AVOIDANCE FACTORS AGAINST ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS

[Muhammad Helmi bin Abu Bakar [1], Mohd Asyiek bin Mat Desa [2], Muhizam bin Mustafa [3]]

Abstract— **This study explains the factors related to the avoidance of an advertisement by consumers. Factors that contribute to the avoidance of advertisements are important, as they lead to helping designers to design better and more effective advertisements. The results of this study have affirmed the factors related to the avoidance of advertisements by consumers. These factors are a good guidance for stakeholders, such as designers, educators, students, etc., to design better advertisements. These factors also serve as a direction for stakeholders to take, in order to increase the effectiveness of information delivery to consumers.**

Keywords— *Avoidance, Visual Complexity, Orientation*

I. Introduction

Advertising is a means to promote awareness about companies, products, services, or ideas to consumers [1]. This vehicle or instrument is imperative to aid marketers in selling their products to consumers. Therefore, in order for marketers to gain their desired returns, they first have to establish the consumer's alertness to the product or services being offered. As mentioned by Barroso and Llobet [2], comprehending the progressive result of advertising awareness or alertness on consumers is crucial. This shows that advertising has a direct significant impact on consumers' awareness to the products being advertised. Advertising is also known as a medium of communication, used to circulate facts about products publicly, and drive action among consumers. As stated by Zigmond and Stipp [3], advertising is proposed to stimulate consumers to respond to some action, based on the message being delivered. This means that advertising has a compelling effect on driving consumers to take necessary action.

Avoidance against advertising has become a major obstacle for marketers in delivering words about products to consumers. Previous studies have confirmed that consumers evade observing the advertisements being displayed. In this regard, Schwaiger et al., [4] stated that advertising which is being displayed on the net is effortlessly overlook, compared to printed ads. This is due to the features provided by the sites that allow consumers to interact easily with all elements to move from one page to another. These kinds of elements drive consumers to easily overlook advertisements being displayed on the net. In line with that, R Pieters et al. [5], stated that it has become a demanding effort for companies to earn marketing aim, as a result of strong avoidance against ads.

Muhammad Helmi bin Abu Bakar [1], Mohd Asyiek bin Mat Desa [2],
Muhizam bin Mustafa [3] Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang (USM)
Malaysia

II. Literature Review

Effective advertisements are able to create awareness among consumers towards the products being marketed. They also have a direct impact on increasing the strength of brand-recall by consumers. As reported by Niazi et al. [6], effective advertisement factors have the ability to aid the consumers' recollection of the product being marketed. Recollection of the product is paramount in driving consumers to make the next decision, which is to possess the product being marketed. This is only achieved once the consumer is aware of and recollects the product (or brand) being advertised. An advertisement that has the power to encourage consumers to take positive steps towards acquiring the marketed product is considered to be a successful advertisement. In order to achieve this, an advertisement needs to be recognized by consumers at the very beginning of the promotion process. As concluded by Campbell et al. [7], a successful advertisement is considered capable of obtaining consumers' attention towards the displayed ads. Advertisements need to be attentive in consideration, in order to be successful in delivering messages to consumers.

However, avoidance is a significant problem for marketers in distributing the facts about a product to consumers. As reported by Kelly et al. [8], advertising avoidance refers to the reactions of users in minimizing disclosure to an advertisement. A previous study stated that avoidance of advertising is a way in which the consumer limits their exposure to the displayed advertisement. Therefore, this kind of behaviour has a negative impact on the marketing process. Basically, consumers will not be aware of the advertisement being presented to them; as there is no attention given to the advertisement. Conforming to that, Lee[9] stated that no further action will be considered by the consumer in making a positive judgment related to the decision to buy the product; if no attention is given. In conclusion, attention forms the early steps of the marketing process and will be the most crucial approach to ensure consumer's awareness about the product being marketed. Therefore, studies concerning the factors that contribute to advertisement avoidance are important, as they will provide a relevant approach to addressing the fundamental problem.

III. Method

The purpose of this study is to analyse the factors that lead to advertisement avoidance by consumers. In this study, document analysis was used to identify the contributing

factors. Furthermore, this study will serve as a review of previous studies and will be a good guidance for other researchers and designers to determine factors that lead to ineffective advertisements. For this reason, a qualitative research method was chosen and executed by reviewing previous research documents. All documents regarding Internet advertising, eye tracking studies, and social networking advertisement studies were analysed. Figure 1 outlines the structure of this study. This study used a frequency table to analyse all of the documents stated and the factors concerning advertisement avoidance resulting from this study.
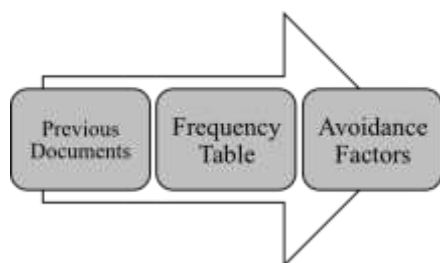

Figure 1: Research Framework

IV. **Result and Discussion**

This study focuses on the factors that contribute to the occurrence of advertisement avoidance activities. Based on the analysis, advertising avoidance can be collated into two major parts; human factors and design factors. This section will discuss the matters that contribute to advertisement avoidance.

A. *Human Factors*

Consumers were previously identified as having the ability to neglect or avoid advertisements [8]. This shows that consumers do have the power to ignore advertisements. Consumers have a tendency of blocking from view the advertisements being displayed to them. Because no attention will be given to any advertisement being displayed, the objective to create awareness about products or services will not be achieved. This section looks at the factors leading towards advertising avoidance, caused by the consumers themselves.

i. Information Searching Method

Searching for information on a website directly impacts the avoidance of advertisements by consumers, due to the approach used that affects attention to the advertisement [10]. Kim et al. [10], mentioned that directed and exploratory searches are two information search methods. These information search methods have a significant impact on the attention given to an advertisement, presented on a site. In the event of a directed search or a goal driven search, consumers tend to look for the specific information needed [11]. Consumers simply avoid advertisements as a result of the definite search for the information desired. Consumers only focus on fulfilling their goal to seek the information needed.

Consequently, their eyes will not be directed towards other advertisements on the site. However, exploratory searches for information are different, in that consumers are freer to browse sites where other information and advertisements are displayed. Kim et al. [10], state that exploratory searches are stimulus driven, whereby consumers are more affected by features, like size, colour, novelty, complexity, and vividness. Therefore, advertisements that include these features will be noticed by consumers. In line with this, Simola et al. [12], suggested that consumers focus more on advertisements and more time is given to examine them during free browsing. For that reason, free browsing or exploratory searches affect consumers more towards advertisements than other information being displayed, because noticeable features are included within the advertisements.

ii. Consumers' Attitude

Consumers' attitude or behaviour also affects how they look at advertisements. Ferreira et al. [13], reported that previous studies showed that consumers avoid looking at advertisements as a mental judgment, to avoid giving any attention to them [14]. This shows that consumers' behaviour really affects making the decision of whether to look at or ignore advertisements. It is therefore a decision made by the consumers themselves. Based on that, Azizul[15] states that advertising avoidance is the force of consumers in lowering the disclosure to advertisements. This is basically the will of the consumers to reduce their exposure to advertisements. This kind of attitude impacts advertisement avoidance and directly affects the awareness of the product being advertised.

B. *Design Factors*

Besides human factors, the design of an advertisement also has a certain influence on the consumers' attention. The next section discusses matters regarding the design of advertisements, which have a significant effect on attention. This section will look at the visual complexity of an advertisement's design, design clutter in an advertisement, and advertisement orientation.

i. Visual Complexity

Visual complexity refers to the quantity of elements being organized in a display. According to Stickel et al. [16], visual complexity relies on the number and variety of elements in a display; whereby those with a higher number of elements and details are considered as high in complexity [5]. Furthermore, complexity level in a design has an explicit impact on consumers' attention to advertisements. Based on that, advertisements with an intricate design, which consist of a variety of visual features, colours, luminance, etc., are considered complex and have negative impacts on attention. This shows that advertisements with more complex designs will be easily ignored by consumers, compared to those that are less complex. Therefore, designers should consider the number of elements in a design, in order to limit the complexity level of that design.

ii. Advertisement Orientation

Orientation or location of an advertisement on a site also has a certain impact on consumers' attention. Barreto[11] concluded that consumers have a particular style of browsing that affects the way they view the information placed on the site. Consumers view a site in an F-shaped style, as confirmed by a study done using an eye tracking device [17]. For this reason, consumers ignore advertisements that are placed outside of the F-shaped area's view. Therefore, attention will not be given to these advertisements and consumers will be unaware of the products being promoted.

v.   **Conclusion**

The findings from this analysis are a good guide for designers to plan better advertisements and create more effective promotional tools to market their products to consumers. As stated previously, advertisement avoidance is a major problem for marketers, and as such, greatly affects the marketing cycle. Therefore, designers should consider the factors that cause advertisement avoidance; before designing a promotional tool. This will ensure that the designed advertisements will not be wasted and that the marketing goal will be achieved more easily. In conclusion, all human and design factors should be viewed seriously, as they have a significant effect on consumers' attention of the designed advertisement.

Acknowledgment

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About Author (s):

Muhammad Helmi bin Abu Bakar is one of the lecturers at the Jasin Community College, Melaka, Malaysia in the field of Multimedia Advertising. He started his career in 2004. His background is in Information Technology majoring in Multimedia Studies. Presently, he is pursuing his doctoral degree at Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang.

Mohd Asyiek bin Mat Desa, PhD is one of the lecturer at the School of Arts, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia. He started his career as an academician since 2002. He completed his doctorate degree in Design at Swinburne University of Technology, Australia.

Muhizam Mustafa was a lecturer with the Visual Communication faculty of Birmingham Institute of Art and Design, Birmingham City University, with teaching experiences in Hong Kong and in Bangkok before joining the School of the Arts, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang in 2009. His background in Art and Architecture has led him to research on Public Art and its impact on social, political and economic development. He attained his PhD from Birmingham Institute Art and Design, Birmingham City University with his thesis titled 'Public Art in Malaysia: A Case study of Putrajaya'.