

The perception of consumers and experts regarding the values of advertising in the automotive sector (2008-2018)

Percepción de consumidores y expertos sobre los valores de la publicidad del sector del automóvil (2008-2018)



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Abstract:

Products are becoming increasingly similar, and now it is more difficult to distinguish one from the other. Moreover, as a result of globalisation, the competition between them is more intense as well. Advertising is one of the most significant differentiating factors for consumers in choosing one product over another when they make a purchase decision. Given this phenomenon, as well as the complex and peculiar factors that seem to determine the situation, this paper aims to study and analyse the underlying scale of values by which a person chooses a car today, and the role that advertising plays in that decision. The research herein analyses the values communicated through Internet adverts by the automobile industry. To this end, a comparison has been made between the values of advertising that appeared in 2008

Resumen:

Cada día los productos son más similares y se diferencian menos unos de otros y, con la globalización, la competencia entre ellos es aún mayor. La publicidad es uno de los factores de diferenciación más relevantes para que los consumidores elijan unos u otros en el momento de su decisión de compra. Como consecuencia de este fenómeno y de los peculiares y complejos factores que parecen determinarlo, en este trabajo se pretende estudiar y analizar la escala de valores subyacente por los que una persona elige un automóvil en la actualidad y el papel que la publicidad ejerce en esa decisión. Esta investigación analiza los valores transmitidos en la publicidad efectuada en Internet por la industria automovilística. Para ello, se ha realizado una comparación entre los valores de la publicidad durante 2008 y 2018 respecto a los criterios y

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and 2018 with regard to the criteria and values of consumers when making an automobile purchase decision, as well as the key values involved in the purchasing process, according to experts. A combined quantitative-qualitative methodology has been used to identify the perceptions of 300 consumers and 30 experts, as well as the values conveyed by advertising through a content analysis of 672 adverts. The results show that there is a relatively clear divergence between the values that advertising communicates, the ones that customers demand, and those that experts consider most significant.

Keywords:

Values; automobile; advertising; consumers; communication.

1. Introduction

Values hold an indispensable position in the field of psychology and society, as they are the result of changes and transformations throughout history (Sandoval, 2007). These are abstract, stable beliefs that transcend specific situations, are hierarchically arranged in terms of importance, and are used to resolve conflicts or make decisions (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1990; Barbarossa et al., 2017). Rodríguez et al. (2013) have studied values from three different perspectives: educational, human, and social, defining them as follows:

Those aspects of its content and the features of its formal characteristics that make up the set of qualities that give importance, validity, or worth to manifest communication, which engenders appreciation for such communication due to its adaptation to the needs of people and society (Rodríguez et al., 2013, p. 11).

The use of values in advertising strategies is not an innovative practice. “From pre-advertising to advertising, its discourses have been an effective assessment of the social and cultural values that have prevailed in each era” (Núñez-Cansado and Martín-Requero, 2015, p.39). Collective values (youth, modernity, technology, tradition) and transitive values (friendship, solidarity, ecology) have served as the basis for advertising campaigns, allowing for the creation of new symbolic attributes for the product and/or brand that they could never have incorporated by themselves.

Almost no one still has doubts, for example, that advertising arguments and practices tend to replace product attributes with a whole set of intangible values resulting from the features of an organisation’s image, or from highly personalised aspects of consumers (Victoria, 2005, p. 16).

From this perspective, advertising should be seen, on the one hand, as a sociological element with an economic purpose, which evolves in parallel with the market and, on the other hand, as “a socialising factor [that] becomes a cultural expression” (González Requena and Ortiz de Zárate, 1999, cited in Ramos, Delgado and Jiménez, 2007, p.32).

valores de los consumidores en la toma de decisión de compra de un coche y los valores que, según los expertos, son clave en el proceso de compra. Se ha utilizado una metodología mixta cuantitativa-cualitativa para identificar la percepción de 300 consumidores y 30 expertos y los valores transmitidos por la publicidad a través del análisis de contenido de 672 anuncios. Los resultados muestran que hay una divergencia relativamente clara entre los valores que la publicidad transmite, los que demandan los clientes y los que los expertos consideran más relevantes.

Palabras clave:

Valores; automóvil; publicidad; consumidores; comunicación.

1.1. The creation of values through media and advertising

The media have shaped the evolution of advertising and, in turn, this has enabled the media revolution to take place. Yet no previous medium has brought about such a rapid change in the communication landscape as the Internet is doing today (Martín-Casado et al., 2012, p.165).

Television has traditionally been cited as the most important medium by the general public, to the point of being credited with changing the world of communication (Gunter et al., 2000). Having outperformed other media in its ability to attract viewers' attention (Johnson and Kaye, 2000), advertisers have historically invested more in television, which meant that other media started to decline. Not only was cinema hit hard, but magazines as well, by what was a new medium at the time (McLuhan, 1994, p.318), allowing the viewer to see advertising messages with image and sound, facilitating recall and resulting in a high return on everything advertised on television.

However, the growth of advertising investment on the Internet has been the highest of all media since the end of 2016, especially by advertisers in the automotive sector. Thus, Internet advertising has grown by 21%, and in the automotive sector it has increased by 75% since 2017 (Infoadex, 2018). This digital medium is much more than technology. "It is a means of communication, interaction, and social organisation" (Castells, 2006). It has become a new *metamedium*, which has forced the other media to adapt (Okazaki, 2002).

In this sense, advertising developed on the Internet has been labelled as *Electronic Advertising*, and it has some major differences compared to traditional advertising, such as interactivity with regard to advertising on other media (Hawkins, 1994; Yoon and Kim, 2001).

To its credit, advertising conveys values such as respect for the environment, non-violence, family joy, and even solidarity. On occasion, product characteristics are omitted, as the main objective of advertising in such cases is to create a positive brand image.

The advertising message, through persuasion and the appeal to feelings and emotions, not only communicates by focusing on needs, but also on the cultural system of values to the point that the brand value of a product is given greater prominence than its intrinsic attributes (García, 2018, p. 94).

Advertising can be described as an actor who transmits meaning and values in unison: firstly, to the product, and secondly, from the product to the public. This is how the product is sanitised because advertising transforms it into a product with attributes that are desirable to the consumer, which are transferred to the consumer through a purchase. This, in turn, makes the consumer desirable to others for possessing the product. "This process is possible thanks to the participation of the consumer, who actively engages in interpreting the values and meanings associated with products and services, rather than participating passively" (Coldeluppi, 2007, p.151).

1.2. Value models

Authors such as Pollay (1986), Tse et al. (1989), Schwartz (1994), Domínguez (1995), as well as Núñez-Cansado and Martín-Requero (2015), have created or used existing models and theoretical constructs to define the factors that play a key role in the decision to purchase a product and, consequently, in advertising the product. However, few have applied this assessment of

values to automobiles. In the theory of models for the review of brand value, most studies use a sample of print and/or television advertisements and have their foundations in the model established by Pollay (1983), who identified and categorised the dominant values of advertising. Pollay (1986) perceived advertising as a metaphor –a “distorted cultural mirror”– where only certain attitudes, behaviours and values are reflected, which are those that serve the interests of the seller, as they are more readily linked to the products available. Moreover, they are easily dramatized in the advertisements, to which the consumers viewing the advertisements respond in a more trusting way (Okazaki, 2002).

Pollay analysed over 400 ads from three different countries and drew value inferences between the ads from the same product categories in those countries based on a table covering 42 values, of which practicality, technology, naturalness, economy, productivity, youth, social status, and belonging stand out, among others. Thus, Pollay concluded that there was “great consistency over time and across media” about the values most frequently promoted in advertising discourse (Méndiz, 2007). As such, the ultimate consequence of advertising is the consolidation of negative values such as materialism, cynicism, anxiety, social competitiveness, and lack of respect.

Subsequently, following Pollay’s proposal, Tse et al. (1989) carried out a standardisation of consumer values adapted to Asian peculiarities (Table 1).

For this purpose, they used a sample consisting of 291, 296, and 377 selected print adverts from 1979 to 1985. The categories (calls to action) used in the cultural content analysis carried out by these authors were as follows:

Table 1. Calls to action

Calls to action	Components listed on the coding form
Technology	Technological components of the product
Modernity	Modern, future, new
Hedonism	Beautiful, luxurious, prestigious, foreign, funny
Product performance	High quality, performance
Product guarantee	Certified, generally accepted
Components	Product components
Product variety	Variety
Distribution	Availability of the service, list of shops or workshops
Purchase value	Price, economy, practicality
Image	Company history, image

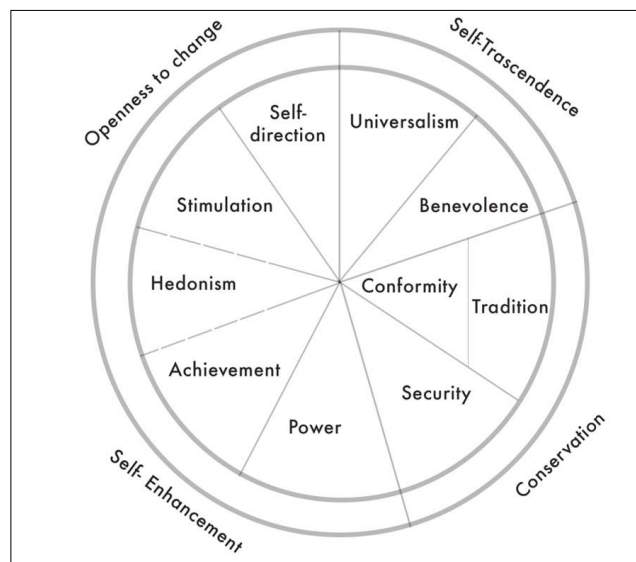
Source: Tse et al. (1989)

Schwartz (1994) also studied the factors that influence the purchase decision and established a Value Survey (SVS) in which he defined ten types of values according to the kind of motivational objectives they express, structuring them in a circular fashion (Figure 1) in order to emphasise their similarities when faced with conflict.

Schwartz organised them into four higher-order domains

- “Self-transcendence”, which combines benevolence and universality. Benevolence indicates concern for the welfare of others and universality emphasises understanding and protection of the interest of all people and nature.
- “Self-enhancement” is the result of power and achievement. Power indicates control and dominance over people and resources, social status, and prestige, while achievement refers to success and social approval.
- “Openness to change” integrates self-direction, stimulation, and hedonic values, emphasising sensual gratification and pleasure for oneself.
- “Conservation” includes security, conformance, and tradition. The latter leads people to prioritise established social rules and immutable expectations of the past (Barbarossa et al., 2017).

Figure 1. Schwartz’s values for domains of value



Source: prepared by the authors based on Barbarossa et al. (2017)

Afterward, Domínguez (1995) carried out a detailed analysis of the values inherent to Spanish TV advertising based on a sample of 500 advertisements selected over the course of a year.

The methodological framework offered by this study features large conceptual areas, which are articulated around three large groups: self-centred values, which aggregate a person's egocentric tendencies focusing on success, pleasure, comfort, or security; collective values, which are those that unite us to others, or in other words, to the group; and transitive values, which imply selflessness in opening oneself to others in solidarity, examples of which are friendship, coexistence, and service. In recent years, authors such as Alameda (2006), Núñez et al. (2008), and Castelló et al. (2013) have considered that rather than transmitting the values of a country, advertising reflects the materialistic values that advertisers transmit.

Núñez-Cansado and Martín-Requero (2015) have also identified the existence of these materialistic values (high income, growth, order, security) and point out that these have changed toward post-materialist values (participation, ecological balance, etc.), as the result of a "silent revolution" in industrialised countries. According to these authors, the transition from old values to post-materialist values has had consequences, such as the emergence of environmentalist tendencies that have led to a sudden concern for the environment (Núñez-Cansado and Martín-Requero, 2015, p.39).

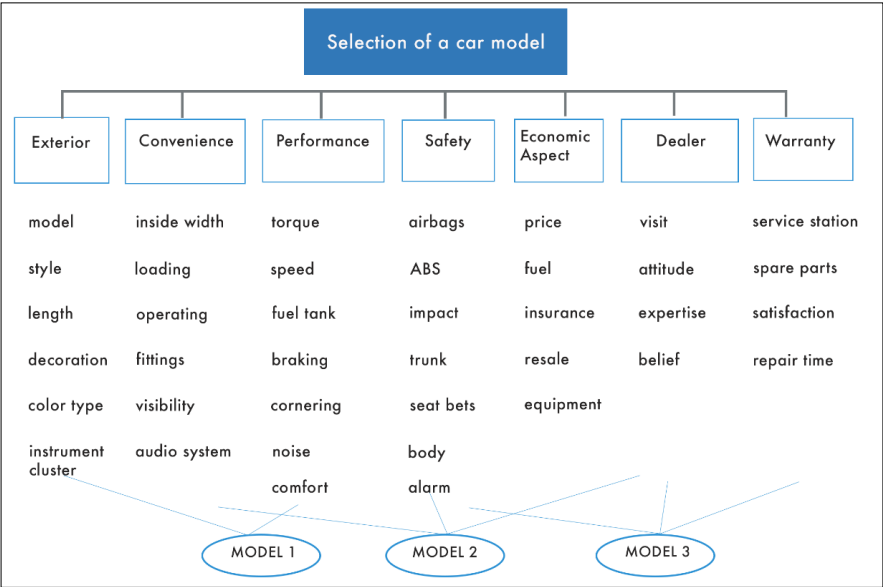
1.3. Models applied to the automotive sector and values that influence the purchase decision

For most consumers, buying a new car is a very infrequent action as the decision requires a high level of implication. Consequently, compared to many other usual, small-scale purchase decisions for which habit may be an important factor, there might be a higher likelihood of rational thought that generates a cost-benefit analysis (Steg, 2005; Lieven et al., 2011; Gao et al., 2014; Hafner et al., 2017).

Contextual influences that are more specific include practical considerations, such as purchase price, size, performance, and operating costs (Lane and Potter, 2007; Banerjee, 2010), as well as more image-related issues (e.g. colour) and status (branding), which are linked to regulatory and identity concerns (Choo and Mokhtarian, 2004; Peters et al., 2015). There is also evidence that the environmental impact of a car purchase, such as CO₂ and particulate emissions, is a consideration of interest (Kahn, 2007; Coad et al., 2009). Driving a given vehicle has a number of connotations beyond the intrinsic transport benefits, such as symbolic associations that provide and express self-identity and social status (Steg et al., 2001; Steg, 2005; Heffner et al., 2007). Such benefits related to a person's social image may even take precedence over more rational advantages related to the intrinsic benefits of the vehicle at the time of the purchase decision (Lane, 2011). "Symbolic benefits influence customers' purchase decisions, and they can even set trends or sales tendencies" (Burgess et al., 2013, p.33). As such, brands employ a different strategy depending on their models and the target they want to reach, as these depend on the different attractions offered by each vehicle (Heffner et al., 2005; Burgess et al., 2013).

Regarding the study of purchase decisions, the analytical hierarchy process-AHP (Figure 2) established by Byun (2001) offers a decision-making method for selecting the best passenger car model using three levels.

Figure 2. AHP Model



Source: Byun (2001)

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This method establishes seven criteria at the first level: exterior, convenience, performance, safety, affordability, dealership, and warranty. From these, other factors or sub-criteria emerge at the second level, such as the following: model or styling in the case of the exterior; convenience related to equipment design for better operation; performance linked to the functioning of the car; safety offered by the airbags or seat belts, and technical features that reduce the risk of death or serious injury; the economic aspect refers to the price and expense of a car; dealership criteria refer to the personal characteristics and attitudes that lead the customer to make a purchase decision; and finally, the warranty factor considers after-sales service, the ease of acquiring spare parts, or the customer’s post-service satisfaction. Another model applied to the automotive sector (Table 2) was developed by López et al. (2002), who use the variables that receive the highest scores from consumer surveys to establish indicators as key factors in the purchase of a car.

Table 2. Consumer satisfaction indexes

Vehicle body	Mechanics	Economy
Design/Aesthetics	Engine	After-sales service
Design/Functionality	Gearbox functioning	Fuel consumption
Finish	Velocity	Maintenance costs
Safety	Acceleration/Recovery	Value for money

Roominess.	Steering	Resale price
Luggage compartment	Brakes	
Driving position	Response/Stability	
Visibility and Illumination	Reliability	
Equipment		
Comfort		
Noise level		
Ventilation and Heating		

Source: López et al. (2002)

Finally, the analysis model of Chng et al. (2019) is based on authors such as Bamberg and Möser (2007) for studying the psychosocial determinants of pro-environmental behaviour and to establish three factors with fifteen sub-sections (Table 3) to be considered in the process of making a car purchase decision.

Table 3. Variables considered in the purchase of automobiles

Component	Items	Varimax
Image-conscious	Large engine	.798
	Speed	.789
	Features (e.g., sat nav)	.680
	Style/design/image of brand	.663
	Comfort	.523
	Variance	.25
Utilitarian	Reliability	.763
	Safety	.705
	Cost/tax/insurance	.668
	Functionality/interior space	.556
	Variance	.20
Environmental	Electric	.858
	Environmentally-friendly	.621
	Small engine	.505
	Variance	.13

Source: Chng et al. (2019)

2. Methodology

The traditional purpose of advertising is to participate in the purchase process and decisions, influencing consumer preferences and behaviour. In this way, certain values are consolidated and become the representation of each brand.

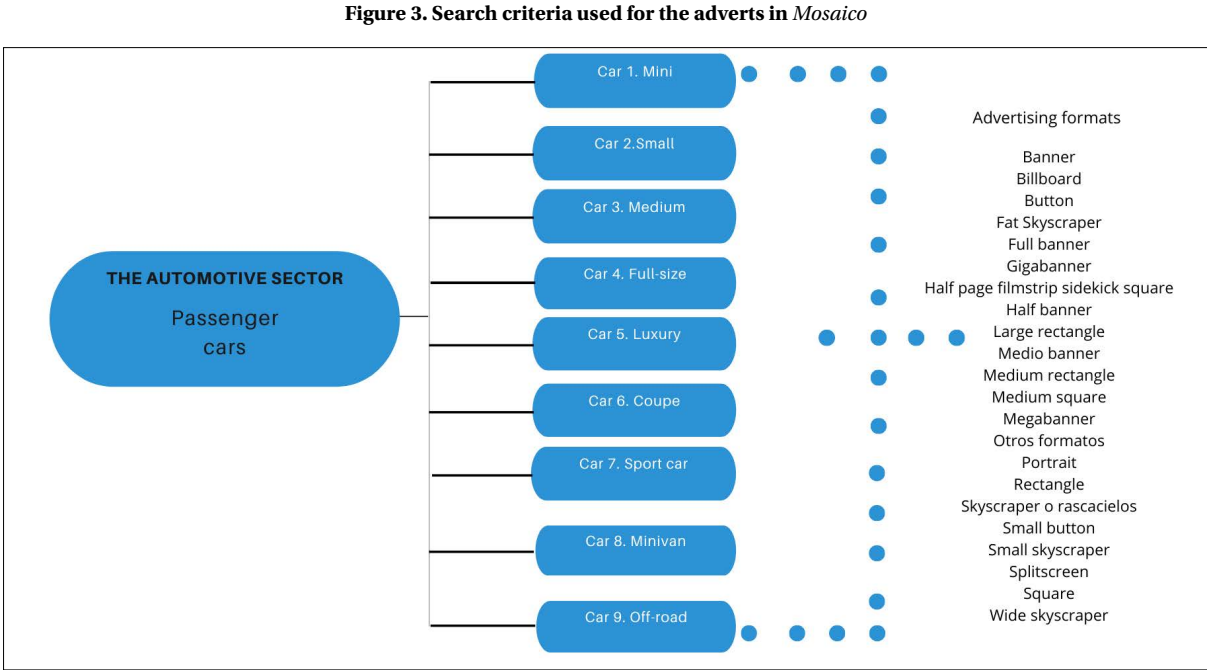
From this approach, the overall objective of this research is to identify the underlying factors that Internet advertisements projected with regard to the automotive sector in 2008 and 2018, or in other words, before and after the economic crisis.

The specific objectives are as follows:

- To identify the values transmitted by automotive advertising.
- To determine the perception of these values from three perspectives: advertising, consumers, and experts.
- To propose a functional model to study the criteria perceived in advertising.

In order to carry out this research, a methodological triangulation with a qualitative and quantitative approach was used:

- 1) The first phase consisted of a content analysis of 672 Internet advertisements obtained randomly and proportionally from *Mosaico*, which is *Infodex's* qualitative information access tool. The following search criteria were used to select the sample (Figure 3):



Source: prepared by the authors based on data from Infodex (2019)

In order to properly calculate the size of the advertisement sample to be analysed (Table 4), the z-score statistical algorithm was applied, using a confidence level of 99% and a margin of error of 5%.

Table 4. Sample selection

2008	1st four-month period	2nd four-month period	3rd four-month period	Total for the year
No. of adverts	338	632	393	1,353
Sample	75	139	86	300
2018	1st four-month period	2nd four-month period	3rd four-month period	Total for the year
No. of adverts	2,688	5,115	3,156	10,959
Sample	91	174	107	372

Source: prepared by the authors

In order to analyse the adverts, literature related to the study of image, text, and values was reviewed. The parameters established by various authors were studied and compared, but in the end, the authors of the paper herein used their own categorisation.

The following list shows the complete sampling sheet that was used to analyse the adverts created by the automotive brands on the Internet, yet the part of the research that is presented in this paper concerns the final category of analysis related to values.

- Date of issue
- Advertiser
- Brand
- Model
- Product [passenger cars: 1 mini, 2 small, 3 medium, 4 full-size, 5 luxury, 6 coupe, 7 sport car, 8 minivan, 9 off-road].
- Banner type [flash animation, jpg, animated gif].
- Format [banner, billboard, bumper, layer, half banner, mega banner, portrait, pushdown, skyscraper, page stealer, sidekick, slider, split screen, and super banner].
- Medium
- Film frames [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15... 20].
- Dimensions [250x250, 300x250, 300x600, 468x60, 234x60, 234x90, 728x90, 900x90, 120x600, 800x600, 400x400, 900x250, 300x1050].
- Technique [photography, drawing, photography/drawing, text].
- Car [yes, no].
- Protagonist [product, brand, character]
- Shot [Close-up, Medium shot, Long shot]
- Background [neutral, city, mountains, sea, and road].
- Background colour [white, grey, black, blue, green, orange, red, yellow, purple, and brown].
- Car colour [white, grey, black, blue, green, orange, red, and yellow].
- Lighting [artificial, natural, dark].
- Headline [yes, no].

- Copy [yes, no].
 - Closing [yes, no]
 - Logo [yes, no]
 - Call to action [yes, no].
 - Legal notice [yes, no].
 - Value [safety, price, financing, sales promotion, guarantee, ecology, technology, comfort, luggage space, design, consumption, power, infotainment, performance, compliance with legislation].
- 2) Next, in the second phase that was aimed at understanding the perspective users have regarding values, a survey was conducted with 300 car consumers aged 18-65 in Spain using the snowball sampling technique. The surveys were carried out from October 2019 to March 2020.
- 3) In the third phase, a qualitative study was carried out through in-depth interviews with 30 experts in the sector. The interview technique is one of the most widely used in the study of consumer behaviour. It involves the following participants: the interviewer (a friendly person who establishes an atmosphere of trust and freedom); the script, in which the questions are planned (usually open-ended in order to enhance the information obtained regarding the opinions, attitudes, motivations, beliefs and hidden feelings of the interviewees), and the interviewee, or the person under study (Trespalcacios et al., 2005). In order to select the interviewees, a professional social network together with door-to-door cold calling to car dealers in the city of Madrid was used. Some were interviewed by telephone and others in person, with an approximate duration of 35-45 minutes. These experts were selected on the basis of the following three triangulation criteria:
- Criterion 1: Management staff of the main car companies in Spain.
 - Criterion 2: Automotive journalists from the leading websites and blogs related to cars.
 - Criterion 3: Sales force. Staff from different car dealerships in Spain.

2.1. Proposed model for the analysis of values in automotive advertising

The categorisation of values used in advertising was another essential stage of this research. Initially, it was based on the value models established by other authors (Pollay, 1983; Tse et al., 1989; Schwartz, 1994; Domínguez, 1995; Cheng and Schweitzer, 1996; Alameda, 2006). However, as these were generic models used in television and the press, they did not meet the objectives of this study, so a search was conducted for value models established by authors in the process of deciding to buy a car (Byun, 2001; López et al., 2002; Chng et al., 2019). These values were analysed and supplemented, thus establishing a unique model that combined the characteristics of both.

In order to define the values used in car advertising, prior fieldwork was carried out in which a sample of 150 people between the ages of 18 and 60 in Spain, selected through social networks, were asked to categorise a series of factors in order of importance, mainly obtained from the model of Byun (2001) and López et al. (2002), from which the following data were obtained (Table 5).

Table 5. Parameters used for the analysis of values

Categories	Description
Safety	This includes all the features that provide greater efficiency and stability to the vehicle while in motion and, as far as possible, to avoid accidents
Price	Monetary value of the vehicle
Financing	Payment of a car in instalments. An amount is agreed upon as a down payment for the vehicle, along with a monthly instalment amount for a period of time that usually ranges from three to five years.
Promotion	A range of activities with the objective of publicising something or increasing its sales. Specifically, this value refers to offers and discounted prices to encourage the sale of a car.
Warranty	Legal and commercial coverage offered by a brand.
Ecology	Progress in being environmentally friendly. The most ecological brands are those that sell cars that are mainly limited in size, power, and fuel consumption. Sustainable vehicles.
Technology	A set of industrial tools and processes.
Comfort	The physical comfort or amenities offered by the car.
Luggage space	The luggage capacity of the vehicle.
Design	Sketch, draft, outline, or the shape of a car. An example would be a sporty or classic design.
Fuel consumption	Fuel cost
Engine power	Engine output or power. Measured in horsepower (HP) and kilowatts (KW).
Infotainment	Information + entertainment. Vehicle features related to systems that provide information (on-board computer, GPS, driving recommendations), communication (telephony, connectivity to social networks from the mobile phone), and entertainment (sound, video, and TV equipment, and an image viewer.
Features	Extra services related to the car's equipment.
Legislative compliance	This value is related to the regulations set for the emission levels of cars and the restrictions set for the year of registration.

Source: prepared by the authors

3. Results

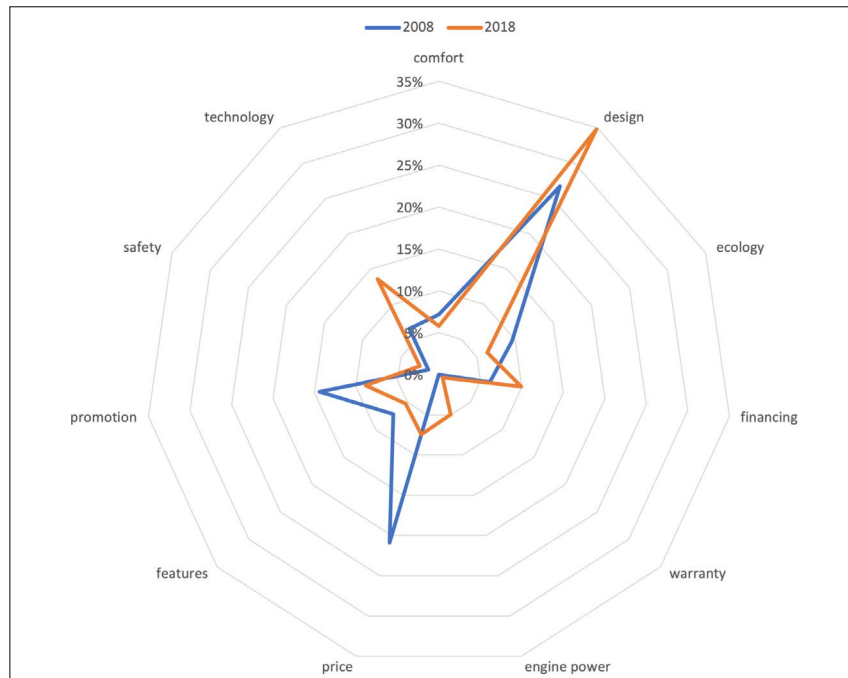
Following the same order established in the objectives, the results of the content analysis, the survey, and the interview are presented here, and based on these, a functional model has been established to study the criteria perceived in advertising.

3.1. Content analysis

In terms of content analysis, the importance of values in advertising is revealed in terms of the socio-economic context before and after the economic crisis (Figure 4). Thus, the value of price and promotion was reinforced in 2008, probably due to the context

of the economic recession. Advertisements presented offers, discounts, and even benefits included in the price during certain seasons of the year. In 2018, however, values such as design, financing, and technology were emphasised.

Figure 4. Comparative values in 2008 vs. 2018



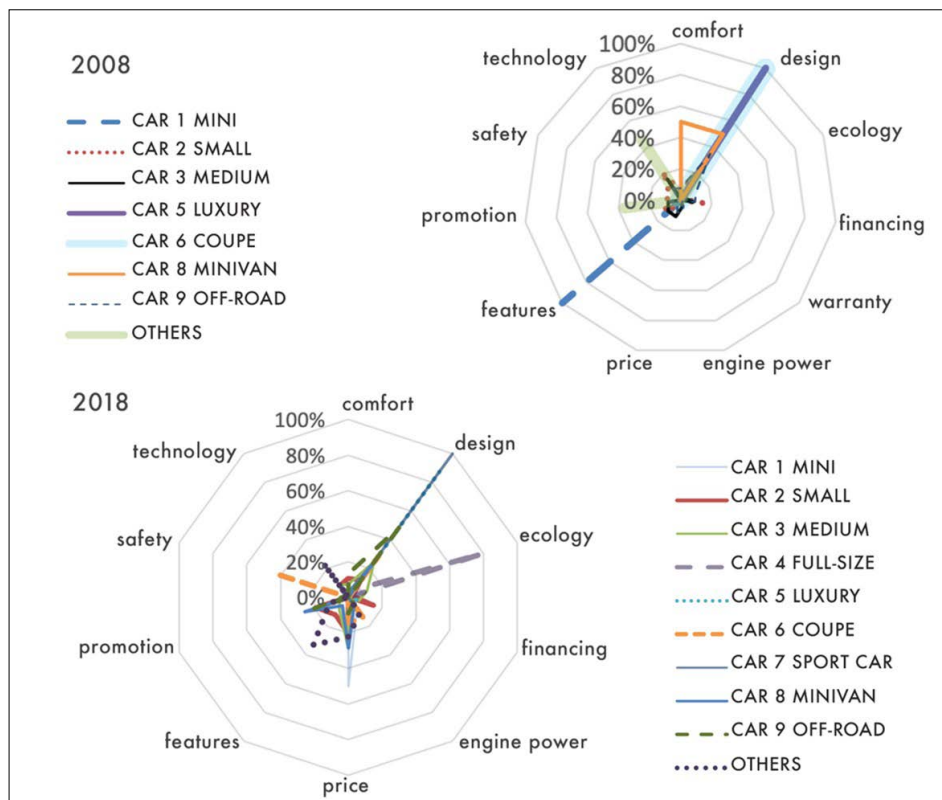
Source: prepared by the authors

Upon analysing the digital advertising of the main advertisers according to investment in the Internet medium, Volkswagen Group, PSA-Peugeot-Citroën Group, Renault-Nissan-Mitsubishi Group, Ford, and the Hyundai-KIA Group accounted for the largest investment in the period of 2007-2018, highlighted by the following: SEAT, which represented 14% of total investment; Peugeot made up 11%; Citroën and Volkswagen both stood at 8%; and Ford accounted for 7%. By segment, SUV (9) invested the most in the Internet and the Full-size passenger car segment (4) invested the least. The distribution of investment in all media combined was quite similar to investment in the medium of Internet.

In terms of the type of products most frequently promoted in car advertisements, brands invested more in advertising Mid-size passenger cars (3) in 2008, and SUVs in 2018. Specifically in 2008, the presence of Mid-size cars (3) was 27% and Small passenger cars (2) was 25%. SUVs accounted for 15%, and Mini-vans comprised 12%. In 2018, SUVs were the most advertised vehicles at 49%, followed by Mid-size cars (3) at 27% and Small cars (2) at 18%. However, the sales pitch changed according to each brand and type of passenger car (Figure 5). It is not the same to advertise a Mini car (1) designed for city driving as it is to advertise an SUV.

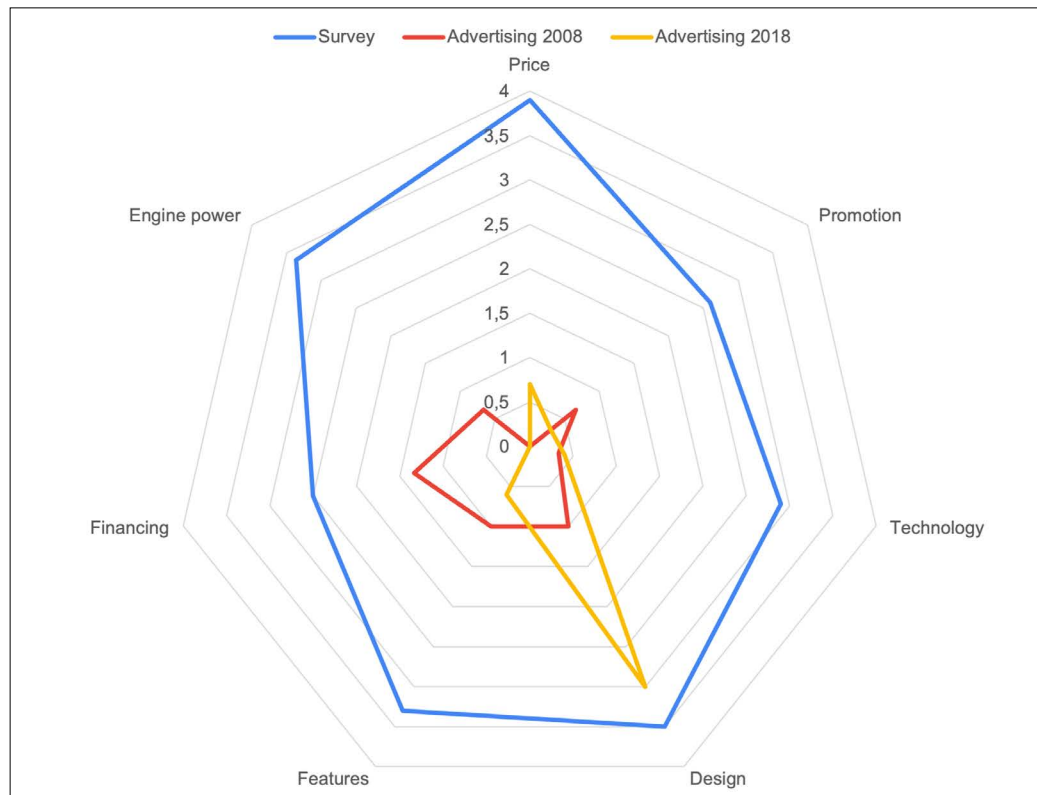
Among the Luxury car group (5), for example, design was the value most used by the brands to advertise this type of car, while among Full-size passenger cars, ecological value was the most frequently conveyed aspect.

Figure 5. Comparison according to product type 2008-2018



Source: prepared by the authors using data from Infoadex (2019)

A detailed analysis of SEAT, which was the brand with the highest level of advertising investment in the Internet during the selected period, reveals the gap that exists between advertising carried out by brands and the values desired by consumers (Figure 6). Respondents rated safety (4.3 out of 5), fuel consumption (4.0), price (3.9), and a spacious luggage compartment (3.9) above the remaining factors. The lowest scores for the remaining factors were promotion (2.6), infotainment (2.6), and financing (2.5). This brand's advertising used values that respondents rated as least desirable: financing, promotion, and technology. Similarly, they also used others that were rated positively, yet they were not the most highly rated, such as design (3.5 out of 5), performance (3.3) and power (3.3).

Figure 6. Comparison of desired vs. advertised values for SEAT

Source: prepared by the authors

In 2008, brand advertising focused on finance, design, and performance, while in 2018 it emphasised design, performance and price.

3.3. Survey

Respondents had to rate 14 criteria based on a Likert-type scale from lowest to highest level of importance, or specifically, from 'not at all relevant' to 'extremely relevant'. The 14 criteria were as follows: safety; price; finance; warranty; promotion; comfort; design; fuel consumption; eco-friendliness; performance; features; technology; compliance with environmental legislation; and infotainment together with plenty of luggage space. Users gave the highest scores to safety, followed by fuel consumption, luggage space, and compliance with environmental legislation. On the other hand, the attributes they rated least enthusiastically were promotion, infotainment, and warranty.

In terms of the respondents' interest in advertising, 51% said they did not pay any attention to it, while 49% said they did. The figure of 51% who did not pay attention to advertising comprised 21% of the respondents who said they did not own their own car and 79% who did. Of the 49% of respondents who did, in fact, pay attention to advertising, 70% were female and 30% were male. When asked about spontaneous recollection of advertising, the knowledge of the sector by the sample was between average and low. Few respondents gave examples, and those who did so responded vaguely with unclear examples from years ago (e.g. BMW's "Do you like to drive?" campaign). Only 10% cited an example of a current Golf advertisement, and only one person reiterated the claim, "It's just like a Golf, but it's not a Golf". Specifically, 55% wrote down an example and identified the medium; the rest (45%) did not know, did not remember, or did not know where they had seen it.

Of the 55% who answered, 45% said the medium was television, 7% said it was outdoor advertising (billboards), 3% stated the print medium, and 1% answered that it was radio. On the question of which brand is doing well in terms of advertising and why, the respondents named BMW, Mercedes, Toyota, Volkswagen, Kia, and SEAT ahead of the rest.

3.3. Interviews with experts

The variables of price and design were the most frequently mentioned by all the experts. Communication managers, CEOs, and presidents of automotive associations differentiated between two types of customers: the first is the consumer of premium brands who is mainly looking for design and status. The second type consumes mainstream brands, looking for price and whether or not the car fulfils the customer's needs in terms of space, roominess, fuel consumption, and mobility. They also felt that both are looking for safety and in some ways are trying to identify themselves with the brand they are going to use. This group also believed that the customer considers equipment, comfort, reliability, and connectivity to be important as well.

The journalists, on the other hand, focused on the price variable. For them, price comes first, followed by design. They also paid special attention to the safety equipment and the environmental rating.

In addition to mentioning all of these variables, the sales personnel were the only ones who spoke about the importance of advice and after-sales service, design, price, and customer service. "First, the final price, and nearly at the same level, attention and service".

3.4. Proposed model

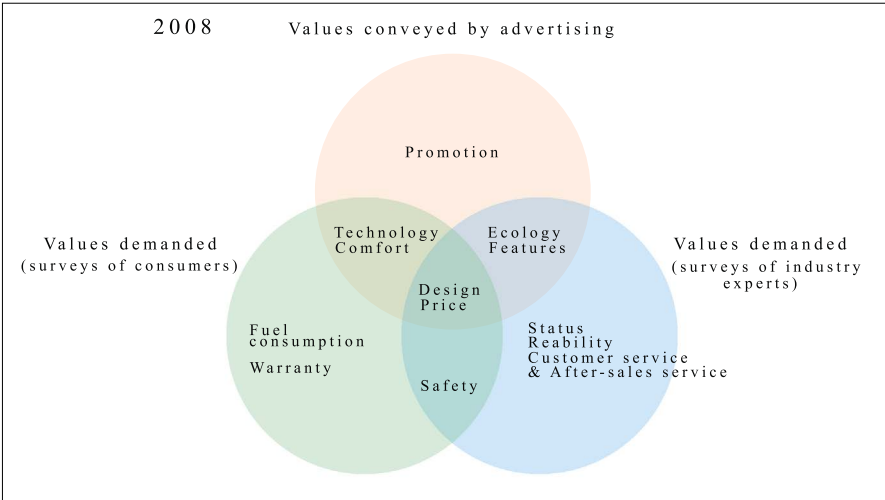
Based on the results of the content analysis, surveys, and in-depth interviews, an in-house analysis model based on the Venn diagram was developed to make a visual comparison between the advertising values, both from the perspective of consumers and experts.

In the analysis of the latter, the clusters were examined by comparing the criteria conveyed in the advertising with the values desired and/or demanded by consumers, and with the most important factors in the purchase process, which emerged from the discourse of the experts interviewed.

Figures 7 and 8 show the results of the values analysis model carried out in the two years studied, 2008 and 2018, in three Venn diagrams. The top diagram, in orange, presents the values conveyed by advertising, identified in a representative sample of 300 advertisements in 2008 and 372 advertisements in 2018. These are the values most commonly used in advertising, as explained in the methodology section. The diagram on the left in green represents the values demanded by final consumers of the different

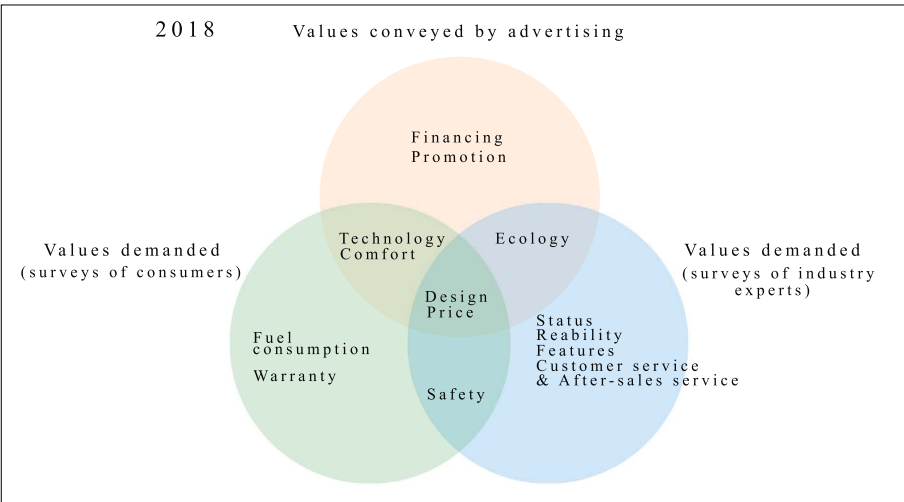
car brands. Lastly, the set on the right in blue refers to the values that the automotive industry experts interviewed indicated that consumers prioritise when making their purchase decision.

Figure 7. Comparison of values in 2008



Source: prepared by the authors

Figure 8. Comparison of values in 2018



Source: prepared by the authors

Therefore, a clear divergence has been observed between the values that advertisers are trying to convey, those demanded by customers, and those considered most important by the experts:

In both 2008 and 2018, advertising sent the message that the vehicles offered special promotions (and even financing in 2018), while neither customers nor the experts considered this the most relevant factor.

- In both years analysed, advertising reflects the values of ecology and performance, which are also important for the experts, yet these were not valued by consumers in the same way. A similar situation can be seen in relation to the criteria of comfort and technology of the cars, which are demanded by the respondents, yet the experts did not consider them to be decisive aspects in the purchase decision.
- The experts considered ecology, performance, status, reliability, customer care, and after-sales service to be key factors in the purchase of a car by their customers. These same values were not shared by the consumers themselves, and of these values, the advertising only transmitted that of ecology (in 2008 and 2018) and performance (only in 2008).
- Consumers value fuel consumption and warranty, aspects upon which the experts did not agree, nor did advertising convey.
- Safety was the most highly valued aspect, both by consumers when buying a car and by the experts as well. However, advertising does not reflect this in its marketing discourse.
- In advertising during 2008 and 2018, design and price are the only two criteria valued by consumers that experts also considered key factors in their customers' decision to buy.

4. Discussion and conclusions

The research carried out herein has made it possible to achieve the initial objective of analysing values from 3 perspectives: advertising, the consumer, and the experts. Although the methodology proposed has only been used to analyse the advertising of car brands on the Internet, it could be applied to the advertising of other sectors on the Internet, and even to promote cars in the press and on television, due to the fact that classification offers many possibilities, as generic categories of analysis are proposed that can be extended and adapted to each case study, which would help to identify the predominant values in the different media. One advantage of using the Internet as an advertising medium is the greater reach it can achieve, and being a digital resource, it is easily adaptable to a variety of platforms. In addition, the interactivity it provides helps generate interest from users and gives the brands greater visibility.

With regard to the perception of values, one conclusion of this study is that differences exist between the most relevant factors for consumers and those conveyed by brands in their advertisements. The values that consumers demand coincide with the values that advertising conveys only in four aspects, and only partially, which are the following: design, price, technology, and comfort. Advertising also transmits the values of financing and promotion, yet consumers do not consider these very important. Respondents value safety the most, yet this is not conveyed in advertising. Similarly, the respondents also value fuel consumption and warranty, which are not present to any substantial degree in the adverts as well. Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that the role of advertising is not only to transmit values, but also to guide certain consumer interests and preferences, educate, and set trends, generating an international presence.

In 2008, brands communicated values such as price, promotion, and financing, whereas in 2018 brands focused more on technology as a value. Therefore, it has been deduced that companies adapt their discourse according to the situation at the moment, and with regard to trends as well.

In the last 10 years, new priorities seem to have emerged on the scale of values that determine the purchase decision. For example, advertising gave priority to certain values in 2008, and to others in 2018. In the banners analysed from 2008, the values of design, price, promotion, ecology, comfort, and technology are repeated more frequently (in that order), while in 2018 the values that appear most often are design, technology, financing, promotion, and price (in that order). There are also differences between what industry experts believe potential customers are looking for and what they are actually looking for.

According to the professionals, in the buying process customers are most concerned with safety, design, price, ecology, status, reliability, performance, customer service and after-sales service. However, the most important considerations for respondents are safety, design, price, technology, comfort, fuel consumption, and warranty. They only agree with the professionals on design, price, and safety, and differ on the rest. This indicates that brands create advertising while taking into account emerging thematic trends. For example, it is now common to observe different organisations' interest in caring for the environment in their advertising, or their contribution to the creation of sustainable development. Therefore, the decision to buy a car is influenced by new values that are consistent with the evolution of the issues that concern society today, such as ecology, technology, and compliance with environmental legislation. Likewise, in the current period following the Covid-19 crisis, it is possible that brands will adapt their designs by putting special emphasis on the passenger cabin (e.g., air filters that protect against viruses), and this might be reflected in their communication, highlighting new elements such as health and well-being. Therefore, special attention will have to be placed on these new values, which will shape future lines of communication.

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