

## Advertising Campaign

Advertising is a **paid, mediated** form of communication from an **identifiable source**, designed to **persuade** the receiver to **take** some **action** now or in the future.

The role of advertising is to:

1. Create awareness of the product.
2. Provide knowledge of the product/install emotions for the product.
3. Promote a positive attitude towards the product.
4. Sell the product.

### **Questions to answer BEFORE you develop your advertisement campaign:**

**PRODUCT:** What product will you be advertising? What does it do? Why is it being sold?

**EFFECT:** How is the advertisement campaign supposed to affect its audience? How are they supposed to feel or react?

**CONSUMER:** Who is your target audience? What age group, income bracket, sex, race, etc. will your advertisement target?

**BENEFITS:** Why should people buy your product? What are the benefits of your product?

**WHERE:** Where will your advertisement be shown/seen?

**STRATEGIES:** What advertising strategies or techniques will your advertising company use? Why/how will they be effective?

The most important things to consider when you create your campaign are:

- ★ Brand Integration (people need to know what you are trying to sell)
- ★ Your Market (who you are trying to sell to)
- ★ Your Offer (what your brand does for the consumer)
- ★ Your Campaign Theme

Strategies within these categories may include:

- ✓ Catchy slogans or jingles
- ✓ Emotional appeal- make consumers NEED your product
- ✓ Humor
- ✓ Comparisons to competitors' products
- ✓ And many more...

**Submit the answers to the questions above before you create your billboard or commercial.**

**Due:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Advertising: Think Before You Speak

Just as your funny bumper sticker might offend the guy behind you, your ad may not be saying what you want the target audience to hear.

Recently a colleague told me an anecdote from her personal life. She went out with a guy who had one of those bumper stickers on which an ersatz Calvin [from the comic strip Calvin and Hobbes] was relieving himself on a Florida State University logo. When he called her for a second date, she declined. It wasn't that she had an affinity for Florida State, it was just that [in her words], "I thought, clearly I can't have anything in common with someone who voluntarily drove himself to the store, purchased that sticker, and applied it to the back of his vehicle."

That's one of the problems with bumper stickers. The young man who put Calvin on his truck no doubt thought it was funny, preoccupied as he was with putting down a football rival. But the message it conveyed said more about him than he thought, and it cost him that second date.

When you put a bumper sticker on your car it represents just one element of your personality; it's one small sample of how you look at the world. Yet to the guy stuck behind you in traffic, it's the defining element of who you are. As a result, the message you send can become louder than intended, and often misunderstood.

### The Message Is Everything

Take, for example, the "my child is an honor student" bumper stickers. That's a nice thought. And Mom probably put it on her minivan out of a combination of delight with and obligation to her wide-eyed sixth grader who proudly brought it home. She displays it to reward her child for his hard work, not to brag. But not every other driver interprets it that way -- that's why we see stickers that say things like "my kid can beat up your honor student" or even "my French Bulldog is smarter than your child". [Yes, that's a real sighting.] The same is true of advertising. It may be O.K. for you to risk the ire of other drivers by virtue of the stickers you put on your car. But when you're paying big money to run an advertising campaign, the message your audience receives is everything -- regardless of what it is you intend to say.

A marriage counselor friend of mine defines communication as "the meeting of meaning." I think that's as good a definition as I've heard. We don't truly communicate simply by speaking to someone, we communicate only if they understand what we mean for them to know. The trick of creating effective advertising

is to get inside the skins of your target customers, to see your message through their eyes and hear it through their ears.

### How You Say What You Say

When you do, you might be surprised at how they interpret what you're trying to say. Here's an all-too-common example. When you hear retailers yelling [as they so often do], "There's never been a better time to buy," you don't think, "There's never been a better time to buy." You think, "There they go again, trying to coerce me into buying a car/sofa/TV." Not the message they intend, but by failing to take into consideration the fact that you may have heard that line once or twice before, advertisers can be their own worst enemy.

Or consider the positive example of companies such as Nike (NKE), Apple (AAPL), and Gatorade (PEP), which rarely overtly ask people to buy anything. They simply develop appealing, interesting, often thought-provoking advertising that involves consumers in the message and invites them to draw their own conclusions. Even more direct-response-oriented brands such as Geico, eBay (EBAY), and Capital One (COF) know how you say something is as important as what you say. Because they've done such a good job of understanding who it is they're trying to reach, their ads have a positive effect.

### You aren't the target

Remember, it doesn't matter what an advertiser intends to communicate, what matters is how the target audience interprets the message. Don't just put an ad out there because it sounds good to you. You may like what your advertising has to say, but that can be misleading. You, after all, aren't the target. In fact, since you know so much about your products, your industry, your competition, and even your own good intentions, your reaction may be as far from the target's as it can get.

Learn the lesson of the bumper sticker. Study the people you're trying to reach. Get to know them. Understand their attitudes and perceptions, even if you think they're incorrect. And don't just say what you want to say. Make sure you achieve the meeting of meaning, and save self-expression for the back of your car.

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McKee, Steve. "Advertising: Think Before You Speak." Business Week Online (14 Jan. 2008): 23. MAS Ultra - School Edition. EBSCO.

### Questions

- 1) What does McKee suggest is one of the flaws of advertisers in their messages?
- 2) What methods does McKee suggest advertisers use for a positive effect on their consumer?
- 3) What is his overall thesis of this article? Do you agree? Why or why not?

## TIPS FOR DESIGNING MESSAGES THAT SELL

### ADVERTISING

Could your ads be improved? Here are some pointers from the Yellow Pages Publishers Association, in Troy, Mich., on what it takes to make an effective ad:

- Make sure your headline grabs readers' attention and draws them into the ad by using a bold statement or asking a question.
- Avoid too much copy. Liberal use of white space (space without text or illustrations) will keep your ad uncluttered and easy to read.
- Vary the size of the copy type from bold to medium and from large to small to keep the reader's interest.
- Keep the reader's eye heading directly to the phone number.
- Keep copy succinct. Emphasize the benefits of your product or service. Specify areas of specialization. Include vital information such as your location, hours, parking, and credit policies.
- If you have a distinctive logo, use it. Besides your headline, an illustration is the most effective way to attract attention.
- Be sure your illustration keeps the reader's eye drawn to your ad, not directed out to your competitors' ads.
- Add a distinctive border to create a mood.
- Use color selectively to make a strong statement or to emphasize selling points. Color captures the reader's attention regardless of the ad's placement on the page.
- If you use red only, limit it to no more than 50 percent of the advertisement so that the color won't lose its effectiveness. Move the eye from color to black to color throughout the ad.

Generally, your ad has good flow if you can look where your attention is first drawn and from there move through all of the information smoothly to the end.

Maynard, Roberta, Nation's Business; Dec94, Vol. 82 Issue 12, p10, 1/3p

## Billboard Basics: Six Rules of Thumb for Creating Outdoor Advertising

Everyone loves billboards. As a marketing technique, they're inherently sexy. In addition, perhaps because the "magic bullet" theory of communications is so popular, people overestimate their effectiveness. Plus, they're a simple, flat canvas, so it seems like they should be "easy" to create.

Misconceptions abound with billboards, but there are a few basics that can help structure your outdoor advertising strategies:

### 1. Secondary, not primary

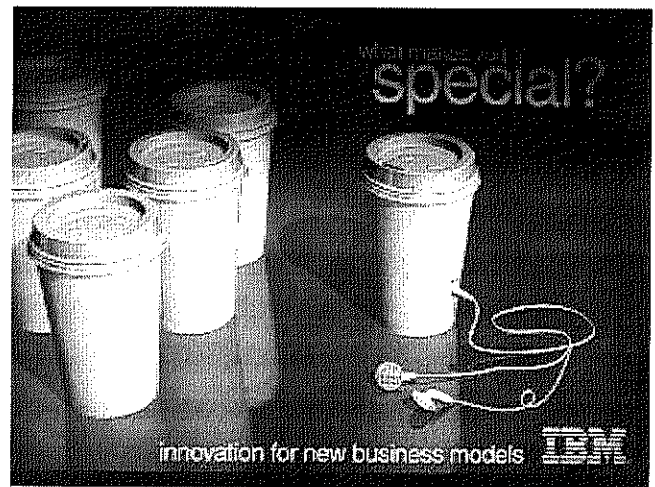
In general, billboards are a secondary medium, not a primary one. This means that they act as a support to other parts of an advertising campaign, and are not the main thrust themselves. There are exceptions, of course. Retail operations like gas stations, hospitality, restaurants and such will use outdoor advertising as a primary vehicle to get people to "exit now." But if you're selling an intangible product or service, or if your goal is to develop your brand image, then you need to have a plan that goes beyond billboards.

### 2. Six Seconds, 6 Words

Billboards are viewed quickly, generally in vehicles going over the speed limit. This means there isn't much time to read a complex message. The industry rule of thumb is that a billboard is read in less than six seconds, and the billboard should have no more than six words. You can have a few extra words in smaller type or a secondary position to give location information or a call to action, but your primary message should be 6 words or less. Generally, it should stand away from secondary text and presented in an uncluttered manner. Once again, less is better, just as Mark Twain once said, "If I had more time, I would have written less."

### 3. Avoid Metaphors

The need for simplicity is an obvious corollary to the speed and brief message space of a billboard. In Web design, Steve Krug has said, "Don't make me think." The same concept applies to outdoor advertising. Comparisons should be clear, and while they may be clever, they should be immediately obvious. If you see a concept like this one for IBM and say, "I don't get it," then you can be confident that the metaphor just isn't working (Original post: Adrants)



### 4. Mnemonics Only

When I'm driving with someone, I don't want him or her taking their hands off the wheel to write down a phone number. Unless one has some great phone number that spells a simple phrase, don't even think about using one. Likewise, caution should be given to using URLs, and they must be simple, straightforward and memorable.

### 5. Buy in Gross

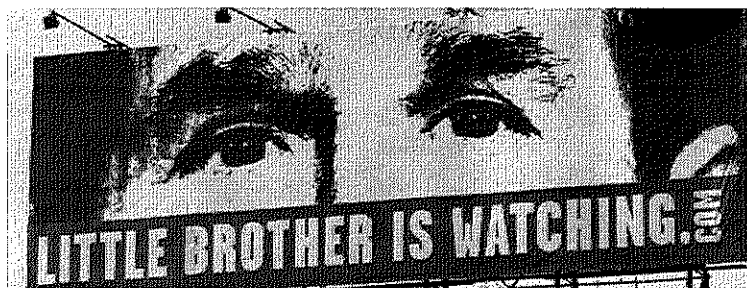
Generally, you'll want a billboard *campaign*. So be ready to spend some money. A single billboard will not achieve your communication goals unless you can use the best, most well known billboard phrase: "Exit Now."

Billboards are bought in "shows," which are comparable to gross rating points. If you buy a 50 show in a particular geographic area, you will be reaching a number of viewers equivalent to 100% of the population in the area every two days. This is based on the amount of traffic known to go past the board (the Annual Average Daily Traffic, or AADT), the number of people age 18+ in each vehicle, and the hours of

illumination for the display. Of course, this doesn't necessarily mean you're reaching the population that actually *lives* in the area – especially if you're posting on expressways or commuter routes.

## 6. Placement Review

Not every billboard is a winner. In fact, the smaller your organization or your budget, the more you'll need to do hand-to-hand combat in selecting billboard locations. In addition to different sizes, placements on the opposite side of the road (called cross reads), tall buildings and trees can significantly impact each of your placements. Nowadays, most companies provide a photo, map and description of each placement; although the photos do not always do justice to individual boards, making an automotive survey something worth considering.



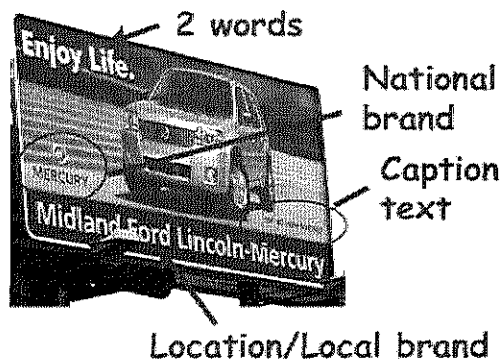
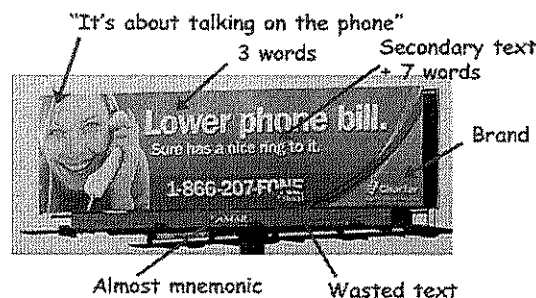
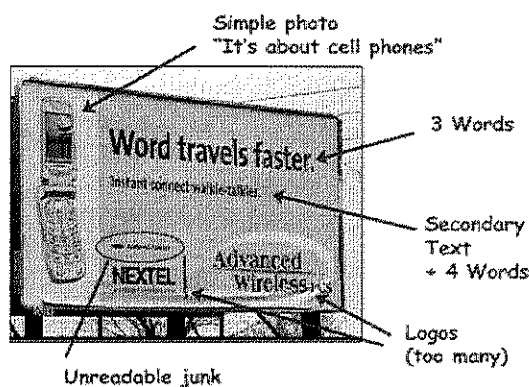
Apply these six basics and you'll be well on your way to successful outdoor advertising effort. Explain them convincingly to your clients, and you'll be well on your way to a successful campaign -- and marketing career.

## Deconstructed Examples

Below are three examples pulled off the local highways showing some good – and some not so good – examples of the six “billboard basics.” Some common problems in these examples include:

- Too much secondary text
- Secondary text not set far enough apart or distinct from primary text
- Too many unreadable, extra, or illogical elements
- Multiple, confused, or too small branding
- Lack of creativity

<http://www.unsolicitedmarketingadvice.com/2006/11/billboard-basics-six-rules-of-thumb.html>



## How to Use Humor in Advertising

By [Lou Dubois](#) | [@lou\\_dubois](#) | Dec 31, 2010

Thinking beyond your product and more in terms of humor and entertainment can maximize your advertising effectiveness. Here's how to pull it off.

**Old Spice. Taco Bell. E-Trade. Blendtec. Budweiser.** Some of the most memorable advertising campaigns in recent history, regardless of company size and marketing budget, and whether broadcast, print or online-only, have involved humor. As an audience, consumers most enjoy being entertained instead of pitched, and so appealing to them emotionally can lead to further engagement with your product in the future. Utilizing social media can be an inexpensive and extremely effective way to do that.

For example, when you're a company like Cisco selling \$100,000 computer routers, it can be difficult to put a commercial together that will appeal to anyone but hardcore tech programmers. But thinking creatively and beyond the product, you can create something that becomes a viral hit and appeals to your customers, while also allowing others who may have zero intention to buy your product to share it with their friends, raising brand awareness.

So why should your company use humor in its advertising? How can you implement it into your overall marketing strategy? Those questions and more will be answered in this guide.

### How to Use Humor in Advertising: Why Advertise With Humor?

According to a 1993 Journal of Marketing study that examined multinational effects of humor on advertising (a study that still stands true), the major conclusion was that "humor is more likely to enhance recall, evaluation, and purchase intention when the humorous message coincides with ad objectives, is well-integrated with those objectives, and is viewed as appropriate for the product category. Under such circumstances, humorous advertising is more likely to secure audience attention, increase memorability, overcome sales resistance, and enhance message persuasiveness."

Humor should not be the only form of advertising your company employs. Particularly when you're selling a very specific product, you need to give your customers valuable purchasing information and specifics, but without hitting them over the head with it. Spend money on traditional advertising that will actually lead to conversions for your leads, because that's where the bulk of your business will come from. But occasionally adding humor into the equation when it's least expected can be a great way to show customers that you care not just about sales, but about their individual satisfaction. You can do this in your blog, via your company's social media presence, or in a traditional advertising campaign.

"It still takes a lot of work to sell an entire organization on an ad campaign that employs humor, particularly on social media platforms," says [Tim Washer](#), a senior social media and marketing manager for [Cisco Systems](#) in [New York City](#) and a comedy writer/actor who has worked with Conan O'Brien, [Jon Stewart](#), [David Letterman](#) and more. "Typically you have an entire marketing group and the whole fiber of your being is geared toward evangelizing your product and services. So someone will always feel left out. But talking solely about your product just doesn't work."

### How to Use Humor in Advertising: When Humor Works

Comedy can be the great differentiator for any product, notes [Washer](#). So when Cisco was releasing their new ASR 9000 in 2009, Washer helped to create a sketch around how many ways a man can show his wife he loves her, with the purchase of a new router was the [humorous conclusion](#). 180,000 [YouTube](#) views, a [New](#)

York Times blog mention and later detailed in David Meerman Scott's best-selling book *The New Rules of Marketing and PR*, the executives at Cisco began to see the value of Washer's overall belief in terms of humor in advertising.

"Humor, when executed properly, helps cut through the noise and helps you stand out," Washer notes. "If you can make someone laugh, there is an emotional connection with them. And anything you say beyond that is going to be more meaningful."

### **How to Use Humor in Advertising: When Humor Doesn't Work**

Identifying examples of advertising where humor was employed but failed could be a story in itself, but there are plenty of recent examples of poorly executed campaigns that teach just as much about doing it right as they do things to avoid.

"There are two big mistakes that you often see in the campaigns that fail," Washer says. "The first, and easily the biggest, is trying to include too much product messaging. As soon as you start doing that, you lose the audience. It's important to fight the urge to burden a comedy with product information. The second mistake I see is companies that simply are not willing to take a risk by being a little bit edgy. If you are safe, your results will be average. But it's when you take a chance that something can become really big."

Among recent failed campaigns, industry analysts point to the 2009 Super Bowl advertisement by Sobe beverages as an example of when humor doesn't work as intended. In the "Lizard Lake" campaign, the brand employed three NFL players, CGI (computer-generated imagery) lizards and monsters and had them dancing in a mockery of the old and famous ballet Swan Lake. There were many reasons the campaign was not received well: too much CGI and computer enhancement, football players turned ballet dancers, lizards turned football players, the inherent promotion of a new movie (Monsters vs. Aliens) and too much product promotion throughout.

### **How to Use Humor in Advertising: How To Add the Humor**

While it's a great idea to attempt comedy, actually pulling it off can be very tricky for many. Let's face it: we all think we are hilarious, but few are actually talented enough at writing and producing content that appeals to mass audiences. And as a small- or mid-sized organization, it's unlikely you'll have a Madison Avenue advertising agency with access to a major budget and top-tier comedic talent to tap into. But that doesn't mean you can't find talented writers and producers to help you.

Assuming you don't have in-house talent to work on these campaigns, Washer recommends you begin by visiting a local film school and talking to some of the professors (IMDB Directory of Film Schools). Find out who some of the top seniors are, as almost every school will have someone with a great comedic voice and vision. Even better for small businesses, since they aren't yet established professionally and rather are looking to add to their reel and resume, you can acquire them much cheaper.

Another option for those in urban areas is to visit a local improv comedy theatre (it's important not to go to a stand-up performance) and see who controls the crowd best. As Washer says, those venues tend to attract "more cerebral types of comedy writers who aren't going for a cheap laugh but understand comedy that comes from character and situation."

"The great thing for smaller companies is that with humor, you can compete with the goliaths," Washer adds. "The more nimble your company is and the more willing you are to take a risk, even with a smaller budget, it

can be the difference-maker. Because as consumers, they don't care how big your company is or what your budget was. If it's funny and good, that's what matters."

Another point to consider when using humor in advertising is that different things are funny to different people. A commercial that may leave one person keeled over from laughter may leave a bad taste in another's mouth. The target market must always be considered, and running test and focus groups to receive feedback is always a great idea. Sometimes the portion of the commercial you thought was the funniest may get no laughs, while a scene you never expected to be a hit can be the most popular part.

It's important with every advertising campaign to set measurable and realistic expectations. It's no different with an ad that includes humor, even if it's being used only digitally on your company blog or via YouTube. The key is to meet with management ahead of time and set goals that satisfy all involved parties. One of the major keys to a successful humorous campaign is variety, as once a campaign starts to wear out there's no saving it without some variation on the concept. Washer notes that it's important with humorous campaigns to let it run its course. You're going to have people who love it and others who hate it, and then even more that just don't get it at all. But if it's done well enough (and is funny enough), the growth can happen very naturally, particularly on social networks.

### **How to Use Humor in Advertising: Utilizing Humor in Social Media**

The time has never been better for brands to employ social media when launching a new advertising campaign, particularly one with humor. The main reason for this: social media (and namely YouTube) is largely looked at as an entertainment medium. People don't often turn to YouTube to garner product information, but they do go there to watch funny videos. When they find one that resonates with them, the likelihood that they'll click the share button to spread via their networks on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), email it to a friend or talk about it becomes even higher.

"As a small company, you can take the chance with a funny video and just post it on YouTube to see how it's received," Washer notes. "Sometimes it fails, but if it's done properly, it can be a chance for those companies to compete with much larger brands without spending much money."

For Washer's latest Cisco campaign, geared around the company's scheduled announcement at January's [Consumer Electronics Show \(CES\)](#), he was given little to work with in terms of content. Since they are teasing an announcement related to the way consumers view their televisions and consume entertainment, he couldn't really describe in detail what they were doing and there isn't even a product to feature. So he employed a humorous ad, creating an "[Obsolete TV Support Group](#)" where older TV's talk about how they feel useless with many of the new technologies now available. As one of the TV's says: "With DVRs, on-demand, pods and pads — it's overwhelming. I feel left out!" Posted on December 3, it already has nearly 10,000 views, pretty amazing for an ad that doesn't even promote a product. It's just another example of how using humor in advertising correctly can help your brand.