

**TRULY INTERACTIVE ADVERTISING:
NEW DEVELOPMENTS**

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DECLARATION

I declare that the work described in this research Paper is, except where otherwise stated, entirely my own work and has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at this or any other university.

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Summary

The current paper explores the new developments in interactive advertising. Firstly, it reviews and examines some of the common definitions of the terms advertising, interactivity and interactive advertising.

Secondly, the research paper inquires whether the advertisements traditionally associated with the term interactive advertising, such as banners, brand websites, emails and pop-up windows, can be considered truly interactive today. It maintains that certain types of interactive advertising have begun to emerge. These appear to present different characteristics to the types traditionally outlined as interactive advertising.

Lastly, the research paper attempts to explore the key characteristics of this emerging type of interactive advertising. In order to illustrate its key characteristics, this study analyzes three case studies considered representative of the genre. The paper uses Shklovsky's theory of automatism and estrangement as theoretical frame for it appears to relate to issues arising in the advertising theory and can offer a way to alleviate them.

Thus, the current paper shows that these advertisements are notable in three distinct ways: *high level of interactivity, independency from the medium, and quality of divergence*. The most differentiating feature of this type of advertising is the determining role of the user. He/she is approached both as an object, that is to be affected by the advertising message, and, as a subject, that is actively participating in its creation and distribution.

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List of Abbreviations

IAB: Interactive Advertising Bureau

UO: User Oriented

Chapter 1. Introduction

Mass media technologies traditionally encompassed two distinctive roles – sender and recipient – and the communication flowed mostly in one direction. The dynamic development of technology means today there are many communication channels and they are not necessarily on a mass scale, such as radio, television, print editions and so on. Further, more recent communication channels such as the Internet and interactive television have communication flowing in two directions, even simultaneously.

And the possibility for choice is one of the most significant changes that these newer channels of communication bring. The audience is able to choose when and what to consume and this refers not only to the general content but to advertising as well.

For this reason, the determinative role of users is being gradually recognized. The advertisers' goal is to win users' attention. Users are not perceived as mere objects that are to be persuaded. They have preferences and interests that are to be acknowledged and approached accordingly, but, most importantly, they also have the choice as to what to devote their attention. As Othmer (2009), notes, today advertising is the "art of engagement" rather than "an act of persuasion".

Taking this into consideration, the study explores the meaning of the term 'interactive advertising' at the present time, the changes that have occurred over time and the issues arising.

Interactivity is one of the means that advertising employs in order to gain audiences' attention. Because it is inherently an action, it suggests directed attention on the side of the user. For this reason, interactive advertising appears to be a natural option to gain the user's attention.

This study reviews some of the widespread understandings of the term 'interactivity' in order to deduce its characteristics. It then juxtaposes them with the types of advertising that are associated with the term interactive advertising.

The study claims there is a lack of correspondence between the definition of the term 'interactivity' and its application in advertising. Specifically, it maintains that little interaction is in fact offered to the user. Frequently the interaction is limited to the option to either close or follow the hyperlink in an advertising message. Often times, though, the user is unable to control the display of advertising content, for example in pop-up windows.

This paper explores the possibility of a new type of advertising that seeks to engage the user on a more physical and cognitive level as an actor. For its purpose, the study analyzes three

advertisements that are considered representative of the type. The common point between the three of them is the central role they offer to the user. He/she is able to not only choose to view the advertisement or not, but to take part in its creation and distribution as well.

The case studies on the advertisements are examined through the prism of Russian Formalism theory. Specifically, it uses the concepts of automatism and quality of divergence and relates them to interactivity and advertising theory.

Chapter 2: The literature of interactive advertising

2.1. Defining advertising

Kotler (2012) defines advertising as any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services by an identified sponsor. Even though other researchers concur with this definition of the term (Defleur & Dennis 1996, Wells, Burnett & Moriarity 1998 cited by Lombard & Snyder-Duch 2001), Richards and Curran (2002) argue that such definitions were coined by a single person or in many cases were developed for dictionary entries by linguists deducing the definition from the common uses of the word. They devise a definition based on recurring elements: “Advertising is a paid non-personal communication from an identified sponsor, using mass media to persuade or influence an audience” (Richards and Curran 2002, p. 64).

Their panel of experts challenged some elements of this definition. Specifically, the idea of advertising as a “non-personal form of communication” was rejected. They argued that new technologies, such as the Internet, have made communication personal and therefore less “mass” and impersonal. Another moot point is that while advertising is considered to be by default paid for, as it uses mass media space and time, one of the best forms of advertising is the word of mouth and – yet – is free of charge. However, while this element was challenged, it was retained as it distinguishes advertising from other forms of communication, for example, public relations.

After three stages of discussion, the final definition is shaped as follows: “Advertising is a paid mediated form of communication from an identifiable source, designed to persuade the receiver to take some action, now or in the future” (Richards & Curran 2002, p. 74).

An important addition to Kotler’s definition of advertising is the call for action. The experts’ panel defines action broadly: it is not confined only to the act of purchasing. Frequently, they maintain, the main goal of an advertisement is not a mere sale but an attitude change towards the brand.

Advertising, as a mediated form of communication transmitted mainly through mass media, lacks the kind of spontaneous feedback found in face-to-face communication (McQuail & Windahl 1993). It is difficult to implement continuous feedback between sender and receiver due to the time and space limits of broadcast media.

Due to the lack of continuous feedback on the side of the audience, the marketers often have inaccurate image of their targeted recipients. This is a factor that oftentimes diminishes the

effectiveness of the communication process. Another important factor regarding advertising effectiveness is the audience's perception of the communicator and whether it identifies with him and his values (McQuail & Windahl 1993, pp. 50-51).

Taking into consideration the limited chance for feedback on the side of the audience, the advertising communication process might be described as rather unidirectional and marketer centered.

2.2. Consumer attitudes towards advertising

The Persuasion Knowledge Model suggests that when the same tactics are repeatedly applied, consumers learn to anticipate them and avoid advertising (PKM, Friestad & Wright 1994 cited by Back, T. H. & Morimoto, M. 2012). A lot of research was conducted in order to explore consumers' attitudes towards advertisements and what causes negativism (Morimoto & Chang 2006; Back & Morimoto 2012).

In an attempt to regain consumer interest, advertisements can grow louder, bigger, more persistent and more in number. Instead of alleviating the problem, though, this technique results in increased perceived intrusion on the side of the consumers (Lombard & Snyder-Duch 2001).

According to Brehm's psychological reactance theory, people are motivated to alter their behavior or attitude if they believe their personal freedoms are threatened (Brehm 1966; Brehm and Brehm 1981 cited by Back, T. H. & Morimoto, M. 2012). Information privacy and perceived loss of control, for example, are among the most frequent concerns causing irritation and, as a consequence, advertising avoidance. Often emails or other type of advertising would use personal data in order to make the advertisement more personal, but this alarms the user as from where the advertisers had gained such information. Research points out, though, that if the consumer has had previous dealings with this marketer, he tends to be less worried and irritated (Morimoto & Chang 2006).

Advertisements also might cause irritation when they interrupt consumers' cognitive processes or when they are too many, appear too often or the content of the message is inappropriate, untruthful, or exaggerated. For example, a person is inclined to delete an unsolicited email without even opening it if he/she feels that prevented him from reading the editorial content (Morimoto & Chang 2006).

Users find advertising particularly irritating when they are experiencing 'flow'. Csikszentmihalyi introduced the concept of flow, defined as "the state in which people are so

involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter"(1992, p. 4). Users participating in an experiment described the experience of being interrupted mid-flow as annoying and were strongly inclined to dismiss the advertisement (Rettie 2001).

Another reason for advertisement avoidance and irritation is skepticism. According to Obermiller, Spangenberg and MacLachlan (2005), skepticism towards advertising is defined as the tendency to disbelieve the informational claims made in an advertisement.

To cope with the audience's negative attitudes towards advertising, the term "Madison and Vine" was coined, referring to the merging of advertising and entertainment in an attempt to offer the public more engaging and captivating advertising messages. Kotler and Armstrong (2012, p. 465) discern two types: advertainment and branded entertainment. The first term reflects the idea of creating an advertisement so entertaining and interesting that people would actually want to watch it. The second term refers to the incorporation of branded products as inseparable parts of other forms of entertainment, for example series, games or movies.

Viral advertising offers another possible way to overcome consumers' avoidance. Viral advertising is based on peer-to-peer communication. Receivers become active participants who volunteer to forward an advertising message. This serves as an endorsement of the brand and increases its credibility in the eyes of others receivers. As it is unpaid communication, Eckler and Bolls (2011) were interested in consumers' motivation to forward a message. They found that emotional tone affects people's intent to forward a viral video advertisement. If the content is pleasant, consumers are more inclined to spread it. Pleasant tone of the advertisement also evokes favorable feeling towards both the brand and the advertisement.

2.3. Defining interactivity

Within the advertising industry, the term 'interactive' frequently means simply advertising on the Internet. (Medoff & Kaye 2011) The term 'interactive', though, is more complex. It has been the centre of many discussions and attempts to define it. (Heeter 2000; Macias 2003; Voorveld, Neijens & Smit 2011) So far, there is little consent over its definition. Each one concentrates on a specific type or side of interactivity which reveals key characteristics.

One of the earliest definitions of the term is Rafaeli's (1997 cited by W. Macias 2003). He defined the term as "recursive communication exchange, such that later exchanges refer to earlier ones and so on, in which communication roles are interchangeable". It articulates the

continuous character of interactive communication process and the obliteration of the traditional roles of sender and receiver.

Heeter's (1989 cited by Heeter 2000) definition of the term is more detailed, identifying seven key points, some of them reaffirming the traits emphasized in the previous definitions. The element of action, i.e. actively seeking information, and the two-way flow communication described as continuous feedback are reappearing in this definition. Heeter, though, adds important traits of interactivity. Firstly, she emphasizes the idea that interactivity defies the borders between receiver, and sender, and, secondly, she suggests that there are different levels of interactivity.

Another important feature of interactivity emphasized in the relevant literature is the sense of control. The user is able to actively traverse the information and to select what part and/or in what order to view it. As this feature transforms the flow of information to non-linear, it is outlined as one of the main distinctions between traditional and new media (Bezjian-Avery, A., Calder B. & Iacobucci, D. 1998).

The perception of control, two-way communication and synchronicity are considered among the key features of interactivity (Sharp 2002; Liu & Shrum 2009 cited by Voorveld, Neijens & Smit 2011). Synchronicity indicates the immediate responsiveness of the parties involved in the communication process.

An equally important trait of interactivity, that is also considered to be one of its major advantages, is that it creates time and space fluidity. Communication and information are not restricted by these two dimensions. Hence, this influences the user's experience by creating the perceptual illusion of non-mediation (Lombard & Snyder-Duch 2001).

However, interactivity can present one significant problem. Measuring its effectiveness had proved to be difficult. Early research results point out that sometimes interactivity interrupts the process of persuasion (Bezjian-Avery, A., Calder B. & Iacobucci, D. 1998). In contrast, another study concluded that the interactive features used on a brand web site had significantly improved comprehension (Macias 2003). The lack of uniform definition of the term interactivity may be considered as the reason for these mixed results.

On the whole, interactivity presupposes action and it involves at least two parties. It allows two-way flow of communication. It offers to all parties control over the flow of communication and information and it defies the limitations of time and space and thus, creates an immersive

experience. It is imperative to take under consideration the challenge of measuring its effectiveness.

Nevertheless, interactivity has affected the field of advertising as it alters the communication process into two-way and empowers the user with the possibility of choice (Lombard & Snyder-Duch 2001; Mazurek 2009). Furthermore, users gain control over the flow of information and can choose which advertisements to see (Medoff & Kaye 2011). This phenomenon becomes more intense with the advent of internet-based technologies, which allow instantaneous communication and user generated content. The marketer-centered model has begun to transform into a user-centered model by acknowledging the user's significant role (Mazurek 2009).

2.4. Defining "interactive advertising"

The Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) revenues report for the first six months of 2012 refers to nine types of interactive advertising. These are: search, display/banner, classifieds, digital video, lead generation, mobile, rich media, sponsorship and email. Interactivity is specifically referenced in the description of rich media advertisements: "Advertisements that incorporate animation, sound, and/or interactivity in any format." Some of the examples provided by the IAB as rich media advertising are web pages, full- or partial-page text and image server-push advertisements, splash screens, page takeovers, and pop-up windows (IAB revenue report 2012). These forms of advertising are usually affiliated with the term "interactive advertising". Some research has been carried out on their differentiating characteristics and effectiveness and on how consumers interact with them and perceive their interactivity (Pavlou & Stewart 2000; Li 2011; Ohme, Matukin & Pacula-Lesniak 2011; Voorveld, Neijens & Smit 2011).

It is important to inquire if these advertisements display the key characteristics of interactivity. Even though the IAB refers to these advertisements as interactive, as stated in their name and descriptions, this research paper argues that these advertisements do not appear to contain the fundamental characteristics of interactivity. Banners and pop-up windows, emails and feedback forms often have little user interactivity to offer. There is no "recursive communication exchange" as Rafaeli (1997 cited by W. Macias 2003) describes interactivity. In fact, frequently the user is able to either follow up or avoid them completely. When users feel they have little control over these advertisements, the result is irritation (Morimoto & Back 2012). Participants in Rettie's (2001) research expressed the opinion that when interactivity offers a field of activity, it is more stimulating. This suggests that interactivity is understood as an action on the user's side, which

presupposes active participation, not just passive consumption or exposure. Instead of actively seeking them, usually users tend to actively avoid them, especially when there are privacy concerns. Spam filters and pop-up blockers are few of the techniques that users employ to protect themselves from unsolicited advertising messages. Furthermore, there is a clear distinction between sender and receiver as marketers transmit their message towards a specifically selected and targeted audience.

The types of advertising listed by the IAB as interactive relate to interactivity in the computer science meaning of the term: as software that accepts and responds to user's input, which is usually limited to a click. According to Lombard and Snyder-Duch (2001, p. 68), an advertisement is considered non-interactive, regardless of the marketer's intents and the medium used, whenever it fails to elicit feedback of some type. It is questionable, though, if a click can be considered as feedback, especially taking under consideration the possibility, that users might have clicked on the advertisement by mistake or by accident. Ko, Cho and Roberts (2005) found that user's attitude towards a website is affected more by the human-human interaction than the human-machine interaction. Specifically, if a website is able to get users to interact with others, then it is more likely to elude positive outcomes. These results suggest that when interaction with a medium is experienced as a natural communication process, it is more likely that users will evaluate it highly. As technology develops interaction has become more elaborate and refined. Users begin to expect something more than just clicking. They are looking for experience that is so authentic that can evoke feelings, resembles reality, and requires action. (Bongers & Veer 2007; Waterworth 1992)

2.5. New developments in Interactive Advertising

Certain types of interactive advertising are emerging, that appear to present different characteristics to the nine types outlined by the IAB. These are notable in three distinct ways: *a high level of interactivity, independence from the medium, and quality of divergence (Shklovsky, 1991)*. The most differentiating feature of this type of advertising is the determining role of the user. He/she is approached both as an object, that is to be affected by the advertising message and as a subject that is actively participating in its creation and distribution. Because of the central role of the user, this research refers to the advertisements under inquiry as User Oriented (UO) interactive advertising.

This research explores three case studies considered representative of the genre in order to illustrate its key characteristics. Two of the advertisements chosen were winners in the

Webby's Awards¹ for the year 2012. The Homeless Banners campaign is the winner in the category Banner Campaigns and the Forgot Your Password – Email Marketing. The Tippex advertisement is a nominee in the 2011 Webby's Awards in the category Best Use of Online Media. Even though, it did not win, it is considered suitable for the purposes of this research, because of its innovative techniques and high levels of interactivity.

To begin with, as aforementioned, one of UO interactive advertising key traits is *independency from the medium*. It is mainly found online, but not only. In order to describe this, two additional examples are selected and briefly examined.

Interactivity can be powered not only by a human-machine interaction or the Internet, but by a traditional and non-communication media as well. For example, a sponge moistened with green paint was placed on the side of a road in China (*See Fig.1 and Fig.2*). As passengers cross the road, they would leave green footprints on the road, where a lifeless tree trunk was painted, and, thus, they would gradually transform it into a green living tree. This advertisement aimed to raise awareness of nature and to promote walking over driving.

It is noteworthy that it serves as a call for action on two levels. Firstly, it indirectly invites people to take part in the creation of the advertisement. The possibility that people can get involved both physically and emotionally enhances the active understanding of the advertising message. It empowers people by creating the feeling that, when they walk, they contribute to a greener environment. Furthermore, it creates a connection between the passer-by and the sender of the message. This interactive advertising is a way of collaboration and co-creation between the two of them. People can decide not to collaborate or to stray in different directions, and, thus, impede the construction of the message. It is imperative to mention, that participants deliberately and independently from each other act in collaboration. Secondly, the advertisement attempts through its message to influence and ultimately change people's attitudes and behavior. By their participation, people demonstrate their support of the message. As it is possible for people to observe the immediate effect of their actions, visualized by the green footprints, there is a possibility that this experience would be instrumental to the change of attitude and behavior.

As the participation on both levels in this advertisement is optional, it is plausible to suggest that the participants associate their experience with pleasant emotions, and thus, they might find reasons to share it through other communication channels (Eckler & Bolls 2011).

¹ The Webby Awards is an international award honoring excellence on the Internet in five entry-types: Websites, Interactive Advertising & Media, Online Film & Video, Mobile & Apps and Social. (<http://www.webbyawards.com/index.php>)

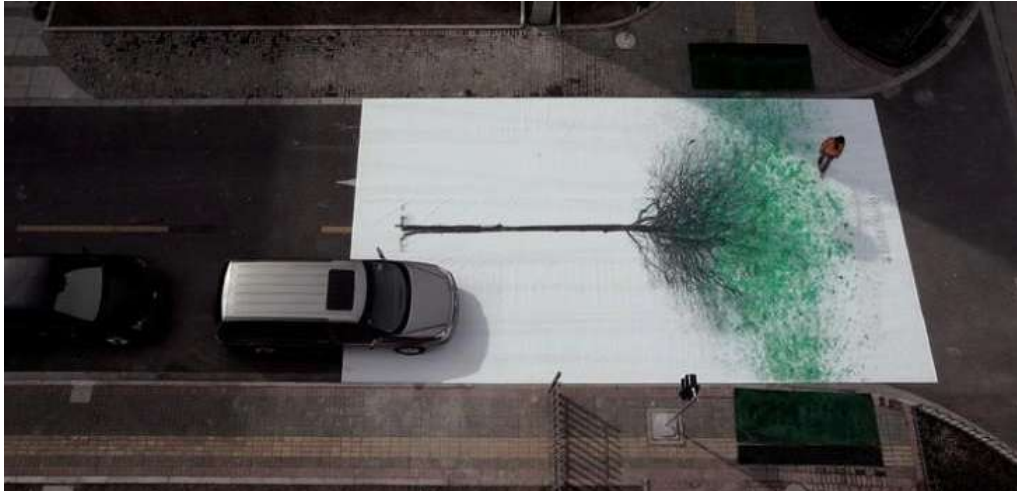


Fig. 1: Interactive advertising, China

Advertising agency: DDB China Group; Client: China Environmental Protection Foundation; Goal: Promote walking over driving; 2012

Source: <http://ifitshipitshere.blogspot.ie/2012/10/ddb-shangai-promotes-walking-over.html>



Fig. 2: Interactive advertising, China

Advertising agency: DDB China Group; Client: China Environmental Protection Foundation; Goal: Promote walking over driving; 2012

Source: <http://ifitshipitshere.blogspot.ie/2012/10/ddb-shangai-promotes-walking-over.html>



Fig. 3: Interactive advertising, Indonesia

Advertising agency: Saatchi & Saatchi Worldwide, Jakarta, Indonesia; Client: Jakpetz; Product: Frontline Flea & Tick Spray; 2009

Source: <http://www.thecoolhunter.net/ads/Get-Them-off-Your-Dog---People-As-Fleas/>

As a final point, even though this advertisement does not employ any digital media, it still creates rich interactivity and engagement.

Another illustrative example of UO interactive advertising's independence from the medium is the huge poster of a dog scratching itself that was placed on the floor in a shopping mall in Indonesia (See Fig.3). Viewed from a higher spot, the people walking on the floor looked like parasites. The slogan of the advertisement reads: "Get them off your dog". The construction of the message is executed in two layers. On the first layer, the advertisers use visual hyperbole in order to present a problem that is invisible to the unaided eye. For the implementation of this technique they utilized the presence of people walking randomly on the poster. The people's role on this layer is not immediately realized but it is crucial for the constructing of the message of the advertisement.

The advertisement as a whole could be observed only from a higher point in the mall, which constitutes the second level of the construction of the message. The role of the observer is significant, because he is the one who puts the pieces together and is able to absorb the advertising message. The strength of the advertisement is the element of surprise when people realize that objects accidentally juxtaposed in the same context suddenly obtain new meaning. The observer is not simply exposed to the advertising message. On the contrary, some action is required on his side as he has to construct the message by adding the seemingly random elements.

Both of these advertising campaigns were implemented outdoors but users utilized digital media technologies, such as blogs, to share their photographs, opinions and impressions. What is more, both advertisements have reserved a key role for the user, both as a recipient and an actor in the advertising message.

These two advertisements applied rather novel techniques in order to create a different experience by changing perspective and allowing consumers to see things in a novel way. These techniques aim to remove the automated associations people might have. Consequently, they aim to bring people to the sudden realization of the new meaning that trivial objects can obtain when put in a different context or viewed from a different perspective. This process is best described by the concept of *defamiliarization* (*ostraneniye* in Russian, meaning, more literally, 'estrangement') introduced by the Russian Formalist, Viktor Shklovsky. The role of these techniques is to enhance the communication of the advertising message so consumers can actively perceive the advertisements. This sudden awareness of the new old is creating a sensation of feelings and triggers the user's attention and interest. Interactivity is the most

prominent of these estrangement techniques for, when a user is interacting, he is inherently active and hence aware of it, as Bongers & Veer (2007) describe it.

Due to the active participation they exert, these two advertisements are also a good example how high avoidance levels can be alleviated. The users are faced with a new advertising technique, and, as a result, they cannot predict the advertisers' strategy. Consequently, it is possible that users can be intrigued. With the decision to participate, they become co-creators who are in control of their own experience. But as users are physically and cognitively aware and present, they actively perceive the advertising message, as well. The message itself is subtly transmitted as a personal experience and remains open for interpretation to every user.

The third fundamental trait of UO interactive advertising are its *high levels of interactivity*. This type of advertisements exhibits and applies in practice the most important features of interactivity: *defying borders between receiver and sender, actively seeking information, two-way flow of communication, sense of control, and independency from time and space*.

The high levels of interactivity in this type of advertising determine the user's has central role. His position is twofold: he is an object and a subject at the same time.

The user has been and still is the object of marketers' efforts to promote their products and services. After the establishment of mass communication technologies, users were approached as a homogenous mass that is to be influenced and persuaded. The goal was for the same message to reach as many people as possible. In the 60s new models described communication as a rather complex process and added more factors determinative for its effectiveness. One of these factors, taking into consideration the uses and gratifications theory, denotes the significance of audience preferences and attitudes. In other words, users can choose what to consume from the content that broadcast media offer based on their needs and interests (McQuail & Windahl 1993).

That being the case, in order for advertising to be effective, users had to be approached individually based on their needs and interests. After the development of cable television but mostly the Internet, as examples of niche-oriented media, the subdivision of users into target groups and their individual approach became easier. Advertisements attempted to obtain personal tone by narrowing down specific interest groups or by personalizing advertisements with additional information (Medoff & Kaye 2011).

Yu and Cude (2009) found that this technique did not prove to be effective, as the use of personal information, such as the first name of the user, brought up concerns about privacy and the result was irritation and avoidance. Specifically, their findings show that consumers expressed

the strongest level of disagreement for the statement 'When I receive that kind of personalized advertising, I feel I am being treated with special care'. Moreover, consumers' intentions to purchase the products in personalized advertising were low and respondents were generally unlikely to recommend products promoted via personalized advertisements to others.

This brief presentation of traditional advertising approach towards the consumer as an object indicates two important issues. Firstly, the flow of information is one-directional as messages are being sent by one identifiable source. Secondly, the user's preferences are being examined as a tool for achieving advertisers' goals.

UO interactive advertising also examines the user as an object, as it aims to influence and persuade. But it focuses on finding ways to engage and attract the user to take part in the advertisement, i.e. how to become an actor. In contrast, it is not based on the use of personal information, but it tailors a different experience for each user through genuine interactivity.

The process of interaction with the advertisement presents the user with a choice. Firstly, the user can choose whether to view and participate in the advertisement or no. Secondly, he/she might be enabled to navigate between a series of choices which for example can consist in selecting a route in a branching narrative structure. The user has the freedom which path to follow. Consequently, the advertisement responds in real time to the user's choices and reveals different content accordingly. This way, with the simple act of choosing each user's experience becomes unique each time he interacts with the advertisement. It is noteworthy that the choices the user makes ensure a personal experience without the actual use of personal information. Enabling users with choice is instrumental not only for the creation of a custom experience for each user, but can potentially increase the sense of control, as well.

In view of the possibility for an increased sense of control, the user's role as a subject is revealed. The user is not exposed to the advertisement by accident, but he/she has deliberately made a choice to view and take part in the development of the advertising message. The audience takes real actions in the physical world, such as typing commands or walking on a sponge for example, in order to explore further the content of the advertisement. This suggests that the user is both interested and determined to unveil the rest of the advertisement. As a result, there is active involvement with the advertisement and increased sense of control on the side of the user.

In addition, the user is instrumental in the construction of the advertising message. Participation is required to add the objects in the advertisement together and make them

meaningful. This way, the user is not only an actor, but a co-creator, as well. Co-creation means completing the gaps. It can consist in actively giving commands or using the user's preexisting emotion. For this purpose, the advertisement is left open ended. Without participation on the user side, the advertisement would not be completed and probably it would not make sense. Without someone walking on the sponge and on through the white canvas on the streets, these objects would remain unconnected, just a bunch of objects scattered around a street. The user is the glue that ties all the elements together. Because of this participation, objects suddenly obtain new meaning. They become story tellers and the user is the protagonist. On the whole, the user is indispensable for the creation of a finished state of the advertisement.

When participating in the development of the advertising message, the user is not only filling the gaps, but is *living* the advertisement, as well. By becoming a part of the advertisement itself, the user can feel closer to its objective goals and advocate for them by further distributing the advertising message.

In this way, the model of disseminating the messages becomes decentralized. Marketers do not send their advertising message to a specifically targeted audience, but they set it free and the users determine its further distribution through peer-to-peer communication. This way, users are able to seek and find advertisements according to their interests, in the same way they find other types of information. For example, one of the case studies looks at a Tippex advertisement which was posted on YouTube. For users to view it, a deliberate search is required. As users discovered it, they decided that it is worth sharing and this is how it became popular and reached the audience it did. Similarly, the second case study "The Homeless banners campaign" was realized without any media related expenses. It is based on users' willingness to share its message. The user has made a choice to find, view and forward these advertisements, reaffirming his role as a subject.

This technique helps alleviate audience fragmentation which Medoff and Kaye (2011) state is one of the significant disadvantages of advertising on the Internet. Because there are many websites that offer a variety of content it is difficult for a marketer to find the right placement for his advertisement. By letting users choose to see and/or forward an advertisement, marketers allow the target group to emerge on its own based on its members' interests.

As a result, the distinction between sender and receiver is further obliterated as these two roles become interchangeable. The message is not sent by a single source only. Instead, the user is able to continue the advertisement's journey across time and space. He has transformed from the target object into an energetic actor. The act of sharing the advertisement, not only confirms

that the user received the message, but also shows how the model of disseminating the messages has changed. Furthermore, the redistribution of the message serves as a personal statement that this advertising message is worth listening to (Pavlou & Stewart 2000, p. 64).

After being redistributed, these advertisements begin a second life outside the framework of the advertising campaign. Users from unintended markets view, share, and/or discuss them even after the campaign is over. These advertisements are no longer associated with the particular marketer's goal to promote and/or sell a specific product on a specific market. They are being further distributed and discussed because of additional values that users can find in them, such as creativity, interactivity, strangeness and so on. These advertisements have transformed into a work of art because they can evoke sensations and the experiences that appear relevant to users.

In summary, UO interactive advertising reserves a key role for the user both as an object and a subject. The user is enabled to make choices regarding the experience, besides whether to view or dismiss the advertisement. Users can exert control over their own experience by acting upon the advertisement. As a result, the user receives a custom experience. Without the user's active engagement and participation, the advertisement would not make sense or achieve completion. The user can decide on the further distribution of the advertisement. This way, the roles of sender and receiver become interchangeable, and, at the same time, it serves as an act of endorsement of the advertisement core idea. By choosing to act, the user is entering a dialogue: with the machine, the advertisement, the marketer, and other users and by doing so, the user admits that he has been intrigued.

The three advertisements selected for the purpose of this research paper present the above mentioned key points and each one emphasizes a specific aspect of them. One of the examples offers the user real time interaction and is highly responsive to users' commands. It provides branching structure of choices and as such it has to offer each user a custom experience. The user becomes the master of his own experience. Another example is based entirely on the user's willingness to take action. The advertisers have sent out a message and users pick it up by their active choice and transmit it further. The campaign's success is due mainly to the users' participation. The final example engages the users in an indirect way by making use of feeling relating to a common online situation and putting it in a different context. The sense of sudden realization that a feeling might gain a complete new meaning if seen from a different point of view is needed for the advertisement to gain sense and power to affect the user. Consumers are thus unexpectedly drawn into the advertisement.

However, before further detailed analysis of the three advertisements, an outline of the theoretical frame will be presented.

Chapter 3. Theoretical Framework – Russian Formalism

Russian formalism is a school of literary critique that operated between the years of 1915-1916 and 1930 (Erich 1965). Regarding literature, during the period of realism the emphasis was mainly on the content, whereas the form was considered just a vessel to transmit the message. The Russian Formalists opposed this idea and as they concentrated entirely on form, they brought awareness of its significance with the following motto: “We Futurists entered literature with a new banner: ‘New form gives rise to new content’” (Erich 1965, p. 254). These words belong to one of the most prominent representatives and spokesmen of this school of thought, Viktor Shklovsky (Erich 1965). In the first chapter of his book *Theory of Prose* (1991), he introduces two significant concepts: ‘automatism’ and ‘the quality of divergence.’

Shklovsky, argues that as something becomes habitual it also becomes automatic and unconscious based on the idea of “economy of effort”. He cites several other authors to describe the idea that because one’s resources are limited, we tend to use them as purposefully as possible for perceptual activity, which is to achieve the greatest possible result with the minimum possible expenditure of energy. For example, a person speaking a foreign language for the first time, is excited, but as he/she masters it the excitement disappears, as it becomes a subconscious action. Furthermore, in spoken language, words are not even fully articulated (Shklovsky 1991, p. 5). Objects are substituted by symbols, represented by one characteristic only, like in algebra, by a number. People perceive the existence of the object, they see only its surface but it rarely rises to their level of consciousness. Automatism turns actions into subconscious movements that leave no trace on people’s memory: “And so, held accountable for nothing, life fades into nothingness. Automatization eats away at things, at clothes, at furniture, at our wives, and at our fear of war. If the complex life of many people takes place entirely on the level of the unconscious, then it’s as if this life had never been”(Shklovsky 1991, p. 5).

To sum up, Shklovsky draws a clear line between perception and recognition. In his opinion, as people grow accustomed to a certain object or action, they begin to merely recognize it instead of actively perceive it. This way, the awareness for the vividness of the world withers away¹ (Erich 1965, p. 176-177).

¹ “People living at the seashore”, wrote Shklovsky, “grow so accustomed to the murmur of the waves that they never hear it. By the same token, we scarcely ever hear the words which we utter. ... We look at each other, but we do not see each other anymore. Our perception of the world has withered away, what has remained is mere recognition.” (Erich, 1965, p. 176-177)

Shklovsky refutes the widespread argument that image in poetic language is used to facilitate perception, because it has become a symbol of what is to be explained or because it is much clearer and simpler to understand. Firstly, he argues that some images are describing unseen things and thus, it cannot be assumed that they facilitate the process of perception. As an example, he cites Tyutchev's comparison of summer lightning with deaf-and-dumb demons and to Gogol's simile of the sky as the 'raiment of the Lord' (Shklovsky 1991, p. 1). Secondly, he upholds that images should be used not to make perception easier, but, on the contrary, long and laborious (Shklovsky 1991, p. 6). Moreover, he explains that the purpose of the image is to make people see the object in a different way, to bring them to a "vision" of the object rather than to a mere "recognition".

He believes that art is the tool that men were given in order to restore their awareness of the world, in his own words: "to make a stone feel stony". Art can estrange objects and change their form. It gives people the opportunity to see the same object from a different perspective and it sharpens their perception (Shklovsky 1991, p. 6). By making the habitual strange the chain of associations is broken and with it, the automatic responses.

This is Shklovsky's idea of the 'quality of divergence'. The device of making things strange (*priem ostraneniya*), as it is often called, is a challenge to the cliché. It is putting the usual in an unusual context. It is not defying the old, it is simply "regrouping of the old elements" (Erlich 1965, p. 258-259), so the objects presented can become "perceptible" again. According to Shklovsky, the purpose of art is to make people experience the process of creativity and the actual artifact is not important (Shklovsky 1991, p. 6).

He maintains that through creative deformation the familiar is made unfamiliar by changing its form, but not its essence (Shklovsky 1991, p. 6). The author's purpose, as well, is to create a vision that will de-automate and impede the reader's perception. This deviation from the norm can be both linguistic and on the level of form.

He gives an example of one of Tolstoy's writings, *Kholstomer*, where the story is told from the perspective of a horse. A recent similar example would be Orhan Pamuk's *My Name is Red* (2011) where each chapter is told from the perspective of a different person, animal or even object. Another way to achieve estrangement is the use of different devices, such as parallelism and simile.

Shklovsky also quotes Aristotle saying that poetic language should appear strange and wonderful. For example, in some countries, people use a different language for their literature

works than the one used for everyday communication, e.g. Arabic language was used in Persia and Old Bulgarian was used in Russian literature (Shklovsky 1991, p. 12).

To sum up, Shklovsky maintains that if people are to awake their perception of the word, creative deformation is needed. That is, familiar objects need to be presented in an unfamiliar way. In his opinion, art is the best tool to do this. He believed, the device of making things strange has wide application and can be found almost anywhere; actually wherever there is an image. (Shklovsky 1991, p. 9) Shklovsky's theory of automatism and estrangement is used to analyze the three advertisements.

As Shklovsky derived his concept of automatism observing ordinary everyday life, it seems to be applicable to other areas besides poetic language. His theory resonates with the Persuasion Knowledge Model, described previously, but adds the notion of the habitual. When applied to advertising, it suggests that advertisements, like other objects, have become inseparable but imperceptible part of consumers' lives. Advertisements can obtain perceptiveness once again if they are presented in a new, unusual context or through a different perspective. This can be achieved by employing estrangement devices which are limited only to the imagination of those who intend to use them. For this reason, Shklovsky's theory is considered suitable for the analysis of the three cases.

Chapter 4. Case Studies

Case 01: The man versus the machine (Users' interactions)

Title: NSFW. A Hunter Shoots A Bear!
Product: TippEx
Delivering platform: YouTube
Advertising company: Buzzman (France)



Fig.4 Dilemma: "Shoot the bear!", "I can't"

Source: <http://jamesthomaswallace.wordpress.com/2011/08/24/hunter-shoots-a-bear/>

The advertisement consists of a 30 second video clip featuring a hunter camping care-free in the woods. A voice behind camera is conversing about everyday things with the hunter while



Fig.5 The Two Options

Source: <http://www.valueprop.com/blog/2010/10/a-hunter-shoots-a-bear/>

he is brushing his teeth. Suddenly a bear appears. The hunter jumps terrified and grabs his gun

aiming at the bear, unsure what to do. The voice is shouting: “Shoot the bear! Shoot it!” At the same time, the hunter is shouting back: “I can’t!” (See Fig. 4).

This part of the video ends with 2 clickable buttons, presenting the viewer with two choices: “Shoot the bear!” and “Don’t shoot the bear!” (See Fig. 5).

By clicking on one of the choices the user is transferred to the Tippexperience channel on YouTube and the name of the product is clearly stated above the video. It is imperative to mention that there is no pause function on this part of the video.

Both of the choices lead to a continuance of the video where the hunter throws his gun on the ground and says: “Hey! I don’t want to shoot this bear!” He reaches outside the video window and grabs the product, some TippEx correction fluid that is positioned in a near-by window (See Fig.6). He deletes the verb “shoots” with it from the title of the video as he says at the same time: “Help me to rewrite this story. Type anything you want with your keyboard, then, enjoy!” And he walks out of the cadre.

This is an invitation for the user to write a verb in the blank space. If the user takes too long to type something in the space provided, the hunter reappears and urges the user to type in something by saying: “Come on, write something up there!” as he points at the blank space in the

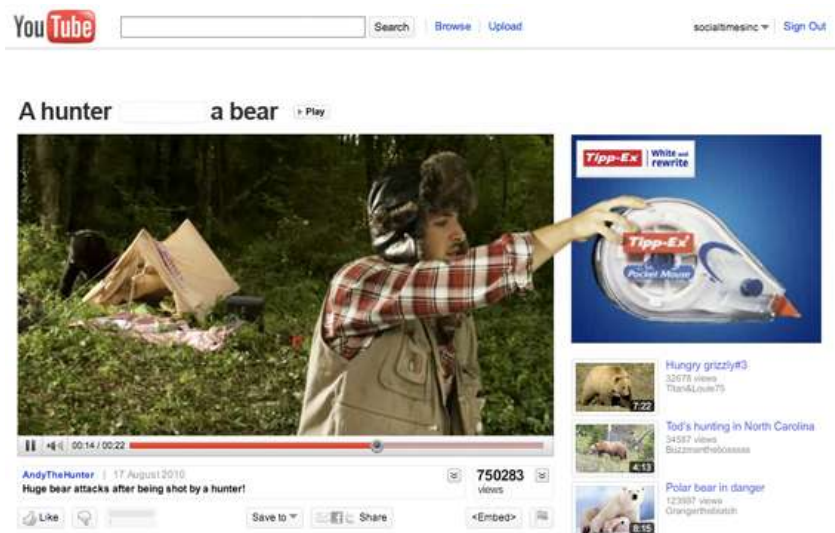


Fig.6 Using the product

Source: <http://theinspirationroom.com/daily/2010/tippex-shoot-the-bear/>

title. If the user continues not writing anything, then the same text appears on a white background with an arrow pointing towards the blank space.

When the user types a new verb in the space provided, a new video scene emerges depicting the action that the user entered as a verb.

In case the user enters a verb that has no prerecorded scene, then the hunter and bear appear holding a sign: “404 Error. Request not found.”

To begin with, the advertisers exerted efforts to mask the advertising bit in the advertisement. They used a natural everyday language. For example, the title which uses unusual for an advertising campaign language. It opens with an urban slang abbreviation: NSFW, which means “not safe for work”. This way the video is promising an interesting and even forbidden content, but surely not an advertisement. The sentence, that follows, ends with an exclamation mark and is to further “describe” the content of the video. Even though exclamation marks are not unusual for advertising, its role here is to create the effect of casual online video title and to indicate once again the interesting and funny content that the video offers. In addition, the name of the product is not mentioned anywhere in the title. The description in YouTube under the video appears to be even more misleading. It reads: “A huge bear attacks after being shot by a hunter.” and promises dangerous action.

The shaky camera and the voice that comes behind the scene are two other elements that reinforce this feeling of non-mediated and unintended message. The voice appears to belong to a friend who also happens to be shooting the video. It seems as if the viewer has witnessed a real event that just happened to be recorded by an amateur and then uploaded online.

It is not until the user had chosen one of the two options, when the name of the product appears. By then, the user should have reached the point of no return. He would be so engaged that he would continue viewing the advertisement despite the fact he was not expecting to view an advertising message. The advertisers’ goal is to let the user view and perceive this video unbiased by the associations and connotations of advertising he/she might have. This way, they would be immersed in the experience they have created.

The plot of the video illustrates the potential of the product: it can erase anything, and, this way, it opens new possibilities. In order to gain the viewer’s attention and active perception, the plot is estranged. Both the title and the description suggest a violent development of the action. The two main characters in the video, a hunter and a bear, are the two opposites, a hero and an anti-hero. This innate opposition predetermines the course of the story: the main character overcomes his enemy. The advertisers, though, have decided to offer a different reading to the same story.

As aforementioned, the two buttons lead to the same video. There is no other option than the hunter not shooting the bear. First time users, though, are unaware of this. In case they have

chosen “Don’t shoot the bear” they would feel satisfaction as the hunter follows what they have wanted him to do. This way, the feeling of control over the machine would increase. On the other hand, users who had chosen “Shoot the bear” might feel surprised (pleasantly or unpleasantly) or even amused by the unexpected course that the video had taken. Furthermore, this unexpectedness would create an illusion that the hunter as the hero of the story has suddenly gained voice and powers to express his own opinion. He has rebelled against the natural course of events and he does not want to be the one who shoots the bear any more. The viewer would be even more engaged and interested because the automated perception of how the story ends is disrupted. He no longer knows what to expect next. Because the user is unable to predict the advertiser’s techniques, the Persuasion Knowledge Model cannot be applied in this case. Consequently, the user is not immediately avoiding the advertisement but has some interest to continue viewing it. Following Shklovsky, the user is now actively perceiving the object (i.e. the advertisement) and not merely recognizing it.

It is noteworthy that the advertisers have chosen a generally non-interactive medium (video) to create an interactive and dynamic experience for the user. The user is invited to select one of two branching narrative possibilities. This linking technique is often used for connection to other places on the Internet, similar to a hyperlink in a text. The novelty that the advertisers offer here is the possibility of two different story developments. When the user clicks on either one of the options, he/she is not simply following a hyperlink, but making an active choice that has an immediate effect on the course of events.

Furthermore, the user is invited to help the hunter rewrite this story. Suddenly, the user has been transformed into a helper of the main character and pulled into the virtual world of the advertisement and is now part of the story. The user transforms from a receiver into a co-creator. Without the active participation on the side of the user, the story will remain unfinished. This way the user is obliged to type in an action, in order to get a resolution of the story. By attempting to evoke increased sense of control and an urge of obligation to participate, the advertisers aim to engage the user.

In addition, the increased level of user participation breaks the usual mediated type of communication where one source is sending a message to a mass audience that passively receives it. By actively engaging the user to participate in the development of the story, the advertisers have created equality in communication terms. The user is not passively exposed to a predetermined message, but has the freedom to a certain extent to interact with the message and to receive a different experience based on his choices. It is only to a certain extent, because

there is specific number of prerecorded scenes. It is imperative to mention, though, that this does not change essentially the users' experience. When deliberately selected, the available options can evoke the feeling of non-mediation. In addition, it preserves some control over the content on the side of the marketer, while at the same time offers the user a diverse and rich experience.

The story in the Tippex advertisement has no ending. The user might type in again and again new verbs until he is bored or has tried all the available possibilities. This open-endedness resonates with the message behind the advertising campaign, i.e. this product promises to erase what has been and open the way for an endless number of new possibilities. The message is subtle and thus it does not immediately evoke skepticism and disbelief. As the user interacts with the advertisement, he/she is in a position to experience the advertisement in their own way and interpret the message accordingly.

As a result of this estranged experience, the users showed willingness to forward it to other users. In this way the video reached one million views in the first 24 hours (YTShowandTell 2011). This challenges one more time the traditional one-to-many communication models. It has been transformed into many-to-many. The boundaries between marketer and user have been diluted. The question why would users share this advertisement remains to be studied. But following Shklovsky, the reason for this video to be shared is not the artifact itself, i.e. the advertisement, but it might be to experience the process of creativity.

Case 02: The user takes action

Title: Homeless Banners
Product/Service: Stockholm Stadmission
Delivering platform: Website/ Internet
Advertising company: Garbergs (Stockholm, Sweden)



Fig.7 A Homeless Banner that has been hosted
Source: <http://www.creativereview.co.uk/feed/march-2011/22/homeless-banner>

The objective goal of this advertising campaign is to raise awareness and funds for the homeless in Stockholm despite the very limited budget for advertising that the Stockholm Stadmission had at its disposal.

With this in mind, the advertisers create a campaign that secures free advertising space. They decide to launch a collection of homeless banners in need of shelter on a website specifically designated for this purpose². The website itself has little appeal as it was gray and unadorned. Its only purpose is to facilitate users to select a banner to shelter. The procedure is simplified to entering the user's name and copying code to embed in a website or blog. On the website there is a short text explaining the idea³.

On the campaign website there is also a chart with the websites' participants in the campaign. The chart could be arranged by the amount of time a banner was hosted or by the number of clicks it had received.

² <http://www.hemlosabanners.se/>

³ "These banners are homeless. If you have a little room on your site, feel free to give any of them a roof over their head. Our work for the homeless depends on donations. Therefore, we constantly need help to spread our message. Choose a banner and embed it on your site or blog. For media sites and blog networks do not hesitate to download a file instead. The banner will get warmer color the longer you take care of it, and the more people click on it. Thank you for helping us to be seen!"

Once hosted on a website, the banner's color gradually changes to warmer tones corresponding to the amount of time it is being sheltered and to the number of clicks it receives. The banner displays who and for how long had given it shelter. In addition, it shows a message to encourage people to click on it: "Click here if you too want to give warmth to a homeless Stockholmer." besides the Stockholm Stadmission's logo. The banner is linked to the Stadmission's website where it is possible for the user to make a donation for the organization or to shelter a banner himself.

The campaign was launched on Facebook and Twitter and, as the video promoting the results of the campaign (Garbergs, 2012) states, it spread quickly. After a month, 316 websites⁴ were hosting homeless banners and, as a result, the number of donations was quadrupled. The advertisers managed to secure not only free advertising space but also the users' participation by employing different estrangement devices.

To begin with, the banners are initially black. The use of this lack of color is significant. A black banner is the complete opposite of what advertising banners usually look like: colorful, animated, intrusive and trying to attract notice. By choosing black for the initial state of the banners, advertisers attempt to differentiate the campaign banners from the all other.

In addition, in the western world black is often associated with sadness, remorse, depth, mourning, and so on. Consequently, the black banners are to signify the absence of life and happiness. They serve as an analogy to the homeless people who live without home and hope. Moreover, these banners try to tell the story of a homeless person who also needs shelter, help and care.

While it is perhaps difficult to provide a home for a homeless person, users are able to spread their story. Thus, people who already own personal space on the Internet are invited to shelter the homeless banners. However, this invitation creates an opposition between people who have and those who do not. As a consequence, users are put in a position of power and responsibility. Their actions can contribute and make a difference. People are presented with a choice to act or no and how. They can shelter a banner, donate, or do both. This way, users are able to help in the way they can.

The use of initial and intermediate states is there to indicate a possibility of transformation. It visualizes the idea that change is possible when the right actions are taken. In addition, this way the banners are presented as if they are living creatures with feelings and needs. They are

⁴ Statistics can be found here: <http://www.webcollection.se/hemlosabanners/en/>

homeless and unhappy and they need shelter. If they receive help and care, they respond and change their colors into happier shades.

This technique is intended to influence the users' attitude towards banners. Users respond to the banners need of shelter and banners respond to the users' actions. This exchange of responses simulates human interaction. Owing to this fact, people can get emotionally engaged and attached. As people can see the fruit of their contribution, they might be inclined to continue contributing. This facilitates the entrance into a long-term relationship with the advertising campaign and aims to secure engagement and devotion on the side of the user.

The use of the chart on the banners' website is noteworthy as it seems to be appealing to the competitive side of people. As it reflects the results that users have achieved, it can bring satisfaction to the banner hosts. In addition, advertisers employ this technique to send an inspiring message that people can be "competing" as to who will do more good. (*See Fig. 8*)

The way the campaign was constructed transforms the banners as an activity of their own. As a result, it was no longer an outside advertisement imposed on people. On the contrary, people invited these banners willingly into their personal internet space. The fact that people were not compensated for this suggests that the driving impulse for people to host these banners was purely altruistic.

Because of the added element of choice presented to users to participate in the campaign or not, the banners appear not to be disrupting their activities. As a result, users are less likely to experience irritation. In addition, when an action is conscious, it becomes a powerful statement that users support the campaign and stand for its values (Pavlou & Stewart 2000, p. 64).

The use of simple and clear language aims to attract users' attention to the message rather than the form. By using the word "too" on the banner, the advertisers attempt to suggest that there is a bigger community of people who are already helping. This adds another dimension of opposition between two groups: those who help and those who do not. The invitation presents people with a choice: to join the helpers or no. This is an appeal to the moral side of the users and constructed as such it predetermines their choice. In addition, the possibility of joining the campaign aims to create the feeling of collective synergy between people who does not know each other.

On the other hand, the use of the singular form "a Stockholmer" is there to suggest that the user would be helping one specific person. This aims to create a sense of meaningfulness. When

one person helps to another it appears as if impact will be greater, and, thus, it acquires more rewarding appeal to the one helping.

Advertisers based their campaign mainly on users' participation. This way, the role of the user as a subject is reaffirmed. On the whole, the advertising campaign is a good example that this can be an powerful and effective tool.

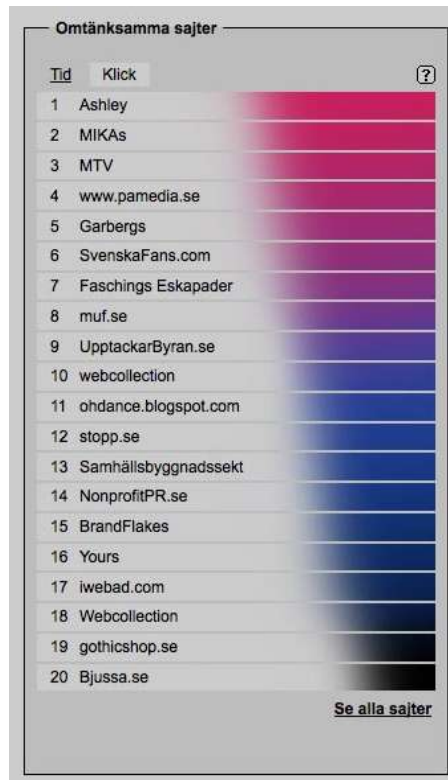


Fig.8 The Chart

Source:

<http://theinspirationroom.com/daily/2012/homeless-banners/>

Case 03: A different perspective

Title: Forgot your password
Product/Service: Alzheimer's Association
Delivering platform: E-mail
Advertising company: Grupo Gallegos (CA, USA, focused on the Hispanic market)

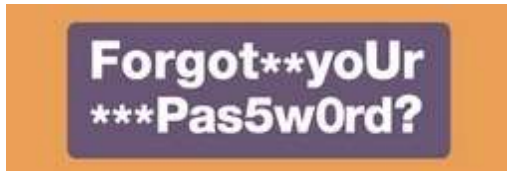


Fig.9 The Campaign Title

Source:

<http://www.welovead.com/en/works/details/fefDklpB>

As November is National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness month in the USA, the Alzheimer's Association needed an advertising campaign to raise awareness and funds.

The advertisers cooperated with one of the biggest and most important Hispanic websites in the US, Univision, with about 2 million visitors per month. Every time a subscriber forgets their password and requests a new one, they would get it. But in addition, the user would receive a message: "If something as insignificant as forgetting your password complicates your life, imagine what it's like living with Alzheimer's. Help us find a cure for Alzheimer's. Visit www.alz.org/espanol for more information" (AlzForgotPassword, 2012).



Pic.10 The Advertising Message
Source: Personal

This advertising campaign utilizes email as a platform to transmit its message. However, unsolicited email messages are often perceived as intrusive and irritating (Yu & Cude 2009). Because they are frequently sent to general audience, users consider them not useful and have privacy concerns over personalization (Moromoto & Chang 2006, p. 8). In addition, the large

amount of email spam received every day resulted in the development of techniques for avoiding unsolicited emails, such as spam filter in email programs. As a result, the effectiveness of advertising campaigns through email might be decreased.

In view of this potential danger, the advertisers exploit a new way to approach consumers through email. They try to utilize a preexisting emotion in order to convey a message.

To begin with, because of the way the message is sent, it is likely to not be considered unsolicited. The user had previously requested a new password, i.e. the user had previous contact with the specific marketer and he knows how the marketer had obtained his email. According to Morimoto and Chang (2006), this decreases the user's levels of negativity. This can potentially alleviate the biased attitude that users share towards unsolicited advertising messages. As a result, users are likely to be open to perceive the message. It is noteworthy, that the advertising message does not actually instigate users to donate money. On the contrary, they are invited to educate themselves on the topic.

In addition, the advertisement is not targeting a specific audience. Only people who had forgotten their passwords would be exposed to the message. This audience is not formed by demographic or financial criteria, but instead it is selected on a seemingly random basis. Furthermore, there is no apparent relation between forgetting passwords and the possibility of donating money for an illness.

Conversely, the selection of users to receive the message is based on the potential engagement with the advertisement. The engagement is somehow indirect. The marketers use the frustration that people might experience when they forget their passwords. This technique aims to evoke increased sense of non-mediation: it almost seems as if the marketer is sitting in the same space with the user and can read his mind. This appears to be an efficient way of personalization, mostly because it does not evoke privacy concerns. At the same time, frustration is a strong inward feeling and as such it appears to be personal. Users might not realize at first that this feeling is a common denominator for many others, as well. They might feel taken aback and touched at the same time that a marketer can know something so private about them. As such, this tool has the power to affect people on a deep emotional level. And, yet, it is general enough as most people feel frustrated when they forget their password. Owing to this, it has the potentiality to reach a large number of people, but affect them each separately.

The feeling of frustration is just another usual response to everyday collision with technology. Most people would probably forget about it after receiving the new password, and

would continue with their initial agenda. The advertisers decided to contextualize this feeling differently, and, as a result, it suddenly gained new meaning. Now, it is not just a passing feeling, but it is a glimpse into somebody else's life.

The re-contextualization of the message aims to remove the automated associations. If these are successfully removed, people's consciousness can become awakened which allows the experience of even stronger feelings, such as empathy and compassion, towards those who suffer from Alzheimer's. These feelings aim to increase the possibility that users would follow the link to get informed.

This advertising campaign is based on the incorporation of a user's emotions. This determines the central role of the user, but also the campaign's success as it depends on the existence and the strength of feeling on the side of the user.

Chapter 5. Conclusions and Future Work

This research paper attempts to explore new developments in interactive advertising that are based on the central role of the digital media user. For this purpose it reviews key definitions in advertising, interactivity and interactive advertising and it further explores their current meanings and issues arising from this. Consequently, it analyzes three advertisements that are considered to be representative of the type.

In all three advertisements, the advertisers have reserved a central role for the user. He/she is the protagonist and through his/her choices the development of the story is determined. This way each user can receive a custom experience. This is achieved through the high levels of interactivity that the advertisements have to offer. They comply with the most widespread and accepted definitions of interactivity and they apply its main characteristics in practice. They allow two-way flow of communication, active search for information, interchangeable roles of receiver and sender, and a sense of control and independence from time and space.

As the user has a significant and central role, these advertisements facilitate social interaction, both between the user and the advertisement and between the user and other users. It allows users the freedom of choice to view and further distribute the advertisement and thus, changes the way advertising traditionally approaches its target groups. When able to actively choose whether to see or forward an advertisement, the users become actors and they are placed in control, whereas the lack of it is yet another cause for avoidance. In addition, users become senders as they redistribute the advertising message. The traditional model of one-to-many is now transformed into peer-to-peer. Their action not only contributes to the advertisement reaching a bigger audience, but also perhaps serves as an endorsement of the message. The increased level of interactivity allows the users to experience the advertisements in their own way. The subtlety of the advertising message addresses one of the causes of avoidance outlined in the literary review – skepticism. Due to the active and conscious participation in the advertisement development and distribution, user avoidance levels are decrease.

In order to achieve perception awareness, the advertisements employ different estrangement techniques and the most significant is interactivity itself. When automatic associations are removed, users are not able to predict the advertisers' strategy. As a result, users are not following the Persuasion Knowledge Model and instead they are able to view and perceive the advertisement in an active and unbiased manner.

Thus, taking everything into consideration, these advertisements fundamentally differ from the traditional categories of interactive advertising. They approach and communicate with users in a nonconventional way for the advertising sector. In addition, they offer a different memorable experience. The current research maintains that a different type of interactive advertising has recently emerged and it needs to be further investigated.

Due to time and space restrictions this study is limited to three representations of the type through case studies. Future research could examine more examples of this type of advertising, particularly across different kinds of advertising messages or products, in order to confirm or reject the findings of the current paper. Another direction for research might concentrate on the possible relation between the content of the advertisement and the use of interactivity.

These advertisements can potentially dilute the borders not only between sender and receiver, but also between advertising and non-advertising content. As a result, it might not be clear which messages are public and intended to persuade, and, consumers might not be aware that they are exposed to an advertising message. This issue may raise ethical concerns and needs to be further examined.

In addition, further research is required to investigate the audience reception of these advertisements and their perceptions and attitudes towards it. It would be especially valuable to design a research study that could link interactive advertising to user actions and to follow a single advertisement through its lifecycle as it travels across different media from user to user. Finally, further research should examine whether there are in fact different levels of interactivity and how they might affect the user's motivation to act upon the advertising message.

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