

Smart Advertising: Advertising or Persuasion Techniques

Advertising has discovered many different ways to convince people to buy products over the years. By coming up with persuasive techniques, advertising has become the primary way to move people to purchase items or services. Some of these techniques are listed below.

Testimonial: A famous person or authority on the subject endorses the product. (Caution! This person may or may not have any expertise in evaluating this product and most likely is paid for saying they use or recommend this product.)

Bandwagon: Everyone else is buying and using this product. This insinuates that this product will make you more popular, good looking or friends will like you better.

Plain Folks: People in the ad are just ordinary folks making it seem that the general public uses this product.

Snob Appeal: The opposite of plain folks. This ad appeals to us because only certain people can afford to have access to this item which makes us feel special if we can afford to purchase it.

Glittering Generalities: Uses general words that sound very attractive, but do not give specific information. This technique uses phrases like *“Looks better, is more nutritious, is less expensive, cleans better, etc...”* It leaves out the part of WHAT it looks better than, WHAT it is more nutritious than, WHAT is it less expensive than, or WHAT it cleans better than, etc... Buyer should listen carefully for what it does **NOT** say.

Humor/Kids/Animals: This ad uses humor to entertain you so you look at the commercial and hopefully remember it when you are buying products. Buyer should keep their mind on what is being advertised and not on the images being supplied. Do the images have anything to do with the product being sold?

Repetition: Advertisers repeat the name or a phrase a number of times to help people remember or recall the information when making a purchase. Sometimes a song or rhyme can get stuck in your mind and is able to influence you to purchase the product. Other products may be just as good or less expensive without the catchy repeating phrase.

Free Prizes or Coupons: A prize or coupon with the product or a mail-in coupon for an item is used to promote the purchase and use of this product. Often the prizes are one of a series.

Advertising or Persuasion Techniques, Continued...

Limited Time Offer: This technique offers special savings or limited amounts only if you purchase within a short period of time. Often the price of the product is quite inexpensive. (Caution: Think carefully and research other options. This is a method to hurry the buyer and not allow them to make a logical decision. Will you still want this item later?)

New and Improved: What exactly has been improved or what is new about the product? Often this improvement does not improve the quality, just the look, packaging, flavor, aroma, etc. of the product. For example, a bag of cat food may have changed the shape of the food, but not the actual food content. Does your cat care what shape her food is?

Use of Statistics: Advertisements often say “50% more” or similar statements. Or it might say “9 out of 10 doctors that use this product recommend it.” What they may not be telling you is who isn’t using it or 50% more of what?

Remember, all these techniques are for one purpose: To Sell a Product or Service. The basics of advertising still exist. Advertising is what moves products. Reaching the consumer through ads, coupons, promotions, labels and packaging is a continuous process. Deciding what will attract a customer to your product over somebody else’s is a huge part of a successful business. A person who wants to sell a product must know:

- The product name: What is it?
- What is the reason for using this item? What problem does it solve?
- Why should a person purchase or use this particular item?
- What components are necessary to create this product?
- What makes this product special? What is new, different or unique about it?
It is more energy efficient, bigger, tasty, healthier or does it create less pollution?
- What is the cost, number of servings and serving sizes, number of usages?
Is it disposable, biodegradable, multi-use, etc?
- Are there recipes or other hints for using this project?
- Are there specials, coupons or guarantees with this product?
What is the time frame for these limits?
Is there a limit on the amount of purchases?
- Is safety advice listed? Are there clean-up instructions?
Is there a guideline for proper disposal, poison labels?
Are there any age limitations or requirements?
- Are there different styles, colors or sizes available?