

Advertising styles assignment

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**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Supposedly, this is what Alkali-Seltzer discovered with its comic commercials of the late sixties; “ I can’t believe I ate the whole thing,” the sad-faced husband lamented, and the audience cackled so much it forgot the antacid. Or, did not take it seriously. But used carefully, humor can punctuate some of the softer appeals and soften some of the harsher ones. When Emma says to the Fruit-of-the-Loom fruits, “ Hi, cuties. Watch doing in my laundry basket? We smile as our curiosity is assuaged along with hers. Bill Cowboy gets consumers tickled about the children in his Jell-O commercials, and strokes the need to nurture. An insurance company wants to invoke the need to feel safe, but does not want to leave readers with an unpleasant aftertaste; cartoonist Rowland Wilson creates an avalanche about to crush a gentleman who is saying to another, “ My insurance company? New England Life, of course why? The same tactic of humor undercutting threat is used in the cartoon commercials for Safest when the Pink Panther wanders from one disaster to another Often humor masks aggression: comedian Bob Hope in the outfit of a boxer promises to knock out the knock-knocks with Texaco; Rodney Dandified, who “ can’t get no respect,” invites aggression as the comic relief in Miller Elite commercials. Roughly fifteen percent of all advertisements incorporate a celebrity, almost always from the fields of entertainment or sports.

The approach can also prove troublesome for advertisers, for celebrities are human beings too, and fully capable of the most remarkable behavior if anything distasteful about them emerges, it is likely to reflect on the product. The advertisers making use of Anita Bryant and Billy Jean suffered several anxious moments. An untimely death can also react poorly on a

product. But advertisers are willing to take risks because celebrities can be such a good link between producers and performing the social role of introducer. There are several psychological needs these middlemen can play upon.

Let's take the product class of cameras and see how different celebrities can hit different needs. The need for guidance can be invoked by Michael London, who plays such a wonderful dad on "Little House on the Prairie"; when he says to buy Kodak equipment, many people listen. James Garner for Polaroid cameras is put in a similar authoritative role, so defined by a mocking spouse. The need to achieve is summoned up by Tracy Austin and other tennis stars for Canon AWE-I; the advertiser first makes sure we set these athletes playing to win.

When Cheryl Ties speaks up for Olympus cameras, it is the need for attention that is being targeted. The past and future, being outside our grasp, are exploited by advertisers as locales for the projection of needs. History can offer up heroes (and call up the need to achieve) or traditions (need for guidance) as well as art objects (need for aesthetic sensations). Nostalgia is a kindly version of personal history and is deployed by advertisers to rouse needs for affiliation and for guidance; the need to escape can come in here, too.

The same need to escape is sometimes the point of futuristic appeals but picturing the avian-grade can also be a way to get at the need to achieve. Analyzing Advertisements When analyzing ads yourself for their emotional appeals, it takes a bit of practice to learn to ignore the product information

(as well as one's own experience and feelings about the product). But that skill comes soon enough, so does the ability to quickly sort out from all the non-product aspects of an ad the chief element which is the most striking, the most likely to snag attention first and penetrate brains farthest.

The key to the appeal, this element usually presents itself centrally and forwardly to the reader or viewer. Another clue: the viewing angle which the audience has on the ad's subjects is informative. If the subjects are photographed or filmed from below and thus are looking down at you much as the Green Giant does, then the need to be guided is a good candidate for the ad's emotional appeal. If, on the other hand, the subjects are shot from above and appear deferential, as is often the case with children or female models, then other needs are being appealed to.

To figure out an ad's emotional appeal, it is wise to know (or have a good hunch about) who the targeted consumers are; this can often be inferred from the magazine or television show it appears in. This piece of information is a great help in determining the appeal and in deciding between two different interpretations. For example, if an ad features a partially undressed female, this would typically signal one appeal for readers of Penthouse (need for sex) and another for readers of Cosmopolitan (need for attention).

It would be convenient if every ad made just one appeal, were aimed at just one need. Unfortunately, things are often not that simple. A cigarette ad with a couple at the edge of a polo field is trying to hit both the need for affiliation and the need for prominence; depending on the attitude of the male, dominance could also be an ingredient in this. An ad for Chimer perfume

incorporates two photos: in the top one the lady is being commanding at a business luncheon (need to dominate), but in the lower one he is being busied (need for affiliation).

Better ads, however, seem to avoid being too diffused; in the study of post-World War II advertising described earlier, appeals grew more focused as the decades passed. As a rule of thumb, about sixty percent have two conspicuous appeals; the last twenty percent have three or more. Rather than looking for the greatest number of appeals, decoding ads is most productive when the loudest one or two appeals are discerned, since those are the appeals with the best chance of grabbing people's attention. DO They or Don't They?

Do the emotional appeals made in advertisements add up to the sinister manipulation of consumers? It is clear that these ads work. Attention is caught, communication occurs between producers and consumers, and sales result. It turns out to be difficult to detail the exact relationship between a specific ad and a specific purchase, or even between a campaign and subsequent sales figures, because advertising is only one of a host of influences upon consumption. Yet no one is fooled by this lack of perfect proof; everyone knows that advertising sells.

If this were not the case, then eight-fisted American businesses would not spend a total of fifty billion deflator ann. ally on these messages. But before anyone despairs that advertisers have our number to the extent that they can marshal us at will and march us like automatons to the check-out counters, we should recall the resiliency and obduracy of the American

consumer. Advertisers may have uncovered the softest spots in minds, but that does not mean they have found truly gaping apertures. There is no evidence that advertising can get people to do things contrary to their self-interests.

Despite all the finesse of advertisements, and all the subtle emotional tugs, the public resists the vast majority of the petitions. According to the marketing division of the A. C. Nielsen Company, a whopping seventy-five percent of all new products die within a year in the marketplace, the victims of consumer disinterest which no amount of advertising could overcome. The appeals in advertising may be the most captivating there are to be had, but they are not enough to entrap the Wiley consumer.

The key to understanding the discrepancy between, on the one and, the fact that advertising truly works, and, on the other, the fact that it hardly works, is to take into account the enormous numbers of people exposed to an ad. Modern-day communications permit an ad to be displayed to millions upon millions of individuals; if the smallest fraction of that audience can be moved to buy the product then the ad has been successful. When one percent of the people exposed to a television advertising campaign reach for their wallets, that could be one million sales, which may be enough to keep the product in production and the advertisements coming.

It is good to keep in mind that many of the purchases which might be credited to these ads are experienced as genuinely gratifying to the consumer. We sincerely like the goods or service we have bought and we may even like some of the emotional drapery that an ad suggests comes

with it. It has sometimes been noted that the most avid students of advertisements are the people who have just bought the product; they want to steep themselves in the associated imagery. This may be the reason that Americans, when polled, are not negative about advertising and do not disclose any sense of being MIS-used.