

MY WALL! MY CONTROL! RIGHT?



Sponsored advertisements can be a common eye-sore for any Facebook user. Some have grown immune to the common practice of online advertising, while others remain infuriated by its invasive nature. Your Facebook profile is your own personal account, so shouldn't you at least have some control as to what appears on your Facebook wall?

The use of the internet and especially online social platforms has grown beyond expectations. A social networking site (SNS) such as Facebook has not only consumed the lives of millions of users around the globe but has gained immense popularity as both a communication platform and advertising tool. A number of concerns regarding advertising on SNSs have surfaced.

Jade Samuels, a [Master's](#) student in the [Department of Marketing Management](#), conducted a study to determine privacy concerns, advertising intrusiveness, attitudes and behaviour within the context of Facebook advertising. The study was conducted amongst a sample of 300 university students.

The study revealed that consumers perceive advertising on Facebook as intrusive and in violation of their privacy; whilst attitudes towards Facebook advertising positively predicted behaviour towards Facebook advertising. In addition, a significant gender difference was also identified with respect to Facebook privacy concerns and advertising intrusiveness on Facebook. Female users displayed greater concern regarding their privacy on Facebook and perceived Facebook advertising to be more intrusive than male users.

The findings suggest that marketers need to be mindful of the issues of privacy concerns and advertising intrusiveness. Therefore, advertising campaigns on SNSs should be more entertaining, interactive, tailored and relevant to minimise the perceptions of advertising intrusiveness. Moreover, marketers should consider the existence of gender differences in order to promote their products differently to male and female Facebook users through tailored digital communication strategies. Strategies specifically targeted at female users could enforce stricter privacy policies, whereby users are continually reassured of their privacy protection. Marketing managers should take into consideration Facebook users' privacy concerns and gender differences; otherwise they could have devastating results for digital advertising campaigns and may fail to yield satisfactory returns on investment.

This research was conducted as part of the fulfilment of the [Master's degree](#) in Marketing Management in 2014 with the [Department of Marketing Management](#) by Jade Samuels under the supervision of [Prof. M. Wiese](#).