

Good rational appeals versus emotional appeals research paper example

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



Introduction

Advertising makes products known to consumers and the only way to ensure that an advert reaches the right audience is assessing the needs of a market before coming up with products that would satisfy those needs. This involves a number of advertising strategies that need to be taken into close consideration. In most occasions, corporations choose to advertise their products with the view of informing their target markets of the importance and the advantage these products have over others that may satisfy the same needs. However, such corporations do not give much weight to the fundamentals of advertisements which include clarity, balance and simplicity of the advert (McDonald, 2011).

Advertisement messages are sometimes meant to not only increase brand awareness but also create a good attitude of the consumers towards products or their marketers. The persuasiveness of an advertisement is fully dependent on its emotional or rational appeal. This is irrespective of whether advertisements are aimed at increasing brand awareness or persuading a target audience to purchase a product. Emotional appeals are aimed at a consumer's heart and feelings whereas rational appeals target the brains as they focus on details and logics concerning a product. This paper, therefore, is a comprehensive debate on whether emotional appeal or rational appeal sells products better than the other (Abraham, 1943).

Emotional appeal in advertisements

Human beings are naturally emotional and as a result they tend to focus on subjects that arouse their emotions and feelings. Human's earliest response

is to emotions which are brought about as a result of nonverbal communications. Businesses have since harnessed people's emotions as a way of finding markets for their products. Such businesses apply a variety of practices in their marketing strategies in order to appeal to the emotions of their clients (Zou, & Fu, 2011). This is because consumers are more inclined to have their drawn towards catchy advertisements like those made by a compassionate and caring announcer than bland advertisements that announced matter-of-factly. Orwig further asserts that corporations also use their advertisements to appeal to fear, joy, compassion and sympathy amongst other human-like emotions (Dorothy, 1988).

Rational appeal in advertisements

This method of advertising attempts to communicate the usefulness, quality and specific details of a product to a consumer. It is important to note that rational appeal is aimed at giving information on product benefits, demonstrations and statistics. Even though there are claims that consumers are guided by their emotions during purchasing before justifying their decisions with facts, it is clear that rational appeal plays a significant role in buyer behaviors. Rational appeal in advertisement is also largely based on convincing proof. Consumers are more likely to believe in what they see and this is the reason why rational appeals in advertising provide facts about the products in market (Zou, & Fu, 2011).

Marketing research studies in the recent years have provided dependable guidance to marketers as to when to apply emotional appeals or rational appeals in advertisements. It is now clearer when to use either of the

strategies and when not to. This is an implication that each of the strategy has at least significance when it comes to product and service promotion. Owing to the fact that market research studies are generally shallow due to the few variables that major on specific products, advertisements and audiences, generalization is rather difficult. For this reason, the debate on whether focus advertisements on emotional appeal or rationalistic logics is quite direct and free of generalizations (Spiller, & Bergner, 2011).

There are three key areas acknowledged by marketing research that determine when emotional appeal or rational appeal should be applied in advertisements. These are three distinct variables that enclose most of the major parameters put into consideration in the process of formulating an advert. They include:

- Market maturity
- Predisposition
- Level of involvement

Market maturity

The maturity of a market can be defined as the time a particular service of product has spent in a market. Young products or services in a market are those that are those that were recently introduced and are in the process of gaining fame amongst consumers. In most occasions, such products are less known to a market and require extensive marketing through a number of media in order to reach the threshold of 'known products'. Old products in the markets, on the other hand, are those that have been in the market for a while and are well known to consumers (Spiller, & Bergner, 2011). These, as

opposed to new products, require limited marketing because they are widely used by consumers in a particular market.

Product maturity plays a significant role in determining the advertisement appeals. Research on marketing trends have revealed that emotion based advertisements are more efficient at influencing buyer behavior in relatively old markets as compared to new markets. This is because old markets have had so much communications on a particular product or service and have tried different products that meet the same needs. The consumers of such a market are more likely to go for products whose adverts tune them emotionally instead of flat advertisements that only communicate facts and statistics. Mature services and products are constantly consumed and hence the lack of motivation to process more information concerning them.

Rational appeals are, however, effective in new markets because of the markets' need for information concerning a particular service on products (Moschis, 1994).

Predisposition

Predisposition may be described as the negative or positive perceptions on products or services that are created in the minds of consumers through the information gathered about them. While new products in a market need to be communicated effectively to consumers, it is upon the consumers to accept or refute the new information. Therefore, the more positive the perceptions are the more friendly the responses would be to either emotional or rational appeals. While this might sound logical and easily understood, one ought to know that identifying this aspect in a market

research study is quite challenging and needs a critical analysis of numerous parameters including uniqueness of the product, product or service prices and tangibility of the products (Ken, 2011).

Creating positive perceptions towards a product or service is a vital part of virtually every marketing strategy. This is because it will serve an imperative role in enhancing the effectiveness of the advertising campaign that would follow (Moschis, 1994). One ought to realize that this is inconsiderate of whether the advertisements have emotional appeal, rational appeals or an amalgamation of the two appeals. Therefore, positive predisposition is an integral factor in determining how the marketing campaigns used to promote products or services are perceived by a market (Ken, 2011).

Level of involvement

The level of involvement is simply the efforts of consumers or buyers in decision making process just before purchase. In simpler terms, this is the degree of thought involved in the decision making process just before purchase. It is important to note that purchase decisions are accompanied by a level of thought involvement. High thought involvement in the purchasing process is an indication that the consumer is gathering enough information concerning a product or service. This is done with the aim of making comfortable purchase decisions. In most occasions, this happens when consumers are deciding to purchase highly priced goods or services (Spiller, & Bergner, 2011). Sometimes new products in a market encourage high thought involvement. This is an implication that high thought involvement during purchasing favors rational appeal in advertisements.

Low involvement during the purchasing process is, however, is associated with lower price goods and services. Additionally, frequently purchased goods and services also enhance low involvement during the purchasing process (Ken, 2011). This implies that low thought involvement during purchase favors emotional appeals in advertisement. For this reason, quick purchases that do not involve a lot of inquiries and analysis are instigated by emotions thereby making the products bought in this manner easily promoted by emotional appeals in advertisements (Dorothy, 1988).

Other factors that may determine the application of either emotional or rational appeals in advertisements include uniqueness and prices. Very unique products need a lot of information communication in order to make them more appealing to and understandable by the consumers. Therefore, rational appeals in advertisement are important for promoting such products. However, in the event that a product is not so much different from others in its genre in the same market, emotional appeals are advisable in designing its related advertisements. Price is also a contributing factor here. Purchasing relatively expensive products requires a lot of deliberation thereby making rational appeals in advertising more effective in marketing such products. On the other hand, cheap products and services do not need much deliberation thereby making emotional appeals best in promoting them (Moschis, 1994).

Another important aspect in choosing the marketing campaign for a product or service is the level of innovation. Innovations that have since been championed by the technological advancement bring new products in the market. Additionally, innovation requires gathering much information

regarding a product hence making related advertisements more inclined towards rational appeals than emotional appeals (Saxena, 2009). This means that high innovation products need to be marketed with detailed information because they are not only new to the market but also unique and complicated for consumers to understand. It is needless to mention how old-economy products are well known to a market hence their buyers need no additional information on them. As a result, such products are better marketed by emotional appeals in advertisements.

Conclusion

This confusion can only be addressed by amalgamating rational and emotional appeals in advertisements. Besides, consumers buying decisions are largely instigated by emotions before they are justified by facts and statistics. In conclusion, therefore, a successful business enterprise ought to use both marketing campaigns in order to reach and appeal to all the target markets. This is the surest way to maximize on organizational goals.

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