

## MA Thesis

### Augmented reality marketing: A quasi-experimental study evaluating the influence that interactivity has on brand attitude

Augmented reality (AR) has recently emerged as its own discipline within marketing as it enables uniquely interactive branded experiences which drive experiential and hedonic value (Hilken, et al., 2017; Hinsch, et al., 2020; Scholz, 2018). However, despite the research field growing there is still little known if or how AR branded experiences influence consumers' attitudes toward brands (Hinsch, et al., 2020; Poushneh & Vasquez-Parraga, 2017). Therefore, the aim of this research was to explore what role interactivity plays in influencing brand attitude in the context of augmented reality marketing (ARM) and to do so by evaluating and comparing participants experiences of two different pieces of ARM, one being Lego's AR app and the other being Lego's Snapchat-based AR filter. The following research question was developed: **How does interactivity in AR branded experiences influence the brand attitude of young adults?** To answer this question and based on previous findings, the following hypotheses were formulated:

**H1:** Enjoyment (H1a), satisfaction (H1b) and interactivity (H1c) have a significant positive correlation with brand attitude

**H0:** There is no statistically significant correlation between enjoyment and brand attitude (H0a) or satisfaction and brand attitude (H0b) or interactivity and brand attitude (H0c)

**H2:** Participants exposed to Lego's AR app will record a significant increase in attitude toward the brand (H2a) and participants exposed to Lego's Snapchat AR filter will record a significant decrease in attitude toward the brand (H2b)

**H0:** There is no significant increase in attitude for participants exposed to Lego's AR app (H0a), nor a significant decrease in attitude for participants exposed to Lego's Snapchat AR filter (H0b)

**H3:** Lego's AR app is significantly more interactive than Lego's Snapchat AR filter

**H0:** There is no significant difference in interactivity between the treatments

**H4:** Participants exposed to Lego's AR app record significantly increased enjoyment over participants exposed to Lego's Snapchat AR filter

**H0:** There is no significant difference in recorded enjoyment between the groups

**H5:** Participants exposed to Lego's AR app record significantly higher satisfaction than participants exposed to Lego's Snapchat AR filter

**H0:** There is no significant difference in recorded satisfaction between the groups

The research utilised a pretest-post-test non-equivalent group quasi-experimental design to evaluate and compare consumers' perceptions of interactivity and their feelings of enjoyment and satisfaction, and how these variables drive consequential changes in brand attitude. The results of the experiment revealed that

enjoyment, satisfaction, and interactivity do significantly and positively correlate with brand attitude. Moreover, Lego's Hidden Side AR app was highly interactive, enjoyable, and satisfactory and as such enhanced the participant's brand attitude. Furthermore, Lego's Snapchat-based AR filter was enjoyable but not interactive nor satisfactory and consequently did not enhance brand attitude, though notably, it did not diminish it either likely because it was not considered dissatisfactory. The findings suggest that even a minimally interactive AR branded experience offers hedonic value, however, for a brand to see improvements in consumer's attitude, interactivity should be maximised.

The study contributes to AR marketing (ARM) theory by providing fresh evidence of consumers' preference for increased interactivity as well as their positive and encouraging responses to ARM overall. Moreover, the study identified and established a spillover effect from the consumer's positive evaluation of ARM to their attitude toward the brand. Based on the findings, the study suggests marketers consider implementing AR into marketing strategies aimed at young adults to offer interactive branded experiences that drive value and enhance brand attitude. More specifically, it is emphatically recommended to maximise interactivity as it is what makes AR so engaging and can transform traditional marketing that is typically ignored by this audience into a captivating experience that contributes positive associations to the brand.

Regarding future research, it is recommended to continue investigation into AR filters. The format has been rapidly gaining popularity amongst marketers and as such, increasing understanding of consumer preferences would be valuable (Southgate, 2017; Scholz & Duffy, 2018; Rauschnabel, et al., 2018). Specifically, studies could examine how consumers respond to highly interactive filters. It would be beneficial to know if the increased allowance for control would simultaneously increase satisfaction and possibly even brand attitude as developing a filter is less costly and more convenient than developing an app.

## References

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