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AIDA model of Advertising Strategy

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ABSTRACT

Advertising is a form of promotion, and, as one of the four pillars of marketing (along with product, place, and price), promotion encompasses the variety of techniques an advertiser uses to communicate with current and potential consumers. The type of promotional effort employed by the firm depends on several things. Advertisers create ads with a variety of objectives in mind from getting people to sample a product, to donate money for an environmental cause. Advertisements work because they make an effective appeal to some need or desire in the people who view, read or listen to them. Once the advertising objectives and appeals have been decided, the creative advertising team must decide how to present the product so that the message will have the maximum impact on the target market. Advertisers are constantly trying to define how advertising works, and from an advertising models reviewed in this paper; they often try to pick meaningful communications objectives. This paper reviews the current and past literature of advertising models; several different models will be examined in greater detail with an empirical comparison using advertisements.

Keywords : Promotional Strategy, Advertising Appeal and Objectives, Potential Customers

Introduction

Advertising is a form of promotion, and promotion is the face of a company. As one of the four pillars of marketing (along with product, place, and price), promotion encompasses the variety of techniques an advertiser uses to communicate with current and potential consumers. The goal of promotion is to ensure that targeted customers know and like a company's products. This paper will focus specifically on advertising. There are many tools available to communicate a brand message to potential consumers, including ads on television and radio, print ads in newspapers and magazines, on the World Wide Web, outdoors on billboards and bus shelters, as well as in store promotions, coupons, direct mail, and many others.

While advertising is usually involved in selling a company's goods or services, there are other purposes of advertising including selling ideas, gaining political support, persuading people or firms to take an action or so on. This article, however, will focus on advertising and how it relates to selling a company's goods or services. The type of promotional effort employed by the firm depends on several things. One of the preliminary questions that should be addressed is whether the firm should adopt a push or pull strategy. A push strategy is one where a firm focuses its promotions on wholesalers or retailers and encourages these companies to push the products directly onto consumers. By contrast, a pull strategy occurs when a firm creates demand at the customer end and relies on this demand to pull products through the marketing channel as customers ask retailers, and retailers ask wholesalers, and wholesalers ask a firm for the product (Bovee et al., 1995). In addition, different products, at different stages of the product life cycle, require different promotional strategies to achieve different objectives. To pull buyers to a store or to push the distribution channel to stock and sell, there are five general categories of promotion:

- Advertising
- Personal selling
- Sales promotion
- Public relations and publicity
- Direct selling

Given the tremendous expenses involved in the typical ad-

vertising campaign, it will be useful to understand how advertising works, which message strategy is appropriate for certain products, or generally how to increase the return on the advertising investment. The conventional wisdom is that most cases, more advertising is preferable to less, and that advertising takes a long time (many months, or in some cases even years) to increase sales. Abraham and Lodish (1990) disagree and suggest that the actual return on advertising investment is extremely low "...only 16% of trade promotions are profitable – and for many, the cost of an extra one dollar of sales is greater than one dollar". The famous suggestion that "half of the money spent on advertising is wasted, but it is not clear which half" indicates that pursuing effective advertising can be a challenge.

Advertising purpose, appeal and message strategies

Advertisers create ads with a variety of objectives in mind from getting people to sample a product, to persuading them to donate money for an environmental cause or vote for a political candidate. Here are six categories of advertising purpose, arranged from most direct to most indirect (Jones 1992 and Bovee et al., 1995):

To prompt action: Direct action advertising is designed to motivate people to act. It involves ads that try to persuade people to make a purchase, call a phone number, or mail/fax/email an order form, and includes many of the common ads consumers see in newspapers, in-store advertising and package advertising.

To encourage information search: In some cases, it is unreasonable to assume that a consumer is ready to make an immediate purchase based solely on advertising. In these cases, consumers need more information – a test drive or a demonstration – before making up their minds. This is often the case for big-ticket items and such ads often include a telephone number or website so the consumer can seek more information.

To relate product to needs: A less direct form of advertising, this category includes those ads that draw a link in the consumers' minds between the product and their needs as a consumer.

To encourage recall of past product satisfaction and prompt a repurchase: Ads of this nature are designed to summon memories of past satisfaction and get customers to purchase a product again.

To modify attitudes: One of the more challenging objectives facing advertisers is to modify attitudes towards a product. This is often appropriate when a firm's product has received a bad reputation for one reason or another or if a firm is attempting to recapture customers they lost to a competitor. Tylenol employed this strategy after its headache medication was sabotaged with cyanide.

To reinforce attitudes: The final category of advertising objectives seeks to reinforce attitudes that customers already have towards a product. Market leaders (such as Coke or McDonald's) often use this to maintain their market share and volume. Advertisements work because they make an effective appeal to some need or desire in the people who view, read or listen to them. The advertising appeal is an attempt to draw a connection between the product and the audience. At the broadest level, there are two main types of appeals: logical and emotional. Logical appeals aim for the buyer's head, while emotional appeals aim for the buyer's heart. Appeals can be either positive or negative. The most common types of appeals are based on price or value; quality; star identification; ego; fear and/or anger; the five senses; sex, love and social acceptance; and novelty (Jones 1992).

Once the advertising objectives and appeals have been decided, the creative advertising team must decide how best to present the product so that the message will have the maximum impact on the target market. Some of the more common message strategies used for creative execution are (Tuckwell 1998):

Testimonials: In a testimonial ad, a typical user of the product presents the message. Since ordinary people are used, (as opposed to models or celebrities), the message is usually perceived as being believable.

Endorsements: An endorsement is essentially a celebrity testimonial, where the advertiser attempts to capitalize on the popularity of the celebrity. Some of the more prominent celebrities endorsing products include Amitabh Bacchan for Binani Cement, Shahrukh Khan for Dish T.V, Sachin Tendulkar for Coke.

Product demonstration: The use of a product demonstration is quite common in advertising and centers on product performance. Several execution formats are available including the "before and after", which is often appropriate for diet related products, or a simple demonstration of the product at work, which is regularly used for many household products.

Product as Hero: In the case of product-as-hero, the advertiser presents a problem situation (using a negative appeal strategy), which is quickly solved when the product comes to the rescue. For example, television commercials always show Sensodyne tooth pest for cure to Sensitive Teet.

Torture test: In a torture test, a product is exposed to exaggerated punishment or abuse in order to substantiate a product claim that is known to be of interest to consumers. The MRF Tyre is a classic case of the creative execution of a message strategy that uses torture testing.

Product comparisons: A final message strategy compares one product against another in the same category. To be successful, the attribute singled out must be important to consumers. A successful comparison campaign is the one used by JK Wall Putty against ordinary Putty. Product comparisons are illegal in some markets (Ogilvy 1985).

How Advertising Works: Models of advertising

Advertisers are constantly trying to define and model how ad-

vertising works, and from these models, they often try to pick meaningful communications objectives (Bovee et al.1995). This section reviews the current and past literature of advertising models. Several different models of advertising are presented and be examined in greater detail with an empirical comparison.

1- Hierarchy of Effects Models (AIDA)

One of the earliest influential models was called DAGMAR, an acronym for Defining Advertising Goals for Measured Results, a book that was first published in 1961 (Colley 1984), also commonly known as the AIDA model. The model was built around four stages of communication results: awareness, comprehension, conviction, and action. Colley argued that it is possible to pick the appropriate stage in the communication process and use it to define advertising objectives. Since its first publication, there have been numerous variations published, each a variation of the hierarchy of effects model since they show several phases of communication, progressing from initial awareness up to the decision to make a purchase (Jones 1986). Lavidge and Steiner (1961) first suggested that consumers respond in terms of a hierarchy of effects, which is a sequence of stages a prospective buyer goes through from initial awareness of a product to eventual action (either trial or adoption of the product).



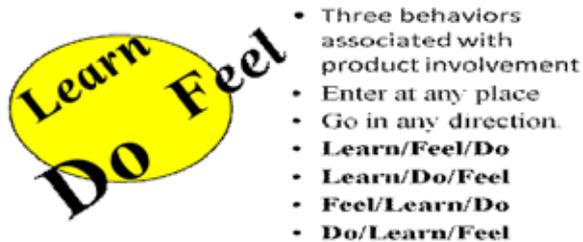
Or



Whatever the variety, a hierarchy of effects models is based on the assumption that people first learn something from advertising, then form feelings about the product in question, and finally take action (for example, purchasing a product). This order of stages is often called the learn-feel-do sequence (Bovee et al. 1995). While enjoyed because of its simplicity, advertising does not always work in such a clear, straightforward, and logical manner. An examination of typical purchasing decisions for the average consumer suggests that the learn-feel-do sequence is often violated. For example, consider a routine decision that many customers face every day; where to purchase lunch. Does the customer always need to be aware of a potential restaurant, develop strong feelings (or at least strong enough to try) before deciding on a place to eat? What if the customer sees a restaurant and simply walks in to give it a try? Perhaps the customer saw friends walking out of a restaurant and decided it might be worth exploring, or maybe he or she made the decision simply because he or she was hungry and this was the only convenient place to eat.

Such an example illustrates the two main problems associated with the learn-feel-do sequence of consumer behavior: the steps do not always occur in this order, and the customer does not always go through each step. For instance for some products that a consumer gives little thought to, (for example purchasing light bulbs), feelings may not be formed for the product until after the purchase has been made, suggesting a learn-do feel sequence. Another possible sequence is feel-learn-do, where a consumer first gets positive feelings about a product, (for example a car or personal computer), then learns more about it, then makes a purchase. A final possible sequence, and according to Jones (1986) it is the most common, is the do-feel-do sequence. In these circumstances, no learning is going on; the customer is aware of the product and has probably used it before. A customer buys a product, likes the way it works or is satisfied with the purchase, and advertising reinforces those feelings prompting the customer to purchase the product again and again. These variations in the learn-feel-do triad are illustrated in the figure below, suggesting the customer can start at any point and move in any direction:

The Learn/Feel/Do Circle:



1. Surf Excel's Advertisement (Brother & Sister Duo)



Hindustan Unilever Limited introduced Surf in 1959, introducing the first detergent powder into the country. At the time, housewives used laundry soap bars to wash clothes. Surf offered them significantly better clean, with much less effort. The promise of 'superlative whiteness' – the articulation of a great clean at the time, connected with consumers and helped to establish the brand. Surf was the first national detergent brand on TV; the brand used TV to effectively educate their consumers on how to use detergent powders in a bucket for a better wash. Surf Excel made a big "splash" with their "Daag Achhe Hain" advertising campaign. The following is an analysis of the first such commercial.

The advertisement features a brother and sister duo walking home from school, when the little girl falls into a puddle of mud. Crying, she looks to her brother for help. Her brother gets an idea and starts "beating up" the puddle of mud, demanding an apology. After a time and a lot of mud on his uniform, he stands up and says, "Sorry bola." The narrator then removes all apprehensions of dirt and stains and says, "Daag Acche Hain."

This advertisement is universally well-loved. This is so because it does a lot of things right. It makes use of children's appeal to get the advertising message across. The advertisement does what seldom others do – cater to the emotions and sentiments of the viewers – and succeeds with it. Not only do the children lower your guard to the advertisement, but the story, too, warms the heart of the viewers. The advertisement generates a sense of bonding. Viewers without siblings, too, can relate to the advertisement and the actions of the little boy.

AIDA Model

The AIDA model suggest consumers move from an Awareness ► Interest ► Desire ► Action (or that the consumer has a Learn ► Feel ► Do mentality). This advertisement is consistent with the AIDA model. The advertising mantra, AIDA, is strictly adhered to. This is one of the reasons for its success. This ad creates Attention, Knowledge and interest and makes a sequence of Learn-Feel-Do. By showing a little boy and girl, the advertisement draws the attention of the viewers. When the little girl falls into the puddle and starts to cry, it creates interest in the minds of the viewers. When the tagline is spouted, it builds, in the viewers, a desire to know more. This desire often leads to action. Although there is no obvious tar-

geting, it is done so through indirect means. Most mothers are concerned when their children come home in dirty and messy clothes. This advertisement, not only sends out the message that Surf Excel will help you was them out, but that also there is no need to fear stains.

This advertisement also does what the majority do not. It focuses on the people rather than the product. The sentiments, actions and emotions of the people are highlighted and showcased throughout the advertisement in one form or another. The product is kept discreetly tucked away and does not overpower the commercial. Although Surf Excel is a premium brand, this advertisement caters to all the income grades and all classes of people, across age groups. The brand and product are positioned as accessible to all people, whoever and however they may be. The brand image created through this advertisement is phenomenal. The advertisement leaves people with a warm feeling. This feeling also transfers to the product and brand. Thus, this advertisement can definitely be called an advertising success.

2. Nirma Washing Powder



When we think of strong detergent in general and low cost in particular, Nirma is the first brand which comes to our minds. Everyone remembers not just these lines but also the tune!

"Washing powder Nirma,

**Washing powder Nirma;
Doodh si safedi Nirma se aaye,
rangeen kapda bhi khil-khil jaye;
Rekha, Jaya, Meena aur Sushma,
Sabki pasand Nirma"**

The kind of impact that Nirma's simple "Dancing Girl" advertisement managed to have on prospective buyers was phenomenal. It perhaps was the most famous audio-visual of its times. And it remained etched in the minds of people for a very long time. Advertisements of Nirma focus on the "performance" and "cost effective" features of the washing powder which has made it popular in most Indian households, who have been using it for many years now. This product is targeted for middle class and lower middle class population of India. Washing Powders have undergone a number of changes in terms of composition, advertising etc ever since they were first introduced. And consumer preferences have also changed accordingly with people more comfortable with more sophisticated brands. Yet, Nirma with its distinct yellow color (later which became blue) does crop up somewhere in the mind space of consumers, even nonusers.

AIDA Model

In this Ad's beginning the jingles creates Awareness with impact. Then it follows the AIDA model in sequence. E.g Knowledge ► Liking (Rekha, Jaya, Meena, Sushma) Preference ► Conviction ► Purchase. The Ad was built around four stages of communication results: awareness, comprehension, conviction, and action (Purchase). In this Advertising people first

learn something from advertising, then form feelings about the product in question, and finally take action (for example, purchasing a product). So it follows the sequence of Learn ► Feel ► Do.

3. Bingo!



Al Ries, one of the most prominent marketing gurus, who along with Jack Trout coined the term 'positioning' as we use in marketing today wrote in one of his books on branding that a second brand can enter the market and gain share by staying far away from the leader in terms of mind space, or by taking an opposite Positioning.

While Lays was selling its American Sour Cream & Onion and Spanish Tomato flavors, Bingo! Was positioned with its Indian flavors such as Tandoori Paneer, Tikka, Spice Paneer etc. We all know how the North Indian market (in fact, all of India except the South) loves all things Punjabi. And to appease the South Indian market, Bingo! had flavors such as Chatkila Nimbu Achaar, Achari Masti etc. In fact, Bingo! Comes in 16 flavors to cater to the taste buds of different regions of India.

Bingo!'s advertising follows the AIDA model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action). The clutter-breaking ads with their slapstick humor and irrelevant themes garnered enough eyeballs to create awareness of the product and generate an interest

towards the product in the minds of consumers. The ads are simply insane & nonsensical to the point of being bizarre & utter crap. And that is why they are so funny. This resulted in high product trials.

Or the one where the scientists at the Bingo Mad Labs issue a pregnancy certificate after feeding you Bingo! Mad Angles. The procedure, the ad claims, to test whether you are pregnant is fast, simple and painless. The scientists will offer you Bingo Achaari Masti, and if you are driven crazy by the tangy "achaari" taste of the snack & chase the scientists for more, then congratulations you have tested positive.

Or the one where a guy says he has tried his hands at making a combination of his lazy brother Jignesh & a toaster. Posing for a family poster, Jignesh jumps up in the air even before the photographer could click. In another shot, his girlfriend gets the shock of her life as he springs up from his motorcycle leaving her alone on the running vehicle. These incidents lead the guy to conclude that unlike Bingo's Mad Angles combination, his combination was a failure. There are many other attention-grabbing Bingo! ads such as the Vango Pango ad etc. but what's interesting is the fact that Lays uses a brand ambassador approach with mass appeal celebrities such as Saif Ali Khan, Juhi Chawla & M S Dhoni whereas Bingo still doesn't have an ambassador. Finding one that can match its image would be quite a task.

Conclusion

This paper explored several advertisements and evaluated them on the practicality and consistency with the advertising models presented. Despite widespread popularity and near universal acceptance, the standard hierarchical advertising model suggesting consumers move from a level of awareness, to interest, to desire and finally to action appear to be inconsistent with the actual communication strategies employed by the firms in this paper.

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