

Creativity in Advertising as a Persuasive Communication Style to Attract Audience



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Abstract

This study aims to explore creativity in advertising from a persuasive communicational perspective, due to its significance at various levels, since it is one of the elements that contribute to the communication message's success. Accordingly, the study focused on understanding and analyzing the role of creativity in the advertising strategy. The study also addressed the impact of creativity on the effectiveness of the persuasive communicational message concerning the recipient. In addition to mentioning various challenges that hinder achieving creativity in advertising, supported by practical examples to understand the subject under study. The research concluded that creativity is a vital tool and an effective method in achieving the highest levels of advertising success, whether related to the product or the service. However, this approach carries risks, primarily the potential for misinterpreting the message or its incompatibility with prevailing societal culture, which can lead to the failure to achieve the intended goals.

Keywords: Creativity; advertising; persuasion; communication; audience. .

Introduction

Creativity is a fundamental pillar in the progress and development of nations, it is the driving force behind innovation in various fields. In our modern world, characterized by accelerated changes and intense competition,

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creativity in communication has become not just an additional advantage, but an imperative for effectiveness and impact. The ability to formulate innovative messages, choose non-traditional communication channels, and adapt methods to suit the target audience have become decisive factors in the success of both organizations and individuals. In the midst of a world full of images and messages, in which the pace of economic and social changes is accelerating, advertising is emerging as an effective and influential force in shaping awareness and guiding consumer behavior. Advertising is no longer just an introductory tool for goods and services, but has turned into an integrated industry based on art and science. In the center of the sector are two key concepts that together form the backbone of the success of any advertising campaign.

The biggest challenge facing advertisers today lies not only in delivering their message to the target audience amid such a huge information momentum, but also in the ability to catch his attention and arouse his interest, which is possible only through creative content. Creativity in the idea, design and implementation is the first spark that lights the way to the consumer's mind, breaking the monotony of traditional advertising messages. What enables brands to stand out in a highly competitive market and create a unique footprint remains to be remembered, but creativity alone is not enough to ensure the achievement of the ultimate goal of advertising. There is no value to an impressive creative work if it does not succeed in influencing the audience's convictions and pushing them to make a certain decision, whether this decision is buying a product, adopting an idea, or changing behavior. Hence, the importance of persuasion as another facet of the advertising success coin emerges. Persuasion is a thoughtful psychological and rhetorical process that turns momentary

fascination with creative work into a firm conviction and sustainable effect.

From this standpoint, what is the role of creativity in advertising as a persuasive communication tool?

Purpose of the Study

This study aims to achieve the following main objectives:

- Exploring and identifying the various dimensions of creativity in the field of advertising, and how it manifests in advertising messages.
- Understanding how creativity contributes to attracting the audience's attention and embedding the message in their minds.
- Recognizing the creative techniques and methods used in advertising that have proven effective in achieving their goals.
- Identifying the challenges and obstacles facing creativity in advertising.

Relevance of the Study

Our study contributes to bridging the knowledge gap on the relationship between creativity and persuasion in advertising, which enriches the Arab and foreign library in the field of information and communication sciences, especially with regard to research and studies related to the field of advertising. The study also provides a conceptual framework for a deeper understanding of the role of creativity as a persuasive tool in the advertising context. By providing deep insights on how creative messages work in influencing cognition, beliefs and behaviors, which enhances our understanding of the processes of persuasive communication in general. The study also combines concepts from different fields such as psychology through understanding consumer behavior, marketing to understand persuasion strategies, and

media through message design, representing interdisciplinary research.

In practice, the study provides advertisers and marketers with practical tools and knowledge to create more creative and impactful advertising campaigns, which leads to an increase in persuasion rates and achieving marketing goals, innovative advertising can be a decisive factor in distinguishing brands and attracting the attention of consumers, which is exactly what the study aims at. In addition, the study helps to understand how the audience reacts to different creative messages, enabling companies to design ads that better match the preferences and needs of their audience, and institutions can also benefit from the results of this study in developing their curricula and training programs to qualify specialists in advertising capable of producing creative and compelling content.

1-Defining Creativity in Advertising

Creativity is a multifaceted construct, broadly defined as the generation of ideas, products, or solutions that are both novel and useful (Runco & Jaeger, 2012). In advertising, this definition is refined to encompass messages that are original, divergent, and relevant to the communication objectives. Smith and Yang (2004) conceptualize advertising creativity along dimensions such as originality (uniqueness), flexibility (diverse ideas), elaboration (richness of detail), synthesis (connecting disparate ideas), and artistic value.

Advertising creativity is defined as the result of the integration of sound, image, colors, movement, music, etc., especially with the development of new technologies of media and communication, which have strongly imposed themselves. This led to more artistry and creativity in producing advertising

messages that carry new positions and ideas to attract the audience's attention. This has made the quality of advertising a substitute for the quality of the product itself (Hanoune, 2022). Thus, We can say that advertising is an action capable of producing an effective surprise. It should also be noted that creativity in advertising is an essential element within the strategy of any institution, to ensure its continuity and development in light of competition and the alternatives available to the target audience.

2. Literature Review

A literature review is an important step in scientific research because it establishes the foundation and context for the study. By analyzing existing scholarly works, the researcher can demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the topic, identify gaps in current knowledge.

-The effect of creative messaging on audience persuasion is another focal point in media studies. Lukin et al. (2017) explored how different argumentative styles (factual versus emotional) interact with audience variables such as personality. Their large-scale experiments demonstrated that belief change is influenced by both the content of the message and audience traits: individuals who are more conscientious, open, and agreeable were particularly susceptible to emotional arguments. This suggests that creative advertising strategies that tailor emotional or narrative elements to specific audience segments can enhance persuasive effectiveness.

-The digital transformation of media has foregrounded the role of social media metrics in evaluating the reach and effect of creative advertising. Costas (2017) reviewed the development of social media metrics and their complex relationship with traditional indicators of influence such as

citations. Although SMMs like Mendeley readership show moderate correlation with citation counts, indicators from platforms such as Twitter and Facebook exhibit weaker ties, suggesting that creative content may achieve widespread attention or buzz without necessarily translating into conventional measures of impact. This aligns with the argument that creative advertising's effectiveness increasingly depends on its capacity to generate engagement and discourse within diverse online audiences.

-Rosengren et al. (2020) conducted a meta-analysis to synthesize the literature on advertising creativity and empirically test various theoretical explanations for its effects on consumer responses. Their primary objective was to provide a robust understanding of advertising creativity's impact. The research aimed to clarify the mechanisms through which creative advertising influences consumer perceptions and behaviors. The researchers analyzed various measures of creativity and their impact on different consumer responses, The study emphasizes that advertising creativity is most effective when considered as a bipartite construct comprising both originality and appropriateness. While originality alone contributes to affect transfer, appropriateness is crucial for signaling and overall stronger effects. Advertising creativity primarily fosters positive ad and brand attitudes, rather than merely grabbing attention or enhancing memorability. This suggests that creative ads resonate emotionally and cognitively with consumers. Also, the impact of advertising creativity is found to be stronger in high-involvement communication contexts and, to a lesser extent, for unfamiliar brands. This indicates that creativity can be particularly beneficial when consumers are more engaged or when a brand is trying to establish itself.

Comment on Related Research

It's noted that the previous studies the researcher relied upon varied greatly; in terms of data types, there are quantitative studies and others qualitative, in terms of final results, there are theoretical studies and others applied. The researcher also found that these studies are varied in terms of disciplines; some belong to economic sciences, while others belong to psychology, and some other studies belong to information and communication sciences. This confirms the importance of what interdisciplinary studies aspire to, which address different variables from various knowledge and scientific fields. On this basis, the previous studies reviewed by the researcher on the subject have contributed to opening deep horizons for understanding creativity in advertising from various angles and dimensions, making the research rich in its diverse scientific sources and approaches.

3. Creativity in Communication Strategy

From a communication perspective, advertising is essentially a process of encoding a brand message by a sender (advertiser/agency) and decoding it by a receiver (target audience) through various channels, often amidst significant noise (Shannon & Weaver, 1949). Creativity intervenes strategically at multiple points within this model, transforming mere information transmission into persuasive engagement.

3.1. Attention and Engagement

The most immediate function of creativity in advertising is to capture attention in an increasingly cluttered media landscape. Consumers are exposed to thousands of commercial messages daily, leading to selective attention and information overload (Till & Baack, 2005). Creative ads, through their novelty, humor, emotional appeal, or

unexpected elements, act as a disruptive force that cuts through the noise. They compel consumers to pause, look, and listen, fulfilling the initial, crucial step of any communication process. By being distinctive, creative ads avoid the perceptual filtering that often screens out mundane or generic content, thus ensuring the message reaches the consumer's conscious awareness.

3.2. Message Encoding and Decoding

Creativity significantly influences the encoding of the message by the sender and its subsequent decoding by the receiver. A creatively encoded message often employs rhetorical figures (metaphors, similes, personification), narrative structures, or symbolic representation to convey complex ideas efficiently and memorably (McQuarrie & Mick, 1999). This not only makes the message more appealing but also aids in its comprehension and retention. When decoding, consumers are more likely to elaborate on, process deeply, and recall creative messages because they often demand more cognitive effort to understand, leading to stronger memory traces (Keller, 1993). This enhanced cognitive processing facilitates the formation of stronger, more distinctive brand associations.

3.3. Emotional Connection and Persuasion

Beyond rational processing, creativity is a powerful tool for evoking emotional responses. Human communication is inherently emotional, and advertising leverages this to build deeper connections. Creative ads often elicit feelings of joy, nostalgia, empathy, surprise, or humor, which can bypass rational defenses and foster positive attitudes towards the ad and, by extension, the brand (Heath, 2001). This emotional resonance contributes significantly to persuasion, as consumers are more likely to be influenced by brands that

evoke positive feelings and align with their values (Binet & Field, 2013). Creative storytelling, in particular, can transport consumers into the brand's world, creating an immersive experience that builds brand affinity and loyalty.

3.4. Brand Meaning and Image Construction

Creativity plays a vital role in the construction of brand meaning and image. Through semiotics, creative ads imbue brands with symbolic meanings that extend beyond their functional attributes (Barthes, 1967). A creative execution can associate a brand with aspirations, lifestyles, social groups, or cultural values. For instance, a luxury car advertisement might not just show the car's features but evoke a sense of freedom, status, and adventure through its visual style, music, and narrative. This symbolic communication enables brands to differentiate themselves in crowded markets and resonate with consumers on a deeper, more personal level, fostering a strong brand identity in the consumer's mind.

4. Impact of Creativity on Communication Effectiveness

The aforementioned communicative functions of creativity translate directly into measurable impacts on advertising effectiveness, influencing cognitive, affective, and conative consumer responses.

4.1. Cognitive Effects

Creative ads have been consistently linked to enhanced attention, memorability, and recall. Studies show that highly creative campaigns are more likely to be recalled spontaneously, recognized, and processed deeply than less creative ones (Rosengren et al., 2013). Consequently, this improved cognitive processing leads to higher brand

awareness and stronger brand associations, which are foundational to brand equity.

4.2. Affective Effects

The emotional appeal inherent in innovative advertising contributes to more positive opinions towards the ad and subsequently, attitudes towards the brand. Consumers tend to like ads that are engaging, entertaining, or emotionally resonant, and this positive affect often transfers to the advertised brand (MacInnis & Jaworski, 1989). The emotional connection can foster brand loyalty and advocacy, as consumers feel a stronger bond with brands that evoke positive feelings.

4.3. Conative Effects

Ultimately, the goal of advertising is to influence consumer behavior. Research by the IPA (Institute of Practitioners in Advertising) and others has consistently demonstrated that highly creative campaigns are significantly more effective in driving sales, market share growth, and long-term profitability (Binet & Field, 2013). They achieve this by increasing purchase intent, stimulating word-of-mouth, and building brand equity that translates into sustained consumer preference and willingness to pay a premium. Creativity, therefore, acts as a potent catalyst for commercial success by optimizing the entire communication funnel.

4.4. Persuasion and Purchase Intention

While liking is important, the ultimate goal of many advertisements is to drive behavior. It is suggested that creativity can enhance persuasion by making arguments more appealing and less intrusive. When an ad is perceived as creative, consumers may be less resistant to its message, perceiving it as less manipulative or overtly sales-oriented (Reinartz & Saffert, 2013). When reducing resistance,

combining with enhanced attention, recall, and positive attitudes, can translate into higher purchase intentions and, eventually, actual purchasing behavior.

5. Challenges of Creativity in Advertising

Despite its undeniable benefits, achieving and sustaining effective advertising creativity presents several challenges for communicators.

According to Lalaoui (2022) the researcher "Said Benkrad" believes that the secret of the success of any advertising flash is persuasion, that is, convincing the consumer of the need to buy, the flash that does not lead to the purchase of the product. He emphasizes that the flash does not offer the consumer what he knows in advance, but rather puts in front of him what he thinks he is ignorant about himself and his surroundings. Also, advertising should be interesting, attractive and tempting, and the content of flashes should be a mixture of emotional and mental. The consumer is drawn into the worlds of inspiration, considering that the purpose of the advertising flash is to single out the consumer's mind, direct his desires, identify his needs, diversify them and replace them with others.

Since with abundance and diversity, competition has intensified and the foundations have multiplied, so the consumer has become trapped from all directions and can no longer keep a single idea for a long time, because he is exposed daily to incessant waves of ads.

In some instances, highly creative ads can be so captivating that they overshadow the brand or key message, leading to "vampire effects" where the ad itself is remembered but not the product, which we call "Overshadowing the Message" (Dahlen et al., 2010). This describes a situation

where an advertisement is so exceptionally creative, entertaining, or visually stunning that it inadvertently detracts from its primary purpose, which highlights a critical paradox in advertising, while creativity is highly valued, it must always serve the brand and its message. When creativity becomes an end in itself, it can, ironically, undermine the very purpose of the advertisement.

6. Practical Examples of Creativity in Advertising



Figure 1

As we see in figure 1 The most striking feature is the three-dimensional sculpture of the steak and fork that literally breaks through the two-dimensional plane of the billboard.

This act of frame-breaking serves as a powerful attentional hook. It disrupts the mundane visual landscape of roadside advertising, forcing viewers to notice and process the anomaly. The structure transforms from a passive display into an active, almost aggressive, visual statement.

While the monumental size of the fork and steak is a classic visual representation of the rhetorical device of hyperbole. This exaggeration is not merely for spectacle; it directly communicates the core message. The physical immensity of the steak becomes a visual metaphor for the immense quality and flavor of the product being advertised. It visually dwarfs its surroundings, asserting the primacy and importance of the advertised product's quality. Despite the exaggerated scale, the sculpture of the steak is rendered with a high degree of realism. The visible char, the gradient of pink to red indicating a perfect cooking, and the apparent texture of the meat appeal to the viewer's sensory memory. This realism grounds making the abstract promise of flavor feel tangible and authentic.

From an other side; the tagline "flavor is actual size" is the intellectual core of the advertisement. It presents a synesthetic proposition, the merging of two different sensory modalities. Flavor, a gustatory and olfactory experience, is equated with size, a visual and spatial dimension. This elevates the communication from a purely visual medium to a multi-sensory, immersive experience. The use of scent marketing, or olfactory advertising is a sophisticated communicative technique. Smell is powerfully linked to memory and emotion, bypassing rational filters to trigger a primal, visceral response in this case, hunger and desire.



Figure 2

In this figure the conceptual brilliance of the Formula advertisement lies in its ability to translate an abstract product benefit into a concrete and dramatic visual narrative. The central idea is to provide an impossible, yet visually persuasive, demonstration of the product's claim. The tagline is "builds strong teeth." Rather than simply stating this benefit, the ad opts to show it through a powerful visual metaphor. The abstract concept of strength is made undeniable by depicting a man performing a superhuman feat tearing apart the structure of the advertisement with his teeth. This moves beyond mere assertion into the realm of visual proof.

The advertisement constructs a micro-narrative of extreme power, this use of hyperbole serves to establish the product's superiority in a cluttered market. The implied logic is compelling; if the toothpaste can make teeth strong enough to rip metal and vinyl, it can certainly handle everyday challenges

like cavities and plaque with ease. This creates a strong value proposition and positions the brand as a high performance.

The ad utilizes a frame-breaking technique, but in a distinctively different manner. Instead of adding an external object to the billboard, this creative deconstructs the billboard from within. The illusion of the corner being torn away, exposing the underlying metal trusses and supports. The message is literally strong it cannot be contained by the physical medium of the advertisement itself. Which gives us a startling and highly memorable visual effect. The viewer is not just seeing a picture, he is witnessing an incredible event. This dynamism makes the advertisement feel more alive, funny and urgent, capturing attention more effectively than a flat, passive image.

Conclusion

From the previous analysis, we can say that creativity in advertising is far more than a stylistic choice; it is an indispensable strategic asset and a critical component of effective communication. By viewing advertising through a communication lens, we understand that creativity functions to break through clutter, enhance message encoding and decoding, forge emotional bonds, and build powerful brand meanings. Its impact on cognitive, affective, and conative consumer responses, demonstrating its capacity to drive both short-term sales and long-term brand equity.

While challenges persist in measurement, balancing creative ambition with clarity, and navigating ethical considerations, the fundamental role of creativity in persuasive communication will only intensify in an increasingly noisy and fragmented world. Continued investment in understanding, nurturing, and responsibly deploying creativity remains

paramount to building meaningful connections between brands and consumers in the dynamic landscape of modern communication.

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