

Advertising and Marketing in New Media - UK - October 2009

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What is this report about?

With 70% of UK adults accessing a high speed broadband connection, online advertising is now a channel that advertisers can use to connect with a mass-market audience. This is also reinforced by the increasing amounts of time internet users are spending online. In response to the challenge, advertising practitioners are doing much to encourage internet users to engage with brands more fully, including the use of branded content designed to entertain while simultaneously delivering a marketing message. The report also discusses the pitfalls and potential benefits of more efficient behavioural targeting techniques.

What have we found out?

- Mintel's research shows that internet users pay nearly twice as much attention to ads via search engines such as Google compared to social networks.
- Technology ownership affects the way internet users interact with ads: the more gadgets owned increases the propensity to pay attention to online advertising and encourages more positive attitudes to online advertising in general.
- Online advertising revenues in 2008 were £3.5bn, up from £166m in 2001. Internet users have to deal with more marketing messages than ever, reflected in Mintel's research which shows 76% of respondents actively try and avoid online ads.
- However, the research also shows that internet users are open to the benefits of online advertising when they see it has practical benefits. 67% of respondents see it as a necessary evil, reflecting the fact that advertising can be as much a pest (e.g. spam email) as it is a way of providing for compelling, entertaining services.
- Mintel's research shows that women in particular are more motivated to explore and engage with ads when they are offered a practical reason to do so, either for exclusive information, offers or competitions. A good example of this in action is Dove's 'Campaign for Real Beauty' - its main website provides expert guidance and support on women's issues alongside product information.
- By age, Mintel's research shows that younger internet users respond the most to advertising based around entertainment or humour. By comparison older internet users look for product information above all else.

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