

Title:

The four sins of advertising

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Summary:

why your ads do not work

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Advertising is a very precise science. It finds its bases in many different fields including copywriting, psychology and even math. In recent decades, we have observed a slow but steady beautification of advertising.

For marketing experts this can work. For less savvy advertisers, it is a huge pitfall that draws attention away from the much more important aspects of a successful selling proposition. Faulty advertising costs its makers billions of dollars a year, and almost all are guilty of it, even the huge corporations.

You will see many of today's internet marketing "gurus" recommending volumes several decades old. There is a good reason for this. Many of those volumes were written by direct marketers that engaged in extremely costly mailings.

These ads have to produce optimal results or they produce losses. The upside is that results can be measured and broken down to a ridiculously precise extent. In fact very small fluctuations in these figures separate success from failure.

First and foremost is the written word. Nothing replaces a captivating headline and solid advertising copy. For headlines, the goal is to grab attention and qualify. Prospects must immediately recognize that the ad is addressed to them and they must also be drawn into the main copy. Ad copy should be as abundant as needed to tell the whole story, or however much of the story is needed to lead to the action you are soliciting.

Here are the four biggest mistakes you can make in advertising.

1) Being pretty instead of selling. This is really deadly. You don't need to impress with your design, you need to make a sale, and words sell.

2) Not following a formula. Formulas exist because they work. Use them.

3) Forgetting, even for a single instant, to concentrate on your MDA, Most Desired Action.

4) Not testing different models. This is one of the most painful shortcomings of many marketers. They try an ad and if it's not profitable the first time, they drop it entirely. If it is profitable, they continue to run it. Here, there is usually an enormous amount of room for improvement. Fluctuations in sales of the order of 500 to 800% are not uncommon...

Advertising comes in many shapes and sizes, with different costs associated to them. Do your research, purchase and read books by the likes of David Ogilvy and follow formulas that are aimed towards direct mailings. The results you get will far outweigh any effort you expend or money you invest.