Traditionally, organizations have created advertisements, and customers consumed them. The intentions of advertisers have been reasonably clear: Organizations use these messages (mostly in broadcast or print media) to inform, persuade, or remind present and potential customers of their offerings or of the organization itself. Consumers, on the other hand, have been passive recipients of the communication, reacting to it either by becoming aware, or by being swayed to do something they might otherwise not have done, or by having their memories jogged and reinforced. Most of the time they will simply ignore the advertisement’s message. However, things have begun to change. Now customers are crafting ads and broadcasting them. The creation of advertisements is no longer the prerogative of the organization or its designated ad agency, and the consequences are significant.

Whereas the early promise of technology was to give marketers power over consumers by using, to the firm’s benefit, all the information that had been gathered and processed on these consumers, recent evidence suggests that the opposite is occurring. Indeed, as Deighton and Kornfeld assert, “it’s the consumer who runs the show for the most part, not the marketer—in fact, forget the ‘consumer’ label altogether.” Technology is enabling consumers to perform for themselves and others many of the marketing tasks and functions (the well-known “4 Ps”) that were previously the prerogatives of organizations. Web sites such as eBay have enabled consumers to buy and sell to each other. Firms such as Betfair, the world’s largest sports betting exchange, permit customers to make, rather than have to take, their own prices (in the form of betting odds),

The authors gratefully acknowledge the advice and assistance of an anonymous reviewer who went above and beyond the call of duty. All errors and omissions remain our own.
and therefore represent a real competitive threat to incumbent firms and odds makers. Consumers are providing significant advisory services to each other using rating and advice web sites such as ePinions. They are even redesigning and remanufacturing products for themselves, and others, and using Internet technologies to distribute their offerings. There don’t seem to be any of marketing’s 4 Ps that are immune to the consumer-technology onslaught—and advertising is no exception.

The last few years have seen the next wave of developments ushered in by the Internet. Whereas text ruled the first surge of Internet communications, video appears to be the medium of preference in the second wave. Not only are consumers consuming video, but in a major shift, facilitated by inexpensive media software, they are creating the content. The phenomenal rise of video-hosting sites such as YouTube has also allowed the consumer to become the broadcaster. This is fueling a revolution in advertising, for the ad has been liberated from the exclusive control of the firm, and now expresses a myriad of heterogeneous voices. Some ads are subversive, others laudatory, but the fact remains that the firm is no longer in exclusive control of the message. Appendix 1 provides a brief history of parody- or spoof-advertising, some important data on YouTube and the customer generated advertising phenomenon, and the emerging commercial, social and political impacts of consumer-generated ads.

The traditional distinctions between producer and consumer and between mass communication and individual communication are dissolving, and with these, traditional models of media management. Unsurprisingly, organizations are struggling to adapt to this new dispensation. There have been a number of high-profile cases where firms try to control or co-opt consumers’ creative talent, but in each instance the results have been highly variable. This article explores the phenomenon of consumer-generated advertising. Three primary questions are addressed: First, what drives consumers to generate their own ads? Second, what are the types of ad created by consumers? And third, what management strategies are available to respond to the phenomenon?

Before addressing the three key questions, however, we need to define exactly what we mean by “consumer-generated ads.” Two delimitations are relevant in this context: subject and dissemination. First, in terms of subject, consumers can obviously create ads about almost anything—themselves, their families, their friends, enemies, institutions, or governments. However, the subset that we are interested in is consumer-generated content specifically targeted at collectively recognized brands. While the American Marketing Association defines a brand as “a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers.
and to differentiate them from competition,” Aaker sheds more light on the issue by defining brand equity as “a set of assets (or liabilities) linked to a brand’s name and symbol that adds to (or subtracts from) the value provided by a product or service.”

It is precisely the nature of brand as an asset that makes the issue of consumer-generated brand ads so critical for senior management. As Achenbaum contends, “what distinguishes a brand from its unbranded commodity counterpart and gives it equity is the sum total of consumers’ perceptions and feelings about the product’s attributes and how they perform, about the brand name and what it stands for, and about the company associated with the brand.”

The second delimitation is dissemination; obviously consumers can create ads about brands, but they have no effect upon the brand until they are collectively disseminated through some form of media. As Berthon, Holbrook, Hubbert, and Pitt point out, brands are not simply “created,” “owned,” or “used” by management; rather, they have a life and meaning beyond and, to some extent, independent of that intended by their initiators. In a real sense, brands are the collective possessions in the minds of multiple constituents. Thus the operational definition of “consumer-generated ads” we adopt in this context is: “any publicly disseminated, consumer-generated advertising messages whose subject is a collectively recognized brand.”

What Drives Customers to Create Their Own Ads?

Different motivations drive customers to produce and distribute their own ads. Much of the scholarly research on consumer creativity has been done at a conceptual level. While this is commendable from an academic perspective, it tells managers little about how and why customers will go to the trouble of creating and flighting an ad, and what happens as a result. It also gives them very little advice about what they should do. “Consumer creativity” (the study of consumer problem-solving and creativity traits) and “creative consumers” (the reality of how consumers adapt, modify, or transform proprietary offerings), as has been pointed out, are related but still very different phenomena.

There is a strong stream of research in the consumer behavior literature that has focused on consumer creativity, beginning with the work of Hirschman, who defined it as the problem-solving capability that may be applied toward consumption-related problems. The focus of consumer researchers has tended to be on the behavioral traits of creative consumers, and especially the factors that influence the process of consumer creativity. For example, Moreau and Dahl have studied, in an experimental setting, how input and time constraints influence the way in which consumers process information during a creative task and how those processes, in turn, influence the creativity of the solution. Also using experiments, Burroughs and Mick have investigated the antecedents and consequences of creativity in a consumption context. Their findings are that both situational factors (i.e., time constraints, situational involvement) and personal factors (i.e., locus of control, metaphoric thinking ability) affect creative
consumption, and that there is also interaction between these variables. These research efforts are praiseworthy, yet they shed little light on what managers in firms should be doing to become aware of customer creativity, how they should define their attitudes towards it, and what actions they should embark on to either encourage or discourage it.

Only of late have consumer researchers begun to give attention to the phenomenon of consumer-generated advertising, although this has been in a specific, focused context. Muniz and Schau have studied the marketing communication generated by the brand community centered on the now-defunct Apple Newton personal digital assistant, a brand that was (along with its supporting advertising) discontinued in 1998. They found that consumers can be quite skilled in the creation of brand-relevant communications, applying the styles, logics, and grammar of advertising.

More recently, Dahl and Moreau have suggested that consumer creativity be conceived of as existing along a spectrum, ranging from extremely limiting cases in which a product might for example, be simply assembled (e.g., putting together an IKEA desk) to extremely creative cases in which the product is both conceptualized and realized (e.g., painting an original picture). Their focus is on what they term “constrained creativity,” or hobbyist creation according to guidelines, such as painting by numbers, or following a recipe in a cookbook, and they point out that most constrained creative tasks fall somewhere in the middle of the consumer creativity continuum. Our focus is on the extreme end of the spectrum, where the creation is both conceptualized and realized. Like an original painting, many consumer-generated ads exhibit imagination, innovation, and inventiveness.

In their research, Dahl and Moreau uncovered, by means of in-depth interviews, hobbyist’s motivations for undertaking constrained creative tasks. They identified seven basic motivations that drive hobbyists in constrained creation: competence—the anticipated satisfaction to be derived from completing a creative project successfully; autonomy—the enjoyment to be derived from the freedom to choose the process and/or design of the creative task; learning—the desire to attain or improve the skills necessary for completing creative projects; engagement and relaxation—the anticipated satisfaction to be derived from immersion in the creative process itself; self-identity—the desire to reinforce or enhance self-perceptions of creativity; public sense of accomplishment—the anticipated satisfaction to be derived from others’ recognition of one’s own creative accomplishments; and community—the desire to share creative experiences with others who are similarly motivated.

Interestingly, Muniz and Schau found that the members of the Newton community created commercially relevant content in order to fill the void created by the lack of advertising for the brand. The motivations behind individual acts of creativity can be highly idiosyncratic and varied. However, we suggest, based on interviews we conducted with customers who generated ads (presented in Case Studies 1 through 4 below) and then placed these online, that this creativity tends to be driven by three main factors:
Intrinsic Enjoyment: These individuals create for the sake of creation—usually tech savvy and artistically inclined, they create something for the playful enjoyment they get out of the process. What happens to the creation, and the effect the creation has, are secondary to the intrinsic creative process. The case of Gabriel Stella and the iPod Dance video (in Case Study 1) provides a good example of an ad being created for intrinsic enjoyment.

Self-promotion: These individuals create with the specific goal of self-promotion, perhaps to attract the attention of a potential employer such as an ad agency or client firm, or to have as part of a portfolio for admission to an educational institution. Here the ad is merely a means to the end of bringing the creator to the awareness of a specific group of people. The case of Alec Sutherland and his colleagues, and their creation of the “iPhone New York” ad (in Case Study 2) provides a good example of consumer-generated advertising with self-promotion as the primary goal.

Change Perceptions: These individuals create because they intend the ad to have a specific effect on a target audience. Their goal is to change hearts and minds, to influence people. Again, the ad is merely the means to the

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**Case Study 1: Gabriel Stella and iPod Dance**

Gabriel Stella is a young Brazilian, who “always liked to create things, images and stuff” and who describes videos as “my passion.” He created a video for Apple’s iPod MP3 player called “iPod Dance” while experimenting with editing programs and posted it, unfinished, to YouTube (<www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xk4Vjmc6Gws>). He expects nothing from Apple or anyone else in return, but plans on making more videos because he now “knows a better way to do it” and “wants to make a scene with more iPods.” Asked if he would let Apple use his idea in a future advertisement should they request it, he is agreeable and says, “I don’t want nothing back, maybe just the credit.”

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**Case Study 2: Alec Sutherland and Colleagues—iPhone New York**

Taking advantage of the hype surrounding the launch of Apple’s iPhone, a few people in the advertising industry decided to make, ostensibly for their own edification and enjoyment, a commercial touting its features. The clip (<www.phonewyorkcity.com/>) is undeniably creative, but is also clearly of professional caliber: We talked with Alec Sutherland, the creative mind behind the project, who says “living in New York you are constantly surrounded by diverse people from all over the world. In a single day hundreds of conversations go on all around that you cannot understand due to the language barriers. Well, one day I thought, ‘What if they were all talking about the same thing?’” Alec and his group went to the expense of acquiring a dedicated web address to showcase the video. The ad’s credits prominently acknowledge and name all of those involved, including e-mail addresses. It is obvious that the creators of this ad are interested in more than mere praise for their work.
ends of a specific result. The Poor Bastard David’s “Starbuck’s Ad” featured in Case Study 3 provides a good example of consumer-generated advertising targeted at changing perceptions.

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**Case Study 3: Poor Bastard David—the Starbucks Ad**

Hiding behind its innocuous title “Starbucks Ad,” the contents of the video created by David (also known as the “Poor Bastard”) (<www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnbT7qt6RF4>) are anything but official. The ad opens with an attractive woman holding a Starbucks drink while giggling and saying, “I don’t know anybody who doesn’t love a Frappuccino on a hot summer day.” The tone of the ad changes when she reminds the viewer that “they’re not cheap either” and that “you could feed a kid in a refugee camp in the Sudan for a whole week on what we spend on one grande mocha half-caf no-whip Frappuccino . . . a whole week . . . seven days.” Humor drives the point even further during the closing when she opines “not that anybody is gonna skip their frosty treat to save a kid from starvation. I mean, c’mon, they’re freaking delicious!”

What differentiates this spoof ad from others is its focus on a specific irony of modern life and the relative absence of the other two driving motivations for creating such content. The video was created using obviously amateur filming and editing equipment, features a dimly lit room as its set (complete with visible light switch), and uses poor-quality graphics and text overlays. These qualities point to the message of the ad being the ultimate goal as opposed to intrinsic enjoyment of the process as seen in the “iPod Dance” video. We put questions to David, the creator of the “Starbucks” ad:

**What made you decide to make the video?**
I was working on a series of short videos around the tagline “Sincerity is the new irony.” I heard a news report one morning about Starbucks losing money because they couldn’t make their frozen drinks fast enough to meet demand and the basic script for the ad pretty much just popped into my head. As for why I actually made it and posted this or any other video, I guess that’s probably just about the fun of creating a dialogue with a random and potentially massive audience.

**What was your goal?**
My goal was to spur critical thought and conversation and/or make you laugh.

**Can you briefly describe the process of actually making it (how long did it take you, who was in it, and so forth)?**
I shot it in one night with the actress (Kirstan Perry), a woman I had used in previous pieces. I edited it the next day and posted it.

**Did you tell Starbucks (or anyone else) about the ad?**
I never told anyone official about the ad. I sent an e-mail around to friends, with the link and that was about it. Then it got picked up by consumerist.com and adrants.com and kind of took on a life of its own.

**Has Starbucks contacted you?**
Nope.

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*continued on next page*
Careful inspection reveals that the seven hobbyist motivations identified by Dahl and Moreau fall primarily under our “intrinsic enjoyment” factor, as they tend to be subjective (rather than instrumental in an “other” sense) motivations: self-satisfaction, self-enjoyment, self-improvement, and self-perception; even the nominally social dimensions of “community” and “public sense of accomplishment” are aimed not at the community (the “other”) per se but at personal feelings of satisfaction. This is perhaps not surprising, as Dahl and Moreau focused on what motivates a person to pursue a particular hobby (e.g., scrapbooking, cooking, card making, or sewing) or a constrained creative task. The creation of videos for distribution on YouTube is qualitatively different from traditional hobbies—it may be a hobby to some, but to others it is instrumental (i.e., not an end in itself, but a means to an end) and outwardly directed (it’s not about changing “me,” but influencing others). In summary, our model of the motivation for consumer-generated advertising subsumes the Dahl and Moreau motivations under one factor and adds two further unique factors.

The three motivations explored above are used as the dimensions to construct the framework depicted in Figure 1. While the figure implies that these are independent axes, in reality people often have a combination of two or three of these factors driving their creative actions. Indeed, the factors can be nested, in the sense that one element can lead to another. For example, the capability to influence people’s attitudes (change perceptions) can be a powerful means of generating publicity (self-promotion). Moreover,

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**FIGURE 1.** Motivational Dimensions Underpinning Consumer-Generated Ads

- Intrinsic Enjoyment
- Self-Promotion
- Change Perceptions
the ability to self-promote and change perceptions often arises from an intrinsic enjoyment of the creative process.

An excellent example that encompasses all of these elements of motivation is a spoof video based on a recent Tourism Australia international advertising campaign. The original ad, produced by the government-run organization, was itself designed to be edgy. The ad featured stunning shots of Australian landscapes and social scenes, voiced over with phrases such as “we’ve bought you a beer,” “we’ve saved you a spot on the beach,” “dinner’s about to be served,” and “we’ve got the sharks out of the pool.” It closed with the tagline “so where the bloody hell are you?” and was thus banned from television broadcast in the UK, Canada, and the U.S., its key markets.²⁰ Needless to say, this publicity only increased intrigue and interest in the video. Ironically, this increased media exposure and interest in the ad garnered for a young comedian and director; the entire incident has afforded Ilic tremendous notoriety within Australia and, to an extent, the rest of the world.

Case Study 4: Daniel Ilic and Tourism Australia

Daniel Ilic is a 24-year-old comedy writer and director who says, “I got sick and tired of hearing how the ‘So where the bloody hell are you’ Tourism Australia ad was so good and was drumming up a great buzz about Australia, so I decided to make my own. If Tourism Australia can be controversial, so can I!” With the help of his associated production company, Ilic filmed a spoof version entitled “Where the f—-ing hell are you?” and filled it with less-than-savory images of Australian life. One shot is voiced over with the phrase “We got the ethnics off the beach,” as a gang of rowdies chases a young man. Another scene pokes fun at Australia’s immigration policies, showing an immigration detention center with the voiceover; “We got you some free accommodation.” The spoof ad sparked the ire of Tourism Australia and their legal department. Beyond intrinsic enjoyment and a desire to frame Australia differently, Mr. Ilic, whether he intended to or not, benefited enormously from the media exposure the ad garnered. For a young comedian and director, the entire incident has afforded Ilic tremendous notoriety within Australia and, to an extent, the rest of the world.

What Types of Ads Do Consumers Create?

In trying to understand the types of ads created by consumers, it is useful to differentiate text from subtext. In this instance, “text” is used as the collective term to cover the written word, the audio track, and the visual image. In a media-saturated world, consumers are becoming increasingly sophisticated at “reading” or interpreting media texts. Such interpretations are shaped by idio-
syncratic personal factors as well as text structure. Extreme postmodernists will argue that the reader imbues the text with meaning independent of the author’s wishes. However, we take a less extreme position and propose that a text shapes or directs interpretation, but does not fix or determine it.

The distinction between surface text and sub-text (from the Russian podtekst) was originally made by Konstantin Stanislavsky in his theory of acting, but it has come to be widely used to refer to the distinction between the face-value or explicit meaning and the underlying or implicit meaning of a text. We use this distinction to focus on a consumer-generated ad’s message(s) about a particular brand. On the “surface” text level, one has an ad’s nominal relationship to the official (i.e., that sanctioned and portrayed by the firm) brand message. On the “subtext” level, we deal with the underlying or implicit message about a brand. The former may range from assonant (i.e., in tune with or in agreement with the official message) to dissonant (i.e., in discord or disagreement with the official brand message). The latter may range from a positive to a negative take, spin, or riff on the brand. Taken together, these two dimensions yield four distinct types of consumer-generated ads, which we term contrarian, incongruous, subversive, and concordant. These are outlined in Figure 2 and described below.

**Concordant**

When surface text and subtext are in accord, we see the concordant consumer-generated ad. Here the nominal text of the ad is in general agreement...
with that of the firm’s brand message, and any underlying subtext or message is positive in attitude towards the brand. Gabriel Stella’s Apple iPod ad (<www.youtube.com/watch?v=XK4Vjmc6Gws>) and the iPhone ad directed by Alec Sutherland (<www.iphonenewyorkcity.com>) in Case Studies 1 and 2 are good examples of concordant ads.

**Subversive**

The subversive ad arises when an ad appears on the surface to be in accord with the official brand message, but the subtext of the ad is clearly negative. Daniel Ilic’s spoof Tourism Australia ad in Case Study 4 is a good example. Another is the notorious “big sister” ad, in which Hilary Clinton’s “intention of running for president” speech is shown on the giant video screen that provides the backdrop to Apple’s iconic Macintosh 1984 “think different” ad (<www.youtube.com/watch?v=6h3G-lMZxjo>). Ads in this category often use parody to subvert and undermine the dominant brand message. That is, the ad will employ self-conscious and exaggerated use of brand-dominant (i.e., firm-generated) text for comic effect or ridicule.

**Incongruous**

In this category of consumer-generated ads the surface message is dissonant with that of the official firm brand message, yet the underlying text is generally positive towards the brand. This incongruous melding of off-message, but brand-positive ad has resulted in a number of highly innovative videos, the best known of which is the Volkswagen Polo ad. In this video, a “terrorist” attempts to use a VW Polo as a car bomb. However, when he detonates the explosives inside the car after parking on a crowded street, the strength of the Polo’s construction contains the blast so that no damage or injury occurs outside the car.26

**Contrarian**

The contrarian ad category consists of consumer-generated ads that are clearly off-message and implicitly negative towards the brand. These are ads where the creator is generally trying to undermine, question, or attach a contrarian meaning to the brand message. The spoof Starbucks ad in Case Study 3 is a good example of a contrarian message. Starbucks does not actually undertake traditional print or TV advertising, let alone the “this is delicious” surface message of the Frappuccino drink featured in the spoof. The subtext of not caring about the Third World negates Starbucks’ publicized actions of trying to facilitate fair trade and thus helping countries in emerging markets.

**What Management Strategies Are Available to Respond to the Phenomenon?**

As noted, firms adopt a range of stances toward consumer-generated ads. Some see them as threatening and actively attempt to block or counter the errant messages; others view them as an opportunity and actively attempt to
facilitate or even co-opt consumers’ creativity. In thinking about firms’ reactions to this phenomenon, it is useful to differentiate using two axes: a firm’s attitude towards, and action on, consumer-generated adverts. Attitude to consumer-generated ads is a firm’s espoused policy or philosophy towards the phenomenon in principle; it can range from positive to negative. The espoused philosophy typically reflects the mental mindset of top management or senior marketing executives but can also range from a subtle form of politicking to poor organizational communication. Action on consumer-generated ads consists of what a firm actually does, above and beyond mere espousal of attitude, once the phenomenon has been detected. This can range from active to passive. These two axes delineate a four-fold typology of firm postures to consumer innovation, consisting of the stances of disapprove, repel, applaud, and facilitate. The four stances are illustrated in Figure 3 and discussed below.

Disapprove
Here a firm’s attitude towards consumer-generated ads is negative, but the firm’s actions are de facto passive. In this instance, firms verbally berate a consumer-generated ad, but take no overt action—which can range from blissful ignorance to reluctant tolerance to an unreceptive internal reaction. This is perhaps the default or initial stance for many firms, and is typically a knee-jerk reaction. Examples are legion. Coca-Cola reacted negatively to a recent consumer-generated video sensation of geysers being created by dropping Mentos (mint candies) into Diet Coke bottles. They labeled the experiment “amusing” but derided it for not fitting in with the “real” Coke brand identity.27
There are both advantages and disadvantages to the Disapprove stance. On the positive side, a Disapprove stance allows the firm to watch from the sidelines and consider the position before possibly over-reacting, and looking like a bully. Once it has considered the situation carefully, and learned from it, the firm can then enter the debate at a later stage, in a more sober way. A major disadvantage of the Disapprove stance is that firms who adopt it may be perceived as uncaring or indifferent, and even weak and powerless, by those who create ads about their brands and by their broader customer markets as well. Furthermore, the Disapprove stance may be an indication of indecision—or worse, incompetence—regarding the brands’ detractors (both consumers and competitors) so that later attempts to engage the consumer-generated advertising phenomenon will be seen as too little, too late.

**Repel**

What distinguishes this stance from the disapprove posture is that while the firm’s attitude towards the consumer-generated ad is still negative, the firm’s response is active. Thus firms verbally condemn a consumer-generated video and also follow up their espoused position with punitive action. The firm actively seeks to minimize or counter the message portrayed in the customer-generated ad. A classic example of this stance was that taken by Volkswagen in response to the subversive “Small but Tough” Polo ad discussed above. Despite the popularity of the video (it has now been viewed many millions of times on various video-hosting sites), Volkswagen considered the message detrimental to the brand and sued the creators of the ad.28 In the same manner, Daniel Ilic (in Case Study 4) received a very stern cease and desist letter from Tourism Australia demanding that he take his creation offline.

Being the toughest of the four stances, the Repel position does have some significant disadvantages. The simplest and most obvious drawback of this stance is that the firm is in danger of looking like a tyrant, a huge Goliath fighting a little David over something that many in the marketplace will see as a trivial issue. Firms can end up with lots of egg on their faces if they lose legal actions, and quite a bit of egg even when they win. The public relations spillovers the firm might experience could be a lot like those faced by McDonald’s in its seven-year, 314 court day, multi-million dollar libel suit in the United Kingdom in the late 1990s—when at the end of everything, the firm was only awarded around seventy-five thousand dollars. Perhaps more importantly, a firm that follows a Repel stance might be losing out on genuine opportunities to engage with and learn from its customers.

There are however, some benefits to be gained from following the Repel stance. First, a firm that follows it well, and sticks to this path, will be seen as tough, and not one that ad-creating consumers will want to mess with. They might seek softer targets instead. Second, the Repel stance will afford those firms who follow it the greatest level of brand asset protection. Third, the Repel stance permits firms to avoid actual, serious damages, not only to brand equity, but also possible physical harm to consumers who might be tempted to use products in
the way spoof ads suggest they can be used. (For example, if an exploding Diet Coke bottle charged with Mentos were to hurt someone, the fallout could be serious for all concerned).

**Applaud**

The third stance is the applaud position. Here, the firm’s attitude towards consumer-generated ads is primarily positive, but the firm’s actions are again *de facto* passive. In this instance, firms verbally laud and applaud consumer-generated ads but take no overt action to facilitate or co-opt the creators. This stance is a positive but “hands-off” approach to the phenomenon. Examples of this are becoming increasingly common. Perfetti Van Melle Inc., marketer of Mentos, in sharp contrast to Coke, applauds the various Mentos in Diet Coke geyser videos. “We are tickled pink by it,” says Pete Healy, vice president of marketing for the company’s U.S. division. Indeed the positive publicity that Mentos’ reaction to the video received in the press and in the blogosphere was reward enough for the company.

The benefits of the Applaud stance are that the firm doesn’t look like a tyrant by repelling consumer-generated ads, and is able to merely observe. If it wants to, the firm can join in the creative dialog, perhaps in a selective way, at the appropriate time. The stance is limited in that it doesn’t represent real engagement with the phenomenon, which might be seen as insincere or indifferent by some actors. The firm’s apparent lack of commitment will in any case be overturned if it decided at a later stage to actively repel a particular strand of consumer-generated advertising.

**Facilitate**

The fourth strategic stance is to facilitate. Here a firm’s attitude towards consumer-generated ads is positive, but in contrast to the previous applaud stance, the firm’s posture is overtly active. In this instance firms verbally encourage consumer-generated content, and also actively help consumers to produce their own brand-related media. Such facilitation can range from enabling (providing web sites and software for consumers to use in ad creation) to co-opting (soliciting and encouraging consumers to create ads by means of competitions, forums, and projects). This is very much a “hands-on,” positive approach to the phenomenon. Exemplifying this stance are companies such as Frito-Lay, GM, Heinz, and L’Oréal. Frito-Lay ran a competition to solicit consumer-generated ads for their Doritos crisps. They received over a thousand entries and the winning ad by Kristin Dehnert was aired during the Super Bowl. Moreover, the ad has since been viewed over four million times (<http://promotions.yahoo.com/doritos/> and has yielded untold publicity for Frito-Lay, Doritos, and of course Kristin.

Of the four stances, the Facilitate posture is the one with the most significant advantages and disadvantages. On the positive side, the stance permits the exploitation of genuine opportunities to engage customers in meaningful dialog. This will result not only in their goodwill, but also, perhaps more importantly,
the ability to glean superlative creative ideas and insights in an authentic and cost-effective manner. Brands that assume the Facilitate stance might be seen to be adopting a point of view, rather than simply making promotional claims, and in doing so “become a lightning rod for discourse.” Like good politicians who collect cartoons that make fun of them, managers in Facilitate situations will be confident that their brands are strong enough to withstand multiple messages from all sides of the opinion spectrum. For example, Dove’s “Real Beauty” ads have been parodied not only on YouTube, but also on late-night television. That level of exposure hasn’t bothered Unilever, Dove’s parent company, whose executives argue that those kinds of publicity can’t be bought.

The Facilitate posture is the riskiest and least controllable of the four stances. Customers who see themselves as having not only the firm’s permission and backing to create ads will not only say nice things about brands—sometimes they will be spiteful and malicious in their creation, and devious in their distribution. The latter behavior will be exacerbated when the firm’s efforts to engage its brand community are seen as insincere attempts at commercialization. Then creative consumers will craft ads that not only make fun of the firm’s brands, but also of its efforts to engage them—and this will all be done with the firm’s active support!

**Spotting the Stance**

It would be ideal if there was “one correct” stance in the matrix in Figure 3, that would make it simple to follow, and easy to implement. Like most important and complex issues in management however, there is no simple and easy solution. Managers need to be able to “spot,” or recognize the stance their organization adopts toward consumer-generated advertising. Rather than provide straightforward answers, the matrix, instead, should prompt a series of questions that will require a firm to evaluate whether it has the appropriate stance for the set of environmental circumstances under which it operates. Examples of such questions are set out in the decision tree in Figure 4. Depending on the variance (the range or dispersion) and valence (the polarity—positive or negative) of consumer attitudes to the brand, different managerial actions can be considered.

Legal, branding, and strategic considerations will be paramount, as well as a consideration of the resources available. There may be good reasons to follow a Disapprove stance. For example, where a firm is not positive toward a particular form of consumer-generated ads (and perhaps for good reason), but wishes to avoid the bad publicity that acting like a “bully” might cause, it can adopt a “disapprove” posture. Where the consequences of the consumer-generated ads can be more severe however, the firm might actively resist, and take some form of legal action when its intellectual property, reputation, and brand equity are under threat.

Likewise, there may be good reasons for assuming an Applaud stance. An organization might value and appreciate the accolades accorded to it in consumer-generated ads, especially for the brand appreciation and enthusiasm that
these might engender, but be reluctant to become actively involved in the phe-
nomenon, for a number of reasons. These might include creating expectations
that cannot be delivered on, appearing to favor positive customers unreasonably,
or a simple lack of resources and time that managing consumer-generated con-
tent might require. A Facilitate stance is typically adopted by organizations that
want to exploit the phenomenon to its fullest—to capitalize both on the brand
enthusiasm and loyalty that it epitomizes, as well as gaining access to the cre-
tivity of ordinary customers who might not want anything more than accolades
and recognition. On the other hand, an organization embracing a Facilitate
stance will have to recognize that not all consumers will create positive messages
about its brand, even when this creativity is enabled by the organization. GM
found that when it facilitated and sponsored opportunities for customers to cre-
ate ads about its offerings; a number of renegades created messages that belittled
the firm’s brands and made fun of its products (particularly its SUVs).

Interestingly many companies have moved from an initial Disapprove
stance to a co-opting Facilitating stance, not out of any great love of the phe-
nomenon but rather in an effort to exert control over it. This was Coke’s move
after finding that the Mento’s and Diet Coke video was showing no wane in
popularity. Coke now provides a controlled venue for consumers to submit their
own Coke ads (<http://moblogsmoproblems.blogspot.com/2006/07/coke-boldly-
goes-where-every-other.html>).

![Decision Tree: Variance, Valence, and Action](image-url)
Managing Consumer-Generated Ads

Ironically, many firms seem blissfully unaware that consumers are creating ads about their brands, although, with the advent of recent media publicity, this ignorance is becoming less common. The first task of management is therefore to make itself aware of whether or not consumers are generating ads about the firm’s brands. Nowadays this is a relatively easy task, facilitated by using search engines such as Google. Inevitably ads that have attracted any kind of attention will also find themselves on YouTube and other video hosting sites, and these can also be easily searched using key words. These kinds of simple search are also likely to unearth ads for competitor brands, and managers might like to ponder on the implications of these as well—will they make the rival look better or worse, and what might rival reactions be?

Once managers are aware of and have become informed about consumer-generated ads about their brands (and perhaps those of competitors), they need to analyze the phenomenon and develop appropriate strategies. This is where the matrix outlined in Figure 3 is essential. A careful consideration of it will enable managers to answer questions such as: What are the implications for the firm? Should our attitude be positive or negative? Should we pursue a hands-off approach or actively engage with the phenomenon? What is happening to the brands of our competitors—are they attracting more, less, or the same consumer-generated attention, and is this positive or negative? Of course, this also requires an understanding of the motivations of consumers in generating ads or, in simple terms, the three factors outlined in Figure 3.

Consumer motivations and managerial strategies are integrated into the framework presented in Table 1. This table summarizes answers to the questions: What is the link between motivation and type of ad produced? What types of brands are subsequently targeted? And finally, what should managers do in response? Thus consumers motivated primarily by intrinsic enjoyment tend to create “hobbyist ads.” Here, the consumer is interested in exploring the brand/product, focusing on interesting and informative content. Videos produced tend to include “how to” ads (e.g., how to install Linux Ubuntu operating system), “experience ads” (e.g., unpacking and using your new iPhone), and simple “fun ads” (e.g., Lego Indiana Jones, see <www.youtube.com/watch?v=egPgU5kAjKE>). The types of brands typically targeted by this consumer tend to be enthusiast brands, producing products or services that people are passionate about or highly involved with. Given the generally positive tone of most hobbyist ads it is suggested that managers either applaud such videos or become more proactive and facilitate their development.

Consumers motivated primarily by self-promotion tend to create “me ads.” Here the consumer is interested in piggybacking on the brand/product. However, the focus is on the creator of the ad rather than the brand or the message (indeed the creator typically tries to ensure that the brand or message does not overshadow the creator). The style of videos produced tends to be humorous, but not usually at the expense of the brand (e.g., the Obama-girl series of videos, featuring the now famous actress and model Amber Lee Ettinger did...
much to promote Barack Obama; see <http://www.zimbio.com/Amber+Lee+Ettinger>). The types of brand typically targeted by the self-promoter tend to be high-profile brands with high media coverage and generally positive connotations, which offer good vehicles to piggyback upon—it is perhaps predictable that Apple is a brand used by many self-promoters. Although “me ads” can range from the parasitic to symbiotic, the brand is generally a means to an end

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consumer Motivation (from Figure 1)</th>
<th>Type of Ad Relationship to Brand</th>
<th>Type(s) of Brand Targeted</th>
<th>Suggested Managerial Action (from Figure 3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic Enjoyment</td>
<td>The Hobbyist Ad</td>
<td>Enthusiast Brands</td>
<td>Selective enablement/encouragement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                                     | Relationship: the consumer wants to explore the brand/product | Brands which people feel passionate about or are highly involved with e.g., Linux Ubuntu Operating System | • Applaud
• Facilitate |
|                                     | Focus: on content—that’s interesting, insightful, creative |                           |                                            |
|                                     | Style: not necessarily humorous, but typically informative |                           |                                            |
| Self-Promotion                      | The Me Ad                       | High-Profile Brands       | Neutrality—“hands off” relationship       |
|                                     | Relationship: the consumer wants to piggyback on the brand | Target high-profile brands and products that are in the news, on which to piggyback | • Applaud
• Disapprove |
|                                     | Focus: on the creator rather than on the brand or message (don’t want the brand or the message to overshadow the creator) | Brands which dominate the media, generally ones which have positive connotations e.g., Apple |                                            |
|                                     | Style: often uses humor and/or parody—but not necessarily at the expense of the brand |                           |                                            |
| Change Perception                   | The Activist Ad                 | Issue Brands              | Range depending on ad message             |
|                                     | Relationship: the consumer wants to either promote or disrupt the brand | Brands that people view as either disingenuous or in need of support | • Promote:
• Applaud
• Facilitate |
|                                     | Focus: on the message. No interest in promoting the creator of the ad | In need of support e.g., organizations such as Green Peace or Free Tibet | • Disrupt:
• Disapprove
• Repel |
|                                     | Style: often sharp humor/parody—at the expense of the brand (disrupt); at the benefit of the brand (promote) | Disingenuous: e.g., oil companies claiming to be environmentally friendly, such as Exxon Mobile |                                            |
rather than an end in itself. Thus the suggested managerial response is neutrality: say nothing, or nominally approve or disapprove.

Consumers motivated by the desire to change perceptions tend to create “activist ads.” Here the consumer is interested in promoting or disrupting the brand. The focus is on the message (information, image, connotation designed to elicit change) rather than the creator. When in promotion of the brand, the style of videos produced tends to be factual or humorous (e.g., a number of “Free Tibet” ads on YouTube). When designed to disrupt the brand, the videos often employ satire and/or parody (e.g., the Big Sister video lampooning Hillary Clinton). The types of brand targeted tend to be “issue brands.” These comprise two distinct types: brands that people see as somehow disingenuous (e.g., Exxon Mobile); and brands that people feel are in need of support (e.g., Green Peace). Given the different nature of issue brands, managerial response should be similarly nuanced. Ads designed to disrupt the brand can be disapproved of or actively repelled—however, this strategy can backfire if done covertly. Ads designed to promote the brand can be applauded or actively facilitated (however, once again activists tend to be weary of cooption, so this strategy should be employed with caution).

**Consumer-Generated Ads Are Here to Stay**

Consumer-generated advertising is here to stay—it won’t go away, and managers will have to deal with it by developing and adopting appropriate stances for their organizations. Indeed, strong evidence and a number of pronounced trends suggest it will grow in prominence and effect. First, the technologies that enable consumers to create and broadcast their own advertising messages are advancing very rapidly. As technologies converge, consumers will no longer have to rely on video cameras and desktop computers to create and broadcast their ads—cell phones already have the basic capturing and broadcasting capabilities. The kind of software used by movie producers such as Steven Spielberg to create and edit blockbusters such as *Jurassic Park* in the early 1990s now either comes bundled with a new home PC, or can be downloaded free. To a considerable extent, the only remaining significant barrier between everyday people and extraordinary creativity is not finance or technology but talent, and there is adequate evidence on video download sites such as YouTube that many ordinary individuals possess this in abundance.

Second, there is an almost paradoxical tension with regard to brands in today’s business environment that will give tremendous impetus to the phenomenon of consumer-generated advertising. On the one hand, the last decade has truly been the age of brands and branding, and it is likely that the obsession with brands will thrive and grow, for both organizations and consumers. On the other hand, in the recent past, while brands may be “everything,” what they represent is not appreciated by everyone. There has been an active anti-branding movement throughout the world directed at the better known brands that has accused them of a multitude of sins, ranging from anti-competitive stances to
outright bullying. In many countries, there are consumer groups that resent the dilution that they perceive global brands exert on their cultures and as a result there has been considerable effort targeted at major brands. Thus, we are likely to see consumers creating ads for the brands they love and aspire to, but at the same time we are also going to witness many ads targeted at brands and organizations that some consumers love to hate. The Starbucks ad discussed earlier is the tip of the iceberg—YouTube currently features pages of McDonald’s spoof ads, and more than fifty ads making fun of Nike. Not only Apple parodies Microsoft in its ads—YouTube features many uncomplimentary consumer-generated ads ridiculing the company, its products, and founders Bill Gates and Steve Ballmer.

Third, brands give identity, not only to the goods and services of organizations, but also to the customers who purchase, own, use, and consume them, as evidenced by the Newton community investigated by Muniz and Schau. Brands enable consumers to say things about themselves, and some consumer-generated ads are doing this for those who craft and broadcast them, as some of our examples have illustrated. However, just as a beloved brand might enable a loyal consumer to say “who they are,” other brands can stand as beacons for them to say “who they are not.” For these consumers, creating and broadcasting ads that mock and deride both organizations and other customer groups will provide a fun, but potentially harmful outlet for their scorn. Those who manage corporate identities and brands will increasingly find themselves in an environment populated by empowered, socially engaged, culturally adept consumers with a range of motivations who present organizations with a range of conflicting societal and economic expectations.

Traditionally advertising has been viewed as non-personal, one-way, paid-for communication to a target audience through mass media of products, services, or ideas with the intention of informing, persuading, or reminding them. The phenomenon of consumer-generated advertising brings this conceptualization into question. Conventional definitions of advertising don’t address the fact that in the age of consumer-generated ads, advertising is personal (one can communicate quite easily with the creators of ads) and two-way (in that dialogs between creators, organizations, and audiences are possible). Whereas traditional media have charged advertisers for space and time, interactive vehicles such as YouTube are essentially free to advertisers and audiences. The days of advertising as a unidirectional attempt by organizations to influence the broad masses though broadcast media are numbered. Advertising is becoming a fragmented engagement between firms, multiple customer groups, and the brands that are shared, valued, adored, and sometimes reviled by them. While the objectives of advertisers may still be reasonably clear, the intentions of consumers, especially those who create and transmit ads, are often shadowy.

The management of brands has become an overall strategic issue that impacts on the future of the firm as a whole, rather than merely a source of focus for marketers and advertising practitioners. Brands and branding are concerns for top management, and not just marketers, as brands have become
significant intangibles assets for organizations. The advent of customer generated advertising will cause advertising to be on the agendas of all senior executives, because of its potential to directly affect brands in so many ways. Marketers specifically, and senior executives in general, will need to understand the motivation of consumers in creating ads and be able to categorize them broadly. Then, they will have to think carefully about their attitudes toward the phenomenon and develop the appropriate strategies to manage it.

Managers may be better off viewing the consumer-generated advertising phenomenon as a word-of-mouth problem rather than a conventional advertising dilemma. Marketers have long been aware of the tremendous power of interpersonal communication between their customers, and researchers have exerted significant effort into attempts to understand word-of-mouth, how it works, and what can be done about it. Consumer-generated ads are similar to word-of-mouth communication in that they are created by consumers and not organizations, and the motivation for their creation is not so much related to sales directly as it is some inner spur or impulse. Like word-of-mouth, firms are less able to control the ads crafted and broadcast by consumers. It is also possible that the ads created by consumers will be perceived as more credible than the ads broadcast by firms, as is the case in word-of-mouth communication.

Managers have shown resurgent interest in word-of-mouth communication and what has been referred to as “stealth marketing,” which works on the idea that word-of-mouth and peer-group recommendation are the most effective promotional and marketing tools. The main objective of spreading “buzz” about a new product or service is to create an environment where consumers carry the message, and obviously consumer-generated advertising has the potential (although not always the promise) to do this very effectively. Researchers have examined the propensity of consumers to engage in positive versus negative word-of-mouth, and they have attempted to answer such questions as what are the antecedents of word of mouth; how the transmission of positive word-of-mouth differs from that of negative word-of-mouth; how online word-of-mouth differs from offline word-of-mouth; what the impact of word-of-mouth is; and how word-of-mouth can be measured. The potential of interactive media such as the Internet to shape and be shaped by word-of-mouth has also received considerable attention.

Marketers are able to affect word-of-mouth to the firm’s benefit, and some of these tactics—especially when used in conjunction with our strategic stances framework (as in Figure 3)—will be applicable to dealing with consumer-generated ads. First, according to Chung and Darke, managers should make sure that they understand the situations in which consumers are more or less likely to provide positive word-of-mouth. Our work suggests that there are also situations in which consumers are more or less likely to create positive advertising messages, and marketers would do well to study these circumstances. Second, research indicates that word-of-mouth is more likely when the product is self-relevant rather than utilitarian. Obviously this implies that consumers will be more likely to create ads for self-relevant product and brands,
but the real challenge for marketers of utilitarian offerings will be to make them more self-relevant for their target markets. If they do, then consumers of these brands may just create positive ads for these products. Third, in the context of word-of-mouth, these researchers recommend that marketers may also profit from creating or strengthening associations between their brand and consumer self-concept (the mental and conceptual understanding and persistent regard that individuals hold for their own existence; the sum total of their knowledge and understanding of themselves).\textsuperscript{44} In the case of consumer-generated ads, the interplay between offerings and the motivation to create will be both more complex and stronger than in simple word-of-mouth, and marketers will benefit by studying, understanding, and exploiting this phenomenon.

The frameworks developed here are intended to help managers think about and manage the impact consumer-generated advertising can have on their organizations. Decision makers, whether they desire to or not, must deal with the complexities they will face in this age of changed advertising. Like the brands that the medium talks about, advertising is becoming diverse and multidimensional, a co-creation as much by the groups it has formerly targeted as that of its traditional directors. As advertising moves away from being static and towards an era of fluidity and continual evolution over time (often in unpredictable ways), so too must the outlook and actions of those who create the very brands embodied in such messages. The ad is liberated. Managers’ thinking will have to be as well.

APPENDIX 1
Consumer-Generated Advertising—A History in the Writing

Early Parody and Spoof Ads

Parody or spoof advertising is in itself not a new phenomenon—since the first ads appeared in print, cartoonists and other observers made fun of them graphically. When advertising moved to radio and television, it again became the butt of many jokes on comedy shows. Advertisers themselves often parodied the products and marketing communication of their competitors. Back in the 1960s, for example, Stolichnaya vodka ads showed competitor products and pointed out that while they “said they were Russian,” they were in fact distilled in the USA, while Stolichnaya was a genuine Russian vodka, distilled in the USSR.\textsuperscript{45} In the 1990s, Energizer batteries featured in a famous series of parody advertisements that were in themselves parodies of the well-known Duracell commercials. A toy pink rabbit powered by Energizer batteries, being filmed in an ad, escapes the studio and runs amok, barging into other commercials being made, including those for coffee, wine, a fictional upcoming TV series, long distance service, breakfast cereal, and sinus medication. Coca-Cola ran a series of Sprite ads featuring fictional drink products endorsed either by actual or fictional celebrities, and which implied that the fictional product was inadequate. Parody advertising reached the U.S. Supreme Court in 1988, when Hustler magazine ran a parody of the double entendre Campari ad that asked people about their
“first time” (they consumed the aperitif, that is). The Hustler parody featured the Reverend Jerry Falwell who later sued the magazine (unsuccessfully as it turned out) for libel.

However, the Internet and, in particular, vehicles such as YouTube (as well as the armory of tools and software available) can make advertisers of us all. Consumers can now create and broadcast ads at will. Many of these will be spoofs and parodies, and many will be malicious, but consumers are also taking the opportunity to pay homage to the brands they love by crafting ads that sing their praises.

The Rise of YouTube

YouTube is a video-sharing web site where users can upload, view, and share video clips. It is by far the greatest platform for consumer-generated advertising (as well as hosting many thousands of conventional ads that users have chosen to post on the site, for whatever reason). YouTube was created in mid-February 2005 and uses Adobe Flash technology to display a wide variety of video content. In November 2006, Google Inc. acquired the company for US$1.65 billion in Google stock. Unregistered users can watch most videos on the site, while registered users are permitted to upload an unlimited number of videos. By July 2006, the company revealed that more than 100 million videos were being watched every day, at which time 65,000 were being added daily.

10% of Ads on YouTube are Spoof Ads

Some consumer-generated ads (those that poke fun at an existing product or brand), are termed “parody ads” or “spoof ads.” Searches and simple analysis of the data taken from YouTube are shown below:

Who Gets Parodied? Spoof Ads on YouTube of the World’s Top 10 Brands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand</th>
<th>Number of Spoof Ads on YouTube</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coca-Cola</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microsoft Windows</td>
<td>74 (Microsoft, 21; Microsoft Windows, 25; Windows, 28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBM</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GE</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intel</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nokia</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toyota</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disney</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McDonald’s</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercedes-Benz</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Descriptive Statistics of Ads on YouTube

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N (approximate figures)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Videos on YouTube</td>
<td>60,000,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Ads (search term “ad(s);”</td>
<td>24,200</td>
<td>&lt; 0.001 of all videos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“advertisement(s)”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spoof Ad (search term “spoof ad(s);”</td>
<td>2,450</td>
<td>10% of ads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“spoof advertisement(s)”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Figures based on data collected Jan 2nd, 2008, 12:00 EST—searches based on identifying text and tags.

Top 5 Consumer-Generated Spoof Ads on YouTube

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ad</th>
<th>Views</th>
<th>Synopsis of Ad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Park Mac vs. PC</td>
<td>5,235,015</td>
<td>A parody of the Apple Mac vs. Windows PC commercials with South Park characters. Created as the final project for a multimedia production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote Different</td>
<td>4,110,758</td>
<td>Mashup of the famous Apple 1984 Super Bowl ad, depicting Hillary Clinton as Big Brother—a pro Obama ad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powerthirst</td>
<td>3,122,100</td>
<td>A spoof on the ubiquitous commercials for energy drinks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hi, I’m a Marvel ... and I’m a D.C. (Mac PC Parody)</td>
<td>2,714,491</td>
<td>Spider-Man (Marvel) and Superman (DC) discuss the state of their respective film divisions in this take on the Apple Mac/WindowsPC ads.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gates vs. Jobs</td>
<td>1,591,792</td>
<td>Bill Gates and Steve Jobs square off in the clean white virtual world of the iconic Apple Mac ads.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Social Impact of Consumer-Generated Ads

The fourth most viewed item on YouTube in 2007
Spoof ad “Hillary 1984”
Posted on YouTube by an individual nicknamed Park Ridge-47, the ad mashes together the classic 1984 Apple Superbowl ad with footage of Hillary Clinton giving a speech. Clinton is inserted into a screen as a Big Brother character and (presumably) Democratic voters are shown as zombie-like followers. The creator turned out to be an employee of an online communications firm that had worked with the Obama campaign.

One of the top 10 ads of the year 2007
Doritos: “Live the Flavor”
The “Live the Flavor” ad was the winner of Frito-Lay’s competition for consumers to create an ad for the Doritos brand of corn chips. The ad was then flighted during the 2007 Superbowl half-time. A Doritos consumer’s attention is
drawn to a pretty girl, which results in him smashing his car. All is not lost however, and they find each other over a bag of Doritos.

How consumer-generated content is shaping politics
TechPresident.com (one of 2007’s Top 10 web sites)
The web site TechPresident.com looks at the 2008 presidential candidates’ online promotional efforts, and particularly at how consumer-generated content created influences the popularity of the candidates. The site tracks online advertising and YouTube.

Notes
7. For example, see T. Howard, “Madison Avenue Wants You!” *USA Today*, June 21, 2007, pp. 1b-2b.
17. Ibid., p. 359.
18. Muñiz and Schau, op. cit.
Ad Lib: When Customers Create the Ad

21. For example, see U. Eco, The Role of the Reader (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1979).
29. Vranica and Terhune, op. cit.
30. Howard, op. cit.
32. Deighton and Kornfeld, op. cit.
34. Muñiz and Schau, op. cit.
43. Chung and Darke, op. cit.