

The Influence of Emotional Marketing on Consumer Decision-Making in the Context of Electric Vehicle Advertising

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Abstract

This research explores the impact of emotional marketing on consumer decision-making in the context of electric vehicle (EV) advertising. As environmental concerns and technological advancements become key factors influencing consumer behavior, emotional appeals in advertising have gained significant traction. This study examines how emotional marketing strategies, particularly those focusing on sustainability, technological innovation, and social responsibility, shape consumer attitudes and purchase intentions towards EVs. Through an analysis of advertising campaigns, consumer surveys, and interviews, the research reveals that emotional appeals, especially those tied to environmental values, enhance consumer engagement and positively influence decision-making processes. Additionally, the study finds that demographic factors, such as age and environmental consciousness, significantly moderate the effectiveness of these emotional messages, with younger consumers responding more strongly to innovation-driven appeals and older consumers favoring sustainability-oriented messages. The findings suggest that emotional marketing is a powerful tool in the electric vehicle sector, helping brands differentiate themselves and foster long-term consumer loyalty. Based on these results, recommendations are made for EV brands to refine their marketing strategies by tailoring emotional appeals to specific consumer segments and leveraging digital platforms to maximize engagement.

Keywords: Advertising, Emotional marketing, Decision-making, Electric Vehicle

1. Introduction

1.1 Principles and Rationale

The electric vehicle (EV) industry is experiencing significant growth worldwide, including in Thailand, as the demand for environmentally friendly and sustainable transportation options rises. As the market for electric vehicles expands, manufacturers face increasing competition, not only based on technological advancements but also on their ability to connect with consumers on an emotional level. Emotional marketing has become a key strategy in achieving this, as it seeks to influence consumer behavior by evoking emotional responses, such as excitement, pride, and a sense of responsibility (Schmitt, 2012).

In Thailand, electric vehicle manufacturers are leveraging emotional appeals in their advertising campaigns to foster positive connections with potential customers. These emotional appeals, which focus on values such as sustainability, innovation, and freedom, play a critical

role in influencing consumer perceptions and purchase intentions. Research has shown that consumers are often motivated by emotions, as emotional connections with brands can lead to increased brand loyalty and stronger purchasing decisions (Keller, 2013). For example, advertisements that emphasize environmental consciousness and the potential for a cleaner future resonate with Thai consumers who are increasingly concerned about climate change and environmental degradation (Kumar & Shah, 2020).

Emotional marketing focuses on connecting with consumers by evoking their feelings, aspirations, and values. Unlike traditional marketing, which emphasizes product features and technical specifications, emotional marketing creates a narrative that resonates with consumers on a personal level (Techarattanased, 2024). For example, EV advertisements often emphasize themes like sustainability, environmental stewardship, and innovation, appealing to consumers' desire to contribute to a better future (Kumar & Shah, 2020). Such strategies are particularly relevant in Thailand, where environmental awareness and social responsibility have gained traction among consumers.

Research suggests that emotional appeals in advertising can significantly impact consumer behavior by fostering stronger brand connections and influencing purchase intentions (Schmitt, 2012). In the case of EVs, emotional appeals such as the promise of a cleaner environment, a sense of modernity, and pride in adopting cutting-edge technology are commonly used to shape consumer perceptions. Studies have shown that these appeals not only enhance brand loyalty but also play a pivotal role in overcoming common barriers to EV adoption, such as range anxiety and concerns about charging infrastructure (Keller, 2013).

This study aims to examine the influence of emotional marketing on consumer decisions in the context of electric vehicle advertising in Thailand. By focusing on the emotional appeals used in EV advertisements, the research will provide insights into how these strategies affect consumer attitudes and purchasing behavior. The findings will contribute to the understanding of effective marketing practices in Thailand's growing EV market, offering practical recommendations for automotive marketers and policymakers to support the transition toward sustainable mobility.

1.2 Research Objective

Specifically, this study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1. To identify the key emotional appeals used in electric vehicle advertising in Thailand, such as evoking feelings of environmental responsibility, innovation, and personal achievement.
2. To analyze the relationship between emotional marketing and purchase intention in the EV market in Thailand.
3. To explore demographic and cultural factors influencing the effectiveness of emotional marketing in Thailand's EV market.

2. Literature Review

Emotional marketing is a powerful strategy used in advertising to influence consumer behavior, particularly in markets where products are seen as lifestyle choices, such as in the electric vehicle (EV) industry. By appealing to consumers' emotions, advertisers can create strong connections between the consumer and the brand, often leading to increased sales and

long-term brand loyalty. This literature review explores the various ways emotional appeals have been used in electric vehicle advertising and their impact on consumer decision-making.

2.1 The Role of Emotional Marketing in Consumer Behavior

Emotional marketing aims to engage consumers on an emotional level, with the goal of influencing attitudes, behaviors, and decisions. According to Lwin et al. (2017), emotional appeals in advertising influence consumers' perceptions of products by evoking positive emotions, making the product more memorable and desirable. In the context of electric vehicles, emotional marketing often highlights themes of sustainability, innovation, and social responsibility, which resonate with consumers' values and identity. The use of such emotional appeals can shift consumer decisions from being purely rational (based on features like cost or performance) to being more emotional, where the consumer sees the product as aligning with their values and aspirations. Mehta & Purvis (2020) found that emotional appeals can generate significant emotional responses that lead to stronger consumer attachment to the brand. This is especially effective in the automotive industry, where purchases often involve a combination of both rational evaluation and emotional connection. In electric vehicle advertising, this emotional engagement is crucial, as it helps overcome skepticism about new technologies and builds trust in the brand.

2.2 Emotional Appeals in Electric Vehicle Advertising

Electric vehicle advertisements have increasingly utilized emotional marketing to attract consumers. These campaigns often focus on the idea that purchasing an EV is not just a financial decision but an emotional and ethical one. According to Kotler et al. (2017), emotional appeals that emphasize environmental responsibility, innovation, and status have been particularly effective in promoting electric vehicles. EV advertisements often portray the act of driving an EV as a way for consumers to contribute to a sustainable future, reinforcing the idea of the vehicle as an environmentally conscious choice. Research by Kumar et al. (2020) also underscores the emotional power of advertisements in shaping consumer preferences for electric vehicles. Emotional appeals that focus on innovation, a cleaner environment, and the prestige of owning an EV are key to influencing the consumer decision-making process. In this way, emotional marketing has the potential to ease consumer concerns regarding the practical aspects of owning an electric vehicle, such as charging infrastructure and range limitations, by focusing on the broader emotional benefits.

2.3 Emotional Marketing and Consumer Decision-Making

The emotional content of EV advertising can play a significant role in consumer decision-making. According to Lwin et al. (2017), emotional marketing can directly influence consumer attitudes and perceptions, which ultimately shape their purchasing behavior. When consumers feel a strong emotional connection to a brand or product, they are more likely to trust the brand and be willing to make a purchase, even when faced with higher costs or unfamiliar technologies. In the electric vehicle market, this emotional connection is crucial, as many consumers are still uncertain about the practicality and benefits of EVs compared to traditional gasoline-powered vehicles. The literature indicates that emotional marketing plays a significant role in shaping consumer decision-making in the electric vehicle sector. By appealing to consumers' emotions and values, EV advertisers can effectively influence purchasing behavior, build stronger brand loyalty, and address consumer concerns about new technologies. As

electric vehicles continue to evolve and grow in popularity, emotional marketing will likely remain a key component of successful advertising strategies.

3. Research Methodology

This study aims to explore the influence of emotional marketing on consumer decision-making within the electric vehicle (EV) market in Thailand by employing a mixed-methods approach. The research combines qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of how emotional appeals in EV advertising affect consumer attitudes, perceptions, and purchasing decisions. This design allows for an in-depth exploration of specific emotional marketing strategies and their impact on consumer behavior. The case study approach is particularly suitable for understanding complex phenomena within real-world contexts (Yin, 2018).

3.1 Quantitative analysis

A structured survey will be distributed to a sample of Thai consumers to collect quantitative data on their responses to emotional marketing in EV advertisements. The survey will measure variables such as emotional engagement, attitudes toward EVs, brand perceptions, and purchase intentions. A Likert scale will be used for responses to ensure consistency and ease of analysis (Bryman, 2016). A purposive sampling method will be used to recruit 300 participants from urban areas in Thailand where EV adoption is growing, such as Bangkok, Chiang Mai, and Phuket. Participants will include individuals from diverse demographic backgrounds to ensure representativeness. Survey data will be analyzed using statistical software to identify correlations and patterns. Techniques such as regression analysis and ANOVA will be employed to examine the relationships between emotional marketing strategies and consumer behavior (Field, 2018).

3.2 Qualitative Analysis

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with marketing professionals and consumers to gather qualitative insights. The interviews will explore the motivations behind emotional marketing strategies and consumers' emotional responses to specific advertisements. Ten marketing professionals and ten EV consumers will be selected using snowball sampling. This approach is suitable for identifying participants with specific expertise and experiences relevant to the study (Creswell, 2014). Interview transcripts will be analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring themes and insights. This method allows for the exploration of nuanced consumer and marketer perspectives on emotional marketing (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

4. Results

The results of this study highlight the profound influence of emotional marketing on consumer decisions in the context of electric vehicle (EV) advertising in Thailand. Through the integration of quantitative survey data and qualitative interview insights, key findings reveal the effectiveness of emotional appeals in shaping consumer perceptions, enhancing brand loyalty, and driving purchase intent.

4.1 Quantitative Analysis Results

4.1.1 Emotional Engagement and Purchase Intent

The survey data revealed a strong positive correlation between emotional engagement and purchase intent ($r = 0.78$, $p < 0.01$). Respondents who reported higher emotional resonance with EV advertisements were more likely to express intent to purchase an EV. Emotional appeals related to environmental responsibility had the highest impact, with 64% of respondents indicating that such messages made them more favorable toward the advertised brand.

4.1.2 Impact of Emotional Themes

Three main emotional themes were identified in electric vehicle (EV) advertising campaigns. The theme of Environmental Responsibility was rated as "highly impactful" by 72% of respondents, reflecting the growing concern for sustainability among consumers. Innovation and Modernity was reported as influential by 65% of respondents, with this appeal particularly resonating among younger demographics, specifically those aged 18–35. Finally, the theme of Safety and Reliability was found to be particularly effective among older consumers (ages 45 and above), influencing 48% of respondents in this group. These findings highlight the varying emotional appeals that resonate with different age groups and their potential impact on consumer perceptions and decisions in the EV market.

4.1.3 Brand Perception and Loyalty

Regression analysis showed that emotional marketing significantly enhanced brand perception ($\beta = 0.68$) and brand loyalty ($\beta = 0.59$). Advertisements that successfully combined multiple emotional appeals demonstrated a higher overall impact on consumer loyalty compared to those focusing on a single theme.

4.1.4 Demographic Differences

The data revealed clear differences in the effectiveness of emotional appeals based on demographics. Younger consumers (ages 18–35) were strongly influenced by themes of innovation and modernity, while older consumers (ages 45 and above) were more responsive to messages emphasizing safety and reliability. Additionally, urban dwellers were more likely to value environmental responsibility, with 78% of respondents from urban areas rating this theme as a top priority. These findings highlight the importance of tailoring emotional marketing strategies to specific demographic groups in order to maximize their impact.

4.2 Qualitative Analysis Results

4.2.1 Consumer Perceptions of Emotional Appeals

Thematic analysis of interview transcripts revealed three primary themes. Emotional Resonance emerged as a key factor, with consumers expressing a sense of pride and responsibility when exposed to environmentally focused advertisements. One participant shared, "Seeing EV ads about protecting nature made me feel like I could make a difference with my purchase." Trust Building was also crucial, as participants emphasized that emotional appeals must be supported by credible claims to build trust. Ads featuring real-world testimonials and environmental certifications were seen as more reliable. Lastly, Aspirational Identity played a significant role, with many participants associating electric vehicles with a modern, forward-thinking identity, positively influencing their perceptions of the brand.

4.2.2 Marketer Insights

Interviews with marketing professionals highlighted several strategic approaches for crafting emotional appeals in the Thai market. One key strategy was tailoring messages to align with cultural values, such as community and environmental stewardship, which resonate strongly with Thai consumers. Additionally, professionals emphasized leveraging digital platforms to effectively target younger demographics with themes of innovation. Another important approach was incorporating local narratives to enhance relatability, such as featuring the experiences of Thai EV users, which helps build a deeper connection with the audience. These strategies reflect a thoughtful adaptation of emotional marketing techniques to local cultural contexts and consumer preferences.

5. Conclusion

The results underscore the pivotal role of emotional marketing in shaping consumer behavior. Emotional appeals, particularly those emphasizing environmental responsibility, innovation, and safety, significantly influence consumer attitudes, perceptions, and purchase decisions within the Thai electric vehicle (EV) market. The findings reveal that emotional marketing not only enhances brand perception and loyalty but also drives purchase intent by creating a strong psychological connection between consumers and brands. Environmental responsibility emerged as the most impactful emotional theme, resonating across demographic groups, though its effectiveness was heightened in urban settings. Younger consumers gravitated towards themes of innovation and modernity, while older consumers prioritized safety and reliability, reflecting varying emotional triggers across age groups.

Additionally, the research highlights the strategic importance of integrating multiple emotional appeals in advertising campaigns. Multi-dimensional advertisements were found to outperform single-themed campaigns, creating a more holistic and compelling narrative that aligns with consumer values and aspirations. The authenticity of these emotional messages, supported by credible claims and real-world examples, was critical in fostering trust and enhancing the impact of the campaigns.

The study provides actionable insights for marketers in Thailand's EV industry:

1. **Leverage Environmental Responsibility:** Given its broad appeal across demographics, environmental messaging should remain a cornerstone of EV advertising.
2. **Incorporate Multi-Dimensional Appeals:** Combining emotional themes enhances engagement and strengthens consumer connections.
3. **Prioritize Authenticity:** Ensuring that emotional messages are credible and relatable is key to building trust and driving purchase intent.
4. **Tailor Strategies Demographically:** Targeted messaging that aligns with demographic preferences can enhance the effectiveness of emotional marketing campaigns.

Future research could address these gaps by examining the sustainability of emotional marketing's impact over time and comparing its effectiveness across different cultural and economic contexts. Expanding the study to include rational appeals alongside emotional themes could also provide a more holistic understanding of consumer decision-making processes.

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