Advertising Analysis

Techniques advertisers use to persuade you to buy things, believe in ideas or support candidates often against your better judgment.
Advertising is both big business and a science!

*Billions* of dollars are spent on advertising every year to convince you to buy products whether you need them or not!

Advertisers use principles and techniques based on:

- Human behavior and psychology (how people act, react and think)
- Marketing studies (who buys what and why)
- Principles of design and color (what colors and designs appeal to people)
Advertisers are like salesman in many ways.

They are often “selling” you products ideas and people by very exact and proven methods.

Why Should We Analyze?

Analyzing ads helps us understand ourselves as well as the market so that we can make intelligent decisions.

Analyzing helps us avoid being manipulated or controlled.

Analyzing helps prevent costly mistakes in impulse buying.

Analyzing is fun!

“There’s a sucker born every minute.”

P.T. Barnum
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEFT BRAIN FUNCTIONS</th>
<th>RIGHT BRAIN FUNCTIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>uses logic</td>
<td>uses feeling</td>
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<tr>
<td>detail oriented</td>
<td>&quot;big picture&quot; oriented</td>
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<tr>
<td>facts rule</td>
<td>imagination rules</td>
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<tr>
<td>words and language</td>
<td>symbols and images</td>
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<tr>
<td>present and past</td>
<td>present and future</td>
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<tr>
<td>math and science</td>
<td>philosophy &amp; religion</td>
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<tr>
<td>can comprehend</td>
<td>can &quot;get it&quot; (i.e.</td>
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<tr>
<td>knowing</td>
<td>meaning)</td>
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<tr>
<td>acknowledges</td>
<td>believes</td>
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<td>order/pattern perception</td>
<td>appreciates</td>
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<tr>
<td>knows object name</td>
<td>spatial perception</td>
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<tr>
<td>reality based</td>
<td>knows object function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forms strategies</td>
<td>fantasy based</td>
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<tr>
<td>practical</td>
<td>presents possibilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>safe</td>
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<td></td>
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</table>
To convince people to buy their products, ideas or candidates, advertisers use:

1. **Rhetorical Appeals:**
   - **Pathos:** Appeals to the emotions
   - **Logos:** Appeals to reason
   - **Ethos:** Appeals to authority or ethics

2. **Propaganda Techniques:**
   - Name Calling, Transfer, Glittering Generalities, Testimonial, Magic Ingredients, Bandwagon, Card Stacking

3. **Color and Design principles**
Rhetorical Appeals

In the 3rd Century B.C. Aristotle, a Greek philosopher and student of both Plato and Socrates, formulated the concept of rhetorical appeals as a system of successful debate and persuasion.

Rhetoric (n) - the art of speaking or writing convincingly or persuasively.

The goal of argumentative or persuasive writing or speaking is to persuade your audience that your ideas are valid, or more valid than someone else's.

• Ethos: persuasion based on the source's credibility, the speaker's/author's authority and position. Who is persuading is the hallmark of ethos.

• Logos: the logic used to support a claim (induction and deduction); can also be the facts and statistics used to help support the argument.

• Pathos: the emotional or motivational appeals; vivid language, emotional language and numerous sensory details; appeal to feelings.
Rhetorical Appeals

**Ethos**

Ethos is appeal based on the character of the speaker. An ethos-driven advertisement relies on the reputation and authority of the person representing the product, the idea or the company itself. It goes hand and hand with the Transfer propaganda technique.

Many people allow themselves to be easily manipulated by people they respect or admire. This has created a whole culture of celebrity endorsements.

Much of the reputation for contemporary authority figures and “role models” is based on clever public relations rather than virtue or character. Also, mass media has made influential celebrities of otherwise obscure people. This makes Ethos a particularly effective technique today.
2. Logic and Reason

*Logos*

- Advertisers appeal to our logic and reason by using scientific “facts” and studies, statistics, and expert opinions in their ads to appeal to our left brains.
Rhetorical Appeals

**Pathos**

- Advertisers easily persuade us by appealing to the whole range of emotions and feelings, activating our right brains.

- Fear!
- Patriotism!
- Pride!
- Anger!
- Love and Sex!
- Humor! Etc...
3. Color and Design

- Advertisers have studied the effects of different colors on human feelings and behaviors, and so they use specific colors and design patterns to help sell their products. (See Handout for full description)

- Blue
- Yellow
- Red
- Brow
- Black:
- Orange
- Green
Placement and Design for ads

Psychologically the human eye tends to focus on specific areas in a visual field. Often the most dominant images in an ad are either off center on the right or left of the page.

Text is usually not centered but is either off to the side on the upper or lower corners to keep the viewer’s eye moving around the page, often in a clockwise direction.
The Seven Most Common Advertising Techniques

Advertisers use very specific propaganda techniques to sell products.

**Propaganda:** “deceptive or distorted information to promote a policy or product”

*From Ann McClintock’s article “Propaganda Techniques in Today’s Advertising”*

1. **Transfer:** Advertisers transfer or connect their product to a symbolic object or image to try and connect the meaning of the image to the product.

2. **Testimonial:** A famous celebrity or expert is used to help sell the product, even if the celebrity doesn’t actually use or know anything about it. This is one of the most effective and common advertising techniques.

3. **Plain Folks:** Ads that use the idea that you are just like the average people shown using or buying the product.

4. **Bandwagon:** Ads that invite consumers to join in with the majority, conform and be like everyone else.

5. **Name Calling:** Ads that attach a negative label or name to their competition or opponent.

6. **Glittering Generalities:** Ads using vague or broad statements that are appealing to all people, but that contain little substance. “New, improved” “Modern” “Revolutionary” “Health” etc.

7. **Card Stacking:** Ads that only present the beneficial or positive aspects of a product without showing the negative sides

There are many more advertising techniques. Often, more than one of these techniques is used in the same advertisement.
• The following is a more in-depth description of the 7 most commonly used Propaganda techniques. Some may be used in face to face interactions while others are more appropriate for add use.
1. Transfer

Using well known symbols or images that are transferred to the product or idea.

For example, the Binder and Binder law firm uses the well-known patriotic symbols of the American flag and the Statue of Liberty to “transfer” the idea that they are a patriotic company that believes in American values and supports American troops. It also uses the emotional word “intimidated” to make consumers feel they will be protected and safe.
2. Testimonial

Testimonials use celebrities or experts to help sell products by giving the impression that these famous people use or support the product or idea and so we should too.

Testimonials are one of the most common and effective advertising techniques.

Note: Testimonials are a variation of Aristotle’s Ethos, but the celebrity is usually not a legitimate authority.
President Kennedy is being used in an obvious example of Testimonial. Whether he gave permission for this is doubtful.
This ad for Bavaria Beer is a perfect example of the Testimonial technique.

A well known celebrity, in this case Yoda the Jedi Master, is used to help sell beer - a product he probably doesn’t use or know much about.

Because of Yoda’s presence, the beer is associated with Jedi power, will and discipline, and so people who choose this beer will get the same benefits. So it’s also uses Transfer.

Note the heavy use of Green in this ad and the humor.
This famous and ad for Carl’s Jr. Hamburger is another perfect example of the Testimonial technique.

A celebrity, Paris Hilton, is being used to help sell a product that she may or may not actually use or know anything about. Your eyes don’t focus on the product, but on the celebrity.

This ad uses an appeal to the emotions, particularly sex, pleasure, and glamour and uses the color black.
3. Plain Folks

Unlike Testimonial ads, Plain Folks ads use average or normal looking people to create the impression that everyday people, just like you, use or support the product or idea,
Here’s a good example of a Plain Folks ad with a message that many normal people understand. Notice the use of yellow in this ad to create a positive, happy, humorous feeling.
This ad for Miller High Life beer shows the **Plain Folks** technique.

These normal looking, everyday folks from the 1950’s are having a great time pounding down Miller beer with their feast.
This ad for Benetton clothes is a good example of a *Plain Folks* ad addressed to young people.

Notice the use of color in this ad and the diversity of the “young Americans.”
4. Bandwagon

The Bandwagon technique persuades people to join the group, to conform to the style or choices of the majority of people.

Bandwagon ads make feeling or being different something negative and to be avoided, so there is usually a Pathos appeal about feeling left out or being weird.
FATHERS! IT'S UP TO YOU!

It's your job to protect your daughters' virginity!
DO YOU WANT TO LIVE?

VOTE DEMOCRATIC

DISCLAIMER: “Vote or Die” should not be construed as a literal statement. Voting will not prevent death. Voting will not cure nor prevent any life-threatening illness. This campaign should not be construed as a threat directed against any person or persons, including non-voters and Republican voters. You will not get a free T-Shirt if you vote. Voting will not make you hip, rich, and sexy. Voting will not get you laid.

This is a non-partisan message. “Vote or Die” is not affiliated with any political party, yeah right.

FreakingNews.com
Name Calling

• Name calling is used in ads to create a negative image of the competitor or opponent. Name calling can be obvious or subtle.
“Name Calling” is clear in this ad. It uses an unflattering picture of Hillary Clinton, dramatic red lettering with a black background for drama, and the emotional words “defeat and communism.” It’s an effective three word ad that identifies Clinton as a communist and brings up the memory of President Reagan who “defeated” communism in the 1980’s.
Obviously, this ad from 2004 clearly uses “Name Calling”. The use of orange in a black and white ad calls extra attention and drama to the names.

 THEY’RE BACK... AND THIS TIME THEY MEAN WAR
Supporters of President Obama are being called unthinking robots in this ad, and associated with Nazis.
Glittering Generalities or “Weasel Words”

Ads using vague or broad statements that are appealing to all people, but that contain little substance or meaning. Peace, love, success, freedom, health, truth, justice etc. can all be used as common glittering generalities or weasel words.
The use of “the real thing” a phrase which doesn’t really mean anything and can’t be proven, is an example of “Glittering Generalities.” Also the presence of gobs of healthful fruit and cheese “Transfers” the idea of health and nutrition to Coca Cola, which is not a very healthful drink.
This ad appealing to college students uses both **Plain Folks** and **Glittering Generalities**. The words “money” “lowest price guarantee” “save” “your textbooks, your school, your bookstore” all add to the persuasion, as does the normal looking college student.
Card Stacking

Presenting only the positive or attractive features of a product, even if it has negative, unhealthful or dangerous qualities.

This milk ad uses Card Stacking by only presenting milk’s good qualities and not mentioning the fat content, cholesterol, expense, or possible hormones in milk. It also uses Testimonial, Transfer (Batman) and dramatic blues for a male appeal.
This cigarette ad not only shows **Card Stacking** because it makes cigarettes so attractive, but it also **Transfers** Christmas joy to cigarettes, and uses Ronald Reagan in a **Testimonial**. The red color used everywhere symbolizes health, vitality and energy. This was made before health warnings were put on cigarette packs and ads.
STOP CLIMATE CHANGE BEFORE IT CHANGES YOU.
NOW...
Test Your Ad Analysis Skills!
What Rhetoric Is Being Used? What Propaganda Is Being Used?
What Propaganda Technique is being used? What do you think is being advertised and to what market? How do you know this?
What is the message of this ad? What would the consumer need to know before understanding this message? Is this ad fair? What propaganda technique is being used in reverse?
THE ARMY
Dont ask, Dont tell.