



advertising will go beyond banner ads on websites."

Dana-Marie McCracken of Bluecube says clients easily understand the value of pay per click (PPC) but there's more to online marketing than this model alone. "Clients should also understand the importance of building their brands online. PPC is important but we've got to push the thinking a bit and explore all the other possibilities available."

Who are the pioneers online?

Shenda Loughnane of Dublin-based Ican says the digital online market can be divided into three parts: Display worth €22 million; Search worth €34 million; and Classifieds worth €15 million. "Lots of people don't take into account classifieds e.g. a €50 house ad on MyHome, but it should be counted as part of the online advertising spend. We carried out research with e-consultancy and the IAPI and if you add all three

"The media owners have to deliver commercial opportunities that make the investment in digital worth the effort"

figures together you get a market worth at least €70 million."

According to Loughnane the main advertisers online tend to be financial and telecom companies. "We find that the main advertisers such as Eircom, Vodafone, AIB and Permanent TSB are looking for accurate measurements. These companies do a lot of business online and they want to do more business online, they want to drive this channel and are therefore more likely to advertise online."

While new websites and online trends emerge all the time Loughnane says jumping blindly on the

band wagon is not necessarily the correct thing to do. "Emerging trends concern clients the most because they think 'new sites and trends are coming on-stream all the time and I want to be involved with the latest'. However, a classic example of why it's better to wait a while and see is the Facebook phenomenon. Eight months ago it was one of the most viewed sites, now it has fallen back significantly. It's not the latest fad clients should worry most about, it's assessing what's available and what has most relevance to their brands."

One sector that remains quite slow to embrace online advertising is FMCG (fast moving consumer goods). "FMCG companies will only come online when they see critical mass. Now that broadband penetration is increasing, food and drink companies are seeing better numbers and deciding to go online."

In any new industry there will be problems and at present Loughnane says finding quality staff is "a nightmare because we would like good people with ten years experience but it's a pioneering sector. We're among the first to do this".

Direct Response Products

As online advertising increases it will take money away from traditional media.

The big question for people wanting to spend money online is: "How do I ensure my ad is on the correct sites and is being viewed by the correct consumer base? I can measure how many clicks I get but how can I measure my sales conversions?"

If a client is marketing what can be termed 'direct response products' then this is possible. Direct response products include the likes of credit card products, insurance deals, money off vouchers, banking products etc. In other words they are the online version of many sign-up products offered by direct mail.

Etype-ireland.ie offers clients targeted marketing solutions for direct response products. Keith O'Reilly, sales director of etype-ireland says his product is performance based for those who have a business objective behind their campaign.

"Originally online ads were all about branding and banners but right now it's all about what does work and what doesn't work. It's performance based advertising. We can put the ads on the websites best suited. There's an appetite for it because we have to be accountable to our clients, they know how many applications they get and how many commercial objectives they meet with each campaign. It's been very well received, particularly with the current credit crunch where people are looking for value behind their investment. It's not just about branding it's about delivering customers."

The Genuine article

Last month Miller Genuine Draft launched the first Ireland specific commercial Myspace profile. The profile was developed by Captivate Digital. The company says the profile "will serve as a digital touch point that provides users with details of 'what's new' at Miller Genuine Draft, promotions and on-going sponsorships".

In February 2008, over one million people logged on to the internet in Ireland, with



the majority of those (942,000) visiting social networking sites. More importantly for FMCG brands is the amount of time people

are spending online. Irish web users spent five hours and 11 minutes on average visiting social networking sites in February 2008.