



The Journey of Visual Communication **Eustis, Florida**

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Introduction

STOP! Listen! Act Now! Communication is everywhere. Whether conveying thoughts, messages, or information, communication is used in many forms on a daily basis. One of the most powerful and most often used forms is visual communication. The use of visual communication in advertising has been a powerful force since the early days of promoting a particular product or business. In creating these advertisements, graphic design has also played an important part that can be seen when looking at the many changes advertising has gone through over the past 200 years. This communication process has been affected by major events, cultural changes, and most often times advances in technology. More recently, the Internet has opened a whole new dimension of design to the communication process. With these changes have come new methods and concepts that are being used and built upon by both marketing and design professionals to continue to communicate with their audiences. By reviewing the evolution of advertising and the methods that have been developed, this paper will take a look at how these methods are being used and what new ideas are being developed and tested in the current world of "advertising.com."

Early Advertising

This journey begins back in the early 1700s of Colonial America. There were three major groups of advertising forms consisting of outdoor advertising, newspapers, and miscellaneous business advertising such as trade cards. The first group of outdoor advertising, the earliest form of advertising, includes signboards, tavern signs, bulletins, posters and public notices. Descendants of this form can be seen all around in today's

road signs, billboards, point-of-sale displays, and even on the sides of various forms of transportation (Hornung ix).

The second form of early advertising was the newspaper. Early newspapers, referred to as "news-letters," consisted only of text and had very little advertising. They were only issued weekly until the close of the Eighteenth Century when they finally started to catch on and the literacy rate of the nation began to increase. The few magazines that were attempted at this time only met failure (Hornung ix). Newspapers, however, were here to stay. In 1726, Ben Franklin was the first to include illustrations in his newspaper, *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, in trying to add a little spice and interest for the readers. The first ones were wood engraved images of sailing vessels that accompanied the announcements of cargo shipments and such. These were the first examples of store advertising that later grew into a wide variety of images that were used to draw the reader's attention to the particular store or product they may need. For this reason Ben Franklin is considered the father of advertising art (Hornung x).

The third group consists of advertising used in business and selling. Included in this group are trade cards, invoices, bills of lading, labels, tags, schedules and other printed material (Hornung x). Trade cards were the most widely used form in this group. Trade cards date back to the first part of the Eighteenth Century. They are described as a pasteboard card that states a good or service for sale and usually contains the name and address of the merchant and any other important information. Before illustrations were used, printers would throw in any decorative elements such as ampersands or question marks to fill up the vacant space on a card. Later on, wood engraved illustrations were used and better described the business and goods to be sold (Hornung xxi).

Within these forms of advertising were several pieces to this advertising puzzle that each played a part in the development. The typographic elements, for example, show a distinct progression. Early goals were focused on readability and not design. A more bookish typeface was used for most everything and their options were also limited. Then in the early 1800s the modern face came into use. A wider and bolder type or fat face started to be used with the main goal being to gain reader attention and not to look beautiful or normal (Hornung xxiv). It is evident that advertising and design was becoming more important. The idea of advertising in general was catching on. People started to see results of advertising and began using it regularly. Everyone had some kind of announcement or important information and newspapers seemed to be the most effective way to let the public know. By 1847 there were around two thousand American newspapers with about eleven million separate advertisements (Hornung xxix). Advertising agencies also came into existence around this time. Volney B. Palmer started one of the first advertising agencies in Philadelphia. Unlike ad agencies of today, they went out to get businesses and companies to put their advertising in the newspapers. It wasn't until later that companies started coming to them to create ad campaigns and promotional strategies (Sell and Spin). The importance of branding also became well known and businesses began focusing on getting their name on everything.

As advertising became more important the design and mediums did too. Advertising could be seen on rocks and brick walls in the cities and painted huge on the sides of buildings. New York City in particular became a blaze of color and signage in the middle 1800s. Phineas T. Barnum and his stunt publicity provided a major boost in advertising to get away from the conservative forms and spark a new creativity

(Hornung xxxi). His bright and lively posters captured audiences' attention and brought posters to a new level. Repetition was another technique that was evident in conveying general themes in advertising. Patriotic emblems such as the eagle were widely used in many forms during the Nineteenth Century and during the Civil War days (Hornung xxxix). In looking at these progressions, the technical aspects of printing were a factor.

The two main techniques used in printing were letterpress and lithography. The letterpress system was the earliest used and "consists of relief surfaces that are inked and pressed against a sheet of paper." The letters are made from wood or lead and stored in slotted cases to be used in blocks of copy (Rothschild, Lupton, and Goldstein 55).

Lithography, invented in Germany in 1796, "involves marking a smooth stone with a water-resistant substance; when the surface is bathed in water during the printing process, the treated areas accept ink, and the resulting image prints onto paper." Offset

lithography involves a flexible metal plate that transfers the image to a rubber cylinder and then to paper. Although this method became popular after World War II, letterpress was mainly used to reproduce text and lithography was used to replicate images.

"Letterpress printers used images as typographic elements, while lithographers treated words as pictures" (Rothschild, Lupton, and Goldstein 56).

Photography was invented in 1839 and was used by commercial printers. Due to letterpress and lithography's inability to produce shades of gray, photography was used mainly for copy line images or purely black and white images. Then when the halftone process was developed in 1884, a method of using different size black and white dots to simulate gray values, photography became more widely used. It was now possible to

combine real images with typography and advertising began to look closer to what we know today (Rothschild, Lupton, and Goldstein 56-57).

One other contribution to advertising and graphic design was the "card craze." During the 1870s and 1880s thousands of printed and lithographed trade cards appeared and swept the country. The cards had colorful designs of various subjects that caught on and were collected and even displayed in homes. It was becoming evident that people wanted things that looked good and were different and more creative than what had previously been done (Hornung xlv).

1900-1940s

The first few decades of the Twentieth Century ushered in a flurry of new ideas and technology that broadened the ideas of advertising and graphic design.

During the 1910s and 1920s in Europe and the United States there was an unprecedented give-and-take of new ideas and ways of seeing that took place among a small group of artist-designers of different nationalities, and interchange made possible in part by twentieth-century advances in travel and communication.

This interchange of ideas led to a variety of advances in design (Rothschild, Lupton, and Goldstein 9). This era also was characterized by a movement toward artistic freedom in design. Previously, design meant to "take an idea and make it visually clear, concise, and instantly understood." Now designers were trying to express themselves and their products in a new light and get away from the tired traditional rules of design and express their intellectual freedom. As a result, many new ideas were realized and began to be accepted (Rothschild, Lupton, and Goldstein 10). Through these extreme experiments came a more calmed version of the new ideas of design and by the mid 1920s they were

starting to be accepted by progressive corporations and their clientele (Rothschild, Lupton, and Goldstein 47).

The first full service advertising agency, Ayer and Sons, was started in the early 1900s and advertising's importance was growing in the minds of many businessmen. All kinds of new methods were being tested. In 1921 skywriting was the hot thing, used by major companies like Pepsi-Cola. Then in 1925 came the Goodyear Blimp, and to this day it causes excitement when it passes overhead. Outdoor billboards were used as a reminder and reinforcement form of advertising and have also stuck around to this day. Burma Shave came out with a creative approach that got a lot of attention when they had several small signs along the roads that lead up to their store and built excitement and anticipation for the customers in the early days of driving (Sell and Spin). This was a time of bright lights and spectacular displays to attract the attention of many onlookers. In the 1920s when neon was invented the lighted signs of Times Square took on a whole new look and attitude. Signs in general got bigger and they all had to out-do one another. One Wrigley's Gum sign was eight stories high and another sign featured a man smoking with real smoke rings coming out of the sign (Sell and Spin).

During the late 1920s magazine design was moving away from the restricted traditional look and more toward a modern feel. This can be seen in the tightly cropped photos, the silhouette effects, and the use of sans serif faces. Most of these advances can be credited to M. F. Agha, who was the art director for *Vogue*, *Vanity Fair*, and *House and Garden*. He was devoted to raising the standards of magazines and making them more modern. In 1932, *Vogue* included their first full-color photograph and magazines were on their way to becoming very modern (Remington and Hodik 16).

One of the most important breakthroughs in the early 1900s was in marketing research. Advertisers finally started to look at how advertising affected consumers. In 1932, George Gallup was at the forefront of marketing research bringing a scientific perspective into advertising. The ideas of target markets became important and more and more thought was put into creating ad campaigns (Sell and Spin). Audience participation became an important goal. "It was no longer sufficient to feed a self-contained work of art to the public for passive absorption; instead, modernist artists sought to engage their viewers . . . to enter into a dialogue with them and thereby distill new meaning" (Rothschild, Lupton, and Goldstein 95). With this new approach to advertising the audience was forced away from the realistic photographs that told the entire story and left little room for interaction or creativity and moved into a more abstract method that allowed the consumer to almost participate in the ad and gain his own meaning from it. This entered the customer into a new way of perceiving the product they purchased as a way of life and not just an object (Rothschild, Lupton, and Goldstein 97). One ad that shows this is the Wrigley's Gum ad where the package looms large and is seen as essential to the customer's happiness or well-being. It seems straightforward, however the placement of the package makes it look even larger and the red string of the wrapper was already starting to unravel. This allowed the consumer to participate in this unraveling and even start to taste the fresh spearmint and agree with the slogan that it is the perfect gum (Rothschild, Lupton, and Goldstein 99). This means of advertising was very successful and is still being used today in many areas.

The invention of the radio was another breakthrough in advertising during this time period. It didn't initially affect visual communications but helped pave the way for

television later on. In 1920, radio was first used to broadcast election results and within two years over 400 stations were in use. There were no commercials in the early days but advertisers quickly remedied that (Sell and Spin). The first goal in promoting radios was just to sell the actual radios, and then, in 1922 the first commercial aired and the rest is history. Advertising was finally brought into the home and advertisers had a direct communication line with many households. Advertisers thought sound was easier to remember and jingles became very popular. Even today there are certain jingles that most Americans can still remember. Most radio shows had sponsors and this was a very successful means of advertising. This was when "soap" operas became popular. In 1938 radios overtook magazines as the most popular form of advertising (Sell and Spin). The popularity of radio allowed for a very smooth transition to television a few years later.

The early part of the Twentieth Century was a busy time in the advertising and graphic design fields. Many new ideas and concepts were tested, some successful and some not. An overall greater awareness of the consumer in general, however, was achieved. Companies started planning their promotions around the consumer and creating ads that allowed the consumer to participate in the communication process. These concepts are the foundations of current advertising goals and strategies that are still being built upon today.

1950s-1980s

The next change advertising faced was the invention of the television. Although it was created in 1927, it wasn't until 1946 that they started to catch on and even then there were fewer than 10,000 sets in American homes. However, it didn't take long for

Americans to make the switch from radio to television. It was a simple transition because many of the radio programs were brought to television and faces were added to Americans' favorite characters. Many of the same successful concepts were carried over and then built upon. In the early days of television the advertisers were mostly in control. However, after the Quiz Show scandals were uncovered, and the public found out the shows rigged the winners, the networks were forced to take over (Sell and Spin).

During the early days of television, there were several challenges for the producers and advertisers. First of all was the lack of color. More attention had to be paid to tonal values. Although the first images were hardly realistic or fitting with the sounds or jingles that were meant to go with them, the impact of this new media was significant. Another challenge was the fact that television is different from other means in that there is a limited amount of time for the exposure of the ad, whereas in posters, brochures, billboards and such, the audience can take however much time they desire to take the ad in. These television ads must then be immediately understood and the message relayed in a short amount of time. Several methods were tried to determine the best approach (Laughton 10).

Selecting typefaces for television was also a difficult task. The typeface must capture the mood of the scene but also must be legible which was more difficult through television. Many producers began to select certain typefaces for no particular reason, other than they liked them, and there was a flurry of odd faces that showed up in television (Laughton 6). Because this was a new field with new rules, there weren't many graphic designers that fully understood the technical aspects of television to translate the known and trusted methods of design over to television and, therefore it took

a while for them to develop the new methods that would eventually be successful. Even then the potential of television was evident although it would take a while to get up to speed with other advertising media.

The main advantage in television was thought to be its ability to grab the emotion of the audience. This was when the hard sell or direct advertising began to be used. The message was very straightforward and showed the basic benefit of the product. This was successful for a while. As times changed, so did methods of advertising. The new generations demanded more creative ads and meaning within the product in the same way print reached this point of greater interaction several years before. However, the use of strong symbols was still the most effective means when used creatively (Sell and Spin). Such examples as the McDonald's ad campaign of "you deserve a break today" and the Alka-Seltzer campaign of "plop, plop, fizz, fizz, oh what a relief it is" combine the ideas of a strong symbol and a creative twist to become images and jingles that have stayed in Americans' memories for quite a while (Sell and Spin). Throughout these positive steps the idea of brand recognition remained strong. Businesses believed more than ever, now that their products were in plain sight of so many consumers, how important a strong brand image was and still is today. This became the main goal of many companies.

Another approach in advertising was to target a smarter consumer that could understand the less simple ads that had a bit of humor to pick up on. Emotion was the major factor that was played upon in most forms of television advertising. Then as remote controls became more widely available advertisers had to reevaluate once again. Keeping the attention of the audience so they wouldn't change the channel was most important. Not only did the advertiser have to inform the audience about the benefits of

the product, they were now expected to get their attention and entertain them to get the message across. To this day advertisers are still competing for consumers' attention to entertain and inform them.

Television advertising was also used in politics in 1952 by Eisenhower. The ads dealt with the negative aspects of the war and painted horrific pictures that shocked many Americans. The voter turnout after these negative ads started to be used decreased 15%. The affect television advertising was having on the public became evident (Sell and Spin).

Other forms of advertising still continued to grow and transform with the times as well. With the increased speed of cars in the 1960s, billboards got bigger and bolder in order to catch the attention of the fast moving motorists (Sell and Spin). The wild ideals of various opinions of the 60s and 70s carried over into several forms of advertising while the threat of war also had its affects. These can plainly be seen in the bold and bright statements that were made in many of the magazines, posters and pamphlets of this time period. Closing up the 80s and looking to the 90s, the public was ready for another change in advertising. The change happened to come in the early 1990s in the form of the Internet and little did anyone know what an impact it would have.

1990s – Present

The last decade of the Twentieth Century has ushered in a leap in technology which has lead to a new media available in advertising. The Internet was actually started by the U.S. government and later turned over to the private sector in the early 90s (Kleindl 284). It didn't start to catch on, however, until the mid 90s when academics

began widely using it (Kleindl 154). Once the general public caught on to the idea and started to get comfortable with it, the flood gates flew wide open. The function that aided in this process was person-to-person communication in the form of e-mail. Once consumers were able to figure out how to write and immediately send a letter to their cousin Fred in Idaho through this setup, it was an ideal starting point to get into the rest of the uses of the Internet. Now consumers can collect and provide information by searching thousands of businesses' Web sites and large databases of information. They are able to exchange ideas and questions with other consumers as well as product and service providers. They can also get technical help regarding almost anything (Pavlou and Stewart 3). These are just a few of the possibilities now available to consumers through this new media.

The recent explosion of the Internet isn't news to anyone. Affects of the Internet can be seen all over. Most businesses have realized and are realizing this and most are trying to catch up, if they haven't already. They have traditionally used linear forms of communication in advertising where the information follows a scripted flow. However, with the Internet a nonlinear form of communication is possible. This "allows a free flow and exchange of information" (Kleindl 53). This form of communication brings a greater number of people together through a many-to-many model and provides a means for feedback (Kleindl 55). This has also affected advertising on a world-wide scale because through the Internet virtually anyone, anywhere can be a customer – the world is getting smaller (Garibaldi 191).

Businesses of all kinds and sizes and individuals alike are realizing the importance of the Internet. One article talked about an Italy-based Web design company

called Ootworld that was started in 1998. They claim to have more than enough to do because of the many businesses that are ready to get online (Garibaldi 191-192). One of the local Web design companies here in Joplin called Intruos also claims to be very busy and is looking to expand even though they just opened in April of 2000 (Blaukat). So it is obvious that businesses are ready to move forward, knowing if they don't they will get left behind. Individuals are also realizing this fact. One article told of a senior art director and copywriter of a certain agency quitting to go work for Web design firms. They were quoted as saying, "There is no future in advertising. Web is where the action is" (Mohoni 48). Consumers are also slowly making the transition to looking online for products and some purchasing online. Even older adults that don't readily change their habits are starting to try out the Internet and its benefits. Being that much closer to talking to grandchildren is a big incentive. Through all of these examples it is clear that communication in advertising is in a transitional phase and advertisers must pay attention and change with the consumers.

Advertising on the Internet By now most everyone who has heard of the Internet has heard of a banner ad. Banner ads usually are small rectangular block messages that have been the most common method of Web advertising (Kleindl 62). Initially they were meant to attract customers to click-through them to the advertiser's site, however they haven't been quite as successful at doing this as many businesses would have liked. Some of this may be attributed to poorly designed ads. One article stated that click-through rates have dropped to 1 in 100 visitors responding (Weaver 93). Another part of the perceived failure of banner ads may be that getting the customer to immediately click-

through isn't their strongest ability. Banners still account for nearly two-thirds of advertising dollars spent, but maybe their success lies in their ability to make the customer more likely to visit the site at another time (Weaver 94). Regardless of how they work, the advertiser still has to pay and there are several options available to do this. An advertiser can pay by the impression, or each time an ad is displayed. They can pay per click, or each time a potential customer clicks-through their ad. They can also pay a portion of the click through revenues. One other method is a banner exchange program where ads may be traded, impressions for impressions (Senyak 100). So, if banner ads are the choice of a company, they have several specific options from which to select.

Another means of online advertising is to get placed on a popular search engine. Referred to as portals, these sites see millions of consumers each day. Although placement on some of these sites can cost in the neighborhood of \$5 million to \$20 million per year plus a percentage of sales, if they work, they usually work very well. Some of the Internet giants such as Beyond.com use portals very successfully and have much to show for it (Weaver 94).

Interstitial advertising is another form that has raised some questions. This box of advertising just pops up on the computer screen without any warning. It has gotten people flustered because of its intrusive nature, however its success rate compared to traditional ads is significantly higher (Shaffer 348). The nature of these pop-up ads may eventually change or they may be here to stay, it is yet to be seen.

Other various forms of Web advertising might include giveaways and free stuff to get the consumers to use the business' service, like AOL did with their free Internet use CDs. They signed up 18 million subscribers with their promotion. Victoria's Secret

gained incredible “exposure” when they told the public of a live online lingerie show with one commercial on Super Bowl Sunday (Weaver 95). Blue Mountain Arts greeting card company exploded onto the scene with basically no marketing budget at all. By offering a free greeting card service, recipients of the first cards sent would return to the sight to send free e-cards to other people. Before long everyone had heard of bluemountain.com and 4.2 million people visit this sight per month (Weaver 92).

The bottom line concerning Internet advertising is the same as in traditional advertising: catch the consumer’s attention. Advertisers are realizing a simple “mybusiness.com” isn’t going to drive customers to their site by the thousands, however a creative and flashy ad that sparks their interest might. So as Internet technology continues to progress, so will the creativity and quality of the ads progress as businesses continue to attempt to differentiate themselves from all the other dot.com companies now in the marketplace (Shaffer 348).

Building a Successful Web Page or Ad According to some people, creating an ad or Web site is easy and something that anyone can do with a couple pointers (Senyak 100). However, the difference in opinion comes in when considering the intended success of the ad or page. Rodney Blaukat, president of Intruos Web design company, used the example of a customer’s brother’s friend’s uncle being able to make his Web page for him, but if the page is going to be representing his business to the online market, they should want it to look professional. So, yes, anyone can basically make an ad or Web site, but that doesn’t guarantee it will be successful (Blaukat). One article from March 1998 stated that only “three out of a surveyed one hundred sites are adequately

servicing their visitors, the other ninety-seven excluding or annoying valuable potential clients" ("Poorly Designed Web Sites"). This article also referred to a survey that revealed corporate web sites to have a far too narrow focus on a specific customer that in turn excludes equally valuable customers. Many companies are realizing the importance of having a site, but they are either not putting any concern for design and usability into it or they are loading it up with too much stuff that takes forever for the customer to download before they can even view the homepage ("Poorly Designed Web Sites").

Another article talked about many sites getting too wrapped up in what they want instead of focusing on the customer's needs. Site usability is an important factor in whether a customer will return to a site or not. "Successful sites focus on the customer's experience while keeping self-promotion in the background" (Smith 2). Navigation and a visually pleasing layout are two keys in achieving this goal. Some other tips given to make Web sites and ads successful are to maintain a balance of information and aesthetic content, to make any buttons or labels straightforward, and to make the path from the product to the checkout as direct as possible (Smith 3). Some other helpful suggestions to keep in mind are to keep it fairly simple, be sure to provide the customer with added value, make the business easily accessible with a toll-free number or an address, and always know who the customer is and what they most likely want (Ashton 94-95). There is much more to being successful on the Internet than just having a Web site. With the possibilities in interacting with customers today, advertisers need to be sure not to waste any opportunities.

Another issue relating to Internet advertising is the affect that it is having on traditional forms of advertising. For example, printers are already seeing a decline in

business in certain markets. The concept is basic in that as more projects are done on the new media of the Internet, less will be done on the presses. The key to the changes for design professionals is to adjust and continue learning to evolve with the media. It is believed that designing for print will not disappear, however there will be a greater need to integrate the various media (Whittington and Webb 40). Much of the proofing stage for most jobs will be handled through the Internet and this also will force printers to keep up with new technologies. There are predictions also that many designers will be attracted to the Internet and away from traditional print-oriented shops and there is a definite need for good designers in Internet focused businesses (Whittington and Webb 40). This stresses the need for designers to continue to learn and keep up with advances in technology and also in order to be more marketable.

The Future of Internet Advertising Many predictions are already being made as to where the Internet will be going in the next few years. The idea of bandwidth plays a big part in these predictions. Bandwidth refers to the amount of digital information that can be carried over a line (Kleindl 25). So the richer the information and content, the higher the bandwidth that is required. As higher bandwidth becomes more readily available to consumers, the opportunities for greater interaction and advertising become possible. With these possibilities come more movement and Flash-based projects that involve animation. One article stated that good design combined with Flash technologies are the next wave of design. They also talked about wireless technologies and how projects will be created for not only the Internet, but also for mobile phones and other such products (Garibaldi 194). Banner ads are predicted to stay around for awhile although they are

expected to consist more of moving images and graphics. "Static banner ads are doomed" (Weaver 100). Full motion interstitial ads are likely to appear almost like short videos or television commercials. Multimedia in general will continue to get richer in content and more widely used. One other idea is that sponsorships of events will become a bigger part of advertising to get the dot.com companies more seen. And in all of these areas a major focus will be to highly target all forms of Internet advertising in order to reach the most likely customers (Weaver 100). Many ideas of the future of Internet are being expressed and companies are trying to stay ahead, but the most important thing is for companies to continue learning and staying open to new technologies and methods.

Conclusion

Upon looking into the evolution that visual communication in advertising has gone through, distinct stages of progress and ingenuity can be seen. In the early years of advertising newspapers and various forms of simple outdoor advertising were used to get people's attention. In business, trade cards were the tool used to express an individual's trade or goods to be sold. With Ben Franklin's creativity, illustrations became more widely used and design began to play a greater part in advertising. As time progressed, so did technology; and, with photography and new means of printing using lithography, there were many possibilities. As the Nineteenth Century came to a close and the Twentieth Century opened up with a bang, signs got larger and flashier and advertising got bolder. People were ready for exciting ads that entertained them. Many new forms of advertising such as skywriting, blimps, and series of roadside mini-billboards came onto the scene. With new technology designers were able to be more creative and daring

in their ads. There were many extremes that were tested and eventually design settled into an acceptable state. With the invention of the radio and later the television came a whole new series of opportunities and challenges. Now advertisers had a direct line into consumers' livingrooms and were able to have their uninterrupted attention. Sound also played a big part in what was possible in advertising. Along with these changes in media came changes in the approach advertisers took to reach their audiences. They attempted to invite the consumer to participate in the ad and interact within the promotion process. This was very successful and is still a key idea used today. As television became more popular and widely available advertisers started to address a new, more intelligent audience. They started to make ads that required some thought and a fresh sense of humor. Branding was a key concept and jingles and phrases stuck in the heads of most everyone. Then as technology kept on moving right into the Internet, so did advertising. It has only been within the last few years that advertisers have begun to understand the capabilities and unique nature of this new media. New techniques and methods are constantly being tested and surveys are being taken left and right to determine what is working, what isn't, and what needs to be done.

When evaluating the wide range of information and opinions available regarding the evolution and current advances in visual communication, there seem to be three key concepts that design, marketing, and advertising professionals must now consider in Internet advertising. These three concepts are the shift of power to the consumer, the necessity of a strong media mix, and the greater opportunities available in marketing research.

Shift of Power to the Consumer In talking to several local business professionals working with the Internet, many stressed the importance of customer service as a main goal. Dennis Burns from CFI talked about their success with the Internet in that the customer can now be more comfortable with shipments and such because they can check a wide variety of updated information through their Web site. This shift of power to the customer provides greater service and satisfaction (Burns). Mr. Burns also talked about this shift in relation to greater responsibility on the part of the business. Customers now have a much greater access to information and are more knowledgeable. This is forcing businesses to be careful in developing their strategies and operations and is also holding them accountable to an informed consumer (Burns). No longer can a car dealer tell the customer that their deal is the best they'll find knowing it isn't. Most consumers now have already researched several options on the Internet and know what is and isn't available. This shift in power has affected advertising in that "it is now the consumer who does something to or with advertising, not vice versa" (Pavlou and Stewart 3). This control of the information flow has shifted from the marketer to the consumer through the use of interactive media and has changed the way advertisers approach this information flow (Pavlou and Stewart 4).

Strong Media Mix The importance of a strong mix of media that is well coordinated to work together is another point that came up several times in talking to local business people. Rodney Blaukat of Intruos Web Design stressed the importance of their clients promoting their Web sites in their other forms of advertising. To expect search engines to send people to a business's site when there are millions of other sites

out there is extremely optimistic and unrealistic. A business's Web address should be incorporated into every aspect of their marketing program (Blaukat). Dan Chiodo from the Joplin Globe talked about their Web site being able to offer their customers another means of advertising that is consistent with their overall media mix (Chiodo). Kerry Ogle from Freeman Hospital talked about how their marketing program now includes all forms of media and has a coordinated look and feel to bring all the units together (Ogle). Some people are scared that traditional forms of advertising are going to disappear, however most people agree that isn't the case. The Internet isn't a substitute for traditional advertising but an extension of traditional mass advertising. It is referred to as a "better medium for reinforcing your message to the more aware, more active populace" (Mohoni 48). How did Yahoo get to be so huge? They advertised with "over-the-top characters who pulled immense tuna out of local ponds" (Weaver 95). The importance of a strong media mix is reiterated over and over when looking at some of the companies that have made a strong Internet presence. The Victoria's Secret example, the AOL example and many others prove its success. Branding is also achieved in this same way. Just look at all of the many signs and ads that all have some kind of dot.com on them. These Internet companies don't have the reinforcement opportunities as car companies, clothing brands and others that consumers see each day, so they need to get their name out and in the minds of customers through other means of advertising (Judge et al. 38). Billboards have become one of the most popular means of dot.com company advertising. One example is a garden.com billboard that is made from live plants and an irrigation system of its own on a strip of highway in Silicon Valley (Hamilton EB 84). Billboards like these are becoming the means for many online companies to get recognized. So, it is

quite evident how important it is for advertisers and businesses alike to incorporate all areas of promotion in creating a media mix that is best suited to the individual business.

Marketing Research Opportunities The Internet not only has provided added means of advertising but also added information about the customers. This point is best explained in a statement from Pavlou and Stewart:

While it has long been possible to obtain self-reports of consumers' involvement and participation, interactive advertising has the potential to provide a direct measure of consumers' involvement and participation through examination of the frequency and type of interaction with the advertiser (9).

Through the use of databases and cookies, electronic information created each time a customer visits a site, marketers and advertisers are able to track the habits of customers like never before (*Sell and Spin*). Marketers obtain this information through several ways. Some use clustering techniques that group people who behave in similar ways together. Collaborative filtering uses algorithms to figure an individual's tastes based on other people's tastes with similar interests. A profiling system tags individual consumers, and record their responses to various areas in a Web site. Artificial intelligence is probably the most sophisticated type because it learns from a user's behavior and can detect deviations from what is normal for a customer. This is often used in risk assessment and fraud detection ("Watching While You Click" 108). Marketing research has definitely reached a new level and even Mr. Blaukat said a lot of their site designs are determined by the likes and dislikes of the customers (Blaukat). The mere presence of these new methods of marketing research alone, however, doesn't make them helpful unless marketers, advertisers, and businesses take advantage of them.

In conclusion, it is up to the design, marketing, and business professionals to use this new media in an efficient way that best communicates the intended message to the consumer. There are still many things to be learned and ideas to be tested, however, the possibilities are endless in the reality that everything will continue to change and evolve as history has repeatedly proven. For these reasons, being a part of this fascinating and ever-changing field will be both challenging and rewarding.

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