

Marketers look beyond ads for new ways to use online video

Dianna Dilworth March 30, 2009

As Google's YouTube and AOL and Yahoo videos gain popularity, brands are looking for ways to monetize online video.

"Advertisers who used to get a lot of reach by buying spots on prime time TV are finding that they are reaching less of an audience, so they are looking for new opportunities, especially with younger audiences," said Usha Srinivasan, VP of product marketing at Vobile, which helps advertisers identify user-generated content to ensure that ads are safe against the content.

Innovid recently launched a new platform that lets advertisers, publishers and content producers create brand integration in video content that is interactive. With it, a brand can superimpose a product into the content. For example, a T-shirt or a product can be placed into the video after the video is shot. The brand also can include a call to action that encourages the viewer to click on the product for more information.

Warner Brothers worked with Innovid to promote the film Watchmen during the online video series, Kyle Piccolo. The Kyle Piccolo episodes were filled with interactive, clickable Easter eggs, linking viewers and fans to secret Watchmen files, images and viral Web sites. The campaign reached more than 1 million views in two weeks.

"The Internet is an engaging and interactive medium, but video can be very static," said Zvika Netter, CEO and co-founder of Innovid. "We are looking at video as a canvas that can be turned into something where the brand can integrate their message in a dynamic way."

Besides product integration, online video advertising is being used as a tool for entertainment and information.

"Online video is a platform with an interesting intersection of entertainment and information," said Jeff Whattcott, SVP of marketing at BrightCove. "This kind of infotainment is very cutting-edge."

BrightCove also is working to help brands leverage advertising in online video. The technology provider works with The San Diego Zoo, Rhode Island School of Design, The New York Times and Boston.com.

The Rhode Island School of Design uses videos with teachers telling their personal stories to make the school more inviting.

"It's way better than a brochure with leafy photos and some pretty buildings," added Whattcott."