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## **A Fresh Look on the Diegetic Content of Advertisements and its Rhetorical Functions**

**Abstract.** In this article I set forth a conceptual distinction between two levels on which *inventio* takes place in advertising, one of which is critical for rhetoricians to examine: the diegetic content. I argue that current rhetorical studies have an inadequate construal of advertising content and I identify the source of this confusion in an older stream of research in consumer psychology. I perform a close analysis of several print advertisements and show that the diegetic content has important rhetorical effects on audience response which are not to be ascribed neither to product features nor to aspects concerning *elocutio*, as the current framework suggests. The results of my analysis are then used to explain why issues concerning relevance, credibility and persuasive power of an advertisement can only be accurately measured and explained if researchers pay close attention to the diegetic content itself.

**Keywords:** advertising discourse; rhetorical operations; brand meaning; persuasive imagery; diegetic content.