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Write to The Editor, new media age, 50 Poland Street, London W1F 7AX

Video ads offer so much more than TV spots

Luke Avner, MD, Govind



I read with interest your look at the year ahead in video and TV (nma 6 January) but there was a missed opportunity to look at what 2011 holds for advertisers.

Some people are reasserting the perception that broadcasters focus too heavily on push mechanisms, which fundamentally move TV ads online. While not wishing to detract from this method, it can impact on the psyche of the client and lead to a stifling of creativity when the reality is that the creative possibilities have never been so great.

The real profit will be found through value ads that you can't do on TV: different and longer formats, such as testimonials or tutorials.

The fundamentals of online advertising are changing. Information is becoming part of the product and it's giving agencies, broadcasters and advertisers alike the chance to use or invent better and more effective delivery mechanisms and content formats that better suit not only their messages but also users.

Ebay ruling may shift moderating roles

Mark Owen, Head of the Intellectual Property practice, Marbottle & Lewis



One of the most valuable levers for the web is the one that says online services aren't liable if users post content that infringes someone else's intellectual property rights, as long as the service removes the content once notified. On that legal balance rests many of the operations of today's largest online services. They have no duty to monitor in advance what's posted on their sites; the onus is on the rights owners to be vigilant for infringements and then complain.

But the EU version of this law, Article 14 of the E-Commerce Directive, has come under scrutiny thanks to a European judicial opinion. L'Oréal sued eBay as unauthorized products were appearing in auctions on its UK site. The case has reached the EU's highest court and before a final judgment, an advisory opinion was given in which Advocate General Jääskinen raised some serious doubts about how effective Article 14 is at protecting service providers.

While he said eBay was protected by Article 14 for most purposes, what happens if the site removes offending content but the user simply reposts

it? The assumption had been that the onus is still on the rights owner to keep monitoring and notifying the hosting site, whose only obligation is to remove the offending material each time. But Jääskinen's opinion suggests that if the site is told once, that may amount to notice for all subsequent postings by that user.

If this is followed by the European Court then services risk being sued if they don't put in place monitoring procedures to ensure repeat postings don't happen. This may fundamentally change the way such sites operate.

Google Preview will just refine search traffic

Aam Vargas, SRO director, Flug



Following the announcement of Google Preview, there has been a great deal of speculation and debate about its effect on search, both navigational and transactional. I don't think it will affect either.

In the first case, a person more or less knows what they're looking for. If they're searching for the London Dungeon's website, they'll know what to expect when they get there. In the case of transactional searches, a person will want to see details and price of what they're looking to buy.

For informational searches, site design could play a more important role, but also what the site is offering. If you search for 'lock t-shirts', you expect to see different t-shirt ranges, regardless of the design.

At all times we are embracing the change as it should ultimately mean more relevant clicks for our clients. It might reduce volume slightly, but the traffic that does come through is more likely to convert.

Comment from nma.co.uk

Re: Jonathan Briggs: Are online ads as we know them outdated?

You're purely referring to online DR activity here and ignoring the huge area of branding. You suggest showing ads only to those who click often or have social influence, with no explanation of how this would work. I think you're forgetting that the vast majority of sites today are free because of advertising.

With the models you've suggested, you'd end up with a group of influencers getting served ads and no one else. Do you not think these influencers might not get a little annoyed by that? I don't deny there's room for improvement, but I'd argue your suggestions are impossible to implement and unsustainable.

Jon Morris

DAN DOUGLAS

MD, The Cloud and Compass



It's up to brands to find the value to users in real-time tracking

What purpose does letting adults track each other in real time serve?

Errant husbands, wayward wives, truant parents, and the like are not going to be afraid, be very afraid. Real-time tracking arrived. Google has updated its Latitude platform from requiring active user consent to giving passive updates, enabling real-time tracking of those who let themselves be tracked when their mobile is on.

The privacy advocates will say this is an end in itself, and allowing people to follow every move seems like overkill even to the hard-check-in obsessive. So where's the value?

As a utility, real-time tracking allows you to know where your parcel is on the way if you left it in a bar using Apple's MobileMe

to locate a much-loved pet that has gone astray. But what purpose does letting adults track each other in real time serve?

From a Big Brother perspective, we know the police rely heavily on mobile to track fugitives - Real Meant went through several phone attempts to avoid capture. But that's not exactly a benefit for most users. Many believe the reason location services haven't tipped into mainstream yet is because of concerns over the balance between privacy and the lack of perceived value from these services.

Attitudes to privacy have changed dramatically in the past 24 months and the pace of change is always accelerating, so what was a privacy concern yesterday (for example, giving out your credit card details on the internet) has been replaced by today's issue of real-time tracking. It's inevitable that people will accept it once it's seen to be of net benefit, and this is the opportunity for brands. They can create value and engagement that add value by being aware of your location to span offers because they know you're close. These should add value and be part of their audiences' real-world interaction, making their lives easier or that bit more interesting.

Google tells us that it's using the new Latitude service being used by short bursts. If you're going out and you want to make it easier to share with your mates, then you'll turn the service on so you can see each other's whereabouts, or broadcast to your social group. It's not in case they want to join in. It's the natural extension to what you do except that it's done automatically.

This heralds the advent of the automatic check-in. Facebook is trialling the use of RFID to help people create automatic stories based on their actions and locations without their mobile being simplified or automatic translation of action and location into interesting social media content could be the catalyst for the market to adopt real-time location services.

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