Exploring the phenomena of deceptive online advertising and blockchain technology as a solution: An expert perspective

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Deceptive online advertising is a prevalent issue characterising the contemporary digital landscape, yet it is often ignored as a type of online disinformation. By conducting interviews with 19 experts from the online advertising and blockchain industries, we examined deceptive online advertising in all of its manifestations and explored whether blockchain technology can be applied as a solution. Using a grounded theory approach to data collection and analysis, we developed a theoretical framework mapping the causes, nature, and impact of deceptive online advertising, and the preliminary challenges, strategies and consequences of using blockchain as a countermeasure. Our findings demonstrate that while experts consider blockchain to have several technological affordances that can be used to counteract the impact of deceptive advertising and other types of disinformation, there are practical and socio-structural challenges that must initially be addressed. The findings have important implications for theory and practice.