

Online Banner Adverts: More than the Final Click

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Purpose/Summary:

This study intends to gain an exploratory insight into the behaviours of young adults (18-25) which affects their response to online banner adverts. By utilising the consumer-controlled focus of the Interactive Advertising Model and incorporated functional behaviours of internet motives and modes as the pivot of the study, enabled the ability to facilitate a core behavioural understanding of the targeted cohort as well as key associated factors. In addition, brief, yet constructive recommendations in relation to this study are presented for the business community.

Design Methodology:

An exploratory understanding was examined by means of a qualitative research approach. Semi-Structured face-to-face interviews were conducted with 8 university students. Data was analysed using the template analysis coding system.

Findings:

Findings indicate that adverts relatedness, personal interest, risk, and congruity, in conjunction with mode of behaviour and internet motive are important factors affecting a young adult's response; Ignore, Notice, Click, to banner adverts.

Research Implications:

Vast amounts of online advertising spend is directed towards engaging with young adults. With characteristics showcasing young adults as worldly enough to see through advertising messages, understanding the behaviours of which influences the likely hood of engagement with banner adverts is therefore an essential focus.

Originality/Value:

To the best of the author's knowledge, studies to date have failed to test the consumer-controlled dynamic of the IAM to the young adult cohort from a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach provides the ability to yield rich information collection and gather in-depth insights into subjective meanings. In addition, the outcomes of this study can be exploited to drive further research in the field.

Keywords: Online Advertising; Banner adverts; Young Adults; Consumer Behaviours; Interactive Advertising; Advertising Effectiveness

Introduction

Online banner adverts have become a prominent feature of the internet engagement experience (Ha,2008). Characterised as rectangular-shaped displays of graphical advertising units located throughout a web page, banner adverts are designed to encourage consumers to click on a display, linking the consumer to the company's target communication and additional information of the company (Zeff and Aronson,1997; Wang,2013). However, unlike of an era when the first banner adverts appeared on the web in 1994, internet users of today can essentially be recognised as unconventional in the way they experiencing information, media and advertising (Cho,2003). Constantinidies (2006) and Urban (2005) express that customer's needs, nature and behaviours have radically transformed as a result of technological advancements, thus illustrating a consumer who has more control over the flow of marketing message and the increased ability to choose what adverts, when, where, and how long they would like to see them.

This gained control has inevitably raised amongst researchers the formal phenomenon of 'Banner Blindness', in which internet users tend to completely ignore or avoid banner adverts (Nielsen,2007; Porta et al,2012). Aspects such as banner blindness have resulted in banner adverts to endure considerable scrutiny by failing to effectively 'engage' consumers with advertising messages (Cho,2003 pp.7; Wang,2013). To elaborate, 2012 studies by EyeTrackShop revealed that in the best case scenario 44% of advertising spend is wasted on adverts that never reach the consumers' eyes and worst case, as much as 93% of banner adverts are going unseen (MediaTel,2012). In addition, banner ads encompass an estimated 1% click-

through rate, suggesting a low level engagement response (Wang,2013).

However, of particular interest, attractive recent research trends recognise the young adult cohort as an important, interesting and lucrative segment for advertisers to expansively understand and target. Pew (2010) research expressed that 93% of US young adults go online and Mintel (2013) data revealed that 49% of UK young adults clicking on adverts and 92% noticing adverts. Nevertheless, from an academic perspective, Noble (2009 pp.618) recognised young adults as "worldly enough to see through many advertising tactics" and despite the potential of this market, much is unknown about this groups motivations, consumption behaviours and patronage. Viswanathan and Jain, (2013) further recognised that it is especially important to understand this segment as their influence in the market place is only bound to grow. With this understanding, utilising young adults - individuals between the ages of 18-25 - as the context of this study appeared ideal and practical.

To briefly summaries this cohort, young adults are the mid-range segment of the generation Y consumer group; individuals born between 1980-2000 (Viswanathan and Jain,2013). Also known as 'Millennials', they are the first generation to have technology and the internet from an early age, have a prevalent use of the internet and an extremely media and technologically savvy demographic (Djamasbi et al,2008 & 2010; Viswanathan and Jain,2013). Giving attention to a narrower segment of the group avoids research limitations such as attempting to assume all generation Y consumers are similar in their attitudes and behaviours, as it is an evident heterogeneous group. For example, behaviours of a 14 year old would surely be diverse from a 34 year old.

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With a basic acknowledgement of the consumer, Porta (2012) recognises that understanding more about banners adverts and the way users relate to them is an essential requirement to find more effective strategies. As such, the purpose of this study is to establish an exploratory understanding of functional – ‘Pre-advert click’ - consumer behaviours in which affect young adult’s responses to banner adverts. By addressing emerging trends within the literature and utilising a qualitative research approach, exploratory findings are presented within the context of the young adult cohort, in which enable the ability to answer key research objectives of:

- A. How do pre-click (advert click) functional behaviours affect young adult’s recognition and engage with online banner adverts?
- B. What functional behavioural elements and associated factors of young adults can be targeted by advertisers to enhance their recognition and engagement with online banner adverts?

To address the preceding questions, the remainder of the paper will present a literature review of which establishes the conceptual framework, description of the methodology and primary research conducted, a report on the findings and related discussion. The study closes with concluding remarks, indications of limitations and directions for future research.

Literature Review

The Banner Ad: Recognition & Engagement Factors

Literature on advertising and consumer behaviour indicates important factors which influence a consumer’s response to banner adverts such as, consumer-related factors, advertiser-controlled factors and contextual factors (Cho, 2003 pp.202). Acknowledging advertiser-controlled factors and contextual factors, many studies have shown that objective elements of size (Chandon,2000; Nihel,2013), location/placement (Choi Rifon,2002; Nielsen,2010), brand incorporation (Hollis,2005; Ju,2013), audio (Kim et al,2010), design (Cho,2003), colour (Clifford,2008) and animation (Chandon,2003) have an evident influence on banner success. For example, Chandon (2000) showed that the size of the banner increases awareness and purchase intent (Nihel,2013), and Choi and Rifon’s (2002) study of media credibility recognised the importance of placing banner ads on trustworthy sites to enhance advert credibility and consumers responses. However, although advertiser-controlled and contextual factors appear significant to understand, Rodgers and Thorson (2000, pp.2) express that “advertisers have controlled which ads consumers see, when and how, [but] of course, consumers always have the option of not paying attention to, becoming involved with or ignoring the ad”.

Users web Experience: Recognition & Engagement Factors

Noticeably, previous research highlights that vast advertising saturation in the web environment results in a tendency for users to avoid internet advertisements mainly due to the perception that the ads inhibit the reading of the web content (Ju,2013). Dreze and Hussherr (2003,pp.10) further recognise that with a banner advert sharing its bandwidth with other elements of a web page and typically occupying less than 10% of the area, the attention of the individual is largely focused on other elements of the page. In addition they express that most banner ads consist of the same rectangle/square shape which enables web surfers the ability to train themselves and develop strategies to avoid

devoting attention to them. Ultimately highlighting that if surfers never actually look at a banner, they cannot click on it. However studies on online advertising, individuals and attitudes, have in fact recognised that people who obtain favourable attitudes towards banner ads are likely to have a high level of involvement with them (Cho,2003). To expand more in-depth, research literature further recognises significant consumer-controlled factors which affect response to banner adverts, such as:

Congruity

Congruity is the relationship between the nature of the content of an advert and its surrounding context, and the association that the user can produce between them (Porta et al, 2012). Not only has research expressed that attitudes towards a web site will be enhanced when there is a congruency between the banner and the website (Newman et al.,2004), but also the web page visited will have core effect on an individual’s engagement with the banner advert (Danaher and Mullarkey,2003). Recognisably, Stevenson (2002) found that background complexity had a negative effect on attitude toward the advertisement but no effect on attention toward the advertising stimuli. (Danaher and Mullarkey,2003). However further studies have demonstrated that congruent website and advert placement were better memorised and easier for people to recall (Porta et al,2012).

Duration

The duration of the visit to the website is recognised as another factor to be considered in the effectiveness of online advertising. Danaher and Mullarkey (2003) emphasize that the longer the duration, the more likely it is that the internet user is exposed to the advertisements inserted in the website, therefore raising the potential of engagement. However noticeably Berlyne (1970) argued that the amount of time that a consumer has available for product message processing is not the only factor influencing their evaluations of the brand and ad. As such, the ease of processing the message also has an effect on consumer evaluations, with ads that are easier to process often preferred (Reber et al,2004).

Perceived Risk

Perceived risk refers to a feeling of uncertainty regarding possible negative consequences of using a product or service (Featherman & Pavlou,2003). Bauer (2005) expresses that consumer behaviour is strongly influenced by perception of risk, determining his or her behaviour such as in this context; avoiding risk and not engaging with the advert. Noticeably, studies showcase individuals expressing banner ads as highly intrusive, annoying, and incorporating a feeling of being “violated and molested by their presence” (Telang and Bhatt,2011,pp.3). Outlining characteristics which stimulate advert blindness.

These proceeding factors imply that the greater part of an internet users processing of banner adverts will perhaps take place at the pre attentive level (Dreze and Hussherr,2003). Therefore evidently questioning the methods of measuring banner advert effectiveness. Review of previous literature reveals that most advertising agencies use click through rate (CTR) as an effectiveness indicator (Ju,2013). A CTR is defined as a user-initiated action of clicking on an advert that typically results in a redirection to the advertiser’s website (Aksakalli,2011). Use of the CTR has been questioned by numerous authors (Dreze and

Husser,2003; Chandon,2003), as it is likely to undervalue advertising mediums such banner adverts (Briggs and Hollis,1997), with its focus exclusively on an active response to the advert rather than possible exposure to it (Nihel,2013).

Online user Behaviour: Recognition & Engagement factors

MarketShare CEO Wes Nichols acknowledges that, “there are a lot of things that impacted what gets that person to engage with an advert, but it’s usually the last click that gets all the credit” (Saunders et.al.,2012 pp.358). Advertisers that only emphasize click rates ignore the affecting behaviours that occur before the click. Nihel (2013,pp.94) asserts, “Unlike traditional media, exposure to advertising on the Web does not occur accidentally, but deliberate and desired by the consumer”. Thus recognising that consumers has total control throughout the experience of internet use, therefore active and selective control to determine what, when and how they want to see marketing messages (Cho,2003; Sicilia et al,2003)

Interactive Advertising Framework

Rodgers and Thorson (2000) theoretically conceptualised the Interactive Advertising Model (IAM) which recognised that advert response outcomes in an interactive online environment are dependent on both functional and structural components, and divided into advertiser-controlled influences and consumer-controlled dynamics [Figure.1]. Noticeably, based on the preceding literature presented, it is acknowledged that a structuralised frame of reference or advertiser-controlled structure alone cannot explain what drives individuals to use the internet, and how they react to the physical features of Internet adverts once on the web. According to Thorson and Leavitt (1986), "unless advertising is understood in terms of consumers and their goals, there is no adequate base for dealing with complex behaviour such as responding to persuasive communication".

The IAM distinguishes the consumer-controlled dynamics to consist of a stage of functions that fluctuate consumer information processes (MacInnis and Jaworski,1989); attention, memory, attitude. Dewey’s (1896) functionalism notion explains that, “the activity of using the Internet does not start with the stimulus, or advertising message. Rather, internet use begins with a response to some drive”. As such, functions of the consumer-controlled dynamic, which initiates the framework, attempts to identify the reasons and behaviour surrounding the use of the internet (Rodgers and Thorson,2000). This makes sense if we consider the fact that most Internet users typically use the internet with some sort of agenda or goal in mind, for example, the need to shop. In light of this functional perspective, Rodgers and Thorson (2000,pp.7) undoubtedly express that the functionalist approach cannot account for environmental factors, such as the physical features of adverts and that it ignores a host of possible structural dynamic. Nevertheless, Bandura (1986) recognises that by knowing the characteristics of a stimulus environment, it is more likely to predict the behaviour that occurs in response to that environment.

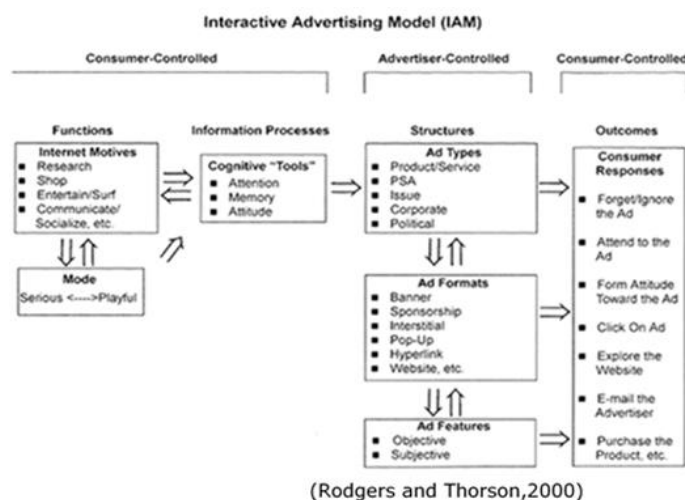


Figure 1

IAM provides the ability to not only understand why people use the Internet and the affect it will have on advert responses (internet motives), but also the degree of goal-directedness in relation to the task being executed (mode of behaviour). As such, the IAM acts as the theoretical underpinning and dominant guidance of this study. Not only has previous research failed to apply this framework to the context of young adults, but as the study focuses on the cohorts functional behaviours, it ideally enables the ability to explore the affect internet motive and mode behaviours have in relation to banner advert responses; ignore, notice, or click Figure 2.

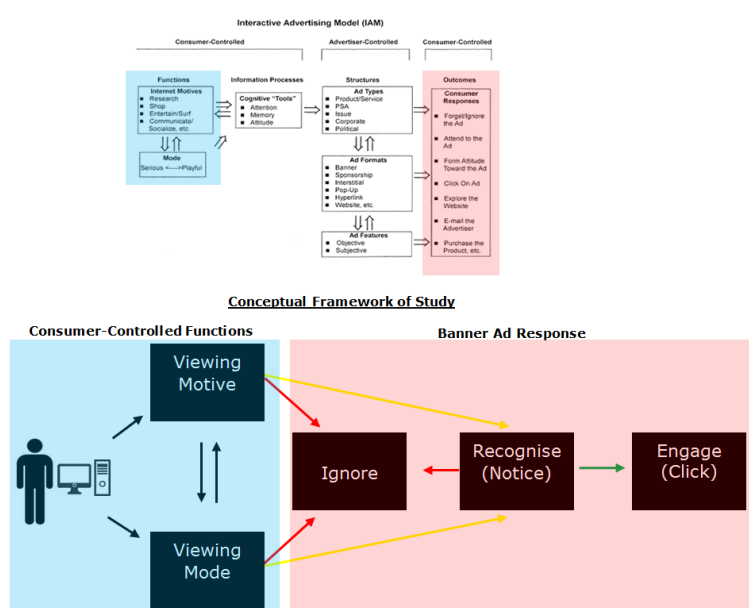


Figure 2

Rodgers and Thorson (2000) acknowledge that motives and modes of which people use the internet are probably the most important aspects of how IAM operates. As these represent core dynamics to the context of this study, both viewing motive and mode are further explained.

The Internet Motive & Banner Advert Response

Stemmed from Deci and Ryan’s (1985) notion that a motive is an inner desire to actively fulfil a need or want, an internet motive is defined as an inner drive to carry out

any online activity (Rodgers and Thorson,2000). Although more than 100 web motives have been identified, IAM categories this vast number into four primary motives; researching, social/communicating, surfing (i.e., entertaining) and shopping. Ha (2008) recognised that Rodgers and Thorson further differentiate the original four motives to 12 sub motives such as, download, game, transaction, and product trails, however for the context of this study the original four motives presented will act as the basis.

Rodgers and Sheldon (1999) found through regression analysis that Internet motives significantly predict how consumers respond to adverts. Surfers, for instance, were presumably more "present-oriented" and more likely to demonstrate curiosity toward online adverts in comparison to researchers (Rodgers & Thorson,2000). Rodgers and Thorson (2000) further elaborate saying "this is not to say that researchers ignore or are uninfluenced by online ads. It may be, in fact, that researchers are more likely than surfers to click on ads that are directly relevant to the task at hand". However knowing what drives an individuals to use the Internet evidently provides insights into the types of ads that will appeal and attract their attention, and ultimately encouraging advert engagement. More recent studies by Telang and Bhatt (2011), statically concluded that motives harnessed main effects resulting in product involvements and advertising appeals. Showcasing an indirect application to Rodgers and Sheldon's (2000) notion that people who are driven to use the Internet for a particular reason (e.g., surfing) are more likely to express favourable attitudes toward banner ads that "promote" that motive.

Within the conceptual understanding of IAM motives, the aspect of motive-switching is acknowledged as an interconnected importance. Rodgers & Thorson (2000,pp.5) depict the idea of motive-switching by describing that,

"[In some situations individuals utilise the internet] with one or more motives in mind and throughout the course of carrying out one motive, switch motives perhaps because they became bored or frustrated with the initial motive, or because some other activity captured their attention. [For example], an individual who enters the web with a shopping motive, but then becomes discouraged because a search engine does not produce the necessary results, might find a shopping-oriented advertisement interesting one moment and not the next".

Although a number of variables offer reasons to switch motives, user's mode of behaviour and its relation to motives is one core factor driving this occurrence (Rodgers and Thorson,2000).

The Internet Mode & Banner Advert Response

Mode of behaviour is defined as the degree of which internet activities are goal-directed. It is conceptualised as constantly "switching," as noted by the up-and-down arrows in the IAM and ranging on a continuum from 'serious' to 'playful' (Rodgers and Thorson,2000 pp.5). Therefore, it largely influences whether and which types of ads are attended to, as well as the extent of processing. Rodgers and Thorson (2000,pp.5-6) depict conjoint association between the motive and mode by expressing that,

"Presumably, this goal-directed state would make [a particular motive] more serious and less playful. A more serious, goal-oriented mode

might then translate into more cognitive effort being placed on reaching the goal and less cognitive effort being devoted to other tasks, such as attending to adverts"

Put more practically, surfers, presumably are more 'present-oriented', demonstrate curiosity and are more likely than researchers to click on ads found along while online. Danaher and Mullarkey's (2003) concluded that highly task-oriented consumers exhibit more advert avoidance in goal-directed navigation, while in a playful mode banner adverts can compete for attention, as attention is less focused, enabling much more recognition and recall of banners (Porta et al,2012). Hence, greater advertising effectiveness can be gained by choosing websites where more surfing is likely to arise (Danaher & Mullarkey,2003). However, associating highly task-oriented with high involvement, Kim (2010) suggest that consumers with high-task involvement will have a great deal of interest in the intrinsic attributes of the task, so they will be more receptive to related information. Thus pay more attention to ads of similar relatedness unlike less involved users, or those exposed randomly to a banner displayed in general rotation (Chandon,2003; Cho,2003).

From a controversial perspective, the degree of concentration exhibited by an individual toward the task will evidently affect advert engagement. That is to say, as the perceived need relevance of a task outweighs the perceived need relevance of the advert stimuli, attention to advert decreases (MacInnis and Jaworski,1989). As such, this understanding establishes the concept of flow. Flow is defined as the sensation of being completely absorbed in an activity and ignoring all other things (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). While flow refers to a specific state, it can also be considered a continuous variable in that different degrees of flow can occur, ranging from none too intense (Sicilia et al, 2003). Wu and Liu (2007), assert that the fun in one's flow experience significantly affects the person's attitude and intention regarding online aspects. Therefore, potentially obstructing advertising recognition. Nonetheless, Nel (1999) did demonstrate that positive flow experiences on websites encourage repeat visits, which would in affect allow for greater exposure to banner adverts.

Research Methods

By utilising the consumer-related functional dynamics of the IAM as a dominant guidance of this study, provides the suitable basis to direct the data collection in order to answer the research aims present:

- A. How do pre-click (advert click) functional behaviours affect young adult's recognition and engage with online banner adverts?
- B. What functional behavioural elements and associated factors of young adults can be targeted by advertisers to enhance their recognition and engagement with online banner adverts?

Establishing prior themes of internet motive and mode of behaviour within the context of this study, offers an initial starting point for gathering exploratory findings in regards to the influences affecting young adult's responses to banner adverts. The evident need to gather rich insights into subjective meanings, results in the research design to incorporate the functionalist understanding of the IAM from an interpretivism research philosophy.

In an attempt to establish reliable, valuable, and justified research findings, primary data was collected by means of mono-method qualitative research. Ha (2008) recognised that most of the previous studies in online advertising have used a quantitative methodology as it facilitates statistical testing and generalisation of the results which are usually easier to get accepted for publication in scholarly journals. However justifying the current studies qualitative choice, Delbridge and Kirkpatrick (1994; pp.39) state, "in the social sciences we cannot hope to adequately explain the behaviour of social actors unless we try to understand their meanings" (Saunders et.al.,2012 pp.342). With a consumer behaviour research focus, a qualitative approach provides the ability to yield results that are more true to life and appropriate to the aims of the study. Additionally, it enables rich information collection as well as individual differences and emerging themes to become apparent. Utilising a deductive and cross-sectional focus, the study looks to gather exploratory data related to real life instance and detailed explanations.

Participant Sample

Data for the present study was generated by means of 8 face-to-face interviews with university students of the young adult cohort. Lynch (1999) emphasized that student samples can be useful when trying to understand relationships between concepts and that the impact on external validity is no different to using a similar homogenous group from the general population. Participants of the study aged 18-25 (mean=21, female=20, male=23) and were predominantly undergraduate students at Nottingham Trent University (NTU), studying a range of degree courses. A quota sampling approach was used to obtain representation of students from all ages of the cohort under investigation. Due to the nature of the study, selection of participants did not require any special knowledge, skill or unidentified awareness of the research being conducted. Therefore, unknown and known university colleagues were approached to partake in the 15-20 minute semi-structured interview between February and March of 2014. Individuals participated voluntarily, and were given no incentive for their cooperation to prevent participant bias. Voluntary participation was overly emphasized to ensure no pressured involvement and as a result three potential individuals expressing their unwillingness to partake. In addition, students were not required to disclose their identity. This anonymity provided the opportunity to voice their opinions freely. Interviews took place in various locations deemed convenient by the respondent in an attempt to engage with them where they are most comfortable, and in most cases this meant their residency. General characteristics of those who did agree to partake are portrayed in Figure 3.

INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS					
Participant	Age	Gender	Devices to access	University	Article Abbreviation
1	18	Female	4	NTU	P1
2	20	Female	4	NTU	P2
3	25	Male	3	NTU	P3
4	18	Female	2	NTU	P4
5	21	Female	5	NTU	P5
6	20	Female	3	NTU	P6
7	25	Male	3	NTU	P7
8	21	Male	4	NTU	P8

General characteristics of those who agreed to partake consisted of; individuals with a familiarity or regularity of internet use, access the internet by multiple devices throughout the day and have had no involvement with any previous studies regarding online advertising, preventing response bias.

Figure 3

Procedure

In preparation of conducting the interviews individuals were formally briefed on the study focus and issued a consent form to officially agree to partake. After a brief set of questions to gathered personal details, participants were encourage to explain in depth and elaborate as much as possible in their responses. Throughout the interview a variety of complex and open-ended questions were asked in order to understand the relationships between different banner advert response variables and the prior themes established. To facilitate discussions, a list of prompts were utilised to promote further discussion or clarify explanations. In addition, some questions were designed to simulate online situations to enable the participants to express how a response would occur within that particular setting, allowing a fundamental understanding to mode and motive behaviours. These tactics allowed for response variables, beliefs, engagement influences and favourable advert traits to emerge.

Measures

Each interview was audio taped and later transcribed. Thematic analysing of the qualitative data was conducted following the Template Analysis (King, 2008). Template analysis provided a framework for development of a coding process and a way of arranging and summarising the codes that were discovered. Essential prior codes such as; web experience factors, motive and mode behaviours were established, being strongly relevant to the analysis. Transcribed segments corresponding to these prior codes were coded according. In addition, key trends of information made apparent throughout the analysis process resulted in the development of additional codes to include the relevant material. Once the coding process was complete, codes were grouped into categories and core themes were developed.

Findings

Among the 8 young adult's interviewed, all had used the internet before and recognised themselves as active internet users with day-to-day internet engagement. The average daily internet usage time of participants was 5.9 hours, utilising an average of three devices to access the web. Most importantly, all have had some previous or current exposure to distinguish a banner advert from other online advertising formats. Throughout the interviews conducted, participants expressed an array of detailed responses and online illustrations which provided the ability to formulate data to apply to the themes prior proposed and additional themes that evidently emerged. The findings of these themes are discussed in detail in this section.

Users Web Experience

The 'user's web experience' theme was developed to categorise and identify comprehensive participant behaviours as well as perceptions of banner adverts while engaged on the web. Individuals interviewed expressed a vast array of situations they conduct online in which banner adverts are present. Prominently, the concept of noticing banners was a more recognised response than the actual click. However it was evident participants recognised a significant degree of consumer control in regards to their response to banner adverts; the choice to ignore, notice, or click. This consumer control resulted in the phenomenon of 'banner blinders' to become apparent.

P6 - On some websites I feel like I've learned to naturally avoid them.

P6 - I wouldn't say I pay that much attention to them. I notice that their there, but sometimes like I do block them out.

P4 - Yea, [Banner ads] don't bother me when I'm on a website, ill ignore them.

P2 - I knew that there were adverts there [Facebook] but I don't pay attention to them.

It would appear that young adult participants interviewed have adjusted to the mere presence of online banner adverts and established a sense of avoidance to them in which allows adverts to not get in the way of the activity being conducted. Although a natural avoidance was evident, participants were generally neutral in their attitudes towards banner adverts; expressing in most cases both beneficial aspects and an annoyance.

P5 - I feel they can be very helpful, and there online and there normally based on stuff you previously look at online, so they're there for a reason, and yea, I think they are quite helpful on the side, sometimes they do get in the way, like on YouTube they get in the way. But generally I don't have a problem with them.

P4 - Annoying, because if you're trying to find something and something's on the page which you don't need, and it's there, it's prone to distract you from what you're actually looking for.

P6 - Sometimes I won't notice on a website that they have something extra to give, and then I see [The banner] and take advantage of it. Then other times when I'm doing something it can be a little annoying especially the ones that grab your attention, and then taking your attention away from something that you're actually doing.

Mode of behaviour & Banner Advert Response

Almost every respondent recognised a changing mind-set of importance when conducting different online activities. Put more simply, going online for a highly goal-directed task (Serious) was acknowledged to consist of a different mind-set than going online in a low goal-directed manner (Playful). This theme establishes some connectivity between participant's modes of behaviour (Playful-Objective) within the task being conducted to online and banner advert responses.

Interview participants acknowledge that receptiveness to surrounding web page elements such as banner ads is increased when engaged in playful/free browsing behaviours. Respectively, as the importance of the task intensifies to objective manners, the less receptive banner ads became, resulting in decreased opportunities for notice and click responses. It appeared that objective tasks of high intensity, subsequently created a 'flow' mind-set in which banner blindness was established. This was expressed in both high involvement and low involvement situations such as doing university research through an online news site (P8) or the route through a bank website to accessing ones online account (P7). Respondent recognised these as

instances of a highly focus mind-set in which fails to attend do any forms of banner ads.

P1 - It depends, when its, playful yes, when it's not, no, definitely not. Because um, I'm specifically looking at something, that's what I'm looking at, I'm not looking at what's around it. I went on the news, the times, and I specifically read about this super space shuttle and... how much it cost, and everything... But I wasn't looking at anything else on the page. I was just looking at that story and what was within that story.

P5- If I'm in a task manor, I'm more likely to be focused on what I'm looking for, rather than anything else that's going on the page.

P6 - [In playful] I'd say I'm more receptive because I have the time, so I'd say that I'd look at them more because I won't be in rush to do something else.

Motive of online Engagement & Banner Advert Response

The aim of this theme was to acknowledge the activities which drive individuals to use the internet and the effect it would have on banner advert response. Based upon the finding young adult participants are driven to utilise the internet for a vast number of activities. However, from the most popular activities expressed by respondents (social media, university work, emailing, clothes shopping and information searching; travel, receipts news, sports), categorisation to the four primary motives of IAM (researching, social/communicating, surfing; e.g. entertaining and shopping) was distinguishable.

Throughout the study it became apparent that certain motives directly associated to a particular mode of behaviour. Research for example was typically expressed in moments of objective modes, resulting in less recognition of banner ads and social/communication was relatively linked with playful modes, in which adverts were more noticeable. Recognisably, utilising a shopping example, the shop motive consisted of greater click engagement with company adverts situated within that company's website. To elaborate, even when shopping in an objective manor, almost all participants recognised increased instances of shopping on particular websites and noticing or engaging (clicking) at some point with promotional offers or related products banners primarily associated to that brand. Ultimately highlighting an increased acceptance and receptiveness by participants to banner adverts congruently placed within the brands own website contents, in comparison to placement of a similar advert on a third party website.

P6 - I'd say it depends for what it is, because on some websites I feel like I've learned to naturally avoid them. But when I'm on like top shop or river island website, I'd always lookout for the sales banner or free delivery until Friday or whatever.

In addition, multitasking or motive switching was a frequent occurrence recognised by all participants. This considered two or more activities of a motive or a different motive were being conducted at the same time. Noticeably, not only were the occasions of motive switching and distraction from the primary motive unsurprisingly linked with the intensity of the mode, but multitasking together

with highly obsessive websites (Social Media; Facebook, Twitter) resulted in participants adjusting their mode of behaviour (Serious – Playful) in a rapid manor during motive switching.

P1 - Definitely, um, Facebook is a big distraction if I'm doing my [university] work. Um and I get let's say a notification and I go on my Facebook, I'll be on Facebook for at least 10 minutes just because I saw that notification, and I'll look down the time line and look on the um, side, where all the advertisements [are].

This anomaly proved important to understand as multitasking meant participants were engaged with multiple motives which consisted of different modes of behaviour. During these instances of motive switch to a playful/free browsing activity, receptiveness to banner ads were increased, and therefore distinguishing that the primary motive for using the internet isn't a distinctive indication of advert engagement, the motive at present is. Respondents further acknowledged that playful motives entailed shorter session more frequently throughout the day in comparison to an objective motive which typically consisted of longer one off sessions.

Personal Relatedness to Banner advert

Recurring key words of 'interest' and 'relatedness' were overly expressed in regards to a participant's response to an advert. Based on this emerging finding, a new theme was established which attempts to make a connection between personal relatedness of an advert to a young adult, mode and motive, and the response aspect.

As expressed, evident banner blindness and awareness of increased control amongst young adults means they acquire the ability to attend to adverts of their choice. Quite noticeably, depicted instances of increased attention (notice) and actual engagement (clicking) dominantly occurred towards banner adverts that participants had a keen interest or personally related too. In particular, banner adverts situated on third party websites, evidently gained greater recognition when the advert was of great relevance to the task being completed or directly related to a product or service the participant had recently viewed, purchased online or found appealing.

P3 - Ill click on it if it relates to me because I'm interested to see what it actually holds. Like if it's a banner of a video and it's a new movie, I'll look to see a little sneak peak of the actual video. If it's a new piece of clothing ill click on it because maybe I might actually like the new trend that's going on out there, cause I like fashion and trends.

P1- On something like Facebook, on the side it shows advertisements, that um, you specifically click on every day, so say I'm shopping at Foot Asylum or I'm shopping at Miss Guided, on the side of my Facebook it will show those websites and I will be drawn to click them. Which is not a part of what I was supposed to be doing.

Interest and relatedness were recognised to link better with participants recall of banner adverts in regards to; placement, mode of behaviour, exact occurrences, in comparison to adverts that did not appeal to them, as in most circumstances detailed examples were expressed; House Shopping (P1), Jacket Purchase (P3) Need and

Purchase of Trainers (P8). The adverts relevance and personal interest (need or want) to the individual made it the most encouraging factor identified throughout the study to prompt a click response.

Of particular interest was the relation this theme had with motive and mode. The degree of Interest towards an advert was vastly acknowledge as a situation which can distract a participant from the motive being utilised regardless the intensity of the mode behaviour. In addition, participants highly involved with a product or service tended to be more receptive to information related to that product or service and thus, more attentive to adverts of relatedness. To elaborate, a high involvement, interesting or related advert can overpower instances of banner blindness as evidently recognised by most participants. In addition, motive switching is actively increased when the adverts degree of interest is great as individuals have the potential to click on the advert and effectively change to a new motive.

P8 - Well if I've been doing something for a while and something new pops up that I find interest enough I'd click on it cause that's just the type of person I am, and because I'm interested in it, I'd look more deep into it, and then I'd go even deeper and deeper and deeper.

P5 - Interviewer - So if something is interesting enough it can pull you away from what you initially went to do?

P5 - Yes, especially if it's like a broad website, so like the guardian has quite a lot of adverts, some that catch my attention, like receipts, so I can get distracted easily.

Risk & Banner Adverts

Based upon an evident emerging trend revealed during data analysis, this final theme recognises the risk young adult participants perceive with clicking adverts and the linkage to motive and mode. Regardless of their tech savvy nature, numerous young adult respondents recognise an element of risk associated with adverts. In cases when this did occur, it was due to the inability to distinguish between adverts legitimacy when primarily placed on third parties website. This was apparent in both high involvement and interest instances, as well as depicted within well-known websites such as Facebook and towards adverts produced by legitimate brands such as Nike and JD Sports. As a result participants who did recognise risk either avoided clicking on the advert by navigating on their own to the brands website to view the promotion, as company adverts situated on a company's website were more trustworthy. Or executing a sense of banner blindness to it. Noticeably, the mere element of risk resulted in banner blindness to increase toward all motives and modes of even the most extreme playful instances. Below are examples of this Risk theme:

P2 - Even if I had seen those Nike shoes I wouldn't have gone onto that website. I would have seen where they are from and typed it in. I wouldn't have clicked on the ad. I'm scared I'm going to get a virus. So no.

P4 - I ignore them, because I know they're there. And because I got viruses on my computer, I get so annoyed with the viruses like I would tend to

block everything else out as well. Other than what I'm actually looking for.

P4 - Yea cause some people still try and send a virus to you even by using good brand names. So I don't do that unless, if it was something that in that area, id search it myself, I won't click on it, if I've just seen it.

P7 - Because there (Facebook Banner Adverts) external links, and it's not that don't trust them, but in a way it's not like on a direct website, I don't know where it's taking me or what it will do to my computer.

Discussion

Within the context of this study, an exploratory understanding of the young adult cohort is in fact achieved. Danaher and Mullarkey's (2003) reported that task-oriented consumers or goal-directed navigation exhibit more advert avoidance in comparison to a playful mode of navigation in which banner adverts can compete for attention. In addition, Rodgers and Sheldon (1999) further proposed that internet motives predicted how consumers responded to online ads; Surfers, for instance, were more positive toward online ads than researchers. The current study supported these notions in regards to the investigated cohort. Young adult participants were less receptive to banner ads as the importance of the task intensified to objective manners. Furthermore, research motives were typically expressed in moments of goal-directed navigation, resulting in less recognition of banner adverts, and social/communication motives were relatively accompanied with playful modes, in which adverts were more noticeable. It was apparent however that participants sustain great control over their attention to adverts enabling the active and selective control to determine what, when and how they want to see marketing messages. This understanding showcased that in evident instances they adjust to the mere presence of online banner adverts and established a sense of advert avoidance or banner blindness.

In accord with the IAM conceptual framework (Rodgers and Thorson, 2000), the functional behaviours of internet motive and viewing mode were driving factors determining advert responses. Their conjoint manner was emphasized in instances of multitasking, which was of regular occurrence amongst young adult respondents. To highlight the linkage, the anomaly of multitasking meant that the primary motive for using the internet isn't a distinctive indication of the degree of advert receptiveness, the motive at present is. In addition, multitasking together with highly obsessive websites (Social Media; Facebook, Twitter) resulted in participants adjusting their mode of behaviour (Serious – Playful) in a rapid manner during motive switching. To elaborate, highly obsessive websites that result in frequent motive switching and encompass playful modes of behaviour, should in effect support banner advert recognition and engagement. Put in perspective, 'playful' activities, for example social networks, now account for 12% of Britons internet time (IAB, 2013) and the second largest age group using Facebook in the UK is the young adult cohort (ICT, 2013). As such, the potential of a 'notice' response to adverts on Facebook have the possibility to be significantly high among UK young adults because of the overly active use and websites playful nature.

Of particular interest, work by Cho (2003) recognised that consumers with a high level of product involvement are more likely to request additional information by clicking banners than are consumers with a low level of product involvement. In regards to the young adult respondents of the study, this proved accurate as high involvement towards the contents of the banner adverts harnessed the potential to overpower instances of banner blindness. This in particular, directly associated with the emerged understanding that increased attention (notice) and actual engagement (clicking) dominantly occurred towards banner adverts that participants had a keen interest or personally related too. As previously mentioned, "banner adverts situated on third party websites, evidently gained greater recognition when the advert was of great relevance to the task being completed or directly related to a product or service the participant had recently viewed, purchased online or found appealing".

Recognisably, the IAM model lacks to provide a conceptual understanding of the personal relatedness theme. Acknowledging motivational theories, in particular, intrinsic motivations, as a common ground, theoretically provides more insight into the emerged theme. Achakul and Yolles (2013) characterised motivation as a thinking pattern that stimulates an individual's behaviour and an importance to cognitive processing. To further elaborate, Malone and Lepper (1987) defined intrinsically motivating activities as those in which people will engage with for no reward other than the interest and enjoyment that accompanies it. With this understanding, to recognise personal interest and relatedness as elements of personal motivational functions, appears practical. As a result, its consumer-controlled dynamic and recognised importance affecting, mode, motive and advert response, encourages the possibility of introducing 'Motivation' to the IAM model as an IP cognitive tool or of conjoint nature to the functional elements.

Previous research by Bauer (2005) expressed that consumer behaviour is strongly influenced by perception of risk, determining his or her behaviour such as in this context; avoiding risk and not engaging with the advert. The current study further supported this notion within the context of young adults as various respondents recognised an element of risk associated with banner adverts. This resulting in an avoidance to click on it regardless of the internet motive or mode behaviour. As the IAM framework fails to theoretically underpin this emerging trend, utilising the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991), in particular, the framework elements of behavioural beliefs and attitude toward the behaviour, can provide a direct insight. The TPB specifies the nature of relationships between beliefs and attitudes. As Ajzen (1991) proposes, behavioural beliefs are people's evaluations of, or attitudes toward behaviour in which are determined by their belief about consequences of a particular behaviour. Utilising this theory to fundamentally develop the concept of risk can help address the key concern made evident of clicking on banner adverts placed on third parties websites. Yet, amongst young adults that acknowledged the element of risk, what did prove encouraging was the increased acceptance and receptiveness to company banner adverts congruently placed within a company's own website contents. Proving in agreement with research expressed by Danaher and Mullarkey (2003) in which the web page visited will have core effect on an individual's engagement with the banner advert.

Conclusion

The study presented provides an exploratory insight to the functional behaviours affecting young adults (18-25) responses to online banner adverts. With the use of the Interactive Advertising Model (Rodgers and Thorson, 2000) it was recognised that the first step to establish a more effective understanding of what contributes to advert engagement should begin by understanding why individuals visit cyberspace in the first place and the underlying behaviours associated. As such, a qualitative approach in the form of semi-structured interviews was administered to young adult university students in which provided the ability to yield empirical findings in regards to functional internet motives and behavioural modes affecting their responses to online adverts.

In summary, the findings recognised that the advert response of 'notice' was portrayed considerably more commonly than the actual engagement (click) response amongst respondents. In addition, young adult participants were less receptive to banner ads as the importance of the activity intensifies to a task-oriented or goal-directed navigation manner. It was further acknowledge that active motive switching or multitasking meant that the primary motive for using the internet isn't a distinctive indication of the degree of advert engagement, the motive presently utilised is. Furthermore, the high degree of multi-tasking portrayed by participants, expressed that banner adverts on obsessively used sites associated with playful behaviours, have an increased potential to be recognised. Further recognised was the increased acceptance and receptiveness to banner adverts congruently placed within a brands own website contents, even amongst young adults that acknowledged the element of risk as a major factor which affects their engagement with adverts. Finally, and most significantly, the adverts relatedness and personal interest to the individual made it the most encouraging factor identified throughout the study to prompt a click response. As a result, it became apparent that high involvement, interest or relatedness towards the contents of the banner adverts harnessed the potential to overpower instances of banner blindness. The preceding findings in effect address the research aim of 'How do pre-click (advert click) functional behaviours affect young adult's recognition and engage with online banner adverts?'

Based on these exploratory findings, recommendations for the business community can be proposed. Noticeably, greater advertising effectiveness can be gained by choosing websites where more playful modes of behaviours are likely to arise. Therefore continued and more effective utilisation of internet activities in which encourage this form of behaviour and are actively used by young adults, such as social media; Facebook, Twitter, YouTube. This further includes effective monitoring for new emerging sites which have increasingly growing young adult followers and the potential to encourage advert engagement.

In addition, with the understanding that interest, relatedness and congruity are dominating factors of engagement with adverts amongst young adults. Advertisers could potentially focus less on irrelevant or random placement of adverts on websites which the context of the advert does not related or the website has a low target user usage. In response focus more on selective placement and illustrating the value of products of interest to the particular individual. This incorporates more effective cookie placement on things individuals' engage with, and

ideally advertising that product or related products on well-established third party sites (to increase legitimacy) which that individual particularly uses frequently or directly relates to the context of the advert. This in effect would create an optimal setting for advert engagement.

Finally, with higher notice potential recognised amongst young adult participants, the use of click-through rates is likely to undervalue the banner adverts effectiveness as it focuses only on the actual click response and not the responses which take place before. As a result to produce a more accurate understanding of the banner advert's effectiveness, advertisers could utilise impression rates. Aksakalli (2011,pp.230) defines an impression as the publishers-initiated action of loading an advert into the web browser for the users view when the user visits the publisher's website. This measuring system will better recognise the response of advert notice, and utilised in conjunction with CTR enables a complete depiction of the adverts effectiveness. These preceding recommendations for the business community in effect, address the research aim of 'what functional behavioural elements of young adults can be targeted by advertisers to enhance their recognition and engagement with online banner adverts?'

To build upon this qualitative study, further researcher in the form of a quantitative approach can be conducted to robust and support the presented exploratory findings. This would be beneficial as a key limitation to this study is making generalised assumptions based on only a small segment of the young adult cohort. In addition, with this understanding, utilising a small segment of the cohort fails to adequately address cross-cultural difference which may occur amongst different groups of young adults around the world. Although the motive aspects of the IAM have been tested on a cross-cultural perspective (Rodgers et al.,2005), further research can be conducted to address the complete IAM within the context of young adults. Finally as previously highlighted, future research can be conducted to formally address the possibly of introducing 'motivation' as viable addition to the IAM as a conjoint to the functional elements or an IP cognitive tool.

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