

## Behavioural Advertising

### WHAT IS IT?

Behavioural advertising is “a practice that is based on internet browsing activity and allows brands to deliver adverts to web users which reflect their interests. It’s safe, transparent, and designed to empower [the] consumer.” (Source: Internet Advertising Bureau)

### HOW DOES IT WORK?

Information about a website user’s browsing activity is collected and split into groups, such as housing, theatre and fashion. A cookie is then placed on their computer by the website to identify them as someone interested in a certain thing, such as theatre, and they become categorised alongside other users with similar interests to form a type. Advertising is then tailored for different types and more relevant display ads are served to that user.

### WHY USE BEHAVIOURAL ADVERTISING?

The best advertising is relevant advertising – there’s very little sense in advertising baby care products to elderly men, for instance, and this profiling helps to cut out that waste.

### SO FOR EXAMPLE

When a user makes several searches for women’s clothing online, their advertising adapts and offers that user more shopping options.



The screenshot shows the Watford Observer website interface. At the top, there is a navigation menu with categories like News, Sport, Leisure, Info, Pictures, Your Say, Community, Family, Jobs, Homes, Cars, Dating, Click2find, Buy & Sell, and Advertise. Below the menu, there are links for Olympics 2012, Video, Events, Nostalgia, Education, Columnists, Announcements, e-Newspaper, Home Improvements, Local Ads, and Weddings. The main content area features a 'LATEST HEADLINES' section with a link to 'Click here for news and updates on the Olympics'. A large graphic for the 'OLYMPIES 2012' is displayed. Below this, there are three news articles: 'Lorry driver in hospital following crash', 'Watford town centre post box to be painted gold', and 'Call-ups for Hodson and'. To the right of the news articles, there is a weather widget for Watford showing 21.1°C and a 10% chance of rain. Below the weather widget, there is a 'WHAT'S ON / LIVE TRAVEL' section with traffic alerts for A405 and A41. At the bottom right, there is a circular advertisement for 'Shop for longer' featuring a woman and a 'FEATURED JOBS' section for a NIC Electrician/Handyman in Watford.