

# In the mood for advertising

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From research in the literature, it becomes clear that persuasive impact is greater if the person targeted is in a happy, benevolent mood. In the field of advertising research, this implies that positive mood states are related to greater advertising effectiveness. A limitation of many studies concerning mood and advertising effectiveness, however, is that mood is manipulated under experimental, 'laboratory' conditions. As many authors state, these studies require replication under more realistic conditions. In this paper we draw conclusions based on a real-life field study in a naturalistic context, involving 1287 respondents. The results show that people who are in a better mood see more advertising, that people are in a better mood on Sundays, and that, on Sundays, higher ad noting scores are found. It is demonstrated that possible explanatory factors for the higher ad noting scores – for example, size and content of the issue, size of the ad, available reading time or advertising creativity – cannot offer an explanation. So the better mood on Sunday explains the high advertising reach scores on Sunday. The marketing implications of the findings are sketched out.

## Introduction

Advertising effectiveness is influenced by context. Advertising context consists of many aspects that may influence advertising effectiveness. A division can be made between context characteristics related to the receiver of the advertisement and those related to the vehicle carrying the advertisement: the medium context (Moorman 2003). The receiver context can include the physical environment in which a person is exposed to an advertisement (at home or elsewhere), the social environment (alone or with others), time frame (morning or evening) and mental state (good or bad mood). In this contribution we concentrate on the influence that the mental state of the receiver has on the effectiveness of the advertising. More precisely, we concentrate on the mental state that a person is in prior

to exposure to the medium content (antecedent state). Mood is considered as an antecedent state because a mood can be present before the consumer is exposed to the ad (Burke & Edell 1989).

The effect that a mental state has on consumer attitudes and behaviour has already been studied (since the 1980s). Gardner (1985) presents an overview of studies investigating the effects of mood states on psychological processes, and considers their relevance and potential importance for consumer behaviour in general. After this study, the specific role of mood in advertising effectiveness came onto the agenda (Batra & Stayman 1990). From the literature in psychology and marketing science, it becomes clear that a general conclusion is that persuasive impact is greater if the person targeted is in a happy, benevolent mood (Petty *et al.* 1993).

Different definitions of mood have appeared in journal articles and books (for an overview, see Luomala & Laaksonen 2000). These vary from simple definitions such as 'moods are barometers of ego' (Jacobsen 1957) to more complex ones. For example, Forgas (1995) states that moods are 'low-intensity, diffuse and relatively enduring affective states without a salient antecedent cause and therefore little cognitive content (feelings like feeling good or feeling bad).' Egloff *et al.* (1995), who use the terms 'mood' and 'affect' interchangeably, distinguish between an activation component and a pleasantness aspect of positive affect or good mood. But all authors discern some common elements that we endorse:

- moods are omnipresent;
- they can be seen as feeling states that are subjectively perceived by individuals;
- mood states are transient and fleeting; Morris (1989) believes that the mildest moods can last a couple of hours, but certainly no longer than a day;
- moods have a lower level of intensity in comparison with emotions; emotions, by contrast, are usually more intense, attention-getting and tied to specifiable behaviour (Clark & Isen 1982; Luomala & Laaksonen 2000; Martin 2003); Kumar (1997, p.84) states that 'mood, on the other hand, represents a form of affect that is not associated with a particular stimulus. Moods are lower-intensity affective states that tend to be more enduring than emotions'; and

- mood is most often defined as a unidimensional, bipolar phenomenon that ranges from positive to negative (Hill & Ward 1989), although within the field of mood research a variety of moods are recognised, such as anxious and angry moods; the present study concentrates on positive and negative moods.

As stated, persuasive influence is greater if a person is in a positive mood. From the literature, it becomes clear that a positive mood implies that people:

- are more sensitive to social appeals like demands for blood donation (O'Malley & Andrews 1983)
- are more polite and willing to help (Rusting 1998)
- are easier to influence (Gierl & Bambauer 2005)
- have better recall of a message stimulus (Gardner 1985)
- have better recall of a brand name (Lee & Sternthal 1999)
- evaluate message arguments more favourably (Batra & Stayman 1990)
- react positively to a salesperson who has conveyed positive feelings, and are willing to pay more for the products endorsed by this person (Puccinelli 2006)
- have increased self-confidence and are more optimistic about the future (Baumgardner & Arkin 1988).

Park and Banaji (2000, p. 1005) conclude in general about these results: 'the innovative experiments that comprise these demonstrations have now made commonplace the expectation that transient shifts in mood do influence mental processes and social behaviour in systematic ways'. Based in particular on the findings concerning recall and cognitive processing, we suppose that people in a positive mood will note more advertising than do people who are in a negative mood.

How to explain these findings? One explanation is offered by the mood-congruence model based on network models of memory (Bower 1981; Martin 2003). Positive moods prime positive memories and negative moods prime negative memories. People in positive moods avoid disrupting those good moods. People in happy moods remember more positive memories from childhood and recall more happy episodes from previous weeks. Another explanation is the model that posits a reduction in total cognitive elaboration (Batra & Stayman 1990). A better mood reduces

cognitive elaboration (e.g. the generation of counter-arguments) and makes people more open to mood-induced peripheral cues and images. The second explanation leads to higher advertising exposure levels, because individual consumers in a positive mood are less 'critical' and raise less of a barrier to persuasive messages. The first explanation leads to greater appreciation of advertising that conveys positive feelings. Advertising can serve as a mood enhancer when it is enjoyed for its entertainment value (Chang 2006). The two processes together explain the higher advertising responses in positive mood groups as compared with negative mood groups. These findings and explanatory theories also have pragmatic implications, in that a mood-inducing programme may affect subsequent ad processing (Shapiro *et al.* 2002). Enhancing a positive mood in consumers is an effective way of generating advertising effect. Our research is centred around the relationship between mood and advertising.

## **Research problem**

Mood is influenced by different factors. Silberer and Jaekel (1996) distinguish five determinants:

1. personality traits (stable and extrovert people are prone to being in a better mood)
2. competence to influence the social environment (accepting challenges enhances the mood)
3. social interaction (contact with others stimulates a positive mood)
4. object-centred feelings (appreciation of objects can enhance the mood)
5. climatological conditions and mood cycles according to day of the week (light and sun/free time).

In the present study, we focus upon the fifth influencing factor: 'day of the week'.

Shifts in mood states occur routinely, easily and swiftly, and moods can easily and simply be created (Park & Banaji 2000). Literature also offers evidence that mood varies according to the day of the week. In a study conducted in the 1980s, Neale *et al.* (1987) measured mood in relation to the day of the week. In their study, for example, Monday had the most negative mood scores. Egloff *et al.* (1995) also studied the relationship between time of day, day of the week and positive mood. They quote

several studies which ‘found that positive mood was more elevated on weekends compared to weekdays. This result was expected because weekends have more pleasant and less unpleasant daily events than other days of the week’ (p. 100). These authors offer the explanation that weekends are associated with more home, leisure and family events that were assumed to elicit more pleasant effects. Recent data also support the idea that mood and day of the week are related. In a German study, Braun and Pfleiderer (2003) show that people are in a better mood on a Sunday. They feel more well balanced, in more of a good mood, are more open-minded, more relaxed and more light-hearted than on weekdays.

In a broad study into the effects of the introduction of a new Sunday paper, we had the opportunity to test some hypotheses about mood, the influencing factor ‘day of the week’ and advertising. For a long time, the Netherlands did not have a regular Sunday newspaper. But in spring 2004 *De Telegraaf* – the country’s largest daily newspaper – ventured into this unknown area. It joined forces with Kobalt, the largest media buying agency in the Netherlands, TNS NIPO/Veldkamp and the University of Amsterdam, for an in-depth study of the influence of the introduction of the new Sunday edition on both reading behaviour and advertising effectiveness. It is still the only Dutch national newspaper with a Sunday edition, and no ‘me-too’ products have been introduced. In the Netherlands there are no separate Sunday papers; the function of the Sunday issue of *De Telegraaf* differs from that of a Sunday paper in the UK, for example. *De Telegraaf* on Sunday is just the seventh daily issue of a national newspaper that formerly appeared only six days a week. This difference can be derived from reading behaviour. Whereas in the UK a Sunday paper is read spread over the week, *De Telegraaf* on Sunday has about 98% of its audience on the day it is published.

Three hypotheses are tested:

- H1:** People in a positive mood recall more ads in newspapers than do people in a negative mood.
- H2:** People feel in a better mood on Sunday than on weekdays.
- H3:** Due to the better mood of readers on Sunday, advertising noting scores will be higher for the Sunday paper than for a weekday issue, all other things being equal.

The 'ceteris paribus' clause at the end of the third hypothesis deserves some explanation. There are more factors than mood alone that influence whether a newspaper advertisement will be noticed. In the Netherlands, we have a substantial and well-documented tradition of 'newspaper section' research (Bronner & Faasse 1999), which sheds light on these factors. Most important for the success of an advertisement in a daily newspaper are: the size of the paper, the size of the ad, the position of the ad in the paper, and the time the reader has available for reading the paper.

In a paper with fewer pages, people notice more advertisements. Larger ads get more attention. Ads located towards the front of the paper are noticed more often than those on the last pages. People who have more time for the newspaper as a whole also have a better look at the ads. In the survey and analysis of the data, we have been able to control for all these aspects.

The hypotheses will be tested on the basis of real-life data, and we have the advantage of realistic conditions from which to draw conclusions about the relationship between mood and advertising exposure.

Studying moods and the effects that moods have is an important topic in research into advertising. But nearly all data on mood effects are gathered in a forced exposure and lab context. In laboratory studies, participant mood manipulation takes place, for example, by means of a clip used to induce a negative or positive mood (Puccinelli 2006). In the study by Gierl and Bambauer (2005), positive mood induction took place by having subjects stay in a huge/comfortable room with many drinks available and *Mr Bean* running on the television channel. In the negative mood induction, the reverse situation was created: a small room without windows, no drinks and an anti-war movie. The relevance for the practice of advertising is very limited. Such experimental mood induction cannot be realised in the world and there is consequently no possibility of segmenting individuals according to mood, nor of approaching each segment with a different advertising strategy. Many of the findings based on laboratory studies require replication under more realistic conditions (Shapiro *et al.* 2002). Mood manipulation in such a context may also affect other psychological variables that have the ability to affect decision-making effort and thus generate confounding effects (Hill & Ward 1989). Assessing the general applicability of our findings to realistic contexts is a research priority

(Shapiro *et al.* 2002). In this paper, we draw conclusions based on such *real-life data*. Within the context of a study into the effects of the introduction of a new Sunday edition of a large Dutch newspaper, we had the opportunity of testing several hypotheses about the relationship between mood and advertising effectiveness.

## Research design

In the preceding section, our research question was elaborated and hypotheses were formulated. The survey design was intended to answer two different questions: first, did reading behaviour as regards the Saturday issue of *De Telegraaf* change as a result of the introduction of the Sunday issue? Second, what was the influence of mood? We will discuss the results necessary for answering the second question.

## Sample

Seven measurements were carried out (see Table 1). The Sunday paper was introduced on 21 March 2004. The two measurements before this date were conducted for the purposes of analysing the cannibalisation effects of the Sunday issue on the Saturday issue, which is beyond the scope of this paper. The total number of respondents was  $n=1287$ . The respondents had to answer two types of question:

1. about reading behaviour on a specific day
2. about mood on a specific day.

Weekend respondents were asked to fill in a questionnaire on both Saturday and Sunday. Take, for example, the fourth wave, on the weekend of 27/28 March: the sample includes 285 different respondents; they filled in three questionnaires (twice for the Saturday paper, which means reading behaviour on Saturday *and* on Sunday, once for the Sunday paper), so we have 855 ( $3 \times 285$ ) reading day observations. Respondents were asked about the mood factors for both days (Saturday and Sunday), so we have 570 ( $2 \times 285$ ) mood day observations. We have analysed the Saturday mood in relation to the reading behaviour concerning the Saturday issue on Saturday, and the Sunday mood in relation to the reading behaviour of

**Table 1: The design – seven measurements**

Issue	Data	Respondents	Reading day interviews	Mood day interviews	Analysis mood × reading
Saturday	6/7 March	239	2 × 239 = 478	2 × 239 = 478	239
Saturday	13/14 March	175	2 × 175 = 350	2 × 175 = 350	175
Saturday + Sunday	20/21 March	109	3 × 109 = 327	2 × 109 = 218	218
Saturday + Sunday	27/28 March	285	3 × 285 = 855	2 × 285 = 570	570
Saturday + Sunday	3/4 April	205	3 × 205 = 615	2 × 205 = 410	410
Wednesday	21 April	149	1 × 149 = 149	1 × 149 = 149	149
Thursday	22 April	125	1 × 125 = 125	1 × 125 = 125	125
Total		n=1287	n=2899	n=2300	n=1886

the Sunday issue on Sunday.<sup>1</sup> In column six of Table 1, we present the data available for the analysis mood × reading behaviour/ad noting.

### *Method of data collection*

The fieldwork was carried out by TNS NIPO, the largest Dutch market research agency. Respondents were selected from an access panel; with about 200,000 potential respondents, this is the largest Dutch access panel. Random samples were drawn from the stratum 'readers of *De Telegraaf*'. The participants in the access panel have been collected over the years and screened using a variety of instruments. Extra efforts have been made to create a considerable volume in the category of respondents with low PC ownership figures. Each household is used relatively infrequently, is rewarded for participation, and their privacy is respected. The response rate was between 80 and 90%. For data collection, computer assisted self interviewing (CASI) was used. (For more details about the application of CASI in an access panel, see Bronner *et al.* 2003.) With CASI, the PC takes over the interviewer's role: respondents themselves

<sup>1</sup> We did not relate the Sunday mood to the reading behaviour concerning the Saturday issue on Sunday, because in the sample different readers will read different quantities of the Saturday issue on Sunday. This reading behaviour is strongly dependent upon the reading behaviour concerning the Saturday issue on Saturdays. So we limit our mood analysis to measuring the mood on day 'x' and reading the issue of the same day 'x'.



read the questions on the screen and give the answers by typing in codes or verbal answers to open questions. Respondents experience more privacy and anonymity with CASI, so there is no need to engage in socially desirable behaviour (Bronner & Kuijlen 2007). Respondents can take as much time as they want to answer the questions. The samples are representative for readers of an issue of *De Telegraaf*. The interviews took place on the same day as the appearance of the (morning) paper's issue, when memory was still vivid. At the time of the interview a new issue was not available, so this cannot be a source of confusion.

### *Measurement instrument: mood*

To measure mood on a reading day, we decided to use the scales of Braun and Pfleiderer (2003), because we wanted to be able to compare German and Dutch results. These authors also analysed the readership of Sunday papers. The focus of their research was *Bild am Sonntag* and some competitors. In this study, six mood scales were used: well-balanced, in good humour, interested, open-minded/broad view, relaxed, and light-hearted/cheerful. They show that this instrument measures differences between mood on weekdays and Sundays quite well. To these specific German mood questions we added two questions of our own, one at a more general level – namely, everything was super that day – and one at a more specific level – namely, about the mood during the reading moment. So, in our study, a total of eight mood questions were posed (with a 3-point or 5-point bipolar rating scale):

- reading mood:    very relaxed                      ↔    very stressed                      (5pt)
- general mood:    everything was super    ↔    everything went very badly    (3pt)
- specific mood:    in relaxed state                      ↔    stressed state                      (5pt)
  - good humour                      ↔    bad humour                      (5pt)
  - in balance                      ↔    out of balance                      (5pt)
  - cheerful                      ↔    gloomy                      (5pt)
  - interested                      ↔    not interested at all                      (5pt)
  - a broad view                      ↔    a narrow view                      (5pt)

The scale items are comparable to those used in other studies – like the Egloff *et al.* (1995) study mentioned previously – and combine both acti-

vation elements like ‘interested’ and ‘relaxed’, and pleasantness aspects like ‘cheerful’ and ‘in balance’ (Egloff *et al.* 1995). The six specific mood items form one scale. Factor analysis shows a one factor solution with an eigenvalue of 3.99 (67% of variance). Cronbach’s alpha is at a very high level of .90. So in the description of the results, use will be made of the mood scale, which is an aggregate of the six specific mood items. But, besides these scale results, we will also present the scales of the specific mood items, for reasons of comparability with the German study.

We measured mood on a day-by-day basis (excluding the first reading mood question), because the questionnaire was filled in at the end of the day. From a theoretical perspective it would be better to take mood measurements closer to the actual point of advertising contact, which implies that we should have taken measurements more frequently. But in practice this is difficult to realise.

### *Measurement instrument: reading behaviour*

As a measurement tool for advertising exposure, we used a validated page traffic model originally developed for measuring section reading (Bronner & Faasse 1999). Respondents who start filling in the questionnaire on the PC are asked to pick up the newspaper and to answer the questions with the aid of the real newspaper – so they see pages and advertisements in the real context and at the actual size. Newspaper readership is then measured at three hierarchical levels:

1. ‘open eyes’ before open pages
2. read/noted something on a page
3. specific advertisement/editorial articles are read/seen/looked at.

Advertisements were chosen spread across the various sections and further spread as to product, size and insertion. Variation was the core of our selection process. We tried to make a selection of advertisements representative for all ads in that specific issue of the newspaper. The selection of the advertisements was made on the morning of appearance of the issue; these advertisements were then incorporated in the questionnaire. In Table 2 we present details of the number of advertisements measured.

**Table 2: Number of ads and pages measured**

Issue	Data	Number of ads measured	Number of pages
Saturday	6/7 March	16	84
Saturday	13/14 March	16	84
Saturday	20/21 March	16	84
Sunday	21 March	23	40
Saturday	27/28 March	16	84
Sunday	28 March	22	36
Saturday	3/4 April	15	84
Sunday	4 April	21	38
Wednesday	21 April	12	36
Thursday	22 April	14	40

## Results

### *Hypothesis 1*

In the section above, in which the research problem was sketched out, three hypotheses were formulated. The first was: ‘People in a positive mood recall more ads in newspapers than do people in a negative mood.’ So the first question to be answered is: ‘Is there a relationship between mood and the noticing of advertisements?’ In Table 3, the results are presented. In this analysis we relate the mood state – based on all 1886 observations (see Table 1) – to the noticing of advertisements in that specific issue. We find a strong relationship between the mood state on the day of reading the newspaper and the attentiveness to ads. Nearly all expected relationships are significant (tested one-sided, 5% level, for each item the difference between top 2 boxes and bottom 2 boxes is tested). For example, the people who feel well balanced (top 2 boxes out of 5-point rating scale) on the day of reading see 50% of the ads, while for people who do not feel well balanced that day, the noticing score is 15% lower (35%). So we can conclude that H1 is confirmed: people who are in a better mood see more advertising.

These results are comparable with those of the German study, although their differences are somewhat larger. For example, we found the difference in a relaxed state to be +11, while in the German study it was +16.

**Table 3: Relationship between mood and noticing advertising**

	% advertisements seen in this issue		T-value and significance
	Positive mood (top 2 boxes)	Negative mood (bottom 2 boxes)	
<i>Reading mood</i>			
Read feeling very relaxed	54	36	T = 6.02 P < 0.001
<i>General mood</i>			
Today everything was super*	52	35	T = 2.12 P < 0.05
Interested	50	29	T = 3.34 P < 0.001
In balance	50	35	T = 2.75 P < 0.01
In a relaxed state	49	38	T = 2.48 P < 0.01
Cheerful	49	39	T = 1.90 P < 0.05
A broad view	49	38	T = 1.84 P < 0.05
In good humour	49	42	T = 1.15 n.s.
Total mood scale	50	39	T = 1.98 P < 0.05

\* For this variable only, a top 1 and bottom 1 box was available

## Hypothesis 2

The second question to be answered is ‘Are people in a better mood on Sunday?’ Table 4 gives the results (for an explanation of the number of observations, see Table 1). Nearly all mood factors show a significant difference between Sundays and weekdays (tested one-sided, 5% level). We can discern two types of mood factor: one relating to reading behaviour and one relating to mood as a general state of mind (on that specific day). The reading mood in particular shows very significant differences. So H2 is also confirmed.

In Table 5, we made a comparison with a German study into the relationship between mood and the day of the week (Braun & Pfeleiderer 2003). A comparison is permissible because the same rating scales and mood statements were used. Results show that the differences between mood on Sundays and weekdays are somewhat smaller in the Netherlands than in Germany, but nevertheless our hypothesis H2 can clearly be confirmed: people are more relaxed and in a better mood on Sunday. These results are also in line with those from Egloff *et al.*'s study: ‘as predicted

**Table 4: Mood on Sunday and weekdays (top 2 boxes – positive)**

	Sunday % (n = 1013)	Weekday % (n = 274)	T-value and significance
<i>Reading mood</i>			
Read feeling very relaxed	61	44	T = 5.05 P < 0.001
<i>General mood</i>			
Today everything was super	21	11	T = 3.75 P < 0.001
In a relaxed state	88	79	T = 3.82 P < 0.001
In good humour	88	83	T = 2.18 P < 0.05
In balance	82	77	T = 1.87 P < 0.05
Cheerful	86	82	T = 1.65 P < 0.05
Interested	85	81	T = 1.61 n.s.
A broad view	81	77	T = 1.47 n.s.
Total mood scale	86	79	T = 2.84 P < 0.01

**Table 5: Absolute differences between mood on Sundays and weekdays in the Netherlands and in Germany**

	The Netherlands (% Sunday minus % weekday)	Germany (% Sunday minus % weekday)
<i>Mood</i>		
In a relaxed state	+9	+18
In good humour	+5	+10
In balance	+5	+12
Cheerful	+4	+18
Interested	+4	+4
A broad view	+4	+8

PA-pleasantness was higher on the weekend compared to weekdays' (1995, p. 105).

### *Hypothesis 3*

Now that H1 and H2 have been confirmed in the preceding tables, we can pay attention to our third hypothesis. A crucial element in this is that 'advertising scores will be higher for the Sunday paper than for a weekday issue'. We will consider whether this is the case.

The Sunday paper was measured three times. The results for 66 advertisements are available (see Table 2). As mentioned above, variation was the core of our selection process. The average advertising reach for these ads in a Sunday issue is 56%. The Dutch Newspaper Sections Survey offers a reliable benchmark for advertising reach in weekday and Saturday issues. In this survey, there is variation over time (1996–2000), days of the week, type of paper and type of ad. Across all the available ads, the average reach is 34%. Size of the ad and the section in which the ad is placed have a strong influence on the reach score (see Tables 6a and 6b; Puister 2004).

**Table 6a: Benchmarks for advertising reach in newspapers (Dutch Newspaper Sections Survey) – size of ad**

Size of ad	% adv. reach
2800–5700 mm	36.9
1400–2800 mm	31.6
<1400 mm	32.0
Total	33.7

**Table 6b: Benchmarks for advertising reach in newspapers (Dutch Newspaper Sections Survey) – section**

Section	% adv. reach
First (incl. front page)	38.9
Second	29.9
Third	26.6
Fourth and following (incl. back page)	30.5

Since our selection process regarding the ads in the Sunday paper was comparable to the selection process in the Dutch Sections Survey, we need only keep the number of pages constant. The average number of pages in a Sunday paper is 38, and for reasons of comparison we can take from the Dutch Newspaper Sections Survey all ads that appeared in newspapers with 28–48 pages in total (see Table 7).

**Table 7: Advertising reach levels**

	% adv. reach
Benchmark all ads in newspapers	34
Benchmark ads in newspapers of 28–48 pages	37
Ads in weekday issues (benchmark study)	37
Ads in Saturday issues (benchmark study)	29
Ads in Sunday issues (this study)	56

We can conclude (answering one element of H3) that, on Sunday, relatively high scores on advertising reach are found. But in the full formulation of H3 there was a ‘*ceteris paribus*’ clause: ‘Due to the better mood of readers on Sunday, advertising noting scores will be higher for the Sunday paper than for a weekday issue,

all other things being equal.’ There are more factors than mood alone that influence whether a newspaper advertisement will be noticed. To draw the conclusion that *because* people are in a better mood on Sunday they see more advertising on Sunday, we will have to follow the procedure of a real-life study in a naturalistic context. *We have to rule out as many explanations as possible.* The advantage of a field study over experimental settings is its more realistic character. A disadvantage, however, is that we cannot ascribe differences to one or two explanatory factors that were manipulated in the experimental design.

Now we will consider five important alternative explanatory factors for higher ad noting in the Sunday newspaper issue:

1. size of newspaper
2. size of advertisement
3. content
4. creativity, and
5. reading time.

Size of issue cannot be an explanation. The difference between a Sunday issue and issues of comparable size (weekday issues) is still considerable: 56% versus 37%.

The next factor is the size of the advertisement. Based on Table 6a, we concluded that there is a relationship between the size of the ad and the noting of the ad. If the size of the ads in the Sunday paper is larger than the size of the ads in other issues during the week, this could offer an explanation for the higher ad noting scores on Sunday. But further analysis shows that there is no significant difference in average ad size between the different issues (see Table 8). There is even a tendency for Sunday ads to be smaller.

**Table 8: Average size of advertisements (mm)**

	Advertisement size in mm
Sunday	1686
Saturday	1944
Weekday	2021

As a third disruptive factor, content can also give a possible explanation. One might hypothesise that weekday issues have more serious political content and Sunday issues have more popular content. And the less serious context could stimulate ad noticing. But *De Telegraaf* is a paper in which, on all days, popular subjects are mixed with the more serious news items (remember that it is just a seventh issue

of a national newspaper that formerly appeared only six days a week). In terms of content, the Sunday issue does not differ very much from the other issues.

A fourth factor may be that advertising is more creative. But a thorough visual inspection of the ads shows that the advertisements in Sunday issues do not differ in terms of creativity. Furthermore, there was no special stimulus for advertising agencies to make divergent or special advertisements.

Next, as a fifth factor, reading time might be an explanatory factor, since having more discretionary time contributes to the number of pages read and ads seen. Several analyses were performed to get to know more about the intertwining relationships between mood, time and advertising noting. In the first place, a regression analysis was conducted, with reading time and mood (the overall mood scale based on six items) as the independent variables, and advertising noting as a dependent variable. Table 9 shows that a model with both independent variables is necessary.

**Table 9: Regression analysis with ad noting as a dependent variable and reading time and mood as independent variables ( $s^* = P < 0.05$ )**

	R	Beta	T
Total reading time	0.18	0.15	6.5 s*
Total reading time + mood	0.23	0.15	6.5 s*

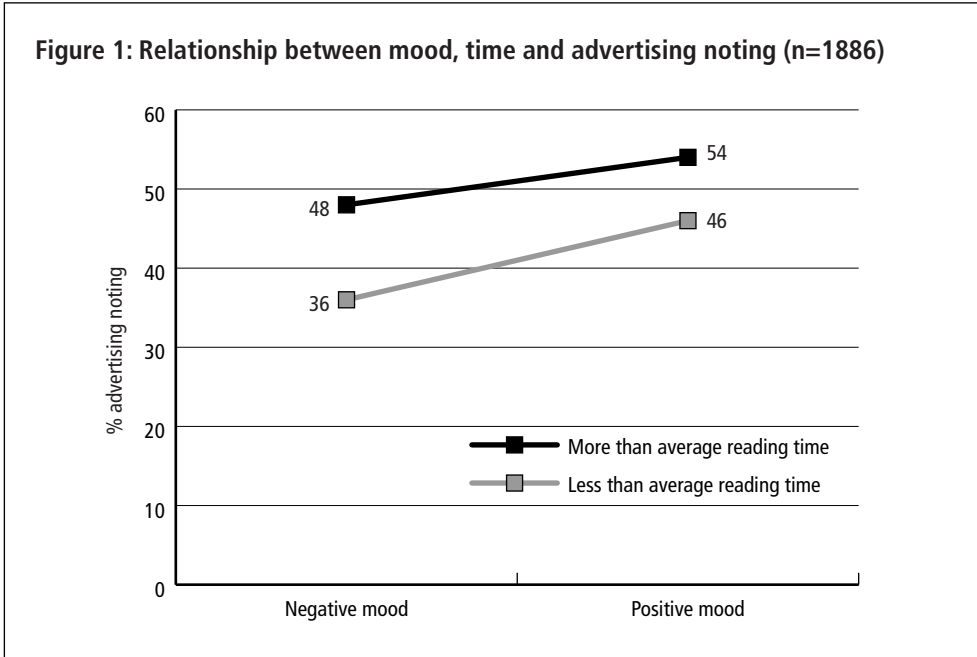
The second approach to tracing possible interaction effects between time and mood is a combination of positive versus negative mood (based on the general mood scale), above- average reading time (>30 mins) and less than average reading time (<30 mins), and advertising noting. The scores have been calculated and are presented graphically in Figure 1.

If the time factor were decisive, one would expect two horizontal parallel lines. As can be seen in Figure 1, this is not the case.

On the basis of Figure 1, several conclusions can be drawn, as follows.

- For both reading time segments (less than average time and above-average time), the fact is that people in a positive mood have a higher advertising noting score than do people in a negative mood.





- For people with relatively less reading time, the relationship between mood and advertising noting is stronger.
- People with relatively less reading time who are in a positive mood have about the same noting score as people with relatively more reading time but who are in a negative mood.
- For both mood segments, it is the case that people with relatively more reading time have a higher advertising noting score than do people with relatively less reading time.

To obtain a third piece of evidence concerning this time issue, we calculated bivariate correlations between mood factors and advertising noting, and also partial correlations between the same variables, controlling for several time-based measures. In Table 10, both types of correlation are presented. In the left-hand column, we present the bivariate correlation; in the second column the partial correlations controlling for reading time per page; in the third column, controlling for total reading time; and in the right-hand column for total time squared (assuming that the relationship between time and noticing ads is non-linear). As can be seen from the figures, all correlations are somewhat lower when controlled for the reading

**Table 10: Correlations between mood and advertising noting, controlling for different implementations of the time factor ( $s^*$  = tested one-sided,  $P < 0.05$ ,  $n=1886$  (see Table 1))**

	Correlation mood-ad noting	Partial correlation contr. for reading reading time per page	Partial correlation contr. for total reading time	Partial correlation contr. for total reading time squared
<i>Reading mood</i>				
Read feeling very relaxed/stressed	0.25 $s^*$	0.13 $s^*$	0.19 $s^*$	0.21 $s^*$
<i>General mood</i>				
Today everything went very badly	0.07 $s^*$	0.07 $s^*$	0.08 $s^*$	0.08 $s^*$
Interested/not interested	0.15 $s^*$	0.10 $s^*$	0.12 $s^*$	0.13 $s^*$
In relaxed state/stressed state	0.16 $s^*$	0.12 $s^*$	0.13 $s^*$	0.14 $s^*$
In balance/out of balance	0.12 $s^*$	0.08 $s^*$	0.10 $s^*$	0.10 $s^*$
Cheerful/gloomy	0.15 $s^*$	0.13 $s^*$	0.14 $s^*$	0.14 $s^*$
A broad view/a narrow view	0.12 $s^*$	0.11 $s^*$	0.11 $s^*$	0.11 $s^*$
In good humour/bad humour	0.13 $s^*$	0.11 $s^*$	0.12 $s^*$	0.12 $s^*$
Total mood scale	0.17 $s^*$	0.13 $s^*$	0.15 $s^*$	0.16 $s^*$

time measures, but they remain significant. Based on the results of the regression analysis (see Table 9), the results of the analysis in Figure 1 and the analysis with different time implementations as the control variable (see Table 10), we can conclude that the relationship between ad noting and mood holds true independent of reading time.

It can be concluded that we ruled out five possible disturbing factors:

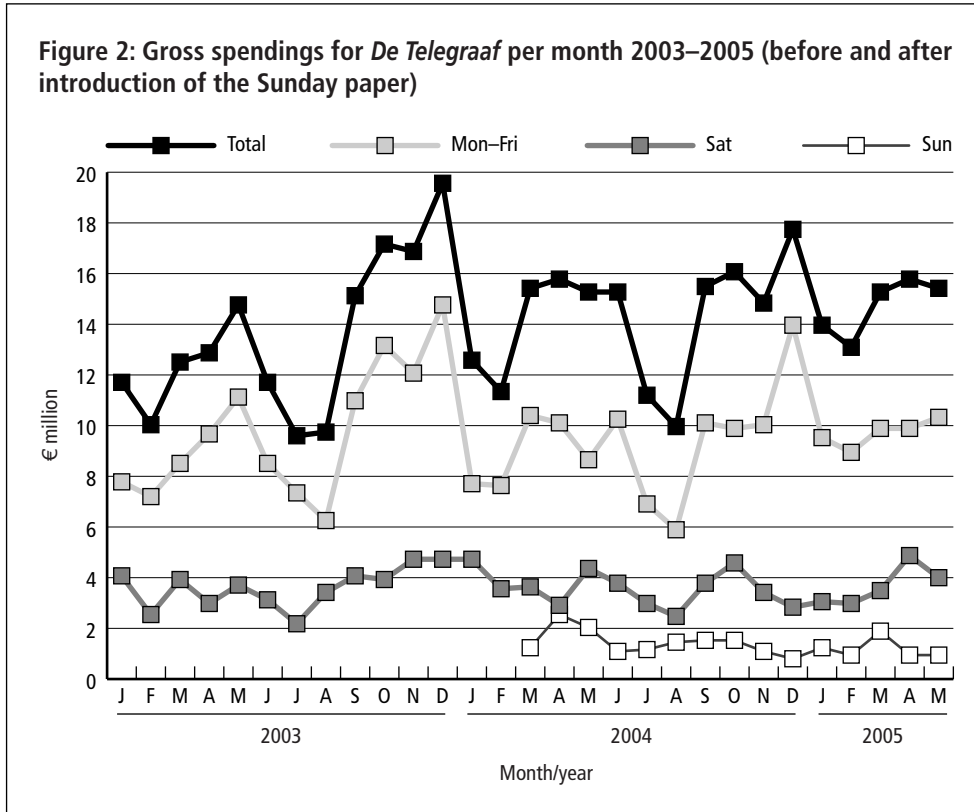
1. size of newspaper
2. size of advertisement
3. content
4. creativity, and
5. reading time.

This supports our idea that mood is the main explanatory factor for higher advertising noting in the Sunday issue. And, in this way, H3 is confirmed.

## Conclusions and implications

Studying moods and the effects that a mood has is an important topic in research into advertising. But nearly all data on mood effects are gathered in a forced exposure and lab context. Shapiro *et al.* (2002, p. 24) conclude at the end of their mood study, ‘similar to most controlled experiments on mood, our study is limited by the use of a forced exposure context, student subjects, and a lab context. Assessing the generalisability of our findings to more naturalistic contexts is clearly a research priority.’ Of course, using laboratory experiments allows us complete control, contributing to high internal validity, but to bridge the gap between theory and practice in advertising we also need data based on field studies. The project described in this paper offers such data. In a real-life study, it was possible to show that people in a better mood see more advertising, and that people are in a better mood on Sunday, which can explain the high Sunday advertising reach scores as compared to the benchmarks. The relationship between mood and advertising noting remains significant in analyses in which we used as control variables other possible explanatory factors, such as size of the issue or available reading time. So our data confirm the hypothesis that mood is the main explanatory factor for higher advertising noting in the Sunday issue. These results also have practical implications for the advertising world. To improve effectiveness, advertisers can choose media that are consumed in a good mood, and select the Sunday issue rather than a Saturday or weekday issue.

Traditional newspapers have to fight back and strengthen their position amid other media. This paper shows that introducing a new Sunday issue is a promising tool for doing so. Because people are in a better mood on Sunday, they are easier to influence on that day – an opportunity that media and advertisers can take advantage of in this time of abundance, in which the media are competing for the same consumers’ time and trying to capture their attention. An important question for *De Telegraaf* (and other newspaper publishers), however, is that if advertisers and media planning agencies are starting to spend money on advertising in the Sunday edition, does that result in less money being spent on other weekday editions? In Figure 2, the gross spendings for *De Telegraaf* are shown. The bottom line represents the advertising spending in the Sunday edition. The other lines show that spending levels on the other days do not



decline as compared to the situation before the introduction of the Sunday paper. So we can conclude that the Sunday spending is additional, and that there is no indication of a cannibalisation effect in the advertising market. Another way of using the results from this study for *De Telegraaf* is to differentiate tariffs for the different issues of the week. More could be charged for an ad on Sunday, for instance, because it has been shown that ads have higher ad noting scores then.

Advertising context matters. For advertisers, it is relevant to know that their messages have more effect when they are consumed by people who are in a good mood. A good mood is a condition that occurs in real life when people are watching a comedy or romantic movie, or on Sundays. In Germany and Holland, Sunday stood out in a positive sense. While weekdays are working days, time-budget studies show that people still have many obligations on Saturdays. Shopping for groceries, social visits and taking the children to sports are activities that mainly take place on

Saturday, whereas Sunday is still more a day of rest. According to the literature, in other countries, too, people score higher on the ‘pleasantness affect’ at weekends (not necessarily only on Sundays).

It would be interesting to see whether the positive mood effect on Sundays also holds true in other countries and for other media.

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Fred Bronner studied Political Science at the University of Amsterdam with as a specialisation research methods and techniques. He worked for many years in market research for the commercial research institutes Veldkamp and TNS Nipo and was managing director of Veldkamp from 1987 till 2002. Working in commercial research he kept ties with the

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