

## Buying Online Video: Clip Demos vs. Site Demos

By Jaffer Ali

Sure, online video is all the rage. But pity the poor media buyer who now has to sort through a virtually limitless channel lineup.

The traditional way online advertising is bought involves matching site demographics with the target demos of the advertiser. The goal is always the same—get one's brand in front of the right audience. What better way to do this than to identify each site's traffic, then hope your banner hits its mark?

But if you're buying pre-roll video advertising, the old rules no longer apply.

Video portals feature tens of thousands of video clips. Viewers watching a Liberace clip will certainly differ from those watching a White Stripes video. But if your pre-roll ad schedule is based on site demographics, your ad will run before *both* videos, guaranteeing the relative worthlessness of at least one—and perhaps both—of those impressions.

The sober truth is that buying video based upon site demographics misses the mark more often than not. The video sites that generate the most views—like You Tube, Metacafe, VEOH, Yahoo, MSN and MySpace—are the least efficient advertising vehicles by design. They offer something for everyone, but offer virtually no control over your target audience.

If you are trying to reach women 18-49, why pay premium prices for pre-roll and have your brand in front of teenage boys? Obviously you shouldn't, and the technology exists so you no longer have to. It's now possible to target specific clips to match their audience demos to specific advertiser messages.

You achieve this by putting viewer predisposition to work for you. Instead of hoping your pre-roll demos match the video, simply reverse the established sequence of events and use the power of video to identify and deliver the target audience. In this scenario, the viewer comes to you.

Each video clip involves a viewer self-selection process. Essentially, viewers choose which videos they want to watch. My son and I routinely visit You Tube. But are we watching the same clips? Of course not.

Agencies and advertisers have been targeting and buying specific demos on television for years. This same approach can now be applied to online video advertising, because video clips are, in a sense, like individual cable or television shows. A video portal is like a cable system with a multitude of channels and a multitude of "shows."

Common sense dictates, and history confirms, that if an advertiser wishes to target a demographic AND use video, it makes more sense to target the clip demo than the site demo, whenever possible.

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