

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE – SYNOPSIS**

This work adapts the Persuasion Knowledge Model (Friestad and Wright 1994) to a social media context where the commercial persuasion intentions of the online publisher are less apparent than in classical advertising media.

The model contributed by the authors (see Figure 1) draws on two main streams of research. The first line of research studies the effects of endorsements by online opinion sources on consumer’s attitude and behaviour, with a particular focus on the comparison between expert and layperson reviewers (Wang 2005; Smith et al. 2005; Ardelet and Brial 2011). The second stream of research relates to the effects of the disclosure versus the non-disclosure of financial interests on the perceived sincerity of the source and on the intentions towards the recommended products. The effects of disclosure can be negative, null or positive on the judgment of sincerity and the product reviews of the online source. While Carl (2008), Nekmat and Gower (2012) and Stephen et al. (2012) use attribution theory in studying the effects of disclosure on credibility, they do not specifically analyse the inferences which the visitor makes of the publisher’s external (remuneration – monetary focused) or internal (sharing of a passionate interest – reader focused) motives, inferences which can impact the readers’ perception of the source’s sincerity. The work of Kozinets et al. (2010) and Kim et al. (2012) suggests that the character narrative that the publisher crafts to portray herself is associated with the response generated by disclosure of financial interests.
The rationale for the development of the hypotheses and the measures can be found in (authors 2013), and in an extended model developed and validated with the same empirical data (authors 2014). The model shown in Figure 1 predicts the perceived credibility of the online source and the behavioural predispositions of the consumers (intentions towards the recommended products and towards the blog) according to the self-presentation and the disclosure/non-disclosure conditions. It accounts for the influence, on the credibility, of the inferences that the readers make of the internal (passion-sharing) and external (remuneration) motives of the source from the blog presentation narrative.

**Figure 1. The Empirically Grounded Model**

**H1**: The higher the perceived sincerity of the content editor, the higher the consumer behavioural predispositions
**H2**: The higher the perceived expertise of the content editor, the higher the consumer behavioural predispositions
**H3a**: The higher the external motive inference, the lower the perceived sincerity
**H3b**: The higher the internal motive inference, the lower the perceived sincerity
**H4a**: When the content editor discloses his/her financial interests, the external motive inference will be higher than when he/she does not disclose
**H4b**: When the content editor discloses his/her financial interests, the internal motive inference will be lower than when he/she does not disclose
H4c: The disclosure factor (disclosure vs non-disclosure) has an effect on perceived sincerity and on perceived expertise.
H5a: The external motive inference is higher when the content editor’s self-presentation narrative portrays a professional than when the self-presentation portrays a layperson.
H5b: The internal motive inference is lower when the content editor’s self-presentation narrative portrays a professional than when the self-presentation narrative portrays a layperson.
H5c: The self-presentation factor (professional vs layperson) has an effect on perceived sincerity and on perceived expertise.
H6: The effects of perceived sincerity and of perceived expertise on consumer behavioural predispositions differ according to the four contexts (layperson/non-disclosure; layperson/disclosure; professional/non-disclosure; professional/disclosure).

The test stimuli (shown translated in Figure 2) consisted of four versions of the home page of a fictitious beauty blog. The home page contained a recommendation by a French blogger, Agathe, of a fictitious lip balm brand. The self-presentation factor (professional/layperson) and the disclosure factor were manipulated in a 2x2 plan to create the four versions. For the disclosure version, a text frame was added informing readers that the blogger earns sales commission while remaining free to write her own opinion about the products she features. The four versions of the home page were assigned randomly to the subjects. Three hundred and eighty-three questionnaires were completed.

The main results are as follows. Firstly, the results of linear regressions show that the perceptions of sincerity and of expertise positively and significantly influence the behavioural predisposition related to the recommended product ($\beta_{\text{sincerity}} = .34; \beta_{\text{expertise}} = .23$) and the blog ($\beta_{\text{sincerity}} = .22; \beta_{\text{expertise}} = .27$) (H1 and H2 validated). Secondly, they confirm the negative effect of the external motives (remuneration) on the perceived sincerity $\beta = -.09$ and the positive influence of internal motives (passion-sharing) on the perceived sincerity $\beta = .55$ (H3 validated).

The analysis of main effects of the disclosure / non-disclosure factor reveals that the inference of the internal motives is significantly higher under non-disclosure (Mean = 5.64) than under disclosure conditions (Mean = 5.39) (H4b validated). There is no significant difference in
mean external inference levels under disclosure versus non-disclosure conditions (H4a invalidated). Nor is there any effect of the disclosure factor on perceived sincerity. In contrast, perceived expertise is higher when financial interests are disclosed (Mean = 3.98) than under the non-disclosure scenario (Mean = 3.62) (H4c validated only for expertise). The main effects of self-presentation show that the mean external inference is significantly higher under professional portrayal conditions (Mean = 4.02) than in the layperson context (Mean = 3.43) (H5a validated). The mean internal motive inference is significantly higher in the layperson blog contexts (Mean = 5.88) than in the professional blog contexts (Mean = 5.16) (H5b validated). In addition, mean perceived sincerity is significantly higher when the online publisher presents herself as a layperson (Mean = 4.89) than when she presents herself as a professional beautician (Mean = 4.39). On the contrary, mean perceived expertise is significantly higher when the online publisher presents herself as a professional beautician (Mean = 4.68) than when she presents herself as a layperson (Mean = 2.88) (H5c validated).

Table 1. The Effects of Perceived Expertise and of Perceived Sincerity on Intention Towards the Blog and on Intention Towards the Product

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variable</th>
<th>Layperson/Non-disclosure</th>
<th>Layperson/Disclosure</th>
<th>Expert/Non-Disclosure</th>
<th>Expert/Disclosure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intention towards the blog</td>
<td>Perceived Expertise</td>
<td>Perceived Sincerity</td>
<td>Perceived Expertise</td>
<td>Perceived Sincerity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td>.55**</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intention towards the product</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>.25*</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td>.32**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ns</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<.05; ** p < .01

Table 1 shows the effects of the perceptions of expertise and of sincerity on intention towards the blog and on intention towards the product (as posited in H6). The Moderation Analysis in the layperson context reveals that under non-disclosure conditions, only perceived sincerity
has an effect on product intention. Under the disclosure condition, both perceived expertise and perceived sincerity impact the product intention. The disclosure factor is also shown to moderate the effect of sincerity on blog intention. Perceived expertise and perceived sincerity both influence blog intention under non-disclosure conditions, however, when the financial interests are disclosed, only perceived expertise significantly influences intention towards the blog. In the professional context, when the financial affiliation is not disclosed, only the perceived sincerity has an effect on product intention and only the perceived expertise influences blog intention. If the home page contains the disclosure frame, perceived expertise remains the only factor that influences the intention towards the blog. For product intention, however, both the perceptions of the expertise and of the sincerity are determinants of persuasion efficacy. Finally, the slope tests comparisons show that the effect of perceived expertise (on product or on blog intention) is significantly higher in the layperson/disclosure context than in the professional/disclosure context.
Figure 2. Screen captures of the stimuli

Blog 1: Layperson/Non-disclosure

Blog 2: Layperson/Disclosure
Blog 3: Professional/Non-disclosure

Ma découverte du jour !

Je vous en parlais depuis plusieurs semaines, le voici arrivé, le nouveau baume pour les lèvres gloss-up 306, de la marque Glossy’s Make Up ! Je ne m’en lasse plus...

> Lire la suite

Blog 4: Professional/Disclosure

Ma découverte du jour !

Je vous en parlais depuis plusieurs semaines, le voici arrivé, le nouveau baume pour les lèvres gloss-up 306, de la marque Glossy’s Make Up ! Je ne m’en lasse plus...

> Lire la suite

As vu les liens de mère, merci de partager les liens de mère en relation avec mon site et des articles, ça me rend le plus de femmes possibles. Ce que j’aime dans la vie, c’est de connaître les gens et les aider, donc ce blog est vraiment en passe temps qui me passionne beaucoup.

Agathe