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## Deceptive Advertising under a Lenient Return Policy: An Abstract

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The main goal of lenient return policies is to protect customers from inaccurate or misleading product representations. However, advertisers often take advantage of these policies and make false claims about their products. This research, consisting of four studies, delves deeper into the factors that enable such misleading advertising to thrive in this environment.

In the initial study, we discovered that lenient return policies can actually make consumers more susceptible to deceptive advertising. The second study expanded on this finding, demonstrating how the level of deception in advertising can influence consumers' decision-making when it comes to returning products.

Building upon these initial findings, the third and fourth studies focused on manipulating different types of product information. They specifically looked at how this manipulation can influence consumers' decisions, often leading them to keep products that have been deceptively advertised.

Taken together, this research has constructed a comprehensive model of the psychological processes that drive consumers to keep or return deceptively advertised products. It has also highlighted the impact of manipulating product information and exposed the deceitful techniques advertisers use to mislead consumers. This knowledge can be used by antifraud regulators to develop more effective strategies to combat deceptive advertising practices.

**Keywords:** Deceptive advertising; attitude change; product return policy; contrast-assimilation

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