

Chapter 1

An Overview of Digital Media and Advertising

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ABSTRACT

In an astonishingly short period of time, the Internet and mobile commerce have profoundly shaped the way consumers live their lives as well as the way organizations do business with them—and with each other. With these electronic technologies and tools, businesses have remarkable new opportunities to connect with their customers and to build their brands as never before. Consequently, this chapter provides a broad overview of digital media and its effects on marketing and advertising. In doing so, we identify and define the most important digital media and advertising tactics as well as explain how they can be introduced into traditional marketing and advertising programs. The innovations presented here will help the reader understand how digital technology can improve marketing and advertising strategy formulation and execution. With so many online changes and innovations happening daily, this is a challenging—and exciting—time to practice marketing and advertising. As such, it is imperative that organizations have a presence in the Internet spaces that their customers and potential customers are exploring on a daily basis. In essence, organizations need to provide online listening posts for customers so that they can communicate what they think, as well as what they want or don't want.

INTRODUCTION

It is well-documented that consumers are increasingly using the Internet and mobile commerce for shopping, for entertainment, and for accessing and sharing information. Brands that connect

with consumers in these spaces—and listen to them—will have a greater chance of success. The utilization of these electronic platforms is no longer a matter of being innovative—it has become a necessity. To understand how things reached this point, we will briefly review the history of Internet marketing. Next, we will outline key marketing tactics for facilitating ecommerce (e-commerce,

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eCommerce) with the organization's website as well as for those outside of the organization's website. This will include a strategic approach for understanding customer needs and wants within the context of the marketing environment in an easy-to-understand framework. In addition, recommendations are provided for the effective implementation of ecommerce strategies that will build the brand and build relationships with customers using digital advertising and media. We will conclude with recommendations and applications for future research.

BACKGROUND

History of the Internet and the World Wide Web

The evolution of the Internet provides a relevant and substantive narrative and starting point for this chapter. While the World Wide Web was created in 1991, its origin dates back to 1957 when the Soviet Union launched the Sputnik I satellite. With Sputnik, the "space race" between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. began. During this period, President Eisenhower created the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) to fund scientific research among the Department of Defense, universities, and research organizations across the United States. What emerged from this effort was an attack-proof electronic infrastructure for the sharing of research results by multiple users, on their own computers, at the same time. The linking of computers allowed scientific communities to interconnect and exchange ideas as well as cooperate on scientific projects.

This new computer network enabled instant, electronic human communication in a time and distance environment that was completely unprecedented in our history. That said, the number of users was limited until the mid 1980's—when TCP/IP (Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol), a standard language of Internet com-

puting was invented and published. Initially developed by English researcher Tim Berners-Lee, the program was expanded to find and retrieve information for the European Particle Physics Laboratory (CERN) in Switzerland. Hypertext was then developed to allow a linked retrieval system that came to be known as the World Wide Web (WWW).

In June, 1993 CERN released this innovation—an interconnected network called the Internet—to the rest of the world. Described as being global and user-friendly, this standardized computer language opened the door to businesses and individuals to connect online. Soon, commercial traffic came rushing in. But in the beginning the Internet was difficult to navigate since search engines and directories did not exist. Moreover, many consumers felt it was too boring or of little use. In short, Internet adoption by consumers emerged slowly until a tipping point occurred in the early 1990s. After that, the rate of adoption skyrocketed past any previous media innovation. Reaching that tipping point, however, required several additional improvements and developments. For instance, in 1993 Mosaic (the forerunner of Netscape) allowed for the transmission of graphic files—something of broader interest. As a consequence, by 1995-1996, there emerged a significant public consciousness of this electronic tool and its potential. Nevertheless, few people fully anticipated the applications that would continue to emerge, much less the rapidly growing pace of change and development that was to come on the Web.

The next significant development occurred in 1996 when Yahoo! pioneered directory and search capabilities that allowed users to move around the Web. Not only could Web surfers find things more easily, as new and easier to use technologies were developed for the Internet, but they also found it more convenient to access information, initiate communications, discover entertainment, and more. Subsequently, the Internet diffused into the global society in a big way. This diffusion provided businesses with an understanding of

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