

# Advertising and its effects on society

Business, Strategy



Advertising and its effects on society Name: Course: Date: Advertising and its effects on society Advertising is the best way for a company to make their product known to their target audience regardless of where they are.

Through it, a company boosts not only their sales but also consumer awareness of a product. Advertisements can be seen on televisions, posters, fliers, magazines, billboards, radio and the internet all with the aim of communicating something to the society. Through the years, the ways in which advertisements have been conveyed have changed, and with it, they have been able to influence more people than they previously could. The advertisers have come up with ways that will convince a potential consumer how a product will benefit them. Thus, advertising is an influential force in convincing the society to buy a product. This influence has made a major impact on what products people choose to consume.

This is because most times people will tend to buy goods they have seen before and not necessarily used. Instead of people doing a thorough research of a product they tend to rely on what the media say about it. As much as advertising has significant benefits drawn from it, many people ask themselves whether it is necessary to the society as a whole because of the impacts; it has on them as a whole (Espejo, 2010).

As the years have gone, different advertisers have strived to come up with ways in which they can better their angle in reaching their desired audience. This has led to new avenues being exploited so that more people can be reached. It is an advertiser's goal that where there is free space visible to capture an untapped market, they take full advantage of it. This has led to

advertisers going the extra mile to look for more advertising space. Schools for instance which have very few sources of funding have taken advantage of this by supplying advertisers with an audience for their commercials. A school has a sizeable market that can be tapped into by advertisers. The students, parents, teachers, employees of a school and even bystanders all serve as potential market for advertising companies. Thus, these days' school buses are used to advertise products by attaching small billboards on the side.

They make up the surplus money they need to keep the schools up and running. This has led to schools concentrating more on getting advertising contracts than on how to better education in the society. In the State of Texas, Alpha Media of Dallas started a school bus advertising program that did very well. It earned the school about 40, 000 dollars in one year. This was over half of what the school would have made in four years.

This funding was more than the school had anticipated and did well to fund more projects that the school needed. However, the impact that these advertisements have on school going children are major. For one, advertisements of fast foods influence children to eat fast food despite its negative influence on the children's health. This is just an example of one way in which the advertisements negatively influences the society. Since the commercials use children as the audience, it is hard for the parents to dissuade them from consuming that product. Being of an impressionable age children are not able to tell apart from bad or good products. However, the financial impact on the school is worthwhile it is not good for the children.

Thus, the fact that they are introduced to advertisements at an early age it makes them influenced into buying products that are not good for their health. This form of advertising has picked throughout the whole country, not only in Texas. Therefore, it has influenced many more people. More children have therefore been exposed to obesity because of these advertisements (Morgan, 2012).

Advertisements also tend to give people the wrong impression. They are meant to convince customers to buy a product thus; they tend not to reveal the negative side of a product. The commercial will point out the strong points of a product and exaggerate them. Advertisers have researched the weak points of its market and preys on them. This makes them able to sell the product. For instance, these days the use of sex has been used to sell products as this is what appeals to many people. However, they have neglected to take into consideration the effect that this will have on impressionable minds like children.

The children who have not been given a chance to grow up are exposed to sex and yet they do not understand it. Advertisements have therefore taken the place of parents and teachers to teach children but unfortunately, they do not do it the right way. The advertisers rarely think about how the strategy they have employed will affect the audience they will attract or anyone else who will get to see their advertisement. In most advertisements, they tend to look for beautiful people with minimal or no flaws are placed on billboards. This creates a wrong impression to the youth that you have to look a certain way for you to be accepted in society. Beauty products tend to

look for models to advertise their products. This gives the target audience the illusion that after using their products they will turn out as beautiful as their models if not more.

This is wrong as it teaches the youth to look only at the exterior of a person and not the inner beauty of a person. The society is influenced into buying products that will make them beautiful which might not change their appearance. Taking advantage of people's paranoia or fears is not right.

This makes the society continue to hang on to the words of the advertisers believing in everything that they say as long as it betters their appearance (Schudson, 1984). Parents against their children watching advertisements have come out saying that they feel that their children are being exploited in many ways. A children's advocacy group in New York have made an outcry against the use of the fictional animation character shrek as a spokesperson for an anti-obesity drive. The parents felt like the Department of Health and Human Services were contradicting themselves as shrek has been used to advertise a number of junk food. This is a conflict of interest as on one hand shrek promotes junk food and on the other promoting public health. Though the department defended themselves by saying, shrek is a good character, as he is well known by many children thus by encouraging them to exercise at least once daily they will be able to curb obesity. Using shrek will lead to confusing children as why would you ask a child to exercise and then at the same time encourage them to eat junk food that will cause the child obesity. The debate of whether or not shrek should be used in advertisement is still out.

However, using him as a spokesperson to encourage children to lead a healthier lifestyle will fail. This is because children will associate him with the junk food more than with the health campaign. Shrek is linked with over 75 junk food products which when advertised will outweigh one advertisement that may not be aired as often as the junk food ones. The ratio to which a commercial in which shrek advocates for junk food to exercising is high and therefore the whole process is futile. The department is still being urged to fire shrek and look for a better spokesperson for their advertisements that will not contradict themselves. Shrek though popular will not achieve what the department intends to do. They will actually popularize him more instead of achieving their goals. There are many more other fictional characters such as superheroes that would play the role better than shrek (Musemeche, 2012).

Though some people may feel that checking the advertisements that are introduced to children is an extreme measure, it is very important that parents check on this. Advertisements have been known even to influence adults so what about children who are still young and cannot make good decisions on their own. This is why some parents have come together to come up with ways to ban advertisements to children. Researchers found out that after banning fast food advertisements in Quebec for thirty-two years there was a decrease of thirteen percent in consumption of the food. This means that the number of obese children greatly reduced. This shows that the impact of advertisements on children is very high. If reduced it will lead to a healthier nation as more people are able to regulate what they consume just as Quebec has done (Musemeche, 2012). Advertising is a great way in

which companies can put their products out there, it is important that they be careful in how they use this resource.

The power that advertisements have on people is great. Companies should therefore use this power well to benefit not only them but also society as a whole. There will be no need for them to make profits in the short run but hurt their consumers in the end.

They should use this tool with discretion so that our children who are the future of the society are not harmed. They should ensure that the impressionable minds are empowered and not made to feel bad about their lifestyle or their beauty. Advertisements should promote healthier choices. Since companies play an influential role in children, they should ensure that they are helping them be better and responsible adults in future.

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