Chapter 11
The Functions of the Narrator in Digital Advertising

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ABSTRACT

Storytelling, which was taken over from traditional advertising, has been continuing existence of it sown in the World of digital advertising. Efficiency of storytelling is intensively used in digital advertisements with the aim of directing attention of consumers to the product and encouraging them to buy product. In digital advertisements, stories are narrated by storytellers. In this study, storytelling in digital advertising and different types of storytellers are examined and traces of storytelling which has existed from past to the present, are followed.

INTRODUCTION

Technological developments are becoming visible within life by increasing day by day, and they continue their influence in virtual reality with access to technology’s being fast and cheap. In conjunction with the technological innovations experienced, more people interact with each other in society. The areas of use of the increased communication tools have become widespread when it united with the internet. This new technology activates the audience through positioning them as participants.

With the rapidly evolving technology, communication tools, smart phones, tablets, computers, smart televisions are used both as media of communication and as data banks. In conjunction with this rapid change experienced, digital media are articulated to traditional media. The digital age experienced with digital media puts “people-oriented” view instead of “customer-oriented” view forward. Nowadays, this situation heads people towards setting people-oriented strategies instead of consumer specification.

In the transformation of advertising sector from traditional media to digital media, it is seen that the process of storytelling supported by narrative and visual elements used in traditional media is now used in digital media to a high degree so as to increase sales. Television and print media advertisements requiring large budgets are leaving their place to digital media which need a more modest budget and

which can create more effective results. Despite all these, a new, fast-growing, perishable and highly consumed media is faced with.

The narrative and storytelling used in the advertising industry are making room for themselves in the digital space with the spread of digital broadcasting. The act of telling has existed since the ancient times of humanity as it is a basic human need. Constantly advancing and changing from telling to narrative forms, it leads to the question of the existence or position of the narrator being one of the main problems. Narrative that exists in the dramas of cinema and television, appears in the advertising sector as the most influential narrative focus of today with its own forms of expression.

In the digital age, in which there are information density and pollution, producers try hard to market their products with storytelling in digital advertising to attract attention to their products. In the advertisements produced for the digital media, digital storytelling of people is used effectively in marketing products.

THE CONCEPT OF DIGITALIZATION AND THE WORLD OF COMMUNICATION

As one of the most important problems of today, information surplus is laid emphasis on. The fact that where people will store so much information that they receive quite rapidly without endeavoring creates uncertainty. Castells describes internet as the “universal, interactive, computerized communications network of the Information Age” (Castells, 2008, p. 465). McLuhan, on the other hand, states that “the information age is to reconstruct the world in our image” (Castells, 2008, p. 465). This is because of the fact that today users are no longer limited to a certain monopoly guidance; they live in a sea of information which is shaped by many people. The positive aspect of this period experienced by digitalization is the removal of monopolization, while the negative aspect is seen as the challenge to reach the correct information among too much information.

When the concept of digitalization is examined, it is seen that it has been addressed as the most important concept of technological progress within the development process seen in a wide area in recent years. Digitalization is defined as the conversion process of analog messages (words, pictures, letters) to signals consisting of different dashes that can be transported from one place to another, processed and stored electronically. Audio, video and text messages can be digitized and easily combined and this feature provides information integration being possible with the new technology. The effects of digitalization make progress far beyond telecommunications. The fact that the sound, image and texts are processed together provides a large multimedia application designed specific to computers. At the same time, digitization process is experienced intensely in all communication tools such as telephones, music players, cameras, radios, televisions and computers (Ormanlı, 2012, pp. 32-33). While increasing the production and efficiency with the latest technologies is targeted, digitalization becomes the focus of communication. While digitization is increasing its prevalence in all communication fields, advertising industry takes its place in this digitization process effectively. In recent years, all brands have become aware of the importance and power of digital technology and social media for the advertising industry.

This is because people can get into contact and interact with the whole world from their whereabouts in the electronic age, they can communicate within the world just like the tribal people communicated with their tribes in the tribal era. So today, the expansion of communication transforms all the world into a single tribe. In this way, people live in a world established on a global scale. Castells calls this electronic age the “network society” as the internet connects people to each other and this changes McLuhan’s