



How to Create More Effective Marketing

What We Can Learn from Iconic Brands

In today's marketing, much of the focus is on website design, social media spending, product features and functions, and differentiation from competitors. So, what's missing?

Savvy marketers have turned to the cognitive sciences to understand how people make purchase decisions and how the brain works in this process. The result is the creation of more effective marketing, better use of marketing budgets, and the creation of truly iconic brands like Coke, Pepsi, and American Express.

How Does This Work?

Cognitive science has found that individuals make decisions based on a need or value they want to satisfy. In the most general sense, consumers have three levels of product knowledge: attributes, consequences, and values. This knowledge is often characterized as a chain of associations. This set of associations is called a means-end chain because individuals choose behaviors or make choices as a means to an end.

Attributes -> Consequences-> Values

The model is based on research findings that product or service attributes, in and of themselves, have little relevance to consumer choice. Instead, these attributes have meaning because of their consequences and, most importantly, the **psycho-social values** that individuals aspire to or want to have met. ¹

The implication is: Don't just advertise features or initial consequences. Instead, make sure that you communicate the **values** your product or service ultimately provides, and individuals ultimately want. These are the benefits that have the most motivating power.

Examples of Brands That Focus on Values in Their Marketing

Consider Coke's new ads for their Limited Edition Dreamworld cola.

"Coca-Cola Dreamworld makes the most fascinating parts of our imagination real."

¹ Reynolds and Olson, *Understanding Consumer Decision Making: The Means-End Approach to Marketing and Advertising Strategy*, 2001, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

In addition, Coke is also playing up its contribution to another value for a fast-growing market segment - sustainability:

"Experience joy on repeat with our new bottles made of 100% recycled materials - and discover how we're one step closer to creating a World Without Waste."*

Then there is Pepsi with its new Nitro Pepsi.

*"Introducing Nitro Pepsi, the first-ever nitrogen-infused cola-it's more than a cola. It's an experience...it sparks connection and conversation."*²

Or in the financial services industry, a current American Express ad reads:

*"YOU'RE A MEMBER WHEN
Arriving means making an entrance."*

*"YOU'RE A MEMBER WHEN
The ball is in your court."*

*"Don't **live life** without it."*

Also, Unilever continues with its highly successful "Real Beauty" campaign:

"Welcome to Dove...the home of real beauty...."

The values being touted here are all about customer values.

You, too, can leverage the power of your brand by discovering the values that underlie your target market's purchase decisions. **At DMR, we specialize in doing this for customers.** The results are amazing. We'd love to tell you more!

Just give us a call at our Washington, DC office, 202-364-4966. See our website too at: dmrdc.com.

² Nitro Pepsi was introduced in March, 2022. It was developed to expand the cola category to people for whom heavy carbonation is a barrier to enjoying regular cola. Potentially, Pepsi is thinking, this may transform the whole cola market.