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**THE ATTITUDES OF INTERNET USERS LIVING IN RUSSIA
TOWARDS VIDEO ADVERTISING IN SOCIAL NETWORKS**

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I hereby declare that I have compiled the thesis/paper independently and all works, important standpoints and data by other authors have been properly referenced and the same paper has not been previously presented for grading. The document length is 10469 words from the introduction to the end of conclusion.

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ABSTRACT

The research aims to provide relevant information about thoughts and estimations of Internet users living in Russia towards video advertisements in popular social media networks (YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, VKontakte). The research aims to investigate Internet users' attitudes who live in Russia towards video advertising in social networks. Research questions for the thesis are: 1) How do the Internet users living in Russia perceive video advertisements in social networks? 2) What criteria of video advertisements create a positive attitude of the Internet users living in Russia towards the video ads? 3) What criteria of video advertisements create a negative attitude of the Internet users living in Russia towards the video ads? The author chose to use a qualitative approach to gather data from the respondents. The method used to collect data is a semi-structured interview. The study's main findings showed that Russian Internet users are irritated by the number of video ads in the used social media and tend not to notice them if they have a native form. The aspects of the video advertisement that Russian Internet users favour are qualified graphics, harmonic music, relevance and innovativeness of the idea, and those aspects they dislike are irrelevance, intrusiveness and repetitiveness.

Keywords: Consumer attitude, Social networks, Social media advertising

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the Internet is a significant part of our lives. It is hard to suppose that someone can live without using its opportunities because it makes people's lives much more straightforward. Many processes go through the Internet, starting from the small and usual ones that people do every day and ending by more critical for work, for example. Due to the coronavirus, making the processes online has become even more common than before (Chaffey 2021). It had also affected people who live in Russia because a practice in which people started to spend more time on the Internet while sitting at home also became common there.

57.6% of the world's population uses social media (Chaffey 2021), which means that every second person has contact with social media. According to Kemp (2021), people spend an average of 6 hours 55 minutes on the Internet from all the devices and 2 hours 24 minutes on social media. Social media is considered a dominating online activity – 95.7% of Internet users use social media each month (*Ibid.*), which is an excellent opportunity for a company that intends to promote its product online. For example, a potential audience that a company can reach when using advertisements on Instagram is 1.39 billion Instagram users (*Ibid.*), which is quite large. Through online advertising, consumers can quickly obtain information about the product they want (Sari *et al.* 2020). A company can suggest receiving an immediate response because of a large auditory (Goyal 2013).

Consequently, sellers need to be flexible and innovative to overcome the indifference and rejection of potential online buyers. As our world is becoming more informative, sellers are trying to find ways to catch users' attention and make them see the ad from the beginning to the very end. The problem is that users tend to abandon video ads while watching – even if the user started to watch an ad, the possibility of skipping is still high because of rejection. There is no universal approach to creating a good advertisement. While Herhold (2019) suggests keeping an eye on timing and making the first seconds engaging, Texeira (2015) claims that the main point is creating an ad appropriate to the content.

A Russian Internet user can meet video advertising mostly everywhere – on YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok and VKontakte, the most popular social media networks among Russians. As well as everywhere in the world, people in Russia are active Internet users who are also involved in all types of advertisements. But some advertisements are considered irritating, not exciting and can even make people angry, whereas other advertisements are considered funny, relaxing and exciting.

The research problem of the chosen topic is the lack of knowledge concerning the attitudes of Russian Internet users towards video advertisement in social media. Different studies in different countries investigated attitudes to specific social networks, but mostly nothing was mentioned about Russian users. For example, Mahatmavidya & Yasa (2020), in study on Instagram, found that Indonesian millennials perceive credible ads better than others, while Murillo *et al.* (2016), in their Twitter case, proves that Mexican millennials better perceive ads that are informative enough. Moreover, Puwandi *et al.* (2020) found that Indonesian YouTube users' attitude is positive when the advertisement is entertaining.

The research aims to provide relevant information about thoughts and estimations of Internet users living in Russia towards video advertisements in popular social media networks (YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, VKontakte). The research aims to investigate Internet users' attitudes who live in Russia towards video advertising in social networks.

Research questions for the thesis are:

- 1) How do the Internet users living in Russia perceive video advertisements in social networks?
- 2) What criteria of video advertisements create a positive attitude of the Internet users living in Russia towards the video ads?
- 3) What criteria of video advertisements create a negative attitude of the Internet users living in Russia towards the video ads?

The research aims to investigate Internet users' attitudes who live in Russia towards video advertising in social networks. The social networks chosen for this research are VKontakte, YouTube, Instagram. The study is divided into three main parts. The first part of the thesis focuses on the previous research and theories, and the theoretical background is linked to the research problem. It has three parts: social media advertising, consumer attitude and overview of

perspectives on different social media platforms, which consider the previous studies concerning the problem of attitude towards chosen networks. The second part of the thesis focuses on the methodology and describes the research process. It also explains why selecting the qualitative research method and a separate semi-structured interview. The third part of the thesis covers the empirical analysis, and its results are shown and discussed. The paper ends with the main findings, suggestions for business companies and limitations.

The author would like to thank the interviewees who helped with the research for being open for the discussion and agreed to spend their time for the interview. The author also would like to express her gratitude to the supervisor who gave the pieces of advice while writing the thesis and to her dear friend who brings excellent emotional and knowledge support.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. Social media advertising

Information is everywhere: in social media, on billboards, in newspapers and magazines. According to Mahatmavidya and Yasa (2020), it is hard for producers to be appealing to consumers on the Internet because they are exposed to hundreds of information, particularly in social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. According to Dollarhide (2020), “social media is a computer-based technology that facilitates the sharing of ideas, thoughts, and information through the building of virtual networks and communities”. We can consider “computer-based technology” as stationary computers, laptops, tablets and mobile phones because these technologies are most common for use for social media. Boyd and Ellison (2007) describe social media as “web-based services that allow individuals to 1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, 2) articulate a list of those users with whom they share a connection, and 3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system”. The authors claim that social media are different based on their characteristics because some of them allow video-sharing (such as YouTube or Instagram), blogging, or messaging. Rodriguez (2017) continues this thought by adding that people now use gadgets to entertain themselves and as a way for sellers to cover the desired audiences.

It is not a secret that nowadays, one of the most popular ways to promote a product is to launch a video ad on all existing social media platforms. But this is also not a panacea because people will always have a reason not to watch it or complete it until the end. People usually tend not to pay attention to the things they are not interested in and use all the existing methods to avoid it: for example, on the Internet, it can be DVRs, ad-blocking programs and mobile devices which allow them to switch attention to the desired content (Teixeira 2015). Whereas users of online platforms are not watching irritating ads, producers and advertisers are losing their money.

Geyser (2021b) define social media advertising as “the process of creating and running ads to reach your target audience via social media platforms, messaging apps, outside apps and websites, and news feeds”. Geyser (2021b) also adds that social media advertising helps companies increase brand awareness and consequently get more sales. It is a significant tool for a promotion, especially to those companies which relate to a mass market or want to make people aware of their new product or a new product line. When creating an account in social media, companies often link their ad and account to receive more followers, raising activity statistics on their page. Belch and Belch (2001) define the advertisement as “any paid form of non-personal communication about an organization, product, service, or idea by an identified sponsor”. There are many forms in which a product can be advertised, but nowadays, Internet advertisement takes the most important part in advertising.

Geyser (2021a) describes seven social media platforms considered the best ones for e-commerce and the most popular types of advertisement, which are common for them. 1) Facebook’s ads formats can be represented by images, videos, slideshows, carousels and instant experiences. They can be placed in Messenger ads, Facebook live ads, or Facebook feed ads. 2) Instagram’s ads formats and Facebook’s are represented by images, videos, and carousels and can be placed in Stories Ads or Feed Ads. 3) LinkedIn provides many ads options such as text ads, sponsored ads, dynamic and message ads, etc. They can appear in users’ feeds as well as in other places. 4) Twitter allows a company to promote their product or service by using Promoted Tweets, Promoted Trends and Promoted Accounts. 5) Pinterest is a visual platform that can also be used as a platform for promotion. It is possible to promote Pins and, for example, add call-to-action with a link for a website or a landing page. 6) Snapchat is a platform that can help reach millennial or young demographics audience. It is possible to promote a product by posting them into Snapchat Feed Ads or Snapchat Discover Ads and creating Sponsored Lenses.

7) YouTube can use video ads In-Stream (skippable and cannot be skipped). Also, there are some more specific types of advertising: TrueView for action, TrueView for shopping, TrueView for reach and TrueView Ad Sequences. During the video, Bumper Ads can be shown, and banners Masthead are shown on the main webpage. Video Discovery demonstrate the full video on the main YouTube page, on the recommendations page and the main mobile page of the app. Moreover, YouTube also can promote a product without a video by using a text advertisement on the search page or outing an overlay on the bottom side of a video after beginning. Finally, in 2020

YouTube started to test an audio format of an ad. It is possible to put an ad during a podcast or music video. (*Рекламные форматы в YouTube ... 2020*).

1.2. Consumer attitude

Ajzen (2005) defines attitudes as “a disposition to respond favourably or unfavourably to an object, person, institution or event”. Peter and Olson (2010) define attitude as “a person’s overall evaluation of a concept”, whereas evaluations are “affective responses, usually at relatively low levels of intensity and arousal”, which “can be created by both affective and cognitive systems”. Cognitive responses are “responses that reflect perceptions of, and thought about, the attitude object” (Ajzen 2005), and such responses are indirect and hard to assess. The affective system produces an instant direct reaction, for example, emotion, feelings, mood, as well as attitudes and evaluations, to certain stimuli. These responses can be favourable or unfavourable while generated by processing of gained information and then become associated with a brand, product, or service. Peter and Olson (2010) claim that there are two broadest concepts of consumer attitudes: objects and behaviours. Physical and social objects can be represented in various forms: products, brands, models, stores, even salesperson and marketing strategy etc. A consumer also can have an attitude towards intangible objects, for example, ideas or concepts, and towards their behaviour or actions, including future behaviours or past actions (*Ibid.*). The combination of the emotional and cognitive components forms a conative component, such as behavioural inclinations, intentions, commitments, which indicates “how a person does or would act with respect to the attitude object” (Ajzen 2005). Intentions can include different expectations, desires, plans – everything a person is intended to do. However, where a specific situation with concrete modifications arises, the consumer’s intentions are implemented in the consumer’s behaviour (Volodina 2011). According to Walley *et al.* (2009), “Attitudes may be positive, negative, or neutral (valence); may vary in intensity (extremity); can be more or less resistant to change, and maybe believed with differing levels of confidence or conviction”.

Having a positive attitude towards an advertised product or service can make a consumer think about buying a product when the time comes or buy it finally and even use word-of-mouth to tell a friend or relative how good this product is. A negative attitude makes the opposite – creates a negative expectation towards the product, and as a result, a consumer is never going to buy it or advertise it to others. Therefore, creating a good impression about the product through the

advertisement is extremely important. Depending on consumers' attitudes to the advertising, users can behave differently towards it. Ducoffe (1996) developed a model of consumers' attitudes towards web advertisements which consists of three parts: entertainment, informativeness, and irritation. Later Puwandi *et al.* (2020) based on Ducoffe's model with adding credibility (Brackett, Carr 2001) as a variable and proved that "when an advertisement is informative, entertaining, trustworthy and not irritating, it would generate a positive attitude of the viewers".

On the other side, some scientific research showed that one of the most appealing characteristics of an ad is its entertaining function. According to Ducoffe (1996), an entertaining component of an advertisement triggers a positive feeling of a consumer towards it. Texeira (2015) suggests that to catch users' attention, entertainment elements in the ad should be presented as a first step and only then relevant information should be provided. Otherwise, the message can suffer because users being more concentrated on emotional context would not register its sense at all. Therefore, there will be no desirable result. According to Hoffman and Novak (2012), advertising needs to be entertaining because it is considered that increase the effectiveness of a delivered message. In contrast, Tomaszewska and Jankowski (2017) proved that elements that used to be appealing do not necessarily make a good impression and can negatively affect users.

According to Ducoffe (1996), informativeness is an advertisement's ability to provide potential customer information about alternative product options. This means one of the aspects of a successful advertisement is being informative to make a user interested enough to follow the video until the end. Murillo *et al.* (2016) claim that advertisements which provide useful, relevant and timely information are more likely to become valuable to users.

Multiple pieces of research demonstrated that online users tend to feel irritated because of several reasons. Ducoffe (1996) states that users feel annoyed when the shown ad is seemed to be irritating, manipulating, or can hurt someone feelings. One of the reasons why users consider an ad as annoying is native advertising which makes the ad similar to the context and style of the website it occurs (Youn, Kim 2019). Moreover, some users can feel that an ad is an obstacle to their aim or is not relevant at all (Li, Huang 2016), especially when the amount of advertising is unreasonable (Kim, Sundar 2010).

Most services provide people with the ability to skip the advertisement bothering them. For example, YouTube decided to reduce the degree of irritation of users by providing the "skip video

button” (Belanche *et al.* 2017). On the other hand, it was investigated that users try to avoid advertisement whenever it is possible (Raditya *et al.* 2020) because they are mostly intended to skip it despite its boring or entertaining components. This drives us to the conclusion that there is no universal rule of how to be appealing to a consumer because it is difficult for an advertisement to make consumers watch it until the very end.

1.3. Overview of attitudes towards advertisement on social media platforms

According to Ria News (2021), the most popular social networks in Russia are VKontakte (48% of respondents use it), Instagram (39%), YouTube (34%) and TikTok (17%). Twitter was not mentioned in line with the aforementioned social networks but is also perceived as the popular Russia, especially among millennials.

VKontakte is the first popular social network in Russia. According to Ershov (2017), VKontakte is in the first place by the amount of advertising. Moiseenko (2016) conducted research concerning the problems of the attitude of Russian users towards advertisement in VKontakte and Odnoklassniki, which is also a Russian social network. It was found that Russian users are mostly indifferent to the target and guerrilla advertising and also to advertising communities and advertising applications. Most users perceive viral advertising more negatively. Moreover, it was found that ads did not help to buy a specific product. Finally, it was mentioned that users prefer to avoid or ignore advertisements in VKontakte and Odnoklassniki as well and have an overall negative impression about it because of the irritation (*Ibid.*)

Instagram is the second popular social network in Russia. According to Mahatmavidya and Yasa (2020), it is better to make Stories that can entertain a potential Indonesian buyer because the entertaining component in a video increases the advertising value in the minds of buyers. Moreover, it was found that informativeness also has a strong impact on people's perception of ads in the Stories, which means that users favour ads that are informative, relevant and timely for them.

YouTube is the third popular social network in Russia. According to Krishnan and Sitaraman (2013), there are three sets of key factors that affect the completion of the video: 1) ad-related factors, such as ad position and its length, 2) video-related factors, such as video content and video

length, and 3) viewer-related factors, such as geographical location, how a viewer connects to the Internet, and the time-of-day and day-a-week. It was found that an ad is more likely to be completed when placed in a mid-roll, as well as a 15-second ad is the length that is more likely to be completed among all others (*Ibid.*). It was proved that ads placed in long-term videos are more likely to complete compared with short videos such as news and clips (*Ibid.*). Moreover, it was also investigated that one-third of users tend to abandon an ad after one-quarter of its length and two-third of users abandon an ad after one half of its length (Bytyci 2014). In contrast, it was found that ads that are becoming too short also makes people annoyed (Goodrich *et al.* 2015). Puwandi *et al.* (2020) proved that irritation affects the attitude towards YouTube advertisements of approximately 28% of viewers.

TikTok is the fourth popular social network in Russia. 72% of TikTok users' consider ads on TikTok as inspiring, enjoyable and optimistic, which is the highest share compared to other social networks. (*Kantar finds ... 2021*). It means that "brands have started to create ads specifically for a TikTok audience". 67% of the audience agreed that video ads on TikTok can capture their attention, while 72% of users prefer TikTok's TopView to other ads on other platforms, and "TopView also ranked first across all engagement-related attributes tested (including lowest skip preference, lowest annoyance level, and highest attention level), as well as call-to-action related attributes (such as credibility, and willingness to click or share)". Moreover, TikTok platform perception also positively affects users: ads on TikTok seemed to be more favourable – the research showed that ads on TikTok are perceived on 10% better than ads on other platforms.

Twitter is also popular in Russia. According to Murillo *et al.* (2016), the Ducoffe model has the following relationships with Twitter advertisements: 1) informativeness has the strongest effect on the advertising value of Twitter ads, 2) entertainment has the second strongest effect on advertising value and also have a direct effect on an attitude towards Twitter advertisement, 3) credibility has the third strongest effect on advertising value, while 4) irritation have no significant effect at all. This can be explained by Twitter's policy which protects the users' experience and results in place not so many advertising posts in their newsfeed (Copeland 2012). Because of such policy, Twitter's users are not so influenced by the advertisement and therefore tend to perceive it more calmly than, for example, YouTube users.

2. METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides information about the methodological part and how the study was conducted. The author describes the method chosen for the research, the research design, collecting data and how it was analyzed later.

The research aims to investigate Internet users' attitudes who live in Russia towards video advertising in social networks. The author chose to use a qualitative approach to gather data from the respondents. The method used to collect data is a semi-structured interview. There are several reasons for selecting the interview as a method. One of them is that the interview allows deepening into the results and the interviewing process because it makes it possible to analyze thoughts, feelings, experiences and behaviour of a respondent or a group. Moreover, it allows to develop and refine concepts during researching and collecting data (Flick 2018) to make the research flexible.

The author asked people living in Russia who actively use chosen popular social networks (YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, VKontakte) to participate in the interview. The author chose nine people living in Russia to conduct an online discussion (voice chat Discord was selected because it is free and all the participants had this program). This number was chosen to diversify the answers received from interviewees with different backgrounds. Firstly, the author decided to test the interview guide. After that, the plan was corrected under the suggestions received: to add a description of the interview (its aims, time, focus group description), background information for the interviewee, and to reorganize the questions in a bit logical order. All the participants were informed about the interview topic to receive some time to think and prepare themselves. They were also told the rules and the procedure of the interview. All the participants received the Interview Guide before the scheduled time of their interview and filled in the "Background Information about the interviewee" part. Six out of nine interviewees spoke only Russian, so the author translated their interviews into English. The service Snackable AI was used to transcribe the recording for the interviews, which were initially conducted in English.

The interview process was recorded using an inbuilt recording program – Xbox Game Bar, which allows recording all that happens on the screens, including the author's and interviewees' voices. Before the interview, the author asked the participant whether they wanted to conduct face-to-face interviews using cameras. Three interviewees agreed to use cameras, and all the other five declined the invitation. The first six interviews were conducted during 17-20.11 and the other three on 10-12.12. They were planned and had an approximate length of 30 minutes. The interviewees were warned that the interview would be recorded and then transcribed. The interview was designed in the following way: a general discussion of advertising in social networks and how often it appears in social networks, discussion of video advertising in the particular social networks (VKontakte, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok) one by one, and finally a discussion of products that were bought after watching the video advertisement. The interview plan was used as a frame for the interview, not a complete structure. The questions that arose during the discussion were also considered names of the interviewees will not be mentioned. They go as follows:

Interviewee 1: 20 years old, female, student (specialization: fencing coach). Uses VKontakte, YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter to communicate with friends, search for interesting images, videos, music, and helpful information, and entertain themselves.

Interviewee 2: 20 years old, female, a full-time employee (business development associate). Uses VKontakte, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok almost every day (except for YouTube, it is used once a week) to learn about public opinions and News, entertainment, opportunity to follow their friends, relatives and clients and know what's going on in their lives.

Interviewee 3: 23 years old, female, student (specialization: Urban Design). Uses VKontakte, Twitter (every day), YouTube, Instagram (several times a week). The reason to use VK – sharing content, chatting; YouTube – following recent News, getting some rest for the brain; Twitter – following recent News, scrolling newsfeed, sharing content; Instagram – scrolling newsfeed, sharing content.

Interviewee 4: 18 years old, female, student (specialization: psychology). Uses VKontakte, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok every day to chat with friends.

Interviewee 5: 21 years old, female, student (specialization: linguistics). Uses VKontakte (to communicate with friends), YouTube and TikTok (to find entertaining and educational content).

Interviewee 6: 18 years old, female, student (specialization: biochemistry). Uses VKontakte (communication with friends and family, entertainment and relaxing), YouTube (entertainment and education), Twitter (entertainment and news' gaining).

Interviewee 7: 24 years old, male, student, VKontakte (to chat with friends, groupmates and lecturers, to relax by watching memes and doing nothing), YouTube (to find guides and information for studying, to relax), Instagram (to follow famous people and friend's lives), Twitter (to find motivation, inspiration and new ideas for learning), TikTok (to relax by watching stupid videos and lifehacks).

Interviewee 8: 17 years old, male, the pupil (math and physics). Use VKontakte (to relax and chat with friends), YouTube (educational and entertainment purposes), Instagram (to follow gaming companies' webpages and News).

Interviewee 9: 53 years old, a full-time employee, financier. Uses YouTube (educational content, overview and analytics of News) and Instagram (educational content).

To analyze the interviews, the author decided to use the inductive method and divide the answers received during the interviews into six parts:

1. The general attitude towards advertisement in social networks;
2. The attitude towards video advertisements in VKontakte;
3. The attitude towards video advertisements in YouTube;
4. The attitude towards video advertisements in Instagram;
5. The attitude towards video advertisements in Twitter;
6. The attitude towards video advertisements in TikTok;

The analysis of these parts supports the research questions 1-3 and makes it possible to answer them.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. The general attitude towards advertisement in social networks

It is hard for companies to be appealing to consumers on the Internet because they are exposed to hundreds of pieces of information, particularly in social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube (Mahatmavidya, Yasa 2020). It is also true for video advertising in social networks because people usually tend not to pay attention. Despite this, they understand that advertising is essential for a social network, not only for a company as posting ads, as it allows the platform to be free for everyone. “Sometimes it [video advertising] seems to be too intrusive or unnecessary, but I understand that advertising is one of the ways of existence for social networks, and it is necessary”, said interviewee 1. Interviewee 3 added that “People have to gain money somehow”, but they skip video advertising whenever possible and even cannot notice it sometimes. Interviewees 4 also said that advertising makes it possible to use social media for free, which is a regular practice. “Advertising is one of the options for earning and living, but the format is very annoying”, noted interviewee 8.

People do not want to see the advertised product and use all the existing methods, such as multiple ad-blocks, instant video skipping, and switching between browser tabs. Cialdini (2007) called this behaviour a “shortcut”, an automatic reaction that people respond to the situation. Mostly the interviewees have ad-blocking programs on their laptops or personal computers. In contrast, interviewee 4 have an ad-blocking program to block music advertisement, and interviewees 2 and 5 stated that they do not have a solid need to install it. None of the interviewees has ad-blocking programs on their smartphones and agreed that they could meet a lot of video advertising, especially when using their smartphones.

Most interviewees agreed that sometimes video advertising could catch their attention. Interviewees 1 and 8 stated that they are interested in mobile and computer games to watch such

ads until the end. Interviewee 4 claimed that the advertising has to be about health or new technologies – these topics are interesting. “Sometimes you can come across great advertisements, trailers or teasers of any coming-out films. The scale and the picture are breathtaking there. Also, come across funny promotional videos, they're just fun to laugh at”, said interviewee 6, and interviewees 5 and 8 also agreed that they could watch the ad, which is a teaser or trailer for an upcoming movie itself. The advertising needs to be interesting to a user to be watched until the end wholly or at least for some second more than usual.

Russian users appeal to excellent visual and musical components. For example, "If the advertisement is well done, bright enough and not repulsive if there are no rapidly changing pictures or obvious false representations, there is a higher chance that I will continue to watch it", said interviewee 1. “So, if an advertisement looks good, it has good colours, good scenery, nice actors or something like that, the sounds are not so loud or quiet, and it contains some features, I will call it interesting and appealing”, claimed interviewee 2. Interviewees 5, 7 and 9 said that aesthetics is important and they “love the beautiful picture” and also added that “the simpler the ad looks, the better”. As coming for a music component, interviewees 1, 3 and 4 claimed that good music influences their perception. Interviewees 1, 3, 4, 5 said that voice actor's voice is essential for them, and they often pay attention to this aspect. Interviewee 8 highlighted that “I need the ad to have meant so that it can make you think about something. The same social advertisement – I rarely miss it because really important thoughts are conveyed there”. Interviewee 6 claimed that “If someone popular is involved in the advertisement, an actor or musician, that interests me. It's nice to watch the person you know and who appeals to you”. Interviewee 7 said they like a beautiful woman in the video ad. In contrast, interviewee 9 noted that they do not like when a celebrity appears in the video as “the first thought in my head is that the person has run out of money because he went out of desperation to advertise toilet paper”. Also, interviewees 2, 3, 6 and 9 said that advertisement could appeal to them if it contains an excellent joke to hear.

As coming for negative aspects of advertisements which Russian users dislike or become irritated because of them, the main one is the advertising they can meet while browsing the Internet is an irrelevance. “I expect the advertisement to be relevant. Google considers me as a woman, it shows me the advertisements of different bags, accessories and stuff. But recently but it started showing me the advertisements for “Old Spice” and some cars. I am not a man, and I don't drive a car. And so I watched this and went like, “All right, good. Where's Where's the skip button?”, said interviewee 2. Interviewee 6 stated that “Most often, a topic is raised is not significant to me, so I

prefer not to waste my time on advertising”. To appeal to a Russian user, the advertising needs to be at least relevant to have an increased chance of being watched completely. The next thing mentioned by interviewees 3, 5, 8 and 9 is the repetitiveness of advertising and its monotony. “The thing that annoys me in the video advertisement is the lack of variety, they are all repetitive. There is nothing new in the field and it not catching my attention”, said interviewee 3 and interviewees 5 and 7 agreed that “primitiveness of advertising in annoying”. They both agreed that innovative and unusual advertisements have an increased chance to catch their attention. Moreover, interviewee 9 noted that the boring and standard approach of the ad could work as an anti-advertising and “you can immediately abandon the product and not even consider it as a product at all”.

The next thing that Russian internet users find irritating is the intrusiveness of advertising. “Sometimes the ad sticks in the head, and you can recognize it in a second. This becomes a very unpleasant factor, because of which you want to skip ads as soon as possible”, said interviewee 1. All interviewees mentioned that loud advertising is unpleasant and even scare them, so they want to skip it as soon as possible. “These advertisements are trying with all their might to attract your attention, but as a result, they only annoy you. And you get nothing but annoyance from this ad”, notices interviewee 6. It drives us to conclude that the loudness of the sound is extremely important for Russian users: they prefer pleasant music and nice sounds because they find loud music irritating, unexpected and scare.

One more thing mentioned is that users want to do the things they want to do, not what they are obliged to. They focus while using the preferred social media (for example, YouTube for education) and do not want to be interrupted by some third-party videos. “On YouTube where I'm purposely watching the video, let's say about Egypt, why not? I'm purposely watching the video about Egypt, and then the advertisement for “Old Spice” comes up. It's very irritating”, highlighted interviewee 2. Interviewee 7 said that "I do not want to waste my time on products and services that are not interesting to me, as well as on ads that distract me from my business". Interviewees 3 and 6 claimed that they do not want to spend their time on useless advertisements. Interviewee 4 stated that they “become irritated when the ad interrupts the progress of watching the video”. One of the main problems of video advertising is that it irritates users and distracts them from their own needs and desires.

3.2. The attitude towards video advertisements in VKontakte

All the interviewees agreed that video advertisements in VKontakte are mostly invisible, so they usually do not pay any attention to it. “Maybe I saw a video advertisement on VKontakte, I just saw this “promoted” label and “woop” – scrolled it”, noticed interviewee 2. A video advertisement in VKontakte’s newsfeed is easy to skip just by scrolling, so it does not bother interviewees. Interviewee 4 also agreed that video ads in the newsfeed are unnoticeable, and interviewee 5 mentioned that such video ads are not annoying. In contrast, interviewees 7 and 8 noticed there are many video ads, although all of them are still invisible. While Russian internet users can skip the ad, which is not intrusive, they feel calm and neutral towards this type of video advertising.

The situation is different with video ads in the “Video” section. As well as it works with YouTube, VKontakte’s algorithms allow video ads to appear before or during the video uploaded on VKontakte. It irritates the users because they have no freedom but a need to watch when it becomes possible to watch the video they want to watch. “It is inserted before the video or during the video, rather intrusive and uninteresting”, noted interviewee 1. Interviewee 6 share the same opinion: “There are some videos, sometimes not very short ones, and I have to wait. So I rarely watch video ads”. The “Video” section in VKontakte is not quite popular in contrast with its main functions (chatting and scrolling the newsfeed), but the video advertisement here is still a problem users need to face.

“I have nothing against it [the video advertisement in VKontakte], but I skip it”, claimed interviewee 3. “I am neutral towards it [the video advertisement in VKontakte] because I rarely encounter it, and it does not distract me. Perhaps this is also because I rarely see VK ads, and I have the opportunity to immediately scroll them”, said interviewee 1. Interviewee 6 added that this is a way to make money, which is still acceptable as it was easy to skip. VKontakte promoted posts with the video advertising look natural as they are inbuilt in a user’s newsfeed, so this does not cause a strong negative reaction due to the possibility of the skip.

Unexpectedly, interviewee 4 had a different opinion: “I don't like it [the video advertisement in VKontakte] because it's hard to skip if I don't like the product that I do not want to see. It can sometimes irritate, so it's not the type that I like”. Interviewee 5 mentioned that they do not like the amount of advertising at all, and it also works for the VKontakte case. Moreover, interviewee 7 said that VKontakte video advertising looks cheap and chaotic.

Also, the video advertising on VKontakte seems irrelevant for its users, which is one of the main reasons they are not willing to watch ads. Interviewee 1 said that ads on VKontakte are not appealing to them and do not suit their tastes. Interviewee 2 made an example: “I see the advertisements of new albums from some Russian new artists because I just see them and instantly scroll”. Interviewees 7 and 8 noted that the video ads in VKontakte are irrelevant for them. “I never wanted to dress in branded clothes or dye my hair in vigorous green”, said interviewee 7.

3.3. The attitude towards video advertisements in YouTube

The Russian internet users consider the video advertisement on YouTube the most irritating one due to some features that make it impossible to skip the video. As people are concentrated on their needs and wishes, they come to YouTube to fulfil them and await to do their own business. “When you are trying to prepare for an exam, and therefore there are a lot of advertisements that disorientate me”, claimed interviewee 5. The video ad appears before and during the video, which sometimes makes it impossible to concentrate on the thing the user was doing. “I hate it with the whole of my heart because again, I purposely watch the video, and I don't want anything to interrupt it”, highlighted interviewee 2. Interviewee 5 stated that the video ad appears in the most intriguing and exciting moments of the actual video, which makes them very irritated. The amount of advertising on YouTube was why interviewees 5, 6 and 7 bought the premium subscription on YouTube to remove all the ads here.

The next thing is that YouTube videos are irrelevant for Russian users. It does not orientate on a user's interests or hobbies, making it impossible to catch necessary attention. Even if the videos are made to suit users' tastes, they are still irrelevant, primarily when they focus on their wishes and needs. It also can even make the user unsubscribe: “If the advertisement is irrelevant, like the advertisement that Google does on YouTube in the middle of the video which randomly starts yelling, I would probably unsubscribe”, said interviewee 2. Interviewee 5 also agreed that video ads shown to them are irrelevant: “It turns out that you are preparing for an exam and watch an advertisement for some baby cream for a minute, but I have no children, and it is unnecessary”. Interviewees 6 and 8 stated that video ads on YouTube are random and have nothing interest, whereas interviewee 7 noted that ads' relevance on YouTube is a rare occasion. It concludes that

video ads may need to be relevant to a user to catch their attention and increase the probability of being watched until the end.

The next thing to be discussed is YouTube's feature which makes a user watch two advertisements in a row. "YouTube also has an annoying system in the form of two commercials in a row. I also try to skip these, but if this is not possible, I will reload the video so that I can skip", claimed interviewee 1. Due to this YouTube's feature, they have to reload the page to dispose of two video ads in a row and makes extra moves to get what they are focused on. "I think it's a crazy thing, you hope that this is one video, and there are two of them. It's not fair, but I have to deal with it as I have no choice", stated interviewee 4. "I'm a fan of not wasting time, but here there are two advertisements at once, and it may even be the same advertisement, and I am offended that I wasted time on it", highlighted interviewee 6. Two ads in a row were one of the reasons interviewees 8 and 9 to buy the premium subscription. Russian users are irritated because of two ads in a row, especially when two video ads are the same, which is considered a time-wasting activity.

Interviewees are especially irritated because of the impossibility to skip the video ad, which forces them to watch it until the end or when they have to wait longer to see the "Skip" button appear. Interviewee 3 claimed that waiting for more than expected is annoying for them. In contrast, interviewee 5 noted that it seems that the "Skip" button now appears much later than usual, which makes them irritated. Interviewee 6 also added that it feels desperate when it is impossible to skip the ad they do not want to watch. As for a more extended waiting period for the "Skip" button, the interviewees are also unhappy to spend their time on it. They wait for the moment they can skip the ad and rarely pay attention to the content of the video ad. It is also possible to watch the ad a bit longer after the "Skip" button appears, if the ad is bright or innovative, as interviewee 4 said. For interviewee 8, the absence of the button becomes the reason to "focus on tapping the skip button as soon as possible".

3.4. The attitude towards video advertisements in Instagram

The video advertisements on Instagram that Russian users can meet are primarily presented in "Stories" or "Promoted Posts". They are also easy to skip, so mostly they do not annoy users because there is no need to wait an established period to continue scrolling the newsfeed or the list of Stories. Some interviewees only visit Instagram to scroll through Stories and have no other

aims, and Instagram Stories often appear to users. Interviewee 1 said that Instagram stories are the ones to watch until the end because they are short and easy to watch. However, interviewee 9 never watched the ad until the end because they followed the promoted link before the video finished. It was also revealed that sometimes Instagram stories could look like an extension of friends' stories: "Sometimes I get so focused on the content of friends' stories, don't even notice that this is an advertisement", said interviewee 2.

Moreover, it was found that Instagram video advertisements are correlated with users' interests and hobbies which also increases the chances to attract attention to a product or service. Interviewee 2 is interested in accessories, so it is the way to make them watch the ad until the end: "I see that it was an advertisement for some nice bracelets. So I might also stop and hold them to see more of what this is". Interviewee 4 also mentioned that Instagram tries to show video ads of the products or services a user was interested in before. "They [video advertisements of mobile games] catch attention by showing at least some approximate gameplay of what I can get. If it is interesting for me, I will follow the link in the advertisement", noticed interviewee 1. Opinion of the interviewee 3 differs from other interviewees: they consider the video ads in Instagram as irrelevant and uninteresting as they do not correlate with their interests. "Sometimes video ads ... have some correlation with my interests. But at the same time, it shows me something about the style and moving to China. And I'm a bit confused ... because it is not based on the things I do or even speak about", highlighted interviewee 3. Despite the mentioned irrelevance, it is still possible to catch the user's attention if the video has a good design, colours, and innovative components. Interviewee 4 said that it feels pleasant when Instagram shows users products or services they are interested in.

Interviewee 2 added their opinion about promoted video posts. It has already been mentioned before that loud sounds in video ads annoy and even scare users, leading to an increase in the level of irritation. The same works for Instagram: even if relevant content meets all the user's criteria, loud sounds still make them unpleasant. "It's happened a couple of times that I was in a public place, and I was scrolling through the Instagram pictures of my friends. And this promoted post with the video popped up, and it somehow unmuted the video, and it started yelling", said interviewee 2. Also, they added that this does not often happen, so they do experience not so much discomfort because of it. Comments of interviewees 7 and 8 are on the side of mobile games: they do not like being held as a fool where they find some video ads of mobile games silly and annoying and consider them a "psychological trauma".

It was also found that Instagram users tend to visit often promoted links that appear during or after the ad and lead to a website or an account on Instagram. For sure, the ad must suit their tastes and be interesting for them. “Something can also interest me. And sometimes I even stop to see what it is about, to visit the website or something”, said interviewee 2. Interviewee 3 added: “if the content caught me and I'm interested in the stuff that was shown, usually I visit the webpage using a link”. The same works for interviewee 4, who also tends to visit a website or an account, and interviewee 1, who downloads mobile games promoted in Instagram stories.

3.5. The attitude towards video advertisements in TikTok

As interviewee 2 mentioned, TikTok video advertisements are made so that sometimes a user cannot understand whether it is just a video from recommendations or a video ad produced by a company. “Different brands that make TikTok accounts and make short funny videos about their brands. I have seen a bunch of videos of Duolingo because they're funny”, said interviewee 2. “Bigger brands also make video ads of a similar format, and it is often not always possible to understand at what point they are advertising something to you. This is both a plus and a minus because it is not always possible to notice that they tried to sell something to you”, noted interviewee 7. Also, TikTok allows skipping videos the user does not want to see. The same works for video ads: the user is not forced to watch the video until the end or even an established period, making interviewees think better about TikTok. Interviewee 2 also added that small brands tend to post their commercial videos which do not even look like an ad. They tell stories of success and failure and show making a product or providing a service. That kind of advertisement does not annoy the user because it is not presented as a usual standardized ad. It has already been mentioned earlier, but the funny aspect of the ad can also be the point when speaking about ads in TikTok. “In most cases, it's entertaining, and it's interesting. It's funny. And these stories about stupid people eating eyeshadows. I like them, so I usually watch them”, said interviewee 2.

Interviewees 4 and 5 are not so positive towards advertisements on TikTok. They mostly skip every video ad they see and have no intention to watch it until the end. Interviewee 4 mentioned that ads on TikTok do not target users' interests and hobbies, making video ads uninteresting for them as ads are standard for everybody. “They're not very interesting for me, and I have never been attracted by the product I saw there”, said interviewee 4. On the other hand, interviewee 5 has no

negative emotions arose, instead, they are neutral. Interviewee 5 said that it did not happen to them to watch the ad until the very end, but also added that “There is advertising, for example, from the bloggers themselves, who come up with some stories and insert ads into them. Advertising is veiled in some interesting plot, and in such cases, I can get interested and watch it to the end”.

One of the ways for a company to promote itself is the so-called “Hashtag Challenge”, which is used only on TikTok. It is perceived by interviewees as an ordinary video ad and can be skipped as well as the usual ad. “I have seen them a lot. But I am not interested in them, I skip them like other promotional videos”, said interviewee 4 as well as interviewee 5. Interviewee 2 have a bit different opinion towards Hashtag Challenges: “If the video is funny, I will like it, and it doesn't matter if it is a company advertisement unless it's funny and interesting, and it's not three minutes long”. The rule for funny or exciting videos can also be implemented here, and there is a chance that the ad will attract some users.

3.6. The attitude towards video advertisements in Twitter

Twitter is considered the social network with the most invisible ads compared with all other social networks. “Compared to VKontakte ads, which are also invisible, Twitter ads seem even more invisible. It merges with the flow of information in the feed”, said interviewee 1. Interviewee 6 agreed with this opinion: “Twitter, I think, [have the less intrusive ads] because there is a chance to at least skip it or watch if you will. In VKontakte, this ad is shown in the feed and videos. And this is too much for a social network in which you should feel comfortable”. Interviewee 7 noted that you have to notice Twitter’s ads because they are well disguised in the newsfeed, so you cannot even see them.

Speaking about Twitter’s video ads, it was mentioned that such type of advertising could be rarely seen during scrolling the newsfeed, so it does not irritate and does not seem intrusive. “I barely pay attention to the advertisements on Twitter, although sometimes they appear, but quite rarely”, stated interviewee 1. Interviewee 4 also noticed that Twitter ads are almost unnoticeable, the sound is turned off, and only visual component is presented. Some of the interviewees scrolled their Twitter on purpose before the interviews and confessed that it was hard to find a video ad. Twitter’s ads look the same as Twitter’s newsfeed, so they do not irritate users by their intrusiveness and appearance. Interviewee 2 said that they do not pay attention to ads (especially video ones) because

they have Twitter for other purposes: “To follow some pages, like my company page, people I'm interested in, my friends, Elon Musk. And I am not interested in seeing some game advertisements”. Interviewee 7 added that they had never watched the video ads on Twitter.

It was mentioned by interviewees 3 and 6 that Twitter’s video advertisements have nothing in common with their interests and hobbies. “VKontakte advertising and Twitter advertising have one thing in common, that it’s advertising is not in my interests. Once in 100 years, you come across the topic which you want to examine. But this is very rare”, highlighted interviewee 6. Interviewee 3 also emphasized that they even have their targeting setting turned on, but the advertising on Twitter is still out of the line of their interests. Interviewee 1’s opinion supports the opinions mentioned above: “Since I use the VPN, the services and products that are offered are not provided in Russia. They have no value to me”. In controversy, interviewee 4 said that video advertising on Twitter made them buy a subscription in another social media and added that it is often for Twitter ads to contact their tastes. Interviewee 1 partly agreed with the previous opinion and sometimes said Twitter shows ads of mobile games which correlate with their interests in games.

CONCLUSIONS

Video advertisement in social networks is considered one of the leading marketing tools. However, it should also be implemented carefully not to create a negative image of a product or service promoted. It is hard to catch users' attention because they have ad-blocking programs on their devices and a natural "AdBlock" in their brains, which makes it possible to skip videos without noticing them.

RQ1: How do the Internet users living in Russia perceive video ads in social networks?

Russian users fully understand that video advertisement shown in a social network is how social networks can exist and be free for everyday usage. Despite their understanding, they highlight that too much advertising is everywhere, which makes them irritated. Russian users are neutral to video advertisement in some social networks (such as Twitter and VKontakte) because video ads seem invisible, small and unnoticeable while inserted in the newsfeed, which generates a neutral attitude towards such ads. The indifference of Russian users to VKontakte's advertising is also supported by Moiseenko's study (2016) and to Twitter. The indifference of Russians towards different types of video advertisements was proved by Moiseenko (2016), and the following research was able to explain the reason: the video ads shown on VKontakte are completely untargeted, which dramatically decreases the degree of interest. The study of Murillo *et al.* (2016) suggested that Twitter's ads are more acceptable than other formats, which is confirmed by the data received from the Russian interviewees. It is recommended that Twitter's format is proper because Russians tend not to notice it. Consequently, it does not cause any irritation, which leads to a negative attitude towards video ads.

In another way, Russian users complain that advertisements interrupt their focus and purpose of visiting a particular social media. It is the most frequent problem, mainly in YouTube cases where the video generates in the most exciting and intriguing moments or where a user needs to be as focused as they can. Russian users perceive such videos as the most irritating ones and even

confess that they hate such situations. Previously Krishnan and Sitaraman (2013) found that the ad is more likely to be completed in the mid-roll, and a 15-seconds video ad placed in the long-term video has the highest chance to be watched until the end. Findings on Russian users contradict the previous results: they find such ads irritating and even count the number of times the ad appears in the long video while waiting to press the “Skip” button. Moreover, Goodrich *et al.* (2015) found that too short videos make users annoyed, and it was mentioned in the research that Russian users tend to become irritated by all the video ads, not depending on their length.

Moreover, Russian users prefer not to notice the video ads as they become immune to such advertising. The video ad is considered a small annoying thing that can be easily skipped (by scrolling newsfeed in VKontakte, Twitter, Instagram and TikTok or tapping the “Skip” button in YouTube). Russians focus on their purpose while visiting a specific social network and do not want to be distracted by other intrusive aspects.

As a rule, Russian Internet users consider VKontakte’s and Twitter’s video advertisements as the most invisible ones. The video ads in the mentioned social networks have a native form and are harmonically inserted in the newsfeed, making them wholly unintrusive and unnoticeable. VKontakte, Twitter and YouTube are united by the randomness of the video ads and the absence of targeting’s settings. In contrast, Instagram and TikTok have more or less targeted video ads that fit users’ interests. The only exciting format of video ads for Russian users on YouTube is creative integrations with bloggers, increasing interest. YouTube is the only platform with such a feature. TikTok also has its quality because video ads can hardly differ from the user's content. Moreover, because of the platform, the video ads on TikTok result in creative format either for content videos or in the video ads. The video ads on VKontakte were mentioned as cheap and poorly made, and the video ads on Instagram have a more or less creative format which can sometimes attract users.

RQ2: What criteria of video advertisements create a positive attitude of the Internet users living in Russia towards the video ads?

It was found that Russian users have a positive attitude toward video advertisements that are creative and innovative. Innovative video ads that have not been shown to a user before generating an increasing degree of interest make a user watch the video for several seconds more or even until the end. Even if not all the TikTok users are ready to spend their time on this type of ads such innovative content can be easily met in TikTok’s video ads, which correlates with the previous

study on TikTok (*Kantar finds ... 2021*) because innovativeness is reached by the brands which come to a creative solution on the video ads and this creativeness cannot be found everywhere else. In contrast, the opposite to the previous finding is that some TikTok users tend to skip the video ads on TikTok as well as other social networks.

An exciting joke or some funny elements inserted in the video ad also increase that chance to watch the video ad until the end. It catches users' attention by an unusual theme that correlates with their sense of humour and makes them interested in the content of the video itself, consequently enhancing the probability of establishing a positive attitude towards the ad. It also should be mentioned that the relevance of the advertisement plays a vital role for Russian users. They tend to be interested in ads that promote the things in the area of interests, tastes or hobbies, or the things the user tried to find before. When the ad is in line with the user's preferences, it has an increased probability to cause a positive attitude towards it rather than an ad that is out of the area of interest and can easily be skipped. Instagram is considered as the social network in the most relevant ads. Mahatmavidya and Yasa (2020) also proved that informativeness is essential for Indonesian Instagram users who favour timely and relevant video advertisements. This works for Russian Instagram users because the ad's relevance is one of the few ways to make them interested in the ads.

One more aspect of the video ad favoured by Russian Internet users is the visual component of the ad. When the graphics are breathtaking, the picture is fantastic, the video is bright and colourful, Russian users let such well-made ad catches their attention because of the aesthetics of the video and its uniqueness as they consider such types of advertisements as rare ones. One more thing that makes an ad appealing to Russian users is having a famous actor or a blogger as the leading actor in the video itself. Users like to see famous people interested in them, which channels they follow and actual videos they want. Seeing a familiar face also increases the probability of a user watching the ad until the end. However, also it can work oppositely and make a user feels suspicious towards the actor and the ad. Moreover, even though they are not famous, the actor's appearance is also essential for users: they appreciate beautiful or handsome faces and an overall impression from the actor.

The last but not most minor factor which appeals to Russian users is the musical or voice component of the video. When the ad has a good music background or a catching voice of a voice

actor, users are pleased and have an overall positive attitude towards the ad. Otherwise, they prefer to skip an ad and become irritated, especially when it is shown often and sticks into their heads.

RQ3: What criteria of video advertisements create a negative attitude of the Internet users living in Russia towards the video ads?

One of the main aspects which Russian Internet users dislike the most is the loud sounds or loud music, which are unexpected and even scare users. Users think that such kind of video advertisement tries to catch their attention as desperately as possible and consider it intrusive and annoying. They try to skip such an ad as fast as possible and become irritated instantly after seeing even a picture of it. It was mentioned that YouTube advertisement is especially loud and can scare a user, leading to a negative attitude towards such advertisements. Loudness is also a problem in social networks where initially muted ads can suddenly unmute themselves and start yelling. Such ads will be immediately scrolled down, and the user will not return to the preview.

The ad is more likely to be skipped when it is out of the area of the user's interests. When the ad's product, service, or topic has no connection with themes that are appealing to the user, it will be skipped almost instantly when possible. Users prefer not to waste their time on entirely uninteresting topics, and the necessity to watch the video (particularly on YouTube) irritates them a lot. Untargeted video ads can be met in other social networks, not only on YouTube, and such ads rarely become appealing.

Finally, Russian users found repetitive and intrusive advertising incredibly annoying. It is pretty well seen on the example of YouTube, which can insert in the actual video two identical video ads in a row. Moreover, as in everyday life, Russian users meet a significant number of different advertisements, they become immune to usual and standardized features, because of which users become bored and uninteresting. The result is obvious: users find a way to dispose of such features by reloading the page or just not paying attention to ads.

In conclusion, the author suggests that marketers keep in mind that Russian users are sensitive to video ads, and many criteria irritate them. To make the attitude of Russian users towards the video ads better, the marketers should improve to overall impression towards the video ads and decrease the number of them to irritate the users less. Moreover, making the video unusual and innovative is essential because Russian Internet users are full of standardized video ads and are more attentive

to non-standard approaches. The music should not be loud and should fit the video and not start yelling from the beginning: it scares users and makes them feel uncomfortable. Also, it is a good idea to make the ads more informative and credible as the Russian users like when the video ad brings them so-called knowledge and new experience on the field of the product.

The study is limited by the age of interviewees (mostly 17-24) and by the cities where they live (two of the most inhabited Russian cities, Moscow and Saint-Petersburg). The author suggests continuing the research by interviewing Russians of younger (14-16) or older (30+) age groups and different living locations. It is also possible to include less popular social networks in the research, such as Odnoklassniki, Facebook, LinkedIn, Snapchat and others.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Interview Guidelines

The interview was conducted under the chosen topic for the thesis, “The attitudes of the Russian users towards the video advertisement in social media”. The discussion with the interviewees was done according to the interview guide:

The aim of the interview: to gather an overall experience of Russian Internet users concerning advertising in social networks and see if there is any difference in their perception because of occupation, frequency of usage of social network or type of used social network, and fill the knowledge gap of what is the attitude of Russian Internet users towards advertisement in social networks

Definition of the target group: female millennials aged 18-23 who live in Russia, actively use 4 or 5 of the mentioned social media (VKontakte, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok) and study at university or work

Type of the interview: open-ended questions framed by the interview guide

Time of the interview: 30-45 minutes

Background information:

Name:

Age:

Occupation:

Specialization in the university/position:

Which social networks do you use (VKontakte, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok):

How often do you use the aforementioned social media?

What is the main reason for you to use those social media?

Questions:

1. What do you generally think about video advertising on social media? How often do you see it?
2. Do you use programs that block video ads? If yes, which ones? Can they cover all the video ads you meet?
3. How often do you watch the video ad until the end? What makes you do so?
4. What aspects of the video ad are appealing, interesting, entertaining to you?
5. How often you skip the video ad whenever it is possible? Why?
6. What aspects of the video ad irritate you?

7. How often do you see video advertisements in VK? In which forms? Do you like it? Why or why not?
8. How often do you see video advertisements on YouTube? In which forms? Do you like it? Why or why not?
9. How often do you see video advertisements on Instagram? In which forms? Do you like it? Why or why not?
10. How often do you see video advertisements in TikTok? In which forms? Do you like it? Why or why not?
11. How often do you see video advertisements on Twitter? In which forms? Do you like it? Why or why not?

12. Have you ever bought the advertised product or decided to buy it later?
 - a. What was this product? Why did you decide to buy it?
 - b. Did the number of times you watch the ad affect your decision?
 - c. What aspect of the ad influenced you the most?

13. Do you have any thoughts to share? If yes, please, share them.

The transcriptions of the interviews are temporarily available for the Committee during the pre-defence and defence periods. After the defence transcriptions will be no longer available. You can find all the transcriptions here: [LINK](#)

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