Altoids Wintergreen Advertisement Analysis

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The Altoids brand of breath mints has been around since 1780 and has been known for the use of the slogan “Curiously Strong Mints” in it highly successful string of advertisement campaigns. The Leo Burnett advertising agency came up with a series of ingenious print ads in April 2008, featuring several nostalgic scenes that all had a slightly teal or mint green background. This ad in particular features a black and white photograph of a young boy, in winter hat, coat, and gloves, with his tongue seemingly frozen to a box of Altoids wintergreen mints. In front of the young boy, the words in red focus the eyes to the words “Altoids Wintergreen,” followed underneath by the words that are the company’s hallmark slogan, “The curiously strong mint,” The use of nostalgia, combined with bright friendly colors, bring about a feeling of simpler times, bring about a comfortable feeling, when life was not so hectic.

The advertisement uses many different color combinations to draw focus, and attention, to remind the reader of simpler times in the advertisement. According to Karla Lant (2018), “Teal and navy blue are the comfort zone for bargain hunters.” Using the background chosen by the Leo Burnett agency denotes Altoids wants the consumer to feel comfortable when buying the mints just like the advertisement. The agency also uses the color red as a focal point to draw attention and focus to the product name, and the use of colors on the box that the boy has his tongue stuck to, in order for the reader can see what the box of mints look like. This way the box of mints can easily be recognized at any local retail store. The boy, being in black and white, helps focus the eyes from the background to exactly where the advertisers would like the reader to see, the logo, and the box of mints.

Karla Cook (2016), eloquently states in her article, “Nostalgia marketing is the advertising equivalent of comfort food.” This means that the use of nostalgia is a very powerful tool for advertisers being that they are trying to remind the reader of a simpler time in life, when things were not as hectic. To bring about the feeling of being sent back to a time when life was more fun, without current problems and stress, to a simpler time, one without modern worries where the reader could relax, kick the feet up and smile. This particular use of color red, and the colors showing the box of mints, as well as the picture of the young boy in black and white are used to bring about that nostalgic feeling. The use of nostalgia engages the emotions and when the reader’s emotions are engaged, the reader will most likely act on that feeling, and purchase the product.

The advertisement seems to be giving a gentle nod to the movie, “A Christmas Story”, which came to theaters in 1983, also has a twofold meaning. For those people who have seen the movie, remembering the scene where the peers of the boy in the movie, are daring him to stick his tongue to a flagpole, in the winter, only to get it stuck and trying in vain to remove his tongue, brings up fond memories of either watching that movie, or perhaps our friend daring us to do similar dumb things. The other meaning of this is perhaps the Altoids wintergreen mints are as cold as the flag pole in winter that your tongue will stick to the box even before you open them to take one out. The use of this movie also brings about the humor, and fond remembrance that also is part of the nostalgic imagery and emotional memories that the advertiser wants to invoke in the reader.

In conclusion, the soft colors elicit a comfort feeling to the whole of the advertisement. The red logo making the words “pop” focus to the words “Altoids Wintergreen”. The use of colors on the box show the consumer exactly what needs to be picked up the next time on that shopping trip for mints, while remembering the warm, fuzzy feeling of watching the movie during the Christmas season with friends and family. The advertisers want the reader to be comfortable buying the Altoids wintergreen mint, while showing the reader exactly what to buy.

References

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