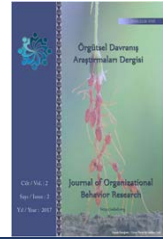




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EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING PERSONALIZED ADVERTISING ON FACEBOOK

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ABSTRACT

In the age of information and communication technology, consumers' attitude toward the creativity of advertising messages is considered as one of the issues in the area of marketing, for which there is not too much information. Thus, the objective of this research was to evaluate the effectiveness of personalized advertising on Facebook. The research population included the Internet users and members of the Facebook social network in Iran, the exact number of which has not been announced. Given the unknown nature of the research population, a sample size of 384 people was randomly selected among Internet users. However, as we did not have a complete list of the target population in order to select the sample randomly, we used the convenient sampling method in this research. The only inclusion criterion of the study is being a member in Facebook. Based on the results obtained, all the hypotheses of the research were approved. In other words, development of a comprehensive model of using personalized advertising in social networks is effective in users' attitudes and behavioral responses (these attitudes and behavioral responses included the consumer perception of the personalization of advertising and advertising credibility), pessimism about advertising, avoiding them, as well as behavioral intentions of consumers with regard to using this advertising for purchasing).

Keywords: The Internet, personalized advertising, social networks, Facebook

INTRODUCTION

Development of the Internet has resulted in the formation of a virtual culture, which involves special form of procedures, community members (citizens) and the way of expressing feelings for those involved in the web production and marketing process (Kamran et al., 2008). While the Internet, as the world's largest computer network, was invented to access the information freely, it was transformed from research tool to one of the widest business facilities in the world, which requires its own advertising methods (Golchin and Bakhtaei, 2006). In the age of information and communication technology, consumers' attitude toward the creativity of advertising messages is considered as one of the issues in the area of marketing, for which there is not too much information. Nowadays, the Internet is an important channel for marketing and advertising. It can be due to the ability of the Internet in reducing the costs and people easy access to online services. Advertisers can also access to large number of users easily and communicate with them at a low cost (Lages, 2004). In this regard, while the Internet has provided an efficient media for advertising, people are looking for maximizing their investment in this regard (Rodgers and Thorson, 2010).

Nowadays, marketers and consumers expand their relationship through a dynamic and new media called Social Network. This is the latest development in advertising products and communication with consumers. Facebook is one of the fast-growing social media. It has made it possible for members of network members to achieve a common idea (Akar & Topcu, 2011; Kim & KO, 2012). Nowadays, advertising is a known industry, which has a profound impact on the introduction of companies to customers and attracting them (Haghighi, Gharloghi, and Nikbakht, 2011). Advertising is one of the most well-known marketing activities, so that researchers view it as a key factor in creating consumer-based brand equity value and a tool which has sustained and cumulative impact on this asset (Ebrahimi, Kkhalifeh, Sami Zadeh and Hosseini, 2013).

Advertising is performed through different media, including newspapers, magazines, radio and television. The Internet has been added to the media used in advertising over the recent years. With start of business activities on the Internet, virtual advertising has also been introduced to this amazing world. Since that time, with development of the Internet software, advertising has been also developed rapidly through the Web. In fact, the potential of online advertising has been formed based on the growth of new models of digital communication and entertainment, social networks, and the Internet television. Recent developments in information and communication technologies and development of new areas of activity as well as new trainings for promoting social activities have drawn the attention of experts in different fields, and the use of the Internet, as the newest and most important technology of our age, is one of the main concerns of big and small business and non-business organizations in the developed and developing countries. The phenomenon of Internet advertising has also emerged in response to these concerns, and since that time, different strategies have been presented for turning traditional advertising into modern advertising. One of the main areas in commercial advertising is internet advertising, and with its new facilities and technology; it has special characteristics for advertising the goods and introducing the manufacturing phenomena (Taheri and Hosseini, 2016). The growth rate of online sales channels has been in line with growth of online advertising costs.

However, the global financial crisis has forced many companies to reduce their marketing budgets. Online advertising increased since 2009 to 2010 by 15%, so that online advertising was over 6.36 billion dollar in 2012 (Dinner , Van Heerde and Neslin, 2014). The mobile device makes it possible to access digital information every time and every place. Hence, these devices allow marketers have an appropriate opportunity to reach consumers directly and continuously (Hongyan & Zhankui, 2017). Moreover, the rapid growth and high popularity of social networks such as Facebook and Instagram highlighted the importance of advertising on the network among internet users and encouraged researchers and marketers to evaluate the effectiveness of using advertising in these settings (Trang, 2017). Advertising strategies have undergone great developments and changes as a result of social networks. At present time, internet marketers use social networks as Facebook to connect consumers with companies and create new opportunities for consumers to obtain information and knowledge on their products and brands.

For this purpose, marketers have used social networks to personalize advertising to make them more attractive to consumers. Thus, we need to have a better understanding of the effectiveness of this new advertising tool and examine the views of consumers on this type of



advertising. With development of modern advertising techniques about 74 years ago, the experts of the area realized its direct effects on community, the effects that images of the newspapers created every day on the mind of people. Nowadays, these images can appear on a computer screen, and even, they can be displayed live in animation and sound.

Nowadays, the Internet is considered as an important channel for marketing and advertising. This can be due to the ability of the Internet in reducing the costs and making it easy for people to access online services. Advertisers can also easily access a large number of users and communicate with them at a low cost (Lages, 2004). Many companies spend billions of dollars on advertising in different media annually. Despite spending these high costs, there is doubt on ability of internet advertising to attract customers through websites and encourage customers to purchase (Lages, 2004). In addition, in comparison with traditional advertising, internet advertising has many advantages, including two-way communication with audience, relatively low cost, global access, and improvement of information, easy updating and accurate targeting. Thus, the attitude toward internet advertising has been determined as a set to evaluate the characteristics and benefits of online advertising (Wang, San, 2010). In a recent study conducted on adolescents' use of social network sites, Kevin et al. (2010) found that there are key factors affecting teenagers' tendency to avoid advertising: (1) Whether users expect a negative experience; (2) whether the advertising is related to the personal taste of the users; (3) the level of doubt of the users towards the advertising, and (4) the level of users' pessimism towards the advertising media.

When a customer is doubtful about the nature of the advertising message, he shows low tendency to that advertising, so he will show higher tendency to avoid it. One of the ways to avoid advertising is switching the channel while broadcasting television advertisements. Accordingly, pessimistic customers do not usually like advertising and find a way to get away with it. Pessimism and doubt regarding personalized advertising may also be due to public distrust towards the marketing tactics designed by marketers, which it involves collecting customer information, including the name of the customer and his personal preferences. However, some users might have a positive outlook on personalized advertising because these advertisings are related to the needs of customers. To attract customers' attention, online marketers of social network sites have used personalized advertising to make them more appealing to customers. Thus, we should know why companies use social media as a marketing tool and why they prefer social networks (such as Facebook) to traditional media (Water et al., 2011). For example, the question of why customers show less resistance to advertisements, and the ways of improving brand awareness are some of the more important questions, which require more studies.

Although researchers have tried to examine the effect of personalized advertising on traditional media (Beak & Morimoto, 2012; Yu and Gude, 2009), the website or mobile phone (Kim & Han, 2014; Xu, 2006), the effect of personalized advertising on Facebook has less been investigated (Keyzer et al, 2015, Tucker, 2014). As Facebook is considered as the most popular social media, and personalization is increasingly used as an advertising strategy, the main objective of this study is to evaluate the effect of personalized advertising on Facebook. Some studies have been carried out in this regard, some of them which are referred below:

Roshandel et al. (2017) designed an advertising model through social media in order to influence the customer's tendency. The results showed that advertising in cyberspace should be



considered and the advertising model should be designed professionally. Yar Ahmadi et al. (2017) examined the attitudes of people towards mobile text messages (case study of Arak people). The results showed that mobile users have a negative attitude toward the use of mobile advertising messages, which could be due to the following reasons: large number of messages, mismatch between text messages and user needs, great effort to cancel the messages, unreliability of messages, and so on.

Orghyani (2016) examined the factors affecting the audience attitudes and behavior towards digital advertising messages and priority of each of these advertisements based on research criteria. The results revealed that television advertising in all criteria has higher priority than other advertisements, and in terms of effectiveness, video advertisement has priority to other advertisements. Jorkesh (2016) evaluated the role of Facebook social media in disseminating the sporting advertising messages in order to attract customers among bachelor students of physical education at Khorasgan Azad University. The results revealed a significant relationship between advertisements on the Facebook social network and the purchasing of goods.

Based on the results of this research, it was found that there is a significant relationship between the attraction of the image (color and design) in Facebook advertising, attractiveness of slogans in Facebook advertising, and the use of celebrities in Facebook advertising, since people would less purchase the goods and services, when attractiveness of the image (color and design), the attractiveness of slogans and the presence of celebrities in Facebook advertisement have less attracted their attention. Given the results of the research, we found that social media has created great development in business and Internet marketing areas. Shareef et al. (2017) examined the marketing of social media and the comparative effect of advertising resources. The results revealed that in social media, the consumer behavior varies in different cultural domains.

As the cultural domain potentially reflects the solidarity of the group members, prioritizing the views of peers in social media can partly affect this cultural characteristic.

Kapp et al. (2014) conducted a study entitled "the role of advertising on Facebook: Great Potential, Great Challenges". The results showed that social networks, especially Facebook, were an innovative place for recruiting participants for research and advertising played a major role on Facebook's social network. Yakoop et al. (2013) examined the issue of credibility in Facebook advertising. The results revealed that there are three online factors, which significantly influence the attitude of consumers towards Facebook advertising. They included factors affecting interaction, avoiding advertising and protecting the privacy. Surprisingly, interaction is not a major factor in predicting consumer attitudes toward Facebook advertising. Khang et al. (2012) examined the role of social media in advertising, communication, marketing and public relations. The results revealed that great number of studies focused on social media. Social media has attracted the attention of great number of people and media has affected the life of people.

METHODOLOGY

In general, research methods in behavioral science can be divided based on two criteria of the research objective and the way of collecting the data. Based on the objective, research is divided into fundamental and applied studies. As the main objective of this research is to



evaluate the effectiveness of using personalized advertising on Facebook, it can be stated that the present research is applied research in terms of the research objective. Moreover, as library methods and field methods such as questionnaires were used in this research, it can be stated that the present study is survey type of descriptive study in terms of nature and method. The research population included the Internet users in Iran and members of the Facebook social network, for which the exact number was not announced. In this research, the Cochran formula was used to calculate the sample size, and the sample size is 384 given the uncertainty of the research population, selected randomly among Internet users. However, as we do not have a complete list of the target population, convenient sampling was used in this research. The only inclusion criterion in this research was membership in Facebook.

Research tool

In this research, a researcher-developed questionnaire with advertising avoidance dimensions (with 5 questions), pessimism about advertising (developmental) (with 9 questions), perception of personalization (reflective) (with 5 question), advertising credibility (developmental) (with 3 questions), advertising attitude (reflective) (with 3 questions), and behavioral intention (reflective) (with 3 questions) was used. The reliability of the questionnaire was obtained higher than 0.70%, so its reliability is confirmed, and the validity of the questionnaire was also reported at desirable level. For data analysis, descriptive statistics (central tendency, distribution tendency and distribution form) were used. SPSS 24 software and regression and correlation were also used for inferential analysis of the results.

RESULTS

In this research, the following results were obtained after the evaluation:

The highest frequency of respondents in terms of age belonged to age group of 36 to 45 years with a frequency percentage of 52.9.

The highest frequency for duration of using the Internet belonged to group of 3 to 5 hours with frequency percentage of 31.3%.

The highest frequency of respondents in terms of gender belonged to the female group with a frequency percentage of 62.5.

The highest frequency of respondents in terms of level of education belonged to the bachelor degree with a frequency percentage of 43.2.

The highest frequency of respondents in terms of income was from 2 to 3 million, with a frequency of 33.3.

The highest frequency for the use of the Internet during the day was from 1 to 3 hours, with a prevalence of 37.2%.

The highest frequency of respondents in terms of level of income belonged to 20 to 30 million Rials with a frequency percentage of 33.3.

The highest frequency for the duration of using Internet during the day belonged to 1 to 3 hours with frequency percentage of 37.2%.

The highest frequency for membership in websites belonged to the Telegram program with a frequency percentage of 30.2%.

Data frequency



Table 1: results were obtained after the evaluation

Variable		Frequency	frequency percentage
age	Less than 25	7	1.8
	26-35	96	25
	36-45	203	52.9
	Over 46	78	20.3
gender	male	240	62.5
	female	144	37.5
Duration of using internet	Less than 1 hour	7	1.8
	1-3	98	25.5
	3 to 5	120	31.3
	5 to 7	117	30.5
	Over 7	42	10.9
Education	High school and lower	28	7.3
	associate	27	7
	bachelor	166	43.2
	Master and higher	163	42.4
Income level	Less than 10 million Rials	84	21.9
	10 to 20 million Rials	100	26
	2 to 3 million Rials	128	33.3
	Over 3 million Rials	72	18.8
Membership	Less than 1 hour	93	24.2
	1 to 3 hours	143	37.2
	3 to 5 hours	48	12.5
	5 to 7 hours	12	3.1
	More than 7 hours	46	12
	Without using	42	10.9
	Facebook	84	21.9
	Instagram	100	26
	Telegram	116	30.2
	Snap chat	72	18.8
	Twitter	12	3.1

After examining the hypotheses, the results showed that:

1. If the consumer believes that the advertisement has been personalized, his avoidance from advertising would decrease.

In testing this hypothesis, the results showed that the correlation between these two variables (personalization of advertising and advertising avoidance) is 0.792, and the level of effect of independent variable of personalization on the dependent variable of avoidance is 25.326, indicating its high effect on dependent variable.

2. If the consumer believes that the advertisement has been personalized, his pessimism towards advertising would decrease.

In testing this hypothesis, the results showed that the correlation between these two variables (personalization of advertising and pessimism towards advertising) is 0.909, and the level of effect of independent variable of personalization on the dependent variable of pessimism is 42.713, indicating its high effect on dependent variable.

3. The consumer's belief in the personalization of advertising has a positive effect on his attitude towards advertising.

In testing this hypothesis, the results showed that the correlation between these two variables (personalization of advertising and attitude toward the advertising) is 0.726, and the effect level of the independent variable of personalization on the dependent variable of attitude is 20.622, indicating its high effect on dependent variable.

4. The consumer's belief in the personalization of advertising has a positive effect on credibility of advertising.

In testing this hypothesis, the results showed that the correlation between these two variables (personalization of advertising and credibility of advertising) is 0.741, and the effect level of the independent variable of personalization on the dependent variable of credibility of advertising is 21.548, indicating its high effect on dependent variable.

5. Pessimism to advertising on Facebook has a positive effect on advertising avoidance.

In testing this hypothesis, the results showed that the correlation between these two variables (pessimism in advertising and advertising avoidance) is 0.883, and the effect level of the independent variable of pessimism on the dependent variable is 36.766, indicating its high effect on dependent variable.

6. Pessimism to advertising on Facebook has a negative effect on attitude towards advertising.

In testing this hypothesis, the results showed that the correlation between these two variables (pessimism in advertising and attitude towards advertising) is 0.823, and the effect level of the independent variable of pessimism on the dependent variable of attitude is 28.265, indicating its high effect on dependent variable.

7. The credibility of advertising on Facebook is effective in reducing the avoidance of advertising

In testing this hypothesis, the results showed that the correlation between these two variables (credibility of advertising and the avoidance of advertising) is 0.914, and the effect of the independent variable of credibility on the dependent variable of avoidance is 44.143, indicating its high effect on dependent variable.

8. The credibility of advertising on Facebook is effective in reducing the pessimism to advertising

In testing this hypothesis, the results showed that the correlation between these two variables (credibility of advertising and the pessimism to advertising) is 0.814, and the effect of the independent variable of credibility on the dependent variable of pessimism to advertising is 27.432, indicating its high effect on dependent variable.

9. The credibility of advertising on Facebook is associated with positive attitude towards the advertising

In testing this hypothesis, the results showed that the correlation between these two variables (credibility of advertising and the attitude towards the advertising) is 0.798, and the effect of the independent variable of credibility on the dependent variable of attitude towards the advertising to advertising is 25.882, indicating its high effect on dependent variable.

10. Avoidance of advertising on Facebook has a negative effect on the attitude toward advertising.

In testing this hypothesis, the results showed that the correlation between these two variables (avoidance of advertising and advertising attitude) is 0.798, and the effect level of the



independent variable of avoidance of advertising on the dependent variable of attitude is 25.882, indicating its high effect of dependent variable.

11. There is a positive relationship between the attitude of advertising on Facebook and consumer behavioral intentions regarding the use of advertising for the purchase of products.

In testing this hypothesis, the results showed that the correlation between these two variables (attitude towards advertising and behavioral intentions) is 0.759, and the effect of independent variable of attitude on the dependent variable of behavioral intentions is 22.813, indicating its high effect on dependent variable.

12. The credibility of advertising acts as a mediator in the relationship between belief in the personalization of advertising and the attitude towards advertising on Facebook.

In testing this hypothesis, the results showed that the correlation between these three variables (personalization of advertising and attitude toward advertising and credibility) is 0.823 and the level of effect of the independent variable of personalization with mediating role of credibility is 6.888, that is, it was reduced as a result of mediating role of the mediating role of credibility. It suggests the effectiveness of credibility variable as mediating variable in the relationship between two variables of personalization and attitude.

13. The pessimism acts as a mediator in the relationship between belief in the personalization of advertising and the attitude towards advertising on Facebook.

In testing this hypothesis, the results showed that the correlation between these three variables (personalization of advertising and attitude toward advertising and pessimism) is 0.824 and the level of effect of the independent variable of personalization with mediating role of pessimism is 1.834, which this effect was lost due to presence of mediating variable. It suggests the effectiveness of pessimism variable as mediating variable in the relationship between two variables of personalization and attitude.

14. The avoidance acts as a mediator in the relationship between belief in the personalization of advertising and the attitude towards advertising on Facebook.

In testing this hypothesis, the results showed that the correlation between these three variables (personalization of advertising and attitude toward advertising and avoidance) is 0.893 and the level of effect of the independent variable of personalization with mediating role of pessimism is 1.366, which this effect was lost due to presence of mediating variable. It suggests the effectiveness of avoidance variable as mediating variable in the relationship between two variables of personalization and attitude.

Table 2: results were obtained after the evaluation

Estimation of standard error	R ²	R ²	R	model
2.58150	.626	.627	.792	1
1.98313	.826	.827	.909	1
1.22863	.526	.527	.726	1
1.21823	.547	.549	.741	1
1.98335	.779	.780	.883	1
1.01584	0.676	.677	.823	1
1.71064	.836	.836	.914	1
2.76561	.662	.663	.814	1

1.07634	.636	.637	.798	1
0.80550	.796	.797	.893	1
1.16206	0.576	.577	.759	1

CONCLUSION

The effect of personalized advertising on the attitude of customers towards mobile and website advertising was examined. Customers are able to find more relevant advertisements through personalized advertising, relying on their preferences or interests. The key benefits associated with personalized advertising include appropriate attitude toward online advertising and the possibility of more purchases. In a social network site such as Facebook, personalization is expected to have a positive attitude towards advertising, which in turn, leads to purchase of advertised products or items. This means that it is more likely that customers will invest in information claims seen in advertisements, such as examining the website or viewing the advertised product (Tran, 2017). Advertising on the Internet is growing increasingly and its capabilities and benefits in targeting the customers and the follow up of the marketing process up to the stage of sales of goods and products have made it one of the most influential advertising systems (Mozaffari, 2013).

Marketing as an operational and dynamic science is adapting to the developments created as a result of information revolution. The core of these developments is the emergence of a new media (the Internet). The impact of Internet existential components in the area of marketing stresses on the need to redefine the key factors of that area. Development of a new marketing concept called "Internet Marketing", under the philosophy of relational marketing, focusing on meeting individual customer needs, creating value for the customer, and developing a communications and interactions among the companies and individuals, is the result of this perspective (Bagheri, 2005). The social network such as Facebook is the most relevant and most commercialized global social network and the third largest assembly of global human community after China and India, and the first intelligent human community with demographic, job, and age diversity. The intelligent business should be based on knowledge engineering and information architecture. In the electronic marketing world, new business models are introduced and new trends are emerging.

One of the latest trends is the social network websites attracting great number of users and visitors. It is also a place for online advertising companies. Social networks associate people with a variety of interests and it is one of the most developing and expanding areas in the use of social networks in corporate environments. While researchers have tried to examine the effect of personalized advertising in traditional media (Beak & Morimoto, 2012; Yu and Gude, 2009), the website or phone (Kim & Han, 2014; Xu, 2006), the effect of personalized advertising on Facebook has rarely examined (Keyzer et al., 2015; Tucker, 2014). Given the fact that Facebook is considered as one of the most popular social media and personalization is increasingly being used as an advertising strategy, examining the effectiveness of using personalized advertising on Facebook was examined in this study.

In a research entitled "evaluation of the role of Facebook social network in dissemination of advertising messages for attracting audiences", Taravati (2014) showed that most people spend 2 to 6 hours in the Internet and less than 1 hour of Facebook during one day. The most



important reason for their use of Facebook is to obtain information and news. Most of them did not see the Facebook social network advertisements, and social network advertisements on Facebook did not provide much information on new products or services. A few of them have taken step to purchase the goods or services by seeing advertisements (video or video teaser) on the Facebook social network. They found that people do not trust the Facebook social network advertisements (advertising pages and groups). Velvi et al. (2014) evaluated the effectiveness of product advertising and increased consumer intention to purchase in the online social networks of Tehran Azad University students. The results showed that advertising images and brand equity significantly affect consumers' purchasing intention. In a study conducted by Zarei et al. (2015) under the title of "The effect of perceptions of creativity of advertising messages on attitude and reaction of consumers", results showed that the perception of creativity of advertising message had significant impact on attitude and reaction of consumers to advertising messages sent to their mobile phones, while the perception of the creativity of the advertising message indirectly and through the mediating variable of attitude affects consumers' behavioral responses.

Jahanian and Salehi (2015) derived the components of Internet marketing mix and the results showed that Internet-based marketing, in addition to the traditional marketing mix, requires more elements such as personalization, service, site and security. Kan (2010) evaluated the effect of gender on online advertising in Taiwan. The results of this research revealed that for more complex products, people have more favorable attitude towards the advertising with interactive capability and for products with less complexity, people have more favorable attitude for advertising with less interactive capability. Moreover, it was found than males, compared to females, had more favorable attitude toward the internet-based advertising with interactive capability and females showed more favorable attitude towards the internet advertising with less interactive capability. Kelly et al. (2010) evaluated the avoidance of advertising on social network sites. The research model showed that advertising in online social network settings had a great impact on individuals and audiences so that people had less authority facing with the advertisements in the social sites and they are attracted by the advertisements in the various sites. Yakoop et al. (2013) examined the issue of credibility in Facebook advertising. The results revealed that there are three online factors, which significantly influence the attitude of consumers towards Facebook advertising. They included factors affecting interaction, avoiding advertising and protecting the privacy. Surprisingly, interaction is not a major factor in predicting consumer attitudes toward Facebook advertising. Kapp et al (2014) examined the role of advertising on Facebook: Great Potential, Great Challenges. The results revealed that social networks, especially Facebook, were an innovative place for recruiting participants for research and advertising played a major role on Facebook social network.

Therefore, the results of this research are in line with those of other studies.

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