

A TYPOLOGY OF ONLINE SPONSORSHIPS

Katherine Renick

Dr. Shelly Rodgers, Thesis Supervisor

ABSTRACT

This research provides a broad look at sponsorships across the Internet. The research sought to examine the characteristics of sponsorships across and within different website types, with a focus on health websites and blogs. It also provides insight into the way sponsorships have evolved as they move from their traditional formats and onto the Internet. A content analysis was performed over the course of four weeks and a total of 2,967 sponsorships were found.

The results were analyzed using descriptive statistics and significance was determined using chi-square tests. Significant relationships were found in the way sponsorships were structured across and within website types. The results pointed to trends within website types and different levels of sophistication across website types. There were also many sponsorships found that showed similarities with traditional sponsorship, but displayed a structural evolution as a result of their placement on the Internet.