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**SOURCE EXPERTISE AND PRODUCT INVOLVEMENT:
WHEN DOES PERSUASION OCCUR?**

BRAD ALLEN HAYNES

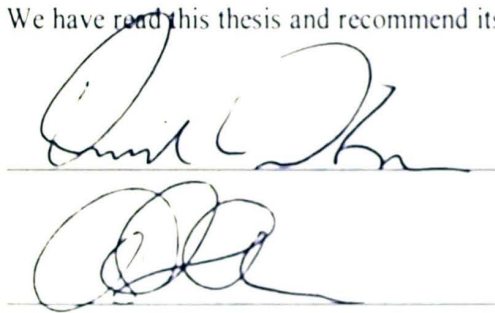
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SOURCE EXPERTISE AND PRODUCT INVOLVEMENT:
WHEN DOES PERSUASION OCCUR?

A Thesis

Presented to

The College of Graduate
and Professional Programs of
Austin Peay State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Brad Allen Haynes

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my Mom
Sandra Elaine Haynes (Oct. 24 1947- Feb. 28, 2000)
who inspires me, and supported me always.

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ABSTRACT

The present study is based on the research of Wilson and Sherrell (1993), Petty and Cacioppo (1986) and Carli (1999). These researchers discuss findings that support these notions: that expertise tends to have the greatest effect on persuasion, involvement moderates persuasion and gender moderates persuasion. Based on the research a study was created to examine the effects of source expertise, involvement, and gender on persuasion. The study used 35 undergraduate psychology students from Austin Peay State University. The hypothesis were: 1. Expertise will have the greatest effect on persuasion. 2. Involvement (designated low and high) will moderate persuasion. 3. The male expert will have more effect than the female expert on persuasion. The study was a 2x2x2 design and used ANOVA tests for significance $p < .05$. Results revealed no support for any of the three hypotheses proposed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Power	
Expertise	
Message Processing	
Involvement	
Gender	
Purpose	
II. METHODOLOGY.....	10
Participants	
Materials	
Design and Procedure	
IV. RESULTS.....	13
V. DISCUSSION.....	15
LIST OF REFERENCES.....	18
APPENDIXES.....	21
VITA.....	36

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this age of information that has become our reality, we must process hundreds of arguments each and every day. To make matters more complex, consumers also tend to evaluate the source of the message or argument. While these messages are being delivered, we evaluate them and form attitudes. "The term attitude is used to refer to a person's overall evaluation of persons, objects, and issues"(Petty & Wegener 1998, 323). These attitudes can be shaped and formed by source expertise. McGuire (1985) proposed that the source of the message mediates the ability of the message to persuade. The following research will review past theories and source manipulations. It will also integrate the research on the moderators of source. Finally, this research will show new ways to implement findings on source variables as they relate to involvement. Evidence will show that source expertise can and does persuade.

Power

When a person hears an argument they tend to evaluate where the message came from, or the source of the message. "Source variables refer to aspects of the person or group presenting the persuasive appeal" (Petty & Wegener 1998, 344). In past research, the sources have been presented usually as physically attractive versus unattractive, ideologically similar versus dissimilar, and credible versus not-credible (Wilson & Sherrell 1993). Early research in the area of source and persuasion was conducted by Kelman, whom in 1961 designed a system to identify the different characteristics of source and its relation to persuasion. The following components were suggested by Kelman: Internalization, Identification, Compliance. He discussed internalization as the degree to which the ideas of the expert match your own. This method measures the congruence of your values with those of an expert. Identification deals with your perception of expert attractiveness. Finally, compliance is the power that the expert has

over the message recipient. This research has given scholars a framework on which to base research on source expertise. Berlo Lemert & Mertz (1966) point out that source credibility has been discussed in many terms including prestige, image, ethos, or charisma. They found during expertise-scale development, that factor loadings pertaining to expertise contain words such as ‘successful’ ‘important’ and ‘powerful’. This research seems to show that our culture places great prestige on someone who is deemed an expert.

Expertise

The present review will focus primarily on expert versus not-expert. French and Raven (1959) showed that when expertise is compared with other types of source, it usually possesses some of the strongest effects. Petty & Wegener (1998), state that “Expertise generally refers to as a source’s presumed knowledge and ability to provide accurate information” (344). Expert opinion is presented to us in a variety of contexts throughout our culture. Experts guide our consumer decisions and mis- representations are used to argue debates from classrooms to political jargon on C-Span. It seems that we are a culture that believes in the word of an “expert”. Harmon & Coney (1982) found that the more credible a source, the larger effect was found on persuasion. Similar research by Strenthal, Phillips and Dholakia (1978) shows that when an expert delivers an argument, the public is more likely to accept that message. Expert opinion is a construct that can usually be reasonably measured. “Expertise is often established on some objective basis (college degree, years of experience, etc.) and may be easier for subjects to asses compared to credibility or similarity, which tend to be more global dimensions” (Wilson and Sherell 1993, 109).

The research in the area of source effects, has had its highs and lows since Kelman’s research of the 60’s. There is a relatively small number of studies relating to source expertise and persuasion. There is even less research looking at moderating

effects of involvement, as it relates to source expertise. The present review will use the most comprehensive meta-analysis of source effects, involvement and persuasion known to date. This meta-analysis was conducted by Wilson & Sherrell (1993); the study looked a large portion of published studies that involved source effects in communication. The study used data that were obtained from 114 studies. Results showed that when the manipulation of expert versus not-expert was used, the manipulation of expert had the greatest effect on persuasion. The average explained variance due to an expert was 16%. They also pointed out that in those studies that showed significance, there was 9% explained variance for source manipulations. This research shows the power of expertise in the persuasion of a target audience.

Research by Petty, Cacioppo, & Goldman (1981), revealed that there was a main effect for the expertise manipulation demonstrating that subjects showed more agreement when the source had high expertise. In a study on the use of experts in mock jury trials Schuller, Smith, & Olson (1994) found that subjects were more likely to believe that a murder committed by an abused wife was justified if an expert explained the trauma that abuse victims undergo. Expertise across studies is an important determinant of target acceptance of a message. Some have argued that expertise may not be the key element to persuasion; they argue that situation may play a larger role than once thought. These notions will be discussed in length later in the review. However, research has concluded that the more credible the source, the more likely the target is to accept the information (Berlo Lemert & Mertz, 1966). Wilson and Sherrell (1993) also point out that when expertise is compared with all other source manipulations, such as attractiveness, credibility, and trustworthiness the largest behavior changes result from expertise.

Message Processing

After discussing source expertise, attention must now be directed to how

messages are processed once they have been delivered by the expert. This discussion will then lead to moderators of source expertise as it relates to persuasion. Chaiken (1981) presents a systematic view, in which the recipient of a message uses cognitive skills to process, comprehend, and evaluate arguments. The heuristic view, on the contrary, proposes that the recipient puts forth a small amount of effort in the judgment process. For example, someone may ask what kind of climbing gear is the best. An individual who is not avid climber may rely on heuristics by remembering an expert on the morning news as he stated that "North Face is the best money can buy." Without even really thinking, humans seem to rely on the past to create a framework for the future. Instantly individuals remember numerous commercials with experts, reading expert opinion in newspapers and professors exclamations "that the experts found". Within seconds most humans will tell their friends that he must go with 'North Face' when facing the most trying weather. When individuals do this they have relied on the expert and have used heuristic processing without even second guessing themselves. Debono & Telesca (1987) show that if the environment of the message doesn't help in the attainment of personal goals, then individuals use heuristics instead of the cognitive effort that would be needed for systematic processing. Considering this research the question arises, would one act the same if he had more involvement in the situation?

Involvement

Petty & Cacioppo (1986) developed the Elaboration Likelihood Model(ELM) to explain the moderating effects of involvement. This research grew out of a doctoral dissertation and was the first research to show the importance of situation as it relates to source effects. The ELM states that source effects are more persuasive in low relevant conditions. In conditions when an individual has a high stake in the decision or is "more involved" they will rely less on source and more on cognition. A major consideration of the ELM is motivation. The more motivation than an individual has concerning the

attitude object the more likely the individual is to take into account all object-relevant material and scrutinize the message (Petty & Wegener 1998). The authors also point out the tradeoff that occurs. They note that “as the impact of central route processes on judgments increases, the impact of peripheral route processes on judgments decreases” (327).

When making judgments on arguments, people first evaluate personal relevance. Whereby they will either use object relevant methods to processor or will rely on heuristics. Various research studies support the notion of the ELM. Wood and Kallgren (1988) found support for the ELM when they measured involvement by retrieval of message arguments. In research conducted by Johnson & Scileppi (1969) the ELM was significant in relation to ego-involvement. The ELM was also supported in the research of Moore, Hausnecht, and Thamodaran (1988) which found an interaction of involvement and source that was significant. These studies verify this structure of the ELM while gaining valuable information in the field of source expertise.

Before researchers began to use frameworks such as the ELM, many focused on message quality and disregarded situation. Research by Petty, Cacioppo, & Goldman (1981) shows that in some cases message content may not be the most important determinant of the actual persuasion. In the meta-analysis by Wilson & Sherrell (1993) it was found that the ELM was supported in 67% of the studies used. As research suggests, involvement moderates message source in large proportions. In a study by Rhine & Severence (1988) the more ego-involvement that was displayed, the less effect an expert would have on attitude change. They also found that low ego-involvement subjects were more likely to have the attitude change caused by the expert. Another moderator that surfaced in the research was recipient Dogmatism. DeBono & Klein (1993) found that individuals who were high dogmatic processed the message heuristically, whereas low dogmatic individuals processed the message systematically. In this study, dogmatism

reflects the properties of involvement and moderates the message source /persuasion effect. Although dogmatism has promising coefficients, there is more literature support for the moderator of involvement.

Involvement in a product, a cause or an idea compels individuals to process these messages with great scrutiny. Heesacker, Petty and Cacioppo (1983) found that those who have a moderate amount of involvement with an issue will likely use a systematic or cognitive route of processing. This individual will more readily analyze the content of the message and rely less on what the expert conveys. For example, if an expert was to inform someone that there was new technology that could cure arthritis, if they had arthritis their involvement would be high. It is likely and, based on research, probable, that the individual would evaluate this message with great care. It is even probable that they would consult various physicians, read numerous books on the subject, and search an array of web pages. The more a situation affects individuals personally, the ELM insists that humans rely less on the source of that message. If the situation affects individuals personally, low involvement causes one to refer to past experiences or instances. Chaiken (1980) found that when individuals were low in involvement they would evaluate the message in relation to the source - a heuristic process.

It is also noteworthy that there have been cases in which the ELM was not supported. The research of DeBono & Harnish (1988) did not uphold the ELM. They did not find an interaction between expert or attractive sources and involvement in calendar production. Also Heesacker (1986) demonstrated that ego involvement in high levels was not related to source manipulation. Finally, Kahle and Homer (1985) provided research that failed to support the ELM. They used products such as razors (which was high involvement), and toothpaste (which was low involvement), and the source manipulation of attractiveness. In this study, involvement did not determine persuasion. The research on both sides of the ELM are of promise to researchers. It has been proven

in many instances that involvement is a moderator of persuasion. More research is needed to provide clear answers to the question of situation and how it affects persuasion.

Further research in the area of source expertise and involvement could be of use to human resource specialists, social psychologists as well as advertising organizations. In the area of consumer psychology, researchers can decipher the best methods for advertising. This can be done by measuring consumer product involvement. Depending upon the results, an expert-versus-non-expert campaign can be designed. A more practical use for research in this area would be for training purposes. Expertise research may serve several functions in this domain. It is possible that experts could be used as sources for delivering orientation programs. The job “expert” could be responsible for describing work duties and helping in organizational socialization. This organizational socialization process includes the development of skills and social knowledge needed for job success . Consistent with the literature, it can be predicted that, even in cases of high involvement, using the source of expertise will generate more persuasion than any other source effect (Wilson & Sherrell 1993). Trainers may involve this research in programs to facilitate in learning of concepts as well as the operation of computer equipment and software.

Gender

Research in the area of expertise and gender has also been conducted. This research shows that in most cases men tend to exert more expert power in persuasive situations (Carli, 1999). The majority of research in this area is based on French & Raven’s (1959) typology of social power. The way in which our society perceives a woman’s expertise may keep an expert woman in her field from advancing as often as her male counterparts. The Federal Glass Ceiling Commission, (1995) shows that women still receive fewer benefits, are excluded from the most powerful executive positions and experience wage discrimination. These biases that are woven into the fabric of our

society serve as a way to understand roles and relationships. Further research in this area is needed to uncover the stereotypes women face in the workplace at the dawn of a new millennium..

There has been only limited research in the area of source expertise. The literature on the expertise and involvement interaction is even more shallow. In the Wilson & Sherrell (1993) meta-analysis, their exhaustive study only uncovered two studies that measured the manipulation of source expertise and the theoretical framework of the Elaboration Likelihood Model. These two studies were DeBono & Harnish (1988) and Wood & Kallgren (1988). As discussed earlier, the former study did not support the ELM; however, the latter study showed support. Since the beginning of research in this field by Kelman (1961), there have been bursts of research expanding the literature base on source effects (e.g., Petty & Cacioppo 1986, Chaiken 1980, Chen, Shecheter & Chaiken 1996). However, there seem to be gaps in the literature on the strength of the source expertise and involvement interaction. Research has proven that expertise has persuasive ability; it has further provided us with the knowledge that situation effects persuadability. The extent to which situation effects persuasion is not known completely. Therefore research in this area is greatly needed.

Purpose

The present experiment uses expert and non-expert source to convey arguments about the effectiveness of computer software, in particular Internet Explorer. Source expertise was manipulated as either expert or non-expert (layman). Considering prior research in the areas of source expertise, product involvement and gender as it effects perceptions of expertise, the following hypotheses are proposed:

1. The expert will be more persuasive than the layman.
2. Involvement will moderate the relationship between expertise and persuasion. Those who are high in the condition involvement will be less persuaded than those who are low in the condition involvement.
3. The male expert will have a greater influence on persuasion than the female expert.

The purpose of the present study is to add to the research on involvement and expertise. There has been no reported research using computer software to measure the effect that expertise has on persuasion. In other words, no research has measured the amount of persuadability that an expert may have on the efficiency of computer software or machinery. This study also adds to the data on the interaction that involvement has with expertise. Given this insight the following study was designed and implemented.

CHAPTER II

METHODS

Participants

Participants were 35 undergraduate students from Austin Peay State University. Participants were of no particular age, race, religion, or ethnic background. Participants received extra credit for their participation in the research. One female mass communications major and one male, senior computer science major were used as the expert and layman. These individuals were paid a sum of \$30 each for their participation.

Materials

A classroom in the Clement Building was used for the study. Dell Computers, each connected to the Internet at the same bits per second, were used. All computers were already connected to the web upon entry. Each computer in the lab was pre-installed with Internet Explorer version 5.0. Two surveys were administered during the study. These surveys measured participant's involvement with Internet Explorer and their reactions to the system. Involvement was measured using a 10 item questionnaire asking questions such as, "I consider myself a loyal customer of Internet Explorer". The reliability of this scale is .76. Persuasion was measured on a 10 item scale asking questions such as, "Overall I feel that this version of Internet Explorer is better than other versions or browsers". The reliability of the persuasion measure is .94.

Table 1

Factor Analysis of Involvement Scale

Rotated Component Matrix	Component	
	1	2
Use different browser	.946	
Use IE as Primary browser	-.884	-.315
Loyalty	.774	.439
Involvement Time	.750	.453
No Loyalty	-.712	
IE on home computer	-.705	
IE best on market	.499	.463
Hrs a week online		.870
Consider buying		.691

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

Table 2

Factor Analysis of Persuasion Scale

Component Matrix	Component	
	1	
Overall rating	.916	
Credibility rating	.897	
Overall speed	.875	
Better toolbar options	.853	
Picture resolution	.841	
Picture speed	.821	
Speed of text	.775	
Ease of use	.770	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Design and Procedure

When subjects arrived at the testing site they completed a survey that measured their level of product involvement in Internet Explorer. Each subject had the potential to be in any one of four groups (female expert, female layman, male expert, male layman).

The experts informed participants that they were senior computer science majors at

Austin Peay. Each expert told participants of their credentials in the area of computer science. They informed participants that they were being used to test the new upgraded version of Internet Explorer. They then discussed the more efficient functioning of connection speed, picture resolution, toolbar functioning, and better overall ease of use. They told subjects that this version is an improvement over prior versions as well as other browsers. Then subjects were given a list of five Web sites to visit in a period of 15 minutes. After participants finished “surfing” the Web, they were given a survey to measure persuasion. The same procedure was followed for the participants in the layman group, with the exception being that the layman did not inform the participants they have any credentials in computer science. The same person acted as the expert and layman to control for physical attractiveness.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

This study addressed three main research questions, as discussed formerly. Basing the analysis on these questions, data were analyzed on the basis of a 2 (expert, layman) X 2 (involvement was designated high/low) X 2 (gender) design.. The condition of expert vs. layman was analyzed using a one way ANOVA to test for significance. The results of the analysis for this hypothesis showed no statistical support, $M = 5.57$, $df. 1$, $F = .76$, $p = .38$. The moderating effect of involvement was analyzed using a two way Anova to test for significance. The results of the analysis found non significant results, $df. 1$, $F = .218$, $p = .64$. The direction of effect for this condition was towards an interaction . The final hypothesis, which predicted that male experts would be more persuasive than female experts, was analyzed using a one way ANOVA to test for significance. The statistical analysis also showed non significant results, $df. 1$, $F = 1.25$, $p = .27$. Results of the ANOVA tests for significance are shown in table 3 below.

Table 3

Analysis of Variance for Persuasion (Main Effects)

Variable	Sig		
	<u>df</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>P</u>
Gender	1	1.25	.27
Expert	1	1.33	.38
Involvement	1	.218	.64

* $p < .05$.

Table 4

Table of Means for Source and Involvement

	Expert	Layman	
High	5.57	5.40	5.48
Low	5.90	5.33	5.62
	5.73	5.36	

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

Although the present data are not consistent with my hypotheses, they are providing added research in the area of source expertise, persuasion and the moderating effects of involvement. The results of this study are congruent with the studies of DeBono and Harnish (1988), Heesacker (1986) and Kahle and Homer (1985) in regards to involvement. These studies also did not support the ELM; they found that involvement was not a moderator of persuasion. These studies suggest that consumers do not think about involvement when being persuaded by an expert. It is possible that consumers use cognitive processing even in low-relevant conditions. The truth may be that expertise does not act as a heuristic that individuals use to process expert persuasion.

The results of this study are not consistent with the research in the area of expert persuasion. The possible explanation of non significance is a lack of participants. There were only 35 total participants divided among four conditions. This made each of the four groups relatively small. The means, although non significant, show when the confederate acted as the expert credibility ratings were higher (female expert $M=5.9$, female layman $M=5.1$, male expert $M=5.8$, male layman $M=5.1$). It is possible, given a larger sample size, that the results would have followed the direction of this study and been significant.

Also the expert condition may have been affected by the dress of the expert. In the male and female expert conditions, on the day that confederates were to act as the expert they were instructed to be the layman by the researcher. Experts dressed as laymen and when they acted as laymen they were dressed as experts.

However confusing this idea may be, it was not discussed in the literature review and was not taken into consideration while conducting this study. This mentioned, it may be possible that dress may have moderated persuasion. Future research in this area could be conducted to determine the moderator of dress on perceptions of expertise.

The condition of gender was non significant and inconsistent with the literature on expert power by French and Raven (1959) and also Carli (1999). Their studies point out that men tend to have more expert power than women. The results of these data, although non significant, were in the direction of the opposite. The means in this study are in the direction of the female having more expert power than the male. The possible results of these results may be due to the greater number of female participants than males. There were only a total of 12 males who participated in the research; of those males, only six were under the female persuasion. These results may or may not differ with a larger sample of male participants. This study may have actually been measuring referent power as a persuader.

This study provides a good methodology for follow-up studies. The idea for the research is based on the studies of Petty and Cacioppo (1986) and Wilson and Sherrell (1993), which show that expertise tends to account for the largest amount of persuasive ability. The present study attempted to incorporate past research with present situations. In the search of the literature, there were no progressive attempts to involve computers and software into studies measuring persuasion. It is unnerving to realize that what is expected may not be what is received when measuring persuasion. It is also important to understand that although research of the past can provide a firm foundation of concepts to build, as times change and the environment changes, logic provides that research will change.

As this new millennium dawns, the concepts of expertise and involvement will

evolve. While Internet media become integrated with television, advertising and everyday life, persuasion will occur more readily. More importantly as women strive to become more recognized as experts in organizations and government, research will be needed to guide the process toward the goal of equality. Information gained in the areas mentioned in this study could provide our culture with a way of understanding our tolerance to persuasion. The present study based on the work of Wilson and Sherrell (1993) and Petty and Cacioppo (1986) added one more step to the stairway of source expertise, involvement and gender.

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APPENDIX A

Expert Script

Hello and welcome to today's study. I am _____, and I am a senior computer science major here at Austin Peay. I have worked extensively with Internet Explorer as well as other browsers over the past 4 years. This year I had the opportunity to work as a Beta Tester for Microsoft developing the new version of Internet Explorer. I have used this product and I feel that you will be happy with the new results. The new version of Internet Explorer supports faster connections, better toolbar options, higher quality resolution of pictures, and better overall functioning. To begin the experiment you will (if you wish) answer questions on your involvement with Internet Explorer. This will help us better understand you as customers. During this experiment you will be asked to visit 5 specified Web sites. At each site "surf" through the site and move on to the next. You will have 15 minutes to visit each site. I will keep you posted on the time after 5, 10, & 14 minutes. Please try to visit each site, and then mark it off on the Web site sheet. After "surfing" you will fill out your reactions to the new upgrade of Internet Explorer. As mentioned before, your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you can withdraw at anytime without penalty. Thank you for your time and enjoy the new version.

APPENDIX B

Layman Script

Hello and welcome to today's study. I am _____, I am a student here at Austin Peay. An expert in the system upgrade of Internet Explorer was supposed to be here today to tell you about the upgrade and get your reactions. That person called in about 1 hr ago and cannot make it today. We must get your reactions, so I am standing in for the Internet Explorer representative today. I have used this product and I feel that you will be happy with the new results. The new version of Internet Explorer supports faster connections, better toolbar options, higher quality resolution of pictures, and better overall functioning. To begin the experiment you will (if you wish) answer questions on your involvement with Internet Explorer. This will help us better understand you as customers. During this experiment you will be asked to visit 5 specified Web sites. At each site "surf" through the site and move on to the next. You will have 15 minutes to visit each site. I will keep you posted on the time after 5, 10, & 14 minutes. Please try to visit each site, and then mark it off on the Web site sheet. After "surfing" you will fill out your reactions to the new upgrade of Internet Explorer. As mentioned before, your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you can withdraw at anytime without penalty. Thank you for your time and enjoy the new version.

APPENDIX C

Please use the following scale to indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	
Strongly						Strongly	
Disagree	-----					Agree	N/A

_____ The connection speed to each Web site was overall very fast.

_____ Each picture download was quicker than other versions or browsers that I have used.

_____ The 'Back' & 'Forward' buttons on the toolbar function better than other versions or browsers.

_____ The text on each Web site "came up" faster than other versions or browsers.

_____ The pictures seemed to have better resolution than other versions or browsers.

_____ This version of Internet Explorer was easier to use than others I have used.

_____ Overall I feel this version of Internet Explorer is better than other versions or browsers.

_____ I feel that the person who told me about the upgrade of Internet Explorer was very credible.

Please answer the following questions about yourself.

What is your age? _____
A. (18-25) B. (26-35) C. (36-50) D. (50 +)

What is your gender? _____
Male Female

APPENDIX D

Please answer the following questions as they pertain to you. Please use the following scale to indicate how much you agree with the statements.

(1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7)
Strongly Disagree-----Strongly Agree

OR N/A

-
- _____ I consider myself to a loyal customer of Internet Explorer.
- _____ I would consider buying Internet Explorer for my home computer.
- _____ I do not feel any loyalty towards the software Internet Explorer.
- _____ I believe that Internet Explorer is the best Internet browser on the market.

Please answer the following questions as they pertain to you.

Yes/No _____ I use Internet Explorer as my primary Web browser.

Yes/No _____ I use a different Web browser (e.g., Netscape) the majority of the time I use the Internet.

Yes/No _____ I have Internet Explorer as my web browser on my home PC.

How many hours a week do you spend on the Internet? _____

What percentage of the time you are online do you use Internet Explorer? _____
(1-100%)

If you use Internet Explorer on your home computer how did you get it?

- _____
- A. already on my computer when I purchased it.
 - B. came from your Internet service provider (e.g. AOL).
 - C. from a friend
 - D. I bought it
 - E. I downloaded it from the Internet.
 - F. I received a trial version in the mail.
 - G. N/A Not Applicable, I do not have a home PC.

APPENDIX E

Please visit and “surf” the following Web sites within a 15 minute period.

www.discovery.com _____ check when visited

www.nashville.citysearch.com _____

www.netradio.com _____

www.photography.com _____

www.apsu.edu _____

APPENDIX F

The true purpose of the study you have just participated in was to analyze source expertise and its effects on persuasion. You were told by either a male expert, male layman, female expert, or female layman that Internet Explorer has been upgraded. In reality the expert was not a Beta Tester for Microsoft. In the expert condition, the expert that discussed the software with you was a senior computer science major. In the layman condition, the expert that discussed software with you was the same computer science major as mentioned above but did not reveal any credentials to you in the computer science area. You were no more deceived than you are watching television commercials at home. This deception was necessary to understand if you were more persuaded by an expert than a layman. Also to learn about product involvement and the role it plays in moderating persuasion. Another purpose of this study was to see if gender of the expert had an effect on how you viewed that expert. These results could shed light on how you may be persuaded by commercials. They will also help us better understand perceptions of women vs. men's expertise. As mentioned before, your surveys will be kept confidential. If any of this data is published or presented you could not and would not be identified. Thank you for your time and assistance in expanding the research base on source expertise. If you have any question about your participation in this study please contact the primary researcher Brad Haynes at Bradallen00@aol.com. If you feel that you need to speak with a counselor arrangements will be made for you to visit the Austin Peay Counseling Center. You may also contact Brad to discuss any of the results of this experiment

APPENDIX G

Consent to Participate in a Research Study Austin Peay State University

You are being asked to participate in a research study. This form is intended to provide you with information about this study. You may ask the researchers listed below about this study or you may call the Office of Grants and Sponsored Research, Box 4517, Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, TN 37044, (931) 221-7881 with questions about the rights of research participants.

TITLE OF RESEARCH:

Measuring the Improved Functioning of Internet Explorer.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S):

Brad Haynes, Graduate Student, Bradallen00@aol.com, 572-9194

Thomas Timmerman, (Thesis Chairman)Psychology, TimmermanT@apsu.edu, 221-1248

Anthony Golden, Psychology, (Thesis Committee) Anthony@apsu.edu

David Denton, Psychology, (Thesis Committee) Dentond@apsu.edu

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH:

The purpose of the present study is to obtain your evaluation of a new Internet Explorer. We would like to evaluate your responses on the upgrade to better serve you as students. Also this study will try to understand how you became involved with Internet Explorer and the extent to which you use this product. The study will try to understand the way that you use Internet Explorer. This research is also being conducted to fulfill the requirements for a graduate degree in Psychology.

PROCEDURES FOR THIS RESEARCH:

To begin this study you will be asked to fill out a survey expressing your involvement with Internet Explorer. Following the completion of this survey you will be asked to visit a list of 5 web sites in a 15 minute time period. You will be instructed of the time limit after 5, 10, and 14 minutes as you “surf the web” please try to visit all of the web sites within this time period while “surfing” within each web site. After the 15 minute time period is over you will be asked to stop “surfing”. You will then be asked to fill out a survey which measures your impressions of the upgraded version of Internet Explorer. This study will protect your privacy. Data will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. In the case that this data is published or presented it will be done so in a way that does not reveal the identity of the participant.

POTENTIAL RISKS OR BENEFITS TO YOU:

It is not expected that the following study will provide you with any discomfort or any immediate benefits. While answering each survey you *do not have to answer any question that you do not wish to answer.*

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT:

I have read the above and understand what the study is about, why it is being done, and any benefits or risks involved.

I understand that I do not have to take part in this study, and my refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of rights.

I agree to participate in this study and understand that by agreeing to participate I have not given up any of my human rights.

I understand that I have the right to withdraw my consent and stop participating at any time during the study or contact the researcher within 5 days of the study and all data collected from me will be destroyed.

If I choose to withdraw, that choice will be respected and I will not be penalized or coerced to continue

I understand that I will receive a copy of this form.

If I have questions about this study I may call Brad Haynes (graduate student, Psychology Department) at 931-572-9194, Dr. Thomas Timmerman (Thesis Chair), Psychology Department) at 931-221-1248, or Dr. Anthony Golden (Thesis Committee) at 221-7451

Signature of Research Participant (or legally authorized representative)

Date _____

Signature of Researcher

VITA

Brad Allen Haynes was born in Manassas, Virginia on April 15, 1975. His family moved to Harrisonburg, Va. in the Shenandoah Valley in 1980. Brad attended New Market Middle School and Broadway High School. He attended Radford University in Radford, Va. where he earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology in May, 1998. After graduation Brad came to Austin Peay State University to major in Industrial/Organizational Psychology. He plans to graduate from Austin Peay State University in May, 2000.