

Analyzing communication: mercedes benz commercial



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Marshall Chen COM 101 - L1 Jordan Henry Essay 1 March 4th Analyzing Communication: Mercedes Benz Commercial During the half time of the Super Bowl this year, many commercials were shown to the audience for their very first time. One of the most successful commercials among them is the Mercedes-Benz's "Soul" commercial because of its choice of communication method, and the use of several communication techniques and features like Aristotle's "Rhetoric," intrapersonal communication, and nonverbal codes.

This commercial, "Soul" (Mercedes-Benz 2013 Super Bowl Commercial: "Soul"), is an around-two-minute video, starring Usher, Kate Upton, Sebastian Beacon and Willem Dafoe. It was posted on YouTube after the Super Bowl via "mbusa". In this clip, the man (Sebastian Beacon) considers selling his soul to the devil (Willem Dafoe) to get the new Benz CLA, but then he realizes that he does not have to, because he can afford it. Since this video is on YouTube, the audience is so broad that the video uploader, "mbusa", the official YouTube channel of Mercedes Benz, U.

S. A. , cannot communicate with every audience who watches the video or even who leaves a comment at the link. Thus, this commercial belongs to mass communication (Adler and Rodman 336-26). Also, this mass communication process can be portrayed through the transactional communication model (Adler and Rodman 336-26). As "mbusa" made this video and posted it on YouTube, the sender sent this message to receivers through the Internet channel.

After receiving this message, the audience of this video would start to respond to it by giving direct comment at the link, and also, the feedback of the receivers would be revealed in either the increase or the decrease of the sales volume of this car too. "Receivers" in the last paragraph are also the target audience of this commercial. To be more specific, the target audience of this video is people who want to buy a (new) car. However, because this CLA series is affordable as the maker of this video tries to imply, this commercial may appeal to people who do not want to buy a car too.

Moreover, since Benz put this video on Super Bowl halftime and YouTube, which both have millions of audience members in the world, the actual target audience can be astonishingly numerous. Commercial, as a sort of advertisement, is to present new products, to attract consumers and to inspire them to buy the product of this company. This commercial "Soul" is no exception. Mercedes-Benz made this video to introduce their brand new CLA saloon car series, and by demonstrating the starting price of this series, to tell people this series is actually affordable.

In order to achieve these goals, the maker of this video uses the following two communication features and makes this commercial outstanding. First, this commercial utilizes intrapersonal communication (Adler and Rodman 336-26): after the devil seduces the man to sign the contract, saying, "You can have a deal with me kid and you can have the car and everything that goes along with it," (Willem Dafoe, "Soul") the man starts to imagine what will happen to him after he signs the contract and gets the car, the things that will come along with this car - fame, fortune, and sex.

At the same time, audience may wonder what will happen if the man really signs the contract and may start to imagine what life will be like if they also have this car because they put themselves in the man's shoes and follow the plot. People are rotten with perfection (Vigil) - who does not want a beautiful car like this? If fame and fortune and all those come along with this car, then why not buy one (especially when the price of the car at last turns out to be less than 30, 000 dollars)? Second, this commercial shows a perfect application of Aristotle's " Rhetoric".

By showing the car running, the maker of the video demonstrates the beauty (appearance and sound) of the car - ethos - " the nature of the source" (Richmond and McCrosky 336-9), or the car in this case. Next, by having the man imagine the life after he has the car, the video makes the audience imagine what their lives will be like after owning the car, and converges the emotion to that of the audience - pathos - " the emotions of the audience" (Richmond and McCrosky 336-9). Last, by revealing the minimum price of the car, the maker of the video presents the most important message in this video to the audience that this car is affordable - logos - " the nature of the message presented by the source" (Richmond and McCrosky 336-9).

According to Aristotle, these three are the methods of persuasion.

Persuasion, in other words, is also the purpose of this video. To sum up, these two techniques, which the maker of the video uses fulfills the purpose of the commercial perfectly. In addition to the effectiveness of this commercial, there are two strengths in the video as well. The first strength of this commercial is the nonverbal codes used by the devil.

When the devil starts to seduce the man, he looks at the man with a typical villain expression in his eyes, smiles treacherously, and speaks with a low tone. The devil is wearing a masonic ring, indicating his true evilness. These nonverbal codes make the beginning of the video so attractive that the audience would want to continue watching the commercial and see what will the devil do to the man. Also the background music goes along with the video and assists the "plot", which makes the video more like a movie. The second strength is that Benz chooses some of the most effective advertising platforms to put this commercial on.

This commercial was on the Super Bowl halftime show, YouTube, and TV. According to International Business Times, "Over 108 million Americans watched the Baltimore Ravens beat the San Francisco 49ers 34-31 in Super Bowl XLVII." (Anthony) Also, active YouTube users and people who watch TV are countless, so in total, there are a huge amount of audience who can see this commercial. As the number of actual audience of this commercial goes up, the number of people who think about buying or who really buy this car after watching this video goes up too. Despite the strengths, this commercial has two weaknesses.

First of all, this video is not appropriate for kids to watch because of the sex and the devil topics involved. It may be difficult to explain to kids some of the sections in this video. Next, conspiracy theorists may use this commercial as a proof to disseminate their theories. A lot of symbols implying evil are used in the video, like the masonic ring, the double triangles in the background of the ball, the signature symbol on the contract.

These symbols all allude Mason, Setan, or Illuminati. So the theorists may <https://assignbuster.com/analyzing-communication-mercedes-benz-commercial/>

use these symbols as proof to argue for and disseminate their conspiracy theories, which certainly have negative effects to the society. However, generally, the drawbacks in this commercial do not undermine its strengths and effectiveness. Through perfect application of nonverbal codes, intrapersonal communication, mass communication, and Aristotle's "Rhetoric", Mercedes-Benz and the maker of this video have made a commercial that is remarkable and effective. Work Cited Mbusa, , dir. Mercedes-Benz 2013 Super Bowl Commercial: "Soul". 2013. Filmstrip. 6 Mar 2013. . Adler, Ronald, and George Rodman. "Human Communication What and Why." Trans.

Array Introduction to the World of Communication. Tammy Vigil. Revised 1st ed. Cognella, 2013. 336-26. Print. Vigil, Tammy. "Human Communication What and Why." COM 101. Boston University. Massachusetts, Boston. 2013. Lecture. Richmond, Virginia, and James McCrosky. "Human Communication Theory and Research." Trans. Array Introduction to the World of Communication. Tammy Vigil. Revised 1st ed. Cognella, 2013. 336-9. Print. Anthony, Riccobono. "Super Bowl 2013: How Many People Watched The Baltimore Ravens Over The San Francisco 49ers?." International Business Times. (2013): n. page. Web. 6 Mar. 2013.