Gender and Age Differences in Internet Use among Czech Internet Users: Consequences for Online Advertisement Targeting

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ABSTRACT

The internet offers advertisers many opportunities for targeting their advertisements. The traditional approach to the demographic targeting of advertisements assumes the existence of internet servers with sufficient homogeneity of visits. The aim of this paper is to identify the variations in internet content consumption habits of different groups of Czech internet users, according to gender and age. On the basis of the research findings, the possibilities for the demographic targeting of internet advertisements by gender and age on the Czech internet were assessed. The analysis is based on the data from the extensive research which was carried out by the Netmonitor project, and which was provided for the purposes of this research study by the Association for Internet Development (SPIR). The research results show that the traditional affinity-based method of targeting according to gender and age is still possible on the Czech internet.

Keywords: Demographic Aspects, Demographic Targeting, Gender and Age, Internet Advertising, Internet Users

INTRODUCTION

With its growing penetration of society, the internet has become an important marketing channel, which today cannot be overlooked when searching for a more effective way of reaching the target group of customers. The Czech Republic has average (in the EU) household internet coverage. 67% of Czech households are connected to the internet (Czech Statistics Office, 2014). The internet is particularly important when addressing the younger inhabitants, where

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coverage reaches much higher values. For instance, 96.5% of individuals aged 16 to 24 years old are connected to the internet, while only 18.9% of people aged 65 and over, are online (Czech Statistics Office, 2014). It can be seen from the data of the Czech Statistics Office that the number of inhabitants in the Czech Republic, who are online, contains a very high proportion of young people with higher education; mostly men; as well as students aged 16 and over. The internet is one of the kinds of media which is becoming increasingly popular among advertisers (Chit, 2009). In the long term, expenditure on internet advertising will increase. This holds true for the internet in the Czech Republic, as well. In 2013, 19.4% of advertising expenditure went on internet advertising (see Table 1).

Besides the traditional advantages of the internet (see Jemmeson, 1997; Sedlacek, 2006; Javalgi et al., 2005); the most important one from the point of view of the internet advertising, is the very precise targeting of advertisement campaigns and good interaction with consumers. A very important point is that it is relatively easy to measure the results and to precisely evaluate the effectiveness of the advertising campaign. Bok (2014), however, recommends measuring also less visible indicators of the effectiveness, such as awareness and brand recognition, intention to purchase, and other communication effects.

Boudreau and Watson (2006), emphasise the global reach as the crucial difference between the internet and other types of media. For this reason they also attach the strategic significance of internet advertisement links with companies’ entire strategies in the case of international firms. Because the Internet allows to effectively reach more potential customers at a lower cost, it also opens up new possibilities for advertisers from other countries, such as India (Khare, 2009), where the online advertising market is growing dynamically (Ziaul, 2014).

The effectiveness of internet advertising, as well as advertising in the traditional media, is largely determined by proper targeting. On the one hand, the internet offers a lot of innovative advertisement targeting options. On the other hand, it is important for many advertisers to target on traditionally defined groups of customers. Although the Internet provides a lot of advanced methods for targeting advertisements, it begs the question: can we target internet users on the biggest servers; according to their basic demographic characteristics; effectively? Finding suitable sites for the effective placement of advertisements presupposes differences in the preferences of users when they consume internet content. According to recent research, differences in user behaviour are changing. However, the differences between men’s and women’s behaviour on the internet still persist. (Ono & Zavodny, 2003; Hu et al., 2012; Chung-Chin & Chia-Ching, 2004).

Table 1. Development of share of advertising performance by type of media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEDIA TYPE</th>
<th>2011 In 000. CZK</th>
<th>Share %</th>
<th>2012 In 000. CZK</th>
<th>Share %</th>
<th>2013 In 000. CZK</th>
<th>Share %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TV</td>
<td>29 162 723</td>
<td>46,8</td>
<td>30 118 949</td>
<td>47,1</td>
<td>27 804 864</td>
<td>40,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print</td>
<td>19 500 741</td>
<td>31,3</td>
<td>17 654 511</td>
<td>27,6</td>
<td>17 455 451</td>
<td>25,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>8 900 469</td>
<td>14,3</td>
<td>11 151 399</td>
<td>17,4</td>
<td>13 344 832</td>
<td>19,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OOH</td>
<td>3 676 360</td>
<td>5,9</td>
<td>4 001 669</td>
<td>6,3</td>
<td>4 274 895</td>
<td>6,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio*</td>
<td>1 122 994</td>
<td>1,8</td>
<td>1 068 142</td>
<td>1,7</td>
<td>5 845 992</td>
<td>8,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>62 363 287</td>
<td>100,0</td>
<td>63 994 670</td>
<td>100,0</td>
<td>68 726 034</td>
<td>100,0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: The data are adapted from SPIR. (2014). Internet advertisements exceeded 13 billion last year. Over the past five years they have doubled. Retrieved: October 2, 2014, from http://www.spir.cz/tz-internetova-inzerce-loni-presahla-13-miliard-za-poslednich-pet-let-vrostla-dvojnasobne. * In 2013, regional advertising sales were included in advertisement performances on radio.
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