Glossary

Ad units:
A classification of standardized online ad types and sizes, defined by the Interactive Advertising Bureau.

Advergaming:
Games that are developed and distributed for the purposes of promoting a brand; branding is integrated throughout the game environment.

Advertising equivalency value (AEV):
A metric used to equate publicity in news media outlets to its paid advertising equivalent.

Advertising network:
A network representing advertising opportunities, which enable media buyers to reach a broader audience more efficiently using run-of-network buys.

Alternate reality game (ARG):
A cross-media game based on interactive fiction.

Avatar:
A graphic identity used to represent people in virtual worlds and social communities.

Banner blindness:
The tendency for Web site viewers to ignore display ads.

Beacon:
A line of code placed in an ad or on a Web page to track behavior, also the name of a Facebook service, which tracks and shares member behavior.

Behavioral targeting:
Delivering advertising with a high degree of relevance to those exposed, based on user behavior online.

Blog:
Short for Web log; an online commentary, which may take the role of diary or column.

Brand democratization:
The shared development and promotion of brand meaning by consumers and the brand's own architects.

Brand engagement:
The process or outcome of developing a meaningful, memorable, favorable relationship between a brand and its customers, particularly through interactive experiences.

Brand equity:
The financial value of a brand, developed as a result of high levels of brand awareness and strong, favorable, unique perceptions of the brand's image.

Brand terrorists:
People who seek to harm a brand by spreading negative information or by vandalizing branded areas in social communities.

Citizen advertising:
Content created by consumers using verbal and/or visual imagery to inform, persuade, or remind other consumers about a brand, resulting in an ad unit, also called V-CAMs (viewer-created ad messages).

Citizen endorsers:
Consumers who recommend products by submitting online product reviews.

Citizen marketing:
Marketing for a brand by customer enthusiasts who share information about the brand and generate media coverage.

Clickthrough:
The action of clicking on an online ad to reach the Web site promoted.

Clickthrough rate:
The response rate of an online ad, based on the percentage of those who were exposed to the ad who also clicked through.

Clutter:
The presence of too much advertising in a space.

Collective detective:
A term for the collaboration of a team of game players.

Compensated consumer-generated media (cCGM):
Consumer-generated content for which the brand has paid the consumer.

Consumer-fortified media (CFM):
Consumer-generated content that is created around the existence of some other content, such as responses to blog postings.

Consumer-generated media (CGM):
User-generated content that reflects first-person commentary about brand experiences.

Consumer-generated multimedia (CGM2):
A type of consumer-generated media that includes audio, video, and perhaps animation.

Consumer-solicited media (CSM):
A form of consumer-generated media to which consumers are invited to contribute content.

Contact comfort:
A motive for the development and maintenance of relationships online, especially in the context of social communities.

Contextual advertising:
Targeting of online advertising based on matching the content of the ad with the context of the Web site chosen to display the ad.

Conversion:
Response to an ad's call to action, especially in the form of purchase.

Conversion rate:
The percentage of people exposed to an ad who clickthrough and make a purchase.

Cost per acquisition (CPA):
The cost to acquire a customer, based on the total cost of advertising divided by the number of customers acquired, also referred to as cost per conversion, cost per inquiry, cost per lead, or cost per sale.

Cost per thousand (CPM):
The cost to reach 1,000 people; pricing is based on number of ad impressions served over a period of time.

Credlining:
A term that refers to the scorecards produced by consumers who analyze product information and post accurate information online for other consumers.

Crowdsourcing:
The use of the general public to accomplish professional work.

Curtain:
The invisible line separating the players from the puppet masters in an alternate reality game.

Digital dialogue:
A phrase used to denote the conversation that can exist between customers and brands using online media.

Dynamic advertising:
Ads displayed in video games, which are dynamically updated throughout a game network.

Friendvertising:
A branding and communication approach, which relies upon social networks to enable consumers to befriend brands and share brand information with other friends in their networks.

Grief:
A term that refers to attacks in virtual worlds, either on avatars or on branded facilities.

Gross rating point (GRP):
A measure of the weight of a brand's communication vehicles in the media market for a specific period of time.

Impression:
The opportunity to see an ad; an advertising exposure.

In World:
A term used to denote activity within a virtual world.

Incentivized consumer-generated media (iCGM):
Consumer-solicited media that is incented by the sponsoring brand.

Inventory:
The number of ad spaces available on a Web site or within a game.

Linkbaiting:
Packaging content to increase the likelihood that others will link to it.

Long tail effect:
The ability online to reach small, niche markets efficiently.

Lurkers:
People who follow the game but do not actively participate.

Mash-ups:
Content created using a mix of existing material.

Massively multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPG):
Form of online game in which a large number of players interact with one another over time.

Meaning Transfer Model:
Consumers first assign meaning from the endorser to the brand. Then the meanings attributed to the endorser become associated with the brand in the consumer's mind.

Mechanistic consumer-generated advertising:
Consumer-generated advertising that is controlled to some extent by the rules, guidelines, and brand assets required by the brand's contest guidelines.

Media fragmentation:
The breaking up of large audiences into small fragments due to an increase in the media choices available.

Metaverse:
A three-dimensional online community, also known as a virtual world.

Microsite:
A separate Web site, distinct from a brand's primary site, with its own URL used as part of a promotional campaign.

Momentum effect:
The incremental gain in advertising effectiveness attributed to endorsements and pass-alongs by friends in a social community.

Netnography:
A qualitative research technique, which applies ethnographic research techniques to the study of online communities.

Network effect:
The increase in value that accrues to a social network as the size of the network community increases.

Newbie:
A person who is new to a social community.

Organic consumer-generated advertising:
Advertising developed by consumers without an incentive or invitation to do so from the brand.

Organic search listing:
Listings that occur naturally in response to a search; search engines do not sell the listing or listing rank.

Packaged consumer-generated advertising:
Consumer-generated advertising that is limited to specific brand assets such as brand-approved images and slogans.

Page view:
An instance in which a Web page is viewed by a visitor.

Pass-along rate:
The percentage of people who pass on a message or piece of content.

Position:
The relative perception a brand holds in the minds of the target market relative to the competition.

Post-roll advertising:
Video advertising shown at the end of content.

Pre-roll advertising:
Video advertising shown before a user is shown the content of interest.

Puppet master:
A person who plans, writes, and governs an alternate reality game.

Rabbit hole:
The first clue used to kick off an alternate reality game.

Reach:
The number of people exposed to an advertising message in a specific period of time.

Return on earned media model:
An approach to social-media return on investment that considers the value of the brand's exposure if the impressions were paid exposures rather than earned through social media.

Return on impressions model:
An approach to social-media return on investment that demonstrates how many media impressions were generated by the social-media advertising tactics employed.

Return on investment (ROI):
A measure of profitability.

Return on media impact model:
An approach to social-media return on investment that determines how sales can be attributed to each element in a social-media advertising strategy over time.

Return on target influence model:
An approach to social-media return on investment that relies upon survey data to assess the effectiveness of social-media advertising based on the extent to which the methods achieved changes in the desired consumer attitudes.

Rich media:
A type of advertising, which includes audio, video, and advanced graphics.

RSS feed:
A method of syndicating online content, enabling others to subscribe to receive the content automatically.

Rubbernecker:
A person who does not actively play in the game but may participate in forums about the game and contribute to the game's solution.

Search engine advertising:
The strategy of using search engine listing results as an advertising vehicle.

Search engine optimization (SEO):
The process of ensuring that a site is well positioned to achieve the best possible search listings, as part of a search engine advertising strategy.

Seed branding:
A technique for branding that involves building relationships between brands and consumers by "planting a seed" of interest in the minds of consumers. The "seed" is some form of interactive device such as a game that inspires consumers to cognate on the brand.

Shilling:
Distributing brand-generated content or incented content online while pretending the content is user generated.

Short:
A video that is longer than a commercial but shorter than a film.

Six degrees effect:
The notion that it is a small world, with everyone connected to everyone else within six contacts.

Social bookmarking:
The storing of URL bookmarks within a social community such that bookmarks can be tagged according to content and shared with others.

Social community:
A broad range of online groups, including forums, social networks, virtual worlds, bookmarking sites, and more.

Social fiction:
Another term for alternate reality games.

Social media:
The collection of social communities online, which enables members to create, share, cocreate, and fortify content, as well as interact as any community might.

Social-media impact (SMI):
A measure of the effectiveness achieved by a social-media advertising campaign.

Social-media marketing (SMM):
Broad category of online advertising that places promotional messages in the context of social communities.

Social-media optimization (SMO):
Optimizing a site so that it is more visible to social communities in order to increase links to a site.

Social-media return on investment (SMROI):
A measure of the revenue generated as a result of social-media advertising.

Social network:
Utility-based social communities, which enable members to build identity using profiles, communicate with other members, develop a network of friends, and participate in the community (e.g., www.myspace.com).

Social news:
News shared in social communities focused on content sharing and ranking (e.g., www.digg.com).

Steganography:
The tactic of hiding messages within another medium such that the message is undetectable for those who do not know to look for it.

Stickiness:
The ability of a Web site to keep a visitor at the site and to encourage a visitor to return to the site.

TINAG:
This acronym stands for a defining mantra of ARGS—This is not a game!

Trackback:
A method of tracking links back or references to a blog, also known as a linkback.

Trail:
A reference index of the game, including relevant sites, puzzles, in-game characters, and other information. Trails are useful for new players coming late into a game and to veteran players piecing together the narrative.

Transmedia storytelling:
A story that is told across multiple media platforms with each component valuable on its own and as a contribution to the story as a whole.

User-generated content:
Content created by an individual that (1) is made publicly available online, (2) reflects some creative effort on the part of the user, and (3) is created outside professional practice.

Viewthrough:
Visits to a target Web site at some point after exposure to the ad.

Virtual worlds:
Online, three-dimensional, economic social communities.

Vlobalization, Vlobe:
Phrases used to denote the universe of virtual worlds and the trend of brands participating in virtual worlds.

Widget:
A small program application that interacts with the Web browser to deliver content to the user.

Wiki:
A collaboratively edited Web page.