In-store and Online Advertising Messages for Tobacco Products in a Western New York Metropolitan Area

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BACKGROUND

- Smoking has been established by CDC to be harmful to smokers and the people around them who inhale the second-hand smoke. Additionally, it is the leading cause of preventable disease. (1)
- Each year tobacco companies spend billions of dollars to advertise their products. In 2016 alone, they had spent $9.5 billion in the U.S. (2)
- It is important to explore the common tobacco advertising features smoke-shops use to sell their products both in-store and online.

RESEARCH QUESTION

What are some of the most common in-store and online words that smoke shops around Rochester use to advertise their products: an analysis of marketing of e-cigarette flavors?

METHODS

- Words from 10 recent Facebook posts (15 smoke-shops) generated a world cloud frequency (Fig. 1).
- A qualitative research "windshield survey" documented publicly visible words from 6 smoke-shop store-fronts to generate a second word cloud frequency (Fig. 2).
- Using qualitative open coding methods, 15 themes were identified from the Facebook posts in Figure 1 to generate a pie chart (Fig. 3).

RESULTS

- For the in-store advertising, out of 50 unique words, the most frequently occurring words were "smoke" (n=5), "accessories" (n=3), and "vape" (n=3).
- For the Facebook advertising, out of 346 unique words, the most frequently occurring words were "stock" (n=28), "vape" (n=27), and "cigar" (n=26).
- The themes that emerged the most frequently were the following: Accessories (23.0%), Novel (14.4%), and Deals (9.2%).

Figure 1: Word Cloud from Facebook posts of 15 smoke-shops

Figure 2: Word Cloud from store-fronts

Figure 3: Pie Chart of themes

- Treatment: 0.2%
- Season: 0.6%
- Event: 0.8%
- Health and Safety: 1.2%
- Preference: 1.9%
- Brand: 3.6%
- Drugs: 4.4%
- Space: 7.2%
- Flavor: 7.8%
- Persuasive Adjectives: 8.1%
- Action: 8.6%
- Community Culture: 9.0%
- Deals: 9.2%
- Novel: 14.4%
- Accessories: 23.0%

Legend: Treatment, Season, Event, Health and Safety, Preference, Brand, Drugs, Space, Flavor, Persuasive Adjectives, Action, Community Culture, Deals, Novel, Accessories

DISCUSSION

- For both in-store advertising and online Facebook advertising the main focus of smoke-shop messaging is on vapes and accessories.
- "Vape" was the second most frequently used word for both marketing formats. Also, the theme "Accessories" for the online advertising and the word "Accessories" for the in-store advertising were the number 1 most frequently used words.
- Other commonly used words such as "Stock" and "In Stock" (n= 47), indicate the smoke-shops' tendency to advertise the variety of products they sell.

REFERENCES

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2. *Tobacco Industry Marketing*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2018). Retrieved 28 February 2020, from https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_s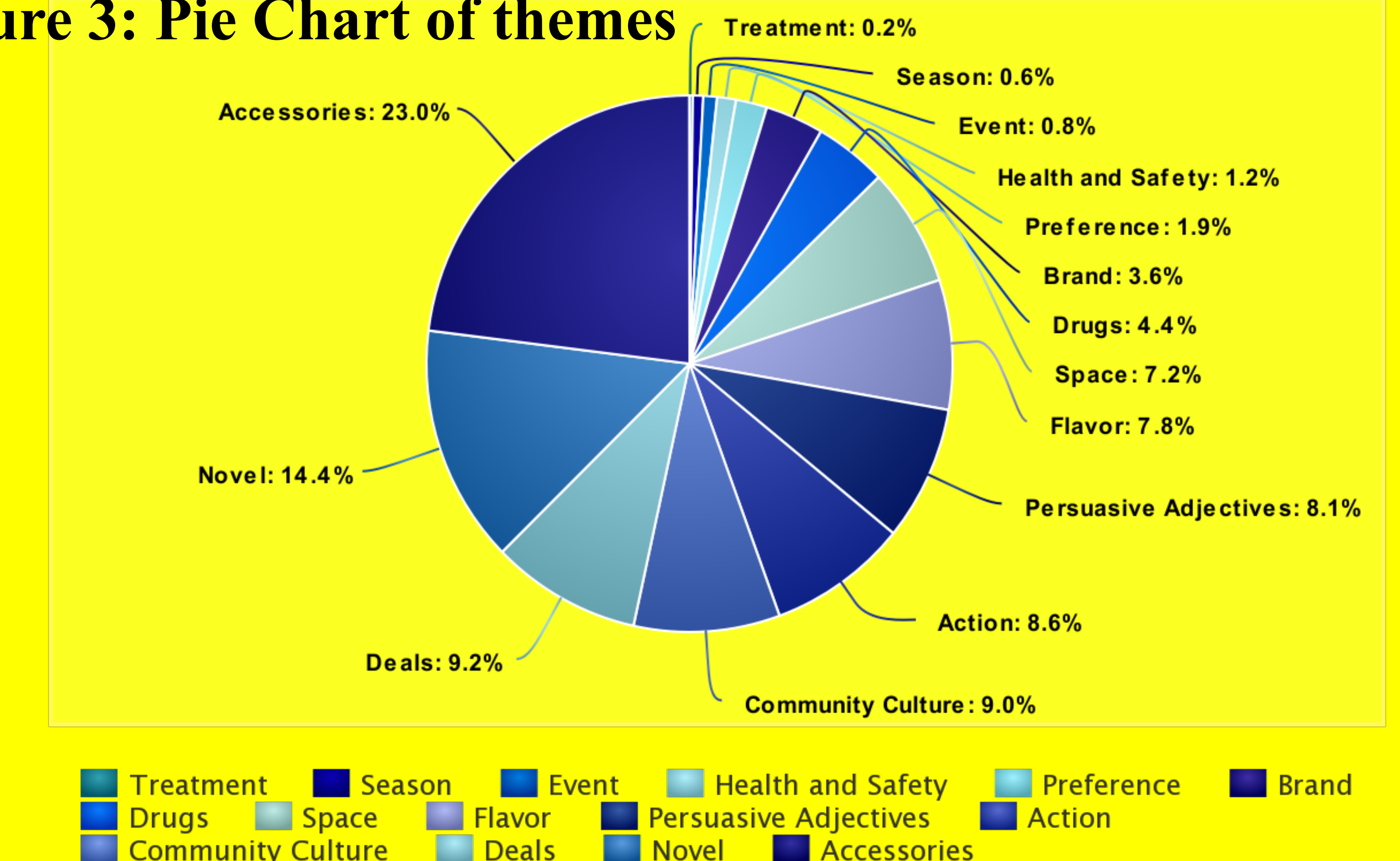tatistics/fact_sheets/tobacco_industry/marketing/index.htm.