**Class Name and Section:** ISEM-501-50

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**Date** 01 – June – 2018

**Assignment** Essay – Current IT Topic

IT Topic for Review: Facebook Blocks Ad Blockers, but it Strives to Make Ad More Relevant by Mike Isaac – Aug 9, 2016

In this essay author has discussed about the advertising, how its impacting internet user experience and behavior. Users are getting smart and driving the companies to innovate to get reach a middle ground that is good for both consumers and advertisers. As the saying goes there are no free lunches in this world, somehow users of internet think or used to think that Facebook, google, Gmail etc. are free. But in realty the real commodity of these companies is not the application or the software they produce, instead their user base and user information. We know that these companies pay huge amounts to the engineers and developers that work for them and on top of that they have huge capital costs for servers and office spaces.

So where does this money come from, e.g. in 2015 Facebook posted a profit of $3.69 billion from a revenue of 17.93 billion. These companies can provide us services as they are getting paid by the advertisers to deliver targeted advertisements to their users. While these advertisements are important for the companies and their main or sometimes only way of generating revenue, for a user these are in most cases annoying and distracting. On top of that showing advertisement comes at a cost of bandwidth and computer resources impacting the user experience, hence user would like to avoid being bothered by these advertisements. There is also a great concern about the advertisements make the user system susceptible to malware and spywares

There are a number of software available that detect and block the advertisements them from being downloaded by the browser, as per an estimate by PageFair an anti-blocking startup about 200 million desktops and 420 million mobile users use ad blocker on their site. These adblockers have drastically impacted the revenue of most applications, so much so that even advertisers have started to question and pull spending too much on hyper targeted advertisements on these applications.

Some applications are stopping access to their app if they detect ad blocker on the browser, some request the user to add their application to white list, giving some sort of control to the user, however Facebook went a step ahead and started masking their advertisements so that adblockers cannot detect it, which to some is unethical and takes away a user’s right to choose. However, Facebook defends their decision that they are being more cautious what kind of ads to be displayed and giving users choice what ads they see.

In my opinion Facebook and other applications are just in doing so but it comes with a caveat, these applications should be forthright with the users that they are using their data, search patterns and other information to show them ads tailored to their interests and requirements. Applications can also provide users choice of accessing their application at a cost so that they can use application without being bothered by the advertisements.

# References

ISAAC, M. (2016, Aug 9). Facebook Blocks Ad Blockers, but It Strives to Make Ads More Relevant. *The New York Times*.