

Advertisers' perceptions regarding the ethical appropriateness of new advertising formats aimed at minors

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Although they are key stakeholders, advertisers' views on the usage of novel (integrated and/or interactive) advertising toward minors has remained largely unexplored in academic research. This study aims to fill this gap by examining advertising professionals' opinions about the ethical appropriateness of using novel advertising formats aimed at children and teenagers, how to advance advertising literacy in minors, and their views of practices that are potentially privacy-invading, by means of both a quantitative online survey and qualitative in-depth interviews with Belgian advertising professionals. Results show that advertisers perceive that from 12 years onward, minors are capable to understand novel advertising formats and it is ethically justified to use them. Remarkably, advertisers would inform minors already from the age of 10 years onward about the commercial intention behind new advertising formats. Advertisers have strict opinions about collecting information online from minors. They advocate a combination of laws and self-regulation and governmental and educational campaigns to raise awareness and develop advertising literacy.

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