

The advancement of human civilization

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The development of products and modernization are in each other's pocket. People simply travel by foot before but now, mankind can travel by air, land and sea.

A hundred years ago, a company doesn't need computers to run its business. Today, the need to adopt information technology is a matter of necessity for the survival of business. The advancement of human civilization is marked by advances in Sciences which is best manifested in the development of products and services available to the people. As civilization advances, our needs also dynamically change.

Advertising is at the core of change because it is primarily the method by which information about new things i. e. products and services are communicated or disseminated for the eventual adoption and acceptance of society. To say that advertising encourages us to buy things we really do not need undermines the important role it plays in introducing and initiating progressive change in society.

Moreover, to view advertising in this manner connotes a negative idea because it would distort its static function of information dissemination to a means of manipulating people into believing something that is not true. Advertising is neither good nor bad but is just a means to an end.

Whether that end is good or bad makes advertising good and bad as well. This on the other hand depends on the perspective of the person who views it or on which side the person is in terms of the information that advertisement carries. An advertising campaign for Nazism is apparently bad for most people but is good in the perspective of advocates of Hitler.

Advertising is a component of the marketing process i. e. under product promotion which is designed to inform potential customers about a particular product and service of a company. Following the essence of marketing, advertisements ultimately tell us about new products that may improve our lives. “ Marketing is the management process which identifies, anticipates, and supplies customer requirements efficiently and profitably.” (Hoffmann).

Products are developed through market research, which involve understanding needs and preferences of customers and finding a competitive edge or differentiating it from the weaknesses and strengths of one’s competitors. Products are therefore developed ultimately as a response to the identified and anticipated needs of the people. Advertising functions to communicate how innovations in new products are able to address those needs for the convenience of people and generally to improve life or advance the civilization.

Of course, we don’t need cars, computers or any other appliances to survive. Mankind had evolved to have all the resources he/ she needed for basic survival. However, mankind is also not static. It is a rational creature in a constant pursuit to improve its life by creating new products and services. Cars were invented even though we have feet for transport. Indeed, we don’t need cars for primordial survival, but transportation had definitely and progressively changed how mankind conducted life.

Advertising played the crucial role of introducing not the need but the advantage and convenience of transportation or having a car in as much as it did for all other products and services. Advertising therefore was essentially meant to inform people of new products that are meant to

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improve our lives because these new products and services were designed to address or respond to our needs and preferences. In which case, advertising partakes in setting social progress by introduction of new products and services.

That advertising encourages us to buy things we really do not need may have stemmed from the idea of advertising as a tool for propaganda. Because propaganda as a form of communication through mass media is one-sided, some modern theorists are critical and wary that this will be used by the powerful elites to impute and infuse values and beliefs which are not necessarily true but are meant to serve their own selfish purposes. (Perry).

In which case, advertisements are meant to persuade or shape people's thoughts. Such is the case for products and services that more than just being informative are astutely designed position product and create company image.

They effectively incite people to buy things and patronize products in a subliminal and benevolent approach. For instance, MasterCard' priceless campaign emphasize on what is priceless; it gives less attention to the cost of what we buy or the need for buying it.

Nevertheless, credit cards indeed provide us the convenience of paying or carrying cash. In which case, people need to be critical of the information that they receive. Whether they need the product or service advertised is ultimately up to the consumer to decide.

References

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