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The marketing power of emotion

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ABSTRACT

In today's business landscape, customers are the lifeblood of enterprises, making them invaluable assets that require careful attention to attract and retain. Scholars like Ph. Kotler and D. Jokubauskas underscore the importance of advertising in resonating with customers and eliciting desired responses. This symbiotic relationship between advertising and psychology has deepened over time, with advertisers leveraging psychological concepts to craft more impactful advertisements. This paper offers a comprehensive exploration of this intricate relationship between advertising and psychology, underscoring their pivotal roles in understanding consumer behavior and shaping effective advertising strategies. Through an examination of emotions, music, shock tactics, humor, social proof, liking, and scarcity in advertising, this paper provides valuable insights into how psychological principles inform and enhance advertising practices, ultimately driving customer engagement and loyalty.

Keywords: *Marketing, consumer psychology, consumer behavior, advertising, Psychological principles, emotions*

I. INTRODUCTION

The symbiotic relationship between advertising and psychology has deepened over time as both advertisers and psychologists sought credibility and a deeper understanding of consumer behavior. Advertisers recognized the need to infuse their work with scientific rigor to validate its effectiveness, leading them to enlist the expertise of psychologists. Psychologists, in turn, played a pivotal role in providing insights into consumer motives and behavior, thus enriching advertisers' understanding of their target audience (Friedman, 2004).

This dynamic collaboration between advertising and psychology has enabled advertisers to leverage psychological concepts to craft more sophisticated and impactful advertisements. By tapping into psychological principles, advertisers aim to create ads that resonate with consumers on a deeper level, ultimately influencing their perceptions, attitudes, and purchasing decisions. Thus, the intersection of advertising and psychology underscores the importance of understanding the intricacies of human behavior in shaping effective advertising strategies. Through an exploration of this relationship, this paper seeks to elucidate how psychological insights inform and enhance advertising practices, ultimately driving customer engagement and loyalty.

II. THE REAL MEANING OF ADVERTISING

Advertising is not solely a modern phenomenon but has roots that extend far back in history, emerging before formal definitions or categorizations were established. It is even plausible that advertising predates human invention. As Ulrich Werner astutely observed, comparing the tranquil demeanor of a duck laying eggs to the vociferous clucking of a hen, the question arises: which eggs garner greater demand? (Werner U., 1992).

The term "reklama," derived from Polish and meaning advertising, finds its etymological origins in Latin. The Latin verb "reclamo" encompasses the notions of shouting at someone, opposing loudly, and reverberating, suggesting an inherent connection to the essence of advertising. Similarly, Latin words such as "divulge," meaning to spread or announce, and "propago," signifying to propagate or disseminate, closely align with the concept of advertising. Furthermore, the English term "advertising," defined as drawing attention to a specific product, seems linguistically apt for encapsulating the discussed phenomenon.

Within scholarly discourse, numerous definitions of advertising abound, reflecting the complexity of the subject. Renowned advertising and brand management expert Jacek Kall posits that advertising serves as one of several tools employed by companies to inform clients about their offerings and persuade them to choose their products or services over those of competitors (Kall J., 1994).

In her discussion referencing Georges Elgozy's work "Les paradoxes de la publicité: la persuasion licite," Katarzyna Skowronek characterizes advertising as a form of legal persuasion. Elgozy suggests that through dissemination by the press, advertising acts as an art of persuasion capable of convincing individuals to believe in various propositions. Skowronek further emphasizes that the persuasive influence of advertising leaves indelible imprints on our brains, sensitizing our neural pathways and shaping our perceptions (Skowronek K., 1993).

III. ROLE OF EMOTION

Emotions, derived from the Latin word "emovere," refer to strong feelings, whether conscious or subconscious, that accompany everyday events. Common examples of emotions include anger, worry, anxiety, joy, liking, and astonishment. Emotional reactions are inherent in the recollection of experiences, the perception of the environment, and consumer choices, making them ubiquitous in consumer behavior. Given their significant role, emotions are effectively utilized in advertising. The perception, memory, and learning of advertisements are influenced not only by the psychological principles governing these processes but also by the emotions they evoke.

In advertising, the expression and manner in which emotions are conveyed are crucial. Advertisements that incorporate pleasant elements and encourage engagement with the product evoke feelings of joy. Conversely, advertisements containing elements that evoke visions of harm or reluctance to purchase evoke fear.

Theorists of emotions offer various assumptions regarding the number of emotions, with C. Izard's (1977) classification being the most well-known. This classification identifies ten basic emotions: joy, interest, astonishment, anger, worry, repulsion, disdain, fear, and guilt.

The evocation of emotions occurs during exposure to relevant events, such as watching an advertisement in real time or recalling past advertisements. Both perception and memory processes contribute to the creation of emotions.

Research on consumer behavior by Deborah MacInnis and Roberta Westbrook (1987) demonstrates that individuals experience a range of emotions when exposed to advertisements. Their analysis identified specific elements of advertising that elicit particular emotions in consumers. For instance, advertisements featuring abusive behavior, disruption, or dishonesty can evoke anger among viewers.

Use of Music

Music serves as a crucial factor in setting the atmosphere of advertisements and is commonly utilized as background accompaniment. It plays a significant role in elevating consumers' excitement levels and emotions. According to Deborah J. Macinnis and C.W. Parka (1991) from the University of Arizona, the use of music in persuasive messages produces two effects. Firstly, it stimulates strong emotions linked to past experiences, thereby capturing consumers' attention. Marian C. Burke and Julia A. Edell (1989) assert that music influences attitudes by eliciting emotions that contribute to shaping consumers' perceptions of brands. Secondly, the impact of music in advertising involves aligning the music with the central themes of the message, including textual and visual elements. Following the principles of Gestalt theory, music that seamlessly integrates with other components of the advertisement is perceived as part of a unified whole rather than a separate entity. This harmonious alignment ensures that music complements rather than competes with other elements, thereby enhancing the overall meaning conveyed in the advertisement. In this way, music, like other elements, directs attention and influences the perception of stimuli.

Use of shock tactics

The use of shocking content in advertising is a relatively common practice, often employed alongside fear appeals or independently. A "shock advertising appeal" deliberately aims to shock and offend the audience (Gustafson & Yssel, 1994). Offense typically arises from the violation of norms established by legal systems, cultural customs, or socialization processes. Examples of norm violations in advertising include campaigns by Benetton featuring provocative imagery, such as a black woman breastfeeding a white child, Barnardos depicting a baby being fed toxic substances, and PeTA showcasing skinned animals in their advertisements. While some argue that such advertisements raise social awareness, others express outrage; nonetheless, they tend to attract attention and spark discussion.

In a study comparing advertisements incorporating shock, fear, or informational elements, it was found that the ad containing a shocking element garnered the most attention and aided better recall and recognition among participants. The ad containing fear was the second most effective in these aspects (Dahl, Frankenberger, & Manchanda, 2003), indicating that while fear may not have the same impact as shock, it still leaves an impression on the audience. However, to maximize attention, incorporating a shocking element into an advertisement may be more effective.

Fear, uncertainty, and doubt (FUD) are frequently utilized by businesses and organizations to prompt consumers to reconsider their behavior. Advertising taps into individuals' desire for security by addressing their insecurities and presenting the product or service as a solution to their fears.

Use of Humour

Humor plays a significant role in the advertising industry, with approximately 10-30% of all TV commercials incorporating comedic elements (Krishnan & Chakravarti, 2003; Rossiter & Percy, 1997). Employing humor in ads can effectively capture consumers' attention (Weinberger, Spotts, Campbell, & Parsons, 1995), engage the audience (Spotts, Weinberger, & Parsons, 1997), and enhance ad responses (Scott, Klein, & Bryant, 1990; Weinberger & Campbell, 1991). Research indicates that humorous advertisements tend to perform better under low involvement conditions, serving as peripheral cues (Zhang & Zinkhan, 2006).

Numerous successful ad campaigns have effectively utilized humor. For instance, the 'Egg Money' campaign featured guinea pigs using credit cards for various shopping purposes.

Despite the perceived advantages of funny advertisements, empirical research on their effectiveness is not as extensive as it could be (Weinberger & Gulas, 1992). Challenges arise as humor can evoke mixed emotions (Gelb & Zinkhan, 1986; Nelson, 1987), and perceptions of what is funny vary across cultures (Francis, 1994). In multicultural societies and international campaigns, cultural differences in humor can pose a challenge.

Additionally, it is crucial not to overdo the humor in ads, as it may overshadow the advertised product and hinder message comprehension (Belch & Belch, 1984). To mitigate this, brands must ensure high visibility and clear integration of the product within the humorous narrative (Cline & Kellaris, 2007). The choice of humor should align closely with the product category (Speck, 1991; Spotts et al., 1997), although no definitive guidelines exist regarding the most appropriate type of humor for each product.

The rule of social proof

The principle of social proof suggests that the beliefs and behaviors of others often influence our decision-making process. This influence is particularly pronounced when we observe individuals who resemble us, as demonstrated by Festinger (1954) and Platow et al. (2005). The actions of similar others serve as cues for the correctness of our behavior. Research supports the notion that individuals are more inclined to emulate those who share similarities with them rather than those who are dissimilar (Abrams, Wetherell, Cochrane, Hogg, & Turner, 1990; Burn, 1991; Schultz, 1999). Consequently, advertisements frequently feature endorsements from ordinary individuals, as they constitute the majority of potential consumers for most products.

The impact of social proof is most pronounced under two conditions: when individuals experience uncertainty and seek guidance from others' behaviors, and when the social proof emanates from individuals with whom we identify closely. To guard against the influence of others, it is crucial to remain vigilant against fabricated evidence of others' behavior and to recognize that external influences should not unduly sway our decision-making process.

Tata Tea's campaigns, such as "Jaago Re," have utilized social proof by depicting ordinary individuals taking action to bring about social change, thereby encouraging others to follow suit. These campaigns often resonate with consumers who aspire to make a positive impact in society.

The principle of liking

People are more inclined to comply with requests from individuals they know and like. Practitioners of social influence understand and leverage this principle by endeavoring to cultivate favorable impressions. Physical attractiveness plays a significant role in this regard, as research indicates that it can shape perceptions of an individual's intelligence, kindness, and talent. Attractive individuals wield greater influence over our attitudes and behaviors. Additionally, similarity fosters affinity, as we are predisposed to favor individuals who resemble us. Compliments directed toward us further enhance our liking for others.

Frequent interactions can bolster mutual liking, as can associations with entities or characteristics we find appealing. Consequently, advertisers, politicians, and producers often seek to align themselves or their products with positive attributes or associations. To mitigate undue obedience to individuals we like, it is advisable to recognize and manage any sudden increases in affinity. By temporarily disengaging from such individuals and separating our feelings toward them from our assessment of their proposals, we can make more objective decisions based solely on the merits of the offer.

Cadbury, a renowned chocolate brand, is known for its heartwarming and emotionally resonant advertising campaigns in India. By highlighting moments of joy, love, and togetherness, Cadbury creates a strong emotional connection with consumers, leading to increased likability and brand loyalty.

The principle of scarcity

The principle of scarcity posits that people are inherently drawn to items that are limited in availability or perceived as rare. This principle aligns with the adage that "forbidden fruit tastes sweeter." Marketers commonly exploit this phenomenon by emphasizing the uniqueness or

scarcity of a product, thereby increasing its desirability. The allure of scarcity stems from two factors: the perceived value of rare items and the sense of loss associated with limited options, which amplifies our desire to obtain them.

The research underscores the potency of scarcity as a motivator, particularly when the scarcity is recent or when competition for the scarce item is intense. Resisting the allure of scarce products through reasoned argumentation is challenging (Olejniczak, 2012). Instead, it may be more effective to acknowledge and manage the emotions triggered by scarcity. By assessing our true need for scarce items with a clear mind, we can make more rational purchasing decisions.

Tanishq, a prominent jewelry brand in India, has employed the principle of scarcity by introducing limited edition collections or exclusive designs available for a limited time. By highlighting the rarity of these offerings, Tanishq enhances their perceived value and entices consumers to purchase before they are no longer available.

IV. CONCLUSION

Deliberations included in this article lead to the conclusion that the road to success in the market is a series of continuous activities aimed at satisfying the needs of customers. In the contemporary world advertising is a very important element of interpersonal relations. It is also an important means of conveying information and emotions, enhancing the recall value of our experiences.

In all kinds of situations, there is always someone who is trying, in a more or less conscious way, to steer our emotions, and influence our decisions in such a way that it is not fully conscious. The rules of exerting influence on people are an interesting socio-psychological issue. The knowledge concerning proper behavior in various situations is also very important. We need to learn to protect ourselves against manipulation.

Emotions are central to advertising, influencing perception, memory, and consumer choices. Music serves as a powerful tool to evoke emotions and enhance the overall impact of advertisements. Shock tactics, humor, social proof, liking, and scarcity are all psychological principles that advertisers exploit to capture attention and influence consumer behavior.

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