

Critical Aspects of an Efficient Commercial

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Commercials are the mainstream marketing tools used to promote products and services, attract new customers and increase demand. However, not all commercials fulfill these goals and fail to produce a return on investment. This essay analyzes the five critical elements of efficient commercials, including a compelling plot line, simplicity, subconscious influence, emotional connection, and a clear message.

An advertisement is a short video, audio or text that should grab the audience's attention and compel it to try the product. The most common psychological approach marketers use is storytelling. A compelling plot line will make viewers liken themselves to the characters and wish to recreate the situations described in the commercial. For example, a luxury car commercial will show a successful businessman behind the wheel with a beautiful woman in the passenger seat traveling along the coast at sunset. The story behind the commercial compels men to buy expensive cars to have the same experiences as the characters in the advertisement: being successful and surrounded with expensive, high-quality things and beautiful partners.

A theme is another powerful concept. According to Berger (2016), "The plot of an advertisement may involve a man and a woman drinking, but the theme might be jealousy, faithlessness, ambition, passion, etc." (para. 11). Little nuances of the commercial can influence the theme, making a drive by the ocean a murder set-up or a romantic getaway. Negative themes are counterproductive unless they are ironic. Themes evoking strong positive emotions make commercials more efficient.

An average commercial is no longer than 30 or 60 seconds. Therefore, the writers should convey their meaning in a compelling and concise way. According to Bilal (2016),

The more you ask people think during an ad break. . . or the more you ask them to do, the more likely it is that your ad will flop. Free the ad of all clutter and stick to a single idea, a single pitch. (para. 18)

To be effective, the commercial should concentrate on conveying a single idea. Unnecessary extra details will only clutter up the storyline and confuse the audience, diverting its attention. An effective advertisement should keep the viewer's attention and have a clear call-to-action.

Despite the controversy around the moral aspects of including subconscious messaging in advertising, this technique makes commercials efficient and successful. Love (2011) raises the questions whether marketers can consciously include subliminal and subconscious messages into their advertising campaigns to make people associate specific products with power and sex. While subliminal messages cannot be perceived by the audience, subconscious ideas might influence the audience into buying the product. However, the implementation of this technique is challenging. Therefore, few marketers can incorporate subconscious messages into commercials.

Taking previous points into account, it is apparent that commercials do not rely on logical arguments, instead building an emotional connection with the audience. According to classical rhetorical definitions, outlined by Rapp (2016), efficient commercials employ pathos rather than logos. Moral implications of emotional manipulations employed by the marketers are outside of the scope of this essay, but the practical approach is not. Experienced marketing specialists rely on their audience's demographic data and user portraits to craft emotionally engaging commercials. For example, advertising campaigns aimed at stay-at-home mothers evoke the feelings of calm, relaxation, and understanding. Commercials can also use negative emotions to hit the pressure points and compel the

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