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Stokmans, M.J.W.; Hendrickx, M.

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The attention paid to new book releases on a display table

M. Stokmans, M. Hendrickx *

*Department of Language and Literature, Tilburg University, P.O. Box 90153, NL-5000 LE Tilburg,
The Netherlands*

Abstract

This study regards the attention paid to books presented on a table in a bookstore. In order to study this topic, a distinction was made between occasional and regular buyers of books. It was hypothesized that occasional and regular buyers differ in the attention paid to books on a presentation table. Another variable which has an effect on the attention paid to books presented on a table is whether or not a book buyer had a prior intention to buy a specific book (title, author or genre). For the regular buyers it was hypothesized that whether or not they had a prior intention to buy a specific book, they would still pay attention to books on a table. In the case of occasional buyers it was hypothesized that they would only pay attention to books on a table if they had no idea what book to buy.

It turned out that occasional and regular buyers differ in the attention paid to books on a presentation table. Occasional buyers act more intensively around the display table but remember fewer titles correctly than regular buyers.

Whether or not a regular or occasional buyer had a prior intention to buy a specific book has a significant effect on the attention paid to books on a display table. But the hypotheses regarding this variable, as stated above, were not confirmed. It turned out that buyers (occasional as well as regular) with a specific intention to buy a book paid more attention to books presented on a table than buyers (occasional as well as regular) without such an intention.

1. Introduction

A growing number of titles is being published every year (in the Netherlands about 12,000 books annually). In countries with a market economy the vast

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majority of books are produced and distributed commercially. The production and distribution of books through the market system implies that both producers and distributors – publishing houses and bookshops – have to increase the probability that the consumer notices the book. Being noticed is the first necessary step to being bought (Brisoux and Laroche, 1980). Because of the enormously large number of titles available the probability that a title is noticed is almost negligible if consumers are not informed in one way or another about a title's existence (for example by book reviews, advertisements or other ways of marketing communication such as a book display).

Increasing the probability of being noticed deserves special attention because today the book trade is facing a serious problem; since 1980 book sales have dropped by 2% a year on average in the Netherlands and the English book trade is facing the most serious crisis within living memory.

Marketing communication is a discipline which is mainly concerned with how to present product information effectively to consumers. In marketing communication usually two basically different ways of communication are distinguished: advertisement and sales promotion (Engel et al., 1991). A type of sales promotion which is very popular in the book trade is in-store communication. Types of in-store communication are: displaying products, personal selling, styling and organization of the store. In-store communication takes place just before, during and just after a buying process. In-store communication can provide information about books directly to (potential) buyers in the bookstore.

In the case of books in-store communication is probably very effective. Most of the time buyers do not write down the title and author of a book their attention was drawn to (for example by means of an advertisement or communication with friends) before entering the store. Seeing books in the store they may recognize a title they vaguely know or perceive a title which seems interesting. In line with this argument one can presume that the higher the probability of a book being noticed is, the higher the probability of it being bought.

A bookstore can present its books in two ways: on a bookshelf and/or on a display table. On a bookshelf only the spine of the book is visible. Consequently there is only a small possibility that the book will be noticed (especially because the spines of books are very similar). Furthermore, books on a bookshelf are usually older books, which can be regarded as books in stock. However, if books are presented on a table, the covers of books are visible. The size of a cover is much larger than the spine of the book. Moreover, books have very different covers and covers play a prominent role in the decision-making process regarding books (Leemans and Stokmans, 1991). Consequently presenting books on a table increases the probability that a title will be noticed. Furthermore, the books displayed on a table were mainly new releases.

In this article we are interested in how book buyers react to books (new releases) presented on a table during their decision-making process. To answer this question two types of book buyers are distinguished: the regular and occasional buyers of books. Both types of buyers have their own decision-making process, which will be discussed successively.

Regular buyers regard books as a hobby. According to Peter and Olson (1987: 104–147) people who regard a product as a hobby are enduringly involved with that product. In this case information is searched for independent of specific purchase needs or decisions but involves two basic motives (Bloch et al., 1986: 120–121). The first is to acquire a bank of information which may be useful in the future. The second motive is pleasure or recreation. It is fun to shop around (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982). A model of decision making which takes this into account is the iterative decision strategy. An extensive description of this model is given in Leemans and Stokmans (1991).

The second type of buyers of books are those who hardly ever buy books (occasional buyers), but consider buying one because they have a specific purchase need: for example buying it as a gift or buying a book to be read on holiday. They search information about books only to solve this specific choice problem. If people are driven by the situation to become involved with a product, they are considered to be situationally involved (Peter and Olson, 1987). There are two decision-making models which start from this perspective: extensive and limited problem solving (Engel et al., 1986: 22). *Extensive problem solving* is often applied to products with which the consumer is highly (situationally) involved and which are highly differentiated, as in the case of durables and books. Furthermore, the consumer can take as much time as needed to arrive at a choice (Engel et al., 1986: 27–35). A major characteristic of extensive problem solving is that very little is known in advance about the product class and the consumer is highly motivated to search and evaluate a good amount of information in order to arrive at a choice.

Limited-problem solving is a less extensive procedure. This strategy is often applied to products with which the consumer is less involved, and which are not widely differentiated. An additional limitation is the amount of time the consumer has available to make a choice (Engel et al., 1986: 36). In applying this strategy, consumers search and evaluate some information in order to finally make their choice.

In the following it will be asserted that for occasional book buyers extensive problem solving gives a good description of the decision-making process which is encountered. An occasional buyer probably comes to a bookstore in order to buy a present or a book for a specific purpose (for example to be read on holiday). Consequently he/she is involved in this buying situation to make the best choice possible. Furthermore, books represent a highly differentiated product. One can even claim that each title is unique.

The occasional book buyer is rather uninformed about recently published books. The book supply changes very rapidly (Verdaasdonk, 1989). Even if he/she buys a book once or twice a year, most of the books that are on display during a previous visit to the bookstore will not be available any more, and their place will have been taken by new titles. As a result, the buyer may have some general evaluative criteria (such as genre), but most of the criteria have to be developed on the spot. In order to do so, he/she has to look at a lot of different titles.

If a lot of information has to be processed in order to arrive at a choice, the time available for the consumer to decide what book to buy should not be

constrained, otherwise the buyer does not have the time to apply extensive problem solving. When a book is bought usually no such time constraints are involved, because there is usually no absolute necessity for buying a book then and there.

To summarize, the decision-making process of regular book buyers can be described by the iterative decision strategy and the decision-making process encountered by occasional book buyers by the extensive problem-solving model. In both models six sub-processes are distinguished. The first sub-process regards problem structuring in the case of the iterative model and problem recognition in the case of extensive problem solving. The other five sub-processes are similar for both models: information search, information evaluation, outcome, purchase and post-purchase processes. (An extensive description of these subprocesses is given in Leemans and Stokmans, 1991.)

A major difference between regular and occasional book buyers is the role of "information search" in the decision-making processes. In the case of regular buyers, information is searched for continuously, without a specific purchase need. When in a bookstore to buy a particular title, regular buyers are also interested in information about other books. Occasional buyers on the other hand, search information to solve a particular choice problem which is more or less specified. Some buyers may have at least a genre or an author's name in mind, others enter the bookshop without having the slightest idea about what to buy. If the buyer already knows which genre, author or title he/she wants he/she can ask a salesperson where to find this kind of book. Consequently this consumer will not be influenced by an attractive display of books on a table. On the other hand, the occasional buyer who has no idea what book to buy, is quite likely to be influenced by books displayed on a table, because those titles are most visible.

In view of this, it is hypothesized that two variables influence the extent to which book buyers pay attention to books displayed on a table. The first variable pertains to the distinction between regular and occasional buyers. It is hard to hypothesize which type of book buyer will pay more attention to new releases displayed on a table. One could suggest that regular buyers focus their attention more on books shown on a table because they are more interested in books than occasional buyers. On the other hand, one could hold that occasional buyers will focus their attention more on new releases displayed on a table because they have to develop criteria to evaluate choice alternatives, while regular buyers know from previous experience what criteria to use to make their choice. Consequently the first hypothesis to be tested is:

H_1 : Occasional buyers differ from regular buyers in the extent to which attention is paid to books displayed on a table.

The second variable regards prior intention of the book buyer. Regarding this variable two hypotheses are stated:

H_2 : Regular buyers who have a prior intention to buy a particular kind of book do not differ from regular buyers who have no such intention with respect to the amount of attention paid to books displayed on a table.

- H₃: Occasional buyers who have no prior intention to buy a particular kind of book pay more attention to books displayed on a table than occasional buyers who do have such an intention.

2. Research method

In order to determine whether or not presenting books on a display table will affect buyers of books, research was done in a local bookstore. This research encompasses a questionnaire and an observation study regarding the behaviors of subjects around a display table.

2.1. Respondents

The respondents were a convenience sample of consumers who visited a large bookstore in 's Hertogenbosch in a particular week (Monday 21 May–Saturday 26 May, 1992). 168 visitors were observed and only 17 did not fill out the questionnaire. Therefore non-response is about 10%, which is quite low in comparison with mail or telephone surveys (Dillman, 1978).

2.2. Design and procedure

Respondents who participated in the research were observed when they entered the bookstore in order to determine whether or not they paid attention to the table on which books were displayed. Just before a respondent who had been observed would leave the bookstore he/she was asked to fill out a questionnaire.

In the introduction two independent variables were identified which have a potential effect on attention paid to books displayed on a table. These are “kind of buyer” (occasional or regular) and “prior intention of the buyer” (a specific intention or not). The classification occasional versus regular buyer was based on a summed score of ten different questions which regarded four types of information, namely: visiting habits to bookstores (three questions), quantity of books bought (three questions) number of books borrowed from a library (two questions) and reading habits (two questions). The maximal score for each question was four. Consequently the maximal summed score was 40. Respondents with a summed score higher than 19 were classified as regular buyers. Those with a summed score of 19 or less were classified as occasional buyers.

The second independent variable “whether or not the respondent knows in advance what (kind of) book to buy” was ascertained in the questionnaire by simply asking the respondent if, when entering the store, he/she had the intention to buy a book with a specific title, a book written by a particular author or a book belonging to a particular genre. If the respondent reacted to one of these questions in the affirmative, he/she was categorized as having the intention to buy a specific book when entering the bookstore; otherwise the respondent was categorized as having no intention to buy a specific book when entering the bookstore.

Table 1
The number of respondents in each separate group of book buyers

	Type of buyer	
	Occasional	Regular
Prior intention	<i>n</i> = 10	<i>n</i> = 38
No prior intention	<i>n</i> = 30	<i>n</i> = 72

On the basis of these two independent variables with each two categories (kind of buyer: occasional versus regular and intention: specific or not) the respondents were divided into four groups (see also Table 1).

It turns out that the proportion of regular buyers who have the intention to buy a particular book does not differ from the proportion of occasional buyers who also have such an intention ($\chi^2 = 1.23$, $df = 1$, $p > 0.05$).

The dependent variable of interest is the extent to which respondents focus their attention on books displayed on a table. This variable was measured in three different ways:

- (1) The extent to which a respondent stated that he/she usually (not only at this particular visit) pays attention to books shown on a table. (Four questions: do you look at, pick up, read in and/or buy books displayed on a table. The summed score of these four questions indicated the extent.)
- (2) The number of books the respondent remembered correctly (recognition task) as being displayed on a table or bookshelf. The respondent was confronted with 34 titles of books. 17 titles were displayed on a table and 17 other titles were located on bookshelves. Respondents were asked whether or not they had encountered the title and where (on a table or bookshelf). Two variables were distinguished in this case: the number of books correctly recognized as displayed on a table and the number of books correctly recognized as displayed on a table as well as those correctly recognized as located on bookshelves.
- (3) The observed behaviors around the display table (in terms of: looking at, picking up, reading the back, opening the book, reading in the book, putting back the book and/or taking it with them).

3. Results

In the introduction it was hypothesized that two independent variables have an effect on the extent to which book buyers pay attention to books displayed on a table: kind of buyer (occasional or regular) and prior intention of the buyer (a prior intention or not). Three hypotheses were stated: the first one states that there is a difference between occasional and regular buyers in the attention paid to books displayed on a table. The second and third hypotheses regard the effect prior intention has for the regular buyers (hypothesis H_2 which states that no difference was expected in the extent to which regular buyers with or without a

Table 2

Mean scores of different groups of book buyers on the verbal dependent variables (standard deviations are given in parentheses)

Verbal dependent variable	Occasional buyer		Regular buyer	
	No prior intention	Prior intention	No prior intention	Prior intention
Influenced in general	16.90 (3.14)	17.67 (3.02)	16.89 (3.13)	18.05 (2.93)
Correctly recalled on table	3.60 (2.68)	5.13 (3.66)	4.92 (3.30)	6.85 (4.42)
Correctly recalled on table/bookshelf	3.20 (2.15)	4.13 (3.00)	3.87 (2.76)	5.82 (3.60)

prior intention paid attention to books displayed on a table) and the occasional buyers (third hypothesis which states that occasional buyers without an intention pay more attention to books displayed on a table than those with a prior intention). The extent to which buyers were influenced by books displayed on a table was measured in three different ways (see also section “method”). The results of testing these hypotheses are discussed for the three dependent variables successively.

The first dependent variable regarded the extent to which the respondents state that they usually pay attention to books displayed on a table. Table 2 presents the average scores of the four individual groups of buyers.

In order to test the first hypothesis (the difference between occasional and regular buyers) an analysis of variance with the independent variables kind of buyer and intention was performed. It turns out that kind of buyer has no significant effect ($F = 0.254$; $df = 1$; $p > 0.05$). This is contrary to the first hypothesis. The effect of intention was significant ($F = 37.029$; $df = 1$; $p < 0.05$).

In order to test the second and third hypotheses two *t*-tests were performed, one for the regular buyers (H_2) and one for the occasional buyers (H_3). For the regular buyers a significant difference was found ($t = -1.93$; $df = 108$; $p = 0.056$). This finding is contrary to the second hypothesis. Regarding the occasional buyers no significant difference was found ($t = -0.69$; $df = 38$; $p > 0.05$). This is contrary to the third hypothesis.

The second dependent variable regards the average number of books one correctly recognizes as having been presented on the table and/or on bookshelves. The average scores for the four groups are also shown in Table 2. The first hypothesis was again tested by an analysis of variance with independent variables kind of buyer and intention. It turns out that kind of buyer has a significant effect for both the average number of books correctly recognized as having been presented on the display table ($F = 5.608$; $df = 1$; $p < 0.05$) and those correctly recognized as having been presented on the table or bookshelves ($F = 10.402$;

Table 3

Mean scores of different groups of book buyers on the behavioral dependent variables (standard deviations are given in parentheses)

Behavioral dependent variable	Occasional buyer		Regular buyer	
	No prior intention	Prior intention	No prior intention	Prior intention
Looked at	3.30 (1.49)	3.40 (1.43)	3.37 (2.10)	2.57 (1.76)
Picked up	3.20 (1.40)	3.27 (1.31)	2.90 (2.18)	2.32 (1.77)
Read the back	2.80 (1.32)	2.97 (1.38)	2.26 (2.01)	1.71 (1.42)
Opened the book	1.70 (1.34)	1.23 (1.22)	0.84 (1.03)	0.92 (0.96)
Read in the book	0.60 (0.84)	0.57 (0.68)	0.45 (0.69)	0.33 (0.63)
Put back	2.80 (1.23)	3.13 (1.30)	2.45 (2.19)	1.76 (1.60)
Took it with you	0.30 (0.48)	0.27 (0.64)	0.40 (0.55)	0.38 (0.74)
Total	15.90 (7.52)	15.77 (6.54)	13.45 (9.72)	10.81 (7.73)

$df = 1$; $p < 0.05$). The regular buyers remembered more titles correctly than the occasional buyers. The effect of prior intention was also significant in this analysis (correctly recognized on the table: $F = 9.245$; $df = 1$; $p < 0.05$ and correctly recognized on the table or the bookshelves: $F = 6.584$; $df = 1$; $p < 0.05$).

In order to test the hypotheses regarding intention two t -tests were performed. For the regular buyers a significant difference was found between those with and those without a specific intention for both correctly recognized on the table ($t = -2.36$; $df = 108$; $p < 0.05$) and correctly recognized on the table or bookshelves ($t = -2.92$; $df = 108$; $p < 0.05$). This finding is contrary to hypothesis two.

Regarding the occasional buyers no significant difference was found between those with and those without a specific intention for both correctly recognized on the table ($t = -1.22$; $df = 38$; $p > 0.05$) and correctly recognized on the table or the bookshelf ($t = -0.91$; $df = 38$; $p > 0.05$). This is contrary to hypothesis three.

The last dependent variable regarded the observed behavior. In Table 3 the average number of times a respondent showed a specific behavioral act is presented as well as the total number of behavioral acts shown.

The first hypothesis was tested with an analysis of variance with independent variables kind of buyer and intention. It turns out that kind of buyer has a significant effect for 6 out of 7 behavioral categories distinguished as well as the

total number of behavioral acts.¹ In general, occasional buyers behaved more intensively around the table on which books were presented than regular buyers. But both kinds of buyers did not differ in the number of books they took with them to the counter.

The effect of intention was almost significant for the number of books looked at ($F = 3.571$; $df = 1$; $p = 0.061$). For the other behavioral categories as well as the total number of behavioral acts no significant effect was found.²

This result indicates that no difference is found between those with and without a prior intention if no attention is paid to the classification occasional versus regular buyer. There is a possibility that intention has a reverse effect for occasional buyers compared to regular buyers. Therefore, the second and third hypotheses were further tested with a *t*-test. In line with the results of the analysis of variance no significant difference was found between occasional buyers with and those without a prior intention for all behavioral categories as well as the total number of behavioral acts.³ These findings are contrary to hypothesis two.

Regarding regular buyers with or without a prior intention, a significant difference was only found for the number of books looked at ($t = 2.12$; $df = 108$; $p < 0.05$). For the other behavioral categories as well as the total number of behavioral acts no significant difference was found.⁴ These findings support hypothesis three.

4. Discussion and conclusion

The main objective of the research reported in this paper was to study the attention paid to new releases presented on a table versus older books in stock stacked away. In the introduction it was hypothesized that kind of buyer (occasional or regular) and intention (with or without a prior intention to buy a specific

¹ Looked at: $F = 3.158$; $df = 1$; $p = 0.078$, picking up: $F = 5.432$; $df = 1$; $p < 0.05$, reading the back: $F = 13.278$; $df = 1$; $p < 0.05$, opening the book: $F = 5.574$; $df = 1$; $p < 0.05$, reading in the book: $F = 2.912$; $df = 1$; $p = 0.09$, putting back the book: $F = 12.035$; $df = 1$; $p < 0.05$ and taking it with you: $F = 0.728$; $df = 1$; $p > 0.05$, total number of behavioral acts $F = 8.198$; $df = 1$; $p < 0.05$.

² Picking up: $F = 1.843$; $df = 1$; $p > 0.05$, reading the back: $F = 1.969$; $df = 1$; $p > 0.05$, opening the book: $F = 0.074$; $df = 1$; $p > 0.05$, reading in the book: $F = 0.659$; $df = 1$; $p > 0.05$, putting back the book: $F = 2.250$; $df = 1$; $p > 0.05$ and taking it with you: $F = 0.017$; $df = 1$; $p > 0.05$, total number of behavioral acts $F = 2.116$; $df = 1$; $p > 0.05$.

³ Looked at: $t = -0.19$; $df = 38$; $p > 0.05$, picking up: $t = -0.14$; $df = 38$; $p > 0.05$, reading the back: $t = -0.34$; $df = 38$; $p > 0.05$, opening the book: $t = 1.02$; $df = 38$; $p > 0.05$, reading in the book: $t = 0.13$; $df = 38$; $p > 0.05$, putting back the book: $t = -0.71$; $df = 38$; $p > 0.05$, taking it with you: $t = 0.15$; $df = 38$; $p > 0.05$ and the total number of behavioral acts: $t = 0.05$; $df = 38$; $p > 0.05$.

⁴ Picking up: $t = 1.49$; $df = 108$; $p > 0.05$, reading the back: $t = 1.68$; $df = 108$; $p = 0.095$, opening the book: $t = -0.38$; $df = 108$; $p > 0.05$, reading in the book: $t = 0.88$; $df = 108$; $p > 0.05$, putting back the book: $t = 1.87$; $df = 108$; $p = 0.064$, taking it with you: $t = 0.14$; $df = 108$; $p > 0.05$ and the total number of behavioral acts: $t = 1.56$; $df = 38$; $p > 0.05$.

book) have an effect on the extent to which book buyers pay attention to new releases displayed on a table. The extent to which buyers of books paid attention to books presented on a table was measured by three different dependent variables:

- (1) The extent to which book buyers state that they usually (not only on this particular visit) pay attention to books shown on a table.
- (2) The number of books book buyers remember (recognition task) as shown on a table or bookshelves.
- (3) The observed behavior around the display table.

The influence of “kind of buyer” and “intention” on the amount of attention paid to books was tested by means of two types of analysis: analysis of variance and a *t*-test. Both types of analysis are designed to compare group-means even if the number of observations in each group is rather small (the minimum number of observations required is two for both analyses) (Winer, 1971). Both types of data analysis take the number of observations into account by making the critical value of the test-statistic dependent on the number of observations. This critical value should be larger if the number of observations in one of the groups is small. In this study one group, namely the occasional buyers with a prior intention, had a small sample size ($n_i = 10$). The results regarding the three dependent variables will be discussed below.

“Kind of buyer” was hypothesized as affecting the attention paid to books presented on a table but no *a priori* hypotheses were stated regarding the difference between occasional and regular book buyers. By means of an analysis of variance a significant effect was verified for two out of three dependent variables. No difference was found regarding the extent to which regular or occasional buyers admitted that they paid attention to books shown on a table. Although occasional buyers act more intensively around the display table, they remember fewer titles correctly than regular buyers.

Regarding intention it was hypothesized that occasional buyers will only focus their attention on books presented on a table if they have no idea what book to buy. Regular buyers, on the other hand, will take a look at books presented on a table irrespective of whether or not they knew what books to buy when they entered the store. By means of an analysis of variance a significant effect of the variable intention was verified for two out of three dependent variables. But the effect of prior intention was not the one expected. Regarding occasional buyers the results showed no significant difference between those with or without a prior intention. This means that even if occasional buyers know what title to buy, they still go to a display table to see if they can find it there, instead of going to a salesperson to ask for the title. With respect to regular buyers a significant difference was found between those with and without a prior intention for two out of three dependent variables. Namely: regular buyers with a prior intention admitted more frequently that they are usually influenced by books presented on a table, and they remembered more titles correctly than regular buyers without a specific intention, but both groups performed about the same number of behavioral acts around the display table.

These findings seem to be contradictory, but they can be resolved when one focuses on the validity of the variables which indicate the attention paid to the books. “Attention” is a theoretical construct and can be defined as “the process by which consumers direct their cognitive processes toward particular stimuli in the environment” (Peter and Olson, 1990: 573). Given this definition, attention can be operationalized in very different ways. The first operationalization used in this study just asks the respondent whether attention was paid to the books. But it is common knowledge that people do not act as they say they do (Dillman, 1978; Wilkie, 1990). This lack of convergency can be explained in a number of ways. For example, one can question whether the respondent can recall if he/she paid attention to the books on the table. In other words is “paying attention to” a conscious or an unconscious process? If it is a conscious process, is this kind of information stored in long term memory? (Nisbett and Wilson, 1977; Ericson and Simon, 1980). Secondly, one can question whether the respondent makes reliable statements about the attention paid to the books on the table. Consequently, just asking whether or not buyers of books pay attention to books presented on a table is not a very valid measure of “attention”.

The second operationalization focuses on a result of paying attention to books: it so happens that titles to which attention is paid are more likely to be stored in memory than titles to which less attention is paid. If they are stored in memory, respondents can remember whether or not they have seen them and where (on the table or on a book shelf). The validity of this measure is debatable since respondents differ as to how much prior knowledge they had about books. If one knows a lot about books, it is more likely that book titles are stored in memory, given a certain amount of attention paid to them (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986; McInnes and Jaworsky, 1989). Consequently, regular buyers will recall more titles even if they pay the same amount of attention to books as occasional buyers. One can use this, operationalization to compare regular (or occasional) buyers with an intention with those without an intention. But this indicator is less suitable to compare occasional with regular buyers.

The third operationalization focuses on the process itself, namely the behavior towards the display table. The validity of this measure suffers from the fact that not all mental processes (such as paying attention to books) are accompanied by a behavioral act. On the other hand, focusing attention is easier if the book is picked up. Reading a book, for example, is impossible if the book is not opened. But this measure will probably underestimate the attention paid to the books on a table. This underestimation will probably occur to the same extent for regular and occasional buyers.

The findings regarding the difference between occasional and regular buyers are now less surprising. In light of the validity of the measures of “attention”, it is plausible that occasional buyers act more intensively around the display table but remember fewer titles correctly than regular buyers. As was stated already, regular buyers probably have more knowledge about books (title, genre, author, etc.) than occasional buyers. This has two consequences. First of all, occasional buyers will remember fewer titles than regular buyers, because the titles occasional buyers do

remember have to be learned during this particular visit to the bookstore. Secondly, occasional buyers pick up and browse in more titles than regular buyers because the decision-making process is more demanding than the decision-making process of regular buyers. Occasional buyers have to find choice alternatives which are worth considering, while regular buyers know which genres and authors are worth reading. Occasional buyers also have to come up with criteria to decide whether or not a particular title is suitable, while regular buyers know these criteria beforehand. Therefore, occasional buyers show a larger variety of behaviors around the display table than regular buyers, but remember fewer titles correctly.

The results regarding the difference between buyers with or without a specific intention are contrary to the hypotheses, even if the validity of the measures is taken into account. It turns out that occasional as well as regular buyers with a specific intention spend more time on new releases presented on a table than buyers without such an intention. We hypothesized that buyers with a specific intention would go to a salesperson to ask for the book. Given that one knows what book to buy, going to a display table instead of asking a salesperson is a more effective strategy to find the book only if the title the buyer wishes to acquire is indeed presented on the table. Further research is needed to investigate the correspondence between the prior intentions of buyers of books and the titles displayed on a table.

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