

Journal



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Middle East

Journal of Public Relations Research Middle East

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Researches in French:

- *Pr Boudjema Redouane* – Université d'Alger3

Les élections présidentielles de 2014 à travers la presse électronique en Tunisie
LA BIPOLARISATION POLITIQUE COMME CONSTRUCTION MEDIATIQUE 7

Researches in English:

- *Prof.Dr. Fazal Rahim Khan* – Umm al-Qura University
Dr. Osman B. Gazzaz – Umm al-Qura University

Impact of communication incipience of the pilgrims' residential context on their
communication behaviors & perceptions, Study on the pilgrims Egypt. 77

Abstracts Researches in Arabic:

- **Dr. Abd Allah Abd Allah E` Alwazan** - Northern Border University

The role of Arab news channels to provide university students with information during
the Libyan revolution February 17. 78

- **Dr. Hunida Gindeel Abo Baker Ahmadoun** - ECT, Abu Dhabi, UAE.

The press coverage of the economic crises in the Sudan in Sudanese newspapers
(AKHIR LAHZA & ALYAWEM AL TALEE) 81

- **Dr. Magda Abdel Monem Makulouf** - Higher Institute for Media and Communication Arts

The Design of Online Advertising in Egyptian News Websites 82

- **Herdan Hady Sayil** - Al Iraqla University

Analysis of quality elements in the Islamic sites on the Internet 84

- **Safa Mohamed Ibrahim Abdel Dayem** – IAEMS – 6 October City.

The new media essence and its means “ Theoretical Study “ 86

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Address

Egyptian Public Relations Association
Arab Republic of Egypt
Giza - Dokki

Ben Elsarayt - 2 Ahmed Zayat Street
Mobile: +201141514157
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www.epra.org.eg
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Egyptian Public Relations Association, Gizza, Egypt
Dokki, Ben Elsarayat -2 Ahmed Elzayat St.

Email: chairman@epra.org.eg - jpr@epra.org.eg

Web: www.epra.org.eg

Phone: (+2) 0114 -15 -14 -157 - (+2) 0114 -15 -14 -151 - (+2) 02-376-20 -818

The Design of Online Advertising in Egyptian News Websites

Dr. Magda Abdel Monem Makulouf

Lecture at Public Relations & Advertising Dep.
Higher Institute for Media and Communication Arts
City of Culture and Science in 6th of October

Abstract

This is a descriptive study designed to identify the different formats of advertising in Egyptian news websites. The study uses content analysis to observe the design of online ads in the following sample news websites:

1. Websites affiliated with a well-established news organisation: Al-Ahram – Al Shorouk
2. Local online portal: Akhbarak – Masrawy
3. Local news websites published in English: Daily News Egypt – Egypt Independent

Content analysis data were collected on a weekly basis, starting Sunday, 1 December 2013, through Sunday, 29 December 2013.

This study aims at identifying:

- Ad formats in Egyptian news websites
- How these ads are presented
- Most common ad formats in Egyptian news websites, and how it compares to worldwide standards
- Goals desired by advertisers, and different types of message appeals incorporated

Results of the study:

- Available space for advertising did not vary much among the six sample websites. Yet, Shorouk and Egypt Independent offered fewer advertising spaces than all other sites
- Commercial ads dominated all advertised areas comparing to non-profit ads
- Egyptian advertisers dominated the advertising space in the sample. Yet, foreign advertisers focused more on English-speaking sites. It is noted too that English ads never appeared on Arabic pages, and Arabic ads never appeared on English pages.
- Types of goods and services advertised in Egyptian news sites were quite similar to global standards. However, automobile, entertainment, tourism and health advertisements were quite scarce in Egyptian news sites.
- As expected banner ads dominated all ad formats in the sample. Yet, what was not expected is the scarcity of using other forms of display

advertising, especially floating ads and expanding ads, which are quite very popular globally. This may be due to their high production costs or to strict/formal news website policies.

- Newspapers trying to maintain a formal image might be evident as they target only adults and exclude teenagers. However a number of ads tried to be a little lighter.
- Interactivity is a key element of any online advertising message as still images and fixed components rest marginalized amid those many interactive elements on the page, may them be other ads or page's original content.

Recommendations:

- This study tried to serve as a gateway to more in-depth studies that examine the relationship between advertising content and original content of the page, especially with the scarcity of such studies in Egypt. It may serve as a cornerstone for more insightful studies on the relationship between online advertising and the intermediate website on which they are presented.
- Due to the growing number of social networks users, it is recommended that more similar studies be conducted to learn about the advertising methods used through these networks and use them to serve the advertising process.