

# Was That An Ad?

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The convergence of editorial content and entertainment content in advertising is stronger than ever. Don't expect it to go away anytime soon.

## A quick background

In the past, advertising and branding a product was easier because there wasn't nearly the amount of competition, and not nearly the amount of media outlets. In today's crowded marketplace, advertisers are struggling to rise above the clutter. Statistics say that people are exposed to thousands of advertising messages daily. Slowly but surely, consumers are building up an immunity to advertising.

RED-TAG SPECIAL! NEVER- BEFORE SEEN! THIS WEEK ONLY!



These and other phrases might have meant something to consumers in the past, but not any more, the human mind has been inundated so much by over-promising and under-delivering, they have all but lost their impact.

Traditional big media (tv, radio, print, outdoor) used to have a hold on the advertising / branding market. If you wanted to sell a new product, you ran a commercial on prime time (only 3 networks), and put a coupon in the newspaper.

## Today

To get into the mindset of today's consumer, many advertisers are creeping into the editorial and entertainment outlets. Let's take a few examples:

*Men in Black II* - This movie is filled with product placements.

*Video Games* - Take a look at your kid's PlayStation games. You'll see product logos all over the screens.

*Banner ads* - The traditional banner ads weren't working. Web surfers would simply ignore that part of the screen intended for advertising. Now we are seeing sponsored sections that include banner ads, skyscraper ads (on the side of the page), pop-ups, and popunders that simply can't be ignored.

*American Idol* - This hot TV show on Fox has two main sponsors (Coke and Ford) whose products are incorporated into the show's content. There's even talk of a new show without commercials – it will be totally supported by product placement.

*Magazines* - Some magazines won't publish editorial content (press releases) without some sort of sponsorship or ad buy. This practice is dangerous because readers will quickly lose confidence in that particular publication if they were to find out.

What does this 'convergence' mean for us, the average consumer? We will have to accept advertising and branding into more and more aspects of our life. Do we have to like it? No. Do we have to deal with it? Yes.

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