

**Media Coursework: An analysis into the methods used in advertising cars**

The first advertisement I have chosen is an advert for the Saab 9-5 car. The advertisement takes place in a desert, which takes up the whole of the one page spread. The desert is very golden and picturesque; it is perfectly motionless, there is no wind and there are no small lizards skulking around. In the centre of the page, and also the desert, there is a very new, very shiny silver Saab 9-5. There are no tyre tracks on the desert floor, which is odd, which may symbolise the smooth ride the car gives. The fact that the car is in the desert may symbolise the all-terrain vehicle aspect that all car companies are going all out to prove. Underneath the car is the text 'Saab vs. the Chocolate Bar', and underneath that is a reasonably sized paragraph of text explaining that if you buy a chocolate bar, you should be able to eat a chocolate bar, and that after putting it in your glove compartment it should not resemble hot chocolate. Then comes the selling point: Saab cars siphon air directly from the air conditioning system, 'maintaining a cool 42°F (5.5°C) in the glove compartment. Which means, when you're ready to eat your snack, it can still be peeled rather than poured.' The advertisement then uses this example as evidence of their extraordinary sense of attention to detail, and in their own words 'It's details like this that illustrate Saab's somewhat different approach to building cars.'

The use of colour is very important in this advert. The golden yellow of the background symbolises confidence according to 'Feng Shui', but more importantly it makes the car stand out from the background, yet the reflective silver paint makes it almost part of the landscape. The use of a desert landscape in the advert symbolises openness and a certain mysticism. The reason the advertisement works so well is it's simplicity, it doesn't throw a hundred different selling points at you at once and expect you to catch them all, but gives you one, which by the same logic, is much easier to catch. Linking the Saab with chocolate bars was a very clever idea, as if one was to take a survey of people's addictions worldwide, filtering out all the age specific addictions like sex, drugs and alcohol, I'm sure chocolate would be up there at the top. Chocolate is known to give off a chemical which stimulates the part of the brain concerned with pleasure, and so having the title 'Saab vs. the Chocolate Bar' is also comparing them in terms of pleasure- what is more satisfying, a drive in a Saab or a chocolate bar? In addition to this idea, having the heading 'Saab vs. the Chocolate Bar' is a very strange title to use to sell a car, and so immediately catches the readers attention, whether they are flicking through a Sunday magazine or flying by the advertisement while on the London underground, and chances are, people will take a second look and more than probably read the advert through to the small print, which is more than can be said for a lot of car advertisements these days.

The second advertisement I have chosen is for the Alfa Romeo 156 2.4JTD, and like the first, is relatively simple and easy to understand, it uses the same simplistic layout of picture followed by text. It is spread out over two pages, with a silver Alfa Romeo 156 2.4JTD car dominating the top three-quarters of the two pages. The car is resting on a glacier blue coloured floor and background, making the car stand out even more. Underneath the car is a black border with white text. The text, summarised, is advertising the new Alfa Romeo 156 2.4JTD; the JTD bit standing for diesel, which until now has been unheard-of in an Alfa Romeo car. On the right hand side of the advertisement is a thick red border with the Alfa Romeo logo at the bottom, and above that, the words '*Cuore Sportivo*'. '*Cuore Sportivo*' is Italian, and

translated it means 'Sporting Heart', which ties in with the image Alfa Romeo has tried hard over the years to create.

This advertisement uses the same simplistic layout of picture and text used effectively by the first advert. The glacier-blue colour of the background surrounding the car makes the car both stand out, and in a way, through the reflective silver paint, blend into it's surrounding, like the Saab in the desert in the first advert. The very cool glacier blue colour emits waves of calmness which relax the readers eyes, and according to 'Feng Shui', it symbolises assertiveness and authority. This effective use of colour is linked to the cars performance- large and powerful engine, Q-System automatic gearbox, top speed of 156mph, etc. The text itself is not quite as effective or thought provoking as the first, and neither does it have clever connotations. It says 'ALFA DIESEL' five times in a vertical column, and underneath that it says '(NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES YOU SAY IT, IT STILL SOUNDS STRANGE.)'. The car is going against the stereotypical sports car and Alfa Romeo, by being a diesel, and not an unleaded who does about seventeen miles to the gallon, and the advert, not in any particularly clever way is making that the main selling point in their advert. One can see why it would sell, it being a diesel with a good mileage to the gallon, but the advertisement does nothing for people. It doesn't have a snappy bit of text like the first advert to catch the reader's attention, and as a result of this, it does not even have a quarter of the effectiveness of the first advert.

The third advertisement I have chosen is for the Volvo V70 XT. The advertisement is spread over two pages, and shows a very beautiful, very picturesque, green landscape of hills and vegetation. On the right-hand page, in the centre of the landscape, is once again a silver car, this time a Volvo V70 XT, with a man at the driver's seat, and a mother and child behind the car playing. On the left-hand page, there is a small portion of text going down vertically, saying, from top to bottom; 'LEATHER UPHOLSTERY. LEATHER STEERING WHEEL. CD PLAYER. ELECTRONIC CLIMATE CONTROL. ALLOY WHEELS. AH, THE JOYS OF PARENTHOOD.' At the bottom of the two pages is a small band of small text, the main selling point of the advert being, I quote; 'Just because you have kids doesn't mean you can't have luxuries'.

The use of colour, as in both the first and second advertisements, is quintessential to the success of the advertisement. The green is calm and assuring, and once again referring to 'Feng Shui', symbolises strong growth energy. The idea of strong growth energy is very effective when thought of in conjunction with the theme of parenthood displayed in the advertisement. As with all the advertisements I have chosen, the car is silver, which once again makes the car stand out as well as appearing to be part of the scenery. The scenery itself is a grassy, vegetation covered landscape, which goes on into the misty distance. It is very beautiful, and coupling that beautiful image with the family and the Volvo V70 XT, it pulls everything together into a very idyllic family holiday in a very idyllic family car. The text and the picture, and the feeling we get from seeing the picture and reading the text, is that the Volvo V70 XT is a family car, if not **the** family car. The text is geared very towards parents with children, and as if the advertisement knew what we were thinking when we saw and read what was on offer, at the bottom it says; 'Just because you have kids doesn't mean you can't have luxuries', which would be many a parent buyer's first thought before buying.