

Research Article | Araştırma Makalesi

Decoding the DNA of Viral Video Ads

Viral Reklamların DNA'sını İrdelemek



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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to identify the key elements in viral video advertisements disseminated through the sharing of digital media users on their networks, and mostly not perceived as an advertising. Accordingly, sixty award-winning viral video ads from Crystal Apple Award were purposively selected, and were content-analyzed on MAXQDA 2020 through a code sheet developed from the previous related research. The results indicated that viral video ads mostly rewarded Silver Apple award mainly had a length of 30-60 and 91-120 seconds, functioned to build brands, included 'pass-it-on' message type, depended upon transformative message strategies, used positive emotional appeals, contained storytelling, excluded voice-over, included background and instrumental music, preferred popular and pop music, mentioned brand in the last third of the video, and avoided product pricing. It also investigated the associations between award type, advertising function and viral ad elements. Finally, drawing upon the findings obtained, this descriptive paper concludes with remarks and suggestions for practitioners and further research.

Keywords: Digital Advertising, Viral Video Advertising, Award-Winning Ads, Content Analysis, MAXQDA2020.

Öz

Bu araştırmanın amacı, çoğu zaman reklam hissi vermeyen ve dijital ortamlardaki kullanıcıların kendi ağlarında paylaşması yoluyla yayılan viral reklamların temel öğelerinin neler olduğunu ortaya koymaktır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda, Kristal Elma Yaratıcılık Yarışması'ndan aldıkları ödüller ile başarılarını kanıtlayan 60 viral video reklamı seçilmiştir. Araştırma kapsamına alınan viral video reklamlar, alanyazındaki ilgili çalışmalardan hareketle oluşturulan bir kod şeması kullanılarak MAXQDA 2020 nitel veri analizi programında içerik analizine tabi tutulmuştur. Analiz yoluyla elde edilen bulgular, çoğunlukla Gümüş Elma ödülüne layık görülen viral reklamların büyük çoğunluğunun 30-60 saniye ve 91-120 saniye arasında değişen bir uzunluğa sahip olduğunu, marka oluşturma işlevini taşıdığını, 'aktarım' türünde viral mesaj barındırdığını, dönüştürücü mesaj stratejilerine dayandığını, olumlu duygusal çekicilik kullandığını, hikâye anlatıcılığını barındırdığını, dış sesi içermediğini, arkaplan ve enstrümental müziğe yer verdiğini, popüler ve pop müziği tercih ettiğini, marka ismine reklam videosunun son kısmında değindiğini ve ürün fiyatlarından bahsetmediğini işaret etmiştir. Ödül türü, reklam işlevi ve viral reklam öğeleri arasındaki ilişkinin de irdelendiği bu betimsel çalışmada, ulaşılan bulgular ışığında tartışmalar yürütülerek uygulayıcılara ve gelecek çalışmalara önerilerde bulunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dijital Reklam, Viral Video Reklam, Ödüllü Reklamlar, İçerik Analizi, MAXQDA2020.



Introduction

Since the day it was born as a kind of email advertising in the beginning (Petrescu & Korgaonkar, 2011; Sharma & Kaur, 2018, 2020), viral advertising has made an indelible mark in the advertising industry (Phelps et al., 2004; Sharma & Kaur, 2018). Named in analogy to viruses due to their ‘contagious’ nature (Berger, 2013), viral advertising can be easily transmitted by and among the digital media users acting as ‘disseminators’ (Golan & Zaidner, 2008; Kaur et al., 2022; Miquel-Romero & Adame-Sánchez, 2013; Porter & Golan, 2006). Defined as ‘unpaid peer-to-peer communication of provocative content originating from an identified sponsor using the internet to persuade or influence an audience to pass along the content to others’ (Porter & Golan, 2006, p. 29), viral advertising in turn attracts the attention of the advertisers because it can be cost-effective in this way without forcing the advertisers to make their ads reach more people (Çiftçi & Özdemir, 2022; Golan & Zaidner, 2008; Miquel-Romero & Adame-Sánchez, 2013; Phelps et al., 2004; Porter & Golan, 2006; Sharma & Kaur, 2018; Shirkhodae & Rezaee, 2013). Furthermore, viral ads have the main function of brand-building (branding) rather than call to action and informing (Çiftçi & Özdemir, 2022; Golan & Zaidner, 2008; Ketelaar et al., 2016; Porter & Golan, 2006; Segev & Fernandes, 2022; Sharma & Kaur, 2018). They are also claimed to be mostly preferred by the advertisers and advertising professionals for their advantages such as entertainment, credibility, likeability, non-interruptiveness and high engagement levels (Dafonte-Gómez et al., 2020; Kaur et al., 2022; Petrescu & Korgaonkar, 2011; Phelps et al., 2004; Sharma & Kaur, 2018, 2020; Shirkhodae & Rezaee, 2013). In this regard, it can be asserted that there are many factors playing a critical role in the success of the advertisement which is principal and essential for the advertisers and advertising professionals to acquire such benefits and advantages. These factors may be broadly grouped into virality attribute factors, and content-related factors (Himelboim & Golan, 2019). The virality attribute factors include brand relationships (Hayes & Whitehill King, 2014; Ketelaar et al., 2016), media characteristics (Kaur et al., 2022), source credibility (Ketelaar et al., 2016; Phelps et al., 2004), personality traits (Dafonte-Gómez et al., 2020; Kaur et al., 2022; Ketelaar et al., 2016). On the other hand, the content-related factors cover creative message strategy (informational / transformational) (Kaur et al., 2022), emotional appeals (Kaur et al., 2022), borrowed interest devices (Kaur et al., 2022), type of viral messages, duration of the ad, voice-over, music (Kaur et al., 2022), brand mentions, and product pricing. Drawing upon the consideration that the online distribution of the advertisements is primarily induced by the ‘content’ (Kaur et al., 2022), which is enunciated and theorized as the ‘king’ of the advertising itself (Golan & Zaidner, 2008; Porter & Golan, 2006), this study encompasses the ‘content’ of viral video advertisements as its object of research.

The content of viral video ads

Creative message strategy is a significant element of ad content. It deals with whether the ad message appeals to the consumers’ logic or emotions. Accordingly, it is divided into two main strategies: informational and transformational. As Tai and Pae (2002, p. 56) put it, informational message strategies highlight the product features and benefits and address the consumers’ functional and practical needs, while transformational message strategies create emotional associations towards the product promoted in the ad and do not focus on the product-related benefits. Previous research (Moldovan et al., 2019) contend that viral ads adopting both message strategies have a higher potential to be shared. However, others (Dafonte-Gómez et al., 2020; Segev & Fernandes, 2022; Sharma & Kaur, 2018) affirm that most of the viral ads depend upon the transformational message strategies.

Similar to creative message strategies, emotional appeals influence the degree of the virality of the ads (Nikolinakou & Whitehill King, 2018). As Phelps et al. (2004) assert, strong emotions like fear, sadness and humor can provoke the liking and sharing behaviour. Specifically, viral ads containing positive emotional appeals (happiness, joy, fun, humor, surprise, etc.) are more likely to stimulate the target audience to share with their networks than those containing negative emotional appeals (fear, sadness, anxiety, anger, etc.) (Dafonte-Gómez et al., 2020; Lin et al., 2006; Porter & Golan, 2006; Segev & Fernandes, 2022; Sharma & Kaur, 2018). Previous research (Dafonte-Gómez et al., 2020; Kaur et al., 2022; Lin et al., 2006; Porter & Golan, 2006; Segev & Fernandes, 2022; Sharma & Kaur, 2018) show that humor is the strongest emotion which triggers the virality of the ads.

The virality of advertising content also depends on the use of borrowed interest devices. They are employed in the viral advertising mostly for the purposes of drawing the attention of the target audience and motivating them to pass along the viral ad online. Also named as 'advertising appeal' (Golan & Zaidner, 2008, p. 966), they include the use of animals, children, eroticism/sexuality, nudity, animations, celebrities (Kaur et al., 2022), and violence (Dafonte-Gómez, 2014; Golan & Zaidner, 2008). According to previous studies (Dafonte-Gómez, 2014; Golan & Zaidner, 2008), the most prominent type of borrowed interest devices in viral ads is sexuality, followed by violence.

Besides the borrowed interest devices, different types of viral messages have a significant impact on the virality of the advertisement. It deals with how the viral ad messages are organized and forwarded by users to their networks. Arjona-Martín and fellows (2020) make a synthesis of existing classifications of viral messages and propose a typology consisting of six categories, which are namely 'pass it on', 'incentivized viral', 'undercover marketing', 'fan clubs or friends associations', 'marketing rumor', and 'user-managed databases'. The 'pass it on' type of viral message stimulates the audience to forward the viral message mostly through the inclusion of humorous content, while 'incentivized viral messages' bestow the users an explicit reward for passing along the viral ad to their networks. In contrast, 'undercover marketing' is the most sophisticated and hardly identifiable type of viral messages since such viral messages imitate the style and format of other digital content. Similar to 'undercover marketing', the type of viral messages entitled as 'fan clubs or friends associations' aims to build an image of a fan club and thus make the ad messages look like those from general users in the digital media environments, not the company itself. Another type is 'marketing rumor', which abuses the fame or privacy of some key figures related to the brand in favor of brand and in this way attributes notorious salience to the advertised brand. This type is mostly found unethical and not in good taste. Lastly, the 'user-managed databases' require the users to invite their networks to share the viral message after creating and managing their own networks through a database generated with the help of an online service. According to Arjona-Martín et al. (2020), 'pass it on' type of viral messages are the most basic and salient type of viral messages.

In addition to the above-discussed elements, the duration of the viral ads also plays a vital role in spurring the intention of the consumers to pass along the ad to their networks (Lin et al., 2006; Sharma & Kaur, 2018). There are several arguments regarding the ideal duration of the viral ads in the relevant literature. In his study on the 25 best global viral ad videos, Dafonte-Gómez (2014) reveals that the average duration of the globally shared viral ads, which is 2 minutes and 2 seconds does not differ from a standard TV commercial

and that when the success of such worldwide viral ads is considered, the duration of the ad becomes of secondary importance. However, in another study examining the association between ad duration and number of shares (Dafonte-Gómez et al., 2020), it is found out that the ads which last 60 seconds to 119 seconds are the ones with the highest number of shares. In a similar manner, Sharma and Kaur (2018) disclose that the average length of most of the global viral ads is 60 to 90 seconds. Likewise, Segev and Fernandes (2022) unveil that most of the viral ads last more than 60 seconds.

The importance of sound and music in viral video ads

The messages conveyed through sounds, rhythms and music and the like hold a significant place for the effectiveness of the advertisements. Accordingly, some utilities of music for advertising have been enumerated as follows:

- The ad messages conveyed via music can bore through the audiences more easily, by activating and prompting their emotions (Abolhasani et al., 2017; Anglada-Tort et al., 2021; DePuy, 2013; N. Graakjær, 2009; N. J. Graakjær & Jantzen, 2009; Hecker, 1984; Lantos & Craton, 2012; Lindstrom, 2005; Özulu, 1994; Roehm, 2001; L. M. Scott, 1990; Shevy & Hung, 2013; Yang et al., 2022),
- The effects of other advertising elements are reinforced through music (Abolhasani et al., 2017; Aytakin, 2012; DePuy, 2013; Farmer, 2008; Hecker, 1984; Huron, 1989; Roehm, 2001; L. M. Scott, 1990; Yang et al., 2022; Yeshin, 1998),
- Music provides the audiences with clues about time and space of the plot (Aytakin, 2012; DePuy, 2013; N. J. Graakjær & Jantzen, 2009; L. M. Scott, 1990),
- Music defines who the audiences are, and give them an identity (Abolhasani et al., 2017; Aytakin, 2012; DePuy, 2013; N. J. Graakjær & Jantzen, 2009; Hecker, 1984; Huron, 1989; Lantos & Craton, 2012; L. M. Scott, 1990; Yeshin, 1998),
- Music creates entertaining and relaxing mood for consumers (Anglada-Tort et al., 2021; N. J. Graakjær & Jantzen, 2009; Hecker, 1984; Huron, 1989; Lantos & Craton, 2012; Özulu, 1994; Yang et al., 2022),
- Music fills the silence in advertising (Aytakin, 2012; N. J. Graakjær & Jantzen, 2009; Yeshin, 1998),
- Music disguises the commercial reality of the advertising by drawing the audiences into an illusion of reality and equipping this illusion with emotional patterns normalised within the social order (Allan & Tryce, 2016; Aytakin, 2012; N. J. Graakjær & Jantzen, 2009; Huron, 1989; Kılıçbay, 2004),
- Music helps audiences learn and disseminate the advertising messages through word-of-mouth (Allan, 2006; Aytakin, 2012; N. J. Graakjær & Jantzen, 2009; L. M. Scott, 1990).

Others (Allan, 2006, 2008; Allan & Tryce, 2016; Anglada-Tort et al., 2021; Aytakin, 2012; Boltz et al., 1991; Farmer, 2008; N. J. Graakjær & Jantzen, 2009; Hecker, 1984; Huron, 1989; Lantos & Craton, 2012; Lindstrom, 2005; Oakes & North, 2013; Özulu, 1994; Shevy & Hung, 2013; Yang et al., 2022; Yeshin, 1998) also set forth that some powerful associations between music, advertising and brand are formed by the brain exposed to the music in advertising, resulting in the high levels of ad recalls, and ad and brand likeability, and a desired increase in sales. But the strength of these associations may be affected by the interactions of some factors including the listening situation, the listener characteristics, the advertisement processing strategy, and the musical stimulus (Lantos

& Craton, 2012). In addition to the musical stimulus, the music genres including classical music, popular music, and folk music and as such also have a considerable impact on what the brands advertised are associated with in the minds of the audiences. Regarding the relationship between music genres and their impacts on the brand image, Dengel and Halbfeld (2002) provided a remarkable list, according to which classical music (e.g. Bach's or Mozart's music) evokes a brand image of quality, elegance, and maturity; classical and romantic music (e.g. Chopin's music) creates an image of love, passion, and romance; folk music associates the brand with locality, purity and jovialness while folk music including anthems evokes the sense of power and discipline; pop music with dance rhythms stirs emotions of liveliness; pop music with rap rhythms instills the feelings of protests and distinctness; pop music with rock rhythms offers the brand audiences a sense of self and protest; and finally pop music with jazz rhythms elicits the feelings of naturality, elegance, divergence, and essentiality (as cited in (Yaman, 2015). Likewise, Farmer (2008) introduced four genres of music used in advertising, which are 'popular music', 'classical music', 'opera music', and 'other'; and 'popular music' was also categorized as 'pop', 'rock', 'rap/hip-hop/rhythm', 'blues / jazz', 'reggae', 'country', 'dance/disco', 'Latin', and 'gospel' music. Allan and Tryce (2016) and Farmer (2008) found that rock was the most used subgenre of ad music, and Oakes and North (2013) discovered that classical music ignited a sense of sophistication and decreased the desire for the advertised service, whereas dance music cultivated hedonic pleasures including pleasures of social interaction and enhanced the desire for choosing and preferring the advertised service.

Farmer also sorted popular music as either 'original popular music' (the original song recorded for commercial use and dissemination without any changes in vocals, composition, and lyrics) or 'cover music' (the music recorded previously but now either includes new vocals or contains same vocals and lyrics, but different music composition) (2008, p. 23). Allan highlights two more subgenres of popular music to the typology, which are 'folk' and 'march' (2008, p. 412). Some (Allan, 2006; Allan & Tryce, 2016; Farmer, 2008) observed that original popular music was more preferable for advertising creatives than cover music most probably due to the high levels of relevance and familiarity of the former for the consumers.

Apart from various music genres, advertising also employs different forms of music such as jingles, needledrop and popular music. The literature provides some typologies for the forms of ad music. While Graakjær (2009, p. 65) offers a typology of forms of ad music which consists of 'tune', 'song', 'groove', 'jingle', and 'emblem', Barrio Fraile et al. (2021, pp. 107–108) classifies forms of music as 'jingle', 'audio logo', 'claim sound', 'commercial song', 'brand song', 'brand voice', and 'product song'. Similarly, Akgün (2007) offers four forms of ad music, which are 'jingle', 'audio logo', 'commercial song', and 'background music' (pp. 60-61). In this scope, Farmer (2008, p. 23) brings forth three forms of ad music, which can be listed as 'jingle', 'needledrop', and 'popular music'. Jingle is a common and unique form of ad music, comprising of a concise song or melody which is specifically generated for the brand and can be easily identified and remembered by the audiences (Allan, 2008; Barrio Fraile et al., 2021; Özulu, 1994; Shevy & Hung, 2013). While 'needledrop' can be defined as "music that is pre-fabricated, multipurpose, and highly conventional" (L. M. Scott, 1990, p. 223) without any lyrics included (Farmer, 2008), it can be stated that 'popular music' includes all genres of music which are produced commercially for the general use of ordinary people (Allan & Tryce, 2016; Farmer, 2008; Shuker, 2001) in order to create some relevance and familiarity for them with the ad messages, resulting

in the involvement of the audience into the advertising (Allan, 2006, 2008). According to some prominent works in the literature (Allan, 2008; Allan & Tryce, 2016), popular music was the pre-eminent form of ad music, followed by needledrop and jingle. In this context, some (Allan, 2006; Farmer, 2008; Hecker, 1984) revealed in their research that popular music was the most powerful tool to stimulate the consumers just as the advertising intended. Unlike others (Shevy & Hung, 2013), some (Allan & Tryce, 2016; Lantos & Craton, 2012) even put forth that jingles were less desirable for consumers since they were perceived as highly brand-oriented messages while the popular music were narrative-oriented. In a study on the use of music in viral advertising, DePuy (2013) discovered that for the virality of video advertising, brands utilized popular music at the expense of high costs of licensing rights. Nevertheless, in some studies on music usage in TV commercials in Turkey (Aytekin, 2012; alıřkan, 2019), it was found out that most of the sampled commercials contained needledrops, followed by jingles and popular music while one-fourth of commercials used a mixture of these forms of ad music. This indicates that the different cultural backgrounds may have an impact on the preference of forms of ad music.

Another issue to consider in terms of music use in advertising is ‘music prominence’, which refers to the level of emphasis placed on the use of music in advertising. Farmer (2008, p. 23) asserts it as ‘foreground’ – which holds the fundamental place in the advertising by being the key or sole component – and ‘background’ – which is used as a supporting component of the advertising. Unlike Farmer (2008), others (Allan, 2006; Lantos & Craton, 2012; Yang et al., 2022) found out in their research that ‘foreground’ music was more effective and dominant than ‘background music’ since the former generally fitted the advertising message and advertised brand better than the latter does. In addition to the importance attributed to the music in advertising, it is also of great importance for the success of advertising to determine how the song is arranged, which is considered within the scope of ‘song structure’ in the literature. Song structure is concerned with the use of lyrics in the song used in advertising, and it is sorted by scholars (Allan, 2008; Farmer, 2008) as either ‘lyrics’ (where the ad song contains lyrics) or ‘instrumental’ (where the ad song lacks any lyrics). Unlike Roehm (2001) who asserted that instrumental music led the consumers to generate the lyrics on their own, resulting in higher levels of memorability of ad message, in a study by Allan (2006), ‘lyrics’ was found to affect the consumers more than the instrumental did, and unlike Farmer (2008) put it, the former was preferred more than the latter in advertising (Allan & Tryce, 2016; Lantos & Craton, 2012). In a similar vein, the results DePuy (2013) gained through a small-scale research on the most-viewed commercials on YouTube reported that the majority of the sampled viral commercials (86%) contained music, which was instrumental to a large extent, and that only 37.2% of them adopted lyrical music.

The use of voice-over is a significant concern for the in-depth analysis of viral advertisements. Whether it is excluded or included may determine the extent of the consumer’s interaction and involvement with the advertising message. It is assumed that the inclusion of voice-over may trigger the skepticism of the consumers toward the viral ads and may cause to a decrease in the interest and willingness of the consumer to disseminate the ad message through their network. In this respect, Dafonte-Gómez and his fellows (2020) reported in their research that the viral video ads without voice-over generated a higher rate of shares than those including voice-over, and set forth that the possibility of the virality of video advertising content might be influenced by the presence

of voice-over, suggesting that viral ads avoid using voice-over for successful results. Just like the use of voice-over, the brand mentions as well as the moment when the brand is mentioned similarly may affect the achievement of viral ads. According to Broadus (2011), the video ads which do not mention the brand have the potential to become viral, but the mentions of the brand in the first third of the video increase the virality of the video ads to the highest degree. Additionally, the product pricing information is considered a substantial component of viral advertisements, and previous research (Broadus, 2011) opined that viral advertisements avoid featuring information about product prices, and that those utilizing such information mostly prefer this strategy if the product costs low for the target audience.

Methodology

Purpose and research questions of study

The primary objective of this descriptive study is to find out what elements are employed in the viral video advertisements in Turkey in order to highlight their main characteristics. In line with the research aim, this study seeks answers to the following research questions:

RQ1. What is the most salient characteristic of viral video ads in terms of;

- RQ1a. duration of ad (in seconds)?
- RQ1b. advertising function?
- RQ1c. type of viral message?
- RQ1d. message strategy?
- RQ1e. emotional appeals?
- RQ1f. borrowed interest devices?
- RQ1g. voice-over?
- RQ1h. music prominence?
- RQ1i. song structure?
- RQ1j. forms of ad music?
- RQ1k. music genre?
- RQ1l. brand mention?
- RQ1m. product pricing?

RQ2. What is the association between award type and;

- RQ2a. duration of ad (in seconds)?
- RQ2b. advertising function?
- RQ2c. type of viral message?

RQ2d. message strategy?

- RQ2e. emotional appeals?
- RQ2f. borrowed interest devices?

RQ2g. voice-over?

- RQ2h. music prominence?
- RQ2i. song structure?

RQ2j. forms ad music?

- RQ2k. music genre?
- RQ2l. brand mention?

RQ3. What is the association between advertising function and;

RQ3a. duration of ad (in seconds)?

RQ3b. type of viral message?

RQ3c. message strategy?

RQ3d. emotional appeals?

RQ3e. borrowed interest devices?

RQ3f. voice-over?

RQ3g. music prominence?

RQ3h. song structure?

RQ3i. forms ad music?

RQ3j. music genre?

RQ3k. brand mention?

RQ3l. product pricing?

Research method

In service to responding to the questions above in order to reach the research goal, data from award-winning viral ad samples were content-analyzed. Content analysis was found eligible for this study as a research method for identifying the key elements in viral video ads since it is a versatile and useful tool to objectively and systematically reveal the common patterns (S. Stemler, 2001; S. E. Stemler, 2015) in not only verbal texts, but also visual ones (Harwood & Garry, 2003; S. E. Stemler, 2015; Stigler et al., 1999) from the perspective of many different disciplines, including communications (Krippendorff, 1989). It enables the researchers to turn the “open-ended” data into a structured one for diagnosing the basic trends (Harwood & Garry, 2003), and then make valid and replicable inferences (Krippendorff, 1989) which can be later combined with other research methods and techniques (S. Stemler, 2001; S. E. Stemler, 2015).

Population and sample

This study examined the award-winning viral video ads, taking into consideration that they embodied the most effective elements, which made them a success with high levels of virality and led them to be deemed fit for an award, and so the researchers could bring about the essential components of a viral video ad. Therefore, the data used for analysis were purposively selected from Crystal Apple (Kristal Elma) Advertising Awards. Crystal Apple is the first and one of the most prestigious and well-established advertising awards program in Turkey, which, as Kristal Elma (Kristal Elma, n.d.) puts it, aims to honor the most influential advertising efforts since 1988 and has turned into a festival, hosting the leading marketing and communication masters in the world since 2013. It is a long-running awards program in Turkey, and provides a massive and comprehensive archive, in which ads are classified year-by-year into various award categories, including digital/online viral video ads. The viral video ads sample was gathered from the website of the award program (Kristal Elma Arşiv, 2022) on between 9 April and 22 May 2022.

Data analysis

The viral video ads were analyzed on MAXQDA 2020 on between 22 May and 1 June 2022 through a code sheet (see Appendix 2) developed by the authors depending on the extant literature. Only sector was coded according to the classification by North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) (NAICS & SIC Identification Tools,

2017). Descriptive analyses such as the frequency, percentage and crosstab analyses were performed on the collected data in order to reveal the incidence of each code and the associations between the selected codes. In order to increase the reliability of the study, one trained doctoral student performed the coding of a random sample of viral video ads (N=20), and the intercoder reliability test yielded a strong (0.88) level of agreement by Cohen Kappa's coefficient of reliability.

Results

This section presents the findings obtained from the analysis of 60 viral video ads rewarded by Crystal Apple Advertising Awards program in Turkey. Out of all the sampled viral video ads, most ads (20%) were produced in 2013, and the least number of award-winning viral ads was observed in 2009 (N=1) and 2020 (N=1). The award-winning viral video ads mostly belonged to Anadolu Efes Sports Club (6,5%) and Turkcell (6,5%). The brands promoted in the ads were mostly from Turkey (70%), followed by USA (15%), Germany (6,7%), South Korea (1,7%), Switzerland (1,7%), France (1,7%), UK (1,7%), and Japan (1,7%). A frequency analysis on the sectoral distribution of the brands showed that the service sector (N=38) outdistanced manufacturing sector (N=22). While information, telecommunication, and communication sector (N=8) came first in the service sector, beverages (N=5) and food products (N=5) sector ranked higher in the manufacturing sector. The leading ad agencies with the highest number of awards for creating viral video ads were 41?29! (N=5), BLAB (N=5), C-Section (N=5), and Wanda Digital (N=5). The viral video ads were mostly awarded with Silver Apple (N=20), Bronze Apple (N=17), and Crystal Apple (N=15), and Grand Award was only conferred onto one viral video ad (Protesto, BluTV's viral video ad). While four ads were awarded the 'second within category' award, the rest three ads were rewarded the 'third within category'.

The study attempted to find out how long the viral video ads lasted the most (RQ1a). The results indicated that 30-60 seconds ads (N=15) and 91-120 seconds ads (N=15) were the most prominent ones. They were followed by 61-90 seconds (N=13), 181 seconds and above (N=9), 121-150 seconds (N=5), and 151-180 seconds (N=3).

The advertising function was also considered (RQ1b), and the frequency analysis reported that most of the sampled ads tried to build a brand (N=51), while 21 out of 60 ads had the intention to inform the target audience, and 18 ads undertook the role of call-to-action.

The identification of the type of the viral messages of the sampled ads was another motivation to carry out this research (RQ1c). The results highlighted that the most common type of viral messages was 'pass it on' (N=52), followed by 'fan clubs and friends association' (N=10), and 'undercover marketing' (N=10). The least used type was 'incentivized viral message' (N=1), while 'marketing rumor' and 'user-managed databases' were not observed.

In terms of the message strategies applied in sampled ads (RQ1d), the results indicated that most of the ads (N= 60) used transformational message strategies, while some (N=24) included informational message strategies. A combination of both message strategies was found in a significant proportion of the ads (N=12). In terms of the emotional appeals used (RQ1e), most of the ads (77,8%) were found to include positive emotional appeals, and a few ads (22,2%) covered negative emotional appeals. The most prominent positive emotional appeals were happiness (29,5%), humor (20,9%), and gladness (17,1%). While the most common negative ones were sadness (41,4%), rage (31%),

fear (24,1%), the least common one was anxiety (3,4%), and no ad containing 'disgust' appeal was observed.

This study also probed the ads in terms of the borrowed interest devices (RQ1f). Storytelling (N=43) was the most preferred interest device in the sample, followed by music (N=20), celebrity endorsement (N=19), and violence (N=10). The least common ones were patriotism (N=8), pets and animals (N=6), talented activities (N=6), animations (N=6), hyperbolic elements (N=4), cute babies (N=3), and eroticism / sexuality (N=2). Two of the ads were found to include no borrowed interest devices.

The audial elements of the viral ads were given significant importance in the related literature, and this study analyzed the ads in terms of voice-over (RQ1g), music prominence (RQ1h), song structure (RQ1i), forms of ad music (RQ1j), and music genre (RQ1k). The results informed that 34 ads excluded voice-over, while 26 ads included. Background music (58,7%) surpassed foreground music (36,5%), and no music was prominent in three ads. The number of the ads with song lyrics (N=19) were nearly half of those with instrumental music (N=40). In terms of forms of ad music, popular music (N=43) overtopped the needledrop (N=12), and jingle (N=5). Lastly, this research investigated the common music genres in ads, and found out that popular music (87,8%) ranked first, followed by classical (8,2%), and other music (1,3%). While four ads were found to include no music genre, opera was not observed in any ad. The distribution of the popular music as a music genre in the ads was as follows: pop music (N=28), rock music (N=11), arabesque (N=9), original popular music (N=8), rhythm / hiphop / rap (N=7), folk (N=6), dance/disco (N=5), country (N=3), jazz/blues (N=3), march (N=2), cover music (N=1), reggae (N=0), Latin (N=0), and gospel (N=0).

The ads were also evaluated in terms of their brand mentions (RQ1l). The results showed that the brands were mostly mentioned in the last third of the video (N=33). This was followed by brand mentions in the first third of the video (N=17). While seven ads avoided mentioning brands, only three ads mentioned brands in the second third of the viral video.

RQ1m posed whether the ads gave information about the prices of the products. The results pointed out that a remarkable proportion of the ads (96,7%) did not inform the target audience of the product pricing. Only two ads provided information about the price of the products promoted in the viral video ads sampled.

As per RQ2a, the association between award type and duration of the ad was investigated. The results presented that the duration of ads by award type differed. The viral ad winning Grand Award lasted between 30 and 60 seconds, but the most prominent duration was 181 and above (N=5), followed by 91-120 seconds (N=4) for Crystal Apple winning ads. It was 61-90 seconds (N=6), followed by 30-60 seconds (N=5) and 91-120 seconds (N=5) for Silver Apple winning ads, and 91-120 seconds (N=5), followed by 30-60 seconds (N=4), and 61-90 seconds (N=4) for Bronze Apple winning ads.

The association of the advertising function of viral video ads by their award types was questioned in RQ2b. The results showed that the Grand Award winning viral ad had the intention of brand-building and informing. However, brand-building was the most prominent advertising function of viral video ads winning Crystal Apple (N=11), Silver Apple (N=16), and Bronze Apple (N=16). The 'call-to-action' (N_(crystal apple)=5; N_(silver apple)=5; N_(bronze apple)=5) and 'informing' (N_(crystal apple)=5; N_

(silver apple)=5; N_(bronze apple)=5) were evenly common in the viral ads winning all three awards.

RQ2c examined the association between the award type and type of viral message. While 'pass it on' strategy was observed in the viral ads winning all types of awards ([N_(grand apple)= 1; N]_(crystal apple)= 13; N_(silver apple)=18; N_(bronze apple)=16), the second most salient type differed. While it was 'fans clubs or friends associations' for Crystal Apple winning ads (N=5), it was 'undercover marketing' for Silver Apple winning ones (N=5).

As per RQ2d, this study evaluated the association between award type and message strategy, and found out that transformational message strategy was the most prominent one for all award types. It was also evident that Bronze Award winning ads (N= 8) included informational message strategy more frequently than those winning Crystal Apple (N=6) and Silver Apple awards (N=5).

The association between the award types and emotional appeals was the matter of RQ2e. The findings revealed that the most used emotional appeal was positive ones for all award types. Although the distribution of negative emotional appeals was even in Crystal Apple (N=10) and Bronze Apple (N=10) winning ads, positive emotional appeals were found more salient in Crystal Apple winning ads (N=44) than those winning Bronze Apple (N=42).

RQ2f probed the association between award type and borrowed interest devices. The results disclosed that Grand Award winning viral ad benefitted from 'storytelling' and 'music'. It was also found that even though storytelling was the most prominent one, the second most used borrowed interest device was different for each award type. It was 'music' (N=7), followed by 'celebrity endorsement' (N=6) and 'patriotism' (N=5) for Crystal Apple winning ads. While it was 'celebrity endorsement' for both Silver Award (N=6) and Bronze Apple (N= 7) winning ads, 'celebrity endorsement' was followed by 'music' (N=5) in Silver Award winning ads, and by 'music' (N=5) and 'violence' (N=5) in Bronze Award winning ones.

The analysis of the association between the award type and the use of voice-over (RQ2g) reported that voice-over was excluded in the viral ad winning the Grand Award. While the exclusion of voice-over was the most prominent strategy for Crystal Apple (N_inclusion=6; N_exclusion=8) and Silver Apple (N_inclusion=9; N_exclusion=10) winning viral ads, it was the inclusion of voice-over for the viral ads winning Bronze Apple (N_inclusion=9; N_exclusion=8).

The study probed the music prominence in terms of award type (RQ2h), and found out that Grand Award winning viral ad included foreground music, and this was also the most prominent music in viral ads winning Crystal Apple (N_(background music)=6; N_(foreground music)=8). However, the most prominent music in viral ads winning Silver Apple (N_(background music)=15; N_(foreground music)=7) and Bronze Apple (N_(background music)=11; N_(foreground music)=6) was background music.

The use of song structure in terms of award type was also a consideration of this research (RQ2i), and the crosstab analysis revealed that while lyrics was used in Grand Award winning viral ad, instrumental music was the most preferred song structure in viral advertisements winning Crystal Apple (N_instrumental=9; N_lyrics=6), Silver Apple (N_instrumental=15; N_lyrics=8), and Bronze Apple (N_instrumental=11; N_lyrics=6).

In terms of the forms of ad music by award type (RQ2j), the study found out that 'jingle' was used in Grand Award winning viral ad, but the most prominent form of ad music was 'popular music' for other award types (N_(crystal apple)= 11; N_(silver apple)=14; N_(bronze apple)=13). The second most applied form of ad music was 'needledrop' for those winning Crystal Apple (N=2), Silver Apple (N=6), and Bronze Apple (N=3).

This study attempted to bring about the differences of the music genre in terms of award type (RQ2k), and the results showed that there was no salient difference. The most prominent music genre was 'pop music' in viral ads winning Grand Award (N=1), Crystal Apple (N=5), Silver Apple (N=11), and Bronze Apple (N=8). However, the second most salient music genre was different for each award type. It was 'original popular music' (N=4) and 'folk' (N=4) for Crystal Apple winning viral ads, and 'rock music' for Silver Award winning viral ads, whereas it was 'original popular music' (N=2), 'arabesque' (N=2) and 'country' (N=2) for Bronze Award winning viral ads.

This study questioned what was the most common brand mention strategy in terms of award type (RQ2l). The results showed that the viral video ads winning the Grand Award did not mention the brand in the video, and the most common brand mention strategy was 'brand mention in the last third of video' (N_(crystal apple)=10; N_(silver apple)=9; N_(bronze apple)=12). It was followed by 'brand mention in the first third of video' (N_(crystal apple)= 4; N_(silver apple)=6; N_(bronze apple)=4). It was seen that 'brand mention in the second third of video' was not applied in viral ads winning Bronze Apple.

The association between the advertising function and duration of ad (in seconds) was the focus of RQ3a. The analysis yielded different results. While the ads with the function to inform mostly lasted 30-60 seconds, the 'call-to-action' ads mostly lasted 61-90 seconds. 91-120 seconds video ads were the most prominent ones among the 'brand-building' viral ads.

RQ3b investigated the association between advertising function and type of viral message. The crosstab analysis results showed that the most applied type of viral message for all advertising functions was 'pass it on' viral message (N_(brand-building)=45; N_(call-to-action)=15; N_informing=16). While the second most used type of viral message for all advertising functions was 'fan clubs or friends association' (N_(brand-building)=9; N_(call-to-action)=6; N_informing=4), and third one was 'undercover marketing' (N_(brand-building)=9; N_(call-to-action)=1; N_informing=4), the viral ads with the intention to call to action and inform the target audience differed from brand-building viral video ads by also including the 'incentivized viral' messages (N_(brand-building)=0; N_(call-to-action)=1; N_informing=1).

The study also examined the association between advertising function and message strategy (RQ3c). It found out that the brand-building viral ads contained mostly the transformational message strategies (N_informational=18; N_transformational=51), while the viral ads with the function to call to action (N_informational=11; N_transformational=18) and inform (N_informational=18; N_transformational=21) applied both informational and transformational message strategies in a more balanced way.

The association between advertising function and emotional appeals was also a matter of consideration (RQ3d). The results pointed out that the positive emotional appeals were the most used emotional appeals for each advertising function. It was a notable finding that while the viral ads with the 'call-to-action' function did not evoke 'pride', the viral ads

with the 'informing' function lacked the positive emotional appeal 'curiosity'. Additionally, the brand-building viral ads utilized 'anxiety', whereas it was missing in 'call-to-action' and 'informing' viral ads. While the most applied negative emotional appeals were 'sadness' (N_(brand-building)=9; N_(call-to-action)=4), 'rage' (N_(brand-building)=6; N_(call-to-action)=3), and 'fear' (N_(brand-building)=5; N_(call-to-action)=2), respectively in 'brand-building' and 'call-to-action' viral ads, they were 'rage' (N=5), 'sadness' (N=2) and 'fear' (N=2), respectively, in 'informing' viral ads. In the same vein, 'happiness' (N_(brand-building)=33; N_(call-to-action)=12) was the most executed positive emotional appeal, followed by 'humour' (N_(brand-building)=22; N_(call-to-action)=8) and 'surprise' (N_(brand-building)=15; N_(call-to-action)=6) in brand-building and call-to-action viral ads, it was 'humour' (N=12) and 'happiness' (N=12) which were the most prominent positive emotional appeals, followed by 'surprise' (N=6), and 'gladness' (N=5) in viral ads functioning as an informing advertising.

As per RQ3e, the crosstab analysis was also performed to find out the association between the advertising function and borrowed interest devices. One of the remarkable finding was that patriotism (N=8) was only present in brand-building viral video ads. 'Storytelling' (N_(brand-building)=35; N_(call-to-action)=13; N_informing=18) was the most applied device for each advertising function. But the second most used devices differed. The second most applied interest device for brand-building viral ads was 'music' (N=17), while it was 'celebrity endorsement' for 'call-to-action' (N=8) and 'informing' (N=6) viral ads.

RQ3f posed the question what was the association between the use of voice-over and advertising function. The analysis revealed that the the voice-over was excluded mostly in 'brand-building' (N_exclusion=28; N_inclusion=22) and 'call-to-action' (N_exclusion=10; N_inclusion=7) viral ads, while it was included mostly in the viral ads functioning as 'informing' viral ads (N_exclusion= 9; N_inclusion=11).

The association between advertising function and music prominence was investigated in RQ3g. Background music (N_(brand-building)=33; N_(call-to-action)=11; N_informing=15) was more prominent than foreground music (N_(brand-building)=20; N_(call-to-action)=5; N_informing=4) for all advertising functions.

The study examined the association between advertising function and song structure (RQ3h), and brought about that instrumental music (N_(brand-building)=34; N_(call-to-action)=14; N_informing=16) was the most salient one in all advertising functions. Interestingly, the prevalence of lyrics in 'call-to-action' (N=2) and 'informing' (N=3) viral ads was at a lesser extent than that of lyrics in 'brand-building' viral ads (N=21).

As per RQ3i, the results revealed that the most frequent form of ad music for each advertising function was 'popular music' (N_(brand-building)=38; N_(call-to-action)=14; N_informing=15). Although the second most frequent one for 'brand-building' ads was 'needledrop' (N=11), it was 'jingle' (N=4) for 'informing' viral ads.

The association between advertising function and music genre was the focus of RQ3j. The analysis showed that the most prevalent music genre for all advertising function was popular music (N_(brand-building)=41; N_(call-to-action)=10; N_informing=13), followed by 'classical music' (N_(brand-building)=11; N_(call-to-action)=6; N_informing=4). In terms of sub-genres of popular music, the viral ads differed. While 'pop music' (N_(brand-building)=26; N_(call-to-action)=7; N_informing=7) was the most used sub-genre, 'rock

music' (N=10) ranked second in 'brand-building' viral ads, it was 'dance/disco' (N=2) in 'call-to-action' viral ads, and 'country' (N=3) in 'informing' viral ads.

RQ3k investigated the association between the advertising function and brand mention. The results highlighted that brand was mentioned mostly in the last third of video for all advertising functions (N_(brand-building)=28; N_(call-to-action)=9; N_informing=9), followed by brand mention in the first third of the video (N_(brand-building)=15; N_(call-to-action)=6; N_informing=6). It was also found out that the strategy of brand mention in the second third of the video was not executed in 'call-to-action' viral ads.

Finally, the study focused on the association between advertising function and product pricing (RQ3l). It was brought about that the price of products was mostly not mentioned in viral ads (N_(brand-building)=49; N_(call-to-action)=18; N_informing=20). However, the information of product price was available in 'brand-building' (N=2) and 'informing' (N=1) viral video ads albeit slightly, although this was not observed in 'call-to-action' ones.

Conclusion and Discussion

Viral advertising is a catchy, entertaining, engaging, and cost-effective kind of digital advertising, which is disseminated among and through the users just like a virus transmission among the members of a society. The success of a viral ad depends upon two main factors, one focusing on the virality attributes, and another on the content of the ad itself. While the former deals with the issues other than the ad itself such as the characteristics of the source/sender of the ad, the media on which the ad is shared, and the characteristics of the sharing users, the latter one is centered upon the key elements of the ad content.

Content serves a principal function in the success of the virality of the ads. For content to achieve efficiency in helping the ad go viral, comprehensive consideration is needed on its elements. In other words, content is a multifaceted factor of virality for ads, and thus it is essential to identify what elements act together for the ad to accomplish virality. By taking this need into account, this study was designed to provide a robust analysis of viral video advertising, and examined sixty award-winning viral video ads in Turkey. It employed content analysis, which was carried out on MAXQDA 2020 through a code sheet developed from the previous related studies.

The study yielded several key results. The first was that the viral ads were mostly designed for branding reasons, and this was followed by dissemination of information and call to action. This finding was consistent with previous studies (Çiftçi & Özdemir, 2022; Golan & Zaidner, 2008; Ketelaar et al., 2016; Porter & Golan, 2006; Segev & Fernandes, 2022; Sharma & Kaur, 2018). Another significant finding was that most of the viral ads had a maximum duration of 120 seconds, which indicates that the viral ads lasting more than 2 minutes are not favorable in the Turkish context. This result was consistent with those of (Dafonte-Gómez et al., 2020; Sharma & Kaur, 2018).

This study also shed some light on the general structure of the messages. It was observed that the transformational messages dominated. This result was consistent with previous studies (Dafonte-Gómez et al., 2020; Segev & Fernandes, 2022; Sharma & Kaur, 2018). However, the current research found that the combination of both informational and transformational messages was the least used strategy, which does not comply with the results of Moldovan et al.'s (2019) study. In terms of message appeals, positive emotional

appeals surpassed the negative ones, which shows similarities with the results of previous research (Dafonte-Gómez et al., 2020; Lin et al., 2006; Porter & Golan, 2006; Segev & Fernandes, 2022; Sharma & Kaur, 2018).

The current study proposed two new devices to the list of borrowed interest devices identified in the literature; which are 'storytelling', and 'patriotism'. While creating the viral ads based on a full story – storytelling – was the most used device in the ads analyzed, it was followed by 'music' and 'celebrity endorsement'. This was inconsistent with previous research (Dafonte-Gómez, 2014; Golan & Zaidner, 2008). This may stem from the differences of the cultures, in which the ads are produced and shared. Drawing from this single finding, it can be considered that the advertising sector finds music and celebrity endorsement more effective in Turkey for triggering audiences' liking and sharing motivations, instead of sexuality and violence. Patriotism was also applied in the viral ads albeit slightly, and this may derive from the fact that the award-winning ads in the sample included those created solely for the national special days in Turkey, attempting to reach a high level of virality by evoking the patriotic feelings among the users.

The results showed that most of the ads excluded the voice-over, which complied with the results of Dafonte-Gómez et al.'s (2020) study and Broadus' (2011) study. This may originate from the desire of advertisers and advertising professionals to prevent from users' ad avoidance. Furthermore, they indicated that background music was more prominent than foreground music, and this result was not similar to those of previous research (Allan, 2006; Lantos & Craton, 2012; Yang et al., 2022). In a similar vein, instrumental music was pre-eminent in the viral ads, which shows similarities to the findings of previous studies (Allan & Tryce, 2016; DePuy, 2013; Lantos & Craton, 2012). Likewise, popular music surpassed needledrop and jingle, which is consistent with the results of Allan's (2008), Farmer's (2008) and Hecker's (1984) study.

Among other substantial results comes the finding that the brands were mentioned mostly in the last third of the video, which contrasts with that of Broadus' (2011) study. This contradiction may derive from the consideration that Turkish users avoid liking and sharing a video when they realize that this video has a commercial intention, and thus that the brands should be mentioned in the last part of the video. Furthermore, this study revealed that the majority of the viral ads in the sample avoided providing information about product prices, which bears a clear similarity with the findings of Broadus' (2011) study.

To sum up, it can be inferred from the results that a viral video ad can gain success in Turkey on condition that it does not last longer than 2 minutes, containing branding messages, disseminating 'pass it on' type of messages mostly formed with transformational message strategies and positive emotional appeals, adopting storytelling as an interest device, excluding voice-overs, mentioning brands in the last third of the video, avoiding information about pricing, using background and instrumental music, including popular music (mostly 'pop music'). It can be suggested that when the main function of a viral ad is to inform, it should not exceed 60 seconds, while branding viral ads can be up to 120 seconds. Besides, those informative and call-to-action viral ads can stimulate users to pass their video ads on to their networks by using incentivized viral messages. In addition, branding viral ads can highly benefit from patriotism in the context of Turkey since patriotism is adopted as a social norm and has the potential to fuel the desired behaviours

in the consumers in Turkey, as previous studies (Balabanis et al., 2001; Kagıtcıbası, 1970; Nas, 2017) put it. Furthermore, even though it is mostly not recommended that product pricing be available in viral ads, it can be used for the purposes of branding and informing.

The main limitation of this research is that it applied the content analysis method on a sample of award-winning viral ads in Turkey. The content analysis method can be inherently a subjective method since the coders may evaluate the content subjectively, although a code sheet is prepared and operational definitions are provided, and also even though inter-coder reliability tests are used to increase the level of reliability of the research. Another limitation of this study is that it focused on viral ads rewarded by a single advertising award program, Kristal Elma (Crystal Apple), in Turkey, which might yield a limited understanding of the main characteristics of viral ads, so the researchers working in this field are invited to examine a larger size of samples including viral ads from different award programs and even from different countries. Among other limitations is the exclusion of the analysis of music tempo of viral ads which can be regarded as one of the significant elements of viral ads in terms of their success to disseminate easily. The tempo of the music used in viral ads sampled within the scope of this study could not be measured due to the fact that the coders were not qualified in the field of music, therefore the future studies can examine the tempo of the music of viral ads through the use of metronome in order to reveal the frequently used tempo in viral ads and its importance in the success of viral ads. Likewise, the success of viral ads is highly determined by the perceptions and opinions of their audiences, so it can be recommended that further qualitative studies can be carried out through qualitative research techniques including interviews, focus groups, and the like. Despite its limitations, this study, which is one of the pioneering studies exploring the key components of viral video ads, provides a benchmark for future research on viral advertising and professional practices regarding the design of viral video advertising.

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Viral Reklamların DNA'sını İrdelemek

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Geniřletilmiş Özet

Porter ve Golan'ın (2006, p. 29) ifadesiyle "oluřturduđu tetikleyici içeriđi diđerlerine yayması konusunda hedef kitlesini internet aracılıđıyla ikna etmek veya etkilemek amacını taşıyan kimliđi belli bir sponsorun karřılıđında herhangi bir bedel gerektirmeksizin kullanıcılar arasında yayılan reklamı" olarak tanımlanan viral reklamlar ilk bařlarda bir e-posta reklamı olarak serüvenine bařlayan, dijital ortamlardaki kullanıcıların paylařımlarıyla bir virüs gibi hızla yayılabilen ve kısa sürede geniř bir kitleye ulařabilen bir dijital reklam türüdür. Yayılması ve var olması sürecinde hedef kitlenin etkin rol oynadıđı viral reklamların, daha geniř kitlelere ulařması noktasında reklamcıların daha fazla maliyet tasarrufu edinmesini sađladıđı için tercih edildiđi ileri sürülmektedir. Bunun yanı sıra, hedef kitleyi bilgilendirmek ve eyleme çağırılmaktan daha çok marka yaratma ve geliřtirme ađısından etkili olan viral reklamlar tüketici tarafından daha güvenilir bulunduđu, daha çok sevildiđi ve eđlence unsuru olarak görüldüđu, bu nedenle de yüksek oranda etkileřim sađladıđı ve tüketicilerin gündelik internet ve dijital medya kullanımlarını sekteye uđratmadıđı için reklamcılar ve reklamverenler ađısından anlamlı bir araç olarak deđerlendirilmektedir. Bu noktada viral reklamların söz konusu avantajları sađlayabilmesini etkileyen çeřitli faktörlere alanyazında yer verilmektedir. Himelboim ve Golan'a (2019) göre 'virallik atfeden faktörler' ve 'içerikle ilgili faktörler' olarak iki grupta incelenebilecek olan bu faktörlerden ilki marka iliřkilerini, medya özelliklerini, kaynak güvenilirliđini ve kiřilik özelliklerini kapsamaktadır. 'İçerikle ilgili faktörlere' bakıldıđında ise 'yaratıcı mesaj stratejisi', 'duygusal çekicilikler', 'ödünç ilgi araçları', 'viral mesaj türleri', 'reklam süresi', 'dış ses', 'müzik', 'marka deđinmeleri' ve 'ürün fiyatı deđinmesi' gibi alt faktörlere rastlanmaktadır. Reklamların çevrimiçi yayılımını ilk olarak reklamın 'kralı' olarak ifade edilip kuramsallařtırılan 'içeriđin' tetiklediđini dikkate alarak bu çalıřma arařtırma kapsamına viral video reklamların içeriđini almaktadır.

Türkiye'deki viral reklamları amaçlı örnekleme yoluyla seçilen Kristal Elma Yaratıcılık Yarıřması'nda ödül almıř viral video reklamlar (bkz. Ek 1) üzerinden inceleyerek bařarılı viral video reklamların içeriđinde yer alan öğelerin ne olduđunu tespit etmeye amaçlayan bu çalıřma, amacı dođrultusunda içerik analizi yönteminden faydalanmaktadır. Hem sözlü hem de görsel-iřitsel metinlerdeki (Harwood & Garry, 2003; S. E. Stemler, 2015; Stigler et al., 1999) ortak öğeleri nesnel ve sistematik olarak ortaya çıkarma ađısından faydalı ve çok yönlü bir araç olarak iřlev gören içerik analizi yöntemi (Krippendorff, 1989; S. Stemler, 2001; S. E. Stemler, 2015) yoluyla ařađıdaki arařtırma sorularına yanıt aranmaktadır:

AS1. Viral video reklamların öne çıkan özelliđi;

AS1a. reklam süresi (saniye olarak) ađısından nedir?

AS1b. reklam iřlevi ađısından nedir?

AS1c. viral mesaj türü ađısından nedir?

AS1d. mesaj stratejisi ađısından nedir?

AS1e. duygusal çekicilikler ađısından nedir?

AS1f. ödünç ilgi araçları ađısından nedir?

AS1g. dış ses kullanımı ađısından nedir?

- AS1h. m¼zik t¼r¼ aısından nedir?
- AS1i. m¼zik yapı aısından nedir?
- AS1j. reklam m¼ziđi biçimi aısından nedir?
- AS1k. m¼zik janrı aısından nedir?
- AS1l. marka deđinmeleri aısından nedir?
- AS1m. ¼r¼n fiyatı deđinmesi aısından nedir?
- AS2. ¼d¼l t¼r¼ ile ařađıdaki ¼đeler arasındaki iliřki nedir?
- AS2a. reklam s¼resi (saniye olarak)?
- AS2b. reklam iřlevi?
- AS2c. viral mesaj t¼r¼?
- AS2d. mesaj stratejisi?
- AS2e. duygusal ekicilikler?
- AS2f. ¼d¼n ilgi araları?
- AS2g. dıř ses kullanımı?
- AS2h. m¼zik t¼r¼?
- AS2i. m¼zik yapısı?
- AS2j. reklam m¼ziđi biçimi?
- AS2k. m¼zik janrı?
- AS2l. marka deđinmeleri?
- AS3. Reklam iřlevi ile ařađıdaki ¼đeler arasındaki iliřki nedir?
- AS3a. reklam s¼resi (saniye olarak)?
- AS3b. viral mesaj t¼r¼?
- AS3c. mesaj stratejisi?
- AS3d. duygusal ekicilikler?
- AS3e. ¼d¼n ilgi araları?
- AS3f. dıř ses kullanımı?
- AS3g. m¼zik t¼r¼?
- AS3h. m¼zik yapısı?
- AS3i. reklam m¼ziđi biçimi?
- AS3j. m¼zik janrı?
- AS3k. marka deđinmeleri?
- AS3l. ¼r¼n fiyat deđinmesi?

Yukarıda listelenen arařtırma sorularına yanıt bulmak amacıyla 8 Nisan-22 Mayıs 2022 tarihleri arasında Kristal Elma'nın arřivinden dijital / evrimii viral video reklamlar indirilerek klas¼rlenmiř ve mevcut alanyazındaki alıřmalardan hareketle oluřturulmuř bir kod cetveli (bkz. Ek 2) yoluyla MAXQDA 2020 nitel veri analiz programında 22 Mayıs-1 Haziran 2022 tarihleri arasında analiz edilmiřtir. Frekans analizi, y¼zde analizi ve apraz tablo analizinden faydalanılan bu alıřmanın g¼venilirliđini arttırmak amacıyla viral video reklamlar arasından rastlantısal olarak seilmiř 20 reklam bu konuda eđitilmiř bir doktora ¼đrencisi tarafından da kodlanmıř ve Cohen Kappa g¼venilirlik katsayısı ile test edilen kodlayıcılar arası uzlařma oranı (.88) y¼ksek g¼venilirlik d¼zeyini iřaret etmiřtir.

T¼rkiye'deki viral reklamların anatomisini oluřturan temel ¼đelerini belirlemek ¼zere y¼r¼t¼len arařtırmanın ulařtıđı temel bulgular g¼z ¼n¼nde bulundurulduđunda viral reklamın belli bařlı bazı unsurları dikkat ekmiřtir. Viral reklamların ođunlukla 30-60 saniye ve 91-120 saniye uzunluđunda olduđu ve genel olarak ele alındıđında bařarılı reklamların 2 dakikayı ařmadıđı g¼r¼lm¼řtir. ¼zellikle bilgi verme iřlevi ¼stlenen viral reklamların 60 saniyeyi gemediđi, ancak markalama iřlevindeki viral reklamların en fazla

2 dakikayı bulabildiđi dikkat çekmiştir. Aynı zamanda reklamların çođunluđunun özellikle mizahi içerik yoluyla hedef kitlenin viral reklamı paylaşmasını teşvik edecek şekilde ‘yayma odaklı viral mesaj türünü’ içerdikleri tespit edilmiştir. Ancak bilgilendirici ve eyleme çağırıcı reklamların özellikle paylaşımı özendirici mesajları (hediyeler, kuponlar, indirimler, vs.) daha fazla barındırma eğiliminde olduđu anlaşılmıştır. Ayrıca, dönüştürücü mesaj stratejilerinin ve olumlu duygusal çekiciliklerin ağırlıklı olarak görüldüđu viral reklamlarda hikâye anlatıcılıđının ödünç ilgi araçları arasında en çok kullanılan tür olduđu belirlenmiştir. Bu bağlamda özellikle Türkiye’nin vatanseverliđi toplumsal bir norm olarak kabul etmesi ve bundan ötürü de vatanseverlik deđerinin reklamlarda kullanılmasıyla Türkiye’deki hedef kitlede istenilen davranışların tetiklenebilmesi (Balabanis et al., 2001; Kagitcibasi, 1970; Nas, 2017) sebebiyle viral reklamların markalama odađında vatanseverlik türündeki ilgi aracına ağırlık verdiđi düşünölmektedir. Öne çıkan diđer bir unsur ise viral reklamların çođunluđunun dış sesleri dâhil etmedikleridir. İncelenen viral reklamların çođunluđunda fiyat bilgisine yer verilmezken, marka isimlerine ise çođunlukla videonun sonlarında deđinildiđi saptanmıştır. Bunun yanı sıra, bu reklamlarda yođunlukla arkaplan müziđi ve enstrümental müziđinin kullanıldıđı dikkat çekerken popüler müziđin (özellikle de ‘pop müzik’ dalındaki müziklerin) daha fazla kullanıldıđı görölmüştür. Yine bu bağlamda cingil ve reklam şarkısından çok popüler müzik türünün reklamlarda daha çok yer aldıđı belirlenmiştir. Bunun sebebi popüler müziđin daha bilindik olmasının yanı sıra cingil ve reklam şarkısının hedef kitlenin reklamdan kaçınma yönündeki davranışını tetiklemesi olabilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dijital Reklam, Viral Video Reklam, Ödüllü Reklamlar, İçerik Analizi, MAXQDA2020.

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In this study, the rules stated in the “**Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive**” were followed.

Araştırma tek bir yazar tarafından yürütölmüştür.

The research was conducted by a single author.

Çalışma kapsamında herhangi bir kurum veya kiři ile **çıkarcı çatışması** bulunmamaktadır.

There is no **conflict of interest** with any institution or person within the scope of the study.

Appendices

Appendix 1. List of Award-Winning Ads Analyzed in this Study

Award Year	Advertiser	Ad Agency	Ad Campaign	Award Year	Advertiser	Ad Agency	Ad Campaign
2009	GittiGidiyor	41?29!	Gittigidiyor.com	2015	Change.org	Punch	Özgecan Yasası
2010	Mey İçki	41?29!	Binboa - "Kendi Şişeni Yarat"	2015	Eti Gıda	C-Section	Mahmut Abi'yle Halay Öğreniyorum
2010	Renault	Proximity Istanbul	Laguna Coupe	2015	Eti Gıda	C-Section	Cangardaşlar
2011	Avea	TBWA\ Istanbul	Avea'lı Olmayanlara İyi Davranın	2015	Turkcell	Wanda Digital	Konuşmamız Lazım...
2011	İzocam A.Ş.	Kompüter/ Matris	İzocam Yalıtım Ürünleri	2015	Lassa	4129Grey	Don Duran - Arkamız Sağlam
2011	THY	Fakülte Istanbul	Miles&Smiles Classic Kart	2015	Samsung	Leo Burnett Istanbul	Duyan Eller
2011	THY	Rabarba	FIBA 2010 Basketbol "Türkler Uçuyor"	2015	Turkcell	Wanda Digital	Esnaf Seni Affeder mi?
2012	Anadolu Efes Spor Kulübü	TBWA\ Istanbul	Anadolu Efes Spor Kulübü	2015	Yapı Kredi Play Kart	Wanda Digital	Babamın Hayali
2012	Elit Çikolata ve Şekerleme	Concept	İşte Elit Kampanyasının Arkasındaki Adam	2015	Yemek Sepeti	C-Section	Fakat İyi Yedik
2012	BSH Ev Aletleri	Rafineri/ Trafo	Profilo Kurban Bayramı	2016	Allianz Global Assistance Türkiye	Pure New Media	Allianz Yolda, Her Şey Yolunda!
2013	Anadolu Sigorta	Rabarba	Sağlık Sigortası-Bir Aşkın Röntgeni	2016	Arvento	SVStudios	Varınca Selfie Çek
2013	Anadolu Efes Spor Kulübü	TBWA\ Istanbul	Büyük Taraftardan Büyük Sürpriz	2016	Eti Gıda	C-Section	Serdar Ortaç'la 5 Adımda Depresyondan Çıkin
2013	Cheetos, Fritolay	BBG (Wanda Digital)	Angry Birds İstanbul Kuşatması	2016	Ford Trucks	Tick Tock Boom	Hanımağa
2013	Marmara Gold, Anadolu Efes	Manajans Thompson	Harbi Biraçılar Hareketi	2017	Meyhanedeyiz. biz	BLAB	Gitmek Lazım Diye Gidersin
2013	Nestlé Waters	Project House	Bir Asansör Hikayesi	2017	QNB Finansbank	Rabarba	İşimiz Rakamlarla Değil İnsanlarla
2013	Özyeğın Üniversitesi	41?29!	Hayatının Oyunu	2017	THY	SG P Prodüksiyon	A Milli Kadın Basketbol Takımına Türk Hava Yolları'nın Babalar Günü Sürprizi
2013	Profilo	Rafineri	Yavrum Seni Like Ettim	2018	HAYTAP	TBWA\Istanbul	What the Fluff Challenge
2013	Teknosa	41?29!	Son Teknoloji Anneler	2018	KFC Türkiye	Forgan Mreeman	Bir Kova Spotu
2013	Toyota	Kompüter	Yeni Auris	2018	Turkcell	Rafineri	Turkcell - UpCall Lansman
2013	Uluslararası Af Örgütü	Grey Istanbul / 41?29!	Amnesty Kadına Şiddet	2019	Ford Trucks	Tick Tock Boom	Hafritur - Bizi İzlemeye Devam Edin!
2013	Vialand	Tribal Worldwide	King Kong İstanbul'da	2019	Gmag	Havas	Esın & İpek'in Babalar Günü
2013	Youth Republic	Youth Republic	Anne Ben Ne İş Yapıyorum	2019	Gmag	Havas	Paris'in Babalar Günü

Award Year	Advertiser	Ad Agency	Ad Campaign	Award Year	Advertiser	Ad Agency	Ad Campaign
2014	Anadolu Sigorta	Rabarba	Aduket Şoku	2019	Gmag	Havas	Nil Makaracı'nın Babalar Günü
2014	Coca-Cola	C-Section	Tarık Mengüç- Ben Niye Yokum?	2019	Joker Baby	Punch BBDO	#sevdiğini göster
2014	Doğadan	Plasenta, Random Works	Bay Hastalık	2019	Netflix	Tribal Worldwide İstanbul	Black Bairam
2014	Garanti Bankası	Kompüter	DeneySEL Bankacılık	2020	Adidas	Wunderman Thompson	adidas Fenerbahçe Forma Lansman Deli Severiz
2014	Turkcell	Wanda Digital	14 Kubat	2021	BluTV	PunchBBDO	Protesto
2014	Intel	BLAB	Fantastik Değişim	2021	Bundle	Bundle News	Bundle sokak röportajı filmi
2014	Meyhanedeyiz. biz	BLAB	Meyhanenin Güzel İnsanları	2021	Meyhanedeyiz. biz	Brand The Bliss	Yüzleşme
2014	Vestel	BLAB	Çok Düşünen Anneler	2021	Yeni Rakı	BLAB İstanbul	Yeni Rakı Burası İstanbul

Appendix 2. Code Sheet for Content Analysis

Themes	Codes / Operationalization
Year	The year when the ad was awarded.
Advertiser	The company, NGO or brand for which the ad was produced.
Advertiser's Country of Origin	The country where the company, NGO or brand came from.
Sector	a) Manufacturing sector; b) Service sector
Ad Agency	The agency which created, planned and handled the viral ad.
Award Type	a) Grand award; b) Crystal Apple; c) Silver Apple; d) Bronze Apple; e) First within category; f) Second within category; g) Third within category
Duration of the Ad	a) 30-60 sec.; b) 61-90 sec.; c) 91-120 sec.; e) 121-150 sec.; f) 151-180 sec.; g) 181 seconds and above.
Advertising Function	a) Brand-building (Branding); b) Call to action; c) Informing
Type of Viral Message	a) Fan clubs or friends associations; b) Incentivized viral; c) Marketing rumor; d) Pass it on; e) Undercover marketing; f) User-managed databases
Message Strategy	a) Transformational message strategy; b) Informational message strategy; c) Combination
Emotional Appeals	a) Negative emotions (1: Anxiety; 2: Sadness; 3: Rage; 4: Disgust; 5: Fear); b) Positive emotions (1: Curiosity; 2: Excitement; 3: Pride; 4: Surprise; 5: Gladness; 6: Humor; 7: Happiness)
Borrowed Interest Devices	a) Hyperbolic elements; b) Patriotism; c) Storytelling; d) Animations; e) Celebrity endorsement; f) Cute babies; g) Eroticism / Sexuality; h) Music; i) Pets, animals; j) Talented activities; k) Violence; l) N/A
Voice-Over	a) Voice-over excluded; b) Voice-over included
Music Prominence	a) Background music; b) Foreground music; c) N/A
Song Structure	a) Instrumental; b) Lyrics; c) N/A
Forms of Ad Music	a) Popular Music; b) Jingle; c) Needledrop; d) N/A
Music Genre	a) Classical; b) Opera; c) Other; d) N/A; e) Popular Music (1: Arabesque; 2: Country; 3: Cover music; 4: Dance/Disco; 5: Folk; 6: Gospel; 7: Jazz/Blues; 8: Latin; 9: March; 10: Original Pop Music; 11: Pop Music; 12: Reggae; 13: Rhythm / HipHop / Rap; 14: Rock)
Brand Mention	a) Brand mentioned in the first third of the video; b) Brand mentioned in the second third of the video; c) Brand mentioned in the last third of the video; d) Brand not mentioned
Product Pricing	a) Product pricing available; b) Product pricing not available