

Exploring the Willingness of Video Apps Users Participating in Ads Monitoring

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ABSTRACT

In China, companies that provide ads monitoring services often hire professionals to verify the actual effect of ads. However, hiring professionals can be costly, so ad verification companies develop ideas that engage video app users to help with the ad verification process. Addressing on a survey taken by 500 people about their willingness to participate in ad monitoring activities and their habit of using video apps, the application of this new method will be discussed in detail.

Keywords: Ads Verification, Ads Monitoring, Video Apps Users, Willingness.

1. INTRODUCTION

Ads Verification checks if the advertisements are displayed in the right place and the right way as the advertisers planned. Companies that offer ads monitoring services usually hire professionals to check the ads displays for the advertisers. However, the cost of hiring professionals is usually high, and the ads verification market becomes more competitive than ever.

Ads monitoring companies are trying to lower the monitoring cost to get their services picked by the advertisers, so the new ads monitoring method is introduced. This article will discuss the start with ads verification methods for three traditional media. Then, it will explain a specific new ads verification method for the video advertising, which will be deeply explored by a survey of the willingness to extract users' browsing history on video-sharing apps.

1.1. Outdoor Advertising Monitoring

Outdoor advertising is also known as out-of-home advertising; the most common types of it are billboards, posters, and bulletins.[1] Ads monitoring companies usually hire people to take outdoors pictures or record videos of the displayed ads.

1.2 Radio and Television Advertising Monitoring

Television ads and radios ads verification are usually recorded by professionals who record the whole day for radio ads and a whole session of television programs for television ads. The ads displayed on the radio and television programs last a short period, 15seconds to 30 seconds.[1] Therefore, ads monitoring companies ask the professionals to record the whole day or the whole session to avoid missing the ads and causing extra costs.

1.3 Digital Advertising Monitoring

Digital paid ads are becoming more popular than ever. With more people spending their time online, the types of digital ads are surging in the market, such as paid search, website banners, digital video ads, tag ads, and etc.[4] As it is a relatively new type of advertising, this also requires the ads monitoring companies to hire professionals to record the ads; sometimes the use of advanced device is also implemented in ads monitoring.

2. NEW METHOD OF MONITORING DIGITAL ADS ON VIDEO-SHARING APPS

Many ads verification companies try to involve the public to help with the ads verification. In this way, ads verification apps are developed; most of them are used for outdoor advertisings because outdoor monitoring ads are relatively simple. Users only need to take the ads

pictures and upload them on the apps. Video, broadcast, and digital ads, however, are harder to monitor with ad-verified apps. As the methods mentioned above, ads verification companies hire professionals to record or screenshot the digital ads, this method is costly and time-consuming.

Ads verification companies are considering engaging video-sharing apps users to help monitor digital ads displayed in videos. Internet users nowadays spend more time on video-sharing apps than ever. The number of TikTok active users increased from 55 million in 2018 to 1 billion in 2021.[2] Advertisers display their ads as banners or insert the ads in the middle of the videos. Many companies consider developing a VPN, once the users connect the VPN, which can extract the browsing history of the phone users. The users do not need to screen-record the ads because the company can see the browsing history of each user. The downside of this method is that users might concern about their privacy. To understand the public's willingness to use video-sharing apps, ads verification, and VPN use, a survey was conducted among Chinese people.

3. DESIGN OF THE SURVEY

The survey contains 14 questions. The first three questions are designed for asking users' habit of video-sharing apps: the most commonly used app, the topic of the videos they watch the most, and the frequency of using video sharing/streaming apps. For the first question, the choices list seven frequently used video sharing/streaming apps in China: TikTok, KuaiShou, Tencent Video, Youku, The Red, XiGua, Yang ShiPin. [3]The second question includes nine video topics for the respondents to choose: movies & T.V. programs, Beauty/Skincare, Technology, E-commerce live streaming, Economics News, Video essays on Social events, Fitness, Parenting, and Cooking shows.[3] Questions 4-5 ask respondents whether they have ever participated in the ads monitoring activities. After questions 4-5, there is a brief explanation for ads verification on the video-sharing apps. Questions 6-9 show four different ads verification activities on video sharing/streaming apps, asking respondents if they would be willing to participate in each of them when they received a reward. Question 10 is about if they mind their browsing history would be read. Questions 11-14 ask respondents what rewards they expect, the frequency of participating in the above activities, their age group, and their phone system.

Table 1 SURVEY

Q1. Which following video sharing/streaming apps do you watch the most?
Q2. Which following video topics do you watch the most on video sharing/streaming videos?
Q3. When do you watch video sharing/streaming apps?
Q4. Have you ever participated in any ads monitoring/verification activities?
Q5. Which following ad monitoring apps have you used before?
Q6. If you will be given rewards, would you be willing to watch an assigned channel for 30 minutes? In the process, you cannot quit the apps.
Q7. If you will be given rewards, would you be willing to watch the most recent 30 videos of an assigned channel? In the process, you cannot quit the apps.
Q8. If you will be given rewards, would you be willing to search the assigned keyword and watch the top 10 results on the video-sharing/streaming apps? In the process, you cannot quit the apps.
Q9. If you will be given rewards, would you be willing to watch an assigned channel's live streaming for 30 minutes? In the process, you cannot quit the apps.
Q10. Suppose we need you to download a VPN that can allow us to read your browsing history, which is your watching history on the video apps, to monitor the ads that appear in the videos. Would you still want to participate in the activities we mentioned above?
Q11. Which form of rewards would you like to receive from participating in the activities?
Q12. Would you be willing to download the video-sharing apps required to participate in the activities mentioned above?
Q13. How often do you think you would be able to participate in the activities we mentioned above?
Q14. Choose your age group
Q15. What is your cell phone system?

4. RESULTS

500 respondents answered the survey with a 1 cent reward offered to them. The top three video-sharing apps picked from the respondents are KuaiShou, TikTok, and Tencent Video. Kuaishou is a popular video-sharing apps in China and often seen as the competitor of TikTok. According to figure 1, the top three video topics chosen by respondents are Movies & T.V. programs, Beauty/Skincare, and Technology-related. Parenting and Economic news are the least-watched topics the respondents pick. 46.8% respondents say they watch video-sharing apps almost every day, and 30.4% respond that they watch the apps during the weekend.

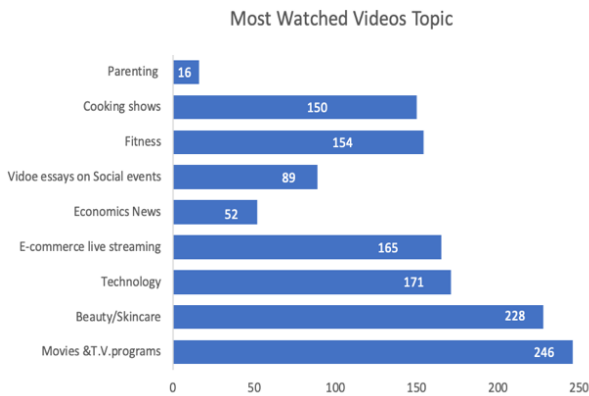


Figure 1 Number of Respondents

In terms of ads monitoring activities experience, out of 500 respondents, 372 people state that they have participated in some sort of ads monitoring activities before, and the apps they used the most are for outdoor ads monitoring. Figure 2 illustrates the willingness of 500 people to participate in four different ads monitoring on video apps. The finding shows a high participation, that is, 80% of participants are willing to participate each ad monitoring activity, and about 20% are unwilling to participate.

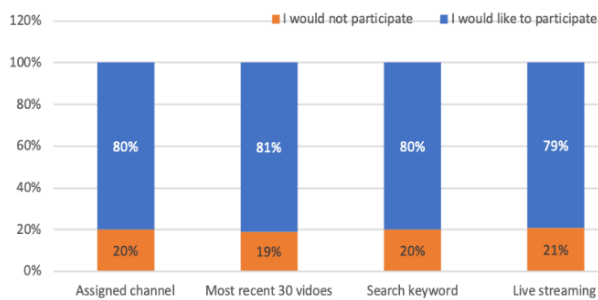


Figure 2 Willingness of Participation

After realizing that their browsing history will be read, 95 people out of 467 respondents say they would not participate in the above mentioned activities. For the rewards, Figure 3 shows that 113 respondents would like to receive gift cards from E-commerce like Alibaba and 95 people would like cash to be transferred into their

WeChat account as an ideal reward. In the last 4 questions, the result reveals that: 96 people want to become members of the video-sharing apps mentioned in Q1, 50.2% of respondents respond that they can participate in the activities daily, 70.4% of respondents are under age 30, and 56.9% have IOS as their cell phone system.

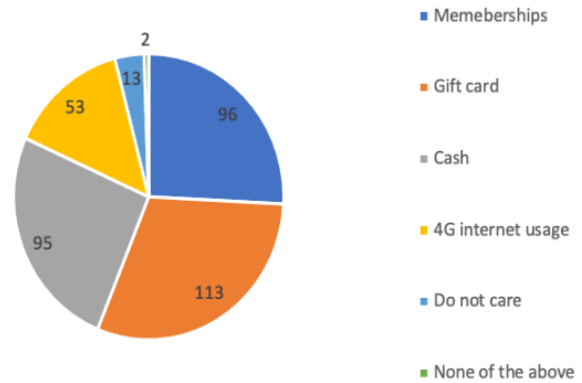


Figure 3 Respondents Preference

5. RECOMMENDATION

Here are three recommendations for ad verification companies who consider using utility users to monitor advertisements.

5.1. Selected Video Apps

According to the iiMedia, the two most popular video-sharing apps in China are TikTok and KuaiShou.[3]Both apps are short video-sharing apps. In recent years, short video apps have become more popular than long video sharing/streaming apps. In this survey, most participants are under age 30, and 277 participants choose KuaiShou as their most-used video sharing apps; 262 choose TikTok. Although the survey results show that most respondents would be willing to download apps that are not already on their phone, the advertising scheduling usually would have the ads displayed on multiple video-sharing apps.[6] Suppose the company ask the participants to download all the apps in the advertising schedule, especially requiring participants to download and watch long videos. In that case, they might quit because they would concern their phone storage or find the task too draining. This means that companies need to select some most downloaded video apps in the app stores, because videos app users are likely already have those apps on their phones.

5.2. Selected Video Topics

According to the survey’s results, respondents find interest in video topics like movies, T.V programs, beauty, E-commerce live streaming, and technology. They show low interest in topics like parenting and news. This demonstrates that respondents watch video apps

more for entertainment purposes than for formal information. Ad verification companies can take advantage of the user behaviors when ad verification companies receive advertising scheduling from beauty products, movies trailers, technology products, or E-commerce. They could consider recruiting some people who are already the audience of those videos with those topics.[5] However, if the advertising schedule is for the products that the video apps users have low interest, then the ad verification companies might not need to consider using the VPN method to ask apps users to help with the monitoring. People would not be willing to watch for long periods of time on less interested topics, or watch them repeatedly.

5.3. Clarification of Using VPN

The survey result also shows that IOS users are more than Android users, so ads verification companies should prioritize IOS versions when developing VPNS. Although in this survey when respondents know about the VPN would allow the developers to read their browsing history, only 95 respondents would quit the monitoring activities; majority of respondents still want to take the opportunity to earn some rewards and they seem do not mind their browsing history would be read. If ad verification companies want to implement this method in the future, they need to make sure that every participants understand how to install and use the VPN. Respondents might not fully understand how crucial it is that they can't exit the apps in the middle of a video, otherwise, monitoring cannot be captured. Therefore, companies have the responsibility to clarify and teach each monitoring step or it would be a waste of time and money.

6. CONCLUSION

This paper firstly discusses the ads verification methods of outdoor advertising, radio & television advertising, and digital advertising. It indicates that ads verification companies in China usually hire professionals to take photos of outdoor ads and record or screenshot ads for radio, television, and digital ads. Recently, they have come up with a new way to monitor digital ads. They develop a new VPN and invite video-sharing apps users to participate in the ads monitoring activities to save the cost of hiring professionals. Five hundred respondents participated in the survey with their habits of using video apps, and the willingness to use VPN ads monitoring for digital ads. The results show that respondents do not have an apparent bias toward four types of digital ads monitoring. However, it may have the probability that they do not fully understand the monitoring process, and they have never participated in this type of ad monitoring activity. Nevertheless, with the increase of video-sharing apps users, ads verification companies could take this opportunity to make the public

understand ads monitoring, and help them with the ads verification on video-sharing apps.

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