

**English Course work essay****Ben Cocksworth****Advertising**

“Referring to advertisements past and present, comment upon the different techniques used by advertisers to persuade the customer to buy their product. Refer to at least one Television and one Magazine advertisement.”

Over the past Century Advertising has become one of the largest and most profitable industries. Everyone is involved in advertising in some way. We are involved in advertising every day, from the clothes we wear to the magazines we read and the television we watch. Techniques and type of adverts has changed dramatically over the years, advertising began to become noticed as a major industry through the early radio and magazines and then gradually developed through the television and other forms of media to the massive and prosperous industry it has evolved into today.

Early television advertisements were in “black and white,” obviously because technology had not developed enough to give us colour television. This meant that it was harder for people to relate to the advert, in particular the product the advertisement was selling. Advertisers tried to combat this problem by inventing techniques that helped the audience/customer relate to the advert. An example of this would be introducing situations to their advert that their target audience could relate to, also “mini-series” advertisements were very popular. These advertisements used story lines to keep the advertisements following on from one another but most importantly to build up an air of suspense in the audience and to make the audience watch the next advertisement, which helped to advertise the product more efficiently. An example of a set of advertisements that used a “mini-series” are most of the “oxo” advertisements. These advertisements simulate an average family right through from the early Sixties until the late Nineties. They use typical family situations like the first day at school, family arguments, University, boyfriends, girlfriends etc... to advertise oxo cubes. Gradually as ideas and technology became more advanced the oxo advertisements used, special effects, theme tunes etc... to help people remember their product. Slogans also played a large part in the oxo advertisements. Many slogans were used in the oxo advertisements over the years, “oxo gives a meal man appeal,” was used when the attitude towards

woman was that their place was generally in the kitchen and their role in life was to look after and to impress their husband or boyfriend. This slogan involves a technique called “Assonance,” this is where the vowel sound in word is repeated through a series of words, in this slogan the vowel sound which is being repeated is the “ea,” in the words meal and appeal. This slogan also involves a technique called “consonance,” which is repeating the consonant sound in a series of words. In this slogan it is the “l” in the words meal and appeal. As the attitude that a woman’s place was generally in the kitchen and their role in life was to look after and to impress their husband or boyfriend was phased out so, too was the slogan. The oxo slogans also involved memorable gestures, such as the rubbing of the thumb, index and middle fingers together. This is how an oxo cube is crumbled.

Another very popular technique used by advertisers is punning. This is when one word is given but it has two meanings. An example of this is the Evian bottled water advert, the image of the advert is that if you drink Evian bottled water you will stay young. The pun in the advertisement is in the slogan. Because the over voice has a strong French accent, when the word Evian is said at the end of the advertisement, it also sounds like “live young,” which I think is a very good slogan because of the pun. I think this because I always remember the “live young,” spoken in a strong French accent sounding like the product name “Evian.”

Punning is just one of a number of techniques which makes the target audience remember the slogan which in turn is a major factor in selling the product itself. Consonance is when a consonant is repeated in a series of words, an example of this is the Penguin chocolate biscuit advert. This uses consonance in the slogan “P-p-p-p pick-up a Penguin.”

Pester power has also become a popular technique in advertising. This is when the advertisement targets the younger generation as their target audience. This then has a chain like reaction. The child begins to “nag,” or “pester,” their parents to buy them that particular product, the parents then eventually buy the child the product. This often happens in advertisements, particularly for toys around Christmas time. Also as well as targeting children, advertisements also target parents. This is usually when advertising something which is for a child, the advert exploits the protective side of the parent to hopefully encourage them to buy the product, to in turn help or make their children safer.

A target audience is used in most advertisements, this is so that the product which is being sold corresponds with the type of people who are going to be watching the advertisement and the type of people who are

intrigued with the advertisement. For example Adult dating agency advertisements are not shown during children's programs. They are shown late at night when mainly only adults are watching. Also a popular action movie, soon to be shown on television would not be advertised with classical music, it would be advertised with exiting lively music, to portrair the theme of the film.

For the product to sell the buyer has to have a motive to buy the product. If the product is a bar of chocolate, some of the motives for the customer to purchase the chocolate maybe;

- Fat free
- Low fat
- Attractiveness of the advertisement
- Attractiveness of actor/actress in the advertisement
- How tasty the chocolate looks in the advertisement
- The price of the chocolate
- Brand of chocolate
- Type of chocolate e.g. Milk chocolate, Dark chocolate etc...
- Extra ingredients e.g. Nuts, Raisons etc...

All of these motives and even more will be used by the advertiser to try and tempt as many people as possible into buy the chocolate.

Location and timing is also a key factor in advertising today. An advertiser who advertises beer will probably try and advertise on television during sports associated with drinking alcohol like rugby and football, and because lots of men who watch football and rugby generally enjoy a nice pint. They will also advertise near public houses and the main nightlife of a city on posters and billboards, although this is seen less frequently than the previous. Billboards advertising near roads will often pick a busy road and stretch of the road which has a lot of traffic jams, so the maximum number of people have the maximum possible amount of time to view their advertisement. That is why a time slot during a popular programme like Coronation Street is much more expensive than a time slot during a less popular programme such as a documentary. This is because during Coronation Street millions of people will be watching across the United Kingdom, because it is on during "Prime-time" television, (when the most amount of people are watching television during the day), were as the documentary will probably be on before or after prime time television, so less people will be watching the documentary.

Many alcohol advertisements are very funny. They often show men or women acting very cool and cheeky, while drinking alcohol. This is good in

one way because it changes the way some people look upon those people who drink alcohol regularly. But it can also have a negative effect. It encourages more people to drink alcohol which can result in more alcohol related deaths, increased violence. Also it does give the image to people who are not legally old enough to drink alcohol that it is good and you will be cool if you drink it. I know this because in my class survey (my class are all aged between 14 and 15) of the most popular television advertisement two of the top 3 were alcohol advertisements. Also, I myself along with many other people my age, have been encouraged to by and drink alcohol because of the image advertisements give alcohol.

Magazines are also a very popular medium for advertisements to dwell. They are usually trying to attract your attention as you flick through the pages of the magazine. They do this with shock advertisements, bright or attractive backgrounds, attractive men or women, jokes or humorous pictures etc... I have commented on an advertisement from a magazine. This advertisement is advertising "Cat" shoes. The first thing that your eye is drawn to in the advertisement is the bright yellow "Cat" logo in the top left-hand corner, this is because we are used to reading from left to right so we automatically look to the top left corner of everything we read. The next thing noticed is the close up view of a pair of Cat shoes, below that image is the same picture but it is zoomed out. You can now see that the shoes are been worn by an attractive young man, who is talking with another man, in the street. This part of the advertisement is stereotypical because it is suggesting that people who wear the kind of clothes shown in the advertisement are popular and attractive, and if you buy Cat shoes then you too will become popular and attractive. At the bottom of the advertisement is the copy (the words on the advertisement), which displays the Cat logo and various phone numbers and website addresses.

I hope that this essay has given you an insight into the techniques used by advertisers to sell their product and the positive and negative results that may cause.