

The the past. if for no
other



The health department popularises family planning through advertising. Even labour organisations have used advertising to make their viewpoints known to the public at large. In fact, it is reasonable to say that promotion now plays a larger role in business than it ever did in the past. If for no other reason than that it is an activity that employs several thousands of people, advertising assumes real economic importance. More importantly, however, is the fact that effective advertising has offered to society benefits not otherwise available. For example, the criticism that “ advertising cost too much” views an individual expense item in isolation.

It fails to consider the possible effect of advertising on other categories of expenditure. Advertising strategies that increase the number of units sold stimulate economies in the production process. The production costs assigned do each unit of output are lowered. Lower consumer prices then allow these products to become available to more people.

Similarly, the price of newspapers, professional sports, radio and TV programmes, and the like might be prohibitive without advertising to share the expense. In short, advertising pays for many of the enjoyable entertainment and educational aspects of contemporary life, as well as lower product costs. The criticism that “ most advertising messages are tasteless” and that “ advertising contributes nothing to society’s well being” sometimes ignore the fact that there is no commonly accepted set of standards or priorities within our social framework. We live in a varied economy characterised by consumer segments with differing needs, wants and aspirations. What is tasteless to one group may be quite informative to

another. An advertising strategy generally suffers from the averaging problems that escape many of its critics.

The one generally accepted standard in our society is freedom of choice for the consumer; customer buying decisions will eventually determine what an acceptable practice in the market place is. Advertising has become an important factor in the campaigns to achieve such societal-oriented objectives as the discontinuance of smoking, family planning, physical fitness, and the elimination of drug abuse. Advertising performs an informative and educative task that makes it extremely important in the functioning of the modern Indian society.