Effects of Interactivity between Audience and Urban Advertisement

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Abstract

Nowadays, advertisement plays an important and impressive role in our lives and we are witnessing different works in this field. The emergence of new technologies in this field has led to the arrival of a new style of advertising with different interactivity and administrative functions. Interactive advertising is considered as one of the most up to date urban advertising. With regard to the arrival of this new style of advertising and using them in different countries, this research investigates the effectiveness of an advertisement's interaction with the audiences in urban advertising through a descriptive/analytical approach as well as field study with regard to the type of advertising usage including commercial, promotional, educational, social etc. It is assumed that an interactive advertising confronts the audience with many challenges and makes him from a static and watching audience to an actor and explorer audience. In such advertisements, the audience enters a path with interactivity where the advertisement guides him and audience responses positively to this action; after a simple activity and in some cases, he interacts and communicates with the advertisement just by passing by it. In interactivity advertisements in urban spaces, the artist pays much attention to audience participation for challenges or performing specific activity that will lead to a result. The use of interactive advertising in various forms such as billboards, stands, and advertisements at bus stops and so on has increased in recent years, developed countries, and countries that are more familiar to technologies. These works are considered a new step in the field of urban advertising. This research selects samples of using such creative advertisements, especially in commercial areas in different countries as well as Iran. It considers the producing method, ideation, and effectiveness of each in a specific period as well as their installation and commissioning places. The results emphasize on more effectiveness of interactive advertising as well as more contribution of audiences in the process of advertising in comparison to simple and non-interactivity advertising.

Keywords: Interactivity, Audience, Interactive Advertising, Urban Advertising.

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Introduction

From the Stone Age onwards, man felt the need for public communication; he shared his visual ideas with others. There are pictures of a number of injured falling bison and stampeding cattle and antelope on the walls of Cave of Altamira in Spain and in the Lascaux France. These paintings date back to the 10 to 15 thousand years before Christ. One of the oldest outdoor advertisings in Egypt is advertising for finding a runaway slave, as it is the first poster having been found in the world; there are also some tetrahedral petroglyphs with pyramid tips used for promoting religion of the ancient Egyptians. The documents indicate that humankind sought from ancient times to inform and promote his specific culture and elements to influence the minds of other people. One of the most evident examples of outdoor advertising may be found in the wars between tribes when some warriors carried huge and visible flags; carrying such flags signified some sort of notification.

The Greeks used some wooden columns called axons; they installed their orders for games on them and they were carried by slaves to Rome. In the last years of 1400 AD, installing bulletin was common in Europe; they were installed in the city squares, next to the church and public buildings. Lithography was invented in 1976; advancement of technology and mechanization of devices and developed poster art in 1870. Due to Industrial Revolution, machines were invented for folding and cutting, printing paper, and creating shades. Three-dimensional designs were created using the shades that were composed of tiny dots. At the same time, Jules Chéret changed the public attention to advertising. He was pioneer of applying color in modern posters. Chéret employed interesting and excellent colors in his works; this attracted people to his posters.

In 1800, the first school of poster was founded. In addition to poster, many attempts were made for urban advertising. Using mechanical devices called projector, the French installed threw light into words in the street. In this way, luminous words attracted people's eyes in cloudy weather or dark spaces. In the United States and many European countries, to advertise their products such as shoes and hats, vendors made large-scale and three-dimensional objects and show them in the streets by horses.

With the turn of the century, an unprecedented growth in commercial and industrial applications came into existence in Europe and the United States. Technology advances in supplying products and increasing population led to creation of new ways to introduce products and their advertising. In addition to industrial developments, Britain experienced considerable developments in communication.

During the early years of 1900, communication acceleration methods developed and camera was invented in the second half of the nineteenth century. Entrance of photography in advertising has opened new avenues in this direction and it has created significant evolution in advertising.

During 1940 to 1945, Second World War in Europe changed people's view of life. For the first time, people attracted to realism and real-life images. By this time, most of the ads were created like political propaganda. Advertisements were available everywhere and they reminded people expectations of the state; it was a political mass communication tool for any government trying to penetrate into people's emotions and thoughts; Germany was one of the first countries to recognize the political effects of advertising billboard. Alongside radio, it began an extensive work in the field of posters and billboards. World War II propaganda was too rough, harsh, and serious; for example, picture of dying soldiers is seen on a billboard. After the war, people were prepared to accept the influx of new goods on the market. With the arrival of the space age, technology and the Internet, communication steps became more rapid and advertising published different images from newer ways. Advertising is one of the primary means of achieving such relationships; outdoor advertising is going to convey message. One can expose educational, cultural, social, economic, commercial, and political messages easily to people's eye in order to guide them for better living. In twenty-first century and with the emergence of new technologies, a new type of urban outdoor advertising is seen. In this process, advertising has shifted more towards interactivity. This characteristic has distanced audience of artwork from inaction and static situation since it invites them to challenge and interactivity.

In recent years, many countries have turned to the use of interactive advertising that have relatively short life. They have invented very interesting samples. Using new techniques and to establish a connection with its audience, these ads influence on the mind of audiences much more than a good composition with colors and glazes; they results in remembering them by common and specific audiences.

This research presents some examples of applying such advertisements in some parts of the world. It also discusses the way of their creation, their ideation, and the effectiveness of each in specific period as well as the place of their installation and implementation.

In this regard, this article provides an introduction about urban advertising and its brief history; then, it explains interactivity art and interaction in urban outdoor advertising. Moreover, it examines some examples of successful interactive advertising. It also presents comprehensive explanation regarding their design and implementation in different countries.

According to the findings by the researchers, interactive advertisings have been very successful in recent years in many countries. It is important to note that the use of these advertising in urban advertising in the world can solve the problems of repetitive projects and ideas. Applying these modern solutions will lead to advertising update in all parts of the world as well as the people and audiences' attraction to outdoor advertising; in this manner, it will be a major step in the field of advancing.

Interactivity in Art

Interactivity is a new form of visual experience. In fact, it is a new form of artistic experience as it has gone beyond the virtual space to expand tactile sensation. In this art, spectators are active and basic elements. They are not spectators but they are users. We have seen Mona Lisa behind a bulletproof shield for a long time passively as one can observe it from a specific distance. Reputable artists have turned more and more into the digital world because how an artist can resist against the sense of being seen by an audience just through a click of the mouse? (Rash, 2010: 255).

Interactivity stimulates broader audience interaction and audience participation in the process of completing a work of art and it invites audience in the artistic work in its real sense to experience it. Interactivity is a kind of mutual relation between artist and audience that begins by audience's connection to the work and ends by audience's experimentation and activity.

Interactivity in Urban Advertising

In interactive advertising, artist pays attention more than anything does to audience's participation in order to challenge and take action that eventually leads to the conclusion. These activities may be doing something simple as pressing a button or touching the screen with one finger on the billboard. It may be doing another action such as turning on Bluetooth or WiFi of a mobile, browsing in site to view the ad, and so on. All these actions cause the audience to interact with advertising or vice versa. Another important point in the design and implementation of these works is the way of designing and developing the mutual interaction between the audience and the advertisers. It should be mentioned that the interactivity manner is determined in the first step by artist and his idea as well as facilities and technologies employed by him in the design and implementation of work in the second step. In the final step, the audience will interact with the work.

As noted above, in facing an interactive work, viewer is confronted with a space that makes him from a static and watching audience to an actor and explorer audience. He is invited to

communicate and interact with advertisement, he responses to it, and he leaves it by receiving an influence. In some cases, especially in billboards and advertising stands, the audience will even get freely attractive prizes from the interaction of the product. This event or interaction will be useful and beneficial for both audience and owner of the goods and services.

For example, in this type of advertising, audiences will walk in a path guided by billboards or stands; audiences are led to the destination determined by artist due to their participation. The invitation and audience's response to the billboard as a satisfactory activity creates a positive emotion in person without any fee and by spending a little time; it may creates sense of satisfaction from fulfillment of this positive interaction in the person. Expressing this positive sensation for others may engage them to communicate with this billboard.

Moreover, the audience of interactive advertising participates in artistic process and the completion of work in different ways. In order to complete and achieve its goal, this field of advertising needs to communicate with the audience, her active participation, and forcing him to mutual reaction to complete the process of advertising. Here, the subject of the formation, expansion, developing, and production of an idea will emerge since idea and ideation are very important in the works of interactive art.

Interactive Advertising Samples and Analyzing Them

As mentioned in the introduction, today's urban advertising has shifted more towards interactivity and they need to cooperate and engage seriously with the audience in order to achieve its goals. In this situation, the viewer makes himself free from the passive status of advertising and he is invited to communication and action. This cooperation will provide the benefits of audience and the interest of the customer and services.

The more is participation in an interactive advertising, the deeper and more serious will be sense of cooperation and customer's pleasure in the process of implementing advertising. Therefore, one important factor in an interactive work is the role of artist in the way of creating motivation for attracting audiences and converting them to active participators. As a result, communication between participants and an interactive work as well as the necessary motivation to create this association are important issues at the first stage. As a designer, artist has a significant role in this regard. Hence, this research has tried to collect successful samples of urban advertisings that have made particular interactions to their audiences. Analysis of each sample will present features of the advertising space.

The large number of visitors as well as evident creativity and innovation are the reasons for selecting such billboards. Moreover, audience interaction with the advertising is visible in samples implemented in foreign countries.

Billboards Sensitive to Weather

There are hundreds of different fashion models for every taste and age including handbags, blouses, and pants as well as winter jackets. Fashion ranges usually divided into two sets throughout the year: spring/summer – fall/winter.

In any case, clothing and coverage is highly related to climate and depends on it. When the weather changes, the type of clothing will change, as well. In this regard two companies of France Mail Order and La Redoute have began to design and implement unique billboards sensitive to weather for better communication of more customers with their new products (new collections).
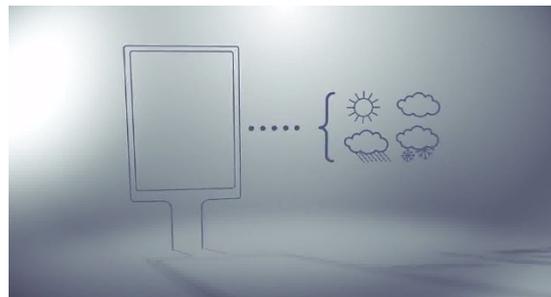
Sensors installed on the panels are working based on two criteria of temperature and precipitation changes

The billboards are working directly with the climate; sensors installed on the panels change based on two criteria of temperature and precipitation so that when the temperature comes down, the clothes worn by the models on billboard will increase according to the latest company's products and its type becomes thicker and warmer according to its model. When the temperature goes up, the clothes will become less, and they will carry umbrella and changes her/his jacket and coat when it rains.

Pictures of models whose clothes and covering changes by temperature changes

The billboards are installed in city centers, they had 120000 visitors for a period of one month, and they are visible at all times of day and night.

These sensitive billboards to climate have particular roles in selling more products of the two companies because changes in model appearance on a billboard as well as the communication established between model and audience is admirable and attractive. The spectator thinks that the model looks at him and it is alive as he informs him about changes in weather. This fact establishes a particular connection between audience and advertising.

Heineken's Interactive Illuminated Billboard

With the slogan of "Let's Illuminate Christmas Together" this billboard is installed on a 10-storey building in one of the most crowded highways in Jounieh Neighborhood in Beirut, Lebanon (Lebanese promenade). The advertising represents a 20-meters black and white Heineken bottle; it consists of 400 neon lamps that their length reaches 1.8 kilometers. According to the scheduled start of advertising, the billboard invites all Lebanese to illuminate the bottle together in 12 days before Christmas. How?

The billboard will be turn on as users enter the website "www.coloryourchrismas.com", log in their pages in personal social pages (like Facebook), and confirm their names in the website to illuminate a green bar on the bottle. In this way, each user would have a partial role in the illumination of the entire great bottle.

How is Christmas without the red and green? Click to turn it on.

Due to the high consumption of electricity by this billboard and in order to save power consumption, they turn the bottle on in certain times of 7:30 to 10 am and 4pm to 2 am.

The advertising was so impressive that attracted 26900 unique visitors and 50000 individuals in 24 December; in sum, the website could attract 76000000 visitors within 12 days from 129 countries in the world. This number shows the profound influences on a communicative and interactive advertising in comparison to simple advertisings.

Heineken's Interactive Bottle Billboard

Dutch company of Heineken is one of the most popular beverage brands in the world. After its successful campaign called "Open Your City" in line with its new advertising campaign in South Africa, it understood by investigating its target population as well as its audiences that 95 percent of South Africans have not travelled abroad.

Interestingly, this statistic may not seem important for a beverage brand in its market researches. This statistic may be significant only for travel companies and other companies for other businesses; but Heineken took the advantages of this opportunity and made it as strength in its marketing. It completed its previous campaigns by starting a campaign called "A bottle for all".

Heineken began the creation of new media by designing a sample of beverage bottles in size of a large billboard and adding a smart 360-degree screen on it; audiences of this brand can travel around the world in different places of the city. Screens used in the bottles are

supported by 360-degrees cameras in different cities of the world and audiences can have a virtual travel to the desired places such as New York, Shanghai, Rio de Janeiro, London, Amsterdam, Johannesburg, etc. and earn scores. Finally, the ticket for using Heineken beverages freely will be given to the persons earning points of interest. In this way, they can enjoy Heineken beverages, as their taste is similar all around the world. It should be mentioned that this attractive outdoor advertising had millions visitors.

Apolosophy Billboards

A company manufacturing hair care products called "Apotek Hjartat" have invented a new way to introduce its products. In collaboration with advertising agencies of Akestam Holst and Stopp, Apolosophy brand implemented its advertising in Stockholm (Sweden) subway using the slogan of "Makes Your Hair Come Alive".

Interactive billboard of Apolosophy product in subway space.

In this interactive work, a digital billboard was installed in subway space; it shows a close picture of a woman's head and face. Some sound-sensitive sensors had been installed in the board to shake the hairs of the woman as the train passed the tableau and its sound was heard. It seemed that the wind of train cause the movement of woman's hair.

Different parts of Apolosophy interactive billboard's movement in metro areas

After this stage, the woman's face looks at visitors; she seems happier as she had a sweet smile for better communication to audiences; the audiences were all people passed the billboard.

Creativity in the use of environment in which the advertising having been installed is one of elements making an urban advertising more attractive and more impressive. An advertisement will be more impressive when it has a close relationship to the audiences. Before ideation, it is better to earn full information about the place where the billboard is going to be installed.

Billboard for showing Airplanes' Arrival and Departure in England

This billboard has been placed in one of the busiest thoroughfares in a region close to the airport in England; it shows time of airplanes' arrival and departure. In this billboard, a happy and sedulous child stands up when the planes of this airline close to the sky above the

billboard and points at the plane in the sky; at the same time, a summary of information about the flight appears on the billboard and announces the flight's origin and destination; in this way, the visitor will be informed regarding the flight without any need to another means of communication only by passing through and looking at billboard. At last, the child returns to its original location after crossing the plane of its perfect location. These billboards have been designed to advertise British Airways flights. Technology of following the planes' movement time presenting the map of airlines has been used in this type of advertising. This extremely intelligent advertising takes all advantages of anon-complex technology.

Billboard for showing Airplanes' Arrival and Departure time

McDonald's Interactive Billboard

Play on McDonald's advertising billboards and get free food!

McDonald's restaurants have launched an interactive-video advertising billboards campaign in a city in Sweden. In the campaign, customers are allowed to participate and win a game. As a reward, they receive free food from nearest McDonald's restaurants to the billboard.

In this campaign, customers visit to a determined website in the billboards having been installed on different buildings; they announce their readiness to participate in the game. With

regard to geographic specifications of the mobile location, the customer is connected to the closest billboard. He has 30 seconds time to earn required scores and win some food receipts.

McDonald's Interactive Billboard

After completion of the game by the viewer, the owner of mobile can go to the nearest branch and get his free food if he earns the necessary points. The interesting point in this billboard is lack of need to install interface application to use this feature and using only touch screen of smartphones to communicate with the interactive advertising.

Coca-Cola and Happiness Machine in Switzerland

Coca-Cola Happiness Machine had found its particular place in cold winter at a bus stop in Switzerland. In this urban advertising campaign of Coca-Cola named "Reasons to Believe", passengers waiting in bus stop did not expect Coca-Cola to bring them summer heat.

A person standing at the bus stop in Switzerland

In this creative performance, turning on automatic Coca-Cola machine lights attracted the passengers' attention. Then, some pictures of beautiful summer scenery appeared for them and they hear the sound of birds. Moreover, pictures of beautiful flowers moved following in passengers' footsteps in front of them. It reminded them summer warm in cold winter. At last, Coca-Cola presents them a free drink.

Turning Coca-Cola board on and spread of summer landscapes and images

Roshd Cake Advertising Billboard

In 2013 and before Iranian New Year, Roshd Food Industries implemented a billboard in Tehran to advertise its mug cakes. The Iranian food company did not satisfy with displaying a simple and non-animated image on its billboard. Due to the presence of mobility and communication element in this billboard, it is one of the rare examples of interactive billboards in Iran.

Roshd Cake advertising billboards (the image of oven and the prepared mug cake on the billboard)

In this advertising, a big mug moves from the right side of the picture, enters the oven, and exits after 1 minute and 30 seconds (in the advertisement, timer moves faster than real time); then, mug cake is ready and it is delivered to the customer.

Roshd Cake advertising billboards (the image of oven and the prepared mug cake)

Jacobs Coffee Advertising Billboard

Jacobs Coffee advertising billboard is one of the success stories of advertising billboards in Iran. It is one of the rare examples in which designers have employed and implemented steam technique. In a cold winter day in Tehran a few years ago, citizens saw this different advertising structure. It attracted all pedestrians' attention. The steam coming up from replica of coffee cup promised a new event in the advertising industry of the country. Although this technique might have been used abroad, its entrance to Iran was interesting for every person. The advertising plan was designed so that a from replica of cup had been set on the billboard and much steam came up from them; the picture of Jacobs coffee container was predicted on the other side of he billboard; a slogan meaning "Enjoy caressing delicately" was written in the middle of billboard.

In fact, Jacobs has used this technique for the first time in Iran. In addition to steam technique, other companies used animated billboards for their advertisements in various forms. For instance, Nokia Corporation has designed an animated mobile in its advertising while its door opened in specific times. It was one of the earliest examples in this regard. Then, other companies began to use special effects in their advertising such as Adan Rice that represented a rice field on its billboard while the stem of rice moved by the wind blow; rice field had been simulate in this billboard.

According to all the instances of advertising in this study, the important point in outdoor advertising of Iran is the fact that applying new and updated techniques is very charming and important for the Iranian audience. It is evident that pedestrians immediately pay attention to it, they inform others from their implementation, and they are encouraged to see it. However, the advertisings having been implemented in Iran especially addressing billboards are not still interactive; they are merely transformed from non-animated and static boards to animated boards while the important issue in interactive billboards as well as their foreign examples is the billboard's interaction with audience and the challenged faced by audience in relation to the billboard.

In recent years in the world, different companies have recognized the advantages of interactive advertising and new advertising strategies for the urban environment more than any time. They have witnessed the feedback of this type of advertising from audiences and evaluated them. As a result, it can be noted that the knowledge of urban advertising specialists about the producers and customers of such works will be essential step in the development and updating outdoor advertising in the country. This knowledge will lead to selling more products and services as well as cultural and economic development of communities.

Recommendations and Conclusion

Interactive advertising affect on audiences and it is functional in different social, cultural, and commercial aspects. This new interesting technology has many applications in the modern age.

In urban advertising, billboards are social media with high capacity; they can be used in the best way by using new and updated technologies and taking advantages of advertising professionals. Developed countries have taken a big step in outdoor advertising and created efficient and effective interaction through features such as motion, light, sound and visual effects, as well as benefiting from the audiences' five senses like hearing and smell in addition to motivational strategies such donations.

According to a field survey of people with an average age of 20 to 40 years, most people, even with high education levels and fields related to visual communication, did not have much information about urban interactive advertising; only they had observed very small samples. The percent of their satisfaction after observing some examples increased significantly. They welcomed this type of advertising and they noted that the samples would definitely establish in their minds and the advertisings are among some few samples having been recorded in their minds.

The audiences were very surprised from implementation of these ads and the number of visitors in a short period. They believed that ideas used in these examples as well as the ways of challenging audiences by designers and design teams were very interesting and impressive.

Findings of this study indicate that applying interactive advertising refers to a mutual relationship between advertising and audience and it has a significant impact in attracting audience's more attention. There is a necessity to pay more attention to this subject and to study strategies to improve and develop it because this type of advertising (due to its mutual relationship with audience) has a lasting impression on the mind. This impression will be duplicated because of audience interaction with the advertising as well as the audience distance from always-static space.

According to surveys conducted in this study, the advertising videos, and sample analysis, the number of visitors to this type advertising much more common than expected amount when the audience interaction is also added. The same as the number of visitors and participants in Heineken's Interactive Billboard, the figure is so high that perhaps it could be a record in advertising on billboards in urban environments.

In the case of urban advertising, it is clear that the audiences of such advertising seek a kind of change in their display. It seems interactive advertising can be new strategy for more and better impact on the audience by outdoor advertising; it challenges their mind and their thoughts and prevents the expansion of repetitive projects and ideas.

Interactive advertising samples in different countries and their analysis indicate that such advertisings invite audiences to attention and interaction due to their close relationship with audiences and viewers. The audience responds to this invitation and leaves it after a workout, even passing by the advertising. The interaction is so impressive that can remain for a long time in the minds of the audience as a new and interesting experience.

This research finds that interactive works can have more and deeper impression on the audiences and viewers in comparison to artwork and simple ads with respect to structure, shape, attractiveness and its special relationship with the audience. It is regarded as one of the most important advantages of a good and correct advertisement.

According to the results of field surveys and analyzes conducted by the researcher, this type of advertising has an important role in urban outdoor advertising; it has an increasing impact on the effectiveness of social, political, cultural and commercial advertisements due to its interaction with audiences and establishing a close relationship to him. Interaction to these advertisings does not need complex technologies and a concise understanding of new communication tools such as mobile phones, tablets, and the Internet solves the possible

problems. Keep pace with this field is inevitable in advertising. It is worth noting that the designers of such advertisings try to make them applicable for common people.

Accordingly, a new step in improving and promoting urban advertising is possible through using the outdoor advertising specialists, updating advertising agencies with the latest technologies in the world, and making the use of interactive tools to align and communicate advertising and viewers. This helps much to cultural and economic growth.

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