The Right Format of Web Advertisement: Case Study in Iran

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ABSTRACT: *The purpose of this paper was to develop a solution for selecting the right format of web advertisement in Iran. The paper is conducted based on a review of the literature and scrutinizing among more than forty scholarly papers. By reviewing the literature, and developing a theoretical framework, a conceptual model was designed to examine factors explaining right format of advertisement on the internet. Expert's opinion was used to test the conceptual model and using T-student examination, have discovered that seven critical factors affect selection of the right format of the web advertisement. In order to implement the model, we designed a new methodology based on TOPSIS (Technique for Order Preference by Similarity to Ideal Solution) philosophy. In this way, we have defined two ideal frameworks; one for advertisement and the other one for alternatives. Accordingly, the right format of web advertisement is the advertisement that its ideal has a more similarity with the ideal of alternative. To test this methodology, we select 150 Iranian high-ranked websites and found that the model is working properly. The report of websites analysis is placed at the appendix.*

KEYWORDS: *Web Advertising, Advertising Formats, Product Involvement, Advertising Classification, Advertising Audience, Advertising Strategy.*

1. Introduction

The increasing access to the Internet as an electronic media has turned it into a dynamic and user-friendly medium for advertising. As a method of marketing through communication, advertising has essentially two primary areas: Marketing whose target is communicating value to the customer (Darroch et al., 2004) and Communication which encompasses creating a united idea between a sender and receiver (Dibb & Simkin, 1991; Schramm, 1955). According to Sepstrup (1991), the ideal advertisement is the one with the highest possibility of access to a wide range of well-defined audiences (selectivity) that provides a good feedback at a low cost (reviewed by Thomsen, 1996). However, mass communication often forces the advertisers to accept a wide range of ill-defined audiences that does not provide a proper feedback for achieving a reasonable cost-effectiveness (Thomsen, 1996). This definition raises a question in the advertisers' minds: which medium has the potential to provide the advertisers with the ideal type of advertisement?

According to the The Interactive Advertising Bureau (2011), "internet advertising revenues in the U.S. hit $7.3 billion for the first quarter of 2011, representing a 23 percent increase over the same period in 2010." The share of the four major types of Internet advertising studied in this research from the total incomes was 34 percent at the end of 2008. The four major Internet advertising types are as following: (1) Display Ads (21%) including Banners, Hypertexts, and Skyscrapers; (2) Rich Media (7%) including Pop Up and Pop Under, and Interstitials; (3) Sent Emails (2%); and (4) Digital Video (3%).

Although large investments are made on Internet advertising, the advertisers and marketers are not yet aware of the effectiveness of various formats of Internet Advertisement and do not know the appropriate audience of each form. On the other hand, the great variety of Internet advertisement formats and insufficient knowledge of the advertisers have added to the complexity of online advertising activities. It is useless to recommend an advertiser to use the right format (Heinz, 2004) when he does not have an idea about right format (Burns & Lutz, 2006).

This study aims at finding the appropriate answers to the following questions:

(1) What advertising format should be developed by advertisers for different goods and services?

(2) Which ad formats do meet the needs of marketers and advertisers of a product or service?

(3) What criteria and features should be considered for advertising a certain product or service?

(4) How can we define the right Internet advertising format for a certain good or service?

By considering the report of Internet World Stats (2012), which states: the number of Iranian users has been reached to 37 million users at the second quarter of 2011, this research intends to develop a general framework to illustrate the factors determining the proper format of Internet advertising in Iran. In sum, the present study embarks on classifying various possible scenarios and selecting the most appropriate Internet advertisement format from each group.

2. Literature review

A few conceptual and qualitative Internet advertising models have been proposed such as Interactive Advertising Model (IAM) (Rodgers & Thorson, 2000), internet advertising avoidance model of Cho and Cheon (2004), the structural equation model Ko, Chang, and Roberts (2005), and avoidance from social networks advertising

Kelly, Kerr, and Drennan (2010). IAM introduces the motivations and initial reasons of entering into the Internet with the framework of two areas of user and advertiser, and then explains factors influential on processing information by the users and the output resulting from information processing. Based on the previous studies on uses and gratifications theory and Internet interaction, the structure equation model (Ko et al., 2005) tries to show the relationships among motivation of using the Internet, duration of time at a website, interactivity, attitudes, and purchase intention of online customers in a structural framework. Whereas in the IAM, the general assumptions are based on the merit of information processing in an interactive environment and are related to functional structure; this model tries to classify the different types of online advertising and recognize their features. It also attempts at finding the effective factors which shape and influence the user's attention, memory, and attitude.

The distinction between the study conducted by Rodgers and Thorson (2000) and the present study is the fact that while Rogers and Thorson have done the information processing from a customer's viewpoint, this study investigates the issue from an advertiser's viewpoint in an attempt to provide the right model for Internet advertising based on the earlier studies and investigations. The other model (Ko et al., 2005) is trying to examine the interactivity construct in terms of its antecedent and consequent and is an attempt to illustrate the interaction between the user and the advertisement. Previous investigations mostly reflect the general attitude toward Internet ads (Ducoffe, 1996; Previte, 1998; Scholsser, Shavitt, & Kanfer, 1999) different types of Internet advertising (Burns & Lutz, 2006), and differentiation between pleasant and objectionable products advertising methods (Heidarzadeh, Behboudi, & Sadr, 2011). Li and Leckenby (2004) introduced the relation between the content of a website and Internet advertising while Sundar and Kalyanaraman (2004) investigated the effects of animated banners' speed and found fast-animations to be more attractive. According to these two studies, fast animations can elicit greater psychological arousal compared to slow-animations.

Most of the researches conducted on the effectiveness of Internet advertising are concerned with step(s) taken after selecting an Internet advertising format. In other words, the assumption is that users are already exposed to an advertisement. The question is: how should the impact of advertising be enhanced to yield a higher click-through rate (Burns & Lutz, 2006; Sundar & Kalyanaraman, 2004). The present study, however, takes some neglected aspects of Internet advertising formation into account. It is believed that the specifications of a given product or service shall be considered a priori to decide about a proper advertising format and the next step is the study of ad impact and it effectiveness in increasing the click rates. Hence, it will be tried to identify the main actors in the context of advertising development so that marketers can select the right advertisement format.

3. Theoretical framework

3.1 Product involvement

Product involvement means "how the product fits into that person's life (Cushing & Douglas-Tate, 1985, p. 243)." From an information processing perspective, involvement is related to the accuracy of elaboration and the amount of attention dedicated to advertising messages (Gardner, Mitchell, & Russo, 1985). Involvement is also influential on processing, keeping, and retrieving information (Salmon, 1986).

Involvement, particularly product involvement, has been proven to be a major determinant of the consumer's behavior and response to a certain ad (cf. Celsi & Olson, 1988; Laurent & Kapferer, 1985; Zaichkowsky, 1985). When product involvement and complexity are high, consumers process advertisements more actively (Warrington & Shim, 2000), devote more time and cognitive effort to the advertisements (Celsi & Olson, 1988) and focus more on the product-related information of the ads (Celsi & Olson, 1988; Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983). This is also reported by (Cacioppo & Petty, 1984; Petty et al., 1983).

When product involvement is low, consumers are less likely to process brand written message claims than advertisement execution cues (Chattopadhyay, 1998). This is due to the fact that brand written message claims require more cognitive efforts to be processed compared to the advertisement execution elements (Chattopadhyay, 1998) and consumers are not motivated to devote much cognitive effort to low-involvement products (Warrington & Shim, 2000). Consumers are more willing to devote their cognitive effort to high-involvement products and are then more likely to process brand message claims of advertisements (Dahlén, Malcolm, & Nordenstam, 2004).

Moreover, product involvement affects the design of advertising messages. Advertisements of low or high-involvement products differ in advertising appeals. Research findings also support the idea that rational advertising appeals can help marketing high involvement products, whereas advertising of emotional appeal has been proved to be good for low-involvement products (Wills, Samli, & Jacobs, 1991). In his study, Vaughn (1980) takes four types of involvement into account and believes them to be the determining features of a given product or service to be considered when selecting the right advertising. Our first hypothesis is based on this viewpoint.

Hypothesis 1: Grouping products based on four types of involvement has a positive impact on determining the right Internet advertising format.

3.2 Audiences

The way the Internet is used has a considerable effect on the users' interest and excitement to follow online ads and shopping. Furthermore, the type of responses users provide to an advertisement is, to a large extent, based on their beliefs and attitudes towards the Internet (Bruner & Kumar, 2000). The time users spend on Internet is a determining factor in forming such beliefs and perceptions. In this respect, Internet users are divided into three groups; namely, Heavy users, Medium users, and Light users (Korgaonkar & Wolin, 2002). Heavy users include PC owners using Internet at their homes or offices, as well as well-educated people using Internet at the universities (Anderson et al., 1995), men (Sheehan, 1999) who earn higher income, (Katz & Aspden, 1997) and people who use Internet excessively for their occupational purposes (Korgaonkar & Wolin, 2002). A heavy user spends up to five hours per day on the Web and usually visits three websites in an hour. The heavy users believe Web advertising to be amusing, enjoyable, informative, trustable, and helpful. They also feel that internet advertising decreases expenses and are necessary. They have a very positive attitude toward Internet advertisement. The medium users are among the most educated and the highest income users of internet. Compared to the heavy users, they are less likely to believe that web advertising is informative, amusing, enjoyable, informative, trustable, and helpful; rather, they believe that it is boring. The medium users spend up to three hours per day on the Web, mostly visit websites of their own interest and visit 2 or 3 websites in an hour (Korgaonkar & Wolin, 2002).

The time spent by the light users on the web is about an hour and no clear-cut usage pattern exists for this group in terms of the time they spend each day on the web. The light users are placed in the second position in terms of both income and education (Korgaonkar & Wolin, 2002). Classifying users into 3 groups have been confirmed by other studies, too. For example, Bruner (2006) conducted a study in which users were divided into three groups of heavy, medium, and light according to the number of times they used internet monthly. Heavy users were those who used internet 19 times, those using internet 11 to 19 times were the medium users, and those using internet less than 11 times were classified as light users. When releasing an online advertising, the advertiser should be mindful of the users' motivations of going online because users have distinctive motivations in surfing a given website. In fact, people use Internet not only to retrieve information, but also to entertain themselves (Ko et al., 2005; Korgaonkar & Wolin, 2002). Marketers' task is recognizing the right audience, because each audience has a unique behavioral reaction to Internet (Ko et al., 2005). Therefore, regarding the distinctive perceptual backgrounds of the Internet users and audience, providing one same Internet advertising format is likely to have different impacts on these groups. A hypothesis was developed on this basis as follows:

Hypothesis 2: Segmenting and targeting audiences based on three types of audiences has a positive impact on determining the right Internet advertising format.

3.3 Advertising type

According to Thorson (1996), all advertisements can be classified into one of the five basic categories, including: product/service, public service announcement (PSA), issue, corporate and political. Each of these ad types represents the general structure in which an ad is seen; that is, the ad type itself provides an indicator of the types of possible consumer responses. Ad type will often determine the types and the extent of the cognitive tools, as outlined earlier, that audiences will use. For example, attention may be heightened by ads that promote a political candidate who is strongly favored by the consumer. In the same vein, memory for an issue ad may be poor in instances where the ad promotes a health or public message that is irrelevant to the user. It is known from traditional advertising research that PSAs outperform other types of ads in terms of credibility and perceptions of social responsibility (Haley & Wilkinson, 1994). The general ad type will predict whether and how much cognitive effort is devoted to the task of processing online ads. Ad type will also interact with the user's motives to influence outcomes, or consumer responses. Based on this point, the third hypothesis is suggested as follows:

Hypothesis 3: Grouping advertisements based on five types of advertising has a positive impact on determining the right Internet advertising format.

3.4 Pull or push strategy

A pull strategy involves those manufacturers who use advertising and consumer promotion as a means to persuade the intermediaries to order the product. This is especially appropriate when there is a high brand-loyalty and a high-involvement in the category; people understand brand differences and choose before they go to the store (Kotler, 2001, p. 279). When users have high level of loyalty, they tend to look for the corporate product. Therefore, the only thing a manufacturer needs in such occasions is to design a website and wait for its users (Turban et al., 2006, pp. 172-173). According to this strategy, websites or other properly designed ads await customers' visit. Depending on their tendency toward the products and services, customers search through the internet to find relevant information (Turban et al., 2006, p. 171). However, when companies provide products or services that are rather unknown to the customers, or when customers are not motivated enough to follow the ads, push strategy is used to attract customers by the companies. In a push strategy, the manufacturer uses sales force and trade promotion to induce intermediaries to carry, promote, and sell the product to end users. In this situation, various tools are applied to push the users toward a company's website. On this basis, another hypothesis is formed:

Hypothesis 4: Selecting appropriate type of advertising strategy has a positive impact on determining the right Internet advertising format.

3.5 The status of audience's ICT condition

In some countries, like developing ones, the level of users' access to Internet is not the same as Western countries. According to the report of Iranian Ministry of Telecommunication and Information Technology (ICT.com, 2007), in this country the low-rate connection with the transfer rate of 56 kbps is mostly suitable for home connections and high-rate connection with the transfer rate of 128 kbps is mostly used by organizations and institutions. Since copper wires are used for the connections in this country, faster rate of data transfer is not achievable. The fifth hypothesis mentioned below is based on the fact that different types of advertisements require different bandwidth:

Hypothesis 5: The ICT status of target market is determinant in the selection of the right Internet advertising format.

In this study, the data transfer at the rate of 128 kbps is referred to as "high Internet speed" which is shown by "H," while data transfer at the rate of 56 kbps is referred to as "low Internet speed" illustrated by "L." However, recently higher rates of data transfer have been achieved in these countries as a result of using fiber-optic cables and sometimes data can be transferred at the rate of several mega bytes per second. They were not included in this study for two reasons: first, it is not cost-effective to develop and expand fiber-optic networks for home users. Second, in the universities and organizations using fiber-optic networks, the high number of users reduces the rate to less than 100 kbps.

3.6 Advertising features

So far, the effects of external features on the Internet advertising formats have been discussed. Nevertheless, the advertisement itself has some features that seem to affect the selection of the right Internet advertising format (Holbrook & Lehmann, 1980). These features or specifications are divided into 2 categories; subjective features and objective ones. Subjective features include Typeface, Appeal Type, Number of Sentences, Movement and Interactivity, Sound Level, Sound Clarity, Telepresence, Realism, and Number of Choices. Objective Features, on the other hand, include Excitement, Flow, Current Information, Attitude toward Ad, Friendly Navigation (Thorson & Leavitt, 1986, reviewed by Rodgers & Thorson, 2000). On this basis, the following hypotheses are formed:

Hypothesis 6: Subjective features of advertising are determinant in the selection of the right Internet advertising format.

Hypothesis 7: Objective features of advertising are determinant in the selection of the right Internet advertising format.

In this study, objective features such as typeface, appeal type, movement and interactivity, as well as subjective features such as attitude toward Ads are considered. Although Thorson and Leavitt (1986) included more features under both subjective and objective categories (reviewed by Rodgers & Thorson, 2000), they are not covered in this study as they are very stylistic and subject to variation based on either the advertising company, or the advertiser's ideas.

4. Conceptual model

Based on the literature review, leading to the development of the seven mentioned hypotheses, the conceptual model is designed for the selection of the right format of web advertisement (Figure 1). The model is a scoring process. In other words, it is initiated with the product or service intended to be advertised. The first influential factor in this regard is the product or service intended to be advertised. The next steps are determination
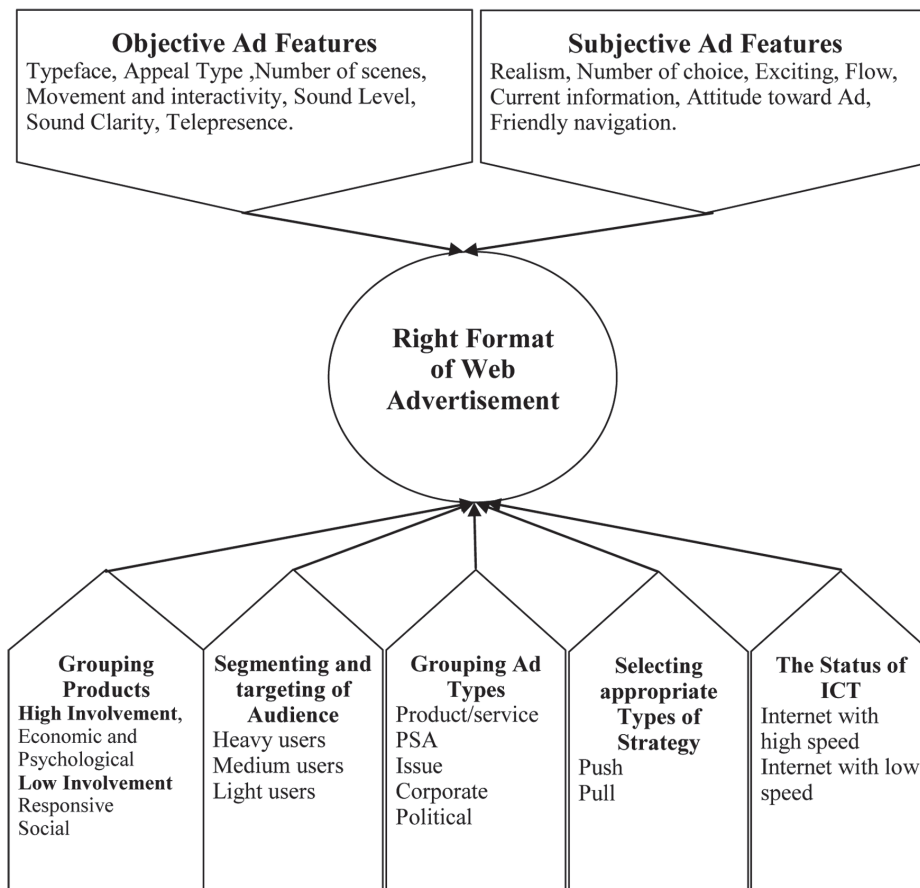

Figure 1   Right Format of Web Advertisement

of the target audience, the type of product/service to be advertised, the most proper advertising strategy, the ICT status, and finding out the audience's Internet connection speed. After calculating the scores allocated to the external variables, the process focuses on two internal advertising variables. This study deals with the type of online ad suitable for a given product/service.

5. Methodology

5.1 Participants

The participants of this study included the websites and businesses of Iran. There were two reasons for selecting Iran for this purpose. First, so far, no study has been conducted on the area of Internet advertisement and it is a new field of research in the world, and particularly, in Iran and its data can be useful for future studies. The second reason related to the research team and its research record in Iran. Since this team is active for a long time in the area of e-commerce and on-line advertisement in Iran, they have comprehensive information on the situation of e-business in this country, which is an advantage for selecting Iran for this study.

5.2 Sample and data collection

Non-random sampling method was utilized for this purpose (Behboudi, Jalili, & Mousakhani, 2011). Efforts were made in a widespread manner to find email IDs of Marketing, DBA (Doctorate of Business Administration), MBA, IS (Information System) and E-commerce experts. Most of the experts selected were either jury members of various journals or faculty members teaching at universities. Ultimately, more than 1,500 IDs belonging to international experts and 200 IDs belonging to some Iranian experts were identified (which itself deemed a valuable asset for future studies). On the other hand, a questionnaire was designed in the form of a website (IARFM.COM) and email invitations including a hypertext were sent to the mentioned experts to motivate them to participate in the survey. From 1,700 experts receiving the invitations, 370 replied by filling the questionnaires. This shows a responding rate of about 0.217. The reason for this low rate of answering is the design of questionnaire website, because it was designed in a way so that each IP address could only take part in the poll just for one time in order to avoid repetitive replies. Thus, from among the experts of the same university who used one IP address, only one could inevitably express his opinion. This research limitation resulted in the low reply rate. Since 6 out of the 7 hypotheses of this article are based on international studies performed in other domains, and the study was performed in Iran at that time, the opinions of the Iranian experts were regarded weightier, to help aggregate their views in the study. As to the third hypothesis referring to the users' type, since the

classification presented was specifically in line with the American society, a parallel survey was developed to study and classify the Iranian users. Encompassing all conditions ruling Korgaonkar and Wolin Study (2002), this survey enquired as to the number of weekly visits paid to the web. The study revealed the same results as those of Korgaonkar and Wolin Study (2002). Based on these results, the Iranian users like users of other parts of the world are divided into three groups: heavy users, medium users, and light users. The finding was included in the questionnaire so the experts could assess it as true or false.

5.3 Validity and reliability

Initially, a 5-item questionnaire was developed and piloted, using small groups of experts who volunteered to provide feedback. For the final instrument several questions were revised for clarity. Internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha resulted in a reliability estimate of 0.84 for the total 7-item scale, where 0.70 is considered adequate. All relevant documentations are accessible for future researchers. After collecting the questionnaires -- as illustrated in Tables 1 and 2 -- although a strict assessment was selected ($\mu \geq 4$), all experts confirmed the research. After confirmation of the features, a core ideal framework was designed based on TOPSIS (Technique for Order Preference by

Table 1   Product Student's T test Statistical Computing

	x	f	fx	$(x - \bar{x})^2$	$f(x - \bar{x})^2$	Statistics
	1	7	7	11.2225	78.557	$\bar{x} = 4.35$
	2	4	8	5.5225	22.09	$Sx = 0.85$
Product/Service Types	3	37	111	1.8225	67.432	Critical value = -1.65
	4	124	496	0.1225	15.19	$T = 7.92$
	5	198	990	0.4225	83.655	
		370	1,612		266.925	

Table 2   Hypotheses Validity and Reliability

$\mu \geq 4$				Examination Statistics: $t_{student}$		
Hypothesis	N	M	Sx	Critical Value	Examination Statistic	Results
Product/Service Types	370	4.35	0.85	-1.65	7.92	Accept
Advertising Types	370	4.165	0.89	-1.65	3.574	Accept
Audience Types	370	4.3	0.815	-1.65	7.08	Accept
Strategy Types	370	4.03	1.08	-1.65	0.53	Accept
Situation of ICT	370	3.96	1.125	-1.65	-0.68	Accept
Ad Subjective Features	370	3.93	1.19	-1.65	-1.113	Accept
Ad Objective Features	370	4.11	0.945	-1.65	2.24	Accept

Similarity to Ideal Solution) to compare the alternatives intended to be used as a tool for the selection of the right Internet advertising format. TOPSIS method is a multi-criteria decision making approach based on farness from and closeness to the ideal. It ranks the solutions by defining the main and subsidiary ideals. According to TOPSIS philosophy, a solution is considered proper if it is closest to the main ideal solution and furthest from the subsidiary solution. The authenticity of these findings has been verified in previous studies (Hanafizadeh, Moosakhani, & Bakhshi, 2009).

6. Defining methodology

In order to select the right Internet advertising format, first, the advertising core ideal framework should be designed according to the confirmed features; i.e., the features of the product or service, and the features of the advertisement itself. This framework serves as a criterion to evaluate the features of the occurred scenario and the possible advertising alternatives. It is noteworthy that the term "Scenario" here refers to a product/service about which the advertiser tends to send information to his potential customers (i.e., to advertise). To advertise a scenario, it is first located within this framework to identify its ideals. On the other hand, this framework serves as a criterion to show the ideal scenario of any given advertising alternative (Table 3). In fact, it identifies the appropriate type of advertising for a given scenario (product or service). Later, this scenario is compared to the ideals of the main advertising alternative and the closest advertising type is selected as the right Internet advertising format.

6.1 Elements of the core ideal framework

You may find the details of the five features (involvement, audience, ad type, strategy, and ICT status) in the "Hypotheses" section. The advertising features include five features, four of which (appeal, interaction, movement, and size) are categorized under objective features, while "attitude toward ads" belongs to the subjective category. These features are set as the base of making distinction among various types of Internet advertising. Therefore, each has been elaborated in detail under different Internet advertising type. This study solely deals with the appeal type, because it is directly related to the customers' type of involvement with the product or service. Appeal is basically

Table 3 Core Ideal Framework

Other Features					Ad Features					Product
ICT	Strategy	Ad Type	Audience	Invol-vement	Attitude	size	Intera-ctive	Anim-ation	Appeal Type	
										Ideal

divided into two groups: emotional factors, represented here by "E," and rational factors represented by "R." As mentioned earlier, by advertising products and services of low involvement, customers can be affected through applying emotional factors; while by advertising products/services of high involvement advertisers may influence their audience through applying rational appeals.

7. Internet advertising formats

As mentioned earlier, the four types of Internet advertising discussed here are Display Ads (including banners, skyscrapers, and hypertexts), Rich Media (including Pop Ups and interstitials), Sent E-mails, and Digital Video. This section elaborates each type explaining the distinctive features of each. Furthermore, each advertising type is evaluated based on the advertising criteria including the Appeal Type, Movement and interactivity, Typeface, Attitude toward Ad, Strategy, audience, involvement, ICT status, and the type of advertisement, which have already been mentioned under the "Main Framework Elements."

7.1 Banners

A banner typically appears as rectangular-shaped box located at the top, either side, or foot of the page (Faber, Lee, & Nan, 2004). It enables consumers to connect to the advertiser's website by clicking on it (Briones, 1999). At present, two major banner formats exist: the static and the rich media (The Interactive Advertising Bureau, 2000). The static banners are interactive but stationary and generally appear in the size of 2.5 cm × 12.5 cm or smaller. Rich media banners, on the other hands, are more interactive (Briones, 1999). Banner advertisements aim at evoking click-through at least for high-involvement (Dahlén, 2002; Dahlén & Bergendahl, 2001; Dahlén, Ekborn, & Mörner, 2000). Banner is the smallest Internet advertising format (usually 468 × 60 pixels). Efforts made to tempt people to click on such ads by sending misleading messages have raised a sense of dislike in the consumers toward this format. Although the information included in a banner is usually limited to the brand name and a brief slogan, it can serve as a mean to improve brand awareness and reminder (Briggs & Hollis, 1997; Faber et al., 2004). However, audiences cannot interact with it and, hence a banner is neutral from this point of view. Therefore, banners seem to be effective for those products whose owners apply pull strategy and try to enhance their customers' awareness by using banners (Bruner, 2006; Dahlén et al., 2004). Due to their low file size, banners do not require a high bandwidth; the available bandwidth of 56 kbps seems proper to display and view these ads (Table 4).

7.2 Pop ups

Pop-ups usually appear on a separate window at the top of the page content. The pop-

Table 4 Banner and Pop up Core Ideal Framework

Other Features					Ad Features					Features
ICT	Strategy	Ad Type	Audience	Involvement	Attitude	size	Interactive	Animation	Appeal Type	Alternatives
L	Pull	ALL	H, M, L	H_1, H_2	-	□	□	□	R	Banner
H	Push	ALL	L	L_1, L_2	-	+	□	+	E	Pop up

up window does not disappear before the user closes it voluntarily. A more recent study reveals that pop-up ads are irritating and annoying to the users (Edwards, Li, & Lee, 2002; Faber et al., 2004). Negative sentiments raised in this regard are due to the disruption that such ads cause for the users when they are engaged in a specific activity on the web.

Since pop-ups have a high rate of movement, they are categorized under the category of large Internet advertising types because the smallest pop-up is 250×250 pixels, while the largest one may be 550×480 pixels (The Interactive Advertising Bureau [IAB], 2007). Pop-up size and movement are so important because bigger size and higher rate of movement result in higher number of clicks. From an interaction point of view, a pop-up is designed to lead the audiences to a certain website, without providing explanation about the target product/service. In fact, pop-ups provide their audiences with no interactive information.

Pop-ups appeal mostly to light users, first because such users have little information about the advertising types, and second because they get online basically for entertainment. Such audiences do not have any particular query (Bruner & Kumar, 2000), thus they react to appealing objects and are more influenced by emotional appeals rather than rational ones (Korgaonkar & Wolin, 2002).

7.3 Interstitials

Interstitials are considered annoying (Cho, Lee, & Tharp, 2000). They cover the whole page (Rodgers & Thorson, 2000) and users have a little control over them because unlike pop-ups, there is no "exit" option to stop or delete an interstitial. However, customers show a more positive attitude towards such ads because they are bigger than pop-ups and provide customers with more information and are thus easier to interact with.

Just like pop-ups, interstitials can effectively advertise products and services which are unknown to users and push strategy is applied to provide the required information. Interstitials, just like pop-ups, have a lot of movements due to employing rich media technology. They also apply numerous appealing and emotional factors to influence the users. Audiences of an Interstitial, as mentioned above, are primarily light users because this group is more prone to emotional appeals. Moreover, this type of advertising suits

those users who have access to a connection speed of 100 kbps.

7.4 Skyscrapers

Skyscrapers are the most popular Internet advertising format (IAB, 2007). They are considered as big Internet advertisements (600 × 120 pixels). Skyscrapers are especially effective for advertising products and services of high customer involvement. Since they sit on the right side of the webpage, the information they provide mostly include the companies' brands and logos. Because customers look for products and services of high involvement rate, they interact with skyscrapers properly. A skyscraper contains a lot of GIF files and animations, and its background color constantly changes to attract the users' attention. Skyscrapers are more appealing to heavy and medium users who use Internet due to highly rational and emotional motives. These people surf the Internet to find their targets. Skyscrapers are effective for advertising familiar brands. Advertisers with such products should use pull strategy in their advertisements. Internet connectivity rate of 56 kbps seems to be enough for users exposed to skyscrapers.

7.5 Hypertexts

Hypertexts come under the oldest and cheapest category of Internet advertising formats. They appear within the content of WebPages in the form of a highlighted text. Hypertexts are interactively neutral because most of the time they include only one or two words, or a relatively short phrase. Since the only things that users see are a number of words possibly related to the search option, a hypertext is not interactive (Hanafizadeh & Behboudi, 2012, p. 81). Hypertexts are neutral from the typeface and movement points of view, as they are offered in the form of a text and might be ignored by some users. The required speed, from the ICT point of view, is 56 kbps. Heavy users and high involvement products are potentially the best targets (Hanafizadeh & Behboudi, 2012, p. 78; Salmon, 1986). Through employing an inexpensive pull strategy and locating the hypertexts in frequently visited websites, the product owner may facilitate the users' access to their websites. Eventually, since hypertexts play an important role in decreasing the advertising expenses and do not appear to be disruptive, users have a very positive attitude toward them (Hanafizadeh & Behboudi, 2012, p. 78).

7.6 Email advertising

Advertising through E-mail is one of the major instruments of push strategy. The targets of this method are mainly middle users and heavy users because light users rarely tend to check their mailboxes (Hanafizadeh & Behboudi, 2012, p. 81). The lowest connectivity speed, 56 kbps, seems to be enough for this method. Movement and size has nothing to do with emails because these two are specified for those ads which occupy some spaces of the web. Email advertising is appropriate for push strategy. However,

the follow up emails trigger user's emotional, and not rational, involvement, first, due to the large number of spam letters and lack of trust on the emails, and second, because of the effectiveness of appeal factors. In e-mail advertising, the emotional motives play a determining role. Therefore, once appealing, they persuade users to follow up e-mails, otherwise they will be easily ignored by the user. Therefore, this method provides a very low level of rational interaction. The attitude toward e-mails is positive and E-mails are very popular with users (International Data Corporation, 2002). Moreover, studies reveal that Internet users are keen on receiving e-mails and being informed (Intermarket Group, 2004) and hence, tend to fill application forms on the web quite often.

7.7 Digital video

This method has successfully shifted from TV to the Net. However, both the advertisers and the consumers contribute to controlling it (Hanafizadeh et al., 2012). Digital video has a very high interaction rate as they can be recalled and analyzed as long as the maneuvers carried on the logo of the advertising company. Customers have a very positive attitude toward this method due to its dynamism and appealing images. According to a study carried out by Jupiter Systems (2005), compared with text-type advertising, video advertising has a deeper effect on the customers' attitude. Video advertising is more influential on light and medium users than heavy users due to the emotional appeals. High-speed Internet connections are required for this type of advertising and it is appropriate for unknown products and services. Video advertising is used both for pull and push strategies.

7.8 The variables of the model

The model includes two groups of features presented below (Table 5):

The "R" representing "rational appeal" is related to those products with which the customer has a high rate of mental involvement and gathers a lot of information to buy them.

The "E" representing the "emotional appeal" is related to those products with which the customer has a low rate of rational involvement and purchases only due to emotional motives.

The "□" stands for those features that do not apply to the option or have a zero value.

The "-" sign stands for features of negative value.

The "+" sign stands for features of positive value.

H_1 and H_2 stand for high customer-product involvements. H_1 stands for those ration-based purchases (like buying furniture), while H_2 represents emotion-based purchases

Table 5   Core Ideal Framework Based on 10 Features and 7 Alternatives

Features / Alternatives	Ad Features					Other Features				
	Appeal Type	Anima-tion	Interac-tive	Size	Attitude	Involve-ment	Audi-ence	Ad Type	Strategy	ICT
Banner	R	□	□	□	-	H_1, H_2	H, M, L	ALL	Pull	L
Pop up	E	+	□	+	-	L_1, L_2	L	ALL	Push	H
Interstitial	E	+	+	+	-	L_1, L_2	L	ALL	Push	H
Skyscraper	R	+	+	+	+	H_1, H_2	H	ALL	Pull	L
Hypertext	R	□	□	□	+	H_1, H_2	H	ALL	Pull	L
Email Ad	E	□	□	□	+	L_1, L_2	H, M	ALL	Push	L
Digital Video	E	+	+	+	+	L_1, L_2	H, M	ALL	Push, Pull	H

(like buying jewelry or cosmetics).

L_1 and L_2 stand for low customer-product involvements both from a logical and an emotional point of view.

H, M, L stands for "Heavy" user, "Middle" user, and "Light" users, respectively.

In ICT section, L represents "low connection speed" and H represents "high speed."

When the ideal framework for each advertising alternative is defined (Table 3), a comparison is made between the scenario and each individual alternative to choose the most appropriate framework for the product.

8. Case study

Here "Job search" was the study case. Job search ads are categorized under "issue ads (Devlin, 1995)."

(1) Involvement: high

(2) Appeals: rational and logical

(3) Audience type: all users

(4) Ad type: issue

(5) Strategy: pull

(6) ICT: lowest connection

(7) Attitude: negative

(8) Interactivity: positive and high

(9) Size and animation: neutral

The scenario presented in Table 6 is considered as the core ideal framework for job search based on 10 variables. At this moment, this ideal framework is compared to the individual ideals of all advertising items (Table 5), and the alternative, having the most corresponding ideals with the scenario ideal, will be selected as the right Internet advertising format for the job search.

As illustrated in Table 7, banner advertisements are closest to job search scenario with only one difference. According to this model, banners proved to be the most effective type of Internet advertising methods for job searches. To evaluate and assess the accuracy of the model, a content analysis was performed on the Persian weblogs and websites to observe and record the job search ads. Eventually, the proposed model was strongly confirmed because the majority of job search ads were in form of banners.

Considering the fact that banner may be the most common format of Internet advertising and since relying merely on one advertising format may not be reliable to prove it as an efficient format, another case study was developed. Just as with the most right banner scenarios, an assumption emerged. According to this assumption, the skyscrapers were assumed to be the best solutions for advertising a film due to customers' high emotional involvement. The proper strategy to be used is Pull strategy because users look for it. In this case, customer-product interaction is high, because users scrutinize the ad looking for the names of the actors and the director. They may even refer to the website to seek additional information. As to ICT status, minimum speed can satisfy the demand. To apply the model, an approach was defined. First, a visit was paid to *Webgozar.com*, an Iranian source of statistics providing monthly reports introducing websites most-visited by

Table 6 Core Ideal Framework for Job Search

Other Features					Ad Features					Job Search
ICT	Strategy	Ad Type	Audi-ence	Involve-ment	Attitude	size	Interac-tive	Anima-tion	Appeal Type	
L	Pull	Issue	H, M, L	H_1, H_2	-	□	+	□	R	Ideal

Table 7 Core Ideal Framework for Banner

Other Features					Ad Features					Banner
ICT	Strategy	Ad Type	Audi-ence	Involve-ment	Attitude	size	Interac-tive	Anima-tion	Appeal Type	
L	Pull	ALL	H, M, L	H_1, H_2	-	□	□	□	R	Ideal

users within the past month. It also provides a list of most-visited websites by users within a year. Then, a list included 150 most-visited websites within the past year. Next, entering into each URL, the relevant data were collected (as stated in Appendix). First, the website was checked to make sure whether it accepts the ad or not, next the type of product to be advertised and the advertising format were checked. The findings revealed that from 150 websites, there were 111 accepted ads. 65 had already accepted film advertising, 45 of which accepted ads of skyscraper format, 20 displayed ads of banner format, and the remaining were as follow: (1) filtered and damaged ones = 14, (2) Skyscraper = 6; Banner = 21; and Bottom = 5 which displayed ads of some other products. According to the content analysis, the skyscraper is the most frequently used format (the right format) of film advertising, thus it can be concluded that the model is functionally efficient. Because according to Enabz.com (2010) one of the five top rank industries in the context of e-commerce is film selling.

9. Discussion

The objective of this study was to provide some insights on Internet advertising formats in Iran. In pursuing this goal, we developed a conceptual model by scrutinizing previous research in the marketing and advertising fields. A questionnaire was performed to validate identified factors. By this work, we found seven factors including product involvement, advertising types, audience types, strategy types, situation of ICT, ad subjective features, and ad objective feature which successfully explain the right format of web advertisement.

The present study introduces a potential framework that helps to classifying the possible scenarios for different alternatives. In other words, based on the main ideal framework, decisions can be made on what advertising format suits which scenario best. Advertisement likelihood scenario is the closest answer to reality. For instance, in the above-mentioned case study, banners seen to be the best advertising method once the ideal framework was defined. On this basis, one classification may be as follows:

Banner is the right format of web advertisement for scenarios (products that are supposed to advertise) that have following requirements:

(1) Have a high involvement and need to high information processing.

(2) Need to use pull strategy in advertising.

(3) Banner can be used for all type of advertisements (product/service, issue, public service announcement, corporate and political).

(4) Banner can be used for all types of users (heavy, medium, and light users).

(5) Banner is more appropriate for those products that consumers have a negative attitude toward them.

(6) Banner is appropriate for those products that their advertising do not need to have interaction, big size and animation.

(7) Banner is good choice when marketers want to use rational appeals.

Banner is the appropriate advertising alternative for those scenarios identified with these features. Actually, this classification can be equally applied to six other types of Internet advertising formats. Each Internet advertising method has its specific characteristics that make it the best advertising alternative for the scenarios categorized in this group.

10. Conclusions and recommendations

The study provides a framework to illustrate the right Internet advertising format. To identify the right Internet advertising format, this study proposed a general framework using the TOPSIS approach. Applying the proposed model, the likelihood of ideal group of advertising format for different types of products/services was determined. The hypotheses were evaluated by international and Iranian experts. In order to complete and extend this research, further researches can be performed on the ad types and the way they contribute to choose the right Internet advertising format.

In order to answer to question; who can enjoy the achievements of this study? It can be concluded that the study consolidates the findings of previous studies and introduces the main pillars of making decision about the selection of the right Internet advertising format. This text opens a window for researchers through which they may observe the various branches of subjective features model (ICT situation, strategy type, audience type, ad type, product type, and ad and subjective objective features) effective on making decisions as to Internet advertising, and develop the required delves. It is noteworthy that the main criteria included in this text were extracted from 40 sources. Business firms tend to use Internet as an advertising medium and Internet may use this model to select an advertising format that suits their product/service best. They may also develop their advertising activities based on the defined criteria to improve the efficiency of their ads. Although, this study provide the main foundation of internet advertising in Iran, more comprehensive studies seem to be required to assess the effect of advertising method on the selection of the right Internet advertising format.

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Appendix: Iranian Websites Which Were Used to Analysis

Rank	Web Site Address	Product	Date	Ad Type	Rank	Web Site Address	Product	Date	Ad Type
1	http://www.java88.blogfa.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Banner	41	http://www.toop30d.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Banner
2	http://www.p30world.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper	42	http://mersee.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
3	http://www.pzrocks.com	filtered	2009/09/10	filtered	43	http://www.takkhal.net	Other	2009/09/10	Banner
4	http://www.kopey.irr	No	2009/09/10	No	44	http://persianbook.ning.com	Other	2009/09/10	Banner
5	http://www.limoonat.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper	45	http://www.free-offline.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Banner
6	http://www.patoghu.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper	46	http://www.takmob.net	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
7	http://www.persian.3jokes.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Botton	47	http://www.ymvis.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Banner
8	http://www.pix2pix.Org	filtered	2009/09/10	filtered	48	http://www.film2movie.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
9	http://www.Bitaraf.com	Other	2009/09/10	Banner	49	http://www.dvb5.net	No	2009/09/10	No
10	http://www.funpatogh.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Banner	50	http://www.aryabooks.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
11	http://www.jadidtarin.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Banner	51	http://www.p30world.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
12	http://www.7gardoon.com	Other	2009/09/10	Banner	52	http://footiran.ir	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
13	http://linkboxiran.com	No	2009/09/10	No	53	http://www.topmovie.ir	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
14	http://www.downloadha.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper	54	http://night-skin.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
15	http://www.pctools.ir	Damaged	2009/09/10	Damaged	55	http://www.tafrihi.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper

#	Website	Type	Date	Format
16	http://www.asandownload.com	Other	2009/09/10	Bottom
17	http://www.lovefor.blogfa.com	Damaged	2009/09/10	Damaged
18	http://www.liga43.org	Damaged	2009/09/10	Damaged
19	http://www.miadgah.ir	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
20	http://www.yaronline.com	Damaged	2009/09/10	Damaged
21	http://www.faclip.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
22	http://www.softgozar.com	Other	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
23	http://www.ketabeavval.ir	No	2009/09/10	No
24	http://www.farabourse.net	Other	2009/09/10	Bottom
25	http://www.rapidautodl.blogfa.com	No	2009/09/10	No
26	http://agahinameh.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Bottom
27	http://www.pcparsi.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
28	http://www.daneshju.ir/forum	Other	2009/09/10	Banner
29	http://yahoo360iran.ning.com	Other	2009/09/10	Bottom
30	http://www.iranhall.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
31	http://link2bux.mihanblog.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
56	http://www.mahsunki-rmizigul.ir	Other	2009/09/10	Banner
57	http://sms-jok.royablog.ir	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
58	http://www.mamisite.com	No	2009/09/10	No
59	http://www.yekmobile.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
60	http://www.eca.ir	No	2009/09/10	No
61	http://www.acclearn.com	No	2009/09/10	No
62	http://www.irantk.ir	No	2009/09/10	No
63	http://www.23055000.ir	No	2009/09/10	No
64	http://www.far30mobile.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
65	http://www.unp.ir	No	2009/09/10	No
66	http://www.it2.ir	No	2009/09/10	No
67	http://musicaal.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Banner
68	http://www.nega.ir	Movie	2009/09/10	Banner
69	http://www.parsiland.ir	Movie	2009/09/10	Banner
70	http://forum.tvshow.ir	No	2009/09/10	No
71	http://www.banksat.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Banner

No	URL	Type	Date	Status	No	URL	Type	Date	Status
32	http://www.birmusic3.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper	72	http://kashkul.com	No	2009/09/10	No
33	http://iranian.f	No	2009/09/10	No	73	http://hurrahsport.com	No	2009/09/10	No
34	http://www.iranmc.org	No	2009/09/10	No	74	http://club.parniaz.com	No	2009/09/10	No
35	http://www.footballiran.ir	Other	2009/09/10	Skyscraper	75	http://www.parsquran.com	No	2009/09/10	No
36	http://www.p30day.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper	76	http://www.yaoo.ir	No	2009/09/10	No
37	http://www.9cd.ir	Filtered	2009/09/10	Filtered	77	http://www.mob4u.ir	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
38	http://www.100fal.com	Other	2009/09/10	Banner	78	http://iransaze.com	Other	2009/09/10	Banner
39	http://www.irpdf.com	No	2009/09/10	No	79	http://www.p30island.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Banner
40	http://blogers.ir	Other	2009/09/10	Skyscraper	80	http://www.cfon.ir	Filtered	2009/09/10	Filtered
81	http://www.pezeshk.us	Other	2009/09/10	Banner	116	http://nezamvazifeh.com	Other	2009/09/10	Banner
82	http://www.kar20.ir	Other	2009/09/10	Skyscraper	117	http://www.miadgah.org	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
83	http://www.oxin-box.co.cc	Movie	2009/09/10	Banner	118	http://www.ariamobile.net	Other	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
84	http://www.freedownload.ir	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper	119	http://sshh.javanblog.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
85	http://www.Iranihaa.mihanblog.com	Filtered	2009/09/10	Filtered	120	http://downloadbazar.com	Damaged	2009/09/10	Damaged
86	http://www.iranselect.net	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper	121	http://www.itech2.info	Other	2009/09/10	Banner
87	http://vatangig.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper	122	http://www.pichak.net	Movie	2009/09/10	Banner
88	http://www.iranmc.org	No	2009/09/10	No	123	http://www.mashhad-shop.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Banner
89	http://www.tactools.org	No	2009/09/10	No	124	http://setarestarh.javanblog.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper

No	URL	Category	Date	Format
90	http://www.irtoolz.info	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
91	http://www.tamashagaran.ir	Other	2009/09/10	Banner
92	http://www.cafedexign.com	No	2009/09/10	No
93	http://bia2clip.org/toplinks	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
94	http://www.mmdsharifnet.ir	No	2009/09/10	No
95	http://www.takbook.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
96	http://www.Taktaz.com	Other	2009/09/10	Banner
97	http://naghola.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
98	http://pichak.net	Other	2009/09/10	Banner
99	http://www.yasinmedia.com	No	2009/09/10	No
100	http://www.mgtsolution.com	Other	2009/09/10	Banner
101	http://www.tazin.blogfa.com	No	2009/09/10	No
102	http://www.persianpet.org	No	2009/09/10	No
103	http://tat-bank.blogfa.com	No	2009/09/10	No
104	http://www.parsiking.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
125	http://www.arash98.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
126	http://old.taroot.ir	No	2009/09/10	No
127	http://www.iranonlinetv.com	Other	2009/09/10	Banner
128	http://www.Bo2song.ir	Damaged	2009/09/10	Damaged
129	http://forum.p30pedia.com	No	2009/09/10	No
130	http://www.bia4clip.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
131	http://www.miladho-spital.com	No	2009/09/10	No
132	http://aksetoop.dortin-blog.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
133	http://tasetare.blogfa.com	Other	2009/09/10	Banner
134	http://www.bazyab.ir	Movie	2009/09/10	Banner
135	http://sajadhosseini.javanblog.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Banner
136	http://www.karshenasi.com	No	2009/09/10	No
137	http://box1000.mihan-blog.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Banner
138	http://www.fal4u.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
139	http://10box.mihanblog.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Banner

No.	URL	Type	Date	Ad
105	http://www.clickkon.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Banner
106	http://www.mardomsalari.com	No	2009/09/10	No
107	http://www.parniaz.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Banner
108	http://www.4downloads.ir	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
109	http://www.mygame.ir	Movie	2009/09/10	Banner
110	http://www.ravazadeh.com	Other	2009/09/10	Banner
111	http://www.indexiran.ir	Other	2009/09/10	Banner
112	http://www.irmob.com	Other	2009/09/10	Banner
113	http://i	Damaged	2009/09/10	Damaged
114	http://www.paroos.com	No	2009/09/10	No
115	http://www.download98.org	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
140	http://takmahfel.com	Other	2009/09/10	Banner
141	http://www.irkut.ir	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
142	http://www.iranweb-shop.info	No	2009/09/10	No
143	http://www.33ir.com	No	2009/09/10	No
144	http://akse20.mahblog.com	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
145	http://sari360.ning.com	No	2009/09/10	No
146	http://www.t-a-k-2-0.sub.ir	Damaged	2009/09/10	Damaged
147	http://www.webgozar.com	Other	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
148	http://www.kahoo.org	Movie	2009/09/10	Skyscraper
149	http://www.pooyaon-line.net	No	2009/09/10	No
150	http://www.persiajok.com	Other	2009/09/10	Skyscraper

Total result: Without ad = 39, filtered or damaged = 14, movie ad (Skyscraper = 45; Banner = 20), other ad (Skyscraper = 6; Banner = 21; Bottom = 5),