Online advertising and e-commerce

Traditionally, ads were mainly used on television or radio and in magazines, and targeted at a wide range of different consumers in the effort to raise brand awareness. The spread of 'New Media' has not only enabled the diffusion of the Internet, but has also transformed the consumer's approach to the buying process. Today's customers are more tech-savvy than ever and are more in control of advertisements or information. With the advent of social media, they have the ability to interact with businesses as never before, giving opinions and responses to brands and marketing techniques. Two trends are driving this change: an increase in Web usage – which strengthens the Internet's role as a convincing support to validate advice and to prepare consumers for a purchase – and the development in targeted advertising formats and techniques – which help to shape more communicative and relevant online campaigns. The big brands have started to use the web-based communication with their clients; they have gone further, purchasing advertising spaces to be inserted into websites or consumers' communities; they have studied and implemented actions requiring interaction with existing and potential customers. Advertising in the digital age has come to mean a cross-promotional way, focusing on the use of different ad channels, such as mobile and social networks, to get across the advertiser's message; multiple channels need to be used simultaneously to garner as much viewership of the advertisement as possible. Combining messages across multiple platforms, to gain interest in two or more products to build on a brand, is becoming more and more common in this age of multi-tasking and shorter attention spans. Moreover, involving consumers is a new and innovative way to grab their attention and keep them open-eyed; promotions, which are interactive and provide engaging opportunities for buyers, have verified effectiveness.

As social networks develop, the Web has also become a place where a brand's reputation and image is shaped; online ad effectiveness research is an important tool for marketers seeking to understand how their campaigns perform. Advertisers are always on the move in implementing appropriate methods and indicators to answer the need for strengthening expertise, trying to find measurements and reliable methodologies to prove the effectiveness of their online campaign.

approach: *approccio*
awareness: *consapevolezza*
to be in control of: *avere il controllo di*
cross-promotional: *promozione trasversale*
effectiveness: *efficiacia*
effort: *sforzo*
expertise: *competenza*
format: *formato*
further: *oltre*
to garner: *raccogliere*
to grab: *afferrare*
to implement: *realizzare*
to involve: *coinvolgere*
multi-tasking: *esecuzione simultanea di diversi compiti*
open-eyed: *con gli occhi aperti*
on the move: *in movimento*
to perform: *svolgere*
relevant: *pertinent*
to shape: *formare*
span: *durata*
spread: *diffusione*
to strengthen: *rafforzare*
to target: *destinare, indirizzare*
tech-savvy: *esperto di tecnologia*
trend: *tendenza*
to validate: *avvalorare*
viewership: *telespettatori*

1 Underline the main words and phrases in the previous text and then compare them with your partner's.

2 Complete the following sentences.

  a. The spread of New Media has also transformed ....

  b. Customers are more ....

  c. Two trends are driving this change: ....

  d. Advertising in the digital age has come ....

  e. Engaging consumers is a new and innovative way ....

  f. Advertisers are always ....

3 Answer these questions.

  a. Before the advent of the Internet, what were the traditional advertising channels?

  b. How has the consumer buying process changed with the development of the Internet?

  c. Can you describe the two general tendencies that have supported the change?

  d. What is cross-promotional advertising?

  e. What is the newest way of grabbing consumer attention?

4 Write a short summary of about 130 words, using the selected words or phrases above, and the answers to the previous exercise.