Consumers, Marketers Disagree On Effective Ads

Contributed by eMarketer
Thursday, 15 November 2012
Last Updated Thursday, 15 November 2012

Internet users think TV ads are more effective than online placements

Even while marketers have taken strongly to digital advertising, they havenâ€™t abandoned traditional media by any meansâ€”TV still takes the largest share of ad dollars in the US, and its percentage of the total isnâ€™t slipping.

But with the measurability inherent in online ads, confidence in their efficacy is generally high.

In an October Adobe survey of marketers and consumers, US marketers even rated online ads better than TV adsâ€”though just barely, with 51% saying that they were more effective. But consumers appeared stuck in the past, with about two-thirds claiming TV commercials were more effective.

Consumers also appear to like seeing ads in traditional media better than on newer digital devices. Asked about their preferred venue for ads, 45% said they liked seeing them in their favorite print magazine and 23% on their favorite TV show, compared to just 11% who chose favorite websites, 3% who chose social media and 2% who liked to see ads in digital magazines.

Marketers and the consumers they are trying to reach disagreed on the effectiveness of a wide variety of ad types, according to the survey. Though both groups thought the best ads were those created by professional marketers, nearly half of marketers said this, compared with just 36% of internet users.

There was large disagreement about the effectiveness of paid search ads (touted by marketers, played down by web users) and outdoor advertising (the reverse). Internet users were also much more likely to say there were no good or effective adsâ€”positions which marketers were extremely unlikely to hold, for obvious reasons.

So what did consumers like? Nearly three-quarters thought ads should â€œtell a unique story, not just try to sell,â€• while about two-thirds said videos and user product reviews were good and that in-store experiences were more important than online ones.

The message for marketers may appear mixed, but itâ€™s not exactly news that consumers donâ€™t love to see advertisingâ€™ that they consider information from people they trust better than a hard sell.

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