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## Structure of the thesis

This report is organized in the following seven parts:

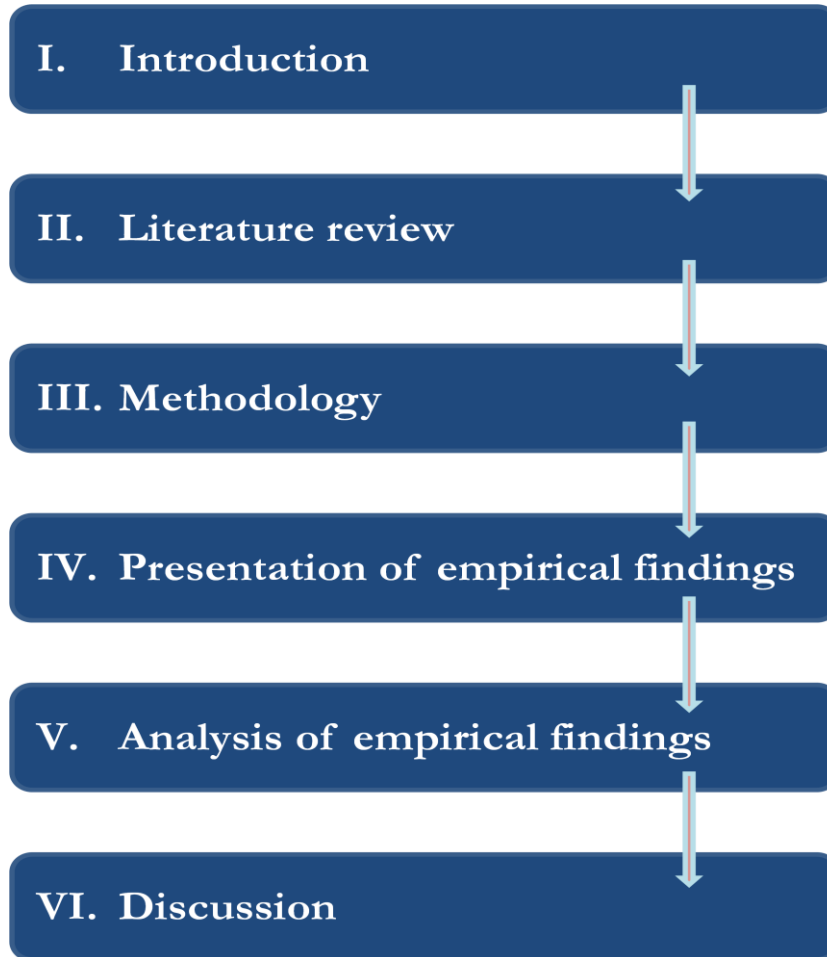


Figure 1-1 Structure of the thesis (developed by the authors).

In the first chapter the reader is introduced into the background and problem discussion of the researched area. Also, the research purpose and research questions are presented. A frame of reference related to the topic of investigation is formulated throughout the second chapter. In chapter three, the research method chosen by the authors is addressed. Chapter four presents the finding gathered from the 20 respondents that have been interviewed. The findings previously mentioned are analyzed by using the theoretical concepts presented in chapter two throughout chapter five. The main findings are emphasized in the subchapter Conclusions of the analysis. The Discussion chapter concludes the present thesis.

# 1 Introduction

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*This chapter begins with a brief background focusing on the state of advertising on social media platforms followed by a problem discussion on the topic of display advertising on social networking sites. It then continues with the problem discussion and purpose where the focus of the thesis is presented. Finally, the research questions are introduced including a short description of how this study has been conducted which is then followed by definitions.*

---

## 1.1 Background

In the early part of the 21st century, the world witnessed an explosion in the number of media that marketers can employ to reach their customers. With the use of the Internet as an advertising medium in the 1990s, Web pages became the new medium to use with banners and other similar types of ads competing for consumer's attention. Internet advertising augmented the traditional set of communication tools such as the television, radio, print and outdoor that marketers had used for the past 50 to 100 years (Winer, 2008). One of the newest forms of Internet advertising is advertising on social networks which has gained a lot of attention recently. The term social networks existed before the creation of the Internet but it was with the development of software programs such as Facebook, Myspace and LinkedIn that it became popularized (Hadija, Barnes & Hair, 2012).

Since the introduction of Facebook in 2004 the rapid growth of online social networking sites has changed the purpose and functionality of the Internet (Kelley, Kerr & Drennan, 2010). As the social media landscape has continuously and massively been expanding, the hub of customer activity has increasingly found its way to the virtual world inside a social media or social networking site. Facebook is today the biggest social networking site with more than 800 million users and is estimated to reach one billion users around the world by August 2012 (Wasserman, 2012). Social networking is a global phenomenon as social networks are the top online destinations reaching at least 60 percent of active Internet users and accounting for the majority of time spent online (Nielsen, 2011).

Marketers have recognized this new potential to reach customers directly in a personal and social environment and have thus been keen to advertise in this new medium (Kelley, Kerr & Drennan, 2010). Social media platforms present enormous potential for companies to get closer to the customers and by doing so facilitate increased revenues. As social media has become the premier place where customers are congregating, marketers need to advertise to them through these platforms. As expected, this is also precisely what is occurring as social media initiatives are springing up quickly across different organizations (Baird & Parasnis, 2011).

Online social networks are able to offer free service largely due to advertising in their virtual space. Advertising thus imposes itself as one of the most important building blocks for any online social network (Hadija, Barnes & Hair, 2012). Facebook's main source of revenue is its online advertising business where the company currently has three 3.1 percent market share of the overall online advertising market. However, if a social networking site is perceived as being overly commercialized or infested with commercial spam it risks negative consequences. For both advertisers and the sites themselves it is thus crucial that users accept advertising as a component of the social networking site (Taylor, Lewin & Strutton, 2011). The financial viability of these online sites further depends on the faith that advertisers have in the effectiveness of the medium.

As social networking advertising still represents a new and largely unexplored frontier for advertisers, consumer acceptance is vital both for social networking advertisers and for the providers of these platforms (Taylor, Lewin & Strutton, 2011). Fears exist that marketers may be intruding into users' personal spaces and placing their advertisements next to less-than-desirable content (Kelley, Kerr & Drennan, 2010).

## **1.2 Problem discussion**

Research studies have not been able to keep pace with the growing popularity of social media platforms and their recognition as potential advertising mediums. Most of the studies about advertising on social networks have focused on all forms of advertising, both “pushed” to consumers or “pulled” by consumers (Taylor, Lewin and Strutton, 2010; Kaplan & Haenlin, 2009; Hadija, Barnes & Hair, 2012; Kelly, Kerr & Drennan, 2008) without differentiating between the two. Little is known specifically about pushed display ads on social networking sites. This has also been confirmed by (Hadija, Barnes & Hair, 2012) who also states that display advertising on social media has not received enough research attention. Further, display advertising has been studied from different perspectives, from the point of view of their effectiveness (e.g., Burns and Lutz, 2006; Fourquet-Courbet, Courbet, and Vanhuele, 2007; Geissler, Zinkhan, and Watson, 2006; Yaveroglu and Donthu, 2008) but also by looking at how consumers accept them (Brackett & Carr, 2001; 2002; Schlosser, Shavitt & Kanfer, 1999). However, these studies have been constructed in connection with traditional Web sites and not specifically for a social networking site.

According to an industry-sponsored study, only 22 percent of consumers had a positive attitude toward social media advertising and eight percent of consumers that were studied had abandoned a social networking site because of what they perceived as excessive advertising. These concerns suggest a delicate balancing act for social-networking advertising. On one hand, advertising provides revenue that enables the sites to survive, on the other hand, overt and/or excessive commercialization in the form of advertising can diminish the appeal of social networking sites (Taylor, Lewin & Strutton, 2011). Consumer acceptance in the form of positive attitudes toward social networking advertising is thus the key to successfully integrating advertising into social networking sites (Taylor, Lewin & Strutton, 2011).

The most important way of understanding users and their perceptions and acceptance of advertising messages is by studying attitudes (Hadija, Barnes, Hair, 2012). In order to understand the attitudes toward social networking advertising, it is necessary to examine the factors that affect attitudes toward the ads. This is particularly true with people with the age between 18 and 34 whose dislike of print media makes them an increasingly elusive target (Taylor, Lewin & Strutton, 2011).

Due to the relatively unexplored nature of attitudes toward display advertising on social networks and the proliferation of this type of advertising there, the authors believe that this topic deserves more attention. Based on this, the authors have decided to focus on investigating user's attitudes exclusively toward display advertising on the social networking site Facebook as it is the most prominent social networking site both in terms of users (Wasserman, 2012) and revenue streams gained through display advertising.

As such, the focus lies in identifying the factors influencing the users' attitudes toward display advertisements on Facebook as well as investigating how these factors influence behavior towards display advertising. In order to accomplish this, theories related to attitudes,

online behavior, attitudes toward advertising and models of factors influencing the formation of attitudes have been reviewed.

### 1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate user's attitudes toward display advertising on Facebook by identifying the main factors that influence the formation of attitudes.

### 1.4 Research questions

1. What are the attitudes of Facebook users toward display advertising?
2. What are the main factors that influence these attitudes?

The authors will in addition consider the following research question, however, it is not as important as research question one and two.

3. Do these factors influence Facebook users' behavior toward display advertising?

In order to answer the research questions and accomplish the purpose of the study a qualitative research is going to be conducted. The data collection method employed is interviews. The respondents are Swedish speaking students in the age between 22 and 33 year old who have a Facebook account.

### 1.5 Definitions

**Advertising:** Advertising can be defined as a paid, non-personal communication about an organization and its products that is transmitted to a target audience through traditional mass media such as television, newspapers and radio or through the new media like the Internet (Lee & Johnson, 2005).

**New media:** The concept of new media is used in this thesis to refer to Internet Web sites, text messages and social media platforms (Graydon & Clark, 2003).

**Social media:** Internet-based applications that help consumers share opinions, insights, experiences, and perspectives (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2009).

**Social networking sites:** Social networking sites are applications that enable users to connect by creating personal information profiles, inviting friends and colleagues to have access to those profiles, and sending e-mails and instant messages between each other. (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2009).

**Facebook:** The largest social networking site initially founded by Mark Zuckerberg to stay in touch with his fellow students from Harvard University (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2009).

**Display advertising:** Display ads, sometimes referred to as banner ads, are boxes presented on Web sites, which contain text and graphical images. They are similar to traditional print ads, though published online, with the enhanced capability of incorporating a response device with the ability on the part of interested consumers to click-through to the subsequent Web site (Tuten, 2008).

***Attitude:*** An attitude is a lasting, general evaluation toward anything that one can have attitude toward like objects, ideas, people or issues (Solomon, 2009).



## 2 Literature review

*This chapter will present the full theoretical foundation that has been used in this thesis. The chapter begins with a general introduction to advertising followed by a short description of advertising on the Internet. The authors then continue by describing the phenomenon of social media followed by an explanation of social networking sites and Facebook. The final part of this chapter begins with an explanation of the concept of attitude that is further developed with the attitude-toward-the-ad and attitude toward advertising. The chapter ends with a presentation and an explanation of the two models that were incorporated for the purposes of the present thesis.*

The authors developed the Figure 2-1 below as a way to provide a clear overview of the structure and the topics that are dealt with in this chapter.

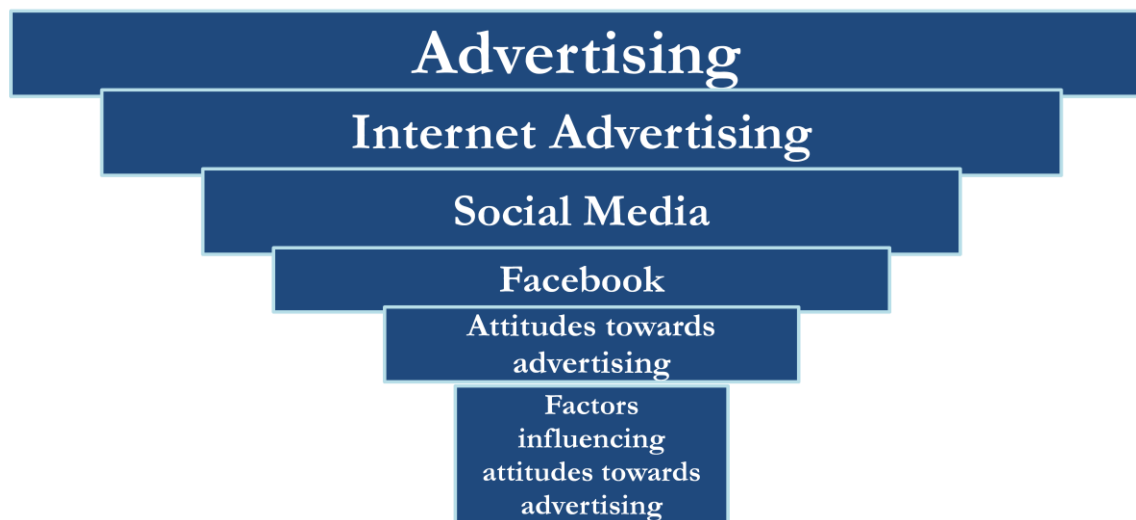


Figure 2-1 Structure of the literature (developed by the authors).

### 2.1 Advertising and the role of advertising in the marketing mix

Advertising can be defined as a paid, non-personal communication about an organization and its products that is transmitted to a target audience through traditional mass media such as television, newspapers and radio or through the new media like the Internet (Lee & Johnson, 2005). Advertising is used by both individuals and organizations in order to promote goods and services with the intention to either inform, persuade or to remind (Lee & Johnson, 2005). The purpose is to persuade the receiver to take either immediate action or action further down in the future (Richards & Curran, 2002). Advertising can be considered to be a non-personal way of communicating as is it usually paid by organizations with the purpose to persuade the audience to change its actions or perceptions (Bovee, Thill & Schatzman, 2003). Advertising is the promotion part of the marketing mix which further includes place, price and product and provides organizations and individuals with a cost effective manner to create brand awareness by reaching a wide audience (Belch & Belch, 2004). The process of communication from the advertiser to the consumer is outlined through the classic communication model presented below. The linkages between these two participants are the communications tools which consist of the message, which is the advertisement and the channel, which is the medium that is chosen for distribution (Dun-

can 2002; Belch & Belch, 2004). The communication model is presented in Figure 2-2 below.

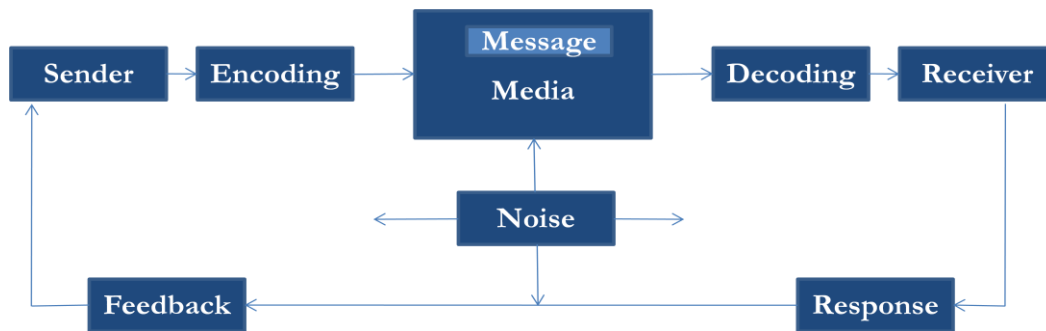


Figure 2-2 Communication Model (Kotler & Keller, 2006).

## 2.2 Internet advertising

Advertising messages can be categorized based on media platforms such as traditional media which incorporates newspapers, magazines, television and radio and new media which includes Internet Web sites, text messages and social media platforms (Graydon & Clark, 2003). The early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century dramatically changed the media landscape mainly through the introduction of new digital media. This alteration was made possible through improvements in technology and changes in how customers interact with the technology and each other (Russell, 2009).

Interactivity and digitalism are the main two characteristics of the new media according to Shankar & Hollinger (2007). Several authors have identified interactivity as the main differentiator between traditional and new media (Morris & Ogan, 1996; Pavlik, 1996; Rafaeli & Sudweeks, 1997). Having in mind the traditional communication model presented above, the interactivity aspect refers to the extent to which the roles between sender and receiver have changed during the communication cycle (Rafaeli, 1988). Moreover, the interactivity also refers to the extent to which consumers exchange the information received through advertising messages among themselves (Winer, 2008). This interactivity between company and consumers or between consumer themselves has been facilitated by the new media which is Internet based and thus based on digital technology (Winer, 2008). As a consequence of the specificity of new media, advertising delivered through it can further be classified into three groups:

*Intrusive* -where the customer is interrupted by advertising (Godin, 1999);

*Non-intrusive* -where the customer chooses to receive the communication (Winer, 2008);

*User generated* - where the customers created the communications (Winer, 2008).

## 2.3 Push based marketing and banners

As presented in the problem discussion, the present study is concerned solely with push advertising on Facebook. As such, this part of the theory only describes the characteristics of push messages. Traditional marketing activities where the message is directed from the company to the customer are called intrusive or push based marketing applications. The advertisements are in this scenario pushed to the public without a request from potential

customers and this is achieved by interrupting their activities (Akar, E. & Topçu, 2011). In the push marketing model the marketer is in control of both the message and who the message is sent to (Schultz, 2007). Internet advertising encompasses a variety of advertising formats under the label of intrusive push advertising. There are options such as buttons, banners, skyscrapers, rectangles and pop-ups. These Internet advertising options are variations of the same theme which are placed on Web sites. The concept of these types of advertisements is to act like billboards and attract attention and if clicked on take the customer to the advertiser's Web site (Russell, 2009).

Today, despite the great number of different type of advertisements, the majority of advertising on the Internet are still in the form of banners (Graydon & Clark, 2003). As such only the concept of banners is going to be expanded on. The rest of the formats are not of importance for the present study as the focus is only on display advertising which has been conceptualized as banners according to the following definition. Banner advertisements, also known as display advertisements, are boxes presented on Web sites that contain text and graphical images. These banners are similar to traditional print advertisements with the capability of incorporating click-through functions which permits interested customers to be taken to companies Web sites (Tuten, 2008). Internet advertising has received a lot of criticism due to the practices employed by the advertisers. Users have found Internet advertising to be deceptive, exaggerated or incorrectly targeted (Cho & Chen, 2004). According to Rosenbush (2006), advertisers have rushed to grab the available advertising space in online social networks. As such, this medium is characterized by a high degree of push advertising (Gruber, 2006) which is subject to users' critique.

## **2.4 Social media and social networking sites**

### **2.4.1 Web 2.0**

The new technology brought about through the Web 2.0 has had profound impact on Internet media for the construction of personal space, the organization of social interaction and through the design of open platforms. In the Web 2.0, the network environment has changed user's features from passively receiving information, which was the main purpose on Web 1.0, to actively seeking information and creating content (Bingyi & Dan, 2011). Web 2.0 can be considered as social software, social computing, participative Web and users' generated content (Akar. & Topçu, 2011). Web 2.0 is a new network technology that brings about new ideas and forms of communication. The purpose is no longer simply to read but to write and build as users can create their own blogs and communities for communicating with friends and users or simply joining other virtual network or social organizations where the same goals can be achieved (Bingyi & Dan, 2011).

### **2.4.2 Social media**

Social media is the newest form of Web based applications in which content is created by participatory communication where users create and share information. The era of social media started more than 20 years ago with the creation of the open diary which was an early social networking site that brought online diary writers into one community. The growing accessibility of high-speed Internet advanced the popularity of the concept leading to the creation of social networking sites such as Facebook in 2004 which popularized the term social media and made it widely recognized (Taylor, Lewin & Strutton, 2011).

The concept of social media refers to applications where the actions of users play a key role. Through these applications users can instantly send text, images, audio and video without any specific technical knowledge as this is achieved with the help of Web 2.0 technology (Akar & Topçu, 2011). Social media includes diverse channels such as blogs and forums, social networking sites such as Facebook, content communities like Youtube, Virtual Social Worlds such as Second life, virtual game worlds like World of Warcraft and Microblogging sites such as Twitter (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010). Figure 2-3 presents the mentioned categorization of social media platforms.

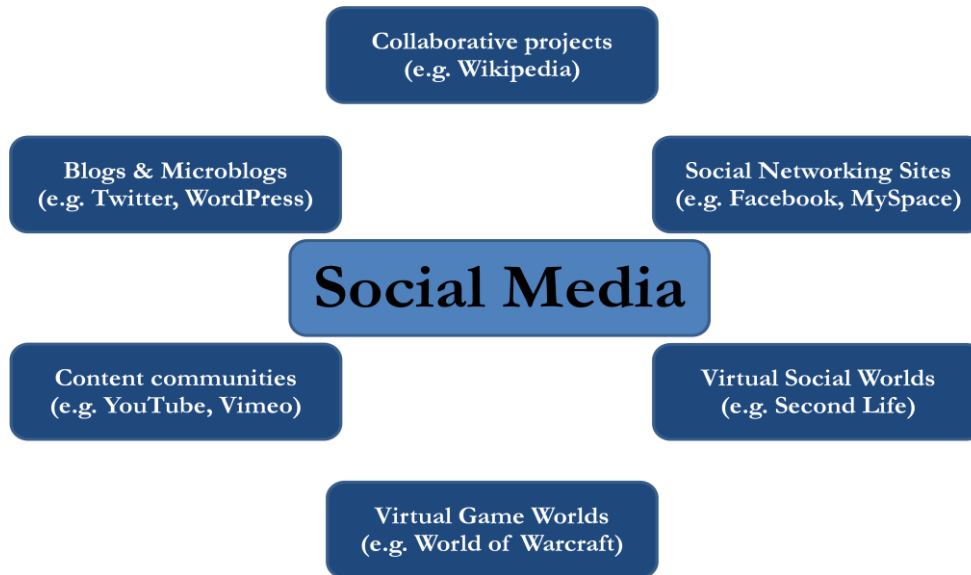


Figure 2-3 Classification of Social Media (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

As social media has rapidly become an important component of hundreds of millions of Internet user's everyday lives all over the world, the different uses of social media are beginning to be understood by marketers (Akar & Topçu, 2011). Through the explosion of Internet based messages, social media has now become a major factor influencing different aspects of consumer behavior including awareness, information acquisition, opinions, attitudes, purchase behavior, and post-purchase communication and evaluation (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). For these reasons the concept of social media is today top of the agenda for many business executives who try to identify different ways of making profitable use of these different applications (Taylor, Lewin & Strutton, 2011). Marketers can use the different social media sites that are available as a way to present products and services to dynamic communities and individuals that may be interested and through that increase an organizations visibility on the Internet. The use of social media for marketing purposes is gradually increasing and this is significantly impacting the marketing strategies of companies as it replaces older methods (Akar & Topçu, 2011).

### 2.4.3 Social networking sites

Social networking sites are the most visited social media platforms where individuals can construct a public profile within a bounded system (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Due to the exceptional advancement of the Internet during the last decade, the world has witnessed the entrance of different online social networking sites with unique characteristics such as Facebook making them popular to different user groups. Social networking is the fastest growing activity on the new Web 2.0 user centered Internet which has spread to sites of all

sizes. One of the unifying features of social networking sites is the way that they support public displays of friendship and connection (Merchant, 2012). In order to join a social network and construct a public or semi-public profile, the users have to start by submitting information which includes providing an email address. The users can then connect and communicate with others with common interests by constructing a list of users with whom they want to share a connection with (Merchant, 2012) or simply further navigate to other users' profiles while also enjoying a wide range of different functions such as instant messaging, emailing, blogging and networking with groups and events (Graydon & Clark, 2003).

#### **2.4.4 Facebook**

Facebook was launched in 2004 and is today the biggest social networking site (Wasserman, 2012). On Facebook, each user has a personal page where they can write comments, share photos and be friends with others. Companies also use Facebook to create a page where they can present themselves and their products or services (Graydon & Clark, 2003). For many marketers, advertising on these Web sites have become a must as it enables them a more efficient approach to market to users of interest by using a high tech approach. Through data mining of the collected user information, marketers can have direct access to their target markets. Facebook enables advertisers to be cost-efficient through a choice of paying either by clicks or impressions. This enables a company to create advertisements which can best serve their promotion objectives (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). According to Zenith Optimedia media agency, the online display advertising market is one of the fastest growing advertising segments and is predicted to reach \$ 25 billion this year with an expected growth of \$ 34 billion by 2013 (Nielsen, A., 2011). Facebook's main source of revenue is its online advertising business as presented in the background section of the thesis.

However, several factors highlight the need to evaluate the effectiveness of display advertising on Facebook. Kelly, Kerr and Drennann (2010) studied the antecedents of advertising avoidance among teenagers on social networks and the empirical data showed that previous negative experience alongside lack of relevance and credibility increased advertising avoidance. Hadija et. al (2012) investigated the effectiveness on the brand recognition of advertisements found on different social networking sites and their study concluded that users of online social networks do not dislike advertisements but simply do not notice them. Akar & Topçu (2011) further found that social media users do not consider activities with marketing purposes in social media applications as positive.

### **2.5 Attitudes toward advertising**

The concept of attitudes is an important research aspect of marketing. It is almost impossible to talk about opinions and views of advertising in online social networks without considering users attitudes. One of the most important ways of understanding users and their perceptions and acceptance of advertising messages is through a study of attitudes (Bergh & Katz, 1999). Attitude is defined as a learned predisposition of human beings (Fishbein, 1967). An attitude is a lasting, general evaluation toward anything that one can have attitude toward like objects, ideas, people or issues (Solomon, 2009). According to Kotler and Keller (2006) attitudes can be described as an individual's enduring favorable or unfavorable evaluation, emotional feeling, and action tendencies toward some object or idea. Attitudes can shape the minds of people as it makes them either like or dislike an object, thus either moving them toward or away from that object (Kotler and Keller, 2006).

## 2.6 Approaches to studying attitudes toward advertising

Throughout the years there have been different models in a variety of degrees of depth, breadth and specificity studying attitudes toward advertising that describe and explain the construct of attitude toward advertising (Bracket & Carr, 2001).

One example is the seven factor model developed by Pollay & Mitall (1993) which contribute to the formation of the attitude toward advertising. The formulation of the factors that were incorporated started from the assumption that beliefs are the basis of an attitude. The factors that were included in their model are (1) product information, (2) social role and image, (3) hedonic pleasure, (4) good for the economy, (5) falsity, (6) corrupt values and (7) materialism. The authors thought that some of the concepts included in the Pollay & Mitall model such as good for the economy, corrupt values, and materialism are abstract to the point where it would be very difficult for the respondents to articulate a coherent answer. Further, as this model has only been studied in the context of traditional media and not in relation to advertising on the Internet the authors' found it unsuitable for the set purposes.

The authors also found in the Bracket & Carr (2001) study, which investigated attitudes toward advertising on the Internet, the (1996) Ducoffe model which focuses on attitude toward advertising and includes three factors: entertainment, informativeness and irritation. This model which has some similarities to the Pollay & Mitall model is more simplistic and straight forward in regards to the factors involved and the fact that it has been previously tested in an online environment made this model more appropriate for the purposes of this thesis. Bracket & Carr (2001) integrated in their study the credibility factor from the MacKenzie & Lutz (1989) model which focuses on attitude-toward-the-ad into the Ducoffe (1996) model as a complement because it offered further explanation of the attitude toward advertising construct. In the present thesis, the authors have used the whole Lutz and MacKenzie (1989) model which includes ad perception, ad credibility, mood, attitude toward advertiser and attitude toward advertising. In regards to the attitude toward advertising, the authors have included the three factors from the Ducoffe (1996) model.

According to Lutz (1985), one key antecedent to attitude-toward-the-ad is attitude toward advertising in general. A direct effect of attitude toward advertising on the attitude-toward-the-ad is likely through a process of generalization, meaning that a consumer's affective reaction to advertising has a tendency to affect his or her attitude toward any specific ad (MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989). Further, Mehta (2000) stated that consumers' beliefs and attitudes toward advertising are important indicators of advertising effectiveness and that those who have more positive attitudes toward advertising are more likely to be persuaded by advertising. This is further backed up by Alwitt and Prabhakar (1992) who stated that consumers' attitudes toward advertising have been considered important to track as they likely influence exposure, attention and reaction to individual ads.

The interrelationship between these two models can further be explained in the following way. The attitude-toward-the-ad model by Lutz and Mackenzie (1989) is a response to the instrument, namely the advertisement itself. The attitude toward the advertising on the other hand, is a response to the institution, meaning the media delivering the advertisement (Sandage & Lechenby, 1980). The authors have thus chosen to use both the Ducoffe (1996) model and the MacKenzie and Lutz (1989) as the two models together provide a greater foundation for understanding the attitudes toward display advertising on Facebook.



## 2.7 Attitude-toward-the-ad model

Attitude towards-the-ad has been defined as ‘A predisposition to respond in a favorable or unfavorable manner to a particular advertising stimulus during a particular exposure occasion’ (Lutz, 1985). Lutz (1985) conceptual research helped to outline the different cognitive and affective antecedents and consequences of attitude-toward-the-ad. The definition of attitude-towards-the-ad is concerned with a particular exposure to a particular advertisement meaning that it is an attitudinal reaction to the ad generated at the time of exposure (MacKenzie & Lutz 1989).

Throughout history, many researchers that have studied advertising have used attitude-towards-the-ad as a measurement of the reaction to a commercial message (Chen & Wells, 1999; James & Kover, 1992; Lutz, 1985; MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989; Mehta, 2000). Attitude-towards-the-ad is one of the most influential theories in marketing communications and advertising research (Bruner & Kumar, 2000; Lutz, 1985; Mackenzie & Lutz, 1989). Attitude-toward-the-ad is considered by researchers as a successful construct that represents consumers’ feelings of favorability or unfavorability toward the ad itself (Mitchell & Mitchell & Olson 1981; Shimp, 1981). A number of studies have documented the significant explanatory power of attitude-toward-the-ad (Batra & Ray, 1986; Gardner, 1985; MacKenzie, Lutz & Belch, 1986; Mitchell, 1986).

The attitude-toward-the-ad model developed by Lutz and Mackenzie originated from Shimp’s (1981) perspective who considered that attitudes toward the ad are generated from consumers cognitive and affective reflections related to advertisements. The model presented below in Figure 2-4 is an illustration of the different factors that are incorporated in the attitude-toward-the-ad that has been utilized in this thesis.

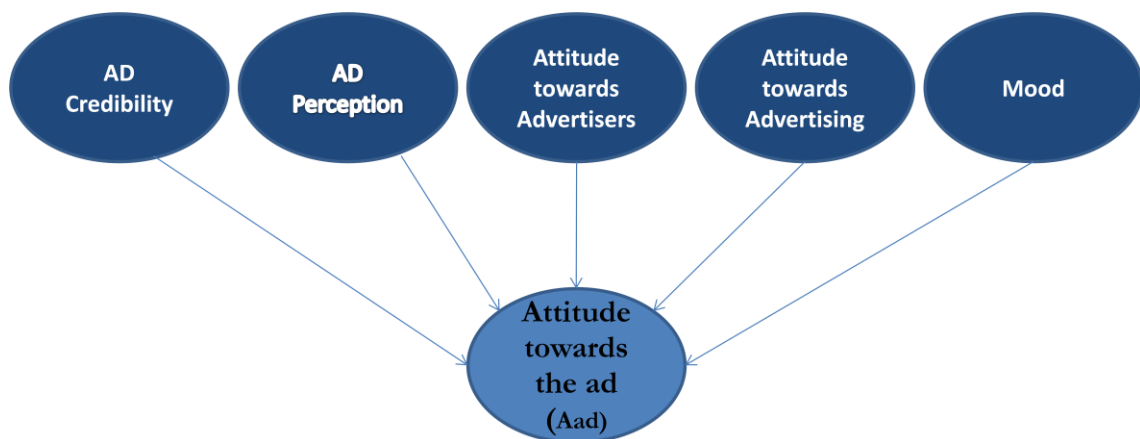


Figure 2-4 Attitude-toward-the-ad Model (Lutz & MacKenzie, 1989).

These five factors presented in Figure 2-4 above are going to be presented in more detail in the following sub chapters in order to give the reader an understanding of how they act in shaping the attitude-toward-the ad. Special attention is dedicated to the construct attitude toward advertising which is going to be treated separately and in more detail.

## **2.8 Factors influencing attitude-toward-the-ad**

### ***Ad credibility***

The definition of ad credibility refers to the extent to which the consumers perceive claims made about the brand in the ad to be truthful and believable. Two constructs underlying the ad credibility have been incorporated in this thesis, advertiser credibility and advertising credibility (MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989). According to Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), the effect of advertiser credibility and advertising credibility affect the credibility of any particular ad through a force of logical consistency meaning that audience members are likely to perceive a direct relationship between how credible a given advertising is based on the credibility of the advertiser. According to Bracket and Carr (2001), advertising credibility has been proven to be a critical factor that affects advertising on the Internet.

### ***Ad perceptions***

Ad perceptions are defined as a multidimensional array of consumer perceptions of the advertising stimulus. The underlying determinants of ad perceptions are the execution characteristics of the ad stimulus, the individuals' attitude toward advertising in general and attitude toward the advertisers in general (MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989). Even though credibility is the most widely studied as perception, there is a wide range of other perceptions which has shown to influence attitude-toward-the-ad (Lutz, 1983). Mechanical and executional aspects of commercials have been related to the attitude-toward-the-ad by several authors when researching the topic of commercial messages delivered customers (Batra & Ray 1986; Belch & Belch 1984; MacKenzie, Lutz & Belch 1986). Grussell (2007) found that people have better expectations from advertising on print than from advertising on electronic media.

### ***Attitude toward the advertiser***

Attitude toward the advertiser is defined as a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner and focuses on the consumers affective reactions toward the sponsor of the advertisement. This is thought to be quite a straightforward generalization of effect meaning that the feelings about an advertiser govern the feelings about the advertisement itself making it more or less an automatic process (Lutz, 1983). This attitude is seen as a representation of the combined accumulation of previous information and experience meaning that it was formed beforehand and serves as a summary judgment of the advertiser (MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989).

The main perceptual factors in regards to the advertisers include attractiveness, reputability and similarity (Lutz, 1983). Choi and Rifon (2002) found in their research that well known advertisers are perceived as being more credible than smaller, relatively unknown advertisers. For established advertisers the image that they have already created in the mind of the consumers makes the brand or the ad credible (Choi & Rifon, 2002). Taylor *et al.* (2010) found that the attitude toward a specific advertisement is influenced by the ability of the advertiser to match the content of the ad with the motivation that drove the users the access that specific platform.



## ***Mood***

Mood is defined as the consumer's affective state at the time of exposure to the ad stimulus. The antecedents underlying the mood are executional characteristics of the ad and reception context which includes surrounding ad clutter and the nature of the exposure situation (MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989). Mood is considered to be fluctuant variable, depending on the differences between individuals and contextual factors.

## **2.9 Attitude toward advertising model**

According to Lutz (1985), attitude toward advertising is a general construct that is defined as “a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner to advertising in general”. Attitudes toward advertising consist of multiple dimensions that evoke both positive and negative emotions that are understood to be antecedent influences on overall attitudes. One's beliefs about advertising are antecedents of attitude toward advertising (Brackett & Carr, 2001; Ducoffe, 1996; Pollay & Mittal, 1993). Measurement of the overall attitude toward advertising has traditionally gone together with research on the underlying beliefs associated with different aspects of attitude toward advertising (Bauer & Greyser, 1968; Durand & Lambert, 1985; Mehta, 2000; Reid & Soley, 1982; Soley & Reid, 1983). Bauer and Greyser (1968) found that four perceptual dimensions, annoying, enjoyable, informative and offensive were strongly related to attitude-toward-the-ad.

Ducoffe (1995) identified the primary benefits and costs that consumers derive in terms of advertising value and demonstrated that entertainment, informativeness, and irritation influenced attitudes toward advertising on the Web. According to Ducoffe (1995), these three factors are the starting point for explaining how consumers assess the value of advertising. According to Houston and Gassenheimer (1987), in order for an exchange to be carried out, each party of the exchange has to both give and receive value. From the perspective of a customer, this can happen when the value of advertising is considered to meet or exceed their expectations. An advertising is thus seen as an overall representation of the worth of advertising to consumers (Ducoffe, 1996). The validity of Ducoffe's (1996) model is further supported by Taylor *et al.* (2011) who studied generalized attitudes toward the concept of commercial content on different kinds of social networking sites. Taylor *et al.* (2011) found that social networking advertisement needs to provide some sort of explicit value to users in order to achieve success. The values that appeared most likely to be highly regarded were entertainment followed by information value.

The Ducoffe (1996) model is presented below in Figure 2-5 followed by detailed explanations of the three factors that are included.

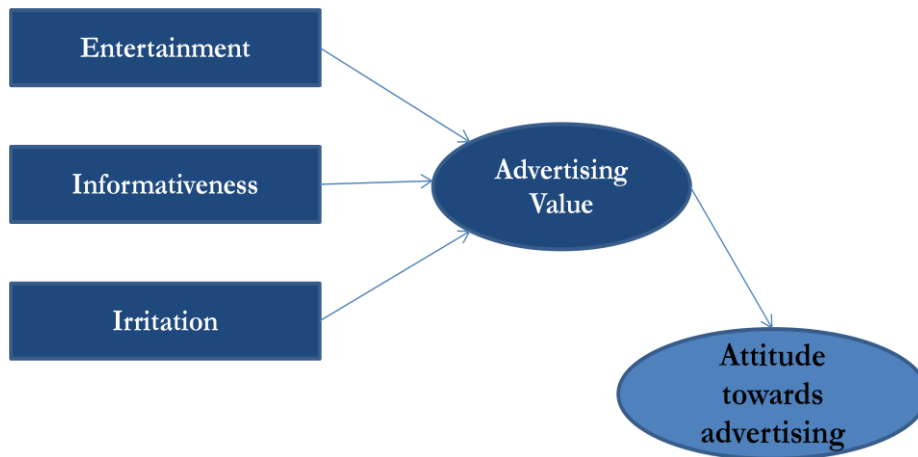


Figure 2-5 Attitude toward advertising (Ducoffe, 1996).

## 2.10 Factors influencing the attitude toward advertising

### *Entertainment*

The value of entertainment lies in its ability to fulfill an audience need escapism, diversion, aesthetic enjoyment, or emotional release (McQuail, 1983). The ability of advertising to entertain can enhance the advertising experience of consumers (Alwitt & Prabhaker, 1992). Included under the umbrella of entertainment are the opinions of consumers' in regards to how enjoyable, pleasing, exciting and fun to see that they find advertisements to be. According to Shimp (1981) and Mitchel and Olson 1981 (1981), pleasant or likable advertising is thought to have a positive impact on brand attitudes. Further, Ducoffe (1996) stated that the degree of entertainment provided by advertising is not only important on traditional media but also crucial on the Internet as well as social media.

### *Informativeness*

According to Rotzoll and Christians (1989), the main legitimizing function of advertisement in its informational role both in terms of the media outlet and whether it is a good source of product information but also whether the advertisement supplies relevant product information. Consumers reported in Bauer and Greyser (1968) study that advertisements ability to supply information is the primary reason for approving of it while other research showed that the advertisers ability to provide an accurate picture of products is at the core of consumer beliefs of benefits (Andrews, 1989). According to Ducoffe (1996), the way that consumers evaluate the experience of processing advertising can be seen as an added source of advertising value. The Internet has already been suggested to become the primary source of information for consumers and as such, the information delivered should encompass qualities such as accuracy, timeless and usefulness (Siau & Shen, 2003).

### *Irritation*

When advertising is perceived to be annoying, offensive, insulting, deceptive or overly manipulative consumers are likely to perceive it as unwanted and irritating. The intrusive tactics advertisers employ when competing for consumers' attention can be annoying to the audiences (Sandage & Leckenby, 1980; Rettie, Robinson & Jenner, 2001) which can be

translated into irritation. Moreover, when users find advertising as interfering with their goal oriented tasks for which they are present on the specific social networking site, the ads are perceived as being irritating ( Li, Edwards & Li, 2002),

## **2.11 Behavior toward display advertising**

An attitude is composed of three components which are affect, cognition and behavior. Affect refers to the feeling of a consumer toward an attitude object, behavior refers to the intentions to take action and cognition is the beliefs about the attitude object. The ABC model emphasizes the interrelationship among knowing, feeling and doing (Solomon *et al.*, 2009). Beliefs and attitudes have been proven to be the precursors of consumers' responses toward online advertising (Wang & Sun, 2010). Wolin (2002) has tested and proved that different belief factors affect the formation of the attitude of Web users toward online advertising which further on manifests in certain behavior toward it.

For the present thesis two types of user behavior related to Web advertising have been taken into consideration: Attention paid toward advertisements and clicking on advertisements, meaning the repetitiveness with which users click on a banner ad Dreze and Zufryden (1997). Ad clicking has been conceptualized as a behavioral outcome of online advertising by Wang and Sun (2010). According to Li *et al.* (2002), a negative attitude toward advertising may evolve in an avoidance behavior toward advertisements.

## 3 Methodology

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*This chapter deals the research method used in this thesis in relation to the research approach, research design, secondary and primary data collection and interviews. Moreover, the discussion in this chapter also contains topics such as validity, reliability, trustworthiness and generalizability of the findings generated by the research. The methodology chapter concludes with a presentation of the limitations of the present study.*

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### 3.1 The research approach

The aim of this study is to investigate the attitudes toward display advertising among Facebook users. More specifically, the thesis focuses on the factors influencing both the attitudes and the behavior manifested by users. As presented in the methodology literature, there are different ways of approaching a research study: either inductively, deductively or thirdly through a combination of the two previously mentioned which is by some authors called abduction (Alvesson & Skoldberg 1994; Kirkeby, 1990; Ezzy, 2002).

Deduction starts from the facts that are already known and continues with testing the anticipated phenomena. The starting point is as such the theories developed in relation to the topic of interest that guides the researcher in the inquiry process (Malhotra & Birks, 2007). The deductive process relies on the development of hypotheses that are derived from the studied theory which tests the relationships between the studied concepts and the formulated a conclusion made from the findings. Starting from a different perspective, induction deals more with the observation of the facts and is concerned with the context in which events are taking place. The purpose is to develop an understanding of the way humans interpret their social world in order to afterwards develop a theoretical framework (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). The two methods are not mutually exclusive and they can be used in combination which is also the case with the present thesis which cannot be defined as being absolutely deductive or purely inductive. The empirical data is the starting point in the abductive approach as in the case of induction. However, the difference lies in the acceptance of theoretical concepts prior to the investigation or during the collection of empirical data (Alvesson & Skoldberg 1994).

Given that the study is concerned with the factors influencing the attitudes and behaviors toward display advertising on Facebook, it starts with a deductive approach through the insertion of relevant models that outline the factors influencing attitude-toward-the-ad. Through these two models presented in the literature review chapter, attitude-toward-the-ad model (Lutz & MacKenzie, 1989) and attitude toward advertising (Ducoffe, 1996) the framework for the empirical data collection was created. Thus, the theory is not tested but simply used for guidance when conducting the interviews in order to uncover the respondents' perspective. The thesis is further inductive in its approach as the purpose is to understand the way that the respondents interpret the display advertisements on Facebook. As such, the present study adopts an abductive approach.

### 3.2 Research purpose

The purpose of a research is often defined by the research questions and the research objectives (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). The purpose of a study may be classified as either exploratory which can be studied either qualitatively or quantitatively or conclusive (Malhotra *et al.*, 2007), which can either be descriptive or explanatory (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

The design of the study developed in this thesis can be described as exploratory with a qualitative research method approach incorporated with explanatory and descriptive elements. When there is a need to clarify the nature of a problem and gain more knowledge about it, an exploratory research is suitable (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). The research is further classified as being exploratory as the research has been conducted in a flexible manner. This was done in order to understand how users feel, think and act in relation to display advertising on Facebook which is a phenomenon that is difficult to understand and where little information is available. These reasons have been identified by different authors as suitable for an exploratory study (Malhotra *et al.*, 2007; Polonsky & Waller, 2005; Cooper & Schindler, 2006).

The research is considered to be descriptive if presentation of the actual facts or situations is developed. Further in this thesis, the gathered data is presented in a logical and structured manner in the findings chapter in order for the reader to understand the information provided by the respondents. This makes it descriptive in nature. The analysis chapter is explanatory as it concentrates more on showing how the different factors mentioned by the respondents are affecting the overall attitude and behavior toward display advertising on Facebook. As mentioned by (Zikmund, 2000; Saunders *et al.*, 2009), the relation between differed variables that a study might evaluate is treated under explanatory research

### **3.3 Research method**

As argued by Silverman (2010), the choice between qualitative and quantitative research method should be made by considering the specificity of the task on hand. The same author pleads for the use of qualitative methods when people's behavior is investigated. As the present thesis deals with the factors influencing attitudes and partly with people's behavior toward display advertising, the direction of the research method is clearly toward a qualitative approach. Furthermore, both the research approach - abduction and the research purpose with its exploratory nature adopted in this thesis are positively oriented toward a qualitative research method approach (Cooper & Schindler, 2006). Qualitative research is concerned with how the social world is experienced and interpreted (Mason, 2002). As this thesis is about investigating the factors influencing the attitudes toward display advertising on Facebook, which is a social digital world, a qualitative research method has been considered appropriate.

The present qualitative research concentrates on the point of view of the research participants, which are the users of Facebook. The aim of the research method was to place the respondents in a real world setting (Patton, 2002) which in the present case meant the main page on Facebook. As the present research is inspired from the theoretical concept of attitude-toward-the-ad which requires the evaluation of advertisements in the actual visualization moment, it was necessary for the authors to sit down with the respondent during the actual observation of the display advertisements on Facebook. The qualitative approach offers the researcher the possibility to investigate in-depth the factors influencing the attitudes that users have toward the ads displayed on Facebook, as this thesis was not started by making any assumptions in regards to these factors (Daymon & Holloway, 2002; Silverman, 2010). As Cooper and Schindler (2006) writes, the aim of the qualitative research is to interpret, to build an understanding of something that happens and not to prove a specific theory. The findings have not been produced for the purpose of quantifying the information (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) but for the purpose of evaluating the answers that people have provided and the actions that were taken when observing the banners on Facebook. This was done in order to identify patterns through the process of documentations

and further through the analysis of the gathered data. Numbers have been used only in order to differentiate the main opinions from other less emphasized findings.

### **3.4 Time horizon**

The time horizon of the research is also an important aspect that researchers have defined. According to Saunders *et al.* (2009), in terms of the time dedicated to the research, the study can be either cross-sectional or longitudinal. The cross-sectional studies are concerned with understanding how a particular phenomenon is defined at a specific moment in time. On the other hand, a longitudinal study is oriented toward capturing the changes that a phenomenon suffers over time. In terms of the time horizon of the present research, the study is considered to be a cross-sectional study, since the attitudes of the respondents and the reasons behind them are studied at a specific moment in time, during the interview moment.

### **3.5 Data collection**

The present thesis is going to rely on both types of data collection methods that are available, namely primary data and secondary data. These two methods have been clearly defined based on the functions that they fulfill. Data that is being collected with the purpose of answering the specific purpose of the study through techniques such as interviews, observations or experiments is called primary data. On the other hand, data that has been used in previous studies or elaborated by the findings of previous studies is called secondary data (Malhotra *et al.*, 2007).

#### **3.5.1 Primary data collection**

There are four major methods of gathering qualitative data: observations, analyzing texts and documents, interviews and focus groups, audio and video recording (Silverman, 2006). For the purposes of this thesis, the interview method was found to be the most suitable alternative combined with an audio recording of the whole process. Both the data collection and the analysis have been characterized by flexibility and did not follow a strict theoretical pattern (Daymon & Holloway, 2002). Direct observation is an alternative method when studying users that can be used when there is a need to research specific individual activities. First hand observations would however be impossible to conduct in this scenario as observations alone would not permit an understanding of the user's attitudes or the factors that are influencing them. The authors also considered gathering the empirical data through diaries where participants are required to fill in information related to the topic investigated. This is a method that is used when studying people in a personal environment (Rieman, 1993) without being too intrusive (Bloor & Wood, 2006). Moreover, several authors have opted for the use of this method when conducting exploratory research in a social medium (Rieman, 1993; Lee, Kim & Kim, 2009; Ryan & Valverde, 2006). The optimal period of collecting data through diaries is seven days (Bloor & Wood, 2006). This approach was however not viable as the potential participants thought that the seven days participation period was hard to accommodate in their busy academic schedule. Owing to the facts presented above, the interview method has been found to be the best fit for this study.

When choosing the research method, the researchers have the possibility to use either a single data collection method or a single analysis procedure also called mono method or to employ several data collection methods and consequently different analysis procedures called multiple methods (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

For the purpose of this thesis, only a single data collection method was used as all the data was collected through the semi-structured interviews.

### **3.5.2 Interviews**

Interviews have been defined as a purposeful discussion held between two or more people (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Interviews are used as a data collection method that helps the researcher to gather data based on a list of prior defined questions in order to respond to the main research questions and fulfill the object of the study (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). For the purpose of the present thesis it has been considered appropriate to use semi-structured interviews which are a set of questions and themes that the researcher planned to discuss with the participants, but in a flexible way by adapting them to each interview case based on the provided answers (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). This type of data collection method has been chosen for several reasons. First of all, the research method employed is qualitative which fits well with the held consideration that semi-structured interviews are the most used type of interviews in exploratory and qualitative research (Morse & Richardson, 2002 & Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Secondly, “what”, “how” and “why” questions that are associated with semi-structured interview questions are employed throughout the formulation of the present interview questions as well (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

Several authors have pointed out that conducting interviews is not an easy task and the prior experience and formed skills of the interviewers could make the difference between a good and a bad interview (Saunders *et al.*, 2009; Morse & Richards, 2002). The authors of this thesis are not experienced moderators but have strived to overcome each of the obstacles by carefully preparing in advance for the meetings with the respondents. One valuable insight offered by Morse and Richards (2002) is namely to be a good listener has been taken into consideration and been applied thoroughly throughout all the interview sessions. A good listener is both passive and interactive meaning being interested enough in the conversation in order to make the appropriate comments and help the respondents when in difficulty in order to keep the conversation going, but at the same time not interrupts the flow of thought of the participant. This was applied by the interviewers as thoroughly as possible when conducting the interviews. Further, according to Saunders *et al.* (2009), choosing an appropriate location for conducting the interviews is further vital for successful results, since it might influence the data offered by the respondents. As such, the majority of the interviews have been conducted at the university due to the fact that it is a comfortable, familiar and an easily accessible medium for the respondents. More specifically, the study rooms in the Library building have been used due their privacy and noise isolation characteristics.

Prior research on literature concerning attitudinal studies was conducted in order to develop a better understanding of the topic. The theoretical findings were used for guidance in terms of providing a foundation of the main factors that influence attitudes. Through these factors, relevant questions were developed and used in the interviews in order to understand user's attitudes (see appendix 2). These questions were organized in three different sections for both logical purposes and practical requirements. The first section was comprised of general questions which requested information about knowledge, general attitude and behavior toward the display advertising on Facebook. This part of the section was based purely on the memory of the respondents. The following part of the interview tested particular attitudes and particular factors that might affect them in relation to specific advertisements that were displayed on the users' Facebook page. The interviews were finalized with two broader questions which asked for an evaluation of their attitudes and the

most important factors influencing those attitudes. In total 20 open ended questions were created. Further, a probing set of questions were developed separately from the interview questions that were provided to the participants with the aim of assisting the authors explore different answers.

According to Saunders *et al.* (2009), an interview should make the participants state what they think, feel, know and have previously behaved in regards to the topic. For this reason, the participants were encouraged to speak freely and expand both in regards to the framework of questions that was provided, but also on other aspects of display advertising if there was a desire to do so. At the end each interview, the participants were asked to provide a feedback to the interviewer regarding the level of understanding of the questions and the manner in which the interview took place. All respondents provided a positive feedback. They mentioned that they understood all the questions and were able to answer without difficulties. They also appreciated the attention of the interviewers and the fact that some questions were skipped when the topic had already touched upon in a previous question.

The data used in this thesis was gathered during the month of April 2012 in Jönköping, Sweden. In total, 20 students were interviewed. Information about the interviews and the respondents that have been interviewed can be found in appendix 1. The interviews were conducted on a one-to-one basis between a single researcher and a single participant. There are several ways in which such interviews can be handled, face-to-face, by telephone or by Internet. For the present study, the face-to-face method has been employed. Since the interviews were semi-structured and the prepared questions had been defined by both co-researchers it was considered appropriate to conduct the interviews separately. Each researcher conducted ten interviews each using the same template of questions that is presented in appendix 2. This approach is favored by Morse and Richards (2002) who state that if the research design does not restrict it in anyway, the interviews should be conducted on a one-to-one basis in a private setting. Moreover, the authors made sure to gather a significant number of interviews in order increase the reliability and ensure that a considerable amount of data material was available for the analysis.

When conducting the interviews the participants were recorded through the use of a computer. Permission for recording was asked from all of the participants. The interviews started with a brief presentation of the topic and the overall framework of the interview. The participants were told that the first part was more general in its nature and that the second part of the interview had a practical side and that they would be asked to answer questions about the specific ads that were displayed on their Facebook page. All of them agreed to use their personal accounts on Facebook. Throughout the duration of the whole interview, the participants had in front of them a sheet with the questions that were being discussed. English was the language used while conducting the interviews. Incentives in the form of cookies, coffee and tea were offered to each participant. The interviews lasted between 15 and 45 minutes, which accounted for a total of 500 minutes of audio data. The audio files have been transcribed by the researchers and a total of 30 pages of written data were generated. The data that was gathered was already partially categorized in the transcription process as the questions that were asked to the respondents were logically arranged according the theoretical background before the interviews.

### **3.5.3 The choice of respondents**

The population of interest for this research has been people between the ages of 18 and 34 as this age group is indicated as having the most active participants on Facebook according



to Taylor, Lewin and Strutton (2011). The criteria's that were requested in order to participate in the interviews was that the individual spoke Swedish and had a Facebook account that they used on a regular basis. These requirements were necessary as the present study is concerned with advertising that was displayed in Swedish. The respondents have thus been selected based on the above mentioned criteria's.

There are two general techniques in which sampling procedures could be categories and these are probability and non-probability sampling. In non-probability sampling techniques the personal judgment of the researcher plays a key role in selecting the sample elements. On the contrary, in the probability sampling technique, chance plays a more important role, as each element of the population could be chosen as part of the sample to be studied (Malhotra *et al.*, 2007). For the present thesis a non-probability technique has been used in order to select the sample. There are several procedures of selecting a sample in a non-probabilistic manner. In the present thesis a combination of convenience and snowballing sampling techniques has been used (Malhotra *et al.*, 2007). More specifically, the sample was formed of students as they are easy to reach at the university campus during most days of the week. Consequently, the snowball sampling technique has been employed. In the snowball techniques as explained by Malhotra *et al.* (2007), the respondents that have been selected initially are asked to refer to other people that could participate in the study. After interviewing several people we asked them to point out to other people that they considered suitable for this specific study and that fulfilled the requirements.

#### **3.5.4 The secondary data collection**

Secondary data has both advantages and disadvantages which have be analyzed and evaluated before choosing the materials to be used in the present thesis. The large amount of data and the easiness of its accessibility make it attractive for researchers. Nevertheless, it should also be kept in mind that these data has been gathered for a different purpose and fits the requirements of those specific studies and will never be found as a perfect match for future studies. This phenomenon could be explained by the incompatibility between the measurement techniques used, the time frame when the data was collected and variation between terms in the research (Zikmund, 2000). Consequently, particular attention has been dedicated to the type of secondary data to be used. The most reliable data related to the topic has been included and when feasible adjustments have been made in order to fit the present study.

In order to gather the secondary data for the present thesis the resources available from the school library have mainly been used. The used materials have been found both in electronic and paper format. Books and articles have been reviewed. The articles collected have been mainly academic articles, gathered from different well known journals on the topic of advertising and consumer behavior. Particular attention has been dedicated to the credibility of the sources. Non-academic material has been used as well since academic information connected with social networking sites is still limited. Nevertheless this was done only to a smaller extent.

### **3.6 Validity, reliability, trustworthiness and generalizability**

A topic that needs to be discussed in relation to any type of research is the credibility of the study. When talking about credibility in terms of a quantitative method, the researchers often refer to validity and reliability which refers back to the instrument construction, meaning the questionnaire design. As the instrument in qualitative research is the actual re-

searcher and the way of conducting the interview, the credibility aspect of the research is strongly correlated with the ability and the effort of the researcher. In the following rows of the thesis the concepts of validity, reliability and trustworthiness are expanded and also the efforts that have been made in order to assure both the reliability and validity of the present thesis are presented. These aspects have been evaluated both critically and impartially.

### **3.6.1 Validity**

The validity of a study conducted through semi-structured interviews focus on the manner in which the questions have been designed (Grey, 2004). Validity further has to do with the clarity of the questions and the wide angles from which the topic is discussed Saunder *et al.* (2009). The topic of validity is also closely related to whether the content of the questions is directly related to the research objectives developed by the interviewers (Grey, 2004). The aim of the authors was to subtract as much information and knowledge as possible from the respondents through the questions that were developed. A table has been put together in order to explain the role of each question in the interview and the theoretical aspects behind them (see appendix 3).

Moreover, the way in which the respondent and interviewer interact plays an import role in terms of generating valid findings (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). In order to guarantee validity, the respondents were encouraged to speak freely. If any of the interviewees had already touched the topic of a subsequent question in a previous answer, that specific questions was skipped in order for the respondent not repeat themselves. At the beginning of the interview, each participant was explained that there was no specific time frame that they had to follow but nevertheless it was estimated that no more than 60 minutes would be required for discussing the prepared questions. All questions were designed to touch upon the different aspects mentioned in the theory chapter. The wording of each question was carefully designed in order to be understandable and easy to answer. A pilot test was conducted in order to test the questions employed in the interview. Where needed, clarifications and helping words were provided to participants that required it.

One important part in the interview design is the external validity (Grey, 2004) which deals with the extent to which the findings can be generalized. As Malhotra *et al.* (2007) states, there is an important limitation in these types of sampling techniques as the conclusions drawn from analyzing the findings cannot be considered valid for the entire population. From this point of view, the present thesis deals with restricted external validity since the results cannot be generalized to the entire population of interest. Nevertheless, there have been made efforts to improve the level of external validity through the sampling process. Although the majority of the respondents are Swedish due to the language requirements, five international students were selected in order to capture a greater variety of opinions. Moreover, the respondents have been selected from different study programs.

### **3.6.2 Reliability**

The topic of reliability is treated by Grey (2004) in terms of standardization for both the questions asked during an interview and the behavior displayed by the researcher while conducting the interview. In order to guarantee reliability, the set of questions asked to each individual were standardized. Moreover, the process of conducting the interviews was also standardized as much as possible by conducting the same introduction speech to all the participants. Firstly, the definition of display advertising was clarified to the respondents and secondly a clarification on how the interview was going to be conducted was offered. Right from the beginning the respondents were made aware of the fact that they

would be asked to access their Facebook accounts for the second part of the interview which has a more practical approach. Saunderson *et al.* (2009) points out that reliability issues are related to interviewer and interviewee bias. Attention was paid to the manner in which more details were asked from the participants in regards to the topics discussed and the way the subsequent understanding of the facts was formulated and presented. The scope was to minimize interviewer bias as much as possible by avoiding leading the responses of the individuals (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). For this purpose the interviewees were encouraged to speak freely as confidentially was promised. The chosen environment for conducting the interview was further the school library which is a location that is comfortable and easily accessible to the respondents (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

Another aspect assuring the reliability of the present study is through the use of secondary data. This type of data has been gathered by reviewing different scientific articles which are published in scientific journals which are perceived as reliable sources of documentation. The collection of secondary data strengthen the value of the analysis performed as the results of the empirical findings are framed and furthermore compared with the theoretical aspects presented in chapter two.

### **3.6.3 Trustworthiness**

The concepts of validity and reliability have been adapted by Golafshani (2003) for the qualitative method and conceptualized under the name of trustworthiness. According to the before mentioned author, trustworthiness is also used to test and demonstrate the credibility of a study (Golafshani, 2003). In order to assure trustworthiness, the researchers asked permission from the respondents to digitally record the conversations. The consent was granted by all of the 20 persons that were interviewed. Furthermore, after conducting the interviews all the audio files were fully transcribed which is way of assuring trustworthiness (Silverman, 2010) as the researchers have the possibility of going back to the unprocessed material at any point during the study. The digital form was of great assistance when conducting the transcription or when any sort of confusion occurred later in the process. During the presentation of the empirical material, the trustworthiness of the material has been assured by providing quotation subtracted from the actual conversations with the respondents. These quotations are provided in italics both in the empirical and data analysis part

### **3.6.4 Generalizability**

As mentioned previously, given the limited number of interviews and the sample specificity, the results of the present study cannot be generalized to a broader population such as all the users of Facebook. As argued in the beginning of the methodology chapter, the present study is exploratory and descriptive and has adopted an abductive approach. As mentioned by Ezzy (2002), the abductive process is subject to inconsistencies and ambiguities. The abductive reasoning is considered to be the start of an ongoing process of deductive examination and inductive confirmation in future studies for reaching generalizations and validating theories (Ezzy, 2002).

## **3.7 Ethical considerations**

Irrespectively of the research method chosen by the investigators, the relationship between the respondent and the researcher is important. An interview is an intrusive method of collecting data (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Once this data has been collected, ethical consideration

have to be taken into account when disseminating the data. Elliot (2005) points out that at this stage, ethical considerations relate to confidentiality. In order to guarantee confidentiality, the researcher did not use the actual names of the participants but rather referred to them as respondents, individuals or persons. The only personal information disclosed in relation each participant is the age and the study program they are attending. It has been considered that with this level of confidentiality, the reader is not able to relate the information presented with the persons that have provide it.

### **3.8 Limitations**

There are a number of limitations associated with the present study.

The majority of the respondents are residents in the Jonkoping area in Sweden and as such they are not representative of the entire population of Sweden. Moreover, the participants are between 22 and 33 years old and the factors that affect their attitudes toward display advertising on Facebook might not be representative for different age groups.

The language in which the interviews were performed was in English. None of the participants have English as their mother tongue. The answers received from the individuals might be partially biased by the level of understanding and the ability of expressing themselves in this specific language. Moreover, neither of the researcher have English as a first language.

Due to the partially exploratory nature of the study and to the small sample size, the findings of the present study cannot be generalized. As mentioned by Ezzy (2002), the abductive reasoning is characterized by a certain level of inconsistency and ambiguity in the analysis, but the authors have tried to match as best as possible the findings with the theoretical framework while at the same time accommodating elements that been uncovered in the empirical study.

## 4 Presentation of empirical findings

*In this chapter the data collected through the interviews is presented to the reader. The findings are going to be grouped into four categories (1) Facebook users and display advertising, (2) Attitudes toward display advertising, (3) Factors influencing attitudes and (4) Behavior toward display advertising.*

### 4.1 Structure

There are several ways of writing the empirical material. Either starting from a purely thematic approach based on the theoretical structure to organizing the material in the sequence that it was collected (Holliday, 2002). In the present thesis the presentation of the empirical material was done using a mixture of both structures mentioned above. The presentation starts with the basic facts regarding the respondents' usage frequency of Facebook and their familiarity with advertising displayed on Facebook derived from the answers provided in the introductory questions. Following, the data is structured in a more thematic manner following the main headlines presented in the theory chapter, attitudes toward display advertising, factors that affect the creation of the attitudes and the behavior that derives from the attitudes and factors.

The parts that form the empirical presentation are briefly explained in the Figures 4-1 to 4-4 below.

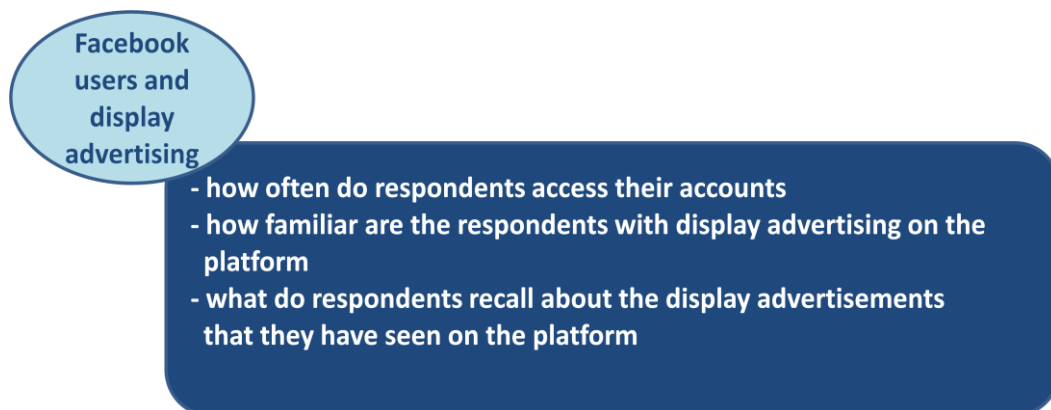


Figure 4-1 Empirical findings – first part (developed by the authors).

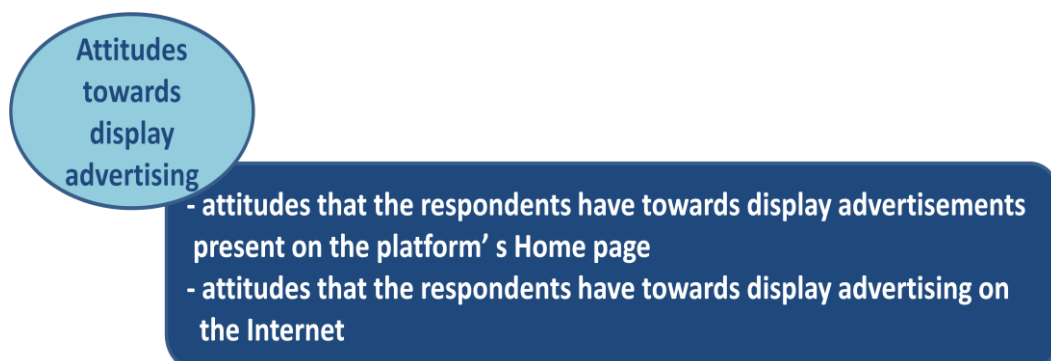


Figure 4-2 Empirical findings – second part (developed by the authors).



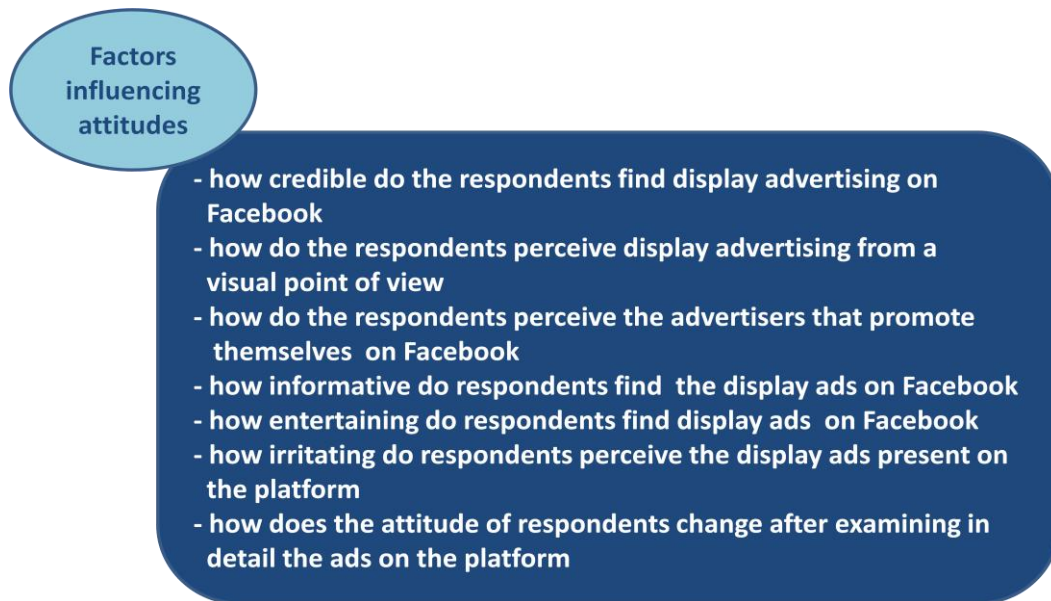


Figure 4-3 Empirical findings – third part (developed by the author).



Figure 4-4 Empirical findings – forth part (developed by the authors).

## 4.2 Facebook users and display advertising

### 4.2.1 Facebook usage habits

The general statement subtracted was that all participants access their account on Facebook every day. 75 percent, meaning 15 out of twenty 20 respondents, have answered that they visit their Facebook account several times a day ranging from two times to ten times. One respondent mentioned that he spends probably as much as three hours per day on the platform (interviewee 15). An interesting correlation was made between the use of Facebook and the use of email by two participants as they stated that these two activities are being performed in parallel and with the same frequency. The rest of the answers were from five people who stated they are always on Facebook when they are online. *“A better question would be when I log out. I don’t really think that I am ever not logged in. Pretty much every day, all the time.”* Phrases as the previous one were used to express their continuous online presence on Facebook.

### 4.2.2 Awareness of display advertising on Facebook

The majority, 17 out of 20 respondents answered that they are aware of display advertising on Facebook. Moreover, all of them have been able to indicate from memory the placement of the ads on the Facebook home page. Several individuals have indicated that they are aware of the ads being displayed also in the profile page, next to pictures when accessed

individually and in the group pages. Their visual prominence and the fact they occupy one fourth of the Facebook home page has been indicated as the main reason for being noticed. There have been three people out of the total number of interviewees who were not familiar at all with display advertisement on Facebook. One explanation that was offered by one participant stated that *“Actually I am not aware at all that they did advertising on Facebook. But it might be because I only access it with my mobile phone and on my mobile I don’t think there are any advertising, because it is a bit different.”*

#### **4.2.3 Attention toward display advertising on Facebook**

The general opinion expressed through the answers is that people do not pay attention to display ads on Facebook. They notice their presence but do not look at the details that the ads are offering. One person stated: *“No, actually I don’t really do it, I notice that there are ads on the right side but never pay any attention to them, not at all.”* 13 people used similar phrases to the one previously stated in order to express the fact that they don’t look at the ads. Only seven out of 20 people stated that they occasionally spend a limited amount of time to briefly look at the ads. This is either because they noticed a change in the advertisements, their attention was caught by some of the displayed images or just because they found the content very much unsuitable to their personal interest. Only two out of the seven participants mentioned that they look at the ads because they feel that something interesting might be there for them. Two also said that sometimes they even click on the ads.

#### **4.2.4 Example of display advertising on Facebook**

A considerable number of participants, 15 people, were able to provide an example of an advertisement that they have seen on the Facebook page. Most of them remembered both the product/service and the company that advertised that particular product or service. The examples provided by the participants were mainly from the sphere of things that they recognize from previous experiences or were related in any ways with their past or present interests. *“There was a school that I wanted to apply to, before I came to Jonköping. It was Hult International Business School. Interestingly enough an ad about this school has appeared on the Facebook page as well”* This is one example offered by interviewee number four. Out of the five respondents that could not remember any particular example, three were people who were unaware of display advertising on Facebook.

### **4.3 Attitudes toward display advertising**

#### **4.3.1 Attitude toward display advertising on Facebook**

The respondents have expressed different opinions in connection to display advertising on Facebook. Three types of answers have been encountered. 8 out of 20 people said that they have a positive attitude toward the display ads on Facebook, 7 claimed to be negative and the remaining five had a neutral attitude. These findings are presented in Figure 4-5. Among the respondents who manifested a positive attitude, four of them mentioned that their attitude is influenced by the fact that the type of services that Facebook offers could not be available for free without advertising. One person stated in the following way *“I also know that it is a way for Facebook to make money and I am also aware of the fact that it is the only way that you can get a service like this for free.”* The statement previously exemplified was subtracted from the interview number three. The rest of the three respondents had similar comments.



Another reason that was presented was the fact that these ads do not affect the user friendliness of Facebook since they are not the central focus of the page and thus are not in the way of the users. One respondent emphasized the fact they are easy to ignore if one does not want to look at them, since they are boring and not very visible. Another person explained that he is in favor of having display advertising on Facebook as it is a source of information regarding new products or services.

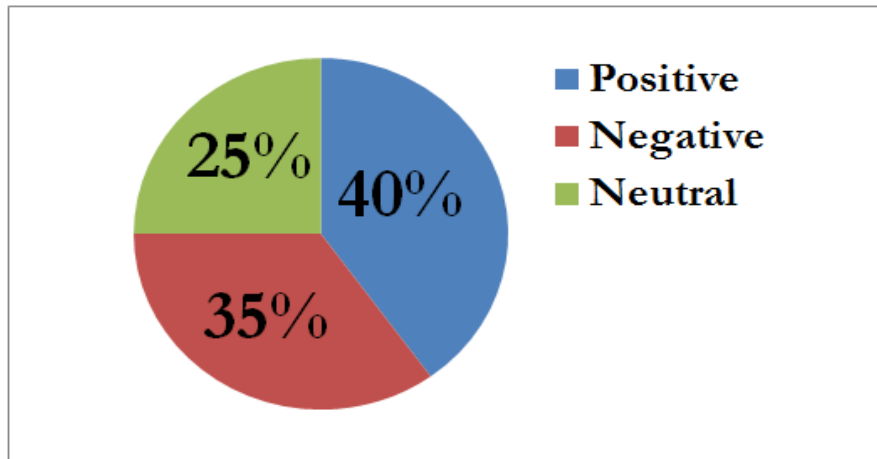


Figure 4-5 General opinion toward display advertising on Facebook (developed by the authors).

Among the people that displayed a negative attitude toward display advertising on Facebook, one mentioned the security and trustworthiness aspect. He felt that searching with Google is a more secure way of finding out about products and that being able to choose the source from where to acquire that specific information is of great importance for him personally. The rest of six respondents had different comments related to the banners that they remembered seeing on Facebook. These aspects included the unfulfillment of needs, not being able to catch their attention, lowering motivation for going on Facebook, annoyance similar to a phone seller and the presence of companies on a space that is dedicated for friends networking.

The respondents that positioned themselves as being neutral shared homogeneous comments and explained that they are not bothered by the advertisements. They did not consider them to be in their sphere of interest and did for that reason not pay attention to them. The following statement captured the comments received from the neutral respondents in a very good way. *“It is ok that they are there. It is not negative because I am not bothered, but it is not positive because I am not there to look at them. It does not scare me, so I feel comfortable with them there.”*

A general opinion was that advertising on Facebook is accepted as none of the 20 interviewees manifested a desire to remove the advertisements from the home page of the platform. However, it was by some considered to reach a point where it may start to annoy them. For some, the implication of this is that they would prefer to pay for Facebook instead of receiving more advertising. Others stated that they would stop using it as frequently and one said that he would move to another socializing network. For example interviewee three said *“I would prefer to pay, let’s say 5 or 10 Euros a month for Facebook instead of having ads from companies that I don’t know in the news feed. I would also consider using my Facebook account less that I do it know.”*



### 4.3.2 Attitudes toward display advertising on the Internet

When the discussion changed focus from display ads on Facebook to the Internet in general, the opinions of the respondents changed. The majority, 12 out of 20 people, is against Internet advertising and found it to be very annoying and interruptive as presented in Figure 4-6 below. In addition, even the eight respondents that claimed to be positive found it necessary to point out that there are certain aspects that they find disturbing such as the non-seriousness of the ads or the fact that sometimes they take too much space in the Web page. Their accepting attitude stemmed mostly toward display advertising that matched the profile of the specific Web site that they were accessing. Interviewee five is cited below in order to exemplify. *“It’s just that my personal point of view are that they are not that serious really, not because of the brand but because I think there are more clear and obvious and serious ways of advertising products, I think the display ads are ok if they are related to the Web site.”*

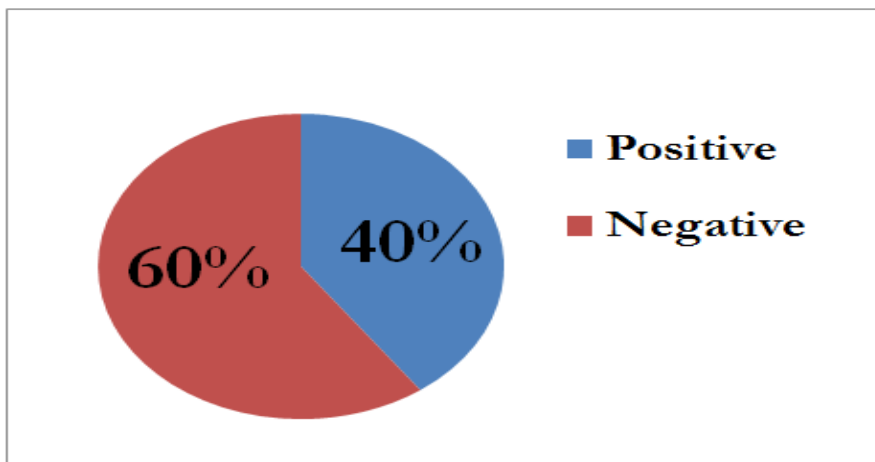


Figure 4-6 General opinions toward display advertising on the Internet (developed by the authors).

In terms of negativity, many of the explanations were offered in comparison with advertising on Facebook. Half of the people that expressed negative opinions in relation to advertising on the Internet also stated that they find it more annoying than display advertising on Facebook. As such, interviewee six stated *“But they are pretty annoying sometimes, most of the times, but not so much on Facebook.”*

## 4.4 Factors influencing attitudes

After discussing their general opinions toward display advertising on Facebook and on the Internet, the respondents were asked to open their Facebook account. The discussion that followed concentrated on evaluating the ads displayed on the home page of their Facebook account by looking at aspects such as credibility, ad perceptions, attitude toward advertiser, attitude toward advertising, mood, entertainment, irritation and informativeness.

### 4.4.1 Ad credibility

11 out of the twenty 20 respondents answered that they find the advertisements on Facebook to be credible. Out of those 11, seven 7 stated that previous knowledge of the brands and the increased presence of more well known brands was the biggest influence toward the overall credibility of the advertisements. One statement that captures the overall sentiment is the following *“In the beginning I was very skeptical as there where many unknown companies*

and products that I have not seen before. I was thinking what happens if I click on this banner? But now the majority of them are famous brands so the credibility has increased a lot in my opinion". Out of the nine that did not find the advertisements on Facebook to be credible, four mentioned the importance of a known brand in regards to the overall credibility and one person stated "If I know what they are doing I can connect with that, I definitely link the ad with what I think about the company". Another person stated their opinion in regards to unknown brands in the following way "If there would be an unknown brand then I would think it I just a crap anyway. If I did not hear about it anywhere else then it is no good anyway". Other aspects that were mentioned were the impact of previous negative experience with these ads in terms of questionable products and offers.

In terms of overall advertising credibility, four respondents mentioned that they find advertising to be more credible on other medium such as television, print or radio. One interviewee provided a good example in this sense: "But credibility-wise I think tv and specialty interests magazines are the most credible sources of advertising because I can still choose what channel and I know what is coming at me, either if I look at CNN or buy a fishing magazine."

#### 4.4.2 Ad perceptions

When discussing the execution of the ads, eleven people stood out by having somewhat of a negative perception. The general sentiment among them was represented through the use of the following words and phrases gathered in Table 4-1:

Table 4-1 Respondent's comments related to the ad execution (developed by the authors)

<i>Comments related to the execution of the ads on Facebook</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>
The ads look boring	5 respondents
The ads look standardized , do not stick out	6 respondents
The ads are not appealing and do not catch interest	5 respondents

The three people that considered themselves to be neutral in terms of execution also mentioned that they do not stick out and one person mentioned that they were probably designed with that specific purpose in mind.

The discussed aspects were the colors used, the size of the image, the Facebook font used, the quality of the images, the logo of the brands present or not on the ads and the text that explain the specific product/service advertised. In terms of color, several people mentioned that it is important and pointed out that they appreciate when it is blending with the content of the Facebook page or when it fits the actual image of the company or of the brand advertised. Three people mentioned that they would prefer to see the ads without text and have an expanded picture. Several respondents mentioned that they noticed how the fonts used for the advertisements are the same as the Facebook one. One person stated that "I think they have to use the same font as Facebook. It is good to have the same all over". The majority of them liked the fact that the advertisements had similar framework as that prevented them from being "too much in my face" as one person said. Others further appreciated that the advertisements were being boring which as their attention was not captured in any way. Several respondents mentioned that they do not find the pictures to be attractive and compared them to the feeling conveyed by images from the 1980's. Three people mentioned

that they consider the images to be too small and as such they find it hard to understand what is communicated in the ad visually speaking.

The remaining six people had overall a more positive opinion toward the execution of the ads. The overall opinion was otherwise that the ads looked good, serious and clean. One person stated his overall opinion in the following way, *"I think the pictures show exactly what the ad is about, the text is enough, they all have the same structure, I would get frustrated if they stand out too much"*. Others appreciated the fact that the pictures presented the product itself and as well as displaying the logo of the brand.

When asked if they find the ads appealing, 18 out of the 20 respondents answered that they do not find the ads appealing. The most common responses were connected to the appearance of the ads where people stated that the ads looked quite cheap, basic and boring while many also thought that they were not appealing because Facebook simply did not relate the ads well enough with their interest. Only two answered that they sometimes find them appealing and these respondents as well mentioned that it depended on how well they were targeted.

#### **4.4.3 Attitude toward the advertiser**

The discussions about the advertisers that use Facebook lead to the following findings. Three participants pointed out that in the beginning there were many unknown companies that advertised on Facebook. Today, this situation has changed as the users stated that they are able to recognize most of the brands. The majority said that well known companies are considered to have good credibility if they advertise on Facebook. One person mentioned that since Facebook is a well established and reputable medium, advertisers that use must know what they are doing. On the other hand, two participants mentioned that they do not consider Facebook as an appropriate advertising medium for big companies that do not want to damage their image.

Several people mentioned that their attitude toward unknown advertisers is met with reluctance. Further, advertisers are perceived as not being credible if the nature of the product or service advertised does not match the entertaining feel conveyed by the platform. Several people mentioned that they have greater trust in advertisers that promote themselves through television or magazines than the ones that use Facebook. Interviewee 15 stated: *"I don't find them credible. Of course that if there are companies that advertise in different media, television, magazines, etc, then I think it is a good way to advertise and get my attention. But if there are companies that I have never heard of and I just see them advertising online then I would not trust them."* Two respondents felt that credible advertisers on Facebook have to be active in the Internet field or marketing sector. One respondent pointed out that he finds advertising on Facebook more credible than the ones that appear on the Internet on pop-ups.

#### **4.4.4 Attitude toward advertising – entertainment**

The unanimous opinion of the respondents was that they do not find display advertising on Facebook to be entertaining at all. Only two mentioned that they were amused when they were completely wrongly targeted.

The overall sentiment was that the ads are boring, do not bring out any feeling, are ridiculous, outdated, pretty simple, straight forward, not eye catching in any way and uninspiring. Two different statements have been subtracted in order to exemplify the respondent's opinion in relation to the entertainment level of the ads on Facebook:

*“Because for me entertainment is something on Youtube that would show somebody fall down out of something or just being stupid. I would show that to somebody else.” “If the colors would not be there, you would not look at them at all.”* The aspects that have been mentioned several times by several people are depicted in the following Table 4-2:

Table 4-2 Respondents’ comments related to the entertainment aspect of display advertising on the Internet (developed by the authors)

<i>Reasons for considering display advertising on Facebook non-entertaining</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>
they are boring	6 respondents
they are quite old-looking	2 respondents
don’t bring out any feelings	2 respondents
they are ridiculous	1 respondent
they are not fun to watch	1 respondent
they don’t catch your eyes	2 respondents
Simple and straight forward	1 respondent
they give no entertaining value	2 respondents
not inspiring	1 respondent
wrongly targeted	2 respondents

#### **4.4.5 Attitude toward advertising – informativeness**

11 respondents found that the display advertising on Facebook is somewhat adapted to their interests. This information was also illustrated previously throughout the answers provided at the initial questions. The empirical study showed that display advertising on Facebook varied between being occasionally and often related to the user’s interest. One person stated that *“I think they might be targeted to me as a guy, but they are not that personalized to me as if they are able to know what I need every day”*. Overall, few people found the display advertisements to regularly be linked to specifically to their interest. Some considered the advertisements to be very obvious and one of the answers contained a comparison between displayed advertising on Facebook and the aggressiveness of telemarketing messages. The rest of the interviewees are split into two groups. There are the ones that do not find display advertising related in any way to their specific interests and others who believe it to be addressed to them from a demographical perspective yet still found them to be irrelevant. Out the ones that manifested disagreement to the customization of the message to their individual preferences, three were the people that were not aware of advertising at all.

75 percent of the respondents stated that they found there to be sufficient information on the display advertisements on Facebook as presented in figure 4-7 down below.

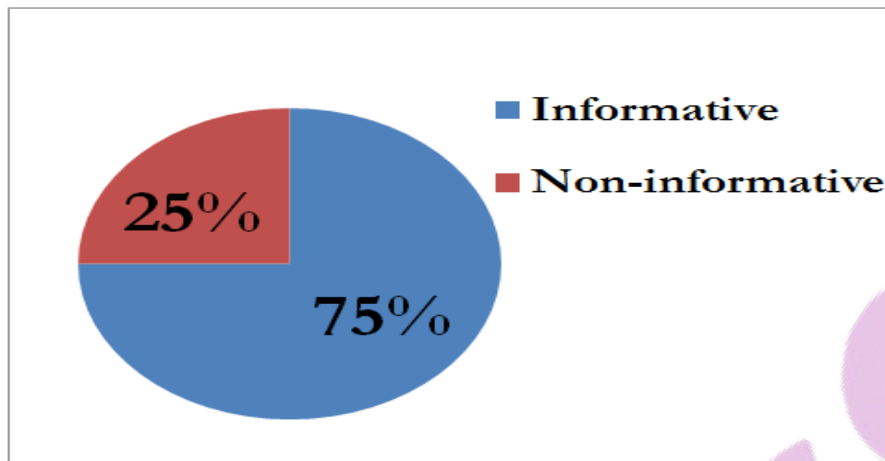


Figure 4-7 Informativeness of display advertising on Facebook (developed by the authors).

However, the 15 respondents that found the advertisements to present sufficient and clear information referred to different aspects of the ads: the images in the ads, the headings of the ads and the text message of the ads. Five people consider the headings to be clear and very important as a source of product information. Four people commented in relation to the images and said that they correctly represent the advertised product or service. The majority considered the text displayed next to the image as the main source of information. Three respondents declared that the information offered in these ads is rather basic but sufficient in order to understand what they communicate. Two respondents commented on a sparkling water ad which they considered very good in terms of the information that it offered: *"I think Loka is good example of doing it well. If I would be interested in Loka I would check it out, because I see what it is, I understand what it is, that it is water and it has different tastes. I see it because they put them in different colors. As soon as I am there and I look at the bottles I also look at the text and they say have you tried Loka yet, that they have a competition on the site, that one of friends like that, (the Loka page). I can also like it or just go the Web page and learn more."* Two people thought that companies that are well known delivered their message more clearly than the ones that do not have notoriety. The main criticism in regards to the informativeness of the advertisements was people who mentioned that they do not find any correlation between the images, headline and the text next to them. They could not find the specific information in order to understand what the ad was about. The images were found to be too small, the text too long for the reader to go through, the entire message too discreet and the link to the source ambiguous.

#### 4.4.6 Attitude toward advertising – irritation

There was almost a complete consensus that display advertising on Facebook is not a source of irritation. Only two people mentioned that they do not like having it there because they go online to network and look at photos and not ads. These two individuals could not understand the reasons for receiving advertising and of them stated through the following phrase his opinion: *"Exactly, they are irritating. I don't see why they have to take space out of my Facebook page."* The rest of the respondents concluded that they do not find display advertising on Facebook to be irritating. However, the majority also mentioned that they consider the amount of display advertising to have reached a maximum level and think that if the number would increase or if the advertisements would be moved to the news feed as well then it would become disturbing. The exact words of interviewee 17 were: *"I think this is the maximum number of ads that I find acceptable because your news feed becomes narrower and*

*narrower and now you have these chat and update feed.” A considerable number of respondents have clearly stated that introducing advertising in the news feed would clutter the page and make it very difficult for them not to be disturbed by the ads. “If they would integrate in the news feed and you would have Charlie says this, Eddie says this and then boom Loka I think a certain threshold would be crossed. It would become annoying.”*

Several other reasons were offered by the respondents as an explanation to why they currently are not disturbed by the ads, these are presented below in Table 4-3. (Several respondents have mentioned several motives.)

Table 4-3 Respondents’ comments related to the irritation aspect of display advertising on the Internet (developed by the authors)

<i>Reasons for considering display advertising on Facebook non-irritating</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>
Blends in well with the background	6 respondents
Maximum amount of ads accepted, or even a bit too many	7 respondents
Small, not moving, not flashy, have discrete colors, have the same fonts as Facebook	4 respondents
It is ok like they have it right now, it would be irritating if they would integrate them in the news feed	9 respondents
They do not interfere with the user’s activity	4 respondents
You get different inputs from them	1 respondent

An overwhelming majority, 19 out of 20 people were either happy or did not mind the placement of the advertisements on Facebook and only one person was annoyed by it. The general consensus can be summarized with the following two quotes: “*I think they do it in a good way, they integrate them quite well, I think that they don’t want to emphasize the ads too much as that would upset Facebook users*” and “*I think its fine, it’s just at the side, if you are not interested you just blend them out, it does not bother me at all.*” Many of the respondents also mentioned that they believed that the placement of the ads was a strategic move as their eyes have to cross over the ads when wandering from the newsfeed to the contact list but this was however not considered to be problematic.

#### **4.4.7 Advertising value**

Only 25 percent out of the 20 respondents said that they are currently receiving value from the display advertisements. Four of those mentioned that they received value in terms of getting new and interesting product information or when it aided them to discover something new or unique. One person stated that the ability to use Facebook for free was the value that he derived from the ads. A common response among the 11 people who said that they are currently not receiving any value from these ads was that they generally felt that they were not properly targeted. Many of those individuals further stated that they would pay more attention to them or perhaps even click on them more if they were to be more properly targeted with advertisements that provided either information, promotions



or other offerings related to their interest. The remaining four individuals felt that they received no value as they were not interested in looking at these ads or that they would rather go directly to other sites if they wanted more information.

#### **4.4.8 Mood**

When asked if their opinions had changed in any way during the conversation, 75 percent answered that their opinion remained unchanged. Three of those answers mentioned that they might look a bit more closely in the coming days but all of them mentioned that their habits would probably return to normal after a little while. Other said that they did not think differently of them and that they would go back to ignoring them. Out of the five people who had changed their opinion, three said that they would perhaps start looking a bit closer and one was surprised that there were so many well known brands there. The last person said that he ended up finding the ads to be more disturbing as he realized that they took up more space than he had previously thought.

### **4.5 Behavior toward display advertising on Facebook**

Although the majority of the respondents were aware of the display advertising on Facebook, the number of people that have actually clicked on these banners is lower. Out of the 20 respondents, only half have ever clicked on the advertisements on Facebook. Once more, the reasons mentioned for clicking are connected to the link between the advertisements and the personal interests of the participants. Out of the people that have previously clicked on a banner, four of them mentioned that it happens rarely. One distinctive opinion came from one respondent that said that he is targeted better in his home country, Germany. Therefore, he clicks more often when he is in Germany as he finds the banners there to be more related to his interest. From the people that were not able to remember clicking on advertisements displayed on Facebook, one explained that he does not have the time to look advertisements and that he is there for doing other things. 12 respondents answered that they would click on some of the advertisement that they had been looking at because they knew or liked the brand, were attracted to the visual image in the ad or merely because they were curious about the product or service on display and wanted to find out more.

Out of the eight people that would not click on any of these ads, many answered that they were not interested in doing it as none of the advertisements were interesting to them in any way. Two of the sentiments were *“No I have never clicked before on Facebook and I would not click on those as I don’t find them to be useful for me. If something sticks out though that was really new and interesting to me then I would click on it”* and *“I don’t really see myself clicking on many ads, I just have to be really interested in a specific thing and if that pops up on Facebook then I will click on it”*.

### **4.6 Influential factors affecting the attitude**

9 out of the 20 respondents stated that the recognition and credibility of the brand and the credibility of the product or service that is displayed are the most important factors. For some, credibility could also be increased depending on whether a display ad was liked or not. Many of the respondents that mentioned the credibility aspect also highlighted the importance that the advertisement has to be relevant to their interest. Nine people mentioned the execution of the ad as the most important factor. Among those nine people, four people mentioned that the image was the most important aspect while other mentioned the execution of the whole ad itself. The importance of how well the users were targeted was also mentioned among this group of nine individuals. Among the last remaining three individu-

als, two claimed that the most important factor was that they were not annoyed by the ads themselves followed by another individual who expressed the opinion that ads do not belong on Facebook.



## 5 Analysis of the empirical findings

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*This chapter in the thesis deals with the integration of findings from the interviews and the theoretical aspects presented in the theory chapter. The analysis is going to be divided into four parts, the first one discusses the general findings of Facebook usage and display advertising familiarity, the second one deals with respondents attitudes toward display advertising on Facebook, the third one presents how each factors separately influence the attitudes and in the fourth part it is explained how these factors work together and influence the behavior of the respondents toward display advertising on Facebook.*

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### 5.1 Facebook and display advertising

75 percent, meaning 15 out of 20 respondents, have answered that they visit their Facebook account several times a day, from two times to ten times. The rest of the answers consisted of people that stated they are always on Facebook when they are online. These findings go hand in hand with the results of the prestigious research company Nielsen who in its 2010 report presented that users spend five point five hours per week on social networking sites (Nielsen, 2010). Even though exact measures of the time spent online are not available in this paper, the findings nonetheless show a very significant time spent on Facebook.

The majority, 17 out of 20 said they are aware of display advertising on Facebook. This finding supports the view of Mongold and Faulds (2009) who consider that awareness is one of the aspects of consumer behavior that is affected by the increasing number of messages delivered through the social media environment. When asked if they could provide an example of an ad seen on the platform, 15 people were able to do so. Most of them remembered both the product/service and the company that advertised that particular product or service. However, 15 of the respondents who claimed awareness also mentioned that they normally paid no attention to the display ads on Facebook. These findings support the study of Hadija *et al.* (2011) who found that advertising on social media is not noticed by the users of the platforms. Only seven out of twenty 20 people stated that they occasionally spend a limited amount of time to briefly look at the ads. This was either because they noticed changes in the ads, their attention was caught by the displayed images or because they found the content completely unsuitable to their personal interest. Only two out of those seven participants said that they looked at the ads because they felt that there might something of interest for them there.

### 5.2 Attitudes toward display advertising

According to Kotler & Keller (2006) an individual can have either a favorable or unfavorable evaluation toward an object or idea which describes the individual's attitude the authors of the present thesis have categorized the attitudes of the respondents' into different types. The respondents have expressed different opinions in connection to the display advertising on Facebook and three types of answers have come into view. 8 out of 20 people have said that they have a positive attitude toward the display ads on Facebook, 7 of them claimed to be negative and the remaining 5 had a neutral attitude.

Among the respondents that manifested a positive attitude, four of them mentioned that their attitude is influenced by the fact that the type of services Facebook offers could not be available for free without advertising. This matches Grubber (2006) founding's that users of social networking sites are more accepting toward advertising on the platform that

they are using as that eliminates the need to pay a fee for the right to use. The remaining four people that were positive, including the five individuals who had a neutral attitude mentioned that they felt that way because they were not bothered by the display advertisements as they did not notice them all that much. Among the people the seven people that displayed a negative attitude toward display advertising on Facebook a wide range of opinions were brought forth from unfulfillment of needs to a general annoyance toward the presence of the advertisements. According to Taylor, Lewin and Strutton (2011), consumer acceptance toward social networking advertising is the key to successfully integrating advertising into social networking sites. A general opinion that can be summarized, irrespectively of the whether the opinions leaned either toward a more positive, neutral or negative position, was that overall, as things stand right now, the majority of users presently accept the displayed advertising on Facebook. This conclusion was drawn based on the fact that in all three camps comments such as “I am not bothered by them” “They do not catch my attention” “They are not disturbing me” “They are just on the limit of what I think is appropriate” “As is it right now I find it ok” “They are not the focus of the page” were to be found.

When looking at advertising in general, the majority, 12 out of 20 people, are against Internet advertising and found it to be very annoying and interruptive. In addition, even the eight respondents that claimed to be positive found it necessary to point out that there are certain aspects that they find disturbing such as the non-seriousness of the ads or the fact that sometimes they take too much space in the Web page. These findings are supported by other authors that have proposed that a commercial content on an Internet environment is better accepted if it is requested rather than pushed (Hawkins, 1994).

One notable finding is that in comparison with the display advertising on Facebook, Internet advertising has been found to be more annoying than the former as presented in Figure 5-1. Six respondents have stated this specific aspect. One representative sentence is: *“They are pretty annoying most of the time, but not so much on Facebook.”* The reasons presented were the fact that these ads do not affect the user friendliness of Facebook since they are not in the way of the user. In order to help the reader better understand the differences in attitudes toward display advertising on Facebook and on the Internet, a comparative graph has been developed.

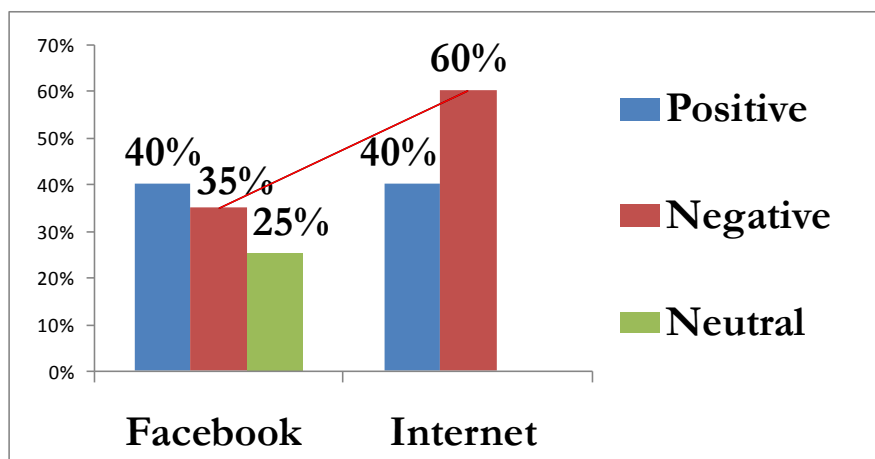


Figure 5-1 Attitude toward display advertising comparison (developed by the authors).

## **5.3 Factors influencing the attitude**

In order to understand which factors that are influencing the positive and negative attitudes of the respondents toward display advertising on Facebook, the interviewed respondents were asked to assess the ads that they found displayed on their Facebook home page. This was necessary in order to understand the stimulus that contributed to the formation of the attitude at that specific moment in time toward those particular ads. This in line with the definition of attitude-toward-the-ad proposed by Lutz (1985) which says attitude-toward-the-ad is concerned with a particular exposure to a particular advertisement. Ad credibility, ad perceptions, mood, entertainment value, informative value and irritation value have been discussed with the participants.

### **5.3.1 Ad credibility**

As conceptualized by Lutz & MacKenzie (1989), ad credibility has two components that were integrated in the current thesis, advertising credibility and advertiser credibility. Even though the respondents talked about both of these two aspects, they referred mainly to the credibility of the advertiser when discussing the credibility of the specific ads that they were looking at. This is in line with the view of Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) who considered that there is a direct relationship between the perception of the credibility emanated by an advertisement and the credibility of the advertiser pictured in the advertisement. Slightly more than half of the respondents, namely 11 people, found that the ads displayed on Facebook are credible. Seven participants stated that previous knowledge of the brands and the increased presence of more well known brands was the biggest influence toward the overall credibility of the ads. The main reasons for not considering the advertisements on Facebook to be credible with the remaining respondents were unfamiliarity with the advertisers in the ads and unpleasant previous experiences with ads that promoted questionable products. These results very clearly indicate how significant previous knowledge of the brand is in influencing the overall credibility of the advertisements. This matches what Brackett & Carr (2001) found that the attitudes toward advertising on the Internet are influenced by the way that users perceive advertising credibility. This outcome was also discovered in the present thesis through people stating that they would not pay attention or click on an advertisements without knowledge of the brand. When it came to the question of advertiser credibility, the importance of knowing the brand was once again at the forefront of the discussion.

### **5.3.2 Ad perceptions**

In relation to ad perceptions, the respondents talked mainly about the appearance of the ads in terms of colors, fonts and pictures used in the construction of the specific ads present on their home page. The execution characteristics are considered to be part of the factors included in the ad perceptions together with the individuals' attitude toward advertising in general and the attitude toward the advertisers in general (Lutz & MacKenzie, 1989). The last two factors will however not be dealt with in this part as they have been treated under different categories.

The majority of the respondents, 18 out of 20 did not find the displayed advertisements as being appealing. The general sentiment was that they looked cheap, basic and boring. These poor execution characteristics have been criticized in terms of image quality, colors used, standardization of the fonts used and the small size of the images. A few mentioned that they are grateful for the fact that the ads have a certain framework that they respect as they

do not stick out too much or are too interactive. However, 9 people mentioned the execution of the ad as one of the most important factors when it came to noticing and being interested by the display advertisements. Among those 9 people, 4 people mentioned that the image was the most important aspect while other mentioned the execution of the whole advertisement.

### **5.3.3 Attitude toward the advertiser**

As Lutz (1983) defined it, the attitude toward the advertiser is a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner toward the sponsor of the advertisement. This definition can be recognized throughout the answers provided by the 20 respondents. In the beginning, when advertising on Facebook was rather new, the lack of notoriety of the advertisers on the platform made users have a distrustful opinion about them. Nowadays, when the array of advertisers has diversified and better known brands are advertising there, they perceive them more positively. The respondents consider well known advertisers on Facebook as more trustworthy than unknown ones. This perception is based on their previous knowledge of the sponsor. This is in line with the findings of Choi and Rifon (2002) who found that smaller advertisers are less credible than well known advertisers as the former ones have already created an image in the minds of the consumer which makes increases the credibility. Advertisers that are well known are seen by the majority of the respondents in a positive light in relation to advertising on Facebook as well. Respondents have described Facebook as being a social platform where people go to entertain themselves, talk to friends or watch photos. Owing to this, one distinctive opinion was that advertisers that conveyed a different feeling than entertainment through their advertisement are not credible. This follows the findings of Taylor *et al.* (2010) who found that advertisers' ability to match the content of the ad with the motivation of user to go online on the platform influences the attitude-toward-the-ad.

### **5.3.4 Mood**

As defined by MacKenzie and Lutz (1989) mood is the consumer's effective state at the time of the exposure and depends on the exposure situation. The fact that the users were asked to look at the advertisements in detail and evaluate their characteristics did not influence the attitude of the respondents toward display advertising on Facebook. The 15 respondents that kept their opinion unchanged explained that even if they look more closely to the advertisements in the following days, eventually they will go back to ignoring them and have the same opinion and feelings toward them as before. The confidence in the different opinions that were shared throughout the discussion of the factors makes the authors believe that the mood in general is not a factor that is impacting the users' attitudes and behaviors. Moreover, when the respondents were sharing their experiences with different advertisements that caught their attention, no one stated that this was due to a mood change such as boredom but simply because something specific in the advertisement caught their attention.

### **5.3.5 Entertainment**

From an entertainment perspective there was a massive agreement among all the respondents that the display advertisements on Facebook are not found to be entertaining except for those rare occasions when somebody was so poorly targeted that it was perceived as a comical incident. According to Taylor *et al.* (2011), their findings suggested that entertain-

ment is a prerequisite for more successful social networking advertising execution through the creation of messages that provide some sort of explicit value to the users. Taylor et.al (2011) further stated that when the advertisement delivered content that provided entertainment consumers appeared more likely to respond favorably toward the ad stimuli themselves. Aaker et.al (1992) demonstrated that the entertainment is an important predictor of advertising value and thus crucial to the effectiveness of the advertisement. The standardized framework with the headline, small image and text on the side provides limited possibilities to the advertisers in terms of being able to create entertaining ads. These limitations are also acknowledged by certain respondents who stated that the format does not provide much room for the creation of exciting advertisements. Others stated that these advertisements are quite information based and thus did not expect much more than that.

### **5.3.6 Informativeness**

One of the main roles of informativeness according to Rotzoll *et al.* (1989) is whether the advertisement supplies relevant product information. The empirical study showed that 11 out of 20 respondents found that display advertising on Facebook is often or occasionally related to their interest. A couple of people shared a similar sentiment as expressed through this one quote *"I think they might be targeted to me as a guy, but they are not that personalized to me as if they are able to know what I need every day"*. According to Taylor et.al (2011), consumers derived utility from advertisement messages that provided information that addressed some functional or pressing user need. Even though eleven people stated that they found advertising in general be related to their interest, the reality is that very few of them frequently found advertisements that were linked specifically to their interest. 75 percent further stated that the advertisements themselves provided sufficient and clear information about the products or services that were displayed.

### **5.3.7 Irritation**

Surrounding ad clutter has been found by Lutz & MacKenzie (1989) to be one of the characteristic that affect the mood. Almost complete agreement existed as well when discussing the irritation factor. Out of the 20 respondents, only two mentioned that they did not like having the display advertisements on Facebook and the rest stated that they were not irritated by them. As things stand right now however, 18 out of 20 respondents were either happy or did not mind the display advertisement nor the placement of them. However, two additional findings were revealed that are noteworthy. First of all, a majority of the respondents that said that they were not irritated by the advertisements also mentioned that they thought that it had reached a peak level and if further advertisements were to be included that they would be annoyed by it. The second significant aspect that was also mentioned was that adding display advertisements to the news feed would clutter the page to the point where it would be difficult for them not to be annoyed by them. For some, the implication of this is that they would prefer to pay for Facebook instead of receiving more advertising. Others stated that they would stop using it as frequent and one said that moving to another socializing network would be another option. These sentiments go hand in hand with what Taylor *et al.* (2011) wrote that overly commercialized social networking sites risk negative consequences that can dilute the appeal of the sites themselves. This was further exemplified by (AdReaction, 2010) who found that eight percent of their respondents had abandoned a social networking site because of what was perceived as excessive advertising.

### **5.3.8 Advertising value**

Only 25 percent of the respondents currently feel that they receive any kind of value from the display advertisements. Out of those five individual four received value by receiving new and interesting product information and one stated that being able to use Facebook for free was the value received. Out of the fifteen people who did not receive any value, 11 said that the main reason was that they were not properly targeted. An interesting aspect is that many of those also stated that they would eventually pay more attention and even click on them more if they were to be more properly targeted. According to Houston and Gassenheimer (1987), in order for an exchange to be carried out, each party of the exchanged has to both give and receive value. From the customers point of view of the customers this occurs when the advertisement is matching or exciding their expectations (Ducoffe, 1996). It is evident that the respondents are not receiving their share of value in the exchange process between advertiser and customer. The significant factor for this occurrence was very clearly stated to be the lack of informativeness in regards to relevant product or service information that was related to the users' interest. This findings match Aaker *et al.* (1992) findings which demonstrated that the informativeness is an important predictor of advertising value and thus crucial to the effectiveness of the advertisement.

## **5.4 Main factors influencing the attitude-toward-the-ad**

Nine out of the 20 respondents stated that the recognition and credibility of the brand and the credibility of the product or service that is displayed are the most important factors. For some, credibility could also be increased depending on whether a display ad was liked or not. Many of the respondents that mentioned the credibility aspect also highlighted the importance that the advertisement has to be relevant to their interest. Nine people mentioned the execution of the ad as the most important factor. Among those nine people, four people mentioned that the image was the most important aspect while other mentioned the execution of the whole ad itself. The importance of how well the users were targeted was also mentioned among this group of nine individuals. Among the last remaining two individuals, one claimed that the most important factor was that they were not annoyed by the ads themselves followed by another individual who expressed the opinion that ads do not belong on Facebook.

## **5.5 Behavior toward display advertising on Facebook**

As behavior is one of the components of the attitude (Solomon *et al.*, 2009), the respondents have also been asked questions about how they act in relation to display advertising on Facebook. The behavior has been measured both at the beginning of the interview by asking the participants to remember how often have they clicked on a banner seem on Facebook, but also, at the end of the interview when they were asked to state if they want to click on any the banners present on their Facebook account. Out of the 20 respondents, only half have ever clicked on the advertisements on Facebook due to the interest created by the actual ads. Clicking on the ad which has been found as one the possible behaviors that users might manifest toward display advertising (Dreze & Zufryden ,1997) has been rarely performed by the respondents in this study. Once more, the reasons mentioned for clicking are connected to the link between the ads and the personal interests of the participants. One distinctive opinion came from one respondent that said that he is targeted better in his home country, Germany. Therefore, he clicks more often when he is in Germany as he finds the banners there to be more related to his interest.

The other half has usually ignored the displayed advertisements present on the Facebook page which is another type of behavior according to Li *et al.* (2002). From the people that were not able to remember clicking on advertisements displayed on Facebook, one explained that he does not have the time to look advertisements and that he is there for doing other things.

At the end of the interview, the opinions of the respondents changed, as 12 participants have manifested a curiosity to click on one the ads discussed during the conversation. The reasons were that they knew or liked the brand, were attracted to the visual image in the ad or merely because they were curious about the product or service on display and wanted to find out more. Out of the eight people that would not click on any of these ads, many answered that they were not interested in doing it as none of the ads interested them in any way. Two of the sentiments were “No I have never clicked before on Facebook and I would not click on those as I don’t find them to be useful for me. If something sticks out though that was really new and interesting to me then I would click on it” and “I don’t really see myself clicking on many ads, I just have to be really interested in a specific thing and if that pops up on Facebook then I will click on it”.

## 5.6 Conclusions of the analysis

In this subchapter the authors present the significant conclusions that were drawn after having performed the analysis of the empirical findings in order to answer the research questions. Each research questions is going to be dealt with individually.

### ***Research Question 1: What are the attitudes of Facebook users towards display advertising?***

- 18 out of the 20 respondents did not mind the display advertisements on Facebook and were as a result not bothered or irritated by them. On the contrary, when giving their opinion about Internet advertising in general, the majority found it to be very annoying and interruptive.
- The greater part of the individuals who currently do not mind the advertisements stated that an increase of advertisements in their current location or in the news-feed would clutter the page to the extent where it would become annoying. As things stand right now however, display advertising on Facebook is almost unanimously accepted among the users.

### ***Research Question 2: What are the main factors that influence the attitudes towards display advertising of Facebook users?***

- In terms of Ad credibility, the majority of the respondents found the display advertisement on Facebook to be credible. The increased presence of well known brands and brand image in general were the biggest influences towards the overall credibility of the ads. The same attitudes were found to be true in regards to attitude towards advertisers as brand image was the most significant factor.
- In regards to Ad perceptions there was a massive agreement among the respondents that the display advertisements are not appealing and the general sentiment was that they are basic, cheap and boring. However, the respondents seem to be appreciative of the standardization of the ads as it limits the advertisers’ efforts to attract the users’ attention. Further, nine people mentioned the execution of the ad as one of the most important factors.

- The informativeness factor was a significant factor as relevant product information was highly influential in regards to receiving value for the display advertisements on Facebook. Only 25 percent of our respondents currently felt that they received any kind of value from the display advertisements. Out of the 15 people who currently did not receive any value, 11 stated that the main reason was that they were not properly targeted. Few respondents actually found the advertisements to be linked specifically to their interest. New and relevant product information combined with the opinions that the advertisements provided adequate and clear information about products and services were the main reasons for receiving value.
- As we mentioned above in research question number one, the respondents were currently not irritated by the display advertisements on Facebook. However, the irritation factor is an important one as a majority of the respondents clearly stated that their attitudes towards the display advertisements would change if increased advertisements were to be integrated or added in a different location. These findings lead to the creation of a new factor that was incorporated into the attitude toward the ads on Facebook model which was labeled lack of irritation.
- In regards to entertainment, there was a complete agreement among all our respondents that the display advertisements on Facebook are not entertaining. Due to the limits imposed by the standardization of the ads which makes them quite simply information based, the respondents stated that they were not expecting exciting advertisements.
- The mood was not found to be an influencing factor in regards to attitudes towards the advertisements on Facebook. The affective state of the users is believed not to contribute to the overall attitudes toward the display advertising on Facebook based both on the firm convictions that the respondents showed throughout the different factors that were discussed, but also through the answers that were given in regards to why they occasionally paid attention to the advertisements. A change in mood would for example not change the fact that most of the users do not receive any value in regards to the display advertisements.

Based on the findings of this research, a unique model was composed as presented in Figure 5-3 showing the main factors that influence the attitudes towards display advertising on Facebook.





Figure 5-2 Main factors influencing the attitude toward display advertising on Facebook (inspired by MacKenzie & Lutz (1989) and Ducoffe (1996))

***Research Question 3: Do these factors influence Facebook users' behavior towards display advertising?***

- 17 out of twenty the 20 respondents answered that they are aware of display advertising on Facebook. Out of those 17, 15 further stated that they normally pay no attention to the display advertisements. Many of those who currently pay no attention also stated that they could potentially pay more attention and even click more frequently on the display advertisements if they were more properly targeted which once again shows the importance of the informativeness factor.
- Out of the 20 respondents, only half have ever clicked on a display advertisement on Facebook. Out of those 10 individuals that have clicked it was revealed that it was a rare occurrence and the main reason for clicking was that the users were correctly targeted with product or service information that was related to their interest. In regards to the 10 remaining individuals who never clicked on a display advertising it was revealed that it was simply because of the rarity that they found products or services of interest.

## 6 Discussion

Our findings suggest that users of Facebook are aware of the presence of display advertising on Facebook but they do however not mind them. This could however change rather quickly if Facebook were to increase the number of advertisements or add them to the newsfeed. A number of respondents clearly stated that if this were to happen, it would become difficult not to be annoyed and irritated by them. Several mentioned that they would as a result consider spending less time on the site or leave all together. In addition, little attention is paid to the advertisements in general. The advertisements were found by most people to be credible because of the increased presence of well known brands. The importance of brand image was clearly established as influencing the overall credibility of the advertisements. The advertisements themselves were not found to be appealing or entertaining. The authors believe that many of the suggestions that were made from the users in terms of increasing the appeal or entertainment would likely also have a negative impact on the level of irritation. The subtleness of the display advertisements on Facebook was mentioned by the users as making them less noticeable and thus less intrusive and bothersome. It was further very clear that being properly targeted in terms of receiving relevant product information was absolutely necessary in order to capture the users' attention. The findings however suggest that this very rarely occurs. This was revealed based on the fact that only half of the respondents have ever clicked on an advertisement but further through the infrequency in which this occurred. Many did however state that they would consider paying more attention and increasing the frequency of clicking if this were to change.

The findings of this thesis have contributed to the contemporary body of work which focuses on attitudes towards advertising on social networks. This study has however brought about original material as this study focused exclusively on traditional display advertisement on one particular social network, namely Facebook. Through these findings, the authors have adjusted the original theoretical models that were used as a foundation. The mood factor was eliminated as it was believed to not be a significant factor influencing users' attitudes and a new factor was introduced which the authors have labeled as lack of irritation. This new factor was introduced as the findings suggested that much of the acceptance toward the display advertising on Facebook was founded upon the subtle and well incorporated display advertisements that do not bother or hinder the user friendliness of the site.

### 6. 1 Suggestion for future research

As this is the only study that we know of that have purely focused on display advertisement on Facebook, the authors believe that further research is necessary for a multitude of reasons. Due to the partially exploratory nature of the study and the small sample size, the findings in the present study cannot be generalized. For this reason, more studies need to be conducted in order to discover how generalizable the findings of this study are. As mentioned in the limitation part in the methodology chapter, the individuals who participated in the study were mainly of Swedish origin, well educated and between 22-36 years old. More studies are needed in order to identify whether a discrepancy exists between individuals of different nationalities, ages and educational backgrounds. The present study can further not be generalized in terms of social networks as a whole as the focus was purely on one social network in particular, namely Facebook. Based on differentiating factors such as quantity, execution characteristics, outline and location of display advertisements on different social networking platforms, different attitudes may come about.

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## Appendix 1 - Interview & Respondents Information

<i>Interview Information April 2012</i>		<i>Respondent Information</i>				
Interview no.	Duration (minutes)	Location	Gender	Nationality	Study Program	Age
1	30 min	School study room	Female	Swedish	International Marketing	23
2	24 min	School study room	Male	Swedish	International Marketing	33
3	32 min	School study room	Male	Dutch	International Marketing	27
4	44 min	Home of the respondent	Male	Austrian	International Marketing	25
5	43 min	Home of the respondent	Male	Swedish	International Marketing	26
6	22 min	School study room	Male	Swedish	International Marketing	23
7	15 min	School study room	Male	Swedish	International Marketing	28
8	23 min	School study room	Female	Romanian	Strategic Entrepreneurship	28
9	26 min	School study room	Male	Swedish	Civilekonom	22
10	28 min	School study room	Male	Bulgarian	Strategic Entrepreneurship	25
11	26 min	School study room	Male	Swedish	International Marketing	25
12	23 min	School study room	Male	Swedish	Business and IT	25
13	20 min	School study room	Female	Swedish	Economics	26
14	18 min	School study room	Female	Swedish	Economics	24

15	30 min	School study room	Female	Swedish	Economics	25
16	22 min	School study room	Female	Swedish	Economics	26
17	18 min	School study room	Female	Swedish	Social worker	22
18	20 min	School study room	Female	Swedish	Management	27
19	22 min	School study room	Male	German	International marketing	25
20	20 min	School study room	Male	Swedish	International marketing	25

## Appendix 2 – Interview Questions

Contextual data to be recorded:

Location:

The date and time:

The setting of the interview (noisy, overheard, interruptions)

Background information about the participant (gender, title, role)

Your impression of how well (or badly) the interview went

**Display advertising = display ads = display banners – boxes with graphical pictures and text, similar to print ads, which can be clicked on.**

### General questions

1. How often do you access your Facebook account?
2. Are you aware of display advertising on Facebook?
3. Do you normally pay attention to the display advertising on Facebook?
4. Can you give an example of a display advertising that you remember on Facebook?
5. Have you ever visited a product Web site (clicked on a banner) after seeing display advertising on Facebook?
6. Do you think the display advertisements on Facebook in general are related to your interest?
7. What is your general opinion toward display advertising on Facebook?
8. What is your general opinion toward display advertising on the Internet?

### Specific questions related to display advertising

9. What is your opinion about the product information that is displayed in the banners?
10. What is your opinion about display advertising as a source of entertainment?
11. What is your opinion in regards to the display advertisements as a source of irritation?
12. What are your perceptions about the advertisers that use display banners on Facebook?
13. What is your opinion in regards to the credibility of the display advertisements on Facebook?
14. Do you find that you receive any value from the display advertisements on Facebook?
15. What is your opinion about the display advertisings in terms of their execution?
16. What is your opinion about the placement/location of the display ads on the Facebook page?
17. Do you find the display advertisements appealing?
18. Would you click on any of the display advertisements that we have been looking at?

### Final questions

19. Has your general opinion toward display advertising on Facebook changed in any way during this discussion?
20. Which of the discussed aspects influence your overall attitude toward display advertising the most?



### Appendix 3 - Design of the interview questions based on the theoretical concepts investigated

<i>Category</i>	<i>Question</i>	<i>Authors and models</i>
Past experience and information	<p>How often do you access your Facebook account?</p> <p>Are you aware of display advertising on Facebook?</p> <p>Do you normally pay attention to the display advertising on Facebook?</p> <p>Can you give an example of a display advertising that you remember on Facebook?</p>	<p>Lutz &amp; MacKenzie, 1989</p> <p>Attitude-toward-the-ad model</p>
Behavior	<p>Have you ever visited a product Web site (clicked on a banner) after seeing display advertising on Facebook?</p> <p>Would you click on any of the display advertisements that we have been looking at?</p>	Solomon <i>et al.</i> , 2009
Attitudes toward advertising	<p>What is your general opinion toward display advertising on Facebook?</p> <p>What is your general opinion toward display advertising on the Internet?</p>	<p>Lutz &amp; MacKenzie, 1989</p> <p>Attitude-toward-the-ad model</p>
Credibility	What is your opinion in regards to the credibility of the display advertisements on Facebook?	<p>Lutz &amp; MacKenzie, 1989</p> <p>Attitude-toward-the-ad model</p>
Attitude toward advertiser	What are your perceptions about the advertisers that use display banners on Facebook?	<p>Lutz &amp; MacKenzie, 1989</p> <p>Attitude-toward-the-ad model</p>
Ad perception	<p>What is your opinion about the display advertisements in terms of their execution?</p> <p>Do you find the display advertisements appealing?</p>	<p>Lutz &amp; MacKenzie, 1989</p> <p>Attitude-toward-the-ad model</p>

Mood	Has your general opinion toward display advertising on Facebook changed in any way during this discussion?	Lutz & MacKenzie, 1989 Attitude-toward-the-ad model
Informativeness	Do you think the display advertisements on Facebook in general are related to your interest?  What is your opinion about the product information that is displayed in the banners?	Ducoffe, 1996 Attitude toward advertising
Entertainment	What is your opinion about display advertising as a source of entertainment?	Ducoffe, 1996 Attitude toward advertising
Irritation	What is your opinion in regards to the display advertisements as a source of irritation?  What is your opinion about the placement/location of the display ads on the Facebook page?	Ducoffe, 1996 Attitude toward advertising
Advertising value	Do you find that you receive any value from the display advertisements on Facebook?	Ducoffe, 1996 Attitude toward advertising
Control question	Which of the discussed aspects influence your overall attitude toward display advertising the most?	