

Faculté de philosophie, arts et lettres

Silver Consumer

**Comparative Analysis of Traditional and Digital
Advertising Reception Among the Elderly**

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Master en Communication Multilingue à finalité spécialisée en langues
des affaires

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Abstract

This comparative study examines the perception of traditional and digital advertising among employed individuals aged 50 and above and retirees. A study was conducted through a digitally distributed questionnaire among 150 individuals to assess differences in advertising perception between traditional and digital media among this population. The results reveal that older adults perceive traditional and digital advertising similarly. They also indicated that older adults more frequently utilise traditional media despite their increased presence on social networks. The discussion highlights the implications of these findings for marketers seeking to engage with the "silver consumers" market segment. This study contributes to understanding the behaviour of elderly individuals as consumers. It provides insights into creating new advertisements effectively and respectfully, as well as creating a stronger bond with “silver consumers”.

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1. Introduction

Today, we face the reality that the elderly are becoming more numerous than the young. This demographic change is noticeable in Asian countries and most European countries, such as Belgium, to which we will pay particular attention. For a long time, marketers primarily focused on the youth demographic, stereotyping older individuals as a low-income and dependent segment. (Meiners & Seeberger, 2010)

“So far, the history of humanity and the development of the modern economy have been primarily characterised by youth and, hence, growth. This also explains why to this day, no country has had any experience regarding the consequences that such a change in the ratio between the young and the old will have on the economy. It is conceivable that extensive economic growth may slacken due to this demographic development. What we can be sure of is that the demand situation and people’s patterns of consumption will change significantly.” (Meiners & Seeberger, 2010).

With the demographic shift and the changing social view, marketers have started to focus more and more on the older population. As far as we know, few studies have been done on the methods and channels to deliver advertising to older people most effectively. One of the most recent books we have read about marketing among silver consumers is “*Le Silver Marketing: Les meilleures pratiques pour communiquer aux seniors*”, written by Aribaud & Tréguer (2016), which we will refer to in this study. This study will focus mainly on digital advertising, i.e., advertising on various internet channels. We will find out which digital channels are the most appropriate for advertising to older people, and we will discover whether the consumption habits of older people have changed. Indeed, researchers have conducted several studies on older people’s Internet use (Alava & Moktar, 2012). These studies lead to the same conclusion that older people are becoming more and more frequent users of the Internet. However, there is still a gap between older and younger people. Different factors can explain the previous point, such as physical or mental disability or digital illiteracy. This study will discover the most frequent causes that prevent older people from using the Internet properly.

In this study, we will also compare different types of advertising. Mainly traditional advertising with Internet advertising. This study will determine if the 50+ age group prefers traditional advertising to Internet advertising. With the increase in users aged 50 and over on the Internet and social networks, it is worth looking at the silver consumer in detail. The silver consumer forms a unique product market, and above all, they have pretty different consumption

habits that should not be overlooked. It is also necessary to consider the actual age and the cognitive age. Studies have shown that these two ages are frequently different. This is why marketers decided to take more interest in new technologies to create a new place for advertising. A new marketing strategy has emerged: digital marketing. Hausman (n.d.) defines the digital marketing as follows:

“Digital marketing encompasses all marketing efforts that use an electronic device or internet. Businesses leverage digital channels such as search engines, social media, email and their websites to connect with current and prospective customers. [...] Digital marketing is defined by the use of numerous digital tactics and channels to connect with customers where they spend much of their time: online.” (Hausman, n.d.)

This study will enable us to discover how digital advertising differs from traditional advertising and which channels would be the most effective for delivering advertising to the target audience aged 50 and over. This observation leads us to the following hypotheses:

H1: Individuals aged 50 and over still in active employment are more inclined to use social networks frequently than retired individuals.

H2: Professionally active individuals tend to use social media primarily for entertainment, while elderly individuals tend to use them mainly to stay in touch with a group of people.

H3: Individuals in active employment show a marked preference for digital advertising over traditional advertising.

H4: The increasing use of social media among the elderly leads to the development of a growing trust in digital advertising.

H5: Professionally active individuals are likelier to use ad blockers than retired individuals.

With the help of these hypotheses, we would like, through this study, to address the specific research question: "Which channels are the most effective for advertising to people aged 50 and over in Belgium." To my knowledge, this is the first time a study will be conducted on identifying an effective channel for advertising to people aged 50 and over in Belgium. This study will verify whether it is more effective to advertise to elderly individuals on social networks because advertising on social media has become more personalised and time-limited compared to traditional advertising. It will also allow for comparing the perception of the advertising between professionally active individuals and retired individuals.

The study was conducted among 150 individuals aged 50 and over to address this hypothesis and the research question. A questionnaire was distributed to retired individuals and

those still in the workforce. The study was limited exclusively to French-speaking individuals, which does not represent the entire Belgian population, making the survey constrained.

This thesis has six main parts: 1. Introduction, 2. Literature Review, 3. Methodology, 4. Analysis, 5. Discussion and 6. Conclusion. In the first part, we present the context and problematics of this study. The second part will thoroughly review existing literature and theories on this subject. The third part will explain the data collection and analysis method. The fourth part will present the obtained results. In the fifth part, we will discuss and relate the results to previous studies. Finally, the sixth part will resume our study and present the obtained conclusions to our study.

2. Literature Review

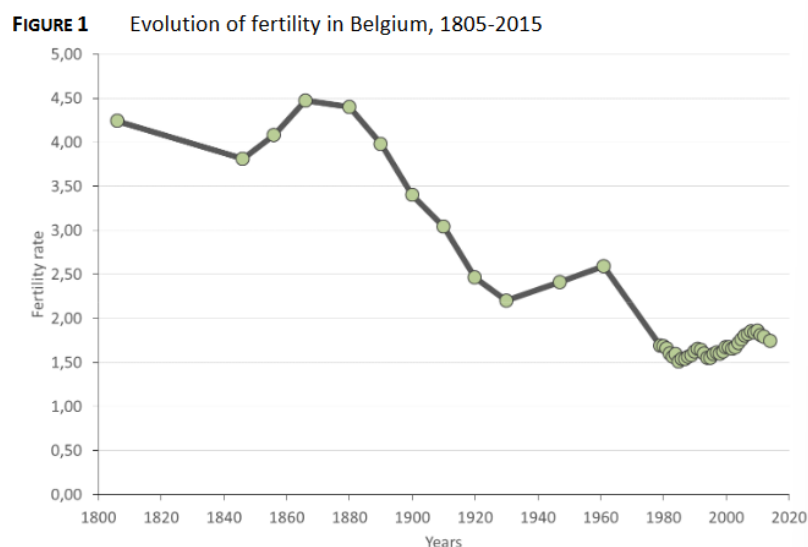
2.1. Belgium's demography

Within developed countries, the decline in birth rates and an increase in life expectancy have caused a shift in the demographics of these nations. Indeed, in many countries, the ageing population is becoming increasingly significant, affecting the economy (Lee & Mason, 2016). Belgium is no exception to this phenomenon we face today (Devriendt & Heylen, 2019). Belgium's population pyramid has changed for decades, as has most European countries. The Belgian population is gradually ageing. This change is primarily due to a reduction in fertility and an increase in longevity. The decrease in fertility reduces the number of young individuals, while the improvement in the quality of medical care extends life and delays the dependence of older individuals. With this demographic shift, older adults continue to participate in active life for longer, impacting both the economy and marketing.

Figure 1 illustrates the evolution of fertility in Belgium from 1805 to 2015. We can observe the gradual decline of the curve. There is also a peak in the 1950s and 1960s, corresponding to the post-World War II baby boom period. As we progress through the years, fertility continues to decrease, reaching a rate between 1.50 and 2.00 in 2020.

Figure 1: Evolution of fertility in Belgium, 1805 – 2015

Source: Bourguignon, M. et al. (2017). Evolution of fertility in Belgium, 1805 – 2015. In *"The aging of populations in Belgium: Current situation and perspectives"* (p.71). Revue Quetelet Journal.



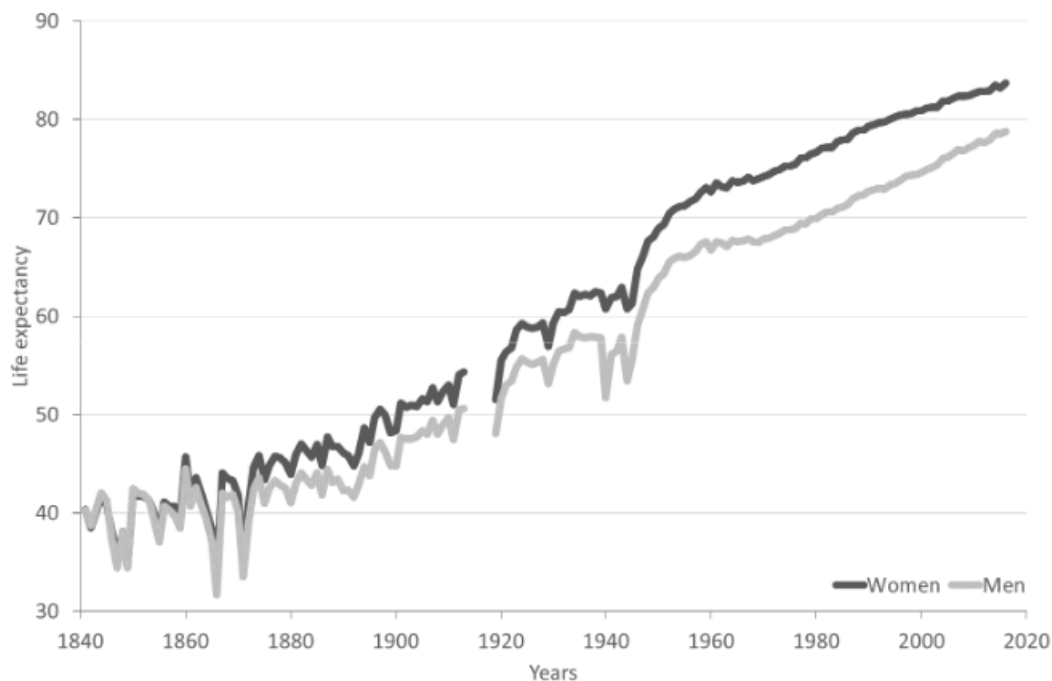
Source: Festy, 1979; Costa *et al.*, 2010; Brée *et al.*, 2016.

Figure 2 represents the evolution of life expectancy at birth in Belgium from 1830 to 2015. We observe in this graph a sharp increase in life expectancy that has continued to rise for almost 200 years. However, we can see peaks occurring at specific periods, such as between 1860 and 1880, when life expectancy did not exceed 40 years for both men and women. Then, there was a noticeable decline during World War II, when life expectancy did not exceed 60-65 years. From 1960 onwards, there are no more peaks, and the curve remains relatively steady, with life expectancy increasing from 70 years to approximately 85 years for women and 80 years for men.

Figure 2: Evolution of life expectancy at birth in Belgium, 1830 – 2015

Source: Bourguignon, M. et al. (2017). Evolution of life expectancy at birth in Belgium, 1830 - 2015. In *"The aging of populations in Belgium: Current situation and perspectives"* (p.72). Revue Quetelet Journal.

FIGURE 2 Evolution of life expectancy at birth in Belgium, 1830-2015



Source: Human Mortality Database.

Figures 3 and 4 clearly show the difference between the age pyramid in 1970 and 2015. In 45 years, the pyramid has undergone remarkable changes. The percentage of people over 65 was 13% in 1970 and 18% in 2015. The rate of individuals over 80 has also increased, from 2% to 5%. According to Devriendt & Heylen (2019), if the tendency continues to evolve in that direction, by 2040, “there will be eight dependent persons for every ten people at working age.” (Devriendt & Heylen, 2019, p.88)

Figure 3: Population of Belgium by age and sex in 1970

Source: Bourguignon, M. et al. (2017). Population of Belgium by age and sex in 1970. In *"The aging of populations in Belgium: Current situation and perspectives"* (p.73). Revue Quetelet Journal.

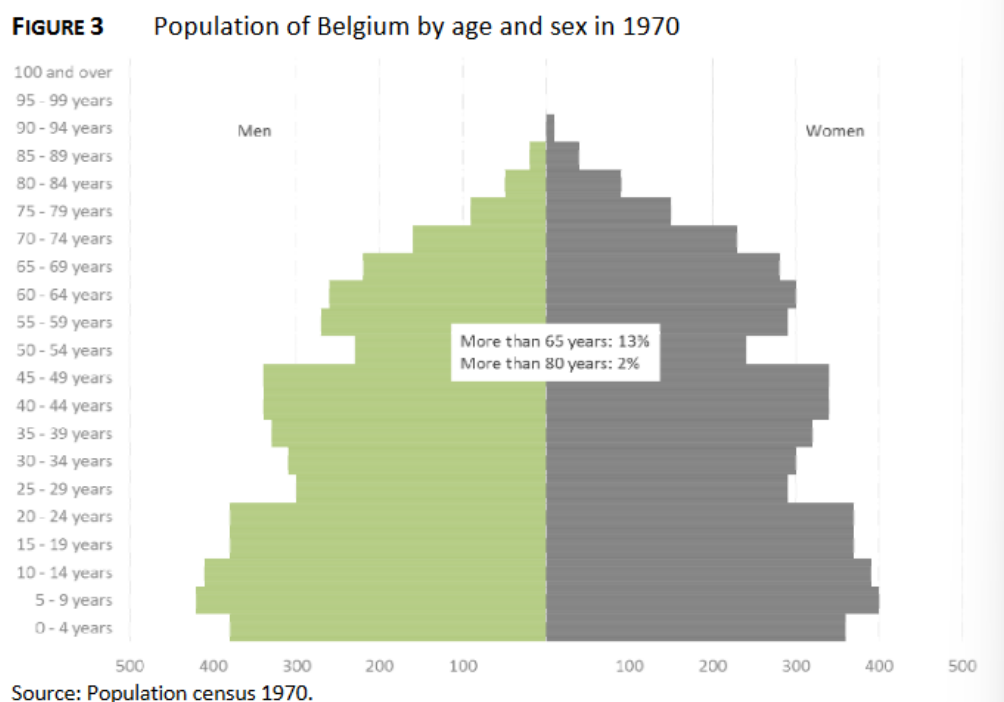
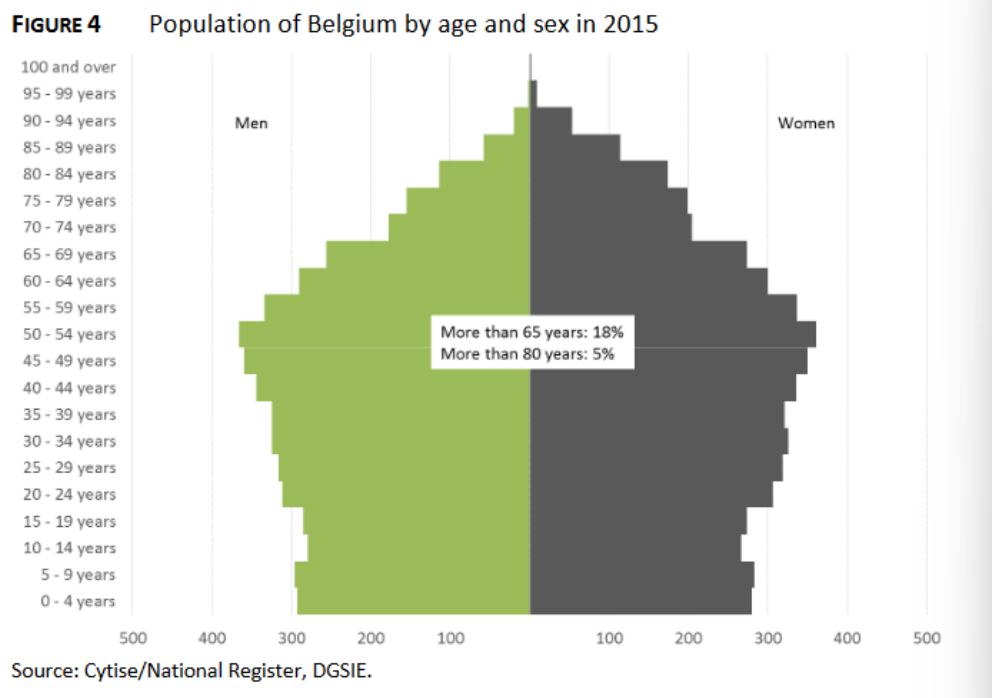


Figure 4: Population of Belgium by age and sex in 2015

Source: Bourguignon, M. et al. (2017). Population of Belgium by age and sex in 2015. In *"The aging of populations in Belgium: Current situation and perspectives"* (p.73). Revue Quetelet Journal.



This demographic change, also occurring in other European countries and our neighbours, such as France and Germany, has economic and social consequences, such as the isolation of older adults (Bourguignon et al., 2017). Another consequence of this demographic change is the increase in the retirement age. Currently, the retirement age in Belgium is set at 65. The increase in the retirement age forces people to work longer, which increases the number of active workers and decreases the number of retirees. Pension benefits are reduced for those wishing to retire earlier (Bourguignon et al., 2017). Late retirement creates an intergenerational environment at work. People of different ages are brought to work together, which creates an intergenerational gap. Older people are often stereotyped at work regarding their performance: "lack of vigour, lower productivity, inability or lack of interest in using technology, resistance to change and modernisation" (Burnaby, cited by Bourguignon et al., 2017, p.102). In conclusion, we face a demographic change due to increased life expectancy and declining fertility, leading to economic and social consequences. This study will focus on individuals aged 50 and above who are still professionally active and retired.

2.2. Definition of the concept of "senior"

According to the Cambridge University Press. (n.d.) the term "senior" or "senior citizen" refers to "an older person, usually over the age of 60 or 65, esp. one who is no longer employed." This term can also mean "someone who is high or higher in rank" or "older and more experienced than the other team members." (Cambridge University Press. (n.d.), Retrieved May 18, 2024) The word "senior" has several different definitions, but they all refer to someone older than others, whether in age, seniority, or experience. Nonetheless, several studies show that age is very vague and can vary from person to person. In his research, Wellner (2015) states: "At first glance, age seems to be a simple concept. The more time has passed since a person's birth, the older he or she is. Nevertheless, some people look older than they are, and some people do not behave according to their age" (p.17). Indeed, age can manifest differently depending on the individual. Age, as a measurement element, is almost identical in all countries. This measure calculates age chronologically from birth. However, "Chronological age is a good indicator of the general characteristics of a specific age for a larger population, but it does not reliably describe someone's individual capabilities and preferences" (Wellner, 2015, p.18). According to Kohlbacher & Chéron (2011), it is often problematic for researchers to carry out

studies on ages because very often we forget that people feel their age differently from their chronological age: "Non-chronological age measures may contribute more than chronological age to an understanding of how older consumers view themselves and how they make consumption-related decisions" (Wilkes cited by Kohlbacher & Chéron, 2011, p.180).

Before the 19th century, age categories were very vague. From the 19th century onward, the first segmentations into different age categories, as we know them today, emerged. Today, we segment age into several categories (Silva, 2008): early childhood (from birth to 2 years), child (2 years to 10-12 years), adolescent (10-12 years to 18 years), adult (from 18 years to 65-70 years), older adult (65-70+). Of course, this segmentation can vary from one country to another, but generally, the categories remain similar. In this study, we will also discuss the category of "third-age" individuals, which will be detailed in the next chapter. Recent studies have discussed chronological and cognitive age (Silva, 2008). Indeed, studying chronological age can pose problems if we want to examine people's behaviour according to their actual age. That is why it is easier to study not chronological age but cognitive age or subjective age, defined as our subjective perception of our actual age (Kwak et al., 2018). Subjective age helps better understand how a person feels about their age and thus comprehend certain habits or behaviours. Cognitive age can differ by 8 to 12 years from the actual age, which impacts people's behaviour (Sherman cited by Kohlbacher & Chéron, 2011).

In this study, we will not use the term "senior" because we will focus on the behaviour of individuals aged 50 and above. From a marketing perspective, "senior" refers to individuals aged 50 and above, which does not align with the traditional age segmentation. Instead, we will use the term "silver consumer" to refer to all consumers aged 50 and above, and we will also define the term "third age," which is a recent segmentation for individuals aged 50 to 65.

2.3. Notion of "third age"

With the advent of retirement in the 19th–20th century, the category of elderly individuals began to be more defined. Old age was closely linked to retirement and the inability to engage in work. Furthermore, retirement and old age were perceived as being dependent and incapable. This representation of old age is now being questioned (Silva, 2008). Today, the representation of old age is starting to change:

"If before it was understood as physical decline and disability, a moment of rest and quiet in which solitude and affective isolation prevailed, now it has come to mean a moment of leisure suitable for any personal realisation that may have been unfulfilled in early years, the adoption of new habits, hobbies, and skills, and the cultivation of affective and loving relationships outside the family". (Silva, 2008, p. 161)

Peter Laslett (cited by Gilleard & Higgs, 2007) characterises the concept of "third age" as "a key development in the transformation of later life in contemporary society" (p.14). Previously, the term "old" was associated with people whose physical and mental health deteriorated as they aged, and this term was considered pejorative because it conveyed a negative image of a person. From the 1960s onward, this term was changed to "elderly." Being an older adult presents a less stereotyped image of the individual. Today, we use the term "third age," which conveys a positive image.

"Anyone over 50 years of age was perceived as financially challenged and unworthy of harbouring the desire to be engaged in a lifestyle based on consumerism, which would be restricted to younger age groups. This picture started to change with the emergence of the first generations of middle-class retirees, whose consumption potential was quickly picked up by marketers." (Silva, 2008, p.165)

The emergence of the third age is primarily due to a turning point in the evolution of society dating back to the 1960s. An upheaval in society characterised the years following the Second World War. After World War II, the social structure changed. The increase in wealth led to the expansion of consumption; women gained access to education and employment, and the manufacturing industry shifted to the service industry. The evolution of social life had an impact on societal attitudes. People began having more choices and autonomy, and personal expression became valued. The new generation emerged in Great Britain and later in other European countries. This new generation is based on a lifestyle, generally a "youthful" lifestyle. The market primarily focused on teenagers, contributing to its continuous growth. The new culture opened many doors to the market, allowing it to flourish fully, and this new culture gave rise to consumer culture. (Gilleard & Higgs, 2007)

The trend of "youth" culture has continued to evolve. People feared ageing: "The issue was not so much about losing the attributes of youth as an aversion to becoming what had earlier been resisted, i.e. old" (Gilleard & Higgs, 2007, p.17). According to Gilleard & Higgs, the sixties saw the emergence of individualism focused on the culture of self. However, in the 80s,

the rebellious youth of the 60s grew up retaining their rejection of conformity and the fear of ageing. This attitude contributed to blurring the boundaries between different generations, and terms such as "later life" and "third age" became increasingly common. On the other hand, the market also changed. Shelves began to fill with products portraying middle age as a new stage of life, emphasising the idea that life only starts at 40. This shift gave rise to "generational marketing,". Focusing on specific target groups such as the Baby Boomers: "Making visible this 'invisible consumer market'"(Guillard & Higgs, 2007, p.18). The market started targeting the over-forties/over-fifties with a variety of lifestyle products that promised to "look and feel healthier, happier, and more beautiful than ever before" (Frieda, cited by Guillard & Higgs, 2007, p.18).

What should we take away regarding the concept of the third age? This phenomenon is linked to the development of a mass consumer society and is also associated with increased wealth and the expansion of market segmentation. This phenomenon has been shaped by the post-scarcity consumer culture in search of distinction and rejecting the "old age." To date, it is challenging to provide a precise definition for the term "third age" and a specific age range. However, to define the boundaries of our study, we will use this term to refer to individuals aged between 50 and 65 years old.

2.4. Silver market

We will now discuss the phenomenon of the "Silver Market." Today, there are 800 million people aged 60 or older worldwide. By 2050, the figure will exceed 2 billion people aged 60 or older. The population ages gradually in developed countries, shifting the age pyramid and impacting global markets (Wellner, 2015). The Silver Market is defined by the group of "third-age" individuals. This definition is primarily based on the chronological age of individuals due to institutionalised segmentation, even though it remains complicated to delineate age due to the subjective age of each person, as explained in the previous chapters. The minimum age characterising the Silver Market is between 50 and 55 years old, as it is considered that from this age range, preferences and habits change (Meiners, 2010). Until recently, marketing and advertising were focused on young consumers, as the older population was heavily stereotyped. Today, the segment of older consumers has become larger and more independent than before, which has sparked marketers' interest in studying this segment more closely. (Meiners, 2010).

The term "silver service" was first used in Japan in the 1970s. The Japanese national rail company first introduced seats for older adults using the term "shiruba," which refers to elderly individuals with white hair. Since then, the term has been used for other products intended for older adults, and now it is used worldwide to define elderly consumers. (Wellner, 2015). Today, older people have better health, are much more independent, and demand a quality life compared to previous generations (Wellner, 2015). All of this is due to improvements in quality of life, healthcare, and a market offering various products that meet the different needs of each individual. Nowadays, older individuals have access to higher education, independent incomes, and various traditional and digital media sources of information. (Meiners & Seeberger, 2010). Elderly individuals have become a particularly interesting market segment, as they generally have higher purchasing power than the rest of the population. They seek quality products that can provide them with a better experience. Additionally, senior citizens typically look for stores close to their homes and easily accessible. Silver consumers are generally very loyal to the shops and brands they choose, making them loyal customers (Lesakova, 2013).

One of the main challenges in producing products intended for older adults is to avoid falling into stigmatisation. As described in previous chapters, a person's subjective and chronological age have an average difference of 10 years. People feel younger compared to their chronological age. Indeed, there is a fine line between a product intended for older adults and a product that labels consumers as "old." (Wellner, 2015). Indeed, it is sometimes challenging to avoid stigmatisation, especially for products related to certain aspects of health that emerge with age. However, for other products, the best way to create items for all ages without making a distinction between consumers is to develop universal products that can be useful and suitable for all ages. The Center for Universal Design at North Carolina State University has established seven principles for product developers: 1) equitable use, 2) flexibility in use, 3) simple and intuitive use, 4) perceptible information, 5) tolerance for error, 6) low physical effort, and 7) size and space for approach and use. The same principles are also used in design. Nonetheless, the best way to reach elderly individuals is to directly adapt products to their needs, interests, habits, and behaviours. (Wellner, 2015)

2.5. Silver consumer

For decades, marketing primarily focused on younger consumers, as older consumers were stereotyped as a single segment of people dependent on their children. Today, elderly individuals represent a market segment that has not yet been thoroughly studied. Nowadays, older adults are much more independent and financially stable. These individuals are now much more motivated to spend money on travel, purchasing quality products, investments, etc. (Meiners & Seeberger, 2010). Elderly individuals are the primary consumers in healthcare, automotive, etc. (Aribaud & Tréguer, 2016). Older consumers have much more excellent experience. They gather information about products more often than younger consumers because they have more time to seek information and compare products. The Internet boosts consumption among older adults because it offers a wide range of stores and products and simplifies product comparison. With a single click, we can compare products in different e-markets. Elderly individuals no longer need to travel to try, choose, and compare products and can do so comfortably at home. (Aribaud and Tréguer, 2016).

According to Lesakova (2013), there is a current tendency to consider people aged 60 and over as a single segment. However, "No generation or partial segment of the market is more heterogeneous and diverse than the 50-plus generation" (Meiners & Seeberger, 2010, p. 298). We can find the same idea Lesakova (2013) described: "With the successive age, people become more diverse" (p.105). Indeed, as individuals acquire more experience throughout life, they become more different from each other. Older people have varied habits, lifestyles, and behaviours. Therefore, it is necessary to adopt a distinct marketing strategy that does not focus on older adults as a single segment of people but on different small segmentations. However, they also share common points: "Today's silver generation is active, self-confident, demanding, adventurous, experience-driven and forward-looking, keen to consume and pleasure-loving. It tries to avoid risks, dislikes using credit cards for purchases and wants to enjoy life instead of saving." (Meiners & Seeberger, 2010, p. 299). Even though the 60+ population is very diverse, specific trends emerge. According to a study conducted by Lesakova (2013), a trend emerged that elderly consumers prefer to shop in stores close to their homes and that are easily accessible. They are price-sensitive and actively seek products with the lowest price, even if it means travelling further to acquire them. Older people are consumers of mass media but remain sceptical of advertising. We will also discover if today's trend remains the same and if older

people remain wary of traditional and digital advertising. Furthermore, older people have expressed their distrust of new products. Silver consumers prefer to buy trusted products they have already tested before buying and trying new ones.

According to a study conducted by Aribaud & Tréguer (2016), "un consommateur sur deux est un sénior (54%)". The most active age group of silver consumers is between 55 and 65. This age corresponds to the population that is still active. It is also referred to as "génération hypermarché" because this generation was in their twenties during the emergence of hypermarkets, which led to the consumption culture that persists throughout life. (Aribaud & Téguer, 2016). Furthermore, this age group has the highest purchasing power compared to the rest of the population.

"Bien que le revenu net imposable d'un foyer fiscal de plus de 50 ans soit supérieur de 38% par rapport à un foyer fiscal de moins de 50 ans, il est important de préciser que c'est surtout le cas pour les seniors en activité professionnelle, car, comme chacun le sait, le revenu chute au passage à la retraite" ¹(Aribaud & Téguer, 2016, p.37)

Table 1 : La composition du revenu annuel moyen selon l'âge de la personne de référence du ménage en 2013

Source : Aribaud, F. & Tréguer, J.-P. (2016). La composition du revenu annuel moyen selon l'âge de la personne de référence du ménage en 2013. In *"Le Silver Marketing : Les meilleures pratiques pour communiquer aux seniors"* (p.37-38).

...

	Revenus d'activité, du patrimoine et pensions			Revenus d'activité, du patrimoine et pensions		Revenu avant impôt (en euros)
	Revenu d'activité (y c. allocations chômage)	Pensions	Revenu du patrimoine	Prestations familiales et logement	Minima sociaux et RSA activité	
25 à 34 ans	89,1	0,6	2,2	6,4	1,7	35 804
35 à 44 ans	87,0	0,6	4,5	6,7	1,2	45 934
45 à 54 ans	85,6	2,1	7,1	3,6	1,6	48 815
55 à 64 ans	63,7	23,0	10,7	1,1	1,5	47 564
65 à 74 ans	12,0	69,5	16,8	0,6	1,1	41 567
75 ans et plus	3,3	76,1	19,0	0,6	1,0	32 993
Ensemble	62,4	23,4	9,3	3,4	1,4	42 147

Source : CCMSA, Cnaf, Cnav, DGFiP, Insee.

In the table presented in the book *"Le Silver Marketing: Les meilleures pratiques pour communiquer aux seniors"* (Aribaud & Tréguer, 2016, p.37), we can observe an increase in

¹ [Translation] "Although the taxable net income of a tax household over 50 is 38% higher compared to a tax household under 50, it is important to specify that this is mainly the case for seniors in active employment, as, as everyone knows, income drops upon retirement." (Aribaud et Téguer, 2016 : 37)

income up to the age of 44, then a peak in income between 45 and 54 years old, followed by a decrease in revenue from the age of 55 onwards. We can say that the highest income belongs to individuals between 45 and 65 years old, meaning the period before retirement. Therefore, we can conclude that active individuals aged between 45 and 65 have the highest purchasing power. Antoine (2023, p.281) shares the same opinion. He explains that incomes are the highest at around 50, close to retirement. This is generally the age when individuals receive an inheritance, have no more debts, and no longer have children to support. Furthermore, he also mentions the idea that the purchasing power of inactive individuals has "increased significantly" (Antoine, 2023, p.281).

We can conclude this chapter by describing the silver consumer as an individual aged 50 and above, possessing a higher purchasing power than younger consumers. Silver consumers are a target audience that has grown up within consumption trends and has maintained these habits throughout their lives. They are individuals who choose quality products, take their time to compare different products on the market, and are loyal to the stores they have chosen. Marketers must consider the various characteristics of a silver consumer to tailor their products and advertising to this audience effectively.

2.6. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Silver Surfer

Today, the use of the Internet continues to grow. More and more people have at least one computer at home. An increasing number of individuals are connected to the Internet via various devices such as computers, smartphones, and tablets. Nearly 43 million people are connected to the Internet (Aribaud & Tréguer, 2006). "En 2060, une personnes sur trois aura plus de 60 ans, en 2025 on estime ce pourcentage à 28% alors qu'actuellement les plus de 60 ans sont estimés à 22,9"² (Gourdin cited by (Alva & Moktar, 2012, p.1) The use of various devices is multiplying, generally used for entertainment, consumption, information, and communication via social networks, which continue to proliferate (Aribaud & Tréguer, 2016). According to a study by Pew, social media users aged 50 to 64 represent a rate of 47%, and

² [Translation] "By 2060, one in three people will be over 60 years old, in 2025, this percentage is estimated to be 28%, whereas currently those over 60 years old are estimated at 22.9%" (Gourdin, 2006; cited by Alva and Moktar, 2012)

Internet users over 65 represent a rate of 26% (Alva & Moktar, 2012). The Internet is also becoming increasingly popular among seniors. Nowadays, one in three Internet users is a senior. There are 17.2 million seniors connected to one of the Internet devices, representing approximately 39% of the total audience. Seniors spend approximately 13 hours and 15 minutes per week on the Internet. The most used device by seniors remains the tablet. (Aribaud & Tréguer, 2016)

"Les tablettes contribuent efficacement à lutter contre la fracture numérique entre les générations de seniors. Leur forma, le contact direct avec l'écran, leur souplesse d'utilisation et leur simplicité séduisent massivement les seniors âgés jusqu'alors réticents face à l'informatique. Ce qui a donné à l'Ipad cette définition : Internet Pour Aînés Débutants"
³(Calon cited by Aribaud & Tréguer, 2016, p.57)

Due to the evolution of longevity and quality of life, seniors demonstrate good intellectual and physical qualities, which allow them to learn new things, « qui explique le développement de l'utilisation des Technologies de la Communication » ⁴(Alava et Moktar, 2012, p.2). Despite this evolution, the digital divide among seniors remains significant. Seniors continue to be the least involved demographic in digital usage. A study shows that nearly 8 out of 10 seniors are still disconnected. Seniors struggle to fully integrate Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) into their daily lives. (Chevalier et al., 2008)

"Les TIC désignent l'ensemble des technologies qui permettent de traiter et de transmettre des informations, et regroupent principalement l'informatique, Internet et les télécommunications. Parmi ces technologies, on observe un essor particulier d'Internet et des sites web."⁵ (Chevalier et al., 2008, pp. 225-256)

People are led to resort to ICTs in both their professional and personal lives. Access to the Internet has contributed to the increase in the number of different users, who can be distinguished by their age, frequency of use, and usage objectives (Chevalier et al., 2008). Indeed, elderly individuals will not have the same frequency of use and objectives as teenagers.

³ [Translation] "Tablets contribute effectively to combating the digital divide between generations of seniors. Their form factor, direct contact with the screen, ease of use, and simplicity greatly appeal to seniors who were previously hesitant about computers. This has given the iPad the definition: Internet for Beginners Seniors."

⁴ [Translation] "what explains the development of the use of Communication Technologies"

⁵ [Translation] "ICT refer to all technologies that enable the processing and transmission of information, and mainly include computing, the Internet, and telecommunications. Among these technologies, there is a particular growth in the Internet and websites."

Further in this study, we will discuss the frequency and purpose of ICT use among elderly individuals. Despite the evolution of ICT and « multiples bénéfices aux personnes âgées », we still observe a « rejet » in the acceptance of ICT for various reasons that we will detail further (Chevalier et al., 2008, pp.225-256).

“The “digital divide” concept refers to the form of inequality affecting individuals and/or groups that, for various reasons, face obstacles regarding access to and/or use of ICT. The digital divide has been characterised as a contemporary form of illiteracy, since (as with limitations with reading and/or writing) it conditions access to a wide range of basic goods and services (material, cultural, social...) which, in today’s technological society, are increasingly linked to ICT.” (Menéndez Álvarez-Dardet et al., 2020, p.1)

Elderly individuals feel more anxious when searching for information, which prevents them from familiarising themselves with new technologies. However, another study demonstrated that this anxiety decreases following successful information retrieval (Kubeck, cited by Chevalier et al., 2008). Information retrieval is a complex activity that requires the mobilisation of cognitive resources dependent on numerous factors, such as knowledge of Internet use, website complexity, and age. Several studies have shown that individuals face cognitive decline with advancing age, which implies difficulty storing and processing information (Lemaire, cited by Chevalier et al., 2008). These difficulties involve a slower appropriation of ICT. According to Kubeck Miller-Albrecht and Murphy (cited by Chevalier et al., 2008), this decrease in search performance depends on the complexity of tasks. Another barrier elderly individuals face when using ICT is their perception of the utility of these new technologies. Indeed, for silver users, ICT's perceived usefulness and benefits are less obvious (Melenhorst, cited by Chevalier et al., 2008). Silver consumers focus more on the consequences of technologies on behaviour, privacy, and risks rather than on the utility of ICT (Chevalier et al., 2008). The same idea is shared by Alava and Moktar (2012). According to them, the question “A quoi sert Internet” frequently reveals misunderstanding and concern about cyberspace. As a result, the Internet is perceived as harmful and dangerous, leading to the rejection and refusal of digital practices. Selwyn et al. (2003) also share that some elderly individuals have difficulty adopting new technologies due to the rejection of the unknown and the sense of uselessness in their use. We can deduce that with the lack of education in new ICT, elderly individuals experience difficulties in appropriating new technologies, and the lack of motivation significantly impacts their Internet use.

“Some authors contend that computers merely need to be better marketed to older adults to persuade their use; for example, ‘education programs may also be needed to inform older people of the potential capabilities of the new technology’” (Madden & Savage cited by Selwyn et al., 2003, p.578)

In addition to the cognitive difficulties and fear of new technologies faced by some elderly individuals, there are also physical and physiological changes. Elderly adults experience visual decline due to reduced sensitivity to light and disturbed color perception caused by « diminution de la pupille, d’un épaississement et d’un jaunissement du cristallin »⁶ (Chevalier et al., 2008, p. 255-256). It is, therefore, more challenging for elderly individuals to read the information on a computer (Chevalier et al., 2008). Selwyn et al. (2003) share the same idea that elderly individuals may encounter difficulties in using ICTs due to physiological changes. Despite these difficulties, positive sensations like the desire to discover a new world, overcome isolation, and stay connected with family and friends drive seniors to adopt digital practices (Alava & Moktar, 2012). Using ICTs can improve social life and support for older adults through significant information on various subjects such as health, learning, and communication with family and friends (Selwyn et al., 2003). It is interesting to note that today, ICTs are not very appealing to older adults because they are primarily attractive to young and well-educated people (Selwyn et al., 2003).

Many studies demonstrate that seniors are users whose frequency of connection to social networks is higher than that of younger users: “Si on compare les usages de l’Internet entre générations, on constate que les 60-65 ans ont des pratiques comparables en temps à celle des adolescents”⁷ (Alava & Moktar, 2012, p.6). The presence of seniors on social networks is increasingly significant, and according to an American study, the age of social media users is rapidly increasing (Alava & Moktar, 2012). The average age of social media users is around 36 years old (Alava & Moktar, 2012). The virtual practices of seniors are highly diversified, but trends are emerging. Elderly individuals mainly connect to the Internet for leisure and communication with family and friends (Alava & Moktar, 2012). According to the same idea shared by Selwyn et al. (2003), elderly individuals primarily turn to the Internet for communication and self-learning to use the computer. Through the study conducted as part of this thesis, we will discover in the following chapters whether the trends in 2024 have changed.

⁶ [Translation] “Reduction of the pupil, thickening, and yellowing of the lens.”

⁷ [Translation] “If we compare Internet usage across generations, we find that individuals aged 60-65 have usage patterns similar in duration to those of teenagers.”

2.7. Silver Marketing

Like any marketing, silver marketing requires segmentation to refine advertising to the target audience. It is also necessary to segment the population aged over 50 because not all “third-age” populations are the same, and advertising should not be addressed in the same way to all individuals over 50. Segmentation should be applied to two uses (Aribaud & Tréguer, 2016)

- “La création : le message publicitaire en tant que tel.” (Aribaud & Tréguer, 2016, pp. 69-84)⁸
- “Le plan média : où diffuser ce message publicitaire.” (Aribaud & Tréguer, 2016, pp. 69-84)⁹

Both creation and media planning are essential to convey a quality message to reach the right target audience and have a maximum impact. To create a quality advertising message (creation), studies must be conducted on “segmentations dites psychographiques, sociodémographiques ou comportementales”¹⁰ (Aribaud, & Tréguer, 2016, pp. 69-84). For media strategy, six segmentation criteria exist: “l’âge, le niveau de revenu, le fait d’être encore en activité ou pas, l’état de santé, le temps disponible et la génération d’appartenance.”¹¹ (Aribaud, & Tréguer, 2016, pp. 69-84) However, all these criteria, whether in creation or media planning, remain challenging to analyse because, generally, companies do not have access to all this data. Age remains the most easily identifiable criterion so that that segmentation can be done solely based on age criterion (Aribaud & Tréguer, 2016, pp. 69-84).

⁸ [Translation] “The creation: the advertising message itself.”

⁹ [Translation] “The media plan: where to broadcast this advertising message.”

¹⁰ [Translation] “Psychographic, sociodemographic, or behavioral segmentation.”

¹¹ [Translation: “Age, income level, employment status, health condition, available time, and generational affiliation”

Figure 5: Les 4 segments marketing seniors.

Source : Aribaud, F. & Tréguer, J.-P. (2016). Les 4 segments marketing seniors. In *"Le Silver Marketing : Les meilleures pratiques pour communiquer aux seniors"* (p.72).

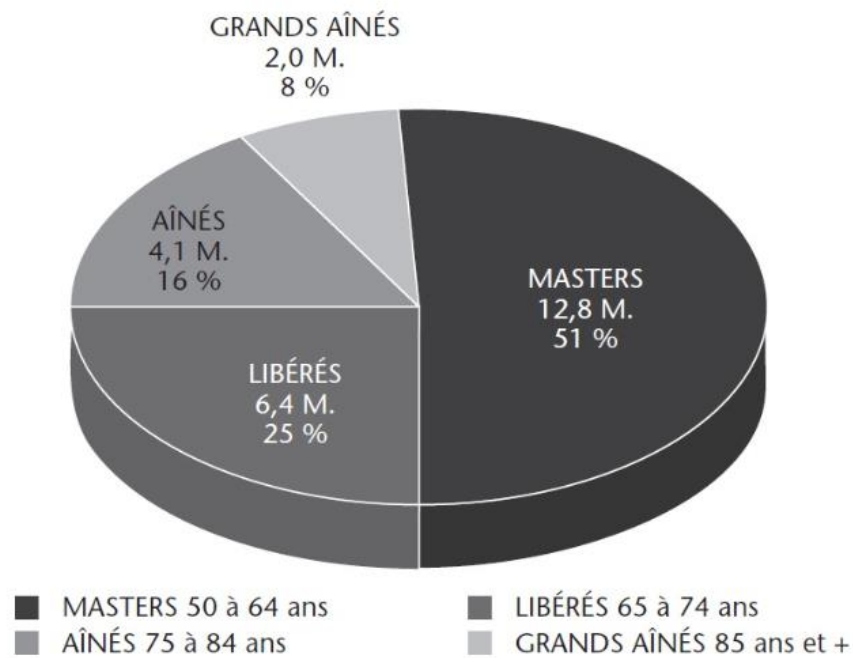


Figure 5 (Aribaud & Tréguer, 2016, p.72) represents the segmentation of seniors into four categories: the “masters” – individuals aged 50 to 64, representing 51% of the senior population; the “libérés” - individuals aged 65 to 74, representing 25% of the senior population; the “ainés” - individuals aged 75 to 84, representing 16% of the senior population; and the “grand ainés” individuals aged 85 and over, representing 8% of the senior population. When looking at this graph, it is also important to note that these data are from 2016. The data may be different today. In this thesis, we have studied a different segmentation based on professional activity. This represents two main categories: active individuals aged 50 to 64 and retired individuals aged 65 and over. We need to establish a link between advertising preferences and professional activity, but we will discover it in the following chapters.

Table 2: Quatre segments marketing seniors

Source : Aribaud, F. & Tréguer, J.-P. (2016). Les 4 segments marketing seniors. In *"Le Silver Marketing : Les meilleures pratiques pour communiquer aux seniors"* (pp.74-76).

	Masters	Libérés	Aînés	Grands aînés
Tranche d'âge	50-64 ans	65-74 ans	75-84 ans	85 ans et plus
Volume	12,8 millions 51 % de la pop senior	6,4 millions 25 %	4,1 millions 16 %	2 millions 8 %
Nés entre	1951 et 1965	1941 et 1950	1931 et 1940	1911 et 1930
Ils ont eu 20 ans	En 1978 (moyenne)	En 1966	En 1956	En 1946
Génération	Connectée	Mai 68	Trente Glorieuses	Rationnement
Mots clés	Plaisir	Liberté	Santé	Dépendance, solitude
Leurs dépenses	Équipement de confort électroménager (multi-room, cuisine équipée), électronique (tablettes, smartphone, objets connectés), voitures haut de gamme Apparence : luxe, cosmétiques, esthétique Alimentation : vins fins, restaurants, traiteurs, diététique Loisirs : tourisme, thalasso, théâtres, expos Investissements : placements, assurances-vie Résidence secondaire	Automobile Loisirs Santé Logement Investissements	Alimentation Santé : médecin, compléments nutritionnels Résidences seniors Adaptation du logement : sécurité, accessibilité, connectivité Services à domicile	Santé Services à domicile Alimentation

Leurs valeurs	Tolérance Individualisme Hédonisme	Sens des responsabilités Expérience Savoir-faire Partage	Sens de la famille Traditions Institutions Prudence Conservatisme	Sens du devoir Sécurité Respect Amitié Engagement
Leurs comportements de consommation	Consommateurs exigeants, Privilégient l'expérimentation, recherche du plaisir immédiat, jouisseurs, sensibles aux modes, comparent	Consommateurs prudents, Demandent à être convaincus, connaissent la valeur de l'argent, achat plus réfléchi, plus lent, moins impulsif	Consommateurs peu dépensiers, Fidélité et habitude, Préférence pour les grandes marques connues et réputées Peu sensibles aux modes	Achat de nécessité et non de plaisir Ils n'ont pas l'habitude de consommer et n'ont plus vraiment envie Cycles de renouvellement faibles Pas d'achat impulsif
Leurs critères d'achat	Innovation Esthétique & Design Choix Personnalisation Avis extérieurs Non segmenté	Utilité Qualité Prix Authenticité Made in France	Service Confiance Confort	Robustesse Rapport qualité-prix Confort Longévité
Leurs médias Internet Réseaux sociaux TV Presse Radio Vente à distance	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	☐ ☐ ☐	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Leurs prénoms	Marie, Nathalie, Chantal, Nicole, Martine, Catherine, Gérard, Jean, Philippe, Michel	Jacqueline, Simone, Denise, Colette, Marie Pierre, René, Jacques, Claude, Jean, Michel	Marie, Jeanne, Marguerite, Suzanne, Madeleine, Louise, Louis, Joseph, Paul, Albert, Jean, André, Pierre	Paulette, Raymonde, Yvette, Germaine, Marcelle, Lucienne, André, Maurice, Raymond, Georges, Émile

Table 2 (Aribaud & Tréguer, 2016, pp. 74-76) summarises the major general characteristics of each age group. These characteristics help better guide communication and publication and adapt them to the target audience. What interests us most in this table are the categories “leurs dépenses”¹² and “leurs médias”¹³. The category “leurs dépenses” informs us about the types of products that consumers purchase, and this knowledge helps to better orient advertising. In this table, we can observe that the “masters” (individuals aged 50 to 64) spend their money on comfort equipment, appearance, food, leisure, and investments. We can also see that they have a more comprehensive range of expenses compared to other categories of individuals. This

¹² [Translation] “their expenses”

¹³ [Translation: “their media”

observation indicates that advertising for these individuals should be varied and cover many areas. The “libérés” (individuals aged 65 to 74) spend the most money on automobiles, leisure, health, housing, and investments. For this category, expenses remain just as varied. The « -- "ainés” (individuals aged 75 to 84) spend more money on food, health, home adaptation, and home services. The spectrum of expenses begins to narrow. Finally, the “grands ainés” (individuals aged 85 and over) spend money on health, home services, and food. The category “leurs medias” helps better understand the channels used to choose the right channel for advertising dissemination. This table shows that individuals aged 50 to 74 use more diverse media types. Individuals aged 75 to 84 use a more limited array of media, and those aged 85 and over are in between. Our study will verify if the trends in 2023 have changed.

2.8. Types of advertising

With technological advancements, we tend to think that television now belongs to the past. With the emergence of computers and then the Internet, the ease of connection on various devices has decreased the popularity of television. Advertising has become much more abundant as it is broadcasted through different channels. This chapter will explore the various types of traditional and digital advertising. We will also discover which channels remain the most suitable for advertising to today's audience.

Previously, advertising was used to convey a message about the product or service that a company wanted to sell. Nowadays, advertising is also used to build the reputation and image of the company. However, the main objective of advertising remains to persuade consumers to purchase a product or service (Qader et al., 2022). Qader et al. (2022) define advertising as: "mass media material designed to convince audiences of readers, viewers, and ideas that have been presented to them" (p.10). They also provide another definition: "it [advertising] is a strong marketing instrument that has the potential to alter people's minds and behaviors, which is why it is utilized for a variety of objectives by industrial giants, non-profit organizations, and even the tiniest retail institution." (Qader et al., 2022, p.10). Indeed, advertising is used by all organisations. Advertising is one of the most effective ways to convey product or service information. Through advertising, consumers can become aware of a new product. The goal of any advertising is to inform and prompt action from individuals. For this purpose, several communication strategies and various channels have increased in recent years. According to Sama (cited by Qader et al., 2022), all techniques companies use to produce advertising are

ineffective without the knowledge of the consumer. To convey the correct information to consumers, one must learn to understand them. Following this, we return to segmenting individuals mentioned in previous chapters. Today, there are several types of advertising: broadcast advertising, online advertising, outdoor advertising, print advertising, and product placement advertising. All these advertisements have their positive and negative sides. (Qader et al., 2022).

Television is a well-known channel for advertising. Indeed, television combines visuals, sound, information, and calls to action, which attracts much attention from people and reaches a broad audience in such a way. Moreover, nowadays, television is accessible to everyone, which was not the case before. A large part of the population has at least one television at home. (Qader et al., 2022) Radio is the oldest mode of information transmission. Advertising broadcasted on the radio includes humour in its message to evoke emotion among the audience. It is more important to evoke a positive sentiment among consumers than to convey a message. Studies have shown that people are more likely to buy a product when it is associated with a positive emotion. (Qader et al., 2022)

Internet advertising is very varied and highly effective among consumers. The most significant difference between traditional and digital advertising is that digital advertising uses two-way communication. In traditional advertising, people receive a message; in digital advertising, consumers can communicate with companies and other consumers. Consumers can leave their opinions, share their experiences, and give new ideas. Social networks facilitate this communication and improve the consumer experience. (Qader et al., 2022) Another advantage of digital advertising, compared to other forms of advertising, is that it can reach more people. Traditional advertising (television, radio, etc.) remains primarily regional, while digital advertising can reach other regions and countries. Consumers have a much wider choice and can purchase products from different countries (Qader et al., 2022). Social networks allow companies to establish a connection with consumers through various popular channels such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, or X (formerly Twitter). However, to maintain this connection and to create advertising tailored to each channel and the right target audience, marketers must understand how these channels work. (Qader et al., 2022)

The oldest and least studied form of advertising is outdoor advertising. We can see this advertising almost everywhere in a city on building walls, billboards, etc. These advertisements use an image, a message that attracts attention. Supermarkets generally use these advertisements to promote their products or a discount. (Qader et al., 2022) Outdoor advertising

presents a significant diversification. It remains the most profitable advertising method and allows reaching consumers who are the most difficult to reach through other channels (Qader et al., 2022). According to a study conducted by Chilet and Moshary, "the true power of outdoor media lies in its ability to creatively summarize the entire idea of the advertising message" (cited by Qader et al., 2022, p. 13).

2.9. Digital advertising

In this section, we will address digital advertising and, more specifically, advertising on social networks. We will explore why it is essential to choose not only the content of the advertisement but also the platform to produce the advertisement that will be best suited to consumers. Additionally, we will compare digital and traditional advertising. According to Todor (2016), digital advertising can be described as follows:

“Digital advertising is a blanket term for the targeted, measurable, and interactive marketing of goods or services using digital technologies in order to reach and convert leads into customers and preserve them. The main objective is to promote brands, shape preference and boost sales through several digital marketing techniques.” (Todor, 2016, p.1)

The main difference between digital and traditional advertising is that digital advertising is considered to involve "two-way communication." However, Kraimova (cited by Fuxman et al., 2014, p.61) criticised this terminology. According to her, "two-way communication" is "tautological" because communication always occurs in both directions. She explains that the main difference between digital and traditional advertising is that consumers can leave their opinions, which is impossible with traditional advertising. The same view is shared by Alhabash et al. (2017). According to them, digital advertising provides access to information and allows users to leave comments and share content. Furthermore, according to the same author, digital advertising has other advantages that traditional advertising lacks. The first advantage is that digital advertising is less costly. Second, digital advertising offers marketers a better way to segment and target the right audience. The third advantage is that digital advertising can provide analyses of the effectiveness of advertising through measurement tools such as algorithms (Alhabash et al., 2017). One of the major disadvantages of digital advertising is the lack of trust from users. Consumers are wary of digital advertising due to possible fraud, penalising different

companies (Todor, 2016). Another major disadvantage is that consumers and users can block advertisements using ad blockers to avoid irrelevant advertising (Voorveld et al., 2018).

When discussing digital advertising, we mainly think of advertising on social networks. Social networks can be divided into four main categories, as found in the study conducted by Hilde et al.:

1. "Relationship represents social media platforms that are profile based and consist mostly of customized messages; this category includes platforms such as Facebook and LinkedIn.
2. Self-media platforms are also profile based but offer people the chance to manage their own social media communication channels. A typical example is Twitter.
3. Creative outlet platforms are content based and allow users to share their interests and creativity, for example, YouTube and Instagram.
4. Finally, collaboration platforms are also content based but allow people to ask questions, get advice, or find the most interesting news and content of the day." (Voorveld et al., 2018, p.40)

To broadcast advertising on social networks, it is essential first to understand the use of these networks. Each social network is unique; advertising must correspond to the channel used (Voorveld et al., 2018). According to a study conducted by Voorveld et al. (2018): "Advertising was evaluated most negatively on YouTube, followed by Facebook and Twitter; all of these scored significantly below the midpoint of the scale. Consumers were most positive about advertising on Google+ and Pinterest." (Hilde et al., 2018, p. 46). The author explains this by the fact that advertising on YouTube is mainly perceived as "intrusive" by users because it is unavoidable, interrupts the video, and requires waiting several seconds before being able to skip the ad. We can compare advertising on YouTube to television advertising. On the other hand, advertising on Instagram is mainly perceived as "entertaining" (Voorveld et al., 2018, p.50).

Just like social networks can be divided into several categories, Alhabash et al. (2017) categorise advertisements on social networks into "paid, owned, and earned media" (Hurrell & Postanty cited by Alhabash, 2017, para 4). Campbell and Marks (2019) share the same categorisation of advertising. According to these authors, paid media is a tool companies use to reach consumers and portray a positive brand image. Paid media refers to sponsored posts linked to a brand, created and disseminated on social networks by the company. These posts are usually published on social networks such as Instagram in exchange for payment to the platform. This advertising is easily identifiable because, most of the time, it is labelled as

"sponsored media." The second type of media is owned media. It refers to posts on social networks created and disseminated by the company itself. These posts are distributed for free, and the company has total control over how the post is published. These posts appear in the consumers' news feeds if they follow the company on the platform. The third category is earned media. It is content generated not by the company but mainly by an influencer who creates content to promote a brand to their audience. All the influencer's followers will then see the advertisement. This advertising is generally perceived positively because it appears more authentic and generates a sense of trust among consumers. (Campbell & Marks, 2019) Influencers must be careful with native advertising. "At a general level, native advertising is a term used to describe a spectrum of new online advertising forms that share a focus on minimising disruption to a consumer's online experience by appearing in-stream." (Campbell & Marks, 2019, p.600). Native advertising is becoming increasingly popular and is generally well-received by consumers because it is much less intrusive than other types of advertising. Studies have shown that consumers do not always recognise native advertising. (Campbell & Marks, 2019) This advertising has an advantage because it is less likely to be ignored by consumers, which may motivate companies to use this type of advertising. However, when consumers discover the source of native advertising, they can become disappointed and lose trust in the influencer and the company. (Campbell & Marks, 2019) Therefore, it is always crucial for influencers to remain transparent with their audience and carefully choose advertising that aligns with the general content disseminated by the influencer.

In conclusion, digital advertising has become prevalent on numerous platforms, primarily social networks. Therefore, let us remember several critical points for successful digital advertising dissemination. Firstly, it is essential to know one's target audience very well. Secondly, understanding the different types of platforms and their uses is crucial. Thirdly, it is necessary to tailor advertising to the right platform and choose among the three main types of media. Finally, the most critical point is to remain transparent and honest with one's audience to avoid disappointing consumers and build a long-term relationship of trust.

3. Methodology

3.1. Description of the Study and Data Collection

This study adopts a mixed-methods methodology comprising both quantitative and qualitative approaches. For the quantitative part, we collected individual responses through an online questionnaire. Subsequently, we statistically analysed the collected responses. For the qualitative part, we analysed responses to open-ended questions in the questionnaire and comments that participants could leave to provide further insight into a question. The participants included employees aged between 50 and 65 and retired individuals aged 65 and above. A sample of 150 respondents was gathered, including 67 men and 83 women. Quantitative data were collected using a questionnaire distributed via email between February and March 2023. Within one week, a sample of 150 responses was collected. The questionnaire was divided into two parts and comprised 21 questions. The first part of the questionnaire focused on general questions to assess the socio-professional status of the individual. This part included four questions on age, gender, employment status, and the highest level of education. The second part of the questionnaire consisted of 17 questions on the use of social networks, television viewing, and other questions that allowed us to analyse the perception of digital and traditional advertising by individuals aged 50 years and older.

3.2. Data Analysis and Limitations

Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistical tests, including a chi-square test to assess the relationship between variables. We also employed frequency analysis to examine the distribution of questionnaire responses. Additionally, a Likert scale was utilised to analyse participants' confidence levels regarding different types of advertisements. To analyse qualitative data, we examined responses to open-ended questions or comments left to clarify a response further. We primarily used lexical analysis to determine the frequency of occurrence of certain words. Furthermore, sentiment analysis was conducted to evaluate participants' opinions on digital and traditional advertising. This mixed-methods methodology was chosen

to obtain the most comprehensive understanding of participants' perceptions of advertising. The quantitative approach enabled us to analyse measurable data, while the qualitative approach provided more nuanced information on the questions posed to participants. The limitation of this study primarily lies in the sample size, which remains relatively small to generalise the conclusions drawn at the end of this study.

3.3. Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted following the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Before participating, participants received a brief description of the research and were able to provide informed consent¹⁴. Their confidentiality was protected throughout the research, and data were anonymised during the collection of questionnaire responses and analysis. These data were stored on a password-protected computer. The storage duration of this data is limited to two years from the launch of the questionnaire and will be destroyed at the end of the study.

¹⁴ See appendices

4. Analysis

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, we will perform a detailed analysis of the data collected as part of this thesis on the perception of digital and traditional advertising by individuals aged 50 and above to compare the advertising perceived by those still in the labour market and retirees. Our main objective is to discover which type of advertising has a more significant influence on individuals and to determine which factors determine this preference for one kind of advertising over the other.

In this research, we studied the perception of traditional and digital advertising among individuals aged 50 and above. Primarily, we analysed and compared the opinions of professionally active individuals and retirees. We examined various aspects, such as the use of social media by both groups, as well as the use of traditional media such as television. We also analysed the frequency of use of these media, the main reasons for using social media, viewing advertisements on TV and specific social media platforms, and the use of ad blockers. Another interesting aspect we analysed in this study is people's trust in different types of advertising. This kind of study has already been conducted, but we have revisited and adapted it to our current research needs (Campbell & Marks, 2015).

The data analysed in the context of this thesis includes responses to an online questionnaire distributed to individuals aged 50 and above, from which we collected 150 responses. This questionnaire consisted of two parts with general questions regarding age, gender, professional situation, and education level. These questions allowed us to establish a socio-professional profile of each individual to determine if the perception of advertising is specific to a particular profile. The second part of the questionnaire included specific questions about the use and frequency of use of various advertising media, primarily television and social media, the main activities of individuals on social networks, viewing advertisements on different media, trust in various types of media, and the use of ad blockers. These questions allowed us to analyse people's behaviour towards different media, their preferences, and their perception of advertising.

This study will use a combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses. We will employ descriptive statistical analysis using the chi-square test to determine if there is a significant

relationship between two categorical variables. This test will also enable us to conduct a comparative data analysis. Additionally, we will conduct a qualitative study by analysing the participants' open-ended responses. This analysis will allow us to enrich our quantitative analysis further.

The specific objectives of this analysis will allow us to determine whether it is relevant to use digital advertising through social networks to influence consumers aged 50 and above. This analysis will also help us address our five main hypotheses and answer our research question: “Which channels are the most effective for advertising to people aged 50 and over in Belgium?”. Let us recall our five hypotheses:

H1: Individuals aged 50 and over still in active employment are more inclined to use social networks frequently than retired individuals.

H2: Professionally active individuals tend to use social media primarily for entertainment, while elderly individuals tend to use them mainly to stay in touch with their family.

H3: Individuals in active employment show a marked preference for digital advertising over traditional advertising.

H4: The increasing use of social media among the elderly leads to the development of a growing trust in digital advertising

H5: Professionally active individuals are likelier to use ad blockers than retired individuals.

We will approach the analysis of the questionnaire responses by conducting a descriptive statistical analysis of the data obtained through the chi-square test while supplementing the received data with a qualitative analysis, including specific responses to the open-ended questions received. In the next chapter, we will further deepen our discussion of the results obtained and conclude this study with a summary of the results from the theoretical and practical sections and suggestions for future studies.

This analysis is a crucial part of this study, as it will allow us to uncover the attitudes of individuals aged 50 and above towards advertising and discover people's behaviour and habits in using different media. The conclusions obtained at the end of this study will enable marketing professionals, companies, and associations to understand this under-researched demographic better and adopt better strategies to maximise the effectiveness of various media in positively influencing consumer experience.

4.2. Results

In this section, we will present the results of our study to address the five hypotheses. We will begin by explaining the data, and then we will conduct a quantitative analysis using the chi-square test, followed by a qualitative study of the participants' responses.

To conduct this study, we collected 150 responses from individuals aged 50 to 89. Of these respondents, 83 were women, and 67 were men. 68 individuals indicated that they were retired, while 82 were professionally active. The questionnaire consisted of multiple-choice questions, a Likert scale, notably to assess the level of trust in different advertisement types, and open-ended questions. It comprised 21 questions and lasted 10 minutes.

Hypothesis 1: Individuals aged 50 and over still in active employment are more inclined to use social networks frequently than retired individuals.

To address this hypothesis, we will start by analysing the following questions asked in our questionnaire and some of the participants' responses. We will skip the analysis of the participants' socio-professional status because the first part of the questionnaire will help us with the quantitative data. In qualitative analysis, we will focus on the questions from the second part of our questionnaire.

Question 1 : Regardez-vous la télévision ? ¹⁵

We started the second part of the questionnaire with questions about participants' desire to watch television. The data revealed that 136 participants (90.67%) responded positively to this question, and 14 people (9.33%) responded that they rarely watch television. Among the negative answers, we could find two different kinds of disinterest in television: first, participants described television as “uninteresting” (5 times) as in the following examples 1 and 2:

Example 1: "cela ne m'intéresse pas"

Example 2: "très peu de choses intéressante à regarder"

¹⁵ [Translation] *Question 1: Do you watch television ?*

Second, participants explained that they felt "wasting their time" (example 3) while watching TV (2 participants).

Example 3: “impression de perdre mon temps”

To delve deeper into this question, we also asked how much time the respondents spent watching television daily (Q1a: Combien de temps par jour regardez-vous la television?¹⁶). 30 participants (20%) reported watching television for less than an hour daily. 88 participants (58.67%) reported watching television between 1 and 3 hours, and 18 participants (12%) reported watching television for over 3 hours.

We will deviate from our initial hypothesis to determine whether retired individuals spend more time watching television than professionally active individuals. The results will help discover whether it is still worthwhile to continue using television as one of the leading advertising channels. To begin with, we will cross-tabulate the variables of age and television usage to determine if these two variables are correlated. We obtained $p = 0.682 > p 0.05$ result by crossing these variables. Therefore, we can conclude that there is no correlation between these variables; age is not a determining factor for television usage. However, by cross-tabulating the age variable with the frequency variable, we obtain a result of $p = 0.055 > p = 0.05$. The result is slightly higher than the reference threshold ($p = 0.05$). Still, it remains interesting to continue the analysis because we could obtain a result lower than $p = 0.05$ with a larger sample.

Table 3: Analysis of the correlation between age and TV usage using the chi-square test
Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.

Tests du khi-carré			
	Valeur	df	Signification asymptotique (bilatérale)
Khi-deux de Pearson	7,592 ^a	3	,055
Rapport de vraisemblance	8,101	3	,044
N d'observations valides	150		

a. 2 cellules (25,0%) ont un effectif théorique inférieur à 5.
L'effectif théorique minimum est de 3,64.

¹⁶ [Translation] Q1a: How many time do you watch television daily?

Table 4 below provides an overview of the time spent watching television based on age. To better understand this table, we can interpret it as follows: *Age 1* = 50 years - 69 years; *Age 2* = 70 years - 89 years; *TV Time 1* = less than 1 hour; *TV Time 2* = Between 1 hour and 3 hours; *TV Time 3* = More than 3 hours; *TV Time 0* = individuals who do not watch television at all or only occasionally. We can observe that generally, individuals aged 50 to 89 watch television between 1 and 3 hours. We also observe that 20.5% of individuals aged 70 to 89 watch television for more than 3 hours per day, compared to 9% of individuals aged 50 to 69. This indicates that as age increases, the time spent watching television becomes longer. At this stage, we cannot say whether this difference in daily television viewing time is due to a higher interest among individuals aged 70 to 89. We can say with certainty that television remains very present in the lives of many individuals aged 50 and above.

Table 4: Analysis of correlation between TV watching time and age.

Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.

Tableau croisé age * TempsTV							
			TempsTV				
			0	1	2	3	Total
age	1	Effectif	11	27	63	10	111
		% dans age	9,9%	24,3%	56,8%	9,0%	100,0%
		Résidus standardisés	,2	1,0	-,3	-,9	
	2	Effectif	3	3	25	8	39
		% dans age	7,7%	7,7%	64,1%	20,5%	100,0%
		Résidus standardisés	-,3	-1,7	,4	1,5	
Total	Effectif	14	30	88	18	150	
	% dans age	9,3%	20,0%	58,7%	12,0%	100,0%	

By conducting the chi-square test with the variables of professional status and television viewing time, we obtained a result of $p = 0.001 < p = 0.05$. We can clearly say that these two variables are correlated, and therefore, we can deepen our analysis by observing the results obtained. By analysing Table 5 below, we can observe that the results obtained are similar to those of the previous results. To read the table properly, we need to know the values of the crossed variables. *Profession 1* = retired individuals; *Profession 2* = professionally active individuals; *Profession 0* = Other; *TV Time 1* = less than 1 hour; *TV Time 2* = Between 1 hour and 3 hours; *TV Time 3* = More than 3 hours; *TV Time 0* = individuals who do not watch

television at all or only occasionally. Looking at this table, we arrive at the same conclusion as the previous one. People watch television between 1 and 3 hours daily regardless of their professional status. However, 20.6% of retired individuals watch television for more than 3 hours per day compared to 5.3% of professionally active individuals. Therefore, we can say that a higher proportion of retired individuals watch television for extended periods than professionally active individuals; precisely four times more retired individuals watch television for more than 3 hours per day than their professionally active counterparts. Let us now focus on the frequency of social media usage.

Table 5: Analysis of correlation between TV watching time and professional status.

Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.

Tableau croisé profession * TempsTV							
		TempsTV					
		0	1	2	3	Total	
profession	0	Effectif	0	4	2	0	6
		% dans profession	0,0%	66,7%	33,3%	0,0%	100,0%
		Résidus standardisés	-,7	2,6	-,8	-,8	
	1	Effectif	8	6	40	14	68
		% dans profession	11,8%	8,8%	58,8%	20,6%	100,0%
		Résidus standardisés	,7	-2,1	,0	2,0	
	2	Effectif	6	20	46	4	76
		% dans profession	7,9%	26,3%	60,5%	5,3%	100,0%
		Résidus standardisés	-,4	1,2	,2	-1,7	
Total	Effectif	14	30	88	18	150	
	% dans profession	9,3%	20,0%	58,7%	12,0%	100,0%	

Question 2 : Utilisez-vous les réseaux sociaux ? ¹⁷

Social media practices revealed even more disincentives among the participants: 118 participants (78.67%) answered that they were using social media, and 32 people (21.33%) said they were not.

Not interesting. As for television, the first reason participants do not use social media is that they find the practice "uninteresting" and "time wasting (16 times)" as we can observe in the examples 4 and 5. We can already say that in comparison to the use of television, 32 participants answered negatively about using social media versus 14 participants who responded that they used television.

¹⁷ [Translation] Question 2: Do you use social media?

Example 4: "futiles et perte de temps"

Example 5 : "Cela ne m'intéresse pas"

Not useful. Another cause was to find the "usefulness" of social media (3 times), as in example 6. Another interesting response was given in Dutch in example 7. In Dutch, the word "oud" means old. It is curious to note that some consider themselves "old" in the use of social media. This statement can be an indicator of self-perception regarding the use of social media and the subjective age. Social media is an effective way to develop social interactions and build a network of friends, family, and acquaintances. Therefore, social media is accessible to everyone.

Example 6: "je n'y vois aucune utilité"

Example 7: "Te oud en geen interesse"

These responses show that the digital divide remains quite present. Despite the growing number of silver surfers, which is also noticeable in our questionnaire (118 people use social media), 32 people out of 150 (21.33%) still do not use them, most often because they are not sufficiently informed about the advantages and disadvantages that social media can bring.

Question 2a: Combien de temps par jour pesez-vous sur les réseaux sociaux ?¹⁸

We also asked about the time spent on social media per day. 81 people (54%) responded that they spend less than 1 hour per day on social media, 33 (22%) answered that they spend between 1 and 3 hours, and 4 responded that they spend more than 3 hours daily. We can once more observe the difference between television and social media. 88 participants answered that they watched television for between 1 and 3 hours, and 18 participants responded that they watched it for more than 3 hours daily. On the other hand, 81 participants answered that they used social media for less than 1 hour, 33 participants answered they used it between 1 and 3 hours, and only 4 participants responded that they used it for more than 3 hours daily. In analysing those statistics, we can say that people aged 50 and over are more interested in watching television than using social media.

¹⁸ [Translation] *Question 2a: How much time per day do you spend on social media?*

To deepen our qualitative analysis of the previous answers, we conducted the chi-square test by cross-tabulating the data on age and the frequency of social media usage to examine the relationship between the two variables. The chi-square test yielded a $p = 0.152 > p = 0.05$ result. This means that we do not have enough evidence to conclude that there is a significant correlation between age and the frequency of social media usage. In other words, age is not a determining factor in the frequency of social media usage.

Table 6: Analysis of the correlation between age and the frequency of social media usage
Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8,081 ^a	5	,152
Likelihood Ratio	10,407	5	,064
N of Valid Cases	150		
a. 5 cells (41,7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is ,26.			

We continued to conduct several chi-square tests, particularly by cross-tabulating the variables of age, social media usage time, occupational activity, and social media usage time. Still, none of these tests revealed a correlation between these variables. In both tests, the obtained result for p was higher than the predetermined reference threshold of $p = 0.05$.

Therefore, we can conclude that the results of the quantitative and qualitative analysis contradict our hypothesis, which states that professionally active individuals aged 50 and above use social media most frequently. In other words, individuals aged 50 and above who are still in the workforce do not specifically use social media more regularly than retired individuals. However, non-active individuals watch television for more extended periods than active individuals. This leads us to a more general conclusion that people aged 50 and above are more interested in watching TV than using social media despite the steady increase of older adult users on the Internet in recent years. These conclusions lead us to believe we cannot prefer one

medium for disseminating advertising, as both media are used regardless of age. Still, there is undoubtedly a clear preference for the traditional medium among the population. Therefore, it would not be pertinent to advertise on only one channel.

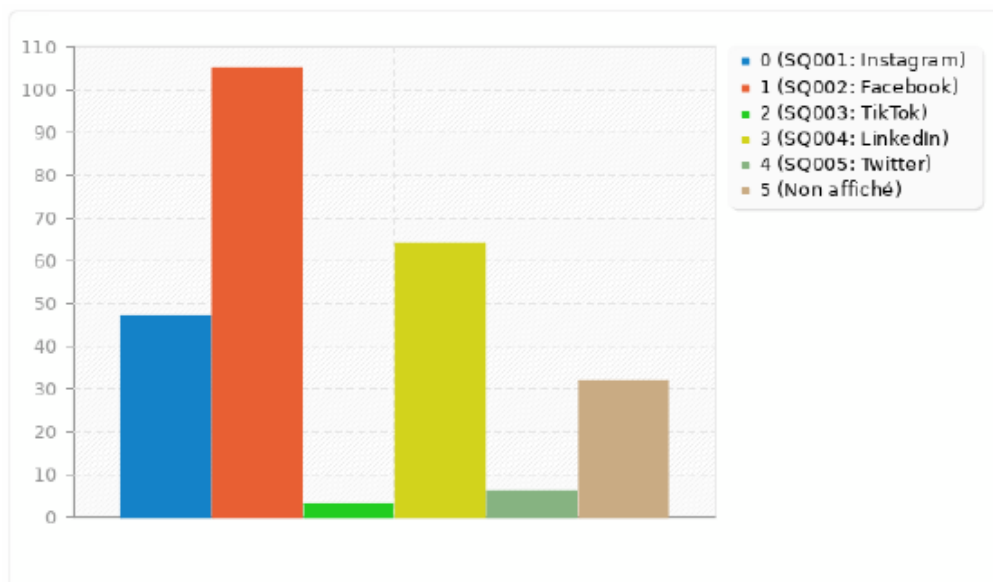
Hypothesis 2: Professionally active individuals tend to use social media primarily for entertainment, while elderly individuals tend to use them mainly to stay in touch with their family.

To address the second hypothesis, we will start with qualitative analysis, examining the responses to questions about the types of social media used and analysing the most frequent activities on the Internet.

Question 2b : Parmi ces réseaux sociaux, le(s)quel(s) utilisez-vous ?¹⁹

We asked the participants about their preferred social networks, such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, LinkedIn, and X (formerly Twitter). The results showed that Facebook holds the first place with 105 responses (70%). Next is LinkedIn, which has 64 responses (42.67%). Instagram is third, with 47 responses (31.33%). X (formerly Twitter) holds fourth place with 6 responses (4%), and TikTok is last with only 3 responses (2%).

Figure 6 : Analysis of responses to the question "Parmi ces reseaux sociaux, le(s)quel(s) utilisez-vous ?"
Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.



¹⁹ [Translation] Question 2b: Among these social networks, which one(s) do you use?

Question 2c : Êtes-vous abonné.e à des entreprises/marques sur les réseaux sociaux ?²⁰

Then, we asked the question to determine whether or not participants are subscribed to companies/brands on social media. We obtained the following results: 89 people (59.33%) responded that they are not subscribed to companies or brands on social media, and 29 people (19.33%) responded that they are subscribed to a company or brand. Upon analysing the responses, the companies that come up most frequently are different shops such as Paprika, INNO or companies such as BMW, as shown in the following examples:

Example 1: “Paprika”

Example 2: “BMW, Mercedes, ethias”

Example 3: “INNO.be”

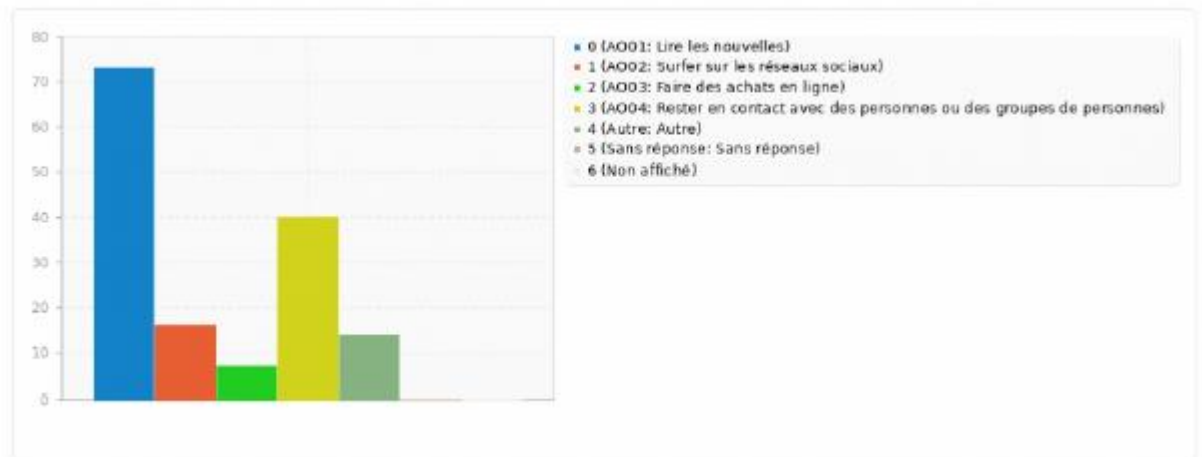
Question 3 : Quelle est votre activité sur Internet la plus fréquente ?²¹

The next question we analysed related to the most frequent activity on the Internet (Figure 7). We obtained the following results: 73 people (48.67%) responded that their most frequent activity on the Internet is reading the news (example 4). 40 people (26.67%) answered that they most frequently use the Internet to stay in touch with people or groups of people. 16 people (10.67%) responded that they use the Internet to browse social networks, and only 7 (4.67%) responded that they use it for online shopping.

Figure 7 : Analysis of responses to the question “Quelle est votre activité sur Internet la plus fréquente ?”
Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.

²⁰ [Translation] *Question 2c: Are you subscribed to companies/brands on social media?*

²¹ [Translation] *Question3: What is your most frequent activity on the Internet?*



Example 4: “nouvelles, vérifier une information, rechercher des informations, achats,...”

To deepen our qualitative analysis and to answer our second hypothesis, we will cross-tabulate the profession variable with the variable of frequent activity on the Internet. In our questionnaire, we used the multiple-choice question: "Quelle est votre activité sur Internet la plus fréquente ?"²² and we offered 5 possible answers: 1) lire les nouvelles ; 2) surfer sur les réseaux sociaux ; 3) faire des achats en ligne ; 4) autre.²³ We obtain a chi-square test result of $p = 0.001 < p = 0.05$ (Table 7). This indicates a strong correlation between the profession variable and the variable of frequent activity on the Internet.

Table 7: Analysis of the correlation between professional status and frequent activity on the Internet using the chi-square test

Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.

Tests du khi-carré			
	Valeur	df	Signification asymptotique (bilatérale)
Khi-deux de Pearson	26,662 ^a	8	<,001
Rapport de vraisemblance	31,269	8	<,001
N d'observations valides	150		

a. 7 cellules (46,7%) ont un effectif théorique inférieur à 5.
L'effectif théorique minimum est de ,28.

²² [Translation] *What is your most frequent activity on the Internet?*

²³ [Translation] *1) reading the news; 2) surfing social networks; 3) online shopping; 4) other.*

Let us analyse the results more closely. The table below (Table 8) indicates that professionally active and retired individuals use the Internet for different purposes. This table shows that professionally active individuals (*profession 2*) mostly use the Internet to read the news (*FrenquenteActiviteInternet 1*). Retired individuals (*profession 1*), on the other hand, use the Internet most frequently to read the news (*FrenquenteActiviteInternet 1*) but also to stay in touch with people or groups of people (*FrenquenteActiviteInternet 4*). This indicates that retired individuals have a greater need for social activity than professionally active individuals, and retirees fulfil this need through social networks. Meanwhile, professionally active individuals need to stay informed about world events. This analysis partially answers our hypothesis. We have determined that professionally active and retired individuals have the same need: staying informed. This is primarily the purpose for which the Internet is used by individuals aged 50 and above. Table 8 shows a significant difference between active and inactive individuals: Retired individuals are three times (41.2%) more dedicated to the use of the Internet to stay in touch with their loved ones compared to active individuals (13.2%)

Table 8: Analysis of the correlation between professional status and frequent activity on the Internet
Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.

Tableau croisé profession * FrequenteActiviteInternet								
			FrequenteActiviteInternet					
			0	1	2	3	4	Total
profession	0	Effectif	1	0	2	1	2	6
		% dans profession	16,7%	0,0%	33,3%	16,7%	33,3%	100,0%
		Résidus standardisés	,6	-1,7	1,7	1,4	,3	
	1	Effectif	5	31	4	0	28	68
		% dans profession	7,4%	45,6%	5,9%	0,0%	41,2%	100,0%
		Résidus standardisés	-,5	-,4	-1,2	-1,8	2,3	
	2	Effectif	8	42	10	6	10	76
		% dans profession	10,5%	55,3%	13,2%	7,9%	13,2%	100,0%
		Résidus standardisés	,3	,8	,7	1,3	-2,3	
Total		Effectif	14	73	16	7	40	150
		% dans profession	9,3%	48,7%	10,7%	4,7%	26,7%	100,0%

Question 4 : A quelle fréquence faites-vous vos achats en ligne ? ²⁴

²⁴ [Translation] Question 4: How often do you shop online?

For the frequency of online shopping, 83 people (55.33%) responded that they shop online only a few times a year. 46 people (30.67%) answered that they shop online a few times a month. 11 people (7.33%) responded that they shop online at least once a week, and 10 participants (6.67%) responded that they never shop online. We can observe that online shopping is not very popular among people aged 50 and over.

To answer our second hypothesis, according to which professionally active people use the Internet mainly for entertainment and retired people to keep in touch with others, we can say that the results partially confirm the hypothesis. Indeed, retirees responded that their frequent activity on the Internet is to keep in touch with others, which was also confirmed by the preferred social medium, Facebook, which was primarily created to offer people the opportunity to maintain social contact. However, the primary need of retirees is to stay informed, which is the same main activity for working professionals.

Hypothesis 3: Individuals in active employment show a marked preference for digital advertising over traditional advertising.

To address the third hypothesis, we will analyse participants' answers to questions about the perception of traditional and digital advertising among participants.

*Question 5 : Regardez-vous la publicité sur la télévision ou changez-vous directement de chaine ?*²⁵

We first asked participants whether they had watched television advertising or had changed the channel immediately without paying attention to the advertising. We obtained the following results: 93 individuals (62%) responded that they do not immediately change the channel but ignore the ads. 46 individuals (30.67%) answered that they immediately changed the channel. 9 individuals (6%) responded that they first watch the advertisement and change the channel if it does not interest them, and only 2 individuals (1.33%) responded that they watch the ad to the end.

²⁵ [Translation] *Question 5: Do you watch television advertisement or do you change the channel directly?"*

Question 6 : Regardez-vous la publicité sur YouTube (par exemple, avant que la vidéo ne démarre)²⁶

We then asked a similar question, but this time regarding advertisements on YouTube. We intentionally chose this social media as the ad on YouTube is similar to the traditional advertising on television. 134 people (89.33%) respond that they do not watch advertisements on YouTube, and only 16 people (10.67%) respond that they do watch advertisements on YouTube. Both for television advertising and YouTube advertising, people do not pay much attention to the ad and prefer to skip it, as shown in the following examples:

Example 1: "J'attends le bouton quitter la publicité"

Example 2 : "Je patiente et je quitte dès que je peux"

Those who answered that they do not watch advertisements on YouTube were allowed to leave a comment to provide a reason. Most commonly, people responded that they see "no interest" in ads (46 times). Other people responded that advertisements on YouTube are too "intrusive" (3 times), as shown in the following examples:

Example 3: "Cela ne m'intéresse pas"

Example 4 : "je déteste la publicité sauf celle qui m'intéresse ce qui est très rare"

Example 5 : "cela ne m'intéresse pas et je trouve que c'est une intrusion dans la vie privée"

Indeed, the term 'intrusive' describes advertising on YouTube quite well, which we can compare to television advertising. In both cases, advertising is imposed on the person watching television and YouTube. Advertising is described as 'intrusive' because it interrupts viewing a TV program or a video on YouTube, which is frowned upon by the viewer. Unlike television, YouTube users can choose to watch the advertisement until the end or not. Users can also subscribe to a Premium subscription that provides access to watching videos without interruption by advertising, which is not feasible on television.

²⁶ [Translation] *Question 6 : Do you watch advertisements on YouTube (for example, before the video starts)?*

Question 7 : Regardez-vous les vidéos publicitaires courtes sur les réseaux sociaux (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok) qui s'insèrent dans votre fil d'actualité ? ²⁷

We also asked about the short video ads we could find primarily on social media to determine whether they are more attractive than longer advertisements. We had 75 people (50%) respond that they see the ads but do not watch them, 37 people (24.67%) answered that they neither see nor watch these ads, and 6 people (4%) responded that they do watch these ads. Indeed, this advertising is less intrusive than television or YouTube ads because it does not prevent users from accessing content. Users can scroll down the news feed, stop to watch the ad, and then click on the link to access the site. We can observe again that few respondents watch this kind of advertisement.

Question 8 : Pensez-vous que la publicité sur Internet est plus intéressante que sur la télévision ? ²⁸

We asked the question to compare users' interest between traditional advertising (television advertising) and digital advertising (on the Internet). We obtained the following results: 112 people (74.67%) answered that they do not find Internet advertising more interesting than television advertising, and 38 people (25.33%) answered the opposite. Individuals could justify their answers by providing more information for each response. Here are some interesting examples:

Example 1 : "Plus ciblée sur mes besoins/envies"

Example 2 : "Car elle peut être plus appropriée à la personne qui la regarde"

Example 3 : "Par ce que plus adaptée à mon profil"

In the three examples mentioned above, we observe that consumers mention positive aspects such as targeting and adaptability of advertising to the consumer. Individuals who expressed a preference for digital advertising express themselves positively regarding digital advertising by emphasising that it is more “tailored” to their specific needs. By using personal pronouns like

²⁷ [Translation] *Question 7: Do you watch short advertising videos on social networks (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok) that appear in your news feed?*

²⁸ [Translation] *Question 8: Do you think that advertising on the Internet is more interesting than on television?*

“mes besoins/envies” (Example 1) and “mon profil” (Example 3), these individuals highlight the importance of their specific needs. It is, therefore, important for these individuals that advertising be more tailored to the audience.

Example 4 : "La télévision est un média vieillissant, on touche plus de personne sur les médias sociaux"

Example 5 : "Plus intéressante sur le plan commercial, vu le nombre d'utilisateurs"

Example 6: "Ca touche plus de monde et si internet = lien direct"

Respondents in examples 4, 5, and 6 emphasised that digital advertising reaches “plus de personnes”²⁹ because it is much more widely used. This is an interesting observation because, as we saw earlier, despite television becoming less popular, it remains one of the most commonly used media for advertising due to its broad reach. In example 2, the participant characterises television as “un média vieillissant”,³⁰ suggesting that fewer and fewer people are using television and also indicating that younger generations are using television less and less. Investigating this topic and comparing television usage among different generations would deepen our study. We can also observe another interesting comment in example 6: “internet = lien direc”³¹. This comment indicates that through social media, consumers and companies/brands can have a direct link and two-way communication, which is impossible through traditional media such as television or radio. The person who made this comment preferred digital advertising, suggesting that this direct link between the consumer and the company or brand presenting the advertisement is viewed positively.

Example 7 : "C'est toujours de la publicité faire la plupart du temps pour acheter"

Example 8 : "La publicité reste de la publicité – Création de besoins"

Example 9 : "Ca reste de la pub ! pour pousser à la consommation"

Example 10 : "Je n'ai jamais prêté attention consciemment à la publicité. Quel que soit le support. Je n'ai jamais aimé l'idée qu'on puisse nous influencer dans nos choix de consommation. Si j'ai besoin de quelque chose, j'essaye d'effectuer mes recherches et mon choix en toute indépendance."

²⁹[Translation] “more people”

³⁰ [Translation] “an ageing media”

³¹ [Translation] “internet = direct link”

In the examples above, respondents highlight a critical perception of advertising, which creates needs and encourages consumers to consume more. Advertising is perceived as manipulative. Example 10 shows that it is essential for individuals to maintain their independence in choosing products/services without feeling manipulated and invaded by advertising.

Example 11 : "Se retrouve au milieu de fake news et ne sont pas personnalisées"

Example : 12 : "La pub est une arnaque"

Example 13 : "Sentiment de harcèlement que je n'ai pas avec la télévision"

Example 14 : "Je considère la publicité comme une action abrutissante et polluante réduisant l'humain à un vulgaire sujet de consommation"

Example 15 : "Publicité est mensongère et envahissante aussi bien sur internet que la télévision"

The examples above evoke a very negative image of advertising. Respondents used strong terms to characterise advertising such as "fake news" (example 1), "arnaque"³² (example 2), "harcèlement"³³ (example 13), "action abrutissante et polluante réduisant l'humain à un vulgaire sujet de consommation"³⁴ (example 14), "publicité est mensongère et envahissante"³⁵ (example 15). All these terms portray advertising in a negative light. Example 11 draws a parallel between advertising and fake news. From this comment, we can understand that advertising is as malicious as fake news for the respondent. In this comment, we sense the rejection and fear of being manipulated or deceived by advertising. The same fear is felt in Example 12, where the respondent characterises advertising as "une arnaque"³⁶. In Example 13, the respondent mentions the intrusive nature of advertising encountered on the Internet compared to television advertising. The respondent feels that there is more Internet advertising than television. The respondent shares the same sentiment in Example 15, for whom advertising is "mensongère et envahissante"³⁷. Example 14 highlights the negative impact of advertising on individuals because, according to the respondent, advertising is a means of increasing consumption and dehumanising individuals by "réduisant à un vulgaire sujet de

³² [Translation] "scam"

³³ [Translation] "harassment"

³⁴ [Translation] "brainwashing and polluting action reducing humans to vulgar consumers"

³⁵ [Translation] "advertising is deceitful and intrusive"

³⁶ [Translation] "scam"

³⁷ [Translation] "deceitful and intrusive"

consummation”³⁸. These examples demonstrate a negative perception of advertising, describing it as a tool to influence consumption choices and create artificial needs. Respondents desire more independence in their decision-making and demonstrate mistrust towards advertising, which promotes consumption insistently.

Example 16 : "Je n'ai pas l'impression qu'elles soient vraiment différentes de la télé"

Example 17 : "C'est encore pire à cause des trackers"

Example 18 : "C'est de toute façon de la publicité passive que l'on subit"

Example 19 : "Même ciblée sur nos intérêts, elle est intrusive et non nécessaire"

Example 20 : "Elle est envahissante et cela me dérange de constater que les recherches ont été suivies et font l'objet de publicité ciblée"

The examples mentioned above also evoke a negative sentiment towards advertising. Example 16 suggests there is not much difference between digital and traditional advertising. This may indicate that advertising is perceived as intrusive regardless of the delivery channel. The same impression is shared in examples 18, 19, and 20. Example 18 highlights frustration related to the inability to choose or avoid advertisements: “publicité passive que l’on subit”³⁹. Example 19 underscores the lack of relevance of advertising even when it is more targeted. Terms such as “intrusive” and “envahissante”⁴⁰ also recur in these examples. Examples 17 and 20 share the same fear of trackers tracking user activity. These examples evoke a negative feeling about the intrusion of advertising, the lack of control over advertising content, and concerns about privacy and intrusion into users' private lives. These concerns underscore the importance for companies/brands/platforms to respect user privacy and find ways to improve the online advertising experience to make it more relevant, less intrusive, and respectful of consumer privacy.

To further analyse the previous qualitative analysis, we will cross-tabulate the professional status variable with the preference variable between digital and traditional advertising. We obtain a chi-square test result with a p-value of $0.010 < 0.05$. The results show that professional activity seems to be correlated to advertising preferences. Let us take a closer look at the results.

³⁸ [Translation] “reducing them to vulgar consumers”

³⁹ [Translation] “passive advertising that we’re subjected to”

⁴⁰ [Translation] “invasive”

In our study, we asked the following question: "*Pensez-vous que la publicité sur Internet est plus intéressante que la publicité à la télévision ?*"⁴¹ The table represents this question by the variable *Pub TV vs Internet*. This table reveals two essential results for our analysis. First, most responses indicate that both active and retired individuals do not find advertising on the internet more interesting than advertising on television. However, we observe that 35.5% of active individuals (*profession 2*) answered that advertising on the Internet is more interesting (*PubTVvsInternet 2*) compared to 16.2% of retired individuals (*profession 1*): they are twice more influenced by online advertising.

Table 9: Analysis of the correlation between professional status and the preference between digital and traditional advertising

Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.

Tableau croisé profession * PubTVvsInternet			PubTVvsInternet		Total
			1	2	
profession 0	Effectif		6	0	6
	% dans profession		100,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	Résidus standardisés		,7	-1,2	
1	Effectif		57	11	68
	% dans profession		83,8%	16,2%	100,0%
	Résidus standardisés		,9	-1,5	
2	Effectif		49	27	76
	% dans profession		64,5%	35,5%	100,0%
	Résidus standardisés		-1,0	1,8	
Total	Effectif		112	38	150
	% dans profession		74,7%	25,3%	100,0%

Question 9 : *Quel type de publicité préférez-vous ?*⁴²

Therefore, we decided to ask participants whether they preferred traditional or digital advertising. We analysed the preferences of individuals aged 50 and older regarding the type of advertising between general and personalised. We also added a response option: "I have no choice". 111 individuals (74%) did not prefer either type of advertising. With this question, we confirm that individuals aged 50 and older have a negative view of advertising and see no

⁴¹ [Translation] *Do you think advertising on the Internet is more interesting than advertising on television?*

⁴² [Translation] *Question 9: Which type of advertisement do you prefer?*

interest in it. 19 individuals (12.67%) stated a preference for general advertising, and 20 individuals (13.33%) expressed a preference for personalised advertising. These statistics suggest that people prefer customised advertising more than general advertising. Still, the difference is insignificant due to the small sample, and the question requires further exploration.

Now, we will cross-tabulate the data of the professional status variable with the variable of the type of advertising that individuals prefer. We distinguished two types of advertising in the questionnaire: general advertising and personalised advertising. On one hand, we have general advertising, which reaches a maximum number of consumers. We can see it on television and specific social media platforms like YouTube. On the other hand, we have personalised advertising, which mainly appears on social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, etc. This advertising is often tailored to consumer preferences through algorithms and cookies. This question will help us discover if there is a preference for the type of advertising based on professional status. The chi-square test yields a $p = 0.657 > p = 0.05$ result. We can, therefore, deduce that these two variables are not significantly correlated. We can conclude that age is not correlated to the different types of advertising.

Table 10 : Analysis of responses to the question "Quel type de publicité préférez-vous ?"
Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.

Réponse	Décompte	Pourcentage
Publicité générale (AO01)	19	12.67%
Publicité personnalisée? (Publicité, généralement sur les réseaux sociaux, adaptée à vos préférences) (AO02)	20	13.33%
Je n'ai pas de préférence (AO03)	111	74.00%
Sans réponse	0	0.00%
Non affiché	0	0.00%

*Question 11 : Avez-vous déjà cliqué sur une publicité pour avoir plus d'informations sur le produit ou sur l'entreprise ?*⁴³

To determine if it is common for individuals aged 50 and older to click on a digital advertisement to get more information about a product, service, or company, we asked whether participants have already clicked on an ad to have more information about a product or a

⁴³ [Translation] *Question 11 : Have you ever clicked on an advertisement to get more information about the product or the company?*

company. After providing their response, individuals could also leave a comment to further elaborate on their answers.

Exemple 1 : "Je ne fais pas confiance"

Exemple 2 : "Curiosité, sans plus"

Exemple 3 : "Pas d'intérêt et crainte de hacking"

Exemple 4 : "Méfiance. Virus"

Exemple 5 : "Je me méfie trop des arnaqueuses"

The examples illustrated above show mistrust toward online advertisements. People fear being scammed, hacked, or encountering a virus, an obstacle to digital advertising. Therefore, platforms and advertisers must ensure security and transparency to increase trust and thus improve the consumer experience.

Considering both analyses, we can answer our third hypothesis, which states that professionally active participants prefer digital advertising. The results obtained during the qualitative and quantitative analysis show that the surveyed individuals do not have a preference for advertising broadcasted on television or the Internet. Nonetheless, we still observe that professionally active individuals slightly prefer digital advertising over retired individuals. Given that the results are only slightly different, we cannot claim that professionally active individuals prefer digital advertising over traditional advertising. We need to conduct a more in-depth study with a larger sample size to draw a more general conclusion. The participants characterised the advertising as “intrusive” and expressed a negative feeling regarding this type of advertising. Additionally, participants did not show any particular interest in shorter advertisements on social media, which are considered less intrusive because they do not interrupt the activity.

Hypothesis 4: The increasing use of social media among the elderly leads to the development of a growing trust in digital advertising

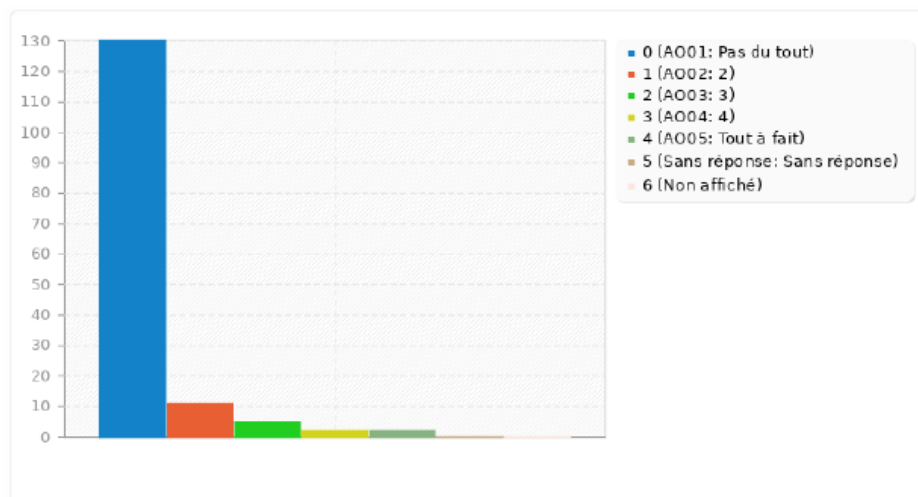
To address the fourth hypothesis, which states that older adults develop a growing trust in digital advertising due to the increasing use of social media, we will continue the descriptive

qualitative analysis by revisiting the Likert scale used in our questionnaire. The propositions we used for the Likert scale were adapted from “*Good native advertising isn’t a secret*” (Campbell & Marks, 2015, p.601). This scale included the question: “*En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance ?*”⁴⁴ and 14 options evaluated on a 5-point scale. 1 corresponded to “je ne fais pas du tout confiance”⁴⁵ and 5 corresponded to “je fais tout à fait confiance”⁴⁶. Let us now observe each response to this question.

Question 10 : En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance ?

Figure 8: Analysis of responses to the question “En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance ? [Publicité textuelle via les SMS]”

Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.



In our analysis of the first question regarding trust in SMS advertisement (“En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance? [Publicité textuelle via les SMS]”), we obtained the following results: 130 persons (86.67%) responded that they do not trust text-based advertising sent through SMS. Only 11 persons (1.33%) agreed they trust this type of advertising entirely.

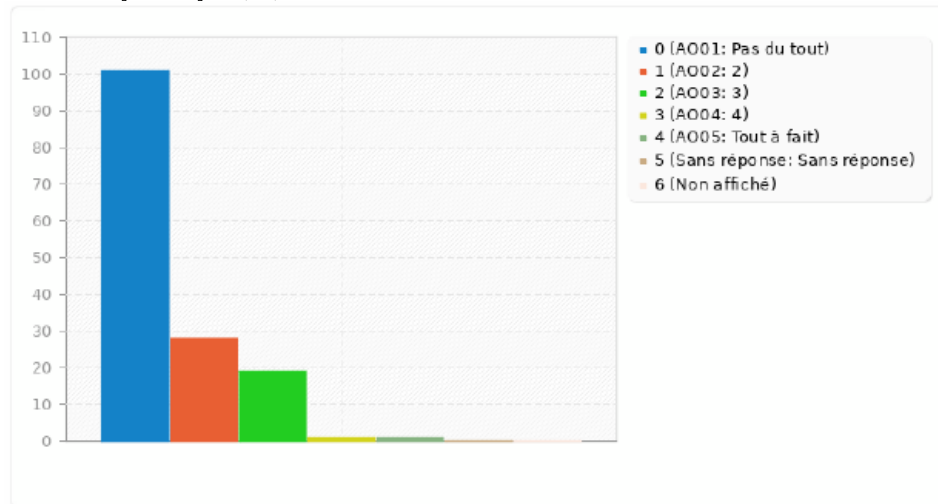
⁴⁴ [Translation] *Which form of advertising do you trust the most?*

⁴⁵ [Translation] “I do not trust at all.”

⁴⁶ [Translation] “I completely trust”

Figure 9: Analysis of responses to the question "En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance ? [Bannières publicitaires sur les sites web]"

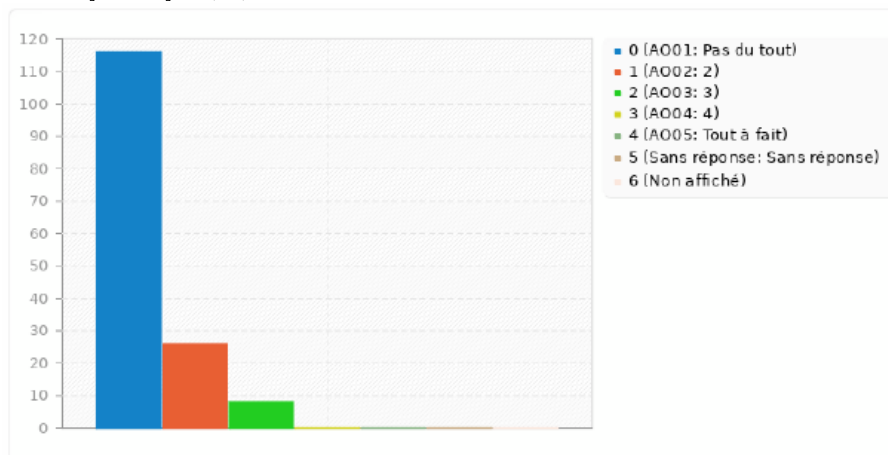
Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.



For the second question about the trust in advertising banners (“En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance ? [Bannières publicitaires sur les sites web]”), we found that 101 persons (67.33%) responded that they do not trust banner ads on websites at all. Only one person (0.67%) responded that he completely trusted them.

Figure 10: Analysis of responses to the question "En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance ? [Publicité par affichage sur les appareils électroniques (publicité qui apparait dans certaines applications, jeux, etc.)]"

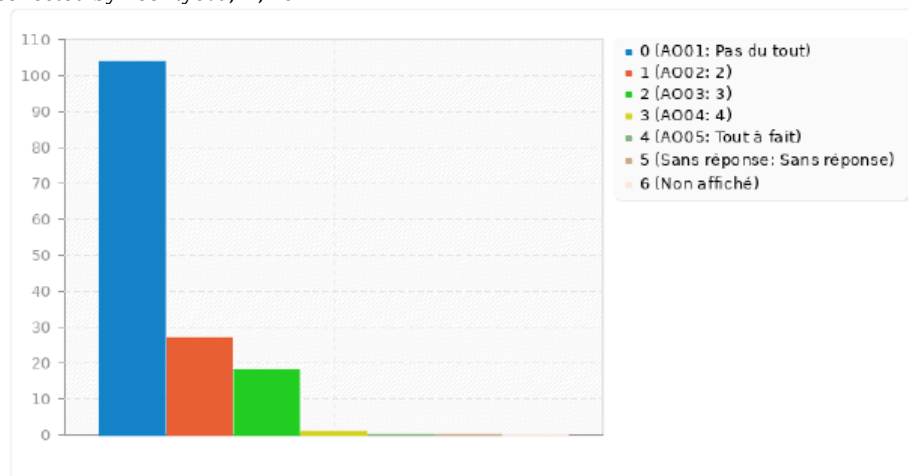
Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.



The third question about the trust in advertising on different apps ("En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance? [Publicité par affichage sur les appareils électroniques (publicité qui apparait dans certaines applications, jeux, etc.)]), revealed that 116 persons (77.33%) responded that they do not trust display advertising on electronic devices at all, and only 8 persons (5.33%) responded with a 3 out of 5.

Figure 11: Analysis of responses to the question "En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance ? [Publicité sur les réseaux sociaux (publicité cliquable sur les réseaux sociaux)]"

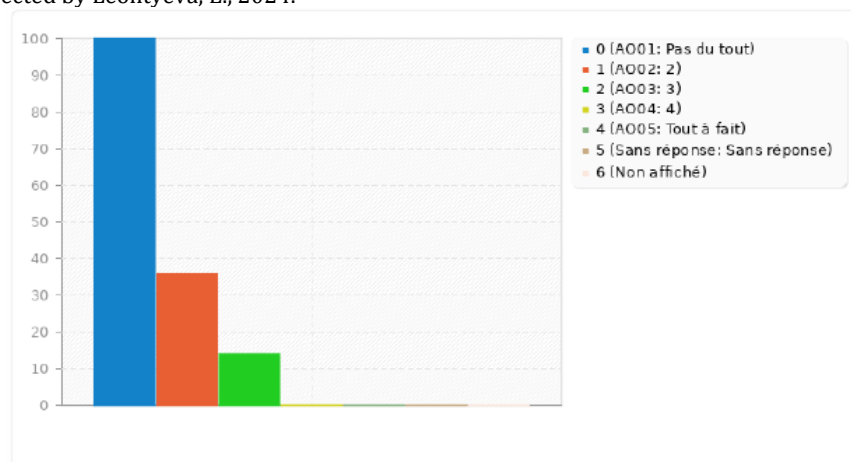
Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.



For the fourth question regarding the trust in social media advertising (“En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance? [Publicité sur les reseaux sociaux (publicité cliquable sur les reseaux sociaux)]”), we obtained 69.33% of respondents who answered that they did not trust it at all, and only 0.67% who gave a rating of 4 out of 5.

Figure 12: Analysis of responses to the question "En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance ? [Publicité vidéo en ligne (publicité sur Youtube, vidéos publicitaires sur les réseaux sociaux, etc.)]"

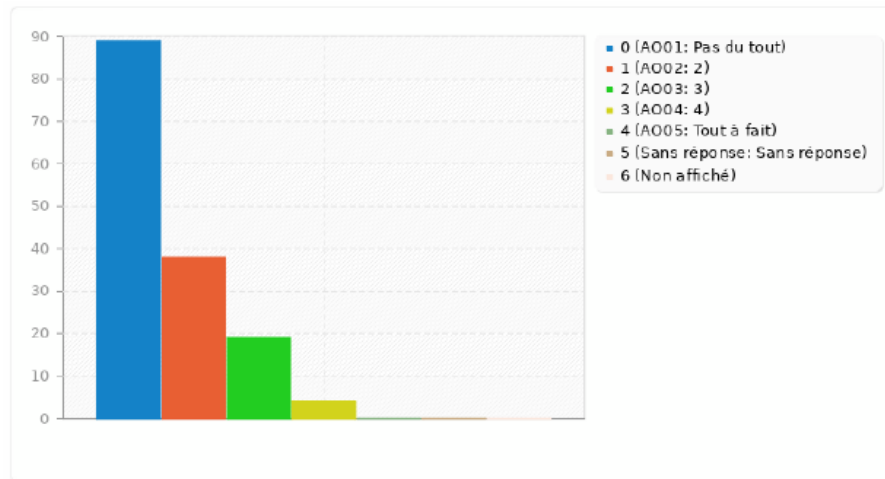
Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.



For the fifth question regarding the online video advertising ("En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance? [Publicité vidéo en ligne (publicité sur Youtube, vidéos publicitaires sur les reseaux sociaux, etc.)]"), 67% of people responded that they did not trust it at all, and 9.33% gave a rating of 3 out of 5.

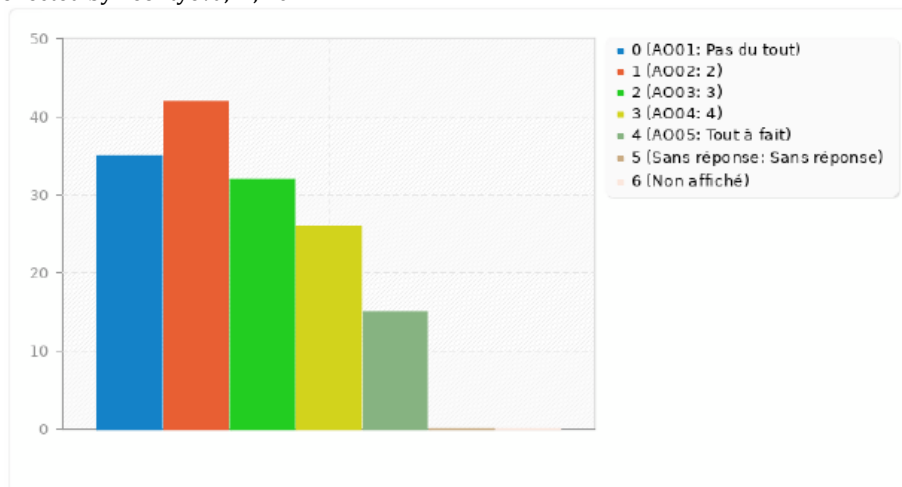
Figure 13: Analysis of responses to the question "En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance ? [Publicité diffusée dans les résultats des moteurs de recherche]"

Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.



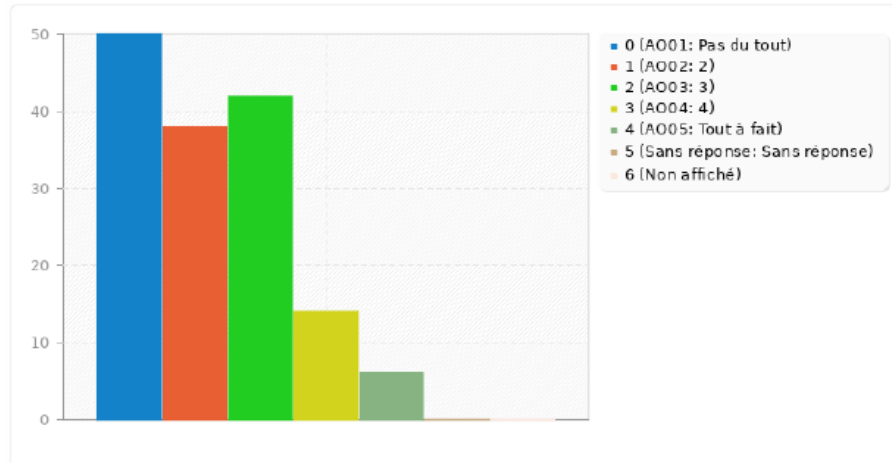
For the sixth question regarding the search engine advertising ("En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance? [Publicité diffuse dans les résultats de moteurs de recherche]"), 59.33% of people responded that they did not trust it at all, and 2.67% gave a rating of 4 out of 5.

Figure 14: Analysis of responses to the question "En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance ? [Emails (des magasins/marques/entreprises) pour lesquels vous vous êtes inscrit.e]"
Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.



For the seventh question regarding the mails advertising ("En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance? [Emails (des magasins/marques/entreprises) pour lesquels vous vous êtes inscrit.e]"), 23.33% responded that they do not trust at all, and 10% answered that they trust completely.

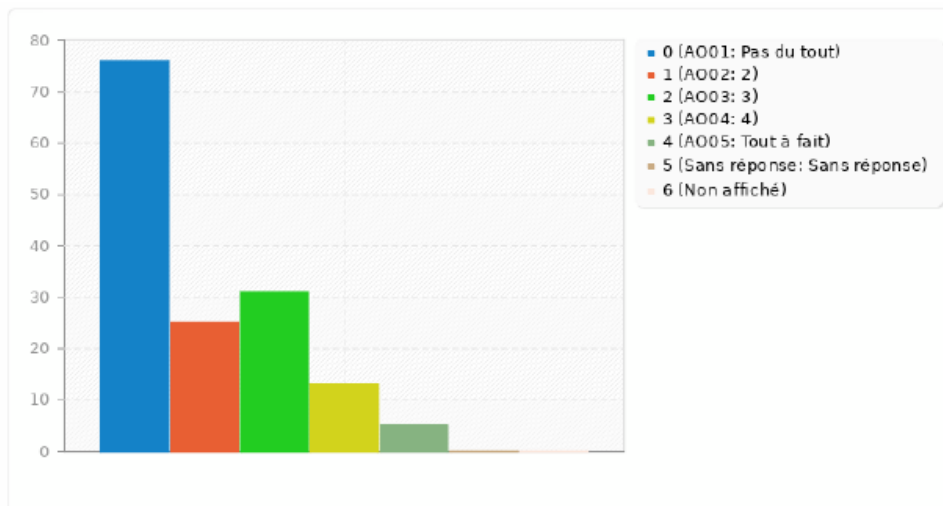
Figure 15: Analysis of responses to the question "En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance ? [Publicité dans les journaux]"
Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.



For the eight question regarding the traditional advertising on newspapers (“En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance? [Publicité dans les journaux]”), 33.33% of people responded that they do not trust at all, and 4% answered that they trust completely.

Figure 16: Analysis of responses to the question "En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance ? [Sponsoring de marque]"

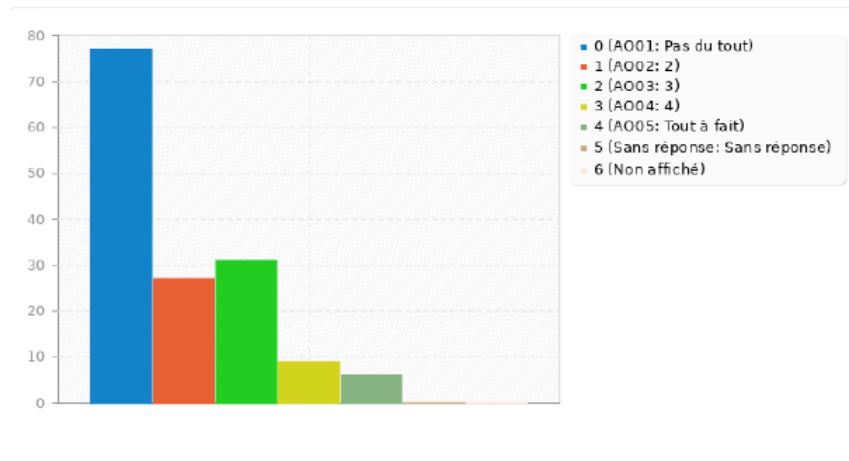
Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.



For the ninth question regarding sponsored advertising (“En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance? [Sponsoring de marque]”), 50.67% responded that they do not trust at all, and 3.3% answered that they trust completely.

Figure 17: Analysis of responses to the question "En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance ? [Publicité à la télévision]"

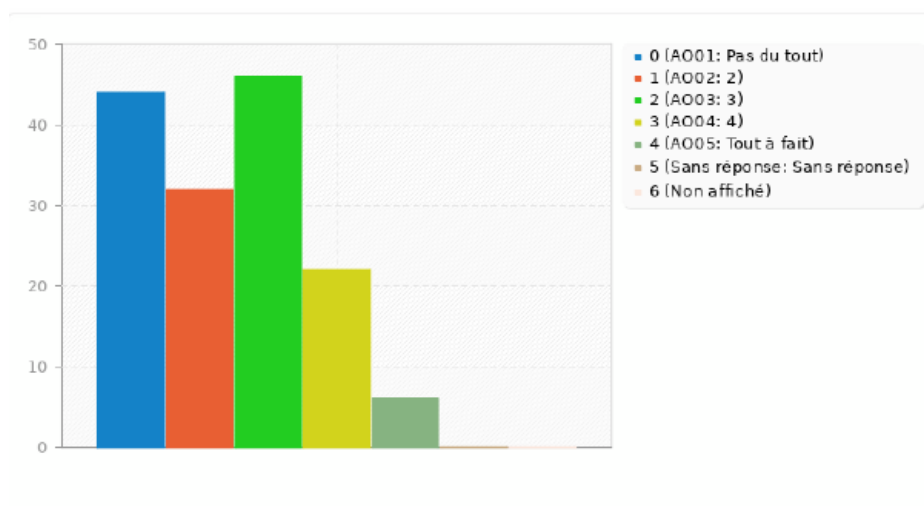
Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.



For the tenth question regarding traditional advertising on TV (“En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance? [Publicité à la télévision]”), 51.33% responded that they do not trust at all, and 4% answered that they trust completely.

Figure 18: Analysis of responses to the question "En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance ? [Contenu éditorial tel que les articles de journaux]"

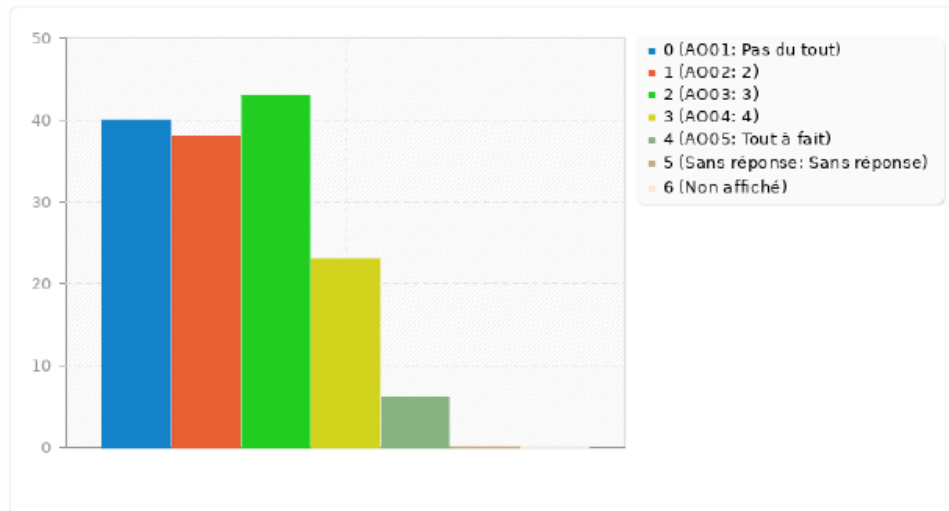
Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.



For the eleventh question regarding the editorial advertisement that we can find in newspapers (“En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance? [Contenu éditorial tel que les articles des Journeaux]”), 29.33% of participants responded that they do not trust at all, and 4% of participants answered that they trust completely. 30.67% of participants rated it 3 out of 5.

Figure 19: Analysis of responses to the question "En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance ? [Avis de consommateurs publiés en ligne]"

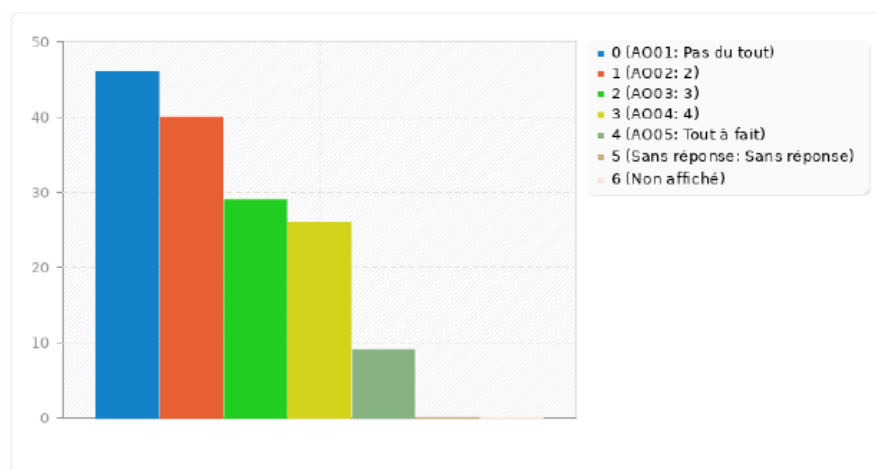
Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.



For the twelfth question regarding the consumers' opinion ("En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance? [Avis de consommateurs publiés en ligne]"), 26.67% of participants responded that they do not trust at all, 4% of participants answered that they trust completely, and 28.67% of participants rated it 3 out of 5.

Figure 20: Analysis of responses to the question "En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance ? [Sites web de marque]"

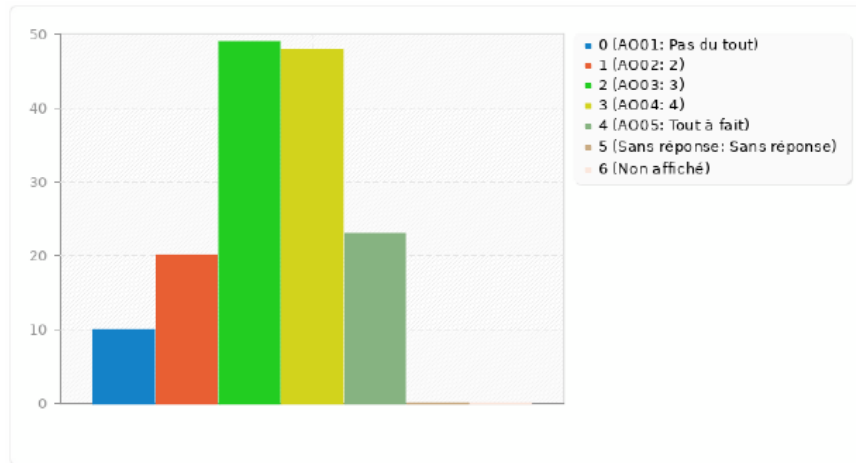
Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.



For the thirteenth question regarding brand advertisements on their websites ("En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance? [Sites web de marques]"), 30.67% of participants responded that they do not trust at all, and 6% answered that they trust completely.

Figure 21: Analysis of responses to the question "En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance ? [Recommandations de personnes que vous connaissez]"

Source: Data collected by Leontyeva, E., 2024.



For the last question regarding the recommendations from people you know (“En quelle forme de publicité avez-vous le plus confiance? [Recommandations de personnes que vous connaissez]”), only 6.67% of participants responded that they do not trust at all, 15% of participants answered that they trust completely, and 32.67% rated it 3 out of 5.

If we analyse each response, we can see that most people reported not trusting advertising. Let us look at the overall picture. We can observe that the percentage of trust remains high for traditional advertising, such as recommendations from friends, television, newspaper articles, consumer reviews, brand websites, and emails. People still do not trust advertising broadcast on the Internet. Despite an increasing number of older people using the Internet, they continue to distrust digital advertising. The only digital advertising that differs slightly from the others is mail advertising. It is the only digital medium in which participants expressed their trust.

Hypothesis 5: Professionally active individuals are likelier to use ad blockers than retired individuals.

To address this final hypothesis, which states that professionally active individuals are likelier to use ad blockers than retired individuals, we asked the following question to determine whether or not participants use ad blockers.

Question 12 : Utilisez-vous des logiciels pour bloquer la publicité ?⁴⁷

We asked this question to determine if people aged 50 and over use software to block advertisements, which is considered one of the significant obstacles to disseminating digital

⁴⁷ [Translation] Question 12: “Do you use software to block advertisements?”

advertising. We found that 49 people (32.67%) used such software, with the main one being Adblock⁴⁸. 101 people (67.33%) did not use ad-blocking software. Here are some examples of people who responded positively:

Example 1 : "oui. J'utilise AdBlock, mais je le désactive parfois. Je l'utilise pour éviter l'abondance de publicités"

Example 2 : "je veux choisir de recevoir ou NON"

Example 3: "ADBLOCK. Je bloque les publicités car elles sont envahissantes et ralentissent l'ordinateur"

Analysing these three examples shows that the most commonly used software is AdBlock. As mentioned in examples 1 and 3, the main reason for using ad-blocking software is the "abundance of advertisements." Example 2 again demonstrates the importance of users maintaining control over the content they wish to see.

Exemple 1 : "Méfiance envers ces logiciels"

Exemple 2 : "Car je devine qu'il faut payer quelque chose. Donc, je subis le minimum"

Exemple 3 : "Soit j'ai peur qu'ils soient payants soit je ne sais pas comment l'utiliser"

Exemple 4 : "une publicité pourrait être intéressante, si pas, j'ignore après qq secondes"

Exemple 5 : "Je ne connais pas de service pour bloquer la publicité. C'est peut-être par ce que je n'ai pas regardé leurs publicités 😊"

The responses above were given by people who answered that they do not use ad-blocking software. The main reasons are distrust towards these software programs, as stated in example 1; fear of having to pay for these software programs, as stated in examples 2 and 3; the desire to maintain control over the content because "it could be interesting," as stated in example 4; and lack of awareness of these software programs, as indicated in example 5. Furthermore, the person in example 5 responded to our questionnaire with irony, saying, "C'est peut-être par ce

⁴⁸ "Adblock Plus is a free extension that allows you to customize your web experience. You can block annoying ads, disable tracking and lots more. It's available for all major desktop browsers and for your mobile devices." (Adblockplus.org)

que je n'ai pas regardé leurs publicités 😏" ⁴⁹. This person suggests that by ignoring advertisements, they have also ignored ads for ad-blocking software, and as a result, they do not know how to use these programs. The winking smiley used at the end of the sentence highlights the ironic tone of the response.

To go further, we will again resort to descriptive analysis using the chi-square test by crossing the profession variable with the variable on ad blockers. As a reminder, ad blockers are: « a computer program that prevents advertisements from being displayed on a screen, for example, when you visit a website.” (Cambridge University Press. (n.d.)) By conducting the chi-square test crossing the independent variable (*profession*) and the dependent variable (*utilisation des ad blockers*), we obtain a result of $p = 621 > p = 0.5$ (reference value). This means that the variables are independent and have no statistically significant relationship between them. Working professionals are not more inclined to use ad blockers. Therefore, we can reject our last hypothesis. Let us still look at the responses of the individuals. We obtained the following results: 49 participants (32.67%) responded that they use software to block advertisements. At the same time, 101 participants (67.33%) answered that they do not use such software. Most of the individuals who responded that they use this software do so to block ads they find very intrusive. On the other hand, individuals who do not use them do so because they do not know how to use them or just because they do not want to pay additional fees. Significantly, few people responded that they do not use ad blockers because they prefer control over the ads they want to see.

⁴⁹ [Translation] "Maybe it's because I haven't seen their ads 😏"

5. Discussion

In this study, our main objective was to examine the perception of digital and traditional advertising among people aged 50 and over and compare the results between those still professionally active and those who are retired. We aimed to determine whether digital advertising is effective for this demographic. To achieve our objective, we conducted a study by distributing a digital questionnaire to 150 people. The data collected allowed us to test our five hypotheses and answer our research question.

The results from this study reveal that continuing to use various media, not just digital media, remains essential. Despite a significant increase in social media users aged 50 and over, they still use traditional media such as television or radio. Let us review the results we obtained to address our five hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: *Individuals aged 50 and over still in active employment are more inclined to use social networks frequently than retired individuals.*

Through our analysis, we obtained results that contradict our hypothesis. The results reveal that people aged 50 and over who are still professionally active do not use social networks more frequently than retired individuals. We also analysed the time spent watching television among people aged 50 and older and found that the older the age group, the more time spent watching television. Aribaud and Tréguer (2016) reached the same conclusion in their book "*Le Silver Marketing*": "la télévision est LE média le plus consommé par les seniors, très loin devant les medias" (pp. 140-141). Therefore, we can say that in 2024, television remains the most consumed media by older people, especially retirees, as they spend more time watching television than professionally active individuals. In this study, we mainly compared television and social networks because both have visual elements to convey advertising, not just content.

Hypothesis 2: *Professionally active individuals tend to use social media primarily for entertainment, while elderly individuals tend to use them mainly to stay in touch with their family.*

The results of our analysis positively support our hypothesis. The findings have shown that the primary activity for professionally active individuals and retirees is staying informed by reading the news. However, another activity for retirees is staying in touch with individuals or groups. This also explains why individuals aged 50 and over most frequently use social networks like Facebook and LinkedIn. These two networks meet the needs of this demographic. Facebook allows for staying connected with people, while LinkedIn facilitates information gathering and networking. The same conclusion is shared by Selwyn et al. (2003). According to them, the primary activity of older adults on the Internet remains communication and personal development through computer use. Aribaud and Tréguer (2016) have also demonstrated that the social network primarily used by older adults is Facebook, followed by X (formerly Twitter). In our analysis, Facebook is followed by LinkedIn, and X (formerly Twitter) is fourth.

Hypothesis 3: *Individuals in active employment show a marked preference for digital advertising over traditional advertising*

Our analysis results show that professionally active individuals do not exhibit a marked preference for digital advertising. Furthermore, our analysis delved deeper. The results show that, in general, regardless of the professional status of individuals aged 50 and over, these individuals have a very negative view of both digital and traditional advertising. As noted in our literature review by Lesakova (2013), older people are a generation of consumers who prefer to purchase in physical stores. Indeed, the Internet facilitates searching for product or service information. Still, for various reasons, most people who responded to our questionnaire remain sceptical about digital advertising. The main reasons recurring throughout our questionnaire are a lack of trust in digital platforms, a desire to control the content being disseminated, and weariness towards intrusive advertising. These reasons have also been mentioned by Chevalier et al. (2008) and Alva and Moktar (2012), who note that older people mainly focus on the consequences and risks of use rather than the utility of using ICT. This could explain the fear of digital advertising. In our questionnaire, people mentioned the fear of encountering a virus by clicking on an advertisement. The previous results also align with the main barriers to using information and communication technologies reported by Melenhorst (cited by Chevalier et al., 2008), among which is the perception of the “usefulness” of these

technologies. Older individuals do not perceive social media's benefits in the same way as younger people.

Hypothesis 4: *The increasing use of social media among the elderly leads to the development of a growing trust in digital advertising*

The results we obtained to address this hypothesis contradict it. Although older individuals increasingly use social networks, their interest in digital advertising has not changed. Our Likert scale shows that advertising through traditional media, such as word-of-mouth recommendations, television, radio, and newspapers, remains the most relevant. In digital advertising, only email advertisements inspire trust in consumers aged 50 and over. Lespusakova (2013) states that older individuals trust familiar products more. They struggle to accept new products, which could, among other factors, explain their apprehension towards advertising on social media. Traditional advertising has been around for a long time and is familiar to everyone. People have learned to filter the information they encounter through traditional media. However, they struggle to sort through information from the internet. As evidence, several individuals responded that they feared clicking on a fraudulent advertisement. As for emails, despite being a digital medium, people trust emails more than social networks because ads sent via email generally come from companies already known to the users.

Hypothesis 5: *Professionally active individuals are likelier to use ad blockers than retired individuals.*

The results we obtained to address the hypothesis regarding the use of ad blockers contradict our initial hypothesis. Professionally active individuals are not more inclined to use ad blockers. Our analysis revealed that more people do not use these tools than those who do. Fuxman et al. (2018) mention that ad blockers are primarily used to block digital advertising that people find very intrusive. These tools are considered a significant barrier to the dissemination of digital advertising. We concluded that people who use these tools do so to block unwanted advertisements and to prevent tracking activities that infringe on consumer privacy. On the other hand, individuals who do not use these tools refrain from doing so to maintain control over the content they consume and to filter it themselves. Additionally, some

people do not use ad blockers either because they lack sufficient knowledge about the usefulness of these tools or because they harbour a certain distrust towards them.

The results we obtained throughout our study and the responses to the hypotheses indicate that our study supports previous research. The results confirm that despite an increase in digital users among people aged 50 and over, marketing is not yet ready to abandon traditional advertising. To answer our research question: “Which channels are the most effective for advertising to people aged 50 and over in Belgium?” we can say that all channels remain equally important. To effectively adapt advertising to people aged 50 and over, marketers should use the various media available today. They should also ensure that information is conveyed in a transparent and balanced manner.

Our study contributes to the existing literature by providing additional evidence and delving deeper into the subject of silver marketing. In terms of practical implications, our study could help marketers adopt a better approach to content creation and dissemination by considering the difficulties encountered so far to improve the experience of users and consumers. In conclusion, our comparative study has allowed us to discover traditional and digital advertising perceptions among older adults. Nevertheless, it is essential not to overlook the limitations of this study mentioned in the methodology section. Future research could expand the sample size and conduct an experimental study to investigate older adults' interaction with digital advertising. Additionally, it would be interesting to conduct a comparative study and examine the perception of digital advertising among different generations.

6. Conclusion

We have reached the final part of this thesis and can now conclude our study. This study, conducted as part of this thesis, examined the perception of traditional and digital advertising among people aged 50 and over. We established a comparison between those still professionally active and those who are retired through a review of the existing literature on Silver Marketing, and we conducted a mixed analysis through a digitally distributed questionnaire. This study allowed us to address our five main hypotheses and draw meaningful conclusions.

Firstly, despite a significant increase in the number of connected older people that continues to grow, there is still a gap between older people and younger people in terms of using information and communication technologies for various reasons. One of the main reasons lies in the distrust of using new technologies and a lack of education in this area. Our study discovered that despite the growing interest in digital media, older people spend more time watching television. We also found that professionally active individuals do not use social media more than retired individuals but spend less time watching television daily.

Secondly, our study revealed that individuals aged 50 and over have a negative, or even very negative, view of advertising, generally characterised as "intrusive" and "useless." We also discovered that older individuals continue to have more trust in traditional advertising broadcast on channels such as television, radio, and newspapers. Aside from advertising on more traditional channels, email remains the only digital channel older individuals trust. The fear of using new tools explains this distrust of digital advertising. The digital realm is still relatively unfamiliar to older people, who generally experience difficulties sorting information on digital platforms. We also found that professionally active individuals show little interest in digital advertising.

Thirdly, we discovered that individuals aged 50 and over rarely use software to block advertisements despite finding digital advertising too "intrusive." This can be explained by various reasons: most people prefer not to invest in such software because it can be costly, but the main reason is that they are unaware of the existence of these tools or do not know how they work. Ad blockers have a significant impact on digital advertising as they allow the blocking of unwanted advertisements. Those who use this software do so to block irrelevant ads and avoid activity tracking on the internet, which is considered an intrusion into their privacy. Individuals who intentionally decide not to use such software do so to maintain control over the visible content.

Finally, we found that older individuals continue to use the Internet primarily to stay informed and to maintain contact with people or groups. We also discovered that the most used social networks among those aged 50 and over are Facebook and LinkedIn for professionally active individuals. These two social networks perfectly meet the needs of staying informed and socialising. We also found that each social network is used for different purposes, and it is crucial to tailor advertising content to the specific channel to create a better experience for consumers.

This study provides practical implications for companies aiming to create more tailored advertisements for a less-studied audience. We have drawn several conclusions for creating appropriate advertisements. First, it is essential to know your target audience. Suppose the target audience is segmented by age. In that case, it is necessary to recognise that the audience considered as "seniors" is very heterogeneous, with each individual having their own experiences and desires. Second, choosing the right channel to disseminate the advertising is crucial. For individuals aged 50 and over, we found it equally important to continue producing advertisements on both traditional and digital platforms, as television will not be forgotten anytime soon. Finally, creating non-intrusive advertisements that respect everyone's privacy is essential to establishing a long-term relationship of trust and respect.

As we mentioned in our discussion section, this study has limitations. The main limitation is the small sample size, which does not allow generalised conclusions. This study needs further exploration. It would be interesting to conduct experimental research and compare the perception of advertisements between generations. Additionally, conducting a study focusing solely on digital advertising and silver consumers would deepen our study.

In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of researching the perception of advertising among older adults in the context of ageing populations in many countries worldwide. This study enriches the understanding of silver marketing. It offers a pathway for developing more effective, inclusive, and respectful advertising that will create a better experience in the future, regardless of age.

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9. Apppendices

Consent Form

FORMULAIRE DE CONSENTEMENT

Etude sur l'identification du meilleur canal pour la diffusion de la publicité sur Internet

Réalisé par Ekaterina Leontyeva, étudiante à UCLouvain, dans le cadre d'un mémoire de master de Communication Multilingue

Je vous invite à participer à une étude réalisée dans le cadre de mon mémoire. L'objectif est de mieux comprendre quels canaux sont les plus intéressants pour un visionnage de publicité.

Votre participation consiste à répondre aux 16 questions de ce questionnaire, d'une durée d'environ 10 minutes. Le questionnaire comporte 2 parties :

- Partie des questions générales (âge, sexe, situation professionnelle)
- Partie des questions spécifiques (sur l'utilisation de la télévision et Internet)

Les données recueillies seront traitées de manière entièrement confidentielle et anonyme. Votre nom et votre prénom n'apparaîtra jamais dans le mémoire ou dans d'autres documents qui seront utilisés comme annexe ou qui pourraient aider à la réalisation du mémoire. L'ensemble des fichiers sera stocké sur un ordinateur protégé par un mot de passe. Les résultats de l'étude prendront la forme d'un mémoire qui sera accessible sur le site internet de l'UCLouvain et dans lequel rien ne permettra de vous identifier.

Vous êtes entièrement libre de participer ou non à cette étude. Si vous acceptez de participer, vous aurez le droit de ne pas répondre à certaines questions et de mettre fin de répondre au questionnaire, sans qu'aucun préjudice vous soit accusé.

Si vous avez des questions concernant cette étude, vous pouvez prendre contact avec Ekaterina Leontyeva par mail ekaterina.leontyeva@student.uclouvain.be

Introductory message

Madame, Monsieur,

Je m'appelle **Leontyeva Ekaterina**. Etudiante en **Communication Multilingue à UCLouvain**, je réalise mon mémoire sur la **publicité sur Internet** et principalement sur les réseaux sociaux.

En effet, de nos jours, la publicité sur Internet est devenue beaucoup plus personnalisée et moins intrusive qu'auparavant. Dans le cadre de mon mémoire, je voudrais découvrir lequel des canaux serait le plus intéressant pour visionner la publicité qui nous intéresse.

Le questionnaire est court. La durée de réponse aux questions (16) est de plus ou moins **10 minutes**.

Le questionnaire est **anonyme**.

En cas de question, vous pouvez me contacter via le mail: ekaterina.leontyeva@student.uclouvain.be

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