6. Persuasion through Digital Games: A Theoretical Model

Abstract
In this chapter, I propose a new theoretical model for the study of how persuasive messages can be conveyed through digital games. This model aims to make visible how persuasiveness can be structured within digital games and to be useful to identify specific aspects of games' persuasiveness, which might not be obvious to the naked eye, by giving them order and conferring them intelligibility. The model is based on the hypothesis that multiple persuasive dimensions can be used within digital games to convey persuasive messages and it is based on the proposition that digital games can persuade players through three different levels and that in each of the three persuasive levels it is possible to find different persuasive dimensions.

Keywords: theoretical model, persuasive games, persuasive dimensions, advergames, persuasive structures, persuasive communication

In the previous chapter, I demonstrated that procedurality statements, in spite of being very useful for understanding games’ persuasiveness, overlook fundamental properties of digital games that should be considered in order to have a complete comprehension of their advertising potential. Accordingly, I argue that other persuasive dimensions can complement procedural rhetoric in the task of conveying advertising messages through digital games and therefore I propose to approach the study of persuasive communication within digital games by exploring these dimensions.

In this chapter, I propose a new theoretical model for the study of how persuasive messages can be conveyed through digital games. The objective of developing this new theoretical model is to make visible how persuasiveness can be structured within digital games and to help identify specific aspects of persuasive games, which might not be obvious to the naked eye,
by giving them order and intelligibility. This model facilitates the study and implementation of persuasive strategies within advergames from a new and specific perspective.

In order to understand how digital games can be designed to convey meaning, I rely on game scholars Salen and Zimmerman’s (2004) statements that refer to semiotic principles to explain how digital games convey meaning. Salen and Zimmerman explain that players create meaning when they interpret a series of signs within a system to establish relationships between them. Furthermore, the authors explain that the context in which these signs are interpreted affects the way the player makes sense of them (Ibid., 2004, p. 364). I build upon Salen and Zimmerman’s statements to claim that persuasiveness can be implemented within digital games by making use of three persuasive levels: (1) the signs embedded within the game; (2) the system that allows players to interact with the signs of the game; and (3) the context in which games are played. Furthermore, in each of these persuasive levels, it is possible to identify different persuasive dimensions. In the new theoretical model that I propose in the following sections, I explain how these persuasive dimensions are structured according to the three levels of persuasion.

Why a Theoretical Model?

What differentiates a theoretical model from a theory is not its function but the way it fulfills the function it is built for (Filloy, Puig, & Rojano, 2008, p. 32). Theoretical models provide explanations “based on assumptions that can be simplified,” and this is what differentiates them from theories (Ibid., p. 32). In this case, I use a theoretical model for the purpose of explaining how persuasive messages can be conveyed through digital games (Ibid., p. 32). Although models are theoretical, they need experiments to demonstrate their validity and to prove their capacity to provide new insights on existing knowledge. After experiments are conducted, “often models have to be modified in response” to their results (Barlow & Mills, 2009, p. 10). However, without the theoretical model, “those experiments would not have been carried out, and the knowledge which arises would have remained unknown” (Ibid., p. 10). It follows that theories are considered more accurate than theoretical models (Filloy, Puig, & Rojano, 2008, p. 32).

Yet, a theoretical model has other advantages. The reason why I choose to work on a theoretical model is because models are proposed with the intention of being used for specific purposes usually related to the understanding
of the structure of the object of study (Ibid., p. 30). This also makes theoretical models different from theories, because proposing a model “is equivalent to suggesting it as a representation that provides at least some approximation to the real situation; furthermore, it means admitting the possibility of alternative representations that may be useful for different purposes” (Ibid., p. 30). I do not aim to provide a conclusive, all-encompassing theory of advergames’ persuasiveness, but, based on an interdisciplinary theoretical framework and using the theoretical model presented here, I aim to structure important theories from different fields and make them comprehensible in a model that can be useful for a better understanding of how persuasive messages can be conveyed through digital games.

How Can a Theoretical Model be Described?

Theoretical models can be described according to three characteristics (Filloy, Puig & Rojano, 2008, p. 30): (1) they are “proposed as a way of representing the structure of an object or system for certain purposes”; (2) they should “consist of a set of assumptions about some concept or system”; and (3) they are “formulated with the aim of providing structural analysis”. In what follows, I discuss each of the three characteristics that identify theoretical models and describe how the theoretical model proposed will apply to each of them.

The purpose

The first characteristic that identifies theoretical models is that they are “proposed as a way of representing the structure of an object or system for certain purposes” (Filloy et al., 2008, p. 30). The theoretical model proposed here is designed for the purpose of becoming useful for the study of persuasive communication within digital games but also with the intention of being useful for the integration of persuasive strategies within the design of persuasive games in general and specifically advergames, the object of interest of this book.

The assumptions

The second characteristic of theoretical models is the fact that they should “consist of a set of assumptions about some concept or system” (2008, p. 30). The theoretical model that I propose here is based on the main assumption
that multiple persuasive dimensions can be used within digital games to convey advertising messages. This assumption is based on a set of assumptions that have been also discussed in detail above. These assumptions are that: (1) the procedural nature of digital games is not their only characteristic that can be used to convey persuasive messages; (2) digital games are also spatial, interactive, encyclopedic, and networked environments, and these characteristics can also be exploited with persuasive intentions; (3) players’ creativity should be taken into consideration when designing persuasive strategies for advergames; (4) players’ emotions and beliefs can influence the way players interpret a message conveyed within a persuasive game and therefore should be also taken into consideration; and (5) the context in which persuasive games are played also plays an important role in this equation.

Structure of the model

The third characteristic of theoretical models is that they are “formulated with the aim of providing structural analysis” (Filloy et al., 2008, p. 30). Accordingly, theoretical models describe the object of study “by attributing to it what might be called an internal structure, a composition or mechanism that, when taken as a reference, will explain various properties of that object or system” (2008, p. 30). In this section I focus on describing the parts into which I have divided the object of study. Later, in the second part of this chapter, I discuss in detail the internal elements of each of the parts described here.

In order to describe the internal persuasive structure of persuasive games I will start by focusing my attention on how digital games convey meaning. There is an open debate about this process, which began in 2011 when the game scholar Miguel Sicart published Against Procedurality. In his article Sicart criticizes proceduralists’ arguments regarding the rules of the game being responsible for the production of meaning. The author advocates a play-centric approach, stating that the rules of the game are not the responsible for the creation of meaning within the game. Sicart asserts that the “meaning of a game cannot be reduced to its rules, nor to the behaviors derived from the rules, since play will be a process of appropriation of those rules, a dialogue between the system and the player” and therefore, that “the meaning of a game is conveyed in the act of play” (Sicart, 2011, para. 57).

However, I agree with the game scholar Mark J. Nelson when he asserts that “proceduralism and play-centrism debate is too simple” (2012, para. 2).
From my point of view the two approaches are complementary, and even additional perspectives should be considered for the understanding of how persuasive games convey meaning. Procedural statements are useful in understanding how meaning can be authored in the rules of the game, but other persuasive dimensions can complement procedural rhetoric in conveying meaning through digital games.

The possibility of conveying meaning through games is not incompatible with players generating new meanings when interacting with the game. Ignoring player creativity and forgetting that player choices can lead to a manipulation of the dominant rhetoric intended by the game designer can result in a distortion of the messages conveyed through digital games. Therefore, I claim that efforts at persuading players through digital games should consist not of conveying closed messages through systems in which players’ freedom is limited but in designing games that allow players to generate unrepeatable experiences related to the message that designers want to convey.

Media scholar Joost Raessens (2009) approaches the study of how digital games convey meaning. Raessens uses the concept of dispositif as developed within film studies to argue that the process of making meaning within digital games “is really influenced by the ways in which configurations of technology, user positioning, desire, media text, and context take shape in specific games” (2009, p. 507). Following Raessens’ arguments, in order to understand how digital games convey meaning, it is important to take also into consideration the context in which games are played, the technology used to play them, and players’ attitudes and feelings toward the game. Taking into consideration all of the above, I claim that the final meaning of a play experience is generated by players while they play a particular digital game in a given context.

In order to structure all the persuasive dimensions involved in how digital games can be used to convey persuasive messages I rely on game scholars Salen and Zimmerman’s (2004) observations. The authors make use of semiotic principles to explain that players make meaning when they interpret a series of signs within a system to establish relationships between them. Furthermore, the authors explain that the context in which these signs are interpreted affects the way the player makes sense of them (2004, p. 364). Following this reasoning, I make the assumption that persuasiveness can be implemented within digital games by making use of three persuasive levels: (1) the signs embedded within the game, (2) the system that allows players to interact with the signs of the game and (3) the context in which games are played. I claim that within these three levels of persuasion it is
possible to situate multiple persuasive dimensions related to all the questions discussed above.

First level of persuasion: The signs
Semiotics understands a sign as the whole that results from the association of the signifier, i.e. the form the sign takes, with the signified, i.e. the concept it represents (Saussure, 1983, p. 67). A digital game can contain thousands of individual signs (related in syntax) that can be rendered by making use of one or more modes. The four modes taken into consideration in this book are: (1) language, (2) visuals, (3) sound, and (4) haptics. Signs rendered in more than one mode at the same time (which is often the case) are considered multimodal signs. For example, the lyrics of a song constitute multimodal signs, rendered making use of sound and language. The list of modes provided here is not exhaustive or definitive, and other modes can be taken into consideration in the future. However, the possible future modifications in this list do not affect the fundamentals of the theoretical model presented here and substantiate the model further.

I will argue that each of the different modes in which signs can be rendered within digital games can be used to persuade players. Thus, it is possible to find four persuasive dimensions within the first persuasive level of advergames: linguistic persuasion, visual persuasion, sonic persuasion, and haptic persuasion. When I refer to linguistic persuasion, I am focusing my attention on how digital games can communicate meaning through language. It follows that linguistic persuasion is concerned with semantics, i.e. how meaning is inferred from words and concepts (Saeed, 2003, p. 2). I refer, then, to any form of linguistic communication, either written or spoken language. Visual persuasion is concerned with how meaning is inferred from visuals —including here the visual treatment of written language; sonic persuasion is concerned with how meaning is inferred from sound—including here music, noise and silence; and haptic persuasion is concerned with how meaning is inferred from nonverbal communication involving touch. All this persuasive dimensions will be discussed in detail in the second part of this chapter.

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3 “This word was introduced at the beginning of the twentieth century by researchers in the field of experimental psychology to refer to the active touch of physical objects by humans. In the late 1980s, the term was redefined to enlarge its scope to include all aspects of machine touch and human–machine touch interaction. The ‘touching’ of objects could be done by humans, machines, or a combination of both, and the environment can be real, virtual, or a combination of both” (El Saddik, Orozco, Eid, & Cha, 2011, p. 3).
In the cases in which more than one mode is used to render one sign, I will be talking about multimodal signs. In multimodal signs, different persuasive dimensions are used at the same time to convey meaning.

Second level of persuasion: The system

Signs need to be interpreted by players in order to become meaningful. However, signs do not function through their intrinsic value but through their position relative to other signs (Saussure, 1983, p. 177). Therefore, in order to become meaningful, signs need a system that establishes relationships between them. The rules of the game have an important role in establishing relationships between the signs within digital games, as they are the responsible for guiding players through the game. However, despite Salen and Zimmerman’s statement that relationships between signs in digital games are established only by the rules of the game (2004, p. 364), I claim, as will be further explained in the next section, that there are other two aspects of digital games that establish relationships between signs as well: the narrative and the cinematic treatment of the audiovisual contents. Therefore, I state that it is possible to find three persuasive dimensions in the second level of persuasion: procedural persuasion, narrative persuasion and cinematic persuasion.

Procedural persuasion is concerned with how meaning can be inferred from the rules of the game. Taking into consideration the interactive nature of digital games, procedural persuasion is also related to the meaning created by players’ performance in the game, which will generate in each game session unrepeatable relationships between sign of the first level of persuasion. Therefore, it is not only that the rules of the game can be interpreted by the players, but, as part of an interactive system, the procedures have a role in the process of the interpretation of what players see, hear, read and feel.

Following the same reasoning, narrative persuasion is concerned with how meaning can be inferred from the narrative of the game and also, as part of an interactive system, has a role in the process of the interpretation of what players see, hear, read and feel. Finally, cinematic persuasion is concerned with how meaning can be inferred from the cinematic treatment of the audiovisual contents of the game and also has a role in the process of the interpretation of what players see, hear, read and feel.

Third level of persuasion: The context

Previously, I have stated that signs need to be interpreted by players in order to become meaningful. It follows that, in order to interpret the signs of a digital game, a player needs to play it. Consequently, the meaning of
a digital game emerges only when the player interacts with the signs of the system within a specific context. Following this reasoning, it can be established that the context can affect the way the player interprets the signs. Furthermore, according to Salen and Zimmerman, the context can influence this interpretation by enhancing, distorting or even radically altering the intended meaning (Salen & Zimmerman, 2004, p. 364). This is because players tend to interpret signs not for what they are but what they mean to them in certain contexts (Walz, 2003, p. 196). Consequently, players’ interpretation of messages embedded within digital games can be influenced by the personal circumstances and beliefs players bring to the game.

However, as will be later explained in detail in section, the game also has the capacity to influence players’ interpretation by the use of metacommunication (Bateson, 2006, p. 315). In this context, metacommunication is understood as the capacity of digital games to influence players’ attitudes through the feelings or emotions aroused by the game. Therefore, advergames have the capacity to influence the perceptions and beliefs of the player not only in the game world but also in the physical world context that it intersects.

Marketing scholar Bernd Schmitt (2000) studied how irrational and emotional aspects involved in a purchasing decision have the same importance as the rational and logical elements on which marketing has been traditionally focused. According to Schmitt (2000, p. 6) persuasive campaigns can be designed to influence targets’ attitudes, perceptions and beliefs by providing experiences focused on the irrational and emotional aspects involved in decision-making. Following Schmitt’s statements, I claim, as will be further explained, that players’ attitudes, perceptions and beliefs can be influenced by digital games (1) by arousing sensory experiences, (2) by arousing emotions, (3) by delivering intellectual challenges that engage players through surprise, intrigue and provocation, and/or (4) by encouraging players to establish relationships with other players. Therefore, I state that it is possible to find four persuasive dimensions in the third level of persuasion: sensorial persuasion, affective persuasion, tactical persuasion and social persuasion.

Sensorial persuasion is aimed at the five individual senses —sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch— with the objective of triggering sensory experiences. The affective persuasive dimension stirs up the player’s deeper feelings and emotions with the objective of triggering affective experiences that go from slightly positive feelings to strong emotions (Schmitt, 2000, p. 6). Tactical persuasion aims to provide appealing experiences for creative customers by delivering intellectual challenges that engage them through surprise, intrigue and provocation (2000, p. 6). This persuasive dimension
is directly related to tactical involvement, which is described by the game scholar Gordon Calleja as the pleasure aroused by planning the strategies to follow in the game (2007, p. 89). Finally, social persuasion aims to influence players’ attitudes by delivering experiences focused on encouraging players to establish relationships with other people or with the brand.

Visual representation of the model
All the eleven persuasive dimensions described above, the way they are structured and the forms in which they can be used to persuade players, constitute a theoretical model that can be used for the study and/or implementation of persuasive strategies within advergames. It must be noted, however, that when playing persuasive games, players are not persuaded by each of these dimensions in isolation but by the relationships between all of them. Furthermore, the fact that persuasive games can make use of eleven persuasive dimensions does not mean that all persuasive games need to contain all of them in order to be effective. The pertinence of the use of each of the persuasive dimensions will depend on a series of factors. The specific factors that should guide the study or implementation of persuasive strategies within advergames will be identified and described in the next chapter of this book.

In order to facilitate the analysis and implementation of persuasive messages within advergames, I propose to represent this theoretical model by making use of a visual diagram (see Figure 1). Once the theoretical model is understood, the visual diagram can serve to quickly guide both the study and design of persuasive structures of advergames. Furthermore, the visual diagram can also provide information about the persuasive structures of advergames that can be immediately understood by others who also understand the diagram.

The diagram consists of three concentric rings that correspond to three levels of persuasion. The center ring corresponds to the first level of persuasion and, consequently, holds the persuasive dimensions that are related to the signs of the game. These are linguistic persuasion, visual persuasion, sonic persuasion and haptic persuasion. Secondly, the middle ring of the diagram corresponds to the second level of persuasion and, consequently, holds the persuasive dimensions that are related to the system. These are procedural persuasion, narrative persuasion and cinematic persuasion. Finally, the outer ring of the diagram corresponds to the third level of persuasion and, consequently, holds the persuasive dimensions that are related to the context, namely, sensorial persuasion, affective persuasion, tactical persuasion and social persuasion.
Persuasive Dimensions in Advergames

Now that I have explained how persuasive communication can be structured within digital games, I am going to focus my attention on describing in detail each of the persuasive dimensions that can be used within advergames to convey advertising messages. Furthermore, I identify and describe internal elements of each of these persuasive dimensions and illustrate, making use of examples, how they can be used to persuade players.4

4 I only highlight the most significant ways in which each of these persuasive dimensions can be used within advergames to persuade players and illustrate these uses with examples. It is beyond of the scope of this book to make a detailed list of all the persuasive possibilities of each of the persuasive dimensions due to the multiple persuasive techniques that can be deployed within advergames.
Linguistic Persuasion

When I refer to linguistic persuasion I am focusing my attention on how advergames can communicate meaning through pieces of language. Linguistic persuasion can be used within advergames in at least: the name of the game, instructional texts, narrative texts, interface commands, character dialogue, character names, names of objects and names of spatial locations.

Linguistic persuasion is concerned with semantics, i.e. how meaning is inferred from words and concepts (Saeed, 2003, p. 2) including in both spoken or written language. Again, I would like to remind the reader that signs whose interpretation can be influenced by more than one persuasive dimension are considered here multimodal signs. Those signs can be analyzed according to each of the persuasive dimensions that have any influence on their interpretation.

As signs, words in the form of nouns, pronouns or adjectives can represent concrete or abstract objects, physical or mental actions, or qualities (which may be called attributes, properties or features). Linguistic signs can be used not only to convey information through their denotative meaning, i.e. their literal or explicit meaning, but also can be used to manipulate how meaning is interpreted through their connotative meaning, i.e. the cultural meanings that become attached to them (Berger, 2004, p. 16). In this respect, when using language with persuasive intentions it is also important to consider how the context can evoke different responses in those who hear or read the texts (Hipkiss, 1995, Introduction ix).

The study of how language can be used with persuasive intentions began in Ancient Greece and has been a touchstone for rhetorical argumentation ever since. Classical philosophers Plato and Aristotle framed rhetoric as a technique for oral persuasion. Aristotle’s treatise on rhetoric (1984) claimed that a speaker supports the probability of a message by logical, ethical and emotional proofs. He states that persuasion through discourse is influenced not only by elements of style and delivery but also by the use of reasoning to construct arguments (logos), by emotional appeals made within the discourse (pathos), and by the credibility and the character of the speaker (ethos) (Aristotle, 1984, p. 104).

Arguments

Arguments can be constructed within advergames by making use of inductive or deductive reasoning. Inductive reasoning uses examples to draw conclusions while deductive reasoning uses generally accepted propositions to derive specific conclusions. Arguments can be used within advergames to introduce products’ benefits and to increase advergames’ credibility.
However, the use of argumentation in linguistic persuasion within advergames may result in players’ resistance to persuasive communication. Therefore, argumentation should be properly integrated into the gameplay to overcome resistance.

An example of a clever use of argumentation within an advergame can be found in the game Packing Battle (Symbio Digital, 2013), a viral campaign released by a travel insurance company. In the game, players have to control a tourist and help him to collect articles to pack his suitcase and avoid obstacles that can ruin his trip. The tourist’s belongings are represented in the game by transparent balls that players have to collect, and obstacles are represented by red balls that players have to avoid. Players also have the possibility to collect a blue ball that is a ‘power-up’, protecting the tourist against obstacles. When the power-up is activated, even if the player collects one of the red balls, the tourist is not affected by its negative effects. In the game, the blue ball represents travel insurance.

When the first blue ball appears for the first time, a text linked to it appears that says: “Travel insurance protects you”. The red balls are accompanied by texts related to typical problems that tourists can experience when traveling, such as losing luggage. With these texts players understand that collecting the blue ball allows them to be protected from the negative effects of the red balls. Players can rapidly link the power the blue ball has in the game with the benefits travel insurance can have in their life. This association can be made thanks to linguistic persuasion, which helps to link the rules of the game and the visual design of the insurance and the obstacles with the advertising message conveyed within the game. Without linguistic persuasion, this association would never be made.
Furthermore, it is important to highlight that the text that emerges when the blue ball appears for the first time is not only an instructional text but is also an argument. If we analyze it in the context of the game, it can be considered an instructional text because it indicates to the player what the blue ball is for. However, if the text is analyzed in isolation, we can see that it is also an argument that can be directly linked to the benefits of the advertised product. Since the argument is properly integrated into the gameplay, players may have their guard down against persuasive communication.

Figures of speech
In order to evoke strong emotions in players, linguistic persuasion within advergames can make use of figures of speech. These are words or phrases with a connotative meaning. Schemes are figures of speech that deal with word order while tropes are figures of speech that deal with the meaning of words. The use of figures of speech with persuasive intentions has been extensively studied by other scholars (see Quinn, 2010) and it is beyond the scope of this book to provide a detailed discussion of their uses within advergames. However, metaphor and metonymy are the most-recurrent tropes in advertising. A metaphor is a figure of speech that transfers the meaning of one word to another (Volkmann, 2006, p. 3), while metonymy consists of referring “to an entity by the name of an attribute, or of an entity semantically related to it” (Cook, 1996, p. 50). In addition, strong emotions can be also evoked by linguistic persuasion by making use of storytelling.

In the advergame Wilkinson Fight for Kisses (Gauche, 2007) linguistic persuasion is used to construct a metaphor that helps to integrate the advertising message into the game. The advergame, launched to advertise the men’s razor Wilkinson 4 Titanium, is presented as a war between a baby and a father for the mother’s kisses. In the game, the player is responsible for controlling one of the two in a three-round tournament. In this case, linguistic persuasion is used at the beginning of the game to construct a metaphor linking this virtual battle with the advertising message, which is that the razor leaves men’s skin really soft. The text that is presented at the beginning of the game compares the razor with a weapon that can be used by men to compete against babies’ soft skin, to get back mothers’ attention. The textual presentation concludes that thanks to Wilkinson, men can fight on equal terms against babies for mothers’ attention. This linguistic metaphor serves to introduce the game and make it meaningful from the brand’s perspective.
Character of the speaker

The effectiveness of linguistic persuasion within advergames can also be influenced by the character of the speaker, if it is introduced in the form of spoken language. This strategy was followed in the advergame *Secret Ingredient* (UNIT9, 2010) commissioned by Heinz and designed with the objective of increasing the use of Heinz Tomato Ketchup as a cooking ingredient. The strategy of the advergame was focused on communicating the benefits of using the ketchup for classic homemade dishes. The advergame challenges players to discover the “secret ingredient” in classic homemade favorites. In order to increase the effectiveness of the arguments used to persuade players, the online game gives them the chance to cook with celebrity chef Paul Rankin, who demonstrates how to cook perfect recipes with Heinz Tomato Ketchup and uses linguistic persuasion to convince players about the benefits of this ingredient. In this case, the use of a renowned celebrity to persuade players through linguistic persuasion confers credibility to the arguments conveyed within the game.

Codes

Codes can also be used to define the style in which texts are presented to players, thus influencing their interpretation. A code is a collection of rules for all members of a given society and culture (Berger, 2004, p. 32). Codes are especially useful because they are concrete and comprehensive but at the same time difficult to see because of their pervasiveness. All media deploy codes that users know how to interpret due to their previous experiences. In the introduction of written texts in advergames, written codes can be used to guide players’ attention, apportioning particular relevance to some texts over others or to linguistic signs over other types of signs present on the screen.

Written-language codes include the use of headings and subheadings, subtitles, logos, labels, font, placement and/or size of texts (Berger, 2004, p. 32). Spoken-language codes are related to three main elements: intonation, pitch, pacing and timbre. Intonation refers to the rise and fall of the voice of the speaker, which has the potential to engage and hold listeners or make them tune out. Pitch is related to how high or low the speaker’s voice sounds. Pace refers to the speed and tempo of speakers’ speech (Gabrielsen & Juul Christiansen, 2010, p. 173). And timbre refers to the “own personal vibration” of a voice that differentiates it from other voices (Chion, 1994, p. 31).

An example which uses both written and spoken language codes to persuade users is the advergame *Mentos Kiss Fight* (BBH & Kingdom, 2008). The game, released by the candy brand Mentos, uses humorous references to classic beat ‘em up games and consists of a three-level tournament, wrapped
up by a short video with live-action storytelling. In the game, instead of inflicting pain on their opponents, players need to give them pleasure by kissing them into submission. The advergame includes advanced moves with special effects that are triggered by taking different Mentos’ products. In the moment in which the player collects one of Mentos’ products, the game stops momentarily, showing the logo of the brand accompanied by a voiceover announcing the name of the product collected, for example, as “Mentos Mint”. The logo is shown in a very big size in the center of the screen, and its presence is enhanced by the use of a background glow. Furthermore, the name of the brand is pronounced by a low voice, thereby using a special intonation that gives relevance to the name heard by the player. In addition, the voiceover makes a small pause between the name of the brand “Mentos” and the rest of the name of the product, which in this example is “Mint”. In this way the emphasis is put on the name of the brand, which sounds the same no matter which product is collected. This serves to present the logo and the name of the brand redundantly in the game. Moreover, when the logo shown on the screen is accompanied by the voiceover, players are being informed that they have just collected an item that allows them to perform an advanced move. Therefore, players link this moment to the positive feeling of having a power-up in the game. It follows that linguistic signs are meaningful not only from the brand’s perspective but are also meaningful for the player in the game. This means that the player does not perceive them as intrusive persuasive communication but as elements of the gameplay, which helps to reduce players’ resistance to persuasive communication.

Visual Persuasion

When I refer to visual persuasion I am focusing on how advergames can communicate meaning with visuals within advergames. The philosopher Kenneth Burke (1987-1993) was the first to acknowledge the persuasive potential of nonverbal domains. “Wherever there is persuasion,” he wrote, “there is rhetoric. And wherever there is ‘meaning,’ there is ‘persuasion’” (Burke, 1969, p. 172). The work of Burke gave rise to the study of persuasiveness in other domains, increasing interest in visual rhetoric, which is understood as the art of using imagery and visual representation persuasively.

Numerous scholars have studied how visual persuasion can work in media other than digital games (e.g. Barthes, 1977; Forceville, 1996; Kennedy, 1982). Drawing upon such studies I assume that it is possible to consider that the visual patterns identified by these scholars can be applied within
advergames to persuade players. I perceive visual persuasion as characterized by a process in which the visuals function as cues that evoke intended meanings, premises and lines of reasoning.

Media scholar Jens E. Kjeldsen states that visual persuasion may draw upon four persuasive qualities of visuals (2012, pp. 240-241): presence, realism, immediacy and semantic condensation. Presence is the capacity of visuals to make present to players something that is useful to support advertising claims. Realism is the capacity of visuals to present something “as though it is reality itself”. Immediacy is the property of visuals to be perceived and understood in a brief instant. Finally, semantic condensation is the capacity of visuals to condense several ideas, thoughts or contents into a single image. It follows that these four persuasive qualities might be used within advergames to persuade players.

However, visuals within advergames can become polysemous, thus implying “subjacent to its signifiers, a ‘floating chain’ of signifiers of which the reader can select some and ignore the rest” (Barthes, 1977, p. 28). Therefore, players may need certain directions to be able to interpret the intended meaning. Players’ interpretation can be guided by the use of codes that users understand from their previous experiences. Although concrete and comprehensive, codes are at the same time difficult to see because of their pervasiveness. In this sense, the manipulation of lightning, color and perspective play important roles in persuading players through visuals.

I have identified that visual persuasion can be used within advergames in: (1) interface design (including the design of splash and menu screens), (2) character design, (3) objects design, and (4) spatial design. An example of visual persuasion executed in the design of the interface can be found in the advergame The Naughty Christmas (Isobar France, Fighting Fish, & CRCR, 2012), commissioned by the fashion designer Jean Paul Gaultier and launched at Christmas time. The interface design of the advergame is an advent calendar that players can use to access mini-games by clicking on one of the days of the calendar. The design features Jean Paul Gaultier who wears an open coat with multiple pockets and each day of the calendar is placed in one of these pockets. Although Jean Paul Gaultier is dressed in the design, the player immediately links the image with the typical image of an exhibitionist flashing open his coat to a stranger (see Figure 3). The connotative meaning of the image enables players to build a metaphor5 that guides their interpretation and make them understand that the game

5 A metaphor is a rhetorical figure that describes an object and is used in a place of another object to suggest an analogy between them (Nöth, 1995, p. 128).
might be related to naughty content, as also suggested by the title of the game. Moreover, in the image Gaultier raises one of his eyebrows when he smiles, which culturally can be interpreted as a sign of flirting. As a designer, Gaultier has always questioned established conventions, and in this advergame the designer follows the same path, relating Christmas to naughtiness.

An example of visual persuasion executed through the design of a character can be found in the advergame *Banana Boogie Battle* (Group, 2010), which features a Chiquita banana battling against a ‘regular’ banana. In this case, the visual representation of the two bananas tries to convey to players the message that Chiquita bananas are of better quality than ‘regular’ bananas. For that purpose, the Chiquita banana is represented as a ‘perfect banana’, featuring a uniform yellow color and a smiley face that resembles Chiquita’s logo. The ‘regular’ banana, on the other hand, is pale yellow with brown spots, resembling an overripe banana, and has a scowling face (see Figure 4). The comparison between the two representations communicates that the Chiquita banana is the better of the two.

The advergame *Harald Hardtooth and The Fight Of The Clean Teeth* (Colgate-Palmolive, 1992) is an example of visual persuasion executed through the design of an object. The game consists of a battle in which the main character, Harald Hardtooth, fights against bacteria. In this battle Harald holds a toothpaste tube as if it were a gun and uses it to kill bacteria. The visual representation of the tube, its position and how is it held by Harald, added to the use he makes of it, help players to construct a
metaphor identifying toothpaste as a ‘gun’ to fight against bacteria. From this metaphor players can infer that the use of Colgate toothpaste can prevent the growth of bacteria.

The advergame *First Person Lover* (Isbit Games, 2015) is an example of visual persuasion executed through space design. The game, released by the sportswear fashion brand Björn Borg, uses humorous references to first person shooter games. In the game, instead of inflicting pain on their opponents, players need to “liberate” them by shooting them with a kiss gun and a love-bubble blaster. Liberating opponents involves shooting them until their clothes come off, and then using a “love glove” until they get “filled with love” and dressed in an outfit from the Björn Borg collection. The experience in the advergame is totally focused on conveying the idea that wearing Björn Borg clothes is associated to happiness and positive vibes. In the advergame the metaphor of paradise is used to convey a very pleasant world. Traditionally paradise can be represented by a colorful quiet place in which everyone smiles and is happy. In the game, the player should transform the game space from a dark city with people wearing dark clothes and sad faces, to a colorful side-coast city with happy citizens who wear Björn Borg clothes. This enables players to interpret that wearing Björn Borg clothes is like being transported to paradise, and helps you to feel happy and forget about negative feelings. It follows that the visual design of the advergame space has an important role in forming players’ interpretation of the advertising message.
Overall, visual persuasion can be executed in many different elements of game design. However, it must be taken into consideration that in some cases players may need certain directions to be able to interpret the meaning intended by visuals within the game.

**Sonic Persuasion**

When I refer to sonic persuasion I am focusing my attention on how advergames can communicate meaning through the selection, generation, recording, distortion, amplification and mixing of sounds. The types of sound considered in this section are music, noise and silence. The sonic treatment of the linguistic sound⁶ will also be considered, but the content will not be analyzed under this domain. The use of these four types of sounds can have an expressive function in digital games that can be analyzed in terms of persuasion.

In order to understand how sonic persuasion works within advergames it is important to comprehend how players listen to sounds, and how interaction can influence how players interpret them. The game scholar Karen Collins, specialized in the study of game sound, explains that listening to sounds consists not only of hearing them but also of consciously focusing on them (2013, p. 4). In this respect, the theoretician of audio-visual relationships Michael Chion (1994) states that players can gather information from sounds that they hear by casual listening and reduced listening. Casual listening refers to “the act of focusing on or recognizing the cause or source of the sound” (Chion, 1994, p. 28). From listening to sounds, players can recognize where they come from or what type of object is making them, for example. On the other hand, reduced listening is the capacity of players to gather information from the traits of the sound, such as its quality or its timbre (1994, p. 28).

The information gathered by players through casual and reduced listening may be interpreted by semantic listening (Chion, 1994, p. 28). Therefore, semantic listening is the ability of players to interpret a message in a sound by listening to it. It follows that by taking advantage of players’ abilities to gather and interpret information from sounds, advergames can persuade players through sonic persuasion.

It is also important to note that, due to the interactive nature of advergames, the way players trigger sound events in the game depends on their performance. In this regard, sonic persuasion should consider the

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⁶ The lyrics of music are considered part of the linguistic sound.
expressive capacity of interactive audio and adaptive audio identified by Collins. Interactive audio groups those sound events that are the result of a player's direct input, while adaptive audio groups those sound events that are introduced by reacting to different game states (2008, p. 4).

I have identified that sonic persuasion can be used within advergames in at least: (1) interface sounds, (2) sound effects, and (3) ambient sound beds. An example of sonic persuasion used in the sounds associated with the interface can be found in the advergame Customize (Vitaliy Onishenko & Oleg Kostyuk, 2010) from the costume brand of the same name. The game was designed to advertise a Halloween custom line from the brand and consists of a hidden object mechanics in which the player needs to look for hidden pumpkins. The interface design includes a visual representation of several characters dressed in the brand’s costumes. When players roll the mouse over these characters looking for the hidden objects, they can hear a special sound, and at the same time the interface displays a button that enables the players to access to a new window. The sound helps to drive players’ attention toward the characters and arouses their curiosity about the content of the new window. The new window shows detailed information about the costume the character is wearing and allows the players to buy it. Therefore, in this case sonic persuasion makes use of interactive audio to encourage the players to visit the purchasing site.

An example of sonic persuasion through sound effects in an advergame can be found in Honda Grrr (UNIT9, 2005). The game was designed to promote the car model Accord i-CDTi, and its advertising message was focused on conveying that the engine of the car is environmentally friendly. In the game, the player is responsible for guiding a rabbit and helping it to find and destroy objects responsible for pollution (see Figure 5). This action is a metaphor that tries to compare the use of the car with a good action for the environment. Every time the rabbit destroys an object, a jingle of the campaign is heard, indicating to players that they have done a good action. In this case sonic persuasion makes use of interactive audio, rewarding an action undertaken by the player with a pleasant sound. The fact that the sound is associated with the players’ action makes it more meaningful for them. Such a strategy therefore enables semantic listening, facilitating players’ interpretation of the advertising message. Furthermore, this strategy also relies on redundancy because this sound is heard every time the player finds and destroys one of the objects, thereby facilitating familiarity and recall.

An example of sonic persuasion executed within an ambient sound bed can be found in the advergame Swedish Armed Forces Recruit #1 (DDB
The advergame was commissioned by the Swedish Armed Forces with the intention of recruiting soldiers. Given that purpose, the game makes players face a recruitment test which evaluates their abilities to become soldiers. The test consists of a series of challenges that evaluate skills that players would need if they decide to join the army. The game tries to give people who might question whether they
can become competent soldiers a tool with which to evaluate their capacity. If they are able to succeed in this challenge, their interest in joining the army may increase. Following a successful outcome, the game offers players the possibility of applying for a position. In this case, the game uses sonic persuasion by creating an ambient sound bed that resembles the one that players could expect from a physical army testing room. The ambient sound bed uses expressive silences instead of music. Furthermore, the sounds heard by players, such as a door closing and a voiceover, are treated with echoes and reverb to create a realistic atmosphere. The game encourages players to use headphones to increase the effect of sonic persuasion. In this case, the realistic treatment of the sound aims to influence the way players feel the experience, to make them imagine themselves actually trying to join the army. Players might link the feelings and emotions experienced during the test to the physical world. This can increase their willingness to join the army or at least arouse curiosity about such a career.

There is another way to integrate sound with persuasive intentions within advergames when the sound itself is what the game is trying to advertise. For instance, a band may use an advergame to advertise the launch of a new album. In this case, the designer should think about the way to focus players' attention on the music, to enable casual listening. There are many possibilities to do this, and all the aforementioned techniques can be useful. The electronic band Spleen United, for example, created a puzzle advergame _Sunset to Sunset_ (hello monday, 2010) in which the pieces of the puzzle are sounds. Each sound corresponds to a piece of a song, and in order to solve the puzzle the player needs to play the sounds in the right order. With this strategy game designers give players a reason to interact with the band's music, and this interaction undoubtedly makes them completely focus on the sound. Thus the sound becomes meaningful to players in the game.

**Haptic Persuasion**

When I refer to haptic persuasion I am focusing my attention on how advergames can communicate meaning with any form of nonverbal communication involving touch, which is perceived only when it is directly experienced. Haptic persuasion deals with how players construct meaning through their bodily and mental performance, which may generate new signs or modify existing ones (Frasca, 2007, p. 198). Therefore, it is directly related to interactive activities in games.

The possibilities for haptic persuasion have substantially increased thanks to the evolution of technology. The incorporation of haptic and
sensing technologies in the screens of devices such as smartphones, tablets or consoles has changed the way players interact with games, opening a new domain for persuasion. These technologies have facilitated the introduction of haptic interfaces, devices that allow users to “interact with a computer by receiving tactile and force feedback“ (Orozco, Silva, El Saddik, & Petriu, 2012, p. 217). Multimedia communication scholars Orozco, Silva, El Saddik and Petriu, who have conducted several studies on game haptics, state that the use of haptics within digital games “enhances the game experience by creating a more realistic physical feeling of playing a game” (2012, p. 218).

In his Ph.D. dissertation *Play the Message. Play, Game and Videogame Rhetoric* (2007), game scholar Gonzalo Frasca explores how the haptic system is involved in the creation and interpretation of meaning within play activities. The author states that “forcing the player to exaggerate his physical performance is the equivalent of a rhetorical figure” on the haptic level (2007, p. 150).

However, the persuasive potential of haptics resides not only in the way the game accepts input from the player but also how the system provides tactile output. The feedback that we obtain from computer games as well as from our interaction with the physical world is essential to understand the consequences and validity of our actions in the environment we are interacting with. Accordingly, digital media scholars Martin Faust and Yong-Ho Yoo state that haptic interaction is “among the fundamental ways in which humans understand the world and effect changes in it” (Faust & Yoo, 2006, p. 1). For this reason, the authors consider that haptic feedback offers “an advanced interaction concept for games” (2006, p. 1).

It follows that haptic persuasion within digital games should be designed according to the physical aspect of the game and how the players can give haptic input and receive haptic feedback. Haptic feedback can be provided by the use of “force/tactile feedback, pressure, vibration, heat, and even pain” (Park, Kim, Cho, & Park, 2010, p. 389). The human-computer interaction engineer Grigore C. Burdea has studied how tactile and force feedback techniques can be used to give feedback about the “weight, surface smoothness, compliance or temperature” (1996, p. 1) of grasped objects in virtual worlds. The author defines tactile feedback as a “sensation applied to the skin, typically in response to contact or other actions in a virtual world” (Burdea, 1996, p. 3). On the other hand, he defines force feedback as the “the sensation of weight or resistance in a virtual world” (Burdea, 1996, p. 4). Burdea explains that tactile feedback can be used, for example, to provide sensations that give information about a specific condition of an object
grasped in a virtual world (1996, p. 4). Furthermore, tactile feedback can also be used to produce symbols, such as with the use of Braille language. Meanwhile, force feedback can be used to allow players to “feel the weight of virtual objects or the resistance to motion that they can create” (Burdea, 1996, p. 4).

The possibilities to implement haptic persuasion depend on where and how interaction is taking place. In digital games in which players use controllers such as joysticks, game pads, haptic vests and jackets or wheels, haptic persuasion can be implemented depending on the different types of haptic feedback that these controllers can provide. Each of these controllers can be specially designed to provide tactile or force feedback in response to interaction. In addition, in pervasive games in which players can interact with the physical world by making use of digital devices, bodily interaction with the physical world opens new possibilities for haptic feedback. Furthermore, motion-sensing input devices such as the Kinect of the Xbox 360, also harbor potential for haptic persuasion.

Although the potential of haptic persuasion is huge, this technique is not widely exploited in the field of advergames due to the high costs of the technology that allows haptic feedback. However, advergames try to take advantage of the potential of haptic persuasion by making use of multimodal feedback. Multimodal feedback combines different channels simultaneously to provide feedback to players’ input (Caporusso, Mkrtchyan, & Badia, 2009, p. 2). In games with limitations in haptic feedback, visuals and sound can be used to provide feedback to haptic input.

Furthermore, the mechanics of the game can be designed to make the game respond to haptic input in a way that generates in the player an illusion of haptic feedback. An example of this can be found in the advergame Get the Glass! (North Kingdom, 2007) discussed on p. 39. The game features a challenge in which the player has to help the father of the Adachi family drive a van along a winding road. Through this challenge advertisers want to communicate that the father has difficulties driving the van because his muscles are weakened from a lack of milk consumption. This situation is represented in the game by a delayed response to players’ input when they try to control the van in the game. What happens is that there is a delay between the moment the player moves the mouse and the moment in which the game responds to this input. This delay becomes an illusory haptic feedback that can be interpreted by the player as the difficulty the father experiences in moving the van’s steering wheel. Therefore, in this case multimodal feedback has been used to replace force feedback with a persuasive purpose.
In other cases, haptic input alone is used within digital games with persuasive intentions. The advergame Honeyway Train (Saatchi & Saatchi & Boffswana, 2010) is an example of how advergames can use haptic input to persuade players. In this augmented reality advergame the player is encouraged to use a box of Cheerios cereal as a wheel controller. Though the box is not the same as the controller, the fact that the player moves the box to simulate the act of driving in the game is sufficient to make the player connect the box controller to a real wheel controller. In this case Cheerios cereals are a utilitarian product purchased to satisfy a basic need. It is also a low involvement product, and therefore it is likely that players are not going to pay too much attention to advergames’ claims, and an experience product, which means that its features can be evaluated only after purchase. In this case it is difficult to think about a game design that can simulate the experience of eating the product. Consequently, the strategy followed was to create a memorable and enjoyable experience in which the product is incorporated through an illustrative function. That is, the product has an important role in the experience, but the player does not interact with it in its natural context within the game. However, thanks to the augmented reality, this strategy serves to motivate the player to interact with the product outside of the boundaries of the digital game.

**Procedural Persuasion**

Procedural persuasion is concerned with how meaning can be inferred from the rules of the game and the relationships that the rules of the game establish between the signs of the persuasive dimensions of the first level of persuasion. Therefore, it is not only that the rules of the game can be interpreted by the players, but, as a system, they also help players to interpret what they see, hear, read and feel.

Bogost defines the term procedural rhetoric as referring to “the art of persuasion through rule-based representations and interactions” (2007, p. preface ix). To be consistent with the approach of this book, I refer to the use of the mechanics of the game with persuasive intentions as procedural persuasion, rather than persuasive rhetoric. I have already discussed in depth Bogost’s arguments on procedural rhetoric and the importance of this persuasive dimension. In this section I focus my attention on explaining how procedural persuasion can be implemented within advergames.

Game rules are a powerful tool for persuasion because they are usually loaded with conventions that the players understand based on their previous experiences. Combined with game’s interactivity, the game rules are key to
making the game a performable experience, which differentiates persuasive games from other kinds of persuasive contents. From a persuasive point of view, the rules of the game have the primary function of guiding the player through the game and consequently have an important role in establishing relationships between the signs contained in the persuasive dimensions of the first level, helping players interpret their experience.

According to game scholar Gonzalo Frasca, there are at least four types of rules that can be designed to persuade players within digital games (2007, pp. 118-119), these are: (1) model rules, (2) grade rules, (3) goal rules and (4) meta-rules. The model rules define how the playworld works and therefore set the boundaries of players’ activity (Frasca, 2007, p. 118). An advergame that uses the possibility of designing model rules with persuasive intentions is Race Anywhere (Aperto AG, 2016). The game, commissioned by the Volkswagen, was released with the intention of allowing players to control self-customized Volkswagens’s different models in a digital experience. In the game, the players can choose to control one of the ten different vehicles, which have different capabilities reflecting their capabilities in the physical world. This feature not only provides different racing experiences within the game world but also informs the player about the benefits of each of the models and the differences between them.

The grade rules deal with any characteristic of the game that is measured within it, such as scores or energy levels (Frasca, 2007, p. 118). An example of a persuasive use of grade rules can be found in the game Red Bull Flugtag Flight Lab (Less Rain, 2008). In this game, players need to design and build their own aircraft and make it fly through as many gates as possible in one of the ten available locations. During the flight players lose energy that they can replenish by collecting Red Bull cans (see Figure 7). Therefore, the energy level in the game is visually represented by Red Bull cans. Taking into account that Red Bull is an energy drink, it is obvious that the brand established a visual metaphor between the Red Bull drink and energy that tries to suggest that drinking Red Bull gives energy and ‘fuel’. This is understood thanks to the way the grade rules of the game make the player interpret the visual representation of the cans of Red Bull. Without the grade rule, the player would never associate the image of the can in the game with energy. Accordingly, the grade rule could never suggest this interpretation without this specific visual representation. If the visual representation of the energy level were completely different, the player would not link energy with the brand. Therefore, in this case visual persuasion and procedural persuasion are used together to address a specific interpretation through a multimodal sign.
The goal rules define the stated aims that lead to victory and defeat (Frasca, 2007, p. 119). If we can assume that players always want to win the game, these rules are supposed to define what they must and must not do. However, it must always be considered that cheating is likely to occur in almost every kind of game. Designers need to bear this in mind, although it is not possible to foresee all of a player’s actions.

Using goal rules with persuasive intentions is influenced by the relationship between game goals and advertising goals. Below I discuss in further depth different ways in which game goals and advertising goals can be related and how the different relations can influence the use of goal rules with persuasive intentions. In this section I would like to analyze an example in which game goals and advertising goals do not overlap.

The strategy that I want to discuss here is used in the advergame *The Handytest* (Try/Apt & Copyleft, 2013). The game was commissioned by the Norwegian website of the classified ads business FINN.no, which launched it to promote a new service for hiring contractors. The objective of this game is to make players aware of their need to hire contractors. For that purpose, the brand proposes an advergame that challenges players to find out how handy they are. In the game, the player needs to identify a series of tools, know what are they used for, and to demonstrate knowledge in subjects such as electricity or carpentry. At the end of the game, players are given...
an average score of how handy they are. In this way, players discover where their knowledge is lacking and thus for which tasks they will need help. The game finishes by reminding the players that in case they need help, there is a network of professionals available to help them on FINN.no.

In this case the game goal and the advertising goal do not completely overlap because even though both were set to make players aware about their lack of knowledge, the advergame is designed in a way that makes players believe that the real objective of the game is to let them demonstrate their level of handiness. This game delivers a challenge that engages players through provocation, and this may make them let their guard down. Consequently, when they discover the ‘real’ intentions of the game, it is too late, and the persuasive message has already been conveyed.

Finally, meta-rules define how the player can modify the game’s rule system (Frasca, 2007, p. 119). These rules include the ones that allow players to customize the game, for example, by changing its difficulty level. The design of meta-rules with persuasive intentions was used in the game Airman Challenge 2017 (Active Theory, GSD&M & Plan 8, 2017). This advergame was launched to give visibility to the work of the U.S. Air Force. In the game, the player needs to face missions undertaken day in and day out by United States airmen. To face those missions, players need to choose their team (see Figure 8). If they make a poor choice, the mission cannot be accomplished.

Figure 8. Airman Challenge 2017 (Active Theory, GSD&M & Plan 8, 2017) in which the player needs to select the right team to accomplish a mission.

Persuasion works here thanks to the combination of procedural persuasion, visual persuasion and linguistic persuasion. In this case the meta-rules of the game allow the player to select the team, but it is the way in which the possible members of the team are presented to players that allows them to learn more about their respective roles in the army. The pictures of each of
the prospective team members give the player information about how their roles are performed. Additionally, the descriptive texts that accompany the images inform players more about their skills and their specific abilities. This information needs to be checked by the player in order to select the right team to accomplish the mission. Therefore, playformance persuasion is guiding the player through the visual and linguistic persuasive dimensions.

**Narrative Persuasion**

The second aspect of the game that can be used to establish relationships between the signs of the first level of persuasion is the narrative of the advergame. The use of narrative with persuasive intentions consists in evoking images, in other words “convert[ing] our telling into some sort of ‘higher common sense’ by personalizing it, playing on the hearer’s identification” (Amsterdam & Bruner, 2002, p. 135).

There has been a broad debate between ludologists (e.g. Aarseth, 2004; Adams, 1999; Costikyan, 2000; Eskelein, 2001) and narratologists (e.g. Murray, 1997; M.-L. Ryan, 2005) concerning the possibility of studying games using principles of narratology. Ludologists have argued that “interactivity is almost the opposite to narrative” (Adams, 1999, para. 17) and that there is a “direct, immediate conflict between the demands of a story and the demands of a game” (Costikyan, 2000, p. para 8). However, this debate has moved on since the ludologist Gonzalo Frasca (2003) has shown that ludologists never ruled out the narrative in the game, and the narratologist Janet Murray has stated that “no one has been interested in making the argument that there is no difference between games and stories or that games are merely a subset of stories” (Murray, 2005, p. para 9). I agree with the position of authors such as the media scholar Henry Jenkins who has advocated a mid-way course pointing out that although “not all games tell stories”, actually “many games do have narrative aspirations”; however,”if some games tell stories, they are unlikely to tell them in the same ways that other media tell stories” (Jenkins, 2004, p. 2). In this section, I analyze the different ways in which narrative and narrative elements can be used within digital games to persuade players.

In order to understand how narrative persuasion can be implemented within advergames, I would like to introduce the difference established by game scholar Gordon Calleja (2009) between scripted narrative and alterbiography. Calleja describes scripted narrative as the “narrative content and structures that have been written by the designers” and alterbiography as “the narrative generated during the gameplay” (2009, p. 4). Both scripted
narrative and alterbiography depend on three narrative elements: (1) the story, (2) the characters and (3) the space. However, whilst the main plot and secondary plots of scripted narrative are written by designers, plots of alterbiography emerge from players’ performance. Therefore, besides the three narrative elements mentioned, alterbiography also depends on the interaction of the player with the rules of the game (2009, p. 5). The narrative emerging from the interaction of the player with the rules is “a combination of rules, representations and imagination” (2009, p. 7).

The story

The first element of the narrative that can be designed to persuade players is the story. The story of a game is the chronological order of its events. Narrative games, namely games in which the story plays a significant role, contain a “scripted succession of events that the player has to perform in a specific order” (Egentfeldt-Nielsen, Heide Smith, & Pajares Tosca, 2008, p. 172). Although not all games require a scripted story, most of them are much improved by the addition of one, and the importance of the story increases along with the complexity of the game (Rollings & Adams, 2003, pp. 91-92).

The story of a game can be useful to persuade players because it can reduce players’ resistance to persuasive messages and reduce cognitive loads in complex games. Resistance can be avoided by the use of narratives because narrative is not based on arguments but tells stories so the reader is left with no arguments to refute. Furthermore, counter-arguing may also be inhibited by narrative because arguments might not be noticed by players until it is too late (Dal Cin et al., 2004, p. 178). Narrative involvement also plays an important role in this sense, inasmuch as the ability and motivation of the reader to generate counterarguments weaken with the cognitive and emotional demands of absorption. Social psychologists Melanie C. Green and Timothy C. Brock have demonstrated that narrative persuasion “lead[s] to belief changes that resist counterinfluence and that persist longer over time” (2002, p. 336). Thus, scripted narrative that embeds information about a brand by evoking certain images helps to engage the player and results in an experience that is meaningful from the point of view of the brand.

Furthermore, the use of storylines can reduce cognitive loads in complex games by making it easier to understand their virtual worlds. The communication scholars Lee, Seung-Jin, Park and Kang have demonstrated that an engaging background story that gives crucial information about the gaming environment or provides a framework for a mission-based game...
structure increases players’ feelings of physical and spatial presence (2009, p. 29). As mentioned above, when players have problems understanding the structure of an advergame, they might retain less information (Plummer, 1971, p. 322). Therefore, the story of an advergame can increase its efficiency by helping the player understand its structure.

The advergame *Black Sunshine* (Extreme Group, 2010) is a good example of how a storyline can be used with persuasive intentions. The game was designed for Caribbean Farms’ Black Sunshine Coffee to provide a unique e-commerce experience that allowed players to actually purchase the coffee beans. The game was designed around a storyline in which the purchase of the coffee is compared to a drug deal. In the game, the player travels to the Caribbean Islands and has to close a deal in a dirty abandoned house to purchase coffee beans that are sold in kilos. The drug-deal angle of the storyline was created to communicate the idea that the coffee beans are high-end and rare, so they can be compared to an illicit substance. The objective was to design an experience that would reach out to the next generation of premium coffee drinkers. In this case, the storyline served to deploy a controversial experience that served not only to convey the advertising message but also to trigger its viral dissemination. Furthermore, at the end of the game the players are actually directed to close their deal with a real purchase of the coffee beans. Therefore, the storyline also served to incorporate the purchase in the game in a natural manner totally integrated in the gameplay.

The characters

The second narrative element that can be designed to persuade players includes the characters and their actions. The characters can have an important role not just in their functions in a game’s scripted story but also through the alterbiography, the narrative generated during the gameplay. Moreover, the revolution offered by digital games means that the players can act as characters themselves, and they can expect reactions to their own actions (Egentfeldt-Nielsen et al., 2008, p. 178). This fact induces psychological empathy with the character, which increases a player’s feeling of identification with the character (Lee et al., 2009, p. 30). Characters have an important role in alterbiography, and inasmuch as players establish a psychological empathy with them, the definition of game characters can be used to enable or avoid possibilities in the development of alterbiography’s events. To put this in context, the resulting alterbiography in *Grand Theft Auto* could be influenced if, instead of playing as a criminal, players could take on the role of a nun who cannot steal cars or kill people.
The game scholars Simon Egertfeldt-Nielsen, Jonas Heide and Susana Pajares Tosca state that the language of digital games allows us to define the way in which characters are created in a series of sophisticated ways (2008, p. 179): through what players can see of them on screen, through their actions, through their relationship with space, through other characters’ view of them and through their meaningful names. All of these variables have to be considered when designing characters with persuasive intentions. Furthermore, from a persuasive point of view it is also necessary to pay attention to the following attributes of the characters: their physiology, their sociology, their psychology, their relationship with the story, their role within the story, the extent to which the players can interact with them, the extent to which players can customize them and the identification of the character with the brand.

An example of an advergame in which character design plays an important role for players’ identification is Nike: Reactland (Unit9, Weiden+Kennedy Shanghai & Nike, 2018). This game is a unique retro platform gaming installation, where player faces were used as actual in-game characters and the controller was a real treadmill. Using a green screen, the designers snapped images of each player to place them directly into the game. Then players were invited try on a pair of Nike React shoes and run on a treadmill so they were moving through the game world as an actual character that looked just like them (see Figure 9). In this case, the fact that the character looks like the
player was used not only to increase players’ identification in the game but also to establish relationships with other signs in the system (in this case the pair of Nike shoes), which allows the game to convey the advertising message.

The space
The third narrative element that can be designed to persuade players is the space. The space is a narrative element that has meaningful functions in both scripted narrative and alterbiography. The space is important for scripted narrative because actions take place in the space and it contains the characters of the story. Furthermore, it is important for alterbiography because game spaces can be transformed by the user at the same time that the story is being constructed. In this regard, the social computing scholar Amy Bruckman states that in those games in which there is no scripted narrative or its presence is minimal, a combination of spatial, temporal and thematic mapping can be used to construct a *storyspace* that can be explored by the player, resulting in a non-linear and personal storyline (1990, p. 1). Accordingly, the media scholar Henry Jenkins states that game designers should be considered narrative architects more than storytellers (2004, p. 13).

In order to understand how the design of game spaces can be used with persuasive intentions it is important to distinguish between explicit and implicit space. Explicit space is the world that is represented on the graphic interface at every moment. Within the explicit space it is possible to distinguish between the selection space and the representational space. The selection space corresponds to the interface, whilst the representational space is the one which has the contents selected through the interface. In cases where the selection space and the representation space are coincident we can talk about mimetic-natural spaces (Moreno, 2002).

The implicit space is the off-screen space that is visible or audible to the characters (Chatman, 1990, p. 103). In digital games off-screen space can be passive or active. While in passive off-screen space nothing happens, active off-screen space can be explored by the player. Sometimes the player will have freedom to explore the space at his own pace, but in other cases exploration will be forced by the game mechanics. The gradual unveiling of the game space through exploration is known as scroll, which can be horizontal, vertical or free (Egentfeldt-Nielsen et al., 2008, pp. 117-120).

All the space elements of advergames can be designed with a persuasive intention. Moreover, the possibilities provided to players to navigate through the space can also be designed to be expressive themselves. Although there appears to be a preponderance of advergames which avoid spaces that can
be explored by the player, the design of game spaces that provide freedom of movement to players can make them feel in control of the situation, which makes them let their guard down against persuasion. This can be useful in advergames to overcome players’ resistance to advertising messages. Moreover, it can also be used as a strategy to increase retention of players, who can be motivated to return to the game to explore the uncharted territory.

Jenkins (2004) proposes four ways in which spatial stories can provide engaging narratives that can be used with persuasive intentions within advergames. The first possibility is to design an evocative space that can evoke pre-existing associations in the mind of the player. These associations can be used in advergames to evoke spaces with persuasive intentions such as calling up pleasurable experiences that create a positive attitude toward the game.

The second possibility is to design a space that provides the players with the necessary elements to build their personal experience by exploring the space. In this case, players’ interactions with the space result in micro-narratives that shape the players’ emotional experiences and provide players a sense of freedom which can lead them to let down their guard against persuasive communication. At the same time, the elements provided to the players to build their personal experience can be designed with persuasive intentions.

The third possibility is to embed information within the visual representation of the space. In this case the designer can neither control when players receive bits of information nor assume that they are going to locate or recognize the significance of any given element. Hence, essential information should be redundantly distributed across the game space. This approach allows for a balance between the flexibility of interactivity and the coherence of a pre-authored branded message.

The fourth and final possibility is to organize game spaces by thinking about the possible performances of the player in order to foresee likely outcomes and consequences. In this case the persuasive message can be embedded according to the possible outcomes and consequences.

An example of an advergame in which space is designed to trigger spatial exploration with persuasive intentions is *Energuy* (Bos, mamooth, & Jet Films, 2008). The game was released by Quebec’s Agence de l’efficacité énergétique to show the importance of saving energy. In order to achieve this goal, the game situates players in a house in where they have to guide the main character to locate objects that can help him to save energy. At the moment the player finds one of the objects, it is transformed with the aim
of saving energy. One of the objects that need to be located, for example, is a boiler that it is not properly insulated.

The search for objects in Energyuy has to be done in a limited amount of time; therefore, players do not have enough time to try all the objects they find on their way, but they have to think quickly about the objects that are useful. This strategy encourages the player to have an active attitude in the search for the objects that can be transformed or used to save energy. This implies that the player needs to think about these objects and the amount of energy they use in order to take the right decisions. It follows that the involvement of the player in the search has positive consequences in the retention of the information conveyed within the game. Furthermore, the advertising message is reinforced at the end of the game when the achievements are presented to the player. At that moment, the player can check all the items that have been found and the number of items that remain to be found. When players did not find all the objects, they will realize the lack of knowledge they have in the subject. Players can also check a description of each of the objects found, in which they can learn about how they can be transformed or used to save energy.

**Cinematic Persuasion**

Cinematic persuasion is concerned with how meaning can be inferred from the cinematic treatment of the audiovisual contents of the game and the relationships that this cinematic treatment establish between the signs of the first level of persuasion. In this section I focus on properties exclusively intrinsic to the cinematic. It is important to highlight that with audiovisual contents I mean not only audiovisual pieces such as cut-scenes but that I refer to the cinematographic treatment of all the elements of the game. I have identified that cinematic persuasion within digital games can be executed by (1) the framing of a scene, (2) the camera movements, and (3) the editing.

The framing of a scene is related to the position of the camera and the proportions of the objects that are within the frame (see Dubbelman, 2013). Framing is the result of camera position and camera angles (Newman, 2009, p. 92) which can be used with persuasive intentions within advergames by using codes which players know how to interpret, thanks to their previous experience.

The camera position determines which elements are shown on the screen and how they are shown (Newman, 2009, p. 93). The two variables related to camera position that can be used to influence players’ interpretation are the size of the objects shown on screen and the position of those objects.
The size in which objects are shown on screen is related to the importance given to them, whereas their position is related to the attention they are going to receive from players. According to the Rule of Thirds, the center of the screen is the major area of importance and therefore, the area that receives most attention from players (Newman, 2009, p. 94).

The selection of camera angles can be used with persuasive intentions within advergames to give certain meaning to a scene in the game by using codes that players know how to interpret thanks to their previous experience (Newman, 2009, p. 92). The pitch of the camera can be used to emphasize the hierarchy of elements in the scene. A low-angle shot makes players feel more involved in the events of the scene but also arouses a feeling of submission, whereas a high-angle shot gives players a feeling of dominance but a lower sense of involvement (Hawkins, 2005, p. 9). Camera angles can also determine the point of view of the player, shifting the perspective of the player from first person to third person, which also has consequences for involvement. Furthermore, the use of inclined or unexpected camera angles can intentionally generate feelings such as confusion, disorientation or mystery.

Another way to execute cinematic persuasion within advergames is by the use of camera movements, which can add to the excitement of a game by keeping the action in the frame. Camera movements can be employed to influence players’ interpretation by shifting their attention (Hawkins, 2005, p. 54). Camera moves comprise dolly and crane moves, panning and tilting. Dolly moves are horizontal moves of the camera, and crane moves are vertical moves of the camera. Panning refers to the horizontal view of a stationary camera, and tilting refers to the vertical view of a stationary camera (Bos et al., 2008, p. 100).

Finally, editing refers to the arrangement of sequences of consecutive images. This includes continuity, juxtaposition and fragmentation. Editing can be used to make transitions between disparate locations or to move the story forward (Hawkins, 2005, pp. 210-212). Editing can also be used with persuasive intentions within advergames by establishing relationships between signs and by making use of contrasts. The use of contrasts in editing can serve to generate new signs through the relationships established by the juxtaposition of signs (Hawkins, 2005, p. 223).

In 2003 candy brand Altoids launched the advergame *Curiously Strong All Night Long* (WDDG, 2003) to introduce breath strips in peppermint and cinnamon flavors. Breath strips were at that moment a new product, and not everybody knew them or how to consume them. The advergame was created not solely with the intention of introducing the new product but
also to let people know about its benefits and show them how to consume it. The advergame was inspired by the graphic adventure games of the time, and the objective of the player was to help the protagonist, the world-class loser Big Bad Al, find a local celebrity punk rocker in a pub nightclub and convince her to hang out with him. For that purpose, players needed to follow clues and find items that they could use to find his way to the celebrity.

One of the items Big Bad Al had in his inventory in the game was a tin of Altoids’ breath strips. When the player uses this item within the game, dragging it from the inventory to one of the characters on the screen (see Figure 10), a short cut-scene is shown consisting of two juxtaposed images. In the scene, the player can see Big Bad Al showing the tin of Altoids to the character (see Figure 11), and then giving her one of the strips (see Figure 12). After that she comments that it was a very refreshing experience. Through this short cut-scene the player learns that the product consists of small strips of edible paper that are placed in the mouth and that quickly produce a refreshing feeling.

In this example, designers use framing, camera movement and editing to convey the advertising message and increase its effectiveness. When Big Bad Al offers the product to the character, the shot changes from a long shot, showing the entrance of the pub and a group of characters, to a close-up showing the faces of the two characters and the tin of Altoids. This change of shot serves to center the attention on the product and on the action related to it. Through this close-up the level of involvement with the characters and the product also increases. Furthermore, the tin of Altoids is precisely at the center of the screen where the attention of the player is supposed to be focused.

Whereas the cut-scene is created with still images, the camera executes a slow dolly movement from right to left with the first image, and from left to right in the second image. This action moves the Altoid strips from the sides of the screen to the center, thereby generating more attention to the product. The editing summarizes the whole action in two images, thus quickly conveying the message without breaking the flow of the game. The editing also serves to reduce the action to the two most important moments, helping the player to grasp the intended message.

Other cut-scenes similar to this one are shown every time the player uses one of the products in his inventory. Consequently this cut-scene is not perceived as an intrusive persuasive message but as part of the mechanics of the game. This serves to overcome resistance to the persuasive message, increasing its effectiveness.
Figure 10. The player can drag the Altoids tin to one of the characters.

Figure 11. Big Bad Al shows the Altoids tin to the character.
Sensorial Persuasion

Sensorial persuasion is aimed at the five individual senses (sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch) with the objective of triggering sensory experiences. David W. Norton, specialized in experience research, has proven that sensory pleasure results in “customers’ positive evaluation, stimulat[ing] their desire of consumption and improv[ing] the value of products” (2003, p. 24).

Advergames’ capacity to provide meaningful sensory experiences resides in their “sensory breadth”, defined by the researcher in virtual reality Jonathan Steuer as the number of sensory dimensions simultaneously presented to the player within the game (1995, p. 45). Each of the different sensory dimensions presented to the player in an advergame has the potential to become meaningful. Visual elements can be used to deliver sight sense experiences. Sound elements can be used to provide hearing sense experiences, and haptic elements can work with touch sense experiences. Smell and taste may appear to be outside of the reach of advergames, but they are not because the combination of the previously mentioned elements can deliver experiences that also stimulate those senses, as shown in the following example.
**Nespresso Variations** (Soleil Noir & Chez Eddy, 2010) is an example of how to deliver sensory experiences through digital games. This advergame has problems in terms of. However, it does a great job in arousing a pleasurable experience. The experience is totally focused on the five senses in order to create a cognitive framework in which the player experiences that drinking one of the new Nespresso coffee variations is like being transported to a very pleasant world.

In the game the player has the opportunity to play three different mini-games with the goal of helping an imaginary system to serve a cup of coffee. Playing them is just an excuse to have contact with the sensorially amazing *Nespresso Variations*’ world in which the design, the music and the cinematic treatment of the images transmit a very pleasant feeling that specifically targets the senses of sight, taste and smell. The experience is so well designed that the player can almost smell and taste the coffee variations.

Therefore, by making use of sensorial persuasion, advergames have the potential to influence players’ attitudes toward the advergame and by extension toward the advertised product and/or brand. This is possible through the design of experiences that address players' senses.

**Affective Persuasion**

The affective persuasive dimension stirs up the customer’s deeper feelings and emotions with the objective of triggering affective experiences. According to the marketing communication scholar Bernd H. Schmitt, affective experiences in advertising can go from slightly positive feelings to strong emotions associated with a brand (2000, p. 6). It has been observed by the marketing communication scholars Flemming Hansen and Sverre Riis Christensen that consumers’ emotions do influence the choices they make (2007, p. 200). Therefore, affective persuasion can be used to arouse emotions which players can link to the brand or product advertised. It follows that these emotions can influence consumer behavior and choices outside of the game. Hansen and Christensen also proved that when consumers’ involvement with products or brands is low, emotions generated by the advertisement can be especially effective in influencing consumers’ behavior (2007, p. 114).

It has to be said here that the empathy and the attitude of the player will determine the effectiveness of this strategy. Additionally, to make this persuasive dimension work properly it is necessary to have a good understanding of which stimuli cause concrete sensations. It is important therefore to differentiate between moods and emotions.
Moods are triggered by specific stimuli and can be misinterpreted by customers because they are usually not aware which stimuli have caused them (Hansen & Christensen, 2007, p. 72). After playing an advergame that has irritating background music, for example, players can think that they did not like the experience at all because they felt irritated during the gameplay, and they will probably associate that mood with the brand.

Emotions are intense affective states caused by something or someone that consumes our energy for some amount of time (Hansen & Christensen, 2007, p. 74). It is possible to differentiate between two kinds of emotions: basic emotions and complex emotions. Basic emotions are the fundamentals of our emotional life and include emotions like happiness or sadness (2007, p. 112). These types of emotions are common to all human beings and the way of expressing them is similar in every culture. Hence, working with them is useful in international campaigns.

An example of an advergame working with a basic emotion is Hotel 626 (Goodbye et al., 2008), a scary experience commissioned by Doritos. In the game, which was available to be played only from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m., thus in the dark, players were trapped in a hotel from which they had to get out. Some challenges, like singing a demon baby to sleep had to be completed in order to escape. The advergame used several techniques to deliver an intense experience based on the feeling of fear such as using the players’ webcams to sneak a picture of them and show it later inside the lair of a serial killer. The film scholar Andrew Tudor has proven that horror provokes strong responses (1997, p. 443). Thus, horror makes the game experience more memorable for those who have played it. This undoubtedly has consequences for brand’s familiarity and recall. Furthermore, those players who enjoy horror experiences will link the joy experienced during the game session with the brand, which will affect positively their attitude toward Doritos.

Complex emotions are combinations of basic emotions that can work differently depending on the culture (Hansen & Christensen, 2007, p. 112). Perfect Strangers. The Video Game (Oda, 2012) (see Figure 13) is an example of an advergame using a complex emotion to persuade players, in this case nostalgia. This advergame about the popular 1980s TV show Perfect Strangers is a simple Flash game that consists of helping the character Balki collect all the stars that he finds along a path. The use of the appealing and catchy theme song from the TV show, “Nothing’s gonna stop me now”, gives a feeling of nostalgia that led many players to revisit the show on iTunes.
This persuasive dimension aims to provide appealing experiences for creative customers by delivering intellectual challenges. According to Schmitt, intellectual challenged can engage customers through surprise, intrigue and provocation (2000, p. 6). Tactical persuasion is directly related to tactical involvement, defined by the game scholar Gordon Calleja as the pleasure aroused by planning the strategies to follow in the game (2007, p. 89). Therefore, tactical persuasion can be used to motivate customers by encouraging them to solve intellectual challenges, which can arouse feelings of confidence, control and power.

According to Joy Paul Guilford, one of the founders of the Psychology of Creativity, productive thinking can be divided into two types: convergent thinking and divergent thinking (in Schmitt, 2000, p. 12). Thinking experiences can be designed with one or both types. Convergent thinking is related to analytical reasoning and consists of a process in which the individual reaches a conclusion after analyzing information that has been provided or facilitated. An example of this can be seen in Day in the Cloud (Virgin America & Google Apps, 2011), a convergent-thinking experience first tested on Virgin American planes traveling between the Los Angeles and San Francisco international airports. The experience consisted of an online battle in which the aim was to get passengers of two ordinary flights flying at the same time in opposite directions to join in. Using the Wi-Fi
connection provided during the flight, players were encouraged to solve a series of questions, the answers to which could be found on Google. At the end of the flight, the passengers of the plane with highest scores won a notebook computer. A Boeing Boeing video reporting the experience shows a group of shy players at the start of the game who ended up screaming, asking for answers from fellow passengers and saying things like: “I was born to do this. I was born to Google stuff on a plane” (2011). Undoubtedly, this advergame influenced the way passengers experienced the flight and probably they linked the positive feelings aroused by the experience to the brand.

The second type of tactical persuasion is related to divergent thinking, i.e. the intellectual process in which the individual looks for new and alternative answers out of the information provided (Guilford in Schmitt, 2000, p. 12). Divergent thinking is linked with creative processes and can be used to motivate players by providing diversity and letting them express themselves. Lego’s Builders of Infinity (Serviceplan et al., 2011) is an example of advergame that aims to deliver a creative experience related to divergent thinking. The game proposes that players construct their own platform game by using Lego bricks. Players can both play the platform game and participate in the construction of the longest platform in a game. This persuasive strategy serves to arouse in players a feeling of control and power, which in turn causes them to let their guard down to persuasive communication, overcoming resistance.

Social Persuasion

This persuasive dimension aims to influence players’ attitudes by delivering experiences focused on encouraging players to establish relationships with other people or with the brand. Players can communicate with other players during the game session through chats, social media features, real-time audio or video or in-game interaction, for example. Furthermore, players can voluntarily or unwittingly communicate with brands during the game session through social features, registration forms, contact forms, email, chat or even with their own performance in the game. As previously discussed in chapter 2, advergames can make use of their nature as networked environments to increase player acquisition, virality and retention. Therefore, social persuasion can be used to work on advergames’ visibility and playability.

According to communication scholars Subramani and Rajagopalan, players can establish four different types of relationships while playing advergames, depending on different motivations (2003, pp. 301-303): (1)
players may want to establish relationships with other players, (2) players may want to make others aware about their achievements in the game, (3) players may want to recruit new players and (4) players may want to establish relationships to share information. It is possible to design persuasive strategies that encourage players to establish one or more of these four types of relationships between players. In order to make them work, it is important to consider the reasons that make players share their experiences or establish relationships with others while playing.

The reasons why players establish relationships with others within advergames can be linked to direct and indirect benefits. The social psychologist Peter Kollock, who has studied how cooperation works in online communities, explains that direct benefits can be related to an improvement of the quality game experience, to the outcomes, the rewards or the performance (1999, p. 220). Meanwhile, indirect benefits can be linked to the feelings of reputation and reciprocity, to players’ need or desire to belong to a group, and to an increasing sense of efficacy when sharing the experience with others (1999, p. 220). Players’ motivations can have important consequences for the social relationships they establish during the game sessions and for the benefits the brand can obtain from those relationships.

Persuasive strategies that encourage players to establish relationships between them help engage players in the experience, which can have positive consequences on advergames’ playability and player retention. An example of this can be found in Greenpeace Weather (AlampBBDO & colmeia, 2008) a strategy multiplayer game in which players are encouraged to become activists to fight against climate change. In the game each player needs to collaborate with three other players to find coordinated solutions to stop the environmental crisis. Without the collaboration of other players it is impossible to succeed in the game. This game mechanics encourages players to form relationships with other players and enter into a commitment with them. This bond gives players reasons to continue playing the game, favoring retention. Furthermore, this strategy also serves to convey the message intended by Greenpeace that climate change can be stopped only through collaborative efforts that look for coordinated solutions and require effort to make them work.

Persuasive strategies that encourage players to make others aware about their achievements in the game can have positive consequences on advergames’ visibility and ‘status’. The advergame Free your Dance (Zupa, Capsize, & hello monday, 2010), discussed below, challenges players to join via webcam a dance competition whilst wearing wired headphones, competing against a
dancer wearing Halos. At the end players are encouraged to upload a video showing their performance to a YouTube channel where they can share it with their friends and acquaintances. Players sharing the video adopted different attitudes during their performance, including those doing their best to demonstrate their dancing skills, those trying to create their own dance to demonstrate their creative skills, and those trying to be funny to make other people laugh along with them. The strategy of giving the player the opportunity to decide how to enjoy the experience resulted in multiple videos that motivated new players to join the game for different reasons. Therefore, the strategy served not only to make players spread the game virally but also motivated new players to join the experience encouraged by others’ performance.

Persuasive strategies can also be designed to increase visibility by encouraging players to recruit new players in return for direct benefits in the game. Liberty Mutual’s 2099 advergame (Hill Holiday and RED Interactive Agency, 2010) is a perfect example of how social persuasion can be used with persuasive intentions. This multiplayer, online driving game was launched to promote Liberty Mutual car insurances, challenges players to finish first, but to do it preventing any hazards and collisions with other drivers in the game. In the game, the more insurance coverage players have, the more opportunities they get to repair their vehicles and restore damaged parts during the race time. The game against friends and family, with up to six simultaneous players per race. Facebook Connect can be used to challenge friends to a race, or by cutting and pasting the game's “share” link into a tweet, instant message or email to invite others to play.

Persuasive strategies can also be designed to encourage players to establish relationships with the aim of sharing information. This technique can be particularly useful for brands trying to obtain valuable information about their target audience. An example of this can be found in the advergame Pleasure Hunt 2 (Lowe Brindfords et al., 2012), previously discussed. The game offers players the possibility to create a challenge to compete against their friends. The challenge is created through a Facebook connection so players need to give the Magnum application access to their social profile. This action gives Magnum access to private information about players’ social profiles, providing the brand with better knowledge of consumers’ profiles, preferences and needs. Therefore this strategy serves to increase players acquisition and retention, improving visibility and playability and also provides companies with valuable information about advergames’ targets.
Table 1. Variables for the analysis of the persuasive structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIRST LEVEL OF PERSUASION</th>
<th>VISUAL PERSUASION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LINGUISTIC PERSUASION</td>
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<tr>
<td>– Name of the Game</td>
<td>– Interface Design</td>
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<tr>
<td>– Instructional Texts</td>
<td>– Character Design</td>
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<tr>
<td>– Narrative Texts</td>
<td>– Objects Design</td>
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<td>– Interface Commands</td>
<td>– Spatial Design</td>
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<tr>
<td>– Dialogues</td>
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<tr>
<td>– Names of Characters</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>– Names of Spatial Locations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SONIC PERSUASION</td>
<td>HAPTIC PERSUASION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Interface Sounds</td>
<td>– Haptic Input</td>
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<td>– Sonic Effects</td>
<td>– Haptic Feedback</td>
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<td>– Ambient Sound Beds</td>
<td>• Tactile Feedback</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Force Feedback</td>
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<tr>
<th>SECOND LEVEL OF PERSUASION</th>
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<tr>
<td>PROCEDURAL PERSUasion</td>
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<tr>
<td>– Model Rules</td>
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<td>– Grade Rules</td>
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<td>– Goal Rules</td>
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<td>– Meta-rules</td>
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<tr>
<th>THIRD LEVEL OF PERSUASION</th>
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<tr>
<td>SENSORIAL PERSUATION</td>
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<tr>
<td>– Sight Sense Experiences</td>
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<td>– Hearing Sense Experiences</td>
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<td>– Touch Sense Experiences</td>
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<td>– Smell Sense Experiences</td>
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<td>– Taste Sense Experiences</td>
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<tr>
<td>TACTICAL PERSUasion</td>
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<tr>
<td>– Convergent Thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>– Divergent Thinking</td>
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Table 1 includes all the persuasive dimensions discussed in this chapter as well as their internal elements. This table can be used as a guide for the application of the theoretical model presented in this chapter to the in-depth analysis of persuasiveness within digital games.
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