Context considered: the relationship between media environments and advertising effects
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It is generally assumed that the medium context in which advertisements are placed (*Umfeld*), does not only allow an audience of a certain composition and size to see the ads, yet also influences how the ads affect the audience. Although this belief is widespread, our knowledge about the effect of the context on advertising impact is still rather limited. For example, what is it about the context that causes the effect? Are context effects caused by objectively noticeable characteristics, such as content, genre or style? Does a commercial always perform better in a sitcom break compared to a talk show break? Or are context effects more dependent on the perception of the individual audience members? Does it matter whether the context induces involvement or whether people like the environment in which the ad is embedded? Equally little is known about the direction of effects. Does context-induced involvement stimulate people to pay attention to embedded ads, or does it distract them? Do people remember an ad better when it matches its environment, or is a non-matching ad more eye-catching and therefore better remembered? Do people appreciate an ad more when they like its environment, or does it induce annoyance?

The aim of this dissertation is to identify how context influences advertising effects. It presents an overview of the most critical context factors, and the underlying mechanisms explaining their effects. Moreover, it empirically explores how these context factors influence advertising effects in real-life, focusing on ads in magazines and on television. The book offers insights for media planning and gives directions for further research in this area.

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