

What makes advertising effective



The aim of this report is finding the most correct answer to the question: what makes advertising effective. This issue is essential because it is the key for achieving -or not- the goals pursued by every company that invests in advertising. The general question has been divided in three areas, depending on the type of consumer's response that advertising aims to arouse: cognitive, affective or conative, according to the famous Hierarchy of Effects model proposed by Lavidge and Steiner in 1961. In addition, the report focuses on the role of Music in advertising, with the purpose to highlight how its use can help to achieve efficacy in advertising.

Five recommendations are identified through the report. Advertisers should first choose the media mix able to reach as many consumers as possible from the target audience (Ogilvy, 1985).

Using appealing creativity (Dahlen et Al, 2010) and increasing the frequency of the message (Pickton and Broderick, 2005) is required to pass successfully through all the selective phases of consumers' influence process, in order to make them memorize the contents of advertising. Music can be very helpful both for gaining consumers' attention and giving a mnemonic quality to the message (Sutherland, 2008).

An effective way to build an emotional link with consumers is referring to common culture (Godin, 1999). Jingles are able to involve consumers, at the point that they can become part of consumers' cultural background of people (Sutherland, 2008).

It is necessary to understand how the purchasing decision is taken by consumers in order to effectively affect their behaviour; the FCB matrix by

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Vaughn (1986) identifies four types of purchasing process and suggests the quantity and quality of information to provide for each of them in order to have an impact on the decision making process. Since music sets up an entertainment mood, its use appears to be appropriate for the feel products and not for the think products (Arens et Al, 2011).

As most of these factors refer to the ability of understanding consumers' mind, the report has confirmed that psychology represents a basic support for marketing functions as the making of effective advertising (Foxall et Al, 1998).

INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to identify the factors able to make advertising effective.

The research starts stating a basic condition then, since " efficacy is the ability to bring about the intended result" (Oxford dictionary, 2007), the report analyses which are the marketing objectives pursued by advertising.

The Hierarchy of Effects Model proposed by Lavidge and Steiner (1961) is considered as pivotal in the communication process. People progressively express three kinds of response to a received message: cognitive, affective, conative (also known as the think-feel-do process).

Accordingly, the report uses a tripartite approach in order to better isolate and identify the factors that make advertising successful whether the response sought from consumer is cognitive, affective or conative.

The report then operates a specific analysis on the role of Music in advertising, showing how music can be a very useful tool to reach efficacy (Sutherland, 2008) for all the three pursued responses shown previously.

Recommendations and Conclusions about the topic complete the analysis.

Practical examples chosen among the most famous companies provide evidence to the theoretical analysis; further examples are reported in the appendices to enrich the content.

This research has been performed through the method of the literary review: books, papers and articles of famous Marketers and Psychologists are used as sources.

A Basic Condition

Advertising is undoubtedly a central part of promotion, but compared to the 4 Ps of marketing mix theorized by McCartney (1960), it represents only an aspect of the marketing effort made by the company (Pickton and Broderick, 2005).

To reach and maximize the efficacy of advertising, firms should develop a deep know-how of their market, becoming what Llambin (2008) calls market-driven companies. This is achievable only by large investments in market researches, in order to know as much as possible about consumers and competitors. As Cowles and Kiecker stated (1998), “ market research is important not only to identify the most profitable target segments, but also to develop a message content that is appealing to them, and to identify the

most effective and efficient marketing communications mix elements and media”.

Companies have to focus all their functions to the market: only Market-driven companies will be really able to set the most effective advertising (Llambin, 2008).

The HoE model: three responses to be aroused

As “ advertising is a non-personal form of communication” (Fill, 2009), marketing can be supported by the studies on the communication process.

Among them, this report focuses on the famous hierarchy of effects model proposed by Lavidge and Steiner (1961); when the advertising message reaches the consumer, following the steps of the well-known SMRC communication model (Berlo, 1960), the receiver responds by progressively undertaking three phases: the cognitive phase as first, then the affective and finally the conative.

Specifically, consumers will pass through these sequential stages:

Awareness, Knowledge, Liking, Preference, Conviction, Purchase. [Figure A]

Figure A : Sequential stages of Lavidge and Steiner model (1961)

Source: <http://www.learnmarketing.net/Hierarchy%20Of%20Effects.jpg>

Using this tripartite approach, the marketing objectives become more definite and therefore it is possible to identify more precisely the key factors for achieving efficacy; firms should then set up a specific advertising

campaign targeted for each of the three macro-responses they want to arouse in the audience (Lavidge and Steiner, 1961).

The following three Mc Donald's adverts clearly show this differentiated approach.

In the first one [Figure B], nothing but the apposition of the two logos (the wi-fi one made by chips) is used: since this ad wants to make the audience learn the service provided, it refers to the cognitive phase.

[http://4. bp. blogspot.](http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_I9IjuLPsXSs/S0phHAFT6fl/AAAAAAAAAJ9s/TR7j4eEnYWQ/s400/Cool+and+Beautiful+McDonald%E2%80%99s+Advertising+10.jpg)

[com/_I9IjuLPsXSs/S0phHAFT6fl/AAAAAAAAAJ9s/TR7j4eEnYWQ/s400/Cool+and+Beautiful+McDonald%E2%80%99s+Advertising+10. jpg\)](http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_I9IjuLPsXSs/S0phHAFT6fl/AAAAAAAAAJ9s/TR7j4eEnYWQ/s400/Cool+and+Beautiful+McDonald%E2%80%99s+Advertising+10.jpg)

Figure B. Source: [http://4. bp. blogspot.](http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_I9IjuLPsXSs/S0phHAFT6fl/AAAAAAAAAJ9s/TR7j4eEnYWQ/s400/Cool+and+Beautiful+McDonald%E2%80%99s+Advertising+10.jpg)

[com/_I9IjuLPsXSs/S0phHAFT6fl/AAAAAAAAAJ9s/TR7j4eEnYWQ/s400/Cool+and+Beautiful+McDonald%E2%80%99s+Advertising+10. jpg](http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_I9IjuLPsXSs/S0phHAFT6fl/AAAAAAAAAJ9s/TR7j4eEnYWQ/s400/Cool+and+Beautiful+McDonald%E2%80%99s+Advertising+10.jpg)

In the second one [Figure C], the baby approaching the hamburger evokes feelings of affection for the food offered by the company; an home atmosphere is aroused. Emotional persuasion is the first aim for the affective phase.

[http://www. breastfeedingsymbol.](http://www.breastfeedingsymbol.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2007/08/mcdonalds.jpg)

[org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2007/08/mcdonalds. jpg](http://www.breastfeedingsymbol.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2007/08/mcdonalds.jpg)

Figure C. Source: [http://www. breastfeedingsymbol. org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2007/08/mcdonalds. jpg](http://www.breastfeedingsymbol.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2007/08/mcdonalds.jpg)

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In the third one [Figure D], the invitation to take an action is extremely clear: consumers should have breakfast at Mc Donald's on Mondays, convinced by the free coffee. This ad aims to induce a change in the consumers' behaviour: it refers to the conative phase.

<http://www.mcdonaldsintl.com/images/FreeCoffeeMondays-graphic.jpg>

Figure D. Source: <http://www.mcdonaldsintl.com/images/FreeCoffeeMondays-graphic.jpg>

The main limit of HoE is its rigidity: consumers do not always undertake these steps sequentially, because of their irrationality; however, the existence of these three kinds of responses is widely accepted also among the critics (Barry and Howard, 1990).

Accordingly, it is possible to reformulate the central question in a more detailed way: which elements are necessary in advertising, in order to improve the company's performance in brand awareness (1), in the affective relationship with the consumers (2), and in the sales (3)?

1 – Cognitive response

The goal of these campaigns is to ensure that customers are properly aware of the brand; making clear the brand positioning is the main aim (Egan, 2007).

Reach is the first key factor. Pelsmacker (2007) defines it as “ the number or percentage of people who are expected to be exposed to the advertiser's message during a specified period” .

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Reach plays the either/or role in the SMRC process: if the company does not reach the consumers, no response can be aroused. Therefore, the choice of the most appropriate media mix to reach the target segments becomes crucial for the success of the advertising campaign (Ogilvy, 1985).

According to the selective influence process theories, people play a very active role as receivers in the communication process (Karlz and Lazarsfeld, 1955). There are unconscious and social intervening variables which affect the final internalization of the message. Since only the memorized information is able to affect the consumers' behaviour the ability to pass through the selective phases of the consumer influence process is the second key factor (Karlz and Lazarsfeld, 1955).

To win the receiver's attention, it is required to overtake what Wundt (1896) calls the absolute threshold, that is the minimum psychic intensity an individual needs for reacting to a stimulus.

For this reason, the effort to provide appealing creativity to the advert gains great importance (Dahlen et Al, 2010).

Since the traditional media today are overcrowded by adverts (Levinson, 2007), appealing creativity can make an advert emerge to the consumers' eyes.

A clear example can be represented by the winner of the " Best Use of Blu Tac in a Shop Window Postcard Space" category in the Chip Shop Awards 2012. Clearasil posted a completely and intensely white postcard: impossible not to see.

Figure E. Source: <http://www.chipshopawards.com/>

Clearasil is a brand of beauty products against skin imperfections (www.clearasil.co.uk)

Use of creativity can also have negative impacts: it is difficult to define the line between great effect and great scandal (Godin, 1999). [see Appendix I]

In choosing how often to transmit the advertising message, psychology supports marketing once again (Foxall et Al, 1998). I. V. Pavlov developed the notion of “conditioned reflex” (1927): opposed to the innate reflex it is a learned reaction to a positive or negative stimulus.

In marketing, this means that the repetition of a message will increase its understanding; that’s why frequency plays a key role. Frequency “measures the number of times, on average, that a member of the target audience is exposed to a message or, more accurately, to the media” (Pickton and Broderick, 2005).

Increasing the frequency helps making the advertise effective but, according to the Curve of Wundt (1896), if the intensity of the stimulus exceeds a certain limit it is even possible to arouse anxiety, nervousness and irritation in the receivers.

2 – Affective response

Here, the main goal is to create an affective link with consumers, in order to persuade them appreciating the brand and making a preference for it (Fill, 2009).

The more the content of a message is associated to paradigmatic knowledge, the more immediate and simple is its decoding by the receiver (Grandori, 1999): that's why advertising should carry associations recalling to the common culture to be effective in building an emotional link with the audience (Godin, 1999). Among all the cultural aspects, political studies have shown that the more compelling ones are common roots ; common habits ; famous figures (Gabrielsen, 2010).

The use of cultural associations can be clearly found in Chrysler's spot for the launch of the new 200 model, shown during the 2011 edition of Super Bowl. The core of the message highlights the origin of the machine, manufactured in Detroit: " (...) That's who we are. That's our story. (...) Because when it comes to luxury, it's as much about where it's from, as who it's for. Now we're from America, but this isn't New York City, or the Windy city.(...) And we're certainly no one's Emerald city. This is the Motor city. And this is what we do. The new Chrysler 300 has arrived. Imported from Detroit."

[see Appendix II]

Casting famous figures (VIP) as testimonial can provide good advantages: a VIP well known among the target audience can better win consumers' attention; it allows to make the advertising message more personal, exploiting the VIP's familiarity with the consumers ; people will associate the appreciated qualities of the VIP to the product. (Arens et Al, 2011). [see Appendix III]

Another effective way to involve the audience is taking part at the big events widely enjoyed and cherished by people, as the recent Olympics in London 2012. [see Appendix IV]

Thanks to these associations, every time that consumers get in touch with the reminded cultural aspect, they will also remember the linked brand (Godin, 1999).[see Appendix V]

This cultural approach shows some limits. Since culture is a sphere of meanings related to the past, the new products which aim to highlight innovation as their core quality can't take the best benefits from cultural associations (Ogilvy, 1985). Moreover, relying on VIP means accepting the risk of linking to them the name of the brand also when something negative is referred to them (Arens et Al, 2011). [see Appendix VI]

3 – Conative response

In order to effectively affect consumers' behaviour with advertising, it is necessary to understand how their decision making process works. The model developed by Richard Vaughn for Foote Cone and Belding in 1980, known as the FCB matrix, considers it as driven by two variables: the level of consumer involvement (high-low) and the type of approach to the purchase (rational-emotional). (McWilliam, 1997; Vaughn, 1980 and 1986).

The result is the identification of 4 macro-type of purchasing process, each one requiring different kinds of information to be affected: differences are both in quantity - high and detailed or low and summarized- and quality - emotional or rational - of information. (Vaughn, 1986).

In Figure F, some exemplar products are placed in the 4 quadrants of the FCB matrix.

Figure F. Source: Vaughn, 1980

Therefore, advertising can be effective only if it provides the consumers with the kind of information they look for in their decision making process, this one being identified by the quadrant the product is placed in. (Vaughn, 1986). The analysis of 4 different decision making processes is now addressed, referring to the model of Vaughn (1986):

High involvement / rational. People look for the real facts, they need to gain the confidence they are doing the right choice (e. g. Mortgage). The way to be effective is to highlight all the product competitive benefits as well as the company know-how, and to provide the consumers with positive feedbacks .

[Figure G][http://www.okeefeestateagents.](http://www.okeefeestateagents.com/_microsites/paul_okeefe/docs/images/homepage/rightColAdvert/need-a-mortgage.jpg)

[com/_microsites/paul_okeefe/docs/images/homepage/rightColAdvert/need-a-mortgage. jpg](http://www.okeefeestateagents.com/_microsites/paul_okeefe/docs/images/homepage/rightColAdvert/need-a-mortgage.jpg)

Figure G. Source: [http://www.okeefeestateagents.](http://www.okeefeestateagents.com/_microsites/paul_okeefe/docs/images/homepage/rightColAdvert/need-a-mortgage.jpg)

[com/_microsites/paul_okeefe/docs/images/homepage/rightColAdvert/need-a-mortgage. jpg](http://www.okeefeestateagents.com/_microsites/paul_okeefe/docs/images/homepage/rightColAdvert/need-a-mortgage.jpg)

High involvement / emotional. Consumers want to learn about and feel the experience (e. g. Holidays). Companies should provide content rich media with compelling personal feedbacks, music and everything else able to make the consumers taste the experience. [Figure H]

Figure H. Source: www.adcracker.com

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Low involvement / rational. People usually buy by habit (e. g. toothpaste).

Underlining the incentives to change habits as sale coupons can be effective.

[Figure I]<http://c3240dd96f54819fb6f2->

90846526673b19d9a04c27097b58cb86. r6. cf2. rackcdn.

com/2011/09/optic-white-coupon. jpg

Figure I. Source: [www. cuckooforcoupondeals. com](http://www.cuckooforcoupondeals.com)

Low involvement / emotional. People often look for sensory or psychological gratification (e. g. Movies). Showing sensory rich imagery can be successful.

[Figure J][http://www. filmjabber.](http://www.filmjabber.com/)

com/movie-blog/wp-content/uploads/2007/11/the-eye-poster. jpg

Figure J. Source: [http://www. filmjabber.](http://www.filmjabber.com/)

com/movie-blog/wp-content/uploads/2007/11/the-eye-poster. jpg

The limit of the FCB matrix is the difficulty to plot the product in the right quadrant, because of the inconsistencies between consumers' and companies' perceptions of it (Dahlen et Al, 2010).

Moreover, as marketing environment is rapidly changing, products and services can fast move from one coordinate to another in the brand image of consumers (Fill, 2009).

The Role of Music in Advertising

Music can be a very useful tool to reach efficacy in advertising, whether the aim is to arouse a cognitive, affective or conative response in the consumers (Sutherland, 2008).

The analysis aims to show how the use of music can aid or hinder the effective factors identified in the general part.

COGNITIVE PURPOSE

Music can help to win consumers' attention: reproducing a song well-known among the target audience or a catchy rhythm greatly helps to get its attentions (Sutherland, 2008).

The use of creativity in music can be found in the production of jingles, where companies set their own words to Music. “ Jingles are among the best -and worst- ad messages produced. Done well, they can bring enormous success, well beyond the non-musical commercial. Done poorly, they can waste the advertising budget and annoy audiences beyond belief” (Arens et Al, 2011).

As an example, in the 1970s Coca-Cola was so successful with its jingle “ I'd like to buy the world a Coke” that it was then extended and released to become an international chart hit called “ I'd like to Teach the World to Sing” (Sutherland, 2008).

Moreover, what Sutherland (2008) calls the three Rs – rhyme, rhythm and repetition – give words a mnemonic quality, making the message more catchy and enduring in memory.

AFFECTIVE PURPOSE

Research has shown that the positive mood created by music makes consumers more receptive to an ad message (Belch and Belch, 2009). When words are set to the music, a desire for repetition can be created: that's why

jingles are able to involve consumers, at the point that they can become themselves part of the cultural background of people (Sutherland, 2008).

A chart of the “ top 10 jingles of the century” has been made, according to people’s preferences: a prove of the attachment consumers have towards them (Belch and Belch, 2009).

Figure K. Source: Belch and Belch, 2009

The case of Oscar Mayer’s spots clearly shows the emotional power of jingles in advertising. [see Appendix VII]

Jingles are used less frequently today, replaced by an increasing use of current or classic pop songs: in the age of the technologic way to live music companies must be careful not to appear old-fashionable while using jingles (Belch and Belch, 2009).

CONATIVE PURPOSE

Music can also affect the way people behave, but since it better vehicles an emotional message, it seems to be effective especially -if not only- with the “ feel products” (Sutherland, 2008).

A great example of how music can be focused on action is the jingle created by the pizza chain “ Pizza, Pizza” in Toronto: the company put its phone number in the lyrics, so that Toronto residents could memorize it easily. [see Appendix VIII]

On the other hand, music causes what Sutherland (2008) calls the “ wash-over effect”: when we listen to lyrics, we process the message as an

experience that we can enjoy or not rather than judging the reliability of its meaning. The entertainment mood set up by music is inappropriate when consumers want to focus on the rational information, as for “think products” (Arens et Al, 2011).

As the analysis of consumers’ response to music in advertising carried by Oakes (2007) shows, reaching a congruity between music and advertising in mood, genre, image and tempo contributes to the efficacy of an advertisement by enhancing recall, brand attitude, affective response and purchase intention.

Since the negotiation of the license rights often needs large sums, marketers should carefully decide if and in which way music can be coherent with the marketing campaign, in order to avoid an expensive disorientation of consumers (Belch and Belch, 2009).

RECOMMENDATIONS

As shown through the report, advertisers should first ascertain to find the media mix that will maximize the reach of the audience (Ogilvy, 1985).

Passing successfully through all the selective phases of consumers’ influence process is necessary to make them memorize a message (Karlz and Lazarsfeld, 1955). Concretely, this can be achieved by using appealing creativity (Dahlen et Al, 2010) and by increasing the frequency of the message (Pickton and Broderick, 2005). The use of Music can be very effective both for winning consumers’ attention and adding a mnemonic quality to the message (Sutherland, 2008).

When aiming to build an emotional link with consumers, a successful choice is including associations recalling to common culture in the message sent to consumers (Gabrielsen, 2010). Jingles can be such able to involve consumers, that they can become themselves part of the cultural background of people (Sutherland, 2008). To effectively affect consumers' behaviour, advertisers must understand how the purchasing decision for their products is taken by consumers; the FCB matrix by Vaughn (1986) suggest the quantity and quality of information to provide for each of the 4 types of purchasing process identified by crossing the level of involvement (high or low) and the kind of approach (emotional or rational). Music can be effective for feel products, but not for think products, since it sets up an entertainment mood inappropriate for rational decisions (Arens et Al, 2011).

The overall recommendation for companies is to consider advertising as a process that involves the entire business as connected with it by a close cause-effect relationship: when an advert is not effective, it can be the symptom that there's something wrong in the marketing decision making process, or it can be the cause leading to future problems in the relationship with the market (Llambin, 2008).

CONCLUSIONS

It has been shown how a tripartite approach to the central question “ which factors can make advertising effective?” is able to better analyse the issue and to define an accurate answer.

Since all the factors except the maximisation of Reach refer to the ability of reading consumers' mind, the report has confirmed how psychology can be a

great support for marketing functions and, specifically, for making advertising effective (Foxall et Al, 1998).

That's why Market-driven companies, which have developed a deep knowledge of their consumers thanks to large investments in market researches, have the concrete possibility to apply these factors in the most effective way (Llambin, 2008).

APPENDICES

As an example, the historical testimonial used by Danish Frisbee Sports Union for the 2012 campaign will be definitely able to catch consumers' attention, but it can reasonably arouse perplexity and disgust in a high number of people.

Source: <http://www.chipshopawards.com/>

Nestlè chose to set a totally VIP-focused campaign to promote Nespresso brand: George Clooney has being appeared in every adverts of the famous espresso machine, with the aim to take advantages from his style and world-wide popularity.

Source of Image: <http://www.generation-flux.com/images/Nespresso-site.jpg>

A great example is represented by the marketing campaigns of P&G, created to promote their laundry products Ariel in UK and Tide in USA during the Olympics.

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The compelling references on the athletic competition were present in both the spots: " Before the Gold, Silver, and Bronze, it's the red, white and blue. At the Olympic Games, it's not the color you go home with that matters, it's the colors you came in. When colors mean this much, trust them to Ariel (UK)/ Tide (USA)."

The meaning of the final sentence " Proud keeper of Our Country's Colours" was certainly influenced by the images of the athletes shown in the video: for Ariel, a high number of British participants ; for Tide, almost only American players.

Sources: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DoF9DROHYnU> Tide for USA;
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jipn-MGg0DA> Ariel for UK.

A great example of the power of cultural associations can be found in politics. The ex-Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi, considered the biggest innovator in the Italian political marketing - in a negative or positive way depending on the political conviction - (Palmieri, 2012), named his first party " Forza Italia" (1994), that is the same slogan used by Italian people as an incitement for the national football team. The result was a " widespread embarrassment" (ibidem) when people not voting for Berlusconi wanted to support the football team, but they had to shout the name of his party: they could not manage not to think about this political association.

Cirio is an Italian company founded in 1856 specialized in canned food, especially in tomato paste. (www.cirio.co.uk) Cirio managers weren't happy to learn that their testimonial Gerard Depardieu was founded drunk and

misbehaving on a plane just two weeks later the advertising campaign was launched.

The spot is accessible here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ReGPNs-HfH0>

The episode reported: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/celebritynews/8706992/Gerard-Depardieu-accused-of-urinating-on-floor-of-plane.html>

Oscar Mayer is a brand owned by Kraft Foods. At the end of last century the company held local auditions in search of American children to continue the 30-year tradition of singing the catchy “ bologna” and “ wiener” jingles: they were such known that Oscar Mayer decided to be self-referential in order to best cultivate the relationship with the consumers.

Thompson, S. 1997. “ Promotions: Nostalgia Bolognese”, Brandweek, April 14, 1997

Original videos are available here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rmPRHjd3uHI> (Bologna);

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aNddW2xmZp8&feature=related> (Wieners)

The example and the text of the jingle are reported in Sutherland (2008, p 122): “ nine-six-seven, eleven eleven / phone Pizza Pizza, hey hey hey!”