

■ Advertising Theory and Practice



Advertising Theory and Practice

Eleventh Edition

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Preface

The first edition of this book appeared during the birth of the New Deal. The 11th has been written during the middle of at least the first term of the Reagan administration. To be obvious, much has changed; yet much remains the same. We hope, with this edition, to help your understanding of both the former and the latter.

First and foremost, this edition continues the quest to offer the contemporary student an understanding of that disarmingly simple and extraordinarily complex phenomenon called advertising. It pursues this end with the text's three traditional premises:

1. That advertising should be considered as part of the larger whole of the society and the business system. Only after examining the contexts in which advertising has evolved and performs—the potentials and limitations that free and confine it—can any significant understanding of its particular strategies and techniques be achieved. It is not without purpose that the book has been titled theory *and* practice, in that order.

2. That the receiver of the advertising message is the heart of the advertising transaction. Advertising seems to perform most efficiently when it interprets its subject matters in terms that are meaningful to the lives of those it seeks to influence. This commonality of interests is a useful concept to aid in the understanding of the often bewildering varieties of advertising persuasion.

3. That advertising in America does not readily lend itself to oversimplification and facile categorization. Hence, the various forms of advertising—retail, business, industrial, professional, trade, idea, and so on—are discussed *throughout the book* rather than treated as things apart. Such an approach does constant battle with the tendency to slip into “All advertising does . . .” thinking.

All this is enduring. Now what of the changes in this edition over its predecessors?

A *great deal* has been rewritten not only to reflect changes since the last edition, but, of greater importance, to strive for *better understanding* by combining, sharpening. For example:

- There are seven fewer chapters; but the links are, we feel, stronger.
- There is an entirely new chapter on “issues/causes” advertising—a genre destined to increase in importance in the 80s.
- There is *much* greater emphasis on television and its many forms—traditional, CATV, pay-cable, satellite, interactive, etc.
- Much of what has been traditionally called “pretesting” is integrated into a totally revised “creative” section dealing with the conceptualization and crafting of the advertising message in, we believe, a manner to facilitate learning of structure *and* nuance.
- The “deregulation” approach of the Reagan administration is thoroughly discussed while comparing and contrasting it with other philosophies and practices of advertising regulation.
- There is an abundance of new examples, fresh data, helpful tables, insightful sources (from MacNeil-Lehrer and *Advertising Age* through *Mother Jones*).

All of this is presented through the perspective of what we consider to be the fundamental question that needs to be successfully approached if any real understanding of this provocative subject is to occur.

What is attempted, on what knowledge base, using what creative strategies and techniques, through what media, by whom, with what effects, and toward what future?

This organizational format, we believe, makes the book easier to learn from. It is, for example, logical that the potential effects of advertising be considered only *after* the student is exposed to its functions, strategies, and techniques. Yet such material is commonly found early in introductory texts.

The new physical format provides us with the opportunity to “open up” the book for better arrangements of text and illustrations. A great number of the illustrations are new to this edition and, in keeping with our belief in treating advertising as a whole, are drawn from a wide variety of media, representing many of the forms of advertising that the student may not normally encounter.

In terms of specific content, this is what is intended:

What is attempted . . . sets the stage, strives to provide the student with

the "lay of the land." The introductory chapter offers illustrations of what advertising is—and is not—as well as providing an initial overview of the components of the advertising process—the advertisers, agencies, support organizations, media, consumers. The second chapter, cited for its coverage,¹ places advertising in this country in a philosophical/historical content that is necessary for understanding its evolution and contemporary functions. The third chapter underscores an important theme of the book—that advertising originates from many sources to seek many audiences through many different media for many different purposes. To suggest otherwise oversimplifies a complex reality. And the new fourth chapter explores the provocative area of issues/causes advertising.

On what knowledge base . . . concerns the necessary acquisition of knowledge if both advertiser and consumer are to benefit from the advertising transaction. Research is emphasized to highlight the importance of building an advertising program on a foundation of facts, to indicate the kinds of facts that need to be sought, and to demonstrate how such information can be used in solving the full range of advertising problems. With a research viewpoint the student is more apt to think analytically, to probe for deeper understanding, and to develop a healthy respect for the uncertainties in the present state of the art.

Using what creative strategies and techniques . . . deals with what many consider to be the heart of advertising—the advertising message itself. Here the base provided by research is seen to be further refined into creative conceptualization and crafting. Considerable attention is paid to the conflicting opinions held by practitioners about the proper form and function of the advertising message, as well as the debates about the proper place of message research, and what might be called advertising's ongoing "creative dilemma"—the advertisement as a means or an end in itself.

Through what media . . . provides a sharper focus than in past editions on the strategy and techniques involved in choosing the vehicles for the transmission of the advertising message. As media become increasingly "unmassed"—particularly with cable—the job of the media planner becomes more complex and potentially more satisfying as the "fit" between media vehicle and "target audience" becomes closer.

By whom . . . logically deals with the actors in the advertising process—the advertisers themselves, the agencies, the organizations that serve to facilitate the advertising exchange. This unique one-chapter approach provides the opportunity for the student to realize the interdependence of these units as well as appreciate their separate functions and particular areas of specialization.

With what effect . . . divides itself into roughly three parts. The first chapter concerns advertising's intended business effects and the difficulty and promise in measuring them. It is, we believe, absolutely essential that the

¹See Vincent P. Norris, "Advertising History—According to the Textbooks," *Journal of Advertising* 9, no. 3 (1980).

student realize that much of contemporary advertising can be better understood if the uncertainty of the advertising outcome is grasped. This theme, introduced early in the book, is examined carefully here in terms of the potentials and limitations of "intermediate" and "direct" attempts to measure whether or not advertising "paid its way."

The next two chapters of this section deal, then, with what are usually referred to as advertising's social and economic "effects." The approach taken here is one of integration—and challenge. To integrate what has gone before, to provide understanding of the assumptions made by those who assert that advertising does or does not have particular effects, and to challenge the students to seek their own positions on these provocative and stimulating issues.

Finally, we feel it is only logical that a discussion of how advertising has been, is, and may be regulated, should come *after* an understanding of how its processes and "effects" are achieved. Here, then, the assumptions about the proper functions and sources of advertising control are addressed.

And toward what future? Whither goest advertising? Taking what is and has been, the authors, in closing, suggest what lies ahead.

Advertising, as a prominent and controversial presence in American society, seems a fascinating subject for study. We hope some of the excitement is transmitted through our writing. Whether the student begins the book with merely a temporary curiosity or as the first step toward a career in the field, we hope she or he will find it a meaningful guide to understanding.

The authors are indebted to the numerous advertisers, agencies, media, and other organizations that have shared their work with us so we can share it with you. Their cooperation has been extremely gratifying.

In prefaces to earlier editions the senior authors have expressed their thanks to numerous individuals who have inspired or helped along the way. Here the junior author would like to particularly acknowledge the research help of (alphabetically) Mary Ellen Holland, Bruce Malsberger, and Marshall Rice, as well as the typing heroics of Patti Sudduth and Mary Lowrey.

To all the others who have influenced our thinking over the years, our thanks. We hope you are not displeased with this current link in a five-decade quest to help to understand advertising theory and practice.

C. H. Sandage
Vernon Fryburger
Kim B. Rotzoll

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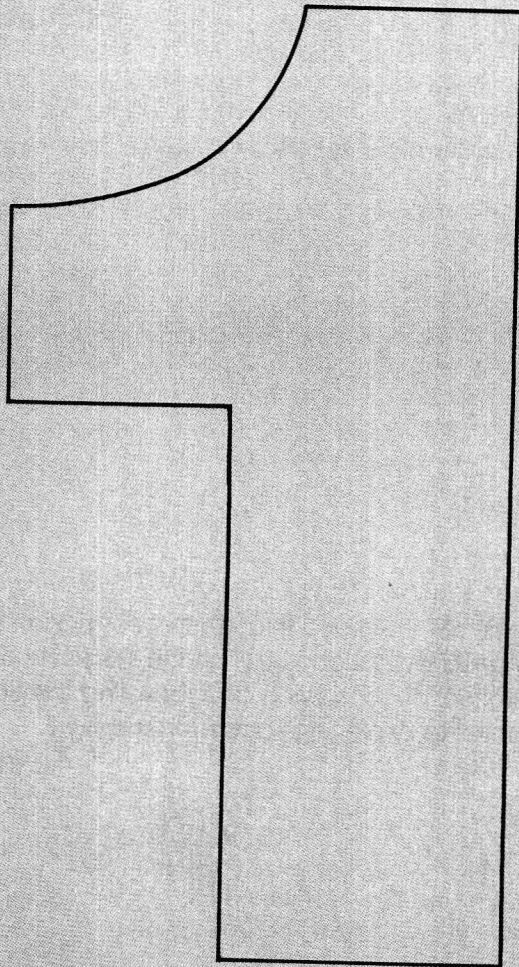
Chapter 1
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Chapter 2
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Part



1

Overview

We must sell the world through the persuasion techniques developed by advertology, on the necessity of reducing population, of conserving and recycling the earth's resources, of exploiting space for energy.

Author Isaac Asimov

ADVERTOLOGY? SELL THE WORLD?

It is perhaps appropriate that we begin our study of advertising with a futuristic quotation. We are, after all, approaching no less than the end of a century; no small event as we have come to celebrate them. Advertising has been very much of a presence along our way, and if we are to believe futurist Asimov, it would seem destined to span our future as well. To understand this fascinating and provocative phenomenon, then, it would first seem appropriate to inquire as to what advertising is all about.

The purpose of this chapter is to make a start: to describe something about what advertising is and is not, to introduce you to some of its major forms and functions, and to begin to raise some of the issues that make it such an intriguing subject for study.

Advertising and advertisements

Advertising today is a worldwide phenomenon, with the heaviest concentration in the United States. It is important at the outset to recognize that many advertisers use advertisements for many purposes with many different possible effects. For example, within a given country it is common to find what might be considered highly fanciful advertising for consumer goods such as toothpaste, detergents, or soft drinks, and highly technical messages dealing with construction equipment, medical supplies, or computer services. The advertisers themselves can include huge multinational firms, special interest groups, local shopkeepers, and individuals. Their intents can range from altering behavior to affecting the way people think about a particular social or economic position. The results of their efforts can range from enormously influential to a waste of the advertiser's money. It is not, then, a subject that lends itself to oversimplification.

When you think about "advertising" at this point, you probably think in terms of specific *advertisements*. ("I love those Miller Lite commercials" or "Can you believe those degrading 'Ring Around the Collar' ads are still around?") To begin there, then, advertisements can be recognized as *paid, nonpersonal communication forms used with persuasive intent by identified sources through various media*.

As *paid* communication forms they are different from common varieties of publicity (e.g., a press release) or "public relations" (e.g., a news conference), which are often covered by the media without charge. By *nonpersonal* they are distinguished from forms of personal salesmanship occurring in business establishments or door-to-door. The advertiser is *identified*, which again sets this form of persuasive communication apart from various types of promotion and publicity in the form of "news" or "feature" material often carried by the media, but supplied by a particular source whose intent is often persuasive (e.g., a "consumer information" specialist on a TV talk show who in fact works for an appliance company). Advertisements are most commonly associated with the *mass media* of newspapers, magazines, cinema, television, and radio, although they frequently flourish in other forms such as billboards, posters, and direct mail as well. And, finally, advertisements are overwhelm-