



Article Title

What type of online advertising is most effective for eTourism 2.0? An eye tracking study based on the characteristics of tourists.

Citation

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine the effectiveness of online advertising on different sites under the Web 2.0 philosophy in the hospitality and tourism industry (eTourism 2.0). First, an analysis is conducted of the type of elements contained in a banner (image vs. text) used in different eTourism 2.0 tools have a greater influence on the attention of potential tourists of a hotel, and secondly, what kinds of banners draw their attention more (static vs. animated).

Besides, these differences have been assessed according to different variables for classifying potential tourists (gender, age and experience level with these tools). In order to achieve this objective, a mixed experimental design was created, following an eye-tracking method and a self-administered questionnaire. Some interesting results reveal that tourists take longer periods and higher prior fixations to notice the text than the image. And it was found that participants fixate first on the static banner. The findings suggest interesting future research path on effectiveness of advertising on eTourism tools, and can help improve tourism business processes in terms of optimizing their advertising campaigns, considering the characteristics of the tourists that visit these websites.

Summary

It was found that participants fixate first on the static banner. This can be explained by the fact that the presence of animation alerts users of the existence of advertising in that spot and lead them to adopt a behavior of rejection and psychological reactance towards it.

Regarding the classification variables, firstly, participants' duration of fixation on the banner does not reflect significant differences when comparing gender, experience level and type of advertisement. In this case, it was confirmed that men and women behave similarly when paying attention to the banner. These results coincide with the results of prior studies.

And it is confirmed that experience level did not influence the attention paid to the banner either. In terms of age, it was found that young people take longer to reach the banner than older people. Besides, once they reach the text of the eTourism 2.0 tool, younger people tend to view it for longer periods of time than older people. These results contradict other research, which has confirmed that older people stay on sites with advertisement content for longer periods of time.

The findings suggest interesting future research path on effectiveness of advertising on the Web tools developed and can help improve tourism business processes for optimizing advertising campaigns, by taking into account the characteristics of the tourists visiting these website tools.

Secondly, this study provides guidance to managers wishing to understand the importance of the effects of celebrity trust on advertising credibility and brand credibility. Based on the outcomes from this study, managers can understand how important a highly trusted celebrity can be in building the credibility of advertising and brand. A highly trusted celebrity can have a positive effect on advertising an brand, while a celebrity with low levels of trust can badly damage linked constructs or entities. However, this study has not shown that celebrity trust has any effect on corporate credibility. One of the reasons could be that each corporation has many brands, making it harder to associate a celebrity with the corporation. Managers can earn fruitful lessons in understanding how a celebrity endorser can be useful for corporations with different and similar names to the brands. It can also help them in understanding the benefits and limitations of each scenario.

Thirdly, this study helps managers to understand the impact of consumer demographics on the effects of celebrity trust. This can assist them in recruiting celebrities who match consumers' requirements. For example, the outcomes suggest that black consumers prefer black celebrities, while non-black consumers have equal preference for both black and non-black celebrities. On the basis of these findings, it becomes essential for marketers to include black celebrities among their celebrity endorsers in multi-ethnic countries or in countries where there is a significant minority of black consumers, such as the US, UK, France, and so on. It will also help brands and corporations to illustrate ethical norms and gain respect from consumers with diverse backgrounds.

In addition, brands and corporations can improve their access to a diverse and enormous market, which can also help them to come up with new lines and brand extensions for the vast number of ethnic minority consumers.