

Chapter 15

Background of “Pinned” Images: Lifestyle Advertising in Social Media

Aslı Sezgin

Osmaniye Korkut Ata University, Turkey

Zaliha İnci Karabacak

TOBB University of Economics and Technology, Turkey

ABSTRACT

The presence of a hidden enforcement is a matter in social media networks, whose contents are made attractive by rich images illustrating the rearrangement of the living spaces belonging to the followers of these networks. Every detail of private life including personal appearance, spaces where time is spent with friends, food is consumed, coffee is drunk, and houses are decorated, is presented through charming images. Inspired by these images, people have started to make their preferences regarding what mobile phone to use, what sports to practice, or what films to watch. The content of social media has begun to draw attention to “lifestyle advertising” and has provided a convenient ground for the advertising industry. Pinterest is a network where images reflecting modern people’s daily habits, including consumption, are pinned in order to serve as sources of inspiration. In this study, the perfect living spaces which have been fictionalised as models in the images shared on Pinterest will be investigated in terms of “lifestyle advertising” and in comparison to real life.

INTRODUCTION

The impact of social media on various areas of daily life is now considered an undiscussable reality. Today, as a result of research on social media and its effects, it can be stated that these networks and the sharings made on them have a manipulative influence on every aspect of life.

The use of social media, mainly as part of the routine activities of the young generation, which is also called the digital generation, offers the opportunity to realize social interaction in a digital environment. Gaming websites, video websites and blogs offer a medium for entertainment and communication for today’s people, who have evolved in a technological sense over the years and have managed to remove the time-space barrier. In this environment, communication opportunities increase, social connections

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are easily established and even technical skills can be developed (O’Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011). People with common ground can communicate with each other in this environment whenever and wherever they wish.

In recent years, with the help of multimedia, a new daily living space that we can design and share at will and which has entertaining as well as communicative content, has been created in the new digital environment. This also entails, among other things, the evolution of daily lifestyles. The developments in consumer electronics and interaction methods, and the facilities provided to access the Internet allow the creation of this new life. Easily accessible multimedia content, communication and information infrastructure supporting user access and smart devices offering user-friendly digital content are also important opportunities for the creation of a new digital lifestyle (Hofmann, & Thomas, 2008).

People’s ability to access information and entertainment must play an important role in the content provided by Web 2.0 technology. Media content is created, shared and consumed by users. Those that meet the expectations and requirements can gain access easily through the customized content (Hofmann, & Thomas, 2008).

One of the most important issues that draw attention to the new lifestyles, which have become fictionalised in the digital environment, is the presentation of the content according to the expectations and requirements mentioned above. In social media, content with a high degree of attractiveness encourages consumption.. Social media networks, which millions of people can access free of charge (Zarella, 2010), offer a customized advertising content that can reach more users with less cost than the traditional media environment. Lifestyle advertising draws people’s attention under the heading of social media advertisement.

These advertisements make customers purchase a product by creating changes in attitude and behavior through persuasion and enable them to have the lifestyle they imagine. Advertisements have an important role in expanding and adopting new lifestyles which emerge with social mobility, through the values and symbolic meanings imposed on products (Erdoğan, 2014).

The increase in the production of similar products has caused the advertising texts to become more and more similar. This inadequacy of traditional advertising texts has led to the emergence of lifestyle facts in advertisements texts (Karaçor as cited in Şimşek, 2002). Flueckiger (2009) emphasizes that lifestyle advertisements tend to have intense nostalgia which is ahistorical, offering merely the most delightful view of an imaginary experience.

In this study, Pinterest has been selected to be analysed as a social media network where different lifestyles with different attractive contents are submitted. Pinterest, which has increased its number of users and market value since 2010, is defined as a visual-based online network. Some general evaluations of this social media were determined in a study conducted in order to describe Pinterest in terms of its content and users (Mittal, Gupta, Dewan, & Kumaraguru, 2013). According to the subject, content and scope of this study, these evaluations can be summarized as follows:

- The most common issues among users are design, fashion, photography and food.
- 95% of the shared content consists of pre-published web content.
- Pinterest users do not conceal their personal information, and trademark sharings draw attention (Mittal, Gupta, Dewan, & Kumaraguru, 2013).

Based on this study, which aims to study the content of users’ lifestyles shared on Pinterest and the consumption preferences presented in these lifestyles, the assumption regarding lifestyle advertising

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