Title:
The Future Of Online Video Advertising

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Summary:
The dash for cash this time centers on who can figure out how to put effective advertising into the video mix. But, unearthing these online riches entails balancing the advertising content so businesses can make money while at the same time not alienating viewers who, up until now, have not been forced to endure institutional advertising in their online video clips.

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Without a doubt, online video increasingly influences the way we expect to digest content on the Internet.

As high-speed access becomes the norm in households that actually spend money online, video will pervade even more of every user's experience.

Besides the enriched content online video provides for viewers, it has also sparked yet another online "gold rush" for online businesses.

The dash for cash this time centers on who can figure out how to put effective advertising into the video mix.

But, unearthing these online riches entails balancing the advertising content so businesses can make money while at the same time not alienating viewers who, up until now, have not been forced to endure institutional advertising in their online video clips.

With some sites getting over a million visitors a day, the prize of figuring out how to get those visitors to buy something has proven too tempting for online advertisers to ignore.

In fact, some even speculate that video advertising technology in the not too

distant future will allow contextual ads to appear in video based on actual dialogue in the videos.

Though this sounds exciting, my experience with creating online video tells me that, for most big companies, online advertising won't work with any measurable effectiveness.

For example, one of the most popular videos online right now shows kids with a Pepsi or Coke bottle dropping Mentos candies into a two-liter container.

The ensuing chemical reaction makes for an explosive show. On the surface, you might think one of the soda manufacturers or the candy maker would want their ads to appear within the video, but would they?

I don't think Coke wants to encourage people to make bombs out of their product.

However, an ad for a book about pranks or mischievous projects with common household items might sell like bottled water in the desert.

Another obstacle faced by advertisers who want to ride along in other people's videos involves the fact that TV advertising doesn't work online for a very basic reason: the Internet is NOT TV!

When someone watches TV, they are typically in a very physically passive mode.

They sit back in their chair, feet up, drink in one hand, remote control in the other and a bag of chips in their ever-expanding lap.

Conversely, when someone watches video online, they usually sit upright, leaning forward, mouse firmly in hand, and ready to click away on to the next thing at the first sign of boredom.

In short, people physically and mentally won't stand for a traditional TV advertising approach when it comes to online video.

So what will work in online video advertising?

Simply this: advertisers must create their own videos to go with the ads they want to run.

They can't just plop 15-30 seconds of advertising material into someone else's video and expect to turn a profit very often.

Video advertisers must understand that the line between video ads and video

content is a blurred one that can't be separated by "And now, a word from our sponsor."

The videos themselves, not the ads, must build a desire within the viewer to find out more about a product or service.

This especially holds true for smaller companies and individuals who, unlike Coke and Pepsi, don't have millions of dollars to throw at online video to "build a brand."

The real winners in online video will understand that the marketing message and the delivery method are one in the same.

Taking the "easy road" of inserting TV ads into videos won't generate a profit for the vast majority who try to make it work.