

Chapter 10

Interactive and Alternative Media

❖ WEB REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1. If you print a toll-free number at the bottom of an ad, does that make it interactive?**

Contact information such as this opens up the door for interactivity, but the ad itself is not interactive. If someone dials the number and participates in a dialogue or conversation, then it becomes interactive. The phone is the most interactive of all media, the one that most lends itself to conversation and dialogue

- 2. If someone were to tell you that interactivity is a continuum, what would you think that means? Draw a continuum for advertising that shows the range of interactivity and locate different types of advertising media on the continuum.**

The text points out that the closer the medium is to a dialogue or the more a user is able to manipulate the content, the more it can properly be described as interactive communication.

When drawing the continuum the text tells us that the phone is the most interactive of all media. Student answers will differ but should be based on the concept mentioned previously.

- 3. What is a Website and how does it differ from other forms of advertising?**

Sometimes called a *home page*, a company's Website is the online face it presents to the public. The Website is a communication tool that sometimes blurs the distinction between common forms of marketing communication, such as advertising, direct marketing, and public relations. Website redesign is often tied to an IMC program with the objective to unify all marketing materials. As advertisers have searched for more effective ways to connect with their audiences, some of these sites have become more entertaining, with games and contests, interviews with celebrities, and even musical performances.

- 4. What is the difference between an intranet and an extranet?**

Intranets are internal communication systems that connect employees. Extranets are similar communication systems that connect a company and its employees to external stakeholders.

5. Explain chat rooms and blogs and how they relate to a company's advertising program.

Groups of people with a special interest can contact one another and exchange their opinions and experiences through chat rooms—sites located online, sometimes as part of an organization's Website, but sometimes completely independent of any company. On these sites, people can post notes and respond to other people's postings. Chat rooms are good information sources about customer and industry perspectives, as well as competitive information.

A blog is a personal, diary-like Website that is created by an individual. These sites have become more valued by advertisers as their readership climbs. The success of blogs has led corporations to consider blogs as an alternative to their traditional Websites. These personal publishing sites also contain links to other related sites that the writer feels are relevant. Some corporations are considering blogs as an alternative to traditional Websites as a way to keep employees and other stakeholders informed.

6. Why are search engines important to users and how can they be used as an advertising vehicle?

Most Internet users depend upon search engines, such as Google or Ask Jeeves, to find information for them. These Internet tools use keywords to compile a collection of information relating to that word. For marketers, an important first step in creating a viable Website is getting it registered with popular search engines so that it begins building visibility and shows up early on the list provided by the search engine.

7. Define and describe a banner ad. Experts say the effectiveness of banner ads is declining. In your opinion, why would that be?

Banner ads are small ads, about other Web pages, on which people can click to move to the advertised Website. They are usually placed on a Website featuring complementary products or related topics.

Students may have a variety of answers regarding why the effectiveness of banner ads is declining. Included in the discussion might be the intrusive nature and that the novelty has worn off. Banner ads use band width and add to the time it takes a page to load.

8. Explain the concept of offline advertising. What is its primary objective?

One of the most difficult problems facing Internet marketers is driving traffic to their sites. One way to do this is to use offline advertising, which appears in conventional media to drive traffic to a Website. Print is particularly useful because it offers the opportunity to present the URL in a format that makes it possible for the reader to note the address. It's harder to present that information in broadcast media where the message is here and gone.

9. How is the Internet audience measured?

The advantages of the Internet as a potential advertising vehicle are tremendous, with rapid, near instantaneous feedback and results chief among them. Marketers can run tests online, measure meaningful results within days, and quickly invest in the best performers with minimal switching costs. The problem, however, is that there is a lack of standards to measure Internet effectiveness. At the heart of the problem is the question of what exactly is to be measured—readers, viewers, visitors?—and how it equates to the reach of other media.

The primary method currently used to measure consumer response to Internet advertising is click-through (the number of people who click on a banner ad). This measure is considered insufficient by many Internet advertisers and a host of private research providers have emerged to expand on that measure.

Having the ability to quantitatively measure audiences is particularly important to media buyers who need to show what the click-through, page view, or total traffic means to their clients. It is also meaningful to advertisers or media buyers to obtain similar information from comparable sites so that they can see if they are getting a fair deal.

10. What are the advantages and disadvantages of Internet advertising?

Internet advertising is relatively inexpensive. Advertisers can customize and personalize their messages. An advertiser can use database marketing techniques and input key demographic and behavioral variables, making the consumer feel like the ad is just for him or her.

For the B2B advertiser, Internet advertising can provide excellent sales leads or actual sales.

The Internet can level the playing field for small- and medium-sized companies that compete against larger organizations. The cost of creating a Website, a set of ads, and a database is affordable for virtually every marketer.

The most serious drawback is the inability of strategic and creative experts to consistently produce effective ads and to measure their effectiveness. Clutter is also a problem.

11. What is the biggest problem with E-mail advertising and how might that problem be overcome?

The biggest problem is unsolicited E-mail, often in the form of spamming.

12. Why are video games of interest to Internet advertisers?

Marketers are trying to reach young people by using video games. Online games will be created as will product placement within games.

13. Why is wireless technology becoming so important to advertisers?

The mobile cell phone has exploded as a popular form of telecommunication. **Wireless communication** that links the common phone to a computer is possibly the most important change in communication systems so far in the new millennium. Some countries are highly advanced in wireless communication and their consumers are far more accustomed to using smart phones, videophones, and instant messaging than those in the United States.

14. What is guerilla marketing and why are advertisers looking for ways to use this practice?

Guerilla marketing is unconventional marketing-communication activities that are intended to get buzz on a limited budget. The idea is to use creative ways to reach people where they live, work, and walk to create a personal connection and a high level of impact. If it works, the encounter gets talked about through word of mouth rather than through the media. More about matching wits than matching budgets, guerilla marketing does have limited reach.