

## Exploring Consumers Attitude towards Web Advertising and its Influence on Web Ad Usage in Malaysia

*(Meneroka Sikap Pengguna terhadap Periklanan Laman Sesawang dan Pengaruhnya ke atas Penggunaan Iklan di Malaysia)*

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### ABSTRACT

*The digital age has already made significant changes to each of the elements of the promotion mix. Companies increasingly see the Internet as an important medium through which advertising messages can be directed towards consumers. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, consumers have more control over advertising exposure with web advertising because they can select how much commercial content they wish to view. However, very little is known of consumer beliefs about Web advertising, attitudes toward Web advertising or Web advertising associated with consumer behaviour in Malaysia. By adopting and applying Korgaonkar, Silverbatt and O'Leary's measurements, this paper explores Web users' beliefs, attitudes and use of Web advertising. The descriptive statistics, cross tabulation, factor analysis results as well as regression analysis and its implications on the findings are discussed.*

### ABSTRAK

*Zaman digital telahpun menghasilkan perubahan yang signifikan ke atas setiap satu elemen campuran promosi. Syarikat telah mula melihat Internet sebagai satu medium yang penting untuk menyampaikan mesej periklanan kepada para pengguna. Dalam kurun yang ke-21 ini, pengguna mempunyai kawalan yang lebih ke atas pendedahan periklanan melalui laman sesawang kerana mereka boleh memilih kandungan komersil yang mereka inginkan. Bagaimanapun, sehingga kini terlalu sedikit yang telah diketahui berhubung dengan aspek kepercayaan pengguna kepada periklanan melalui medium internet, sikap terhadap periklanan laman sesawang dan perkaitan antara periklanan laman sesawang dengan kelakuan pengguna di Malaysia. Dengan menggunakan pengukuran oleh Korgaonkar, Silverbatt and O'Leary, artikel ini meneroka faktor kepercayaan, sikap dan penggunaan periklanan laman sesawang. Penemuan daripada analisis diskriptif, tabulasi silang, analisis faktor dan analisis regresi dan implikasinya juga dibincangkan.*

### INTRODUCTION

Advertising is involved with economic and social effects that cover two main functions - the provision of information and persuasion (Norris 1984). Companies increasingly see the Internet as an important medium through which advertising messages can be directed towards consumers. Strauss and Frost (2001) explained that marketing communications consisting of sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing and advertising comprise an important element of e-commerce strategy, where electronic marketers use these tools to create brand awareness, preference and selection. In 10-15 years in the future of advertising industry, web advertising will have the most important influence (Ducoffe 1996). The Internet is a communication medium, allowing companies to create awareness, provide information and influence attitudes. Advertising on the web can be useful in creating awareness of an organization as well as its specific product and service offerings. It also offers the opportunity to create awareness well beyond what might be achieved through traditional media

(Belch & Belch 1998). In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, consumers have more control over advertising exposure with web advertising because they can select how much commercial content they wish to view. Consumers can gather pricing information, participate in product design, explore promotions, arrange delivery, sales and receive post-purchase support.

Advertising is one of the main approaches firms employ to manage demand risk by raising awareness of their products. Concerns about consumer behaviour are well founded. Although some research has reported that users find information is helpful when presented in an enjoyable context, many of these studies report that consumers develop such as a negative attitude towards the ads that they avoid them whenever possible (Abernethy 1991). In the mid 1990s, the World Wide Web emerged as a new tool for reaching consumers and provided a variety of technologies for influencing opinions, and wants (Boudreau & Watson 2006). There is still minimal published research available on consumer's evaluation of web advertising. This information is valuable for marketers to make decisions in determining their media

mix. It is also important for academicians to further understand and find out more about the perceived position of web advertising among local web users. Beliefs concerning specific attributes or consequences that are activated and form the basis of an attitude are referred to as salient beliefs. Thus, it is very important for marketers to identify and understand these salient beliefs. By recognizing that the salient beliefs vary among different market segments, demographic traits, different consumption or usage situations, and from time to time will help marketers develop a suitable and appropriate strategy for their advertising. It should be noted that currently there is no previous research that attempts to demonstrate how Malaysian Internet users perceive web advertising, despite the increasing number of consumers using the web. The primary goal of this study is to explore and gain an understanding of Internet users' beliefs about, and attitude formation towards, web advertising and Web Ad usage in Malaysia. This can be achieved through the following objectives:

1. To identify the major components of web ad beliefs as perceived by web users.
2. To determine the factor of web ad beliefs that influence the activity of i) click on web ad, ii) pay close attention towards web ad and iii) ignore the web ad.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### WEB ADVERTISING

Kotler and Keller (2001) defined advertising as any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services by an identified sponsor. Web advertisement consists of impersonal commercial content paid by sponsors, designed for audiences, delivered by video, print and audio. Further to its broad form it ranges from corporate logos, banners, pop-up message, email messages and text-based hyperlinks to official web sites (Ducoffee 1996; Schlosser et al. 1999). A more effective form of Internet advertising recognizes that Internet traffic is concentrated around a relatively small number of high content sites or through portals, which are the access gateways that Internet users have as their starting point to surf the net. These sites are particularly attractive to advertisers, who are increasingly anxious to market their products on them. Banners are advertising space on the website that carry advertisements and are often animated in order to attract users to click on the relevant page on the advertiser's own web site (O'Connor & Galvin 2001). Web ads can be standalone or part of a larger web site that may also serve other functions like customer support, distribution and social service. Many e-marketers prefer customers or web users to visit their web ad as by visiting it will increase or build traffic at their web sites. The complexity of the web site background will influence

consumer attitudes and simpler web sites are found to have a significantly positive impact on consumer attitude towards the advertisement and brand (Bruner and Kumar 2000). The crucial role of advertising in informing and persuading consumers, therefore, is categorized as an important part of electronic communications strategy.

Hoffman and Novak (1996) classified advertising on the web as banner advertisements or target advertisements. They defined a banner advertisement as a small rectangular graphic image that is linked to a target advertisement and serves as a lead-in to the visitor to surf and find out more information. A target advertisement is a series of linked web pages that are accessed by consumers by actively clicking on a banner advertisement. Target advertisements may also be a single web page and do not necessarily need to be a series of web pages linked to the banner advertisement. Banner advertising is the most common and accepted form of paid advertising on the Internet. The purpose is to create small live pointers to the promotional web site.

The culture of the Internet is still predominantly opposed to advertising and believes that it does not create value, is not relevant and creates a nuisance. It is considered ineffective because of the low click-through rates for banner ads, lack of useful information, its dullness, often offensive and it confuses consumers (Gaffney 2001; Mathews 2000), furthermore, disruption in flow by banners, pop-ups and other forms could create negative attitudes towards ads (Rettie 2001). Briggs and Hallis (1997) and Gallagher *et al.* (2001) believe web advertising is the least effective media. However, Gaffney (2001) has a contrasting view on online advertising and indicates that online advertising is considered effective in generating sales. O'Connors and Galvin (2001) support this view; they indicated that banner ads could build up brand awareness and perception even though the users do not click on it. Schlosser *et al.* (1999) added that generally people trusted the commercial content of an Internet advertisement more than an ordinary advertisement. Their findings show that respondents' feel more comfortable in purchasing from a phone number listed in an Internet advertisement compared to a phone number listed in a traditional advertisement.

### ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS TOWARDS WEB ADVERTISING

An attitude is a learned predisposition to behave in a consistently favourable or unfavourable way with respect to a given object (e.g. product category, a brand, a service, an advertisement, a web site or a retail establishment) (Schiffman & Kanuk 2000). The multi-attribute attitude model such as the Fishbein model is the most influential model and assumes that a consumer's attitude (evaluation) of an object will depend on the beliefs he or she has about several or many attributes of the object. Thus, it implies that an attitude towards a product or brand can

be predicted by identifying these specific beliefs and combining them to derive a measure of the consumer's overall attitude. Lutz (1985) defined an attitude – toward-the-ad as a predisposition to respond in a favourable or unfavourable manner to a particular advertising stimulus during a particular exposure occasion. Specific types of feelings can be generated by an ad such as upbeat feelings: amused, delighted, playful, warm feelings: affectionate, contemplative, hopeful and negative feelings: critical, defiant, offended. Attitudinal components of attitude towards the advertisement comprise of hedonism, interest and utilitarianism (Olney *et al.* 1991). One of the important theories developed in marketing communications and advertising research is attitude-toward-the ad by Bruner and Kumar (2000), Lutz (1985), MacKenzie and Lutz (1989), MacKenzie *et al.* (1986) and Muehling (1987). Aaker and Stayman (1990), Brown and Stayman (1992) suggested that the positive emotional response to an ad is the best indicator of advertising effectiveness as its goal is to form a positive attitude towards the ad, brand and to encourage purchasing.

Shavitt *et al.* (1998) informed that the propensity to dislike advertising might be changing as consumers feel more entertained by the advertisements. James and Kover (1992) and Mehta (2000) explained that reactions to advertising and the degree of persuasiveness of advertisements are directly related to how much consumers like to look at advertising such as entertainment or enjoyment value, its informational value as well as perceptions of how truthful or manipulative they are. The structure of attitudes towards Internet advertising is the same as attitudes towards advertising in general (Schlosser *et al.* 1999). Ducoffe (1996) informed that the consistency in attitudinal structure supports other findings that the traditional assessments of advertising effectiveness such as information and entertainment value also apply to Internet advertising. Advertising perception factors used to study evaluations of advertising in traditional media were also found to be relevant when assessing attitudes-toward-the website (Chen & Wells 1999). Internet interactivity, which is not available in conventional media, is, thus, an additional evaluative criterion that may be assessed as a positive point in web advertisement. Potential advantages to web advertising that consumers may perceive are the ability to get more information via easy click-through, the ability to act on what interests the consumers immediately, view privacy and more interesting advertisements. In the new medium, consumers choose the amount of exposure to a web ad and decide what to watch, when and how much. If consumers find that the web ad is not useful or uninteresting, they will immediately terminate the visit by clicking out.

Korgaonkar, Silverbatt and O'Leary (2001) stated that those who are interested in web advertising, perceived web advertising as providing useful product information, enhancing their social role and image, their hedonic/

pleasure and not being false. They also found that interested participants exhibit positive attitudes towards web advertising and had a lower income level. Those interested participants are more likely to perceive web advertising on promoting materialism, not corrupting their values and not being false. Mittal (1994) described ten consumer advertising perceptions and beliefs in his past study. Meanwhile Pollay and Mittal (1993) developed a seven-factor belief model, which represents product information, social role and image, hedonic/pleasure, good for the economy, materialism, value corruption and falsity. These were also mentioned in the study by Korgaonkar *et al.* (1997). Ducoffe (1996) found a substantial significant correlation between informativeness and web advertising value.

## METHODOLOGY

The survey instrument is questionnaires consisting of several statements designed to measure the participants' beliefs about, and attitudes towards, web advertising such as banner advertising, and pop ups, which are some of the most common forms of web advertising. The survey gathered additional information on the respondents' web usage, and demographic information such as gender, age, income level, education level and ethnicity. In constructing the survey items, the researcher reviewed items from past studies in advertising attitude research. The main constructs for this study were adopted from Korgaonkar, Silverbatt and O'Leary (2001). The study's sample consisted of 500 respondents. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed at workplaces because it is much easier to encourage the targeted respondents to respond. Employees from selected organisations in the Klang Valley area were randomly identified from the listing in the Telekom directory. A respondent must be at least 18 years old, have a permanent job and only those who indicated that they had used the Internet were selected to participate in this study. Respondents were also randomly selected from the employees listing based on the above mentioned characteristics from each organisation and personally distributed by research enumerators to the targeted respondents. This method was used to ensure that all respondents selected have a permanent job as well as to obtain a high response rate. A total of 432 questionnaires were returned with an overall response rate of 86 percent.

### OPERATIONALISATION OF RESEARCH CONSTRUCTS & MEASUREMENT

There are four major multi-item constructs in this study, which are divided into 1<sup>st</sup> part: web-advertising beliefs, 2<sup>nd</sup> part: web-advertising attitude, 3<sup>rd</sup> part: web advertising usage and 4<sup>th</sup> part: demographic characteristics. Web advertising beliefs were measured using the Korgaonkar,

Silverbatt and O'Leary (2001) scale, which had seven components adapted from Pollay and Mitall (1993). Those items were reviewed and changes were made to make them more suitable and specific for web advertising measurement. A total of 29 attributes were generated, covering various aspects of consumer's beliefs about web advertising, and each survey item was rated on a five-point likert scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. In order to ascertain whether the measures retained construct validity (i.e. measure what they are supposed to) an exploratory factor analysis using principal components and varimax rotation technique was conducted to examine the underlying dimension of web advertising beliefs. In determining the factors, common decision rules employed in empirical research were applied: (1) minimum eigenvalue of 1, (2) KMO measure of sampling adequacy greater than 0.5, (3) minimum factor loading of 0.4 for each indicator variable, (4) simplicity of factor structure, and (5) exclusion of single item factor structure.

The overall attitude measurement towards web advertising attitude was assessed by asking a question from four questions originally adopted from past studies by Ducoffe (1996) and Mittal (1994). Respondents were asked, "Overall do you consider web advertising a good or bad thing?" and this question was measured on a five point scale ranging from (1) very bad to (5) very good. Variables of advertising usage were measured based on three levels of respondents' predilection towards web advertising. Drawing from constructs developed by Korgaonkar, Silverbatt and O'Leary (2001), the first variable is close attention to web advertising, by asking respondents "when I see a web advertisement on the computer screen, I pay close attention to it. The second variable indicates the frequency level of clicking the web ad and the respondents were asked, "When I see a web advertisement on my computer screen, I click on the ad, to find more information". Lastly, the frequency of leaving the web site or web ad was asked, "When I see a web ad on my computer screen, I leave the web site". The three questions were measured based on a five-point scale (1) never, (2) occasionally, (3) sometimes, (4) often and (5) always.

## FINDINGS

### RESPONDENTS BACKGROUND

From the total of 432 respondents, 56.5% are female and 43.5% are male within which 48.4% are married, 47.9% are bachelors and 3.75 are in other categories. In terms of education level, 52.3% of them are university graduates, 29.6% are diploma holders, and the remaining 18.1% are STPM holders. Among the respondents, their monthly income constitutes 41% are less than RM2,000, 38% are earning between RM2,000 to RM4,000, 12.7% are earning

between RM4,000 to RM4,000 and only 8.35 are earning more than RM6,000. In terms of age categories, 56.9% are between 26 to 39 yrs of age, 9.7% are between 40 to 50 yrs of age, and only 2 (0.5%) respondents are above 50 yrs of age.

### EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

Empirical analysis was carried out on the data collected from the questionnaire in which the respondents were asked to circle a number that was most suitable to their choice concerning 34 items that relate to their attitude, belief and behaviour towards web advertising. A five-point Likert-scale was used, anchored from very bad to very good for attitude and strongly disagree to strongly agree for beliefs. In measuring behaviour towards web advertising, respondents were asked to choose either never, occasionally, sometimes, often or always in two items, and rate their degree of agreement using a 5-point Likert scale. The mean and standard deviation for all the 29 items for belief were obtained and tabulated in Table 1.

The result indicates that the highest score of respondents is on the belief that there is too much sex in web advertising today with a mean of 3.85, followed by the belief that web advertising helps me keep up-to-date about products available in the marketplace (3.64) and web advertising is a convenient source of good information (3.63). The belief that products advertised on the web are more trustworthy than those not advertised scored the lowest with a mean of 2.70 followed by the belief that decision to buy would be difficult if there were no web advertising, which had a mean score of 2.81. The overall mean score of all the 29 items of belief was 3.17 (s.d. 0.42), which indicates a substantial degree of agreement with all the belief items. The other items, with a mean score less than 3.00, indicating a weak degree of agreement, are as follows:

Web advertising is enjoyable

Web advertising keeps one in a good social image

Web advertising helps one know product that reflects his/her personality

Web advertising reassures one that he/she is doing the right thing with the product

The only items on attitude, *considering web advertising is either a good or bad thing*, has a mean score of 3.59 (std.dev. 0.83) as shown in Table 2. This indicates that in general web advertising is considered a good thing. The third item on behaviour is where respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with – *ignore the website of a web advertisement on their computer screen* – the mean score obtained was 2.96 (s.d. 1.04), which to some extent indicates a low degree of agreement.

The frequencies for behaviour towards the other two items are tabulated in Table 3. The results indicate that

TABLE 1. Descriptive statistics for the 29 belief items

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Valuable source	3.2887	.88049
Brand feature	3.3756	.89955
Deciding to buy	2.8122	1.05716
Convenient source	3.6268	.85908
Keep up to date	3.6362	.95129
Pleasure in thinking	3.1878	.89308
Enjoyable	2.9225	1.02032
Feel good	3.0892	.92623
Social image	2.9836	.98086
Fantasy	3.0052	1.00821
Impact on oneself	2.9531	.88791
Take advantage of children	3.1338	.90147
Other users (buying & using)	3.0023	.85267
Opposite own values	3.0516	.83294
Product reflection	2.9343	.84875
Too much sex	3.8545	1.06823
Showing other users of the product	3.1479	.90448
Banned for children	3.2653	1.11990
Improve standard of living	3.2207	.92196
Can be trusted	2.7019	.92944
Impulsive buying	3.0728	1.07018
Reassurance	2.9366	.88289
Assist consumer to buy best and the price	3.1033	.89634
Unsure about Web Advertising	3.4812	.92080
Increase dissatisfaction for those that cannot afford the product	3.1948	.89289
Necessary to support WEB	3.5023	.95609
Create materialistic society	3.2042	.94462
Spending money on product improvement is better than Web advertising	3.1690	.94038
Makes/encourage/influence people buy things they cannot afford	3.0000	1.03128
Overall belief	3.1675	.41559

TABLE 2. Descriptive statistics - attitude and behaviour

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Web advertising is a good thing	3.5903	.04004
Ignore the website of a web advertisement	2.9606	1.04018

TABLE 3. Frequency for behaviour items

	Pay close attention to web advertisement		Click on to web advertisement to obtain further information	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
never	23	5.4	43	10.1
occasionally	90	21.1	127	29.8
sometimes	252	59.2	188	44.1
often	53	12.4	50	11.7
always	8	1.9	18	4.2

for both items, *pay close attention to web advertisement* and *click on for further information*, most of the respondents sometimes or occasionally behave in that particular manner with percentages of 80.3% and 73.9%, respectively. It was observed that 5.4% of respondents never *pay close attention to web advertisements* and 14.3% always or often do so. However, the percentage of respondents who are never curious for *more information* on the web advertisements are 10.1% and 15.9%, representing those who are often *seeking more information*.

The construct of web advertising beliefs – principal component analysis was conducted on the twenty-nine items scale and produced six factors following eleven iterations. Items that are recorded with factor loading below 0.50 were eliminated for further analysis. The KMO – Kaiser Meyer Olkin measure of sampling adequacy is 0.874 and the Bartlett’s test of sphericity is significant, indicating the items reject the null hypothesis and thus factor analysis is appropriate as tabulated in Table 4.

Table 5 shows the regression results, the model explains twenty percent of the variance in Click on Web Ad. Thus, about 80 percent differences, which indicates, that other factors might have an effect on Web Usage – Click on Web Ad. The regression model shows that only ‘Enjoyable and Social Image’, ‘Informative’ and ‘Value Corruption’ dimensions have a significant relationship with Click on Web Ad. The largest absolute value of standardised beta coefficient (= 0.301), that is ‘Enjoyable & Social Image’ emerged as the most important predictor of Click on Web Ad. This shows that the higher the belief that web ads are enjoyable and informative, the higher the rate of respondents clicking on the web ad. The negative relationship between Value corruption and Click on Web explains that the higher perception of Value Corruption that users have towards a web ad will lead to a lower rate of web users clicking on the web ad.

Table 6 shows the second regression model that indicates only three dimensions, which are represented by ‘Enjoyable and Social Image’, ‘Informative’ and ‘Value Corruption’, have a significant relationship with Pay Close Attention to Web Ad. The largest absolute value of standardised beta coefficients is ‘Informative’ factor as the main determinant followed by ‘Enjoyable and Social Image’. These findings explain that the more web users perceive that web ads are ‘Informative’, the more web users will pay close attention towards web advertisements. Meanwhile, ‘Value Corruption’ has a negative impact on Pay Close Attention to Web ad. Thus, explaining that the more people perceive that web ads have ‘Value Corruption’, the lower the rate of web users paying close attention to the web ad.

Table 7 shows the regression results explaining factors influencing the behavioural response that lead to ignorance of web ads. The results show that the largest absolute value of standardized beta coefficient is ‘Enjoyable and Social Image’. Thus, it is considered as the most important predictor followed by ‘Materialism’

TABLE 4: Factor analysis on rotated component matrix – Web ad beliefs

Measures/Scale Items	Factor1	Factors 2	Factor3	Factor4	Factor5	Factor6
F1: Informative						
Brand features	0.756	0.124	0.189	0.008	-0.102	-0.019
Convenient source	0.727	0.091	0.169	-0.066	0.000	-0.097
Keep up to date	0.706	0.139	0.143	-0.046	0.058	0.097
Valuable source	0.683	0.118	-0.014	0.025	0.007	0.056
Pleasure in thinking	0.581	0.260	0.230	-0.315	0.092	-0.004
Assist consumer to decide	0.577	0.385	0.041	0.029	0.024	0.107
F2:Enjoyable & Social Image						
Feel good	0.314	0.669	0.201	-0.003	-0.069	-0.123
Enjoyable	0.281	0.646	0.072	0.012	0.040	0.016
Social image	0.224	0.558	0.281	-0.000	0.044	0.021
F3: Economy value						
Necessary to support web	0.082	0.064	0.695	-0.000	0.157	-0.298
Other users (buying & selling)	0.166	0.322	0.611	-0.048	0.115	0.092
Improves standard of living	0.225	0.186	0.598	0.151	-0.042	0.144
Reassure using right product	0.348	0.201	0.534	0.101	-0.036	0.240
F4: Materialism						
Influence buy unaffordable	0.012	0.028	0.047	0.698	0.093	0.143
Spending in product improvement better than web ad	-0.118	-0.071	0.021	0.641	-0.010	0.193
Increases dissatisfaction for those that cannot afford	0.015	0.012	0.055	0.631	0.154	-0.305
Create materialistic society	-0.015	0.072	0.266	0.612	0.228	-0.112
F5:Value corruption						
Should be banned on children's site	-0.037	-0.127	0.098	0.156	0.674	0.188
Fantasy	-0.542	0.336	0.074	0.041	0.584	0.091
Take advantage of children	0.082	0.104	0.034	0.224	0.519	0.046
F6: Falsity						
Impulse buying	0.050	-0.027	0.111	0.135	0.288	0.664
Eigenvalue	6.572	3.041	1.327	1.281	1.225	1.093
Percentage of variance	22.66	10.48	4.57	4.42	4.22	3.77

KMO = 0.874

Bartlett's test of sphericity sig=0.000

Cumulative percentage of variance explained = 50.14%

TABLE 5: Regression analysis: The influence of Web ad beliefs on click on Web ad

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	Untsd.Beta	Std. Beta	t	Sig.	VIF
Click On Web Ad	Constant	0.963				
	(F2) Enjoyable & Social Image	0.124	0.301	5.740	0.000	1.437
	(F1) Informative	-0.038	-0.105	-2.379	0.018	1.012
	(F5) Value Corruption					

R = 0.447, R Square = 0.200, Adj. R Square = 0.194F= 34.966 Sig. F = 0.000

TABLE 6: Regression analysis: The influence of Web ad beliefs on pay attention on Web ad

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	Untsd.Beta	Std. Beta	t	Sig.	VIF
Pay Close Attention on Web Ad	Constant	1.088				
	(F1) Informative	0.025	0.232	4.353	0.000	1.423
	(F2) Enjoyable & Social Image (F5) Value Corruption	0.040	0.212	3.954	0.000	1.437
		-0.024	-0.147	-3.274	0.001	1.012

R = 0.405, R Square = 0.164, Adj. R Square = 0.158F= 27.369 Sig. F = 0.000

TABLE 7: Regression analysis: The influence of Web ad beliefs on ignore Web ad

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	Untsd.Beta	Std. Beta	t	Sig.	VIF
Ignore Web Ad	Constant	3.520				
	(F2) Enjoyable & Social Image	-0.087	-0.196	-3.658	0.000	1.312
	(F4) Materialism	0.062	0.160	3.367	0.001	1.035
	(F3) Good for Economy	-0.043	-0.110	-2.034	0.043	1.352

R = 0.296, R Square = 0.088, Adj. R Square = 0.081F= 13.439 Sig. F = 0.000

and ‘Good for Economy. The inverse relationship between ‘Enjoyable & Social Image’ as well as ‘Good for Economy’ explain that the lower the perception that web ads provide enjoyment and economy, the higher the rate of web users ignoring the web ad. The positive relationship between ‘Materialism’ and ‘Ignore Web Ad’, explains that the more the web ad is considered to influence materialism among society, the higher the rate of web users that will ignore it.

DISCUSSIONS & CONCLUSION

From the results, we can consider that Malaysian Internet users or consumers are responsive to advertising and that they have a positive and negative perception of web advertising. Such as, they perceive web advertising as portraying too much sex. However, they still formed positive beliefs on web advertising such as for retrieving up-to-date information about products available in the marketplace and that web advertising is a convenient source of good information. Moreover, they have a positive attitude concerning web ads being a good thing to look at.

FACTOR 1: INFORMATIVE

This shows that web advertising is considered a useful source of product information. Web advertising allows consumers to have access to product and service information without any hassle. Informative advertising benefits consumers by carrying specific, definite and tangible facts about products. The amount of information revealed by advertising may be indicated as a value to consumer and society (Norris, 1994).

FACTOR 2: ENJOYABLE AND SOCIAL IMAGE

According to Leiss, Kline and Jhally (1986), the content of advertising messages has shifted from product focused to consumer focused. Web advertising can be enjoyable and entertaining to attract and maintain attention while addressing customers’ needs and wants. Therefore, the creativity of web advertising can add value to a company’s products and services. In addition, web advertising is just like other forms of advertising that are usually geared towards promoting social and lifestyle messages to its audience.

FACTOR3: ECONOMY VALUE

Web advertising can make possible inexpensive products and services by allowing companies to reach prospective customers. This again enables consumers to purchase without hassle, thereby saving the consumers’ time and providing a wider selection to choose from. Web advertising can assist marketers to facilitate the introduction and development of new products and services to customers directly.

FACTOR 4: MATERIALISM

Web advertising is accused of promoting materialism that leads to consumers demand for material objects because of the marketing and promotional strategies.

FACTOR 5: VALUE CORRUPTION

Web advertising has the potential to corrupt the values of its users. Advertising is often viewed as being manipulative and creating a desire for the advertised product or services without using ‘the specific’, relevant and verifiable facts’. Norris (1984) stated that this renders advertising an economic and social waste.

FACTOR 6: FALSITY

Web advertising is portrayed as deceptive, half-truths and accused of circumventing consumers’ rational decision-making by developing messages based on consumers vulnerability.

The web is considered a popular communication medium for marketers due to its ability to provide desirable aspects of both television and print media. It can offer product information and allow consumers control over the presentation of information. Moreover, consumers can spend as much time as desired processing the information presented. Thus, marketers should consider a variety of forms of advertising on the web as banner ads, sponsorship and interstitials.

Web sites can be a significant medium for interacting with present and prospective customers, and companies should recognise that web advertising is an integral element of overall corporate advertising (Boudreau & Watson 2006). By understanding the beliefs that underlie local Internet users’ evaluation of web advertising and the importance of various attributes or consequences,

the marketer is better able to develop the right and suitable communication strategies for creating, changing and reinforcing positive attitudes towards web advertising. At the same time, marketers can create awareness and remind consumers of their brand of product or service. The Internet supports advertising and relies on advertising for its own success. Advertising on the Internet employs a variety of forms and holds great potential for consumer markets. Internet users feel there are advantages as well as disadvantages to web advertising. This, perhaps, reflects involvement with the web prompting strong feelings for and against. Thus, this shows that web advertising is seen as advantageous but there are still issues concerning web advertising. Marketers should target consumers who respond positively to web advertising and elicit their help in identifying problems with web advertising and ways of correcting these problems. This could result in a systematic improvement of the site as a whole and making them more effective (Goldsmith & Lafferty 2002). Thus, more care and attention should be devoted to creating web advertising to give it the qualities that make it more likeable.

According to Watson *et al.* (2000) Internet technologies and marketing objectives can be interlaced to increase the effectiveness of a firm's consumer directed communications. Thus, web advertising should be concerned with the creation, placement and distribution of electronic messages that will be read by, and have an effect on, those consumers who the marketers most want to influence. Creativity combined with traditional advertising factors such as messages that will potentially influence consumers should be explored. Marketers should also consider which medium to use and if the web is chosen, they need to place the ad on the page for maximum impact (Boudreau & Watson 2006).

This study has several limitations. Firstly, all the data is self-reported; therefore, the behavioural measures are limited by defects of memory. Secondly, the findings are limited to the specific questions asked; some issues could not be addressed without new data. Thirdly, the study is cross-sectional data representing only one point in time, preventing the authors from inferring cause and effect as would be the case with a longitudinal study. Future studies should expand the scope of the study using multiple measures and additional variables should be measured. The present study makes an initial attempt to study the perception of Malaysian Internet users on web advertising and contributes to the knowledge base accordingly. It is hoped that it will provide a better understanding of the impact of consumer behaviour on web advertising. Marketers should focus on web users' needs, diversifying the content in order to improve the usage and perception among web users.

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