The Internet boosts the effectiveness of advertising campaigns
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Expansión

Using a multichannel strategy for advertising campaigns lets companies generate a greater recognition of a brand amongst their customers.

From completely ignoring the Internet in their communication plans, many companies have gone to dedicating a good part of their marketing budget to online advertising. The economic crisis has cut back much of this investment but at the same time has forced companies to learn how to take advantage of the benefits that the new medium offers as another channel of communication and marketing. According to the consultancy firm Gartner Group, it is becoming more and more common to see advertising campaigns on the Internet that use material from adverts produced for television and vice versa.

Web pages of brands like Mango, Nike and Pepsi reinforce their television advertising message with their own clips from TV adverts and with complementary multimedia resources like "the making off" and extra information about the protagonists of the campaign. This combination of media can also be seen reflected in the nature of advertising campaigns. For example, the company that made the Telefónica campaign under the slogan "communicate as you like, where and when you like" showed all the services that the operator provides, both for companies and for private individuals, in a cocktail of television, press, billboards and the Internet.

Customers
Companies are starting to understand that the customer sees the company as a unique supplier but expects to have relations with it via multiple channels, something that is known in the world of marketing as multichannel strategy. There are very few customers that only interact with the company by Internet. The majority, including the dotcom audience, combine their contacts by telephone, Internet and even visit the company or the product pick-up point. On the other hand, audience figures show that, far from cannibalising each other, users combine or synchronise the consumption of different communications media. PriceWaterhouseCoopers estimate that in 2001 some twenty-five million users of the Internet regularly connected while watching television. In a similar way, it has been shown that advertising campaigns based on the combination of television and online ads manage to obtain a greater sensitising to the brand and recognition of the message than campaigns carried out on only one medium.

A study by Online Publishers Association (OPA) analysed the adverts of the United States Air Force to gauge the impact of their different messages. It was shown that recognition of the campaign was far greater amongst users that saw the ads online than amongst those who only saw it on television. Sixty-five percent of the people who only saw the advert on the Internet remembered the campaign while just thirty percent of
those that saw it only on television remembered it. The most surprising thing was the impact that the campaign had on the group that saw the campaign on both media: seventy-eight percent could remember it and recall its content a day after having seen the adverts on both media.

**Effectiveness**
The true effectiveness of multichannel campaigns is reflected in sales. According to a study carried out by the research firm Shop.org, shoppers that use different channels for their purchases tend to be more loyal and usually spend more. In fact, the same users cite this point as the key when it comes to choosing between one shop and another. The Center of Education and Research in Retailing (CERR) managed to demonstrate that if companies offered the possibility of establishing multichannel communication, whatever the age and sex of the buyer, the success of the campaign was more assured than if they only offered one channel.

It would seem logical then for companies to attempt to attract, satisfy, instil loyalty in and sell to the greatest possible number of customers through adverts in different media and environments. However, the Direct Marketing Association (DMA) points out that, if the vast majority of companies tend to develop multichannel strategies, barely 23 percent are capable of understanding the needs of the consumer through these different channels. For this reason, before setting out on a multichannel advertising strategy, it would be convenient to make sure that the media plan is completely integrated with the marketing plan and that, at the same time, it is coordinated with commercial activities as a whole.

"Customers that use different channels usually spend more"
"Users combine the consumption of different communications media"

**The Question**

"How can the Internet reinforce the impact of traditional advertising?"

**Towards a direct relationship with the customer**

**Xavier Oliver, IESE Professor**
The degree of attention of consumers varies according to whether they find themselves in front of a telescreen, a billboard or a radio commercial. In the case of the Internet, it is a question of a medium that the user consumes on demand, in a state of complete attention and with a low rate of advertising saturation. On the other hand, the capacity of the net to manage large quantities of information permits the arguing of the proposals presented to the consumer. The user can also adjust the proposal to his or her personal situation via comparison and simulation tools, communicate with the brand in order to clear up any doubts he or she might have and even buy the product. These characteristics make the Internet a complementary and indispensable medium for traditional campaigns. Besides reinforcing the impact and the memory of the advertising message it provides something a lot more valuable: establishing a direct relationship between the brand and each of its customers.

**From failure to complementariness**

**Javier Vello, PwC Senior Manager**
The Internet brings interaction, that is to say, it allows the receiver to become simultaneously the transmitter. This is a capacity which is impossible to assign to the traditional media like television, radio and the press. The interaction with the medium makes it possible to know which audience is attracted by our offer and what the audience is really interested in. This trend is clear, for example, in the advert by a beer company that invited the audience to discover the outcome of the advert through the Internet. In an age in which simple advertising online has been shown to be a failure, this complementariness of channels could convert web pages into a very powerful marketing tool, with the capacity to get to know consumers, inform them, make them loyal to a brand and, in greater measure, attempt to attract them to a new channel of communication. Moreover, it is a question of a much cheaper channel and, without a shadow of a doubt, a channel with more possibilities than the traditional media.