

# ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN STRATEGY

A GUIDE TO  
MARKETING COMMUNICATION PLANS

Second Edition



DONALD PARENTE

# Advertising Campaign Strategy

## A Guide to Marketing Communication Plans

Second Edition

Donald Parente

*Middle Tennessee State University*

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**Advertising Campaign Strategy, 2e**  
Donald Parente

**Publisher:**  
Mike Roche

**Executive Editor:**  
Bill Schoof

**Developmental Editor:**  
Bobbie Bochenko

**Art Director:**  
Scott Baker

**Production Manager:**  
James McDonald

**Compositor:**  
Graphic World

**Printer:**  
RR Donnelley & Sons  
Willard, OH

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Printed in the United States of  
America  
5 04 03 02

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5191 Natorp Boulevard,  
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Library of Congress Catalog  
Card Number: 99-074298

ISBN: 0-03-021114-X

Photo Credits: Pages 334, 363,  
364, and 365. Photos courtesy  
of Dr. Lynda Maddox.

# Preface

## Adapting to Change

These are exciting and challenging times. New ideas, new media, and new technology are having a profound effect on the way advertising is conceived, created, and delivered. We are in the midst of a true communications revolution. Changes are taking place seemingly everywhere and everyday. The challenge to educators is to understand exactly what is changing and sort out what is effective and what may be simply a passing trend.

Because of the speed with which many changes take place today, neither educators nor students can afford the luxury of gradually learning about new developments. Technology, especially with respect to the Internet, is swiftly and dramatically changing the way companies are doing business. Companies and individuals that proceed slowly run the risk that their knowledge will quickly become dated. Many changes are translated into buzz words that are used as a litmus test to discover whether someone is current on the change *du jour*.

It is not enough, however, to identify and understand change, one has to figure out how to thrive in the new marketing environment. Yet, one gets the distinct feeling that many changes are occurring faster than the field's ability to fully evaluate their effectiveness. One common occurrence is that students often readily adopt changes or new approaches faster than their instructors. Students see what's going on in advertising, but usually they do not have the analytical tools or the knowledge to judge whether what they see is effective. Educators, on the other hand, are much more likely to evaluate new developments or approaches in terms of their experience. For example, many highly creative image-oriented commercials are widely admired by students. These same ads are sometimes viewed more skeptically by educators, especially when these ads either ignore or are contrary to many of the principles that have been widely accepted over the years. Among advertising practitioners, it's easy to find conflicting opinions about the relative merits of a specific advertising campaign or approach.

We offer no easy solutions. Our approach is to offer a detailed examination of the campaign process with a special emphasis on the analytical and strategic elements that are likely to lead to effective campaigns. We know there will always be advertising that works for reasons that resist analysis. But we do believe that if you understand the concepts that underlie successful advertising, when changes occur in the marketplace you will be in position to better understand and exploit them.

In the first edition of this book, we were sensitive to titling the book *Advertising Campaign Strategy* even though it was clear to us the book was all about *marketing communication strategy*. We pointed out then that the advertising emphasis in the title was more a reflection of tradition than a belief that advertising can or should be prepared apart from other marketing communication tools such as sales promotion or public relations. We believe that the title and the orientation of the book have been well received. We continue to stress that smart companies begin with the premise that they are planning a marketing communication campaign—not an advertising campaign. This assumption not only helps companies avoid any over-reliance on advertising, but it also helps them proactively consider

other promotional options as part of a unified selling strategy. Far too often, communication tools, such as sales promotion, direct marketing, and public relations, are merely combined with an advertising program rather than integrated together to produce a seamless selling effort.

Our challenge as educators is to provide conceptual information in a form that is both useable and practical. To accomplish this task, we included numerous examples of the tests, techniques, principles, and procedures that are used in marketing communication, as well as a number of checklists and tips appropriate for a specific area. We recognize there are many ways to achieve a desired end. We know that as situations change, it may be appropriate to also change the approach or the organization.

## **Highlights of Advertising Campaign Strategy**

The goal for this edition was to strengthen the conceptual elements that form the basis of a marketing communication campaign. At the same time, we wanted to make the information in this edition easier to grasp and to apply.

### **Chapter 1**

This chapter introduces the reader to the purpose and scope of the book. After some discussion of the new marketing environment, including post modern advertising, we present some of the core concepts that should be part of the mindset of students as they prepare for the campaign, including market segmentation, the marketing concept, the communication concept, integrated market communications, and a campaign concept. New to the second edition is a discussion about process orientation. We also present the essential elements in a strategic plan and explain how they relate to a marketing communication campaign. To close the chapter, we present a general outline for the campaign.

### **Chapters 2 and 3**

These chapters cover what many people refer to as the situation analysis. Chapter 2 begins with a discussion of how to get ready for the campaign. This chapter focuses on analyzing the company and the consumer. It includes an updated comprehensive discussion on sources of information, including their availability in a typical university library, an extensive discussion of syndicated research sources, and a broad coverage of the tests and techniques that can be used to complete the analyses. Chapter 3 essentially is a continuation of Chapter 2 but focuses on the market, product, and competitive analyses. Both Chapters 2 and 3 provide the principles and tools to make a thorough situation analysis.

### **Chapter 4**

This chapter is basically about setting objectives. We emphasize that setting objectives should evolve logically out of the research foundation. Critical to our discussion of objectives is the importance of brand equity, which we also discuss in greater detail in the next chapter. To lay a foundation for setting objectives, we discuss the nature of problems and opportunities, and how to uncover them. Most of this chapter focuses on setting objectives, including the decision on how to segment the market. To discuss objectives we follow the principles associated with the management-by-objectives (MBO) philosophy.

### **Chapter 5**

This chapter focuses on the development of marketing communication strategy. We look at four interrelated elements: the management of brand equity, the marketing

communication expenditure, the positioning of messages, and the targeting and delivery of messages. We devote most of this chapter to an extensive discussion of brand equity. We cover the communication expenditure only briefly, taking the position that this variable is not something students usually can change. We rely on the next three chapters to cover the positioning and targeting aspects of strategy in greater detail.

## **Chapter 6**

This chapter is organized so that the first part of the chapter covers both essential and optional elements in a message strategy. The second part of the chapter focuses on execution, including how to evaluate the creative opportunity, an examination of strategic approaches for message strategy, an approach to developing creativity, and new and traditional approaches to creating advertising.

## **Chapter 7**

This chapter parallels the organization of Chapter 6 in that it also begins with a brief examination of the elements that make up a media plan including objectives, strategy, and tactics. The chapter then proceeds to explain how to implement the basic media decisions: first, by examining what is involved with setting both quantitative and qualitative media objectives, second, by breaking down media strategy into its essential elements. This chapter finishes with an explanation of how to execute the media strategy.

## **Chapter 8**

From an organizational point of view, we considered merging this chapter with the previous one on media, calling it integrated marketing communications. It obviously would have been too long, so we separated advertising media from other types of marketing communication using Chapter 8 to cover sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing. We know that most advertising students do not get in-depth exposure to these areas, especially sales promotion and direct marketing, so we provided an extensive discussion of the techniques and tools common to the trade.

## **Chapter 9**

This is a new chapter. We wanted to put in this chapter the extra things that advertisers increasingly are including in their campaigns to give them an edge over the competition. This chapter includes three major sections: 1) special market segments including global, African American, Hispanic, Asian American, and gay/lesbian markets, 2) special message strategies including, multi-tiered advertising, cause-related marketing, green marketing, cross promotions, and 3) special media strategies including advertising on the Internet: non-traditional media options and examples of creative media approaches such as ambush marketing and fresh TV.

## **Chapter 10**

Evaluating the effectiveness of the campaign is the focus of this chapter. We present a comprehensive view of the many tests and techniques that are used to measure a campaign's effectiveness, briefly covering many of the commercial research companies that are involved in this type of testing. Unlike many of the chapters in other books on this topic, this chapter is organized correspondent to when the need for a particular type of research would arise in a campaign. First, we discuss concept testing, then move to in-depth discussions of copy



testing, concurrent testing, and post-testing. This chapter was written with the assistance of Michael P. Kalasunas, Director of Research and Planning, J. Walter Thompson.

## Chapter 11

This chapter covers the task of putting a plans book together, largely focusing on interpreting and presenting the material covered in the previous chapters. For this edition, we expanded our suggestions about specific points to cover in the plans book, especially in the situation analysis. We also use many of the ideas and advice of various educators around the country who either teach an advertising campaigns' course or work with the AAF competition.

## Chapter 12

This chapter focuses on putting together the presentation. This presentation is a comprehensive approach to the most taxing of areas. We are especially appreciative of having Tom Duncan and Sandra Moriarity's outstanding book *How to Create and Deliver Winning Advertising Presentations* as a model. This chapter also includes an extensive discussion of the special problems associated with the National Student Advertising Competition sponsored by the AAF. For this last section, we borrowed heavily from the advice of AAF competition veterans. Lynda Maddox, George Washington University, provided extensive assistance on this chapter.

## Acknowledgments

This book is the result of the collective efforts of many people, including my family and colleagues. I would especially like to acknowledge the warm and friendly people at my publisher: Bill Schoof, the acquisition editor who provided much encouragement and support; Bobbie Bochenko, the development editor, who was always readily available to help me solve problems; Roberta Landi, the copy editor who often helped redirect, if not challenge my thinking; the members of the production team: John Haakenson, James McDonald, Scott Baker, Linda Blundell, and Kim Samuels who helped keep this project on track; and Lise Johnson, our product manager, who helped direct our marketing effort.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank Michael P. Kalasunas, the director of research and planning at J. Walter Thompson in Chicago. He provided many ideas for Chapters 2 and 3, while reviewing and helping me edit Chapter 9. Helen Katz, DDB Needham reviewed Chapter 1 on the media and offered many valuable suggestions.

I would also like to thank the many educators who provided advice, often sharing their own particular approach to doing a campaign. Edd Applegate, Middle Tennessee State University, read most of the book and offered much valuable insight. Bruce Vanden Bergh, Michigan State University reviewed and critiqued the first five chapters. Leonard Reid, University of Georgia, thoroughly reviewed Chapters 2 and 3 in the first edition and the effects of his suggestions continue in this edition. Arnold Barban reviewed the chapter on media and made important suggestions on its organization. Sharon Parente provided important professional assistance throughout the book, but especially in the section on using the library. A number of faculty shared with us their views on how to write a plans book for the first edition: Louise Gainey, University of Miami; Roger Lavery, University of Oregon; Howard Cogan, Ithaca College; Tommy Smith, University of Southern Mississippi;

Carolyn Stringer, Western Kentucky University; and Jim Gilmore, Michigan State University. I am also appreciative of the assistance I received from my research assistants: Lisa Parente, Michigan State University; Ryan Hale (who also designed the cover of the book) and Sheri Morris, both of Middle Tennessee State University.

We also received a great deal of assistance from the following practitioners:

From Leo Burnett Co.: Mike Allen, Jane Spittler, Colin Hall, Cathy DeThorne, Mike O'Neal, Jack Phifer, Carol Fletcher, Rishad Tobaccowala, Josh McQueen, and Lisa Lager.

From SRI International: Rebecca Hollenbeck

From Hull Marketing Research: Bill Hull

From Foote Cone Belding: Dana Anderson and Karen Randolph

From DDB Needham: Mike Horn

From Executive Recruiter: Susan Sedler

From Helene Curtis: Ralph Blessing

From McDonald's Corporation: Roy Bergold and Elizabeth MacAdams

From Quaker Oats: John Blair, Barb Marusz, and Scott Hughes

From Nielsen Media Research: Ted Duff

From Nielsen North America: Dan Sarullo, Meredith Spector, and Connie Milbourne

From Burke Marketing Research: Dan Evarrs

From Lintas Marketing Communications: Lou Schultz

From Tatham Euro RSCG: Michael Robinson

## **Special Acknowledgments to Former Coauthors**

Throughout this book I use the pronoun "we" liberally. Part of the reasoning for this is stylistic, but a large part is my awareness of the contributions my former coauthors, Arnold Barban, University of Alabama, Bruce Vanden Bergh, Michigan State University, and Jim Marra, Temple University, have made to this book. Although much of their work has been rewritten, their ideas and influence is profoundly felt.

I am especially indebted to Arnold Barban for his help and encouragement with both the first and second editions. He has been a good mentor and a special friend.

Don Parente  
March 1999



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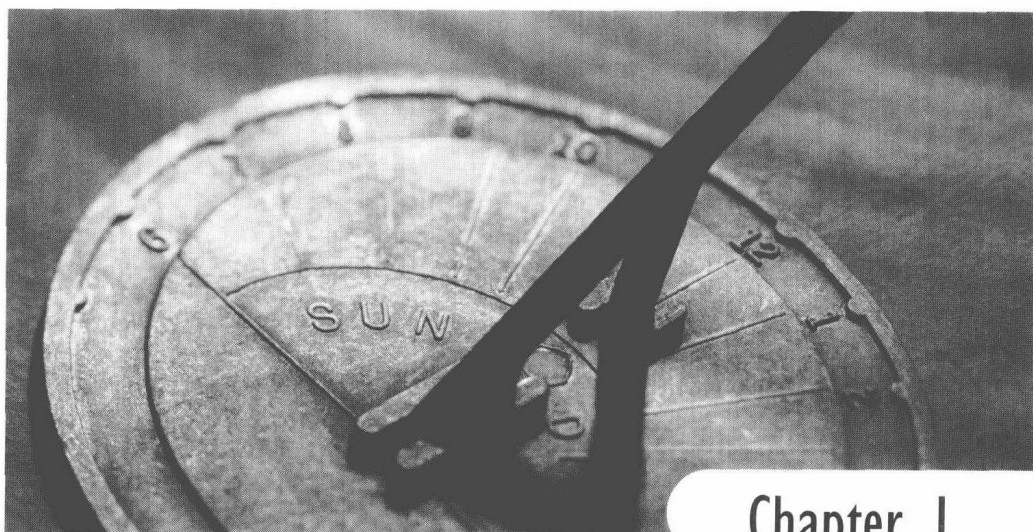
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## Chapter 1

# Advertising from a Marketing Communications Perspective

Consider Super Bowl Sunday. This is the day an anxious advertising industry awaits the debut of the new ad campaigns. The ads will be interesting, some may be spectacular. These ads come from some of the most creative minds in the world. New technology has given copywriters and art directors the ability to transform the dreamable into the doable. These ads are so interesting they get talked about before *and* after the game. But these ads better be *more* than interesting. At a cost of almost \$2 million for a 30-second spot,<sup>1</sup> the ads will have to sell a lot of “product” to recoup the advertiser’s investment. The ads have to be effective. But are they?

Effectiveness can be difficult to achieve and hard to measure. Because of the increasing sophistication of the market and the nature of the advertising task, running some of these ads requires a good measure of faith. The public has become advertising savvy and, perhaps, a bit jaded. Not only is the public exposed to countless ads, they are also inundated with promotional messages virtually everywhere they go—from classrooms and ballfields to the restroom at the local pub. Moreover, many companies sell products that have no distinguishing qualities, nothing to set them apart from the competition other than, perhaps, an image or a personality. In the top agencies, creative people are continually challenged to produce ads that are better and more creative than their earlier work—not to mention that of the competition. Writers and art directors are encouraged to think “out of the box,” or to be “disruptive.” There’s a lot of pressure, but the work can be exciting. The last thing many writers want is to become a “hack”—someone who produces prosaic ideas and pedestrian copy.