

Ethical issues in advertising communication assignment

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Business Communication is communication used to promote a product, service, or organization; relay information within the business; or deal with legal and similar issues. Business Communication encompasses a variety of topics, including Marketing, Branding, Customer relations, Consumer behaviour, Advertising, Public relations, Media relations, Corporate communication, Community engagement, Research & Measurement, Reputation management, Interpersonal communication, Employee engagement, Online communication, and Event management . Advertising is the most widely known weapon in the marketing armory.

This is a paid medium involving radio, TV, poster-sites, press, or direct mail. Each medium offers several advantages and disadvantages. Advertising communication is business - the way account managers and creative talent work together in an advertising agency to create commercials and ads that help sell the client's products to the target audience . On average, advertisements take approximately sixty percent of the printed space in American newspapers. In 2004, almost 34 billion dollars was spent on newspaper advertising. In the same year, newspapers hauled in about 9 million dollars from subscription and single use buyers.

Advertising Exist to solve two problems : 1. Too many goods or materials - If there was not enough of an item, there would be no need to advertise it. 2. Advertising is also a way of reaching your consumers who would otherwise be unfamiliar with your product. Many ads work by providing information: what is the product? what are its characteristics, qualities, functions? Most of us admit that advertising industry is a ??? necessary evil". In spite of certain

questionable practices, advertising meets the consumer needs for information about the goods and services which are offered on the market.

The essential ethical issues raised in advertising industry are that advertisements should be legal, honest and truthful. “ Is it decent to advertise perfume or lingerie with seductive images of gratification the consumer may hope to obtain through the purchase of these products? Is it truthful to advertise cigarettes through images of masculine survival in the wild outback, even if health warnings are clearly footnoted? “. Answers to these questions are likely to be widely divergent and probably irreconcilable. Who is the final arbitrator? A state authority?

The individual consumer? Many persons, are notorious believers in their immunity to advertising. These naive inhabitants of consumer land believe that advertising is childish, dumb, a bunch of lies, and influences only the vast hordes of the less sophisticated. Their own purchases are made purely on the basis of value and desire, with advertising playing only a minor supporting role. Advertisers know better. Although few people admit to being greatly influenced by ads, surveys and sales figures show that a well-designed advertising campaign has dramatic effects.

A logical conclusion is that advertising works below the level of conscious awareness and it works even on those who claim immunity to its message. Ads are designed to have an effect while being laughed at, belittled, and all but ignored. A person unaware of advertising’s effect on him or her is precisely the one most defenseless against the ad writer’s attack.

Advertisers delight in an audience which believes ads to be harmless

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nonsense, for such an audience is rendered defenseless by its belief that there is no attack taking place.

In order to raise the level of awareness about the persuasive techniques used in ads is to analyze ads in microscopic detail. Ads can be studied to detect their psychological hooks, they can be used to gauge values and hidden desires of the common person, they can be studied for their use of symbols, color, and imagery. The reason so many ad demands fall into this category of pseudo-information is that they are applied to parity products, products in which all or most of the brands available are nearly identical.

Since no one superior product exists, advertising is used to create the illusion of superiority. The largest advertising budgets are devoted to parity products such as gasoline, cigarettes, beer and soft drinks, soaps, and various headache and cold remedies . The first rule of parity involves the use of the words “ better” and “ best. ” In parity demands, “ better” means “ best” and “ best” means “ equal to. ” If all the brands are identical, they must all be equally good, the legal minds have decided. So “ best” means that the product is as good as the other superior products in its category.

When it's declared Prigat Orange Juice “ the best there is” it means it is as good as the other orange juices you can buy. The word “ better” has been legally interpreted to be a comparative and therefore becomes a clear request for superiority. They could not have said that Prigat is “ better than any other orange juice. ” “ Better” is a request for superiority. The only time “ better” can be used is when a product does indeed have superiority over

other products in its category or when the better is used to compare the product with something other than competing brands.

An orange juice could therefore claim to be “ better than a vitamin pill,” or even “ the better breakfast drink. ” The second rule is simply that if any product is truly superior, the ad will say so very clearly and will offer some kind of convincing evidence of the superiority. If an ad hedges the least bit about a product’s advantage over the competition you can strongly suspect it is not superior—may be equal to but not better. You will never hear a gasoline company say “ we will give you four km per liter more in your care than any other brand. ” They would love to make so, but it would not be true.

Gasoline is a parity product, and, in spite of some very clever and deceptive ads of a few years ago, no one has yet identified one brand of gasoline better than any other brand. Advertisers have many methods to try and get you to buy their products. Lots of times, what they are selling is a lifestyle, or an image, rather than the product. If a product is really superior to other products, the ad will say so in clear and definite terms. If advertisers can’t come right out and say this, then they will often use one of the following ten basic techniques to create an illusion of superiority.

Each is common and easy to identify : 1. The Weasel Technique A weasel word is a modifier that practically negates the claim that follows. The expression “ weasel word” is aptly named after the egg-eating habits of weasels. A weasel will suck out the inside of an egg, leaving it appear intact to the casual observer. Upon examination, the egg is discovered to be

hollow. Words that appear substantial upon first look but disintegrate into hollow meaninglessness on analysis are weasels.

Commonly used weasel words include “ helps” (the champion weasel); “ like” (used in a comparative sense); “ virtual” or “ virtually”; “ acts” or “ works”; “ can be”; “ up to”; “ as much as”; “ refreshes”; “ comforts”; “ tackles”; “ fights”; “ come on”; “ the feel of”; “ the look of”; “ looks like”; “ fortified”; “ enriched”; and “ strengthened. ” Samples of Weasel Technique “ Helps control dandruff symptoms with regular use. ” The weasels include “ helps control,” and possibly even “ symptoms” and “ regular use. ” The effect is not “ stops dandruff. ” “ Leaves dishes virtually spotless. We have seen so many ad claims that we have learned to tune out weasels. You are supposed to think “ spotless,” rather than “ virtually” spotless. “ Only half the price of many color sets. ” “ Many” is the weasel. The message is supposed to give the impression that the set is inexpensive. “ Tests confirm one mouthwash best against mouth odor. ” “ Hot Nestles cocoa is the very best. ” Remember the “ best” and “ better” routine. “ Listerine fights bad breath. ” “ Fights,” not “ stops. ” “ Lots of things have changed, but Milka goodness hasn’t. ” This claim does not say that Milka chocolate hasn’t changed. . The Unfinished Technique The unfinished technique is one in which the ad sustains the product is better, or has more of something, but does not finish the comparison. Samples of Unfinished Technique “ Nurofen: Twice as much of the pain reliever doctors recommend most. ” This statement fits in a number of categories but it does not say twice as much of what pain reliever. “ Supergloss L’Oreal does it with more color, more shine, more sizzle, more! ” “ Jacobs gives coffee more body, more flavor. ” Also

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note that “ body” and “ flavor” are weasels. “ Ford LTD-700% quieter. When Ford was asked to substantiate this, Ford revealed that they meant the inside of the Ford was 700% quieter than the outside. 3. The “ We are Different and Unique” Technique This technique states that there is nothing else quite like the product being advertised. For example, if Heineken would add pink food coloring to its beer they could say, “ There’s nothing like new pink Heineken. ” The uniqueness is supposed to be interpreted by readers as a claim to superiority. Samples of the “ We are Different and Unique” Technique “ There’s no other mascara like it. “ Either way, liquid or spray, there’s nothing else like it. ” 4. The “ Water is Wet” Technique “ Water is wet” technique say something about the product that is true for any brand in that product category, (for example, “ Dorna water is really wet. “) This is usually a statement of fact, but not a real advantage over the competition. Samples of the “ Water is Wet” Technique “ Max Factor Masterpiece Max greatly increases the diameter of every lash. ” “ Heineken, the natural beer. ” Made from grains and water as are other beers. “ SKIN smells differently on everyone. As do many perfumes. 5. The “ So What” Technique This is the kind of message to which the careful reader will react by saying “ So What? ” A statement is made which is true but which gives no real advantage to the product. This is similar to the “ water is wet” technique except that it claims an advantage which is not shared by most of the other brands in the product category. Samples of the “ So What” Technique “ Vitamax has more than twice the iron of ordinary supplements. ” But is twice as much beneficial to the body? “ Strong enough for a man but made for a woman. This message says only that the product is aimed at the female market. 6. The Vague

Technique The vague technique is simply not clear. This category often overlaps with others. The key is the use of words that are colorful but meaningless, as well as the use of subjective and emotional opinions that defy verification. Most contain weasels. Samples of the Vague Technique “ Lips have never looked so luscious. ” Can you imagine trying to either prove or disprove such a claim? “ Its deep rich lather makes hair feel good again. ” “ For skin like peaches and cream. ” “ Winston tastes good like a cigarette should. ” The perfect little portable for all around viewing with all the features of higher priced sets. ” 7. The Endorsement or Testimonial

Technique A celebrity or authority appears in an ad to lend his or her stellar qualities to the product. Sometimes the people will actually pretend to use the product, but very often they don't. There are agencies surviving on providing products with testimonials. 8. The Scientific or Statistical **Technique** This kind of ad uses some sort of scientific proof or experiment, very specific numbers, or an impressive sounding mystery ingredient.

Samples of Scientific or Statistical Technique “ Cif has 33% more cleaning power than another popular brand. ” “ Another popular brand” often translates as some other kind of oven cleaner sold somewhere. Also this message does not say Cif works 33% better. ” Kinder Penguin-33% more nutrition. ” Also an unfinished statement. 9. The “ Compliment the

Consumer” **Technique** This technique butters up the consumer by some form of flattery. Samples of the “ Compliment the Consumer” Technique “ We think a cigar smoker is someone special. ” If what you do is right for you, no matter what others do, then Coca-Cola is right for you. ” “ You pride yourself on your good home cooking.... ” 10. The Rhetorical Question This technique

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demands a response from the audience. A question is asked and the viewer or listener is supposed to answer in such a way as to affirm the product's goodness. Samples of the Rhetorical Question Technique " Shouldn't your family be drinking Adria? " " What do you want most from coffee? That's what you get most from Elite. " " Touch of Sweden: could your hands use a small miracle? " BIBLIOGRAPHY