

Exploring the Impact of Electronic Advertising on Consumer Behavior in the Japanese Anime Sector

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how electronic advertising affects anime customer behavior, concentrating on trust, visual attractiveness, customization, and UGC. In a qualitative study, five anime fans were interviewed about their interactions with digital ads for anime material and items. Unless accompanied by UGC like fan reviews and community debates, electronic adverts are untrustworthy. Visual appeal is important for grabbing attention, but users' input is needed to develop trust and motivate action. Fan engagement was higher with personalized ads than generic ones, however privacy issues were raised. As fans evaluate ads based on peer and community ratings, UGC was the biggest determinant in trust and decision-making. Digital ads were more interactive and relevant than traditional ones, but oversaturation caused advertising weariness. Marketers must integrate UGC, balance visual appeal with authenticity, respect privacy in personalization, and manage ad volume to prevent overwhelming consumers, according to the report.

Keywords: Electronic advertising, consumer behavior, Japanese anime,

1 .Introduction

1.1 Background and Context

The Japanese anime industry has grown from a niche subculture into a global phenomenon, influencing entertainment, fashion, and digital media across the world. In 2023, the anime industry generated over \$31 billion in revenue, a testament to its international reach and appeal (Figure 1 Anime Industry Report, 2023). The rise of anime as a cultural export has coincided with the rapid development of digital

platforms, including social media, streaming services, and e-commerce sites, which now play a critical role in promoting anime series, films, and merchandise. Platforms like Crunchyroll, Netflix, and YouTube have enabled anime fans to access content from anywhere in the world, significantly increasing the need for targeted and effective electronic advertising in the sector (Yurun Huang, 2017).

With the anime industry becoming more digital, the way anime content is marketed has shifted from traditional advertising methods, such as TV commercials and print advertisements, to electronic advertising through digital channels. These methods include trailers, social media promotions, influencer collaborations, and digital campaigns on platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. Given the visually driven nature of anime, digital ads often focus on high-quality trailers, clips, and posters to capture fan attention. Moreover, the unique fan culture surrounding anime encourages community-driven content creation, such as fan art, reviews, and memes,

which also influence how fans engage with anime-related advertising (Leung & Chen,2018).

This study expands upon previous research conducted in my dissertation, which explored the **influence of** digital marketing in niche entertainment sectors.

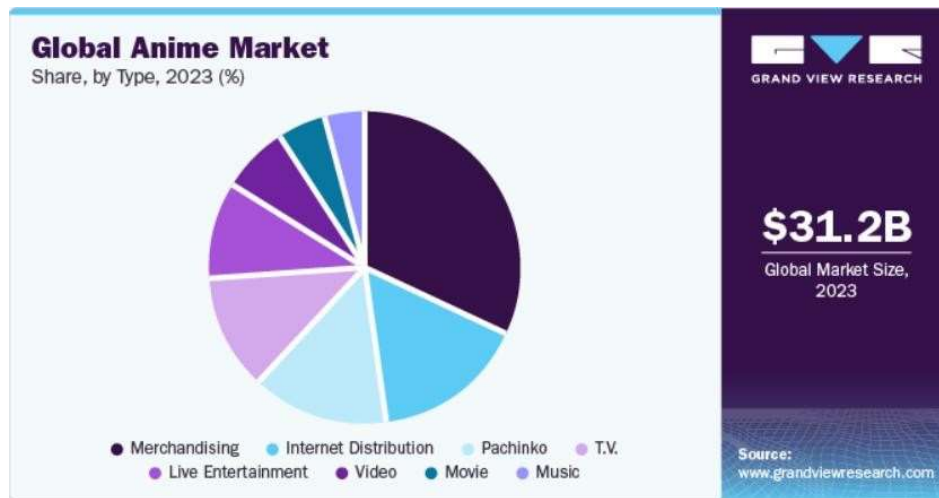


Figure 1: Anime Industry Report

Source: <https://www.grandviewresearch.com/industry-analysis/anime-market>

1.2 Research Problem

Despite the growing presence of anime on digital platforms, there is limited research on how electronic advertising affects consumer behavior within this specific entertainment niche. Understanding how anime fans respond to digital marketing is crucial for the industry to continue expanding its global footprint. The traditional

advertising landscape, which relied on TV, print, and radio, is quickly being replaced by personalized, interactive, and user-driven advertising experiences online (Huzaif AlRehman, 2024). While the potential of electronic ads is undeniable, questions remain about trust, personalization, visual appeal, and the role of user-generated content (UGC) in influencing anime fans' decisions to consume anime content or purchase merchandise.

This research aims to explore how anime fans engage with and respond to electronic advertisements, focusing on their perceptions of trust, the impact of personalized content, and how UGC, such as fan reviews and community-driven discussions, enhances or detracts from the effectiveness of digital ads. Furthermore, this study will compare the effectiveness of electronic advertising to traditional marketing strategies within the anime sector, addressing a gap in the literature concerning digital marketing's specific role in anime fandom.

1.3 Research Objectives

The primary objective of this research is to explore the impact of electronic advertising on consumer behavior within the anime sector. The study will focus on several sub-objectives:

- To understand how anime fans perceive and engage with different types of electronic advertisements, such as trailers, banners, and social media posts.
- To investigate the key factors (e.g., trust, visual appeal, UGC, personalization) that influence anime fans' decisions to engage with or ignore digital ads.
- To compare the effectiveness of electronic advertising with traditional advertising methods in the promotion

of anime content and products.

1.4 Research Questions

This study is driven by the following research questions:

- 1) How do anime fans perceive and respond to electronic advertising for anime series, films, and merchandise?
- 2) What specific elements of electronic advertising (e.g., visual appeal, UGC, personalization) have the greatest influence on anime fans' decisions?
- 3) How does the effectiveness of electronic advertising compare to traditional advertising in the anime sector?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is significant for both academic inquiry and industry application. It will contribute to the growing body of research on digital marketing by focusing on the niche but expanding anime industry, providing insights into how fans interact with electronic ads. Understanding how anime fans respond to digital marketing will help

anime studios, streaming platforms, and merchandise retailers optimize their advertising strategies to better connect with their target audience, build trust, and drive engagement.

Additionally, this research will explore the role of user-generated content in enhancing the effectiveness of ads, an important aspect for marketers aiming to leverage the active and highly engaged anime community. As UGC becomes increasingly influential in shaping consumer behavior, this study will shed light on how anime fans interpret and respond to community-driven content embedded in or related to electronic ads (Sjöblom & Hamari, 2020).

2 .Literature Review

2.1 Electronic Advertising in the Anime Industry

The evolution of electronic advertising has dramatically influenced the anime industry, enabling content creators, streaming services, and merchandise retailers to connect directly with anime fans across the globe. Traditional advertising methods, such as TV commercials and print media, have increasingly been replaced by digital marketing strategies tailored to the preferences of a highly engaged, tech-savvy audience. Social media platforms, including Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, play a critical role in anime promotion, with trailers, sponsored posts, and influencer partnerships being widely used to reach fans (Leung & Chen, 2018).

Streaming platforms such as Crunchyroll and Netflix have further revolutionized anime advertising by offering personalized recommendations and exclusive content tailored to users' viewing habits. Electronic ads, particularly in the form of pre-roll trailers, social media campaigns, and targeted banner ads, have become essential tools for promoting new series and films, as well as driving the consumption of anime-related merchandise (Huzaif Al Rehman, 2024). The dynamic, visually driven nature of anime lends itself well to digital advertising, where fans can be engaged through high-quality visuals and compelling narratives in short ad formats (Saleh Bazi, Raffaele Filieri, M, 2023).

2.2 Consumer Behavior in Anime Fandom

Understanding the behavior of anime fans, or "otaku", is key to developing effective electronic advertising strategies. Anime fandom is unique in that it often involves a deep emotional connection to the characters, stories, and worlds presented in anime series. This connection fosters a strong sense of community engagement, with fans frequently participating in online forums, fan art creation, cosplay, and social media discussions (Clements & McCarthy, 2015). These activities make anime fans highly receptive to community-driven marketing, such as user-generated content

(UGC), which includes fan reviews, memes, and discussions about the latest episodes or merchandise.

Anime fans are particularly influenced by UGC, as peer reviews and recommendations from other fans are often seen as more credible than corporate-sponsored content. This community-driven approach to content sharing not only helps build trust but also fosters a sense of belonging among fans, making them more likely to engage with advertisements that incorporate or highlight UGC (Sjöblom & Hamari, 2020). In fact, studies show that UGC is a powerful driver of both engagement and purchasing decisions in fandom cultures, as fans look to their peers for validation and insight into the value of anime-related products (Yurun Huang, 2017).

2.3 Previous Studies on Digital Advertising and Media Consumption

The effectiveness of digital advertising in media consumption has been widely studied across various entertainment industries. Research on digital marketing for streaming platforms shows that personalized content recommendations, trailers, and interactive ads significantly influence user engagement and subscription rates (Leung et al., 2018). Personalized advertising, in particular, is shown to increase consumer engagement by delivering ads that are directly relevant to individual viewing preferences and behaviors (He, Zha, & Li, 2013). This approach mirrors how anime streaming platforms leverage user data to serve ads and recommendations that align with fans' tastes.

Moreover, studies on digital advertising for niche markets indicate that visually driven ads—those that feature eye-catching imagery and videos—are especially effective for media products like anime, where aesthetics and style play a significant role in the fan experience (Saleh Bazi, Raffaele Filieri, M, 2023). Anime advertising relies heavily on the use of trailers, promotional clips, and digital posters to capture attention and generate excitement about upcoming series or films. This aligns with research on visual marketing, which emphasizes the importance of high-quality visuals in generating emotional responses and driving consumer engagement in entertainment advertising (Huzaif Al Rehman, 2024).

2.4 Theoretical Framework: Uses and Gratifications Theory

To better understand why anime fans engage with electronic advertising, this study will apply the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT). UGT posits that individuals actively seek out media to satisfy specific needs and desires, such as entertainment, information, social interaction, or personal identity (Blumler & Katz, 1974). In the context of anime, fans may engage with advertisements to:

- **Entertain:** Ads that offer sneak peeks into upcoming anime episodes or films can fulfill the entertainment needs of fans looking for new content.
- **Inform:** Trailers and digital ads provide information about new releases, merchandise, or exclusive events, helping fans stay up to date with the latest in anime.
- **Social Interaction:** Anime fans are deeply connected to their community, and ads that feature UGC or spark conversation within fan forums fulfill their desire for social engagement.
- **Personal Identity:** Many fans use anime as a way to express their identity, and engaging with ads that showcase their favorite series or characters helps reinforce their connection to the fandom.

Previous studies applying UGT to digital media consumption suggest that individuals are more likely to engage with advertisements when these ads align with their motivations for consuming media (Sjöblom & Hamari, 2020). In the anime sector, fans may be more responsive to ads that tap into their desire for entertainment, social interaction, or information, particularly if these ads feature the vibrant visual content that defines anime.

2.5 Gap in the Literature

While much has been written about digital advertising in mainstream entertainment, there is limited research that specifically focuses on the anime industry and its global audience. Given the unique cultural and emotional factors that drive anime fandom, understanding how electronic advertising influences these consumers is critical. This study will fill this gap by focusing on how anime fans perceive and respond to various forms of

digital marketing, particularly in relation to UGC, visual appeal, and personalized content.

3 .Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research approach to explore the impact of electronic advertising on consumer behavior in the Japanese anime sector. Qualitative research is particularly suitable for this study because it allows for an in-depth exploration of how anime fans perceive, interpret, and respond to electronic ads (Creswell, 2014). The study focuses on uncovering subjective experiences and emotional responses, which are critical to understanding the unique fandom dynamics that drive engagement with anime-related content.

Given that anime fans form highly interactive communities online, semi-structured interviews were chosen as the primary data collection tool. This method allows for flexible yet structured conversations with participants, enabling the

researcher to probe deeper into topics like trust, visual appeal, and the role of user-generated content (UGC) in decision-making (Patton, 2002). By focusing on how and why anime fans engage with electronic ads, the study aims to provide insights that can inform marketing strategies in the anime industry.

3.2 Sampling Strategy

A purposeful sampling strategy was used to select participants who are actively engaged in anime fandom and regularly exposed to electronic advertisements. Purposeful sampling allows for the selection of individuals who are particularly knowledgeable or experienced with the subject matter (Patton, 2002). The sample for this study consists of five informants who are:

- ❖ Frequent anime consumers who engage with streaming platforms, social media, and anime-related online communities.
- ❖ Regularly exposed to electronic advertising, such as trailers, banners, and social media posts, related to anime content or merchandise.
- ❖ Active participants in online anime communities, where user-generated content plays a key role in shaping opinions and decisions.

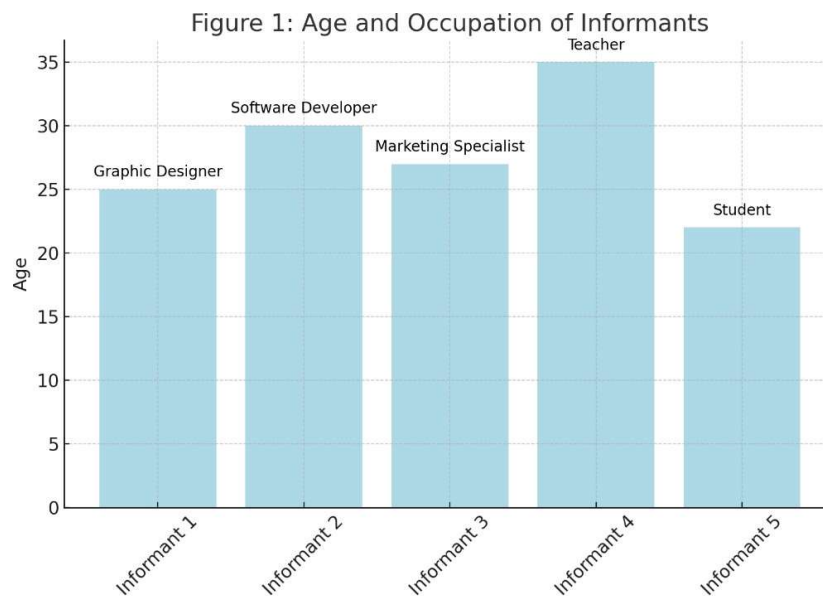


Figure 1: Age and Occupation of Informants

The decision to use a small, focused sample reflects the study's objective to gather detailed qualitative data rather than produce generalizable findings. Each participant's in-depth experience with anime and electronic advertising allows for a rich analysis of consumer behavior patterns specific to the anime sector. Given the complexity and niche nature of the topic, a larger sample size was deemed unnecessary for the exploratory aims of the study.

3.3 Data Collection

Data was collected using face-to-face semi-structured interviews with five informants who regularly engage with anime content and are exposed to various forms of electronic advertising. The semi-structured nature of the interviews allowed for flexibility in exploring informants' personal experiences while maintaining a consistent focus on the core themes of the research. Each interview lasted approximately 30 to 45 minutes, and all conversations were recorded (with consent) and transcribed for analysis.

The interview guide was designed to elicit detailed responses regarding key aspects of electronic advertising in the anime sector, such as **trust, visual appeal, personalization, and user-generated content (UGC)**. Sample questions included:

- 1) How do you perceive electronic ads related to anime series and products?
- 2) What role does the visual appeal of an ad play in capturing your interest?
- 3) How do you feel about personalized ads that are tailored to your preferences?
- 4) Do you trust user-generated content, such as fan reviews, when deciding to engage with an ad?
- 5) How do electronic advertisements compare to traditional forms of advertising for anime?

The responses were then categorized based on the informants' perspectives. The informants were selected using a purposeful sampling strategy, targeting individuals with significant engagement in the anime community and experience with electronic advertising.

No	Informants	Age	Work	Trust in Electronic Ads	Role of Visual Appeal	Impact of Personalized Ads	Importance of UGC	Comparison with Traditional Ads
1	Informant 1	25	Graphic Designer	I don't trust ads unless I see reviews or comments from fans.	Good visuals catch my eye and make me interested, but I still need reviews.	I like personalized ads, but sometimes they're too invasive.	I always check fan reviews before making any decision about a show or product.	Digital ads are more interactive and engaging, but they can be overwhelming.
2	Informant 2	30	Software Developer	I rarely trust ads unless there's UGC to back it up.	Amazing visuals make me check out the show, but I still look for fan reviews.	Personalized ads make me more interested, but I worry about privacy.	Fan reviews and comments are the first thing I look for before watching anything.	I prefer digital ads, but there's a limit. Too many ads can be annoying.
3	Informant 3	27	Marketing Specialist	I trust ads more when I see reviews	I'm drawn to anime ads that look cool, but I	I'm more likely to click on ads that are tailored	UGC is key for me—if fans are excited, I'll give	Electronic ads are better for anime, but they can feel

							it a shot.	
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				om otherfans.	need UGC to confirm it's good.	to me, but I don't like being tracked.		cessive attimes.
4	Informant 4	35	Teacher	I don't fully trust ads unless the community is involved.	Visuals are important, but they don't make me trust the ad alone.	I appreciate personalized ads, but they feel a bit too targeted sometimes.	I need to see what fans are saying before I trust anything in an ad.	I barely notice traditional ads, but electronic ads are everywhere online.
5	Informant 5	22	Student	Ads are too promotional.I need to see fan content to believe them.	If the ad looks good, I'll check it out, but fan comments are crucial.	I engage more with personalized ads, but I don't like how much data they collect.	Fan opinions are more important than anything in the ad for me.	Traditional ads don't really connect with me, but I see electronic ones all the time.

Table No 1: A table with the details of the five informants, including their age, occupation, and responses to various questions related to electronic advertising in the anime sector

1.1. Informants' Profile:

Age: Informants ranged in age from 22 to 35, reflecting a diverse range of experiencesand perspectives regarding digital media consumption (Figure 1).

Occupation: The sample included individuals from various professional backgrounds, including students, a software developer, a marketing specialist, and a graphic designer.

Key Findings from Data Collection:

1.1. Trust in Electronic Advertising:

As highlighted in Figure 2, most informants expressed a lack of trust in electronic ads unless supplemented with user-generated content (UGC), such as fan reviews and community comments. For example, Informant 3 noted, “I trust ads more when I see reviews from other fans”.

1.1. Impact of Visual Appeal:

Figure 3 shows that the visual appeal of anime-related ads plays a critical role in attracting attention. Four out of five informants rated visual appeal as a significant factor. Informant 1 stated, “Good visuals catch my eye and make me interested, but I still need reviews.” However, the informants emphasized that visual appeal alone was not sufficient to build trust without peer validation.

1.1. Personalization:

The personalization of ads was well-received by informants, as depicted in Figure 4. Most informants rated their engagement with personalized ads higher than with generic

ones. Informant 2 said, “Personalized ads make me more interested, but I worry about privacy.” Despite this positive engagement, some expressed concerns about the privacy implications of data collection.

1.1. The Role of UGC:

User-generated content (UGC) was found to be the most influential factor in shaping trust and decision-making. As shown in Figure 5, all informants relied heavily on UGC, such as fan reviews, when deciding whether to engage with an anime advertisement. Informant 5 remarked, “Fan opinions are more important than anything in the ad for me”.

1.1. Comparison with Traditional Advertising:

The responses reflected a clear preference for electronic advertising over traditional formats, as shown in Figure 6. Informants described electronic ads as more engaging and interactive, though some raised concerns about the over-saturation of ads in the digital space. Informant 4 commented, “I barely notice traditional ads, but electronic ads are everywhere online”.

The qualitative data collected from the interviews, supported by the figures, provide a comprehensive understanding of how anime fans interact with and perceive electronic advertising. These insights were then analyzed thematically, allowing for the identification of key patterns and behaviors in the consumption of anime-related digital marketing.

This approach ensured a detailed exploration of consumer behavior, focusing on trust, visual appeal, personalization, and UGC, which were central to the research objectives.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data collected from the interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis, focusing on identifying recurring patterns and key themes related to trust, visual appeal, personalization, user-generated content (UGC), and comparisons between electronic and traditional advertising. The responses from the five informants provided a foundation for developing insights into how fans of Japanese anime interact with and perceive electronic advertising in this sector.

1. Familiarization with the Data

The initial step involved reviewing the interview transcripts and examining the responses in the table. Each informant’s responses offered detailed insights into their perceptions of electronic advertising, highlighting varying levels of trust, preferences for personalization, and reliance on UGC.

2. Coding and Categorization

The data were then coded based on key themes:

- **Trust in Ads vs. UGC:** Responses indicated a lack of trust in electronic ads unless supplemented by UGC. For instance, Informant 3 shared, “I trust ads more when I see reviews from other fans,” underscoring a pattern in which anime fans rely on peer validation to trust an ad. This recurring theme suggests that purely promotional ads are viewed with caution, while community-driven content offers the authenticity anime fans seek.
- **The Role of Visual Appeal:** Visual appeal was consistently mentioned as crucial for initial engagement with anime advertisements. Informants reported being attracted to visually appealing ads but indicated that visual aesthetics alone do not lead to trust or action. Informant 1 remarked, “Good visuals catch my eye and make me interested, but I still need reviews.” This feedback highlights the dual role of visuals as attractors and UGC as validators, indicating that anime fans are visually oriented but demand authenticity for further engagement.

- Personalization and Engagement: Personalized ads received mixed responses. While informants appreciated the relevance of ads tailored to their preferences, there were concerns about data privacy. Informant 2 mentioned, “Personalized ads make me more interested, but I worry about privacy,” reflecting an ongoing tension between relevance and privacy. This theme suggests that, while personalization can drive interest, it must be implemented with transparency to avoid alienating consumers.
- UGC as a Key Trust Factor: User-generated content emerged as the most influential factor in driving trust and engagement with electronic advertising. Informants reported that UGC, such as fan reviews and online discussions, is essential to validating the credibility of an ad. Informant 5 expressed, “Fan opinions are more important than anything in the ad for me.” This theme was reinforced by all informants, indicating a strong preference for peer-driven content over brand-promoted messages.
- Comparison with Traditional Advertising: Informants consistently preferred electronic ads over traditional formats due to the interactivity and personalization offered by digital platforms. However, concerns about ad fatigue were also noted, with several informants mentioning that the high frequency of digital ads could be overwhelming. Informant 4 stated, “I barely notice traditional ads, but electronic ads are everywhere online,” pointing to the need for strategic ad frequency to maintain consumer interest.

3. Theme Development

The coding process led to the development of five core themes:

1. Trust in Electronic Ads vs. UGC: Informants showed a strong preference for ads validated by UGC, which offers the authenticity missing from corporate ads.
2. Importance of Visual Appeal: Visuals are essential for drawing attention but must be paired with UGC to build trust and drive engagement.
3. Effectiveness of Personalization: Personalized ads engage fans but raise concerns about privacy. This indicates a need for transparency and privacy control within personalized advertising.
4. Role of UGC: UGC is a pivotal factor in building trust, as fans rely heavily on peer opinions to validate ads. This suggests that anime marketers should prioritize community engagement.
5. Engagement with Electronic vs. Traditional Ads: While electronic ads offer interactivity, they risk losing consumer interest if over-saturated. This highlights the importance of balancing ad volume and quality in digital marketing strategies.

4. Pattern Recognition

Several patterns emerged across the data:

- UGC as an Essential Trust Element: All informants emphasized UGC as crucial for building trust, revealing that community validation is a decisive factor in engagement with anime ads.
- Visual Appeal Attracts but Does Not Convince: Visual appeal is vital for initial attraction but needs support from authentic peer reviews to build trust.
- Personalization Drives Engagement but Demands Privacy Consideration: Personalized ads were more engaging than generic ones, but privacy concerns indicate that personalization should be handled transparently.
- Ad Fatigue in Electronic Ads: Electronic ads are preferred over traditional formats but risk consumer fatigue if too frequent. Therefore, managing ad frequency is essential to avoid overwhelming fans.

5. Theme Refinement and Reporting

The final themes were refined to ensure they captured the core patterns identified across the responses. These themes were then organized into the findings section, providing a structured analysis of the responses to trust, visual appeal, personalization, UGC, and advertising preferences.

Through this analysis, the study demonstrates that while anime fans are open to engaging with electronic

advertising, their trust is heavily influenced by peer-driven content. Visual appeal serves as an initial draw, but sustained engagement requires authentic validation through UGC. Personalization enhances interest but must be balanced with privacy considerations to maintain consumer confidence. The preference for electronic ads, tempered by concerns over ad fatigue, highlights the need for strategic ad management in the anime sector.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

This study followed strict ethical guidelines to ensure the protection of participants' rights and privacy. Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant institutional review board before data collection began. The following ethical practices were implemented:

- Informed consent: All participants were informed about the study's objectives, methods, and voluntary nature. Participants signed a consent form agreeing to participate in the research and to have their interviews audio-recorded.
- Confidentiality: Pseudonyms were used to protect participants' identities, and no identifying information was included in the research report. Interview transcripts and recordings were securely stored, and only the researcher had access to the data.
- Right to withdraw: Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences.
- Data security: All data was stored securely on encrypted devices, ensuring that participants' personal information remained protected.

4 Findings

The analysis of the data collected from the five informants provided deep insights into how anime fans perceive and respond to electronic advertising. Through thematic analysis, five key themes emerged: trust in electronic advertising, the role of visual appeal, the impact of personalized ads, the importance of user-generated content (UGC), and the comparison between electronic and traditional advertising.

4.1 Trust in Electronic Advertising

A major theme that emerged from the data is that trust in electronic advertising is generally low unless supplemented by user-generated content (UGC). Figure 2 highlights this clearly, showing that all five informants had higher levels of trust in UGC than in electronic ads alone. For instance, Informant 3 stated, "I trust ads more when I see reviews from other fans." This sentiment was echoed by other participants, emphasizing the importance of peer validation in building trust.

The data also revealed that informants were skeptical of ads that seemed overly promotional. Informant 5 noted, "Ads are too promotional. I need to see fan content to believe them." This suggests that anime fans are wary of purely corporate-driven messages and seek confirmation from the community to ensure the authenticity of the product or service being advertised.

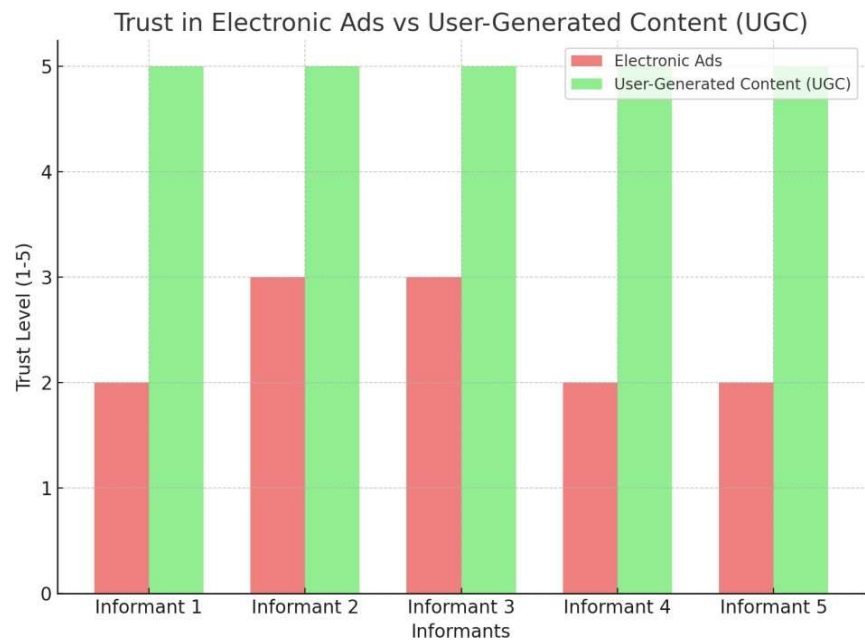


Figure 2: Trust in Electronic Ads vs. User-Generated Content (UGC)

4.2 The Role of Visual Appeal

Visual appeal was a significant factor in determining whether informants engaged with an ad. As shown in Figure 3, four out of the five informants indicated that visually appealing ads significantly influenced their interest in an anime series or product. Informant 1 mentioned, “Good visuals catch my eye and make me interested, but I still need reviews”.

However, despite the strong influence of visual appeal, informants consistently stressed that visuals alone were not enough to drive engagement. They required additional validation through UGC to trust the claims made by the ad. This reflects the finding that while visuals are important for attracting attention, they must be supported by community-driven content to encourage further action.

Importance of Visual Appeal in Ads

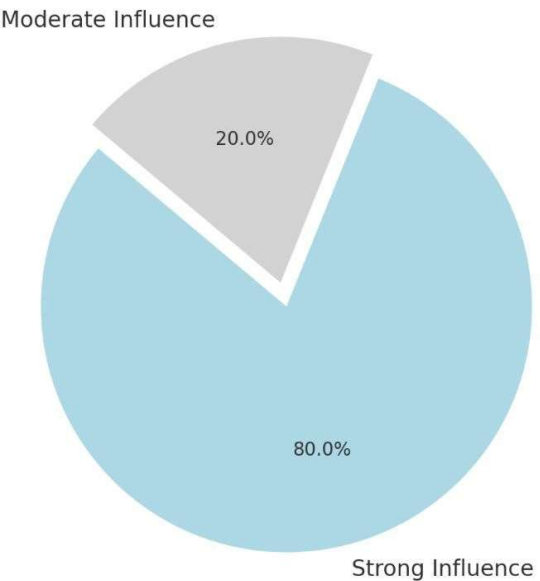


Figure 3: Importance of Visual Appeal in Ads

4.3 Impact of Personalized Ads

The personalization of ads emerged as a powerful tool for engaging anime fans, as depicted in Figure 4. Most informants responded positively to ads that were tailored to their previous viewing habits or interests. Informant 2 remarked, “Personalized ads make me more interested, but I worry about privacy.” This suggests that personalized ads can effectively capture attention but may also raise concerns about privacy and data use.

Despite these concerns, personalized ads consistently generated more engagement than generic ads, with all informants indicating higher levels of interaction with personalized content. For example, Informant 1 said, “I like personalized ads, but sometimes they’re too invasive.” This demonstrates that while personalization increases relevance, it must be balanced with respect for privacy to maintain positive consumer experiences.

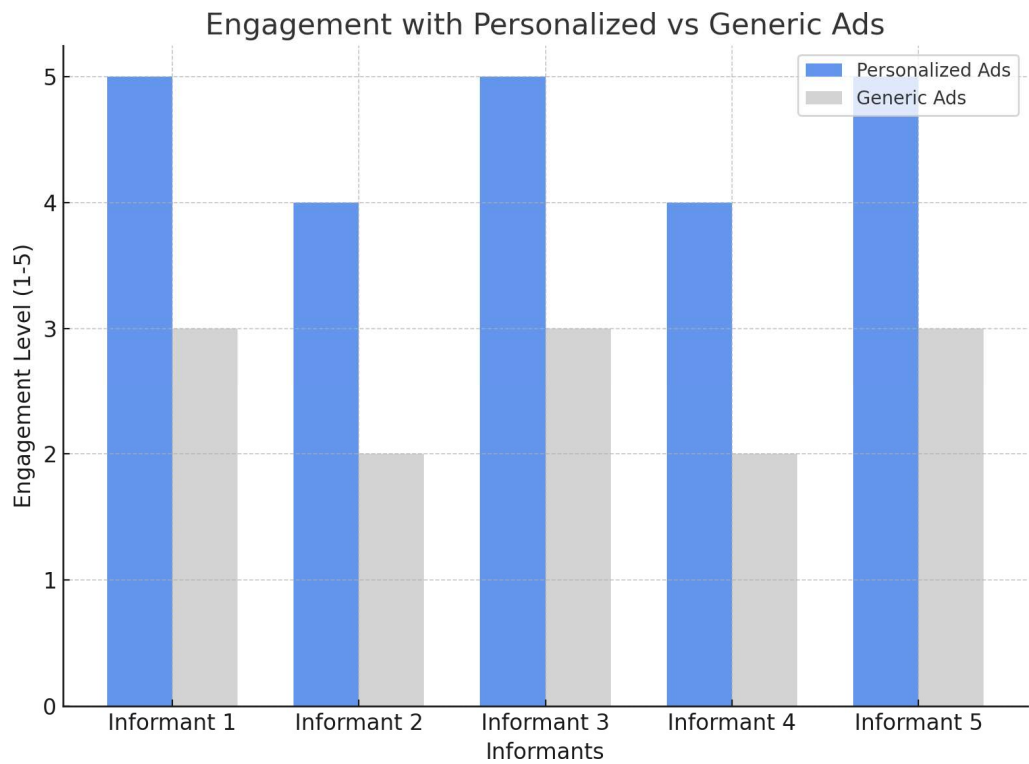


Figure 4: Engagement with Personalized vs. Generic Ads

4.4 Importance of User-Generated Content (UGC)

User-generated content (UGC) was the most influential factor in driving trust and engagement. As shown in Figure 5, all informants relied heavily on UGC, such as fan reviews, social media comments, and community discussions, to verify the authenticity of the ads they encountered. Informant 3 stated, “I always check reviews and fan discussions before making any decisions.” This demonstrates the critical role that peer validation plays in the decision-making process.

For anime fans, UGC provides the authenticity that corporate advertisements often lack. Informant 5 noted, “Fan opinions are more important than anything in the ad for me,” highlighting the significant weight that UGC holds over the effectiveness of electronic advertising in this niche. UGC, such as fan reviews and discussions, helps fill the credibility gap left by corporate advertisements, making it a vital component of any successful anime marketing campaign.

4.5 Comparison Between Electronic and Traditional Advertising

When comparing electronic advertising to traditional advertising, all informants expressed a clear preference for electronic ads due to their interactivity and relevance. As illustrated in Figure 6, electronic ads received higher engagement scores than traditional ads, with informants appreciating the ability to immediately interact with content, such as watching trailers or reading more about a product. Informant 2 noted, “I like digital ads because they’re interactive. You can click on them and find out more immediately, unlike a poster or magazine ad”. However, some informants raised concerns about advertising fatigue due to the overwhelming volume of electronic ads they encounter online. Informant 4 stated, “Sometimes there are just too many ads, and I start to ignore them.” This highlights a challenge for digital marketers to balance ad frequency to avoid oversaturation.

While traditional advertising was viewed as less intrusive, informants felt it was also less engaging. Informant 1 mentioned, “I barely notice traditional ads, but electronic ads are everywhere online.” This suggests that while traditional ads are less disruptive, they lack the interactive features and personalization that make electronic ads more appealing to anime fans.

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into how anime fans respond to electronic advertising. Based on the analysis of the informants' responses, several key themes emerged that relate to trust, visual appeal, personalization, user-generated content (UGC), and the comparison between electronic and traditional advertising. The discussion below connects these findings to existing literature and highlights their implications for understanding consumer behavior in the anime sector.

5. discussion

5.1 Trust in Electronic Advertising

The responses revealed a significant lack of trust in electronic advertising unless it is supplemented by user-generated content (UGC). As highlighted in Figure 2, all informants expressed skepticism toward purely promotional ads, with most stating that they do not trust electronic ads unless validated by peer-driven content. For instance, Informant 3 stated, “I trust ads more when I see reviews from other fans.” This reliance on UGC aligns with existing research that emphasizes the role of community feedback in building trust within niche fandoms, such as anime (Sjöblom & Hamari, 2020).

The findings suggest that corporate advertising alone is not enough to influence anime fans. Informants repeatedly mentioned that they rely on fan reviews, social media discussions, and peer-generated content to determine whether an advertised product or service is credible. This reinforces the idea that authenticity and community endorsement are essential for gaining trust in the anime sector, as fans are more likely to trust their peers than corporate messages (Yurun Huang, 2017).

Trust in User-Generated Content (UGC) vs Electronic Ads

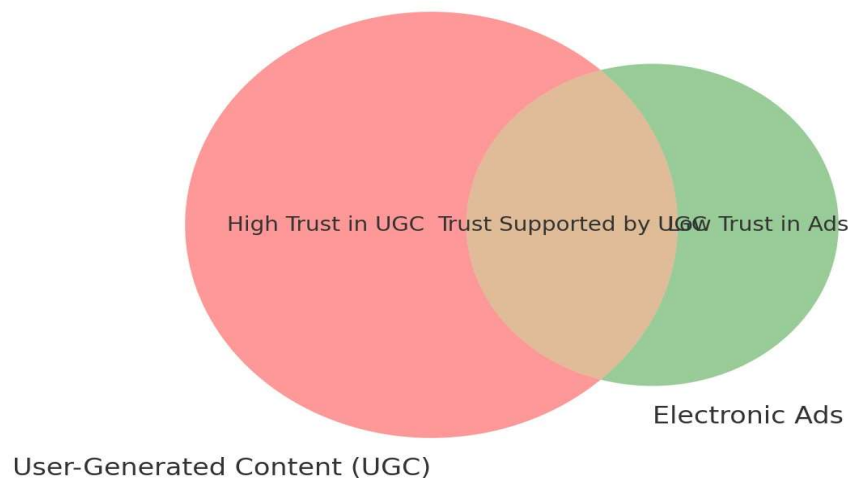


Figure 5: Trust in User-Generated Content (UGC) vs. Electronic Ads

5.2 The Role of Visual Appeal

Visual appeal was found to be a strong factor in attracting attention to anime advertisements, as

demonstrated in Figure 3. Four out of five informants indicated that visually compelling ads caught their interest. For example, Informant 1 stated, “Good visuals catch my eye and make me interested, but I still need reviews.” This highlights the importance of visuals in drawing attention to anime-related ads, which is consistent with studies that emphasize the visually driven nature of anime marketing (Saleh Bazi, Raffaele Filieri, M, 2023).

However, the data also revealed that visual appeal alone is insufficient for converting interest into action. Informants consistently mentioned the need for additional validation through UGC before making a decision, demonstrating that while visuals play a role in capturing initial attention, they are not enough to build trust. The combination of aesthetically engaging visuals and authentic user feedback was key to driving consumer behavior. This finding underscores the need for marketers to balance visual creativity with community-driven content in order to successfully influence anime fans.

5.3 Impact of Personalized Ads

The personalization of ads emerged as a critical factor in engaging anime fans, as shown in Figure 4. Most informants responded positively to personalized ads, with Informant 2 noting, “Personalized ads make me more interested, but I worry about privacy.” This is in line with existing literature that emphasizes the effectiveness of personalized advertising in increasing consumer engagement by tailoring content to individual preferences (He, Zha, & Li, 2013).

Despite the positive response to personalized ads, the data also revealed privacy concerns. Several informants expressed discomfort with how much data advertisers seem to collect to deliver personalized content. For example, Informant 4 said, “It’s a little creepy when ads are too accurate.” This finding highlights a tension between engagement and privacy in personalized advertising. While personalization increases relevance, it also raises concerns about data tracking and consumer privacy, suggesting that marketers need to be transparent about how they use data and offer users more control over their privacy settings.

5.4 Importance of User-Generated Content (UGC)

User-generated content (UGC) was the most influential factor in shaping consumer behavior. As reflected in Figure 5, all informants emphasized the critical role of UGC, such as fan reviews, social media comments, and discussions, in validating the claims made by electronic ads. Informant 5 remarked, “Fan opinions are more important than anything in the ad for me,” illustrating how anime fans heavily rely on peer-driven content when deciding whether to engage with an ad or purchase anime-related products.

This reliance on UGC underscores the importance of community endorsement in the anime sector. The responses suggest that anime fans view UGC as more authentic and credible than corporate advertisements, which are often seen as overly promotional. This finding aligns with previous research that highlights the power of UGC in building trust and influencing purchasing decisions in niche markets (Sjöblom & Hamari, 2020). For anime marketers, incorporating UGC into advertising strategies is crucial for building trust and ensuring that the promotional message resonates with the fan community.

5.5 Comparison Between Electronic and Traditional Advertising

The comparison between electronic and traditional advertising revealed a clear preference for electronic ads, as illustrated in Figure 6. Informants appreciated the interactivity and real-time updates offered by digital ads, with Informant 2 noting, “I like digital ads because they’re interactive. You can click on them and find out more immediately, unlike a poster or magazine ad.” This preference for electronic advertising is consistent with previous studies that highlight the engagement potential of digital platforms (Huzaif Al Rehman, 2024).

However, the data also revealed that informants were experiencing ad fatigue due to the overwhelming volume of electronic ads they encountered online. Informant 4 stated, “Sometimes there are just too many ads, and I start to ignore them.” This highlights a challenge for marketers in managing the frequency and targeting of ads to avoid advertising saturation. While electronic ads are generally preferred for their flexibility and interactivity, there is a need to balance ad volume to prevent consumer burnout.

In contrast, traditional advertising was seen as less intrusive but also less engaging. Informants expressed that traditional ad, such as those in magazines or on TV, did not connect with them as effectively as digital ads. For instance, Informant 1 said, “I barely notice traditional ads, but electronic ads are everywhere online.” This suggests that while traditional ads may not overwhelm consumers, they also fail to capture attention in the same way that personalized, interactive digital ads do.

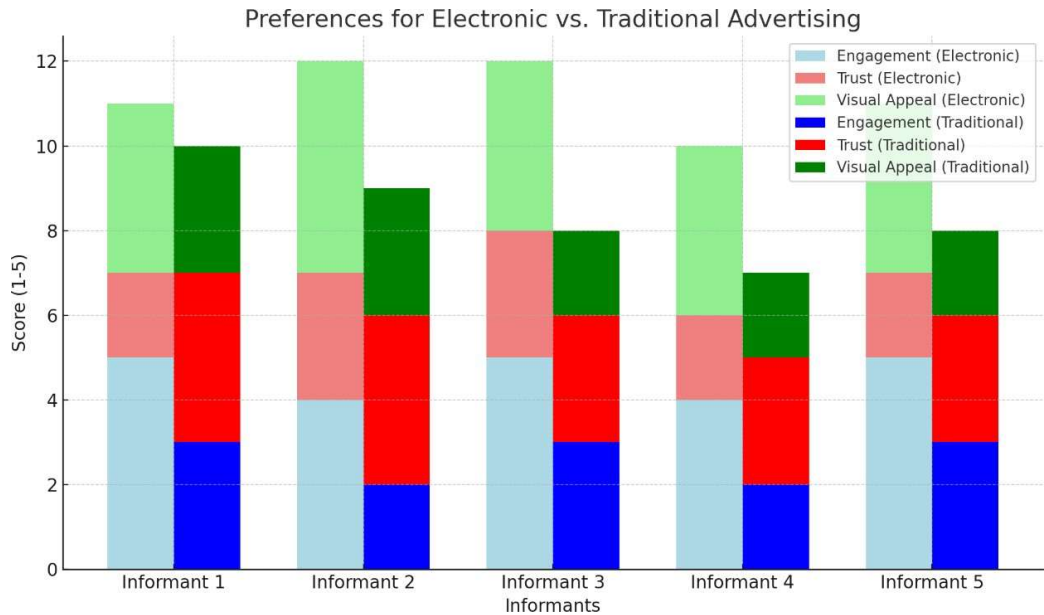


Figure 6: Preferences for Electronic vs. Traditional Advertising

5.6 Contribution to the Literature

This study contributes to the existing literature on digital marketing by offering insights into the behavior of anime fans in response to electronic advertising. While previous research has focused on UGC and personalization in broader entertainment markets, this study specifically explores how these factors influence a highly engaged and niche community like anime fandom. The findings underscore the importance of combining visual appeal with UGC and carefully balancing personalization with privacy to build trust and engagement among anime fans.

5.7 Practical Implications for Anime Marketers

The findings of this study provide several practical implications for marketers in the anime industry:

1) Incorporate UGC to Build Trust:

Marketers should leverage user-generated content—such as fan reviews, comments, and community discussions—within their digital advertising campaigns. Highlighting UGC will increase authenticity and help build trust among anime fans, who are more likely to engage with ads that are supported by peer feedback.

2) Balance Visual Appeal with Authenticity:

While visual appeal is essential for capturing attention, it must be paired with authentic content to drive engagement. Marketers should ensure that their ads accurately reflect the anime content being promoted and include community-driven content to enhance credibility.

3) Respect Privacy in Personalization:

While personalized ads increase engagement, marketers must be transparent about data usage and allow users to control their privacy settings. Respecting consumer privacy is key to maintaining trust while still delivering relevant, personalized content.

4) Manage Ad Volume to Avoid Fatigue:

To prevent ad fatigue, marketers should carefully manage the frequency and targeting of electronic ads. Reducing the number of ads served and focusing on delivering high-quality, relevant content will improve engagement without overwhelming consumers.

6 .Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Summary of Key Findings

The findings from this study offer valuable insights into how anime fans interact with electronic advertising. Through interviews with five informants, several consistent themes emerged that highlight key aspects of consumer behavior in the anime sector: trust, visual appeal, personalization, user-generated content (UGC), and the comparison between electronic and traditional advertising.

- I. Trust in Electronic Advertising: The study found that trust in electronic ads is generally low unless supplemented by UGC, such as fan reviews and comments (Figure 2). Informants expressed a preference for peer-generated content to validate the credibility of the ads they see.
- II. Visual Appeal: Visually appealing ads are important in capturing the attention of anime fans (Figure 3). However, while visuals attract interest, they are not sufficient to build trust or drive engagement unless supported by UGC.
- III. Personalization: Personalized ads were generally more effective in engaging anime fans (Figure 4). Informants responded positively to ads tailored to their preferences, though concerns about privacy were raised, as some felt uncomfortable with how much data was being collected for personalization.
- IV. UGC as a Key Factor: User-generated content (UGC) was found to be the most influential factor in shaping trust and driving decision-making (Figure 5). All informants emphasized the importance of peer reviews and community discussions in verifying the claims made by electronic ads.
- V. Comparison Between Electronic and Traditional Advertising: Informants overwhelmingly preferred electronic advertising for its interactivity and relevance, although advertising fatigue was noted as a concern due to the sheer volume of digital ads (Figure 6).

6.2 Marketing Implications

Based on these findings, several key marketing implications can be derived for the anime industry:

a) Incorporate User-Generated Content (UGC) to Build Trust:

UGC is critical to building trust in electronic ads, as demonstrated by the informants' responses. Marketers should integrate fan reviews, social media discussions, and community-generated content into their campaigns to enhance credibility. This can be achieved by embedding UGC directly into ads or showcasing community feedback in promotional materials. For example, leveraging fan testimonials or showcasing popular fan content can increase the authenticity of anime advertisements and encourage consumer engagement.

b) Balance Visual Appeal with Authenticity:

While visually appealing ads are essential for attracting attention (as shown in Figure 3), anime marketers must ensure that the visuals are authentic and align with user expectations. Overly polished or exaggerated ads without

fan validation may lead to skepticism, as seen in the responses of the informants. Marketers should aim to create ads that not only catch the eye but also maintain credibility by incorporating real experiences from the anime community.

c) Use Personalization, But Address Privacy Concerns:

Personalized ads are more engaging for anime fans, as indicated in Figure 4. However, marketers must address the privacy concerns raised by some informants. Transparent communication about how data is collected and used for personalization is essential to maintain trust. Additionally, providing users with control over their privacy settings and allowing them to opt in or out of personalized ads can enhance trust while maintaining the effectiveness of targeted advertising.

d) Avoid Ad Overload to Prevent Consumer Fatigue:

Although anime fans prefer electronic ads for their interactivity and relevance, advertising fatigue was a common issue noted by informants (Figure 6). To prevent overwhelming consumers, marketers should manage the frequency and targeting of their ads. Reducing the number of ads while increasing their relevance and authenticity can help avoid oversaturation and improve engagement. Marketers should focus on delivering high-quality, relevant ads that resonate with the audience without overloading them with content.

6.3 Limitations of the Study

While this study provides valuable insights, it is important to acknowledge its limitations:

a) Small Sample Size:

The study was conducted with only five informants, which limits the generalizability of the findings. While the responses provide rich qualitative insights, future research could benefit from a larger and more diverse sample to capture a wider range of consumer behaviors and preferences.

b) Focus on Active Fans:

The informants selected were highly engaged anime fans who regularly interact with electronic ads and participate in online communities. This focus may exclude more casual fans, who might have different perspectives on digital advertising in the anime sector.

c) Geographical Scope:

The study primarily focused on global anime fans, potentially overlooking the unique cultural factors influencing anime consumption in Japan, where anime is a mainstream entertainment medium. Future research could explore how cultural differences affect the way anime fans respond to advertising.

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