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TO WHAT EXTENT IS ONLINE ADVERTISEMENT AVOIDED  
BY THE MILLENNIALS (GENERATION Y)?

RELATORE

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## Abstract

Advertisement has been the biggest source of promotion; it is the key to the creation of the awareness of a good or service sold. In this paper we will be looking at the reason why might millennials as the consumers avoid advertisement. The paper will relate on past studies and on statistics collected from ethnographic field work. The main scope of this paper is to examine why ad avoidance has been become so common in our everyday lives. We can therefore answer to what extent is online advertisement avoided by the millennials, or (generation Y), ranging from the 20s to 40 years, using as a backup instrument: scientific method, sociological research and analysis.

Key Words: Ad avoidance, Millennials, Advertisement, Online, Users, Online-marketing, Ad-blocking and Globalization.

## Introduction

Ad avoidance has always been a frequent action since advertisement has been exploited. On the internet ad avoidance, it has become a more volatile, frequent and automatic action as online advertisement is now ever so global. There are three simple avoidance categories, the first one is 'behavioural avoidance'; the action of scrolling away which can lead to mechanical avoidance. Secondly, 'cognitive avoidance' which is a psychological defence mechanism that results in users that intentionally ignore an

advertisement<sup>1</sup>. Thirdly, ‘affective avoidance’ which creates negative expressions and mainly feelings of emotional reactions towards advertisement<sup>2</sup>.

Previously ad avoidance ran through other means of communication such as radio, television and paper media. They did take part, however, in different and less effective means such as the turning down of the volume or by changing channel, in other words by the cognitive avoidance (intentionally). We can also argue that advertising was not as common as nowadays and agree that previously there were less aggressive ad avoidance tactics. Since they were less frequent and intrusive ads could be considered less violent, as they were more bearable.

Through methods of social research and a methodology this paper will indeed attempt to explain to what extent are users constantly trying to avoid online advertisement and in what ways online users can overcome ad avoidance. The protagonists of this research will be millennials (Generation Y), ranging from the early 20s to 40 years old.

## Chapter I

### Advertisement

#### 1.1 How does online advertisement work?

Since the Dot-com bubble, the web has become one of the biggest ways of communication, the worlds has been so interconnected in the past few years that we are

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<sup>1</sup> Cho, Chang-Hoan. (2013), “Why do people avoid advertising on the internet?” *Journal of Advertising*, 89-97

<sup>2</sup> Benway, Jan P. (1999), "*Banner Blindness: What Searching Users Notice and Do Not Notice on the World Wide Web*," Ph.D. dissertation, Rice University.

globalized. For the majority the navigation of the internet has always been a *free*. However, there is no such thing as free internet service. If internet is considered *free* then, I recommend you to think twice as you are the product, sites may be free to view but nonetheless there is often the hidden cost. This costs are the user's opportunity cost of accepting the online advertisement not giving up the browsing<sup>3</sup> (Edwards, S. M., & Lee). Online advertisement plays with three different parties; the publisher who owns the domain (the website), the advertiser who i.e. pays the publisher a specific sum for the *impression* time of one advertisement unit. And, lastly the user in other words the consumer, the one who navigates through the web.

## 1.2 Types of online advertisement

E-marketing or web marketing is referred to the 'promotion' of products and services over the internet Gailewicz (2014). Currently this approach of promoting has vast platforms and strategies of promotion, it is divided in to the following types:

*Social Media Marketing*: This means the 'gaining of attention through social media sites'. Social media is referred to platforms where there are communities and networks such as Social Networks, Bookmarking sites, Social News, Media Sharing, Blog Forums or Microblogging and others. The most widely used platforms where web marketing takes place are Social Networks (Facebook and Instagram) and Microblogging (Twitter, YouTube and Flickr). It is very common to sponsor in this ambient as consumers can be easily targeted

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<sup>3</sup> Steven M. Edwards, Hairong Li, and Joo-Hyun Lee. (2002) "Forced Exposure and Psychological Reactance: Antecedents and Consequences of the Perceived Intrusiveness of Pop-Up Ads", 87-94

since they are services that allow people to connect to others of similar interests and background (Justin P. Johnson 2013)<sup>4</sup>.

*Search Engine Marketing (SEM)*: A process of improving the visibility of a web page (ranking the web page link as top on the search results). This process is offered by Google, the biggest search engine on the internet today, therefore attracts consumers and advertisers. An example of SEO is AdWords which technically links us to PPC (pay per click). On the other hand, the process *Search Engine Optimization* is a strategy that improves the visibility of the web page such as the 'SEM', however, via the natural (un-paid) search results<sup>5</sup>.

*Display Advertising*: The process of the usage of web banners (banner ads), this type of ad relies on elements such as images, video and audio that communicate a promotion message. The display is mostly used to increase product awareness.

*Email Marketing*: The method of sponsoring and promoting a product or service directly to the consumer through a message by electronic mails. Happens usually when signing-up on web pages that require an email address.

Even though all these types of online advertisement independent and vary from one another they all contribute to "internet ad avoidance"<sup>6</sup> (Justin P. Johnson 2013)

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<sup>4</sup> Brooks, Chad. "What is Social Media Marketing?" Business News Daily Senior Writer March 18, 2014. <http://www.businessnewsdaily.com/2334-social-media-marketing-bndmp.html>

<sup>5</sup> "What Is SEM / Search Engine Marketing?". Search Engine Land. February 1, 2012. <http://searchengineland.com/guide/what-is-sem>.

<sup>6</sup> Justin P. Johnson. (2008) "Targeted Advertising and Advertising Avoidance", 1-15

### 1.3 Type of advertising campaign models

There are three types of online advertising campaign models that are: the 'impression models' (CPM, FF), the 'effectiveness models' (CPC, CPA) and the 'Hybrid models' (CPM+CPC/CPS)<sup>7</sup>.

The oldest impression model is the FF, *flat fee* which is commonly used in image based advertisement the costs for the advertiser are free and depend on the period. The CPM, *cost per mille* or also known as *cost per thousand* is included in the impression models. The CPM determines the cost by the advertiser in order to reach a thousand recipients of the advertisement. The advertisement recipient actions are not taken into consideration as costs, however, just views.

Secondly there are the effectiveness models; CPC, *cost per click* which is the most popular method of advertisement. This model is based on the click index, which determines the interaction of the click leading to a cost of the advertiser. Depending on the publish and website most advertiser think this is the most effective way to advertise even though its very expensive (depending on the websites popularity). This model is typically used from googles sponsorship 'AdWords' and does have lot of success in terms of revenues to the publisher, Google. Another settlement model in the effectiveness group is the CPA, *Cost Per Action* where the costs are related to the action of the user (consumer) that is exposed to the commercial in this case the Model extends to many types of actions. The Actions have forms such as; *Cost Per Sale* meaning that the advertiser will only pay the publisher if the user (consumer) will purchase the product or service. There are other related models to the

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<sup>7</sup> Magdalena Rzemieniak. (2015) "Measuring the effectiveness of online advertising campaigns in the aspect of e-entrepreneurship.

CPA following to the CPS as; *Cost Per Lead* consisting of charging fees for providing contact data by the registration of user on pop up survey's. *Cost Per View*; ads that pop up and have to be viewed by the user, usually used by YouTube and pop up ads and others (Nevena Vratovic 2013).

Final and most current are the hybrid models which are the combination a settling models such as Cost Per Mille/Thousand + Cost Per Lead these combinations are used currently a lot because both the publisher and the advertiser profit. It guarantees a certain level of profit for the publisher and decreases costs for the advertiser as Costs are Per *Action*.<sup>8</sup>

## 1.4 Function of online advertisement

Most people consider advertisement as promotional strategy to increase the sales figure. However, advertisements real purpose is increase brand awareness or any type of awareness of people regarding relevant products.

Generally speaking, online advertisement performs three basic functions:

- *Provide product information*

The information given depends on the product or service offered. Its intention is to inform the most impacting things to persuade the consumer depending on the need of the target audience i.e. The quality (usually the excuse for the high price and product information is very detailed). The price (considered convenient), and the location (commodity) all this information brings awareness to the consumer.

- *Provide reminders*

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<sup>8</sup> Raju Balakrishnan. (2011) "Click Efficiency: A unified Optimal Ranking for Online ads and Documents"

This is one of the most unpleasant way of advertising for the majority of the current consumers. The function of the reminding is because consumers tend to forget about the particular brand to which they are loyal to, in other words the brand that brought benefit from past use. Consequently, this message will help to reinforce the consumer's decision. The reminder is seen in most types of online advertisements, whether its image based or message based.

- *Provide motivations to take decisions*

This function is based on the incentives of the consumers, in other words to help the consumer to take a decision. There are many factor that contribute in the 'assistance' of a consumer decision such as the convenience; lower price, high quality and warranties<sup>9</sup>.

## Chapter II

### Avoidance

#### 2.1 Ad avoidance

Ad avoidance is defined as “all actions by users that differentially reduce their exposure to ad content”<sup>10</sup> (Speck and Elliott 1997). These actions depend on the psychological state of mind of the consumer that extend in three components; behavioural, cognitive and affective which have in common the avoidance. The avoidance leads to the user's intention

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<sup>9</sup> Terence A. Shimp (2012) "Advertising, Promotion, and Other Aspects of Integrated Marketing Communications", University of South Carolina,

<sup>10</sup> Louise Kelly, "Advertising avoidance in the online social networking environment", Queensland University of Technology, 1-2

of ignoring the advertisement. Ad avoidance is considered to be one of the greatest obstacles of advertisement. There are many past studies made with different medias such as TV, Radio and Newspaper as they all exposed publicity and the internet. According to Speck and Elliot ad avoidance depends on individual characteristics and other frameworks such as: demographic, interruption of a goal and the communication problems between the advertiser and the user. While Clancey claimed that consumers avoid ads by “ignoring distracting ads” in other words a cognitive ad avoidance. On the other hand, Wen Li, ZIying Huand (2016) focuses on the online behavioural advertising (OBA) “is a type of advertizing which tracks user online behaviour in order to deliver advertising tailored to him or her interest”. Our behavioural component captures two aspects, the behavioural and mechanical.<sup>11</sup>

Finally, Cho, C.-H. and Cheon believe that there are three types of ad avoidance the behavioural, the cognitive and the affective avoidance as mentioned previously. The behavioural aspect relates to an avoidance that is caused by the “consumer avoidance actions other than lack of attendance”<sup>12</sup>ad, i.e. the action of scrolling away of an ad. Behavioural ad avoidance leads to a mechanical ad avoidance, in other words the ad avoidance “performed by means of some apparatus” (Dictionary). The only current apparatus that can block ads, which removes them from any web page is the app Ad Blocker. In this way nor cognitive nor affective ad voidance will be present.

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<sup>11</sup> Speck, P. & Elliott, M. (1997). Predictors of advertising avoidance in print and broadcast media. *Journal of Advertising*, 61-76.

<sup>12</sup> Chang-Hoan Cho and Hongsik John Cheon. (2004). “Why do people avoid advertising on the internet?” *The Journal of Advertising*, 90-93

Affective ad avoidance involves in the consumer's feelings (negative) and expression of emotional reactions towards advertisement.<sup>13</sup>

The Cognitive ad avoidance, the process of knowing the avoidance is a “psychological defence mechanism that results in users intentionally ignoring an ad”<sup>14</sup>. Cognitive ad avoidance depends on the consumer's beliefs e.g. if dislike, ignored.

## 2.2 Analysis Model of Ad Avoidance

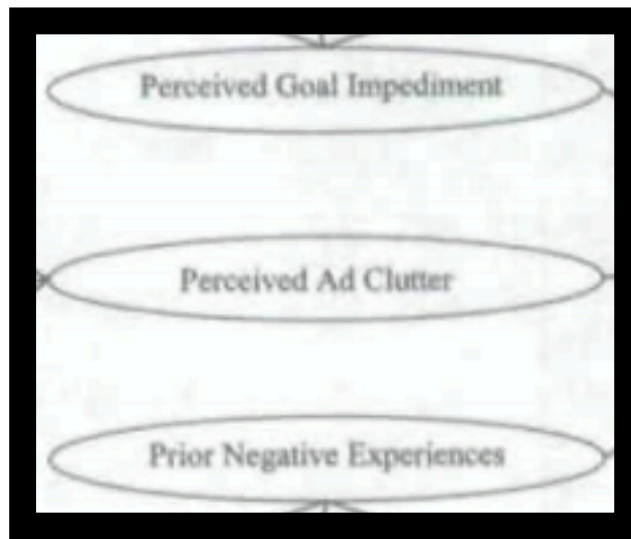
The objective of this study presented by the Journal of Advertising was to “provide insight into antecedents influencing advertising avoidance on the internet and test their proposed interrelationships.” A survey was made to reach to a conclusion so an analysis model on ad avoidance could be build. This model employs three antecedents of online ad avoidance. It also covers three aspects of ad avoidance previously mentioned: cognitive, affective, and behavioural ad avoidance. This model (Figure 1) states that users avoid advertising messages because of three precursors.

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<sup>13</sup> Wen Li, Ziyang Huang. (2016). “The Research of Influence Factors of Online Behavioral Advertising Avoidance”.

<sup>14</sup> Prendergast, G.P., Tsang, A.S.L. and Cheng, R. (2014) Predicting Handbill Avoidance in Hong Kong and the UK. *European Journal of Marketing*

Figure 1



Cho and Cheon 2004

### 2.2.1 Perceived Goal Impediment

The first precursor for online ad avoidance is ‘perceived goal impediment’. An ad avoidance that users practice when online ads impede their goals. For example, a video ad on YouTube video, which are intrusive and block the visual that was goaled. To reduce the perceived goal impediment, marketers should utilize less intrusive and unexpected advertising formats.<sup>15</sup>

### 2.2.2 Perceived Ad Clutter

Secondly, the ‘perceived ad clutter’. As consumers have limited information processing capabilities, the exposure to too many ads can evoke negative responses. Indeed, anything that impairs efficient interactivities between users and ad – vertices such as timing, size and placement of ad can affect the perception and could be viewed as a clutter by the

<sup>15</sup> Speck, P. & Elliott, M. (1997). Predictors of advertising avoidance in print and broadcast media. *Journal of Advertising*, 61-76.

user. This is what is happening that as ad clutter increases, avoidance will too as it can reduce the collective effectiveness of advertising.

### **2.2.3 Prior Negative Experience**

Another experience in the study that was identified as a determinant of online ad avoidance is the 'Prior negative experience'. PNE, in other words the past negative experience. The "dissatisfaction and perceived lack of utility and incentive"<sup>16</sup> According to the 'learning from the past' theory it is considered as an online ad avoidance because it reflects on past negative experiences that cause users to avoid them. To create, indeed, the continuance intention for clicking online ads, it is important to develop a consumer satisfaction towards the ad, 'learning from the past' positively. Some examples of dissatisfaction from past experience could be spam, forced exposure (interference) and annoying pop ups.

### **2.2.4 Full Model**

According to Cho and Cheon (2004) all the three perceived variables all affect the ad avoidance that can be cognitive, affective and behavioural. Depending on these three variables, consumers may associate negative beliefs with online ads, dislike them and take actions to the avoidance of ads.

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<sup>16</sup> Chang-Hoan Cho and Hongsik John Cheon. (2004). "Why do people avoid advertising on the internet?" The Journal of Advertising, 90-94

## 2.3 Ad-Blocking (Mechanical ad avoidance)

Ad-blocking software, blocks approximately all type of online ads such as pop-ups, banner and video ads e.g. google sponsors mostly on its search engine, google play and YouTube after the acquisition in 2016. Ad blocking enables customers for example to disable the video ads in every YouTube video; this is an efficient way to reduce the time lapse and blocks the ad for the online user who has no intention to watch it.

An example of how ad blockers work is figure 1 which shows the difference between having and not having the extension (ad-blocker). Figure 2.1 is pre ad blocking and figure 2.2 is post ad blocking.

Figure 2.1

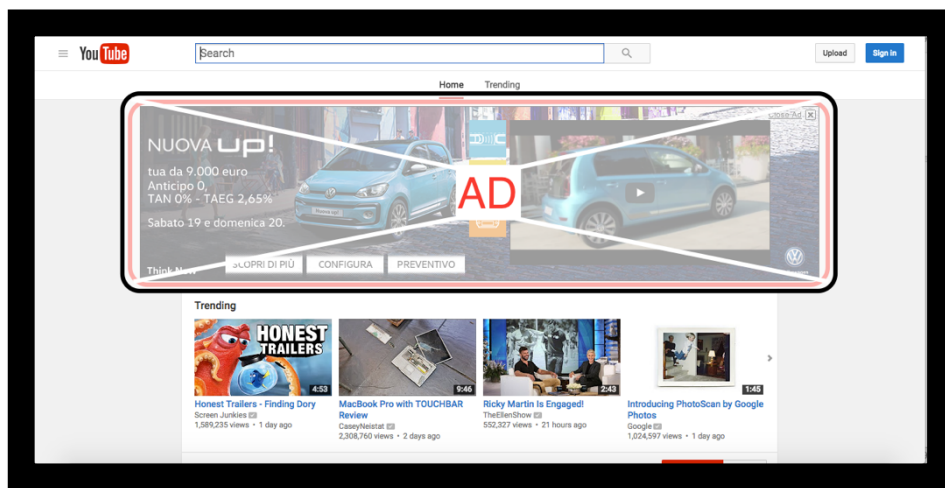
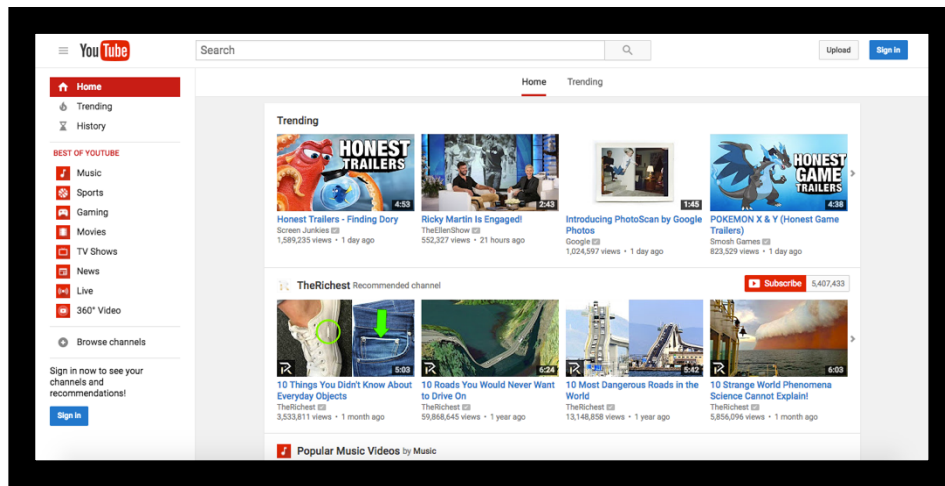


Figure 2.2



Ad-blocking is the mechanical sector of ad avoidance; it fully blocks online advertisement leading to a more effective attention to what users are navigating for. Past research proves that ad avoidance is never that successful if not mechanical, indeed in the cognitive avoidance users feel that they fully ignore ads, but actually they unconsciously do retain some ad information.<sup>17</sup> In other words, a soft avoidance technique that eliminates high attention processing. On the other hand Ad-Blocking (mechanical avoidance) eliminates both the high and low attention processing.

The software is so common nowadays that in current researches they state that for every 3 heavy users at least 2 use any kind of ad blocking software. They state that by the end of March 2016 an estimated 200 million worldwide users are actively using ad blocking.<sup>18</sup> These numbers have enormously grown since 2010 where only 20 million users used ad blocking. Since this rapid growth they have predicted that there will be a growth of 35% year over year. We can notice from figure 4 that there is a steep growth reaching 181 million

<sup>17</sup> Bornstein, R. F., & D'Agostino, P. R. (1994). "The attribution and discounting of perceptual fluency: Preliminary tests of a perceptual fluency/attributional model of the mere exposure effect. *Social Cognition*", 105-118.

<sup>18</sup> Business Insider, (2016). "Ad-block software is approaching 200 million users — here's how publishers are reacting".

software users by 2015 (The Pagefair Team 2015). According to online polling firm CivicScience, 55 % of survey respondents had ad blockers on their PC's and 25 % had them on their smartphones. The biggest incentive is the mechanical way of avoiding ads is so common and growing rapidly is because there are popular solutions and free to download. Ad-blockers are convenient as they are available in app extensions for Firefox and Google Chrome<sup>19</sup>. They are easy to download as they are small files that download in not more than 30 seconds and very user-friendly.

## Global Ad Blocking Growth

Blocking ads continues to build on the strong growth rates seen during 2013 and 2014.

### The findings

- Globally, usage of ad blockers grew by **41% YoY** (Q2 2014 - Q2 2015).
- As of June 2015, there were **198 million** monthly active users for the major browser extensions that block ads.



PageFair 2015

In 2006 the first ever browser ad-blocking software, Adblock Plus was made available but for download. Adblock Plus became popular on PC platforms for the use in popular internet browsers (Internet Explorer, Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox and Apple Safari). In the beginning of 2010 developers released ad-blocking apps for smartphone platforms, however, these apps were banned from all the smartphone stores for controlling issues. Ad-blocking is common in computers, smartphones and tablets. Users though could find

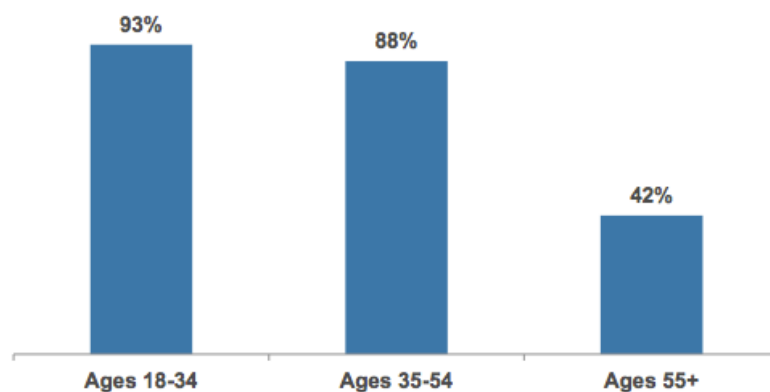
<sup>19</sup> Enric Pujol, "Annoyed Users: Ads and Ad-Block Usage in the Wild".

alternative ways to download the software. Nevertheless, the move helped Apple and Google to revenue more.

## Chapter III

### Millennials

Millennials have been categorized as the demographic sector that prefers less disruptive forms of advertising (Mirriad Advertising Ltd 2016). Millennials also known as generation Y is the generation who has lived through the pre internet and post internet invention. They vary from 20s and 40s years old, and are actively using the internet, indeed they are the most welcomed users as Doug Crang states from his 2011 studies in figure 3. In America they have been represented about a fourth of the entire population (Schawbel). According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics by 2025, millennials will account for 75 percent of the global workplace. Forbes has stated that about 30 percent of millennials rely on online media such as blogs before making a purchase and only 3 percent rely on TV, magazines and books.



comScore 2012

Millennials as they are so informed about the web they are hard to engage as consumers, it is critical to therefore use marketing strategies that do not interfere too much on their

conscious state. Moreover according to Intrepid 48 percent say that the most influential product purchase is word-of-mouth. Indeed, BCG Perspectives suggested to intrusive companies that “Companies should, therefore consider using visuals that are multigenerational and show – friends, classmates, work colleagues, multigenerational families, cultural “tribes”, or strangers coming together for a common cause”.

Social Media usage within the millennials is extremely active, and a great way to target them. Nonetheless, is actually that it efficient? 40 percent of millennials think that it is very important to engage the audience in two – way conversation for an involving factor<sup>20</sup>. Millennials want interaction between an advertisement and themselves, not an intrusive ‘annoying’ pop up banner that distracts them to focus on what they are surfing on. Indeed, according to Barton, 37 percent of consumers that varied from the 18-24 years old feel as if they are ‘missing something’. 43 percent have ‘liked’ over 20 brands on Facebook (Mr. Youth), this proves that consumers do prefer the short visual content that does not disrupt them from doing what they were doing. Cook in fact, states “They (Millennials) appreciate short and compelling visual content more than longer and harder – to – digest written content. The brain is directly linked with this preference, as scientifically proved that images process 60 times faster than words”. We can agree on that Tim Cook is the Chief Executive Officer of Apple Inc<sup>21</sup>. who has been the most successful company in the marketing ambient in the past recent years. As well with easy – to – digest advertisement, Millennials are more emotional and personal with brands according to BCG Perspectives. “They desire opportunities to interact with brands, to be listened to anywhere and anytime and to have

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<sup>20</sup> Shawna Brown, (2016), “Marketing to Millennials: Improving Relationships with Millennial Consumers Through Online Advertising and Social Media Networking”

<sup>21</sup> Katherine Johnson. Marshall Digital Scholar, (2012). “The Innovative Success that is Apple, Inc”. Marhsall University.

personal, timely, and straightforward communication about their concerns and experiences.” Indeed, for them the top two choices that engage their interests on a brand or product is promotion and loyalty with discounts.

## CHAPTER IV

### Research Methodology

Internet ad-avoidance has reached a pinnacle, emancipating rapidly and to some prospects become a trend <sup>22</sup> (Beck, 2013). The paper has focused on past studies that demonstrate why and how online ad-avoidance takes place. These studies included key drivers of internet ad-avoidance and effectiveness of various mitigation techniques.

This Chapter will introduce my hypotheses, survey design and study limitations.

#### 4.1 Hypothesis

Internet ad-avoidance is theorized to be a function of negative experience. Based on the psychology and marketing theories according to Chang-Hoan Cho and Hongsik John Cheon users exercise Internet ad-avoidance because of the three precursors previously introduced: perceived goal impediment, perceived ad clutter, and prior negative experience. Precursors that are all included in the ad-avoidance analysis model that intersect with the

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<sup>22</sup> Chang-Hoan Cho and Hongsik John Cheon. (2004). “Why do people avoid advertising on the internet?” The Journal of Advertising, 90-94

three ways that consumers may respond to advertising stimuli <sup>23</sup>. Cognitive, affective, and behavioural. The following section will unfold the linkage of Internet ad-avoidance with Millennials.

*Hypothesis I: The greater the perceived goal impediment, the greater the advertising avoidance on the Internet within the millennials.*

As I previously defined, online ad avoidance is a product of the perceived goal impediment. Internet ads are considered more intrusive than other type of media ads (Lee 2002). It is intended by the interruption by an ad over the consumer's goal. The cause of the goal impediment could be the search hindering, in other words the 'delay' of consumer effort to browse, the disruption of the user's goal and the distraction from the goal caused by an intrusive i.e. pop-up ad.

*Hypothesis II: The greater the perceived ad clutter, the greater the advertising avoidance on the Internet within the millennials.*

Perceived ad clutter is defined by Elliot and Speck 1998 as a "consumer's conviction that the amount of advertising in a medium is excessive." Ad clutter is also defined as the distrust of advertisement, as it is so excessive consumers tend to lose trust from ads. Compared to other media, the Internet's ads clutter is considered to be the most frequent since the Internet has excessive number of pop-up ads, banner ads, text links, and so forth

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<sup>23</sup> Vakratsas and Ambler, (1999). "How Advertising Works: What Do We Really Know?" Journal of Marketing. 26-36

in one single web page<sup>24</sup>. As millennials are not used of such ad clutter, reason because advert

disement has been excessive since the past years this perceived ad clutter might consequently lead to negative attitudes therefore to ad avoidance.

*Hypothesis III: The greater the prior negative experience, the greater the advertising avoidance on the internet within the millennials.*

Experience is the main aspect that affects future decisions in this ambient it experiences are influenced by, evaluation of brand, purchasing behaviour, loyalty, systematic organization (Bettman and Park 1980). They all affect the psychological conclusion consumers tend to make. Prior negative experience causes Internet ad avoidance as consumers can experience dissatisfaction, perceived lack of utility and incentive for clicking the ads. Indeed, negative experience will lead to an ad-avoidance<sup>25</sup>.

*Hypothesis IV: The greater the advertising avoidance on the internet, the greater the usage of Ad-Blockers within the millennials*

Ad-Blocking is being practiced a lot recently and growing rapidly since the past years, and believed to become a sort of trend (Beck, 2013) especially within the *Millennials*. Ad-Blocking is a consequence from ad avoidance of Cho and Cheon, as it is the mechanical way of avoiding ads.

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<sup>24</sup> Sharon Shavitt, Patrick Vargas, and Pamela Lowrey, (2004). "Exploring the Role of Memory for Self-Selected Ad Experiences: Are Some Advertising Media Better Liked Than Others?" *Psychology & Marketing* 1011-1029

<sup>25</sup> Cho, Chang-Hoan. (2013), "Why do people avoid advertising on the internet?" *Journal of Advertising*, 89-97

*Hypothesis V: The Millennials prefer being exposed to advertisement rather than paying a yearly fee*

Millennials are the consumers who are more willing to purchase in the Internet. Ads also contribute on the awareness of products that are sold on the internet, however, millennials according to Whitman (2016) 73 percent of them ‘hate’ Social Media advertisement. The dilemma is that they ‘hate’ advertisement but they are still the generation who is mostly exposed to advertisement and follows internet trends.

## **4.2 Research Design**

The research addresses the internet avoidance, it is derived by past studies done by Cho and Cheon in 2004<sup>26</sup>. The study engaged an online survey and a paper-and-pencil questionnaire that would possibly lead to more precise results.

### **4.2.1 Sample**

The data was collected by October 2016 from worldwide participants that had to share one thing in common; their age. The participants were all Millennials therefore from the 20 to the 40 years old. A total of 90 participants took part in the research of which 45 completed the online survey and 45 the paper-and-pencil questionnaire.

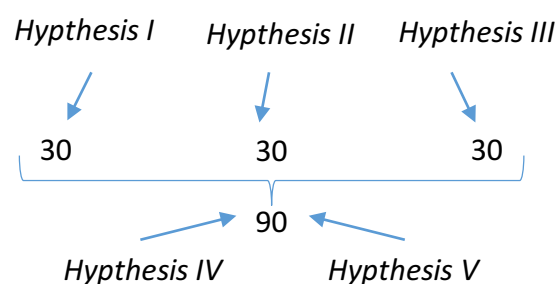
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<sup>26</sup> Cho, Chang-Hoan. (2013), “Why do people avoid advertising on the internet?” *Journal of Advertising*, 91-97

### 4.2.2 Construction

The research will address internet avoidance sharing one demographic; Age. All participants are users and part of the generation Y. There will be five elements that will be examined from: the perceived goal impediment ad-avoidance, perceived ad clutter ad-avoidance, prior negative experiences ad-avoidance, ad-blocker and an ad-yearly-fee. Each hypothesis was constructed with different questionnaires. For the first three hypotheses (*I, II, III*) we divided the sample in three, therefore each hypothesis (*I, II, III*) would have 30 participants that responded out of sample (90 participants). While for the IV and V hypothesis all participants would take part of the questionnaire.

Shown bellow:



For the first three hypotheses we have asked our participants which indicator is the most impacting towards each of the three precursors of the Cho and Cheon 2004 ad avoidance model: perceived goal impediment, perceived ad-clutter and prior negative experience. These indicators will be used to simplify future questions for more precise justification. The responses are measured by a scale that varies from 0 to 10.

The **indicators** for perceived goal impediment ad-avoidance are: search hindrance, disruption and distraction<sup>27</sup> (Speck and Elliot 1997). The indicators for perceived ad clutter ad-avoidance are: ad excessiveness, irritation and exclusiveness. Lastly the indicators of prior negative experience ad-avoidance are: dissatisfaction, perceived lack of utility and perceived lack of incentive<sup>28</sup>.

The **value** is an approximate whole number to how much all 30 participants do value each indicator (in terms of impacting towards the precursors).

### 4.3 Data Analysis

\*The participants were consequently asked questions that would determine the justification of all *five hypotheses*.

#### *Hypothesis I*

#### Perceived goal impediment ad-avoidance

Table 1

| Indicator        | Value |
|------------------|-------|
| Search hindrance | 6     |
| Disruption       | 8     |
| Distraction      | 5     |

From out responses of *table 1* we can determine that most participants answered that the most frequent element that leads to perceived goal impediment ad-avoidance is '*disruption*'.

<sup>27</sup> Speck, P. & Elliott, M. (1997). Predictors of advertising avoidance in print and broadcast media. *Journal of Advertising*, 71-76.

<sup>28</sup> Cho, Chang-Hoan. (2013), "Why do people avoid advertising on the internet?" *Journal of Advertising*, 92-97

*Disruption* “disturbance or problems that interrupt an event, activity or process.” (Google Dictionary). It will now be the *key indicator* in this study to determine our methodology on *hypothesis I*.

Referring to the *key indicator* the first 30 (I) were questioned “do you believe that ad *disruption* is to frequent on the internet, i.e. YouTube video ads?” and they answered;

| Choice     | Participants |
|------------|--------------|
| <b>Yes</b> | 23           |
| <b>No</b>  | 7            |

From the table we notice that around 80% of the participants from our study consider that disruption is very common on the internet.

A second question was asked; “do you find that the ad-disruption of a goal on the internet has increased?” and they answered;

| Choice     | Participants |
|------------|--------------|
| <b>Yes</b> | 21           |
| <b>No</b>  | 9            |

From the table 70% of the participants believe that disruption on the internet due to advertisement increased and for this reason we need to find if this will bring them to greater avoidance.

To justify the hypothesis, we consequently asked “do you avoid internet ads more than three years ago because of this reason?” and they answered;

| Choice | Participants |
|--------|--------------|
|--------|--------------|

|            |    |
|------------|----|
| <b>Yes</b> | 17 |
| <b>No</b>  | 13 |

From the table around 55% of participants believe that they have been avoiding ads more because of the ‘**perceived goal impediment**’.

From our research we can note that; *the greater the perceived goal impediment, the greater the advertising avoidance on the Internet within the millennials.*

## ***Hypothesis II***

### **Perceived ad clutter ad-avoidance**

**Table 2**

| <b>Indicator</b> | <b>Value</b> |
|------------------|--------------|
| Excessiveness    | 8            |
| Exclusiveness    | 3            |
| Irritation       | 5            |

From the responses of *table 2* the participants have determined that ‘excessiveness’ is the indicator that leads to perceived ad clutter ad-avoidance. Google defines excessive as “more than is necessary, normal or desirable in other words immoderate”. Excessiveness will, indeed, be the key indicator that will determine the methodology of *hypothesis II*.

Referring to the *key indicator* 30 participants (II) were questioned; “do you see excessive ads on the internet?” and they answered;

| <b>Choice</b> | <b>Participants</b> |
|---------------|---------------------|
| <b>Yes</b>    | 5                   |
| <b>No</b>     | 18                  |

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| <b>Other</b> | 7 |
|--------------|---|

According to the table 60% of the participants agree that there are excessive Internet ads.

Secondly participants were asked; “do you think that the excessiveness of internet ads has increased?” and they answered;

| Choice     | Participants |
|------------|--------------|
| <b>Yes</b> | 26           |
| <b>No</b>  | 4            |

According to the table around 87% participants believe that internet ads have been increasing since past years.

Consequently, they were asked; “do you avoid internet ads more than three years ago because of this reason?” and they answered;

| Choice     | Participants |
|------------|--------------|
| <b>Yes</b> | 19           |
| <b>No</b>  | 11           |

From the table we can note that the majority of the participants believe that they have been avoiding ads more frequently because of the ‘**perceived ad clutter**’

From our research we can note that; *the greater the perceived ad clutter, the greater the advertising avoidance on the Internet within the millennials.*

### *Hypothesis III*

#### **Prior negative experience ad-avoidance**

**Table 3**

| <b>Indicator</b>            | <b>Value</b> |
|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Dissatisfaction             | 6            |
| Perceived lack of utility   | 6            |
| Perceived lack of incentive | 7            |

The responses of *table 3* show that ‘perceived lack of incentive’ was considered the indicator that impacts the most even though all indicators were considered to have impact on prior negative experience similarly. Incentive is “a thing that motivates or encourages one to do something” (Google dictionary). Therefore, perceived lack of utility will be the key indicator for the methodology of hypothesis III.

Referring to the *key indicator*, 30 (III) participants were questioned; “do Internet ads provide relevant information?” and they answered;

| <b>Choice</b> | <b>Participants</b> |
|---------------|---------------------|
| <b>Yes</b>    | 13                  |
| <b>No</b>     | 17                  |

According to the table the slight majority of the participants agree that advertisement does not provide them with relevant information.

Secondly the participants were asked; “do you think you are well targeted?” and the answered;

| Choice     | Participants |
|------------|--------------|
| <b>Yes</b> | 12           |
| <b>No</b>  | 18           |

According to the table the majority (60%) of the participants believed that they were not well targeted or in other words they were not efficiently aimed.

Thirdly they were asked; “will you re-click on an ad that caused you negative experience?”

| Choice       | Participants |
|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Yes</b>   | 15           |
| <b>No</b>    | 6            |
| <b>Other</b> | 9            |

According to the table we can state that the majority of participants prefer to avoid ads because **prior negative experience**.

Fourthly participants were asked; “do you think that the negative experience of internet ads has increased, decreased or stable?” and they answered;

| Choice          | Participants |
|-----------------|--------------|
| <b>Increase</b> | 12           |
| <b>Decrease</b> | 3            |
| <b>Stable</b>   | 15           |

According to the table 40% of the participants responded as an ‘increase’ and 60 percent as a ‘stable’ and ‘decrease’. This tells that the majority of participants believe that the negative experience perceived when clicking on an ad has increased or remained stable.

Consequently, they were asked; “do you avoid internet ads more than three years ago because of this reason?” and they answered;

| Choice     | Participants |
|------------|--------------|
| <b>Yes</b> | 5            |
| <b>No</b>  | 25           |

According to the table 83% of the participants answered as a ‘no’. Because of this reason we have asked them; “would you avoid more if perceived negative experience would increase?” and they answered;

| Choice     | Participants |
|------------|--------------|
| <b>Yes</b> | 21           |
| <b>No</b>  | 9            |

From the table we can note that the majority of the participants believe that they have been avoiding ads more frequently because of the ‘**perceived negative experience**’

From our research, even though negative experience has not been perceived by our participants as much. We can note that; *the perceived negative experience, the greater the advertising avoidance on the Internet within the millennials.*

## Hypothesis IV

For hypothesis IV all the sample took part of the survey, the 90 millennials were questioned firstly; “Did you ever get to know about ad-blocker?” and they answered;

| Choice     | Participants |
|------------|--------------|
| <b>Yes</b> | 69           |
| <b>No</b>  | 21           |

According to the table the majority of the participants are aware of what ad blocker is.

Secondly they were asked; “did you ever use ad blocker?” and they answered;

| Choice              | Participants |
|---------------------|--------------|
| <b>Yes</b>          | 48           |
| <b>No</b>           | 38           |
| <b>I don't know</b> | 4            |

According to the table almost two out of three participants used ad-blocker as Fractl and Moz (2015) stated.

Thirdly they were asked; “Do you avoid ads without ad-blocker?” and they answered;

| Choice              | Participants |
|---------------------|--------------|
| <b>Yes</b>          | 21           |
| <b>No</b>           | 34           |
| <b>I don't know</b> | 35           |

According to the table 38% of the participants do not avoid ads if they don't use ad-blocker, this denotes that the usage of ad-blocking has increased as ad avoidance increased.

Analysing all the data collected we can determine that most millennials use and know about ad blocker. And indeed, does not completely justify the hypothesis; *the greater the ad-avoidance on the internet, the greater ad-blocker usage within millennials.*

## Hypothesis V

For hypothesis V our 90 participants responded to two questions from the survey made. The first question was “how annoying do you find online advertisement?” and they had five multiple choices of which: extremely annoying, annoying, neutral, not annoying and not annoying at all. They answered as following;

Table 4

| <b>Multiples</b>    | <b>Percentages</b> |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Extremely annoying  | 23                 |
| Annoying            | 30                 |
| Neutral             | 20                 |
| Not annoying        | 13                 |
| Not annoying at all | 3                  |

According to table 4 we can note that most participants believe that internet advertisement is disturbing as the majority (53%) of them rated as ‘annoying’ and ‘extremely annoying’ advertisement. Consequently, we went on asking them if they would have “paid a low yearly fee to block all ads on social networks?” and the responded as following;

| Choice       | Participants |
|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Yes</b>   | 6            |
| <b>No</b>    | 81           |
| <b>Other</b> | 3            |

According to the table 90% responded to a ‘no’ showing that the participants find internet advertisement mostly annoying.

As reported by the survey as a whole Hypothesis V: “*Millennials prefer being exposed to advertisement rather than paying a yearly fee*” is justified as the participants are not willing to pay a yearly fee to remove advertisement even though they find online advertisement “annoying”.

## Conclusion

To what extent is internet advertisement avoided by Millennials? After understanding what advertisement is, what avoidance and who Millennials are. We came up with a conclusion of why do Millennials avoid advertisement and to what extent they do it.

Based on past and personal studies internet advertisement has been constantly avoided by Millennials because of three precursors; the perceived goal impediment, perceived ad clutter and prior negative experiences. And tend to avoid internet ads through a cognitive, affective, and behavioural avoidance that all lead to the usage of ad-blocker.

Despite the limitations, all hypotheses were completely justified excluding hypothesis IV, therefore we can justify that *‘the greater the disruption and the excessiveness in internet advertisement, the greater internet ad avoidance by millennials’*. And *‘the greater internet avoidance, the greater the use of mechanical avoidance’* as *‘millennials prefer being exposed to advertisement rather than paying a yearly fee’*. All the study proves that millennials do not dislike advertisement but, indeed, they very dislike the intrusiveness of the advertisement.

Millennials can be attracted by advertisements, however, only if advertised properly. Millennials are hard to please, impatient, fickle and technological savvy in other words hard to capture their attraction towards advertisement<sup>29</sup>. Regarding them, Barlow (2014) states that the marketing tone should reflect the personality. I would relate this to two successful companies that build a huge market by creating its own marketing strategies: Red Bull and GoPro who do a great job in understanding millennials. According to them the key to have an effective promotion is targeting interests and lifestyle. Both companies avoid perceived goal impediment, perceived ad clutter and prior negative experience as they target by creating a user generated advertisement. Videos and pictures uploaded by the users themselves that advertise more effectively others. This way the marketing tone reflects the personality as their content communicates a message that evokes emotions depending on the music, the visual and creativity.

The relationship with consumers when advertising is despicable, advertisers should make the company seem as a ‘happy’ and good one, one where consumers are getting something extra out of it. This will create credibility and loyalty with future advertisement.

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<sup>29</sup> Kayele C. Williams. “Marketing to the Generations”. Journal of Behavioral Studies in Business.

That's why if used strategic procedures to target millennials personality effectively this will lead to a less perceived goal impediment, ad clutter and prior negative experience, decreasing mechanical avoidance. In other words online advertisement avoidance within millennials is avoided.

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