

How Mobile Video Ad Formats Drive Attention

Mobile video is growing - and not just in consumption, where Snapchat mobile video views have grown over 4x in the past year to 10B videos viewed per day. It's also growing in importance to marketers. eMarketer estimates 2016 mobile video ad spend will grow 47% year over year. But as marketers turn more to mobile video ads, they are learning that not all mobile video ad formats are created equal.

Marketers may allocate their mobile video and television advertising budgets based on traditional metrics like view duration. But view duration may soon become a red herring as the evolution of mobile video ad formats further widens the achievement of consumer attention. Marketers are increasingly searching for mobile video ad formats that most command visual attention - which can ultimately lead to purchase intent. More research is needed to understand how factors that define mobile video ad formats change effectiveness.

WHY MEASURE

Several prominent mobile video ad formats today evolved from online advertising, where ads (1) occupied part of the desktop screen, competing for attention with adjacent content, and (2) required 15 or 30 second assets, which exceeded the 8-second attention spans of today's consumers. These two assumptions about online video ads were taken as fundamental premises of mobile video advertising. But marketers are starting to ask if the mobile video ad formats they have invested in optimally deliver attention to their brands.

Snapchat created the 'Snap' as a full screen mobile video up to 10 seconds in length. The Snap is the atomic unit of storytelling on Snapchat - the canvas from which the Snapchat community creates new content daily. And as both the Snapchat community and volume of storytelling have grown, it became clear that the 10 second, full-screen mobile video format has become one of the powerful storytelling platforms marketers could wield to tell their brand's story, too.

An ad's first job is to command attention. Attention can manifest visually (sight) or aurally (sound). Visual attention is critical for mobile video ads - without it, an advertiser will be challenged to drive emotional response or intent to purchase. So how is visual attention achieved? The advertising industry continues to discuss what mobile video viewability standards should be. But achievement of visual attention can vary widely depending on three key factors of the mobile video ad format:

- (1) Ad Share of Screen: the size of the ad relative to the total screen size
- (2) Ad Length: the duration of the ad
- (3) Ad Choice: the ability for a consumer to skip or avoid the ad

As marketers consider how to achieve optimal success, they must first understand if mobile video ad formats drive more attention than TV ads - so mobile video ads must be compared apples to apples to TV ads. Second, among the major mobile video ad formats: Facebook in-feed, Instagram in-feed, YouTube TrueView and Snapchat video ads, which mobile video ads garner the most attention for their brands? To help address these questions, Snapchat turned to MediaScience, an industry leading consumer neuroscience research company with extensive experience evaluating all forms of video advertising.

HOW MEDIASCIENCE MEASURED

The Test Ads

Given historical spend by brands varies widely across mobile platforms, consumers hold asymmetrical preferences towards brands by platform (e.g. a consumer may associate Coca-Cola more with YouTube and Pepsi more with Facebook). To measure the true impact of the ad format, it was critical to control for ad creative and branding. Six fictional brands were created - and one video ad per brand - across the following advertising verticals:

Automotive, Travel, Financial Services, Consumer Packaged Goods, Retail and Technology

The creative was cut and formatted to the following specifications:

	Ad Length	Partial/Full Screen	Availability
Facebook in-feed	30 seconds	Partial	Can scroll past ad immediately
Instagram in-feed	30 seconds	Partial	Can scroll past ad immediately
YouTube TrueView	30 seconds	Partial	Can skip ad after 5 seconds
Snapchat video ads	10 seconds	Full	Can skip ad immediately
Linear TV	30 seconds	Full	No skipping ad, but distractions (e.g. phone)

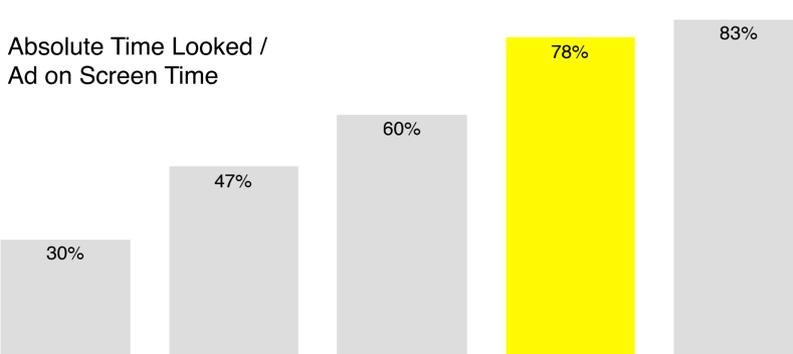
The Lab Test itself

MediaScience recruited 320 participants aged 16 to 56, balanced by gender. Participants were required to be at least a monthly user of one or more of the following platforms: Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat and TV. MediaScience utilized eye-tracking and biometric equipment for each participant, who were selected to participate in either one or two 10-minute sessions. Each participant was instructed to freely navigate around the platform(s) for the duration of a session. As they navigated, participants received a pre-selected subset of the six ads. For each participant in the Facebook or Instagram cells, the ads appeared as standard ads in their native feeds. Each participant in the YouTube TrueView cell received the ad as a pre-roll (the ad appeared prior to the video the participant selected to watch). In the Snapchat cell, ads appeared full-screen adjacent to Snapchat's publisher content or curated Live Stories. Participants in the TV cell experienced the video ad during an otherwise-standard ad pod. During free navigation, if a participant received less than 2 ad exposures, they were instructed to navigate to a section of the platform where they would receive ad exposures. After completing their session, participants completed a brand effectiveness survey about the brands in the respective ads they saw. 552 sessions were collected and analyzed across the four mobile platforms and TV.

WHAT THE RESEARCH FOUND

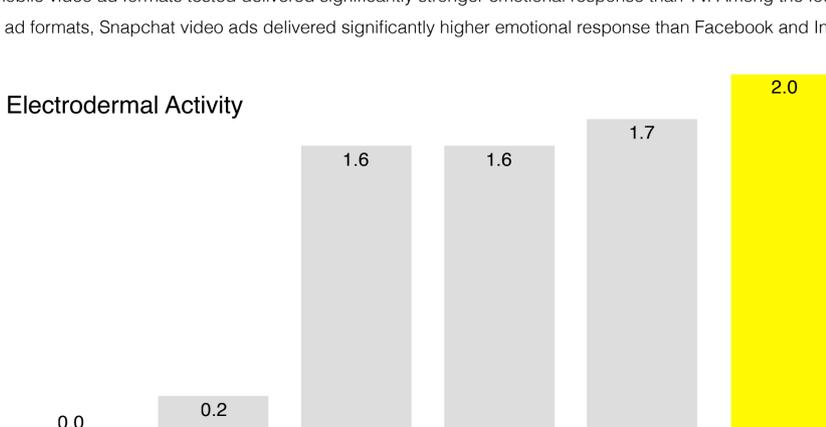
Visual attention

Snapchat video ads and TV ads - the two ad formats with 100% share of screen - were statistically similar to each other and able to command significantly more visual attention than Facebook in-feed, Instagram in-feed and YouTube TrueView. In fact, Snapchat commanded over twice the visual attention of Facebook, over 1.5x the visual attention of Instagram and 1.3x the visual attention of YouTube.



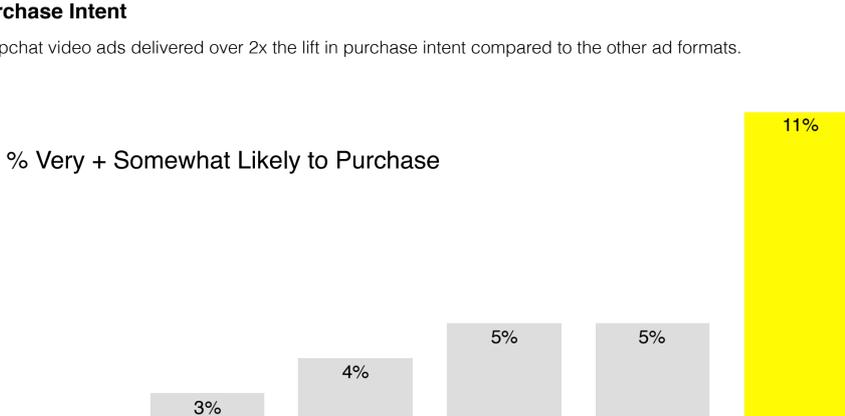
Emotional Response

The mobile video ad formats tested delivered significantly stronger emotional response than TV. Among the four mobile video ad formats, Snapchat video ads delivered significantly higher emotional response than Facebook and Instagram.



Purchase Intent

Snapchat video ads delivered over 2x the lift in purchase intent compared to the other ad formats.



WHAT THIS MEANS FOR MARKETERS

As mobile ad formats evolved, Share of Screen, Ad Length and Ad Choice have emerged as key factors to drive achievement in attention, emotional response and intent to purchase. Marketers should continue to experiment with full-screen, shorter ad creative to drive value for their brand, keeping in mind that significant value can be achieved in giving their consumers choice to watch their ad. Marketers should continue optimizing ads for campaign goals, but going forward, it may be worthwhile to look beyond view duration to capture a campaign's total value. Attention is the real currency of impact as partial-screen ad formats compete with adjacent content.