National College of Ireland

Face the Facts

An eye-tracking study investigating how Irish users engage with advertising and media on Facebook

Carried out on behalf of Mulley Communications

June 2010

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# Table of Contents

1. **Introduction** .................................................................................................................3

2. **Background to Study** ....................................................................................................5
   2.1 National College of Ireland.......................................................................................... 5
   2.2 Centre for Research and Innovation in Learning and Teaching .................................... 5
   2.3 The National e-Learning Laboratory (NELL) ............................................................. 5
   2.4 Mulley Communications .............................................................................................. 6
   2.5 Facebook ...................................................................................................................... 6

3. **Research Methods and Design** ....................................................................................8
   3.1 Research Objectives ..................................................................................................... 8
   3.2 Sample .......................................................................................................................... 8
   3.3 User Study Protocol ..................................................................................................... 9

4. **General Use of Facebook** ...........................................................................................11
   4.1 Sample and Computer Usage ................................................................................. 11
   4.2 How our users use Facebook ................................................................................... 12

5. **Engaging with advertising in Facebook** ................................................................19
   5.1 What did participants first look at when they logged on to Facebook? ................... 19
   5.2 Do users look at adverts in Facebook? ....................................................................... 20
   5.3 Are users aware of advertising on Facebook? ......................................................... 22
   5.4 How do users engage with Pages on Facebook? ..................................................... 24
   5.5 Are there any differences among different groups of users? ............................... 24

6. **Advertising in Facebook** ..........................................................................................26

7. **Appendices** .................................................................................................................27
   7.1 Areas on Different Types of Pages ........................................................................... 27
   7.2 Pre-test Questionnaire .............................................................................................. 29
Usability Report

1 Introduction

This report presents the findings of a research study looking at how people in Ireland currently use the social networking site; Facebook; a site that was recently identified by Google as the top visited destination on the internet\(^1\). We first looked at participants’ general use of Facebook. Then using eye-tracking data we analysed their behaviour when they were engaged with advertising and media within this environment.

This research was conducted by the National College of Ireland on behalf of Mulley Communications, a communications company that train and consult in online marketing and PR. Observations and testing took place in the atrium of the National College of Ireland and a group of 40 users participated in this study. Almost three quarters of the sample were between the ages of 17 and 25 years old, 22 participants were male and 18 were female. Participants completed an on-line pre- and post-test questionnaire and participated in a post-test interview. Testing took place in April 2010.

Analysis of the results showed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Log-on</th>
<th>30 out of 40 users log on to Facebook once a day or more.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Top uses</td>
<td>The top three uses of Facebook were: to interact with friends, chat with friends and look at newsfeeds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pages</td>
<td>The average number of pages these users are fans of is 28 pages. Younger users (u25) are fans of a higher number of pages than other users. Users find out about pages when friends recommend them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games</td>
<td>Games were mentioned as a popular Facebook activity in pre-test questionnaire. When questioned directly if they play any games on Facebook, only 11 out of 40 indicated that they do, the most popular game is Farmville.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Usability Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facebook Credit</th>
<th>Facebook credit is not frequently used among this sample, 29 of the group do not have any credit.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td>Six participants told us that they used the events feature to issue invites and found it to be very useful. However, 22 participants have responded to invitations in the past.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggested Improvements</td>
<td>10 users thought on-line chat function needs to be improved. Others voiced concerns regarding activity of teenagers on Facebook. Suggested improvement included; to add ‘most popular video’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook Security</td>
<td>Users told us they considered themselves security conscious and 17 said privacy settings were set to ‘only friends’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing Video in Facebook</td>
<td>Just over half of these users currently share videos via Facebook. Younger rather than older users are more likely to share videos. Posting a URL link to their own status update in Facebook or commenting on a friend’s status was their preferred way to share video.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### How do users engage with advertising on Facebook?

**Eye-tracking data told us.**

The first area users look at when they log in to Facebook is their News Feed Wall.

71% of users looked at adverts on their Profile pages but only 31% of users looked at adverts on the News Feed page (homepage).

Users spent more time looking at adverts on profile and TV pages rather than adverts on News Feed page.

21% of users told us they remember seeing adverts during testing but just half of those couldn’t remember what the advertising was about.

Users remember seeing products in the past related to cosmetics, technology and computer products, holidays, weddings, weight-loss and dating.

Only three out of 40 users have previously purchased a product they have seen advertised on Facebook. Many users expressed dissatisfaction with the presence of advertising on Facebook.

Users pay more attention (53% vs. 31%) to page updates in their News Feed Wall rather than adverts to the right-hand side of the Wall.

Different age groups spend the same amount of time on pages, but younger users spend less time reading page updates.

We found no significant differences in user behaviour between male and female users.
2 Background to Study

2.1 National College of Ireland

National College of Ireland is a third-level education provider committed to advancing knowledge in its specialist areas of business, human resource management, accountancy, finance, computing and community studies. Full and part-time courses in these areas are offered through the college’s three Schools; the School of Business, the School of Computing and the School of Community Studies. Research at National College of Ireland is regarded as a core activity embedded in the academic culture and contributing to the overall mission of the college. For further details see www.ncirl.ie.

2.2 Centre for Research and Innovation in Learning and Teaching

Research activities are directed toward the following objectives:

- Study, develop, design and access new models, principles, practices, tools, artefacts and settings arising from the use of technology to support learning.

- Support and promote discourse on the application of e-Learning and blended learning within business, government and education sectors.

- Monitor, benchmark, review and report on national and international e-Learning policies and activities.

- Develop new models of teaching and training that support blended learning contexts.

- Apply flexible technology supported approaches to enhance skills in the workforce.

2.3 The National e-Learning Laboratory (NELL)

As part of National College of Ireland, the National e-Learning Laboratory (NELL) is a research facility specialising in usability testing for human computer interactions. NELL allows researchers to systematically explore and improve the use of learning and knowledge-
based technologies. The laboratory consists of sophisticated hardware and software that can observe up to four participants simultaneously.

User behaviour and screen interactions are investigated using combinations of video and audio recording, screen-capture, precision keyboard & mouse logging and eye tracking.

NELL enables researchers to observe record and analyse the behaviour of users interacting with websites and e-learning resources.

This data allows researchers to evaluate the user experience, identifying areas of strength as well as highlighting areas for further improvement.

2.4 Mulley Communications

This research was commissioned by Mulley Communications. Mulley Communications is a communications training and consultancy company who specialise in business blogging, online marketing training, media training and teaching companies about the latest online trends.

2.5 Facebook

Facebook is a social networking website that is operated and privately owned by Facebook Inc. Users can add friends and send them messages, and update their personal profiles to notify friends about themselves. Additionally, users can join networks organized by workplace, school, or college. The website's name stems from the colloquial name of books given to students at the start of the academic year by university administrations in the US with the intention of helping students to get to know each other better. Facebook was founded by Mark Zuckerberg with his college roommates and fellow computer science students Eduardo Saverin, Dustin Moskovitz and Chris Hughes (www.wikipedia.org).
The following statistics on Facebook illustrate the website’s coverage and usage (Facebook.com, retrieved 2 June 2010):

### People on Facebook
- More than 400 million active users
- 50% of our active users log on to Facebook in any given day
- The average user has 130 friends
- People spend over 500 billion minutes per month on Facebook

### Activity on Facebook
- There are over 160 million objects that people interact with (pages, groups and events)
- The average user is connected to 60 pages, groups and events
- The average user creates 70 pieces of content each month
- More than 25 billion pieces of content (web links, news stories, blog posts, notes, photo albums, etc.) shared each month.

### Global Reach
- More than 70 translations available on the site
- About 70% of Facebook users are outside the United States

### Platform
- More than one million developers and entrepreneurs from more than 180 countries
- Every month, more than 70% of Facebook users engage with Platform applications

### Mobile
- There are more than 100 million active users currently accessing Facebook through their mobile devices
- People that use Facebook on their mobile devices are twice more active on Facebook than non-mobile users

### In Ireland
- It is estimated that there are currently (Feb 2010) 1.3 million Irish users and almost a million of those users log on daily (http://nellatnci.wordpress.com)
3 Research Methods and Design

A user study was designed that would facilitate the observation of users of the Facebook performing a number of pre-defined tasks in close to realistic setting. The aim of this research was to gain a better understanding of the habits users exhibit when engaging with advertising and media in Facebook.

3.1 Research Objectives

1. To analyse what users look at on Facebook pages and in particular, to examine how they engage with advertisements in three areas in Facebook (Home area, profile area and Pages).
2. To examine the data to see if any patterns emerge in relation to the areas users look at on Facebook pages.
3. To record usage of this application among various groups of users, and analyse data to see if any differences in behaviour emerge in relation to age or gender.
4. To study users’ general attitudes towards marketing and advertising via Facebook. We will investigate areas such as: Use of pages; advertisement and brand recognition and recall; use of media and purchase consideration.

3.2 Sample

Observations took place in the atrium of the National College of Ireland (NCI) and 40 participants were drawn from the NCI students, NCI staff and general public. Of the 40 testers who participated in this test, 38 subjects were successfully calibrated for eye-tracking data. Testing took place over four days and testers where chosen at random (whoever was in College that day). A prerequisite of participation in this research was that all testers already had a Facebook account and were prepared to use this account during testing.
Usability Report

Although we did not ask for the participants’ nationality, we observed during testing that the participants represented a mixture of national and non-nationals.

3.3 User Study Protocol

This study comprised four parts; pre-test questionnaire, test, post-test questionnaire and interview:

1. Participants were asked to complete a short survey prior to testing to obtain personal information such as age, gender, interests, and general use of Facebook (see below).

2. Participants were then given a set of short tasks asking them to perform several activities in Facebook (see details below). User behaviour was recorded during this section of the test using interaction logging and audio.

3. Post-test questionnaire: Participants were asked to complete a short post-test questionnaire in regard to the tasks

4. Interview: Participants were interviewed about their behaviour and opinions following a predefined interview guide. This audio was recorded.

Pre-test Questionnaire

In the pre-test questionnaire, users were asked to supply details about their backgrounds and experience with computers. They were also asked to comment on whether they had any experience using catch-up TV and social networking sites over the internet and what they currently used Facebook for. Please see Appendix 1 for an example of pre-test and post-test questionnaire.
Usability Report

Tasks during the Test

During the study participants were asked to navigate to three places which are; News Feed Wall, Profile and Page (s) for TV show. Participants were given the following tasks:

Homepage (News Feed):

1. Log into Facebook and stay on News wall (Homepage). Do what you would normally do - take a minute to check out what is new.

2. Find a status update you would normally reply to. Write down a response/or respond (dependant on participant).

3. Update your own status – telling friends that you are participating in market research study.

Profile area:

4. Go to your profile, check out what new.

5. Find your ‘notifications’, take note of the latest two.

Page:

6. Think of a TV programme you like, find more information on Facebook about this programme. Share this information with Friends.

Post test Questionnaire and Interview

In the post-test questionnaire, participants were asked to supply details of their behaviour during the test. E.g. what show did you choose and why? Testers were questioned in a semi-structured interview about their behaviour and attitudes. Questions asked included the following:

- Do you recall seeing any adverts on Facebook, can you tell us what they were? Or what type of advertising it was? E.g new car, etc.
- Have you seen advertising before on Facebook, on what?
- Do you have a page on Facebook for anything, e.g sport, company, etc.
- Have you purchased anything as a result of seeing something on Facebook?
- What is most useful aspect of Facebook and what else would you like to see/use Facebook for?
- Are there any particular topics of interest that are popular at the moment?
4 General Use of Facebook

4.1 Sample and Computer Usage

40 testers participated in this research study. Of this sample, 22 were male and 18 were female. Almost three quarters of the population (31 out of 40) were between the ages of 17 and 25 years old (see Figure 1 below). Six users were between 26 and 35, one user was between 36 and 45 and the remaining two users were aged from 46 to 65 (see Figure 1).

![User age groups](image)

**Figure 1: User age groups**

4.1.1 Participants Use of Computers

In the pre-test questionnaire participants were asked to indicate what they used computers for. Respondents told us that their top types of uses of a computer were email (35 users), web surfing (38), studying (23) and chatting via Facebook, Bebo, etc (30) (see Figure 2). The least popular activities when using a computer were gaming (4 users), Skype (4) and e-Learning (4) (see Figure 2).
4.2 How our users use Facebook

In this section we consider how users engage in Facebook.

Log on and Access to Facebook

In the pre-test questionnaire (please see Appendix 1), 30 out of our 40 users said they log on to Facebook either once a day or more, nine said weekly and one person logged on, on a monthly basis.

When asked how they assessed Facebook 59% of users said from work/home computer only with only 5% accessing it via mobile only. 36% stated that they get on to Facebook using both mediums (see Figure 3).
Users were asked to indicate which activities they use in Facebook: ‘What do you use Facebook for’ (Q8). The most popular activities were; games (26), looking at friend’s updates/news (23) and chatting with friends (23) (see Figure 4).

However, when they were asked to list the top three uses of Facebook in order of priority (Q9), games figured quite low in these rankings (see Figure 5). The most popular Facebook Activities were;

1. to interact/communicate with friends (26)
2. chat with friends (21)
3. look at newsfeeds (19)
Usability Report

**Top 5 Facebook uses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>No. of Users</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Looking at friends</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chat with friends</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messaging</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photos</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 4:** Users were asked to indicate what they use Facebook for. Participants were encouraged to tick as many items as appropriate to them.

**3 Things users do most on Facebook**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>No. of Users</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News feed</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chat</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photos</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (inc games)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 5:** Top three activities users engage in on Facebook. Participants were asked to name top three uses.
Usability Report

**Updating Status**

When asked ‘how often do you update your status (Q10)’ updating on a daily basis (8 users) was the least popular choice (for both under and over 25’s), with weekly (17) and monthly (or never) (15) being far more popular choices.

**Pages**

30 participants indicated they were fans of pages; two said they were unsure and eight participants did not respond to this question (Q11). When then asked if they knew how many pages they were fans of, the answer ranged from 2 to 2500. The average number (median) of pages that these participants told us they are fans of is 28 pages. The younger users (under 25 years old) are more likely than older users to be a fan of a higher number of pages (50 plus pages).

When asked ‘how do you find out about a page’ (Q13), by far the most popular choice was that friends recommend it (76% of sample). This happens when either the user’s friend joins a page and the user can see that they have done this and then the user joins the page themselves. Or a friend forwards a link onto a user. The user also finds out about pages by searching for a page themselves (21%) via the search bar. One person told us that they heard about a page on radio and then went to Facebook to join that page.

Several of the responses to this question indicated that there is some confusion about the difference between pages and groups.

**Groups**

The response given to ‘are you a member of any groups and how many’ was very similar to the responses above regarding pages; 30 users indicated they were a member of groups, four said they were not and the other respondents left this question blank. Several of the respondents were confused about the difference between pages and groups. However of those who did say they were member of groups, the average number (median) of groups was lower than that of pages at 15 groups per user.
Usability Report

Facebook Games

Although games were mentioned as one of the key Facebook activities earlier on in the questionnaire, when participants were asked directly if they play any games on Facebook, only 11 out of the sample of 40 indicated that they do. Of that 11 who said they play games; 10 were between 17-25 and one was in the age category of 26-35 years old. Farmville was by far the most popular game (mentioned by seven users), followed by poker (mentioned twice) and chess, café, Mindjolt and blocks breaking (mentioned once each).

Users who play games on Facebook say they play games for 30 to 60 minutes a day.

Facebook Credit

Facebook credits are not frequently used. A total of 29 users said they do not have any Facebook Credits, the other participants failed to answer this question. Only one user did refer to buying birthday cards via Facebook.

Events

Six participants told us that they used the events feature to issue invites and found it to be very useful. Two use it regularly to issue invites – one organises gigs and the other practices weight boarding with friends. In the post-test interview, this participant stated that Facebook was of great importance to this activity, as it allowed him to access his entire group simultaneously to arrange a meeting at short notice. However, 22 participants have responded to invitations in the past.

When asked what topic they were currently discussing, of the 40 participants, some are talking about current affairs (volcano eruption), popular culture (Xfactor, Lotto, Bebo’s demise), sport, socialising (arranging nights out through Facebook), TV and games (Farmville, Call of Duty) and holidays.
Usability Report

Sharing Video via Facebook

In pre-test questionnaire, 21 out of the 40 users stated that they share YouTube videos or other links via Facebook. Of those 21, almost all (17) were under the age of 25. Users can share videos via Facebook in two main ways: posting a link or URL in their own status via the Newsfeed or using the ‘share’ button from the application to send the link to all their friends.

Users told us that posting the URL directly to Facebook (via their own status update or commenting on a friend's status update) was by far the most preferred way to share video (89%).

Improvements to Facebook

In the post-test interview, we asked participants to suggest any improvements to Facebook. Two participants expressed concern about having family members or teenagers as Facebook friends. One felt that he should set up separate profile pages for friends and family. The other felt that Facebook should provide junior and senior options. He expressed discomfort with having teenage friends on his profile page. Another suggested that Facebook should provide an extra safe version for under 18 year olds. Ten users felt that the on-line chat function is in need of improvement as it is too slow. The notification function was unclear to three users. Two users would like to see a new interface design/layout as they deemed the current design is too bland. With the migration of Bebo users to Facebook comes the expectation of the ability to customise their profile pages. Two users wished to see an end to advertisements on Facebook. Some general suggestions included; addition of web camera to on-line chat, addition of a most popular video page, removal of the on-line chat, removal of the tag function.

Facebook Security

Regarding security on Facebook, in the post-test interview most of the participants told us they considered themselves very security conscious. 17 users said that their privacy settings were set to only friends. Three said that their privacy settings were set to everyone. Four were unsure.
Usability Report

Regarding satisfaction with Facebook security, 21 participants were satisfied and four were dissatisfied. Three people stated that they do not divulge personal info on Facebook. Two users regularly change their passwords. One user said that she would prefer not to be tagged on photos. Two users became concerned about their privacy on Facebook. One was unaware that her photos were available for everyone to see. A friend made her aware of the situation and recommended that she change her privacy settings. Another stated that he had heard negative comments about security on Facebook, but was unsure of how to improve his privacy. He felt that this process should be more obvious. He suggested that perhaps the use of a tutorial would help clarify this matter. One user was reluctant to reveal personal information as he feels that the future of Facebook is uncertain. In the event of a take over, he questions the commitment of the directors to maintain good security standards. Older users (over 25s) were most likely to voice concern about security.
5 Engaging with advertising in Facebook

In the next section we look at participants’ engagement with advertising and media in Facebook. The following results are based on data from 38 participants, one set of data was corrupt and one participant could not be calibrated. During testing, users were asked to navigate to three different areas/pages in Facebook:

1. News Feed page (Homepage)

2. Profile page

3. TV page (they were asked to find this)

All three areas display advertising in the right hand side of screen, though placement may vary (see Appendix 1).

5.1 What did participants first look at when they logged on to Facebook?

Users first look at their News Feed Wall. The first area that all 38 users looked at when they logged into the Homepage (News Feed page) is the News Feed Wall which contains their status updates (see Appendix 1 for screenshots of page). The average number of updates explored per user in the News Feed Wall was 7. When looking at updates, users did not just look at ones displayed on the screen, but rather scrolled down the page to glance through other updates before moving on to look at other areas of the page. Approximately half (21) of the users then looked at the left hand side of page and the other half to the right side of this page.

Users spend more time looking at their News Feed page (homepage) than other pages such as Profile or TV pages

During testing, we analysed the users’ gaze in three different areas/types of pages in Facebook: the News Feed page, the Profile page and a page with information about TV shows. We recorded how long each user spent looking at each page in total. While users spent about 13.8 seconds on their News Wall page and 11.7 seconds on TV pages, they spent only 8.2 seconds looking at a their profile page (see Figure 6).
Usability Report

Users spent most of the time on homepage looking at updates on their News Feed Wall

Within the News Feed page itself, users spent 12.6 seconds looking at news wall (containing updates) and 1.2 seconds looking at right hand side of the page (containing Facebook updates and advert).

![Figure 6: Average dwell time on different types of pages](image)

5.2 Do users look at adverts in Facebook?

71% of users looked at adverts on their Profile pages but only 31% of users looked at adverts on the News Feed page (homepage)

We analysed data to see if users looked at adverts in Facebook and which adverts on different pages received more attention. On average, across all page, 42% of users looked at adverts. However there is was a big difference in which adverts received more attention on the different pages. 31% of users looked at adverts shown on News Feed Wall pages, 39% of users looked at adverts on TV pages and almost double the amount of users (71%) glanced at adverts on their Profile page.
Table 7: Distribution of adverts seen and page updates seen on different types of pages. Adverts and page updates are counted as being seen if at least one fixation occurred within that area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page Type</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Adverts Seen</th>
<th>Page Updates Seen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News Feed Page</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Within Page Type</td>
<td>69.2%</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profile Page</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Within Page Type</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
<td>71.0%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV Page</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Within Page Type</td>
<td>61.1%</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Within Page Type</td>
<td>57.6%</td>
<td>42.4%</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![percentage of adverts seen for different types of pages](image)

During testing, users spent the most time on News Wall pages (13.8 seconds). Despite this fact and the fact they spent almost half that time on profile pages (8.2 seconds), they looked at adverts for more than three times longer on Profile pages (0.2 seconds vs. 0.7 seconds), i.e., about 10% of the total time spend on that page. A similar pattern was observed on TV pages with about 9% of the time spent on adverts (see Table 9).
Table 9: Comparison of absolute and relative time spent on adverts across different types of pages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page Type</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Dwell Time Advert (ms)</th>
<th>Dwell Time Total (ms)</th>
<th>Relative Time on Advert (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News feed page</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>13797</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profile page</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>682</td>
<td>8194</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV page</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1588</td>
<td>11725</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>132</td>
<td><strong>694</strong></td>
<td><strong>11916</strong></td>
<td><strong>5.6%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 10: Percentage of time spent on advert in comparison to total dwell time.

5.3 Are users aware of advertising on Facebook?

21% of users told us they remember seeing adverts during testing but just half of those couldn’t remember what the advertising was about.

The eye tracking revealed that 42% of users saw adverts during testing, but were they aware of these advertisements? In the post test interview, nine users said they noticed advertisements while carrying out tasks (21% of Sample). When asked to recall which products they had seen; 5 users mentioned a product relating to a dating site, ABC TV site, Eircom site, a travel site and an advert for an iPhone. The others who told us they noticed advertisements said they couldn’t remember what they were for. The rest of the testers said there was not enough time during test to pay attention to adverts.
**Usability Report**

**65% of users said they have noticed advertising on Facebook in the past**

When asked if they would usually notice advertisements (perhaps under less pressurised circumstances), 26 out of the 40 participants said that they would – twelve of whom were male, fourteen female. Of those who said that they did not usually notice advertisements, most said that they are aware of the presence of adverts but did not usually pay any attention to them. Two participants said that they actively zone/blank them out. Six users said that they would notice an advertisement if it was eye-catching - particularly if it was animated. Two said that they were drawn to colour rather than images. One user commented on the nature of adverts on the events function stating, ads are not intrusive and spam is non existent. One user said that she notices the first advertisement only, commenting first one counts. Two users expressed a desire to see an ad free Facebook.

*Users remember seeing products related to cosmetics, technology and computer products, holidays, weddings, weight-loss and dating*

When asked if they noticed any particular products or types of products advertised on Facebook in the past, 22 out of 40 interviewees said that they had. Of this group, twelve were female, ten were male. The type of products participants mentioned were cosmetics, technology and computer products, holidays, weddings, weight-loss, dating, T-shirts and music related goods. Products promoting body enhancement proved to be popular among both genders. Males tended to be drawn to body building products, while females were attracted to cosmetic adverts (including make-up, nails, laser hair removal and teeth whitening).

*Three out of 40 users have previously purchased a product they have seen advertised on Facebook*

Out of 40 participants, three have purchased a product they’d seen advertised on Facebook; two of whom were female, one male. Of the female users, one bought a T-shirt for a friend and the other bought a weight-loss product. One of the males regularly purchases an alcoholic beverage called Captain Morgan’s.

In general, many users expressed dissatisfaction with the presence of advertising on Facebook and felt that it should be free from adverts.
5.4 How do users engage with Pages on Facebook?

Another way for companies or individuals to advertising via Facebook is to create ‘Pages’. When a visitor comes across a business page at Facebook, he/she can interact in a number of ways: becoming a fan, reading the latest news, joining in discussions, viewing photos or watching videos. If the user becomes a Fan, updates from that Page will appear on their news wall on the homepage.

In the pre-test questionnaire, 30 participants told us that they were fans of pages and the average number of pages they were fans of is 28.

*Page updates in the News Feed Wall are more likely to get the users attention than adverts to the right of the News Wall.*

During this test, 53% of users looked at the page updates in their News Feed wall, looking at each update for 1.4 seconds on average. This compares to only 31% of users looking at adverts on the same page, which they looked at for less time; 0.3 seconds (p<.035). This would suggest that page updates are more likely to get the user’s attention than adverts on the News Wall page.

*The most popular way a user becomes a fan of a page is when a friend recommends it.*

The most popular way a user becomes a fan of a page is when a friend recommends it. This happens when either the user’s friend joins a page and the user can see that they have done this and then the user join page themselves. Or a friend forwards a link onto a user.

5.5 Are there any differences among different groups of users?

*Age: Different age groups spend the same amount of time on pages, but younger users spend less time reading page updates*

We found no difference between the different age groups in terms of total time spent looking at pages or the time spent looking at adverts. However users aged 26-35 spent about 17% of their time looking at page updates, while younger users spent only 3% of their time on page updates (see Figure 11). Of our older group of testers (over 35 year olds), two out of the three did not receive page updates during this test.
**Gender:** We found no significant differences in user behaviour between male and female users.

We found no significant differences in user behaviour between male and female users.
6 Advertising in Facebook

In summary, 42% of users did glance at adverts in Facebook. However only 21% of users told us they saw advertisements and just half of that 21% recall the types of products being advertised. These participants paid least attention to adverts on the homepage (News Feed page) relative to adverts on profile and TV pages, even though they spent more time on the homepage. Page updates on the News Wall on the homepage attracted more attention than adverts on the same page.
7 Appendices

7.1 Areas on Different Types of Pages

News Feed (Homepage) page.
7.2 Pre-test Questionnaire

Welcome to the National E-Learning Laboratory (NELL) and thank you for taking part in usability testing today.

*A Note On Privacy*

The data collected through this questionnaire is anonymous. The record kept of your questionnaire responses does not contain any identifying information about you unless a specific question in the questionnaire has asked for this. In this study we may record additional data such as video footage, screen recordings or audio data. Publications or reports to clients may contain samples of this data (e.g., pictures, videos or audio sequences). However, we aim to keep data (particularly personal Facebook data specific to participants) anonymous at all times, and while we will present summaries of data in publications, individual participants will not be identifiable at any time.

By participating in this study, you agree that such data may be published and reported.

Do you agree with this policy?

☐ Yes  ☐ No
Usability Report

Facebook Usage

Introduction

Participant ID

Please enter tester number provided (e.g., user 001)

*Are you:
Choose one of the following answers

- male
- female

*How old are you?
Choose one of the following answers

- under 17
- 17-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-65
- 66 or over

[Exit and clear survey]  << Previous  Next >>
### Interests - Computers

**What do you use your computer for?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>No answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office packages such as word, excel etc</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Email</td>
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<tr>
<td>Web surfing</td>
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<td>Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chatting via facebook, etc</td>
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<tr>
<td>On-line shopping</td>
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<tr>
<td>Games</td>
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<td>Slope</td>
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<td>E-learning</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Exit and clear survey]
Usability Report

Facebook Usage

Previous Experience

*Usually, how often do you log on to your Facebook account?*

Choose one of the following answers:

- more than once a day
- once a day
- a couple of times a week
- once a week
- couple times a month
- least often

How do you generally access Facebook?

Choose one of the following answers:

- on my work or home computer
- through a mobile phone
- both through mobile and computer
- No answer

What do you do use Facebook for?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Find Friends</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>No answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look at Friends updates - news fees, etc</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Update my status</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sending messages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chat with friends via messaging</td>
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<tr>
<td>Share information e.g. links, videos etc</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>participate in games such as Farmville etc</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upload photos</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for information on events, pages etc</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Usability Report

What are your top three uses of Facebook? E.g., what three things do you do most often when you are in Facebook?

1.  
2.  
3.  

How often do you update your Status?

[ ] Yes  [ ] No  [ ] No answer

Are you a fan of any page(s) in Facebook?

[ ] Yes  [ ] No  [ ] No answer

Are you a member of any groups? And if so, how many?


Do you participate in any Facebook games?

[ ] Yes  [ ] No  [ ] No answer

If you do play Facebook games, how long per day would you spend on them on average?


Do you have any Facebook credit and if you do, what do you use it for?


How do you usually update your status? E.g., log in to Facebook, via mobile, etc.


[Exit and clear survey]  << Previous  Next >>
## Facebook Usage

### Previous experience

**Do you share YouTube videos or other video links via Facebook?**

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
- [ ] No answer

**Do you use any other types of social networking tools such as Myspace, Twitter etc.? If so, please list.**

- 

**Do you watch or access TV via the internet?**

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
- [ ] No answer

**Are you a fan of any TV programmes in Facebook?**

- 

[Start and clear survey]
Thank you for answering these questions. Please press the submit button and wait for further instructions.