

Communication theories and the advertising industry assignment

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Nowadays, as people's education increase, they pay more attention on food's safety and nutrient value; parents tend to choose baby formula with highest nutrition for their baby, even for high price. Thus, many companies want to decrease parent's concern and increase brand image plus credibility through advertising at the same time. In this paper, we use uncertainty reduction theory to compare three baby formula's television commercials.

Because all baby formulas are very much alike, to stand out from the market and differentiate themselves from their direct competitors, they have to assure customers that they are the best. Although these three television commercials are selling similar product, its focus are different. Because the target audiences have different concerns, different strategies are used to reduce each uncertainty; including concern for baby's health, concern for baby's brain development and concern for baby's growth process. Therefore, each baby formula's brand has their own selling point which aims to attract and touch different customer's needs.

For example, Pedicure tries to satisfy customer's psychological needs of wanting their children to be number one, and provide facts that the baby formula contains twenty-seven nutrients while having most doctor recommendations (Connectionist, 2012, 0: 30). Besides associating its brand with a caring image, Frisson's ad includes information relating to its packaging and segmentation strategy: differentiated marketing for children's different growth stage and its 130 years history being a famous Holland brand (Tomahawking, 2012, 1 : 0).

Last but not least, Inferior positions itself as a top sales baby formula with much DAD (Tomahawking, 2012, 0: 30). However, all of these three ads are trying to reduce uncertainty of potential customers, which are parents worrying if the baby formula would really help their children's growth. The aim of these ads is to explain to them that the baby formula really works. One of the common ways to reduce uncertainty is to show similarity of the brand's goal and the target audience's goal.

According to Berger (1975), based on his Axiom 6: Similarity of the Axiomatic theory, it is implied that when parents see in the ads that the brand is also concern about baby's healthy, their uncertainty would be decreased as both parties are trying to achieve the same goal. That's why these ads do not focus on price, because such "practical" information like money is not the main concern of parents; their biggest concern should be what's best for children. While some ads make use of Axiom 7: Liking by showing that all customers are valued and treasured by the brand, thus decrease their uncertainty.

Some ads use non-verbal warmth such as smile in the baby's face and Joyful expression in the parent's face to reduce uncertainty, showing that the product is satisfying; because based on Axiom 2: Nonverbal warmth by Berger (1975), when nonverbal affiliation expressiveness increases, uncertainty level decreases. These ads stimulate deep emotion such as Communication Theories and the Advertising Industry By Songbooks these positive emotions, enhancing liking of the brand. As TV is proven very important, multiple message plans must be included inside.

These ads have high plan complexity so hierarchy hypothesis can also be applied in case the target audience is only receptive to one approach. In these ads, both approaches: emotional and informational appeals are used. On one hand, practical information is focusing mainly on nutrient value of the baby formula, and what is best for the children. Top sales and doctor's recommendation is also shown in some ads to create a sense of security and ensuring feeling using Axiom 8: Shared Network.

Top sales suggests that the brand is approved or liked by the other HIKE parents with similar background; While doctors recommendation implies that higher education specialist, same as some of the targeted customers in the segment, also recommend the brand. So because of conformity and group think in a shared network, uncertainty regarding the brand will be reduced. This could also be seen as a form of disclosure of information by the brand to reduce uncertainty of customers, because Axiom 4: Self-disclosure in the Axiomatic theory states that disclosure of information and uncertainty is negatively correlated.

On the other hand, using emotional approach, love and hope for children are featured. The emotional value of the product is displayed. These humanism the brand and create brand's personality. Some baby formula ads are humorous, using Hedging to induce a relaxing or amusing atmosphere so when target customers are not interested in the practical information such as the nutrient value in the baby formula, they could just laugh it out so no bad impression would be left in their mind. To conclude, children's growth

heavily depends on choosing the right baby formula, hush the purchase decision of baby formula is very important.

However, most promotions make use of the limited knowledge of chemistry or biology processed by the general parents, and try to persuade them that their brand is the best. Thus parents must apply active strategy like pre-purchase search, to seek for information to reduce uncertainty. Except internal search in brain, they heavily rely on external search; for example, receiving information from market place, or ads. That's why ads are so important in reducing uncertainty. However, no matter how TV commercial promote their product, when we try a new product or brand, we will surely experience some uncertainty.