

As a consumer, you are exposed to hundreds and maybe even thousands of commercial...

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



They may appear in the form of billboards, like the Alkaloids campaign, or in the form of newspaper ads, TV commercials, coupons, sales letters, publicity, event sponsorships, telemarketing calls, or even e-mails. These are just a few of the many communication tools that companies and organizations use to initiate and maintain contact with their customers, clients, and prospects.

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You may simply refer to them all as " advertising. " But, In fact, the correct term for these various tools is marketing communications. And advertising is just one type of marketing communications. So, then, what is advertising? At the beginning of the twentieth century, Albert Lasher, who today is generally regarded as the father of modern advertising, owned a prominent advertising agency, Lord & Thomas. At the time, he defined advertising as " salesmanship in print, driven by a reason why. " But that was long before the advent of radio, television, or the Internet.

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The nature and scope of the business world, and advertising, were quite limited. A century later, our planet is a far different place. The nature and needs of business have changed, and so have the concept and practice of advertising. Today, definitions of advertising abound. Journalists, for example, might define it as a communication, public relations, or persuasion process; businesspeople see it as a marketing process; economists and sociologists tend to focus on its economic, societal, or ethical significance.

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And some consumers might define it simply as a nuisance. Each of these perspectives has some merit, but for now we'll use the following functional definition: Advertising is the structured and composed nonparallel communication of information, usually paid for and usually persuasive in nature, about products (goods, services, and ideas) by identified sponsors through various media. Let's take this definition apart and analyze its components. Advertising is, first of all, a type of communication.

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It is actually a very structured form of applied communication, employing both verbal and nonverbal elements that are composed to fill specific space and time formats determined by the sponsor. Second, advertising is typically directed to groups of people rather than to individuals. It is therefore nonparallel, or mass, communication. These people could be consumers, who buy products like alkaloids for their personal use. Or they might be businesspeople who most advertising is paid for by sponsors.

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M, Walter, Coca-Cola, and your local fitness salon pay the newspaper or the radio or TV station to carry the ads you read, see, and hear. But some sponsors don't have to pay for their ads. The American Red Cross, United Way, and American Cancer Society are among the many national organizations whose public service messages are carried at no charge because of their nonprofit status. Likewise, a poster on a school bulletin

board promoting a dance is not paid for, but it is still an ad? a structured, nonparallel, persuasive communication.