User's Perception of Disruptive Online Advertisements

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ABSTRACT

The decade has witnessed unprecedented growth of information and communication technology. Goods and services started their promotion on internet and internet marketing became an important tool for the marketers. Use of internet-based applications is increasing and marketing on the internet is the first choice for brands and businesses because of its proximity to a global audience, low cost, 24 x 7 services, measuring capacity for any kind of marketing etc. seeing all these advantages a high percentage of marketers are spending their budget on online ads. The effectiveness of online ads compared to traditional marketing techniques has been gauged by many studies. Users find the campaigns more appealing due to the integration of multimedia and instances of strong interactivity. Though the internet became a popular medium of marketing, its advantages somewhere turned it into also intrusive, overloaded ads by publishers and marketers on the internet started interruption in users' experience and they seem forced, irritating and interfere with people's work online.

There are numerous studies on the effectiveness of internet marketing; there is very little research into its intrusiveness and how to move towards formulating a successful online ad campaign in the current scenario. This paper discusses the relevance of online ads and compares user attitudes towards the appealing or disruptive nature of internet marketing campaigns. We analyze how these campaigns are affecting the advertising on the internet and their total impact on customer acquisition

Introduction

A long time ago, marketing simply referred to being able to sell a product or service. The primary concern was the bottom line. The concepts of customer satisfaction or customer acquisition were still broadly misunderstood, if not ignored. With the industrial revolution, the modern era of marketing started. Mass production of goods and by too many producers led to increased competition. To sell their products with so much competition companies started finding unique ways to promote their goods and services. The idea of marketing started evolving and companies began looking for new ways to reach out to potential customers and sell their product. Eventually, four methods of marketing flourished -- Broadcast, Mail, Print and Television. Now, marketing is a well-developed methodological science and is constantly transforming, in accordance with the needs and interests of the populace.

With changing times, suitable methods were developed and subsequently deployed. The modern era is one of competition, technology, strategy and communication. The Internet being the largest intangible place for communication, makes use of all of these. The evolution of the web and websites and the ever increasing ubiquity of the internet has changed the way product awareness used to be previously. In 1994 Online advertising when hot-wired sold its first banners ads. United States revenue grew to an estimated 7.1 billion in 2001 due to online advertising. The online industry started its full-fledged momentum by 2004, when business models for web 2.0 came together. Bristol Myers conducted the first online marketing campaign to promote their product Excedrin. There are certain online companies such as EBay and Amazon who offer products directly to customers via their websites. Because of this direct selling on websites businesses sell their products more quickly and at a lesser cost as the products reach the customer without a middleman. This had led to companies expanding their business across continents, and making profits in millions.

The Internet has evolved as an extraordinary marketing tool that is able to reach any user. It can gather any type of information and convert all types of data into profitable results and that too at a faster rate. The Internet is a medium which supports and interacts with consumers beyond the AIDA model. In the modern world the internet has great influence on marketing and businesses and in fact decides strategy to run a business or marketing campaigns. India is the second largest online market, over 460 million internet users, we are ranked only behind China. By 2021, there will be 635.8 million internet users in India (Data from Stastia).

The Internet and Mobile Association of India predicts that over 40% of the Indian population will be using the internet via mobile or laptop by June 2021. Mobile internet is mostly used by youngsters and they are the great source of online marketing. It is proven that age groups from 16-35 yrs do almost 50% of online marketing .Marketers have an unprecedented number of businesses on the internet or web which can be promoted and can achieve great success on internet marketing . The internet has developed many new ways to achieve marketing goals, the use of modern software tools and features of the internet created a favorable environment for marketers and brands.

"The internet is a phenomenal technological advertisement that has happened to mankind and its benefits are enormous in every regard." - Red Lobster

Developing a successful branding strategy is vital to any company aiming towards long term growth. In this digital age, where approximately 54% of the world population have access to the internet (Internet World Stats 2017.), virtual presence plays a vital role in brand building. In order to stay competitive, companies need to embrace digital marketing. The global reach, low cost, the immediate and specified data

collection with quick measurable insights has made the internet a vital resource for any company.

While the internet became a significant part of the marketing world, it also turned intrusive and annoying-- overflowing with ads of each and every possible product made this medium disruptive and infuriating for users. These ads started interfering with work - ranging from pop ups and side panels to unclosable windows and flashy graphics. These types of ads which are flooded on the internet have become a headache for the internet users. Numerous studies about effectiveness of online marketing glorifies the internet but its intrusive ads and annoying nature of the internet is a serious issue which have to be taken care of , there are very few research that inspect the intrusive nature of the internet ads which transform the user experience. By studying this aspect of the internet a company can increase the efficacy of their digital marketing campaigns. According to a HubSpot Research, 91% of the respondents said that they find ads more intrusive these days compared to 2-3 years ago. The future of digital advertising depends on developing an advertising system which is targeted and offers users pertinent content without seeming aggressive or loud.

Aim of this study:-

This study aims to develop a deeper understanding of the intrusive nature of the internet. The internet is gaining popularity at an unprecedented rate, and over 600 million blocking devices exist in the market. We intend to study how the saturation of advertising on the internet affects the efficacy of a marketing strategy by hampering the user experience.

We are going to examine whether advertisers provide appropriate environments for all kinds of industries and users. Too much advertisement on the internet has impacted the user experience negatively; this has to be addressed and guided. Is that the cause for ad blockers being used? Certainly this overflow of ads created space for ad blockers but in turn whether ad blockers are going to solve the issue or add some further complications that is a big question itself. . Moreover, blocking ads can be considered as an obstruction to the flow of revenue. In this study, we aim to find solutions and conclusions about this aspect of advertisement, the intrusive behavior of online advertisements is a trending issue and will try to find alternative solutions for this problem.

To summarize, our primary questions are:

- Are ad blockers protecting internet users?
- Is Ad blocking valuable or is it destroying the internet experience?
- Could the rise of ad blocking threaten free internet?
- What is the solution for brands and marketers?
- How can ads be less intrusive?

The spend on digital advertising around the world continues to grow, the latest predictions are that it will be $285 Billion by 2020. The figure is almost twice as much as the $160bn spend for 2019.

While ad blocking affects the market, a report by Worldwide Digital Advertising 2016-2020, found that better targeting will help marketers to get higher click-through rates and increase publisher revenues. "Tech giants, like Facebook, are utilizing their unmatched audience data and offering advertisers accurate targeting.

Literature review:-

 "Ad intrusiveness is a main cause of annoyance" (Bauer & Greyser, 1968). Berthon et al. (1996) said that "The Internet in the nineties was more efficient than traditional media because it can offer concrete performance metrics.it can also target segments of consumers to assess the success or failure of a campaign." "Early stage studies showed that advertising on the internet was less intrusive than television commercials" (Rust & Varki, 1996). "In the modern era online consumers are very goal-oriented so they spend more time on the internet and their most work is done on the internet so marketers wanted to use their presence on web by flooding ads on internet and result is that online ads are even more intrusive other media, which lead users to negative attitudes, and sometimes they don't want to return to the site" (Li et al 2002.) Early studies found that these online ads were very effective in brand awareness" (Briggs & Hollis, 1997). "Jupiter (1999) observed through his studies that 69% of internet users when surveyed and said that pop-up ads are very annoying and 23% respondents said they usually do not like to return to the website which have these annoying threads or links." Builk said (2002) "Online advertising can improve the credibility of a product because it can provide detailed information about products and link it to the relevant website which is used by people who may be interested in the product advertised."

When advertising is perceived as "noise" in a medium then audiences have negative perceptions about advertising, they encounter it, regardless of message or content of the ads". Cronin and Menelly (1992) .Some studies on mobile marketing have found that intrusiveness is a major issue in case of mobile users,they are also facing this ad intrusiveness with continuous approach by brands through ads or emails. (Sejung Marina Choi & Nora J. Rifon, 2002; Shamdasani, Stanaland, & Tan, 2001). The tactics advertisers use sometimes lead to intrusiveness, such as television commercials during an exciting scene or an important information in a program or an ad which has no relevance with the context of the programme etc. are cited as a cause of ad annoyance". Li, Edwards, and Lee (2002,)

"Pop-ups advertisements are rated worst ads by users in terms of annoyance. These advertising leads to irritation most internet users admitted that pop-ups are most annoying ads and distract them" (Edwards, Li, & Lee, 2002) "several studies revealed that pop-up and banner advertisements are the two most annoying and interruptive ads and annoyed people than other ads on web." (Li& Lee, 2002). Any ads that interfere with users' primary tasks should be called intrusive ads". (Li et al., 2002)." Users are mostly frustrated by ads which obstruct any kind of information, Users feel these ads imposed and they have no choice. " (Benitez, 2002) Many users said they focus on the "x" button in the upper-right corner of the window, because these overflowing ads distract and interrupt while working." (Chan et al., 2004) "Though internet advertising produces annoyance, results say that these advertisements are more effective than print advertisements and build a positive brand evaluation." (Sundar & Kim, 2005).

Several research concluded that online consumers are goal-oriented so they find online ads more intrusive than people in other media."(Ferris, 2007; Maneesoonthorn & Fortin, 2006; Merisavo et al., 2007). "Internet and mobile advertising have an edge on traditional media advertising, but intrusiveness and annoyance are damaging the reputation of online advertising as well as the web itself. Ad avoidance by users have dramatically changed the advertising on internet for both publishers and consumers" (Berman et al., 2007) "Rise of digital media upon consumers resulted in too much advertising, which can result in a higher level of saturation" (Ranchhod, 2007). "People are irritated by the ads on the internet that are not related to the subject and theme of the site, users think or feel these ads irrelevant and interruptive." (Chan et al., 2007) "

Intrusiveness of ads is affected by the ad value, placement and execution, all ads are not intrusive in nature and don't create avoidance only irrelevant and bad content is responsible for annoying ads."(Ying et al 2009) Truong and Simmons (2010) examined the link between intrusiveness and its effect on especially the marketing strategy in a push and pull context. Findings showed the intrusiveness depended on whether the ad was helpful or misleading. Push strategies like spam mail, pop-ups and banner ads could lead to negative brand association. Examples of this type of advertisement are: advertisements with incorrect information, not relevant information about the product and services, pop ups that lead to distraction because of the wrong timing on screen, wrong information about price and discounts etc."(Truong & Simmons, 2010)

"If online ads are not made such that users can close when he wants then it is in the category of intrusive ads."(Gold and Tucker, 2011) "In recent studies it was found that intrusiveness and major ad annoyance comes with poorly designed websites, badly executed ads and presence too many pop up ads."(Smith, 2011) "One of the Internet's problematic forms of advertising led to the creation of the medium's first form of mechanical ad avoidance: spam filters. As email inboxes became flooded with spam, or unwanted email advertising, consumers sought to find a quick and easy way to remove the unwanted messages. In response, email services began to provide spam-filtering services which recognized the characteristics of spam email and placed them into a separate folder other than one's inbox." (Baek and Morimoto, 2012).

According to (Perraud,2013) "Intrusion can be of many types and a complex issue includes psychology of users, the context of ads, timings when ad targeted customers, choice of closing the ads etc. there are several contexts which decides the percentage of intrusiveness." "For advertisers nowadays there is a challenge to reach out to the right consumer with the right message. Brands and publishers need to increase relevance of the content otherwise they will be intrusive to consumers."(Helen Lassage, 2014) "A study was conducted on ad avoidance psychology and it was found there are three types of ad avoidance behavioural, cognitive and mechanical."(Seyedghorban et al 2016) "Though advertisers may like intrusive tactics for the obvious reason that they garner people's attention, these types of ads tend to elicit negative responses." Li et al (2020)

Discussion:-

Effortless information is the key, the primary reason why the internet is so successful. Coupled with the speed of computing, it emerged as a channel that is capable of performing any type of task. Advertising is one of them. The perpetual 24x7 availability, the global reach, and the economical option for entry into the market give the internet an upper hand when compared to other mediums.

One can argue that the internet, flooded with information and opinions is just a click away and hence gives consumers a power of knowledge. Any company, even and especially small ones, cannot deny the competition and the need to have a presence online. They have to implement digital marketing techniques in order to compete with others in their industry. Consumers like to find out all they can about products and we have the technology to make it possible. The fate of some of these companies, such as Amazon, Ebay had huge turnovers in a short amount of time. These stories have resulted in the Internet being a welcome addition to any industrial segment - ensuring success. When a medium is so widely accepted and people are connected globally from all walks of life there is a tendency of marketers to utilize this platform and this process -- the internet is bombarded with ads of any and every product or services one could imagine.

The success of a website relies on two factors: First, the sales requirement and how they will create space. Websites can make money by keeping their users happy which brings them back to the website. Online advertisement is very successful and in demand so every company big or small wants to promote his or her product or service on the internet. This blind race for profits has resulted in an overflowing number of unchecked ads on the internet. It wouldn't be wrong to say that the ads are destroying the internet.

21 million people were active users of ad blockers in 2010, which increased to 181 million by January of 2015." (Pagefair & Adobe, 2015). In a US internet users survey 71% respondents said that ads are more intrusive than three years before.,79% people said they feel like they're being tracked by retargeted ads (Lauren Nettles report 2018)

Today consumers expect a seamless and uninterrupted experience. Unfortunately this need is not being met as the internet is flooded with unchecked ads that are not only hampering the experience of the user, but often also engaging in the propagation of false information. According to the Internet Advertising Bureau, upto 25% of all people online use some sort of Ad Blocker. Many internet users also complained about the privacy concerns related to the data these websites have access to - information like purchase history and surfing activity is being minutely tracked and the data may be sold to third parties. Several tech giants have been accused of and penalized for this.

What is an Ad Blocker?

In simple words Ad Blockers are software programs which block Ads from being shown on websites, desktop, mobile etc. ad Blockers filters content and block unwanted advertisement, because of this sometimes ad Blockers are also known as content blockers. The software targets ads

like pop-ups, banner ads, sticky ads, interstitial ads or auto playing videos etc. and help users to surf without interference.

These ad blockers are so much in demand that Apple allowed Ad blocking technology in its iOS9 version. In India 122 million people used mobile ad blocking in 2016, China was second with 159 million users and in third position was Indonesia with 38 million users actively using ad blocking. Report also said that Asia pacific region has 55% of global smartphone users and 93% is using ad blocking browsers on their mobile phone. (Page fair report on Asian countries 2016)

In 2018 75.4 million US internet users blocked ads or used ad-blocking software. In 2019 73.2 million.(e-marketer report)

Some popular ad Blockers of 2020:-

AdBlock Plus: It works for all chrome, Edge, Firefox, opera, safari, android and ios9. The features which makes it most adaptable are quick setup, loading preset filter, filter malware and social media buttons etc.

Ad block: this is also an ad blocking browser extension which is available for chrome, firefox, edge and safari. It uses a series of filter lists to automatically block ads.

Poper Blocker:-This blocker focuses on blocking pop-ups,pop unders,overlays time and scroll pop-ups.

Ad Blockers Ultimate:- It also works for chrome, firefox and opera. A free browser which blocks known malware and tracking domains.

U block origin:-It works for chrome and fire fox.It has features like: filter lists, malware sources. It also gives the option to create own personal custom filters from host files.

Adguard is available on Windows, Mac, Android, iOS. AdGuard ad blocker effectively blocks all types of ads on all web pages, even on Facebook, YouTube, and Skype. The main difference between Adguard and the previously mentioned ad blockers is that it is a separate program as opposed to just a browser extension. AdGuard blocks ads up before they are loaded into the browser, resulting in a lighter use of bandwidth, speeding up the page load.

Beside these there are many other blockers like Ad guard, wipr ,Adaway, Blocker X etc.

Ad Blockers came into existence not only because the ads were intrusive or annoying for users but they also compromise the privacy and security of users. These intrusion contain adware, trackers,malware etc. which gathers data the users browsing habits, interest , location etc. There are four types of people who use Ad blockers:-

1.   The people who install ad blockers to protect their privacy. These people mostly whitelist a site.

2.   People who are only interested in their work and don't like anything beside that, these people do not want to see any types of ads even when they are not so intrusive or annoying..

3.   Some people have not installed ad blockers themselves but are using it , installed by friends, company etc.

4.   There are people who have faced intrusive and fed up with annoying ads , these people use ad blockers to support good content they are basically not against ads but the content and timings of ads which they object to.

Interactive Advertising Bureau survey in 2016 found that 26% of users are using ad-blockers on their computers and 15% had ad-blockers on their smartphones. The reason they responded was privacy concerns ,page load times and visual clutter.

The Criteria for "Bad Ads"

●   **Ads that Interrupt.** Ads which force users to wait for 10 seconds or more than 5 seconds before the content falls into the category of bad ads. 74% of users said these ads are extremely annoying.

●   **Ads which Distract.** There are ads which have animations and they play loudly, automatically, these ads usually come before or after content loads.

●   **Ads which Clutter on the space .** Ads which cause a page load time to slow down users time is important and if it is wasted due to the ads not a good sign for publishers. Google calls these ads "high-density displays.

Kantar Millward Brown's global study on multichannel campaigns, titled AdReaction: some of the findings are:-

There is a major disconnect between the views of consumers and marketers especially assessing the effectiveness of integrated campaigns.

94% of marketers in APAC believed that ads fitted well across desktop, mobile and TV, but when surveyed only 56% of consumers said that ads worked cohesively across all digital formats. Opinions differ widely across the region" only 35% of Japanese and 36% of Korean consumers believed campaigns are well linked together, whereas 73% and 74% in Vietnam and the Philippines,were not so complaining about ads on digital platforms. (surveyed over 14,000 people in 45 countries, including 14 in APAC(asia-pacific region)

PageFair and Adobe conducted a survey on Americans and asked ,why they started using an ad blocker? The primary reason they gave was that they didn't want to misuse their personal information.

What is intrusiveness:-

It is a technique of targeting and communicating with customers using marketing materials without their consent such as junk or push.

Li et al. in 2002 measured intrusiveness of ads and developed 7 item subscale to measure intrusiveness:

They asked respondents to indicate how they felt about the ads. They rated ads were :"distracting," "disturbing," "forced," "interfering," "intrusive," "invasive," and "obtrusive"

Ads are considered intrusive when:-

●   Going out of ad guidelines to promote products

●   Invading time and space of the users

●   when unwelcomed,still using advertising tactics and disrupting user's experience.

●   Affecting consumer's privacy and annoys them.

Characteristics of highly intrusive ads:

The ads which are unwelcomed and upset the customers.Generalized and pushed out to all audiences which are available on internet or web.
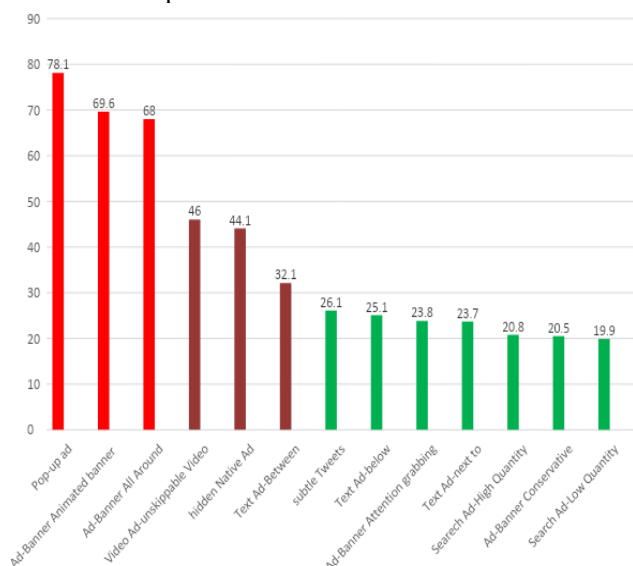
Placement of webpage and bad targeting.

lack of relevancy and size of ads.

Popup ads ,research shows 4 out of 5 people leave webpage due to these pop ups.

The Internet is becoming a less safe place due to these ads..

Level of Disruption

Source: Ad block Plus, 2016 study

Which type of ads annoys customers:-

Bad digital ads
● Intrusive pop-up ads
● Auto-playing video ads
● Text-only ads that ask you to click through to s0mething
● Ads that track browsing activity
● Ads that come up before the page wanted (i.e. interstitial ads)
● Banner ads
● Mobile ads/messages
● Ads that exploit personal data and predict behaviors
● Ads that seem to follow around
● Ads that are placed next to hateful, offensive or objectionable content
● Sponsored messages (e.g. sponsored tweets, Facebook posts, etc)
● Ads embedded in search results

Numerous types of ads are cluttered on the internet which are annoying and intrusive but in the category popups lead.These ads are so annoying and distracting that the inventor of pop ups Zuckerman apologized publicly for creating them. Pop ups are hated by most people but still marketers used them because it works ,though users don't like but these ads converts 7% of pop ups works.Many companies have used it to increase Email signups and it resulted .

Website Popups are used for many types of marketing activities like:

To increase social media following,To answer a frequently asked question by a customer,conduct a survey,Increase or grow an Email list etc.Pop-up ads were originated on Tripod.com in the late 1990.Opera was the first browser to incorporate the tools which block pop-up ads.From 2000 onwards all major web browsers let users block unwanted pop-ups.In 2004 Microsoft released window XP SP2, which added pop-up blocking to internet explorer.

Ad Blocking User Penetration in Select Countries Feb 2018

% of Internet users
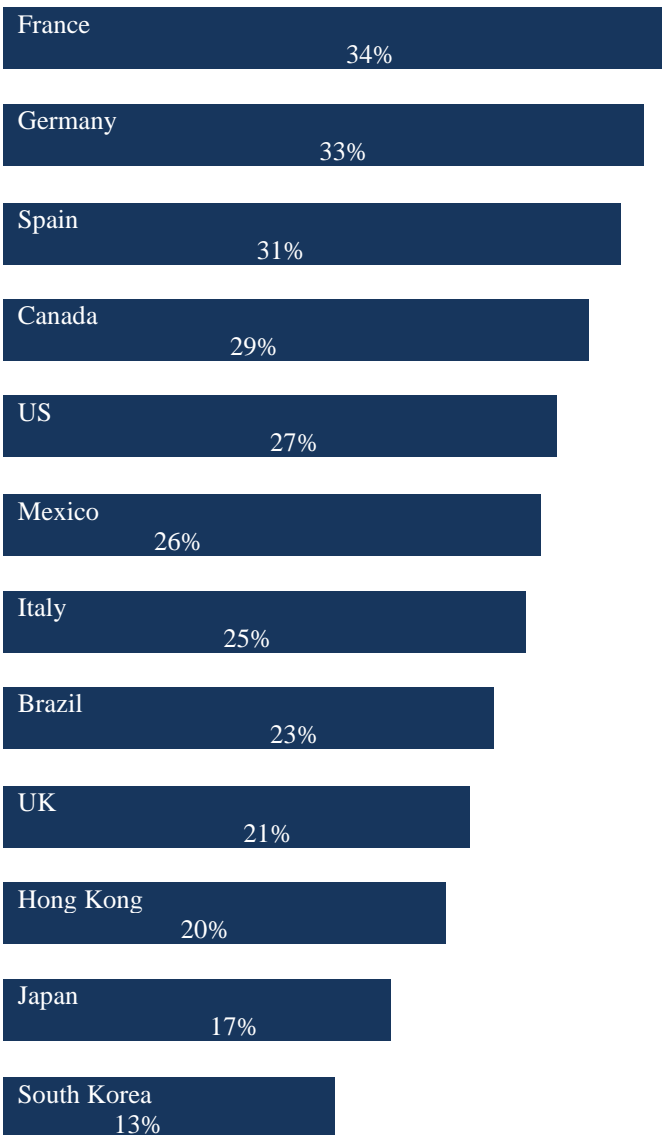
Note: ages 18+; via any device
Source: Reuters "Digital News Report 2018" June 2018

List of annoying desktop advertisements that will be blocked on Chrome:

● **Pop-up ads:** These ads have been the most annoying things on the internet to click, but the interesting thing is that it works .The research suggested that pop-ups are irritating but also attract users attention.

● **Prestitial ads with countdown:** These ads appear on the screen or mobile page just before the content has

loaded.and blocks users from continuing with the content.These ads are not beneficial to publishers but very advantageous for the advertisers.

● **Auto-plan video ads with sound:** It starts on a user's device , these ads are favourite to both publishers and advertisers because auto plan ads catch instant attention.Though this attention can be annoying or intrusive.

● **Large sticky ads:** These ads usually stick to the bottom of a page.The large sticky ads have a tendency to obstruct the page view.sometimes 30% of page view,which makes these ads very intrusive.These ads are usually of two types horizontal and vertical.Horizontal ads are present at the top or bottom of the webpage and spread from one end to the other end.Vertical sticky ads are portrait sized and they appear on the sides of the webpage.

Some annoying phrases which are frequently used in marketing:-

● Let's socialize this
● Net net
● It's a different animal
● Quality facetime
● Let's add value
● Reach out
● Going for work
● Millennial
● Fail forward
● Platform
● Touch base etc.

Some Online marketing tactics which is annoys customers:-

● Gating content
● Auto post from facebook and twitter
● Advertising pre-recordings as live streams
● Posting information without fact-checking
● Incessant ads
● Constant self procustion
● Automated messaging
● Hopping on all the trends
● Excessive use of hash tags
● Tagging everyone
● Gating people into likes, comments and shares.
● Hiding content
● Leaving visitors stuck at dead ends
● Ignoring big questions
● Useless features
● Gating content
● Advertising webinars
● Marketing calls without consent of customer
● Uncalled feed back requests
● Junk mails about discount and services
● Unnecessary updates
● Urging customer to buy a product which is already purchased by customer or not useful to him
● Popup
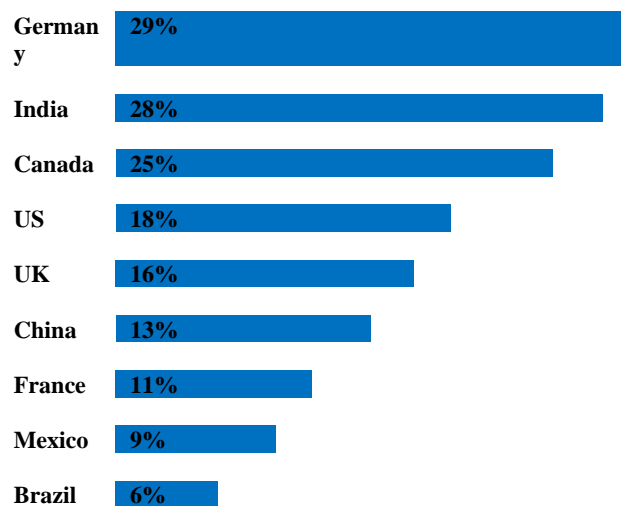● Side panels
● Unclosable windows
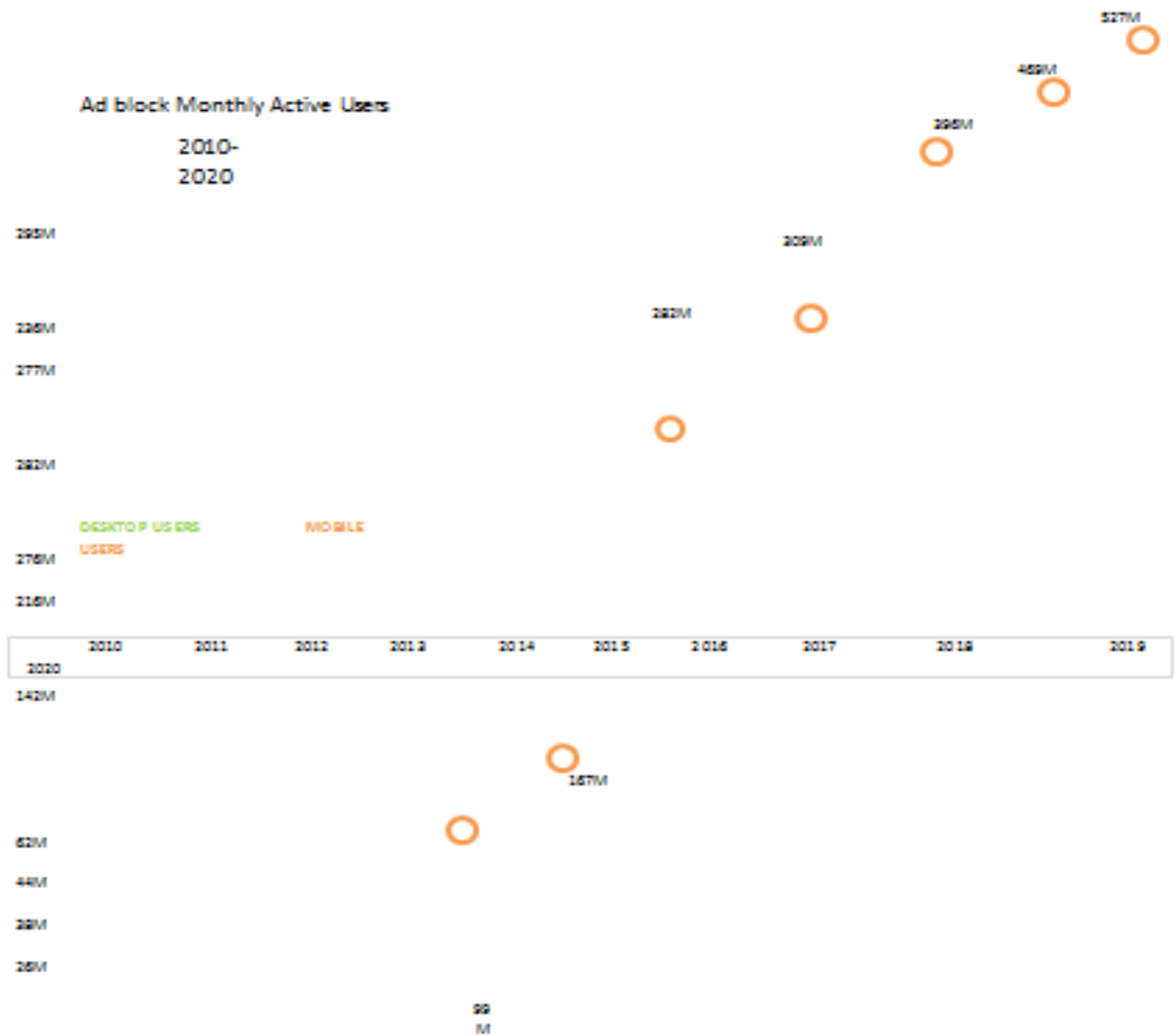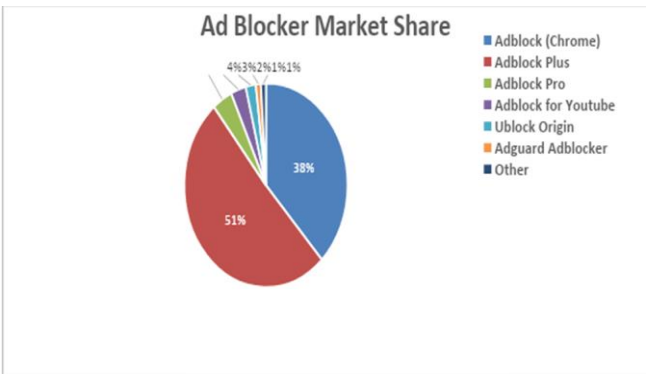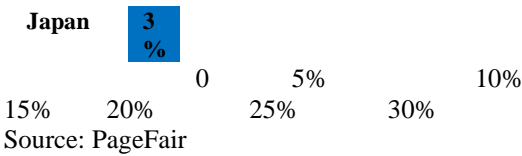● Flashing items

● Graphics

A report suggest:-

● A survey reported 73% people dislike popup
● Youtube video ads are disliked by 57% of users which play before content loads
● 82% people reported they have closed a webpage because of an auto playing video ad
● 70% of users said they dislike mobile ads.
● 64% of people said that they feel ads on the internet these days are annoying and intrusive.
● 54% users said ads disrupt them when they are doing their work.
● 39% of people said they are worried about security because these ads create a threat to security.
● 36% of people said that they want better page load time and these ads are the main reason for reduced bandwidth.
● 33% users complained that sometimes these ads have offensive content.
● 32% of people hate these ads due to privacy concerns.
● 22% mobile users complained about reduced data usage due to these ads.

(source:-Consumer survey 2017 by page fair and Hubspot) The Internet is flooded with ads,and so much that people started using ad blockers.It is in demand and so that Apple iOS 9 the latest iPhones and iPads will support ad blocking.According to Adobe and Page fair desktop ad blockers has risen from 21 million users in 2010 to 181 million users in january 2020. Though ad blockers have a negative impact on publishers and advertisers,because most of the content on the web is financed through ad revenue. a research conducted by page fair in 2015 found that publishers lost $ 22 billion cash due to the ad blockers and this figure is going to increase.Most people understand that advertising subsidizes the cost of content on web so this trend is declining slightly but not going to vanish due to the negative ads and huge number of ads.

The use of ad blockers around the world

Country	Percentage
Germany	29%
India	28%
Canada	25%
US	18%
UK	16%
China	13%
France	11%
Mexico	9%
Brazil	6%

Japan **3%**

0   5%   10%
15%   20%   25%   30%
Source: PageFair

Ad Blocker Market Share

- Adblock (Chrome)
- Adblock Plus
- Adblock Pro
- Adblock for Youtube
- Ublock Origin
- Adguard Adblocker
- Other

4%3%2%1%1%

38%

51%

Ad block Monthly Active Users 2010-2020

527M	
459M	
295M	
295M	209M
236M	282M
277M	
262M	
DESKTOP USERS	MOBILE USERS
276M	
216M	

2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019
2020
142M

187M

62M

44M

38M

26M

99M

Source: Adobe & Block through Ad block Report, 2020

As more and more users switch to hand-held devices, ad block usage on desktops is gradually declining. In spite of this, the monthly active users in 2019 was around 236 million (Figure). The number of people that block ads on mobile is twice that. This growth is primarily due to web browsers that block ads by default. One such web browser - called UC Browser has an estimated 405 million users worldwide. It is by far the most popular application in this category. Opera, with 123 million users as of December 2019 stands second. Another adblock browser "The Brave" is gaining popularity in the USA and Europe, with around 10 million active users in 2019, and a year on year growth of 89%.

Adblock usage on Computers over the years

	2016 (Q1)	2016 (Q3)	2018 (Q2)	2020 (Q2)
US	N/A	23%	21%	18%
UK	N/A	26%	25%	15%
Germany	N/A	N/A	26%	28%
Denmark	14%	12%	9%	6%
Sweden	18%	19%	19%	23%
Norway	15%	19%	21%	15%
Finland	15%	17%	19%	20%

Source: AudienceProject Insights 2020

A survey in United.Kingdom., Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland conducted by the martech company AudienceProject found that there is decline in use of ad blocking, fewer people are using ad blockers in 2020 than four years ago. To detect the number of respondents that were using ad blocking software they attached an ad to the online survey and used the analytics obtained from it. In most countries, the sessions blocked on a computer decreased in 2016 and 2018 versus 2020 — though there were slight increases recorded in Germany, Sweden and Finland.(Table)

The table above shows an overall decline in their usage, with the most significant drop observed in Denmark, which went from 14% in Q1 2016, to 6% in Q2 2020.

Ad blocking through the years

● In 2019 around 527M people were using apps that block ads, which was a 64% increase from December 2016.
● 419 Million smartphone users are using Ad blockers globally. which is 22% in the world,s smartphone users.(2016)
● In India 122 million mobile users are using Ad blocking.(2016)
● More than 763 million devices block Ads globally.(2017)
● The average Ad blocking rate in 2018 was 27%(2018)
● Google chrome also started blocking invasive ads and even launched software canary from Feb 2018
● Chrome canary is basically ad filtering software in both the desktop and mobile.
● Most Ad blockers are from Asia-Pacific region.40% browsers are using from this region.North America is second with 38%.(2019)
● In 2020 the use of Ad blockers is slightly declined for desktop but for mobile the ad blockers are increased.
● A report by page fair indicates that mobile ad blocking is emerging in China, India, Pakistan and Indonesia. 36 percent of smartphone users in Asia-Pacific are blocking ads.
● More than 763 Million Devices Globally Block Ads, Mobile Ad blocking is Up to 64%
(2020 PageFair Adblock Report)
Some famous surveys on Ad blocking:-

SURVEYS	YEAR	PLACE	SAMPLE SIZE	FINDINGS
A. Hub spot ad block plus research study	Q2 2016	US UK Germany and France	731Adults	1.64% people said Ads are annoying/ intrusive 2. 54% believed Ads disrupt what I'm doing. 3. 39% of people believed that unchecked Ads are security threads. 4. 36% people said that because too much Ads page load time is affected and it reduced bandwidth use. 5. 33% believed that many Ads are offensive/inappropriate ad content. 6. 32% of people were worried about privacy. 6. 22% said that too much ads reduced data usage (for mobile plans) 7. 18% people simply don't like contributing to a business making money off their brows. 8. 8% of people said ads are not good because of ideological reasons.
				1.73% of people said that they

B. Hub spot ad block plus research study	Q2 2016	US UK Germany and France	1055 online browsers	dislike online pop-ups. 2. 70% of people disliked ads on their mobile phone. 3. 57% of people don't like online video ads before content loads (like on Youtube). 4. 43% of people don't like online banner ads. 5. 40% of people don't like ads on Facebook. 6. 36% of people don't like TV ads. 7. 25% people don't like Text-only search ads (Google, Bing,etc) 8. 21% of people don't like Billboard ads.
C. Kantar millward brown survey on US internet users	November 2017	US	1001	1. 79% of people said ads are appearing in more places now than previously. 2. 74% people accepted that ads are now more visible everywhere online. 3. 71% of people believe that ads are more intrusive now. 4. 41% of people believe that ads tell better stories now. 5. 33% of people believe that ads are now more confusing.
D. Mumsnet and Saatchi & Saatchi London (www.eMarketer.com)	April 2017	UK	1111	1. 32% of people believed that they simply hate ads. 2. 26% people said that it depends on what the ad is for- sometimes it's fine, sometimes it's really intrusive. 3. 11% of people said that ads are targeting them again and again even if they purchased the item. 4. 7% people installed blockers because of all upper listed reasons. 5. 6% people said they want to see the ads which interest them. 6. 6% of people have never noticed this happen to them.
E. GlobalWebindex (www.eMarketer.com)	February 2018	Global	39,438 (ages 16-64)	1. 51% of people said that too many ads are annoying or irrelevant. 2. 50% of people said that there are too many ads on the internet. 3. 47% of people said that ads are too intrusive. 4. 42% of people believe that ads sometimes contain viruses or bgs. 5. 40% of people said that ads take up too much screen space. 6. 37% people said that to speed up page loading times they used ad blocks.

				7. 29% of people said they avoid all kinds of ads and on all types of screens. 8. 27% of people said that ads compromise their online privacy. 9. 25% of people said that they don't want their data to be used up.
F. Data privacy consumer survey (www.eMarketer.com)	October 2018	NS	1079 ages 18+	1. 41.7% of people said that ads are too aggressive on every device or browser. 2. 18.6% of people said that ads understand my interests and needs, but it is creepy. 3. 10.8% of people said that they appeal to interests and needs when they are no longer interested. 4. 7.6% of people said that ads don't understand their interests or needs at all. 5. 6.1% people said that ads don't comes from brands that ï know or trust" 6. 5.8% people said that they understand their interests and needs.
G. Eyeo googles	January 2018	Global	NS	1. 37.8% ad block users said that they spend $250 or more for blocking devices. 2. 11.2% spend $150 to $250 for ad block. 3. 15.6% spends $5--$100 spent for ad blocks. 4. 23.3% spend less than $50 for ad blocks.
H. e-Marketer survey (www.eMarketer.com)	August 2018	Global	39438	1. In 2016, 57.8% people were using adblock. 2. In 2017, 64.9% people were using adblock. 3. In 2018, 70.8% people were using adblock. 4. In 2019, 75.4% of people are using adblock. 5. Now it is predicted that by 2020 79.4% people will use adblock.

Ad Blockers - my View

Surabhi Kishore <surabhi.kishore@nexzenpro.com>   Mon, Mar 11, 3:13 PM

We are a Digital Training institute as well as a production house.
The team constantly keeps researching for fresh content. The never ending ads that virtually cover the content you are looking for is highly irritating. It slows down the surfing speed and results in negative performance.

I am personally not against all formats of advertisement on the web but definitely against the ads which under the garb of innovation actually divert your attention and disturb you. e.g. The pop-ups, and other so called innovations like interstitial or sliders or for that matter the expandos.

We do use an Ad blocker but this at moment blocks all formats of ads on the web. It shall be a happier situation should we have an Ad-Blocker which can be customized and allow selective blocking.

The news that Google may shortly come up with blocker which shall have high control on such disturbing

innovations allowing normal banner ads... this shall be whole heartedly welcome and a game changer

regards,

From: **Harminder Singh**<harminders@cybermedia.co.in>
Date: Wed, Mar 13, 2019 at 1:19 PM
Subject: Ad-Blocks --Major Pain point for publishers
To: Shubhra<shubhra.s259@gmail.com>

It's a pain and does not appear to be ethical to me.

We are a reputed media house and have always cared for user convenience and best of the content - first hand.

Being one of the most credible and respected IT media houses both Online and print, our readers log on to us for best of the information, research papers, white papers as well as future trends in IT.

Now to put forward all such content it's a huge cost and effort and to sustain this maintaining the quality of content we need money which primarily comes through advertisements.

With the coming of Ad-Blocking technology, we have taken a revenue hit and the gap continues to grow. The average monthly banner views are on a steep decline.

This will further shrink the revenue stream!

One thing that contradicts the claims of the AD-Block companies is that, "Are the normal Banner Advertisements so disturbing to the readers in turs sense?" I doubt this.

Yes, Pop-ups and other such innovations which tend to hide the content and disturb the reader, rest are all fine and we are sure no reader has any objection to it. Then Why Block All Ads??

Is it a new way to earn money? Are we waiting for the day when the Ad-Blocks start negotiating with web publishers to show their Advertisements or has it already come?

best regards,

Ad-Blocks --Major Pain point for publishers

	Wed, Mar 13, 1:19 PM
Sanjay Sinha <sanjay@confianzamedia.com>	

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	Mon, Mar 11, 3:55 PM
Shivangi Saxena <shivangisaxena736@gmail.com>	

Recent reports suggest that Ad Blockers are used by a very significant number of people in the internet community across the globe. I must say who once uses this application, their all devices whether desktops or mobile phones or tablets get a taste of it.

What ad blockers do is that it filters out the advertisements in digital platforms so that consumers can experience the content for which they originally visited the platform. It is annoying to be mandated to watch a pre-roll ad before every video I want to watch on YouTube and they do not stop at that, there are mid-roll ones also. This extension gives a seamless experience without disturbing ads and pop-ups. I know that it is the bread and butter of some sites but not all sites. Most popular examples are Wikipedia and Netflix. Some sites suffering from this loss of revenue are switching to other methods like asking a user to do an activity that is useful to them before reading their content. So I think ad blockers will increase all the more and the publishers will switch to other methods of generating revenue gradually.

While imparting Digital training at NSIC we used to face tremendous problems while coding etc. due to these unwanted pop-ups and other disturbing advertisements. On applying Ad-Blocker now the work environment is much more productive and congenial.

Conclusion:-

Ad Blockers serve their purpose for users but with this trend of blocking ads emerged another problem the major problem of revenue loss. The basic nature of the internet is that it is **free for everyone.** Around 600 million ad blockers are available in the market. It is difficult to find out which one is genuine, and going to serve the purpose. The whole issue became a cycle which has after effect, If ads are intrusive and annoying that is bad but ad blocking is also badly affecting the revenue and publishers. So a middle path has to be found where everything is in control and balanced, in the digital world advertisement hsa to stay with their purpose and sametime not disrupt the users experience,both should not destroy each other's presence.

Ad blocking cost publishers around $20 million in 2015(report by Pagefair and Adob**e**).

It is estimated that if ad blocking is continued with this pace that every next day a new software is launched then, by 2020 revenue losses from ad blocking will amount to over 10.5 billion dollars in the U.S. and 1.9 billion dollars in the UK. Businesses.(Research by informa Group)

So publishers and advertisers have to find ways to get consumers' attention without annoying them.The research on ad blocking is going on by different sources in all parts of the world. Ad blocking is not going to stop but the world

has to find a solution for the revenue loss of the publishers and advertisers because without internet revenue, its content is not going to work or can't be available to all.

Interactive Advertising Bureau said that "Ad blocking is a threat to the ad industry and is working to set industry standards to improve the user experience through the DEAL and LEAN initiatives to get publishers clean up their sites and improve the online ad experience."

DEAL stands for Detect ad blocking through an IAB-provided script. It is good that Ad blocking trends are forcing publishers to improve the quality of their ads which is good for both the user and advertisers. "Ad blocking is a symptom related to consumer issues and the solution has to be related to users and that is better consumer experience"(.Jason kint,CEOof Digital Content Next)

Adobe recent report suggests that 38% of US consumers said that Online advertising improved in the last two years and 68% said that even if they have not improved but at least not worsened.Adobe's other findings was that 78% of consumers like personalized ads. People also like rich media ads,video ads and native ads.

Greater solution to this problem is to make ads which are less intrusive or not intrusive.Tto make ads less interrupting or annoying, a LEAN programme was developed.

L.E.A.N Ads programme:-

● L :- Light
● E :- Encrypted
● A :- Ad choice supported
● N :- Non-invasive Ads

World has to find some solution to this overplayed and flooded ads on the internet. Ad blocks can do but they are short term solutions, Ad blockers are increasing users' experience but destroying the basic idea of the internet, which is "**free everything to everyone** " All aspects of marketing on the internet have to be addressed and that too without being harsh on any stakeholder .

some tips to avoid interrupting ads:-

● No use of auto start on audio ads.
● smaller adverts of ads such ads will not distract much
● Uses of similar color ads
● No pop ups ads
● position of ads should be so that they don't interfere, like in the top right hand corner
● Banner ads must be at the bottom of the web page.

Advertising must follow some basic rule that the "ads are made to grab the attention of the consumer", but then if ads have to be noticed and want to survive in the market then Ads must focus on what consumers want and when they want?This is the thumb rule of any advertising. It is important to design campaigns in a way which targets the right audience at the right time for the right purposes and at the same time without being annoying ,Ads must be appealing.

How to Make Ads Better:-

1. **Immediate.** When ads are made so they load quickly, and don't slow a page's load time, people don't complain about these ads and engage. Google's AMP framework is a great help in this,it helps publishers to create optimized content that loads instantly on all devices.

Google's AMP product manager Rudy Galfi said "The Median load time for AMP-coded content is 0.7 seconds."

2. **Immersive.** These ads use augmented reality and enhance the quality of ads or make it more real to users. They can connect with these ads easily. These ads uses latest technologies for making ads which blur the lines between reality and the virtual world.It's part of what Google calls native advertising,

3. **Relevant.** It's not easy to learn about what the people want to see? or who are the people consuming the content? but by tracking analytics or through simple research some trends and facts can be discovered. As Google says, " having that information about your viewers choice and likes can help content creators build ad experiences that are relevant to their users".

The standard practice for online advertisers,especially on social media should be relevant ads for consumers without bombardment.Permission marketing can help marketer and the best solution in present time where marketers have honest, open communication with their target market. Godin says "Permission marketing is the best tool on the internet that unlocks the power of the internet".

Advertising should be a creative art form which uses the internet as a medium . Subscription, email updates etc. are good examples of permission marketing. Seth.Godin said "**Permission Marketing-where you turn strangers into friends and friends into a customer".** Permission marketing is a low cost method but very successful and appealing without annoying the consumers.

Marketing must be creative and sensible where customers decide what they want, in the process the customer should not feel cheated or annoyed. The Internet should be used as a medium for marketing which is valuable and reachable where customer's satisfaction is given more importance.

As Mark Zuckerberg said -

"Our strategy is to increase the quality of the content and the quality of the targeting.This strategy is going to target the right people with right content."

we can say that users now understand the issue and are more mature about ads and blocking ads ,but they also don't want to spoil their experience. Now Ad blocking slightly changed to ad filtering.

To fight the economic cost caused by Ad blockingbig giants Google,facebook,Microsoft P&G etc.formed an alliance and named it coalition of Better ads. Internet users are more smart than previous time and demanding,They are more focused on the criteria of advertising,location of ads,size or duration of ads etc. so publishers and advertisers have to be more creative and careful about their content and ads.

US Ad Blocking User Penetration and Growth 2018-2021
% change and % of internet users
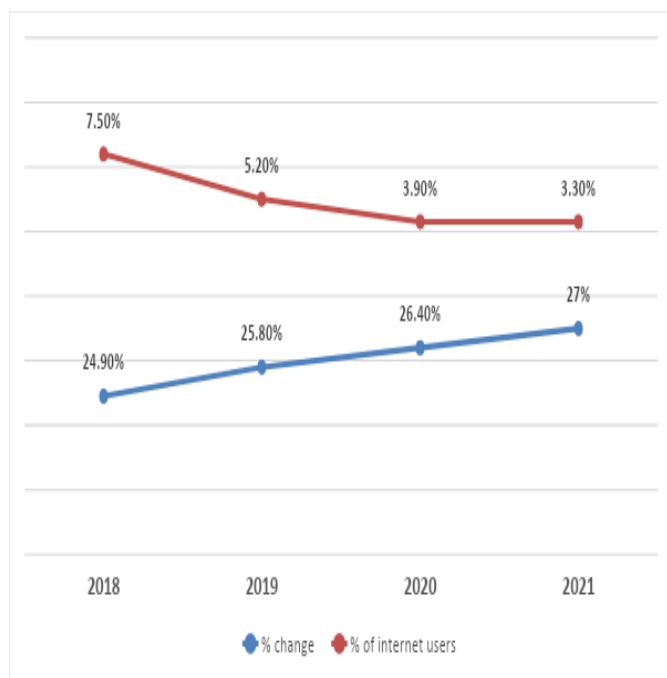
Source: eMarketer, July 2019

Although Ad blocking trends are now low compared to year 2016,2017 ,2018   because of the revenue loss by the publishers etc. Other big companies like Facebook etc. are against it and Google also did not block ads totally but filtered the ad, But we can't deny that internet space is flooded with ads and causing problems for users.

Nicole Perrin, principal analyst at eMarketer said" Ad blocking may not be increasing double digit rates anymore, but it is also not going away"

A report says nine out of 10 sites are free, and that is possible because the internet advertisement is working. Free Internet which is accessed by all is a value or fact that makes the internet popular globally, so if that is finished the soul of the Internet is finished. If revenue will not flow back to publishers then these all free websites or idea of free web for all is not going to sustain and also the quality, diversity and content of the internet will gradually die. As Bob Garfield said that "Ad blockers are 21st century DDT" like pesticides and blockers will enhance the user experience but the side effect of this is doing more harm.

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