Analysis Of Advertisements For Two Different Things Essay, Research Paper

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In order for advertisements to succesfully portray a product, they must

be directed to the appropriate intended audience. Magazines, in general, are

usually geared towards a specific audience with distinct interests. Therefore,

the `ads’ need to be carefully designed to attract the attentions of the

magazine reader. This very concept is well displayed in the two selected, yet

very different, magazine ads from the software magnate Microsoft Corporation.

The first ad is taken from Computer Games Strategy Plus – a gaming

magazine, as one might infer from the title. The product `Monster Truck

Madness’ is a computer video game designed, quite obviously, for entertainment

purposes. The second ad is from PC World, which is of a much more technical

nature than its previous counterpart. The product in this ad is `Microsoft

Project for Windows 95′, a software used for businesses and project development

teams.

The `Monster Truck Madness’ ad encaptivates the casual browser with its

bright yellow background with a large purple type set across the top of the

page accompanied by the words: `Size Matters”. This leads the reader to ponder

the meaning of this rather unusual phrase and to further read the smaller

print. Here, the reader encounters an irregular font of different sizes to

accentuate certain words. While this may be annoying to many, its overall

purpose is to create a lively playful environment through the usage of fonts.

This, of course, is an attempt to appeal to a younger gaming audience. On the

other hand, the `Microsoft Project’ ad does not envoke any visual desire read

further into the text. The sections are divided into fine print paragraphs

with a slightly larger heading above. Everything is set plainly and

unassumingly. This can be justified to mirror an American professional’s

lifestyle: simple, neat, and organized.

The first four lines in the `Monster Truck’ ad: “bigger tires, bigger

competition, bigger thrills, bigger mud-splitting” uses repetition to

accentuate the fact that this game is bigger and better than all the other

racing car games. Microsoft then introduces the product in a rather blunt

manner but just stating the title of the game. The reader is then asked to

“strap yourself into a 1,500 horsepower tower of American pig iron, punch it

when the light turns green, and you’re in for the biggest race of your life.”

Having read this far, the reader should be overwhelmed by the forceful way the

ad delivers its message. From this, one can derive the intent to parallel the

`brute force and run over everything attitude’ that only a monster truck can

possess, in the text.

The `Project’ ad explains very straight-forwardly what the software is

capable of doing for the readers and their businesses. What this lacks in

excitement is made up for through a very complete description of the product.

This is appropriate for the intended audience: no-nonsense, no-hassle

businessmen. Strangely enough, the `Monster Truck’ ad, in sharp contrast,

discusses absolutely nothing about the actual game itself. Instead it

elaborates on other parts of the ad more important to persuading the intended

group of people.

The pictures and images are, of course, `everything’ to an advertisement.

They retrieve preconceptions from each individual without using words at all.

Consequently, these pictures must express a meaning related to its intended

purpose – in this case, to sell the product. In the `Monster Truck’ ad, the

first image the reader should notice is the massive blue and yellow monster

truck. Certainly because it is the largest picture, but also because it is

seemingly `standing’ on its back tires. My first impression of this picture

was one of pure awe. I imagine hearing the powerful revving of the engine and

the massive tires rumbling through the grass. However, if the reader has no

preconception of what a monster truck is or how large it is, this picture may

be nothing more impressive than a Micro Machine. Nextly, two additional

pictures are taken from the computer game itself. Both, in an attempt to

impress the viewer, are taken at an inspiring frame deserving of a highlight

reel. The viewer can see the rich color and high resolution details of each

individual screenshot. The purple monster truck in mid-air flying off a ramp is

strategically positioned in the exact middle of the photo, bringing all

attention to the truck. The picture on the lower left shows the interior of

the vehicle, the speedometer and tachometer; everything a real-life monster

truck would have. Lastly, the last corner of the rectangle holds the picture

of the box of the software. This is most likely intended to allow the reader

to recognize the box when they head over to the store. The quote in the

picture: “Down and Dirty Racing”, goes to emphasize the fact that the game is

not intended for the faint hearted conservative but rather for the hardcore

gamer.

Conversely, the pictures in the `Project’ ad are very realistic to one’s

life compared to the `virtual’ world of the `Monster Truck’ game. The central

picture is, of course, the businessman who is denoted by the blue collared

shirt, tie and neat appearance. The man has a Windows 95 `Start’ button on his

head possibly symbolizing that all ideas start within the mind. From here,

small blurbs of photos are linked together. One is a flowchart of coworkers

connected on a board, signifying the need for companies to work and communicate

together in order to be successful. The second is a building made up for

wooden blocks allowing, as the title states, teams to visualize where the

project is going. Next is photo is a small boy whispering into the ear of a

girl. While this can signfy communication among everyone, instead I believe it

to be the man’s children to show that he is a successful business and family

man. Lastly, the final link goes to a picture of the box `Microsoft Project’.

This relates the software to the other items by linking the results that your

company will receive when you buy `Microsoft Project’. Also, this box is

Microsoft’s way of allowing you to remember what it looks like at the store.

The box is simple, neat and organized signifying the orderly fashion of a

company. One clear lacking of this ad are pictures from the actual software

itself. It may be safe to assume that the software is just a large array of

icons and there is nothing amazing to look at. Once more, as stated at the

beginning of the paragraph, a business type is more concerned with `real world’

pictures rather than one of the `virtual’ gaming world.

Two very different advertisements from two very different magazines

selling two very different products, yet all from the same company. While the

reader may not be aware of it, each ad differs from one magazine to another.

This is due to the typical stereotype of the persons who usually buy a certain

product. Am I saying that all people are stereotyped? Yes, of course. If this

were not the case, then ads would not be specifically designed to attract each

unique group of people and everything would be colorlessly drab. Ads are meant

to be directed to a particular prototype of the buyer, economy relies on this

constant method to thrive.

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