

Communication strategy: the benetton group



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Benetton, the Italian retailer was engaged in the manufacturing and distribution of clothing, undergarments, shoes, cosmetics and accessories. Benetton also licensed its brand name to various manufacturers of sunglasses, stationery, cosmetics, linens, watches, toys, steering wheels, golf equipment, designer condoms and luggage. This group was a very important brand that included United Colors of Benetton. Benetton spent millions in the market by advertising, purchasing the latest styles, promotion and operation cost of the goods and services. Benetton group is presented in 120 countries around the world (Overview, 1). Its business is fashion and they are based the style, quality, and you can see that clearly through their brands. There are around six thousands store all over the world that offers the high quality customer service and products.

United Colors of Benetton, is a global brand known all over the world, it has a high quality of style that is combined with color, and fashion (Our Brand, 1). They offer a wide variety of products that are for all ages and genders. They carry new items based on the season of the year. Benetton Group focuses on the Evolution of Communication Strategy. They combine cultures into their industry and offer opportunity for creative growth and multicultural interchange. They develop cultural and social communication projects in the area of design, visual communication, photography, interaction, video, music and publishing under the guidance of experts (Fabrica, 1).

Advertising objectives are the communication tasks to be accomplished with specific customers that a company is trying to reach during a particular time frame (Advertising Objectives, 1). A company that usually advertises is trying to reach out to the consumers through the four main advertising objectives;

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trail, continuity, brand as witching, and switchback. Trail objective is to encourage customers to make an initial purchase of a new product (Advertising Objectives, 1). Companies will typically employ creative advertising strategies in order to cut through other competing advertisements. Continuity advertising is a strategy to keep customers using a particular product (Advertising Objectives, 1). Existing customers are targeted and are usually provided new and different information about a product that is designed to build consumer loyalty. Brand switching companies subscribe to this advertising objective when they want to get back former users of their product brand (Advertising Objectives, 1). A common strategy is for a company to compare product price or quality in order to convince customers to switch to its product brand. Switchback companies subscribe to this advertising objective when they want to get back former users of their product brand (Advertising Objectives, 1). A company might highlight new product features, price reductions, or other important information in order to get former customers of its product switchback.

Advertising is a form of communication intended to persuade its viewers, readers or listeners to take some action (Advertising, 1). It usually includes the name of a product or service and how the product or service could benefit the consumer, and persuade the consumer to purchase the product or consume that particular item. Advertising has helped increase production and the industry in the late 19th and early 20th century, many companies use advertising today, it helps benefit a company by getting their goods or service out there. Advertising can be found in all sorts of material such as

newspaper, magazines, television, radio, press, online (pop-ups), and e-mail (Advertising, 1). Advertising can be found outdoors on billboards, in stores, and even on motor vehicles. Some key parts to when consumers decided to purchase a good or service they look at the price, products quality, promotion, and place.

Shock Advertising is a type of advertising generally regarding as one that “deliberately, rather than inadvertently, startles and offends its audience by violating norms for social values and personal ideals” (Stock Advertising, 1). They use graphic images and slogans to highlight the goods and service in which they are offering to the consumers. Shock advertising is designed principally to break through the advertising “clutter” to capture attention and create buzz, and also attract an audience to a certain brand or bring awareness to a certain public issue, health issue, or cause (Stock Advertising, 1). Shock advertising was created by Benetton, the Italian clothing retailers which created the line United Colors of Benetton, and advertisement in the late 1980s. Shock advertisements can be shocking and offensive for a variety of reasons, and violation of social, religious, and political norms can occur in many different ways (Stock Advertising, 1). This included someone own personal traditions, practice, beliefs, and themselves. Several of their product or service messages could be shocking or offensive to the public. Some effects on the consumers are the shocking content in an advertisement significantly increases attention, benefits memory, and positively influences behavior (Stock Advertising, 1). Studies show that more consumers are going to remember the shocking advertisement content over the advertisement that is not shocking.

Benetton has come under particular use for the shock advertisement in its campaigns, leading to public outrage and consumers complaints. However there are several issues about this campaign that is has highlighted awareness of social issues, human rights, civil liberties, and environmental rights. Some advertising that displays shock advertisement are in figure 1, it features teenagers and kids from culturally diverse nation. They are wear the products of Benetton and are spreading cultural diffusion and it is showing the different culture can share the same product all over the world. Figure 2, it features two black boys kissing each other, one has a USSR flag and the other has a US flag. The theme in this photo is that you can battle with each other but all colors are equal, just as all men are equal. Figure 3, it features two superstars Joan of Arc and Marilyn Monroe. Benetton changed their slogan to United Superstars of Benetton. Figure 4, it features a wolf and a lamb that are very similar but different at the same time. The slogan for this one is United Friends of Benetton. Figure 5, it features a black and white kid facing each other on the potties, this shows the personality tests, and that if one can do it the other one can do it too. Figure 6, it features a man holding a baby that is still attached to the umbilical cord, this is intend as an anthem to life. Figure 7, it features an African American holding a human bone behind his back; this symbolizes the meaning of life. Figure 8, it features three hearts that say white, black, yellow. This means that everyone is the same inside no matter what the outside skin color is everyone has similarities and differences. Figure 9, it features Leroy Orange, who is sentenced to death; the slogan for this is We Call it Death Row. Figure 10, it features a women that volunteers international. Figure 11, features teenagers wearing Benetton's clothing and those issues like war, religion,

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race, birth, immigration, ecology, travel, slavery, and etc don't matter because we are all the same on the inside but are characteristics are different on the outside. Figure 12, features colors 53, the race issue that blacks are different than whites. Figure 13, features a kindergarten class mixed of Jewish and Arab kids, they are considered to be enemies based on their race and beliefs (All figures were taken from Benetton Case, 1-19)

The pictures show different campaigns and they all have different meanings but are part of Benetton's famous advertisements. Some campaigns were Globe Campaign (1986), Israeli and Arab (1987), A black man and a white man hands linked together (1989), Black and White Hand (1990), Campaign of (1991), War Cemetery (1991), Tongues (1991), Girl with Doll (1992), A bird stuck in oil (1992), Killing in Kosovo (1992), A boat overcrowded with Albanians (1992), a man dying with AIDS (1992), an empty chair for execution (1992), Bosnia Soldier (1994), Faces of AIDS (1994), Food for Life (2003), Food for Peace (2003), and Food for Work (2003). All the campaigns are very graphic and symbolize the different situations that are occurring all around the globe. Political, mental, emotional, and social problems of the different kinds of people occur all over the world. (All campaigns were taken from Benetton Case, 1-19)

The pros and cons of stock advertising are it can put an image in a consumers mind that they will remember more than a normal advertisement. Shocking advertisement can be offensive for a variety of different reasons and ways. Stock advertisement is very graphic and shows the consumer the true meaning, I mean when you look at the pictures shown the image is horrible and consumers will really think about what they are seeing.

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Consumers will see there are several products, services, or messages that could all be considered controversial and offensive advertising because of the products or messages that the advertisements are selling (Shocking Advertising, 1).

Oliviero Toscani has defended Benetton's use of shock advertising by noting that it constitutes nothing less than a debate between advertising and art. He argues that potentially offensive images are acceptable in the world of art and journalism while in other realms such as advertising they are not. I agree with Toscani's position he has many clear points on this topic. Oliviero Toscani is an Italian photographer, best known worldwide for designing controversial advertising campaigns for Italian brand Benetton, from 1982 to 2000 (Oliviero Toscani, 1). Two images that meant the most to him are a man lying in a bed dying of AIDS with his family and friends around him and the other one is three identical hearts with white, black and yellow written on them showing that everyone is the same on the inside but different on the outside. The point of this graphic advertising is to show that the group is built on the multiculturalism prevalent at that time and in Benetton's campaigns, while remaining editorially dependent from Benetton (Oliviero Toscani, 1). Yes, the advertising is very graphic but it gets a message of to the consumers about the products, services or message that Benetton's group is selling.

Another company that uses shock advertising is PETA. PETA stands for the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. The type of companies that would use this type of shock advertising are the companies that want to get a message off to the consumers about the product, service or message they

are trying to sell. PETA is focusing its attention to the four areas which are; factories, farms, laboratories, clothing trade and entertainment industry, PETA is an organization for animals (PETA, 1). PETA shows graphic pictures to show consumers what is happening to the animals all over the world and how they are being treated today in the society around the world. PETA is only one of the many companies that uses Shock Advertising, because it helps get the point across to consumers about the products or services they are using.

I do agree with Benetton's decision to drop the use of stock ads and return to the more conventional ads. He can still get the message out there without hurting a consumers values and shock advertising is very offensive in a variety of reasons and ways. Benetton's advertising can allow consumers to view the product and services without being as graphic and having horrifying images. Advertising can be very helpful to a business and can allow businesses to spread their products and services in a friendly manner without hurting your consumer's belief or values.

Benetton Group of Evolution Communication Strategy is a great study that shows how advertising can affect a business strategy. Benetton is a large advertising company that focuses on its products and logo. Advertising is an easy way to persuade its viewers, readers or listeners to take some action, it usually includes the product or service that could benefit the consumer and persuade them to purchase the product and show them they have a uses for the product or service. Advertising is used to generate an increase in consumption of a company's products or services through the process of branding.

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Benetton Group mainly used Shock advertising before they switched to the normal type of advertising. Shock advertising was used mainly because it impacts the consumer's way of life and their thinking. Shocking advertising is a type of advertising generally regarded as one that "deliberately, rather than inadvertently, startles and offends its audience by violating norms for social values and personal ideals (Shocking Advertising, 1). Benetton Group was mainly advertising to help show the consumer's their products, services or messages through graphic images. Most consumers remember the shocking images that offended the public by several products, services, or messages that could be deemed shocking. Benetton's Group had a very successful business and the strategies they used in their business seemed to help their product and services.