Marketing and Advertising

Inquire: The Influence of Marketing

Overview

What is marketing? What is advertising? How are they different? These are questions that people ask every day. In this lesson we will go over what is marketing, how it differs from advertising, ethical obligations of advertisers, and how to identify the audience you want to target your advertisement. Knowing what is advertising, and how it’s used, will allow you to identify them and the effect they have on you in your everyday life.

Big Question: What is marketing and what influence does marketing have on you in your everyday life?

Watch: Real Life Marketing and Advertising

What do you think of when you hear the word “marketing?” An annoying commercial? A giant billboard? An oversized check showing a big donation a company has made to a nonprofit? If any of those are what came to mind, you know a bit about what makes up marketing!

Think of marketing as an umbrella. Basically, anything a company does to promote their product or service, or anything they do to be successful, is marketing. This includes a lot of pieces! When you see a bumper sticker of a brand name, that bumper sticker went through a whole process before it got on the back of a car. It started as an idea, perhaps from the digital media department of a company. Then, it went through the advertising department to make sure it was “on brand.” Next, it was sent to the printing press to print thousands of stickers. After that, it went onto an online store where customers could see a picture of it, put it in their cart, and get it shipped to them. Every step is a piece of marketing!

You are affected by advertising every day, sometimes in ways you might not even realize. Imagine you are sitting at your desk at work and you hear the familiar crack and hiss of a soda can opening up. You might’ve heard this sound before in an advertisement. In their advertisements, Coke-Cola has attached this sound to their brand. Even though every can of soda makes that sound, you might only think about Coke-Cola because you’ve associated that sound to their brand.

So while you are sitting there at your desk and hear that sound, you may suddenly have a thirst rush over you and want a cold Coke-Cola. That would mean that Coke-Cola has been successful in their advertising. If you walked down the street to your local corner store and bought a Coke-Cola, the company would have been overall successful with their marketing. How else do you think you’ve been affected by advertising? Can you think of a successful advertisement? What about an unsuccessful one?
Read: Marketing and Advertising

Overview
Marketing and advertising are things that people have a brief understanding of, but never really think too much about. In this lesson, we will talk about what is marketing, what the difference is between marketing and advertising, ethical obligations in marketing, and how to identify your advertising audience.

What is Marketing?
There are several words thrown about in business communication that can get quite confusing: marketing, advertising, and public relations. As you might remember, public relations is the professional management of a good public image. Advertising is focused on selling a product, actions that are directly meant to make people spend time or money on the thing being marketed.

Marketing is the umbrella term used to define every effort that a business or organization takes to be successful. This might include flyers for a product, as well as donations to a charity on behalf of a business. When you walk down the sidewalk and see a t-shirt with a brand on it, that is part of marketing. When you tell your friend about a great new car you drive, that is part of marketing.

Is There a Difference Between Marketing and Advertising?
While you may understand that marketing is the umbrella over everything a business or organization does to be successful, it might be a little unclear as to how marketing and advertising are different. Imagine that “marketing” is a car. The entire car has a multitude of pieces that work together to make it drive down a road. Advertising might be the engine, while public relations is the exterior of the car. Public relations looks great, but without an engine, it’s pointless. Likewise, an engine without an exterior is not going to get you to JC Penney. While the pieces are different from one another and have to work individually, they are all necessary.

Ethical Obligations in Marketing
When an organization markets to a population of people, they have ethical guidelines they need to uphold. Such ethical guidelines include: be truthful, be forthcoming, and be responsible.

First, organizations have the obligation to be truthful when marketing to consumers. This is often disregarded when businesses manipulate statistics to make their product seem more successful than it is. Some companies fund drug-testing trials to sway the results of a study in their favor. This is considered dishonest marketing. The general public trusts scientists, but when those scientists are being paid by the company their results might not be valid.

Second, organizations have the obligation to be forthcoming. Forthcoming means you bring up all information (even if it’s bad news), and don’t try and hide it. Have you ever heard the person at the end of a medicine commercial that explains “side effects may include…” Often, such advertisements continue on to list a ton of side effects really fast. Technically, that drug company is required to be forthcoming about those side effects. Not all business are required to be forthcoming with the bad parts of their product or service, but they should if they want to uphold these ethical guidelines.
Third, organizations have the ethical obligation to be responsible. If something goes wrong, it is their responsibility to do everything they can to fix it. If a company accidentally says something offensive in a Tweet, they should apologize and do everything they can to make it right. If an oil company has a giant oil spill in the ocean, they are responsible for the consequences of that mistake. They need to own up to it, and try their best to fix it.

**How to Identify Your Audience for Advertising**

Knowing who to target for advertising is important for effectively advertising a product. If I can’t grow facial hair, I don’t need beard cream. If I don’t need beard cream, I’m not the person you should target with your ads.

There is a series of questions to ask in order to ensure your advertising reaches the proper target. What is the need? How can I meet it? Can I change my approach to meet it better? Once you have asked these questions it is time advertise the product. Knowing what is needed and how you meet that need tells you who to target with your product: people with the problem you can solve. Once you begin advertising it is important to be open to feedback you receive from your audience. Take that feedback into account and be flexible to change. As you continue to grow and advertise more you will receive more feedback that will help you become even better. Don’t be afraid of feedback; rather embrace and use it to become better.

**Reflect Poll: Avoiding the Influence of Marketing**

Is it possible to avoid the influence of marketing?

- Yes
- No

**Expand: How to Spot Marketing**

**Overview**

Mixed marketing makes use of four strategies - the four Ps - to sell a product. Knowing the four P’s is crucial to understanding what marketing is and how it’s used. The four Ps are: product, promotion, price, and place.

**The Four Ps**

- **Product** is the thing that you’re selling. Be it a FitBit, a Shake Weight, a soda, or a car. The product is the central thing that is being marketed. Without a product there is no need for marketing.

- **Promotion** is the specific marketing campaign you engage in to sell a product. A television commercial is a kind of promotion. A cardboard pop-up in a store is a kind of promotion. Promotions are the part of marketing that actually make people interested in your product, if they don’t already know about it. Be it an infomercial that describes a product’s uses and specifications, or a catchy jingle that stays in your head all day, a promotion is the central part of the marketing strategy.

- **Price** is how expensive a product is. If something is too expensive no one will buy it, no matter how good your marketing is. If something is too cheap you will lose money on each product sold and quickly go bankrupt. Finding the sweet spot in the middle is challenging, but crucial. You need to be aware of how
expensive your product is to make, how expensive it is to sell, and how much people might be willing to pay for your product.

**Place** is where a product is sold. Are you selling your suntan lotion in Alaska during the winter? Not a smart idea. Do you sell your tractors in the middle of Kansas? That's a better idea. Keeping in mind who needs your product and where they live can help determine the best place to sell your product. Marketing a product in a place where it can solve a problem is vital to ensuring that moving your product off the shelves is successful.

**Lesson Toolbox**

**Additional Resources and Readings**

This article provides an in-depth look at what marketing is and why it is important to study.
- Link to resource: https://www.internationalstudent.com/study-marketing/what-is-marketing/

This article provides an in-depth look at what a marketing strategy is and how to develop one.
- Link to resource: https://www.tronviggroup.com/marketing-strategy/

This article and video provides an in-depth look at what marketing is, and how it can mean different things to different people.
- Link to resource: https://www.culturepartnership.eu/en/publishing/marketing/marketing

**Lesson Glossary**

- **marketing**: the term used to define the umbrella over every effort that a business or organization takes to be successful.
- **product**: the thing that you’re selling.
- **promotion**: the specific marketing campaign you engage in to sell a product.
- **price**: how expensive the product is.
- **place**: where the product is sold.

**Check Your Knowledge**

1. Marketing and advertising are the same thing.
   a. True
   b. False
2. Identifying a need is the first step in identifying an advertising audience.
   a. True
   b. False
3. You should never listen to feedback from your audience.
   a. True
   b. False

**Answer Key:**
Citations

Lesson Content:
Authored and curated by Alexander Amos, Elizabeth Amos for The TEL Library. CC BY NC SA 4.0