

Advertising in the Age of New Media

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According to Mulhern (2009), media is experiencing a digital revolution which is liberating news, information, and advertising from the confines of traditional print and broadcast delivery systems. While the differences between traditional advertising and the new world of digital communications are numerous, none is greater than that between the concept of communications focusing upon the delivery of messages via media channels and that of communications involving an entire world of networks, algorithms and automated systems, specifically designed to facilitate and manage the connections between information (products) and people. Naturally, as in traditional advertising, creative content remains at the center of these communications. However, with the advent of automated advertising networks (e.g. Google search advertising) and data-driven ad placement mechanisms, corporate media planning will begin to resemble business logistics instead of simple advertisement placement. This revolution may pose significant challenges to those media companies, agencies, and brand marketers who have focused their efforts on sending advertisements to target audiences through traditional media channels without investing the time and effort to learn how to integrate the data analysis and modeling techniques required of digital media into their marketing strategies.

The strategy of traditional advertising has long been based upon the notion of collecting large target audiences and delivering branded messages to them. And while this practice continues to dominate corporate media spending, a new, parallel world has been evolving which utilizes search engines, spiders, social networks, cloud computing and algorithms designed to filter and serve (push) information. Those marketing professionals who continue to emphasize branding and creative work at the expense of

data, metrics, quantitative models and digital technology will find themselves on the sidelines (Plummer, Rappaport, Hall, & Barocci, 2007).

Clearly, the manner in which information may now be digitized and broadcast through various network outlets is introducing new methods by which marketing communications may be utilized to connect consumers and products. For example, while the Internet offers several advantages over traditional advertising methods (cost and virtually unlimited advertising space), its most significant advantage rests in the ability to function as both a sales and distribution channel (Nagar, 2009).

This literature review begins by examining those characteristics of the networked information economy in which this digital revolution in advertising takes place. Next, it presents a framework which may well serve as a roadmap through the landscape of new media marketing. This review continues by investigating how basic principles of advertising may be successfully applied to build and deliver an effective, ubiquitous digital campaign utilizing this new media environment. Given the numerous channels available through which one's message may be delivered, this review focuses on one specific avenue which offers tremendous opportunities, mobile marketing. The multitude of ways in which marketers may create brand aligned mobile portals and equipment will be examined. Finally, this literature review concludes with an examination of new media marketing from the consumers' perspective by examining their attitudes towards various interactive digital advertising venues, such as Internet, email, and mobile phone.

Why is this subject important? Given the relatively recent appearance and growth of social networking sites such as Twitter and of social media in general, (e.g. Facebook, Flickr, LinkedIn, and an ever-growing number of blogs), an examination of

how marketing professionals may effectively utilize this trend is extremely relevant to companies competing in the global marketplace, especially for those seeking to capture the younger demographic groups. This literature review examines those factors which have transformed the Internet and other new media technologies into major advertising mediums.

The Networked Information Economy

So what trends have contributed to the rise of new media? Two fundamental, technological events have spurred these changes. The first event involves the digital codifying of information which has been occurring since the early 1990s, as printed material was converted into digital formats for use in web pages and other electronic files. The second event involves the global networking of that information. Once information was digitized and networked, the stage was set for the rise of what Benkler (2006) refers to as the networked information economy. Within this new information orientated economy, digital, networked media allows: “(1) the production and distribution of information through nonproprietary processes much like those in the arts, education and sciences; (2) a blend of market and nonmarket mechanisms for making information available to the public; and (3) large-scale, cooperative efforts that generate output from many providers, best exemplified by wikis” (Mulhern, 2009, p. 87). In contrast to the mass production activities which dominated the twentieth century, Mulhern provides a detailed analysis regarding those characteristics associated with this networked information economy: infinite reproduction and sharing, modularity of content, consumer networks, user-control and content production, customized content, information streams, and advertising as a service.

Print media (e.g. newspapers and magazines) may only be consumed while in the physical possession of a reader. Television may only be watched when someone is sitting in front of it. In the digital world, content is not only free from such constraints, but may also be copied and repeatedly shared at little (if any) cost and without any degradation in quality. This capability for infinite reproduction demolishes the traditional business model of making money by selling duplicated content (Mulhern, 2009).

As consumers, we are accustomed to seeing news, entertainment, and advertising bundled together into neat packages for our viewing pleasure. However, a digital infrastructure allows these individual pieces to become unattached. For example, a news story may be unbundled from a specific media (e.g. newspaper) and delivered separately. As such, an advertisement may be packaged with the story without ever being attached to a newspaper. Therefore, one need not buy an entire newspaper for one story and still be exposed to the advertisement. This approach allows advertisements to become modular and associated with pieces of information which are of interest to specific customers. Customers benefit because they no longer have to wade through extraneous material in order to reach the content in which they are interested (Mulhern, 2009).

While consumers are known to function within social networks, the capability to monitor their tribe-like behavior has not been available, until now. Internet-enabled technology provides social graphs which depict interpersonal communication patterns, identifying those social clusters which make the purchase decisions and allowing marketers to more readily identify their target audiences (Mulhern, 2009).

Previously, content was created by producers in centralized environments and disseminated by distributors; new technologies now allow individual consumers to control what information they receive and produce their own content to share with others. And once consumers are in control of the content, they may produce whatever consumption experience they wish. As such, media content and its advertisements will become customized, not by the media corporations, but instead by individual users. This trend forces marketing groups to shift from aggregating complete packages for large audiences, to responding with relevant, targeted information (Mulhern, 2009).

One of the major side effects from the digitization of content is the continuous stream of data regarding how consumers interact with this wealth of information. Whereas marketing decisions had been based upon relatively small samples of information gleaned from various surveys, this torrent of digital data will transform marketing and qualitative research by replacing static techniques with those utilizing dynamic data (Mulhern, 2009).

While advertisement placement had been determined by fairly sophisticated software, the digitization of media has enabled an even higher degree of automation with respect to the allocation of advertising. Algorithms have been developed which place ads based upon key word matches identified within search terms or content within web pages. These advances have spawned the advent of advertising-supported search engines, online maps, and social networking sites. This business model of providing free service coupled with relevant advertising acknowledges the consumers' (1) reluctance to pay for what they consider to be free information and (2) propensity to pay for ancillary services and products from sources they trust. Thus, the strategy becomes

one of matching digital services with advertisements that provide brand connectivity (Mulhern, 2009).

A Framework for New Media Marketing

Marketing via new and traditional media is not the same, as new media is capable of extending advertising functions significantly beyond the capabilities of traditional media. While offering promise, this path towards new media marketing is also fraught with peril. Merely utilizing the latest display, mobile, streaming video, gaming, and social media technologies is not enough. A framework must be developed which not only addresses the growing sophistication among consumers with respect to advertising, but also emphasizes the delivery of value rather than simply repeated product exposures. Kim (2008) provides such an advertising framework, one which focuses on consumer contexts and mindsets and how they may be effectively connected with these new campaign delivery vehicles.

Kim's (2008) framework is based upon acknowledging the increasing levels of sophistication and skepticism exhibited by consumers towards media and advertising. The main problem for advertisers is their adherence to a tradition in which the primary strategy for delivering marketing messages is based upon interrupting their customers' daily lives whether they are trying to enjoy a television show, read a newspaper, or even wait for a bus. Delivering value is not part of the marketing strategy; however, grabbing the consumers' attention is. Well, times are changing and the advent of digital media provides a new canvas from which immersive experiences may be painted. Kim believes that taking a more intelligent and sophisticated approach will actually prompt the skeptical public to ask for more advertising to be inserted into their media.

Citing the gaming world as a prime example, Kim (2008) observes numerous examples in which advertising combined with reality-oriented games is not only viewed as acceptable, but is actually seen as making the gaming experience more realistic and hence more fun. One example of effective product placement within digital reality involves Tony Hawk American Wasteland where players skateboard through urban landscapes dotted with advertising placements for CPG beverages, various entertainment brands, and the game version of Desperate Housewives. Players even find Daimler-Chrysler automobiles parked in front of their digital homes. According to Kim, these are examples of campaigns which not only produce a noticeable, quantitative lift in brand recognition for those products and services featured in games such as this, but also provide a positive qualitative experience for the gamers. Campaigns such as these are successful because the advertising is embedded directly into the medium, providing a seamless experience between product and marketing, while producing value for the customer. Even more remarkable according to Kim, participants in research surveys request that manufacturers increase this form of advertising in their games. Kim believes the success of this mode of advertising among an advertising-skeptical demographic (gamers) strongly indicates the potential for an approach which aims to deliver value instead of interruption.

This concept of delivering value carries significant implications with respect to the development of both media strategy and creative message content. Even though the majority of global advertisers recognize the need to leverage and incorporate digital media into their marketing packages, very few have either the actual experience or expertise to effectively deploy these new methods. Kim (2008) suggests the key to

successfully adapting advertising to these new media forms is to develop a keen understanding regarding customer mindsets and expectations relative to each media format. For example, by applying this value-added approach to a relatively standard medial presentation vehicle such as the Internet, advertisers may not only begin to evaluate their strategies in terms of audience reach and time spent (today's standard metrics) but also gain an insight into their audience's motivation and mindset. Exercises such as this provide valuable lessons and guidance as to how advertising campaigns within each type of vehicle should be designed and implemented.

Kim (2008) concludes his research with his forecasts as to where technology may lead us in the coming years. The author expects hardware performance to continue increasing, giving our computers, mobile devices, and other devices more speed, greater capacity, and more reliability. These advances will present marketers with even more robust and ubiquitous platforms from which to reach out with their messages. Additionally, these improvements will allow the creation of more creative and complex advertising messages (or even better, experiences). Speaking of ubiquitous, those continuous, fast, and reliable Internet connections represent an integral component with respect to the future of new media advertising. Increasing Internet access translates into a medium which becomes an increasing part of consumers' lives. As broadband continues its global penetration, advertisers will gain significantly increased access into new markets via a medium which becomes evermore persistent. The advent of cloud computing and its vast storage capacity offers customers access to virtually unlimited volumes of information. As consumers shift the methods in which they store their photos, movies, television shows, and other personal information, additional avenues

could well appear by which advertisers may reach potential customers. Information and device management should become more intuitive and easier to use as speech recognition, touchscreen, and tablet personal computer technologies continue evolving. This increase in usability will directly translate into increased usage and flexibility regarding the manner in which information is disseminated and shared. As keyboards recede into memory, users will interface with their digital devices via the spoken word, touching a screen, or perhaps even moving their bodies. (Actually, we have these capabilities now with HP all-in-one touchscreen computers and the Nintendo Wii.) Advances in user interface design will open up new digital opportunities for a wider audience (consider the very young and old), as well as access to new places (such as automobiles). And finally, perhaps the most important trend within the digital landscape is the emergence of social media. Even at this relatively early juncture, the user base for blogging, tweeting, and networking websites has evolved far past the original, stereotypical teenagers who first flocked to sites like MySpace and Facebook. The increased activity of the 25-34-year-old audience and white-collar professionals in social media outlets present an extremely attractive demographic with which to draw the attention of advertisers.

Indeed, technologies and the manner in which they are utilized will continue to evolve. As such, advertisers must remain flexible and open-minded in order to take advantage of opportunities as they present themselves.

Techniques for New Media Marketing

During the past several years, various factors converged contributing to the Internet's status as a major advertising medium. First, across major markets in the

United States, Europe, and East Asia, significant cross-sections of the population now have access to the Internet. Second, advances in technology (especially in the realm of broadband) have allowed the presentation of more media rich content, providing advertisers with more options for delivering their messages. Third, advertisers began to realize the great potential of utilizing search engines as advertising vehicles (Taylor, 2009).

Having examined the lessons learned regarding digital advertising on the Internet, Taylor (2009) proposes six principles which should be applied to new media. Of these principles, three involve consumer considerations, two relate to implementation factors, and one involves general advertising philosophy.

Taylor's (2009) first principle of digital advertising states that "marketers must be sensitive to consumer concerns about privacy and spam" (p. 413). In today's era of iPhones, BlackBerrys, and androids, society functions in an "always on" mode. While traditional media was delivered in chunks of defined time (e.g. when the television was turned on), consumers leave their mobile devices on most of the time, if not continuously. As such, they may be exposed to digital advertising at any time, day or night. Advertisers need to understand that consumers have reached the stage at which they consider their mobile devices as extensions of their "personal space." Therefore, they become very protective of their extended territory and sensitive to what they perceive as invasions of privacy by unwanted advertisements. Thus, those advertisers who simply bombard the public with unwanted messages may experience a backlash from their potential customers, as their annoyance level increases in proportion to the amount of spam sent their way.

The second principle states that “consumers are more likely to be receptive to digital ads from marketers they trust” (Taylor, 2009, p. 413). According to Taylor, corporate and academic research continues to demonstrate that consumers are more receptive to advertising from those brands which they trust. As a corollary, research has also shown that consumers would prefer having their service providers screen advertisers, thus giving them some degree of assurance that an advertisement originated from a trusted source. According to research, the level of trust held by consumers with respect to a specific brand plays a significant role in whether that company’s digital advertising is successful.

The third principle states that “consumers are more likely to be receptive to respond to digital ads for products that are relevant to them” (Taylor, 2009, p. 414). The effectiveness of digital advertising is directly related to the relevance of the message upon the consumer. Research has demonstrated that a MMS message’s perceived usefulness and relevance is the primary factor as to whether or not it is accepted. Thus, when operating in an environment where consumers are noticeably sensitive to the content of their messages, advertisers must ensure their messages are relevant to the recipient (Pagnani, 2004).

Taylor’s fourth principle states: “approaches that incorporate interactivity are more likely to be effective” (p. 415). Research into factors influencing website effectiveness conducted by McMillan, Jang-Sun, and Guiohk (2003) suggests that interactivity is a key factor of a web site’s success. The Internet possesses the inherent potential to engage consumers for longer periods of time and at a greater depth than traditional media. Incorporating such features as quizzes, voting, chatting or other

opportunities to provide feedback keeps customers engaged, interested, and returning. This principle is substantiated by academic research which supports the proposition that those media outlets which incorporate user interactivity are significantly more successful than those which do not (Taylor, 2009).

The fifth principle states: “advertising messages that are entertaining have a higher chance of success in the digital context” (Taylor, 2009, p. 415). Messages which are entertaining tend to be significantly more effective than messages which are not. Research has demonstrated that advertisements which are entertaining lead to more positive reactions and subsequent purchases. Therefore, those digital advertisements which combine interactivity and entertainment have a significant advantage (Taylor, 2009).

The sixth and final principle states that “in the long run, new media messages need to build the brand to be effective” (Taylor, 2009, p. 416). At a time when product branding is more important than ever, advertising campaigns must take advantage of the new media’s unique brand development capability. As Chiagouris and Wansley (2000) declare, “When it comes to building a brand on the internet, never have so many talked so little of what may be the internet’s most stunning capacity –strengthening the brand with customers and prospects” (p. 35). The Internet’s interactive environment offers corporations an enormous opportunity to build brand awareness and loyalty.

Clearly, new media offers significant advantages with respect to the effective targeting and engagement of consumers. As such, organizations would be well advised to investigate and evaluate how their advertising campaigns may be tailored to take advantage of the opportunities offered by this medium.

While the media may be new, some traditional advertising techniques are still effective. Corporations should know which ones to keep and how they should be tweaked for maximum effectiveness. Given the pervasiveness of new media in our lives, Martin and Todorov (2010) discuss how marketing professionals must shift their perspective from delivering single, standalone touch points to providing engagements which appear seamless and keep potential customers connected with their brands throughout the day.

In the early stages of new media, advertisers followed Taylor's (2009) principles and focused on developing interactive messages which would be accessible on single platforms, such as an interactive Web site or perhaps an iPhone application. These single deployments were designed to fill vertical advertising gaps, those areas where consumers had not previously been reached. While this strategy may have been initially successful, it eventually succumbed to an old adversary, the lack of people's attention span. People lost interest usually because they had either seen the advertisement before or the engagement simply took too much time for them to derive any perceived value. Eventually the novelty surrounding a product's advertising campaign wears off and consumers move on to new products and their messages. However, the basic problems are that novelty does not represent a sustainable marketing strategy and not all delivery platforms are created equal (Martin & Todorov, 2010).

According to Martin and Todorov (2010), brands must make themselves immediately relevant in the daily lives of customers. While interactivity is a great concept, advertisers cannot rest on that laurel and must move beyond simply filling gaps towards creating synergy by providing messages and events which span across

multiple touchpoints and prolong the experience by utilizing different delivery vehicles through which consumers may experience the brand. Frankly, if the message does not extend along a continuum of touchpoints, consumers will lose interest and find suitable substitutes. Therefore, as marketers plan a digital branding strategy, they must be aware of rich media's capabilities, various interaction models, and how multiple platforms may be linked together (via through application program interfaces (APIs) and Web services) to present a coherent presentation. This connectivity between platforms and touchpoints is critical for enabling a continuous presentation of the brand's story throughout the consumer's day. By adopting this approach, advertisers may provide messages which are synchronized with consumers' locations and activities, thus creating relevance.

So what qualities should these touchpoints demonstrate? According to Martin and Todorov (2010), they cannot simply fill gaps of inactivity within someone's day. The events must (1) motivate the consumer to begin using it at that very moment of discovery and (2) provide the consumer with a sense of perceived value. Basically, touchpoints must grab the consumers' attention away from the myriad of distractions they face on a constant basis. The bottom line is that brands fight for customer interest at every touchpoint; they compete for mindshare. One strategy for capturing mindshare is to maximize the level of engagement by addressing a need, offering superior functionality, and providing access to the brand offering. The impact of a brand engagement is determined by the following five levels:

1. The Gag. These messages are usually seen on digital billboards, banners, or simple Smartphone applications. While they offer entertainment and might even

facilitate a new behavior from the consumer, they are short lived, as the customer's attention rapidly moves on elsewhere.

2. **Utility.** This engagement usually appears as “a calculator, recommendation engine, price finder, or similar task-oriented feature” (Martin & Todorov, 2010, p. 63). Value must be provided by leveraging contextual data.
3. **Social Connectivity.** At this level, brands are beginning to extend across multiple platforms, connecting with consumers, and allowing them to build a social connection with the brand offering; perhaps the message may even go viral. The organic nature of the content begins converting consumers into brand ambassadors.
4. **Brand Customization.** Customized experiences reflect the consumer's individuality, thereby building a stronger affinity and sense of loyalty to the brand. The brand begins to permeate the customer's psychology and allows them personal ownership over the engagement. For the greatest impact, platforms should be customized with links to social media, allowing customers to show off their purchases and influence their friends.
5. **Brand Lifestyle.** The highest level of engagement represents the stage where the brand provides “everyday services, utilities, customization, and social ecosystems that enable consumers to truly live the brand” (Martin & Todorov, 2010, p. 64). The ultimate in new media success occurs when a brand creates an environment in which consumers may unite around a common goal, interest, or feeling.

Consumers usually receive their initial introduction to an engagement via entertainment, e.g. a game, video, or song. As additional features are added to the experience, advertisers provide a richer engagement, thereby deepening the consumer relationship and transforming their offering into a utility which adds value. Over time, consumers' perception of these utilities changes as they evolve into tools and then necessities (Martin & Todorov, 2010).

The Rise of Mobile Marketing

Given the growing marketing opportunities presented by new media, Friedrich, Gröne, Hölbling, and Peterson (2009) explore one particular area which offers incredible potential, that of mobile marketing. New business models are being developed which transform the mobile phone into a marketing platform, as advertisers create brand specific mobile portals, tailored handsets, and preloaded applications all of which work in unison to drive home a brand's message. The technology chain required to accomplish this strategy is relatively simple. The company which has products or services to offer contacts a mobile-service provider to establish a mobile brand. The newly created mobile band attracts not only a company's traditionally loyal customers, but also new customers who are drawn by the opportunity to purchase a better service at a lower price. The net results from this process are the development of more powerful customer relationships and new streams of revenue.

For marketing professionals, the ubiquitous of this personalized data media platform provides customers who are more informed, demanding, and focused on their own needs. Mobile marketing provides opportunities for game changing strategies which are customized towards the individual customer. As such, the target population

has significantly changed to that of one. To measure a brand's success of reaching this market segment, customary metrics such as gross reach are no longer relevant and have been replaced by those measuring digital net reach and cost per transaction (Friedrich et al., 2009).

Realizing its potential to fundamentally alter the brand customer relationship, the authors discuss five ways in which mobile platforms outperform all other delivery channels.

- Customer access: The utilization of mobile channels provides what amounts to continuous access to customers through voice, messaging, and portal platforms. While the Internet has an advantage to other mediums with respect to access, it is neither exclusive nor portable. Mobile offers exclusivity and location independence.
- Customer insight: As customers use mobile channels, they provide companies with a vast range of data to include demographics, communication, social patterns, and tendencies regarding geographic movement. The authors predict that eventually shopping history, online store preference, and spending tendencies will eventually be added to this list of available data.
- Customer dialogue: While mobile channels may not offer the media experience available via home entertainment systems or personal computers, their content-rich, real-time visual and acoustic messages may be completely customized for individual consumers. While family members or friends may share computers, the mobile telephone is a uniquely personal device, reflecting the tastes and

interests of its owner. And like the Internet, the mobile phone is interactive, allowing customers to respond by click, voice, or message.

- Customer emotions: A customer's choice of a mobile device is often a strong statement regarding their overall lifestyle, indicating an emotional attachment to their mobile devices that transcends its use as a mere tool. Instead it becomes an extension of themselves and a part of their everyday lives. As such, these devices provide a powerful platform for delivering information regarding specific items, topics, or products relevant to one's lifestyle. As a result, users of mobile devices become attached to them in a manner unlike that with their personal computer.
- Customer transactions: Given the lack of physical boundaries associated with these mobile devices, customers have easy and continuous access to e-commerce applications in which products and services are only click away. Additionally, companies may respond to a customer's interest by instantaneously pushing new offers or updating prices (Friedrich et al., 2009).

By using these dimensions as guidelines for creating relevant user experiences, advertisers may provide their customers with more of what they actually desire. As these devices may actually put a service or products in a consumer's hand, using mobile channels immediately enhances a brand's value.

Haygood (2007) examines how one mobile delivery platform is beginning to capture the public's and advertiser's imagination, podcasting. Even though podcasting is a relatively new digital phenomenon, it is already changing the manner in which audiences interact with media content. So, how is podcasting different from traditional or

even other new media? Well, podcasting allows consumers to both time-shift and place-shift their consumption of digital media to a time and location of their choosing, as content is downloaded onto either a personal computer or other digital listening device. Thus, the listener has direct control as to when the material is consumed. Therefore, many creators of digital content believe that podcasting will change the public's habits as to how new media is consumed, thus leading to a shift in how advertisers reach their customers.

The initial question becomes why (given the numerous alternatives) marketers would be interested in using podcasts as an advertising medium. Well, research has demonstrated that those who download podcasts represent the target audience that advertisers find so appealing: "well educated, high incomes, technologically astute, and at ease interacting with others and with information on the internet" (p. 519, Haygood, 2007). Thus, the follow-up question is whether advertisers are using podcasting to reach this lucrative audience. Studies indicate that advertising on podcasts is not an extensive practice, appearing on approximately only a third of selected video and audio podcasts. And for those podcasts which contained advertising, the average number of messages was only slightly over two, signifying that marketers have yet to fully embrace this new outlet. The number two also reflects the current strategy utilized by a majority of podcast advertisers. Research indicates that 75 percent of advertisements are placed at the beginning and ending of podcasts, serving as bookends to the primary content. In this manner, podcast producers are positioning their advertisers as "sponsors," a model which closely mirrors that found on many public radio or television programs where protecting the integrity of a program's flow is preserved by limiting commercial

interruptions. While advertising via podcasts is not yet an extensive practice, it does appear in a wide variety of programs and primarily involves communication, entertainment, and internet products and services, such as satellite radio, DVDs, web hosting, and DSL services (Haygood, 2007).

While still in its infancy, podcast related marketing offers one significant advantage in that a commercial message may be paired with program content which is strongly related to the product or service being advertised. As such, advertisers are assured of reaching their target audience and taking advantage of the synergy created by matching highly correlated messages and content (Haygood, 2007).

The Consumers' Perspective

Clearly, in order to take advantage of the opportunities presented by new media, corporations should be aware as to which delivery channels consumers are more responsive. Cheng, Blankson, Wang, and Chen (2009) examine consumer attitudes regarding three specific interactive venues (Internet, email, and mobile-phone) to determine whether consumers find their use as sources of advertising to be informative, entertaining, or irritating. For their research, the authors select a sample population of Taiwanese university students, as they are provided free access to the Internet, to include emailing, web surfing, and Skype access. Additionally, mobile phone usage is relatively high among the student population and this segment is considered a major market within the mobile telecommunications industry.

From their survey, Cheng et al. (2009) discover that while consumers' attitudes towards Internet and mobile phone based advertising are more positive than those regarding email advertising, neither medium is considered to be highly entertaining.

Overall, email advertisements are viewed as less informative, entertaining, and significantly more irritating than those from other two mediums. Therefore, the authors suggest that advertisers develop new, more creative methods for using the Internet and mobile devices to increase their messages' entertainment value. One suggestion which may have merit involves the combination of internet and mobile advertising campaigns into adventure type games in order to increase the content's entertainment value.

Zia (2009) augments the study conducted by Cheng et al. (2009) by narrowing his focus to the examination of customers' attitudes towards email as an advertising medium. Zia's proposition is that consumers expect advertising to be entertaining and informative. Indeed, entertainment is a critical factor as consumers expect advertising to be concise and humorous. As such, emails which provide interactive games and prizes keep consumers engaged, encouraging them to at least become familiar with the product or service being advertised. Advertising delivered via email must also be accurate, timely, and useful. Above all, consumers want the message to be tailored to their specific interests. And finally, consumers must find the advertising creditable in that it conveys an impression of truthfulness and believability. However, as Ducoffe (1996) warns, "When advertising employs techniques that annoy, offend, insult or are overly manipulative, consumers are likely to perceive it as unwanted and irritating influence" (P. 23). Clearly, the annoyance that results from unintelligible and unwanted email reflects poorly upon the originator and significantly diminishes its value as a marketing tool.

These authors propose that by understanding these attitudes, designers and marketers may develop more effective advertising campaigns. As such, advertisers

(regardless of the medium) must design their campaigns to provide the requisite levels of entertainment, information, and credibility. These advertisements must also be targeted to specific audiences who will appreciate the information rather than become irritated by what they consider spam.

Conclusion

As digital media increasingly becomes part of everyday life, the opportunities for advertisers to interact with their customers will dramatically expand. This trend will continue, as media grows to encompass not only mobile phones, iPods, iPads, and video games, but also microwave ovens, refrigerators, electronic billboards, and even automobiles. As advertising channels spread across all things digital, organizations will not only have unparalleled access to current and potential customers, but also a myriad of new ways in which to spread their messages. The challenge for both academics and practitioners is to establish the requisite theories, concepts, and methods which will serve to sculpt this new digital landscape into a networked ecosystem in which these communications may thrive (Mulhern, 2009).

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