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Advertising – psychological aspects of the influence of marketing tricks

ADVERTISING – PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE INFLUENCE OF MARKETING TRICKS

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Introduction

Promotional activities planned in research institutes are supposed to draw the attention of entrepreneurs, institutions and individuals to the offered services. The implementation of a marketing program usually involves participation in conferences, seminars, workshops. Organising and participating in the above-mentioned events gives the opportunity to share valuable information, remarks and allows updating and preparing new solutions in the scope of research and services that can be offered. Another means of promotion is the Internet website, which can contribute to raising interest in the presented offer. Another important element is also the publication of informative materials like catalogues, leaflets, brochures, publishing advertisements in branch magazines, sending out newsletters to entrepreneurs, appearances on radio and tv concerning latest projects and initiatives started by units, as well as publishing articles in scientific publications. Research units should be taking up actions compliant with the rules of good practice, providing evidence that in their activities they are guided by the rules of balanced development. The continuation of such activities should bring benefits in form of a greater number of orders and contracts. Marketing activity gives the opportunity to reach a broader group of recipients with the services offered by the company. Through advertising it is possible to raise the awareness of the society with regard to the offered services. The cooperation of scientific institutes with entrepreneurs enables establishing new relations, which may result in commercialization of research results and innovative products.

Another interesting source of information are White Papers. This is a combination of a scientific lecture with an advertising brochure. The result is a synthetic text written in a comprehensible language bearing certain promotional traits. It includes, among others the description of products, technologies, business processes. One of the biggest advantages of White Papers is the fact that they are free of charge. White Papers include a whole series of data concerning solutions applied by the particular institution. The main goal of White Papers is raising the credibility of a company/institution among its partners and clients and proving that the company/institution has good knowledge about the applied solutions.¹

¹ A. Błaszczuk, *White Papers*, [in:] M. Błoński, K. Kondracki (ed.), *Zarządzanie na przełomie wieków*, Hays Personnel, Warszawa 2004, p. 90.

The activity of the research and development sector requires precise targeting adapted to the needs of the economy and business. I think that this is a unique sector, as its products and services are not advertised in a traditional way, for example through tv commercials. Marketing activity in research units is to a large extent targeted at raising the awareness of the offered services among institutions. I think that psychological aspects of influence of advertising on the behaviour of consumers work in a similar way in every area of our life.

„If at a party a man tells a woman, that she needs a man and that he is the right one, then this is marketing. However, if he decides to stand on a chair and offers his love services to the gathered people, then this is called advertising. If he tells a woman that he is the best lover and that she should immediately follow him to his place, then this is called sales. However, if she approaches him and tells him that he is said to be the best lover in the world, then what we are dealing here with is public relations. Praise to the one who manages to do that!”²

The above citation fully reflects the multidimensional and complex structure of particular marketing activities. Only arranging them in an appropriate manner allows us to achieve the desired goal.

The goal of this article is to show the complexity of psychological mechanisms constituting the foundations of contemporary methods of exerting influence with information in advertisements. Nowadays creators of advertisements are resorting to ever more sublime methods of manipulating the human mind. Some of us think they are resistant to advertising. Robert Heath in „The Hidden Power of Advertising” shows in an experiment that even when we don’t pay attention to advertising, we are still under its influence. At the end of the 1980’s Langmaid and Gordon (1988) tried to verify the accuracy of the assumption that advertising affects us through rational persuasion, so it cannot exert influence on us, if we don’t consciously register the advertising message. In other words, it cannot influence us on the subconscious level.

In an exceptionally interesting, but never again repeated experiment they applied hypnosis to find out whether people learn more from advertising than they think they do. The experiment involved conducting interviews with volunteers and finding out whether they remembered a few advertising campaigns well. Later they were hypnotized and asked the same questions. It turned out that during the first interview most of the group remembered hardly anything about particular advertisements, but after having been hypnotized they were able to recall almost all details. It is also interesting that at least one surveyed man openly admitted, while hypnotized, that an advertising campaign where an actor played a chilled-out bear had a substantial impact on his choice of beer, because he wanted to „feel as good as the main character of the advertisement”. This man is a good example of a person who remembered an advertisement very well and was under its influence, even though he couldn’t recall it in a state of full consciousness.

² P. Forsyth, *Marketing dla nie wtajemniczonych*, Dom Wydawniczy ABC, Warszawa 1996, p. 199.

Another researcher, Daniel L. Schacter, a professor and the head of the department of psychology at Harvard University (1996) came up with similar findings:

„Perhaps you think that if you don't pay much attention to tv commercials, they don't affect your assessment of products. However, one of recently conducted experiments proved that people generally prefer products shown in advertisements, they caught a glimpse of just a few minutes before, even if they don't remember at all that they saw them“.

In such case it seems that the mechanism of functioning of advertising is not as clear as it is widely believed. Advertising can exert its influence on us even on the level of subconsciousness. Thus, it really has hidden powers, which can influence us even when we don't realize it.³

What really is advertising?

Advertising is not a phenomenon typical of just our times. It appeared long before it was captured in forms, named and defined. Perhaps it wasn't even invented by humans?! In one of his books Ulrich Werner shared one very accurate observation: „a duck laying eggs is calm and quiet. At the same time what does a hen do? It cackles as loud as it can! Thus, the question is: which eggs enjoy greater demand?⁴

The origin of the word „reklama“ (ed. Polish for advertising) can be traced back to Latin, where the verb *reclamo* means „shout at someone, oppose loudly, reverberate“. It seems that such latin words as *divulgo* „spread, announce“ or *propago* „propagate, disseminate“ are closer to the idea behind the word *reclamo*. Also the English term *advertising*, which means drawing attention to a particular product, seems to be semantically more appropriate for the discussed phenomenon.

It is hard to define advertising, as it is a constantly developing, dynamic phenomenon determined by technological factors. It is spreading to even further spheres of human activity, and thus is entering the area of interest of economy, marketing, psychology, cultural studies, sociology as well as law or linguistics. The proportions between information and persuasion in each message, as well as relations between them and other aspects of advertising depend mainly on such factors as: the subject of advertising, its recipient or means for delivering it. Generally, the evolution of contemporary advertising is heading towards reduction of the purely informative content referring to the sphere of reasonable perception in exchange for esthetic and emotional reception.⁵

In the literature we can find many definitions of advertising, as defining advertising unambiguously is not easy. Jacek Kall – a renowned specialist in the area of advertising and brand management thinks that „... *advertising is one of a few tools used by companies for the purpose of informing their clients about their offers and encouraging them to choose their offer (instead of their rivals' offers)*“⁶

3 R. Heath, *Ukryta moc reklamy. Co tak naprawdę wpływa na wybór marki?*, Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne, Gdańsk 2006, p. 20-21.

4 U. Werner, *Reklama*, Thaurus, Warszawa 1992, p. 11.

5 E. Szczęśna, *Poetyka reklamy*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2003, p. 13.

6 J. Kall, *Reklama*, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Ekonomiczne, Warszawa 1994, p. 18.

Katarzyna Skowronek, referring to the book by Georges Elgozy „*Les paradoxes de la publicité: la persuasion licite*” wrote that advertising is sometimes called legal persuasion. According to Elgozy „*disseminated by the press, this art of persuasion can persuade people to believe in anything. Unerasable traces of this persuasion can be found in our brains, it fills our brain cells and makes them sensitive*”⁷

Advertisements attack our senses every day, they interrupt interesting movies, serious programs, billboards spoil beautiful landscape, ads in newspapers draw our attention away from articles thanks to sex-appeal. Marketing specialists respond with the following arguments to this „commercial noise”. First of all, when they create an advertising message, they hope that it will reach the targeted recipients. Second thing is that it is thanks to advertising that we pay less for radio, television and the costs of newspapers and magazines are lower.⁸

Consumer's behaviour

When striving to satisfy his needs, human acts in an independent way, not regulated from the outside. As an individual and a part of a particular group he is striving to achieve this goal and he is looking for means to satisfy these needs. It is assumed that an individual striving to achieve his goals behaves in a rational way, thus, he behaves in an inherently coherent way, which allows him to maximize satisfaction. Some conclusions can be derived from the assumption that people's behaviour is rational. They can be boiled down to the following statements:

- individual makes a decision choosing from many different solutions,
- every time he makes a choice, he has to abandon one or more of the other available solutions,
- when striving to maximize satisfaction (well-being) an individual takes actions bringing more benefits than costs.

Purchasing behaviour of consumers on the market is determined above all by the economy. However, economy cannot be based on just financial data, it also has to take into consideration the psychological aspect of consumers' behaviour determined by various factors.

Not only economic and psychological factors are important. Cultural, social and personal factors also play a major role.

- *Cultural factors*

Cultural factors exert the biggest influence on the behaviour of the consumer and culture (environment) is the basic factor determining the needs and behaviour of buyers. The behaviour of a person raised in a society highly involved in technology, where children are taught from the start to cultivate such traits as activity, practicality, will to achieve success, material comfort, freedom and youth, will be different than

⁷ K. Skowronek, *Reklama. Studium pragmatyngwistyczne*, Polska Akademia Nauk, Instytut Języka Polskiego, Kraków 1993, p. 5.

⁸ P. Kotler, G. Armstrong, J. Saunders, V. Wong, *Marketing. Podręcznik europejski*, Polskie Wydawnictwo Ekonomiczne, Warszawa 2002, p. 42.

in societies dominated by religious values and different than in tribal cultures.

- *Social factors*

Social stratification can be found in all societies. Particular social strata are characterized by certain behaviour, they are tied to certain values. Members of various social groups have different taste with regard to products, brands, food, clothes. Companies are trying to determine reference groups by adapting their products to the needs of the clients' needs. Reference groups have a significant impact on the choice of product, brand. Producers of particular goods and brands usually reach leaders of particular groups and encourage them to cooperate. The more integrated a group, the more effective its actions are.

- *Personal factors*

Another important element are personal factors – age, stage in life, profession, economic situation, lifestyle, personality and self definition of an individual.

Economic situation - income allocated to spending, its level and stability, development in time, savings, assets and opportunities for additional income all have a great impact on the choice and purchases.

Lifestyle – people from the same subculture, social class, with the same profession or even education may still have different lifestyles.

- *Personality and self definition of an individual*

Personality can be explained as a set of specific traits characterizing a particular person. Personality is often defined with such categories as: self-confidence, independence, influence on others, sociability, respect, shyness, insecurity as well as the ability to adapt.⁹

The power of persuasion. Conscious use of words: *no, try, but.*

Persuasion is an art. It is a skill allowing to persuade people to accept our convictions and values by exerting influence on their thoughts and behaviours through using special strategies.

In „Sztuka perswazji...” Andrzej Batko gives a recipe for making the customer desire the product we want to sell. According to the author this is very easy. First of all, it is necessary to make the customer experience particular feelings, for example, the feeling of great desire for something, that „he feels he must have it”. At that moment it is worth trying one of the oldest NLP (neuro-linguistic programming) techniques – anchoring. Anchoring uses the mechanism of conditioning discovered by the Russian physiologist, who lived at the end of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century, Ivan Pavlov. It enables durable association of any emotional state with any stimulus, for example, the sight of a particular product.

⁹ S. Składowski, *Podstawy marketingu, a lecture, Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce, branch in Piotrków Trybunalski, 2005.*

Subconsciousness says: „I want to look better“.

The conscious mind produces justification: „A man in my position should have another jacket“.

If you have already bought a jacket, try to remember how many „logical“ reasons were generated by the conscious mind so that you would buy this jacket.

Not everyone knows how often he is subject to hypnosis. It is hypnosis that makes us more susceptible to suggestions. Hypnotic language of persuasion involves something else. Talking about hypnotic language we mean words and sentences we are unable to resist. States of hypnotic trance are a constant element of our everyday lives, even though most often we don't realize it. We are being hypnotized by advertising texts, goods, books.

How do we communicate with other people? Mainly thanks to using the tool of speech. In this part of the article we will pay attention to three words that we use many times every day. These words have a unique influence on our minds.

The first of these special words is the word „no“. Through conscious application of this single, very short word we are able to control what is happening in the mind of another person by using mechanisms, this person usually knows nothing about. Below, we will look at a few examples, where people stop own actions by giving orders with negations, for example:

Don't forget to send the letters!

Don't lose that!

The above sentences have an effect opposite to the desired result. It would be much more efficient to try to achieve the desired results by expressing orders in a different way:

Remember to send the letters!

Look after that!

In case of these sentences the mind gets a precise instruction. The intention of the person saying such sentence complies with the way it is understood by our brain. The chance that the planned target of communication will be achieved is very high.

Another special word is „try“. Many of us think that this word means strong encouragement to take action. If we utter the message „Do it!“, there is very high likelihood that the order will be carried out. In case when we say: „Try to do it!“ - an attempt to carry out the order will be made, but it doesn't necessarily mean that it will be done. Thus, we could conclude here that the word „try“ in a given order programs failure.

Try to do your homework before eight!

Try not to be late!

We can achieve better results by giving the same order in a different way:

Do your homework before eight!

Come on time!

The last word with special powers is „but“.

You are an intelligent person, but...

You are a beautiful woman, but...

What would we feel if someone told us one of these sentences? The word „but“ cancels and deletes on the subconscious level the part of the sentence preceding it. The information is noticed and accepted on the conscious level and at the same time deleted on the subconscious level. This means that this way room was made for the introduction of another piece of information, which may also be a suggestion. This mechanism can be used in many various contexts. However, it is necessary to remember a very important thing here. Crucial for the efficiency of this linguistic structure is that the content of the two sentences – before and after „but“ - cannot be associated with each other in an apparent way.¹⁰

Thus, we need to remember that when applying linguistic structures and models, we are communicating with the interlocutor's mind on the conscious and subconscious levels. We can take advantage of this knowledge in everyday life, both in private and professional life.

Hidden consumer attitudes

Research concerning hidden attitudes usually focuses on problems typical of social psychology. However, hidden attitudes can be found in many other areas of life, also in the area of consumers' attitudes. For a very long time consumers and their decisions have been investigated from the point of view of the economy. The consumer's choices were justified mainly with marketing factors (characteristics of a product, its price, distribution) and economic factors. It was thought that the most important factor determining the consumer's choices are his financial assets. This conviction assumed that the consumer makes decisions in a rational way. For example, if his financial assets are smaller, he will buy cheaper things, if they are bigger, he will buy comparably more expensive things. This attitude also suggested that objectively better products should be more popular than worse products. However, experience in marketing provides ample evidence that these assumptions may be wrong. Consumers often make choices which are not the best and at the moment of making a decision they use much smaller amount of information than required at a given moment.

Regarding the consumer as an entity which behaves in a reasonable and well-considered way is emphasized by the classic model of the consumer's decision-making process – the EKB model (from the

10 A. Batko, *Sztuka perswazji czyli język wpływu i manipulacji*, Helion, Gliwice 2005, p. 5-40.

names of the authors: Engel-Kollat-Blackwell, 1968; Kotler).

The Engel-Kollat-Blackwell model focuses on the analysis of the course of processing information and making decisions. The level of empirical verification of this model is very low. The best thing about it is that it started research on the course of processing information, analysis of hierarchy of effects and the shaping of criteria of choice as well as consumer's behaviour following the decision-making process.

The E-K-B model assumes that the decision on the choice and purchase of a product is a direct and logical result of the consumer's transition through five stages of the process:

Stage I – creation of consumer's need;

She has a new bag – I want it too.

Stage II – searching and assessment of information concerning the available options;

Lacoste, Dior

Stage III – making a decision, the choice of one and the best option;

Dior

Stage IV – deciding to make a purchase;

Stage V - post-decision assessment (assessment of the product).

This model assumes that the decision made is highly reasonable, which is implied by the information gathered in the second and the third stage. Thanks to the gathered information the product with the most desired qualities is chosen. The E-K-B model is one of the most popular consumer behaviour models in literature on the subject, despite the fact that it cannot be verified empirically.

Another well-known model explaining consumers' attitudes is the multi-aspect model by Fishbein and Ajzen (1974; Ajzen and Fishbein). This model assumes that the attitude towards an object comes from the convictions of a person with regard to traits of an object and the value ascribed to these traits. The methodological consequence of this model is the assumption that we can ask consumer a question concerning his assessment of characteristics of a given product and later the value of these attributes. As a result we will be able to calculate the global attitude towards the object.¹¹

According to the „Theory of planned behaviour“ by Fishbein and Ajzen, three basic variables influence the intention of a person to behave in a particular manner¹²:

¹¹ D. Maison, *Utajone postawy konsumenckie. Analiza możliwości wykorzystania metody IAT*, Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne, Sopot 2004, p. 36-38.

¹² I. Ajzen, D. Albarracín, R. Hornik, *Prediction and change of health behavior: applying the reasoned action approach*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., USA, 2007, p. 71.

AB – attitude towards the behaviour, SN - subjective norm of behaviour in relation to performing or not performing, PC – perception of control of behaviour. The influence of these variables on the intention is presented in form of a linear model:

$$BI = \alpha + w_1 AB + w_2 SN + w_3 PC + \varepsilon$$

where:

α – scaling constant,

w_1, w_2, w_3 – w_1, w_2, w_3 – weights of relative influence of AB, SN and PC on BI,

ε – error (small, random deviations, e.g. noise).

The theory of planned action by Ick Ajzen and Martin Fishbein is based on the assumption that people behave in a rational way and when they decide to take or not to take some action, they consider the possible results of the action. This can be shown in the following example:

Attitude: *Fatty food isn't harmful.*

Norm: *There's nothing wrong about eating a hamburger.*

Intention: *I will have a hamburger as soon as an opportunity comes along.*

Favourable circumstances: *I'm walking past a fast-food restaurant.*

Memory

Research concerning memory usually takes place in laboratories. People taking part in experiments are usually presented with artificial situations, which are devoid of natural context and allow us to discover the rules governing cognitive functioning of memory. Many of the patterns applied in laboratories, can be observed in human's natural habitat. An example of natural environment is the market, which consists of such marketing factors as advertisement, price, product, shop. The above-mentioned stimuli reach the consumer in great numbers. They come from the street, from television, radio, Internet, newspapers, leaflets, billboards. For an average consumer they may seem to be chaotic and random, but in fact they are meticulously planned elements of marketing strategies.¹³ The process of building strategy is based on the strategic analysis of the environment and the strategic potential of a company and on strategic planning. Formulating a strategy means big intellectual effort for people participating in this activity, above all, for the managers. Building strategy is a creative task, which requires knowledge, talent, abilities and predispositions.¹⁴ One of the most important goals of such strategy¹⁴ is planning an advertising campaign

13 A. Falkowski, *Praktyczna psychologia poznawcza: marketing i reklama*, Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne, Gdańsk 2002, p. 101-102.

14 L. Nieżurawski, G. Owczarczyk-Szpakowska, *Zarządzanie strategiczne przedsiębiorstwem*, University of Humanities and Economics in Wrocław, Wrocław 2005, p. 38.

so that information directed at the client stays in his mind together with positive associations concerning the brand of the advertised product.

In his everyday life the consumer sees many advertisements referring to products of a particular kind, but under different brands. Most often it takes some time before the consumer makes a decision on the purchase of a product of a particular brand. Thus, it could be said that such situation corresponds to retroactive interference, in which you lose access to previously memorized advertisements as a result of perceiving and remembering information about brands and products. Statistically, consumers perceive from three hundred to six hundred advertisements a day and over a half of them cannot recall any particular advertisement from the last 30 days (Burke, Srull, 1988).

Thus, managers dealing with promotion of goods often assume that simply by broadcasting a commercial more often they will make the consumer remember information about a given brand better. Is this kind of strategy efficient? Without any doubt it is very expensive. Research conducted by R. Burke and T. Srull in 1988 has shown that repeating an advertisement makes recipients remember it better only in case when there are no other advertisements, that is, when there are no interfering stimuli. As commercials are usually presented in blocks consisting of many advertisements, such situation is completely detached from reality. Repeating an advertisement in such a block doesn't make it easier to remember, which is shown by empirical research conducted by Burke and Srull.

Is there any other strategy that could be applied in order to improve the efficiency of memorizing advertisements? Let's make a hypothesis, made by Tulvig and Psotka in course of their research. Inability to remember already seen advertisement is not really the effect of losing trace of the memory, but it is associated with the fact that it is hard to extract this trace. This process that can be called retroactive restraining, which is the result of perceiving many other bits of advertising information. In such case a method used to extract a „lost“ advertisement may be using hints for recalling it. Applying such strategy may bring multiple benefits to companies. Not the growth of frequency of broadcasting a commercial but rather a strategic manipulation of hints for recalling it may be the cause of growth of sales.

Regular research on hints for recalling advertisements, as well as on their influence on the assessment of the brand of the advertised product was conducted by K. Keller. The author's idea boiled down to using marketing strategy, which involved putting advertising elements (hints) in form of words or pictures on the packaging of a product. Thus, it could be presumed that if a consumer has ever memorized an advertisement of a product and now he can see some elements of this advertisement on the packaging, through dispersion of stimulation in a network of connections he may recall to his operating memory other elements of the advertisement including the name of the brand in form of an image or a word. In case when these recalled elements are associated with positive emotions during perception of the advertisement, the consumer will be ready to buy the given product. Each element of the remembered advertisement can be interpreted as cognitive units connected with each other through a network of associations in long-term memory. J. Hutchinson and D. Moore (1984) mention such elements of the advertisement as:

1. information about the brand presenting its advantages,

2. information about the advertisement defining its form, style, esthetic,
3. brand identification,
4. product category,
5. assessment (cognitive and emotional reaction stemming from the general impression evoked by the advertisement as well as from the perception of its contents.

The above-mentioned cognitive units can be remembered and connected with each other as a result of perception of advertisement. They can also be connected with other cognitive units previously imprinted in memory, for example, with the previously perceived advertisements. The structure of organization of these connections, in which their strength plays a major role, determines access to these units. The consumer's decisions on buying products, viewed from the perspective of a network model, depend on the process taking place during the activation of a structure of connections between cognitive units corresponding to various elements of advertisements. What can facilitate this process is the application of hints for recalling advertisements. According to the rule of specificity of coding, these hints constitute contrast, which contributes to activation of other elements of advertisement and improves their accessibility in the operating memory.¹⁵

The language of advertising message

An effective advertising message should contain intriguingly presented promises and make it credible. Both making the message intriguing and making it credible can be achieved through sound or image – but most often it is achieved through language and words. In the structure of an advertising campaign advertising reflection can be positioned in various ways. The sender creates an advertising message for the recipient – from this point of view it is important to determine at what moment the language of the message affects the recipient. For the recipient it is not important whether the slogan was created as the first or the last element in a campaign. For him it is important that at first he has contact with the final shape of an advertising message – it is obvious that the importance of the first stimulus is great.

„You never get the second chance to make the first impression” - Andrzej Sapkowski

Formulas defining the stages of functioning of an advertising message have been evolving along with the development of advertising.¹⁶

Specialists who create advertising take advantage of various formulas, patterns, models etc. The following are some of the most common formulas:

SLB (*stay, look, buy*);

AIDA (*attention, interest, desire, action*);

AIDCAS (*attention, interest, desire, conviction, action, satisfaction*);

¹⁵ A. Falkowski, *Praktyczna psychologia...*, op. cit., p. 102-105.

¹⁶ J. Bralczyk, *Język na sprzedaż czyli o tym, jak język służy reklamie i jak reklama używa języka*, Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne, Gdańsk 2004, p. 11.

DIPADA (*definition, identification, proof, acceptance, desire, action*);

DAGMAR (*defining advertising goals for measuring advertising results*).¹⁷

Let's imagine the following sequence of stages of operation of an advertising message:

An advertising message has to be noticed first (here the aspect of language is not that important),



The message should draw attention (language here is very important – whether we react or not, depends on the linguistic form),



Advertisement is supposed to arouse interest (there is no doubt that attractive linguistic form may help in that),



Evoking the need to have a product (this is the place for the persuasive function of language – it depends on the linguistic form, whether persuasion will evoke such need),



The message is supposed to persuade to take action – action is the desired result (here external factors such as: availability of the product, the client's disposition).

Additionally, when linguistic means are used in a conscious way, two things should be taken into consideration. Advertising message hardly ever starts working right away. Advertising texts, even more than any other kind of text, are created for reproduction. Iteration is one of the most important elements from the very start. When we first hear a perfect message, we should get the information, next we should make the bit of information more credible and as a result remind the recipient of what he already knows and believes in, in case of further exposures. Thus, it works in a constant way. However, it is different at every stage.

Advertising theorists enumerate many desired traits of an advertising message, which are usually also the desired linguistic traits of this text.

Thus, the message is supposed to draw attention and be easy to remember. It should be bold, original, but also natural and rational. Such traits as comprehensibility, simplicity and brevity also play a major role. The message should inform about the traits of a product and at the same time remain honest, credible. It should also express confidence in convictions, respect for the recipient and evoke liking. At the same time it cannot irritate the recipients with impudence and aggression. As a result it is supposed to comply with moral and social norms of behaviour, public opinion and law.¹⁸

The rules of exerting influence on people

Robert B. Cialdini, a renowned social psychology professor of Arizona State University spent about

17 J. Altkorn, *Podstawy marketingu*, Instytut Marketingu, Kraków 1995, p. 313.

18 J. Bralczyk, *Język na sprzedaż...*, op. cit., p. 12-13.

a dozen years on scientific research concerning people's behaviour – in particular their susceptibility to persuasion and their decision-making. He has proven that even though the techniques of exerting influence on others may take thousands of various shapes, most can be classified into six categories. Each of them is based on one fundamental psychological rule, which steers the process of human behaviour. It is this rule that grants the power of persuasion to various techniques. Professor Cialdini has isolated six standard rules known to every marketing and sales specialist.

These are the rules of:

- mutuality,
- involvement and consequence,
- social evidence of rightness,
- liking,
- authority,
- unavailability.

The rule of mutuality

The rule of mutuality is one of the oldest rules existing among people. It is so wide-spread that Alvin Gouldner (1960) and other sociologists came to a conclusion that the duty of mutuality is known to all human societies. Mutuality constitutes an exceptionally effective tool for exerting influence on others. It is due to the enormous power of this rule, that often the feeling of commitment determines whether we satisfy others' requests, which we would certainly reject without that feeling.

An example of application of the rule of mutuality may be a free sample – a marketing technique, which has already been used for a very long time and has been very successful. Very often the seller or producer gives a potential buyer a small portion of his product, so that he can try it out. The allure of a free sample is that as the client doesn't have to pay for it, it may be regarded as a gift. Receiving a gift obliges the recipient to do something in return – purchase the tested product. This is the only way to reciprocate the seller's gift.

The rule of mutuality is very strong, which allows it to overcome the influence of other factors affecting our decisions. Even favours we don't ask for evoke commitment to mutuality. This in turn limits our ability to choose people we owe something to and provides them, not us, with real choice in this respect. This rule may stimulate unfair exchange of goods – striving to quickly get rid of the unpleasant feeling of commitment a person may agree to make a much bigger favour, than he himself received.

Dozens of companies apply the rule of mutuality in their marketing strategies. The above-mentioned free samples, free advice, or the visit of an expert create commitment to a particular company.¹⁹

¹⁹ B. R. Cialdini, *Wywieranie wpływu na ludzi. Teoria i praktyka*, Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne, Gdańsk 2011, p. 48.

The rule of involvement and consequence

Psychologists have long known the power of people's desire to achieve harmony between words, convictions, attitudes and actions. The desire to achieve harmony comes from three sources:

- Consistency is highly valued by the society;
- Consistent behaviour is usually beneficial for those who manage to achieve it;
- Consistent attachment to a defined pattern of behaviour facilitates dealing with complications in contemporary life.²⁰

One of the ways to improve the chance for a positive response in reaction to a request or offer is convincing somebody to take action, which is a small step towards the position (evoking involvement) coherent with the character of the request. Cialdini illustrated this phenomenon with an example of a restaurant which has a problem with reservations. The problem was that people calling and booking tables wouldn't come to the restaurant. The situation had a negative impact on everybody. The restaurant – because it had to reject other guests due to lack of free tables, the owner of the restaurant, because he bought food for the kitchen, but the restaurant was empty. It was really a very serious problem. At first the restaurant tried to introduce a new strategy, however, it didn't bring the desired results. When a client phoned the restaurant, he had to provide his credit card number. If he didn't show up at a particular time, he was charged 15 to 20 dollars. The protest of clients made most restaurants abandon such „practices“. A restaurant owner from Chicago, Gordon Sinclair found a better solution to the problem with reservations. He asked his employee answering phonecalls to slightly modify her standard statement confirming reservation. Earlier the woman used to say:

„Thank you for calling Gordon's Restaurant. Please contact us in case you need to cancel or change your booking.

It was changed to:

„Thank you for calling Gordon's Restaurant. Could you please call us, if you need to change or cancel your reservation?“

On hearing the words „Could you please call us in case you need to cancel or change your reservation?“ everyone would react in a similar way, saying something like: Sure. No problem. Of course. This way the person booking a table makes an active, public, fully conscious commitment. From the time this change was introduced, the number of empty tables dropped by 300%.

Only three words, which are of great importance, were changed in the statement. We want to be consistent and react in a way that confirms our position.

Public involvement is also important, as people usually behave consistently, when other people see their actions.²¹

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 130-131.

²¹ B. R. Cialdini, *Zasady wywierania wpływu na ludzi. Szkoła Cialdiniego*, Helion, Gliwice 2011, p. 72-74.

The rule of social evidence of rightness

According to this rule what other people believe in or how they behave often constitutes the foundation of the decision we make. The rule of social evidence gains more power, when we observe the behaviour of people similar to us (Festinger, 1954; Platow et al., 2005). The way other people behave gives us hints with regard to the correctness of our behaviour. Research has shown that we are more likely to follow the actions of people similar to us, than the actions of people different from us (Abrams, Wetherell, Cochrane, Hogg i Turner, 1990; Burn, 1991; Schultz, 1999). For this reason in advertisements of various products we can often find positive opinions about these products coming from normal people. Most people are „normal“ people and they constitute the majority of potential buyers of almost every product. Marketing specialists know very well about that and for this reason most products are advertised by completely normal, average people.

Social evidence of rightness has the strongest impact in two cases:

- When people feel uncertain, they look for hints in other people's behaviour.
- The effect of social evidence is especially strong when it comes from people similar to us.

In order to protect ourselves against the influence of others, we need to watch out for falsified evidence of other people's behaviour. It is also necessary to realize that other people's behaviour cannot influence our decision-making.²²

The rule of liking

We usually agree to satisfy the requests of people we know and like. Those dealing with social influence in practice realize the functioning of this rule and for this reason they do their best to make us like them. One of the traits of a person exerting influence is his physical appearance – research shows that this means more than is commonly believed. Physical beauty of a person can be transferred to his psychological traits such as intelligence, kindness or talent. Attractive people are able to exert stronger influence on our behaviour and opinions. The second factor is similarity – we like people similar to us and we are more eager to tell them „yes“. Our liking for other people can be boosted by their compliments targeted at us. Mutual liking can also be boosted by high frequency of contacts with a person or an item.

Another factor boosting liking for a person or an item is associating them with something we like. For this reason not only advertising specialists, but also politicians, producers try to associate themselves or their products with something we like.

Potentially, an efficient strategy of reducing our obedience to someone we like is learning to detect an unexpected rise in liking for this person. At the moment when we detect this surge, we should stop contact with the person for a while and separate in our minds our feelings for the person from the feelings for this person's offer. The right decision can be made only on the basis of our feelings about the offer.²³

22 B. R. Cialdini, *Wydzieranie wpływu na ludzi...*, op. cit., p. 157, 182.

23 *Ibidem*, p. 223.

The rule of authority

Milgram's research on obedience has shown strong inclination towards making concessions to authorities. In the experiment many mentally healthy, normal people administered dangerous and painful electric shocks against their will to another person. They did it, because they were ordered to do it by a person who played the role of an authority. In reality, electric shocks were simulated. The goal of the experiment was to investigate the tendency to obey rightful authority. Moreover, the research has shown that obedience to real authority is adaptational in character, because authorities are usually characterized by knowledge, wisdom and power. Moreover, obedience to authority may appear automatically during the decision-making process. Automatic obedience to authorities may mean submitting only to such symbols as titles, clothes or cars, not to the essence of the authority. People who are not authorities, but appropriate one of the above mentioned symbols, may have strong influence on others.

Protecting ourselves against such undesired influence of an authority involves answering two questions:

- Is this authority a real expert?
- How much can we trust this person in this situation?

The first question leads us to the essence of authority, however, it draws our attention away from its symbols. The second question draws our attention to probable measures a person trying to be regarded as an authority may take in order to make us trust him.²⁴

The rule of unavailability

The rule of unavailability refers to the fact that people generally desire things that are unavailable or that are in short supply. This rule functions in line with the statement that „forbidden fruit tastes better“. This is a method commonly used in marketing in order to encourage clients to purchase a product: „this product is unique“ or „this is the last pair“. There are two reasons for the existence of this rule. First reason is the availability of a thing. Usually we think that things that are harder to get are more valuable and that their unavailability may serve as an automatic indicator of their value. Second thing is that the unavailability of a certain option becomes a factor causing the loss of freedom of choice and action, which raises our opposition. This opposition becomes a symptom of increased desire to have the unavailable thing.

The results of the conducted research show that limiting access to some product makes it more desirable. The rule of unavailability is the strongest in a situation where unavailability appeared recently and when we have to compete with others to get the rare product.

It is hard to oppose the pressure exerted by unavailability of a certain product with pure reasoning. Our defense may involve taking advantage of the influx of emotions evoked by unavailability. If we are under influence of emotions, we should try to cool down and assess whether we really need this hard-to-get product.

The above-mentioned examples show simple and efficient ways of learning to exert influence on others. Exerting influence on others consciously is very often used by marketing specialists to create advertising messages.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 248-249.

Emotions in advertising

Emotions (*emovere* in Latin) – strong feelings (conscious or subconscious) are a subjective psychological condition accompanying everyday events. Good examples of emotions are: anger, worry, anxiety, joy, liking, astonishment. Emotional reactions accompany the recollection of experiences, processes of perceiving the environment as well as the consumer choices.

Thus, emotions appear in all spheres of behaviour of the consumer. Due to the fact that they play a major role, they are used in advertising. Perceiving, remembering, learning advertisements depends not only on psychological laws governing these processes, but also on the feelings they evoke.

In the context of creation of advertising not only the expression itself but also the way emotions are expressed is important. If the advertisement includes pleasant elements and elements encouraging to come in contact with the thing evoking this feeling, we can say that this advertisement evokes a feeling of joy in us. However, if it includes elements, which evoke a vision of harm and unwillingness to purchase a particular thing, then we can talk about fear.

Theorists of emotions make various assumptions with regard to the number of emotions, depending on the data they take into consideration. The best-known classification of emotions is the one introduced by C. Izard (1977). This classification distinguishes between ten basic emotions: joy, interest, astonishment, anger, worry, repulsion, disdain, fear and guilt.

Evoking of emotions can take place only when we deal with appropriate events, eg. with the currently watched advertisement, but also at the time of recalling an advertisement watched in the past. Thus, both the processes of perception and memorizing take place in the creation of emotions.

Research on consumer behaviour conducted by Deborah MacInnis and Roberta Westbrook (1987) prove that when people watch advertisements, they really experience a whole spectrum of emotions. In their research MacInnis and Westbrook analyzed what characteristic elements of advertising lead to particular emotions of consumers. The research has shown that advertisement can for example evoke anger, when people who behave abusively towards each other, disturb or behave in a dishonest way in various situations, are shown.

Positive emotions and music

Advertisements also refer to the consumers' emotional sphere highlighting mainly positive emotions associated with the consumption of goods and services, such as sensuality, joy, pleasure and good taste.

An example of that is the advertisement of a coconut treat with a whole almond inside – Raffaello:

„More than a thousand words“

another example is the advertisement of Milka chocolate:

„The most delicate pleasure“

or that of Wedel chocolate:

„Produced for pleasure“

Joy is an emotion very often used in advertising. Factors, which are usually associated with joy are for example the words: „pleasure“, „delight“ or simply a smile.

In the process of creation of advertising the pattern of childhood is often used, as it evokes the instinct of looking after a defenseless child. This pattern is usually used in advertisements of goods for children, like baby food or toys, for example, the advertisement of Bebiko:

„Healthy children are happy children“

Young animals, which similarly as children evoke positive emotions, also have the characteristics of the pattern of childhood. A good example of that is the advertisement of Whiskas cat food:

„Your cat would be buying Whiskas“

A popular stimulus applied in advertisements is sexual attraction. Eroticism is among the strongest elements drawing the attention of recipients of advertisements. Most often charming looks, satisfaction and pleasure are associated with the sexual motive.²⁵ Using the elements of romance, love, flirtation is very common in advertisements of cars, cosmetics as well confectionery. A good example here is the advertisement of a chocolate wafer Kinder Bueno (Let it seduce you). The creator of the advertisement didn't use a single word, just music.

Music is a factor which creates atmosphere. It is a very important peripheral hint, because it appears as background in almost all advertisements. Music has an impact on raising the level of consumers' excitation and their emotions. According to Deborah J. Macinnis and C.W. Parka (1991) from the University of Arizona, in persuasive messages two effects associated with the influence of music are applied. The first effect of applying music in advertising is associated with stimulating strong emotions referring to experiences from the past. Thanks to this the attention of consumers is raised. According to Marian C., Burke and Julia A. Edell (1989) the influence of music on attitudes is associated with evoking emotions, which take part in the shaping of attitude towards brands. Second thing is that the effect of using music in advertising is associated with adapting music to the central hints of the message, that is, to textual and visual elements of the advertisement. According to the assumption of Gestalt theory, music which doesn't differ from other elements of the advertisement is regarded as a part of the whole and not as a separate element. Music matched this way doesn't compete with other elements of the advertisement and contributes to creation of the specific meaning included in the advertisement. This way music, equally

25 A. Falkowski, T. Tyszka, *Psychologia zachowań konsumenckich*, Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne, Gdańsk 2006, p. 70-71.

as other elements, can direct attention and perception of stimuli. An example of matching music with contextual information is the advertisement of „Polsilver” razors („kiedy byłem małym chłopcem, och, jak bardzo chciałem golić się” - ed. a verse from a well known song, which translates into „when I was a young boy, I wanted so much to shave myself”).²⁶

A popular kind of emotions appearing in advertisements is joy. In advertisements humour is supposed to evoke this positive emotion. Humour in advertisement has been subject to intensive research. Opinions with regard to the efficiency of jokes and humour in advertising are mixed. Without any doubt humour draws the consumer’s attention to the advertisement, moreover as results of many researches show it boosts the credibility of information shown in the advertisement (Mowen, 1990). However, it is also necessary to take into consideration the fact that humour may decrease the understanding of such important elements of the advertisement as the product and the brand. In the research conducted by Mowen recalled contents of advertisements with and without humour were compared. The research showed that people could recall the advertisements without humour much better.

It is also necessary to reckon with the fact that not all consumers react in a similar way to humour. Research conducted by H. Lammers (1983) has shown that, in comparison with men, women more often reacted to humour in a negative way. Thus, before introducing elements of humour to advertising, it is necessary to investigate the segmentation of the market and exclude the segment, in which consumers may react in a negative way to humour. Resorting to humour in an international promotional campaign may lead to aggravation of problems stemming from cultural differences. For example, American humour resorts to a large extent to exaggeration and makes fun of differences between nations²⁷. According to Anna Jachnis and Jan Terelak, (*Psychologia konsumenta i reklamy*) in Polish tv commercials humour in pure form – as a joke or a gag – is very rare. Most often situational humour, which is associated with the character’s actions, is used. What is typical of Polish advertisements is simple language combined with music background. The advantages of products are very often presented by experts, older people (most often advertising pharmaceuticals), actors and athletes.

Even though it is not possible to evoke all kinds of emotions with advertising, consumers can identify and appropriately react to an advertisement either with positive or negative emotions.

Negative emotions in advertising

The creators of advertisements also pay much attention to negative emotions. What is interesting is that many researches show that negative emotions are effective in marketing strategies. Manipulating negative emotions in a skillful way may bring the desired result. Theories of influence of advertisements such emotions have also been formulated. One of the most intriguing negative emotions is the feeling of fear. Fear-based advertisements (fear conditioning advertisements) inform the consumer that in case he doesn’t use some product or service, something bad can happen to him.

26 A. Jachnis, F. J. Terelak, *Psychologia konsumenta i reklamy*, Oficyna Wydawnicza Branta, Bydgoszcz 1998, p. 239.

27 A. Falkowski, T. Tyszka, *Psychologia zachowań konsumenckich*, op. cit., p. 72-71.

Fear-inducing advertisements are used above all by insurance agencies and automotive companies. They are also used by social organizations dealing with protection of health, as well as (for completely different reasons) by pharmaceutical companies, producers of toothpastes and others. A good example of a fear-based advertising is the advertisement of Monroe shock absorbers. The author of the advertisement skillfully illustrated the threat and described several tragic events caused by the lack of appropriate shock absorbers. This advertisement is a schoolbook example of taking advantage of the feeling of fear. It contains the basic elements of the model of creating fear-based advertisement prepared by Tanner, Hunt and Eppright (1991). According to this model, in course of presentation of a fear-based advertisement it is necessary to preserve the order of presented information. First of all, the threat is presented (death in a car accident), the next step is presenting the causes of this threat (worn out shock absorber) the final step is eliminating the threat (new shock absorbers – Monroe SensaTrac). The presence of all of these elements is crucial. In case of tv commercials preserving the appropriate sequence of these elements is very important. The results of research conducted by Tanner, Hunt and Eppright confirm that such sequence of events presented in an advertisement has an impact on the change in behaviour of recipients.²⁸

Other negative emotions often evoked by advertisements are the feelings of guilt and shame. It is because these emotions are particularly painful for people. We make much effort to avoid the feeling of guilt and shame. Producers of food for small children often resort to the feeling of guilt and shame (Coulter and Pinto, 1995). They are aware of the fact that working mothers feel guilty because they don't provide their children with nutritious, fresh food, because they most often don't have the time to prepare it. Thus, they should be motivated to buy products that are advertised as healthy and nutritious, regardless of the price. Research by Coulter and Pinto has shown that only advertising messages inducing moderate feeling of guilt are effective. Messages which openly suggest to a woman that she is guilty of not providing her children with appropriate nutrition, have been rather ineffective.

The role of negative emotions in the influence exerted by advertisements is complicated and often hard to predict. Pinto and Priest (1991) analyzed the influence of an advertisement, which was supposed to make recipients feel guilty and what they observed was unexpected anger caused by the advertisement. In another research it was observed that an advertisement which earlier evoked the feeling of sadness, also evoked fear (Holbrook, Westwood, 1989). Taking into consideration the fact that particular negative emotions can either diminish or boost persuasive power of contents presented in advertisements, it is advisable to investigate the influence of an advertisement on recipients before publishing it.

Conclusion

Deliberations included in this article lead to the conclusion that the road to a success on the market is a series of continuous activities aimed at satisfying the needs of customers. In the contemporary world advertising is a very important element of interpersonal relations. It is also an important way of passing on information, emotions and our vision of the world.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 76.

In all kinds of situations, there is always someone who is trying, in a more or less conscious way, to steer our emotions, influence our decisions in such a way that it is not fully conscious. The rules of exerting influence on people are an interesting socio-psychological issue. The knowledge concerning proper behaviour in various situations is also very important. We need to learn to protect ourselves against manipulation.

In order to create a „good“ advertisement it is necessary to refer to literature not only from the area of marketing and advertisement, but also from the area of psychology, linguistics and sociology. Studying literature on psychology will let us make a „journey“ into the depths of our mind and discover its secrets.

Theoretical deliberations in this article are supported with rich knowledge of scientists and analysts, which has been gathered in their work. Research and experiments constituted the basis for empirical analysis. The interdisciplinary character of the article required referring to publications not only from the area of marketing and psychology, but also from the area of sociology, linguistics and management.

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