

Promotional Mix Lesson 1: Advertising

SUBMITTED BY: Leya Matthew

SUBJECT(S): Marketing

GRADE LEVEL(S): 9, 10, 11, 12

☰ OVERVIEW:

In the overview lesson on promotions, we looked at the various elements that form the promotional mix of a marketing plan. In this lesson, we focus on advertising. Advertising is a very visible element of the promotional strategy for both brands and products. We are constantly exposed to advertisements in multiple mediums — television, Internet, print, billboards, banners, etc. In this lesson we analyze the objectives and effects of advertising from a marketing perspective. The effect of brand advertising on product advertising is also examined. While doing this, it seems fitting to also scrutinize the ethical concerns involved in “embellishments”. Furthermore, the impact of advertising is linked to customer segmentation, social identification and the entire marketing process.

☰ NBEA STANDARD(S):

- Marketing, IV. The Marketing Mix

☰ RELATED ARTICLES:

- “Super Bowl Advertising and Corporate America’s Message on Diversity”
- “Reality Check: The Technology Behind “Pokemon Go””
- “Enterprising Easter Bunnies Share Lessons in Entrepreneurship”

Common Core Standard(s):

1. CCR Standard for Reading: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and make logical inferences from it.
2. CCR Standards for Listening: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on each other's ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.
3. CCR Standards for Speaking: Present information, findings and supporting evidence in such a way that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, and the organization, development and style are appropriate to the task, purpose and audience.

Objectives/Purposes: In this lesson, students will: (1) analyze the advertising strategies of a product of their choice, (2) compare this with the advertising strategy of the brand this product belongs to, and (3) examine the ethical concerns within their analysis.

Knowledge@Wharton Article: “A Million Little Embellishments: Truth and Trust in Advertising and Publishing”

Other Resources/Materials: Internet access

Activity:

1. View Advertisements (*5-8 mins*)

As students come into class, they are given handouts of the following advertising objectives.

Objectives of Advertising (from Businessdictionary.com)

- To create awareness
- To inform
- To remind
- To persuade
- To compare

They are then asked to suggest commercials they would like to view. For each commercial viewed, they are asked to individually note down the brand, the product, and the objective(s) of the commercial. For example, the students might want to watch the McDonalds Super Bowl commercial, Blackberry shoots Apple commercial, and the Dove Evolution video.

A sample student list might look something like this:

Name of Student:

- McDonalds Super Bowl commercial, BigMac and Fries, to remind
- Blackberry shoots Apple commercial, touch screen Blackberry, to compare
- Dove Evolution video, Dove self esteem fund, to create awareness

After three or four commercials, the teacher chooses one product from the advertisements viewed, and pulls up all the advertisements available on the Internet. From the previous example, I may choose to focus on the Apple iPhone product, and pull up all the iphone commercials, print ads, billboards, etc., that are available on the Internet. For these advertisements, students are asked to individually record the product name, type of medium and the objective(s) of the advertisement.

A sample student list might look something like this:

Product: Apple iphone

Hello ad — TV commercial, to create awareness

How to use the iphone (for June 29 release) — TV commercial, to inform

There's an app for that—TV commercial, to inform, create awareness, remind

Solving life's dilemmas one app at a time — Print, to inform

First Steps — TV commercial, to inform, remind, persuade

Blackberry/Apple — TV commercial, to compare and persuade

It's okay to stare — Print, to remind, persuade

Sales Promotions — Print, to persuade

2. Group Discussion (8-10 mins)

The teacher leads a group discussion on the objectives and the impact of advertisements for promoting brands and products. I would begin with a question like: *Which ad did you like the*

best? I would then ask students for the objectives they recorded for this advertisement and ask them to compare this objective with the requirements of marketing. Even if they pick an ad from the first set of 3, they can be asked: *What other advertisements does the product require for a holistic marketing plan? Before you remind your customer of your product, you have to make your customers aware, and maybe inform them about the unique features and value of your product.*

After discussing the marketing objectives of advertising, the teacher moves to the impact of advertising. Going back to the advertisement the student had liked (or you could ask another student for his/her favorite one) the teacher asks the student *why* he/she liked this ad. If the student hesitates (*why* questions are always difficult to answer), the teacher asks all the students in the class to note the advertisement they liked the most and write down 2-4 points as to why they liked this particular advertisement. They are then asked to share their reasons for liking the advertisement.

For example, I like the “It’s okay to stare” advertisement because of its punch line. It makes me think of a beautiful woman or a handsome man, confident of their appeal, but reaching out instead of being exclusive. I feel the iphone fits this image very well, and I feel included in an exclusive club.

The students are then quizzed on who they think the target customer is for this ad, and asked to consider how far they fit the customer profile the iphone is targeting. *Would you buy this product? If not, why? Do you consume/use any other products from this brand?* In this manner, the impact of branding on cross product sales, product sales and market share is discussed.

3. Work with the Knowledge@Wharton article (8 mins)

Students are given handouts of the article and asked to read the sections titled: Pushing the Envelope in Ads, and The “Truth Effect”

They are then asked to critically analyze the ads they liked the most for embellishments. I would ask them to: *Breakdown the ad into its various elements: visuals, sequences, story, sound, etc, and what is different from the world the advertisement is creating and the real world as you know it?*

4. Group Discussion on Ethical Advertising (5-8 mins)

The teacher asks students to share from their notes. *It is common knowledge that companies spend a huge amount of money on advertisements. (A commercial that I worked on cost 50,000,000 Indian rupees for the production alone, and additional costs included paying the film*

star, the TV spots, and the advertising agency for their services!) The visuals, sounds, layout, etc., everything about the ad is meant to be a subtle embellishment. A photo you and I take of the product will never look like the visual in the advertisement. But, when does embellishment become unethical? What examples are quoted in the article? You could also suggest the example of corn flakes claiming to be high in Calcium when they are actually drawing on the fact that they are consumed with milk (inaccurate facts).

3. Small Group activity (8-10 mins)

Students are now divided randomly into small groups. They are asked to analyze the advertising strategy of a product of their choice. They have 8-10 minutes for the analysis and will be given 5 minutes each to present their analysis.

They may be given the following guidelines as a handout:

Choose a product that you purchase often/purchased recently/would like to purchase.

- What advertisements of this product do you remember?
- Choose one advertisement and analyze it for its components:
 - What is the tagline?
 - What is the music/colors, etc.?
- What ideas/emotions do you associate with this ad?
- How do these relate to the image of the product?
- How often do you see this ad?
- Who are the competitors for this product?
- What are the advertisements for the competitor products?
- How are the ads similar/different?
- (Why) do you purchase this product and not a competitor's product?
- What is the role of advertising in your purchase decision?

4. Presentations and Feedback (10-15 mins)

The groups are asked to present their analysis. Other groups are encouraged to provide constructive criticism — *What was insightful about the analysis? Do you have anything to add to this analysis? Was there anything about the analysis you felt was erroneous?*

5. Wrap-up

The teacher asks students about what they learned about the objectives and impacts of advertising.

Practice Outside of the Classroom: The next time you see an ad you like, think about why you liked the ad. Does this liking translate into purchases?

What Worked and What I Would Do Differently:

If you are using Google as a search engine, it might be prudent to search for the advertisements on the “everything” tab rather than on the “videos” or “images” tabs. Those tabs have greater likelihood of pulling up inappropriate material. If inappropriate material is accidentally displayed, be upfront and frank about the issues of using Internet in the classroom, and maybe also ask students about the problems they face while using Internet to conduct secondary or preliminary research. You could also briefly discuss the problem of information overload and difficulties in information processing.

If the class strength does not permit all the presentations in this class, all the groups could be asked to present in the next class. That way, they also get additional preparation time.