



Melts In Your Mouth, Not In Your Hand



Why is it that some advertising speaks to you, engages you, and stimulates your imagination? What is it about some advertising that surprises you and piques your curiosity to the point where you find yourself forming buying decisions even as you read?

Why do some products or services stick in your mind and become mainstays in your life?

For beyond 30 years I've been studying what it is that makes some ads compel you to take action and others that are forgettable.

From the early days of cut and paste, and I don't mean the Adobe equivalent, but actually using knives and wax; I've been searching for the answers to the above questions. My research has taken lots of two-wheeled turns and has shone a light into the mind of the consumer (Trust me some things you just don't want to know.); but every time I read the latest guru's remarks on the subject, I hear strains of ideas from the halcyon days of advertising. Watch Bravo's *Mad Men* and you'll get the idea.

Some advertising ideas were "fly-by-the-seat-of-your-knickers, scooped out of thin air" theories that were untested and fictional in nature.

There was however a handful of real-life geniuses with an understanding of how advertising could sell anything from Camels to brassieres to cake mixes.

Guys like Caples, Ogilvy, and Reeves.

Anyone worth their salt in this ad industry has read Ogilvy on Advertising but there are a few lesser-known heroes that paved the way with groundbreaking ideas for the rest of us.

The only way you will see success is for you to quit working for the paper, radio/TV station or magazine and start working for your clients.

You think you've got it bad? Try being in their shoes for a week.

Look, we're all in this together and the sooner you become your client's marketing and advertising resource the sooner your digits will reach # 1 on his or her speed dial.

Here today, are some thoughts that continue to be valid that I want to share from our brilliant predecessors.

In 1961 Rosser Reeves wrote:

I'm not saying that charming, witty and warm copy won't sell. I'm just saying that I've seen thousands of charming, witty campaigns that didn't. Let's say you are a manufacturer. Your advertising isn't working and your sales are going down. And everything depends on it. Your future depends on it, your family's future depends on it, and other people's families depend on it. And you walk in this office and talk to me, and you sit in that chair. Now, what do you want out of me? Fine writing? Do you want masterpieces? Do you want glowing things that can be framed by copywriters?

Or do you want to see the gawddamned sales curve stop moving down and start moving up?"

That kinda sums up what advertising is supposed to be all about, isn't it?

Your challenge is to find out what will sell product or services and keep the peddle to the floor. You need to help the client figure out what makes them different from everyone else.

Read and pay attention to what Rosser Reeves had to say about what he calls the Unique Selling Proposition (USP).

Each advertisement must make a proposition to the consumer. Not just words, not just product puffery, not just show-window advertising. Each advertisement must say to each prospect:

'Buy this product and you will get this specific benefit.'

The proposition must be one that the competition either cannot, or does not, offer. It must be unique; either a uniqueness of the brand or a claim not otherwise made in that particular field of advertising.

The proposition must be so strong that it can move the masses; i.e., pull over new customers to your product.

Here's 5 techniques Rosser Reeves used to optimize effectiveness:

1. Stick to a single, strong claim, to avoid diluting the power of your core message. Secondary messages are fine only if they reinforce the core messages.
2. Copy sometimes fails to convey the intended unique selling position. Test the copy by asking readers to articulate the message, and calculate the percentage that get it right. (Buckley's: "Tastes awful, but it works.")
3. Don't change your ad campaign once it works; doing so will destroy the penetration you've built and you'll become forgettable and get lost in the m el e of other ad noise.
4. Avoid visuals and gimmicks that attract attention to themselves at the expense of your USP recall. Even jewelry can be distracting.
5. All senses should express the same message at the same time to successfully convey the USP. Remove elements that are a distraction.

There's the logic.

You don't have to credit Reeves, Ogilvy or Young with this stuff. Take it and mold it to your style, make it your own and start being the number one resource to your clients. Being perceived as part of their business team will make your position unshakable.

Oh, by the way, Reeves is the guy responsible for M&M's "melts in your mouth, not in your hand". Used copies of his book "Reality In Advertising" are going for about \$130US on Amazon.com.

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