

THE ROLE OF ADVERTISING IN SOCIETY

Annotation. The article deals with the problems of advertising in modern society. Different approaches to advertising were regarded. Some ways advertisements influence consumers were revealed. The strategies of successful advertising were outlined and the consequences of advertising were analyzed.

Анотація. Розглянуто деякі проблеми рекламної діяльності у сучасному суспільстві, різні підходи до реклами. Розкрито шляхи впливу реклами на споживача. Досліджено стратегії успішної рекламної діяльності та проаналізовані її можливі наслідки.

Аннотация. Рассмотрены некоторые проблемы рекламной деятельности в современном обществе, различные подходы к этой деятельности. Исследованы стратегии успешной рекламной деятельности и проанализированы ее возможные последствия.

Keywords: commercial advertising, social advertising, brand, media users, customers, national creativity, advertising agencies, employment

Advertising is the process of persuading potential customers to buy products or services being offered to them. Nowadays advertising must be seen in the context of a world of immense variety and choice. In economies where there is no choice, there is no need for advertising. But in modern societies an average large supermarket offers shoppers about 40,000 of different lines. There are some 2,000 of new models of cars available plus an uncountable number of consumer durables, electronic gadgets, entertainments, holidays and financial investments – the list goes on and on. People need to be able to sort out all these choices reasonably and simply. Advertisements help them select the things they want without spending forever on the task.

Therefore, the aim of this article is the analysis of the important role of advertising in society.

To achieve this aim it is necessary to consider the purpose and functions of advertising; to analyze the difference between commercial and social advertising; to describe the importance of advertising for the media and public.

It is common knowledge that the purpose of advertising is to promote products and services that businesses are trying to sell. However, this is not the sole purpose of advertising. In addition to promoting a product or service, advertising serves multiple functions for the company and brand. For example, the overriding function of advertising is to inform potential customers about a product and persuade them to buy it. An additional important function of advertising is the identification function, that is, to identify a product and differentiate it from others. This creates an awareness of the product and provides a basis for consumers to choose the advertised product over other products. These functions help companies achieve the ultimate goal: selling their products or services [1].

However, it should be pointed out that the purpose of advertising depends on its type. As advertising may be commercial and social, it is necessary to understand that there may be different purposes and effect. It is well known that the aim of commercial advertising is to boost sales and make profits. Therefore, it may go against important social values. For example, advertising of luxury cars or pills may lead to a waste of money. Moreover, advertising of alcohol makes people drink more. On the contrary, the aim of social advertising is to draw attention to the existing social problems, to change people's attitude towards important issues. For example, social advertising that is calling to make donations to those left homeless as a result of natural disasters.

Advertising is very important for the media which receive 90 % or so of all advertisers' expenditure. The benefits of advertising for the media, and thus for society, go wider and much deeper. More than 3,000 consumer magazines are published in Britain. Each one is of personal interest to groups of readers, large or small. These magazines are heavily subsidized by advertising, so that their readers – all those men and all those women in all those streets – buy them at a small percentage of their production cost. Many readers of special interest magazines find the advertisements at least as helpful and interesting as the editorial itself. Some magazines contain only advertisements with no editorial whatsoever living proof that their readers value the advertising they contain. As with magazines, so it is with almost all other advertising media, from cinemas to public transport: the revenue they receive from advertising reduces, even if only marginally, the prices they charge the public for what they provide [2].

There are certain benefits of advertising for the public. Advertising heavily subsidizes the Internet, so that most websites are available either without cost or at a fraction of their set-up and running costs. The digital media revolution, upon which we are all so dependent, has been provided to us for very nearly nothing – paid for by advertising. This is a totally new public benefit.

It should be noted that advertising encourages national creativity as it inevitably uses advertising agencies and they provide creative people with employment. For example, not only the writers and art directors work directly for them, but also such freelance creative people as photographers, designers, film directors, cameramen and actors are involved in the process.

It should also be mentioned that, despite obvious benefits, advertising communications commit many acts of dubious ethics in their attempts to seduce consumers into buying. For example, advertising may promote overselling, exploitation of vulnerable groups, deception, intruding on privacy, racial or sexual stereotypes, prejudice against certain vulnerable groups, socially or personally harmful values or behaviour, offending public taste, vulgarity, exploiting base motives of greed and envy. The problem with advertising is that ethical judgements in general are predicated on certain values and interests that are not universally agreed upon [3].

Thus, what is the role of advertising in society? It creates employment, now and in the future; it provides the public with numerous free and inexpensive media; it supplies shoppers with a great deal of helpful information; it pushes prices down and quality up; it keeps the public aware of all the different brands available.

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