

PERSUASION, INFLUENCE & ADVERTISING

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Focus: Advertising strategies, influencer marketing, consumer psychology, brand loyalty and the influence of social media.

A. Warm-Up – Why Do We Buy What We Buy?

Discuss:

1. Do you usually research products before buying them?
2. Have you ever purchased something because it was advertised by an influencer?
3. Why do people pay more for certain brands when cheaper alternatives exist?
4. Are online reviews always trustworthy?
5. Can advertising create needs that people didn't previously have?

B. Advertising Language – What Are They Really Saying?

Consider these common advertising expressions.

Advertising phrase	Possible hidden message
Limited-time offer	Buy before you miss out.
Trusted by millions	Other people approve of us.
Premium quality	Expect to pay more.
Don't miss out!	You might regret not buying it.
The choice of professionals	Experts supposedly recommend us.
Be the best version of yourself	Our product will improve your life.

Discussion:

1. Which expressions are most persuasive?
2. Which ones create unnecessary pressure?
3. Do advertising slogans influence people consciously or unconsciously?
4. Can you think of similar slogans in your own language?

C. Influencers – Authentic or Just Another Advertisement?

Discuss the following situations.

Situation 1: A popular travel influencer recommends a hotel but does not mention that the hotel paid for the visit.

Situation 2: A fitness influencer promotes a health product that they have never personally used.

Situation 3: A content creator regularly recommends products they genuinely enjoy, but also receives commission on sales.

Questions:

- Should influencers always disclose paid partnerships?
- Are followers responsible for checking advertising claims?
- Is an influencer's personal recommendation more convincing than a traditional advertisement?
- Where should the line between entertainment and advertising be drawn?

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D. Advertising Techniques – Analyse the Message

Read the four advertising descriptions.

Advertisement 1: The Perfect Family

A family is sitting around a beautiful dinner table. Everyone is smiling and enjoying a particular brand of food. The message suggests that buying this product brings families closer together.

Advertisement 2: The Celebrity Choice

A famous athlete promotes an expensive sports drink. The advertisement focuses on the athlete's achievements rather than the actual ingredients of the drink.

Advertisement 3: The Last Chance

An online shopping website displays a message saying that only three items remain in stock and the discount will disappear in ten minutes.

Advertisement 4: Everyone Is Buying It

A new mobile phone advertisement claims that millions of people have already switched to its latest model.

Discuss each advertisement:

1. What technique is being used?
2. What emotion or desire is the advertiser targeting?
3. What information is missing?
4. Would the advertisement influence you? Why or why not?

E. Role-Play – The Marketing Meeting

You work for a company launching a new reusable water bottle.

The company wants to attract young adults and environmentally conscious consumers.

Three people must agree on a marketing campaign.

Student A – The Marketing Director

You want a bold social media campaign using influencers and attractive videos. You believe emotional advertising is essential.

Student B – The Financial Manager

You have a limited budget. You prefer practical advertising, measurable results and a smaller number of carefully selected influencers.

Student C – The Consumer Representative

You are concerned about exaggerated environmental claims. You want the campaign to be honest, transparent and environmentally responsible.

Your task: Agree on:

1. The target audience.
2. The main advertising message.
3. The marketing channels.
4. The campaign budget priorities.
5. How the company will demonstrate that its environmental claims are genuine.

F. Final Discussion

1. Should advertising be more strictly regulated?
2. Is it possible to advertise ethically while still being persuasive?
3. Are consumers becoming more resistant to traditional advertising?
4. Will artificial intelligence make advertising more or less trustworthy?
5. Should companies be responsible for the behaviour of influencers they employ?

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