



The Ad War: A Look Into the Multi-Billion Dollar Advertising Industry and How They Waged War Against Their Own Consumers

Matt Hrushka , Andy Walraven (Editor) , Angelo Vilar (Illustrations)

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Written by award winning technologist and entrepreneur, Matt Hrushka, The Ad War reveals the inner workings of Online Advertising and exposes a growing conflict between advertising networks and their own consumers. Learn how the demand for relevance has led the industry into a perilous struggle with privacy and control that could ultimately change the way we use the internet.

The Ad War: A Look Into the Multi-Billion Dollar Advertising Industry and How They Waged War Against Their Own Consumers Details

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From Reader Review The Ad War: A Look Into the Multi-Billion Dollar Advertising Industry and How They Waged War Against Their Own Consumers for online ebook

Litia says

I thought the book to be informative and very straightforward. A more fitting title would be more like digital media guerrilla warfare or the evolution of the banner ad, something more exciting and more true to the content of the book. I feel that maybe there should have been more stories from the author's experiences with these large scale fortune 500 companies. This book just felt like it was a college text book with its large print and glossary terms or even a lengthy school report with bad graphics. I was hoping to gain new insight to the Ad wars some juicy insider information but at most I've come away learning that there is a "Do Not Track" option on your browser because no one likes a stalker and companies need to understand success and change relates to relevance which dictates survival.

Thomas says

Matt Hrushka gives a nice overview of our current advertising system and into ad networks, something probably not everyone is aware of.

He starts explaining why in his view advertisements are beneficial and essential for us. However, the current advertising model is broken, as he explains in the third chapter. Matt continues explaining why nothing is changing and the networks are clinging to the current model. But this model is hurting everyone, from the consumer to the publishers to the advertising companies themselves. Instead of interacting, the ad system builds a wall between company and customer. But Matt describes a solution, the buildup of interaction in order to regain trust. In my view, this solution is a bit vague, probably due to the complexity of the problem and Matts intention to keep it short and entertaining. He goes on about the difficulty of the necessary change and its benefits and ends with the conclusion that sooner or later a change will happen, one way or another.

Although I personally don't agree with everything, there is a lot of good information and argumentation in the book. It is definitely a great introduction into the field. It is an easy read but is very inspirational and animates own thinking. For those who are not from advertising it provides great information in a well presented form. For the more advanced it gives inspirational opinions and things to think about.

Overall the book is very well written. It is an extremely easy read, due to several things: it is short and fast to read (on the backside an average of 3 hours is given, which is about right), it is very comprehensive and compact and has a very good argumentation that is easy to follow. It is extremely well structured. Each chapter ends with a conclusion which summarizes the important messages of the chapter brilliantly. The book itself is very well printed, the font size, line spacing and column width are extremely ergonomical and makes it easy for the eye to fly over the page. The ink is very black and gives a very good contrast and readability. The size is very handy.

Furthermore, good references are given as footnotes in the text. Further resources for study are given in the appendix.

Tracey says

Disclaimer: I won this book as part of a Goodreads Giveaway.

Quotable Quote:

"When you're on YouTube and an ad comes up before your video, are you watching the ad? Or are you fixated on the countdown that shows how much time is left until you can skip it?"

This book explores the broken world of online advertising, and posits some (I think) interesting ideas as to how to change it for the better.

I'm a 90s kid. I grew up and got to see how ads have changed firsthand. I've had to listen to my dad roar about the fact that he doesn't see why he should have to pay for TV only to be bombarded by 5 minutes of commercials for every 2 minutes of TV (seriously, dad, just disconnect and watch Netflix already. I'm tired of your complaining). I remember the pain-in-the-ass popup ads, the annoying moving banners, and a few years ago when roll-over ads materialized, I would have been only too happy to throw the computer out of the window to make them go away. Annoying the public is not a feasible way to sell your product in the long-term.

This book definitely makes some good points. It's not that I dislike ads, it's that I dislike ads that are irrelevant or obtrusive. I love when Amazon tells me "You might like this other stuff based on your previous choices". I love when I get an Air Canada e-mail saying "hey man, we know you like international travel, so here's some deals on that this week".

I like to interact with ads, and I like feeling that I have some control over the ads that I see. I like when I get some variety and don't have to see the same ad before every YouTube video plays. But for the love of all that is holy, if you have an ad that automatically plays when a webpage loads and I'm scrambling to find it so I can close it off, you better BELIEVE that I will gladly write down the name of the company that subjected me to it, and vindictively go out of my way to **never purchase anything from them ever again**. I'm lookin' at you, Volvo. You're on my list of "obnoxious companies to never buy stuff from".

You guys out there who work in the advertising business? You should really read this book. It's got some good ideas in it. And y'know, anyone who has some interest in online advertising should give it a go too.

Crystal Starr Light says

Bullet Review:

Ads suck. But they are a necessary evil. But companies don't know how to use them so they don't suck. So we get endless pop-ups and "native ads". And ads continue to suck

Oddly enough, the author never brings up the biggest reason I never click: malware, spyware, and viruses. I was always told never to click on ads for that reason. Didn't matter if I was on a suspicious site - if it was an ad, don't click!

(Seriously...don't. It leads to pesky popups.)

Interesting content, but I felt it was more like a college research paper than a proper nonfiction book (the design of the cover and the layout of the inside text corroborates this according to my personal graphic design expert). Grammar/spelling issues also were very prevalent; editor needed to make a second pass.

Full Review:

Is there a person on the planet that likes ads, other than ad companies and businesses? (Other than people who watch the Superbowl that is.) Ads are that "necessary evil" - without them, we'd be paying for everything. With them, well, an hour long TV show becomes 40 minutes, our skylines are rimmed with billboards, and let's not even get started about the biggest collection of ads, the Internet.

NOTE: I won this through Goodreads Giveaway. This does not influence my rating whatsoever.

Buddy Read with the AMAZING Nenia!!

Whatever I thought this book was, it wasn't what I got. No offense to the author, but this reads like my English semester paper that I prettied up a cover I made in Word, double-spaced and set to 14 point font (making sure to take any opportunity to skip pages) and shoved a bunch of clipart into. An editor should have made a first or second pass through this. And I am a bit unsure about the sheer number of online resources. When I was in college (grrr, now I sound old!), my teachers insisted I use more than just the Internet for my sources.

The book does have some interesting factoids. I liked reading about the progression of Internet ads and reminiscing about the "Good Old Days" of endless popup ads. (Goddess, things were awful back in the early 2000's, weren't they?) And I appreciate that many innovations we have are because of ads.

But...what's the solution? Interactive ads? Okay...how does this get implemented? That's the only solution? Hmm, sounds pretty...one size fits no one. And I don't know that that will actually help. There are far too many people who want absolutely no ads, not even ads they may be interested in, that are actually targets and customized to them.

And the author never addresses the biggest reason I never click ads: malware, spyware, and viruses. Internet 101: don't click ads, they lead to things getting on your computer and messing up your system! Has this changed in recent years? If so, I haven't heard.

Interesting thing to note: this book includes a "3 hour read time" symbol on the back along with the notation that you can read this on a flight between LAX and ORD. I have never seen this before, though I must admit, it's useful. I certainly got through this book remarkably fast.

Initially I gave this 4 stars, but looking back and thinking of my experience, 3 stars is more like it. I don't feel that it really gives a solution to the problem, it doesn't have the polished feel of a real journalistic book (grammar, spelling, text design, etc.), and it just felt too basic, too top-level. A good start, but by no means comprehensive - just like your average college student's English paper.

Beau says

The Ad War is an excellent introduction to the history and current state of advertising on the internet.

While the page count is small, and the pace is brisk, the author efficiently delves into the evolution of and underlying problems with internet advertising, and the way it has contributed to the blindness and apathy of its targets causing a perpetual downward spiral in “effectiveness”.

Unfortunately, there’s no easy solution to this problem which is systemic and now practically ingrained in the relationship between advertisers and viewers. As such, the author is understandably unable to offer any real solutions that might be able to deescalate the situation and build to a more collaborative relationship between advertisers and consumers.

Overall I enjoyed the read and feel it’s a well-sourced and valuable primer for anyone interested in the subject of online advertising. My thanks to Goodreads First Reads for this short but worthwhile lesson.

Daniel says

This is a straightforward and easy to read book. It has large text and is broken up by a full page image every two to three pages or so. That being said, at around 200 pages, it is also a very quick read.

This premise of this book is a look at current advertising (specifically internet ads) and what the companies making these adds need to do to keep people interested. One idea is that the entire system of cookies and tracking web activity needs to be reevaluated in order to provide users with a more apt delivery of advertising. Give the people what they want, basically.

Matt Hrushka works in the field and states the positive aspects of advertising. He says that advertising can lead to a positive information exchange. He also states that ads are good ways of staying up to date with new products and trends if delivered in a successful format.

The book condemns the modern state of advertising and uses a lot of statistical evidence to show that the more invasive advertising gets, the more likely the general public is to block or ignore it. All in all a good read. Also, the back is full of useful tidbits on how to keep those pesky ads from showing up.
