

Brand advertising model still 'upside down'

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The world of advertising is in a strange and possibly bizarre condition, with MBA-laden thirty-somethings believing that the internet will change TV more than TV will change the internet, according to Jeff Einstein of digital media firm, Brothers Einstein.

Immersed in a culture of digital fragmentation, Einstein warns that many advertising agencies seem to believe that where and how frequently you repeat a message is somehow more important and significant than the message you repeat.

The wrong approach

Advertisers and agencies alike now spend almost all of their time looking for the return on investment (ROI), and seeking a "seamless user experience" (often a euphemism for speed and convenience at any cost), and have failed to notice how toxic this single-minded approach is to brand building.

Effective brand advertising is required to do the one thing that the seamless user experience cannot and will not do: It must intrude on the consumer's life somehow. This may seem a rash statement, but effective brand advertising demands a response, whether that's to participate, change the TV channel, click a button, or turn the page. Effective brand advertising challenges consumers to say "no" or "yes". In contrast, a seamless user experience has to be entirely on-demand, and waits patiently for consumers to do something when they feel like it.

Video killed the advertising star?

Interestingly, with the sudden ubiquity of broadband and wireless internet access, online video has recently become the dominant digital media experience. But how can marketers expect brand advertising to be compatible with on-demand, user-requested online video when the main function of brand advertising (intrusion and decision making) is so much at odds with it?

According to Einstein, the first thing that marketers must do is to realise that the only things about consumers' digital lifestyles that are not at odds with the demands of a seamless user experience are the twin gods of speed and convenience.

Learning from the past

The next step is to look back a few generations and see how our predecessors borrowed the lessons of brand advertising from the Golden Age of Radio and applied them to the Golden Age of Television. What they discovered was a simple and elegant truth: It's better to own the brand environment than to rent it.

Owners tend to care more for their own environments than renters, and they are usually more respectful of their neighbours than renters. Back in the days of radio and the early days of television, nobody questioned the fact that the programmes were there to support the adverts, simply because the advertisers owned the programmes: they owned the branding environment.

Backward model

According to Jaffer Ali, CEO for Vidsense, an online video advertising network, "The current pre-roll model for online video is backward. Not only does it increase attrition rates but it also compels the brand message to support the video clip when it should be the other way around. The video clip should support the brand message."

His suggested remedy is to simply return control of the branding environment back to the advertiser, where it rightfully belongs. In the case of Vidsense, thumbnail images from a library of film and video clips appear throughout a network of partner web sites and, when a consumer clicks on a thumbnail, a new window opens and takes the viewer and the content to an

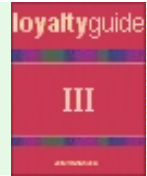
advertiser's web site where an imbedded video player shows them what they wanted to see. The end result is a high-quality impression delivered safely within the advertiser's own online brand environment.

For additional information:

- Visit Brothers Einstein at <http://www.brotherseinstein.com>
- Visit Vidsense at <http://www.vidsense.com>

Sources: *Brothers Einstein; The New EPA; Vidsense*

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