

INTERNET ADVERTISING

Before you read

Do you look at advertising on the Internet or do you ignore it? Why?

Reading

Read this article from the *Financial Times* and answer the questions.

FT

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY ● ● ○

Advertisers try the soft sell as TV drifts online

by Joshua Chaffin

Visitors to Hulu, the online video site jointly owned by NBC Universal and News Corp, can do something that television viewers would never have imagined just a few years ago: choose their own advertising. When, for example, an advertisement sponsored by a carmaker pops up, viewers might be asked to click on a sports car, a pick-up truck or a family sedan, depending on their preference, and watch a corresponding message. (Skipping past, unfortunately, is not an option.) 'It's choose-your-own-adventure advertising,' says Jean-Paul Colaco, Hulu's Senior Vice-President of Advertising, who is hoping to reduce the friction between audiences and marketers by making advertisements less intrusive for the former and more efficient for the latter.

The Ad Selector, as Hulu calls it, is just one example of a burst of innovation in online advertising. As audiences increasingly move

to the web to consume video – be it full-length television episodes or short clips – media companies and advertising agencies are rushing to develop new and more effective advertising strategies in the hope of creating a profitable business.

They are eager to harness the interactive possibilities that differentiate the Internet from the more passive experience of traditional television. In a marketer's dream scenario, consumers who see a message for a product that interests them might pause a video, click through to a website and even make a purchase. But that same interactive power can also be a curse for marketers because it makes it easy for viewers to jump to other websites if they feel bombarded by irritating and irrelevant advertisements.

'Internet video is a lean-forward experience. The audience

is watching with their hand on the mouse, ready to click away as soon as they lose interest,' says Matt Cutler, Vice-President of Visible Measures, a company that tracks online behaviour. He estimates that more than 30 per cent of consumers abandon an online video within the first 10 per cent of its stream.

Solving those problems is vital for media companies. While they were once content merely to collect clicks on their web pages, they are now desperate to retain viewers for longer periods. 'Advertisers are less interested in general impressions. They want engagement,' explains Patrick Keane, Chief Marketing Officer at CBS Interactive, promising more innovative advertising formats in the future.

1 Use the correct form of verbs from paragraphs 1 to 3 to complete these statements.

If ...

- an advertisement appears suddenly on your screen, it
- you 'jump' past an advertisement without watching it, you it.
- an advertiser pays for an advertisement on a website, on TV, etc., they it.
- someone makes conflict, disagreement, etc. less strong, they it.
- you watch video, you it.
- you start something from nothing, you it.
- you exploit the power of something, you it.
- make something different from something else, you the two things.
- you feel that you're watching too many advertisements, you feel by them.

2 Look at paragraphs 1 to 3 and find:

- a noun that describes the relationship between advertisers and Internet users.
- two adjectives that describe advertisements from the point of view of many users.
- one adjective that describes how users relate to advertisements in a way that can be good or bad for advertisers.
- a noun that relates to the bad effect of the adjective in c above.

3 How is the Internet experience described in relation to traditional television?

4 How quickly do nearly a third of users stop watching an Internet video on average? What do they do when this happens?

5 What, in a word, do advertisers want from users that they didn't have before? How will this be achieved?

6 Which of these statements sums up the article best?

Internet advertisers ...

- are only interested in the number of people who click on advertisements.
- don't know how to avoid users 'clicking away' from advertisements.
- are looking at ways of engaging users so that they do not click away from advertisements.

Over to you 1

Will Internet advertisers ever find a way of retaining the attention of users? Why? / Why not?

Over to you 2

Can you imagine clicking on an advertisement and making a purchase in one process? If so, what product or service might you buy in this way?

SHOCK ADVERTISEMENTS

Before you read

Where are pharmaceuticals (medicines) sold in your country, apart from in pharmacies or chemists? Is their sale strictly controlled?

Reading

Read this article from the *Financial Times* and answer the questions.

FT

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY ● ● ○

Pfizer uses big screen to fight counterfeit drugs

by Andrew Jack

Pfizer, the world's largest pharmaceuticals company, has launched a hard-hitting cinema advertising campaign to warn consumers of the medical dangers of counterfeits when illegally purchasing prescription medicines on the Internet. The advert, to be shown in 600 cinemas around the UK, is best seen before filmgoers dig into their popcorn. It shows a middle-aged man spitting up a rat after swallowing a tablet delivered by post.

The campaign reflects growing safety concerns – and commercial losses for the drug industry – caused by a rise in unregulated Internet sales of medicines.

It also marks an extension of advertising by drug companies to raise their public profile, in spite of tight restrictions on the marketing of prescription medicines to consumers.

The film contains no reference to Pfizer's medicines, but shows the corporate logo alongside that of the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency, the UK organisation that co-ordinates an increasing number of investigations of counterfeiters. It agreed to a pioneering partnership with the company.

Pfizer has raised its public image in its fight against counterfeits, warning of health risks and calling for action against parallel traders.

These are the intermediaries that buy medicines abroad for resale at higher prices in the UK. Pfizer argues that parallel trading risks allowing fakes into pharmacies.

But the overall level of counterfeit medicines in the developed world is estimated at

only about 1 per cent, with most sold via the Internet rather than through normal supply chains. A recent Pfizer poll suggested 10 per cent of men purchased prescription-only medicines via unregulated sources, including the Internet. Pfizer is one of the hardest hit by Internet sales of medicines, since it produces a fifth of the top-selling prescription medicines in the UK by sales. The campaign, which includes a website, cost nearly £500,000 (\$731,000).

The cinematic rat was inspired by the discovery of rat poison in a counterfeit version of a Pfizer blood pressure drug. Pfizer said the rats it used in the advert were supplied by trained specialists and not killed during filming.

1 Look at the headline. Which of these words means the same as *counterfeit*?

- a) authentic b) fake c) substitute d) similar

2 Read paragraph 1. What is the purpose of Pfizer's campaign?

- a) To promote its products
b) To advertise popcorn
c) To dissuade people from buying drugs that may harm them

3 *The advert ... is best seen before filmgoers dig into their popcorn.* (lines 8–11) Why?**4 Match the two parts to make expressions from paragraphs 2 to 4.**

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1 safety | a) sales |
| 2 commercial | b) restrictions |
| 3 unregulated | c) profile |
| 4 public | d) partnership |
| 5 tight | e) losses |
| 6 corporate | f) concerns |
| 7 pioneering | g) traders |
| 8 parallel | h) logo |

5 Now match the expressions in Exercise 4 to their meanings.

- i) when unauthorised products are sold
ii) when two organisations do something for the first time
iii) worries about the dangers of something
iv) a symbol used by a company
v) when no profit is made in selling something
vi) strict rules
vii) unauthorised sellers
viii) the ideas that people have about an organisation

6 Why does Pfizer object to unauthorised distributors selling its products in the UK?

- a) lost profit b) safety c) other reasons

7 What do these figures refer to?

- a) 1 per cent (line 51)
b) 10 per cent (line 55)
c) a fifth (line 61)
d) 500,000 (line 65)
e) 731,000 (line 65)

8 Why were rats used in making the advertisement?**Over to you 1**

Do you think that shock advertisements such as this work? Give your reasons.

Over to you 2

Think of other examples of parallel trading. What steps, if any, do manufacturers and retailers take to prevent them?