone is the right thing to do'; one when they are metaphors widely used in daily language, e.g. 'Helping someone is to lend a hand'; two when they are 'live' metaphors, e.g. 'Helping someone is to make a deposit in the bank of Karma' (Burroughs and Mick 2004).

The interrater reliability between the two independent judges is illustrated in Table 4.20 (Section 4.9.1.4), as in Burroughs and Mick a consensus decision is reached and the ratings are used for further analysis in this experiment.

(e) Need for Cognition

Need for cognition, which is linked to the likelihood that participants will spontaneously engage in information elaboration, is measured with Cacioppo, Petty and Kao's (1984) eighteen item scale. This seven point scale is anchored by 'extremely uncharacteristic of me' to 'extremely characteristic of me'. Reverse coded items are marked with (R).

Please rate to what extent the statements below are characteristic of you:	
NCOG1	I would prefer complex to simple problems.
NCOG2	I like to have the responsibility of handling a situation that requires a lot of thinking.
NCOG3	Thinking is not my idea of fun. (R)
NCOG4	I would rather do something that requires little thought than something that is sure to challenge my thinking abilities. (R)
NCOG5	I try to anticipate and avoid situations where there is likely change I will have to think in depth about something. (R)
NCOG6	I find satisfaction in deliberating hard and for long hours.
NCOG7	I only think as hard as I have to. (R)
NCOG8	I prefer to think about small, daily projects to long term ones. (R)
NCOG9	I like tasks that require little though once I've learned them. (R)
NCOG10	The idea of relying on thought to make my way to the top appeals to me.
NCOG11	I really enjoy a task that involves coming up with new solutions to problems.
NCOG12	Learning new ways to think doesn't excite me very much. (R)
NCOG13	I prefer my life to be filled with puzzles that I must solve.
NCOG14	The notion of thinking abstractly is appealing to me.
NCOG15	I would prefer a task that is intellectual, difficult, and important to one that is somewhat important but does not require much thought.
NCOG16	I feel relief rather than satisfaction after completing a task that required a lot of mental effort. (R)
NCOG17	It's enough for me that something gets the job done; I don't care how or why it works. (R)
NCOG18	I usually end up deliberating about issues even when they do not affect me personally.

(f) Tolerance of Ambiguity

Participant tolerance of ambiguity is assessed with McQuarrie and Mick's (1999) twelve item scale (Cronbach's alpha = 0.70), anchored by 'strongly disagree' and 'strongly agree'.

To help us understand you better we would like to know your opinions about some common objects, situations, and activities. There are no right or wrong answers and therefore your first response is important. Please indicate your level of agreement by clicking on your answer.

TOA1	I like movies or stories with definite endings. (R)
TOA2	I always want to know what people are laughing at. (R)
TOA3	I would like to live in a foreign country for a while.
TOA4	A good job is one where what is to be done and how it is to be done are always clear. (R)
TOA5	I tend to like obscure or hidden symbolism.
TOA6	It really disturbs me when I am unable to follow another person's train of thought. (R)
TOA7	I am tolerant of ambiguous situations.
TOA8	A poem should never contain contradictions. (R)
TOA9	Vague and impressionistic pictures appeal to me more than realistic pictures.
TOA10	I don't like to work on a problem unless there is a possibility of coming out with a clear-cut and unambiguous answer. (R)
TOA11	Generally, the more meanings a poem has, the better I like it.
TOA12	I like parties where I know most of the people more than ones where all or most of the people are complete strangers. (R)

4.7.4.3. Measuring Internal Consistency & Unidimensionality of Scales

The internal consistency of each scale included in the experiment is assessed with Cronbach's alpha. This research has the advantage of using only scales which have been used extensively in prior research, and therefore have already endured substantial prior analysis. For this reason in this experiment a minimum parameter of 0.7 is applied to judge acceptable levels of internal consistency (Nunnally 1978). Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is a frequently used technique to evaluate scales and if necessary refine them into a number of smaller more manageable scales (Field 2009). As mentioned, all of the scales used in this research have been widely used in prior empirical studies. Therefore the aim of the EFA is not to try to reduce the scales into smaller subsets, but to better understand what factors the scales are measuring, and to ensure this study is measuring what it purports to measure. EFA is conducted for the key scales used for further analysis in this experiment, including, the manipulation check, the information processing styles, level of consumer involvement and all dependent variables. Two key methods are employed to ensure the scales are appropriate for EFA. Bartlett's test for Sphericity is used to assess the homogeneity of items, which measures correlations among items. A significant Bartlett's test means that the correlations between items are different from zero, i.e. there is intercorrelation between the variables (Field 2009). Intercorrelation is essential in order to find a number of different variables which measure the same thing, which is a goal of this experiment. This experiment tries to avoid using single item scales where possible, because they don't allow sufficient information to estimate the validity or reliability of the measure (McIver and Carmines 1981). Further, McIver and Carmines (1981) go on to argue that single items are unlikely to accurately measure a complicated mental construct. The second method of assessing the suitability of the data for EFA is the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (KMO) (Kaiser 1970). This measure represents the difference between the ratio of the squared correlation between variables to the squared partial correlation between variables (Field 2009). The KMO varies between 0 and 1. A higher value indicates that patters of correlations are concentrated, meaning there is less diffusion in the pattern and suggesting that EFA is likely to yield distinct, reliable factors. According to Hutcheson and Sofroniou (1999) KMO values from 0.5-0.7 are acceptable, those between 0.7-0.8 are good, those from 0.8-0.9 are great and values of 0.9 and above are superb. Finally, a minimal threshold of 0.3 is used to reject items from loading onto a factor (as recommended by Field 2009).

4.7.4.3.1. Internal Consistency Analysis

Table 4.6 below presents the internal consistency measured by Cronbach's alpha for each variable in the study. Almost every scale assessed has more than acceptable levels of internal consistency, ranging from 0.77-0.96 (Nunnally 1978). This is true for all of the scales bar tolerance of ambiguity, which is almost acceptable at 0.68.

Table 4.6 Cronbach's Alpha Summary

Scale	**Number of Items**	**Cronbach's Alpha**
Narrative	5	.79
Comprehension	3	.95
Attitude to the service (Ab)	4	.96
Attitude to the service (Ab)	4	.96
BI	4	.88
PI	3	.94
Transportation	11	.80
Elaboration(A)	6	.77
Elaboration(B)	3	.84
Involvement	11	.96
Knowledge	2	.82
Transportability	20	.92
Need for Cognition	18	.95
Tolerance of Ambiguity	12	.68

4.7.4.3.2. Exploratory Factor Analysis

Narrative Manipulation check

A principal component analysis (PCA) is conducted for the 11 items included in the involvement scale (Chang 2009), illustrates an appropriate data set. The KMO measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, KMO = .797, approaching a 'great value' which is well above the acceptable level of .5 (according to Hutcheson and Sofroniou, 1999 – Fields, 2009). Bartlett's test of Sphericity indicates that correlations between items were suitably large for PCA (p = 0.000), therefore both KMO and Bartlett's test indicate an appropriate data set. The correlation matrix revealed that all of the coefficients are above .3. PCA extracted two factors which represents more than 76% of the total variance. The items load logically onto the two factors, with the only item on the second factor being the only reverse coded item. Internal consistency is high (Cronbach's alpha = .79), therefore all five items are retained for further analysis in this experiment.

Table 4.7 EFA Results for Narrative Manipulation Check

Item label	**Factor 1**	**Factor 2**
Vividness	.896	NS
Interesting	.843	NS
Provokes imagery	.815	NS
Thoughts while reading service description	.783	NS
Complexity of meanings	NS	.989
NS = No significant (<0.3 loading on a factor) Rotation method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization Rotation converged in 3 iterations KMO = .797 Bartlett's test = 1213.888, df = 10, p = 0.000		

Transportation Scale

Both the KMO and Bartlett's test of Sphericity indicate this data is appropriate for EFA. KMO = .739, above the recommended minimum threshold of 0.7 and a good value (Hutcheson and Sofroniou, 1999). Bartlett's test = 1922.546, significant at p = 0.000. The principal component analysis extracted three factors which explain 65% of the common variance. The pattern matrix for the three factor solution is illustrated below.

Table 4.8 EFA Results for Transportation

Item	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
I could picture myself in the scene of the events described in the story.	.894	NS	NS
While I was reading [Nicky's story/the service description], I could easily picture the events in it taking place.	.875	NS	NS
While reading [Nicky's story/the service description] I had a vivid image of the scene.	.812	NS	NS
I was mentally involved in the story while reading it.	.763	NS	NS
[Nicky's story/the service description] affected me emotionally	NS	.748	NS
I found myself thinking of ways [Nicky's story/ the service description] could have turned out differently.	NS	.705	NS
I wanted to learn how [Nicky's story/the service description] ended.	NS	.587	NS
The events in [Nicky's story/the service description] are relevant to my everyday life.	NS	.455	NS
While I was reading [Nicky's story/the service description], I found it difficult to tune out activity going on in the room. (R)	NS	NS	.743
After finishing [Nicky's story/the service description], I found it easy to put it out of my mind. (R)	NS	NS	.705
I found my mind wandering while reading [Nicky's story/the service description]. (R)	NS	NS	.676
NS = No significant (<0.3 loading on a factor) Rotation method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization Rotation converged in 20 iterations KMO = .739 Bartlett's test = 1922.546, df = 15, p = 0.000			

The pattern matrix highlights the factor loadings of each variable. According to Green and Brock (2000) in their development of the transportation scale, it consists of three main elements: cognitive, affective and imagery. The first four items presented in the pattern matrix fit neatly with the imagery element of transportation: 'I could picture myself in the scene of the events described in the story'; 'While I was reading [Nicky's story/the service description], I could easily picture the events in it taking place'; 'While reading [Nicky's story/the service description] I had a vivid image of the scene'; and 'I was mentally involved in the story while reading it'. The next cluster of items all load onto the affect element of transportation: '[Nicky's story/the service description] affected me emotionally'; 'I found myself thinking of ways [Nicky's story/the service description] could have turned out differently'; 'I wanted to learn how [Nicky's story/the service description] ended'; and 'The events in [Nicky's story/the services description] are relevant to my everyday life'. These four items relate directly to evoked emotions, empathy with the characters, and emotional involvement in terms of a desire to either know or alter the plot conclusion. Finally, the last three items 'While I was reading [Nicky's story/the service description], I found it difficult to tune out activity going on in the room.'; After finishing [Nicky's story/the service description] I found it easy to put it out of my mind'; and 'I found my mind wandering while reading [Nicky's story/the service description]' neatly fit with the cognitive aspect of transportation. This is because they all refer to how engaged an individual's cognitive resources are in the story plot versus external stimuli. Because this scale is operating as theory dictates, and because it also has high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = 0.80) all of the items in this scale are retained for further analysis.

Transportation (Reduced Scale)

Given the importance of the mediating variables to this research, a second reduced transportation scale is also used in the analysis of the findings. This scale has recently been used to assess transportation in recent articles (Escalas 2004, Escalas 2007), and so may prove a useful measure for further analysis. This scale includes just three of the items: 'I could picture myself in the scene of the events described in the story'; 'I was mentally involved in the story while reading it'; and 'While I was reading [Nicky's story/the service description], 'I could easily picture the events in it taking place'. This may also be used to analyze the mediating impact of transportation on consumer response to framing strategies,

so it is important to assess the internal consistency and unidimensionality of the scale. Both the KMO (.712) and Bartlett's test of Sphericity (p = 0.000) indicate an appropriate data set. The correlation matrix revealed that all of the coefficients are above .3. PCA extracted one factor which represents almost 75% of the variance. This scale loads on one factor, indicating its unidimensionality, and has high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = .832) as it is well above acceptable levels (Nunnally 1978). Therefore it represents an appropriate scale for use during mediation analysis.

Table 4.9 EFA Results for the Reduced Transportation Scale

Scale Item	**Factor Loading**
I could picture myself in the scene of the events described in the story (TRANS3)	.887
I could easily picture the events in it taking place (TRANS1)	.879
I was mentally involved in the story while reading it (TRANS4)	.832
One factor extracted, rotation not required KMO = .712 Bartlett's Test = 259.233, df = 3, p = 0.000	

Elaboration A

As discussed in the section outlining the mediating variables (4.7.4.2.3), elaboration is measured with two scales (Elaboration A and B). The reason for this is because three of the six items in the first scale (McQuarrie and Mick 1999) are is thought to be similar to transportation in terms of the imagistic elements: 'not imagery provoking/ provokes imagery, dull/vivid and boring/interesting (Unnava and Burnkrant 1991). The second three items of this scale: 'I had few/many thoughts', 'the service description has one/multiple meaning(s)', and 'the service description has simple/complex meaning(s)' relate to the discursive element of elaboration (Gkiouzepas and Hogg 2011). Therefore it is expected that the scale will load onto two factors. Firstly, both KMO (.739) and Bartlett's test of Sphericity (p = 0.000)

indicate an appropriate data set. The PCA extracted two factors, which explain 77% of the common variance. The pattern matrix for the two factor solution is illustrated below.

Table 4.10 EFA Results for Elaboration A

Item label	Factor 1	Factor 2
Vividness	.907	NS
Interesting	.905	NS
Provokes imagery	.854	NS
Thoughts while reading service description	.737	NS
Complexity of meanings	NS	.928
Number of description meanings	NS	.908
NS = No significant (<0.3 loading on a factor) Rotation method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization Rotation converged in 3 iterations KMO = .739 Bartlett's test = 1922.546, df = 15, p = 0.000		

The pattern matrix highlights the factor loadings of each variable. It is clear that, as expected, two factors emerge. The first relating to vividness and imagery, the second relating to number of meanings. Because the scale has high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = .77, above the acceptable level of .7 (Nunnally 1978)); the two factors are logical and expected; and finally each item loads heavily (above .45) on a single factor, all six items are kept. However, a second elaboration scale is also used in this research as it is more distinct from the level of mental imagery assessed with the transportation scale.

Elaboration B

A factor analysis is conducted for the three items included in the smaller scale used to measure elaboration. This scale is adapted from Fitzsimons and Shiv (2001), and used also in Chow and Luc (2006). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure verified the sampling

adequacy for the analysis, KMO = .7, a good value which is well above the acceptable limit of 0.5 (according to Hutcheson and Sofroniou, 1999 – Fields, 2009). Bartlett's test of Sphericity indicates that correlations between items were suitably large for PCA, meaning both the KMO and Bartlett's test indicate an appropriate data set. The correlation matrix revealed that all of the coefficients are above .3. PCA extracted one factor which represents almost 76% of the variance. Therefore all three items are retained for further analysis.

Table 4.11 EFA Results for Elaboration B

Scale Item	**Factor Loading**
Extent of thought about service description	.903
Time spent thinking about service description	.889
Attention paid to service description	.821
One factor extracted, rotation not required KMO = .7 Bartlett's Test = 864.255, df = 3, p = 0.000	

Comprehension

A principal component analysis (PCA) was conducted on the 3 items included in the comprehension scale (Hoeffler 2003).

Table 4.12 EFA Results for Comprehension

Scale Item	**Factor Loading**
COMP 1	.936
COMP 2	.957
COMP 3	.964
One factor extracted, rotation not required KMO = .759 Bartlett's Test = 2014.2, df = 3, p = 0.000	

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, KMO = .759, a good value which is well above the acceptable limit of 0.5 (according to Hutcheson and Sofroniou, 1999 – Fields, 2009). Bartlett's test of Sphericity indicates that correlations between items were suitably large for PCA, meaning both the KMO and Bartlett's test indicate an appropriate data set. The correlation matrix revealed that all of the coefficients are above .3. PCA extracted one factor which represents almost 91% of the variance. Therefore all three items are retained for further analysis.

Attitude to the Ad (Service Description)

A PCA conducted for the 4 items included in the attitude to the ad scale (Lutz et al. 1983; MacKenzie et al. 1986; Jeong 2008), illustrates an appropriate data set. The KMO measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, KMO = .855, a 'great value' (according to Hutcheson and Sofroniou, 1999 – Fields, 2009). Bartlett's test of Sphericity indicates that correlations between items were suitably large for PCA, therefore both KMO and Bartlett's test indicate an appropriate data set. The correlation matrix revealed that all of the coefficients are above .3. PCA extracted one factor which represents 87% of the variance. Thus, all four items are retained for further analysis.

Table 4.13 EFA Results for Attitude to the Ad (SD)

Scale Item	**Factor Loading**
ATT_SD1	.942
ATT_SD2	.922
ATT_SD3	.946
ATT_SD4	.921
One factor extracted, rotation not required KMO = .855 Bartlett's Test = 2724.278, df = 6, p = 0.000	

Attitude to the Service

A PCA conducted for the 4 items included in the attitude to the service scale (Delbaere, Phillips and McQuarrie 2011, McQuarrie and Mick 1992, Toncar and Munch 2001), illustrates an appropriate data set. The KMO measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, KMO = .850, a 'great value' which is well above the acceptable level of .5 (according to Hutcheson and Sofroniou, 1999 – Fields, 2009). Bartlett's test of Sphericity indicates that correlations between items were suitably large for PCA, therefore both KMO and Bartlett's test indicate an appropriate data set. The correlation matrix revealed that all of the coefficients are above .3. PCA extracted one factor which represents 90% of the variance. Therefore all four items are retained for further analysis.

Table 4.14 EFA Results for Attitude to the Service

Scale Item	**Factor Loading**
ATT_SERVICE1	.952
ATT_ SERVICE2	.960
ATT_ SERVICE3	.933
ATT_ SERVICE4	.953
One factor extracted, rotation not required KMO = .850 Bartlett's Test = 3315.155, df = 6, p = 0.000	

Involvement

A PCA conducted for the 11 items included in the involvement scale (Zaichkowsky (1985), illustrates an appropriate data set. The KMO measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, KMO = .943, a 'superb value' which is well above the acceptable level of .5 (according to Hutcheson and Sofroniou, 1999 – Fields, 2009). Bartlett's test of Sphericity indicates that correlations between items were suitably large for PCA (p = 0.000), therefore both KMO and Bartlett's test indicate an appropriate data set. The correlation matrix revealed that all of the coefficients are above .3. PCA extracted one factor which represents 71% of the total variance. Therefore all 11 items are retained for further analysis.

Table 4.15 EFA Results for Involvement

Scale Item	**Factor Loading**
INVOLVE1	.88
INVOLVE2	.877
INVOLVE3	.925
INVOLVE4	.879
INVOLVE5	.873
INVOLVE6	.773
INVOLVE7	.877
INVOLVE8	.819
INVOLVE9	.868
INVOLVE10	.724
INVOLVE11	.768
One factor extracted, rotation not required	
KMO = .850 Bartlett's Test = 3315.155, df = 6, p = 0.000	

4.8. RESULTS - DESCRIPTIVES

4.8.1. Experimental Conditions – Participant distribution

The experiment was administered via Mechanical Turk to US participants (see section 4.6.2). The participants were given a maximum of 20 minutes to complete the task, and compensated $0.50, meaning the hourly compensation rate is $1.50. This is just slightly higher than the median reservation rate of $1.38 per hour (Horton and Chilton 2010). Given the length of the survey it was decided that respondents who spent less than 7 minutes would have spent insufficient time absorbing and interpreting the questions. Also those respondents who failed to complete the questionnaire in 20 minutes were also deleted, as they are assumed to have become distracted by other tasks. This is evidenced by some participants finally completing the task up to 24 hours after beginning it. The number of responses reached 1,147. However, only 663 of these met the criteria of spending 7-20 minutes on the task. The distribution of participants in each experimental condition is presented in table 4.16 below.

Table 4.16 Cell Sizes

Condition	Brand	Mental Intangibility	Cust.	Framing Strategy	Frequency	Percent
1	BeautifulStay	High	High	Narrative	51	7.7
2	BeautifulStay	High	High	Metaphor	55	8.3
3	BeautifulStay	High	High	Argument	51	7.7
4	ICube	High	Low	Narrative	53	8
5	ICube	High	Low	Metaphor	50	7.5
6	ICube	High	Low	Argument	58	8.7
7	DreamTrips	Low	High	Narrative	66	10
8	DreamTrips	Low	High	Metaphor	59	8.9
9	DreamTrips	Low	High	Argument	55	8.3
10	CrossCountry	Low	Low	Narrative	51	7.7
11	CrossCountry	Low	Low	Metaphor	52	7.8
12	CrossCountry	Low	Low	Argument	62	9.4
					663	100

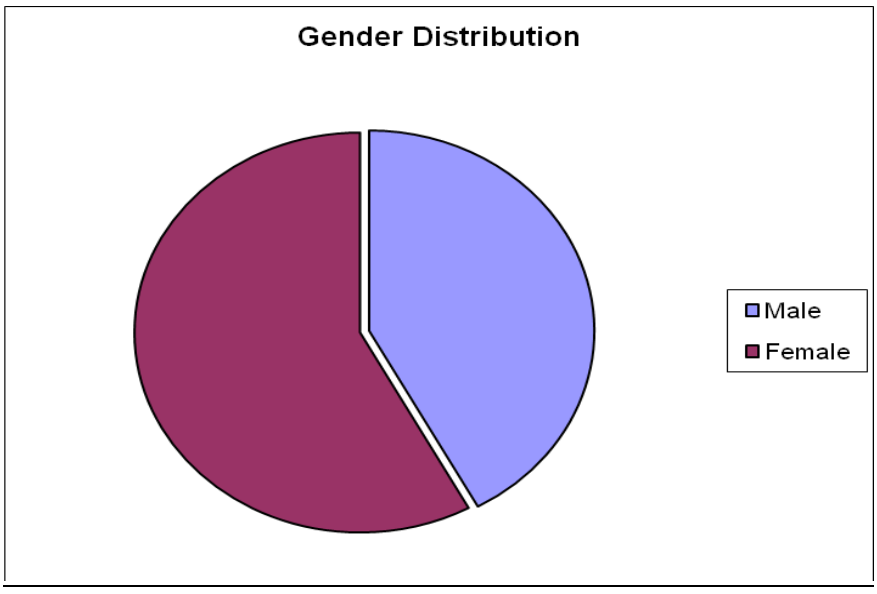
4.8.2. Demographic Descriptives

As mentioned in section 4.6.2, all of the respondents are recruited from the US. This is because a pilot study of the metaphor pre-test on Mechanical Turk revealed a majority of Indian participants, many of whom had a poor grasp of English reflected in nonsensical answers to the open ended questions. In contrast, when administered solely to US participants the metaphor pre-test generated very high quality answers to the open-ended questions. This also helps to increase the homogeneity of the sample. Other relevant demographic descriptives include gender and level of education.

4.8.2.1. Gender

In this experiment 58% of the respondents are female. This is almost identical to the gender distribution of both typical internet samples (57%) and Mechanical Turk samples (55%) (Buhrmester et al. 2011, Gosling et al. 2004). Paolacci et al. (2010) suggest that the slight majority of female participants is reflective of motivational differences across genders.

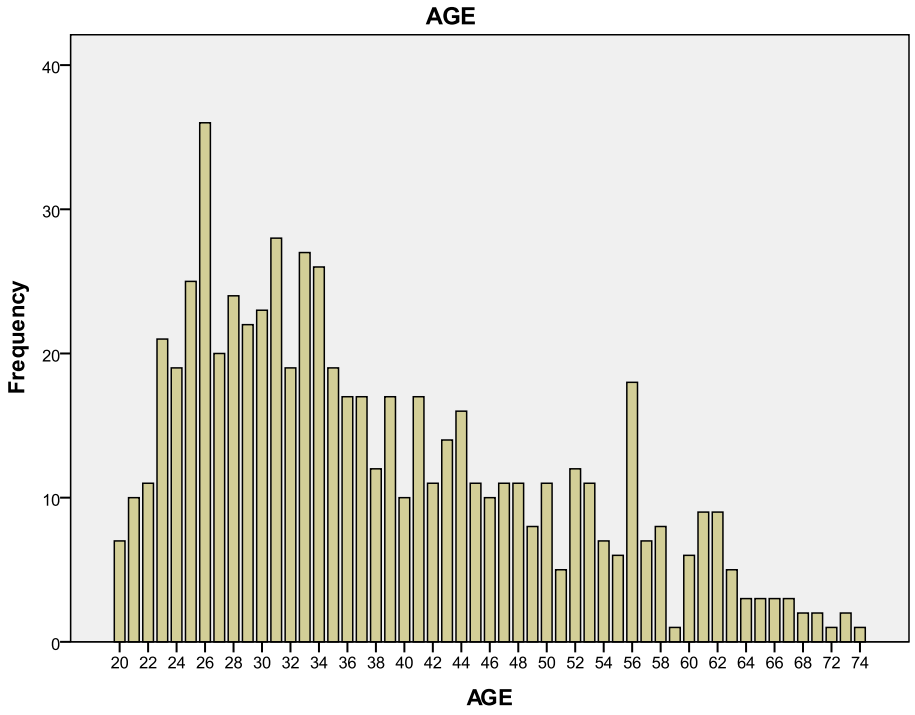
Figure 4.6: Gender



4.8.2.2. Age

The age of the experiment participants ranges from 20 to 74. Of these, almost 75% are below 45. The distribution of the ages is illustrated in Figure 4.7 below. The mean age of the participants is 26, younger than the general population but reflective of the younger age of early technology adopters (Paolacci et al. 2010). The distribution is positively skewed with a median age of 23.

Figure 4.7 Age

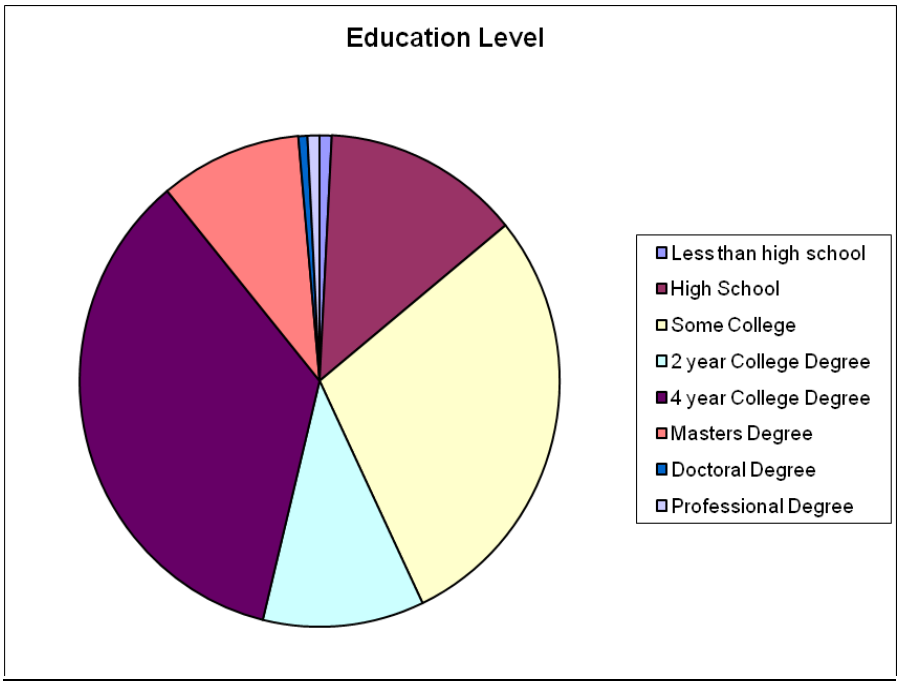


4.8.2.3. Education

Participants in this sample were highly educated, with less than 1% who left education prior to high school. Further, 86% of the sample have higher education, the plurality of which have a 4 year university degree (34.8%), followed by less than 2 years college education (28.5%), a 2 year college degree (10.7%) and a masters degree (9.4%). The high level of education is consistent with Paolacci et al's (2010) findings that the education levels of US Mechanical Turk workers is higher than that of the general population. They suggest this is due to the

younger age of Mechanical Turk workers as well as the higher education levels prevalent among early technology adopters.

Figure 4.8 Education



4.9. RESULTS - RESEARCH FINDINGS

Section 4.5 describes the hypotheses being tested in this study, which relate to consumer responses to framing strategies, focusing on the moderating role of service characteristics in particular. A four step experimental study was designed to empirically investigate these hypotheses. This section portrays the analysis and results from the final step in the experiment, the online experiment with twelve conditions. This experiment is a 3 (framing strategy: argument x metaphor x narrative) x 2 (mental intangibility: high versus low) x 2 (customization: high versus low) between subjects design. This section is organized as follows. The first stage of the analysis includes testing for the influence of individual difference variables. Given that individual differences are not the focus of this study; the aim is to rule out confounding variables by controlling for individual differences where necessary (Keppel and Wickens 2004). Therefore the main effect of each individual difference variable, as well as the interaction effect with the framing strategy on consumer responses taken together is investigated via multivariate ANOVAs. When significant main effects are found in the MANOVAs, a step down breakdown into univariate f-values for each dependent variable is carried out (Hair et al. 1998). This highlights which, if any, individual characteristics need to be included as covariates in this model. Secondly, the overall tests of the model significance are presented, to illustrate the importance of proceeding with more in-depth analysis. Thirdly, the hypotheses are tested and the results are laid out. The results relating to consumer responses (comprehension, attitude to the ad and attitude to the service) to framing strategies across high versus low mental intangibility are depicted. Then consumer responses to framing strategies across customized versus standardized services are illustrated. Finally, the mediating role of information processing styles (transportation and elaboration) is tested. Additional analyses included in this study include the mediating impact of comprehension on attitudes (to the ad/to the service) and of attitude to the ad on attitude to the service.

4.9.1. Test for moderating impact of individual difference variables

Theory suggests that individual difference variables can have a moderating impact on consumer response to framing strategies. This is debated in detail in chapter 2 (Section 2.4). Individual difference variables which are measured in this experiment include: involvement, tolerance of ambiguity (TOA), need for cognition (NCOG), metaphor thinking ability (MTA), knowledge, and transportability. For the individual difference variables listed here, the main effect of the variable, as well as the interaction effect with framing strategy on consumer responses taken together is investigated via multivariate ANOVAs. When significant main effects are found in the MANOVAs, a step down breakdown into univariate f-values for each dependent variable is carried out (Hair et al. 1998).

4.9.1.1. Involvement

A multivariate analysis of variance for the three dependent variables (comprehension, attitude to the ad, attitude to the service) indicates a significant main effect of involvement, as well as a significant interactive effect of framing strategy*involvement. There are no significant interaction effects of framing strategy*involvement*mental intangibility or framing strategy*involvement*customization. In order to further understand the significant main effect of involvement on consumer responses, a breakdown into univariate F-values for each dependent variable is conducted. This reveals a significant main effect of involvement at $p<0.005$ on comprehension, attitude to the ad and attitude to the service. Univariate ANOVAs indicate that the interactive effect of framing strategy*involvement holds only for attitude to the service. These results suggest that involvement impacts consumer response to framing strategies, and this needs to be taken into account in this experiment. Including involvement as a covariate impacts the significance of the effect of framing strategies on consumer response to different services. Given that involvement is not the independent factor of interest in this experiment, involvement is included as a covariate, rather than a moderator, and is controlled for in all of the analysis presented in the results section. Involvement is an appropriate covariate as the literature clearly indicates a correlation between involvement and response to framing strategies (see also section 2.4.4).

Table 4.17: MANOVA: Impact of involvement on DVs

	Wilk's Lambda	F Value	Partial η^2	Comp	Ad Attitude	Service Attitude
				F Values		
INVOLVE	.118	4.27***	.509	2.029***	6.894***	16.574***
FS*INVOLVE	.327	1.224**	.311	1.004	1.068	1.402**
FS*MI*INVOLVE	.698	1.082	.113	1.399	.982	1.086
FS*Cu*INVOLVE	.665	1.037	.127	.924	.984	1.129

****Sig at p<0.005*
***Sig at p<0.05*

4.9.1.2. Tolerance of Ambiguity

The role of tolerance of ambiguity as moderator of consumer responses to framing strategies is examined via multivariate ANOVAs combining the three dependent variables. As the results in table 4.18 illustrate no main effect is found for TOA on consumer responses. Further, no interaction effect is found for: framing strategy*tolerance of ambiguity; framing strategy*tolerance of ambiguity*mental intangibility; or framing strategy*tolerance of ambiguity*customization. This indicates that participant response to the framing strategies across different levels of customization and mental intangibility is not accredited to individual differences in tolerance of ambiguity. Further tests of covariance including tolerance of ambiguity as a covariate don't impact the effect of framing strategy and service characteristics on consumer responses. Therefore tolerance of ambiguity doesn't moderate consumer responses, nor does it require controlling for in this experiment.

Table 4.18 MANOVA: Impact of TOA on DVs.

	Wilk's Lambda	F-Value	P	Partial η^2
TOA	.742	.907	.781	.095
FS*TOA	.638	1.039	.346	.139
FS*MI*TOA	.774	.910	.753	.082
FS*Cu*TOA	.820	1.091	.296	.064

4.9.1.3. Need for Cognition

Need for cognition has the potential to increase consumer attitudes to more cognitively demanding framing strategies, e.g. rhetorical tropes (metaphor). The impact of NCOG is examined via multivariate ANOVAs combining the three dependent variables. Table 4.19 highlights no main effect of NCOG on consumer responses (comprehension, attitude to the ad, attitude to the service combined). Further, no interaction effect is found for: framing strategy*need for cognition; framing strategy* need for cognition *mental intangibility; or framing strategy* need for cognition *customization. This suggests that responses to the framing strategies across different levels of customization and mental intangibility can not be attributed to varying levels of need for cognition. Tests of covariance with need for cognition included as a covariate don't impact the effect of framing strategy and service characteristics on consumer responses. It can be safely asserted that need for cognition doesn't moderate consumer responses, and nor does it require controlling for in this study.

Table 4.19 MANOVA: Impact of NCOG on DVs.

	Wilk's Lambda	**F-Value**	**P**	**Partial η^2**
NCOG	.494	.864	.932	.210
FS*NCOG	.384	.887	.918	.273
FS*MI*NCOG	.658	.839	.920	.130
FS*Cu*NCOG	.682	.876	.840	.120

4.9.1.4. Metaphor Thinking Ability

Burroughs and Mick's (2004) nine item Metaphor Thinking Ability Sentence Completion test (MTA-SC) was included in the online questionnaire in order to assess participant ability to think metaphorically (see also 4.7.4-2.3). Each participant completed nine different truncates of sentences, which were then coded by two researchers in order to increase the reliability of this variable by evaluating the level of intercoder reliability. Given each participant finished nine sentences, and there are twelve conditions with a minimum of fifty participants, more than 5,400 sentences were coded individually by the lead researcher and a research assistant. More specifically the process involved the two researchers rating each phrase for every

respondent in an excel booklet on a scale of 0-2 (level of metaphor thinking ability). The two excel sheets were combined and Cohen's kappa is calculated for each phrase in order to determine inter-rater reliability. Cohen's kappa (1960, 1968) is calculated for each of the nine sentences and indicates to what extent the two coders agreed that the statement indicated high or low metaphor thinking ability. Despite being overly conservative, this has been cited as the most widely used method of determining inter-rater reliability in the behavioral science area (Perreault and Leigh 1989). The majority of the agreement is substantial (ranging from .616-.808), with only one phrase achieving only moderate agreement (.597) (Landis and Koch 1977). Discrepancies were discussed between the two researchers and a consensus was reached in order to achieve a final rating for use in further analysis.

Table 4.20 Intercoder Reliability for MTA-SC test.

MTA Statement	Kappa	Sig
1. Watching a sunset is…	.808	.000
2. Getting caught is…	.806	.000
3. Helping someone is…	.749	.000
4. Missing someone is…	.734	.000
5. Putting things off is…	.710	.000
6. Being in love is…	.749	.000
7. Achieving a goal is…	.616	.000
8. Watching television is…	.597	.000
9. Getting a goal is…	.631	.000

The results presented in table 4.21 illustrate no main effect of MTA on consumer responses, as well as no interaction effect of MTA*Framing Strategy; MTA*Framing Strategy*Mental Intangibility and finally MTA*Framing Strategy*Customization. This suggests individual differences in MTA are not responsible for differences in participant responses to framing strategies across difference service types.

Table 4.21 MANOVA: Impact of MTA on DVs

	Wilk's Lambda	F-Value	P	Partial η^2
MTA	.859	1.325	.060	.050
FS*MTA	.990	.772	.592	.005
FS*MI*MTA	.811	1.036	.388	.068
FS*Cu*MTA	.983	1.333	.240	.009

4.9.1.5. Knowledge

Table 4.22 below confirms no main effect of knowledge on consumer responses, and no interaction effect of Knowledge*Framing Strategy; Knowledge*Framing Strategy*Mental Intangibility; and Knowledge*Framing Strategy*Customization. Further, tests of covariance with knowledge included as a covariate don't impact the effect of framing strategy and service characteristics on consumer responses. These results lead to the conclusion that consumer knowledge is not the reason behind the differences in participant responses to argument, metaphor and narrative across the different service types.

Table 4.22 MANOVA: Impact of Knowledge on DVs

	Wilk's Lambda	F-Value	P	Partial η^2
KNOW	.925	1.233	.162	.026
FS*KNOW	.896	1.169	.189	.036
FS*MI*KNOW	.945	1.082	.349	.019
FS*Cu*KNOW	.984	.627	.856	.006

4.9.2. Overall tests of model significance

It is important to note that consumer involvement is controlled for throughout the results presented. This is because involvement is found to influence scores on the dependent variable (further explained in section 4.9.1.1). Therefore multivariate and univariate ANCOVAs are employed to analyze the data throughout Section 4.9. ANCOVA holds two important advantages over ANOVA (Page, Braver and MacKinnon 2003). ANCOVA offers a method of statistically equating groups which differ on a covariate. Also, including the covariate in the model can help to minimize unexplained variability, and improves the power to identify the effect of the independent factor. Further, and most importantly, not adjusting for a covariate can lead to the generation of inappropriate or misleading conclusions. This is because randomization does not ensure that the participants are equal on the dependent variable prior to the experiment (Page, Braver and MacKinnon 2003). As it has been noted that involvement differs across participants and has a significant impact on consumer responses, it is important and relevant to include this variable as a covariate throughout the analysis. It is hoped that this will help to maintain high validity and true findings.

This section is structured as follows. Firstly the impact of the experimental treatments on the three dependent variables (service comprehension, attitude to the ad and attitude to the service) is examined via a multivariate ANCOVA. The main effects of framing strategy and customization are significant, as illustrated in Table 4.23. Following achieving significant results on the multivariate test of significance for the main effects of framing strategy and customization, a step down breakdown of the multivariate model into univariate F-tests is carried out on each independent variable (Hair et al. 1998). The main effect of framing strategy is significant for comprehension and attitude to the ad, while the main effect of customization remains significant for comprehension only. The multivariate ANCOVA reveals that the main effect of mental intangibility on the three dependent variables taken together is not significant; however, further univariate ANCOVAs considering each of the three dependent variables individually illustrates a main effect of mental intangibility on comprehension, attitude to the ad and attitude to the service. Only the interaction effect of framing strategy*customization is significant, and follow up univariate ANCOVAs show this interaction is significant for each of the three dependent variables. The multivariate ANCOVA reveals that the interaction effect framing strategy*mental intangibility is not

significant, although univariate ANCOVAs find this interaction to be significant for attitude to the service.

Table 4.23 Effects on the three dependent variables

	Pillai's Trace	Wilk's Lambda	F Value	Comp	Attitude to the ad	Attitude to the service
				F Values		
Framing Strategy (F)	.06	.940	6.6***	19.257***	3.391***	2.446
Mental Intangibility (MI)	.010	.990	3.00	4.511**	4.111**	3.751**
Cust (Cu)	.016	.984	3.535**	7.205**	.000	.286
INVOLVE	.118	4.27	.509***	2.029***	6.894***	16.574***
F*MI	.017	.983	1.915	1.438	.599	4.018**
F*Cu	.022	.979	2.381**	4.041**	3.00**	4.651**
FS*INVOLVE	.327	1.224	.311**	1.004	1.068	1.402**
F*MI*Cu	.013	.987	1.453	3.354**	.307	.448
FS*MI*INVOLVE	.698	1.082	.113	1.399	.982	1.086
FS*Cu*INVOLVE	.665	1.037	.127	.924	.984	1.129

*** Sig at .05 level*

**** Sig at .005 level*

Involvement = covariate

4.9.3. Main effects of framing strategies on dependent variables

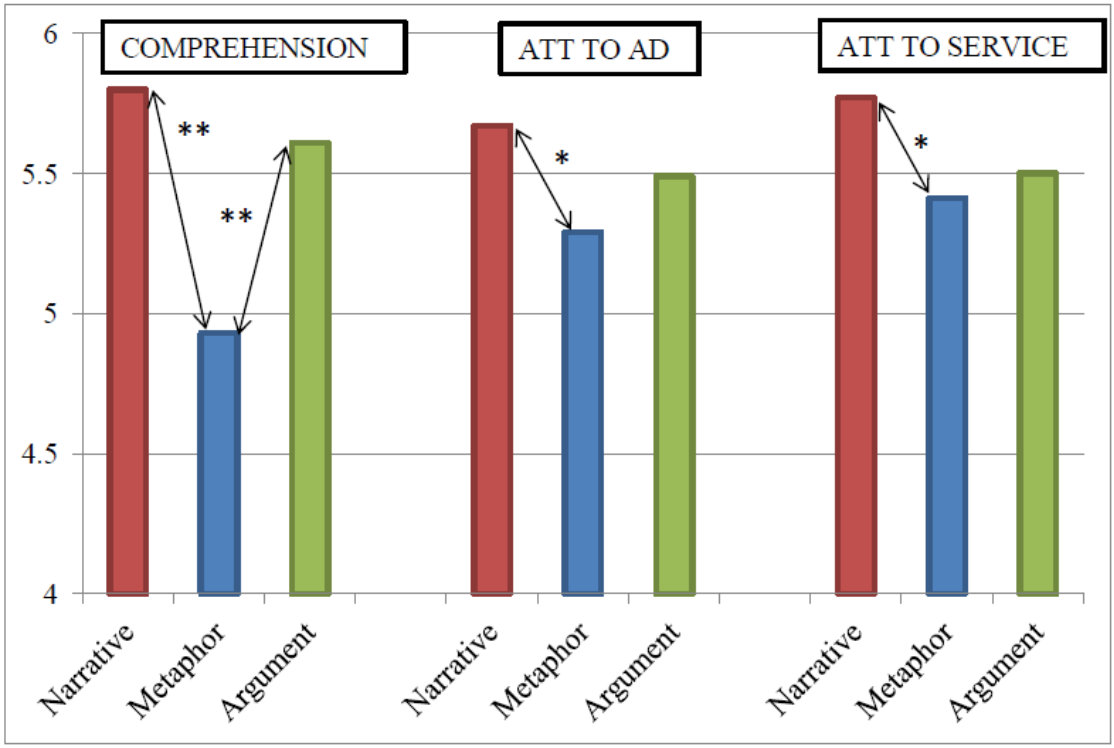
This section further explores the main effects of framing strategy on consumer comprehension, attitude to the ad and attitude to the service. Univariate ANCOVAs (controlling for involvement) are carried out in order to determine specifically where the individual differences lie, i.e. argument is compared to narrative, narrative to metaphor and argument to metaphor for each dependent variable.

There is a significant main effect of the framing strategy used in the stimuli on the participant's comprehension of the advertised service $F(2,662) = 19.602$, $p=0.000$, $\eta^2 = .056$. Post hoc tests reveal that overall both narrative (M = 5.8) and argument (M = 5.61) lead to significantly higher comprehension than metaphor (M = 4.93) at p=0.000, no significant difference is found in the impact of narrative versus argument on comprehension ($M_{difference}$ = -.598, p =.511).

There is a significant main effect of the framing strategy used in the stimuli on the participant's attitude to the advertisement $F(2,662) = 4.414$, $p=0.012$, $\eta^2 = 0.013$. Post hoc tests reveal a significant difference in narrative (M = 5.67) versus metaphor (M = 5.29) only ($M_{difference}$ = -1.525, p=0.009). No significant difference is found in argument (M = 5.49) versus metaphor or narrative ($M_{difference}$ argument v. metaphor = .806, p=.344, $M_{difference}$ argument v narrative =-.718, p=.473).

There is a significant main effect of the framing strategy used in the stimuli on the participant's attitude to the service $F(2,662) = 3.72$, $p=0.025$, $\eta^2 = 0.011$. Post hoc tests reveal a significant difference in narrative (M = 5.77) versus metaphor (5.41) only (p = 0.025). No significant difference is found in argument (M = 5.5) versus metaphor or narrative ($M_{difference}$ argument v. metaphor = .421, p=.1.000, $M_{difference}$ argument v narrative =-1.01, p=.177).

Figure 4.9 Overall impact of Framing Strategy on DVs



*Significant at p<0.05

**Significant at p<0.005

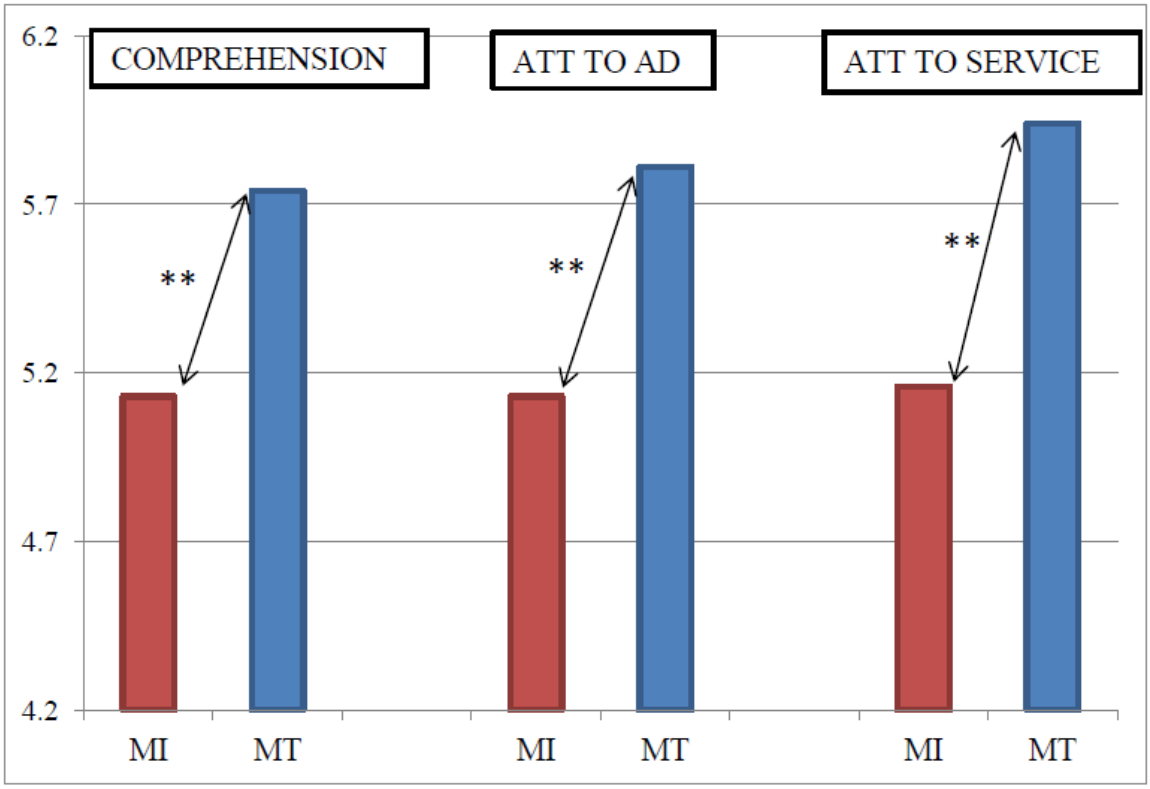
4.9.4. Main effects of mental intangibility on independent variables

There is a significant main effect of mental intangibility on the participant's comprehension of the advertised service F(1,662) = 25.532, p=0.000. Comprehension of mentally tangible services (M = 5.74) is significantly higher than that of mentally intangible services (M = 5.13).

There is a significant main effect of mental intangibility on the participant's attitude to the ad F(1,662) = 44.318, p=0.000, indicating that services which are difficult to grasp impact consumers attitude to the advertisement. Mentally tangible services (M = 5.81) lead to significantly more positive attitudes to the ad than mentally intangible services (M = 5.13).

There is a significant main effect of mental intangibility on the participant's attitude to the service F(1,662) = 54.197, p=0.000. Attitudes to mentally tangible services (M = 5.94) are significantly higher than attitudes to mentally intangible services (M = 5.16).

Figure 4.10 Overall Impact of Mental Intangibility on DVs



**Significant at p=0.000

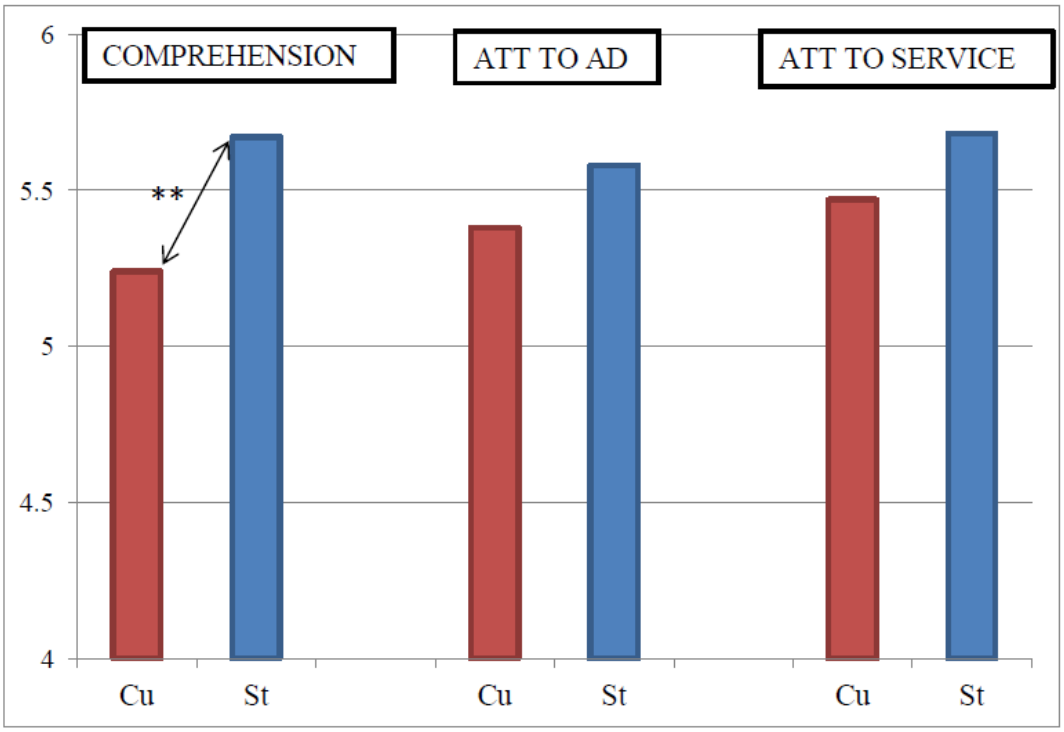
These results reveal that overall, participants comprehension, attitude to the ad and attitude to the service is significantly higher for mentally tangible versus mentally intangible services. This is expected, as mentally intangible services are by definition difficult to grasp (Lacroche et al. 2001) and more highly correlated to perceived risk (Laroche et al. 2004), which in turn is likely to impact attitude to the service. The challenge lies in increasing comprehension and generating more positive attitudes to mentally intangible services via appropriate framing.

4.9.5. Main effects of customization on independent variables

There is a significant main effect of customization on the participant's comprehension of the advertised service $F(1,662) = 13.04$, $p=0.000$, $\eta^2 = 0.019$. Comprehension of standardized services ($M = 5.67$) is significantly higher than comprehension of customized services ($M = 5.24$). There is no significant main effect of customization on attitude to the ad ($F(1,662) = 3.068$, $p=0.058$, $M_{standardized} = 5.58$, $M_{customized} = 5.38$). Similarly, there is no

significant main effect of customization on attitude to the service (F(1,662) = 5.533, p=0.061, M*standardized* = 5.68, M*customized* = 5.47).

Figure 4.11 Overall Impact of Customization on DVs



**Significant at p<0.05

Cu = Customized service

St = Standardized Service

These results reveal that participant comprehension is significantly higher for standardized versus customized services. This is logical in terms of service comprehension, because standardized services are higher in search characteristics and therefore can be understood and assessed prior to consumption (Galetzka et al. 2006). The challenge facing marketers of customized services higher in experience characteristics is to provide the audience with a surrogate experience via an appropriate framing strategy, and in doing so enhancing consumer comprehension.

4.9.6. Tests of Hypotheses 1-18

The hypotheses are tested via univariate ANCOVAs firstly with framing strategy and mental intangibility as the independent factors and service comprehension, attitude to the ad and attitude to the service as dependent variables. Next ANCOVAs are carried out with framing strategy and customization as the independent factors for each of the three dependent variables.

The hypotheses which are developed in section 4.5 are as follows:

H1: When the service is mentally intangible, narrative will be more effective than metaphor in generating greater comprehension.
H2: When the service is mentally intangible, narrative will be more effective than argument in generating greater comprehension.

H3: When the service is mentally intangible, narrative will be more effective than metaphor in generating a more positive attitude to the ad.
H4: When the service is mentally intangible, narrative will be more effective than argument in generating a more positive attitude to the ad.

H5: When the service is mentally intangible, narrative will be more effective than metaphor in generating a more positive attitude to the service.
H6: When the service is mentally intangible, narrative will be more effective than argument in generating a more positive attitude to the service.

H7: When the service is mentally tangible, the information framing strategy will not trigger significant differences in comprehension.
H8: When the service is mentally tangible, the information framing strategy will not trigger significant differences in attitude to the ad.
H9: When the service is mentally tangible, the information framing strategy will not trigger significant differences in attitude to the service.

H10: When the service is customized, narrative will be more effective than metaphor in generating greater comprehension.

H11: When the service is customized, narrative will be more effective than argument in generating greater comprehension.

H12: When the service is customized, narrative will be more effective than metaphor in generating a more positive attitude to the ad.
H13: When the service is customized, narrative will be more effective than argument in generating a more positive attitude to the ad.

H14: When the service is customized, narrative will be more effective than metaphor in generating a more positive attitude to the service.
H15: When the service is customized, narrative will be more effective than argument in generating a more positive attitude to the service.

H16: When the service is standardized, the information framing strategy will not trigger significant differences in comprehension.
H17: When the service is standardized, the information framing strategy will not trigger significant differences in attitude to the ad.
H18: When the service is standardized, the information framing strategy will not trigger significant differences in attitude to the service.

4.9.6.1. The impact of framing strategy across levels of mental intangibility (H1-H9)

H1-H6 relate to the impact of framing strategies on consumer response to mentally intangible services. These hypotheses suggest that narrative represents a more effective framing strategy than metaphor in generating greater comprehension (H1), a more positive attitude to the ad (H3) and a more positive attitude to the service (H5). The hypotheses also posit that narrative represents a more effective framing strategy than argument in generating greater comprehension (H2) a more positive attitude to the ad (H4), and a more positive attitude to the service (H6).

H7, H8 and H9 are concerned with the impact of framing strategies on consumer response to mentally tangible services. These hypotheses posit that the framing strategy (argument v. metaphor v. narrative) will not lead to any significant difference in comprehension (H7), attitude to the ad (H8), and attitude to the service (H9).

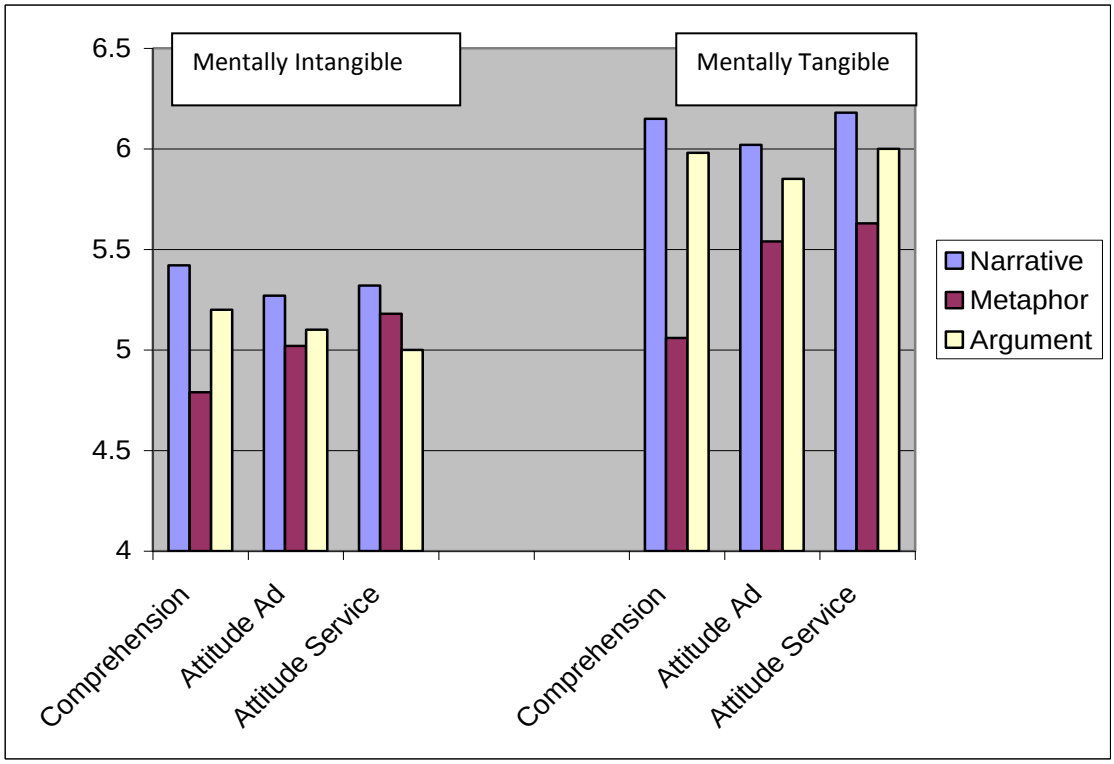
The hypotheses are tested using univariate ANCOVAs. A 3 (framing strategy: argument*metaphor*narrative) x 2 (service type: mentally intangible*mentally tangible) ANCOVA is conducted separately for each independent variable (comprehension, attitude to the ad, attitude to the service). Following this, ANCOVAs investigating the impact of framing strategies is conducted for mentally intangible and mentally tangible services individually on each dependent variable. This is performed for each combination of framing strategies (i.e. argument v. narrative, narrative v. metaphor, argument v. metaphor) in order to extract where the significant differences lie.

*4.9.6.1.1. Interaction effect: Mental Intangibility*Framing Strategy*

The main effect of mental intangibility on consumer responses (section 4.9.4), as well as the main effect of framing strategy on consumer responses (section 4.9.3) are illustrated above. Here the interaction effect of mental intangibility and framing strategy on the three dependent variables is considered, before the impact of framing strategies individually for mentally tangible and mentally intangible services is explored. Three separate 2 x 3 univariate ANCOVAs revealed a significant interaction effect for attitude to the service only. No interaction effect is found for comprehension ($F(2,662) = 1.438$, $p = 0.238$, $\eta^2 = 0.004$) or

attitude to the ad (F(2,662) = 0.599, p = -.55, η^2 = 0.002). However, a significant interaction effect of framing strategy*mental intangibility is found for attitude to the service F(2,662) = 4.018, p = 0.018, η^2 = 0.012.

Figure 4.12 Interaction Mental Intangibility*Framing Strategy

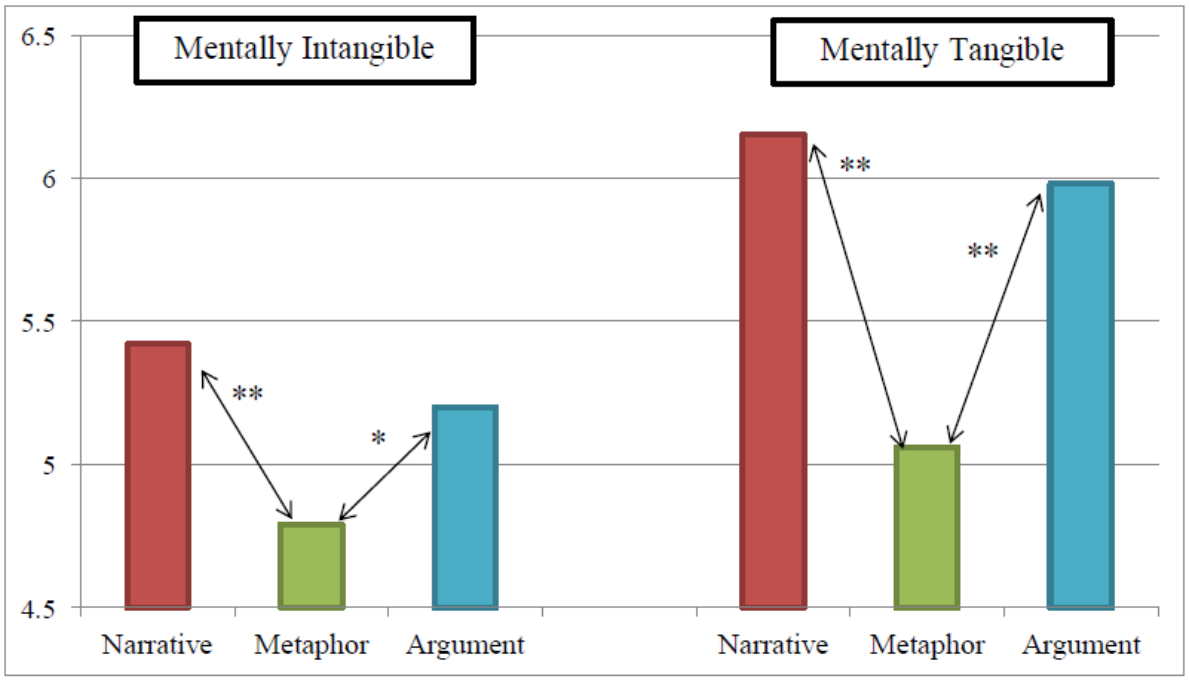


4.9.6.1.2. Impact of Framing Strategies on Consumer Comprehension of Mentally Tangible versus Mentally Intangible Services

H1 and H2 posit that narrative will generate significantly greater comprehension than metaphor and argument respectively for mentally intangible services. A univariate ANCOVA controlling for consumer involvement indicates a significant impact of framing strategy on participant comprehension of mentally intangible services, F(2,317) = 5.161, p = 0.006, η^2 = .032. Follow up univariate analyzes illustrate a significant difference in narrative versus metaphor on participant comprehension of mentally intangible services F(1,208) = 10.851, p = .001, η^2 = .050. A significant difference is also found in argument versus metaphor on comprehension of mentally intangible services, F(1,213) = 4.041, p = .046, η^2 = .019. No significant difference is found in argument versus narrative on consumer comprehension to

mentally intangible services F(1,212) = 1.155, p = .284, η^2 = .005. **These results indicate support for H1**, narrative leads to significantly higher comprehension than metaphor for mentally intangible services. However no difference is found in narrative versus argument on consumer comprehension to mentally intangible services, therefore **H2 is rejected**. H7 posits that the framing strategy will have no significant impact on consumer comprehension of mentally tangible services. **H7 is rejected**, a univariate ANCOVA analyzing the impact of framing strategy on consumer response to mentally tangible services (controlling for consumer involvement) is significant; F(2,345) = 17.455, p = 0.000, η^2 = .093. Follow up univariate analysis finds a significant difference in narrative versus metaphor F(1,227) = 25.47, p = 0.000, η^2 = .102; and argument versus metaphor F(1,227) = 20.909, p = 0.000, η^2 = .085. No significant difference is found in argument versus narrative for mentally tangible services F(1,232) = .071, p = .790, η^2 = .000. Consumer comprehension of mentally tangible and mentally intangible services framed as narrative, metaphor and argument is illustrated visually below.

Figure 4.13 Comprehension for each Framing Strategy across mental intangibility



*Significant at p<0.05

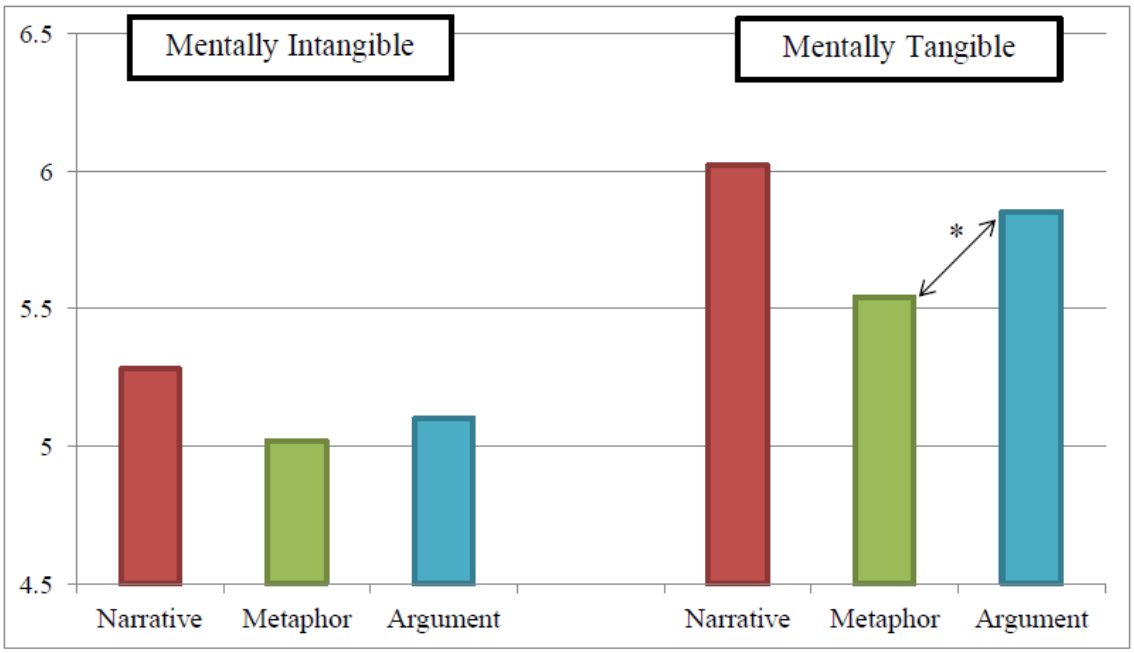
**Significant at p<0.005

4.9.6.1.3. Impact of Framing Strategies on Ad Attitudes for Mentally Tangible versus Mentally Intangible Services

H3 and H4 posit that narrative will generate significantly higher attitudes to the advertisement than metaphor and argument respectively for mentally intangible services. A univariate ANOVA controlling for consumer involvement indicates no significant difference in attitude to the ad for mentally intangible services across framing strategies; F (2,317) = 1.51, p = 0.223, η2 = .010. Follow up univariate ANCOVA analyzes finds no significant differences across all three combinations of framing strategies in terms of attitude to the ad. I.e. There is no significant difference in narrative versus metaphor (F(1,208) = 3.074, p = .081, η^2 = .015); argument versus narrative (F(1,212) = 1.182, p = .278, η^2 = .006); or argument versus metaphor (F(1,213) = .400, p = .528, η^2 = .002). Therefore **H3 is rejected** and **H4 is rejected**.

H8 predicts no significant difference in ad attitudes to mentally tangible services across all three framing strategies. A univariate ANCOVA controlling for consumer involvement indicates no significant difference in attitude to the ad for mentally tangible services across framing strategies; F(2,344) = 2.891, p = 0.057, η2 = .017 Follow up univariate ANCOVA analyzes confirm no significant difference in narrative versus metaphor (F(1,227) = 3.795, p = .053, η^2 = .017) or narrative versus argument (F(1,233) = .144, p = .705, η^2 = .001). However, a significant difference in attitude to ads with mentally tangible services is found in argument versus metaphor framing strategies (F(1,227) = 4.697, p = 0.031, η^2 = .020). Therefore, although no main effect is found for framing strategy on attitude to the ad for mentally tangible services, **H8 is rejected**, as a significant difference is found in argument versus metaphor. Further, the difference between narrative versus metaphor for attitude to the ad for mentally tangible services is very close to significance at p = 0.053.

Figure 4.14 Attitude to the Ad for each Framing Strategy across mental intangibility



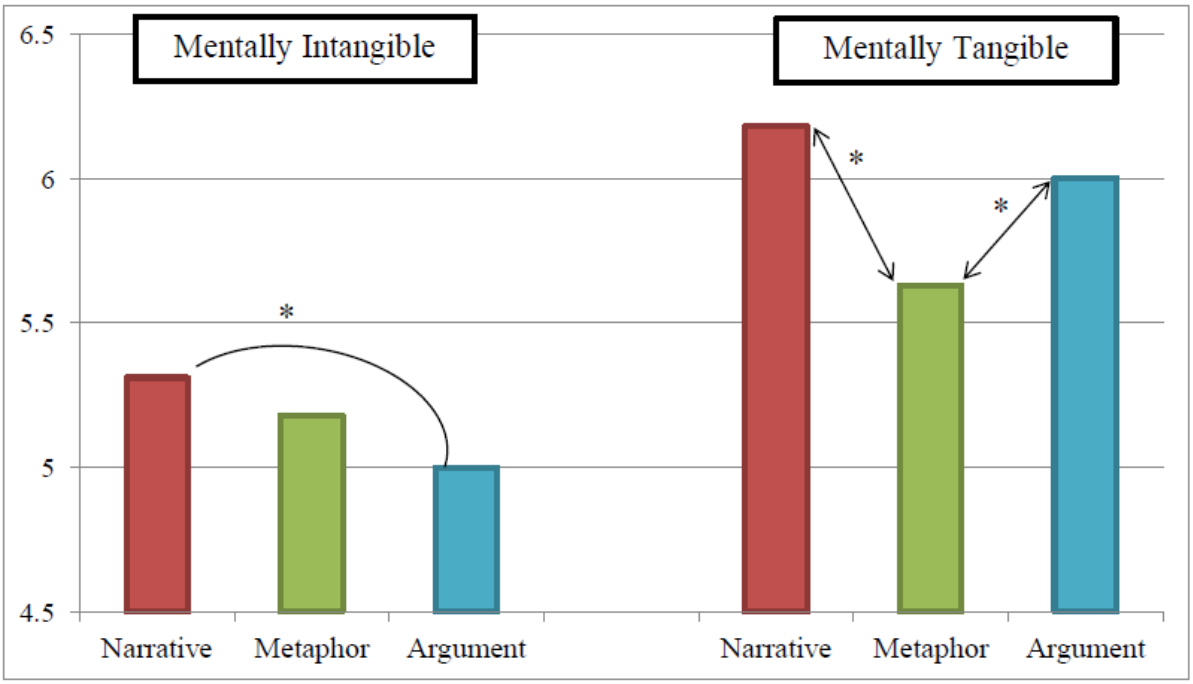
*Significant at p<0.05

4.9.6.1.4. Impact of Framing Strategies on Attitude to the Service across Mentally Tangible versus Mentally Intangible Services

H5 and H6 state that narrative will generate significantly higher attitudes to the service than metaphor and argument respectively for mentally intangible services. A univariate ANCOVA controlling for consumer involvement indicates no significant difference in attitude to the service for mentally intangible services across framing strategies; $F(2,317) = 2.530$, $p = 0.081$, $\eta 2 = .016$. Follow up univariate ANCOVA analysis finds no significant differences in narrative versus metaphor ($F(1,208) = 1.369$, $p = .243$, $\eta^2 = .007$) or argument versus metaphor ($F(1,213) = 1.137$, $p = .288$, $\eta 2 = .005$). Therefore **H5 is rejected**. However, a significant difference is found in narrative versus argument ($F(1,212) = 5.138$, $p = .024$, $\eta^2 = .024$), with narrative ($M = 5.32$) leading to significantly higher attitudes to mentally intangible services than argument ($M = 5.2$). **H6 is supported**: narrative is a more effective strategy than argument in terms of generating positive attitudes to mentally intangible services, and no difference is found between narrative and metaphor or argument and metaphor.

H9 asserts that the framing strategy will have no significant impact on attitude to service for mentally tangible services. **H9 is rejected**, when involvement is controlled for, framing strategy has a significant main effect on consumer attitude to the service ($F(2,344) = 4.977$, $p = .007$, $\eta 2 = .028$). Post hoc univariate ANCOVA tests reveal that narrative is significantly different to metaphor ($F(1,227) = 7.059$, $p = .008$, $\eta^2 = .030$) and argument is significantly different to metaphor ($F(1,227) = 7.686$, $p = .006$, $\eta^2 = .033$). No difference is found in argument versus narrative ($F(1,233) = .088$, $p = .767$, $\eta^2 = .000$).

Figure 4.15 Service Attitudes for each Framing Strategy across mental intangibility



*Significant at p<0.05

Table 4.24 Descriptives Summary:
Impact of Framing Strategy across mental intangibility

	Mental Tangibility			Mental Intangibility		
	Metaphor	**Narrative**	**Argument**	**Metaphor**	**Narrative**	**Argument**
	M (SD)	**M (SD)**	**M(SD)**	**M (SD)**	**M (SD)**	**M(SD)**
Comprehension	5.06(1.77)	6.15(1.04)	5.98 (1.38)	4.79(1.70)	5.42(1.38)	5.20 (1.64)
Attitude to Ad	5.54(1.28)	6.02(1.05)	5.85 (1.60)	5.02(1.39)	5.28(1.36)	5.10 (1.93)
Att. To Service	5.63(1.36)	6.18(0.89)	6.00 (1.69)	5.18(1.44)	5.31(1.53)	5.00 (1.59)

Table 4.25 ANCOVA Results Summary:
Impact of Framing Strategy across mental intangibility

	COMPREHENSION		
	F	**P**	**Partial η^2**
Framing Strategy	19.812	P<0.005	.057
Mental Intangibility	4.551	P<0.005	.007
Framing Strategy x MI	1.438	P>0.05	.004
	AD ATTITUDE		
	F	**P**	**Partial η^2**
Framing Strategy	3.60	P<0.05	.011
Mental Intangibility	4.111	P<0.05	.006
Framing Strategy x MI	0.599	P>0.05	.002
	ATTITUDE TO SERVICE		
	F	**P**	**Partial η^2**
Framing Strategy	2.564	P>0.05	.008
Mental Intangibility	3.751	P=0.05	.006
Framing Strategy x MI	4.018	P<0.05	.012

Note – involvement included as covariate

Table 4.26 Summary of Hypotheses Results

	Hypothesis	Result	Explanation
H1	*When the service is mentally intangible, narrative will be more effective than metaphor in generating greater comprehension*	Supported	Narrative is significantly more effective than metaphor.
H2	*When the service is mentally intangible, narrative will be more effective than argument in generating greater comprehension*	Rejected	There is no significant difference in narrative & argument.
H3	*When the service is mentally intangible, narrative will be more effective than metaphor in generating a more positive attitude to the ad*	Rejected	There is no significant difference in narrative & metaphor.
H4	*When the service is mentally intangible, narrative will be more effective than argument in generating a more positive attitude to the ad*	Rejected	There is no significant difference in narrative & argument.
H5	*When the service is mentally intangible, narrative will be more effective than metaphor in generating a more positive attitude to the service*	Rejected	There is no significant difference in narrative & metaphor.
H6	*When the service is mentally intangible, narrative will be more effective than argument in generating a more positive attitude to the service*	Supported	Narrative is significantly more effective than argument.
H7	*When the service is mentally tangible, the framing strategy will not trigger significant differences in comprehension*	Rejected	Both narrative & argument lead to sig higher comprehension than metaphor. No significant difference is found between argument & narrative.
H8	*When the service is mentally tangible, the framing strategy will not trigger significant differences in attitude to the ad*	Rejected	Argument is found to be more effective than metaphor. No significant differences are found between narrative & metaphor or argument & narrative.
H9	*When the service is mentally tangible, the framing strategy will not trigger significant differences in attitude to the service*	Rejected	Both narrative & argument lead to sig higher attitudes to the service than metaphor. No significant difference is found between argument & narrative.

4.9.6.2. The impact of framing strategy across levels of customization (H10-H18)

H10-H15 relate to the impact of framing strategies on consumer response to customized services. These hypotheses argue that narrative represents a more effective framing strategy than metaphor in generating greater comprehension (H10), a more positive attitude to the ad (H12) and a more positive attitude to the service (H14).

The hypotheses also posit that narrative represents a more effective framing strategy than argument in generating greater comprehension (H11), a more positive attitude to the ad (H13) and a more positive attitude to the service (H15).

H16-H18 relate to the impact of framing strategies on consumer response to standardized services. The hypotheses suggest that the framing strategy will not lead to any significant difference in (a) comprehension (H16), (b) attitude to the ad (H17), or (c) attitude to the service (H18).

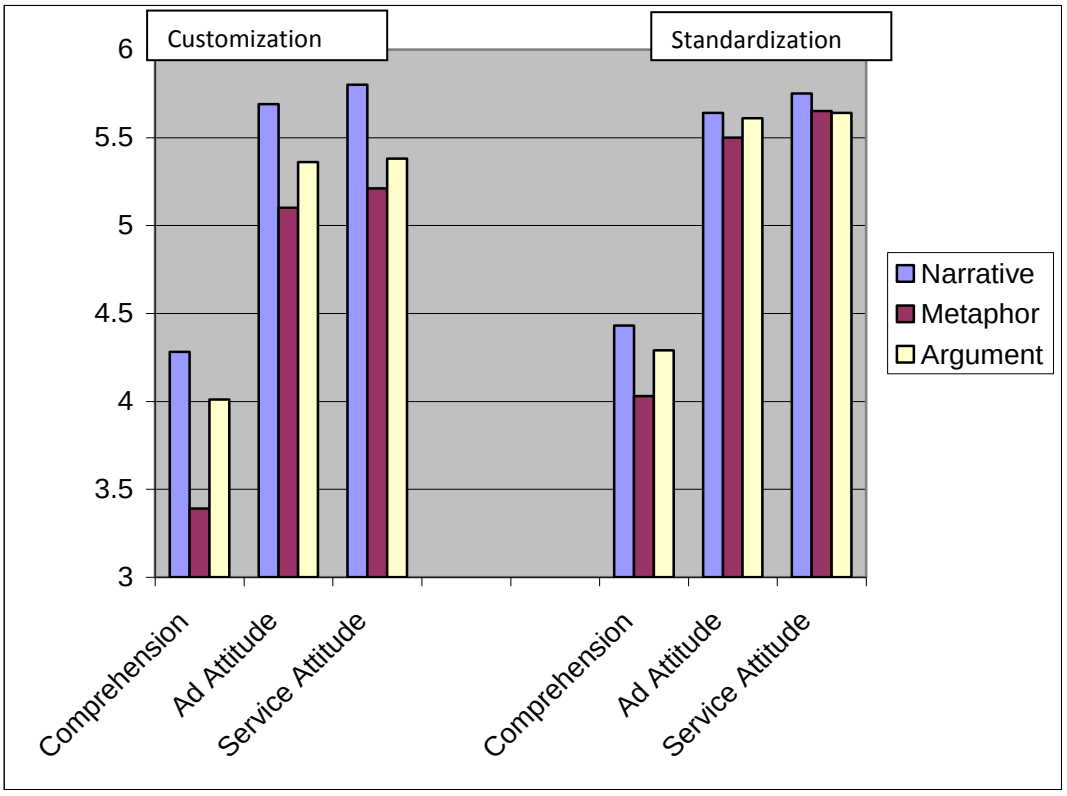
These hypotheses are tested using univariate ANCOVAs. A 3 (framing strategy: argument*metaphor*narrative) x 2 (service type: customized*standardized) ANCOVA is conducted separately for each independent variable (comprehension, attitude to the ad, attitude to the service). Following this, a one-way ANCOVA investigating the impact of framing strategies is conducted for customized and standardized services individually on each independent variable.

*4.9.6.2.1. Interaction effect: Customization*Framing Strategy*

The main effect of level of service customization on consumer responses (section 4.9.5), as well as the main effect of framing strategy on consumer responses are illustrated above (section 4.9.3). A multivariate ANCOVA analysis reveals a significant interaction effect of framing strategy*customization on the three independent variables taken together, Wilk's lambda = .979, significant at $p<0.05$. Next the interaction effect of customization and framing strategy on the three dependent variables is considered. Further univariate ANCOVAs indicate that this significant interaction effect holds for each of the three independent variables: comprehension $F(2,662) = 4.041$, $p=.018$, $\eta^2 = .012$; attitude to the ad $F(2,662) = 3$,

p = .05, η^2 = .009; and attitude to the service F(2,662) = 4.651, p = .010, η^2 = .014. Therefore it is relevant and important to further explore the interaction of framing strategy and level of customization, and determine where the significant differences lie. The following sections explore the impact of framing strategies individually for customized and standardized services for comprehension, followed by attitude to the ad and attitude to the service.

Figure 4.16 Interaction Framing Strategy*Customization



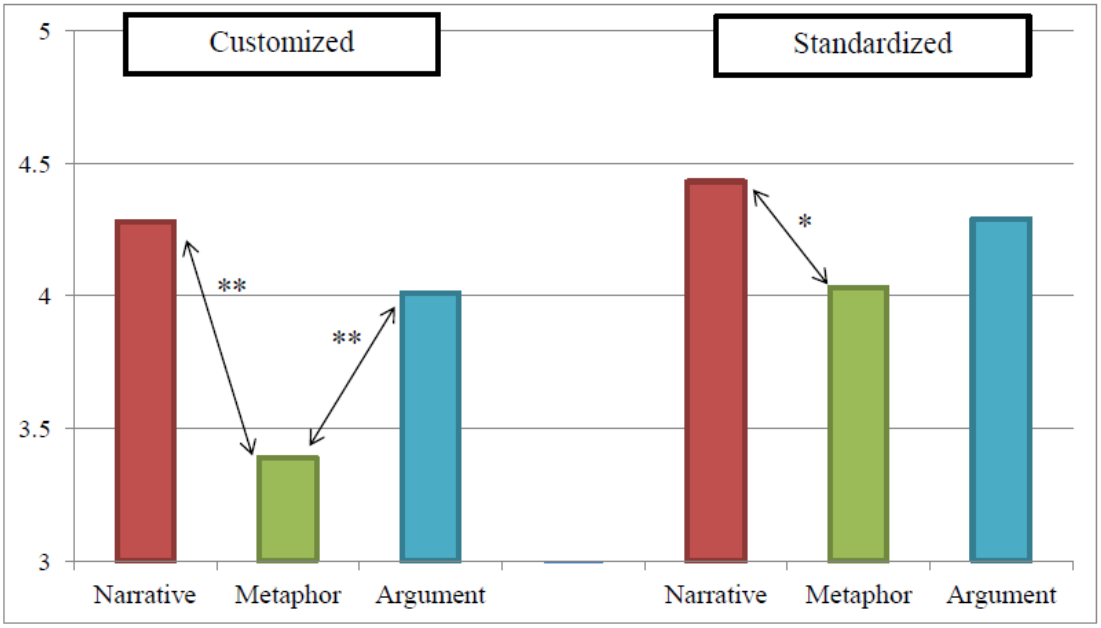
4.9.6.2.2. Impact of framing strategies on comprehension across levels of customization

H10 and H11 assert that narrative will generate significantly higher comprehension of customization services than metaphor and argument respectively. A univariate ANCOVA controlling for consumer involvement indicates a significant impact of framing strategy on participant comprehension of customized services, F(2,336) = 18.671, p = 0.000, η^2 = .101. Follow up univariate analyzes illustrate a significant difference in narrative versus metaphor on comprehension of customized services F(1,230) = 33.468, p = .000, η^2 = .128. Therefore **H10 is supported**. A significant difference is also found in argument versus metaphor on

comprehension of customized services F(1,219) = 18.984, p = .000, η^2 = .08. No significant difference is found in argument versus narrative on consumer comprehension of customized service, F(1,222) = .695, p = .405, η^2 = .003. **H11 is rejected** because no significant beneficial difference is found in narrative over argument.

H16 posits that no significant difference will be found in comprehension of standardized services across framing strategies. This **is rejected**, a univariate ANCOVA controlling for involvement reveals a significant effect of framing strategy on comprehension of standardized services (F(2,325) = 3.147, p = .044, η^2 = .019). Post hoc univariate analysis for each combination of the three framing strategies reveals that the only significant difference is in narrative versus metaphor (F(2,325) = 3.147, p = .044, η^2 = .019). No significant difference is found for argument versus metaphor (F(1,221) = 3.167, p = .077, η^2 = .014) or argument versus narrative (F(1,223) = .382, p = .537, η^2 = .002).

Figure 4.17 Comprehension for each framing strategy across customization



*Significant at p<0.05

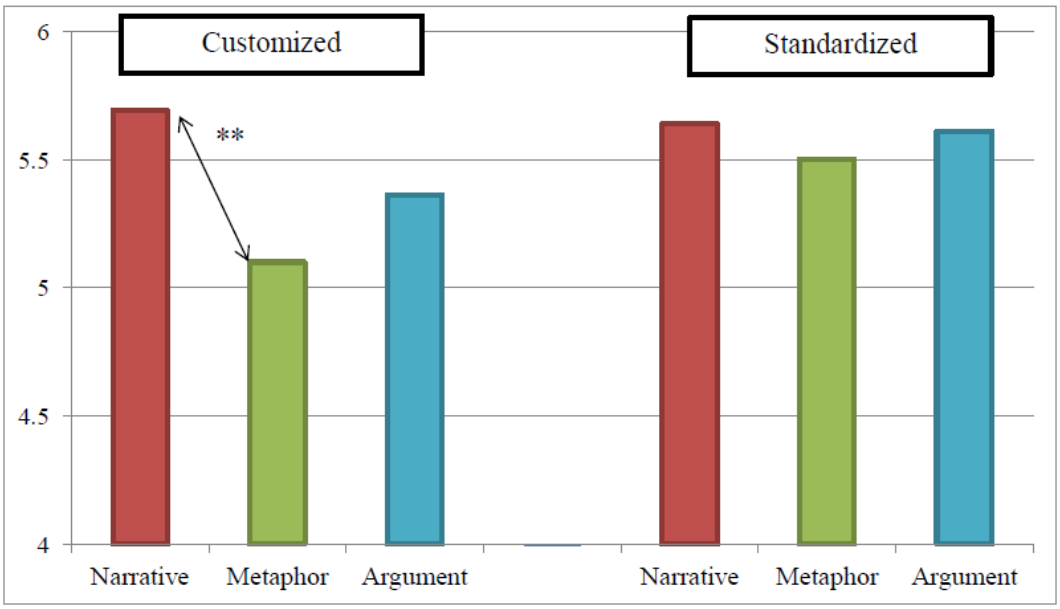
**Significant at p<0.005

4.9.6.2.3. Impact of framing strategies on attitude to the ad across levels of customization

H12 and H13 posit that narrative will generate significantly higher attitudes to the advertisement than metaphor and argument respectively for customized services. A univariate ANCOVA controlling for consumer involvement reveals a significant difference in attitude to the ad across framing strategies; $F(2,336) = 6.583$, $p = 0.002$, $\eta^2 = .038$. Follow up univariate analysis illustrates a significant difference in narrative versus metaphor ($F(1,219) = 3.616$, $p < 0.05$, $\eta^2 = .016$), **H12 is supported**. No significant difference is found in argument versus metaphor ($F(1,219) = 2.669$, $p = .104$, $\eta^2 = .012$) or argument versus narrative ($F(1,222) = 2.260$, $p = 0.134$, $\eta^2 = .010$). Therefore **H13 is rejected**, because no difference is found between narrative and argument in terms of attitude to the ad for customized services.

H17 states that the framing strategy will have no significant impact on consumer attitude to the ad in the context of standardized services. First, a univariate ANCOVA controlling for consumer involvement illustrates no significant difference in attitude to the ad across framing strategies; $F(2,325) = .249$, $p = .78$, $\eta^2 = .002$. Therefore **H17 is supported**. Post hoc univariate ANOVA tests confirm that no significant differences are found across all combinations of framing strategies: i.e. narrative versus metaphor ($F(1,205) = .001$, $p = .982$, $\eta^2 = .000$), argument versus metaphor ($F(1,221) = .291$, $p = .590$, $\eta^2 = .001$) and argument versus narrative ($F(1,223) = .563$, $p = .454$, $\eta^2 = .003$).

Figure 4.18 Attitude to the Ad for each framing strategy across customization



*Significant at p=0.05

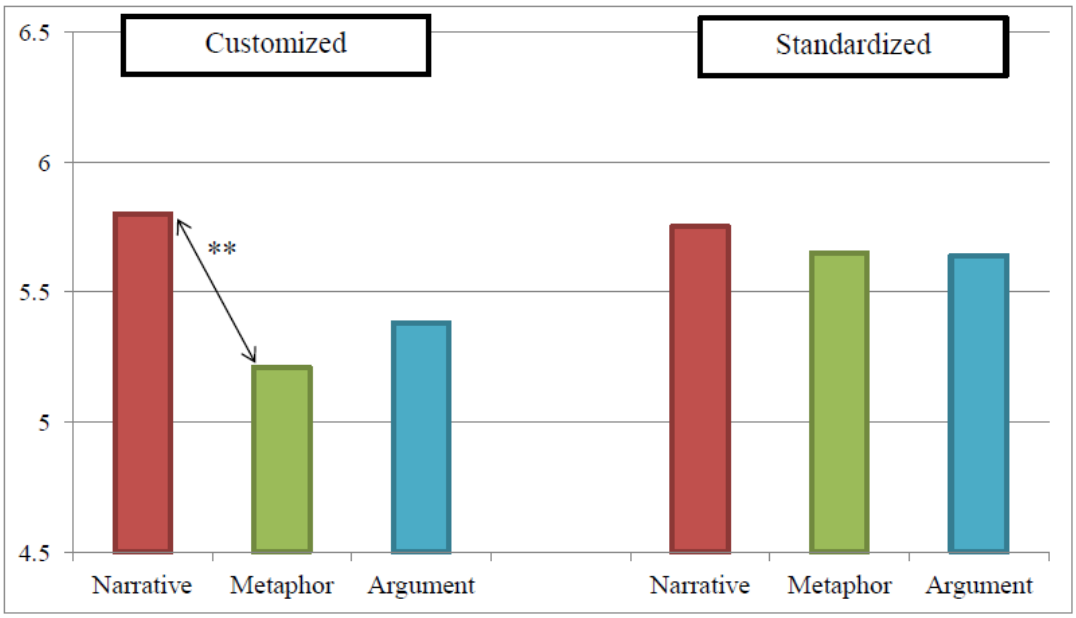
4.9.6.2.4. Impact of framing strategies on attitude to the service across customization levels

H14 and H15 argue that narrative will generate more positive attitudes to the service than metaphor and argument respectively for customized services. Firstly, a significant main effect of framing strategy on attitude to the service is found for customized services ($F(2,336) = 6.809$, $p = .002$, $\eta^2 = .039$). Follow up univariate analysis illustrates a significant difference in narrative versus metaphor ($F(1,230) = 15.234$, $p = .000$, $\eta^2 = .063$); **H14 is supported**. No significant difference is found in argument versus metaphor ($F(1,219) = 2.669$, $p = .104$, $\eta^2 = .012$) or argument versus narrative ($F(1,222) = 3.454$, $p = .064$, $\eta^2 = .015$) in terms of attitude to the service for customized services. Therefore **H15 is rejected**, with no difference in narrative and argument for attitude to the service.

H18 asserts that no significant difference exists in consumer attitude to the service across framing strategies in the context of standardized services. This hypothesis **is supported**. First, there is no significant main effect of framing strategy on attitude to the service ($F(2,325) = .275$, $p = .760$, $\eta^2 = .002$). Post hoc univariate ANCOVA tests for each combination of the three framing strategies reveal no significant effects for narrative versus metaphor ($F(1,205) = .369$, $p = .544$, $\eta^2 = .002$); argument versus metaphor ($F(1,221) = .220$,

p = .639, η^2 = .001); and argument versus narrative (F(1,223) = .128, p = .721, η^2 = .001). These results indicate that level of customization moderates the impact of framing strategies on consumer attitude to the service.

Figure 4.19 Attitude to the service for each framing strategy across customization



**Significant at p=0.000

Table 4.27 Descriptives Summary:
Impact of Framing Strategy across Customization

	Customization			Standardization		
	Narrative	**Metaphor**	**Argument**	**Narrative**	**Metaphor**	**Argument**
	M (SD)	**M (SD)**	**M(SD)**	**M (SD)**	**M (SD)**	**M(SD)**
Comprehension	4.28(0.97)	3.39(1.38)	4.01(1.22)	4.43(0.92)	4.03(1.12)	4.29(1.12)
Attitude to Ad	5.69(1.11)	5.10(1.36)	5.36(1.42)	5.64(1.41)	5.50(1.31)	5.61(1.38)
Att. To Service	5.80(1.24)	5.21(1.48)	5.38(1.52)	5.75(1.38)	5.65(1.30)	5.64(1.61)

Table 4.28 ANCOVA Results Summary:
Impact of Framing Strategy across Customization Level

	COMPREHENSION		
	F	**P**	**Partial η²**
Framing Strategy	19.812	P<0.005	.057
Level of Customization	7.205	P<0.05	.011
Framing Strategy x Cu	4.041	P<.05	.012
	AD ATTITUDE		
	F	**P**	**Partial η²**
Framing Strategy	3.60	P<0.05	.011
Customization level	.000	P>0.05	.000
Framing Strategy x Cu	3.00	P<.05	.009
	ATTITUDE TO SERVICE		
	F	**P**	**Partial η²**
Framing Strategy	2.564	P>0.05	.008
Level of Customization	.286	P>0.05	.000
Framing Strategy x Cu	4.651	P<0.05	.014

Note – involvement included as covariate

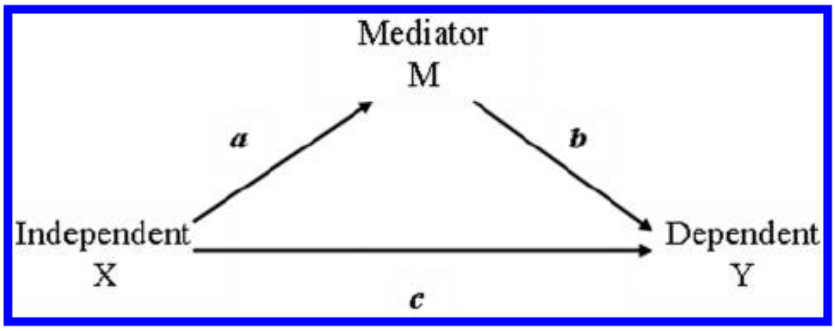
Table 4.29 Summary of Hypotheses Results

	Hypothesis	**Result**	**Explanation**
H10	*When the service is customized, narrative will be more effective than metaphor in generating greater comprehension*	Supported	Narrative leads to significantly higher comprehension than metaphor. (Argument also leads to significantly higher comprehension than metaphor).
H11	*When the service is customized, narrative will be more effective than argument in generating greater comprehension*	Rejected	No significant difference is found between argument & narrative.
H12	*When the service is customized, narrative will be more effective than metaphor in generating higher attitudes to the ad*	Supported	Narrative leads to significantly higher attitude to the ad than metaphor. (No significant difference is found between argument and metaphor).
H13	*When the service is customized, narrative will be more effective than argument in generating higher attitudes to the ad*	Rejected	No significant difference is found between argument & narrative.
H14	*When the service is customized, narrative will be more effective than metaphor in generating higher attitudes to the service*	Supported	Narrative leads to significantly higher attitudes to the service than metaphor. (No significant difference is found between argument and metaphor.)
H15	*When the service is customized, narrative will be more effective than argument in generating higher attitudes to the service*	Rejected	No significant difference is found between argument & narrative.
H16	*When the service is standardized, the framing strategy will not trigger significant differences in comprehension*	Rejected	Narrative is found to be significantly more effective than metaphor. No significant differences found in argument versus metaphor or narrative versus argument.
H17	*When the service is standardized, the framing strategy will not trigger significant differences in attitude to the ad*	Supported	Framing strategy has no effect on attitude to the ad.
H18	*When the service is standardized, the framing strategy will not trigger significant differences in attitude to the service*	Supported	Framing strategy has no effect on attitude to the service.

4.9.7. Mediating impact of information processing styles on consumer response to framing strategies

Based on recent research illustrating issues with Baron and Kenny's (1986) widely used method of examining mediation, this study instead uses a bootstrap test of the indirect effect of information processing styles on consumer response variables (Zhao, Lynch and Chen 2010). Through this discussion, *a, b, c, and X, Y and M* will be referred to. These are presented visually in figure 4.20 below. *X* is the independent variable, *Y* is the dependent variable, *M* is the mediator, *a* is the effect of *X* on *M*, *b* the effect of *M* on *Y*, and *c* the effect of *X* on *Y*.

Figure 4.20 Three-Variable Nonrecursive Causal Model



(Zhao, Lynch and Chen 2010: 198)

Traditionally, mediation has been established via Baron and Kenny's method which recommends three tests:

> *A variable functions as a mediator when it meets the following conditions: (a) variations in levels of the independent variable significantly account for variations in the presumed mediator (i.e., Path a), (b) variations in the mediator significantly account for variations in the dependent variable (i.e., Path b), and (c) when Paths a and b are controlled, a previously significant relation between the independent and dependent variables is no longer significant, with the strongest demonstration of mediation occurring when Path c is zero.* (1986: 1176)

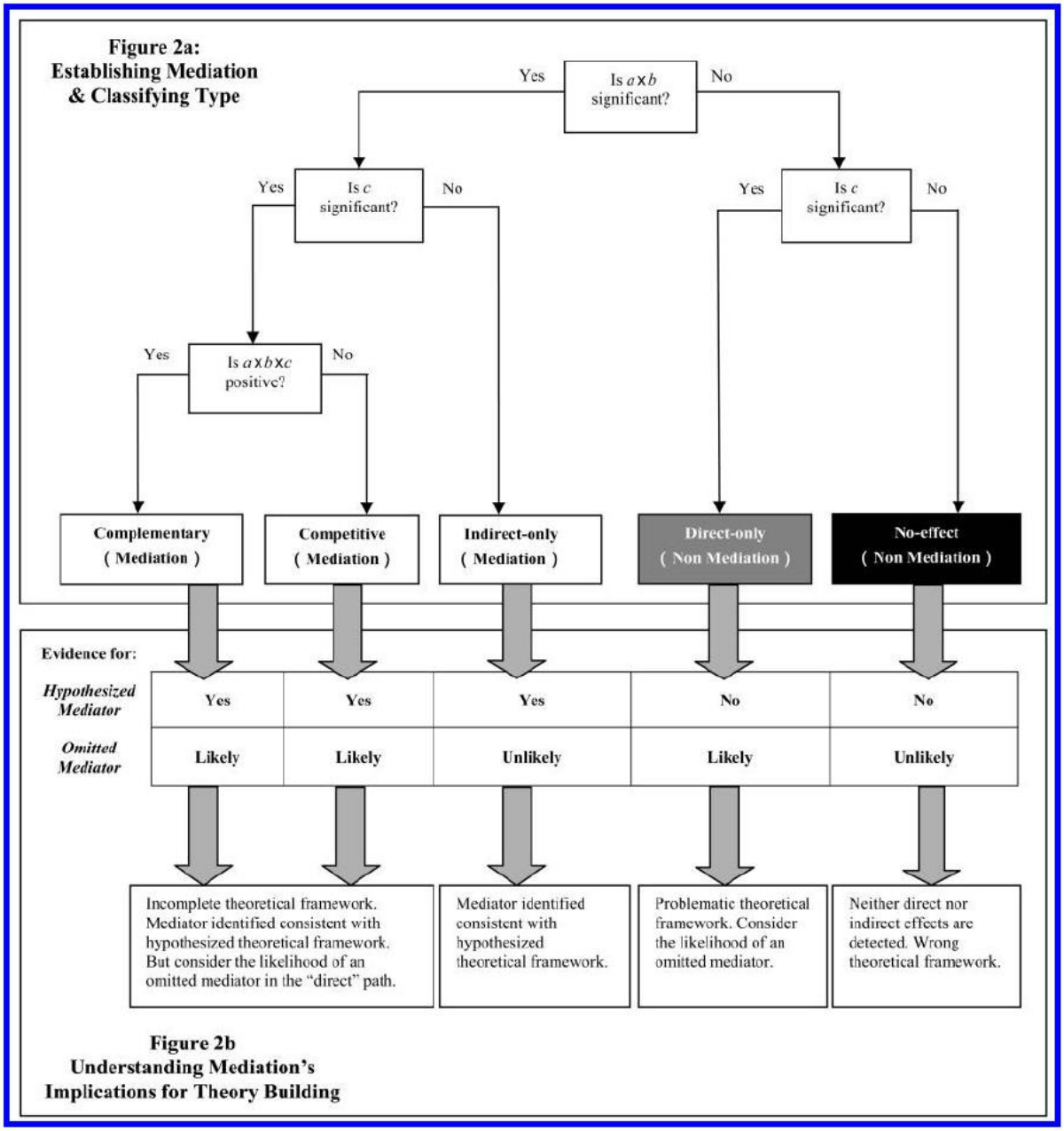
Baron and Kenny continue to assert that:

> *To test mediation, one should estimate the three following regression equations: first, regressing the mediator on the independent variable; second, regressing the dependent variable on the independent variable; and third, regressing the dependent variable on both the independent variable and on the mediator… To establish mediation, the following conditions must hold: First, the independent variable must affect the mediator…; second, the independent variable must be shown to affect the dependent variable…; and third, the mediator must affect the dependent variable...* (1986:1177)

Therefore Baron and Kenny's (1986) classification of mediation types consists of: full mediation, partial mediation, and no mediation. Full mediation is argued to show the strongest evidence for mediation, and involves an indirect effect (*a x b*) but no direct effect (*c*). Partial mediation refers to situations where there are both direct (*c*) and indirect effects (*a x b*), and no mediation occurs when there is a direct effect (*c*) but no indirect effect (*a x b*) (Zhao et al. 2010). Although 'full mediation' is argued to be optimal, according to Iacobucci (2008) the majority of articles report 'partial mediation'. Zhao et al. (2010) argue that what Baron and Kenny call 'partial mediation' is very important for theory building, as the direct effect which is not accounted for by the indirect effect can lead the researcher to explore alternative, yet often equally important mediators. Zhao et al. (2010) develop a typology which they believe improves on Baron and Kenny's more coarse and one-dimensional classification, by offering a two-dimensional perspective. This updated typology has five categories (See Figure 4.21), including three types of mediation (complementary, competitive, and indirect-only) and two types of non-mediation (direct-only and no-effect). Complementary mediation overlaps with Baron and Kenny's (1986) partial mediation, and the indirect-only mediation overlaps with their full mediation. The three other categories presented in Figure 4.21, competitive mediation, direct only non-mediation and no-effect were all treated as no mediation by Baron and Kenny. For this reason Zhao et al's (2010) typology can better help to explain effects found. Consider the example of investigating the mediating impact of transportation on the superior effect of narrative over metaphor on consumer comprehension of customized services. Zhao et al.'s typology suggests that if the impact of narrative on transportation and transportation on comprehension are both significant (*a x b*), then some form of mediation exists. If the superior impact of narrative over metaphor on comprehension (*c*) is also significant then we can conclude that either complementary or competitive mediation exists. If the relationship *a x b x c* is positive, then

both narrative and transportation have a positive effect on comprehension and complementary mediation exists. If we replaced the mediating variable transportation with elaboration, theory suggests that the findings will show a negative mediating effect of elaboration on consumer response to narrative versus metaphor. In this case it is expected that the relationship *a x b x c* will not be positive, and therefore competitive mediation would exist.

Figure 4.21 Decision Tree for Understanding Types of (Non) Mediation



Preacher and Hayes (2004, 2008) offer an alternative method of mediation analysis which is more powerful and appropriate than using the Sobel *Z*-test to test the significance of the indirect path *a x b*, as previously recommended by Baron and Kenny (1986). Zhao et al. (2010) offer a clear explanation of the bootstrap test recommended by Preacher and Hayes (2004). This bootstrap test creates an empirical sampling distribution of *a x b*. Using the size of the sample (*N*), this test draws replacement N values of *X*, *M*, and *Y* to create a new sample. The following equations (i) and (ii) are estimated for each bootstrap sample, this research follows the recommended number of 5,000 bootstraps:

(i) $M = i_1 + aX + e_1$

(I.e. regressing the mediator on the independent variable)

(ii) $Y = i_3 + cX + bM + e_3$.

(I.e. regressing the dependent variable on both the independent variable and mediator)

After 5,000 bootstrap samples have been drawn and *a x b* estimated for each, the SPSS macro (developed by Preacher and Hayes 2008) estimates the indirect effect as the mean of these estimates (Zhao et al. 2010). An important advantage of Preacher and Hayes (2008) macro is that it facilitates including a covariate in the model. This is crucial for this research where involvement is controlled for throughout the analysis. The process involves: downloading Preacher and Hayes (2008) SPSS syntax (http://afhayes.com/spss-sas-and-mplus-macros-and-code.html), identifying the relevant independent, mediating and covariate variables, and running the script. This procedure is recommended in the literature (MacKinnon, Lockwood and Williams 2004 and Zhao et al. 2010) and has been used in recent articles with a similar methodology in the Journal of Consumer Research (Mehta et al. 2012). The 95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence intervals (CIs) with 5,000 bootstrap samples are conducted for all three contrasts (narrative v metaphor, narrative v argument, and argument v. metaphor). The primary objective of this analysis is to investigate the mediating impact of transportation on the beneficial impact of narrative over metaphor and narrative over argument on consumer responses (H19-H22). This section also investigates whether elaboration mediates the negative effect of metaphor compared to the alternative framing strategies. Although not hypothesized, because narrative emerged as more effective than metaphor for mentally tangible services (comprehension and attitudes to the service) and standardized services

(comprehension), the mediating impact of transportation is also investigated for these service types. Zhao et al's (2010) typology of establishing the mediation type (Figure 4.21) helps to understand the implications of mediation in this research. The rest of this section is organized as follows. First, the four remaining hypotheses are investigated and the results conveyed (H19(a-c), 20(a-c), 21(a-c) and 22(a-c)). Then the additional analysis for mentally tangible and standardized services is described.

H19: The impact of narrative versus metaphor on (a) comprehension, (b) attitude to the ad, and (c) attitude to the service for mentally intangible services is mediated by transportation

The 95% bias-corrected bootstrap CIs for the mediating impact of transportation[3] on the effect of narrative versus metaphor on consumer comprehension of mentally intangible services is conducted. The results support the hypothesis that transportation mediates the effectiveness of narrative over metaphor, illustrating that the narrative-metaphor contrast (.0928 to 1.14) does not include zero. This means that transportation does mediate the effect of narrative (versus metaphor) on comprehension of mentally intangible services. This relationship is positive, therefore **19a is supported and complementary mediation exists.** Because the framing strategy has no impact on attitude to the ad for mentally intangible services, and narrative is not found to be significantly more effective than metaphor in generating positive attitudes to the service for mentally intangible services, the findings indicate no direct effect of narrative versus metaphor on attitude to the ad or attitude to the service for mentally intangible services. In relation to **H19b** and **H19c**, bootstrap tests do indicate however that an **indirect-only mediation exists** for the impact of transportation on both attitude to the ad (.0956 to .9766) and attitude to the service (.0878 to .8246). Following Zhao et al's (2010) typology in Figure 4.21, this suggests that the mediator identified is consistent with the hypothesized theoretical framework, even though the hypothesized direct effect was absent.

[3] For this section the reduced three item transportation scale is used, in keeping with recent experimental research (Escalas 2004, 2007). The analysis was first conducted with the 12 item transportation scale but no significant results emerged. This is potentially due to respondent fatigue with a very long scale, with items which place high demand on the participant's resources to correctly answer. The reduced three item scale is therefore used in all analysis on the mediating impact of transportation in this thesis.

H20: The impact of narrative versus argument on (a) comprehension, (b) attitude to the ad, and (c) attitude to the service for mentally intangible services is mediated by transportation.

Narrative does not emerge as significantly more effective than argument for comprehension or attitude to the ad for mentally intangible services, for H20a and H20b the only potential mediation effects which can exist are indirect-only or no-effect. Because for both comprehension (-.038 to .4994) and attitude to the ad (-.0136 to .4031) the bootstrap includes zero, we can conclude that **H20a and H20b are rejected and no-effect (non-mediation) exists.** The results reveal that narrative is significantly more effective than argument for attitude to the service for mentally intangible services. A 95% % bias-corrected bootstrap CI with 5,000 bootstrap samples indicates that, surprisingly, transportation doesn't mediate the beneficial impact of narrative over argument. The results of the narrative-argument contrast (-.0038 to .2904) include zero, ruling out an indirect impact of transportation, and **H20c is rejected** and **a direct-only (non-mediation) effect exists**. This suggests that an alternative mediator explains the significant direct impact of narrative versus argument on attitude to the service (Zhao et al. 2010).

H21: The impact of narrative versus metaphor on (a) comprehension, (b) attitude to the ad, and (c) attitude to the service for customized services is mediated by transportation

Narrative emerges as more effective than metaphor for comprehension, attitude to the ad and attitude to the service. Therefore the potential mediation effects that can be found here are: complementary or competitive mediation (if $a \times b$ is significant), or else direct-only (non-mediation). First, consider the mediating impact of transportation on the effectiveness of narrative over metaphor for comprehension of customized services. The 95% CI results obtained (.1986 to 1.0691) do not include zero; a positive mediating impact of transportation can be confirmed, **confirming H21a, complementary mediation exists**. An examination of the mediating impact of transportation on the effectiveness of narrative over metaphor for attitude to the ad for customized reveals that **complementary mediation exists** as the results do not include zero (.1042 to .9140). **H21b is accepted**. The results also indicate a negative mediating impact of elaboration on the narrative-metaphor contrast (-.5584 to -.0050) which provides another rationale for why narrative leads to more positive attitudes than metaphor.

Finally, the only significant direct effect found for the impact of framing strategy on attitude to the service for customized services is between narrative and metaphor, with narrative emerging as more effective as expected. This impact is mediated by audience transportation into the narrative, the 95% CI obtained for the narrative-metaphor contrast (.1770 to .9054) does not include zero. Therefore **complementary mediation exists and H21c is supported**.

H22: The impact of narrative versus argument on (a) comprehension, (b) attitude to the ad, and (c) attitude to the service for customized services is mediated by transportation.

Unexpectedly, no significant differences are found between narrative versus argument for comprehension, attitude to the ad or attitude to the service for customized services. Therefore the only potential mediation that can exist here is indirect-only or no-effect (non-mediation). The 95% CI bootstrap conducted for narrative-argument contrast reveals that for comprehension (-.0175 to .3004), attitude to the ad (-.0323 to .3910) and attitude to the service (-.207 to .3357) the results cross zero. Therefore **H22a, H22b and H22c are rejected**, and for all three dependent variables, **no-effect (non-mediation) exists**.

Additional Analyses – Mentally Tangible and Standardized Services

Now the additional results which were not hypothesized are discussed. The findings indicate that narratives are more effective than metaphors in optimizing comprehension of mentally tangible services. This effect is mediated by transportation into the narrative, the 95% CI conducted for narrative-metaphor contrast (.1702 to 1.088) does not include zero, complementary mediation exists. For mentally tangible services, argument emerges as more effective than metaphor in terms of attitude to the ad. The results reveal that this is not due to the mediating impact of elaboration, because the 95% CI obtained (-.2578 to .4327) includes zero. This means that the beneficial impact of argument over metaphor is not due to prolonged audience elaboration on the metaphor, and an alternative mediator is likely to exist (Zhao et al. 2010).

Both narrative and argument are found to be significantly more effective than metaphor at generating positive attitudes to the service in the context of mentally tangible services. First, the mediating impact on the narrative-metaphor contrast is considered. The results of the 95% CI (.1253 to .8715) do not include zero. Therefore the mediating impact of transportation on

the differential effectiveness of narrative over metaphor on consumer attitudes to mentally tangible services is confirmed, complementary mediation exists. This further confirms the fact that the beneficial impact of narrative over metaphor is mediated by transportation. Elaboration is not found to mediate the narrative-metaphor contrast (-.1356 to .1432) as the 95% CI results include zero. This means it cannot be ascertained that high levels of elaboration triggered by the incongruity inherent in rhetorical tropes negatively impacts attitude to the service. The impact of argument v. metaphor on consumer attitude to the service is mediated by elaboration. As expected, elaboration negatively mediates this impact, and provides some explanation for why argument enhances consumer attitudes over metaphor. The results of the 95% CI (-.6715 to -.0772) do not include zero and are negative.

The final additional analysis discussed relates to standardized services. As illustrated in the findings related to standardized services, consumer attitude to the ad and the service are unaffected by the framing strategy, which is in line with the hypotheses. However, narrative serves to enhance comprehension of standardized services over metaphor. This impact is mediated by transportation, as confirmed by the 95% bootstrap CI conducted for narrative-metaphor. The results (.1916 to 1.1344) do not include zero, therefore complementary mediation exists.

Overall the findings illustrate very strong support for the theory stating that the narrative framing triggers audience transportation, and this mediates the effect of the framing strategy on consumer responses (Dal Cin 2005, Green and Brock 2000). This holds for every *significant* impact of narrative over metaphor or argument on consumer responses to mentally intangible and customized services. The only exception to this is the impact of narrative over argument on consumer attitude to the service for mentally intangible services (H20c is rejected). This suggests that an alternative mediator may explain the beneficial impact of narrative over argument for customized services, which is omitted in this analysis (Zhao et al. 2010).

Table 4.30 Mediating Impact of Information Processing Styles

	Transportation	Elaboration
Mentally Intangible Services: Narrative versus. Metaphor		
Comprehension (H19a)	Complementary Mediation (.117 to 1.177)	Direct only (non-mediation (-1.093 to .2128)
Attitude to the Ad (H19b)	Indirect only mediation (.0956 to .9766)	No effect (non-mediation (-.3254 to .4045)
Attitude to the Service (H19c)	Indirect only mediation (.0878 to .8246)	No effect (non-mediation (-.2664 to .3037)
Mentally Intangible Services: Narrative versus. Argument		
Comprehension (H20a)	No-effect (Non-mediation) (-.038 to .4994)	Direct only (non-mediation (-.034 to .1436)
Attitude to the Ad (H20b)	No-effect (Non-mediation) (-.0136 to .4031)	No effect (non-mediation) (-.0244 to .2644)
Attitude to the Service (H20c)	Direct only (non-mediation (-.0038 to .2904)	Direct only (non-mediation (-.0232 to .2165)
Customized Services: Narrative versus. Metaphor		
Comprehension (H21a)	Complementary Mediation (.1723 to 1.038)	Direct only (non-mediation (-.3007 to .0822)
Attitude to the Ad (H21b)	Complementary Mediation (.1611 to .8788)	Competitive Mediation (-.5695 to -.0015)
Attitude to the Service (H21c)	Complementary Mediation (.1756 to .9318)	Direct only (non-mediation) (-.4599 to .0038)
Customized Services: Narrative versus. Argument		
Comprehension (H22a)	No-effect (Non-mediation) (-.0175 to .3004)	No-effect (Non-mediation) (-.1171 to .0881)
Attitude to the Ad (H22b)	No-effect (Non-mediation) (-.0323 to .3910)	Indirect only (mediation) (.0311 to .3531)
Attitude to the Service (H22c)	No-effect (Non-mediation) (-.0207 to .3357)	Indirect only (mediation) (.0110 to .2462)

4.9.7.1. Mediating impact of Individual Transportability

As another additional piece of analysis, the mediating impact of transportability (M) on the ability of narrative (X) to transport consumers (Y) is also assessed. A direct only (non-mediation) effect is found, as the 95% CI bootstrap crosses zero (-.0872 to .0841). Therefore transportability does not mediate the impact of framing strategy on transportation in this research.

Although transportability is not found to mediate the impact of framing strategy on transportation, analysis is conducted to check if this variable should be controlled for in this research. A MANOVA reveals a main effect of transportability on consumer responses (comprehension, attitude to the ad and attitude to the service combined).However, no significant interaction effect is found for either framing strategy*transportability or framing strategy* transportability*mental intangibility. The results do reveal a significant interaction effect framing strategy* transportability*customization. This suggests that this variable has the potential to moderate consumer responses and could be responsible for some of the variance found in the results. However, tests of covariance with transportability included do not impact the effect of framing strategy and service characteristics on consumer comprehension, attitude to the ad or attitude to the service. This research can assert that, in this instance, transportability is not responsible for differences in consumer responses across framing strategies.

Table 4.31 Mediating Impact of Transportability

	Wilk's Lambda	F-Value	P	Partial η^2
TRANSABILITY	.256	1.344	.002	.365
FS* TRANSABILITY	.294	1.028	.385	.365
FS*MI* TRANSABILITY	.670	.968	.565	.125
FS*Cu* TRANSABILITY	.586	1.323	.030	.163

4.9.8. Mediating impact among dependent variables

For customized services, narrative emerges as more effective than metaphor for all dependent variables: comprehension, attitude to the ad and attitude to the service. An investigation of mediation among the dependent variables via a 95% bias correcting CI bootstrap (Preacher and Hayes 2008) reveals that **comprehension mediates the impact of narrative versus metaphor on attitude to the ad** (1.0293 to 2.3801), because the upper and lower parameters do not include zero. Further, **comprehension mediates the impact of narrative versus metaphor on attitude to the service** (.7107 to 1.7482), and **attitude to the ad mediates the impact of the narrative-metaphor contrast** (.5443 to 1.735) **on attitude to the service**. This supports the argument that comprehension is a prerequisite for attitudes (Ratneshwar and Chaiken 1991). This analysis is not relevant for standardized services, because in such situations attitudes are found to be unaffected by the framing strategy. This is regardless of the fact that narrative heightens comprehension of standardized services when compared to metaphor.

In relation to mentally intangible services, both narrative and argument are more effective than metaphor in enhancing comprehension, and narrative is more effective than argument in generating more positive attitudes to the service. Attitude to the ad is unaffected by the framing strategy for mentally intangible services. Results obtained from a 95% CI bootstrap reveals that for the narrative-metaphor contrast, **comprehension mediates both attitude to the ad** (.4477 to 1.7052) **and attitude to the service** (.3458 to 1.2922) given that zero is not included in the parameters. Given that no direct effect of narrative versus metaphor on attitude to the ad for mentally intangible services is found, it is not surprising that **attitude to the ad doesn't mediate attitude to the service** in this instance (-.0756 to 1.3457). Considering the argument-metaphor contrast, results reveal that **comprehension mediates the impact of framing strategy on attitude to the ad** (-1.2838 to -.0308) **and attitude to the service** (-.8006 to -.0451). Again, due to the fact that argument versus metaphor does not effect attitude to the ad for mentally intangible services, it is not wholly unexpected that **attitude to the ad doesn't mediate attitude to the service** here (-.9079 to .4525).

For mentally tangible services, argument is found to be more effective than metaphor for comprehension, attitude to the ad and attitude to the service. Further, narrative is more

effective than metaphor for attitude to the service. Mediation analysis via bootstrapping (Preacher and Hayes 2008) with a 95% confidence interval and 5,000 bootstrap samples reveals that for the argument-metaphor contrast, **comprehension mediates the impact of framing strategy on attitude to the ad** (-1.9275 to -.6812) **and attitude to the service** (-1.2884 to -.3893) as both confidence intervals do not include zero. Further, **attitude to the ad mediates the impact of argument v. metaphor on attitude to the service** (-1.264 to -.0857). In relation to the narrative-metaphor contrast, **comprehension is found to influence the impact of the framing strategy on attitude to the ad** (.8842 to 2.1093) **and attitude to the service** (.363 to 1.3958). However, in this instance **attitude to the ad does not mediate the impact of narrative versus metaphor on attitude to the service** (-.0107 to 1.0405) as zero is included in the parameters.

Overall the results reveal that **H23A** *(The significant impact of the framing strategy on attitude to the ad for each service type is mediated by service comprehension*) **is supported**; in every instance comprehension is found to mediate the impact of framing strategies on attitude to the ad. The results also indicate that **H23B** *(The significant impact of the framing strategy on attitude to the service for each service type is mediated by service comprehension)* **is supported**; comprehension consistently mediates the impact of framings strategies on attitude to the service. Mixed results emerge for H23c (*The significant impact of the framing strategy on attitude to the service for each service type is mediated by attitude to the ad.*). Therefore **H23c is partially supported**, but the results reveal that in half of the cases investigated in this analysis, no mediating effect of attitude to the ad on the impact of framing strategies on attitude to the service is found.

The results presented in this section offer further insight into how consumers develop attitudes to new services and provide strong evidence to support the notion that comprehension is a prerequisite for attitudes (Ratneshwar and Chaiken 1991). This suggests that maximizing comprehension should be an important goal for service marketers, as this in turn will enhance attitudes.

4.10. FINDINGS

The intangible nature of services means creating relevant and effective advertising strategies can be challenging (Stafford et al. 2011). Although the current global economy and advertising spend is dominated by services, the services advertising literature is lagging behind that of goods (Stafford et al. 2011). In fact, Stafford and colleagues (2011: 147) go as far as to describe services advertising research as being in a 'state of arrested development'. Little is known about how to design effective advertisements to portray both the experiential service attributes and to reduce the intangibility associated with services. This study illustrates that the information framing strategy, i.e. the manner in which information is presented, can have a powerful impact on consumer responses. Few extant empirical studies investigate the role of framing strategies for services. Two studies illustrate the benefit of narrative over argument for experiential services (restaurants and holidays) (Adaval and Wyer 1998, Mattila 2000), but no research considers either the role of tropes for services, or compares the effectiveness of narrative versus tropes for services. This study introduces the notion of the moderating role of service characteristics on the effectiveness of different framing strategies in generating positive consumer responses. This avoids the limitation of focusing on a specific service industry (e.g. Moser et al. 2010) while remaining conscious of the complex nature of services (Tripp 1997, Stafford et al. 2011). A 3x2x2 between subjects experiment was designed to investigate the impact of narrative versus metaphor versus argument on consumer responses, and to examine to what extent this effect is moderated by mental intangibility and customization.

4.10.1. Main Findings

Table 4.32 below illustrates the most effective framing strategies for each service category across the three dependent variables (comprehension, attitude to the ad, attitude to the service). First, in terms of comprehension, it is immediately apparent that metaphor is an ineffective strategy, with narrative and argument consistently emerging as significantly more effective than metaphor. This holds for all service types.

The impact of framing strategies on attitude to the ad show mixed results. The proposed hypothesis regarding the effectiveness of narrative over metaphor is supported for customized services, but no significant difference occurs between narrative and argument for customized services. For mentally intangible services, the framing strategy is shown to have no significant impact on mentally intangible services. No significant difference is found between narrative and metaphor, narrative and argument or argument and metaphor. In the context of mentally tangible services, no significant effect of the framing strategy is expected, but argument emerges as more effective than metaphor. No significant difference is found between argument and narrative, or narrative and metaphor. The hypothesis positing that framing strategy will have no impact on attitude to the ad for standardized services is supported. As expected, the framing strategy also has no impact on consumer attitude to the service when presented with advertising stimuli for standardized services.

The impact of narrative versus metaphor on consumer attitude to the service supports the hypotheses for customized services. However narrative does not emerge as more effective than argument for customized services. In contrast and surprisingly, no significant difference is found between narrative and metaphor for mentally intangible services, though narrative is revealed to be more effective than argument in terms of attitudes to mentally intangible services. For mentally tangible services both argument and narrative are significantly more effective than metaphor in terms of attitude to the service. This goes against the hypothesis that framing strategies have no effect on mentally tangible services.

These findings, both hypothesized and surprising, are discussed in the following two sections. The rest of the discussion is organized as follows. Firstly, the effectiveness of framing strategies across mentally intangible versus mentally tangible services is described and critically analyzed. Next the effectiveness of framing strategies across customized versus standardized services is explained in greater detail. Finally, the managerial implications and research limitations are explored.

Table 4.32 Optimal Framing Strategies across Categories of Services

	Comprehension	**Attitude to the Ad**	**Attitude to the Service**
Mentally Intangible	Narrative or Argument (Both narrative & argument emerge as significantly more effective than metaphor. No significant difference is found between argument and narrative)	No effect of framing strategy	Narrative or Metaphor (Narrative is significantly more effective than argument. No significant difference is found between argument and metaphor, or narrative and metaphor)
Mentally Tangible	Narrative or Argument (Both narrative & argument emerge as significantly more effective than metaphor. No significant difference is found between argument and narrative)	Argument or Narrative (Argument is found to be significantly more effective than metaphor. There is no significant difference between narrative and argument or narrative & metaphor)	Narrative or Argument (Both narrative & argument emerge as significantly more effective than metaphor. No significant difference is found between argument and narrative)
Customized	Narrative or Argument (Both narrative & argument emerge as significantly more effective than metaphor. No significant difference is found between argument and narrative)	Narrative or Argument (Narrative is significantly more effective than metaphor. No significant difference is found between argument and metaphor, or argument and narrative)	Narrative or Argument (Narrative is significantly more effective than metaphor. No significant difference is found between argument and metaphor, or argument and narrative)
Standardized	Narrative or Argument (Narrative is significantly more effective than metaphor. No significant difference is found between argument and metaphor, or argument and narrative)	No effect of framing strategy	No effect of framing strategy

4.10.2. Impact of framing strategy across high versus low mental intangibility

This study hypothesizes that narrative will emerge as the most effective framing strategy for mentally intangible services in terms of service comprehension, attitude to the ad and attitude to the service. This is because mentally intangible services lack a clear mental representation and are difficult to grasp, in particular by those who lack experience with the service (Laroche et al. 2001). Research in the area of cognitive load asserts that learning about a concept with which one lacks familiarity poses a high intrinsic cognitive load (Chandler and Sweller 1991). Argument is posited to be ineffective in terms of consumer response to mentally intangible services because argument prompts piecemeal information processing (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975), which is obstructed in situations where consumers lack the existing schemas in memory in order to categorize incoming information (Lehmann 1994). Metaphor is also suggested to be ineffective for mentally intangible services because greater cognitive resources are required to comprehend and process the attributes of mentally intangible services (intrinsic load), due the lack of consumer knowledge and schema in memory, leaving insufficient resources to solve the ambiguity inherent in metaphors (extraneous load). This research hypothesizes that narrative is an effective framing strategy for increasing comprehension and reducing risk associated with services with which consumers lack knowledge, by creating a surrogate experience and walking the customer through using the service (Mattila 2000). Because narrative is argued to reduce extraneous load and promote germane load, akin to a worked example (Wise et al. 2009), narrative is posited to represent an optimal match for mentally intangible services in terms of cognitive resources. The hypotheses are partially supported, with narrative emerging as more effective than metaphor for comprehension. However, argument is also significantly more effective than metaphor for consumer comprehension of mentally intangible services, and no significant difference is found between argument and narrative. The fact that argument and narrative are equally effective at generating comprehension of mentally intangible services is surprising. One line of research which supports the benefit of argument over alternative framing strategies relates to the detrimental impact of openness in advertising (Ketelaar et al. 2010). When consumers receive little guidance in interpreting an advertisement message, they may experience difficulty interpreting the advertisement. Another risk with open ads is that the lack of guidance in developing an interpretation could result in the audience creating no interpretation at all (Dingena 1994, McQuarrie 1989). Being unable to correctly decipher the advertisement clearly negatively impacts comprehension. Research investigating the ‘dark

side' of openness provides a clear justification for the beneficial impact of argument over metaphor. Narrative framing strategies also facilitate multiple interpretations because they are processed based on a relaxed form of causal probability (Bruner 1986). In fact, Padgett and Allen (1997:58) develop the research proposition that 'argumentative ads should elicit fewer interpretations from customers than narrative ads'. Processing information in the form of a narrative means seeking a lifelike or plausible explanation for events in the story, rather than aiming to identify the optimal explanation, meaning there is no one 'correct' interpretation (Bruner 1986). The results indicate that the explicit, logical and unambiguous manner characteristic of argument framing (Wells 1989, Chang 2009) is working equally effectively as narratives in terms of comprehension of mentally intangible services. This is potentially because the unambiguous (closed) nature of argument is negating the beneficial impact of narrative in terms of its ability to holistically portray the experience via a series of events which are structurally similar to real life (Matilla 2000).

Unexpectedly, the framing strategy has no impact on consumer attitude to the ad for mentally intangible services. This could be for a number of reasons; one important one being that this advertisement is black and white verbal copy only (in order to maximize internal validity) and so the advertisement itself may not be rated very highly. However, this issue occurs across all service types, and the framing strategy is found to have a significant impact on attitude to the ad for customized and mentally tangible services. Another reason could be that the high intrinsic load involved in comprehending and processing the mentally intangible service involves an effort on the consumers behalf which exists regardless of the framing strategy employed. The level of intrinsic load involved in completing the task (i.e. learning about the new service) is out of the advertiser's control, and so remains constant across all three framing strategies (McCrudden et al. 2004). The exertion involved in processing this new information could reduce attitude to the advertisement as this represents the task to be completed by the consumer. It is important to note that although no direct effect of framing strategy on attitude to the ad exists, an indirect only mediation effect of transportation is found. This suggests that although the direct effect of narrative over metaphor is lacking, the mediating effect is consistent with the hypothesized theoretical framework (Zhao et al. 2010).

Narrative is found to be significantly more effective than argument in terms of attitude to the service for mentally intangible services. This supports our hypothesis that the beneficial impact of narrative over argument is because: narratives are structural similar to real life

(Adaval and Wyer 1997) which can facilitate consumers mentally stimulating integrating the service in their own lives (Escalas 2004); and the fact that narratives facilitate individual and personally relevant interpretations of the service experience (Padgett and Allen 1998). However, surprisingly, this is the only time a significant superior effect of narrative over an alternative framing strategy is not mediated by transportation (see Table 4.30). Therefore a direct-only, non-mediation effect exists. This suggests that there may be an alternative mediator which is omitted from the framework which might explain the superiority of narrative over argument framing (Zhao et al. 2010). There could be a competitive mediator which is linked to the effort involved in piece-meal processing which reduces attitudes in response to argument framing for example.

Perhaps one of the most surprising findings is the lack of significant difference between narrative and metaphor on attitude to the service for mentally intangible services. Theory would support this finding by suggesting that consumers experienced pleasure having solved the ambiguity in the metaphor, which was in turn transferred to the service (Mandler 1982; Meyers-Levy and Tybout 1989; Stayman. Alden, and Smith 1992). However, the fact that comprehension is significantly lower in response to metaphor versus narrative for mentally intangible services indicates that consumers experience difficultly correctly interpreting the service attributes framed metaphorically. An analysis of the mediation effect of information processing styles reveals that transportation has an indirect-only mediating effect, and elaboration has no mediating effect. Therefore a rationale for the fact that narrative is not exerting a superior effect over metaphor in this instance could be that participants are not responding to the metaphors as theory suggests. In light of experiencing difficulty comprehending the mentally intangible service, the audience of the metaphor stimuli may be protecting their cognitive resources by engaging in lower elaboration and making judgments based on superficial analysis (Petty and Cacioppo 1981). Low elaboration via peripheral route processing is a heuristic form of processing, which is associated with greater positive affect than systematic processing (Clore, Schwarz, and Conway 1994). The participants may be generating simple inferences based on, for example, the number of arguments presented (Cacioppo and Petty 1984). Given that the number of arguments presented in both the narrative and metaphor stimuli in terms of the service benefits are identical, this could be a potential rationale for why narrative is failing to outperform metaphor in terms of attitude to the service for mentally intangible services, despite the fact that the narratives are successfully transporting the audience. It should be noted, that although narrative is not

outperforming metaphor in terms of attitude to the service, the metaphor does not enhance comprehension and consumers who lack comprehension may experience heightened perceived risk which could negatively impact purchase intentions.

Unexpected findings also emerge in terms of consumer comprehension, attitude to the ad and attitude to the service for mentally tangible services. This study hypothesizes that the framing strategy will have no impact on consumer response to mentally tangible services. For comprehension and attitude to the service both narrative and argument emerge as significantly more effective than metaphor. In terms of attitude to the advertisement, argument is more effective than metaphor. No significant difference is found between argument and narrative, and narrative is not found to be significantly more effective than metaphor. Overall, the findings in this case can be considered in terms of the ineffectiveness of metaphor as a framing strategy for mentally tangible services. Given that mentally tangible services are easily comprehended regardless of consumer experience or familiarity with the service (Laroche et al. 2001), argument represents a logical strategy to clearly, explicitly and logically portray the attributes of such services. Argument framing directly conveys information about product features to the audience and uses logic to persuade (Wells 1989, Chang 2009). The explicit manner in which service attributes are portrayed may combine well with the easily grasped attributes of mentally tangible services in order to enhance consumer comprehension. On the other hand, as illustrated throughout this thesis, narrative represents a useful strategy for holistically portraying the symbolic and functional benefits of services, and contextualizing them in a working example to increase comprehension (Padgett and Allen 1997). For this reason narrative is also an attractive framing strategy to enhance consumer response to mentally tangible services. Given that consumers of mentally tangible services are suggested to be akin to expert consumers in terms of their ability to grasp the service, it was assumed that metaphor would also be an effective strategy. Mentally tangible services pose a low intrinsic load which would couple with the high extraneous load posed by metaphorical tropes in order to optimally match resources. Upon solving the ambiguity inherent in the metaphor (as a destabilization trope), it was expected that the consumer would benefit from the 'ambiguity relief process' and that attitudes would be enhanced (Barthes 1985). However, metaphor has emerged as ineffective for mentally tangible services across all independent variables.

As mentioned, the risk of open ads, such as rhetorical tropes, is that consumers experience difficulty developing an interpretation or else fail completely to interpret the ad. Contrary to the body of research on the positive impact of rhetorical figures (McQuarrie and Mick 1996, Huhmann 2008), a number of studies argue that consumers don't want to or enjoy devoting time and effort to comprehending what the advertisement is intending to communicate (e.g. Franzen 1997, Phillips 2003, Phillips and McQuarrie 2004). It is also suggested that consumers might not view interpreting an ad message as a reward in itself (in contrast to Barthes (1985) 'pleasure of the text' theory), because they assume that the ad's intended message is consistently the same: 'purchase this product/service because...' (Phillips 1997, Warlaumont 1995). This is regardless of whether the advertisement is open or closed, but closed ads (e.g. argument) do not make consumers work to understand the intended ad message (Ketelaar et al. 2010). When presented with an open ad which requires time and effort to be interpreted, consumers may become frustrated and irritated (McQuarrie and Phillips 2005). As mentioned, a risk with open ads is that the lack of guidance in developing an interpretation could result in the audience creating no interpretation at all (Ketelaar et al. 2010). Being unable to correctly decipher the advertisement clearly negatively impacts comprehension. Attitudes are also impacted as consumer experience frustration and irritation (e.g. Dingena 1994; McQuarrie 1989; McQuarrie and Mick 1999, 2003; Phillips 2000, 2003). Also, consumers can sometimes experience uncertainty as to whether the interpretation they generate is the one the advertiser intended. This uncertainty can lead to feelings of dissatisfaction, which has been compared to an individual solving a riddle without being confident about whether or not it has been correctly solved (Peracchio and Meyers-Levy 1994). Prior empirical research illustrates the negative impact of openness on attitude to the ad. One study compares ambiguous versus unambiguous ads, and finds that attitudes to ambiguous advertisements are significantly more negative than attitudes to unambiguous advertisements (Warlaumont 1995). This research provides a fitting rationale as to why metaphor is less effective than argument in enhancing both comprehension and attitudes. However, narrative framing strategies also facilitate multiple interpretations because they are processed based on a relaxed form of causal probability (Bruner 1986). On the other hand, in contrast to rhetorical tropes (metaphor), narratives are similar to real life and walk the consumer through using the service via the experience of the character (Matilla 2000). Therefore this study suggests that although narratives facilitate individual interpretations (Padgett and Allen 1997), they are less ambiguous than metaphors. Further transportation subconsciously hooks consumers into the narrative (Change 2009) and is less effortful than

the extensive elaboration which can be demanded to solve the incongruity in rhetorical tropes (McQuarrie and Phillips 2005). In summary, the results indicate that, for mentally tangible services, the unambiguous nature of argument framing works equally effectively as transportation into a narrative in terms of comprehension, attitude to the ad, and attitude to the service.

4.10.3. Impact of framing strategies across customized versus standardized services

This research builds an argument regarding the differential benefit of narrative over metaphor and argument for enhancing consumer response to customized services. This is due to the fact that narrative offers a holistic understanding of the functional, symbolic and experiential service attributes. As this paper illustrates, customized services are evaluated based on the customer experience in interaction with the service provider (Välikangas and Lehtinen 1994). When making judgments on such services, the consumer may attempt to envision the whole progression of events associated with the service encounter. The experience is considered not only in terms of the functional end benefits, but also in terms of the affective, symbolic and experiential responses facilitated by the service process (Otto and Ritchie 1995). Narrative is hypothesized to represent the most effective strategy for enhancing responses to customized services. This is because narratives are argued to be unique in their ability to convey experiences (Boller 1988) by facilitating subjective interpretations which merge the facts presented into a coherent gestalt representing the experience (MacIntyre 1981). The hypotheses regarding the effectiveness of narrative over argument and metaphor for customized services in terms of comprehension, attitude to the ad and attitude to the service are only partially supported. Narrative consistently emerges as significantly more effective than metaphor across all dependent variables. However, no significant difference is found between narrative and argument. The fact that argument is not found to be significantly less effective than narrative is surprising. Argument lacks the potential to implicitly portray the symbolic and emotional benefits of customized, experiential services. In contrast to narrative, argument lacks the structural similarity to real life which hinders this framing strategy from holistically conveying the consumption experience. Heuristic processing styles are associated with greater positive affect than systematic processing strategies (Clore, Schwarz, and Conway 1994). This suggests that transportation via narrative framing generates a more positive affect and, in doing so, higher attitudes to the service than the piecemeal processing triggered by argument.

The fact that narrative isn't significantly more effective than argument across the dependent variables for customized services is therefore surprising. One potential explanation could be that the required antecedents for narrative transportation are lacking, e.g. the experiment participants don't empathize with the characters in the story or they fail to mentally imagine the story plot. Firstly, a potential reason could be that the experiment participants didn't empathize with 'Nicky', the character is the story plot. The name Nicky is specifically chosen as it is gender neutral, so as not to influence one gender empathizing to a greater extent. However, the four narratives (one for each of Beautiful Stay, Dream Trips, iCube and Cross Country) share a common theme. That is of hard work and stress experienced in the workplace, and the need to enjoy a trip in order to unwind and return with renewed energy and perspective. Although this plot is expected to resonate with most adults who have experienced employment, the recruited participants may not all be able to empathize with this story. Empathy ('an involuntary and un-self-conscious merging with another's feelings' (Escalas and Stern 2003:567)) is important in that it impacts the extent to which the audience of a narrative is transported into the story world (Slater and Rouner 2002). Empathy refers to the audience attempting to understand the experience of the character presented in the story, in other words to know and feel the world in a similar manner to the character (Van Laer et al. 2012). In order to successfully transport consumers, narratives must create story characters which the audience can empathize with, i.e. empathic characters (Escalas, Moore and Britton 2004). For example, in the arena of health research, Slater and Rouner (2003) illustrate that empathic characters depicted in narratives encouraging healthy lifestyles trigger greater healthy eating habits among the audience of the narrative. So, extant research supports the need to create characters with which the audience empathizes in order to enhance attitudes to the advertisement.

Secondly, great effort was made to include high levels of imagery in the story plot of the narrative stimuli in this experiment. This is because imagery of the story plot is essential for transportation to occur (Gerrig 1993) and narratives resemble real-life experiences via the mentally imagined plot (Green 2006). If participants fail to mentally imagine the narrative plot, they are less likely to be hooked into the narrative and return from the story world with new information and enhanced attitudes (Green et al. 2008). Prior research reveals that narratives provoke transportation based on the extent to which it provokes mental imagery (Escalas 2004, Green and Brock 2000). Therefore if the narrative stimuli fail to create a mentally imagined plot then the intensity of transportation is restricted and fewer changes in

attitudes occur. Because narrative is significantly more effective than metaphor for customized services, and it is shown that narrative stimuli are successful in triggering transportation (section 4.9.7), it can be asserted that the narratives have empathic characters and create mental imagery to a certain extent. However, the impact of narrative versus argument on consumer responses to customized services is not mediated by transportation. It appears that while the degree to which participants are transported does impact comprehension and attitudes when compared with metaphor, transportation is not sufficiently powerful to outperform the explicitness with which arguments are portrayed. The intensity of transportation can be enhanced by further developing the plot and creating more empathic characters. This could lead to narrative emerging as significantly more effective than not only metaphor, but argument also. Drawing on extant research which illustrates that open ads lead to more negative attitudes than closed ads (e.g. Warlaumont 1995) strengthens the rationalization not only for why argument is working more effectively than metaphor, but also for why the hypothesized benefit of narrative over argument for customized services is negated. By definition narrative framing facilitates individual interpretations of the advertised experience (Bruner 1986), hence it is an open advertisement. The fact that argument is operating as effectively as narrative, which triggers audience transportation, could be because of the explicit and unambiguous manner in which argument portrays service attributes and benefits. This ensures consumers don't experience frustration or irritation at having to firstly generate an interpretation (Dingena 1994; McQuarrie 1989) and secondly feel confident that the interpretation they created is the one intended by the advertiser (Peracchio and Meyers-Levy 1994).

As expected, the framing strategy exerts no impact on consumer response to standardized services in terms of attitudes. Attitude to the ad and attitude to the service are unaffected by the information framing strategy. This is explained by the fact that standardized services are high in search characteristics (Galetzka et al. 2006) and comprehension of such services is by nature high. The focal benefit of consumption of standardized services is the end-benefit, rather than the service experience which is the key event of customized services (Välikangas and Lehtinen 1994). Given the nature of search attributes and the focus on utilitarian end-benefits, comprehension of such services is high regardless of the framing strategy used. Consumers of such services are equated to expert consumers, who have been shown to be unaffected by the framing strategy. Experts are expected to be unaffected because they have existing domain-specific schema in memory, to which they relate incoming information

(Alba and Hutchison 1987, Mattila 2000). Expert consumers therefore rely on their existing knowledge schemas to form a judgment regardless of the framing strategy employed (Mattila 2000). One unexpected finding is that metaphor is less effective than argument and narrative in terms of generating greater comprehension for standardized services also. The fact that narrative is more effective than metaphor for comprehension can be explained by the fact that narratives illustrate rich contextual information surrounding the service experience, and portray the temporal sequence of events in a service (Wise et al. 2009). This study finds that transportation mediates the impact of narrative versus metaphor on comprehension of standardized services, confirming that complementary mediation exists. This means that the effectiveness of narrative is partly due to the fact that consumers are transported into the story world, and emerge transformed with new levels of knowledge (Green and Brock 2000). Also, many scholars agree that much of the social information acquired in daily life is conveyed in a story-format; it is transmitted thematically in a temporal sequence and is constructed from an individual's life experiences (Schank and Abelson 1995, Adaval and Wyer 1998). Because of this, it can be asserted that individuals are naturally wired to organize information about people and their actions in a narrative manner (e.g. Bruner, 1986, 1990; Kerby, 1991; Schank, 1990). Mentally imagining a narrative in memory is argued to aid learning (Robinson and Hawpe, 1986). The finding related to the effectiveness of argument over metaphor is explained by the negative impact of openness on consumer comprehension, based on the difficulty experienced in attempting to generate an interpretation (Ketelaar et al. 2010), as well as the frustration and uncertainty linked with confirming that this is the 'correct' interpretation (Peracchio and Meyers-Levy 1994).

4.11. CONCLUDING SECTION

4.11.1. Key Contribution

Revisiting the objectives and examining to what extent this thesis achieved them helps to delineate the important contributions of this research. The overarching aim of this thesis is *to extend the currently impoverished knowledge on the role of framing strategies for services advertising*. Specific objectives set out to work towards achieving this primary aim include:

(a) Identifying and examining previous research on the use of framing strategies in advertising;

(b) Investigating the use of framing strategies by service practitioners, specifically exploring trends in the use of framing strategies across service types, and

(c) Determining the effectiveness of framing strategies for different categories of services.

Each of the three papers presented in Chapter's 2, 3, and 4 are aimed at fulfilling objectives (a), (b), and (c) respectively. In this section whether the three papers succeeded in achieving their target objective is considered, and the contribution of each paper and the overall thesis is summarized.

Chapter 2, the literature review paper, aimed to identify the implications of different framing strategies for advertising. A review of the key literature is illustrated in order to offer an understanding of the role of framing strategies on consumer response to advertisements. The mediating information processing styles triggered by the various framing strategies are conveyed and potential individual difference and product type moderating variables are explored. This helps to generate a comprehensive conceptual model and highlights specific areas which require further testing. An important finding which emerged from the chapter is the lack of both empirical and conceptual research comparing different framing strategies across a range of contexts. It is rare that rhetorical figures are compared to narrative or mental simulation, with scant exceptions (Feiereisen et al. 2008, Hoeffler 2003). These studies generate important findings and challenge traditional thinking (e.g. Gregan-Paxton and Roedder John 1997) by indicating the differential effectiveness of mental simulation over analogies for really new products. Rhetorical figures are typically compared to argument in empirical studies (Toncar and Munch 2001) as is narrative framing (Mattila 2000). There is a

lack of research comparing transporting framing strategies and those that fall under the scope of rhetorical figures. This is perhaps due to the lack of a unified terminology and definition of the concept of framing strategies which may indicate that such diverse strategies as rhetorical tropes and transporting framing strategies are not viewed as alternatives. Narrative in particular represents an important framing strategy for intangible products (i.e. services) (Padgett and Allen 1997), contradicting traditional thinking which recommends association strategies (e.g. metaphor) to reduce the intangibility of services (Berry and Clark 1986). This indicates the need for further empirical testing comparing different framing strategies in order to increase our academic understanding of this topic. This chapter offers a clear explanation of alternative framing strategies from which service marketers can select to frame their advertisements. Moreover, it outlines the mechanisms by which the different framing strategies operate (i.e. information processing styles), and the implications for consumer responses. Also detailed in this review are the potential moderating impact of a variety of individual difference variables, e.g. metaphor thinking ability, need for cognition, and tolerance of ambiguity (etc). This is the first conceptual piece to bring together such a diverse range of framing strategies. This research identifies and examines prior research on the use of framing strategies in advertising and the resulting implications in terms of consumer responses; therefore it can be asserted that objective (a) has been met.

Chapter 3 sheds light on the variety of framing strategies used by services in practice, which include argument, narrative, mental simulation, rhetorical schemes and rhetorical tropes. The literature review outlined in Chapter 2 illustrates the lack of unified terminology and definition of the concept of 'framing strategy'. This study represents an important contribution by showing that framing strategies that prompt transportation (i.e. narrative and mental simulation); strategies that trigger elaboration (i.e. rhetorical schemes and tropes); and those that provoke piecemeal processing (i.e. argument) are all used as alternatives. Along with bringing to light the variety of framing strategies employed in modern services marketing communications, this paper also offers an important rationale for future empirical research comparing such diverse framing strategies as, for example, narrative versus rhetorical tropes. This study meets objective (b) (*Investigating the use of framing strategies by service practitioners, specifically exploring trends in the use of framing strategies across service types*), by clearly illustrating the frequency with which framing strategies are employed in practice. This highlights the advertising industry's perspective on what framing strategies are deemed to be most effective. A clear finding that emerged is that, in line with

the theoretical underpinning of this paper, both mentally intangible services and customized services are failing to take advantage of the benefits of narrative framing. This paper contributes to current knowledge on the role of framing strategies in services advertising by: illustrating alternative strategies used by modern marketers; highlighting the frequency with which certain framing strategies (e.g. argument and metaphor) are used, thereby indicating what the industry deems to be effective; and finally highlighting a gap between current use of framing strategies in practice, and the most theoretically effective framing strategies.

The final paper is aimed at achieving objective (c) (*determining the effectiveness of framing strategies for different categories of services*), and attempts to do so via an experimental methodology. Two important literature reviews on services advertising research (Tripp, 1997, Stafford et al. 2011), call for more research on advertising executional techniques, in particular they underline the need for more robust empirical research and research that crosses service industry boundaries. Chapter 4 takes a step towards addressing this call for action by introducing the moderating role of service characteristics (mental intangibility and customization) on the effectiveness of framing strategies in enhancing consumer responses. Further, every effort is made to ensure the methodological procedure maintains a balance between internal and external validity, and maximizes reliability in order to develop robust findings. This experiment raises some interesting findings which offer an important contribution to the field of services advertising.

First, an unexpected finding is the ineffectiveness of metaphor for all four service types. This contradicts prior recommendations, which are based on theory rather than empirical evidence, of using metaphor to increase the tangibility of services (e.g. Berry 1980). The literature reveals that metaphor is a powerful framing strategy, and has been shown to be more effective than argument for enhancing attitudes to goods (Tom and Eves 1999, Toncar and Munch 2001). This experiment contributes to the existing body of work on metaphors in advertising by illustrating a context where metaphor is less effective than argument and narrative in terms of comprehension: the promotion of new services. Literature on the 'dark side of openness' (Ketelaar et al. 2010) is drawn on to explain this finding.

This experiment contributes to current knowledge of framing strategies, building on such empirical work as Mattila's (2000) comparison of narrative versus argument for experiential services. Chapter 4 reveals that the customized versus standardized nature of the service

moderates the impact of narrative versus argument versus metaphor on both attitude to the ad and attitude to the service. This study finds that while framing strategies impact attitudes to customized services, attitudes to standardized services are not affected by the framing strategy. Therefore this study suggests to researchers to take the nature of the service, whether standardized or customized, into account when designing empirical work to further investigate the role of framing strategies for services. Objective (c) is met as this experiment illustrates the most effective framing strategies for each service type, presented in Table 4.32 above.

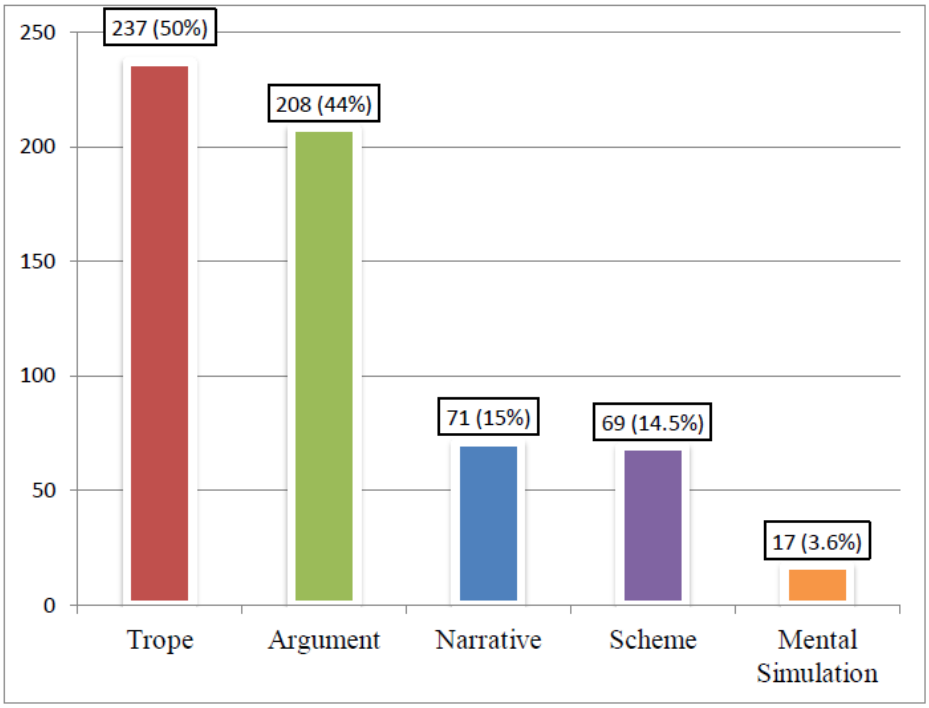
An additional contribution of this experiment is that further support for Green and Brock's (2000) contention that narrative operates via provoking transportation is provided. While the correlation between narrative framing and transportation is well asserted (Escalas 2004, Escalas 2007), this research illustrates that this holds in a new context (services) and across a range of service types. This experiment also provides support for the contention that comprehension mediates the impact of framing strategy on both attitude to the ad and attitude to the service, which is in line with theory (Ratneshwar and Chaiken 1991) but has not been previously tested in this context.

An important theoretical contribution of this research is the application of a novel theory to the field of marketing. Cognitive load theory (Chandler and Sweller 1991) originates from the area of educational psychology, and it has been developed and refined in relation to learning about new concepts in this field. However, this thesis draws on this theory to help to understand the rationale for why certain framing strategies are ineffective when processing advertisements for particular service types. Cognitive load theory offers a fitting rationale for why rhetorical tropes, in particular destabilization tropes, may at times hinder rather than aid learning. This is expected in situations when processing information related to a product or service represents a high intrinsic load (McCrudden et al. 2004). The application of this theory to research on information processing from advertising represents an exciting avenue for future research.

4.11.2. Managerial Implications

This research offers important findings on how service marketers should frame their advertisements in order to enhance comprehension and attitudes to new services. While a number of factors need to be considered to ensure the effective design of advertisement stimuli, including: target market expertise and familiarity with the service; the information communicated by a well-known brand name; the cognitive capacity at the time of processing (i.e. situational context where ad is placed); and the consistency of the advertisement design with existing marketing communications, this research offers useful guidelines to service marketers on effective framing strategies contingent on the characteristics of their services. Although prior research has examined the moderating role of the utilitarian/hedonic nature of new products (e.g. Feiereisen et al. 2008) this is the first research to provide guidelines on the selection of framing strategies according to the service type. A finding across all service types is that metaphor may not be an optimal framing strategy to enhance consumer response to new services. Instead, argument and narrative have emerged as more effective, for the reasons elaborated on in the above section. This is a very important finding as the content analysis (Chapter 3) reveals that rhetorical tropes are the most frequently employed framing strategy across a wide range of service industries (see Figure 4.22 below).

Figure 4.22 Overall Frequency of Framing Strategies (Across All Service Types)



Moreover, metaphors represent more than 50% of the incidences of rhetorical tropes. This highlights a substantial mismatch between framings strategies found to be empirically effective and the incidence of framing strategies in advertising practice.

This research highlights the need to understand the characteristics of the service in order to understand the psychology behind what the consumers are purchasing (experience versus end-benefits) (Otto and Ritchie 1995, Välikangas and Lehtinen 1994) and the difficulty they encounter creating a mental representation of the service (Laroche et al. 2001). Understanding the nature of the service can help to determine the optimal framing strategy to use in advertisements. Considering the effectiveness of framing strategies across the four service types, this thesis reflects on the disparity in the use of framing strategies in practice (content analysis) and optimal framing strategies to enhance comprehension and attitudes according to the service type (experiment) (see Table 4.33).

The aim of Table 4.33 is to give an overall view of the disparity between empirical findings and use of framing strategies in practice, and to provide recommendations. For mentally intangible services, tropes are the most frequently used framing strategy (62%). This research indicates that the use of tropes may negatively impact comprehension, with narrative and argument representing more effective framing strategies. However, both metaphor and narrative are more effective than argument in terms of generating positive attitudes to mentally intangible services. The recommendation therefore depends on the advertiser's aim. If the service is well established, it may be assumed high comprehension exists due to brand familiarity or prior experience with the service. In which case, either narrative or metaphors are effective at enhancing service attitudes. On the other hand, if the service is new and the aim is to increase comprehension, narrative or argument are more suitable. For mentally intangible services, in order to both increase comprehension and enhance attitudes, narrative represents an attractive framing strategy. This is an important finding given that the instance of this framing strategy in practice is low (17%).

Comparing the experiment findings and frequency of framing strategies in the content analysis for mentally tangible services, the clear recommendation is to reduce the use of tropes and instead continue to employ argument (50.4%) and take advantage of narrative, which is currently underused in practice (13.5%). A similar finding emerges for customized services. Tropes are the most frequently used framing strategy by customized services (55%),

however the experiment findings indicate that metaphor can fail to clearly portray the service experience, inhibiting comprehension and reducing attitudes as compared to argument and narrative. The recommendation includes continuing to take advantage of the explicit and rational nature of argument framing, and employ narrative to a greater extent, which is used in less than 18% of advertisements.

Finally, for standardized services, the choice of framing strategy may depend on the advertisement objective. If the service is new and enhancing comprehension is the key objective, then tropes are less attractive than argument or narrative. However, if the service is well established or comprehension is assumed to be high given the high level of information available prior to purchase (search attributes), generating positive attitudes may be the primary goal. This study reveals that framing strategies don't influence attitudes to the ad or attitudes to the service for standardized services. However, consistency in the use of framing strategy can help to build a strong brand image and develop a clear brand personality. For example, the retail banking service provided by the international bank HSBC can be considered standardized and mentally tangible. The 'Different Values' campaign launched in 2008 by the agency JWT consistently employs rhetorical tropes (see Figure 4.23 below). The objective of this campaign is not to increase comprehension of the bank's services, but to build the brand image. The advertisements are framed with three juxtaposed images and words, with either the images or the words varying depending on the advertisement. Each individual advertisement represents a destabilization trope, they are undercoded and it falls to the viewer to generate the intended meaning (Eco 1990, Huhmann 2008). The advertisements are open and facilitate multiple interpretations. They are consistent in the use of the advertisement copy which reads '*The more you look at the world, the more you realize what really matters to people*'. One important difference between measuring the effectiveness of tropes in an experimental condition versus in reality is that often in reality, an advertisement framed with a trope will be part of a wider campaign, and viewing a number of advertisements from the same campaign with consistent framing can help to guide the viewer in developing the correct intended meaning. This can help to alleviate the negative impact of tropes on comprehension. The recommendation for standardized services is therefore to select the framing strategy based on the campaign objectives, and take advantage of consistency across advertisements separated by distance or time to build a strong brand image.

Figure 4.23 Use of Rhetorical Trope by HSBC

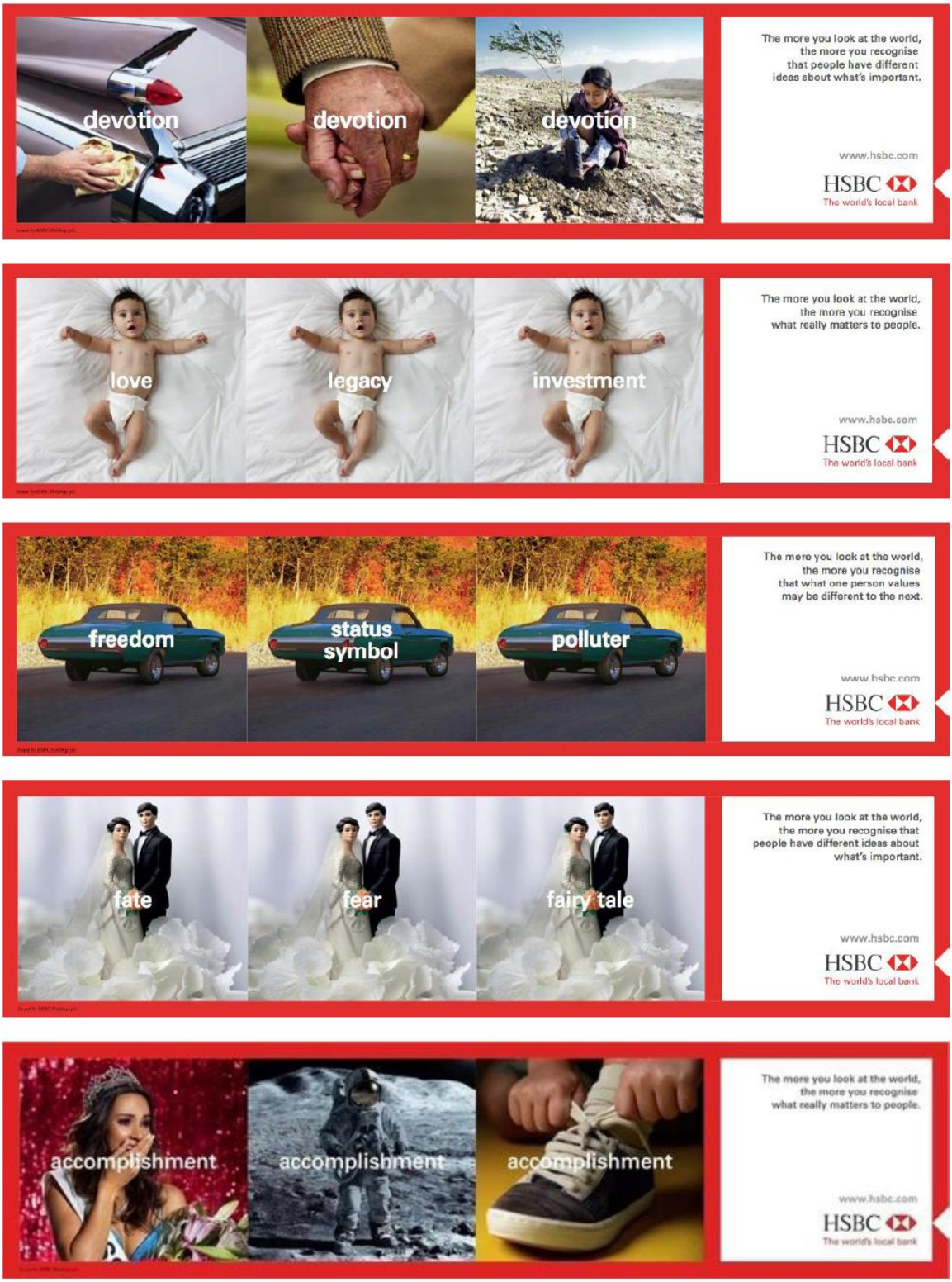


Table 4.33 Summary of experiment and content analysis results

Service Type	Effective for Comprehension (Experiment)	Effective for attitudes (Experiment)	Current practice (Content Analysis)	Recommendation
Mentally Intangible	Narrative and Argument	Narrative and Metaphor	Trope (62%) Argument (34%) Narrative (17%)	The most frequently used strategy (tropes) may negatively impact comprehension. Narrative is the optimal strategy if both comprehension & attitudes are the ad aims.
Mentally Tangible	Narrative and Argument	Narrative and Argument	Argument (50.4%) Trope (42%) Narrative (13.5%)	Current practice does make the most of arguments, however narrative is underused and tropes are overused.
Customized	Narrative and Argument	Narrative and Argument	Trope (55%) Argument (38.4%) Narrative (17.6%)	Overall finding for customized services is the overuse of tropes such as metaphor, which can fail to clearly portray the service experience. The unambiguous nature of argument is taken advantage of, but narratives are underused.
Standardized	Narrative and Argument	No effect of framing strategy	Argument (57%) Trope (38%) Narrative (8.6%)	Such services are high in search characteristics and information is easily available prior to consumption. Framing strategy doesn't influence attitudes; however, tropes have the potential to negatively impact comprehension. The choice of framing strategy should reflect the brand characteristics and personality, and be consistent across all MC.

An example based on one of the services used in this experiment is useful to clarify the implications for service marketers. Because attitudes to standardized services are unaffected by the framing strategy employed, it is interesting to consider customized and mentally intangible services. Beautiful Stay is rated as customized (M = 4.94) and hedonic (M = 5.30), therefore offering an example of a customized, experiential service. Beautiful Stay is also mentally intangible (M = 4.25), so it represents an interesting example of both customization and mental intangibility. This service has a fictitious brand name to maintain high internal validity, but is based on a real life new service 'Onefinestay'. Taking into account the customized nature of the service, both narrative and argument are more effective than metaphor in terms of generating more positive consumer responses. Because it is also mentally intangible, narrative represents an optimal strategy in terms of generating both higher comprehension and attitudes to the service. Onefinestay offers consumers the chance to stay in someone else's property while they are out of town. It also professes that the consumer can live their life for a few days and nights. Booking accommodation is a similar process to that of booking a hotel, and the service is of hotel quality. The home owners leave personal recommendations of things to see, do, and eat, and otherwise the Onefinestay team is on hand 24/7 should their services be required.

A number of different service descriptions have been published in different magazines which employ a variety of framing strategies (http://www.onefinestay.com/press-coverage/). For example, The New York Times uses argument framing to promote this new service:
'The new London Web site onefinestay provides an alternative, a first-of-its-kind service that rents out 50 luxurious private apartments in central London that are owned and lived in by real people — off on fabulous vacations of their own. They come with hotel services like maids and high-end amenities as well as personal touches like an iPod loaded with recommendations from the owners on where nearby to dine, shop, chill and order in from.'

Another example of argument framing in a service description for Onefinestay appears in Travel&Leisure:
'If you're looking for a practical alternative, more affordable and more spacious, check out the apartments at onefinestay. Just a quick browse through the listings will make you wonder why you've even ever considered a hotel'

As these descriptions illustrate, argument explicitly conveys the service attributes in a logical manner. The service benefits are unambiguous and the description is closed. While argument is an effective strategy in terms of comprehension, taking into account both the customized and mentally intangible nature of the service indicates that narrative is a more effective strategy to enhance attitudes.

Metaphor has also been used to promote Onefinestay, e.g. this description from Bloomberg Business Week, which compares consuming this service to living in a catalog:
'It's like living in a catalog. These are likely some of the coolest digs you'll ever visit, and they offer a unique travel experience that most hotels can't replicate.'

Another metaphor compares Onefinestay to the key to experiencing life as a favorite celebrity, published in Conde Nast Traveller:
'Whether we've cast ourselves as Holly Golightly, Carrie Bradshaw or even Johnny Boy from Mean Streets, most of us have imagined living in New York at some point. The fantasy is easier to indulge without a keycard, however, which is where onefinestay delivers.'

What is clear from the metaphors is that how the service (target domain) is perceived depends on the perceived characteristics of catalogs (base domain), and the lifestyles of the named celebrities (base domain). The information portrayed in the metaphors is more ambiguous and less explicit than that in the argument descriptions. The findings in this experiment illustrate the beneficial impact of both narrative and argument over metaphor to increase comprehension, but also of narrative over both argument and metaphor to maximize attitudes, taking mental intangibility into account. Hence, for this service, narrative represents the optimal framing strategy to maximize both comprehension and attitudes. Examples of narrative for Onefinestay include the following description taken from British Airways 'Highlife' magazine:
'I'm in the city on holiday but, instead of checking into a hotel, I've essentially 'borrowed' a stylish pad for a few days through onefinestay…Although you're staying in someone else's home, there are all the benefits of a hotel, too — beds are made with top-quality linen and bathrooms come stocked with lovely toiletries and fluffy towels...there's also an iPhone, charged and full of suggestions of the owner's favorite local places to eat, drink and explore.'

Another example of narrative appears in the New York Times:

'The experiential traveler does not arrive at Kennedy Airport and immediately go shopping on upper Madison Avenue. She takes a drawing class; she rides the Lexington Avenue line at rush hour...The interest in this kind of travel is, in part, what led to the opening here a few weeks ago of...onefinestay.'

While these narratives are quite short and underdeveloped, the high imagery in the few sentences should provoke transportation if consumers can empathize with the characters in the narrative description. Narrative represents an attractive match for customized services because it allows each individual to develop their own interpretation of the advertisement and holistically portray the functional and experiential benefits (McIntyre 1981, Padgett and Allen 1997). Narratives are also beneficial in terms of reducing mental intangibility, because they represent a more appropriate strategy to match resources demanded by the incoming information (intrinsic load) and the framing strategy (extraneous/germane load) (Chandler and Sweller 1990). Consumers may find it difficult to grasp both the process of Onefinestay and the service benefits. The concept of an 'unhotel' is new, and it may be difficult to mentally imagine how this works in practice, and to gain an understanding of the overall experience, including the variety, comfort, security, hotel style service and pricing strategy. Comprehending this new service process poses a higher intrinsic load for a consumer than understanding the benefits of a traditional hotel. This research outlines how metaphors place high extraneous cognitive load on consumers, which can fail to match available resources and inhibit learning. Metaphor is therefore not an attractive framing strategy for this service. Narrative helps to contextualize the service experience (e.g. '*The experienced traveler…rides the Lexington Avenue line at rush hour.'*), and walks the consumer through using the service (e.g. '*Although you're staying in someone else's home, there are all the benefits of a hotel, too — beds are made with top-quality linen and bathrooms come stocked with lovely toiletries and fluffy towels'*). This conveys how narrative represents a worked example of an individual's experience with the service, therefore it poses high germane load (Wise et al. 2009), which is shown to aid learning. To optimize comprehension and attitudes to this service, narrative represents the most attractive framing strategy based on the fact that the service is not only customized but mentally intangible also.

This research offers recommendations to service advertisers in their choice of framing strategy according to the type of service. It highlights certain disparities in the use of framing strategies in practice and those which are effective in enhancing comprehension and attitudes.

This research is prescriptive in encouraging service advertisers to consider the service characteristics when developing the advertisement creative strategy. However, this study also acknowledges that a number of other factors also come into play and need to be considered when deciding what framing strategy to employ. These include: the newness of the service, consumer familiarity with the brand name, how the placement of the advertisement relates to consumer cognitive capacity, and the consistency of the advertisement design with current communications. Finally, the goals of the advertisement will also guide the choice of framing strategy. Different framing strategies will be more or less effective if the objectives are to inform and develop comprehension, to improve attitudes, to develop the brand image, to remind the consumer about the brand, to grab attention or to creative affective and emotional responses. The interaction of framing strategies and advertisement goals represents one interesting and timely avenue for future research.

4.11.3. Limitations

The research carried out in this thesis makes an important step towards increasing our knowledge of effective service advertising strategies, a topic which is grossly underrepresented in advertising research (Stafford et al. 2011). However, it is not devoid of limitations and the findings should therefore be interpreted with care. The first limitation relates to the design of the stimuli included in the experiment. The stimuli are called 'service descriptions' in the experiment, because they contain no visuals, they are verbal black and white descriptions, and they are not professionally edited. Calling the stimuli 'advertisements' in the experiment and the subsequent questionnaire could lead participants to rate their 'attitudes to the ad' negatively, given consumer expectations of professional advertisements and the lack of professional editing in the graphic design of the experimental stimuli. For this reason 'attitudes to the service description' were measured rather than 'attitude to the ad'. While very clear findings emerge on the effectiveness of framing strategies in this research, they are in response to service descriptions, rather than high quality professional advertisements. This questions whether the findings would have been consistent had a professional graphic designer been employed to design realistic advertisements. In designing the experiment the aim was to achieve high validity, by being accurate in measuring what the study is aiming to measure (Burns and Bush 2003). Every attempt was made to increase both internal validity (controlling for a range of confounding variables) and external validity (creating a naturalistic setting) (Churchill and Iacobucci 2004). However,

ensuring high internal validity can act to the detriment of external validity, which may be the case in this situation. Controlling for confounding variables (such as differences in images or color) can increase internal validity, but reduce external validity by being unrealistic stimuli as compared to professional advertisements. In particular, having simple black and white verbal stimuli reduces the ecological validity which in turn reduces the external validity (Lynch 1982). However, the use of stimuli in this experiment is consistent with prior work on framing strategies in advertising (e.g. Mattila 2000).

The design of the stimuli raises another limitation of this study, the framing strategies are presented verbally only. A potential disadvantage of using visuals in the experimental stimuli is that internal validity can be compromised. This is because it is more difficult to control the information communicated by visual versus verbal ad elements, because visuals can communicate more information. Consider the narrative stimuli. When in a visual format more information about the character (e.g. Nicky) is portrayed, such as the age, gender, appearance, and can allude to the person's income, lifestyle and personality. This can widen the gap between the information content of argument and metaphor as compared to narrative. As of yet, no research has compared visual versus verbal narratives to visual versus verbal metaphors. While this study represents an interesting starting point to understand consumer response to framing strategies for services advertising, whether findings would remain consistent across visual framing strategies warrants addressing. The impact of ad format (visual versus verbal) is discussed further in the section on future research.

Creating very similar styles of service descriptions, identical in terms of creativity (black and white verbal copy in identical font and size) and the service attributes portrayed helps to maintain internal validity. On the other hand, employing a web experiment allows the participant to access the experiment at their convenience and in more natural conditions (e.g. in their own home) thereby increasing external validity, but potentially to the detriment of internal validity (Churchill and Iacobucci 2004). Web experiments remove the researcher's control over the conditions at the time of participation, including noise and visual distractions, and the participant performing other tasks simultaneously. Replicating this experiment in a laboratory condition would address the internal validity of this methodology. However, as mentioned, internal and external validity tend to compete with each other, in that increasing one type of validity can be to the detriment of the other. In line with recommendations to maintain the highest quality of this methodology (Calder et al. 1982,

Lynch 1982), this research strives to maximize both internal and external validity. This ensures that this study is measuring what it is trying to measure, and so producing truthful findings (Burns and Bush 2003).

Drawing on the benefit of hindsight, another methodological issue should be mentioned. The samples used in the different stages of the experiment might benefit from some changes. Namely, the four services are selected based on a questionnaire administered in a laboratory condition to undergraduate and postgraduate students at a UK university. The four services included in the final experiment are based on the findings from this pre-test. Further, the ratings of the four services in terms of mental intangibility and customization (independent variables) are based on these findings. The final experiment was administered online to a sample of US participants recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk. Using UK participants was unfeasible as there is not a high enough response rate on Mechanical Turk when this criterion is selected. The concern, moreover, is that the sample of participants who respond to the three different framing strategies (argument, metaphor, narrative) are not the same as those who rated the service characteristic manipulations. Prior research confirms that, compared to typical web samples, Mechanical Turk participants are slightly more representative to the population of the United States (Buhrmester et al. 2011, Paolacci et al. 2010), making this source relevant for the experiment. It is important to note that the sample recruited from Mechanical Turk in this experiment are highly educated: 86% of the sample have higher education, the plurality of which have a 4 year university degree (34.8%), followed by less than 2 years college education (28.5%), a 2 year college degree (10.7%) and a masters degree (9.4%). The high level of education is consistent with Paolacci et al's (2010) findings that the education levels of US Mechanical Turk workers is higher than that of the general population. This means the sample who participated in the main experiment are highly educated, and so not different from the sample of students who completed the service characteristic pre-test in that respect. Also, almost three quarters of the sample in the main experiment are below 45 years of age, with a mean age of 26. This reiterates the fact that the participants in the main experiment do not differ to a great extent from those who completed the first pre-test.

One important potential limitation is linked to the manner in which comprehension is measured in this experiment. How consumers comprehended the new services in this experiment is an important measure of the effectiveness of the framing strategies. A

limitation is that the scale used in this experiment to measure comprehension (McQuarrie and Mick 1999) is a subjective measure of comprehension. Participants may believe they have understood the service attributes and benefits, but it is not ascertained that this is the case. Using a measure of objective comprehension, such as an open-ended question could address this. This would also help to reveal any misconceptions prior to exposure to the stimuli for the new services framed as argument versus metaphor versus narrative.

This research raises interesting findings on the impact of framing strategies on consumer comprehension and attitudes for four different types of services. The mediating impact of information processing styles offers insight into the mechanism by which framing strategies are more or less effective. This study draws on theory from the field of educational psychology to further strengthen the justification of the findings. This raises the final limitation identified here: the certainty with which cognitive load theory can be applied to the findings is not confirmed. Cognitive load theory (Chandler and Sweller 1991) offers a fitting rationale for the superiority of narrative or argument over metaphor in situations characterized by restricted cognitive capacity. However, the types of cognitive load are not measured in this experiment. Therefore it cannot be asserted that the ineffectiveness of metaphor for consumer comprehension of mentally intangible services is because the high extraneous load posed by the metaphor couples with the high intrinsic load demanded by the mentally intangible new service to be learned, which in turn overwhelms cognitive capacity and inhibits consumer learning. In retrospect, to further strengthen the justification as to why certain framing strategies are optimal for different contexts, measurement of the three types of cognitive load during the experiment would prove very useful. One potential method of measuring the three types of cognitive load is to use three measures, which each relate to one type of cognitive load, as illustrated in DeLeeuw and Mayer's (2008) research on measuring intrinsic, extraneous and germane load. They find that measuring response time to a secondary task offers an effective means of measuring extraneous load. The secondary task suggested by DeLeeuw and Mayer (2008) is to detect a periodic color change in the background of the stimulus, and to press the space bar as fast as possible each time the color changed. Longer response time indicates greater extraneous cognitive load. When greater cognitive resources are demanded by the primary task (e.g. learning about a new service), less resources are available to spend on completing the secondary task, which leads to a longer response time on the secondary task (Brünken, et al. 2002; Chandler and Sweller, 1996). Next, intrinsic cognitive load can be measured by a mental effort rating during the

completion of the primary task (e.g. learning about the features and benefits of a new service). This rating involves asking participants to rate their level of mental effort on a 9-point scale ranging from 1 (extremely low) to 9 (extremely high). This measure can be repeated throughout the experiment, for example after participants have been asked to rank their attitudes or perhaps after being presented with an open-ended measure asking them to describe the service experience (DeLeeuw and Mayer 2008). This measure is a frequently used measure of cognitive load (e.g. Paas and van Merriënboer 1994), but DeLeeuw and Mayer (2008) have shown that it relates specifically to intrinsic cognitive load. Finally, germane cognitive load is measured by completing a difficulty rating scale following completion of the task. Also used by Kalyuga et al. (1999), this measure is anchored by 1 (extremely easy) to 9 (extremely difficult). A higher rating indicates a lower germane load, and a lower rating indicates a higher germane load. The aim of those developing marketing communications should be to reduce extraneous load and increase germane load, thereby freeing up resources to concentrate on processing the new service (intrinsic load). This is particularly in situations where the intrinsic load posed by the primary task is high (McCrudden et al. 2004). Given that cognitive load theory (Chandler and Sweller 1991) originates from the field of educational psychology and has not previously been applied to consumer behavior, measuring cognitive load in future experiments related to learning about new products or services represents a very important and exciting avenue for future research.

4.11.4. Future Research

This study makes an important step towards developing our understanding of the role of framing strategies for services advertising. From this study a number of valuable directions for future research warrant attention. As mentioned in the above section, manipulating whether the framing strategy is presented visually versus verbally requires investigation, particularly for narratives, which to the researcher's knowledge have so far only been examined in verbal format (e.g. Adaval and Wyer 1998, Mattila 2000, Van Laer et al. 2012). The use of visuals is not expected to improve the performance of metaphors. The rationale for why metaphors underperformed in this study is based on two main arguments. The first relates to the excess demand placed on consumer's cognitive capacity by the coupling of learning via analogy and the high intrinsic load of learning about the new service (Anand and Sternthal, 1990, Chandler and Sweller 1991). The second is due to the many interpretations

facilitated by open ads such as metaphors, which can lead to misinterpretation of the ad claims, or no interpretation at all (Ketelaar et al. 2010). Visuals by definition facilitate more interpretations than verbal copy, because they stimulate a number of weak implicatures (Sperber and Wilson 1986, McQuarrie and Phillips 2005). Therefore a visual metaphor will not reduce the ambiguity of the advertisement as compared to a verbal metaphor, and is not expected to improve the performance of metaphors compared to argument or narrative. There are potential advantages and disadvantages to using visuals for narratives. Firstly, the characters are clearly presented, which may increase mental imagery and aid transportation (Gerrig 1993, Green 2006), but leaves no room for each individual's interpretation of self-relevant characters in the plot. This may only be an issue if the target audience is heterogeneous, in which case including clear characters may alienate potential consumers and inhibit the audience empathizing with the characters, reducing transportation (Slater and Rouner 2002). A homogenous target audience may be easier to represent with well chosen characters that are easily empathized with. The use of visual versus verbal narratives opens up an interesting avenue for future research. In particular, comparing visual versus verbal narratives for different types of target audiences (specific/broad) would also contribute further to our knowledge about the effectiveness of different types of narrative framing.

The potential negative impact of visual narratives on consumer's empathy with the characters in the story raises another interesting question for future research: in what contexts are narratives less effective than alternative framing strategies? It is already known that transportation into narrative stimuli is hindered when the cognitive resources of the audience are already absorbed by narrative editorials. Chang's (2009) research finds that the superior effectiveness of narrative over argument in generating more favorable cognitive responses is removed when participants are reading narrative magazine articles, because transportation is inhibited. This is because their cognitive resources are already 'hooked' into the narrative presented in the article. This finding could clearly transfer to television media also; it can be assumed that narrative advertisements will fail to transport consumers who are already transported into the story world of a TV program or movie. Given that narrative emerged alongside argument as an important framing strategy for all four service types, it is important to better understand contexts when this framing strategy is ineffective. Research on this topic should focus on individual and contextual factors which will inhibit transportation. This could involve considering other factors that impact the availability of cognitive capacities, as

well as factors that impact the extent to which consumers empathize with the characters in the plot, and the degree to which they mentally imagine the events in the narrative.

The literature on intangibility asserts that there are three elements of intangibility; generality, physical intangibility and mental intangibility (Laroche et al. 2001). This research explores how mental intangibility moderates the impact of framing strategies on consumer response to services, which are by definition physically intangible. Mental intangibility is chosen to be manipulated because, of the three types of intangibility, it is the most highly correlated with perceived risk (Finn, 1985, McDougall and Snetsinger 1990). The concept of mental intangibility is closely aligned to Berry's (1980) description of intangibility: 'that which cannot be easily defined, formulated or grasped mentally'. This in turn strongly influences consumer behavior, because consumers suffer anxiety evaluating services about which they lack information (Mortimer 2000). Another aspect of intangibility is physical intangibility, which reflects McDougall's (1987) definition of intangibility: 'the lack of physical evidence'. Physical tangibility does not ensure a clear mentally tangible representation of a good (McDougall and Snetsinger 1990); therefore a physically tangible good can also be mentally intangible. An interesting avenue for further research would be to also manipulate physical intangibility. A future experiment could be a 2x2x3 design, examining physical intangibility (physically tangible versus intangible) x mentally intangibility (mentally tangible versus intangible) x framing strategy (narrative versus metaphor versus argument). It would be interesting to see if physical tangibility helps to reduce the risk associated with mental intangibility, and if the level of physical intangibility moderates the effectiveness of framing strategies in generating consumer response to mentally intangible products. This research indicates that narrative is the most effective framing strategy for mentally intangible services (to enhance both comprehension and attitudes). Prior research illustrates that consumers experience less difficulty evaluating physically intangible versus tangible goods, because they use mental representations from knowledge schema in memory, which is less effortful than processing the information gleaned from the tangible attributes presented to them (Breivik, Troye and Olsson 1998). However, no research has examined which framing strategy is most effective to aid this evaluation process. Further, evaluating physically intangible products may be more effortful when the product is also mentally intangible, because the consumer will not have the knowledge schema in memory to draw on. When the product is physically tangible and mentally intangible using a visual argument which portrays the product and explicitly explains the attributes and features could help to increase

comprehension and therefore attitudes. Manipulating both mental and physical intangibility and examining their interaction and how this moderates consumer response to framing strategy represents an interesting avenue for future research.

While this research examines consumer comprehension and attitudes to one stimulus framed as either argument, metaphor or narrative, in reality consumers may be exposed to either more than one framing strategy in a single advertisement or different framing strategies across a variety of advertisements in a campaign, and across a variety of marketing communications tools. Important questions which warrant attention emerge. Is it more effective to consistently employ the same framing strategies across a variety of marketing communications touch-points? For example, if narrative is the most effective at generating comprehension and attitudes to mentally intangible services, is the optimal strategy to consistently use narrative across the entire marketing communications mix? Or, does employing a mix of framing strategies across different touch points complement each other? These questions require further research. Also, whether the findings apply in other settings, such as social media websites also represents an interesting avenue for future research. Consider Twitter for example, which only allows 140 characters per message. This will clearly restrict the development of a narrative. On the other hand metaphors can be effectively created with a restricted word count (e.g. 'You can be a chameleon with BeautifulStay' or 'Experience Space with iCube'). It is possible that when the context restricts the communicator's ability to develop a narrative rich with mental imagery, metaphor may outperform narrative framing.

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APPENDICES

I. SUMMARY OF CONTENT ANALYSIS ON SERVICES ADVERTISING

Author(s)	Journal	Sample	Key Findings
Grove, Carlson & Dorsch (2007)	JA	1,473 ads	The probability of IMC for an ad depicting a service was higher than for an ad for a good in ads appearing during the same time periods and in the same magazines
Turley & Kelley (1997)	JA	186 ads 91 B2B Ads & 95 Consumer Ads	Results show differences in message appeal types between B2B and consumer services advertisements.
Zinkhan and Zinkhan (1989)	JA	760 ads	Compare the informational versus transformational appeal of services, goods and retailers, findings that services were more likely than goods advertisers to use a transformational appeal.
Spears, Paswan, & Kahla (2006)	JCIRA	449 ads	Services-advertising contexts deemed "maximal-self" tend to be more verbal and use pronouns related to the self. Ads in "minimal-self" contexts tend to use visual presentations and fewer pronouns related to the self.
Carlson, Grove, & Dorsch (2003)	JCIRA	136 ads	Integrating services advertisements could increase tangibility in service offerings
Abernethy & LaBand (1999)	JAR	Yellow Page Ads for 49 cities	In larger cities, the proportion of service providers who purchase display ads fails; this may be due to a clutter effect
Cutler and Javagali (1993)	JAR	471 ads	Analyzed the visual components of print ads, finding that service ads contain more emotional appeals than goods. Quality appeals, convenience appeals, and portrayal of employees appeals appeared no more frequently used in service versus goods ads.
Albers-Miller & Stafford (1999)	JSM	950 ads in 11 countries: 498 financial service ads 452 travel service ads	Across countries, ads for utilitarian services tend to be dominated by rational appeals while advertisements for experiential services tended to be dominated by emotional appeals.
Abernethy & Gray (1997)	JSM	445 radio ads	Service marketers who include more information in radio spots can

			"concretize" offerings in consumers' minds and lower purchase risk.
Ha (1998)	JSM	212 ads: 107 - Hong Kong 105 – USA	U.S. services ads score highly in quality cues, but lower in both price and availability cues than services ads in Hong Kong. U.S. ads emphasize traditional values; are more likely to make health appeals.
Cobb-Walgren & Mohr (1998)	JSM	192 ads: 48 × 4 categories	Suggest a correlation between power and commitment in a service relationship and use of services advertising. Services high in consumer power or low in consumer commitment used magazine ads more than services low in power or high in commitment.
Green (1998)	JSM	646 ads: 355 Consumer ads 291 B2B ads	B2B services advertisements tend to have more quality-related cues than advertisements targeted towards general consumers.
Grove, Carlson, & Dorsch (2002)	JSM	100 ads: 25 ads × 4 categories	IMC can be used to increase tangibility in services advertising
Bang & Moon (2002)	JSM	403 ads: US: 202 Korean: 201	Services advertisements in U.S. magazines follow suggested service-advertising strategies to a greater extent than Korean counterparts. Advertisers in both countries tend to under-utilize certain guidelines
Lee, Chung & Taylor (2011)	JSM	2,480 financial services ads (2 years before and 2 years after the financial crisis)	The findings of this study suggest that FSOs may rely much more heavily on informational than on transformational approaches during an economic crisis.
Lee, Yun, Hayley (2013)	JSM	391 ads	Documents how mandatory financial disclosures are presented in mutual fund advertisements
Zinkhan, Johnson and Zinkhan (1992)	JSM	760 ads	Using Hefzallah and Malloney's (1979) messages structure typology find differences in how goods and services are advertised. Services more likely to use a transformation appeal, as above.

Abernethy and Butler (1993)	JSM	562 ads	Illustrations and descriptions of contact people were found to be a key part of service marketing strategy. In addition, the experience of service employees was mentioned more often in services ads than in ads for goods or good/ service combinations.
Day (1992)	JSM	300 ads	Examined the manner in which service quality is conveyed thorough advertising, findings that tangibility cues occurred most frequently, with reliability, assurance and empathy cues rarely mentioned.
Stafford, Kilburn & Allen (2005)	SMQ	232 ads	Professional service providers give less pricing information in their advertisements than retail service providers.
Cutler, Moberg, & Schimmel (1999)	SMQ	139 ads	Advertisements for attorneys appear to use the appropriate cues and purchase criteria in their commercials.
Abernethy & Butler (1999)	SMQ	16,708 ads	Attorney yellow-page advertising may be improved by providing more information about experience, provider availability, and payment information in their advertisements.
Siu & Fung (1998)	SMQ	232 ads	Chinese hotel advertisers should consider varying the information cues in their ads and including people (rather than simple exteriors) in their ad images
Smith & Smith (1998)	SMQ	222 ads	Professional accounting firms most commonly advertise computer software when advertising in professional journals. Advertising among the big six firms is widely varied.
Turley (1998)	SMQ	153 ads	Professional and nonprofessional service firms often employ different combinations of content variables to communicate information and develop personalities for their services.
Abernethy & Butler (1998)	SMQ	2,934 ads	Accountants generally do a good job of indicating service offerings; however, they could benefit by

			including experience, provider availability and cost information.
Albers-Miller and Straughan (2000)	IJBM	398 ads	Financial services-advertising strategy research from English speaking countries should be viewed with caution by financial service marketers in non-English speaking countries. Expectations by business consumers may be very different among these countries.
Abernethy and Butler (1992)	JR	562 ads	Using Resnick and Stern's (1977) coding instructions they found that the information content of service ads is less than for goods ads, but quality cues were more likely to appear in service ads.
Upah and Uhr (1981)	AMA	10 ads (public accounting)	General capabilities (e.g., number of offices, number of years in business) of the CPA firm were the most frequent copy points in the ads.
McDaniel, Smith and Smith (1986)	JPSM	122 ads	Information content and media placement of physician's ads.
Hite, Schultz, and Weaver (1988)	JAMS	812 ads	Copy points in CPA advertisements presented the availability of specific CPA services such as auditing, tax planning, and information systems services. No clear patterns emerged for the other variables assessed (e.g., location, special talents, degrees).
Abernethy and Butler (1992)	JR	562 ads	Using Resnick and Stern's (1977) coding instructions they found that the information content of service ads is less than for goods ads, but quality cues were more likely to appear in service ads.
Grove, Pickett and Laband (1995)	SIJ	27,043 ads	Ads for services contain more factual information than do ads for physical goods in terms of price, guarantees/warranties, availability, and/or evidence of excellence.
Sisodia and Chowdhary (2013)	JSR	317 ads	Explore the visual component in the recruitment advertisements for service organisations, recommending that such ads use the same attention in design, elegance, use of space and detail as corporate and brand advertising

Adapted and updated from Tripp's (1997) review of services ad (1980-1995) and Stafford et al.'s (2011) review of service ads (1997-2011).

IJA = International Journal of Advertising
IJBM = International Journal of Bank Marketing
IJSIM = International Journal of Service Industry Management
JA = Journal of Advertising
JAR = Journal of Advertising Research
JCIRA = Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising
JPSM = Journal of Professional Services Marketing
JR = Journal of Retailing
JSR = Journal of Service Research
MHS = Marketing Health Services
SMQ = Services Marketing Quarterly
SIJ = Service Industries Journal

II. CONTENT ANALYSIS: CODING INSTRUCTIONS BOOKLET

Framing Strategy	Example
Argument	
• Associationally or logically connected i**deas not enacted by a characters in the advertisement** • Conveys functional product attributes • Attributes and functional consequences of the service very obvious • List – no indication of the sequence of activities that occur	Some features of your vacation experience are: • Visit to the capital, Delhi • The cool mystery of the forests • The forest tribes • The Taj Mahal at Agra • Palaces and Temples in Rajasthan, etc. (Adaval & Wyer 1998)
References: Wells 1989, Padgett & Allen 1997, Adaval & Wyer 1998, Mattila 2000	
Narrative	
• Narrative means 'story', Green and Brock have in mind a specific kind of story. For persuasion to be possible, they require 'a story that raises unanswered questions, presents unresolved conflicts, or depicts not yet completed activity; characters may encounter and then resolve a crisis' (Green and Brock 2000: 701). • Demonstrates rather than explains the functional elements of the service, also prompts the consumer to construct symbolic meanings associated with the experience of interacting with the brand. • Structurally similar to real life • Narrative refers to all knowledge structures that consist of a sequence of thematically and temporally related events. o scripts (routinized series of events such as those involved in going to a restaurant) o stories (anecdotes that have a beginning, a plot, and an end) o personal histories (e.g., an account of a person's experiences from high school to college)	'On your vacation, you will start out from the capital of India, Delhi, and move on to see the Taj Mahal. Later, you will go west, and see the palaces and temples in the colorful deserts of Rajasthan…before heading south. Further south, you will visit the beaches of Goa, tropical forests and backwaters of Kerala and…complete your trip at the southernmost tip of India' (Adaval & Wyer 1998)
References: Padgett & Allen 1997, Adaval & Wyer 1998, Mattila 2000, van den Hende et al. 2010, Green & Brock 2000, Phillips & McQuarrie 2010.	
Mental Simulation	
Mental simulation is a cognitive construction of hypothetical scenarios that are usually in the form of stories starring ourselves as the main character (Escalas 2004). This simulation can be provided in different ways. Advertising appeals sometimes instruct recipients to 'Imagine...' or 'Think back to your experience of...'	'Imagine yourself using Saloncare shampoo. As you wash your hair, you experience Saloncare's latest formula with enhanced natural ingredients. Feel the lather permeate your hair. Your hair feels clean, your scalp refreshed' The 'Samsung Imagine' campaign invited consumers to 'imagine owning the most mobile computer in the world'.
References: Escalas 2004, Taylor et al. 1998, Hoeffler 2003, Thompson, Hamilton and Petrova, 2009.	
Rhetorical Schemes (repetition)	

• Rhyme • Alliteration - the repetition of a particular sound in the first syllables of a series of words and/or phrases • Assonance - refrain of vowel sounds to create internal rhyming within phrases • Anadiplosis - The word is used at the end of a sentence and then used again at the beginning of the next sentence. • Anaphora (beginning words) • Epistrophe or epiphora (ending words) • Epanalepsis (beginning and ending) • Anadiplosis (ending and beginning). • Parison • Polyptoton - words derived from the same root are repeated (e.g. "strong" and "strength") • Parallelism - giving two or more parts of the sentences a similar form so as to give the whole a definite pattern	'Performax. Protects to the Max' (rhyme) "Now Stouffers makes a real fast real mean Lean Cuisine." "The price you want. The quality you need." (parison) and that government of the people, by the people, for the people (epistrophe) Nice to see you, to see you, nice. (epanalepsis)
Rhetorical Schemes (reversal)	
• Antimetabole – the repetition of words in successive clauses, but in transposed grammatical order • Antithesis – the juxtaposition of contrasting ideas, usually in a balanced way	"Stops static before static stops you." (ntimetabole) Many are called, but few are chosen. (antithesis)
Rhetorical Tropes (substitution)	
• Hyperbole (exaggerated/understated claims) • Ellipsis (absence/plenitude of expression elements) • Epanorthosis - signifies emphatic word replacement • Rhetorical question • Metonym • Synecdoche[4] • Onomatopoeia - a word that imitates or suggests the source of the sound that it describes • Euphemism (abstractions, ambiguities, indirections, slang, mispronunciation, litotes, slang). • Antimeria - the use of a noun as if it were a verb	'...' (Ellipsis) 'The bag weighed a ton' (hyperbole) "Everyday vehicles that aren't." (Ellipsis) 'Thousands, no, millions!' (Epanorthosis) "Don't you have something better to do?" (rhetorical question) "Chances are you'll buy a Ranger for its value, economy and quality. Yeah, right." (Epanorthosis)
Rhetorical Trope (destabilization)	
• **Metaphor - affirms a fundamental similarity between two objects which are not expected to be associated and in doing so open up new inferences In order to resolve a metaphor consumers must draw on inferences that find similarities between the objects presented.** • Pun (homonym, antanaclasis, syllepsis, paronamasis, loud) - a form of word play which suggests two or more meanings, by exploiting multiple meanings of	Jergens skin care headline "Science you can touch" (metaphor) Kodak: "This picture was taken by someone who didn't bring a camera." (Paradox) Range Rover: "The British have always driven on the wrong side of the road,"

words, or of similar-sounding words, for an intended humorous or rhetorical effect. • Irony - situation in which there is a sharp incongruity or discordance that goes beyond the simple and evident intention of words or actions, typically convey a meaning exactly opposite from their literal meaning • Parody - is a work created to mock, comment on, or make fun at an original work, its subject, author, style, or some other target, by means of humorous, satiric or ironic imitation • Resonance - Print ads exhibit resonance when they combine wordplay with a relevant picture to create ambiguity and incongruity. A cliché or stock expression is first appropriated and then it is changed slightly and/or placed in an unconventional setting. • Personification – personification has been defined as a figure of speech in which inanimate objects are characterized in terms of human attributes, thus representing the object as a living and feeling person (Ricoeur 1977). • Allusion - referring to names, places or images that may only make sense in the light of prior knowledge.	(Irony) Men's ties arranged to form a bouquet – headline = 'forget-me-knots' (resonance)
References: McQuarrie & Mick 1992, 1996, Mothersbaugh, Huhmann and Franke 2002.	

III. CODING FRAME

Dimension (variable)	Categories (scale)	Instructions (See also Instruction Booklet)
Section 1: Service Characteristics		
Standardization	**0** – Standardized **1** - Customized	Code '0' if standardized, '1' if customized
Level of Mental Intangibility	**0** – Mentally Tangible **1** – Mentally Intangible	Code '0' if mentally tangible, '1' if mentally intangible.

Section 2: Advertisement Format		
Framing strategy	• Argument • Celebrity • Narrative • Analogy/Metaphor (includes personification) • Mental Simulation • Repetition • Reversal • Substitution • Pun • Irony • Parody • Resonance • Paradox • Allusion	Code '1' if the framing strategy is present in the ad, code '0' if there is no evidence of the framing strategy in the ad. Note – ads can have more than one framing strategy. If an ad is layered with more than one framing strategy please code '1' for all strategies noted in the ad. Please refer to literature and instruction booklet prior to coding the ad.

IV. SUMMARY OF SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS

Author	Classification Scheme	Comments
Paul, Hennig-Thurau, Gremler, Wiertz, Gwinner (2009)	Bowen's Typology: • Type 1: Those directed at people and characterized by a high degree of customer contact with highly customized service solutions (full-service restaurant, hairdresser, physician/dentist, travel agency) • Type 2: Those directed at objects for which low customer contact is the norm and the service can be customized only slightly (bank, car repair shop, shoe repair shop, veterinarian) • Type 3: Those directed a t people with standardized solutions and moderate customer contact (Bar/coffee shop, book store, drug store, supermarket)	Interesting findings in relation to drivers for repeat purchase of consumer services: • 29 of 39 drivers not affected by service type • Highly customised services that require a high-level of customer-employee interaction - relationship characteristics are more important for repeat purchase than other services, functional benefits less salient. • Psychological benefits are less salient for repeat purchase in context of moderate contact, highly standardised services. • Without intense interactions with service employees and with less customized and impersonal service offerings, the benefits referring to the self-oriented goals of the customer seem less relevant.
Lovelock and Gummesson (2004)	New framework: Non-Ownership: • Rented Goods Services (Judd 1964) – vehicles, construction equipment, formal clothing • Place & Space Rentals – hotel room, airplane seat, apartment hire (impact of C2C interaction) • Labour & Expertise Rentals – surgery, mgmt consultancy, cleaning, car repair • Physical Facility Access and Usage – museum, theme park, spa • Network Access and Usage – telecommunications, utilities, banking, insurance, specialised information services Note – a service may combine elements from several of above categories, plus direct transfer of physical items	Argue non-ownership is an old but overlooked paradigm (Judd 1964, Rathmell 1974) Propose that marketing transactions that don't involve a transfer of ownership are distinctly different from those that do Imp of time for most services – rental relates to specified time period. Services enable resource sharing – Custs can use goods & facilities they can't afford to buy or justify purchasing

Grove, Fisk and John (2003)	Insights from exploratory research with ten marketing authorities: • Drop the 4 characteristics – IHIP - used to distinguish goods from services marketing • Eliminate goods versus services distinction	' One of the authorities referred to the circumstance as the IHIP (i.e. intangibility, heterogeneity, inseparability, perishability) misrepresentation, while another declared the characteristics to be service mythology' (p115).
Clemes, Mollenkopf and Burn (2000)	Further examine Silvestro et al's (1992) classification: • Professional Services • Service Shops • Mass Services	5 characteristics used to differentiate services based on Silvestro et al's (1992) typology. • Intangibility • Inseparability • Heterogeneity • Perishability • Lack of ownership Problems stemming from each characteristic are discussed for each of the three service types.
Hill (1999)	Traditional dichotomy between goods & services should be replaced by a breakdown between goods, intangible goods & services – highlights services not intangibles. Goods: • Ownership rights – established & exchanged • Consumption can be remote and long after production Intangible Goods: • Have economic characteristics of goods, can be traded • Have no physical dimensions or special coordinates of their own Services: • Cannot be produced without the agreement, co-operation and possibly active participation of the consuming units	Argues distinction between goods & services has been confused with tangible & intangible products Describes intangible products – entities that are recorded on paper, films, tapes, or disks, originals created by authors, composers, scientists, etc – have salient economic characteristics of goods, not services. Economic perspective – importance of ownership and exchangeability - true for goods but not services. Note – provides history of use of 'intangibility' in relation to services 'Services are inherently heterogeneous, but not so heterogeneous as to embrace intangible goods' (p445)

	The outputs produced are not separate entities that exist independently of the producers or consumers – 'service output must impinge in some way on the condition or status of the consuming units and are not separable from the latter' (p428)	
Cook, Goh, Chung (1999)	Service Process Structure (Operations Dimensions): • Customer Contact • Capital Intensity (people-based systems (low), equipment-based systems (high intensity). • Customer Involvement • Employee/Provider Discretion (can employee exercise judgement in creation/ delivery of service?) • Production Process (manufacturing, non-manufacturing) • Interactions and Integration of marketing/operations (Customisation of products – implications for process & package) Service Package Structure (Marketing Dimensions) • Tangibility (Can product be seen, tasted, felt, heard or smelled prior to purchase) • Differentiation (between offerings within group of services) • Object of Transformation (Person v. Possession) • Type of Customer (Institutions v. individuals) • Commitment (Low power = high commitment) • Service Environment: Social and economic – dynamic	Not typology, but illustration of themes found in literature. Extensive & useful review of service typologies from previous four decades
Soteriou & Chase (1998)	Investigation of the linkages between Service Quality (Parasuraman, 1985) & Customer Contact (CC dimensions = Communication time & Intimacy) (Kellogg & Chase, 1995)	In relation to service characteristics: 'Services are not only intangible processes, but must also include some link with the customer to be complete' (p495)

		Desirable range of CT & IM is much higher for services characterized by high complexity and/or divergence, compared to less complex and/or divergent services (Shostack, 1987).
Rust and Metters (1996)	• Customer behaviour models • Service quality impact models • Normative service models	Paper considers the three main categories of mathematical models of service management, and discusses the most important models in each category.

Lovelock and Yip (1996)	Classification scheme for core services:
	• People-processing services (tangible actions to customers)
	  ○ Custs part of production process
	  ○ Production consumption is simultaneous
	  ○ High contact
	  ○ E.g. passenger transportation, health care, food service, lodging services
	• Possession-processing services (tangible actions to improve physical value of objects)
	  ○ Lower contact – object involved in production process, not customer
	  ○ E.g. freight transport, warehousing, car repair, laundry
	• Information-based services (collection, manipulation, interpretation & transmittal of data to create value)
	  ○ Lower contact - Customer involvement often minimal
	  ○ E.g. accounting, banking, insurance, consulting, education, legal services
		This classification concerns differences and commonalities in operational processes (argued the way in which inputs are transformed into outputs ha a significant effect on strategy)
		
		Conceptually developed classification, eight categories of supplementary services to surround the core service:
		• information
		• consultation
		• order-taking
		• hospitality
		• caretaking
		• exceptions
		• billing
		• payment

Stafford and Day (1995)	• Experiential • Utilitarian	Conceptually considers Bowen's Taxonomy in relation to experiential and utilitarian characteristics: • Group 1 service, characterized by high employee contact, a people orientation,

		considerable customization, and direction toward people not things (i.e., more personal), seem to be more experiential. • Group 2 services, characterized by low employee contact, moderate customization, an equipment-orientation, and direction toward things, correspond to more functional or utilitarian offerings. • Group 3, having more moderate levels of the defining characteristics, seem to be at the middle of the experiential/utilitarian continuum.
Kellogg and Chase (1995)	Measurement model for Customer Contact: • Communication time (CT) – total time spent in communication between customer & server, consumers have ideas of acceptable CT • Intimacy – mutual confiding and trust • Information richness – addresses the value of the service exchange	Provides empirically derived measurement model for customer contact – *identifies characteristics of high/low contact services*. It links the theories of coupling, interdependence and information richness.
Kellogg and Nie (1995)	Service Process Structure: • Expert service • Service shop • Service factory Service Package Structure: • Unique • Selective • Restricted • Generic	Conceptually derived framework – links service process structure with service package structure Service Package Structure is defined by customisation.
Kotler and Armstrong (1994)	Attributes: • Intangibility • Inseperability • Variability • Perishability	Categorization based on organisational design purpose

Silvestro et al (1992)	Three service process types: • Professional Services • Service Shops • Mass Services	Typology based on 6 characteristics: • Equipment/people focus • Customer contact time • Degree of customisation • Degree of discretion • Value added front/back office • Product/process focus (see pg67) Typology posits as number of customers processed increases focus goes to equipment (v people), & product (v process) level of contact, customization and discretion falls, value moves to back office.
Mitra (1991)	• Search • Experience • Credence	Empirically examines perceived risk and behavioural intentions for the three service types.
Mersha (1990)	Classifies services according to Customer Contact • Active contact • Passive contact	Develops customer contact matrix for classifying service systems.
Bowen (1990)	Taxonomy of services: • High contact, Customised, Personal • Moderate Contact, Semi-Customised, non-personal • Moderate Contact, Standardized Services	Based on cluster analysis of consumers perceptions of 10 services. Consumers rate services according to characteristics below: • Intangible/Tangible • Level of Customisation • Employee/Customer Contact • Importance of People • Differentiation • Ability of cust to switch firms • Service affecting people or things • Customer participation • Continuous/discrete transaction (Tangibility & Customer participation removed as high standard deviation in data)

Wemmerlöv (1989)	Service classified according to:
	• Customer Contact
	  ○ Direct (customer contact with service workers/self-service)
	  ○ Indirect
		Service provider's perspective; focus on operations management-related decisions.
		
		Argues customer contact model most promising taxonomy, but needs more

	○ No contact • Degree of Routinisation ○ Rigid (low: variety, technical skills, info exchange, judgement by service worker, demand fluctuation) ○ Fluid (high: technical skills, info exchange, judgement made by service worker, workflow uncertainty) • Objects of the Service Process (as in Perrow, 1967) ○ Goods (belong to customer/provided by service system) ○ People (worker needs sensitivity to cust) Information/Images (objective – receive, handle, manipulate data)	stringent formulation to be appropriately applied. Note: • No cust contact, rigid process & goods close to 'Manufacturing' • Direct cust contact, fluid process & people or information close to 'Pure Service' Note: Cust contact, Routinisation & people/things all identified in Bowen's taxonomy
Larrson and Bowen (1989)	Diversity of Demand Customer Participation	Input uncertainty used to classify service and design types
Haywood-Farmer (1988)	• Degree of labour intensity • Service Process Customisation • Contact level • Interaction level	
Shostack (1987)	Service Process differentiated according to: • Complexity • Divergence	Complexity refers to the steps and sequences that constitute the process Divergence: the executional latitude or variability of those steps and sequences
Schmenner (1986)	Classification matrix: • Labour Intensity • Degree of customer interaction & customisation	Author discusses critical management tasks associated with position in the matrix. This classification scheme is operational in orientation.
Mills and Turk (1986)	• Customer contact ○ High – high/low dependence interactions ○ Low • Task Activities ○ Analysability	This paper offers empirical evidence for proposed model. Customer-contact interface found to mediate the relationship between information equivocality and task activities.

	○ Variability • Information Processing ○ Distributed Information ○ Information Equivocality	
Goodwin (1986)	• Power • Commitment	4 Cell Classification Scheme – customer/service role relationships
Bowen and Bowers (1986)	Attributes: • Customer Contact • Intangibility (Bowen 1990)	This scheme argues that the effectiveness of a firm depends to a certain extend on matching the firm's structure and environment.
Silpakit and Fisk (1985)	Attributes: • Customer contact level • Customer participation (Bowen 1990)	The participation of services is related to productivity.
Kotler (1984)	Attributes: Importance of employees Function (Bowen 1990)	
Lovelock (1984)	Attributes: • Service delivery system • Employee/customer contact • Importance of employees • Multiple/single site • Ability to meet peak demand • Degree of Regulation • Extent of demand fluctuation • Service affecting people/things • Intangibility • Level of Customisation • Ability of customers to switch firms • Continuous/discrete transactions	
Stiff and Pollack (1983)	Attributes: • Customer contact • Economic Concentration • Importance of Machines (Bowen 1990)	Addresses the issue of consumerism in services (Cook, Goh and Chung, 1999)
Grove and Fisk (1983)	Attributes: • Audience size • Customer Contact level (Bowen 1990)	Typology developed based no the precepts of dramaturgy
Lovelock (1983)	Five 2x2 Service Type Matrices: • Nature of service act (tangible/intangible; people/things) • Type of relationship between service	→ If service act on people – higher customer contact & importance of service process.

	and its customers (continuous/discrete; formal/no formal relationship) • Room for customization & judgement by service provider (Can service be customised; can service personnel exercise judgement in customization) • Nature of demand and supply (extent of demand fluctuation & supply constraint) • How service is delivered (Location of transaction; Single/Multiple sites)	→ Services with formal relationships can facilitate segmentation and simple packages for customers, no relationship – usually discrete transactions. → Service, simultaneous production & consumption means room for customization. High personnel judgement – control not with user, e.g. health professional. Separate costs – diagnosis & solution. → Convenience lowest when cust has to come to service & must use specific outlet. May be possible to separate components from service & handle at arms length (booking & info search) This classification synthesises prior studies and represents a comprehensive scheme that takes strategy development into account (Cook et al. 1999).
Dilworth (1983)	Project Unit/batch Mass production Attribute – customisation/standardisation	Classification based on standardisation of outputs and process performed (Cook, Goh & Chung, 1999)
Langeard and Eiglier (1983)	Attributes: Multiple or single site Level of Customisation (Bowen 1990)	
Maister and Lovelock (1982)	Classification: • Factory • Jobshop • Mass service • Professional service	Focus on customisation and customer contact.
Fitzsimmons and Sullivan (1982)	Classification: • People changing • People processing • Facilitating services	Builds on work by Hansenfield and English (1975) who use people-changing/people-processing categories
Daniels (1982)	Attributes: Service Delivery System (Bowen 1990)	
Bell (1981)	Attributes: • Customer Contact • Intangibility (Bowen 1990)	
Mills and Margulies	Three types of service organisation:	Based on personal interface between customer and service organisation at

(1980)	• Maintenance-interactive (bank) – focal point is building trust & stability for LT relationship. • Task-interactive (engineering) – concentrated interaction for problem solving, focus not on what customer wants but how to achieve these wants. • Personal-interactive (medical service) – personal nature of problem brought to employee decision by customer. Attributes: Customer Contact Importance of Machines (Bowen 1990)	workflow level. Classification based on underlying dimensions of customer/service interface: • Information • Decision • Time • Problem • Awareness • Transferability • Power • Attachment
Lovelock and Young (1979)	Classifying service according to: • Those that act on consumers as individuals • Those that act on consumer's possessions	Related to discussion – how customers can impact productivity in service organisations (from operational perspective)
Sasser, Olsen and Wyckett (1978)	Tangible goods v. intangible benefits contained in each service bundle	Argues against the existence of pure goods, posits there are only bundles of goods and services.
Chase (1978)	From High Contact to Low Contact: • Pure service • Mixed service • Quasimanufacturing • Manufacturing Note: Customer contact = percentage of time the customer spends in the service system, relative to the total time it takes to serve him Attributes: Customer contact (Bowen 1990)	Customer contact: 'the physical presence of the customer in the system' (p138) Possibilities: 1) There is no service worker there 2) There is a service worker but the customer has no interaction with him/her 3) The customer exchanges information with the service worker Chase recognises the challenges particular to services requiring high customer contact: Challenge for high-contact services: • Uncertainty about day-to-day operations • Demand matching • Workforce skill - PR component Chase recommends separating high and low contact functions to increase efficiency

Ryans and Wittnik (1977)	Attributes: • Differentiation • Ability of Customer to Switch Firms Importance of Machines (Bowen 1990)	
Hill (1977)	Classification: • Services affecting people/things • Permanent/Temporary effects • Reversability/Non-reversability • Physical/Mental effects • Individual/Collective services	Economic perspective Emphasises nature of service benefits and in individuals versus collective services, variations in the service delivery/consumption environment (Cook, Goh & Chung 1999).
Shostack (1977)	Molecular model: • Services classified according to their intangible or tangible dominant elements	The degree to which the marketer should focus on either tangible evidence or intangible abstractions is argues to be inversely related to the entity's dominance.
Thomas (1975)	Classification: Equipment based: • Automated • Monitored by unskilled workers • Operated by skilled operators People Based: • Unskilled labour • Skilled labour • Skilled professionals Attributes: • Employee skill level • Importance of employees (Bowen 1990)	This typology is operational rather than marketing in orientation.
Darby and Karni (1973)	Introduce 'Credence' to the search/experience model put forward by Nelson (1970)	Based on Stigler's (1961) EoI theory, Darby and Karni suggest that information verification unavailable for credence prior to purchase, and only verifiable post purchase with necessary expertise.
Levitt (1972)	Service v. Goods: product-oriented terminology. • Concept of service has historical connotations of charity, gallantry, selflessness or obedience, subordination, subjugation. Individuals performing service behave	Insists 'there are no such things as service industries. There are only industries whose service components are greater or less than those of other industries' (p41) Criticism: Levitt posits discretion is the enemy of order and standardization. McDonald's praised for

	ritualistically, not rationally. • Manufacturing oriented toward efficient production of results, not attendance on others. • Service looks for solutions in performer of the task. • Manufacturing looks for solutions inside the tasks to be done – tools, skills, processes, audits which can improve outcomes.	being a technocratic service. However, certain services require personalisation, high levels of judgement. Shostack argues fast-food made up of tangible & intangible elements in equal measure. Distinction between what company 'makes' and what customer 'buys'. E.g. Charles Revlon (of Revlon inc.) noted 'In the factory we make cosmetics, in the shop we sell hope'. Recommends customer service to be consciously treated as manufacturing in the field, and it will be carefully planned, controlled, automated (where possible) audited and reviewed.
Nelson (1970)	• Search • Experience	Based on Stigler's (1961) theory of the economics of information – Nelson argues that search attributes can be verified prior to purchase, experience attributes can only be verified after purchase and immediate consumption.
Rathmell (1966)	Attributes: • Importance of employees • Economic concentration • Ability to meet peak demand (Bowen 1990)	This classification has been argued to be equally applicable to products and not unique to services (Cook et al. 1999).
Judd (1964)	Three broad, mutually exclusive areas of services: • Rented Goods Services (right to possess & use a product) • Owned Goods Services (custom creation or repair or improvement of a product) • Non-Goods Services (no product elements, experiential possession) Attributes – Service affecting people/things Intangibility (Bowen 1990)	Approach doesn't offer any insight into characteristics of services, but allows elimination of offerings that are not services. Room for more complete list within each category.

V. SERVICE DESCRIPTIONS FOR PRE-TEST#1

A) FINANCIAL SERVICES

JustDigit – the easy way to transfer money!

- With this new mobile banking service you can send money using just a mobile number.
- Link your current account and mobile number to your bank's JustDigit service and use your android, blackberry or iPhone with internet access to send and receive payments using your phone contacts.
- Chose who you want to pay from your contacts, select how much you want to send and confirm your payment. This new service makes banking simple and utterly mobile for everyone.

GoInvest – now investing is for all!

- GoInvest offers a seamless investment process with a user-friendly platform, and no middle man stockbroker, Instead, the excellent software, using the same technology found on Wall Street, automatically handles the work for you.
- Your money is seamlessly invested with long-established, SIPC insured investment companies and the platform provides automatic risk management features so that your investments will bring the best return.
- This online investment service sends you regular updates and has an automatic-invest feature to rebalance your investments.

Fresh® Account –be an individual with the brand new way to bank!

- This renowned bank launched Fresh® account for young adults offering a variety of tailored products and services. Express yourself with an original credit or debit card from over 150 designs, and enjoy an individualised credit limit and tailored interest rates based on your needs.

- Open an account with no initial deposit, no monthly fees and convenient international ATM machines.
- Get help to organize your finance, set savings goals and separate your spending from your saving in one simple bank account.

Henry Steven's Investment – good things happen face to face!

- Henry Steven's investment serves individual needs, with over 10,000 offices around the UK, including one in your local community.
- The relationship between you and your financial advisor is one of vital importance to successful investing. Financial advisors who understand your financial needs and goals are dedicated to working individually with you.
- Your advisor will work to help you maintain a diversified portfolio of quality investments and will meet you regularly to offer personal guidance and help re-balance your portfolio.

B) HEALTH AND FITNESS SERVICES

Simply Fitness – pay only for what you need at no frills fitness centers

- Simply Fitness is a revolutionary gym concept with over 170 pieces of gym equipment. You won't find classes and personal trainers or spa areas, but a sea of state of the art treadmills, cross trainers, step machines, dumbbells, and much more.
- These low-cost, stripped down fitness centers are open 24/7 so you can train at your own convenience at any time of the day or night.
- You can join online with the easy sign up process with no long term contracts.

Innovitfit Camp – rejuvenate your health in a unique way!

- Innovitfit Camp is a five day residential boot camp which educates and empowers groups to continue their physical well being journey at home long after the boot camp.

- The group workouts are challenging and enjoyable, our distinctive fitness plan will motivate everyone in the group to meet their goals.
- This service offers you the chance to improve your physical and mental well being and self confidence, in a supportive, comfortable environment with high quality healthy food served.

Total Health & Fitness – luxury gyms cater to individual needs!

- Total's top end, luxury fitness centers offer a wide variety of different membership programs to ensure the needs of each individual are met.
- Chose from group training, weight loss programs, a wide variety of classes and sports. A team of friendly, professional staff are on board to help you. Other amenities include rock climbing, a relaxing spa area, outdoor water slides, babysitting services and luxury changing facilities.
- Members can join 'myTotal.com' for access to individual programs, club events and member advantages.

Matthew Jones - One-to-one personal training in inspiring clubs.

- The extensive team at Matthew Jones represent the finest trainers and health and fitness professionals in the UK. They have specialist skills to help each individual achieve their unique, desired targets.
- You will have an extensive series of specialist tests and professional analysis in order to reveal your ability and potential. A program will be designed tailored to your needs according to how your body operates.
- Your personal trainer will work with you in our luxurious, bespoke, purpose-built settings.

C) <u>TRAVEL AND TOURISM SERVICES</u>

CrossCountry Sleeper bus –affordable, comfortable travel!

- Travel overnight from one city to another on this innovative low-cost sleeper service.
- CrossCountry bus service offers each passenger their own berth as well as a standard seat for ultimate comfort during their journey
- This service is an affordable and comfortable method of travel, each berth has a bed, reading light and curtain for privacy, and the bus is equipped with bathrooms, free Wi-Fi, and onboard refreshments. Also provided are complimentary overnight toiletry packs for every customer's convenience.

iCube -No frills, chic hotels. The smart way to travel.

- iCube Hotel offers futuristic and high-tech amenities for budget conscious travelers.
- You can rent a 'Cube'; a revolutionary, compact space with visionary furniture, automatic mood lighting and pioneering technology.
- The concept is modeled around self-service, with a self-service check in area and innovative vending machines offering refreshments & toiletries.
- Talented designers express their creative views in the trendy lobby and intelligent gadgets are on hand for local information.

Dream Trips - tailor made itineraries for discerning travelers!

- Dream Trips specializes in designing tailor made travel itineraries for travelers seeking authentic experiences around the world.
- Trips are designed such that you are not tied to a group itinerary; it is personalized specifically to your requirements, allowing you to explore your interests.
- Company specialists have travelled extensively through their specialist regions, and you can rely on their knowledge and enthusiasm. They regularly revisit their chosen regions to keep up to date and ensure the best possible authentic trips are designed.

BeautifulStay – live like a local in real homes with hotel style service!

- BeautifulStay offers you the unique chance to stay in someone's home while they are away, you can live their life for a few days, and benefit from the personal recommendations of the home-owners.

- With this service you get the advantages and amenities of a hotel, including 24/7 customer service to ensure your every need is met.
- The most decadent and surprising houses and apartments in the city have been sifted through, to come up with wonderful places for you to stay.

VI. METAPHORS TESTED IN PRE-TEST#2

A) iCUBE METAPHORS

iCube - Sleep in Space!

With the futuristic vibe of space travel, iCube is reinventing hotel services.

- iCube is leading a high-tech revolution with its futuristic, compact pods with pioneering technology.
- This ultra-smart hotel is modeled around complete self-service, with a surrealistic check in zone, and revolutionary self-service technology.

iCube – explore the Swiss army knife of hotels!

iCube is a marvel of design, so much fits in each futuristic cube!

- iCube is leading a high-tech revolution with its futuristic, compact pods with pioneering technology.
- This ultra-smart hotel is modeled around complete self-service, with a surrealistic check in zone, and revolutionary self-service technology.

Experience StarTrek, iCube, the next generation of hotels.

iCube – bring StarTrek to life in this revolutionary, futuristic hotel!

- iCube is leading a high-tech revolution with its futuristic, compact pods with pioneering technology.
- This ultra-smart hotel is modeled around complete self-service, with a surrealistic check in zone, and revolutionary self-service technology.

B) BEAUTIFULSTAY METAPHORS

BeautifulStay, the real 'second life'!

You can make a virtual, fantasy life reality with BeautifulStay!

- BeautifulStay offers you the chance to stay in the most decadent & surprising properties in the city while the home-owner is away, letting you live their life for a few days.
- BeautifulStay offer the advantages of a hotel, including 24/7 customer service to ensure your individual needs are met.

BeautifulStay – be a chameleon!

You can blend seamlessly into a new, exciting city with BeautifulStay!

- BeautifulStay offers you the chance to stay in the most decadent & surprising properties in the city while the home-owner is away, letting you live their life for a few days.
- BeautifulStay offer the advantages of a hotel, including 24/7 customer service to ensure your individual needs are met.

BeautifulStay – Bring your avatar to life!

Emerge yourself in some else's exciting world with BeautifulStay!

- BeautifulStay offers you the chance to stay in the most decadent & surprising properties in the city while the home-owner is away, letting you live their life for a few days.
- BeautifulStay offer the advantages of a hotel, including 24/7 customer service to ensure your individual needs are met.

C) DREAMTRIPS METAPHORS

DreamTrips – Rub the lamp and the genie will grant your wishes!

Let the genie transport you to paradise for your next holiday!

- Dream Trips specializes in designing travel itineraries personalized to your specific requirements individuals seeking authentic experiences around the world.
- Our experts have traveled extensively through their specialist regions, and you can rely on their knowledge and enthusiasm for your tailor made trip.

DreamTrips - Your fairygodmother waves the magic wand!

We make fairytales reality, and turn your fantasy into your next holiday!

- Dream Trips specializes in designing travel itineraries personalized to your specific requirements individuals seeking authentic experiences around the world.
- Our experts have traveled extensively through their specialist regions, and you can rely on their knowledge and enthusiasm for your tailor made trip.

DreamTrips - Directors of the movie starring you in paradise!

Our imagination & experience work to create a masterpiece trip!

- Dream Trips specializes in designing travel itineraries personalized to your specific requirements, for those individuals seeking authentic experiences around the world.
- Our experts have traveled extensively through their specialist regions, and you can rely on their knowledge and enthusiasm for your tailor made trip.

D) <u>CROSSCOUNTRY METAPHORS</u>

CrossCountry - Enjoy 1st class airline travel without leaving the ground!

You can afford 1st class airline travel with our overnight bus service!

- You can be sure of great amenity every time with CrossCountry bus service; we offer each passenger a standard sleeping berth to allow ultimate comfort during your journey.
- Every berth has a reading light and curtain, and the bus is equipped with bathrooms, free Wi-Fi, and onboard refreshments.

Get teleported with CrossCountry!

Wake up at your destination with this innovative new sleeper service!

- You can be sure of great amenity every time with CrossCountry bus service; we offer each passenger a standard sleeping berth to allow ultimate comfort during your journey.
- Every berth has a reading light and curtain, and the bus is equipped with bathrooms, free Wi-Fi, and onboard refreshments.

Cross country – travel like a snail, only faster!

Now you don't have to leave your home comforts behind on your journey!

- You can be sure of great amenity every time with CrossCountry bus service; we offer each passenger a standard sleeping berth to allow ultimate comfort during your journey.
- Every berth has a reading light and curtain, and the bus is equipped with bathrooms, free Wi-Fi, and onboard refreshments.

VII. FINAL STIMULI USED IN EXPERIMENT

Beautiful Stay service descriptions
METAPHOR (115 words) **Beautiful Stay: Be a chameleon in an exciting new city!** • With Beautiful Stay clients can become chameleons in new, exciting cities, staying in someone's home while they are away, benefiting from the personal recommendations of the homeowners and living the life of a local during the stay. • As a chameleon – clients fit right into a new life while enjoying all of the advantages and amenities of a top class hotel, including 24/7 five-star customer service, as they launch themselves into local life in a new city. • Beautiful Stay provides the opportunity for clients to become chameleons in wonderful places to stay; they can choose from some of the most luxurious and surprising city centre properties while immersing themselves in local life.
ARGUMENT (110 words) **BeautifulStay – New & Exciting Holiday Accommodation!** • The first benefit of BeautifulStay is that it offers customers the unique chance to stay in someone's home while they are away, to benefit from the personal recommendations of the homeowners, and live the life of a local during the stay. • The second benefit of BeautifulStay is it includes all of the advantages and amenities of a top class hotel, including 24/7 five star customer service to meet every individual needs. • Another reason to chose Beautiful Stay is that customers can choose a wonderful place to stay from a collection of some of the most luxurious and surprising city centre properties.
NARRATIVE (188 words) **Beautiful Stay: Nicky's Story!** After some stressful months at work with long hours and threats of redundancies, Nicky needed a break from the work environment. Nicky decided the best distraction would be to organize a unique holiday and leave the stresses of daily life behind. Rather than doing typical tourist activities, Nicky wanted to be immersed in a new city and live the life of a local for a few days. After an online search checking out possibilities, Nicky decided BeautifulStay could provide a dream holiday. BeautifulStay gave Nicky the opportunity to stay in someone's home while they are away, and enjoy the pros of a top class hotel, including 24/7 customer service. Nicky managed to shrug off work anxiety in the luxurious, spacious city-centre property, feeling like the home-owner during the holiday.

Nicky benefited from the personal recommendations of the homeowners, and after enjoyable days experiencing local life, went back to the beautiful apartment to enjoy five-star room service, which provided the much needed escapism. The break was just what the doctor ordered, Nicky returned renewed with more energy and perspective to excel in the work environment.

iCube service descriptions

METAPHOR (99 words)

iCube - Sleep in Space!

- Sleep in space in this 22nd century ready hotel, experience iCube's futuristic and intelligent accommodation for budget conscious travelers.
- iCube is reinventing hotel services. Customers can feel like they are orbiting the earth in the space-age pods: the revolutionary, compact rooms which house pioneering technology and visionary amenities including state of the art, trendy furniture, and intelligent mood lighting.
- Space-age iCube represents 'the next generation' of hotels, with its self-service experience, with an intelligent self-service check in area, including an i-robot to manage customer's luggage, as well as innovative vending areas.

ARGUMENT (99 words)

iCube –Innovative, trendy and exciting accommodation.

- The first benefit of the revolutionary iCube hotel is that it offers futuristic and intelligent accommodation for budget conscious travelers.
- The second benefit of iCube is that customers can rent a pod: a revolutionary, compact space which houses pioneering technology and visionary amenities, including state of the art, trendy furniture, and intelligent mood lighting.
- Another reason to make iCube the first choice is that it is modeled around complete self-service, with an intelligent self-service check in area, including an i-robot to manage customer's luggage, as well as innovative vending areas.

NARRATIVE (170 words)

iCube Hotel: Nicky's Story!

After a stressful few months at work with long hours and threats of redundancies, Nicky needed a break from the work environment. Nicky decided the best distraction would be to head off on an affordable but unusual and exciting city break. After an online search checking out different possibilities, Nicky discovered iCube hotel, an ultra futuristic and intelligent hotel modeled around complete self-service with visionary amenities. Nicky was amazed by their revolutionary, compact 'pod' accommodation, which housed state of the art, trendy furniture and intelligent mood lighting. Also, being a self-confessed 'techie', Nicky got a great kick out of the pioneering technology including the i-robot who took the luggage and the intelligent self-service check in and innovative vending

areas. Staying at iCube gave Nicky a unique, affordable holiday break. Nicky managed to leave the troubles of work stress behind in this revolutionary, futuristic hotel. The break was just what the doctor ordered, Nicky returned renewed with more energy and perspective to excel in the work environment.

Dream Trips service descriptions

METAPHOR (114 words)

DreamTrips – Rub the magic lamp and the genie grants a dream holiday!

- A visit to Dream Trips is rubbing the lamp and getting a tailor-made, personalized, boundary-pushing itinerary around the globe granted.
- With a simple rub of the magic lamp, clients are granted a trip personalized specifically to their requirements, they are not tied to a group itinerary but their wishes to explore their special interests are granted, whether they be exhilarating adventurous activities, breathtaking cultural sites or lounging on the beach.
- The genie grants trips where clients can be safe in the knowledge that company specialists have travelled extensively through their specialist regions, and their knowledge and enthusiasm is guaranteed.

ARGUMENT (105 words)

Dream Trips – Specialists in tailor-made, personalized dream holidays!

- The first reason for choosing Dream Trips travel agency is it specializes in designing tailor made, personalized travel itineraries for individuals seeking boundary-pushing trips around the globe.
- The second benefit is that Dream Trip's clients are not tied to a group itinerary; each trip is personalized specifically to their requirements, allowing them to explore their special interests, whether they be exhilarating adventurous activities, breathtaking cultural sites or lounging on beaches.
- Another reason to choose Dream Trips is that company specialists have travelled extensively through their specialist regions and their knowledge and enthusiasm is guaranteed.

NARRATIVE (171 words)

Dream Trips – Nicky's Story!

After some stressful months at work with long hours and threats of redundancies, Nicky needed a break from the work environment. Nicky hadn't taken a proper holiday in the three years since beginning work, and decided the best distraction would be to take a much deserved once-in-a-lifetime holiday. It being the first major holiday, Nicky didn't know where to begin and was worried about not making the best out of the opportunity. Nicky found Dream Trips, who specialize in designing tailor made itineraries for people seeking boundary-pushing trips around the globe. Dream Trips designed a trip

personalized specifically to Nicky's requirements, which included exhilarating adventurous activities, breathtaking cultural sites and time for lounging on the beach. Nicky could relax knowing that Dream Trips have specialist experts in each region. Thanks to Dream Trips, Nicky left work stress behind and made memories to last a lifetime. The break was just what the doctor ordered, Nicky returned renewed with more energy and perspective to excel in the work environment.

Cross Country service descriptions

METAPHOR (107 words)

CrossCountry - Enjoy 1st class airline travel without leaving the ground!

- Each passenger can experience the comfort of 1st class travel, by travelling overnight from one city to another on this low-cost and innovative sleeper service, going to sleep after embarking and waking up at their destination.
- All of the benefits of 1st class airline travel are provided for every passenger, including a comfortable sleeping berth equipped with a curtain, a reading light and entertainment system complete with free Wi-Fi, to ensure ultimate comfort during the overnight journey.
- As with 1st class airline travel, the affordable CrossCountry service offers on-board refreshments and restroom facilities.

ARGUMENT (104 words)

CrossCountry Sleeper bus – Affordable, comfortable overnight travel.

- The first benefit of CrossCountry bus service is that customers can travel overnight from one city to another on this low-cost and innovative sleeper service, going to sleep after embarking and waking up at their destination.
- The second benefit of CrossCountry bus service is that it offers every passenger a comfortable sleeping berth, equipped with a curtain, a reading light and entertainment system complete with free Wi-Fi, to ensure ultimate comfort during the overnight journey.
- Another reason to choose CrossCountry is that the comfortable, affordable bus offers on-board refreshments as well as restroom facilities.

NARRATIVE (182 words)

CrossCountry: Nicky's Story!

After a stressful few months at work with long hours and threats of redundancies, Nicky needed a break from the work environment. Nicky decided the best distraction would be to head home for thanksgiving to enjoy home comforts, good food and warm company. However, being on a limited budget Nicky simply couldn't afford the flights home, and was disappointed at the thought of missing family thanksgiving. Then Nicky came across CrossCountry bus service, and decided to travel home on the overnight sleeper service. Nicky was delighted with the comfort of the standard sleeping berths, equipped with

reading light, curtain and entertainment system complete with free Wi-Fi, as well as the onboard refreshments and restrooms. Shortly after embarking a CrossCountry bus and happily calling family member's to let them know they'd see Nicky the following morning, Nicky fell asleep in the comfortable berth. Waking up in the familiarity of Nicky's home city, Nicky felt the tension melt away. The break was just what the doctor ordered, Nicky returned renewed with more energy and perspective to excel in the work environment.

VIII. SERVICE TYPE PRE-TEST (QUESTIONNAIRE)

PhD Research – Management Department, Cass Business School

This questionnaire is part of a PhD project at Cass Business School, City University regarding consumer response to new services. You will be provided with three service descriptions, with each one followed by a short questionnaire. Please read the service descriptions and then answer the questions as best you can. There are no sensitive questions, but rest assured that the information you provide will remain anonymous and confidential. This questionnaire will take no more than 5 minutes of your time. Thank you in advance for taking the time to carefully respond to the questions.

SERVICE DESCRIPTION 1: (Please read this before moving on to answer questions below.)

Simply Fitness – pay only for what you need at no frills fitness centers

- **Simply Fitness is a revolutionary gym concept with over 170 pieces of gym equipment. You won't find classes and personal trainers or spa areas, but a sea of state of the art treadmills, cross trainers, step machines, dumbbells, and much more.**
- **These low-cost, stripped down fitness centers are open 24/7 so you can train at your own convenience at any time of the day or night.**
- **You can join online with the easy sign up process with no long term contracts.**

Q1: Please indicate to what extent you agree with the statements below.

After reading the service description:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I need more information about this service in order to make myself a clear idea of what it is.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
This is not the sort of service that is easy to picture.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
This is a difficult service to think about.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I have a clear picture of this service.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The image of this service comes to my mind straight away.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q2. Please read these definitions before answering the question below:

Customized services are adapted to meet the needs of individual customers. Customers can choose from an array of options and the service is flexible in terms of what it entails and how it is delivered. Employee skills are important as they customise the service for individual customers.

Standardized services are not adapted for individual customers, customers have little discretion in defining the service offering and how it is delivered. For such services speed, consistency and price savings are usually important to the customer.

How would you rate the service described above?

Standardized	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	**Customized**

Q3: Please indicate to what extent you agree that the statements below apply to the service described above:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This service is customized to meet the needs of individual customers.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Customers have an input in the performance and delivery of this service.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
This service offers a wide array of options for the customer to choose from.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Customers of this service have little discretion in defining how, what and where this service is delivered.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Production systems and automatic equipment may be substituted for employee skills for this service.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
This service offers a standardized service to all customers.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q4. Please read these definitions before answering the question below:

Utilitarian services are functional, customers expect functional utility from these services and the economic benefits they provide are important.

Hedonic services offer experiential benefits (e.g. fun, pleasure and excitement), and customers are primarily seeking enjoyment from experiencing the service.

How would you rate the service described above?

Utilitarian	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	**Hedonic**

Q5: How would you describe the attractiveness of this service?

Not at all attractive	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Very Attractive
Not at all interesting	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Very Interesting
Not at all likeable	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Very likeable

Q6: How would you rate your feelings prior to using this service according to the statements listed below?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel there is a high chance that there would be something wrong with this service or that it would not be delivered as promised	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I feel there is a high chance that I would suffer some loss because this service would not be used well.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I feel this service is extremely risky in terms of how it would perform.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The thought of using this service gives me a feeling of unwanted anxiety.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The thought of using this service makes me experience unnecessary tension.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I would worry a lot when buying this service.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q7: How would you describe the benefits of this service?

Not very innovative	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Very Innovative
Not very novel	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Very Novel
Not very original	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Very original

Q8: How familiar are you with this service?

Not at all familiar	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Very Familiar

DEMOGRAPHICS

1) Please indicate your gender by ticking one of the following options:

- ❍ Male
- ❍ Female

2) What is your country of origin?

3) What year were you born?

IX. METAPHOR DEVELOPMENT PRE-TEST (QUESTIONNAIRE)

Please read this service description before answering the questions that follow:

SERVICE DESCRIPTION

iCube - Sleep in Space!

Sleep in space in this 22nd century ready hotel, experience iCube's futuristic and intelligent accommodation for budget conscious travelers. iCube is reinventing hotel services. Customers can feel like they are orbiting the earth in the space-age pods: the revolutionary, compact rooms which house pioneering technology and visionary amenities including state of the art, trendy furniture, and intelligent mood lighting. Space-age iCube represents 'the next generation' of hotels, with its self-service experience, with an intelligent self-service check in area, including an i-robot to manage customer's luggage, as well as innovative vending areas.

1. **How would you rate the service description shown above?**

Straightforward/Matter of fact or Artful/Clever	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

2. **How would you rate your familiarity with the concept of outer-space?**

Not at all familiar/Very familiar	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

3. **How easy is it to understand the comparison between sleeping in space and staying in iCube hotel?**

Not easy at all/Very easy	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

4. **How would you rate your attitude to the concept of outer-space?**

Unfavorable/Favorable	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Unpleasant/Pleasant	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Unappealing/Appealing	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

5. **What is the most attractive feature of this service?**

6. **In the box below list any other service attributes and/or benefits that come to mind:**

7. **Please indicate your gender by clicking on one of the following options:**
   - ❍ Male
   - ❍ Female

8. **What is your country of origin?**

9. **What year were you born?**

10. **What is the highest level of education you have completed?**
    - ❍ Less than High School
    - ❍ High School / GED
    - ❍ Some College
    - ❍ 2-year College Degree
    - ❍ 4-year College Degree
    - ❍ Masters Degree
    - ❍ Doctoral Degree
    - ❍ Professional Degree (JD, MD)

X. ONLINE EXPERIMENT

Please note – not all of the questions translate well to offline document as this is administered online via Qualtrics. To see the online version visit:
http://cass.eu.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_559rKfBIKdFxn13

INTRODUCTION

The following is a description of a new service. Please read it carefully before answering the questions that follow. We would like to gauge your response to this service. There are no right or wrong answers, it is your personal opinion that matters.

SERVICE DESCRIPTION

Dream Trips – Nicky's Story!

After some stressful months at work with long hours and threats of redundancies, Nicky needed a break from the work environment. Nicky hadn't taken a proper holiday in the three years since beginning work, and decided the best distraction would be to take a much deserved once-in-a-lifetime holiday. It being the first major holiday, Nicky didn't know where to begin and was worried about not making the best out of the opportunity. Nicky found Dream Trips, who specialize in designing tailor made itineraries for people seeking boundary-pushing trips around the globe. Dream Trips designed a trip personalized specifically to Nicky's requirements, which included exhilarating adventurous activities, breathtaking cultural sites and time for lounging on the beach. Nicky could relax knowing that Dream Trips have specialist experts in each region. Thanks to Dream Trips, Nicky left work stress behind and made memories to last a lifetime. The break was just what the doctor ordered, Nicky returned renewed with more energy and perspective to excel in the work environment.

1. After reading the service description above, please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
There are characters in the service description	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
There is a plot in the service description	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
There is time shift in the service description	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The service description reads like a story	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The service description directly addresses service attributes	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

2 Please indicate your opinion by clicking on your answer. I think this service description presents the message...

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very Literally/Very Metaphorically	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

3. Please click on the circle which corresponds with your answer. After reading the service description, I find it:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Difficult to understand/Easy to understand	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Confusing/Straightforward	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Unclear/Clear	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

4. What is your reaction to the service description according to the statements below?

I find this service description:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unfavorable/Favorable	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Very bad/Very good	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Unappealing/Appealing	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Unpleasant/Pleasant	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Uninteresting/Interesting	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

5. What is your reaction to the service description according to the statements below?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It does not provoke imagery/It provokes Imagery	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Dull/Vivid	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Boring/Interesting	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I had few thoughts in response to the service description/I had many thoughts in response to the service description	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The service description has one meaning/The service description has multiple meanings	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The service description has simple meanings/The service description has complex meanings	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

6. Please give your response to the three statements by clicking on the slider and moving it to your answer.

_____ The extent to which I thought about the service description is:
_____ The time I spent on thinking about the service description is:
_____ The amount of attention I paid to the service description is:

7. After reading the service description above, please indicate to what extent you agree with the statements below.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
While I was reading Nicky's story, I could easily picture the events in it taking place.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
While I was reading Nicky's story, I found it difficult to tune out activity going on in the room.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I could picture myself in the scene of the events described in the story.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I was mentally involved in the story while reading it.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
After finishing Nicky's story, I found it easy to put it out of my mind.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I wanted to learn how the story ended.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Nicky's story affected me emotionally.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I found myself thinking of ways the story could have turned out differently.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I found my mind wandering while reading the story.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The events in the story are relevant to my everyday life.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
While reading the story, I had a vivid image of Nicky.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
While reading the story, I had a vivid image of the scene.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

SERVICE DESCRIPTION (Repeated as on new page)

Dream Trips – Nicky's Story!

After some stressful months at work with long hours and threats of redundancies, Nicky needed a break from the work environment. Nicky hadn't taken a proper holiday in the three years since beginning work, and decided the best distraction would be to take a much deserved once-in-a-lifetime holiday. It being the first major holiday, Nicky didn't know where to begin and was worried about not making the best out of the opportunity. Nicky found Dream Trips, who specialize in designing tailor made itineraries for people seeking boundary-pushing trips around the globe. Dream Trips designed a trip personalized specifically to Nicky's requirements, which included exhilarating adventurous activities, breathtaking cultural sites and time for lounging on the beach. Nicky could relax knowing that Dream Trips have specialist experts in each region. Thanks to Dream Trips, Nicky left work stress behind and made memories to last a lifetime. The break was just what the doctor ordered, Nicky returned renewed with more energy and perspective to excel in the work environment.

8. What is your reaction to the service Dream Trips?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Negative/Positive	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I disliked it/I liked it	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Very bad service/Very good service	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Unappealing/Appealing	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

9. How do you perceive Dream Trips?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Insignificant/Significant	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Does not matter to me/Matters to me	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Unimportant/Important	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Worthless/Valuable	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Means nothing to me/Means a lot to me	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Non-essential/Essential	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Useless/Useful	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Of no concern to me/Of concern to me	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Undesirable/Desirable	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Superfluous/Vital	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Boring/Interesting	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

10. Before you read the service description, please indicate how weak or strong your level of knowledge regarding Dream Trips was by clicking on the slider and moving it to your answer.

_____ Before I read the service description my knowledge of Dream Trips was:
_____ Before I read the service description my knowledge of the characteristics of Dream Trips was:

11. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the statements below.

When reading for pleasure:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Some what Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I can easily envision the events in the story.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I find I can easily lose myself in the story.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I find it difficult to tune out activity around me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I can easily envision myself in the events described in a story.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I get mentally involved in the story.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I can easily put stories out of my mind after I've finished reading them.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I sometimes feel as if I am part of the story.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I am often impatient to find out how the story ends.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I find that I can easily take the perspective of the characters in the story.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I am often emotionally affected by what I've read.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I have vivid images of the characters.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I find myself accepting events that I might have otherwise considered unrealistic.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I find myself thinking what the characters may be thinking.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I find myself thinking of other ways the story could have ended.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
My mind often	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

wanders.							
I find myself feeling what the characters may feel.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I find that events in the story are relevant to my everyday life.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I often find that reading stories has an impact on the way I see things.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I easily identify with characters in the story.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I have vivid images of the events in the story.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

12. Sentence Completion Task

Below are a number of abstract concepts. For each concept, pretend that it is your job to get someone who is not familiar with the concept to appreciate its essence. You do this by completing the given statement in such a way that it paints a concise yet vivid image portraying a way of thinking about that concept. For example, if you were given the concept "being deceived" you might use your imagination and come up with: Being deceived is.....like suffering fingerprint smudges on the lens of truth....to make a deal with the Devil....equal to playing cards with someone who has an ace up their sleeve....to be sold the Brooklyn Bridge....like believing the fox will guard the chicken coop.

1. Watching a sunset is...
2. Getting caught is...
3. Helping someone is...
4. Missing someone is...
5. Putting things off is...
6. Being in love is...
7. Achieving a goal is...
8. Watching television is...
9. Getting a gift is...

13. Please rate to what extent the statements below are characteristic of you:

	Extremely uncharacteristic of me	Quite uncharacteristic of me	A little uncharacteristic of me	Neither characteristic nor uncharacteristic of me	A little characteristic of me	Quite characteristic of me	Extremely characteristic of me
I would prefer complex to simple problems	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I like to have the responsibility of handling a situation that requires a lot of thinking.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Thinking is not my idea of fun.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I would rather do something that requires little thought than something that is sure to challenge my thinking abilities.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I try to anticipate and avoid situations where there is likely change I will have to think in depth about something.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I find satisfaction in deliberating hard and for long hours.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I only think as hard as I have to.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I prefer to think about small, daily projects to long term ones.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I like tasks that require little thought once I've learned them.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The idea of relying on thought to make my way	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

to the top appeals to me.							
I really enjoy a task that involves coming up with new solutions to problems.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Learning new ways to think doesn't excite me very much.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I prefer my life to be filled with puzzles that I must solve.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The notion of thinking abstractly is appealing to me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I would prefer a task that is intellectual, difficult, and important to one that is somewhat important but does not require much thought.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I feel relief rather than satisfaction after completing a task that required a lot of mental effort.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
It's enough for me that something gets the job done; I don't care how or why it works.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I usually end up deliberating about issues even when they do not affect me personally.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

14. To help us understand you better we would like to know your opinions about some common objects, situations, and activities. There are no right or wrong answers and therefore your first response is important. Please click on your level of agreement with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I like movies or stories with definite endings.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I always want to know what people are laughing at.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I would like to live in a foreign country for a while.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
A good job is one where what is to be done and how it is to be done are always clear.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I tend to like obscure or hidden symbolism.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
It really disturbs me when I am unable to follow another person's train of thought.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I am tolerant of ambiguous situations.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
A poem should never contain contradictions.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Vague and impressionistic pictures appeal to me more than realistic pictures.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I don't like to work on a problem unless there is a possibility of coming out with	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

a clear-cut and unambiguous answer.							
Generally, the more meanings a poem has, the better I like it.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I like parties where I know most of the people more than ones where all or most of the people are complete strangers.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

15. Please indicate your gender by clicking on one of the following options:

- ❍ Male
- ❍ Female

16. What is your country of origin?

17. What year were you born?

18. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ❍ Less than High School
- ❍ High School / GED
- ❍ Some College
- ❍ 2-year College Degree
- ❍ 4-year College Degree
- ❍ Masters Degree
- ❍ Doctoral Degree
- ❍ Professional Degree (JD, MD)

19. Please insert survey code below

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