

Section A Task 2: Compare the different types and variety of advertising media that are available to businesses and explain their advantages and disadvantages.

Advertising has achieved a central place in business activity across the world as firms have begun to face global; as well as national competition. In the UK it has been estimated that between 1 and 2 per cent of national income is spent on advertising.

There are a wide range of advertising media that firms can choose from in order to make consumers aware of their products.

Television

Television for instance; because of its many advantages, television advertising is often used by businesses marketing consumer goods to a mass market. The fast changing trends in television were likely to provide opportunities for television advertising after 2001. Ninety per cent of males and female watch television in the UK. The growth of cable, satellite and digital television may attract companies to advertise on television. Businesses may be particularly interested to advertise on digital television as packages on sky, for example, may be subscribed to by higher earning and spending groups.

However television advertising contains its own advantages and disadvantages. Although television advertising is expensive medium, it reaches huge numbers of consumers. This means the cost per sale from a television advertisement may be relatively low and cost effective. Television advertising can also engage the viewer's emotions and empathy. A customer can see joy or hurt in someone's eyes, they can hear a voice tinged with the pain of a headache or the pride of a new product and the customer can watch in amazement or in disbelief as a product is demonstrated. The message can also be reinforced by continuous advertisements which could help emphasis the need for the product or create strong awareness for the company or its products.

Nevertheless television advertising audiences are more fragmented than ever as the number of channels increases, not to mention alternative uses for TV sets like video games, computer hook-ups and movie rentals. The days of any message reaching 40 percent or even 30 percent of the viewing audience on one network at one time are past. Consumers also tend to switch channels when watching a commercial which means theirs a lot of wastage in advertising on TV. Television has a comparatively expensive initial cost. Also technical information is harder to emphasis considering the amount of time available.

Newspapers

Newspaper and magazines are an important medium for the advertising of mass market products. It has been estimated that 39 million readers of a national newspaper each week in 2002 and that four out of five adults read a national newspaper. Newspaper and magazines can be useful for targeting a particular audience or market segment. For instance, businesses selling sports equipment might advertise in the Sunday times. Newspaper advertising can also be useful for smaller businesses. It was estimated that 40 million adults read a local newspaper.

Newspapers know a lot about their readership so it's easier to target audiences more effectively. Technology is improving newspapers' capabilities to create clear photos, better colours and to use new techniques such as scented inks. Readers are actively involved in reading the paper. The fact that they must hold it and turn the pages produces a higher level of attention. The immediacy of a daily newspaper's news will cause readers to pick it up within a predictable time frame (i.e. Tuesday's paper is usually read on Tuesday) so advertisers know when readers receive their

messages. Newspapers deliver timely messages because they have an established, regular publishing schedule such as daily, weekly or monthly. This allows you to tailor your message to current events, such as weekend entertainment or Christmas.

On the other hand newspaper advertising limits specific audience targeting. A business may only want to reach bike owners, but they'll pay to reach the newspaper's entire audience. However, some papers offer "zone advertising" which allows you to run an advert that is seen only in part of the coverage area. For example, you could place an ad for your pizza delivery service in the "Northwest News" insert section delivered only with the newspapers in the northwest part of the city or newspaper coverage region. Newspapers are often read more than once so the reader will refer back to them. Newspapers are static and two-dimensional. Electronic newspapers may change this—in the future.

Radios

In recent years there has been a growth in the number of independent radio stations in the UK. These include local stations, such as Capital in London and the key 103 in Manchester, national stations such as Virgin and Talk Radio and specialist stations such as Smooth FM and Classic FM. For advertisers this has meant an increase in both the number and type of radio stations on which they can advertise. There has been an increase in the number of people listening to radio. This trend may be likely to continue with development of digital radio and internet radio stations. All types of businesses such as restaurants to Kleenex tissues, as well as smaller businesses, have found radio effective in reaching target customers.

Radio messages are mobile. They can be heard at work, on the beach, in the shower, in the dentist's chair or even while shopping. Radio is an intrusive medium. A listener does not have to be actively involved in getting your message to hear it. Depending on availability, it's often possible to get an ad on a station on short notice. This allows advertisers to react to sudden developments, such as a retailer selling fans reacting to a heat wave or a competitor's special offer. A message can run with as much frequency as you choose (or the station's format allows). For example, you could run an ad once a day for a year or twice an hour for a day. Radio is mostly local in its appeal. You can tie your message into local events, weather, or locations to heighten the relevance of your message to the listener.

Conversely radio has no visual impact. Companies don't use it to talk about a product that a listener may not already understand. Some ads use "the theater of the mind" very effectively to create pictures in a listener's head (for instance when you hear a pop the first thing that we think of is a bottle opening). This type of ad should be done well and may call for a professional writer at an extra expense that is well worth it in the long run.

Cinemas

Cinema attendances fell from a high of around 1.4 billion in 1951 to reach a low of 53 million in 1984. The 1990s, however, saw a revival in attendances, partly as a result of the better facilities offered by larger cinemas. By 2003 attendances had improved to 167 million. As a result, advertisers began to pay greater attention to this medium. Firms such as Coca Cola have even produced advertisements principally designed for use on large cinema screens. Of all the advertising media available to a business, the cinema has the greatest potential for having a strong impact on its audience.

Posters and billboards

Posters appear in a variety of locations and tend to carry short messages. This is because motorists and pedestrians usually have a few seconds to consider what they are about. An

effective poster is likely to be larger in size, attention grabbing and placed in a site where it is highly visible to large numbers of people. The development of electronic screens containing 'posters' with rotating advertisements is a development in this area that may attract businesses.

Big, splashy messages attract attention. Using this, medium businesses must be short and to the point the message must have an impact on the audience. Technology is allowing for more and more innovations like talking, moving, smoking, changing and twinkling billboards. Hot air balloons, blow-ups, flags, banners and other eye-catching devices are an option, too. Businesses can even hire "rolling billboards" on the back of a truck that drives a route you choose to make sure your billboard is seen by the right audience numerous times. Businesses ads reach lots of people, many of whom see it repeatedly as they travel regular routes.

Yet it's hard to reach a specific audience. Business might be able to target a neighborhood, but can't be more specific than that. Businesses creativity is inhibited by space limitations. It's hard to measure its effectiveness over a period of time. The advertisement is vulnerable to vandalism and graffiti and costs can be quite reasonable for a billboard that you want to leave up for a sustained amount of time. However, innovative adaptations can become quite expensive.

Exhibitions and displays

As a method of promoting products and services, exhibitions can be very useful, and widely used by producers of industrial products and consumers durables, as well as of such services as travel and gardening. Many although not all, exhibitions have trained staff in attendance and would-be buyers can obtain advice and have any questions answered on the spot by experts. There are also mobile exhibitions and road shows, which have the advantage of being able to reach people in different locations. The ideal home exhibition in London and the motor show in Birmingham are examples of well established, annual exhibitions which are well attended by exhibitors and the public. International trade fairs are important for companies exporting their products abroad. British producers participate in many such fairs, e.g. in Hanover and Leipzig in Germany and Poznan in Poland.

Internet

Businesses have shown great interest advertising on websites on the internet. One major advantage is that websites can be accessed by consumers all over the world, giving companies a worldwide market. Many companies now have their own websites to advertise products and some even allow customers to purchase online using credit cards.

Internet advertising is relatively cost-effective; the costs can also be independent of the size of the audience. For example, a Web presence will cost the same regardless of how many viewers your site has. (Businesses will, however, need to make sure that Internet Service Provider can handle the volume of viewers they anticipate having.) Advertisers can target specific types of viewers by positioning an ad banner on related Web sites. For example, if you're targeting people seeking information on a specific topic, you can purchase ad space on Web pages that are related to this category in the major search engines. So, an organic herb farmer selling through mail order might advertise through the "organic foods" or "gourmet cooking" category. The indexing structure of these sites allows you to target your audience by geographic location and related interest area. Internet advertisers can potentially reach a global audience. Aside from language barriers, anyone at any location in the world can access information about a company's products or services.

Nonetheless the popularity of the Internet is rising remarkably; it is difficult to gage the impact of advertising on the Internet. The range of costs to advertise on the Internet can vary greatly. It is best to compare a number of highly-frequented sites to determine the best way to spend your advertising money.

