

Charity advertising essay sample

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



Charity advertising is very different from other forms of advertising, as the main purpose of charity ads is to persuade target audiences to donate money, rather than buy a product. Thus, the techniques have to be different from product or brand advertising; however, it can be argued that they do use similar techniques. An example of a charity advertising campaign is that of the children's charity Barnardo's. In my opinion these campaigns have been extremely effective to highlight the plight of thousands of children who live with issues such as exclusion, abuse, drug addiction, alcoholism and prostitution.

These adverts are usually placed in the broadcast and also newspapers such as the Daily Mail as this is the best way, in the charity's opinion to reach their target audience; ABC1 35 to 55 year olds. The reason for why they are targeting this age group is because they usually have a regular income, and thus be able to afford to give money. For example, it would be a waste of time and valuable money, which charities cannot afford to spend, constructing an advert for a teenage audience because they don't have a disposable income, and so they would not be able to afford to donate money to charities.

An additional reason why they target ABC1 35 to 55 year olds because they are more likely to have children, and thus be able to sympathise with the adverts, for example, they may think 'What if that was my child?' and as a result this may influence them to donate money to the charity. A technique charity adverts often use is sensational or emotive images, or even controversial images as this will have an impact on the target audience. For example, one of the Barnardo's adverts it showed a young baby injecting

itself with heroin, which is disturbing, and caused an influx of complaints to the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA).

These adverts for the ‘ Giving children back their future campaign’ highlighted the long-term effects of a disadvantaged childhood. However, it could be argued that these complaints had a positive effect on the charity as it made people talk about the issues that Barnado’s were depicting. Thus, leading to more publicity for the charity, and perhaps even more donations, as ‘ all publicity is good publicity. ‘ A predominant or controversial image is often positive to the advert because it stands out so much and because the selling technique is “ impact central.

Also, charities often research the effects of the adverts on the target audience to see if it has the intended effect and would modify them if it did not have the intended effect. In addition, Barnado’s uses a rubbish motif to illustrate the mess in the character’s lives. Also, they also use red a lot in their advertisements, which is symbolic for danger and blood, as in the Emotional Death, campaign during 2001. In this campaign they also used names in the advertisements, which individualises the advert, and is more personal than if they did not use a name, i. e. the target audience may be more inclined to donate money if they are personal.

In addition, the Barnado’s uses red, white and blue in most of their advertisements, as these are their signature colours. Also, images used in charity advertisements may be connotative or suggestive to the audience, for example, the 2002 Barnado’s campaign was called Stolen Childhood where one advertisement showed a young girl sitting on a bed with only

underwear on, however, in the background there is man's legs lying down, which suggests that she is a child prostitute or that he is abusing her, which is extremely disturbing.

Another reason why the advert is so disturbing is because the children's faces have been digitally aged which suggests that abuse through prostitution steals children's lives. However, it is not only the image, which is important to advertisements, it is also the language devices they use. The text in charity advertisements is juxtaposed with the images to persuade the target audience to donate money to their cause. Also charity advertisements often use personal pronoun, or direct mode of address, as then it seems as if the advert is talking to you, therefore, it is aimed at the reader.

They also use imperative mode, or command form, which is urging the target audience to do something, for example, ' call now. ' In addition, in the Emotional Death campaign the text at the bottom of the advertisement was crossed out which is a graphic device to illustrate how the lives of the individuals depicted in the advertisements have been cancelled out by negative childhood experiences. However, this may be an enigmatic code to the target audience because they are wondering why the text has been crossed out.

They usually give the website address to promote their website so the target audience can find additional information on the charity, and also where they can also donate. This is an example of the use of new media technology and secondary media marketing. It may also be more convenient for the target audience to donate online. Charities may also advertise on commercial

television, especially leading up to Christmas. Therefore, they have to use slightly different techniques to print-based advertisement.

A successful charity campaign was for the Children's Society in the late 1980s, which shown a young homeless girl during Christmas. In addition, the music also represents her mood, as the music is sad and depressing, therefore, the lyrics of the song are parallel to the images we see on the screen. The song also highlights the season of when the advert was shown, Christmas, charities often advertise leading up to Christmas because people are often willing to donate more.

In my opinion, moving image advertisements can be more effective than print-based advertisements because they are able to use audio codes to set the tone and mood of the advert. In this advert, the advertising agency has used pathetic fallacy to illustrate her mood, as the weather is miserable with rain and wind which is the way the young girl is feeling. In this advert, they have also used a rubbish motif to symbolise the rubbish in her life. As print-based advertisements are, moving image advertisements are also emotive, persuasive and controversial. The reason for this as the advertisement suggests paedophilia activity.

For example, there is a scene where the car is crawling along a curb, which could be symbolic for curb crawling, and also the young girl stops and the driver is talking to the girl, which is also juxtaposed with the text at the bottom of the screen, which says " among other things" after mentioning children are often also subjected to issues such as violence, homelessness. The " among other things" is also connotative. This is very disturbing and

parents could sympathise with the advert, as they would not want that young girl to be their daughter or son.

What is also disturbing is the low-camera angle shot, which shows the girl's legs walking which makes the audience think she is older than what she actually is, so when we see her the audience feels disturbed, it could also be a point of view shot from the older man's perspective. They use technical codes such as tracking where they follow the young girl, could be symbolic for a journey in her life, and we see her crying which is emotive and therefore might persuade the audience to donate money to save young people like the young girl shown from a life on the streets.

In addition, the girl is wearing a white coat, which is symbolic for innocence, and purity, which is juxtaposed with the red light, which is symbolic for danger. Likewise, the moving image advertisements also use language devices to persuade the audience to donate money. For example, they use imperative mode in the same way Barnado's did; for example, " Please call" and devices such as direct mode of address or personal pronoun " We need your money. "

To conclude, charity advertising is both different and similar to other forms of advertising. They are different in that charity advertising persuades, or tries to persuade the target audience to give them money, rather than trying to persuade the audience to buy a product. However, it could also be argued that they are similar in that they both use controversial and sometimes emotive images. For example, Benetton's campaigns were extremely controversial.