

Being moved by beauty

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Abstract

Attractive and less attractive faces have been typically used in advertisements. Neuropsychocognitive theories suggest that attention to a stimulus (such as faces) mostly depends on two properties: its saliency (i.e. how rare or uncommon it is) and its value (i.e. how rewarding is). We track eye and hand movements while participants are engaged in a covert, simulated price-detection task in the presence of faces of various degrees of attractiveness. We show that hand responses (motor system) were primarily driven by attractive faces (value computations), whereas the eye movements (visual system) were primarily driven by saliency, such that eye-fixations differentiated between attractive, unattractive, and moderate faces, in that order. This suggests that advertisements targeting motor responses (such as mouse clicks) would need to engage attractive faces; on the other hand, advertisements targeting visual attention (such as posters or banners) would benefit from salient stimuli.

Keywords: *mouse-tracking; eye-tracking; attractiveness*

Track: Consumer Behaviour