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Online Narrative Ads and its Impact on Facebook Users' Engagement

Abstract

Purpose- The purpose of this paper is to examine the impact of online narrative ads on Facebook users' engagement with the brand.

Design/methodology/approach-

This paper is using a mixed methodology, 400 Questionnaires, electronically distributed to collect and analyse active Facebook users' responses and evaluate their engagement with five online narrative ads for different brands from different industries. The survey included links to five suggested ads that were selected based on best Egyptian Facebook Ads ranked in 2018, followed by a set of questions testing the main dimensions of the study after viewing the ads. Focus groups were conducted before the quantitative phase to select the Facebook narrative advertisements. Participants first selected one of the advertisement links of a brand that they would seriously consider purchasing, and then answered the survey.

Findings- The results of our paper showed structuring online narrative ads for Facebook depends on four main dimensions ,online interactivity, entertainment elements of the ad , vividness, self-referencing, which will consequently affect Facebook users' engagement. It was found, that there is a relationship between all dimensions as well as significant impact on increasing online user' engagement with the brand.

Originality/value The main contribution of this paper is studying the Egyptian online narrative ads' significant dimensions and how it can engage Facebook users' with brands, thus affects their intentions to purchase. The empirical evidence suggests that if brands properly designed their online ads targeting Facebook users, they can fully utilise social media platforms to maximize their consumers' engagement more than traditional forms of media.

Keywords Narrative Advertising, Social media (Facebook), Facebook brand engagement, Egypt context

1.1 Introduction

Digital advertising expenditure has beaten television ad spending for the first time in 2017. Advertising is a precious funding source for internet content and services (Benady, 2016). As promoters have shifted more of their ad expenditures online, it's becoming very challenging to measure online ad effectiveness. Advertisers consistently access data that link ad exposures, clicks, page visits, online purchases, and any other activities that could be held (Bond, 2017).

This brings up the question: what content works best for the online platform? What engages users more? And does ad content really affect online users' engagement? Surprisingly, these questions are greatly understudied. Research models of directly informative advertising usually allow advertising to inform consumers only about price and product existence.

Nevertheless, many observations and several studies (Armstrong, 2010) suggest that advertisements hold much more information and content beyond prices (Berger, 2012). Many researches are aiming to help better understanding and improving firms' social media marketing strategies. (Ascend2, 'Marketing Strategy Report: Social Media', 2013) Report that attaining engagement on large audience platforms like Facebook is an essential marketing goal for firms trying to promote their brands (Gerber, 2014).

Consequently, firms invested a lot in acquiring fans and followers on platforms like Facebook by investing heavily in ads on the network (Brett R. Gordon, 2018). Narrative technique

(storytelling) influence on communication and comprehension have been examined and became an important area for study in several sectors (West, 2004). Recently many researchers have examined the effect of stories in advertising, how narratives better help in comprehending and processing information and more over how stories act as a vehicle through which consumers engage with brands (Adval and Wyer, 2004). Moreover, previous studies recognize the difference between narrative ads and other types of ads such as factual ads. Narrative ads usually have a similar structure to information acquired in daily lives and thus prompting a narrative form of processing (Kirmani, 2007). Narrative processing, therefore, can enhance persuasion by provoking strong emotional reactions (Green, The role of transportation in the persuasiveness of public narratives, 2000), and by encouraging consumers to relate the advertised brand to themselves (Escalas, 2004).

In this essence, this study aims to explore the effects of online narrative advertising via Facebook in various industries, on Egyptian consumers' brand Engagement.

1.2 Research problem

To stand out in today's highly competitive market and create powerful Ads that would eventually have an impact on the consumers, the Ads need to stand out and most importantly be recalled. With this fierce competition narrative Ads have gained trophies in being one of the most effective tools of communication and influence (West, 2004). Despite recent researches in this area, there is still few studies examining

the elements which create stronger online narrative Ads and how this could affect online users' engagement with the brand.

Therefore this research will be conducted in the Egyptian context to examine the impact of Facebook Narrative advertising on online users' engagement with various brands from different industries. It is argued that this research will help to get a better understanding of the most effective elements needed to construct Facebook narrative Ads for online users to boost the level engagement which will consequently affect

Furthermore, examining whether online narrative ads are really effective to engage viewers and boost their online engagement with the brand, is a highly recommended area of research (Fernández-Sabiote & -Ballester, 2016). As a result, the research problem can be expressed as follows: *How to structure effective online Narrative Ads for online users and the effect of these Ads on online users' engagement with brands advertised on Facebook.*

1.3 Research purpose

In light of narrative transportation theory, this study suggests that when processing an online narrative advertisement, users can be easily attracted to the advertised content. Researchers have argued that the human brain tends to recall and remember information in the form of narratives (stories) because of their nature; narratives are considered one of the most important ways of organizing the events of our worlds (Leigh Ann Vaughn, 2009).

Accordingly, in today's huge market of advertisements researchers have noticed that narratively structured Ads tend to generate more positive feelings, positive cognitive responses and are generally more persuasive than non-narrative Ads (McQueen, 2011).

Therefore, the overall purpose of this research is to examine the effect of online Narrative Ads on online user's engagement with brands advertised on Facebook. Especially that it was confirmed in several studies that online media is gaining prominence and spending on online advertising is growing in a rapid pace. Thus it is important to better understand how structuring effective online narrative Ads is significantly related to consumers' responses and how they can become highly engaged with advertising on Facebook.

1.4 Research objectives

Due to the high competition in today's advertising world, this study identified vividness and self-relevance, in addition to two online-based elements, interactivity and entertainment, as four relevant dimensions of online advertising. A model that combines the effects of these dimensions on online user's engagement towards the brand is suggested. Based on literature, Interactivity is defined as the degree to which an individual is influence or gets influenced by a particular stimulus (Flornenthal, 2010). In online based advertising, interactivity involves creating a direct two-way online communication between the user and Advertised content (e.g. Brand) (Gurau, 2008).

The literature also suggests that advertisement vividness is one of the most important elements of advertising that

contributes to a user's emotional response. Moreover, Entertainment is one of the main motives of using the internet. Literature states that many people use the internet to seek enjoyment, relaxation, and entertainment. The last dimension that measures online narrative Ads in this study is self-referencing, it is a process in which user's apply the advertisement's relevance to themselves to judge its usefulness (Ching & Tong, 2013). Therefore, the research's main objective is:

Examine the effect of the four online narrative advertising dimensions (Vividness, interactivity, entertainment and self - referencing) on online users' level of engagement with the brand advertised on Facebook.

1.5 Research importance:

The persuasiveness impact of Narratives and their influence on consumers have been noticed across many fields, such as advertising and many others. Despite many examinations and research, Narratives have not yet been fully tested and given the attention that they deserve. Moreover nothing proves against the fact that Narratives wouldn't have less of an effect when applied to brands. Yet there are not enough studies on the effect of Online Narrative advertising and its elements on the online brand engagement (Solja, 2016). Hence, the research is of academic and practical importance.

1.5.1 Academic importance

This study has shown unique and important findings that contribute to the body of knowledge about online narrative advertising research. Previous research has examined the effect of narratives using traditional media platforms,

few that has examined online advertising using new media platforms such as Facebook. Internet-based online advertising, especially social networking sites is a new and constantly growing area of research. This study has examined the features of online narrative advertising on Facebook and there effect on online users engagement with the brand advertised on Facebook.

The transportation theory has guided the effect of online narrative ads on users engagement, revealing that the more the users get immersed into the ad, the more engaged and attached will become to its content. The effect of transportation proves that narrative advertising, greatly affects how consumers perceive the brand. More over the study expanded the research on narrative ads,examining specified online features such as (interactivity, entertainment, vividness and self- referencing). Narrative ads have been previously examined using other dimensions, but newly that these features have been upgraded to include the online dimensions, additionally testing these dimensions on user engagement in the Egyptian context is also recently studied.

1.5.2 Practical importance

Additionally, this study offers important practical implications. As concluded from this research narrative advertising affects consumers experience with the advertised content (i.e. Brand), the technique of using storytelling grabs more attention and focus into the message. It couldn't be set aside or neglected that advertisers should realize the powers of narrative advertising.

Advertisers should expand their zone to include more online based advertising and much advanced tech-

niques such as using narrative ads to increase consumer's engagement, and let their brands set aside from the crowd and clutter of traditional advertising. It is also crucial that the potential effect of online technology should be acknowledged and used to deliver a wider experience. Using online features such as entertaining displays, interactivity and virtual reality must be taken into consideration when wanting to engage consumers. The interactive world online, specifically on social networking sites like Facebook, can definitely be used to advertise for brands, make brands shine more, and stick into consumers mind.

The four elements signify central factors that improve and enhance the storytelling experience. Consumers are allowed to interact more using the online features, they get a good amount of entertainment that is an essential element that adds joy and relaxation to the overall atmosphere. Even more consumers relate the narrative experience to stories and events from their own lives, which makes them more attached. Lastly the vivid representation of ad allows more concentration and comprehension.

Nevertheless, if properly designed, a narrative online advertisement can be nearly the main reason in maximizing user engagement towards the brand. Interactivity is a very unique feature to internet based advertising, thus advertisers should aim to utilize this feature in attempts to engage and grab consumer's attention. After the analysis it has been found that highly interactive narrative ads, including entertaining content, delivering a vivid message and relating this to real life experiences, all are reasons behind user engagement.

2. Literature review

2.1 Facebook advertising

Social networks are progressively captivating greater shares of the time consumers spend online (Benjamin Gleason, 2018). Recently brands from all over the world are focusing their attention to these social media platforms including Facebook on the top list (Voorveld, 2018). Researchers and social media experts are seeking to develop advertising content to better engage users (Dokyun Lee, 2016). Facebook, which is now the largest social media platform in the world, forces most top brands to uphold a Facebook page for their brands, from which they post messages (pictures, comments, ads etc.) To attract users (Voorveld, 2018).

Many types of content in Facebook posts contain characteristics of brand personality. For example, we see millions of posts from firms that contain humor, emotional appeal, and casual chitchat or discuss the brand's charitable work (Childers, 2001). All these approaches are understood as efforts by the firm to establish a brand personality "a set of human characteristics associated with the brand" (Weiss, 2000). A significant finding is that brand-personality-related content results in social media engagement considerably, on the other hand informative content mostly drive engagement positively only when combined with more personalized content. (Dokyun Lee, 2016).

2.2 Online Narrative ads on Facebook

For Consumers narrative is one of the oldest and most powerful means of communication (Mine Üçok Hughes,

2016).The reason behind its power starts from childhood, when people are used to read, listen and tell stories (Allison R. Johnson, 2015). Narrative ads are more affective, more convincing and stick to the mind compared to other means of communication such as rational arguments, statistics and facts (Monarth, 2014).

In recent studies, it has been found that advertisers are now using narratives for the purpose of delivering information, building, maintaining credibility, persuading and making buyers more comfortable and engaged (Gilliam, 2015).Furthermore a Narrative technique is also perceived as a persuasive tool in the areas of advertising, communication,branding and management to connect with the organization's stakeholders due to its probable effects on story recipients (Escalas, 2004).For example, studies have examined the use of storytelling as a tool that affects stakeholders' perceptions of the corporate brand helping it stand out and become differentiated from other competitors and at the same time build corporate brand reputation and maintain a pool of loyal consumers.(Janssen, 2012).

Compared to regular advertisements, Ads that contain stories are proved to help consumers better understand and comprehend the benefits of the brand leading to positive views of the brand (Kaufman, 2003).Narrative transportation theory explains the persuasive effects of stories on cognitive and affective responses of consumers towards a brand (Green,2000).This theory explains that when consumers are transported by (i.e., absorbed or immersed in) the story told, narrative processing inside their brains works and dominates

over analytical processing (Green, 2002).As Narrative processing controls the mind ,less critical analysis of the ad being watched or read takes place , at the same time results in less arguments, fewer negative thoughts and greater affective responses compared to analytical processing, which in turn enhance persuasion of the ad message (Green, 2002).Online based narrative advertising underlines many benefits which traditional narrative ads don't. Entertainment, interactivity are highly experienced online (Childers, 2001). These unique features aid in gaining consumer's attention and emotions, on the other hand traditional narrative advertising media platforms can't offer such features (Jiang Z. a., 2007).

2.3 Online Narrative ads Dimensions

Research states that interactivity is the degree to which an individual can influence or be influenced by a certain stimulus (Florenthal, 2010). This crucial element enables users online to respond, act and reply in their own way to received messages. (Ghose, 1998) Moreover high interactivity levels enhance and aids in building long term relationships with consumers (Fiore,2005). Higher interactivity also enables consumers to form scenarios in their minds and build stories related to the product and its consumption, and based on the transportation theory these scenarios control the mind and leads consumers to positively relate to products and brands (Schlosser, 2003).

Vividness , one of the elements experienced under narrative advertising , involve much clearer images of reality , enables consumers to better understand the product , motivates their beliefs and

excites them towards buying the product (Jiang Z. a.,2007).Since online advertising includes more contextual details and more attractive elements than traditional advertisements do its thus allows the consumer to from more vivid images and stimulations of the reality , live a full experience , and increases the level of persuasion in the ad (Petrova, 2005).

One another very important and present element of the internet is the element of entertainment (Ching & Tong, 2013). Previous research states that one of the main reasons of using the internet is internet users would be seeking enjoyment, and entertainment (Childers, 2001).Since online advertising benefit from the options available of the internet, consumers are expecting to highly enjoy the ad, and get entertained while watching it (Mathwick, 2001). The experience of watching the ad online results in higher enjoyment, pleasure, fun, and fantasy (Bloch, 1983).Thus according to the narrative transportation theory higher levels of entertainment releases the mind , leads to less mind control and results in higher emotions and feelings (Batat, 2009).

Self- referencing is one more component of online advertisements, which leads to more engagement, it is a kind of process where consumers relate to the ad story and start applying relevance themselves, and forming judgments of the product usefulness (Debevec, 1988).

2.4 Facebook users' engagement with brands'online ads

The media has been ruled for some time in the past, consumers were captivated audience and had no control over the consumption of the content being delivered (Cha, 2013).Consumers were not able to create, distribute or present any content or feedback (Kerry Fiona Chipp, 2016).Being no more the case this past control from content providers (i.e. organization), has slipped away from them. Now with the new media (i.e. social media) democratizing the media landscape, consumers are able to not only share and interact with content, but most of the time create the content (Kant, 2014).

The power and control has been transferred from producer to consumer; whereas consumers craft their own content, share it and comment on it (Erz, 2018). In the past ten years, the freedom enabled by the web, expanding consumer engagement has been the trending area of research (Kerry Fiona Chipp, 2016).Engagement is a high point of discussion in the field of advertising, many researches and literatures have been focusing on this point (Schultz, 2012).The amount of engagement and the degree to which consumers get attached to any ad message depends greatly on the value intensity represented. In other words the motivational force that drives them to take action (Hennig-Thurau, 2010). If the ad focuses primarily on highly motivating viewers, using narrative technique, the ad message would serve the purpose of generating value intensity with great extent (Hennig-Thurau, 2010).

Due to the concept of interactivity and co-creative nature of the social media platform, brand engagement could be linked and viewed in the light of key elements and characteristics of social media usage, such as ratings, comments and shares (Barger,2013).Based on recent research consumers' engagement could be measured in a set of measurable actions that consumers take on social media in response to brand-related content : reacting to content (e.g. likes, hearts, _1s, 1 to 5 star ratings), commenting on content (e.g. Facebook comments, Twitter replies), sharing content with others (e.g. Facebook shares, Twitter retweets) and posting user-generated content (UGC) (e.g. product reviews, Facebook posts about brands) (Victor Barger, 2016).

Brand narratives on social media and its effect on brand engagement has

been tested in terms of various elements (Seonjeong Ally Lee, 2016), research states that Customers co-create brand meanings when they comprehend and become immersed into a story (Deighton, 2009) ,and tend to create emotional connections with the brand through the stories they processed. The Social networking sites are(SNS) becoming one very important driver in terms of brand management because customers play a great role of co-creating brand meanings, due to the interactive, dynamic characteristics of SNS (Gensler, 2013).

2.5 Conceptual Model

This study helps to fill the gaps found in the previous studies by examining the impact of online narrative advertising on Facebook online users' engagement in the Egyptian context as shown in figure (1).

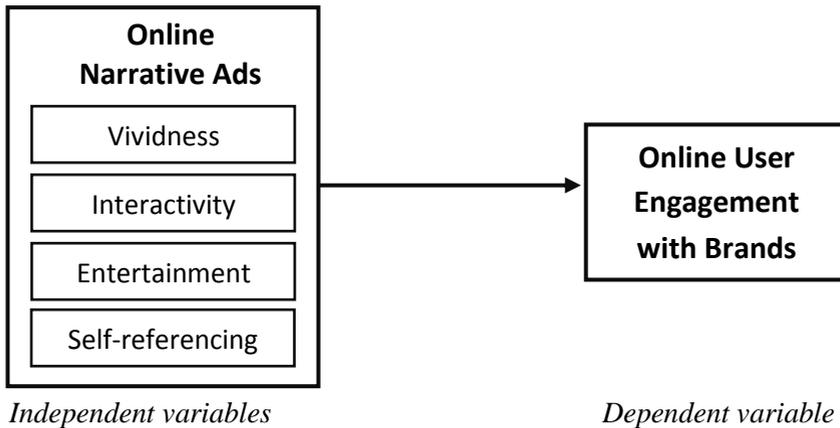


Figure (1): proposed model

The variables in this study represent the dimensions of online narrative advertising affecting Facebook online engagement with brands. Table (2.1) below includes the definition of the research model variables. It summarized the explanations of each variable in the

proposed model. The following main hypothesis is developed to investigate the proposed model.

H1. Online narrative Ad dimensions has a significant positive effect on online user engagement

Table 2.1 Definition of the research model variables

Online narrative advertising elements	
➤ Vividness	The degree to which the add presents information to engage the senses , attract the viewers’ attention , emotionally engage him/ her , provoke concrete imagers and excite the imagination (Russell K.H. Ching, 2013).
➤ Interactivity	The degree to which consumers control what and how much they want to view through active links or control buttons embedded in the platform. Or through their responses to the events in the story (Russell K.H. Ching, 2013)
➤ Entertainment	The extent to which the add presents enjoyment, relaxation, and entertainment value (Russell K.H. Ching, 2013)
➤ Self-referencing	The degree to which the consumers feel the advertisement’s relevance to themselves to judge its usefulness (Russell K.H. Ching, 2013)
Online Users’ Engagement with brands	
The degree to which consumers are willing to consume, contribute and create content with the commercial (Françoise Simona, 2017)	

3 - Research Methodology

The study was carried out using both qualitative and quantitative techniques. In this study a methodology for conducting research that involves collecting, analysing and mixing both quantitative (e.g., surveys) and qualitative (e.g., focus groups) research was used. This

approach was used to strengthen the results and clarify the research problem. Focus groups were conducted in the qualitative phase to filter the ads and select the five ads for the study as well as generating useful information from the participants through discussions and open ended questions. In the quantita-

tive data collection, surveys were electronically distributed and statistically analysed to test the research hypotheses. Through integrating both methods the researcher was able to gain in depth information and understandings.

According to (checkmark, 2018) any sample size above 1,000,000 would require 384 questionnaires as a minimum sample. Once the questionnaire guideline and questions were set, a pre-testing was performed. A pilot study allowed gathering information prior to a larger study, in order to improve the quality and efficiency of the instrument.

Active Facebook users worldwide according to the statistics portal in 2018 were at the highest at ages (18 to 24), (25-34), and (34 to 44). Therefore participants chosen for the sample were young adults and adults between the ages 18 to 34, the two highest active Facebook user's age groups.

3.1 Focus Groups

The focus groups were conducted under the supervision of the researcher. The participants were guided by the researcher through the whole process. Four Focus groups were conducted, and the focus group was divided into two main parts. The first part is specific close ended questions to clarify and confirm the 4 dimensions vividness, entertainment, interactivity and self-referencing dimensions of online narrative ads with the participants before starting the discussion. In qualitative research, closed questions help clarify and confirm something specific (Hoets, 2009).

The second part in the focus group consisted of open ended questions to ask participants about the most appealing dimensions of the ads they are

watching, discussing the pros and cons of each ad to justify their selection and preferences and collecting further information about what triggers their emotions and intentions to buy or refer certain brand and is it directly linked by the online ads streamlined on Facebook; open-ended questions are the essence of qualitative marketing research. They allow people to answer in any way they see fit. Open-ended questions do not enforce answers on people; they rather allow expression and keep conversations going (Hoets, 2009).

The main objective of the focus groups is mainly to discuss the narrative ads dimensions suggested with the participants and collect information about several ads that were screened to identify the respondents' preferences of narrative advertisements fulfilling the dimensions explained and select the appropriate ads to be included in the study that would aid in the data collection process in the phase of survey distribution. The ads chosen were (Vodafone, Cadbury, Uber, Town Team and Juhayna).

3.2 Questionnaire

The other method of data collection was Electronic questionnaire designed using google forms distributed to reach online users by sending them directly survey link through *Facebook and WhatsApp* messages (See Appendix A). This type of questionnaire ensured reliable responses from respondents since no obligation was set on them, they were informed that their responses will be respected and appreciated in all cases and that they could withdraw from answering the questionnaire at any time. This method comes with advantages as well as disadvantages. Using

online questionnaires enables the researcher to collect large volumes of data quickly and at low cost (Fleming and Bowden, 2009; Couper et. al., 2007). It is generally agreed that online questionnaires can provide a superior questionnaire interface compared to onsite surveys, as it is possible to make them more user friendly and attractive, thus encouraging higher response rates. As online questionnaires are quick to complete, and can be completed at a time and place convenient to the respondent, they are often more popular than onsite surveys Madge and O'Connor (2002). On the other hand this method holds some disadvantages. The researcher tried to be careful with those disadvantages and overcome them, some of which are, electronic questionnaires are subject to sample bias, online surveys may have to be shorter than those conducted onsite. Response rates drop off after 10-15 questions and are directly and negatively correlated with questionnaire length Harris (1997), Specific technical problems noted include Smith's (1997) observation that a pop-up box implemented using JavaScript failed to appear when the respondent pressed the 'submit' button, resulting in multiple submissions of the same data being sent as the user tried repeated submission. Minimising reliance on complicated features is therefore important and careful piloting will mini-

mise technical difficulties. Protecting respondent privacy and confidentiality is a significant ethical issue. Spamming can be considered an invasion of privacy Umbach (2004). Researchers must be very careful not to unwittingly collect information without respondent permission.

The questionnaire was divided into 4 main parts, (See Appendix A). The first part includes questions aiming to give general information about the participants such as (age, gender, income, occupation), in addition to a closed end question aiming to classify the respondents based on their online time spent using of Facebook. This part is very helpful later on in the analysis to describe the sample and its characteristics.

The remaining parts, in the questionnaire aim to measure the independent variable (online narrative advertising) elements, the Mediator variable (users' involvement) and the dependent variable (users' engagement with brands) through a set of scale items for each variable and using a five point Likert scale to rate the responses ranging from highly agree to highly disagree. The operational definition of the research variables were also explained and summarized (See Table 3.3).

Table 3. 1 The operational Definition of the Model variables

Model Variables Scale Items	
Vividness (source: <i>Bone and Ellen 1992</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The appearance of the add looks clear ○ The appearance of the add looks vivid ○ The appearance of the add looks lifelike ○ The sound effects of the Add are clear ○ Using the social media technology made ad vivid and rich
Interactivity (source: <i>Ko et al. 2005, Liu 2003</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Watching the add on Facebook gave me Control over experience ○ Watching the add on Facebook Chose enabled me freely what I wanted to see ○ Watching the add on Facebook Stay enabled me longer for details
Entertainment (source: <i>Chen and Wells 1999, Ko et al. 2005</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○The Contents are fun ○The Contents are cool ○The Process of watching the add is entertaining ○The Flow of the add is fast (time passed fast)
Self- Referencing (source: <i>Burnkant and Unnava 1995</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ad made me think about brand usage ○ Ad written with me in mind ○ Ad related to me personally ○ Ad made me think about my experiences in life
online user Engagement (source: <i>Muntinga et al., 2011</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ After watching the ad I would Visit the Facebook page of this brand ○ After watching the ad I would View pictures uploaded on this Facebook page ○ After watching the ad I would Read the brand's posts issued on the Facebook page ○ After watching the ad I would Engage in conversations with community members on this brand's Facebook page ○ After watching the ad I would Comment user comments on this Facebook page ○ After watching the ad I would Ask questions to the community members of this Facebook page ○ After watching the ad I would Post favorable reviews on this brand's Facebook page ○ After watching the ad I would Upload brand-related video, pictures, or images on this Facebook page

4–Research Findings and analysis

4.1 Focus Group Analysis:

The focus groups, were conducted under the supervision of the researcher. The participants were guided by the researcher through the whole process. Four Focus groups were conducted, and the focus group was divided into two main parts. The first part are close ended questions. In qualitative research, closed questions help clarify and confirm something specific (Hoets, 2009). The second part in the focus group consisted of open ended questions, open-ended questions are the essence of qualitative marketing research.They allow people to answer in any way they see

fit. Open-ended questions do not enforce answers on people, they rather allow expression and keep conversations going (Hoets, 2009).

The main objective of the focus groups is mainly to identify the narrative advertisements that would aid in the data collection process. Many Ads were screened and filtered based on the respondent’s preferences and justifications.

Four focus groups were conducted, all with heterogeneous members varying in age and gender but all are active Facebook users based and within the ages 18 to 34 as based on the statistics of 2018. There were in total 48 participants (See Table 4.1).

Table 4. 1 Number of Focus Group participants according to Age

No of Participants	Age
10	21
7	22
8	20
8	19
5	25
6	18
4	30

The focus group questions, were divided into two main sections. The first part are close ended questions. In qualitative research, closed questions help clarify and confirm something specific (Hoets, 2009).In this study the close

ended questions, were used to clarify the elements of Narrative advertising (Vividness, Entertainment, Interactivity, Self – referencing) in The Ads that were chosen the most by the participants. Figure 4 illustrates the percentages of the answers on each criterion.

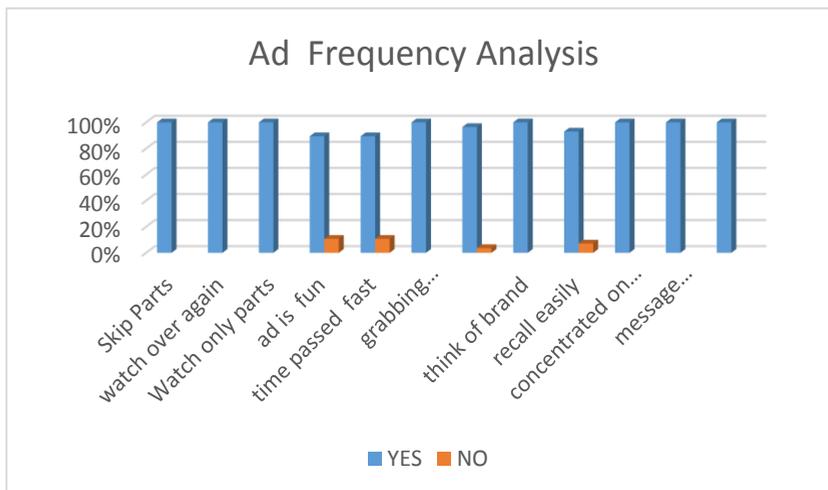


Figure 2 Percentages of the answers on each criterion

From the Bar chart (Figure 2), it can be concluded that Most of the focus group participants agreed to the criteria based on the Ad they choose. 85.6% of the participants agreed almost on all the criteria, only 14.4% disagreed on few criteria. From The analysis and detailed coding (See Table 4.2), the disagreement resulted from minor differences among the Ads.

The second part in the focus group consisted of open ended questions, open-ended questions are the essence of qualitative marketing research. They allow people to answer in any way they

see fit. Open-ended questions do not enforce answers on people, they rather allow expression and keep conversations going (Hoets, 2009). In this study Five Ads (Cadbury, Vodafone, Uber, Town Team, Juhayna) were selected, this selection was based on the analysis conducted after the focus groups. The dimensions of narrative advertising (Vividness, entertainment, Interactivity and self-Referencing) were highly supported in The Ads (See Table 4.2). Supporting Quotes were also extracted from the analysis, to confirm the Narrative Ad dimensions (See table 4.3).

Table 4. 2 Narrative Ad Dimensions / detailed coding

Narrative Ad Dimensions	
Detailed Coding	
Dimension One : Entertainment	
Advertisements	
Cadbury	Participants though it was extremely fun to relate the chocolate bars to characters, they also agreed that the use of colors and narration were catchy and that the story was carried out in a fun manner.
Vodafone	The fun elements was created from the twist in the story.
Town Team	Participants stated that the fun came from the characters in the story, they said that they were funny and their expressions were true and relevant.
Uber	Participants said that they liked how the story was filmed, it was based on fun and entertainment.
Juhayna	Participants stated they though the sequence of the story was fun, watching their lives pass by, was exciting to them, making them eager to watch more.
<p>*Themed Analysis*: According to the researcher the themed analysis is that overall narrative ads could highly include the element of entertainment, and that entertainment in the ad story increases attention.</p>	
Dimension Two : Self- Referencing	
Cadbury	Each of the participants said that they could relate the characters to one of either their friends, family or in general people they know or have met before. In the Cadbury ad most of the participants also said they were able to picture those people that they know while watching.
Vodafone	Some of the participants could very much relate to the story, because they had blind friends, or have encountered blind people in their lives. They were touched and felt emotional with the story.
Town Team	Ad as stated by some participants, reminded them of their parents and how they sometimes give them similar judgments on the way they dress.

Uber	Some participants related it to their own, they personally encountered similar situations and have been through similar thoughts.
Juhayna	When it came to reality, the story in this ad based on what participants saw, related greatly to situations from their own lives, they have experienced all the events in the story. Whether being a mother or a child this story related to the participants, the events showed reality and many emotions said the participants.
Themed Analysis: According to the researcher the themed analysis is that real life events presented in an ad's story , makes the ad viewers connect more to its message and relate it to themselves	
Dimension Three : Vividness	
Cadbury	Narration played a great role in grabbing the participant's attention, it provoked concrete imagery.
Vodafone	The flow of the story, grabbed the viewers' attention. The places and the events the character has been through caught the participant's attention.
Town Team	<i>Nostalgia</i> played a role in the Town Team ad, some participants agreed that giving a picture of the old days and how they used to dress added creativity to the story and grabbed their attention.
Uber	The lyrics in the Ad story, excite the imagination and grabbed attention.
Juhayna	Participants stated that the add presents a life time story that engaged all their senses.
Themed Analysis: According to the researcher the themed analysis is that reality plays a crucial role in grabbing the viewers' attention. Any additional element in the story could also contribute to viewers' attention.	
Dimension Four : Interactivity	
Cadbury	Participants shared this Ad with their friends, they felt a link between the characters and people they know.

Vodafone	Participants stated that they were interested to know more about the application, after watching the Ad. They shared and liked it.
Town Team	Participants stated they wanted to share the Ad after watching it, they would tag their family and grandparents.
Uber	On Facebook the participants were able to know more about the service provided in the Ad, they navigated through links to the original page after watching the Ad.
Juhayna	Most of the participants tagged their mothers, it was so touching and emotional to most of them.
<p>*Themed Analysis*: According to the researcher the themed analysis is that the sense of freedom and control given by the Facebook interface enabled participants to want to control the experience of watching the Ad through active links and control buttons embedded in the platform, Participants were also able to respond to the events in the story through comments and shares.</p>	

Table 4. 3 Supporting quotes from Focus groups

Supporting Quotes
<p>-“The slogan said at the end made sense and connected to the story”</p> <p>-“The ad was so attractive”</p> <p>-“I liked it all, the sequence and I could relate it to many things and many events.”</p> <p>-“I really got hooked to the movements and scenario in the ad”</p> <p>- “It is very realistic, it shows reality in every detail.”</p> <p>-“It relates to my own personal life in a way”</p> <p>-“I felt I could relate too many of the events in the story, it was like my life going by.”</p> <p>-“I feel that the service is brilliant we meet people every day with the disability of not being able to see, the story really got me hooked.”</p> <p>-“It is everyone’s story, we live this and everyone I guess lives similar situations for sure.”</p> <p>-“Vodafone was successful they thought out of the box.”</p> <p>-“It was very thoughtful of Vodafone to make an application to help blind people; it shows care and collaboration between the company and the humanity.”</p> <p>-“ Every girl is born with the heart of a mother, so even if I am not married and I still don’t have kids I would be feeling and getting every part of this story.”</p>

4.2 Validity and reliability analysis

Before analyzing the data, construct validity was conducted to find out how well the results obtained from the use of each measure fit the theories around which the test is designed. For the purpose of testing the construct validity, both the convergent validity and the discriminant validity were examined.

Validity refers to the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under consideration. In other words it refers to the extent to which a scale or set of measures accurately represents the concept under study. Construct validity is the degree to which the measure assesses the underlying theoretical construct it is supposed to measure. Any measure that contains construct validity must have evidence of both convergent and discriminant validity. (Twycross & Shields, 2004).

4.2.1 Convergent Validity

Convergent validity was essential to ensure that the items measuring the same construct are highly correlated (*O'Leary-Kelly & Robert J. Vokurka, 1998*). In order to test the convergent validity, the average value extracted for each of the scales was calculated. The average variance (AVE) represents the average community for each latent variable, and in an adequate model it should be greater than 0.5, which means that the factors should explain at least half the variance of their respective indicators (*Hair, Marko Sarstedt, Christian M. Ringle, & Jeanette A. Mena, 2012*). The results of the factor analysis conducted on research constructs indicates that AVE values for all scales were found to have convergent validity reporting AVE values above 0.5 as represented in 4.1.

Table (4. 1) Results of the AVE and the Factor loadings

The study variables	% of variance (AVE) value	Factor loading of items
<p>Ad life- likability (Vividness and Entertainment combined) <u>Scale items</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Appearance of the add looks clear ▪ The Appearance of the Add looks vivid ▪ The Appearance of the Add looks lifelike ▪ The sound effects of the Add are clear ▪ Using the Social media technology made ad vivid and rich ▪ The Contents of the Add are fun ▪ The Contents of the Add are cool ▪ The Process of Watching the Add is entertaining <p>Note: one item was deleted due to the loading factor</p>	77%	<p>.898 .866 .823 .910 .907 .872 .878 .864</p>

Table (4. 1) Continued: Results of the AVE and the Factor analysis

The study variables	% of variance (AVE) value	Factor loading of items
<p>Ad Message Bonding (Self-Referencing and Interactivity combined) <u>Scale items</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ad made me think about Brand usage ▪ Ad written with me in mind ▪ Ad related to me personally ▪ Ad made me think about my experiences in life ▪ Watching the Add on Facebook gave me Control over experience ▪ Watching the Add on Facebook enabled me to Choose freely what I wanted to see ▪ Watching the Add on Facebook enabled me to Stay longer for details 	72%	<p>.856 .823 .832 .859 .859 .846 .874</p>

Based on factor analysis the four proposed independent variables of online narrative advertising (Vividness, entertainment, interactivity and self-referencing) were grouped to only two dimension based on the factor loading of items as found by the researcher . Both Vividness and entertainment were combined to be (Ad life-likeability) and both Self-referencing and interactivity were combined to be (Ad message bond). Figure 4.1 shows the new proposed model. Two main hypotheses are developed, instead of the prior hypothesis suggested earlier in this paper, to test the direct effects of narrative online advertising element on Facebook brand engagement.

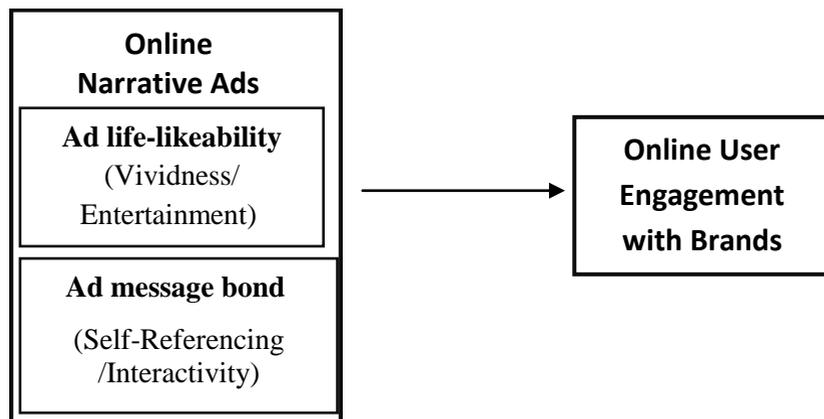


Figure 4. 1 New Model

- H1. Ad life-likeability (vividness / entertainment) has a significant positive effect on online user engagement**
- H2. Ad Message bond (self-referencing/ Interactivity) has a significant positive effect on online user engagement**

4.2.2 Discriminant Validity

The discriminant validity means that a measure varies for different constructs , thus it is used to make sure that the scales used to measure the study variables are not correlated with each other and that the respondents were able to differentiate between meanings of the items of the questionnaire (Hair, Marko Sarstedt, Christian M. Ringle, & Jeanette A. Mena, 2012).

Based on the criterion set by (Fornell, 2017) to achieve discriminant validity, the squared inter-correlation between two construct should be less than AVE estimates of the respective two constructs for all pairs of construct. Thus, in the current study, all measurements were found to be with discriminant validity as the squared correlations between the latent constructs were found to be smaller than the AVE values from respective constructs for all of the latent variables. Table 4.9 summarizes the correlation coefficients between the latent variables. By squaring these variables and comparing their results with table 4.8 discriminant validity will be proved.

Table 4. 2 latent variable correlations

(AVE Value)	Vividness and entertainment (77%)	Self- referencing and interactivity (72%)	Online user Engagement with brands (77.5%)
Vividness and entertainment	1	.579**	.338**
Self-referencing and interactivity	.579**	1	.571**
Online user engagement	.338**	.571**	1

4.3 Measuring Reliability

This stage of the analysis is used to indicate and confirm the consistency and the degree of errors of the items in each technique that measured the variables, as well as test the harmony of the scale items all together. Cronbach Al-

pha is the measure used to assess the reliability whereas, the acceptable range is between 0.70 and 0.90, and a value of 1.0 indicates perfect consistency in measurement (Tavakol & Reg Dennick, 2011). Table 4.11 summarizes the reliability analysis.

Table 4. 3 Reliability Measurements

Study variables	Number of scale items	Cronbach's Alpha
Ad life-likeability	8	0.957
Ad Message bond	7	0.935
Online user engagement with brands	8	0.958
Overall model Reliability	27	0.974

4.3 Research population and sample

The results of this study showed that respondents were mostly from age 18-24, students with percentages 62.9 and 55.4 respectively. More than half of the sample were Females 69.8 percent. 98.5 percent of the respondents said yes they use Facebook, and 49.3 of this sample uses Facebook on average 1 to 5 hours per day.

According to the **Age demographic** that the questionnaire were distributed ages that varied from (18-24) with 62.9 percent, age (25-34) with 25 percent and (34- 44) 12.1 percent, and according to the gender demographic (69.8%) were Females and the rest (30.2%) were males. The Occupations showed that (students were 55.4 %), (self Employed were 13.9%), (professionals 21.8 %) and (other were 8.9%). Finally According to the income level (41.6 % is from 2000 less than 5000), (29% from 5000 less than 10000) and finally (29.5% is over 10000)

After the Socio –demographics introductory questions were also analysed:

The first question in the introductory section was: “**Do you use Facebook daily?**” The majority of the respondents answered **yes** with **98.5 %** while only **1.5%** of the respondents answered **no**.

The second question was:” **How many hours on average do you spend on Facebook daily?**” The majority of the respondents used Facebook from 1 to 5 hours with (49.3%), followed by (30 %) from 5 to 10 hours, less than 1 hour were (12.6%), and finally those who spend more than 10 hours (8.2%).

The third question required respondents to choose among a list of ads: the ads that were available were of the following brands (**Cadbury, Juhayna, Town Team, Uber, Vodafone**) 15.8 % choose Cadbury, 9.9% choose Juhayna, 9.9% choose Town Team, 20.5 choose Uber and 43.8 choose Vodafone.

Other descriptive analysis were then summarized to combine results of the respondent’s sample, showing relationships among data gathered. Cross tabulation is used to analyse categorical data, also known as contingency tables. Cross tabs group variables and examine relationships within data between categorical variables. It is usually used to find patterns, trends, and probabilities within raw data and give more understanding of the data analysed. The Chi Square was measured to identify cross tabulation significance and based on (Turner, 2014), If $p \leq 0.05$ it is considered statistically significant. Cross tabulations were used to join two or more categorical variables.

The following Bar chart (figure 3) illustrates the relationship between Age and the type of ad.

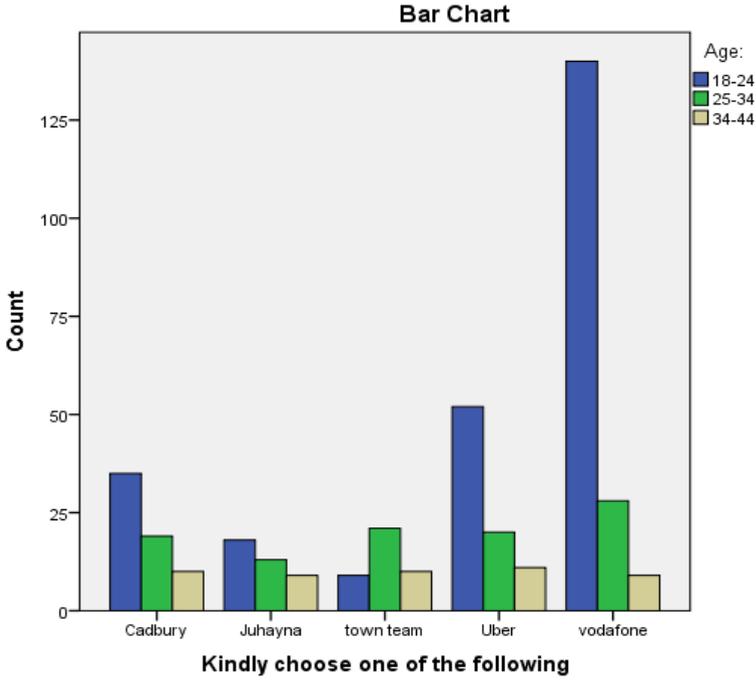


Figure (3)

The shown Bar graph illustrates that most of the age group from 18 to 24 choose the Vodafone advertisement with percentage of 34.7%, while least of them choose Town Team advertisement with percentage of 2.2%. Age

group from 25 to 34 also choose the Vodafone ad at most with percentage of 6.9% and the Juhayna ad at the least with percentage 3.2%. Finally the age group from 34 to 44 choose the Uber ad at most with 2.7% and Juhayna at least with 2.2%.

The following Bar chart (figure 4) illustrates the relationship between Age and hours spend on Facebook Daily

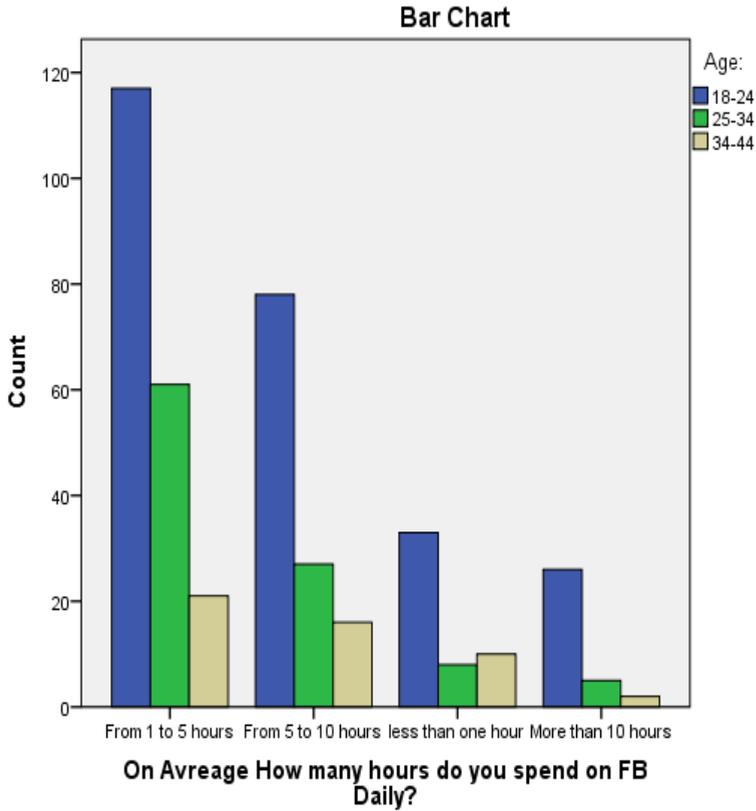


Figure (4)

The shown Bar chart illustrates that all three age groups spend at most From 1 to 5 hours daily on Facebook with percentages of 29%, 15.1% and 5.2% respectively among the three different age groups.

5 – Research Model Hypothesis Test

Hypothesis 1:
Ad life- likability (Vividness/ Entertainment) has a significant positive effect on online user engagement

To test the first hypotheses a simple regression was performed. In the current study, R square (coefficient of determination) provides a measure of how

much of the dependent variable is likely to be associated with the predictors (Ringle, 2005).

Table 4. 4 Model Summary (Ad life-likeability/ online user engagement)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Model significance (ANOVA)	Standardized Coefficients Beta	Coefficients Significance P-value
1	.582 ^a	.339	.337	.000	.582	.000

The results showed that Ad life-likeability explains 33.7% of the variance in online users engagement and that the relationship between them is positive. According to these results, a significant positive association between (Ad life-likeability and online user engagement) is revealed with a beta value of (.582). The results support the hypothesis. Thus H1 is accepted.

Hypothesis 2:

Ad Message Bond (Self-Referencing / Interactivity) has a significant positive effect on online user engagement

To test the second hypotheses a simple regression was performed. In the current study, R square (coefficient of determination) provides a measure of how much of the dependent variable is likely to be associated with the predictors (Ringle, 2005).

Table 4. 5 Model Summary (Ad Message Bond/ online user engagement)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Model significance (ANOVA)	Standardized Coefficients Beta	Coefficients Significance P-value
1	.756 ^a	.572	.571	.000	.756	.000

The results showed that Ad Message Bond explains 57% of the variance in online user engagement and that the relationship between them is positive. According to these results, a significant positive association between (Ad Message bond and online user engagement) is revealed with a beta value of (.756). The results support the hypothesis. Thus H2 is accepted.

6-Limitations of the Research

Research does not come without limitations. This study was conducted with a sample of Egyptian online users, various factors, such as Culture and social trends may have influenced the results and findings, all of which were not in the scope of this study. The majority of the respondents were active online users between 18 and 34 years old and the focus was limited to only one social media platform (Facebook). Although this was the target sample aimed for in the survey, yet the limit may lead to narrow variance in the responses.

In this study, some narrative Ads were excluded by the researcher when it was realized through the focus groups that another element (celebrity endorsement) played a role. The narratives that were based on a celebrities' story were excluded, although they were great attraction to viewers. This study was limited to five different Egyptian brands from different industries, although the data collection was rich and valuable to the Egyptian advertisers, yet the variety was restricted to only few companies within the Egyptian market. Additionally, this study was conducted using electronic questionnaires, this method may be subject to possible threats of subjectivity and common biases

of the respondents. Yet the data collection process in this study, including the validity test and the mixed method approach, produced valid and high quality data. Also it was crucial to use electronic surveys to fit the nature of the analysis in this study, due to the fact that respondents had to watch an Ad before answering the questions. Though these limitations are recognized, the four online narrative advertising dimensions and their effect on Egyptian online engagement and the overall model show high significance and compatibility.

7- Conclusion & Recommendations

This paper adds important contribution by showing the importance of structuring narrative ads on Facebook using the web features and its impact on Generating higher levels of online user engagement with the brand, this is with respect to the Egyptian context. Based on the analysis, it has been found that that structuring narrative ads on Facebook using the interactivity, entertainment, self-referencing as well as clear vivid messages, this will positively and significantly affect Facebook user engagement with the brand. This study can also benefit advertisers to think more of the structure of their ads, relating the ads more to reality and personalizing their messages all based on the transportation theory. The Theory states that narrative ads, (the techniques of using storytelling in an ad), will have a powerful effect on the ad's viewers. This study also concluded that higher engagement levels may be due to the elements of the narrative ads, some elements show higher significance than the others, yet overall the impact was strong and significant.

Future research could focus on other dimensions under narrative advertising, in this study certain elements under narrative advertising were measured, while narrative ads might include more variety of elements. Culture is one important element missing in this study, the study was implemented in Egypt but certain cultural aspects were held for further investigations. The lack of comparison between different advertising could have been a limitation in this research as well.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Dear Participants,

This questionnaire is designed to identify your Facebook Brand engagement after watching a Narrative Add in relation to your degree of involvement with the Add in the Egyptian context. The information you provide will help us to better understand the elements of effective online Narrative advertising and the degree of involvement with the ad, which may lead to Facebook brand engagement. Additionally, this questionnaire will help us to identify the moderating role of Advertising involvement between Online Narrative Advertising and Facebook brand engagement. Because you are the one who can give us a correct picture of how you perceive the Online Narrative Add, I request you to respond to the questions frankly and honestly. Your participation is voluntary. You are able to withdraw from answering the questionnaire at any time as you wish. Data collected will be only used for academic purpose. All information given will be kept strictly confidential.

Please answer the following introductory questions:

Do you use Facebook Daily <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	On Average How many hours do you spend on FB daily? <input type="radio"/> less than one hour <input type="radio"/> From 1 to 5 hours <input type="radio"/> From 5 to 10 hours <input type="radio"/> More than 10 hours
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Please select one Add of a brand that you are familiar with from the following list; you're kindly requested to select only one Add that you actively follow on Facebook and your answers should be based on the Content of the Narrative Add you choose.

- **Vodafone:**<https://www.facebook.com/Vodafone.Egypt/videos/10154510562408437/>
- **Uber:**<https://www.facebook.com/kingtutsplayground/videos/740948439428749/>
- **Juhayna:**<https://www.facebook.com/Baherelnewehy.official/videos/515729135294012/>

- Cadbury: <https://www.facebook.com/CadburyEgypt/videos/154273976574-1058/>
- Town Team: <https://www.facebook.com/TOWNTEAM/videos/160733002-9280037/>

Part (A): Vividness

Vividness is the degree the add presents information to engage the senses to attract a viewer's attention, emotionally engage him/her, provoke concrete imagery, and excite the imagination. Strongly Disagree (1), Strongly Agree (5), and the numbers in between indicate different levels of agreement.

	Statements	(1) Strongly disagree	(2) Disagree	(3) Neutral	(4) Agree	(5) Strongly agree
1	The Appearance of the add looks clear	1	2	3	4	5
2	The Appearance of the Add looks vivid	1	2	3	4	5
3	The Appearance of the Add looks lifelike	1	2	3	4	5
4	The sound effects of the Add are clear	1	2	3	4	5
5	Using the social media technology made Ad vivid and rich	1	2	3	4	5

Part (B): Entertainment

Entertainment is the degree the add presents enjoyment, relaxation, and entertainment value. Strongly Disagree (1), Strongly Agree (5), and the numbers in between indicate different levels of agreement.

	Statements	(1) Strongly disagree	(2) Disagree	(3) Neutral	(4) Agree	(5) Strongly agree
1	The Contents of the Add are fun	1	2	3	4	5
2	The Contents of the Add are cool	1	2	3	4	5
3	The Process of Watching the Add is entertaining	1	2	3	4	5
4	The Flow of the Add is fast (time passed fast)	1	2	3	4	5

Part (C): Self-referencing

Self-referencing is the degree in which the consumers feel the advertisement's relevance themselves to judge its usefulness. Strongly Disagree (1), Strongly Agree (5), and the numbers in between indicate different levels of agreement.

	Statements	(1) Strongly disagree	(2) Disagree	(3) Neutral	(4) Agree	(5) Strongly agree
1	Ad made me think about Brand usage	1	2	3	4	5
2	Ad written with me in mind	1	2	3	4	5
3	Ad related to me personally	1	2	3	4	5
4	Ad made me think about my experiences in life	1	2	3	4	5

Part (D): Inter-activity

Inter-activity is the degree in which consumers control what and how much they want to view through active link or control buttons embedded in the screen or through their responses to events in the story. Strongly Disagree (1), Strongly Agree (5), and the numbers in between indicate different levels of agreement.

	Statements	(1) Strongly disagree	(2) Disagree	(3) Neutral	(4) Agree	(5) Strongly agree
1	Watching the Add on Facebook gave me Control over experience	1	2	3	4	5
2	Watching the Add on Facebook enabled me to Choose freely what I wanted to see	1	2	3	4	5
3	Watching the Add on Facebook enabled me to Stay longer for details	1	2	3	4	5

Part (E) Online user’s Engagement with brands

Online user’s Engagement with brands is the degree to which consumers are willing to consume, contribute and create content with the chosen add. Strongly Disagree (1), Strongly Agree (5), and the numbers in between indicate different levels of agreement.

	Statements	(1) Strongly disagree	(2) Disagree	(3) Neutral	(4) Agree	(5) Strongly agree
1	After watching the Add i would Visit the Facebook page of this brand	1	2	3	4	5
2	After Watching the Add i would View the brand's pictures uploaded on Facebook	1	2	3	4	5
3	After Watching the Add i would Read the brand's posts issued on the Facebook	1	2	3	4	5
4	After watching the Add i would Engaged in conversations with community members on this brand on Facebook	1	2	3	4	5
5	After watching the Add i would Comment on the brand's user comments on Facebook	1	2	3	4	5
6	After watching the Add i would ask questions about the brand on Facebook	1	2	3	4	5
7	After watching the Add i would Post favorable reviews on this brand on Facebook	1	2	3	4	5
8	After watching the Add i would Upload brand-related video, pictures, or images on Facebook	1	2	3	4	5

Personal information, please complete the following information:

Gender:	Age:
Male	From 18 to less than 24
Female	From 25 to less than 34
	From 35 to less than 44
Current occupation:	Average monthly household income:
Student	2,000 – Less than 5,000 L.E.
Professionals	5,000 – Less than 10,000 L.E.
Self-employed	Over 10, 000 L.E
Others	

Thank you for your participation ☺