

ADVERTISING CREATIVE

STRATEGY • COPY • DESIGN

TOM ALTSTIEL AND JEAN GROW

4TH EDITION



ADVERTISING CREATIVE

4TH EDITION

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4TH EDITION



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Preface

Welcome to the first postdigital edition.

We started this series in 2005 with the dot-com bust fresh in our memories and innovations like Facebook, Twitter, and iPhones on the near horizon. We heard they were coming, but no one could have predicted their impact on marketing communications. In those days we spoke of silos—solid containers for “traditional” and “nontraditional” media. Another analogy was swim lanes—well-defined boundaries where different marketing communication elements competed. “Digital” was one of those swim lanes. As technology evolved, digital competed in more lanes. Now we can take out the lane markers. Everybody and everything is in one big digital pool, swimming for their lives. Welcome to the postdigital age.

Digital Disruption

Advertising Age summed it up nicely: “Traditional media found itself scrambling to stay relevant as digital media wreaked havoc with the guarantee that consumers were likely to see ad messages. Expensive journalism distributed free online amassed audience but not ad dollars and wiped out a whole generation of magazines and newspapers, while DVRs, podcasts, streaming video services like Netflix and Hulu challenged TV and radio models. Out of this massive shift, marketers and agencies got very innovative in turning these new tools to their advantage.”¹

Despite the disruptions in the marketing world, some basic truths still apply. Brands need to make friends. Consumers still have wants and needs that must be satisfied. People read and see what interests them. Sometimes it’s advertising, but now it’s delivered in ways never imagined 10 years ago. We still need to find that One Thing—probably more than ever since the market has been so fragmented.

The next edition of this book will most likely be arranged a lot differently to align with new ideas about marketing communication in this postdigital age. Perhaps we’ll be in a new age with a new name—with new thinking about the best ways to reach an increasingly advertising-resistant world. However that world takes shape, we’ll bet the Big Idea—that One Thing—will still be the center of it all.

But how do you leverage that One Thing in a world that is more and more globally connected, more and more diverse, yet more and more, well—dare we say similar? In past editions we talked about the need to embrace diversity because the world was changing, because it was becoming a global marketplace. The truth is, that global marketplace now lives in your backyard—and across the world. Yes, understanding diversity is more important than ever. You’ll need to leverage that understanding whether you’re working on a local campaign for Mom and Pop’s Pizza, a regional campaign for T-Mobile, a national campaign for Target, or a global campaign for McDonald’s.

Being a great advertising practitioner means understanding the content within this book and others like it, but it also means becoming a student of culture—local and global culture. In Chapters 3, 4, and 5 we attempt to explore the complex issues of an ever changing advertising landscape. At the same time we have tried to weave examples, which speak to an increasingly diverse world, throughout the entire text. However, you might also consider stretching your wings. None of us can afford to live in a bubble. So pop yours now. Start taking classes on world religions, ethnography, anthropology, social psychology, and racial and ethnic identity. Along the way, why not become fluent in another language? Build a cultural knowledge base that gives you an advantage.

1. “Top Ad Campaigns of the 21st Century,” *Advertising Age*, <http://adage.com/lp/top15/> (accessed August 11, 2015).

Beyond the Book

We've worked with Sage to develop a new website (study.sagepub.com/altstiel4e), as outlined below. There you will find a test bank, PowerPoint® presentations, discussion questions, chapter exercises, video links, and other web resources. The digital additions, new for the fourth edition, will link you directly to the advertising world. There are websites, blogs, and feeds that will help keep you up to date and ever wiser. You will also find links to some of the digital work discussed in the book.

You may also want to see what we are doing outside of the classroom. We invite you to follow us. Find Tom at LinkedIn. Find Jean at @jeangrow or follow her two blogs: Grow Cultural Geography (growculturalgeography.wordpress.com) and Ethical Action (ethicalaction.wordpress.com). And, of course, we want to hear your ideas. So, don't hesitate to share them with us through the "Contact the Authors" link on the Sage site.

Ancillaries

The password-protected Instructor Teaching Site at **study.sagepub.com/altstiel4e** gives instructors access to a full complement of resources to support and enhance their courses. The following assets are available on the site:

Test Bank: This Word test bank offers a diverse set of test questions and answers for each chapter of the book. Multiple-choice, true/false, short-answer, and essay questions for every chapter help instructors assess students' progress and understanding.

What Would You Do? This is a new feature, woven into each chapter and featuring case studies from fellow teachers, with questions that will allow students to apply lessons learned in class to real-world marketing problems. We invite submissions for this edition and the next and will be delighted to cite you, adding another line on your CV.

Discussion Questions: Chapter-specific questions help launch discussion by prompting students to engage with the material and by reinforcing important content.

Chapter Exercises and Activities: These lively and stimulating ideas, found at the end of each chapter, can be used in and out of class to reinforce active learning. The activities apply to individual and group projects.

PowerPoint® Slides: Chapter-specific slide presentations offer assistance with lecture and review preparation by highlighting essential content, features, and artwork from the book.

Video Links: Carefully selected web-based video resources feature relevant interviews, lectures, personal stories, inquiries, and other content for use in independent or classroom-based explorations of key topics.

Web Resources: These links to relevant websites direct both instructors and students to additional resources for further research on important chapter topics.

The open-access Student Study Site available at **study.sagepub.com/altstiel4e** is designed to maximize student comprehension of the material and to promote critical thinking and application. The following resources and study tools are available on the student portion of the book's website:

- Mobile-friendly **practice quizzes** allow for independent assessment by students of their mastery of course material
- Mobile-friendly **eFlashcards** strengthen understanding of key terms and concepts
- Carefully selected chapter-by-chapter **video and multimedia** content which enhance classroom-based explorations of key topics

Acknowledgments

We would never have completed this fourth edition without the help of some amazing folks. First, you wouldn't be reading this if our previous editions had not been so well accepted. Thanks to the teachers and advertising professionals around the world who have purchased past editions and adopted them for classes. We hope you like this one even more. Thanks to the creative practitioners who have shared their wisdom by contributing more detailed case histories, called Closer Looks. Your views of the inner workings of our business are invaluable. Thanks to the young people who shared their personal stories in the new Rising Stars sections. Your voices brought an insightful new dimension to this edition. Finally, thanks to our newest contributors, our fellow teachers. Your What Would You Do? case studies provide a valuable new teaching tool.

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Finally, we thank our loved ones, who tolerated our late nights and weekends sitting at the keyboard instead of by their sides.

Tom and Jean

Chapter 1

Creativity

The Changing Nature of Our Business

Spoiler alert.

This book won't teach you how to be creative. No one can. But you may be surprised how creative you really are. You may not have been an A+ English student. But you may find you're an excellent copywriter. You may not be a great sketch artist. But you may discover you have a talent for logo design or ad layouts. You may not know much about ad copy. But you may have a knack for building communities online through social media. You may never have to write a broadcast TV commercial. But you may be able to create innovative online videos that go viral. If you think advertising today is a remnant of the *Mad Men* era, think again. It's an industry that keeps reinventing itself, and you will be part of that process.

What You Need to Learn

If you're lucky, you'll take classes that allow you to discover a lot about creative strategy and tactics, and probably a lot about yourself. At the very least you should learn:

- The correct format for writing copy for traditional and new media.
- The basic rules of copywriting and when to break them.
- How to put more sell into your copy.
- Design basics that apply to all media.
- Sensitivity of issues that affect consumers.
- Awareness of ethical and legal issues.
- How to connect the reader or viewer with the advertiser.
- How to keep continuity throughout a campaign.
- Knowing how to use emerging technology as a tool, not an idea.
- Understanding what endures in the face of a rapidly changing marketing environment.
- The importance of presenting your work.

*"Properly practiced creativity can make one ad do the work of ten."*¹

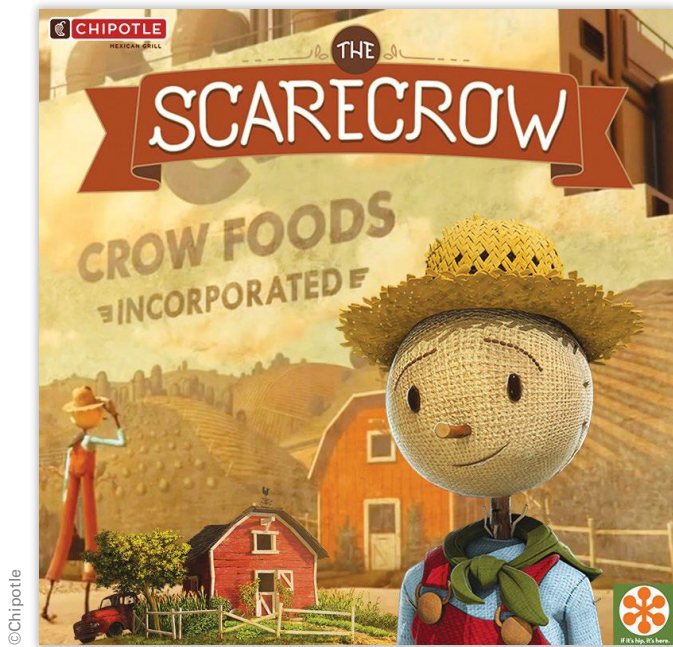
Bill Bernbach,
copywriter and founding
partner, Doyle Dane Bernbach

Who Wants to Be a Creative?

At the beginning of each semester we ask students, "Who wants to be a copywriter?" We get a halfhearted response from about two or three. "Who wants to be an art director or a designer?" Usually a few more raise their hands. Then we get to creative director. Typically more than half the students covet that exalted title, and almost none of them realize you have to be a copywriter or an art director first.

These are the most common reasons advertising students don't want to become writers:

- "I think I want to be an account exec."
- "I might want to be an account planner."
- "I want to be a media director."
- "I want to work in social media."
- "Words are boring. I'm more of a picture person."
- "I'm not sure I can write."
- "I'm not sure I even want to be in advertising."



After McDonald's ended its investment in the company, Chipotle released an animated short called *The Scarecrow* with a companion mobile video game that criticized "industrial farming." Coincidence?

Those are legitimate reasons, but we can make a case for learning about creative strategy and tactics to answer every one of them.

- **Account executives** need to know how to evaluate creative work. Does it meet the objectives? What's the strategy? Why is it great or not so great? When account executives and account managers understand the creative process, they become more valuable to the client and their agency.
- **Account planners** have to understand consumers, their clients' products, market conditions, and many other factors that influence a brand preference or purchase. In essence they function as the voice of the consumer in strategy sessions. The skills required to develop creative strategy are key components in account planning.
- **Media folks** need to recognize the creative possibilities of each medium. They need to understand tone, positioning, resonance, and the other basics pounded into copywriters.
- **Bloggers and social media specialists** have to be able to merge their mastery of digital media with creative skills. Someone has to write all those blog posts and build those online communities with a few well-chosen words—even if they are limited to 140 characters.
- **Designers, art directors, producers, and graphic artists** should know how to write or at least how to defend their work. Why does it meet the strategies? Do the words and visuals work together? Does the font match the tone of the ad? Is the body copy too long? (It's *always* too long for art directors.) As we'll stress repeatedly throughout this book, writers also need to understand the basics of design. Design can't be separate from the concept.



Creating and meeting a consumer's immediate need. That's what effective marketing communication is all about.

There is English, and there is advertising copy. What you say is more important than how you write it. Ideas come first. Writing with style can follow.

Regaining Thought Leadership for the World's Most Iconic Whisky—Chivas Regal



Live With Chivalry

Chivas Regal is heavily outspent in the global whisky market by Johnnie Walker. In the face of such competition, we couldn't rely on just telling consumers a story about a product truth, we had to create a transformative idea and campaign.

Based on the global insight of *collective honour amongst modern gentlemen* (success but not at any cost), in 2008 we moved Chivas from a lifestyle positioning of 'The Chivas Life' to a competitive, relevant and modern expression of its DNA—the call to arms for modern gentlemen to 'Live With Chivalry.'

Using a series of international campaigns since 2009, we had successfully explained the core values underpinning chivalry—success with honour, brotherhood, freedom and gallantry.

Recruiting a New Generation of Drinkers

Recruiting new customers to the brand is crucial for Chivas. Generation Y (those born after 1980), are the biggest generation of all time. Not only are Gen Y a big group, but current trends show an opportunity to

take share from other spirits and beer. The opportunity was big, but so was the challenge; this is an uncompromising group of consumers, with new expectations for both brand conduct and contact.

A New Definition of Shared Success

We knew (through extensive primary and secondary research we undertook across our global agency network) that GenY are not concerned with the notion of 'business as usual,' and the old self-indulgent codes of luxury. They want to be their own bosses, and they believe that businesses have a responsibility to use their financial success to improve the world, rather than just the balance sheet. The opportunity was to respond to the consumer desire for more ethical business practices by highlighting that success can and should be shared, rather than hoarded.

This plays to a historical brand truth of Chivas, a brand founded on doing good whilst doing well, with brothers James and John Chivas using proceeds from their business to support their local community infrastructure and secure employment and contracts for others in their community.

Live With Chivalry—Winning the Right Way

Win the Right Way is the latest installment of 'Live With

Chivalry.' It is a movement based on people not just doing good, but doing well. Social enterprise is growing across the world, and the principles of social entrepreneurship align perfectly with GenY's desires for independence and responsible corporate behaviour.

We worked with Chivas to create a \$1m seed capital fund for budding social entrepreneurs called The Venture, which we supported with a connected and interactive campaign split into two broad stages of provocation and enablement.

- **Provocation:** We used inspiring case studies and renowned global personalities like Chiwetel Ejiofor to exhort the values and potential impact of social enterprise.
- **Enablement:** We created TheVenture.com to allow social enterprises to submit their ideas, assisting the best of them through TheVenture.com.

The campaign launched globally in late 2014 to great acclaim and is a true behavioral manifestation of the brand's thought leadership idea—Live With Chivalry.

Russ Lidstone, CEO, Havas Worldwide, London

Creativity outside of advertising. You can put the skills learned through developing creative strategy and tactics to work in more fields than advertising. The ability to gather information, process it, prioritize the most important facts, and develop a persuasive message is useful in almost every occupation. Even if you don't aspire to be the next David Ogilvy, you might learn something about marketing, advertising, basic writing skills, and presenting your work. Who knows? You might even like it.

The Golden Age of Creativity

Every generation seems to have a Golden Age. Many people who built their careers in the post-*Mad Men* era look back to the 1950s through the early 1970s as the Golden Age of Advertising. This so-called Creative Revolution was one of many uprisings during turbulent times. Unlike any other era before or since, the focus was on youth, freedom, antiestablishment thinking. If you don't believe us check out Denis Leary's FX series *Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll*. So it's not surprising that some of the world's most recognized ads (some of which are included in this book) were created during this time.

What made these ads revolutionary?



Doyle Dane Bernbach turned the ad world on its head with its Volkswagen campaign. When other automakers were crowing about tail fins and chrome, VW took the opposite position with self-deprecating humor, a twist headline, white space, a small logo, and intelligent, yet friendly, copy.

- First, they began to shift focus to the brand, rather than the product. They developed a look, introduced memorable characters, and kept a consistent theme throughout years of long-running campaigns. All of these factors built brand awareness and acceptance.
- Second, they twisted conventional thinking. When most cars touted tail fins and chrome, Volkswagen told us to “Think small.” When Hertz was bragging about being the top dog, Avis said it tried harder because it was number two. When Levy’s advertised their Jewish rye bread, they used an Irish cop, an Asian man, and a Native American as models (although today, we’d say this is a blatant example of stereotyping).
- Third, they created new looks, using white space, asymmetrical layouts, minimal copy, and unique typography—all design elements that we take for granted in today’s ads. The driving forces of this revolution included such giants as Leo Burnett, David Ogilvy, Mary Wells Lawrence, Howard Gossage, and Bill Bernbach, who are mentioned prominently in this text. First and foremost, they were copywriters. But they were also creative partners with some of the most influential designers of their era, such as George Lois, Helmut Krone, and Paul Rand. Even though these top creative talents went on to lead mega-agencies, their first love was writing and design.

Today we look to creative inspiration in the digital space from visionaries such as the late Steve Jobs, Mark Zuckerberg, and Biz Stone. In this brave new world where the “third screen” is rapidly becoming our primary window for communication, news, and entertainment, we may be entering a new Golden Age. Who knows? Maybe *you* could become a leader in the next creative revolution.

The Creative Team

Most copywriters do a lot more than just write ads. In fact, writing may be only a small part of their jobs. Although this section focuses on the copywriter, designers and art directors also handle many of these functions.

Co-Captain of the Creative Team

Traditionally a creative team has comprised a copywriter and an art director, with participation by web developers and broadcast producers. This team usually answers to a coach—the creative director.

Every player has his or her role, but in many cases the copywriter drives the creative process. However, once the art director understands the creative problem, he or she may become the idea leader. No matter who drives the process, the creative team needs to know the product frontward and backward, inside and out.

They have to understand who uses the product, how it compares with the competition, what’s important to the consumer, and a million other facts. Sometimes art directors write the best headlines. Or writers come up with a killer visual. Sometimes the inspiration comes from a comment on Facebook or a tweet. The creative leaders need to be able to sift that nugget of an idea from all the white noise that surrounds it.

So, What Else Does a Writer Do?

In small shops, the writers wear so many hats, it’s no wonder they develop big heads. Some of the responsibilities besides writing copy include:

- **Research**—primary and secondary.
- **Client contact**—getting the facts direct from the source rather than filtered through an account executive, presenting those ideas, and defending the work.
- **Broadcast producer**—finding the right director, talent, music, and postproduction house to make your vision come to life.
- **New business**—gathering data, organizing the creative, working on the pitch, and presenting the work.
- **Public relations**—some copywriters also write the news releases, plan promotional events, and even contact editors.
- **Internet content**—the Internet has become an integral part of a total marketing communication effort. A lot of “traditional” media writers are now writing websites, blogs, and social media content.
- **Creative management**—much has been written about whether copywriters or art directors make the best creative directors. The answer: yes.

Don (creative director):
It’s your job. I give you money. You give me ideas.

Peggy (copywriter): *But you never say thank you.*

Don: *That’s what the money is for!*²

Dialogue from Mad Men



director by finding photos, artwork, or design elements, not to rip them off but to help you make your point. The finished piece may not look anything like your original vision, but at least you can start with a point of reference. Browse the web, stock photo books, and awards annuals. We can't emphasize this enough, especially for beginning writers—if you can't find what you want, it might trigger a new idea. The visual selection is a starting point, not the end game.

Step 5: Working with the rest of the team. For most creatives, the happiest and most productive years of their careers are spent collaborating with others. When two creative minds click, the whole really is greater than the sum of the parts. A great creative partnership, like any relationship, needs to be nurtured and will have its ups and downs. While one person may want to drive the whole process, it's best not to run over other teammates. They may come up with some ideas that will make you look like a genius.

Step 6: Preselling the creative director and account executive. Chances are you will not be working directly with the client, and even if you are, you probably won't be the sole contact. That's why you need the people who interface with the client to buy into your ideas. Maintaining a good relationship with the creative director not only protects your job; it also gives you an ally when you pitch your idea to the account executive and client. In many cases, the account executive represents the client in these discussions. He or she may try to poke holes in your logic or question your creative choices. That's why every creative choice must be backed with sound reasoning. In the end, if the account executive is sold, you have a much better chance of convincing the client.

Step 7: Selling the client. As the person who developed the idea, you have to be prepared to defend your work, using logic rather than emotion. Many times your brilliant reasoning will fail because clients usually think with their wallets. Over time you'll know how far you can push a client. The trick is to know when to retreat so you can fight another day. Most clients don't mind being challenged creatively, as long as there are sound reasons for taking chances.

The three things you *never* want to hear from a client:

- "That looks just like the competitor's ads. I want our ads to stand out."
- "I was looking for something a lot more creative. Take some risks."
- "You obviously don't understand our product or our market."

You won't hear those things if you take care of Steps 1 to 6.

Step 8: Getting it right. Okay, you've sold the client. Now what? You have to hand your creation to the production team, but your responsibilities don't end. Does the copy fit the way it should? If not, can you cut it? Can you change a word here and there to make it even better? Are the graphics what you envisioned? Your involvement is

*"Our job is to read things that are not yet on the page."*³

Steve Jobs,
founder and former CEO, Apple

*"In the ad game, the days are tough, the nights are long, and work is emotionally demanding. But it's all worth it, because the rewards are shallow, transparent, and meaningless."*⁴

Unknown copywriter

even more critical for broadcast. Did you have a specific talent in mind for voice or on-camera roles? Does the director understand and share your vision? Does the music fit?

If you remember nothing else, keep the following quote from the great Leo Burnett in mind and follow it through Step 10: "Nothing takes the guts out of a great idea like bad execution."

Step 9: Maintaining continuity. Almost everyone can come up with a great idea. Once. The hard part is extending that great idea in other media and repeating it, only differently, in a campaign. Over time, elements of a campaign tend to drift away from the original idea. Clients usually get tired of a look before the consumer. Art directors may want to "enhance" the campaign with new elements. Someone on the creative team needs to continually monitor the elements of an ongoing campaign to make sure they are true to the original idea.

Step 10: Discover what worked and why. If the ads in a campaign achieve their objectives, great! If they win awards, but the client loses market share, look out. Keep monitoring the efficacy of the campaign. What are the readership scores? What do the client's salespeople and retailers think? How are sales? If you had to make any midcourse corrections, what would you do? If you never stop learning, you'll never miss an opportunity to make the next project or campaign even better.

Where Do I Go From Here?

A lot of entry-level copywriters and art directors see themselves as senior creative directors after toiling in the trenches for two or three years. It usually doesn't happen that quickly, if at all. However, many junior writers or designers don't consider the other exciting possibilities.

Copywriter/art director for life: Many people are happy to hone their creative talents throughout their whole careers.

Account service: Many writers are drawn to the "dark side." It makes sense, especially if you like working with clients and thoroughly understand the product, market, and consumers. In some small shops, the copy-contact system gives account execs an opportunity to create and creative types a reason to wear a suit. Art directors also work directly with clients, and in many cases are the primary agency contacts.



Courtesy of Mike Bednar

Can advertising change the world? We keep hoping. This student-created ad was designed to raise awareness of waterborne illnesses around the world.

Account planner: A natural for many writers who like research and enjoy being the conduit between the account manager, the creative team, and the consumer. It involves thorough knowledge of research, marketing, creative, and media, as well as a lot of intuition. Most successful advertising copywriters already possess those skills.

Promotion director: Writers and art directors are idea people. So it makes sense to use that creativity to develop sales promotions, special events, sponsorships, specialty marketing programs, displays, and all the other marketing communication tools not included in “traditional advertising.” This is a rapidly growing area with a lot of potential for creative people.

Public relations writer: Although most PR people won’t admit it, it’s easier to write a news release than an ad. Most advertising writers won’t admit that editorial writing is usually more persuasive than advertising. PR writing involves much more than news releases, though. You may become an editor for a newsletter or an in-house magazine. You may produce video news releases or schedule events, press conferences, and any number of creative PR efforts.

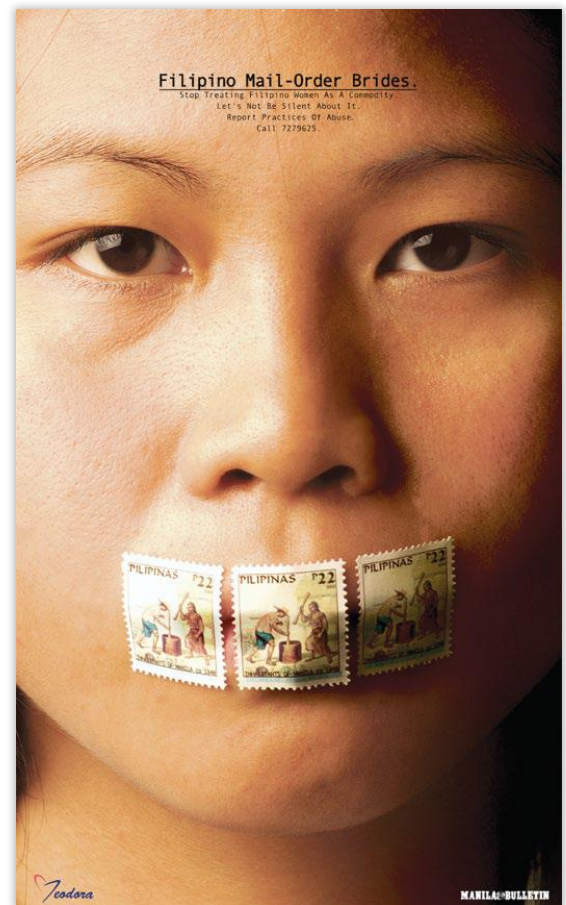
Internal advertising or PR department: So far, we’ve outlined agency jobs, but other companies need talented creative people. In small companies, you may handle brochure writing or design, PR, trade shows, and media relations, in addition to advertising. In larger companies, you may handle promotional activities not covered by your ad agency. You may even write speeches for your CEO.

Web/interactive expert: The web is so integrated into most marketing communication programs that it seems ridiculous to consider it nontraditional media. Any writer or designer today should be web savvy. You should know the terminology and capabilities of the Internet—just as well as you understand magazines or television. You don’t have to be a whiz at HTML, but having some technical expertise is a huge plus. As with any phase of advertising, creativity, not technology, is the most precious commodity.

Social media specialist: This job usually involves daily monitoring, posting, and content development. It can also mean developing social media advertising and creating friends for your brand online. You could moderate chats as well as initiate conversation through forums, tweets, and postings. Writing skills, creativity, and knowing when not to use social media are the keys to success.

Content provider: Content involves a wide variety of marketing communication activities from feature articles, lists, white papers, online newsletters, advertorial, and native advertising. You can provide content as part of an agency, in house, or as a freelancer. To succeed, you need a thorough understanding of that sweet spot where the wants of the target audience intersect with the brand message.

Freelance writer/designer: A lot of people like a flexible schedule and a variety of clients. Being a successful freelancer requires tremendous discipline and endless self-promotion, plus the mental toughness to endure the constant rejection, short deadlines, and long stretches between assignments.



Creative people usually care about issues outside their jobs. In some cases, they can combine their creative talents with their passion for social causes to make a difference.

Video and broadcast producer/director: Like to write video or radio commercials? Maybe you have the knack for writing scripts, selecting talent, editing, and other elements of audio and video production. As for web/interactive experts, creative talent and a logical mind are the keys. Technological expertise can be learned on the job.

Creative strategist: Some agencies take pride in providing only lofty strategic thinking—the view from 30,000 feet. Strategic recommendations should be derived from primary and secondary research, competitive and market analysis, and many other variables. Once the strategy is developed and sold, the strategic agency or consultant collects the money before anything is created. The people who actually make things—copywriters, designers, art directors, web developers, and the rest, have to wait for compensation when their work is completed.

Consultant: Some companies (and agencies) hire outside talent to provide a fresh point of view. Other times, consultants set the strategy that gives the creative their marching orders. Too often, “consultant” is another word for unemployed. A select few actually make a living as creative consultants. Sometimes they are no more than repackaged freelancers. Sometimes they are “rainmakers” who help with a new business pitch. Keeping current and connected are the keys to success.

Creativity and Online Media

While traditional media advertising usually rides up and down on the waves of economic conditions, many advertisers have shifted more money into social media and mobile. So what does this mean for the future of creative advertising? Many marketers will shift their emphasis to such “middle of the funnel” approaches as social media, in addition to paid search and email marketing. Creatives have to understand how to do business in the digital space and anticipate an increasingly faster pace to changes in technology, pop culture, and online viewing trends. That means you will have to know more than how to create a banner ad or post a tweet. You may have to develop entire online communities for very specific target audiences and find ways to keep them engaged . . . and oh, by the way, you still have to sell something. As the use of social media grows for business, we are discovering that it’s great for building relationships and brand reputations, but not so great for generating direct sales.

What’s in It for Me?

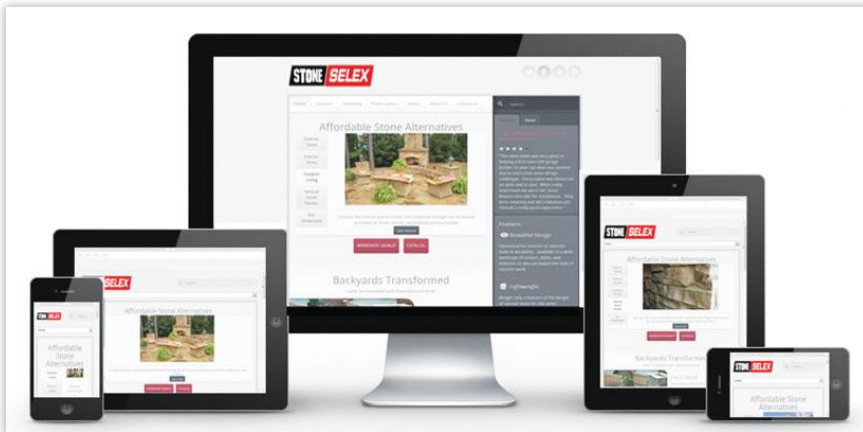
You might have discussed the role of advertising in society and explored ethical issues. You have probably reviewed theories of communication and might have even read about the greatest creative people of all time. That’s all good, but let’s be honest—if you want a creative career, you’re interested in only three things: fame, fortune, and fun. Not necessarily in that order.

Let’s look at each one in a little more detail.

Fame: Everyone wants recognition, especially Millennials. Since advertising is unsigned, there are only two ways to get recognized—awards and having people say, “You’re *really* the person who did that?” While it’s important for your fragile self-esteem, winning awards can also be the key to building your career. If there is a student section in your local advertising club’s award competition, study it, and if your stuff is good, enter it. You will get noticed, and it could help you land that dream job right out of school. Continue entering and winning to build that reputation as a top-tier creative. Last time we looked, there are no books showcasing account execs and media buyers.



Mobile technology such as iBanners makes it possible to engage users in real time in virtually any location, as this app for attendees at South by Southwest demonstrates.



Modern digital design has to take a “mobile first” approach to create sites that work seamlessly on smart phone, tablet, and desktop screens.

Fortune: Depending on experience, the economy, the results they generate, and a million other factors, creative people can make as much or more than any other people in advertising. Recent salary surveys show that salaries for top creatives and top account supervisors are pretty much the same. In many cases, senior creatives can actually earn more than some doctors—without years of postgraduate school, internships, and residency. All you need to know is how to sell toilet paper or health insurance versus how to save lives. As a writer or an art director, you get to earn a decent living and still wear jeans, have a tattoo, pierce your nose, and spike your hair. But only if you want to.

Fun: You can be famous and well compensated and still be unhappy in any business. You can still get a kick out of solving problems, even if you’re not well known or a millionaire. It’s still a treat to work with other creatives, interact with musicians and actors, win presentations, and travel to exotic locales. If the idea of persuading gullible consumers to buy things they don’t need starts wearing thin, you might consider redirecting your talent toward more worthy causes. They need great creative ideas too. No matter how much you’re earning, when it stops being meaningful, or if you lose your edge, you should probably consider getting out.

Knowing the Rules and When to Break Them

We will not dwell on too many of the rules of advertising writing and design, but we will look at some accepted practices. These are the tips and techniques that have proved successful over time.

One “rule” will always be true. Advertising is a business. A business populated by a lot of crazy people, but still a business. Although the slogan “It’s not creative unless it sells” has lost its impact, we still have to persuade someone to buy something. This reality leads to something we call “creative schizophrenia”—the internal conflict between the stuff you want to do and the stuff clients make you do. For example, if you want to get a job, you need really cool, cutting-edge stuff in your portfolio, which is usually not usable in the real world. When you land that job, you’ll probably be forced to do a lot of boring stuff that sells products but looks terrible in your book. So hold your nose and smile. Throughout your career, you’re going to do a lot more crap than award-winning stuff.

You Don’t Have to Be Crazy, but It Helps

Psychologists have spent years studying creativity. We know that creativity is not an isolated right-brained activity. Rather, it “reflects originality and appropriateness, intuition and logic. It requires both hemispheres.”⁶ The left side likes words, logic, and reasons. The right side likes pictures, emotions, and feelings. Bringing both hemispheres together in a mediated form is what Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi calls “flow . . . a phenomenon constructed through an interaction between producers and audience.”⁶

Flow requires flexibility and “the capacity to adapt to the advances, opportunities, technologies, and changes that are a part of day-to-day living.”⁷ Advertising creativity is the end product of balancing logic with irrationality, artistic freedom with the constraints of the creative problem, and divergent thinking with convergent thinking.⁸ It’s about making strategy come to life.

What Does That Mean for You?

Daniel Pink, in his groundbreaking book *A Whole New Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future*, argues that we are moving away from left-brain leadership toward the attributes associated with the right brain. Pink describes right-brain thinking as holistic, big picture, intuitive, and nonlinear. He states, “The Information Age we all prepared for is ending. Rising in its place is what I call the Conceptual Age, an era in which mastery of abilities that we’ve often overlooked and undervalued marks the fault line between who gets ahead and who falls behind.”⁹ So we are moving from high tech to high concept and high touch. The Information Age was about knowledge workers. *The Conceptual Age is about creators and empathizers—in other words, right-brain thinking.*

The contradiction of increased reliance on big data is that left-brain thinking (cold, calculating technology) makes it more possible to create higher levels of empathy and engagement. Too often it creates a loss of privacy and crosses the creepiness line.



Creating an ad with a twist takes a reader in an unexpected direction, which strengthens the message. Here a handicapped man has issues, but they turn out to be the same as most other people his age. It’s a way to create unity from diversity.

What Does This Mean for the Industry?

Pink’s Conceptual Age is based on changing demographics as much as it is based on changing needs in the marketplace. Creative, empathic ideas do not come from a homogeneous group of individuals. Creative, empathic ideas come from a highly varied mix of individuals—a mix of people bringing diverse backgrounds and experiences to the creative process. Diversity of thought and experience will be the game changer. Diversity of thought and experience will be the driver of optimal flow.

Today too many ad agencies suffer from a lack of diversity, especially in their creative departments. FCB is one agency that acknowledges this issue. Under the leadership of global chief creative officer Susan Credle, FCB started the No 2 Six6 movement to help correct it. FCB’s research shows that the ad industry won’t achieve equality another 66 years at the current rate of hiring. Regardless of how workplace equality is defined, most people agree the advertising industry has a long way to go. As you’ll see in subsequent chapters, diversity in advertising merits discussion. Like Csikszentmihalyi, Pink, and Credle, we too think diversity of thought and experience is at the heart of advertising’s future.

DISCOVERING ADVERTISING



Courtesy of Nick Heiser



Advertising wasn't always my passion. I used to whine about commercial breaks and skip through them whenever I could. It wasn't even my passion when I chose it as a college major. For me, creative advertising became a way to channel my lifelong interests.

As a kid I was really into writing, drawing, and music, and early on I knew that a creative profession was the only route for me. During sophomore

year of high school, I was lucky enough to take a course called graphic communication fundamentals, which was basically intro to graphic design with a conceptual focus. Our teacher pushed us to think about the *why* instead of just making stuff that looked cool. That idea of art with substance and thinking behind it really stuck with me, and by the end of high school I'd realized that advertising was essentially at the intersection of psychology, communication, and art. And that seemed pretty cool.

During college, I visited agencies and listened to ad club speakers, idolizing the creative directors who made a living by coming up with ideas and creating beautiful work. I wound up taking classes at the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design to sharpen my design skills, while continuing advertising and psychology courses at Marquette. By senior year, it was clear that the key to landing an art director job out of school was a killer portfolio. The problem was, my art school peers were better

designers than me. So, I created a portfolio that showcased my thinking, filling it with campaigns that were driven by concepts and supported by good design and writing. Somehow it worked, and I landed an internship at BVK my senior year, getting hired not long after graduation.

A year later, I'm concepting and designing for some of the strongest brands in tourism, health care, and education. Every day is a little different from the last. The biggest perk is getting to work on campaigns for Serve Marketing, BVK's nonprofit agency, on pro bono projects designed to tackle problems in the Milwaukee community. Last year, we covered teen pregnancy, animal abuse, and human trafficking. Working on campaigns that can truly change lives makes my whole pursuit of a job worth it, and I'm looking forward to whatever's next.

Nick Heiser, associate art director, BVK
nickheiser.com

Knowing What Makes the Consumer Tick

Consumer behavior is learning what makes people tick through a deep dive into how people buy, what they buy, when they buy, and why they buy. It blends elements from psychology, sociology, and marketing, and quite a bit of insight. Marketers attempt to dissect buyers' decision-making process, both for individuals and for groups.

*"The people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do."*¹⁰

Apple's "Think Different" campaign

They study demographics, psychographics, and lifestyles to understand what people want and how they want to get it. Billions of dollars are spent on research to test new products and the consumer's willingness to buy. But many times the most successful marketing concepts spring from some crazy idea no research could predict. Can you say Google?

Steve Jobs relied on his intuition instead of focus groups. He and the talented team that followed him developed products consumers didn't even know they wanted—the Macintosh, iMac, iTunes, iPod, iPhone, iPad, and Apple Watch—and in the process created the most valuable technology company in the world. We'll discuss some of the tools you can use to gauge consumer attitudes and opinions later in this book. However, at this point, suffice it to say that a successful creative practitioner writes and designs materials that appeal to a consumer's wants and needs. Unless you're the next Steve Jobs, you may need some research to guide you.

Creating From the Consumer's Point of View

If you remember nothing else from this chapter, remember this:

***People do not buy things.
They buy satisfaction of their wants and needs.***

You may have studied Abraham Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs. This model is usually depicted as a pyramid, ranging from the most basic needs to the most complex and sophisticated.



Collateral and direct mail often get overlooked in discussions about advertising writing and design, but a person who is able to create visually compelling and hard-selling marketing tools will always be in demand.

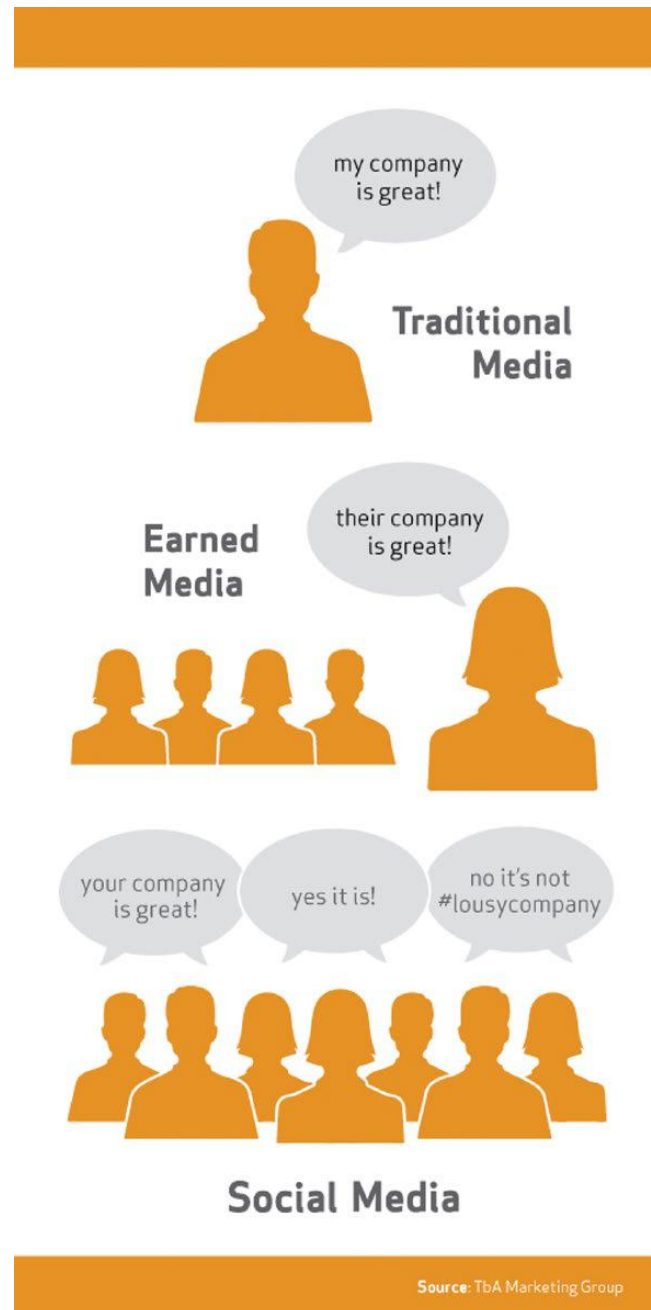
According to Maslow, the needs at each level must be met before one can progress to the next level. Maslow considered less than 1% of the population to be truly self-actualized.¹¹ Some communication theorists have expanded on Maslow's list. Some texts list more than 30 needs. To simplify matters, we can probably sum up wants and needs from a marketing communication standpoint as follows:

- Comfort (convenience, avoid pain and discomfort)
- Security (physical, financial)
- Stimulation (aesthetic, physical)
- Affiliation (esteem, respect)
- Fulfillment (self-satisfaction, status)

So how does all this talk about Maslow and wants and needs play in the ad business today? That's where account planning comes into play. The account planner is the connection between the business side and the creative side of a marketing campaign. The planner works with the account manager to understand what the client is looking for and then relates that to what the consumer wants. The planner also helps the creative team develop a more focused Creative Brief to lead them to that One Thing. Planners want to know what makes people tick—to bring the consumers' voice into the strategic process. They use that information to develop branding strategy for the campaign. It is the planner's job to take all this information, insight, and nuance and condense it into a form that the creative team can understand (preferably short sentences for the writers and pictures for the art directors). We provide more detail about account planning in Chapter 2.

But what exactly do we do with all this? Once you have discovered consumers' sweet spot, you have to communicate in a way that convinces them your brand can satisfy their wants and needs. One of the best explanations of a consumer's wants and needs can be found in this simple declarative sentence: *Don't tell me about your grass seed; talk to me about my lawn.*

Think about that. People aren't really looking for seed. They need a play area for their kids. They want a calm green space for relaxing or a yard the neighbors will envy. Security. Comfort. Fulfillment. Wants and needs. A \$30 Timex will probably tell the time just as well as a \$3,000 Rolex. (Well, close enough for most folks.) What wants and needs are satisfied by spending 1,000% more? Hint: It's really not about telling time.



*"If you can't turn yourself into your customer, you probably shouldn't be in the ad writing business at all."*¹²

Leo Burnett,
copywriter and founder,
Leo Burnett



Green is part of the dream.
It gives our kids courage to leap.
Cushions their falls. Softens the edges of our lives.
Welcomes our visitors with open arms.
Green says we're committed to something,
Something the whole neighborhood believes in. Something good.
Something the world, even on its best days,
Could use more of.

For 75 years, Scotts® Turf Builder® has helped make millions of lawns greener. Because, better than any other fertilizer, Scotts Turf Builder feeds with the perfect blend of nutrients grass needs to flourish. And American dreams need to grow.

For help building your dream, go to scotts.com

Green is part of the dream.™



©Scotts

Don't tell me about your grass seed; talk to me about my lawn. Here's a classic example. While this ad isn't about grass seed, it's about a lot more than fertilizer.

WHO'S WHO?

Chapter 1

In this and future chapters, you'll see some Words of Wisdom floating around. Who are these wise guys and gals? At the end of most chapters we'll provide very brief bios

on some of the best known voices in advertising, as well as other innovators whom we have cited in Words of Wisdom and Closer Look.

Jon Steel

One of the early leaders in account planning, Jon Steel is well known for his innovative approach to focus groups, in which he elicits opinions from people where they live, work, and shop, rather than in sterile interview rooms. *Adweek* named Steel, head of Goodby, Silverstein & Partners' planning department, "West Coast Executive of the Year" in 2000. He also finds time to share his depth of knowledge at Stanford University's Graduate School of Business as a regular lecturer. His first book, *Truth, Lies, and Advertising: The Art of Account Planning*, has become a must-read for anyone interested in account planning.

Leo Burnett

Founder of the agency that still bears his name, he established a new creative style of advertising, along with many memorable characters that are still working today, including Tony the Tiger, the Jolly Green

Giant, the Keebler Elves, the Marlboro Man, and the Pillsbury Doughboy. Leo Burnett believed that creativity made an advertisement effective but, at the same time, that creativity required believability.

Steve Jobs

This legendary force drove Apple and Pixar to the top of their games. Complex, difficult to work and live with, impatient, and always outspoken, Steve Jobs controlled everything related to his products, including the copywriting for his ads.

Biographer Walter Isaacson describes Jobs as "a creative entrepreneur whose passion for perfection and ferocious drive revolutionized six industries: personal computers, animated movies, music, phones, tablet computing and digital publishing."¹³

Mary Wells Lawrence

While CEO, chair, and president of the legendary Wells Rich Greene agency, Mary Wells was the highest paid, best known woman in American business. She was also the first female CEO of a *Fortune* 500 company. Her

innovative campaigns for Braniff, Alka-Seltzer, Benson & Hedges, and American Motors brought a fresh new look to established brands. At age 40, she became the youngest person ever inducted into the Copywriters Hall of Fame.

Coffee and Conversation Gets Company in Hot Water

Discussing hot topics like politics, race, religion and sexual orientation can freeze conversations. However, exchanging ideas about difficult issues is important to society. Fractured civic spaces surround us, and one marketer, the CEO of a multinational corporation that sells premium coffee, aimed to make a difference by using his business to start conversations that could potentially help customers see not only what divides them, but what unites them.

Long known for its commitment to social responsibility, the corporation has a history of making a positive impact on the communities it serves through its efforts to source products ethically, encourage sustainable farming practices that minimize the environmental footprint, hire veterans and military spouses, and celebrate diversity. Following in this tradition, the coffee chain wanted to make a difference by encouraging its customers to work through thorny social issues in discussions that respect and recognize different perspectives.

The Big Idea: A cup of coffee and a conversation worth having. What could be more natural? Convinced that the initiative to help citizens engage in civil conversations contributed to building the brand, the CEO endorsed his marketing team's campaign to invite customers into conversations about difference. Customers would receive their beverages with napkins imprinted with some provocative questions aimed at starting what might be difficult dialogues, such as these: When did you first remember thinking about race? Does your workplace favor one religious tradition over others? What does it mean to you when people say they don't see color/are colorblind with respect to race and ethnicity?

*Nancy Mitchell, professor,
University of Nebraska*

The campaign rolled out with much fanfare. The company took out full-page ads in the *New York Times* and *USA Today*. It attracted publicity during network morning talk shows. The coffee company sparked conversations, but it ignited a backlash that flamed into a media firestorm. Angry customers were insulted by the corporation, which tried to set the agenda for their conversations and intruded on their free time. Tweets and blogs were not kind to the corporation. Within a week, the coffee chain decided to abandon its controversial efforts to start conversations about difference.

1 Imagine that you are the brand manager for this coffee. Do you think that the CEO was wrong to approve this campaign? In what ways did the campaign help or hurt the brand image?

2 Where do you think this campaign went wrong? What went well?

3 A challenge of marketing in the midst of a communication environment teeming with social media is that corporations cannot control what people tweet or blog, as this case illustrates. What, if anything, could the marketer have done to prevent or mitigate the damage?

4 As brand manager, what steps would you take to prevent and/or manage situations like this in the future?

CHAPTER 1

Exercises

1. No More Wonder Bread

Wonder Bread is bland, white bread. Sorry to insult any Wonder Bread lovers, but in advertising you can't be bland. You have to have flavor. Back in the 1940s Wonder Bread made the claim that it built "strong bodies in 12 ways." That's where we begin.

Below are 12 ways to build strong insights.

- Feel free to add and subtract as you see fit, making these experiences relevant to your environment. By semester break you must have experienced all 12.
- Keep a journal with an entry for each experience: who (alone or with friends), what (use brief detail, for instance, the title of a foreign film or name of a club), where (a no-brainer), when (another no-brainer), and why (your reaction, how it made you *feel*).

Use your six senses as you describe how each experience made you feel. That's where you'll find the insights.

1. Go to the local public market, where "slow" food is sold.
2. Watch a subtitled foreign film.
3. Hit the Latin dance floor.
4. Catch the week's news on BBC online: www.bbc.co.uk.
5. Check out live jazz or blues at a neighborhood club.
6. Attend an event sponsored by the Gay-Straight Alliance Network, the Muslim Students Association, the Black Student Council, or an international student organization—one for which you don't fit the demographics.
7. Attend a local Rotary function.
8. Dine on tofu.
9. Settle in for an afternoon of NASCAR racing or WWE (World Wrestling Entertainment).
10. Experience a meeting of the college Republican or Democratic student association—and it has to be the opposite of your political point of view.
11. Join in the fun at a bingo gathering.
12. Visit the local art museum and check out the current special exhibits.

2. Personal Branding Timeline

- Create a map moving across your life in 5-year increments. Begin with birth and end with your current age (which might be less than a 5-year gap). For each 5-year stage generate a list of the brands you associate with that time of your life.

CHAPTER 1

Exercises

- After each brand write a single sentence about what that brand meant to you at that time.
- Now extend this map out by 10-year increments: 30, 40, 50, 60, and 70. List brands you think will be a part of your life. Again write a single sentence about why you believe each brand will be relevant to you at that time.
- Now discuss what factors are influencing your choices: familiarity, aspiration, current use, personal or family associations, trends, and so on.
- Next see if there are any brands that were constant over a long period of time. Discuss what makes those brands have traction over time. What inherited qualities and brand messages enable brand loyalty?

3. AIDA in Action

Consider the buying process for the following product categories using the AIDA (attention, interest, desire, action) steps: hybrid cars, microbrews, running shoes, frozen vegetables, and cosmetics. Or create your own categories.

- Make a list based on the following questions: What gets your *attention*? What part of the brand messages within this category captures your *interest*? At what point and due to what circumstances do consumers feel a compelling *desire* for the product? What are common intended *actions* that might be relevant to this product category?
- Now find an ad for each category and discuss how the AIDA process works for that brand. How much influence do advertising and promotion have on the buying decision for that brand?

Review chapter content and study for exams. <http://study.sagepub.com/altstiel4e>.

- Interactive practice quizzes
- Mobile-friendly eFlashcards
- Carefully selected chapter-by-chapter video and multimedia content

Chapter 2

Strategy and Branding *Putting a Face on a Product*

Congratulations! Your agency's request for proposal has been selected, and you've been invited to pitch the Garlowe Gizmo account to introduce their new line of Gizmos. Your job is to develop a creative strategy and build a marketing communication campaign that will knock the socks off the Garlowe management. You really need this account, because if you don't win, half of your agency will be laid off, including you. Right now, you know nothing about the company, its products, its customers, its competition, or its market. How will you develop something that differentiates Garlowe from the competition? Something no one else has done before. And something that might even win some creative awards. By the way, you've got two weeks until the presentation. Once again, congratulations!

Let's Review the Basics

The scenario in the introduction happens every day somewhere. The good news is you're invited to the dance. But there are very few "gimmes" when it comes to new business, and if you're lucky enough to win an account, the euphoria quickly dissolves into the daily grind of keeping the business.

Most texts will tell you that you just can't start creating an ad from scratch. Of course you can. And you just might get lucky the first time. But can you repeat that success? That's why we need to discuss the foundations of marketing communications. First, a few definitions.

Advertising, MarCom, IMC, or What?

Everyone knows what advertising is, right? George Orwell, author of *1984*, said it was "the rattling of a stick inside a swill bucket."¹ Science fiction author H. G. Wells claimed, "Advertising is legalized lying."² Humorist Will Rogers declared, "Advertising is the art of convincing people to spend money they don't have for something they don't need"³ (and we could add "to impress people they don't like"). For a less cynical view, advertising professor Jef Richards said, "Advertising is the 'wonder' in Wonder Bread."⁴

You've probably learned that advertising is paid communication to promote a product, service, brand, or cause through the media. Is direct mail advertising? Well, if you consider mail a medium, yes. How about a brochure? Probably not; however, it can be mailed or inserted into a magazine as an ad. The Internet? Yes and no. A website by itself is not really advertising, although a banner ad on that site is. Social networks? They can be a platform for ads, but they are sometimes more effective when they influence consumer perceptions of a brand without advertising. Public relations? No, because the advertiser is not paying the editor to publish an article (at least not directly). PR professionals talk about **earned media**—where the quality of their content and relationship with editors earn mention of a product without a direct media payment. With earned media you're asking permission to share information, rather than hitting them over the head with a commercial. Then there's **native advertising**. When the ad message is blended with other content, does it also become PR, product placement, branded content, sales promotion, sponsorship, or something else? Confused? Don't feel alone. Many marketing professionals can't make the distinction between advertising and other forms of promotion.

Randall Rothenberg, CEO of the Interactive Advertising Bureau, described the dilemma of defining advertising: "Today's media landscape keeps getting more diverse—it's broadcast, cable and streaming; it's online, tablet and smartphone; it's video, rich media, social media, branded content, banners, apps, in-app advertising and interactive technology . . . it's physical interactive gear, like Nike + Fuelband . . . Google Chromecast dongle . . . and smart watches . . ."⁶

*"Our business is infested with idiots who try to impress by using pretentious jargon."*⁵

David Ogilvy,
copywriter and founder,
Ogilvy & Mather

MarCom (Marketing Communications)

MarCom to some people takes in every form of marketing communication. Others describe MarCom as every form of promotion that's not traditional advertising. Traditional advertising usually covers print (newspapers, magazines), television, radio, and some forms of outdoor advertising. "Nontraditional" promotion includes direct marketing, sales promotion, point of sale, public relations, email, online advertising, search engine marketing, mobile, social networks, guerrilla marketing, viral, word of mouth, and everything else you can attach a logo, slogan, or message to. These divisions evolved as large agencies discovered they could make money beyond earning media commissions. So they created MarCom units or separate interactive, direct, and sales promotion divisions. Sometimes these are set up as separate entities under the corporate umbrella of a large agency.

IMC (Integrated Marketing Communications)

IMC unites the MarCom elements into a single campaign. *IMC* has become a buzzword, especially for agencies that set up MarCom divisions. Actually, IMC is nothing new. Smaller full-service agencies and in-house ad departments have been doing it for years under the banner of "doing whatever it takes to get the job done." With limited budgets, companies need to get the most mileage from their promotional dollar with a variety of tools, including advertising.

Advertising's Role in the Marketing Process

Many people describe the most common forms of advertising, such as a clever TV commercial or a slick catalog, as "good marketing." Actually, those forms of advertising and direct marketing are subsets of one of the four P's of marketing (promotion, place, product, and price). Unless a director of marketing can also control the product, distribution (place), and price, he or she is a glorified ad or promotion manager. And any director of marketing worth his or her salt also takes into account a fifth P—people. If you don't take the time to understand what motivates the people you are pitching your brand to, you may as well pick a new career.



Years ago advertisers were afraid to show minorities in mainstream ads. Recently gays and lesbians were subtly integrated. Today many brands openly embrace marriage equality and LGBT rights.



No matter how you slice it, Heinz has developed some very creative concepts, including eye-catching print ads and innovative digital sales promotion programs.

The buying process for some products may take a couple seconds, such as picking out a sandwich at the drive through, or it may take years, as with buying a multimillion dollar piece of industrial equipment. No matter the time frame, there is a process that starts with awareness and ends with the sale. One of the best ways to describe the process is using the acronym AIDA, which stands for *attention, interest, desire, and action*. Understanding AIDA helps you, as a creative person, guide a consumer from just recognizing your brand to demanding it.

Here's how AIDA works in advertising:

1. **Attention:** How do you get someone who is bombarded with hundreds if not thousands of messages a day to look at your ad or commercial? If you're a writer, one way is to use powerful words, or if you're an art director, you need a picture that will catch a person's eye.
2. **Interest:** Once you capture a person's attention, he or she will give you a little more time to make your point, but you must stay focused on the reader's or viewer's wants and needs. This means helping that person quickly sort out the relevant messages. In some cases, you might use bullet points and subheadings to make your points stand out.
3. **Desire:** The interest and desire parts of AIDA work together. Once people are interested, they need to really want the product. As you're building readers' interest, you also need to help them understand how what you're offering can help them in a real way. The main way of doing this is by appealing to their personal needs and wants. Another component of desire is conviction—the willingness to buy when the opportunity is right. So even if your message does not result in an immediate sale, keeping your messages on track and on time could eventually trigger a sale.
4. **Action:** Okay, they're hooked. Now what do you want them to do? Visit a website? Take a test drive? Call for information? Plunk down some cash now? You should be very clear about what action you want your readers or viewers to take.

Calling Consumers to Action

The fourth step in the AIDA process is the one that drives the bottom line. So let's take a moment to say a little more about the Call to Action. The Call to Action is the little voice you've planted in the consumer's head that keeps saying, "Go do it." But it's up to you to plant what the "it" is. Of course the "it" that gets a consumer is based on strategy, and we'll be talking a lot more about that. For now let's consider seven surefire ways to engage consumers in action⁷:

- Begin with a strong command verb
- Choose words that provoke emotion or enthusiasm
- Give the target a compelling reason to take action
- Build in a fear of missing out on something big
- Know the platform your message lives on or in and leverage it
- Spice it up with tantalizing details
- Add numbers that translate into a tangible value

A Call to Action that works is based on knowing what makes the consumer tick.

Objectives, Strategies, and Tactics

The difference between strategy and tactics stumps a lot of clients, their agencies, and, not surprisingly, students. Too often the first stab at the process looks like a tangled mess of what everyone would like to see happen—about as specific and realistic as wishing for world peace. Other than drafting a mission statement by committee, listing strategy and tactics can be the most confusing, thankless task in marketing, and without clear objectives, failure is guaranteed. Don't get us wrong. A creative person needs to follow a strategy. Otherwise you're working for the sake of creativity rather than solving a problem.

Consider this—your objective is to visit mid-America. Think of strategy development as picking the destination, such as “I want to go to Cleveland.” The strategy is to make the trip. The tactics are how you get there. If I drive, which roads do I take? Should I fly? If so, which airlines have the best rates? Where will I stay? How long will I be there? And a bunch of other questions that deal with specific actions you must take to get to Cleveland and back. Another analogy comes from the military. The objective speaks to the big picture, like winning the war. Strategies deal with achieving objectives, like capturing specific cities, blocking their ports, and hacking into their power grids. Tactics are the means to achieve the strategy. In

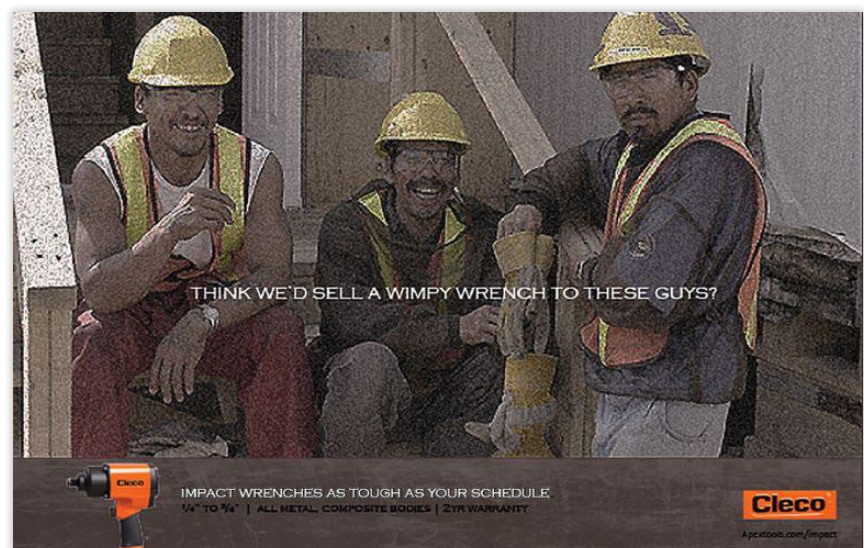
the case of taking a city, it might be tactics such as using a combination of close air support, flanking maneuvers from infantry, frontal assaults by tanks, and constant bombardment of artillery. So, it's objective, strategy, and tactics. Got it: one, two, and three.

Account Planning—Solving the Client's Problem

Strategy often deals in long-term solutions such as building brand share. Strategy relates to continuity, growth, and return on investment. It should be specific, and measurable. It begins with account planning.



Real men are comfortable in their own skin. The strategy for these Dove ads and TV commercials was to show men in a slightly different light. However, when you consider that women already love the Dove brand, and they buy the products for their men, it's a smart marketing move.



First, you have to know the target market and then develop a strategy to connect with it. Industrial tools like impact wrenches have to be made as tough as the people who use them.

If you were working on the Garlowe Gizmo account mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, where would *you* start? The first thing to do is ask, “What’s their problem?” Every client has a problem. Otherwise they wouldn’t need to promote their products. Some clients state the problem as a broad objective, such as to sell more Gizmos in the next fiscal year. That’s not the problem. The problem is: What’s going to make it difficult to sell more Gizmos, and how can we overcome those difficulties? The client may tell you, but these may not be the only problems. Often the client doesn’t have an in-depth understanding of its target audience. An even more challenging situation emerges when the client can’t even identify the problem.

Account planning is how agencies come up with the solutions that solve a client’s problem. It’s about finding consumers’ sweet spot. So, even before you get to the strategies and tactics, account planning lays the foundation. All strategy documents and the subsequent strategies and tactics emerge from account planning.

Here’s a little background on planning. It developed in Britain in the late 1960s and was based on the desire to create an environment where creativity flourished, but where the consumer’s voice was a key part of strategic development. Coming into existence on the heels of the Creative Revolution of the 1960s, it’s not surprising that planning also sought a modern, creative approach to replace irrelevant, inappropriate, and outmoded methodologies. Prior to the introduction of account planning, advertising research was highly marketing oriented, largely quantitative, and often detached from both the creative team and the consumer. At the heart of account planning is the need to understand consumers—to bring their voice into the strategic process. This often involves qualitative research as planners seek consumers’ sweet spot and nail the key insight.

Stanley Pollitt, of London’s Boase Massimi Pollitt, is credited with developing account planning. His goal was to put a trained researcher, representing the voice of the consumer, alongside every account person. In the 1980s Jay Chiat, of the original Chiat Day in Los Angeles, brought account planning to North America. Jon Steel, of Goodby, Silverstein & Partners in San Francisco and a noted author on account planning, calls account planning an essential strategy tool. By the mid-1990s account planning was common practice in ad agencies across North America.

“Brilliant creative isn’t enough. You must be creative and effective. It’s a time for the strategic thinker, not just the creative rebel.”⁸

Helayne Spivak,
former global chief creative
director, JWT, and head of VCU
Brand Center

LEXUS GS	Horsepower is just the beginning. The Lexus GS F SPORT features a standard 6-cylinder engine and rear-wheel drive, unlike Audi. Standard 8-speed transmission, unlike Mercedes-Benz. And better overall handling performance than the BMW 535i M Sport. All of which means that in the world of luxury sport sedans, the time has come to learn a new language for performance.	LEXUS THE PURSUIT OF PERFECTION
304 HORSEPOWER 3.5L V6 SPORT-TUNED SUSPENSION		lexus.com/GS #LexusGS

Options shown.
1. 2014 GS 350 F SPORT vs. 2014 Audi A6 2.0T with 19" Sport Package, 2014 Mercedes-Benz E350 with Sport Styling Package, 2014 BMW 535i with M Sport Package. 2. Ratings achieved using the standard premium unleaded gasoline with an octane rating of 91 or higher. Performance fuel is not used; performance will decrease. 3. AWD. Testing: Certified handling performance. 2014 Lexus GS F SPORT versus the 2014 BMW 535i M Sport with rear-steer performance options. ©2014 Lexus.

The One Thing about the Lexus GS—more standard horsepower than its German competitors. How do you make that point to a skeptical American reader? Run the headline in German. The traditional Lexus position has been luxury and quality first, not performance. TV ads also compared the performance of the GS directly with Audi, BMW, and Mercedes.

“Some of the biggest advertising mistakes are made by people who imagine they know what the problem is . . . they’re just coming up with that brilliant idea and trying to force the problem to fit it.”⁹

Mary Wells Lawrence,
copywriter and founding
partner, Wells Rich Greene

Marketing Tasks	What They Mean
Define the target audience	Who are we talking to?
Identify features and benefits	What makes this product better?
Clarify the current position	What do people think about the product?
Align wants and needs with the product	Why should people buy it?
Determine Call to Action	What do we want people to do?

Table 2.1 Defining Marketing Tasks

Get the Facts

The first step in planning for any type of research is gathering and organizing information. You have to answer the basic questions listed in Table 2.1.

Notice that the above creative development questions include some of the basic journalism questions, such as who, what, and why. Where and when are media questions, which may also influence your creative strategy. For example, if you want to reach gay men, a commercial on *Modern Family* might be smarter than a spot during the Super Bowl. Not to mention a whole lot less expensive.

Where to Look for Information

Research can be divided into two basic categories: primary, where you gather the facts directly, and secondary, where you assemble research done by others. We’ll look at secondary research first, because it’s usually more accessible.

Secondary Research

You can find a wealth of information about markets, products, and consumers. Most of it is quantitative, so learning how to read and understand stats benefits anyone going into advertising. You don’t have to run the stats. You only need to be able to understand them. A lot of it is available for free on the Internet. However, most of the really good stuff comes from subscription services. Most university libraries offer the same information that costs companies thousands of dollars, although it is usually slightly out of date. Buying current data is often prohibitively expensive. Simmons Market Research Bureau and Mediamark Research & Intelligence are good places to begin.

Many universities will have one or the other, as they are commonly used by the industry. Learning how to navigate these databases will give you a leg up when you interview.

Primary Research

While most of the primary research you'll find is quantitative, a lot of the primary research that will help you as a planner is qualitative. Most people think of formal types of research such as focus groups or mail surveys, but primary research can be very informal and personal. Ethnography and projective techniques are hot right now and with good reason. With ethnography you'll find yourself immersed in consumers' world. There's no faster way to find consumers' sweet spot than spending time with them. With projective techniques you'll use psychological tools to find out how people feel about or perceive your product. This can help you define your insight and develop a strategy that really connects with consumers. Start thinking like an anthropologist or a psychologist, and you'll quickly learn how to identify consumers' sweet spot—the One Thing that links your consumers' desire with your product. As you might imagine, these kinds of techniques pose some ethical considerations. Not the least of which is, how far is too far? So before you begin your research take the time to know exactly how far is too far—and don't cross that line.

- Check out the competition. Review ads and other promotional material for your product. Study their visual structure and symbolism. Study their claims. Where are they weaker or stronger compared with your product?
- Read the publications, pursue the online sites, and watch the TV shows your media department is considering. What do they tell you about your target and the competition?
- Talk to the people who buy, or might buy, your product. Why did they buy it or not buy it? Would they buy it again? If not, why not?
- Talk to people who considered, but did not buy, your product. Why didn't they? What would make them change their mind?
- Immerse yourself in the fine-grained details of your consumers' everyday life. Where do they live, work, and play? What makes them tick and why?

Ethnography—Immerse Yourself in Their World

- Visit a store and check how your product and its competitors are displayed. How does the shelf appeal of your product compare? While you're there, spend some time watching consumers interact with your brand and its competitors. What does that tell you about their expectations?
- Observe the salespeople who sell your product. Eavesdrop. What do they tell customers about it, and how do consumers respond?
- Sometimes it's helpful to take a factory tour. Observe with all your senses. Is there a key insight waiting to be shared with consumers?
- Hang out with the consumers. Go to their homes. Explore the rooms in which they will use your product and how they use it. Observe them at play. Where are they playing and who are they playing with? More important, what does their play look like? What do you observe that can help you successfully pitch this product?

The devil is in the details.

"The process begins with just filling my head with stuff. Devouring media, soaking up the world around me—words and image and music and life."¹⁰

Chris Adams,
creative director,
TBWA\Chiat\Day

Projective Techniques—Eliciting Inner Feelings

- Provide some images or words related to the product and ask consumers to make associations. What can you learn about how they feel about your brand?
- Ask them to draw pictures or create collages that remind them of something related to your product or something you're trying to find out. What images begin to repeat themselves? What's happening inside your consumer?
- Give them sentences to complete based on what you want to find out. Do you notice any word patterns, and what do they tell you about the emotional state of consumers when they think of your brand?
- Show them a storyboard about the product and ask them to tell you what they think about the main character (the consumer) within the story. Do you think they might be projecting themselves into that story? Chances are you're right.

You can find subjects to observe or interview in a number of places—stores, malls, sporting events, chat rooms, online games, trade shows, basically anyplace where members of your target audience may gather. You might even consider conducting more traditional research, such as focus groups with members of the target audience. These groups, professionally moderated, can explore attitudes and opinions in depth. And of course, there are always the tried and true surveys. Whatever you decide on, the goal is to find the sweet spot—without crossing ethical boundaries.

Interpreting Research Findings

There's a funny thing about research—if it confirms the client's opinions, it wasn't really needed; if it contradicts the client's opinions, it's flawed. While the "facts" may be gathered and presented objectively, the interpretation is often subjective.

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