

User Experience Test: Interactive advertising on n-tv plus

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In the course of the telecommunication network upgrade, providers are trying to establish a new platform over the Internet Protocol to transmit TV as “Next Generation TV”. Therewith telecommunication companies are in direct competition with well-established TV broadcasting platforms as cable, satellite and terrestrial. Developments such as the Windows Media Center and the services of telecommunication and network providers are offering the necessary prerequisites.

What should advertising on this television format of the future look like in order to be successful? The TV promoter IP Deutschland, the media agency Mediaplus and corporate advertisers O₂ and BMW joined forces under the leadership of facit digital to find answers to this question with the November 2007 study “User Experience Test: Interactive advertising on n-tv plus”.

n-tv is a news channel and has established a spotlight service (n-tv plus) in the Windows Vista Media Center. The Media Center is a software programme on Windows Vista operating system. Within this programme users can choose from different spotlight services. A spotlight service is an interactive portal that provides as in the case of n-tv plus the live n-tv programme and in addition to that Video on Demand services.

In the case of interactive advertising users could interact with a brand over a *blue button*. When there was either a BMW or O₂ TV commercial then the *blue button* “BMW/O₂ plus” appeared in the navigation.

20 early adopters participated in individual scenario-based, partially structured interviews conducted by user experience experts in the Lean Back Usability Lab in Munich.

In conjunction with the studio test, both tested campaigns were broadcasted live on n-tv plus. In addition to the qualitative test, the tracking results were evaluated by IP Deutschland.

Study Objectives

- Evaluation of new advertising formats on n-tv with regard to acceptance and usability.
- Evaluation of specific spots and interactive offers from participating advertising partners
- Development of optimization ideas based on the users’ point of view.

The most significant result of the qualitative study, conducted within the scope of the research initiative “Zukunft Digital” was, that it is all a matter of “the right combination”. Media users do want interactive functions for IPTV, but they should not be identical with online media and advertising.

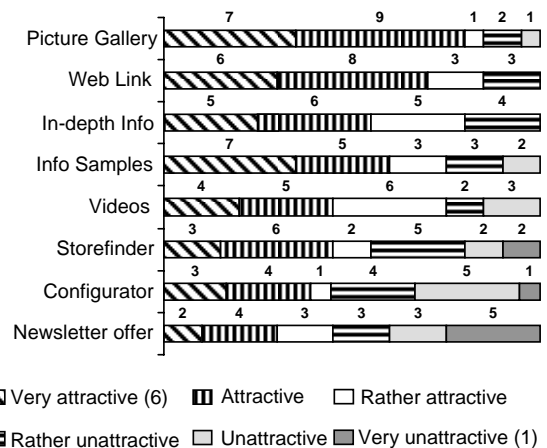
Interactive Advertising Formats

The campaigns “BMW series 3” and “O₂ Weihnachtszauber (Christmas Magic)” consisted of one spot and several menu items such as: a series of articles with additional information about the spot, a picture gallery, a trailer about the production of the spot and a link to a website.

Figure 1: O₂ Interactive Menu



Figure 2: Attractivity of Interactive TV Advertising Formats



Of all campaign elements on offer, browsing the picture gallery is the most popular.

Other options that were very much appreciated included links to Internet landing pages offering more in-depth information, product samples or appointments for test drives. This provides users with the opportunity to be informed directly.

Predicted use of Interactive Advertising

The probable rate of use of interactive advertising largely depends on the consumers' affinity to the product. 70 percent of test subjects would use interactive TV offers. The idea that you can use everything, but don't have to use anything was met with particularly high acceptance.

Of course there are several types of user behaviour among the people willing to use the offers. Starting with people who are very focused on looking for the information they need and want to achieve quick results, and – at the other end of the spectrum – people who do active searches while being extremely open to advertisement information which they use downright impulsively.

Switching from TV to the Internet

Most of the people participating in the study are able to switch from television to the Internet without a problem. The direct connection is seen as very practical in order to have quick access to further information if an offer seems interesting.

Benefits

The benefits of interactive advertising as opposed to regular television commercials include the direct opportunity to do more in-depth research on topics as well as the chance to follow and satisfy individual impulses. The user is given more freedom to make decisions and is not subjected to uncontrollable pop-ups and layers. In addition, interactive advertising is rated as more lively and of a better quality.

In the case of the O₂ products, the interactive advertising formats were deemed appropriate by 90 percent of test subjects.

n-tv will use the results of the study for the optimization of their re-launch end of this year.

Media agencies can benefit from this test, because it shows how interactive TV commercials should be.

References

¹ Clarke, B. & Katz, B. (2005). The new Medium of Television Demystifying IA Interactive Advertising Guidelines. 5-8. Retrieved May 16, 2008, from http://www.idigitalsales.co.uk/html_content/idspublications/IA_guidelines.pdf

² Sky Interactive (2003). Honda Cog Using DiTV to extract greater media value and increase exposure. 1. Retrieved May 16, 2008, from http://www.skyinteractive.com/NR/rdonlyres/1D7415BC-B1FD-4F2E-B42C-4D2852E08A72/0/casestudy_hondacog.pdf

³ Sky Media (2004). Case Study Dulux Interactive TV Campaign. 5. Retrieved May 16, 2008, from [http://www.skymedia.co.uk/pages/audience-casestudies-duluxinteractivetvcampiagn/\\$FILE/dulux+case+study.pdf](http://www.skymedia.co.uk/pages/audience-casestudies-duluxinteractivetvcampiagn/$FILE/dulux+case+study.pdf)

Companies like BMW and O2 are benefitting from this new media, because they are the first movers in the area of interactive TV commercials in Germany.

Results

Users want IPTV advertising to contain more information and interactive options than traditional TV advertising. At the same time, it should be clearly distinguished from Internet advertising. IPTV advertising needs information, interaction, innovation – combined with the seductive charm of traditional TV commercials.

Interactive Advertising experts in UK say that commercials should be entertaining. But the study of ids “Demystifying IA” shows that information in a TV spot is a “must-have” and entertainment a “nice-to-have”, but not converse.¹ The test subjects in our study also mentioned that advertising should give a reason to interact with a brand.

The following case studies from UK show how much more effective interactive TV advertising can be. Honda used for their multi-media “Honda Cog” campaign also interactive TV advertising. By providing the viewer to order a brochure or DVD they could achieve a response rate of 0.32% which is five times the car category average. Further they were able to create a return on investment of over 200%.²

The other case study shows how companies can use the strength of TV to explain complex products. Interactive TV advertising allowed Dulux the time and flexibility to fully demonstrate their colour help tool. Interactors spent an average of over four minutes with the brand. Those who had interacted had increased purchase consideration for Dulux products.³

You can download this study as a free pdf file at www.zukunft-digital.de or www.ip-deutschland.de.

Study Design

Between November 26 and 30, 2007, facit digital conducted 20 partially structured individual interviews and observed users of n-tv plus and the two campaigns by BMW and O₂ at the company's Lean Back Usability Lab. The test participants had a personal monthly net income of at least EUR 2,500. Each participant was observed and interviewed for 90 minutes. The study was based on the campaigns for the BMW series 3 and “O₂ Weihnachtszauber”.