

How to Measure Digital Attention: Validating Viewport Logging via Mobile Eye-Tracking as a Measure for Gaining and Holding Attention in Social Media

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Attention is the currency of social media and a bottleneck of ad effectiveness. Achieving it encompasses two essential tasks: gaining and holding. Viewport logging, initially developed for billing online ads, offers a potential ecological method to monitor attention on social media. However, the need for empirical validation is evident. In response, our study contrasts viewport logging with mobile eye-tracking within a simulated Instagram environment, assessing its potential as a cost-effective and valid alternative to eye-tracking. This research marks the first validation of viewport logging in a social media setting. Moreover, it pioneers the differentiation between metrics for gaining and holding attention. The findings indicate that viewport logging aligns with established eye-tracking metrics, demonstrating concurrent validity. Furthermore, it predicts brand recall, establishing predictive validity. Therefore, viewport logging proves to be a scalable solution for both researchers and practitioners aiming to quantify gaining and holding attention in social media.

Keywords: attention, social media, eye-tracking, viewport logging