

Selective Determinants of Advertisement Appeal for a Product or Service

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Abstract

The study establishes the intrinsic role of advertising appeal to both the prospect and the Advertiser, in determining the volume of sales of products, service or idea. With the increasing number of substitutes (products) in the economy, the level of competition among emerging industries and organizations is high. Hence there is the need to exploit those unique selling points that motivate the desire to acquire the products from which benefits will be derived. This tasks the intellect of the graphic designer and copywriters in the advertising industry. A number of literatures bothering on the unique selling point, classification of advertising appeals and the relationship with the other elements in advertising were reviewed and analyzed. Through a survey of a number of goods and services, coupled with interviews from prospects and organizations, it is found that gender, social status and materialism have significant relationship with purchasing behaviour. They engender ad appeal that could lead consumer to have positive attitude towards brand, higher purchase intention and brand choice, generates and maintains loyalty, and thus serve as a strong *raison d'être* for patronage.

Keywords: Appeal, Talking point, target audience, determinants, Advertisement, Choice

1. Introduction

In a free economy, one has a number of choices to make - to like or dislike, acquire or non- acquisition of a product, service or idea. This is in line with the democratic principle that is practiced in contemporary society. In a mixed economy where there are varieties of products, services or ideas, the consumer who is often regarded as 'king' because of the power of independence and freedom to make a choice of what appeals to him, holds a significant position in the socio-political and economic development of a nation. In a developing economy, due to technological breakthrough, a number of substitutes (products) stare at the face of the consumer, from which choice can be made. This choice is determined by some factors that are incidental to the status of the persons involved. The most basic of human needs is the need for food, clothing and shelter. Special need for these necessities cannot be created with advertising. However, there are certain other products that provide comfort in life and advertising aims to generate demand for these products. Advertising uses appeals as a way of persuading people to buy certain products. Ad appeals are designed in a way so as to create a positive image of the individuals who use certain products. Ad agencies and companies use different types of advertising appeal to influence the purchasing decisions of people. By and large, advertising appeal can be stated as the inducement used to stimulate a buying motive. According to Wirson as cited in Pitman (1964), since the buying motive is the reason for purchasing, the appeal is the basic ingredient of the advertisement. It is thus the focal point under which the entire advertisement is built or constructed. Manrai et al (1992) defined appeal as the basic idea behind an advert or the basic reason why an audience should act.

The researcher has observed that there is a competitive market among emerging industries seeking for relevance and to elicit patronage for their products, services or ideas, in order to be a leader in their chosen lines of businesses. This has resulted in some kind of rivalry that the target market is put at wits end. Various claims have been made, some are genuine, while a number of them are deceptive. The ability of the consumer to take a final decision thereof is influenced by the nature of the advertising appeal used. This is where the Graphic Artists and Copywriters make use of their creative ingenuity not only to draw immediate attention to their products but attract large patronage that will bring maximum returns for their investment. It is on this backdrop that the researcher seeks to determine the basic ingredients that stimulate the appeal for the acquisition of products X rather than product Y. A good knowledge of these techniques will equip the graphic artists and copywriters to make desirable designs and copy texts that will motivate desire and increase sales and productivity.

Through a survey on the volume of goods and services in society, interviews with a number of prospects and organizations will be organized. A number of literatures on advertising appeals will also be reviewed, the result of which will form the bulk of the generalization and conclusion that will be made at the end of this study. Consequently, this study examines the Talking points, Significance of appeals, Classification of Advertising Appeals, Selective determinants of Advertisement Appeal for products, services or ideas and the Relationship of Appeals to other Elements.

2. The Talking Point

The talking point of an advertisement is the characteristic of the product or the use of the product on which the appeal of the advertisement is based. In choosing appeal therefore, the buying motives of the product, its services must be understood before an appeal is selected. An advertisement must always start with a great idea if it is to end by making a sale. Advertisers have found that the surest way to influence people to buy is to appeal to their emotions. The best advert contains ideas that appeal to the reader's self interest, arouse his curiosity and offer him news. Effective advertising sells benefits not products. It does not sell mattresses but "a good night sleep", not soft drinks but 'refreshment', not life insurance but 'protection for your family future'. A good advertisement attracts attention, arouses interests, creates desire, assures belief and impels action (*Encyclopedia International*, 1976). A selling point therefore, for a product generally is a characteristic of the product itself which can contribute to the satisfaction of a need or desire of the buyer. A benefit then becomes the satisfaction received from purchase or use. Unique selling point is a proposition each advert makes that is powerful, unique and not offered by the competition. Sometimes, the unique feature resides in the method of production.

Thus, every good advertisement ought to have a "central idea" or a unique selling point (USP) which is stated in the form of a sales proposition. It requires good knowledge of overall marketing environments, awareness of consumer's needs and lucid understanding of salient product attributes. The concept of the USP originated at Ted Bortes Advertising Agency, USA, where Rosser Reeves was Vice- President and is now credited with the original formulation of the unique idea which has proven universally effective. The USP is a products' benefit claim. It is sometimes called a "position" or "target response statement" or "proposition". A USP, according to Reeves, gives leverage to an advertising campaign and enhances consumer identification with a product as well as brand loyalty. The "big idea" or what is often called the unique selling point or proposition is the central theme of the advertising message. USP is an essential first step in preparing any advertising message. It is not complete unless it contains convincing reasons for patronage based on the unique attributes of the product or service.

For instance, Unilever Nigerian Plc is famous for developing products with USP. The Close up tooth paste with fluoride is perhaps the only brand that has on the package approval from the FDI World Dental Federation and also endorsed by the Nigerian Dental Association. This caught the marketing leader Colgate off guard and within a very short time, Close up assumed the leadership position.

3. Significance of Advertising Appeal

According to Wirsing as cited in (Pitman, 1964), people buy products or services for one reason only-benefits. Occasionally, these benefits are derived from the mere act of making a purchase, but more often they are obtained by using the product or service. The advertiser requires the knowledge of the wants and needs of the consumers in his market, particularly with regards to his product, so that he may determine how his products may satisfy these wants and needs. He must know how his products will benefit the consumer. It is the function of the appeal to awaken or arouse the dormant desire in the mind of the individual and to set into action the behaviour mechanisms which will lead to the satisfaction of desire. Its aim will naturally be to convince the consumer that the product being advertised will satisfy the desire more completely than other products. (Sandage and Fryburger, 1975).

Advertising is designed to inform, influence or persuade people. To be effective, an advertisement must first attract attention and a person's interest. It may then provide reasons for buying a product and for believing the advertiser's claims. Advertisers use a variety of techniques to create effective advertisements. They start with a basic appeal which is the main selling point or theme of an advertisement. They then use certain specific techniques which include attention- getting headlines, slogans, testimonials, product characters, comparison of products and repetition. As copywriters, the ultimate objective is to sell products or services to the prospects. Since most consumers have a reason for every purchase they make, a good advert ought to provide customers with reason why they should patronize the product. These reasons are called "copy appeals and they are utilized to exploit basic human needs". There are as many human needs as there are reasons for making purchases. Some of the commonest are the desire for food and drinks, the desire for comfort, for good health and long life, for security, the desire to earn more money, to save more money, protects one's family, the desire for wise labour, the desire for amusement, for social approval, the desire for external life, the desire to be superior, the desire for the approval of the opposite sex (Raab and Reisch, 2005).

4. Classification of Appeals

Psychologists have classified human wants into primary and secondary with each of the human wants desiring a type of motivating force. For example, primary wants include appetizing food, thirst quenching drinks, comfortable surroundings, escape from pain, sex companion, welfare of loved ones, social approval, superiority over others, mastery over obstacles and play. Secondary wants include universality, health, efficiency,

convenience, dependability, economic profit, style, beauty, cleanliness, curiosity, information and education. According to (Sandage and Friburger, 1975), primary wants are generally considered to be more universal, more quickly aroused, and stronger movers to action than Secondary wants. However, appeals to secondary wants may be more appropriate if the advertised product is strictly utilitarian and impersonal, such as vacuum cleaner or lawn mowers. Also, appeal to secondary want often furnishes an excuse or rationalization for buying something that satisfies a concealed primary want. Consequently, Advertising appeals can be classified according to buying motives namely:

4.1 Primary and Selective Appeal

Primary appeals induce people to buy a general class of products e. g Television sets, cars, refrigerators, while Selective appeals determine the particular brand of the general class of products to be bought. The consumer who decides to buy a television set (primary) may prefer a Sony brand (selective)

4.2 Emotional and Rational Appeals

Emotional appeals are directed to the prospective buyer's sense of feeling i.e his emotion. Their purpose is to stimulate desire for a product on the basis of certain psychological or biological wants. Emotional appeals are often not preceded by careful analysis of the pros and cons of the case. They are directed to primary wants- the desire for companionship of the opposite sex, appetizing food, social approval, superiority over others, welfare of loved ones. Rational appeal is directed to the consumer's intellect or reasoning power. Rational appeals involve a reasoning process following the logical consumer behavior model.

4.3 Products and Institutional Appeals

Product appeals refer to appeals buying motives involved inducing action to buy a product whereas the institutional appeal centres on building a good image of an institution i.e urging or inducing people to believe on good image of an institution or project.

4.4 Products and Advertisement Appeals

In contrast to products appeal which attempts to arouse or stimulate desire for a product, an advertisement appeal is used to encourage further readings (listening or viewing) of the advertisement itself. It is necessary sometimes to use an advertisement appeal to increase the possibility that the prospective buyer will expose himself to the product's appeals contained in the advertisement.

4.5 Positive and Negative Appeals

Positive appeals are those appeals that are presented in such a way as to suggest that the reader, in responding to the appeals, will attain something useful, beneficial, or desirable. Negative appeals warn people against an undesirable condition or situation. The objective of using positive appeal is to convince people that if the product is used, it will be beneficial to the prospects while negative appeals are intended to arouse fear in varying degrees, to the extent that in order to avoid the undesirable situation, the prospect will rather purchase something worthwhile.

4.6 Patronage Appeals

Patronage appeals refer to the reasons why people consistently patronize a particular distributive outlet or brand of product. It is easy to see that these motives are not mutually exclusive and so a purchase decision could be based on a more than one motive. The adroit copywriter understands the dominant motive responsible for his prospect's purchase behavior and therefore "wrings" or draws such motives directly or indirectly into the advertising copy. The problem in copy presentation is often not whether or not to provide a motive for behaviour, but rather which particular ones to adopt.

4.7 Sex Appeal

Sex and nudity have always sold well. Sexuality, sexual suggestiveness, over sexuality raises curiosity of the audience and can result in strong feelings about the advertisement. It can also result in the product appearing interesting. However, use of sex in types of advertising appeal can have a boomerang effect if it is not used carefully. It can interfere with the actual message of the advertisement and purpose of the product and can also cause low brand recall. If this is used then, it should be an integral part of the product and should not be seen vulgar (Um, 2008).

5. Selective Determinants of Advertisement Appeal for a Product or Service

In choosing appeal, the buying motives qualities of the product, its services must be understood before an appeal is selected. The advertiser must be interested in determining the type of stimulus to use in presenting his message in order to obtain a desired response. The form of the stimulus used by the advertiser is generally referred to as the advertising appeal. The initial problem of the advertiser in choosing the appeal is the determination of the

buying motives that are most likely to induce purchase of the product. The advertiser must ask himself the following questions.

- What is there in the product that will make people want it?
- What are the benefits that could be derived from using the product?
- How is the product different from other competitors' products?
- Does the product naturally appeal more to certain buying motives than to others?

The answers to the above questions could trigger off a behaviour mechanism that will motivate the prospects to take action and purchase the product. It is also possible that the advertiser get motives of equal strength in trying to advertise or choose an appeal for a product. He could check possibilities. For instance, in selling items such as fruit juice, it is possible to consider such appeals as those of health, taste, economy, beauty, sociability, and so on, all of which may be equally strong. Advertisers rely on many kinds of appeals to persuade people to buy. In general, advertisers may present their message either in a factual way or in an emotional way. Advertisements that use a factual approach describe the demonstrable characteristics of a product. Such advertisements tell what the product is, how it works, or how it is made. Advertisement that use an emotional appeal stress the way in which a product will give personal satisfaction. Such an advertisement might appeal to a person's need for love, security or prestige and suggest that the product will satisfy the need. Advertisers often use sexual themes that appeal to a person's desire to be attractive to the opposite sex. For example, an advertisement for an After-shave lotion might suggest that the product will help a man attract women.

To persuade the largest possible number of people, many advertisements combine factual information with an emotional appeal, or they use several appeals. In some cases, the appeal is aimed specifically at a limited group of people, such as business executives or young married couples (*Encyclopedia International*, 1976). In selecting appeal, the copywriter first, must remember that one of the most important functions he or she can perform for an advertiser is the creation of campaigns from the outside in looking at the product through the eyes of prospects and seeing it as something they may willingly buy rather than as something the advertiser must sell. Secondly, copywriter notes that people are not interested in the advertiser's product per se. They are interested in the rewards the product promises- the value it holds in terms of wants and needs fulfillment.

In many advertising situations, the decision facing the creative specialist is not whether to choose an emotional or rational appeal but rather determining how to combine the two approaches. Notable copywriters, David Ogilvy and Joel Raphaelson as cited by (Belch and Belch, 2007) have stated thus: Few purchases of any kind are made for entirely rational reasons. Even a purely functional product such as laundry detergent may offer what is now called an emotional benefit. For instance, the satisfaction of seeing one's children in bright, clean clothes. Advertising appeals are important message that will affect the consumer's purchasing behavior. Consumers in market come from different personal background. Therefore, they had different perception and needs towards products (Verma, 2009). Consumer decision making is commonly influenced by price, quality and advertisement. In the selective determination of ad appeal, emotional and rational appeals appear to be the most important elements. A study conducted by Verma adapted five types of emotional appeals (thrill, affection, pride, fear and humour) from Moriarty, Hoyer and MacInnis as cited in (Yin, 2011) and four types of rational appeals influence all the three stages among consumers. While thrill and pride under emotional appeals only influence consumer at stage of purchase decision. (Ruiz and Silicia, 2011) explained that advertising appeals can be divided by cognitive and affective processing styles among consumers. They found that informational- emotional advertising appeals could lead consumer to have positive attitude towards brand, higher purchase intention and brand choice.

Fournier and Richins as cited in (Fitzmaurice, 2008) suggested that high materialistic consumers were likely to buy something that is readily visible to signal and affirm their own high status and success than low materialism consumers. Consequently, gender, social status and materialism have significant relationship with purchasing behaviour. The high involvement product increase the brand affect, brand identification, brand trust, attitudinal and behavioural brand loyalty. According to the elaboration likelihood model (ELM) of persuasion by (Petty and Cacioppo, 1992), high involvement product and low involvement products may require a central route process that needs a great deal of thought. They are likely to predominate under conditions that promote high elaboration. In this central route condition, high elaboration product appeals are considered more effective than low elaboration product appeal. In other words, when involvement is high, people are more likely to be motivated to process cognitive effort required to evaluate the true merits of an issue or product. In contrast, when the elaboration likelihood is low, the peripheral route is more effective than the central route. Under low involvement conditions, people are not motivated to evaluate the true merits of an issue or product.

According to (Wright et al, 1981), Whittier stated that the copywriter uses a check list of basic advertising appeals or benefits the product may deliver while it does not include all the wants buyers seek to satisfy. Whittier found this list of ten questions a practical guide in his own creative work.

Will the product make the purchaser feel more important?

Will the product make the purchaser happier?

Will the product make the purchaser more comfortable?

Will the product make the purchaser more prosperous?

Will the product make the work easier for the purchaser?

Will the product give the purchaser greater security?

Will the product make the purchaser more attractive or better –liked?

Will the product give the purchaser some distinction?

Will the product improve, protect, or maintain the purchaser's health?

Will the product appeal to the purchaser as a bargain?

Many products promise more than one benefit and many advertisements offer more than one basic advertising appeal. A new reading lamp may make the buyer more comfortable by providing better light, add some distinction to the home and so to the owner, and at the same time appeal as a bargain because of relative price. However, the copywriter must analyze product selling points and the benefits they support than others in order to provide a central selling idea for the advertisement.

6. Relationship of Appeal to other Elements

To appeal is basic and it is the central idea of the advertisement. The copywriter, the photographer, the artist, and the layout man cannot begin their work on particular advertisement until they know the appeal that is to be used. Their efforts must be directed at the task of effectively communicating the appeal to the reader, viewer or listener. All the elements of the advertisement- headline, copy, illustration and layout must be consistent with the appeal. The copywriter exercises his discretion in deciding what elements to use, and in what manner. The most satisfying method is usually to display the elements in such a way as to achieve a pleasant and well structured copy. For instance, the headline should ideally present a selling idea and is displayed in such a way and position as to attract reader's attention. The copy text is the selling position where the copywriter reasons, argues with, convinces, frightens, amuses or appeals to the reader. Ideally, the text should grow out from the Headline, so that there will be unity of purpose. The illustration which can be a photograph, line illustration or a sketch should complement the other elements so that there will be a concordant context.

7. Conclusion

The best appeal should bring out the uniqueness of the product or services and serve as a strong reason for patronage. When an advert fails to persuade, often it is because the writer failed to give adequate selling points to convince the prospective buyer. Unique selling point definitely plays a very important role in the effectiveness of promotional campaigns and the advertising industry will benefit immensely if this technique is more widely applied. Its wider application will necessitate a more detailed knowledge of the products and services in order to determine the salient and unique product attributes that consumers will use to satisfy their perceived needs .

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Biography

Dr. Godwin Ogheneruemu Iriwieri is a prolific creative writer since 1986, author of a number of books since 1997, a Graphic and Advertising Practitioner in 2000, Art Historian and Art Critic since 2005. He is also a Senior Lecturer and a former Head of Department of Fine & Applied Arts, Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria in 1999 and 2006 respectively. He is also a Fellow of the strategic Institute for Human Resource and Development, Abuja, Nigeria in 2011.

Iriwieri hails from Oria-Abraka, Delta State, Nigeria. Born in June 16, 1956. He attended Government College, Ughelli, the University of Benin, Benin-City and Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria. He obtained a B.Ed Hons degree (Second Class (Hons) Upper Division, in Fine and Applied Arts in 1986, MFA degree in Graphics in 1991 from the University of Benin, Benin-City, Nigeria.

He also obtained a Ph.D degree in Art History in 2005 from the Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria.

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