

## ADS AND MONETIZATION DIMINISH WEB EXPERIENCES

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### Abstract

The nearly ubiquitous presence of marketing ads on websites has reached a point where it often detracts from the end-users' experience and compromises the intended purpose of the website. Online educational websites are not immune to this practice and often educational research is hindered by distracting marketing advertisements. Marketing ads are more pervasive than ever before and have become the basis for monetization of websites. As users navigate online spaces, they find themselves bombarded with intrusive advertisements that disrupt their ability to complete their original goal. Ads, whether inline with the body of the document or on a sidebar, autoplay videos that the user may not want to see, and excessive banners not only slow down page loading times, but also create an environment where the actual content takes a backseat to marketing content. When viewing some websites on a mobile platform, often an article can have so many advertisements inline with the story that it becomes nearly impossible to finish or even follow the article that was the user's intended purpose for the visit. This saturation of advertising elements can erode the overall appeal of websites, diminishing the quality of user engagement and user experience. From a business standpoint, striking a balance between revenue generation and user-friendly design is crucial for preserving the integrity of online platforms and ensuring a positive browsing experience. However, from an end-user perspective, it appears as though website content creators and companies view the monetization through marketing ads as immensely more important than the content itself. This paper will explore the perceptions and potential impacts of marketing advertisements on educational experiences using the web.

**Keywords:** *Ads, web-experience, diminished web quality.*

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### 1. Introduction

In the digital age, advertising has become an inseparable element of our online experiences, permeating various facets of the digital landscape. This ubiquity is particularly evident in the realms of phone apps, phone websites, and websites across the internet. This extensive presence of ads is a testament to the evolving nature of advertising, technology, and the economic models that underpin the digital ecosystem.

Ads are disrupting traditional modes of communication and content consumption by infiltrating various aspects of our lives. The pervasive nature of advertising has evolved, driven by technological advancements and changing consumer habits. Online platforms, social media, and websites have become saturated with ads. Many content platforms, especially free ones, rely heavily on ads for revenue. Some ads use intrusive techniques, such as pop-ups, auto-play videos, or full-screen takeovers, disrupting the seamless flow of content consumption. These tactics can be annoying and lead to users having a negative experience. While personalized ads aim to provide relevant content, the extensive collection of user data raises privacy concerns. The disruption caused by ads prompts ongoing discussions about ethical advertising practices, user consent, and the detrimental effect it has on user experience.

### 2. Social media and advertising

The rise of digital platforms and social media has significantly contributed to the prevalence of ads. Platforms like Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), and others are ad-supported, and they leverage user data to target ads more effectively (Chu, Deng, & Mundel, 2024). Many content platforms, especially free ones, rely heavily on ads for revenue. While this model allows users access to content without direct payment, it also means that users are frequently interrupted by ads during their

viewing or reading experience. Additionally, the use of surveillance technologies to track user behavior for ad targeting disrupts the balance between personalized advertising and individual privacy.

Advances in data analytics and machine learning enable advertisers to target specific demographics, interests, and behaviors. This personalized approach increases the effectiveness of advertising, making it more likely that users will engage with the content (Wiese, Martinez-Climent, & Botella-Carrubi, 2020). Search engines, particularly Google, are a primary avenue for advertising. Ads appear prominently in search results, and search engine advertising allows businesses to reach users actively looking for relevant products or services. The targeted nature of digital advertising, driven by data analytics, ensures that ads are tailored to individual preferences, but this constant bombardment can disrupt the online user experience (Kerr & Richards, 2021).

### **3. Mobile devices and apps**

The widespread adoption of smartphones has permanently changed the way people search for and consume content, connect with others, and access information. As more and more internet users accessing the web through mobile devices, advertisers have shifted their focus towards mobile advertising to reach a broader audience. Phone apps and websites have become prime real estate for advertisers to engage with users through various formats such as display ads, video ads, and interactive content.

Advertising has become incredibly pervasive. Mobile apps, games, and websites, ranging from social media platforms to news aggregators and gaming applications often incorporate ads and serve as effective conduits for targeted advertising as the constant connectivity of mobile devices provides advertisers with more opportunities to reach consumers. Advertisers leverage user data, app preferences, and behavior patterns to deliver personalized and relevant ads. With the rise of online content consumption, websites and content creators, especially free ones, often rely on advertising as a primary source of revenue. This includes banner ads, interstitial ads, and rewarded ads, creating additional touchpoints for advertisers. These in-app advertisements seamlessly blend with the overall user experience, providing brands with a direct channel to engage users during various activities (Chu, Deng, & Mundel, 2024). This is seen in display ads on websites, sponsored content, and pre-roll ads on videos. Automated, data-driven advertising (programmatic advertising) allows for real-time buying and placement of ads. This efficiency has contributed to the widespread distribution of ads across various digital channels.

In parallel, the optimization of websites for mobile devices has become imperative. Responsive web design is a method of adapting websites to different screen sizes, facilitating a seamless transition between desktop and mobile browsing. Mobile websites, too, have become fertile ground for ads, with banner ads, pop-ups, and sponsored content strategically placed to capture user attention (Wiese, Martinez-Climent, & Botella-Carrubi, 2020). In fact, many mobile websites have become cumbersome to nearly impossible to read content between the plethora of advertisements that popup during scrolling.

Beyond the confines of mobile apps and dedicated mobile websites, ads have infiltrated virtually all websites across the internet. Whether you are perusing news articles, watching videos, or shopping online, advertisements are an omnipresent companion in the digital space. As mentioned earlier, many websites rely on ad revenue as a primary monetization strategy. Content creators, news outlets, and online platforms often offer free access to their content, supported by advertisements. This symbiotic relationship between content and ads allows users to access a wide array of information without direct monetary exchange, while advertisers gain exposure to diverse audiences.

The diversity of ad formats and placement strategies contributes to the ubiquity of ads. From traditional display banners to native advertising seamlessly integrated into content, the goal is to capture user attention without disrupting the overall user experience. Dynamic and responsive ad placements ensure optimal visibility on various devices, including phones, tablets, and desktops.

### **4. Personalization and targeted advertising**

One of the driving forces behind the ubiquity of ads is the advent of targeted advertising and personalization. Advanced algorithms and data analytics enable advertisers to analyze user behavior, preferences, and demographics. Armed with this information, ads can be precisely tailored to individual interests, increasing the likelihood of engagement.

With the increase in smart TVs and the popularity of streaming services, targeted ads are integrated into these platforms. Advertisers can reach specific audiences based on viewing habits and preferences. Online shopping platforms use ads to promote products to users. Ads are strategically placed on these platforms to capture the attention of potential buyers. Businesses are in constant competition to

reach wider audiences. Advertisers strive to make their products or services known to as many people as possible, leading to the widespread use of ads across different mediums.

User data, collected through cookies, user accounts, and other tracking mechanisms, fuels data-driven ad campaigns. This approach allows advertisers to deliver content that aligns with users' preferences and past interactions. Consequently, users are more likely to encounter ads that resonate with their interests, creating a more personalized and engaging experience (K. V., KP, & Kamath, 2021).

The increasing reliance on user data for personalized advertising has raised concerns about privacy and ethical practices. Striking a balance between providing personalized content and respecting user privacy remains a significant challenge for advertisers and the digital ecosystem at large. Ongoing discussions about data protection, consent, and transparency shape the landscape of ethical advertising practices.

As ads have become more ubiquitous, users have sought ways to mitigate interruptions to their online experiences. Ad-blocking tools and browser extensions have gained popularity, allowing users to filter out or block certain types of ads. This user response reflects a desire for a more streamlined and uninterrupted browsing experience, prompting advertisers to reconsider their approaches.

The prevalence of ad blockers poses a challenge to the traditional revenue models of content creators and publishers. Ad-dependent platforms are forced to explore alternative revenue streams, such as subscription models, sponsored content, or exclusive memberships. The evolving landscape encourages advertisers to prioritize creativity, relevance, and non-intrusiveness to maintain audience engagement (K. V., KP, & Kamath, 2021).

## 5. Future trends

As technology continues to advance, the landscape of digital advertising will undoubtedly undergo further transformations. Emerging technologies such as augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), and interactive content present new avenues for immersive and engaging ad experiences. Additionally, the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into ad targeting and delivery algorithms holds the potential to refine personalization further.

The future of ads in phone apps, phone websites, and all websites may witness an emphasis on enhanced interactivity and user engagement. Interactive ads that allow users to participate in the content, rather than passively consume it, could redefine the relationship between advertisers and audiences. Gamification elements and storytelling techniques may become integral components of ad campaigns.

With an increasing focus on privacy and ethical considerations, the future of advertising may see a shift towards more transparent and user-friendly practices. Advertisers and platforms may prioritize obtaining explicit user consent for data collection, offer greater control over ad preferences, and adhere to stricter guidelines for responsible advertising (Wiese, Martínez-Climent, & Botella-Carrubi, 2020).

## 6. Conclusions

In conclusion, the ubiquity of ads in phone apps, phone websites, and all websites is a multifaceted phenomenon shaped by the evolving dynamics of technology, consumer behavior, and business strategies. From the rise of mobile advertising to the infiltration of ads on all digital platforms, the digital landscape is marked by a delicate balance between user experience, personalization, and revenue generation. As we navigate this intricate terrain, the future of digital advertising holds promises of innovation, interactivity, and ethical considerations, seeking to create a harmonious coexistence between advertisers and audiences in the ever-expanding digital realm.

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