

Eating popcorn makes ads less effective

17th October, 2013



The advertising people see while at the movies is less effective when audiences eat popcorn. This is the conclusion of a newly-published study from

Germany's Cologne University. According to researchers, people remember the names of new brands or products by silently pronouncing them in their brains. However, with a mouth full of popcorn, this process is interrupted. The report is titled "Popcorn in the Cinema: Oral Interference Sabotages Advertising Effects". It describes how the chewing action interferes with the brain's "inner speech" that operates whenever we come across a new name. Researchers say: "This happens covertly, that is, without our awareness."

Researcher Sascha Topolinski invited 96 people to watch a movie. Half of the group was given popcorn, while the rest received a small sugar cube. A week later, the participants were asked to rate a series of products, including some of those they had seen adverts for during the movie. The sugar cube group remembered a lot more of the product names than those who ate popcorn. Mr Topolinski said: "The mundane activity of eating popcorn made participants immune to the pervasive effects of advertising." He added: "This finding suggests that selling candy in cinemas actually undermines advertising." This presents cinema owners with a dilemma. There is usually a 900% mark-up on popcorn sold in movie theatres.

Sources: BBC / Yahoo Movies / AdNews.com

Writing

Food should be banned in movie theatres. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

advertising / effective / conclusion / brands / mouth full / chewing / awareness / researcher / rate products / sugar cube / mundane / immune / dilemma / mark-up

True / False

- A study is about ads before movies on TV while people eat popcorn. T / F
- A report says we remember names by pronouncing them in our brain. T / F
- The report said only popcorn stops us remembering names. T / F
- Chewing may stop us remembering new names. T / F
- 96 people ate popcorn and did a memory recall test for brand names. T / F
- The report said eating sugar cubes helps us remember names. T / F
- Researchers said eating popcorn makes us immune to advertising. T / F
- Popcorn costing the cinema \$1 can be sold to moviegoers for \$9. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 1. effective | a. restricted |
| 2. conclusion | b. evaluate |
| 3. interrupted | c. resistant |
| 4. interferes with | d. opinion |
| 5. awareness | e. predicament |
| 6. rate | f. disrupts |
| 7. mundane | g. useful |
| 8. immune | h. hike |
| 9. dilemma | i. realisation |
| 10. mark-up | j. boring |

Discussion – Student A

- Should food and drink be banned in cinemas?
- How much of an effect does advertising have on you?
- Is popcorn good or bad for us?
- What kind of ads do you like and dislike?
- What movie-going habits do you have?
- Do you think advertisers will ask cinemas to stop selling popcorn?
- What do you think of cinemas selling popcorn for nine times the price they bought it for?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. less effective when | a. them in their brains |
| 2. silently pronouncing | b. owners with a dilemma |
| 3. with a mouth full of popcorn, | c. without our awareness |
| 4. the chewing action interferes with | d. activity of eating popcorn |
| 5. This happens covertly, that is, | e. audiences eat popcorn |
| 6. rate a | f. up on popcorn |
| 7. The mundane | g. the brain's "inner speech" |
| 8. selling candy in cinemas actually | h. series of products |
| 9. This presents cinema | i. this process is interrupted |
| 10. There is usually a 900% mark- | j. undermines advertising |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you eat or drink at the movies?
- Are you surprised by this research?
- Do you think people who chew gum all day have more difficulty remembering names?
- What do you think of the advertising at movie theatres?
- Is advertising good or bad?
- Why is popcorn so popular?
- Salted or caramel popcorn – which is best (and why)?
- How is popcorn made?

Spelling

- less cevfteeif when audiences eat popcorn
- silently oucprnignno them
- this process is tdeuretirpn
- the chewing action esefitrern with the brain's "inner speech"
- This happens etcyrvol
- without our wassrnaee
- eating popcorn made aspttrainicp immune
- The nenduum activity of eating popcorn
- the sarpevevi effects of advertising
- candy in cinemas actually usdirnemen advertising
- This presents cinema owners with a mmiedal
- a 900% rkum-ap

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. a	4. f	5. i
6. b	7. j	8. c	9. e	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Movie theatres

You think movie theatres are the best places to advertise. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): trains and buses, websites or radio.

Role B – Trains and buses

You think trains and buses are the best places to advertise. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): movie theatres, websites or radio.

Role C – Websites

You think websites are the best places to advertise. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): trains and buses, movie theatres or radio.

Role D – Radio

You think radio is the best place to advertise. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): trains and buses, websites or movie theatres.

Speaking - Movies

Rank these.

- | | |
|------------------|------------------------|
| • popcorn | • the dark |
| • the seats | • being in an audience |
| • the foyer | • the sound |
| • the big screen | • the trailers |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	F	d	T	e	F	f	F	g	T	h	T
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.