

TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT OF AN ADVERTISING DISCLOSURE TO DISCLOSE EMBEDDED ADVERTISING TO MINORS

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Introduction

Minors often have difficulties with identifying embedded advertising. An advertising disclosure can assist children and adolescents to recognize and understand this type of advertising (for a literature review on advertising disclosures, see Zarouali et al., 2017¹). Currently different advertising disclosures are implemented, e.g. the “PP”-logo (used to signal product placement), the “sponsored by” (used by Facebook), “adv.” (used by Google), etc. However, minors have difficulties to understand the meaning of all these different disclosures. Hence, within the AdLit project we aim to optimize the advertising disclosure in a way that children may recognize it, understand it and have a positive attitude toward the disclosure. To accomplish this, we aim to develop one universal disclosure which may be implemented on all advertising targeting minors to increase the recognition of commercial content for the different advertising formats. The advertising disclosure’s effectiveness strongly depends on its characteristics (e.g. wording, shape, font, color) and how it is implemented (e.g., place, timing, ...). This brief report discusses four studies that have been conducted within the AdLit project to develop a new advertising disclosure and test these characteristics. More information on the effectiveness of the disclosure will appear on www.adlit.be.

Study 1: Co-creation Sessions With Minors

To ensure that the meaning of the advertising disclosure is clear to minors, children and youngsters were involved in the design procedure of the advertising disclosure.

Method

Eight co-creation sessions took place, in which 24 children (aged 8 to 11 years) and 31 adolescents (aged 12 to 17 years) participated. First, respondents received information on advertising (literacy). Next, the participants worked on two creative tasks to determine the optimal design of the advertising disclosure. The first task involved children drawing a basic shape and choosing an appropriate word or abbreviation for an advertising disclosure. The second task involved the children designing their own advertising disclosure. Each task was performed individually. Afterwards the results were discussed with the whole group.

¹ Zarouali, B., De Pauw, P., De Jans, S., & Vanwesenbeeck, I. (2017). Improving advertising literacy by ‘cueing’. A report in the framework of the AdLit research project. Document accessible at www.AdLit.be.



Results

Shape

- ✓ Circle is perceived as too "ordinary"
- ✓ Most of the participants preferred the triangle, oval or "explosion" shape
- ✓ Rounded corners

Color

- ✓ Prominent
- ✓ Red and yellow (combined with black)
- ✓ Definitely not: grey, brown, green

Text

- ✓ Preference for one word: "reclame" which is a syn. for "commercial" (comparable with 'advertising' and 'commercial')
- ✓ No abbreviations of words (e.g. adv.)
- ✓ Exclamation mark

Figure

- ✓ Most preferred: megaphone

Conclusion

Based on the input obtained from the co-creation sessions, eight disclosures were designed. During the design process, it became clear that the explosion shape and triangle were too difficult to implement on online banners. As a result, these shapes were not used in the final six.



Reclame!



Study 2: Impact of Advertising Disclosure Design on Attention

An important feature of advertising disclosures is that they attract the attention of the minors. Therefore, an eyetracking study has been conducted to test which disclosure design attracts the most attention.

Method

18 children (aged 6 to 10 years) participated in study 2. The aim of this study was to identify how much attention was paid to the different advertising disclosures.

Results



The advertising disclosures were placed on the upper right corner (which is the location of currently used advertising disclosures). The results showed that although children's eye movements focused on the banners (mostly in the center), but did not pay attention to any of the six advertising disclosures.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the current study, we decided to change the position of the advertising disclosure and put it on the center of the banner.

Study 3: Impact of Advertising Disclosure Position on Attention

Method







24 children (aged 7 to 12 years) participated in study 3, which investigated whether a central placement (i.e. top-center) of the advertising disclosure increased attention to the advertising disclosures.

Results



A central placement of the advertising disclosure attracts more attention. A detailed analysis of the key performance indicators (see table) shows that the advertising disclosure that is noticed the most is the yellow-black one, with the word 'advertising' (in Dutch: 'Reclame') and an exclamation mark.

Key performance indicators analysis:

Cue	Number of fixations (cue on top of the website)	Number of fixations (cue in right sidebar)	Total number of fixations	Number of participants	Entry time (cue on top - cue right sidebar)	Dwell time (cue on top - cue right sidebar)	Average fixation (cue on top - cue right sidebar)	First fixation (cue on top - cue right sidebar)
	1	1	2	1 (P19)	11011.2 ms 4000.1 ms	15.3 ms (0.1%) 34.8 ms (0.3%)	15.3 ms 34.8 ms	15.3 ms 34.8 ms
	0	2	2	2 (P19, P23)	/ 5898.3 ms	/ 50.1 ms (0.4%)	/ 50.1 ms	/ 50.1 ms
	0	2	2	2 (P19, P21)	/ 4984.2 ms	/ 54.3 ms (0.4%)	/ 54.3 ms	/ 54.3 ms
	2	3	5	3 (P14, P21, P23)	10990.1 ms 11938.2 ms	68.9 ms (0.5%) 55.0 ms (0.4%)	68.9 ms 55.0 ms	68.9 ms 55.0 ms
	0	0	0	0	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /
	2	1	3	3 (P10, P17, P19)	8821.0 ms 12575.9 ms	28.5 ms (0.2%) 7.0 ms (0.1%)	28.5 ms 7.0 ms	28.5 ms 7.0 ms

Final advertising disclosure design

- The shape was made more prominent, with rounded corners (cf. study 1)
- A short pulse animation was added
- For integrated brand placements (in games, advergames, TV soap, movies), the word 'Contains' (in Dutch: 'Bevat') was added to the disclosure

RECLAME!

BEVAT RECLAME!

Study 4: Assessing the effectiveness of the new advertising disclosure

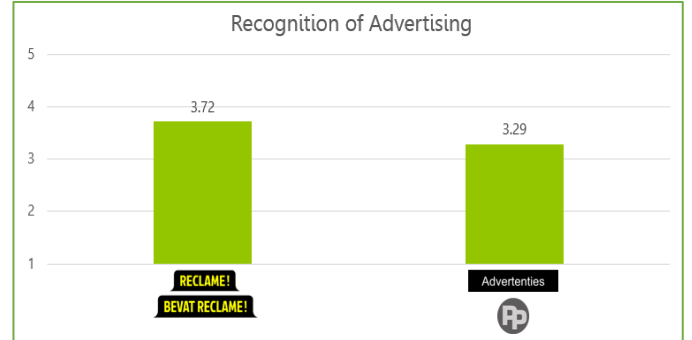
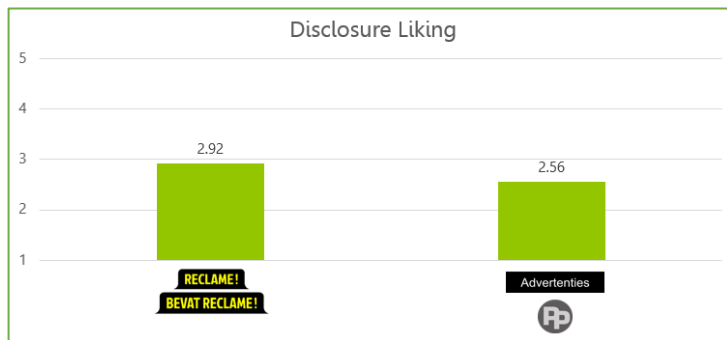
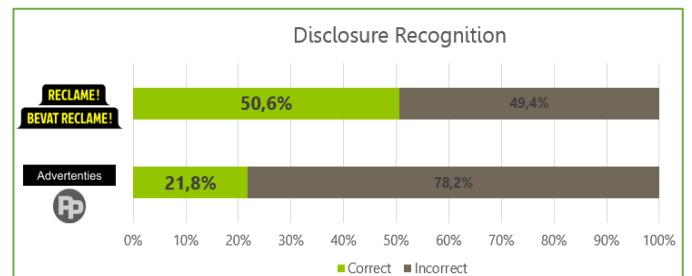
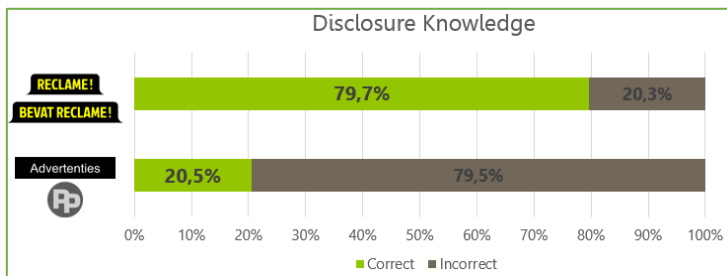
A final study has been conducted to test the effectiveness of the new advertising disclosure compared to existing ones, in terms of recognition of commercial content, recognition of the disclosure, disclosure meaning and disclosure liking.



Method

A 2 (advertising format: brand placement versus online banner advertising) by 3 (advertising disclosure: no disclosure versus existing advertising disclosure (PP-logo  vs. advertising logo on banners ) versus newly developed advertising disclosure () between-subjects experimental study was conducted to examine the effectiveness of the newly developed advertising disclosure.

Results



The new advertising disclosures helped respondents to better recognize the commercial content and the disclosure, have a better understanding of the new advertising disclosure and it is also liked more compared to the existing disclosures.

Design Recommendations

Based on the abovementioned studies, the following recommendations can be formulated:

- An advertising disclosure should be adapted to the local language
- The position of the disclosure on websites is important, central placement is preferred
- Colors, font and shape should be prominent