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Tablet advertising – the look on best practices, design patterns and methods

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Johdon yhteenveto

Tabletit ovat historian nopeimmin yleistynyt kulutuselektronikkasegmentti.

Niiden kiinnostavuutta uutena mainosalustana lisäävät tablettien käyttötottumukset ja lukijoiden suhtautuminen tablettilehtien mainontaan. Markkinointitutkimukset – tieteellistä tutkimusta on vielä vähän – viittaavat siihen, että tabletteja käytetään paljon lehtimedian lukemiseen ja lukijat suhtautuvat mainoksiin tablettijulkaisuissa vastaanottavaisesti – etenkin, jos mainokset on suunniteltu varta vasten tälle alustalle ja sille ominaisten konventioiden mukaisesti.

Tässä katsauksessa pyritään määrittelemään noita konventioita olemassa olevaan markkinointitutkimukseen pohjaten ja antamaan suosituksia hyvistä käytännöistä tablettilehtien mainosten suunnittelussa.

Executive Summary

Tablet computers are the fastest growing segment of consumer electronics ever.

Advantages for advertisers lay not only in growth but in the way the audiences use tablets and how users react to advertisements in the tablet media. Research – mostly marketing research, scientific research is yet scarce – suggests that tablets are not only used mainly for media, but users are also receptive towards ads in tablet, especially if the ads are designed using platform specific design patterns.

This paper defines those patterns based on marketing research and usability studies and gives recommendations for good practices.

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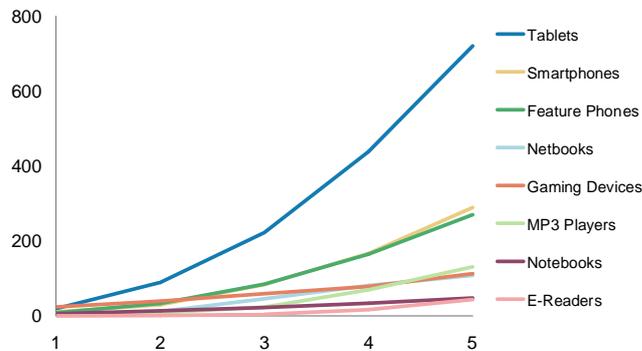
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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

Gyro	Gyroscope, a device in iPad for measuring orientation around three axes
SFP	Straight From Print, ad as a print replica
SFPplus	Straight From Print, ad as a print replica with enhancements
DFT	Designed For Tablet, ad designed to tablet, but without multimedia
EFT	Enhanced For Tablet, ad designed to tablet, with multimedia

1 Background

Marketing research predicts that over half of Internet users will use Internet via their tablet computers by 2015. Tablet devices are the fastest growing segment of consumer electronics in history, even compared with the MP3 devices and cell phones (Morganstanley 2012).



Source: Gartner, IDC, Company Data, Morgan Stanley Research

Graph 1. Cumulative shipments of mobile devices in first five years.

Tablets are not yet mainstream media, but their influence is growing fast (Cochen 2012; Robinson 2012). This new platform delivers future opportunities for advertisers, not only because of the growth, but because tablets are used by consumers and they are geared for media use. In addition, many marketing studies agree that tablet users have a positive attitude towards advertising; they consider advertisements as an interesting part of content in tablet publications and they respond actively to ads.

Tablet ads are proving to be more engaging than typical mobile and web campaigns (Emarketer 2012; Ignitionone 2012). Ads are noticed and their click-rates are high, even double compared to mobile advertising, readers interact with tablet ads (Iab 2012; Nielsencompany 2012; Garcia 2012) – studies claim that this is true especially in ads that have been designed particularly for the tablets (Condénast 2010).

In the absence of real scientific research this paper looks at the existing marketing and usability research of tablet advertising and strives to extract common and valid points from it. Task is to list design practices, -patterns and -methods that have been found effective.

“The tablet space is something everyone should be learning as much about as they can because it's taking over these other media experiences like TV, email, surfing the web” instructs Alan Cochen, CEO of ad agency OMD Worldwide (Cochen 2012).

1.1 Personal media device has content that competes other daily

Tablets are very personal devices (Bonniere 2011; Nesamoney 2012) and they tend to be used in the evening (Google 2011b) and specially for media consumption. Google research of 5000 tablet users summarizes: “Tablets are for fun, entertainment, relaxation, while laptops are for work” (Google 2011a).

Bonnier research points out that the decision process for engaging with a digital magazine is fundamentally different than with a printed magazine. Users don't think what to read before the grab a tablet – unlike what they do with print – therefore newspapers and magazines are competing with other apps and with each other about attention every time a user starts to use a tablet. (Bonnier 2011)

Tablet is very easy to take hold of to check something: one growing trend is multi-screening as almost half of the tablet users in US use tablets daily while watching TV..People also tend to check email (57 %), visit social media (44 %) and surf for unrelated info (44 %) but also search info related to program they are watching (29 %) and for products they saw in the ads (19 %) (Nielsencompany 2011, 2, 8).

1.2 Positive attitude towards ads

Research by Bonnier and Cp+B (2011) found out that advertising, when relevant to the content and the user's own interests, is a welcomed part of the magazine. Participants did not consider advertising as an interruptive element, but something that adds value to the magazines.

Condé Nast (2010) tablet survey found similar results: “readers expected to find ads in digital magazines and expressed that their inclusion was an enhancement to the experience”. Orlando Sentinel study agrees: approximately one third of surveyed tablet owners found advertisements in tablets “eye-catching”, “unique and interesting” (Sentinel 2012)

1.3 Types of ads

American Association of Magazine Media and *IDEAlliance* have proposed the following classification of ad types on tablets:

SFP (Straight From Print): Advertising content where the page on the screen looks exactly like (or is a replica of) the print page, with no interactive enhancements except for the active links.

SFPplus (Straight From Print Enhanced): Advertising content where the page on the screen looks exactly like the print page with some interactive enhancements (beyond activation of links). □

DFT (Designed For Tablet): Advertising content with no interactive enhancements except for the active links, where the page on the screen has been re-designed specifically for reading on the tablet and is meant to be displayed at 100 percent (that is, there is no need to tap and zoom).

EFT (Enhanced For Tablet): Advertising content where enhancements and bonus content has been added to DFT content to more fully utilize the tablet medium (e.g., hotspots, photo slide shows, video, audio, in-app browser). (Kennedy 2012)

In Finland the major ad form in tablets is still the SFP-type, since in November 2012 there are just a few commercial tablet publications that allow content that takes and advantage of special interactive features available for tablets i.e. the EFT-class.

In fact, *Kärkimediat*, which is the main distributor of ads in Finnish media, has instructed ad agencies to use only vertical JPEG or PNG for a format for tablet ads – except for *Helsingin Sanomat* for which (quite vaguely) “Rich media [is] possible”. In November 2012 there are two additional newspapers, which allow rich media (Kärkimedia 2012). WHICH ADD

Kantar Media survey implies that rich media in tablet ads is not a standard in the United States either. However, there are certain ad groups like tech and automobile that use it more often than other groups, but in the whole interactive ads are a minority. Kantar notes also that there are certain categories that are all together missing from tablets like medical ads (Kantarmedia 2012).

The lack of standards and tools to produce interactive ads are also a known problem in USA, but situation is expected to be improved when HTML5-tools become standard (ibid.) and when audiences for tablet publication grow.

2 Design patterns and good practices

2.1 Highly visual, simple full-page ad is effective

Highly scoring tablet ads in Time-McCann research did not have much text, but they had bold, clean graphics (Morrison 2010). Diaz Nesamoney from *Jivox Corp* claims that here is even a special expectation for this kind of highly visual ad type in tablets (Nesamoney 2012).

Big high quality pictures certainly look better in an iPad display than in printed paper, but it is difficult to say how sustainable this visual trend of clear and bold “lifestyle ads” will stay when tablet use is mainstreaming – and how this trend works across different magazine concepts. But it is a safe policy to avoid cluttered ad designs in tablets, specially those web-type layouts where many buttons compete with each other: emphasizing everything equals emphasizing nothing (Heikkilä 2012; Morrison 2010).



Picture 1. Two ads published in the Wired iPad edition 12/2012. If there is an expectation of visibility bold and simple, and uncluttered ads in tablets, Sonos has answered it better here than Finlux.

2.2 EFT-type ads get more attention

Several marketing studies indicate that there are increased opportunities for engagement by using rich media like video, slide shows, 360-degree views, photo galleries and links (Condénast 2010; Iab 2011; Onswipe 2012).

One of the most convincing research is by Affinity, a marketing and media research company specializing in advertising effectiveness and audience measurement. Affinity has been polling reader response of print and tablet ads comparing effectiveness of 4000 ads in their VISTA service and reports that action scores are much more higher in iPad ads than in print ads – due to interactivity and creative use of rich media. The best liked features were 3D views (92 %) and video (88 %) (Affinity 2011; Robinson 2012).

But like with fondness for big visual ads. we can not be sure if “is this a honeymoon effect or is this a trend over time. As tablets become mainstream, will those recall and action scores continue to skew higher?”(Robinson 2012).

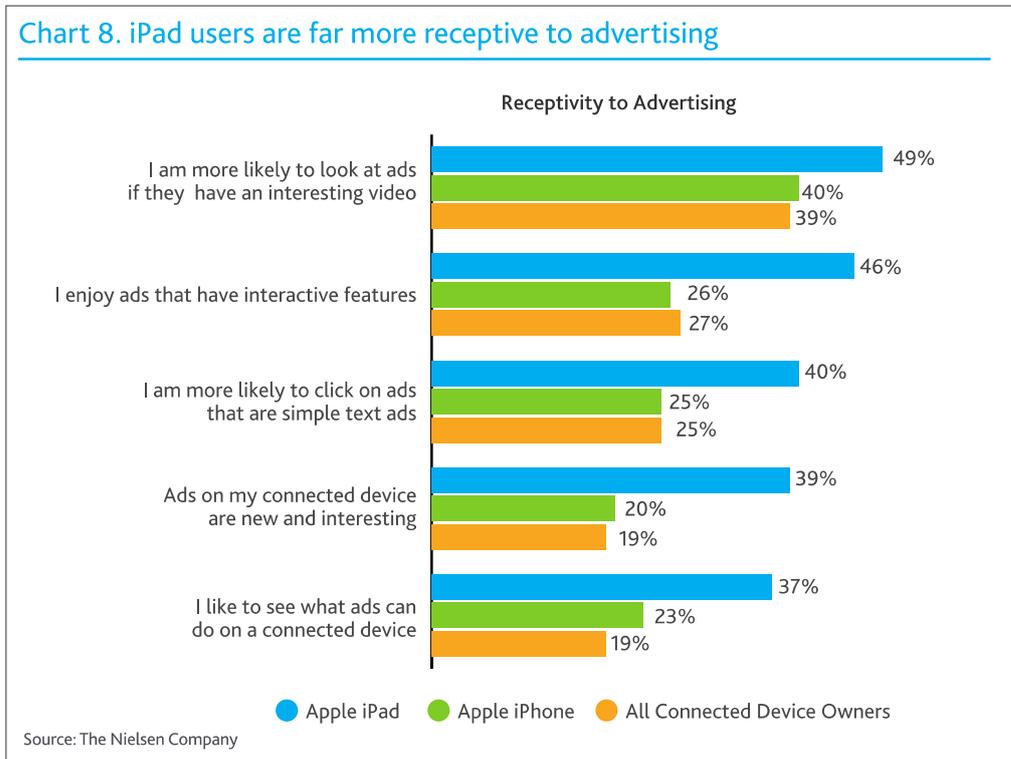
Obviously users should have at least something to do with the ad: to be able to move within the ad using interactive elements (Morrison 2010), to use links inside the ad. It is questionable whether the user should be directed outside the ad. Nielsen has found that majority of readers do not prefer to be taken outside of the ad (Yahoo 2012).

If there are outside links, a special HTML5 landing page could be considered (Iab 2011, 17). There is positively no point to link to flash content from iPad. Landing pages are an important

part of the rich media/flash campaigns on the web; there is no reason why tablets should be exception.

With or without links, tablet ads should try actively to entertain, engage and educate (Nesamoney 2012) and rich media is a tool for that.

According to Nielsen survey, iPad-users are more receptive for EFT-type -ads than other “connected device owners” (see table 1).



Graph 2. Connected Devices Playbook -study by Nielsen has researched 5000 tablet users and claims that iPad users enjoy more interactive features in ads than other connected device users (Nielsencompany 2010). Same study found out that iPad users are more likely to make purchase after viewing an ad (24 % vs 10 %).

2.3 Think of platform specific features

It is reasonable to reflect upon tablet specific user interface (UI) very early in the design process (Iab 2011): for example, how to tap the possibilities of horizontal and vertical orientation, gyro, accelerometer, GPS and swiping. (Aimia 2011, 18; Onswipe 2012). It is a good practice to make changes to content in vertical and horizontal orientation (Kantarmedia 2012), to offer different, more detailed pictures for example, not just same content with different lay-out.

Plain SFP-ad is not the best solution to get attention. “Re-purposing video or creative used for other mediums is not suggested” (Condénast 2010). See pictures 2–6 for examples of EFT-type ads, which suggest that new creative narratives which build on platform specific features are being developed by advertising agencies.



Picture 2. Simple Tic Tac ad plays music when shaken.



Picture 3. Advanced use of the accelerometer and gyro in the Audi ad (<http://vimeo.com/36498434#>).



Picture 4. Extensive media richness and platform specific features used in VISA ad (<http://vimeo.com/36498434#>).



Picture 5. Print and digital media combined in the famous Lexus advertisement (<http://youtu.be/hckCBO2eezM>).

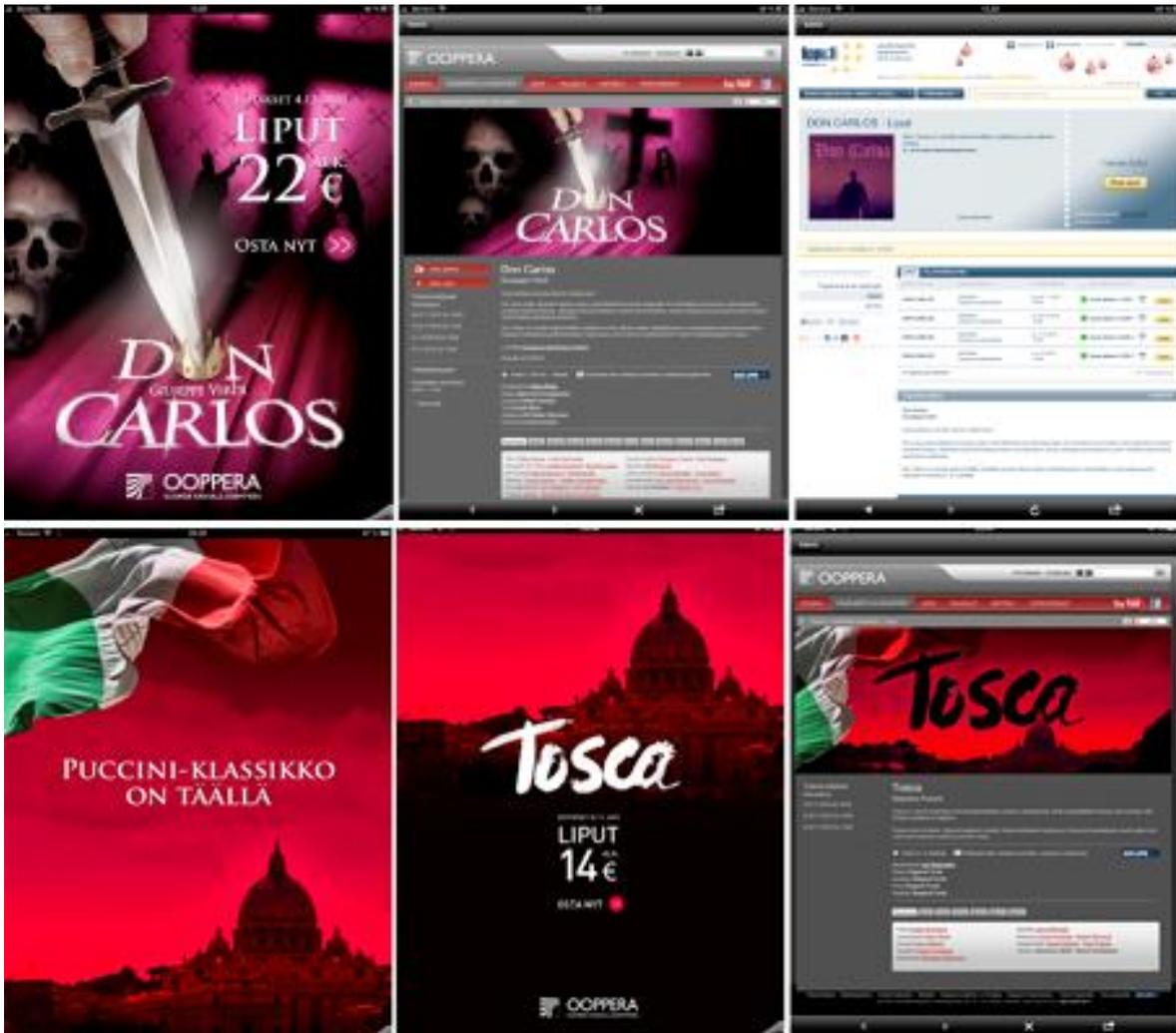


Picture 6. Cannes awarded ad for an insurance company makes clever use of gestures to get attention, swiping does not change the page as expected but crashes the car.
(<http://vimeo.com/41999684#>).

One platform specific feature that opens possibilities for advertisers compared to print ads is the possibility for gathering automatic readership data. For example Condé Nast has introduced in spring 2012 basic metrics which include magazines in iPad and Kindle Fire. The system can report “how many readers accessed its individual ad, the total number of times that ad was displayed, the average time readers spent on it, and how all those results compare with the issue's advertising as a whole” (Ives 2012).

2.4 Enable direct buying action

Brands that enabled a user to directly access and purchase the featured product succeeded better than companies, which offered homepage links alone. “Ads that included clear calls to action and cues on how to engage (...) were more effective” (Condénast 2010).



Picture 8. Finnish National Opera tickets can be bought without leaving the visually impressive environment of the iPad ad. (HS iPad edition October 2012).

2.5 Tell a story

The most remembered ads contained some kinds of narratives. Tablet makes it possible to tell a brand's story in more depth than in print (Aimia 2011, 18; Condénast 2010; Garcia 2012). Interactivity creates new possibilities to take reader into the ad, but this requires professionalism. Just a single video window will not do it.



Picture 9. Finnish logistics company Itella emphasizes the point by telling the story with HTML5 animation (HS iPad edition November 2012).

2.6 Ad should be recognized as an ad

“In a tablet environment, each page stands alone and there’s less context to help the reader orient herself.” Therefore “there should be clear visual distinctions between ads and edit, and both need to add value to the user experience”. (Bonnier 2011)

2.7 Remember touch screen ergonomics

Design for the finger. Check the appropriate size (big!) and the optimal positioning of touch areas. Make it clear where to touch. (Heikkilä 2012). Use touch areas as entry points deeper into the ad (Morrison 2010). Guide user with icons etc. as this is still a new platform and can be unfamiliar for some customers. (Aimia 2011, 18). Make it clear when and where to take action and make call-to-action attractive (Yahoo 2012).

2.8 Avoid uncalled actions

Tablet newspaper and magazine should appreciate readers’ reading flow. There can be flickering banners and flashing strobo-effects in the web (Aimia 2011, 17) but not in tablet publications. Garcia (2012) recommend to avoid “in-your-face” promotion, instead ad should associate the brand with enjoyable content. Even automatically starting videos are questionable. On the other hand it could be concluded that light HTML 5 animation, where just some smaller part of the picture is moving, would not be seen as obtrusive as a noisy video where everything is on the move.

2.9 Keep file size down

Rich media can easily become a burden for the whole app. Check limitations, use tiled backgrounds etc to avoid bloated size. *Aimia* suggests 1.2 MB for a page limit (Aimia 2011, 18). *Kärkimedia* sets limit to 1 MB (Kärkimedia 2012).

2.10 Use social media with appropriate practices

Let consumers connect with their social networks (Onswipe 2012).

2.11 Make it easy for the advertiser

Give specific instructions and requirements. Consider publishing templates that a publisher can use for tablet ad specification or offer other assistance. HTML5 is a novel and emerging format; there is no tradition of established software solutions for it.

2.12 Ad is a landmark within publication

The few interactive tablet ads in newspapers in Finland rely on *Richie* as an ad platform. *Richie* is a platform made by MK&C, a Finnish software proprietor. In this implementation all ads are dynamic i.e. they have no fixed position in a newspaper – they are shown in frequencies. This can be problematic since ads act also as navigational landmarks, and visual landmarks are an important part of the user experience in tablet publication environment (Heikkilä 2012). A moving landmark is undoubtedly confusing, even an oxymoron, therefore ads should be fixed. This has been also noted in tablet newspapers testing made by Juhani Mykkänen with HS iPad version (Mykkänen 2011)

Dynamic ads are also quite questionable from an archiving point of view: if one looks today for example at an iPad edition of *Helsingin Sanomat* published ten months ago there are a lot of ads that advertise products of the present day. If advertisements are to be considered an integral part of the publication-experience, the 0 month old publication should look different than today.

3 Conclusions

In order to benefit from tablet ad platform

- Finnish media should use more techniques that makes it possible to use also other than static content and issue better specifications about formats involved.
- Advertisers and ad agencies should understand new design patterns and intentionally gather experiences and build know-how of this emerging platform.

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