

Options For Online Video Ad Viewers Lead To Greater Engagement

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Interactive overlays, dismissible pre-roll offer greater engagement

Unlike TV, the internet affords marketers more than just a platform for message dissemination; it provides a channel through which users can simultaneously view and engage with a brand, product or service.

Still, many marketers have yet to embrace this interactivity; instead, they continue to adapt the broadcast TV ad model, expecting viewers to endure in-video advertisements as the common currency for free viewing.

In addition, advertisers often base video ad spending decisions on traditional broadcast view and impression-based metrics, according to video ad network BrightRoll.

But findings from online video ad provider AdoTube suggest marketers who offer video viewers more choice in their ad consumption are likely to draw greater ad interest—and ultimately engagement—for their brand.

AdoTube found that in Q1 2011 interactive overlays saw a significantly higher clickthrough rate (CTR) than less engaging branded overlays: 1.86% vs. 0.53%, respectively.

Branded overlay was defined as an in-video advertisement overlaid on the bottom third of the video screen. An interactive overlay is similar to a branded overlay but also includes elements like social networking buttons and other sharing capabilities.

Interactive overlays offer marketers an additional gauge of how users are responding to their message and interacting with their brand, much more so than viewthrough alone. According to Break Media, 40% of North American advertisers will use video ad overlays this year.

AdoTube saw a steady increase in overlay ads in 2010. In Q1 2011, however, overlays appear to be giving way to another type of ad that offers viewers greater choice—the dismissible pre-roll.

Pre-rolls are the most common video ad units, according to Break Media and the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB).

Dismissible pre-rolls like AdoTube's aptly named Polite Pre-Roll are relatively new to video advertising but are undoubtedly welcomed by viewers. But for advertisers looking to maintain maximum viewthrough metrics, this open invitation to skip ads is cause for concern.

According to a February 22, 2011, article on ClickZ, only 35% of viewers elected to watch YouTube's newer dismissible pre-roll ads, called TrueView, to completion for advertiser GoPro.

For AdoTube's skippable pre-roll, that number was closer to 45% for Q1 2011. Though these percentages are low, user opt-in—as seen in any interactive channel like email or social media—signals a much more valuable and engaged audience.

Yet for standard pre-roll ads, viewthroughs were only slightly higher (51%). Still, dismissible pre-roll ads outperformed standard pre-rolls in CTR and engagement rate, again illustrating that when given choice, viewers are more likely to interact and engage with video ads.

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