
RESEARCH

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ADVERTISING AS A CULTURE TRANSMITTER

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ABSTRACT

The advertising is a fundamental instrument in the capitalist current system - present already in the majority of countries-, but also it has turned into a main piece into the creation, transmission and maintenance of the values that sustain the society. In this article we are going to study this question, analyzing the opinions of diverse authors about the topic and establishing a few conclusions that will show us the increasing importance of the advertising in the society.

KEYWORDS: Advertising – culture – values - society – capitalism - freedom.

LA PUBLICIDAD COMO TRANSMISORA DE CULTURA

RESUMEN

La publicidad es un instrumento fundamental en el sistema capitalista actual-presente ya en la mayoría de países-, pero también se ha convertido en una pieza clave en la creación, transmisión y mantenimiento de los valores que sustentan la sociedad. En este artículo vamos a estudiar esta cuestión, analizando las opiniones de diversos autores respecto al tema y estableciendo unas conclusiones que nos mostrarán la creciente importancia de la publicidad en la sociedad actual.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Publicidad - cultura – valores – sociedad – capitalismo - libertad.

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A PUBLICIDADE COMO TRANSMISSORA DE CULTURA

RESUMO

A publicidade é um instrumento fundamental no sistema capitalista atual-presente na maioria dos países -, mas também se há convertido em uma peça chave na criação, transmissão e manutenção dos valores que mantém a sociedade. Neste artigo vamos estudar esta questão, analisando a opiniões de diversos autores sobre o tema e estabelecendo umas conclusões que nos mostraram a crescente importância da publicidade na sociedade atual.

PALAVRAS CHAVE: Publicidade – Cultura – Valores – Sociedade – Capitalismo – Liberdade

1. INTRODUCCION

The culture of a society changes over time and it makes that the social habits of 50 years ago are very different from the current habits today. However, the truth is that today there are far more powerful instruments or vehicles that let you transmit and popularize these new values booming with amazing speed and effectiveness. One of these vehicles, and perhaps one of the most effective, is advertising, which has become a "supersign that takes part of our culture and learning (Martorell, 1990, p. 1)." In fact, as Eguizábal says, "*the advertising business worth billions of Euros, influences our behavior, the way we dress, what we drink, we eat, what we are voting, and on what we think* (2009, p. 9)". But before get deeper into this issue, we outline the concept of culture, defined by the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language as "the set of lifestyles and customs, knowledge and degree of artistic, scientific, industrial, in a time, social group, etc.". In this definition, it is showed that culture refers to social customs and habits in a particular time.

2. DISCUSSION

As mentioned previously, advertising has become one of the main transmitters vehicles of culture - hence the name of this article- in modern societies. As Alfonso Durán says, "the advertising heroes continually offer us patterns of behavior which homogenize our way of being (1992, p. 85)". The situation is, as Eguizábal states, "*no one can imagine our culture, our global culture tailored by the multinationals, without symbols of Nike or Coca-Cola, Gucci or Yves Saint- Laurent* (2009, p. 27)". In any announcement, we can see the idols of the moment, which show the values that mark fashion; all values that people want to follow, as St. Nicholas explains:

Talking of 'crawlers style' or 'cool-hunters', i.e., current figures put at the service of advertising in its various corporate fronts, is a documentary reason to make reports on television and magazines currently, realizing how big

firms employ young people who cull information in the most variegated paths of youth culture on the hunt for new cultural trends to bring to market (2003, p. 36).

Now we wonder, how much advertising can fulfill this important task and the complex and, at the same time, fulfill with a mission of create culture time; that means new customs and social habits. Well, a very good example is in the case of Adidas, as Luis Bassat explains:

With Adidas, a new attitude of young Spaniards to the understanding and practice sport, and to think how and when to use a sports shoe were created. The jogging was introduced in Spain, better known then as footing. We had not a better idea to enhance the practice of a sport that does not require rivals, or ball, or track, or network. With a T-shirt, shorts and slippers there were more than enough. (...) I myself I would not have dared to go out with knee breeches as a year before our campaign, and since that time I acquired this healthy habit (1998, p. 66).

Looking at this case, it may be seen that changing certain custom or enter a new one it is not so complicated. It is only necessary to get a good advertisement. Advertisers know that, but also advertisers. Advertising is therefore "*a cultural industry, which does not produce material products that the public buys, consumes and destroys, but manufactures messages, information and models of behavior* (Costa, 1992, p. 14). This idea about the ability of advertising to generate culture is shared by several authors, as Hellin, adding that "*in their messages, it is possible to make a reading of the social, economic, cultural and political structures, values, which arises and with which it is expressed* (2006, p. 65) ". In fact, as Cardus says:

The main ideologies and revolutionary movements of the XIX and XX centuries are based precisely on the value of work. Now the free time is identified with obtaining happiness and personal fulfillment. This is one of the main cultural transformations of the last third of the XX century (2001, p. 167).

Along with that shift work leisure as the main value, it can be seen as Eguizábal says, as advertising has also become large values of the time of prosperity, welfare, safety and fortune (2009, 19). As Ortega says:

Most of the specific values that are being used in advertising, such as freedom, success, nature, independence, art, friendship, affection, etc., are quite far from the nature of the products covered by the corresponding marks, so that in theory can be used for any type of these (2004, p. 224).

Creating the culture we are talking about, advertising must take into account many factors -related own culture- for meeting the desired objective and therefore your advertisement be a success. One of them is to consider the main values, because

new who want to be establishes can never make a complete break with the present at that time. A second factor to consider is the language "as it increasingly society is spoken in different words and codes that are used by specific target but not another. To reach this, it is necessary to be very updated and aware of what goes and what is said (Vives, 2005, p. 154)". Third, you must choose a certain value that is associated with a brand with a lasting nature, as "brands carry signs of values and attributes, conceptual and cultural burden (San Nicolas, 2003, p. 38)".

Certainly, advertising not only creates and transmits new values, which are part of the "origin of social behavior of the consumer (Gonzalez, 1986, p. 101) - but also it is a reflection of the social changes of the time. Antonio Lopez quoted:

Also in the way to consume, we show the values that guide us. The quantity and quality of the objects that we consume, transmit to our children messages that are easily deciphered. Often, without realizing it, we tell them that to accumulate goods market is a sign of personal success, that objects can compensate absences and disaffected, and that the ability to consume rather prosaic-a faculty of all living beings, is the essence of modern man (2008, p. 267)".

Some people say that advertising and consumerist model involving endangers one of the main values for the human being, as is freedom; in this way Antonio Lopez explains when he says that "advertising, focus groups, institutions and the media are increasingly able to decide for us. In fact, it threatens our freedom. The market treats us like objects that serve to accumulate objects (2008, p. 267)". The author proposes a solution: a personal reflection about our own motivations for consuming (2008, p. 268). As a contrary opinion are the European Association of Advertising Agencies, which says that "advertising develops and enhances the freedom of choice, right regarded as the essence of democracy (Bassat, 1994, p.25)".

3. CONCLUSION

In any case, as Vives says, "advertising will continue watching life with different eyes and will reflect on people. It is like telling through different forms and narrative languages: Have you noticed what is happening in the world? (2005, p. 169). Yes, advertising teaches us what happens in the world, a world in which it also has a lot to do. Advertising is, therefore, witness and main actor in this that is the culture of a society, a witness to the values that are present and at the same time, star of the creation of new social values, which are interested in creating advertisers in any given time. Thus, advertising not only enjoys economic importance, since it is an essential tool for the consumer market - considered fundamental for "our world can continue playing (1986, p. 102)" - but also enjoys great social importance, because of its enormous power to transform cultures.

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