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MP1 - Think Different

When looking for an ad to analyze for this assignment, Apple's Think Different campaign from the late 90s stood out to me as an interesting choice. It is an advertisement that doesn't advertise a product or service, but rather an attitude.

In the late 90s, Apple was a far cry from the trillion dollar tech behemoth it was today, and it certainly didn't have its gaggle of loyal acolytes that would defend and push every zany, evil, innovative, or downright confusing idea. This ad was the beginning of Apple's solution to win over the public, and get them on board with the changes they were about to bring to the tech space. Given the time period of the late 90s, where personal computers and tech in general was still a budding industry and idea, the primary audience of the ad is most certainly creatives and professionals in tech-adjacent industries. This ad tries to instill the idea in these artists, designers, filmmakers, etc who might be stuck in their comfortable ways and workflows, that they should, in fact, think differently. Think Apple. This ad also appeals to the secondary audience, the general public, which Apple likely wasn't actually expecting them to buy any products at this time, but it certainly did a good job of priming the public to Apple's design language and attitude as a 'break the mold', revolutionary company.

I've already touched a lot on what I believe the purpose to be in my section on audience, but let's get into more detail. The purpose of this ad was not to honor any of

the esteemed figures showcased, and not to sell any actual product or service. The ad's purpose was to introduce and prime the world for what Apple was about to do over the next few years, which would completely change the look and feel of personal computing. The ad also used these esteemed individuals such as Albert Einstein and Martin Luther King Jr to project the idea of a shatterpoint in the tech space. Physics was never the same after Einstein, civil rights was never the same after MLK, and tech would never be the same after Apple. The ad is trying to cement Apple as a legend, a figurehead in their space, before they actually became legendary.

Finally, the context. Again, I've already touched on this earlier, but let's dive in. This campaign was launched in 1997, and terminated in 2002. This five year period was a crucial period in the development of the modern era of tech, with the first iPhone and MacBook most likely under development, as they would be released four and five years after the campaign wrapped up, respectively. Apple knew that their products coming down the pipeline in the next few years would be revolutionary, but could easily fall flat if the public wasn't ready for it. A computer in your pocket? Where's the keypad? This ad was the beginning of the solution to that. Apple took the context of the late 90s, with the rise of optimism but still the relative obscurity of tech, and perfectly capitalized on it with this ad. Apple knew that the product was going to be stellar, but the public needed to be prepared for it.

[Apple - Think Different Campaign '97-'02](#)