

Chapter 57

Digital Advertising Practices and its Impacts on Students: An Application in the Public and Private Universities in Turkey

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ABSTRACT

The subject of this chapter is the universities listed on the website of the Council of Higher Education in Turkey. This study aims to reveal the importance of digital advertising in these universities. In this study, firstly, the websites of these universities were examined. Secondly, the social networking and mobile applications listed in these websites were examined. The results of the current study states those Turkish universities' efforts are inadequate. This is clearly seen in mobile application and video sharing tendencies. Although most of them use social networking websites, the contents of their profiles are not attractive enough to draw the attention of young people. Therefore, special interest has to be given to content management on social networking profiles.

INTRODUCTION

Marketing is the most dynamic and innovative business function. Marketing is directly and indirectly affected by many technological developments, especially information and communication technologies. In the mid-1990s means of communication has begun to change across the world with the widespread use of the Internet. The changes in communication have also affected marketing activities. Online marketing activities – such as digital advertising- has become one of the most important factors in doing business. Digital marketing and advertising technologies enable businesses to introduce themselves and their of-

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ferings to a wider audience. It also improves product attractiveness. On the other hand consumers can also benefit from digital marketing technologies by reaching a wide variety of offerings and information about products and/or services they intend to buy.

According to The US-based Interactive Advertising Bureau's (IAB) report which was published in February 2013, the number of internet users in Turkey has increased by 1.3 million in one year and reached 26.6 million people. The information shared in the report draws attention to the increase in the number of Turkish Internet users and their usage patterns. The 56.7 percent of Turkish internet users access the web on a daily basis. The percentage of people access the web less than once a month is 1.1 percent. The gender ratio of Turkish internet users is 56 percent male, and 44 percent female. Among the new joiners, 628 thousand people graduated from primary school or have lower educational levels. Most noticeable growth in the new joiners was seen in the group aged 55 years and older with 20 percent. With this addition to the population, 1.2 million of 26.6 million has become 55 years or older (http://www.iabturkiye.org/sites/default/files/iab_subat_2013.pdf, 2013).

Important changes are taking place mobile Internet usage in Turkey. According to Madreport's (<http://mobilike.com/kaynaklar/madreport/>) research, the number of mobile Internet users increased by 88 percent in 2011 and reached 12 million 161 thousand 900 in 2012. The number of 3G subscribers increased 33 percent and reached 41 million 798 thousand 432. According to research conducted by Information and Communication Technologies Authority (ICTA); the number of mobile subscribers reached to 68.02 million in the second quarter of 2013, while this number was 67.9 million in the previous period. At the same time, the number of subscribers using mobile Internet increased 12.4 million from 10.6 million (http://www.btk.gov.tr/kutuphane_ve_veribankasi/pazar_verileri/ucaylik13_1.pdf, 2013).

In the first quarter of 2013, 41.1% of internet users used mobile phones or smartphones to connect to the Internet wirelessly outside of home and workplace. 17.1% of them have used a portable computer (laptop, netbook, tablet, etc.) (<http://tuik.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=13569>, 2013).

In term of social media, Facebook, Twitter, Foursquare and Instagram are the most commonly used social networking websites in Turkey. Turkey is ranked as seven in the world with 32 million 265 thousand Facebook members. Twitter users in Turkey present 3 percent of the total users around the world and the number of twitter users is about 10 million. Instagram in Turkey has reached 3 million users and finally Foursquare users in Turkey has reached to 2 million (<http://www.socialbakers.com/>, 2013).

Conducting research concerning internet usage in universities is significantly important in consequence of the young population and the excessive use of social networking sites in Turkey. There were 179 universities in Turkey in 2013. 109 of these are public universities and 69 are private universities (faaliyet.yok.gov.tr/, 2013). The number of students studying in these universities is about 4 million and 300 thousand. (<http://www.osym.gov.tr/dosya/1-60426/h/5onlisanlisansduzeyogrencisay.pdf>, 2013).

Universities are required to adopt new business models and innovations to compete. If universities don't response to current necessities they would operate in certain limits and be vulnerable to the threads that result from the current competition. With its innovative approach digital advertising provides an important contribution to universities' advertising activities. The purpose of this research is to describe how the Turkish universities use digital advertising strategies, what are the drawbacks and threads the face, and the performance outcomes of digital advertising strategies. In addition to these the impact of effect of digital advertising strategies on students will be examined. A number of materials (academic papers, websites ect.) are used in the study to increase the reliability and efficiency. The materials used are listed in the references section.

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