

G E PAPER

MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

B A (Hons) Economics, Pol Sc, History, B Com (Hons), Maths (H), Physics (H)

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TOPIC: ADVERTISING

WHAT IS ADVERTISING?

Advertising is a means of drawing people's attention to various goods, services, or ideas.

Advertising is done through various media, both print and electronic. Some common platforms used for advertising are newspapers, magazines, television, the internet, radio, hoardings, etc.

WHAT IS THE USE OF ADVERTISING?

There are various goods and services available in the market. These goods and services may belong to the same category or segment. Advertisements tell us about them and encourage us to buy these goods or use these services available. Advertisements may also be used to raise general awareness, about our health, environment or certain habits; and thus encourage us to donate towards certain causes, or to bring about certain changes in our lifestyle or behaviour.

Advertising may be used to convey information to the masses too. Advertising is also a source of income for the media. A newspaper that costs almost a 100 rupee to print, is made available to us for a paltry sum only because most of the production and other overheads of a newspaper are taken care of by the advertisements that appear in the newspaper.

TYPES OF ADVERTISING:

COMMERCIAL AND SOCIAL

Commercial Advertising: These advertisements are aimed primarily at promoting the interests of the advertiser, who or which is usually a business organisation, or a private body. Some common types of commercial advertising are -

Product advertising - gives information about a product to enable customers to make an informed choice.

Classified advertising - gives information about jobs, births, deaths, change in names, homes for rent and sale, sale of used cars and gadgets, etc.

Industrial advertising - gives information specially relevant to technical people

Institutional advertising - these highlight the institution's achievements, the facilities provided etc to create an image.

MAIN ELEMENTS OF ADVERTISING:

1. The advertiser - the person, organisation, brand, business house for whom the advertisement is created, for a range of purposes from selling a product, to generate social awareness, to generate brand identity and so on.
2. Target audience - each advertisement is created keeping in mind a specific target audience. The target audience depends on the product, the brand, the brand association it wants to generate. The target audience can also be defined as the audience most likely to buy a product.
3. The message. This varies with the type of advertisement and consequently its purpose. A product advertisement's purpose is to generate awareness about the product, make it stand out from similar ones, and ultimately encourage consumers to buy the product. An advertisement for an anti-smoking campaign, on the other hand, would be focused on spreading awareness about the effects of smoking on one's health.
4. U.S.P. Unique Selling Proposition is the term commonly used in advertisement whereby a product tries to not only create a unique identity for itself, but also tries to set itself apart in terms of what the consumption or use of the product would achieve.
5. Tag-line. Just Do It. Thanda Matlab Coca Cola. Nothing Official About It. These are tag-lines that one immediately associates with a particular product and a brand. A tag-line is thus a catchy line that creates an association in the mind of the consumer between a product and a particular brand. A tag line gives recall value to an advertisement.

6. Medium. The advertisement reaches its target audience through a chosen medium which maybe print, visual, audio, audio-visual. The choice of the medium depends to a large extent on the target audience.
7. Feedback. We usually look at the sales of a product advertised as feedback for the advertisement. But, especially in times when social-media rules, feedback can also be determined in terms of the buzz or interest that an advertisement creates.

PRODUCT ADVERTISING

This is the type of advertising that is most common. The purpose of product advertisement is to encourage people to buy different consumer products. These products can range from automobiles and mobile phones to a detergent powder or a mosquito repellent. In a consumerist culture, with a globalised economy in practice, various products are available to the consumer in the market. This creates a lot of competition in the market. Each product vies against the other to grab customers and hence a share in the market. But how does one flour distinguish itself from the other? How does it create an identity whereby it would stand out from the other available flours in the market? How is it possible to create an association in the mind of the consumer whereby when he/she thinks of flour, he or she thinks of a particular brand of flour? This is achieved through advertisement and branding or brand-building. The process of packaging a product, literally and through creating an image of it, whereby one distinguishes it from other similar products is called branding. The product is called a brand and it is supposed to have unique attributes or characteristics and an image of its own.

SOCIAL ADVERTISING

This kind of advertising is created primarily for the benefit of the people. Its purpose is social, rather than commercial. Also, the purpose of social advertising is to generate awareness amongst the public about a host of issues of importance to the society at large. These issues may be about the environment, or about following traffic rules, an awareness campaign about administering polio drops regularly, and so on. Social advertisements not only spread awareness about an issue, but

usually also advice, or gives out dos and don'ts about how to achieve the desirable. There isn't a rule in place but it is more common to see state authorities indulging in social advertisement than private, commercial business houses. Even when private, business houses put out social advertisements, it can be seen as a part of an image or brand-building exercise.

ADVERTISING AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

1. Advertisements should not make false promises about their products.
2. Advertisements should not mislead the consumers.
3. They should not go against commonly accepted moral values or standards of decency.
4. Advertisements should not hurt the sentiments of any race, religion, caste, sex , region or country.
5. They should not encourage people to take part in dangerous, violent or illegal activities.
6. Advertisements should not contain unfair and unfounded remarks about rivals or other persons or organisations
7. Advertisements have to abide by the laws of the concerned state or country.

