



MYTHS OF ONLINE ADVERTISING IN THE INTERNET ERA - A LITERATURES REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The term "online advertising" refers to all sorts of banner, e-Mail and keyword advertising on the websites such as Face book, Twitter, Google, etc. The online advertisements presents the advertisement copy in an animated way in a stylish form including both text and images in an interactive manner. With the advent of technology and rapid increase in online usage for the day-to-day life of each and every individual, the growth of online advertisement has also increased dramatically. The common examples of online advertising includes advertisements displayed while searching on the search engine result pages, banner advertisements, pop-ups and pop-down advertisements, social network advertising, interstitial ads, e-mail marketing, etc. Thus, the most important advantage of the advertising on the Internet is that the internet advertising is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and therefore the internet users can access advertising on internet at anytime from anywhere in the world. Since the attitude and beliefs of the respondents are subject to change based on their demographic variables, many researches were conducted to know the attitude towards online advertising. This paper critically examines the general opinion about the online advertising, the different forms and some hidden myths about online advertising in the revolutionary era of Internet.

KEYWORDS : Attitude, Effectiveness, Internet, Networking, Online Advertising, Web Site

INTRODUCTION

In the modern age of information technology, Internet has become a vital source both for knowledge updation as well as for entertainment. The Internet being an interactive media for communication and due to its mass availability has replaced the old media such as the radio, television and the newspaper. It also enables the users for instant access to up-to-date information at any point of time by connecting all parts of the world. It is estimated that more than 700 million people use the Internet daily, mostly so in developed countries (USA, China, Japan, Germany and Britain, e.g) Hoffman and Novak (1996). According to the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) report, the volume of Internet users in India is expected to increase nearly three times from 125 million in 2011 to 330 million by 2016. The report also reveals that among the 90 million urban Internet users in India 40 per cent of them are influenced by the online activities such as product research and price comparison while purchasing the product. This review paper discusses about the features of online advertising, Types of Online advertising, and users' attitude towards online advertising.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS ADVERTISING IN GENERAL

The focus of research on advertising has also been done to study the public attitudes towards advertising in general (Mittal, 1994; O'Donohue, 1995; Pollay and Mittal, 1993; Zanot, 1984). According to Zanot (1981, 1984), the first large scale, national surveys of public opinion about advertising dates back to the 1950s and 1960s (Bauer and Greyser, 1968; Gallup, 1959). Many recent studies have also been conducted (e.g., Alwitt and Prabhakar, 1992; Alwitt and Prabhakar, 1994; Andrews, 1989; Mittal, 1994; Muehling, 1987; O'Donohoe, 1995; Reid and Soley, 1982; Sandage and Leckenby, 1980; Shavitt, Lowrey and Haefner, 1998) but most of these have focused more upon investigating the structure of advertising attitudes rather than the generalizability of overall attitude favorability.

The consumers' attitude towards on-line services has been explored in a research by Miller (1996) and opinion towards online purchasing behaviour by Gupta, (1995; GVU, (1999) and recall of the sites visited (Diaz, Hammond and Mc William, 1996); actions taken toward non-trust advertising or SPAM (GVU, 1999); effect of banner ads on brand judgments (Briggs and Hollis, 1997); attitudes toward Internet advertising policies (Gordon and De Lima-Turner, forthcoming); and aware-

ness of the Internet itself (Fawcett, 1995). However, relatively there is less study has been conducted to know about the consumers' evaluation of internet advertising particularly.

ONLINE ADVERTISING

With the advent of technology and rapid increase in online usage for the day-to-day life of each and every individual, the growth of online advertisement has also increased dramatically. The internet being online is emerging as a new media not only for entertainment but also as an interactive communication channel. The internet supports more for business landscape as in the form of displaying advertisements in several forms which attracts the internet users at large. The first online advertising was in 1994 when Hot Wire sold first Banner on the company's home of the website.

The term "online advertising" in the common parlance consists of all sorts of banner, e-mail, in-game and keyword advertising on the websites such as Face book, Twitter, Google, etc. The online advertisements presents the advertisement copy in an animated way in a stylish form including both text and images in an interactive manner. Even though, the online advertising is based on the traditional advertising forms, it incorporates the new technology such as graphics, multi-colour, interactive features, etc for its high attraction. In a simple word, online advertising is a form of delivering advertisements to the Internet / Online users through Web site, e-mail, ad-supported software and internet-enabled smart phones. The common examples of online advertising includes advertisements displayed in the result pages while searching on the search engine, banner advertisements, pop-ups and pop-down advertisements, social network advertising, interstitial ads, e-mail advertising, etc. Thus, the most important advantage of advertising on the Internet is that the internet advertising is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and therefore the internet users can access advertising on internet at anytime from anywhere in the world.

2.1 TYPES OF ONLINE ADVERTISING

According to Rodgers and Thorson (2000) in their research on interactive advertisement had identified five different types of advertisement which are commonly used in Internet. They are sponsorship, keyword linking, commercial sites, pop-up/pop-under advertising and banners.

2.1.1 Sponsorship online advertisements

The online sponsorship advertisements appear on a particular site or a special section on the website where the advertiser pays to a particular event and visible for promotional / marketing activities. This type of advertising is most commonly used in charitable events like blood donation, eye camp, polio medicine apart from sponsoring local sporting teams, sports tournaments and other community events.

2.1.2 Banner Advertisement

The most common form of advertising on the Web is Banner advertisement. It is like a billboard that appears across the top or bottom of the Web page and when clicked by the user, the link is transferred to the advertiser's Website. The size of the banner is about 4 ½ inches x 1 ½ inches. The banners, however, should not take too long to load, in which case customers are quite likely to lose interest in the advertisement (S.H.H. Kazmi and Satish K. Batra 2006).

2.1.3 Pop-Up and Pop-Under Advertisement

The Pop-Up is a small window containing advertisements which appear when accessing a certain Website and displayed on the same window. It is usually larger than a banner advertisement but smaller than a full screen. The Pop-under advertisements are similar, but are placed themselves under the content of the Website and are therefore less intrusive. Pop-up and pop-under advertisements annoy many users because they clutter up the desktop and take time to close. However, they are much more effective than banner advertisements (Brain Marshall, 2002).

2.1.4 Sponsored link words

The internet is often surfed with search engines with keywords to gather any specific information or idea by the internet users. This automatically attracts the advertisers for advertising their products / services with specific keywords and there by include their advertisements in the top position of the search results. If the prospective internet user enters a particular keyword to the search engine on the internet (for example, Google, Yahoo, etc), the results will be displayed with the related sites which matched the key words entered. The searched results which are matched with appropriate keywords are normally appeared at the top or at the side of the search engine and are known as sponsored links (Overture 2003).

2.1.5 Commercial Sites

The marketers or the manufacturing entities that are intended to market their products or services are acquiring commercial sites on the internet. In this type of online advertising, the homepage of commercial sites displays the similar features (to inform and to persuade) as that of other media network reveals (Singh and Dalal, 1999). These commercial sites are mostly used for marketing activities like buying and selling of particular product or variety of products. For example, quicker.com, olx.com, etc.

Unlike other traditional media for advertisements, the online advertising enables the advertisers to assess the effectiveness of the advertisements in an instant manner as it is an interactive media. It allows the advertisers for modification of advertisements in a better way and rearrangement of target group of audience as soon as they have noticed any feedback from the audience (Ramaraj and Suzanna, 2003). Further, it has been often stated that the effectiveness of online advertising is easily measurable because of its interactive nature (Ronald and Barbara 2002).

ATTITUDE TOWARDS ONLINE ADVERTISING

Much research has been conducted to know the attitude towards online advertising based on the demographic variable of the respondents such as age, gender and occupation. This is due to the fact that the attitude and beliefs of the respondents are subject to change based on their demographic variables.

The study conducted by the Internet Advertising Bureau (1998) reveals that 60% to 70% of the respondents have good opinion about advertisement on the internet. Schlosser et al. (1999) in their study using two matched samples, have tested the relationship between attitudes to internet advertising and to advertising in general. They found that most of the respondents have disliked the internet advertising than advertising in general and the customer trust was more in internet advertising. Wong (2001) have conducted a study among 80

internet users to know their attitude towards banner advertisement on the internet and found that 80% of the respondents have opined favourably towards banner advertisement on the internet.

Novak and Hoffman (1996) have stated in their empirical study that there is a similar response given by the consumers for both advertising on the internet as well as advertising in traditional media. However, the advertising on the internet has more powerful, responsive and customizable than other interactive media like television (Port & Otis 1999). This has been further validated by Drèze and Hussherr (1999) as there is a relationship between response to advertising on the internet and response to advertising in other media apart from the features that the appearance of the advertising on the internet can be easily ignored while surfing.

The internet advertising is considered as a viable alternative to traditional media because of its high reachability, frequency and accessibility of its usage attributes for measuring its effectiveness (Drèze (1998). In the internet advertising, the multimedia content of the web provides more fun and stimulating the consumers who surf the internet and thus gets the quick attention of the online consumers for the longer period of time (Ghose and Duo, 1998). Further, the consumers are not only arrested with quick attention of the online advertisements but also they are able to control over web based advertisements on what, when, where and how long they are able to see advertisements displayed while browsing on the web sites (Gallagher et al., 2001).

4. CONCLUSION

Advertising is one of the best promotional tools for delivering the product from the point of manufacturing to the point of consumption. It bridges the communication gap between the consumers and marketers / advertisers through several media for advertisements. One among the modern and creative media for advertisements is online advertising which combines the interactive features of both audio and visual effects. This has been well judged by the above reviews of several literatures based on the studies conducted in the past years. Several studies have been conducted to know the consumers' reactions towards internet advertising and their opinion of the advertisements displayed on the websites by counting the number of "clicks" and "hits" (Berthon, Pitt, and Watson, 1996). While reviewing the previous studies and statistical findings, it can be concluded that the internet users comprising of different demographical groups are having strong opinion about the online advertising. However, due to little record of online advertising and its emerging trend in the recent past, the beliefs, reactions and attitudes of the consumers towards online advertising is budding and does not constant (Karson et al., 2006). Hence, more research in the field of online advertising should be focused across the cross-sectional society of the consumer groups to provide more insights into the effectiveness of advertising through online.

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