

Advertising is a very important aspect for all companies and businesses trying to showcase new products to old customers, or just trying to get more customers. They need to keep advertising fresh to keep their current customers coming back, but also need it to grab the attention of new customers so that they can keep expanding their business. Without advertising, it would make it much more difficult for a company to grow and. If a company wants to reach out to large markets, then they have to advertise. If they have a particular customer base that they are aiming for, then advertising is not as important. Most companies want to grow as large as possible, and therefore spend a lot of money on advertising. However, just simply making advertisements for products or services is not enough. There are many different things to think about when trying to effectively advertise. Some things that must be taken into consideration are the target audience, the type of advertising you want to use (print media, television, radio, internet, etc.), and the appropriateness of the advertisement, among many others.

There are many ways that advertisers can advertise their new products. Print used to be the major form of advertising, whether it was magazines or newspaper. Before the internet, everyone received their news from the newspaper, so advertising within newspapers was almost sure to reach just about everyone. Like everything in this world though, advertising began to advance. Magazines began to print advertisements because so many people were subscribing to them. Magazines are also one of the major instances of researching the target audience. You would not see advertisements for sports equipment in a *Cosmopolitan* magazine, just as you would not see advertisements for make-up in a *Sporting News* magazine. Direct mail was also a popular means of advertising. It has declined in popularity, but can still be a useful advertising tool. Direct mail can be costly, however, because the company has to pay for the resources

necessary to create the advertisements, mail the advertisements, and to acquire the addresses of the target audience (ResourceNation.com).

As technology advanced, so did the advertising industry. Radio advertisements were very popular. It could reach a large audience in a very short amount of time, but they did not always hit their intended audience. Advertising on the radio can also get pretty pricy. Television was one of the most influential and far reaching types of advertising. Like radio, it does not always hit only the target audience, but it can be seen by such a large audience that it usually gets the job done. Television advertising is also pretty costly to the company (ResourceNation.com).

The internet is a continuously increasing means of advertising. Nowadays, more people receive their news from the internet than newspapers. Television is still the number one source for news, but internet is not too far behind and is getting closer (people-press.org). In 2010, the average American spent about thirty-two hours a month on the internet (comScore Data Mine). That is a little bit over an hour a day. With all of this time spent on the internet, the possibilities of reaching your target audience online are pretty much unlimited. Instead of only being able to advertise in local papers or on local television, the internet allows a company in Pittsburgh to show off its new product to target audience members in California, and even internationally. With the inventions of social networking sites, advertising has become even easier to do on the internet, which will be discussed later in the paper.

The internet has created many advantages in the advertising world. While radio, television, and print advertising can only be viewed or heard during specific hours, internet advertisements can be shown all day and night. There are no boundaries as to when they can be shown. This can help a company saved a lot of money. Why bother making advertisements that can only be played a couple of times throughout the day when you can have it displayed 24/7.

Some banner and link swaps are even totally free, therefore costing the company absolutely no money to reach millions of people (chron.com).

Another reason internet advertising is advantageous is that they cannot be skipped as easily as television advertisements. Digital Video Recorders give people the ability to record shows for later. When they watch the show later, no one is going to sit and wait through the commercials when they can simply fast forward back to the program. Internet advertisements are not so easily avoided. The banner advertisements are constantly on the screen and no matter where you look, they can be noticed. Also, when an advertisement comes on before a video you are trying to watch, it does not always give you the option of skipping it. This way, people have to sit through the whole advertisement before they can watch the video (chron.com).

The first thing that has to be done when trying to create an effective advertising campaign is to figure out who the target audience is. I have recently taken a health communication course here at West Virginia University and our main project was working on a testicular cancer campaign. We spent a majority of the time researching about our target audience. We start by figuring out who was affected by testicular cancer, and then narrowed it down to who we could realistically reach. If a company creates an advertisement without thinking of who they need to target it towards, there is no telling who the advertisement is going to reach. Our “product” was intended for college aged males, but if the advertisement was not tailored to grab college aged males’ attention, then that advertisement would not have been very effective. Once the target audience is established, the next step is to do research to find out what the interests of the target audience is. Focus groups and surveys are different ways to conduct this research. We used both of these methods to learn about what our target audience’s interests were, so that we could make a campaign poster or video that would grab their attention. By knowing the interests of the target

audience, reaching them becomes much easier. It will bring you closer to your target audience, and therefore will help you feel more confident about your advertising strategies (Focusing on Your Target Audience). Social networking sites were very important in conducting much of our research. We created a group on Facebook and everyone invited their friends to join. Many surveys were posted on the group page and the group members were asked to take the time to fill them out. These surveys provided a lot of information about the interests and likes of our target audience. Social networking sites also make it easy to find out information about the target audience without trying to make people take surveys. People provide their interests, hobbies, and “likes” right on their site, making the information free to almost anyone.

Another way that the internet can help with the target audience is that the advertisement can be placed where it “can achieve 100-percent relevant views” (chron.com). The example used in the source is that if a new video game is coming out, you can get an advertisement placed on a video game website. People who are not interested in video games are not going to be visiting a video game site. Since only video game users are going to visit the site where you are advertising on, then you know that all of those people may be interested in your game.

After you have figured out your target audience and done the research on them, you have to figure out how to draw them in and purchase your product. Everyone has their favorite and least favorite advertisements, but what makes an advertisement appealing versus not appealing. I have seen advertisements for products that I use, and I wonder what they were thinking when they made that advertisement. I have also seen advertisements that I completely loved and thought were hilarious and clever, yet I still do not use that product. It makes me wonder why that is. A main reason is probably because people like to form habits and routines. They become acquired to a certain product and do not want to switch. I am a Bud Light drinker, but I love

many of the Miller Lite advertisements. As much as I like Miller Lite's advertisements, I do not like them enough to make me want to switch from Bud Light. The tough job of the advertiser is getting people to make that switch simply through an advertisement. You cannot do a taste test through an advertisement, so you have to follow certain principles to help make people think that your product is better.

There are ten principles for effective advertising. Those principles are to grab people, be clever and creative, speak loudly, don't make the audience think too much, colors that pop but make sense, be informative, stand out and be memorable, give off a feeling, show not tell, and use humor (Spoonfed Design). Following these principles will help to not only get the audience's attention, but get them to buy into whatever is being sold. While these principles help to insure that advertisements will be effective, not all of them must be used at the same time or on the same advertisement. Colors that pop are definitely going to help with billboards and other visual advertisements, but will not work for non-visual advertisements, like on the radio. Also, each principle depends heavily on what is trying to be sold. Using humor for a beer commercial will be much more effective than using it for funeral home services. Beer is meant to bring fun and joy, so humor is a great tactic to get the consumer's attention. Funeral home services are much more personally touching and sad, and therefore should not be associated with humor. Instead, they would focus more on the principle of being informative.

Grabbing people's attention is the first and foremost thing that advertisers need to do. If the advertisement does not grab the audience's attention, then the rest of the principles won't even matter. Once the attention is grabbed, then the other principles come into play. People don't like boring advertisements. The bright colors for a billboard, magazine, internet, or television advertisement help to grab the consumers' attention. The advertisement needs to stand out so that

peoples' eyes are drawn to it. The bright colors have to fit in with what is being sold though. Some bright colors may just be annoying and therefore push the consumer away, so the colors need to be kept in check. As for a radio advertisement, there are no colors to be seen, so other means of grabbing the consumers' attention must be used. A good and catchy tune is a good idea to get people to pay attention to a radio advertisement. Many people have heard a radio commercial and had the tune stuck in their head. When this happens, it is almost like the advertisement is still being used, even when it is not physically playing on any radio station. After the advertisement has caught the consumers' attention, their attention needs to be kept so that they know what it is for.

That is why they need to be clever and creative. Successful advertisements are always the most interesting and intriguing. When people see or hear a clever advertisement, it makes them want to see or hear the rest of it. It also makes them want to learn more about the product and company. While being clever is a good idea, it is different than making the audience think too much. People enjoy smart and clever things, but not if it makes them think too hard. A successful advertisement is short and witty. No one wants to look at an advertisement and then try to solve a riddle about what they are being sold. Entertainment and briefness as become the expectation for many people in the world today, since attention spans have seemed to be getting smaller and smaller (Web Designer Depot). Advertisements are meant to grab someone's attention and then plant a wanting for the product in a short amount of time. No one wants to stare at a billboard or magazine page for a long time trying to figure out what the advertisement is selling, but yet some companies still have advertisements like that. So while making the audience interested and inquisitive is an important goal, making them confused or over think is not a good idea.

A very important part of the advertisement is that it is informative. Simply putting the product or service on a piece of paper or over the airwaves is not going to draw people towards it. They might not need to know every single aspect about it, but they need to know the basic information. Key information that needs to be included in the advertisement is what it is, what it does, what it can be used for, and most importantly, where people can acquire more in depth information. The advertisement is just meant to draw in new or already existing customers and buyers. Making those people want to look up more information about it is important in making them become regular users. It shows that they care enough to find out more about the product or service, and therefore meaning that they are very interested in using or purchasing it. There are some instances, however, when information is not needed. If the brand name or product is already extremely popular, then they do not necessarily have to feed you a bunch of information. The product is already well-known, so the company just has to intrigue their consumers with new or improved products. A good example of this is the ipods, ipads, and iphones. Everyone knows what these devices are capable of. Apple does not have to be too descriptive about the latest version because no matter what, people are going to want to get it.

All of these principles and ideas behind advertising can be utilized with social media. Social media “represents low-cost tools that are used to combine technology and social interaction with the use of words” (Understanding Role of Social Media). In other words, it is using computers, smartphones, and other handheld mobile devices to interact with others. There are many websites that provide people with social media. The biggest social media site is Facebook. There are over 800 million Facebook users across the world (Facebook). Before social media and networking sites, it was almost impossible for any average person to have access to communicate with that amount of people. Some other social media sites include Twitter,

MySpace, LinkedIn, and Tagged, among hundreds of others. With this new ability to reach almost a billion people globally, businesses have begun to take advantage of it, especially when it comes to advertising.

Social networking sites are becoming the most influential means of communication in the world, as well as becoming the most effective means of advertising. Many people, especially college and high school students, spend a majority of their free time on sites like Facebook and Twitter. If a company wants to get the attention of people, then there is no better place to advertise than on social networking sites. The advertisements would be getting constant attention from the millions of people that are signed up on the different sites. Facebook is littered with sidebar advertisements and companies are creating their own pages so that their customers can interact with them. These sidebar advertisements are hard to miss because most of them are interactive and are animated. The movement is very eye catching and draws in the Facebook user's attention. The advertisements are also placed there based off of the Facebook user's interests. If one of their hobbies is fishing, the advertisements will be about fishing, such as a Bass Pro Shop advertisement.

Companies also use Twitter to announce new products and special deals to the people that follow them. More and more businesses everyday are starting up Twitter accounts. Twitter is becoming an extraordinary tool for advertising. Instead of paying out a lot of money to marketing groups to help develop advertisements, the companies can simply make a Twitter and connect directly with its consumers. People who use Twitter feel that it is more of a personal connection than anything else, other than a true personal connection. They are set up to seem

almost like text messages, to when a consumer sees a tweet from the company they are following, it feels as if the company is personally telling them about a new product or deal.

Twitter has also found out that by having a celebrity tweet about and endorse your product, that it can greatly increase sales. Celebrities have an extraordinary amount of followers. Lady Gaga alone has almost 17 million followers. Those followers read celebrity tweets as if it were that celebrity's personal journal. It feels as though the celebrity is telling all of his or her followers all of their personal thoughts. While most of the tweets are personal thoughts and exclamations, some of them are sponsored by companies to tweet a minimum amount about the said company's product. Celebrity tweeters can make \$10,000 or more just for a single tweet (Yahoo). Although it is hard to measure whether these celebrity tweets are causing people to buy the product, it is definitely a new and effective way to reach the consumers. Companies have to keep coming up with new ways to reach their audience. Since social media continues to grow, using them to advertise seems like the right move. It was shown that it works when Charlie Sheen began using Twitter. He was then endorsed by Internships.com to tweet about them. After his first tweet about Internships.com, more than 95,000 people clicked the link to go to the site (Yahoo). So while there is no way of telling of the impact of Twitter on sales, you can definitely see that there is an effect.

After I graduate from West Virginia University, I really do want to get involved in all things social media. Social media may not be the entire future, but it will definitely be a part of it. More and more people are joining Facebook and Twitter every day. I feel that eventually, newspapers will be obsolete and news will come strictly from television and internet. News stations already have Facebook pages, Twitters, and smartphone apps that are continuously updated to keep its followers and group members up to date.

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