Abstract: Indirect persuasion in advertising is a method of selling that consumers do not recognize. Most, if not all companies use this type of advertising in order to gain consumers and customers this way. The research is based on how indirect persuasion affects college students. This research will also address the following questions:

• How affective are the indirect persuasion ads towards college students?
• What does the future holds for this type of advertising?
• Keywords: Indirect, persuasion, advertising, college students

Introduction/Lit Review

To define indirect, it is “deviating from a direct line or course” according to Webster’s Dictionary. In today’s society, advertising is around us all the time; even when we least expect it. Whether it is direct or indirect selling, consumers are somehow persuaded to purchase a service or product from an advertisement. They also invite consumers to construct multilayered meanings that are not actually given in a text (Dick, Chakravarti, and Biehal 1990, Stern 1992). Meaning these ads coaxes consumers into a message that would not usually not catch a person’s attention. Indirect persuasion attempts thus rely on consumer inference, in the sense of going beyond what is explicit stated in an ad (Johar 1995). In a sense it’s as if the ad is hypnotized the receiver to become interested in the product or service. Not to say that all persons receiving the message will purchase what is being advertising, but for a near second to one minute, the ad has grabbed a person’s attention. But overall what does the future really hold for this method of selling? Although thousands if not millions of companies use it, it be probably dominate the marketing industry. Being that it is used so much now, it just your so to speak “hypnotize” the human race. Eventually, advisement might be solicited similar to the way it is in Will Smith’s movie Robot.

Metaphors vs. Pictures

Metaphors represent a type of indirect claim because they make claims in a figurative way rather than a literal way——the advertising message is not stated outright but only implied (Mothersbaugh, Huhmann, and Franke 2002). They keep the ad somewhat complex but rather simple. Instead of outright saying what wants to be said, the consumer has to figure out their own unique understanding of it without being too wordy. It also keeps the consumer a reminder that anytime they hear or see that metaphor that they will automatically think of the ad associated with it. rhetorical figures (pictures) which are artful devices that require resolution and point the way to resolution (McQuarrie and Mick 1996; Tocan and Mumch 2001). They also help the consumer visualize the product but also associate the product with the metaphor.

Consumer Processing

There will always be different ideas and theories on how the human mind translates what is being advertised. Linguists Sperber and Wilson (1986) explain two types inferences they have the indirect claims are processed by consumers. They can be drawn in response to a message: (1) strong implications, and (2) weak implications (Sperber and Wilson 1986). Strong implication is in terms of to be chosen as the most relevant tends to vary little across listeners. Weak implications generated by a consumer familiar with the genre of advertising will typically take the form of favorable claims about the brand, or more exactly, hypotheses about the specific favorable claim the advertiser intended (Tanka 1996). They are also less likely to function as distracting thoughts (cf. Edel and Staelin 1983). Another claim is that consumers who are exposed to related but distinct attribute claims for a product are more likely to rate a general claim as true than consumers who are exposed to one attribute claim repeatedly (Hawkins, Hoch, and Meyers-Levy 2001).

Conceptual Models

Figure 1.1 Second Hand Smoke Kills

Figure 1.2 Coca Cola

Figure 1.3 Abortion

Figures 1.1-1.3

Combing metaphors and pictures in ads, it invites the comparison of two objects by suggesting that the one object is like another, even though they come from different domains. This forces the consumers to create their own unique opinion based upon the alterations, color, size, and what surrounds the message to draw attention to the ad.

References

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