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Creative Strategy: Implementation and Evaluation



Source: Yum! Brands, Inc.

Learning Objectives

LO 9-1 | Compare the different types of appeals used in advertising.

LO 9-2 | Identify creative execution styles and their most appropriate applications.

LO 9-3 | Compare tactics for the creation of print ads and TV commercials as well as online advertising.

LO 9-4 | Discuss guidelines for clients to evaluate creative work.

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Creating Advertising Personality Symbols: Flo, the Colonel, and the Most Interesting Man in the World

The use of personality symbols to advertise a company or brand has been around for decades. In some cases, popular spokespersons, such as a celebrity or CEO, have become synonymous with the company or brand and evolved into personality symbols with whom consumers can connect. Sometimes, marketers create fictional characters or cast an individual in commercials who becomes extremely popular. Personality symbols often work well because they are effective at attracting attention and interest in a commercial or print ad and are a way to get consumers to relate to a company or brand on a deeper level. Over the past decade, several successful advertising campaigns have used personality symbols as an integral part of their creative strategy. These include Progressive insurance's use of the Flo character as

the company's advertising frontwoman, the resurrection of the Colonel Sanders character for KFC, and "The Most Interesting Man in the World" campaign for import beer brand Dos Equis.

In 2007, Progressive insurance had almost no brand recognition and was struggling to find an identity in a highly competitive market where companies such as Allstate, Geico, State Farm, and Nationwide had very large advertising budgets and share of voice. Progressive's advertising agency, Arnold Worldwide, came up with the idea of a "superstore" where shopping for insurance would be an orderly and pleasant experience. The superstore would be shown in all gleaming white with orderly shelves and rows of boxes labeled for car, home, and other types of insurance.

In the campaign's first commercial, a character named Flo appears as a cashier in the superstore, and when a customer is checking out and notes how he saved \$350, she immediately goes on the PA system and excitedly says: "We have a savings of \$350" as she hands him boxes representing other services he receives from Progressive. When the customer says "Wow," Flo echoes his enthusiasm with the line "wow, I say it louder." And from there, the rest is history, as they say. Over the past 11 years, Flo has appeared in nearly 200 commercials for Progressive and has become an iconic figure in the world of advertising. She is so popular that she has been a Halloween costume favorite for years, and there are Flo-related Pinterest and Facebook pages. The Flo character is played by Stephanie Courtney, a veteran of an improv and sketch comedy group whose graduates have included stars such as Will Ferrell, Melissa McCarthy, and Lisa Kudrow. The creative team recognized Flo's ability to ad lib early on, and she is encouraged to improvise and add her own spin to the commercial scripts. Some critics speculate that Flo-fatigue might be setting in and question her longevity. However, the agency utilizes a number of side characters to avoid overloading its brand icon.

A very interesting twist on the use of a personality symbol is a recent campaign created by the Wieden+Kennedy agency for KFC that resurrected Colonel Harland Sanders, who founded the company (originally known as Kentucky Fried Chicken) in 1940 and appeared in ads for decades for the popular chicken restaurant chain. When the agency took over the account in 2015, KFC sales had declined for nearly two decades, and the chain had lost nearly 40 percent of its business. The company had changed its name from Kentucky Fried Chicken to KFC in an effort to let people know that it sold more than fried chicken. Although Sanders had been dead for 35 years, W+K decided to harken back to KFC's past by bringing back the icon and having comedians Darrell Hammond and Norm Macdonald play the bespectacled founder with the white hair and goatee who always dressed in an all-white suit and black string tie. A major goal of the campaign was to appeal to millennials, many of whom had never tried KFC, by adding a modern, comedic twist to his character.

Since resurrecting the Colonel, KFC sales have increased for five straight years, and more than a dozen celebrities have played him in commercials, including Jason Alexander, Rob Lowe, George Hamilton, and country star Reba McEntire, who plays up the fact that she is the first woman to portray the Colonel. The success of the campaign has also helped KFC introduce new menu items that have contributed to its revenue growth. In late 2018, KFC introduced Kentucky Fried Chicken & Waffles, which pairs KFC's Extra Crispy fried chicken with Belgian waffles. To introduce the new product, actor Craig Fleming plays the Colonel in an ad that shows him dancing and

bonding with Mrs. Butterworth—a bottle of syrup. In one commercial, he and the bottle recreate the signature dance from the movie *Dirty Dancing*, and in a second, he shares a special connection with Mrs. Butterworth in a flirty video to Celine Dion's "I'm Your Lady." It was not that long ago when many people were questioning _____ page 288 whether KFC would survive. However, by harkening back to its origins, the company has resurrected the company as well as Colonel Sanders himself.

Another example of creative and successful advertising built around a personality symbol is "The Most Interesting Man in the World" campaign created by Havas Worldwide for Dos Equis beer. Research conducted by the agency with import beer drinkers revealed that many were annoyed by beer advertising that used images of sexy women, sophomoric humor, and tired clichés. The research also revealed that import beer drinkers felt misrepresented and misunderstood and, more than anything, wanted to be perceived as interesting and intriguing. Based on these insights, the agency creative team came up with the idea of creating a personality symbol for the brand, whom they labeled "The Most Interesting Man in the World." The agency then created a fictitious character played by veteran actor Jonathan Goldsmith, who is portrayed in the ads as a suave and debonair gentleman with an exotic accent, silver beard, and no-nonsense attitude. The commercials would show him in highly exotic and intriguing situations and locales, such as leading mysterious expeditions, running with the bulls in Pamplona, or arm wrestling with Fidel Castro. At the end of every ad, he acknowledges that he does not always drink beer, but when he does, he prefers Dos Equis, and then he delivers the signature line: "Stay thirsty, my friends." The implied message from the ads is that all beer drinkers could and should be living more interesting lives and, of course, can vicariously do so by drinking Dos Equis.

The campaign launched in 2007; over the next decade, it helped make Dos Equis, which was once a low-profile brand sold mostly in Texas and California, the sixth largest imported beer in the United States. The final ad featuring Goldsmith aired in 2016 and showed him headed on a one-way trip to Mars, leaving the impression that the character will never come back. He delivers his classic line "Stay thirsty, my friends" aboard a rocket ship, as the familiar voiceover says, "His only regret is not knowing what regret feels like." Dos Equis continued the campaign with a new actor playing the role of the most interesting man, but it was never able to achieve the same level of success, and in 2018, a decision was made to move advertising for the brand in another direction. Stayed tuned, my friends, as perhaps Dos Equis will have Goldsmith return to planet Earth and share his adventures in outer space, which will truly make him "The Most Interesting Man in the World."

Sources: Simon Dumenco, "What Happens after Colonel Sander and Mrs. Butterworth Kiss?" *Advertising Age*, March 26, 2019; <https://adage.com/creativity/work/kfc-most-delicious-union-back-chicken-and-waffles/2030331>; Jeff Beer, "10 Years of Flo: The story behind Progressive's Accidental Ad Icon," *Fast Company*, November 1, 2018, <https://www.fastcompany.com/90254247/10-years-of-flo-the-story-behind-progressives-accidental-ad-icon>; Kristina Monllos, "W+K Brought Back Colonel Sanders after Discovering He Was a 'Master Jedi of Branding' for KFC," *Adweek*, October 6, 2017, <https://www.adweek.com/brand-marketing/wk-brought-back-colonel-sanders-after-discovering-he-was-a-master-jedi-of-branding-for-kfc/>; E.J. Schultz, "Dos Equis Will Swap Actor Who Plays Most Interesting Role," *Advertising Age*, March 9,

The advertising campaigns used by Progressive, KFC, and Dos Equis are examples of big ideas that use emotional appeals based on humor. However, the success of these campaigns is a result of not only the creative ideas and appeals the agencies developed, but also the way they were executed using the different personalities. There are many bases for advertising appeals that marketers might use and a number of ways an ad can be executed. A successful advertising campaign requires creative strategy that uses the right type of appeal and is executed properly. In this chapter, we examine various advertising appeals and execution styles as well as tactics for implementing print, television, and online advertising.

APPEALS AND EXECUTION STYLES

The **advertising appeal** refers to the approach used to attract the attention of consumers and/or to influence their feelings toward the product, service, or cause. An advertising appeal can also be viewed as “something that moves people, speaks to their wants or needs, and excites their interest.”¹ The **creative execution style** is the way a particular appeal is turned into an advertising message presented to the consumer. According to William Weilbacher:

The appeal can be said to form the underlying content of the advertisement, and the execution the way in which that content is presented. Advertising appeals and executions are usually independent of each other; that is, a particular appeal can be executed in a page 289 variety of ways and a particular means of execution can be applied to a variety of advertising appeals. Advertising appeals tend to adapt themselves to all media, whereas some kinds of executional devices are more adaptable to some media than others.²

Advertising Appeals

LO 9-1

Many different appeals can be used as the basis for advertising messages. At the broadest level, these approaches are generally broken into two categories: informational/rational appeals and emotional appeals. In this section, we focus on ways to use rational and emotional appeals as part of a creative strategy. We also consider how rational and emotional appeals can be combined in developing the advertising message.

Informational/Rational Appeals **Informational/rational appeals** focus on the consumer's practical, functional, or utilitarian need for the product or service and emphasize features of a product or service and/or the benefits or reasons for owning or using a particular brand. The content of these messages emphasizes facts, learning, and the logic of persuasion.³ Rational-based appeals tend to be informative, and advertisers using them generally attempt to convince consumers that their product or service has a particular attribute(s) or provides a specific benefit that satisfies their needs. Their objective is to persuade the target audience to buy the brand because it is the best available or does a better job of meeting consumers' needs. For example, Exhibit 9–1 shows a rational appeal ad promoting the award Honda received from *U.S. News & World Report* as the Best SUV Brand for 2019. The copy of the ad discusses features of Honda SUVs such as the CR-V, HR-V and Pilot. The *U.S. News & World Report* awards are used by many consumers in evaluating SUVs and other automotive vehicles and can have a strong influence on their purchase decisions.

XHIBIT 9–1

A rational appeal is used by Honda to promote the award received for its popular line of SUVs.

Source: American Honda Motor Co., Inc.



Many rational motives can be used as the basis for advertising appeals, including comfort, convenience, economy, health, and sensory benefits such as touch, taste, and smell. Other rational motives or purchase criteria commonly used in advertising include quality, dependability, durability, efficiency, efficacy, and performance. The particular features, benefits, or evaluative criteria that are important to consumers and can serve as the basis of an informational/rational appeal vary from one product or service category to another as well as among various market segments.

Weilbacher identified several types of advertising appeals that fall under the category of rational approaches, among them feature, competitive advantage, price, news, and product/service popularity appeals.

Ads that use a *feature appeal* focus on the dominant traits of the product or service. These ads tend to be highly informative and present the customer with a number of important product attributes or features that will lead to favorable attitudes and can be used as the basis for a rational purchase decision. Technical and high-involvement products such as consumer electronics and automobiles often use this type of advertising appeal. However, a feature appeal can be used for a variety of products and services. These types of appeals often show how product attributes can result in specific benefits for consumers. For example, advertisements using this type of appeal will list and/or discuss the specific features or benefits of the

product or service in the ad copy. The ad shown in Exhibit 9–2 for the Blue Cash Everyday Card from American Express is a good example of advertising that uses a feature appeal. The copy lists the various places where card users receive cash back on their purchases as well other security related features of the Blue Cash Everyday Card, such as purchase protection, extended warranty, and mobile fraud alerts.

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XHIBIT 9–2

American Express uses a feature appeal in this advertisement for the Blue Cash Everyday Card.

Source: American Express Company



When a *competitive advantage appeal* is used, the advertiser makes either a direct or an indirect comparison to another brand (or brands) and usually claims superiority on one or more attributes. This type of appeal was discussed in Chapter 6 under Comparative Advertising.

A *favorable price appeal* makes the price offer the dominant point of the message. Price appeal advertising is used most often by retailers to announce sales, special offers, or low everyday prices. Price appeal ads are often used

by national advertisers, particularly during economic down times or to reach price sensitive market segments. Most fast-food chains have made price an important part of their marketing strategy through promotional deals and “value menus” or lower overall prices, and their advertising strategy is designed to communicate this. Price-based appeals are also often used by business-to-business marketers to advertise products and/or services and promote their value or affordability. Many other types of advertisers use price appeals as well, such as airlines and car-rental companies. For example, Southwest Airlines recently used a variation of a price appeal in its “Transfarency” campaign with ads such as the one shown in Exhibit 9–3. The goal of the campaign, which coins a word for transparency in airfares, is to tell consumers that unlike other airlines, Southwest does not charge extra fees nor surprise them with hidden charges.

XHIBIT 9–3

Southwest Airlines uses a variation of a price appeal in the “Transfarency” campaign.

Source: Southwest Airlines Co.



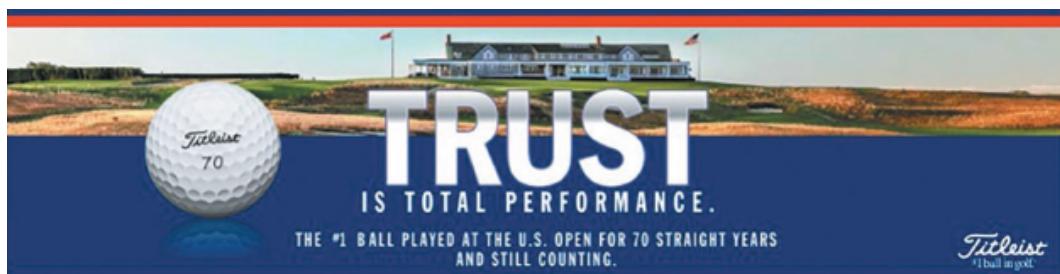
News appeals are those in which some type of news or announcement about the product, service, or company dominates the ad. This type of appeal can be used for a new product or service or to inform consumers of significant modifications or improvements. This appeal works best when a company has important news it wants to communicate to its target market. For example, airlines sometimes use news appeals when they begin offering service to new cities or opening new routes as a way of informing consumers as well as generating media interest that can result in publicity for them.

Product/service popularity appeals stress the popularity of a product or service by pointing out the number of consumers who use the brand, the number who have switched to it, the number of experts who recommend it, or its leadership position in the market. The main point of this type page 291 of advertising appeal is that the wide use of the brand proves its quality or value and other customers should consider using it. The ad for Titleist golf balls shown in Exhibit 9–4 uses a popularity appeal by noting how Titleist has been the #1 ball played at the U.S. Open golf tournament for 70 straight years. Titleist is the leading brand of golf balls, and its popularity among tour professionals has a strong influence on the purchase decisions of amateur golfers. The banner ad was used on various websites that cover the PGA tour, as well as in digital versions of golf publications such as *Golf* and *Golf Digest*.

XHIBIT 9–4

Titleist uses a popularity appeal to promote the trust professional golfers have in its golf balls.

Source: Acushnet Company



Emotional Appeals **Emotional appeals** relate to the customers' social and/or psychological needs for purchasing a product or service. Many

consumers' motives for their purchase decisions are emotional, and their feelings about a brand can be more important than knowledge of its features or attributes. Advertisers for many products and services view rational, information-based appeals as dull. Many advertisers believe appeals to consumers' emotions work better at selling brands that do not differ markedly from competing brands, since rational differentiation of them is difficult.⁴

Many feelings or needs can serve as the basis for advertising appeals designed to influence consumers on an emotional level, as shown in Figure 9–1. These appeals are based on the psychological states or feelings directed to the self (such as pleasure or excitement), as well as those with a more social orientation (such as status or recognition). A campaign developed by The Lambesis Agency (TLA) for Gold Peak Tea is a good example of how an emotional appeal can be used effectively. For a number of years, the brand had been marketed around the product attribute of “home-brewed taste.” However, when TLA took over the account, it saw an opportunity to bring more emotional attachment to the brand. The agency developed “The Taste That Brings You Home” campaign, which depicts authentic tea moments that celebrate the comforts of home and special feelings we all experience when we feel truly at home. The integrated campaign includes TV and online videos, as well as variety of print, digital, out-of-home ads, and print ads, such as the one shown in Exhibit 9–5, which use imagery to connect the Gold Tea brand with the comforts and good feeling of home.

FIGURE 9–1

Bases for Emotional Appeals

Personal States or Feelings	Social-Based Feelings
Safety	Arousal/stimulation
Security	Sorrow/grief
Fear	Pride
	Recognition
	Status
	Respect

Love	Achievement/accomplishment	Involvement
Affection	Self-esteem	Embarrassment
Happiness	Actualization	Affiliation/belonging
Joy	Pleasure	Rejection
Nostalgia	Ambition	Acceptance
Sentiment	Comfort	Approval
Excitement		

XHIBIT 9–5

Advertising for Gold Peak Tea uses an emotional appeal based on the comforts and good feeling of home.

source: *The Coca-Cola Company*



Advertisers can use emotional appeals in many ways in their creative strategy. Kamp and Macinnis note that commercials often rely on the concept

of *emotional integration*, whereby they portray the characters in the ad as experiencing an emotional benefit or outcome from using a product or service.⁵ Ads using humor, sex, and other appeals that are very entertaining, arousing, upbeat, and/or exciting can affect the emotions of consumers and put them in a favorable frame of mind. Many TV advertisers use poignant ads that bring a lump to viewers' throats. Hallmark, Campbell's Soup, Procter & Gamble, and McDonald's often create commercials that evoke feelings of warmth, nostalgia, and/or sentiment. Marketers use emotional appeals in hopes that the positive feelings they evoke will transfer to the brand and/or company. Research shows that positive mood states and feelings created by advertising can have a favorable effect on consumers' evaluations of a brand.⁶ Studies also show that emotional advertising is better remembered than nonemotional messages.⁷

The effectiveness of emotion-based appeals has also been documented in research conducted by Hamish Pringle and Peter Field and is discussed in their book *Brand Immortality*.⁸ Pringle and Field analyzed 880 case studies of successful advertising campaigns submitted for the United Kingdom-based Institute of Practitioners in Advertising Effectiveness Award competition over the past three decades and included campaigns from the UK as well as international competitions. Their analysis compared advertising campaigns that relied primarily on emotional appeals versus those that used rational persuasion and information. A key finding from their study is that advertising campaigns with purely emotional content are nearly twice as likely to generate large profit gains than are campaigns using only rational content. The emotional-only campaigns were also more effective than those that used a combination of emotional and rational content. Their research also showed that one of the reasons why emotional campaigns work so well is that they reduce price sensitivity and strengthen the ability of brands to charge a price premium, which contributes to profitability. They also found that emotional campaigns continue to work well during economic downturns such as the recent global recession.⁹

While emotional appeals are often executed through television commercials, many marketers are now implementing them online through videos that provide an opportunity for popular messages to go viral. An example of this is the "Love Has No Labels" public service advertising

campaign that was sponsored by the Ad Council, to get people to examine and challenge their own prejudices and biases. The digital agency R/GA created a three-minute video for the campaign by filming at a live event in which a large x-ray screen depicts different sets of people as only two skeletons embracing. As the skeleton images separate and walk out from behind the screen, the audience discovers who they really are (Exhibit 9–6). This process occurs a number of times in the video, each highlighting different pairings of gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and age to encourage viewers' to take a closer look at their own expectations and implicit bias. The heartwarming video uses the song "She Keeps Me Warm" by Mary Lambert to help set the sentimental tone for the message. The video amassed more than 110 million views online and is the second most viewed community and activism campaign of all time.¹⁰

XHIBIT 9–6

The "Love Has No Labels" campaign used emotional advertising to connect with consumers.

Source: *The Advertising Council*

Ad Council

**how skeletons showed the world
love has no labels**

challenge:
While the vast majority of Americans consider themselves very kind, many unintentionally make judgments about people based on what they see. This is significant because many people in the U.S. feel discriminated against. The challenge was to get people to take a closer look at their own biases ("What's in a label") and how it can lead to judgments for how we view and interact with others who are different than us.

solution:
A large-scale installation was set up on Valentine's Day. It displayed skeletons hugging, playing and dancing. Those looking on mentally filled in the bones. When unexpected couples stepped out from behind the screen it created a simple demonstration that love has no labels. The video was then directed towards media, that further brought people to rethink and act on their bias at home and in the workplace.

10,000 live event spectators
100 million video views: [www](#) + [f](#)
2nd most viewed PSA in history
1 billion media impressions

HBO Now
Oprah Winfrey Network
People
FOX
TIME
FORBES
CNN
BusinessWeek
The Washington Post
BuzzFeed
abcNEWS

Another reason for using emotional appeals is to influence consumers' interpretations of their product usage experience. One way of doing this is through what is known as transformational advertising. A **transformational ad** is defined as "one which associates the _____ page 293 experience of using (consuming) the advertised brand with a unique set of psychological characteristics which would not typically be associated with the brand experience to the same degree without exposure to the advertisement."¹¹

Transformational ads create feelings, images, meanings, and beliefs about the product or service that may be activated when consumers use it, transforming their interpretation of the usage experience. Christopher Puto and William Wells note that a transformational ad has two characteristics:

1. It must make the experience of using the product richer, warmer, more exciting, and/or more enjoyable than that obtained solely from an objective description of the advertised brand.
2. It must connect the experience of the advertisement so tightly with the experience of using the brand that consumers cannot remember the brand without recalling the experience generated by the advertisement.¹²

Transformational advertising can help differentiate a product or service by making the consumption experience more enjoyable by suggesting the type of experiences consumers might have when they consume the product or service. This type of advertising is often used by companies in the travel industry to help consumers envision the experience or feeling they might have when they take a trip such as a cruise or visit a particular destination.

Image advertising, which is designed to give a company or brand a unique association or personality, is often transformational in nature. It is designed to create a certain feeling or mood that is activated when a consumer uses a particular product or service. An excellent example of this type of advertising is the "Find Your Beach" campaign for the import beer brand Corona Extra. Advertising for Corona over the years has helped establish the brand as the beer to drink when relaxing on a white-sand tropical beach. The "Find Your Beach" campaign extends this theme to other consumption situations by showing people enjoying Corona on a city rooftop, during a break from skiing, on an airplane, or in a bar in the city with a group

of friends. However, the final scene in all of the spots takes the viewer back to the familiar tropical-beach scene and shows the tagline “Find your beach.”

Corona added an interesting twist to its transformational advertising with the integration of the “Corona Gets Its Lime” concept to its advertising.¹³ The new campaign highlights the iconic Corona + Lime ritual and helps bring Corona’s unique state-of-mind to life. The ads focus on moments that need a Corona and choices that can be celebrated only with a Corona, such as getting together with friends, taking a break from work, or being page 294 on vacation. The Corona + Lime ads are also designed to preserve Corona’s iconic beach image while extending the Corona state of mind beyond the sun, sand, and surf (Exhibit 9–7).

XHIBIT 9–7

Corona’s “Find Your Beach” and “Corona Gets Its Lime” campaigns are excellent examples of transformational advertising.

Source: Crown Imports, LLC



Combining Rational and Emotional Appeals In many advertising situations, the decision facing the creative specialist is not whether to choose an emotional or a rational appeal but, rather, determining how to combine the two approaches. As noted copywriters David Ogilvy and Joel Raphaelson have stated:

Few purchases of any kind are made for entirely rational reasons. Even a purely functional product such as laundry detergent may offer what is now called an emotional benefit—say, the satisfaction of seeing one's children in bright, clean clothes. In some product categories the rational element is small. These include soft drinks, beer, cosmetics, certain personal care products, and most old-

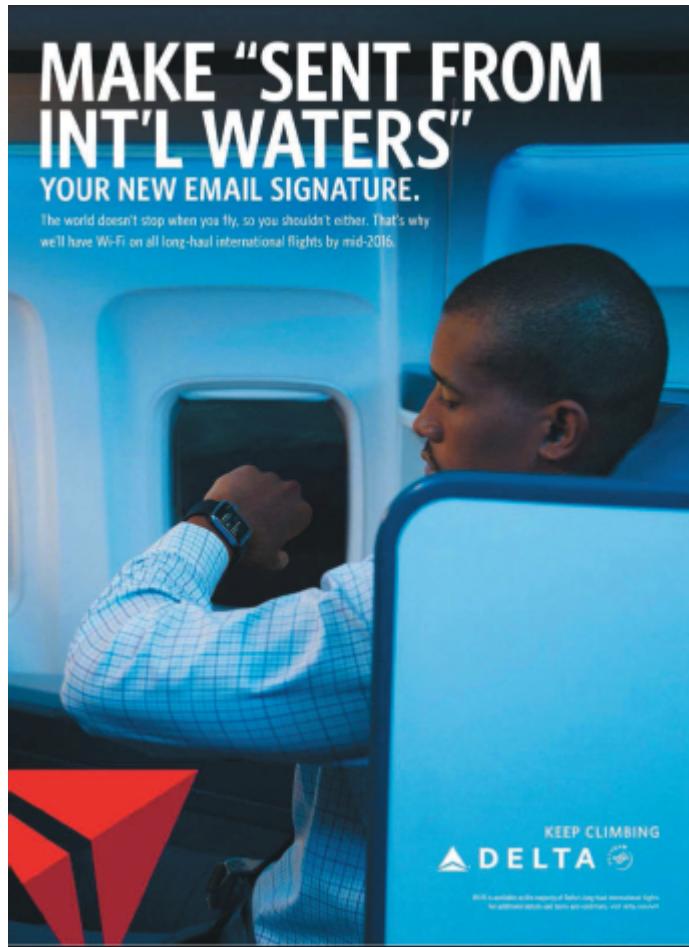
fashioned products. And who hasn't experienced the surge of joy that accompanies the purchase of a new car?¹⁴

Consumer purchase decisions are often made on the basis of both emotional and rational motives, and attention must be given to both elements in developing effective advertising. Purchase decisions regarding services can also be based on both rational and emotional motives. For example, many consumers choose an airline based on factors such as price, availability, arrival and/or departure time, and the ability to earn miles or points for their travel. However, airlines recognize that it is also important to appeal to emotional factors in competing for passengers. Frequent flyers in particular often become loyal to one airline based on emotional as well as rational motives, and some airlines use ads that are designed to connect to these travelers on an emotional level. For example, Delta has been running its "Keep Climbing" campaign since 2010 and is a declaration of the company's commitment to making flying better where the airline is headed. The TV commercials, videos, and print and online ads used in the campaign show how Delta is keeping up with the needs of travelers and helping them navigate through their entire travel experience. For example, the ad shown in Exhibit 9–8 promotes how Delta is adding Wi-Fi on all long-haul international flights.

XHIBIT 9–8

Advertising for Delta Air Lines often appeals to emotional as well as rational motives.

Source: Delta Air Lines, Inc.



Marketers continue to search for ways to connect with consumers on an emotional level. IMC Perspective 9–1 discusses Subaru of America’s decision to change its creative strategy from rational- to emotional-based advertising with the “Love” campaign.

Additional Types of Appeals Not every ad fits neatly into the categories of rational or emotional appeals. For example, ads for some brands can be classified as **reminder advertising**, which has the objective of building brand awareness and/or keeping the brand name in front of consumers. Well-known brands and market leaders often use reminder advertising to maintain top-of-mind awareness among consumers in their target markets. For example, the Almond Board of California runs ads such as the one shown in Exhibit 9–9 in men’s and women’s health- and fitness-oriented magazines to remind active people about the nutritional value of almonds and how they are an excellent source of protein. Products and

services that have a seasonal pattern to their consumption also use reminder advertising, particularly around the appropriate period. For example, marketers of candy products often increase their media budgets and run reminder advertising around Halloween, Valentine's Day, Christmas, and Easter.

XHIBIT 9–9

This clever ad reminds active people of the nutritional value of California almonds.

Source: Almond Board of California



Online ads often serve as a form of reminder advertising. Many of the banner ads that are pervasive on Internet websites have very low click-through rates but still can be effective and serve a valuable function by fostering familiarity, even though most consumers may never click through to the source of the ads. Research into the psychology of online advertising has

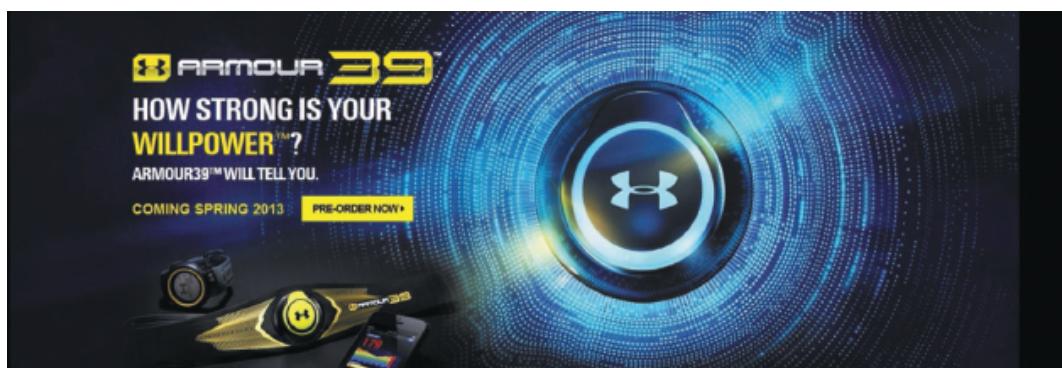
shown that repeated exposure to banner advertising can enhance familiarity with and generate positive feelings toward a brand.¹⁵ These favorable feelings often occur through what psychologists have identified as the *mere exposure effect*, whereby repeated exposure to a stimulus (such as a brand name) can result in favorable feelings toward it.¹⁶ While digital advertising may have positive effects through the incidental exposure that takes place when consumers visit a website, many advertising experts argue that consumers tune out most of the banner ads, as well as other forms of Internet advertising. They note that it is becoming increasingly difficult to get people visiting a website to attend to, let alone engage with, digital ads.¹⁷

Advertisers introducing a new product often use **teaser advertising**, which is designed to build curiosity, interest, and/or excitement about a product or brand by talking about it but not actually showing it. Teasers, or *mystery ads* as they are sometimes called, are also used by marketers to draw attention to upcoming product launches and/or advertising campaigns and generate interest and publicity for them. For example, Under Armour has used teaser ads to create interest and excitement around new product introductions such as running and basketball shoes. The company recently used teaser ads as part of its prelaunch campaign for its Armour39™ performance monitoring system, as shown in Exhibit 9–10.

XHIBIT 9–10

Under Armour often uses teaser ads prior to the launch of new products.

Source: Under Armour, Inc.



IMC Perspective 9–1 >>>

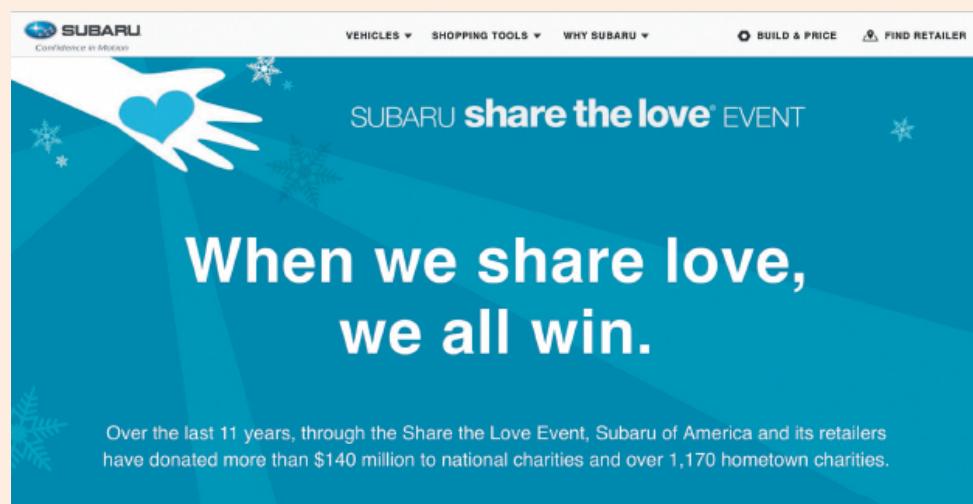
How the “Love” Campaign Turned Subaru Around

Subaru has been selling cars in the United States since 1958, and for its first 40 years, the company barely made a profit. The struggles continued into the new millennium. During the early 2000s, the company remained a niche player with only about a 1 percent market share, and it battled to sell 200,000 vehicles a year in the highly competitive U.S. market. However, in 2018 Subaru of America Inc. reported record-breaking sales of 680,135 vehicles, marking the 10th consecutive year of record sales for the company. Interestingly, the genesis of Subaru’s turnaround can be traced to the emotion-based “Love” advertising campaign that began in 2007 and has become among the most recognizable and enduring in the automotive industry.

During the 1990s and into the 2000s, Subaru cycled through advertising agencies and campaigns using rational-based appeals with taglines such as “What to Drive,” “The Beauty of All-Wheel Drive,” “Driven by What’s Inside,” and “Think, Feel, Drive.” Various celebrities were used to pitch Subaru models such as the Outback, which used Australian actor Paul Hogan, who starred in the popular *Crocodile Dundee* movies. Other celebrities used in ads for Subaru included tennis star Martina Navratilova and cycling champion Lance Armstrong, who appeared in ads using taglines such as “Driven,” “Tough,” and “Muscular.” The campaign targeted consumer lifestyle segments and featured cars with bicycles and canoes on roof racks to show that Subaru owners are active individuals. While awareness increased slightly from the ads, the celebrities received more attention than did the vehicles, and studies showed that two-thirds of potential automotive buyers in the United States were unaware of the brand. Moreover, the rational-based advertising appeals failed to move the sales needle, so Subaru of America management knew it was time for a change.

When Carmichael Lynch took over the account, the agency began doing research to understand why automotive customers were not considering nor buying Subarus. While awareness was a problem, they also learned that those who were aware did not know enough about the brand to form the favorable attitudes that would lead to consideration and ultimately, purchase. However, a major insight came when research was conducted among existing owners that asked why they did purchase Subarus. Typically, the answers revolved around rational motives such as safety, quality, all-wheel drive, and other factors that were mentioned in ads for the brand. However, the majority of the owners would answer the same way by expressing their strong affection and devotion to the brand and how much they *loved* it. The insight gained from the research was the impetus for a new campaign developed by the agency using the tagline: “Love. It’s what makes a Subaru a Subaru.”

Rather than focusing on logical reasons for buying a vehicle, such as product attributes and benefits, the “Love” campaign tugs at the heartstrings of car buyers. The commercials used in the campaign show friends going on camping trips in their Subaru and memories and experiences families have had with a Subaru, such as handing down the car to their children, sending them off to college, and surviving an accident because of the safety features of a Subaru. The “Love” campaign has tied together the attributes Subaru had been highlighting for decades in its advertising but were not really resonating with consumers. However, the campaign has clearly helped Subaru develop an emotional bond with car buyers; for people who have seen the “Love” ads, awareness goes up by 27 points, familiarity triples, and opinions of Subaru vehicles goes up by 400 percent.



Source: Subaru of America, Inc.

In addition to advertising, the “Love” campaign has also become the umbrella for other integrated marketing efforts for Subaru, including promotions, sponsorships, corporate- and dealer-owned media, and cause-related marketing. Subaru became a major sponsor of Animal Planet’s Puppy bowl, which broadcasts pups frolicking around a football-like field on Super Bowl Sunday, after research showed that 60 percent of Subaru owners also have dogs. The theme is also used in a charitable campaign called “Share the Love,” which Subaru has run at the end of every year since 2008. Rather than using year-end discounts and rebates, Subaru donates \$250 to charities for every car sold during December and has contributed more than \$120 million over the past decade.

So can all of Subaru’s success over the past decade be attributed to a great advertising campaign? Subaru of America’s director of corporate communication notes that everything has gotten better over this time period, including the dealerships, the showrooms, the service, and the vehicles, which are now more suited for the American market. However, several Subaru marketing executives make a strong argument that the answer to the question is “yes.” As one notes: “Love is the most powerful emotion and ‘I Love my Subaru’ is the most used phrase I hear about our brand. Indeed, it is ‘Love that makes a Subaru a Subaru’ and what makes people buy them.”

Sources: Diana T. Kurylko, "How Subaru Marketing Found the 'Love,'" *Automotive News*, February 12, 2018, <https://www.autonews.com/article/20180212/RETAIL03/180219982/how-subaru-marketing-found-the-love>; Jake Holmes, "How 'Love' Helped Kick-Start Subaru Sales in the U.S.," *motor1.com*, April 17, 2017, <https://www.motor1.com/news/142732/subaru-love-ad-campaign/>; Steve Olenski, "Subaru: The 50-Year-Old Brand Built on Love," *Forbes.com*, June 29, 2017, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/steveolenski/2017/06/29/subaru-the-50-year-old-brand-built-on-love/#3836f2f38724>.

Teaser ads also are often used for new movies or TV shows and for major product launches. They are especially popular among automotive advertisers for introducing a new model or announcing significant changes in a vehicle. A study by Thorbjorsen and his colleagues found that online teaser advertising pre-announcing a new product is more effective in generating product interest and positive word of mouth than merely advertising a new product at the time of launch.¹⁸ While teaser campaigns can generate interest in a new product, advertisers must be careful not to extend them too long or they will lose their effectiveness. As one advertising executive says, "Contrary to what we think, consumers don't hold seminars about advertising. You have to give consumers enough information about the product in teaser ads to make them feel they're in on the joke."¹⁹

Another form of advertising that is becoming increasingly popular is **user-generated content (UGC)**, whereby ads are created by consumers rather than by the company and/or its agency.²⁰ A number of marketers have developed contests that involve having consumers create ads and submit them for consideration. Frito-Lay was one of the first marketers to use UGC on a major level when it sponsored a "Crash the Super Bowl" creative competition and ran a user-generated ad during the big game that was entirely conceived and produced by amateurs rather than advertising professionals. A number of other marketers have made UGC part of their advertising campaigns by using TV commercial or print ads that have been crowdsourced.

The growth of social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Snapchat, and Instagram has led many marketers to use user-generated content material such as pictures, videos, and stories as part of their integrated marketing campaigns.²¹ For example, Ben & Jerry's uses UGC as a source of inexpensive, authentic marketing content by incorporating images of its products that were tagged on social media by its customers into its website, blog, newsletter, and various social media sites such as Facebook and Instagram. Disney also began using UGC a few years ago with its #ShareYourEars campaign, which encouraged people to share photos of themselves, friends, and family wearing Mickey Mouse ears (Exhibit 9–11). The company made the campaign part of a cause-related marketing effort by pledging a \$5 donation to the Make-a-Wish Foundation for each participant in the campaign. Disney originally put a \$1 million cap on the campaign, but the tremendous response led the company to double the amount to \$2 million. As was discussed in Chapter 5, UGC is often utilized in viral marketing campaigns as a way of increasing consumer involvement with a brand and encouraging them to share information and experiences related to it with friends.

XHIBIT 9–11

Disney's #ShareYourEars campaign is an example of the effective use of user-generated content.

Source: Disney/Instagram, Inc.



Many ads are not designed to sell a product or service but rather to enhance the image of the company or meet other corporate goals such as soliciting investment or recruiting employees. These are generally referred to as corporate image advertising and are discussed in detail in Chapter 17.

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Advertising Execution

LO 9-2

Once the specific advertising appeal that will be used as the basis for the advertising message has been determined, the creative specialist or team begins its execution. *Creative execution* is the way an advertising appeal is presented. While it is obviously important for an ad to have a meaningful appeal or message to communicate to the consumer, the manner in which the ad is executed is also important.

One of the best-known advocates of the importance of creative execution in advertising was William Bernbach, founder of the Doyle Dane Bernbach agency. In his famous book on the advertising industry, *Madison Avenue*, Martin Mayer notes Bernbach's reply to David Ogilvy's rule for copywriters that "what you say in advertising is more important than how you say it." Bernbach replied, "Execution can become content, it can be just as important as what you say. A sick guy can utter some words and nothing happens; a healthy vital guy says them and they rock the world."²² Bernbach was one of the revolutionaries of his time who changed advertising creativity on a fundamental level by redefining how headlines and visuals were used, how art directors and copywriters worked together, and how advertising could be used to arouse feelings and emotions.

An advertising message can be presented or executed in numerous ways. We will examine the following most frequently used execution approaches:

- Straight-sell or factual message

- Scientific/technical evidence
- Demonstration
- Comparison
- Testimonial
- Slice of life
- Animation
- Personality symbol
- Imagery
- Dramatization
- Humor
- Combinations

Straight-Sell or Factual Message One of the most basic types of creative executions is the straight-sell or factual message. This type of ad relies on a straightforward presentation of information concerning the product or service. The execution is often used with informational/rational appeals, where the focus of the message is the product or service and its specific attributes and/or benefits.

Straight-sell executions are commonly used in print ads. A picture of the product or service occupies part of the ad, and the factual copy takes up the rest of the space. They are also used in TV advertising, with an announcer generally delivering the sales message while the product/service is shown on the screen. Ads for high-involvement consumer products as well as industrial and other business-to-business products generally use this format. Straight-sell advertising executions are often used for various types of consumer products and services as well and can be very effective when done creatively. For example, personal care products such as shampoos, deodorants, and cosmetics often use straight-sell executions that focus on the problem a product can solve for a consumer by using it. The ad shown in Exhibit 9–12 for L’Oréal’s ELVIVE Total Repair 5 balm is a good example of a straight-sell execution because the copy discusses how use of the product can help repair damaged hair.

XHIBIT 9–12

This ad for ELVIVE Total Repair 5 uses a straight sell execution.

ource: L'Oreal International



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Scientific/Technical Evidence In a variation of the straight sell, scientific or technical evidence is presented in the ad to support performance or efficacy claims. Advertisers often cite technical information, results of scientific or laboratory studies, or endorsements by scientific bodies, doctors or agencies to support their advertising claims. For example, an endorsement from the American Council on Dental Therapeutics on how fluoride helps prevent cavities was the basis of the campaign that made Crest the leading brand of toothpaste. The ad for Alcon's Opti-Free multipurpose disinfecting solution for contact lens care treatment shown in Exhibit 9–13 uses this execution style by noting how the product is the number 1 doctor-recommended brand and how its performance is driven by science.

XHIBIT 9–13

Opti-Free promotes how it is the number 1 doctor-recommended brand to support the product performance claim.

Source: Alcon, A Novartis Company

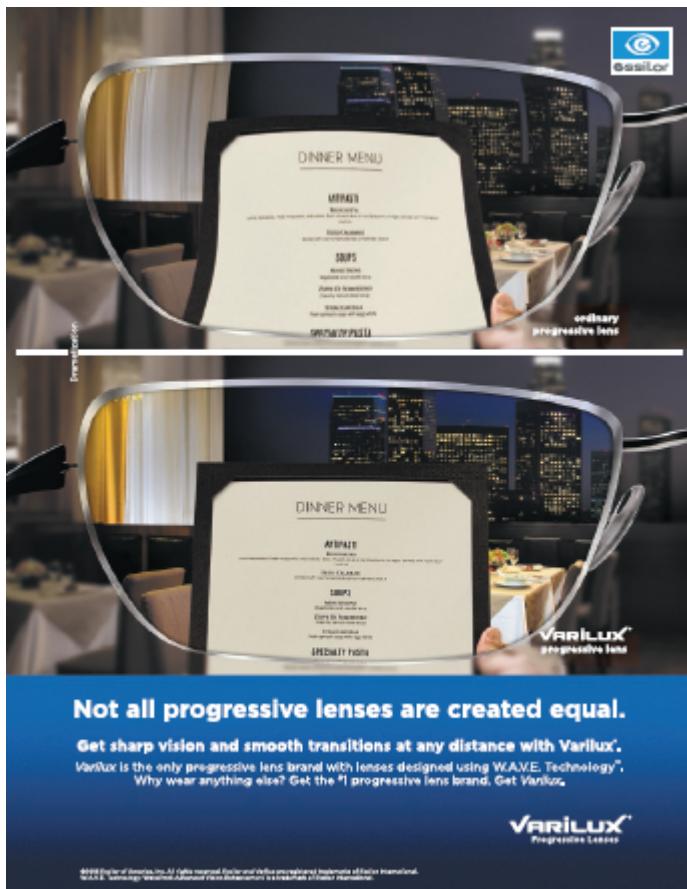


Demonstration Demonstration advertising is designed to illustrate the key advantages of the product/service by showing it in actual use or in some staged situation. Demonstration executions can be very effective in convincing consumers of a product's utility or quality and of the benefits of owning or using the brand. TV and online videos are particularly well suited for demonstration executions, since the benefits or advantages of the product can be shown on the screen using sight, sound, and motion. Although perhaps a little less dramatic than TV, demonstration ads can also work in print. The ad for Varilux Progressive Lenses shown in Exhibit 9–14 is an excellent example of the use of this technique. The ad shows the superiority of its progressive lens with W.A.V.E. technology over ordinary progressive lens by contrasting the clarity of the two images. The company also uses demonstrations in TV and online ads.

XHIBIT 9-14

This Varilux ad is an effective way to demonstrate the superiority of its progressive lenses.

Source: *Varilux by Essilor of America*



Comparison Brand comparisons can also be the basis for the advertising execution. The comparison execution approach is increasingly popular among advertisers, since it offers a direct way of communicating a brand's particular advantage over its competitors or positioning a new or lesser-known brand with industry leaders. Comparison executions are often used to execute competitive advantage appeals, as discussed earlier.

Testimonial Many advertisers prefer to have their messages presented by way of a testimonial, where a person praises the product or service on the basis of his or her personal experience with it. Testimonial executions can have ordinary satisfied customers discuss their own experiences with the brand and the benefits of using it. This approach can be very effective when

the person delivering the testimonial is someone with whom the target audience can identify or who has an interesting story to tell. The testimonial must be based on actual use of the product or service to avoid legal problems, and the spokesperson must be credible.

A number of marketers, such as weight-loss companies, use testimonials to advertise their products, services, and programs. For example, Jenny Craig uses television commercials, online videos, and print ads featuring ordinary consumers discussing how they have been able to lose weight by following the company's programs. Exhibit 9–15 shows a testimonial from a person who lost weight using the Jenny Craig program. Her testimonial is one of many that appear on the Jenny Craig website and social media pages.

XHIBIT 9–15

Jenny Craig uses testimonials to advertise its weight-loss program.

Source: Jenny Craig, Inc.



A related execution technique is the *endorsement*, where a well-known or respected individual such as a celebrity or expert in the product or service area speaks on behalf of the company or the brand. When endorsers promote a company or its products or services, the message is not necessarily based on their personal experiences.

Slice of Life A widely used advertising format, particularly for consumer products and services, is the slice-of-life execution, which is generally based on a problem–solution approach. This type of execution portrays a problem or conflict that consumers might face in their daily lives. The ad then shows how the advertiser’s product or service can resolve the problem.

Slice-of-life or problem–solution execution approaches are not limited to consumer-product advertising. Many business-to-business marketers use this type of advertising to demonstrate how their products and services can be used to solve business problems.²³ Some business-to-business marketers use a variation of the problem–solution execution that is sometimes referred to as *slice-of-death advertising*.²⁴ This execution style is used in conjunction with a fear appeal, as the focus is on the negative consequences that result when businesspeople make the wrong decision in choosing a supplier or service provider. For example, FedEx used this type of advertising for nearly three decades through humorous but to-the-point commercials that show what might happen when important packages and documents aren’t received on time.

Execution is critical in using the technique effectively, as these ads are designed to be dramatizations of a supposedly real-life situation that consumers might encounter. Getting viewers to identify with the situation and/or characters depicted in the ad can be very challenging. Since the success of slice-of-life ads often depends on how well the actors come across and execute their roles, professional actors are often used to achieve credibility and to ensure that the commercial is of high quality. Smaller companies and local advertisers often do not have ad budgets large enough to hire the talent or to pay for the production quality needed to effectively create slice-of-life spots. Thus, this execution technique is more likely to be used by companies with ad budgets that are large enough to fund the use of professional talent and production of quality commercials.

Many marketers like to use the slice-of-life genre because they believe it can be an effective way of addressing a problem or issue and offering a solution. Slice-of-life commercials can also be used as an effective way to execute humor appeals. For example, the most popular commercial during a recent Super Bowl was a humorous ad for the Hyundai Genesis automobile featuring actor/comedian Kevin Hart. In the “First Date” spot, Hart plays an

overprotective father who lends his new Genesis—equipped with Hyundai's Blue Link Finder feature—to his daughter's date so he can track the couple's whereabouts throughout the night. The ad includes various scenes showing Hart spying on the couple such as when he puts his arm around her in a movie theater and wins her a prize at a carnival. The funniest scene shows the Genesis parked at a scenic spot overlooking the city and Hart stopping the boy from kissing his daughter while suspended from a helicopter and yelling: "You're messing with the wrong daddy!" The boy decides to take the girl home early and the spot ends with him nervously returning the keys to the father while the daughter angrily walks into the house, and Hart smiles and asks, "Honey, what did you guys do tonight?" (see Exhibit 9–16).

XHIBIT 9–16

Hyundai uses a humorous slice-of-life execution for its popular "First Date" commercial.

Source: Hyundai Motor America



Animation An advertising execution approach that has become popular in recent years is animation. With this technique, animated scenes are drawn by artists or created on the computer, and cartoons, puppets, or other types of fictional characters may be used. Cartoon animation is especially popular for commercials targeted at children. Animated cartoon characters have also been used in many campaigns, including Green Giant vegetables (the Jolly Green Giant) and Keebler cookies (the Keebler elves). Kraft Foods revitalized its Mr. Peanut character a few years ago to make him more

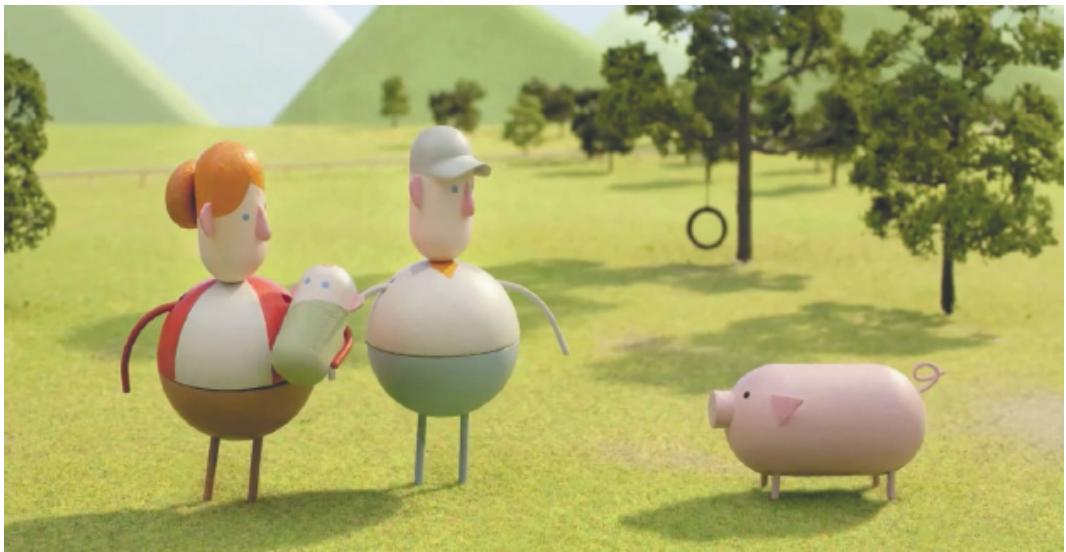
appealing to young consumers. They ran animated commercials with actor Robert Downey Jr. and, later, Bill Hader of *Saturday Night Live* doing the voice of Mr. Peanut.²⁵

A number of major marketers use animation for TV commercials, online videos, or short films. For example, as discussed in Chapter 1, Procter & Gamble has been using the animated bears in commercials for Charmin toilet tissue for nearly two decades. Chipotle has also used computer-generated animation to create short films as part of its “Food With Integrity” campaign, including the award-winning “Back to the Start” spot. The two-minute short film depicts the life of a farmer as he slowly turns his family farm into an industrial animal factory. He soon sees the errors of his ways and realizes the benefits of sustainable farming and turns it back (Exhibit 9–17). The spot ran online, in movie theaters, and as Chipotle’s first national TV ad, and it won the Grand Prix and Gold Lion awards at the Cannes International Advertising Festival. It was also named one of the top 15 commercials of the 21st century by *Advertising Age*. Chipotle built on the success of “Back to the Start” by developing several other animated short films that generated a large amount of earned media attention and were widely shared on social media.²⁶ The use of animation as an execution style may increase as creative specialists find more ways to use computer-generated graphics and other technological innovations.²⁷

XHIBIT 9–17

This “Back to the Start” Cannes Lions Film Grand Prix Winner for the Chipotle Cultivate Foundation uses computer-generated animation.

Source: Chipotle and Cannes Lions International Advertising Festival Winner



Personality Symbol Another type of advertising execution involves developing a central character or personality symbol that can deliver the advertising message and with which the company or brand can be identified. This character can be a person, like the iconic Mr. Whipple, who asked shoppers, “Please don’t squeeze the Charmin,” or the Maytag repairman, who sits anxiously by the phone but is never needed because the company’s appliances are so reliable. As discussed in the chapter opener, over the past decade several companies have developed successful advertising campaign that use personality symbols for the company or brand, including Progressive insurance, Dos Equis beer, and KFC (Exhibit 9–18.)

XHIBIT 9–18

KFC has brought back Colonel Sanders as a personality symbol for the brand.

Source: KFC Corporation



Personality figures can also be built around animated characters and animals. As discussed in Chapter 5, personality symbols such as the Pillsbury doughboy, Tony the Tiger, and Charlie the Tuna have been used for decades to promote Pillsbury's refrigerated dough products, [page 302](#) Kellogg's Frosted Flakes, and Star-Kist tuna, respectively. Other popular personality symbols that have been used more recently include the Energizer Bunny, Mr. Clean, GEICO insurance's gecko, and the Burger King character. One of the most popular and effective advertising personality symbols has been the Aflac duck, which has been very successful in raising awareness, as well as sales, for the supplemental insurance company over the past two decades.²⁸ Aflac has even integrated the duck into the company's redesigned corporate logo to take advantage of the tremendous equity that has resulted from the ads featuring the character.

Imagery You have probably noticed that some ads contain little or no information about the brand or company and are almost totally visual. These advertisements use imagery executions whereby the ad consists primarily of visual elements such as pictures, illustrations, and/or symbols rather than information. An imagery execution is used when the goal is to encourage consumers to associate the brand with the symbols, characters, and/or situation shown in the ad. Imagery ads are often the basis for emotional appeals that are used to advertise products or services where differentiation based on physical characteristics is difficult, such as soft drinks, liquor, designer clothing, and cosmetics. However, image is important for all types

of products and services, as marketers want the target audience to hold a favorable set of psychosocial associations for their company or brand.

An imagery execution may be based on *usage imagery* by showing how a brand is used or performs and the situation in which it is used. For example, advertising for trucks and SUVs often shows the vehicles navigating tough terrain or in challenging situations such as towing a heavy load. An excellent example of usage imagery is the award-winning outdoor ad for Michelin tires shown in Exhibit 9–19. This clever ad shows the arm of the iconic “Michelin Man” helping an SUV make it up a hill in the snow. Usage imagery executions are also often used in the marketing of services as well as experiences such as hotels and destination resorts to show favorable images related to the use of a company’s service offering. This type of execution can also be based on *user imagery* where the focus is on the type of person who uses the brand. Advertising for products such as cosmetics, jewelry, and designer clothing often rely on user image by associating the brand with the characteristics of the person shown in the ad. The image can be based on factors such as the lifestyle, values, personality, or other characteristics of the user of the brand. Image executions rely heavily on visual elements such as photography, color, tonality, and design to communicate the desired image to the consumer. The ad for Yes To natural skin care products shown in Exhibit 9–20 is a good example of advertising based on user imagery. The Lambesis agency created the “Yes To You” campaign with the goal of creating a fun, playful, and irreverent image for the brand that breaks through standard conventions of natural skin care. This campaign includes a series of banner ads and videos used online and in social media to engage viewers by asking the question, “What do you say yes to?” and showing users of the brand in playful behaviors. Marketers who rely on image executions have to be sure that the usage or user imagery with which they associate their brand evokes the right feelings and reactions from the target audience.

XHIBIT 9–19

This outdoor ad for Michelin utilizes usage imagery to promote the superior traction of its tires in the snow.

Source: Michelin North America Inc.



XHIBIT 9-20

Advertising for Yes To creates a fun and irreverent image for the brand.

Source: YES TO, Inc.



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Dramatization Another execution technique particularly well suited to television is dramatization, where the focus is on telling a short story with the product or service as the star. Dramatization is somewhat akin to slice-of-life execution in that it often relies on the problem–solution approach, but it uses more excitement and suspense in telling the story. The purpose of using drama is to draw the viewer into the action it portrays. Advocates of drama note that when it is successful, the audience becomes lost in the story and experiences the concerns and feelings of the characters.²⁹ According to Sandra Moriarty, there are five basic steps in a dramatic commercial:

First is exposition, where the stage is set for the upcoming action. Next comes conflict, which is a technique for identifying the problem. The middle of the dramatic form is a period of rising action where the story builds, the conflict intensifies, the suspense thickens. The fourth step is the climax, where the problem is solved. The last part of a drama is

the resolution, where the wrap-up is presented. In advertising that includes product identification and call to action.³⁰

In his excellent book *Creative Advertising*, Mario Pricken lists several relevant questions that should be considered when telling a story through a dramatic execution: What everyday situations could you develop around the product to show its advantages in the best light? What sort of story could involve the product as best friend or partner? In what everyday situation could it attract attention in a provocative way? In what situation could it become a star, a lifesaver, or a helper? In what everyday story could it make people laugh? He also notes that there are a number of dramatic styles that might be best suited for telling the story. These include, but are not limited to, genres such as thriller, adventure, comedy, slapstick, love story, and documentary.³¹

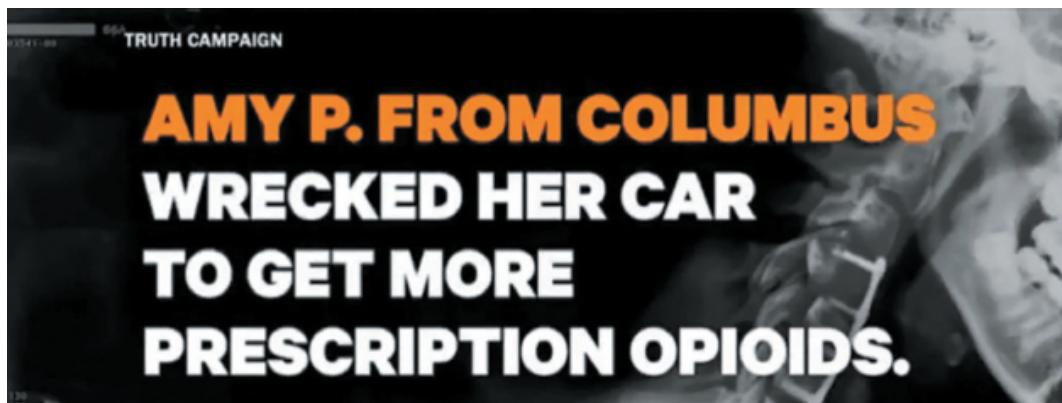
The challenge facing the creative team when using a dramatic execution is how to encompass the various elements and tell the story effectively in 30 seconds, which is the length of the typical commercial.

Many marketers are using dramatization as part of short films that can be viewed on their websites, as well as on various social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram. An example of the effective use of dramatization is the “Truth About Opioids” campaign created by the Truth Initiative, which is a nonprofit public health organization dedicated to preventing tobacco and drug use among young people. The campaign uses dramatic TV commercials, such a spot showing a young girl intentionally crashing her car into a wall and a construction worker slamming his arm in door to break his arm so they can get more prescription opioids. Each spot ends with a clear call to action, “Know the truth, spread the truth” (Exhibit 9–21). A second phase of the campaign uses a short film called Rebekkah’s story that focuses on a young woman’s withdrawal, treatment, and recovery from opioid addiction.³² The campaign is a collaboration among the Truth Initiative, the Office of National Drug Control Policy, and the Ad Council to prevent and reduce the misuse of opioids among youth and young adults, destigmatize addiction, and highlight the importance of treatment.

XHIBIT 9–21

The “Truth About Opiods” uses dramatization in commercials and videos to educate young people about the opioid crisis.

source: Rhode Island Department of Health



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IMC Perspective 9–2 >>>

DASANI: Designed to Make a Difference

For many years, the marketing battles in the beverage industry were fought over market share for carbonated soft drinks. During the latter decades of the 20th century, Coke and Pepsi traded salvos in the “cola wars” as the two brands dominated the market for soft drinks that have long been America’s most popular beverages. Up until the 1990s, bottled water was only a sliver of the U.S. beverage industry, and the market was dominated by upscale brands such as Perrier and Evian. However, during the last decade of the millennium, beverage consumption patterns were changing. Soft-drink sales began to stagnate while bottled water became the fastest-growing segment of the mass market beverage category. Beverage companies recognized that consumers were increasingly choosing healthy, convenient, zero-calorie bottled water over other beverages and were launching new products to grab a share of the market.

While the bottled water market was growing rapidly, The Coca-Cola Company was skeptical as to whether consumers would be willing to buy bottled water and remained focused on soft drinks and other beverages. But the success of Pepsi’s Aquafina, Nestle’s Poland Spring, and other brands in the fast-growing market finally moved the soft-drink giant to change course and enter the bottled water market. The Coca-Cola Company launched DASANI bottled water in 1999. Strong growth in the bottled water category, along with The Coca-Cola Company’s extensive distribution system, helped

the brand achieve 20 percent compounded growth through 2006 and become a \$1 billion brand in retail sales. However, by 2007 the marketing environment for bottled water was beginning to change. Mainstream brands such as DASANI, Aquafina, Arrowhead, and others had become more commoditized and began losing market share to private-label brands and enhanced water beverage brands such as vitaminwater®. The Coca-Cola Company found its DASANI brand stuck in the middle and being squeezed between premium, prestige brands such as smartwater®, Voss, Ethos, Fiji, and Evian, as well as low/value-priced private-label brands. The bottled water category was also facing environmental concerns with many consumers and retailers questioning the sheer number of brands on the market and the disposal of plastic bottles. By the end of the decade, Walmart and other major retailers began dropping DASANI and other mainstream brands of bottled water.

In 2009, The Coca-Cola Company retained Lambesis as the new advertising agency for the DASANI brand. Lambesis quickly recognized that its first challenge was to defend against the market squeeze from the high- and low-end brands, which required positioning DASANI bottled water as the most aspirational yet accessible mainstream brand. The bottled water category was dominated by competitors making taste claims as well as functional or wellness claims that proved to be difficult to credibly or successfully sustain. Research conducted as part of the strategic account planning process found that frequent bottled water users didn't think about "water" in terms of a bottled beverage, but instead as something that invigorates the mind, body, and soul. Based on these findings Lambesis developed an integrated marketing communications strategy to position DASANI bottled water as the feel-good, crisp-tasting companion that invigorates you—whenever, wherever—helping body and mind stay refreshed and feel good during all moments throughout the day.

Lambesis also recognized that the environmental concerns regarding bottled water also had to be addressed and could be a point of differentiation. Coca-Cola had created PlantBottle® packaging, a 100 percent recyclable bottle made from up to 30 percent plant-based material that was being used for some of its other beverages. The company was ready to reintroduce its DASANI brand in this new, more environmentally friendly bottle and knew that the launch had to make the brand likable and relevant to consumers as well as retailers. Lambesis decided that the relaunch campaign could serve the DASANI brand in two ways—by appealing to "light green" consumers who were seeking simple ways to be more environmentally conscious and by positioning the DASANI brand as a more premium brand in the highly competitive bottled water market. The agency created a fully integrated rebranding campaign that combined environmentally conscious messaging with premium high design to celebrate the DASANI brand, the PlantBottle packaging, and the brand's sustainability platform. A sleek and minimalist aesthetic was used throughout all of the creative work to reflect the pure, clean, refreshing feeling of water.

Print and outdoor advertising used for the campaign centered around an impactful image of natural plant life "growing" the PlantBottle packaging. Lambesis created an innovative print insert on 100 percent recycled paper with a peel-off plantable seeded paper leaf to showcase the environmentally conscious design of the packaging. Seeded leaf paper with eco-conscious messaging was also placed on products in retail stores to further communicate DASANI's commitment to sustainability. The integrated campaign also used television advertising; the first TV spot used bright, clean, nature-

inspired imagery to showcase the brand's commitment to being more sustainable and to portray DASANI bottled water as clean, crisp, and refreshing. A second spot was set to music from the classic Chubby Checker song "The Twist" and leveraged its enduring appeal to demonstrate to consumers how easy it is to twist and recycle the new PlantBottle packaging. The entertaining "Twist" spot ranked as the second most memorable commercial that aired during the Olympic Games in research conducted by Ace Metrix, rating higher than spots for companies and brands such as Nike, Samsung, and Old Spice that aired much more frequently.

The integrated campaign was very successful; it helped the DASANI line regain distribution in key retail accounts and positioned it as the mass prestige brand that stands out as the clear choice between higher-priced premium brands and lower-priced private-label options. Building on the successful repositioning of DASANI bottled water, The Coca-Cola Company decided to leverage the brand equity created through the excellent IMC campaign by introducing several line extensions. The first was DASANI DROPS, a zero-calorie flavor enhancer, which was followed by DASANI Sparkling, a carbonated water beverage.



This creative print ad was used to launch DASANI's new PlantBottle™ packaging

Source: Dasani by The Coca-Cola Company

The creative work done by the Lambesis agency helped propel DASANI bottled water from a brand that was struggling to avoid commodity status to the highest-ranked branded water in dollar volume. Moreover, bottled water has become the largest beverage category in the United States, with annual sales of nearly \$19 billion. The DASANI brands have also become an important part of The Coca-Cola Company's product portfolio as consumers continue to move toward healthy, convenient, and refreshing beverages. And as they do so, DASANI bottled water will be there to deliver pure, crisp taste with a clean, fresh style.

Sources: Rachel Arthur, "Bottled Water Is America's Favorite Drink!," *Beverage daily.com*, June 1, 2018, <https://www.beveragedaily.com/Article/2018/06/01/Bottled-water-takes-top-spot-in-US-in-2017>; personal communication with The Lambesis Agency; Elizabeth Whitman, "The Ad Campaign That Convinced Consumers to Pay for Water," *Priceonomics*, June 2016, <http://priceonomics.com/the-ad-campaign-that-convinced-americans-to-pay>.

Humor Like comparisons, humor was discussed in Chapter 6 as a type of advertising appeal, but this technique can also be used as a way of presenting other advertising appeals. Humorous executions are particularly well suited to television or radio, although some print ads attempt to use this style. The pros and cons of using humor as an executional technique are similar to those associated with its use as an advertising appeal. However, it is important to recognize that the success of humorous appeals often depends on how well they are executed. Advertising professor Charles Taylor notes that there are two fundamental factors that determine whether humorous appeals are effective—the concept and the execution—and it is the latter that is usually most important. For example, Taylor argues that the success of the Progressive insurance ads using Flo as a personality symbol are due, in large part, to how well the ads have been executed by the Arnold Worldwide agency.³³

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Combinations Many of the execution techniques can be combined to present the advertising message. For example, animation is often used to create personality symbols or present a fantasy. Slice-of-life ads are often used to demonstrate a product or service or as the basis for various types of emotional appeals. Comparisons are sometimes made using a humorous

approach. FedEx uses humorous executions of the slice-of-death genre depicting business people experiencing dire consequences when they use another delivery service and an important document doesn't arrive on time. It is the responsibility of the creative specialist(s) to determine whether more than one execution style should be used in creating the ad. IMC Perspective 9–2 discusses how a variety of execution styles were used in advertising for DASANI that helped make it the leading brand of bottled water.

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CREATIVE TACTICS

Our discussion thus far has focused on the development of creative strategy and various appeals and execution styles that can be used for the advertising message. Once the creative approach, type of appeal, and execution style have been determined, attention turns to creating the actual advertisement. The design and production of advertising messages involve a number of activities, among them writing copy, developing illustrations and other visual elements of the ad, and bringing all of the pieces together to create an effective message. In this section, we examine the verbal and visual elements of an ad and discuss tactical considerations in creating print ads and TV commercials.

Creative Tactics for Print Advertising

The basic components of a print ad are the headline, the body copy, the visual or illustrations, and the layout (the way they all fit together). The headline and body copy portions of the ad are the responsibility of the copywriters; artists, often working under the direction of an art director, are responsible for the visual presentation. Art directors also work with the copywriters to develop a layout, or arrangement of the various components of the ad: headlines, subheads, body copy, illustrations, captions, logos, and the like. We briefly examine the three components of a print ad and how they are coordinated.



LO 9-3

Headlines The **headline** is the words in the leading position of the ad—the words that will be read first or are positioned to draw the most attention. Headlines are usually set in larger type and are often set apart from the body copy or text portion of the ad to give them prominence. Most advertising people consider the headline the most important part of a print ad.

The most important function of a headline is attracting readers' attention and interesting them in the rest of the message. While the visual portion of an ad is obviously important, the headline often shoulders most of the responsibility of attracting readers' attention. Research has shown the headline is generally the first thing people look at in a print ad, followed by the illustration. Only 20 percent of readers go beyond the headline and read the body copy.³⁴ So in addition to attracting attention, the headline must give the reader good reason to read the copy portion of the ad, which contains more detailed and persuasive information about the product or service. To do this, the headline must put forth the main theme, appeal, or proposition of the ad in a few words. Some print ads contain little if any body copy, so the headline must work with the illustration to communicate the entire advertising message.

Headlines also perform a segmentation function by engaging the attention and interest of consumers who are most likely to buy a particular product or service. Advertisers begin the segmentation process by choosing to advertise in certain types of publications (e.g., a business, travel, or fashion magazine). An effective headline goes even further in selecting good prospects by addressing their specific needs, wants, or interests. For example, the headline in the UPS ad shown in Exhibit 9–22 is designed to appeal to small business owners who rely on daily deliveries to operate and serve their customers. The headline attracts attention by using an unlikely premise and draws people into the ad copy, which explains how UPS Accent Point locations serve more than 8,000 neighborhood businesses. The ad is part of the “United Problem Solvers” campaign that focuses on how UPS can solve problems for all types of customers ranging from small businesses to large enterprises.³⁵

XHIBIT 9–22

The headline of this UPS ad is designed to attract the attention of small business owners.

Source: United Parcel Service



Types of Headlines There are numerous headline possibilities. The type used depends on several factors, including the creative strategy, the particular advertising situation (e.g., product type, media vehicle[s] being used, timeliness), and its relationship to other components of the ad, such as the illustration or body copy. Headlines can be categorized as direct and indirect. **Direct headlines** are straightforward and informative in page 307 terms of the message they are presenting and the target audience they are directed toward. Common types of direct headlines include those offering a specific benefit, making a promise, or announcing a reason the reader should be interested in the product or service.

Indirect headlines are not straightforward about identifying the product or service or getting to the point. But they are often more effective at

attracting readers' attention and interest because they provoke curiosity and lure readers into the body copy to learn an answer or get an explanation. Techniques for writing indirect headlines include using questions, provocations, how-to statements, and challenges.

Indirect headlines rely on their ability to generate curiosity or intrigue so as to motivate readers to become involved with the ad and read the body copy to find out the point of the message. This can be risky if the headline is not provocative enough to get the readers' interest. Advertisers deal with this problem by using indirect headlines that are interesting enough to generate interest or curiosity as well as employing a strong visual appeal that will attract attention and offer a reason for reading more of the message. An excellent example of this is the ad for Kiwi shoe polish shown in Exhibit 9–23. The ad is one of a series from the “First Steps” campaign that explores the lives of American icons such as writer Ernest Hemmingway, nursing pioneer Florence Nigtingage, legendary football coach Vince Lombardi, and president Abraham Lincoln. The print ads feature long-form copy that explores the first steps that led to their amazing life stories, so a catchy headline is needed to attract attention and encourage people to read the message. For example, the ad shown here tells the story of former heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali and uses a clever headline that plays off of his outgoing personality. Ali often referred to himself as the “greatest” and was known for loving to talk, as well as taunting his opponents.

XHIBIT 9–23

This ad for Kiwi shoe polish uses an indirect headline that encourages people to read the body copy.

Source: S. C. Johnson & Son, Inc.

IF THESE SHOES COULD TALK, THEY'D NEVER STOP TALKING.

These aren't just any ordinary boxing shoes. These are Muhammad Ali's boxing shoes. These are the greatest shoes in the history of the world. The greatest shoes of all time. These shoes are original. They're one of a kind. The world has never seen shoes like these before. And never will again. These are the shoes that are too sick for those y'all. These are the shoes of a man who can prove what record he'll knock you down and then do it.

"These are the shoes of the man who claimed he could whip every single man in America. Every star in Russia. Every man in China. Every man in Japan. Every man in Europe. And them to do. These shoes say a lot about the man who wore them. And the man who wore them also sold a lot about the character and resilience. And he could take up everything he said. These shoes never wanted to be located by an underdog. They would only be won by the single greatest. The most confident. The one you couldn't lay a glove on. the knockout. the perfect. the most. the winner. scientific. established. fighter in training.

These shoes have the best and the cool for a greatness. You can't

convince that they are truly the best-talking shoes. They're the best-smelling shoes. Other shoes should be reserved for air pollution. These shoes never blow-off anyone. Hit with power. And when you take them off, they smell like a flower. Oh yeah, that's right, these shoes aren't just pretty, they're poetic. They have the class of an octopus, the style of a wimp. And just like their owner, they'll give you a kiss if you're nice.

They're strong like a lion. Flexible like a snake. And when the last fight, they're more like a sweater. All shoes had personality. They had class, obviously, they had taste. Sometimes they were black. Sometimes white. But they never had wants on them. No walls on these shoes. Because, like the boxer himself, no one could touch them. You think these are better shoes than cheer? Don't be ridiculous.

The shoes that can defeat Muhammad. Haven't ever been born yet. Muhammad Ali's shoes were known and notorious. They'd step into the ring, and a predator-like-pushing and spiking. That's the honest-to-goodness truth. And I ain't joking. These shoes supported the legend of Muhammad Ali. Another boxer's legs should see these shoes for encouragement.

These shoes helped Ali win the heavyweight championship of the world. Then they helped him win it again. And win it a third time. These are the shoes that proved the boxer would win the game. They fought the fight at the octopus. They ran in the jungle. Then fought a Triffid in Ireland. They drew a veteran in Africa. They got plenty in Kentucky. They got a boxer in Houston. Little opponents get caught at maturity. They extended his legs in Lewiston, Maine. They hit 'em hard in the Garden. They were definitely a-fighting in Canada. They fought an unwilling scenario in Toronto, Ontario. The question at the Pumas, the Ultimatum at the Mexican. They fought it like Goliath in Jaffa. And there, they brought the championship back home at the Superdome. They were cool like drivers of A1 time.

Muhammad Ali used these shoes, and other great shoes like the ones. He made huge strides that had never been taken before. Steps that have never been replicated. And steps that are still marveled at today.



Muhammad Ali
Boxing shoes, size 13 (1958)
Top shoes: stuffed and never washed fighting.



Subheads While many ads have only one headline, it is also common to see print ads containing the main head and one or more secondary heads, or **subheads**. Subheads are usually smaller than the main headline but larger than the body copy. Subheads are often used to enhance the readability of the message by breaking up large amounts of body copy and highlighting key sales points. Their content reinforces the headline and advertising slogan or theme. The ad for GEICO auto insurance shown in Exhibit 9–24 is a good example of the effective use of subheads to present a large amount of advertising copy and highlight the major points of the message.

XHIBIT 9–24

This GEICO ad uses subheads to make the copy easier to read as well as to highlight features and benefits.

Source: GEICO

"You could save hundreds by switching to GEICO."

WITH GEICO, IT'S EASY TO SAVE.

I'm here to save you money. Well...not really here in your kitchen, but you know what I mean.

People say to me, I don't have time to shop for car insurance. And I say to them, have you ever made \$500 in 15 minutes? Go to geico.com. Answer some quick questions and you get an accurate rate quote. You buy right then, or if you want, call 1-800-947-AUTO to buy over the phone. Either way, you could save \$500.

VALUE. IT'S SAVINGS AND SERVICE.

People know they could save hundreds. But what about GEICO's service? I tell people, GEICO isn't just about saving hundreds. There's also the 24/7 service with real live people. They're on the phones at all hours answering your questions. And you can also get the help you need at geico.com.

CLAIMS MADE EASY.

A friend gets into a small accident. Everyone is OK. When he gets home he goes to geico.com, reports the claim and schedules an appointment. Later he goes back to the website, prints out his estimate and views photos of the damage. He then goes to a GEICO-approved shop and his claim repairs are guaranteed for as long as he owns his car. Now that's what I call service.

DEPENDABILITY. IT'S THE GEICO WAY.

I get asked, how dependable is GEICO? They've been consistently protecting drivers and delivering great value for more than 70 years. That sounds dependable to me.

PROTECT LOTS OF THINGS WITH GEICO.

Sure, GEICO does cars. Everyone knows that. But, you could also save big when GEICO insures your motorcycle or ATV. Homeowner's and renter's insurance? GEICO can help you with those, and boats and PWCs, too.

LOOK, IT ALL MAKES A LOT OF SENSE.

It's easy to switch, so contact GEICO. You'll get the value and claim service all my mates love.

15 minutes could save you 15%.



GEICO
geico.com

1-800-947-AUTO
or call your local office.

Average savings based on GEICO Non-Policyholder Savings from January through February 2007. Some discounts, coverages, payment plans, and features are not available in all states or in all GEICO companies. GEICO Insurance Company • GEICO Indemnity Company • GEICO Casualty Company. These companies are not affiliated with the insurance companies. GEICO's auto, homeowners, renters, boat, and PWC coverage are written through non-affiliated insurance companies and are issued through Insurance Companies Inc., the GEICO Property Agency. The GEICO Gecko image © GEICO 1986–2007. GEICO Washington, DC 20076-02008-007 GEICO

©GEICO

Body Copy The main text portion of a print ad is referred to as the **body copy** (or sometimes just *copy*). While the body copy is usually the heart of the advertising message, getting the target audience to read it is often difficult. The copywriter faces a dilemma: The body copy must be long enough to communicate the advertiser's message yet short enough to hold readers' interest.

Body copy content often flows from the points made in the headline or various subheads, but the specific content depends on the type of advertising appeal and/or execution style being used. For example, straight-sell copy that presents relevant information, product features and benefits, or competitive advantages is often used with the various types of rational appeals discussed earlier in the chapter. Emotional appeals often use narrative copy that tells a story or provides an interesting account of a problem or situation involving the product.

Advertising body copy can be written to go along with various types of creative appeals and executions—comparisons, price appeals,

demonstrations, humor, dramatizations, and the like. Copywriters choose a copy style that is appropriate for the type of appeal being used page 308 and effective for executing the creative strategy and communicating the advertiser's message to the target audience.

Visual Elements The third major component of a print ad is the visual element. The illustration is often a dominant part of a print ad and plays an important role in determining its effectiveness. The visual portion of an ad must attract attention, communicate an idea or image, and work in a synergistic fashion with the headline and body copy to produce an effective message. In some print ads, the visual portion of the ad is essentially the message and thus must convey a strong and meaningful image. For example, the ad shown in Exhibit 9–25 uses a whimsical visual image to promote the new, redesigned Honda Civic. The print ad was part of a campaign designed to go inside the head of a Honda engineer and provide insight into the thinking process of designing a car. The simple line of copy at the bottom reinforces the message presented by the visual image.

XHIBIT 9–25

This ad uses a clever visual image to provide insight into the process of designing the new Honda Civic.

Source: American Honda Motor Co., Inc. and Rubin Postaer and Associates



Many decisions have to be made regarding the visual portion of the ad: what identification marks should be included (brand name, company or trade name, trademarks, logos); whether to use photos or hand-drawn or painted illustrations; what colors to use (or even perhaps black and white or just a splash of color); and what the focus of the visual should be.

Layout While each individual component of a print ad is important, the key factor is how these elements are blended into a finished advertisement. A **layout** is the physical arrangement of the various parts of the ad, including the headline, subheads, body copy, illustrations, and any identifying marks. The layout shows where each part of the ad will be placed and gives guidelines to the people working on the ad. The layout helps the copywriter determine how much space he or she has to work with and how much copy should be written. It can also guide the art director in determining the size and type of photos.

While the layout of a print ad is often straightforward, some creative executions can be challenging but also provide marketers with a very effective way to deliver a branding message. For example, The Lambesis Agency created a unique print ad for DASANI purified water that was part of an integrated campaign designed to communicate the Earth-inspired design for the brand's new bottle. The ad, which is shown in IMC Perspective 9–2, was used to launch the new PlantBottle™ packaging and included a peel-off plantable seeded paper leaf insert that helped enhance consumer perceptions of DASANI as being innovative and environmentally conscious. Layouts are often done in rough form and presented to the client so that the advertiser can visualize what the ad will look like before giving preliminary approval. The agency should get client approval of the layout before moving on to the more costly stages of print production.

Creative Tactics for Television

As consumers, we see so many TV commercials that it's easy to take for granted the time, effort, and money that go into making them. Creating and producing commercials that break through the clutter on TV and communicate effectively is a detailed, expensive process. On a cost-per-minute basis, commercials are the most expensive productions seen on television.

TV is a unique and powerful advertising medium because it contains the elements of sight, sound, and motion, which can be combined to create a variety of advertising appeals and executions. Unlike print, the viewer does not control the rate at which the message is presented, so there is no opportunity to review points of interest or reread things that are not communicated clearly. As with any form of advertising, one of the first goals in creating TV commercials is to get the viewers' attention and then maintain it. This can be particularly challenging because of the clutter

page 309 and because people often view TV commercials while doing other things (reading a book or magazine, talking).

Like print ads, TV commercials have several components. The video and audio must work together to create the right impact and communicate the advertiser's message.

Video The video elements of a commercial are what is seen on the screen. The visual portion generally dominates the commercial, so it must attract viewers' attention and communicate an idea, message, and/or image. A number of visual elements may have to be coordinated to produce a successful ad. Decisions have to be made regarding the product, the presenter, action sequences, demonstrations, and the like, as well as the setting(s), the talent or characters who will appear in the commercial, and such other factors as lighting, graphics, color, and identifying symbols.

Audio The audio portion of a commercial includes voices, music, and sound effects. Voices are used in different ways in commercials. They may be heard through the direct presentation of a spokesperson or as a conversation among various people appearing in the commercial. A common method for presenting the audio portion of a commercial is through a **voiceover**, where the message is delivered or action on the screen is narrated or described by an announcer who is not visible. A number of major advertisers have celebrities with distinctive voices do the voiceovers for their commercials.³⁶ Actor Morgan Freeman does the voiceover commercials for Visa, Patrick Dempsey does State Farm Insurance, and Hyundai has used actors Paul Rudd and Judd Apatow in some of its TV spots. Other celebrities who have been paid large sums of money to do voiceovers for commercials include Jon Hamm for Mercedes-Benz, George Clooney for Budweiser, Julia Roberts for Nationwide Insurance, Viola Davis for Delta Air Lines, and Bill Hader of SNL fame for Planters peanuts.

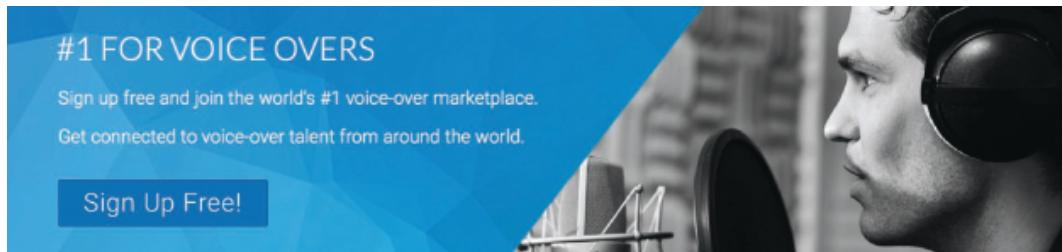
While some companies use celebrities or professionals to do the voiceover for their commercials, digital disruption is rapidly changing the voiceover industry as an online marketplace has emerged that connects voice actors to companies who need them. For decades voiceovers were done primarily by professionals who were members of the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) and often had agents represent them. However, today voice actors are setting up home studios by hooking up a microphone and mixer and marketing their services through companies such as Voices.com, Voice123.com, and others that connect companies with voiceover talent (Exhibit 9–26). Voice actors often still need agents and SAG membership for most of the high-paying jobs such as advertising campaigns done by major marketers.

However, many smaller companies are using online voice services for their commercials and videos.³⁷

XHIBIT 9–26

Companies such as Voices.com connect companies with voiceover talent.

Source: Interactive Voices Inc



Music is also an important part of many TV commercials and can play a variety of roles.³⁸ In many commercials, the music provides a pleasant background or helps create the appropriate mood. Advertisers often use **needledrop**, which Linda Scott describes as follows:

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Needledrop is an occupational term common to advertising agencies and the music industry. It refers to music that is prefabricated, multipurpose, and highly conventional. It is, in that sense, the musical equivalent of stock photos, clip art, or canned copy. Needledrop is an inexpensive substitute for original music; paid for on a one-time basis, it is dropped into a commercial or film when a particular normative effect is desired.³⁹

In some commercials, music is much more central to the advertising message. It can be used to get attention, break through the advertising clutter, communicate a key selling point, help establish an image or position, or add feeling.⁴⁰ For example, Honda's agency, RPA, integrated music very well into the TV commercial that was part of "The Dreamer" campaign for the newly designed Honda Civic, which included the print ad shown earlier in Exhibit 9–25. In the TV spot as the engineer designs the new Civic, the car

escapes from his imagination and goes on a magical journey around his workspace as the techno song “Walking on a Dream” by Empire of the Sun plays. The car drives across winding roads and past sun-splashed waterfalls before landing at the bottom of a rainbow slide.

Steve Oakes conducted a review and analysis of research on consumers’ cognitive and affective responses to music in advertising.⁴¹ He found that increased congruity between the music and advertising with respect to variables such as mood, genre, score, image, and tempo contributes to the communication effectiveness of an advertisement by enhancing recall, brand attitude, affective response, and purchase intention. Research has also shown that music can work through a classical conditioning process to create a positive mood that makes consumers more receptive to an advertising message.⁴² These studies underscore the importance of considering the mood induced by music and how it might influence responses to ads.

Because music can play such an important role in the creative strategy, many companies have paid large sums for the rights to use popular songs in their commercials. There are two kinds of works to which companies negotiate rights when licensing music for use in commercials. The *musical composition* includes the music notes and the words, while the *master recording* includes the voice(s) of the original artist.⁴³ The latter is usually much more expensive to buy, so advertisers will often negotiate for the rights to use the music and have it performed by someone with a similar voice. Rights to music can be held by various parties, such as the original artist, the artist’s estate, or a music publishing company. For example, the rights to songs done by the late reggae star Bob Marley are held by his estate, while the rights to songs by Michael Jackson are controlled by music publishing company Sony/ATV. An example of a commercial using a master recording is Google’s use of the classic Beatles song “Help!” as part of its “Here to Help” ad campaign, which launched in 2019. The campaign includes a 60-second commercial set to the Beatles’ song; it features user-generated content to show relatable, real-life moments where Google products and technology can help people in their everyday lives, such as getting directions to a destination or instructions on how to do something or finding a way around traffic (Exhibit 9–27). Google feels that the large amount of money paid to

license the soundtrack was worth it because it works so well with the theme of the commercial and campaign.

XHIBIT 9–27

Google licensed the master recording of the B song “Help!” for its “Here to Help” campaign.

Source: Denys Prykhodov/Shutterstock



Some advertising experts argue that music can account for as much as 50 percent of the effectiveness of a commercial and are encouraging their clients to invest in popular songs and soundtracks that can help them connect with their customers on an emotional level. They note that marketers who align themselves with popular songs and artists are often perceived as more cutting-edge and trendy, particularly if they are seen as exposing consumers to new artists and/or songs. There was a time when artists felt having their music used in commercials or creating songs for ads was “selling out.” However, most artists now recognize that it is more beneficial and lucrative to “sell in” and have become open to having their music used in commercials. Artists can clearly benefit from having their songs used in

commercials. For example, Apple often used music in its ad campaigns and is known for featuring songs by relatively obscure artists that benefit from the “Apple Bump,” as they become very popular once they appear in the company’s commercials. For example, a relatively unknown song, “Best Friend,” by dance music duo Sofi Tukker became very popular when it was used in a commercial for the iPhone X. So many songs have been used in Apple campaigns over the years that the editors at Apple Music page 311 recently curated a playlist titled “Heard in Apple Ads” that is available on Apple Music.⁴⁴

Some advertisers are willing to pay large amounts of money to use the voices of the original artists in their commercials. A recent study by Nielsen, “I Second That Emotion: The Emotive Power of Music in Advertising,” found that commercials with some form of music performed better across four important metrics—creativity, empathy, emotive power, and information power—than those that did not have music. The study notes that music can not only create a positive emotional response but can also help motivate consumers to buy a brand. For example, advertising for the HP × 360 tablet that featured Meghan Trainor’s hit song “Lips Are Movin” resulted in a 26 percent increase in sales among her fan base of teens and young adults. Ford Motor Co. also had great success with music when it licensed Rachel Platten’s hit “Fight Song” for use in commercials for its Edge SUV, as sales increased significantly after it began airing ads with the popular song.⁴⁵

Another important musical element in both TV and radio commercials is **jingles**, catchy songs about a product or service that usually carry the advertising theme and a simple message. For example, Subway Restaurants’s “Five-dollar foot-long” jingle has been an integral part of one of the most effective promotional campaigns ever developed in the fast-food industry. The catchy jingle (“Five. Five. Five dollar. Five dollar foot-long”) repeats the word *five* several times to help register the price of the product and help promote the value of the large sandwiches.⁴⁶ In 2016 Armour updated the jingle it had been using in its advertising since 1967 as part of a new campaign to update the image of its hot dogs and other meat products. The jingle originally ended with the line “Armour hot dogs, the dogs kids love to bite” and now ends “Armour great moms, the moms we love so much.”⁴⁷ Other popular jingles include those for Ace Hardware (“Ace is the place

with the helpful hardware folks”), Folgers coffee (“The best part of waking up is Folgers in your cup”), and Kay Jewelers (“Every kiss begins with Kay”).

In some commercials, jingles are used more as a form of product identification and appear at the end of the message. Jingles are often composed by companies that specialize in writing commercial music for advertising. These jingle houses work with the creative team to determine the role music will play in the commercial and the message that needs to be communicated.

While the use of jingles dates back to the 1950s, they are used less frequently today than in the past, as many advertisers are using licensed music in their ads. However, jingles are still commonplace in many of the television and radio commercials used by local advertisers; these companies view them as an effective way to keep their company name and/or slogan in the minds of their customers and prospects. The position of many advertisers regarding the use of jingles is perhaps best summed up by a Procter & Gamble brand manager who stated that the company believes jingles still work, noting that “if they are humming it, they are buying it.”⁴⁸

Planning and Production of TV Commercials One of the first decisions that has to be made in planning a TV commercial is the type of appeal and execution style that will be used. Television is well suited to both rational and emotional advertising appeals or combinations of the two. Various execution styles used with rational appeals, such as a straight sell or announcement, demonstration, testimonial, or comparison, work well on TV. Television is particularly well suited to emotional appeals such as humor, fear, romance, and fantasies, which are often executed using dramatizations and slice-of-life commercials.

Advertisers recognize that they need to do more than talk about, demonstrate, or compare their products or services. Their commercials have to break through the clutter and grab viewers’ attention, which is becoming increasingly difficult in today’s multitasking viewing environment.

Television is essentially an entertainment medium, and many advertisers recognize that their commercials are most successful when they entertain as well as inform. Many of the most popular advertising campaigns are characterized by commercials with strong entertainment value, like the engaging ads for Nike, McDonald's, Apple, and AT&T as well as humorous spots for companies/brands such as GEICO, Hyundai, and Budweiser/Bud Light.

Television commercials are an integral part of the IMC program for most marketers, particularly larger companies that are advertising their products and services to mass markets. However, the costs of planning and producing a TV commercial can be very high and must be considered as part of the budget for an advertising campaign. While it is possible to produce a commercial for a few thousand dollars (such as many spots that air for local retailers and businesses), marketers recognize that a poorly produced TV ad will not be effective and may have a negative impact on the company and/or brand's image. Thus, large amounts of money are often required to produce high-quality TV commercials. For 25 years a Television Production Cost Survey was done by the American Association of Advertising Agencies (4As) that provided an estimate of the average cost for producing a 30-second commercial for a national brand. However, the last survey done was nearly ten years ago and the cost data supplied by 10 agencies for 506 national commercials of varying length estimated the average cost to be \$354,000.⁴⁹ It is likely that the production costs for quality commercials have increased since the last 4As survey, particularly for major marketers who rely heavily on TV ads. Figure 9–2 shows an example of the production costs for a commercial that was produced for a major fast-food chain.

FIGURE 9–2

Production Costs for a 30-Second Television Commercial

Big Time Productions
1234 Production Place
Santa Monica, CA 90404

Bid Date 3/25/10	Firm Bid (x) Cost Plus Fixed Fee ()
Production Co: Big Time Productions	Agency: Awesome Ads
Address: 1234 Production Place	Address: 1234 Advertising Way
Santa Monica, CA 90404	Santa Monica, CA 90404
Telephone: (310)555-5555	Telephone: (310)555-5555
Fax: (310)444-4444	Fax: (310)444-4444
Job #: M10-340	Agency Prod: Ashley Producer
Director:	Agency Art Dir: Brian Artist
Executive Producer:	Agency Writer: Deborah Writer
Production Contact:	Agency Bus Mgr: Alan Business
DP:	Client: FAST FOOD CHAIN
Art Director:	Product: Sandwich, Burger,
Editor: Fine Edits	Bid Name:
Pre-Production	
Days:	
Build & Strike Days:	Commercial Title: _____ Length: _____
Pre-Light Days: One	1) "Delicious Sandwich" :30
Studio Shoot Days:	2) "Yummy Burger" :30
Location Days: Two Hours: 10 & 14	
Locations(s) Los Angeles	

SUMMARY OF PRODUCTION COSTS		TOTAL
PRE-PRODUCTION & WRAP		\$76,676
SHOOTING LABOR		\$93,901
LOCATIONS & TRAVEL		\$65,690
PROPS, WARDROBE & ANIMALS		\$18,670
STUDIO & SET CONSTRUCTION		\$88,056
EQUIPMENT		\$42,750
FILMSTOCK DEVELOP & PRINT		\$22,920
DIRECTOR/CREATIVE FEES		\$32,400
INSURANCE		\$12,288
PRODUCTION MARK UP		\$92,153
NEELEDROP MUSIC		\$2,000
EDITING		\$66,504
TALENT		\$33,905
		GRAND TOTAL
		\$647,913

There are many factors that contribute to the costs of producing a TV commercial, including production personnel, equipment, location fees, video editing, sound recording and mixing, music fees, and talent. Increases in television commercial production costs are a major concern among marketers, and many companies are looking for ways to reduce them. For example, a large expense item is talent costs, as actors who appear in commercials receive *residuals* that are based primarily on how many times a commercial airs. The Joint Policy Committee on Broadcast Relations, an advertising industry group that represents advertisers and agencies in bargaining with talent unions, negotiated a new compensation system that

will base pay for commercial actors on the size of the audience the spot reaches as well as the number of times it is run. In 2019, the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA) union and the Joint Policy Committee reached a new agreement on terms for successor television and audio commercial contracts that addresses changes occurring in the advertising industry, such as provisions for digital and social media.⁵⁰

The cost of producing the high-quality TV commercials and videos used by many marketers remains high. However, today marketers are producing a variety of video content in addition to TV commercials for use across a variety of platforms and are learning to do so more efficiently to control production costs. And marketers and their agency partners have gotten smarter over the years and have learned to produce video content more efficiently.

Planning the Commercial The various elements of a TV commercial are brought together in a **script**, a written version of a commercial that provides a detailed description of its video and audio content. The script shows the various audio components of the commercial—the copy to be spoken by voices, the music, and sound effects. The video portion of the script provides the visual plan of the commercial—camera actions and angles, scenes, transitions, and other important descriptions. The script also shows how the video corresponds to the audio portion of the commercial.

Once the basic script has been conceived, the writer and art director get together to produce a storyboard, a series of drawings used to present the visual plan or layout of a proposed commercial. The storyboard contains still drawings of the video scenes and descriptions of the audio that

 page 313 accompanies each scene. Like layouts for print ads, storyboards provide those involved in the production and approval of the commercial with a good approximation of what the final commercial will look like. In some cases an animatic (a videotape of the storyboard along with the soundtrack) may be produced if a more finished form of the commercial is needed for client presentations or pretesting.

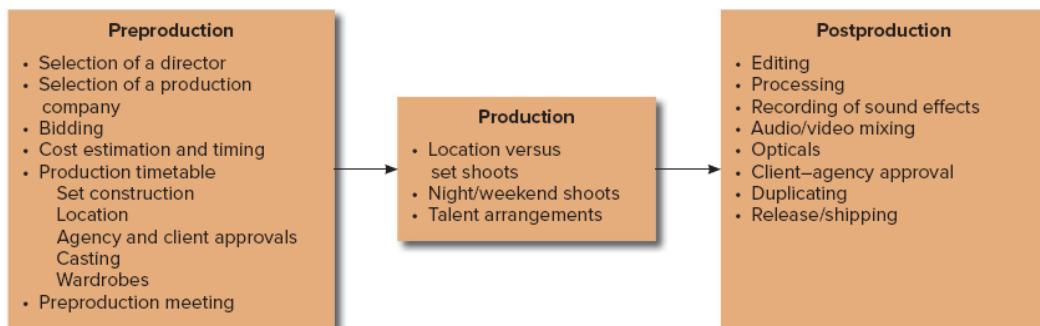
Production Once the storyboard or animatic of the commercial is approved, it is ready to move to the production phase, which involves three stages:

1. *Preproduction*—all the work and activities that occur before the actual shooting/recording of the commercial.
2. *Production*—the period during which the commercial is filmed or videotaped and recorded.
3. *Postproduction*—activities and work that occur after the commercial has been filmed and recorded.

The various activities of each phase are shown in Figure 9–3. Before the final production process begins, the client must usually review and approve the creative strategy and the various tactics that will be used in creating the advertising message.

FIGURE 9–3

The Three Phases of Production for Commercials



Creative Tactics for Online Advertising

While a great deal of attention has been given to advertising creativity over the years, much of the focus has been on its application to traditional forms of advertising such as print, television, radio or outdoor. However, marketers are allocating more of their media budgets to digital ads that appear [page 314](#) on websites, social media and mobile devices, which are creating a new set of challenges from a creative perspective. Compared to traditional media such as television or magazines, the Internet is a more goal-oriented

medium. Getting consumers to pay attention to, let alone engage or interact with, a digital ad is very difficult since doing so takes them away from the content on the web page or social media site they are visiting on their computers, tablets, or phones. Online ads often interrupt our viewing sessions, and unless they are providing relevant information and/or are very creative or entertaining, it is likely they will be ignored. Doubleclick, which is the display advertising division of Google, reports that the click-through rates (CTRs) for online display advertising across all format and placements is just 0.05 percent.⁵¹ Rich media such as video ads have the highest average click-through rate (0.1 percent) of all digital ad formats but the CTR is still very low. Moreover, many of the pre-roll ads shown prior to a video being viewed do not give the viewer the option to skip the advertisement and thus are often perceived as intrusive and annoying.

Role of Digital Ads A variety of digital advertising formats are available to marketers, including banner ads, search ads, interstitials, native ads, and videos. The type of online ad used by marketers will vary depending on the goal(s) they are trying to achieve. Peter Minnium of the Interactive Advertising Bureau notes that digital advertising is trifurcating into three types of advertising—concept, content, and commerce ads—and their use varies based on the goals and/or objectives the marketer is trying to achieve all along the purchase funnel.

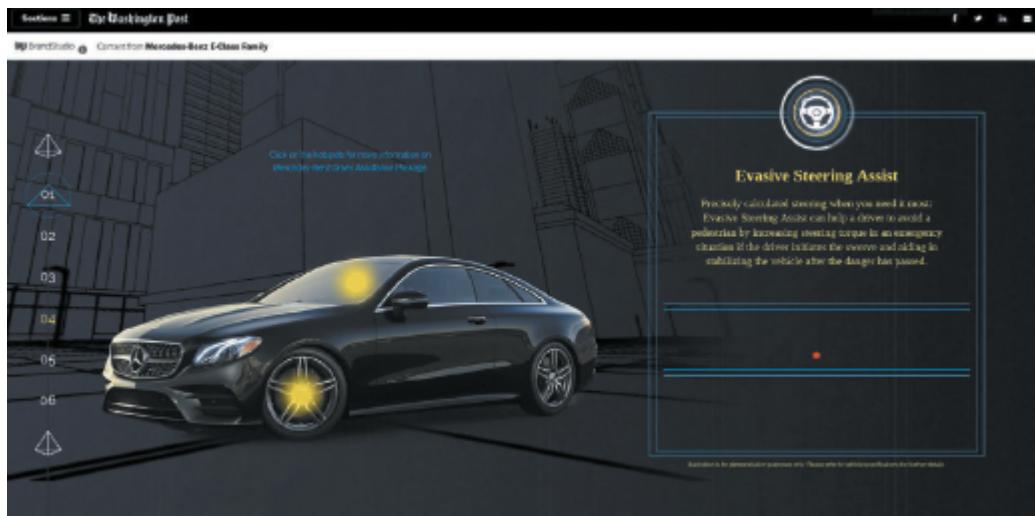
The goal of digital concept ads is to drive top-of-the-funnel goals such as awareness and interest, which can be achieved through banner ads or videos such as commercials. Content ads typically have a mid-funnel goal of enhancing consumers' knowledge or understanding of a product or service, which can be done by providing high-quality content with which the viewer can engage. Different types of online ads can be used to provide content such as videos, webisodes, in-feed ads to Facebook or Twitter with sponsored content, and native ads. **Native advertising** is a type of paid placement designed to fit seamlessly into the content that surrounds it. The design, content, and writing style of a native ad mirrors the nonpaid content around it, giving the user the impression that it really belongs. Native advertising is becoming a dominant form of content advertising, particularly in digital editions of magazines and newspapers. For example, Exhibit 9–28 shows an

ad from a native campaign run by Mercedes Benz called “The rise of the superhuman” that appeared in online edition of *The Washington Post*. To pique interest and engage readers, the native content used an interactive quiz with questions and hot spots the reader could click to get more information about various technologies that turn ordinary people into superhumans, such as virtual reality, robotic suits, and facial recognition. The content tied into information about the Intelligent Drive system in the Mercedes E-class automobile.

XHIBIT 9–28

Mercedes Benz developed a native advertising campaign in cooperation with *The Washington Post* to promote the Intelligent Drive system in the E-class automobile.

Source: Mercedes-Benz USA, LLC



The third form of digital advertising is commerce ads, which primarily have a bottom-of-the-funnel goal of getting consumers to take action and make a purchase. Commerce ads are the dominant form of display advertising, particularly retargeting types that follow consumers page 315 across the Web, and typically are not visually rich, as their success is based on serving the right offer to consumers and can be easily measured in terms of clicks and conversions. While digital advertising is discussed in more detail in Chapter 15, we will consider the creative issues associated with display ads and online videos, which are the dominant forms used by marketers.

Display Ads There are many different formats available for online display advertising. Many online display ads use large-size ad formats such as rectangular ads, horizontally oriented leaderboards, or skyscrapers that are vertically oriented and give advertisers the ability to place an ad adjacent to the website content. A study conducted by Dynamic Logic analyzed results from 4,800 online campaigns and found that the best-performing ad unit in terms of metrics such as brand awareness, recall, and purchase intent was the traditional pixel rectangular banner ad. The study also noted that ads surrounding content, such as well-worn skyscraper and leaderboard units, are the least effective, as people have developed “banner blindness.”⁵² Rectangular banner ads can be more effective because they are often closer to and interrupt the content, which means that as you read the information on the site, your eye naturally has to roll over the ad. However, ads that cover content are also among the most annoying online advertising formats.

In another study the company analyzed the highest and lowest performers from its database of more than 170,000 digital ads and found that creative factors such as persistent branding, strong calls to action, and the use of human faces result in better ad recall, brand awareness, and purchase intentions than do highly targeted or high-profile online ad placements. The results of the study support past research conducted by the company, which has shown that creative quality accounts for more than 50 percent of the success or failure of online advertising; factors such as ad size, technology, context, and targeting make up the remainder.

Critics argue that one of the major problems with online advertising is that it has been too focused on ubiquitous banner ads as marketers often try to build awareness and/or brand identity by simply buying large amounts of banner ads across myriad online platforms. A great deal of time and effort is devoted to optimizing media placement, retargeting, and measuring the effects of digital advertising campaigns, but less attention is given to creative considerations and the fundamentals of great advertising.⁵³ However, the domination of banner ads at the top or side of a page is weakening as new online display formats are being developed that are larger, richer, and take up more of a page, either initially or upon expansion. The Interactive Advertising Bureau refers to these new formats as “Rising Stars,” which

include ad unit formats such as billboard sidekicks and sliders as well as various video formats. One format that has become very popular is expanding pushdown ad units that push page content down rather than expanding over it, which helps address the annoyance issue. Exhibit 9–29 shows examples of these various formats.

XHIBIT 9–29

Online display ad formats.

Source: Cox Media, LLC

AD PLACEMENTS ON COX.COM



Although the design of most display ads is straightforward, there are certain rules and restriction that must be adhered to in order to page 316 avoid having them rejected. For example, display ads should be distinguishable from normal webpage content, and there are rules that restrict ads from having a white background without an outline border. Various social media sites such as Facebook have restrictions regarding banner ads,

which has a rule that ad images can contain only 20 percent text, including logos. The Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB), marketers, and online advertising networks have developed a range of display ad best practices. In 2017, the IAB released the “New Ad Portfolio” guidelines, which provide comprehensive recommendations for display advertising on websites, mobile apps, and social media as well as new digital experiences such as virtual reality and augmented reality (Exhibit 9–30). Before developing online display ads, marketers and/or their agencies must check with the ad networks and publisher to determine their specific requirements. These requirements also apply to the use of rich media such as online video, to which we now turn our attention.

XHIBIT 9–30

The Interactive Advertising Bureau developed the “New Ad Portfolio” guidelines for various forms of online advertising.

Source: IAB

The screenshot shows the homepage of the IAB New Ad Portfolio. The header is red with the text "IAB New Ad Portfolio". Below the header is a dark banner with white text that reads "Transition Now to the IAB New Standard Ad Unit Portfolio: Lightweight, Cross-Screen, and Flexible size ads that implement LEAN principles". Below the banner are icons representing different devices and technologies: a laptop, a tablet, a smartphone, a person wearing a VR headset, and a 360-degree camera. A descriptive paragraph follows, stating that the guidelines cover various digital landscapes and new experiences like VR and AR. It then lists the components of the portfolio: Display ads, Native ads, and New media experiences. Finally, it outlines three principles: Respect, Control, and Choice.

IAB New Ad Portfolio

Transition Now to the IAB New Standard Ad Unit Portfolio: Lightweight, Cross-Screen, and Flexible size ads that implement LEAN principles

The New Ad Portfolio guidelines developed by the IAB Tech Lab Ad Portfolio Working Group are comprehensive recommendations of advertising experiences across diverse digital landscape including websites, mobile apps, social media, communication, and messaging experiences as well as new digital experiences like virtual reality and augmented reality.

The IAB New Standard Ad Unit Portfolio ("IAB New Ad Portfolio") is comprised of:

1. Display ads
2. Native ads
3. New media experiences like Emoji ads, 360-degree image and video ads, Virtual reality ads and Augmented reality ads

It emphasizes on better user experience, faster load performance and non-disruptive ad content based on the following principles:

1. Respect: A consumer's primary objective is consuming publisher content
2. Control: A consumer has control over his/her advertising experience
3. Choice: A consumer decides what content he/she wants to experience and for how long

Online Video The use of online video advertising is growing rapidly and is part of the tremendous growth in the viewing of videos across all online platforms, including websites, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, and other popular social media sites. The use of video for online advertising can include multiple formats ranging from the airing of a digital video or commercial in a program streaming online to more customized formats for viewing on mobile devices. Online advertisers using video can choose from a number of options regarding the placement of the ad such as pre-roll, which runs before the piece of video content that is being viewed; mid-roll, which runs somewhere in the middle of the content; or post-roll, where the video plays at the completion of the content. They can also choose to use interactive ads that take over the full screen and preempt or pause the video content and allow a variety of interactions, like clicking for more information, signing up for a newsletter, or locating a store. These types of ads allow for further viewer engagement with the brand as well as interactivity that either expands in player or clicks out to an advertiser website. Different online advertising formats have also been developed as part of the IAB's "Rising Stars" program, such as control bars that allow viewers to share ads, watch extended versions, overlay videos with ad content, and more.

Creative decisions regarding online videos and ads are often similar to those for television as far as the type of appeal, execution style, and use of video and audio elements. However, online video advertising must consider other factors such as intrusiveness, length, and content. For example, most online video ads are inserted pre-roll and shown prior to the video being viewed and provide little or no options to skip the advertisement, which means they can interfere with intended viewer activity. A study by Goodrich, Schiller, and Galletta found that online ads that are perceived as intrusive had a negative impact on attitudes and intentions toward both the advertised brand and the host website and also resulted in higher abandonment of ad viewing.⁵⁴ Length of the online video or ad is also an important factor because consumers are likely to be annoyed by longer ad formats or abandon them if they have the option to do so, unless they find them as useful or entertaining. However, short-form commercials such as five-second spots may have trouble delivering a meaningful message.

Content is also an important consideration when creating online videos and advertisements. However, many creative directors note that the content of video ads that work well online is not that different from their TV counterparts. Videos and ads that provide relevant and/or valuable information are less likely to be perceived as intrusive and thus avoided. Emotional appeals often work better for longer videos, while humor can be very effective for online ads and perhaps have a greater page 317 likelihood of being shared. Marketers are recognizing that more attention has to be given to developing commercials and videos specifically for online use rather than simply uploading the same ads they use for television.

An excellent example of video advertising created specifically for use online is the “Unskippable” campaign developed by the Martin Agency for GEICO. The agency was well aware of research showing that more than 90 percent of people skip pre-roll video ads because the ads fail to hook them before they get a chance to press the skip button. To address this problem, the agency decided to develop ads specifically for use as pre-roll that put the emphasis on the first five seconds in a humorous way. The first ad in the “Unskippable” campaign was called “Family,” and it opens with a family eating dinner and the mother smiling and saying, “Don’t thank me, thank the savings.” After a few seconds, the video freezes and an off-screen voiceover tells viewers: “You can’t skip this GEICO ad because it’s already over.” Then, the GEICO logo appears and the mother, father, son, and daughter remain as frozen mimes (Exhibit 9–31). However, rather than signaling the end of the commercial, the logo actually signals the beginning of the spot and the humor begins as the family’s large Saint Bernard dog leaps up on the table and scarfs down everybody’s spaghetti for the remaining 45 seconds of the ad. The Martin Agency created additional pre-roll commercials for the “Unskippable” campaign using the freeze frame format. Many advertising critics argue that it was a landmark moment in advertising, when online video advertising took a turn for the better. The family dinner pre-roll ad earned numerous awards, including being selected as Best Ad Campaign of 2015 by *Adweek* and *Advertising Age*’s first ever Campaign of the Year Award in 2016.⁵⁵

XHIBIT 9–31

GEICO's "Unskippable" campaign used pre-roll video ads created specifically for use online.

Source: GEICO



Marketers will continue to spend more of their advertising budgets online since this is where their target audiences are spending their time. Moreover, many feel that the targeting and measurement capabilities of digital more than make up for the creative limitations of online advertising. However, it is also important for marketers to challenge their agencies to adopt and experiment with new types of formats and develop digital ads that are informative, entertaining, and/or engaging rather than continuing to bombard consumers with banner and/or video ads that they can easily avoid by clicking a mouse or button. Digital and Social Media Perspective 9–1 discusses the need for greater creativity in online advertising.

CLIENT EVALUATION AND APPROVAL OF CREATIVE WORK

LO 9-4

While the creative specialists have much responsibility for determining the advertising appeal and execution style to be used in a campaign, the client must evaluate and approve the creative approach before any ads are produced. A number of people on the client side may be involved in evaluating the creative work of the agency, including the advertising or communications manager, product or brand managers, marketing director or vice president, representatives from the legal department, and sometimes even the president or chief executive officer (CEO) of the company or the board of directors. The amount of input each of these individuals has in the creative evaluation and approval process varies depending on the company's policies, the importance of the product to the company, the role of advertising in the marketing program, and the advertising approach being recommended.

In many cases, top management is involved in selecting an ad agency and must approve the theme and creative strategy for the campaign. Evaluation and approval of the individual ads proposed by the agency often rest with the advertising and product managers who are primarily responsible for the brand. The account executive and a member of the creative team present the creative concept to the client's advertising and product and/or marketing managers for their approval before beginning production. A careful evaluation should be made before the ad actually enters production, since this stage requires considerable time and money as suppliers are hired to perform the various functions required to produce the actual ad.

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Digital and Social Media Perspective 9–1 > > >

The Need for More Creativity in Digital Advertising

Before reading this page, take a moment to click on the home page of a popular website on your computer or smartphone, spend a minute or so on the site as you might normally do, and then close it. Now answer this simple question: Do you recall the name of any company or brand that was advertising on the site? Chances are that few, if any, of the banner ads caught your attention, and it is extremely unlikely that you clicked on one of them. And, of course it is possible that you use an ad blocker to avoid being annoyed by the banner ads, pop-ups, and other formats used by marketers, so no ads appeared on the site. You might also think about the last time you went to YouTube to watch a video and a pre-roll ad appeared before the video started. Did you watch the commercial or quickly hit the skip button so you could get on with watching the video? Advertisers usually have less than five seconds on YouTube to convince someone that their ad is worth watching before they have the option to skip it; more than 90 percent of people skip pre-roll ads after that five-second mark.

While a great deal of attention has been given to advertising creativity over the years, much of the focus has been on traditional forms of advertising such as print, television, or outdoor. However, as marketers shift more of their advertising to online and social media, more attention needs to be given to creativity for digital advertising as well. Getting consumers to pay attention to, not to mention engage with, an online ad is very difficult because doing so takes them away from the content on websites or their social media page. Television and radio ads air during commercial breaks and do not compete for viewers' or listeners' attention during a program, while print ads often appear on separate pages of a magazine or newspaper and can easily be ignored by simply turning the page. However, online ads often interrupt our viewing sessions, and unless they provide information that is relevant and/or of interest to a consumer, it is likely they will be ignored.

Online advertising is often criticized for being too focused on ubiquitous banner ads, as well as on the targeting and measurement of them in terms of click-through rates. A great deal of effort focuses on optimizing media placement and measuring the effects of online advertising campaigns, but less attention is given to creative considerations. The digital marketing strategy of many marketers consists of buying and placing large numbers of banner ads across myriad websites and on social media, as well as retargeting ads to people who have shown some interest in the company/brand or product/service. Critics argue that marketers are enticed by the idea of cheap banner impressions and spend most of their resources on quantitative analysis, predictive measurement, and audience targeting while ignoring the fundamentals of great advertising. Adding to this problem is the vast supply of inventory and digital display space, most of which is purchased programmatically through online advertising exchanges.

Nearly a decade ago, Randall Rothenberg, CEO of the Interactive Advertising Bureau at the time, argued that advertising on the Internet has been "an unthinking hostage to a direct-marketing culture and tradition that devalues creativity and its long-term effect on brands" and called for a "creative renaissance" for online advertising. Many question the amount of progress we have seen over the past decade in making online ads more creative. They argue that the growth of digital and social media has lowered the bar and allows anyone to advertise, but such media have been accompanied by a decrease in the quality of online ads. Adding to the problem is that many marketers are having a digital, PR, or social media agency create a number of

ads very quickly using nothing more than free online tools such as Canva rather than engaging the creative team at advertising agencies to develop them. Moreover, companies with smaller marketing budgets are often encouraged not to overspend on video production and, rather than developing flashy creative concepts, to focus on simple ideas that are easy to execute and can help drive sales.

Many marketers and their agencies are responding to the call for creativity in the digital advertising they are developing. As discussed earlier, some such as GEICO are doing more than uploading the same commercial they run on TV and hoping that viewers will not hit the skip button. They are developing messages designed specifically for use on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, or various websites where consumers might encounter them. Some are using responsive design, whereby the size of the ad will change and take on different forms based on whether it is seen on a computer, tablet, or smartphone. Another emerging trend is the use of programmatic creative, whereby ads will have dynamic content that changes based on digital cues such as location, time, and device.

Marketers will continue to move their advertising to digital media because they know that this is where consumers they are targeting spend much of their time. Moreover, many feel that the targeting and measurement capabilities of digital media more than make up for the creative limitations of online advertising. However, it is also important for marketers to challenge their agencies to develop online ads that are entertaining and engaging rather than continuing to bombard consumers with more leaderboards, skyscrapers, banner ads, and/or video buttons to click.

Sources: Karen X. Cheng, "Common Video Marketing Mistakes," *Adweek*, April 8, 2019, p. 11; Peter Minnium, "The Future of Digital Advertising Creativity and How to Get Ready," *Marketing Land*, December 2, 2016, <https://marketingland.com/future-digital-advertising-creativity-199082>; Hernan Lopez "Why Interactive Advertising Needs a Creative Revolution," *Advertising Age*, June 15, 2009, p. 3.

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The client's evaluation of the print layout or commercial storyboard can be difficult, since the advertising or brand manager is generally not a creative expert and must be careful not to reject viable creative approaches or accept ideas that will result in inferior advertising. However, personnel on the client side can use the guidelines discussed next to judge the efficacy of creative approaches suggested by the agency.

Guidelines for Evaluating Creative Output

Advertisers use numerous criteria to evaluate the creative approach suggested by the ad agency. In some instances, the client may want to have the rough layout storyboard or animatic pretested to get quantitative information to assist in the evaluation. (Various methods for pretesting print ads and TV commercials will be discussed in Chapter 18.) However, the evaluation process is usually more subjective; the advertising or brand manager relies on qualitative considerations. The following are the basic criteria for evaluating creative approaches:

- *Is the creative approach consistent with the brand's marketing and advertising objectives?* One of the most important factors the client must consider is whether the creative appeal and execution style recommended by the agency are consistent with the marketing strategy for the brand and the role advertising and promotion have been assigned in the overall marketing program. This means the creative approach must be compatible with the image of the brand and the way it is positioned in the market. The approach should also be consistent with marketing and advertising objectives and contribute to building or maintaining brand equity.
- *Is the creative approach consistent with the creative strategy and objectives? Does it communicate what it is supposed to?* The advertising appeal and execution must meet the communications objectives laid out in the copy platform, and the ad must say what the advertising strategy calls for it to say. Creative specialists can lose sight of what the advertising message is supposed to be and come up with an approach that fails to execute the advertising strategy. Individuals responsible for approving the ad should ask the creative specialists to explain how the appeal or execution style adheres to the creative strategy and helps meet communications objectives.
- *Is the creative approach appropriate for the target audience?* Generally, much time has been spent defining, locating, and attempting to understand the target audience for the advertiser's product or service. Careful consideration should be given to whether the ad appeal or execution recommended will appeal to, be understood by, and communicate effectively with the target audience. This involves studying all elements of the ad and how the audience will respond to them. Advertisers do not want to approve advertising that they believe will

receive a negative reaction from the target audience. For example, it has been suggested that advertising targeted to older consumers should use models who are 10 years younger than the average age of the target audience, since most people feel younger than their chronological age.⁵⁶ Advertisers also face a considerable challenge developing ads for the teen market because teenagers' styles, fashions, language, and values change so rapidly. They may find they are using an advertising approach, a spokesperson, or even an expression that is no longer popular among teens.

- *Does the creative approach communicate a clear and convincing message to the customer?* Most ads are supposed to communicate a message that will help sell the brand. Many ads fail to communicate a clear and convincing message that motivates consumers to use a brand. While creativity is important in advertising, it is also important that the advertising communicate information attributes, features and benefits, and/or images that give consumers a reason to buy the brand.
- *Does the creative execution keep from overwhelming the message?* A common criticism of advertising, and TV commercials in particular, is that so much emphasis is placed on creative execution that the advertiser's message gets overshadowed. Many creative, entertaining commercials have failed to register the brand name and/or selling points effectively. For example, Aflac had to modify the commercials using its iconic duck character after several research studies showed that many consumers were not exactly sure what Aflac insurance was. [page 320](#) Consumers indicated that the advertising didn't explain what supplemental insurance is and what Aflac does, so recent ads focus more attention on explaining the product and the company.⁵⁷

With the increasing amount of clutter in most advertising media, it may be necessary to use a novel creative approach to gain the viewer's or reader's attention. However, the creative execution cannot overwhelm the message. Clients must walk a fine line: Make sure the sales message is not lost, but be careful not to stifle the efforts of the creative specialists and force them into producing dull, boring advertising.

- *Is the creative approach appropriate for the media environment in which it is likely to be seen?* Each media vehicle has its own specific

climate that results from the nature of its editorial content, the type of reader or viewer it attracts, and the nature of the ads it contains. Consideration should be given to how well the ad fits into the media environment in which it will be shown. For example, the Super Bowl has become a showcase for commercials. People who care very little about advertising know how much a 30-second commercial costs and pay as much attention to the ads as to the game itself, so many advertisers feel compelled to develop new ads for the Super Bowl or to save new commercials for the game. In some cases marketers may develop ads specifically for certain media vehicles such as magazines. For example, many of the ads run in the popular *Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Issue* that is published each May are adapted to fit with the theme of the magazine. Exhibit 9–32 shows an example of a clever ad for Snickers that appeared on the back cover of the annual SI swimsuit issue.

- *Is the ad truthful and tasteful?* Marketers also have to consider whether an ad is truthful, as well as whether it might offend consumers. For example, Bloomingdale's created a controversy during the holiday season a few years ago with an ad that appeared in the department store's holiday catalog. The ad featured a woman laughing and looking away as a man is shown looking at her suggestively. Next to the photo is a caption that reads "Spike your best friend's eggnog when they're not looking." Critics say the ad encourages men to "date rape" their female companions. Bloomingdale's apologized for the ad and acknowledged that it was inappropriate and in poor taste. However, despite the apology, the ad could not be pulled, as it was part of a mailed catalog. It resulted in a considerable amount of negative publicity for the retailer.⁵⁸

XHIBIT 9–32

This clever Snickers ad was created specifically for the special swimsuit issue of *Sports Illustrated* magazine.

ource: Mars, Incorporated



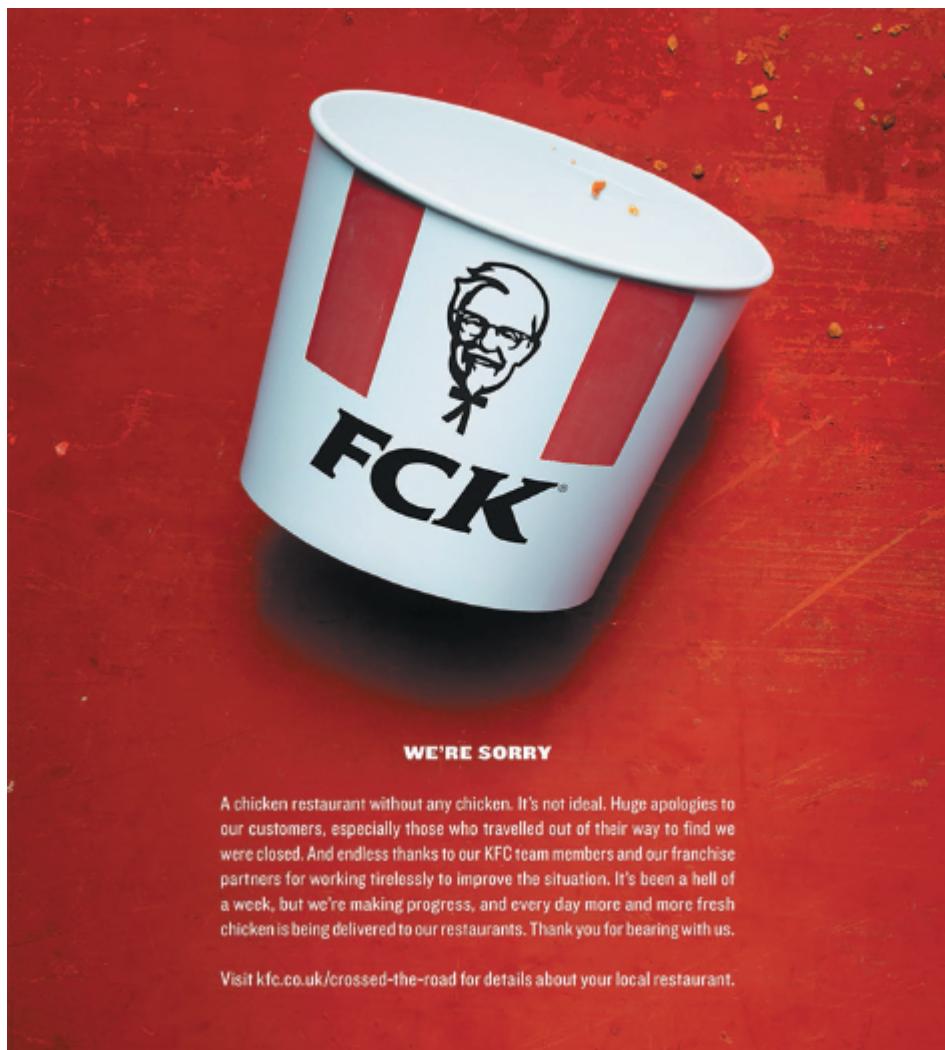
An interesting example of clever but somewhat controversial advertising that might offend some people is a print ad that KFC used in the United Kingdom in response to a crisis marketing situation in 2018.⁵⁹ An operational issue with a delivery provider resulted in the chain running out of chicken and being forced to close hundreds of stores temporarily. Disappointed customers were very vocal on social media and even tried to get the police involved in some cities when the chain ran out of chicken. The marketing team and its agency, Mother London, knew they had to respond and decided to do so with a creative stunt by rearranging the letters page 321 in its name in the apology ad, which is shown in Exhibit 9–33.

The ad won numerous creative awards because many felt that it was appropriate for a company that does not take itself too seriously with its marketing. While the ad worked well in the U.K., there are some countries where the ad might be seen as inappropriate or distasteful.

XHIBIT 9–33

KFC ran this clever apology ad in the U.K., but it may be seen as inappropriate in some countries.

Source: Yum! Brands



The ultimate responsibility for determining whether an ad deceives or offends the target audience lies with the client. It is the job of the advertising or brand manager to evaluate the approach suggested by the creative

specialists against company standards. The firm's legal department may be asked to review the ad to determine whether the creative appeal, message content, or execution could cause any problems for the company. It is much better to catch any potential legal problems before the ad is shown to the public.

The chief marketing officer, brand manager, advertising manager, and/or other personnel on the client side can use these basic guidelines in reviewing, evaluating, and approving the ideas offered by the creative specialists. There may be other factors specific to the firm's advertising and marketing situation. Also, there may be situations where it is acceptable to deviate from the standards the firm usually uses in judging creative output. As we will see in Chapter 18, the client may want to move beyond these subjective criteria and use more sophisticated pretesting methods to determine the effectiveness of a particular approach suggested by the creative specialist or team.

Summary

In this chapter, we examined how the advertising message is implemented and executed. Once the creative strategy that will guide the ad campaign has been determined, attention turns to the specific type of advertising appeal and execution format to carry out the creative plan. The appeal is the central message used in the ad to elicit some response from consumers or influence their feelings. Appeals can be broken into two broad categories: rational and emotional. Rational appeals focus on consumers' practical, functional, or utilitarian need for the product or service; emotional appeals relate to social and/or psychological reasons for purchasing a product or service. Numerous types of appeals are available to advertisers within each category.

The creative execution style is the way the advertising appeal is presented in the message. A number of common execution techniques were examined in the chapter, along with considerations for their use. Attention was also given to tactical issues involved in creating print, television, and digital advertising. The components of a print ad include headlines, body

copy, illustrations, and layout. We also examined the video and audio components of TV commercials and various considerations involved in the planning and production of commercials. The role of creativity in digital advertising was discussed along with tactical considerations for display and online video ads.

Creative specialists are responsible for determining the advertising appeal and execution style as well as the tactical aspects of creating ads. However, the client must review, evaluate, and approve the creative approach before any ads are produced or run. A number of criteria can be used by advertising, product, or brand managers and others involved in the promotional process to evaluate the advertising messages before approving final production.

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Key Terms —

- advertising appeal** 288
- creative execution style** 288
- informational/rational appeals** 289
- emotional appeals** 291
- transformational ad** 292
- reminder advertising** 294
- teaser advertising** 295
- user-generated content (UGC)** 296
- headline** 306
- direct headlines** 306
- indirect headlines** 307
- subheads** 307
- body copy** 307
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Discussion Questions

- 1.** Discuss some of the reasons a marketer might choose to create a personality symbol or character to represent the company or brand. Choose one of the personality symbols discussed in the chapter opener and discuss the company's decision to use this individual as a personality symbol for the brand in its advertising. (LO 9-2)
- 2.** IMC Perspective 9-1 discusses the success of the “Love” campaign used by Subaru for the past decade. Why do you think this campaign has been more successful than some of the other creative appeals used in advertising for Subaru? (LO 9-1)
- 3.** Explain the concept of transformational advertising. Find an example of a company that is using transformational ads and discuss how the ads might enhance the experience of using the product or service. (LO 9-1)
- 4.** Choose three of the advertising execution techniques discussed in the chapter and find examples of advertisements that are using them. Discuss why these companies or brands might be using these particular ad execution techniques. (LO 9-2)
- 5.** IMC Perspective 9-2 discusses how DASANI was able to use creative advertising to reposition the brand and make it the leading brand of bottled water. Evaluate the creative strategy used to position DASANI in the bottled water. Why do you think the advertising was so effective? (LO 9-1, 9-2)
- 6.** Discuss the role of headlines in a print advertisement. What is the difference between a direct headline and an indirect headline, and when might each type be used? (LO 9-3)
- 7.** Discuss the role of music in advertising. Find an example of a television commercial that is using a specific song and discuss the role the music plays in delivering the message. (LO 9-3)
- 8.** Discuss the challenges marketers face in developing online advertising messages. How will the creative strategy for online advertising differ depending on whether the goal is for concept, content, or commerce types of online advertising? (LO 9-3)

9. This chapter discusses the “Unskippable” online advertising campaign created by the Martin Agency for GEICO. Why do you think this campaign was so popular among consumers? Do you think the technique used for the GEICO campaign can be used by other marketers as a way to draw attention to their online video ads? (LO 9-3)

10. Choose a current advertising campaign and analyze it with respect to the creative guidelines discussed in the last section of the chapter. Identify any areas where you feel the campaign does not meet the guidelines and discuss why this is so. (LO 9-4)



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10 Media Planning and Strategy



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Learning Objectives