

Advertising in the modern society

[Media](#), [Advertising](#)



Advertising is the greatest art form of the 20th century. Today, advertising is one of the primary sources of information that people rely on in making purchasing decisions. The prevailing channels of advertisement in the 20th century include magazines, newspapers, radio, television, and Internet.

As much as people try to avoid it, people are experiencing advertisement saturation everywhere. People watch TV in restaurants they dine in, newspaper and magazine are readily available in parlors and waiting areas of clinics and hotels, billboards are displayed almost everywhere, people hear the radio even inside a cab, and many more. Furthermore, the easy access of Internet has heightened the growth of advertising sources as well.

Numerous doubts in the legitimacy and reliability of Internet information keep on mounting yet many people still believe what they see and read from it. Due to the stiff competition and increasing growth of businesses, companies together with the modern technologies are aggressively finding more ways to reach their respective consumer markets through aggressive advertising.

Advertising drives competition in the marketplace since it motivates consumer spending and increases businesses sales. However, many consumers are not reluctant participants in this system, they consciously and freely participate. They are fully aware of what is happening and could also distinguish between facts and false claims from the marketplace.

On the other hand, there are also consumers who unconsciously participate in the process. This is especially true to children who are not yet fully aware

of the strategies and effect of advertising. Advertising creates product images and perceptions for the consumer.

Depending upon the advertising message and the type of product advertised, consumers hope to satisfy their needs for self-actualization and self-esteem, their need to belong, and other symbolic meanings gained through the experience of consumer consumption.

Advertising artfully promotes materialism, expenditure, and typecasting that cause consumers to buy products that are unnecessary. People are being sold to the idea that happiness is dependent on being able to acquire material things.

As people become engrossed on how they could afford to buy the “in” products, children have also started to demand and dream certain toys, clothes or food brands. Businesses and advertisers have been coming up with aggressive marketing strategies catering to the present market. Children as young as two are now consumers. They dictate to parents their demands.

Also, merchandising aimed at children is worth billions of dollars. A popular trick that numerous advertisers employ is based on the “pester power”. This works by motivating the children to pester their parents into buying them things through advertisements seen on television, papers, or billboards.

The creation of marketing ploys in advertising is skillfully done like an artwork. For instance, McDonald’s “happy meal” marketing ploy has been drawing increasing number of children to eat in its fast food restaurants. The

offer of free toys with every happy meal is a tactic that works well to entice young consumers to buy McDonald products.

To ensure high demand, McDonald's free toys are tied up with the latest children's film or some other current craze. The highly effective advertising contributes to the growing child obesity epidemic in different countries of the world. The aggressive marketing would have been tolerable if they offered any truly healthy options.

Companies and corporations selling products or services are undoubtedly profit-driven. Although they may appear to promote responsible social awareness and changes, in most cases there are subliminal undertones that convey people to buy the products. There are companies who resort to emotional arousing advertisement to get the consumers' interest. An example of this is Benetton. At a glance, it appears to be touching and promoting social awareness through its different advertisements.

It has even won various awards. In its January 2000 "We, on Death Row" campaign showed actual faces of the convicts on the death row. This was done to create public awareness on capital punishment and the company's stand on death penalty. Many retailers were infuriated believing that Benetton exploited the issue on death penalty just to increase sales.

The progress of information and communication technologies enabled easy and rapid interaction between customer and advertiser. As a result, advertisers are increasingly depending on various modes of interactive technology to advertise and promote their products and services. A new

genre of advertising and marketing communications agencies has emerged with the advent of the Internet.

It provides the opportunity to instantly advertise, close a sale, and collect payment. Online shopping and E-commerce are becoming increasingly more pronounced. Internet is a big advantage in advertising for its low overall cost and large audience reach. There are two noticeable styles of Internet advertising according to the way they could be accessed. One is passive advertising, and the other is intrusive advertising.

Passive advertising is the voluntary consent of the computer user to access the information or advertisement. Intrusive advertising is using advertising by sending it to emails of consumers or through pop up messages. Business people are aware of the growing demand for Internet usage. As a result, the advertising industry has seen the great opportunities that it offers to businesses.

Much of what consumers buy are not the necessity that they need for the survival or even basic human needs. It is true that advertising has a major effect on consumers and society. Many advertisements are based on deception, misdirection and other highly refined but sharply unethical techniques.

Thus, the advertising industry must learn how to practice responsible advertisement since they have the power to influence consumers in their consumption capacity. However, it is not just the sole responsibility of the advertising industry.

Although it is true that advertising contributes to the shaping of the society, it is still the consumers who decide on how and what to purchase. It is also the consumers who dictate the consumer culture. Thus, consumers must create awareness in developing a movement of conscious consumers to protect the younger generation, the environment, and the society.