



### Gender stereotypes in original digital video advertising

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## Gender stereotypes in original digital video advertising

This study looks into gender stereotypes in original digital video advertising as an independent trend in the advertising industry worthy of a new avenue of research. Content analysis is performed on 324 original digital videos that have won awards from professional marketers. The results show that there is no significant association between gender and any of the ten studied attributes (mode of presentation, credibility, role, age, argument type, reward type, product type, background, setting, and end comment). Hence, women and men are equally portrayed in non-stereotypical activities and roles. However, central figures are more likely to be men than women. This paper highlights the change in women's role according to advertisers' and marketers' criteria for original digital videos.

Keywords: gender stereotypes, original digital video, advertising, content analysis, marketers

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3 Original digital video advertising (ODVA) has the power to alter people's perceptions as  
4 never before and is considered the most effective form of direct advertising to consumers  
5 (Advertisers Perceptions, 2018). Consumers increasingly use the Internet as a source of  
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7 both information and entertainment and are thus consistently exposed to digital video  
8 advertising. In fact, eMarketer reports that the US advertising industry will nearly double  
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10 its investment in digital video advertising spending between 2017 and 2020 (eMarketer,  
11  
12 2017). Given the exponential increase in Internet usage for numerous purposes, especially  
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14 digital video, and advertisers' great interest in taking advantage of this channel, it stands  
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16 to reason that consumers are selective in their viewership content.  
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24 This opportunity has prompted the design of even more targeted digital video  
25 advertisements. Original digital videos (ODVs) are moreover essential to reach audiences  
26 that cannot be reached through television and enable greater placement and branding by  
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28 companies. Specifically, two thirds of advertisers will reallocate funds from television  
29  
30 budgets to promote digital video advertising (Advertisers Perceptions, 2018). In this new  
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32 advertising environment, companies will not create a single video for all their sales  
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34 channels as they did in the past. Today, companies and marketers recognize ODV  
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36 campaigns as a primary source of advertising (Advertisers Perceptions, 2018).  
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38 Consequently, researchers should be looking into this new field.  
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45 Digital video advertisement designers have substantial control over how people's  
46 perceptions are shaped through specific content. Perhaps nowhere is this aspect more  
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48 important than in the shaping of gender expectations, their stereotypical projection, and  
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50 their enhancement through steady role playing (Collins, 2011). The creation and  
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52 reinforcement of stereotypes, some more universally typical and prevalent than others,  
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54 can be highly detrimental to society at large (Coltrane & Adams, 1997). The information  
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56 projected through digital video advertising also has the ability to alter people's  
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3 perceptions, thereby affecting not only their choices but also, ultimately, their behaviour.  
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5 Consumers choose based on their perceptive understanding and rationalize based on their  
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7 perceptive exposure. Thus, research on gender stereotypes, a well-known concept in the  
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9 advertising industry that has drawn extensive scholarly attention (e.g. Bretl & Cantor,  
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11 1988; Debevec & Iyer, 1986; Goffman, 1979; Manstead & McCulloch, 1981; McArthur  
12  
13 & Resko, 1975), is seeking to determine whether the same aspects of gender stereotyping  
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15 will exist in ODVs as an independent channel for promotion.  
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19 This paper helps to fill this gap on ODVs, reviewing the extant literature on both  
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21 traditional and digital video advertising, specifically in the context of gender stereotyping  
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23 and how genders are represented in digital video advertising. The main aim is to study  
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25 the existence of gender stereotypes in digital video advertising and the different roles  
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27 played by men and women in ODVs, thereby advancing the knowledge of digital  
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29 advertising.  
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### 35 **Perceptions and bias generated through digital video advertising**

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37 Kay, Matuszek, and Munson (2015) contend that online advertising portrayals of gender  
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39 stereotypes in occupational contexts have a damaging effect on women's role in the  
40  
41 professional world. This damage is perpetuated through heightened stereotypical  
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43 perception of the differences between gender portrayals and affects the opportunities  
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45 available to women, their range of choices, and their compensation. This finding is further  
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47 substantiated by earlier studies of offline media, especially television (e.g. Jacobs, 1995;  
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49 Massey, 2007). It is also in line with Cultivation Theory (Potter, 1993), originally put  
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51 forward in relation to the then dominant medium of television, ascribing to it a negative  
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53 impact consisting of professional challenges for women created and reinforced through  
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55 gender stereotypical advertising. In their qualitative study, Kay et al. (2015) conclude that  
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3 gender stereotyping in online advertising largely exaggerates stereotypical portrayals.  
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5 These authors further find that under-representing women helps reinforce people's  
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7 perceptions, which have already been shaped by other media, and assure them of the  
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9 validity of their results.  
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12 Both advertisers and researchers have become more aware of the specific effects  
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14 of gender stereotyping in advertising, as reflected in prior studies, albeit with multiple  
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16 media. Miller (2014) highlights a promising positive shift at Getty Images and  
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18 LeanIn.org, which sought to address the negative stereotyping of women in a professional  
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20 capacity by increasing the depiction of women employees in their stock images. That is  
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22 a still medium, however, and it tells only half the story compared to video advertising.  
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26 Another important consideration in the gender stereotyping debate is the target  
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28 viewership. McMahan, Hovland, and McMillan (2009) contend that around half of US  
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30 Web users are women. Hence, almost 52% of the target audience for digital video  
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32 advertisements consists of women. This statistic should prompt advertisement designers  
33  
34 to rethink their content in terms of the creation and projection of stereotypes. The change  
35  
36 in viewership is likely to directly impact the perception and interpretation of online video  
37  
38 advertisements, once they are viewed. Therefore, marketers need to reassess the situation  
39  
40 with regard to gender stereotypical content in their advertisements, especially in Web-  
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42 based environments. Conversely, McMahan et al. (2009) also note that men use the  
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44 Internet for both entertainment and information purposes, whilst women use it as a  
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46 communication tool. However, they further remark that online advertising content should  
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48 be tailored to the viewership's gender and that gender stereotyping is a dangerous trend  
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50 that would thus need to be broken should the different gender-based markets have to be  
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52 tapped. The target audience for digital video advertising seems to be clearly divided in  
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3 this context, suggesting that the percentage of men exposed to video advertisements is  
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5 still higher than the percentage of women.  
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8 Some studies that have assessed stereotypical depictions in online video  
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10 advertisements have found patterns similar to those of traditional advertising.  
11  
12 Plakoyiannaki, Mathioudaki, Dimitratos, and Zotos (2008) find that online video  
13  
14 advertising uses women in different types of stereotypical roles, portraying them in the  
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16 role of traditional homemaker, as the siren and seductress, for purely decorative purposes,  
17  
18 and in completely neutral roles related to the decorative one. They further report that  
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20 sexism against women in online videos is deeper than in print media. The bias created  
21  
22 due to stereotypical representations is quite harmful in a practical sense, as ODVs will  
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24 presumably follow the same path.  
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### 30 31 **Online gender stereotypes**

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33 The issue of gender stereotypes in advertising has been extensively explored over the  
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35 years, in multiple media and across different cultures (e.g. Bretl & Cantor, 1988; Debevec  
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37 & Iyer, 1986; Goffman, 1979; Manstead & McCulloch, 1981; McArthur & Resko, 1975).  
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39 As marketers have been made suitably aware of gender stereotypical attributes and  
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41 influences, one might expect to find awareness-driven reform in this area.  
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45 Whilst the predominant advertising media in the twentieth century were  
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47 television, radio, and the printed press, the twenty-first century ushered in a completely  
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49 new scenario, i.e. the Internet, made even more popular through the introduction of smart  
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51 phones (Okazaki, 2007). The Internet has changed consumer behaviour, and advertisers  
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53 have adapted to the new medium, changing their campaigns accordingly. Researchers  
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55 have also paid special attention to new advertising trends and examined the effect of  
56  
57 gender stereotyping in the promotion of products through site recommendations  
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3 (Garbarino & Strahilevitz, 2004), Web advertising (Wolin & Korgaonkar, 2003), the  
4 application of Hofstede's masculinity index in Web advertising (An & Kim, 2007), the  
5 online advertising of global products (Plakoyiannaki et al., 2008), social media  
6 (Tortajada, Araña, & Martínez, 2013), and the interpretation of Web atmospherics in  
7 information searches (Tsieh, Hatzithomas, & Boutsouki, 2014), amongst others.  
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15 Gender stereotyping has been heavily researched since 1970, across both cultures  
16 and countries (Courtney & Lockeretz, 1971). The portrayal of gender in different media,  
17 including print, radio, television, and, increasingly, the Internet, has likewise received  
18 extensive attention (e.g. Arima, 2003; Kuipers, Van der Laan, & Arfini, 2017; Mont-  
19 Turner, Kouts, Parris, & Webb, 2007; Wallis, 2011). Various researchers have tracked  
20 the progression of gender stereotyping through the different prevailing media at various  
21 points over the past few decades. Women have primarily been objectified either through  
22 the role of dutiful wife, mother, or daughter, in a caring occupation, or through the  
23 somewhat dubious role of a symbol of attraction – glorified as a physical beauty, a sex  
24 object, or in a similarly decorative role (Kyrousi, Panigyrakis, & Panopoulos, 2016).  
25 Although they have also been frequently portrayed as professionals, these portrayals are,  
26 again, limited to women-dominated occupations, such as nursing or teaching (Anand,  
27 2013). On the other hand, men are typically depicted as the capable partner, the wiser,  
28 more mature, and more authoritative counterpart, regardless of their status or profession  
29 (Prieler, Ivanov, & Hagiwara, 2015). In contrast, several studies have found that men and  
30 women are portrayed in a more egalitarian way (Hatzithomas, Boutsouki, & Ziamou,  
31 2016; Kotzaivazoglou, Hatzithomas, & Tsiehla, 2018), whilst others suggest that there  
32 has been a change in roles, such as the new trend featuring men who are concerned about  
33 their physical appearance (Barry, 2014).  
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3 This paper will explore the relatively new phenomenon of gender stereotyping  
4 within the context of ODVA. Advertising content for purely online purposes is still  
5 relatively limited. In contrast, many television advertisements are also used with online  
6 media. Therefore, limiting the investigation solely to ODVA can open new avenues for  
7 both the advertising industry and research. Zotos and Tsihla (2014) point to postmodern  
8 advertising as a promising path to explore. This study will thus focus on gender  
9 stereotypes in ODVA, as few studies have been conducted in this particular area,  
10 especially in relation to ODVs.  
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### 24 **Hypotheses**

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26 As noted, ODV stereotypes should follow the same path as those found in non-exclusively  
27 online videos and their counterparts such as television, radio, or magazine advertising.  
28 One could expect to find the same core variables and significant sex-role stereotypes  
29 between genders. Since the early 1970s, the following main attributes concerning gender  
30 stereotypes have been identified: mode of presentation, credibility basis, role, age,  
31 argument type, reward type, product type, background, setting, and end comment.  
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40 The mode of presentation is still a frequently used attribute in the measurement  
41 of gender stereotypes. Klofstad (2016) concludes that male voices tend to have a higher  
42 level of credibility and be more persuasive. In contrast, Martín-Santana, Muela-Molina,  
43 Reinares-Lara, and Rodríguez-Guerra (2015) find no evidence of increased effectiveness  
44 due to the use of a male voice in terms of persuasion. Nevertheless, men are  
45 predominantly used for voice-over messages, whilst women are most often shown  
46 visually and have less of a presence as voice-over narrators (Furnham, Mak, & Tanidjojo,  
47 2000b; Valls-Fernández & Martínez-Vicente, 2007). Based on the above, the following  
48 hypothesis is proposed in the new context of ODVA:  
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3 *H<sub>1</sub>: Women are more likely to appear in visual situations and men in videos with*  
4 *voice-over.*  
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8 Credibility basis refers to the power to persuade consumers. In this regard, women  
9  
10 are generally depicted as non-authoritative users, whilst men are presented as authorities  
11 or experts (Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008; Furnham & Paltzer, 2011). Hence, the  
12 following hypothesis is formulated in relation to ODVA:  
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17 *H<sub>2</sub>: Women are more likely to be depicted as users and men as authorities*  
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19 In the second decade of the twenty-first century, men and women's roles have  
20 supposedly dramatically changed. Nevertheless, professional and autonomous roles are  
21 more often assigned to men, whilst dependent ones are more often assigned to women  
22 (Knoll, Eisend, & Steinhagen, 2011; Zotos & Tsihla, 2014). For instance, digital video  
23 advertising still uses women in purely decorative roles (Plakoyiannaki et al., 2008;  
24 Tsihla & Zotos, 2016). In contrast, Furnham and Skae (1997) suggest that the role of  
25 interviewer/narrator is equally prominent in both genders. Thus, the following hypothesis  
26 is proposed in relation to ODVA:  
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37 *H<sub>3</sub>: Women are more likely to be portrayed in dependent roles and men in*  
38 *autonomous ones.*  
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42 The age of an advertisement's central figures has also been studied as an attribute  
43 of gender stereotyping. Men are depicted as more mature figures, in the 36-50-year-old  
44 range, whereas most of the women depicted in commercials are between 20 and 35 years  
45 old (Das, 2011; Ganahl, Prinsen, & Netzley, 2003). Thus, the following hypothesis is  
46 proposed in relation to ODVA:  
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53 *H<sub>4</sub>: Women actors tend to be significantly younger than men actors.*  
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56 Non-argument attributes are significantly more common in women than men, who  
57 are given factual arguments (Furnham & Paltzer, 2010; Lim & Furnham, 2016). Opinions,  
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3 i.e. non-argumentative explanations, are assigned to women. Therefore, the following  
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5 hypothesis is formulated in relation to ODVA:  
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8 *H<sub>5</sub>: Women are more likely to give opinions, whilst men make factual arguments.*  
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Manstead and McCulloch (1981) find a significant difference between men and women in terms of reward type: men are often associated with practical rewards and women with self-enhancing ones. Additionally, women are sometimes depicted as rewards resulting from products supposedly targeted at men (Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008; Prieler, 2016). The following hypothesis is therefore proposed in relation to ODVA:

*H<sub>6</sub>: Women are more likely to be portrayed in videos where the reward is self-enhancement and men in videos where the reward is practical.*

Women are mainly featured in relation to certain product categories, such as beauty and personal care products (body products) and, on the whole, products related to aspects of their physical appearance (Bresnahan & Inoue, 2001; Espinar-Ruiz & González-Díaz, 2012; Nassif & Gunter, 2008; Uray & Burnaz, 2003) and household products, appliances, and furnishings (Valls-Fernández & Martínez-Vicente, 2007). In contrast, men are predominantly depicted in connection with cars and automotive accessories and technology (Ganahl et al., 2003; Prieler, 2016). Based on the above analysis, the following hypothesis is formulated in relation to ODVA:

*H<sub>7</sub>: Women are more likely to be used to endorse body-relevant and food products and men to endorse motor-vehicle-related products.*

Men and women are depicted against various backgrounds. The literature is contradictory on this point. Some authors find no significant differences between genders (Furnham & Skae, 1997; Mazzella, Durkin, Cerini, & Buralli, 1992). Others report that men are more likely to be shown with women in the background, whilst women are more

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3 likely to be depicted in the company of children or men (Furnham, Babitzkow, &  
4 Uguccioni, 2000a; Royo-Vela, Aldas-Manzano, Küster, & Vila, 2008). Still others have  
5 shown that men are most often depicted in the company of other men and women in the  
6 company of other women (Neto & Pinto, 1998). The following hypothesis is thus  
7 formulated in relation to ODVA:  
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14 *H<sub>8</sub>: Women are more likely to be shown against female backgrounds and men*  
15 *against male ones.*  
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19 Most studies have found that women are portrayed in the home or indoors  
20 engaging in role-related behaviour, whilst men are shown in settings outside the home,  
21 such as occupational ones (Bresnahan & Inoue, 2001; Espinar-Ruiz & González-Díaz,  
22 2012; Milner & Higgs, 2004). On the whole, women are less likely to be depicted in a  
23 professional setting than men (Gentry & Harrison, 2010; Verhellen, Dens, & De  
24 Pelsmacker, 2016). In this regard, the following hypothesis is formulated in relation to  
25 ODVA:  
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35 *H<sub>9</sub>: Women are more likely to be shown in domestic settings and men in*  
36 *occupational ones*  
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40 Finally, central figures who are men are more likely to make an end comment than  
41 central figures who are women (Ali A., Ali, Kumar, Hafeez, & Ghufuran, 2012; Furnham  
42 & Skae, 1997). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed in relation to ODVA:  
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47 *H<sub>10</sub>: Women are more likely to appear in videos without an end comment and men*  
48 *in videos with one.*  
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## 51 52 **Methodology**

### 53 *Method*

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57 When the first empirical studies on gender stereotypes emerged in the early 1970s,  
58 content analysis proved to be an extremely valuable tool for measuring the portrayal of  
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3 gender stereotypes in advertising (Dominick & Rauch, 1972). This method has continued  
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5 to be used in a wide range of studies up to the present day (e.g. Furnham & Paltzer, 2010;  
6  
7 Grau, Roselli, & Taylor, 2007; Plakoyiannaki & Zotos, 2009; Prieler et al., 2015).  
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### 10 11 12 ***ODVA Sample*** 13

14 The research sample was drawn from the Internet Advertising Competition  
15 (IACAWARD) database. These awards were created by the Web Marketing Association,  
16 which promotes Internet marketing and corporate development on the World Wide Web.  
17 The category corresponding to ODVs is the format 'online video'. From 2010 to 2017,  
18 354 videos received awards. Some of these videos are not currently available online,  
19 especially the videos from the first years of the competition. In an attempt to remedy this  
20 problem, the competition organizers were contacted and asked for access to all the videos  
21 for strictly research-related purposes. However, they claimed to have no control over the  
22 maintenance of the winning participants' links. Additionally, some videos receive awards  
23 in multiple categories. Such duplicate advertisements were likewise not considered.  
24 Therefore, the final sample consisted of 324 videos.  
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### 42 ***Coding Procedure*** 43

44 Two coders (one woman and one man) received four hours of training on the coding  
45 procedures and then coded all the ODVs independently. The one woman-one man coding  
46 system has been used elsewhere (e.g. Milner & Higgs, 2004; Uray & Burnaz, 2003). In  
47 the training sessions, the categories and study variables were clearly explained to the  
48 coders. The coders were also provided with coding guidelines, definitions, and an online  
49 table for data input linked to the content analysis of the digital videos. As suggested by  
50 Weber (1990), before the study sample was coded, a pilot coding of fifty original video  
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3 advertisements was conducted in order to reduce differences in the coding and facilitate  
4 the reaching of final agreements. This process, consisting of training and prior coding,  
5 has been implemented by several researchers and proved to be a valuable method  
6 (Plakoyiannaki et al., 2008). ODVs were classified as female or male: if a video  
7 highlighted more than one stereotype, it was classified as the dominant one.  
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12 Perreault and Leigh's (1989) reliability index was used by both coders. This index  
13 is suitable when two coders are involved. Scores range from 0.0 (no reliability) to 1.0  
14 (perfect reliability). Male gender stereotypes had a reliability score of 0.91, and female  
15 ones, 0.93, and the intercoder agreement exceeded 90% for all variables. Both scores are  
16 considered very high and are well above the 0.70 score deemed trustworthy by Rust and  
17 Cooil (1994). Each coder worked independently, and any coding discrepancies to appear  
18 were later discussed by the two coders until an agreement was reached to obtain the final  
19 sample.  
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### 36 *Central measures and attributes*

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38 This paper is based on the content analysis categories proposed by McArthur and Resko  
39 (1975), a method that has been used in more than 70 studies (Gilly, 1988; Manstead &  
40 McCulloch, 1981; Furnham & Paltzer, 2011).  
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46 Any adult portrayed in a central role (visually or vocally) is considered the central  
47 figure. Of the 324 ODVs, 212 featured a central figure who was a man, and 112, a central  
48 figure who was a woman. In all, 18.5% of the ODVs lasted less than 2 minutes and  
49 featured a central figure who was a woman vs 40.4% lasting less than 2 minutes and  
50 featuring a central figure who was a man. For ODVs lasting between 2 and 4 minutes,  
51 these figures were 17.3% (women) and 12.4% (men) respectively, whilst for ODVs  
52 lasting over 4 minutes, they were 3.7% (women) and 7.7% (men), respectively.  
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3 Building on Gilly (1988) and subsequent studies (e.g. Das, 2011; Milner & Higgs,  
4 2004), the ten measured attributes were as follows:

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8 *Mode of presentation.* The mode of presentation of the central figure was  
9 classified as: voice-over, visual speaking, visual speaking & voice-over, or visual non-  
10 speaking.  
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15 *Credibility.* Four main types of credibility were included: user, authority, other,  
16 and neither.  
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19 *Role.* The central figure was categorized into one of five roles: dependent,  
20 interviewer/narrator, professional, celebrity, and other.  
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24 *Age.* Three categories were used: young (aged 35 and under), middle-aged (ages  
25 36 to 50) and older (over 50).  
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29 *Argument type.* Four types of arguments were coded: factual/scientific,  
30 opinion/non-scientific, other, and none.  
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35 *Reward type.* The central figure was coded as being portrayed against one of the  
36 following five types of rewards: social approval, social/self-enhancement, practical,  
37 pleasure, and other.  
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42 *Product type.* The videos were classified into the following categories, depending  
43 on the type of product the central figures were depicted with: body, home, food, auto,  
44 sport, services, financial, technology, property, or other.  
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49 *Background.* The backgrounds for the central figures were classified as: mostly  
50 women, mostly men, mixed, mostly children, or none.

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54 *Setting.* Six types of settings were used: private residence/home, occupational,  
55 leisure, fictional, animated, and other.  
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3 *End comment.* This attribute refers to the inclusion of a final brief remark. The  
4 following categories were used: present as a voice, present as an image, present as a voice  
5 and image, and absent.  
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## 10 11 12 **Results and Discussion**

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14 The results for all ten attributes are summarized in Tables 1 and 2. An overall significant  
15 chi-square was found for the central figures (men or women) ( $X^2 = 204.429$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p <$   
16  $.001$ ). Therefore, women did not account for half of the central figures (only 34.6%).  
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21 *Mode of presentation.* No statistically significant association was found between  
22 the mode of presentation and gender ( $X^2 = 2.705$ ,  $df = 3$ , NS). Therefore,  $H_1$  was rejected.  
23 Both men (52.3%) and women (55.3%) are depicted most frequently in visual speaking  
24 roles. Further analysis, in which the effect of music was tested independently, likewise  
25 did not reveal any significant association ( $X^2 = 9.116$ ,  $df = 7$ , NS). When music was tested,  
26 visual speaking was the prevailing combination for both genders. Music plays an  
27 important role in ODVs and is present in 93.7% of ODVs featuring central figures who  
28 are women and 86.9% featuring central figures who are men. These results stand in stark  
29 contrast to those of previous studies (Furnham et al., 2000b; Manstead & McCulloch,  
30 1981). In the present study, women central figures were portrayed equally to men in terms  
31 of the mode of presentation.  
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47 *Credibility.* The overall analysis revealed no significant association between  
48 gender and credibility basis ( $X^2 = 6.746$ ,  $df = 3$ , NS). A total of 39.3% of the women were  
49 portrayed as authorities vs 37.3% of the men, whilst 41.1% of the women were portrayed  
50 as product users vs 35.40% of the men. In other words, the percentage of women users  
51 was slightly higher than that of men (41.1% vs 35.4%).  $H_2$  was thus also rejected, because  
52 the credibility attributes have changed in the case of women.  
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3           *Role.* No significant association was found between gender and roles ( $X^2 = 5.072$ ,  
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5  $df = 4$ , NS). The role of interviewer/narrator was the most common one for both genders  
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7 (women = 40.2%; men = 43.9%). These results are consistent with those of Furnham and  
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9 Skae (1997).  $H_3$  was thus rejected, as there were no differences between the genders in  
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11 terms of the role played.  
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14           *Age.* The overall analysis revealed no significant association between gender and  
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16 age ( $X^2 = 0.733$ ,  $df = 2$ , NS). Younger women and younger men were depicted equally  
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18 (50.0% for both genders). However, the percentage of middle-aged women has increased  
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20 compared to previous research (Das, 2011; Ganahl et al., 2003), and the percentage of  
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22 middle-aged men was close to that for women (42.0% vs 44.3%). Therefore,  $H_4$  was  
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24 rejected.  
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28           *Argument type.* No significant association was found between gender and  
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30 argument type ( $X^2 = 5.090$ ,  $df = 3$ , NS). Opinion-based arguments were the prevailing  
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32 type for both genders (45.5% = women; 47.2% = men). The rest of the measured variables  
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34 were as likely to occur in men as in women. Hence,  $H_5$  was rejected.  
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38           *Reward type.* The overall analysis revealed no significant relationship between  
39  
40 gender and reward type ( $X^2 = 2.969$ ,  $df = 5$ , NS). Because there were no differences  
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42 between the genders in terms of reward type,  $H_6$  was also rejected. The predominant  
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44 reward type for both genders was a practical reward (33.9% = women; 29.7% = men).  
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48           *Product type.* No numerical gender differences were observed with regard to  
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50 product type ( $X^2 = 1.969$ ,  $df = 9$ , NS). Services were the most common type for both  
51  
52 genders (women = 17.9%; men = 19.8%). Body was the second most common product  
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54 type for both women and men (15.2% vs 13.7%). Thus,  $H_7$  was not accepted.  
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57           *Background.* The overall analysis revealed no significant association between  
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59 gender and background ( $X^2 = 1.818$ ,  $df = 4$ , NS). Men and women were equally likely to  
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3 be shown in mixed backgrounds (33.9% for women vs 37.3% for men). The second most  
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5 common option for both women and men was to be portrayed with men (20.5% vs  
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7 19.3%). Therefore,  $H_8$  was not accepted, as there were no differences between the  
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9 genders.

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12 *Setting.* No significant association was found between gender and setting ( $X^2 =$   
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14 1.393,  $df = 5$ , NS). An occupational setting was the most likely setting for both genders  
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16 (women = 30.4%; men = 29.7%). The second most common setting for both genders was  
17  
18 a leisure setting (more than 20%). Thus, hypothesis  $H_9$  was also rejected, as the setting  
19  
20 attributes were quite similar for both women and men.  
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24 *End comment.* The overall analysis revealed no significant association between  
25  
26 gender and end comment ( $X^2 = 4.173$ ,  $df = 3$ , NS). Further analysis with two variables  
27  
28 (present and absent) likewise failed to reveal any significant association between the two  
29  
30 variables ( $X^2 = 0.098$ ,  $df = 1$ , NS). Therefore,  $H_{10}$  was also rejected.  
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34 The findings of this examination of male and female role portrayal indicate that  
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36 men and women are portrayed in a more egalitarian way in ODVs in terms of traditional  
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38 gender stereotypes. In general, there was no significant association between gender and  
39  
40 any of the ten studied attributes (mode of presentation, credibility, roles, age, argument  
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42 type, reward type, product type, background, setting, and end comment).  
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46 In conclusion, as the chi-square measurements demonstrate, there was no  
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48 difference between genders; women central figures in ODVs seemed to have the same  
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50 attributes as central figures who were men. These results differ from previous findings  
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52 (e.g. Furnham et al., 2000b; Manstead & McCulloch, 1981; Mazzella et al., 1992; Neto  
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54 & Pinto, 1988). The only difference found between genders in the present study was with  
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56 regard to the central figure. Most of the prize-winning videos featured a central figure  
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3 who was a man, although the attributes of male and female central figures themselves  
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5 were quite similar.  
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9 [Insert table 1]  
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## 16 **Conclusions and future research**

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18 In 1988, Ferrante, Haynes, and Kingsley pointed to a change in women's role as depicted  
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20 by advertisers and marketers. The present findings support that observation, since the  
21  
22 analysed prize-winning videos, selected by marketing and advertising professionals,  
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24 featured women with the same attributes as men.  
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28 The lack of significant differences found between men and women in ODVs for  
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30 attributes related to traditional gender stereotypes point to a need to find new variables  
31  
32 better adapted to the independent scenario of ODVs. This is particularly true in light of  
33  
34 Eisend's (2010) writings about the coding scheme and lack of theoretical justification for  
35  
36 the categories. The Internet has revolutionized marketing and advertising alike.  
37  
38 Therefore, the attributes presented by McArthur and Resko (1975) and Goffman (1979)  
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40 might be outdated or, at least, ill-suited to ODVs. In fact, this study is one of the first to  
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42 deal with and present specific data on gender representation in ODVs.  
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47 The findings are consistent with those of other recent research. For instance, Kay  
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49 et al. (2015) found evidence of stereotypical representations, but at a declining rate. Their  
50  
51 conclusion supports the view that people's conscious desire to be represented in a truly  
52  
53 social manner, as opposed to in hypothetically stereotypical ones, provides evidence of  
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55 changing perceptions, requirements, and desires. This needs to be incorporated as soon  
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57 as possible in actual practice with regard to visual online marketing content.  
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3 Studies looking into work roles (Matthes, Prieler, & Adams, 2016) and  
4 advertisements aired during the Super Bowl (Hatzithomas et al., 2016) have found some  
5 evidence that the differences between women and men have been lessening. Similar  
6 structural features can be found in Grau and Zotos (2016) and Rubie-Davies, Liu, and  
7 Lee (2013), who find that women are equally depicted in more egalitarian societal roles.  
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12 Another interesting study (Åkestam, Rosengren, & Dahlen, 2017) examined  
13 femvertising as female empowerment advertising. The findings of that study highlight  
14 that reducing female stereotypes enhances brand attitude. ODVs seem to offer a clear  
15 example of femvertising and of how companies are changing their advertisements to  
16 spotlight a more equal culture. It is necessary to further explore the influence the carefully  
17 constructed stereotypes are likely to have on people's perceptions of social gender roles  
18 and how these perceptions are constructing the social fibre of our relationship  
19 environments. It is hoped that such an understanding will make marketers and users more  
20 aware of the dangers of stereotypical associations in society.  
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35 There seems to be a trend towards creating videos in a more neutral environment.  
36 This neutral approach could breathe new life into the research, allowing researchers to  
37 create new variables and measurements. The present findings indicate that the number of  
38 animated ODVs is increasing each day. Given the lack of research on that topic, trying to  
39 identify the gender stereotypes in animated videos could also be an area worth looking  
40 into.  
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Table 1. Results for Mode of Presentation, Credibility, Role, Age, Argument Type, and Reward Type

Attribute		Women (n=112)	Men (n=212)	$\chi^2$	<i>p</i>
<b>Mode of Presentation</b>	Voice-over	24.1%	31.1%	2.705	ns
	Visual speaking	48.2%	47.6%		
	Visual speaking & voice-over	7.1%	4.7%		
	Visual non-speaking	20.5%	16.5%		
<b>Credibility</b>	User	41.1%	35.4%	6.746	ns
	Authority	39.3%	37.3%		
	Other	0.0%	5.2%		
	Neither	19.6%	22.2%		
<b>Role</b>	Dependent	16.1%	12.3%	5.072	ns
	Interviewer/Narrator	40.2%	43.9%		
	Professional	25.0%	28.3%		
	Celebrity	3.6%	6.6%		
	Other	15.2%	9.0%		
<b>Age</b>	Young (35 or under)	50.0%	50.0%	0.733	ns
	Middle-aged (36 to 50)	42.0%	44.3%		
	Older (over 50)	8.0%	5.7%		
<b>Argument type</b>	Factual/scientific	31.3%	35.4%	5.090	ns
	Opinion/non-scientific	45.5%	47.2%		
	Other	4.5%	7.1%		
	None	18.8%	10.4%		
<b>Reward type</b>	Social approval	20.5%	19.8%	2.969	ns
	Social/self-enhancement	20.5%	20.3%		
	Practical	33.9%	29.7%		
	Pleasure	13.4%	20.8%		
	Other	11.6%	9.4%		

Table 2. Results for Product Type, Background, Setting, and End Comment

Attribute		Women (n=112)	Men (n=212)	$X^2$	<i>p</i>
<b>Product type</b>	Body	15.2%	13.7%	1.969	ns
	Home	3.6%	3.3%		
	Food	6.3%	8.5%		
	Auto	6.3%	8.0%		
	Sport	1.8%	2.8%		
	Services	17.9%	19.8%		
	Financial	12.5%	10.8%		
	Technology	14.3%	12.7%		
	Property	2.7%	1.9%		
	Other	19.6%	18.4%		
<b>Background</b>	Mostly women	10.7%	11.8%	1.818	ns
	Mostly men	20.5%	19.3%		
	Mixed	33.9%	37.3%		
	Mostly children	2.7%	4.7%		
	None	32.1%	26.9%		
<b>Setting</b>	Private residence/home	16.1%	11.8%	1.393	ns
	Occupational	30.4%	29.7%		
	Leisure	23.2%	24.5%		
	Fictional	13.4%	15.6%		
	Animated	13.4%	14.6%		
	Other	3.6%	3.8%		
<b>End Comment</b>	Present as voice	1.8%	0.0%	4.173	ns
	Present as image	64.3%	64.2%		
	Present as voice & image	21.4%	24.5%		
	Absent	12.5%	11.3%		