



Knowledge is Power: The Impact of Control of Information on Brand Attitudes

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What impact does communicating a control of information have on brands?

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Definitions of Power



- One's potential ability to influence a target
(French and Raven 1975)
- The control of valuable resources (Keltner,
Gruenfeld and Anderson 2003; Rucker and Galinsky 2008)

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Control of information resources



- Knowledge and information has been directly related to the concept of expert power
(French and Raven 1975)
- A link exists between power motive and positions that control information (Winter 1973)
- Correlation between perceptions of a brand as powerful and its control of information
(Stoner and Torelli 2015)

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Warm Brands



eHarmony®
Love Begins Here™



Big Brothers Big Sisters

Warm, Kind, Generous (Aaker, Vohs, and Mogilner 2010)

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Power and Warmth



- Social judgments of a person's power have been demonstrated to be negatively related to perceptions of warmth
(Fragale, Overbeck, and Neale 2011)
- Powerful people have been associated with traits conflicting with warmth such as selfishness, dominance, and competitiveness
(Fragale et al 2011; Rucker, Dubois, and Galinsky 2011; Fiske et al. 2002)
- Power and warmth are incompatible brand values (Schwartz and Boehnke 2004; Torelli et al. 2012; Torelli, Monga and Kaikati 2012)

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Study 1: Control of Information as Power



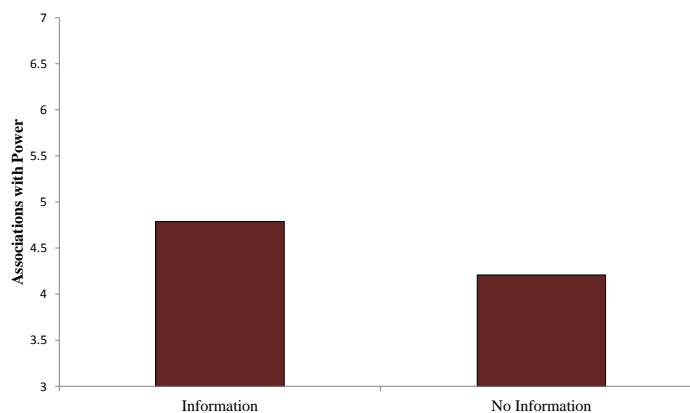
- Fictitious “Job Werks” brand
- 2 Conditions:
 - Control of Information
 - No Control of Information
- Associations with Power – 4 items:
 - “To what extent is Job Werks associated with power?” 1 = Not at all, 7 = Very much

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“...Job hunters upload their past education and employment history as well as complete a lengthy questionnaire ...Prospective employers also upload a job description as well as answer many questions...”

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Study 2: Impact of Information- Real Brands



- 2 X 2 between subjects design
- Quote from the founder of Caring Bridge (high warmth) or LinkedIn (low warmth)
- Highlighted the amount of information the company has or did not
- 4 item measure of brand favorability

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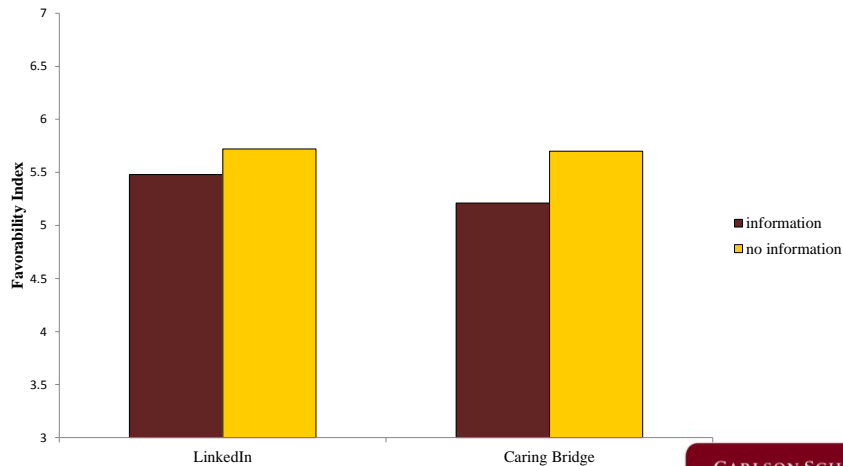
"Ten years ago, I co-founded LinkedIn in my living room with the mission of connecting the world's professionals to make them more productive and successful. Inspired by the invaluable role relationships played in our own careers, we launched LinkedIn with the tagline "Relationships matter." -- Reid Hoffman, LinkedIn Founder

Information: LinkedIn now has regularly updated career information on more than 500,000 people.

No Information: LinkedIn now helps people connect with more than 500,000 other professionals.

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Study 2: Results



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Study 3: Impact of Information- Fictitious Brands



- Mixed Design
 - 2 Between Subject Condition (High/Low warmth brand)
 - Fictitious News Channel Description
 - Favorability Rating(Time 1)
 - Article about the information the news channel has in archives
 - Favorability (Time 2)

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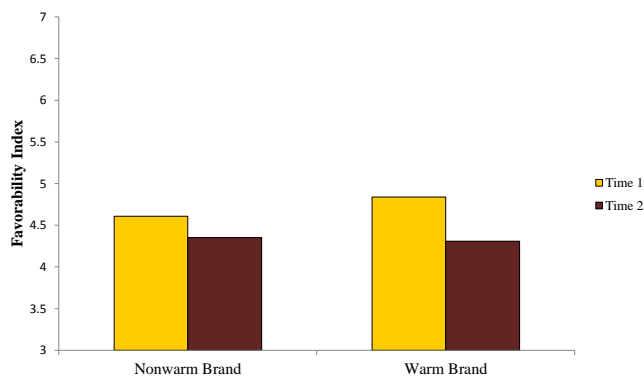
Control of Information



“On a date last month, a local newspaper reported that Channel 8 has a wide variety of information in its archives. Sometimes Channel 8 collects interviews and information for stories which then are never chosen to be aired. Due to its ability to collect and disseminate information, Channel 8 has a large database with information on companies and persons, some of which viewers may have never seen.”

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Study 3: Results



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Contributions



- Identifies one dimension by which consumers perceive of power in brands: control of information resources
- Demonstrates that communicating control of information can be detrimental to brands
 - Especially for brands that have built warm brand images

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THANK YOU

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