The New Advertising Trend: QR Code

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Abstract: This paper presents how the uses of QR (commonly known as Quick Response) codes have led to new advertising trends in the contemporary world, ranging from online payments to advertising. It discusses how the QR codes have surpassed the use of UPC (Universal Product Code) barcodes among the emerging smart phone and browsing populace. It contains how the use of QR Code in the field of marketing has resulted in increased number of marketers with innovative and creative ideas on advertising and promotion strategies. Organizations have utilized this opportunity of innovation and unique ways, not only in using QR codes but also in boosting their brand awareness.

Keywords: QR Codes, Advertising, Barcode, UPC Code

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INTRODUCTION

The technological revolution in the modern day has led to increased competition in innovation and growth of new advertising methods. The embracement of this technology led to the emergence of the QR (Quick Response) Codes in businesses. QR Codes are known as 2-dimensional barcodes. A barcode is a machine-readable and optical label that holds all the information of items attached to it. Pasqua & Elkin (2012) asserts that QR Codes are generally known as physical hyper-links that offer the capability to users to access, through their smart phones that are able to scan the QR Codes [1]. Sarika & Imran (2016) maintains that the use of QR code is a trademark in matrix barcode since it contains an array of white and black squares, normally used to restore and retrieve URLs (Uniform Resource Identifier) or any other relevant information [2]. Sahu (2013) firmly holds that imaging devices such as scanners and cameras process the image using Reed-Solomon, which is an error corrector until the image is properly interpreted [3]. The image QR codes can then be linked to websites, emails, mobile applications and text messages. As a result, these links have improved new advertising trends in the field of marketing.

The QR system is greatly revolving in marketing and in new advertising trends of products and services, due to its fast readability compared to the standard UPC barcodes. According to Ambadiyil, *et.al*,(2015), a QR Code uses four standardized encoding modes, namely, alphanumeric, binary or byte, kanji and numeric to efficiently store and retrieve data [4]. As addressed by [5] nearly 40% of smart phone users use phones while shopping to compare price competition various businesses.

Examples of New Advertising Trends using QR Codes

First, the Mobile Marketing Association (2013)notes that creative Ads for the mobile application have increased new trends of advertising using QR Codes [6,7]. Most of the companies use mobile ads such as Angry Birds and Instagram that uses QR Codes to direct the user to the application download manager. This trend has increased the advertising strategies through self-explanatory promotions and creativity. Second, mix tapes and greeting cards creativity are created by unofficial ads. If a mobile user has a premium Spotify application on the phone, the application scans the QR code and after the processing of the image, a playlist start. For example, music for cooks or geeks, this leads to new advertising method.

Third, marketers attach wrapped holiday papers and gift messages using QR Codes. In turn, these wrappers contain the gift giver recording, where a personalized message is played when a recipient scans the QR code. Fourth, according to Waters (2012), QR codes shares an individual's life with a single graphic [8]. QR codes are used funeral occasions to notify families the people who attended the funeral since these codes are placed on the tombstones. Lastly, Museums have improved the appearance and dimensions of their paintings to reveal the hidden stories of insanity, deception, and war. However, each painting contains QR codes whereby when a visitor scans the code for the painting, they are able to reach the painters themselves directly.

CONCLUSION

It is advisable that before smart phone users hop on this new advertising trend, they should be conscious of the possible impacts of the QR codes. Mobile spammers have taken the advantage of the significant uses of QR codes by using the QR codes to flood mobile phones with gunk. Conversely, Rogers, (2013) point out that scammers and hackers use the QR codes to cover malware downloads by the mobile users [9]. Thus, the user is forced to spend money when sending premium messages using their smart phones, because QR code scanners accept shortened URLs [10]. It is vital for smart phone users to be aware of such malicious downloads that are accompanied by QR codes and also be aware of what they download with their mobile phones.

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