Juan Jose Blazquez-Resino¹, Julian Chamizo-Gonzalez² ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY OF ADVERTISING: SOME EVIDENCES FROM INTERNET PUBLICITY

Internet has been developed from a double perspective, as a distribution channel and as a communication channel. From this second perspective, the Web allows consumers unlimited access to information and greater control of their contact with advertising, because they can choose what commercial content they wish to see, when they are receptive to it and whether they want to receive it completely. In this sense, the measurement of attitude to Internet publicity and its assessment by Internet users has become an essential element for the development of more profitable and efficient business communication strategies. This paper analyses the attitude of consumers to Internet advertising, as well as the effect of Internet users' previous awareness of different ads formats on their attitude to web advertising.

Keywords: online advertising, consumers' attitude, effectiveness, awareness.

Хуан Хосе Бласкес-Ресіно, Хуліан Чамісо-Гонсалес ЕКОНОМІЧНА ЕФЕКТИВНІСТЬ РЕКЛАМИ НА ПРИКЛАДІ ІНТЕРНЕТ-РЕКЛАМИ

У статті Інтернет розглянуто з двох точок зору — як канал дистрибуції і як канал комунікації. Інтернет надає споживачам необмежений доступ до інформації та більший контроль їх контакту з рекламою, вони можуть вибрати комерційний контент, терміни появи і обсяги реклами. У цьому сенсі вимірювання відношення до інтернет-реклами та її оцінювання користувачами стало важливим елементом розвитку прибуткових і ефективних стратегій ділового спілкування. Проаналізовано ставлення споживачів до інтернет-реклами, а також вплив обізнаності інтернет-користувачів про різні формати реклами на ставлення до онлайн-реклами.

Ключові слова: інтернет-реклама, ставлення споживачів, ефективність, обізнаність. *Таб 6. Літ. 43.*

Хуан Хосе Бласкес-Ресино, Хулиан Чамисо-Гонсалес ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКАЯ ЭФФЕКТИВНОСТЬ РЕКЛАМЫ НА ПРИМЕРЕ ИНТЕРНЕТ-РЕКЛАМЫ

В статье Интернет рассмотрен с двух точек зрения — как канал дистрибуции и как канал коммуникации. Интернет предоставляет потребителям неограниченный доступ к информации и больший контроль их контакта с рекламой, они могут выбрать коммерческий контент, сроки появления и объемы рекламы. В этом смысле измерение отношения к интернет-рекламе и ее оценка пользователями стало важным элементом развития прибыльных и эффективных стратегий делового общения. Анализируется отношение потребителей к интернет-рекламе, а также влияние осведомленности интернет-пользователей о различных форматах рекламы на их отношение к онлайнрекламе.

Ключевые слова: интернет-реклама, отношение потребителей, эффективность, осведомленность.

Introduction. Internet can be considered a developing advertising medium whose characteristics make it different from general advertising (Wolin, Korgaonkar and

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Lund, 2002), because it permits an active role in information search. Electronic advertising (Hawkins, 1994) does not simply advertise and distribute messages; it facilitates the relationship with customers, offering certain services to consumers and sending marketing messages to specific customers.

The main characteristic of web advertising is interactivity (Coyle and Thorson, 2001). Interactivity is the key since enables two-way communication, transforming the way of how advertising is designed and implemented, changing the way in which it affects the opinions and attitudes of consumers (Chandon, Chtourou and Fortin, 2003). Bezjian-Avery, Calder and Iacobucci (1998: 23) define interactive marketing as "immediately iterative process by which customer needs and desires are uncovered, met, modified, and satisfied by the providing firm". Therefore, the ability to control information is thus essential. Interactivity allows the audience to choose and respond to an advert at will (Yoon, 2001). In interactive advertising, consumers display an active attitude because they can deliberately collect information that is not necessarily of an advertising nature, reply to the advertiser, spread a message, and interact with other users (Hoffman and Novak, 1996).

The growing popularity of Internet has led several researchers to conduct studies examining advertising effectiveness (Lees and Healey, 2005). Some researchers have suggested that customer's attitude to advertising is a good indicator of effectiveness (MacKenzie, Lutz and Belch, 1986). However, studies dealing with online advertising have analyzed attitude to website as a whole (e.g., Coyle and Thorson, 2001; Hsieh and Chen, 2011; Stevenson, Bruner and Kumar, 2000) or analizing a particular advertising format.

Hence, this paper aims to analyze attitudes toward different advertising formats, trying to identify the forms of advertising that are the most effective. Furthermore, using the relationship between the familiarity of Internet users with different formats and their advertising assessment, examines whether greater knowledge of formats can improve the attitude of consumers to advertising.

The efficiency of web advertising. Fast development of online advertising campaigns has reduced their efficiency (Bhatnagar and Papatla, 2001). Moreover, the difficulties of measuring the impressions of online advertising have caused much dissatisfaction, curbing the willingness to spend resources on advertising. The question of how to design and assess Web advertising is thus crucial (Ducoffe, 1996; Hoffman and Novak, 1997; Dreze and Zufryden, 1998).

Advertising format has been defined as "the manner in which an ad appears" (Rodgers and Thorson, 2000: 34). The most common advertising format in Internet is the banner. Some works suggest that banner ad is highly efficient (Briggs and Hollis, 1997), arguing that contact with banners has a significant effect on purchase intention (Manchanda et al., 2006) and that some size and design elements have positive effects on the clickthrough rate (Baltas, 2003; Chandon, Chtourou and Fortin, 2003). Clickthrough rate is generally accepted as the best measure of the efficiency of web advertising. Clickthrough can be described as the percentage obtained from the quotient between the number of times users click on a banner or web ad and the total number of times they have been exposed to the ad during a determined time span.

In this sense, Baltas (2003) noticed a positive relationship between banner size, animation, and clickthrough rate. Obtaining similar results, Chandon, Chtourou,

and Fortin (2003) stated that clickthrough rate confirms that banner size and animation have a positive impact on consumer response. Lohtia, Donthu, and Hershberger (2003) analyzed 8,725 real banner advertisements and find that animation, color, and the presence of emotional elements have a significant effect on clickthrough rate. Dahlen and Bergendahl (2001) distinguished banner advertising according to the type of product and separate between functional and expressive products.

However, the clickthrough rate has been already questioned as an effective measuring method for different reasons, mainly because pre-attention processes do not imply an immediate action (Dreze and Hussherr, 2003). For instance, Chatterjee (2005) noticed that the level of exposure to the running of adverts had no influence on the clickthrough rate, which mainly varies according to user orientation toward a tentative or focused netsurfing. In addition, some authors state that banner ad is inefficient (Hoffman and Novak, 2000) because it requires a large number of appearances to be noticed and clicked on. Several studies in the academic and commercial sectors reported that most banner ads remain unnoticed by consumers (Dreze and Hussherr, 2003), using the term "banner blindness" (Hsieh and Chen, 2011) to refer to the nonperception of such ads.

It should be noted that web designers continuously try to make their advertising more attractive by utilizing new technology developments such as plug-ins, Javascript and Flash. These developments have improved the designs and interactivity of web advertising as well as created new advertising formats. However, creative formats that use animation, audio, video, richmedia, pop-ups or slow moving banners may be perceived as intrusive; excessive repetition may also have a negative influence in comparison with traditional media (Chatterjee, 2005). Thus, several studies have shown that increasing advertising complexity over an optimal point may negatively affect attitude and response to advertising (Stevenson, Bruner and Kumar, 2000).

Yoo, Kim and Stout (2004) supported the notion that animated ads display better advertising communication than static ones. They also show that attitude were lower in high animation conditions, indicating that there is an inverted U relationship in the relationship between degree of animation and attitude and recognition formation. In a later paper, Yoo and Kim (2005) expanded the conclusions reached in the previous works and discover a linear, positive relationship among all animation levels and attention. This observation implies that fast-moving banners are more likely to attract attention than slow-moving ones. Other research confirms the inverted Urelationship between animation level and attitude to advertising. Geissler, Zinkhan and Watson (2006) supported the argument that web page complexity influences attention, attitude, and buying intent, and therefore, establishes an inverted U relationship between web complexity and communication effectiveness.

Besides the differences in the use of creative design elements, online advertising formats also differ in the level of interactivity, the time of exposure or the level of forced exposition. Thus, some research has focused on determining the differences between exposure levels. Cho, Lee and Tharp (2001) focused their research on the effect of forced exposition to advertising on consumer response by measuring it through awareness of advertising, attitude to advertising, attitude to a trademark, and purchase intention. The results indicate that an unwilling exposure during the presentation has a significant positive relationship with perception and the readiness to

click on the ad. Moreover, these authors observe that the format of a wholly unwilling exposure leads to desirable effect and to a favorable attitude toward advertising, trademark, and purchase probability.

On the other hand, some research has centered on different online formats, like pop-up ads (Edwards, Li and Lee, 2002) or e-mail advertising (Dufrene et al., 2005). Nevertheless, academic studies dealing with the global analysis of different formats of advertising are limited. Dealing with the differences between advertising formats in their analysis of attitude to advertising, Burns and Lutz (2006) created a construct called "attitude to the format", and develop their argument around 6 different online advertising formats. Although only 3 formats — banner, pop-up and interstitial — were considered as informative, their conclusions indicate that the factors like entertainment and annoyance intimately relate to the attitude to the format in all cases. The authors also observe a significant, positive relationship between the attitude to advertising in general and to a format in particular.

Thus, the main objective of this paper is to analyze online advertising effectiveness in relation to net surfer attitude and to take into consideration different advertising formats in the Internet. In adittion, in the process of web advertising communication, if consumers do not perceive such communication as advertising, they will pay more attention to a message and will absorb more information (Gallagher, Parsons and Foster, 2001). It is thus important to analyse the relationship between how aware consumers are of diverse web advertising formats and how they assess this type of publicity globally. Some works (Bruner and Kumar, 2000; Dahlen, 2001; Ward and Lee, 2000) established a relationship between the effect of advertising and Internet experience. Furthermore, Burns and Lutz (2006) consider that attitudes to web advertising may differ depending on the users' perception of what it is. Therefore, it is proposed to determine the relationship between knowledge of Internet advertising formats and the perception of them by consumers.

Empirical research. The sample was recruited from the customers of a business providing public Internet connection services. The establishment was chosen taking into account the average number of customers who used the services per week. 108 people were selected for this study. The procedure used for this research has been a laboratory experiment. As the customer entered the shop, he or she was asked to participate in this research. Those customers who accepted were given a brief questionnaire whose main objective was to elicit information about their knowledge of the Internet medium, habits when netsurfing, and attitude to advertising in general. Once this questionnaire was completed, each group was exposed to one of the different forms of advertising. The selection of advertising types was done at random. When the exposition time was over, the participants filled the second part of the questionnaire that consisted of questions about their attitude and assessment of the adverts they had been exposed to. Because of the fact that Internet users' response to advertising is different in relation to their familiarity with the product or brand name (Dahlen, 2001; Ward and Lee, 2000), the advertising used consisted of different adverts belonging to well-known trademarks.

The questionnaire had 3 main parts: Internet use habits, perception and awareness of the diverse web advertising formats (general assessment of advertising, perception of different formats, awareness of different formats and global assessment of this type of advertising), and finally, demographic characteristics. The scales used to measure the different variables were the following:

- Firstly, an opinion measure scale, using a five-point Likert scale.

- To measure the Internet users' perception of diverse publicity typologies, the measure scales were:

- An adaptation of the scales developed by Beltramini and Evans (1985) and the scale proposed by Wells (1964), all of them adapted to web advertising.

- Measurement of the assessment of each type using 3 likings, user global sensations, assessment of products/services presented and general assessment of each advertising type.

Results of the empirical analysis. The literature has been stating the belief in a positive correlation between attitude to advertising and its perception (Cho, 1999; Ducoffe, 1996; Schlosser, Shavitt and Kanfer, 1999; Shavitt, Lowrey and Haefner, 1998). According to the general media theory, consumer choice to pay attention to any kind of web advertising depends on their beliefs in and attitudes to advertising (Singh and Dala, 1999).

The analysis began with the general opinion on web advertising (Table 1). 31.5% of the sample considered web advertising "good". However, the percentage of individuals who think web advertising is "very bad" is larger than the number of those who consider it "very good".

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Very bad	11.1
Bad	21.3
intermediate	28.7
Good	31.5
Very good	7.4
TOTAL	100

Table 1. General advertising assessment, %

According to the results shown in Table 2, web advertising is informative, useful, and entertaining; it facilitates the search of information, and it improves corporative image. These results are in line with the conclusions presented by some studies like Schlosser, Shavitt, and Kanfer (1999) that state a positive relationship between certain characteristic elements of advertising and its assessment.

Agree	Disagree
44.5	19.4
42.6	24.1
29.6	36.1
58.4	12.0
33.7	21.4
45.9	20.4
52.1	22.4
22.4	34.7
44.9	18.4
25.5	25.5
28.6	14.3
30.6	24.5
	44.5 42.6 29.6 58.4 33.7 45.9 52.1 22.4 44.9 25.5 28.6

Table 2. Opinions about Internet advertising, %

Table 3 presents the consumers' reactions to advertising. If the attitude to advertising is considered, most Internet users tend to pay attention to advertising if it provides information they are interested in, and the potential interactive features of advertising do not seem to have an influence on the attention paid by the user. Lohtia, Donthu and Hershberger (2003) found similar results; this research affirms that interactivity reduces the probability that a banner is clicked on.

Paying attention often	3.1
Closing without looking	17.3
Paying attention when information is interesting	66.3
Paying attention if page is interactive	1.0
Clicking on it only rarely	10.2
Not interested	2.0

Table 3. Reaction to advertising, %

On the other hand, analyzing the assessment given by users to each of different advertising formats, Table 4 shows greater interests to the messages achieved through websites (44.9%) and email (36.7%). On the rest of formats consumers do not demonstrate significant interest.

	Interest	No interest		
Banners	4.1	59.2		
Button	5.1	57.1		
Popup	13.3	56.1		
E-mail	36.7	33.7		
Interstitials	13.3	53.0		
Links	30.6	36.7		
Web	44.9	26.5		
Sponsorship	19.4	41.8		
Cyberspot	28.6	41.8		

Table 4. Interest in advertising formats, %

	YES	NO
Banners	36.7	63.3
Button	26.5	73.5
Pop up	37.8	62.2
E-mail	93.9	6.1
Interstitials	8.2	91.8
Links	48.0	52.0
Web	58.2	41.8
Sponsorship	58.2	41.8
Cyberspot	40.8	59.2

Table 5. Awareness of advertising formats, % YES

Finally, the relationship between user awareness of advertising formats and the assessment of advertising has been tested with an analysis of contingent tables (see Table 6). The statistics used have been: Chi-square, Phi, Cramer's V-coefficient and the contingent coefficient. The statistics used for this analysis prove there is no relationship between the two variables. Consequently, it is impossible to affirm that there is a relationship between the awareness of Internet advertising types and its assessment.

Statistics	X ² (a)	Phi	V Cramer	C. Conting.	R	
Value	5,483	0,237	0,237	0,230	5,944	
Sig.	0,241	0,241	0,241	0,241	0,203	
Value	5,194	0,230	0,230	0,224	5,020	
Sig.	0,268	0,268	0,268	0,268	0,285	
Value	1,443	0,121	0,121	0,120	1,761	
Sig.	0,837	0,837	0,837	0,837	0,780	
Value	4,189	0,207	0,207	0,202	6,056	
Sig.	0,381	0,381	0,381	0,381	0,195	
Value	2,162	0,149	0,149	0,147	3,090	
Sig.	0,539	0,539	0,539	0,539	0,378	
Value	14,667	0,387	0,387	0,361	17,810	
Sig.	0,005*	0,005*	0,005*	0,005*	0,001*	
Value	11,281	0,339	0,339	0,321	12,501	
Sig.	0,024**	0,024**	0,024**	0,024**	0,014**	
Value	8,739	0,299	0,299	0,286	9,503	
Sig.	0,068**	0,068**	0,068**	0,068**	0,050**	
Value	4,004	0,202	0,202	0,198	4,027	
Sig.	0.405	0.405	0.405	0.405	0,402	
	Sig. Value Sig. Value Sig. Value Sig. Value Sig. Value Sig. Value Sig. Value Sig. Value Sig. Value	Value 5,483 Sig. 0,241 Value 5,194 Sig. 0,268 Value 1,443 Sig. 0,837 Value 4,189 Sig. 0,381 Value 2,162 Sig. 0,539 Value 14,667 Sig. 0,005* Value 11,281 Sig. 0,024** Value 8,739 Sig. 0,068** Value 4,004	Value 5,483 0,237 Sig. 0,241 0,241 Value 5,194 0,230 Sig. 0,268 0,268 Value 1,443 0,121 Sig. 0,837 0,837 Value 4,189 0,207 Sig. 0,381 0,381 Value 2,162 0,149 Sig. 0,539 0,539 Value 14,281 0,337 Sig. 0,005* 0,005* Value 11,281 0,339 Sig. 0,024** 0,229 Sig. 0,068** 0,068**	$\begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	$\begin{array}{rrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr$	

Table 6. Awareness of formats and assessment of advertising

*** p < .01; ** p < .10.

Final discussion. This study has focused on the assessment and efficiency of advertising and the effect of the Internet users' awareness of different online advertising formats. Firstly, the results show no relationship between the awareness of advertising formats and the attitudes to them as displayed by the users. This may be due to the fact that Internet users may understand as advertising any information different to the one they are looking for. This result can be attributed to the effect of experience. Other research has proved that new and experienced customers display dissimilar behaviour and responses to marketing actions (Bruner and Kumar, 2000; Dahlen, 2001).

Secondly, due to the fact that there are no differences between publicity formats and its effect, it is possible to conclude that the differences in adverstising creation has no affect whatsoever on its global assessment. Zhang (2000) considers that the animation of an advertisement in order to improve information search is counterproductive, because animation will distract the users' attention from a central task. Nonetheless, some variables are relevant in order to distinguish among different advertising types. Brunner and Kumar (2000) establish that complexity has a negative impact on websites, while interest has a positive one. In theory, the relationship between website complexity and communication efficiency can be represented by an inverse and curvilinear function, that is, in order to achieve optimal efficiency, a website must display a reasonable degree of complexity but not be too complex, for this would mean that users will be distracted (Geissler, Zinkhan and Watson, 2006). Then, businesses whose advertising strategies include the Internet should avoid the temptation to implement complex designs because they are likely to provoke negative attitudes (Bruner and Kumar, 2000).

There are admittedly some limitations to this research work. On the one hand, sample homogeneity in characteristics such as age, education, and Internet experience, has made it impossible to analyze advertising assessment in relation to age, education, and Internet experience differences. The latter are especially relevant because

they significantly affect the response to advertising. Another limiting factor is the use of material advertising the same products or services. It impeded a detailed analysis of the variation among different types of products. An analysis of differences among product type has already been carried in other research works (Dahlen, 2002; Dahlen and Bergendahl, 2001). However, the main limitation of this work resides in the presentation of advertising itself, because it was done separately from normal netsurfing activity. This makes it impossible to determine different attitudes to advertising in relation to a website general contents.

Finally, this work has also raised some questions to be dealt with in future research. The most significant is the analysis of the attitude to advertising type in relation to different advertising formats. The study of the influence of demographic characteristics and, more importantly, of Internet experience on the attitude to online advertising is also a logical consequence of this work. In addition, the incorporation of constructs such as purchase intention and netsurfing orientation to future research will contribute to the completion of more thorough studies.

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