MODERN ADVERTISING AS A COMPULSIVE MARKETING TECHNIQUE

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Abstract:

Advertising plays an integral part in the successful marketing of any product. Many ways have been devised for decades in order to appeal the customer consciousness. Print media was such a popular form, which gave way to newspaper advertisements. With the advancement in technology, television ads became so popular which goes on changing its styles even today with respect to the changing trends in the market. But resolutions are always wide in the postmodern world where the corporate firms try every means to suit their needs, in a way that even alters the mindset of the customer. In an age where online media and sources play a prominent role in our day-to-day living, there are only very few youngsters who have never browsed at least once for any of their personal purposes. This lifestyle has been taken a great advantage by the corporate community. This paper attempts to analyze the methods and techniques used by corporate firms to attract customers via online media through a psychological process in an era of technological advancements. Furthermore, it explores the postcolonial and cultural implications of Advertisements as well.

Keywords: *Market, Media, Persuasion and Power.*

Advertising plays is a form of marketing communication which could either be audio or visual in form, with an openly sponsored non-personal message which promotes in selling a product. Images and similar visual elements could convey information, afford pleasure, influence style and even determine consumption and mediate power relations.

Many ways have been devised for decades in order to appeal the customer consciousness. Print media was such a popular form, which gave way to newspaper advertisements. In the 18th century Europe where the towns and cities of the Middle Ages began to grow, not all people were able to read and write. Hence, signs and images were used in association with trade. It was by the latter half of the 18th century that advertisements began to appear in weekly newspapers in England. With the introduction of printing press, books and newspapers became much affordable and advertisements became common with an aim to promote these publications. However, false advertising and so-called "quack" advertisements became a problem, which ushered in the regulation of advertising content.

The first ever known effective form of advertising was put forward by Pears soap, under the idea and creativity of Thomas J Barrat from London, whom we call "the father of modern advertising". It included targeted slogans, images and phrases like "Good Morning. Have you used Pears soap?" which aimed at grabbing attention. Barret always understood the market and constantly reevaluated it with the change in tastes and fashions, telling that the advertiser has to change with them.

During 1920s, radio stations were introduced and various programs were organized by manufacturers with an intention to sell more radios. Initially, several non-profit organizations too set up radio stations, but later on, the practice of sponsoring programs was popularized which made a great realization to the station owners to earn more money through selling multiple sponsorships. Soon after the 1950s, television network flourished and programs began gaining sponsorships. Hence, ads became so popular with respect to the number of sponsors every program has. By 1980s, cable television gained prominence and satellite television introduced specialty channels which were exclusively devoted to

advertising. Today, all these things attained newer resolutions in multi-faceted forms and the advancement in technical aspects have changed the scenarios to a much higher level. This particular paper analyzes the methods and techniques used by corporate firms to attract customers via online media through a psychological process in an era of technological advancements.

There are several degrees of media communication. In case of television ads, they seem to follow a simple method of 'show and tell'. But they actually include visual metaphors and structural concept through an assembly of images, which when taken together, appears much more than a simple visualization.

A human brain processes images 60,000 times faster than the text. So, visual metaphor can make an image more meaningful in the moment. This metaphorical thinking in images is known to be as meta-writing. Together they can constitute visual writing. Hence, an advertiser initially analyses the devices that could capture audience attention.

The Art of Persuasion

Persuasion could be defined as an action or fact of influencing someone or being influenced to do or believe something. In other words, encouraging someone to change his/her mind upon an issue in order to dominate their money or time, or to convince people, all can be considered as persuasion. A good persuader would be good in convincing people around. Almost all the advertisers are very good persuaders. They appeal to the consciousness of the consumer in a wide variety of ways. They are:

1. Logical Appeal:

Appeal with the use of logos and images. Ethos of the consumer is specifically considered here. There are subdivided into:

1.1). Band wagoning: It is a method of propagating the idea that everybody is in favor of it and thereby raising an intention among the masses that one should join the crowd. A question of "why couldn't I?" appeals to the consumer consciousness.

1.2). Card Stacking: A practice that advertisers undergo by distorting facts or telling half-truth to sell a product; giving number games more than reality. For example, we have seen advertisements which say one sachet of their powder could give 100 glasses of a soft drink. As these things are on TV, people may feel that something must be true in it (appealing to the mind).

2. Emotional Appeal:

Utilizing the senses and emotions of the consumer for the popularity and influence of the advertisement. It is classified as:

2.1). Plain Folks: Using simple, down-to-earth people rather than celebrities, to introduce a product or an idea. These ads make an emotional appeal with the use of phrases like "hey, I like it!" making ordinary consumers feel that they befit the same. This is somewhat similar to the bandwagon technique, which arouses a thought "why shouldn't I?"

2.2). Glittering Generalities: Using 'good' labels such as 'amazing', 'beautiful', 'exciting' etc. with respect to certain products supported by general facts to sell it. For example, 'Creamy', 'Icy', 'Chocolatey' are common terms in ice-cream ads; some terms that cannot be literally denied are consciously used.

2.3). Catchy Slogans: The use of memorable phrases to foster support and catch consumer attention. For example, Nike uses the caption "Just Do It", which raises a false intention that anyone who wears it can do anything that an efficient athlete does. Something that seems inspiring is actually a kind of persuading.

2.4). Snob Appeal: Applies with the products that could appeal or persuade the elite class people. Only the richest class of people in the society, which maybe 1% of the total population could afford to buy such products. But these ads silently propagate an idea that for one to seem wealthy, he/she should definitely buy that product.

2.5). Humor: It is considered to be one of the effective ways of communication between the consumer and the advertiser in order to sell a product. An emotion of positivity is created and is cleverly utilized for

marketing the product. A much familiar example would be the Vodafone ZooZoo ads.

3. Ethical Appeals:

Images and elements that appeal to the ethos of the consumer are intelligently utilized for the market gain. They are distinctively classified into:

3.1). Testimonials: Utilizing famous and popular people to promote a product. The presentation in such a way that a celebrity says "I use this product", appeals to the ethos of the consumer through the credibility of the speaker. As these people are so popular to the audience, an effective communication is established between them, which are utilized for the successful marketing of the product.

3.2). Transfer: This is somewhat similar to the 'testimonial appeal' mentioned above. But the difference is that the celebrity or the person in the ad may not directly say "I use this" as we seen before, but displayed as an icon. Hence, a transfer of image takes place. What happens here is lending the face of oneself to sell a particular product.

Logos, images and statistics that appeals to our brains are commonly used by advertisers today in order to persuade the consumers. They seem logical, appeal to the ethos and pathos, and finally hits at the very heart of the consumer which accounts for the effective marketing of the product. Commercials are made entertaining to capture attention, thereby clearing the challenge of resistance to the advertiser. There are definite strategies: humor, shock, suspense, mini-drama, special graphic effect, music etc. and clever ways to engage audience like "order in next 10 mins", "special discounts", "and free widgets" etc. Such ads have a unique selling preposition.

Ads these days are projected according to the viewing behavior of the audience, especially in the social networks. In an age where online media and sources play a prominent role in our day-to-day living, there are only very few youngsters who have never browsed at least once for any of their personal purposes. This lifestyle has been taken a great advantage by the corporate community. Based on our search data, they could analyze our likes and dislikes, which are utilized in the form of favorable advertisements at the margins whenever we browse internet for anything. For example: If you have searched for Micromax Canvas Infinity mobile phone for more than once from your computer system (possibly in Amazon or Flipkart), next time onwards even if you are loading Spark notes, the advertisement from that commercial shopping website will stay at the margin of your webpage, to arouse a tendency in us to fall for it as a result of constantly viewing it all day.

This instance is a clear example of how we are being utilized by the commercial kingdom, as a mere prey to their tactics, which make us purchase certain commodities even if we are not in need of it. All our browsing histories, search histories and even Facebook posts we share, are under surveillance, of some eagle eyes to whom we fall a prey. Such people could analyze even the exact character of a person that they could be able to stick him to their websites by providing data regarding his areas of interest, thereby adding numbers to their profit. A detailed study of this case can be conducted on the basis of several theories and studies conducted on these grounds.

Commodity Racism in Soap Advertisements

"Commodity racism" is a term that refers to the way in which race and commodities mutually inform one another. Commodity racism encompasses racist modes of the commodification of people most importantly, slavery as well as commodities in which racism is embedded. In the 1800s Huntley and Palmers biscuit tins illustrated images of 'civilized and refined' European explorers conquering and taming the 'barbaric and savage' African people. Pears soap appealed to consumers by sending messages that the soap, "had the power to wash black skin white... while at the same time keeping the imperial body clean and pure in the racially polluted contact zones" (Hall). Uncle Ben's, Aunt Jemima and Cream of Wheat all send messages of the stereotypical subservient and inferior African-American. Fighting commodity racism in the media is a seemingly daunting task. The wide-acceptance and knowledge of racial ideologies makes it nearly impossible to omit racist messages in advertising because these ideologies have been

customary for hundreds of years. So it seems that in order to overcome racism in the media, society must understand the beliefs that found racial ideologies have been fabricated in order to justify slavery and racism, and gain a following of people to accept these practices.

Advertising is at the front of delivering the proper message to customers and prospective customers. The purpose of advertising is to inform the consumers about their product and convince customers that a company's services or products are the best, enhance the image of the company and also points out and create a need for products or services. While advertising can be seen as necessary for economic growth, it is not without social costs. Unsolicited commercial e-mail and other forms of spam have become so prevalent as to have become a major nuisance to users of these services, as well as being a financial burden on internet service providers here have been increasing efforts to protect the public interest by regulating the content and the influence of advertising. Some examples include restrictions for advertising alcohol, tobacco or gambling imposed in many countries, as well as the bans around advertising to children, which exist in parts of Europe. The advertising industries within some countries rely less on laws and more on systems of self-regulation. Advertisers and the media agree on a code of advertising standards that they attempt to uphold. The general aim of such codes is to ensure that any advertising is 'legal, decent, honest and truthful'.

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