Advertising Trends You Should Consider in 2019

Here’s why you need more video than ever.

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It’s a new year, filled with new challenges to advertising professionals. The slow death of traditional advertising vehicles (TV, newspapers), the rise of new ones (mobile, video) and the rise of a new generation of consumers who simply will not be interrupted (millennials, Gen Z), means those responsible for spreading the word about products or services are going to have to work more innovatively to accomplish their goals. Here are some of the trends to be aware of heading into the New Year.

AI in advertising

We have seen huge growth in targeted advertising, where the message is made to fit the viewer. For years, the quest for advertisers has been to ensure that their message is really hitting its mark. Artificial intelligence, machine learning and its associated technologies, can help do that. AI helps eliminate the guesswork in targeted advertising. With access to relevant information about a cohort (or even an individual audience member), advertisers can ensure that messages that aren’t effective, or that work against a brand’s positioning, don’t get through.

In addition, AI will likely help engineer a major upgrade in programmatic advertising. A powerful tool for optimizing

campaigns already, programmatic advertising will get even more accurate, targeting audiences, verticals and customers with far greater precision and cost effectiveness.

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Content is (still) king

Ever since the early dawn of media, content has been a major focus for advertisers. To engage customers, you have to give them something. After nearly a decade of social media as a constant in our everyday lives, consumers have come to expect blog posts, videos, social media updates, and other authentic content when engaging with a brand. Now that everyone is "doing" content, you need to do it better in order to stand out and break through the clutter.

As mentioned earlier, AI can help build a better content strategy. By better targeting audiences, companies can more effectively hone their stories, blog posts, videos and other content pieces to tailor fit and engage their users for a longer period.

Contextual advertising

Thanks to GDPR, the new European protocol on user privacy, online advertising is set to undergo major changes in 2019. The "right to be forgotten" that GDPR prescribes means that companies can't collect information about people without their explicit consent. How can companies run targeted advertising campaigns without personalized data?

The answer is contextual advertising: determining the characteristics of a target audience based on the content of the web pages they visit. General data about the interests of visitors to that page gives advertisers a clear context of how

to appeal to those visitors. With legislators in the United States considering adopting rules (as is already the case in California) similar to those of GDPR, the importance of context to advertisers is likely to grow.

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More video than ever

Generation Z, the cohort born roughly between 1995 and 2015, will become the biggest single population group in the world in 2019; already, one third of the world's population was born since the year 2000. One thing this group likes to do is watch videos; according to an infographic by Awesomeness TV, the average Gen Zer spends watches about 68 videos a day.

What that means, of course, is that video is going to be an even more important advertising channel in the years to come. An even more effective way of using video – especially for Gen Z – is to enable them to participate in creating those videos. According to a study by the Guardian, Gen Z is very creative and tends to trust their own cohort over others. Enabling them to creatively engage with a brand could go a long way to getting them on board and enable your brand to better harness the power of sharing.

Connected TV and over-the-top ad growth to continue

As cord-cutting increases and more viewers move toward connected/smart TV and over-the-top (OTT) app viewing – and away from linear TV viewing – advertisers are becoming enamored with CTV/OTT advertising.

A seminal study by Freewheel indicates that ad views on OTT grew 35 percent between Q2 2017 and Q2 2018. That was in a year when some 33 million Americans were set to drop pay TV

altogether. That number will probably grow in the next few years, as people replace cable subscriptions with the growing number of devices (Apple TV, Amazon TV, Roku, etc.) and apps that offer a huge variety of content.

That content has, until recently, been "immune" to advertising. But, as consumers move away from linear TV and toward connected/smart TV and OTT app viewing, advertisers will as well, but they will need to consider new ad models and formats that are more aligned with these on-demand viewing experiences.

Because of differences in the way ads are delivered and in the way effectiveness is measured – and because advertisers have a greater ability to zero on their specific audiences – the ads they run on TV will need to be revamped in order to ensure advertisers get the ROI they seek.

Voice search advertising breakout

Nobody really knows how many Echos and Google Homes are out there – estimates going into the holiday season claim about 50 million – and by the end of the year, there are likely to be millions more. It's too tempting a market for Amazon and Google to ignore, and while there have been some outright ads on all the platforms, 2019 is likely to see a more sophisticated approach, such as partnerships with brands that will allow for organic use of the devices, peppered with ads directing consumers to specific products or services.

The challenges for advertisers have never been greater; to reach audiences, you have to "micromanage" the message and use new and innovative ways to get the message across. With some insight into these trends, advertisers will be better prepared for what 2019 brings.

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