PRIORITIZING OUTDOOR ADVERTISING CHARACTERISTICS IN THE MINDS OF THE AUDIENCES

Reza MOVASSAGHI AMINI

MA in Master of Business Administration, Department of Management, Faculty of Human Sciences, Payam-e Noor University, Tehran, Iran.

Email: mov.amini@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Advertising in today's competitive market is one of the most important factors of the success and growth of organizations. The only way to survive in this market is to use the most effective advertising methods. The out-of-home media advertising creates a steady trend while transferring the message directly in all stages of advertising. Thus, identifying, highlighting, and prioritizing out-of-home factors would be very important, as they leave an impact on the minds of customers. In this research, we aim to prioritize the characteristics and the elements of the most important outdoor advertising tool, that is, billboard, which affects the mind of the audiences. The question asked in this regard is which of the elements of an advertising poster has a higher impact on the actual or potential audience. This impact has a direct relationship with customer purchasing behavior. Accordingly, this researcher aims to identify the outdoor advertising factors based on a questionnaire and interview with experts. The research population included advertising experts and metro passengers in Tehran. The results of the research showed that the elements related to the design and background, the elements related to brand identity, and elements related to content are the main factors affecting the minds of the audience.

Keywords: *Advertising, Outdoor Advertising, Billboard*

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, with growing increase in advertising by various companies, audiences are constantly exposed to many advertising messages and slogans, provided at all times of day and without diversity. Based on many experts, advertising means knowledge and awareness. The aware person chooses consciously, but the issue that how it should be done to be pleasant for audience and leave desired impact on the mind of the audience is the concern of many experts. The fact is that audiences nowadays are tired of watching numerous, repeated, and free of any creativity and innovation advertising. In this regard, the need for interactive and two-way, feedback and measurable communication between the media and audience is being felt strongly. After several surveys, experts have concluded that they should create changes in the structure of media and audience interaction, and their mission is to create the brand identity in mind of the audience in an attractive and exciting way and shift from monologue orientation to dialogue orientation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Mass media

The main function of mass media is that it can be everywhere. Unlike other elements of human life, the media are comprehensive and they can be formed in a non-walled class with billions of audiences. The second function of the mass media is that they are responsible for protecting the environment. The third function of mass media is creating a general correlation between

the elements of community in response to environmental needs, and their fourth function is transferring the social legacy from one generation to another (Lazar, 2006).

Advertising

Advertising involves interrelated methods in the form of a system to mobilize and direct social and individual forces through an influence on their personality, thoughts, beliefs and feelings to achieve a specific goal (Dehghan, 2009). On the other hand, advertising is shaping the thoughts or actions of others, by signs such as words, references, flags, images, historical buildings, music, etc., and by considering the beliefs, values and behaviors, which people consider them controversial (Anand, 1999). Three important and distinguished characteristics of it include unidirectional, being rigid, and non- tolerance the debate and controversy

Outdoor advertising

Outdoor advertising refers to any type of advertisement outside of the customer's final point of purchase. Wall posts, billboards, advertising within metro lines and bus stations, pedestrian bridges and public places like hotels, parks and cities, etc., are appropriate places for outdoor advertising (Wendell, 1997).

Van meurs and Aristoff introduced various media elements of outdoor advertising:

- Use of humor
- The amount of information given about the product
- Advertising a new product
- The number of advertising message words
- Use of human face
- The number of words used in headline of advertisement
- Using brand in message text
- Using brand in the message headline
- Brand awareness
- Brand font size
- Use the image
- Text color
- Number of colors used
- Text message font size
- Billboard background color (Van meurs,2009)

The mentioned elements are the base for researcher in developing and performing the research. For this purpose, the elements were divided into three general factors as follows:

Elements related to content

- ~ Humor
- ~ The amount of information provided
- ~ Advertising new product
- ~ Number of headline words
- ~ Number of text words

Elements related to brand identity

- ~ Using brand in the text

~ Using the brand in the headline

~ Brand awareness

~ Brand font size

~ Using the brand logo

Elements related to design and background

~ Using graphics and image

~ Using human face

~ Number of colors used

~ Background color

~ Fonts color

~ Text font size

Research questions

A. What are the elements related to content that affect the attention of the audience from the experts and audiences point of view?

B. What are the elements related to brand that affect the attention of the audience from the experts and audiences point of view?

C. What are the elements related to design that affect the attention of the audience from the experts and audiences point of view?

D. What is the priority of these elements?

METHODOLOGY

The research population included two parts. The first part is experts in advertising area including 690 private companies advertising experts. The second part is Tehran Metro customers. The metro as one of the most important means of public transport plays an essential role in the transfer of advertising messages to a wide range of people. In this study, 250 samples were selected in the first part and 384 samples were selected in the second part.

After analyzing the questionnaires related to advertising experts, it was found that the questions were divided into 3 main sections and based on the nature of the questions, they were named as follows: a) content b) brand identity c) design and the background.

In the next step, based on the factors identified in the previous questionnaire, customers' questionnaire was designed. Three questions were selected for each factor, which they were included in the customer questionnaire in this way:

MM1 = to what extent humor is affective in reminding the advertising?

MM2 = to what extent the provided information is effective in reminding the advertising?

MM3 = to what extent new product advertising is effective in reminding the advertising?

HH1 = to what extent brand and its logo is effective in reminding advertising?

HH2 = How familiar is the brand to be in reminding the advertiser?

HH3 = to what extent font size of the brand is effective in reminding the advertising?

TT1 = to what extent color of the background and poster text is effective in reminding the advertising?

TT2 = to what extent image is effective in reminding the advertising?

TT3 = to what extent the use of human face is effective in reminding the advertising?

Cronbach's alpha method was used to assess the reliability of the questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha was reported 0.86 for the experts' questionnaire and 0.73 for the customers' questionnaire, indicating high reliability of these questionnaires.

RESULTS

In order to examine the priority of different elements of advertising from the point of view of experts and audiences, one-sample t-test was used and its results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: one-sample t-test

	Test value = 3				95% confidence interval of the difference	
	T	df	Sig. (2 tailed)	Mean difference	lower	upper
Content	11.491	249	0.000	0.77	0.64	0.90
brand	-5.474	249	0.000	-0.39	-0.53	-0.25
design	3.045	249	0.003	0.18	0.06	0.30
Content(audience)	-11.827	383	0.000	-0.6510	-0.7593	-0.5428
brand (audienc)	0.798	383	0.005	0.0443	0.0648	0.1533
design (audience)	11.827	383	0.000	0.6710	0.5595	0.7826

The results of this test showed that in the experts' part, the mean of content and design elements of brand is less than average. In addition, in the audiences' part, the mean of content element is less than the average, and the mean of design and brand elements is more than average.
Given the mean of elements, their priority from the point of view of experts is as follows:
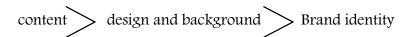1. Elements related to content
2. Elements related to the design and background
3. Elements related to brand identity

Given the above table, the priority of different elements of advertising from the audiences' point of view is as follows:
1. Elements related to the design and background
2. Elements related to identity
3. Elements related to content

CONCLUSION

After examining the questionnaires of two different groups of research, including experts and audiences, significant difference was found between experts and audiences in prioritizing different elements of advertising. Thus, the priority of the general elements of advertising from the point of view of experts is as follows:

content > design and background > Brand identity

The priority of these elements from the point of metro passengers is as follows:

design and background > brand identity > Content

It should be noted that the advertising experts' perception of preferences and priorities of the audience is not close to reality. Thus, experts of advertising should review the preferences of the audiences and take measures for designing the various products according to these preferences and priorities.

Recommendations

After identifying the general outdoor advertising factors, several interview sessions were held with the advertising industry elites and the ways to increase the impact of advertising on the minds of the audience were reviewed. According to research findings and elite strategies, it is recommended:

- To increase the impact of advertising, appropriate content should be considered for them. This can be done in 3 ways:
1) Proper use of humor in advertising
2) Avoid providing too much information about the product
3) Emphasis on product newness
- To increase the impact of the design and background of advertisement, the following actions can be taken.
- To increase the impact of the design of the advertisement, the following actions can be taken.
1) Use of white and blue colors in the background
2) Use the black font for the headline and text message
3) Use of real photos instead of drawing and graphic works
4) Use of human face in the advertising
- To increase the impact of brand in drawing the attention of the audience, the following actions can be taken:
1) Brand awareness
2) Use a thinner font for brand display
3) Use of the brand and its logo on the poster.

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