Instructor

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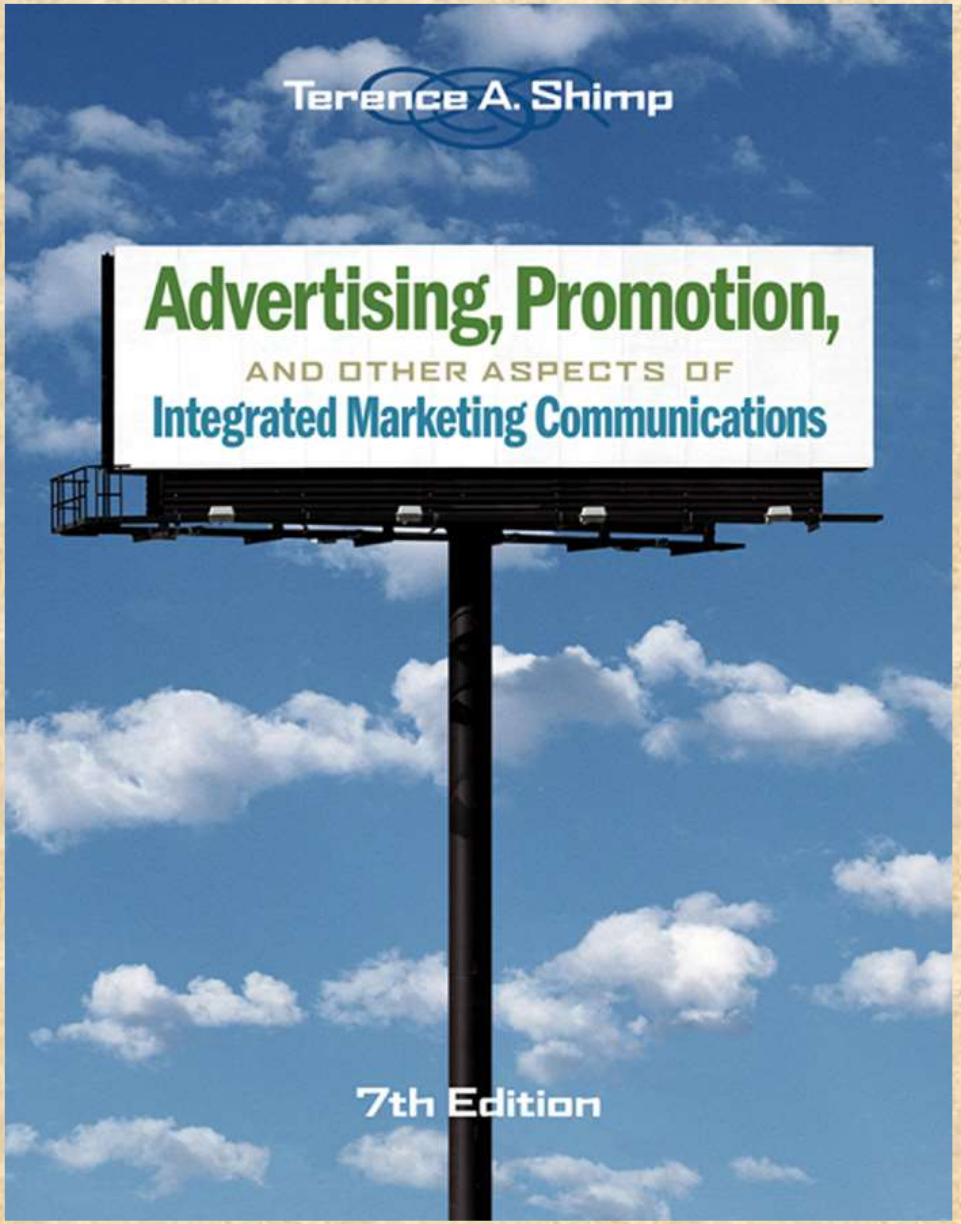

CHAPTER 11

Selecting Message Appeals and Picking Endorsers

Overview

- Advertisers continually face the challenges of dealing with ad clutter and audiences that often are disengaged and uninterested in the advertiser's message.
  - To be effective, advertising must break through the clutter and provide the audience with sufficient motivation to pay attention and engage in higher order processing of ad messages.

- Effective advertising is usually creative, and creative ads tend to be both original and appropriate.
  - They provide a meaningful message and often do so in an entertaining manner.

Overview

- An attempt is made to identify *generalizations* about the creation of effective advertising messages.
  - First, the buyer behavior that advertising is designed to influence is complex, dynamic, and variable across situations.
  - Second, advertisements are themselves highly varied entities that differ in numerous respects.
  - Third, products differ in terms of technological sophistication and ability to involve consumers.

Overview

- It would misleading to suggest that any particular advertising technique will be successful under all circumstances.

- The effectiveness of any message format depends on conditions such as
  - The nature of the competition,
  - The character of the product,
  - The degree of brand equity and market leadership,
  - The advertising environment, and
  - The extent of consumer involvement.

Enhancing Processing Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability

- ✓ There is no single way to influence people to form favorable attitudes toward brands

- ✓ Appropriate influence strategy depends
  - ✓ On *consumer characteristics* (<u>their motivation, opportunity, and ability to process marcom messages</u>) and
    - ❖ Consumers are interested in learning about a product

  - ✓ On *brand strengths*
    - ❖ Company's brand has clear advantages over competitive brands

Enhancing Consumers' Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability to Process Brand Information

I. Enhance Consumers' MOTIVATION to . . .

A. Attend to the message by . . .

- Appealing to hedonic needs (appetite appeals, sex appeals)
- Using novel stimuli (unusual pictures, different ad formats, large number of scenes)
- Using intense or prominent cues (action, loud music, colorful ads, celebrities, large pictures)
- Using motion (complex pictures; edits and cuts)

B. Process brand information by . . .

- Increasing relevance of brand to self (asking rhetorical questions, using fear appeals, using dramatic presentations)
- Increasing curiosity about the brand (opening with suspense or surprise, using humor, presenting little information in the message)

II. Enhance Consumers' OPPORTUNITY to . . .

A. Encode information by . . .

- Repeating brand information
- Repeating key scenes
- Repeating the ad on multiple occasions

B. Reduce processing time by . . .

- Creating Gestalt processing (using pictures and imagery)

III. Enhance Consumers' ABILITY to . . .

A. Access knowledge structures by . . .

- Providing a context (employing verbal framing)

B. Create knowledge structures by . . .

- Facilitating exemplar-based learning (using concretizations, demonstrations, and analogies)

Enhancing Processing Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability

I. Motivation to Attend to Messages

- ✓ There are two forms of attention: voluntary and involuntary.
  1) Voluntary attention is engaged when consumers devote attention to an advertisement or other marcom message that is perceived as *relevant to their current purchase-related goals.*

  - ✓ Messages are voluntarily attended to if they are perceived as pertinent to our needs.

- ✓ Marketing communicators attract voluntary attention by appealing to consumers' informational or hedonic needs.

Enhancing Processing Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability

2) Involuntary attention occurs when attention is captured by the use of attention gaining techniques rather than by the consumer's inherent interest in the topic at hand.

- ✓ Novel stimuli, intense or prominent cues, complex pictures, and, in the case of broadcast ads, edits and are some of the techniques used to attract attention that otherwise would not be given.

Enhancing Processing Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability

1. Appeals to Informational and Hedonic Needs

- ✓ Consumers are most likely to attend to messages that serve their informational needs and those that make them feel good and bring pleasure.

1. Informational needs*:* consumers are attracted to those stimuli that supply relevant facts and figures.
2. Hedonic needs: People are most likely to attend to those messages that have become associated with good times, enjoyment, and things we value in life.

- ✓ Note: the best time to reach consumers with a message is just at the time they are experiencing a need for the product category in which the brand resides.

Enhancing Processing Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability

2. Use of Novel Stimuli

- ✓ Novel messages are *unusual, distinctive,* or *unpredictable.*
  - ✓ Such stimuli tend to produce greater attention than those that are familiar and routine.
- ✓ This can be explained by the behavioral concept of *human adaptation.*
  - ✓ People adapt to the conditions around them: as a stimulus becomes more familiar, people become desensitized to it.
- ✓ Psychologists refer to this as *habituation.*

Enhancing Processing Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability

3. Use of Intense or Prominent Cues

- ✓ Intense and prominent cues (those that are louder, more colorful, bigger, brighter, etc.) increase the probability of attracting attention.
- ✓ This is because it is difficult for consumers to avoid such stimuli, thus leading to involuntary attention.
  - ✓ For example, the use of celebrities in advertisements is a sure way of gaining attention due to their general appeal to select audiences.

- ✓ Advertisements, too, utilize intensity to attract attention.
  - ✓ The advertisement using the intense, vibrant colors of a hummingbird and a hibiscus flower to attract the magazine reader's attention and encourage comprehension of the ad's straightforward message: "One simple press of [Ziploc's Snap 'n Seal lids] and you know it's secure."

Enhancing Processing Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability

Using an Intense Stimulus to Attract Attention

Enhancing Processing Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability

4. Using Motion

- ✓ Advertisers sometimes employ motion to both attract and direct consumer attention to the brand name and to pertinent ad copy.
  - ✓ Falling objects (e.g., a flipping coin), people appearing to be running, and automobiles in motion are some of the techniques used in print ads to attract attention.

- ✓ A couple riding in an open-top convertible automobile is an effective attention getter for the advertised product, Norwegian Cruise Line, and is used in making the point that Norwegian Cruise Line departure points are relatively close—"a short trip to the ship."

Enhancing Processing Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability

Using Motion to Attract Attention

Enhancing Processing Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability

II. Motivation to Process Messages

- ✓ The ad receiver should have increased interest in reading or listening to the ad message to determine what it has to say that might be of relevance.
  - ✓ It has been shown to strengthen the impact of brand attitudes on purchase intentions.

- ✓ Marketing communicators do two things:
  1) Enhance the *relevance* of the brand to the consumer and
  2) Enhance *curiosity* about the brand.

Enhancing Processing Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability

- ✓ Methods for enhancing brand relevance include the use of
  1) Rhetorical questions,
     - ✓ *"The art that aims to improve the facility of speakers or writers who attempt to inform, persuade, or motivate particular audiences in specific situation. It is a faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion" (Aristotle).*
  2) Fear appeals (discussed later), and
  3) Dramatic presentation to increase the significance of the brand to consumers' self-interests.

Enhancing Processing Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability

- ✓ Enhancing curiosity about a brand can be accomplished by
  1) Using *humor,*
  2) Presenting *little information* in the message (and thereby encouraging the consumer to think about the brand), or
  3) Opening a message with *suspense* or *surprise.*

Enhancing Processing Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability

III. Opportunity to Encode Information

- ✓ Marketing messages have no chance of effectiveness unless consumers comprehend information and incorporate it with information related to the product category in their existing memory structure.

- ✓ The communicator's goal is to get consumers to *encode* information and to make it as simple and quick as possible for them to do so.
  - ✓ The secret to facilitating encoding is *repetition:* the marketing communicator should repeat brand information, repeat key scenes, and repeat the advertisement on multiple occasions.

Enhancing Processing Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability

IV. Opportunity to Reduce Processing Time

- ✓ Opportunity to process is further enhanced if the communicator takes extra measures to *reduce the time* required of the consumer to read, listen to, and ultimately discern the meaning of a marcom message.

- ✓ The use of pictures and imagery create a form of total-message processing (or gestalt) whereby the consumer can readily encode the totality of the message rather than having to process information bit by bit.

- ✓ This is in line with the old aphorism that a picture is worth a thousand words.

Enhancing Processing Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability

V. Ability to Access Knowledge Structures

- ✓ A brand-based *knowledge structure* represents the associative links in the consumer's long-term memory between the brand and thoughts, feelings, and beliefs about that brand.
- ✓ People are most able to process new information that relates to something they already know or understand.
- ✓ The marketing communicator's task is to enable consumers either to *access* existing knowledge structures or to *create* new knowledge structures.

Enhancing Processing Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability

- ✓ To facilitate consumer accessing of knowledge structures, marketing communicators need to *provide a context* for the text or pictures.

- ✓ *Verbal framing* is one way of providing a context.
  - ✓ This means that pictures in an ad are placed in the context of, or framed with, appropriate words or phrases so ad receivers can better understand brand information and the key selling point of the marcom message.

Enhancing Processing Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability

V. Ability to Create Knowledge Structures

- ✓ Sometimes marketing communicators need to *create* knowledge structures for information they want consumers to have about their brands.

✓ This is accomplished by facilitating *exemplar-based learning*.

- ✓ An *exemplar* is a specimen or model of a particular concept or idea.
- ✓ By using concretizations, demonstrations, or analogies, the marketing communicator can facilitate learning by appealing to exemplars.

Enhancing Processing Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability

Concretizations

- ✓ Concretizing is used extensively in advertising to facilitate both consumer learning and retrieval of brand information.
- ✓ Concretizing is based on the straightforward idea that it is easier for people to remember and retrieve *tangible* rather than abstract information.
- ✓ Claims about a brand are more concrete (versus abstract) when they are made perceptible, palpable, real, evident, and vivid.
- ✓ Concretizing is accomplished by using concrete words and examples.

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

- ✓ Advertised brands frequently receive endorsements from a variety of popular public figures.
- ✓ It has been estimated that approximately one-sixth of ads worldwide feature celebrities.

I. Celebrity Endorsers

- ✓ Television stars, movie actors, famous athletes, and even dead personalities are widely used to endorse products.
- ✓ Advertisers and their agencies are willing to pay huge salaries to celebrities who are liked and respected by target audiences and who will, it is hoped, favorably influence consumers' attitudes and behavior toward the endorsed brands.
- ✓ Top celebrities receive enormous payments for their endorsement services.

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

II. Typical-Person Endorsers

- ✓ It is much less expensive than celebrities,
- ✓ Typical-person endorsers avoid the potential backlash from using "beautiful people" who may be resented for possessing atypical physical attractiveness or other individual traits.
- ✓ Real people who have personally experienced the benefits of using a particular brand possess a degree of credibility that likely is unsurpassed.

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

- ✓ Advertisements portraying typical-person users often include *multiple people* rather than a single individual.

- ✓ The act of portraying more than one person seems to increase the likelihood an advertisement will generate higher levels of message involvement and correspondingly greater message related thought.

- ✓ Greater elaboration increases the odds that compelling message arguments will favorably influence attitudes.

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

Endorser Attributes: The TEARS Model

- ✓ It is important to formally describe endorser attributes and the role they play in facilitating communications effectiveness.
- ✓ *Credibility* (the process of Internalization) and *attractiveness* (the process of identification) contribute to an endorser's effectiveness.

- ✓ *TEARS* to represent five discrete attributes: *t*rustworthiness and *e*xpertise are two dimensions of credibility, whereas physical *a*ttractiveness, *r*espect, and *s*imilarity (to the target audience) are components of the general concept of attractiveness.

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

T = Trustworthiness	The property of being perceived as believable, dependable—as someone who can be trusted.
E = Expertise	The characteristic of having specific skills, knowledge, or abilities with respect to the endorsed brand.
A = Physical attractiveness	The trait of being regarded as pleasant to look at in terms of a particular group's concept of attractiveness.
R = Respect	The quality of being admired or even esteemed due to one's personal qualities and accomplishments.
S = Similarity (to the target audience)	The extent to which a endorser matches an audience in terms of characteristics pertinent to the endorsement relationship (age, gender, ethnicity, etc.).

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

1) Credibility: The Process of Internalization

- ✓ Credibility refers to the tendency to believe or trust someone.
  - ✓ When an information source, such as an endorser, is perceived as credible, audience attitudes are changed through a psychological process called *internalization.*

- ✓ Internalization occurs when the receiver accepts the endorser's position on an issue as his or her own.
  - ✓ An internalized attitude tends to be maintained even if the source of the message is forgotten or if the source switches to a different position.

- ✓ Two aspects of credibility include:
  1. Trustworthiness
  2. Expertise

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

- **Trustworthiness** refers to the honesty, integrity, and believability of a source.
  - Endorser trustworthiness simply reflects the fact that prospective endorsers of a brand vary in the degree to which audience members have faith in what they have to say.

- An endorser's trustworthiness rests on the audience's perception of his or her endorsement motivations.
  - If consumers believe that an endorser is motivated purely by self-interest, that endorser will be less persuasive than someone regarded as having nothing to gain by endorsing the brand.

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

- A celebrity earns the audience's trust through the life he or she lives professionally (on the screen, on the sports field, in public office, etc.) and personally, as revealed to the general public via the mass media.

- Advertisers capitalize on the value of trustworthiness by selecting endorsers who are widely regarded as being honest, believable, and dependable people.

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

- **Expertise** refers to the knowledge, experience, or skills possessed by an endorser as they relate to the endorsed brand.
  - Athletes are considered to be experts when it comes to the endorsement of sports-related products.
  - Models are similarly perceived as possessing expertise with regard to beauty enhancing products and fashion items.
  - Successful businesspeople are regarded as experts in matters of managerial practices.

- Expertise is a perceived rather than an absolute phenomenon.
  - Whether an endorser is indeed an expert is unimportant; all that matters is how the target audience perceives the endorser.

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

1) Attractiveness: The Process of Identification

- ✓ Attractiveness means more than simply physical attractiveness—although that can be a very important attribute—and includes any number of virtuous characteristics that consumers may perceive in an endorser: intellectual skills, personality properties, lifestyle characteristics, athletic prowess, and so on.

- ✓ When consumers find something in an endorser that they consider attractive, persuasion occurs through identification.
  - ✓ When consumers perceive a celebrity endorser to be attractive, they *identify with* the endorser and are likely to adopt the endorser's attitudes, behaviors, interests, or preferences.

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

- An endorser is regarded as attractive to the extent that he or she is considered physically attractive, respected for reasons other than physical attractiveness, or regarded as similar to the target audience in terms of any characteristic that is pertinent to a particular endorsement relationship.

- A celebrity who possesses the entire "package" of attractiveness attributes would represent awesome endorsement potential.

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

- Physical attractiveness—the *A* component in the TEARS model—is a key consideration in many endorsement relationships.

- Research has supported the intuitive expectation that physically attractive endorsers produce more favorable evaluations of ads and advertised brands than do less attractive communicators.

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

- Respect represents the quality of being admired or even esteemed due to one's personal qualities and accomplishments.
  - Whereas a celebrity's physical attractiveness may be considered the "form" aspect of the overall attractiveness attribute, respect is the "function" or substantive element.
  - Celebrities are respected for their acting ability, athletic prowess, appealing personalities, their stands on important societal issues (the environment, political issues, war and peace, etc.).

- Individuals who are respected also generally are liked, and it is this respect qua likeability factor that can serve to enhance a brand's equity.

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

- Similarity represents the degree to which an endorser matches an audience in terms of characteristics pertinent to the endorsement relationship—age, gender, ethnicity, and so on.
  - People tend to better like individuals who share with them common features or traits.
  - "Birds of a feather flock together."

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

- Matchup between endorser and audience similarity is important when the product or service in question is one where audience members are *heterogeneous* in terms of their taste and attribute preferences (restaurant).

- When preferences among audience members are relatively *homogeneous* (such as auto repair), the matchup between spokesperson and audience similarity is not that important.
  - In this case, it is the spokesperson's *experience* or *expertise* with the product or service that appears to have the greatest influence in shaping the audience's attitudes and subsequent behavior.

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

Endorser Selection Considerations

- ✓ Advertising executives use a variety of factors in selecting celebrity endorsers.
  1) Celebrity and audience matchup,
  2) Celebrity and brand matchup,
  3) Celebrity credibility,
  4) Celebrity attractiveness,
  5) Cost considerations,
  6) A working ease or difficulty factor,
  7) An endorsement saturation factor, and
  8) A likelihood-of-getting-into-trouble factor.

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

I. Celebrity and Audience Matchup

- ✓ An endorser must match up well with the endorsed brand's target market.
- ✓ The first question a brand manager must pose when selecting an endorser is, "Will the target market positively relate to this endorser?"

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

II. Celebrity and Brand Matchup

- ✓ Advertising executives require that the celebrity's behavior, values, appearance, and decorum be compatible with the image desired for the advertised brand.
  - ✓ For example, Elizabeth Arden, CMO of a cosmetics firm, explained the choice of supermodel and actress Catherine Zeta-Jones in these terms: "Catherine has [a] great career and family, she's a mom, and she has a timeless beauty, which is exactly the image we want to project."

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

III. Celebrity Credibility

- ✓ People who are trustworthy and perceived as knowledgeable about the product category are best able to convince others to undertake a particular course of action.

IV. Celebrity Attractiveness

- ✓ Attractiveness is multifaceted and does not include just physical attractiveness.
- ✓ Advertising executives generally regard attractiveness as subordinate in importance to credibility and endorser matchup with the audience and with the brand.

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

V. Cost Considerations

- ✓ It should not dictate the final choice.
- ✓ Everything else held constant, a less costly celebrity will be selected over a more costly alternative.
- ✓ Brand managers must perform a cost-benefit analysis to determine whether a more expensive celebrity can be justified in terms of a proportionately greater return on investment.
- ✓ It is difficult to project the revenue stream that will be obtained from using a particular celebrity endorser.
- ✓ Management must attempt to calculate the alternative returns on investment given multiple options of celebrities.

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

VI. Working Ease or Difficulty Factor

- ✓ Some celebrities are relatively easy to work with, whereas others are simply difficult—stubborn, noncompliant, arrogant, temperamental, inaccessible, or otherwise unmanageable.
- ✓ They are unwilling to flex their schedules, hesitant to participate with a brand outside of celebrity-restricted bounds, or otherwise difficult to work with.

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

VII. Saturation Factor

- ✓ The number of other brands the celebrity is endorsing.
- ✓ If a celebrity is overexposed—that is, endorsing too many products—his or her perceived credibility may suffer.

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

VIII. The Trouble Factor

- ✓ The likelihood that a celebrity will get into trouble after an endorsement relation is established.
  - ✓ Due to the risks of such incidents after the consummation of multimillion-dollar celebrity endorsement contracts, there has been increased scrutiny in selecting celebrity endorsers.
- ✓ No selection procedure is fail-safe
- ✓ An alternative is to use the "endorsements" of celebrities who are no longer living (dead celebrities).

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

Endorser-related factors	Percentage of respondents rating factor as *very* or *extremely* important*
Doesn't use drugs.	66%
Is good role model for kids.	64
Has never been arrested.	54
Has a good family life.	51
Actually uses product in real life.	49
Is/was very successful in his/her sport.	36
Plays/played sport I follow.	30
Plays/played for one of my favorite teams.	30
Is religious.	27
Has been playing or played the sport for a long time.	25
Is someone I would like to be like.	21
Was born in America.	12
Is hottest new star in his/her sport.	14
Is good looking/stylish.	13
Is same gender as me.	8
Came to America from another country.	3

*Response options included "not at all important," "somewhat important," "important," "very important," and "extremely important."

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

- **The Role of Q Scores**
  - Advertisers' selection process is facilitated with *Performer Q Scores* (the *Q* signifies *quotient*) that are commercially available from a New York–based firm called Marketing Evaluations.
- Marketing Evaluations obtains Q Scores for approximately 1,500 public figures by mailing questionnaires to a representative national panel of individuals.
- Panel participants are asked two straightforward questions for each person:
  1) have you heard of this person? (a measure of *familiarity*); and
  2) if so, do you rate him or her poor, fair, good, very good, or one of your favorites? (a measure of *popularity*).

The Role of Endorsers in Advertising

- The calculation of each performer's Q score is accomplished by determining the percentage of panel members who respond that a particular performer is "one of my favorites" and then dividing that number by the percentage who indicate that they have heard of that person.

- The popularity percentage is divided by the familiarity percentage, and the quotient is that person's Q Score.

The Role of Humor in Advertising

- Advertisers turn to humor in the hopes of achieving various communication objectives—gaining attention, guiding consumer comprehension of product claims, influencing attitudes, enhancing recall of advertised claims, and, ultimately, creating customer action.
  - A study based on a sampling of television advertisements from four countries (Germany, Korea, Thailand, and the United States) determined that humorous advertisements in all of these countries generally involve the use of *incongruity resolution*.

- Incongruity exists when the meaning of an ad is not immediately clear.
  - Baffled by the incongruity, the consumer is provoked to understand the ad's meaning and resolve the incongruity.

The Role of Humor in Advertising

- When the meaning is eventually determined—as, for example, when the humor in an ad is detected—a feeling of *surprise* is experienced, and it is this sensation of surprise that generates a humorous response.
  - This humorous response can elicit a favorable attitude toward the advertisement and perhaps toward the advertised brand itself.

The Role of Humor in Advertising

1) Humor is an effective method for *attracting attention* to advertisements.
2) Humor enhances liking of both the *advertisement* and the *advertised brand*.
3) Humor does not necessarily harm comprehension and may in fact increase memory for advertising claims *if the humor is relevant to the advertised brand*.
4) Humor *does not offer an advantage over non-humor* at *increasing persuasion*.
5) Humor does not *enhance source credibility*.
6) The nature of the product affects the appropriateness of using humor.
   - ✓ Humor is used more successfully with established rather than new products.
   - ✓ Humor also is more appropriate for products that are more feeling oriented, or experiential, and those that are not very involving.

The Role of Humor in Advertising

- ✓ Humorous appeals vary in their effectiveness across demographic groups and even among individuals.

- ✓ Humorous ads are more effective than non-humorous ads *only when consumers' evaluations of the advertised brand are already positive*.
  - ✓ When prior evaluations are negative toward the advertised brand, humorous ads have been shown to be less effective than non-humorous ads.

- ✓ Individuals who have a higher *need for humor* (i.e., the tendency to seek out amusement, wit, and nonsense) are more responsive to humorous ads than are those with a lower need on this personality trait.

Appeals to Consumer Fears

- Marketing communicators employ a variety of techniques to enhance consumers' information-processing motivation, opportunity, or ability.
  - The appeal to fear is especially effective as a means of enhancing motivation.

- Advertisers, realizing that people have fears, *rational* as well as *irrational*, attempt to motivate consumers to process information and to take action by appealing to their fears.

- Appeals to fears in advertising identify the *negative consequences* of either:
  1) *Not using the advertised brand* or
  2) *Engaging in unsafe behavior* (such as drinking and driving, smoking, using drugs, eating unhealthy foods, driving without seat belts, and engaging in unprotected sex).

Appeals to Consumer Fears

Fear-Appeal Logic

- ✓ The underlying logic:
  - ✓ Fears will stimulate audience involvement with a message and thereby promote acceptance of the message arguments.

- ✓ *Social disapproval:*
  - ✓ Mouthwashes, deodorants, toothpastes, and other products appeal to fears when emphasizing the social disapproval we may suffer if our breath is not fresh, our underarms are not dry, or our teeth are not cavity free.
- ✓ *Physical danger:*
  - ✓ Smoke detectors, automobile tires, unsafe sex, driving under the influence of alcohol and other drugs, and being uninsured are a sampling of products and themes used by advertisers to induce fear of physical danger or impending problems.

Appeals to Consumer Fears

Appropriate Intensity

- ✓ *How intense* the threat should be.
  - Should the advertiser employ a slight threat merely to get the consumer's attention, or should a heavy threat be used so the consumer cannot possibly miss the point the advertiser wishes to make?
- ✓ There is *no consensus* on what threat intensity is *optimal*.
  - ✓ The more an audience experiences fear from an advertised threat, the more likely it is that they will be persuaded to take the recommended action.

Appeals to Consumer Fears

Appropriate Intensity

- The level of threat depends in large part on *how much relevance* a topic has for an audience—the greater the relevance, the lower the threat intensity that is needed to activate a response.
  - People who are highly involved in a topic can be motivated by a relatively "light" appeal to fear, whereas a more intense level of threat is required to motivate uninvolved people.

Appeals to Consumer Fears

The Related Case of Appeals to Scarcity

- ✓ Advertisers and other persuasion agents appeal to scarcity when emphasizing in their messages that things become more desirable when they are in great demand but short supply.

- ✓ advertisers use this tactic when encouraging people to buy immediately with appeals such as "*Only a few are left*," "*We won't have any more in stock by the end of the day*," and "*They're really selling fast*."

Appeals to Consumer Fears

Psychological Reactance

- The theory of psychological reactance helps explain why scarcity works.
  - People react against any efforts to reduce their freedom or choices.
  - Removed or threatened freedom and choices are perceived as even more desirable than previously.
  - when products are made to seem less available, they become more valuable in the consumer's mind.
  - if the persuader is credible and legitimate, then an appeal may be effective if it activates a response such as "Not many of this product remain, so I'd better buy now and pay whatever it takes to acquire it."

Appeals to Consumer Guilt

- Appeals to guilt attempt to trigger *negative emotions*.
  - People feel guilty when they *break rules*, *violate their own standards* or *beliefs*, or *behave irresponsibly*.
  - Appeals to guilt are powerful because *they motivate emotionally mature individuals to undertake responsible action leading to a reduction in the level of guilt*.
  - Advertisers and other marketing communicators appeal to guilt and attempt to persuade prospective customers by asserting or implying that *feelings of guilt can be relieved by using the promoted product*.

Appeals to Consumer Guilt

An Appeal to Guilt

Appeals to guilt are ineffective if advertisements containing guilt appeals *lack credibility* or advertisers are perceived as having *manipulative intentions*.

The Use of Sex in Advertising

- The use of sex in advertising appeals to something that people generally approach rather than avoid.
- Sex appeals in advertising are used frequently and with *increasing explicitness*.
- Products such as *soft drinks*, *alcoholic beverages*, *cosmetics*, *automobiles*, and many others use sex appeals in hopes of *drawing attention to advertisements and making their sales pitch*.

The Use of Sex in Advertising

What Role Does Sex Play in Advertising?

- ✓ *First*, sexual material in advertising acts to attract and hold attention for a longer period, often by featuring attractive models in provocative poses.
  - ✓ This is called the *stopping-power role* of sex.
- ✓ A *second* potential role is to *enhance recall* of message points.
  - ✓ Sexual content or symbolism will enhance recall only if it is appropriate to the product category and the creative advertising execution.
- ✓ A *third* role is to *evoke emotional responses,* such as feelings of arousal and even lust.
  - ✓ These reactions can increase an ad's persuasive impact, with the opposite occurring if the ad elicits negative feelings such as disgust, embarrassment, or uneasiness.

The Use of Sex in Advertising

The Potential Downside of Sex Appeals in Advertising

- ✓ The use of explicit sexual illustrations in advertisements may *interfere with consumers' processing of message arguments* and reduce message comprehension.
- ✓ Many people are offended by advertisements that *portray women* (and *men*) *as brainless sex objects*.
- ✓ Sex in advertising can be *demeaning to females* (and *males*) and, for this reason, should be used *cautiously*.

The Use of Sex in Advertising

- Three categories of indecency include advertisements that are *sexist* or *sexy*, or that *sexually objectify* their models:
  - *Sexist ads* are those that demean one sex in comparison with the other, particularly through sex-role stereotyping;
  - *sexy ads* use *sexual imagery* or suggestiveness; and
  - *sexual objectification* occurs when ads use women (or men, as in the Diet Coke ad) as decorative or attention getting objects with little or no relevance to the product category.

Subliminal Messages and Symbolic Embeds

- The word *subliminal* refers to the presentation of stimuli at a rate or level that is below the conscious threshold of awareness.
- Stimuli that cannot be perceived by the conscious senses may nonetheless be perceived subconsciously.
- This possibility has generated considerable concern from advertising critics

Subliminal Messages and Symbolic Embeds

A Cautious Challenge

- ✓ There are three distinct forms of subliminal stimulation:
  1) A first form presents *visual stimuli* at a very rapid rate by means of a device called a *tachistoscope* (say, at 1/3,000 second as in Vicary's research).
  2) A second form uses *accelerated speech* in auditory messages.
  3) The third form involves the *embedding of hidden symbols* (such as sexual images or words) in print advertisements.

Subliminal Messages and Symbolic Embeds

Are embedded symbols in advertisements effective?

- ✓ The *first* step in the process requires that the consumer consciously or subconsciously process the embedded symbol.
- ✓ *Second*, as the result of processing the cue, the consumer would have to *develop a greater desire than he had before seeing the ad*.
- ✓ *Third*, because advertising is done *at the brand level* and because *advertisers are interested in selling their brands* and *not just any brand in the product category*, effective symbolic embedding would require that *consumers develop a desire for the specific brand rather than just any brand in the category*.
- ✓ *Finally*, the consumer would need to *transfer the desire for the advertised brand into actual purchase behavior*.

The Functions of Music in Advertising

- ✓ Jingles, background music, popular tunes, and classical arrangements are used to attract attention, convey selling points, set an emotional tone for an advertisement, and influence listeners' moods.
- ✓ Well-known entertainers, non-vocal musical accompaniment, and unknown vocalists are used extensively in promoting nearly everything.

Music Communications Functions

1) *Attracting attention,*
2) Putting consumers in a *positive mood,*
3) Making them *more receptive to message arguments,* and
4) *Communicating meanings* about advertised products

The Role of Comparative Advertising

- The practice in which advertisers *directly* or *indirectly* compare their products against competitive offerings, typically claiming that the promoted item is superior in one or several important purchase considerations, is called *comparative advertising*.

- In some countries (e.g., *Belgium*, *Hong Kong*, and *Korea*) it is illegal to use comparative advertising; and with the exception of the *United States* and *Great Britain*, advertising comparisons are used infrequently in those countries where this form of advertising is legal.

The Role of Comparative Advertising

Is Comparative Advertising More Effective?

1) How do comparative and non-comparative advertisements match up in terms of impact on *brand awareness*, *consumer comprehension* of ad claims, and *credibility*?
2) Do comparative and non-comparative ads differ with regard to *effects on brand preferences*, *buying intentions*, and *purchase behavior*?
3) How do factors such as consumer brand preference and the advertiser's competitive position influence the effectiveness of comparative advertising?
4) Under what specific circumstances should an advertiser use comparative advertising?

The Role of Comparative Advertising

1) Comparative advertising is better at enhancing brand name recall.
2) Comparative advertising promotes better recall of message arguments.
3) Comparative advertising is perceived, however, as somewhat less believable than non-comparative advertising.
4) Comparative advertising is responsible for generating more favorable attitudes toward the sponsoring brand, especially when the brand is a new (versus established) brand.
5) Comparative advertising generates stronger intentions to purchase the sponsored brand.
6) Comparative advertising generates more purchases.

The Role of Comparative Advertising

Considerations Dictating the Use of Comparative Advertising

I. Situational Factors

- ✓ Characteristics of the audience, media, message, company, and product all play important roles in determining whether comparative advertising will be more effective than non-comparative advertising.

II. Distinct Advantages

- ✓ Comparative advertising is particularly effective for promoting *brands that possess distinct advantages* relative to competitive brands.

The Role of Comparative Advertising

III. The Credibility Issue

- ✓ The effectiveness of comparative advertising increases when comparative claims are made to appear *more credible.*

- ✓ There are various ways to accomplish this:
  1) Have an independent research organization support the superiority claims,
  2) Present impressive test results to back up the claims, and
  3) Use a trusted endorser as the spokesperson.

The Role of Comparative Advertising

IV. Assessing Effectiveness

- Because comparative advertisements make claims for an advertised brand relative to another brand and because consumers encode this comparative information in a relative fashion, *measurement techniques* in assessing the effectiveness of comparative advertising are most sensitive when questions are worded in a relative fashion.
- This is, for *maximal sensitivity*, the *question context*, or *wording*, should match the consumer's encoding mind-set.

The Role of Comparative Advertising

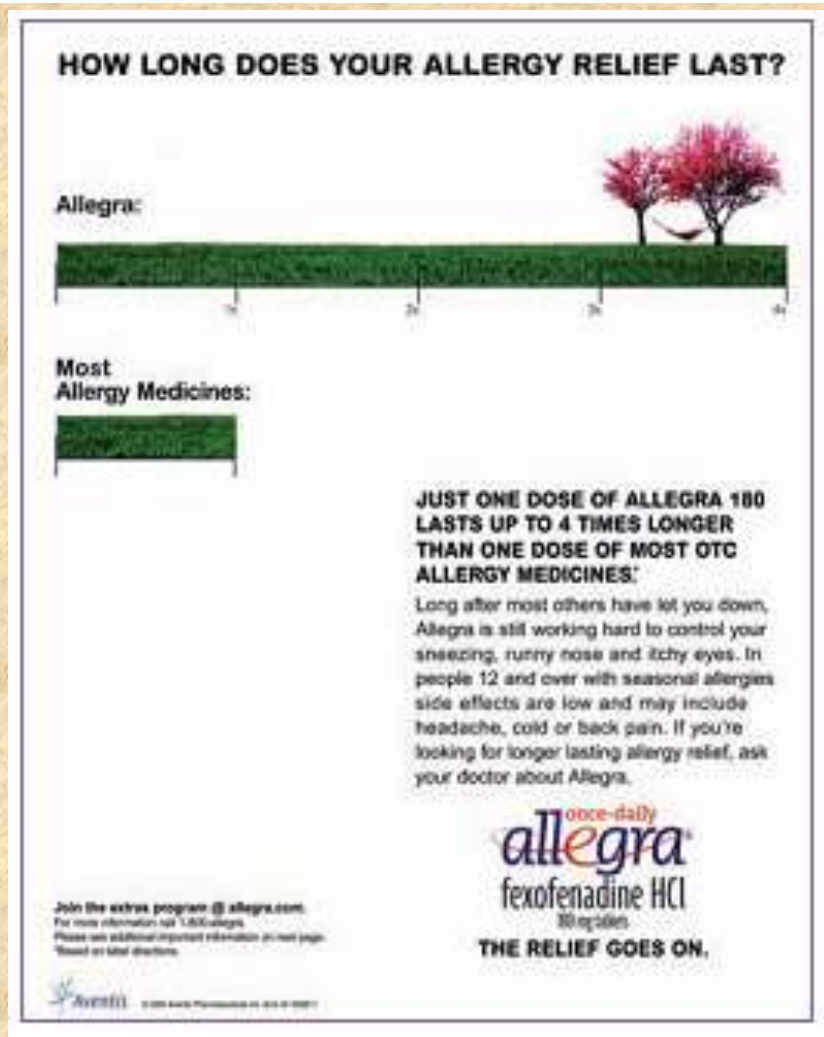

Illustration of an Indirect Comparison Advertisement

The Role of Comparative Advertising

- For example, with reference to the *Allegra advertisement*, there are two alternative questions that could be framed to ascertain whether consumers perceive Allegra as an effective brand in treating seasonal allergies:
  - How likely is it that the effects of Allegra are long lasting? (*nonrelative* framing) or
  - How likely is it that Allegra is longer lasting than most other over-the-counter allergy medicines? (*relative* framing).

- Research has shown that relative framing does a better job of assessing consumers' beliefs after their exposure to comparative advertisements.

The End