

UNDERSTANDING USER VIEWING BEHAVIOR WITH REGARD TO ONLINE NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING

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There are several types of newspapers in circulation: local/regional, large metropolitan, national newspapers, and free newspapers (e.g., Pennysavers). The Internet has become an important mode of communication and as such, newspapers are taking advantage of publishing news content using this online medium. Print newspapers as well as electronic papers receive most of their revenue from advertisements. However, in the online medium, the majority of the revenue comes from classified advertisements as opposed to more traditional Web advertisements, such as pop-ups, pop-unders, interstitials, banners, and videos. Classified advertisements such as want ads are more directed, or task based, and usually consists of only text. They have a targeted audience, which requires people to visit these ads for a purpose. Web advertisements are text and graphical based. They are visual attention grabbers used to reach a wider audience.

The purpose of the study will be to understand how users behave towards advertisements in an online setting reading the newspaper. Since print newspapers make money through subscriptions whereas the online papers do not, it is important to understand the role of Web ads since they can make up the lost revenue from print subscription fees. We will also evaluate the effectiveness of Web ads beyond click-through. This two-part study includes: 1 - conducting a survey to identify the characteristics of a target audience who regularly read the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle online, and 2 - using eye-tracking to understand this targeted populations' viewing behavior. We will draw conclusions based on the results so that companies will be able to advertise more effectively and get better value for their money in this medium.