

# Ads on YouTube: Skip or Watch?

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**Abstract**— The development of online media provides an opportunity for advertisers to use the new media for commercial purposes. This advertiser uses YouTube, the most popular video player, to embed their video ads. In the last few years, online media made it easy for users to actively and individually take the choice of whether to watch ads or skip it. This research uses online surveys to social media users who watch YouTube. The survey contains a list of questions with closed answer alternatives and also open-end questions. There are several behaviors that YouTube users do if they received ads: ignore it; they have to watch the unskippable ads, and immediately press the skip button if it is available. There are some reasons why YouTube users behave like that. The results of this study provide information to advertisers to change their advertising products to suit the behavior of YouTube users.

**Keywords**—YouTube Ads; attitude; watch; skip

## I. INTRODUCTION

YouTube is the most popular search engine after Google. As the most popular video content search application, it makes YouTube have a great opportunity for advertising activities. YouTube's popularity is in line with the very rapid changes of new online-based media known as social media. One characteristic of social media is to place users as an active audience. The user actively determines the content to be accessed and how to access it. So, the decision to watch or skips YouTube Ads is in the hands of users [1].

YouTube is a video-based social media. Videos with the ability to deliver audio-visual content make YouTube a powerful influencing media [2]. With YouTube, people can share videos. It doesn't have to be a big company, even an amateur video maker can share their home-made videos. They can share their work, and they also could give comments [3]. In 2015 YouTube users were dominated by those aged 25 years and above. And in the last two years, there was a shift in users ages, it increased from the age of adolescents to under the age of 25 years. YouTube gets a number of 400 hours of videos uploaded in every minute, with 1 billion hours of videos watched in a day [4]. With the large amount of video content that is exchanged and the number of YouTube users attracts advertisers. Both individual advertisers who want to sell their

products or services, as well as companies that want their products and services watch by YouTube users.

There are several forms of advertising. Ads can be display ads, overlay ads, bumper ads, and mid-roll ads. The last two categories are non-skippable video ads and skippable video ads. This variety of ads formats is a strategy to reach the attention of YouTube users. As stated earlier, the characteristic of social media - YouTube as a part of it - is that users have the freedom to surf for what they want. Including to accept or reject things offered, including advertisements.

Related to active users, several studies have tried to discovered attitude and behavior towards YouTube ads. Pace examines consumer behavior towards ads on youtube with the narrative method [5]. The narrative method is the main focus of this research. YouTube advertising was seen as storytelling that can be understood using narrative analysis. With this approach, research can give meaning to consumption behavior from uploaded videos. Although in the end, the use of this method did not provide satisfactory results. The complexity and diversity of YouTube uploaded videos can produce less valid and reliable results. Each researcher can produce different meanings, and the narrative method should be complementary to other more accurate methods.

Some research that explores the attitudes of consumers and the influence on the intensity and shopping behavior of advertisements on the internet. Informativeness, irritation, and entertainment are determinants of attitudes toward web ads [6], [7], and credibility [8] as the fourth influential factor. Whereas intensity and shopping behavior are influenced by Flow [7], [8] - as a mental condition to focus and engage in something.

This research aims to look for attitudes and behavior of YouTube users towards advertising. As a form of information that is avoided, the ad gives the possibility to be watched or ignored. This research is important to be used as a reference for advertisers to develop advertisements that will increase the likelihood of being watched.

## II. RESEARCH METHODS

This research data was obtained at the end of 2017. Data collection using an online survey method entitled "YouTube

User Behavior towards Advertising". The research instrument was a questionnaire. Respondents were obtained by voluntary sampling techniques [9], namely those who consciously wanted to be involved in filling out the questionnaire. Requests to become respondents are distributed online through various social media, such as Line, WhatsApp, Twitter, and Facebook. Within the specified time period, 102 respondents obtained complete questionnaires, ignoring 12 other incomplete respondents.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The sampling technique is voluntary. The distribution of online survey questionnaires in this study also voluntarily. Researchers posted survey links on several social media groups, and request to spread to other groups. There is no data for this distribution. All takes place anonymously, randomly and cannot be traced.

Profile of respondents can be see in Table I. The majority of respondents are female. Whereas the age range of majority respondents is in 15-20 years (68.6%), and the next largest are at the age of 21-25 (21.6%). The occupation majority are students and student undergraduate. Where they spend at least two hours every day accessing YouTube.

In this survey, women responded voluntarily than men. This finding is different from several other surveys relating to the use of the internet and social media. Other research shows that male involvement is greater than women in internet use, social media, and games.

This survey was uploaded to social media groups and forwarded to other social media groups to expand the distribution. If someone uploads in a social media group, then it is uploaded by someone who is part of the group. Someone who is known by other group members. According to social exchange theory, this happens because women are more motivated to help friends in need. Women are more empathetic, while men are more rational information-seeking [10][11].

Information search is based on the studies about uses and gratification [12]. Men seek the information needed. Internet users actively search for information they need and ignore others. And advertising is avoided unless the product offered is something they need. Surveys about advertisements were also affected by avoidance. Because advertising is avoided, then everything about the ad - including surveys about the ad - will be avoided too. But women are willing to fill out surveys not because they are related to advertising, but because of empathy.

As an active audience, there are two categories of behavior for YouTube ads: skippable and unskippable ads. Except for display ads, all types of ads provide these two choices. Ads could be categorized as unwanted information. As an active audience, if they want to exposed to ads, then they will find it. Other unwanted information will be ignored. YouTube ads are mostly be avoided [13][14], even blocked with the Adblock application [15].

However, why are they still going to watch YouTube skippable ads? The reason they keep watching even though

they can avoid majority advertising is because of the attractiveness of the advertisements (see Fig. 1). Few people watch it because of the product offered or because of the actor who plays the ads. The attractiveness of ads due to personalized efforts. Ads are designed with assumptions to meet the personal factors of the audience, such as audience needs, preferences, interest and context [7]. Other research states more attractive because of the following factors: have a good story, targeting people who like the brand, and emotional relationships [14], [16]. Everyone who is connected to the internet, and has an interest in a product will be known by the search engine. This information is the basis for offering product advertisements that attract personal attention. Whereas a good storyline, made in a short film format can make people watch ads longer, even to the end.

TABLE 1 RESPONDENTS PROFILE

Gender	N	%
Male	33	32.4
Female	69	67.6

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Age	N	%
10-15	1	1.0
16-20	70	68.6
21-25	22	21.6
26-30	2	2.0
>35	7	6.9

102

Occupation	N	%
High School Student	5	4.9
Under Graduate Student	87	85.3
Government Officer	8	7.8
Corporate Employee	2	2.0

102

Duration (hour/day)	N	%
0-2	69	67.6
3-5	21	20.6
>5	12	11.8

102

Since YouTube users are active, they have a high level of interactivity. They can refuse to see advertisements. They can skip if possible. About 93% of respondents did this. Some video ads can be ignored after 5 seconds. If there are ads that cannot be ignored, they can decide to move to another channel. However, there are behaviors that ignore this activity. Of course, if you find an ad that can be immediately skipped, it will soon be ignored. If not, they still watch unskippable ads until finish. They still allow annoying advertisements by not moving other channels. Even though, they do other activities while waiting for the ad to finish, such as moving to other application, visiting another page on a different tab, or doing other activities than online. The majority of YouTube users are waiting for unskippable ads to finish because they are waiting for video content (70%) interspersed with advertisements.

Because they need the content. The majority of video content awaited is films, music, and tutorials. From the content watched, it can be concluded that entertainment is the majority sought on YouTube, then followed by information fulfillment. Entertainment, in this case, is content that contains entertainment (such as movies, music, etc.) or informative messages that are packaged in an entertaining way (see Fig. 3). Thus, advertising with entertainment packaging - like movies - will bring its own appeal. Will make people hold back longer to watch the advertisement [16].

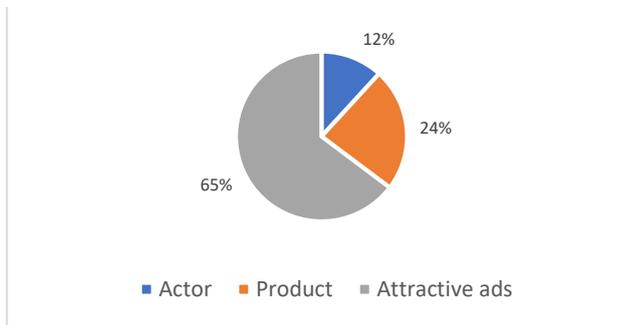


Fig. 1. Reason to Keep Watch Skippable Ads

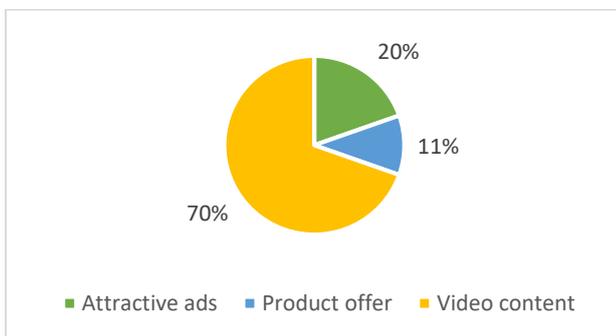


Fig. 2. Reason to Keep Watch Unskippable YouTube Ads

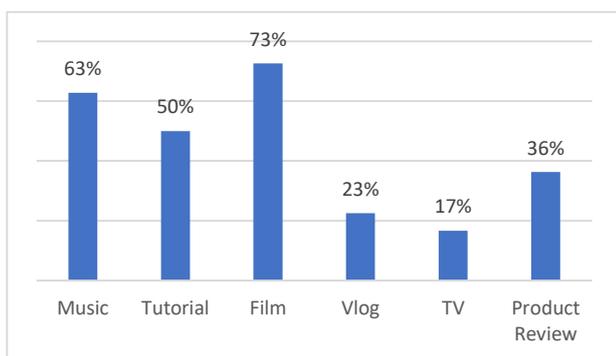


Fig. 3. Video Contents Which Keep Watch Unskippable Ads

Attitudes toward video ads will determine the behavior that will appear when the ads are present. There are various strategies of advertisements, such as Endorse Ads, Bumper Ads, Overlay Ads, Display Ads and Product Review. Endorse Ads is a type of advertising that use famous YouTubers to promote commercial products, either directly or indirectly. They could be artists, or people who have expertized and

attention to the product advertised. Bumper Ads appear at the beginning or in the middle of the video. Bumper Ads place at the beginning video can be a short Ad and unskippable, or longer duration but are skippable after five seconds. If in the middle, Bumper Ads appears on videos that last more than ten minutes. In this type of ad, there is also an option to skippable after a few seconds or unskippable short Ad. Overlay ads are image ads that overlaid and incorporate messages directly into streaming video without interrupting users experience watching video. Display Ads appear outside the desired video area. Depending on the user to watch or not, just click the desired one to watch. The ads that appear in display ads are in accordance with our interests. YouTube and other search engines will record our interest through the pages that have been visited. This data used as a guide for search engines to display advertisements. While the Product Review is a video review of a product by experts or someone interest in the products.

In general, the attitude towards various advertisements are almost the same, they do not really care about the ads on YouTube. They tend to give a neutral answer than agree or disagree (see Table II). Endorse Ads and Product Review is an advertising strategy on YouTube that brings up more than 50% neutral answers. It can be assumed that they do not care about the Ads. Endorse Ads is seen because they are followers of YouTubers who choose to be endorsers of a product. So, respondents are looking for people, no matter what products are endorsed. Nearly 80% respondents do not decide to agree or disagree toward Endorse Ad. The remaining respondents are distributed evenly to agree or disagree.

Likewise with product reviews. Product review is a video about product advertised. Participants deliberately search for that product. They are interested in a product and look for reviews from expert to convince the decision. The majority of them are neutral as an ad. Product review is not considered as an advertisement, because it contains a straightforward review of the advantages and disadvantages of a product.

However, the answer is different if advertising interferes with streaming video viewing experience. Although the neutral answer is still quite high, it is in the range of 40-50%, but the attitude of agree and disagree are quite strong. Disagree if the ad interferes with the process they watch the video. Bumper ads that appear at the beginning and/or in the middle of the video have a tendency to be treated disagree. A total of 59.8% disagreed with advertisements made with Bumper Ads, only 2% agree and 38.2% give neutral answer. Likewise, the attitude on overlay ads. Although it doesn't stop streaming video, the image that floats in front of the video is considered to interfere with the video viewing experience. The respondent who disagrees with overlay ads are 47.1%, while 48% are neutral and only 4.9% agrees with overlay Ads.

A different attitude is shown if the ad does not interfere with the video, like display ads. The display ad is placed around the video area. And it will appear replacing the main video with the advertisement if respondents want it.

**TABLE 2 RESPONSE TO YOUTUBE ADS**

Response to YouTube Ads	Endorse Ads		Bumper Ads		Overlay Ads		Display Ads		Product Review	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Agree	8	7.8	2	2.0	5	4.9	35	34.3	27	26.5
Neutral	81	79.4	39	38.2	49	48.0	48	47.1	69	67.6
disagree	13	12.7	61	59.8	48	47.1	19	18.6	6	5.9
Total	102		102		102		102		102	

For display ads, 34.3% agrees and 18.6% disagrees.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The attitude of YouTube users is that they disagree with advertisements that interfere with the process of enjoying the videos they need. And they will avoid the advertisement whenever possible. If it cannot be avoided, the entertainment genre content, such as movies and music, will make them willing to be exposed to advertisements. The entertaining adverts are also an attraction for YouTube users to view ads in full. The implication for the ad maker, to make the ad refrain from pressing the skip button and passing ad impressions is to create an ad with an entertaining impression.

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