



Online Advertising- Transforming the Masses

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Abstract

Background/Objectives: Advertising is known as an art form used as a persuasive tool to escalate business profits. It is the most flexible and adaptive element in the growth of marketing communication. With enhancements in scientific development, the advancements in technology have resulted in Digitization and the emergence of Online Media. **Methods/Statistical analysis:** The effectiveness of online advertising on consumers, their perception was quantitatively analyzed through a questionnaire. A sample of 267 students, enrolled in various different courses, was asked to fill the forms explaining their point of view and understanding about the subject. **Findings:** The advertising world has evolved taming the advertisers about the need to sell products on the basis of elegance and indulgence rather than humble efficacy. Moreover, Online Advertising is serving as a complementary rather than a competitive medium to the traditional media, surfacing a way for it to tap the consumers with more effectiveness and efficacy. **Improvements/Applications:** The revolution in technology and the emergence of Online Advertising as an interactive universal medium has given advertisers amazing opportunities worth exploring that are desirable for a brand to pursue.

Index Terms

Communication, Internet, New Digital Media, Online Advertising, Technology

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I. OBJECTIVE

The study exemplifies that the rise of the Internet as an Online Advertising Medium has surpassed other media over its effectiveness, accessibility and intelligibility. It serves as an imperative complimentary means for the promotion of goods and services and helps in getting better consumer responses.

II. INTRODUCTION

Since the early civilizations of human existence, communication has been a significant part of our lives. However, with the humanoid evolution, this custom advanced to become a necessity for our survival. People started communicating with each other to maintain a social standing through various communication channels for the sake of their livelihood. The further periodic inventions that took place with the passing years of human existence, since antiquity, eventually resulted in the conception of new forms of communications, refining both the range at which people could communicate and the durability of the information. Communication ranges from very elusive processes of exchange to full conversations and mass communication. Therefore, it is quite evident that advertising has turned up to be one such mass communication tool, which is a part of the cultural and economic fabric of our society, since ancient time.

A. Advertising- Meaning and Background

To *advertise* means to inform, describe or to notify (Nicosia, 1974). The term 'Advertising' is defined as a process where a message is designed using symbols and language to promote a product, thought/idea, and a service using creativity and spreading it through various advertising media. It is a marketing and a promotional business tool which is known as the most applied and effectual means of upholding a mass-production marketing system. Advertising is commonly known as a public announcement that can be oral, written or visual, done to enlighten, guide, direct and persuade the audience towards the advertised message. Also, the elementary function of advertising is to provide reminders and reinforcements about the message to ensure further unceasing purchases by the consumers. Being a paid form of non-personal communication, as stated by American Marketing Association (AMA), advertising provides abundant options to the brands for making business information accessible to their potential customers.

Advertising is as old as civilization and commerce. It is being used to fulfill various market determinations by industrial giants, non-profit organizations and the small merchandising establishments since ages. From the flinch of product exchange through barter system in prehistoric times to the contemporary period, buyers and sellers communicated in embryonic ways to reach potential prospects of a product or a service [1]. From the mouth to mouth promotion by town criers to display of notices, from information through newspapers to radio jingles, from the television commercials to internet banners, videos and advertisements on mobile phones, Advertising has been scattering awareness since ages, but in the 21st century, the major turning point of advertising took place (Figure 1). Along with the inventions of computers, laptops, mobile phones, and tablets, the Internet emerged as the New Media Technology leading towards the foundation of a New-fangled Advertising Media Culture which provides the advertisers an unabridged and an innovative set of channels that can be used for delivering the advertiser's message directly to the individuals.



Fig. 1. Evolution in Advertising Media (source: google search)

The advertised message is predisposed and contains an explicit viewpoint. Communication through advertisements is a derivative of the AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action) Communication Model, which is one of the founding principles of most contemporary marketing and advertising. It explains how an advertisement or marketing communication memo engrosses and encompasses consumers in choosing a brand and making purchase decisions. [2]

B. Advertising Media

Media is a plural term for medium and a medium is a vehicle that conveys the advertiser's message and acts as an assistance to eradicate the gap between the manufacturer and the consumer. Advertising media is a vivacious domain in business and advertising and they have played a vital role in media's evolution and development. The advertising media are an important and subtle fragment of advertising communication.

Types:

- i. Print Media: Newspaper, magazine, brochure, pamphlet, flyer, etc.
- ii. Broadcast media: Television and radio.

- iii. Outdoor media: Hoarding, poster and transit media.
- iv. Digital Media: Text message and online media.

Classification:

- i. ATL (Above the Line): Mass media like television, radio, print, and internet are used to promote brands and reach out to the target consumers in masses and not specific individuals.
- ii. BTL (Below the Line): One to one communication is done through the distribution of pamphlets, handbills, stickers, promotions, brochures placed at the point of sale, and on the roads through banners and placards.

Advertisers today have the advantage of both traditional media like newspaper as well as the enduring new media options like the internet. The selection of the right medium/ media for advertising has become an important but at the same time a difficult and a complicated task. Furthermore, the advertisers have another important task that is to find out the influence of the selected medium. The medium should be cost-efficient, and it is also important to evaluate the right time to advertise through it and to find the geographic areas that should be covered by that medium. [3, 4]

III. DIGITAL MEDIA-EMERGENCE OF ONLINE ADVERTISING

The innumerable scientific developments in the past era have directed to the technological enhancements, the invention of machine-readable formats and henceforth, the digital age leading towards the development of 'Internet' known as the 'network of networks'. The Internet is a comprehensive interactive medium that provides multiway communication to its user. The Internet entered the market as a gigantic global system that links computer networks. With its emergence, Online Media came into existence and gave an escalation to an inexpensive, highly-personalized, and measurable advertising medium, i.e. Online Advertising. As Robert Logan writes in his book 'Understanding New Media', Online Media is defined as New Media which refers to "those digital media that are cooperative, and integrated mutual communication which encompasses some form of computing" [5].

A. Categories of Online Advertising Media:

- i. *Paid Media:* Advertiser pay to advertise on an existing channel for influencing the audience. It lets them grasp a comprehensive audience and get their direct attention to the content.

Example: Pay per click display advertisements, paid search advertisements, social media advertisements, and native advertising.

- ii. *Earned Media:* It is known as "Online word of mouth". It includes SEO rankings; social media mentions and content getting picked by a third party. The consumers are actually the promotion channels.
Example: Shares, reposts, reviews, etc.
- iii. *Owned Media:* It is the one which is completely and directly controlled by the advertiser's brand.
Example: Website, mobile site, blog and social media channels.

B. Forms of Online Advertising Media: [6,7]

- i. *Search Engine Advertisements (SEM-Search Engine Marketing):* It is a form of paid search advertising in which when a user performs a search related to a particular keyword, the related advertisement appears at the top of the search result page.
- ii. *Display Advertisements:* They are found on the websites in the form of visuals and in relation to the content or service in some way or the other. They can be seen in the form of floating banners, static images, text, wallpaper, pop-up ads, flash, and videos.
- iii. *Social Media Advertisements:* They appear on the social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, etc. in the form of a simple image, banner or an auto-play video.
- iv. *Retargeting Advertisements:* They appear when a user visits a particular site of his/her interest, and go around the web, some targeted ads appear in front of him again and again as a reminder.

C. Characteristics (5Cs) of Digital Media Technology: [8]

- i. *Communication:* It provides a speedy communication with a rapidity of transmission throughout the schmoozed society in our highly interconnected age.
Example: Blogs, Web Pages, etc.
- ii. *Collaboration:* It enables cooperation through its collaborative aspect and virtual communities over the internet.
Example: E-mails, Google Docs, etc.
- iii. *Community:* It provides a global reach in a variety of democratic and inclusive ways.
Example: Social networking sites like Facebook, Google Groups, YouTube, etc.
- iv. *Creativity:* It is interactive and interactivity have dramatic effects on the creative process of advertising. It offers a user-generated content where users are no longer the inactive receivers of the message and thus, can edit, modify and create new content.

Example: Product reviews, Posts to Blogs, etc.

v. *Convergence*: It allows convergence of technology, media, consumption, and digitization making it easier for the users to work from anywhere and anytime.

Example: Broadband Internet Connections, Wi-Fi, Internet Dongles, etc.

D. Communication through Online Advertising:

Although advertising continues to be a primary tool for marketing communication that conveys information about product, services, or ideas to a targeted audience, the technological advancements in the past decade have had a significant effect on its practice and execution. Advertising has undergone dramatic changes. Previously, messages were circulated from one source to their target audience who used to gather these messages through a convincing form of distribution. Publishers used to have a high supremacy level over the information being disseminated and the way it was perceived by the audience. However, all that changed radically with the rise of computers and more significantly the Internet. It has made advertising an opportunity to prosper and become an integral fragment and element for the development of our society and economy. The emergence of Online Media has caused a standard nudge in the ways and means of advertising of modern methodologies that allows different forms of media to converge making them extremely effortless to process, store, transform and regain. It has provided the advertisers with online tools to capture the attention of target audiences with greater precision and efficacy. Evolution in technology and the invention of Online Media has shortened the distance among people all over the world through electronic communication as it has a universal accessibility and is capable of making computer connections worldwide forming a whole new community. Online Advertising has let the advertisers have greater opportunities for interactive approaches to reach the audiences. With the cumulative market competition, the advertisers are now placing more emphasis on persuading consumers through creative advertising messages via various media made available to them by the scientific advancements. [9]

Today, advertisers are using direct response techniques through online advertising as a key ingredient of marketing strategies. It consents them to personalize their messages and build an enduring relationship with prime target audiences. They are constantly looking for more sophisticated online tools and the ways in which consumers interact with media and advertising messages. Online Advertising Media is allowing the advertisers to reach the greatest audience with the lowest cost (Figure 2).



Fig. 2. Traditional V/S Digital Media (Source: <https://seriouslysimplemarketing.com/traditional-vs-online-marketing/>)

The emergence of New Media vehicles such as the Internet, Video Catalogues, Interactive Television, Tablets, etc, have provided the advertisers a benefit of circulating information to selected consumers. On one hand, they allow consumers to deal directly with the marketers, bypassing traditional media and marketing channels, similarly, on the other hand, they allow sellers to deal one-on-one with the consumers through direct communication and interaction. They have also permitted new products to enter the marketplace increasing the availability of market choices for the consumers. The emergence of the internet as an inexpensive, quick, easily available, interactive and the most flexible medium with an ability to change messages quickly according to the circumstances and needs, brought histrionic changes in the advertising world [10]. The online approach has increased the practicality for consumer feedback. It has become an instant, intrusive and international medium with no boundaries. Example: It has made higher education courses accessible from anywhere around the globe in the form of distance learning courses.

Online advertising media provides the sellers an advantage to gain information about individuals regarding their buying habits and product preferences. On the basis of these preferences, it communicates the message to that individual. Example: Display ads that occur on the web pages befall on the basis of our preferences which can be tracked through our google search history. Online media allows advertisers to reach samples of specific consumers to govern a number of advertising retorts. The advertisers today are exploring more to look for new and better ways of using the Online medium because of its ability to publish information instantaneously with the expediency of altering the content according to requirements and without bothering about constraints of time and geography [11-13]. From banner ads (including rich media banners) to Search Engine Optimization (SEO), social networking, email marketing, online classified ads, site takeovers, and even SPAM, online

advertising is one of the fastest growing ways to reach an audience.

The platform of online advertising allows the advertisers to have more effective cross-selling from current customers, get higher customer retention and loyalty along with customer profitability and responses. For this motive, advertisers are experimenting to blend old and new communication strategies. On one hand, they are maintaining brand visibility and positioning through television commercials and other traditional media messages, whereas, on the other hand, they are using an interactive new medium like e-mails and websites for creating a high brand identity. New technology can rarely create a brand image but it helps the traditional media in maintaining one. A combination of both the medium helps in developing an effective branding communication. Example: Print advertisements in newspaper or magazine ask readers to visit a company’s website for more information or to place an order.

The rise of the Internet as an accessible, universal and interactive medium has made the progress in developing countries to explode, providing various market prospects to the advertisers as well as the users. The use of interactive technology through online media allows businesses to deal with the unique purchasing lifestyle and communicative histories of each customer. It has the capability of one-to-one marketing communication which is profitable for both, the consumers who gain better value and the company who gets continued customer loyalty. Online advertising serves as a basis for a direct sale, direct response, targeted communication, personal communication, advertising-supported communication, and marketing promotion. Online Advertising media has increased the productivity and effectiveness of other traditional media. [14]

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For examining the effectiveness of online advertising on consumers, their perception was quantitatively analyzed through a questionnaire. A sample of 267 students, enrolled in various different courses, was asked to fill the forms explaining their point of view and understanding about the subject. Youth were focused as they are the most active segment as well as the future of our country. India has the largest population of youngsters in the world that makes Youth Advertising an important determinant of its consumer behavior. They are more prone towards experimenting with the market trends and they believe in making decisions for themselves. The

respective questionnaire consisted of a set of 14 questions enquiring them about the awareness, value, and effectiveness of Online Advertising in creating a brand perception.

V. ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

Data collected through the questionnaire concluded that the youth believe in Online Advertising as the most powerful medium than any other media. 64% of the respondents believe in the power of Online media as an effective way of communication about the brand and the others believe in the power of the traditional media like Television, Newspapers, Radio, etc. (Figure 3, Online Advertising is the most Powerful Advertising Medium).

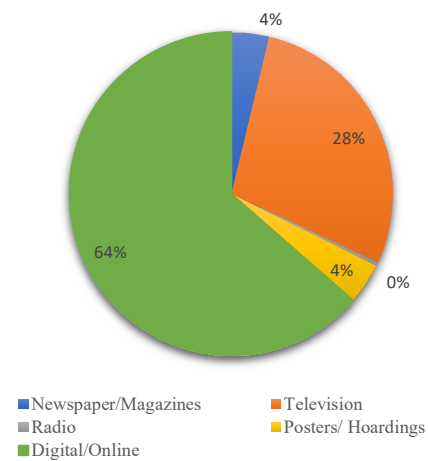


Fig. 3. Online Advertising is the most Powerful Advertising Medium

Furthermore, 88% of the respondents believe that the reason behind the success of New Digital Online Media as an influential way of communicating and creating mass awareness is that it is an interactive medium that provides information globally eradicating all the physical barriers (Figure 4, Online Advertising is the most Interactive Global Medium).

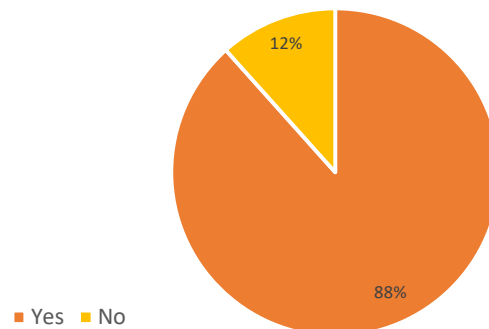


Fig. 4. Online Advertising is the most Interactive Global Medium

Moreover, 90% of them believe that Online Advertising develops a brand perception among the consumers. It is the most accessible way to reach the target audience and a better way to develop consumer satisfaction (Figure 5, Online Advertising develops a brand perception).

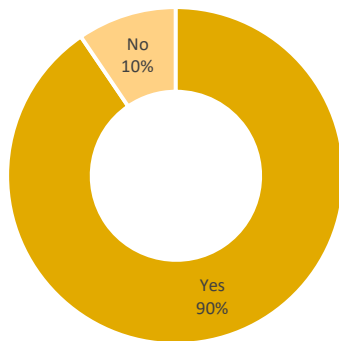


Fig. 5. Developing a Brand Perception through Online Advertising

VI. CONCLUSION

The rise of the internet and the resultant emergence of Online Advertising have made advertisers understand the importance of creating product interaction rather than regular product advertising. Online Advertising has led to the conception of the relationship between users and consumers with technology and media. Digitization and Online platform have made it easier for the advertisers to determine the most effective means of reaching consumers by providing them a platform for studying various consumer behaviors and approaches to appeal. The emergence of new media is helping sellers disseminate product information with an ease and as a supporter of other media such that it allows consumers to know about the existence of various products. It gives them the information about the competing brands permitting them to make intelligent choices among the numerous product options available in the market according to their own comfort and needs. The online digital media technology, which is extremely easy to access and process by the masses than any other form of media, has an ethical responsibility to deliver product information that is both honest and communally appropriate. Advertising is a powerful communicator of morals and integrity of our society and it has directed the formation of new ways of subject representation by creating novel textual experiences through the online approach. Online Advertising, which uses the Internet as a medium to convey and deliver promotional messages to the consumers, has

now become the most accessible and intelligible form of advertising media.

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