

## THE CONSUMERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS IN TIRUCHIRAPPALLI CITY

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### **Abstract:**

Online advertising includes email marketing, search engine marketing (SEM), social media marketing, many types of display advertising (including web banner advertising), and mobile advertising. Like other advertising media, online advertising frequently involves a publisher, who integrates advertisements into its online content, and an advertiser, who provides the advertisements to be displayed on the publisher's content. Many consumers tend to ignore online advertising because they perceive online advertisements as deceiving. Entertaining and pleasurable online advertisements with relevant content and sufficient information are able to capture consumers' attention. Marketers should ensure that their online advertisement is attractive and enjoyable for the consumers as it is able to capture their attention immediately and stimulate their curiosity to click on the advertisement.

**Keywords:** *online advertisements, Advertisements, Online, Behaviour, Purchasing Decisions*

### **INTRODUCTION:**

An advertisement is the promotion of a product, brand or service to a viewership in order to attract interest, engagement and sales. Advertisements come in many forms, from copy to interactive video, and have evolved to become a crucial feature of the app marketplace. An advertisement is different from other types of marketing because it is paid for, and because the creator of an advertisement has total control over the content and message. Advertisements are a guaranteed method of reaching an audience. By creating an engaging ad, and spending enough to reach many users, advertisements can have an immediate impact on business. This effect could be seen in improved trade or boosted brand recognition, among many different metrics.

### **ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS**

Online advertising, also known as online marketing, Internet advertising, digital advertising or web advertising, is a form of marketing and advertising which uses the Internet to deliver promotional marketing messages to consumers.

Online advertising includes email marketing, search engine marketing (SEM), social media marketing, many types of display advertising (including web banner advertising), and mobile advertising. Like other advertising media, online advertising frequently involves a publisher, who integrates advertisements into its online content, and an advertiser, who provides the advertisements to be displayed on the publisher's content. Other potential participants include advertising agencies who help generate and place the ad copy, an ad server which technologically delivers the ad and tracks statistics, and advertising affiliates who do independent promotional work for the advertiser. It is considered one of the most effective ways for businesses of all sizes to expand their reach, find new customers, and diversify their revenue streams.

### **EVOLUTION OF ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS**

The evolution of advertisements in India began in the 19th century. Advertising is not done just for the products, people advertise their services, the government advertises their schemes and developments, people advertise vacancies at their firms, etc.

The history of advertisements can be divided into four stages:

- ❖ First Stage (1947-1960): Factual Advertisement
- ❖ Second Stage (1960-1980): Creative Advertisement
- ❖ Third stage (The 1980s): Impactful Advertisement
- ❖ Fourth Stage (Current Scenario): Digital Marketing& Advertising

Slowly internet users are increasing and it has opened bigger opportunities for the advertising agencies to spread their viewers and customers not just locally but globally.

- ❖ The evolution of online advertising began in the late 1990s.
- ❖ 1994: The first banner ads appeared
- ❖ 1995: Display ads became increasingly targeted
- ❖ 1996: ROI tracking tools began to improve
- ❖ 1997: Pop-up ads quick rise and fall
- ❖ 1999 - 2002: Advertisers turned towards paid search and pay-per-click
- ❖ 2006: Digital ads became hyper-targeted
- ❖ 2010: Marketers found value in native ads

Advertising has a big role to play in creating awareness about anything that could be of importance to people. It increases customers for brands, people become aware of important services that people or government is providing. Advertisements have been here for a long time and have been through various changes in the ways of their production and presentation.

In today's advertising scenario, creativity and content win the market. Online advertising focuses on marketing products on the internet through various means like social media, emails, blogs, videos, etc.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Over years, advertising media went through drastic change but advertising has a history of adapting cleverly and is still adapting. From papyrus to walls and stone tablets, to billboards, newspapers, radio, television, then computers to mobile phones, advertising has had several communication media. Along with these media, the thinking, approach and attitudes toward advertising have changed as well. Advertising today is smarter, sharper and consumer-driven, unlike the advertising approach four or five decades ago which was product-driven. Hence the research topic is '**A STUDY ON CONSUMERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS**'. This research helps to identify consumers' attitude and perception towards online advertisements and how it influences their purchasing decisions.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

The study has been undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To study the profile of the sample respondents;
2. To study the perception the respondents towards online advertisements.
3. To study the attitude of the respondents towards watching online advertisements.
4. To identify how online advertisements influence their purchasing decisions.
5. To study the satisfaction level of the respondents towards online advertisements.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The reason for choosing this topic is to have a better insight on how consumers perceive about online advertisements. Since internet is now ruling the world, business owners and manufacturers promote their products and make them reach the consumers using this platform. Many consumers tend to ignore online advertising because they perceive online advertisements as deceiving. Entertaining and pleasurable online advertisements with relevant content and sufficient information are able to capture consumers' attention. Marketers should ensure that their online advertisement is attractive and enjoyable for the consumers as it is able to capture their attention immediately and stimulate their curiosity to click on the advertisement. This also increases the possibility that consumers will recommend the advertisement to others. Hence the study is undertaken to analyze consumers' perception towards online advertisements.

**AREA OF THE STUDY**

The area selected for the study is Tiruchirappalli city. The study has been undertaken to analyze the consumers’ perception towards online advertisements in Tiruchirappalli city.

**PERIOD OF THE STUDY**

The study was undertaken for a period of three and a half months from January 2018 to April 2018.

**METHODOLOGY**

Stratified random sampling method has been adopted for collecting primary data from the respondents in Tiruchirappalli city. Secondary data have been collected from books, journals, e-journals and websites.

**SAMPLING DESIGN**

Primary data were collected from 100 respondents using questionnaire. Stratified random sampling method was used to select the sample respondents.

**TOOLS USED IN THE STUDY**

Microsoft excel has been used to analyze the primary data for getting the percentage analysis. Diagrams such as bar charts and pie charts have been used for better representation of the tabulated figures.

**LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

1. The study includes personal opinion and perception of the sample respondents. It may be subject to personal bias and prejudices.
2. The sample respondents are chosen from Tiruchirappalli city alone, the perception of the consumers may vary from place to place.

**ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:**

**Table – 1**

**Age group of the respondents**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Below 20 years	10	10.0
20-25 years	66	66.0
Above 25 years	24	24.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Primary data**

Table 1 shows that, among the 100 respondents, 10 respondents (10 per cent) are below 20 years of age; 66 respondents constituting 66 per cent are between the age group of 20 and 25 years and 24 respondents (24 per cent) are above 25 years of age. A majority of respondents (66 per cent) are between the age group of 20 and 25 years.

**Table - 2**

**Gender of the respondents**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>41.0</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>59.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Primary data**

Table 2 shows that, out of 100 respondents, 41 respondents (41 per cent) are males and 59 respondents (59 per cent) are females. Majority of the respondents (59 per cent) are females.

**Table -3****Educational Status of the Respondents**

<b>Educational Status</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Up to schooling	10	10.0
UG	31	31.0
PG	56	56.0
Others	3	3.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Primary data**

Table 3 shows that, 10 respondents (10 per cent) have completed up to schooling; 31 respondents (31 per cent) have completed Under Graduation; 56 respondents (56 per cent) have completed Post-Graduation and 3 respondents (3 per cent) have completed other programmes. The 3 respondents who come under the category of 'others' have completed / are pursuing professional courses. A majority of respondents (56 per cent) have completed Post Graduation.

**Table - 4****Occupation of the respondent**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Business/Profession	13	13.0
Private Employee	13	13.0
Student	60	60.0
Self employed	8	8.0
Unemployed	6	6.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Primary data**

Table 4 shows that, among 100 respondents, 13 respondents (13 per cent) are either business people or professionals such as accountants, teachers, professors; 13 respondents (13 per cent) come under the category of salaried private employees; 60 respondents (60 per cent) are students; 8 respondents (8 per cent) are self-employed and the remaining 6 respondents (6 per cent) are unemployed. Majority of the respondents (60 per cent) are students.

**Table - 5****Annual income of the Respondents**

<b>Annual income of the Respondents</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Less than Rs.50000	54	54.0
Rs.50000-Rs.250000	27	27.0
Rs.250000-Rs.500000	10	10.0
More than Rs.500000	9	9.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Primary data**

Table 5 shows that, 54 respondents (54 per cent) have annual income less than Rs.50000; 27 respondents (27 per cent) have annual income between Rs.50000 and Rs.250000; 10 respondents (10 per cent) have annual income more than Rs.250000 but less than Rs.500000 and the remaining 9 respondents (9 per cent) have annual income more than Rs.500000. Majority of the respondents (54 per cent) have annual income below Rs.50000.

**Table 6****Number of hours spent online in a day by the respondents**

<b>Number of hours spent</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Less than an hour	12	12.0
1-3 hours	48	48.0
More than 3 hours	40	40.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Primary data**

Table 6 shows that 12 respondents (12 per cent) spend online less than an hour in a day; 48 respondents (48 per cent) spend online more than an hour but less than three hours in a day and 40 respondents (40 per cent) spend online more than 3 hours in a day. A maximum of respondents (48 per cent) spend online more than an hour but less than three hours in a day.

**Table - 7****Level of trust towards online advertisements**

<b>Degree of trust</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Very high	3	3.0
High	9	9.0
Moderate	65	65.0
Low	19	19.0
Very low	4	4.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Primary data**

Table 7 shows that, 3 respondents (3 per cent) have very high level of trust towards online advertisements; 9 respondents (9 per cent) have high level of trust towards online advertisements; 65 respondents (65 per cent) have moderate level of trust towards online advertisements; 19 respondents (19 per cent) have low level of trust towards online advertisements and 4 respondents (4 per cent) have very low level of trust towards online advertisements.

A majority of respondents (65 per cent) have moderate level of trust towards online advertisements.

**Table – 8****Factors that attract respondents towards online advertisements at their First look**

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Reviews	1	1.0
Quality ingredients	1	1.0
Nothing	1	1.0
Induced by the celebrities	18	18.0
Content of the advertisement	58	58.0
Based on the number of likes	20	20.0
Based on one's needs	1	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Primary data**

Table 8 shows that, 58 respondents (58 per cent) are attracted towards online advertisements because of its content; 18 respondents (18 per cent) are attracted towards online advertisements as they are induced by the celebrities; 20 respondents (20 per cent) are attracted towards online advertisements based on the number of likes; and the remaining 4 respondents each constituting 1 per cent are attracted towards online advertisements based on the factors such as reviews, quality ingredients, etc. A majority of respondents (58 per cent) are attracted towards online advertisements because of its content.

**Table – 9****Probability of reading comments after being impressed by the online advertisements**

<b>Probability of reading comments</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Always	61	61.0
Sometimes	25	25.0
Rarely	14	14.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Primary data**

Table 9 shows that, 61 respondents (61 per cent) always read comments after being impressed by online advertisements; 25 respondents (25 per cent) sometimes read comments after being impressed online advertisements; 14 respondents (14 per cent) rarely read comments after being impressed by online advertisements. A majority of respondents (61 per cent) always read comments after being impressed by online advertisements.

**Table – 10****Level of satisfaction by the Respondents on online advertisements being more enjoyable than other media content**

<b>Level of satisfaction</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly Agree	3	3.0
Agree	14	14.0
Neither Agree nor disagree	61	61.0
Disagree	14	14.0
Strongly Disagree	8	8.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Primary data**

Table 10 shows that, 3 respondents (3 per cent) have strongly agreed that online advertisements are more enjoyable than other media content; 14 respondents (14 per cent) have agreed that online advertisements are enjoyable than other media content; 61 (61 per cent) respondents have neither agreed nor disagreed that online advertisements are enjoyable than other media content; 14 respondents (14 per cent) have disagreed that online advertisements are enjoyable than other media content and 8 respondents (8 per cent) have strongly disagreed that online advertisements are enjoyable than other media content. A majority of respondents (61 per cent) have neither agreed nor disagreed about online advertisements being enjoyable than other media content.

**FINDINGS:**

- ❖ A majority of respondents (59 per cent) rarely find online advertisements deceptive.
- ❖ A majority of respondents (52 per cent) always ignore online advertisements when they are shown.
- ❖ A majority of respondents (65 per cent) often find online advertisements convincing.
- ❖ A maximum of respondents (46 per cent) depend on online advertisements to a certain extent with regard to complete information about a product/service.
- ❖ A maximum of respondents (48 per cent) have agreed to a certain extent that online advertisements induce desire to purchase a product/service.
- ❖ A majority of respondents (59 per cent) sometimes depend on positive reviews/comments while purchasing a product/service.
- ❖ A maximum of respondents (44 per cent) feel dissatisfied about online advertisements due to insufficient information.
- ❖ A maximum of respondents (49 per cent) describe online advertisements to their friends as informative.
- ❖ A majority of respondents (65 per cent) have moderate level of trust towards online advertisements.



- ❖ A majority of respondents (58 per cent) are attracted towards online advertisements because of its content.
- ❖ A majority of respondents (61 per cent) always read comments after being impressed by online advertisements.
- ❖ A majority of respondents (61 per cent) have neither agreed nor disagreed about online advertisements being enjoyable than other media content.
- ❖ A majority of respondents (60 per cent) have not purchased during the pandemic lockdown that was promoted through online advertisements.

#### **SUGGESTIONS:**

- ❖ Since majority of the respondents search online for obtaining information about a product or service, the manufacturers or the business owners should concentrate on the content area and keep them updated so that consumers are aware of the whole information about a product or service.
- ❖ Concentration have to be made on the duration of the advertisement. Since a majority of respondents have always ignored online advertisements when they are shown, this could be probably due to the duration of the advertisement. To make it better, steps could be taken to make the advertisements short and crisp without compromising its quality.
- ❖ A majority of respondents felt that the content of the online advertisements are irrelevant. Online advertisements could be made even better if the content available in an advertisement is more relevant and if it focused more on providing right information, which in turn will influence the customers' decision to purchase a product/service in an effective way.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

Online advertising in today's world is considered the most important feature for accomplishing a desired aim in business. Research shows that consumers are increasingly using the internet to look up for information about a product or service before making any buying decisions. Traditional media of advertising although outdated still exist. However, online advertising forms garner more attention and have a bigger outreach. Every manufacturer or business has social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook and Instagram where consumer engagement and interaction is the strongest. We can conclude that online marketing is much easier, affordable and trackable form of marketing present in today's time which has a greater impact on influencing consumers' buying decisions.

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