Design Features That Influence Consumers’ Attention for Advertising In Social Media

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ABSTRACT

Background: Advertising in media social has become a major role in marketing nowadays. Social media has been identified as the most popular communication channels for all ages. Due to that, social media has also been seen as an effective medium in delivering messages or information regarding product to consumers. With regard to that, user's attention to ads becomes part of the main influence on the effectiveness of an ad. In our previous work, we have been looking into the preceding studies in order to identify the factors that may influence attention. The earlier discoveries have found a few factors that contributed to the human attention to an advertisement. Those factors are advertisements' orientation, congruency factors and the design features of an advertisement. Results: Thus, the aim of this paper is to clarify the elements regarding on the design features of an advertisement that contribute to consumers’ attention to a displayed advertisement. Document analysis has been used as the methodology in order to attain the goal of this study. The finding reveals that the elements that contribute to consumers’ attention within design features can be categorized into three main categories, which are, (i) design elements, (ii) design principle and (iii) ad content. Conclusion: All of the elements stated can be used as a guide for designers in designing a better and effective yet attractive for advertisement displayed in social media.

INTRODUCTION

Advertising is an imperative platform in keeping consumers up-to-date with the product and services. As reported by Wei & Jerome, (2010), advertising is said to be any form of communication of ideas and facts about product in a certain media or platform with a goal in building a brand appearance. In line with that, Zigmond & Stipp, (2010), believe that, advertising have its own goal or target. Advertising is said to give an insight about customers’ preferred product, presenting the latest product by manufacturers, building a better perception on the marketed product, persuading consumers in buying the marketed product and making brand more enticing. This is perhaps to be the reason why advertising is critical and an important task in marketing activities. Based on that, advertising contribution in marketing activities should be given a fair attention by marketers. This is to ensure that the goal of advertising as stated is achieved significantly.

Previously, media such as newspaper, magazines, radio, and television have become the number one media for advertising. These media have serve as the main platform in delivering facts and information about product to consumers. However, with the existence of information technology opened a new scenario in advertising. As mentioned by Jerome, Shan, & Khong, (2010), online advertising has becoming a new medium for advertisers in creating a brand alertness among consumers. Nowadays, focus has been given to online advertising by advertisers in distributing words about product to consumers. In addition to that, Tavor (2011), has outlined a few advantages of online advertising; online advertising is more attractive; less disturbing compared to other advertising; and online advertising is more tolerable.

In relation to this, the advancement of social media today is in line with the advances in information technology. Hence, this development give a positive impact in todays advertising sector. As mentioned by Rauschnabel, Praxmarer, & Ivens, (2012), social media such as Facebook gives some space to advertisers to promote brands. Based on this, advertisers began to consider social media as one of the advertising media. The advantages offered by social media allow advertisers to communicate more easily and effectively. Generally,
this medium helps advertisers to deliver relevant information on product to consumers easily through the advertisement posted on social media. Apart from that, users’ support to social media is seen to have a positive impact on the advertising activities through this medium. In line with previous studies, which indicate that social media advertising helps users to update with products offered in the current market. (Anwar, 2012).

However, issues related to advertisements avoidance has become the major problems in advertising through social media. Generally, (Kelly, Kerr, & Drennan, 2010) reports that, avoidance of ads is refers to all actions performed by users in reducing their exposure to ads. According to a study conducted by, (Kelly et al., 2010) found that one of the reasons why users ignore ads can be associated with the matters relating to the goal impediment. Traditionally, consumers are identified to have a certain goal while using Internet. This situation is refers as goal directed and focus is only given to the information needed. At this point, users attention is not given to the object or information which is not the main focus. As been mentioned by Kim, Ph, & Lee (2011), users who are in this situation will only see the parts that are required only and not to the ads. In contrast to that, users are more into stimulus driven state when they are in a free browsing situation. At this stage, users are more influenced to some properties such as color, shape, novelty, etc (Kim et al., 2011). Consumers will be more focused on ads that display characters as specified.

Therefore, with regard to the goal directed and free browsing, it is said to have a strong correlation to the user’s attention to the ads that are displayed in a website. As you know, social media is used as the medium of communication. Based on that, Lee & Ahn, (2012), suggest that advertisers can manipulate the factors associated with bottom-up to increase stimulus salience with the objective to attract users to the ads. As noted, Internet users are more likely to be in goal directed and this situation can be overcome when advertisers take into account the factors that are closely related with free browsing in the production of an ad. Factors such as size, color, animation and so is said to be the attention-grabbing tools that will attract users’ attention to the ads. As for that, the study of these factors holistically is necessary to overcome the problem associated with the advertising avoidance by user. This paper specifically discusses several factors that will attract users to the ads displayed online.

1. Methodology:

This study sought to determine the design features that have an effect on consumers’ attention to advertisements displayed on the social media platform. Document review was the method used to attain the objectives of this study. The result of this study is a list of design features that is said to enhance the attractiveness of advertisement. Moreover, the outcomes of this study also functioned as an input for designers to design effective advertisements for the social media platform. A qualitative research method was conducted by reviewing past research documents to fulfil the objectives of this study. All the documents of previous studies in regards to Internet advertising, advertising on social network and eye tracking research were analysed. The figure below briefly describes the measures employed in this study.

![Research Framework](Image)

Fig. 1: Research Framework.

Results:

Based on the document review conducted, this section specifically discusses the finding or result, which was obtained.

a. Content:

i. Word:

Word is referring to a any unit of language used to express something or any kind of information develop and deliver to someone (Oxford Dictionary, 2005). Generally, word is an important element in the dissemination of information. Words are used to describe the products advertised to consumers. Appropriate words are able to attract the attention of consumers on an advertisement displayed. Previous study by (Ferreira et al., 2011) have found that the use of negative words will attract users’ attention to the ads. It states that, the appropriate word in an ad can increase the attractiveness of the ad.

ii. Image:

Apart from words, images are also said to increase the attractiveness of an ad. As reported by (Jerome et al., 2010), use of images or pictures in an ad is more effective than other advertising content to attract users’ attention to the ads. In line with that (Rauschnabel et al., 2012) also reports that, images or pictures are processed more easily than text. Generally, images have a more effective affect than advertising content or other elements of an ad. Indirectly, the use of appropriate images can enhance the attractiveness of an ad. Thus, ad designers should consider the use of photographs or images that coincide with advertising messages.
iii. Location:
In general, location is indicated as a place or area which an object or something exist (Oxford Dictionary, 2005). Location of a certain object in a design also has an impact on consumers’ attention to advertisement displayed. Based on (Huang, 2010), individual might attend to a certain location that contains a particular feature. Previous studies have also showed that attention to a certain feature is indicated by its unique location. Objects that are presented at a certain location are sometimes more easily to be attended by consumer.

b. Design Elements:
Apart from the content of the ads that will attract users to the ads that are displayed, design elements also play a distinctive role in increasing the attractiveness of an ad. This section specifically discusses several design elements that will attract users’ attention to the ads.

i. Shapes:
The relationship between shapes and attention can be seen in the context of visual complexity. Based on (Pieters, Wedel, & Batra, 2010), advertisement which is intricate with certain design such shapes, objects and patterns are considered complex in terms of design. Based on that, the ads have a certain level of design complexity; influence the level of attraction of an ad. In general, design complexity is said to have a positive effect on attention. Therefore, the use of shapes which is differs or unique from the other elements in an advertising will also influence consumers' attention. In other words, consumers’ eyes will be distracted to a unique elements displayed. According to (Becker, Harris, Venini, & Retell, 2013) the existence of distractors will attract consumers’ attention to the shapes that are significantly different from the other shapes presented.

ii. Color:
Color elements are also said to have the ability to enhance the level of attraction of an ad. According to (Huang, 2010) which states that visual attention can be controlled in a variety of methods by which an individual will have a focus on the element of color. In line with that, (Tayebi, 2010) also found that the color is an effective element that will attract users. Basically, the use of appropriate colors element in a design of an ad will increase its attractiveness.

c. Design Principle:
Design principles also play an important role in the production of effective advertising. The application of good design principle will help to develop better and effective advertisements. The next section will discuss the design principles that will also enhance the attractiveness of an ad.

i. Balance:
Design that is imbalance or called as asymmetrical is considered as complex in design. As reported by (Pieters et al., 2010), a design which is asymmetrical in terms of shape boosts the level of design complexity. With respect to that, dissimilarity in shape, sizes, colors or other features increases contrast within the features. In a simple word, human eyes are attracted to any shapes that are more different in terms of sizes or color in a design. Human eyes will be laid at the shape that is more contrast to the other shapes in the same layout.

ii. Contrast:
Contrast is referring to differences of things that can be seen clearly (Oxford Dictionary, 2005). As in design, objects that is low in contrast are difficult to identify compared to the object which is high in contrast (Pieters et al., 2010). This is to show that, contrast are credible in making things or object more attentive. Human eyes will be more attracted to any sorts of things or objects that are more contra than the other. Applying features such as size, color, shapes, etc. can construct contrast.

Discussion:
The Figure 2 below shows the outcome of this study.
Based on the study, the results confirmed that there were few features that influence consumers’ attention on advertisements. In this study we have identified that content of an ad, the use of design elements and application of design principle in an ad were among the factors that contributed to consumers’ attention. Features such as word, image, elements location, shapes, colour, balance and contrast were identified as the major contributors in consumers’ attention. The use of these features optimally helps to create an attractive ad for social media. This in the other hand, will help in developing a better and effective ad. According to Rauschnabel et al., (2012), the used of certain design features may increase awareness on brand due to the attention given by consumers to the displayed ad. Consumers that already have an attention to an ad will have an interaction with the brand posted in a site. As in social media, the interactions are the activities such as liking to a post, sharing it to friends and give some comments regarding on the brand posted. Apart from that, as
mentioned earlier, Kelly et al. (2010), users of Internet are mostly have their own goal while using the medium. In other words, users have their own goal when using the medium. This situation is known as goal directed and at this stage, users are not really giving any attention to any ads displayed. As for that, designers should always seek for a better solution in increasing the level of attraction of an ad by identifying the best design features used to attract consumers’ attention.

Fig. 2: Attention Design Features.

Conclusion:
This study has investigated the potential design features that have a certain impact on consumers’ attention to ad displayed. This is an important study, as it will give an input to designers in designing an effective ad for social media. This is also to ensure a successful result in delivering information about brand and product to consumers. Besides that, the design features identified will also helps to overcome issues regarding on ad avoidance. Based on that, ad displayed will not be neglected by consumers and at the same time stimulating the online marketing activities.

REFERENCES