

EĞİTİM yayınevi

Editör: **Doç. Dr. Arzu Kazaz**

Reklamcılık

Alanında Uluslararası Araştırmalar - I

International Research in the Field of Advertising

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Reklamcılık Alanında Uluslararası Araştırmalar –I
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EĞİTİM YAYINEVİ GRUBU

İÇİNDEKİLER

ÖNSÖZ ..... **V**

YEŞİL ETİKETLİ REKLAM İÇERİKLERİNİN TÜKETİCİ ALGISI ÜZERİNE BİR İNCELEME: TÜKETİCİLERE YÖNELİK DERİNLEMESİNE GÖRÜŞME ÇALIŞMASI **1**
Cihan Becan, Behçet Tahir Başçı

THE FUTURE OF ADVERTISING AGENCIES: RESEARCH ON ADVERTISING PRACTITIONERS IN THE DIGITAL AGE **43**
Gülten Adalı, Hediye Aydoğan, Sibel Hoştut

REKLAM DÜNYASININ KORKULU RÜYASI: REKLAM ENGELLEME PROGRAMLARI **67**
Nilay Akgün Akan

FOMO (GELİŞMELERİ KAÇIRMA KORKUSU) VE REKLAMCILIK: KAVRAMLAR VE ETKİLERİ **83**
Ece Ozan

KARİKATÜRLERDE YER ALAN MARKALARIN GÜNDEM BELİRLEME ROLÜ: LEMAN DERGİSİ ÖRNEĞİ **97**
Kamile Elmasoğlu

ÖNSÖZ

Reklamcılık, toplumsal dinamiklerin, kültürel değişimlerin ve teknolojik yeniliklerin bir yansıması olarak her zaman evrim geçirmiştir. Özellikle son yıllarda reklam sektörü, dijitalleşme, tüketici davranışlarının dönüşümü ve sosyal medyanın etkisiyle hızla değişen bir ortamda faaliyet göstermektedir. Bu kitabın amacı, reklamcılığın farklı yönlerini incelemek ve sektörün geleceği hakkında derinlemesine bir anlayış sunmaktır.

"Reklamcılık Alanında Güncel Çalışmalar" adlı bu eser, reklamcılıkla ilgili çeşitli güncel meseleleri ele alarak, akademik bir perspektiften farklı konuları tartışmaya açmaktadır. Kitap, alanındaki uzman akademisyenler ve araştırmacıların katkılarıyla şekillenmiş olup, reklamcılık alanındaki dönüşümleri, kapsamlı bir şekilde analiz etmeyi hedeflemektedir.

Kitabın ilk bölümü, yeşil etiketli reklam içeriklerinin tüketici algısı üzerindeki etkilerini incelemektedir. Bu bölümde, sürdürülebilirlik ve çevre dostu tüketimin arttığı günümüzde, reklamların çevre bilincini nasıl şekillendirdiği ve tüketiciler üzerindeki algısal etkileri ele alınmaktadır.

İkinci bölüm, dijital çağda reklam ajanslarının geleceği üzerine yoğunlaşmaktadır. Dijitalleşme ile birlikte reklam ajanslarının nasıl evrildiği, dijital platformların stratejileri nasıl dönüştürdüğü ve ajans çalışanlarının bu dönüşüme nasıl adapte olduğu soruları etrafında dijital dönüşümün reklamın içeriğine ve reklamcılık sektörüne ne gibi farklılıklar getirdiği ele alınmaktadır.

Üçüncü bölümde, reklam engelleme programlarının reklam verenler ve reklam izleyicileri üzerindeki etkileri incelenmektedir. Dijital reklamcılıkla birlikte hızla yükselen bu engelleme yazılımlarının, markaların hedef kitlesine ulaşma stratejilerini nasıl tehdit ettiğine dair bir analiz ve çeşitli çözüm önerileri sunulmaktadır.

Dördüncü bölümde, FOMO (Gelişmeleri Kaçırma Korkusu) kavramı ile reklamcılık arasındaki ilişki irdelenmektedir. Tüketicilerin sosyal medyada yaşadıkları kaygıların, markaların reklam stratejilerine nasıl etki ettiği ve bu fenomenin reklam dünyasında nasıl bir araç olarak kullanıldığı tartışılmaktadır.

Son olarak, beşinci bölümde, karikatür markalarının gündem belirleme rolü ele alınmaktadır. Leman dergisi örneği üzerinden, mizahi bir dil ve toplumsal eleştirinin karikatürlerde nasıl kullanıldığı ve gündemi nasıl şekillendirdiği analiz edilmektedir.

Bu kitap, reklamcılığın çok çeşitli yönlerini ele alarak, sektördeki yenilikleri, karşılaşılan zorlukları ve yeni fırsatları daha iyi anlamak isteyen araştırmacılara, öğrenciler ve profesyonellere faydalı bir kaynak olmayı amaçlamaktadır. Reklamcılığın toplumsal, kültürel ve ekonomik etkilerini araştırarak, hem teorik hem de pratik alanda değerli bir katkı sunmayı hedeflemektedir.

Kitabın hazırlanmasında emeği geçen tüm yazarlara, katkı sağlayan akademisyenlere ve bu yayını ilgilileri ile buluşturan Eğitim Yayınevine teşekkür ederim. Bu eser, reklamcılıkla ilgilenen tüm paydaşlar için, daha derinlemesine bir anlayış geliştirmeye yönelik önemli bir adım olacaktır.

Doç. Dr. Arzu KAZAZ

THE FUTURE OF ADVERTISING AGENCIES: RESEARCH ON ADVERTISING PRACTITIONERS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Gülten ADALI[*], Hediye AYDOĞAN[†], Sibel HOŞTUT[‡]

Introduction

As more and more people around the world come online via both desktop computers and especially mobile devices, digital channels are consuming larger portions of total advertising spend (Feldman, 2019). DataReportal (2022) announced that as of 2022 63 percent of the world's population (5 billion people) use the Internet, the majority of these users (92.4%) use a mobile phone to go online, and mobile phones constitute more than half of the world's web traffic. Technological innovations such as the increasing penetration of home Internet and high-speed broadband connections, the development of social media platforms, e-commerce, and the widespread consumer adoption of smart mobile devices (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016, p. 146) have led to the creation of a new approach called digital marketing (Makrides et al., 2019, pp. 4-5), which is defined as "the use of digital or social channels (websites, social media, search engines, mobile devices, and similar channels) to promote a brand or reach consumers" (AMA, 2022). Since the first banner went live on October 27, 1994, the importance of digital advertising has grown tremendously (Yun & Strycharz, 2022, p. 24). In a virtual environment (Herhausen et al., 2020, p. 276), digital media platforms have revolutionized marketing by providing advertisers with opportunities to provide new ways to reach, inform, interact, sell, learn and serve customers (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016, p. 146). By 2020, when the coronavirus shut down many industries, worldwide advertising spending has grown steadily, with spending expected to exceed one trillion US dollars by 2026. North America, Asia Pacific, and Western Europe are the top three regions that invest the most in advertising. Although the Middle East, Africa, Central and Eastern Europe are among the regions that spend the least, these

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regions stand out with the highest growth (Guttmann, 2022a). Since the world's first television commercial aired in the United States in 1941, the advertising industry has focused its efforts on traditional media formats, until recent changes in consumer behavior fundamentally changed practices (Guttmann, 2022b). In 2021, approximately 59 percent of all global advertising investments were allocated to digital promotion, while television received 25 percent, outdoor 5 percent, newspapers 4 percent, radio 4 percent, and magazines 2 percent. The Internet has strengthened its position as the most invested advertising medium (Guttmann, 2022b). The industry is largely controlled by a small number of big tech companies, including Google, Facebook, and Adobe (Yun & Strycharz, 2022). The increasing potential of digital communication technologies has caused the advertising industry to enter a new structuring process. The continued impact of digital technology is emerging in nearly all areas of the industry, reshaping traditional production and distribution processes as well as consumer media consumption habits (Takemura, 2012, p. 4). This situation demands that advertising agencies respond more creatively to the new reality by developing new skills and techniques (Hackley, 2010). The new generation of people in the industry needs to be much more versatile as they try to blend strategic, creative, and reductive communication skills with an understanding of digital technologies and channels (Content advertising slated to grow into a multi-billion-dollar industry by 2020, 2017). As changes continue in society, the role of advertising in shaping consumer attitudes and behaviors, and in influencing consumer preferences will continue to grow (Stafford et al., 2022, p. 35).

With the digital technology revolution and the advent of big data, advertising and its ecosystem have introduced entirely new conceptualizations of what advertising is and what constitutes the advertising industry (Helberger et al., 2020, pp. 377-378). Fundamental changes in marketing, communications, and technology have redefined the nature of agency work (Patwardhan et al., 2018, p. 316). Agencies are trying to reinvent themselves to face many brand and business challenges, such as the transition to digital, leaner, more agile, strategic and creative consultancy rather than scale and uniformity (Johns, 2015). Research on the same topic by Dahlen and Rosengren (2016) explains the (new) media and formats, (new) consumer behaviors, and an increasing acceptance of the expanded effects of advertising as the three dynamic changes driving this transition. In this context, Dahlen and Rosengren (2016) proposed an updated working

definition for advertising and defined it as “the purpose of brand-initiated communication to impress people” (2016, p. 334). With the rise of digital advertising and more and more advertising spending, advertising is facing a new era (Deloitte, 2022). Advertising agencies face rapidly changing markets that challenge existing business models and force them to change in order to stay competitive (Freytag & Clarke, 2012). Therefore, the aim of this research is to reveal how the advertising industry is structured in the digital age and how agency employees are affected by digitalization in the sector. Nevertheless, very little research has explored how digital technologies changed advertising agencies (Childers et al., 2018, p. 245). According to the literature review conducted within the scope of the research, no study has been conducted on the effects of digitalization on advertising agencies in Türkiye. Thus, this study contributes to the literature by filling the gap and provides important theoretical and practical implications as it addresses the issue from the practitioners' point of view and explores the current situation of advertising agencies in an emerging market.

Overview of Previous Research on Digital Advertising in Various Countries

It is well known that North America is the largest regional advertising market, followed closely by Asia Pacific (Statista, 2022a). Advertising in Türkiye has shown rapid development in recent years, both in terms of expenditure and quality. The advertising market has grown by 10-20% each year in real terms, and the structure of the sector has been shaped to attract the attention of the global market and has produced effective promotional products (SBB, 2018). In the Turkish advertising sector, approximately 15.5 thousand businesses provide employment for about 66.500 people (Statista, 2022b). The highly competitive market ranges in size from small agencies to subsidiaries of multinational enterprises. Advertising is not only essential for economic growth, competitiveness, and job creation, but it also accelerates innovation and contributes to culture and society (DPIP, 2021; UK Advertising in a Digital Age, 2018). Between 2012 and 2020, the contribution of advertising and media investments to GDP in Türkiye was 6.24% on average (DPIP, 2021).

Many studies address advertising on various subjects. Based on a qualitative reading, Stafford et al. (2022) investigated the key developments in advertising research over the last four decades, as published by

International Journal of Advertising, Journal of Advertising, Journal of Advertising Research, and Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising. The authors (Stafford et al., 2022) identified four overarching themes named as advertising effects, advertising industry, audience, and commentary as well as approximately seventy topics, demonstrating how academic discipline has evolved over the years. The rapid development of digital advertising has affected the business of advertising agencies economically, organizationally, and culturally. A change in one of the intertwined and interconnected issues also affects the others (Gluck & Roca, 2008, p. 74). However, the diversity of functions and the interchangeability of various terms (Lee & Cho, 2019), such as digital advertising (Gordon et al., 2019; Orimoloye et al., 2022; Shoenberger, 2017; Venkatraman et al., 2018), interactive advertising (Geng & Sun, 2022; Xu & Zhang, 2022), Internet advertising (Bapat et al., 2021; Nuara et al., 2022; Song et al., 2020), or online advertising (Cherif & Baccino, 2022; Li et al., 2023; Yan et al., 2022) make it difficult to agree on definitions and terms of application. Wardhana et al. (2022) examined the relationship between the impact of technological disruption and the transformation of business models mediated by an adaptive organization and organizational learning on top management teams from members of the Indonesian Advertising Association (IAS). In their research, Yun and Strycharz (2022) explored how blockchain technology (IT) is applied to advertising research and applications and offered a critical look at the evolution of digital advertising, largely driven by the urgent technological need to maximize profits. The study on leaders' perception of young employees in advertising agencies within Central and Eastern Europe conducted by Majer (2020) found that young individuals in advertising are well-informed and ambitious, by taking advantage of the technological understanding in advertising as digital natives. For these people, success seems to be manifested through social media rather than the exhibition of material goods (Majer, 2020). Ferreira et al. (2022) examined the hard and soft skill gaps in the digital marketing and advertising industry in the South African market and found that while soft skills have become an important field of training for new employees after the Covid-19 pandemic, the future growth areas of the industry, which focus on data analysis, marketing automation, and user experience, are found as hard skill gaps. The study conducted by Independent Agency Search & Selection Company (IAS, 2022) revealed that creative agencies in South Africa still largely focused on core business disciplines and regions, despite strengthening their digital

capabilities. In the research conducted by Chen et al. (2019), Chinese advertising practitioners' perceptions and interpretations of advertising creativity and strategy were examined. The findings revealed that although Chinese practitioners largely mirrored their US counterparts in strategy and creativity, and digested China's imported advertising model, it modified it to fit the local culture. Additionally, while the digital age has indeed brought new changes to the advertising industry, its impact is not as significant as one might expect. Stříteský et al. (2015) identified Internet content consumption habits of Czech Internet users and found that traditional affinity-based method of targeting by gender and age is still possible on the Czech Internet. Dekoulou and Trivellas (2015, p. 372) investigated the impact of the learning organization on job satisfaction and job performance in the Greek advertising industry. For Greek advertising companies to deal effectively with the economic hardship that jeopardizes their survival, they need to adopt a more learning-oriented work style, promote knowledge-based work, and focus strongly on empowering the potential of human assets as a recipe for increased job satisfaction and high individual performance (Dekoulou & Trivellas, 2015).

Methodology

This study adopted an exploratory qualitative research design to evaluate the perceptions of advertising practitioners regarding the digitalization process within the advertising industry. It aimed to understand how advertising practitioners appraise digitalization and its implications for the sustainability of the advertising profession as well as the local agencies. To reach this aim, it employed semi-structured interview techniques as the primary method of data collection. While allowing for flexibility, this technique ensured that key topics related to the digitalization of the advertising industry and sustainability were covered. The interviews were conducted online due to the social distancing restrictions imposed during the Covid-19 pandemic, and an interview guide, which was adapted from previous research (Mokoena et al., 2021) and included open-ended questions designed to elicit practitioners' perceptions, experiences, and insights on digitalization and sustainability of the advertising profession and agencies, was used to outline the interview process.

To meet the implications of qualitative interviews for coherence, transparency, impact, and reliability, the four-point approach of defining a sample universe, deciding a sample size, devising a sample strategy, and

sourcing the sample presented by Robinson (2013) was adopted. The participants in this study consisted of seven female and two male advertising practitioners from local advertising agencies in Antalya, Türkiye. They were recruited through snowball sampling techniques. This sampling technique helps researchers choose research participants or data sources based on referrals from one source to another and is considered functional in the data collection process carried out with in-depth interview technique as it can obtain information about other people who can be interviewed throughout an interview (Yin, 2016, p. 95). Taking this into account, the initial participants were identified based on their roles in the advertising industry, and subsequent participants were referred to by the initial interviewees, ensuring a diverse and relevant sample.

Before the interviews, participants were provided with informed consent forms describing the purpose of the study, confidentiality measures, and their rights as participants. All interview sessions were held between June 12 and 30 in 2022 and lasted approximately 25-60 minutes. They were video recorded with each participant's consent for accurate data transcription. Each participant was interviewed once.

It was considered appropriate to terminate the research process after it was realized that data saturation was reached after the 9th interview. At the data saturation point, there were no new themes generated from the interview data. Data saturation, as indicated by data duplication or redundancy, requires the inclusion of new participants continuously until the dataset is complete (Bowen, 2008), and normatively thematic/data saturation means that data should continue to be collected until nothing new is produced (Green & Thorogood, 2014). The fact that the appropriate sample consists of participants who best represent or have knowledge of the research topic ensures efficient and effective saturation of categories with optimum quality data and minimum dross (Morse et al., 2002). As emphasized by Morse et al. (2002) the adequacy of sample size is measured by the depth of data rather than by frequencies.

In the process of collecting qualitative data, macro analyses were made after each interview, and the process of reaching saturation was followed. The interviews were transcribed verbatim and then transferred to the MAXQDA 2020 qualitative data analysis software where the data were categorized and coded by two researchers by adopting the thematic analysis method suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006). Within this scope, the data

were coded inductively, meaning that the themes and codes emerge from the raw data under repetitive examination and interpretation during the data analysis process (Chandra & Shang, 2019, p. 91). After the inductive coding process, whereby the raw interview data were organized and categorized through close reading and examination, the themes and codes presented in Table 1 came out. To enhance the rigor and trustworthiness of the study, triangulation was conducted by utilizing peer debriefing and multiple coders.

Table 1: Theme and codes emerged from the interview data

The study adhered to ethical guidelines, ensuring the confidentiality and anonymity of participants. Informed consent was obtained, and participants were assured that their participation was voluntary. To ensure the fulfilment of the ethical principles, ethical approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Board before the research was conducted. The research aimed to respect the dignity, privacy and rights of all participants involved.

Results

4.1. Overview of Participants

Key information about the advertising practitioners who voluntarily agreed to participate in the study is presented in the table below. The chronological order was made according to the date of the interview and the initials of the participants' first and last names were used to anonymize the participants' identity.

Table 2: Participants and Positions

4.2. Key Themes

The thematic analysis of the data obtained through interviews revealed several key themes which encapsulated the perceptions of advertising practitioners towards digitalization and its implications for the sustainability of the advertising profession and local agencies. To provide a richer context for the findings, representative quotes from participants are presented. They are selected to exemplify the diversity of perspectives and nuances captured during the interviews.

4.2.1. Theme 1: Changes and transformation brought by digitalization to the advertising sector

As in every field, digitalization has made its impact felt in the advertising sector, especially affecting practitioners working in this field. The changes

and transformations that will be examined in the first category of the study will be examined under the following subheadings.

4.2.1.1. Sectoral changes

"Although digitalization varies from person to person, it has also caused positive developments. From the employee side, I think it increases motivation. I think working at home is more convenient and comfortable for employees. I think the freedom to work at any time increases creativity" (P-1).

"Obviously, the sectoral impact was inevitable. Namely, the focus of this business has turned to freelancing and agency employees have been very affected by this situation. But I think the coordination within the agency was negatively affected. It was challenging in terms of task distribution, and it also challenged the management team in terms of supervision. The people who felt digitalization were not the clients, but rather those of us who created the work (P-2)."

"I did not observe a change because we have been a digital agency from the beginning. I guess we did not feel the change because we have always been digital" (P-3).

"I have been in advertising for 28 years. I can say that I have experienced a lot of change in the sector as someone who is in the business. At first, I started with magazine publishing and printed advertisements. The functioning was different then, of course, and many things have changed with digitalization over the past time. Antalya is a growing and expanding city and this is how I see the advertising sector" (P-4).

"I am a content creator for a destination marketing website, and I am also responsible for advertising content. I have been in advertising since 2006, when I first started, I was in magazine advertising and then I switched to digital" (P-5).

"You have to know and love technology; everything was easier in print media. I think it is more difficult to produce digitally. It is necessary to master all the innovations, to discover the consumer's behavior and what they like. I have been in this sector for 9 years, 7 of them in print and the last 2 in digital, so I can make comparisons. Digital expects you to constantly renew and improve yourself" (P-6).

"Our agency is a full-service agency, and we try to provide all services related to advertising. We are an agency that closely follows the changes in the sector, this is a newly established department and even the necessity to establish a social media department in this agency is an indication that there is a change in the sector" (P-7).

Participants stated that they are intensely affected by sectoral changes and that they strive to keep up with the changes. In general, it is possible to say that advertising practitioners are in an effort to adapt to the requirements of the digital age.

4.2.1.2. Changes in creative processes and advertising formats

"The organization you work for also has a great influence, and if it is an advertiser that develops and updates itself in advertising formats, it can automatically turn to digital, even if it is rare" (P-1)

"We direct our customers more towards digital. They come to us completely result-oriented, and their budgets are very low, so we want to reach more audiences with less money by investing in digital ads instead of spending more money on traditional advertising channels." (P-2).

"It is very valuable in the advertising industry to be able to see opportunities and make the right use of them. It is very important to adapt to digital, to understand digital, it is a very laborious job for our generation. Digitalization has brought society to a level that demands fast, consumes fast and is difficult to satisfy. To talk about the difference, there is faster consumption in digital, it is more volatile, more temporary. In digital, you must be more creative in a shorter period, and although it seems easier to reach the consumer, it is actually more difficult because competition is high and it is very, very difficult to win the attention of the consumer" (P-4).

"The most striking change in advertising formats is that digital demands constant change, we are faced with a demanding consumer audience, always looking for innovation, impatient and wanting to consume quickly" (P-5).

"The most striking change in advertising formats has been speed, people do not have the patience to wait for a long time, they have very little patience, you have to convey the maximum message in the shortest time" (P-6).

"Creative processes are changing and so are the designs in digital, there are quite a few differences between the graphics that were made when I started working here and the ones designed now. We want to use the possibilities offered by technology to the fullest. The graphics department improves itself every day and prepares designs that are moving and in the spirit of digital rather than static designs" (P-7).

"I can say that in creative processes, quick thinking and taking immediate action gained importance" (P-8).

The prominent change in advertising formats and creative processes can be called speed. Some of the features brought by the digital age have affected advertising practitioners and the way they work. In parallel with this, it can be concluded from the comments that the consumer has become more demanding and difficult to satisfy.

4.2.1.3. Organizational structure

"With digital media becoming so prominent, values are actually universalizing. The effect of digitalization is not only related to the pandemic, for example, we do not only serve Antalya, but many of my customers are also in Istanbul, for example" (P-1).

"The way we work can be called freelance. We are in the office on Mondays and Fridays, we plan and decide on the work, we can distribute the work. The other days we work freely. WhatsApp also has a great impact on running the business, we constantly talk in our work groups and exchange ideas. By using cloud systems, we can check the work of the designers and ask for revisions. In fact, we can easily access everything from anywhere" (P-2).

"Before Covid-19, I wanted to work independently of the location, but my partners did not accept this, and when the pandemic happened, we had to switch to this system. I am a manager against the concept of working hours, people should be able to live while working and work while living" (P-3).

In terms of organizational structure, it can be said that advertising practitioners have evolved into a more freelance way of working.

4.2.1.4. Advertising agencies and sustainability

"What is important for us in terms of sustainability is to evolve, change and adapt to the era. We realized this and changed our agency services. We think that doing sustainable business means following the trends of change and transformation well. Focusing on one area and nicheization is very important for us" (P-2).

"Sustainability depends on the establishment of a serious marketing network, the agency must constantly introduce itself to new clients, develop its client portfolio, without this, economic crises become inevitable. I think it is very important to establish ties based on good communication with clients for sustainability, to be an agency that is always recommended. Of course, it is also important to follow the sector closely and be a trend follower and even a new trend creator" (P-3).

"In order to be sustainable, advertising agencies should be able to adapt to the new era, they should closely follow the change, advertising does not end, it will always continue to exist in this system, but in what way? You should constantly check this, you should catch the spirit of the times and monitoring consumer insights closely. I think that the advertising sector will continuously grow and employment in this field will increase every year" (P-4).

"It is very difficult to influence and satisfy such an audience. In the past, brand advertisements used to be longer lasting, but there is no such thing today" (P-5).

"Advertising agencies should focus on new types of advertising to ensure their sustainability, it is essential to catch up with the age, but I don't think traditional advertising will ever end" (P-8).

"I think we have contributed to sustainability in the near term. The importance of social media is obvious today, you need to exist in that world for sustainability. For this, it is inevitable to have a good social media team. As a social media department, our only job is not to increase the number of followers or to increase interaction; in fact, we represent a corporate image in the virtual world. It is a serious matter to ensure the continuity of the brand image we have created." (P-9).

Advertising practitioners attribute the sustainability of and advertising agency to catching the spirit of the times and monitoring consumer insights closely. According to the participants, one of the inevitable conditions for success is to create a network by establishing a sustainable communication.

4.2.2. Theme 2: The effects of digitalization on the working conditions of advertising practitioners

4.2.2.1. Experiences in business life in the digital age, changing professional roles in business life with digitalization

"I am quite happy to work in the digital age. There are already different names for customer relations in our field. There is no sales director in a digital media agency, the boss usually does the selling. I think the flexibility of the working style increases efficiency" (P-1).

"Working in the digital age actually has many advantages, for example, when we outsource services, we share in the turnover. Instead of receiving a service fee, we receive an average of 10% to 15% profit share on the customers we bring in. We trust ourselves that much. It is also an advantage for the customer because he directly gives a share of the money he earns, so both sides win and are happy. I love working in the digital age and I consider myself lucky. Digital advertising experts or advertising experts who know advertising engines have gained importance. People who can manage ad engines and Facebook ad manager have come to the fore" (P-2).

"We have a slightly different understanding of the art director. In classical advertising, he plays the role of an implementer. In our case, the art director is like a monitor, he is the brains of the work at the head of the practitioners" (P-3).

"Working in the digital age was very difficult for our generation at first, and I employed young people to overcome this. The average age of the agency is very young, for example. To understand the new generation, I watched them, talked to them, learned a lot from them and I continue to learn. I think the new generation is very smart, practical and has a great sense of humor. As someone who is trying to keep up with digitalization, I feel lucky because I know the past of advertising and I am trying to adapt to the new age, and I can approach it in a hybrid way. Digitalization has changed and transformed many things and created new professional roles, for example, when I started working, there was no social media, so there was no such department or social media specialist." (P-4).

"New roles have emerged, of course, we didn't have a social media department before, now we have social media experts. That department is a different world, it is very important that the employees there are creative" (P-5).

"There are pros as well as cons of working in the digital age, of course, it depends on how you look at it. We use technology in a way that makes our work easier" (P-6).

"There have also been some changes in professional roles, for example, there was no digital marketing specialist a few years ago, brand management is a very new role. Coordination has gained importance today, statistics has gained importance in advertising, reading advertising statistics has become a separate field with the increase in digital. Fast consumption is becoming inevitable, a new platform is constantly emerging, such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, their popularity changes day by day, you need to understand the field to use these areas effectively" (P-7).

"For example, a new role that has emerged is the content producer, as advertising formats change, new professional roles emerge." (P-9).

Participants are eager to take their share of the change and transformation that digital brings to their fields. Based on the statements of the participants, it can be said that they are very pleased to be in the advertising sector in the digital age. They stated that new professional occupational groups emerged with the effects of digitalization in the field of advertising.

4.2.2.2. Changes in working conditions

"We have no more working hours, no more concept of space and time in our working conditions. There used to be a concept of working hours, now there is none. We have a free and independent working system. I think working 9-5 is not very comfortable for agency workers. When you look at productive working conditions, maybe they work less time from 9 to 12, but this can increase when they are at home" (P-2).

"Digital has many advantages, in fact, if we can break the habits, we can benefit from it to the maximum extent. You need to love digital, otherwise you will not be successful. It has also changed the way of doing business. Previously, when I went to a customer, we used to chat for 1.5-2 hours, first we would ask how they were doing and then we would talk about business, now everyone has a maximum of 15 minutes. Time is very precious, you must close the business in 10 minutes, otherwise the person in front of you will either get a phone call or a message. Everything has accelerated and our meeting times with advertisers have shortened considerably" (P-4).

"Honestly, there has not been much change in our working conditions, we keep the office culture alive, I do not find working from home efficient, I think employees have difficulty in focusing. Only our social media team worked from home for a short time during the pandemic" (P-4).

"So, working in the digital age actually brings many positive aspects. Everything should be done on site, home and work areas should be different. Private life and work life intertwine a lot when working from home" (P-5).

"There was a change in the way we work, sometimes in the form of working from home, but I didn't find it productive for myself, I went back to my office routine after a short time. I think it is very difficult to adapt at home, but it can be comfortable for some people. I think it depends on each person" (P-6).

"Digitalization has given us great comfort in terms of time and space. This is good on the one hand and bad on the other, since our job is social media, you must stay alert all the time, your phones should be on 24 hours a day, you should be able to intervene in any situation. Working from home is of course more flexible, but I have trouble focusing, when you are at home you are always on your phone and computer, there is not much opportunity to socialize" (P-7).

"The way we work has changed, of course we are more active, we go to the customer's feet, we do shootings, etc. In traditional advertising, ads are prepared for a more general audience, while in digital there is more individual targeting. In fact, digitalization is not the only reason for the changes in the way of working, but the pandemic period we went through was also effective and many sectors switched to working from home. In my opinion, we cannot say that working from home is good or working in the office is more efficient. Hybrid working can be based on the needs and needs of the person. The expectations and wishes of the people you work with are very important, for example, if the advertiser wants to see you as an interlocutor when they come to the office, you should be there" (P-8).

"I actually like working both in a home office and in an agency. We are always out shooting, so there is no distinction for me. There is such a change in the way of doing business that segmenting the target audience and targeting according to customer potential is possible in digital." (P-9).

Participants are divided on the change in working conditions. While some of them talk about the advantages of working in a home office, others believe that the office culture should be kept alive, and that private life and workspace should be separate. Advertising practitioners agree that agencies should adapt to flexible working conditions for sustainability.

4.2.2.3. Attitudes and thoughts of advertising practitioners about the future

"The customer sees opportunities more as a creative idea, as making money, not social responsibility. In other words, an agency can manage social media very well for the client, or make a very good social responsibility campaign, but if it doesn't make money, the client starts to grumble after 3 months. We saw the opportunities for the future in health tourism and that's where we turned. We should contribute to our clients' trade" (P-2).

"In the future, the advertising sector will grow unfortunately, I don't like this very much because the capitalist order is consolidating its throne in the world day by day. There will always be a need for advertisers to make this wheel work. To be a leader in the sector, you need to understand the world well, just knowing marketing is definitely not enough for sustainable advertising. We need to understand politics, sports, hobbies; we need to know the consumer and understand the lives of the people we are addressing." (P-3).

"In the future, the jobs of advertising practitioners will be easier, they have a great power at their disposal, the new generation was born into the digital age, I don't think they will have difficulties, we had more difficulties as a generation in between" (P-5).

"I think the new generation will achieve great things in the field of advertising, I think they will constantly raise the bar because they are very creative and intelligent, I observe this in my fellow advertising interns who started working here. They are luckier than us because they were exposed to a digital world at an early age" (P-6).

"I think traditional advertising will gradually end in the coming years; advertising will completely shift to digital. Even the commercials that are shot rather than television commercials will be published on social media. More people will be reached with lower costs. In the future, advertising practitioners are waiting for surprises, everything can happen at any moment, change, transform, today's popular applications may be deleted, completely different technologies or applications may come instead, all of these are possible, so what will advertisers do to survive, of course, they will discover and recognize innovations before anyone else and adapt their advertising formats accordingly. Change is inevitable in our field, and I think those who keep up with this change will be the ones who guarantee success." (P-7).

Participants are hopeful about the future of advertising and think that the potential of the sector is high. It can be said that they agree that the way for advertising agencies to be sustainable is to adapt to the digital age, to follow trends closely and to reach especially new generation consumers through the right channels.

4.2.3. Theme 3: Determining the changes in the point of reaching consumers

4.2.3.1. Technology and consumer relationship

"I can persuade people much more easily in face-to-face communication. Sales depends on communication; this is not possible on the web" (P-1).

"In fact, we are experiencing many advantages of technology, but this situation also has disadvantages, for example, the advertiser can give too many revisions. When we do the work and deliver it to the customer, he can easily ask for corrections repeatedly with requests such as this should be like this or that, but he does not realize that this is an operation work in the back. To prevent this convenience, we made it a rule for clients to give revisions and set a 48-

hour deadline. In other words, the client cannot request a change different from the requested change before 48 hours have passed after a revision, and this is clearly written in the contract we make before starting work." (P-2).

"Of course, technology affects where you communicate with the consumer. I think reference-based ads are very important. It is important to provide this in digital media, Turkey is adapting to digital media day by day. You have to attract the attention of the consumer in 3 seconds on social media, whereas in the past you had to explain your problem in an advertisement movie. As the channels change, the formats inevitably change. We are now in an age of fast consumption and advertising must adapt to this" (P-3).

"Interaction with consumers has changed, people who you used to see as friends are now approaching each other with a purely profit and loss calculation, with an eye to what this person can bring me" (P-4)

"Consumers are impatient and demanding in general. It is now impossible to explain things to them at length, we try to reach them with visuals and reach an agreement. We guide the incoming customer that they should prefer digital in the advertisement creation process" (P-5).

"As the use of technology increases, we actually find a more impatient consumer who is always waiting for more. More creative works are expected from advertisers, and this is an element of pressure. In terms of technology, we should not stick to only one thing, we should turn to multiple areas. For example, there was no platform called metaverse, but suddenly there was, and people are flocking to it, we need to catch up" (P-7).

"In the coming period, the consumer will choose more, they will skip the empty ads, feedback will become more important. Consumers will have the luxury of seeing ads in the areas they want to see; it will be under the control of the consumer and reaching the consumer will not be as easy as it is today" (P-8).

"Such rapid development of technology makes change inevitable. If we think in terms of social media advertising, I think that each of us will turn into a content producer and an advertiser over time. Today there is a profession called influencer, and one day we will all be influencers in our own way. Just like word-of-mouth marketing, customer reviews are very important in the digital age, and people pay attention to real consumer experiences before shopping. We are becoming too active; we need to avoid trivialization. Individualized advertising will increase in the future. Brands will try to turn each consumer into a brand ambassador. This is done through some practices, for example, e-commerce brands give incentives such as coupons, discount rates, gifts to customers who create and share collections, and these will increase. I think word-of-mouth marketing in the classical sense is done through comments in digital. Sharing experiences is essential. These experiences have an aspect that also develops brands, in fact, they are a very important source of communication with the customer. It is also very important in creating brand loyalty." (P-9)

Advertising practitioners, who stated that there have been changes in the understanding of advertising in parallel with the development and change in

technology, emphasized that technology has caused some negative consequences as well as positive aspects. The point emphasized is that the consumer is now in control.

4.2.3.2. The role of technology in advertising creation processes

"We are making technological investments. We bought a 3D camera from Germany and made a 360-degree technology investment in physical terms, and it is a device that very few agencies in Antalya have. We are making technological investments like this" (P-2).

"For the last 15 years, technology has been fully integrated into the business. We started to use 2D or 3D technologies as a small agency in Antalya. We were able to produce animated films for a brand like the World Bank. In the past, such a brand would not prefer to work with a small agency like us. Digitization has strengthened the competitive environment, with smaller boutique agencies starting to gain some advantages over the advertising giants. Although digitalization has made the way of doing business easier, creating, producing and producing original content are still the most difficult aspects of the job. Whether you have the technology you want, it is difficult if you do not have a creative team" (P-3).

"Of course, there has been a change in our ad creation processes. Previously, the shootings were done with slower, larger cameras, now it is possible to shoot very professionally with a phone as big as a palm. As an agency, we constantly invest in technology, buy new computers, acquire programs for our graphics department. You must spend money to constantly pursue innovation, to earn money to produce. There is an investment in both technology and innovation" (P-4).

"We had to be faster in interacting with consumers. We have a consumer who is easily bored and dissatisfied. It is possible to reach more consumers with one click, it is necessary to use technology effectively to reach consumers. Advertisers and consumers alike attach great importance to visuality, especially videos and reels. You can do many things digitally that you cannot do in the print media, you are freer" (P-5).

"The agency is constantly investing in technology. There is investment in the programs, the phone and computer were bought" (P-9).

Advertising practitioners have inevitably emphasized the constant investment in technology. While mentioning the decisive power of technology in advertising production processes, they also mentioned that technology creates an area of freedom.

Discussion

Unprecedented technological advances across the globe have set the stage for traditional advertising to evolve and struggle to keep pace with change (Childers et al., 2018; Kumar & Gupta, 2016). To reveal this change, recent research has been conducted with advertising professionals in different

countries around the world. As part of a long-standing tradition of academic research on advertising agencies, this study provides valuable insights into the strategies of local advertising agencies in Antalya to adapt to the changing digital world and become sustainable.

The findings of this study also support Lee and Lau's (2018) observations that producing ads in the digital space goes beyond the traditional advertising space and that the consumer actively participates in this process. In addition, research on the advertising industry generally shows that in order for advertising agencies around the world to adapt to an environment that is undergoing rapid and digital revolutionary changes, agency employees need to constantly update themselves with intense effort (Bilby & Kunal, 2017; Bilby et al., 2019; Kitchen & Tourky, 2015; Parker et al., 2017; Stipp, 2016; Zimand Sheiner & Earon, 2019). In this sense, the results of this study also support previous studies.

Participants to a study by Childers et al. (2018) agree that everyone now needs to think digitally to keep up with the times and ensure agency sustainability. The results of this study are similar; respondents are hopeful about the future of advertising and see high potential for the industry. It can be said that they agree that the way for advertising agencies to be sustainable is to adapt to the digital age, to follow trends closely and especially to reach new generation consumers through the right channels.

The opinions of advertising professionals who participated in this research regarding technology are similar to the Cheevasart (2017)'s research results. As a result of both studies, technology is described as a double-edged sword that has both advantages and disadvantages depending on how it is used. According to advertisers, the growth and development of technology in the digital age was another challenge and test of working in the industry. A similar conclusion is "Technology no longer is used just to produce campaign materials; It is used as an input that influences the development of ideas" (Stuhlfaut & Windels, 2017).

They stated that new professional occupational groups emerged with the effects of digitalization in the field of advertising. Participants are divided on the change in working conditions. While some of them talk about the advantages of working in a home office, others believe that the office culture should be kept alive, and that private life and workspace should be separate. Advertising practitioners agree that agencies should adapt to flexible working conditions for sustainability. In a recent study conducted for

freelance advertising practitioners, social isolation and intense competition on digital platforms came to the fore among the main problems of freelance work (Yıldız, 2022). In terms of organizational structure, it can be said that advertising practitioners have evolved into a more freelance way of working.

Agencies are drivers of marketing because they have been described as ‘operating in the engine room of a panoptic marketing system’ (Hackley, 2002). Although this study focuses on local advertising agencies, the findings and implications may also be of interest for the global advertising industry. In future studies, a comparison of local and global advertising agencies' understanding of sustainability may be suggested.

Conclusion

This research delves into the transformative landscape of the advertising industry in Antalya, shedding light on the dynamic challenges and opportunities brought about by unprecedented technological advances. The study, conducted with advertising professionals at local agencies, underscores the necessity for adaptation to the rapidly changing digital environment for sustained relevance and success. The current study emphasizes the pivotal role of continuous learning and adaptation for advertising agencies worldwide. The digital space demands a shift beyond traditional advertising paradigms, involving active consumer participation in the advertising process. The study highlights the dual nature of technology, presenting both advantages and challenges. Technology, once confined to the production of campaign materials, now plays a transformative role in shaping ideas within industry. The emergence of new professional occupational groups, coupled with the evolution of working conditions, reflects the industry's adaptability to the digital age. Considering these conclusions, future research endeavors may explore a comparative analysis between local and global advertising agencies, providing valuable insights into their distinct approaches to sustainability. This study contributes to the ongoing discourse on the transformative impact of technology in advertising and paves the way for further exploration into the evolving dynamics of the global advertising industry.

The current paper is not free of limitations. The first limitation is that the research depended on the qualitative data obtained from the advertising professionals working in the local advertising agencies in Antalya. Similarly, the qualitative studies make deductions from interpretative and context-dependent findings, although the qualitative data provide rich insights into

the experiences and perceptions of the advertising professionals. Another limitation derived from the self-reported data, which may be subject to biases such as social desirability bias or recall bias. The study also included limitations due to the way the research was conducted. As the data were obtained via online meeting with the participants, this may yield the lack of the seriousness of the scientific data collection process. Despite these limitations, the current research offers valuable insights into the perceptions of the advertising professionals regarding the future of the advertising sector and sustainability issues, and suggestions for academics, practitioners, and professionals.

Supplementary Materials

Table 1. Theme and codes emerged from the interview data

Main Themes	*Themes and Codes*
Consequences on industry	Theme 1. Changes and transformations brought by digitalization to the advertising industry Code 1: Sectoral changes Code 2: Changes in creative process and ad formats Code 3: Organizational structure Code 4: Advertising agencies and sustainability
Consequences regarding working conditions	Theme 2. The effects of digitalization on the working conditions of advertising practitioners Code 1: Experiences in business life and professional roles in the digital age Code 2: Changes in working conditions Code 3: Attitudes and thoughts of advertising practitioners about the future
Consequences in reaching consumers	Theme 3. Determining the changes in the point of reaching the consumers Code 1: Technology and consumer relationship Code 2: The role of technology in advertising creation process

Table 2. Participants and Positions

Participant	*Interview Date*	*Position*
(P-1)	12.05.2022	Client Relationships Manager
(P-2)	12.05.2022	Co-Chair of the Agency
(P-3)	14.05.2022	Co-Chair of the Agency
(P-4)	20.05.2022	Advertising Coordinator
(P-5)	22.05.2022	Advertising Editor
(P-6)	24.05.2022	Advertising Editor
(P-7)	28.05.2022	Social Media Expert
(P-8)	30.05.2022	Digital Marketing Expert
(P-9)	30.05.2022	Social Media Expert

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