Advertising Theory

The Tools of Persuasion
The Goals of Advertising

Information (Marketing)
- product features (did you know?)
- improving brand recognition (now you know.)

Persuasion (Advertising)
- buy it! (don’t you know that you need it?)
- forming relationships (you know you love it!)

The Goals of Advertising
The Elements of Communication
Interactive Communication Model

Smart mediums allow contemporaneous input from senders and receivers.

• Receivers may:
  ◦ select one message over another
  ◦ skip, replay, store a message

• Senders may:
  ◦ identify receivers and their behavior
  ◦ focus or alter message
“...the World Wide Web represents an interactive media with a greater richness of information as opposed to what can be found in traditional media (Evans & Wurster, 1997). Researchers have found that consumers are more active on the Internet and the World Wide Web than is the case with other media channels (Hoffman and Novak, 1996). During a Web session, the Web user is active and interacting with the material presented on the Website, a behavior that may impact advertising on the Web.”

![Image: Diagram showing media channels and the new digital media terrain.](image)

**The Internet**
increased information flow
+ increased ad intensity
+ increased consumer awareness
= no more “sleeper effect.”

The **sleeper effect** identified by psychologist Carl Hovland refers to the "hidden" effect of a propaganda message even when it comes from a discredited source.

- **Knowledge Bias**: the presumption that a speaker has a biased view on an issue

- **Reporting Bias**: the perception that the source has opted not to report certain facts

**How to Build Credibility?**

A Compromised Source
The first step in ad development is identifying, the target audience. An old rule of rhetoric dictates that you can’t begin speaking until you know who you are speaking to.

The VALS chart, developed in the late 1970’s, is still used today. It is unique in that it sections off the general public into groups based on resources and attitudes towards consumption, not just by demographics or geography.

**Primary Motivation**
Consumers buy products and services and seek experiences that fulfill their characteristic preferences and give shape, substance, and satisfaction to their lives. An individual’s primary motivation determines what in particular about the self or the world is the meaningful core that governs his or her activities. Consumers are inspired by one of three primary motivations: ideals, achievement, and self-expression.

**Resources**
A person's tendency to consume goods and services extends beyond age, income, and education. Energy, self-confidence, intellectualism, novelty seeking, innovativeness, impulsiveness, leadership, and vanity play a critical role.

Taking Aim

To find out what your VALS profile is, take the survey at [http://future.sri.com/VALS/VALSindex.shtml](http://future.sri.com/VALS/VALSindex.shtml)
A Long Road to Branding
Central route processes are those that require a great deal of thought. They involve careful scrutiny of a persuasive communication to determine the merits of the arguments. Under these conditions, a person’s unique cognitive responses to the message determine the persuasive outcome (i.e., the direction and magnitude of attitude change). So, if favorable thoughts are a result of the elaboration process, the message will most likely be accepted and if unfavorable thoughts are generated, the message will most likely be rejected.

Peripheral route processes do not involve elaboration of the message through processing of the merits of the argument. These processes rely on environmental characteristics of the message, like the perceived credibility of the source, quality of the presentation, the attractiveness of the source, or the catchy slogan.

(Petty & Cacioppo, 1986)
Hugh Rank (1976) outlined two basic (and opposite) patterns of persuasion:

- **Intensify**
- **Downplay**

He argued that these two patterns are common to many persuasive situations.
Repetition of a word or visual pattern not only causes it to become remembered (recognized), it also leads some to accept the message as truth. An advertiser of soap powder may focus on how wonderfully white clothes become by repeating the word 'whiteness' regardless of the product’s actual effectiveness. Related to the exposure effect.

Association links the item with an idea or thing which already has emotional connotation, something desired or feared. The soap powder advertiser may use attractive people or imply that a person who doesn’t use soap will be shunned.

Composition of the message can further intensify it. For example, the soap powder ad may start with a person wearing extremely muddy clothes.
Repetition:

Association:

Composition:

Examples
intensify :: association :: desire

“Sex Sells”
intensify :: association :: desire :: halo

The **halo effect** refers to a cognitive bias whereby the perception of a particular trait is influenced by the perception of the former traits in a sequence of interpretations.

In brand marketing, a halo effect is one where the perceived positive features of a particular item extend to a broader brand.

— Wikipedia

Celebrity Endorsement
intensify :: association :: fear
intensify :: association :: fun?

Making Fun of Ads
• **Diversion** distracts a person from something we do not want them to think about. The soap powder ad may divert from concerns about environmental damage by highlighting the small quantity of powder needed for each wash.

• **Omission** is to simply not mention any facts that counter the main argument. The soap powder manufacturer will not talk about potential damage to gentle or painted fabrics.

• **Confusion** may be used when the receiver knows about an opposing argument. It may also be used to cover up weaknesses in one's own position. You can confuse by showering the receiver with complex data, or by asking them convoluted questions about their own position. Soap powder manufacturers may give a scientific ‘explanation’ of how their product works.

**Schema :: Downplay**
downplay :: distraction :: fun

Making Ads Fun
downplay :: omission

Every Ad You’ve Ever Seen and will ever see...
downplay :: confusion + intensify :: desire

or

appeal to reason

vs.

appeal to emotion

A Syncretic Art Form
“The current trend in advertising relies upon branding, or creating a sort of ‘personality’ of the product. In order to create an emotional fondness or attachment between the product and the consumer, ads cannot rely upon logic and reasoning but must appeal to the emotions. If Armani’s ads listed the product's features or promised a ‘new and improved’ product, consumers would not be able to differentiate it from other brands who say the same thing. The only thing Armani’s ads can do to stand out, is to utilize more emotional elements, such as Attitude, Lifestyle, Bandwagon, and Oddvertising.”

—www.ciadvertising.org
A Multimedia Art Form

**Allegory**
- Product or service that has been personified by a character. (Jolly Green Giant)

**Metaphor**
- Involves use of explicit comparison. (Tony the Tiger = Strength)

**Resonance**
- Presentation that combines a play on words with a relevant picture.

**Forms of Story Presentation**
- Drama - draws viewer into the action.
- Lecture - source speaks directly to audience.
Research: New ARF Study Says Storytellers Succeed
October 29, 2007

Want to market your brand better? Then tell a story. That's the top finding from an intensive three-year study entitled "On the Road to a New Effectiveness Model" released this month.

... a campaign like Bud's iconic "Wassup" registered more powerfully with consumers than Miller Lite low-carb ads that essentially just said, "We're better than the other guys." Why? Because Bud told a story about friends connected by a special greeting.

Vanessa L. Facenda
—http://www.brandweek.com
Effects of Visual and Verbal Components
For many products that are essentially homogenous in nature, building a brand image is key. Practically speaking, there are very few differences between many brands, except the image they portray. Attitude is a very important part of building this image. In advertising, the general rule is that when you try to appeal to all people, you end up appealing to no one. Attempting to identify with all segments of the population make the brand mundane and boring, and ultimately turns off consumers.

— www.ciadvertising.org
“...the current level of expenditure for advertising and its waste of social resources is a national scandal.”
—Harms & Kellner, UTA

“A main property distinguishing Web advertising from other kinds of advertising is that it has hybrid characteristics combining properties from print, broadcast, out-door, and direct response media. “
—Dréze and Zufryden, 1997

“For many products it is possible to find (or invent) a sexual connection. However, the sexual connection is much easier to set up for men than for women. Remember that men have minimal criteria for sexual desire; basically, they are concerned with a woman's anatomy—as long as a woman looks young enough and healthy, she is desirable.”
—Richard F. Taflinger, PhD

Food for Thought