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Strategic Advantages of Creative Advertising Modes-A Saudi Arabian Perception

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Abstract: This study examined the concept of innovative advertising and its benefits. It also aimed to determine the extent to which creative advertising methods are used in Saudi Arabia by advertisers. An often overlooked fact is that the selection of the correct advertising mode could spell the difference between having a million people buying a product or none at all. Many commercial organizations are known to manufacture highly efficient and comprehensive products but they so often omit to use proper advertising techniques in order to promote their product to the mass community. These companies end up using traditional advertising techniques like television, newspaper, radio or magazine advertising or some other kind uneventful or mundane advertising mode that does not appeal at all to consumers. Many consumers are starting to grow incensed and irritated by traditional advertising modes that they tend to avoid these advertisements because of the fact that they find these advertisements annoying and irritating and it would take more than a television advertisement to convince the consumer to purchase a product or service, no matter how good it is. This research would make an analysis of the perceptions of Saudi Arabian consumers in relation to traditional and creative advertising modes and to determine which mode is preferred. The strategic advantages of creative modes of advertising would also be outlined comprehensively and its viability for use in the 21st century would be critically appraised. This research confirmed the fact that traditional advertising modes are not favored by a large majority of people in Saudi Arabia and these persons are understood to have preference for more creative advertising modes.

Key words: Creative advertising, marketing, competitive advantage, promotion, innovative advertisement

INTRODUCTION

The world is changing and if one does not want to be left out, then it is advisable to think outside the box. Many people think that the best way to market their products or services is through the television or magazine but with all due respect, their perceptions and theorization are not accurate and imprecise to say the least. In the recent years, a lot of things have changed in the world. The young generation do not seem to care about the old approach of advertising. One must find something new, something interesting, something not too many people have thought of doing it. These are labeled as the innovative ways of modern marketing. There are a lot of creative ways that can be used to market your products or services. They are cheaper than the regular advertising methods such as TV and they are more attractive and effective than other tools. For most companies, the most important thing is the cost but with these innovative ways there will be no extra cost for advertising. These kind of advertising are unique, eyes caching, aggressive, forcible and cost-effective. In these present times, successful organizations are looking for a new method to advertise their products or services. If you want to promote your

new advertising campaign effectively you should adapt one of these great and innovative advertising ideas. These ideas can harness to help market your business and company by spreading your message across in a unique way. The creative and innovative advertising methods are starting to gain more and more attention and it is a way of providing entertainment and fun. The new generation is looking for a funny and attractive advertising. The normal kind of advertisements is going to come to an end and these kinds of advertising are going to start off. The main objectives of this study is to examine the concept of innovative advertising and the benefits that it is capable of providing the advertiser. It also aims to determine the extent to which creative advertising methods are used in Saudi Arabia by advertisers and a comparison between conventional and creative advertising methods, its viability and potency of each of these methods are also studied. The study evaluates the opinion of Saudi Arabian advertisers on the benefits that they gain from innovative advertising methods and also evaluate the opinion of Saudi Arabian consumers on their perceptions of innovative advertising methods. This study is highly significant and the main reason for stating this is that it provides very important

information on the concept of creative advertising, its benefits and the impact in enhancing the success of the advertiser. This study brings to light some very important aspects of creative advertising that is likely to ensure that the maximum impact is brought on to the consumer. This study is focused on making a determination of the importance of creative advertising modes as a replacement for traditional advertising modes and to determine the level at which these creative advertising modes would be acceptable in Saudi Arabia. Today business organizations are facing a high level of competition and changes. If the company is not unique to pull the customers from the competitors, then it will not sustain for a long time. People like to see new and innovative things that would stay in their memories so that they will remember the advertising whenever they see the company's logo again. It is a good practice to differentiate one product or service from others and companies that can take advantages of the new ideas in advertising would be the winners. The marketing world is unlimited and there are a lot of companies which are competing with each other and if they do not come up with new strategies for surviving, they cannot survive. A company that is looking for a method of advertising their products or services, traditional advertising avenues like television advertising, newspaper advertising and billboard advertising comes to their mind first. Despite the fact that these types of advertising modes do work, very often, people are harassed with the same kind of media and it becomes boring. The younger generation today dislikes reading or viewing advertisements or even listening to annoying radio commercials because they find it boring and are not sufficiently captivating. Looking at new advertising techniques one can realize that advertisements that are best remembered are the ones that effectively interact and connect the viewer in an emotional way. Placing advertisements on billboard or even a bench is capable of being effective but their modes of advertising are quite problematic and the billboard advertising might have many competitors as there are always other billboard advertisements that might advertise the same products or services. These advertisements do not move and the fact that they are stationary means that people have to drive or walk past these advertisements to view them according to Bell (1992). In the event if the advertiser makes the decision to use traditional media modes for their advertisements, their advertisements has to be extra creative and this may costs much with a minimal impact. Michell (1988) and Cook and Kover (1997) felt that the advertising should be good,

strong and a solid concept with great execution but before any of that happens, there should be a strategy that is right, tight and bright. It is right on for the clients. It is tight for written strategy when it has got some kind of innovation, some kind of inspiration, something that differentiates. It connects on our emotional level, it has a benefit and it makes people want to spend time with that brand. The bottom line is advertising that is going to generate results for the clients and get them a very strong return on investments. The creative and innovative advertising is like a cold glass of water on a really hot summer day. It is theorized here that good advertising reaches across a lot of media to deliver a constant message. Creative advertising is any message that is memorable and easy to recall for any individual when they are ready to be a consumer of that product.

The mobile billboard: The perfect solution here could be to turn ones vehicle into what can be described as a mobile billboard. This is capable of being accomplished through the use of a vehicle graphic wrap that simply comprises of vinyl graphic which is completely or partially wrapped on the car. The main advantage of this is that the advertiser would be able to advertise their products or service wherever the advertiser goes. Due to the fact that people are very accustomed to viewing ordinary cars, a car wrapped in advertisements stands out and it can get noticed more.

Vinyl graphic advertising: Similar kinds of vinyl graphic advertising are capable of being used in various other special places such as supermarket check-out lines, for instance. Such advertisements can even be placed on conveyor belts or even placed on the floor. When customers are waiting in line, they would be able to effectively captivate the audience as they would be looking at their surroundings when they are waiting to pay.

Tunnel advertising: The concept of tunnel advertising allows for a much wider reach for the target audiences due to the fact that a high volume of persons are being transported on certain subways as well as trains all around the world worldwide. When viewers pass advertising areas at the subway, they are normally treated to a few seconds of motion-picture advertisements. These persons normally enjoy a huge amount of innovative and beautiful motion pictures advertisements which are said to totally fill the train windows and are capable of reaching millions of people worldwide.

The benefits of escalator and elevator advertising: Some of the main advantages of escalator and elevator advertising are high level of innovation and creativity that makes good and intelligent utilization of elevator empty spaces, easy to achieve goals of advertisers, creative media solution and enjoyable form of advertising. The benefits of escalator advertising from the user’s perspective are enhanced appearance of escalators and enjoyable escalator rides. The benefits of escalator advertising from the advertiser’s perspective are ability to catch the attention of the public easily; rate of impression frequency is very high and long time periods for impression in terms of exposure for escalator users.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The method applied in collecting primary data has been obtained for the purposes of being used for the analysis below was the use of a questionnaire that was handed out and sent to precisely 153 respondents in Saudi Arabia. The research was carried out from March to October 2009. These respondents had come from a cross section of the Saudi Arabian society and they had provided very important information about the way in which they perceive conventional advertising and creative advertising methods and this output was very beneficial in assisting the researcher in making certain theorizations as to the viability of using creative advertising methods in Saudi Arabia for the 21st century. Secondary data are collected through reviewing articles, textbook, journals and dissertation. A comprehensive secondary data review and analysis was done in the form of a literature review. In terms of sampling, for this study, the sample comprise of 153 members of the Saudi Arabian population that comprised of random members of the public as well as person from the marketing departments of famous companies in Saudi Arabia. A large majority of these respondents would be from Jeddah city which amounted to 73.2% of the respondents while the rest of the (15.68%) of the respondents were from Riyadh and (11.11%) from Dammam (Table 1).

Table 1: Locations of the respondents with their jobs

Type of the respondents	Respondents locations			Total
	Jeddah	Riyadh	Dammam	
Marketing executives and managers	11 (7.18)	13 (8.49)	6 (3.92)	30 (19.61)
Marketing staff	39 (25.49)	6 (3.92)	3 (1.96)	48 (31.37)
Others	62 (40.52)	5 (3.26)	8 (5.22)	75 (49.01)
Total	112 (73.2)	24 (15.68)	17 (11.11)	153 (100)

Values in brackets indicate percentage to total

RESULTS

In this facet of the study, a comprehensive analysis of the research findings were made with the presentation of the statistics of the research findings and the drawing of some very important conclusions in respect to the research topics. The Empirical Findings of the Research shown in Table 2.

Analysis of the number of respondents who have encountered creative advertising: For this analysis, it was found that 60.78% of the respondents had said that they had encountered creative advertising modes in

Table 2: The empirical findings of the study

Research questions	No. of respondents	
	Frequency	%
Have you ever come across a creative advertising mode before?		
Yes	93	60.78
No	58	34.64
Don't know	2	1.31
What type of creative advertising was it?		
Floor advertising	35	22.87
Mobile billboard (Car, Bus, Truck....)	28	18.30
Seats advertising	5	3.26
Tunnel advertising	16	10.45
Elevator advertising	24	15.68
Escalator advertising	19	12.41
Vinyl graphic advertising	14	9.15
None of them	12	7.84
If so, did it catch your attention?		
Yes	119	77.77
No	31	20.26
Don't know	3	1.96
What is your opinion of creative advertising modes?		
Positive opinion	129	84.31
Negative opinion	19	12.41
No opinion	5	3.26
What is your opinion of traditional advertising modes?		
Positive opinion	28	18.30
Negative opinion	123	80.39
No opinion	2	1.31
Would you prefer to view creative advertising modes or traditional advertising modes?		
Creative advertising modes	146	95.42
Traditional advertising modes	7	4.57
Don't know	0	0
What are the aspects of creative advertising that appeals to you the most?		
Emotionally appealing	67	43.79
Funny	19	12.41
Innovativeness on communicating the message	32	20.91
None of them	35	22.87
Which mode would likely capture your attention to such an extent that it might make your mind up in purchasing a product or service that is being advertised?		
Creative mode of advertising	144	94.11
Traditional modes of advertising	9	5.88
Do you think that creative advertising modes would be well accepted in Saudi Arabia?		
Yes	123	80.39
No	17	11.11
Don't know	13	8.49

Saudi Arabia and abroad as well. The 34.64% said that they did not encounter such a mode of advertising in Saudi Arabia or abroad. The 1.31% said that they did not know if they had encountered such a mode of advertising or not.

Type of creative advertising: For this analysis, it was found that 41.17% of the respondents stated here that the floor advertising and mobile billboard were the most common type of creative advertising that they have encountered. Next were elevator and escalator advertising which accounted for 28.09% of the respondents and then tunnel, vinyl graphic and seats advertising which had accounted for another 22.86%.

Did it catch your attention: For this analysis, it was found that the majority of 77.77% said that this form of advertising did catch their attention. The rest of the 20.26% said that it did not catch their attention at all.

Opinion of creative advertising modes: For this analysis, it was found that 84.31% stated that their opinion of creative advertising modes were positive. The 12.41% said that their opinion of creative advertising modes were negative.

Opinion about traditional advertising modes: It was found that the majority of 80.39% stated that their opinion of traditional advertising modes were negative and 18.3% said that their opinion of traditional advertising modes were positive.

Preference to view creative or traditional advertising modes: For this analysis, it was found that a majority of the respondents which amounted to 95.42% stated that they prefer to view creative advertising modes as opposed to traditional advertising modes. The 4.57% said that they prefer to view traditional advertising modes.

Appealing aspects of creative advertising: For this analysis, it was found that 43.79% stated that the aspect of creative advertising that appeals to them the most is the fact that these advertising modes are emotionally appealing and hence this had their easy attention. The 12.41% said that these advertising modes were appealing to them because creative advertising modes were funny. The other 20.91% said that this mode of advertising was appealing because of its innovativeness on communicating the message.

Mode that motivated to purchase a product or service that is being advertised: For this analysis, it was found that

the majority of 94.11% respondents stated that it was the creative mode of advertising that captured their attention to influence them in purchasing a product or service that is being advertised. The other 5.88% said that it was the traditional modes of advertising that would likely capture their attention to such an extent.

Acceptance of creative advertising in Saudi Arabia: For this analysis, it was found that the majority of 80.39% respondents said that creative advertising modes were well accepted in Saudi Arabia. The 11.11% said that it would not be well accepted in Saudi Arabia and 8.49% said that they did not know if it would be well accepted in Saudi Arabia

Limitations: The primary limitation that was encountered when doing this research was the fact that the research sample was limited to just a few major cities in Saudi Arabia. This country has a very large population but the only a small portion of this population was capable of being subject to the research and hence an assumption has to be made that the views of these respondents were representative of the larger population.

DISCUSSION

The analysis of the findings above is quite positive in terms of the perception of Saudi Arabians towards creative advertising mechanisms. It is quite clear here that a large portion of Saudi Arabian's views creative advertising as a highly acceptable and effective method of advertising that would be highly appealing to them. In the analysis, it was found that a large majority of the respondents had stated that creative advertising were a effective mode of advertising that attract them to purchase the product or service that was being advertised. It is apparent here that these respondents are wanting more creative, attractive and innovative methods of advertising and creative advertising modes are capable of satisfying these requirements. Present day consumers are growing more and more incensed and irritated with traditional advertising modes and this level of displeasure had grown to such an extent that consumers simply avoid traditional advertisement mechanisms. They find it boring and irritating and are totally un-attracted to these kinds of advertising modes. These consumers seem to prefer the news and creative advertising modes and it is submitted here that these modes are highly popular and are able to capture the attention of the consumer by tapping into their emotions and assisting them in making their minds up when it comes to purchasing the goods that have been advertised. What can be said here is that creative

advertising techniques are high acceptable, popular and effective in conveying the message across to the public and would certainly be a highly feasible advertising method for 21st century business organizations. Michell (1988) and Cook and Kover (1997) feel that the creative advertising should be simple and also needs to be unique, memorable, interesting and engaging. The innovative ads pursuits and changes behavior. It sells the product whatever is going to be. There are a lot of impressions that you see every day and you got to have something unique to retain your customers. Bernstein (1989) and Fariborz (1991) are of opinion that there is no real need to hire a marketing consultant for the purposes of devising the most innovative and creative advertising strategies. Everyday items that are found all over the place are capable of being used to create more exposure for a certain product. Small items can be used in a highly creative ways like business cards, flyers as well as promotional gifts in order to attract the attention of consumers. Within the media saturated climate of these present times, a special and highly creative advertising idea would be the most appropriate method of capturing the consumers attention, especially the ones that have been bored of conventional and everyday marketing methods. However, if these companies utilize innovative advertising concepts, this could well mean the difference between having profits that are marginal and having very high level of success within the business. It is noted here that the most appropriate kinds of advertising would be the ones that would require a particular business to take part in a certain amount of planning. It is appreciated that a variety of daily objects can now be used in order to advertise and among these include objects like ballpoint pens, t-shirts, lint brushes and even magnifying glasses. It is submitted here that when a new product has been introduced, a perfect way to promote it would be to have a miniature of the product that is effectively embedded into a lucite paperweight and included with filled orders and via the use of distribution to certain walk-in customers. Theoretically speaking, Percy *et al.* (2001) agreed that the elements of highly effective creative advertising would typically include freshness, target appeal, cultural relevance, immediate response motivation and measurable results. There are some types of creative ideas of advertising like advertising in the public seats, elevator advertising, escalator advertising, dry cleaner plastic bags and bus advertising.

CONCLUSION

The trends of consumers these days are very unpromising for companies that continue to use

traditional advertising modes like television and radio advertising for instance. These advertising methods are in some cases, highly undesirable. These consumers are known to simply ignore these advertisements and hence the objective of the advertiser is not satisfied. This research confirms the fact that traditional advertising modes are not favored by a large majority of people in Saudi Arabia and these persons are understood to have preference for more creative advertising modes. The presence of such creative advertising modes would ensure that the attention of the consumer is caught and captivated due to the fact that these creative modes of advertising affect the emotions of the consumers and makes them pay attention to the advertisements and research has confirmed the fact that these creative advertising modes are so effective that they tend to compel the consumer in purchasing the product or service that is being advertised. In these present time and with the low popularity of traditional advertising modes, the utilization of creative advertising modes could bring a strong competitive advantage to the company that utilizes it.

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